

No 46

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NEWS MAGAZINE

RAMSBOTTOM IN WORLD WAR I

**RAMSBOTTOM HERITAGE SOCIETY, C/O RAMSBOTTOM LIBRARY,
CARR STREET, RAMSBOTTOM, BURY, BL0 9AE**

Contact number: 01706 82 1998

The objects of the society shall be:-

- a) To advance education of the public by creating an awareness of and interest in the study of the history and heritage of Ramsbottom (as defined by the boundaries of the pre-1974 Ramsbottom Urban District Council).
- b) To locate relevant documents, records and artefacts. To retain, catalogue and/or copy them where possible, and to operate an information centre.
- c) To seek to protect the heritage of Ramsbottom

PROGRAMME 2014:

- June 18 John Alker – *Manchester’s Formidable Women*
- July 16 Barbara and Jon Williams – A visit to Mount Pleasant factory village. Meet 6.15pm at Carr Street, Ramsbottom, car park; transport by car sharing.
- August 20 Harry Sidebottom (English Heritage custodian) - A visit to Goodshaw Chapel. Meet 6.15pm at Carr Street, Ramsbottom, car park; transport by car sharing.
- September 17 Diane Taylor – *The History of the Leeds, Settle and Carlisle Railway Line* (illustrated)
- October 15 Mike Turpin – *Roman Aldborough: Victorian Antiquarian Research and Links with Ramsbottom* (illustrated)
- November 19 Lizzie Jones – *Rogues and Vagabonds*
- December 10 **Christmas Social Evening**

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

Entry by donation, please.

The Editors welcome articles for inclusion in the News Magazine. These may be handwritten, typed or on disc (in “Word”) and sent to the Heritage Society. Please include your full address and a contact telephone number.

Ramsbottom Heritage Society News Magazine No 46

Spring 2014

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Front Cover – A drawing by Mike Spencer of Emmanuel Holcombe Church of England Primary School – the 1894 original building with a recent new build which was completed in 2011

Website - www.ramsbottomheritage.org.uk

Email via website

Chairman's report

In this last six months we have had very successful meetings in the Civic Hall and the Gallery continues to be opened on the second Sunday of every months from twelve till three. However this year seems to have been dominated by the attempt to allocate Church Fields as a town green for public use. After collecting evidence from local residents, Andrew Todd did a magnificent job as our advocate at the public inquiry and was thanked by the Inspector who said, "You have done your community proud,"- a sentiment we would echo. My last report mentioned the fact that the trees had been cut down around the former bowling green at the back of the Civic Hall. Since then an application has been resubmitted for a large building on the site and this is causing us great concern. At the time of writing, the outcome of these two applications is not yet known

Last autumn we successfully ran Local History Research Workshops and two projects grew out of these, which have been running ever since. One group is cataloguing and scanning our entire collection of maps, so that they can be made available on line and on disc. The second group, the exhibition team, has been researching and collecting objects and photographs for "*Ramsbottom's Response – A World War I exhibition*". They have found many interesting stories about soldiers who went to war, Belgian refugees who came here, women and children who engaged in the war effort at home and a Zeppelin which came to bomb us. You will be fascinated by the displays when you visit the Heritage Gallery in Ramsbottom Library.

We are extremely grateful to the many people who have worked for the RHS this year. Over 10 members have had some level of input into the exhibition and many, many others support the RHS in different ways. So it must seem surprising that we are still looking for volunteers. However we really need help with the archiving team and for the collection of objects and artworks. The bookstall may close altogether if no one can be found to take it over, which would be a pity as it gives us a public face at local events including the Christmas Markets, and a forum for selling our own publications. If you feel you could help, you will get plenty of help and advice from previous holders of the post and the rest of the team. It is a great way to feel involved in the RHS and to get to know people better.

Over the summer months we have arranged visits and guided walks. Please take a look at our programme for details and come along. So, when you are not away on your summer holidays there are plenty of interesting things to do with the RHS.

Very best wishes
Kate Slingsby

RAMSBOTTOM MISCELLANEA – NEWS ITEMS

Church Fields Update

In News Magazine 45 we published information about the fencing off of Church Fields and about Ramsbottom Heritage Society's bid to secure town/village green status for the land. The Society soon received widespread and enthusiastic support from the public in the form of completed questionnaires and written statements. A peaceful protest against the closure of the land took place on 22nd February when a human chain stretched for about a distance of a hundred yards on the public footpath which runs through Church Fields. The Society's town/village green application was considered at a public inquiry at Ramsbottom Civic Hall on 4th, 5th and 6th March. Inspector Alan Evans presided at the hearing and on 31st March RHS final submissions were made to him in public at Bury Town Hall. After his report has been received by Bury Council they will make the final decision.

Mr Evans presided over the inquiry into the Walmersley village green application in November. His report ran to 90 pages and took over four months to prepare. So we should not expect Bury's decision before the summer.

BBC Radio Lancashire's Sally Naden was at *The Chocolate Café*, Market Place, Ramsbottom on Wednesday 2nd April for a live broadcast. The group that took part in the programme included several Society members.

Sally began by saying that 2014 is the fortieth anniversary of the Local Government Act and hence local government reorganisation. Even though the Government of the day assured everyone the changes were for administrative purposes and that for cultural, sporting and ceremonial purposes the old counties would continue to be used, county boundaries were transformed. Sally asked what difference it had made to local people. Richard Hall explained that in 1974 Ramsbottom people had a strong feeling of belonging to Lancashire and that those who were put into Greater Manchester felt cut off by the boundary changes. (The old RUDC had been cut in half.) It was agreed that, following a very difficult period (in the 1970s the town's industries were also in decline), Ramsbottom has adapted to its new status. Being on the fringe of Manchester but with the advantage of excellent transport links to the city was seen as playing an important part in the renaissance that Ramsbottom had worked hard to achieve.

