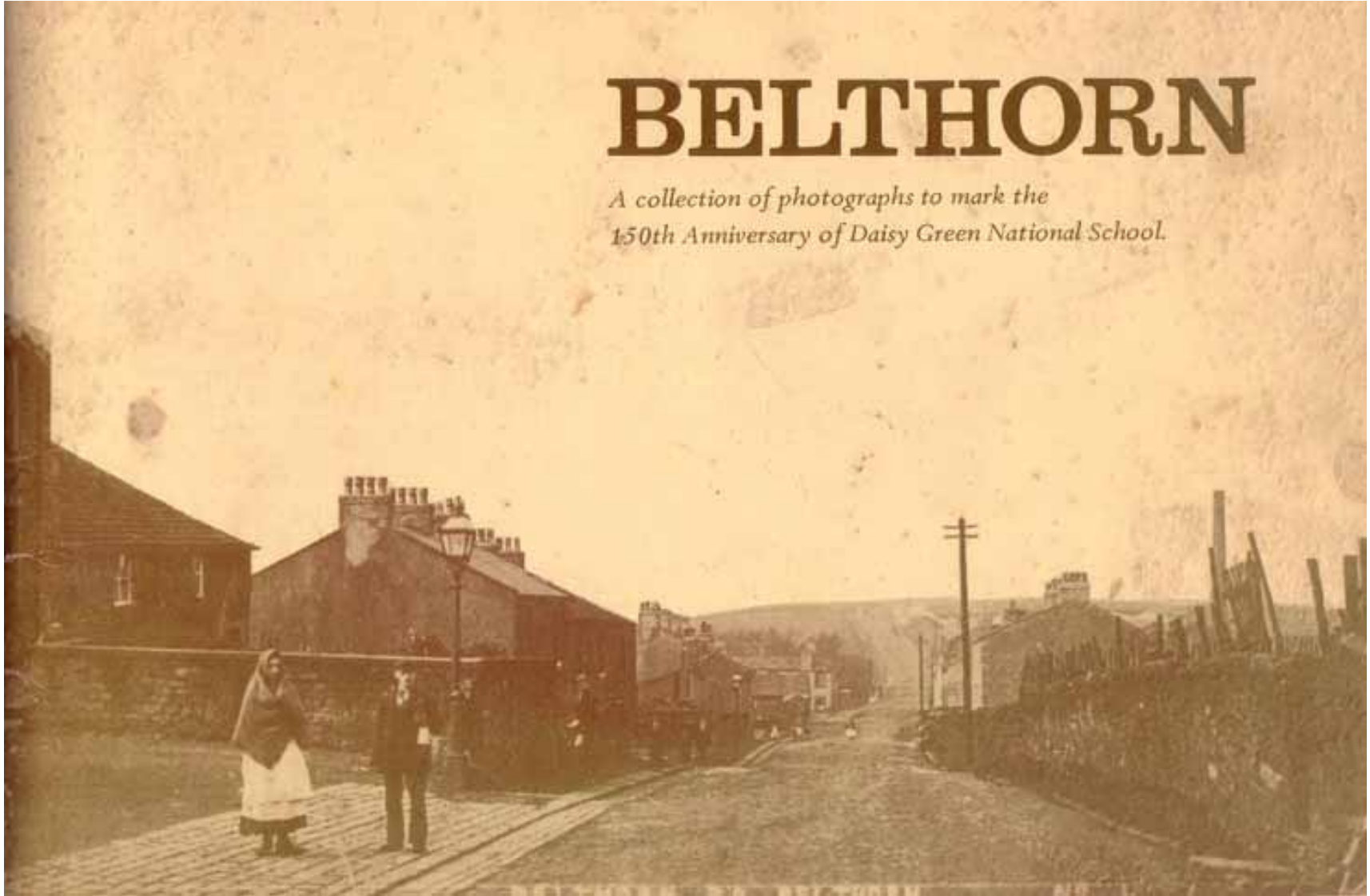


# BELTHORN

*A collection of photographs to mark the  
150th Anniversary of Daisy Green National School.*



## INTRODUCTION

Belthorn is a small, moorland village situated to the south-east of Blackburn. The village is divided by the boundary between the ancient parish of Yate and Pickup Bank and the township of Oswaldtwistle. During the nineteenth century a small portion of the village, including Syke Mill and a few farms, was in the parish of Lower Darwen.

The modern development of the community began in the last quarter of the eighteenth century when many calico handloom weavers' cottages were built. In the same years the common lands were enclosed and new farms established. Similar growth occurred in the neighbouring hamlet of Daisy Green. Coal mining was also important in the district and pits were sunk to the east of Elton Road in the early nineteenth century. At Yate Bank the workings were reached by drifts into the steep hillsides. Two cotton weaving mills were opened in the middle of the last century and were the principal employers in the village for over fifty years. The mills closed in 1933 and 1958, and although one is used by a carpet manufacturer, the majority of the population is now employed outside the village.

Education in the Belthorn district dates back to the 1790's when a Sunday School was established at Shorrocks Fold, Yate Bank, by the Church of England. Although there is evidence of the provision of basic schooling at Belthorn Independent Chapel from 1818 onwards, the first purpose built school was Daisy Green National School, opened in 1837 as a mission of Immanuel Parish Church, Oswaldtwistle, and replaced in 1861-62 by Saint Michael's School.

The decline of the settlement at Daisy Green began after the construction of two reservoirs by the Borough of Blackburn in the late 1840's. The lack of adequate drainage and sewage facilities in the hamlet resulted in the demolition of the houses and the removal of the school to a new site at Belthorn.

This small booklet is intended to mark the 150th anniversary of Daisy Green School, and to give an insight into the past history of Belthorn and district through old photographs.

Belthorn Primary School is indebted to many people for their assistance, and for the loan of photographs during the preparation of this booklet. Particular thanks are extended to Mrs. E. Sunter, Mrs. J. Griffiths, Miss J. Taylor, Miss R. Bury, Mrs. I. Beetson, Mr. and Mrs. J. Casey, Mr. and Mrs. W. Gordon, Mr. T. Walkden, Mrs. Gabbott, Mrs. Hoghton, Mrs. Yates of Pike Low Farm, Robin Whalley, Susan Jackson, Albert Wilkinson, Mr. B. Ashton and Mrs. J. Green of Accrington Library and Mr. S. Miller of Blackburn Library. Finally, a word of thanks to Mrs. S. Proctor, who co-ordinated and organised the collection of photographs and information in the village.

Mike Rothwell, September, 1987.



## BELTHORN – RICHARD AINSWORTH'S HISTORY

*The following article, reproduced by permission of the Accrington Observer and Times, first appeared on the 19th June, 1920. Richard Ainsworth was a noted local historian and is best remembered for "Old Homesteads of Accrington and District."*

Belthorn is situated at the summit of that wild stretch of country lying between Oswaldtwistle, Darwen, and Haslingden. The group of grey old homesteads which constitute the village, appear to have grown with the landscape, and out of it, like the thorn-bushes, the rocks and rough-coated acres of moorland that seem to isolate them.

These old homesteads have brought forth a sturdy race, who have shown their love of home by clinging to these high moorlands, and wrestling with nature in all her moods. These hills and moors possess a spell which is difficult to define. The rushes, the heather, and the soft springing turf; the sigh and the rustle of the herbage, as it is stirred by the wind; the ever varying colours, the brown and the purple, the rich green of the moss; the freedom that encircles, the silence that reigns, all go to make up the glory of these moorland heights in the summer time.

### ORIGIN OF BELTHORN

The origin of Belthorn, like many other places in our land, is lost in the dim and distant past. Centuries ago much of the lower land in our district was either forest or vast morasses, in which streams flowed and caused great areas to be nothing but quaking bogland. The hill tops were the safest places for man, and the best way of getting from one place to another. Growing civilisation has drained the marshes and the lowlands, while the people have betaken themselves to the warmer valleys. Now the hill tops and ridges are left comparatively lonely, as they never were in the old days, but this isolation has preserved to us traces of the life of other days.

There is no doubt of Belthorn's early origin, but very conflicting are the theories of how it got its name. One of the most imaginative and fascinating theories is that Belthorn is a corruption of Beltane or Beltein, a festival connected with sun worship. This carries us back to the days of the Druids and has a biblical connection with the worship of Baal. This festival was held on the 21st June, during which fires were kindled on the tops of the hills, to which the people gathered, and various ceremonies were gone through in the worship of the sun. Another and more commonplace theory is that a bell was fastened to a thorn. The fierce winds that blow upon this hill top, caused the bell to ring. This was in order to give travellers a knowledge of their whereabouts. A more reasonable idea is that its name is derived from the thorns which grew hereabouts. "Thorn" is frequently used, with a distinguishing prefix, in local placenames, such as Gaulkthorn in Oswaldtwistle.

