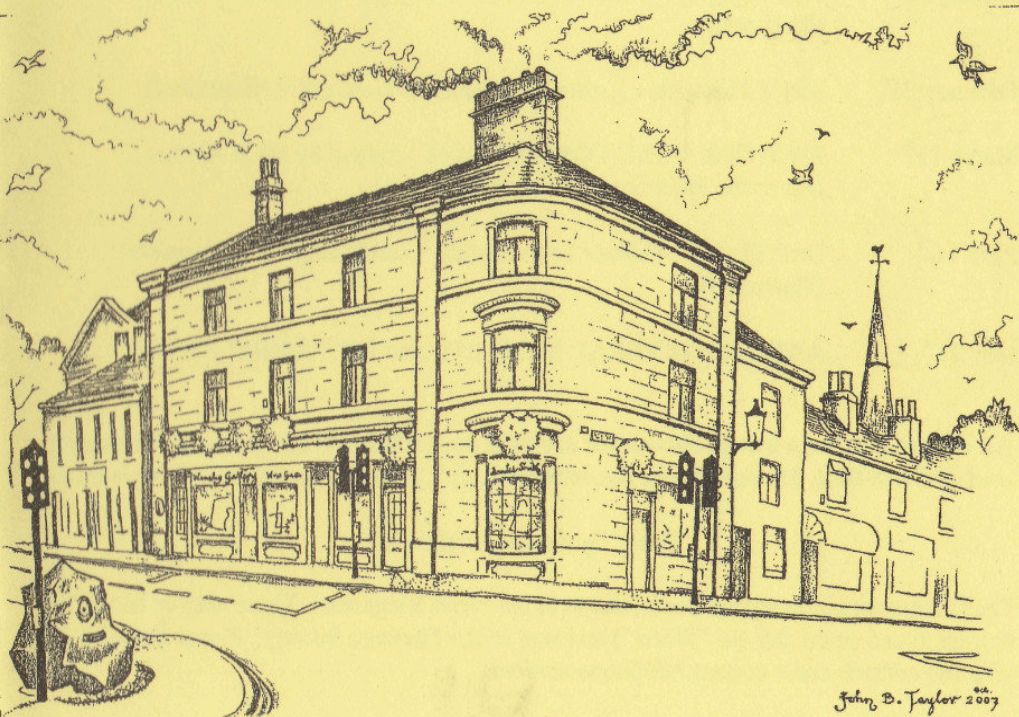


NEWS MAGAZINE

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**RAMSBOTTOM HERITAGE SOCIETY, C/O RAMSBOTTOM LIBRARY,
CARR STREET, RAMSBOTTOM, BURY, BL0 9AE
Contact number: 01706 82 7245**

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 2007-8

- November 21st Miss Margaret Curry – *Tales of Two Cities* – Manchester and Salford (illustrated talk)
- December 19th ★ Members' Night** – Christmas Festivities (★ Please note this new date)
- January 16th Mr J Doughty – *James Brindley, Millwright and Canal Engineer* (illustrated)
- February 21st Mrs K Fishwick – *Evolution of Mills in Lancashire* (illustrated)
- March 19th PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION – judged by Mr B Aldous
Where the Wild Garlic Grows (illustrated)
- April 16th Dr P Hindle – *William Yates and the County Maps of Lancashire* (illustrated)
- May 21st **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and MEMBERS' NIGHT**

All indoor meetings ~~except December~~ are held on the third Wednesday of the month in the Civic Hall, Market Place, Ramsbottom, at 7.30pm for 7.45pm. All welcome.

Entry by donation, please.

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

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Jonathan ALI

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Front cover: - *2 Market Place, Ramsbottom* (which was once the premises of
Ramsbottom Library) by John B TAYLOR. [See article "Memories of Lancashire
County Library Ramsbottom Branch"]

Centre pages :- *Mineral Water Manufacturers around Ramsbottom* by John
B TAYLOR

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

After the disappointment of continuing closure of the Heritage Centre - refurbishment is still awaited - a summer of activity and involvement. Beginning with an invitation to the. Society to take part in the formal re-opening of the new Library building by mounting a display depicting the development of Ramsbottom during the last 200 or so years,. and introducing it to the Duchess of Gloucester, who performed the re-opening. The display certainly caught the attention of the Duchess. An honour for the Society, and sincere thanks to Janet SMITH, Display Organiser, for having put it together. This prestigious event was followed almost immediately by the Community Dig at the site of the former Fulling Mill at Magbrook, Ramsbottom, in which yours truly, several members, and soon to be members, took part. My physical input was minimal by comparison with some others, but I found it hard work; the end result was quite satisfying, with stone walls, floors, engine beds, and waterways, revealed for the first time in many decades, and some artifacts found. Thanks to Kate SLINGSBY for having organised the dig. The endeavours of those who took part have been preserved for posterity by way of a CD, and the findings of the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit are eagerly awaited.

Whilst all that was going on, arrangements for the 20th Anniversary event were being finalised; held on 15th July at Ramsbottom Civic Hall, it provided a shop window for the activities of the Society and. friends. The event, opened by our Mayor Cllr. Dr. and

Mrs. CHOUDHARY, was a success in maintaining our profile, and sincere thanks go to the team of members and friends who organised it and took part.

At the end of July, unveiling of the Society's second Blue Plaque took place, at the Grant Arms Hotel in Ramsbottom's Market Place, in commemoration of William and Grace GRANT and their family, (see article in this issue of the news magazine.) whose residence it was in early 19th century, and whose legacy remains very much with us today, thanks to Brenda RICHARDS for arranging the event. Sincere thank also to all, those members un-named, who have worked hard during the year to maintain the profile of the Society. After all the activity, time for an autumn break and the opportunity to prepare for the year ahead. Good wishes to everyone for a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Tony Murphy

OBITUARIES

On 1st July, Jenny JOHNS died, in hospital following a stroke. Jenny was born on 6th January 1916, at 152 Bolton Street, Ramsbottom, next to DAWSON's sweet shop, adjacent to the Major Hotel; she was schooled at St Andrew's, leaving at age 14 to work at Holme Mill as a weaver. At age 21 Jenny and her family moved to 80 Bolton Road West, where she lived for the rest of her life. During WW2, Jenny was employed in munitions manufacture, at a Royal Ordnance factory in Radcliffe, leaving in 1945 to become a wire winder at F.D. Sims, where she remained until retirement, gaining a long service gold watch along the way. In 1945 Jenny joined the Labour party, remaining a staunch and active supporter. In 1976, following retirement, she became actively involved with Age Concern, a commitment maintained for many years, receiving a long service certificate in 1996. Jenny was also a long-serving member of the Heritage Society, active as a supporter at the Heritage Centre, and attending open meetings until the end; she will be remembered for her forthright good humour, enthusiastic participation in activities, and will be very much missed by many. She had lived a full and active life, and her recollections of war time, and post war, work, can be found in Society News Magazines of Autumn 2005, and Spring 2006. Jenny worshipped initially at the Primitive Methodist Chapel, Bolton Street, on its closure at the Presbyterian Chapel, Dundee Lane, on its closure at Dundee United Reform Church, Ramsbottom, where her funeral service was held on 11th July 2007

