

Edward and Elizabeth Smith
William and Susanna
John and Ann
Edmund, Samuel, Susanna
Fred
Fred
Richard John (who made the website)

<http://www.geocities.com/smithfamilyhistory/>
Chapter One: Mill Town Origins

One of the most fundamental influences concerning ‘The Fred Effect’ was the original geographical location of the Smith family themselves. During the late eighteenth to early nineteenth century they had moved around the small settlements of Cowling, (on the way to the market town of Colne) Glusburn, Crosshills and Sutton-in-Craven which lay south of a bend on the River Aire, five miles West North West of Keighley. A tomb inscription at Kildwick Parish Church implied that their roots in area had gone back a very long way – even as far back as the seventeenth century and perhaps further.

Forming part of the Parish of Kildwick, Sutton-in-Craven had once contained three textile mills all operating power looms. The first of these mills had been constructed in 1830. Prior to this year the mechanisation of cotton and woollen yarn production was to cause handloom weaving to become the third largest occupation in the early nineteenth century ~ ranking only behind domestic service and agricultural labour. Both men and women moved into this occupation because there was money to be made. However, in late 1825 technological changes and a banking crash caused a collapse in the domestic cotton-weaving sector. Nevertheless, woollen hand weaving continued to prosper for up to thirty years. Even after that a handloom weaver could still make a living if he or she specialised in the production of high quality cloth.

A typical handloom weaver’s house tended to be sparsely furnished, with any spare room given over to weaving equipment. A pig would often be kept in the garden where vegetables were also grown. Sometimes a handloom weaver would work flat-out for fifteen hours to earn 2s (shillings) and 6d (pence) for thirty yards of cloth. (On other occasions the hours were less arduous.) In hard times they were known to undertake an assortment of odd jobs in order to earn the extra penny. ‘Friendly Societies’ such as the “Odd Fellows,” (still active today), provided financial support in the event illness or death. To avoid the cost of a barber, men in Todmorden (fifteen miles to the South of Sutton) were on record for cutting one another’s hair. A special treat took place when the “pig killer” came round to slaughter the pig, after which extended family members would be invited round for a pig’s supper where the perishable parts were eaten first. Pig suppers were something of a local custom and bacon was considered a delicacy. Sometimes a pig was kept for a lengthy period of time in order to be fattened up, to appreciate in value, and then be sold for profit.

Two of the people living in Sutton during the early 1830s were my Great, Great Grandparents John and Ann Smith. On Saturday, January 21st 1832, Ann Smith gave birth to my Great Grandfather Edmund. He was to exert a major influence upon subsequent generations of Smiths, lasting even into the twenty-first century. (The manner in which he came to exercise this influence will be the subject of a later chapter.) Because of Edmund, prospects for the Smiths were greatly changed for the better. To appreciate how such a change came about it is necessary to give a detailed account of the socio-economic and, (in a subsequent chapter) the religious environment in which my Great Grandfather was born. It was the harshness of this environment, which partly made Edmund into the man he was. However, before exploring this in more depth a few words will be said about Edmund's own immediate forbears.

The North Yorkshire County Council Record Office, based in Northallerton, provided the following information about the marriage of Edmund's parents, (in a letter received on Saturday, 10th September 2000).

“24th May 1824, John Smith of Sutton in this parish, millwright and a minor & Ann Wilson of Sutton in this parish, minor- married after banns and with consent of parents. Witnesses: Benjamin Smith, Mary McCroben.”

Direct observation of this document on Friday, June 15th 2001 revealed that in contrast to the two witnesses who could write very neatly, John and Ann Smith could leave only a mark. Unlike their witnesses John and Ann were illiterate – able only to pen two cross-shaped marks. My desire to get hold of their original signatures had been foiled.

The Sutton Baptist Dissenting Register provided John Smith's birth date:

“John Smith, the son of William and Susanna his wife of Glasburn in the Parish of Kildwick in the county of York was born the seventeenth day of March in the year of our Lord 1805. Registered the twenty third day of June of our Lord 1805 by John Walton – Protestant Dissenting Minister.”

Unfortunately, Ann Wilson's name failed to appear in either the Sutton Baptist Dissenting Register or the baptismal roll kept by the local Parish Church at Kildwick or Colne. Moreover, no Ann (or Anne) Wilson with the right specifications was on record of being christened at any Anglican Church during the 1803/1805 period. This lack of information suggested that my Great, Great Grandmother were born of dissenting parents somewhere out of the vicinity of Kildwick. Somewhat to my annoyance her precise birth date was impossible to trace. Census information and the fact that she was still a minor at the time of her marriage meant that her birth must have taken place at any time from late May 1803 until the end of March 1804. She was therefore just a little older than her husband. The identity of her parents has remained an unsolved mystery.

Like most of their contemporaries John and Ann had links with their local Parish Church, which in this case was the Parish Church of Saint Andrew's in Kildwick Village. The incumbent for most of this period was the Rev. John Perring (who may well have been the archetypal model of one of

the three Clergymen featured in Charlotte Bronte's novel 'Shirley.') It was he who baptised the following children of John and Ann Smith:

When

Baptised?

Child's

Christian Name

Parents' Name

Abode

Quality, Trade, or Profession
Christian

Surname

Christened, 4/2/1827

Born, 1/11/1826

No. 2107

Samuel

Son of

John

Anne

Smith

Sutton

Millwright

Christened, 6/9/1829

Born, 29/6/1829

No.176

Susanna Wilson Daughter of

John

Anne

Smith

Sutton

Millwright

On some documents my Great, Great Grandmother's name would appear without the 'e,' whilst Susanna sometimes had the letter 'h' appended onto it. In this history I used the spelling as it had been originally written in a particular document.

In both cases, the Reverend John Perring, who was the Vicar at Kildwick, performed the baptismal ceremony. Warren (1999) pp. 6 & 12 revealed that John Perring was a 'pluralist' Vicar who had more than one church under his care. His main 'living' was at Kildwick Village and he delegated to his curate the services at Skipton Parish Church. During August 1813 he called an important meeting of Churchwardens and influential townspeople at Skipton in order to push through the decision to set up a new Parish School there, under the auspices of a special Committee of Management. As its chairman, John Perring played an important role in persuading wealthy members of the community to make generous donations. In the end £305 was raised from 82 subscribers with half of the amount coming from six members of the committee.

The name Susanna provided further evidence that John Smith was indeed the son born to William and Susanna Smith in June 1805. It was often the case that sons would name a daughter born to them after their own mother. This was particularly the case if the mother had died and there was a desire to honour her name. Interestingly, the Kildwick Parish Monumental Inscriptions, which were obtained from Skipton Public Library, revealed: -

William Smith of Glasburn May 12th 1850 72 years

Susannah his wife April 27th 1821 45 years

Martha his second wife September 21st 1826 54 years

The death of Susannah in April 1821 when John was in his teens would have been a hard experience on a lad of his age, and possibly left a strong desire within him to preserve her memory. William Smith's own death certificate indicates that his demise was due to a stroke. It provided the first evidence of those blood circulatory problems, which were to dog successive generations of Smiths.

Registration District Skipton

1850 Death in the sub-district of Kildwick in the County of York

1

2

3

3

4

5

6

7

8

When and where died

Name and Surname

Sex

Age

Occupation

Cause of death

Signature, description, and residence of Informant

When registered

Signature of Registrar

Twelve May Glusburn

William Smith

Male

71

Years

Corn Miller

Paralysis 6 days Certified

X The mark of Mary Smith Present at death Glusburn

Twenty Second May 1850

John Crosley

His occupation as Corn Miller established another link with John Smith – who may well have been his oldest and perhaps only surviving son. Even in the mid nineteenth century there appears to have been a marked lack of literacy in the family. Mary Smith may have been the daughter of William Smith who appears to have been a widower at the time of his death.

Extra evidence concerning William Smith only came to light during a visit made to Kildwick Parish graveyard with my wife on Monday, September 22nd 2003. Remarkably, what had been a very wet day brightened up when the bus we were on drove into Kildwick. My wife provided invaluable help in transcribing what were often badly eroded ‘pavement’ tomb inscriptions; the afternoon sunlight, which cast long shadows was also a decisive factor in assisting transcription of the following details.

“IN MEMORY OF

Susanna Wife of William Smith

Of Glusburn who died April 27th

1821 aged 45 years

‘Weep not for me my Husband dear

My children weep not I am here

From in refrain to Jesus I fly

If you thus live you'll happy die'

Also of Martha wife of the above

named William Smith who died

September 21st 1826 aged 34

Also the aforesaid William

Smith who died May 12th 1850 in the

72nd year of his age"

Further up from William's tombstone lay that of his possible father Edward Smith, which was almost missed because it was buried beneath a lot of fallen leaves. Once again a combination of my wife's help and ideal sunlight assisted in the transcription of what was often badly eroded wording. As with William's grave I sensed that this discovery had been just made in time. A year or two later and it would not have been possible to retrieve some of the below information for the Internet.

"Here lieth the body of

Elizabeth the wife

Of Edward Smith of

Glusburn Hall who de-

Parted this life the

21st May 1796 and

in the 49th year of her age,

'Hither I gave my spirit up

And trust it in thy hand

My dying flesh shall rest in hope

And rise at thy command.'

Also Mary daughter of

The above named Edward

And Isabella Smith who

Departed this life May 27th

1809 aged 9 years.

Likewise the aforesaid

Edward Smith who departed

This life July 20th 1811 in the

68th year of his age

Also Ann wife of Robert Smith

Who died October 6th 1840 in

The 77th year of her age

Also the said Robert Smith

Who died August 11th 1847 in

The 79th year of his age.”

As my wife remarked during our visit the above inscriptions “appear to confirm that the Smiths were a God fearing lot.” They also indicated that they led hard lives characterised by a resigned attitude to suffering. Attempts to discover more about Elizabeth proved unavailing. A letter from Northallerton Archive Centre (received on Saturday, 27th September 2003) confirmed her name was not found on the Kildwick Saint Andrews parish baptism registers covering the period from 1745 to 1750. Her precise date of birth couldn’t be ascertained. All that can be asserted is that it had most likely occurred some time in the period of May 1746 to May 1748.

However, Edward’s second wife was perhaps the same Isabella Smith of independent means who was recorded as living with a Mary Smith (aged 40) at Hopsis, Crosshills during the 1841 Census. The Kildwick Saint Andrews burial book records her burial as occurring on 31st December of that year. She was 74 at the time of her death. Like many other second wives of the period she had been much younger (by some 24 years) than her husband. The possession of a private income suggests that Edward had been a good provider for his family.

Possible evidence of a genetic predisposition to longevity was found on the tomb of George Smith of Lumb, Cowling, who'd “departed this life on the 6th of January 1832 in the 99th year of his

life.” His wife (also named Susanna) had died on April 5th 1805 aged 71. It was possible for a Smith to live to a ripe old age at this period in history.

On Friday, July 6th 2001, I received copies of the Baptismal Register for Kildwick Saint Andrews from Northallerton Archive Centre. These provided some extra information about William Smith: “Baptised: 1779 January 3 William son of Edmund Smith, Weaver of Glusburn & Elizabeth his wife [being born on] November 2nd 1778.” His was one of seven christenings, which the Parish Vicar had conducted on January 3rd 1779. (Unfortunately, the Vicars surname was too faded to have been recorded, but consultation with Livett 1932 showed that his name was John Dehane.) During the time of William Smith’s birth George the Third was on the throne and the American Colonies were struggling for independence from Britain. This was just at the period when the British were consolidating a new Empire in India and starting to experience the Industrial Revolution. Within mainland Europe the radical new ideas of the Enlightenment were beginning to hold sway in influential, educated circles. These ideas would pave the way for the French Revolution, which was to explode with great force in just another ten years. For now, Louis the Sixteenth of France and his Austrian born wife Marie Antoinette were still more or less secure on their thrones and able to enjoy the delights of the Palace of Versailles. Such in outline, was the state of the world at the time of my Great, Great, Great, Grandfather’s birth.

Beyond the bare facts cited above, little else could be discovered about William. Like many men of a similar background he was shrewd in his business dealings and able to survive by engaging in a number of jobs other than Corn Milling alone. Also, akin to his first wife Susanna (already a spinster from Cowling), William Smith could also write intelligibly – in stark contrast to his second wife Martha Brewer (whom he married on June 20th 1822) who was able only to leave a mark. His respectable occupation as Corn Miller would suggest that he’d enjoyed a living standard slightly above the norm; though this would not have spared him the all too common tragedy of that time of seeing his two wives die at a comparatively young age. Also, like many of his contemporaries, he would have flirted with religious dissent. Surviving records in June 1805 showed a connection with Sutton Baptist Chapel. Furthermore, the ‘Muster Roll’ of 1803 revealed that he’d served in the local militia, which had been raised in response to the threat posed by Napoleon. In that capacity he would have been taught the rudiments of firearms, but like many militia members he may have spent more time in the tavern than on the local parade ground. The militia were notoriously undisciplined and often the subject of satirical cartoons. They were given only scant regard as a military force.

A phone call from Skipton Library on Monday, July 28th 2003, revealed that local militia men were sub-divided into four groups or classes: -

Class 1: men aged under 30 with no living child

Class 2: married men aged 20-40 with a child under ten

Class 3: married men aged 17-29 with not more than two children aged under ten

Class 4: others not included in the above classes.

The 'miller' William Smith fell into the third class – at that time having one son and one daughter (born in June 1803). This extra information confirmed that I had indeed located the correct William Smith.

