The career of PC Thomas Clifford, 1880-85

John Clifford, June 2020

In each of our family trees, sixteen positions are occupied by our great-great grandparents. We inherit our surname from just one of them. My great-great grandfather, Thomas Clifford, was born in 1850 in Hugglescote, north-west Leicestershire. He grew up in Allestree and Darley Abbey, just north of Derby. Thomas spent most of his working life with the Midland Railway, based in Derby. But he also had a brief career with Derbyshire Constabulary, posted to the north of the county on the southern edge of Sheffield.

Early years

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Leicestershire roots

Thomas' relatives lived in north-west Leicestershire. His father, Charles, was an illiterate agricultural labourer, as were some of his uncles and his grandfather.

Charles Clifford married Thomas' mother, Catherine Harrison, in Hugglescote in 1848. Their first three children were born there: Helena in 1847, Thomas on 21 March 1850, and their brother John in 1852, but he died within months. They had moved to nearby Ibstock by then, but did not stay long.

Unlike their fathers, few of Thomas' cousins worked in agriculture. Most were employed in increasingly mechanised industries.

Main Street, Hugglescote in north-west Leicestershire. This is the oldest known photograph of the village, taken in the 1870s. Thomas Clifford and two of his siblings were born there. (With thanks to Steve Duckworth of Coalville Heritage Society)

Allestree and Darley Abbey

Some family members moved to the towns and villages in Derbyshire's Derwent Valley, such as Allestree. Charles, Catherine and the children moved there in the early 1850s. Thomas' brothers, James and William, were born in Allestree in 1854 and 1857.

Duffield Road, Allestree, around 1900. Thomas and his siblings grew up here from around 1853 to 1863. (OldDerbyPhotos.co.uk, no.360)

But Charles died in 1857, aged just thirty-four. Catherine had to work at the cotton mill in neighbouring Darley Abbey. The children were at least attending Allestree village school, provided by the mill-owning Evans family, who had also built the homes for their workers. Helena soon joined her mother at the mill.

At eleven, Thomas was working as a garden labourer. He continued doing so into his early twenties. Catherine Clifford remarried in 1863. She and the children moved in with her new husband, James Monk, in Darley Abbey. He was also a garden labourer, and Thomas may have already been working with him. Helena also married a garden labourer, Lewis Mather, in 1868. They may have been working together 'up at the big house'. The nearest large properties were Darley Hall and Darley House, both owned by the Evans family. Helena and Lewis would have eight children. In 1871, James was working as a servant in Litchurch, just south of Derby city centre. William was a factory hand, probably at the Darley Abbey cotton mill.

Boar's Head cotton mills, owned by Walter Evans & Co. From the 1850s to the 1880s, several members of Thomas' family worked here. These included his mother, siblings, step-siblings, his wife Annie, his father-in-law and Annie's siblings. (Mid-C19th engraving – with thanks to Tony Lintott, Darley Abbey History Group)

Derwent Weir and toll bridge at Darley Abbey around 1905. To the right is the mill workers' dining room. In the background are St Matthews church, where Thomas got married in 1875, and Darley House, where he may have worked as a gardener for the mill-owning Evans family. (From original postcard, Scott Russell No.264, author's collection)

Locomotive fireman

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Marriage and family

Thomas married my great-great grandmother, Anne (Annie) Norton, on 21 June 1875 at Darley Abbey St Matthews.

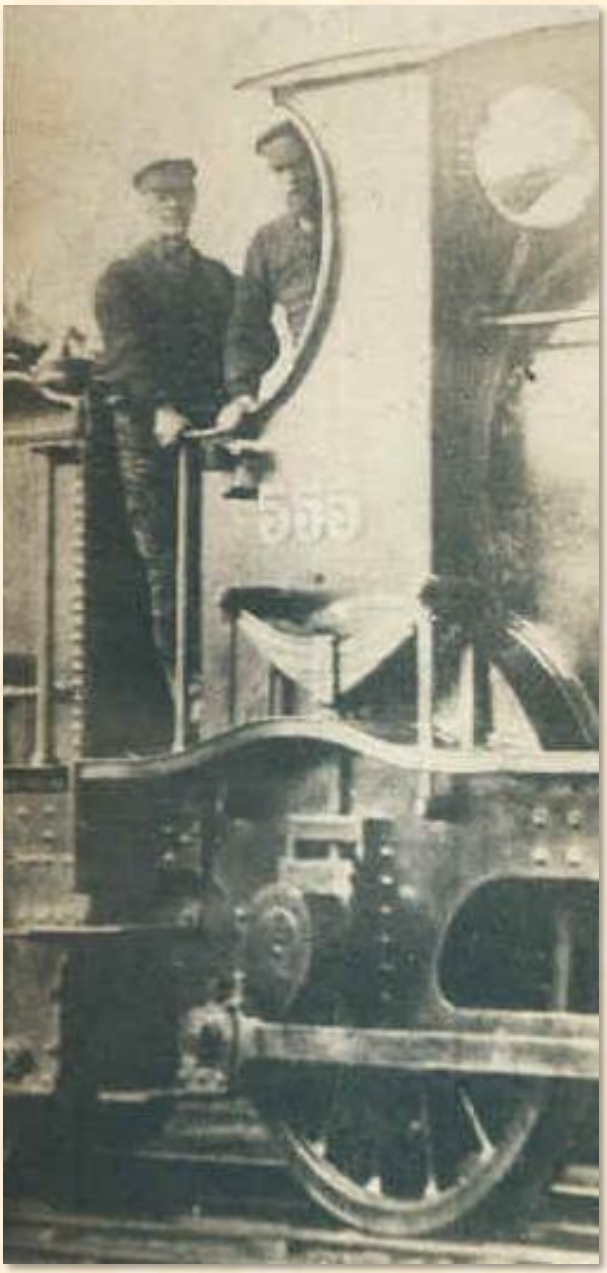
Thomas joined the expanding Midland Railway in the early 1870s and became a locomotive fireman. It seems he advanced quickly, possibly due to a growing demand for more firemen as those ahead of them were promoted to become drivers.

Thomas and Annie made their first home in Derby at 3 Church Lane, off Liversage Road. This was to the south-east of the town centre, behind Holy Trinity Church on London Road. Thomas had a half-mile (800 m) walk to the Derby engine shed, just south of the main railway station.

Church Lane, Derby, where Thomas and Annie Clifford made their first family home at No.3 in 1875 – seen here on the right around 1960. The street was demolished around 1970. (Pete Davies; Derby Telegraph)

Thomas and Annie's first child, Charles, my great grandfather, was born at Church Lane on 24 March 1876. Charles's brother James was also born in Derby in 1878.

Thomas' sister Helena had the fifth of her eight children that year – first cousins to Charles and James. Also that year, Thomas' brother William married Susan Slack. They would have five children. William would be employed by the Midland Railway for the rest of his working life.



A Midland Class 480, designed and built between 1863 and 1869 under the supervision of Matthew Kirtley, Chief Mechanical Engineer. It is seen here at Lancaster in the 1880s. Thomas would have been familiar with these locomotives as a fireman in the 1870s. (With thanks to Steve Rabone, whose great grandfather, John Edward Rabone, is on the left)

A driver and fireman in the cab of a Kirtley Class 700, seen here before 1907 when the Midland's numbering system was changed. As a fireman in the late 1870s, Thomas would have also been familiar with these locomotives, which were built between 1869 and 1874. (Mick Hymans collection, with thanks to Charlie Verrall)

Time for a change

Thomas' mother, Catherine, died in January 1880, aged fifty-nine. His brother James then died in the February, aged only twenty-five. Annie was heavily pregnant with their third child.

This may have prompted Thomas, who turned thirty in the March, to decide that he should "better himself" for his family's sake. This was the reason he gave when he left the Midland that spring and became a policeman.

The right decision?

Like any wife, Annie would have been apprehensive. She wouldn't have known where Thomas would be posted, and where they would bring up their growing family. But she would have been keenly aware of a fatal incident involving police officers in Derby on 12 July 1879.

A group of constables saw a pony and trap being driven erratically by Gerald Mainwaring in the company of Annie Green, a prostitute. Mainwaring was the son of Revd Charles Henry Mainwaring. His mother had aristocratic connections.

The fatal shooting of PC Joseph Moss by Gerald Mainwaring in Derby on 12 July 1879 – portrayed on the front page of the Illustrated Police News *for Saturday, 8 August 1879. (Newspapers Collection, The British Library)*

PC Shirley judged that they were drunk and requisitioned a cab to pursue them. PC 35 Joseph Moss and PC John Clamp followed on foot. The policemen caught up with the pair and took them to the lock-up at Derby police station, where they were assisted by PC Price.

Annie Green became violent. When the constables restrained her, Mainwaring pulled out a revolver. He shot PC Moss in the lower chest and PC Price in the arm. Moss died the next day in Derbyshire Royal Infirmary. A memorial plaque at Lock-up Yard marks the site of the shooting.

Moss was twenty-six years old. Annie Clifford was not to know that he would be the only Derbyshire policeman to this day to be murdered in the course of his duty.

Joining Derbyshire Constabulary

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Urban and regional police forces

The first professional police forces in the UK were established in 1800 in Glasgow and Belfast. These were followed by Newcastle and, in the 1820s, by Rochdale and Oldham in Lancashire. The London force was established under Home Secretary Robert Peel's Metropolitan Police Act of 1829.

The Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 required 178 boroughs to set up paid police forces. Derby and Chesterfield founded theirs in 1836. Within twenty years, every city and major town in the UK had its own police force.

The Rural Constabulary Act of 1839 allowed counties to establish their own police forces. Wiltshire was the first to do so in 1839. Derbyshire followed in 1857 with 156 men joining that year. More were recruited for postings to smaller towns and villages around the county.

Borough forces remained distinct from their surrounding counties for many decades. Derby was eventually absorbed by Derbyshire Constabulary in 1967.

Appointment

Thomas would have applied to join Derbyshire Constabulary at its headquarters at St Mary's Gate in Derby town centre. This was less than a mile's (1.6 km) walk from his home on Church Lane.

The Constabulary register states that Thomas was recommended for the job by a number of people, but only one is named – William Holmes. If he was a fellow railway employee, he may have been the railway clerk of that name, according to the 1881 census, living at 23 Charnwood Street. This was a third of a mile (500 m) from Church Lane. Or he may have been William Holmes the railway porter, living at 8 Sheffield Place, near Derby railway station.

Thomas was appointed as a 3rd Class Constable on 13 April 1880. His daughter, Catherine Anne, was born six days later, on 19 April. She would be known as Annie, like her mother.

He was given the number PC 180. His height was recorded as 5 feet 8 inches (1.73 m). This was an inch or two less than the requirement of many other forces.

The original crest of Derbyshire Constabulary, founded in 1857. (DerbyshirePoliceHistory.co.uk)

Thomas would have been issued with an oil lantern, leather belt with a metal clasp, hand cuffs, a staff (truncheon), a cape and leggings.

He would have joined his fellow officers from around the county at the quarterly drill and inspection of uniform and equipment. This was held at the Derby Arboretum for a number of years, and was later hosted at Derby Divisional Headquarters.

His pay would have been around twenty-one shillings a week (£1/1s). He would be dismissed if he contracted debts that he was unable to pay.

Each superintendent was provided with a pony and trap, whereas constables patrolled their beats on foot. They were on call twenty-four hours a day, and prolonged exposure in cold and wet weather was a real hazard.

Policemen were forbidden from influencing elections and were not allowed to vote themselves until 1888. By 1889, Derbyshire Constabulary had 282 men on active duty.

PC 221 James Baker of Derbyshire Constabulary in 1888, wearing the uniform that PC 180 Thomas Clifford would have worn. This style of helmet (initially without a badge) was used from 1880 until 1893. (DerbyshirePoliceHistory.co.uk)

Metal clasp from the type of leather belt issued to members of Derbyshire Constabulary from when the force was established in 1857. These were handed to new officers after those leaving the force had finished with them, and it's though they remained in use until the 1930s. (DerbyshirePoliceHistory.co.uk)

'Bulls Eye' police oil lantern made by Hiatt's of Birmingham, of the style issued to members of Derbyshire Constabulary. (DerbyshirePoliceHistory.co.uk)

Handcuffs issued to members of Derbyshire Constabulary from the 1870s onwards. They were also known as 'handbolts', 'snips' or 'snaps', and were still in use in the mid-1970s! (DerbyshirePoliceHistory.co.uk)

Norton

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The parish

Thomas was sent to the north Derbyshire ‘constablewick’ of Norton, just under four miles (6 km) south of the centre of Sheffield. The city was just over the border in Yorkshire and is surrounded by hills. With a high point of 719 ft (219 m) above sea level, Norton is at the top of the southern-most hill.

John Marius Wilson's *Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales* from 1870-72 describes Norton as “a village, a parish, and a sub-district, in the district of Ecclesall-Bierlow and county of Derby…a pleasant place”.

White’s General and Commercial Directory of Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley, Chesterfield and Worksop for 1879 had over 1,100 pages. The page for Norton stated that the village was “situated on the highest point and nearly in the centre of its parish” which “occupies an undulated and well-wooded surface”.

The Oakes Park, Norton, painted by Charles Ashmore in 1910. These were grounds surrounding the grand home of the Bagshawe family. (PictureSheffield.com, y09213)

Wilson’s *Gazetteer* listed the villages in the parish as “Norton-Lees, Greenhill, Backmoor, Maugerhay, Hemsworth, and Woodseats… also the extra-parochial tract of Beauchief-Abbey.” Norton Woodseats, a mile (1.6 km) north of Norton, was also known simply as ‘Woodseats. There were post offices at Norton, Woodseats and Greenhill, a mile and a half (2.5 km) west of Norton. In the course of his duties, Thomas would become familiar with all of these places and more.

To the south-west of Greenhill, the Bradway tunnel had been excavated in 1870 for the Midland Railway, between Dronfield and Dore near Totley. Following the River Sheaf north of the tunnel, the line took trains between

Chesterfield and the then-new Sheffield Midland Station. The tunnel is 2,026 yards (1,853m) long and is still in use today. Eight ventilation shafts of up to 300 ft (90 m) deep were dug. North of the tunnel, the line turned north-east through Norton Hammer before descending into Sheffield. The Midland erected a mission hall at Bradway for the good of the railwaymen's souls. In the tunnel's first ten years of operation, Thomas may have travelled through it many times as a fireman on the footplate of a locomotive.

Churches

Norton's parish church, dedicated to St James, dates from around 1170. The vicar from 1844 until 1888 was Henry Hollingworth Pearson. He had been preceded by his father, also Henry, who was the incumbent from 1812. Restoration of the building began in 1881. The interior was remodelled and ancient features were rediscovered. Thomas would have known Revd H H Pearson and would have witnessed the progress of the restoration. St James re-opened in July 1882. St Paul's in Norton Lees was new, opened in 1877. The vicar was Revd William Mercer.

There was a Wesleyan Methodist chapel in Greenhill and one in Backmoor. John Wesley had preached several times at Woodseats House on Chesterfield Road from 1753 onwards. There were also United Free Methodist Chapels at Greenhill, Bradway and on Derbyshire Lane in Woodseats. Also in Woodseats was the Methodist New Connexion chapel on Chantrey Road.

Norton Christian and Mutual Improvement Association had been formed in 1871. By 1879, it had 100 members.

Schools

The old parish school in the hamlet of Maugerhay had been endowed by Leonard Gill in 1654. Local industrialist Charles Cammell had a school and lecture room built at the bottom of Cobnar Road in 1861. There was also a Church of England National School in Greenhill.

Norton School Board was established in 1873. According to *White's Directory* of 1879 "a new schoolhouse, capable of holding 400 children. was opened by the Board in Derbyshire Lane in 1875, at a cost of £2000." This was located at Mundella Place, a *cul-de-sac* off Derbyshire Lane, and is known today as Mundella Primary School. The Board opened another school on Chesterfield Road and one more in Greenhill.

Board Schools were built following the Elementary Education Act of 1870. This was introduced by MP William Forster and supported by Anthony J Mundella, an MP for Sheffield from 1868. The street in Woodseats was named after him. The Act established local education authorities which were empowered, where there was limited capacity at existing schools, to make new provision for children aged between five and twelve.

School attendance was not made compulsory across the country at that time, but Boards could make this a local requirement. Norton did, and parents who failed to send their children to the Board Schools were not only fined but were 'named and shamed' in local newspaper reports of magistrates' hearings.

Local schools were closed for three weeks in October and November 1877 on the recommendation of Dr George Booker. Scarlet fever had broken out in the parish, especially in a nearby area being developed for housing by a 'Land Society'. This was possibly the Mount View Land Society on Harvey Clough Road. The schools re-opened after being cleaned and fumigated with equipment provided by Dr Booker.

Dr Booker lived on Netherdale in Woodseats. He was a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons (MRCS) and a Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries (LSA). He was a public vaccinator, and the medical officer for the Ecclesall district, which included the civil parish of Norton.

A J Mundella served under Prime Ministers Gladstone and Lord Rosebery, and was Vice-President of the Committee on Education from 1880 to 1885. His Elementary Education Act of 1880 made education compulsory for all children aged between five and ten. His 'Code' of 1882 developed standard syllabus requirements and introduced school performance inspections.

Little Norton Lane, Norton. The cottages, seen here around 1910, were demolished in the 1960s. PictureSheffield.com, s17630)

Residents and their occupations

Wilson's *Gazetteer* provided statistics on Norton's population – over 1,800 in 1851 and over 2,300 in 1861. *White's Directory* stated that the population had increased to 2,800 by 1871. It had no doubt exceeded 3,000 by 1879, when they were living in 479 houses.

Harold Armitage published his book about the history and character of Norton, *Chantrey Land*, in 1910. This is the name by which the area became known locally, in honour of its favourite son, renowned sculptor Sir Francis Chantrey. Various streets and establishments are still named after him.

Armitage explains that "Norton's natural, unprotected, bounty-free industry has…been connected…with iron and steel. Sickles and scythes and such manly implements have been her contribution to industrial evolution…not in factories, but in picturesque workshops in the country lanes, and sometimes their anvil has been set up in a shop attached to their home and with the pleasing surroundings of apple-blossoms, vegetables and flowers, with ready access to the dinner and tea table and other homely advantages."

Others made nails in their home workshops. Backmoor was known for nail making. However, Armitage reported that, by 1910, "the jealous, greedy cities have clawed the craftsmen…away from their village homes and gardens into crowded streets and factories".

'File cutting' was also a local trade, putting criss-crossed grooves into file 'blanks' using a hammer and chisel: "A few file cutters have been able to retain their position as outworkers, so that the tap-tap-tap of the 'nicker peckers' may yet be heard in some places as an accompaniment to the droning of the bee".

Local farmers produced wheat, oats, barley, turnips, and hay. They also supplied cows'

milk, not only to their own communities but also to the city. Village boys delivered milk in barrels on the backs of donkeys, which their customers became very fond of.

Armitage remembered one Norton donkey in particular: “Quite a series of donkey boys came and went during the many years that this old donkey was growing grey in the service of the people of Heeley…the boys…permitted me to ride upon this patient beast when the milk barrels had been emptied. One of the traits that endeared Neddy to the people of Heeley was the undeviating regularity of his habits…he knew his stations better than the milk boy, and seemed to stand even in the same footprints every morning…In the early eighties he died”. Thomas may well have got to know Neddy in the twilight of his milk-delivering career.

Milk Boys, View of Sheffield from Norton – *an engraving based on a drawing and a painting by Henry P Parker, in which one of the boys is thought to represent the young Francis Chantrey. (*The Land We Live In*, Vol.1, p.281, 1847 –* [*PictureSheffield.com, s12728*](PictureSheffield.com, s12728)*)*

The parish included a number of grand residences. Colonel Nathaniel Creswick of the *Sheffield Artillery Volunteers (Fourth West York)* lived at Chantry Grange. Barrister and magistrate Edward Montague Earle Welby lived at Norton House.

Norton Hall

Charles Cammell lived at Norton Hall until his death in 1879. *White’s Directory* described the Hall as a “large and handsome stone mansion, in a finely wooded park, commanding picturesque views”.

Cammell was a local magistrate, and also lay rector at Norton St James, which was next door to Norton Hall. His son Bernard succeeded him as lord of the manor and lay rector. Charles’s widow and family paid for much of the church restoration in 1881-82.

Charles Cammell & Co Ltd, made a range of steel and iron products. These included rolled iron armour plates for the Admiralty. For the railways, they made cast steel rails, axles, piston and connecting rods, boiler plates, springs and buffers. Thomas would have been very familiar with their products as a railwayman in the 1870s.

Cammell’s Sheffield manufacturing sites were at the Cyclops Works on Savile Street, to the north-east of the city centre, and Grimesthorpe Steel Works, further to the north-east. They also owned Yorkshire Steel & Iron Works at Peniston and the Oaks Collieries at Ardsley, both eighteen miles (22.5 km) to the north near Barnsley. Bernard Cammell’s brother George opened millstone quarries on the family’s Brookfield Manor estate. This was near Hathersage, ten miles (16 km) west of Norton.

Norton Hall was used as a hospital in later decades, but has since been converted into luxury private apartments.

The Bagshawes

The Oakes with its surrounding park was the home of Francis Westby Bagshawe. It was owned by his family for nearly three hundred years until the 1980s. The house had a terrace designed by Sir Francis Chantrey.

Like Charles Cammell, F W Bagshawe was a local magistrate for many years. He had been appointed as Deputy Lieutenant and High Sheriff of Derbyshire in 1868, and also served as a County Councilor for Norton. He was a trustee of Maugerhay school, and of one of the numerous charitable funds in the parish. He was also a vicar’s warden at St James’s.

The family also owned the Bagshawe Arms in the nearby hamlet of Hemsworth, described in Wilson’s *Gazetteer* as “a good inn; and is a seat of petty sessions, and the monthly meeting-place of a local farmers' club”. The

club was the Norton Ploughing Society, which held ploughing competitions and annual dinners. Its members included magistrates, landowners and the vicar. An earlier agricultural society, the Norton Farmers' Club, was founded by F W Bagshawe's father. The Club transferred to Chesterfield where it held an annual show in partnership with the East Derbyshire Agricultural Society.

The Oakes in Oakes Park, built around 1670 and seen here in the late nineteenth century. It was the home of the Bagshawe family for nearly three hundred years. Today, The Oakes is Christian residential activity centre for young people. (PictureSheffield.com, s05867)

Courts of 'Petty Session', presided over by magistrates, had been established in the 1730s to cover local 'petty sessional' or county 'hundred' divisions. They took cases such as assault, drunkenness, examining illegitimacy, arbitration, minor theft and larceny – the unlawful taking of the property of a person or business. From 1872, they also approved licenses to sell alcohol in alehouses and public houses. They became known 'magistrates' courts'.

In PC Clifford's area of north Derbyshire, Petty Sessions were held on Mondays. The venues were Eckington court house, Dronfield town hall and, in the summer, the Bagshawe Arms at Hemsworth. Harold Armitage remembered often attending the Hemsworth Petty Sessions, "held usually in the club room over the stables, occasionally in the coffee-room". Thomas would bring his detainees before F W Bagshawe on several occasions.

Sir Francis Chantrey

The most famous Norton resident was Sir Francis L Chantrey. He was born in 1781 in the hamlet of Jordanthorpe, just south of Norton, where his father had a small farm. He worked as a milk boy and, according to Armitage, "with his donkey Jock, he went with the milk, eggs and butter of the farm to the neighbouring town of Sheffield". He was next employed by a grocer in Sheffield, before becoming an apprentice wood carver. He set up a portrait studio in the city in 1802.

The busts he produced included Kings George III and IV, Admirals Duncan, Howe, Vincent and Nelson, the Duke of Wellington, William Pitt the Younger, James Watt, George Canning and George Washington. He also created four monuments to senior military figures for St Paul's Cathedral in London.

Chantrey's funeral procession in 1841 was watched by local people all along its route from Chesterfield to Norton. The service at St James was attended by many notable Sheffield residents. Villagers carried his coffin.

His tomb in the churchyard, overlooked by Norton Hall, is plain as he disliked excessive ornamentation. But a 22 ft (6.7 m) high memorial obelisk, designed by his friend Phillip Hardwick and paid for by public subscription, was erected outside the churchyard in 1854.

In his will, Chantrey left money for educating children in the parish and for supporting the poor. But he left the greater part of his fortune as the Chantrey Bequest for the purchase of art produced in Britain for the benefit of the nation. The first purchases of a now extensive collection were made after his widow died in 1875.

PC Clifford would have met people who remembered Chantrey. In 1881, Thomas Higginbottom was sixty-four years old and was living with his family in Backmoor. Higginbottom had been a trombone player in St James's church, and was an under-gardener at The Oakes for nearly fifty years. He then came out of retirement in his seventies to work as a road labourer.

When Chantrey visited the Bagshawes at The Oakes, Higginbottom remembered him making time to chat and joke with him. As a young man in his early 20s, he helped at Chantrey's funeral.

As an old man, Thomas Higginbottom received a pension from Chantrey's charitable fund. By 1901 he and his family had moved to 231 Derbyshire Lane in Woodseats. Up to his death in 1909 at the age of 92, Armitage knew of Higginbottom living in the nearby hamlet of Lightwood, and included a reference to him in his book, *Chantrey Land*, just before it went to press the following year.

