



Saddleworth White Rose Society

In the County of York

Newsletter No 3 July 1999

SUNDAY 01 AUG 99 YORKSHIRE DAY !

Last year we celebrated Yorkshire Day in Saddleworth for the first time. This was a pretty low key affair, we displayed posters in shops in the Saddleworth villages and we placed trays of white roses with a collecting box on behalf of Saddleworth White Rose Society and The Multiple Sclerosis Society, in six public houses in various villages. This was really a trial run but it proved to be popular, and worthwhile.

This year Saddleworth Museum wishes to celebrate Yorkshire Day with us and we have organised several events for the day. This will commence with Diggle Junior Band playing at the Ammon Wrigley Statue outside the Museum. The statue itself will be decorated with white roses for the occasion. At 11.24 a.m. Mr Gilbert Symes of Delph, well known brass bandsman and local character, will read the Yorkshire Declaration, the band will then continue to play until around 12 noon. This will be followed by a display by Saddleworth Morris Dancers until 1.00 p.m. when the children of The Brenda Goddard School of Dancing from Delph will perform their Yorkshire Country Dancing Display. Inside the Museum gallery Saddleworth White Rose Society will have a stand with membership application forms etc. The gallery tea bar will open at 12 noon serving Yorkshire Parkin and Yorkshire Day cakes and biscuits and also serving Yorkshire Tea very kindly donated by Taylors of Harrogate, the firm who sponsor the popular television programme "HEARTBEAT".

Meanwhile for the more energetic, a Yorkshire Pudding walk has been organised from the Museum Car Park, commencing 2.15 p.m. The route will take the canal towpath to Brownhill, through Gatehead Wood to New Delph, and over Rumbles Lane to the White Lion Public House, arriving around 3.50 p.m. A Yorkshire Pudding meal with beef and onion gravy will be served. The route back to the Museum will be via Hull Mill Lane, over Lark Hill onto Brown Hill and along the Lin-ear Park to Uppermill. Anyone wishing to take part in this walk will be required to book in advance so that catering arrangements can be organised. Walkers are asked please do not bring dogs on this walk. The cost including the meal will be £3 and the number taking part will be limited to 40 people. Public Houses all over the villages and hamlets of Saddleworth have welcomed the idea of selling white roses on their premises for Saddleworth White Rose Society and The Multiple Sclerosis Society over the Yorkshire Day period. We hope all members will celebrate this day one way or another and will all buy and proudly wear their White Rose.

How Did Yorkshire Day Begin?

In order to celebrate Yorkshire's identity and heritage the Yorkshire Ridings Society established "Yorkshire Day" on August 1st 1975.

August 1st was chosen as it has special significance in the County's history. On this date in 1759 soldiers in Yorkshire regiments who had fought in the battle of Minden in Germany picked white roses from nearby fields as a tribute to their fallen comrades. Since then a number of Yorkshire regiments wear white roses on August 1st to commemorate that day and the heroic deeds of their Yorkshire ancestors.

In recent years, as founder of the much wider ranging "Yorkshire Day", the Yorkshire Ridings Society has encouraged people to organise special events on August 1st to spread the word about Yorkshire, its identity, heritage, values and culture

A LAW UNTO HIMSELF

(by Phil Clay)

Characters abound in the north of England, especially in the Ridings of Yorkshire. Every villager can relate stories of past and present occupants with amusement and affection and Saddleworth is no exception to the rule.

One well known individual, lets call him Bert, was a police constable who was stationed in Saddleworth and was a law unto himself. He, with the backing of a doctor's certificate, convinced the higher ranks that he suffered from periodical attacks of lumbago and he was therefore allowed to carry a substantial walking stick which, incidentally, looked very similar to a shillelagh.

This weapon assisted him to cover his beat and to attend to the daily task of giving succour to his parishioners. Unfortunately for some, the stick had a more sinister use than purely to aid walking, and many a young lad could vouch for that after feeling it across his backside when he least expected it. Bert was heavily built but walked as stealthily as a tiger, he could creep up to within three feet of an unsuspecting young vagabond before he was aware of the swishing sound which terminated with a sharp stinging sensation across his posterior. Even adults, who incidentally had not committed any kind of misdemeanour, would give Bert and his swinging hickory stick a wide berth.

In days of yore, the West Riding police station at Uppermill was warned by a large coke boiler situated in the cellar and it was the job of the constables, after the delivery of the usual 5 ton of coke, to shovel it through a small grating into the boiler house. The office was usually full of loafing, tea supping, constables and the sergeant, but at the sound of the coal merchant's wagon there would be a mass exodus to attend to suddenly remembered important tasks, the coke would therefore remain in a large pile for some days.