The following links that Ramsbottom still has with the County Palatine were highlighted:

Its Chairman pointed out that Ramsbottom Cricket Club, which was established in the town in 1845, continues to be part of the Lancashire League.

Postal addresses are Ramsbottom, Bury, Lancashire

Ramsbottom's local food shops, cafés and restaurants are supplied from Lancashire.

It emerged during the discussion that some members of the group had roots elsewhere but, encouraged to admit that the town's loyalties were now to Manchester, the group unanimously denied this was the case. All showed strong support for Ramsbottom as part of Lancashire because of the feeling among the community that it is a part of Lancashire.

Barbara Palmer

Sadly, we note the passing of Mrs Barbara Palmer, a founder member of the Society, who died during 2013.

Correction

On page 17 of News Magazine 45, we stated that Ramsbottom's original Wesleyan Methodist Chapel (built in 1825) was the town's first Non-conformist chapel. We have been reminded that Dundee Presbyterian Chapel, Dundee Lane (demolished 1978) opened in 1712 and we apologise for the mistake.

Ramsbottom War News

Life in Ramsbottom during WW2

ISSUE 5 1943: THE TIDE TURNS

TWENTY A4 PAGES ~ STILL ONLY £1

On sale during the 2014 ELR 1940s Weekend

May 24th, 25th and 26th

Published by the Society using information from
The Ramsbottom Observer and our archives.

***War News* issues 1 - 4 published 2010-13, have been our most popular publications ever and are still available.**

DON'T MISS YOUR COPY OF THE LATEST ISSUE.

RAMSBOTTOM HERITAGE SOCIETY PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION 2013

The competition entries, which were taken in Ramsbottom and surrounding area during 2013, were judged by Bernard Wilson. All of the photographs are available for viewing on the Ramsbottom Heritage Society website in the Photo Database section, which has 2500 photographs since the competition started in 1987, and also 1500 photographs scanned in from Bury Archive

OVERALL WINNER OF THE DICKENSIAN TROPHY:

Joyce Sellers HPC-13TH-031 The War Weekend

EVENTS & DAILY LIFE:

Winner: Joan Platt HPC-13EV-018 Santa Special at Ramsbottom

Highly Commended:

Ian Summers HPC-13EV-012 School Christmas Presentation

BUILDINGS:

Winner: Joan Platt HPC-13BU-038 Peel Tower

Highly Commended:

Ian Chapman HPC-13BU-019
St Andrew's Tower, minus pinnacle

TOWN & COUNTRY LANDSCAPES:

Winner: Dennis Salmon HPC-13TC- 030 View over the Rake

Highly Commended:

Joyce Sellers HPC-13TC- 025 A view across the River Irwell
Ian Chapman HPC-13TC-005 Holcombe Village in the snow

THEMES:

Winner: Ian Smith HPC-13TH-091/095 War Weekend

Highly Commended:

Ian Summers HPC-13TH-021/25
Redevelopment of Edenfield Co-op
Joyce Sellers HPC-13TH-031/35 War Weekend parade

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM, RAMSBOTTOM HEROES OF WORLD WAR ONE

Elizabeth Duxbury has collected many of the names of the men and women of the Ramsbottom area who served in the Armed Forces in World War One. She tells us:

“I have searched War Memorials, Rolls of Honour, gravestones, the Ramsbottom Observer, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website, some histories of our local churches and books by Jonathan Ali and Duncan Francis. I hope the completed booklet, containing over 2,000 references to those who served in WWI, will be available in Ramsbottom Library by the summer. For the following item I have selected one surname to illustrate the many sources that can help to build up a picture of the events that affected one family, and would have affected so many in Ramsbottom”.

Ramsbottom Observer 8th January 1915

FATHER AND FOUR SONS IN ARMY RAMSBOTTOM FAMILY'S PROUD DISTINCTION.

Mrs Turner, 152 Bolton Street has a husband and four sons in the Army. Private Richard Turner, the husband enlisted in the Lancashire Fusiliers when a young man. Ten of the twelve years in the Army on that occasion were spent in India and Turner finished his term with the rank of Corporal. Afterwards he served in the Volunteer Force and about two years ago joined the National Reserve. A few weeks ago he again enlisted for active service, this time in the 6th Manchester Regiment;

Second son, Charles Thomas Turner who is now 22 years old, has been in the Sherwood Foresters Territorial Battalion for the past four years, whilst William Turner, the third son has joined the 5th (Reserve) Battalion East Lancashire Regiment and is now billeted in Southport. The youngest son, named Fred is in the Royal Field Artillery, for the present he is stationed at Preston.

On Wednesday morning Mrs Turner received a letter from her eldest son, Richard who is married and resides at Birch Vale, Derbyshire, that he had enlisted and was proceeding to Cornwall.

It might interest our readers to know that Richard Turner the father was on the “Euphrates” when that vessel was wrecked on the Pearl Rock off the coast of Spain. There were 2,000 troops on the ship and Turner was one of the men

told off to stay on board to help at the pumps whilst the others were being taken in boats to Malta. The vessel, it will be recalled, was on the rocks for a fortnight before being towed to Malta for repairs.

Ramsbottom Observer 12th February 1915

**A RALLY TO THE FLAG -
PATRIOTIC RAMSBOTTOM FAMILY.
FATHER AND FOUR SONS IN THE ARMY.**

The record of patriotism in Ramsbottom contains no finer example than that displayed by the Turner family of 152 Bolton Street; the father of the household along with his four sons have responded to the call of duty. . . [as R O 8th January] .. On Wednesday of last week he was drafted along with the other members of the Ramsbottom Company of the National Reserve to Cardiff to take charge of prisoners of war in that locality.