Norton St James with the monument to the sculptor, Sir Francis Chantrey, who died in 1841. The monument was installed in 1854, and is seen here before it was restored in 1881. (PictureSheffield.com, s04611)

Norton Association for the Prosecution of Felons and other Depredators

Armitage says that this local initiative, "Older than police organisation as we know it to-day", was founded in 1784 by Thomas Fox, Chantrey's schoolmaster.

Funds were raised by "subscription…a voluntary police rate, and the members received aid for the capture and prosecution of horse stealers, sheep stealers, fowl robbers, garden robbers, burglars and other reprobates." The "Bagshawes and other local gentlemen, gave liberal support to the association". Revd Henry Pearson had been a member. In 1878 the membership stood at forty.

Other areas of Derbyshire such as Buxton and Heanor had similar societies. For example, they were able to fund night constables in areas such as Greenhill where residents requested help to suppress crime. Once Derbyshire Constabulary was formed, these societies may have provided some support to professional police officers like PC Clifford.

In 1877, the Norton Association prosecuted a miner for stealing fowls from a farmer in Lightwood, and a farm labourer for stealing turnips from his employer in Woodseats. But they did not appear in the newspapers often.

As Armitage explains, "Much of the money went in eating and drinking, and the prosecutions cost more than the stolen goods…the lawyers must have had even better pickings than the thieves, to say nothing of the expenses of the numerous committee meetings, at which members were fortified with brandy…it has not been found desirable [in 1910] to dissolve the association."

Eckington

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District HQ

The headquarters of the District of Derbyshire Constabulary which included Norton was at Eckington, six miles (10 km) to the south-east.

Eckington District policemen were posted to several other Derbyshire towns and villages on the edge of Sheffield: Beighton, Bradway, Dronfield, Dronfield Woodhouse, Eckington Colliery, Greenhill, Hackenthorpe, Halfway, Killamarsh, Mosborough, Ridgeway, Totley and Woodseats. The District also included Clowne, Barlborough, Elmton, Renishaw, Unstone and Whitwell. These were all a few miles south and closer to Bolsover and Chesterfield.

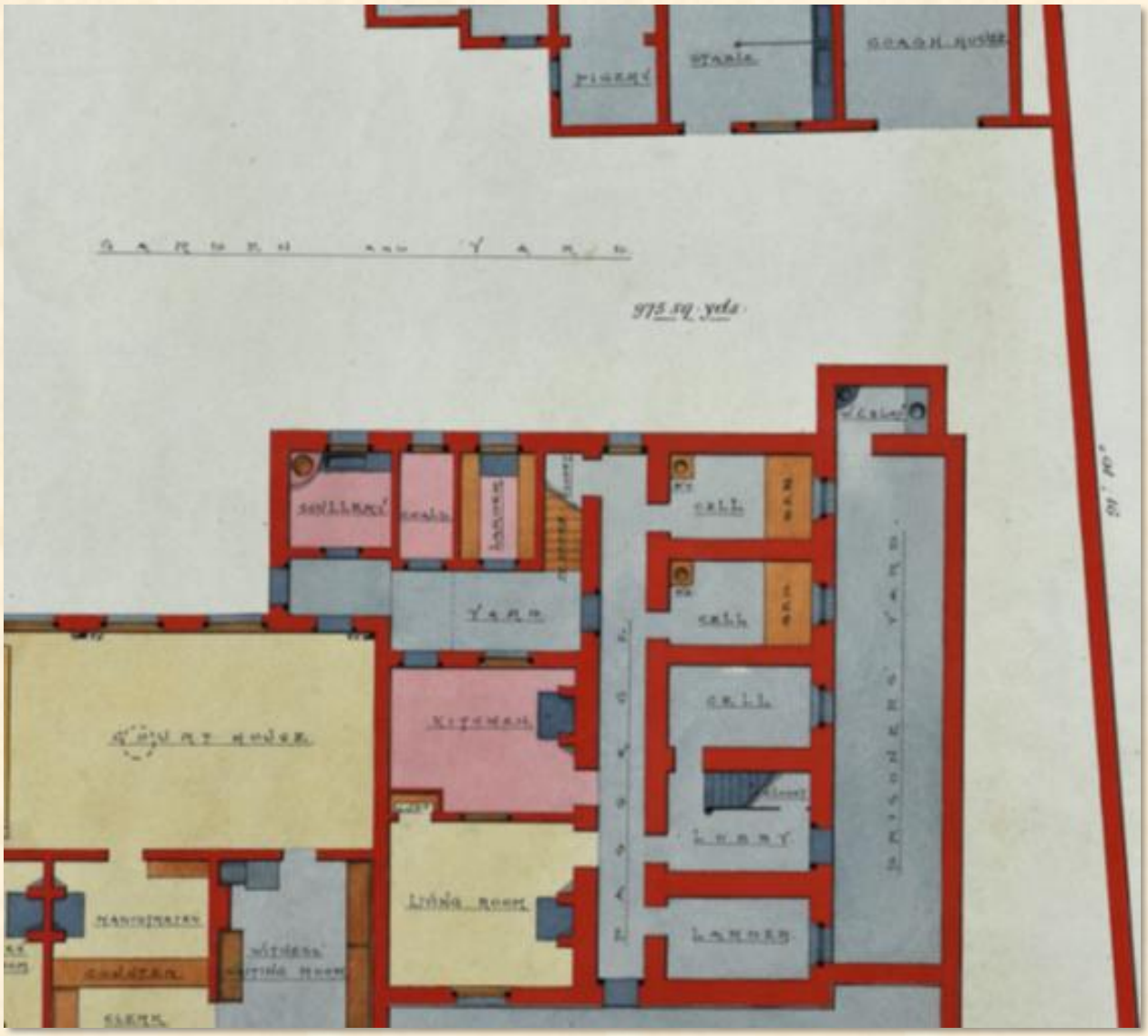
A PC George Clifford, possibly a distant relative of Thomas, had joined Derbyshire Constabulary in 1870. He too served in the Eckington District. He was initially posted to Whitwell, seven miles (11 km) south-east of Eckington. In 1880, he was promoted to Sergeant and transferred to Belper, 23 miles (37 km) further to the south-west.

Thomas and George's commanding officer at Eckington was Superintendent Peter Cruit. He was in charge of the Eckington District for twenty years from 1872. Superintendent Cruit could move his men around, so Thomas and George could have worked in each other's areas. But incidents in the north of the District were likely to have been attended by Thomas.

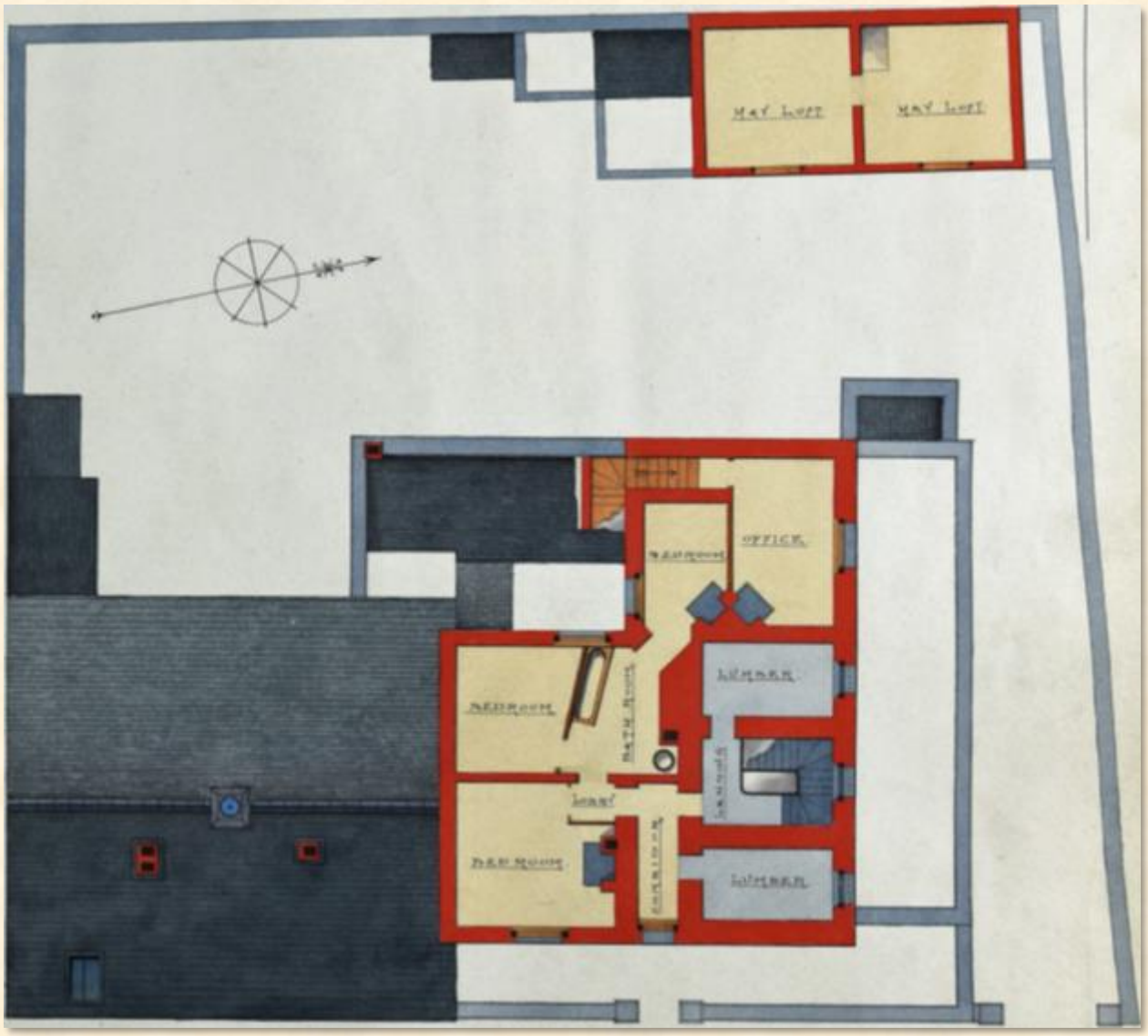
The former police District headquarters on Church Street in Eckington. The Superintendent from 1872 to 1892 was Peter Cruit. He and his family lived in the house. The single-storey building to the left was the court house. These were built in the early 1850s at a cost estimated by the architect of £750. PC Clifford presented his detainees here to the magistrates at Petty Sessions hearings on Mondays, when they were not being held at Hemsworth or Dronfield. The house has been a private home since around 2000, as has the court house since around 2015. (Photographer: Nicol Bradshaw)

The headquarters included a house for the superintendent, a court house, and cells for use as a 'lock-up' for prisoners awaiting presentation to the magistrates. Contact with Constabulary Headquarters in Derby was by telegram or letter, until the new technology of telephones arrived in the 1890s.

On the day of the census in April 1881, Superintendent Cruit was living in the police house with his wife Catherine, their daughters Mary, Catherine and Agnes, and their son Peter. The children were aged between nine and sixteen. In the cells were three coal miners, a general dealer and a wire worker.



Architect's drawing, dated 11 April 1851, of the ground floor of Eckington District police headquarters and court house. The smaller court house to the left included a witnesses' waiting room, clerk's office, magistrates' retiring room with its own entrance, and the court room to the rear. The larger building had a living room, kitchen, scullery and larder for use by the Superintendent's family. The remainder of the ground floor included three cells, a larder and a long, narrow, unroofed prisoners' exercise yard. The driveway to the right led around to a walled rear yard and garden. The structures at top right were two piggeries, a stable and a coach house with hay loft for the superintendent's pony and trap. (Derbyshire Record Office, D2200/C/1/1 – Volume of County Buildings and Lock Ups, Plan 39)



Architect's drawing of 1851 showing the roof of Eckington court house and the first floor of the police house. Upstairs were the superintendent's office (with a staircase to the rear yard) and three bedrooms for his family. In the centre was the bathroom, with the bath positioned at an angle. The building was sold to Eckington Parish Council in 1905 for £510, when the police headquarters moved to nearby Renishaw. The narrow prisoner's exercise yard on the right was then roofed to create additional rooms. (Derbyshire Record Office, D2200/C/1/1 – Volume of County Buildings and Lock Ups, Plan 39)

Sheffield

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County border

Yorkshire's historical boundary with Derbyshire and Norton parish followed two rural water courses. One was the River Sheaf, from which Sheffield took its name. The other was the Meersbrook, a tributary of the Sheaf. The Sheffield suburb of Heeley was on the Yorkshire side. Meersbrook was on the Derbyshire side.

The old main road from Sheffield to Chesterfield and London used Derbyshire Lane through Woodseats. From 1757, a new 'turnpike' toll road followed a less steep incline through Woodseats. This became known as Chesterfield Road, and would be designated as the A61 under Ministry of Transport's road numbering scheme of 1921.

The artist, J M W Turner, visited Sheffield in 1793 to produce drawings for a publisher. In his book, *South Pennine Country*, published in 1979, Roger Redfern describes how Turner's "first sight of the town would be from the top of the steep ground immediately to the north of Norton village, where the old main road (Derbyshire Lane) skirted Meersbrook Park. It has been suggested that Turner knew instinctively that he was not likely to find a better belvedere of Sheffield than this, with that sudden, broad vista over the Sheaf Valley to the major buildings of the town centre".

Steelopolis

Henry J Palmer wrote an article on *Cutlery and Cutlers at Sheffield* for the August 1884 edition of *The English Illustrated Magazine*. He explained "that the cutlery trade is the industry upon which the prosperity of Sheffield was built, and which has been most constant". However, he conceded that, "the remarkable developments of the steel trade have long pushed the historic craft from its stool of honour".

Sheffield had become the iron, steel and cutlery captial of the world, and was nicknamed "Steel City". The surrounding hills provided iron ore, forests and coal for fuel, and stone for grinding wheels. Several rivers, including the Sheaf, powered machinery until steam engines took over.

Benjamin Huntsman used his 'crucible' method to mass-produce high-quality steel in Sheffield from 1742. The next year, Thomas Boulsover, a Sheffield cutler, achieved the plating of copper with a thin layer of silver. Soon, every middle class family in Britain had silver-plated cutlery, teapots and candlesticks.

In 1858, Henry Bessemer set up in the city his modified furnace, known as the 'Bessemer Convertor". This blew air through molten 'pig' iron to burn the carbon out. Controlled amounts of carbon could then be added back in to produce low-, mild- or high-carbon steel. Tons could be made cheaply in minutes, such as components for railways and bridges. Sheffield manufacturer John Brown licenced Bessemer's design and introduced his method for producing rolled armour plate for naval ships. Charles Cammell followed suit.

The city's annual steel production increased from a few hundred tons in the mid-eighteenth century to tens of thousands, dwarfing production across Europe. In 1871, Sheffield exported three times as much rail track to the United States as was made there.

The last complete crucible steel furnace in the UK can be seen Sheffield's Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet museum. A Bessemer converter is on display at Kelham Island Museum, north of the city centre.


Heeley
Meersbrook Park
Meersbrook House
Norton Lees
Thorpe House
Lees Hall
Newfield Green
Buck Wood
Rollestone Wood
Fourlane Ends
Norton Woodseats
Herdings
Bolehill
Old Park
Sheephill Farm
Backmoor
Hemsworth
Meadow Head
Cobnar Wood
Norton
Norton Park
The Oaks
Oaks Park
North Croft
Little Norton
Jordanthorpe
Greenhill
Newfield Spring Wood
Lightwood
Norton
4436·715
305·231

Previous page:

The parish of Norton, bounded to the north-west by the River Sheaf and to the north-east by the Meersbrook. The two water courses formed the boundary between Derbyshire and Yorkshire (West Riding). As Sheffield grew, the county boundary was gradually moved southwards from Heeley between 1901 and 1933. Parts of Norton still straddle the border.

The village centre and St James's church are between Norton Park, home of the Cammells, and Oakes Park, home of the Bagshawes. Above Oakes Park are the hamlets of Backmoor and Hemsworth. Below Norton is the hamlet of Jordanthorpe, where Sir Francis Chantrey grew up in the 1780s.

Note the Midland Railway from Chesterfield at top-left, running between Little London Dam and Chesterfield Road. Thomas would have been very familiar with the line, having worked as a locomotive fireman in the 1870s.

From bottom-left, note Greenhill and Chesterfield Road running up through Meadowhead, past Woodseats House, the Masons Arms and the Cobnar Works where scythes and sickles were made. Derbyshire Lane runs up from left-of-centre, through Woodseats and Four Lanes End. After Cliffefield House, around which the Meersbrook Bank housing estate was being laid out, Derbyshire Lane converges with Chesterfield Road near Smithy Wood.

(Ordnance Survey County Series, Yorkshire, scale 1:10,560; surveyed 1889 to 1892, published 1894; © Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd, Old-Maps.co.uk)

Sheffield smoke

Henry Palmer admitted that Sheffield was as "black as it is painted, by a good many coats", but that " 'Steelopolis' will, with joy and pride, wear the stigma as a garland".

He described the view of rail travellers as "whirling through the blinding smoke-fog…she turns her seamy side to the world and belches nine-tenths of her smoke in the faces of those who pass over the great trunk lines, instead of planting her industrial Inferno at a respectful distance from the railway-king's highway…railside Sheffield is, like waterside London, an ugly place."

PC Thomas Clifford would have been familiar with this view of the city from his vantage point on locomotive footplates in the 1870s.

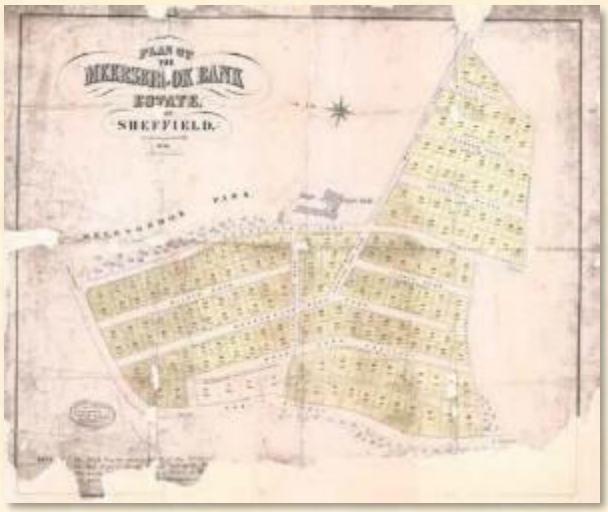
*Industrial and residential Sheffield in the 1880s. (*Sheffield Smoke *by A Morrow, for* The English Illustrated Magazine*, August 1884 – original article, author's collection)*

Growth of the city

Palmer added that the steel industry had "done so much to make the town the sixth largest in England". The population of Sheffield trebled during the second half of the nineteenth century, from 111,000 in 1843 to 324,000 in 1891.

Building development was spreading into surrounding districts. From 1868, Heeley was expanded with new housing. From 1873, the area at the northern end of Derbyshire Lane was divided by the Meersbrook Land Society for residential development and garden allotments with new connecting roads.

Residential development wasn't all welcomed. A correspondent's letter published in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* on 22 June 1880 described new housing estates as "ill-arranged ugliness…in every direction disfiguring what were once the beauty spots of suburban Sheffield…To-day's aspirations for rural life are met by inferior reproductions of the town part of Ecclesall Road, Derbyshire Lane, Woodseats, Totley, & c."



Plan of building plots for sale in 1876 on the Meersbrook Bank estate, at the southern edge of Meersbrook Park. Derbyshire Lane runs through the centre from right to left, past Cliffefield House, and joins Chesterfield Road which bends up from below. Norton Lees Road runs up towards top-right. (PictureSheffield.com, y10030)

In his book, *Annals of Bird Life*, published in 1890, Charles Dixon lamented the destruction of these river valleys: "My ruined aviary ! …I knew every tree and bush, and bird and beast within it, and loved them all !" In Dixon's *Among the Birds in Northern Shires*, published in 1900, he said, "Those who remember the quaint old village of Heeley (now, alas ! a suburb of Sheffield) in the days before the railway, when the mail-coach passed through twice a day and caused the only commotion, when the old flour-mill, driven by water, with its tree-surrounded dam, stood where the railway-station does now, may perhaps recall the matchless sylvan beauty of Meersbrook".

Harold Armitage described the streets that we now find so charming as having "hard, ugly lines…ill-built, ill-arranged barrack-like houses cutting abruptly across the flowing shapes of Nature's lovely sculpturing and softened forms…hideous cold blue slates and raw red bricks obtruding their screeching discords before the gentle contours of the wooded slope…However, we must not linger here to cry over spilt milk. The ruin has been wrought…its oaks killed by the smoke…the quiet and beauty we once enjoyed around Meersbrook Park".

Meersbrook Park. (Photographer, Jasper Redfern – Sheffield and Rotherham up-to-date: A fin-de-Siecle review, 1897 – PictureSheffield.com, y04915)

The boundary moves southwards

As the city continued to grow after Thomas' time in the area, the Yorkshire border would move southward in stages. The city council appointed a committee to consider incorporating outlying areas, including towns and villages in north Derbyshire. The first boundary extension was established by the Sheffield Corporation Act of 1900, which came into effect in 1901. Parts of the parish of Norton, administered by Norton Rural District Council, were absorbed, as were Meersbrook and Woodseats.

Reviews of local government at a national level determined further extensions. Following boundary changes in 1921 and 1928, the Sheffield Extension Act of 1933 brought most of the remaining area of Norton into Sheffield, along with Totley, Greenhill and Hemsworth.

Beighton, Hackenthorpe, Halfway, Mosborough and parts of Killamarsh were brought into Sheffield from Chesterfield Rural District Council in 1967.

Ramsay's news agent at 41 Derbyshire Lane, built in the 1890s on the site of the demolished Cliffefield House. This was part of the Meersbrook Bank housing estate, which was being developed at the north end of Derbyshire Lane during PC Clifford's posting in the area. It is seen here around the time when the news agent was listed in Kelly's Derbyshire Directory *of 1912. The steep slope down towards the Chesterfield Road junction is very apparent.*
(With thanks to Tim Hale, Sheffield Postcard Co, spc 00207)

PC Richard Enefer

Contents

Thomas' predecessor was PC Richard Enefer. He joined Derbyshire Constabulary in 1875 and, by 1876, he was the Norton constable. He also covered neighbouring Woodseats, and was living there by 1879. His sergeant from 1877 was Thomas Baker, who had been promoted to the rank in 1869. He transferred to Norton from Mickelover, west of Derby.

What was Thomas told to expect? The Derbyshire border with Sheffield may have appeared to be a rural idyll, in which unpleasant things happened only occasionally.

Dogs, sheep and chickens

PC Enefer was named in local newspaper reports several times, as Thomas would be. The last newspaper covering the area to name PC Enefer was the *Sheffield Independent* for Tuesday, 11 May 1880. This reported on the Hemsworth Petty Sessions the day before. The article stated that, on 30 April, "a dog was running about in the fields at Norton in a rabid condition, and killed and injured a number of sheep." A farmer caught the dog and handed it over to PC Enefer, who looked after it until it died three days later.

Mr Gillott, a 'dog fancier' (right, possibly a breeder), and two friends in the old Sheffield Park slum area in the late nineteenth century. (PictureSheffield.com, s12747)

In March 1879, Sgt Baker and PC Enefer charged four men with keeping dogs without licenses. In the October, PC Enefer found a poultry dealer selling birds in Fitzallen Market in Sheffield, which he had stolen from a farmer in Norton. In the November, around twenty men were illegally hunting game using greyhounds on F W Bagshawe's land. PC Enefer and one of the game keepers caught two of them – a collier and a silversmith, both from Ridgeway. Harold Armitage remembered witnessing the magistrates at the Bagshawe Arms in Hemsworth exercising "a good deal of severity on poachers."

Careless road users

The first time a newspaper named PC Enefer was in March 1876. The *Sheffield Independent* reported on the Dronfield Petty Sessions, to which he summoned a labourer "for not having proper control over a horse and cart in his charge at Norton".

In the July, the same newspaper declared that "Another warning to brewers' waggoners" had been made clear by PC Enefer's diligence in catching three drivers not in full control of their 'drays' while travelling through Norton. Two of them were asleep, which was by no means uncommon.

In January 1877, PC Enefer heard that a horse and trap had been driven "furiously" through Woodseats. It had crashed into a waggonette which was carrying a family. He caught up with the trap in Heeley and believed that its occupants, two butchers, were drunk. A witness did not support his assertion and the case was largely dismissed, apart from payment for damage to the waggonette.

In January 1879, PC Enefer charged a farmer from Gleadless "with having left his horse and cart unattended for half-an-hour in Derbyshire Lane, Norton. It appeared that defendant had gone into a public house and stayed there till he was called out to attend to his horse which had become restive and seemed likely to run away."

The same month, he charged a carter with "riding furiously along the highway at Norton…frequent complaints had been made

against the defendant…the horse had no bridle nor saddle". The carter claimed, unsuccessfully, that the horse had run away.

Violence

The area could be genuinely dangerous, especially for policemen. Derbyshire Constabulary stored cutlasses ready for issue to constables when they needed to defend themselves during riots. In the 1860s, officers in the Eckington District were permitted to wear cutlasses for night duty.

A PC John Moore was the resident constable in Woodseats from 1871 to 1876. His time overlapped with that of PC Enefer. In March of that year, the two constables had to monitor a public altercation. Local property owner Samuel Yates was disputing a right of way to the new Board School and to plots of land which had been sold for building houses. This was the *cul-de-sac* which would be named Mundella Place. The contractors were busy levelling the road surface when Yates built a wall of stones across it. The school had to close temporarily because Yates's wall prevented the children attending.

