

# The Ilkeston and District Local History Society

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JEB Seely seated. Photo courtesy of D. Corns

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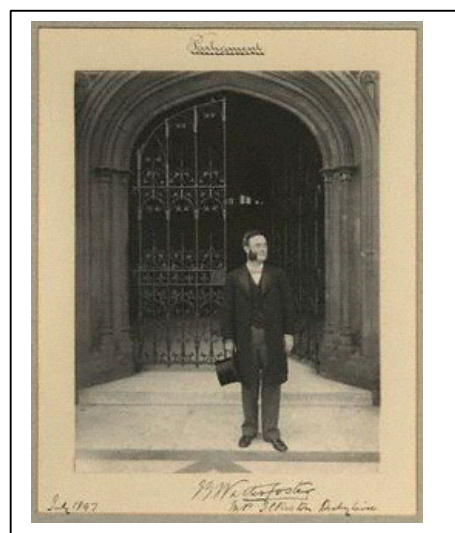
## **Ilkeston MPs by Beverley Kilby**

The recent general election prompted me into investigating the MPs that have represented the constituency of Ilkeston. Ilkeston as a constituency existed from 1885 to 1983.

**Thomas Watson** (1821 – 7 March 1887), was an English silk spinner and Liberal politician. In 1846 with two fellow workers, he started a silk-spinning and hatter business in Rochdale. He was responsible for the invention of silk-plush for hat-making and became sole partner in the firm of Thomas Watson & Sons of Rochdale. He funded a new infirmary for the town of Rochdale, became chairman of Rochdale School Board, and treasurer of the Free Church Denomination. He was also J.P. for Rochdale. In the 1885 general election, Watson was elected M.P for Ilkeston. He retained the seat in the 1886 general election, but on 04/03/1887 the Ilkeston Pioneer was reporting that Watson had a “serious illness” and was “confined to bed at his residence in Rochdale”.

He died 07 March 1887 at the age of 64. The Ilkeston Advertiser of 03/04/1887 reports “...in 1885 General Election he had been selected as prospective Liberal candidate for the Ilkeston division. He won the seat and was the first MP to be elected for what was a new constituency created under 1885 redistribution of seats, following 1884 Reform Bill which gave the vote to all ratepayers in county divisions. He was to represent Ilkeston for the rest of his life”.

**Sir Balthazar Walter Foster**, later 1st Baron Ilkeston, was born on 17 Jul 1840. The family moved to Ireland where Foster studied medicine at Trinity College, Dublin. After graduation he held various appointments in anatomy. In 1864 he married Emily Martha Sargant. He held a professorship, was a doctor at Birmingham General Hospital and published various medical articles and texts. In the 1870s he became involved in the public health and the social applications of medicine. In 1885 he was elected as MP for Chester as a Liberal candidate with a programme of free education and improved housing for the



poor. In 1886 he was made President of the National Liberal Federation, where he played a large part in keeping Chamberlain's supporters loyal to Gladstone. Foster was unseated following the Liberal defeat at the 1886 election but Foster returned to Westminster on 24 Mar 1887, elected MP for Ilkeston. In 1892 he was made Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board, becoming the first doctor to hold a ministerial post in Britain. He organised the sanitation campaign between 1892 and 1895, which successfully prevented the 1893 Cholera epidemic reaching Britain. In 1906

he was made a member of the Privy Council. After his sixth victory at Ilkeston in 1910 he was asked to vacate his seat to allow J.E. B. Seely to take his place. In 1910 he was elevated to the peerage, as *Baron Ilkeston* of Ilkeston in the County of Derby, although he did little in the House of Lords due to his growing ill-health. He died of bowel cancer in 31 Jan 1913.

During his time as MP for Ilkeston Foster did a great deal to obtain a public library. In 1901 Foster wrote to the mayor offering to contact Andrew Carnegie provided the Council had "a complete scheme". The Council wrote back and Foster secured the funding off Carnegie. Cyril Hargreaves, in his book "Ilkeston as a Borough", states that Foster was also the principal donor of books to the library.

