



Saddleshworth White Rose Society

In the County of York

Newsletter 34

Response to Saddleshworth Petition

A reply has finally been received by Cllr Ken Hulme from a government minister to the record breaking Saddleshworth petition (3,500 plus) which called for a review of local government boundaries between Oldham M.B. & Saddleshworth.

The letter is positive, although not surprisingly doesn't give an immediate review of boundaries. Angela Smith (and Ruth Kelly) acknowledge Saddleshworth's concerns as perfectly legitimate though.

The ministers recognise that "in some places the boundaries of local authorities are artificial". This issue has been raised in the Government White Paper (para 3.52). There cannot be a more artificial arrangement than trying to bolt together a semi-rural Yorkshire Parish with an old Industrial Lancashire mill town. It could only have been dreamed up by a Whitehall bureaucrat.

It goes on to say we have been put on a list of areas that will be considered when, as sooner or later, boundary changes are considered.

Ken Hulme says "Angela Smith also raises the point she and Phil Woolas raised when the petition was handed in. The Government is trying to address the very serious problem of dissatisfaction and disenchantment with local government through its new White Paper. They are right that boundary changes alone won't solve all our problems." Personally I would like to see boundary changes and the new 'local vision' that the White Paper is talking about. Whatever the final outcome of any boundary changes - devolving power down to local neighbourhoods, communities and villages has to be a good thing".

Note: Cllr Hulmes reply from the Government Minister carried his true geographical address, Saddleshworth, Yorkshire

Saddleshworth's Identity

Contrary to what much OMBC literature implies, Saddleshworth, Chadderton, Crompton & Shaw, Royton, Failsworth and Lees are not parts of Oldham. All seven are administered by a joint council formed in 1974 by councillors from all seven of the town/district councils who were instructed to form a Metropolitan Council. Only later was this dubbed "Oldham" MB and this by the decision of these short sighted councillors and not the public. Each one of the seven places is a separate town/district. Collectively they constitute a local government administrative area, not a town. Oldham ends at Grains Bar on the A672, at Waterhead on the A62 and at Salem on the A669. There are signs at all these locations to indicate this. Saddleshworth is no more a part of Oldham than it would have been a part of Huddersfield or Ashton-u-Lyne, had it been similarly forcibly put into either Kirklees or Tameside Metropolitan Boroughs against the will of the vast majority of it's people. Or a part of Wakefield had it continued to be administered by the West Riding. It is an insult to our identity that the OMB Joint Council and local media frequently refer to parts of Saddleshworth and in fact other towns/districts in the admin area as Oldham. We all pay our rates to the Admin Authority not the town of Oldham

Govt. & Duchy of Lancaster Office Statements

Government Statement issued 01 Apr 1974:

The new county boundaries are **administrative areas** and will **not alter** the traditional boundaries of counties, nor is it intended that the loyalties of people living in them will change despite the different names adopted by the new administrative counties

Michael Portillo Minister of Local Government July 1990:

I can confirm the government still stand by this {the above} statement

Dept of the Environment 03 Sep 1991

As far as **postal addresses** are concerned, they are **simply sorting and routing instructions** for the use of postal authority staff and may or may not reflect geographical or administrative locations. The form these take is entirely a matter for the postal authorities and is not something over which central government has any control – nor does it have any plans for seeking such control.

Local Government Commission Draft Report 04 June 1994:

There is no question of the abolition of Historic Counties, whatever the system of local government.

Duchy of Lancaster Office 04 March 1996:

Legislation enacted for the creation of the administrative county was for the purpose of local government and **did not affect the geographical boundaries** of the County Palatine {of Lancaster}.

Local Govt. Commission 02 May 1996:

The Commission had (and has) **no intention of abolishing traditional counties**, whatever the system of local Government

Duchy of Lancaster Office 04 March 1996:

Legislation enacted for the creation of the administrative county was for the purpose of local government and **did not affect the geographical boundaries** of the County Palatine {of Lancaster}.

Uppermill Band

On Sunday 11 Mar 07 Uppermill Band was awarded 2nd place, 4th Section in the National Brass Band Championships of Gr Britian (NW Region). As a result the Band have qualified to compete in the National Finals at Harrogate 29th/30th Sep 07. The costs of this are likely to be in the region of £3,500 and they are appealing for donations towards this event. They have only 6 months to raise this amount. Any donations to this cause will be most welcome. Please make cheques payable to Uppermill Band and forward to Mr John Ward, 8 Thorpe Close, Austerlands, Saddleworth, Yorkshire OL4 3QL



The above sign was recently erected in Cleveland & Redcar Borough on the Stokesley Road between Great Ayton and Guisborough

We received the following information from Cllr Chris Abbott, Cabinet member of Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council.

Seven road signs were erected by the Borough of Redcar & Cleveland Council, paid for by a donation of £1150 from the Yorkshire Ridings Society.

Councillor Chris Abbott said:

"We are delighted that at last our real county is shown on road signs in our area. "The Coalition running Redcar & Cleveland has promoted the area as part of Yorkshire ever since it took control in May 2003. In July of that year the Council made Yorkshire part of its postal address and introduced an annual Yorkshire Day festival that has proved very successful. The Council also joined the Yorkshire Tourist Board.

