



The history of Healey, like Flushdyke, is the story of a lost village on the fringes of Ossett, but it has a long and industrious history. This section looks at the dwellings and at the people of Healey from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century set in the context of the nearby mills: **Healey Old Mill (built 1787), Healey Low Mill (circa 1815), Healey New Mill (1826), and the Calder Vale Dyeworks (1864) on Low Mill Road.** The history of these Mills has been explored elsewhere, including, in expert fashion, on this website and, of course, they are integral to the history of Healey's residents over the years. Without the Mills the people would not have been in Healey.

However the Mills would be nothing without the people who worked them day in and day out for most of their lives and the history of Healey's people, their homes, their families and their work has never been told, until now.

### **Late 18<sup>th</sup> Century - In the beginning**

The first of the Healey Mills to be built, in 1787-1791, became known as *Healey Old Mill*. It stood on the site which became the business premises of Matthews Foods in 1964 until 2005 when the Company was purchased by Kerry Foods, who remain here at the time of writing (February 2016).

Even at this early 18<sup>th</sup> Century date it is probable that the Healey Mill Company provided some dwellings for their workers. The evidence suggests that there were between 4 and 6 Dwellings dating from this time and that they survived, in the *Old Mill Yard*, at least until the 1960's.



**Healey Old Mill Yard post 1961. The tree lined goit or mill race which once took water from the Calder & through the Mill to power the water wheel can be clearly seen. Photo Mark Allen**

## 1800 - 1850

The second Healey Mill to be built was *Healey Low Mill* in 1816 and this was followed some 10 years later when *Healey New Mill* was constructed in about 1826. Over the years each of these Mills provided accommodation for their workers. In these early years most of these homes were “one up one down” but occasionally 3 roomed homes were seen, comprising 1 downstairs room and two bedrooms.

The 1821 Ossett Census provides sketchy evidence of the people who might have lived and worked here in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. However earlier research had identified that an early Healey resident was Benjamin Marsden, the son of Frank, who lived in Horbury at the house which later became The Half Way House Historian, .John Goodchild has identified that Healey Low Mill was home to William Marshall and John Crowther as early as 1819. The 1843 Tithe Award also records that Mark Stephenson & others owned and occupied 1.5 acres in the *east part of Healey & gardens* at Healey New Mill and he too was recorded in the 1821 Ossett Census.

In 1821 Crowther and Marshall were living at properties 196 & 197 with another Marshall living at no. 192. Marsden (@189) and Stephenson (@188) were near neighbours, at Healey, alongside the likes of Thomas Green, Joseph Moss, John Vaughn, Robert Harrop, William Littlewood & George Mitchell . There may have been more but the evidence suggests that, by 1821, there were at least twelve dwellings at the Healey Old and Low Mills. In 1831 and 1832 for example, public notices advertising auction sales make reference to a messuage, cottages and two dwelling houses being situated at the newly constructed Healey New Mill .Future information, recorded in this study, suggests that this number of dwellings, in these locations at the Old Mill Yard and at Low Mill, continued well into the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century/early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

In 2016, this part of Healey, has only seven dwellings, and the remnants of a further two, remaining. This includes The Brewers Pride Public House. (formerly The Millers Arms). 4 dwellings are located at Calder Terrace just to the east of the Pub, 2 are situated in New Mill Yard, although at least one of them appears to be used as business premises. 2 are situated at was known as Healey Flatts just to the east of the Healey Old Mill (now Kerry Foods).



**The two remaining cottages New Mill Yard 2017. The right cottage appears to be a business unit**

The Millers Arms existed as a beerhouse as early as 1842 when John Gawthorpe was the licensee and it is the reference point for the identification of the whereabouts of the dwellings which will be tracked in this study. The first national census was held in 1841 and each Parish was divided into

several enumeration districts – an area considered capable of recording by an enumerator in a single day. In Healey's case, in 1841 and until 1881, the enumerator began his walk at *Mitchell Laithes Farm* (in the west) walked through Healey and across to *Storrs Hill* (in the east). Whilst not part of this history it is worth noting that in 1841 Mitchell Laithes farm had 5 dwellings, 3 of which were uninhabited.

In 1841 Healey recorded 19 dwellings, 12 of which were to the west of The Millers Arms. These 12 dwellings are believed to have been constructed in the yards of the Healey Old Mill (1787-91) and New Mill (c. 1826) by the mill owners. Based on later evidence it seems likely that, at this time, there were 7 dwellings in the Old Mill Yard (2 uninhabited – perhaps being built) and 5 in the New Mill Yard. Four of The Old Yard dwellings were situated at the bottom of the footpath which leads from Runtings (Runtlings) Lane and another two were probably situated close to where the caretaker's bungalow used to stand, on the north side of the road that leads from Healey Road into the Mill site. To the east of the Millers Arms a further 6 dwellings were recorded. The 1843 Tithe Award map does not appear to show any dwellings behind the Millers Arms and so it seems likely that these 6 were in Healey Low Mill Yard. Later evidence (1911) reveals 6 dwellings in use in that Yard.

The 1841 Census names include many that would echo down the Healey censuses in later years. They include Marsden, Gawthorpe, Marshall, Smith, Saxton, Newsome and Moss. In total 1841 the Healey houses provided homes for 105 adults and children in 19 dwellings. Almost certainly these would mostly be 2 room, one up one down, dwellings. Later recollections recorded in 2016 reveal that at least four of the houses in Old Mill Yard were stone built and in 1961 it is known that 8 houses, with a Healey Old Yard address were still in use.

### **1851-1891**

By **1851** little appears to have changed since the 1841 Census. There were now 18 houses recorded in Healey, including The Millers Arms compared with 19 in 1841. 11 of these dwellings were to the west of The Millers and 6 to the east. This again suggests 6 dwellings (1 uninhabited) in the Old Mill Yard, 5 in the New Mill Yard and 6 (1 uninhabited) in Low Mill Yard. Significantly this also suggests that there was no housing development adjacent to John Gawthorpe's Millers Arms. All of the dwellings provided in or before 1851 were thus provided by the owners of the three Healey Mills which stood at that time. Several of the names recorded in 1841 were also in evidence in 1851 but many weren't suggesting some significant turnover of occupiers in the 10 years between censuses. In 1851 the 16 occupied dwellings( 2 were unoccupied) provided homes for 94 adults and children.

By **1861** things had changed quite significantly. The number of dwellings, all occupied, had increased to 31 (from 18 in 1851) providing accommodation for 158 adults and children (94 persons in 1851). There were 13 dwellings to the west of the Millers Arms and 17(compared to only 6 in 1851) to the east indicating that the great majority of the new housing stock was provided to the east - towards Storrs Hill - of The Millers (where John Gawthorpe was still the licensee)

The slight increase in the houses on the west –towards Mitchell Laithes - of The Millers was due to the first appearance in the Census of two dwellings which were recorded with an address *Flatts Healey*. These do not appear on the 1850 map and so they must have been built in the later 1850's or in 1860. They were built on land owned by the Old Mill Company and in 1843 the field name of the land was *Near Flatts*. These dwellings were still in use 100 years later in 1961 but must have been demolished before the year 2000. All that remains today is grass and moss covered stone and brick but, with help from maps, the footprint of the dwellings can be reasonably determined nonetheless.



**Pair of cottages, Healey Flatts, are shown top right. The line of the former mill race from the River Calder can also be seen running beneath Healey Old Mill Photo post 1961 courtesy Mark Allen**

Bricks bearing the name *Westgate* and *Craven* have been found in this location indicating their origins in the Wakefield Westgate Common Foundry of William Craven and Richard Bradley. Established in 1843 and making bricks by machine shortly thereafter this confirms the suggestion that the Flatts cottages were probably built in the mid/ late 1850's. There is also evidence of some bricks, bearing the name *Nostell* which would originate from a later date, perhaps the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century which may indicate the building of out buildings or extensions.

In 1861 these 2 room dwellings, *Healey Flatts* provided homes for 37 year old widow Agnes Audsley and her 5 children, all under the age of 16 years. Next door was home to George Collinson, his wife and their 4 children. These dwellings are important in this history of the people of Healey because, as will be seen later, one of them was the home, and probably the birthplace of Henry Vickers, the father of the Queen of Healey, Alice Vickers.

The 1861 Census also records for the first time the presence of a *grocer's shop* to the east of the Millers Arms suggesting that the five *Calder Terrace* dwellings (in 2016 only four, including the shop front, remain) may have been built by this time. Later (1911) evidence indicates that three of these dwellings each had three rooms (two up, one down), while one had four rooms and the shop (occupied in 1861 by Enoch Hartley) had five rooms. The rest of the increased housing stock appears to have been provided to the rear of The Millers. It was this area which, later, was to become known as King's Yard. It was here that 7 new dwellings, each with probably two rooms, were built in the 1850's or very early 1860's. The 1930's map below suggests that this row had been demolished by that time. Some of the old names were still in existence while others had gone forever from the Healey landscape. The Marsdens were no more but Saxton, Smith, Moss and, of course, Gawthorpe were still living and working at Healey. New names had joined the ranks of Healey families and many, like the Oxley and the Vickers families, would become long term residents.