The 1841 Census showed two William Smiths, both of whom were of the right age to have been my Great, Great, Great Grandfather. One had lived at Lingah Farm, just outside Crosshills and worked both as a farmer and a stonemason. The other had lived in Glasburn itself and was of 'independent means' – suggesting he'd made a success of whatever business he'd been engaged in. Preventing any firm identification was the fact that both William Smiths lived with a Mary Smith too. However, the information obtained from Northallerton Archive Centre did allow me to draw a direct line of descent from my Great, Great, Great, Great Grandfather Edmund Smith the weaver, right through to the present day and runs as follows: -

1. Edmund Smith 'A Weaver' who married Elizabeth at an unknown date and had a son: -
2. William Smith (1778-1850) 'A Miller,' who married Susanna Emmot (1776-1821) on 7/2/1799 and had a son: -
3. John Smith (1805-1843) 'A Corn Miller,' who married Ann Wilson (1803-1844) on 24/5/1824 and had a son: -
4. Edmund Smith (1832-1915) 'A Commercial Traveller in woollen cloth,' who married Rosamond Stamford (1843-1891) his second wife on 10/12/1867 and had a son: -
5. Fred Heselwood Smith (1869-1939) 'A Commercial Traveller, selling men's worsted clothing' who married Elizabeth Foster (1871-1947) on 27/6/1899 and had a son: -
6. Fred Gordon Smith (1914-1999) 'A Clothing Representative' who married Cynthia Absalom on 13/12/1941 and had a son: -
7. Richard John Smith (born in 1956) the writer of this history, 'A Teacher of Business Studies, Social Science and History' who married a tireless proof reader June Elizabeth Shinn (also born in 1956) on 23/6/1979 in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne and had: -
8. Four children, who together will contribute to the future history of the Smiths.

The scarcity of evidence meant that only brief mention could be made of the first two generations recorded on this list. Edmund Smith the weaver and his wife Elizabeth also had the following younger brothers of William, each christened by the Reverend John Dehane at Kildwick Parish Church. These were another Edmund, christened on 22/7/1781, having been born on 2/5/1781 and Henry christened on 4/1/1784, having been born on 23/11/1783 – the year America finally

gained independence from Great Britain. (By this stage Edmund was still living in Glasburn but working as a 'Husbandman' – presumably weaving had become unprofitable during this period.) Despite careful research into the Kildwick Parish records preserved by Levett IV, 1778 remained the earliest year in which it was possible to trace my ancestors. All family links before that date were far too conjectural. Edmund Smith the weaver may have been the son of William and Ellen Smith and christened at Kildwick on 7/1/1730. Less likely he may have been the son of Robert and Margaret Smith christened on 24/4/1730, or again the son of a Robert and Elizabeth Smith and christened on 17/4/1735. Equally probably he was the son of none of these people and was christened somewhere else other than Kildwick - assuming that he was christened at all! Remaining on a speculative note, mention may be made of the possibility that he may have been an Edmund Smith who married an Elizabeth Pighels at Kildwick on 18/10/1768. However, in this case a ten-year gap ensued before they had any children. He did not however appear to be the man who married Elizabeth Johnson on 6/4/1779, because the record of William's christening showed Edmund as being married prior to that date. One possibility was that he moved into Kildwick from another locality such as Colne. But consultation with the parish records of that locality on Thursday 26th January 2001 failed to find a person with the correct specifications. Attempts to connect him with any of the three Edmund Smiths living in nearby Cowling also proved unsuccessful, as did the attempt to connect him with an Edmund Smith living at Stott Hill. (During a walk to Lund Tower with my wife on a boiling hot Saturday 9th August 2003 the grey stone farm buildings where this Edmund Smith had lived were located on a steep hill outside Cowling. The surrounding fields were still used for grazing cattle.) In the end, barely anything was discovered about the Edmund Smith who was my direct ancestor.

Sometimes parish records would throw the odd shaft of light onto the family affairs of the early Smiths. A transcribed copy of St Andrew's Kildwick Burial Register of 1792-1801, (received from the Keighley & District Family History Society on Tuesday, 22nd July 2003) revealed the date of the death of Elizabeth Smith who was my Great, Great, Great, Great, Grandmother. It contained the following statement: "27/5/1796 SMITH wife of Edmund of Glusburn a Yeoman aged 49 years." The burial register (1802-1812) also revealed that my Great, Great Grandfather John Smith had had an elder sister Mary who'd died on 8th May 1803. The burial entry confirmed that she'd been the daughter 'of William & Susanna of Glasburn a Weaver, aged 2 yrs.' Unfortunately, Mary wasn't the only loss suffered by that family, John had also had an elder brother whose name had not been recorded. The statement simply read: "3/1/1810 SMITH a son of William & Susannah of Glusburn a Miller aged 10 years." Why, unlike the vast majority of other deceased children, his name hadn't been recorded isn't known. He doesn't appear to have been baptised either. Perhaps there'd been a clerical error or his name was identical to that of his father.

Sometimes the burial registers could be unintentionally revealing about the ways in which life was lost at that time. On 4th March 1775 the burial register for 1771-1781 entered a Richard Smith of Lothersdale "who drowned in the canal!" The same source also revealed (in an entry dated 9th December 1773) that a Husbandman by the name of Francis Stirk of Silsden Moor had lived to be 97. Other entries confirmed that it was possible for men and women to live into extreme old age. Not everyone died young. This last point was underlined in the following tomb inscription, lying within Saint Andrew's Church.

“This stone relives from oblivion the
Memory of Thomas Wade of Silsden Moor who
Lived a life of plainness, uprightness &
Temperance and died Feb II 1810
In the 103rd year of his age
Also Martha widow of Hugh Hudson and daughter
Of the above Thomas Wade who died Mch 2nd 1812 73rd yr.”

A ‘Deed of Release’ discovered at the West Yorkshire Archive Service Centre at Wakefield on Monday, July 14th 2003 threw far greater light upon the activities of the early Smiths. Regrettably, the use of archaic language, dense handwriting and eighteenth century legal terminology made this a ferociously difficult document to either transcribe or to interpret. Indeed, professional help from more than one archivist had to be sought in order to make any sense of it at all. In outline it demonstrated that the Smiths were purchasing land and property, which they had hitherto held on lease. Under eighteenth century law this was a three way process whereby the lease was ‘released’ (terminated) before it became the freehold property of the purchaser. The following lengthy extract will give a greater idea of the ponderous style in which this document was written - the red lettering was as such in the original.

“INDENTURES of lease and release date respectively the thirteenth and fourteenth days of February in the twenty eighth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George the third by the grace of God of Great Britain, France and Scotlan, King, Defender of the Faith and so forth and in the year of our Lord Seventeen Hundred and Eighty Eight. This release was made between the Reverend William Bawdwen of Stonegap in the Parish of Kildwick and George Smith of Bisko within Glasburn in the Parish of Kildwick aforesaid yeoman of the two other parts and the lease made between the Rev’d William Bawdwen of the first part, of Grace Bawdwen of the City of York of the second part, Thomas Chippendale, Stargate Gentleman of the third part, the said George Smith of the fourth part and Edmund Smith of Glusburn aforesaid manufacturer of the fifth part and concerning all that fields, or dwelling house, farm and tenancies in situ in Glusburn aforesaid and generally called or known as Glusburn Gree,n write our lease out [for the] Turf house and garden to the said belonging and all those several closes and parcels of ground variously called and known as the Green, Beanlands, [Wheatlands, Binns, Ryecroft, Lingah] Hopsis all of which parcelled out, situated lying and being in Glusburn aforesaid in the Parish of Kildwick and now in the tenancy or occupation of Joshua Clough.” (Reference CX: Page 530 document 719.) The rest of this document stated that, although William Bawdwen made this ‘release’ a Matthew Wilson of Otley and William Philips of Silsden were required to place their signatures as witnesses. A brief note in the margin confirmed that represented here was a transfer

of real estate from William Bawdwen to George and Edmund Smith.

Consultation (on Monday, July 14th 2003) with a knowledgeable informant experienced in this type of documentation, showed that Edmund Smith had been one of five parties involved in the lease; he was now collaborating with a George Smith (his brother?) to purchase several closes of land, consisting of approximately 32 acres (although some of these could have been later purchases). A firsthand observation made of the area during a visit to Clusburn on Saturday, July 26th 2003 confirmed that a substantial property had been involved. It had consisted mainly of downward sloping fields, tilting toward Glusburn Beck where the Corn Mill was sited. It made ideal pastureland for sheep or cattle.

What this crucial document showed was that in 1788, the year King George the Third had had his first serious attack of madness, the Smith family were moving up in the world. They were investing in land, which was to stand them in good stead until at least the mid nineteenth century. On display was an ability to think and to plan ahead. Also present were links with the Cloughs and Wilsons whose names would frequently re-occur in connection with the Smiths. One intriguing question remained; where did Edmund and George obtain the money for such a substantial purchase? The answer is lost in the swirling fog of time but the clear implication is that the first Edmund Smith had made a success of his business in what appears to have been cloth manufacturing. In the year King George went mad the Smiths were already displaying a strong capacity for business.

Reference to earlier Deed Purchase Indexes, covering the period from c.1760 until 1787 showed that there was next to no purchasing of real estate in Glasburn Township by any party during that time. In contrast during the same period in Cowling, which was only five miles East of Colne a considerable amount of purchasing activity had been made by the Smiths who lived there. 'Edmund' was a common forename amongst them. Interestingly, an old family tradition stated that the Smiths came from Colne, Lancashire. Now none of the available documentation showed this as ever applying to any of the Smiths living in the post 1778 period. Therefore if true this tradition of moving from the Colne or Cowling area must be prior to that date. From the scrappy documentation available and from the fact that my Great, Great, Great Grandfather William Smith married Susanna Emmot a spinster of Cowling in 1799 it's possible to reconstruct the following order of events.

Around the time of his marriage to Elizabeth in 1768, Edmund Smith moved from nearby Cowling to Glasburn and took up a lease. He had prospered sufficiently by 1788 to purchase (along with George Smith) the whole of the land covered by the lease. Despite the discovery of the deed much remained tantalizingly obscure and it wasn't possible to verify any definite Smith activity before William's birth in November 1778. Dates prior to that time could only remain approximations. Nevertheless, the deed did show that by the late eighteenth century the Smiths were going up in the world. In the next century a second Edmund Smith would later build on this trend.

The pattern of settlement followed by the Smiths in the late eighteenth century was very typical for the region. For economic reasons, there was a tendency to slowly move down from poorer hillside areas to more fertile lower lying ones. It was the Genealogist Andrew Todd who first

drew my attention to the existence of this trend on p.104 in the September 2003 issue of The Yorkshire Family Historian magazine.

However, more could be said about John and Ann Smith and a great deal more about Edmund the Commercial Traveller and the two Freds who succeeded him. Indeed, it was only with this Edmund that a clearly discernible personality emerged. It was during his life that the Smiths made their final break away from what had been a fairly rural background to a completely urban lifestyle in Leeds. In addition, it was this Edmund who secured for the Smiths a firm place in the Victorian middle classes and by so doing made possible a whole range of achievements – some of which will be described in greater detail in other chapters.

To convey a flavour of the world in which my early ancestors were born it was decided to quote extracts from the Leeds Intelligencer, which was an important regional newspaper of the day. This paper was selected because it covered the whole period from the time of William Smith's birth, in November 1778, to Edmund's in January 1832. It is worth mentioning that from the 1790s onwards the Leeds Intelligencer was Tory in its sympathies – in contrast to the Leeds Mercury, which supported the Whig Party. It was this political divide, which partly explained the different coverage given to an event such as the Great Reform Meeting held in Leeds on May 14th 1832. The Leeds Intelligencer gave a negative coverage, (which highlighted the disorderly aspect of that meeting) whereas the Leeds Mercury took care to give a far more positive impression of the events.

(Any inserts of my own will be denoted by square brackets [], though some old spellings and phraseology will have been retained):

On Tuesday, November 3rd 1778, the day after William Smith's birth, the Leeds Intelligencer (price 3d) contained the following news items: -

“The following ships sailed from Sandy Hook [off the coast of America], under the command of Lord Howe, August 6th 1778 – The Cornwall of 74 guns, Eagle Trident, Nonsuch, Reasonable, Somerse St Albans and Ardent, of 64 guns each. Preston, Centurion, Experiment, Isis and Renown of 50 guns each. Phoenix and Roebuck of 44 guns each. Venus of 36, Richmond, Pearl and Apollo of 32 guns each. Spitfire of 20, besides several armed ships, fire-ships. & c. &c.”

Apparently their mission was to engage the French fleet (who were supporting the Americans) in the New York area. A long despatch from Lord Howe had preceded this bulletin, which appears itself to have been extracted from the London Gazette and dated August 17th 1778. It seems that in those days news about the American War of Independence took two to three months to reach Leeds – (a far slower speed than we are used to today!)

The next item recorded was one of many auction announcements.

“To be SOLD by AUCTION

By T. STOOKS,

At BRAMHOPE HALL, near OTLEY

ALL the Valuable Household furniture,

Belonging to Mrs VAVASOUR, consisting of Bed-

heads with different Hangings, and Window Hangings,

Bedding, Plate, Linen, China, Glass & C.

The Sale to begin on Monday the Sixteenth of Nov.

Inst. At Ten o' Clock in the Forenoon, and to continue till

All are sold.”

This fairly typical announcement has a certain market town air about it. The list of goods being sold revealed that Mrs Vavasour had been a wealthy lady. One wonders whether she'd died or fallen on hard times.

“VOLTAIRES WORK COMPLEAT.

On Saturday last was published, price only 6d

Elegantly printed in octavo, and ornamented with a Head

Of the Author, copied from an original bust by the ingenious Mr Houden and engraved by Mr Walker,

NUMBER 1. (to be continued weekly) of

A Compleat Edition of the WORKS of the late celebrated Mr De VOLTAIRE – Translated from the French by WILLIAM CAMPBELL, I.L.D.

Member of the Royal Academy of Sciences and Belles Lettres

at Lyons, J. JOHNSON M.A and OTHERS.

With Notes, Critical and Explanatory.”

This advert was most fascinating because it showed that Enlightenment Thinking was spreading even to a provincial town like Leeds. It was not a phenomenon confined to capital cities like

London or Paris. In a very shrewd manner a reputable authorities like the Academy of Sciences, was used the Leeds Intelligencer as a selling point to an obviously upper class genteel audience. The advertisers knew how to appeal to their market. Of particular interest was the way in which the following public notice provided evidence that the ‘pirating’ of Voltaire’s works was a real problem. This suggested that there was a significant demand for them.

