

RIPLEY & DISTRICT
HERITAGE TRUST
DERBYSHIRE

Newsletter



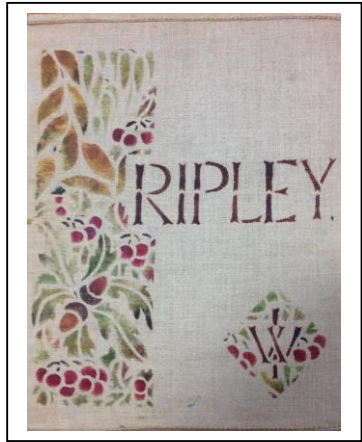
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www.rdht.org.uk

The W.I. History of Ripley – Progress

The Trust is well on the way to publishing this unique manuscript found last year by Peter and Eunice. The badly faded, hand written and drawn manuscript produced by five ladies of Ripley's Women's Institute in the early 1930's has now been copied, albeit with less than good results and its contents 'set' in what will be a 176 page book.



Personally, I think the ladies back in the 30s did a remarkable job in researching and writing their History of Ripley. It's full of information about Ripley from Roman times up until the First World War. There are many fascinating facts ranging from the names of the families listed in Domesday times up to accounts of cock fighting and the ensuing drunken brawls. Details of how Ripley was administered around, including election riots in the mid nineteenth century.

Two of their drawings are reproduced on the front page of this newsletter.

Unfortunately progress has been slow in designing the book and setting the hand written pages within the book. Due to the fading of the pages and the quality of the copying each page has taken up to half an hour to make legible enough for today's publication and printing standards. However thanks to the magic of Photoshop software (and many hours of work) the pages have been copied and book is now 'laid out' ready for proof reading and any final amendments and additions.

It's looking good and hopefully we might get it printed ready for July's Ripley Big Day Out. However, with a hundred and seventy odd pages on good quality paper we expect it to sell for £10 or more – but well worth it!

Mike Frost

Our Next Meeting is on Thursday 28th June at 2.15pm in the Shed.

Butterley Ironworks Trust (BIT)

Progress on future development of the site continues albeit at a very slow pace. Godkin Holdings (GH) is working onsite on behalf of the owners Aquarius Estates (AE) to determine the accurate location of drains and sewers, this work being helped by a map from the RDHT archive. A meeting between GH, AE and BIT is imminent, the exact date yet to be determined. In spite of added security there is still some illegal access, as indicated by graffiti artists work within the Machine Shop. BIT is updating its original 'Tunnel Vision' article to include some of the latest ideas for the site put forward by BIT members.

BIT is also to work in conjunction with RDHT to take part in the Town Council's 'Big Day Out' at Swanwick Junction on July 11th between 10 am and 4pm.

Little Eaton Historical Society

Some RDHT members may remember that back in 2014 we made an interview with 100 year old Mr Arthur Degge Bates of Lowes Hill, who began work in Butterley Foundry in 1927. Degge was born in Coxbench and had a much older wealthy relation living in Little Eaton who, upon his death, left money to the village. Degge's granddaughter Lynn now lives in Little Eaton and is a member of the relatively new Little Eaton Historical Society.

In April this year, Tim Castledine gave a Butterley talk to the Society. They had applied to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant to further develop their activities, and were particularly interested to see how we at RDHT had applied for and used our Lottery grant. Four members of the Little Eaton committee paid a visit to the 'Shed' on May 10th where Peter gave a full briefing of the history of RDHT, our Lottery grant application and the outcome of the subsequent work. Particular interest was shown in our scanning equipment and the computer filing system we use. They certainly will be in future contact to let us know how they are getting along.

Butterley DVD Sales

Since the launch of the DVD last October, over 750 copies have now been sold, providing a very useful cash stream. Organisations such as The Friends of Cromford Canal, Midland Railway Centre and Heage Windmill all report good sales. Private sales at talks and other events are also providing a good income. It is hoped that by the end of this year we can hit the 1000 mark, which will be a truly remarkable achievement. Copies can be purchased either via our website or direct from the RDHT 'shed'.

