

# WEATHERHEAD family history

Silsden, West Yorkshire, England

Tracing the story of two Silsden families, through six generations of change

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## Setting the scene

Although this document is intended to be a family history, like so many other families, the Drivers and Weatherheads were an integral part of the village, and in setting the scene one needs to include some of the history of the village. It is the everyday living conditions that form the background and provide some understanding of the lives of our ancestors.

### Agricultural changes

Changes to the agricultural scene came about as a result of a variety of factors; the passing of the mini-ice age of the 1600s, technical advancements and land management. Agricultural changes are considered to have started in the early 1700s and lasted a couple of hundred years, but improvements in the methods of farming are ongoing.

Since land ownership is involved, we need to turn back the clock to 1310 when Edward II granted extensive lands, which included Skipton, Kildwick and Silsden, to the Clifford family and in particular to Robert the 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Clifford. Jumping forward to the late 1500s we have George, the 13<sup>th</sup> Lord Clifford, resident at Skipton Castle and still owner of extensive lands.

Lady Anne Clifford, on the death of her father George Clifford in 1605, inherited the title of 14<sup>th</sup> Baroness de Clifford and she expected to inherit her father's estate. However, her father was also 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Cumberland and the Earldom and lands were bequeathed by George to his younger brother. It was not until this uncle and a cousin had died that in 1643 Lady Anne regained her father's estates. She then managed them in what was perhaps a determined manner. She and her husband had been resident in London but in 1649 she moved north and started the renovation of her northern properties and estates. She died in 1676.

By 1620 a large proportion of the present-day moorland farms was established. Common town fields were enclosed and pieces distributed amongst the tenants. As the leases were renewed, the early 17<sup>th</sup> century system defined by ox-gang holdings, changed to being a list of fields for each tenant. These were still widely scattered and the houses remained in

the village streets. Many leases were revised and endured for the lives of several named members of a family rather than for a fixed period of time. Some were sub-lettings and scarcely anyone else owned land outright. Lady Anne's daughter married John Tufton, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Thanet, who was a staunch Cavalier and whose name and title, Earl of Thanet, are still known in Silsden, together with the 20th century title Baron Hothfield.

Lady Anne lived in Skipton Castle, a Royalist stronghold during the Civil War. The castle was under siege by the Parliamentarians in 1645 and, following its surrender, Oliver Cromwell ordered its roof to be removed.



In 1668 when peace had been restored Lady Anne had the castle repaired. This was achieved but she did not return to live in the castle. She died at Brougham Castle near Penrith in Cumbria in 1676. During this period many of Lady Anne's tenants supported the Parliamentarians.

The period after the Civil War was a prosperous one for the weaving industry and even in the 1800s people were still talking favourably about conditions in 'Oliver's time'.

Quoting from the online Steel family history, 'Richard Steel and his family came to Holden (Holden and Howden are adjacent hamlets on the outskirts of Silsden) during a period of rapid altitudinal expansion in Yorkshire farming. Improvement and enclosure of moorland waste accelerated, with the relatively successful use of poorer and poorer land, until by 1700 the 1000 foot (305m) contour had usually been passed. Although the average farm size was well below 30 acres and at first provided only a meagre subsistence eked out by domestic wool and worsted working in the face of a prolonged textile depression, Lady Anne and her successors gradually offered greatly improved leasing arrangements. These grants raised the status of almost all their tenants and created many independent proprietors, the admired and envied 'statesmen' (yeomen) of the Craven dales.'

The word 'worsted' has been introduced and needs to be explained. A worsted fabric is one made from a fine smooth yarn spun from combed long-staple wool. The name is derived from the village Worstead in Norfolk.

So, returning to the Agricultural Revolution, this was a period when there was a general increase in agricultural productivity over the early 1700s to the 1900s. There were a number of factors that were advantageous.

1) The colder period of the mini-ice age was being replaced by warmer weather and better growing conditions. This warming trend is hard to define but is generally agreed to stretch from the 1600s to the mid 1800s.