### OLD ROADS OF THE DISTRICT

The old roads of a district are a very interesting study, and none more so than those in this locality. The ancient Roman road from Manchester to Ribchester was within sight of Belthorn heights. The present highway from Bury to Blackburn keeps very near the Roman way, in many places, and is identical with it in some stretches. As Watling street it passes over the height of Affetside, then on towards Blackburn. The most interesting stretch of this Roman road is that at Blackmoor, near Lower Darwen. It is known as Roman Road near Blackmoor Church. Vestiges have been traced near Daisyfield Brow. A few years ago a portion of



the original pavement was laid bare when some sewerage excavations took place. The road was about 20 feet in width, and was discovered at a depth of four feet below the present road. The stones composing the pavement were large, and the upper sides were worn smooth by the traffic which passed over them whilst the Roman road continued in use. The stones were unsquared, rough hewn out of some neighbouring quarry, and are of millstone grit, probably from Revidge. Traces of a cross road of lighter construction, at about the same level as the main Roman road, on either side under the existing branch road to Guide and Oswaldtwistle eastward, and to the valley of the Darwen river westward, were also discovered. Probably that road occupies the line of a vicinal way, or Roman by-way running in those directions.

The present highway through Belthorn follows closely the line of a very old road, from Haslingden Grane to Blackburn. In medieval times there were a number of stone crosses alongside this road. The base of one, the Holden cross, which stood near Holden Hall, is preserved in Haslingden Park. Then there were the Higher Abbey, and Lower Abbey crosses, but all traces of these have disappeared. A stone cross two feet high, with some Roman coins under it, was found near Guide in 1865. There were several old tracks and pack horse roads; a good example is to be seen passing by Quaker Fold.

#### SETTLEMENT OF THE DISTRICT

The settlement of the district is no doubt due to the presence of roads. The Roman road would be utilised by King Oswald's forces in the Saxon period, when this corner of Oswald's kingdom was the contending ground for rival armies in the 7th century. The most intimate knowledge in

regard to the early period that this district was settled is to be gained from the De-Lacy accounts of the 13th century. The stretch of country on the Darwen side from Belthorn to Hoddlesden should interest Accrington and district people, for this part was reclaimed from the waste moorland and hill side by the enterprise of those who held Accrington. Money spent upon development of the land was included in the yearly accounts of the steward, and afterwards the greave of Accrington Grange. The accounts for 1296 show that 6d. was received "for one old cottage at Hoddlesden sold". "For cleaning house there 3s. 6d., mendings hedges 2s. 1d., rebuilding and roofing house £19 3s. 4d." Under the year 1305 appears the item "6d. for cleaning meadows".

From this period we can trace the development of this district, comprising Belthorn in the township of Oswaldtwistle, Yate and Pickup Bank, and Hoddlesden in the valley below, from the wild moorland to a chase reserved for hunting, then to a stock-raising farm or vaccary dependent on Accrington, a holding leased from the overlord by the Radcliffe family, then to a group of smaller farms, granted to tenants by copyhold, according to the custom of Accrington Manor. Through all these centuries a small population has continued to exist on the bare and breezy heights of Yate-cum-Pickup Bank, which attains the height of 1,000 feet at Belthorn.

#### OLD HOMESTEADS

The grey old stone homesteads that lie along the hillside and cluster on the crest exhibit no claims to architectural art. They are all strongly and sturdily built to withstand the wind and storm, and are similar in type to those of neighbouring districts. Many of these old homesteads are now derelict. Quaker Fold is an instance, where only the rear and end walls remain. Originally occupied by



the Yates, it was later the home of Richard Ratcliffe, who lies in the neighbouring burial ground.

The principal family is undoubtedly the Yates, who derived their name from the township, the meaning of which is way or road. They were settled on this hillside as far back as the reign of Edward III. There are so many branches of the family that it is impossible to trace them out, for all the bearers of that name at Yate Bank were more or less related. They were the leading yeoman family for centuries. One member, William Yates, was a leader in a dispute in regard to lands in 1548. Then we have in 1608, six heads of families or households of the name of Yates, and in 1662 four in Yate and Pickup Bank. There were Yates's at Windy Bank, Bank Fold, Woodhead, Waterside, Jackhouse and Duckworth Hall. Windy Bank was rebuilt by William and Mary Yates in 1718.

The first of this branch we can distinctly trace was John Yates 1588, Robert Yates 1602, William Yates 1617, James Yates 1641. The Bell Thorn Inn was built by Robert Yates in 1791. Pedigrees of several branches are given in Abram's "History of Blackburn". Bank Fold was built or rebuilt by Robert Yates in 1765. John Yates was living at Woodhead, Belthorn, in 1810. From him was descended the late Oliver Yates, who died recently at Southport. Another Oliver Yates, an ancestor of the above gentlemen, one day in Blackburn noticed an advertisement in a shop window for a salesman in Manchester. Oliver applied for the post, and was engaged. Eventually he married his employer's daughter, succeeded to the business, and when he died left a fortune of £160,000. He was born at Woodhead, and afterwards rebuilt the house, in which he resided. His nephew, the late Oliver, resided here until his removal to Southport.

A charming story is attached to another old homestead that of Jackson Houses. Here was born Nellie Yates, who married the first Sir Robert Peel, and became the mother of the second Sir Rober Peel, Prime Minister of England. Her father, William Yates, had entered in partnership with the first Sir Robert's father. Young Peel resided for a time with the Yates's, whose young daughter he often nursed. He often asked her if she would marry him when she became a woman, to which she would answer in the affirmative. When she became 17 and he 33 their early pledge was redeemed.

The Presbyterians had a licence for preaching at John Dinden's house at Yate Bank in 1672.

There were Holdens at Eccleshill and Pickup Bank. The Holdings of Broadfield are descended from the Holdings of this district. The Holdens were residing at Eccles Fold in 1602. Then there were the Pickups mentioned several times during the 16th century and Hargreaves's, who figure in the Court Rolls.

#### OLD BURIAL GROUNDS QUAKER FOLD AND RED EARTH

The two quaint little Quaker burial grounds at Quaker Fold and Red Earth in Yate and Pickup Bank are interesting, especially to those who delight to visit out of the way and curious places. The first-named is marked on the Ordnance survey map, but no name is given, reference only being made to Quaker Fold, near by, and now a ruin. Its position is best indicated by looking up the farm locally known as Daub Hall, but which now exists under the name of New Inn, and is marked as such on the ordnance map.

There are two tombstones in the Daub Hall enclosure. The earliest, a flat slab against the wall, records the follow-



ing epitaph: "Agnes, Wife of Robert Yates. Buried here, April third, 1768, Aged 46 years." The other is a flat table tomb-stone erected on four short rectangular supports – "Underneath T.H.I.S. stone was interred the body of Richard Ratcliffe, who died May 8th, 1803, Aged 73 years. Also Ellen, his wife who died July 14th, 1793, Aged 66 years. Also Ellen, their daughter, the wife of George Hargreaves, died January 24th, 1813, Aged 51 years".

It is not surprising that many of the inhabitants of this district, the extreme south-eastern portion of the Parish of Blackburn, should have accepted the tenets and become members of the Society of Friends during the 17th century. Isolated as they were by bad roads and lack of good communication cutting them off from their Parish Church, condemned to a life-long toil to wrest from the poor soil a scanty living, eked out by home, spinning and weaving, it was only from the unorthodox divines and recusant priests, driven by persecution among these hill-side communities, that they received any religious consolation whatever.

Red Earth enclosure, near by the farm of the same name, contains the remains of a family of Scholes. It is situated in the meadow, near one end of the farm. It is similar in form and size to the one at Daub Hall, and has four trees, one at each corner. A narrow entrance is now walled up. This burial ground contains only one flat tomb-stone resting on the ground, which bears the following epitaph: "Here resteth the body of John Scholes, of Yate Bank, who departed this life June 9th, 1812, aged 53 years. Also Mary Scholes, the wife of John Scholes, who departed this life December 5th, 1815, in the 63rd year of her age". Evidently these inscriptions did not conform to the strict Quaker injunctions which only allowed the name and the numerical for the month.

It seems that these family grave-plots were a distinctive feature of the district and must have been quite common. During the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries the outlying districts in Lancashire, apart from the towns, were wild and almost inaccessible places, with notoriously bad roads, which made travelling a troublesome and oft-time dangerous proceeding.

#### "BELTHORN CHARITY"

We cannot speak of Belthorn, without referring to that well known dialect poem, Belthorn Charity, by Fent Dick. Richard Crawshaw, who wrote under the pen-name of "Fent Dick", kept a fent shop in Abbey street, Accrington, next door to the Oak Tree. His works have never been collected from the local Press, but the poem that will keep his name alive is Belthorn Charity. It is full of fun and humour in its description of Belthorn Charity, for which "Fent Dick" was said not to have been forgiven by the then inhabitants of Belthorn. The scene is in the old Congregational chapel, which at the time the late Rev. E. H. Apperley came in 1873, was used both as chapel and school. It was a plain, square, stone structure, with plaster ceiling and ancient windows, and the pews were of the old straight back type. The pulpit was placed against one of the end walls. There was a gallery at the opposite end and the space underneath was used both for day and Sunday school purposes. Old fashioned coke stoves stood in the aisles, and green was the colour on the walls and pews. The original chapel was erected in 1818, rebuilt 1848-1884-5.

We are introduced in this dialect poem to a number of Belthorn worthies:

"Un owd Fat Grace and Betty Brawn,  
Sung tribble like a lark;  
One sung up and tother deawn,  
When they sung th' Vital Spark.



"Winther Peg sung alto part,  
While Harishorn Jack and Stuttin Ned sung tenor;  
Deeaf Kit reared 't nook like an owd clockcase,  
Wi his nooase t' music book, singin' bottom base."