“To distinguish the spurious performances from those which really flowed from his pen, as well as to procure many of his last pieces would have been a task attended with superior difficulties, had not the present translators been generously favoured with the assistance of the author’s noble friend the Marquis de Villette; under whose hospitable roof he died.”

Present here was an appeal to traditional English snobbery with its love of aristocratic titles. The advertisers clearly knew how to differentiate their product from those of other competitors, who were quite subtly belittled. They also had a clearly targeted market niche in mind. Their sales promotion was really quite brilliant and could rival any ‘modern’ advert produced today.

On Monday, March 13th 1805, four days before John Smith’s birth, the Leeds Intelligencer (price now 6d) contained the following news items: -

“CAUTION

The Public are hereby informed, that I will not
From the Day of the date hereof, be answerable for
Debt or debts which ELIZABETH SARAH REYNOLDSON,
The Wife of me THOMAS REYNOLDSON,
Leeds, in the County of York, Taylor, or her son
WILLIAM PARKER, may contract, or have heretofore
enacted – As Witness my Hand
THOMAS REYNOLDSON,

Rothwell Gaol, March 7th 1805.”

The angry tone of this announcement speaks volumes. What appears to have happened was that Thomas Reynoldson had found himself in prison because of debts incurred by a spendthrift wife. She appears to have passed money on to a son of a previous marriage; perhaps she was one of those silly mothers who couldn't say 'no' to the unreasonable demands of a feckless child. If this was the case then the result was the enmity of her second husband who was determined to 'wash his hands' of both his wife and stepson alike; the words were those of a man driven to the last point of frustration. An interesting insight had thus been given into some of the domestic conflicts existing at the time.

“In HOPKINS'S BANKRUPTCY

An Order of Dividend having been lately made
by the commissioners in a commission of bankrupt,
awarded and issued against SAMUEL HOPKINS, now or
late of Leeds, in the County of York, Merchant, Dealer
and Chapman.

NOTICE is hereby given

That the fair Dividend will be paid to the Creditors
As have proved their Debts under the said commission, at
the House of William Ward, the Bull and Mouth Inn, in
Leeds, on Saturday the Thirteenth Day of March Inst. Between
the Hours of Ten in the Morning and Five in the
Afternoon – By Order,
CHARLES CARR, Solicitor.
Greenfall, March 11th 1805.”

The fact that this was one of half a dozen bankruptcy notices appearing on the first page of this paper was indicative that Leeds was enduring a period of economic stress. The presence of at least two dissolved partnerships supported this conclusion. However, on the next page was an advert for the Insurance Policies of the Norwich Union – (a Company successfully thriving to this day.) This particular advert had an eye-catching logo of two hands clasped in a handshake each sporting two ruff shirtsleeves. Here again I had the impression that many of our allegedly new ‘marketing techniques’ are really not so new after all! Beyond its eye catching quality this handshake logo had merit as a marketing tool for conveying an image of trust.

The next item conveyed some important international news demonstrating the complexity of both the military and political conflict then raging across Europe.

“THURSDAYS POST.

LONDON, March 12.

Letters from Berlin speak of very active negotiations

Between the court and the Russian cabinet –

The First Court is stated to have received the answer

To her offer of mediation between the former and

That of France and Russia could only treat in conjunction

With Great Britain. A defensive alliance is

also said to be in agitation between Austria and Prussia.

An English squadron of six ships is cruising off

The coast of Genoa.

The poor old Pope is destined to endure new humiliations.

According to report, he is to add to the

Degradation of his [the Popes] character by consecrating another

Usurpation of the Corsican upstart [Napoleon] at whose heels

He must lacky till he has erected a new throne in the

Italian republic.”

The Leeds Intelligencer's patriotic sentiments have been clearly revealed here. Even the Pope was shown a little sympathy because he was an enemy of "the Corsican upstart," Napoleon Bonaparte. Great hopes appear to have been placed in an anti-French alliance. Napoleon's stunning victory the battle of Austerlitz on December 2nd of that year would end these hopes. Mention was also made of various naval manoeuvres in the Atlantic. These represented the run-up to the battle of Trafalgar, which Admiral Nelson won on October 21st 1805.

On Thursday, January 19th 1832, four days before Edmund Smith's birth, the Leeds Intelligencer (price now 7d) contained the following news item: -

"The anatomy bill, on the motion of MR WARBURTON, was read a second time; the only dissentient was Mr Hunt. The Irish Reform Bill was read a first time, and the second reading fixed for Friday fortnight."

The Anatomy Bill was eventually passed, and by loosening the restrictions on dissection it ended the practice of body snatching, which had been common in Leeds. It allowed for 'unclaimed bodies' from workhouses to be used for dissection purposes. Those unfortunates who were inmates of the workhouse clamoured a great deal against it, but to no avail. Most of the parliamentary discussion was taken up with the question of the Great Reform Bill, of which the Irish Reform Bill was a part. (There was much, sometimes violent agitation over the whole question of parliamentary reform at this time.)

Leeds did not escape the economic hardships endemic during the time of Edmund's birth.

"SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR PROVIDING CLOTHING and other charitable ASSISTANCE for the POOR of Leeds during the ensuing winter.

SUBSCRIPTIONS ADVERTISED, £2676. 6d

(A long list of subscribers followed with the amounts they had donated, they mainly appear to have come from the wealthier manufacturing and professional classes.)

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED AT THE DEPOT

Mr. Wm. Holliday, five Shirts.

Mr Hunt, Eighteen women's bonnets.

Messrs. Saml. Powell & Son, Six Pair Blankets.

JOHN CAWOOD, Treasurer.

The Treasurer will attend at the Depot every Day, next
Week, from 11 to 12 o' Clock, for the purpose of receiving
Subscriptions."

This example of middle class paternalism shows that Leeds was not immune to the socio-economic distress afflicting the rest of the country. The level of distress was so great that it drove ahead the agitation for political reform. Edmund had been born at a time of very great hardship for the mass of the common people. One such hardship was the frequent outbreak of cholera caused by the dirty drinking water and overcrowded living conditions. A huge cholera epidemic had ravaged Newcastle-Upon-Tyne and its outlying settlements, from January 11th to January 17th 1832 Thirty six lives had been lost in Newcastle alone and another eight in Gateshead and one in North Shields. At Newburn, five miles from Newcastle, cholera managed to claim the life of the Rector the Rev. Edmondson on Sunday, 15th January 1832. "The following day thirty deaths occurred, and people were falling ill every hour." This village appears to have been particularly badly hit.

Sadly, there were plenty of quacks willing to exploit the despair of a frequently ill population. Two of them went under the name of Drs R. and L. Jordan who were concentrating their efforts on something other than cholera: -

"THE VENEREAL DESEASE under its
various appearances and complicated attacks may
be speedily and secretly eradicated from the system by the
use of DR LEWIS'S VEGETABLE PILLS, Price 2s 9d, or
two boxes in one for 4s 6d, which for their salutary effects in
cleansing the Blood from all impurities, whether venereal
or Scorbutic, are of the utmost importance. They are in
the highest estimation for preventing as well as totally
eradicating, every symptom of this destructive malady, and

producing a safe and salutary cure, without the least confinement, or abstemious regimen; effecting its purpose independent of those common auxiliaries that generally lead to a discovery. So sovereign a remedy should ever be in possession of such, as either through juvenile inclinations, or the habits of gallantry, frequent such places where danger is inevitable, as no change of climate can alter their power.”

(Much more tedious ‘hard sell’ then followed)

“These pills are worthy of a place in the cabinets of masters and captains of ships; the more so, as they will keep good in all climates any length of time, and they have now borne the tests above 70 years with increasing credit to themselves and to honour of the author.

Prepared only by the sole Proprietors, at 23 Park square, Leeds. Private entrance, first door on the left hand, one Door from St Paul buildings.

Drs JORDAN are to be consulted, as usual, every day And on Sundays from Nine to Two o’clock. Patients in the remotest Parts can be treated successfully on describing minutely the case and enclosing a remittance for medicine which can be forwarded to any part of the World. No difficulty can occur, as the medicines will be securely packed

and carefully protected from observation.

Address Drs R. and L. JORDAN, No. 23, Park

Square, Leeds, Money, Letter, paid double Postage.”

These peddlers of false hope appear to have made a profitable income from their quackery as Park Square contained office accommodation for wealthier professionals such as lawyers. (This is still the case!) An examination of the site made on Friday, 5th July 2002 revealed that their premises had consisted of a two storey, red brick Georgian house situated above an archway where a coach and horses would have driven through. Although covered over with new brickwork it appears that the side entrance had been set in the wall underneath the arch. A narrow flight of stairs would have taken people up to the consulting room. The Jordan's had chosen an excellent central location for their trade – with the entrance tucked away so as to afford a rapid but discreet entrance and exit for their unfortunate clients.

The high degree of literacy displayed in their promotion also betrayed a certain amount of education. Whoever Dr's R. and L. Jordan were (assuming that to be their real names) they knew how to play on the needs of a desperate market. One wonders how much VD was actually spread by customers who perhaps mistakenly thought that they had been cured by the vegetable pills? Their confidence trick had perhaps cost many lives. Incidentally, a search for their names in relevant Leeds Trade Directories proved fruitless. They didn't seem to live at their premises nor were they listed under the headings of 'Druggists' or 'Physicians.' This reinforced the impression that they were not proper, bona-fide doctors. They certainly seemed unwilling to advertise their services through the respectable channels.

Someone with a more robust attitude to the problems of the day was the following anonymous poet who published these six verses against drink.

“FILL, FILL THE CUP!

Fill the cup, the bowl, the glass

With wine and spirits high;

And we will drink, while round they pass,

To – vice and misery!

Push quickly round the draught again,
And drain the goblet low;
And drink to revelry's swelling strain,
To – Reason's overthrow!

Push round, push round in quickest time
The deepest drop be spent
In one loud round, to – guilt and Crime,
And Crime's just punishment!

Fill, fill again! Fill to the brim
To – Loss of honest fame!
Quaff, deeper quaff! While now we drink –
Our wives and children's shame!

Push round and round, with loudest cheers
Of mirth and revelry!
We drink to women's sighs and tears!
And – children's poverty!

Once more! While power shall yet remain,
Even with its latest breath,
Drink – to ourselves Disease and Pain,

And infamy and death!”

The lively beat of this poem suggested that it might have been a satire of an old drinking song. The author himself, whoever he was it may well have participated at some stage in his life in some of the situations described here. His sentiments were now identical to those of the Temperance Movement. Unlike Dr's R. and L. Jordan he preferred to challenge rather than to further exploit the social problems of his time.

Together these ten extracts covered a period of just over 53 years. They vividly traced Britain's progress from that of a market town, agriculturally based economy to one where the process of industrialisation was reaching a crescendo – leaving in its wake an enormous backwash of social and political discontent. The orderly, hierarchical world of 1778 had now given way to a highly radicalised world of 1832 - one in which the old certainties had gone and were now replaced by an overwhelming desire for reform. In between those eras there had been the loss of the American Colonies in 1783 and the severe ordeal of the Napoleonic Wars, which had raged almost without interruption from 1792 until 1815.

During my first visit made to the Sutton and Crosshills area on Monday 22nd November 1999, I noticed that the mainly terraced houses were built of sandstone ~ now sooty-black with age, but still retaining a very solid appearance. The walls were thick in order to provide protection against the icy cold winds that blew up the Aire Valley. A second visit to the area, made on 29th December 1999, this time with my wife and two younger sons, confirmed that Sutton-in-Craven was something of a 'smoke trap.' On what was a clear and frosty winter's day the smoke of one small factory chimney left a sooty blue haze over the town that could be smelt almost as far away as Crosshills. Like the spectre of a stranded blue whale, this haze lay trapped at the bottom of the valley. One was left wondering what conditions would have been like when all of the mill and house chimneys had belched their contents into the air. Lung conditions like bronchitis and pleurisy must have been rife. A metal date bar above a passageway confirmed that most of the houses near the Crosshills Road had been built in 1862. Further out, and nearer to the Parish Church lay even more substantial houses, which dated from the late 1870s.

Steep grassy ridges flanked both settlements, to the lay north by Rombalds Moor and to the south Shipley Moor. Personal observations made during my initial visit quickly reinforced the impression of bleak 'Wuthering Heights' country. In winter a damp, icy wind would blow down from the moors, chilling the very bones. However, seeing the sun sink over Shipley Moor towards the end of the second visit was a very moving experience. As I stood with my family just outside the small Crosshills local library, we watched the red glow ebbing out over the moor land ridge, high above Sutton. As I looked I realised that this too was a sight that my distant forbears would also have witnessed. This common experience somehow brought them closer to me.

During the nineteenth century the main local agriculture would have been sheep farming. In most

places the soil was simply too poor to have grown much in the way of crops, except for oats in a few sheltered locations. These at least would have provided fodder for the horses but it would have been difficult to make a full time living as a Corn-Miller. Such an activity would of necessity have often taken place in conjunction with other work. A 1799 "Survey of Agriculture in the West Riding" provided supporting evidence for this point. One part of this survey was quoted by Wood pp. 27-8, and stated that, "very little corn is now grown, grazing being the main farming occupation and sheep farming very common. The whole Vale of Skipton is under grass, a wet climate making it unfit for corn and small farms." An 1841 Tithe Map of the Vale of Skipton showed that only 178 acres were given over to arable farming as compared to 1,974 acres for meadow and (mainly sheep) pasture. What fruit and vegetables there were, were often grown in small back gardens. Rather unexpectedly, Sutton enjoyed a good reputation for producing good quality strawberries.