**1930's Map showing dwellings top left to right: Calder Vale Terrace, King's Yard Terraces & Calder Terrace**

In 1864 the fourth Healey Mill, William Gartside's Dyeworks (later Calder Vale Mills), was built further adding to the demand for workers' accommodation. By **1871** the number of dwellings was 35 (1861 -31 dwellings), providing homes for 136 adults and children. Three of the dwellings were unoccupied and it is thought that these may have been at New Mill as newer provision was being made at *Calder Vale Terrace* closer to the Millers Arms. Overall this represented an increase of only four additional dwellings in the ten years since 1861 and the number of residents had fallen from 158 to 136 persons.

In 1872 John Gawthorpe was recorded as the owner and licensee of The Millers Arms. There were now 19 dwellings (3 unoccupied) to the west (towards Mitchell Laithes) of the Pub compared to 11 in 1861. To the east of The Millers (towards Storrs Hill) there were 15 dwellings (compared to 17 houses in 1861).



It seems likely that five of this increased housing stock to the west of the Pub was provided in the terrace approximately opposite to The Millers. In later times this terrace became known as *Calder Vale Terrace* since the Calder Vale Mill (formerly Gartside's Dyeworks), stood immediately behind.

The ground floor facade of this terrace still stands today (2016) as a retaining

wall. The number 10 can be seen above the bricked up doorway of the house which was closest to The Millers Arms (pictured in the background). Significant to this history was the 1871 recording, for the first time in Healey, of John Vickers and his youngest son, five month old Henry who 30 years later would become the father of Alice Vickers. John Vickers and his family were living in one of the two semi detached cottages at *Flatts Healey*, situated on Old Mill land just to the west of Healey Old Mill. Alice Vickers, the grand daughter of John, died in Healey in 1983, at least 112 years after the Vickers family first arrived in Healey.

In **1881** Healey dwellings numbered 33 (a decrease of two on 1871) with 20 (15 in 1871) to the east of the Millers Arms and 12 (19 in 1871) to the west. In *overall* terms these numbers had hardly varied in the 10 years since the previous census in 1871 but an increase of five dwellings to the east of The Millers was offset by a similar reduction in dwellings to the west. In addition to the Census information it is evident from press notices in the early 1880's that cottages & messuages still existed at Healey New Mill. The increase to the east was as a consequence of further housing development at, what would be become known as, King's Yard and the housing decrease to the west is thought to be due to a reduction in dwellings at New Mill Yard.

Of the 1881 overall total of 33 dwellings, 2 were unoccupied and the remaining 31 houses provided homes for 174 adults and children. Some of earliest known Healey residents or their descendants like Moss, Smith and Oxley, were still present and new families like Bilbrough, Tinker and Vickers were beginning to establish their credentials and they too would become a significant part of Healey's history. For this history it is relevant to note that during the 1870's John Vickers had moved his family from *Healey Flatts* to the recently built King's Yard terrace behind the Millers Arms.

More significantly by 1881 The Millers Arms itself had also changed owner and Licensee. The Public House had been owned by the Gawthorpe family for at least the previous ten years or so and the same family had been licensees for 40 years. The last of the Gawthorpe licensees was Jane Gawthorpe in 1877 and by 1881 John Duffin had assumed the position of landlord.

TO BE SOLD, pursuant to an Order of the High Court of Justice, Chancery Division, made in an action in the matter of the estate of John Gawthorpe the elder deceased *Gawthorpe v Gawthorpe*, 1878, G 39, with the approbation of the Master of the Rolls, the Judge to whose court the said action is attached, by Mr WILLIAM FREDERICK FOX, the person appointed by the said Judge, at the Coopers' Arms Inn, in Ossett, in the parish of Dewsbury, in the county of York, on *Monday the Nineteenth day of July, 1880*, at Seven o'clock in the Evening, in five lots, the following Freehold Property, lately belonging to the said John Gawthorpe the elder, deceased, viz.

**A FREEHOLD ESTATE** situate in Healey, near Ossett, in the parish of Dewsbury, in the county of York, comprising "The MILLER'S ARMS" INN, at Healey aforesaid, 14 DWELLING-HOUSES or COTTAGES, a plot of 1931 yards of Grass LAND, and the Cherry Tree Close, containing 4A. 2R. 1P., in the occupation of Mrs Jane Gawthorpe, and others.

Particulars and conditions of sale may be had gratis of the following solicitors in London, Messieurs H. B. Clarks & Son, 14, Feoffee's Inn, Fleet Street; Messieurs Hamlin & Grammer, 7, Staple Inn; and in the Country, of Messieurs Haigh, Barker, & Barker, Horbury Bridge, Wakefield; Mr Thomas Senior, Bradford; also of Mr J. D. Good, Accountant, Dewsbury; and of the Auctioneer, Mr W. F. Fox, at his office, Dewsbury.

Dated this 15th day of June, 1880.

JOHN W. HAWKINS, Chief Clerk.

Notice in Yorkshire Post & Leeds Intelligencer 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1880 for the sale of the Millers Arms and, perhaps, some of the dwellings situated behind the Public House

Following a family disagreement in 1873 regarding the Will of the late John Gawthorpe the Gawthorpe family sold the Millers Arms and other properties and by 1881 the Public House and yard was in the possession of John King of Horbury. It was John King and, in 1889, William King who were responsible for, or connected with for the further housing development behind The Millers Arms. This Yard and its dwellings, not unreasonably, became known as King's Yard, King's Buildings or King's Row forever more. John King was a Scot and Oil Distiller who, in 1881, was living at Bridge House, Horbury Bridge.

The 1880's saw significant housing development at Healey. The decade began with 33 dwellings and 174 persons and ended with 44 houses and 179 occupants with a *Healey* address. Further up Healey Road, to the east of the Gasworks there is also evidence that a new terrace of eight dwellings was being built. These houses are not included in this study. For the first time the **1891** Census, helpfully, recorded the number of rooms in those houses which had fewer than five rooms. On a less welcome note the census enumerator's walking route, which had been constant since 1841 had changed. Instead of walking from Mitchell Laithes in the west to Storrs Hill in the east (or sometimes vice versa) the enumerator now walked south, down Healey Road and began his Healey count at The Millers Arms. In 1891 and 1901 it was therefore much more difficult to identify the location of dwellings in relation to The Millers Arms where Albert Sowden was now the licensee with William King as the owner.

The number of dwellings to the west of The Millers had barely changed in the previous 50 years except for the building of *Calder Vale Terrace* in the late 1860's or very early 1870's but these were offset by the reduction in the dwellings at New Mill In 1891 therefore there were just 13 dwellings in the Old & New Mill Yards and *Flatts*. A third dwelling was recorded here in 1891 for the only time and there is another building on the 1905 map just to the west of the pair of cottages built in the 1850's/60's).

The overall increase of 11 dwellings between 1881 and 1891 therefore was almost entirely on the east of the Millers Arms and due to development on John & William King's development land to the rear of the Public House. By 1891 there were 23 dwellings in King's Yard and five, including the shop, at the adjacent *Calder Terrace*. It is probable that this increase was due to the construction in the early/mid 1880's of a second terrace of 7 or so dwellings parallel to the earlier terrace but closer to the gas works. This was the row in which Alice Vickers was born in 1900 and where she lived for most of her life. The row of terraces went by various names over the following years including King's Buildings, Kings Row and Gas Works Row.

What is not in doubt was that the terrace was in King's Yard. A clue to the date of the building of this Row was given in the 1881 Census which records, rather simply, "7B" in the King's Yard area. Might this suggest 7 B[uildings], probably under construction, in that year and so inhabited by the 1891 Census. It is not certain however that this terrace was built by the Kings since later evidence indicates the terrace in the ownership of Ossett Corporation.

New property or not life was hard for King's Yard families as they scratched a living for their families from their work in the Mills and the local Gasworks. In 1881, the Butterworths were one of those families living in King's Yard. Mother Rachel Butterworth was forced to apply to the Dewsbury Union for relief for herself and four children after her husband, Enoch, had left them. Enoch was sent to prison for three months with hard labour. As for Rachel, a widow by 1901, she remained in King's Yard until at least 1905.