2) Land improvement and greater use of it came about as a result of the enclosure process, which although perhaps penalising the very small farmers, meant land was leased to fewer individuals with larger farms enabling better use being made of the land. Additionally, more land was able to be used for crops due to the use of lime that turned waste moorland into crop growing land. In the 1851 census a number of farmers are stated to be in possession of over 100 acres of farm land and also of another large area of moorland. The enclosure of land in Silsden happened significantly earlier than in most of England, much of it enclosed in the early 1700s and

only small fragments needing to be enclosed by the Silsden Enclosure Act of 1786.

3) The rotation of crops using clover and turnips to enable reuse of land that otherwise might have been left fallow for a year or more.

4) Increased livestock breeding, since crop rotation provided vegetation for them, with resultant improved manuring of the land.

5) Improved machinery to drill seed and avoid wastage to scavenging birds together with improved drainage of some land and the use of imported fertiliser in the 1800s.

#### Transport and industrial changes

An essential requirement for industrial growth is the ease with which people and materials can be moved.

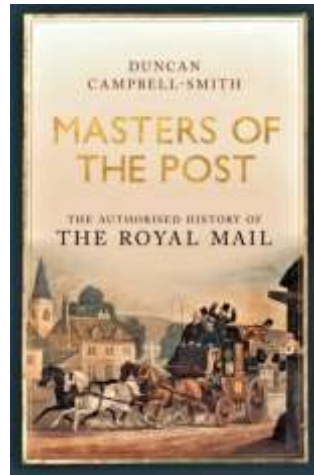
One might be excused from thinking that, before the days of modern transport, travel was difficult. That is not the case, it just took longer, a lot longer. It is reported that King Alfred (lived 850-899) twice visited Rome, once as a boy and again in later life. Also on record from 1507 is a round trip by a King's chaplain taking some papers to Emperor Maximilian in the Low Countries from King Henry VII in Richmond-on-Thames. He travelled via Dover and Calais and was back in Richmond in 80 hours. So quite a quick journey. This same chaplain later became Cardinal Wolsey.

This ability to travel and for messages and documents to be exchanged had grown into well-structured processes by the 1400s and continued to improve thereafter. Merchants drove this process alongside those established by the King and royalty who did so for their own safety, survival and protection of the country. At that time in the more important market towns there was a carrier licenced by the local worthies to collect letters and deliver them safely along a handful of popular routes.

In the National Archives there are the Paston Papers, a collection of papers of that family who lived in Norwich in the 1400s. They consist of 80 years of personal and business material, all from one family. In them the method

of conveying messages is sometimes mentioned, together with comments on speed and reliability.

In the book, *Masters of the Post*, *The Authorised History of The Royal Mail*, written in 2011 by Duncan Campbell-Smith, the development of the King's Post from Roman times to the Middle Ages is described. It includes how the King's post was increasingly used by the wider court; how all post travelled by post-roads to London where it was sorted, sometimes opened and read for security and spying purposes, resealed and forwarded for delivery; how merchants had, of necessity, set up their own network; how Flemish merchants had established their own messenger system in London; how only the Dover Road and the North post roads, of the five radial post roads from London, were constantly in operation because of the maintenance costs, and how Brian Tuke became referred to in Privy Council papers as, Master of the Posts; how England was still largely a country having many fairs, with travellers and carriers always prepared to earn extra by taking messages; how cross-posts were introduced to avoid everything going via London; how charges were introduced; how London had introduced a system whereby the time from despatch to delivery within London was a matter of only a few hours enabling replies to be received the same day, and for which service the cost was one penny; how in the early 1600s many of London's Innkeepers had lists of hundreds of carriers who had organised scheduled weekly teams of riders, runners and horse drawn wagons with scheduled departures to destinations throughout England; and then how the change in the postal service was made from the recipient being charged to the sender being charged, with pre-paid adhesive postage stamps being introduced.



So, travel, often on poorly prepared roads, was a busy business.

In the late 1600s the concept was authorised by Parliament of having turnpike roads, where a toll was charged for use of the roads, with the income to be spent on repair and improvement of those roads. The post was exempt from payment of the toll. This management of highways became widespread in the 1700s and 1800s, and continued with revisions until the early 1870s when responsibility for road maintenance was passed to local authorities. It was about this time that the use of tarmacadam or asphalt for road surfacing was coming into use.

