



Chaddesden Historical Group

Newsletter 68 May 2019

www.chaddesdenhistorygroup.co.uk/newsletters



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Editorial

For the past few years it has been our practice to distribute the AGM papers at the March meeting. The benefit of distribution in advance is that the papers may be taken as read at the AGM, and the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer only have to give a summary rather than the full report.

This year the advance papers included an amended constitution which has been the work of several committee members, notably Beryl Lawrence, during the year. The old constitution had been amended several times over the years and inconsistencies had crept in as a result. One was the requirement that the Chairperson be elected even if there was no opposing candidate. That had not been done at the 2018 AGM which is why we had an apparently unnecessary show of hands to confirm John Crosby as Chair.

Some amendments to the Constitution were suggested after it had been circulated. On the first page the paragraph beginning, "*The Committee shall retain the right to amend the Constitution...*" now requires the amendments to be voted in "*at the next Annual General Meeting*".

At the top of the second page, insert before the first paragraph, "*Nomination forms for proposing re-election of retiring committee members and/or election of new committee members, will be issued at the February meeting and collected in at the March meeting.*" This is because a ballot is required if more than one person contests one of the officer posts (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer). We need to know at the March meeting if a ballot is to be held in order to allow time to print the voting papers.

Lower down the second page, insert new item 4 in the numbered list, "*A quorum of the committee shall be six, which shall include a minimum of two officers.*" Existing items 4 – 12 are renumbered 5 – 13.

The Constitution is on our web site at www.chaddesdenhistorygroup.co.uk/constitution

It was suggested that the post of Honorary Lifetime President should be included in the Constitution. This title was awarded to Tony Bowler at the 2012 AGM in recognition of his achievement in founding the Group. The committee has considered the suggestion and decided not to include this title in the Constitution as it was awarded to Tony Bowler only and is not intended to be a permanent post.

Finally, thanks to all who supported my proposal that John Crosby, Linda Crosby and Deryck Morley should be granted lifetime membership after their long service to the Group. I had discussed the proposal with the other committee members in advance of the meeting as required by the Constitution; it was a surprise only to the three nominees. We now have a full complement of four Honorary and six Lifetime members so it is likely to be many years before the matter can be considered again.

Peter Barnes

The Wood Farm Pillar

At one of our Historical Group meetings last year, Terry Morton, Sandra Rainsford and I were talking about Wood Farm (also known as Stoney Flatts Farm) on Wood Road, when Terry mentioned a large pillar which once stood isolated in the field some forty yards to the south-west of the farm buildings, close by the public footpath to Priory Flatte / Porter's Lane, and speculated what its original function could have been. Sandra remembered the pillar, but although I had regularly walked my dog across the field from the late 1960s until the late 1970s I could not recollect it at all. Terry, who knew the area well from his childhood days, said the pillar was big enough to be marked on the large-scale Ordnance Survey map of 1900 and, sure enough, exactly where he described, a diminutive rectangular shape was shown on the map [Note 1].

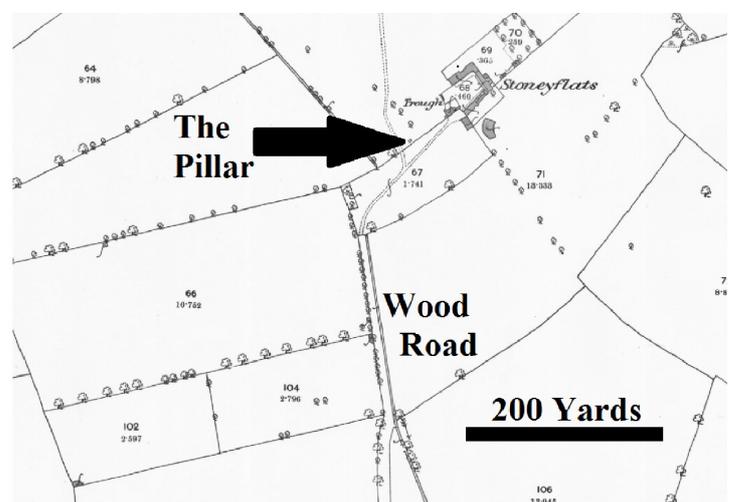
Once I got home I began to think that whatever the pillar was, it must surely have been connected with the Chaddesden to Stanley tramway of the Derby Kilburn Colliery Company, which was constructed between 1892 and 1894 and ran past Wood Farm. I checked the first edition OS map of 1882 and found that the pillar was still marked although of course there was no sign of the tramway; evidently whatever it was had absolutely nothing to do with the later industrial feature! The 1914 edition of the map also marked the pillar, but it was omitted from the 1945 edition. I checked my own photographs of Wood Farm and to my amazement found one I had taken from the north-west in 1976 which actually showed the pillar, albeit in the far distance. Clearly I must have walked past the structure on countless occasions and yet it had never registered with me. Terry thought the pillar was made of sandstone and over six feet in height, but as regards its width and depth, taking scaled measurements from such a tiny feature on the OS map proved to be problematic, however, I eventually concluded it was something like six feet wide and four feet deep.

Back once again to Terry's original question ... what was the function of this monolith? As it could not be associated with the colliery tramway, what other possibilities were there? A natural feature? — definitely not, the maps all show it with a precise rectangular cross-section; it is true that some substantial stones were discovered during the construction of Oakwood but they were massive, irregularly-shaped glacial boulders. A boundary marker? — unlikely since the stone was not near a parish boundary or anything of similar importance. Maybe a waymarker for the adjacent footpath? — almost certainly not, for who would go to the expense of placing a large pillar in a field when a simple wooden post would suffice? [Note 2]. A remnant of some long-forgotten farm-building that had proved too difficult to demolish completely? — possibly. One of a pair of substantial gate-posts in a vanished field boundary? — not impossible. The only other suggestion I could think of was that the pillar was some sort of "folly" erected by a farmer at Wood Farm in Victorian times, perhaps brought from elsewhere to this site.