At one o'clock on the morning of Monday, 20 March, PC Moore arrived to supervise a work gang from Sheffield tasked with removing the wall. But some local residents, including the elderly Mrs Yates, started rebuilding the wall. Some of the schoolboys helped, hoping for a longer holiday, but the constables sent them out of harm's way.

Yates got into a heated argument and hit a man in the stomach with a potato masher. The wall was dismantled and rebuilt several times. It seems there was not much that PCs Moore and Enefer could do other than to discourage fighting as an excited crowd of spectators increased. PC Moore was promoted to Sergeant that year, and was posted away from Woodseats.

In October 1879, PC Enefer was called to a house on Harvey Clough Road in Woodseats. Two men had been badly beaten in the latest episode of a violent feud. They had attacked their assailant the day before. The men were all cutlers. The case was heard at the Eckington Petty Sessions, where one of the magistrates was F W Bagshawe. He was reported as saying that, "the neighbourhood of Norton Woodseats was at one time a very quiet and peaceable one, but now, with such people as these living there, there was not a more disorderly place in the district."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On 5 October 1879, PC Enefer was called to a house on Harvey Clough Road in Woodseats. He found two men who had been badly beaten by an employee of Joseph Rodgers & Co. This was the latest episode of an ongoing feud between local cutlers. Advertisement in White's Directory of Sheffield*, 1879. (University of Leicester, Special Collections)*

On 7 March 1880, a small barrel of gunpowder exploded in a greenhouse belonging to a much-admired gardener living on Harvey Clough Road. Local people contributed to a gift of money to compensate him for the damage.

Demon drink

PC Enefer also encountered violence against women. On 2 August 1879, he charged a cow keeper with being drunk on licensed premises – the Prince of Wales on Derbyshire Lane. The cow keeper could hardly stand. The constable followed him home, where he found that the man's wife had locked herself in an upstairs room "in consequence of his violence."

He also had to deal with sad cases. In September 1879, a farm labourer committed suicide and was found by his son. PC Enefer had known the man for four years, and confirmed that he had been fined several times for drunkenness. "The jury found that the deceased hanged himself while insane and distracted through drink and poverty."

The Licensing Act of 1872

Landlords were permitted to serve alcohol to customers outside of licensed trading hours only if they were "*bona fide* travellers". This meant that genuine travellers who went "into an inn for refreshment in the course of a journey, whether of business or pleasure" could be served. Customers had to be at least three miles (5 km) from their starting point when they reached the inn.

To avoid prosecution, landlords needed to "honestly believe" that customers who arrived outside of licensed trading hours were travellers. They were obliged to ask them to declare their purpose and where they had come from. Customers could be prosecuted if it was clear that they were merely "travelling for the purpose of taking refreshment".

Highly respectable persons

In early 1880, Superintendent Cruit and PC Enefer were involved in a case concerning "a house open at prohibited hours for the sale of intoxicating liquors." This was the Abbey Hotel on Chesterfield Road in Woodseats. The case was heard at the Dronfield Petty Sessions on 9 February.

At some time after midnight on 27 January, landlord John England had served a party of seven men from Dronfield, accompanied by several ladies. They had been to a pantomime in Sheffield that evening. They had already been served coffee at a nearby inn, and they were not even travelling on foot. They could therefore no longer claim to be travellers.

PC Enefer discovered their presence when he saw "a waggonette and a pair of horses stand at defendant's door on the night in question." When England told him that the party had called for refreshment, "He told him they had no right to it."

The defending counsel stated that "the whole party were highly respectable persons" and that "they would not knowingly break the law". He also argued that England believed they were *bona fide* travellers and he had not wilfully infringed the law either. The defence "hoped, therefore, that the Bench would allow the cases to be withdrawn on the payment of expenses." The magistrates agreed.

The Abbey Hotel on Chesterfield Road in Woodseats, at the junction with Abbey Lane. PC Enefer found the landlord serving customers outside of licensed hours on 27 January 1880. It is seen here in the late nineteenth century with a policeman walking past. (Morgan and Son, PictureSheffield.com, s14369)

Woodseats

Contents

Starting from scratch

PC Enefer transferred to the Buxton District some time after May 1880. He had got to know the Norton area thoroughly and would have discovered early on who the ‘usual suspects’ were. When Thomas arrived to replace him, he had all this to learn.

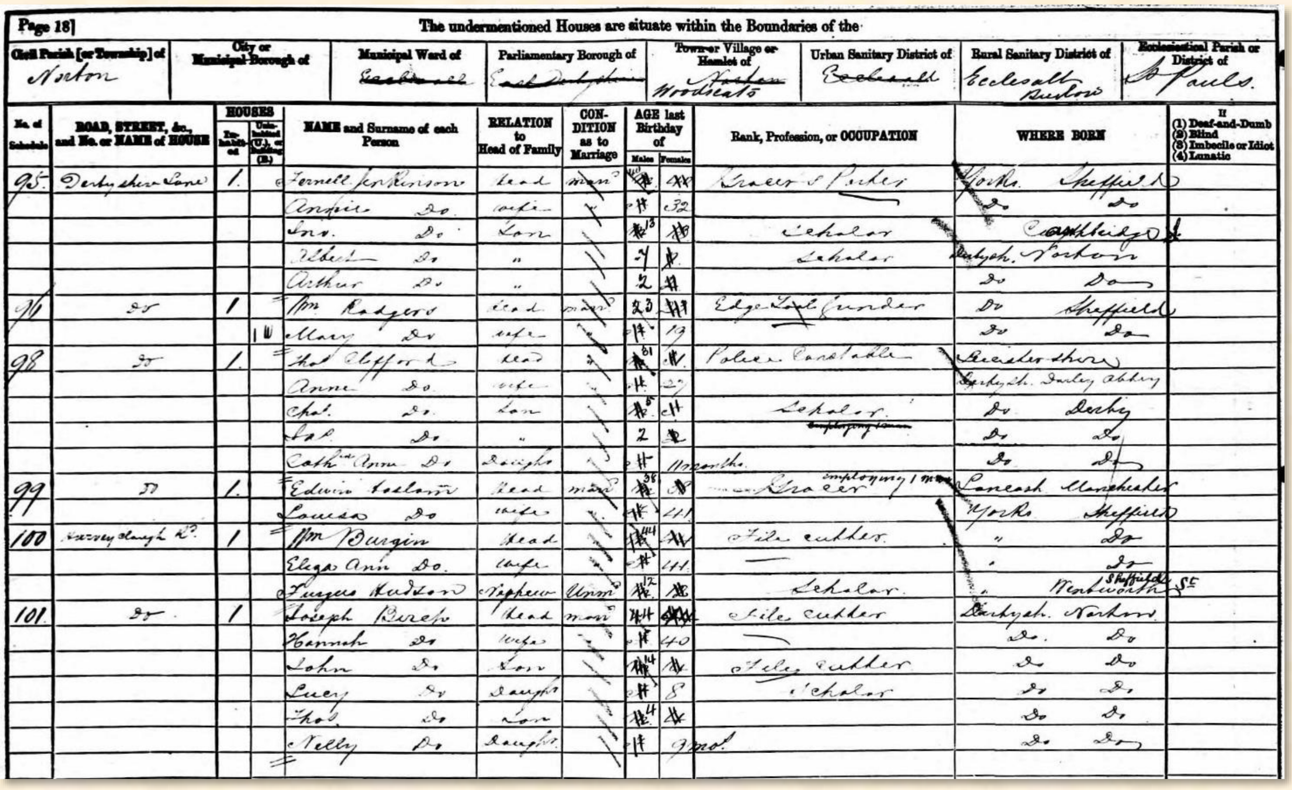
Like PC Enefer, it seems that Thomas covered Woodseats as well as Norton, and he would patrol other parts of the Eckington District. He might sometimes meet a supportive colleague in the street. But he would often have to deal firmly and single-handedly with tough, heavy-drinking coal miners, railway navvies and cutlers. He would certainly encounter all of the same kinds of trouble that PC Enefer had faced.

A new home

PC Enefer may have been living at 275 Derbyshire Lane in Woodseats at the time he was transferred away. This was between the junctions with Harvey Clough Road and Mount View Road.

Thomas and his family may have moved into the house when he took over from PC Enefer. They were certainly living there a year later when the 1881 census was taken.

The Force may have owned the house or rented it from a private individual, but policemen often had to find their own accommodation to rent.



Page 18] The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the

Civil Parish [or Township] of: Norton
City or Municipal Borough of:
Municipal Ward of: [illegible]
Parliamentary Borough of: East Derbyshire
Town or Village or Hamlet of: ~~Norton~~ Woodseats
Urban Sanitary District of: [illegible]
Rural Sanitary District of: Ecclesall Bierlow
Ecclesiastical Parish or District of: St Pauls.

No. of Schedule	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES Inhabited	HOUSES Uninhabited (U.), or Building (B.)	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	CONDITION as to Marriage	AGE last Birthday of Males	AGE last Birthday of Females	Rank, Profession, or OCCUPATION	WHERE BORN	If (1) Deaf-and-Dumb (2) Blind (3) Imbecile or Idiot (4) Lunatic
95	Derbyshire Lane	1		Fornell Jenkinson	Head	Mar	40		Grocer & Porter	Yorks. Sheffield	
				Annie Do	Wife			32		Do Do	
				Jno. Do	Son		13		Scholar	Cambridge	
				Albert Do	"		7		Scholar	Derbysh. Norton	
				Arthur Do	"		2			Do Do	
96	Do	1		Wm Rodgers	Head	Mar	23		Edge Tool Grinder	Do Sheffield	
			1 U	Mary Do	Wife			19		Do Do	
98	Do	1		Thos Clifford	Head		31		Police Constable	Leicestershire	
				Anne Do	Wife			27		Derbysh. Darley Abbey	
				Chas. Do	Son		5		Scholar	Do Derby	
				Jas Do	"		2			Do Do	
				Cath. Anne Do	Daughter			11 months		Do Do	
99	Do	1		Edwin [illegible]	Head	Mar	38		Grocer employing 1 man	Lancash Manchester	
				Louisa Do	Wife			41		Yorks Sheffield	
100	Harvey Clough Rd.	1		Wm Burgin	Head		44		File cutter	" Do	
				Eliza Ann Do.	Wife			41		Do	
				Fergus Hudson	Nephew	Unm	12		Scholar	Wentworth Sheffield St	
101	Do	1		Joseph Birch	Head	Mar	44		File cutter	Derbysh. Norton	
				Hannah Do	Wife			40		Do. Do	
				John Do	Son		14		File cutter	Do Do	
				Lucy Do	Daughter			8	Scholar	Do Do	
				Thos Do	Son		4			Do Do	
				Nelly Do	Daughter			9 mo.		Do Do	

1881 census page showing “Police Constable” Thomas Clifford, his wife Annie and their children living on Derbyshire Lane, Woodseats, between the junctions of Harvey Clough Road and Mount View Road. Charles (“Chas”, my great grandfather) was a five-year-old “Scholar”. His brother James (“Jas”) and sister Catherine ‘Annie’ also appear. (Census for England, Wales & Scotland, 3-4 April 1881)

The original 275 Derbyshire Lane, with the position of its front door now obscured by ivy, has since become part of no.273. The current no.275, visible at the right-hand end, is a later addition.

A policeman's wife

Police officers' wives were very much involved in their husbands' duties. Their houses acted as a 24-hour police stations. If a constable was out and someone came to the house, his wife would be expected to get a message to him or to his sergeant.

Sgt Thomas Baker was forty-nine years old. He lived less than half a mile (600 m) away at the bottom of Chantrey Road, near the Methodist New Connexion chapel and the Chantrey Arms on Chesterfield Road. He and his wife, Maria, had three children. In April 1881, John was five, Annie was three and Elizabeth was eight months.

Norton had its own lock-up where PC Clifford and Sgt Baker would have taken their prisoners. They used the lock-up until they could get them to the magistrates' Petty Sessions on the following Monday. Police officers had to transport their prisoners at their own expense, which they would then have to reclaim.

Bottom of Chantrey Road around 1910. Sgt Baker and his family were living in one of these houses in 1881. (PictureSheffield.com, s14266)

However, like Superintendent Cruit's wife Hannah in Eckington, Annie Clifford may have had to put up with Thomas bringing his prisoners home. However, 275 Derbyshire Lane is not a big house. If there was no space in the lock-up, it may have been Maria

Baker who had to look after not only her husband's prisoners but PC Clifford's as well!

Landlords who owned properties used as police houses were sometimes asked to modify or extend the building to create one or two cells. If a cell wasn't available, the prisoner would be handcuffed to a heavy fixture in the house such as the cooker or a large piece of furniture. The wife may have to search female prisoners. She would also be expected to cook a meal for a prisoner and clean the cell once it was vacant.

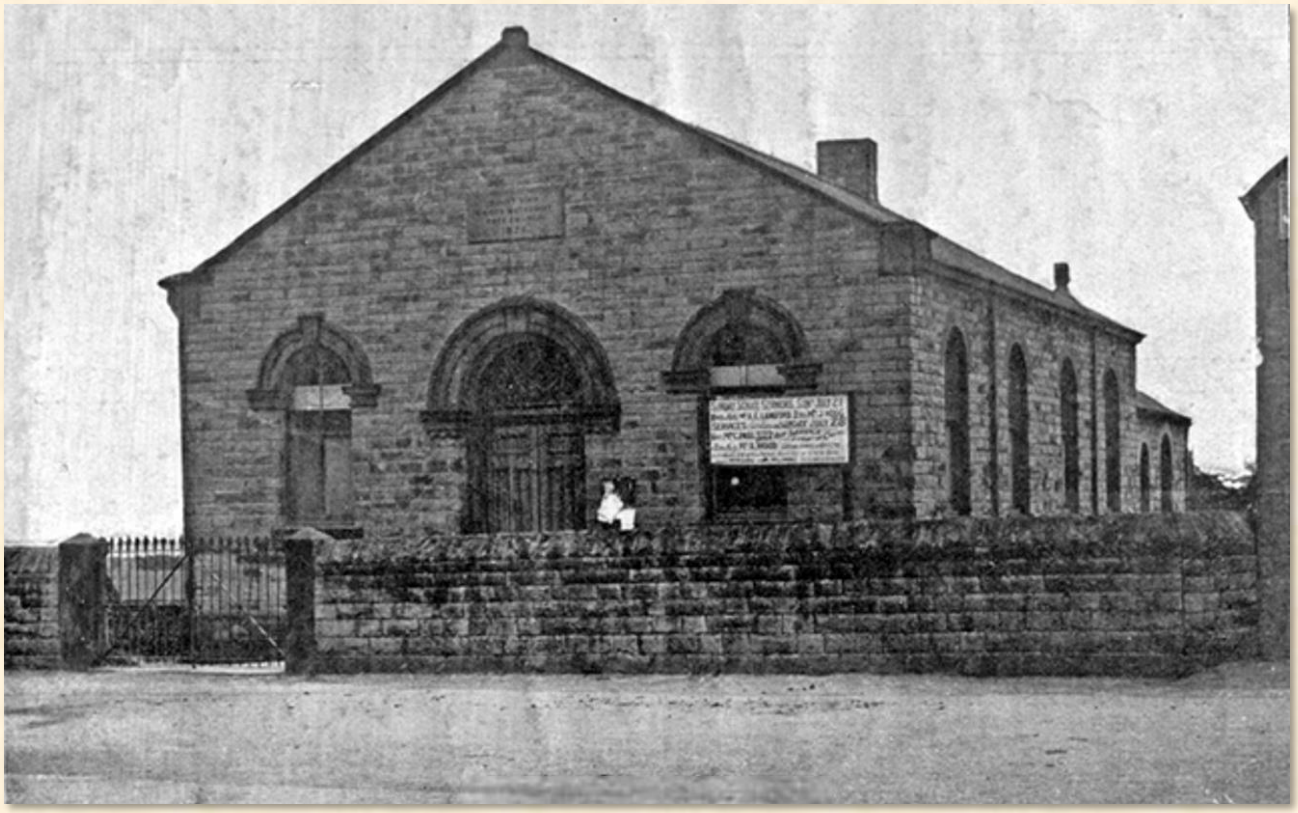
Derbyshire Lane

The road was a mile (1.6 km) long and all downhill when travelling north toward Sheffield. At the southern end, at 650 ft (200 m) above sea level, was the Mount Pleasant Inn. This was a former quarryman's cottage on the Mount View Road junction, opposite a brick works. In 1881, stonemason James Birtles was the publican. He lived there with his wife Anne and their two children.

A hundred yards (90 m) further north was Thomas' police house. Beyond that was the Harvey Clough Road junction, where a letter box was mounted on the wall. Perhaps Annie asked little Charles to post letters for her, addressed to members of their mill-working family in Darley Abbey.

100 yards further north was Mount View United Free Methodist chapel, built in 1876. Opposite the Methodist chapel was the local grocer's shop, at Albert Villas. It was run by John Cavill, who was also a beer retailer. The post mistress was John's sister, Sarah Ann Cavill. Perhaps Annie asked Charles to fetch groceries from Cavill's shop. She could watch Charles cross the road and all the way to the shop, insisting that he keep an eye out for horse-drawn vehicles.

Another 150 yards on was the Board School on Mundella Place. Charles probably attended the school between the ages of five and seven. If he was late, he would have heard the bell ringing when he burst out of the front door of 275 Derbyshire Lane.



Mount View United Free Methodist chapel on Derbyshire Lane in Woodseats. seen here perhaps not long after it was built in 1876. The police house was 100 yards (90 m) to the right. (PictureSheffield.com, s05042)

Norton County School on Mundella Place off Derbyshire Lane, built by Norton School Board in 1875 and seen here in 1967. PC Clifford's son Charles, my great grandfather, probably attended the school between the ages of five and seven, from 1881 to 1883. The school is known today as Mundella Primary School. (PictureSheffield.com, s24650)

Just beyond the school, a Working Men's Club had been established in 1873. This included a library, concert room, billiards and reading rooms, a bowling green and a croquet lawn. The resident club steward and stewardess in 1881 were James Elshaw and his wife Ellen. Their three teenage children lived with them. nineteen-year-old James was a brass caster. Sarah Ann was fifteen and taught children. Steven was unusual in still attending school at age thirteen.

Beyond the Club was the Prince of Wales Inn. The landlord in the 1870s and early 1880s was George Hollingsworth. Further north was Norton Cemetery, which opened in 1869. *White's Directory* of 1879 described it as "a most happily selected site…The prospect from it is one of the most beautiful in the highly picturesque neighbourhood of Sheffield, comprising the bold wooded heights about Beauchieff, the fine slope of Ecclesall wood, beautifully undulating farms and plantations, with occasional villages, villas, and churches; all framed in by a ground sweeping line of purple moorland."

The northern end of Derbyshire Lane was in Meersbrook, a little over 300 ft (90 m) above sea level, and 400 ft (120 m) lower than Norton which was a mile and a half (2.5 km) to the south-east. Beyond Meersbrook were Heeley Mill, Little London Dam on the River Sheaf, Norton Hammer and Smithy Wood.

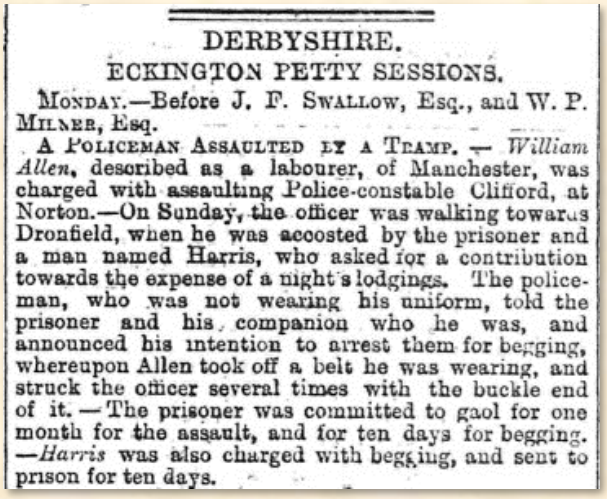
The northern, Meersbrook end of Derbyshire Lane, seen here around 1910. PC Clifford had a steep climb as he walked home after patrolling in Norton Hammer. (F Sneath, Peak Photo Works, Paradise Square – PictureSheffield.com, t06638)

Beggars

Contents

Assaulted by a tramp

Thomas soon experienced physical violence himself. He was named as the arresting officer for the first time in a case that was dealt with at the Eckington Petty Sessions on Monday, 23 May 1880. This was reported on in the *Sheffield Independent* two days later.



DERBYSHIRE.

ECKINGTON PETTY SESSIONS.

MONDAY.—Before J. F. SWALLOW, Esq., and W. P. MILNER, Esq.

A POLICEMAN ASSAULTED BY A TRAMP. — *William Allen*, described as a labourer, of Manchester, was charged with assaulting Police-constable Clifford, at Norton.—On Sunday, the officer was walking towards Dronfield, when he was accosted by the prisoner and a man named Harris, who asked for a contribution towards the expense of a night's lodgings. The policeman, who was not wearing his uniform, told the prisoner and his companion who he was, and announced his intention to arrest them for begging, whereupon Allen took off a belt he was wearing, and struck the officer several times with the buckle end of it. — The prisoner was committed to gaol for one month for the assault, and for ten days for begging. —*Harris* was also charged with begging, and sent to prison for ten days.

Sheffield Independent, *25 May 1880, in which PC Thomas Clifford was named as an arresting officer for the first time in a newspaper. (Newspapers Collection, The British Library)*

On Sunday, 22 May, Thomas was in Norton walking towards Dronfield. He was "accosted" by "William Allen…a labourer of Manchester… and a man named Harris". The two men "asked for a contribution towards the expense of a night's lodgings."

"The policeman, who was not wearing his uniform, told the prisoner and his companion who he was, and announced his intention to arrest them for begging, whereupon Allen took off a belt he was wearing, and struck the officer several times with the buckle end of it.– The prisoner was committed to gaol for one month for the assault, and for ten days for begging.– Harris was also charged with begging, and sent to prison for ten days."

The equivalent report in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* on the same day added that Allen was "disarmed, and conveyed to the lock-up."

This was Norton's own local holding cell. Thomas also took Harris into custody.

On seeing the bruises that Thomas sustained from Allen's belt buckle, Annie must have worried about how often her husband would encounter violence.

A less troublesome arrest

The *Sheffield Independent* reported that Thomas arrested another beggar, George Clarke, in Norton on Sunday, 7 November 1880. The report, printed two days later, stated that Clarke was "sent to prison for seven days, with hard labour."

A beggar slumped on the pavement with his right hand held out for money and his dog between his legs – from a lithograph of 1821 entitled Pity the sorrows of a poor old man! *(Rodwell & Martin, British Library, 1872,1012.3778)*

First promotion

For his efforts, Thomas was promoted to 2nd Class Constable in November 1880. His pay would have risen by one shilling per week with each promotion. 2nd Class constables in 1875 were paid 3s/2d a day, or £1/2s/2d per week.

The former Eckington court house, with the magistrate's entrance (green door), clerk's office (centre window) and witnesses' waiting room (black door). The court room was at the back, where PC Clifford presented William Allen and his companion named Harris to the magistrates on 23 May 1880. Allen had assaulted PC Clifford the day before when he arrested them for begging. He would bring his prisoners here on many occasions. To the right is the former Eckington District police headquarters, where Superintendent Peter Cruit and his family lived. (Photographer: Nicol Bradshaw)

Asleep at the reigns

Contents

Faint or drunk?

On the night of Thursday, 9 December 1880, Thomas discovered a man fast asleep on a dray from Spring Lane Brewery, owned by John Watson & Co. This was a low, flat-bed wagon without sides, and it was being pulled along the road in Norton by two horses. The 'drayman', George Fridlington of 10 Egerton Street West, Sheffield, was summoned to the Eckington Petty Sessions on 20 December. He was charged with "an offence against the Highways Act" for being "drunk in charge".

Thomas had shone his lamp in Fridlington's face, but this was not enough to wake him, and Thomas had to shake him. He did not deny Thomas' version of events, but said that "he had had a long day and injured his hand that day with a barrel and it had caused him to be sick and faint." He added that he had trapped his thumb, and claimed that Thomas had "mistaken faintness for drunkenness".

If 26-year-old Fridlington was on his way back to the brewery, he still had over three miles (5 km) to go. He may have been able to rely on the well-known phenomenon of the horse knowing the way. If he then had to make his way home to his wife and two young sons, he would still have over two miles (3 km) to walk. Fridlington originated from Lincolnshire, as did many men who came to find work in the growing city.

"The magistrate said the case was a serious one", but it was Fridlington's first offence and he "bore a very good character". He was therefore fined five shillings, plus court costs of twelve shillings and two pence, which was paid. The case was reported on in the *Sheffield Independent* for 21 December, and in the *Derbyshire Times & Chesterfield Herald* on Christmas Day.

John Watson had inherited the brewery from his father in 1864. Like other breweries, they owned a number of pubs around Sheffield.

John and his wife, Emma, had five sons and a daughter, aged between five and fifteen, plus two servants. They lived over three miles (5 km) from the brewery, at Stand House, 270 Fullwood Road. This led out to the more affluent, south-west side of Sheffield. Many business owners lived here because, as with other Victorian cities, the prevailing wind direction blew the smoke of the factories towards the poorer, north and east side.

