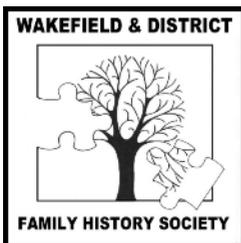


THE WAKEFIELD KINSMAN



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2026

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WAKEFIELD & DISTRICT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

(Registered Charity 1104393)

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The Wakefield Kinsman

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While the Society always uses its best endeavours to ensure that the information in its publications is complete, errors may from time to time occur. The Society will not be held responsible for the consequence for such errors but will make corrections in future editions.

Opinions and comments expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Society.

E & OE

Cover image – Wild's Yard, with a Beverleys Yorkshire Brewery wagon in bottom corner

Chairman's Letter



By the time you read this, the celebrations for Christmas and the New Year will be long behind us. Nevertheless, I do hope you have many happy memories to reflect on, and that 2026 has started well for you. How about New Year's resolutions? How have they worked out for you? I do hope that, amongst them, was to press on with your family history research, and, secondly, that you would tell other members how you are getting on.

I decided to try to start my own research again and, to this end, chose to write an article about one of my ancestors whose life story has intrigued me, and the details you will find in this copy of the Kinsman. Sadly, the story does not link to Wakefield or even Yorkshire, but it does include some beautiful writing in letters from the mid-19th century that are quoted. The reason for writing this particular story was that the main character might be considered something of 'A Black Sheep'; because of an incident later in his life, which was well documented. The Society's annual competition is currently running for the Norman White prize of £50 for the best article on the subject of a "Black Sheep in the Family," with the winner to be announced at our AGM. As a member of the committee, I am not allowed to enter the competition! We do have a number of good entries already, but there is still time for you to enter, by email to editor@wdfhs.co.uk or by post to **Carol Sklinar**. By the way, if you do not like my article, I do have other ancestors who could be considered as black sheep, but I will save them for the future.

Carol continues to do a great job as interim Editor, but is very keen that we keep searching for someone to take on the role. Please do not hesitate to make contact if you or someone you know would be interested in the job. I would also like to draw attention to the work done behind the scenes by **David Huddart**, our webmaster. He keeps our website up to date and is working to enhance the members' area. A recent innovation was to introduce a flipbook format for the electronic copies of the Kinsman on the site. Which reminds me to ask whether you have considered receiving your journal electronically? A number of our members have already taken this option. It means you are no longer affected by the vagaries of the Royal Mail delivery system, and it also reduces the Society's postage and printing costs. If you wish to receive your journal by email, please let me know.

Jacqueline Ryder is the public face of our library team at meetings and deserves credit for the work done behind the scenes to organise the resources. This effort provides another benefit to you as members, so please make use of it to ensure we continue to offer this facility.

Paul Gaywood

Editor's Ramblings

Welcome to 2026, a year which I hope will be filled with the ups and downs of family history and the fulfilment of research achieved. Are you planning to go on, when the weather decides to take a turn for the better, it's not good here in the UK, a family history adventure? Will you visit a churchyard or cemetery to look for that elusive relative, in the hope there is, or was, a headstone? And in your head, do a little happy dance.

Some headstones make you work in your research by just inscribing a name and maybe a date. While others give you a clue to a mystery. There are snippets saying 'in an accident', 'drowned', 'in a disaster', all words that lead you quickly to look in newspapers, becoming Sherlock Holmes for the duration of your search.

Still on the subject of headstones, in England, a wife is always, well, nearly always referred to by her married name or her first name. In Scotland, a wife is always named on a headstone by her maiden name, even in modern times. Without further research, you have a first name and her family surname.

I have not done much research in Wales, well, only around the Ruthin and Wrexham areas for the Wheeldon family, but from looking at their headstones, it seems they use the English system - a married woman using her married surname.

Let me know your experiences with wording on headstones. Or any interesting research you have undertaken.

Not on the headstone theme. Good News. The subscription family history website, Ancestry have recently added nearly 5 million baptism, marriage and burial entries for the East Riding of Yorkshire. Other additions include Doncaster and North Yorkshire.

^{places}

Finally, our Chair, Paul, mentioned the Norman White Prize. I have received a wonderful array of Black Sheep. There is still time to get your Black Sheep story to me. The judging is undertaken by the committee anonymously. Until the articles are printed in Kinsman, only I know who the authors are. Keep them coming in as it looks like it's going to be a good competition year.

Reports from our Meetings

On 1 November our speaker was **Andy Tilby Baxter** who is a volunteer for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and he gave us a talk on that organisation.

Andy started his talk by giving us an infographic which showed the breadth and reach of the organisation; 1.7 million servicemen and women commemorated, the youngest being 14 years old and the oldest 91. 23,000 locations around the world and the employment of over 850 gardeners. They have 1380 staff worldwide and work in 150 countries and territories. Another boggling statistic was that 1.1 million headstones were maintained and over 98 million square metres of grass needed cutting. We were told about member governments and how funding was allocated.

The qualifying dates were 4 August 1914 to 31 August 1921 and 3 Sep 1939 to 31 Dec 1947 and Andy explained that the end dates for these periods reflected when peace treaties were signed.

He then went on to talk about the origins of the organisation and that before the Commonwealth War Graves Commission there was no commemoration with no information getting back to the families of the fallen. Sir Fabian Ware, who worked with the British Red Cross during the war, was passionate that the dead should be commemorated. This was a mammoth task.

Andy told us about the founding principles of the CWC including that all commonwealth war dead should be commemorated with their name on a permanent, uniform headstone with no distinction of rank or status with standard lettering so that the words could be seen clearly from any angle. Families were consulted about a personal inscription they wished to have on the headstone of their loved one. We were told that there was a Cross of Sacrifice or a Stone of Remembrance depending on the size of the cemetery.

He then told us about the monuments and memorials maintained by the CWC which recognised missing personnel, including Vimy Ridge in France, Menin Gate in Ypres and the Portsmouth Naval Memorial and including the largest sites of Tyne Cot Cemetery in Ypres and the Thiepval Memorial in France.

The organisation is environmentally conscious; a plush green meadow would not be appropriate in places like Iraq where water is at a premium. The organisation was also respectful about how different places had their own customs about how the dead were commemorated and that there was a reciprocal arrangement with other countries' equivalent organisations of the CWC in Poland, Germany etc.

Andy told us about the work carried out in the Commonwealth War Graves Visitor Centre in Arras and how the organisation was responsible for repairs to monuments and cemeteries and that where possible, local work people were used. He talked about the Archives Collections which were held and told us how we could search these and also the ongoing projects the CWC were involved in, including a huge process of digitisation. Also there was at present

research into African personnel who were ignored after the war for whatever the reason, possibly the culture at the time, and for these people to be commemorated. He showed us some of the fascinating items in the collection including correspondence which showed that there was some resistance to some of the early decisions that were made, for example regarding the headstones all containing a Christian cross; the organisation felt any symbol should reflect the personal faith of those who had died.

The talk was brought to close with Andy telling us a little about the MacRoberts Trust which contributes to the CWC by financing guides and talks to inform people about the work of the organisation. He also reminded us that there were opportunities for members of the public to contribute stories and photographs to the archives to continue to commemorate their loved ones.

Our speaker on 6 December 2025 was **Stuart Hartley** who gave us a very comprehensive talk on Yorkshire: God's Own County - What Makes Yorkshire Great.

Stuart started his talk by telling us that Asda, Morrisons and Marks and Spencer all have their roots in Yorkshire. Iceland was started by entrepreneur **Sir Malcolm Walker** who was born in Grange Moor, Mirfield. He successfully founded and developed the business; he was knighted in 2017 for services to retailing and charity.

Among the many others we learned about was Dewsbury born **Professor Tom Kilburn** who is credited with writing the world's first computer program and developing the concept of computer memory in 1948. He died in 2001 and did not own a computer himself. **Leslie Fox** was also born and raised in Dewsbury; in 1957 he set up Oxford University's first computing laboratory and became Oxford's first Professor of Numerical Analysis.

Stuart told us about **Percy Shaw** who invented 'cat's eyes'. He was born in Halifax in 1890. He came up with the invention whilst repairing roads and it is estimated that there are now 500 million cat's eyes on roads in the UK. He was a man uninterested in possessions except for his white Rolls Royce.

Sir George Cayley was born in Scarborough in 1773 and was responsible for the first aircraft and first aircraft flight in 1804 which developed 50 years later into manned flight. He was also involved in designs for biplanes and rail safety. A Sheffield born man, **John Stringfellow** was the first person to achieve powered flight in 1847.

John Harrison was born in Foulby near Wakefield and very importantly developed the marine chronometer to develop longitude and make navigation of the seas safer; he had a lifelong obsession to develop this and started being interested in clock making in his teens.

James Henry Atkinson was an ironmonger born 1849 in Leeds and is best known for his 1899 patent for the simple mousetrap. **Joseph Priestley** born in Leeds in 1733 was credited with the discovery of oxygen and **Sir Donald Coleman Bailey** was a civil engineer who invented the Bailey Bridge. **Montgomery** said that without this we would not have won the war. He was born in Rotherham in 1902 and at the time of his invention he was a civil servant in the War Office. Hundreds of the bridges, which could be erected in half a day, were manufactured and Bailey was awarded a knighthood for this.

We were told about **Charles Waterton**, 1782-1865, who was born at Walton Hall and created the world's first nature reserve in the 1820s. He was an early opponent of pollution and had a long running court case with Simpson's soap works. **David Attenborough** described him as one of the first people anywhere to recognise how important the natural world was but that it also needed protection.

Stuart told us about the many achievements of **John Smeaton**, born Aouthorpe, Leeds, a civil engineer responsible for designing bridges, canals and lighthouses and regarded as the father of civil engineers. Someone who did not get the credit he deserved was **Sir Robert Edwards**, born in Batley in 1925 and responsible for enabling the first test tube baby to be born in 1978, **Louise Brown**. He was awarded the Nobel prize in Physiology in 2010 and knighted in 2011. **Dr William Astbury** born in Leeds is credited with the birth of molecular biology at Leeds; his laboratory was christened the x-ray Vatican. **Dr Clifford Albutt** was born in Dewsbury in 1836 and was a physician at Leeds General Infirmary who introduced the ophthalmoscope, weighing machines and microscopes to wards and invented the clinical thermometer.

We were told that the Mallard and the Flying Scotsman were both built at Doncaster, designed by **Sir Nigel Gresley**. **William Bartholomew** designed 'Tom Puddings', a new system for pulling tugboats which allowed large cargoes of coal to be moved. Stuart told us about Bamfords of Huddersfield who were painters and decorators in the 1840s. The company produced sentimental postcards during WW1 which were very successful but their popularity declined after the war and the company went on to produce comic postcards, of which they sold over 20 million a year.

Stuart then moved on to musicians; **Bert Lee** was co-writer of 'Knees Up Mother Brown' and was the organist at Ravensthorpe Church and also wrote songs for **Gertrude Lawrence** and **Gracie Fields**. Endearingly, on the back of his gravestone is written 'Mad as a Hatter, Daft as a Brush'. **Noel Gay**, songwriter and composer, born in Wakefield as **Reginald Moxon Armitage**, wrote the Lambeth Walk.

Staying with the arts, Stuart reminded us about world famous artists and sculptors **Barbara Hepworth** born 1903 in Wakefield and **Henry Moore**, born

1898 in Castleford. **Roger Hargreaves** was born in Cleckheaton in 1935 and wrote children's books, being best known for the Mr Men and Little Miss series; 85 million copies have been sold worldwide.