Tony Murphy

In July also, we learned of the death, in Morecambe, of Thomas (Tom) JACKSON, born on 20th September 1914 in Victoria Street, Ramsbottom. Schooled latterly at Haslingden Grammar, he began working life at a gents' outfitters on Bridge Street. Marrying shortly before the outbreak of WW2, his war years were spent as a radio operator in the Royal Corps of Signals. After the war, he, with wife and by then, son, went to live in Edenfield, when Tom joined his father in the family grocery business, located at 336 Bolton Road West, where he worked until retirement. From the 1930's

through until the 1950's Tom had an association with RADOS, playing lead roles in many productions, particularly musical and comedy. He also had long and active involvement with Freemasonry, being honoured in 2003 upon achieving 50 years of service, Tom also found time to support the Heritage Society, maintaining membership until the end, over the years providing information about RADOS activities, and local tradespeople, donating several items, including 'O'wd Bassets' bell, and photograph, together with RADOS material. Tom's funeral was held in Morecambe late in 2006.

Tony Murphy

In October we learned of the death of Gladys HAMER, following a short illness. Gladys, nee GREENHALGH, was born on the 2nd October 1915 and brought up on Callender Street, Ramsbottom. The family later moved to Bolton Road West and then to Eliza Street. She attended Park Congregational Church until her marriage to John HAMER; when she became a member of Ramsbottom Wesleyan Methodist Church, now Christ Church (Baptist/Methodist). She owned a baker's shop in Bridge Street (now part of the Evangelical Church) and later worked in the Manchester office of the HAMER family business, as well as baking for parties and weddings etc. For thirty three years she held office on the Ramsbottom and Tottington Blind Persons' Welfare Committee (*see RHS News Magazine Number 32 - Editor*). She was the cook for the weekly Ramsbottom Old People's Luncheon Club at the Civic Hall for a period and was involved with the RNLI and the Inner Wheel, as well as being a very active member of Christ Church (taking command of the kitchen right up to the beginning of her last illness a short while ago) holding various offices in the Church. The highlight of her last year was being invited to attend the official opening of Ramsbottom Library by the Duchess of Gloucester. Gladys was the longest living library member, having joined in, 1928. She was a long serving member of the Heritage Society, a helper at the Centre, and a fount of knowledge about mid c20th Ramsbottom.

Also in October, we heard of the death of John HOWARTH. Born at Radcliffe in 1925, John was an early supporter of our Society, attending meetings, and notably helping his son Bob to attach the *Nuttall Park* opening plaque and *Strang Streetsign* to the Centre's wall! A motor mechanic by trade, he was an engineer in the Royal Navy during World War II, rising to the rank of Chief Petty Officer, engine room. He was on a landing craft on D Day. His naval service led to a lifetime's interest in the Sea Cadets, being involved with groups at Blackburn, Burnley and Bury. From 1957 he ran a newsagents on Bacup Road, Rawtenstall, before returning to being a motor mechanic in 1963, when he came to Ramsbottom with wife and son to work at Station Garage on Railway Street. He later worked at Sam HEYWOOD's garage (later Geoff DUTTON's), which formerly occupied the site where the new three-storey house stands by the *Hare and Hounds* at Holcombe Brook. A generation of us will remember him teaching car maintenance evening classes at the Technical College, once on Stubbins Lane, John

was a group scout leader at St Andrew's, and a sidesman. He lived at Cemetery Road from his arrival in the town in 1963 until his death in October of this year.

Andrew A Todd

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION 2006

The photographs for the 2006 Competition were judged in March 2007 and the winner of the Dickensian Trophy was Linda de RUIJTER with her photograph of the "Rear of Callendar Street" in the Events & Daily Life category.

Buildings - First - Linda de RUIJTER

Events & Daily Life - First - Linda de RUIJTER

Highly commended - Alan WILKS & Christine MORRIS

Town & Country - First - Jennifer Beech

Highly Commended - Jennifer BEECH & John LEYLAND

Themes - First - Ian SMITH

Thanks to all who entered the competition, and to the organiser(s). Congratulations to all the Prize Winners.

CONSERVATION WORKING GROUP

We have had a busy summer, which has resulted in plenty of publicity for the Heritage Society in the local press. Happily, some of the projects, which were pending in the previous magazine report, have now been completed.

Blue Plaque on Grant's Arms Hotel

In the last magazine I mentioned that we had put up the Society's first blue plaque. Well, like buses, when they finally come along, plaques don't come alone. The second plaque now adorns the front of the Grant's Arms Hotel to commemorate William and Grace GRANT and their family who lived there. Sheila MAGNALL and Yvonne WRIGHT, Bury councillors were involved in the unveiling, Malcolm WAGNER of the Grants Arms kindly provided light refreshments and RICHARDS and RICHARDS Construction again very generously gave their time and erect the plaque without charging us.

Post Boxes

I'm sure, you will have noticed how splendid the post boxes in Ramsbottom and Edenfield now look, Graham TWIDALE painted the sovereigns crest and other wording in gold, to celebrate the Society's 20th Anniversary, and both he and the boxes appeared in the local papers.

Double Yellow Lines

It was obviously too soon to pat ourselves on the back about getting the council to paint the double yellow lines which should be used for the conservation area (ie. primrose in colour and only 50mm wide). Almost as soon as we went to print, most of the other double yellow lines in the centre of town were repainted incorrectly and although the council promised to remove and correct them, this has not been done.

Irwell Bridge Mill

You may have noticed the appalling state of the Irwell Bridge Mill now the present owner has removed most of the roof. Since this building is in the conservation area, this should not have been done without council permission, unless he was planning to replace the roof later. However a planning application was submitted to increase the height of the building to five storeys in places and to completely overwhelm the original facade with a very modern design. It would have contained 12 apartments, as well as offices and possibly workshops. You may remember that in January 2006 the chairman of a public inquiry refused a previous plan to demolish the mill because of its visual enhancement of the traditional character of the town and because the planned apartments would have limited the employment opportunities in what is an industrial area. This year's planning application has now also been refused, partly because of the style of the building, but mainly because the council are not allowing residential accommodation in this industrial area.

Carr Bank Lodge

There are only two remaining lodge houses in Ramsbottom and planning applications were submitted to extend each of these buildings. The application to redevelop Carr Bank Lodge into a restaurant was passed and sadly this will involve some changes to this historic building,

Nuttall Park

Nuttall Park was given to the public by Lt Colonel PORRITT in 1928 and the Ramsbottom Heritage Society will be well represented at the 80th anniversary celebration next year. Brenda RICHARDS is preparing an interpretation board of the history of the Nuttall Hall and has other plans to make the public aware of the history of the park.

Arguably the greatest success since the last report has been the dig at Kibboth Crew, but this will not be dealt with here, as it is contained in a separate report.

The number of people in the conservation group continues to increase. Some people just come along on a "one off" visit, whilst others have joined and are getting involved with the work. If you are interested to see what we do you would be welcome to come along - just let me know so that I can make sure we have enough chairs !

