



# **Our Schools Our Stories**

Stories from  
Penny Acres and Wigley communities,  
1850 to 1920

Grace Seb

Anya

Khaya

Lily

Alex

Lucas

Oscar

Archie

Megan

Evangeline

Joseph

Mannah.

Harley

Oscar Reece Aiden  
Fraser

Evie Joseph

Jack

Sophiea Fallon

Matthew

Jack

Oscar

William

Freya

## **Introduction**

In 2019 Penny Acres and Wigley Primary Schools were awarded £10,000 by the Heritage Fund to explore the lives of the people of Holmesfield, Wigley and the schools from 1850-1920. The book and project's completion was delayed until 2021 due to Covid.

This book explores some of the stories uncovered and shares a selection of the creative responses of the children to the history. None of the work would have been possible without the enthusiastic work of the two Community Heritage Groups:

- Alison Smith
- Betty Bartrim
- Caroline Nunn
- Catherine Simpson
- Claire Bartrim
- Claire Taylor
- Evie Adams
- Graham Gregory
- Helen Gregory
- Imogen Dorward
- Kirsty Adams
- Lesley Green
- Mark Williams
- Nelly Stamose
- Patricia Gregory

- Paul Gregory
- Pat Wildsmith
- Rachael Dammarell
- Rosanna O'Hara
- Theo Stamose
- Vernon Gregory
- Victoria Wale

The group were trained to use Ancestry and British Newspaper Archives in order to carry out research. Becky Sheldon of Derbyshire Record Office brought documents from the archives to each community. The children curated a museum for parents and the community group.



Here Catherine Simpson is explaining what she discovered about the Hancocks of Hare Edge Farm to the Wigley Community Heritage Group.



Although the two communities are different, there are some similarities and parallels between them. Some stories even share characters.

Both communities contain many farms. Professor Nicola Verdon from Sheffield Hallam University came to share her Derbyshire farming research.



**Isaac Biggin ploughing with Unthank Horses,  
Ginny and Turpin**

It was possible to see how farming affected these communities. The Holmesfield School Logbook closed on August 20<sup>th</sup>, 1897 for 2 weeks for the corn harvest.

The admission books for both schools also reflect how some families moved around seeking farming work.

As part of the original project the class of 1920 was identified from the Admission Books and the

community groups put some effort into researching those families. One member of that class was Rosa Lily Judson. She was admitted to Holmesfield School and left twice. The register describes her family as *"birds of passage"*: - a euphemism for travellers.

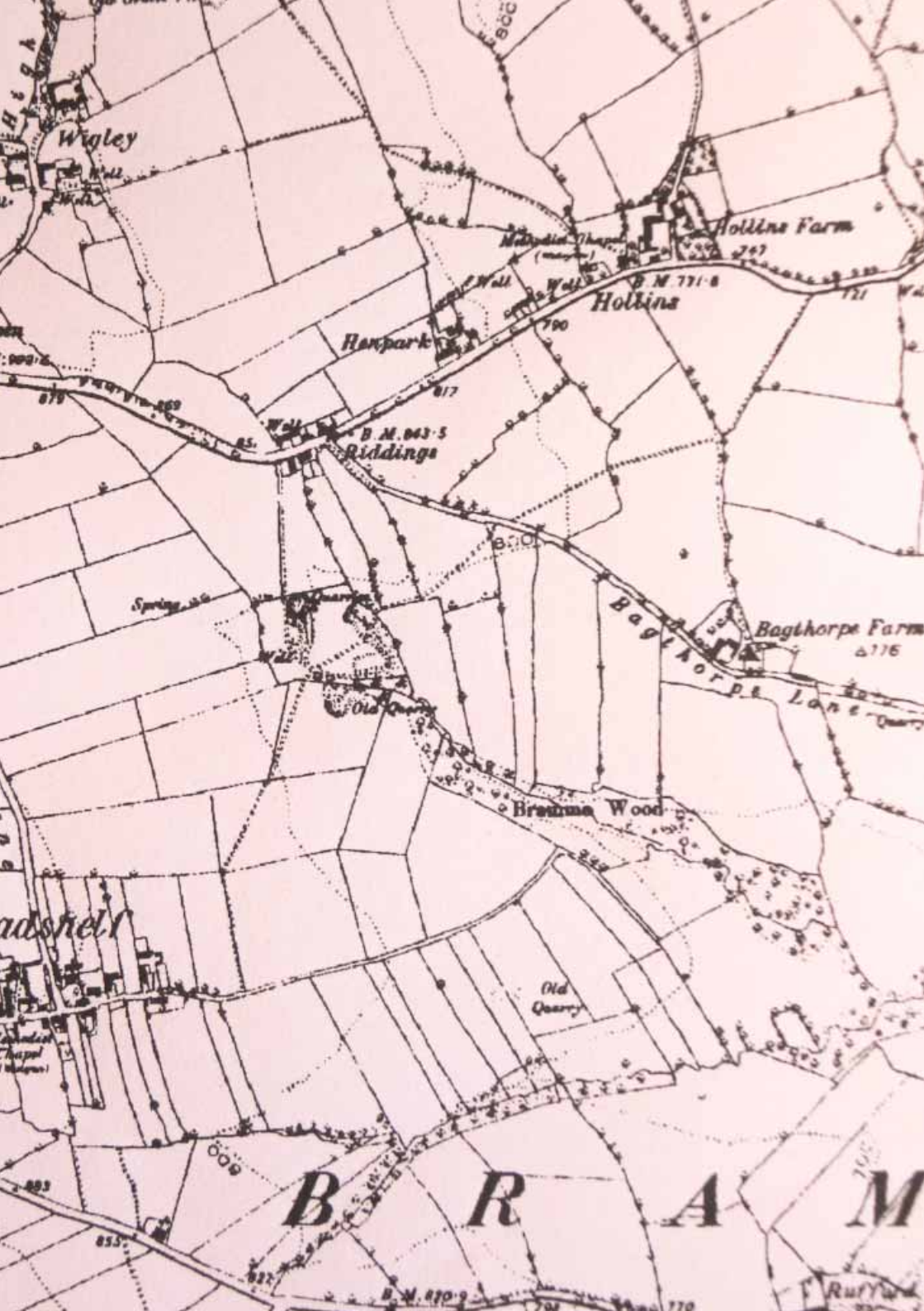
The first story is based on a farm in Wigley whose inhabitants link the communities.

Looking at the 1883 map of Wigley (page 5 and 6) it is possible to identify a quarry near the top of Pudding Pie Hill. This quarry was on Moor Hay Farm. Moor Hay can be written numerous ways, this form has been selected for purposes of this book.









Witley

Hollins Farm

Hollins

Hanpark

Riddings

Bagthorpe Farm

Bagthorpe Lane

Bradshill Wood

Old Quarry

Bradshill

B R A M

# **Farming**

## **Moor Hay Farm**

**“The Addys and The Patchwork Lady”**



**This is a photograph of Edward and Emma Addy in the 1860s at Moor Hay.**

The Addys leased the farm from the Sitwells. The census places Edward's family at Moor Hay in 1851 and possibly 1841. His father Edward (1800 - 1897) was at Moor Hay in 1851 with his wife Sarah.