The eldest son, Richard Turner who is married and resides at Birch Dale .. has joined the Notts and Derby Battalion of Kitchener's Army; the second son, Charles Thomas Turner, who is now 22 years of age, has been in the Sherwood Foresters Territorial Battalion four the past four years; while the third son has joined the 5th (Reserve) Battalion East Lancashire Regiment. The fourth son, Fred is in the Royal Field Artillery at present stationed at Fulwood Barracks, Preston.

The youngest son of this patriotic family is Prince Edward Turner and had he not been too young he would doubtless have followed the example of the other members of his family. In fact we believe parental intervention only kept him back. He is a member of the Church Lads' Brigade

Ramsbottom Observer 18th June 1915

Ramsbottom's Roll of Honour. Official list serving –

**C Turner, 152 Bolton Street, Sherwood Foresters;
F Turner, 152 Bolton Street, RFA ;
Corporal R Turner, 152 Bolton Street, Manchester Regiment;
T Turner, 37 Bolton Street, ASC;
W Turner, 152 Bolton Street, ELR**

Ramsbottom Observer 29th October 1915

**Local enlistment in Bolton Artillery. during the past fortnight
F Turner 152 Bolton Street Ramsbottom**

Ramsbottom Observer 9th June 1916

Ramsbottom soldiers wounded, Corporal R Turner [142?] Bolton Street received news that his son Private Richard Turner, Sherwood Foresters, was wounded in Egypt;

Ramsbottom Observer 2nd August 1918

MILITARY FUNERAL – INTERMENT OF A RETIRED SOLDIER

The interment of the late Mr Richard Turner, aged 51 years, a retired soldier of 13, Coulthurst Street Ramsbottom, took place at Holcombe Parish Church on Saturday afternoon. Eight soldiers acted as bearers, a firing party from Bury Barracks attended and Bugler Taberer sounded The Last Post.

...[as R O 8th January] .. **“There are four sons of the deceased serving in the Army and one has been discharged.”**

Holcombe Emmanuel gravestone

[Manchester Coat of Arms] **623 Corporal R Turner Manchester Regiment 24th July 1918.**

Holcombe Emmanuel burial register

Albert Turner, 4 Bales Yard Taylor Street Bury, buried 26th June 1931, 14months

Annie Turner, Birch Hill Ho Wardle buried 6th February 1942, 74yrs

Lily Turner, 47 Jermyn Street Rochdale, buried 26th February 1927 3yrs

Richard Turner, 15 Coulthurst Street, buried 27th July 1918, 51yrs

William Turner 7 Flannel Street Wardleworth, buried 27th February 1931, 35yrs

[All the above, were buried in grave K19]

Richard Turner, the father, 1865 – 1918.

Annie, his wife, about 1867 – 1942.

William Turner, their son, about 1896 – 1931.

Albert, probably a grandson, 1930 – 1931.

Lily, probably a granddaughter, 1924 – 1927.

Holcombe Emmanuel, Commonwealth War Graves Commission
Turner, R, Corporal, Manchester Regiment, 24/7/1918.

Holcombe Emmanuel [Sacrifice Remembered, Duncan Francis]
**Richard Turner [photo] 152 Bolton Street Ramsbottom, Corporal 623,
Manchester Regiment, died 24th July 1918 aged 51 years, of natural
causes. His five sons all served in Great War.**

Elizabeth Duxbury, 2014

OUR BOYS -
THE GREAT WAR IN A LANCASHIRE VILLAGE
by Jonathan Ali

“Our Boys” was the term used by the Hawkshaw headmaster, Thomas Beckett, when writing to his former pupils as they served at the front. Jonathan Ali’s interest in the First World War started when, as a youngster, he read the names on the three memorials (placed in the church and chapels of Hawkshaw) to the forty dead and 127 survivors. The stories in the book, about the men from Jonathan’s home village who fell and those who returned, could have come from anywhere in Lancashire. He has kindly allowed us to publish the following extracts which include paragraphs referring to Andrew Bridge, an only son and a descendant of one of the oldest families in the area.

DOING OUR BIT

(The first men, former professional soldiers and Territorials, left Hawkshaw for war service in 1914 - Editor)

January 1915 saw more men joining up to do their “bit”. The *Ramsbottom Observer* in its recruitment column noted that Andrew Bridge, a twister from Hawkshaw and Robert Stanton Young, a weaver from Hawkshaw had both enlisted at Ramsbottom in the East Lancashire Regiment. They must have stood in line together as good friends, because they have consecutive army numbers. They had grown up, played football together, gone to school and chapel together, so felt it was right to go to war together.

THIS IS NO GARDEN PARTY – IT’S BLOODY HELL

One of the many gatherings during the course of the summer months at Croich Hey, the residence of Mr Fred Whowell, at Hawkshaw, which stand out

prominently in the calendar is that which brings together annually the old folk of the district. No fewer than 240 invitations were sent for Saturday July 1st last week.

The day broke full of climactic forebodings, and rain descended early in the afternoon. Heavy banks of clouds passed over, and the outlook at the time of the reception was ominous, but the day turned out to be delightful.

