



Chaddesden Historical Group



www.chaddesdenhistoricalgroup.co.uk or 01332 665333

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Chaddesden Sidings circa 1955.

Editorial

Despite me opening Septembers Group meeting and welcoming everyone to the 'August' meeting time is certainly marching on. Within the group the Archives Team are busy organising this year's Archive Day to be held in the United Reform Church on November the 15th and next year's speakers list has just been finalised as well. On the local scene the planning application for the Brook Farm Development has been resubmitted and whilst avoiding political involvement we cannot help but be concerned considering our City Councils track record on such issues. The naming of our new library being a point in question, the matter was never discussed at local level and locals had no input on the matter. As for me, 'The Wilmot Library' would have been a far more suitable name considering the history of its location and Chaddesden's association with that esteemed family. The 'we can't change it now' argument doesn't wash these days either, remember 'The Olive Eden School' and they changed that name whilst the good lady still lived locally, a disgraceful decision. We have all been successful in highlighting the history of Chaddesden and the interest we have generated along with our association with other community groups is fantastic. We now find that we have a collective voice on issues that directly affect us and no longer have to rely on politicians whose only real interest lies elsewhere. Isn't freedom of speech a wonderful thing? Its use is to be encouraged. Finally can I express my thanks to Mary Adelman who has recently resigned from our committee to pursue other interests. Best wishes for the future, Mary and once again, thanks for all your hard work. *Thanks also to Rita for the photograph shown above which is taken from her own personal collection. AJB.*

My War.

The following article is one of two received recently from Mrs Janet Taylor MBE aged 81, who now lives in Scotland.

My name was Janet Bell aged 7, and I lived at 76 Bangor Street on the Roe Farm Estate. My first knowledge of the war was of sitting around the wireless with mum and Auntie Muriel, they were both crying, and someone on the radio was telling us that we were at war with Germany. Uncle Bill (my auntie's husband and also my mum's brother) was in the regular army as a bandsman with the Sherwood Foresters and was trapped in France. My dad was talking about joining up and he hoped he wasn't to old! Later the news broadcast told us of the rescue at Dunkirk. Uncle Bill was safe.

The first time I heard sirens was at night, I remember loud bangs and being taken out of bed and we all sat under the stairs until another long siren gave us the all clear and we all went back to bed. For me the war had started.

A few months later my dad went away and I was very upset. My dad always smoked a pipe so I used to go upstairs and stand in the big wardrobe just to smell his coat, it was so comforting to me. We were all given gas masks, which were ugly grey things, to use if we were gassed. I was so envious of the infants who had pink Mickey Mouse masks but fortunately we never had to use them. About this time mum became an air raid warden and wore a long black coat with an armband with ARP on it as did her black tin helmet. At the bottom of our street was the ARP office, it was a small square brick building with one tiny window, a table, two chairs, a sink, field glasses, first aid equipment, stretchers and a telephone. Occasionally I was allowed in, on my way home from school, to have a cuppa with my mum, the other kids were really envious but I was so chuffed.

At this time men arrived and were digging big holes in the back gardens and erecting Anderson Shelters with bunk beds - great! At night I enjoyed rushing down the garden in my nightie amid sirens, bangs, flashes and searchlights brightening up the sky. I also loved the sandwiches, hot cocoa and tea. The first war wound was MINE, I stubbed my toe climbing into the shelter and I had a lovely big bandage on it that I wore with pride. After the air raids all the children went out looking for shrapnel pieces.

At Roe Farm School we learned where to go for the nearest shelters and to be sure we had our gas masks with us. A few months late we moved to a bigger house at 433 Nottingham Road on the opposite side of the cemetery and just a few doors from our grandmother's house. There was no Anderson Shelter and we spent many a night under a large reinforced table for safety. There was a lot of bombing because the railway sidings ran along the back of the cemetery and they were very important for the transportation of armaments. The Germans often missed their targets and the bombs landed on Chaddesden, the old cemetery and Mayfield Road areas. We used to go to school early to see the houses that had been hit. One bomb stuck in the high wall at the side of the cemetery alongside Nottingham Road hill so we went looking for coffins and old bones but, sadly for us, none were seen. Our house had a narrow escape when a bomb landed in the cemetery just opposite our house blowing out some front windows and killing my budgie Joey.

