

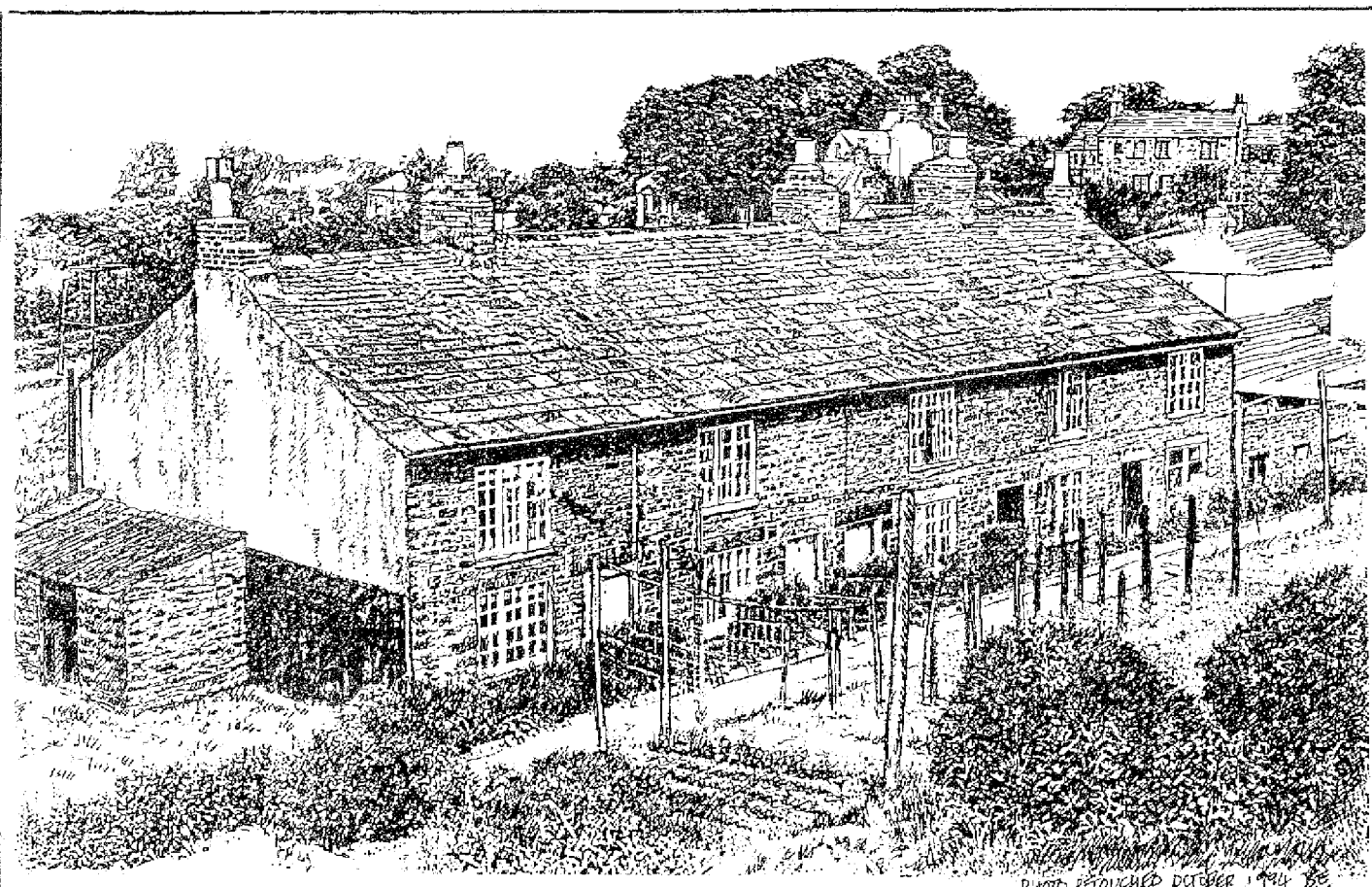
# TOTLEY INDEPENDENT

PUBLISHED BY TOTLEY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION SINCE JULY 1977

FEBRUARY 1995

No.180

15p



TAKEN FROM THE BASLOW ROAD

## SUMMER LANE

The view of these cottages is from the near the War Memorial on Baslow Road, the gardens in front of the houses did not belong to them, they were attached to three more cottages which stood on Baslow Road. The houses to the right in the background are at the top of Butts Hill.

These cottages standing at the top of Hillfoot Road were once a thriving community of about 50 people, some of whom lived in the five cottages in the drawing, the rest lived in other cottages further on the Lane on the other side.

It was in the early part of the last century that it was known as Ogdens Road after a local farmer who owned most of the houses. They once housed no fewer than four file shops, a smithy and a grocers.

There was a well standing at the end of the lane which is probably still there buried in the undergrowth.

The last families to live there were the Taylors, Wortleys, Trustwells, Fishers and Kirkbys.

The cottages were demolished in the late sixties as unfit for habitation. Old cottages like this would fetch a fortune these days to be modernised.

J.Perkinton

# GARDENING TIPS FOR FEBRUARY

I hope all your New Year resolutions aren't broken, especially if they relate to the garden. We are coming up to the busy period soon, lots to do in preparation. Beds to dig over and lime for vegetables, except potatoes of course, weeds to pull, eliminate slugs etc. etc. So let's get started on the new season.

**FLOWERS.** Examine dahlia roots in store, dust with flowers of sulphur if there is any sign of rot. Winter flowering jasmine should be pruned when it has finished flowering.

Trim back flowering heathers with shears as blooms fade, a dressing of bone meal will be beneficial.

It's a good time to build a rockery. Choose a sunny spot with plenty of drainage. Give herbaceous plants a top dressing of rotted manure, lightly fork in, if no manure is available use a flower fertiliser.