This is an extract from the Derbyshire Courier from January 10th, 1874, reporting the findings of a report into sanitary conditions in Chesterfield and

describes Moor Hay Farm. The quote gives an idea of what living conditions were like for many living and working in rural communities: *“At Moor Hay Farm, by the side of which one of the streams passed, the water was polluted by the filth and refuse from the cow houses and foul soakage from the whole of the farmyard.”*

Edward and Emma died at the farm in 1882 and 1885 respectively.

Edward and Emma had 2 sons. John Hardwick Addy (1864-1932) and Edward (b1865...).

John Hardwick Addy remained in the area after the family relinquished the farm and lived on Pudding Pie Hill. His children Rose (admitted 1895), Lucy (admitted 1895), Edward (admitted in 1896), Fanny (admitted 1899) and John (admitted 1901) can be found in the Wigley Admission Books.

Although no factual Frances or Fanny Addy could be found there was a ghost story that was called “The Patchwork Lady” about her haunting the farm. The story is based on the following:

*“Fanny Addy was a miser. So mean was she, that she patched her dress so it was difficult to identify the original garment. She was a “woman with a million patches.” She hid her gold sovereigns and taunted her family with them.”*

The children have created their own versions of this tale some of which will appear in the text alongside their illustrations. Since Robert Murray Gilchrist (see page 57) also wrote Gothic Horror, this makes their creative writing appropriate. (Their “Patchwork Lady” artwork also appears on the cover.)



### The Mystery of Moor Hay Farm

As the sun started to settle and turn into a dark and stormy night, a young girl arrived from her first day at Wigley school. As she trudged through the fields she eventually came to her new, small, spooky, cluttered and mysterious cottage her and her family would be staying in.

Minutes later, Annie, the little girl, was brushing her hair with her fingers. Annie had beautiful golden hair, and piercing blue eyes as blue as the afternoon sky on a sunny day.

Everyone decided to go to bed as it was getting late, although, Annie felt something was wrong, she soon forgot about it and settled down under her blanket, as she didn't believe in ghosts. Annie just couldn't sleep after a while, so she decided to stay up, she tip toed down the stairs and came to a sudden halt.... A door.....a small door.....an entrance! She knew there was something wrong with this house!  
Rattle.....rattle.....rattle...it was the door.

Getting scared, her heart pounded, her breaths got faster, as quick as she could she scuttled up the stairs and hid under the blanket. Two hours later, it was much darker Annie tried to take her mind off what she saw by looking out the window: she saw the dull, silver moonlight climbing out of a chimney, she admired the moon and how miraculously it shone, and desired strongly she would get away from this cottage.

Getting bored, she looked around her dingy room, but whatever she did, sleep would not come.  
Rattle....rattle... There it was again! For a moment she thought she was hearing things.



Rooted still, she shivered in the night's chill.

....THUMP, THUMP, THUMP.....

Came a noise from the ceiling, a ghost? A ghost?

It was there! In the mirror! A crackly laugh arose, surrounded in horror, her voice seemed to linger in the darkness.

With old, wrinkly skin and bony hands, the grumpy miser cackled and pointed her dry fingers "Get out, my house!" Screeched the ghost of Fanny Addy. She had un-brushed, wavy, grey hair tied up in a knotty, messy bun, and smelly, stinky breath topped off with un-coloured, pale skin.

Petrified, the face slowly faded away, all the doors slammed then suddenly the clock struck two and everything went back to normal....

Since that day, she comes back every night to haunt whoever lives there and nobody has ever dared to go into the attic ever again.....

That is the story of Fanny Addy.

THE END!!!!!!!!!!

By Evie Curtis Year 6 from Wigley Primary School

## **The Furniss Family and their Travels**

The next tenant at Moor Hay Farm was John Furniss a Quarryman and Farmer known as “Big John”. He was described as “Preacher, Politician, Prophet, and Mystic”. It was said that he'd memorised the whole Bible and used the scriptures to foretell world events!

Edward Carpenter describes John Furniss in his autobiography “My Days and Dreams”. *“He was a remarkable man, and perhaps the very first to preach the modern socialism in the streets of Sheffield. A quarry man by trade, keen and wiry both in body and in mind, a thoroughgoing Christian socialist, and originally I believe a bit of a local preacher; he had somehow at an early date got hold of the main ideas of the movement, and in the early 80s used to stride in, he and his companion George Pearson, 5 or 6 miles over the Moors to Sheffield in order to speak at the pump or the monolith, and then stride out again in the middle of the night.”*

The 1901 census lists the Furniss family pictured on page 13 at Moor Hay Farm. John (aged 49) and his wife, Mary Ann (aged 38). She is his second wife and he married her in 1890. His first wife was Elizabeth Lucy Anne Wood who died in 1888 giving birth to her second child.



John Hoyle  
Furniss known as  
Jack (aged 14)  
was born in 1887  
and died in 1973.  
He was  
Elizabeth's only  
living child,  
admitted to  
Brampton and  
Wadshelf Board  
School on 29th  
May 1893.

James (aged 10),  
admitted to the  
Board School on  
6th January  
1896.

Annie (aged 9), admitted to the Board School on  
27th April 1896.

George (aged 8), admitted to the Board School on  
16th June 1896.

Mary Hannah (aged 5), admitted to the Board  
School 20<sup>th</sup> Feb 1899.

Grace (aged 3) admitted to Wigley School 30<sup>th</sup> July  
1900. NB The younger 2 children, Amy and Tom,  
are not in the picture. Amy was one in 1901, and

her brother, Tom, was born in 1902 shortly before the family emigrated to New Zealand.

John Hoyle Furniss wrote a memoir when he was 79 in which he describes “Big John’s” farming childhood which falls directly in the period of the project.

*“My father was born in 1852; his parents died when he was a child and he went to live with his uncle who was a tenant farmer. ...The tenant farmer’s lot was a meagre one. My father was forced to leave school when he was nine years old to help his uncle on the farm...*

*Machines for slicing and pulping the turnips for winter feeding had not been invented, so the job was done with a knife made from an old scythe blade. Handling the half frozen turnips meant chilblains every winter, but little required regard was paid to child welfare in any industry.*

*...Such were the conditions which led my father to interest himself in Socialism; saving every shilling he could spare from bare living demands for books. When his uncle died, he went to work, first in a coal mine and later on in a stone quarry. He was unpopular because, in addition to being a socialist he was deeply religious and shunned the local pub...*

*He had saved a little money and determined to go farming and was offered a 21 year lease of a 150 acre farm, part of the estate of Sir George Sitwell. It was too big an undertaking for his very limited means, but two friends agreed to go in with him on a cooperative basis."*

(George Pearson from the Saint George's Socialist Farm at Totley helped John out at Moor Hay. At first, they ran the two farms as one concern. Edward Carpenter, famous socialist and vegetarian, lived at Millthorpe, visited and worked with both men. Edward and John's friendship survived the move to New Zealand.)