Born 31 May 1868 (**John Edward Bernard**) **Jack Seely** was the son of Sir Charles Seely. He was educated at Harrow School, where he met Baldwin and Churchill and at Trinity College Cambridge. Churchill became a lifelong friend. Seely was later called to the Bar; joining the Imperial Yeomanry in the Second Boer War, he was mentioned in despatches and was awarded the DSO in 1900. He was known as "Colonel Seely" during his time as a politician before the First World War. Seely was an MP from 1900 for the Isle of Wight, for Liverpool to 1910, Ilkeston from 1910 to 1922, and then Isle of Wight again from 1923 to 1924.

As Ilkeston's MP he served as Under Secretary of War from 1911 to 1912: In 1912, Seely was appointed to the post of Secretary of State for War which he held until 1914. In WW1 Seely left for France to join the Canadian Cavalry Brigade winning several medals and mentioned in dispatches five times. After being gassed in 1918, he returned to England as the only member of the Cabinet, besides Churchill, to see active service in the war. He continued to have an influential role in domestic politics and died in Westminster aged 79 on 7 November 1947.

Other roles he held were:

- Chairman of the National Savings Committee
- The first chairman of Wembley Stadium
- A director of Thomas Cook

**George Harold Oliver** was born in Bolton on 24 Nov 1888. He became an engineer working as a gear cutter for Rolls Royce, and when the works were moved to Derby he moved with them. He also joined the union and became shop steward of the works; joining the Labour Party and was elected to Derby Town Council as a Labour Party candidate. As an engineering worker he was not called up to fight in the First World War.

At the 1918 General Election Oliver stood for Ilkeston but lost to Seely losing by 1,698 votes. He remained involved in the constituency and was adopted again as candidate for the 1922 election: this time he was successful by 1,084. He was re-elected in 1923, and during the Labour government he seconded a motion calling for a national minimum wage. After the Labour government lost

a vote of no confidence, Oliver was again re-elected in the 1924 election. He had determined to retrain as a trade union lawyer, and was called to the Bar by the Middle Temple in 1927. Shortly after, he persuaded the Home Secretary to halt the planned hanging of William Knighton convicted of murdering his mother. See The Times, Saturday Apr 02 1927; pg.9 "Date of an Execution Cancelled." (The appeal, for a special verdict of "guilty but insane", was dismissed and Knighton was executed 27 April 1927 at Nottingham Prison.)

Losing by only two votes in the 1931 election, Oliver worked as a Barrister for the Transport and General Workers Union. He acted for the union at an inquest into the poisoning deaths of three workers at British Celanese in Spondon in 1934. At the 1935 election, he regained the Ilkeston seat by 10,601 votes. Oliver was appointed Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Home Office in the Attlee government in August 1945. He left the government in October 1947 and in 1949 he was appointed as a King's Counsel.

Boundary changes gave him a very safe seat and in the 1951 election his majority of 30,398 was the fourth largest in the country. In February 1952 he was chosen to be one of the members of the House of Commons to call on the Queen Mother to extend Parliament's condolences on the death of King George VI. In 1963 he was named to a committee investigating the pay for Members of Parliament. Oliver stood down at the 1964 election, but lived to be 95 dying on 22 September 1984.

**Abraham John Flint** was born 27 March 1903 to Abram Reginald Flint, a Derby solicitor. As mentioned previously he was declared elected as MP for Ilkeston in October 1931 by two votes after having four recounts. In July 1935 he declared his intention not to stand for re-election and ceased to be MP for Ilkeston in November 1935.

He became a County Court Judge in 1957 and died 23 January 1971 at the age of 67.

**Leopold Raymond Fletcher** (3 December 1921 – 16 March 1991) was a Labour politician. As a schoolboy he attended the Berlin Games in 1936 – a fact he referred to in Parliament in the debate about the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (Hansard 17 March 1980).

Fletcher served in the army (1941-48) in the Far East, the Middle East and the British Army of the Rhine. He subsequently worked as military advisor on "Oh What a Lovely War". He became a journalist, author and lecturer and wrote two plays.

Fletcher contested Wycombe in 1955. He was MP for Ilkeston from 15 October 1964 to 1983. The seat was abolished that year in boundary changes. Fletcher was later revealed as a spy for the Soviet Union according to the records furnished by Vasili Mitrokhin, who arrived in the West after the Cold War.