Fill in any gaps in the wallflower beds. Prune late summer flowering clematis to within 6" of the ground, back to 2 or 3 good shoots. Finish planting lilies.

**VEGETABLES.** Firm in any spring cabbage that has been loosened by frost, give them a feed with nitrate of soda or similar nitrogenous fertiliser.

Add lime to soil as necessary, at least 2 weeks before sowing or planting, work in a dressing of balanced fertiliser such as Growmore.

Put seed potatoes in a light airy frost free place to sprout.

Sow lettuce, cabbage and cauliflowers in warmth.

Sow parsley pots indoors for summer use.

**TREES, SHRUBS AND FRUIT.** Fruit trees growing in grass may be starved of nitrogen, this can be remedied by feeding now with sulphate of ammonia or nitro-chalk, use about half an ounce per square yard.

Protect fruit bushes from birds as buds begin to swell.

Complete the planting of fruit bushes now before they start to grow.

Prune Autumn fruiting raspberries now cut down just short of ground level.

Prune gooseberries shaping them as you prune.

Plant deciduous shrubs and heathers towards the end of the month.

**GREENHOUSE AND INDOOR PLANTS.**

Bring the shoots of outdoor chrysanthemums into the greenhouse and give them a little warmth and all the light possible, so that they make sturdy cuttings.

Watch out for sunny days and make sure vents are working properly.

Early onion seedlings raised under glass should be pricked off into boxes 2" each way being left between the plants.

Repot ferns.

A few tubers of begonias and gloxinias should be started into growth. Place them in boxes of moist peat or leaf mould, leaving 1 or 2" between the tubers.

Gradually increase watering of indoor plants.

Sow antirrhinums, salvias, ageratum, lobelia and impatiens now. I prefer to have the general run of half hardy annuals such as French and African Marigolds, Phlox, Stocks and Asters until the end of March.

Reduce the young shoots in vines to one per spur.

Prune and start greenhouse plants such as fuschias, pelargonium, geranium.

Gardenias should be cut sufficiently to give them a solid foundation for the coming seasons growth. Place them in the lightest place possible.

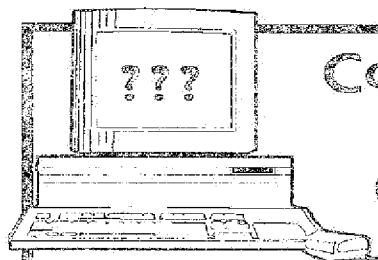
**LAWNS.** Keep off when frosty.

Brush off any leaves etc. when the weather permits.

Remember Spring's not far away.

Cheerio for now,

Tom Busy Bee.



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## WEATHER SUMMARY 1994

I have heard it said that the British Isles are one of the very few places to experience the wind blowing from all quarters. It certainly makes for interesting weather (not that I always appreciate what is being produced). Constant blue skies, sun and warm temperatures might seem very tempting when reading this; but every day without fail? How boring when we can have the warmest November for years along with the wettest September; the first of May producing a high temperature of 20deg.C, the 13th of 18 1/2deg. and then producing a maximum of only 8 1/2deg. on the 17th and a minimum of 0deg. on the 18th. August had a mid-day temperature of only 16deg.C which dropped 4deg. shortly afterwards! While on Sept. 12th the highest day temperature was only 9 1/2deg. (which is less than 50deg.F) evidence of a much cooler month than average with only 7 days in the month reaching 60deg.F or slightly above. October nearly drowned us with approximately 3 times the average rainfall. Despite all this the totals for the year show that it was warmer, sunnier and wetter than average.

We had 11 months which were wetter than Weston Park (W.P.) records, October producing twice as much rain in Totley (98mls - 47.9mls W.P.) and 219 days with water in the rain gauge as against 203 at W.P. The wettest day (14th September) 37 1/2 mls. here and 58.9mls. at W.P. There were 13 days when snow fell, 4 in April and the rest in February. Our hottest day was 12th July at 29deg.C, with W.P. adding another 0.6deg.C and the coldest was -8 1/2deg.C on the 21st February with W.P. recording -7.8deg.C the night before. There were 49 nights with a recording of 0deg.C or just below but just 6 days when the thermometer stayed down that far.

### TOTLEY

#### Rain for the year:

1994	1047 1/2mm.
1993	1058 1/2mm.
1992	1021mm.

#### Wettest day:

1994	37 1/2mm.
1993	34 1/2mm.
1992	32mm.

#### Coldest night:

1994	-8 1/2deg.
1993	-7.5deg.
1992	-7deg.

#### Hottest day:

1994	29deg.
1993	25.5deg.
1992	27.5deg.

#### Sunhours:

W.P. only.	
1994	1361.7
1993	1288.6
1992	1337.8

### WESTON PARK.

895.1mm.
913.8mm.
824.5mm.

58.9mm.
33.4mm.
39.0mm.

-7.8degC.
-6.5degC.
-5.7degC.

29.6degC.
25.4degC.
28.1deg.

#### Highest Wind Speed:

W.P. only.
60 knots.
67 knots.
51 knots.

V.Filleul

## LOSS OF A WELL LOVED VIEW

An application has been made to site a pair of semi-detached houses on the corner of Hillfoot Road and Baslow Road, (as part of the whole Summer Lane development), which will deprive residents and walkers alike of the breathtaking view of the moors as they pause at the crossroads.

To stand at the Post Office and look towards the hills and trees will be a sight lost forever and the complete development (of six 4 bedroomed houses) will spoil the rural aspect of the village forever.

We urge all readers of the Totley Independent to call at the Council Planning Office to inspect the plans (No. 94/15568) and send their comments and objections to Mr. Lomas (Council Planning Officer) before Monday, 6th February, the closing date.

Bob and Marjorie Dunn.