Betty Boothroyd was born in 1929 in Crackenedge, Dewsbury, starting her political life as a Dewsbury councillor, was MP for West Bromwich West from 1973 to 1992 and then served as Speaker of the House of Commons, the first woman to do this.

David Brown was born in Lockwood, Huddersfield in 1879 and founded David Brown and Company. He died in 1903, his grandson took over and by 1936, in conjunction with **Harry Ferguson**, was producing 3000 tractors annually. These went to the Ministry of Defence and the company was also producing Merlin engines for Spitfires during WW2. After the war, he bought out Aston Martin-Lagonda and continued producing Aston Martin cars.

So, to end on a sweet note. Stuart had told us about **Brian Boffey** from Horsforth who accidentally invented Jelly Tots; he was trying to create a powdered jelly at the time. **Ben Bullock's** factory in Dewsbury started in 1876. After taking a holiday in Blackpool he came up with the idea of lettered rock and this was produced in Dewsbury, nearly 70 miles away from Blackpool; Blackpool Rock was not made in Blackpool until 1902.

Lorraine Simpson



Membership News

A Welcome to New Members

John and Pauline May Grayson 1593

Margaret and Merf Adamson 1594

Members' Articles

Wood, Beer and Furniture – a Short History of a Wakefield Yard

In the Summer and Autumn 2025 issue of The Wakefield Kinsman, the section of old Wakefield business adverts caught my eye. In particular, Beverley Brothers Eagle Brewery. I didn't know it when I started my first job fresh from school in 1979, but I was to discover links between where I worked and the former Eagle Brewery.

My employer was Clegg & Huntington, an old established furniture retailer in Wakefield. They had a shop in Kirkgate near where Woolworth's used to be, and a warehouse in Avison's Yard further down Kirkgate opposite the big roundabout. The company was taken over in the early 1980s by Wades Furnishings of Sheffield but they retained the same premises in Wakefield. I eventually became the warehouse manager and moved permanently into the building in Avison's Yard. This gave me the chance to study it properly and undertake some research into its history, as it was clearly a very old site, including an original iron guttering hopper with a date stamped on it from the 1820s.

The Yard itself was identified on a 1823 map of Wakefield as "Fernandes' Yard", we shall see the significance of that name later and in the present day. It had no name listed in 1848 but in 1893 it was shown as "Avison's Yard". Adjacent streets were "Old Red Lion Yard" (1823 and 1848) and "Trinity Church Gate" (1893), the latter being extended much later to continue around to join up with Avison's Yard. I remember large furniture lorries struggling to negotiate this narrow, bending road, as there was no longer any direct access from Kirkgate. Trinity church was demolished in the 1950s. In 1848 what was to become Avison's Yard held a number of buildings, stretching around 200 feet from Kirkgate on the south side (including the building where I worked) and nearly 400 feet on the north side (including a malt kiln, a clue to its emerging use). The malt kiln was likely built some time after 1823 and demolished after 1932, possibly as late as 1952. Beyond the buildings of the Yard were originally public gardens, these became a timber yard some time between 1848 and 1893.

So, where does the brewing link come in? Well, in 1919 I found deeds of conveyance covering much of the property in Avison's Yard. Firstly, a sale by **Henry, Charles, George and Ramsden Walker Louis** (*sic*) **Fernandes** to **Arthur Wormald** and **George Percival Howarth**, Maltsters. The Walker Louis Fernandes brothers(?) were descended from **Jose Luis Fernandes**, a Portuguese wine merchant who set up business in Wakefield in the late 18th century and became a prominent citizen. The above sale included, on the south side, a "fifteen-quarter" malt kiln (this, presumably, relates to a fairly large kiln which could steep up to fifteen "quarters" of malted grain?) plus two cottages (then numbered 9 and 15) and a stable. The latter was used by a **Mr R Broadhead** who had a joiner's shop and yard across the road. Broadhead's joinery was still there when I worked in Avison's Yard in the 1980s. The elder Mr Broadhead in my time was a somewhat cantankerous individual with whom we had numerous arguments about access for large vehicles, but when I eventually got to know him better we built up a relationship of mutual respect. Also worth noting that in 1919 the buildings fronting Kirkgate on Avison's Yard were owned by a **Mr J Avison**. **Henry Walker Louis Fernandes** retained ownership of the timber yard at the far end of Avison's

Yard. Later in 1919 the building where I worked, and those adjacent, was sold by Wormald & Howarth Maltsters to Beverley Brothers Ltd whose Eagle Brewery (founded in 1861) was located in Harrison Street directly next to Avison's Yard. It appears, therefore, that there had been a tradition of malting for the brewing industry in this area since at least the early 19th century.

Did Beverley Brothers take on their own malting facilities with acquisition of the kilns? Did the adjacent timber and joinery businesses provide wood for making barrels? I've not been able to answer for certain these possibilities, more research is needed. We jump forward to 1931 when the buildings on the south side of Avison's Yard were conveyed from Beverley Brothers to **Harry Broadhead**. It included all of the warehouse buildings where I worked and the adjacent building fronting Kirkgate which was at that time occupied by Clegg & Huntington Ltd, the furniture retailers. The buildings and land in question included a disused malt kiln and a partly demolished adjacent cottage. This suggests that by 1931 Beverley Brothers no longer had a need for the Avison's Yard buildings next to their brewery in Harrison Street. Were they bringing in malted grain from elsewhere, or did they have malting facilities within their own brewery? In 1952 land on the north side of Avison's Yard, then surrounded by the property of a **Mr F Avison**, was conveyed to "Broadhead and Sons Ltd" from "**Michael Sanderson & Son Ltd**". It appears that Broadhead's joinery business was expanding and a significant operation in the first half of the twentieth century.]

By the 1980s their business was somewhat smaller, occupying an office and small workshop at the north end of Avison's Yard. Strange, then, that in 1968 that same building was conveyed to Beverley Brothers from Broadhead and Sons. This was the year that brewing ceased at the Eagle Brewery after its take-over by Watney Mann Ltd in 1967. This transaction may simply have been part of the winding-up legalities to complete the closure of the brewery, and later at some point Broadhead's "re-acquired" the premises to continue their joinery operations. Wades Furnishings closed their Wakefield warehouse in 1987 at which point I was transferred to Dewsbury and then left to start a new career in Leeds. I lost touch with what happened to the old warehouse in Avison's Yard for many years. But it still held some fond memories, prompting me into a nostalgic re-visit a few years ago. Imagine my surprise to see it tastefully converted into an old fashioned bar-cum-pub, which it still is today. And the name of this establishment? "Luis Bar – Fernandes Brewery" of course, what could be more apt as a nod to its history!

Neil Shuttleworth, 614

A Walk Around Outwood Cemetery

For a number of years, I've told you about people who now rest in what local people call Sugar Lane Cemetery. For this edition of Kinsman, I thought I

would include a young man who rests a little closer to our venue, Outwood Memorial Hall.

In early August last year, I decided, for some unknown reason, to visit Outwood Cemetery. So armed with my aged but trusty Fuji SLR, off I went. It was a nice day, not too hot, with just a little breeze, and, most importantly, there was no sign of rain.

As usual, I walked the cemetery, section by section, two or three rows at a time, depending on how the inscriptions had weathered the years. There was one section I had to wait to look at, as there was someone else being added to Outwood's city of the silent.

When I'm in a cemetery, where I know none of my family rest, I look for unusual names, places out of area and any other information that may have been added by the family. You will be surprised by what extra tidbit of information was included.

I did want to start with someone remembered on one of the most recognisable headstones worldwide - a Commonwealth War Grave. But as I delved further into the photo album, I decided on someone who was remembered on a family headstone and may not be seen by a passerby.

James Ellis, the beloved husband of **Ethel Lunn**. A few questions arise from the inscription, some of which can more than likely be answered very quickly.



*'In Loving Memory of Albert dearly loved husband of **Kate Rayner** who died 20th July 1918 aged 55 years. Also the above Kate Rayner who died 14th September 1946 aged 80 years. And **Mabel Rayner** granddaughter of the above who died in infancy. James Ellis the beloved husband of Ethel Lunn who fell in action 21st October 1918 aged 25. Also the above Ethel Lunn who died 4th May 1968, aged 73 years.'*

The headstone is not one that stands out, but, like all headstones, it has a story.

After searching through many military records, I am disappointed to say that I cannot find any military document that I can 100% say is the James remembered on the headstone. I've even looked for him using the surname, Rayner, but again, nothing that I can truly say stands out as him.

Do any of our members know the names on the headstone?

So, to save finishing here with a dead end, I've reverted to one of my original finds.

Harry Gill was born at Newton in 1895, the son of Henry Gill and his wife, Eliza. In 1901, Henry was 55 and working as a miner, while our Harry was a six-year-old youngster.

Ten years later, living with his parents in Newton, the only child of 13 still living at home, 16-year-old Harry is a haulage boy underground. While his father, now 65, is a coal hewer.

Less than five years later, he would be the cause of his mother's tears.

Harry died of wounds received in action on the 15th of December 1916, following time spent in Abbeville Hospital. He was 21 years old. The family home at the time was 16 South View, Newton Hill. One official document, The Dependant's Pension Record on Fold3, provides a great deal of information about Harry.

Harry served in the 4th KOYLI's as a private with service number 1665 and entered France in April 1915. His date of death, cause of death, and next of kin details are provided. This is the dependent's information, indicating how much would be received on a regular basis; in this case, 12/6 a week from the 3rd July 1917. Another pension form shows that the money stopped on 17th April 1922, as Henry Francis Gill, now of 23 Garden Street, Leeds, died on the 16th.

After Harry's death in 1919, his father was to receive 10 guineas as a War Gratuity, along with nearly £13 as an authorised payment.

Harry would have been eligible for what is known as 'Pip, Squeak and Wilfred', the 1915 Star, Victory and British Medals. I wonder if they are still with the family? OR, did his father even take possession of them?

If you would like to visit Harry, apart from the family headstone in Outwood, where he is remembered, he rests in Abbeville Communal Cemetery Extension, which overlooks farmland. The CWGC cemetery, with over 2,000 memorials, forms part of the much larger community burial ground. Visitors to the site will be able to see the stark contrast between the CWGC grassed area and the local section with dry paths and solid tombs (in the French tradition).

I would say 'buyer beware', but in this case, family historian beware. Today was the second time in two days that, after my research, I looked at online family trees. The two people I was researching both had a decent amount of online information: they were both WWI casualties, had numerous family trees

online, and had the wrong death date on those trees. In Harry's case, it was 1971 in Wharfedale. The other case was a service record for a young man. The correct service record had the correct family address, and the other military information all matched. The online tree service record had no information that matched known details, i.e., date of birth and place, parents, and military details. There are now at least six family trees out there that all match the original tree and have just compounded the incorrect details.

Regarding the military record, I knew the responsible person and spoke with him. He told me it was a basic research tree and had forgotten it existed...oops. Even if he removes his tree, nothing will change for the others.

Please do your own research, then, if you wish, look at online trees; they may have something you are missing. I was going to contact the other tree owner; however, there was no point, as they had not been on the website for over a year.

Should I be sympathetic with all those who have copied the information?

Do you know where The Editor has been?



Kirkgate and George Street Looking like this?

In the previous edition of Kinsman I asked if you knew where I'd been? Well, did you know from the clues I left.