## **From the papers...**

### **ILKESTON ADVERTISER -28 January, 1910, page 8**

#### **MONDAY'S POLLING - Wretched Day of Snow and Rain.**

"Monday opened badly for the election. Rain was falling fast in the morning, and later there was a keen contest between rain drops and snow flakes. The latter won at mid-day, and covered the country with a fresh carpet of white. This in turn, in the busy haunts of men, was churned into slush by the tramp of feet and the swift wheels of the election motor cars. Vehicles of all kinds were much in evidence in Ilkeston, and on a day such as Monday turned out to be their services were especially valuable, trying through it must have been to the chauffeurs and drivers. Both candidates made tours in the division, visiting the polling stations and giving words of encouragement to the party workers.

In Ilkeston the whipping up of voters was very well done. The Conservative Central Committee Room in Pelham Street was a scene of enthusiastic work on behalf of Mr Morrow, and throughout the town tri-colour favours were much in evidence. The thick-falling snow and the slush in the streets made the place look dismal and dreary, but these conditions did not damp or chill the ardour either of the "yellows" or the "blues." In the evening the rain and snow ceased, and the children came out in battalions to make things lively with their party songs and flying colours. The chief point of interest was the Town Hall, where a large crowd assembled in the last two hours of the poll to cheer the ribbon-bedecked motors as they brought up the final contingent of voters.

In the last two hours, as usually happens in an industrial district, there was a continuous stream of voters, mostly miners, who had cleansed themselves of coal dust and doffed their working clothes. Things were pretty lively at this time at all the stations. At Wesley Street work must have been at pretty high pressure, for at six o'clock only about 240 had polled whereas after that the voters rolled in at the rate of four per minute. At Holy Trinity 600 out of the 730 electors in the district had placed their crosses on the papers by quarter past seven. The record at Stamford Street was nearly as good, while at the old British School about 650 out of 700 had polled by half-past seven. When the doors closed at the Kensington School about 645 out of 750 on the list had gone to the ballot boxes. Thus, in spite of the wretched conditions, what appears to be a pretty good percentage, allowing for removals and the wretched weather, had in the twelve hours recorded their votes."

Extract by Esther Collington.

Post script. The counting of the votes took place in the Free Library and not at the Town Hall owing to the date clashing with the Ilkeston County Courts.

# WM. WINTERBURN,

(SUCCESSOR TO W. HALL,)

## Boot and Shoe Manufacturer,

QUEEN'S HOUSE,

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W. W. tenders his sincere thanks for the very liberal support accorded to him during the past, as late manager for W. Hall, and trusts that by still selling a really good and well-made Article at the very lowest remunerative Price, to merit a continuance of that confidence which has been so largely reposed in him.

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Pit Bluchers .. .. .	7/6
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Dreadnoughts .. .. .	7/6
Oxford Shoes .. .. .	6/6
Ladies' Good Elastic Boots .. .. .	3/6
Ladies' Elastic Walking Boots .. .. .	4/6
Ladies' Kid Elastic Boots .. .. .	5/6
Ladies' Elastic Block Kid Sewed .. .. .	7/6

Boots and Shoes made to Order, and Repaired on the Premises.

ALL BOOTS GUARANTEED.

Extract from Edwin Trueman's History of Ilkeston 1880- supplied by Malcolm Burrows.

### Quiz

- 1 What was the name of the pub that stood near to the GNR bridge on Cotmanhay Rd?
- 2 What was the Beauty Spot at Little Hallam before it became a venue for boating, sporting and now fishing activities?

- 3 What firm made the fountain in the Market place and what was its purpose?
- 4 Who were the respective editors of the Advertiser and Pioneer newspapers during the late Victorian and early 20<sup>th</sup> century?
- 5 Green's Lock on the Erewash Canal was called by another name around 1900 what was it?

Answers on page 10.

## **Children of 1891.**

February's meeting saw society members transported back to Cotmanhay in 1891 by Ruth Gordon from Derbyshire County Council.

The talk began with a newspaper clipping detailing an evening's entertainment at the Town Hall- a series of tableau or sketches and then we were transported to the "Live and Let Live" public house and were given details of children living in the area and imagined their actions. Introducing a few toys Ruth advised that very few could have afforded manufactured toys but would have had hand-made toys, such as wooden blocks. However entertainment was plenty with Sunday Schools treats, parades, sports days, so much so the School Board refused to grant a half day holiday for the May Festival organised by the Band of Hope.

Ruth then described the area, a very different picture to today, new houses and schools springing up, divided by the railway from the main part of town, open fields and allotments separate Norman St from Heanor Rd where the Rutland Cottage inn stands in isolation. Plenty of work in brickyards, lace factories, collieries, housing newly built, local corner shops, Granby schools built 8 years ago and an infants school being built – this was a thriving community.

