



Local Heritage *initiative*

Woodlands

The Birth of a Dream

1905

to 2005

A Booklet produced by The Brodsworth Informer and celebrating 100 years of The Model Village and the area.

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The
Countryside
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The Beginnings

The 1901 Census showed that 294 people lived in Adwick. Woodlands was not mentioned. Most of these people worked the land around the area. The farms were situated at Mill Street, Doncaster Lane, Redhouse Lane and Longlands Lane. Village life revolved around the parish church of St Lawrence. The church was in existence by the end of the twelfth century. It is believed that there was a much earlier settlement here of Romano-British origins.. Certainly the Roman Road from London to York passes near by. The main employment was agricultural and the nearest Market Town was in Doncaster, some 5 miles away. By Horse and Cart this took almost an hour to cover the distance.

By the middle of the 19th century it was known that a very large seam of Coal ran underneath the area and was already being worked at Denaby. The owner of Brodsworth Hall, Charles Thellusson wanted to share in this underground bonus crop, but not wanting a Coal Mine in his front garden very kindly rented part of Brodsworth Common to the newly formed Brodsworth Colliery Company, owned by the local M.P. Arthur Markham. Part of the land he leased to them contained the old Pickburn Race-Course, now covered over by the spoil tip. On 23rd October 1905 the first sod was turned over and the pit was begun to be sunk. Mr Markham realised that he needed to accommodate the Sinkers. Some were lodged with the farmers of the area, some lived in Tents and Huts at the site whilst still more were Carted in every morning from Doncaster. 5 of them were lodged with the Adwick Village Post-Mistress, a widow lady with an unmarried daughter. Apparently tongues were wagging over this arrangement..

Markham was a great thinker and he had seen the type of bleak terraced cottages the miners at Denaby lived in. He had a dream that his men would live in much nicer surroundings, using the idea that a content miner was a harder worker. He commissioned Percy Houfton, a celebrated architect to design him a "Model Village" in the style of a garden suburb. The imaginative design that he came up with include wide tree lined Avenues, the houses built in "Squares, each looking out onto a grass area and that all houses should have Flush Toilets. The actual work was begun at the end of 1906 and finished in 1913. It fulfilled all of the requirements, having some 19 different styles of houses of 2, 3 and 4 bedrooms. The first part of the development was The Park and by the end of 1907 miners were taking up residence. The average wage started at 4/6d per week which is 22½p in modern money. Miners came from all over the country to work at Brodsworth Pit and many must have marvelled at the palatial splendour of the accommodation. Initially all the houses had Gas Lighting, the Gas being made at the pit and piped down to the village. The flushing toilets did however present something of a problem as many had never used this device before. The Colliery found it necessary to place a sign in all the toilets telling people how to use them. I still have one of these signs which was presented to The Brodsworth Informer by one of its readers. A picture of it is overleaf.

In common with most mining communities a spirit of friendship quickly grew up between

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the wives of the miners. To live in a colliery house you had to be married to the lady and not just living together. When Markham had set out his ideas for Squares he knew that this would encourage the wives to talk to their neighbours and share their fears and worries. Working underground was and still is a dangerous way to earn a living and a miner who had troubles at home could not expect to give 100% attention to the job in hand. By getting the wives to share their troubles he knew that they would not burden their menfolk with their worries. Miners wives have always had a common bond, but here in the Squares that bond was stronger. As the pit developed and grew, so did the model village. By 1913 it was finished with some 653 houses. Even whilst it was being built it became apparent that more housing would be needed so Highfields was built. Because of the cost of a Model Village the design for Highfields was less grandiose and conformed more to Miners Cottages across the North. By 1910 work was also started at Woodlands East on what was to become First, Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Avenues.

At the pit work continued and at last they were ready to start bringing coal to the surface. The first ton of coal came up on October 26th, 1907, 2 years after the first sod was turned. On that day some 57 tons of best Yorkshire Coal was mined. The first ton was carried away by a local Carter, W Ramsden and was taken to Adwick Railway Station. Here the Leeds/London line ran and was operated by L.N.E.R. Soon a spur off this line was laid to the pit where a Fiddle Yard of 16 tracks held the trucks which took the coal away. In common with other collieries, Brodsworth ran its' own Steam Engines for the purposes of shunting and hauling away. These all bore male names. Here we see "JOHN" in the winter of 1947 being dug out.



Photo from The Jones Collection.

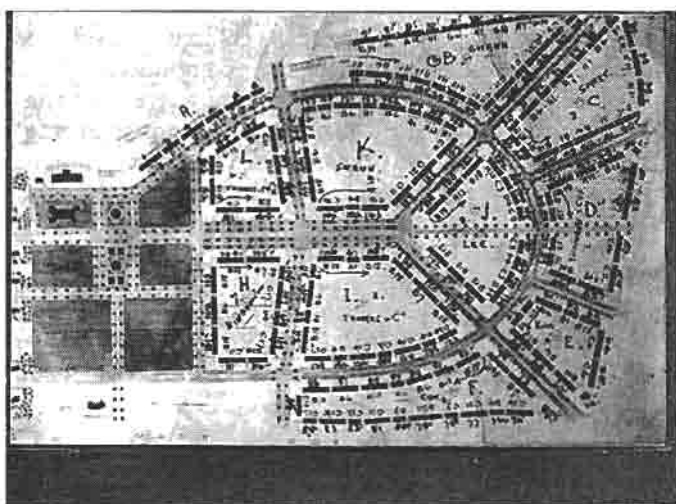
The land on which the Model Village was built formed part of the Woodlands Hall Estate. The hall, also known by some as Brodsworth Institute had been acquired by the Thellusson family a few years before and was now leased to the colliery. The land was adjacent to the Great North Road and was fairly high. The Hall itself was later on to