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## THE HOWGILL FELLS

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Mountaineering has a tremendous appeal in this modern age. Fell walkers and rock climbers have a common bond in trying to escape to the hills. Maybe our glorious National Parks tend to get rather crowded especially during the holiday seasons. The popular slopes of Kinder Scout and Mam Tor groan under the sheer weight of countless boots and the rock climbs on Stanage Edge tangle with nylon ropes almost any weekend.

The ridges of Striding Edge and Gable take on the appearance of gaily coloured washing strung along a clothes line as anorak-clad climbers queue for the high places.

Fellrunners dash across the tops of Catbells and Causey Pike as if they were situated in the environs of a large city park. Races across the three peaks of Pen-Y-Ghent, Ingleborough and Whernside are almost a common place event and thousands of walkers make the pilgrimage along the Pennine Way an annual outing. Mention of even Scafell Pike, Snowdon and Tryfan hardly tests the imagination of modern climbers. But speak of the delights of Yarlside, Greenbell, Randygill Top and Great Dummacks and few people have heard the names. Mention of the Howgills or Brant Fells brings complete puzzlement to even the most ardent of rambblers.

Situated between the Lake District and the Yorkshire Dales lies the Shrangri-La bounded by the A 684 Sedbergh to Kendal road to the south, to the east the Rawthey Valley and the A683 Kirkby Stephen westwards. The Lune Gorge carves a beautiful landscape alongside the busy M6 motorway.

Explore this 40 sq. miles of sheer delight and step into another world. This compact group of grassy hills rise steep and smooth from deep hidden valleys and all the streams are feeders of the river Lune. The old County

boundaries of Westmorland and Yorkshire march across these tree-less slopes. Over a score of summits grace the skyline of the Howgills taking this name from the tiny hamlet to the west of the range.

Valleys pierce into the Fells like the spokes of a wheel, but do not confuse lonely Langdale and Borrowdale with the popular Lake District venues. Cairns grace very few summits, paths are comparatively few and litter is non-existent, only the wild fell ponies leave their mark. These lovely creatures roam at large across the eastern slopes around the head of Weasdale and Bowderdale. Many ruined farmsteads nestle in the secluded Langdale and Ellergill, traces of an earlier prosperity. The buzzard and kestrel hover in flight along Long Rigg Beck and Simons Seat. Rough fell sheep and the fox and hares share these quiet hills. Enchanting waterfalls abound, above Carlingill Bridge is the steep ravine of Black Force, hereabouts a delightful scramble to the summit of Fell Head. Dramatic scenery around the cliffs of Cautley Crag, plunging steeply are the cascades of Cautley Spout, one of the most spectacular waterfalls throughout the land. From the summit of the Calf 2,200ft., highest point of the range, magnificent views extend across the whole of Lakeland and the limestone tops of Yorkshire. Walls and fences do not obstruct the Landscape, this area would appeal to the Winter Sports enthusiast. Park the car at the interesting market town of Sedbergh, or close to the "Cross Keys" hotel at Cautley and explore these lonely fells.

You will want to return to share the memories of Wainwright's favourite hills. But always remember that map and compass are essential for this is country for the lover of solitude.

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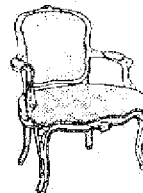


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## JOHN SCRIVEN

It is sad to report the death of popular fruit shop owner John Scriven, who passed away over Christmas.

John was always supportive of local events and was enthusiastic over the formation of the Totley Residents Association.

In the late 1970's he was always in attendance at Totley Sports Night, when it was held in Greenoak Park, organising the Welly Throwing, Wellies being most appropriate in those early days when it consistently rained.

In the early 1980's John, always a leading light in the retail Fruit and Veg world, could regularly be heard on Radio Sheffield in conversation with Michael Cooke, answering listeners questions and giving advice on all manner of the Greengrocer's trade.

John was also a regular contributor to the Totley Independent where his column was always useful, relevant and full of friendly eating advice.

## VIDEO

The "Twilight" Video Rental shop in Baslow Road has now closed.

However the good news for those of you still wishing to rent videos locally, they will shortly be available from Totley Library.

The closing of the video shop now brings the total number of empty shops on Baslow Road Parade to three. This emphasises further the moral to local shopping, "Use it or loose it". Still it's good to see a full complement ever ready to serve and meet our needs at Totley Rise.

## MISS DOROTHY AMY TROTT

The death has occurred at the age of 91, at her home in Poole of Dorothy Amy Trott, who will be remembered as the Principal of four schools in the Sheffield area, the largest of which was the former Dore and Totley High School in Grove Road, Totley.

Dorothy was adopted at an early age, her foster father being the manager of Wortley Top Forge. As a child, in the early years of the century, she was a pupil at the original Dore and Totley High School, owned by Mrs. Shrubsole and situated on Twentywell Lane.

In 1924 Dorothy opened a new school of the same name, initially in the church rooms of St. John's, Abbeydale, later moving to premises in Grove Road. The school flourished until 1966 when it closed, though a thriving Old Pupils' Association still holds an annual reunion each July.

Dorothy Trott retired to Poole in Dorset, where she became a member of the Borough Council and served as Sheriff of Poole in 1975-76. She also published three books, including an autobiography "A Tapestry of Life". Mrs. Vicky Hight.



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# A TALE FOR THE NEW YEAR

adapted from  
THE DIARY OF FLYING OFFICER "X"  
by K.W. Billingham.

## THE CORPORAL FITTER.

In September 1928 I was posted to a day bomber squadron stationed in Norfolk, not far from Sandringham.

The N.C.O. Fitter for my aircraft was a Corporal Heppinstall, well known on the Squadron for his "Grindley Peerless 500" motor cycle. He would spend most of his spare time tinkering with it. He knew of my interest in motor cycles and we would sometimes have a chat about the merits of the various machines. He came from somewhere in Lancashire and when his leave came up he would roar off down the lane from the camp, as indeed he did on Christmas Eve 1928.