In spite of such constraints, an influential local family called Bairstow had, in April 1809, acquired a Corn Mill in Sutton Mill. The whole purchase (which included three 'closes' of land) had cost £2,560. This sum of money showed that the Bairstow's were already an extremely wealthy family. (Records show that they had been commercially active for at least the previous decade, having re-opened a Corn Mill in neighbouring Steeton on January 30th 1798.) The previous owner of the mill had been a certain David McCarten. Apparently, they taken over a site used for corn milling purposes since 1543. The limited profitability in that line of business provoked the two brothers Thomas and Matthew Bairstow to move into worsted manufacturing in 1838. Like many other manufacturers of the time, they began by converting the use of the old premises by importing worsted machinery. Very quickly however, the Bairstow brothers began to construct a large worsted factory on the same site as the old Corn Mill. (Stone for both mills was carted from the four hillside quarries lying to the south and south east of Sutton.) Over the 1836-1838 period, there was substantial rebuilding on the site and in December 1838 money had been paid for a temporary dam. Their action demonstrated that a highly enterprising, business-orientated family did not see much of a future in corn milling. Later cited evidence showed that by June 1834, my Great, Great Grandfather John Smith had worked as a Miller in Cullingworth. In Sutton, the only way he could have followed this trade on a regular basis was either by working with his father at Glusburn Corn Mill or for Bairstow's Corn Mill sited on what was then, called Glusburn Beck. Edmund himself would describe his father's occupation as being a 'Corn-Miller' and this description strongly suggested a link with either or (at different times) both of these mills. Some nearby tenant farmers called the Roes also undertook Corn-Milling but were only in operation after the early 1830s, by which time John Smith had moved to Cullingworth. The Roe's business was only on a very small-scale and would have been unlikely to provide regular employment – something, which John Smith needed in order to survive. Unless he owned an established local business my Great, Great Grandfather would have found Corn Milling to be a very precarious, occupation. No Trade Directories for Sutton, Cullingworth or Skipton showed him ever owning a large enough business to gain an entry in that type of source.

A review of the Bairstow archives at Bradford Archive Centre on Friday, June 28th 2002 confirmed that the Bairstows were a substantial family with properties and shares in a diverse

number of places across the West Riding of Yorkshire. They also owned land, cottages and shops. Miscellaneous documents in the archive revealed that in 1831 there was a purchase of land near Silsden called New Close from a Henry Spencer, the traditional landowner, for the then large sum of £57 3s 7d. The Barstow's thus reflected the wider trend of the time wherein manufacturing families were taking over from old landed families who had hitherto been dominant. (Details of the huge Bairstow archive can be found in Hudson pp.9-48. It was fortunate that I needed only to find material up to the end of 1835. The whole archive itself carried on into the 1960s.)

Once I had gained access to this source the next question was to determine whether the Smiths' had any connection with the Bairstows. In particular I was keen to ascertain whether my family had ever worked for them. Consequently, I had to spend a total of two and a half hours wading through account books, sale ledgers, lists of outworkers and wage cashbooks. Some of them were written in very faint ink and even in pencil. Also present were badly written rough 'workings out,' which obscured the important data. Nevertheless, these records were of sufficient detail to allow a number of definite conclusions to be drawn. The first showed a business connection between the two families, but only a very limited one. A John Smith Senior (his actual full name) was found to have laboured at the new dam in Sutton Mill, constructed from 19/8/1809 until 8/11/1809. He was paid 6s 6d, which constituted only a small part of the total (mainly labour) costs of £25 12s 0d. His name had been written against the date 8/11/1809. A more substantial connection was enjoyed by an Edmund Smith of Sutton who featured in the 1834-1843 'Wage Account Cash Book For Hand Combers' who were also 'Outworkers.' (A Hand Comber had the unpleasant job of manually cleaning wool before it was processed in the mill; Outworkers simply did their work at home rather than on the industrial premises and were employed on a short term Commission basis. Their labour was usually taken on when a large order needed to be met.) It was found that he had been paid: -

£ 5 16s 9d for work done over 1/12/1837-9/2/1838

£ 7 7s 4dh for work done over 1/12/1838-16/4/1838

£ 7 15s 6dh for work done over 21/4/1839-7/9/1839

£ 7 16s 5d for work done over 13/9/1839-29/1/1840

N.B. h, stands for halfpenny.

Another interesting transaction took place with the brothers Joseph and Benjamin Smith who had been wool dealers in Crosshills. A 'Purchase/Sales Day Book' covering 1830-1835, had the following entry, dated October 21st 1831, "J & B Smith Crosshills contra Ce. (Latin for 'Credit Against') for wool £14 2s 63/4d." A subsequent entry for October 29th showed that they had paid this amount in cash. From this entry one can deduce that these Smiths were prompt payers who liked to keep some cash in hand. A review of the index in this source showed that, given the large numbers of Smiths involved in textiles, only a few had any links with the Bairstow Empire. Even the name "J & B Smith" came up only once. It appeared that the Smiths as a whole wanted to give the Bairstows a fairly wide berth. Presumably, they were keen to preserve their

independence from a large organisation. Given the working conditions in Barstows Mill at Sutton they were perhaps wise to have adopted this stance. On the whole, the Smiths were a very self-sufficient lot, determined to make their own way forward in life. Incidentally, this independent streak was a trait my own father possessed to a large degree. I myself have it!

None of the above Smiths were my direct ancestors. However, there was a direct ancestral link with my Great, Great, Great, Grandfather William Smith who had limited connections with the Bairstow Dynasty as shown in the following entries: -

“1823, March 3rd’Let Wm Smith stable horses for £1 11s 6d – Wm Smith left the horses 6th December.” (From the Account Book 1801-1839)

“11th June 1835 William Smith Crosshills,

59 11- 1. 1. 25

14

1—1-11 – for 15 Ibs Scotch Wool@ 63/4 per Ib pays £4-4-10

2

4-5-0”

(From p. 341 of the ‘Purchase/Sales Book’ 1830-1835. On 25/6/1835 an entry on p.343 showed that he had paid off the amount owed, £4-4-10 in cash and the remaining 2s by discount. Rough workings out preceded this figure.)

“22nd November 1830 paid William Smith for Comb setting £1-5s-0d, sundries 8s 3d.” (From p. 365 the ‘Purchase/Sales Book’ 1830-1835. This is a slightly more doubtful entry and may well refer to another William Smith.)

Unlike most of the other entries, William Smith was not a regular customer of the Bairstow enterprise. He appeared only to have dealings with them when he had to. The amounts quoted in the ‘Purchase/Sales’ book showed that he did have some spare cash to use. My ancestor was by no means the poorest member of the local community. Like many of his contemporaries he appeared to diversify into a number of business activities. These included Corn Milling, other agricultural activities and textiles. William Smith was certainly keen to spread his risk. He

provided early evidence of that shrewd Smith business brain, which would manifest itself throughout successive generations. (It was absolutely fascinating for me to see these written financial transactions involving my ancestral family and at such a distance in time.)

According to Riley (1996) most of the people would have worked at home as weavers or cloth makers. During the eighteenth century textiles had largely replaced agriculture as the main occupation in Sutton. For some reason, John Smith did not follow this trend by taking up handloom weaving. However, the invention of the Spinning Jenny in 1764 created a new trend toward a greater number of people working alongside one another in larger premises. These often consisted of little more than a few cottages knocked together. Nevertheless, by the time Edmund was born mass production would have been well under way. However, smaller-scale cottage industries did manage to survive by specialising in the production of high quality cloth. Hence, in the economic sphere, the old co-existed fairly amicably with the new. At a lecture given at a meeting of the Family History Section of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society on Wednesday, 13th June 2001, the local historian Stephen Counce confirmed that until about 1850, the old domestic system grew alongside the new factory system. At that time the factories concentrated upon the mass production of a lower quality cloth. It was only after 1850 that power looms were able to produce the same quality of cloth as the traditional handloom. Counce also remarked that the woollen industry was an industry “that consisted of a lot of little people” and that its pattern of development was one of steady growth over long centuries rather than the rapid boom and bust that characterised the Cotton Industry. Nevertheless, Edmund’s entrance into the world came at a time when, through industrialisation the Western World was undergoing its most amazing development in production since the agricultural revolution 10,000 years previously. In addition, salesmanship was something, which would have been instilled in his blood. The aggressive salesmanship of textile representatives from the North of England was greatly feared by competitors in places as far a-field as New York where these “pushy people” were accused of undermining the American Constitution! These representatives knew what it was to go out and seize foreign markets. It was their determination, which played an important part in laying the foundations of Britain’s industrial success throughout the nineteenth century. Edmund too was to share this quality of sheer determination in full measure.

A chance encounter with an eighty-four year old man (during my first visit to Sutton) confirmed that most of the mill working families had intermarried with one another. The fact that Edmund married outside the Sutton area suggested that he enjoyed a status slightly higher than that of the ordinary mill worker. My informant himself used to work at a nearby mill. He also stated that there were possibly up to three families of Smiths still living in the Sutton area and that in the 1920s the Baptist church had still been very active, running a Sunday school and a ‘Band of Hope’ Temperance Society, whose aim was to encourage people to give up alcoholic drinks. This particular Baptist Assembly still existed, situated near the bridge spanning Holme (formerly Glasburn) Beck, and now housed in a very modern building on the left hand side of the old Turnpike Road, running up to Crosshills. Much more will be said about this church and its profound influence upon my family in the second chapter of this history.

Wood p.1 suggested that the name Sutton was derived from the Anglo-Saxon word 'Sun-tun,' meaning 'south Town.' It had been settled by the Angles during the early to mid Dark Ages (C.500 –700AD). This meant that originally the Smiths had come from the Rhineland in Germany. The surname, 'Smith' implied that some of my remote ancestors had been blacksmiths who may well have forged some of the weapons used to destroy the power of Rome. The use of Norse words such as 'Ellers' (meaning 'Alder' tree) indicated a Viking influence and for much of the late dark ages, (C.800-1000 AD) Sutton lay on the boundary of Danish held territory known as the Dane law. Consequently, some Viking blood in the Smiths could not be ruled out. However, The first documented evidence for an early settlement was provided by a Domesday Book entry, which revealed that, excluding woodland, Sutton and other surrounding villages were assessed on a value basis of 200 acres. This suggested that Sutton had been a settled agricultural community sometime before the Norman Conquest. Generous supplies of spring water, woodland and game would have provided an incentive to settle in the area. Even so, life must have been hard, with a diet confined mainly to porridge and bread. At best Sutton was in a highly marginal area for arable crops, with farming at a subsistence level and famine an ever-present threat. Hardly surprisingly, there was a tendency to diversify into sheep farming at a very early stage and this would explain why the woollen trade began to develop in the later middle ages. During this period Sutton would have consisted of daub and wattle cottages strung along a dirt track, which would later become the high street. Behind each cottage would have been a vegetable patch and behind these would have lain the open fields. Most people would have been short in stature, with well-defined jaws to chew the rough bread, having unwashed hair covered in nits. Diseases stemming from malnutrition will have been rife, with the bow-shaped legs of rickets being all too common. The little amount of leisure time would have been spent on drink and on activities connected to the Parish Church at Kildwick. A visit to the market at Skipton five miles to the North West would have constituted a rare treat. From perhaps Tudor times (1485-1603), people would have tried to supplement a meagre agricultural living by spinning and weaving textiles. A document of 1558 provided the earliest record of the domestic system of weaving. It mentioned "a payre of loomes with a shearborde," (Wood p.34). By 1700 textiles were becoming an important secondary occupation for many hard-pressed farmers. Significantly, two entries from the Sutton Township Account Book quoted in Wood p.34 recorded the costs involved in repairing two pieces of weaving equipment.

1760: 'Paid for wool for lumes for Richard Petty and two times going a brought it 18/-.'

1790: 'To two spinning wheels for Berry Shackleton 3/8d.'

By the time the last of these entries was made the textile trade was beginning to become the major source of employment in Sutton. Farming was no longer the main line of business.

The technical difficulties involved in calculating population figures before the 1801 Census were partly resolved by employing other sources such as Poll Tax Returns, Militia Muster Rolls and Baptismal Registers. In order to follow conventional historical practice, the first two of these sources were multiplied between six and seven times to provide an estimated population range. (With Baptismal Registers the calculations were more complex with a multiple of 31 being used for mathematical reasons. Particularly in remote areas like Sutton large-scale tax evasion may well

have distorted some estimated population figures downwards.) After adding an extra 5% to estimated population totals to allow for tax evasion it was possible to establish with a reasonable amount of confidence that the approximate pre-census population of Sutton stood in the range of:

-
115-150 in 1379

180-220 in 1539

300-350 in 1648

380-420 in 1744

Beyond periods of famine, outbreaks of contagious diseases (such as the epidemics of 1587 and 1604) provided another major break on population expansion. A tomb inscription next to Kildwick Parish Church revealed that two teenage boys were buried on the same day in January 1732. Such closely connected deaths could easily have been due to an infectious illness. The names of these youths were Robert and John Smith. A more thoroughly documented case mentioned in Wood p.84 was that of a Benjamin Clough who had married Mary Emmott in 1744. They produced four children; Robert, John, Elizabeth and a baby born on 13/1/1749. Five months later all of the family including had been wiped out by some unknown infection. For many in those days life was truly 'nasty, brutish and short.'

By 1801 the population of Sutton had grown to 809, (probably an underestimate). Given what was known about the conditions in which people lived, it seemed unlikely that an improvement in health played more than a minor role in creating this doubling of population in just over half a century. The real reason lay in that massive shift from a rural to a manufacturing economy known as the Industrial Revolution. The construction of the Leeds-Liverpool Canal at Kildwick in 1786 and the completion of the Keighley to Kendal Turnpike Road in 1798 opened up the locality to new industries and to migrant labour. Most of the migrants would have travelled from within a ten-mile radius, but names like McCoben suggested that some of them had indeed come from further a-field. Wood p. 12 revealed that the majority of migrant workers lodged in Sutton Mill or Ellers, although a few were spread out on outlying farms including Long House and Valley Farm (where two branches of the Clough family lived.) The presence of such migration indicated that very few people had any kind of sentimental attachment to the land. To such migrants agriculture was an occupation to escape from rather than to cherish. It was in textiles where new opportunities beckoned. Sutton itself possessed both the sheep and the waterpower to support a large-scale move into textiles. At this stage, most of the weaving and garment making will have been done in people's homes. Soon water mills and larger workshops would provide a foretaste of the large textile mills that were to dominate the locality from 1830 until their closure in the 1980s. At the beginning of the nineteenth century most manufacturers would have had to make do with knocking a few cottages together in order to make a workshop. During the nineteenth century there was a major trend for people to move from agriculturally-based pursuits to first cotton and then, following a major banking crash in the mid 1820s, to worsted (woollen) manufacture. However, some bypassed the cotton stage altogether and went straight into worsteds. Even where

agricultural pursuits continued it was often only in conjunction with weaving and spinning. Often a local farm would act as the main source of employment whilst textile work would provide an extra piece of income. There was a marked trend toward diversification, although in many cases textile work alone would gradually take precedence.