The turnpike through Silsden is largely associated with the creation of Bolton Road, which was opened in 1826. It also improved the Skipton Road, from Silsden as far as Kildwick, and Keighley Road. However, there were two other nearby turnpikes, one to the north and one to the south of Silsden. Appendix 1 provides a little additional information about these turnpikes and includes a few reminders of that period of local history.

The opening of the turnpike through Silsden ensured good access to and from Silsden and facilitated the movement of packhorses, wagons and riders between the Aire and Wharfe valleys and their turnpikes.

Management of the turnpike was let by auction, as shown in one exhibit in Appendix 1. It was also within the authority of turnpike management to require ditches, gates and fences to be adequately maintained by owners of land adjacent to the turnpike roads.

So, communication conditions, coupled with an acceleration in inquisitive and entrepreneurial thinking and the British political, religious and legal conditions which permitted free thinking, all contributed to produce the conditions that triggered what we now refer to as the Industrial Revolution (mid 1700s to mid-1800s).

The tracing of our Driver and Weatherhead families has gone back to just prior to those times and these ancestors were inevitably caught up in its flow.

People, messages and packages could move relatively swiftly but bulk materials and manufactured goods were still reliant upon horse and cart, wagon or packhorses. In 1761 the first English canal was built and named after the Duke of Bridgewater and was in northern Manchester. This was 80 years after France opened its first canal, now known as the Canal du Midi. The building of canals was rapid and revolutionised the transport of bulk materials. Josiah Wedgewood built his Etruria factory on the Trent and Mersey Canal in Staffordshire in order to more easily transport his goods to London and elsewhere. In 1769 work started on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal through Silsden. The first boats passed along the northern section in 1773 carrying both freight and passengers. The Leeds and Liverpool Canal was not finally completed until 1816, delayed by lack of money partly caused by attractive war bonds being offered by the government to fund the army during the American War of Independence (1775-1783). It would be many years before railways arrived and became significant freight transporters.

So, horse and cart and packhorses, and later canal barges, would be used to convey materials, such as coal, quarried rock, timber and produce to and from Silsden. Imports, particularly of cotton, and exports of textiles, nails and manufactured goods, may have been sent via the Port of Lancaster, where William Driver's future wife was the daughter of a customs officer. With limited ship access to Lancaster and to Preston and, with canal access to Liverpool, the latter quickly became the major port.

This assumption that exports and imports were initially via the Port of Lancaster rests upon the question, how else would William have met, courted and married the daughter of a customs and excise officer of the Port of Lancaster? However, a few years later another explanation of how William may have met Sarah was discovered and this involves Silsden's brass band. So, this new evidence downgrades our assumption that the family nail making business was using Lancaster for exports.

The railway came to Silsden in 1847 and mass rail travel had established itself by the mid to late 1800s, being embraced and enjoyed by millions. In

the year 1854 it is said that nearly 100 million people travelled by train that year. The postal collection, sorting and delivering of mail, coupled with the Post Office Savings Bank, the telegraph service and later the telephone service all introduced new facilities which, put together, constituted a new style of living.

There is another book that throws light on this period. An illustration of the free thinking and entrepreneurial activities of the time is provided by *The Lunar Men*, the title of a book written in 2002 by Jenny Uglow. These were men who met regularly once a month for a number of years in order to discuss and exchange ideas about engineering and scientific subjects of interest. They lived in the Midlands and usually met in Soho Birmingham. They were so called because they met monthly at full moon in order to ease night travel. There were 12 of them over a period of years from 1730 to 1810. The group included famous names such as Josiah Wedgewood, Matthew Bolton, Erasmus Darwin, James Watt and Joseph Priestley. They talked about their own and each other's work and ideas and jointly worked to promote advancements.



James Watt had been granted a patent for the invention of the first condensing steam engine in 1769. That same year Josiah Wedgewood opened his new fine pottery factory, Etruria, near Hanley, and also that year the first water-powered cotton spinning frame was built by Richard Arkwright.

Prior to the Industrial Revolution it was generally accepted that the world was created as described in the Book of Genesis. This, according to the Bishop of Armagh, happened in the year 4004 BC. In the 1700s there was a small but increasing number of people who thought it might be older

than that. It was into that world that Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection was published. This arose from his round the world journey on HMS Beagle (1831-1836). Charles Darwin was the grandson of Erasmus Darwin and Josiah Wedgewood.