We meet at 7.30 on the first Monday of the month Kate Slingsby

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG AT KIBBOTH CREW

The Ramsbottom Heritage Society's first dig took place during three weeks in April and May when, luckily, we had the longest spell of dry weather this year. Professional archaeologists from The University of Manchester Archaeology Unit (UMAU) supervised local volunteers, all novices, who were very keen and who worked with great enthusiasm. There were a total of 39 volunteers only 9 of whom were already members of the heritage society.

The dig site is in the tiny valley or clough at Kibboth Crew and can be reached from the road, which runs through the car park of the Old Mill Hotel, off Springwood Street. The dig is on private land owned by John and Gill WILD and cannot be accessed directly, however you can get an excellent view of it from the public right of way which starts just through the gates of Top Wood Farm (Rath Carrig) and runs up hill past the site.

At the outset we knew that the building we were excavating was a fulling mill and that one had existed on the site as early as 1710. Before the dig began a stone arch, a wheel pit and a few walls could already be seen, however, we were amazed at the structures, which gradually emerged. We were also fascinated when later research showed that a mill on Kibboth Crew dated back another hundred years.

Before the volunteers were allowed to start, the university archaeologists spent three days setting up the site. During that time they fenced off the area and any hazards such as the wheel pit, and also provided first aid facilities and a portaloos. They used a minidigger to remove the top soil, so that the outlines of some of the structures were partly visible when we began. Having been taught the correct way to use mattocks and trowels, and having been provided with kneeling pads and hard hats where necessary, we set to work. Towards the end of the dig Mike NEVELL, Director of UMAU and Norman REDHEAD, Assistant County Archaeologist from Greater Manchester visited the site to interpret what had been found.

Structures excavated on the site

A rectangular room was excavated, the floor of which consisted of two huge flags on which was lying a thick square stone several feet across. The purpose of this room was not understood even by the experts, nor was that of the large stone arch which had been visible from the outset. Whilst many of us had assumed that this was a doorway, none of the archaeologists agreed as it has no holes for fixing bolts. Beside the arch were large stone engine mountings made of dressed stone similar to the arch itself. Whilst it is not known exactly when steam engines were installed in this water-powered mill, the fact that the engine beds were made of stone not steel, apparently indicates that this occurred at quite an early date. Steam engines require a boiler and a brick lined boiler house was found on the south east corner of the site. Whilst we, the volunteers had very little idea, of what to expect, the archaeologists were aware that there would have been culverts to carry water under the floor of the mill and when the rectangular room had been fully excavated, the culvert from the wheel pit was found beneath it. However it was not so easy to find the by-wash through which water would have been diverted when the wheel was not in use. It was only after several flags in the floor of the mill had been lifted, that the by-wash was found running underneath the engine beds. There was nothing left of the fulling stocks, which may have been removed when the mill eventually closed, the only evidence of machinery being a line shafting box, through which a drift shaft would have run. Strange ceramic washer-like items were

also found along with various pieces of pottery, the earliest of which, surprisingly, dated back to the middle 1600s.

History of the mill

A series of maps showed that the mill we were excavating was built sometime around 1850 and documents indicated that it had been closed before 1871. At the start of the dig, John WILD, the landowner told us there was a *story of* a dam burst in which a woman had been killed. Certainly a huge wedge-shaped breach in the dam, which supplied our mill, is clearly visible and the stream is now diverted across the site through a brick culvert and a cast iron pipe. A series of maps indicated a 17 year period during which the burst must have occurred and one of the dig volunteers then found contemporary newspaper accounts of the catastrophe. It was at 5:15 am on Friday 16th March 1894 that the occupants of two cottages below our dig site were awakened as water demolished our old mill building (then empty) and then flooded down through their homes. William TAYLOR made valiant efforts to save Mary HILL who was already suffering from heart failure and consumption and who had recently had a stroke. TAYLOR, with the fingers of one hand trapped in the front door, held onto to Mary with his other arm until the water level appeared to have gone down. Then, as he let go of her, the back door burst in and Mary was swept to her death,

Both maps and documents show that there had been at least one earlier building on the site and some evidence of the mill shown on the 1842 tithe map was uncovered.

Before the dig Dr Mike NEVELL director of UMAU told us that 1710 was very early date for a fulling mill in this area. Since then the documentary research has continued and we now know that a fulling mill on the site existed in 1628 and Mike NEVELL's comment was "that is extraordinary"

The dig has increased our knowledge in some important ways. We have found structures in the mill, the purpose of which is not yet known, but which we are still working to interpret, and we now know there was industry in the area nearly 400 years ago. The dig was also a success because the volunteers had such a fascinating experience and because it made so many new people aware of the Ramsbottom. Heritage Society. . Kate Slingsby [*Kate included a photograph and plans of the dig, unfortunately lack of space means these are not in this issue of the magazine, we hope that they will be available on the Society's web-site. -Editor.*]

EXTREME WEATHER: FLOODS IN THE RAMSBOTTOM AREA

Summer 2007 rainfall levels in parts of England (records of 4.1 inches in 24 hours in June at Fylingdales, Yorkshire and 4.8 inches on the .20th July at Pershore, Worcestershire) may have strengthened the credibility of climate change theories and placed these ideas at the centre of mainstream politics but the Ramsbottom area seems to have remained flood-free, apart from a roadway in Summerseat. Following major work on flood defences, especially in the year 2000, the regular floods which used to

affect Summerseat and areas around Strongstry, Chatterton, Stubbins and Kenyon Street, Ramsbottom are hopefully in the past.

An inscription on a stone obelisk standing on a stepped plinth behind the aft gallery- at Peel Park, Salford, shows that on Friday, 16th November 1865 the River Irwell flooded in that area to a height of eight feet six inches. Locally a Ramsbottom newspaper correspondent reports a "great flood" on that day:

In consequence of the continual rain the River Irwell has become so much swollen during the night that on Friday morning it was found that a great portion of land and road between Ramsbottom and Stubbins was completely flooded, preventing a great many people from getting to their various places of work. The water has also got into several of the houses, the inmates of which have been compelled to take refuge in their upper apartments. Many of the mills have also been compelled to stop work, the water having got into the lower rooms, among the machinery etc; and it is feared that considerable damage will be the result, as the water has now spread more and is rising a great deal higher than can be remembered for a great many years.'