The first recorded worsted manufacturers in Sutton were Joshua Hill and Robert Clough who took up this occupation as early as 1787 – (two years before the outbreak of the French Revolution in July 1789). One other person to quickly seize upon the opportunities presented by the early stage of industrialisation was a certain John Smith (1718-1793) who, following his death, was described by the Kildwick Parish Register as being ‘for many years an eminent worsted manufacturer.’ (Incidentally, this was the year in which King Louis XVI of France and his wife Marie Antoinette were guillotined in Paris, where the Jacobean terror was at its height.) Quoted in Wood p.34, this notice meant that he must have possessed enough business acumen to make a success of his trade despite periods of economic instability. His work would have required him to travel to Colne and Halifax to sell his wares in the Cloth Halls located in these places. At Halifax a room could be hired for £2.00 per year or purchased entirely for £30.00. There was no reason to think that dissimilar prices were charged at Colne. Whilst working in these Halls John Smith would have had to prove himself a very good salesman. In particular he needed to strike a good bargain with a customer, giving the impression that it was the customer who was being done the great favour. Such a challenge would have demanded a marked degree of ‘playacting’ and a strong voice to go with it. Somehow, I could easily imagine my own father Fred discharging that role with great enthusiasm.

A source of further information about this John Smith was his monumental inscription at Kildwick Parish Church. This provided the following details: -

John Smith of Sutton, upwards 50 years a tradesman.
75th year

August 31st 1793

Mary his relict (meaning widow)
December 21st 1799 83rd year

Clearly, here was a man who wanted to be remembered for his business. His epitaph anticipated that of my Great Grandfather Edmund who also took pride in his business. Whether this John Smith was a direct forbear of Edmund could not be proven, but if he was then he would have been his Great, Great Grandfather. My own instinct as a family historian is to believe that there was a connection – not least because Edmund appears to have inherited his gift in doing well at business.

As a final point, it’s worth noting that this John Smith was obviously much better off than the able-bodied paupers who were paid only 1/- a day to repair the local roads. During epidemics it was these paupers who were sent to clear out the houses of those who had died. Often, the result was a reduction of the poor relief needing to be paid out!

Other more traditional craft occupations continued and were perhaps even rejuvenated by the

arrival of new migrants. The 1822 Baines Directory listed another John Smith as being a stonemason. For him to possess such an entry meant that his highly traditional craft must have been doing well. Very small businesses were not usually recorded in this Directory.

During 1803, the threat of a French invasion caused a Militia Muster Roll to be compiled covering the whole of Kildwick Parish. Recorded on this document (kindly provided by the small community Library at Crosshills on Monday, 5th February 2001) were the names and trades of the following Smiths from Glasburn Township just north of Sutton.

Henry Spencer Smith – “Weaver”

Edward Smith – “Miller”

Thomas Smith – “Mason”

William Smith – “Comber”

William Smith – “Miller”

Wilkinson Smith – “Mason”

George Smith – “Weaver”

Robert Smith – “Comber”

Robert Smith – “Miller”

What this document showed was the way in which these Smiths appeared to hold in common a narrow range of occupations; these being mainly textiles, milling and masonry. They appeared to be neither at the very wealthy nor the very poor end of their communities. Given the tendency of militias in those days to include anybody who was even remotely fit it also seemed apparent that represented here were the majority of able-bodied Smiths. In addition, some of the above Smiths might well be father and son. Statistical extrapolation suggested there were a total of 55-70 Smiths living inside Glasburn Township. They were clearly very prolific. Of particular interest was the connection with milling. Whilst noting the fact that in this period the same occupation was usually passed down from father to son, it seemed highly possible that one of the Smith's who was listed as a miller may well have been the parent of John Smith. The presence of a John William amongst one of John Smith's Grandchildren suggested that of the three millers listed William Smith was the most likely candidate. Reinforcing this view was the following item of information from Sutton Baptist Dissenting Register:

“John Smith, the son of William and Susanna his wife of Glasburn in the Parish of Kildwick in the county of York was born the seventeenth day of March in the year of our Lord 1805 - registered

the twenty third day of June of our Lord 1805 by John Walton – Protestant Dissenting Minister.”

Significantly, this John Smith would have still only been a 19-year-old minor at the time of his marriage in May 1824. Consultation with Pigot’s 1834 Trade Directory showed that the only miller of note in Glasburn was a certain Guy Pearson. The implication of this finding was that by this period the Smith’s owned no significant Corn Milling Business, instead they appear to have worked for other people. Any corn milling business they did own would have only been very small.

An 1838 Trade Directory (held in Keighley Public Library) listed Sutton-in-Craven as having a population of 1,153 spread over 2,650 acres. (Compared to a population of 3,240 recorded in the 1991 Census.) In 1830 the Industrial Revolution arrived with the foundation of a new worsted Mill owned by the Hartley family. From speaking to local inhabitants, it was ascertained that at one time the mill had been called Hartley-Smith mill, and so a possible (albeit distant) family connection had existed, although the Hartleys were undoubtedly the prominent shareholders.

Already well established in the village was a Baptist Chapel, (Sutton Baptist Church) standing beside the Crosshills Road just above a small stream. Situated behind it was the Baptist Cemetery. Founded in 1711 by the Rev. Isaac Dewhirst, the Church had long been a very important centre of village life. At the time of Edmund's birth, this mill-like building was something that could hardly have been missed. The high degree of courtesy shown by Sutton Baptist Chapel in correspondence conducted during late 1999 pointed it out as being a Church having retained many good values. Further details about the effect this assembly had on the life of the wider community shall be described in Chapter Three.

Throughout Edmund’s youth the Bronte sisters would have been making their own distinguished contributions to Victorian literature whilst living at Haworth Parsonage, some eight miles to the Southeast. However, Sutton Township itself was following its own course, and despite having a strong sense of community it remained very much the sort of place from which any ambitious young man would wish to escape.

A few hundred yards due north of Sutton and further along the Crosshills Road, across what is now known as Holme Beck, stood the village of Crosshills itself. In 1838 it formed part of the Glasburn Township, and along with Glasburn itself, it comprised of 987 inhabitants spread over 1,513 acres. Like Sutton, Glasburn Township belonged to the Parish of Kildwick, itself a small village adjacent to the Leeds-Liverpool Canal. At the centre of Kildwick lay the very distinguished-looking fifteenth century church of Saint Andrew. Most of the inhabitants of Kildwick Parish would have possessed thick Yorkshire accents with expressions like “ayup lad,” being common. A tough labouring life would have created a practical, realistic disposition ~ one

which valued hard work and disliked emotional displays. Drunkenness and wife beating may well have comprised the most common social problems. The presence of two Inns in 1822, 'the Black Bull' and 'the Bay Horse' provided evidence of a significant market for alcoholic beverages. A third Inn 'the Kings Arms' had also been established by 1837. Evidently, the local demand for 'demon drink' had been growing. Within these Inns there would once have been stone flagged floors, spittoons, benches and tables, with a landlady on hand to act as the local 'agony aunt.' Innkeepers often brewed their own ale. During the 1850s, Richard Laycock who was landlord of the Bayhorse, was reputed to have cooled his barrels of beer in Clough Beck. The formation of a Sutton Branch of the Temperance Society in 1869 suggested that drunkenness were increasingly viewed as a major problem. In those days, people had little else to do with their evening leisure time except to get drunk on beer or to get drunk on religion! Perhaps both pub and chapel were catering for the same need to escape a marked sense of boredom. They were also places where a strong sense of community could be generated.

One further social problem was illegitimacy. According to a lecture given by the local historian Linda Croft to the Family History Section of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society (on Wednesday evening, June 14th 2000) the illegitimacy rate was in the order of 10 – 12%. However, this figure relied upon incomplete Church Registers so the real percentage may well have been higher. Hence it is possible that the real illegitimacy rate may have been around 15 – 20%. There were also a large number of marriages taking place because the partner was already with child. In Burnley (15 miles southwest of Sutton), the parents of one girl who worked in a mill sued the man who made her pregnant for loss of earnings. After awarding the girl's parent's £50.00, the magistrate warned that he was not setting a legal precedent. During his summing up he remarked that the weaving class people appeared to "enjoy their gravy first and say grace afterwards." However, in accord with ancient custom some men felt it right to cause a pregnancy before a marriage, thus ensuring the woman was fertile and could provide children who would care for them in old age.

Any social problems would have been compounded by the awful housing conditions, which prevailed during the eighteenth and nineteenth century. By 1840, with severe overcrowding, conditions may well have been at their worst. An 1840 map of Sutton Village and its outlying farms showed the village a little to the south of what was then called Glusburn Beck. The village was an elongated settlement straddling the Kendal to Keighley Turnpike Road. Up a very steep hill at the very Southern tip of the settlement lay a tiny hamlet called Ellers, (spelt Hellers in the 1851 and Owelers in the 1861 Census Returns). The name is derived from the Norse word for 'alder,' which was a common type of tree in the locality. Flowing out from an oblong alcove chiselled out of a sandstone wall was a spring known as Dow Well, which an old photograph confirmed was still used during the early part of the twentieth Century. Ellers had three rows of cottages, two on the East and one on the West Side of the Turnpike Road. This tiny hamlet had strong associations with the Smiths of Sutton. A firsthand visit made to Ellers on Monday, 19th March 2001 confirmed that some of the housing here was very old but at the beginning of the nineteenth century they would have been a little more spacious than the cottages in Sutton Mill. I also found Dow well beside a fairly busy hillside road. It looked remarkably unchanged from an old photograph taken around 1900. The only alteration was that the small gateway, once leading to it, was now blocked in by a dry stonewall. There was quite a breath taking view of Sutton from

Ellers, which lay just inside the modern township boundary. (Incidentally, a Township consisted of isolated settlements grouped together under one local authority - their boundaries often being very indistinct. A Township formed only part of Parish; hence, the 'Township of Sutton' existed within 'the Parish of Kildwick' alongside other Townships such as Glasburn. The system of local government during the first half of the nineteenth century was often very confused.)

To the North of Ellers straddled the High Street, which in reality formed part of the Turnpike Road. In 1840 most of the buildings were sited on the West Side of the road, but were rarely more than two rows deep. It was in the High Street that most of the shops and small craft trades were located. Two Public Houses, 'The Bay Horse' (nearest to Ellers) and 'The Kings Arms' (more neatly tucked into the centre of Sutton) are still functioning. However, no shops remain along the High Street now (in contrast to Crosshills, which still has a busy main street) and the centre of Sutton is commercially dead. During this visit I saw what was once a butcher shop being converted into a private residence. I noticed no other retail outlets.

In 1822 things could not have been more different with the Township enjoying a very active commercial life. One of the shopkeepers in that same year was a grocer and draper with the name of Rowland Wilson. Joining the Turnpike Road at the northern tip of Sutton was the Eastburn Road. Before turning into Sutton it ran parallel to the nearby Glasburn Beck, which lay a little to the North. Standing by this road and to the east of Sutton was the then isolated village of Sutton Mill. Like Ellers, it too was had strong connections with the early Smiths. However, the fact that John Smith was a millwright pointed to him living at Sutton Mill where a nearby corn mill was present, it was most probably there that my Great Grandfather, Edmund was born. Nevertheless, the presence of Smith's living in Ellers suggested that he had some contact with that locality as well.

Whilst containing some of the oldest houses in the locality, Sutton Mill was a compact settlement consisting of: -

1. Tetley Row – a row of about 11 terraced cottages stretching along the South Side of the Eastburn Road. (This later became known as the Main Street when new building work in the 1850s and 1860s joined Sutton Mill to the main Village of Sutton.) This row was sited due North of Salt Pie Farm where a family of Tenant Farmers called the Roes lived. A visit made there on Monday, 19th March 2001 confirmed that Tetley Row has long since been demolished to make way for a small park and seating area.
2. Harker and Wells Street - which ran directly onto the Eastburn Road from the North. Harker Street consisted of two facing rows of several back-to-back terraced houses. By 1868, at the bottom left of Harker Street stood a slaughterhouse, although whether it was also present at an earlier date could not be confirmed. On a back lane behind these streets stood ten privies and two ash pits. In contrast to Harker Street, the houses on Wells Street had some small gardens. Like the cottages in Tetley Row the houses in these streets had slanting slate roofs.
3. A rather large house called Garden Place, which flanked the East Side of Wells Street. It may well have been constructed at an earlier period.

4. A row of four-corn mill houses - each possessing a small garden. An old photograph on p.16 of Doris Riley's booklet 'Owd Settings' showed that these houses had narrow oblong windows and tall chimneystacks. The large complex of Bairstows mill overshadowed them. It was possibly in one of these now demolished houses that Edmund was born, as the Bairstow's appear to have rented out these dwellings to those who worked at their corn mill.

5. The growing complex of Bairstow's Mill lay wedged between the above rows of houses and Glasburn Beck. By 1840 a reservoir flowed northwest into the Beck itself. Until about 1838 it had been the site of a corn mill rather than a textile mill. Two brothers of that family, Thomas and Matthew Bairstow who owned the mill were responsible for its conversion to textile milling. (Once the capital had become available it would have been easy for the Bairstow's to replace corn mill machinery with power looms – both would have been driven by water power generated by a water wheel.)

6. Royds Hill, which that stood a little way to the North Side of the Eastburn Road. Standing in some grounds to the East of the previously named streets, it was obviously the dwelling place of a very rich family these could only be the Bairstows. The 1841 Census confirmed that Thomas Bairstow his wife Elizabeth and two servants inhabited Royds Hill.

Although documentary evidence was lacking, it seemed that the Bairstows hurriedly built most of these streets for their expanding workforce during the 1820s and 1830s. The now demolished Corn Mill Houses were perhaps the oldest dwelling places – having been constructed at a time when the Bairstows had purchased the old corn mill.