A third book about these times is Charlotte Brontë's novel, Shirley, written in 1849. She was writing a story reflecting the local life of the Haworth area, the hardships resulting from the introduction of machinery into manufacturing and the Luddite movement that was resisting change. Haworth is some seven miles south of Silsden. The Luddite uprising was eventually put down by soldiers, with those convicted facing transportation for life or the death penalty. It is only fair to record that some were found not guilty. The cottage hand-weaving industry almost died out with the introduction of power looms. It is reported that in Silsden one power driven machine in less than a day could weave more than all the handlooms in a week. This indicates the hardship that modernisation caused and this is reflected in the 1851 census. Current thinking is that in Silsden water power was not used for textile mills and that Silsden's first powered weaving mills used steam and then ultimately electric power.

There was also the Chartist movement which started about 1838 and continued until about 1857. This was a movement amongst the working class who were expressing their dissatisfaction with parliamentary voting and demanding political reform. At that time voting was limited to landed gentry. This movement had strongholds in the north of England as well as the Midlands and Welsh Valleys.



### Changes to employment and representation

Having mentioned the transport, industrial and agricultural background we should now consider what employment, in addition to farming and agricultural labouring the inhabitants of Silsden might have had. There would be all the skills of building, stone masonry, carpentry, farming, blacksmithing, quarrying, tailoring, dress and hat making, making of footwear, tanners, maltsters and brewers.

Burning of limestone was another common activity. While there were men who specialised in doing this, it would most probably have been done by both farmers and builders, with lime burnt in lime kilns built on site. Mortar for building was all lime mortar and lime was an important additive to help turn acid moorland into a productive fields.

There would be carters, butchers, bakers, grocers, and so on. In this area weaving was a widespread activity and required supporting workers such as sorters and combers. Flax was woven to make linen materials and sail cloth. Cotton and wool weaving were cottage industries that later became centralised in highly productive mills, making high quality products. The development process of moving forward into high quality, high production manufacturing was not without its problems. Changing from one weaver attending one loom to one weaver attending eight looms, at a time when the market was very unstable, is a study of its own.

In the 18th century it is recorded that men of the family at Cowburn Beck, just north of Cringles, Silsden, as well as farming, combined the trades of mason, joiner, blacksmith, turner, mechanic, beekeeper and wool comber.

As already said, Silsden and the surrounding area was dedicated to farming. Before the days of mechanisation labourers were needed to support the more skilled workers, and one frequently finds 'agricultural labourer' in 19th century census records. The reports on the daily weather, which unexpectedly appear in the subscriptions account for the new Primitive Methodist chapel, Appendix 15, indicates how casual labour and their earnings were so dependent upon the weather.

There was another major industry that had established itself in Silsden and that was nail making. This was the making of iron nails, and the like, for horse shoes, clogs, and building purposes. This started largely as a by-product for blacksmiths, but later took place in special workshops with men and boys employed on a small industrial scale. Footwear was primarily wooden clogs for the working classes. These were wooden soles with leather uppers and were made more durable by the addition of iron plates and strips known as clog irons. The material available would have been what we now call traditional wrought iron, which had quite good malleable and corrosion resistant properties. The earliest evidence found of a nail maker in Silsden is the marriage record of William West and Isabel Turner in 1755. By the end of the 1800s the manufacture of steel predominated and this was less suitable for the hand manufacturing process.

The weaving industry had been long established in the area and was a well organised cottage industry. Weaving looms powered by water had been used in other parts of Yorkshire for many years. In 1837 Silsden's first powered mill, The Becks Mill, was built on Keighley Road by Joshua Fletcher, Henry Mitchell and James Gill. However, this was powered by steam. Previously there were between 200 and 300 hand looms in use in Silsden. The census of Silsden in 1851 provides a snapshot in the middle of the change. It shows plenty of residents whose employment is 'power loom weaver'. There are almost as many hand loom weavers and inevitably some 'paupers, late hand loom weavers'. Yorkshire Heritage tells us that, over the years, there were nine textile mills in Silsden and fifty-six in nearby Keighley.