There were competitions that included finding the Babes in the Woods, Smashing the Kaiser and bombarding the Germans, as well as the beauty show. (*Ramsbottom Observer*, Friday July 7th 1916)

This was the scene at the festivities at Croich Hay in Hawkshaw on the '*First Day of the Somme*'. Those present could not have known that it was the worst day for the British army, the day when it suffered its heaviest casualties in a single day. The strategy behind it was a pulverising bombardment of the German lines, destroying men and barbed wire. It would then be followed by a walk over '*No Man's Land*' by the massed British armies. But the Germans were not crushed. In many places on the line they simply came out from their deep dug outs, mounted their machine guns and took aim as the slow moving mass of infantry walked toward them up the gentle slopes of the French countryside. It was in one such attack that Andrew Bridge was killed. His battalion, the 1st East Lancashires, went over the top close to Serre to find the barbed wire had not been cut sufficiently by the shelling. Andrew and nearly 500 other men were killed or posted missing. A letter was received by his parents from his platoon commander Sgt Robert Jepson who wrote,

It is with deep sympathy and regret that I am writing this letter to let you know that your son Andrew was killed in action on 1st July. I am sure you will be pleased and comforted a little to know he was a very brave lad. He was also one of my best men – always willing and hard working. He did everything so cheerfully that I feel his loss on my staff very much. I hope you will bear up well in your bereavement and be proud to think how much and how well he did his duty for his king and country. (*Ramsbottom Observer* Friday July 21st 1916)

Sgt Robert Young, who had seen his mate, 20 year old Andrew Bridge, killed on the first day of the Somme and had himself been wounded in the head at the Somme, died at Passchendaele in 1917.

Copies of *Our Boys – The Great War in a Lancashire Village* by Jonathan Ali (2007) are still on sale at the *Fusiliers Museum*, Bury.

The Lost Generation - 1914 by Duncan Francis

A fascinating, meticulously researched book.

The Lost Generation - 1914 is the start of a series; as Duncan is writing a separate book for each year of the First World War. He has spent years researching each of the soldiers from Ramsbottom who were killed in the Great War, giving details of their families and lives here at home and the tragic circumstances of their deaths. His work gives a valuable insight into the ordinary men and women in Ramsbottom before and during the war and how these men went on to experience the horrifying and fatal consequences of fighting.

As Duncan says to the readers of his first book, "These pagesare my attempt to breathe life into the stories of Ramsbottom's fallen heroes. This is their story, their legacy and our heritage."

The books may be a first for the RHS as we expect to publish them in both hard back and as e-books. Since e-books are rapidly spreading in their popularity and use, people from all over the world, will be able to download Duncan's books. The lives of the soldiers from Ramsbottom can then be accessed at the click of a button.

When Duncan approached the RHS about producing his series of books he was not looking to make a profit for himself, but very generously offered the proceeds to be divided equally between ourselves and *Bleakholt Animal Sanctuary*.

Duncan has also been very generous in allowing the RHS to use his research findings and photographs to enhance *Ramsbottom's Response, A World War I Exhibition* which will open in the Heritage Gallery in June. It is because of his work that there will be displays for two soldiers, Ernest Hamer and Harold Monks, as well as the fascinating story of Leonie Ashworth. Leonie is the subject of an article in this magazine written by Kathleen Husband and Anne Shortt, using Duncan's work and other information from their own research.

More details about the sale of Duncan's books can be obtained by looking on the website www.ramsbottomheritage.org.uk or phoning 01706 281998

Leonie Ashworth - A Remarkable Woman

Leonie Ashworth was born Octavie Leonie Henriette Neutkens in Brussels on the 26th. September 1883. She was one of nine children of whom only four survived into adulthood - John, Jeanne, Leonie and Edouard, who died young from tuberculosis. The children were raised by their aunt, Marie Neutkens who was a dentist in Ostend. Leonie came to England in 1901 to teach and settled in Derbyshire. She married Edmund Ashworth in Holy Innocents Church, Fallowfield in 1907. Edmund was a director of Messrs Adam Ashworth and Sons, felt hat manufacturers based in Fernhill, Bury. He was also a Captain in the

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CASES TREATED IN THE HOSPITAL DURING 1914.

Number of Cases (Medical and Surgical) - 174.

SURGICAL.

	<i>No. of Cases</i>	<i>Died</i>
Abscess of body	1	2
" upper extremity	12	0
" lower extremity	2	0
Adenitis	4	0
Arthritis (Tubercular)	2	2
Appendicitis	1	0
Bed sores	1	1
Burns and Scalds	5	0
Carcinoma	2	0
Cysts	2	0
Carbuncle	1	0
Dislocation	1	0
Empyema	1	0
Endometritis	1	0
Fistula	2	0
Fracture—upper extremity	4	0
" lower extremity	12	0
" pelvis	1	0
Hæmorrhoids	3	0
Injury—head and neck	10	1
" upper extremity	13	1
" lower extremity	2	0
Phimosi	23	0
Tonsils and Adenoids (enlarged)	30	0
Spinal Caries	1	0
Ulcer of leg	1	0
Vaginitis	2	0
Minor Cases	8	0

MEDICAL.

Ascites	1	0
Carcinoma (Liver)	1	1
Cardiac disease	4	0
Cerebral Hæmorrhage	1	0
Colitis	2	1
Chorea	1	0
Dyspepsia	1	0
Diabetes	1	0
Gastritis	1	0



Territorial Force of the Lancashire Fusiliers. The couple eventually settled in Plant House, Holcombe, where Leonie was involved in the Ramsbottom Girl Guide movement. On December 1914 at Holcombe Emmanuel Church, Leonie gave a presentation with a lantern show conveying the plight of The Belgian Nation. A large congregation witnessed her impassioned plea. With the start of war, Leonie volunteered as an interpreter for the Belgians who fled to Bury. The Relief Fund helped house and support refugees in Ramsbottom. Captain Ashworth, a member of the 1/5th Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers Territorial Force since 1908, was sent to Egypt and from there to Gallipoli. Leonie courageously made her own way to Egypt where she volunteered to help nurse the troops evacuated from Gallipoli and began work at San Stefano Military Hospital, Alexandria. When the Lancashire Fusiliers were sent to the Dardanelles, Leonie helped Mrs Douglas (wife of Major General Douglas) set up a convalescent hospital for their wounded. An indication of the kind of person she was is revealed in a letter she wrote to her sister-in-law, Sally, on 16th May 1915 where she states how wretched she is at seeing the conditions of the wounded soldiers and how, so short of nurses were they that she - with only first aid and sick nursing certificates - was in charge of a ward of eighty soldiers. She was so overwhelmed the first night she was on duty by the sight and sound of the badly wounded men - some delirious - that she thought she might run away but true to character, she wrote, "I put myself together and overcame the feeling and now I feel almost a seasoned nurse. I really must do all I can and then it eases my troubled mind besides were Edmund wounded I feel sure they would transfer me