Butterley Locomotive Engine Drawings

The Trust has received a donation of detailed engineering drawings for two Butterley 0-4-0 tank engines, estimated to have been built in the 1880 - 1890's. One of them is drawn on 'cloth' and hand coloured, the other being drawn on fine drawing paper. Both are drawn to the scale of one inch to 1 foot, the overall lengths of each engine being approximately 21 feet. As such, in order to accommodate full layout views they are quite large, measuring 48 x 33 inches,

They were donated by Mrs Galloway of Little Eaton whose father was Mr Jack Groom of Butterley's Mechanical Drawing office who began work at Butterley in the 1930's.

It is hoped to find out more information about them, possibly by showing them to the more knowledgeable railway enthusiasts at the Midland Railway Centre. If anyone is interested in seeing the drawings, please contact Tim Castledine as they are as yet to be stored safely in the shed.

The Other Miners' Strike

I am an avid collector of history books of the period 1700 to 1939 and the more I read the more I discover incidents and events worthy of deeper research. For example, in 1893 Ripley featured heavily in the largest industrial dispute Britain had hitherto experienced. Around several areas of Britain some 300,000 miners were locked out by their employers for long periods.

Derbyshire mining was a significant contributor to the national tonnage, which in 1880 was some 147 million tons annually, with 8 million tons from Derbyshire pits. In 1913 the annual national tonnage had risen to 287 million with 18 million from Derbyshire. A key stimulus to the Derbyshire contribution was the decision of Midlands Railway to favour Derbyshire coal for the fast-developing network.

An article published by The Nottingham Daily Express of 3rd November 1893 discussed the context of a series of disturbances in several areas and, in particular, involving miners employed by Butterley Company in the Ripley area. Some sources suggest that the Butterley Company was one of the few mine owners to be still operating the 'Butty System' which many had dispensed with after the Coal Mines Regulation Act 1872. In fact, this Act and several others of this period served to constrain the harsh conditions of those working in the mining industry, such as banning women, boys under 12 and, later, introducing maximum working hours.

The dispute was basically over the mine owners desire to regulate their profits by reducing miners pay or hours when coal prices fell. At this time the mine owners wanted at least 15% cut to wages. Most miners were already on a 3-day week (and, of course, a 3-day pay packet) The new Miners Federation of Great Britain took the view that miners should be on a fixed hourly rate. This issue was to be a curse on the industry's staff relations until the second world war and then nationalisation.

The Ripley meeting discussed the use of police and the military to deal with disturbances. One barbed comment was that 'we had come to a sorry state of things when one man residing at Ormonde Fields, Codnor could send for 100 police and soldiers'. Many will know you this was referring to : Frederick Channer Corfield, the manager of the Butterley Company's mines.

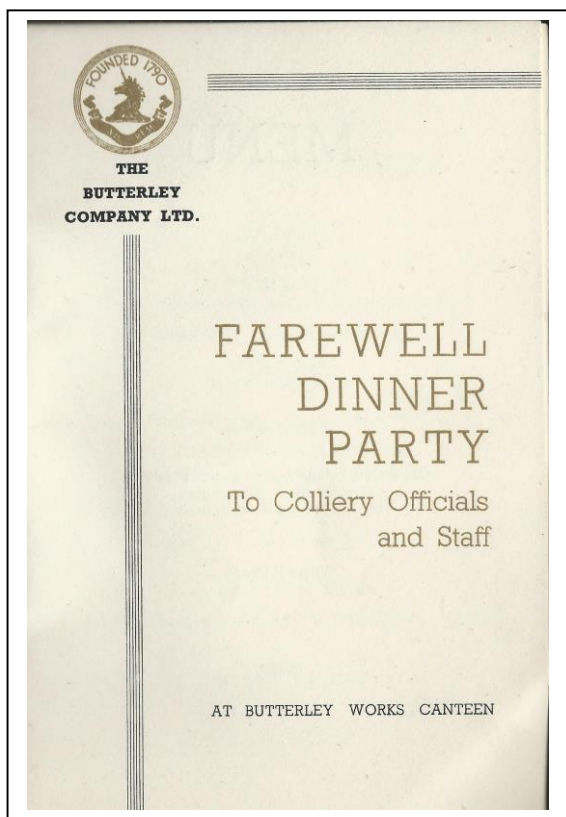
There were several serious disturbances. One in particular was at Featherstone, near Pontefract, when the military were called in to protect Lord Masham's colliery. Stones thrown by the miners which resulted in a volley of shots from the South Staffordshire Detachment. Several were injured, and two miners died; one of these being James Gibbs of Loscoe.

