



Part of Crompton House CofE Multi Academy Trust

LOCAL HISTORY TRAIL



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The trail begins at Beal Vale School. Beal Vale Primary School was opened at Easter 1975 and children and staff moved from the old St Paul's Methodist school adjacent to St Paul's Church [16] on Rochdale Road. The site for the school had been used on 22nd October 1954 for a bonfire to celebrate the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh's visit to Lilac Mill. The nursery remained in the old school, only moving to Beal Vale in 1999. In 1973 workmen excavating for the school unearthed a Second World War air raid shelter, built to protect the residents of Shaw from possible German air raids. Years after the war local residents had many happy childhood memories of playing in the shelters. In 2016 the school planted 400 new trees to mark the end of the 40th anniversary of the new school.

Exit the school grounds via the main entrance on Glebe Street, Glebe being an area of land used to support a parish priest, reminding us that this area was owned by Littleborough church. Bardsley's farm [19], situated at the corner of Rochdale Road and Glebe Street, and dated back to 1695 was purchased in 1774 for £600 using funds from Queen Anne's Bounty. This was a scheme established in 1704 to augment the incomes of poorer clergy. It was used to purchase land whose income augmented the living. The Bardsley estate was purchased for Littleborough church with the annual income from rents being £24. By 1884 the land was being let for £113.



Passing the 'History round Beal Vale School' information board, turn right out of the school gate and right again onto Salts Street.



Salts Street [1] was named after Alfred Salts, Vicar of Littleborough Church who was baptised on 2nd January, 1839 at St Johns, Preston. Admitted to Cambridge University on 3rd July 1856, he gained a BA in 1860; an LLM in 1863 and an LLD in 1873. He was ordained a deacon in 1862 and priest in 1863 and during this two year he was curate of St Jude & St John's, Leeds. He served a two year curacy in Dents, Yorkshire before being transferred to Rochdale in 1864 where he remained for eight years. He was then appointed Vicar of Littleborough where he remained for 39 years until ill health forced him to retire in 1911. He died at Saxon House, Carlton Road, Whalley Range, Manchester on 1st April 1913 aged 74.

Alfred [left] married Mary Ann Blakelock (1843-1927), only daughter of the late Samuel Blakelock of Red Hall, Guildford Street, Leeds on 25th July 1865. They were to have 12 children.

As the administrator of the Bardsley Estate the Rev Salts oversaw the construction of houses on the farmland. The newly created streets were named after himself and some of his family, for example Alfred Street, Avis Street, Blakelock Street, Christine Street, Neville Street and Salts Street.

In 1934 the Council applied to use land adjacent to and on the northerly side of Salts Street, Glebe Street, Charlotte Street (unmade) and Back Neville Street to build houses. Twenty non-parlour type houses [2], were erected. The land had been leased to the Council for 999 years

on 27th Sept 1915, to provide a playground which was duly built. The remaining land was surplus, hence the application to build houses.

Continue down Salts Street. On the right is **St James' Primary School [3]** built in 1964 and opened by Mr & Mrs Leslie Barker on 25th July. It stands on the site of St James' infant school which was built in 1905.

Continue past the terraced houses. Facing St James' Church, on the opposite side of Salts Street was **Shaw Spinning Company's cotton mill [4]**, built in 1875. It ceased production in 1929. During the Second World War it was used as a warehouse and afterwards as an engineering works. It was demolished in 1972 and the site used to build the bungalows we see today.



Shaw Spinning Company

Turn right onto Vicarage Street. Continue for about 80 yards (73meters). The large stone house on the right is **St James' Vicarage [5]** built in 1870.



Continue to the end of Vicarage Street.

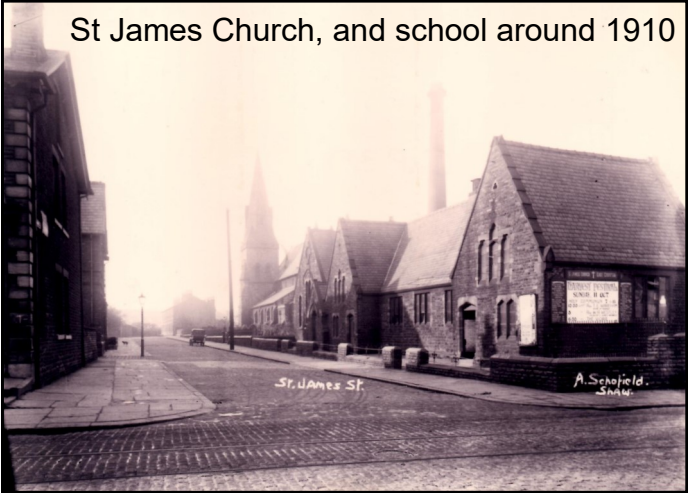
The brick wall facing you is the boundary wall for the **Fern Mill [6]**, built in 1884 by the Fern Cotton Spinning Co. Ltd. The land was rented from the Siddall family, who were iron founders. A four storey extension was added in 1904 and the card shed extended in 1923. It ceased production in 1938 and used as a carbon works until 1981. The mill was demolished in 1983 and the site is now used for housing. The remains of the steam engine which powered the mill can be seen at Ellenroad Engine House Steam Museum, Milnrow.