**Sylvia Briddon's photo of Moor Hay 1950s.**



John Hoyle Furniss continues: *"They found an outcrop of stone; this they opened up and found it suitable for dressing and sawing into high class building materials such as steps, sills, paving etc. They managed to raise the money to build and equip a mill for sawing the stone and this became almost as important as the farming operations. Apparently, the partnership carried on reasonably satisfactorily until two of the partners married and the wives became dissatisfied with their husbands' share in the control. My father managed to raise the money to buy out his partners and carried on alone under a heavy debt burden. He married the daughter of Francis Wood, an accountant and estate agents of Sheffield and in due course I was born."*



*My mother was not very well equipped for matrimony; certainly not to be a farmer's wife in a house dating from the 17th century, with none of the conveniences she was accustomed to; and situated on the edge of the moorland, 5 miles from the nearest town - Chesterfield. The house was a two-storied one, the ground floor of stone slabs worn smooth during the three centuries since the house was built. The upper storey floors were of oak supported on oak beams about 10 inches square running under the ceiling of the rooms below. Below the ground level was a cellar with stone benches for accommodating the big earthenware milk 'panchions' for setting the milk for skimming, and stone benches for salting bacon, grooved to drain away excess salt.*

*My mother was a little woman, just over 5 feet in height, and due to a pre-marital life spent in her father's office, without adequate exercise, she was anaemic. Although she had a maid to help her, the strain of motherhood and the care of such an inconvenient house of nine rooms proved too much for her, and she collapsed from heart failure when the second child was born. It died with her."*



**Sylvia Briddon in the 50s at the grave.**

Taken from "Peakland Days" by Roger Redfern *"the vicar of old Brampton pleaded with Furniss to have her buried in consecrated ground within the bounds of the churchyard and even offered to pay for a church funeral but the widower would have none of it and buried his wife at the edge of the field, where stands a group of deciduous trees and from whence there is a fine view across to Burley and down the Linacre Valley. The stone slab marking the grave is carved with a heart and upon this is cut the memorial to the young wife."*

It was said that each evening while he still lived at the farm, John Furniss visited his wife's grave.

John Furniss created a stone coffin. There was a



chair shaped piece of stone left over from the cutting of the stone coffin which John had moved to the top of Pudding Pie Hill as a memorial and a seat for tramps moving between Chesterfield and Bakewell workhouses.

### **The Wishing Chair.**

*"I was left motherless, but my earliest memory is of my stepmother who married my father two years later. She had lived in London as a companion to a Mrs Hargreaves, the widow of a civil servant, and the contrast of life in Kensington to that of a farmhouse with such primitive conveniences can be imagined. She was only slightly built, but what she lacked in physique she made up in courage. To me she was all a mother could have been and I never thought of her as other than my mother. I think, if anything, she favoured me over her own children, and I took it all for granted and never realised how fortunate I was.*

*I am afraid my father did not fully realise the burden she was bearing. He was very interested in Socialism, being a colleague of Edward Carpenter,*

*the Glaziers and the Webbs. He never spared himself, walking five miles to Chesterfield to address meetings and back again. His rostrum was the town pump which was raised on a kind of platform - a survival of ancient days when it was the source of the water supply for the one-time village."*



The family left for new lives in New Zealand in 1902. John Hoyle Furniss tells of how tough their lives were there too.

*"Arrival at Wellington found us without accommodation for the night, so finding a vacant space on the beach above high water mark, we camped down in the open*

John Hoyle Furniss returned to England in 1907 and 1909. Then a second tragedy struck: *"After Jim*



*and I had been on the new land about two years we were called home as mother was seriously ill. It was an illness and from which she never recovered. Uncomplaining during the pioneering years, she had given all she had, and her strength had failed just as we could have given her a better time. I never realised until too late what I owed to her unselfish love. Nobody could have had a better mother.... She died and was buried on a little plot we had reserved for family burials by survey and a special deed."*



This poem was written by Amy Asher, (nee Furniss) youngest daughter of John Furniss who was only one when they emigrated. Since she struggled even to find the money to move between Australia

and New Zealand, she must have written this from family stories.

### **Moorhay Farm**

I know this place, I have been here before -  
I know the warning cry, g'back, g'back!  
Of grouse across the lonely moor.

I know the windswept hillside there,  
Where only briars grow,  
Where daffodils in early spring  
Shine through the woods below.

I know the old grey schoolhouse there,  
On the Hill called "Pudding Pie"  
Where snowdrifts in the hedgerows  
So deep in winter lie.

I know a tall tree brooding stood  
Beside a rough hewn chair,  
That old stone chair - as lonely there  
As the grave by Channy-field wood.

I know the hand that placed them there,  
That carved the cold, hard stone,  
Which tells so poignantly of grief -  
Of dreams and hopes then flown.

I know where violets and Lady-fingers grow,  
The Ragged -jacks, and Mayblobs,  
In the lovely peaceful meadows  
And the valley stretched below.

I know a lonely old farmhouse,  
That broods o'er the valley below;  
They say the house is haunted,  
By a voice of long ago.

I know that voice, I hear it still,  
And the echo of steps inside;  
But it's only an empty echo,  
For the heart of the house has died.

I know a lagoon in the garden where,  
On an island built of stone,  
Was set a small laburnum tree,  
On that pride of place alone.

I know it was planted to mark the day  
Of the birth of a daughter - now far away,  
Far away, but free to roam -  
In thought, to that old country home.

I sit and dream, but I long to see  
The moor and the woodlands there,  
The countryside I know so well –  
For mine was that birthday tree.

## Stacey and the Ghost of Moor Hay Farm

1821

Legend has it, that there was an old lady living at Moor Hay Farm called Fanny Addy. She was known as the Patchwork lady and was a miser that taunted her family with gold sovereigns. She always wore the same dress everyday and patched it with scrap pieces of cloth and materials whenever there was a rip or tear. Before her death she hid the gold sovereigns everywhere in the most difficult places.



1875

A few years later her nephew found a couple of gold sovereigns in a four poster bed. Her ghost started to get

angry and every couple of years she comes looking and protecting her gold sovereigns.



2021

146 years later Stacey and her family were moving into a new house on a farm. Yes, it was Moor Hay Farm. The place where the Patchwork lady lived. When Stacey got there she ran in the house and started unpacking. She noticed she had a secret door in her wardrobe. It was already getting late so she decided to check it out the next day. She woke up in excitement and checked out the door in her wardrobe. She saw a skeleton with a patched-up dress on it. She also found an old newspaper, and on it it said, "The Patchwork Lady" is gone! Stacey realised that the skeleton was in fact the Patchwork lady's dead body. Stacey ran to her



room but before she could go through, the door slammed shut. She started bashing her tight fist against the door but it was jammed. Stacey heard footsteps in the room. She went and checked it out. There was n no one there. She started to cry. Stacey was trapped in a secret room, that had a dead body's skeleton on a table, newspapers about a Patchwork Lady that had died and she was sat on an incredibly dusty floor. She looked down and saw a bony finger writing something on the ground. It spelt "Get out of my room!"