to his hospital.” Her love for her husband is also illustrated, "I hope and pray that all the other officers are still alright especially my boy. How I love him and how I wish I could have spared him the horrors and privations of the battlefield." In her letters home she would enquire about the Belgian people she knew in the area. She was highly regarded by the Belgian refugees she had come to know and help. In their tribute, published in *The Lancashire Fusiliers Annual 1914-1915*, Leonie was described as “A NOBLE WOMAN.” The article states, “From the day of their (the refugees) arrival till she left for Egypt she devoted herself to them; speaking Flemish and French she quickly gained their hearts and they all felt for her genuine love and devotion. Never was love more deservedly bestowed; she not only gave time and labour freely, but she helped them with a tact and delicacy that made them idolise her. To see her flitting from cottage to cottage with bright eager eyes, observant of everything, her arms laden with numerous packages was a joy to the beholder.” The concluding comment from the refugees was, “We do so miss her because she was always laughing.”

Sadly, while working with Mrs Douglas, Leonie contracted typhoid, which was rife among the troops, and died on July 23rd. 1915 in the Deaconess’ Hospital where she was being treated. *The Manchester Evening News* published her obituary on July 26th.1915. *The Bury Times* published an obituary in its 28th July 1915 edition and a memorial service was held at Holcombe Emmanuel Church on October 3rd. Her name is inscribed on the lych gate at the Church. Sally called her daughter Margaret Leonie. Captain Ashworth survived the war and married Beatrice Gardner (a war



widow with two children) in 1916. Beatrice's husband Robert had been killed at Ypres, Belgium in May 1915. Edmund died in Windermere in 1944

Kathleen Husband and Anne Shortt 2014.

THE ZEPPELIN RAID ON THE ROSSENDALE VALLEY AND BOLTON 1916

Most of the following account of the zeppelin attack on our area relies so heavily on the book "Zeppelins Over Lancashire" that we decided to contact its author, Peter J C Smith about using an extract from his book. He kindly agreed, subject to it being made clear that the account was written in 1991 and that therefore references to residual damage resulting from the raid and to people then alive may now be out of date.

The first of the zeppelin raids on England had taken place a few days after they had been sanctioned by the Kaiser, apparently after some hesitation. These airships had already been represented in the British press as huge and menacing with blurred photographs and imaginative artists' impressions. They could carry a significant bomb load and to begin with they could fly at a higher altitude than could be reached by defending aircraft or anti-aircraft fire. However, flying conditions (weather and darkness) made bombing accuracy difficult and bombs could be dropped miles off target. Pin-point accuracy to hit military targets was impossible and civilian casualties made the zeppelins objects of hatred. In Lancashire rumours of local night

flights by zeppelins were being widely circulated before Monday 25th September 1916 when one of a raiding force of seven zeppelins dropped incendiary and explosive bombs in the Rossendale Valley. Luftschiffe 21(L21) commanded by Oberleutenant Kurt Frankenburg was 179 metres long and 18.9 metres in diameter with a maximum speed of 58mph. It appeared at 11.55pm over Bacup where it hovered with its engines idling before heading down the valley. Just after passing over Seat Naze at Height Side House, Newchurch the first bomb was dropped. It was an incendiary but it did not ignite and a special constable carried it to Cloughfold. Then, after travelling with it by tram, he carried it into the hands of the police at Rawtenstall. (The actual incendiary can be seen on exhibition at Rossendale Museum.) By 12.05am the zeppelin had passed over Rawtenstall, Irwell Vale, Ewood Bridge and Lumb and a dozen more bombs had been dropped. Most were explosive bombs and a few caused large craters. On the East Lancashire Railway a section of rail was blown out. There was also damage to windows and doors of six cottages above the level crossing at Hardsough Lane.

Extract from *Zeppelins in Lancashire*:

Next it was the turn of Holcombe, which lay in the path of the airship, and here five explosive bombs fell in quick succession. Two fell in a field beside the village school; one of these toppled the wall beside a footpath opposite the northern gable end and a hole was knocked right through the six-inch stone wall of the school. Pitting marks caused by bomb splinters and flying debris may still be traced. Amongst the relics held by the school is a stuffed thrush in a glass case. This once had a caption which read, "The only casualty of the air raid in Holcombe". The truth is not quite so simple, for a poultry run was obliterated when another bomb exploded in a sloping field above the school (between it and Moor Road), while a further missile cratered the roadway between what is now the Shoulder of Mutton pub car park and the building opposite, on which many pitting marks can still be seen. In 1916 this building was the village post office, and according to the Manchester Evening News for 25th September 1954, "When zeppelin bombs fell on the village of Holcombe in 1916 and damaged the post office Mrs Elizabeth Hoyle, the post- mistress, carried on business in a nearby cottage" (in Cross Lane). Mrs Hoyle suffered a cut from flying glass. Mrs Bessie Hall, aged 95, who still lives in the village, was one of the residents of the Shoulder of Mutton, then a farm and country inn known as the Lower House. Such was the concussion that she remembers being "blown" out of bed and recalls the damage done to the property. Its shippon and a barn stood on the present car park site and these were substantially damaged. Fortunately, however, the twelve cows normally kept there were out in a lower field but naturally very disturbed. The inn suffered the loss of twenty