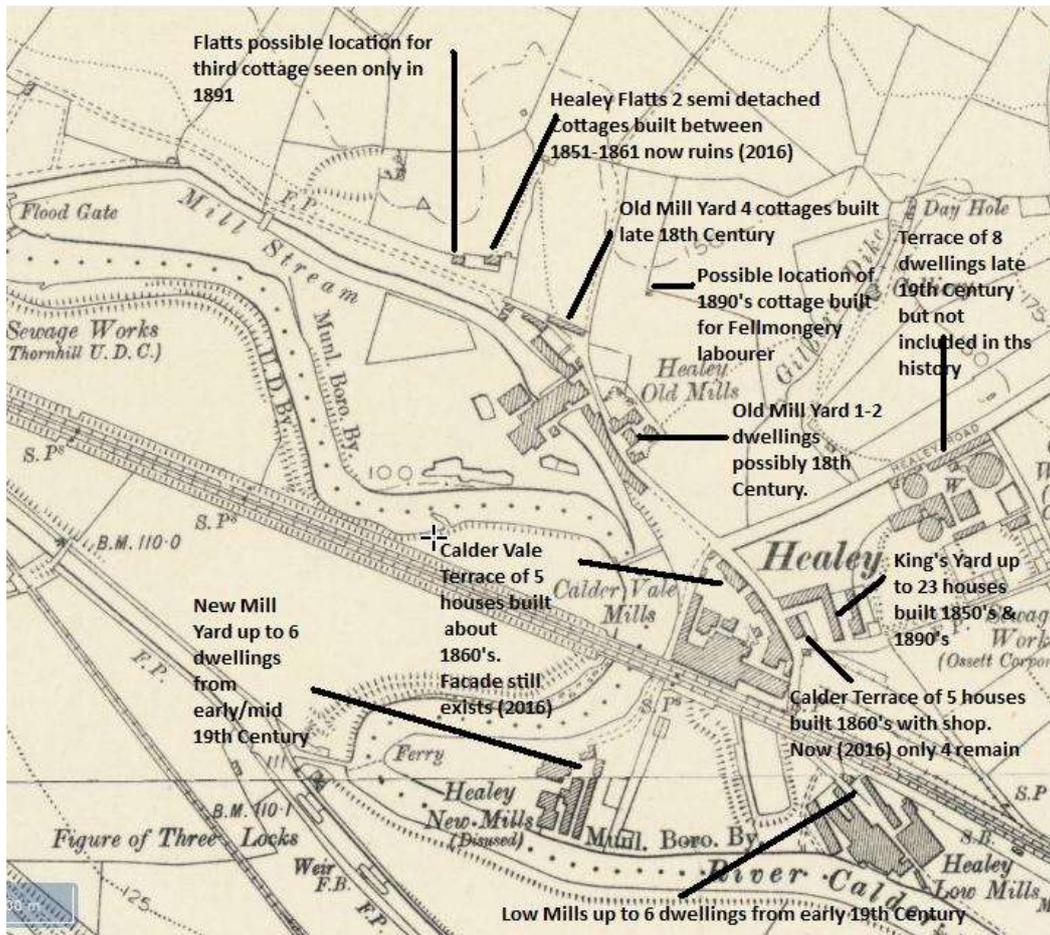
The layout of Healey at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century is shown in the map below

### **A New Century 1901 -1950**

The start of a new Century, and the 1901 Census, is an appropriate time to describe the dwellings in Healey at that time. It was the very peak of Healey's existence as a village on the edge of another, larger, village called Ossett. By this time Healey had a mix of properties with some, more than 100 years old, dating from the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century, and others where the paint had barely dried. **By 1901**, Healey, as it is described in this history, had 53 dwellings compared with 44 in 1891. The increase was almost entirely due to the completion in the early 1890's of the second row of dwellings, and addition of other dwellings built in, what was then known as, King's Yard. This second row (King's Row or King's Building or, later and less usually, Gas Works Row) closer to the gasworks mirrored, almost exactly, in number the row closer to the Millers Arms that was built in the mid/late 1850's. While these dwellings went by the name *King's* the later 1910 Inland Revenue Valuation records 9 buildings, including this terrace of 7, in the ownership of Ossett Corporation.

The Millers Arms itself had also undergone some changes with new owners in 1894 when Bentley Brewery Co Ltd (Henry Bentley & Co) bought it from William King. Bentley's ownership lasted for only about seven years and in 1901 they sold it on to Whitbread (Yorkshire) Ltd who held it until 1972. The licensee in 1891, Albert Sowden, had also left and was replaced, in 1894, for a few months, by Henry Archer. Mr Archer was Albert Sowden's son in law and shortly after becoming landlord he was shot at, in the Miller's Arms, by Mr Sowden's son. It was suggested, that the son felt that he should have become the licensee. Henry Archer was soon afterwards replaced by Joseph Mitchell who was licensee by 1901.

By 1892 a new business appears to have been established at the north eastern edge of the Healey Old Mill site. This Fellmongery business was established by Godfrey Illingworth who appears to have lived in a house (with more than five rooms) in that vicinity until his later move up Healey road to Granary Farm.. Illingworth built a house for his main worker and relative, Herbert Howard Nettleton, who lived in a two room house either in the Yard or possibly in the middle of the field, adjacent to Old Mill and but a short distance from the Fellmongery. The land on which this latter house may have been built, and the Fellmongery works, belonged to Eleanor Steele, the main beneficiary of Charles Wheatley J.P. who inherited significant land ownerships from his very wealthy Haigh cousins of Longlands House, Flushdyke.



**Map showing the layout of the Healey Mills & Dwellings in about 1905**

In 1904 Sam Croft became Licensee of The Millers Arms which was still owned by Whitbreads. In 1908 the landlord was George Ibbotson and by 1914 Wilson Earnshaw had become Licensee.

By **1901** the following addresses were everyday names for those 211 adults and children who lived there in 53 dwellings in various states of condition:-

**To the west of the Millers Arms** on Low Mill Road (i.e in the direction of Mitchell Laithes)

*Healey Flatts* 2 semi detached cottages each with two rooms (built between 1851 & 1861)

*Healey Old Mill Yard* 6 dwellings comprising a terrace of 4 in the Yard at the bottom of the path leading to & from Runtlings Lane. 3 of these had two rooms and one had 3 rooms. Built by Healey Old Mill probably mid/late 1790's. 2 dwellings on the north eastern edge of the Old Yard possibly occupied by Godfrey Illingworth for his fellmongery business established by 1892. One with 2 rooms & another with more than five rooms. One of these may have replaced an earlier building.

*Healey New Mill Yard* 3 dwellings including a pair of semi detached cottages (still existing in 2016). Each of the 3 dwellings had three rooms.

*Calder Vale Terrace* (opposite The Millers – the first floor facade still exists in 2016) 5 dwellings with 3 having three rooms and 2 having four rooms. Built 1860's.

**To the east of the Millers Arms** on Low Mill Road (i.e in the direction of Storrs Hill). The Millers itself had more than five rooms.

*King's Yard* A terrace of 7 dwellings each with two rooms built mid/late 1850's before 1861.

A terrace of 7 dwellings each with three or four rooms built early 1890's.

Further 9 dwellings, some attached to the terraces and some attached to the rear of the Millers Arms. These dwellings were mainly two/three rooms but 1 dwelling had four rooms. The Millers Arms had more than five rooms (in 1911 it had eight rooms).

*Calder Terrace* (adjacent to The Millers Arms). 5 dwellings including one with an integral shop (five rooms) , 3 of the houses with four rooms and 1 with three rooms)

*Healey Low Mill Yard* 6 dwellings with a mix of three, four and five (or more) rooms.

In **1901** therefore 16 dwellings were to the west of The Millers Arms and 36 dwellings were to the east. After this date it is likely that only one other dwelling was built in the next 115 years. This was a bungalow built and subsequently used as the caretaker's home at the north eastern edge of the Old Mill Yard (Kerry Foods) close to where Illingworth's Fellmongery, and two dwellings, probably stood, 100 years earlier.

It is extraordinary to contemplate the living conditions of some of these Healey families. Take, for example, Charles Bilbrough, a carter & farmer who, in 1901, was living in two rooms in the older King's Yard terrace with his wife, two sons and four daughters. Eight persons were living in one up & one down accommodation. By 1911, Charles had moved to the newer King's Yard terrace and was enjoying the luxury of three rooms (one down and two bedrooms) except that his household now comprised himself, his wife, four sons, six daughters, and a lodger. A total of 13 persons.

In addition to these dwellings which are part of this study, a further 8 dwellings (with three & four rooms), had been built by 1901 on Healey Road opposite, more or less, to the Healey Mission which would be built in 1920. In 1910 these dwellings were owned by Ossett Corporation.

In **1905-06** the Ossett Burgess Rolls record 41 households on their listings. In **1913-1915** the equivalent totals were 36 households . Care must be exercised when considering these results because of the complication around voting rights in different elections in this period of British history. Nevertheless if people are seeking their Ossett relatives after 1911 then the Rolls, which record names of voters are worth an examination.

In **1910** the Inland Revenue Valuation recorded the following at Healey:-

\*8 dwellings at *Healey Old Mill Yard* owned by John William Smith Ltd

\*2 dwellings at *Healey New Mill Yard* owned by Extract Wool & Merino Co. Ltd

\*5 dwellings at *Calder Vale Terrace* owned by Facett & Firth Ltd (owners of Calder Vale Mill)

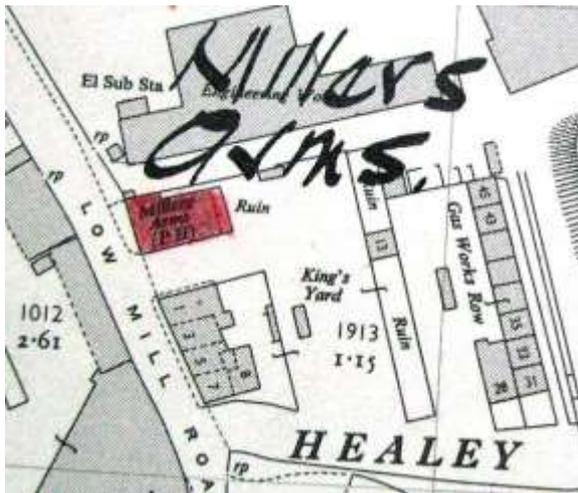
\* *The Millers Public House*, licensee George Ibbotson, owned by Bentley's Yorks Brewery

\* 6 dwellings at *Calder Terrace*, 5 owned by Thomas Gelder (also the shop keeper) & 1 owned by Bentley's Yorks Breweries. Hence this terrace was sometimes also known as *Gelder's Terrace*

\* 12 dwellings at *King's Yard* 4 owned by John Wm. Mitchell , 8 owned by Thos Neal,

\*9 dwellings at *Low Mill Road* owned by Ossett Corporation. Even though these dwellings had a Low Mill Road they comprised the newly built terrace in King's Yard closest to the gas works.