John Watson was not a well man. He died on 19 July 1882 at the age of forty-five. According to the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, of 25 July, he "died at Harrogate where he went some time since in the hope that the change of air would have a beneficial effect" on the advice of his doctor. Emma, who was the same age as John, took over the business. Watson's would merge with Whitmarsh's South Street Brewery in 1892.


JOHN WATSON,

ALE & PORTER

BREWER,

SPRING LANE,

SHEFFIELD.

The above Brewery being situate conveniently at the west end of the town, enables J. W. to supply private families with Six, Nine, Twelve, or Eighteen Gallon Casks, on a very short notice, and at prices as under:—

X Ale, - 1s. per Gallon
XX Beer - 1s2d ,,
XXX Beer - 1s4d ,,
X Porter - 1s ,,
Stout ditto - 1s4d ,,

Advert for Spring Lane Brewery, thought to date from the early 1880s. The brewery owned the horse-drawn wagon or 'dray' which PC Thomas Clifford stopped on the night of 9 December 1880. The drayman, George Fridlington, was unconscious. (BreweryHistory.com)

Stable enclosure and dray yard at the Moorhead Brewery of Thomas Berry and Co Ltd on Park Street, Sheffield, seen here before 1900. PC Clifford had to intervene on three occasions when he discovered drivers asleep on moving horse-drawn wagons. Two were drays from breweries. In the course of his work, Thomas would have become familiar with a number pubs owned by breweries like Moorhead, including the Cricketers Arms on Bramall Lane in Sheffield. They also owned the Brunswick on Egerton Street where drayman George Fridlington lived. Moorhead would be bought and closed by Tenants in 1923, which would also acquire the Prince of Wales on Derbyshire Lane in Woodseats. (PictureSheffield.com, s10054)

Whitmarsh Watson & Co would continue to acquire pubs, including several that fell within the Eckington police district. These included at least two which Thomas visited in order to enforce licensing laws – The Mount Pleasant Inn on Derbyshire Lane and the White Hart on Main Road in Greenhill.

Another drowsy drayman

Nine months later, Thomas would bring a very similar case to the Eckington Petty Sessions on 12 September. This concerned an incident which took place on Sunday, 28 August 1881, reported the next day in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*.

William Fox of 61 Broomhill Street, Sheffield, was summoned “for an offence against the Highways Act”. “Police-constable Thomas Clifford (180) proved that a little after midnight…he saw the defendant at Meadowhead, Norton Woodseats asleep on a brewery wagon which was going in the direction of Sheffield, while he had no reigns to guide the horses.”

Fox said “he had been out many hours and was very sorry”. He was fined two shillings and sixpence, plus court costs of eleven shillings.

Detail from photograph of a carter being escorted by Sgt Joe Hurst during the Sheffield coal strike of 1911. (PictureSheffield.com, s03756)

Yet another comatose carter

Thomas would find a third carter asleep at the reigns on the night of Friday, 8 September 1882. The case was described briefly in *Derbyshire Times & Chesterfield Herald* for 30 September.

William Jarvis was fined 30 shillings plus costs at the Eckington Petty Sessions on 25 September. He had been in charge of a wagon and two horses driving through Norton, and admitted the offence.

Ferocious pony on the loose

At 11 pm on Thursday, 24 May 1883, Thomas would be patrolling in Norton when he discovered a pony wandering in the street. He needed the help of three other men to bring the animal under control, which “rushed at them with its open mouth” before they were able to return it to its stable.

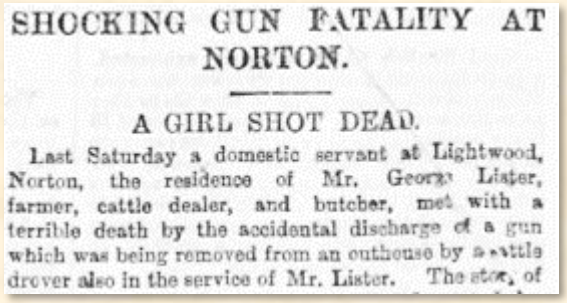
The pony was owned by greengrocer William Smedley from Little London, two miles (3 km) to the north. At the Hemsworth Petty Sessions on 11 June, he explained that he had bought the pony the day before, and had arranged for stabling. He claimed that the owner of the stable had released the pony.

The magistrates were unsympathetic and fined Smedley one shilling plus costs of ten shillings and sixpence. The report of the case appeared on Saturday, 16 June, in both the *Derbyshire Times & Chesterfield Herald* and the *Sheffield Independent*.

Accidental shooting tragedy

Contents

Thomas and Sgt Baker had to attend a very sad and upsetting scene at a farm on Lightwood Lane on the morning of Saturday, 28 May 1881. The *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* for 30 May carried an extensive article on the incident.



SHOCKING GUN FATALITY AT NORTON.

A GIRL SHOT DEAD.

Last Saturday a domestic servant at Lightwood, Norton, the residence of Mr. George Lister, farmer, cattle dealer, and butcher, met with a terrible death by the accidental discharge of a gun which was being removed from an outhouse by a cattle drover also in the service of Mr. Lister. The ston, of

A tragic incident attended by PC Clifford and Sgt Baker, reported in the Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 30 May 1881. (Newspapers Collection, The British Library)*

Cattle farm

George Lister was a 41-year-old butcher and cattle dealer. His wife, Emma, was 34. Their three sons were aged between nine and fifteen. All three boys were attending school.

Back in 1871, they had been living at 142 Ecclesall Road in Sheffield. Lister must have done well because, at some time in the intervening ten years, they had moved to the farm on Lightwood lane, which had twenty acres of land. This was near the Bagshawe Arms in Hemsworth.

Lister employed a horseman, a cow keeper called Thomas Wignall, and two cattle drovers named Henry Smith and Henry ‘Raff’ Bower. Living with the family was Sarah Ann Jackson, a 24-year-old domestic servant.

Lightwood Farm in 1966, where the accidental shooting of 28 May 1881 may have taken place. The tragedy occured in the doorway of one of the outhouses, which was divided into a cart shed and wash house. (PictureSheffield.com, s40445)

Cows being driven along Little Norton Lane, Norton, around 1930. (PictureSheffield.com, s17631)

Additional duties

When the two drovers were not working around Sheffield, they would come back to the farm to help the other employees. The drovers had arrived on the Friday night and, early on Saturday morning, they were emptying the outhouses before cleaning them out. George Lister had asked them to apply the annual coat of whitewash.

One of the outhouses was divided into a cart shed and wash house, and was also used by Wignall as a store. In the roof was a pigeon loft. Smith and Bower started with the wash house, which needed to be cleared of its wringing machine, wash tubs, some lumber and Wignall's agricultural tools.

At a few minutes to seven, Sara Ann Jackson was in the kitchen of the main house, cleaning boots while the household was still in bed. She came outside, holding a boot and a brush, to tell the men where to place the washing utensils.

Pest control

Wignall used a "rusty and dilapidated" single-barreled gun for 'fowling' – scaring and shooting birds and vermin, such as crows which liked to visit a nearby barley field. He had left the gun loaded with lead pellets since the Thursday, when he had found nothing to shoot at. He placed it back in the wash house, ready to fire at a moment's notice if the opportunity arose.

Sarah Ann was looking sideways toward the door of the wash house when Henry Smith picked up the gun, which was standing on its butt. Bower was washing himself at the sink just three feet away. As Smith approached the door, he "was bringing the gun nearer to his side to avoid the door post".

The newspaper reporter lamented "the terrible consequences that so often ensue from the practice of keeping guns loaded… The person who is told to scare off vermin is not usually an individual of much caution or forethought…putting many a precious life in jeopardy."

Fatal spark

Smith "felt the gun kick" as the sound of its "report" shattered the air. He was wearing "a loose white blouse", and believed that "the trigger or hammer caught in the folds of the coat".

Sarah Ann fell bleeding at his feet. Bower exclaimed, "Good God! what is amiss?" Smith "was almost beside himself" and cried, "Oh! dear, Oh! dear; oh, my God, Raff, look here!" He pointed to "the prostrate form of Jackson, who lay in a pool of blood."

Because "the range was short, the shot had not time to scatter, so that the deceased received the whole charge as a mass" to the lower right part of her face. Mercifully, she died instantly. There was little left of her mouth and jaw. The pellets "lodged in the flesh near the left ear".

Smith had no idea that the gun was loaded, not least because of its "disused" appearance. He did not know whether it was "full cock, half cock, or if the hammer was down".

Aftermath

Those in the main house assumed that the local gamekeeper was using his gun in the neighbourhood. They did not realise what had happened until they were informed.

George Lister sent for Dr Booker, who soon arrived. The two men's households could not have been more similar. Dr Booker and his wife had three daughters and a son, aged between eleven and twenty. Also living with

them was 25-year-old servant Sarah Littlewood.

Lister also obtained assistance from 49-year-old William Fielding, innkeeper at the Bagshawe Arms, which was three minutes' walk away. According to White's Directory of 1879, William Fielding was a member of the Board of the school at Mundella Place. He lived with his wife Jane and three children. At twenty years of age, his daughter Eliza was not much younger than Sarah Ann.

Artwork on the front page of the Illustrated Police News *for Saturday, 8 April 1882. A young man had been aggressively pestering a disinterested young lady. He was admitted to her house in London "by an unsuspecting servant, whose young mistress…retreated to an inner apartment…He leveled the gun he carried with him and fired through the door". He then "made his escape…His victim was wounded in the face, but luckily her injuries [were] not of a serious nature." The physical circumstances of the tragic incident which PC Clifford attended at a farm on Lightwood Lane on 28 May 1881 bore some similarities to the London case, although completely without intent but resulting in the death of 24-year-old Sarah Ann Jackson. (Newspapers Collection, The British Library)*

Sgt Baker and PC Clifford also arrived within a few minutes. In his "excited condition", Smith assured them that he had not been "larking" with the gun, and "never presented it at Jackson by way of joke". They satisfied themselves "that death was caused by an accident". Smith "showed no disposition to evade inquiry", and "they took no steps to detain him", simply insisting "that he must remain at Lightwood".

The policemen had Sarah Ann's body taken to the Bagshawe Arms. She was laid in the long club room at the rear which was used by the Norton Ploughing Society and for the Hemsworth Petty Sessions. That morning, Lister got word to her parents in Oughtibridge and to her married sister living in Heeley, two miles (3 km) to the north of Norton. Her mother, sister and brother-in-law arrived that afternoon to see the heart-breaking scene.

Rear of the Bagshawe Arms, seen here around 1950. The steps lead to a long room over the stables, built in 1859. The room was used for Petty Sessions court hearings by local magistrates. A stone in the south gable bears the initials FWB for Francis Westby Bagshawe, who was one of the magistrates. Sgt Baker and PC Clifford had Sarah Ann Jackson's body laid in the room after the tragic shooting on the morning of Saturday, 28 May 1881. (PictureSheffield.com, y02101)

The Bagshawe Arms, Hemsworth, around 1890. The people in this photograph probably remembered very well the accidental fatal shooting of Sarah Ann Jackson on 28 May 1881. (PictureSheffield.com, s00110)

Thomas, Sgt Baker and Dr Booker must have gone home to their wives and children with very heavy hearts that day. The mood in the Fielding household must have been even more somber after hosting Sarah Ann's body and her grieving relatives.

News "In the neighbourhood of Norton…spread rapidly" and "the most extravagant rumours were current". The County Coroner held an inquest on the Monday.

George Lister must have felt deep sorrow for his remaining three years of life. He died in 1884 aged forty-four, and is buried in the churchyard of Norton St James. His wife Elizabeth and their sons, who moved back into Sheffield, would have remembered the painful experience for a lot longer. Elizabeth died in 1927 and is buried with George.

Second promotion

Sgt Baker must have thought that Thomas had kept his composure well. He was promoted to 1st Class Constable in June 1881, a few days after the shooting. What he had witnessed at the farm on Lightwood Lane was no doubt still very raw in his memory.

Carrying a gun without a license

Two years later, at the Eckington Petty Sessions on 12 March 1883, "Charles Watmough, a youth, who lives with his father, a farmer, at Carter Hall Lane, Ridgeway, was fined 10s. and costs for having carried a gun without having previously obtained a license." The case was reported on by the *Derbyshire Times & Chesterfield Herald* two days later, and again in the Saturday edition of 17 March.

Charles Watmough was the nineteen-year-old son of farmer John Watmough. According to the 1881 census, they lived at Carter Lodge Farm. The offence was “proved” by “Police-constable Clifford”.

Carter Lodge Farm around 1960. John Watmough was the farmer in the 1880s and 1890s. In March 1883, PC Clifford found Watmough’s son, Charles, carrying a gun for which he did not have a license. (With thanks to Carol Bunting)

Ridgeway is four miles (6.5 km) west of Norton. It is likely that, on the day Thomas met Charles Watmough, he had been sent to Ridgeway by Superintendent Cruit to cover for PC Joseph Henry Booth, who had been the local constable there since 1878.

Booth lived on High Lane with his wife Elizabeth and four daughters. The younger three were of similar ages to Thomas’ sons. Ann Jane as ten years old, Maud was six, Florence was five and Alice was three.

If Thomas walked directly from Norton to Carter Hall Lane that day, he would have passed the Bagshawe Arms. He must have still keenly felt, after the tragic shooting of Sarah Ann Jackson in 1881, how important it was that guns were kept and handled safely and legally.

PC Booth would remain as the Ridgeway constable until 1888. By 1891, Charles Watmough was married and living three and a half miles (5.5 km) to the north east on Meetinghouse Lane, Woodhouse. He was working as a caretaker. If he was responsible for pest control using a firearm, hopefully he did not leave it unattended when loaded.

Gaming and gambling

Contents

Pitch and Toss

On Sunday, 22 May 1881, Thomas was out on duty in the Norton Hammer area, two miles (3 km) north-west of Norton. This was the weekend before the tragic shooting at the farm on Lightwood Lane.

From Woodseats, he would have walked down Derbyshire Lane in the direction of Sheffield, passing the Cross Scythes at Four Lane Ends crossroads. Near the end of Derbyshire Lane, he would have turned left along Norton Lees Lane and then crossed Chesterfield Road.

He came across two fifteen-year-old boys, who turned out to be John Jow and Samuel Singleton from nearby Heeley. They were playing 'Pitch and Toss' in the street.

Children playing Pitch and Toss in an Edinburgh street in 1909. PC Clifford arrested two fifteen-year-old boys on Sunday, 22 May 1881, while they were playing the game in a street in Norton Hammer. (Photographer, Albert Octavus Knoblauch – Scottish National Portrait Gallery, PGP R 1122)

The game involves throwing or 'pitching' coins and trying to make them land near an agreed mark. The player who lands one of their coins closest to the mark wins. Depending on the version of the game being played, the winner takes some of the other player's coins, such as those that landed heads up, or all of the coins. This makes it a gambling game.

John Jow worked with his father, William, laying asphalt road surfaces. William and his wife Susanna lived on Wolseley Road with their daughter and seven sons, of which John was the eldest.

Samuel Singleton lived two doors away from the Jows. He and one of his brothers were table knife 'goffers', using dies to stamp out cutlery blades from heated steel. Their eldest brother was a 'saw piercer'. Their step-father was a carter. John and Samuel were a mile (1.6 km) south of their home street when Thomas found them.

Thomas asked the boys for their names but they refused initially, so he took them into custody. The boys were brought to the Hemsworth Petty Sessions on 23 May, where they were fined two shillings and sixpence, plus court costs. The case was reported on the next day in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*.

Card playing on a Sunday

At the Hemsworth Petty Sessions on Monday, 25 July, as reported on the next day in the *Sheffield Independent*, "Tom White, table knife hafter, Landsdowne Road, Sheffield, was brought up in custody charged with gaming with cards, on Sunday afternoon."

Thomas had been back in Norton Hammer on 24 July when he discovered Tom White and two other young men, who "ran away, but he gave chase and apprehended the prisoner."

F W Bagshawe, one of the magistrates that day, "had heard numerous complaints of the gambling carried on by young men" which was considered "a great nuisance".

Superintendent Cruit was also there. He said that, until recently, "between two and three hundred persons used to go from Sheffield to Norton on Sunday afternoons for the purpose of playing at cards on the road sides".

Tom White was fined ten shillings including costs.

The Cross Scythes Inn at Four Lane Ends crossroads on Derbyshire Lane. This was towards the north end of Woodseats. It is seen here around 1910, looking towards Norton Lees Lane. In the early 1880s, engraver Enos Brown was the publican. He lived with his wife Christiana, their six sons and a daughter, and a servant. PC Clifford would have passed the Cross Scythes on his way to patrol in Norton Hammer. (G Bagshaw and Sons postcard No.326, PictureSheffield.com, s14867)

Theft of a bagatelle ball

A case involving sixteen-year-old Joseph Edwin Matthews was reported on in the *Derbyshire Times & Chesterfield Herald* of Saturday, 1 July 1882. He lived on Hermitage Street, on the south side of Sheffield, and worked at Mr Brown's Beer Store on George Street in the city centre.

Joseph had previously worked as an errand boy for a news agent. At least until a year before, he was living around the corner from Hermitage Street on London Road. This was the home of his uncle, an insurance agent, his aunt and two young cousins. Also in the household were his aunt's father, an army pensioner from the 82nd Regiment of Foot, and a maid who was Joseph's age.

On Saturday, 24 June, Thomas had arrived at Brown's Beer Store, three miles (5 km) north of Woodseats, and arrested Joseph.

On Friday, 26 May, Joseph had accompanied Henry Lord, also of Hermitage Street, to George Hollingsworth's Prince of Wales Inn on Derbyshire Lane. They "had refreshment" and "played bagatelle".

Illustration of a bagatelle table in use from Manual of Sporting Rules *by Ed. James, New York 1873. (Library of Congress)*

This was a table game derived from billiards, and itself developed into bar billiards and the pinball machine. The object was to get nine ivory balls to roll past wooden pins and pegs, and drop into holes without knocking the pegs over.

At the Hemsworth Petty Sessions on 26 June, Joseph claimed that Lord had told him to take one of the bagatelle balls, suggesting that it was worth seven shillings and sixpence.

Shortly after they left, someone noticed that the ball was missing. But by the time Thomas caught up with Joseph a month later, he had long since sold the ball.

According to the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* of Wednesday, 9 August, Joseph had gone into the Cricketers Arms on Bramall Lane in Sheffield and spoke to a waiter, Arthur Smith. Claiming to have found the ball a mile (1.6 km) away on Brunswick Street, he asked Smith if they had lost a bagatelle ball. They had not, but Smith paid a shilling for it.

It seems that F W Bagshawe and the other magistrates considered the guilt of Henry Lord to be the greater for corrupting young Joseph. They took pity on the lad, who was released. Harold Armitage had often witnessed the magistrates administer “a sort of paternal justice” in the Bagshawe Arms at Hemsworth”.

Lord was known to be in Sheffield Infirmary with a broken leg at the time, and a warrant was issued for his arrest. Thomas apprehended him when he left hospital. Lord protested his innocence at the Eckington Petty Sessions on Tuesday, 8 August, but he was remanded in custody for theft.

The Cricketers Arms, 106 Bramall Lane, Sheffield, seen here probably before 1914. The nearby sportsground had opened in 1855 for the Sheffield United Cricket Club. The ground also hosted football matches. At some time in late May or June 1882, sixteen-year-old Joseph Matthews sold a stolen bagatelle ball to Arthur Smith who was a waiter at the Cricketers Arms. PC Clifford arrested Matthews, but the magistrates at the Hemsworth Petty Sessions released him. He had been put up to it by Henry Lord, who was later arrested. The cricket ground became the home of Sheffield United Football Club from its founding in 1889. (Photofinishers Ltd, PictureSheffield.co.uk, s06905)

Assaulted amid a mob

Contents

Street fight

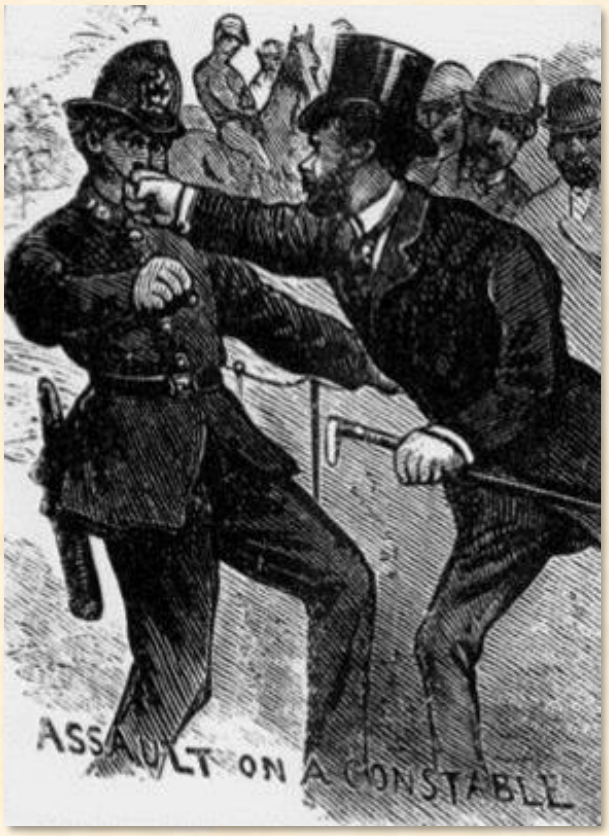
At around 10.15 pm on Sunday, 7 August 1881 Thomas was on duty in Greenhill. According to the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* of Tuesday, 16 August, He saw Frederick 'Gore' Allen of Dronfield in the middle of "a great disturbance". Allen was "holding another man whom he was backing to fight in the middle of the road".

Allen may have been the 39-year-old reaping hook grinder who was recorded in the April 1881 census as living on Carfield Street in Heeley. He had been born in Dronfield, as had his two sons and two daughters.

According to a witness named Fox, who spoke at the Hemsworth Petty Sessions on 15 August, they were surrounded by a crowd of fifty to sixty people. Several of them had come up from Dronfield, which was three miles (5 km) south of Greenhill.

Thomas had pushed his way into the middle of the crowd and asked Allen to go away. He refused, using language that was "very bad", so Thomas "took hold of him to take him into custody." Allen "struck him violently, and the two struggling, he fell down, and was kicked seven times on the left side in the ribs, and at the back of the head."

Main Road, Greenhill, around 1905. PC Clifford intervened in a street fight amid a noisy crowd in Greenhill on Sunday, 7 August 1881. He was violently attacked by one of the men who was goading one of the combatants. The White Swan is just out of sight on the left at the end of the street. The White Hart is just behind the photographer. (With thanks to Tim Hale, Sheffield Postcard Co, spc671)



A man named Beauclerk assaulted PC Kestin on Tuesday, 8 May 1883, at Croxton Park race course, Croxton Kerrial. This is on the Leicestershire side of the border with Lincolnshire between Melton Mowbray and Grantham. This artist's impression appeared on the front page of the Illustrated Police News *for Saturday, 12 May 1883. PC Kestin had forbidden Beauclerk from crossing the track during a race. "Mr Beauclerk called upon the crowd to thrash the constable, offering £5 to anyone who would do so". On 7 August 1881, PC Clifford was violently assaulted in Greenhill by Frederick Allen in the middle of an unsympathetic crowd, after he tried to stop a street fight that Allen was encouraging. (Newspapers Collection, The British Library)*

Failing to assist a police officer

Thomas called out for help to a man whom he knew, named Benjamin Holmes. He failed to respond, and denied in court that Thomas had called to him personally.

Holmes lived on High Street in Dronfield. He may have been the 26-year-old 'flyer grinder' who, at the time of the census in the April, had been lodging in the Dronfield home of a spindle grinder.

Holmes called on several witnesses who had been standing with him. They confirmed his denial. The magistrates "dismissed the case against Holmes on the ground of 'doubt' ", accepting that he may not have heard Thomas over the noise of the crowd.

Worse for liquor

Thomas had charged Frederick Allen with being drunk and disorderly, and for assaulting him. Allen called three witnesses to prove that he was not drunk, but they admitted that he was "worse for liquor". He was fined two pounds for the assault, plus costs of eighteen shillings and sixpence, and a further twelve shillings for being drunk.

Thomas Atkin, a blacksmith from Dronfield, was also charged with being drunk and disorderly at the incident. He denied the offence but was fined one pound plus costs, unless he preferred 14 days in prison. Atkin "said he would sooner go to prison than pay, and was accordingly removed in custody."

Annie must have been most concerned about the bruises that Thomas came home with at the end of that shift on 7 August. Perhaps she was able to prevent the children from seeing their father's injuries.