The fun begins after these "dab hands" had been out to get their gill of refreshments. They were watched by one who was out for a spree. He pushed snuff in the flute and put resin where Bill sat.

"Bass horn he filled with soot, and corked up Bill's clarinet."

Sam blew the soot all over the place. Bill blew the cork out of his clarinet, and hit Winther Peg on the nose, and felled him like a Scot. He fell against Betty Brown, who "tupped" against Fat Grace, and all three knocked down owd Kit. Owd Dick blew the snuff out of his Jarman flute, so what with soot and what with snuff everybody sneezed. It caused the parson to sneeze so much that he fell into the singing pew, and alighting upon owd Tum, both fell inside owd Bob's bass fiddle, Bob jumped up, but the resin stuck true, and ripped the coat laps off his back "and out o' th' hole he flew".

#### FOLK LORE

I was speaking recently to an old inhabitant of the district, Jeremiah Yates, who told me of the hard struggle the people had to undergo during the transition from the hand-loom to the power-loom. In the old hand-loom days each of the old homesteads were a busy hive of industry, and the people were not confined to mills and workshops. He said he was named from old Jeremy Hunt, a noted character of bygone days. He was a Nonconformist worthy who taught a class in the cottage school by candle light at 8 o'clock on a Sunday morning, afterwards crossing the hill

to Darwen for morning service. In 1834 regular service was held at Pickup Bank. After providing the furniture for a chapel, the people had 5s. 3d. over which was given to Jeremy Hunt to build a school, and it was built.

#### MUDDLING OF BOUNDARIES

There is a curious muddling of townships here, for Belthorn is for the most part in Oswaldtwistle, St. Michaels church school being in Immanuel parish. St. Michael's Church-school was built in 1863, during the time of the late Rev. Boulby Haslewood, who was vicar of Oswaldtwistle for 40 years. He died in 1897.

The New Inn (Daub Hall) was the meeting place for business of the overseers and officials for the township of Yate-cum-Pickup Bank. The district was formerly an outlying portion of the Forest of Rossendale. In September 15th, 1863 the district outside Belthorn (Oswaldtwistle township portion) was formed into the separate parish of Hoddlesden, carved out of the ancient parishes of Whalley and Blackburn.



*Guide about eighty years ago. The junction of Elton and Belthorn Road is much the same today, although the volume of traffic is somewhat greater. The cottages on the right-hand side of the photograph have since acquired gardens.*





*Belthorn Road, c1900. This view, taken near the Dog Inn, shows the Grimshaw Park Co-operative Society's store and Ned Row.*



*Ned Row, built at the beginning of the nineteenth century, was a terrace of cotton handloom weavers' cottages. The loomshops of each cottage, designed to hold four handlooms, were lit by a pair of windows at ground floor level. By the time this photograph was taken the loomshop of the lowest house had been converted into a separate dwelling. Although one of the windows has been enlarged to form a door, the relationship between the bedroom window and the ground floor openings survived.*



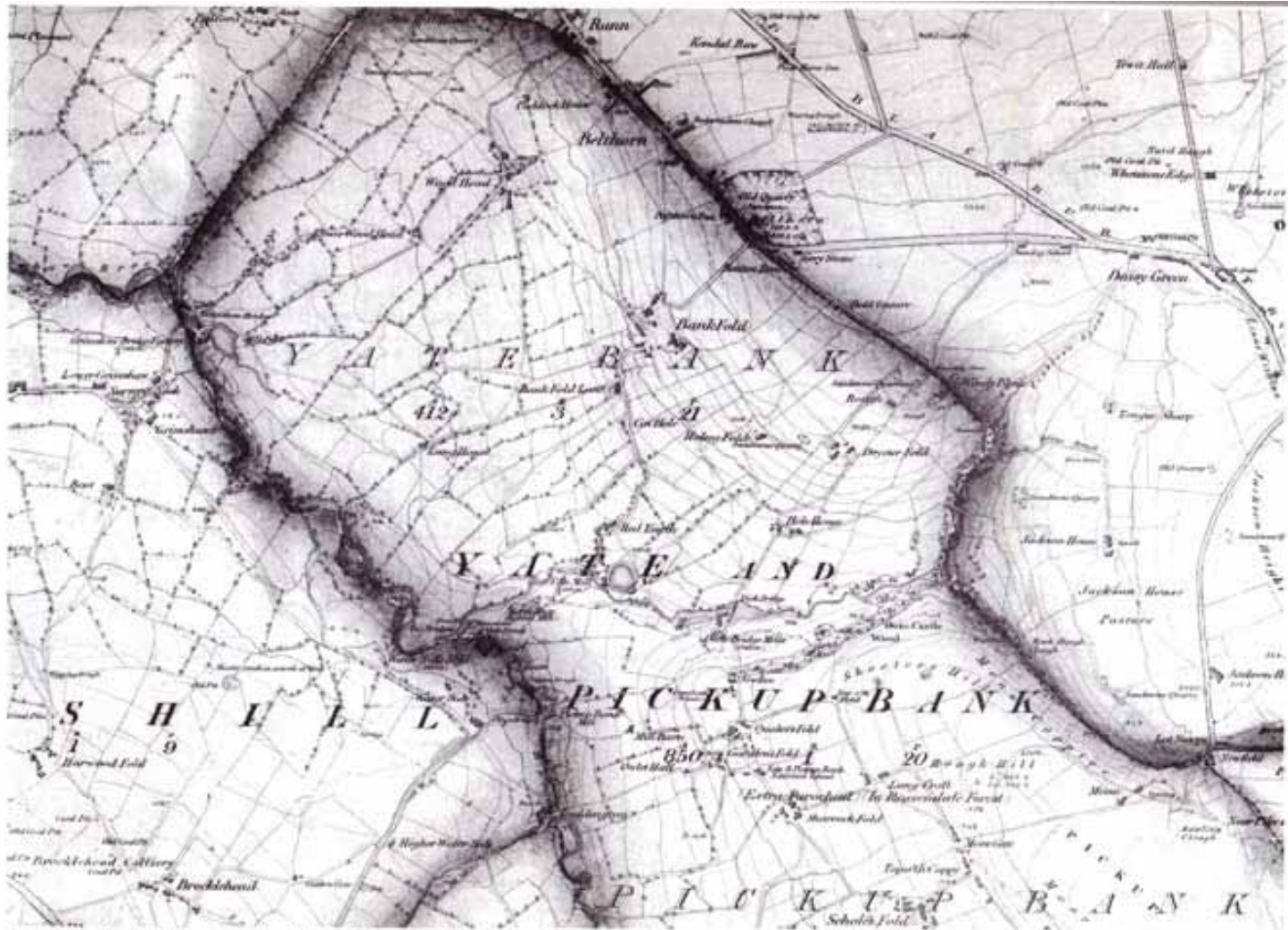


*Another view of Belthorn Road at the beginning of the century. The flagpole is on the Conservative Club, formerly the British Queen beerhouse. In the distance is the overhead flight which carried fireclay and coal to Shaw's Whitebirk Brickworks, Blackburn, from a drift at Yate Bank. The flight was dismantled after the erection of a new works at Waterside in 1908.*



*Belthorn Road looking towards Rann and Blackburn. Note the gas lamps and the chimney of John Oddie's Syke Mill. The building on the corner of Hutchinson Street (now Lower Fold) is the Victoria Inn which later became Belthorn Workings Men's Club.*





Belthorn in 1848: opposite the Bell in the Thorn is a large sandstone quarry which probably provided the building materials of many houses in the area. Notice also the hamlet of Daisy Green and the farm houses at Windy Bank. Daisy Green National School is marked "Sunday School" on the map.  
(Reproduced from the 1848 6" Ordnance Survey Map)



*Saint Michael's and Daisy Green National School was built in 1861-62 by the Church of England to replace the older Daisy Green School. The building was also a mission chapel of Immanuel Church, Oswaldtwistle. After the closure of the school in March, 1966, the church continued to operate for a number of years. The final service was held on the 31st August, 1975. Following an ill-fated attempt to renovate the school as a dwelling, the building fell into ruin.*





*Saint Michael's: the inside of the church during the early 1960's. The altar was given by W. H. Haworth in memory of his wife and son, while the reredos and rails were erected in memory of James Lomax, the organist at the church for twenty five years.*



*An interior view of Saint Michael's School, taken about 1961. In the background are the Rev. J. Beall, Vicar of Immanuel Church, and the headmistress, Mrs. E. J. Stiff. During its last years numbers on roll at the one teacher school seldom exceeded twenty – a marked contrast to the nineteenth century when upwards of eighty children attended Saint Michael's. In the 1860's the master also taught an evening class in the school.*





*This photograph, possibly dating from the last years of the nineteenth century, is one of the oldest discovered of Belthorn. William Taylor, shown standing on the right of the picture, was headteacher of Saint Michael's between 1891 and 1910.*