My mum gave up being an ARP warden to work in a factory on Lancaster Bombers. During that time I helped my grandma to make breakfast, dress my little sister Diane and take her to Beaufort Street nursery and then go round the corner to St Marks Road Junior School. After school I collected Diane and went back home. It was a busy time and I missed dad terribly.

Another move saw mum, Diane and me move to 6 Radford Street, Alvaston and it had an Anderson Shelter, GREAT! I loved it there and I attended Brighton Road Junior School. I recall we lost all our metal railings to the war effort. As well as having ration books I also remember funny little letters from Dad which had been opened and censored to make sure we didn't know where he was or what he was doing. I still missed him.

Next was the invasion of the GI's, yes the Americans had arrived with their lovely smooth uniforms, chewing gum, coke and nylon stockings. By this time I was a pupil at the Marjorie Johnson dancing school in Hillcrest Road. Our teacher took us to the American Red Cross in Irongate to do a cabaret. The two buildings were on opposite sides of the road, one for White and the other for Black Americans. We also went to the American Hospital in Sudbury and danced for them on the wards. They really enjoyed our shows and afterwards gave us a slap up meal, we were treated like royalty.



Harry Bailey, Andrew's granddad,
issuing gas masks in St.Marks
Church Hall circa 1940.

About this time some people came to inspect our house to see if we could billet evacuees from London. Mum was told to let Diane and I share and to give the other to two Cypriot boys Elias and Tony Eliades.

Their mother visited them, sleeping on the floor. She always brought two suitcases with her filled with butter, dates, eggs, fruit and other food stuffs, to keep my boys strong, Janet too! Apparently it was all Black Market goods, I certainly missed them when they left.

What seemed like a long time passed before we got a knock at the door early one morning, yes Dad was home and for me, the war was over.

Mrs Janet Taylor MBE.

William Hodgkin – wheelwright 1858 - 1930

William Hodgkin, was born in Barwell, Leicestershire in 1858, the son of master wheelwright Edward Hodgkin and his wife Hephzibah. He was the third son of the couple to be given the name William, the previous two having died in infancy. Due to the high infant mortality rate in Victorian times, it was not unusual for the name of a deceased child to be 'passed down' to subsequent siblings.

The Hodgkin family had been settled in Leicestershire for several hundred years, the earliest one traced being Gilbert Hodgkin who was born in Great Glen, and died in Slawston in 1661.

It is not known what brought William to Derbyshire, but it may well have been his work. He became a wheelwright like his father, and in the 1871 census, when William was just a schoolboy, his older brother Thomas was already working alongside his father. It seems likely that the business was not large enough to accommodate three tradesmen, resulting in William having to travel away from his home village to find employment.

Whatever the reason, by 1882, William was in Derby, as on the 26th of December that year, he married Harriet Jacques in Saint Alkmund's church. Harriet, described as a 'cotton and worsted weaver' was living in Henry Street with her parents and younger siblings, although she had been born in Fritchley. Her father Joseph, was a wood turner.