Additionally, there were many itinerant workers. The construction of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal through Silsden (1769 to 1773), the new turnpike road (opened 1826), the railway (opened 1843) and later the improved drainage, sewerage, water, gas and electric supplies were all dependent upon a plentiful supply of labour, originally known as navvies. They came from all over the country bringing trade and vibrancy. They required accommodation, feeding and entertainment. Houses were being

built and this perhaps employed local inhabitants rather than itinerant workers. One would have expected these itinerant labourers to have been recorded in the censuses of the 1800s but in Silsden they are not apparent.

Across much of Britain one industry that saw rapid expansion, once mechanisation was introduced, was coal mining. Pumping out of water, pumping in fresh air and powered lifts had enabled extraction of coal to become a major source of employment and the West Riding had numerous mines. Silsden had its own very limited outcrop of coal but that was trivial compared with elsewhere.

The size of the population of Silsden increased slowly during the period up to about 1800 and thereafter increased at a faster rate, especially in the 4th quarter of the 19th century (see page 322). This came about as a result of better hygiene and health leading to reduced infant mortality and increased life expectancy, as well as migration. Estimates followed by more accurate census data shows the population to have been roughly 600 in the year 1700, 1200 in the year 1800, and 4500 in the year 1900. The number in 2011 was just under 8000. As a result, the demand for housing and services increased. Up to 1900 most other villages in the local area grew little. In studying the censuses of Silsden one feature that stands out in the 1881 census is that, unlike in earlier censuses, a considerable number of entries were people not born in Silsden and a good number were not born in Yorkshire.

It is appropriate to record that in the period extending over 100 years in the UK, from the early 1800s, wages paid in factories were low. Families in slum areas were scarcely able to feed themselves while many property and business owners enjoyed a lavish lifestyle.

In 1834 the Poor Law Amendment Act was passed. It provided Unemployment Relief payments to provide relief at home rather than in a workhouse. It was administered at a local level and was quickly restricted to able bodied males. It was to be funded by local taxation with the tax falling primarily on occupants of dwellings. Unemployment tended to be

cyclical but in the 1830 to 1865 period a cotton famine was experienced which hit Lancashire in particular and spread into Yorkshire's West Riding. Taxation was increased to the level that was causing even more people to default. The system was unable to meet the demand for poor relief. Charities on a national basis, appealed to 'those individuals and classes of society who feel little of the pressure of the time' and Trade Unions all helped in this dire situation. In 1911 a second National Insurance Act established a compulsory system of unemployment insurance, albeit in a limited number of industries.

This was also a period when children were employed and legislation was needed to restrict exploitation. Amongst new legislation it was required that children under the age of 8 were to be at school, children between the ages of 8 (later increased to 10) and 13 could be employed half time. The 1851 list of employees at a textile mill (Appendix 8) separates those children under 13 from those over 13. Later, a requirement was introduced that the child had to be medically assessed and cleared by a doctor as being fit enough for employment. We have a copy of the record of 1922 for Mary Annie Driver, Q4+, at the age of 12 being signed as fit to be employed.

Some schools, for example, Elliott Street School in Silsden, also provided baby care to allow both husband and wife to go out to earn a wage. This was usually arranged where an older daughter was a scholar at the school.

The contribution of women is seldom recorded in detail, other than in the census. With the introduction of power looms women increasingly were recognised as earning their living. For married women these earnings were, according to the law, the property of their husbands, not of the women who had received them as wages. Between the early 1200s and 1870 married women were absorbed into the husband's field of responsibility and with that came all their property and the rights of ownership. This was known as Coverture.

Then, in 1870, the Married Woman's Property Act was approved which, together with its sequel of 1882, meant that a woman married after the

date of the Act was considered an individual and her status was changed. A woman could now own and keep her own property and her husband did not have any rights of ownership over his wife's property. It also, for the first time, made the married woman, equally with her husband, to be responsible for maintenance of their children.

The changes brought about during the Industrial Revolution meant that the need for local management of local affairs had increased beyond recognition. The vestry system was steadily replaced by elected local and county councils.

The population was discontented with the voting system both on a local and national level. Local level firstly allowed greater involvement of men and women 'of standing' to vote. Then, following the 1832 and 1867 Representation of the People Acts, voting for Parliament, which earlier had been restricted to landed gentry, permitted all men to vote.