Do any of you remember the corner of



Where have I been now? Do you recognise the junction or the corner shop?

Dad's Letters

Letter Dated 24th September 1942
(Post Mark 26/9/42)

24.9.42

Dear Vi,

2/LT T Staynes
No. 1 Group
A.A.P.C. (WA)
W.A. Forces

Kinsman

12

A special letter for you. Not that I have any special news, but my transport is all tied up again so I can't get out to visit my working parties. It was very hot this morning, but clouded over now and a storm obviously brewing. The Limba men call lightning "Kwāli-wāli" – I like that. Thunder they call 'gdanke' – not so good. Someone has felled a tree and brought down the over-head wires, and so the telephone can't worry me. Officially I'm seething with rage and instituting inquiries and writing peevish letters to all and sundry; privately I'm enjoying the odd hour's peace and quiet. Several lost African drivers keep wandering in, and Ordnance invariably pass them on to me; I, of course, send them along to the service corps. Sometimes they travel in the reverse direction, but I occupy a strategic position in the middle so it doesn't really matter.

I haven't any real news for you except, as you will observe, I have acquired some writing paper. However, five of these sheets have to satisfy four envelopes, so your letters in future will be few and far between, or else much shorter. I've got another touch of foot rot, and a terrific quarrel on with the I P C concerning tools. As yet the fight is even, but I fear he has too many vouchers behind him.

I've had no news from **Harding**, and we are all frightfully worried & nervous. I think he should already be a father, but I don't know. The excitement is terrific.

Yesterday I had an unfortunate African on the 'phone wanting to know the catalogue number and price of a tyre pressure gauge. Sinking my voice to a very confidential whisper I told him that he really ought to contact Ordnance and if he rang them up and asked to be put in to the bargain basement, men's department, they'd tell him just what he wanted to know. He asked me to repeat it so he could write it down. I then rang off and sat listening for the telephone next door to ring. It found **SQMS Waterman** in one of his busier moments. 'What' screams he 'What'..... We haven't got any bloody bargain basement...What the hell do you think we are..... What department? etc." Really choice it was. However, the caller finally got his information, and I sent a note next door asking them to moderate their language, and everybody was happy except Waterman who is probably thinking out something to push on to me. It all helps the war effort.

There's a train shunting outside again and there's a homely smell of smoke and soot. I wish there weren't quite so much noise though. I think I will retire to my billet. There's nothing to do in the afternoon except visit the outside jobs; and I can't get to those without transport as it happens. If you were here, I'd take you for a walk in the rain and get your feet wet for you and show you a waterfall and some monkey apples and maybe a snake, and some quails and a native village.

My Sgt is getting restless at the forced inactivity and talking of hitch-hiking about the countryside. I think I'll let him go. He's a good lad but a bit short-tempered and occasionally suffers from coast memory.

That's all for the time being, or else I shall have nothing to write about on Sunday. Did I tell you I'd written to Ernest again? I told him two good stories but I've forgotten them now. **Aunt C.** apparently intends to stay with Henry. I'm sure she'll be well looked after there and will be able to get about a lot more if she wants to. I hope you'll keep on visiting her a lot, despite your job.

You don't tell me much about Rex nowadays. I gather he is out of favour or else hairless. You always were a fickle piece, weren't you? Remember me to my mother-in-law and tell her the only cigarettes we can buy out here now are Craven A – we call them 'Cravena' with a long ee and two short a s. Sounds very pukka. Take care of yourself and be a good girl and maybe I'll send you some more copies of the local flora.

Yours incorrigibly
Tommy.

Post Mark 30th September 1942
Staynes

219433

2/LT T

No. 1 Group
A.A.P.C. (WA)
West African

Forces

27/9/42

My dear Vi,

Sunday with its usual letter. My opinion of this joint still stays unchanged; but it is now becoming, I suppose through increased knowledge of the land, the people and their queer customs, a little less unbearable. I like signalling too; it's a different thing altogether from kicking one's heels in a transit camp or being maid of all work for a thankless O.C. I don't go about waving little flags, nor yet do I work on the railway. My daily routine starts at nine – actually I usually pop out about seven or half past to have a look at the drivers doing maintenance to their vehicles, or see the Africans doing their early morning stuff, or turn up at first parade just to see that its running to time – nothing really happens on first parade, except that my Sgt, tells the linesmen what job if any to get on with. All these things however are movable feasts as it were, and I don't need to interfere since they all run very smoothly at the moment. Actually, it's very nice and cool in the morning and I like the stroll before breakfast – why I've even started taking a run with the Ordnance P.T. squad Monday & Friday mornings, a mile trot at half-past six with **Lt. Muckle, Bro. Boase, SQMS Waterman, Staff Flanders** etc. etc. I breakfast at quarter-past

eight and at nine o'clock (by my watch) I walk into the office. My L/Cpl has parade stats ready for me. I sign whatever there is to sign and then go into conference with my Sgt. This usually lasts about an hour – all depends how much technical stuff I have to have explained to me; **Sgt. Rhead** however, is very long suffering and I'm learning the business gradually. Our talk is usually punctuated with telephone calls from outraged subscribers. About half-past ten my office work is done. L/Cpl Smart settles down to whatever clerking I've set him to do; Sgt Rhead goes off to find the 15 cwt truck (via the Sgts Mess), brings it along to the Officer's mess, where Alpha has had a nice cup of tea waiting for me, and off we go. Sometimes we go to contact customers and find out what is wrong with their 'phone, or where they want a new one; or how we are to get a cable round or under an R A F. runway, or across a river or railway, or plan a private exchange for a R.A. unit; sometimes to arrange things with some civilian authority; to inspect sites and advise units on their system of communications. Sometimes we take a couple of linesmen with tools and materials to do a rush job, or a repair one-time; sometimes just the Sgt & I 'faulting' – that is when communication fails between two points A and B. Experience tells Sgt Rhead the most likely spot to look for trouble – a tree-feller has brought down an overhead; or a weak point is giving trouble. If the break isn't immediately visible, we 'tap' the line, disconnecting the wire at given points and connecting up a portable test phone. One end of the joint is connected up and we get through to A. We try the other and find it dead. So we move towards B, tapping away until we find two adjacent places from which we can get A but not B, the other B but not A. The fault is in between the two. If we can't repair it ourselves, we decide what will be needed and send out the necessary when we get back. I like this – tramping about the bush, and I'm sufficiently initiated now to connect up the test phone, or whilst Sgt Rhead does the connecting, take the receiver and address whoever answers in a most professional manner – "Hello, who is that? Exchange? ,,,,,, All right, Lineman testing. Give me a ring back please." Then I turn to my Sgt and say "L- Exchange, line O.K." Sometimes we've nothing really exciting or interesting; then we, or sometimes just I with no Sgt, just have a look at the native labourers on the cable trenches, or search out scattered linesmen to see what they are doing and how they are getting on. Back for lunch any time between twelve and two; drop in at the office after lunch to see what official letters the dispatch rider may have brought in during the morning, again give Smart instructions about relies, or pass on to Sgt Rhead if they are new jobs, hear what he is going to do about them, and then I'm finished for the day, unless there is a job on, in which case I go out again. Five o'clock I usually drop into the office again to hear if all the men are in and how they are getting on; and to be available if any of them want to see me. Back to the mess by way of the men's mess to see what they are having to eat and how they like it. Every Friday I have a day in town – set off about 10.30, meet my C.O. at the bank, have a quick one, up to H.Q. for lunch, help him sort out the cash for all

the sections; discuss with him any problems or difficulties, see the quartermaster, the transport officer and the colonel (for reasons of courtesy if nothing else) and back to the depot with the men's pay. If I'm back by 5.30 I have a pay parade. If not, I pay out on Saturday morning before the men go out to work – early morning and late at night are the only times I can do it without holding up the jobs. I pay the men once a week. Once a fortnight I pay the labourers. That is a longer job. I spend all Tuesday afternoon with Cpl Alger making out the pay sheets I collect the cash Friday – about £150 mostly in two shillings, shillings, etc; nearly dislocates your shoulder carrying the bag. Saturday after lunch I go out and pay one gang on the job. When I get back about 5 the other gang is waiting at the office and I pay them off. Sunday morning is like any other morning; but Sunday afternoon I manage to squeeze in a bathe somehow.

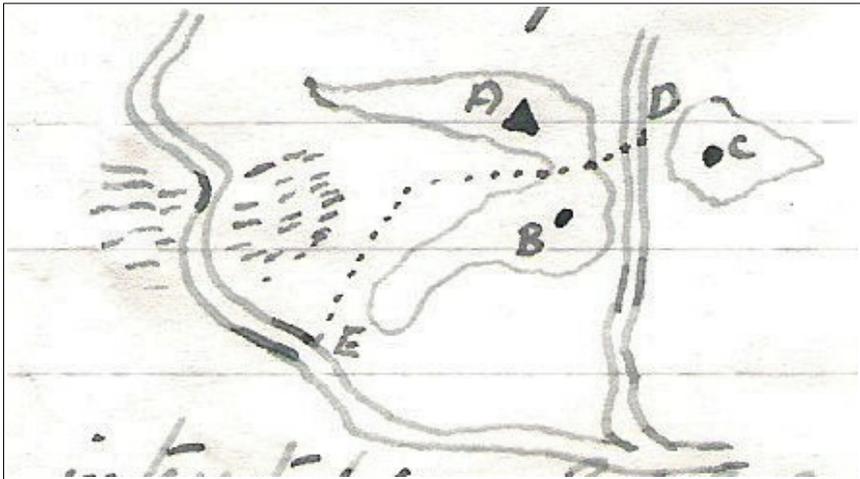
Half the fun of this job is the places I go to & the people I meet to arrange the installation of the 'phones for them – R.A.F, Navy, Fleet Air Arm, and practically every unit in the army. I had a particularly good time with the Fleet Air Arm – quite a tricky job we had and a good job of work it was when we'd finished it – they were most friendly and hospitable and looked well after my men and let them use the canteen and invited us to go to their cinema shows. Unfortunately, that's as much as I can say about it, or of half a dozen interesting jobs I've had this week.

We're getting real Hollywood storms every day now – late afternoon and evening just after dark. There are three kinds of lightning – the long shimmering kind the lights up the sky and flickers and flickers for a long time, the sudden blinding flash, and most spectacular of all a blue snake-like kind (just as lightning looks like in a photograph) that runs in an almost leisurely fashion right across the sky. There's a great deal more lightning than thunder; and the rain is short and torrential. The wind comes with it now; a tremendous gust without warning which bends the palm trees over and tears away the leaves and twigs; five minutes fury with lashing rain; then the wind dies away, the rain goes on a little longer, then it too dies away; and the lightning has the sky to itself. This afternoon the wind lifted most of the thatch off the Sgt's quarters in the first blast and carried it right across the road. Dam funny it looked. You needn't worry about the Sgts' – there is a tin roof underneath. The thatch is only for coolness in the summer. On Thursday H – Exchange was right in the middle of the storm. We man the exchange and at about 3.30 the operator rang me up to say he was going to close down for a short time as the lightning was coming out of his test frame. In the middle of the conversation the lightning must have got the overhead because there was such a crack in the receiver that I nearly jerked my neck out. I don't blame him for closing down. Theoretically, of course, when lightning strikes the earth, it should disappear and lose itself. Actually, in this part of the world at any rate, it gets into our cables and either sets the frames in the exchange sparking

and flashing or else makes a horrible 'crack' in the receiver. Unless there's a direct hit on the building there's no danger from the lightning, but the noise in the receiver is nearly as bad as an electric shock – you can't help jerking your ear away violently. Last year, of course, the lightning came along the overheads into our exchange here and set the thatch on fire. It's a great life if you don't weaken.