become The Park Club and survives to this day. Below is a builders map of the layout of the new village. It is from the Canning Collection and shows 10 of the 12 squares. There were at least 7 different firms of builders were contracted to carry out the work, amongst them Swann, Richardson, Lee, Thomas & Co., Kirks and Thompson's and Smarts.

The biggest square of them all, The Park, is off the page to the left. This is different from all the other squares in that it has its grass area at the front of the houses and not the back.

The road around the Park is just over half a mile long and there are some 120 houses built there.

Nowadays, houses in The Park fetch several thousand pounds more when sold than other houses in the village..



builders map of Brodsworth pit village 8th July 1908.

Early on in the construction, Markham, influenced by Thellusson, decreed that there would be no shops or clubs built on the land. Over the years this was overcome by building them right on the edge of the estate. He did however allow one of the houses in the Crescent to act as a Sub-Post Office. The main shops for the area are built on the Eastern side of The Great North Road. The western side being part of the model village.

Below is another photo from the Canning collection which shows some of the men who built the village. The photo was taken in one of the squares about 1908.



THE POPULATION GROWS

From a total number of 294 people in 1901, by 1911 that was nearly 7000 and over the next 10 years this would rise to almost 12,000. It was soon apparent that more housing would be required and by 1910 work was underway to build a village at Highfields. The cost of the model village at Woodlands deterred the colliery company from such a grandiose design again and Highfields was built along more conventional lines. Whilst it was only half a mile from the model village it very rapidly became a separate community, even though they all worked at the same pit. Today, there is still a them and us attitude amongst the model villagers towards Highfields. The Community Partnership is working hard to try to bring the two communities closer together. Around 1910 work was also started on Woodlands East. The first part of the development being First to Fifth Avenues. This was on the Eastern side of The Great North Road. By 1920 the whole of Woodlands East was completed. This included the Police Station in Windmill Balk Lane at the junction with Doncaster Lane. This was built in 1914 and is still in use today, although it is not always open. In 1911 Adwick le Street Urban District Council was in existence, the old Parish Council having been superseded. The Adwick Town Hall is just across the road from the police station, today the local Housing Office for Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council.

As the model village was occupied some of the tenants started to keep live-stock, i.e. Hens and Pigeons. The Colliery Management issued a directive that No livestock was to be kept on the estate. The miners got over this by building Allotments just across the stream from the Roman Ridge and it was here that Cows, Sheep, Pigs, Chickens and of course the miners great friend, The Racing/Homing Pigeon were kept. To this day the allotments thrive and one resident from the park runs a small herd of Cattle on his allotment. There are a couple of Pigeon Lofts on the estate today, but no one seems to mind. There is even a Sheep, Wooly, who lives on the squares with the councils' blessing. Woolys' owner has had him since he was born, deformed and should have died. She nursed him back to health and now Wooly is better trained than a dog and is also a lot cleaner. He can often be seen sitting in the back seat of his owners car, being driven around the estate.

As well as keeping allotments, the miners were expected to keep their gardens neat and tidy and a man from the pit would make regular inspections of all the gardens to ensure that they met up with the desired standard. Failure to comply meant eviction. Because of the spirit of camaraderie that existed between miners and their families if one man was ill or injured, he knew that his workmates and neighbours would rally round and help. If a man was confined to bed with an injury, the neighbouring wives would take it in turns to give the wife a break and "Baby-Sit" the husband whilst she went out for a while. There was never any impropriety as such behaviour could also get you evicted. The dangers of working underground were shared by everyone in the community and residents of the model village became part of a very large extended family. Neighbour disputes were quickly sorted out by the men as they each looked out for one another below ground and needed to be able to rely on their mates at all times. Most problems caused by the children were sorted out at the Pit Head Baths and in general life in the model village was pleasant. When the village was fully occupied, the average rent was 4/6d (22 1/2p) per week. Nowadays either the council or private land-lords own the rented property, the average Council Rent is £55 per week and Private Rented at about £75 per week.