The Festive Season over, I arrived back at camp in the New Year 1929 and conspicuous by its absence was Corporal Heppinstall's motor cycle. For a moment I wondered why he had not returned with the others, but as I had other things to think about I continued with my duties. Snow and mist covered the aerodrome and all flying was cancelled.

I walked across to the "B" flight hangar, where my aircraft was being fitted with a new propeller. As I approached the hangar I suddenly saw Heppinstall walking towards the airmen's quarters, still wearing his long leather motorcycle coat and not his usual overalls. He looked odd, as if he was in a world of his own and so very sad, but I had to inspect the new propeller. I casually mentioned to the two fitters about seeing Heppinstall and asked why he was looking so dejected. The fitters looked at me wide eyed, their jaws sagging and colour drained from their faces. Then one of them spoke "With respect, Sir, we thought you might have been told".

"Told what" ? I asked.

"Corporal Heppinstall was involved in an accident on his way back to camp, he was killed outright. They say he collided with a tram near his home in Accrington".

This was ironic as I later found out, before Heppinstall joined the R.A.F. he had been a tram driver.

## RECORD VISITOR NUMBERS

### AT ABBEYDALE.

Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet enjoyed record-breaking attendances at its recent Christmas Fayre, with a total of 1,740 people coming along during the two days and enjoying the festive atmosphere. This brought December attendance figures up to 1,867 visitors, almost trebling the visitor figures for December of the previous year.

Julia Waterhouse, Marketing Officer at Abbeydale said, "We were delighted that so many people were able to celebrate Christmas with us. The high numbers of visitors show how popular Abbeydale is with local people and tourists and the success of this event was a real morale booster to spur us on in 1995".

Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet is open all year round (closed Mondays only) and in 1995 visitors can look forward to more special events including Working Weekends, an exhibition on Power, a Summer Craft Fair and a Batik Exhibition. The hamlet's water-wheels are operated daily and visitors can see how our ancestors lived and worked. Craftspeople - both traditional and modern - have permanent workshops on the site and are happy to talk about their work. With its well-stocked gift shop and mouth-watering cafe, there is something for everyone at Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet.

For further details or any queries contact Julia Waterhouse 2367731

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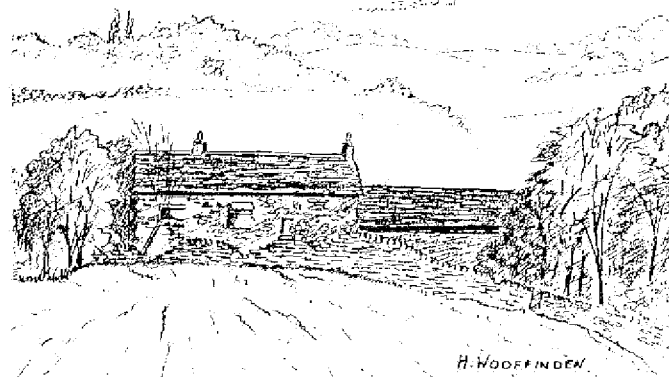


# THE GARDEN OF EDEN

The Totley Colony: St George's Farm  
by Mike Williamson

## ST. GEORGE'S FARM

Viewed from GREEN OAK PARK



Just over 100 years ago, Totley, through the thoughts and works of John Ruskin and the Guild of St. George was the centre of an experiment in communal living and early innovative attempts at communism, that became the focus of attention throughout Victorian Britain. Comments and visits were also attracted from notable radicals, thinkers and personalities.

Today, it is difficult to imagine that anyone, (in this case, John Ruskin), would support a project, in Totley, to create, "A Garden of Eden", founded on utopian ideals. But in the late 1800's the world was a different place and for a decade the experiment continued.

The Totley Colony was only a part of Ruskin's influence and activities on behalf of the working classes of Sheffield. So let us examine the man, his thoughts and writings, his museum and collection and of importance to us locally, St. George's Farm - The Totley Colony - "The Garden of Eden".

Who was John Ruskin? What sort of man was this Victorian who like Sheffield so much that he assembled a Museum and Art Collection specially for the benefit of local people.

John Ruskin was, to say the least, a complex and highly talented man. He was artist, traveller and writer, and perhaps the most powerful critic that Britain has known. As well as being a great theorist, he was greatly outspoken in his opinions of Victorian painting, architecture and society. A man of means, he still felt a great affection towards the working classes. He appreciated skills and craftsmanship, particularly in Sheffield (which he called, 'Steelolopis'), and looked upon the city as the 'Florence of the North'. It was in his writings

'Letters to Workmen and Labourers' (entitled "FORS CLAVIGERA") that he put forward his most ambitious constructive scheme - The Guild of St. George. He set out a code of conduct Christian Belief to which the Companions of the Guild were to pledge themselves. They were then to give a tenth of what they have and of what they earn, towards the creation of a Ruskinian utopia.

John Ruskin was one of the most extraordinary characters of the Victorian age. As a socialist and social reformer, artist and art critic, essayist and author, lecturer and educator, he has an enormous influence on the whole nation, which is still felt today. Tolstoy, Gandhi and Bernard Shaw are among those who regarded him as one of the greatest reformers of his time.

The following are highlights from his life:

1819 - Born in London in the same year as Queen Victoria. Only child of a prosperous and cultured wine merchant and his deeply religious wife.

1837 - Aged 18, went to Oxford University. Wrote first book, The Poetry of Architecture.

1854 - Aged 35, became art tutor at the newly founded Working Men's College in London and later wrote two books, Elements of Drawing and Elements of Perspective, which are both still in demand.