Cliff GASKELL recalls a disaster at Brooksbottle when both the railway bridge and the timber bridge to the Print and Dye works were swept away.² It was" December 1936 when this storm affected all parts of Rossendale after a week of fogs, frost., snow and gales which culminated in over twelve hours of torrential rain. A full account appeared in the press:

RAMSBOTTOM BADLY HIT BY MONDAY'S FLOOD

Much damage caused in local cotton Wills - Many people temporarily out of work - Over 200 houses flooded - On Monday the River Irwell rose to an unprecedented height, and overflowed its banks for miles between Rawtenstall, Ramsbottom and Bury, with the result that most of the low-lying land was inundated and many roads were impassable, including the one to Lumb (Edenfield) and that to Strongstry, as well as a stretch of Stubbins Lane. At the last named place the water was 4 or 5 feet deep.... -Kenyon Street suffered as much as any part of the area. Here there are several mills and works and all, I believe, closed down soon after the rushing waters of the swollen swell began to flow over the river wall which flanks the yards of one or two of the works at the farthest end from Peel Bridge. - Gradually Kenyon Street became a miniature lake -and practically every house from one end of this long street to the other besides houses in abutting streets (Hardy Street, Mill Street, Moore Street, Harrison Street and River Street) was flooded. Householders -had to beat a hasty retreat to upstairs rooms as the water rose to a depth of anything from two to four feet, in some instances to the windowsills. Some of the operatives from the mills, including women, had to wade

waist high through the water when they found themselves marooned on the mill premises, while others were rescued in horse-drawn carts... Lorries with the intention of bringing the marooned people from the works to the higher ground at the Peel Bridge end of Kenyon Street were affected by the height of the water and one had to be towed out before its load of survivors could steep e once more on to dry land. - Two of the houses in this area which suffered badly owing to being below the level of the street were those behind the Good Samaritan. In one known as number 6, tenanted by an aged couple (Mr and Mrs LOMAX) the water rose to the top bar of the fire grate in the kitchen, extinguishing the fire. In the tidy little front room the sewing machine was found floating about, while the settee and chairs were ruined by the murky waters which also damaged the sideboard,... - Shopkeepers in and around Kenyon Street report that there had been a brisk trade for brushes, mops and cleaning materials. Many people visited the shops for newspaper and boxes with which to light fires, as their supplies of firewood and paper were unusable. They asked, too, for cardboard boxes in which to put the contents of sodden drawers. From five o'clock until late at night on Monday, Kenyon Street and the other houses adjoining were a centre of activity as wives, assisted by their husbands and, families scrubbed their premises and carried their furniture outside into the breeze to dry.³

Industrial premises in Kenyon Street which were affected:

Irwell Manufacturing Company, known as STEADs (resumed work Tuesday noon)

Grove Towel Company (resumed Thursday)

Pemberton Manufacturing Company at Peel Bridge Mill

Field Mill Company - remembered by Tom BARRETT⁴. E

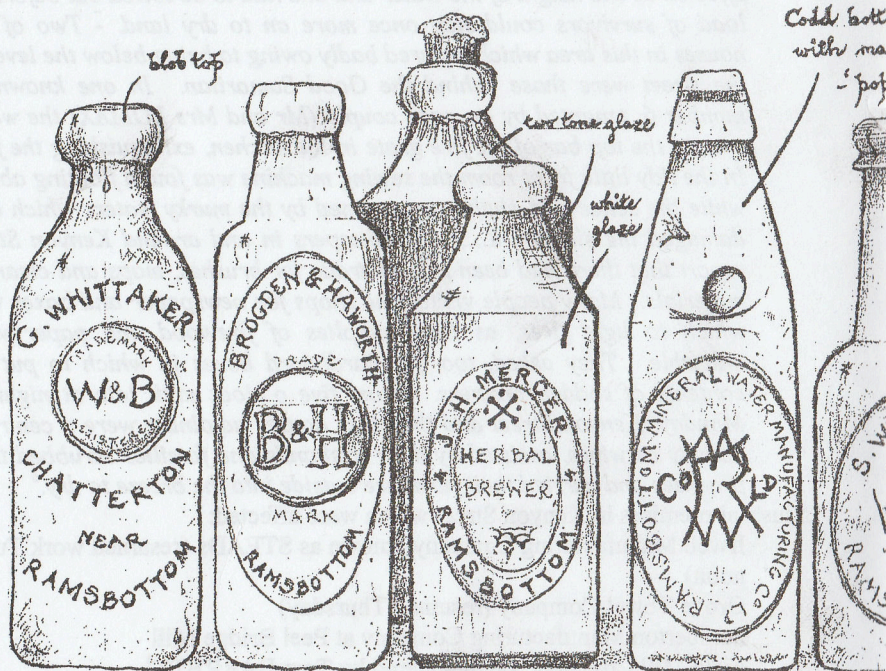
CUNLIFFE's Chemical Works

J KAY & Sons, Britannia Soap Works

The widespread flooding on that day affected about half the works in Ramsbottom altogether, including Holme Mill, Bolton Street Mill, and Square Bleachworks, and also other vulnerable places, especially around Stubbins, Strongstry, and Chatterton. Late on Monday afternoon at Irwell Vale the village was a hive of activity, 'every resident being busy with a broom, some being stockingless'. Part of several new extensions at AITKEN's Irwell Vale mill had been built over the River Ogden so water backed up because it could not pass in the space beneath the building. The weaving shed, big loom shed, warehouse, the doubling and winding departments and the offices were flooded. with seven electric motors inundated and a considerable amount of cloth and other mill. material damaged. About two hundred workers were laid off until Wednesday morning. CROMPTON's Paper Mill, Stubbins, was another works which closed down, temporarily while at nearby Stubbins Station people used ladders to access the

Mineral Water Manufacturers around

Based on work by Malcolm Starkie — in Rawtenstall Reg.



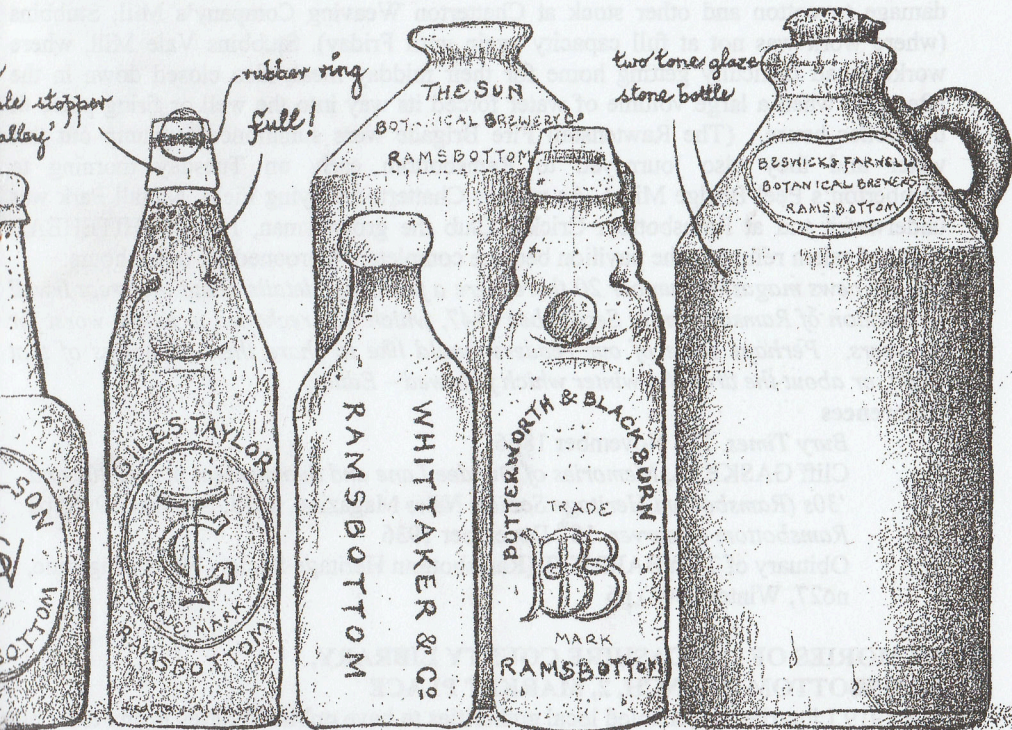
NAME...	George Whittaker	Brogden & Haworth	Joe Joseph H. Mercer	Ramsbottom Mineral	Samuel
MAKER...	Mineral water man. & farmer	Mineral water man. Ginger beer & Soda water man.	Herbalist Herbal Brewer 'Station Temperance Bar'	Water Man. Co. Ltd.	S. V. Beer
ADDRESS...	The Eaves, off Holcombe Rd., Chatterton.	34, Bolton St.	7, Bridge St. Church photo 'Around Bani'	Kay Brow — Barwood Lea flats	Rail
DATE	1883 ~	c 1880 ~	c 1901 - 1924	1892 - c 1913	c 18