THE FESTIVAL

Back in 1910 someone had the very good idea of starting a Family Festival. With Dad working at the Pit 6 days a week and on his rest day spending most of it at the club with his mates, children saw little of their fathers. On one day a festival would bring the whole family together as a unit and they would parade around the village and then have an afternoon of fun and festivities on the grass in The Park. Maypole dancing was a prominent feature and various sporting activities would also take place.. In the early days of the festival, Thellusson, the self styled local squire would attend and support the event. The first May Queen was Miss Cissie Robinson who rode around the village on a White horse owned by the vicar of St. Lawrence



church at Adwick. Here is a photo of her taken from the Cox Collection. For the next few years the festival continued until the start of WW 1. In the 1920s it was revived for a while, but with the general strike of 1926, then the depression of 1929 people did not have a lot to celebrate. It was very Hit and Miss during the Thirties, then came WW 2. The festival had a short revival in the Fifties when they incorporated a Coal Queen. Last year, 2003, the Woodlands and Adwick Community Partnership held a Dry Run in August and based on the success of that staged Festival 2004. They obtained Funding from The National Lottery Local Heritage Fund, part of which has funded the production and distribution of this booklet. Based upon the success of that festival, the committee has now launched plans for Festival 2005. This will be a two day event and will include a parade, a sports theme, a Craft Fair, Local Talent featured live on stage and even a special Songs of Praise put on by the ladies of All Saints Church. There will be side shows, fair-ground rides and various stalls which will promote things which will be advantageous to the residents of the area. Already the committee has been Fund Raising and held a very successful Halloween Disco for the youngsters in October 2004. This is all designed to re-generate the once strong community spirit and can only grow bigger and better.

RELIGION

The self styled local squire, Charles Thellusson felt that he had a moral duty to the miners and thus it was that he donated £10,000 to build the All Saints Church. Work was started in 1911 when his good lady laid the foundation stone and the church was consecrated in 1913.

Some cynical people believe that he had the church placed where it was just so the spire could be seen from the windows of Brodsworth Hall and he could show off to his guests at the Hall. Certainly for the next 89 years the spire dominated the landscape from almost every direction you approached the village from. These days whilst still prominent, the massive development of the B & Q Distribution Centre at Redhouse has somewhat dwarfed it.

One of the winding wheels from the headgear of the Pit now rests in the grounds of All Saints as a very fitting memorial to a lot of brave men. At the time of writing this book there has been no incumbent for over 12 months, due it seems to a shortage of Vicars.

The ladies of All Saints have been doing a splendid job of holding things together and the Vicar of Adwicks' St. Lawrence also helps out when he can. The sister church to All Saints was built at Highfields. Today the building has been converted into two bungalows.

The Roman Catholics are catered for at the bottom of Welfare Road with the church of St. Joseph and St. Teresa, opened in 1927. The current incumbent, Father Norman also manages the church at Carcroft, St. George & The English Martyrs. There is a Catholic Junior School attached to the church, ST Josephs, also in Welfare Road.

There was a Methodist Chapel built at Fernbank, Adwick in 1887 which survives to this day. When it was built it cost the Princely sum of £394. The Methodist movement was always strong in the North East with small churches all over the place.

The Baptist Movement was also very strong around Coalfields and in about 1918 the Wesleyan Chapel was opened about 200 yards from All Saints Church on the model village. This lovely building, complete with bell tower was to have a bit of a sad history. After a few years it was acquired by the local GP for his Doctors Surgery and it stayed thus until the end of the 1980s when the new Health centre was built at Woodside. The building then fell into neglect and was used for nefarious purposes including Drug and Solvent Abuse. It was badly damaged by fire, but being a listed building was rebuilt and a security fence placed around it. During the rebuild the Bell Tower was left off, the Bell having been stolen many years ago. Today the building is up for sale at the give-away price of £300,000. It would make an ideal 6 or 8 bed roomed residence and stands on quite a big plot of land.

The church of St. Lawrence at Adwick le Street is the only church in the area that has a graveyard attached. This church dates back to the 12th century and has undergone many changes to its fabric over the years. This is a very interesting church to look around and to absorb some of the history of our area. The Salvation Army also had a Citadel in the model village near to Market Square(now Quarry Lane).



Woodlands Church, 1886.

Life in The Model Village

Arthur MARKHAM, MP, had decreed that his Model Village would set an example to others. He allowed no alcohol to be sold on the village and also laid down strong rules on how his tenants must behave and what they could and could not do. Every month the gardens were looked at and any tenant neglecting his garden was warned that he could face eviction if he did not maintain it better. Markham wanted the village to be private and so had gates fitted to each entrance to the estate. Once a year on Boxing Day these gates were closed to preserve the private status. He did make one concession and allowed the Marlow family to open a Post Office in the front of their house on The Crescent. The Post Office on the shop fronts was to come much later, although there was a Post Office in Church Lane, Adwick, see photo below.

This photo is from the Holdgate collection and shows 5 of the Sinkers who found lodgings with the Widowed Post-Mistress and her unmarried daughter. It was taken in early 1906. Next door to the Post Office was Gardiners stores, a general purpose shop. The Funeral Director, Roger Hickling now has his premises there.



Speaking to The Gazette in 1908, Arthur Markham compared his Model Village with the finest anywhere, claiming that the residents would have a life style worthy of a Prince. He had described the site of the village as being fairly level, but the far side has a steep dip giving a view as charming as any that lies outdoors anywhere. He neglected to mention that this view was also to be the site of the spoil tip. He prevented a News-

Photographer from taking a photo of the view because he said that no photo could do justice to the picture that nature had painted. It also would have been a photo which could

come back and haunt him. Speaking as only a politician can he added that the village was laid out in regular, yet irregular lines. It ran for one and a half miles along the York Road and would give travellers along the road views of the village through a screen of verdure, beautiful enough to attract the attention even of a scorching motorist/ Just what had he been drinking? He referred to the village as New Brodsworth, but this name just didn't seem to catch on and it became Woodlands.