1860 - Aged 41, wrote important series of articles on social ethics, arguing that the art of growing rich (much admired in Victorian times) was really the art of keeping others poor. He also called on employers to treat workers as is they were members of their own families. These writings, later published as a book, Unto This Last, were condemned as subversive and dangerously heretical but had an enormous impact. Many of the first members of Parliamentary Labour Party declared that Ruskin was the predominant political influence on their lives.

1870 - Aged 51, became first Professor of Fine Art at Oxford. Two years later he established the Ruskin Drawing School in the City. Believing in the value of physical work, he persuaded a group of undergraduates to repair a country road, under the supervision of his gardener. The diggers included Arnold Toynbee and Oscar Wilde. Campaigning for the reform of England, Ruskin established the Guild of St. George, "to set the example of socialist capital as opposed to a national debt and of socialist labour as opposed to competitive struggle to life". The Guild still exists and is the owner of the museum collection which Ruskin assembled specially

for the people of Sheffield and is described in detail later.

At his peak, Ruskin wrote up to 20 letters daily, besides travelling, writing articles and books, lecturing sketching, collecting minerals, rowing - chopping wood.

But in the 1880's he suffered a series of mental breakdowns from which he never fully recovered. Ruskin died in 1900 and was buried in Coniston churchyard in the Lake District he loved so much.

In May 1985 the collection of the Guild of St. George was returned to Sheffield to be housed in the new Ruskin Gallery in Norfolk Street, Sheffield.

Ruskin tried to educate widely through his letters, lectures and pamphlets, many of which were aimed at working men, and which generated an enormous following. His ideas contributed to the increase of Mechanics Institutes, to the demand for free public libraries, for working class access to university education, (leading to the creation of the WEA and several university extramural departments). Perhaps most obviously the naming after him of the first residential working-class college (founded in Oxford earlier this century) pays lasting tribute to Ruskin's influence.

Sheffield was important to Ruskin because he was impressed by the utility of its iron and steel manufacture, the excellence of its cutlery and the town's proximity to beautiful scenery which provided such a contrast with the 'dolorous city of the dirty Don'.

Ruskin was familiar with Sheffield. He had visited in 1875 and in his Fors Clavigera letter 56, published in August of that year he wrote, "I have become responsible, as the Master of the Company, for rent or purchase of a room in Sheffield, in which I propose to place some books and minerals, as the germ of a museum arranged first for workers in iron and extended into illustration of the natural history of the neighbourhood of Sheffield and more especially of the geology and flora of Derbyshire.

In February 1876, Ruskin informed his readers that out of the annual income of the Guild, which was 240 pounds a year, one of his old pupils at the Working Men's College, Henry Swan, had been appointed as curator at a salary of 40 pounds a year.

The site of the original small cottage at Walkley, situated between Bell Hagg Road and Bole Hill Road is commemorated today by Ruskin House, a private flats complex. The purchase price of the original five roomed, stone built cottage in 1875 was 300 pounds.

When Henry Swan moved into the cottage

with his family he took up most of the house, leaving just one small room to accommodate Ruskin's growing collection. And this was a constant source of complaint by Ruskin.

Henry Swan was an interesting man in his own right. He had been trained as an engraver and worked with Isaac Pitman, the inventor of shorthand, before becoming a photographer in London.

In the 1870's he moved to Sheffield to find work as an engraver and helped Ruskin to find suitable premises for the museum. Swan was considered something of an eccentric having been of the first people to ride a bicycle in Sheffield and had attempted, and failed, to popularise the sport of throwing boomerangs. Sheffield was one of the centres of industry in Victorian England, and the skill and craftsmanship in ironwork was held to be of the finest quality in the world. There was little chance to study the history of art in Sheffield at that time. It was in 1875 that Sheffield got its first public museum and not until 1887 that the Mappin Art Gallery was opened.

The Walkley museum became one of Ruskin's most successful ventures. It soon outgrew the Walkley cottage and Ruskin began negotiating with the Sheffield Council to persuade them to provide suitable accommodation for the museum. When they failed to, he built a wooden extension in 1884 to ease the problem of space but by 1890 the Council offered Ruskin the use of the recently-acquired Meersbrook Hall, situated in Meersbrook Park.

The newly housed collection was opened by the Earl of Carlisle on April 15th, 1890. In the spacious premises, situated in parkland, the popularity of the museum grew year by year.

Up until 1953, the collection remained on view to the public but interest in Ruskin's work had, by this time, declined and then structural problems with the building arose the museum finally closed.

The collection remained in store in Sheffield, until 1964 when it was removed by the Guild of St. George to Reading University. In 1979, Sheffield City Art Galleries began a campaign to persuade the Guild to return the collection to its original home and in 1981, it returned to Sheffield. In May, 1985 the new Ruskin Gallery was opened with its new premises on Norfolk Street, in the city centre, in the old Hays Wine Lodge building, an appropriate place as Ruskin's father founded the family fortune in the wine trade.



THE TOTLEY COLONY (ST. GEORGE'S FARM)  
The Garden of Eden

"We will try to take some small piece of English ground, beautiful, peaceful and fruitful".

Ruskin's most persistent attempt on his utopian line was at Totley, now a South Western suburb of Sheffield, some 6 miles from it's centre. This was a 13-acre farm and was variously referred to as Abbeydale, Abbeyfield, the Mickley Estate, or simply as Totley. It stayed under the direct control of the Guild of St. George from the time of it's purchase in 1876 until 1885, after which it was leased to a tenant farmer and the name was changed to St. George's Farm. Whilst it never achieved success during the 9 years it was under the control of the Ruskinian colonists as a model orchard and botanical garden, it has since 1885, up to the present day flourished as a commercial nursery and has been farmed continuously by the Pearson family.