The orchard and forest area at the front of Beal Vale School, was named Fern Croft after the Mill which along with the reservoir adjacent to where the school now stands.

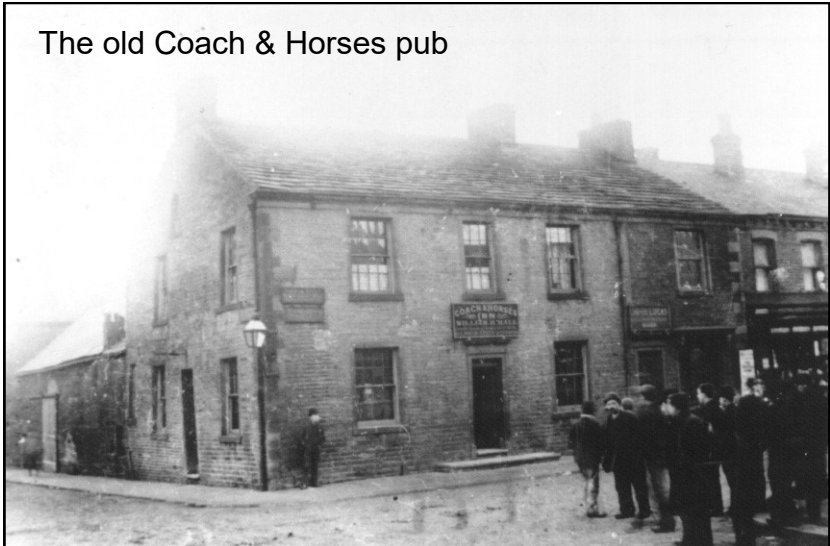
Retrace your steps, cross the road and turn down St James Street. On the left is **St James' Parish Church [7]**. The Parish of East Crompton St James was created on the 13th Dec 1844 to serve the growing population of Shaw as houses were built north along Milnrow Road. At first services were held at Brun Chapel on Buckstones Road, as there was no church. Eventually the foundation stone for a church, St James', was laid on 25th July 1846 (St James' Day) by Mrs Milne. The church was consecrated on 6th July 1847 by the Bishop of Chester. The tower & spire were not added until about 1867.

Next to the church is all that remains of the old **St James' School [8]**. This was the infant department added in 1878 to the school which had been built in 1851. With the population of the town expanding rapidly, space became a problem so it was decided to build a separate Infant School on Salts Street (on the site of the present day school) in 1905. In 1938 the chief rent for a site on Salts St was purchased with a view to building a new school [3], which was not built until the 1960s. The old school, with the exception of the infant extension, along with the Church Institute on the opposite side of St James Street were demolished in 1969, during the construction of the by-pass. The Infant section was used as the Parish rooms until February 1996 when the roof and interior were destroyed by a disastrous fire. It was later restored as you can see today.



Continue to Crompton Way, turn left and then right, crossing Crompton Way at the traffic lights. Follow the footpath round in front of the shops, turning right onto Milnrow Road. Continue, passing the former Co-op buildings [9] until you reach the traffic lights at Four Lane Ends. As the cotton trade developed the hamlet of Shaw (in the township of Crompton) grew up around this crossroad.

The **Shay Wake [10]** pub/restaurant on the left opened in December 2011. In the nineteenth century was the site of the stables for the Coach and Horses pub, opposite. The stables provided space for the horses and carriages belonging to William Hall, the landlord of the Coach and Horses. They also provided accommodation for the town's horse drawn ambulance. Later in life, the site became the Co-op coal yard and in 1955 a new Co-op store was built on the site. The Co-op in Shaw, established in 1851, had a central store with clock tower [above right] adjacent to the stables on



The old Coach & Horses pub

Beal Lane. After the Co-op store at the traffic lights closed, it was converted into a small shopping centre. This unfortunately suffered a serious fire in December 2009.