In reality life in The Squares developed well. It was not very long before sports teams were formed and inter-square Football and Cricket matches were being played. The wives very quickly formed firm friendships with their neighbours and if the man of the house was off sick, the neighbours rallied round, even mounting a form of Husband Sitting if required. The children were not much trouble either. Ok, it was in different times when children had more respect for their grown-ups, but any problems which arose between the kids were sorted out in the Pit-Head Baths between the fathers. Working underground, you could not afford to have any enemies. There were no Youth clubs, Play Stations, Computers, Televisions or Mobile Phones to keep them amused, but no one can ever remember a child announcing that he or she was bored. The youngsters always found something to keep themselves occupied and Petty Crime in the village was almost non existent. The Police Station which was to be built in 1914 at Windmill Balk Lane would have been a much less hectic place in those days. Because there was only one land-lord in the village, not many neighbour disputes ever took

RECREATION

Whilst Arthur Markham had decreed that no alcohol would be sold in the Model Village, it did not take long before the Licensed Trade took notice of a gap in the market and moved in to fill it. The Officials Club was at the back of the houses on The Crescent above a builders yard. The Park Club opened and The Woodlands Hotel quickly threw off its "Temperance" Mantel and sold strong drink. A group of men had formed the Allotment Holders Club and this was to open as a Licensed club. Originally it was just a large wooden hut, but at 5 pm on 7th June 1924 it was to open in its new building. This was in Windmill Balk Lane, opposite where the allotments were. This is now the site of North Doncaster Technology College. The chairman at that time was Mr G W Tickhill. This club was soon dubbed "The Cabbages" and indeed even advertised as such.



The New Cabbages Club, from The Library Collection.

Brodsworth Miners welfare is unique in that it is about the only Welfare in Yorkshire that has never been licensed to sell alcohol. The building and grounds hosted many great features and sports. The Brodsworth Football And Cricket Team played at home here. There was a running track and later on Bowling Greens. In the Ballroom, a very grand venue many well known bands played there. When the local council, DMBC wanted to build a Leisure Centre it was in the grounds of the Welfare that this took place. The Miners Welfare struck a deal with DMBC that in return for the land, the council would be responsible for all the grounds maintenance. This applies to this day. The Miners Welfare lies adjacent to the Great North Road and whilst there has been a great deal of money spent restoring the main building it is not used to its full potential. Bingo 3 nights a week seems to take centre stage over other things. On a Sunday there is a Car-Boot Fair held, except when they host a Dog Show. Weight Watchers also meet

here once a week. Unless the whole complex is better used and managed, it will only be a matter of time before parcels of land are sold off for Housing Development, as has taken place in other parts of the area.

THE PARK CLUB.

This old building is what was once Woodlands Hall. The concert room is very roomy and is still putting on good turns most weeks. At the rear of the building are the stables which used to house the local Fire Brigade. The horses were allowed to graze in The Park and local kids got a Penny in old money if they caught the horses when an alarm had been sounded. The appliance in those early days had a Steam Pump which presumably was always kept lit. A picture of the Pump is reproduced below from the Holdgate Collection.



The present Fire Station in Quarry Lane is built on the site of the old market which was held twice a week.

In front of The Park Club lies Highfields Lake. This has been a very popular Fishing spot over the years. It is fed by a stream which runs from The Pit and is home to many species of Birds. One resident of the village, lets call her Mabel can recall that her husband who worked at the pit and made the Gas once released 20,000 gallons of water into the stream by mistake and poisoned all the fish in the lake. Over the years the lake has attracted the usual debris of Motorbikes, Shopping Trolleys and on one occasion a Stolen Bus. Since the reclamation of the Spoil Tip the natural filter beds which have been planted have meant that the water above the lake now supports Fresh Water Mussels. About every 4 years or so South Yorkshire Police Diving Team spend a week training at the lake and recovering stolen property. The lake is one of the most underused features of the model village and the author himself has spent many hours down at the waterside feeding the swans with stale bread. A stroll around the lake on a warm Spring or Summers day costs nothing. The motorcycle nuisance which once plagued this area has abated thanks to the good work of South Yorkshire Police and Environmental Health.

Take a fresh look at our own Lakeside. It is well worth it. On the other side of The Great North Road the Old Comrades Club in Princess Street exists. Again it is a large and well

appointed club. Whilst the membership of clubs like these is falling, this club still keeps going and putting on several good events every year. The Board of this club have very kindly made their lounge available to the Woodlands and Adwick Community Partnership for their monthly meetings and this is in keeping with the spirit of community which the partnership promotes. For some reason this club has the Nick-Name "The Bomb". At the top of Princess Street is The Woodlands Hotel. Opened in 1914 as part of the Temperance Movement it did not take long before it also sold Drinks. In the early days the landlord was

not allowed to advertise Alcohol, just the fact that he sold gentle refreshments for Ladies and Gentleman.

The Woodlands hotel was destroyed by fire in the early hours of a Saturday Morning in February 1989. Believed to have been started deliberately, although never proved the pub was demolished and was later rebuilt along smaller lines. The original hotel is shown in the picture below which comes from the Wade Collection, circa.1927 approx.