\* 7 dwellings at *Healey* owned by Extract Wool & Merino Co Ltd (These were at Low Mill)



In total in 1910 there were 50 dwellings compared to 53 in 1901. The following year, 1911, the National Census recorded the following analyses which have been annotated to include the number of rooms in each of the 48 dwellings (1 was uninhabited). The dwellings housed 206 adults and children.

Over the next 20 years the map (opposite) makes clear that as many as 12 dwellings, in King's Yard had been demolished. This map was believed to date from the 1930's but is likely to be later since the 1939 Register records that King's Yard still had 21 dwellings compared to 21 in 1911.

**Map (above) showing King's Yard following the demolition of most of the terrace (marked *ruin*) built in the 1850's.**

Civil Parish		Sanitary District		Ward		Electoral Division		Parliamentary Borough or County		Population	
Healey (Part of)		South-Central Healey (Part of)		West (Part of)		Healey Division of Yorkshire		Healey		1911	
No. of Inhabitants	Address	Kind of Building (See Note at Foot of Table)	Name of Occupier	Number of Rooms		Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
				In	Out						
196	Healey Building	Dwelling	Mr. Barton	1		3	1	4			
197	Healey	Low Mills	Mr. James								
198	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Peace	1		1	1	2			
199	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Foxwell	1		1	2	3			
200	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Lockwood	1		1	1	2			
201	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Smith	1		2	1	3			
202	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Brown	1		4	1	5			
203	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Longwood	1		3	2	5			
204	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Smith	1		3	1	4			
205	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Ellis	1		5	3	8			
206	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Green	1		1	1	2			
207	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Green	1		2	2	4			
208	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gilder	1		1	2	3			
209	Healey Building	Dwelling	Mr. Long	1		5	1	6			
210	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Hill	1		2	1	3			
211	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Whittaker	1		2	2	4			
212	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Wicks	1		3	6	9			
213	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Oldroyd	1		2	2	4			
214	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gidley	1		3	2	5			
215	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Ellis	1		1	1	2			
216	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Hewson	1		4	3	7			
217	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Oldroyd	1		3	3	6			
				Total to be inserted in column		- 22		6		5334 93	

Civil Parish		Sanitary District		Ward		Electoral Division		Parliamentary Borough or County		Population	
Healey (Part of)		South-Central Healey (Part of)		West (Part of)		Healey Division of Yorkshire		Healey		1911	
No. of Inhabitants	Address	Kind of Building (See Note at Foot of Table)	Name of Occupier	Number of Rooms		Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
				In	Out						
218	Healey Building	Dwelling	Mr. Taylor	1		4	5	9			
219	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Bellwell	1		3	3	6			
220	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Wilby	1		4	2	6			
221	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Ellis	1		2	1	3			
222	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Bellwell	1		6	4	10			
223	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Stanley	1		4	2	6			
224	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Green	1		1	1	2			
225	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Taylor	1		2	3	5			
226	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gidley	1		1	1	2			
227	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gidley	1		1	1	2			
228	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gidley	1		2	2	4			
229	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gidley	1		2	2	4			
230	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gidley	1		2	2	4			
231	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gidley	1		2	2	4			
232	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gidley	1		2	2	4			
233	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gidley	1		2	2	4			
234	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gidley	1		2	2	4			
235	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gidley	1		2	2	4			
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263	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gidley	1		2	2	4			
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297	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gidley	1		2	2	4			
298	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gidley	1		2	2	4			
299	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gidley	1		2	2	4			
300	Healey	Dwelling	Mr. Gidley	1		2	2	4			
				Total to be inserted in column		- 21		1		44100	

1911 Census Healey East District 6 Annotated to include rooms per dwelling

Civil Parish.		Ecclesiastical Parish.		Borough or Urban District.						
Ussett nr of		South Ussett Christ Church nr of		Ussett, nr. B. nr of						
Ward of Borough or Urban District.		Rural District.		Parliamentary Borough or Division.						
West nr of				Morley Yorks nr of						
No. of Schedule.	Address.	Kind of Building. (For Blocks of Flats and Model Dwellings the Numbers of separate Flats or Tenements must be stated.)	Name of Occupier.	Dwellings or Tenements.			Population.			
				Inhabited.	Uninhabited.	Building.	Buildings not used as dwellings.	Males.	Females.	Persons.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.
428										
429										
430										
431										
432										
433										
434										
435	Old mill yard 1 ROOMS	Private House	Hutcheon	1				1	1	2
		Healey Old mills	J.W. Smiths Ltd				1			
436	3 2 ROOMS	Private House	Mr Hanson	1				1	1	2
437	4 2 ROOMS		Smiths	1				2	2	4
438	5 1 ROOMS		Butterfield	1				3	2	5
439	6 1 ROOMS		Newsome	1				2	3	5
440	7 HEALEY FLATS 2 ROOMS		Biswick	1				1	1	2
441	9 HEALEY FLATS 2 ROOMS		Roberts	1				2	1	3
	Healey Road	Warehouses					2			
End of Ecclesiastical Parish of South Ussett Christ Church										
Total to be carried forward to Abstract				14			4	25	25	50

1911 Census Healey Old Yard & Healey Flatts District 5

## 1914-1918 World War 1



In proportion to its population, Healey probably suffered more than most the loss of its young men in the First World War 1914-18.

So that future generations may remember these ten brave men of Healey their names are displayed here with a link to their biography written in 2014 and published on <http://ossett.net/ww1.html> in honour of their sacrifice.

The memorial Plaque on the wall of Healey Mission (now a dwelling). The plaque is visible from Healey Road.

Private Harry Asquith \*\*, 6<sup>th</sup> K.O.Y.L.I. , King's Buildings,  
[http://ossett.net/WW1/Harry\\_Asquith.html](http://ossett.net/WW1/Harry_Asquith.html)

Private Alfred Bilbrough \*\*, 1/4<sup>th</sup> K.O.Y.L.I. Son of John Bilbrough & brother in law of fellow soldier, James Ryan, Gas Works Row  
[http://ossett.net/WW1/Alfred\\_Bilbrough.html](http://ossett.net/WW1/Alfred_Bilbrough.html)

Private Harry Ellis\*\*, 6<sup>th</sup> K.O.Y.L.I. Gas Works Row  
[http://ossett.net/WW1/Alfred\\_Bilbrough.html](http://ossett.net/WW1/Alfred_Bilbrough.html)

Private William Newsome, 2<sup>nd</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> West Yorkshires, Old Mill Yard  
[http://ossett.net/WW1/William\\_Newsome.html](http://ossett.net/WW1/William_Newsome.html)

Lance Corporal James Ryan, married Eliza Bilbrough, daughter of John, carter, of Gas Works Row.  
[http://ossett.net/WW1/James\\_Ryan.html](http://ossett.net/WW1/James_Ryan.html)

Private Oliver Smith\*\*, Gelder's Buildings (Calder Terrace)  
[http://ossett.net/WW1/Oliver\\_Smith.html](http://ossett.net/WW1/Oliver_Smith.html)

Private James Edward Taylor\*\*, 14<sup>th</sup> K.O.Y.L.I. [http://ossett.net/WW1/James\\_E\\_Taylor.html](http://ossett.net/WW1/James_E_Taylor.html)

Private Clifford Spedding, 13<sup>th</sup> Hussars, Calder Vale Terrace,  
[http://ossett.net/WW1/Clifford\\_Spedding.html](http://ossett.net/WW1/Clifford_Spedding.html)

Private Fred Talbot\*\*, 10<sup>th</sup> K.O.Y.L.I. 6 Low Mill Road (King's Buildings)  
[http://ossett.net/WW1/Fred\\_Talbot.html](http://ossett.net/WW1/Fred_Talbot.html)

Private Herbert Vickers\*\*, 10<sup>th</sup> K.O.Y.L.I. Gas Works Row, King's Yard,  
[http://ossett.net/WW1/Herbert\\_Vickers.html](http://ossett.net/WW1/Herbert_Vickers.html)

\*\* Signifies that the soldier is remembered on the Healey Mission Memorial. Seven Healey men were recorded on the Mission Memorial but a further three men who lost their lives in WW1 and who were born, or lived, at Healey have been located and are included above. It is likely that these three men were not included because the families had moved away from Healey sometime before 1914 and may not have been contactable by those people responsible for the composition of the names on the Memorial.

Our next glimpse of Healey's past is in 1939, when the Government conducted a survey known as the 1939 Register. Taken on 29 September 1939, this provided a snapshot of the civilian population of England and Wales just after the outbreak of the Second World War. The records were used to produce up-to-date population statistics and identification cards and, once rationing was introduced in January 1940, to facilitate the issuing of ration cards.