The **Coach and Horses [11]** has been in existence from the late eighteenth century. In 1809, the first coach service to Manchester was established. By the 1820s, there were several coaches offering a similar service. It was refaced around 1892.

The Old Pineapple Inn



Turn right and cross Milnrow Road to the Pineapple Inn. The **Pineapple [12]**, dates from the eighteenth century and was rebuilt around the beginning of the twentieth century.

Continue up Rochdale Road (originally called Sandy Lane). On the right is the recently closed Royal Bank of Scotland [13]. In 1925 William Deacon's Bank purchased the site in order to build a new branch, which was completed in 1928. It was acquired by the Royal Bank of Scotland in 1930 but continued to trade under its

original name. In 1970 it was integrated with Glyn, Mills & Co and the National Bank (part of the same group) to form William and Glyn's Bank. It later changed its name to the Royal Bank of Scotland. The branch closed on 28th January 2019.

Continue on Rochdale Road. On the right is the former **Midland Bank [14]**. Built in 1895 and opened two years later by the Oldham Joint Stock Bank. It was later taken over by the London City and Midland Bank. It adopted the name Midland Bank Ltd in 1923. It closed in late 1992, for a period of time was used as a wine bar but it has stood empty for many years. Opposite is the former **Post Office** built in 1925 [15].

Again continue up Rochdale Road. On the right is **St Paul's Chapel [16]** [see cover picture]. Records

show that the Wesleyan Methodist movement was active in Shaw as far back as 1790, meeting in various locations. They erected their first church in 1815, which was used both as a church and Sunday school. A purpose built Sunday School at the rear of the building was constructed in 1832. By 1842, a Wesleyan Day School was operating in this building. A new chapel was built in 1863, to replace the smaller chapel. It was designed by James Simpson of Leeds with a classical façade. A replacement school was built in 1872 at a cost of £1920 and an extension added in 1886. Additional classrooms were built to the left of the church just before the First World War. In 1932 the name changed from Shaw Wesleyan School to Shaw Methodist School. As previously stated the school transferred to a new site in 1975 and renamed Beal Vale. A well known former pupil was Robert Harper, better known as the comedian Bobby Ball from the duo Canon & Ball.

The whole complex, church and school are now unused having been declared unsafe. Part of the front elevation has been dismantled following a partial collapse of the roof in February 2019.



The Oldham Joint Stock Bank in 1900

Continue to the traffic lights and cross over Crompton Way. As you cross over, on the left hand side of Rochdale Road stood the Police Station. The **Lancashire Country Constabulary Police Station [17]** was opened in 1883. One of the Police Sergeants in 1901 was Henry Dyson who lived on Rochdale Road and later Victoria Street. Beal Vale School have followed the life of his son, William Booth Dyson. He worked as an assistant secretary at Rutland Mill and was a keen musician. He died in 1918, thirteen days

Police Station



after the end of World War One after succumbing to the Spanish Influenza epidemic. He was a Lance Corporal in the Royal Defence Corps at Colsterdale Camp in Yorkshire, where he had been guarding German Prisoners of War. The Dyson family grave can be found in Crompton Cemetery [see facing page]. The Police Station was demolished to make way for the by-pass in the late 1960s, a new Police Station opened on Milnrow Rd, which has subsequently been demolished.

*Continue up Rochdale Road. After crossing Brunswick Street, the small business units on the right were the site of **Sandy Lane Mill**.*

The mill [18], founded sometime before 1861 by Joseph Clegg of High Crompton took its name from the road, Sandy Lane. This was later renamed Rochdale Road around 1871. The family continued to run the mill, adding an extension and cotton warehouse, until it ceased production in 1935. The mill was demolished and a modern bakery built on the site. The Ideal Bakery as it was known, was taken over by Warburton's Bakery in 1965, but



Warburton's Bakery

closed in January 2012.

*Continuing up Rochdale Road. At the corner of Rochdale Road and Glebe Street stood **Bardsley's Farm [19]** [see the beginning of the trail]. Continue up Rochdale Road.*

On the left is the **United Reformed Church [20]**. After worshipping in the Co-operative Hall for many years, the Congregationalists erected a corrugated iron church on this site in 1886. A new stone and brick church was built in 1894, and the old iron church was used as a Sunday school. This however burnt down in 1897 and a new stone building, opened in 1898, was erected in its place.

The Congregational Church amalgamated with the Presbyterian Church of England in 1972, to form the United Reformed Church. In 1997 the gable end of the Sunday school collapsed after a strong gale and resulted in its demolition the following year. Within four years a church hall was constructed on the site. It was extended in 2017-8, after the demolition of the church which had been declared unsafe.