Votes for women became the new demand. This was not to be fully achieved for a further 50 years. The movement towards achieving that vote gathered strength from 1880 until 1914, was suspended during the war and was achieved in 1918 with some limitations and fully granted in 1929. The Woman's Property Act is now seen as an essential precursor to women having the right to vote. Also, in 1918, women were permitted to stand for election to Parliament.

In 1926 there was the national General Strike. It stemmed from the reduction in coal exports due to increased output from elsewhere in Europe, a fall in the price of coal and drastic cuts in coal miners' wages. The Trade Union Congress, TUC, recognised that the government would win the contest but they, none the less, termed the strike as a 'brilliant failure' because 'workers had learnt a new sense of their oneness and their power'. The 1929 general election saw the Labour Party gain the most votes and form a new government.

## Services

Overarching all this is the provision of civic services. Education, the provision of sewerage, and the supplies of water, gas and electricity. To this list one might add entertainment and sporting activities.

The role of religion has been and continues to be a major consideration in communities. England was primarily a Protestant community with the Roman Catholic adherents still being disadvantaged. Freedom of thought and expression had surfaced in non-conformist beliefs, with Methodism establishing itself strongly in Silsden from about 1810. Some members of the Weatherhead and Driver families became significant Primitive Methodist figures. This will be explained as those family members are reviewed and in Appendix 2. Religious discrimination at times entered into employment opportunities and wages.

Education to a high level was available to those who could afford it, with significant expansion becoming available from the 1500s onwards. Sometimes this would have been achieved by employing a scholar to live with the family or sending the son to a school, college or university. Girls in general did not have the same opportunities. However, there were benefactors who would leave money to pay for some lessons to those who could not afford schooling. Consequently, there were very few poor children who were taught to read and write.

In the early 1800s the majority of children would be illiterate, but that did not prevent them from earning a living. Primary schooling in Silsden was available in Sunday schools and a few dame schools. In 1820 Silsden was to benefit from the opening of a National School provided by the National Society, one of several philanthropic organisations, supported by the established or non-conformist churches. Its objectives were to provide primary schooling throughout the country for the poor.

Secondary education was provided by public schools and endowed grammar schools, all in the private sector. The government in 1833, recognising that this was not meeting the nation's needs, firstly started

providing grants to support the growth of the private provision. Then, in 1870, when the provision was still inadequate it passed the Elementary Education Act requiring the provision of additional schools where they were needed and the introduction of School Boards.

It was another ten years, 1880, before schooling became compulsory between the ages of 5 and 10. Fees were payable but were means tested and local authorities paid the fees for children of the poor. In 1891 elementary schooling was made free for everyone.

It has been interesting, in transcribing the 1851 census of Silsden and Kildwick, to see how enumerators' abilities to spell have varied. Most enumerators had been reasonably well educated and their spelling was consistent and modern. Occasionally an enumerator had been less well educated and spelling of names was largely phonetic and inconsistent. Three simple examples are a description of occupation 'A prentice to sho maker', a girl's name 'Alles', presumably better known as Alice, and a boy's name, 'Mikul'.

In Charlotte Brontë's book, *Villette*, written in 1853, and in Mrs Gaskell's writing some ten years later, schooling is a central topic. The Brontë daughters were sent away to boarding school and were supported by a charity. However, one died at school of pulmonary tuberculosis and another died a month later having been sent home. The lack of care and of understanding of health matters was the cause of so many deaths at that time. The book also revealed that walking was the normal mode of transport with the sisters, who lived at Haworth, walking four miles each way to return books to Keighley's



lending library. The Keighley and Worth Valley Railway, which served Haworth, was not opened until 1867. This was the railway that was used in the 1970 film *The Railway Children*.

From the mid 1800s central government began to recognise that the need for local management was growing at a pace that the vestry system could not provide, and they introduced local boards. However, these boards were proliferating and they needed to have a governing body, so local elected councils were introduced. Charles Weatherhead responded to these changes and became the elected chairman of the Silsden management team, whether that was boards or council, and his leadership is related in Appendix 14, *The Civic Father of Silsden*.