Traction engine blocks High Street

Contents

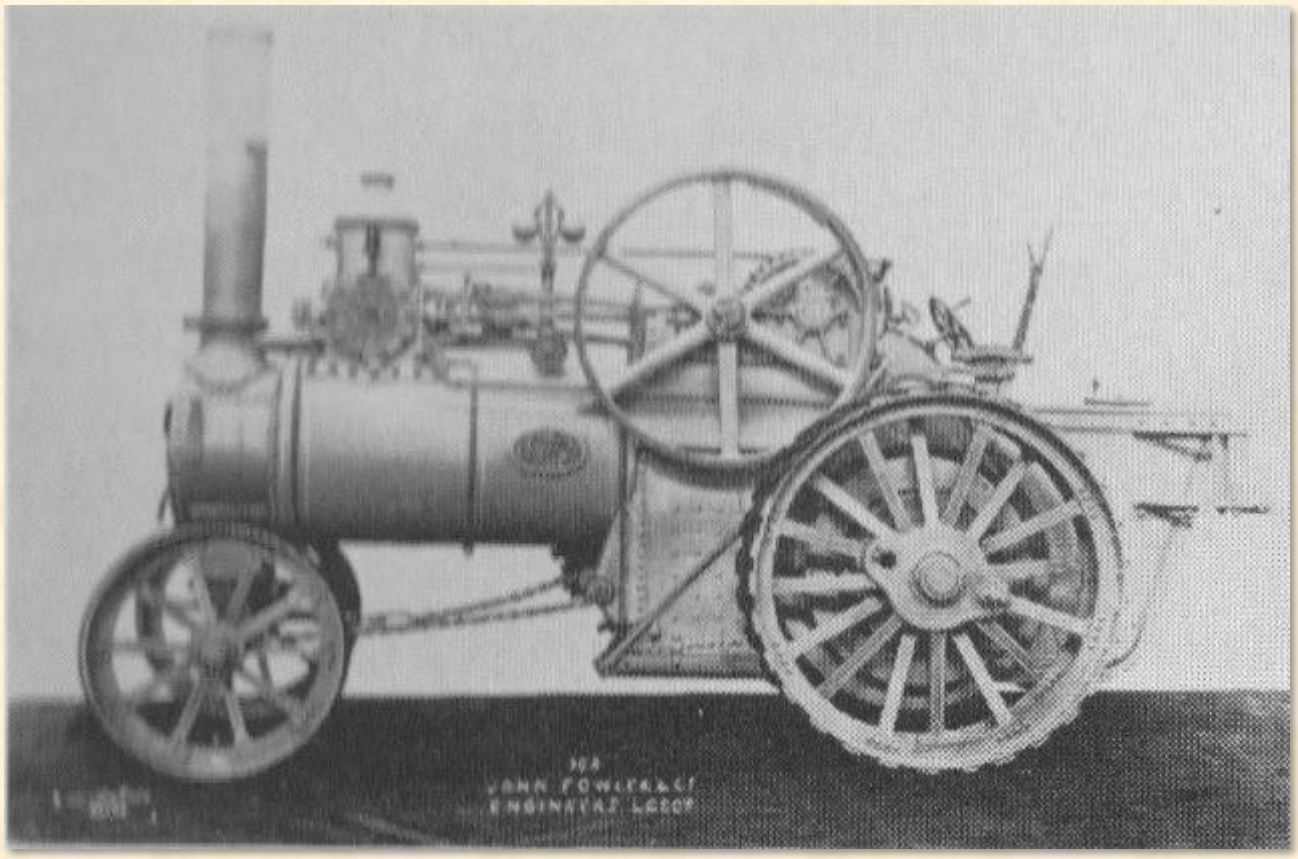
Unlawful obstruction

Two cases heard at the Dronfield Petty Sessions on 17 October 1881 involved steam road engines used for haulage. These were popularly known as traction engines due to their similarity to those used on farms.

The *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* reported the next day from Dronfield Town Hall on High Street, where Petty Sessions were held in rotation with Hemsworth and Eckington.

The engines were owned by a local coal mine owner, 66-year-old John Sheard. Since 1874, he had owned Gomersal Colliery, half a mile (800m) south-east of High Street and a stone's throw from the police station. He was well known for flouting mining regulations.

The same newspaper had reported on 5 August 1880 that Sheard had "purchased, and put to use, at a cost…upwards of £500, a fine new traction engine and trucks, for the purpose of taking coal from Dronfield to Baslow, and other villages over the moors. Two trucks will be attached to the engine, and the weight of coal carried will be upwards of twelve tons." The first case on 17 October 1881 dealt with engine tenter George Dawson. He had been driving one of Sheard's engines through Dronfield when he brought it to a standstill and blocked High Street.



Works photograph of 8hp traction engine no.3734, built by John Fowler & Co of Leeds in 1879. On 3 October 1881, PC Clifford discovered an engine of this type on High Street in Dronfield, "unlawfully obstructing the free passage…for a long and unreasonable time". The case was one of two heard at the Dronfield Petty Sessions on 17 October involving engines owned by local mine owner John Sheard. (Image from The Story of the Steam Plough Works *by Michael R Lane, Northgate Publishing, 1980; with thanks to Derek Rayner, CEng MIMechE, Technical Advisor to Old Glory magazine and President of the Leeds and District Traction Engine Club)*

A tenter originally oversaw large-scale textile production. Our word ‘tent’ for the hanging of a sheet on a frame has the same root. Machinery was increasingly introduced to textile production during the Industrial Revolution. When static steam engines started driving mill machinery, those who minded them were known as ‘engine tenters’. The term was then transferred to the operators of mobile steam engines.

PC Clifford charged Dawson with “unlawfully obstructing the free passage of a certain highway at Dronfield, by allowing a certain traction engine to stand thereon for a long and unreasonable time on October 3”.

The engine needed water, but the point in the street where Dawson brought it to a halt, adjacent to a stream, was only twelve feet six inches (3.81 m) wide. Even after Thomas arrived on the scene, the engine was stationary for a further twelve minutes while taking on water. He measured the remaining gap and “found there was not room for a wheel barrow to pass”.

Startled pony

While PC Clifford was no doubt encouraging Dawson to move the engine as quickly as possible, a butcher named Mawson had to stand and wait with his wife and their pony for seven minutes. Mawson was called as a witness. They had eventually passed “with great difficulty” just at the moment Dawson re-started the engine. The pony “was so frightened that he (Mawson) and his wife were subject to great danger.”

High Street, Dronfield, around 1905. The memorial structure of 1854 commemorates the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 by Sir Robert Peel, who also founded the London Metropolitan Police in 1829. While PC Clifford was trying to get a traction engine moved along a narrow part of High Street on 3 October 1881, a butcher and his wife were waiting to get by with their pony. When they eventually passed “with great difficulty”, the engine started up, frightening the pony and endangering its owners. The case was heard by the magistrates at their usual Dronfield venue, the Town Hall, which is just out of view down the hill on the right. (With thanks to Tim Hale, Sheffield Postcard Co, spc108)

To defend Dawson against Thomas' charge, John Sheard hired a Mr Clegg. He was probably a member of W J Clegg & Sons, solicitors, whose office was on Figtree Lane in central Sheffield. Mr Clegg obtained confirmation from Mr Mawson that he was complaining about the frightening of the pony rather than the blocking of the street.

Clegg argued that Dawson took on water for the engine at his earliest opportunity and did not wilfully obstruct the highway. But the magistrates considered Dawson to be negligent, presumably for not taking on water sooner and in a more convenient place. He was ordered to pay costs.

Operating without a license

Mr Clegg provided the defence once more in the second case to be heard on 17 October involving John Sheard's engines. They were grandly named *Victoria* and *Blucher*. The Road Locomotive Society (RLS) lists engine no.3654, built by Fowler of Leeds, as being named *Blucher* and owned by Sheard in 1880.

The engine was named after the Prussian field marshal who had assisted Wellington in defeating Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815. The RLS also lists Fowler no.3830, named *Wellington*, as being owned by Sheard from May 1881. Patriotic northerners and midlanders were clearly still celebrating the defeat of Napoleon sixty-five years on.

The charge, brought by Sgt Baker and Inspector Spencer, was that Sheard's men had been operating *Victoria* in Dronfield High Street on Sunday, 9 October, without being able to produce a license.

Sheard had been charged with this offence before. Licenses were granted under the Highway and Locomotives Act of 1878. He had been fined on 23 August 1880, a few weeks after he bought the engine, because a license for operation within Derbyshire had not yet been granted. He was fined again for the same reason just three days later, and again on 13 and 22 September. These would be the first in a long series of offences involving Sheard's traction engines.

On 9 October 1881, Sheard had a license for *Blucher*. Clegg argued that this was adequate to cover *Victoria* because *Blucher* was "unwell, and was being repaired at Chesterfield, and the other was working in its place."

The magistrates accepted the mitigation and the case was dismissed. Clegg suggested that there had been "an attempt to make Mr Sheard a martyr", which caused laughter in the court room.

Lessons not learned

Local newspapers would often cover these cases under the title, "The traction engine nuisance". Sheard got into trouble for the damage his engines caused to the highway. When he was charged at the Bakewell Petty Sessions after the discovery, on 16 December 1881, of one-inch (2.5 cm) spikes having been fitted to the main wheels, he had already been fined eight times for similar offences.

Sheard was fined at the Bakewell Petty Sessions several times in 1882 for blocking the highway. George Dawson and William Ransley were named as the drivers. Dawson was also fined twice that year for driving at above the regulation four miles per hour (6 km/h).

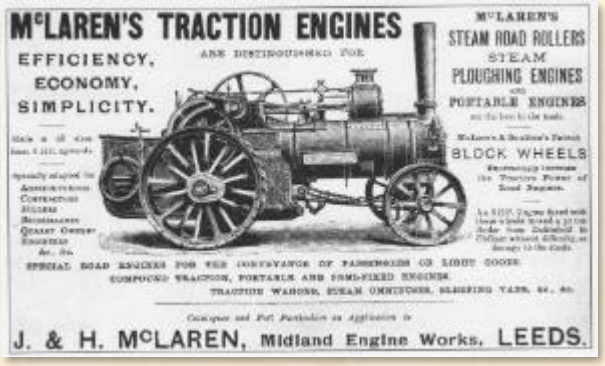
Dawson, Ransley, Thomas Beech and John Sheard jnr were all fined for driving over unsuitable bridges in 1882. Dawson and Ransley claimed that John Sheard snr had told them to cross the bridges, and that he would protect them from any charges.

Gosforth Colliery closed in 1882 but Sheard acquired and re-opened it. It was located in Dronfield Woodhouse, a mile (1.6 km) to the west of Dronfield in the Gosforth Valley. According to Roger Redfern in *South Pennine Country*, this "proved a successful gamble on the part of this Dronfield landowner". He was displeased when some of his miners were discovered taking a short cut on the south side of the valley. "For 'damage suffered to the surface of my land'…Sheard is reputed to have subtracted a portion of their wages each week."

New Year's Day 1883 was not a good start to the year for John Sheard. He was summoned

for one of his engines almost blocking a road after five o'clock, which was the time limit under a local bye-law. The Dronfield magistrates accepted that there was enough passing room but fined Sheard for not leaving a lamp for safety on the truck being towed. The time limit was soon extended to eight o'clock, but John Sheard jnr soon fell foul of that too. They would also be fined for not carrying lamps after dark.

George Dawson was caught twice on prohibited bridges in 1883, driving *Wellington* on both occasions. He had tried to stay off one of the bridges by taking the engine across another bridge without the trucks, and then bringing it to the other side of the first bridge and dragging the trucks across using chains. Superintendent Cruit took Dawson all the way to the High Court of Justice in London. At a hearing before the Lord Chief Justice on 26 February 1884, Dawson was fined for breaking the spirit of the bye-law by using chains across bridges.



Advertisement for McLaren traction engines in Robinson's Business Directory of the City of Leeds*, 1891. From December 1881, Dronfield mine owner John Sheard owned an 8 hp McLaren, no.136 named* Ranger. *(With thanks to Derek Rayner, CEng MIMechE, Technical Advisor to Old Glory magazine and President of the Leeds and District Traction Engine Club)*

There were also complaints about the amount of smoke produced by Sheard's engines, much to his frustration. He fought such a case in 1884 and accused two Dronfield constables of perjury for lying about the amount and colour of the smoke. Engine manufacturer John McLaren came down from Leeds to provide evidence on good firing practises which limited the amount of smoke from engines' chimneys.

John Sheard jnr was caught again in 1887, crossing an unsuitable bridge in Hathersage. Also that year, one of the trucks broke loose in Dronfield, rolled back down Church Street and crashed into a house causing great damage. Concerns returned in the late 1880s when local authorities demanded payment from Sheard for damage to several roads. His engines were banned from entering Bakewell.

He was prosecuted in 1890 by HM Inspector of Mines for allowing bore holes at Gosforth Colliery to fill dangerously with water. He had failed to drill more bore holes in the necessary places, creating a serious risk of drowning for the miners. The mine would close in 1902, partly because of flooding.

Highway fatalities

Members of the public had even greater reason to fear traction engines. The police were intolerant of anything that disturbed the local community. This may explain why PC Clifford and his colleagues were disinclined to use their discretion.

On 1 December 1880, eleven-year-old George Adams had been killed in Dronfield when one of the trucks being pulled by *Blucher* had run over him. Local boys enjoyed jumping onto the trucks while they were moving, which the drivers had been unable to prevent. There had been several 'near misses' before George Adams had fallen under the wheels.

Traction engines on public roads were supposed to be preceded by a man on foot carrying a flag, Sheard and his drivers would be fined several times for failing to ensure the presence of a flagman. With sad irony, his own son, Michael, aged thirty-seven, would die from injuries sustained while acting as a flagman, after one of the engines ran over his feet on 10 March 1882.

A month after Michael Sheard's accident, George Dawson was pulling coal-laden trucks with *Wellington* on 10 April 1882 at Froggatt Edge, up in the moors of the Derbyshire Peak District. He was involved in a collision when he turned the engine across the road just as

a horse-drawn carriage was trying to pass. Steam from the engine frightened one of the horses, which tried to climb a bank. The carriage overturned and its occupants were thrown out. Ben Littlewood, aged twenty-one, and eighteen-year-old Mary Smith were killed.

The incident was the subject of public meetings and letters to the newspapers. Outrage was revived when a similar but non-fatal accident happened near the same spot on 23 July 1883. A wagonette overturned when, once again, steam from Dawson's *Wellington* frightened the horses.

John Sheard's Gomersal Colliery at Dronfield in the 1880s. Sheard's McLaren traction engine, possibly the one named Ranger, and its coal trucks can be clearly seen. (With thanks to Maria Smith – Dronfield Heritage Trust, DHT-000703)

William Ransley was killed when the McLaren engine he was driving, named *Nelson*, exploded in the Midland Railway goods yard at Chesterfield station on 4 June 1884. The McLaren was owned by his later employers, Bamford & Nuttall, who were coal merchants from Bradwell in the Hope Valley. They were represented at the inquest by Mr J C Clegg, who had also represented Sheard at Dronfield on 17 October 1881.

John Sheard died at the age of 76, with some irony, after being thrown from his pony-drawn trap when the animal stumbled. Despite his reputation and that of his traction engines, the *Sheffield Independent* for 27 May 1891 stated that "His death will be a great loss to the community. The poor especially have lost a good friend, as no worthy appeal for assistance to him was ever refused."

In recent years, Sheard's Drive, Sheard's Way and Sheard's Close have been named in recognition of his contribution to the town.

Cutlers

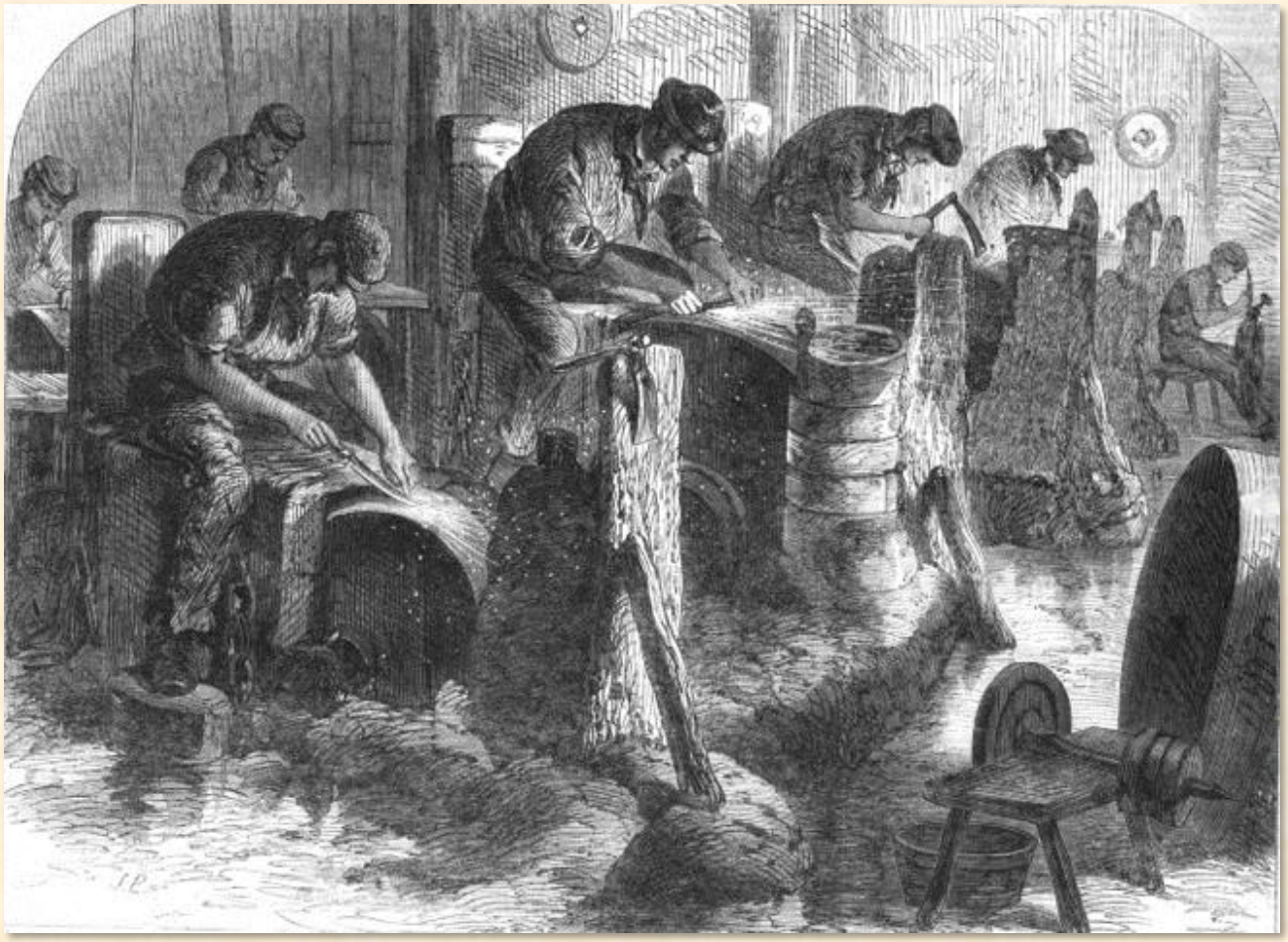
Contents

Sheffield's pride

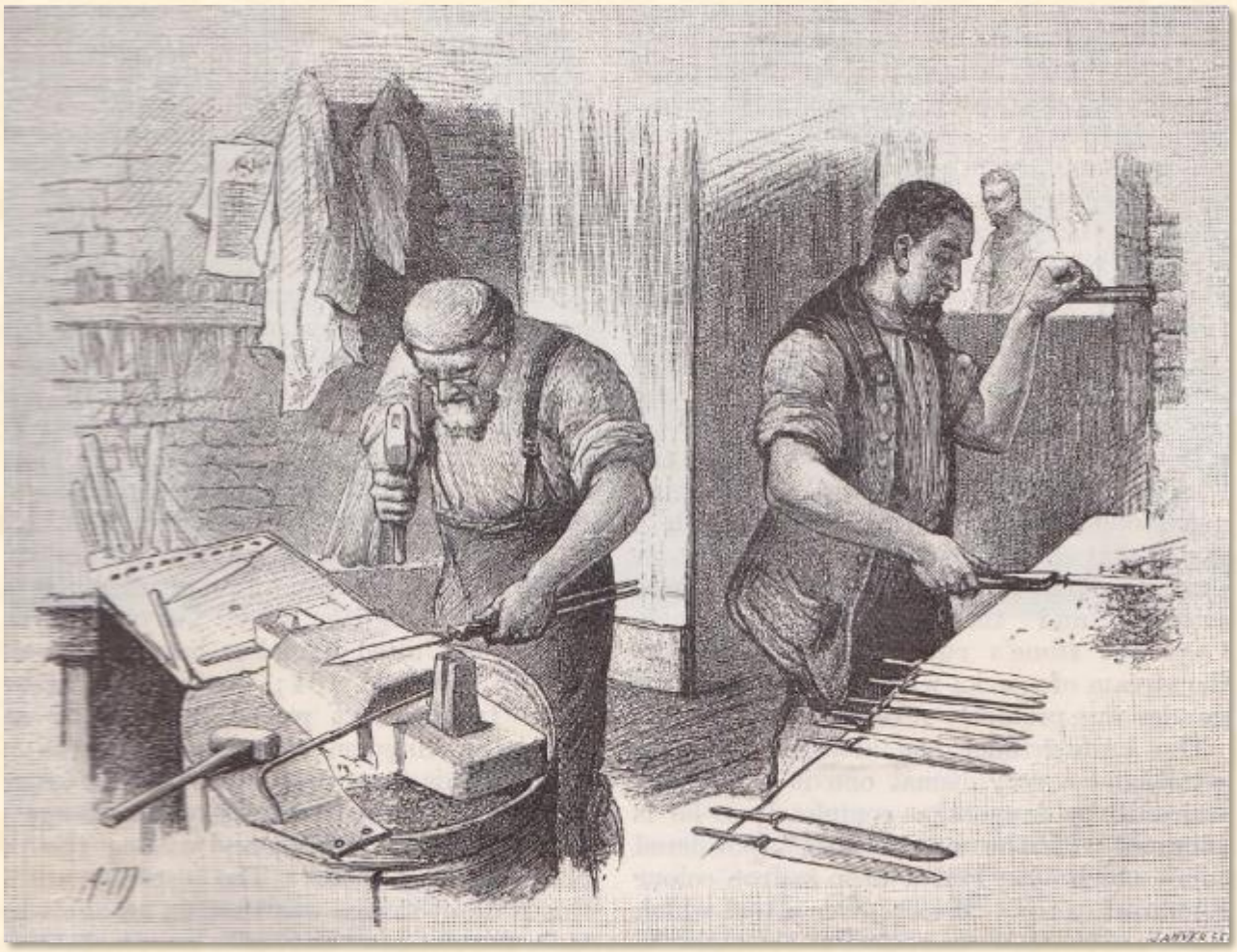
Cutlery was a general term for steel blades of any type and size, not just the tableware that we are familiar with. Cutlers made anything with a blade or cutting edge, such as saws, scythes, sickles and surgical instruments. Norton and Backmoor were known for the making of scythes and sickles.

They also made implements that combined blades with hinged or sprung mechanisms, such as razors, shears, scissors and pen knives. Production of parts was divided into specialisations, including decorative features and handles made from both humble and exotic materials.

Related trades included production of tools used in cutlery manufacturing processes, such as files made from forged high-carbon steel, grind stones and wrought iron hammers. Greenhill was known for saw file making. Palmer stated that "the Sheffield cutler…is the best workman in the world, and his heart is as sound as his workmanship."



*A table blade grinding 'hull' workshop, with grinders sitting on their 'horsings' and leaning over their grindstones. Among PC Clifford's neighbours in Woodseats were grinders of edge tools, files and pocket blades. On 12 November 1882, he arrested grinder John Grason and others for drinking at the house of 'licensed victualler' John Allen outside of licensed hours. (*The Illustrated London News *of 10 March 1866, courtesy of Hathi Trust Digital Library and University of Michigan)*



Workshop of a forger, assisted by a blade striker. According to the 1881 census, a file forger was living at Mundella Place, opposite the school which was probably attended by PC Clifford's son Charles. As mentioned above, PC Clifford arrested table blade forger Francis Sterrup and others on 12 November 1882 for drinking outside of licensed hours. On 8 June 1883, PC Clifford arrested table blade striker Samuel Howson and others for the same reason at the Prince of Wales on Derbyshire Lane. (A Morrow, for The English Illustrated Magazine*, August 1884 – original article, author's collection)*

Thomas' neighbours

According to the 1881 census, many of Thomas' near neighbours on Derbyshire Lane, Harvey Clough Road and Mount View Road were employed in these trades. They included a scythe striker, five spring knife cutlers, two pearl & ivory carvers, a file hardener, an edge tool grinder, a file grinder, twelve file cutters, a scythe maker, a table knife buffer, an engraver and a silversmith.

Mundella Place, near the school, was home to a scythe grinder, four file cutters, a file forger, a file smith, a pocket blade grinder and a silversmith. Many more people employed in these trades lived all across Norton Parish and beyond. Thomas would have to arrest some of them in the course of his duties.

Forging and grinding

Blades and files were made using similar processes, which were relatively unchanged for centuries. A steel bar was heated and hammered or 'forged' to a required size and shape. In the case of a file, one end was narrowed into a spike or 'tang'. For a knife, a wrought iron strip was welded to the end of the blade to form both the 'shoulder' or

'bolster' and the tang. The handle would be fastened with the tang as its core.

Forgers were assisted by strikers, who used hammers to straighten the blades. The metal was heated and cooled or 'tempered' and 'annealed', in order to achieve the desired combination of hardness and flexibility.

A grinder removed any excess material and made the surface smooth and flat. Grinders used large circular grindstones of up to six feet (1.83 m) in diameter and eight inches (20 cm) wide. A new grindstone, made traditionally from sandstone, was 'raced' or 'hacked' by holding a steel bar against it to make it perfectly round and smooth.