Frustrated that I could not come up with a likely explanation for the presence of the pillar, I then resorted to comparing the 1792 enclosure map with the 1882 Ordnance Survey map. ➤



ENCLOSURE MAP ~ 1792



O.S. MAP ~ 1882

The Wood Farm Pillar continued

When the enclosure map was drawn up by the Enclosure Surveyor (Chaddesden's very own Robert Smedley), Wood Farm had not yet been built, and the pillar, if it existed then, must have been situated at or near the southern extremity of a small field called (as Smedley spelled it) "Stoney Flates Pingle". In the immediate pre-enclosure era this small parcel of land (2 acres 0 roods 24 perches) belonged to Sir Robert Mead Wilmot of Chaddesden Hall but, as part of the various exchanges of land made by the Enclosure Commissioners, was "swapped" with Hugh Bateman of Hartington Hall.

Significantly, Stoney Flatts Pingle once played an important role in the history of Chaddesden schooling, for Robert Walker of Chaddesden, who died in 1710, made this bequest in his will: *I give and devise ... all that my Close called Stone Flatt Pingle in Chaddesden aforesaid for and towards the Educating and paying for the Schooling and Instructing of Three poor boys ... That is to say to each Boy the yearly pension of Eight Shillings per annum to be continued to every Boy for the space of five years only.* However, by the time of enclosure in 1793, the school land was said to be comprised of four strips of land lying in Nether Wilriding and therefore immediately to the south of Stoney Flatts Pingle [Note 3]. In point of fact the school land had not moved in the years between 1710 and 1793, rather the use of Nether Wilriding as a field name had expanded somewhat - quite a common occurrence [Note 4]. Could it be that the pillar was originally intended to mark Walker's generous gift to the parish of land for educational purposes? It is important to remember that this provision for the education of poor children predated the foundation of the tiny school in St. Mary's churchyard by more than quarter of a century and thus might well have been deemed to be worth commemorating by our eighteenth-century predecessors!

One final thought. Although Wood Farm vanished under the Oakwood development many years ago, the long track that once led from Wood Road up to the farmhouse has survived in part as a road which from 1996 onwards has been called *Broadstone Close*. Naturally I wondered if this was purely a coincidental name or had someone at the local council remembered the old stone monolith? Unfortunately it seems that Derby City Council now have no record as to why *Broadstone Close* was given its name, and I rather suspect it was simply chosen at random with no local input whatsoever. Perhaps someone reading this article might remember the enigmatic pillar and be able to add some welcome detail, if so please get in touch.

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NOTES:

Note 1. In modern terms, the pillar would have been somewhere close by 57 Saffron Drive, Oakwood.

Note 2. I always knew the path which ran past the pillar towards Priory Flatte / Porter's Lane as a public footpath, and indeed it was shown as such on the Definitive Footpath map drawn up c.1953 where it is referred to as Footpath No.16, yet the OS maps of 1900 and 1914 clearly mark it as a bridle-road.

Note 3. See the Chaddesden Enclosure Award pp.134 & 180, and also *Further Report of the Commissioners for Inquiring Concerning Charities*, Vol.17, London, 1828, p.81. The process of enclosure saw the school land transferred to a field off the bridle path on Morley Road.

Note 4. Just to add to the general confusion another nearby field also went by the name of Nether Wilriding!



Meadow Lane Footbridge

By the time you read this, the footbridge that continued the line of Meadow Lane into the Wyvern Retail Park will have been closed, if not demolished.

Meadow Lane footbridge viewed from the east in April 2019. The structure on the right in the foreground is the foundation and reinforcement for one column of the new bridge. Work has not started on the other side of the bridge. [photo: Peter Barnes]

The replacement bridge, which was mentioned in Newsletter 63, is to be built to the east of the old bridge. It was expected that the new bridge would be completed before the old one was closed, to maintain pedestrian access to the Wyvern and Pride Park.

In mid-April the City Council announced that the old bridge was to be closed on 29 April and demolished on the weekend of 18-19 May. Brian Clough Way will be closed between The Pentagon and Raynesway while demolition takes place.

The Council's web site has a "frequently asked questions" page that answers a few.

Why do you need to close the footbridge on 29 April, when the demolition isn't taking place until 17 May?

We need to close the footbridge prior to demolition in order to carry out essential preparation work.

How do I cross the A52 from Chaddesden to The Wyvern and Pride Park?

Pedestrians travelling from Chaddesden to the Wyvern and Pride Park will be diverted to Highfield Lane footbridge to cross the A52. then along Chequers Road and Wyvernside to Derwent Parade.

How will the works affect Derby County FC match days?

Football supporters travelling to the stadium from Chaddesden will be able to use the Highfield Lane footbridge to cross the A52. Due to the walk being longer, we do suggest that supporters leave more time for their journey

Many more are left unasked, such as,

Why is it necessary to demolish the old bridge before the new bridge is built?

What will be the diversionary route for A52 traffic while Brian Clough Way is closed?

How will traffic reach Wyvern Retail Park while there is no access from Brian Clough Way?

Where will the new bridge be built? (The replacement London Road bridge was assembled on London Road and then slid into place over three nights. The obvious place to build the replacement Meadow Lane bridge is the former Toys 'R' Us car park but that has become the unofficial pedestrian route to the Wyvern since the old bridge ramp was removed.)

Disclaimer

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