Stacey screamed and said I can't I am trapped! She heard a loud screechy voice say, "You'll regret this!"

Stacey screamed. "AAAARRRRRHHHH!!!!" The room was silent. Since then, there was no sign of Stacey.

Rumour has it that the Patchwork Lady still haunts that house to this very day. Watching. Waiting, for her next victim to come.

By Elexa Stamose Year 6 from Penny Acres Primary School

## The Hancocks at Moor Hay Farm



By 1911, Alexander Lowe Hancock (1867-1921) occupied Moor Hay Farm. He was a widower and living with his daughter, Sarah Elizabeth (17) and adopted son, Jack (12) who went to Wigley School.



In 1901, Alexander had been living at the farm of his parents (Thomas and Sarah) in Cutthorpe Green. He was working there. His wife Mary Jane was living at Browns Blocks with children, Sarah Elizabeth (aged 7), Harriden (aged 9) and Russell (aged 5). Family history makes it clear that the couple

were no longer living together. Divorce was very rare and usually only the rich could afford it.

Alex died in a Wakefield hospital in 1921. His son, Harriden, pictured below, brought his body back to Chesterfield on a horse and cart to be buried. The family are buried in Old Brampton churchyard.



Harriden did not go to Wigley School but to Cutthorpe School instead.

What is clear is that Harriden gave his father's address as Moor Hay when he enlisted to fight during WW1 on Oct 31<sup>st</sup> in 1916. His WW1 records give us the following details:

- On enlistment he described himself as a waggon driver working at a farm in Alfreton. He was 5 foot 5 inches.
- He was punished in May 1917 for not coming back from his leave on time.
- He lost pay twice in Sept 1917 for being late and not "complying" with an order.
- His record indicates he served in France.
- He was injured by shrapnel in the right thigh at the beginning of Oct 1918 at Le Cateau. About a month later he was admitted to hospital and remained there until 15<sup>th</sup> Feb 1919.
- He had the Spanish flu for most of March 1919 to the beginning of May 1919 prior to being discharged from the army. Being young, he was lucky to survive this pandemic.
- He was discharged in Oct 1919 to Moor Hay farm.

Harriden never spoke about the war to his children.



He married Florrie Hancock (1903 -1939) in 1928. She was the daughter of George and Sarah Hancock from Riddings Farm). (Florrie's family ran the Fox and Goose Inn for about 200 years.) They both loved riding and she had a medal for "circus riding".

Unfortunately, Florrie died of pneumonia in 1939. Harriden brought up his children with his sister Sarah Elizabeth, known as "Cissie". Cissie lived at Bottom Farm, Wadshelf.

His daughters, Mona and Margaret, went to Wigley School.

Margaret Hayes, Harriden's daughter, says she spent the week with her aunt and the weekends with her father. She remembers her father played the accordion and liked singing these two songs, *"The Farmers Boy"* and *"Alice Where Art Thou?"*

**The family left Moor Hay in 1935, moving to Bagthorpe Farm which remains in the family today. The Briddens bought Moor Hay Farm in 1946.**

### **The Horror of Moor Hay Farm!**

It was a cold, crispy, bitter morning, I'm Jack and I'm going to my friend George's house, I'm 10 years old. We go to Wigley Primary school, as the day got colder and colder as time passed by I was sat at my brown, wobbly desk listening to the crackling, roaring fire and the wind blowing through the hole in the cracked window, shivering in excitement.



It was finally the end of school, we were walking back to George's house. The sun went behind the clouds and a big gush of wind hit me in the back. The wind



howled and the trees wailed. I spotted red bleeding eye's poking out of the green, musty trees. We arrived at the house and George said it's called Moor Hay Farm...

The house had broken windows, smashed fences and cows wandering everywhere. We crept to the creaky door that looked like it had an eye staring at me, an orange blood shot eye. We went in as the door slammed against the wall because the wind was so powerful. We tiptoed past the kitchen and up the stairs so grandma wouldn't give us a big, sweaty kiss.

When we got to George's bedroom we made a base out of blankets. I felt sleepy so I fell asleep on the pile of blankets. DING! "Awwwwwwww!" I screamed.

"It's just the clock," exclaimed George.

I couldn't get back to sleep after that so I asked George if he could tell me a story. He told me about this lady called Fanny Addy who lived here years ago and now haunts the house in the cellar...

I saw the moon creeping back down into its chimney pot. As time passed I kept thinking about that old lady ghost. Suddenly, I heard this thumping sound: duf, duf, duf, duf. Who is it? It sounded like it was coming from downstairs, near the cellar...

I tiptoed down the stairs when I saw the ivy Wrapping round the windows and the door. There was no way out, I was trapped. The sound got louder and louder. The cellar door had a lock on it and you needed a key to open it, so I walked back to the kitchen to see that all the keys were gone! I didn't believe in ghosts until this day.



I ran around the corner of the kitchen again to see the cellar door open! Now I was starting to panic. When I glimpse at the clock, I see the hands turning back to 12. I heard a different sound- this time it was a laughing sound whoo ha ha ha ha ha boo! There it was the terrifying ocean blue crispy, cloudy eyes with long black gusty hair with the patchwork dress, long

flashy gusty eyelashes. She sank into the ground and drooped down from the ceiling, this time I saw her thin bubbly bones and pointy, stretchy fingers wrapping round my sweaty face. It was Fanny Addy's, ghost! I screamed. I ran backwards heading for the door but I realised it was locked, so I ran upstairs stomping like an elephant leaving footprints behind me. The ghost shot up like a rocket straight in front of me screaming like a witch, George shouted what's going on? He trampled out of the bedroom. I said there was a ghost, it was Fanny Addy. George exclaimed, it was just a dream so he pulled me back to bed but it was almost breakfast. I thought hard- then it came to me that it was the horror of Moor Hay Farm.

By Jack Stokes Year 6 from Wigley Primary School



## Two Holmesfield Farming Families



The following stories are based on 3 members of the Holmesfield Class of 1920.

On the left, here is a grown-up Jessie Helliwell who was admitted to Holmesfield School on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1919. According to the school logbook: *“Jessie Helliwell is over 7 years and two months old and this is her first appearance at school. She is a fine healthy looking girl. Her parents always set the attendance authorities at defiance.”* Daughter of farmer Harry Helliwell, she was the

youngest of 8. They lived at The Bank. After World War 1 the school leaving age had been raised to 14 – Jessie left at 14 in 1926.

Her brother, Benjamin, married another member of the class of 1920, Vera Woodbine.

Daughter of Frank Arthur Ernest Woodbine, a grocer in Sheffield, Vera was admitted to school in May 1912 and left in 1926 at 14. Here is a picture of her just 3 years later:



Before getting married Vera worked in service at White Stacks, a big house on Unthank Lane.

Vera married Benjamin Helliwell in April 1934. They were tenant farmers at Meanfield Farm on Far Lane. They had one daughter, Jean, born on 30/9/1939.

Ben died suddenly whilst out working on the farm in 1972. After her husband's death Vera moved back to Sheffield where she died in 1999.

Vera is buried in Holmesfield churchyard with her husband.