Last night I made a discovery. The O.C. troops here, Lt Muckle, was talking of two schoolboys who indulged in a spot of shop lifting, and of an interview with a feather-legged headmaster who's nose twitched! The shop, of course, was Woolworth's in Scarborough, and the headmaster, our dearly beloved **Willie Wolfe**! Did I ever tell you about it. Muckle was manager of Woolworth's then. Actually, he'd not been there long – his previous shop had been in Bishop Auckland and he'd motor cycled all over Teesdale & Tynedale & the Lake District even Hardknott – he spoke of the two boulders at the top of the pass – and Burnmoor and Honister. We talked until three o'clock.

I'm thinking quite a lot about hills just now – and after all they are the saving grace of this god-forsaken dump. There's a likely hill not far from here, it looks good and is just over 2900 ft. I've been studying the map – it's something like this.



'A' is the peak I'm interested in. B & C are two smaller peaks. There are two rough roads, both passable for vehicles in the dry season, one running up to a 2000 ft pass at D, the other skirting the hills through swampy plain. The map shows a hunter's trail running from the pass at D over a little saddle between the two peaks and down to a little native village at E. It's almost six miles from D to E and I'm planning to take the lorry up to D and then send it back and round to E to wait for me. I can then try and force a way along the hunter's

trail. It's all thick bush; and the bush seems to go right up the mountain so it will need a preliminary expedition to see if it is possible to get to the summit. However, if the hunter's trail is practicable, I might have a shot of the mountain. Muckle is going to join forces with me; and we'll take a couple of boys to carry some food & drink and other impedimenta & to act as interpreters if necessary. They can carry a machete to deal with odd thorns; and will carry rifles for the benefit of chance leopards or bush cats; sticks, boots & thick puttees for the benefit of snakes, and enjoy ourselves generally. Would you like to come with us? Or would you be too frightened of creepy-crawly things? I don't think you dare come, not even with your lawful wedded. We'd lend you a rifle or a pop-gun and you could blaze away at the dicky-birds. Anyway, by the time you get this invitation it will probably be all over, so you can't come anyhow. Besides, you'd probably get your feet wet, and you'd sweat something horrible; and we're going to have ground nut chop tonight. Take ground nuts & roast them. Grind them into a coarse powder and make it into soup. Take whole chickens ad lib. Stuff with whole roast ground nuts (monkey nuts to you) and meat etc. Boil in the soup until soft & tender. Take bananas & potatoes & paw-paw & melons & all other available vegetables. Slice & fry. Serve the birds in large tureens, and the veg. neatly arranged in separate dishes. Eat until full to bursting and then go to bed and sleep until Monday morning. Oh, to be in England now that rationing is there. Yesterday we had Heinz - Tomato soup. Boiled rolled steak stuffed with sausage, fried potatoes, carrot (tinned) marrow (fresh) & Heinz beans, fruit salad & custard (with fresh pineapples & bananas in it), spaghetti on toast and a cup of coffee. Quite a nice little dinner. Could you do a nice ripe juicy pineapple – or am I spreading alarm & despondency amongst the civilian population of Ravens Crescent? I'd cheerfully exchange the lot for a kiss in the dark from a lass I know. To gather beech twigs by Brignall Banks and get a smell of clean cold moorland air and see gold and reds and browns on the trees and trample in wind-piled mounds of dry leaves and to ride quickly home down a quiet country lane and smell the wood burning in the country cottages, and to feel the nip of September evenings. And then the cheerful fire in our own little room, ^ the flickering light of the flames & the old settee just big enough for two to lie and whisper whilst the washing up waits ----

Twenty crowded months – Middlesbrough and Dewsbury, Tal-y-llyn and Barnard Castle, Dewsbury and Warminster, Scarborough and Camberley, Dewsbury and Whitehaven. Camberley, Oxford, Leicester and Dewsbury again. And all the little trips to Frome and Salisbury and Bath and Winchester and Neasden and Weybridge, and all the places that have known us. There are so many I can't remember when I want to – I was trying to tell Muckle about the Roman Wall but its all jumbled up. Some names I remember but can't say exactly where they are – like Borcovicus and Housesteads and twice Brewed and some places I can't give a name to like the little camp where the

Wall crosses the North Tyne just north of Hexham, or the big park as you near Haltwhistle coming from Alston – or even the hill on the left as you go up to Grisedale from Grasmere – not Dollywaggen, the one before that. Do you still disbelieve in Coaster Memory? All places I used to know like the palm of your hand, but now I can't remember their names or get them in the proper order. Which side of Bardon Mill is Haydon Bridge? What is the big village the 'bus comes to after leaving Barney to go the Darlington? It's all very aggravating, especially when I knew exactly where these places were and could always find them – though you never really trusted me and were always afraid of being lost. Don't try to deny it, for I'm in no mood for being crossed. Not at this distance; I'd either become violent or subside into an armchair and a flood of tears. I'm sure I couldn't cope with your vivacity now; you'd have to be ever so kind gentle with me and make a fuss of me in a quiet sort of way. I'd like somebody to make a fuss of me and there's not the slightest possibility out here. It's time some more mail came in too; your letters are over a month behind now and that's too long. Maybe there'll be some in a day or two. I'm beginning to look for them again every time the D.R. comes along. I wish you'd tie yourself up in the next parcel. Oh, my Vi, I'm just aching to see you and hold you and love you. I've spent too long by myself in my room thinking of you and writing this letter; I'm feeling your absence too deeply and it doesn't do any good and there's fourteen months still to go. I think I'll go for a stroll round the depot and gaze on the storm.

Monday

Up and doing again. Had my run this morning and am just waiting for my transport to come in so I can go off to deal with the R.A.F. There's a lovely letter here that I've just censored – Nigerian, of course – I don't know what his original correspondent was or said, but the reply gives a fair indication “----- she is nowhere in beauty. In height poor, in education backward, in harlotting notorious and nothing would prompt me to recommend her in marriage to anyone.----” I should think not! And to hell with the laws of libel. I like a man who speaks his mind. Another bloke advised his friend, if he enlisted, to join the “noble corps of signals. The salary is gorgeous” Life has its compensations – would you like a run in an open truck in hot sunshine with a view of green hills and a broad river and a distant horizon? And the R.A.F. always have an iced drink for you-----

Your own Tommy.

P.S. I had some photos taken. If they are ready I will pop them in.

We Will Remember Our Heroes

Name – Francis Milthorp Walker	Date of birth - 1894
Relationship to author – Great uncle	Place of birth - Alverthorpe

Regiment – King's Own Yorkshire Light Inf. (when KIA)	Service unit - 5 th Battalion
Service No.- 17318	Date of death - 27 th March 1918
CWGC Memorial - Arras Memorial, France	CWGC reference - - Bay 7
Local Memorial - St Paul's Church, Alverthorpe	Parents - James Luis Walker and Martha Walker of Cross Pipes Road, Alverthorpe, Wakefield

Francis Milthorp Walker was the younger brother of my grandmother, **Lilian Shuttleworth, nee Walker**, of Alverthorpe. He was killed during German attacks on the Arras sector of the Western Front in Spring 1918 and has no



known grave. His photo appeared in the Wakefield Express; Saturday April 27th 1918 under the front page heading of “Local Heroes of the Great War”. A report was published as follows:

“He enlisted in Wakefield and had a chequered career since joining Kitchener’s army in September 1914, having been in every battle in the Ypres sector since that date, being slightly wounded twice. He figured in the Cambrai fight, and was one of a few machine gunners who returned from that memorable struggle, his platoon taking the trophies twice in short time. For three winters he served in the trenches and met his end in resisting the

overwhelming forces of the enemy on Wednesday, March 27th, 1918.”

He was entitled to three separate campaign medals – 1914/15 Star; British War Medal; Victory Medal – according to his Medal Index Card from the National Archives. His medals were passed down to his nephew, **Peter Walker** who lived in Scotland.

He was the youngest child of **James Luis Walker** (died 1920) and **Martha Walker**, nee **Whitehead** (died 1912) and lived with them at Cross Pipes Road, Alverthorpe. When he was killed in action he was 23 years of age, single, and before the war a junior partner in **Messrs. Walker Bros.**, printer's engineers, Westgate Common, Wakefield. His surviving brothers and sisters were **Lilian, James William, Fanny, Walter, Sarah Ellen ("Nellie")**, and **Florence ("Florrie")**. In his will he left everything to his brother, **James William Walker**.

Wakefield Express Roll of Honour:

WALKER – In tender and abiding remembrance of a loving son and brother, Lance-Corpl. Francis Milthorp Walker, late of Alverthorpe, killed in action in France, March 27th, 1918. Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. May his reward be as great as his sacrifice.

□ *From Father, Brothers, Sisters, and Mabel.*

[note: "Mabel" was likely to have been his girlfriend/fiancée pictured in a surviving photograph with him.]

Wakefield Express Thanks for Sympathy:

MR. J. L. WALKER and FAMILY wish to THANK all friends for sympathy in their sad bereavement – Alverthorpe, Wakefield.

Francis Milthorp Walker's army service records do not appear to have survived in totality, likely destroyed during the Second World War. He is commemorated in St Paul's Church, Alverthorpe; his name being included in a memorial plaque at the East Window to those local men who died in the 1914 – 1918 war. His name is also included in the Roll of Honour plaque in the church, showing those who served in the forces during the war. The author has also installed a small memorial plaque on the grave urn of his parents, also at St Paul's, Alverthorpe.

He owned a set of ebony and ivory dominoes in a wooden box which were given to my grandmother, then to my father (who was named after him – "Frank"), and are now in my possession, intact and with Francis Walker's name and initials still visible on the box. They are the most personal surviving link to his memory.

Image is from authors collection

Editor : his father was the recipient of 5/- per week pension from November 1918, for his son.

Name – Ernest Chappell	Date of birth - 1891
Relationship to author – Cousin	Place of birth - Alverthorpe
Regiment – Duke of Wellington's West Riding Regt.(when KIA)	Service unit - 2nd Battalion
Service No.-33862	Date of death - 31 st August 1918
CWGC Memorial - Vis-en-Artois British Cemetery, Haucourt	CWGC reference - - I BN 55
Local Memorial - St Mary's Church, Woodkirk and St Paul's Church, Alverthorpe	Parents - Alonza and Florence Chappell , The Old White Bear Inn, Tingley (originally of Dewsbury Road, Ossett, later of Alverthorpe Road)



Ernest Chappell was the only child of Alonza and Florence Chappell (nee Whitehead), Old White Bear Inn, Tingley (formerly of Alverthorpe). He was an apprentice printer at the “Wakefield Express” Office, Wakefield, and may have secured this job via my Grandfather – **James Shuttleworth** – who was a long-established printer at the Wakefield Express and who was married to Ernest Chappell’s first-cousin, **Lilian (nee Walker)**. Ernest Chappell’s mother, Florence (“Florrie”) later ran a fish and chip shop in Alverthorpe and lived in the village until her death in 1952. She is buried with her husband Alonza (they married in 1898) in St Paul’s churchyard, Alverthorpe. Alonza Chappell (a wool spinner by trade), had also joined the army in 1918 (when he was 42), and returned to his unit in Ripon after only a few days’ compassionate leave

following the death of his son. Alonza served in the Labour Corps; Private 563679. He died in 1924 and is buried at St Paul’s churchyard and cemetery, Alverthorpe. On his and his wife’s gravestone there is a memorial inscription to their son, Ernest Chappell.

