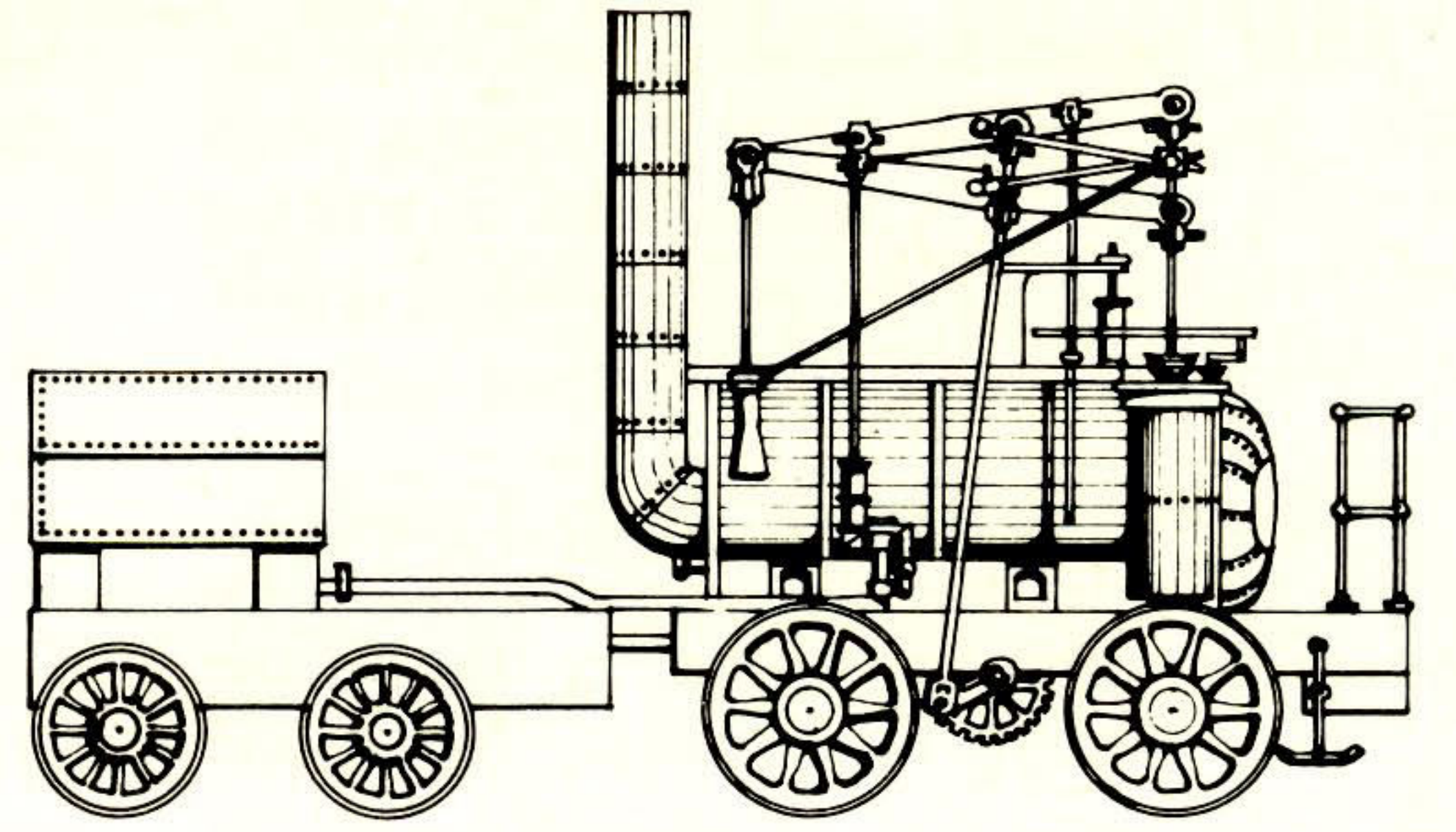


# THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council



April 1978

Quarterly

Number 20

## Public Toilets — Where should they be built?

Six years ago the siting of public toilets in the village became a very controversial issue; various sites were considered, and it was eventually agreed that they would be built in the car park in the former North Wylam Station Yard, associated with the walkway along the old railway track. Planning permission was given for these toilets—but then with local government reorganisation, and cut-backs in public expenditure, money to build them was no longer available.

Now Tynedale District Council have indicated that money may be available for toilets to be built in the village in the next two years.