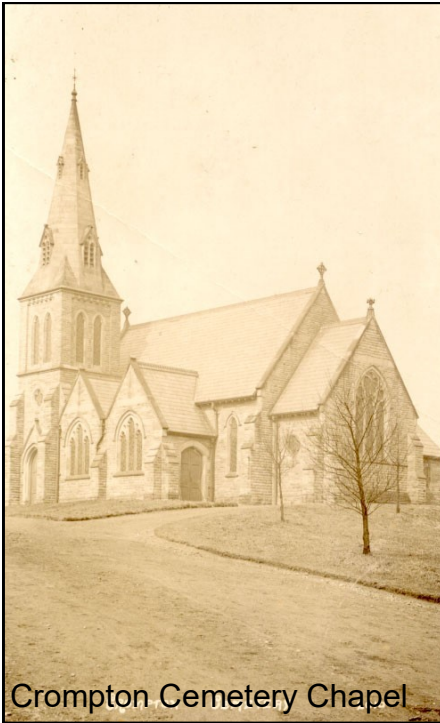
The United Reformed Church and School

Turn right onto Fraser Street. The street is named after James Fraser (1818-1885), Bishop of Manchester from 1870. He set up over 100 new parishes and saw 99 new churches consecrated. His statue can be seen in Albert Square, Manchester.

Continue along Fraser Street. On the left are the **Cemetery Gates [21]**. When the burial grounds of Holy Trinity and St James'



Crompton Cemetery

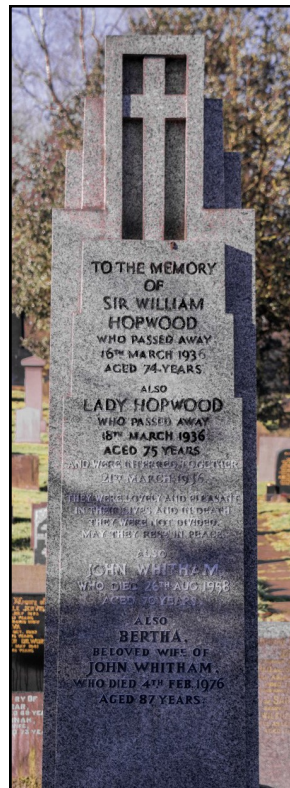
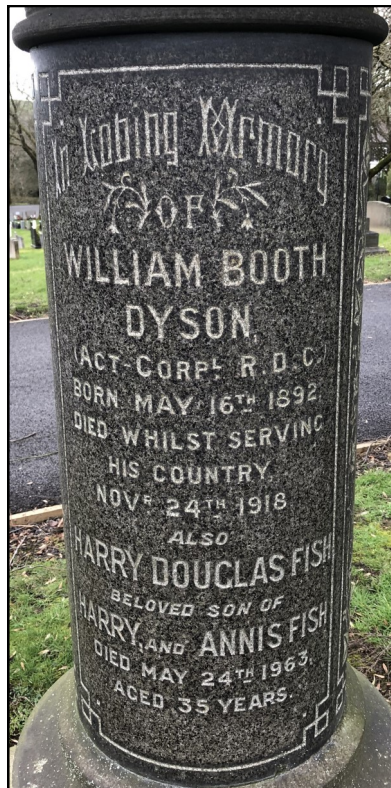


Crompton Cemetery Chapel

Churches were almost full, Crompton Council purchased 14 ½ acres of land from Messrs J A & J Crompton in order to build a cemetery. It was opened on 23rd October 1881 by John Wolstencroft, Chairman of Crompton Local Board. The church portion was consecrated by the Bishop of Manchester on the same day. Three mortuary chapels were built: for the Church of England, the Non Conformists and the Roman Catholics. Only the former [left] remains (the others were demolished in the 1950s) which was converted into a Chapel of Rest for all denominations.

As well as William Booth Dyson, Sam Fitton [1868-1923] the author, dialect poet, artist, cartoonist, and actor is buried here along with Sir William Hopwood 1862-1936], a self-made man who started life as a tuber in a cotton mill and ended up on the board of directors of 34 spinning companies. He was a generous benefactor to Shaw providing, amongst other things, land for parks but eventually lost all his money in the slump and was declared bankrupt. There are numerous graves from the First and Second World Wars here too.

Continue along Fraser Street until you reach Salts Street. Turn right and continue along Salts Street until you return to Beal Vale School.



Written by Frances Stott and David Morris

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Cover Photograph: St Paul's Methodist Church with the school buildings at the rear.