In the Wakefield Express; Saturday, September 28th, 1918 was the following entry:

Roll of Honour.

CHAPPELL – In ever loving memory of Signaller Ernest Chappell, West Riding Regt., killed in action 31st August 1918, only and dearly loved son of Mr. and Mrs. Chappell, Old White Bear Inn, Tingley.

*We long for household voices gone,
For vanished smiles we long;
But God has led our dear one on,
And He can do no wrong.*

- From Father, Mother, and Friend Eliza, with many thanks for all letters and expressions of sympathy received.

[note: "Eliza" may have been his girlfriend]

Signaller Ernest Chappell was killed in action, aged 19, in the Pas-de-Calais region of France between Arras and Cambrai. He enlisted in Wakefield and went to France only a few months before he was killed. In the Wakefield Express; Saturday, September 28th, 1918 under the page 3 heading of "Local Hero in the Great War" was a photo of "Signaller ERNEST CHAPPELL, Tingley, West Riding Regt. (killed)" – see above. He was entitled to two separate campaign medals – British War Medal; Victory Medal – according to his Medal Index Card from the National Archives.

His war record has survived and provides more information about him and his army service. He enlisted in March 1917 when he was 17 years and 10 months old, being small in stature at 5' 4 ³/₄ " tall with a 32" chest and weighing 108lbs. His religion was given as Wesleyan Methodist. He was put initially on the army reserve, then on reaching his 18th birthday he was posted in May 1917 at Pontefract to a Training Reserve battalion. He was then transferred to the regular KOYLI at Chelmsford in October that year and remained in Britain before being sent to France in May 1918. He embarked from Folkestone and went on to Etaples via Boulogne where he was transferred to the West Riding Regiment. He appears to have seen active service in the field from June before being killed on 31st August. In his will he left everything to his mother.

What appears to us today as being the officious, cold and impersonal nature of the forms and letters regarding his death, is in stark contrast to the tragedy and unimaginable grief of parents losing their only child so young. As late as 1921 there is a letter from Ernest's mother to a senior army officer politely seeking clarity about the soldier's final entitlement to medals and honours. She ends by asking to be excused for troubling the recipient of the letter.

Image from the Wakefield Express

Neil Shuttleworth mem 614

John Macallan – Saint or Sinner?

I have long been interested in the life of my great great grandfather **John Macallan**. I have some documents which seem to confirm him as an exemplary character but there are records of an incident in his life which make one question this.

Taking first the evidence which gives a positive impression of him the first item is a testimonial transcribed below from The **Rev. T. Langhorne**, Episcopal Clergyman, Musselburgh, writing from Loretto Academy on September 12th 1835:

“Dear Sir

As you have intimated to me your intention of becoming a candidate for the Mastership of the Classical Department of the Grammar School in this place, I have great pleasure in bearing testimony to your qualifications, industry, and success as a teacher.

It is nearly five years since you entered this establishment as my assistant; my experience of you, therefore, enables me to consider you as competent in every respect for the situation in question.

You have taught the classics, in all stages with great credit to yourself, satisfaction to me, and to the friends of my pupils. Your superior knowledge too, of French, and acquaintance with all the business of a school, render you eminently qualified to fill, as Headmaster, the honourable appointment to which you aspire.

I have witnessed with great satisfaction, your patience and temper, combined with firmness, so requisite in our profession; and your sound moral principles, and invariably correct conduct, it will perhaps be the highest proof of my approbation to repeat, that you have lived nearly five years in my family, with a character which, I believe, cannot be impeached; and that your laudable views, in regard to the above situation, are the whole and sole reason of our parting. With every good wish for your welfare,

I remain Dear Sir,

Very sincerely yours

THOMAS LANGHORNE”

Loretto survives to this day as a renowned school in Musselburgh, just outside Edinburgh and it claims to be the oldest boarding school in Scotland. The Rev Langhorne was the founder and the school traces its history to 1827 and thus John Macallan served there in the very early years of the establishment. Little is known of his ancestors. A few generations before it is claimed that all the male members of the clan were killed at Culloden but

somehow he has appeared and made his way to study at Edinburgh University. From their records I learnt that he came from Caithness and that he studied at the University in two separate periods in the 1820's. It was apparently common at that time for students to take a break in their studies to earn the funds to finance the remainder of their learning. I do not know if he was successful in seeking the above-mentioned opportunity but he is living in Edinburgh when he marries in 1837 and has two children while living at different addresses in the city. He moves on however taking the post of schoolmaster at Eddlestone just outside Peebles and the 1841 census confirms him at that location. By late 1844 it seems that he was ready to move again and the **Rev Patrick Robertson** wrote the following testimonial for him.

“As I understand that Mr John Macallan, schoolmaster at Eddlestone, is about to become a candidate for the vacant Mastership in the High School of Edinburgh, I cannot deny myself the gratification of bearing my testimony to his distinguished merits as a teacher of youth. He was selected, four years ago out of a list of twenty-six candidates, as in all respects the best qualified for filling the situation of schoolmaster in this parish; and the longer I know him, the greater reason have I to rejoice in the appointment that was then made. Although the school was well taught by his predecessor, he has already succeeded in raising the intellectual character of the youth of the parish in high degree; and from his zeal and energy as a teacher, has drawn around him a greater number of scholars by one fifth than was ever known to have attended the school in former times when the population was greater; there being actually more than a sixth part of the whole population in daily attendance at the school.

The admirable manner in which the various branches of education are conducted, and the perfect order and regularity maintained in the school without severity, have called forth the admiration of every visitor, and justly entitle him to be ranked among the most successful teachers of youth.

He is an excellent classical scholar, and has had great experience in teaching the Latin, Greek and French languages; and should he be successful in gaining the present object of his ambition, I feel he will maintain the just celebrity of the High School of Edinburgh as a seminary of learning. He has taught privately in my own family for the last three years, and my sons have also attended him in the public school. I have, therefore, had the most ample opportunity of knowing him thoroughly, and I can with confidence say, that a more inexhaustible temper, more perfect self-command, or greater zeal in the exercise of his vocation, I have never met with. As a private individual, his conduct and character have earned for him my confidence and esteem; and should he be removed from his present sphere of useful labour, I shall lose a most able and invaluable assistant in training the rising generation for time and for eternity. I shall, nevertheless, rejoice should his success

elsewhere be equal to his merits, although his loss to me and to this parish will not be easily made up, and I have little hope of ever seeing his place so adequately filled.

PATRICK ROBERTSON
Minister of Eddlestone

It seems however that his application for this situation does not succeed and he continues in the role at Eddlestone. A note of pride enters in a local survey of education when it appears that about 70 parish children attended the school in addition to the boarders, and it states that *“there is not one child in the parish between 6 and 15 years of age who cannot read or write”*. John is admitted to the Educational Institute of Scotland in 1848 as a Fellow and their records confirm him as a schoolteacher at Eddlestone. To gain the diploma he would have to provide evidence that he was qualified to teach English, Writing, Arithmetic, Geography, History, Scripture Knowledge, Composition, Music, Drawing, Latin, Greek, French and Mathematics. He would also have to provide evidence that he had taught with acceptance and success during a period of twenty years all the said branches of education and had attended a University for four sessions.

At a personal level he and his wife have two further children whilst there and the youngest, a son, is christened **Patrick Robertson Macallan** reflecting the close relationship between the two families. In 1841 John had been elected as an Elder to the Kirk session and had taken various duties including that of Clerk to their meetings. The minute book which I researched was written in his hand and when following through the book there was a sudden change in the writing; consequently I read the entry for July 20th 1848 with great interest. Patrick Robertson told the meeting that *“He had taken possession of the books kept by Mr Macallan their clerk who had left the parish on the 30th June without any communication to him. The books showed the register of births deaths and marriages had been correctly kept and brought down to the date of Mr Macallan’s departure but that no entries have been made in the book of receipts and disbursements kept by the clerk since they audited his accounts on 27th May. At that time there was a balance in his hands as appears from the book and relative minute of 5 pounds 15 shillings and 11 pence halfpenny. To this sum there falls to be added the church collections received by him from the 7th May to the 25th June inclusive amounting to 3 pounds 1 shilling and 6 pence”* There is then reference to jottings that indicate that 16 shillings and 6 pence have been paid out to a named pauper. Leaving a balance of 8 pounds 11 pence halfpenny which is now due to the Kirk session. The minutes continue *“But as he left the parish on the 30th June for London without having paid over this balance to the Kirk and as there is reason to fear that his pecuniary affairs are in a state of great embarrassment **Mr James Robertson** (a church elder)*

stated that as it might have a most injurious effect upon the amount of the future church collections if this sum were to be lost through the insolvency of their clerk he would make up the deficiency from his own funds and take his chance of being repaid by Mr Macallan should he ever be able to do so."

There is a further meeting on 25th July and a letter dated 21 July is read and reproduced in the minutes:

Sir,

In consequence of being appointed to a situation in London, I now resign the offices of Clerk, Collector and Inspector of the Poor, of the parish of Eddlestone.

I am Sir

Your Most Obedient Servant
JOHN MACALLAN

Later in the meeting the following letter to the Rev Patrick Robertson is read and reproduced in the minutes:

London, Swallow Street School
21st July 1848

My Dear Sir,

Enclosed you have my resignation of the various offices I have had in Eddlestone for the last 8 years. A faithful and correct statement of my receipts and disbursements of the funds belonging to the Parochial Board shall be forwarded without delay. What arrears may be due by me I will honourably pay. I will however require some time as my affairs are in a considerable embarrassment owing to my dilatoriness in collecting my own. I have hitherto rendered to every man his own as far as I could and I shall ever continue to do so. I throw myself on your and Mr Mackenzie's indulgence as I know you to be gentlemen. I write this to you hurriedly. I have had much to do since I arrived here without a pound in my pocket. What distresses me most is my wife being unwell since she arrived. God bless you and your family.

I remain my dear sir

Most sincerely yours,
JOHN MACALLAN"

It is fascinating to speculate what led this man who was a paragon of virtue according to his professional testimonials to make his sudden departure with a significant cloud over his reputation from what had seemed to be a well respected position. I will keep my eyes open for any further information which sheds light on his circumstances. There is however a happy ending to his story because I have found evidence to say that he was appointed Master of the Scottish Central Schools in Swallow Street, just off Piccadilly in Central

London. This was a Boys and Girls Day and Sunday School in connection with the adjacent Scotch Church. His wife Margaret was appointed Mistress of the school. This is confirmed in the Post Office directory of 1851 but records from 1854 show that the school had a different Master. John died in 1857. His wife, Margaret survived until 1892. I was advised years ago by a great Aunt that Margaret had gone on to be a missionary "Teaching African boys to wear grey flannel trousers" but I have not been able to find missionary records to confirm this. The 1881 census does show her at an address in central London where she at the age of 72 is listed as the head of household and her occupation is listed as mission lady so perhaps there is some truth in the family rumour.