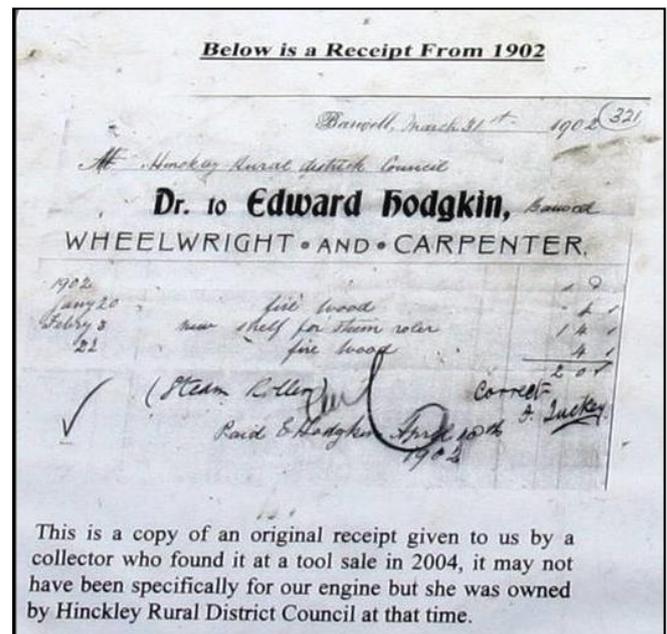


Photo- Grace's BIH

William became a wheelwright and joiner in Chaddesden village, and he and Harriet set up home in the 'Lockage' in Chaddesden Lane. This cottage, demolished in the 1950's, was known locally as 'OXO cottage' because of the OXO pattern in its roof tiles. By 1891, the couple had three sons and two daughters. A fourth son, Thomas, born in 1892, sadly died in December 1893, aged eighteen months. He is buried in Chaddesden churchyard.

The 1901 census shows that the family had moved to Walpole Street. Three further children, twins Annie and Frederick, and daughter Ethel had been added to the family.

William continued to work at his chosen trade from the new address, and in the Derby and District Directory of 1910-11 he is listed as 'William Hodgkin(s) Wheelwright, of 16 Walpole Street'.

By this time wheels were beginning to be factory made, and the demand for skilled craftsmen was diminishing. None of William's sons followed him into the trade.

His eldest son Albert, was employed by the railway. He moved to Rowsley to work in the sidings there, and he and his wife and family also ran a small shop in the railway cottages.

Joseph, my husband's grandfather, worked at Fletcher's Lace Works on Nottingham Road throughout his working life. He married Nellie Louisa, elder daughter of John Thomas Margerrison, also of Walpole Street, who was profiled in a previous newsletter. They had nine children and as was the custom at the time, several of them were named after Joseph's siblings.

A number of Joseph's grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren still live in the Derby area. William's third son, also called William, became a locksmith and later an electrician. He and his wife continued to live in Walpole Street until their deaths.

William Hodgkin senior, died in March, 1930, at the age of 73.

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(n b Nellie Louisa Margerrison was sister to Andrew Bailey's grandmother!)

Thankful Villages

Thankful Villages (also known as Blessed Villages) are settlements in both England and Wales from which all their then members of the armed forces survived World War I. The term Thankful Village was popularised by the writer Arthur Mee in the 1930s. His initial list identified just 32 villages. In an October 2013 update, researchers identified 53 civil parishes in England and Wales from which all soldiers returned. There are no settlements in Scotland or Ireland (all of Ireland was then part of the United Kingdom) that did not lose a member of the community in World War I. The only village in Derbyshire to achieve this status is Bradbourne situated 5 miles north of Ashbourne.

Peter Tolson RIP



Peter Tolson.
28 April 1932 - 6 July 2014

It was with sadness that we heard of Peter's death on July 6th. Peter was born in the Nightingale Maternity Hospital in 1932 and moved into Chaddesden when he was 5 years old. He had a lifelong passion for photography, inherited from his uncle, and he worked for Celanese as a photographer before moving on and eventually joining the National Coal Board's photographic team. This work involved him in all aspects of mine safety and investigation including working underground on many occasions. He progressed to being assistant to the area's senior photographer before becoming the area photographer himself for the South Nottinghamshire NCB. He brought these skills to our history group, as well as his enthusiasm and sense of humour and we will miss him and his work. I will certainly miss our talks, and laughs, about our respective times with the Royal Air Force. Our sympathies go to his wife Heather who I hope will be able to call and see us whenever possible. *AJB.*

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