Like new housing estates today the area had an overwhelming young population- out of 87 houses, 67 had a child under the age of 16 and there were only 23 with an over 60 year old living in them; most of these were living with their children's family. The number of adults was overwhelmed by the number of children – 190 under the age of 16 and 50 aged between 16 and 20. The census shows that most of the people living in the area were Ilkeston born people with only 18 out of 190 not locally born.

Ruth advised us that with the 1880 education act made attendance at school compulsory from the ages of 5-12 being policed by the attendance officer. Attendance was always problematic with the weather being cited in more than one instance for being the reason for having to send the children home! Another main cause for non-attendance was illness- flu striking in 1891. One consideration was to close schools but the Ilkeston board decided against this. Ruth told us about the subjects taught, how the pupils were graded and gave several accounts of punishments meted out to girls for various misdemeanors. Granby Girls had a head, 3 teachers and 3 pupil-teachers but with 300 children on the roll and the reliability of the pupil-teachers in question the effectiveness of the pupil-teachers was brought into doubt.

It was amazing to hear of the problems faced by the headmistress- class sizes, inadequate buildings, not enough equipment and misbehaving children. Not

only contending with these issues the school was affected by the School Board point scoring off one another- morale was low in the teaching staff. Staff absences were constant with almost all the teachers having non attendance recorded: in particular the headmistress, Miss Brant, who was missing for 7 weeks without a certificate. She became a political football to be booted about, was dismissed and then re-instated on 3<sup>rd</sup> September after unseemly public rows.

Ruth told us that this happened at the same time as one of the most significant advances in nineteenth century education – national legislation made education free for all. However this did not sort out the problems at Granby Girls. Inspectors threatened that unless there was a dramatic improvement the school would be reported as inefficient. Miss Brant resigned and Miss Amy Read took over. Her disciplinary style led to the inspectors noting there was a marked improvement in the school.

However, as Ruth pointed out at the end by 1893 Miss Brant was running a private school at Wilton Place and Miss Read was being dismissed.

Report by Beverley Kilby.

## **THE RUTLAND CRICKET GROUND by Sheila Mason**

The article on page 4 of the first issue of The Herald reminded me that while researching “Nottingham Lace: 1760s – 1950s” I found a number of reports of cricket matches in Ilkeston, and the Rutland Cricket Ground would seem to have played a prominent part in the summer and autumn activities of the lace and hosiery workers in Ilkeston during the middle of the 1800s. Carriers was not the only firm that had one or more cricket teams, and, in the absence of other records, it is sometimes only a cricket report which reveals what was going on in the Ilkeston lace factories.

For nearly a century and half from the beginning of the 1800s Carrier's, whose factory was on the east side of the southern end of Town Street, (Bath Street), was noted primarily for its textile production from warp machines, (which knitted together threads to produce various fabrics and lace). However, in addition to the warp machines, by 1829 Carriers was also by far the largest twist lace makers in Ilkeston, with 13 machines twisting together the threads to make the fabric. It is unrecorded how long Carriers continued to work both warp and twist lace machines, but twist lace production obviously continued to at least 1859 because in September that year there was a cricket match between two Carrier teams on the Rutland Ground. The team for the Warp Hands was J. Harrison, J. Wheeldon, H. Wheeldon, Joseph Harrison, W. Sudbury, Whitehead, Rice, Bryan, and two Whites and two Bakers, while the Twisthands' team consisted of E. Aldred, E. Trueman, W. Trueman, A. Aldred, J. Aldred, I. Aldred, T. Harrison, J. Carrier, S. Tilson, W. Lee, Brown, and Haran.

Carriers also challenged cricket teams from other factories. In June 1857 there was an announcement in the Ilkeston Pioneer that the factory hands of Carriers would be happy to play a friendly game of cricket with those of Ball & Co, (whose warp machines are on Burr Lane). This game does not seem to



have been reported, but in the September there was a cricket match between Ball & Co. and Bailey, Son & Co. (twist lace makers of Heanor Road), for the prize of a supper at the Sir John Warren Inn. The team for Balls was to be chosen from I. Gregory, W. Bostock, T. Meakin, J. Tatham, H. Smith, T. Ball, E. Ball, A. Ball, J. Ball, T. Smith, R. Davis, H. Spencer, J. Bostock while the Bailey side was to be chosen from J. Horsley, G. Eaton, J. Potter, J. Peet, H. Lane, R. Fletcher, J. Hodgkinson, J. Calladine, A. Aldred, J. Aldred, G. Ball, J. Turner.