What about the debt left behind in Scotland you may ask. Further research of the minutes found the following entry on 4th November 1849:

"The Kirk session note with satisfaction that Mr Macallan had paid to their treasurer the amount of his salary as parochial schoolmaster to which he was entitled from Whitsunday 1848 to the date of the acceptance of his resignation of the office of schoolmaster by the Heritors and this was amounting to six pounds seven shillings and two pence. The session approve of the action of their treasurer in having paid said sum to Mr James Robertson in part liquidation of his advance to the Kirk session on Mr Macallan's account". I can find no reference to any further payment.

Paul Gaywood Mem 1496

Sign of the Times – A Brief History of a Wakefield Yard

Throughout my childhood playing in the garden of my parent's house in Thornes in the 1960s and early 1970s, there was one of those things that seemed to have always been there but which no-one really noticed any more. It was an old metal sign languishing in the bottom of a privet hedge, its lettering almost obscured by dirt and the grass growing around it. It read: "Shuttleworth's Yard". I remember it earned me bragging rights with my mates, having such a sign with my name on it. But I knew nothing of its history at the time, nor its remarkable connection to our family.

Some years later when I began my interest in family history research I dug the sign out of the hedge bottom, cleaned it thoroughly and hung it on my bedroom wall. A rich royal blue background with white lettering and border emerged from the cleaning, an enamelled metal street sign, measuring 61" in length and 7" in height. Research indicates that these wall signs are difficult to date but almost certainly early 20th century and possibly from as late as the 1940s.

This particular sign was taken from buildings being demolished in the early 1960s opposite Wakefield Cathedral, the location of Shuttleworth's Yard (in fact, where the new Wakefield Museum is being created from the old BHS store). The author's sister, Jill, was working at the time for **W A Church & Sons**, a building firm with offices and yard off Southgate. One of the employees noticed the sign and asked Jill if she would like it. He helped her retrieve it (she remembers an archway entrance to the yard) and take it to her parent's home at Thornes. It eventually ended up in the author's garage in Leeds when I moved there in the 1990s, where it remained until it was donated to Wakefield Museums in 2024.

The first appearance of Shuttleworth's Yard on a Wakefield street plan appears to have been in 1823, on **John Walker's** detailed map of the town. It is shown next to Manor Court (or Manor House) Yard between the main streets of Southgate and Almshouse Lane, opposite the (then) Parish Church. It was clearly well established by this time and is shown running from what is now upper Kirkgate all the way down to George Street. Adjacent at the George Street end is shown Haigh & Graham's wood yard, which is significant. In the 1841 census a George Graham, timber merchant is recorded at Shuttleworth's Yard, likely connected to this business.

In Walker's "Wakefield, Its History and People", describing Wakefield in the 18th century, he states: "The ground where George Street now is was a croft, occupied towards the close of the century by **Thomas Shuttleworth**, joiner, to put his wood in; that part of it next Almshouse Lane was used by **John Wilby** as a stackyard." So it seems that this area at the time was a centre for joiners and timber merchants. **Thomas Shuttleworth** (1751 – 1816) was an eminent Joiner, Carpenter & Under-taker of Wakefield, and is listed in the *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers 1660 – 1840*:

Shuttleworth, Thomas, Kirkgate, Wakefield, Yorks., cm [cabinet maker?] (1798–1818). In 1814 the business was trading as Shuttleworth & Son.

In 1792 the Charnock family of wealthy merchants (siblings **William, Elizabeth, and Edward George Charnock**) leased land to Thomas Shuttleworth for him to erect buildings off Westgate and Kirkgate, and this together with his wood yard off what was to become George Street suggests this was the beginnings of what became known as "Shuttleworth's Yard". Thomas Shuttleworth continued his association with the Charnocks and other Wakefield property speculators (including the solicitor John Lee) via a number of deeds to erect and lease buildings in the town.

Thomas Shuttleworth was the second in a line of joiners and cabinet makers of that name. His father Thomas (1706 – 1785) was from Wakefield but spent much of his life (from the mid-1750s) at a house he acquired in Wragby village

so that he could serve the large-scale works being undertaken at Nostell Priory by the **Winn Baronets** during the 18th century. He worked as a contractor to **Sir Rowland Winn** and alongside **Thomas Chippendale** (“Shuttleworth” is mentioned in letters between the two men). Thomas Shuttleworth “junior”, his wife Sarah and son (also Thomas) ran the family business in Wakefield, taking on several apprentices where, interestingly, all three were described as “Master Joiners of Wakefield”. In 1786 and 1803 Thomas is recorded in the Wragby Churchwarden’s Accounts as having supplied timber to the church, transported from Wakefield.

Commercial directory entries for Wakefield in the late 18th and early 19th centuries list Thomas Shuttleworth and “Shuttleworth & Son” variously as Joiners, Cabinet Makers, Timber Merchants and even Undertakers. The addresses also vary between Kirkgate, Westgate and George Street. They may have had multiple outlets but also to take into account is the rather vague and changing definition of where Westgate ends and the top of Kirkgate begins opposite the church, it seems to have changed over the centuries. It is possible that the locations all relate to Shuttleworth’s Yard. Only from 1828 is Shuttleworth’s Yard specifically referred to, as the location for **Martha Shuttleworth**, Joiner and Undertaker. She was married to the third Thomas (1777 – 1827), son and grandson of those referred-to above, and took over and ran her late husband’s business until she retired and moved to Liverpool with her two grown-up children by 1841.

There ended the Shuttleworth family association with Shuttleworth’s Yard as far as can be determined from existing records. Although brothers of the third Thomas Shuttleworth (born 1777) continued nearby: Charles was a joiner and Sexton of St John’s church, living off Northgate. Samuel and his wife Harriet were Bookbinders running their business from nearby Almshouse Lane for many years. And John (my 2x great grandfather) was a woollen cloth manufacturer, eventually becoming landlord of the Little Bull Inn on nearby Little Westgate. The author is a direct descendent of Thomas Shuttleworth (born 1706) and Thomas his son (born 1751) – 4x and 3x great grandson respectively. There was a later coincidental connection to my mother’s side of the family, when a **James Ooram Stables**, living at Shuttleworth’s Yard married my mother’s aunt, Martha Ann Jones in 1901. Their only child, **Edyth Alice** was born there in 1905, she was known as “Queenie” and was like an older sister to my mother. I remember being taken to visit her when I was a child. My mother (nee Massam) became a Shuttleworth in 1942.



Any remnants of Shuttleworth's Yard disappeared entirely during the creation of The Ridings shopping centre, but it is recorded in all census records from 1841. The table below shows the number of residents recorded at a selection of censuses, the surnames and occupations (excluding domestic servants and scholars).

Year	Occupants	Surnames Recorded	Occupations
1841	46	Blackburn, Espley, Grace, Graham, Hauxwell, Hayman, Heptonstall, Potts, Senior, Smith, Tuke, Williamson, Wright.	Smith, Ag. Labourer, Dyer, Joiner, Tailor, Cloth Dresser, Parish Clerk, Boot Maker, Bailiff, Engineer, Timber Merchant, plus a few of Independent Means.
1861	41	Armitage, Barker, Cordingley, Carwood, Coward, Goodye(a)r, Grainger, Hoyland, Jayson, Mawson, Moxon, Smalley, Stone, Taylor, Trotter, Wadsworth.	Lodging House Keeper, Joiner, Blacksmith, Wine Merchant, Labourer, Currier, Ostler, Charwoman, Dress Maker, Corn Porter, Railway Porter, Coach Builder.
1871	44	Bowie, Dale, Gosnay, Hornsby, Hurst, Lister, Little, Naylor, Preston, Roberts, Sledge, Sunderland, Taylor, Thompson.	Ag. Labourer, Woolsorter, Dress Maker, Moulder, Shoe Maker, Railway Clerk, Joiner, Printer Compositor, Leather Currier, Hawker, Mechanic, General Dealer, House Painter, Boot Clorer (finisher), Solicitor's Clerk.
1891	45	Beaumont, Cheesborough, Crossland, Heptonstall, Hillaby, Langton, Milnes, Mitchell, Mortimer, Ough, Preston, Stables, Swift, Townsend.	Weights & Measures Office (asst), City Crier, Cab Driver, Groom, Police Constable, Draper's Assistant, Grocer's Assistant, Postman, Builder, Steam Engine Maker, Fitter, Wool-sorter, Compositor, Railway Plate Layer, Mechanic, Joiner.
1911	40	Brogden, Cooper,	Rope Maker (retired),

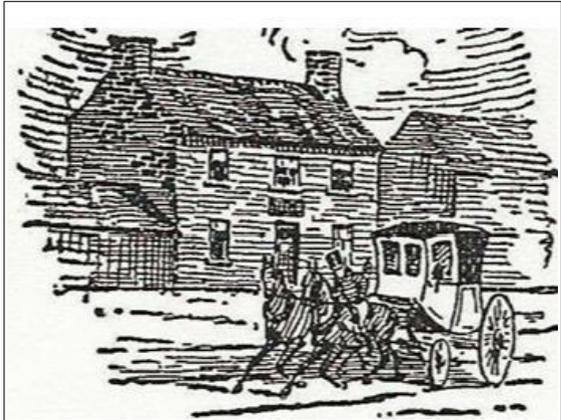
		Goodair, Harrison, Illingworth, Latham, Mathery, Palmer, Pitts, Priest, Senior, Williamson, Wright.	Teamer, Labourer, Business Assistant, Miner, Errand Boy (Grocer), Joiner, Maltster, Milliner, Iron Fetter, Asylum Attendant, Carter.
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Neil Shuttleworth Mem 614

The Red House at Adwick-le-Street

"May 2, 1714.—Surprised by a message from Wakefield that the coach could not reach this town [Leeds]." (Diary of **Ralph Thoresby**)

Tom Bradley, in his book *The Old Coaching Days in Yorkshire* (1889) wrote, "The state of the roads around Leeds must have been something frightful, as it is clear that in bad weather the coaches could not get to and from Leeds. On this occasion



Thoresby, who was going to London, sent his clothes on to Wakefield by the messenger and himself rode forward to that place, where he joined the coach, which did not travel the usual route of the Wakefield coaches, by Barnsley and Sheffield, but came on to the Great North Road at **Red House** (right) and went forward by way of Doncaster and Barnby Moor."

The Great North Road evolved from the Roman road that had been built from London to York and beyond. Over the centuries it was extensively used by Crown and monastic officials, pilgrims and for the movement of goods and people for business purposes. There was no responsibility for maintenance and repairs, so the movement of wheeled traffic could be impossible on some stretches and at various times. Traffic really started to boom in the 17th century. The first recorded stage coach operating from London to York was in 1658 taking four days. The turnpike trusts came into being to maintain roads while charging a toll to all users.

Along the Great North Road scores of coaching inns developed to provide fresh horses, food and drink for travellers and often overnight

accommodation. One of the lesser inns was the Red House at Adwick-le-Street.

This picture shows the building that was the main part of the inn. Over the last 150 years all signs that it was an inn have disappeared and it is now a residential building, a farm house.



In 1889 Tom Bradley described the Red House thus: “a square, commonplace, two-storey building, with a

glaring red front, now a farm-house, but having the same appearance almost to-day as it had in the days when it was known as one of the minor coaching inns, and its front was graced with long settles and wooden benches, at which the neighbouring farmers sat enjoying their pints and 'churchwardens' [long pipes], and awaiting the arrival of the different coaches. A few of the coaches

were horsed from this house, but the number could not have been very great, as there was only standing room for about a score horses, which probably plied principally on the cross roads. At this point the road branches off to Wakefield, which was the route pursued by some of the Leeds coaches.”