In view of this possibility, the Parish Council have been discussing again whether the site in the Old Station Yard

is still the best location for the toilets, or whether the Jubilee Field is a more suitable site.

The Old Station Yard site has the advantage of being adjacent to the car park, and convenient for visitors using the walkway and riverside, but is less convenient for local residents.

A toilet on the Jubilee Field would be ideal for people using the playing field facilities and is nearer the centre of the village. One disadvantage is the lack of parking facilities which could result in roadside parking outside the entrance to the playing field.

At its March meeting, the Parish Council

considered the two alternatives and decided to recommend to the District Council that the toilets should be built in the corner of the Jubilee Field (just inside the entrance, next to the hard-surfaced play area) instead of in the Old Station Yard car park.

However this recommendation is subject to approval being given to this at the Annual Parish Meeting on May 17th and subject to obtaining planning permission and other approvals.

So if you have strong views about the siting of the proposed public toilets—come to the Parish Meeting and express your opinion then.

## Congratulations Tommy

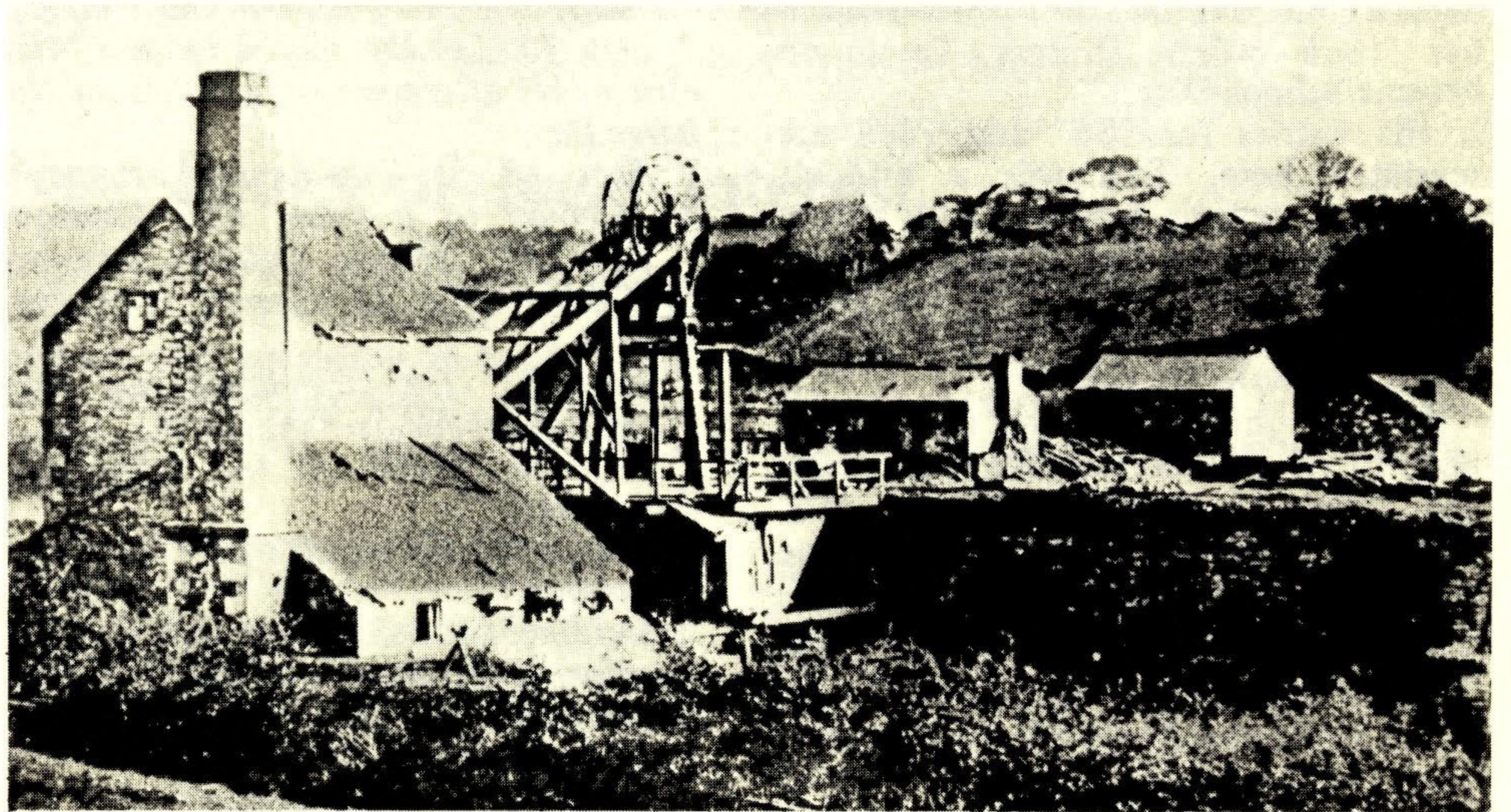
On behalf of the village we have sent sincere congratulations to Mr. Thomas Taylor who celebrated his 100th birthday earlier this month. Formerly of Algernon Terrace, Mr. Taylor is now in the Charlotte Straker Hospital in Corbridge.

