



Saddleworth White Rose Society

In the County of York

Newsletter No 2 April 1999

SADDLEWORTH IS STILL PART OF YORKSHIRE

The 1974 local government reorganisation caused much confusion throughout Britain. Administrative areas were created which in no way affected the traditional historical boundaries of existing counties. Unfortunately these administrative areas were called counties and were superimposed on top of the existing counties, even though in many cases they did not follow the traditional county boundary lines, which still legally exist, resulting in many people being utterly confused as to which county they lived in. Many of these administrative councils such as Greater Manchester were dissolved in 1986 and their powers passed to Metropolitan Boroughs, but still the administrative boundaries cross the traditional county boundaries. In the case of Saddleworth the administration is no longer controlled from Wakefield but has been transferred to the Metropolitan Borough of Oldham but nevertheless Saddleworth remains a part of Yorkshire, just as Chadderton, Failsworth, Royton, Oldham and Lees remain a part of Lancashire although they are not administered by Lancashire County Council.

In 1974 Oldham Metropolitan Borough was formed being made up of Saddleworth 18,485 acres, Oldham 6,392 acres, Chadderton 3,014 acres, Crompton 2,865 acres, Royton 2,148 acres, Failsworth 1,679 acres and Lees 288 acres. The choice of name for this Borough was rather unfortunate because it gave the impression that Oldham took over the rest.

The neighbouring Borough of Tameside was perhaps more considerate in not naming the Borough after any one district and this appears to have resulted in less of a problem in recognising that their districts like those in the Oldham, Metropolitan Borough are not all in the same county; Ashton, Droylsden, Denton and Mossley being in Lancashire, Dukinfield, Stalybridge and Mottram in Longdendale being in Cheshire.

In the Oldham Metropolitan Borough very few people seem to realise that Saddleworth is in Yorkshire and has never been anywhere else and as Saddleworth makes up 53% of the Borough most of the Borough is actually in Yorkshire. The pre 1974 Oldham was quite a different entity to the present Borough and Oldham like Saddleworth and the rest is just one of the seven districts that make up the present Oldham Metropolitan Borough.

LET US REMEMBER (by Phil Clay)

Twenty five years ago, on All Fools Day, the former Saddleworth Urban District Council handed over the control of our district to the newly formed Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council. Prior to this date a referendum had been held with the object of ascertaining the wishes of the local electorate in their choice of a future authority which would be submitted to the Government. The subsequent result was:

5963	69%	in favour of Kirklees.
1837	21%	in favour of Tameside Metropolitan Borough,
890	10%	in favour of Oldham Metropolitan Borough.

The 69% of the Saddleworth voters had high hopes that, living in a democratic country, their wishes would be taken into account. Unfortunately the powers that be had, no doubt, previously decided what course would shape the new administration and the referendum was a totally worthless exercise.

After 25 years have we achieved any noticeable benefits? I have no doubt that there are some if we care to delve but these will pale into insignificance when we examine the facts. On the debit side they are too numerous to take into account in this brief article. Some do stand out and I would hazard a guess that the first and foremost is the dictatorial attitude of Oldham Council in relation to the wishes of the Saddleworth residents. In some cases I strongly suspect them of adapting a policy of 'Non co-operation'.

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We have seen large areas of quality land taken over by the developers regardless of the ultimate outcome, namely that house prices have risen in excess of the normal inflation which has made it difficult and in some cases impossible for local people to afford to buy or rent property.

We have lost the local and friendly services where one could obtain immediate satisfaction from one of the numerous local offices, for example, gas, electricity, rates, highways, refuse, etc. All these facilities have sadly disappeared.

Our local Police station, which incidentally provided a 24 hour cover before amalgamation, was staffed by an inspector, two sergeants and in the region of 20 constables, In addition constables, who resided in Diggle, Denshaw, Grasscroft and Greenfield, were provided with houses and office facilities to attend the demands of the local population. This alas is no longer the case.

The Magistrates' Court had a full staff and the magistrates were local men and women who had an inside knowledge of the area and the people.