After the Second World War there was a Snooker club in a wooden building on the edge of Market Square. These days the Snooker Club is on the shop fronts above the Bingo in the old Coop Premises. This club is licensed to sell drinks.

In the village of Adwick The Foresters Arms had been in business for some years serving the needs of that village. Some of the Model Village men would drink there to be with their mates. The building of the Drury estate on the East side of The Great North Road saw the building of The Tally Ho pub. This was the first building in the village as you came down the Great North Road and it lasted until about 1999 when it was closed, then pulled down and housing crammed onto the site.

At the other end of the village, the Doncaster side, there was The Broad Highway Public House. This was closed in the 1990s and was eventually modernised and re-opened as The Highwayman, complete with a Wacky Warehouse children's complex attached. At the mention of The Highwayman, it must be at this point that the reader is reminded that once upon a time the famous Outlaw, Dick Turpin is reputed to have used the road through the village. There is still talk in the model village of "Turpins Cave", which is supposed to be adjacent to the Roman Ridge at the rear of Woodside Road. Mention has been made of this cave being used as an Air Raid Shelter during WW2, but the author has not been able to substantiate this fact, or the caves location. There are a number of locations around the country which claim to be Turpins Cave, one of them in Epping Forest, Essex.

In 1964 a New Club opened at the junction of The Great North Road and Green Lane. Known as "The New Club" it was to house The Royal British Legion and also The Royal Air Forces Association branches. This club closed at the end of 2003 and pulled down early in 2004. Then in November 2004 the site was re-opened with 4 shops on it, one of which is a Cooperative Convenience store. So it was that there was no reason why the villagers should go thirsty.



In common with most collieries, Brodsworth had its own Brass Band. The picture above comes from the Canning Collection and shows the band and sports committee in 1910. There was a great demand for Brass Bands and ours did remarkably well. There was also a Junior version and the photograph below, taken from the Holdgate Collection was taken in 1967. Many of the band members are still living in the immediate area and a few years ago held a re-union.

When looking at the top photo, the fierce pride is visible in the eyes. It is a sad fact that by the time they had worked down the pit for a few years, the "DUST" had robbed them of the breath needed to play their instruments. Should any reader have a recording of the Brass Band, the



author would love to hear it and if possible borrow it. The band master in this photo is Wynn MOORE. The photo was taken outside The Park Club. Both Junior and Senior bands played all around the country and the

junior band was once on television. The bands used to rehearse in one of the upstairs room at The Park Club, known as The Band Room..

The Pit Develops.

In an interview with the media in 1908, Arthur Markham, MP, was asked what sort of a future Brodsworth Pit had. His reply was that they had been expecting to strike coal at a depth of 900 yards. They had actually struck coal at a depth of 595 yards which was due to a fault in the sub-strata somewhere between Hickleton and Brodsworth. There was no indication of this fault at the surface and there was no way of knowing just how far the fault may continue. He did say that he felt that the Bentley Colliery would be likely to strike coal at about the same depth. He also covered himself by adding that finding coal sooner might still cost a lot more



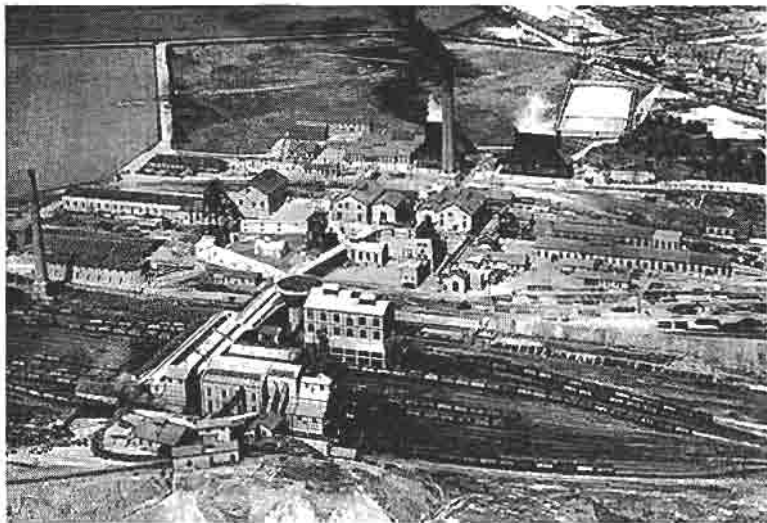
than originally planned, depending on the size and direction of the fault. It must be remembered that the man was a politician, being the MP for Mansfield. He referred to the colliery as being a Model Colliery, better equipped than any other in this country. He was proud of the ventilating machinery, claiming that it could move 300,000 cubic feet of air per minute. There were to be Railway Siding provision for 2000 coal wagons, which would connect to four railway systems: The Great Northern, The North Eastern, The Lancashire and Yorkshire and The Hull and Barnsley. Markham was a very experienced mining engineer, having worked in South Africa in both Coal and Diamond mines.