In addition to friendly games at least one cricket match was organised to settle an industrial dispute. The Derby Mercury reported that in October 1847 workmen at Balls had walked out rather than submit to a further reduction in their wages. When they could not agree on whether or not to accept the subsequent offer made by the management the men agreed to a cricket match to decide. It was reported that the game was won by the party for the refusal, with upwards of a 100 runs to spare; so presumably the walk out continued.

I found no references to factory cricket matches from the 1860s so perhaps by the last quarter of the nineteenth century these were a thing of the past and the 'annual treat' had been substituted. There is an 1887 report of 'the most pleasant dinner of many given by the firm' of Carriers in the Wine Vaults Inn on East Street, while the female workers of Tathams, (needle makers, warp machine builders and warp lace makers of Kensington and Belper Street), were treated to tea at the Town Hall and their men and boys went to the General Havelock Inn. (Nottm weekly Express 28/1/87 and IP 17/1/1878 respectively).

## **Obituary**

The society lost a long time member recently in Don Webster. Don caught the end of the war with service in the RAF. After learning his profession at Stanton Ironworks, he later became chief accountant for Showerings Brewery and Oxford University Press. Don was a strong supporter of the Society and will be sadly missed.

## **Future Meetings**

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2010-"The Friargate Line"- walk by Keith Blood. Meet at Friargate Bridge, Derby.

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2010- Erewash Museum change to programme Victorian Life not Georgian Life.

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2010- Visit to Ilkeston Fire Station. If anyone has any old photographs regarding the fire service, please bring along to share.

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2010- Strelley Village Hall and Church: **PLEASE NOTE THIS MEETING HAS HAD TO BE CANCELLED. APOLOGIES TO ALL.**

All meetings commence at 7.15p.m.

The Society has also been informed of a "Heritage Day" organized by Ilkeston Specialist Arts College (Ilkeston Grammar School) to be held on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010. Further details contact Kate LeProvost on 0115 9303724 kate.leprovost@ilkeston.derbyshire.sch.uk.

### **Chilwell National Filling Factory- A Canary Girls follow up.**

The day before I received my April/May issue of The Herald, I was at Ilkeston Register Office transcribing information from Shardlow Death Registers for the Derbyshire FHS, "The Herald" article on the Canary Girls by Gary Henshaw brought to mind some entries I had seen that day from the 1916 register.

There were three entries of deaths of workers employed at 'the National Shell Filling Factory, Chilwell, Notts...

Aug 4th 1916 a youth aged 15, of Long Eaton, an inquest showing that he died of 'acute destructive condition of the liver due from (sic) poisoning of TNT brought about by the nature of his work...'

Sept 19 1916 a married woman, aged 27, of Long Eaton, from 'toxic jaundice from fumes and dust emitted from TNT contracted during her work....'

Oct 8 1916 a spinster, aged 19, of Long Eaton, from 'toxic jaundice set up by TNT poisoning derived from the nature of the work upon which she was employed.'

No cover up here? As the article also points out there were several recorded deaths from 'accidental explosions' in 1916/1917 in the register. And then in a subsequent register were recorded all the deaths from the devastating explosion of July 1 1918, 'there being no evidence how it was caused'. I counted 145 entries, 94 of them described as 'presumed killed' and for which there was no inquest. 19 were listed as 'unknown' with age and sometimes sex also unknown. This latter group, although listed in the register, does not appear in the index of entries, compiled for each register. Only 32 victims were both identified and named.

Recording these entries must have been very time-consuming for the Registrar and was done over about a month. Interspersed with them are several other deaths that have occurred under more 'normal' circumstances.

Just over three weeks after this catastrophe two further deaths of workers at the same factory occurred, as a result of 'explosion of amatol'.

Dave Johnson

### **Quiz answers**

1 The Nottingham Castle-its license was transferred to the new Nottingham Castle at Kirk Hallam.

2 It was Ilkeston's first proper waterworks opened in 1870 and later to be controlled by the Ilkeston and Heanor Water Board- most local youngsters congregated there at the weekends in the 30s, 40s and 50s –myself included!