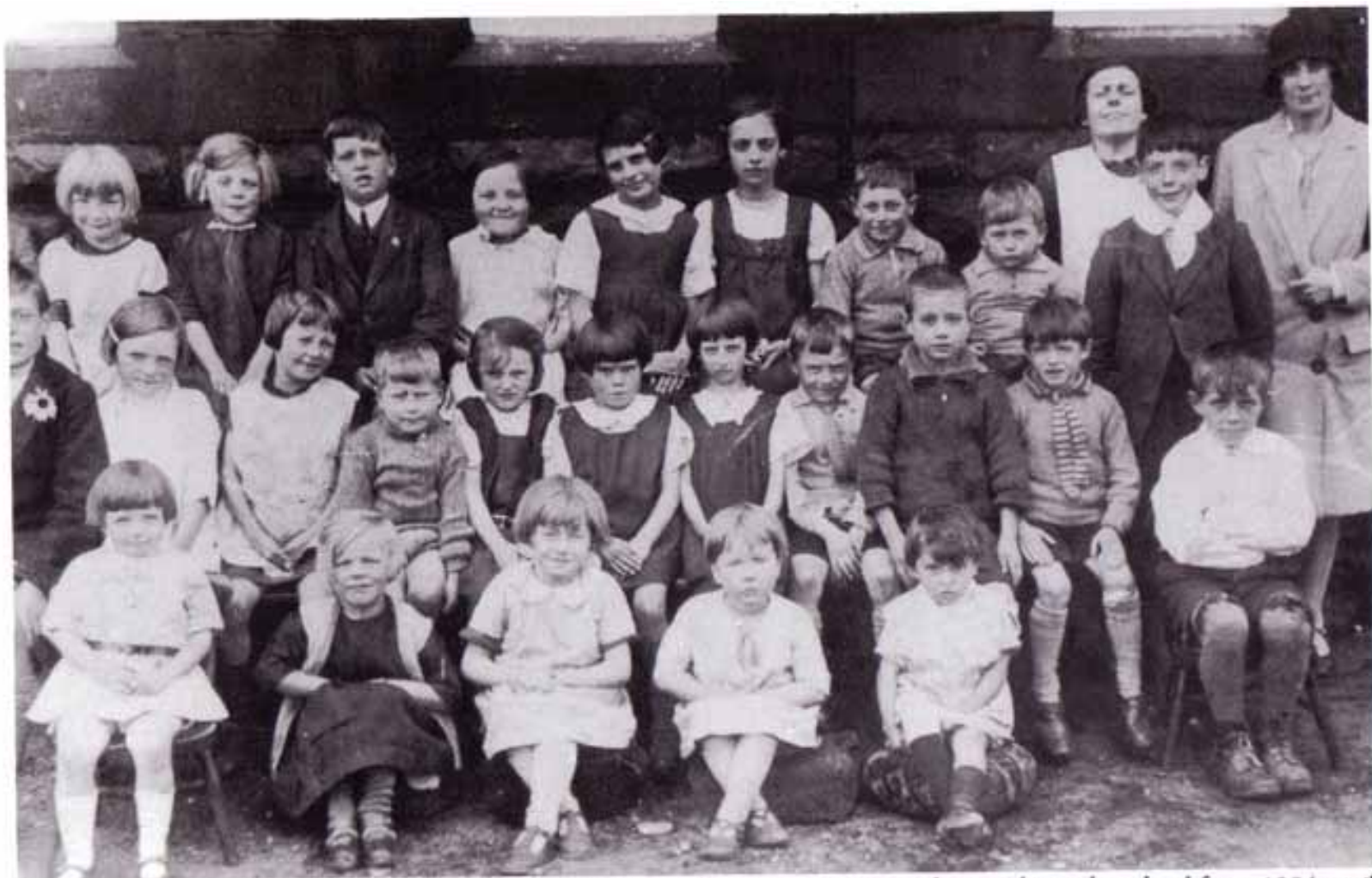


*A group of children at Saint Michael's School, c1912.*





*An early twentieth century gala of Saint Michael's held on Nuttall's field. The square chimney of Belthorn Higher Mill can be seen in the distance.*



*A class group of St. Michael's. The headteacher, Mrs. Watson (standing, extreme right) taught at the school from 1924 until 1958.*





*Saint Michael's Church organised frequent outings of its members. Thomas Lomax, churchwarden, choirmaster and organist from 1920 until 1971, and the last person to live in the school house, is seated on the extreme left. Third from the left, front row, is Robert Lomax, manager of Belthorn Higher Mill.*



*The banner of Saint Michael's Church was dedicated in 1934 in memory of William Taylor, a former headteacher of the school. It is now preserved at Immanuel Church, Oswaldtwistle.*



*Saint Michael's Gala Day passing Ned Row on Belthorn Road. In the centre is Canon James Dodd, vicar of Immanuel Church, 1926-1960.*



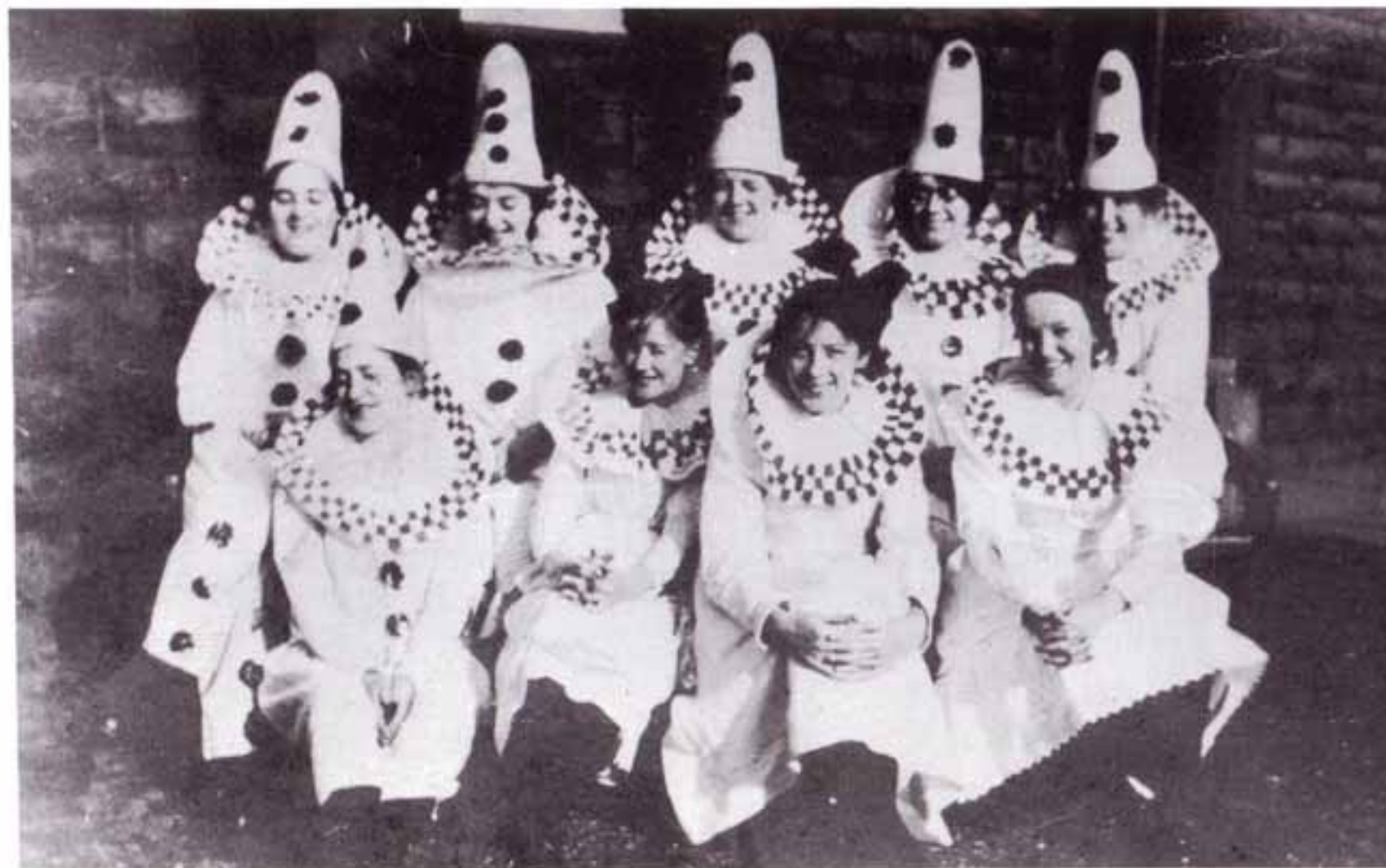
*A snap-shot of Saint Michael's Gala or Walking Day taken soon after the Second War. The Belthorn Co-op was opened on 29th September, 1886, by the Grimshaw Park Co-operative Society Limited of Blackburn. 150 people attended a tea in the room above the shop to celebrate the opening. After 1920 the store was operated by the Blackburn Amalgamated Co-op. Trading ended in 1964 and the building has since been greatly altered.*





*Another Saint Michael's group dating from c1929-30.*





*Two photographs showing the casts of concerts given by Saint Michael's Church. Opposite is "the Village Wedding".*







*The church and school officials of Saint Michael's in 1961. In the centre is the Rev. John Beall, vicar of Immanuel Church, Oswaldtwistle.*



*Saint Michael's Gala Day, 1959. From left to right: John Eccles and Emmanuel Haworth, churchwardens, J. T. Sunter, Jonathan and Thomas Taylor, and Harold Gabbott. In the background is the school house of Saint Michael's.*





*Saint Michael's School Nativity Play, December 1964. The last headteacher at the school was Mr. D. Nicholson, who was subsequently head of Belthorn Primary School between 1966 and 1986.*

# BELTHORN "CHARITY."

By R. CHAWSLAW, ("FENT DICK")



WD fiddlin' Bob and Claret Bill, an Sam w' th' owd bass-born,  
They used to play at th' owd Chapel, just aboon th' belthorn.  
As sure as ever Sunda's room, these three dob hands wur there,  
Just as they'd come out o' th' loom, which wur their Sunda's ween.