*(It is interesting to reflect that the old photograph on the right was taken only 10 years before Mr. Taylor was born.)*

## Library open on Saturdays

As from the beginning of April, the library opening hours have been extended to allow opening on Saturday mornings.

It had been intended to include Saturday opening, as part of the "regular hours" when the new library opened in 1976, but as a result of severe Government cut-backs in public expenditure reduction in the number of library staff in the County prevented this. In view of the slightly improved financial situation and the increasing use which is being made of the library, the County Council has now agreed to opening the library from 10 - 12.00 p.m. on Saturday mornings.



*Wylam Colliery (Haugh Pit) at the time of its closure in 1868. It was this which led to the decision to close the village school (See extracts from school log-book overleaf). This view looks southwards across the river. The casing of this pit shaft can still be seen.*

## Book the date — Wednesday, 17th May

Although all meetings of Parish Councils are normally open to the public, few people ever attend. However, by law all parishes must hold an Annual Parish Meeting each year—between 1st March and 1st June.

The Annual Parish Meetings held in Wylam in recent years have all been well-attended—a reflection of the interest which most residents have in the village.

This year's meeting will be on **Wednesday 17th May** at 7.30 p.m. in the Institute.

You should be sure of a lively evening so why not come along—both new residents and old, and air your views about what we need to do to improve the village. The Parish Council always welcomes constructive criticism as well as compliments! Our County Councillor and District Councillors are likely to be at the meeting as well as Parish Councillors—so if you've got any questions, there'll be an opportunity to ask them then.

Remember the date—17th MAY.



## Guide to local walks — just published

After months of work involved initially in surveying local footpaths then selecting attractive walks, and in writing and preparation—the long-awaited guide to local walks is now available.

“Country Walks in East Tynedale” is the title of the new guide which describes 14 circular walks in the Tyne Valley countryside between Newcastle and Corbridge, and particularly centred on the parishes of Wylam, Heddon, Ovingham, Horsley and Ovington. Many features of interest are described and illustrated, and the detailed directions should enable anyone to follow each

walk, without any problems (even if you can't read a map!)

The guide has been published jointly by the Parish Councils of Heddon, Horsley, Ovingham, Ovington and Wylam—for the benefit of everyone, both residents and visitors, who enjoy walking in the countryside as a recreation. The Countryside Commission have given a grant towards the costs of publication.

Priced at only 55p, the 32 page guide with 14 maps and illustrations, is excellent value.

Obtain your copy now from Margaret Roan, The Clerk of the Parish Council, at 88 Dene Road.

## Improved footpath

Using help from the Job Creation team a new fence has been erected alongside the footpath which runs between the allotments and the riverbank. The erosion of the riverbank just west of the old pit heap had made this path narrow and inconvenient in places and the opportunity has been taken to widen the path by setting-back the fence line of the allotments.

Now that the “official” path has been improved please use it, and do NOT take the unofficial path which runs through the allotments. That path is intended as an access for allotment holders only.

## School-life in Wylam — more than a century ago

One of the most interesting sources of information about life in the village in the past is the school log-book. The Victorian log-book still exists, and during the 1930's Mr. Hamilton, the headmaster of the time, compiled a series of extracts which were published in the “Hexham Courant.” These proved of considerable interest to readers then, and in the belief that they will be of similar interest to residents of “modern” Wylam, we shall be reprinting occasional extracts in this newsletter.

Although the school in Woodcroft Road opened in 1854, the entries in the log-book only survive from 31st December 1866 when Thomas Tomlinson became Schoolmaster.

His entries for 1867 and 1868 are reprinted here. This was a difficult period in village history, with many men being thrown out of work with the closure of the colliery in October 1868, which resulted in the closure of the school for more than a year.

Most of the entries need no explanation. E. A. Blackett was the local squire and lived at Oakwood House. Mrs. Atkinson lived at Wylam Hall. One entry—for May 6th 1868 is unusual—why was bark collected in Horsley Wood?