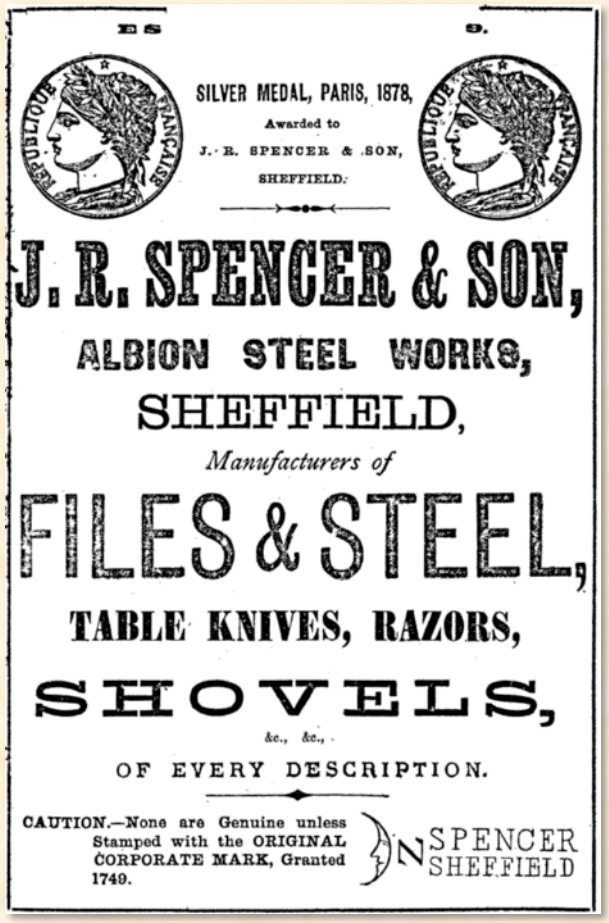
The grinder sat on a wooden seat or 'horsing', which enabled him to lean over the grindstone and bear down with his weight. Razor grinders lay on their stomachs, with a dog on their backs to keep them warm!

The grindstone rotated at high speed, mounted above a cast metal trough or 'trow' containing water to keep the grindstone wet. Grindstones became clogged with metal particles and dirt, and grinders would have to clean or 'rod' them up to forty times a day.

Further refinement of metal surfaces was achieved using other tools and machines adjacent to the grindstone and trough. A glazer was a wooden wheel covered in emery-coated leather. A lap was a wooden tool faced with lead and used for smoothing the non-cutting surfaces and edges of penknives, razors and scissors. A polisher was a small wheel covered in leather. Grindstones and other tools were driven by long belts attached to water wheels or steam engines.

Grinders rented their troughs and associated machinery. These were housed in grinding mills, known across the Sheffield area as 'wheels'. The troughs were housed in rooms known as 'hulls'. Some grinders would rent additional troughs to employ apprentices.

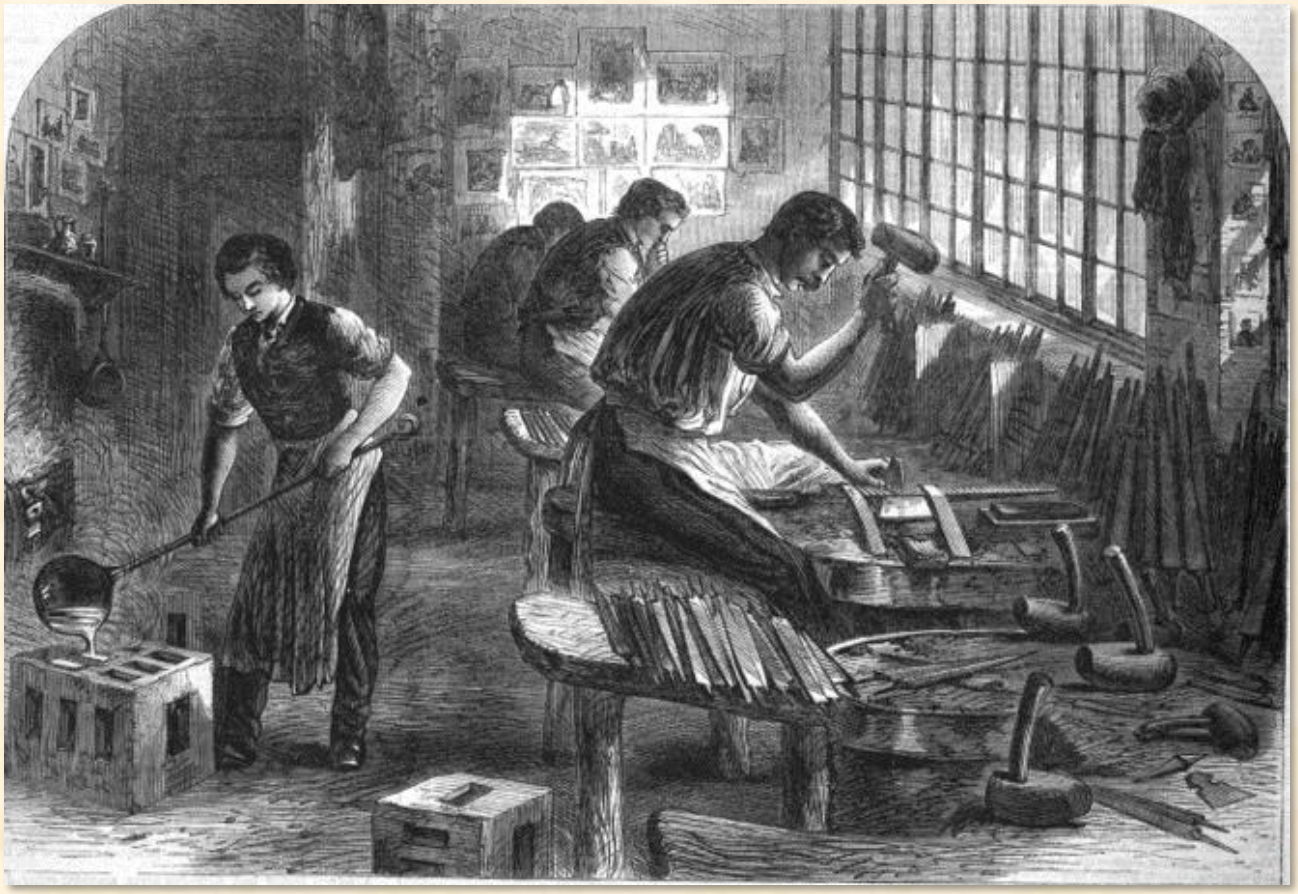
By the early 1800s, scythe makers in Britain were highly concentrated in the Sheffield area. Scythe workshops expanded as blades for reaping machines were developed. Many scythe makers were employed by W Tyzack, Sons and Turner. The company was based at its Little London Works, at the north-west corner of Thomas' beat. They also had a site at Abbeydale Works near Beauchief Abbey, where Abbey Lanes from Woodseats meets Abbeydale Road on the edge of Ecclesall Wood. From these sites on the River Sheaf, Tyzack supplied the British Empire.



Advertisement in White's Directory of Sheffield*, 1879. (University of Leicester, Special Collections)*

File cutting

An endless variety of file shapes and grades was produced for different purposes. A 'blank' was taken by a file cutter, who placed it in a lead-lined stone stock or frame to keep it still, while hammering a small chisel to cut a multitude of grooves in the surface.



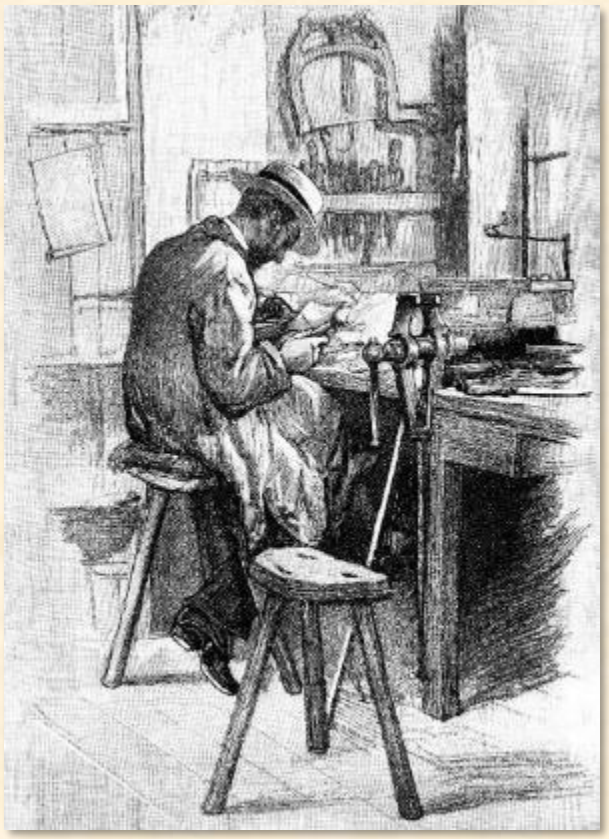
*A file cutting workshop, showing how criss-crossed grooves were cut into file blanks using a hammer and chisel. Several of PC Clifford's neighbours were file cutters. On 12 November 1882, he arrested file cutter William Memmott (with table knife cutler Benjamin Hall) for drinking at the Masons Arms on Chesterfield Road outside of licensed hours. On 8 June 1883, he arrested file cutters Henry Howard and William Hartley for the same reason at the Prince of Wales on Derbyshire Lane. (*The Illustrated London News *of 10 March 1866, courtesy of Hathi Trust Digital Library and University of Michigan)*

In the mid-nineteenth century, male file cutters earned relatively well – up to 35 shillings over a working week of as many as 70 hours. By 1891, they would not expect to earn more than 22 shillings. Inevitably, female file cutters earned less but, towards the end of the century, there were many more of them. They could work at home with lighter tools, between domestic tasks and while keeping an eye on their children. One of the file cutters who lived near Thomas on Derbyshire Lane was 42-year-old widow Elizabeth Smith.

Hafters

Cutlers who assembled and adjusted the finished products, including fitting handles or 'hafts', were known as hafters. Within the industry, when distinguishing the various trades from each other, the term 'cutler' was often used more specifically for hafters.

They used oil, wire, glue, and tools including drills, hammers, files, vices, glazes and buffs. Handles were made from wood, ivory and mother of pearl, of which flat pieces or 'scales' were riveted to the 'tang' at the end of the blade. The processes were skilled and labour-intensive, and were further subdivided between hafters to ensure quality and speed.



A Sheffield cutlery hafter finishing knife handles. In Norton Hammer on 24 July 1881, PC Clifford arrested Tom White, a table knife hafter, for "gaming with cards, on Sunday afternoon". On 12 November 1882, he arrested table knife cutler Benjamin Hall (with file cutter William Memmott) for drinking at the Masons Arms outside of licensed hours. As mentioned above, he then arrested cutler William Biggin and others for the same reason. (A Morrow, for The English Illustrated Magazine*, August 1884 –* *VictorianPictureLibrary.com, ST59)*

Cutlers' guild and trade unions

From the early seventeenth century until the early nineteenth, the trades were governed by a guild known as the Company of Cutlers in Hallamshire. This was named after the ancient area of southern Yorkshire into which much of the city of Sheffield grew. The guild represented the interests of its tradesmen, and ensured and promoted the quality of their products. By the mid-eighteenth century, Hallamshire overtook London as the centre for premier cutlery manufacture.

Apprentices served up to seven years. A trained craftsman could become a 'freeman'. This meant that he could take on apprentices and register his own identifying mark. Most craftsmen did not register and were obliged to work for freemen.

Trade unions for knife, saw and file grinders allied themselves together and became increasingly influential. They paid their members when they were out of work, and provided money for the families of those who died. In 1866, their members included 3,500 adult male forgers and cutters and 250 file grinders, plus 300 women and 1,000 boys.

Relations between employed craftsmen and freemen were difficult at times, particularly when trade unions demanded better pay and resisted the employment of non-union men.

Rattening

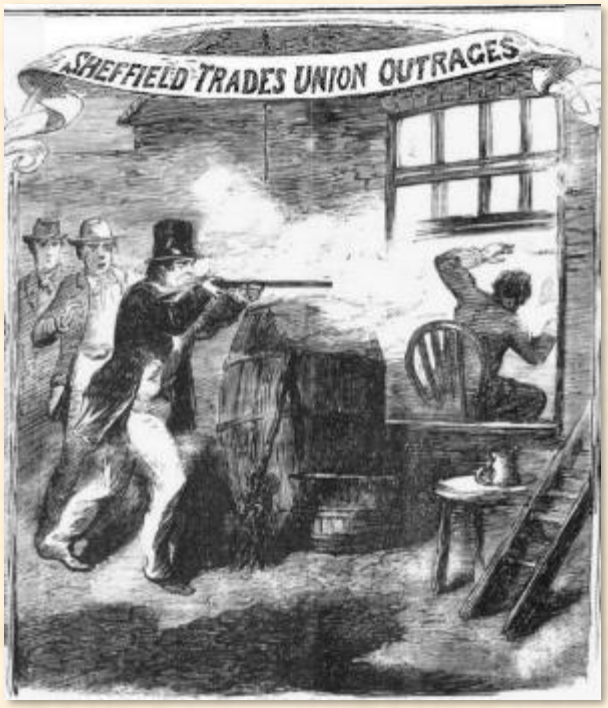
Those who refused to join a union or pay their subscriptions were intimidated. This was known as 'rattening'. Their tools were sometimes confiscated until they capitulated, Members of the Saw Grinders' Union were the most aggressive.

In 1853, a file grinder named Elisha Parker had his horse hamstrung when he refused to stop working for company which employed non-union men. When he refused to pay his dues until he was compensated, his house was damaged by a gunpowder explosion. He was then shot in the arm. In 1857, George Gillot's house was blown when he refused to pay his dues and because he employed too many apprentices. In 1859, a saw grinder named James Linley was harassed for weeks for taking on too many apprentices, and was then shot, dying later from his wound.

In 1860, a factory was blown up after introducing saw-grinding machinery. The wives of its directors received threatening letters. In 1861, a woman died from burns when a house in which she was lodging was damaged by a gunpowder explosion. The house was that of George Wastnidge, who had left his union. They had been out on strike for two years, and Wastnidge had found work which was beyond their influence.

William Torr's factory and warehouse were picketed and broken into, and his equipment

was damaged. This was because he paid file grinders less than the union's expected rate. The perpetrators were suspected as being members of the file grinders' union. In 1866, gun powder was again set off in the cellar of another saw grinder, Thomas Fearnehough.



Artwork on the front page of the Illustrated Police News *for 29 June 1867, depicting the fatal shooting of James Linley in 1859, who had taken on more apprentices than the Saw Grinders' Union allowed. The newspaper was reporting on the findings that year of the 'Sheffield outrages' committee of the* investigating Commission into Trade Unions. *(Newspapers Collection, The British Library)*

The power of the unions was broken after a sixteen-week strike in 1866. An investigating Commission into Trade Unions was established in 1867. Using advertisements in newspapers and on posters, the Commission announced its interest in collecting information about union practices and hearing disputes, of which many were brought. A sub-committee looked into the 'Sheffield outrages', which had received national condemnation.

The unions tried to create a more positive image, concentrating on workers' interests, but rattening continued for many years.


GOLD MEDAL, PARIS UNIVERSAL EXHIBITION, 1878.
SILVER MEDAL, PARIS, 1855. | GOLD MEDAL, PARIS, 1875.
GOLD MEDAL, PARIS, 1867. | GOLD MEDAL, CAPE TOWN, 1877.

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Advertisement in White's Directory of Sheffield*, 1879. (University of Leicester, Special Collections)*

Mechanisation

In addition to water- and steam-powered grindstones, mechanised forging hammers were introduced as the size of factory workshops grew from the early nineteenth century onwards. When file grinding machines were developed, they could grind several file blanks at a time. File cutting machines were increasingly common from the 1880s. However, early examples produced files that still needed finishing by hand.

The unions objected to the inevitable reduction in the need for their members' labour. But as machines improved, hand production could not compete. The man who had blown up the saw-grinding machines was using them himself only a few years later.

Many craftsmen, including those around Norton, were 'outworkers', working by hand in their own small home workshops. They

supplied blades to grinders and hafters in their own and neighbouring parishes. Hand crafting continued well into the twentieth century, but eventually disappeared from mass production. This was partly due to Sheffield firms contracting as production became cheaper elsewhere around the world.

Public health

In 1864, the new Dale Dyke Dam burst. 650 million gallons (three million cubic meters) of water rushed down the Loxley Valley, through Hillsborough and into Sheffield. Around 250 people were killed. Thousands of homes and businesses were flooded. Many grinding mills and workshops were destroyed. PC Thomas Clifford would have met people who remembered the disaster well.

Dr John Charles Hall, senior physician at Sheffield Public Hospital, spent time over a number of years among cutlers like those who Thomas would meet. In 1865, Dr Hall produced a report on diseases caused by pollution and poisoning in Sheffield industries, recommending a number of reforms in practice. The report was entitled, *The Trades of Sheffield as Influencing Life and Health, more particularly File-cutters and Grinders*. On 5 October of that year, he presented his report in Sheffield to the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science. In early 1866, The *Illustrated London News* published a series of articles drawing attention to Dr Hall's findings, with detailed illustrations of working environments.

By-laws had been passed in 1864 prohibiting construction in the city of back-to-back, high-density housing. These tended to be of poor quality and did not provide good ventilation or sanitation, creating slums.

In his introduction, Dr Hall lamented "the sanitary condition of the inhabitants… …producing widowhood and orphanage, arising from preventable diseases…on opening their windows with the forlorn hope of purifying their small habitations…get instead a mixture of gases from dunghills, ashpits and night-soil".

Shattering grindstones

Dr Hall explained how cutlers were in constant danger in their daily occupations. Injuries were common and sometimes deadly. Spinning grindstones could shatter, flinging fragments in all directions, and the fast-moving belts were not protected by guard rails.

On Friday, 21 April 1876, a resident of Derbyshire Lane was involved in a serious accident, reported on the next day in the *Sheffield Independent*.

Alfred Crofts was twenty-one years old. He walked three miles (5 km) to work at the Soho 'wheel' on Bridge Street in Sheffield. Two long rows of 'hulls' faced each other with a large yard between them. Crofts sat on his horsing and began grinding files.

At 9.30 am, the other workmen heard a loud noise and came running. The grindstone Crofts had been leaning over weighed nearly a ton (900 kg). It had broken into four pieces. One piece destroyed Crofts' horsing. Another, weighing five hundred weight (250 kg), had gone through the roof and landed in the yard. A third had punched a hole through a wall. The fourth piece had taken Crofts with it across the room.

His colleagues found him on his hands and knees and covered in dirt. He had a serious injury to his head and an injured leg. A cab was called and took him to the Infirmary.

Grinders' disease

Grinders inhaled a lot of dust and metal fragments, especially when not using water in the troughs. Fork grinders always used dry grindstones. They often developed lung diseases such as silicosis, collectively known as 'grinder's phthisis'. Boys as young as seven worked as polishers and breathed in the same dust.

Extraction fans were effective at removing particles from the air inside the hulls, but not all factory owners installed them. Dr Hall's verdict was damning: "many wheels are a disgrace to the civilization of the nineteenth century...a great evil."

Many grinders did not live beyond thirty years of age. Penknife grinders were more than twice as likely to die in their twenties and thirties than the national population. The average age of fork grinders was twenty-eight years. Grinders of scissors, edge tools, wool shears and table knives averaged thirty-two to thirty-five. Those who lasted longer were debilitated by shortness of breath.

*Grinders at the Trinity Works of George Butler & Co Ltd, cutlery and electro-plate manufacturers on Eyre Street. (*Sheffield and Rotherham up-to-date: A fin-de-Siecle review, 1897 – *PictureSheffield.com, y07144)*

Dr Hall concluded that "these unfortunate men are exposed to influences which rob them of 25 years of existence – to that extent deprive their wives and families of the benefit of their labour, and fill the union poor's-houses with widows and fatherless children. There is no more melancholy object than a fork grinder, looking prematurely old and dying from the dust inhaled in his trade…we see him often crawling to his hull to labour".

The eyes of grinders who refused to wear protective spectacles were damaged and even blinded by flying grit and hot metal particles. Their posture also caused joint problems.

Dr Hall also lamented the attitudes of many grinders. They refused to mask their noses and mouths despite being well aware of the risks. They spent their days off "in drunkenness and intemperance." Some believed that "a drunken grinder often lives the longest", which Dr Hall dismissed as "a very great mistake." Some even felt that, "if the men lived longer [the trade] would be so full there would be no getting a living at it."

He went further: "if bent on destroying yourselves thus recklessly, have the honesty to prevent others, the poor little boys, many of them your own sons, from entering the trade without a warning – write therefore, over the doorway leading to your infernal hulls 'All hope abandon ye who enter here'."

Working conditions in grinding wheels were a little healthier in rural locations outside of the city. (A Morrow, for The English Illustrated Magazine*, August 1884 – original article, author's collection)*

Saw and scythe blade grinding were comparatively healthy occupations, conducted in water-powered mills on streams in the rural valleys around Sheffield. The men were able to stand to work rather than being hunched, and they worked fewer hours. The Saw Grinders' Union did not support the employment of boys under fourteen.

File cutters' disease

File cutters suffered poisoning from the lead in the frames which held the file blanks still. Dr Hall described their "foolish habit of wetting the finger and thumb with which the chisel is held, by licking them – they frequently eat their meals without washing their hands…They do not change their clothes when they get home".

He stated that lead acted on the nerves, including "the intestines, producing colic – and on those of the arms, producing paralysis." Other symptoms included "a peculiar dirty-while and sallow appearance… and the blue line round the teeth".

Like grinders, the posture of file cutters also caused joint problems.

Social reputation

Henry Parker used the hard lives and early deaths of the cutlers to explain the fact that they believed in “a short life and a merry one…The grinders as a body acquired the reputation for improvidence and debauchery”.

Dr Hall condemned “parents who seem only to regard their children as machines to add to their weekly income…It is impossible under such circumstances, to give these children that general education which they require…and religious instruction…they have come into the world without God’s blessing in the homes where but too often their parents have left it without a hope…rocked by the cradle into a maturity of vice, and their education completed by…men, whose every breath is an offensive expression”.

Parker went on: “there were many other inducements…to relieve the peculiar hardships of the grinder’s lot with liquor… So extravagant were the excesses of the men…that even their fellow townsmen came to place them on a lower plane of the human species, and to speak of a group of persons consisting of ‘three men and two grinders.’ ”

It would have been understandable if PC Clifford was somewhat daunted when encountering cutlers, with the union men’s history of violence, especially when he needed to take a group of them to task for unlawful drinking.

But Palmer’s picture in 1884 was not all bleak: “As a class, however, they are rapidly improving, and there are in Sheffield to-day many striking examples of cultivated and prosperous men who have emancipated themselves from the thraldom of evil habits, and while following the trade have followed at the same time the behests of the ‘still small voice’ within them.” No doubt the Norton Christian and Mutual Improvement Association had very similar aims, and may have made Thomas’ job a little easier than it might have otherwise been.

Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet museum occupies the site of the former Tyzack Abbeydale Works. A waterwheel, workshops, grinding hull, steam engine and worker's cottage can be seen at the museum. Another water-powered grinding workshop can be seen at the Shepherd Wheel museum in the south-west of the city. Its wheel is driven by water diverted from the Porter Brook.

Grinders and buffers employed in 1914 by John Batt & Co Ltd on Sycamore Street in Sheffield city centre, near where the Crucible Theatre stands today. (From Grinders and *Buffers: My Boyhood and Beginnings in the Sheffield Cutlery Industry, by Herbert Housley – PictureSheffield.com, s09398)*

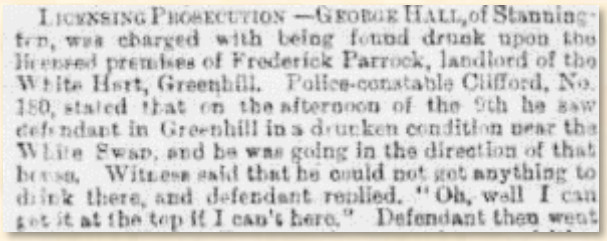
Innkeepers and drinkers

Contents

So drunk he could hardly stand

While Sgt Baker and Inspector Spencer were in Dronfield on 8 October 1881, challenging John Sheard's men about their traction engine license, Thomas was in Greenhill again. He was keeping an eye on George Hall of Stannington. Hall was six miles (10 km) from his home on the north-west side of Sheffield.

According the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* report of Tuesday, 18 October, on the Dronfield Petty Sessions which took place the day before: "Police-constable Clifford, No.180, stated that on the afternoon of the ninth he saw defendant in a drunken condition near the White Swan". The case was also reported in the *Derbyshire Times & Chesterfield Herald* on 22 October.