Owd Dick-o-Hag's play'd th' jerman flute; 't was like th' schoolmaster's rule,  
Ut aw geet pown as black as soot w' when aw went to th' school.  
To see him lick and sack at th' hole, an wink w' two odd een,  
Un screw his big mouth up so smole, yo'd laught whot yo wur green.

Th' owd flute wur like a yeam trough, throppin' mornin' dew,  
Offier on then it thropt off owd Bill when he re f' th' pew.  
His fingers they had thumpin' segs at th' end as hard as oak;  
They rait'd on to th' flute like pegs; he made th' owd thing fair talk.

He dash'd away, moon, wrung or rest, no matter how he blunder'd;  
He'd crack a new tune off fast feet, s'p' if it wur th' Owd Hundred.  
Un owd Fat Grace an Betty Braon sang th' thrible like a lark;  
One sung up an th' tither doun when they sang th' "Vital Spark."

The charmin' voices thrill'd through th' air, an warb'd like a thrush;  
Th' poor things, they'd lost their teeth w' near, they'd root left but a tush,  
Which cut an split at th' noose's f' two; 't med crossins into quivers;  
Un th' minims scoulded too-ra-loo, they mangled 'em to shivers.

Owd Winther Feg sang th' another part; he open'd a mouth so wide,  
When he knew th' tune off 'd heart, yo'd sin doun his inside.  
Th' owd lad, he'd awlus th' thremlant on; he shok'd long ummybeeves  
Bessus he could'n help it, you; he sang just like Sims Reeves.

Owd Havershorn Jack an Sturtin Ned sang th' tenor like two trumpets;  
Yo' could'n't tell a jot they said; th' words geet o' f' jumps;  
Owd Havershorn Jack knock'd th' times acroot he g'e th' noose's rich a kow;  
Raoud his mouth th' noose's row'd alout just like a bacoo chew.

Un owd Deaf Kit, he rear'd f' th' nook just like an oven clock-case;  
Wi' his noose's f' th' music book singin' th' bottom bass.  
Th' lad he dud'n't know a noose; he'd never sin a gamit;  
He'd awlus hev a copy wroote so as he could sham it.

He harp'd away o on our key just like a hummin' bee;  
Whether 't' tune wur low or high, owd Kit wur sammlin' C,  
Th' odd noose's it coar'ded to a hair, w' Bill's clarinet yo' see;  
They scanded, moe, just like a pair o' haggipos to a T.

Owd Tum Crook wur th' leadin' man; he set o th' tunes on th' swing;  
Wi' a stick he heigh'd em on; they used th' owd place fair ring.  
Paw and egs wur throon'd w' th' din ut owd Sam's horn blew out;  
Twar like a pack o' big buntin' dogs lootin' o' about.

Un Bill's clarinet yo'd yeard it squeak fur 'boon a hufe a mile,  
Like a goose, or else a shrike, he play'd i' sich a style;  
Un Bob's bass fiddle grunted wur than a pig hoot meyt,  
Every time he screw'd it yer to god it up to th' height.

Then th' owd lad he asig'd away as hard as he could do;  
Aw thout ut he would cut some day, th' owd fiddle fair f' two  
But th' strings wur tough, an th' saw wur dull, or else 't would bin a case;  
Th' poor thing, it roar'd just like a bull, without a tear on 't face.

This noyye crew they set f' th' pew just under th' pa'ons noose;  
He'd smell some rare good music too when th're a minor cloose.  
One Sunda's they sung "Hockin' Warp;" owd Tum set it to hev'  
Th' singets geet a noose's too sharp, an th' players fell doun three—

Bi which a reg'lar jar took place, an set fousk's teeth on th' edge,  
Owd Bob he reap'd soon on his lins whot smash room doun his bridge  
It crack'd just like a thumberbow, which flay'd fousk out ther wir;  
Th' owd pa'ons cumm (luckyneck or noot) doun th' steps fr' his pulpit;

Un into th' singin' pew he darts, an sm'd em' every one;  
He said, "If these be fiddle parts pray lest hev no more, moe;  
'Aw'm sure aw ne'er yeard th' like befoore, thar's nod a pin to chose;  
'Aw'd rather year a craikin' doose, or twenty lincas sackos;

"Yo're noose's hafe fit to sing oft sharps, yo're sich a set o' flats;  
'Yo'n yeards as thick as cotton warps lepp'd round wi' owd doose-mats;  
'Th' next Sunda's char'y sarmon day, nao see yo' come, an soon;  
'Un let's hev lether harness, un thry to keep i' roon."

Th' next Sunda's room, thad noosed day; fousk room fr' far an near,  
To year th' belthorners sing an play; th're noot like 'em no where.  
Owd Sam an Bob an Bill an Dick, they rest thad mornin' soon,  
To nois up th' owd fiddle-stick an god ther plays i' tune.

Un when they'd gott'n right un thure they went to hev their gill,  
Un left ther instrumnts i' th' pew to tack keer o' thirel';  
Bud th're a moe on for a ippe, he watched 'em out o' th' dar,  
Then crept i' th' singin' pew, yo see, as quietly as noot war;

Un cross'd an noose o' stuff i' th' flute, an roin'd wher Bob set;  
He rear'd th' owd bass-born full o' soote, an cock'd up Bill's clarinet.  
When this time wur up this noyye crew coom hobbin into th' place  
Un took ther seats i' th' singin' pew, an th' pa'ons show'd his face.

All wur quote, yo'd yeard a pin fall if it fell on th' floor;  
Th' pa'ons roose up to begin, an read two versus o' o'.  
Owd Tum kick-dap a gradely shant to give em o' th' leigh noose;  
And Sam he cock'd his horn straight out an blew th' soot doun his throot.

Th' poor lad wur in a wazy staw; he could'n't teck his woid,  
For the soote hed med his een up, too; it knock'd him var' near blind.  
He look'd just like a sweep's seck rear'd up straight o' th' end,  
Wi' th' beash-yed stickin' out o' th' neck; naw word, yo would ha grin'd

Owd Bill he blew whod he fair sweat; his cheeks they wur full blown;  
He could'n't get his owd clarinet to squeak a single tone.  
At last his boylin' temp's roose; th' cork flew out like a shot,  
It hit owd Winther Feg o' th' noose; un fell'd him like a scot;

He jowl'd agreen owd Betty Braon; hoo repp'd agreen Fat Grace;  
In fact it knock'd 'em o' three doun owd Kit, too, at sang bass.  
Owd Dick he blew w' o' his puff into his jerman flute,  
Un sot room oasin into a snuff, which flew about w' th' soote;

Everybody smez'd i' th' place; some smez'd whod they wur because;  
Owd Tum Crook wi' his black face, smez'd th' soote fair off his cloose.  
But th' pa'ons he wur th' wnat i' th' lot; he could'n't speyk a word  
Naut anemin twice if he m'd bin shot or hung up w' a cord.

One time he smez'd to that degree whod he geot fair wnat;  
He tumbl'd neck o'er heels, yo see; doun th' singin' pew he let  
Auther o' Tum sh' i' whod a dast i' his legs clasp'd round his middle;  
They boost fell straight slap bang th' yod fast inside owd Bob's bass fiddle.

Owd Bob jump'd up, moe, in a crack, but th' noot stuck on thure  
He s'pt his coon-legs off his back, an sot o' th' hole he flew.  
Eh dear, o' me! ther wur a spore; it wain'd a bonny ruck'd'  
Everybody laugh'd to see owd Bob in a round jacket!





*The first Independent chapel at Belthorn was erected in 1818, following the formation of a Sunday School three years earlier. At the time the village was noted as "an unenlightened spot" with a population "among whom the greatest ignorance prevailed". In 1884 the original chapel was rebuilt with room for a congregation of 500. By the early 1980's the building was in a dangerous condition and the last service was held on October 25th, 1981. Demolition took place soon afterwards.*