Relation of Thos. Mercer,
Springbank Brewery,
Edingfield

d Ramsbottom

John B. Taylor 2007

Library



son,	Giles Taylor	Henry Whittaker	Thomas Albert Butterworth & Blackburn	William Beswick & Farnell
	Minerals, Cordials, Ginger beer makers,	Mineral water man.	Botanic beer man.	Botanical brewers
	Hazelhurst, Regent St.	Back Bolton St.	Chatterton, Spring St.	Rami
Hotel	192, Bolton Rd.			
	Geoffrey St.			
	1895 ~ 1960.	1876/1883 ~	~ 1913 ~	
	Is The Sun the Rising Sun near the Rose & Crown?			
				Also ~ medical herbalist
				William Howard 9, Bolton St.
				G. Hanson
				& others

platforms because the subway was underwater. The Bury Fire engine was brought in to pump water from the retort house at the Gas Works. (It stood just north of Stubbins railway bridge opposite the *Railway Hotel*, now closed.) There was considerable damage to cotton and other stock at Chatterton Weaving Company's Mill, Stubbins (where work was not at full capacity again until Friday). Stubbins Vale Mill, where workers had difficulty getting home for their midday meal, also closed down in the afternoon when a large volume of water forced its way into the well or firing place of the boiler, house. (The Rawtenstall Fire Brigade were summoned to pump out this water and they also journeyed to Ramsbottom early on Tuesday morning to Pemberton's Peel Bridge Mill.) As well as Chatterton Playing Field, Nuttall Park was underwater and at Ramsbottom Cricket Club the groundsman, Harry WHITEHEAD who had taken refuge in the pavilion became completely marooned for a few hours. *(In our news magazine number 20 there were a few basic details about the great Irwell inundation of Ramsbottom in September 1947, which was reckoned to be the worst for 65 years. Perhaps some of our readers would like to share their memories of that event, or about the dreadful winter which followed - Editor)*

(References

- 1 *Bury Times*, 17th November 1866
- 2 Cliff GASKELL, *Memories of Dundee Lane and Summerseat in the '20s and '30s* (Ramsbottom Heritage Society News Magazine, no 13, Summer 1996) p3
- 3 *Ramsbottom Observer*, 18th December 1936
- 4 Obituary of Torn BARRETT (Ramsbottom Heritage Society News Magazine, no 27, Winter 2004) p6

MEMORIES OF LANCASHIRE COUNTY LIBRARY, RAMSBOTTOM BRANCH, 2, MARKET PLACE

The 1919 Libraries Act enabled local authorities to have public libraries in any town but it was not until 1925 that chairman of the town's urban district council, Councillor Daniel SHILTON, officially opened the voluntary service library in Market Place, Ramsbottom. Two years later a part time library was started and in 1937 we had a full time staff at the county branch library, as reported in the *Ramsbottom Observer* of 1st Dec 1950.

Mrs Mona HALL recalls the time when she worked in the library in the days when it occupied the premises at 2 Market Place, now part of Denise SMITH's lighting shop, on the corner of Bridge Street.

Her first job on leaving school in 1935, aged 1.6, had been on the cash desk at WEBSTER & PEACOCK's, high-class grocers, in Silver Street, Ramsbottom. Wanting a change she requested an application form from Lancashire County Council for a position at the library. Mona remembers being interviewed by the County Librarian, Mr IRWIN. There were three applicants and Mona was offered the job on the spot. Miss Clara P BATE, who had transferred from Wigan, was the branch

librarian in charge. Six years older than Mona, she was at first in digs with Mrs PEERS in Dundee Lane. Later she moved to a cottage in Square Street, next to what is now the Bury Hospice shop. The library Working hours were between 9 a.m. (Or possibly 9.30am) and 8pm every weekday and on Saturdays till lunchtime, evenings were particularly busy. Two members of staff were on duty but when one of them took her holidays the other had to manage on her own. Every Saturday at that time there were stalls on the Market Place. The library was just one room with the entrance door facing the Market Place. Library staff shared the upstairs toilet with Mr Harry LONSDALE, a professional photographer, who had his studio above the library.

Early in 1945 the town was in a state of great excitement due to the impending visit of the King and Queen. The ladies in the library watched with amusement as workmen took up the cobbles one day because the Royal couple were coming. *'We all thought it was a joke,'* Mona said. The workmen also built a platform in front of the *Grant Arms* for the occasion. On 8th March, the day of the visit, Mona wore her fur coat to work. Bought by her parents for her 21st birthday, she felt it made her look 'very posh'. On a photograph taken that day of the King and Queen meeting town folk and local dignitaries Mona and her colleagues can be seen looking out of the library window at the spectacle taking place in front of them. Among the main subjects of the picture are the Chairman of the RUDC Gilbert HOLT and behind him on the right is the Clerk to the Council Frank BELLIS. Further right are members of the WRVS and the vicar of St Philip's Church, Mr WYNNE with his daughter Joyce who had attended Haslingden Grammar School with Mona. She recalls the occasion as a very special day for Ramsbottom and says that it is wonderful to have the memories still to draw on. Mona regrets not taking the Library Association examinations but at the end of the War she resigned and took a job as Registrar with Lancashire County Council on the retirement of Mr James HORROCKS.

(Mona was married to Billy HALL in 1940, She spent 40 years in local government altogether and eventually became Deputy Superintendent registrar for Bury, With the boundary redrawn in 1974 Mona moved to the Bury office in Parsons Lane until, just before her 60th birthday 1979, she retired.)

Here are a few items which have been selected from Miss BATE's annual reports to the Library Committee while she was the librarian at 2, Market Place: 1939- 40 - with the outbreak of World War II the library stockroom was converted to an air raid shelter (*presumably the basement of 2, Market Place - Editor*) The

numbers of books totalled at Ramsbottom with 420 more housed at Summerseat, a village library centre (*which opened in 1938*).