In so far as Healey was concerned the 1939 Register recorded the following dwellings and, for comparison, the 1911 figures are included in brackets.

*Millers Arms* 1 dwelling [2 people]

*King's Yard* 13 dwellings [59 people]

*Gas Works Row* 8 dwellings [33 people]. This was the Row built in the 1890's also known as King's Buildings or King's Row and home to Alice Vickers.

*Calder Terrace* 4 dwellings [20 people]

*Low Mill Yard* 3 dwellings [16 people]

*Low Mill Road* 5 dwellings [14 people] This is *Calder Vale Terrace*

*Healey New Mills* 1 dwelling [4 people]

*Old Mill Yard* 6 dwellings (including 1 at Flatts) [22 people]

1939 in total recorded 39 dwellings and 170 adults and children. Vacant dwellings were not recorded in 1939. In 1911 there were 48 dwellings and 206 adults and children. The major reduction in dwellings was at Low Mill which had 3 dwellings (6 in 1911) and there was a single dwelling reduction at each of Flatts, Old Mill Yard, New Mill Yard, King's Yard and Calder Terrace. In some instances the dwellings may have been empty, and not recorded, or demolished.

The 1939 Register records Benjamin Sharp and his family living in the only occupied dwelling in New Healey Mill Yard. The five dwellings comprising Calder Vale Terrace (but with a 1939 address of Low Mill Road) were occupied by the families of Alfred Kaye, John Moulson, Cyril Leake, Clifford Handley and Annie Wilby. In Low Mill Yard itself the families comprised the Chamebers, Dwyers and Wicks. Calder Terrace was home to Irvine and Edith Gosnay at number 1 which was a home and a shop. Edith is recorded as a grocer/ shopkeeper. Their neighbours on the terrace were the Sykes, Cadman & Simms families.

In 1939 Eileen Brown was the manageress of the Millers Arms and her neighbours in King's Yard comprised the families Simms, Lee, Stokes, Atkinson, Harkin, Wynne, Ellis, Berry, Dyson, Wood, Hamer and Paton. At the adjacent Gas Works Row were the families Ramsden, Bedford, Handley, Challenger, Hawksworth, Hayward, Harrop, Beaumont, Vickers and Dixon.

## 1940-2016 The beginning of the end



**Healey in 1949. The buildings on the right are King's Yard. The east facing gable of Calder Terrace (adjacent to The Brewers Pride) is marked by a yellow dot & opposite, with a blue dot, is the gable of Calder Vale Terrace. In the background, marked by red dots are thought to be the Healey Old Mill Yard dwellings. (Courtesy of co-researcher of this history, Nev Ashby).**

The above photograph shows Healey as it was in 1949 but the area would have been much the same since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Ten years after 1949 the landscape had begun to change significantly. The identity and purpose of the large building behind King's Yard in the photograph is currently unknown.

In the early 1940's, a young boy, John McQueen, born in March 1939, arrived in King's Yard Healey with his mother and sister whilst his father was away in WW2. John now lives in Australia but he shared his memories of King's Yard when he was growing up. In his own words, this was King's Yard Healey during and after WW2 in the 1940's and 1950's.

*I was born on the 13th of March 1939 in Manchester. Just six months prior to the start of Second World War. We as a family, my mum our Pat and I, lived in Kings Yard Healey. Our house in Kings Yard was about the size of a two - car garage. There were about thirteen houses in the yard. One room downstairs and one up. The house was built of stone as was the floor tiles (flagstones) roof tiles and the staircase that led to the tiny bedroom, even the sink was carved out of stone. And another set of stone steps that led down to the cellar.*

*There was no electricity, and no hot water. We had a "Yorkist" Range fire place with two ovens heated by the fire. A "set pot", it was like a large iron pot under which you could light a fire to boil water. We children used to sit in this to get bathed. Mum and Dad, when he came home from the*

war, got bathed in a "tin bath" with warm water being boiled on the fire. All we had was gas lamps and a small one ring gas burner. You had to put pennies into a gas meter to get the gas. No pennies meant no gas. The radio we had (no television in those days) was, because we had no electricity, run off a large battery, just like a car battery today.

There was no "cereals" for breakfast for kids in Kings Yard. "Milk slops" was our breakfast. Milk delivered by horse and cart from the farm ½ a mile away, poured over stale bread, hot milk in the winter, cold in the summer, with, if rations allowed, a little sugar or jam. In the winter Mum and Dad used to put bricks in the oven to warm up then wrap them up in a towel and place in our beds, if we had no bricks, one of the red hot iron oven plates did the same thing. They kept our feet lovely and warm.

At the corner of Kings Yard was a pub, the "Miller's Arms". It is still there today. In the middle of the yard were the toilets. All four of them, for thirteen houses, thirteen families. Mr and Mrs Wood, just one of the families living in Kings Yard had sixteen children. The toilets were just a wooden bench with all the body waste going on to a stone floor, which to council men came to "shovel out" every fortnight.

As a young boy from Kings Yard during and after the war, I, like all children in those days were never in the house, we were out playing from dawn till dusk. We would dig five holes in the yard and play marbles...

In the winter many people in the yard would run out of coal. Remember, no coal, no fire. No fire, no hot water, no oven, no cooking, no dinner, and no set-pot. However at times coal was very scarce, so whole families used to walk along the railway banks and railway lines looking not for blackberries but coal. The steam trains in those days, and that's all there was, had on board a "fireman" whose sole job it was to keep the fires going in the boilers of the steam train. I always like to think that while passing Kings Yard the fireman used to sometimes miss the fire and throw some coal on to the lines and down the banking's so that the families in the yard could have a fire and a hot dinner. It was no fun in a freezing cold winter sitting in a house with no fire.

Nov the fifth, is a big night in England. It is a throwback to celebrate Guy Fawkes Night. The man who tried to blow up the English Parliament..... In Kings Yard it was the biggest night of the year. Months before all the kids used to be out "Chumping", collecting anything that would burn for "our bonfire" It was enormous, almost as tall as the houses that were only a few feet away. It lit up the outside toilets, the railway sidings. The corner shop, the pub, every house was lit up inside, like it was a summers day, the whole area changed, once a match had been put to it.

What a night we used to have all the families sitting either around the fire or on their stone steps, I almost said front door steps, but that was the only door they had, no back doors, just the one. Every ones face red with the heat from the bonfire, kids every where, fireworks going off, kids running around with lighted touch paper, (thick string smouldering at the end, and when spun around resembled a spinning wheel fire work).

That is how a village looks after its own. When the fire was burning down, after many hours, in used to go a sack of potatoes. Given freely by the men of the Yard, who had just emerged from the farmer's field carrying a sack full of freshly dug potatoes and a few shovels. Out came the bits of

*margarine saved from the rations, and heaps of salt. The men would get a jug of warm beer from the Millers Arms, but with the heat from the fire it soon turned even warmer. No doubt when all us nippers were tucked up in bed, they would take their bonfire red faces into the pub for the rest of the night. They deserved it, to us kids they were all heroes.*

*When Dad came home from the war, like everyone and everything else, money was scarce, so come Christmas dad did not have the money for a Christmas tree, so Pat and I walked up to Storrs Hill about two miles away, with the snow up to the tops of our wellies, to chop down a Gorse bush down. We dragged the large bush with all its thorns all the way home. Dad put it in a bucket with some bricks to hold it in place. It looked great. Christmas presents in those days were not like today. Everything in the shops was still on ration. But we would get a whip and top, some marbles, a ball, a few lollies and maybe an orange or some fruit in our Christmas stockings.*

John McQueen is a member of the Facebook History Group, *Ossett Through The Ages (OTTA)*, which was established in 2015. Information supplied by other members of OTTA has been incorporated in this history of Healey. We are grateful to all of those OTTA members who contributed their memories of the place where they, or their ancestors, once lived.

OTTA members have mentioned the names of some of the families who lived at King's Yard and the other nearby Healey addresses. Tales of the Wood family who were ancestors of Yorkshire cricketer, Barry Wood, and a family named Fox who lived on King's Yard in the late 1940's and early 1950's. The Dwyer family were well known and so too were the Watsons of no.4 Old Mill Yard who, in 1958, moved to the Gas Board houses opposite Healey Mission. The Wilby family lived for some time on Calder View Terrace and the Listers lived near Smith's Mill in Old Mill Yard. Benjamin Sharpe lived in New Mill Yard and it is believed that he bought some of King's Yard around the time of demolition when Charles Lister assisted with the work. Healey gets into the blood it seems and the Lister's married grand daughter lived with her husband, a security guard, in the bungalow built in the Old Mill Yard near the entrance to, what is now, Kerry foods.

These names and John McQueen's recollections of life in King's Yard take the story of Healey into the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and to a period when those families who had made their histories there, had to move on. But before doing so it is worth remembering how important this part of Healey was to the children who grew up there.

Situated on the banks of the River Calder and the Calder & Hebble Canal with a man made dam and open countryside just footsteps away it was a playground that children could only dream about. Elsewhere in his Memories of Healey John McQueen speaks of blackberrying, bird nesting, fishing and spending hours and days wandering the fields and making dens in the older parts of the Mills as they fell into decline.