windows shattered and its heavy front door was broken in half. Frightened villagers took cover in the pub's cellars - perhaps a little stimulant for the shock was not considered out of place! Three of the bombs exploded within a short distance of Holcombe Church, the clock of which was stopped and some of the windows were broken by blast. The exact position of the fifth explosive bomb remains untraced. Mr R Hayhurst, although only a child of nine at the time, remembers that the school was moved to Dundee Congregational Church, ten or fifteen minutes walk away, pending repairs to the building, for something over six months. He recalls earning a few coppers for going down the hill to David Ross & Co, plumbers, in Ramsbottom to buy gas mantles to replace those broken in some of the damaged cottages. He also well remembers the occupier of Higher Barn Farm, Mr Jack Trippier, offering the local boys some payment for helping to fill in the craters on his land, the meadow beside the school. However, this was never paid and, with a chuckle, Mr Hayhurst adds that it "is not likely to be paid now since Jack Trippier died forty years ago". He said that the story went around the village that "the zepps always returned the next night," which kept a few folks awake! Local reports say that Frankenburg circled in the Holcombe-Ramsbottom area and the Borough Surveyor recorded in his diary that the raid lasted from 12.05 to 12.35am. He ordered his men to fill up the "hole made by the bomb dropped at the junction of Helmsore Road and the road leading to Holcombe Church" (the one opposite the pub car-park), "which hole was about 12 feet wide and 7 feet deep". He advised the postal engineer at Bury of wires down in Holcombe village. Further evidence that L21 circled during this time is the positioning of the next two explosive bombs which fell in Ramsbottom. One of them fell on Giles Taylor's mineral water works in Regent Street, where it damaged machinery and wrecked the firm's two motor lorries. A timber roof joist was torn from the building and hurled for 35 yards, landing upright in a field. The other bomb blew a crater in a meadow between Victoria Street and Tanners Street. Adjoining cottages had windows broken, doors burst in and slates blown off, but luckily nobody was hurt.

One consequence of this raid was a resolution passed by the Streets and Buildings Committee of Ramsbottom Urban District Council on 26th October 1916: "That owing to the stringent restrictions due to the Lighting Regulations, instructions be given that the corners, kerbs and posts, where considered advisable, be whitened as a guide to the public". Lighting Restrictions enforcement was obviously a matter of priority following the bombing. Proceeding to Holcombe Brook and Greenmount, Frankenburg dropped two incendiary bombs at 12.45. One of these was ineffective but the other fell through the roof of a cottage in Holcombe Road, Greenmount, near to the Greenmount Congregational Church, the home of the Brooks family. It

missed by a couple of feet the bed in which two little girls were lying, one of them six, the other three years old, and set the cottage on fire, fortunately without causing casualties. Willing helpers quickly extinguished the flames and the cottage was saved.

Peter J C Smith 1991

By far the worst attack of the whole raid was on Bolton. The zeppelin had headed off towards the town causing damage to buildings and terror among residents nearby as it dropped more bombs on the way. The attack on Bolton itself began with two incendiaries which set fire to stables at the Corporation's Wellington Yard depot and the downstairs room of a house where the Fire Brigade, acting quickly, saved a woman and two children. Then five explosive bombs destroyed six terrace houses and damaged surrounding property. Thirteen people died, including two young children, and nine more people were seriously injured. Nineteen families were homeless and a horse in a stable nearby was killed by another bomb. There was one more fire and also an unexploded bomb in Queen's Park before the airship left Bolton at 1.05am, dropping its last bomb at Bolton Abbey, Yorkshire. It eventually left our shores just north of Whitby. By the time of this raid on Lancashire improved defensive measures were becoming effective against airships. (Nevertheless, in 1916 twenty three raids dropped 125 tons of bombs, killing 293 and injuring 691 people.) On 28th November 1916, Kurt Frankenburg and his L21 were shot down in flames off Lowestoft following another raid. On his way back to Germany he had escaped from two defending aircraft but was then successfully attacked by Royal Naval Air Service pilots.

MEMORIES OF THE ZEPPELIN ATTACK ON HOLCOMBE AND RAMSBOTTOM

In 2003, Mrs Alice O'Donnell (nee Hall) wrote:

I attended Hazlehurst School from the age of three (in 1912) and have many happy memories. My brothers Jack and Charlie and my sister Edna (all older than I am) attended Hazlehurst too but my oldest brother Dick went to Holcombe School as Hazlehurst wasn't built then.

During World War I we knitted scarves for the soldiers. I remember walking round the playground at break, knitting as we went. Later, I could knit socks, but Mother had to turn the heel. The zeppelins bombed Tagg Wood and we all hoped the school had been a target so we wouldn't have to go. During that night we were all together downstairs in our nightwear with blankets round us. When daylight

came we realised we were all covered in soot – the zeppelins must have swept our chimney!

George Ashworth writes:

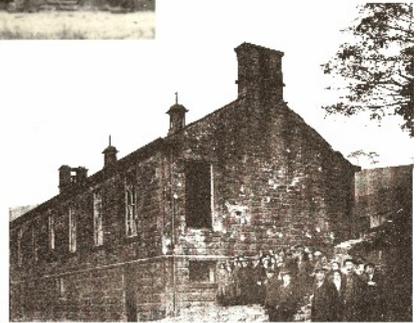
I was just turned fourteen years of age and living at 95, Callender Street. I slept in the back room along with my brother John who was two years older than myself. In daylight the view we had included the front and back of Rostron Road and also the front part of Albert Street and the gable end of Victoria Street. A familiar noise awakened us early that morning – so we imagined. The noise we thought we heard was known as the ‘night soil cart’: a cart fitted with an iron box and drawn by a big Shire horse accompanied by two men. (They used to go round at night time to empty the ‘nasty’ bins from the privvies. They made an awful row on the stone setts. (No man would do that sort of job these days.) John and I were certain that it was this noise that had wakened us until my father came from the front bedroom. He said that the, “BOOM .. BOOM.. BOOM,” we had heard must have been bombs.