A Health Board of twelve members was formed in Silsden in 1863. Its chairman was G S Taylor with C Weatherhead as one of its members. One of its first tasks was to have designed and installed a sewerage system, a task which was mainly achieved by 1874. This must have been a great health benefit especially as drinking water was still drawn from numerous wells in and around the town and the beck had become polluted. In the *Primitive Methodist book*, there is a paragraph that relates how the beck had trout in it in early days but how polluted and smelly it had become.

The Health Board's responsibilities were absorbed into the first Local Board. In 1874 arrangements were in hand, with Bradford Corporation, to provide pumped water for the properties in Silsden, with reservoirs and extensive pipe work being planned and constructed, including a small reservoir at Brown Bank above Silsden. So, a piped water supply became generally available in Silsden in 1880.

One other aspect of pollution to which, surprisingly, no reference has been found, must have been the smoke from coal fires and from the many mill chimneys in the town, particularly by the early 1900s. On days in which there was no wind the atmosphere must have been most unpleasant and unhealthy. It is not so apparent in the 21st century but the stone faces of buildings were darkened, if not blackened, by the ever-present smoke.

Fuel had been available as wood and coal, both from local resources, but both were in short supply. The canal had enabled a cheaper supply of coal to be brought to Silsden. The development had progressed of extracting gas, coke and other useful by-products from coal by heating the coal in the absence of air. In addition to gas lighting being provided in some mills, it began to be used in streets. One might question priorities as we note that gas for street lighting was installed in the centre of Silsden, 10 lamp posts and 15 wall brackets in 1869, whereas piped water only became available in 1880. The gas at that time was known as coal gas or town gas and the place where it was generated was known as the gas works. The gas was stored in very large expanding structures known as gasometers. Only in the late 1960s did natural gas replace coal gas. Natural gas, sometimes called fossil gas, now commonly used for central heating of houses and often for cooking, is being planned to be phased out of use in domestic dwellings in the near future as a move towards cutting carbon dioxide emissions.

Electricity was the wonder of the 1800s with new phenomena being discovered almost every year. The first rotating device driven by electromagnetism was built by the Englishman Peter Barlow in 1822 and the first application of a practical electric motor was in 1834. The world's first public electricity supply was provided in late 1881, when the streets of the Surrey town of Godalming were lit with electric light. There was much to be learned; generation, insulation, transmission, safety and standardisation, but it is perhaps a little surprising that it was not until 1925 that a public electric supply came to Silsden. Although, by about 1919, electric motors were used from locally generated sources.

The arrival of the services does not mean to say that all properties had that service and it must have been years before the majority of properties within the town received the benefit. One can imagine the constant obstruction to pedestrians and road traffic as first sewerage, followed by gas, water and then electricity were installed in the roads and pavements. As with the building of the canal, the installation of these services required

large numbers of labourers and the local boarding houses, pubs and eating houses must have seen considerable benefits.

One needs to appreciate that in more remote villages the basic services can take many decades to arrive. I recall visiting Arncliffe, probably in 1954, and being astonished to be told that electricity was to be switched on for the village in one week's time. Indeed, a friend recently recalled that when he first visited the Falcon pub in Arncliffe it was oil lit. These days we experience the same story, but the service being laid on is faster broadband.

With a growing acceptance of the need to improve social services for the population, Friendly and Mutual societies and the long-established Masonic movement began to play a significant role. In the second half of the 1880s a few organisations started to provide insurance available to those who, for whatever reason, were temporarily unable to work. This was funded by contributions, such as 3d per week, by those who were members and were able to earn their income. With the Freemasons, while there was a social element to membership, their prime objective was charitable fund raising, frequently financed by donations from its membership. In England and Wales, the Old Age Pension Act of 1908, following early examples established in some European countries, introduced the concept of retirement at the age of 70 and payment of a pension to deserving cases and where other income was very limited.

Silsden's first recorded resident doctor arrived in 1841, Thomas Driver, not related to the Silsden Drivers. Medical services which had become more generally available were often not called upon because of cost, although doctors usually still administered to those in need but who were too poor to make a contribution. Britain then led the way in 1948 introducing its National Health Service.

One service that did not require much local labour was the introduction after WW1 of radio or wireless. The first public broadcasting station in the

UK was 2MT in 1922 followed by 2LO in 1923. The spread throughout Britain was fast with Silsden getting the service in 1924.