LICENSING PROSECUTION.—GEORGE HALL, of Stannington, was charged with being found drunk upon the licensed premises of Frederick Parrock, landlord of the White Hart, Greenhill. Police-constable Clifford, No. 180, stated that on the afternoon of the 9th he saw defendant in Greenhill in a drunken condition near the White Swan, and he was going in the direction of that house. Witness said that he could not get anything to drink there, and defendant replied, "Oh, well I can get it at the top if I can't here." Defendant then went

Sheffield Daily Telegraph *for 18 October 1881, naming "Police-constable Clifford, No.180" as the officer charging George Hall of Stannington "with being found drunk upon licensed premises" ten days earlier. (Newspapers Collection, The British Library)*

Hall was unable to get a drink at the White Swan. The landlady, Elizabeth Hibberd, testified that she had refused him "on account of being worse for drink". He had clearly

The White Swan pub in Greenhill at the bend on Main Road, seen here around 1905. On the afternoon of 8 October 1881, drunken George Hall of Stannington was refused a drink here outside of licensing hours. PC Clifford caught up with him half an hour later at the White Hart, 150 yards (140 m) further up Main Road. (With thanks to Tim Hale, Sheffield Postcard Collection, spc670)

consumed alcohol elsewhere not long before. He continued to the White Hart, where Thomas found him half an hour later at around 5.30 pm. Hall had “a glass of beer before him, and was so drunk he could hardly stand”.

The landlord was Frederick Parrock, who originated from St Pancras in London. His wife, Anne Jane, was Danish. They had moved from London with their two older children in around 1875, and then had a third child.

Parrock was charged with “permitting drunken men and also with keeping his house open during prohibited hours.” Parrock claimed that Hall had not been drunk and, for some reason, the case against Parrock was dismissed.

However, Hall was still fined five shillings plus costs “for being drunk in the street”. He was also “ordered to pay the costs in the charge of being on the licensed premises during prohibited hours.”

False representations

Thomas became a zealous enforcer of alcohol licensing laws. According to the *Derbyshire Times & Chesterfield Herald* for Saturday, 19 August 1882, he had been with Sgt Baker on Sunday, 23 July, when they saw “John Lilliman and Thomas Gill of Highfield, Sheffield…
on licensed premises at Norton Woodseats…
at prohibited hours…with drink before them”.

Lilliman and Gill had obtained the alcohol “by false representations regarding their residences, they not being three miles (5 km) distant therefrom.” Highfield was only two miles (3 km) north of Woodseats. This meant they were classified as locals and could not be served during prohibited hours. They did not qualify as *bona fide* travellers under the Licensing Act of 1872.

They were each fined five shillings plus costs at the Hemsworth Petty Sessions on 14 August.

Sale of intoxicating liquors during prohibited hours

Thomas and Sgt Baker were doing their rounds in Woodseats at around four o’clock on the afternoon of Sunday, 12 November 1882, when they entered the Masons Arms on Chesterfield Road. Joseph Ibbotson was the landlord. He also ran his own horse-drawn omnibus service.

Ibbotson was summoned to the Dronfield Petty Sessions on 27 November “for having his house open for the sale of intoxicating liquors during prohibited hours.” The Sessions were reported on in the *Sheffield Independent* the next day, and in the *Derbyshire Times & Chesterfield Herald* for Saturday, 2 December.

The men drinking at the Masons Arms on 12 November included William Memmott and Benjamin Hall, both of Thomas Street, Sheffield. This was just under three miles (5 km) to the north.

Memmott was a 55-year-old file cutter. He and his wife, Mary Ann, had four daughters, aged between five and eighteen. Sarah, the eldest, was a spoon buffer. They had recently moved the short distance from Porter Street, within the Moor area of the city.

Hall was a 50-year-old table knife cutler. He had recently moved with his wife Mary and son, also named Benjamin, from Bard Street on the west side of the city centre. Benjamin junior was twenty-one years old and was also a table knife cutler. Perhaps it was Benjamin jnr who Memmott was encouraging to indulge unlawful habits when PC Clifford and Sgt Baker found them.

Memmott and Hall said they had not been asked where they came from. Ibbotson’s wife, Catherine, claimed that she had indeed asked them when they came in, and that they told her they were from “near the theatre”.

Joseph Ibbotson was fined 40 shillings plus costs, “but as there had been no previous complaint against the landlord”, his alcohol license “was not endorsed” with the offence. Memmott and Hall were dismissed without charge as “they had been tempted to do wrong by the negligence of the landlord in not inquiring where they had come from.”

The Masons Arms on Chesterfield Road in Woodseats, seen here in the late nineteenth century. After a visit from PC Clifford and Sgt Baker on the afternoon of Sunday, 12 November 1882, landlord Joseph Ibbotson was charged with "having his house open for the sale of intoxicating liquors during prohibited hours". Originally known as the Free Masons Arms, it was also commonly known as The Big Tree for the obvious reason. The original tree was destroyed after some elephants from Sanger's circus were tethered to it, possibly during their winter tour of 1888-89. They bolted during a thunder storm and took several branches with them. The tree was eventually replaced, the pub was rebuilt and was named officially as The Big Tree. Masonic symbols can still be found in the floor. The second tree was removed in the 1980s due to Dutch Elm disease. A third tree stands there today. (Photographer, J W Mottershaw – PictureSheffield.com, s00480)

The Heeley Poisoner

Eleven months earlier, 61-year-old Thomas Skinner was seen in the Masons Arms on the evening of 5 December 1881. Meanwhile, his housekeeper and 'sweetheart', 27-year-old artist Kate Dover from Heeley, was visiting a chemist on Abbeydale Road. She was buying an ounce of arsenic, which she later claimed was for colouring wax flowers.

She then walked more than a mile (2 km) to join Skinner at the Masons Arms, where they appeared to be happy together. Due to her love of fine clothes, she was known as 'The Queen of Heeley'.

The next day, Skinner was very ill after eating a dinner that Dover made for him at his house in Highfield. She was ill too but he was much worse, and he died that evening.

PC Thomas Clifford was not involved in the case, and the death occurred just north of the county boundary. But he would have become well aware of it, since the couple had been in Woodseats the night before.

A clear intent to kill could not be established, but, at Leeds Town Hall on 8 February 1882, Kate Dover was convicted of manslaughter. She served nineteen years in prison.

Next stop

John E Allen was another publican or 'licensed victualler' in Woodseats. After Thomas and Sgt Baker left the Masons Arms on 12 November 1882, Allen's house was next on their route. At ten minutes past four,

they found three men drinking. They were Francis Sterrup, a table blade forger, William Biggin, a cutler, and John Grason, a grinder.

They were summoned to the same Dronfield Petty Sessions and on the same charges as Ibbotson and his customers. Allen "pleaded that he inquired of the men where they came from, and supplied them with refreshment on their saying they lived in Charles Street, Sheffield". This was just under three miles (5 km) to the north.

Allen was ordered to pay costs. The other men were each fined a shilling plus costs.

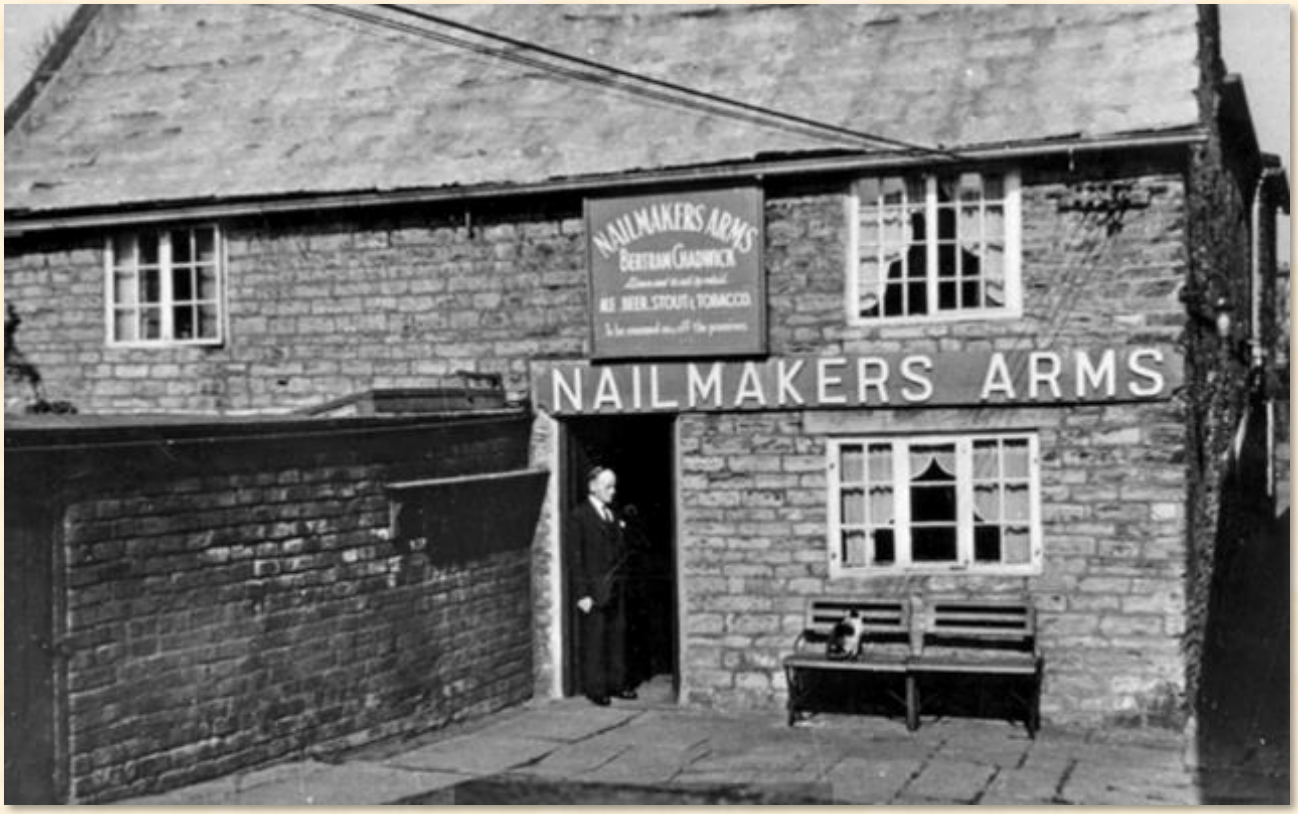
Was the beer good?

The *Sheffield Independent* on Tuesday, 22 May 1883, carried a report entitled "The bone fide traveller question". The *Derbyshire Times & Chesterfield Herald* carried the same report the next day, and again on Saturday, 26 May.

At the Eckington Petty Sessions on 21 May, "William Richardson and Thomas Pashley, both of Sheffield, were summoned for having been on the licensed premises of Frances Skelton, of the Nailmakers' Arms, Norton, during prohibited hours."

Frances Skelton was a 62-year-old widow. She and her son, 27-year-old Herbert, were keeping her husband's farm of 23 acres going. Frances also had two daughters, Annie aged twenty-four and Alice aged nineteen. They had help from a servant, 29-year-old William Fisher.

At 10.45 on the morning of Sunday, 6 May, Thomas had visited the Mount Pleasant Inn near his own house. He saw Richardson and Pashley "having a pint of beer there." When he asked them where they were from, Richardson told him that he lived in Pyebank, five miles (8 km) north of Norton. Pashley gave Nursery Street as his address, over four miles (6.5 km) to the north.



The Nailmakers Arms on Backmoor Road, seen here possibly around 1940. On Sunday, 6 May 1883, PC Clifford followed two men here who no longer qualified as travellers because they had already obtained refreshment at the Mount Pleasant Inn, less than a mile (1.6 km) away in Woodseats. The magistrates were lenient. Having traded since 1638, the Nailmakers Arms remains the oldest pub in Sheffield. (PictureSheffield.com, s06909)

Pashley was probably the 37-year-old wire drawer of that name living on Nursery Lane at the time of the 1881 census. He and his wife, Annie, had three sons aged between four and nine. Richardson may have been the 28-year-old stone mason living on Stockton Street with his wife, Sarah, and their baby boy.

Forty-five minutes later, Thomas found the men enjoying bread, cheese and beer at the Nailmakers Arms on Backmoor Road. He checked with Frances Skelton, who confirmed that they had given her the same addresses that they had told Thomas before. But that was no longer the issue.

They had already been served at the Mount Pleasant Inn, and so could no longer claim to be travellers. “The defendants admitted the offence, and both asserted that they had no intention of doing wrong.”

Magistrate Mr J F Swallow said to Pashley, “Was the beer good?” Pashley replied, “Yes sir; it was very good, and it was a beautiful morning. We were thirsty with the walk.” Laughter rippled around the room.

The other magistrate, Mr W G Blake, felt that the two men were “*bona fide* travellers”, but he added that “They ought, however, to have confined themselves to one public house.” Both magistrates “were willing to take a lenient view”, and only required the men to pay the costs of the summons. “The defendants thanked the magistrates, and paid the money.”

A drinking excursion

Thomas would be named once more in a newspaper report as the arresting officer in a similar case. The *Derbyshire Times & Chesterfield Herald* of Saturday, 30 June 1883, reported that he and Sgt Baker had followed four men after they left a pub in Norton on the afternoon of Sunday, 8 June. They suspected the men of being “on a drinking excursion”.

Samuel Howson was a table blade striker. Walter Pattison was a carter. Henry Howard and William Hartley were file cutters. All four were from Sheffield. They were hosted at the Prince of Wales on Derbyshire Lane by Jesse Whittington. He had recently taken over from George Hollingsworth as landlord. The policemen entered the pub at around 4.30 pm, and found the men drinking beer.

Whittington was summoned to the Hemsworth Petty Sessions on 25 June, “for having sold intoxicating liquors during prohibited hours”. He said that two of the men had given their address as Charles Street, Sheffield. As we have seen, this is where another defendant was living when summoned by Sgt Baker and PC Clifford on a similar charge the previous November.

The distance was not great enough for them to qualify as travellers, although the other two men claimed to be from further away.

Whittington “had been before the magistrates on a similar charge in December last”, so his tenure of the pub had not got off to a good start. He was fined one pound plus costs. His four guests were ordered to pay costs “for having been on licensed premises during unlawful hours.”

Time out

Eleven days after attending the summons at Hemsworth, Thomas left the Force. The Constabulary’s register records that, on Friday, 6 July, once again, he “resigned to better himself”.

It is possible that the family moved to Mosborough. A school record from mid-1885 states that Charles and James had previously been to school at ‘Masborough’. There’s no known evidence that they moved to Masborough near Rotherham, whereas Mosborough is just over five miles (8 km) east of Norton.

Thomas would return to Derbyshire Constabulary in 1884, ten months after he resigned. That year, George Clifford was demoted from Sergeant back to Constable, but continued serving at Whitwell. Sgt Baker was promoted to Inspector. He would retire in the 1890s.

PC George Vardy

Contents

Thomas' successor

There may have been a period of weeks after Thomas resigned when Norton and Woodseats had no constable to support Sgt Baker. PC George Vardy was twenty-three years old when he arrived in October 1883. He and his wife may have moved into 275 Derbyshire Lane at that time. They were certainly there at the time of the 1891 census.

George had married Emma Norton in the summer of 1883, at Hope St Peter in the Peak District, 14 miles (22 km) to the west. Emma was soon pregnant with their first child.

The similarities between Thomas and George were not only that they both married girls with the surname of Norton, and were posted to a village of the same name. Like Thomas, George had been a locomotive fireman with the Midland Railway. According to the following newspaper report, he was well known at Heeley Station.

Theft from allotments

PC Vardy's first appearance in a local newspaper was in the *Sheffield Independent* for 5 January 1884. The report had some similarities to Thomas' first appearance after he had been attached back in May 1880. But Vardy came off much worse in the incident he endured, involving a knife which had probably been made locally.

On the evening of 3 January, Sgt Baker sent him to the estate of the Meersbrook Land Society near Heeley, where plots of land reserved for building houses were being used as garden allotments in the meantime. There had been several complaints about theft of vegetables and chickens. PC Vardy went "in plain clothes…and concealed himself." The encounter was described dramatically and deserves to be quoted at length.

Arrest of Henry Gregory

"He had not long been in his place of concealment before he saw a man named Henry Gregory enter a piece of garden ground belonging to Mr. Matthias Skillington…and help himself to a quantity of potatoes, which he placed in a sack…[Vardy] jumped up…Gregory dropped the sack and took to his heals…the officer overtook him. There were several desperate struggles in the gardens, in the course of which the officer lost his hat and his lamp was smashed."

The article later states that "Gregory, who lives in Penn's Road, Upper Heeley, is a much heavier and a more powerful man than Vardy. He has been employed breaking stones on Richard Road, and whether rightly or wrongly he has been suspected of several of the robberies of garden produce and poultry".

"Eventually [Vardy] succeeded in securing Gregory, who affected to be in deep distress, and pleaded hard to be allowed to go, and said he would cut his throat rather than be taken prisoner…Vardy [checked] to see whether he had a knife in his hands. Finding that he had not, he took out his handcuffs and placed one of them on Gregory's right wrist. The man did not resist, but pleaded his wife and children as reason why Vardy should allow him to go. The officer…advised him to make the best of it…his offence was not so very serious."

"Taking the other hand cuff in his left hand...Then putting the sack of potatoes over his right shoulder, he proceeded with his prisoner…on to the road at the top, which runs to Norton, his intention being to take him to the lock-up there. It seemed as though Gregory was inclined to take the officer's advice and 'go on quietly'." They had a walk of two miles (3.2 km) ahead of them.

Gregory attacks

"When about thirty yards from Mr. John Ryall's house Gregory's manner suddenly changed…He turned around till he almost faced the policeman, and then plunged the blade of his pocket knife into Vardy's neck…[and made] a determined effort to wrench the handcuff out of the officer's hand…he bravely held to his man and said, 'I shall not let you go whilst I have breath…he

believed that he had received a fatal wound, and his courage, therefore, is all the more remarkable."

"It was, to quote Vardy's own words, 'a case of up and down for quite half an hour'…his mouth was filled with blood…More than a dozen times the two men were on the ground, sometimes the policeman being on the top and at other times Gregory".

*PC Robinson subdues the murderer, Charles Peace of Sheffield, who was armed with a gun. The incident took place in Blackheath, south-east London, on 10 September 1878. On 3 January 1884, PC Vardy took half an hour to subdue Henry Gregory, who became violent on the Meersbrook-to-Norton road after Vardy arrested him for stealing. Vardy was not in uniform and it seems that he did not have his truncheon with him. Gregory was carrying a knife and stabbed the officer in the neck. (*Adventures of a Notorious Burglar*, London 1880 – PictureSheffield.com, y12408)*

"At length he succeeded in getting the knife out of Gregory's possession, and then holding the weapon clenched in his fist, he struck the prisoner a tremendous blow under the jaw…to knock Gregory straight to the ground, and as he lay there Vardy kicked him several times on the back of the head. Gregory then became unconscious, the upper part of his clothes soon becoming saturated with blood".

Help arrives

"During all this time Vardy had been screaming 'Murder' and 'Help'…Mr. Ryall's servant…was afraid to unlock the door…she heard the cries for fully twenty minutes…Mr. John Eadon…heard cries of 'Murder'…on reaching Upper Albert Road, he saw Gregory lying with his head on the kerbstone and Vardy stooping over him".

Vardy asked Eadon to take the knife, "and then remarked, 'I am dying from loss of blood'." Gregory regained consciousness and wanted to get up. Vardy refused and said, "I will die over you first." Eadon suggested to Gregory that "you are best where you are." Eadon had also been crying for help and "some other neighbours came with lights…Gregory was lying in a pool of blood, and from the officer's throat blood was freely flowing".

"Messengers were immediately send for Sergeant Baker and for Dr. Johnson who lives in Victoria Road". Others "placed the policeman against a wall, with his head leaning to one side, with the view of closing the terrible wound…others kept careful guard over the prisoner…Dr. Johnson…proceeded to dress their wounds on the spot…armchairs were brought…in which the men were placed, and shawls were thrown around them…brandy was administered…only sufficient for the officer. Thereupon sal volatile [a smelling salts solution] was given to Gregory. The dressing of the wounds occupied more than an hour…Vardy then said [to Eadon], 'Will you go and tell my wife all about it?' "

To hospital in a cab

"…the officer and his prisoner were put into a cab and taken to the Public Hospital… Gregory's condition was the more serious in consequence of the great quantity of blood which he had lost. The wound in Vardy's neck is…an inch broad and two inches deep. Only a slight distance…from the main arteries".

"He also has a severe cut on his right hand, which he received whilst endeavoring to take the knife away…a 4-inch 'Dover,' with bone handle and spear blade…a formidable looking weapon. The point of the blade has been broken off, it is supposed in the struggle."

"Superintendent Cruitt yesterday paid a visit to Vardy at the hospital, and complimented him upon his courage. Gregory is watched day and night by a constable".

If Thomas had not resigned in the July, and been in the post for another six months, Sgt Baker would probably have sent him to Meersbrook that night. Aged ten years older than Vardy, would he have survived the attempt to restrain Gregory? It is Annie Clifford who would have received the news from John Eadon.

Career officer

Emma Vardy gave birth to their first daughter a few months later. They named her Eva. At the time of the 1891 census, PC Vardy was still active as the local constable. He and Emma now had a second daughter. Eva was six and Cora was three.

Unlike Thomas, George Vardy made a long-term career of policing. A new police station and lock-up for Woodseats was proposed in 1887 and, by 1890, it had been built on Chesterfield Road. It is still there today. Vardy was Constable in Charge at the police station by 1893, when he was promoted to Sergeant. By 1895, he had moved from 275 Derbyshire Lane to a house on Holmhirst Road, on the other side of Chesterfield Road.

Holmhirst Road from Chesterfield Road, around 1900, where PC Vardy and his family were living in the mid-1890s. (PictureSheffield.com, s17441)

Sgt Vardy remained at Woodseats until 1898. He was then promoted to Inspector and was transferred to Long Eaton, seven miles (11 km) south-west of Nottingham. He reached the rank of Superintendent and retired in 1920 in Belper.

Elmton

Contents

How Thomas spent the next ten months is unknown but it was evidently unsuccessful. He re-joined Derbyshire Constabulary on Tuesday, 8 April 1884. This time, he was given the number PC 211.

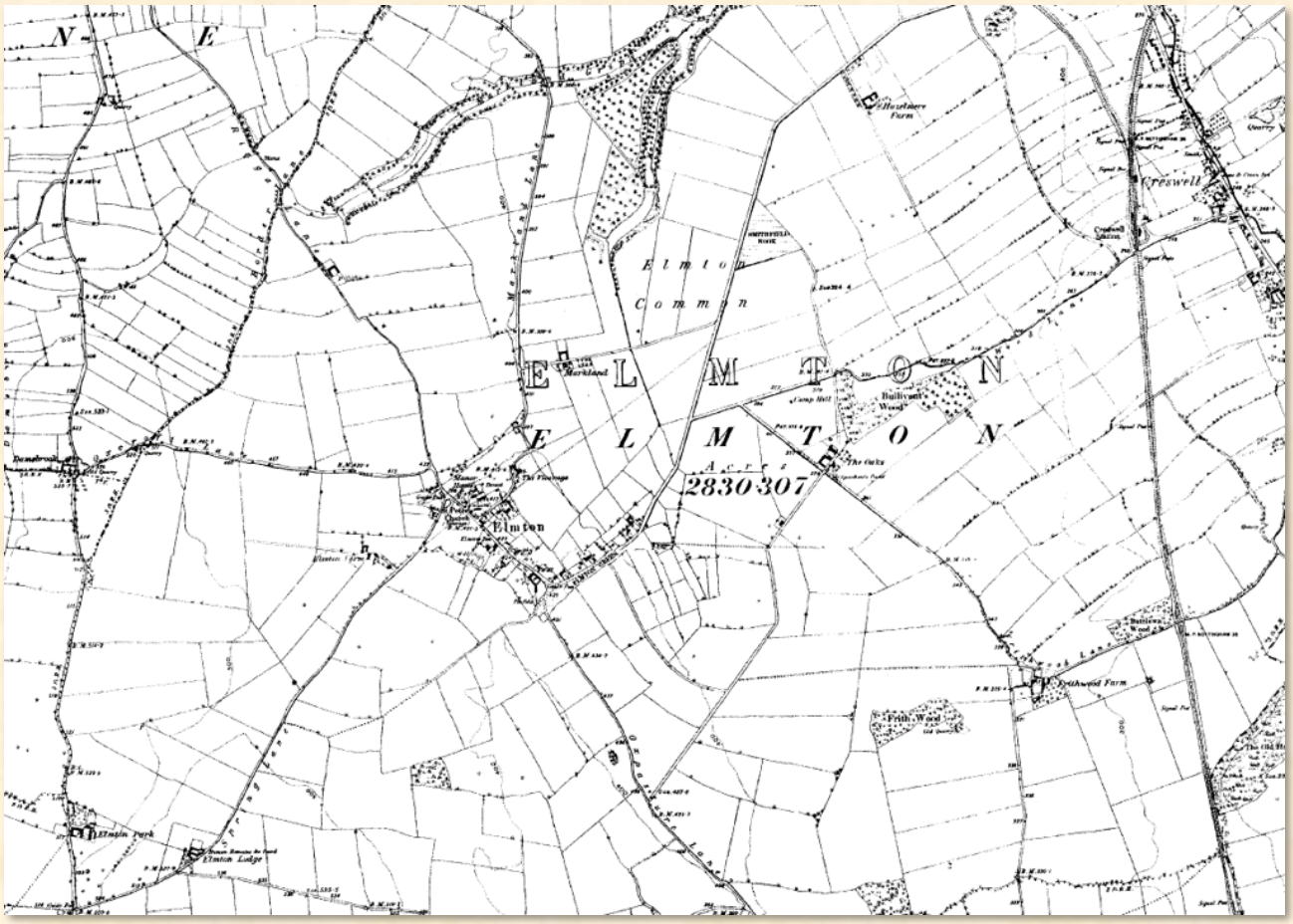
A fresh start

Thomas' second posting was to Elmton, eight miles (13 km) south-east of Eckington and three miles (5 km) north-east of Bolsover. Elmton was a very rural parish of a few hundred people. It was the part of the Eckington District furthest away from where he had been posted before, perhaps to give him the chance of a fresh start and a less challenging community.