On one such occasion Bert was working late on office cover, this duty consisted of answering the telephone, keeping the fire and boiler stoked up and attending to the needs of a prisoner, this being one of the rare occasions that one was in the cells. The prisoner . lets call him Tom Taylor, was a local small holder, horse trader, dealer and a colourful well liked character who was usually recognised by his dress, highly polished high laced brown boots, red and white spotted handkerchief around his throat and a large wide brimmed country and western style hat. Tom was on remand, suspected of receiving stolen sausage skins, a charge vociferously denied and which was never brought to court, resulting in Tom remaining as pure as driven snow.

As Bert walked down Buckley Street he had observed the pile of coke and on entering the office he was heard to remark to a colleague, "If the lazy buggers think that I'm going to move that bloody coke they can get stuffed". He then settled down in front of the roaring fire with a pot of tea, the local evening paper, and a yachting magazine, sailing being his main love. Woe betide any thoughtless person who may disturb him before supper time.

Approximately 8 p.m, 1 had called into the police station for a chinwag with Bert to be followed about 15 minutes later by the Chief Superintendent. "Evening Constable". "Good evening sir", replied Bert, showing respect by condescendingly putting down his pint pot but leaving his size 10s parked on the table. After the usual queries as to the state of crime, accident statistics and other matters, the Chief Superintendent asked, "Does the civilian orderly work overtime?" "No sir, he will have finished at 5 o'clock" replied Bert. "Well who is that man outside shoveling coke into the cellar?", was the next question of the Chief. "It's the prisoner sir, he was bored and wanted summat to do so I set him off clearing that pile of coke", explained Bert. "He's not being guarded and could easily run away", screamed the Chief, his usual pale face turning a deep shade of purple. Bert, glancing heavenward with a look that betokened the fact that he was surrounded by idiots replied in a patronising manner, "I very much doubt that Sir, he's nowhere to run only home and he's usually glad to gerrout of there for a spell. Anyway he'll be wanting his supper in a bit so he'll be nipping down to t' chip shop then he'll bring 'em back in here". It took some minutes for the Chief Superintendent to regain his composure and then, knowing that it would have been a wasted exercise to haul Bert over the coals, or in this case over the coke, he suggested that the villain be returned to his cell. Bert went out to collect the unlikely escapee and returned a moment later with Tom securely handcuffed. "That'll put paid to any plan of escape", he said as he pulled the reluctant coke dust covered felon back to the comfort of his cosy cell. I gave the Chief a friendly smile as he left the office but was only rewarded with a vindictive glare. Ten minutes later Tom was back shoveling coke and Bert remarked, "Sod that interfering bugger. I believe in making 'em earn their bloody keep, and another thing I'm not going to miss my fish and chips. Not when Taylor's paying".

FROM LANCASHIRE

Greetings to the Saddleworth White Rose Society from the Friends of Real Lancashire. Although there will always be friendly rivalry between the 'Inhabitants of the Red and White Rose Counties, especially in sport, we share a common cause in promoting the true identity of our historic and geographical counties.

The Friends of Real Lancashire wish to see the true boundaries of our county depicted on maps and marked by road signs as they were prior to 1974, so that it is clear to everyone that Lancashire still stretches from the River Mersey in the south, to the River Duddon and the west bank of Windermere in the north, the Irish Sea coast in the west to the true Yorkshire border in the east. In your area we do not recognise "Greater Manchester" as anything more than a defunct administrative area, it isn't a county, neither is it a postal address, so why the devil do the media keep harping on about it? We welcome the inclusion of traditional counties in the latest edition of the Royal Mail UK Addresses CD, which means that everyone in Saddleworth can and should include Yorkshire in their address.

If there are any Lancastrians living in exile in Saddleworth, Yorkshire, we urge them to both support the White Rose Society and to support their home county by Joining the Friends of Real Lancashire. Details from Chris Dawson, 1 Belvidere Park, Great Crosby, Lancashire. L23OSP. Tel.. 0151 9282770

FIRST HUDDERSFIELD BUS COMPANY.

As a result of enquiries carried out by councillor Richard Darlington of Saddleworth Parish Council and requests made by a committee member of Saddleworth White Rose Society. First Huddersfield Bus Company has agreed to issue return tickets on the 365 route Oldham-Huddersfield. This will come into effect as soon as the ticketing machines can be programmed.
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