According to the excellent pages of <http://www.healeyhero.co.uk>, in August 1893 the first violence broke out at Killamarsh, Derbyshire where a crowd of miners began to throw stones at a gang of non-union labourers. This brings to mind similar incidents at the same location almost a century later, in 1984.

The meeting in Ripley moved a resolution condemning the introduction of police and military in Ripley and a second pledging a fund to provide relief for the miners.

Michael Parkin

From the Archive



On the subject of mining, this document has recently come to light :

It is dated 1947, and is the menu and programme for the dinner the company gave to its higher officials of its mines as the mines were taken into public ownership.

We also have this picture, one of the collection donated by George Eyre, who was for many years a photographer for the Ripley and Heanor News.



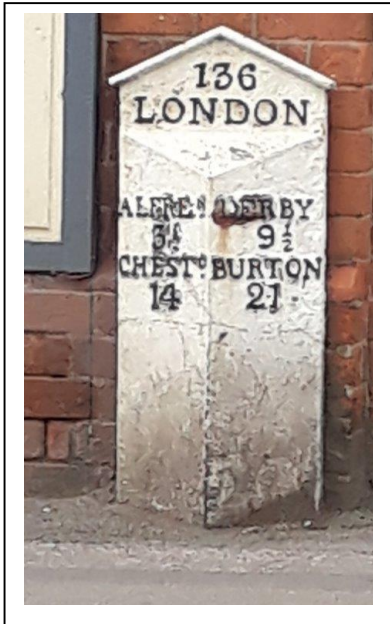
It shows the opening of the Buy Wise supermarket in Ripley in May, 1964. The opening ceremony was apparently performed by Bobo the chimp, who wore a sparkling blue and silver dress and a huge blue net hat for the occasion.

All Things Local

Look out for our regular contribution to this magazine. Recent articles have included Music Hall in Ripley and the 1934 shopping campaign.

Quiz answers:
1. Derby Road 2. Lucknow, India
(constructed bridge there, was
resident there, born there) 3. William
Horne of Butterley Hall 4. Ripley
Hospital 5. Walter Brierley

Quiz



1. Do you know where this is ?

It is almost certainly a relic of the 1807 turnpike road which was constructed to pass the Butterley works, moving the route East from the earlier one which went through Heage, Buckland Hollow and Higham.

2. What links the following :

The Butterley Company, The Byard of India and Cliff Richard.

3. Who was executed in 1759 for the murder of a child?

4. What was opened in 1912 after a miner died on his way to Derby ?

Plays of Derbyshire Life

No. 7. "Local Showers"

A DERBYSHIRE PLAY IN ONE ACT

By [REDACTED]

Permission to play reserved by the R.C.C., Community House, Derby.

Characters:

ISAAC DUNWOODY, aged 40-50 years.

MARTHA DUNWOODY, his wife.

JANE DUNWOODY, daughter, aged 22.

MRS. POPINABOTTLE, neighbour, aged about 50.

A PARSON.

JACK SHARMAN, Jane's fiancé, aged 24.

F. TAYLOR

ALICE BLOUNT

JEAN WALTERS

VERA WHYLD

ELLIS REDFERN

TOM MURFIN

5. Who wrote the novel "The Means Test Man", as well as the early play, "Local Showers", a copy of which has recently been donated to us ?