Road maintenance is now virtually non-existent, with the exception of the traffic hazards which have been placed along the road between Grasscroft and Uppermill, presumably at great expense.

We also see a great decline in local employment opportunities with many of the industrial sites being adapted for residential expansion with little regard for future generations.

We have lost our free weekend car parking, this is to enable the Oldham Council to collect a few shekels at a loss.

One beneficiary from all this seems to be Oldham Metropolitan Council with a large proportion of the council tax being collected from Saddleworth to finance projects out of this district.

So what price progress now?

THE MEETING OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR TRUE IDENTITY

The C.T.I, meeting at Sawley near Skipton on the 20 Mar 99 was attended by representatives of Unite Craven, The Yorkshire Ridings Society, Friends of Real Lancashire, The Association of British Counties (A.B.C) and Saddleworth White Rose Society. Each group gave a brief summary of their progress, problems, successes, failures and intentions.

Mr Hoyle, Chairman of C.T.I., was congratulated by Mr Colin Holt Chairman of the Yorkshire Ridings Society, on the success of his full page feature in the Yorkshire Post of the 7 Jan 99, entitled 'Border Skirmishes' and in reply Mr Hoyle thanked all those in the relevant groups who had taken the trouble to write to the Yorkshire Post expressing their views.

Unite Craven were able to report that they have appointed Freddie Truman the famous Yorkshire cricketer as their President.

The successes by the A.B.C. were very interesting and encouraging. They have seen some success, due to their pressure, in the abolition of some of the administrative counties such as Avon, Cleveland, Grampian, Humberside etc. and the areas administered by these returned to their correct county administration, and real counties like Hereford and Rutland given back local government and ceremonial status.

The meeting was well attended, the venue excellent and it is hoped that some of our members will attend the next C.T.I. Meeting with us in about six months (details to be announced later).

.....AND FROM LANCASHIRE

Our good friend Chris Dawson Chairman of Friends of Real Lancashire informs us that the Queen, as Duke of Lancaster may be visiting Lancaster, this summer to commemorate the death of John of Gaunt (father of Henry IV) and the merging of the Duchy with the Crown.

If anyone wants any further information on this or any other information about F.O.R.L. they should contact Chris Dawson at 1 Belvidere Park, Great Crosby, Lancashire, L23 OSP. Tel. 0151 928 2770 (please do not put Merseyside on the address).

F.O.R.L. are in a similar position to us and wish to gain more recognition of the traditional and legal county boundaries.



YORKSHIRE

East Riding

Beverley
 Bridlington
 Filey
 Great Driffield
 Hedon
 Hornsea
 Howden
 Kingston Upon Hull
 Market Weighton
 Norton
 Pocklington
 Withernsea



North Riding

Bowes
 Easingwold
 Hawes
 Helmsley
 Leyburn
 Malton
 Masham
 Middlesbrough
 Northallerton
 Pickering
 Redcar
 Richmond
 Saltburn
 Scarborough
 Stokesley
 Thirsk
 Whitby
 Yarm

West Riding

Barnsley	Hebden Bridge	Sedbergh
Barnoldswick	Holmfirth	Selby
Batley	Huddersfield	Settle
Bawtry	Ilkley	Sheffield
Bingley	Ingleton	Shipley
Boroughbridge	Keighley	Skipton
Bradford	Kettlewell	Slaidburn
Brighouse	Knaresborough	Sowerby Bridge
Castleford	Leeds	Tadcaster
Cawood	Mexborough	Thorne
Dewsbury	Otley	Tickhill
Doncaster	Pateley Bridge	Todmorden
Goole	Penistone	Wakefield
Halifax	Pontefract	Wetherby
Harrogate	Ripon	
	Rotherham	
	Saddleworth	

A member of Saddleworth White Rose Society has kindly donated a number of Yorkshire postcards showing the three Ridings and naming several places including Saddleworth (see illustration), to help raise money for the White Rose Fund, which we hope to sell at 10p each. If anyone wishes to purchase some of these to send to friends, the proceeds will all go to this project.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Please don't forget, if you have anything of interest you wish to include in future Newsletters please let us know. We will be very glad to hear from you.

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