What is attractive to children in their pursuit of new adventures and experiences can also be dangerous and John mentions a few instances in his memories. The newspapers of the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries are full of similar stories involving Healey and its people. In addition to the proximity of two major water courses, including the often fast flowing River Calder, the main Leeds to Manchester railway thundered through with freight and passengers from morning to night. There were four mills within shouting distance of King's Yard, behind the Millers Arms, which provided every opportunity for exploration but which were also the scenes of much hardship and tragedy.

The Newspapers over the centuries tell of dangerous work practices and incidents in those Mills and on the Railway. They tell of drownings, some accidental and some not, in the Calder and the Canal, and they tell of families suffering hardships that most of us could barely contemplate in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

By 1961 what was left of housing in this part of Healey could be counted on the fingers of two hands. The Millers Arms had survived and by this time the landlord was Cyril Addy having succeeded the likes of Albert Smith Peacock (1956), Mark Gunning (1955), Walter Marsh (1945), Eileen Brown (1939), Leonard Brown (1933), Norman Wilkinson (1932) and Wilson Earnshaw (1914).

According to the record there was only one occupied dwelling, it seems, at *Calder Terrace*, where Gordon Newsome, grocer, lived and sold his wares. However in 2016 there were four occupied dwellings in this terrace, including the one, immediately adjacent to The Millers, which was once a home and shop and, by the early 1970's, a busy cafe. Mary Mitchell is also recorded at Calder Terrace but it is said that she actually lived at 8, *Calder Vale Terrace*, the first floor facade of which can be seen today (2016), opposite the Millers Arms. There was one dwelling at *New Mill Yard*, occupied by Benjamin Sharp and that dwelling and this too remains, seemingly occupied in 2016, being one of a pair of old cottages. The other cottage appears to be home to a small business.

As for *King's Yard* which once provided homes for 22 families, in 1961 there were only two residents remaining. Cyril Ramsden and his wife lived at number 43. Next door, at the end of terrace dwelling, number 45, was the home of Alice Vickers, the Queen of Healey. This dwelling was most probably the place of her birth in 1900. Cyril Ramsden was born in Thornhill on 23rd July 1907, the fourth of five children born to miner William Ramsden and his wife, Martha. Cyril married 23 year old Elsie Hopkinson at South Ossett Parish Church on 17th April 1933. Cyril was a miner at the time of his marriage and records suggest they may have had one child, Brenda, born later that year. Sadly, Cyril and Elsie Ramsden died, within a week of each other, in Summer 1970 after 37 years of marriage.

By this time both Alice Vickers and Cyril Ramsden had been moved, in the 1960's, from King's Yard to live in the Gas Board Houses, built in the 1890's, further up Healey Road almost opposite Alice's beloved Healey Mission. Alice lived at number 77 and Cyril and Elsie lived nearby at number 81. Alice was, fittingly, one of the last residents of King's Yard, which is now no more.

Finally, in 1961, the story ends more or less where it began. *Healey Old Mill Yard* in 1790 or so, had 6 dwellings. In 1961 Old Mill Yard had the same number of dwellings, albeit 2 were in different locations within the Yard. The occupants in 1961 were Sadie Powell, Jack Hanson, Mary E. Martin and Walter H. Paramour who were living in the stone built terrace at the bottom of the footpath which leads to and from Runtlings Lane (see photograph below). Along the Yard was a small building which housed earth toilets shared by the four houses. In 2016 the houses and the privy are no more.



**The four cottages at the bottom of the footpath from Runtlings Lane are shown on the left. The cottages were still occupied in 1961. Photograph courtesy of Mark Allen.**

Slightly further west, the pair of stone built semi detached cottages, perhaps with later brick built extensions, at *Healey Flatts*, were home to Leslie Stephenson and Wilfred Cooper. Between 1961 and 2000 these dwellings, (See photograph below) were demolished but by 2016 there remain traces of their presence and the footprint of the cottages can be traced. There was one dwelling at New Mill Yard.



**Pair of cottages, Healey Flatts, are shown top right. Photograph courtesy of Mark Allen**

*The Millers Arms* has been a constant for all but 50 years of this history which began in the late 1780's. In the mid 1950's, Alfred Smith Peacock was the landlord and he was followed by Cyril Addy (1958), Frank Ward (1963), Ronald Ward (1968), Roy Elston Cutts junior (1972), Frank Annison Rhodes (1972), David Garthwaite & Ben Robert Cooper (1985), Mark David Gilbert (1989), Robert Hunter & Lynda Johnson (1992), Robert Hunter & Andrew Pollard (1993), Robert Hunter & Annabel Smith (1996 – Ms Smith deleted during 1996), Matthew D Cox & Sally Louise Walker (still there in 2001). The Millers changed ownership in 1972 when Roy Elston Cutts acquired it from Whitbread. He was followed as owner by Frank Ellison Rhodes and in 1985 by Clark's Brewery and then by Robert A Hunter. It changed its name to Boon's End in 1985 and to its present name, Brewer's Pride, in 1994.

Thus, with the passage of time, in 2016, only six dwellings still remain in this part of Healey. These were The Millers Arms, four dwellings on Calder Terrace including the one with a shop front which was a busy cafe in the 1970's. In addition there is a pair of old brick built cottages in Healey New Mill Yard, one of which appears still be used as a dwelling. This may be the earliest built dwelling surviving in 2016.

### **Occupations 1790-1939**

While the dwellings were homes to parents, grandparents and children they were also the homes of those men and women, but mostly men, who, almost without exception, worked the Mills. The pattern of occupational descriptions over the years therefore holds few surprises.

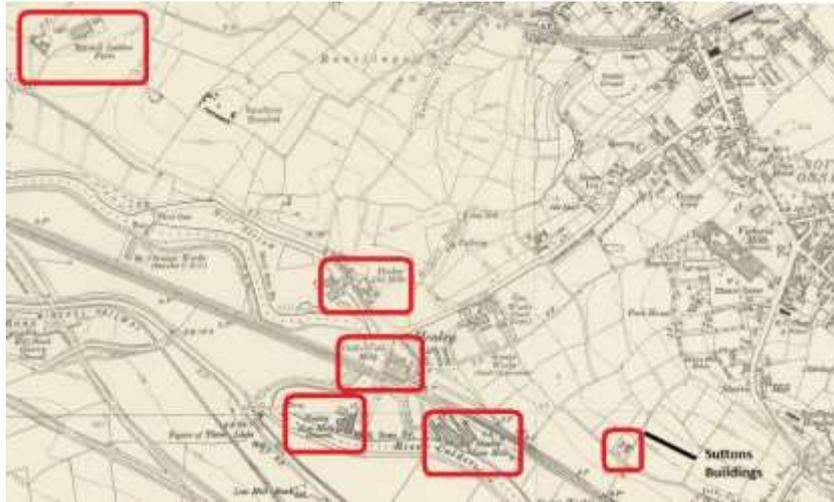
In the early/mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century there was a preponderance of *cloth millers* & cloth journeymen, a millwright and an engine tender. Later the descriptions would be more descriptive so that by 1861 the occupations provided clues as to the location of their work. Some men were *dyers*, or engineers at a *woollen* factory, wool scribblers, scourers and, for the first time, a *waterman* who was almost certainly transporting people across the River Calder. By 1861 Healey had a railway porter and a grocer working a grocer's shop, providing a possible clue as to the age of the shop which was part of Calder Terrace.

As the Healey community increased in size then so too did the types of Occupational descriptions. In addition to those described, in 1871 & 1881, there was a blacksmith, a commercial clerk, a coal and sand dealer, a power loom turner, a coal miner and some gas works labourers. As the new century approached the mass of mill workers were joined by fellmongers, working Godfrey Illingworth's Fellmongery, believed to have been at the northern edge of Healey Old Mill (Kerry Foods). In addition a joiner, a bricklayer, an enginemen (in the mills) and, of course, a watchman were plying their trades. In 1901 the occupational types widened to include a warehouseman, a mining engineer, coal miners, carters, a rail signaller and a platelayer.

Notwithstanding these changes the great majority of the men were working as millhands but often specialising in particular kinds of mill work, such as dyers, carbonizers, enginemen, loom turners and so on.

This history of the men and women who lived and worked at Healey over parts of four centuries has concentrated upon those living in the small community at the bottom of Healey Road. During the research it was necessary, in each of the eight censuses (ten if 1821 and 1939 are included), to identify the start and end of our Healey area. In most cases it began at Mitchell Laithe Farm in the west and ended at Storrs Hill (Suttons Buildings) in the east.

It is worthwhile then to record here a few notes about *Mitchell Laithe Farm* and a group of dwellings called *Suttons Buildings* which stood between Healey and Storrs Hill Road.



**Map showing the position of Mitchell Laithes (top left) & Sutton's Buildings (bottom right) in relation to Healey's Mills.**

### **Mitchell Laithes Farm**

**1841** Four dwellings, two uninhabited and two occupied by agricultural labourers, Jackson, Spurr & Wrigley. 1851 (not recorded here)

**1861** Three dwellings William Taylor, Farmer, James Sutterhill, labourer & Sam Smith cloth weaver.

1871 (not recorded here) **1881** five dwellings. Job King, manager Dewsbury Sewage Farm, Lilwood in a cottage & three uninhabited.