Thomas seems to have been the first constable to live in the village. He and Annie may have lived with their four children in Beam Ends, one of a pair of semi-detached cottages on Elmton village green. According to the 1891 census, The cottage is where one of his successors, PC Samuel Harris, appears to have lived with his wife, Elizabeth, and their nephew, Samuel Smith.

Today, they are two of the oldest cottages on the green. The village was owned by the Duke of Portland, who acquired the surrounding estate in 1854. The cottage was probably rented from the Duke by Derbyshire Constabulary.

Beam Ends (left) and Cherry Cottage (right), cottages on The Green at Elmton, seen here in the 1920s. The local landowner from 1854 was the Duke of Portland. Beam Ends, named in the 1960s, was probably the home of the local constable in the 1880s and 1890s. PC Clifford may have been the first to be posted to the village. One of his successors, PC Samuel Harris, appears to have been living there at the time of the 1891 census. (With thanks to Enid Hibbert and Pam Finch, Elmton with Creswell Local History Group)



Elmton around 1880 with the Midland Railway line of 1875 to the east, coming up from Mansfield. At Creswell (top-right), the line diverged north-eastwards via Whitwell to Worksop, and westwards via Clowne to Staveley. Note Elmton Park Farm at bottom-left, from where thirty-two "fowls" were stolen on 20 February 1885. From 1895, Creswell was expanded to accommodate workers for a new coal mine, established by the Bolsover Colliery Company. This would be served by an additional line laid by the Lancashire, Derby and East Coast Railway. (Ordnance Survey County Series, Derbyshire, scale 1:10,560; surveyed 1875 to 1884, published 1886; © Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd, Old-Maps.co.uk)

In the newspapers?

The *Derbyshire Times & Chesterfield Herald* for 12 April 1884 reported that the magistrates for the Eckington district had sanctioned the annual appointment of a number of local 'overseers' in various towns and villages. These included James Cropper and William Archer at Elmton, who were appointed several years running. Archer was the landlord of the Elm Tree Inn. Local farmer John Jackson was a member of the Grand Jury at the Derbyshire Quarter Sessions held in Derby. They would have been able to assist Thomas with his duties around the area.

An alcohol licensing hours case at Mosborough was brought to the Eckington Petty Sessions by a PC Clifford on 14 May. This was reported on in the *Sheffield Independent* ten days later. George Clifford may have been the constable referred to rather than Thomas. Elmton is 3.5 miles (5.5 km) south-west of Whitwell, and Mosborough is over a mile (2 km) north of Eckington.

An incident at Plumbley colliery at three in the morning on Saturday, 23 August, could have been attended by either George or Thomas. Again, George is a little more likely. The mine was built by John Rhodes between Ridgeway and Eckington. It was nicknamed 'Seldom Seen' as it was hidden by woods.

The *Sheffield Independent* of Tuesday, 26 August, reported that, at the Eckington Petty Sessions the previous day, "Joseph Hutchinson, a tramp, was placed in the dock on a charge of being upon the premises of the new sinking shaft of the Plumbley Colliery Company". Hutchinson had not given "a good account of himself…when he said he was employed there. This statement was untrue.– The Justices sentenced him to seven days' hard labour."

The 'Seldom Seen' engine house of Plumbley Colliery, nine miles (14.5 km) north-west of Elmton. A PC Clifford, possibly George rather than Thomas, arrested a tramp here on 23 August 1884. In 1895, four children drowned after falling through ice on the reserve engine pond, as did the watchman who tried to save them. (With thanks to Spike on Flickr)

On Friday, 20 February 1885, six men stole thirty-two "fowls" from George Cox at Elmton Park Farm, to the south-west of the village. One of the men was from Whitwell, three were from Killamarsh, one was from Pleasley on the Nottinghamshire border and one was from Worksop beyond it.

The men were arrested in Whitwell at midnight on the Saturday by PCs Arnut Pack from nearby Clowne, PC Marston from Mosborough, and PC Gane, who took them to the cells at Eckington. Superintendent Cruit remanded two of them and the other three were released on bail. Thomas would have been aware of the case but does not seem to have been involved.

Offences against regulations

In any case, Thomas' heart was clearly not in law enforcement any more. Policemen caught drinking on duty or contravening other rules would be fined and even demoted. Four weeks earlier, he had been fined five shillings for offences against regulations on Tuesday, 27 January.

Annie must have been most perplexed at Thomas' behaviour. Their son Charles was nearly nine years old. Did he know his father was in trouble at work?

Then things got worse. Thomas was finally ordered to resign on Thursday, 19 March, for improper conduct. His offence was recorded as "Gambling in a public house and neglect of duty". This may have taken place in the Elm Tree Inn, and was a regrettable irony considering his earlier zeal.

Discipline for misconduct was common. The concept of an established, professional constabulary was still quite young. Senior officers were often ex-military and well used to discipline. If soldiers in the army often got into trouble for drinking and gambling, it's little surprise that constables like Thomas, who were less familiar with discipline, fell foul of regulations. This happened to many within a couple of years joining the service. Affordable alcohol was usually the cause. Gambling was no doubt another, and officers were often dismissed.

Being ordered to resign was a favour so that he would not have to admit to having been dismissed when making subsequent job applications.

Thomas could certainly no longer prevent his problems affecting his family, not least the matter of how to keep a roof over their heads after having to vacate their Constabulary-provided accommodation.

Annie must have been distraught. Charles turned nine five days later and was old enough to understand what had happened. James was six and half, and was old enough to have an opinion. Little Annie, who would turn four a month later, and Helena who was two-and-half, would have picked up on tension in the household.

The Elm Tree Inn, Elmton, with a group of beaters getting ready for a shoot, possibly around 1930. This may have been the pub in which PC Clifford broke regulations by gambling, leading to his dismissal from Derbyshire Constabulary on 19 March 1885. (PicturethePast.org.uk, DCBR000035)

Midland Railway engine driver

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Return to Darley Abbey

What Thomas did for the next two years is again unknown. However, we do know that the family moved ‘back home’ to Darley Abbey.

As in nearby Allestree, the mill-owning Evans family had built a school for the children of Darley Abbey in 1819. Nearly three months after Thomas was dismissed from Derbyshire Constabulary, his sons Charles and James were admitted to Walter Evans School on 8 June 1885.

They joined their cousins Kate and Alice Mather there. They were the daughters of Thomas’ sister Helena and her husband, Lewis, who still lived in Darley Abbey. They had their seventh child on 1 September. Their son Harry joined his sisters and cousins at school the following February.

At some time before 1891, Thomas and Annie became Congregationalists. The low ebb of their circumstances in 1885 may have prompted them to reach out to members of a Congregationalist church. This would have meant setting aside their Church of England affiliations going back generations.

Little Annie started at Walter Evans School on 7 February 1887, ten weeks before her seventh birthday. Her father’s name and address at the time of her admission were recorded as “Thomas Clifford, 1 The Street”. This was Darley Street, on the west bank of the Derwent, just downstream from the cotton mill.

Little Annie’s cousin Ethel, daughter of Thomas’ brother William, started school with her on the same day. William and his wife were also still in Darley Abbey, and they now had three children. They lived just around the corner from Darley Street at 3 Hill Square. Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee was celebrated on 20 June, which was no doubt an exciting event for the school children.

Lewis and Helena Mather had their eighth and last child baptised at Darley Abbey St Matthew on 13 July 1887.

Welcomed back

Thomas finally returned to what he knew best. He re-joined the Midland Railway. He was listed in the district staff register for the engine shed of the Derby Locomotive Department from 5 August 1887. He was thirty-seven years old.

The expansion of the Midland Railway had continued while Thomas was away. They probably needed his skills, and he returned as a fully qualified or ‘passed’ fireman. This meant he could be called upon to drive engines when not enough drivers were available.

Charles and James left Darley Abbey school on 30 September 1887. Charles was eleven and a half and probably started work. James had his ninth birthday that week and probably transferred to a school in Derby. Little Helena was now five and a half. This probably dates when the family moved into Derby to be nearer to Thomas’ work. However, they left little Annie to continue at school in Darley Abbey until 12 April 1889, a week before she turned nine.

On 13 September 1889, Thomas was promoted to become a full-time driver. What went through his mind as he entered the Bradway tunnel and passed through Norton Hammer on his way in and out of Sheffield?

Widowed twice, married three times

Sadly, Annie died on 15 January 1891, aged just thirty-five. She was buried at Nottingham Road Cemetery in Chaddesden, just to the north-east of Derby. Annie had probably held the family together during Thomas’ career difficulties, and the children would have felt her loss very keenly. Thomas now had to look after them without his wife to whom he had been married for nearly sixteen years.

A Midland Johnson Class 1738, built in Derby in 1885-6 and named after Princess Beatrice, youngest daughter of Queen Victoria. Thomas returned to the railway in August 1887 as a fully qualified or 'passed' fireman, based on his previous experience. He was promoted to driver in September1889 and may have driven Class 1738 locomotives. Beatrice *pulled the royal train carrying Queen Victoria from Derby on her way to Scotland in May 1891. (John Bassindale Collection, with thanks to Tony Hisgett)*

According to the census taken eleven weeks later in April 1891, the family was living at 13 Sidney Street in Litchurch, Derby. This was a few minutes' walk from the engine shed. They were also half a mile (800 m) from their first home on Church Lane, which they had left eleven years before when Thomas joined Derbyshire Constabulary.

Derelict houses on Sidney Street, Derby, seen here in 1975. Thomas and his family were living at no.13 in April 1891. Annie had died on 15 January, making Thomas a widower. The houses were demolished around 1980. (Photographer, J M Wilcox – PicturethePast.org.uk, DRBY003747)

Charles was fifteen years old and working as an iron moulder, either at one of the city's foundries or at the giant Midland Railway works complex. James was a twelve-year-old errand boy. At ten and eight, Catherine Anne and Helena were attending school.

Thomas' brother William was working as a railway plate labourer. Unfortunately, his wife Susan had also died aged thirty-six, on 13 January 1888. Like Thomas, William had moved into Derby with his children. In September, Ethel Annie left Walter Evans School and started at St Andrew's School in the city. William remarried on 25 May 1890, his second wife being Sarah Jane Goodwin. They would provide Thomas' children with one more cousin in 1893. By 1901, William would be working as a stores assistant at the Railway Signal Works in Derby.

Widowed twice, married three times

On 27 June 1891, Thomas married his second wife, Eliza, at St Chad's church in Derby. This may have signified his return to the Church of England. Eliza was the widow of a railway labourer.

Thomas remarriage may have happened too quickly for Charles. He may have felt unable

to accept his stepmother, prompting him to leave home. He joined the Royal Navy on 18 August, volunteering at Devonport near Plymouth. His brother James would follow him into the Navy. It is Charles's service papers which provide the evidence that the family had become Congregationalists.

Unfortunately, Thomas was widowed again when Eliza died in on 20 March 1896, aged fifty. Thomas had her buried with Annie in Nottingham Road Cemetery.

Back in the Norton area, readers of the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* learned of the death of Francis Westby Bagshawe at the age of sixty-four. The edition of the newspaper for 29 April published his obituary "with much regret". He had died peacefully at 6am the previous morning after "a severe illness" of three years "which left his heart in an enfeebled state...The local world can ill afford to lose…a man who had a very high conception of his position and of the responsibilities attaching to it".

At a presentation in his honour in 1888, Sir John Brown had said that F W Bagshawe was "one of the kindest and most warm-hearted of men, an admirable Chairman, and a good Christian". The obituary concluded that "both Church and State have lost a wise and energetic supporter."

His body lay in Norton St James church before being taken to Hathersage for burial. The bells of St James were renovated in his honour at a cost of £500, and there is a memorial to him inside the church.

On 2 June, Thomas' nephew Arthur, William's son, started at Pear Tree School in Derby. Arthur was living with his uncle Thomas at the time, at 12 Shaftsbury Crescent.

This was 150 yards (140 m) from the Baseball Ground, home of Derby County Football Club until 1997. The ground had been created in the 1880s for employees of the adjacent Vulcan Works foundry. Baseball was introduced from the United States in 1889. The ground was developed as a new home for the Football Club, which moved from Nottingham Road in Chaddesden. The first home match for the Club as full tenants was played on 14 September 1895.

21 Shaftsbury Crescent, Derby – the door on the right – seen here in 1980. Thomas lived here with his third wife, Matilda, from 1897 until 1910. These houses were demolished in the early 1980s. (Derby City Council, PicturethePast.org.uk, RBY007107)

On 9 November 1896, at Derby St James, Thomas was remarried yet again. His third bride was Matilda, the widow of another railway worker. She had been living further up Shaftsbury Crescent at no.54. By the time the electoral roll for 1897 had been complied, Thomas, Matilda, little Annie and Helena had moved into 21 Shaftsbury Crescent. On 13 July 1899, Thomas joined a trade union, the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants.

According to the 1901 census, little Annie, now twenty-one, was still living with Thomas and Matilda, and was working as a silk spinner. Helena was eighteen and a half and had left home. She was a domestic housemaid for a matron of a nursing home at 6 Oxford Street in Nottingham, fifteen miles (24 km) to the east.

Locomotive coaling stage near the engine shed and Midland Railway works at Derby around 1900. (Midland Railway Study Centre)

Thomas Clifford aged fifty (my own age at the time of writing), seen here at the wedding of his son Charles in Portsmouth on 11 June 1900. (Original photograph, family collection)

Demotion

Thomas' behaviour relapsed on 2 November 1908. He was disciplined "for coming on duty worse for drink & being insolent". Perhaps he had gained a 'reputation'. We know from his police record that he had character weaknesses. Or he may have been particularly unfortunate in which member of the management witnessed his misdemeanour. He was demoted to "Shunting Driver" on much reduced pay.

How did Thomas reflect on his predicament, remembering how his police career had ended in 1885? Matilda must have been deeply unimpressed. Did she know that Annie had endured a similar ordeal twenty-four years earlier?

End of the line

On 2 January 1911, Thomas was transferred to the massive railway marshalling yard in the Chaddesden. He and Matilda moved to 185 Nottingham Road a stone's throw from where Annie and Eliza were buried. In the census three months later, He still proudly described himself as a "Locomotive Engine Driver, Midland Railway Company".

Chaddesden sidings looking west from Chaddesden South Junction in 1968. Thomas worked at the sidings, probably as a shunting driver, from January 1911 until his death in March 1915. On the left of the horizon is the tower of Derby's All Saints Cathedral. The houses of Nottingham Road are to the right, where Thomas and Matilda lived from 1911. (Courtney Haydon Collection, Y-16-11 – with thanks to the Railway Correspondence and Travel Society)

Thomas died at home on 30 March 1915, nine days after his sixty-fifth birthday. He was buried with Annie and Eliza in Nottingham Road Cemetery.

This is where PC 35 Joseph Moss had been buried after being shot in Derby on 12 July 1879. As a former Grenadier Guard, he had been buried with military honours.

Thomas' name appeared in a newspaper one last time, when notice of his death appeared in the *Derby Daily Telegraph* of 31 March 1915. Matilda died in Derby in 1922, aged sixty-four.

Thomas Clifford's pocket watch. The background image is of a Midland Johnson Class 2228 at Derby. This particular locomotice was built in 1900 and remained in service until 1946. (Family collection)

Charles Clifford's naval career

Contents

Early years

Charles trained in Portsmouth at the *HMS Vernon* Torpedo & Mining School, and also at the Naval School of Telegraphy which was housed in Nelson's *HMS Victory* at the time. He returned to *Vernon* and *Victory* for training in several periods as his career progressed.

From 1896 to 1899, he was a member of the crew of the cruiser, *HMS Intrepid*, with the North America & West Indies Squadron. Their bases were at Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Bermuda. He returned to the squadron with the cruiser, *HMS Ariadne*, from 1903 to 1905.

Armour plated hulls

From 1904, one of the floating 'hulks' used to accommodate the Torpedo & Mining School was the former *HMS Warrior*, the world's first iron-hulled warship, which had been launched in 1860. Since 1987, *Warrior* has been preserved at Portsmouth near *Victory*.

Charles probably knew that Charles Cammell & Co Ltd of Sheffield had made rolled armour plate for the Admiralty. But did he realise that he had lived a few minutes' walk from Norton Hall, the home of Charles Cammell, when his father was a police constable?

Charles Cammell and Co Ltd merged with Laird Brothers Ltd in 1903, acquiring Laird's shipyard at Birkenhead on the south bank of the River Mersey.

Torpedo expert

From 1905, Charles' career focused mainly on torpedos. He assumed increasing responsibility and became an instructor at *HMS Vernon*, reaching the rating of Chief Petty Officer in 1916.

While serving on the Torpedo Boat Destroyer, *HMS Beaver*, Charles participated in the first naval engagement of WWI, the Heligoland Bight Action of 28-29 August 1914.

Beaver was an *Acheron*- or *I-Class* Destroyer. Two other members of the class, *HMS Lapwing* and *HMS Lizard*, were built by Cammell Laird at Birkenhead.

Career twilight

From 1917 to 1918, Charles served on the newly commissioned battlecruiser, *HMS Furious*. This was immediately converted to become the world's first operational aircraft carrier. He would have witnessed the first take-offs from and landings on her deck.

He joined the Royal Fleet Reserve in 1919, and attended *HMS Vernon* once a year from then on. Charles retired from the Navy on his fiftieth birthday in 1926. He then became the landlord of the King Alfred pub in Portsmouth.

The full story of his career will have to wait until another time.

Chief Petty Officer Charles Clifford, my great grandfather, seen here around the time he was demobilised in 1919. He then joined the Royal Fleet Reserve at forty-three years of age. (Original photograph, family collection)

Epilogue

Contents

Between 1993 and 1995, I lived with my wife and daughter in Brimington, to the north-east of Chesterfield. Every weekday morning, I drove north up the main road from Chesterfield to Sheffield. After the modern A61 bypasses Dronfield, the A61 becomes Chesterfield Road as it proceeds into Sheffield.

To my left were Bradway, Greenhill and Norton Hammer. To my right were Norton, Meersbrook and Heeley. Through Woodseats, I passed the Abbey Hotel, the Big Tree, the Chantrey Arms and the Norton Lees end of Derbyshire Lane. I then continued via a choice of streets, including Bramall Lane, to the office where I worked off Ecclesall Road.

I knew that my great-great grandfather had been an engine driver with the Midland Railway and had probably travelled on the line between Chesterfield and Sheffield on many occasions. Several stretches of the line are visible from the A61 and the streets of southern Sheffield.

But I had no idea until early 2019 that he had been a police constable, or that he had walked the very area that passed by the windows of my car.

In the preface to *Chantrey Land*, Harold Armitage explains how, to capture history, it is necessary to “work in small corners…spending laborious days amongst…old documents… until every village…manuscript and book has been compelled to yield its story…and if this book shows some young scholar…that the history of Norton is worth his while, it will not have been written in vain.”

I am neither young nor a scholar, but I have worked ‘in a small corner’, spending laborious evenings amongst old documents, many of which are now available online. I have indeed tried to compel a range of sources to yield the story of north Derbyshire in the few years that my great-great grandfather worked there. One of those sources is Harold Armitage’s fascinating book, which he certainly did not write in vain.

He went on to say that he did not write his book as “a scholar for scholars. It has a more homely intention, and if it finds its way to the firesides of Derbyshire and Hallamshire folk, and helps to round off in an agreeable way some of the days spent in the work of forge, factory, mill or counting-house, or gives point to country rambles, it will not have missed its mark. It is such as book as I should have liked when I began to find that all history was not made at Court, nor in London, nor in the House of Commons, nor upon far-away battlefields, nor embodied in school books”.

I too have a “homely intention” for this piece of family and social history. I have written it for anyone who is interested in the history and geography of Derbyshire and Sheffield, the history of policing, the Industrial Revolution, the daily life of ordinary people in the Victorian Age, or bringing the unromanticised truth of genealogy to life. I certainly hope that it will “round off in an agreeable way” days spent at work, or ‘give point to rambles’ along town streets and country lanes that are still recognisable from the 1880s. Like Armitage, I have written the story that I wanted to read, in order to learn about the world that my great-great grandfather experienced 140 years ago. I am now able to share so much variety to interest and fascinate, to delight in or reflect on soberly, that I’m sure I have not done so in vain.

Timeline of Thomas' life

Contents

Domestic	Occupational
1847 Thomas' sister Helena born illegitimate in Huggelscote, NW Leic	
1848 Their parents, Charles Clifford and Catherine Harrison, get married; Charles is an illiterate agricultural labourer	
1850 Thomas born in Hugglescote	
1851 Census: Family living in nearby Ibstock	
1852 Brother John James is born but dies within months	
1853 Family moves to Allestree, Derbs	
1854 Brother James is born	
1857 Brother William is born; Charles dies aged 34	
1861 Census: Family still in Allestree; Catherine and Helena working at Darley Abbey cotton mill; James and William are in school	**Domestic gardener** Possibly working at Darley Hall or Darley House, both properties of the mill-owning Evans family
1863 Catherine marries James Monk; family moves in with him in Darley Abbey	Possibly as a team with stepfather James Monk and brother-in-law Lewis Mather
1868 Helena marries Lewis Mather	
1871 Census: James is a domestic servant in Litchurch, Derby; William is a factory hand, probably at the cotton mill	
c.1872	**Midland Railway** Has become a locomotive fireman
1875 Thomas marries cotton mill hand Annie Norton; First marital home at 3 Church Lane, Derby	
1876 First child, Charles, is born	
1879 Second child, James, is born	

The career of PC Thomas Clifford, 1880-1885

Domestic	Occupational
1880 Mother Catherine and brother James die; Third child, Catherine 'Annie', born in Derby	**Derbyshire Constabulary** 13 Apr – posted as 3rd Class Constable PC 180 to Norton 22 May – attacked by tramp Nov - promoted to 2nd Class Constable 9 Dec – discovers sleeping drayman
1881 Census: Family living at 275 Derbyshire Lane, Norton Woodseats Charles probably attends Norton County Board School	22 May – youths playing 'Pitch & Toss' 28 May – Sarah Ann Jackson shot dead Jun - promoted to 1st Class Constable 24 Jul – gamblers with cards on a Sunday 7 Aug – violently attacked amid a crowd in Greenhill 8 Oct – enforces licensing laws at White Hart, Greenhill 17 Oct – traction engine blocks Dronfield High Street
1882 Fourth child, Helena, is born	24 Jun – arrest for theft of a bagatelle ball 23 Jul – enforces licensing laws in Woodseats 12 Nov – enforces licensing laws at Masons Arms, Woodseats
1883	12 Mar – youth carrying gun without license in Ridgeway 22 May – enforces licensing laws at Nailmakers Arms, Norton 24 May – 'ferocious' pony captured, Norton 30 Jun – enforces licensing laws at Prince of Wales, Woodseats 6 Jul – resigns "to better himself"
Family possibly moves to Mosborough; Charles and James may have attended school there	Occupation unknown
1884 Family moves to Elmton near Bolsover	**Derbyshire Constabulary** 8 Apr – Appointed as PC 211; posted to Elmton May – enforces licensing laws in Mosborough (maybe PC George Clifford) 23 Aug – tramp and Plumbley Colliery (maybe PC George Clifford)
1885 Family returns to Darley Abbey Charles and James go to Walter Evans school	27 Jan – fined for offences against regulations 19 Mar – dismissed from Derbyshire Constabulary for misconduct
	Occupation unknown

The career of PC Thomas Clifford, 1880-1885

Domestic	Occupational
1887 Little Annie starts at Walter Evans School in Darley Abbey; Charles and James leave the school; Family moves back into Derby	**Rejoins the Midland Railway** 5 Aug – Returns as a qualified or 'passed' locomotive fireman
1889	13 Sep – promoted to driver
1891 Annie dies, buried in Nottingham Rd Cemtry; Census: family at 13 Sidney Street; Charles is an iron moulder; Little Annie is in school; Thomas marries Eliza White; Charles joins the Navy in Devonport, followed later by James	
1896 Eliza dies, buried in Nottingham Rd Cemetery; Thomas living at 12 Shaftsbury Crescent; Thomas marries Matilda Sheldrick; they move to 21 Shaftsbury Crescent with little Annie and Helena	
1899	13 Jul – Joins union, Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants
1900 Charles marries Amelia Scadden in Portsmouth; Thomas and Matilda attend the wedding	
1901 Census: Thomas, Matilda and Catherine Annie, a silk spinner; Helena is a domestic housemaid at a nursing home in Nottingham; Charles and Amelia live in Portsmouth	
1908	18 Nov – demoted to shunting duties "for coming on duty worse for drink & being insolent" on 2 Nov
1911 Census: Thomas and Matilda live at 185 Nottingham Road, Chaddesden	2 Jan – transferred to Chaddesden marshalling yard
1913 Charles and Amelia's only surviving child is born – Harold, my grandfather	
1914 Charles participates in the Heligoland Bight Naval Action of 28-29 Aug	
1915 Thomas dies on 30 March, buried in Nottingham Rd Cemetery	
1922 Matilda dies in Derby	

Acknowledgements

Contents

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