Having now completed this description of the community of Sutton there is now scope to use Wood, Chapter Four as a basis to describe the housing conditions my Great, Great Grandparents faced around the time Edmund's birth in January 1832. In many ways they were truly appalling. Most of the sandstone-constructed dwellings consisted of either blind back houses (as in the case of Harker Street) or back-to-back houses (as in the case of Wells Street). In either case ventilation would have been very poor – being made worse by small square sash windows. A poor circulation of air would have produced a greater amount of damp in winter and stiflingly hot conditions in summer. Any perishable food would have quickly deteriorated. In 1850 the average ratio of people per household was 5.7 as compared to 5.4 in the main Village of Sutton. The more expensive houses would at least have contained a cellar; families in cheaper rented accommodation would have had to do make with only one downstairs and one upstairs room. Of the 58 dwellings in Sutton Mill it was found that 20 had 7 or more inhabitants, whilst 32 had 6 or more. The 21 small dwellings of Harker and Wells Street had over 100 inhabitants who shared 10 privies that in reality consisted of nothing more than a tiny shed with open boxes over a pit. Even as late as 1879 a Sanitary Report quoted in Wood pp.18-19, mentioned the "offensive emanations from the large uncovered privy middens." At that time only four houses possessed proper water closets. Adding to the stench was a large slaughterhouse at the bottom of Harker Street and from which it seems some of its remains were dumped in an open midden 15 feet away from its door. Another slaughterhouse beside the footbridge just above Sutton Chapel went one better and left its remains in an open field! The sanitary inspector noted that at the time of his visit liquid excrement trickled down the footpath near the slaughterhouse. Frequently blocked stone channels,

running alongside the road helped little in removing the sewerage. These discharged into Glasburn Beck, which also received the remains of slaughtered animals and industrial waste from Bairstow's Mill. The reservoir beside the mill was little more than an open cesspit. Hardly surprisingly, wooden clogs were perhaps the most sensible footwear to use in these conditions. (Wood pp. 23-24 showed that in both 1822 and 1851 there were three 'shoemakers and cloggers.') Mortality in the period 1861-1878 was 19 per 1000. Deaths from enteric fever were common. During the time of Edmunds birth in 1832 period, conditions would if anything, have been worse as public health was only just beginning to be a serious concern. Admittedly, an 1850 map of Sutton Mill (unlike one of 1868) showed no evidence of a slaughterhouse being present but the smell would still have been very unpleasant – especially during the hot summer months. Inside the houses human body odour would have hung in the air. The floors in these houses will have consisted of stone flagging and sparse furnishings with little more than a dresser, table and chairs and possibly a handloom in the corner. A row of hooks would have been needed to hang up heavy overcoats. Beside the single window would have once stood a stone sink known as a 'slop stone' and opposite to this, a large cast iron cooking range. This would have provided a source of warmth in the winter. If no cellar was available a 'set pot' consisting of a jug and a bowl was placed nearby for the weekly wash. Water would have had to be carried by bucket from a nearby spring. If the household was religious then bible texts may have adorned the bare white plaster walls. The downstairs would have had to dovetail as a kitchen, dining room and wash area. Upstairs was likely to contain one bed and dresser. The children would have slept on rough sacking curtained off from their parents. When not working they would have been encouraged to play outside in the street in all hours and in all weather. The presence of a Sunday school would act as another relief from overcrowding. Disease would spread quickly as would head lice and skin rashes. To survive, one needed to be strong. Most people preferred to spend their meagre leisure time outside the house in either the pub or the chapel.

The 1841 Census recorded that there were 28 inhabited and 3 uninhabited houses at Sutton Mill. These figures excluded the larger accommodation of Laith Farm, which lay on the north side of the Eastburn Road just west of Sutton Mill, and Royds Hill where the Bairstows lived. Inside those small houses were crowded 168 people, 84 of whom were male and 84 female. On dividing 168 by 28 it was found that there was an average of 6 people per house, (which denoted overcrowding.) In contrast, Ellers had 10 households - plus one uninhabited house. In these 10 houses lived 48 people of whom 25 were male and 23 female. After dividing 48 by 10 there was found to be a ratio of 4.8 people per house. However, any benefit of less overcrowding was quickly countered by the fact that all of the occupations were textile-related, with worsted weaving and spinning being the most common work done. (There was also some wool combing.) The implication here was that house space will been taken up by weaving equipment. In one way or another the accommodation at Ellers could be just as cluttered as that of Sutton Mill – only one would be tripping over spinning wheels rather than children!

By retracing the steps taken by the 1841 Census enumerator, from Ellers to Royd Hill, it became possible to discover the likely living place of my Great Grandfather John Smith. Starting well to the south of Sutton the enumerator will have called in at the following dwellings, all on the East Side of the old Skipton to Keighley Turn Pike Road: -

1. Longhouse (consisting of 2 households – neither of them Cloughs)
2. Valley Farm (consisting of 1 household – the Cloughs)
3. High Royd Brow (consisting of 2 households)
4. Dobby Hall (consisting of 1 household)
5. Knowle Top (consisting of 4 households)
6. Briggate (consisting of 1 household of farmers)
7. Ellers (consisting of 10 households – all in textile-related occupations)
8. Gott Hill (consisting of 2 households – mainly farmers)
9. Sutton (consisting of 21 households living East of the Old Turn Pike Road – however, most of the main village was concentrated on the west side)
10. Mill Lane (consisting of 2 households of farmers at Laith Farm)
11. Salt Pie (consisting of 1 household of Corn Millers)
12. Sutton Mill (consisting of 28 households)
13. Royds Hill (consisting of 2 households including the Bairstows and their servants)

After Sutton the enumerator will have turned east up the Eastburn Road, (A reference to an 1840 map of the locality showed that this road ran across to Royds Hill known as Mill Lane). The first row of houses he came to would be on Tetley Row. A close examination of the 1841 Census Return for Sutton Mill confirmed that a handloom weaver called John Smith lived at the sixth house from the left on Tetley Row. (The fifth house was uninhabited.) This house was almost directly opposite to where the slaughterhouse stood. First hand observation of this row, taken on a number of different visits to Sutton, showed that the doorway stood about three steps above Eastburn Road. Sadly, he did not turn out to be the John Smith who was my Great, Great Grandfather. At the far right of the row was located the premises of James Murgatroyd, the village blacksmith. Two doors down from John Smith and his wife Mary were the Bassitt's - a family of eight. During hard times such as the 1839-1842-trade recession many of the inhabitants would have been oppressed by the nagging anxiety of being evicted. Landlords would have cast all of their furniture onto the street. As was stated earlier Edmund's place of birth would most likely have been one the Corn Miller Cottages next to Bairstows Mill. John Smith's occupation as a Corn Miller powerfully suggested that he worked for the Bairstows – who were the largest employers in Sutton. If that was the case, then the balance of probability points to Edmund being

born amidst the squalor of Sutton Mill. Hardly surprisingly, Sutton Mill represented an environment from which John Smith would dearly want to escape. After studying the conditions of his son's Edmunds birthplace I could easily understand why John Smith moved to Cullingworth. (His move coincided with the time when the Bairstow's were beginning to think of moving from Corn to Worsted production.) Edmund himself came to display the attitudes of a man who was brought up during the 'starving 1840s' when commercial failure often amounted to a death sentence.

During 1833, one year after Edmund's birth, a Factory Inquiry Commission (quoted in Wood p. 36) tabulated weekly factory wages in nearby Oxenhope Mill as being: -

2/- for those aged less than 10 years

2/6d for those aged 10-12

3/6 for those aged 12-14

4/6 for those aged 14-16

6/- for those aged 16-18

7/- for those aged 18-21

10/- for those males aged 21 or over

7/- for those females aged 21 or over

Working hours was from: -

6.00 A.M. -7.00P.M, in summer

6.00A.M. - Dusk in winter.

In Sutton, wages and hours will have been at a similar level. At the time of his birth the most likely future prospect facing my Great Grandfather would have been working in Bairstows mill. By a mixture of hard graft and opportunism he may have worked his way up to being an overseer but this was the highest level he would ever be likely to reach. (The notion that eventually one of Edmund's daughters would almost marry a man who became a Lord would have been dismissed as an unrealistic fairy tale in Bairstow's Mill.) By the time of the 1851 Census Bairstows had become the major employer in Sutton. This can be seen in a comparison between itself and Hartley's Mill, made by Wood p.35.

Number of Textile Workers

Bairstow's Mill Founded as a Worsted Mill in the 1836 to 1838 period)

Hartley's Mill (Founded 1830)

Men

402

58

Women

12

0

Boys

109

7

Girls

83

0

Totals

606

A quick calculation showed that 88.53% of the 671 textile workers of Sutton were employed at Bairstows. The days of small businesses employing a few spinners in their workshop premises were long since over. Even semi-independent handloom weavers such as John Smith of Tetley Row would have depended mainly upon contract work outworking from Bairstows. Of the two establishments, Hartleys appeared to be marginally more humane in not employing female labour. Nevertheless, Bairstow's appears to have prospered for the 1861, Census revealed Thomas Bairstow to have been a manufacturer employing 820 persons.

The occupational composition of the textile workforce in 1851 in both Bairstow and Hartley Mills could be broken down into five main areas, as shown in the table below: -

Occupation

Number

Percentage of Total

Total number of textile workers

671

100

Power Loom Weavers

218

32

Hand Loom Weavers

148

23

Combers

95

14

Spinners

111

17

Others

99

14

What such figures did not show was the overall trend away from handloom to power-loom weaving, which was taking place at this time. However, when compared to earlier data these figures do lend weight to the supposition that Edmund's birth in 1832 came during the middle of a transition from a mainly hand-craft and small business based textile industry to a machine powered one. Single companies enjoyed a near local monopoly in terms of production and employment. A wool merchant of the 1790s would barely be able to recognise the wool industry of the 1850s. Far from being a tranquil, if impoverished backwater, Sutton was a community undergoing dramatic change, (which itself was part of a wider change affecting the whole of Britain.) According to figures supplied by Jay pp.183-4, male employment in agriculture dropped from 53 to 29% over the period 1760-1840; those employed in industry rose from 24 to 47%, whilst the percentage of population living in towns and cities soared from 21 to 48%. Any failure to adapt to such changes could pitch a family into the nightmare of early Victorian destitution. From an early age Edmund would have appreciated the need for flexibility in the world of business. To do nothing but 'tread water' was to drown. His own understanding of the world was moulded by the hardships he would have seen and experienced during the 1840s. In order to understand my Great Grandfather

it was necessary to view him as a product of the 'starving forties.' He had to be seen in the context of his time.

Some of the earliest Smith who could be traced had a flat tombstone situated next to Kildwick Parish Church. I only discovered it during my second visit to this graveyard, made on a very wet Monday, February 5th 2001. (The first visit having been undertaken on a bright but windy autumn afternoon on Friday, 29th September 2000.) The inscription was written in old English where the letter 's' was shaped like the letter 'f' without the cross. (Whilst trying to scrape off some moss I slipped and sent a wooden bench keeling over. In my bright blue cagoule and sodden black jeans I must have looked an amusing sight lying on my back amidst the sleeting rain.) The inscription read as follows: -

“Here lye
The bodies of
Robert and John
Sons of William
Smith of Sutton,
Who were both
Buried January 25th 1732.
Robert in ye 19th year of
His age and John in
Ye first year of his age.
Also the body of
Robert Smith of
Sutton Grandfather
Of the above said children.
He died on the 4th and

Was buried on the 7th January 1741 in the 90th

Year of his age.

Also William Smith son of

The above Robert Smith and father

Of Ye above children

departed this life August 11th

1742 in the 57th year of his age.”

There was something very touching about this epitaph. Despite a covering of moss the inscription was reasonably well preserved although the age given to John was something of a guess as it had been chiselled in what was now very badly eroded Latin numerals. The insertion of missed out letters suggested that the mason had possessed only a limited degree of literacy. From an historical viewpoint the most interesting feature were the names like John, Robert and William, which surfaced repeatedly in my own family line during the nineteenth century. These names and the connection with Sutton suggested that the people interred here could have been my own direct ancestors. Strongly present was a sense of wonder at finding an ancestor who had been born during the English Civil War. His advanced age contrasted with the early death of his two grandsons who appear to have died at the same time. Exactly of what can only be guessed at – but the most likely cause was a highly infectious disease or some form of accident such as a cottage fire. Even in those times when death was common their loss must have been a cause of great heartbreak. One curious feature about the tomb was the absence of any female names – were only the names of men judged worthy of remembrance?

A final interesting feature was the close proximity of this tomb with that of the successful businessman John Smith (1718-1793). This proximity and the shared association with Sutton did strongly imply a family connection although exactly what this consisted of could not be guessed.

Equally striking details about the early Smiths were provided on the following epitaph, engraved on a tombstone adjacent to the path leading to the entrance of Kildwick Parish Church.

In memory of

ROBERT SMITH

Late of Lumb Mill Cowling

Who departed this life February 11th 1840

In the 86th year of his age.

Also MARTHA his wife

Who died May 1801

Aged 40 years

“This memorial is erected by one who shared
their parental care and support when a
pupil at the school in connection with this church”

GEORGE SMITH their son born at

Lumb Mill Cowling, April 5th 1789

Died at Manchester, April 1st 1865.

The birth register for Sutton Baptist Chapel suggested that ‘Laura’ was the middle name of Robert Smith’s wife. It was perhaps used to distinguish her from other Martha Smiths - ‘Martha’ being a very common name of the time. (Incidentally, I discovered this tomb on my first visit to Kildwick in September 2000)

What is fascinating about this epitaph is that it provides early evidence of a family interest in education. This was a very typical Smith trait, it continues to this day. His death at an advanced age lent weight to the view that Robert Smith had been a highly vigorous man. He had lived even longer than my father who had enjoyed the benefits that modern medicine could offer. Moreover, his transfer of loyalties from Sutton Baptist Chapel to Kildwick Parish Church implied that he had risen in the world because, in his time, people tended to join the Anglican Church as they prospered and became more respectable. Exactly what relation Robert bore to my own line of Smiths remained a mystery. The family details given in the Sutton Baptist Register show that he was not a direct ancestor, but a more distant relationship could not be ruled out. Anyway, he was the first Smith about which it was possible to find out anything concrete concerning his personality. His care for others provided an early anticipation of my father’s own marked concern for the welfare of other people.