The picture to the left comes from the Library collection

The other great mover in the development of the village was Charles Thellusson. He became the local Squire when he moved into Brodsworth Hall. He and his wife had a great deal of interest into the welfare of the Villagers. Once a year he would throw the big house open and invite all the children from the surrounding villages to come for Afternoon Tea. The youngsters would be accompanied by a marching band and it was a great occasion in the otherwise bland social calendar of the new villagers. In November 1907, to mark the finding of The Barnsley Seam he laid on a grand meal for all the sinkers. He had a marquee erected near to Adwick le Street station, the floor was boarded throughout and there was a gangway laid to the station. Electric lighting was installed, run off the colliery supply and a meal of Soup, Cold Meats with Fowl, Sweets etc, plus an ample supply of liquid refreshment was provided. He also gave out Church Warden Clay Pipes, Tobacco and Cigars. Mr Thellusson told the gathered assembly that he had met a couple of Sinkers who spoke badly of the Squire. He introduced himself to them and invited them to have a drink with him. He had just made two new friends. According to some reports, Thellusson was a considerate Land-lord and got a good days work out of his men. He saw himself as a Philanthropist and worked hard at his image.



This picture of the pit comes from the Holdgate collection and was taken about 1924/5. The large White rectangular Object to the right of the photo was the settling tank. Here water was pumped once it had been used in the cooling process of making electricity. The Lime was allowed to settle on the bottom of the tank and every few months the water



would be drained off and the villagers invited to collect the Lime slurry which they then used to paint the inside of the outside toilets with.

The three shafts and their winding gear can be seen in the middle of the photo. Number three headgear was not installed until 1924 and was taken into operation at the end of that year. In the top Right hand corner of the picture you can see the start of the Model Village with the Water Tower at the Water Works in Ridge Balk Lane visible.

The first coal to come from Brodsworth was brought to the surface on 26th November 1907 when 57 tons were mined. The output at the end of that week stood at 243 tons. The spirit amongst the men was buoyant, after Arthur Markham announced that there were millions of tons in the Barnsley seam alone. In common with most Pits, there has been a history of industrial dispute at Brodsworth. The first stoppage at Brodsworth occurred when the Pit Lads had grievances over wages and "The Uncivility" of the under-management. This was brought to a head by something which happened at the pit bottom on May 6th, 1909. An excessive number of lads crowded into the cage. A request was made that some of them get out, which was met with a general refusal. At this point the official turned a hose onto them, drenching the occupants. The next day the lads were on strike. The job the lads did was to move the full tubs from the pit face to the pit bottom. This involved a lot of hard work, even when the Ponies were used. There was also an ongoing problem over the price list, the rate at which men got paid for each job. Management posted a notice at the pit head to the effect that unless the miners agreed to a new price list they would be required to leave the colliery within 14 days. This dispute was to rumble on with give and take on both sides and thus a lock-out was prevented at that time. On February 12th 1910 again notice was given to miners that 14 days would see the introduction of the New Price List. This time the men could not see any benefit in agreeing and duly withdrew the labour. At that time the "Butty" system was still being worked. This meant that three to six men shared out the earnings after they had paid off the "Day" men. This would see the day men taking home 35/- whilst the Butty men would take home £6. On 26th February at The Foresters Public House, Adwick le Street 600 men voted for the abolition of the Butty system and two days later work was resumed. The National Coal Strike of 1912 saw the pit closed

down for 6 weeks. Just before this strike the average output had risen at Brodsworth to 3000 tons per day. A fragile harmony lasted until April 1914 when a County wide strike closed the pit for 16 days. Just before the outbreak of the First World War the output had risen to 4000 tons per day. Following the declaration of war this was to drop to 3,500 tons per day, due to there being a shortage of wagons, plus the withdrawal of men to the Armed Forces.

Following the war there were various strikes at Brodsworth including the 1919 "reduction of hours", the 1921 "decontrol" strike and of course the General Strike of 1926 which saw Brodsworth Pit closed for 7 months. The pit was to continue growing and by 1924 they were working the Barnsley Seam, Thorncliffe seam, Parkgate seam and Dunsill seam. The pit was to remain independent until 1937, but in 1919 it did become a member of The Doncaster Collieries Association. In 1937 it was to become a member of Doncaster Amalgamated Collieries. The others were Hickleton Main, Yorkshire Main, Markham Main, Bullcroft and Firbeck Collieries. Then on the 1st January 1947 Brodsworth main became part of The National Coal Board. It is without doubt that Brodsworth Pit owed its success to the driving force of Arthur Markham, who for a number of years took up residence in one of the cottages at the entrance to The Park. It became quite a common sight to see him sat on his heels at the roadside with a group of miners discussing points of common interest. He was convinced, almost obsessed with the idea that the workers could far better manage their own affairs if given a chance to do so. He suggested that Village Committees be appointed which would control all the activities of the community, without the intervention of the police authorities. A few such committees did function for a short time, but following a serious attack upon one of the women in the village, the local Constabulary, with the consent of Miners Branch stationed police in the village. This was a disappointment to Arthur Markham, but he eventually came to terms with it.