Vera was one of 10. The Woodbine family lived at Bank Farm, Fox Lane.



Her sister Clara was another member of the class of 1920. She was admitted to the school in March 1910 and left in 1924 aged 14.

When she was 16, Clara worked looking after the twin children of a local farming family. She then worked in Sheffield as a cook and general help.



When she was 19, she obtained a £10.00 passage to Australia. Her parents did not approve.

She lived with a family & met her husband, Joe, whilst farming in the Outback. Clara & Joe (who was a 4th generation Australian) were married on June 1st, 1935.

Clara came back to visit the Holmesfield area in June 1981. This was 52 years after leaving home for Australia. Clara died on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 1996, aged 86 in Queensland, Australia.

### The Haunting of Moor Hay Farm

It was a cold, drizzly night at Moor Hay Farm on the anniversary of Fanny Addy's death. Every year it was said that on the anniversary she comes back to haunt the inhabitants of the farm...

You see, Fanny was a miser, with every rip in her dress, she would sew a new patch. She was soon given the nickname the Patchwork Lady. She would hide her gold sovereigns and taunt her family with them.



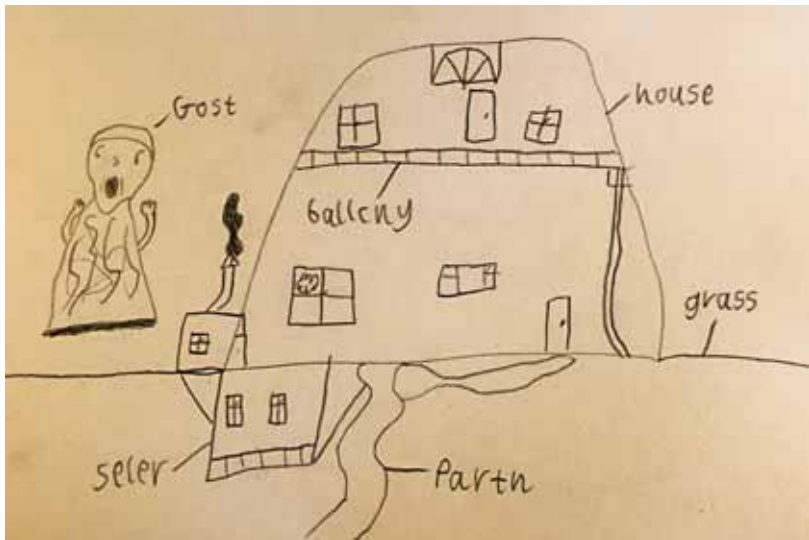
I am Daniel Addy, and I have sleep paralysis. Sleep paralysis is when I freeze and hallucinate. It is a horrible experience that nobody should go through. One night, on the night of the anniversary of Fanny Addy's death, I lay still in my bed. I could hear the bony fingers of the tree outside tapped on my window. That's when it went cold, the window frosted up and I could see my breath and I froze up. Oh no, not again. I let out a silent scream as I looked at the window. It was her, the Patchwork Lady, Fanny Addy, her crooked fingers tapped on the window, then she vanished.



My door then slowly creaked open, there she was in her sea of patchworks. She began to creep towards me and began to mutter something that sounded like, "Where are my sovereign's..." Over and over again. She grasped my arm and let out an ear-splitting shriek, drawing blood from my arm.

I woke up, it was morning, phew, just another sleep paralysis, but something was off. I looked down at my arm to find nail marks on my arm and muddy footprints on my floor.

By Matilda Taylor Year 6 from Penny Acres Primary School



## **The Drabble Diaries 1893 to 1919**



**Hollins House and Farm, Old Brampton from Derbyshire Life article in 1957 after Frank Drabble died, before renovation.**

Linda Hancock's father purchased these farming diaries at a Hollins House, Old Brampton, sale in the 1950s. Linda passed them on to Victoria Wale, whose family currently inhabit Hollins House. Victoria has transcribed 33 years of these diaries which are full of social, finance and farming business. Manure bought. Damsons picked. Turnips planted. Fences built. Animals sold, born, sick, dying, killed and salted. The content truly

reflects life in the Holmesfield and Wigley communities at this time.

The diary is written by John Hibbert Drabble. (JHD) He was married 3 times and had 4 sons and 2 daughters. The sons were William, Charles, Sam and Frank, and the daughters were Maria and Elizabeth. At the time of writing the diaries, he was married to his 3<sup>rd</sup> wife Elizabeth Ann (Martin, nee Margereson). Maria married a butcher and went to live in Bolsover. Lizzie married a hosier and went to live in Walsall.

### **1893**

January 16<sup>th</sup> his son, Sam goes to college to study to be a vet. (His older brother Charles was also a vet.)

JHD is clearly travelling to and from Bradford to buy horses through the year.

In October, he goes shooting with Mr Urton and they kill 33 wild birds and animals. Shooting seems to be a major part of his lifestyle.

### **1895**

He becomes a member of the school board and refers to meetings throughout the rest of the diary.

### **1900**

He becomes the chairman of the school board.

All the way through John Hibbert Drabble refers to paying the Sitwells rent. He owned the farm at Hollins House outright. It had been bought by his grandfather John Drabble in 1824 at the sale of the Marquis of Ormonde's land in this area. However, to increase the amount of land they were farming, he rented Offley Place as well as various other fields in the area from the Sitwells.

## **1901**

He mentions the coronation. He also comments on himself and his granddaughter, Nora, going to see Henry Irving on the 13th March. Henry Irving was a very famous Victorian actor and theatre producer pictured here.



On June 6th he pays for 14 loads of stone from the Furniss quarry.

## **1902**

In September, JHD goes to see “trotting” at Queens Park.

## **1903**

On 17th December he tries to sell a sow. When they fail, they kill and salt it instead.

## **1904**

January 5<sup>th</sup> Frank gets his teeth fixed. On the 20th there is a dance at the schools.

He does a lot of hat and suit buying during this year.

16th August, he goes to a well dressing in Barlow.

28th September, they go shooting at Hardwick Hall.

## **1905**

On Shrove Tuesday they have “good” pancakes.

3rd November John meets the architect at Wigley school. On 7th November, he has a row with his son, Frank, and wife.

## **1907**

13th November, he is still taking stone from the Pudding Pie Quarry.

## **1908**

11th September Mr and Mrs Arthur Sowden called in a motor car at night.

They eat a goose for Christmas.

## **1909**

October 1st and 5<sup>th</sup>, Frank and Nora went to a skating rink



**Wadshelf Corner from Sylvia Briddon**

## **1910**

May 20th Edward VII is buried.

26th July, Frank shot pheasants at Moor Hay.

## **1911**

January 23rd Briddon kills a pig.

25th January JHD goes ferreting.

**In 1911** John Hibbert Drabble, who writes all the diaries up until this point, dies.

Victoria thinks that Frank carried on the diaries until the war, and that when he was away his mother carried on writing them for him. I imagine she referred to herself in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person because she was writing them on Frank's behalf as a record of what was happening on the farm.