Before the days of radio, the cinema, television, computers, mobile phones and the internet, one made one's own entertainment at household, neighbourhood, town and regional levels.

We will read of musical events at the Red Lion in Silsden, and that music formed a strong thread in the Weatherhead family. Silsden's band became highly regarded. Choral works were performed and we have photographs of stage productions.

It was also a period when circuses and menageries became popular, the latter fulfilling an educational role since most of the population would never have seen animals from other countries.

Sport, although not organised on such a broad competitive level as it became in the 20th century, was an important activity and it is interesting to note that Queen Elizabeth 1, by then Head of the Church of England, authorised the playing of sports on Sundays in 1569. The world's first football league was formed in Manchester in 1888 comprising twelve Midland clubs. Cricket, a very much older game was played internationally in 1844.

Appendix 3, Social life in Silsden, expands on these late 19th century activities.

These changes and developments are reflected in the Silsden 1910 tax ledger. It shows the ownership and occupancy of properties in the village. This is well before the upsets of WW1. While significant assets were still held by Lord Hothfield of Skipton Castle much of Silsden was owned by those living in the village who had prospered. It lists 142 cottages and nearly 250 houses of which some 20 were coupled with other assets, often farm or business related. Of the cottages only 2% were owned by the occupier, 7% by Lord Hothfield and the rest by investors most of whom lived in the village. Of the houses just over a quarter were owner occupied,

Lord Hothfield held about 8% and the remainder were owned locally, occasionally with a complete terrace perhaps funded and then owned by an investor. The ledger does not indicate whether building societies were supporting these investors.

Also found were assets such as Quarrying, Sporting and Fishing Rights owned by The Lord of Skipton Castle and indicating to whom they had been let. Likewise mentioned are the Silsden Urban District Council, Bradford Corporation for reservoir and piping, and the National Telephone Company with '21 miles of telephone lines and poles'.

As a comparison the 1832 Silsden land tax lists a total of 173 properties, 100 of which were owned by the Earl of Thanet and the remaining 73 properties were owned by 68 individuals or their trustees.

So, having reviewed the background, it is time to look at what we know about each of our ancestors and their descendants. Firstly, the Driver family, followed by the Weatherhead family.

The narratives are followed by appendices, that either provide examples of original documents or that develop a theme of further research.

### **The Driver family narratives**

Before commencing the individual narratives there are a few more details that need to be explained. The Driver Earlier Generations Master chart primarily shows the tree of the Driver family, from the earliest confirmed date discovered up to about the end of the 20th century. In particular it includes the four Driver brothers of generation Q with their wives and children, plus three other siblings who did not have any issue. This covers generations K to R inclusively.

The Driver family direct line is that part of the family who descend down to Charles Driver and his wife Florence Weatherhead. But because we have established contact with the descendants of Charles' three brothers the term direct line is broadened to include these families.

Each of the four brothers and their wives have a different coloured background to their names and their portion of the tree is continued on four charts headed with their name and their background colours; yellow, purple, brown and blue.

As mentioned earlier from the earliest days the tree includes all siblings as well as the direct line and two more charts are needed to show them and their families. These have the coloured backgrounds pink and green.

In the narratives the name is stepped in using the symbol • and four spaces, one symbol for each change in generation. This is in order to emphasise the generation and any change in generation compared with the previous person reported upon. Thus, the earliest generation has no symbol and the next generation will have one symbol, for example William Driver, who is in the direct line, will be shown as • • • • William, P3.

In most instances this introduction will also mention the spouse's name as this helps with recognition of the new family. This identification method is the same for both Driver and Weatherhead families. Note that if the name is underlined then it is direct line.

One other item to mention relates to ages and dates. Some of the data on ages comes from the various censuses which in general were taken in early March, although the 1841 census was in June. Other data may be provided by calendar year. Please also remember that the calendar change took place in 1752/53. Depending on which month an event happened and especially if a calculation is being made, a variation of one year in age can easily occur and so a slight variation should not be a cause of concern.

Those family members for whom a narrative has been produced are listed on the following pages, and, in order to more readily find one's position, these narratives have been given a number. Numbers are allocated 1 to 99 for Drivers. Those who are known not to have had children are marked // on this list.