Arthur Markham also approached the Miners Branch with a suggestion that the miners might like to buy their houses on easy weekly terms, believed to be in the region of £200. This offer was rejected and it was not until 1975 when the Coal Board started selling off the houses that any development took place. Within 2 years the housing stock in the village was either in private ownership, or the tenants had become Council Tenants overnight. By January 2005 only 20% of the housing remained in Council Ownership.. If Arthur was dedicated to the welfare of his men, the same must be said of his sister, Miss Violet Markham. A quote from her autobiography "Return Passage" goes, "I was determined to keep the settlement clear of any atmosphere of doles, and of the odious spirit of patronage that aim at doing good to the poor. Citizenship, not Charity was our watchword, the sharing of things and ideas; the promotion of the good life." It was Violet Markham who instigated the appointment of a full time social worker, charged with the responsibilities of initiating and fostering The Adult School, Nursing Associations and clubs for boys and girls. This worker, a Miss ALLEN, was housed in Terry Holt Cottage in The Park. Miss Violet Markham was also a leading light in the formation of The Miners Welfare. Sadly, with the passage of time, the good work of this lady is rapidly being forgotten, but there are still traces of her legacies to be seen. For many of the miners who had come from other parts of the country they must have felt that they had reached Utopia. Woodlands seemed to be The Promised Land.

The Royal Connection



King George & Queen Mary's visit to Woodlands
1912.

On July 9th, 1912 their majesties, King George V and his wife Queen Mary made a visit to the Model Village. The royal car arrived at the entrance from the Park Club and then proceeded into the village through crowds of cheering people. A visit to one of the houses had been arranged and the tenants chosen had decorated the lounge and were dressed in their best. Due to unforeseen circumstances the royal couple went to 33 The Park, the home of Mr and Mrs William Brown. At

the moment of their arrival, Mrs Brown was outside her door chatting to her neighbour Mrs Aston. Both the King and Queen entered the house, showing great interest in it. The Queen looked around the house, accompanied by Mrs Aston whilst the King stayed talking to Mrs Brown/ Poor old Mr Brown, although just outside his house, could not get in due to the large crowds around the door. The King and Queen expressed their thanks before leaving. The above photo comes from The Canning Collection.

Later on in the life of the Pit, it was chosen to supply the Royal Palaces with coal, thus earning the title The Royal Pit. One of the residents of the area today, Bill Page joined Brodsworth Pit in 1930s and worked underground. At the outbreak of the second World War he wanted to join the Army, but was in a restricted occupation and could not be spared. After the war he joined the Brigade of Guards and was posted overseas. One day his C.O. sent for him and told him to put two stripes up and to get ready to go home. He had been made Mess Corporal at St. James Palace in London. Although this was the Officers Mess for Wellington Barracks, it was also a royal palace and he had to be on his best behaviour. One of his duties was to make the fires up in the main rooms each day and as he was building the fire in the Throne Room, he realised that he was handling Royal Coal from Brodsworth. He had identified the "Mottie" mark. He thought to himself at the time, "I wonder how many other men can say that they mined the Royal Coal, and then Burnt it in a Royal Palace?". The answer must be none. Bill, you are unique.

All the ex miners the author has met up with have been very keen to ensure that he knew that Brodsworth was a special pit. One can't help but wonder what is burnt on the royal fires these days?

1992 - The End of an Era.



On Friday 13th July 1990 the men were asked to vote on the future of the pit. 329 voted to close the pit, 187 voted to keep it open. Tuesday 24th July 1990 British Coal announced that from this day the pit was to close. On 1st December 1990 the first chock was taken off T45's. On 28th January 1991 the last chock was taken off T45's. The official closing date was 7th September 1992. The writing had been on the wall for a few years following the Strike of the middle 80's and fewer and fewer men were employed at Brodsworth. In its heyday, Brodsworth Colliery employed 4000 men and was one of the largest pits in the country.

The photograph above comes from The Mincher Collection and shows the Headgear of Number 1 shaft being blown up. This was in 1992. The three shafts were backfilled, sealed and capped and over the next 2 years the various buildings at the pit were destroyed. The main offices which were situated to the right of the entrance road lasted until 2004 when they were finally bulldozed down. All the buildings were ground down and were taken off site to provide foundations for various road improvements in the area.



Lawn Avenue on the New Estate, built after the Second World War. This estate is built in the shape of The Rising Sun, with the roads radiating out from the central hub. This photo comes from The Library Collection, circa 1950.

The photo to the right shows the gates which were closed once a year to maintain the estate as private. This is the entrance from The Great North Road into the Park and was taken about 1924. Again, this is from The Library Collection.



The Cinema at Great North Road, which nowadays the is The Snooker Hall. This photo is from approx. 1948 and again comes from the Library collection.

All the photos in this book have been donated by various members of the area and all have given Copyright consent to The Brodsworth Informer to use them in any way the editor feels appropriate.

The forerunner of The Brodsworth Informer, published in 1924 by E Tomlinson. Mr Tomlinson was well known as the owner of Tomlinson's Brewery, Planet Road, Adwick. The paper only appeared for a short while. This is the edition for 26th March 1924. About 90% of the content were adverts, something which The Brodsworth Informer is careful not to exceed 50% adverts.

Over the years there have been a number of free newspapers, including The Adwick Observer, The Courier, The Advertiser, to name but a few. The success of The Brodsworth Informer does seem to lie in its approach to the villagers.

This once Proud Mining Community now has something else to focus on and with luck and hope will continue to grow and prosper. The acid test will come at the beginning of 2006 when the current funding runs out. Because the paper is produced by volunteers it is almost self sufficient, using the money gained from the advertising revenue, to pay its way.