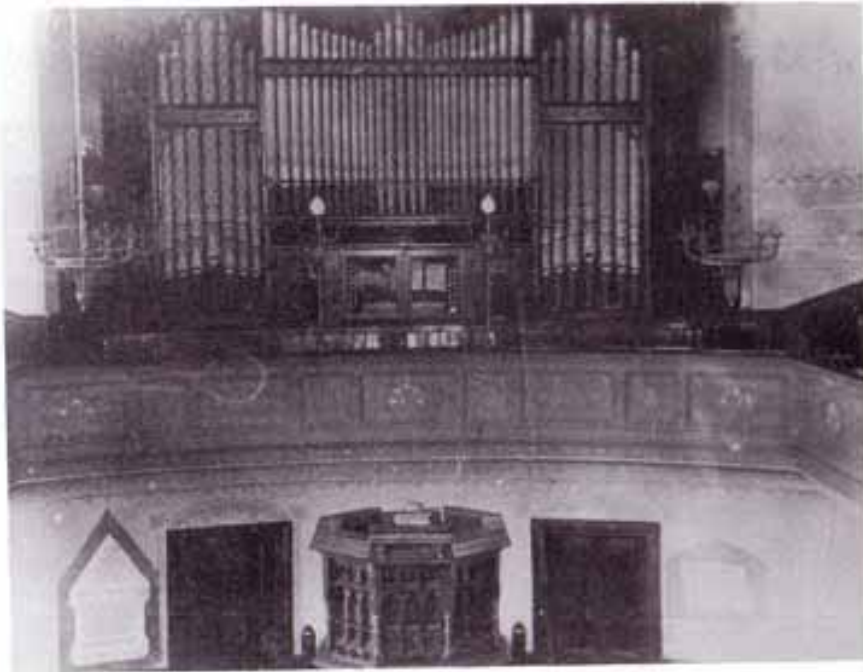
REV. J. H. UNWIN



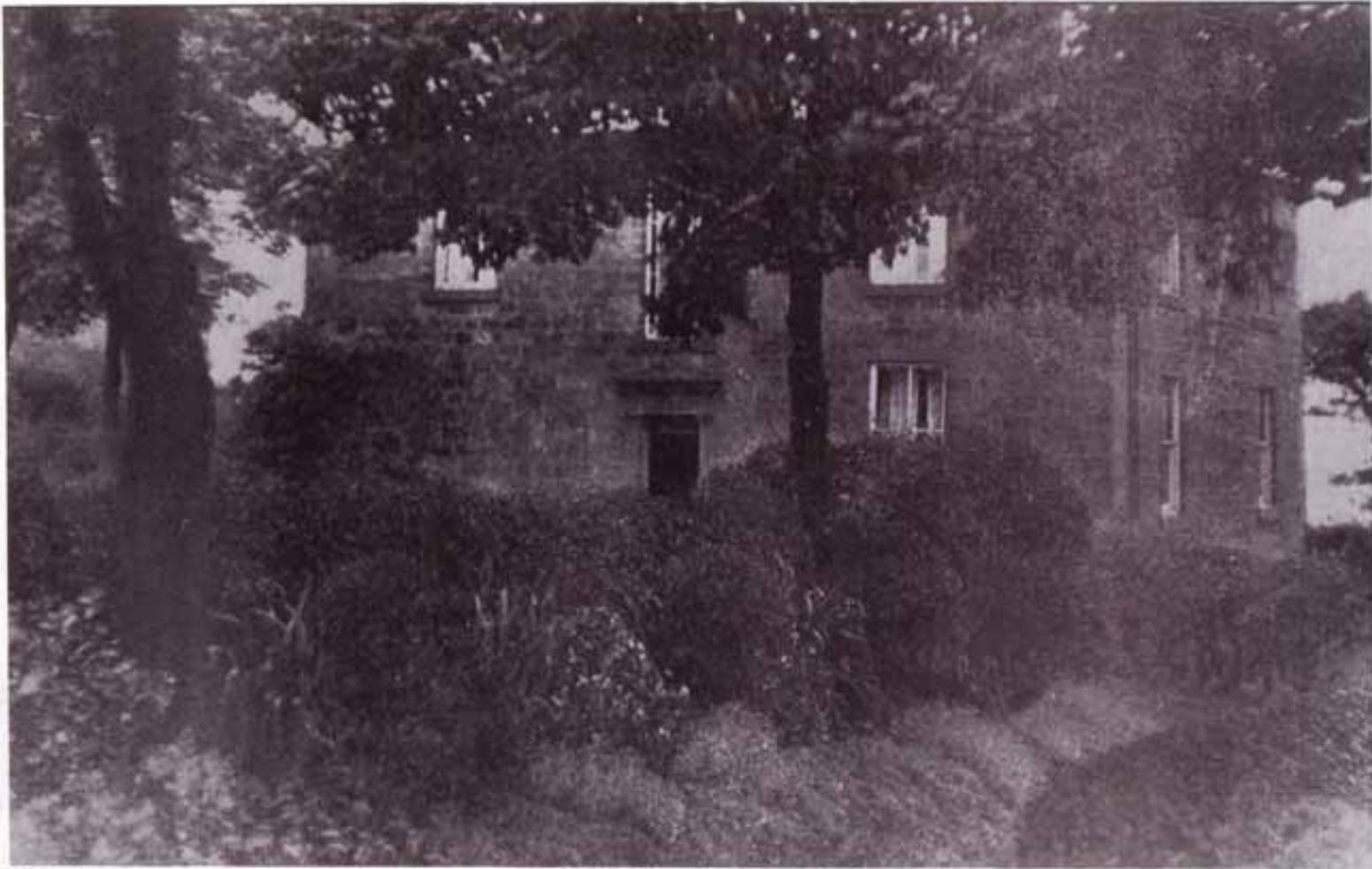
REV. E. H. APPERLEY.

*Two nineteenth century ministers of Belthorn Chapel. John H. Unwin, minister from 1850 until 1867, was responsible for reviving the chapel following a period of decline in the 1840's. During the long ministry of E. H. Apperley (1873-1904) the chapel was rebuilt and a separate school established.*





*The interior of Belthorn Chapel. The organ, by Harrison & Harrison of Durham, was installed in 1899-1900 at a cost of £500.*



*The Manse was erected in 1860 for the minister of the Independent Chapel. The building is now a private dwelling.*





*In 1950 Belthorn Independent Chapel took part in a BBC Radio broadcast from Park Road Congregational Chapel, Blackburn.*

*These two photographs show members of the choir.*



*Belthorn and Yate Bank Independent Chapel School. Originally day, evening and Sunday schools were held under the gallery of the chapel but in 1874 land was purchased for the erection of a separate building. The foundation stone was laid on the 8th July, 1876, by the daughter of the Rev. J. H. Unwin. Following the closure of the school in 1966 the building was used for various functions until its demolition. A bungalow, Chapel House, now stands on the site. The photograph, probably taken in 1918, appears to show all the children who were then attending the school. The headteacher, Mr. Jones, is on the extreme right.*





*A selection of group photographs taken at Belthorn Independent Chapel School before the First World War. The headteacher, Mr. Jones, was noted in the village as a strict disciplinarian, and for his great interest in music.*



*Belthorn Chapel School*





*Belthorn Chapel School*



*Belthorn Chapel School*





*During the 1930's the two schools of Belthorn formed a joint netball team which was successful in winning their league. In the centre row, second from the left, is Mrs. Watson of Saint Michael's, and third from the left, Miss Robinson of the Chapel School.*



*Collecting waste paper and scrap metal for the war effort – the children of the Chapel school in 1941.*





*Belthorn War Memorial was officially dedicated in 1920. The memorial records the names of twenty one villagers killed during the First World War, four who lost their lives in the Second World War and one casualty of the Falklands Campaign.*



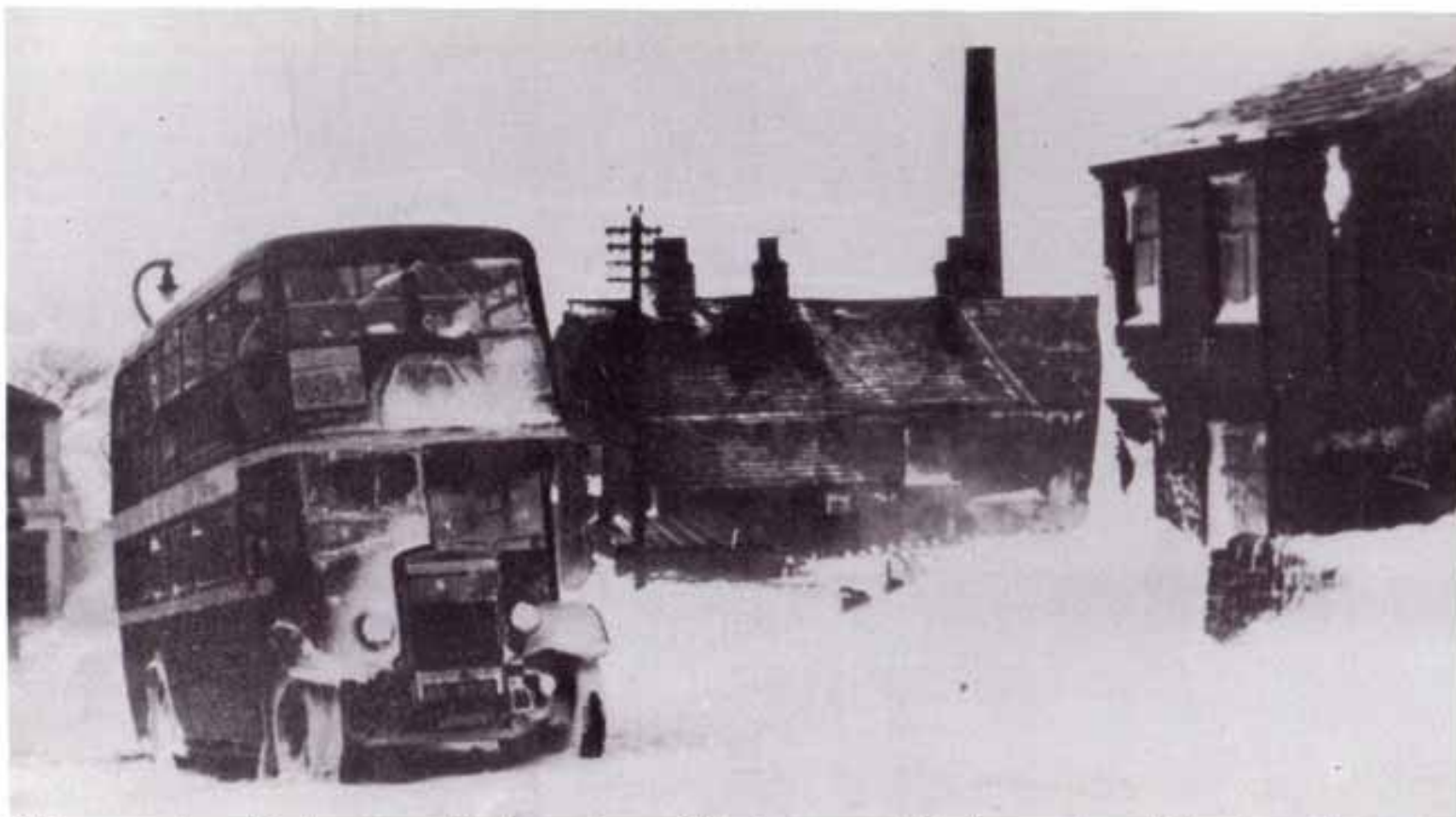
*The Bell in the Thorn Inn was built in 1791 by Robert Yates and lost its licence about 1903. It is now a private residence.*