**1891** two dwellings (one has 2 rooms and the other has 4 rooms) occupied by Stephen Brennion (?) agricultural labourer & Jos/Jeb King Farm Bailiff (in 4 rooms)

**1901** Four dwellings occupied by Robt Wilson (5 rooms) Farm Bailiff; Patrick Breckery (?) in 2 rooms; Robt Giles (4 rooms) horse keeper on farm; John Breckery (3 rooms) House Keeper on Farm.

1911 not recorded here

### **Sutton's Buildings**

**1841/1851** Did not exist or were not recorded here.

**1861** known on Census as "Under Storrs Hill". Six dwellings. George Lister cloth miller; Robert SUTTON, cloth dresser; William Dews, wool spinner; William Sutton cloth dresser; James Hall, agricultural labourer; Joseph Ely, cloth weaver.

**1871** known on the census (confusingly) as Storrs Hill House. 4 dwellings. William Watson, William Dews, Martha Lister, Robert Sutton

**1881** Known as Storrs Hill House (not to be confused with Storrs Hill House at the top of Storrs Hill Road) 4 dwellings. William Dews, cow keeper; Robert Sutton, Teazle sorter at wool mill; George Dews cloth fuller; William Asquith, coal miner.

**1891** known for the first time in the Census as *Suttons Buildings*. 3 dwellings Joseph Horncastle (2 rooms) gas meter inspector; Robert Sutton, (3 rooms) widower; Mary Ann Lister (2 rooms) laundress.

**1901** Suttons Buildings. George Ward (2 rooms) market gardener; Joseph Helliwell (2 rooms), Dyer's labourer; Herbert Milner (2 rooms) rag merchant; Robert Sutton (2 rooms) Teazle setter.

**1911** Five dwellings, four of which had 2 rooms. Occupied by Milner, Sutton, Jessop, Charlton & Haines

The Leeds Mercury on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1904 carried the following in the For Sale section of the newspaper *Well fitted tobacconist shop central position stock optional apply R Sutton Healey.*

Robert Sutton died in late 1912 and whilst it is not known when Sutton's Buildings were sold or demolished they do not appear on the O.S. map series 1937-1961.

The History of Healey's people has been researched by Alan Howe, Nev Ashby & Stephen Wilson and has been written by Alan Howe.

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## **John McQueen – The Memories of a boy from King’s Yard Healey**

In the early 1940’s, a young boy, John McQueen, born in March 1939, arrived in King’s Yard Healey with his mother and sister whilst his father was away in WW2. John now lives in Australia but he has shared with us his memories of King’s Yard when he was growing up. In his own words, this was King’s Yard Healey during and after WW2 in the 1940’s and 1950’s.

*When we were bigger our Pat and I used to walk about two miles to South Ossett, up through the fields, to exchange batteries. But it wasn’t all hard work, on the way we used to go “scrumpling”, that is helping one’s self to the farmer’s apples. If apples were not in season we would dig up one of his turnips or potatoes and eat those, raw, but delicious. We would eat corn from the field if not quite ripe it would turn into a chewing gum substance that lasted for ages. We would eat “bread and cheese” but our so called “bread and cheese” was the new leaves in springtime from the Hawthorne bushes that grew on all the hedge rows. We dug up “cat-nuts” in the fields. The tops look like carrot tops, but down below the soil where lovely tasting nuts. There was no “cereals” for breakfast for kids in Kings Yard. “Milk slops” was our breakfast. Milk delivered by horse and cart from the farm ½ a mile away, poured over stale bread, hot milk in the winter, cold in the summer, with, if rations allowed, a little sugar or jam. In the winter Mum and Dad used to put bricks in the oven to warm up then wrap them up in a towel and place in our beds, if we had no bricks, one of the red hot iron oven plates did the same thing. They kept our feet lovely and warm.*

*At the corner of Kings Yard was a pub, the “Miller’s Arms”. It is still there today. I had a few pints there in 2011. In the middle of the yard were the toilets. All four of them, for thirteen houses, thirteen families. Mr and Mrs Wood, just one of the families living in Kings Yard had sixteen children. The toilets were just a wooden bench with all the body waste going on to a stone floor, which to council men came to “shovel out” every fortnight. We used to sing “here come the shit hole men, bringing their buckets and spades with them “. There was no such thing as “toilet paper” it was always yesterday’s newspaper torn up into little squares and hung on a nail behind the old wooden toilet door. It was often said that if you caught someone with their pants down, you could read yesterday’s weather forecast on their bum.*

*At right angles to King Yard lay the railway sidings; this was a very large railway yard for carriages not in use. Not by the railways, that is, but well used by the kids from the yard. We could and did get into them and play there night and day. Down from the railway yard was the Cotton Mill, with its big supply of water “Healey Dam”. A big stone built dam that supplied the mill with all its water. And a Dam that played a large part in my life. It was full of fish, full of life. It was our “water- playground” in the summer with all the families spending Sunday afternoon swimming and laying around in the sun. There were no signs such as “No Swimming”, “No Fishing”. It was a time when, no one did any damage to the mill owner’s property, no litter was left, and Healey Dam was ours, it was part of us.*

*On the other side of the yard was the bus stop, and Healey beck a small stream full of fresh running water and small fish, known as “Sticklebacks”. It was also full of tiny fresh water shrimps and watercress. The water so fresh, even though the farmers cows and horses used to drink out of it (and do other things in it) we as children used to drink out of it all the time. The stream ran into the “River Calder”, just a few hundred yards away.*

*There were more mills along the river, all "Shoddy Mills". That is they used to get old cloth and grind it into shoddy, which could then be used to fill pillows or make new cloth. All the dye and poisons from the mills flowed into the river. One day it was yellow the next green the next black. Needless to say it was polluted, nothing could live in it. But we used to swim in it. I learned how to swim in "The Calder River". We played on the sandy banks, and made bows for bows and arrow games from the willows growing there. The string for the bows we nicked from the mills. There was the canal just a few minutes away from the river, where barge horses pulled the long thin ships filled with coal on its way down south. Sometimes the ship's owner would let us ride on the backs of those big Clydesdale horses, the biggest breed of horse in the world, with their large wide backs our little legs not even long enough to dangle down the horses' side. Because all the horses ever did was pull a barge (ship) along a canal came the old Yorkshire saying "He's as silly as a barge horse".*

*Over the river was the railway line. Going one way, as children we never knew where, but going the other it went to Dewsbury, one of our nearest towns.*

*There were many other interests down Healey for us kids from the yard. There were empty mills and warehouses down by the river, all of which we could get into and make dens, and there was the old sewerage works where all the sewerage beds were run down and not working. But the beds themselves full of life. With tomatoes growing everywhere in the summer, but with the English summer as such, green tomatoes were all we ever took home for Mum to put in the window and try to ripen. They never did. But it was heaven for little boys to go bird nesting there as it was always full of seagulls and other birds. Why seagulls stayed in Ossett, I never found out. We were more than seventy miles from the sea. A sea that I had never seen. But I knew every blade of grass within a three mile radius of Kings Yard, and still do after seventy three years. (No Town, Village or City in Great Britain is more that seventy miles from the sea).*

*I was born on the 13th of March 1939 in Manchester. Just six months prior to the start of Second World War. Mum (Doris Palliser) came from Wakefield just four miles away from Ossett, but was working as a "domestic" (servant) in Manchester when she met Dad (Thomas McQueen). But on the outbreak of war my Dad "signed up" and joined the army. Something my mother never forgave him for. She said "he's left us". But had he not signed up he would have been "called up" anyway. But Mum would have none of that. He had left us and that was it. It was in Manchester that, once the bombs from Mr Hitler started falling, Mum with me under her arm headed off back to Yorkshire....*

*One of the earliest recollections of my childhood was when after a successful mornings fishing in Healey Beck I came home with three Sticklebacks, tiny little fish in a jam-jar. I asked Mum "what can I do with them" She replied "we'll have them for tea". She must have popped out to the toilet or something and when she came back I had the frying pan out and on the single gas ring ready to cook up these tasty morsels. I have fished all my life, but down Healey there was two distinctive ways of fishing for kids. In the Beck, because it was only a few feet wide and a few inches deep, we used a jam-jar and our hands to try to guide the fish, through the water cress from under rocks and into the jar. With years of practice it was easy to trap these beautiful fish. Now Healey Dam was a different subject. Some grown up men, those not at war, had proper fishing tackle. We had a pin that we bent to make a fishing hook, and enough cotton tied to it to reach the water from the stone walled*

dam side. We put a worm onto the hook, but because the hook has no barb, we had to allow the fish to get the worm half way down its throat, then quickly pull it out of the water.

Years later in my teens and still fishing Healy Dam, only this time with "proper fishing tackle" and a member of the "Ossett Angling Club" I would catch much bigger fish like Pike, the fresh water shark they called it, roach, Perch, Chub, Tench. Healy Dam had been stocked with proper fish. I knew every nook and cranny in the place. In winter sometimes the dam would "ice over" with a foot or more of ice. To fish in those conditions we used to throw a large rock onto the ice to see if the ice would hold our weight, then if we thought it was Ok, we would dig a hole in the ice with a pick and sit around the hole and fish. One problem being that ice keeps forming on the water so you needed a stick to stir the water all the time to stop it freezing over.