It was pointed out to Ruskin that the tone of his, 'Letters to Workmen and Labourers', were not best suited to his intended audience. Often in the letters and his Oxford lectures of the 1870's he could have addressing a group of small girls in his most patronising manner. Some of the content of the letters is destructive, denouncing modern science, or machinery or the ideal of liberty, or the economics of competition. But it was also through this medium that Ruskin put forward his most ambitious constructive scheme, the Guild of St. George. He set out a code of conduct and Christian belief to which the Companions of the Guild were to pledge themselves; they were then to give a tenth of what they have and of what they earn, towards the creation of a Ruskinian utopia.

"We will try to take some small piece of English ground, beautiful, peaceful and fruitful. We will have no steam engines upon it and no railroads; we will have no untended or unthought-of creatures on it; none wretched but the sick, none idle but the dead. We will have no liberty upon it; but instant obedience to known law and appointed persons; no equality upon it; but recognition of every bitterness that we can find and reprobation of every worseness. When we want to anywhere, we will go there quietly and safely, not at 40 miles per hour - - -" (In the 1890's as a contemporary conservationists Ruskin opposed the proposed Dore-Chinley Railway line, through Totley, loudly protesting against, 'the invasion of Virgin country').

Some companions of the Guild would

devote their full time to developing this society and others would support it while pursuing their own professions. Ruskin led the way with his own 7,000 pounds but very few others followed his lead. Having announced the scheme in 1871, he repeated his appeal the year after in greater detail but by the end of 1873 there were only seven annual subscribers. Eleven years later, the Trustees' Report showed that 56 individuals had joined the Guild. There were one or two legacies, but Ruskin's own contribution remained much the largest element of the Guild's resources, which were used to buy a little farmland and some cottages and to promote certain traditional crafts. The only tangible result of any permanence was the Guild Museum, founded in Walkley, Sheffield in 1875.

In April, 1876, Ruskin made a tour of the North of England, visiting Sheffield on the way. For this journey he built a special carriage, as he had no great love for the railway and on the 27th of the month he met a few friends of the museum - Secularists, Unitarians and Quakers, mostly gathered by Henry Swan, the curator of the museum. The Sheffield Telegraph of 28th April, 1876 gave the following report:

"The proceedings were chiefly of a conversational nature and no set speech on any one of these several subjects dealt with was given. Primarily, the subject of communism came up and it's most extreme principles were freely and enthusiastically advocated by one or two of those present".

Ruskin subscribed his belief in the broad principles of Communism and pointed to his sustained advocacy of it. He also attacked machinery - from sewing machines, which would not be used by members of the Guild, to the gigantic steam devices of his day. Indeed he argued that steam should only be used for cutting icebergs in the frigid zones and for blasting rocks to provide more land on which people could live.

One of his audience at this meeting suggested that a community should be established in Sheffield where members could live together in furnished apartments and establish some system of co-operative manufacture - like making boots. Having a government of their own they would inspire similar communities gradually to grow up stronger and more powerful than the government of the country.

In the same month, Ruskin wrote, "A few of the Sheffield working men who admit the possibility of St. George's notions being just, have asked me to let them rent some ground from the Company whereupon to spend what spare hours they have, or morning or evening, in useful labour. I

have accordingly authorised the sale of 2,200 pounds worth of our stock, to be re-invested on a little estate, near Sheffield, of thirteen acres, with good water supply. The workmen undertake to St. George for his three per cent and if they get tired of the bargain, they land will always be worth our stock. I have no knowledge yet of the men's plans in detail nor shall I much interfere with them, until I see how they develop themselves. But here is at last a little piece of England given into the English workman's hand, and heavens".

So St. George's Farm came into existence.

But there was dissent from both the Guild's trustees, who resigned when Ruskin (working in Venice at the time and showing more appreciation of its broader ideals than of its practical details), insisted that the purchase should go ahead. Nor was Ruskin vindicated by his action and he was soon to incur further criticism for his poor choice of land and his inability to ascertain the suitability of the colonists for the task in hand. As with his other land ventures, the Tootley community never approached Ruskin's loftier ideals.

He had hoped that shoemakers who mainly made up the community would use the opportunity to raise their standard of craftsmanship as well as experiment with a suitable form of self government. Ruskin christened them, 'Life Guards of a New Life'. He went on, 'You are called into a Christianity of war, not hiring a corsair's hull, to go forth and rob on the high seas. And you will find the engagements you have made only tenable by a continual reference to the cause for which you are contending, not to the advantage you hope to reap'. It was to be 'the first essay of St. George's work'. He also stated that the lane had been given to them so, 'that they may do the best you can for all men and that they were a fellowship more in the spirit of a body of monks gathered for missionary service'. However,

this was matched by disappointing results on the ground.

He had told them, 'You must get your simple and orderly tyrant, or Cyrus, to begin with. Cyrus, first suppose, only over green-grocers - - in these gardens of yours'. As to their shoemaking enterprise he commanded: 'You are to make shoes with extremist care to please your customers in all matters and which they ought to ask; by fineness of fit, excellence of work, and exactitude of compliance of special orders, but you are not to please them in things which they ought not to ask. It is your business to know how to protect and adorn the human foot. When a customer wishes you really to protect his or her own foot, you are to do it with finest care. But if a customer wishes you to injure their foot, or disfigure it, you are to refuse their pleasure in these particulars and bid them, if they insist on such dis-service, to go elsewhere".

Their accounts were to be opened to the public so that their profits might be known. The tenants were not chosen immediately. Perhaps the reason was that he was experiencing difficulty in transferring the property at once to the society as a body, for as it stood, it was in his own name. He realised he ought to be in Abbeydale (as he called the property) but he was wholly occupied and completing some notes on St. George's Chapel in Venice. He declared that the 'Dalesmen' must take care of themselves.

Early attempts to grow fruit and vegetables for the Sheffield market foundered and Ruskin himself was soon to complain of constant outlay of capital and low yields. Admittedly the land itself was reputedly poor, described at the time of purchase as being wasteland that had been exhausted and then neglected by previous owners. Averting criticism of his own selection and of the in-expertise of the colonists, Ruskin also blamed a hostile climate for the crop failures.