In the late 17th century and the first part of the 18th the Red House was owned and run by William Heald and possibly his son, also William Heald as covered in the previous article.

It appears to have closed long before 1889, as Bradley states, but continued to be repainted red for some time. It still stands, occupied as a farmhouse, the old stabling now housing cows and the red-painted front door opening onto the slip-road for the south-bound A1(M).

The surroundings have altered somewhat too. The top map shows the Red House and its outbuildings at the end of the 19th century, solitary at the junction of the Great North Road and the road to Wakefield branching off to the left. The track going North-South nearby is the old Roman road that had largely been abandoned on this stretch being superseded by a medieval road that passed through the village of Adwick-le-Street.



The area has changed completely in the last sixty years. The Red House has managed to survive but overlaying the old map onto a modern one (right) shows a new road system, the A1(M) with its slip roads and a roundabout. Just to the left, off the map, is a large industrial estate; Redhouse Industrial Estate with Red House Cemetery nearby on Red House Lane. The Healds left the Red House about 250 years ago. Once trade had moved onto the railways and with no surrounding village, the inn would not have been viable and so it closed about 150 years ago. But the name has survived to this day being used for a nearby industrial estate and a cemetery on Red House Lane.



As described in the previous article, the Red House wasn't the only coaching inn to be run by the Healds in this area.

William Heald the elder (born 1666) was a farmer in Wath upon Dearne ten miles away. He took over the Bull's Head at Brampton in about 1704. His son William (born 1707) eventually took over the running of the Bulls Head. The elder William subsequently moved to Adwick to take over the Red House which he ran until his death in 1732.

A Warning about AI (supposedly artificial intelligence)!

This may seem an odd addendum but it is of interest to family history researchers. I asked ChatGPT for the history of the Red House at Adwick le Street, hoping for some extra detail. First it asked me whether I meant the inn or the cemetery – so far so good. Then it delivered the analysis and informed me that it was a sprawling inn with low beams and roaring fires but that it had been closed and demolished when the Doncaster by-pass (A1(M)) was built in the 1980s.

Another stab at accessing the wisdom of AI produced these assorted gems: “The Red House has evolved over the years, continuing to serve as a community hub. It symbolizes the social fabric of Adwick le Street, reflecting changes in public life, local governance, and communal identity. Today, the Red House remains a recognized landmark in Adwick le Street, contributing to the village's charm and historical narrative. Its legacy is intertwined with the broader historical context of the area, illustrating the evolution from a small settlement to a more developed community.”

Complete rubbish! It is still standing (see photo) on a slip road of the A1(M), it is a large high Georgian building and it closed as an inn in about 1870 according to Tom Bradley's book written in 1889. It isn't in the village of Adwick-le-Street and it's most certainly not a community hub.

I replied to ChatGPT that it is still standing and ChatGPT then changed its story. Treat AI with extreme caution and never include personal info – it will be used! What it shows is that if an AI program doesn't know, it will not say that it doesn't know. In this case the programs access what they 'know' about coaching inns in general and then apply it to the case in hand – it's guesswork!



The date stone on the barn to the right of Red House retains fragments of the old red paint that otherwise lives on in name alone.

References

- The Old Coaching Days in Yorkshire by Tom Bradley; pub. The Conservative Yorkshire Newspaper Co., 1889 –

- <https://archive.org/details/oldcoachingdaysi00brad/page/n7/mode/2up>
- The Diary of Ralph Thoresby (1677 – 1724) – <https://archive.org/details/diaryralphthore02thorgoog>

The two maps have been 'Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland'

Peter Holford

William Heald of the Red House

Robert's son William, my 7x great-grandfather, was born in Leeds in 1666 and baptised on 16th December in the parish church of St Peter's (now Leeds Minster). He wasn't the eldest son and so it was unlikely that he inherited his father's business. That probably fell to Robert, jnr! But William was undoubtedly brought up in the business of his father and his marriage in 1691 shows that he was travelling well beyond Leeds.

He wed **Mary Cawthorne** of Doncaster (according to the marriage bond): more precisely she was 'of Carcroft'. The bond states that the marriage was announced in both St Peter's, Leeds and the Parish Church of St George's, Doncaster (also now the minster). This tells us that William travelled for his trade, probably in provisions and other agricultural stuffs. The bond also states (in Latin) that he was a farmer ('agricolam' which I'm sure isn't classical Latin!). The marriage itself took place in the parish church of Adwick-le-Street.

"Gulielmus Heald de Adwick stat: 25 An: Agr et Maria Cawthorn de Carcroft stat: 20 An: spinster en ecclesia parrh de Adwick"

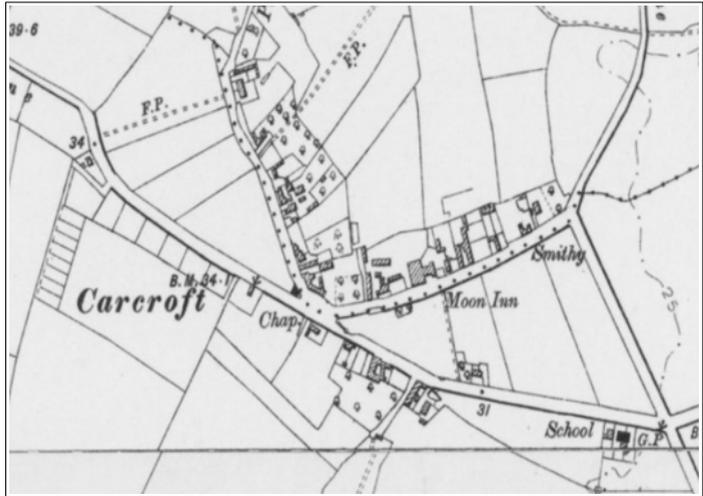
Translation: William Heald of Adwick: age 25: Farmer and Mary Cawthorn of Carcroft: age 20: Spinster, in the parish church of Adwick



William Heald signed the bond in a bold, confident hand; he was educated!

In that era Carcroft was a hamlet in the parish of Owston. This map of Carcroft in the late 19th century shows the parish boundary (the dotted line along the middle of the road) forming the boundary of the hamlet with no buildings on the other side of the road in the parish of Adwick le Street. It was small and it was probably even smaller 150 years earlier. William had probably taken a farm in the parish of Owston.

For those who know modern Carcroft the point where the roads converge on this map is now occupied by the Iceland supermarket.

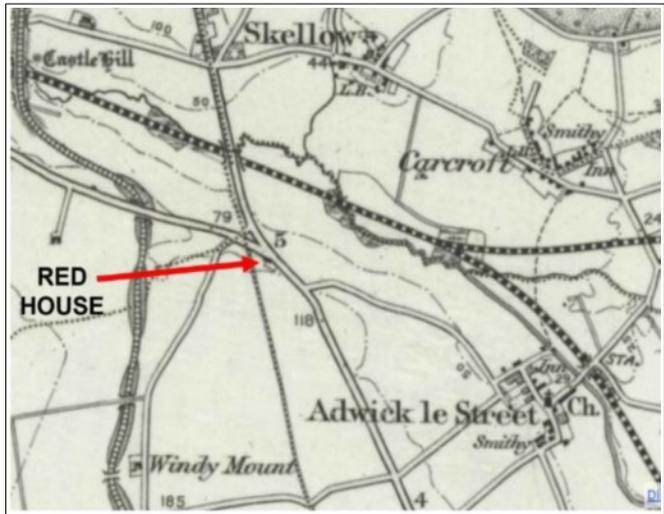


With the accelerating growth of the industrial towns and cities of West Yorkshire from the late 17th

century, there was a growth in the demand for food. The Healds knew the business and, as a businessman, William also spotted another option for making money – inn-keeping.

In 1703 Mary died at the age of 32. Two of the family's young daughters died at the same time, suggesting an epidemic of some sort.

William married again, to **Elizabeth Gilling** (he was still only 38). He moved the family to Wath upon Dearne where he took over the Bull's Head at Brampton



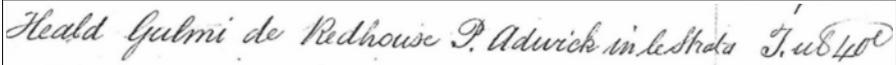
on the road between Barnsley and Rotherham. He also continued farming. Two of his sons from this marriage continued the family line – William and Henry. His wife Elizabeth died in 1721 and William moved again. This time he moved to Adwick-le-Street, probably in about 1726 when he married Mary Oxley. He was now sixty and she was fifty-five according to the marriage

bond. He took over a coaching inn, the Red House, on the Great North Road and, according to the bond, he also continued farming.

The switch to running taverns in the early part of the 18th century was an astute decision as it was approaching the heyday of the coaching trade and the Red House was at the junction of the Great North Road and the road to Wakefield. The Red House was isolated, about a mile from the nearest settlement, alone on the Great North Road. This map dates from the 19th century – the railway was built well after William's time!

Mary died in March 1729 and by November William had married for the fourth time. His new wife was **Sarah Oxpring** (née **Amory**), the widow of **George Oxpring** with whom she had had five children. Presumably with an inn and a farm to run he needed someone to share the load!

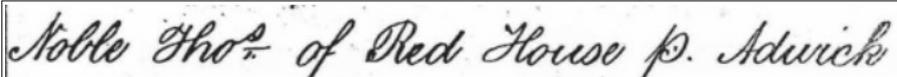
William's latest marriage was short: he was buried three years later at Adwick in 1732. He was described as 'husbandman and innkeeper'. A husbandman in England in the Middle Ages and the early modern period was a free tenant farmer, or a small landowner rather than a keeper of animals. The social status of a husbandman was below that of a yeoman. His ownership of the Red House Inn was confirmed by the probate entry shown here (in yet more medieval Latin!).



Heald Gulmi de Redhouse p. Adwick in le Strada T. u. S. 1420

Sarah outlived William and wasted no time in remarrying, walking up the aisle of Burghwallis Church six months later with appropriate Both were of the parish of Adwick-le-Street. Thomas died in 1742 leaving Sarah a widow for the third time. The probate for Thomas shows he was from the Red House (this time written in English!).

The next part will look at the Red House in more detail before continuing, in the subsequent article, with the next generation of Healds as they move again, following their business instincts.



Noble Tho of Red House p. Adwick

Peter Holford

Did You Know? Wakefield's first air raid on 28th August 1940 was on Norton Street, Belle Vue. There were four injuries and six houses were destroyed. The worst air raid was on 14th March 1941 at approximately 11pm. Two large bombs fell on Thornes Road. One fell near the rear of number 76 and one between numbers 48 and 50. Sadly, six people lost their lives and

four were seriously injured. The blast damaged or destroyed house numbered 51 to 232. Wakefield ARP (Air Raid Precautions) members had previously displayed their firefighting equipment in 1938, when they sprayed 1500 gallons of water, per minute, across the river Calder, thus assuring the public they could cope with any German bombings, and keep the local mills safe.



Anne O'Hare McCormick was born in Wakefield in 1880. In her life as a journalist she interviewed many world leaders, including **Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt**. During the war she served on a post war advisory committee. She became, with her position at the Times, an influential political analyst in journalism alongside Walter Lippman.

Although born in Wakefield the family moved to America shortly after her birth.