Frank was in the yeomanry prior to the war - the Sherwood Foresters. When the war came he was originally with his unit stationed at various camps around the country. Somewhere around the middle of the war he came back home to carry on running the farm. Farming was a reserved occupation.

Interestingly his elder brother Charles, became a major in the Royal Army Veterinary Corps and was in charge of the horses at a remount depot based in Doncaster. Charles's son, Laurie, was also in the Army and served in France.



## **1914**

In January, he gets stone from what he refers to now as the Hancock quarry.

On the 5th August, he is mobilised for World War 1.

Reading future entries in the diary it appears that he and his family are in the army and working with horses. Horses get sent back to the farm to be looked after and supported while training. There was no reference to any active service.

It is also noticeable that in 1915 the diary becomes less detailed and from 1916 onwards it becomes much less in content and interest.

## **1916**

May 10th Captain C Drabble sent two army mares to the farm to be looked after

June 1st Captain C and LH Drabble motor from Doncaster. (LH is Lawrence Hibbert, his nephew.)

September 16th R Hill talks about a tribunal. It is reasonable to assume that this was Frank appealing to leave the army to tend to the farm.

October 16th W. Clark lost control of a motor car and died. (This is reported in the newspaper.)

## **1917**

12th May Army mares sent to the farm.

## The Schools and School Life



### **Ebenezer Hall where the first Holmesfield School was sited.**

There are school endowment documents for Holmesfield dating from 1752 when the people of the village came together to donate in order to provide an education for their children.

There is evidence of the school at Ebenezer Hall in the form of a logbook dating from 1881. The Admission Register starts in 1887.

During this period there was a steady growth of free primary education up to the age of 13. Sometimes children were allowed to leave early if they had a

job. Many children in these communities left to work on the farm. Girls might end up keeping house or went into domestic service until marriage. Sarah A Haslem, who left in 1897, is described as “*working at home*”.

After World War 1 the school leaving age was increased to 14.

The lucky few went on to secondary schools. Parents either had to be rich enough or children had to earn a scholarship as secondary schools were not free. William Foster left in 1911 for Dronfield Grammar School. This appears to happen after 11 years of age.

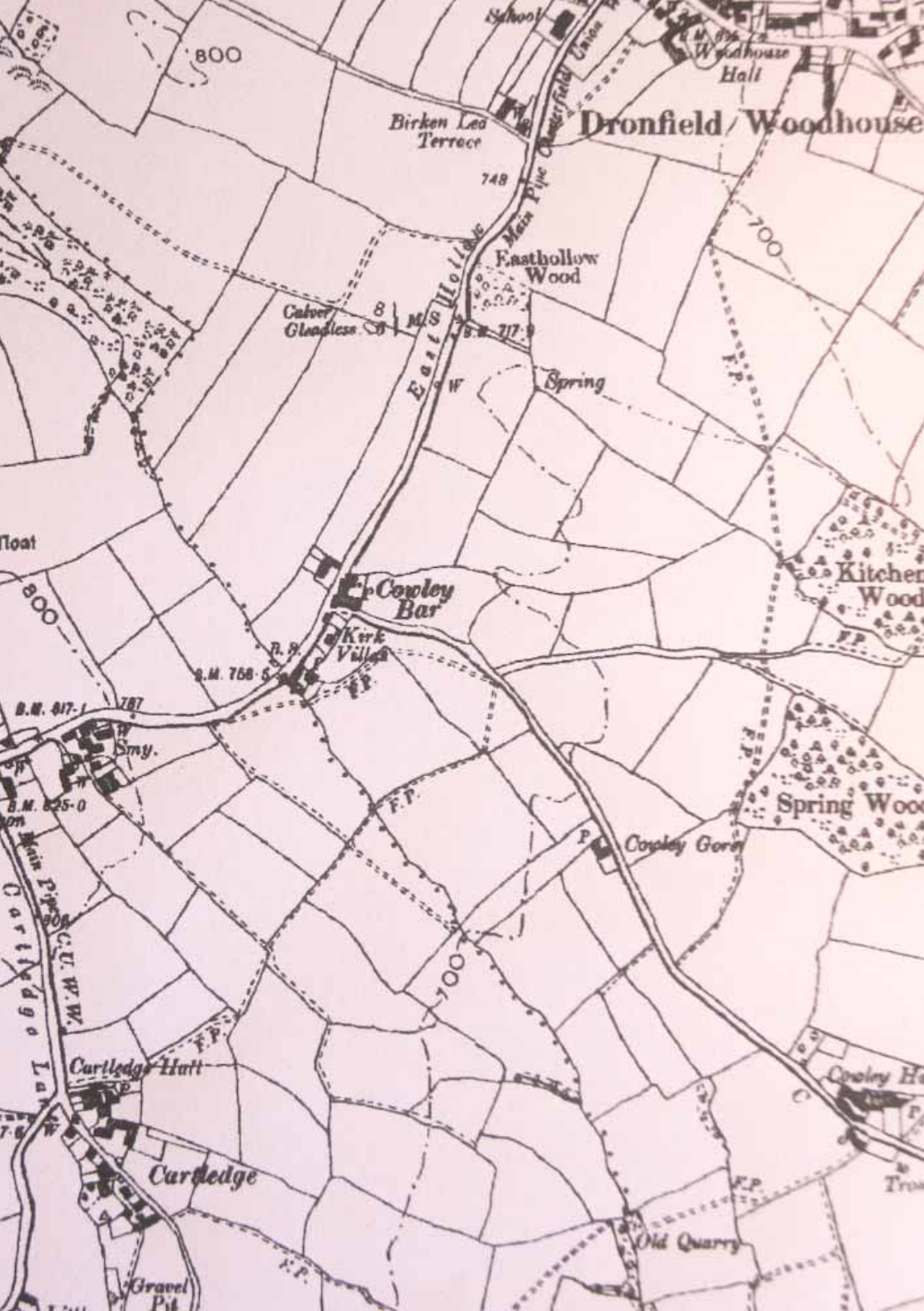
Sadly at least 6 children died while at primary school from 1887 to 1920. Lilian Sharpe died in May 1896.

School logbooks are largely full of attendance; the appointment and attendance of staff; illness; and reports on the weather. In 1893 the Holmesfield Church School logbook says 10<sup>th</sup> Feb was “*a very stormy day.*”

In 1894/5 the new school building that Penny Acres occupies today was built. It can be found on the 1899 map on pages 49 and 50.