A squadron of the Duke of Lancaster's Own Yeomanry stationed in the district had borrowed a set of Somerset MAUGHAN's plays.

1941-2 - There had been difficulty with transport for exchanging books at Summerseat.

1942-3 , arrangements had been made with the Railway Company for the carriage of three boxes of books to Summerseat periodically.

1943-4 - in March 1944 Turn Village Centre. (with 200 books in one cupboard) was opened in the Council School. The headmaster Mr PARKIN was the voluntary librarian.

1944-5 - when a second cupboard had been supplied to Turn, the stock was increased to 278. A branch at Harwood had 2,383 books.

1947-8 - Lt Col AT PORRITT, who was on the library committee, presented 28 volumes of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and an index for use at Harwood.

1950-1 - Tottington had its own library committee. Administrative details about Tottington appear in Miss BATE's reports,

The service point of Ramsbottom Library closed for eight days in November 1950 for the removal from 2, Market Place to Carr Street (*now Ramsbottom Heritage Centre - Editor*). This building is described as a new temporary structure, centrally heated with accommodation for about 7,500 books and consisting of a general room for all purposes, a small storeroom and a staff room.

In May a new village centre had been opened in Edenfield Community Centre.

Miss BATE continued her work as the librarian at Ramsbottom until she retired in March 1958. By that time details, of library service points mentioned in her reports included those at Egerton, Whitworth, Eagley, the Barlow Institute Centre at Edgworth and the National Children's Home Centre. She also reports on an extensive schools library service and the mobile library.

(See the front cover for drawing of 2 Market Place Ramsbottom in 2007.)

Linda de Ruijter and Janet Smith

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF WILLIAM GRANT (1733 -1817)

William and Grace GRANT and their family are commemorated by our second blue plaque which is now in place on the facade of the Grant Arms, Hotel. As the inscription says, before the present frontage was added in 1828 the rear part of the building was the GRANTS' home. Two of their sons, William and Daniel, are known as the Inspiration for Charles DICKENS' Cheeryble Brothers in "Nicholas Nickleby". On 15' March 2006 Blue Badge Guide, Pamela PARKINSON, gave a talk to the society entitled "Ramsbottom and the Grant Family". We are very grateful to her for letting us have a copy of it. In the introduction she mentioned that on Ramsbottom. Heritage Day 2006 she had watched the short film on the making of our video, "Ramsbottom's Heritage", and heard one of the contributors say that people had little knowledge of the Scottish Drovers. The following extracts give us a glimpse into the life of William GRANT (senior), who had been a Scottish Drover, and they also illustrate Pamela's belief that the qualities required of a drover, certainly helped the GRANTS to pursue their goals.

Let's consider what was happening in Scotland and England in the mid to late 18th century. In 1746 there was the Battle of Culloden which was the final blow for those who wanted to reinstate the Stuart family to the throne. After 1746 draconian measures were put in place to dismantle the clan system and enforce relative peace to the highlands. New roads were being constructed so that the military could move around this hostile country more easily. With these more peaceful times, the legitimate business of cattle dealing or droving gained importance and was to increase in value steadily through the later years of the 18th century.

In England there were outbreaks of cattle disease such as foot and mouth disease and we all know what that means to a livestock industry. The navy and army were involved in many wars in Europe and overseas and they needed salted beef as food for their journeys, Scottish cattle, fattened on the richer grasslands of England helped to meet this need. Cattle drovers took cattle from all over the highlands and islands to cattle fairs. The most famous one was at Crieff but after 1770 this "Great Tryst" as it was called, was moved to Falkirk. There was another cattle fair called the Hallow Fair held in Edinburgh.

Having bought or sold cattle at these fairs, the drover may have had to take cattle on to markets south of the border in Carlisle, Craven in Yorkshire or even London. The drovers were responsible for the health and welfare of the cattle in their care. When droving through the winter months they would need to buy hay to feed the animals and buy shoes to protect their hooves. The book "The Famous Highland Drove Walk" was written about the attempt in 1981 to recreate the famous drove walk from the Isle of Skye to Crieff and it explains this in more detail. Some drovers may have paid the farmer up front for the cattle but it was more common for the drover to give the farmer a promissory note or "Drover's bill" which would be exchanged for cash once the animals had been sold - and this could be many weeks after the cattle had left the farm for market. These drover's bills were often used as currency especially when the farmer needed to pay his rent to the landlord. He would hand over these bills to the landlord in payment.

By the late 18th century such were the improvements in the quality of cattle feed and animal husbandry that cattle could fetch between 30 shillings and £4 -each depending on their weight and quality. If a drover was selling 1,000 cattle, this represented a large sum of money in those days. So it was definitely in the drover's best interests to protect the cattle in his care and to protect himself and the proceeds until he could repay the farmer, And don't forget, these drovers were more than likely to be illiterate. What skills did the drover need? Well he needed to know the countryside along his route and regulate his travel and rest days to get the herd to the market on time and in good condition. Once at the market he needed good business skills to gain the best price for the stock. Then he needed to be capable of protecting himself and his herd from attack by outlaws and cattle thieves. And drovers were always armed. There are reports of drovers not being able to repay the farmers and of drovers and farmers going

bankrupt but the majority of drovers were regarded as being fairly honest. For example, at the London Smithfield market in 1782 it was recorded that one drover distributed £2,000 between 30 farmers each of whom had no security for their money other than the honesty of the drover.

What has this to do with the GRANTS? Well we know that William GRANT was a cattle drover and tenant farmer in Scotland. We know that the family travelled down via Skipton. Skipton is in the Craven district of Yorkshire so William was most probably following one his old droving routes when he brought his family down to Manchester.

The drover as we have heard needed good business skills to gain the best price for his stock. I think you will agree that both young William and especially Daniel learned these skills from their father. Daniel was the salesman and travelled all over the country to secure orders. You may have heard the story of Daniel trying to secure an order from a busy customer in Glasgow. The, customer, irate that Daniel was being so persistent, threw him out into the street and the sample book fell into the mud. Daniel picked himself up, dusted himself down, wiped clean his sample book and undaunted went back in to see his customer. "Now sir, I'm sure you'll give me an order - there's fortune in these, a fortune, just look at them!" The story goes that this appeal was irresistible. A lasting friendship began and a long and lucrative business connection was formed between the two firms.

What other qualities did the parents pass on to their sons? It is said that William was a strong man and a noted athlete.. He was known for being able to lift up a 3-hundredweight 'knockin stone' used for grinding grain before the days of corn mills. He was kind, patient and obliging. His wife Grace was a woman of striking personality and extraordinary force of character. Whilst her husband was away for weeks on end driving the cattle, she was left with the management of the farm and bringing up her young family. She was resourceful and energetic and equal to surviving the harsh conditions that was farm life in those days.

Where was this farm? The farm known as Wester Elchies is across the River Spey from the village of Aberlour and not far from the village of Craigellachie in the county of Morayshire in northeast Scotland. This area is in the heart of what the tourist industry now calls "Malt Whisky country". 'Craigellachie' may be the war cry of the Clan Grant but it is also the name of the village at the confluence of the rivers, Spey and Fiddich.