In April 1838, a Robert Smith aged 4 was on record as dying through “accidental burning.” Little was discovered about his background except that he came from Cowling and that his father was a weaver. The name however did suggest that he might have been a grandson of the Robert Smith interred at Kildwick. If this were the case, he would have heard about this family tragedy when in extreme old age.

Another tomb inscription (also discovered during my first visit), not far from that of Robert Smith provided evidence of a rather macabre sense of humour.

“IN MEMORY OF

Martha the wife of Benjamin

Smith of Glasburn Hall, who

died January 30th 1817 in the

23rd year of her age.

Reflect when thou my grave close see

the next that's made may be for thee.”

After that cheerful thought the rest of the inscription read: -

“Also of Esther, wife of the

above named Benjamin Smith

who died the 11th June 1827, in

the 35th year of her age.

Also the aforesaid Benjamin

Smith who died at Crosshills

October 31st 1834 in the 45th

year of his age.

Also James Cowgill surveyor Bradford

who died August 10th 1878 age 53 years.

Also Elizabeth daughter of the above

and widow of the late James Cowgill

surveyor, Bradford who died

May 28th 1887 aged 62 years.”

(During this first visit one elderly lady I met within the graveyard mentioned that an epitaph by a widow for her husband had actually read “Rest in peace, until I come.” Unfortunately, this particular headstone no longer existed to confirm her story!)

A great deal was discovered about this Benjamin Smith whilst searching through the marriage register of Kildwick Parish Church at Northallerton Archive Centre during a thunderous storm on Friday afternoon, June 15th 2001. He was a ‘clogger’ by trade and could sign his name in beautiful script writing. His marriage to Martha (formally Parkinson, a spinster of Cowling) had occurred on July 21st 1814, whilst his marriage to Esther (formally Harrison, a spinster of Glasburn) had taken place on February 22nd 1824. Both wives could write neat signatures, as could the witnesses at the two weddings. (These being Henry Smith and John Greenwood at the first wedding, and Robert Harrison and Jane Smith at the second.) Benjamin Smith’s signature also appeared on the marriage certificate of a John Smith and an Anne Wilson on 24th May 1824. At Kildwick, I had found the gravestone of a man who had known my Great, Great Grandfather face-to face! Such discoveries can indeed provoke a sense of amazement.

Elizabeth, who was a daughter of Benjamin Smith’s first wife Esther, had been christened on March 6th 1824. Her birth date was January 24th of that year.

Benjamin Smith the ‘clogger’ is to be distinguished from a later (but possibly distantly related) Benjamin Smith who was a wool manufacturer. This second Benjamin Smith was baptised at Kildwick Parish Church on December 25th 1804. The register revealed that he was “Benjamin, third son of Benjamin Smith of Sutton Yeoman & Sarah Briscoe his wife, [born] 21 November.” He had an older brother called Joseph who was baptised on 4th July 1803. With regard to him the register stated: “Joseph, second son of Benjamin Smith of Sutton worsted manufacturer & Sarah Briscoe his wife, [born] 30th May.” The 1838 Trade Directory showed that the only Smiths worth mentioning in Sutton were butchers – but in nearby Crosshills was a Benjamin Smith and a Thomas Smith ~ both connected to worsted manufacturing. Regarding, the former manufacturer the 1841 Census Return showed: -

Benjamin Smith aged 35, “Worsted Manufacturer’s Agent”

Anne Smith aged 35

Catherine Smith aged 2

Sarah Anne Smith aged 11

But the 1841 and 1851 Census Returns showed Thomas Smith to have been a single man, born in 1816 whilst Benjamin Smith for his part disappeared from the area sometime between the two Census Returns. He was to resurface later in an unexpected location. Like the first Benjamin he appears to have been a close associate of my family. On some records it was not always possible to distinguish between the two Benjamin’s!

What was especially apparent from the 1841 Census Return was that the whole area from Colne to Kildwick was absolutely teeming with Smiths. This was in marked contrast to a settlement like Cullingworth where other local names such as Craven were far more predominant. (In Cullingworth the Smith's only came in ones and twos.) Adding to this complexity was the fact that many of them had identical forenames, with 'John,' 'Mary' and 'Ann' being especially common. Family tradition and the 1861 Census had located my Great grandfather's place of birth to the Sutton-in Craven and Crosshills district. Although this information narrowed the area of search, a survey of families in Sutton, Glasburn Township (which included Crosshills village) and Kildwick revealed the presence of hundreds of Smiths in 1841. (A summary of the results of this survey can be found in Section One of the Statistical Supplement.) Tracing the parents of my Great Grandfather Edmund Smith would be a nightmare, especially as the Dissenting Register had revealed that their names were 'John' and 'Ann Smith.' Unless great care was taken, it would be all too easy to trace the wrong John and Ann Smith. Yet even with painstaking care this was precisely what happened. The right couple were only finally located at Northallerton Archive Centre on Friday, June 15th 2001, whilst this Family History project was drawing to a close. Consequently, a large number of hitherto plausible conclusions had to be amended.

Written in a very untidy manner, the entry for my Great Grandfather's birth read as follows.

"Edmund Smith, son of John and Ann Smith of Sutton in the Parish of Kildwick in the county of York, was born on the twenty first of January the thousand eight hundred and thirty two. Registered by David Marsh, Dissenting Minister April 22 1832. (This was on an Easter Sunday.)

Witnesses Robert Clough

John Parkinson."

Being registered on the same day as Edmund was: "John Edward Clough son of Robert and Mary Clough was born at Valley in the township of Sutton in the bounds of York the twenty-fifth day of September one thousand eight hundred and thirty one. Registered by David Marsh, Dissenting Minister April 22 1832.

Witnessed Geo: Wilson

John Storey."

The lengthy gap between birth and registration was not unusual - it seemed common parental practice to ensure their children survived the first few weeks of infancy before registering them. Pilling p. 11 revealed that the Rev. Jonathan David Marsh was a former student at Horton Baptist College in Bradford. After accepting an invitation to the pastorate he "entered upon his ministry in January 1833. Considerable numbers were added to the Church during his brief stay, but in 1836

he left to take the pastorate of a newly-formed church at Ashton-under-Lyme.” At the time of Edmund’s birth Sutton Baptist was experiencing an interregnum, which was to last from 1826 until 1833. So until his own appointment to the pastorate in 1833, David Marsh was perhaps standing in the place of an absent minister. The Chapel must have had enough respect (or desperation) to invite him to take up the pastorate. His writing proved to be of a very poor standard ~ one hopes that his sermons were of a better quality.

Incidentally, the baptismal register for Kildwick Parish Church confirmed that the name ‘Edmund’ was a fairly common Smith forename. The earliest entry I found featuring the name Edmund Smith was for 13th February 1615. It recorded the marriage of an Edmund Smith to a Matilda Tempest. It took place in the reign of King James 1st, just four years after the publication of the Authorised Bible. Other Edmund Smiths mentioned in connection with Kildwick Parish Church included:

1. Edmund Smith a ‘Husbandman of Stott Hill’ who married Mary Tempest on 6/1/1757 before having: -

- His daughter Ann christened on 18/3/1759
- His daughter Sarah christened on 28/12/1762
- His son Robert christened on 10/2/1765
- His son Edmund christened on 16/8/1767
- His daughter Mary christened on 8/10/1769
- His daughter Elizabeth christened on 22/9/1771
- His son William christened on 2/1/1774, after his father had moved to Cowling

2. Edmund Smith a ‘weaver of Cowling’ who married Jennet Wright at Keighley on 16/11/1761 before having at Kildwick: -

- His daughter Martha christened on 20/3/1763, whilst living at Green Sike
- His son William christened on 17/11/1765, after moving to Cowling – sadly William was buried at Kildwick on 11/1/1766
- His son Edward (or Edmund) christened on 7/6/1767 – sadly he appears to have been the Edmund buried at Kildwick on 18/9/1768
- His daughter Mary christened on 26/11/1769

· His son, another William christened on 10/7/1774

· His son, possibly another Edmund christened on 5/1/1777, having been born on 17/12/1776 – please note how his parents were following the conventional practice of naming a new child after a deceased one

3. Edmund Smith another ‘weaver of Cowling’ who married Jane at an unknown date before having: -

· His son John christened on 17/5/1772

None of these Edmund Smiths could be linked to my forbear of the same name. From this list it was easy to see how frequently re-occurring names could easily confuse any genealogist. It also explained why I was unable to trace my family line beyond the year 1778.

The Census Returns of 1841 and 1851 revealed that Robert Clough was the owner of Valley Farm, sited on top of a ridge above Sutton. It lay directly to the South of Salt Pie Farm and East of the Old Turn Pike Road. Born in about 1793, Robert had married a woman called Mary - some fourteen years his junior. By Mary, Robert Clough had two surviving sons – Joshua, born on 8th May 1829 and John Edward born on 25th September 1831. John would have been nearly seven months old when his birth was registered alongside Edmund's. The register of Sutton Chapel Sunday school showed John Edward Clough to have attended there at the age of 14 from 19/2/1845 until 20/9/1845. 'John' and 'Robert' were very common forenames in the Clough family. By 1851 Valley Farm covered 39 acres, and John Edward himself had become an apprenticed shoemaker. Interestingly enough a certain Betty Smith of Glasburn was on record as visiting them. (She was aged 65 and of independent means.) Following three tragic deaths in 1854, John Edward inherited the farm. In 1871 he was recorded as living alone with a 61-year-old servant Joshua Dewhirst. The Farm had expanded slightly to contain 40 acres although exactly how it was worked remained unknown. Wood p.84 revealed that John Edward Clough had worked as a shoemaker in Sutton. He also had married to a lady called Hannah, and he died in 1896 without ever having sired any children. During his life he had become an extremely fervent Baptist, which suggested that he were actively engaged in lay preaching. However, his loyalty to the Baptist Church did not prevent him from being interred at Kildwick Cemetary along with other members of his family.

To the South East of Valley Farm, just on the East Side of the Old Turnpike Road had once stood a farm called Longhouse where yet a further Robert Clough had lived during the first half of the nineteenth Century. At that time he had played an influential role the in the affairs of Sutton Baptist Church. (He was not to be confused with the Robert Clough of Valley Farm.)

Astonishingly, the Cloughs were most probably the only family in Sutton who ever had a reasonably detailed biographical sketch written about them. This was largely because they were a fairly influential family who had been in Sutton since at least the Sixteenth Century. According to

Hodgson (1879) p.65-67, a third Robert Clough came from a line of gentleman farmers from Bent in Crosshills. (In actual fact a map showed it to lie down Bent Lane, West of the northern end of Sutton.) Another John Clough, the father of this third Robert Clough had, near the end of the eighteenth century, branched out into spinning and stuff manufacturing. (Records mentioned by Wood p.84 confirm that his Christening was held on 31/5/1752). He was also reputed to have been the first manufacturer to set up “a pot-of-four,” which was apparently a table where four wool combers could work together. His intention was evidently to increase productivity. In addition, this John Clough had owned a warehouse in Sutton, which was used for sorting and storing the wool before being sent out to combers and weavers. Two of his sons Robert and another John Clough were brought up in the business. By 1822, Robert Clough was operating as a sole trader in Sutton. In that year he took into partnership his younger brother John and purchased the Grove Mill, which had specialised in cotton spinning ever since its construction in 1797. By 1826 the business was prospering but a dispute over its expansion had led to the dissolving of the partnership. However, Robert Clough continued business at the Grove whilst his brother set up his own business in Ingrow Mill. In 1831, Robert made his first expansion of the premises by extending the south side of the mill. By the time of my Great Grandfather’s birth, Robert Clough had obviously had a lot of things on his mind. In 1832 he decided to enlarge the old wool warehouse (enlarged again in 1862 and eventually replaced in 1872.) Further expansions to the mill took place in 1836 and 1842. Robert Cough died in 1848 and passed on his business to his son, yet another John Clough, who owned it until his death in 1865. Like his father Robert, John Clough was a generous supporter of Methodism. This was shown by his partly funding the building of several Methodist Chapels and schools on the Keighley Methodist Circuit.

As can be easily imagined, distinguishing these Robert and John Cloughs from the ones who owned Valley Farm was not easy. Only a careful comparison of dates made on Thursday, November 16th 2000 prevented me from mistaking one pair for the other. However, it did become clear that both sets of Cloughs were closely related. In Chapter Eleven, Wood revealed that they shared a common descent from William Clough who was born in 1676 and had seven children by his first wife and six by his second. A weaver and husbandman by trade, it was he who first settled on Bent Farm. Like many in his family he had acted as churchwarden in Kildwick Parish Church. Both the Robert Clough at Bent and the Robert Clough at Valley Farm (often simply known as ‘Valley’) were his Great Grandsons but possibly by different wives. An interesting family connection between this last Robert Clough and the Smiths also existed. This was borne out by the following inscription on a pavement tombstone seen outside Kildwick Parish Church during my second visit there.

“IN MEMBRANCE OF

JAMES

Son of ROBERT and MARY CLOUGH

Of Valley, Sutton who died November 25th

1837 aged one month.

Also of JOSHUA their son who died

June 14th 1847 aged 18 years.

Also the above ROBERT CLOUGH

Who died the 19th September 1854

Aged 62 years

Also the above MARY CLOUGH

Who died the 25th September 1854

Aged 49 years

Also in memory of BETTY SMITH

Mother of MARY CLOUGH

Who died the 23rd September 1854

Aged 69 years.

Also of JOHN EDWARD CLOUGH

Son of the above

ROBERT and MARY CLOUGH who died

February 19th 1896 aged 64 years.

Also of HANNAH widow of the above

JOHN EDWARD CLOUGH

Who died March 20th 1906

Aged 62 years.”