The Adwick

SKELLOW, CARCROFT, ADWICK, W.

No. 2. CIRCULATION 3,000. Friday, March, 29th.

We've run short of "Red Kings"

But if you spend 5/- with us on our Pedigree Seed Potatoes and Vegetable Seeds, we'll see that you have your Free Stone of them as soon as a fresh supply comes to hand.

We have had numerous requests for SEEDS, and have a supply to arrive about Easter including your old favourites — NIGNONETTE, POPPY, LOVE-IN-A-MIST, CLARKIA, etc., in popular-sized packets.

Supplies of Superphosphate, Nitrate of Soda, Lime, Manure, Max. Basal Slag and Kainit are due at any time now, and we shall be pleased to book your order for delivery shortly.

CLARKS',

The Seedsmen & Produce Merchants

ADWICK-LE-STREET.

OPEN: Good Friday TUI Noon.

SCOTCH GROWN (Glass 1) SEED POTATOES.

	WINDS.	4 1/2.	6 1/2.
SHARP'S EXPRESS	1/2	4/0	6/0
DICKS OF YORK	1/2	4/0	6/0
ECLIPSE	1/2	4/0	6/0
MIDDLETON EARLY	1/2	4/0	6/0
SIR JOHN LLEWELLYN	1/2	4/0	6/0
BRITISH QUEEN	1/2	4/0	6/0
EDWARD	1/2	4/0	6/0

A Half-pint of Peas, Autocrat, FREE with full cwt.

Young Shorts—EPICURE, MIDNIGHT ASHLEY, KIDNEY, GREAT SCOT, ARKAN CHIEF and CONRAD, MAJESTIC, UP-TO-DATE and TYNWALD PERFECTION.

PEAS—English Wonder, 1/4; Little Marvel, 1/4; Daisy, 1/4; Peter Pan, 1/4; Thomas Laxton, 1/4; Huddersfield, 1/4; Grand, 1/4; Gladstone, 1/4; Burdock, 1/4; Autocrat, 1/4; Anderson, 1/4; Strathmore, 1/4 (price per pint); Chantrelle, Red and Yellow, 1/4; Broad Beans, 1/4 (price per pint).

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Flour, Butter and Bacon

We keep one quality

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3 NORTH
WOODLAND

Orders delivered to any district.

"MY LADY"

always in stock

Our BISCUIT FLOUR

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THE FUTURE

The immediate aim of the Community Partnership is to secure funding and then to recruit a Development Worker. The partnership has now hosted two Festivals and in 2005 is aiming for a two day festival. They have also held a very successful Halloween Disco, which attracted people from all over the area. As a result of this, the committee has organised a Valentines Disco. It is the aim of the partnership to not only improve the quality of life for all residents, but to also work towards job creation and training schemes.

It is hoped that the May Festival will become a regular part of life in the area and that it will grow in popularity and eventually become one of the main events in South Yorkshire.

Once the community starts to work together it could be possible to run our own Radio Station. It is likely that this would be in partnership with the community partnership at Highfields, our closest

neighbours With regard to the Model Village, over 75% is now in private ownership and is likely that the local Council, D.M.B.C. may sell off the remaining homes to a housing association. There are several Tenants and Residents Associations in the area and by cooperating together it would be possible to have a much bigger say in the running of the area.

There is still a Drugs problem in the area, but this is not unique to this area and given the right support the community could overcome the problems. With the introduction of Anti Social Behaviour Legislation the police are having a greater impact on the yob element. By adopting a Multi-Agency approach they are taking back the streets. The schools need to be included in any partnership and certain schools need to take their responsibility more seriously. Overall, crime is down in the area from that of the mid nineties and house prices have now risen quite dramatically. A 3 bed roomed house on the Squares in 1992 cost between £12,000 to £28,000. Now they are selling for around £65,000. This may be in part due to the fact that Finningly Airport is coming on line in 2005 and that people are realising that at Adwick and Woodlands there is a fantastic transport infrastructure already in place. There is talk of a Bus Corridor along the A638 Great North Road, with a new Park and Ride planned opposite Green Lane. The Redhouse interchange is still being built, but with companies the size of B & Q, McDonalds and DFS already in place, the future looks brighter. We can never replace the ethos that the Pit engendered, but plentiful employment can go a long way towards restoring shattered Prides and Egos. King Coal is Dead, Long Live The King.



A Festival float from the twenties. McCutcheon Collection



This photo of Brodsworth Colliery was taken about 1928 and comes from The McCutcheon Collection. The view has now changed and within a few years will change again when plans to build housing and small Industrial Units come to into effect.

Another photo from The McCutcheon collection, this time showing a group of kids in one of the squares. From the dress, it would appear to be taken sometime around 1916.

The square is possibly the East Avenue, Crescent, Harold Avenue, Ridgebalk one. Note the sibling affection.



The First and Last Pub in the village. The Tally Ho pub at the northern end of the village was a well known landmark and used to be a very popular drinking hole. Now on the site is some 18 houses, none of which sell alcohol. What will be the next landmark to disappear?

100 years after the Pit was sunk the area now has the chance to get a new lease of

life. By supporting The Woodlands and Adwick Community Partnership You can make a difference. Where do you want the villages to be in 25 years time?