So we know what a drover was, we know a little of the character of the parents and where they came from. What happened to make them leave Speyside? Well the short answer to that is that their farm was washed away in devastating floods. The winter of 1782 was one of the seven worst winters in Scotland in the second half of the 18th century. The effects of this would lead to widespread famine across Scotland. The GRANTS were left with nothing and faced certain famine and debt. Although there were very strong family ties to that area and they could probably have sought some

support from the family in the short term I think it was probably Grace. who took the initiative and said, "Come on, we must Move." Why did they leave Scotland? Why did they not move to another area of Scotland? The linen industry was thriving in Perth, and Glasgow was rapidly establishing itself as a major industrial centre with a growing population to rival Edinburgh.

I think William would have been well aware of this but it could be that he had heard better reports of the initiatives being undertaken in England whilst he was at the road driving the cattle. William would have told Grace about the new cotton industry in Lancashire and I think she pieced all the information together and recognised that their future lay south of the border. Certainly in some reports it says that William had a letter of introduction to Richard ARKRIGHT in Manchester.

So in 1793 the family left Speyside; William was aged 50, his wife Grace was 40 and their seven children ranged in ages from 16 yrs to just 6 months old. Can you imagine what that journey must have been like? They had been able to salvage a horse and cart but there were no motorways or train, No macadamised roads. There was an improving network of turnpike roads but you had to pay a toll - in some cases there was a toll cottage every 6 miles. The drovers tended to shun these turnpikes not only because the surface harmed the cattle's hooves but mainly on the grounds of cost -this journey from Speyside was well over 300 miles.

They came via Skipton and found their way to the Park estate just above Ramsbottom and camped there for their last night before the final push to Manchester. They had been rationing their food and were sparing with their money but that night they ate the last of their food and had no money left. It was a family tradition to have evening prayers and the prayers that night included a plea that they be relieved of their sore trouble and given food to feed the hungry. their prayers were answered the next day by two members of a shooting party. On hearing their plight these men gave the family two sovereigns to help them on their way. A sovereign was quite a sum of money. William thanked God for this proof of His care and proclaimed that the beautiful valley before him reminded him of his beloved Speyside even though the river Irwell was not as grand. What else would he have seen down in the valley? Well at the time Ramsbottom consisted of two farms, one mill and a building site for the future Old Ground works of PEEL and YATES.

They continued their way to Manchester only to have their hopes dashed on learning that Richard ARKRIGHT, the largest employer in Manchester at the time, was not taking on any new workers. Dejected they made their way back up to Bury where an old acquaintance lived. James DINWIDDIE was a fellow Scot and he owned a calico printing business at Hampson Mill. He helped the GRANTS find a home in Bury and was able to provide immediate employment to William and his two eldest sons, James and William. Subsequently he was able to employ nearly all members of the family. I say nearly all because little Mary, a frail 8 year old worked for PEEL and YATES at their Hinds Mills. One stormy day in November 1784 *Mary* drowned possibly whilst

crossing the River Irwell on her way to work. Mary was buried in the cemetery which used to be in Bank Street, Bury.

Very early on father William found that he could not adjust to the claustrophobic life of factory work. So he put his driving skills to good use by becoming an itinerant salesman hawking pieces of cloth at factory gates or in pubs, after payday, anywhere, where people congregated and still had money in their pockets. As enterprising as ever he enquired what sort of goods his customers would like and added to his stock accordingly.

Meanwhile the sons became first-rate apprentices learning all aspects of the calico printing trade. Mr DINWIDDIE was so impressed with young William that he invited him into partnership. William declined the offer because he had his sights set on a family business. When the children were not working in the factory, they helped out in the drapery shop which their parents had opened in Bury Lane (now Bolton Street, Bury). As business grew so all the family became involved full time and they moved into larger premises, lending up with a double-fronted shop in the Wylde by the Market Place.

I have to report that the GRANTs were not particularly popular in Bury. The locals found their Scottish ways a little irksome. They spoke with a strange accent. They were used to getting up early so they had their shop open for business well before any of the other shops in the town. The shop was well stocked and the goods displayed attractively. They were always very gracious to their customers and offered refreshment to any customers who had travelled in from the country. Today we would call this good customer service. It took quite a while for the locals to accept these incomers but the GRANTs persevered. The family was noted for their great love of music and entertainment. They acquired a barrel organ which played 32 tunes, They set it up in the front window of their shop and people used to gather round to listen. If you think about the Scottish ceilidh you will recognise this as another Scottish trait. In 1806, just six years after William GRANT and Brothers had started in Manchester, the GRANTs disposed of the shop in Bury and bought the factory and estate of PEEL and YATES in Ramsbottom. It cost them £9,800, a sum which was to stretch them financially for quite a few years.

So they have now arrived in Ramsbottom. Father William GRANT was 73 yrs, Grace 63. They moved into the property built for Henry WARREN, one of the partners in PEEL and YATES. This property was known as 'Top of the Brow' but was soon renamed 'Grant Lodge'. It is now part of 'The Grant Arms' hotel. Grace turned it into a warm and comfortable home with a lovely garden. It was here that favoured customers would be entertained and also where some of the entertainments would be given to their workers.

(According to Reverend HUME ELLIOTT:

the garden was laid out in the shape of a heart, The gates of the house, with stone pillars and rounded capitals, stood just opposite the top of Bridge Street. Round the

outer fence of the garden ran a row of goodly trees, which continued in front of what is now the Conservative Club and Doctor DEAN's surgery ie the Civic Hall and the lodge house. The trees extended northwards towards the point where the New Jerusalem Church was afterwards erected i.e. the junction of Factory Street and Ramsbottom Lane.

HUME ELLIOT also makes special reference to his friend the nonagenarian Mrs Eliza WILSON; whose 'clear and accurate memory' apparently helped him with a large proportion of the information in his book. Before her marriage she was employed in the warehouse of the Old Ground. She was taken from the warehouse into the service of Mrs GRANT at Grant Lodge. - Editor.)

Soon Ramsbottom was to change significantly as did most villages and towns in the area. In 1807 the GRANTS built a drying house on land to the south of Old Ground. (Once Square Mill became operational after 1822, this drying house was no longer required so the building was converted into four dwellings, each occupied by a Scottish family, hence the name Scotch Row, now Scotland Place.) In 1812 the GRANT bought Nuttall spinning mill. This mill had been silent since the death of its owner Mr ALSOP. They rebuilt it and installed the latest machinery. They also built lots of accommodation for their workers - although housing them in some instances more than seven to a room was probably not what we would call comfortable. It is said that the GRANTS also provided the workers with a complete set of clothes, so destitute were they after the long lapse in work between the death. of Mr ALSOP and the re-opening by the GRANTS. In 1815 they bought Blackley Hall near Manchester together with four acres of land and built a print shop on the site. This they let out. They bought Springside, a large house near Walmersley, sadly now demolished. At first William. and Daniel used this as their weekend retreat but they settled there permanently in later years and this is where they both died.