Any Yorkshire fresh water fisherman will tell you that maggots are one of the best, if not the best bait. As a young man many of us could not afford the maggots sold at the "Bait Shop" So we used to go to the local slaughter house where there was always a steaming hot living, moving hill of cow's guts and sheep's intestines. But amongst all the blood and guts was, "maggots" millions of them. The only thing we had to do was get a bucket of sawdust, dig out the maggots, blood guts and all, place this heaving mass on top of the bucket and the maggots would riddle through the sawdust and come out clean as a new pin in the bottom of the bucket. Not all nice and coloured like the "rainbow maggots" sold in the Bait shop, in their yellow, blue, red and orange skins. But in the true tradition of the Yorkshire man, we liked "our maggots" because they "cost us nowt". The down side of having a never ending supply of free maggots, is that, you have too many, you cannot use them all, so you take them home in tin cans with little holes in the lid so the maggots could breathe. The winter is fine, but in the summer, Mum, and May when I was married, would find a strange looking tin can in the pantry, open the lid to look inside, and out would come hundreds of blue bottle flies all newly hatched in the nice warm pantry.

As a young boy from Kings Yard during and after the war, I, like all children in those days were never in the house, we were out playing from dawn till dusk. We would dig five holes in the yard and play marbles, which has been known to end up in fights and friendships ended forever, well until the next day. Go down to the River Calder and cut down Willow tree branches to make bows, the string from the mills when no one was looking, but if we asked it would be given to us. And the weeds at the river's edge with their upright stems made our arrows. With a bit of old wire stuck down the end of the arrows we could fire them right across the river into the other side where they would stick in the sand.

We used to go "black-berrying", picking blackberries. We would walk for miles, hours on end, along the river and canal banks, on the railway banks for our blackberries. A lot of those we would eat on the way home. In those days every mother was a good cook, and if we had too many blackberries for our own Mum, the other mum's would always give us something for the blackberries left over. A yard smelling of fresh blackberry pies, where would you see that, or get that smell today?

Speaking of the railway banking. In the winter many people in the yard would run out of coal. Remember, no coal, no fire. No fire, no hot water, no oven, no cooking, no dinner, and no set-pot. The men who worked down the mines, as did my Dad at one time, got plenty of coal, it went with the job. They were allowed so much cheap coal a week, they could not burn it all. But in England, the mother of the vast commonwealth that took in 2/3rds of the world. A mother who welcomed all into

her arms and promised protection. Should a coal miner be found to be giving some of his spare coal to a neighbour, he would get the sack. But it was "handed out" freely to those in need.

However at times coal was very scarce, so whole families used to walk along the railway banks and railway lines looking not for blackberries but coal. The steam trains in those days, and that's all there was, had on board a "fireman" whose sole job it was to keep the fires going in the boilers of the steam train. I always like to think that while passing Kings Yard the fireman used to sometimes miss the fire and throw some coal on to the lines and down the banking's so that the families in the yard could have a fire and a hot dinner. It was no fun in a freezing cold winter sitting in a house with no fire. On the lighter side of living near the railway yard. In the shunting yards were all those carriages were stored. Was a giant water tank.

Large enough for steam trains to go beneath and fill up the tanks with water, needed for the steam. It had a great big leather tube about 2 foot in diameter which was put into the funnel of the train, a chain hanging close by was pulled and out came water gushing so fast and strong it filled the trains in no time. Yes you have guessed it. We used to go there on weekends and nights, fully dressed and while some stood under the giant leather tube the others, it would take two or three small kids to pull the chain, and out would come this torrent of water that would knock you on your backs, our very own, water playground and it "cost us nowt".

One of the main hobbies of boys in my day was; Bird-nesting. The collecting of bird eggs. I had boxes lined with cotton wool or fine sawdust to keep the eggs in. To collect a bird's egg, first of all you must find its nest, not an easy task at times. There are birds you see all the time in the fields and woods in Yorkshire, but their nest you will never find, unless you just happen to stumble over it. Crows eggs for instance are difficult eggs to come by. They build their nest very high and in "rookeries", a whole village of birds with their nests high in the tree. They are large birds with very large beaks, and they attack anyone who goes near the "rookeries". Blackbirds on the other hand fly away and their eggs and nests easy to find. Along the Calder sandy river banks, the Sand Martin, a tiny bird like a swallow, digs a tunnel in the sand banks about metre deep.

Where tiny arms of children cannot get to them. But we used to dig them out, (a dangerous task, one slip and you were in the river). Not all just one for the collection. Moorhens nest along the canal in the bull-rushes, they lay about 14 eggs, and are wonderful for cooking with. There are many problems to be solved by a young boy starting bird nesting. Where birds nest is the first problem. Some nest on the ground, in long grasses, others in a particular tree, some in walls, in houses, in barns, quarries and even coal stacks. So if you are after a particular egg, you must find out the habits of the bird. Then what to do with the egg, if there was young inside the egg it was of no use to the collector. For to keep the egg from "going off" and stinking the house out.

It had to be "blown". In other words you had to prick a hole in both ends of the egg and blow out the contents, so all you had left was the shell. How do you carry eggs from a very high branch of a tree? We used several methods, dropping them into a coat held by three or four mates. Or putting them in a safe pocket. Both methods, more times than not finished up with broken eggs. We found the best way was to put them in your mouth. And unless you bumped your chin on a branch, which would break the egg and give you an early unwanted breakfast. We all did that from time to time. You got the eggs down safely. Tiny eggs as big as you little finger nail are very hard to make a hole in and blow without them breaking. To make a hole in the eggs was very easy, for growing along the side

*the fields every hedge was growing the Hawthorne bush, the very same we used to eat their new spring leaves and buds as "bread and cheese", They are covered in thorns, which can put a hole in the hardest egg shell.*

*The mills that made the "shoddy" from old clothing also at the end of the war started to get bails, (sacks) by the hundreds of German Army Uniforms. And before they actually ground up the old cloth into shoddy, a task that involved putting the cloth onto a steam driven conveyer belt that took the cloth into a giant wheel covered in thousands of large spikes that tore the cloth to shreds , (the same type of machinery that tore off May's Dad, Alfred's, left arm. He had gone all the way through a world war without a scratch and a shoddy grinding wheel took off his arm), they had to take off all buttons, badges, anything that could cause a spark and then with all the grease around, cause a fire. All of which was dumped at the mill. A dump that attracted us kids like a moth to a flame, because we could find brass buttons, brass belt buckles all that we could sell to a scrap metal dealer to get a bit of pocket money.*

*But once the "German Uniforms" arrived, not only did we search the tip and found many German uniform buttons, badges, all types of things from "The War". This was "the thing" to find as a kid in the yard, so much so that we used to go into the mill at times and open the bails of German uniforms before the mill hands, (employees) had a chance to open them. Then one day news got around the Yard, that there were German prisoners of war working on the banks of "our Calder River". We kids all dashed round to see these terrible monsters who had caused two world wars, killed some of our dads and bombed our fish and chip shops. But they looked like us. Apart from the fact, they looked a lot better fed than we were. Zilla Watson who was about eighteen years old at the time, and lived next door with brother Rennie (talk in the yard was that they were gypsies with their funny names) and their Mum and Dad, was talking, or trying to talk, to these Germans. We did not go too close to them, not Germans, and after a few days working on the Calder River banks, they left and we never saw them again. There was another man who lived in Ossett, the first black man I had ever seen. I think he was from Jamaica, a big man and was always nice to people and people were nice to him.*

*I never liked school. Any school. When I first started school it was at South Ossett Infants. Where our Pat and I would walk to get the radio batteries. It was about two miles. I loved the walk through the fields, along the Hawthorne hedgerows in the summer, but in winter it was cold, freezing cold and the snow came over the tops of my wellington boots, wetting my socks. We used to take them off at school and put them on the hot water pipes that ran through the classrooms to dry them. The free small bottle of milk that us kids got every day also went on top of the hot pipes to warm up. But it was never as nice as the cold milk in the summer time. Even the little birds liked a drink of milk in the winter. Many times people opening their doors on a winter's morning found that some bird had punched a hole in the milk top to get a drink, there was no drinking water for them, and it was all ice.*

*There was no bus from South Ossett to Healey, still isn't seventy three years later. There is only one bus to Healey and that arrives every hour from Wakefield. We did not know anyone with a car, the doctor had one, so did the farmer, and the mill owners. And you could walk up into Ossett town and see the odd one parked in the street, so it was as they say in Yorkshire you have to travel by "Shank's Pony". In other words walk.*

*We had a chance of a new home..... No 5 Lodge Hill Road Ossett. Was a brand new, brick built, three bedrooms, living room, and another room (known lovingly by Yorkshire people as "the Front Room") a kitchen with a proper gas stove, pantry, and electricity. Bathroom with hot running water, two toilets, all our own, one inside and one out, (we were used to four outside toilets with no flushing for thirteen families, why would a family of four need two toilets? an outdoor brick shed for Dad's things and separate shed, to put the coal in. And a big back garden like grandad Palliser's, that Dad and I could grow our own vegetables and I could keep some chickens and rabbits. But I did not want to leave Kings Yard.*

John McQueen emigrated to Australia 40 years ago and now lives in Brisbane but as can be seen he has very fond memories of King's Yard. We are grateful that he has shared those memories with us.