3 It was made by Handysides of Derby and was constructed to commemorate the creation of Ilkeston as a Borough in 1887- it was a drinking fountain and horse trough.

4 William Shakespeare was the editor and proprietor of the Advertiser and was president of the Liberal Association for many years. Edwin Trueman was the editor of the Pioneer and was the Conservative agent for the Parliamentary Division. They were obviously great political opponents.

5 Soughclose Lock: it was renamed Green's Lock after the local landowners.

### **THE STORY OF JOHN SCARGILL (1588 – 1662).**

The David Harrison Memorial Lecture in March was given by Roger Wood who had been brought up in West Hallam and went to Scargill Secondary School in that village between 1958 and 1962. The headmaster at that time was S. Hunt who when asked by pupils what the S stood pupils for replied Sir! Class sizes at that time were high (60+) and meals were provided in the nearby Village Hall. The year 2012 marks the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of John Scargill who provided the means within his will for setting up a school in the village. The year 2014 falls 350 years after the first school opened. The Scargill School Foundation Papers are at the County Records Office and cover the period 1662 to the 1980s. They give a lot of history about the schools but not much on John Scargill.

Scargill came from Knapwell some 8 miles northwest of Cambridge. His father, Francis Scargill gained a BA at Cambridge in 1566 and was a parson at a nearby village. His mother was Katherine Turner of Warwickshire and there were 4 children, Francis, Dorothy, Thomas and John who spent their early lives in the confines of the church. John's father died in 1605 but his mother lived for a further 20 years. John obtained a BA in 1612/13 and an MA in 1616, both at Cambridge. John came to be rector at West Hallam in 1638 under the patronage of the University of Cambridge. He used the name Thomas Scargill probably feeling safer in these uncertain times. Life could not have been straightforward for him as the owners of the village were the Powtrells who had lived there since the C15. They were a strong, practising Roman Catholic family and were constantly in trouble for their religious beliefs with the Protestant monarchy.

When John died in 1662, he left in his will £10 to William Skip who had married his brother Thomas's daughter, 20 shillings to the poor of West Hallam, 10s to Dale, 10s to Stanley, 20s to Ilkeston and 20s to Mapperley. He also left £540 to buy a farm in Eastwood. The income from this was to be used to build a school within 2 years in the township of West Hallam. The will set out the site, size, construction details and the materials to be used for the building. It also detailed how the school was to be administered, set out a

curriculum and gave a job description for the school master. His pay was to be £10 per annum. There were to be 12 pupils (“pentioners”) drawn from poorer families in specified villages, the numbers being allocated to each village being West Hallam 6, Dale 2, Stanley 2 and Mapperley 2. Four Trustees were to be nominated to administer the school. Details of a strongbox were given which included the dimensions and the need for 4 locks. The strongbox can be seen today in the nave of St. Wilfrid’s Church. John Scargill is buried in the chancel. There is no elaborate monument but a flat slab of Dale sandstone containing the words:

Here lies the body of John Scargill Gent Rector of this Church.

He died a bachelor January 17, 1662.

He built a school here for twelve children poor

Six of this Town and six of Three Towns more.

To whom he gave beside their learning free

9d. a week to each boy paid to be.

Aged 74.

The original school was opened in 1664 and extended three times over future years. The site was redeveloped with cottages in the C19. A second school, now a house, was built in School Square and a later one in 1852 for girls and infants. This is now the Village Hall.

During his talk, Roger also touched on the story of John Scargill’s sister Dorothy, her marriage in 1605 to Richard Cole, a rich man from Warwickshire, and their life in America but his main theme was the life of the Reverend John Scargill. A man who was a true benefactor. Who was far ahead of his time in the field of education and whose charity is still benefitting the youth of West Hallam.

This year Roger has submitted John Scargill’s name for one of the County Council’s Blue Plaque Awards. Winners of the Award will be announced in July but all unsuccessful submissions will be reconsidered in 2011. In 2012, the John Scargill 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations are taking place and it would be a fitting tribute to receive a blue plaque for West Hallam. Good luck Roger and thank you for a most interesting and enlightening talk.

Report by Alan Edwards

## **Final Word... This is YOUR Herald!**

All contributors are responsible for ensuring that their contribution is factually accurate.

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