"Promoting the area as part of Yorkshire, which of course it is, keeps our link with history and heritage alive. It is quite separate from the areas invented for local government administration, economic development and regional planning. These areas can change at any time but Yorkshire is one of England's 39 Counties, which have been part of our geography for more than 1000 years. Real Counties should appear on maps alongside our administrative areas

The Ridings Society campaigns for recognition that the three Ridings of Yorkshire still exist for all cultural, ceremonial, sporting and postal purposes. Local government changes in recent years have not affected the North Riding of Yorkshire. The 1972 Local Government Act abolished only North Riding County Council and not the North Riding.

Government statements made at the time and often repeated since declared that "the changes were for local government purposes only, for all other purposes Yorkshire is still Yorkshire."

The Saddleworth Accent

Sadly, accents are disappearing rapidly all over Britain. Many words commonly used not long ago have fallen into disuse. Many are being corrupted by "urban street spiel". Our Saddleworth accent is unfortunately amongst these.

Although strongly influenced by the neighbouring towns of Lancashire and Cheshire, or maybe the other way around! the Saddleworth accent, the accent of the farmers, textile workers, bandsmen etc. of these Yorkshire valley's is nevertheless a Yorkshire accent, by virtue of the fact that it is the natural accent of the people bred and raised in this part of Yorkshire. It was blended and formed by our Saddleworth ancestors over many centuries and from whom we have inherited it to varying degrees.

To local people at least there is a vast difference between the accent of Saddleworth and those of the towns to our west and surprisingly, an even greater one with those to our east, even though the latter are in the same county.

Saddleworth's accent is of course a blend of the accents of all of these places and although carrying a strong Lancashire influence is nevertheless unique to Saddleworth. Long may it remain so.

Twenty or so years ago, "Saddleworth" was in common usage by a majority of mill workers, farm workers, joiners, plumbers etc. "o' reet, owd mon?" was then by far, a more expected greeting than today's "hiya".

As a child I remember the beautiful mellow accent of the old people of Saddleworth. It flowed like music, even words such as "onyrode" (anyway) and "appen" (maybe). These words, whilst sounding vulgar in many other accents, sounded soft and gentle when "caressed" by Saddleworth folk.

I feel it is sad that words like kwathren (quarter) shus-how (however) weeran-ye-bin (an anagram for, where have you been) and many more may completely disappear before long except where they are preserved, usually inaccurately in plays or in some instances in dialect poetry. But of course dialect is quite different to the sort of accent I so lovingly recall as a child.

Wherever I have been in the world I have always been proud of my Saddleworth accent, just as our local poets and historians were and I have no desire to ever change it.

I find it unbelievable that words such as sor (saw) drawring (drawing) and fink, fought and free (think, thought and three) can creep into our vocabulary in preference to local words! Which for these latter three would be reckon, thowt and tray. Long may Saddleworth people and their true accent remain in these valley's.

Mr Frank Allsopp 1922 - 2007-03-12

Frank died on the 3rd January 2007 after a short illness. Born and bred in Greenfield where he remained throughout his life, he leaves wife Kathleen, son Neil, daughter in law Carol and grandson Richard.

He spent almost his entire life at Robert Fletcher & Son Papermakers, where he was Transport Manager for many years. Proud of his Yorkshire heritage, he was particularly proud of and interested in all things Saddleworth. He possessed an extensive knowledge of local history, and was highly regarded for his recitations of local dialect poetry. A lifelong member of Friezland Bowling Club and Greenfield Cricket Club, he also supported many local organisations including the White Rose Society.

Regarded by all who knew him as a true gentleman, Saddleworth has lost one of her finest sons.

Mr Fred Langfield of Uppermill

Fred Langfield was born 25 Nov 1927 died Dec31 2006.

He was a True Saddleworth man born at 3, Chapel Street, Uppermill, although he lived at 4 different addresses in Uppermill all the houses were within 50 yards of where he was born, on the same street.

He embraced Saddleworth and all its traditions from Whit Friday to the White Rose Society, local hunting and other sports, football, rugby, cricket and crown green bowling. He enjoyed village life and being near to the countryside, which he loved. He enjoyed walking all round Saddleworth watching the local wildlife. In his younger days he played football for Uppermill Rockets, he crown green bowled at Uppermill Cricket and Bowling Club. He enjoyed gardening and he received several commendations for his garden.

He was a painter and decorator by trade and became self employed after many years of working for local companies he worked for many local people around Saddleworth.

He was very much a family man, married to Elsie for 52 years they had two sons Alan and Roy and 3 grandsons which he doted on Andrew, Steven and Mark, and also a wonderful daughter in law Susan who is married to Alan.

He died at the age of 79 on New Years Eve, suddenly but peacefully at home, his funeral was well attended by over 200 people at Saddleworth Church, there were representatives from the 3 local hunts which he supported, in full livery accompanied by a couple of hounds, the Colne Valley Beagles, the Holme Valley Beagles and the Pennine Foxhounds and many local people. This was followed by a celebration of his life at Uppermill Cricket and Bowling Club where he spent many an happy hour. Many of his hunting friends sang some of his favourite songs in a relaxed and jovial atmosphere and enjoyed Buckley's potato pie as Fred had.

He was a well known and respected local character who will be sadly missed by everyone.