It was a bright, clear night with the stars shining. My father took John and myself outdoors where there were many other people. The form of the zeppelin could be clearly seen. Nothing of this kind had been expected.

There was no panic. The rumours went about that the ‘zepp’ was trying to get to Manchester, and that it had been following a train that went into the tunnel under the Pennines and had remained there out of sight. It then became known that one of the earlier bombs had fallen near Regent Street and had hit the mineral water works of Giles Taylor. Many people went to look and found that some of the ‘machinery’ had been damaged and two lorries had been smashed with broken bottles and glass scattered all around. House windows etc were broken with slates off the roofs. However, no one at all had been hurt. In the Tanners area bombs had been dropped in several places, but only on the pastures. (For many, many years I noticed that a large pole was left there as a sort of marker.) Several bombs had been dropped in Holcombe Village and there was a large hole in the middle of the road near the present Shoulder of Mutton car park. The Post Office was in the building opposite and appeared to be severely damaged: windows and frames gone, slates off the roof and the face of the stone wall very much marked but the house was quickly repaired and in use again. It must have been the same bomb that damaged Holcombe Church clock and some of the church windows. Another bomb fell near the gable end of Holcombe Day School with many windows smashed and the walls marked. Tales about other problems soon spread: damage to a hen pen and walls knocked down



Holcombe Post Office 1916



Holcombe School 1916

SELECTED ENTRIES FROM THE HOLCOMBE SCHOOL LOG BOOK 1914 - 1917

1914 Oct 23rd

Holcombe School opened 1864

Jubilee 1864 – 1914

The Reunion of Old Scholars has been postponed owing to the war.

Oct 27 A list of Old Scholars on HMS

Roll of Honour

The following Old Scholars are serving their country:

Tom Barlow, Harry Smith, Ernest Hamer, James Livesey, Wm Metcalfe, Wm Unsworth, Joseph Brown, Harold Crawshaw, Fred Peters, Thomas Clayton, Saml Lawton, Thomas Schofield, Harold Diggle, Ralph Fleming, Harry Coalby, Thomas Burton, Wm Cookson, Harry Lodge, Thos Haworth, Thomas Platt, William Jones, Frank Duckworth, Joseph Platt, Alec Brown, Thos Loughlin, Jack Ramsbottom, Harold Duckworth, Walter Brooks, Ernest Collinge, George Howarth, Herbert Stansfield, Richd Hargreaves, Allan Ashworth, Jack Schofield, Malcolm Stead, Richard Raynerd, Garnett Booth, Thomas Coalby

1915 Christmas presents have been sent to those whose names are on the *Roll of Honour* subscribed for by the scholars and villagers.

1916 Feb 15th **The temperature of the school for some time has been much below the normal. It is said to be the low heating power of the coke due to war purposes.**

May 15th Mr H Foster, Headmaster, June 25th 1877, passed away May 13th 1916

Sept 4th School reopened after midsummer holidays. 77 children present.

Admitted 3 children. Staff: M Lowe 1st class – Stds !V – VII
F Birtwistle 2nd class – Stds I – III G Waite 3rd class – Infants

Sept 8th Children went on the moor this afternoon for organised games – football & rounders – upper dept, singing & ring game - Infants

Sept 26th During the night, Enemy Aircraft dropped three bombs in the neighbourhood of the school, making a hole in the north gable end, and breaking nearly all the window frames. The pictures were not damaged, and the clock was still going; but it was impossible to work in the school. All the staff and over 50 children were present at 9am; and the scholars were dismissed until further orders. Much damage has been done to the windows in the district, but only one woman has been slightly injured.

Sept 27-29th School closed

Oct 2nd School closed for the usual weekend holiday.

Oct 3rd Teachers and children assembled at Holcombe School at 8.50am, collected necessary apparatus, and, after prayers proceeded to Dundee Congregational School, which has been kindly lent by the Trustees for use as temporary premises until Holcombe School has been repaired. 63 children present am 73 present pm Several children absent, away from home, munitions workers' holiday

Oct 4th Dr Brook and Nurse Dickenson came to school to see if any of the children were suffering from shock to nerves. Have not noticed any, though some children naturally are excited in fresh rooms in unusual conditions. Miss Hewitt, HMI, Mr Broome, HMI and the Rector came in school, to inspect the premises; they considered them quit satisfactory.

Oct 6th The Rector spoke to the children about the National Mission, 9 – 9.30am

Oct 10th Closed school this afternoon for the rest of the week, as the premises are required by the Dundee Congregation for a "Café".

Oct 16th Re-opened school, 8.50am. All the staff present.

1917 Jan 8th Re-opened school after the Christmas Holidays:- all the staff present. Miss Birtwistle returned today after an absence of three weeks, owing to illness.

Jan 10th The Revd H Dowsett, Rector of Holcombe & Correspondent of this school 1872 – 14 died at Southport today.

Jan 12th A very poor attendance this week. Heavy fall of snow makes walking difficult.

Jan 19th Nine children have been absent during the last fortnight, - suffering from chickenpox.

Jan 29th Two more cases of chickenpox have developed over the weekend.

Jan 31st Miss Waite absent this morning, - ill. Miss Waite came to school this afternoon after half-a-day's absence

Feb 5th A heavy fall of snow during the weekend has made walking very difficult, & as many children are suffering from colds, the attendance is very poor:- 40 present out of 63 in the mixed dept., 7 in the Infants' Dept: out of 27

The Registers were not marked.