(To be continued in the next issue)

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## DEAR EDITOR

Once again the party at the United Reformed Church was a roaring success with entertainment from Jimmy (the wee Scot), the Barber Shop Octet and Master of Ceremonies, Mike Williamson, to all the people who put so much into this event many, many thanks. I feel sure I speak for all who attended. There are many who miss out on these occasions and to them I say make an effort next year.

Reference was made in November Independent that George Creswick (now passed on) was thought to be the oldest Totleyite, the oldest Totleyite is Ernest Pearson, who lives in Lemont Road, who is 85 plus. The oldest female is Mrs. Pearce nee Mary Holding, second in line is Mrs. Stacey who lives on Laverdene (nee Elsie Pearson), sister to Ernest Pearson. One has to be aged 70 to qualify for Totleyite, as it was about that time that this nice little village was invaded by the developers. Heatherfield was developed by H. Melling and others, Laverdene (the old Monkey Garden) by Laver, Main Avenue by E. Sheard and others and Sheffield Corporation, all good farm land in those days.

We owe a lot to many people who sought to live here. It is through them we have our Independent and I praise such as Mike Williamson and my old pal Brian Edwards, who gives us a host of information about Totley and it's people of bygone years and of course John Perkinton, a stalwart campaigner in all fields, Transport 17 and all helpers, Residents Association and all connected with these facilities, who do a great amount of work in helping we, the aged. This is all gratis for which we are most grateful. Over the past 5 or 6 years I have been writing my memoirs from as far back as 1916.

Maybe one of these days it will be put to print.

Dan Reynolds.

## LENT DISCUSSION GROUP

Many people ask questions about the Christian Faith and many of us go through our lives with but a hazy understanding of what it means to us. This applies to people who attend church regularly as well as those who don't! To help us all a series of discussion groups has been arranged to be held from Monday, March 6th up to Friday, April, 7th.

In those weeks everyone is invited to attend a group each week in the comfort of someone's home. The discussion will be based on the theme LIVE YOUR FAITH and will use a cassette to which the late Roy Castle and his wife Fiona, Lord Tony pandy, Dr. Donald English, the Archbishop of York and others have contributed.

Opportunities are on offer most afternoons and all evenings Mondays to Fridays at various homes in the area. Full programme and details will be available during February in all the local churches but you can find out these details by ringing me on 362822. We need to know numbers beforehand wherever possible to make sure there are enough chairs to go round.

Last year one hundred people attended similar groups in the area. We are hoping for more this year because the course is very attractive. It has been developed from a pilot scheme run with the help of Radio York two years ago. Do take advantage of this opportunity!

On behalf of Churches Together in 17.

M. Snowdon

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## TRANSPORT 17

As we start another year we begin to think about raising money for a new Minibus. We are trying to have events most months. We are grateful also to the many clubs, churches and individuals, who we know will be doing their bit for us as well in 1995. I can't put definite dates to some events yet as arrangements are still being made. Please read the Totley Independent and watch for our posters during the year. If you have any queries or need transport just ring our office (362962).

18th March - Coffee Morning and Lunches at "Olives".

22nd April - Coffee Morning, All Saints', Church Hall 10-12noon.

13th May - Open Day at our office - unless it's the Cakes & Cuttings Day.

June - We will be involved with the T.R.A. and local Churches at various events.

15th July - Cream Teas at "Ashcroft".

September - Coffee Morning at our office.

October 21st - Pie & Pea Supper, All Saints' Church Hall 7.00p.m.

November - Cheese & Mulled Wine event and Christmas Stall.

More information will be available at our A.G.M. in March.

A Brass Band Concert will hopefully be on our agenda for the Autumn at a local school.

Margaret Barlow.

## THE DORE AND TOTLEY SUPPORT GROUP FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED.

On 17th January the 16th meeting of this group was successfully held at the home of Magdalene and Laurie Ryan of 4, Grove Road. 18 people enjoyed talking to each other and appreciated a short talk by Dr. Sylvia Bennett both on the history of Braille and the role of people with visual problems in the development of services in Sheffield.

Our group have made a significant contribution to a pamphlet that is being prepared, not only for those on the register, but also for those who would qualify to go on the partially sighted or blind register.

We now have over 20 members, but anyone with any form of visual impairment would be more than welcome to join and spouses, relatives or carers are also made welcome at our meetings.

Now that the Group has been going for almost two years we have decided that we will meet in the 3rd. week in the month, alternating between Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11a.m. at 4, The Grove.

Therefore our February meeting will be on Thursday, 23rd. February and our March meeting on Tuesday, 28th March.

We would be very pleased to give further details of our group and would welcome new members.

Ann & David Caldwell.

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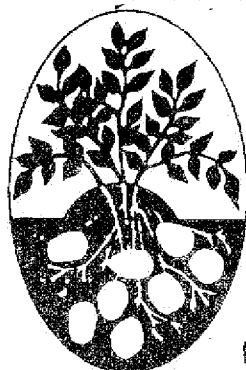
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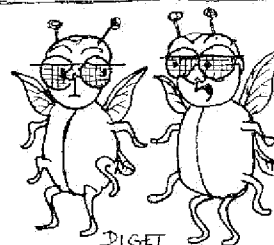