Around 1817 their brother John GRANT built a new home for himself which he called Nuttall Hall. This was on the site of Lower Shipperbottom Farm. He also bought the former Nuttall Hall which was now in ruins and turned this into Nuttall Farm. Father William GRANT died in 1817 and his widow Grace in 1821. In 1827 the GRANTS bought the Park Estate and built Grants Tower as a monument to commemorate the family's first visit to the valley. It had been his mother's wish that a church .and Sunday school be built and in 1832 William laid the foundation stone for what was to become the Presbyterian church. It cost £5,000 to build and was probably the first church in the country to have heating. This came from waste heat from the Square Works down by the river which was fed through a tunnel up the hillside to the church. When. you think about it, this idea was centuries ahead of its time. It's only in comparatively recent years that waste heat from power stations has been used to grow tomatoes and such like.

Were the GRANTS any more popular in Ramsbottom than they were in Bury? Probably. It was reported in a conversation "Some masters when they get a bit rich, leave us and the capital goes with them. That's bad for us. The old GRANTS, they live in the valley and keep the brass at home for use. We want more of that sort. They don't leave us when they have made a bit of a pile. And we ought to stick to that sort of master, none of your idle globe-trotting fellows,"

So I will leave you with a question. Do you think we would be celebrating the life and works of the GRANT family if they had not been immortalised by Charles Dickens as the 'Cheeryble Brothers'?

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Charles Dickens and the 'Cheeryble' Grants: R R CARMYLLIE,

Long Life and Success to the Farmer - a History of the Agricultural Societies of Bury: Alan J SEYMOUR

Pamela PARKINSON

"OUR BOYS - THE GREAT WAR IN A LANCASHIRE VILLAGE"

"Our Boys" were the lads, some still in their teens, who left Hawkshaw to fight in the Great war. 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 40 dead and 127 survivors, These boys could have come from anywhere in Lancashire so great was the impact of the *War to end all Wars*. "Our Boys" is available from Ramsbottom Library priced £8.00.

DO YOU NEED HELP TO RESEARCH YOUR FAMILY HISTORY

Ramsbottom Library is holding Family history Surgeries on the last Thursday of each month from 3pm to 7pm. So if you want to start or need a little help (or a lot) come along with your query or problem.

The next session is on Thursday 29th November; there will be no session in December; then each month from Thursday 31st January 2008.

LOCAL RESEARCH

The Heritage Society has no staff, and cannot offer a research or query service. The following institutions could be approached:

Bury Museum and Archive, Moss Street, Bury, BL9 0DG tel: 0161 253 6782

Email: archives@bury.gov.uk Website: www.bury.gov.uk/archives

Opening Hours:

Tuesday	1pm - 4pm	Friday	10am - 4pm
Wednesday	1pm - 4pm	2nd Saturday of the month	10am - 4pm
Thursday	10am - 4pm		

(We ask that people get in touch to make an appointment in advance of any visit to the archives as these opening hours could be restricted at short notice due to staffing levels.)

Our new searchroom features large reading tables, computer and internet access, microfiche readers and access to Picture Memories. Paper catalogues are available in the searchroom and in Reference and Information Services, Bury Library. We run an enquiry service, offering 15 minutes staff time, and we hold details of researchers in the area who offer fee based services. The building has lift and ramp access, lockers and public toilets. The Ramsbottom Heritage Society's Collection, including photographs, is on permanent loan.

Bury Central Library (Reference and Information Services), Manchester Road, Bury, BL9 0DG – 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, copies of local newspapers, thematic collections of news cuttings we are pursuing for local biographies, census returns and parish registers on microfilm.

Lancashire Family History and Heraldry Society; membership secretary Pip Cowling, 33, Windhill Old Road, Bradford, BD10 0SE – tel 01274 611087, email membership@lfhhs.org.uk. Ordinary membership is £12 per year (concessionary £9.50) and this entitles you to 4 magazine issues, an opportunity to publish your research queries and findings, and 14 meetings each month with speakers at venues all over the county, including Bury and Rawtenstall. More information is available at 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 a state-of-the-art IT suite, with a visually impaired and disabled friendly workstation, back copies of the *Ramsbottom Observer* 1890-1950 on film and microfiche reader. Much of the Ramsbottom local history collection of the Rev R R Carmyllie, local census returns and several filing drawers of local newscuttings and booklets are also available.

Opening hours are: 9.30am to 7.30pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

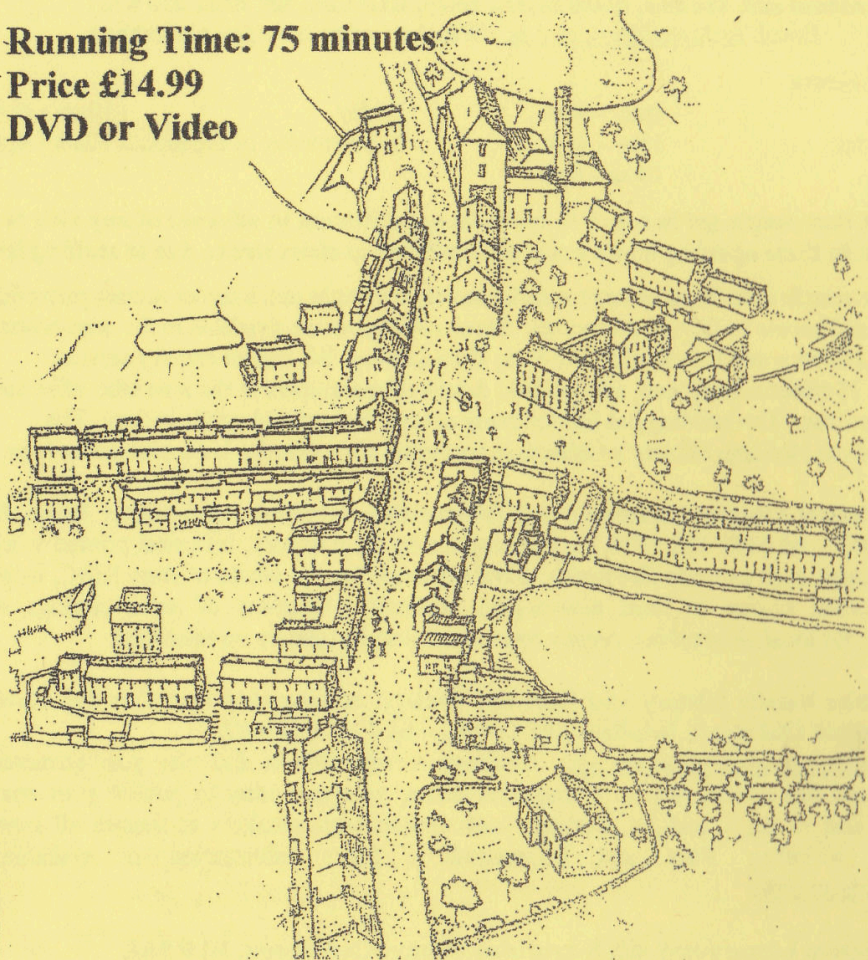
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