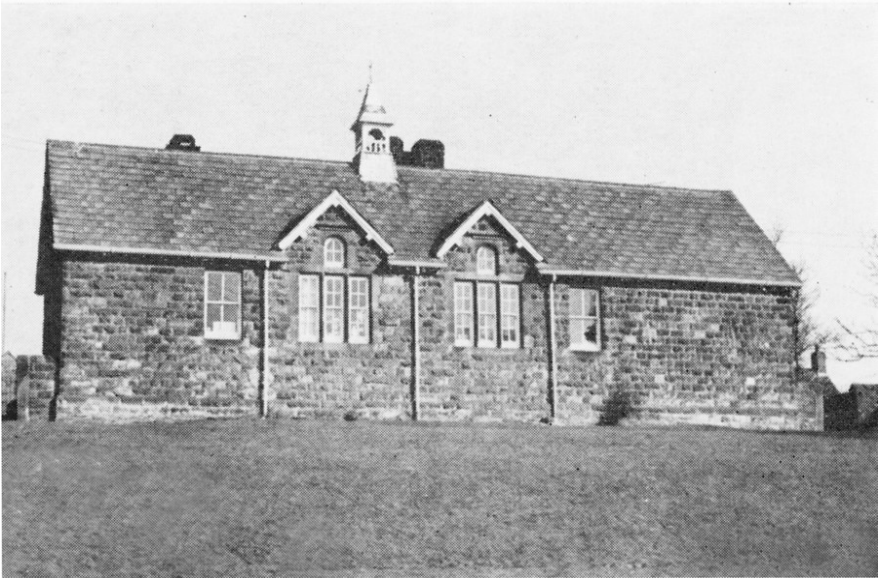
At the time it was called the Holmesfield Church School.







## Holmesfield Church School



The logbooks also contain inspection reports and curriculum plans.

In 1899, beyond Scripture, English and Mathematics Holmesfield was delivering Singing, Drawing, Botany, Agriculture, Animal Life, Physiology, Geography and Needlework. Included in these subjects are the formation of soils; plant food and how it is obtained; sheep rearing and shearing. The curriculum really reflects the community.

In 1918, the school is repeatedly closed due to the influenza epidemic. This was in fact the Spanish Flu pandemic that killed millions during 1918 and 1919.

## Old Brampton School

Illness is a recurrent theme in the logbooks.

In 1886 the Old Brampton School Logbook reports how whooping cough was affecting attendance. Freddy Hill from the Class of 1920 is “*permanently excluded*” from the school due to Encephalitis Lethargica. (The term ‘sleeping sickness’, where people seem to fall asleep or freeze whilst eating or working was first used to describe two cases in Vienna. However, the disease can present a wide and sometimes confusing range of symptoms, often with unusual and bizarre behaviour.)



**The Old Brampton School in 2021**



John Hoyle Furniss' memoir adds some detail to life at the Old Brampton School. His first day was on 29<sup>th</sup> May, 1893:

*"The time came for me to go to school; it was a long walk to the nearest school at Old Brampton. 2 miles for the short legs of a 6 year old. The teacher was a woman, assisted by a girl of 18. She did her best to keep discipline with the aid of a ready cane, but outside the school it had little effect. There was only a small yard to play in - no room for football or cricket, and the only amusement was playing marbles, or for the big boys to tease the girls and boss the small boys. My father told me that the teacher - Miss Hopkinson - was engaged to be married, and I regarded this as utterly unbelievable; no one would dare to marry her - he'd be scared of being caned."*

The first Headmaster was Enoch Horsfall who served the school from 1830 to 1882. Research revealed he held many of the important roles requiring an education in Wigley and the surrounding area.

After he left the school there was a period of 2 heads leading to problems. In 1885, the logbook records:

*"June 26th*

*Reopen school on Monday.*

*June 22nd, 54 children present. The school is now under the Brampton School Board.*

*I, Eliza Clayborn took charge as head mistress with Amy Bingham as assistant....*

*Order very bad during the earlier part of the week. Children whistle and stamp when leaving the room.*

*...*

*25<sup>th</sup> Caned John Dennis for insolence and obstinacy. He left the school by a window."*

Clearly children were naughty and rude 136 years ago. The punishments were a lot more severe! Corporal punishment ended in 1986 in government funded schools.



**Wigley Primary School in 1950s**

In December 1895, the building on page 54 (NB this picture is from the 1950s) was opened to allow children from the villages of Wadshelf, Freebirch, Wigley and the farms of Eastmoor to attend. The original schoolroom had been next to the church in Old Brampton – this had been deemed too far for all the children to walk.

Further recollections by John Hoyle Furniss reflect rather well some of the earlier details in the book and make it clear how much he loved the school and learning:

*“However time passed, I grew older, and a new school was built within a mile from my home. This school had playing fields and a strict male teacher who had a fund raised to buy a medium for playing cricket and football and saw that such games were played. This reduced the bullying by the big boys, they grew keen on sport and school became very much more enjoyable. However, times were bad and I was needed at home to replace hired labour, so when I was twelve I very reluctantly left school to drive a team of horses. I blubbered when I had to say goodbye to the teacher - he had done all he could to help me. My brother Jim and sister Annie carried on at school until we left for New Zealand.”*

# **Robert Murray Gilchrist and Edward Carpenter**

## **Robert Murray Gilchrist**



Robert Murray Gilchrist (1867 – 1917) was born in Sheffield. He lived for much of his life in Holmesfield, at Cartledge Hall (above), from 1892 until his death. He shared the Hall with his mother, sisters Janie and Isabella, and a male companion Alfred Garfitt (a cutlery manufacturer)

He was an English novelist and author of regional interest books about the Peak District. He is best known today for his decadent and Gothic short fiction.



**Robert Murray Gilchrist in 1903.**

Here is an extract from a tale called "The Return" from "A Night on the Moor and Other Tales of Dread": *"Twilight had fallen ere I reached the cottage at the entrance of the park. This was in a ruinous condition: here and there sheaves in the thatched roof had parted and formed crevices through which smoke filtered. Some of the tiny windows had been walled up, and even where the*

*glass remained snake like ivy hindered any light from falling into their thick recesses.*

*The door stood open, although the evening was chill. As I approached, the heavy autumnal dew shook down from the firs and fell upon my shoulders. A bat, swooping in an undulation, struck between my eyes and fell to the grass, moaning querulously. I entered. A withered woman sat beside the peat fire. She held a pair of steel knitting needles which she moved without cessation. There was no thread upon them, and when they clicked her lips twitched as if she had counted. Some time passed before I recognised Rose's foster mother, Elizabeth Carless. The russet colour of her cheeks had faded and left a sickly grey: those sunken, dimmed eyes were utterly unlike the bright black orbs that had danced so mirthfully. Her stature, too had shrunk."*

### The Patchwork lady

People say I am the Patchwork Lady. On the anniversary of my death, I haunt my family with my gold sovereigns. Just as I taunted them when I was alive.

The family, despite looking everywhere, could not find them! I hid some under the four-poster bed which my nephew found. I am not happy about that.

My name is Fanny Addy and my death date every year I haunt Moor Hay Farm to get back my gold sovereigns.

By Livy Shipley Year 3 Penny Acres Primary School



Robert Murray Gilchrist published some 100 short stories, 22 novels, 6 story collections, and 4 non-fiction books.

During World War I, he was noted for his charitable assistance to Belgian refugees, many of whom attended his funeral. The war laid waste to Belgium and many refugees found homes in other countries such as Britain.