## TALES OF THE UNBELIEVABLE

There are a few dates clearly marked on the calendar of every true Scotsman. High and Dry, of course, are the devotions to the start of the year and Hogmonay is no ordinary celebration. It may be "high" but it is by no means "dry". Nevertheless, closely behind are other auspicious occasions. The date of the match between rival football teams of Glasgow, when more battles are fought outside the ground than on the pitch. There are too, the anniversaries of the battles of Prestonpans and Bannockburn and of course, we must not forget Burns Night. A night of celebration wherever a Scot can raise a glass of the Spirit of the Glens. Burns has, these past two centuries become revered and respected as an author and poet. He possibly started in a small way whilst he was working as an excise clerk, by scribbling a few lines of "Tales of the Unbelievable" for the Queen of the South Independent. From that time his words have come down the ages and his name is worthy of a feast in his honour. So, with the skirl of the pipes and the swing of the kilt through thousands of homes and halls, the celebrations are worldwide. Here we start with the Thanks of the Selkirk Grace and whilst waiting for the first course have a turn or two at the Gay Gordons. That works up a great appetite for the soup, which is speedily forgotten in the mad swoop of the Dashing White Sergeant. He has to dash, at that, for not content with a single lady, the gentleman twists and twirls with two at the same time. Steady now, for the great dignity of the evening, piping in the Haggis. Borne aloft in majesty round the admiring audience - "the Chieftain o' the Pudding Race". That Chieftain, in its turn, devoured in the main course. A toast, then to the sober thought of the evening, "The Immortal Memory". Round the floor again, the Strathspey, the reel Nottingham Lace, before sitting down quietly with the

dessert. If there are any gaps in this account, they should be filled with a glass or two of the proper National Beverage. Just sufficient to fortify the men who have to be helped into an upright position for the Last Waltz. Then, to form a traditional circle and to clasp hands and assert that we shall never forget our old acquaintances. Auld Lang Syne, a fitting end to a glorious evening. I think that this is a fairly accurate account of what happened on Burns Night. They tell me that I celebrated a little over-much in advance and that I spent the evening draped round the lamp-post outside, before being rescued and dragged home. - - - - -  
Lang may your lum reek - - -

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## TOTLEY CHRISTMAS PARTY

The 1994 Christmas Party, held on December 3rd. at the United Reformed Church Hall, Totley Brook Road, would seem to have been enjoyed by all those attending.

The food and refreshments offered good choice, quality and variety.

The high standard of entertainment was provided by Jimmy McWilliams, who offered a convincing tribute to Sir Harry Lauder and the World - Class Barbershop Octet, Sheffield's own, HOSP - 8 - ALITY, who not only excelled with their singing but also set a fine example with their immaculate turn - out.

For the Carol singing the entire company was joined by the "massed choir" of the United Reformed Brownies, who were also an example, with their smart uniforms and shines down to the last shoe.

The Committee of the Totley Residents Association has decided to continue the tradition by repeating the Party in 1995, when hopefully numbers can be boosted further.

The introduction of a General Knowledge Quiz added to the fun. Transport was again provided by Transport 17. M.Williamson.

## SCOUT NEWS

1st. Totley Scout Draw for December 94  
1st. Prize No. 18 Christmas Hamper  
Mrs. D. Hutchinson  
2nd. Prize No. 85 £10 Voucher  
Mrs. E. Wood

It is not too late to join the Lottery for £1-00 per month. Phone (or call in) P.Casson 363881 for your lucky number.

## 85th. Sheffield, St. John's, Abbeydale, Beavers, Cubs & Scouts.

1994 was a busy and successful year for the group, ending with an excellent Christmas Fair, a frantic Scout Christmas Post and a very enjoyable Disco. Many thanks to all helpers and to those who come along to support these and other events during the year.

1995 has begun no less busy and the diary is already looking very full well into the new year.

January saw the resignation of our scout Leader, Robert Jones due to family and work pressures, and we welcome Robin Charles as the new Leader.

In February we have a Cub Skills Day and a Scout Indoor Weekend camp. on the weekly meetings night all three sections will be taking part in many activities, in order to prepare for the coming Spring and hopefully good weather.

M.Hollindale

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## TOTLEY & DISTRICT DIARY

### FEBRUARY

MONDAYS COFFEE MORNING, All Saints' Church Hall, 10-00am. - noon  
 TUESDAYS COFFEE MORNING, Totley Rise Methodist Church Hall, 10-00am.- noon  
 CRAFT GROUP Totley Library.  
 WEDNESDAYS T.O.P.S. for the over 60's, Heatherfield Club 2-00pm.- 4-00pm.  
 COFFEE in the LIBRARY 10-00 am. to 11-30.  
 THURSDAYS OPEN DOOR, United Reformed Church, 10-00a.m.- noon

THUR. 9th. BRING & BUY SALE, In aid of Rwanda, 10-00 to 12 noon during "Open Door's"  
 Coffee Morning, United Reformed Church Hall  
 SAT. 11th. MASS IN D MINOR, Sheffield Bach Society, Details page 15  
 MON. 13th. PUBLIC MEETING TOTLEY LIBRARY, Topics for discussion to include Road Safety,  
 Street Lighting and Crime, Panel to consist of LOCAL COUNCILLORS 8-00pm.  
 Admission Free.  
 TUE. 21st. TOTLEY TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD, Methodist Church Hall, 10-00am.  
 THUR. 23rd. SUPPORT GROUP FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED MEETING, 11-00 am., 4 The Grove.

### MARCH

FRI. 10th. to 12th. ABBEYDALE INDUSTRIAL HAMLET, Working Days and Steam Gathering.  
 FRI. 10th. March to 4th. June, ABBEYDALE INDUSTRIAL HAMLET, Pewter Exhibition  
 SAT. 11th. CELEBRITY CONCERT, Dore Male Voice Choir, Details page 15.  
 SAT. 18th. TRANSPORT 17 COFFEE MORNING and LUNCH, Details inside.

### THE INDEPENDENT FOR MARCH

The NEXT issue of the Totley Independent will be available from the usual distribution points on Saturday 4th. March. Copy date for this issue will be Saturday 18th. February 1995.

**EDITORS** Les & Dorothy Firth,  
 6, Milldale Rd., Tel. No. 2364190  
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