Drill takes place frequently;- temp: 9.30am 45° in each room, 10am 50°

Feb 8th

Miss Birtwistle absent this morning owing to sickness: Miss Waite took Stds II & III & monitresses in charge of Std I and Infants; - some changes in Timetable in consequence.

Jan 8th Omission Holcombe School has had new windows put in;- the lowest pane opens, - ?hopper & the top one also: the school has been whitewashed, & some painting has been done, but the pointing is not completed: all other repairs necessitated by the visit of the Zeppelins have been completed.

LOCAL RESEARCH

The Heritage Society cannot offer a research service. The following could be approached:

Bury Archives, Moss Street, Bury, BL9 0DG email contact: archives@bury.gov.uk
or tel: **0161 253 6782**

Opening Hours Please note that the Archives are closed each day between 1pm and 2pm and that the latest time to produce records is 4.30pm (weekdays):

Tuesday	10am - 5pm	Wednesday	10am - 5pm
Thursday	10am - 5pm	Friday	10am - 5pm

Visitors are free to use finding aids, online archives resources or to speak to a member of staff but are advised to make an appointment if they wish to consult archive documents.

Collections held include records relating to local authorities, public bodies, schools, churches, businesses, trade unions, political parties, sports clubs, social organisations, family papers, deeds, maps and plans and indexes to local parish registers including Ramsbottom. Our catalogues are online at <http://archives.bury.gov.uk> as ‘Bury Archives Catalogue’. The Archive photograph collection can be browsed on the Bury Image Bank website at www.buryimagebank.org.uk. We run an enquiry service, offering 15 minutes staff time free. The Ramsbottom Heritage Society’s Collection, including photographs, is on permanent loan to Bury Archives.

Bury Local & Family History Service, Moss Street, Bury, BL9 0DR: information@bury.gov.uk or tel 0161 253 5871 has publications on local history, historical printed works of local interest such as trade directories, older OS maps for the whole of Bury MBC (including Ramsbottom), microfilmed copies of local newspapers, thematic collections of news cuttings worth pursuing for local biographies, census returns and parish registers (microfilm). Indexes for local church registers, including Ramsbottom are also held. A direct link to Bury Libraries catalogue (which lists local history items held in all the borough’s libraries) is at <http://library.bury.gov.uk> - follow ‘Bury Libraries Catalogue (Local Studies)’. Free access to the Ancestry and Find my Past databases is available in all Bury Council’s libraries. Please phone for details of other family history advice services.

Lancashire Family History and Heraldry Society; membership secretary Stephen Benson, 32, Slater Lane, Leyland, PR25 1TN, email: membership@lfhhs.org.uk. Membership entitles you to 4 magazine issues, an opportunity to publish your research queries and findings, and meetings each month with speakers at venues all over the county, including Bury and Rawtenstall. Also one branch in London. More information is available on www.lfhhs.org.uk.

Ramsbottom Library and Adult Learning Centre, Carr Street BL0 9AE

tel **0161 253 5352** (IT - tel **0161 253 5354**) email: Ramsbottom.lib@bury.gov.uk

The library boasts an IT suite, with a visually impaired and disabled friendly workstation, back copies of the *Ramsbottom Observer* 1890-1950 on film and a microfiche reader. Much of the Ramsbottom local collection of the late Rev R R Carmyllie, local census returns and several filing drawers of local news cuttings and booklets and Hume Elliot’s history are also available. Family history help sessions are held on the 3rd Monday of the month 1pm to 5pm and advice is available at other times by appointment.

Ramsbottom Heritage Society's
SUMMER WALKS PROGRAMME 2014

Guided walks

Led by volunteers with a particular interest in and knowledge of Ramsbottom and district.

2 – 3 hours in duration over distances between 3 to 5 miles. Taken at a leisurely pace, the walks are suitable for reasonably fit adults and children. Dogs on a lead are welcome.

We hope everyone will enjoy an afternoon out and benefit from the exercise and friendly company. Stout footwear and waterproof clothing is recommended. Please note that paths may be uneven.

Sunday 15th June *A Stroll Through the History of Stubbins*

Meet at the junction of Stubbins Street and Stubbins Vale Road at 2pm.
Leader – Barbara and Jon Williams

Sunday 20th July *The Pubs of Central Ramsbottom*

An historical, non-alcoholic amble. Meet at 2pm at the *Grant Arms*, Ramsbottom. Leader – Andrew Todd

Sunday 17th Aug *Ramsbottom Mill, the Largest Mill in the Irwell Valley*

Meet at Ramsbottom Station at 2pm. Leader – Kate Slingsby

Sunday 21st Sept *The History of Greenmount*

Meet at Greenmount Old School opposite The Bull's Head at 2pm
Leader – Christine Taylor

Sunday 19th Oct *Holcombe Down the Ages*

Meet at The Shoulder of Mutton car park at 2pm. Leader – John Ireland

More details on www.ramsbottomheritage.org.uk

or contact Kate on 01706 281998

Ramsbottom Heritage Gallery

A NEW exhibition in the Gallery,

Open to the public from 8th June 2014

RAMSBOTTOM'S



RESPONSE

WORLD WAR I EXHIBITION

Location: upstairs at Ramsbottom Library and Adult Learning Centre, Carr Street, Ramsbottom, BLO 9AE. Tel: 0161 253 5352

Gallery opening Times:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9.30am – 7.30pm

Saturday from 9.30am – 1pm

2nd Sunday in the month 12 noon - 3pm (side entrance only)

with extra displays and

Ramsbottom Heritage Society bookstall



Bury
COUNCIL