*There were at least nine beerhouses and inns in Belthorn and district during the nineteenth century.*

*These included the Derby Arms (123 Belthorn Road), the British Queen (182 Belthorn Road), the Old Pack Horse at Taylor's Buildings, the Victoria Inn (1A Belthorn Road), which became a working men's club, and the Colliers Arms, Daisy Green. Only three now survive, the Dog Inn, the Pack Horse, Elton Road, and the Grey Mare at Linnswithins.*

*Many of the nineteenth century inns were operated by local farmers who often worked the adjoining fields.*

*In 1847 the Bell in the Thorn was offered for sale with a barn, shippon and three closes of meadow land.*



*Belthorn experiences harsh winters and is frequently cut off by heavy snow. This photograph, probably taken in the 1950's, shows a Ribble bus just above the Rann.*

*The log books of Saint Michael's contain many references to the weather including the following:*

*November 23rd, 1898 "A severe snow storm is raging and many of the roads are impassable. Only six children came to school and these were sent home as soon as possible".*

*February 27th, 1903 "A terrific gale is blowing today. Considerable damage has been done to the school, and as several patches of ceiling plaster have fallen, and other parts seem likely to fall, the school is closed for the day".*





*Sledging at Yate Bank, February, 1969. In the background is Bank Fold Farm.*



*Pike Low Farm: one of the numerous isolated hill farms in the Belthorn District. Among those now abandoned are Windy Bank, Tongue Sharp, Rough and Hungry Hillock.*



*The 1953 Coronation celebrations at Syke Mill, with Irene Beetson as the Queen and Rose Bury as the Queen Mother. A collection held by the mill employees was used to purchase a television for the children's ward of Queens Park Hospital.*

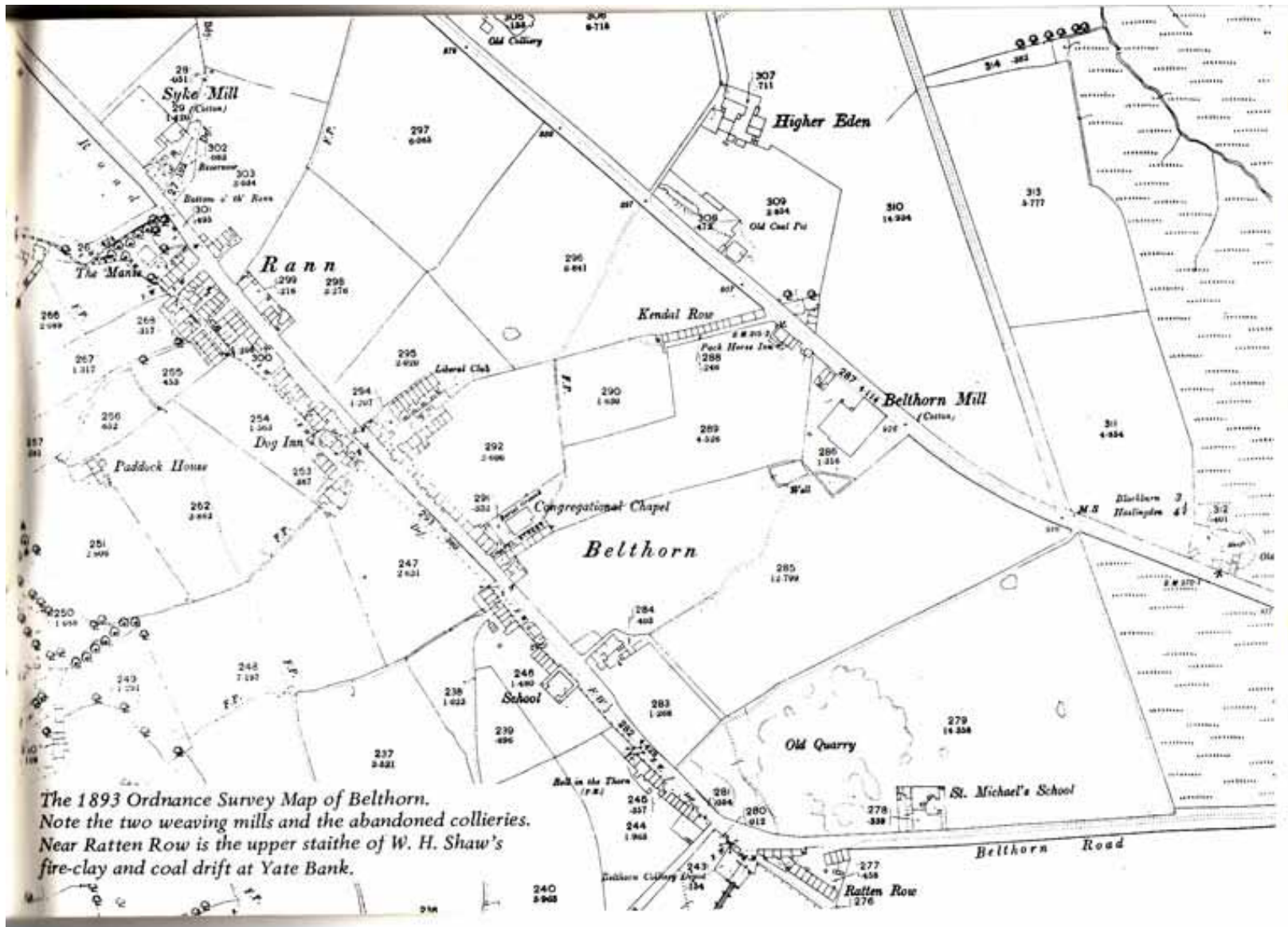


*The official opening of Belthorn County Primary School on the 9th July, 1966. The amalgamation of Saint Michael's and the Chapel School had been discussed for many years and finally became a reality on the 28th March, 1966, when the new school opened with thirty one children on roll.*