Admission		NAME IN FULL		PARENT OR GUARDIAN	
Number	Date	Residence	Occupation	Name	Address
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f) Enter Number of the House and Street (if any)
407 27 10 14		Van Eynde	Knechtsta Joanna	Joseph	Little Chatsworth
408 27 10 14		"	Edward Jozif Rana	"	"
409 27 10 14		Maria Francisco	Marquiesha	Van Eynde	"
410 27 10 14		Van Eynde	Franciscus Melania	"	"
411 27 10 14		Coesters	Regina	Joannes	"
412 27 10 14		"	Seraphina	Franciscus	"
413 27 10 14		"	Maria Irma	"	"
414 7 12 14		Boldy	Julius	Henri	"
538 12 1 15		Jarvis	Irrin	"	"
			Tieler	Fred	Lanshaw's Gate

Little Chatsworth is where they were housed as indicated by the Holmesfield Admission Book.



Joanna Van Eynde left in November 1915 because she had tuberculosis. The logbook reports the death of Franciscus Van Eynde on 9<sup>th</sup> August, 1915



from meningitis. He was a child in one of the families of Belgian refugees that Gilchrist housed and welcomed until they returned to Belgium in 1919 at the end of the war. The Van Eyndes left for Sheffield in 1917.

The Belgian colony attended Robert Murray Gilchrist's funeral after he died in 1916 and laid flowers on his grave in Holmesfield Churchyard according to a newspaper report.

## THE HOUSE OF HORROR

Today I am going to visit my grandad and grandma. My grandad is John Furniss and I am going to play on his horses for two days. Before I went to Moor Hay Farm I was at primary school.

When I was walking home to my grandad's house, I spotted a glimmer of light. Then I ran into the house and shut the door. I told my grandad what I saw. "Oh it's nothing it's your reflection in the sun."

When I was going to bed, I saw this figure. She looked at me and scowled then went into my bedroom. Then I said, "Ah Grandad help there's a ghost."

"Ok I'm coming up!" shouted Grandad.

"Grandad it's here in my bedroom".

"Oh it's just Fanny Addy - she is mean though."

Then grandad took her away but his fingers just went through her. She just disappeared into thin air and we were baffled by it - we asked ourselves how that happened. We went back to bed grandad told me a story.

He told me that Fanny Addy was a mean miser and hid her gold sovereigns and taunted her family with them. She was a mean person when she died - she haunted the house. She had, when she was a ghost, invisible fingers, blue piercing eyes and white hair and black shoes that gave her away. Then my grandad left me and I thought and thought and thought but I couldn't sleep I was too scared so I went downstairs, had something to eat and I went back up the stairs and into bed and fell asleep.

By Joseph Bond Year 4 from Wigley Primary School



## Edward Carpenter

Edward Carpenter was another nationally famous man in the local area at the time.



He was a prominent socialist; championed workers and women's rights; and was an early vegetarian. He wrote in support of other sexualities and sex education.

This is a view of his house in Millthorpe (page 64) around the time he lived there with his partner, George Merrill. Many well-known socialists and campaigners visited his house in Millthorpe.



It was an unusual community where guests were encouraged to contribute to running the household, grow food and make sandals. Edward was a sandal enthusiast and set up a sandal making enterprise.

In 1902, Harry Adams, 14 year old son of Edward's farmer, George Adams, left for "*sandal making at home.*" At some point, George Adams fell out with Edward and left to make sandals elsewhere.

Edward was friendly with Robert Murray Gilchrist and was a highly respected part of the Holmesfield and Totley community.

As mentioned previously, he was a friend of John Furniss and spent time at Moor Hay as recorded by Charles Ashbee in his diary in 1886 on September 4th:

*“John Furniss the communist asked us to come over to Moor Hay yesterday some 4 miles from Millthorpe. There we have a community of early Christians pure and simple, some 10 men and three women... These men all seemed strong fine fellows, they have rented 180 acres of land and have opened three quarries, and work hard all day for the love of work not of gain - placing all profits in the common stock. ....We have supper at Moor Hay and then singing. “There's love at home” was the song, and while they were singing - that one gentle feminine voice and the rough men's voices mingling with it”*

John left the country with so little money that Carpenter gave him £20 when he said goodbye.

The Sheffield Archives have Edward Carpenter's letters which evidence his continuing friendship with John Furniss after he had left for New Zealand.

There is a letter to Edward Carpenter dated January 1907 in which he mentions that his son John Hoyle has come back to visit his ill grandmother. The letter also contained a great deal of practical details about life in New Zealand.

## Accidents

These days the level of health and safety is often bemoaned. During this period, it is notable how many more accidents ending in death or serious injury happened. Bicycles, cars, trains, work accidents and drowning. This tragic incident is a rarity and the geography of Wigley probably contributed.

### Pudding Pie Lane Accident

On Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> April 1916 the Derbyshire Courier reported a terrifying accident on Pudding Pie Lane, very close to the Wigley school building. Under the headline "*Traction Engine Overturns. Shocking Fatality Near Chesterfield*" the Courier describes Pudding Pie Hill as "a steep gradient between Old Brampton and Baslow".



**1947 picture of Wigley of the top of Pudding Pie Hill from Sylvia Briddon**

It reports that a steam powered traction engine was pulling two wagons heavily loaded with coal and stone up the hill.

A traction engine needed two people to operate it, one to control the power of the engine – the ‘driver’ – and one to steer – the ‘steerer’. On this day, William Burrows was the driver and Alfred Bemrose the steerer. The load proved too heavy for the traction engine to pull up the steep hill. The crew tried to stop it rolling backwards but failed. Burrows jumped off the engine and shouted to Bemrose to steer it into a wall to stop it. Bemrose seems not to have heard (traction engines were very noisy). The engine and wagons rolled backwards, out of control, getting faster and faster, for about 200 yards until its rear axle broke and it turned over. Bemrose was trapped underneath.



**Traction Engines being used in the Boer War**

A policeman, PC Limb, and Mr Watts, landlord of the Fox and Goose Inn, helped to free Bemrose, but his leg was badly injured and he had lost a great deal of blood. They attempted to treat him as best they could and then Mr Watts loaded Bemrose onto his milk float (which would have been drawn horse drawn) and took Bemrose to Chesterfield Hospital. Bemrose died within a few hours of reaching the hospital.

The Courier ends the article by reporting “Both the engine and wagons were almost wrecked”.





## **Acknowledgements**

1. British Newspaper Archives
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Ethan Eliza

Livy

Sianna

Henry

Megan

Phorebe

Mila

Lily

Harry

Tom

George

Wigg

Jack

Blue

Elizabeth

Matilda

Maddie

Max

Ella

George

Yuki

Fionn

Maisie

Caleb

Edward

Jessie


Erie

Sophie

Dexter

James

Anya

The background of the entire page is a collage of various children's drawings. These drawings depict a wide range of subjects, including human figures in different poses and outfits, abstract shapes, and simple landscapes. The drawings are done in various media, likely paint and chalk, on different colored papers, creating a vibrant and textured visual field.

Across 2019 to 2021 the Key Stage 2 classes and communities at Penny Acres and Wigley Primary Schools have taken a journey back in time exploring the lives of people in their local areas between 1850 and 1920. This book shares some of their discoveries and responses. Enjoy finding out about the people of rural Derbyshire during this period.