Incidentally, the death of three Cloughs in the space of one week suggested an infectious disease, or one like Cholera, which would have arisen from an infected water supply. The inscription itself had been well preserved but it was not quite clear whether Joshua had passed away in 1847 or 1846. This was because the Stonemason had chiselled the top of a figure ‘7’ but then completed it with the bottom of a figure ‘6!’ However, Joshua’s birth date of 8/5/1829 strongly implied that his

death had indeed been in 1847.

John Parkinson was the name of a Sunday school superintendent at Sutton Baptist Chapel. The contacts gained through this position probably explained why his signature as a witness also appeared on the three previous birth registrations. (These covered the period of 1830-1831 – with Edmund's being the last. After that period the newly appointed Reverend Marsh took over proceedings.) Mr Parkinson was a man who appeared to know everybody who needed to be known. According to previously cited records he was received into membership in 1823. Born at Cononley in 1801, (when its population numbered 876 people) he would have been a near contemporary of my Great, Great Grandfather John Smith. This connection was especially interesting because it showed that John and Ann Smith had enjoyed contact with someone holding a position of responsibility within this same Chapel. Later information powerfully suggested that members of my family did enjoy a significant connection with the Church. Eventually, John Parkinson entered the wool trade to become a worsted manufacturer. In communities such as Sutton business and church contacts were often closely connected. Furthermore, a man's personal reputation was to some extent determined by his skill and honesty in business. (Later cited records showed that a moral failure in this area could lead to exclusion from the Chapel.)

Anne Bronte in her book *Agnes Grey* (an autobiographical novel about an unhappy governess,) has, on pp.71-72 a minor character called Smith who spoke in what would have been the dialect of my ancestors. The scene was where the heroine Agnes Grey is about to leave home in order to take up her position as a governess for what turned out to be an absolutely appalling family. "I was to depart early, in that the conveyance which took me (a gig, hired from Mr Smith, the draper, grocer, and tea-dealer of the village) might return the same day. I rose, washed, dressed, swallowed a hasty breakfast, received the fond embraces of my father, mother, and sister, kissed the cat to the great scandal of Sally the maid, shook hands with her, mounted the gig, drew my veil over my face, and then, but not till then, I burst into a flood of tears.

The gig rolled on – I looked back- my dear mother and sister were still standing at the door, looking after me, and waving their adieux: I returned their salute, and prayed god to bless them from my heart: we descended the hill, and I could see them no more.

'It's a coldish mornin' for you, Miss Agnes,' observed Smith; 'and a darksome un too; but we's happen, get to yon' spot afore there come much rain to signify.'

'Yes I hope so,' replied I, as calmly as I could.

'It's comed a good sup last night too.'

'Yes.'

‘But this cold wind ull happen, keep it off.’

‘Perhaps it will.’

Here ended our colloquy; we crossed the valley, and began to ascend the opposite hill.”

The amazing feature of this account was the way it dovetailed so neatly with my own research into the early Smiths. Ann Bronte’s character had possessed a strong business streak, spreading his activities over a number of different areas. On display was that dogged enterprise, which characterised whole generations of my family. Also, like the real Smiths uncovered by my research her character was not gentry but his standard of living was situated above the average. He certainly was not a ‘common’ labourer or worker. Finally, it is very easy to imagine that the real Smiths were just as taciturn as the one portrayed in Agnes Grey. It would take education and a rising social mobility to produce great conversationalists like my father. On first reading that extract from Ann Bronte’s novel in April 2002 I felt as if I was meeting one of my own ancestors. It was a case of literature illuminating and adding life to the huge amount of carefully gathered historical data.

One final mystery needing to be cleared up was whether the Edmund Smith who’d fathered William Smith and also featured in the title deeds, was indeed the same person as the Edward Smith who featured in the relevant records of Kildwick Parish Church and Sutton Baptist Chapel? Here only two options were possible: -

Edmund and Edward Smith were one and the same person.

Edmund and Edward Smith were two different people.

It’s worth mentioning that by March 1801, Glusburn Township had a male population of 276. One can assume that before that period the figure had been lower, probably in the region of 150-250 males during the second half of the eighteenth century. Such figures will have a bearing upon later discussion. However, the first thing to be stated is that strong positive reasons existed for accepting the first option, as outlined below: -

1) Matching Characteristics. Both men were: -

- Married to a woman called Elizabeth
- Weavers
- Lived mainly in Glusburn
- Obvious contemporaries in terms of age

- Mentioned more than once in local records
- Associated with both George Smith and my forbear William Smith
- Endowed with an enterprising business temperament

2) The alternation of names. Both men were never associated together in the same document. Their names would appear sequentially (as was the case when various parish records of Kildwick Parish were conflated with the Dissenting Birth registers of Sutton Baptist Chapel.) For instance Edmund Smith would appear at the time when one would expect Edward Smith to appear and vice-versa. This point is seen more clearly when information from those records was collated to produce the following summary. (Available birth dates have been placed in brackets.)

- 18/10/1768, Edmund Smith of Cowling 'weaver and bachelor' married an 'Elizabeth Pighels of Kildwick a minor'
- 21/4/1771, baptism of Mary Smith daughter of Elizabeth and Edward Smith 'woolcomber' Kildwick
- 6/3/1774, baptism of John Smith son of Elizabeth and Edward Smith 'weaver' Glusburn
- 20/5/1776, baptism of George Smith son of Elizabeth and Edward Smith 'weaver' Glusburn
- 3/1/1779 (2/11/1778) baptism of William Smith son of Elizabeth and Edmund Smith 'weaver' Glusburn
- 22/7/1781 (21/5/1781) baptism of Edmund Smith son of Elizabeth and Edmund Smith 'weaver' Glusburn
- 4/1/1784 (23/5/1783) baptism of Henry Smith son of Elizabeth and Edmund Smith 'husbandman' Glusburn
- 22/3/1786 (2/2/1786) registration of Betty Smith daughter of Elizabeth and Edward Smith
- 14/2/1788, purchase of land at Glusburn by George and Edmund Smith 'manufacturer'
- 11/5/1788 (16/3/1788) registration of Peter Smith son of Elizabeth and Edward Smith 'manufacturer' Glasburn
- 8/4/1791 (7 or 17/7/1791 registration of Benjamin Smith son of Elizabeth and Edward Smith
- 21/5/1796 (Interred 27/5/1796) death of Elizabeth Smith 'wife of Edmund of Glasburn

a Yeoman aged 48 years’

- 3/3/1798 (20/5/1798) baptism of Margaret Smith daughter of Edward Smith ‘Yeoman’ Glasburn and Isabel Harrison ‘2 wife’
- 13/4/1800 (4/3/1800) baptism of Mary Smith daughter of Edward Smith ‘Yeoman’ Glasburn and Isabel Harrison ‘2 wife’
- 21/8/1802 (28/8/1803) registration of Thomas Smith son of Isabella and Edward Smith
- 24/5/1804 (8/7/1804) registration of Samuel Smith son of Isabella and Edward Smith
- 27/5/1809, death of Mary Smith
- 20/7/1811 (Interred 22/7/1811) death of Edward Smith ‘of Glasburn a Yeoman aged 67 years’
- 31/12/1841, death of Isabella Smith aged 74

Perhaps the most decisive evidence was the way in which both the names ‘Edward’ and ‘Edmund’ were associated with the burial records of the same Glusburn Yeoman. At the death of Elizabeth he had been known as ‘Edmund’ but at his own death (and on his headstone) the name ‘Edward’ was employed. Such evidence provided the decisive clue confirming that ‘Edward’ and ‘Edmund’ Smith were one and the same person. If they were different it would be necessary to believe in a whole string of implausible coincidences - most notably that in a small male population two men possessed identical characteristics, except for a minor difference in forenames. One would also have to believe that where one man appeared the other vanished and that they both shared the same grave. From direct experience the writer knows that unusual coincidences can occur in a Family History but not that unusual! This second option, of Edmund and Edward Smith being two different people simply collapses under its own absurdity. There then remained the problem of how this confusion in names originated, especially as most of the relevant records were neatly written.

The most likely explanation was dialect confusion. To a well-bred vicar from outside the region the two names could have sounded similar. Even in neatly written documents it was still possible for those using blotchy quill pens to confuse the letter ‘m’ with ‘w’ and to close the ‘u’ so that it formed an ‘a.’ A review of Kildwick Parish baptism records from 1678-1714 quickly demonstrated that the two aforesaid forenames were often confused. It appears to have been a fairly standard mistake. The writer recalls how, during the first months of this project, he’d considerable difficulty in deciding whether his Great Grandfather’s forename was ‘Edmund,’ Edwin’ or ‘Edward.’ In order to avoid confusion with his Great Grandfather Edmund Smith the writer will use the forename ‘Edward’ in connection with this particular forbear. Of particular interest was the way Edward Smith rotated between Anglicanism and a form of religious dissent characterised by adult baptism. The writer has followed an identical pattern in his own life in which he: -

- Was brought up in Anglicanism from 1956 until 1975
- Participated in Dissenting Churches (characterised by adult baptism) from 1976 until 1981
- Returned to Anglicanism from 1981 until 1989
- Participated in Dissenting Churches (characterised by adult baptism) from 1989 until 1996
- Became involved in a venue where both Anglican and Dissenting-type services would take place from 1996 onwards

It was amazing to see how in spite of vastly different socio-economic conditions, the writer repeated an identical pattern of religious affiliation. He found it easy to imagine that his forbear was a stubborn man who adopted the role of critical parishioner for a certain time, then switched allegiance and became a chapel member. (Incidentally, the writer shares the same hope expressed in Edward's inscription to his first wife Elizabeth.) Their faith is also his faith. The writer has, at times joked about the questions he would like to put to his ancestors in the afterlife. Whether they would relish this prospect is of course another matter!

Conversations with contacts inside the Asian community confirmed that younger sons of highland Pakistani families were often encouraged to move into low lying areas in order to prevent inheritance or land disputes. Usually, this only applied to families living on the edge of highland areas. Those in central highland regions tended to stay put. It was also customary for marginalized younger brothers to team up in order to acquire land or launch a business venture. Although parallels between eighteenth century England and contemporary Pakistan should be treated with caution such conversations did prove invaluable in reconstructing the likely family dynamics operating within the Smiths of this period. Members of the Asian community had no difficulty in understanding the possible motives of people like Edward Smith. They came from communities at a similar stage of development.

In terms of character, strong similarities did emerge between my Great, Great, Great, Great Grandfather Edward Smith and his descendant, Edmund. Both were shrewd, entrepreneurial figures, keen to rear large families and provide for them. A mixture of job opportunities and family politics may have explained Edward's move to Kildwick; the location of his wife's family – even though it was customary for the wife to move to where the husband lived. Also both men knew the value of 'hard graft' and had worked their way up from lowly positions in the textile industry. Also both had had connections with dissenting forms of religion and indeed both had a weakness for women, with Edward possibly conceiving his first child by Isabella his second wife out of wedlock. Available evidence would suggest that he was one of the most entrepreneurial of the Smiths. Another two generations would pass before his like was to be seen again.

Once it was finally confirmed (on Wednesday 5th November 2003) that Edmund and Edward Smith were indeed one and the same person it was possible to obtain information concerning family events prior to the previous earliest date of 2nd November 1778. A copy of Kildwick Parish records (received from the County Records Office based in Northallerton on Saturday August 30th 2003) showed that on November 13th 1743 'Edward son of George Smith of Cowling Weaver and Mary his wife' was baptised. This was well into the age of Bonnie Prince Charlie, Frederick The Great and John Wesley. King George II sat on the English throne and Louis XV ruled over an increasingly discontented France. At that time France and England were embroiled in one of their frequent wars.

Reference to Kildwick Baptisms from 1715-1743 would suggest that Edward was one of the youngest (perhaps the youngest son) of George and Mary* Smith. There now follows a list of relevant records: -

- 22/11/1726 baptism of Peter* Smith, son of Mary and George Smith 'mercier' Cowling
- 26/12/1728 baptism of Susanna Smith, daughter of Mary and George Smith 'weaver' Cowling
- 21/3/1730 baptism of William* Smith, son of Mary and George Smith 'weaver' Cowling
- 5/5/1733 baptism of Sarah Smith, daughter of Mary and George Smith 'husbandman' Cowling
- 30/6/1734 baptism of Sarah Smith, daughter of Mary and George Smith 'weaver' Cowling
- 29/1/1735 baptism of Patience Smith, daughter of Mary and George Smith 'weaver' Glasburn
- 14/11/1736 baptism of Jennett Smith, daughter of Mary and George Smith 'yeoman' Cowling
- 21/8/1737 baptism of John* Smith, son of Mary and George Smith 'weaver' Glasburn
- 27/8/1738 baptism of Martha Smith, daughter of Mary and George Smith 'grocer' Cowling
- 8/4/1739 baptism of George* Smith, son of Mary and George Smith 'weaver' Cowling
- 3/5/1741 baptism of Henry* Smith, son of Mary and George Smith 'weaver' Cowling
- 13/11/1743 baptism of Edward* Smith, son of Mary and George Smith 'weaver' Cowling

An asterisk has been placed next to those forenames reappearing in the family of Edward and Elizabeth Smith. The forename 'Edward' was included for clarity but it may well have read as 'Edmund' in these records.

The presence of two females named Sarah would suggest that the first had died in infancy. In that period it was common to name a living child after a dead one. It need hardly be added that such a custom could create difficulties for Family Historians. A 'mercier' was a dealer in textiles and suggests a family link with that trade going back to the early eighteenth century.

Although the possibility remains that this list might refer to more than one Mary and George Smith it's still clear that my ancestor was a younger member of a large family and this perhaps fuelled in him the ambition to 'get on.' The 'mixed bag' of occupations was fairly typical of the region. The bleak Pennine area of Cowling was not the place to make a steady living by farming alone. In order to survive, both men and women needed to turn their hands to a variety of skills.

Cowling had been first settled by the Angles in the seventh century, (the forename of 'Edmund' was a common amongst the Smiths of Cowling and was of Anglo-Saxon origin). The confirmation that Edmund and Edward Smith were one and the same person made it possible to push this history back to a far earlier period than was initially thought.