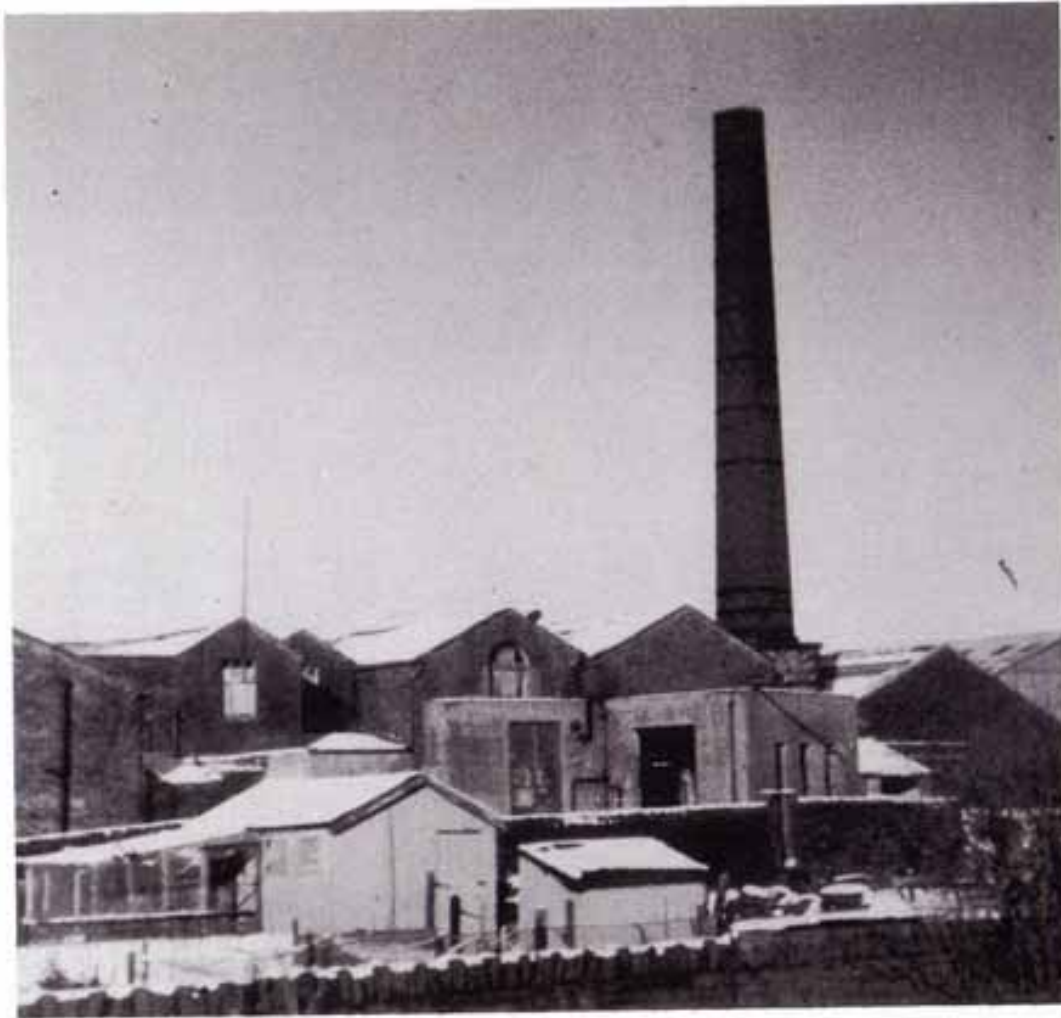




*May Day, 1969.*



The 1893 Ordnance Survey Map of Belthorn.  
 Note the two weaving mills and the abandoned collieries.  
 Near Ratten Row is the upper staithe of W. H. Shaw's  
 fire-clay and coal drift at Yate Bank.



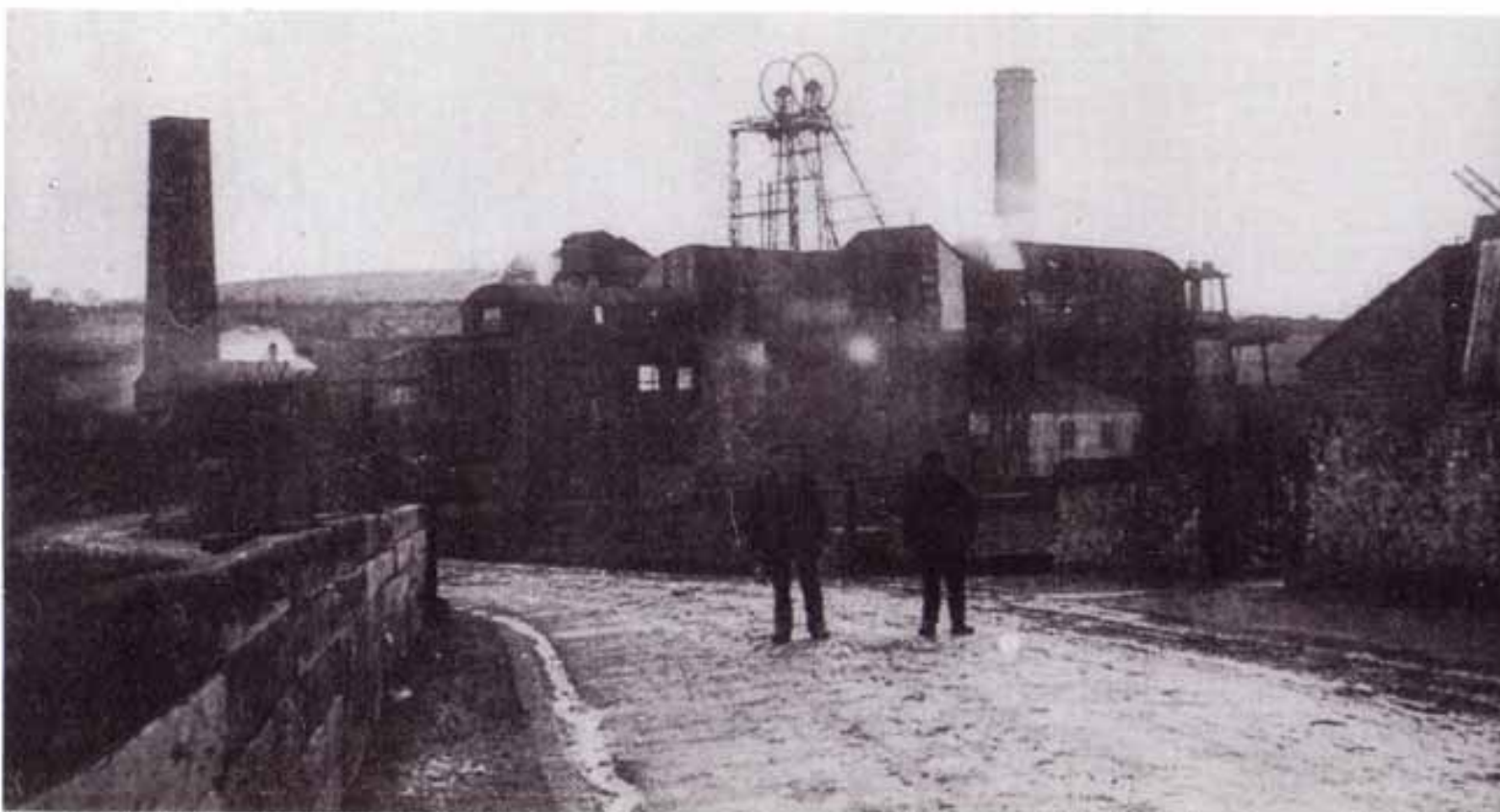
*Syke Mill was built in 1855-57 by Jonathan Crankshaw, a publican and farmer of Belthorn. It contained 200 looms driven by a beam engine. In 1875, John Oddie, a fancy manufacturer of Blackburn, took over. Extensions were made in 1881-82. John Oddie & Sons, who employed one hundred people, many from Belthorn, ran the mill until it ceased weaving in 1958. The photograph shows the mill before the chimney was demolished in the early 1980's.*



Names and addresses of Subscribers	No. of Shares taken by each Subscriber	Names and addresses of Subscribers	No. of Shares taken by each Subscriber
<p><i>James and Elizabeth</i>  <i>of the village of Belthorn</i>  <i>in the County of Lancaster</i>  <i>to take the number</i>  <i>of shares in the Capital</i>  <i>of the Company of Belthorn</i>  <i>Our respective business</i></p>	5	<p>James Taylor Belthorn  <i>Belthorn in the County of Lancaster</i>  <i>10 Shares</i></p>	10
<p>John Yates Belthorn  <i>Belthorn in the County of Lancaster</i>  <i>10 Shares</i></p>	10	<p>Mark Stephen Belthorn  <i>Belthorn in the County of Lancaster</i>  <i>10 Shares</i></p>	10
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<p>John Yates Belthorn  <i>Belthorn in the County of Lancaster</i>  <i>10 Shares</i></p>	10	<p>John Taylor  <i>Belthorn in the County of Lancaster</i>  <i>10 Shares</i></p>	10
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<p>James and Elizabeth  <i>of the village of Belthorn</i>  <i>in the County of Lancaster</i>  <i>to take the number</i>  <i>of shares in the Capital</i>  <i>of the Company of Belthorn</i>  <i>Our respective business</i></p>	5	<p>Total Shares taken 35</p>	
<p>James and Elizabeth  <i>of the village of Belthorn</i>  <i>in the County of Lancaster</i>  <i>to take the number</i>  <i>of shares in the Capital</i>  <i>of the Company of Belthorn</i>  <i>Our respective business</i></p>	5	<p>Dated the 1<sup>st</sup> day of July 1861</p>	
<p>James and Elizabeth  <i>of the village of Belthorn</i>  <i>in the County of Lancaster</i>  <i>to take the number</i>  <i>of shares in the Capital</i>  <i>of the Company of Belthorn</i>  <i>Our respective business</i></p>	5	<p>Witness to the above Signatures</p>	
<p>James and Elizabeth  <i>of the village of Belthorn</i>  <i>in the County of Lancaster</i>  <i>to take the number</i>  <i>of shares in the Capital</i>  <i>of the Company of Belthorn</i>  <i>Our respective business</i></p>	5	<p>Richard Crook  <i>Belthorn in the County of Lancaster</i>  <i>Dated this first day of July 1861</i></p>	

The Belthorn Co-operative Manufacturing Company was formed in 1861 by the villagers to build a weaving shed near the Pack Horse, and to provide employment for the almost destitute handloom weavers of Belthorn. Unfortunately the company was ruined by the Cotton Famine and the mill remained idle until 1881 when it was acquired by a local grocer, Jonathan Taylor, and leased to tenant manufacturers. During the later nineteenth century the shed contained 252 power looms and employed almost one hundred people. From 1897 until closure in 1933 the mill was operated by the Whittaker family. The buildings were demolished soon after and the site is now used by Pendle View Meats.

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*Town Bent Colliery, Oswaldtwistle. Coal mining was once an important industry in Belthorn and the remains of early workings can still be seen in the district.*

*Belthorn Colliery, with three shafts along Elton Road, closed in 1885, although mining for coal and fire-clay in the Yate Bank district continued into the twentieth century.*

*The workings of Town Bent, Aspen and Lower Darwen Collieries extended towards Belthorn and many of the local miners were employed at these pits by Thomas Simpson & Company, and their successor, Oswaldtwistle Collieries Limited. Town Bent Pit, the last to work in Oswaldtwistle, closed in 1925.*