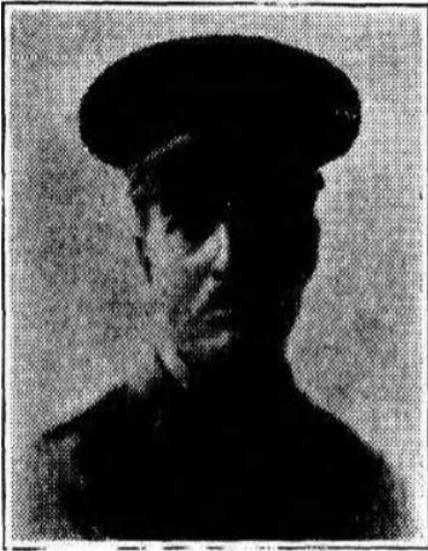
Although the link to Wakefield was brief, we can still claim her as the first woman to receive the Pulitzer Prize in journalism and also the first woman to join the editorial board of The New York Times.

Portland cement was invented in Wakefield. Joseph Aspdin called the product Portland cement because mortar made from it resembled Portland stone which was the most prestigious building stone in use in England at the time

The Wakefield Arms, a Grade II listed building built c1830, was covered in Portland Cement. The building, sadly no longer a place of liquid refreshment, has been extended and I believe is now a HMO, a house of multiple occupation. There was once a Blue Plaque on the external wall of the building. I wonder where it is now?

De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour 1914-1919

A little known resource, but valuable if your soldier is included. I purchased the full set of A4 books many years before they went online at Ancestry. While looking to fill this abridged version of Kinsman, I searched the online version for a Wakefield connection, eventually I found the following link. The entries include a great deal of abbreviations and is very generous with spaces and no paragraphs. I do hope you find the transcript interesting and someone find a connection. Hopefully there will be a photograph.



Coleman, Eric Arthur Frank, 2nd

Lieut., Machine Gun Corps, attd. Tank Corps, s. of **Capt. George Drury Coleman**, R.D.C., of Manor Cottage, Acle, co. Norfolk, by his wife, **Edith Isabel**, dau. of **James Evans** ; b. Coleshill, co. Bucks, 3 Dec. 1886 ; educ. Brighton, and Marlborough College ; obtained a commission in Jan. 1915 ; served with the Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders, and was killed in action at Wieltje 31 July, 1917. Buried in the track of his tank. His Colonel wrote : 'He was very keen and inspired every member of his crew with the same feelings. They would have done anything for him. **Major Hawkins**, his Company Commander, is writing to you, and will give you all such

particulars as we have ; for myself, I can only say that we have all lost a friend, and the battalion an officer whom we could ill spare – and one of whom I cannot replace,' and some of his men : 'I offer you my deepest sympathy in your sad loss and bereavement, and so do all the crew who had the pleasure of serving under such a gentleman and hero as Lieut. Coleman was. When I sit and think of this awful tragedy that has befallen us, it makes me ill, as I lost an officer who was a chum to all – always merry and ready for any danger when duty called. He respected all and sundry, and helped many in distress ; worked hard for our comfort and benefit, and I can assure you every brother officer and man in the battalion respected him and would have followed him anywhere, as we did, for we had implicit trust and every confidence in such a brave gentleman, who fought game to the last. Although an officer and I his driver, we shared our confidence in each other, and had various views in common. I feel now I have lost a friend who was dear to me – a hero and a man, We crawled up on the 30th, at night, waiting for morning to go over the top to strafe a cunning, cruel foe. Lieut. Coleman and seven of us, his crew, slept near other, waiting for the light of day to bid for victory or death. At the given time we went over as merry as sandboys, our Governor, as we called him, leading the way. He never seemed to care what was falling around us. He just led us like a hero would. We did good work too, but it was a hot time and difficult'. A brother officer also wrote : 'I was not actually present when Eric met his death, which you will be glad to know must have been instantaneous, and that he cannot have suffered at all. He died in the execution of his duty, and that he had performed always to the satisfaction of his superior officers. In this, his first Tank action, he was working on the left of

the company ; was first over, and, while advancing to push through the first wave of infantry, had led his Tank on foot all the way. Consequently he had reached the objective early on, and was rendering good assistance to the infantry, who were held up by machine gun fire at the time, near a strong point at Spree Farm, east of Wieltje. Up till then he had been outside his Tank, leading over very difficult ground – sodden with rain and aerated by shell fire. When summoned to the assistance of the infantry on the right, he got inside and went to their help, which he seemed to have rendered satisfactorily. Then a shell hit the left track, breaking six track plates and stopping the Tank. He said : 'What's that?' got outside to examine , and another shell came, hitting the Tank and killing him, and wounding one of the crew. I may say that if all the junior officers in this action had shown the same devotion to duty and led their tanks forward, the company would have done better even than it did. He always worked hard, and could be relied on to execute any duty to the best of his ability.' He m. at Wakefield, in Aug. 1915, Lilian, dau of J. Harris, Chief Constable of Wakefield.

How nice to know how well Eric was thought of, even though you don't expect to hear back things in letters to a bereaved family. And also, how many researchers have someone who died as a result of an action have such a description of the event and those leading up to it?

COLEMAN Eric of 3 St. John's-square **Wakefield** second-lieutenant 3rd battalion Norfolk regiment died 31 July 1917 in France or Belgium Probate **London** 27 May to Lilian Coleman widow. Effects £109 15s. 4d.

The Probate Calendar for 1918 has an entry for Eric. Eric of 3 St John's Square, Wakefield names Lilian Coleman, widow. Effects £109 15s 4d.

Eric's wife, Lilian, of 8 Milnthorpe Crescent, Wakefield died in August 1926 and had over £1700 mentioned in the Probate Calendar.

COLEMAN Lilian of 8 Milnthorpe-crescent Sandal **Wakefield** and of the National Provincial Bank of England limited **Lincolns Inn Middlesex** widow died 9 August 1926 at 8 Milnthorpe-crescent Probate **Wakefield** 25 September to Richard Lomas Prince barrister-at-law Frederick George Woolliscroft bank inspector and Edith Mary Harris spinster. Effects £1772 16s. 7d.

Notices

Horbury Historical Society have the following meetings that may be of interest.

On the 1st of April, as a familiar visit to us in Wakefield, **Christine Leveridge** talk will be 'King George V and Queen Mary's visit to the West Riding in 1912.

Kevin Trickett, MBE, will also be visiting the Horbury society on the 6th May when he will be talking about The Blue Plaques of Wakefield Civic Society.

The venue for these meetings is: Horbury Methodist Church, High Street, Horbury at 7:30pm. Non-members are requested to pay £3.

Speakers at our Meetings

Have you any suggestions for speakers?

What subjects would you like hear about at our Saturday meetings?

Do you want to hear about family history resources, local people or business, local history in general or DNA?

All subjects that can add to your research.

If you have any suggestions for a speaker or subject contact a member of the committee at a meeting or via email.

Articles for Inclusion in your Kinsman

I look forward to receiving articles for inclusion in Kinsman and I, during my stints as Editor, have regularly had a supply of articles – thank you.

But like other committee members, I am a volunteer, so I would therefore ask the following when sending in articles.

1. Could I ask you to **not to include footnotes or other linked notes**. Add sources and other information, unlinked, at the end of the article.

2. **Please send photographs and/or images as a separate file and include where you wish the photograph or image to be in your article along with source.**

3. Please email as a Word or similar document and **NOT** as a read only document or pdf as I need to be able to edit the font and size, line spacing,

and margins etc easily. Also if you can remember – don't use the return or end line key as your end of lines may be smaller or larger than the Kinsman page.

4. Although an emailed article is preferred, a type written or handwritten article is still very, very welcome. editor@wdfhs.co.uk

5. And don't forget to include your name and membership number

I look forward to receiving snippets, articles, help wanted, and other bits that, you, our members will find interesting or help with their family history.

Thank you

Dear Members,

We have Moved to online bank and our new details are as follows:-

Virgin Money 6-10 Northgate Wakefield
Sort Code 82-12-08
Account 00199074

Please feel free to use our Nat West bank for your membership fees this time, but we would very much appreciate it, if you could use our Virgin Money account for future renewals. Please amend any standing orders.

If you require any assistance please ask a member of the Committee or a Key Volunteer who will help or point you in the right direction.

Sheelagh Jackson,
Treasurer

Distant Search for WDFHS Members:

We now have offers of help from members who are willing to undertake specific research in the following areas: Bristol area, Keighley, TNA, The Society of Genealogists, Metropolitan Archives, Glasgow, Central Scotland Members wishing to use this service or who are willing to help, please email joyjoseph105@gmail.com or contact her at Joy Joseph, 105 Bartholomew Square, Bristol, BS7 0QB.

What would you like our speakers to tell you about? The Committee is asking what subjects you would like to have speakers for. The Society is yours, and the Committee would like you to become more involved in choosing speakers at our Saturday morning meetings. Please pass on your suggestions to either a committee member or email: editor@wdfhs.co.uk. Please let us know if you would like to recommend someone, know of a

speaker or volunteer yourself – or indeed if there is a subject that you would like to be covered in one of our meetings.

Principal Wakefield Information Centres

West Yorkshire History Centre, 127 Kirkgate, Wakefield, WF1 1JG.

The Archive has a unique collection of original documents but you must book an appointment to consult them. Be warned at the moment that the earliest available appointment is usually several weeks after you make contact. You can examine their website online to discover documents relevant to your research and they will normally ask you to confirm the documents you want to examine shortly before your visit.

Opening hours:

Mondays 10:00am – 4:00pm

Tuesdays 10:00am -- 4:00pm

Thursdays 10:00am – 4:00pm

On Fridays the Exhibition space is open (but not the search room to view originals) 10:00am – 4:00pm

Please email wakefield@wyjs.org.uk or call 0113 535 3040 to book

Wakefield Library

Local Archives and Family History

Monday, Wednesday and Thursday

9am – 7pm

Tuesday, Friday

9am – 5pm

Saturday

9am - 4pm

Speaker Diary for 2026

Date	Speaker	Title of Talk
7 th March	Ann Parkinson	The History of the Yorkshire School for the Blind 1833 – 1956
4 th April	Joanne Harrison	180 Years of Eastmoor – It's People and Their Houses
2 nd May	Tim Lynch	The Enemy Within
6 th June	Jane Roberts	St Mary's Batley: A One Place Study

KEY VOLUNTEERS

Membership Secretary:

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Lorraine Simpson

Minutes Recorder & Assistant Librarian:

Jacqueline Ryder

Publications Stall:

Ros Bartle

Publications Stall Assistant:

Deborah Scriven

Refreshments Organiser:

Sue Vasis

Refreshments Assistant:

Mary Buttigieg

Wakefield & District Family History Society

WAKEFIELD & DISTRICT



FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

(Registered Charity No. 1104393)

Programme to June 2026

SATURDAY MEETINGS

at Outwood Memorial Hall

Doors open 9.30am - Talks begin 10.30am

Jan 3rd NO MEETING

Feb 7th THE WALMSLEYS OF ROBIN HOOD'S BAY
Jane Ellis

Mar 7th THE HISTORY OF THE YORKSHIRE SCHOOL
FOR THE BLIND 1833 – 1956
Anne Parkinson

Apr 4th 180 YEARS OF EASTMOOR –
ITS PEOPLE AND THEIR HOUSES
Joanne Harrison

May 2nd THE ENEMY WITHIN
Tim Lynch

Jun 6th ST MARYS BATLEY: A ONE PLACE STUDY
Jane Roberts

For further information about this
event, please scan the QR code



wdfhs.co.uk