1866

December 31. I. Thomas Tomlinson, the successor of Mr. Everiss, commenced my duty as the Master of Wylam Colliery School this morning.

1867

January 1. Closed the School on account of it being New Year's Day.

January 2. A very low attendance owing to the severity of the weather, the snow lying on the ground almost knee deep.

January 11. Very little more than half the number on the books were present. I attribute the cause to the pitmen having been lately on the strike and also to the School having had a recent change of masters.

January 25. Sent J.V. home for refusing to do as he was bid.

January 28th. J.V. has since behaved very creditably.

February 6. W. Turnbull, a boy in the first class, broke his arm by a fall from a horse this dinner hour.

February 18. Allowed the children to have a few minutes' play this morning and afternoon as an experiment.

February 27. Had to send to the pit to seek some coals owing to the intensity of the weather that a fire might be kindled.

March 4. Admitted three new scholars lately attending the Houghton School.

March 29. John Robinson, the paid monitor, at home today through illness.

May 30. Let the school loose a little earlier this afternoon on account of the Barge Day.

June 10. A holiday this afternoon on account of it being Whit Monday.

June 17. Several children returned to School after an absence of several months.

June 27. The attendance very thin owing to a pic-nic over the water.

July 26. Broke up the School for four weeks.

August 26. Reopened with a numerous attendance.

October 14. John Robinson, the paid monitor, is still absent owing to his father having the fever and leaving to do his father's work at the pit.

November 20. Had a little singing this afternoon.

December 2. Very cold day. Had the reading class round the fire.

December 5. Had to send to the pit for a scuttle of coals to keep the fires on.

December 18. Mrs. Atkinson kindly sent to inquire how many buns would be required.

December 30. Reopened the School after Christmas. Room very cold.

1868

January 2. Meagre attendance.

January 3. Snow fell very abundantly.

February 10. Saw E. A. Blackett, Esq., to obtain leave of absence for a few days so that I might be present at my father's death, etc.

February 11th. Left the School in charge of John Robinson.

February 17. Returned to Wylam today after the interment last week had taken place. School in charge of J.R.

February 18. Ascertained that the children had been very quiet and orderly during my absence.

February 26. No fires lately owing to the coals being exhausted.

March 11. Joseph Harle, one of the 1st class boys, died of fever today.

March 20. Mrs. R. came to complain of her children taking cold in consequence of no fires being lighted in the School for the want of coals.

April 6. Joseph Robinson and his brother John, left owing to their father leaving the colliery. The latter was the paid monitor.

May 6. Attendance considerably lower owing to some of the children going to carry bark in Horseley Wood.

June 1. Whit Monday half holiday.

June 2. E. A. Blackett, Esq., Mr. Hepple and two gentlemen from London visited the School this afternoon.

June 8. The mason came this morning the clean the School.

July 23. Closed the School for the summer holidays—three weeks.

September 1. Felt indisposed today from over-exertion.

September 4. The attendance has been somewhat lower the last two days owing, I presume, to the men receiving notice that the pit is to be laid off.

September 29. Number present today, 24.

September 30. Still the same wretched attendance. This, the 30th September, is the date at which the pitmen's notices expire.

October 5. The same wretched attendance continues.

October 6. Gave a collective lesson to those in the three highest sections that were present.

October 20. Went to see E. A. Blackett Esq., to-night about closing the School for a few weeks until such times as the pit was worked again. He gave consent that I might close it if I thought proper.

October 23. Closed the School this morning until further notice.



# New play equipment on Jubilee Field proving popular

Greg Smith, Secretary of the Playing Fields Association writes:—

From the interest shown whilst it was being put up, there won't be many children in Wylam who don't know about the new play equipment on the Jubilee Field. It has been paid for by the money raised on the Jubilee Field Day last year and from the Playing Field Association's own funds. The various items have been grouped in two places: for younger children, an area has been set aside by the pavilion for stepping stones, climbing pyramid, see-saw, engine, tractor and trailer; for older children, a log cabin and large climbing-swinging frame have been erected at the base of the bank. Two benches have also been provided.

By designing the equipment itself and having it built by local craftsmen, the P.F.A. has been able to provide very many more items than would have been the case if they had had to be purchased commercially. All the pieces are made of stout wood, with wired joints for double security. Members of the P.F.A. Committee will inspect all parts of the equipment, especially the ropes, every week, and it is a condition of the "liability" insurance cover that an Inspection Book is kept. Nevertheless, it would be valuable if people would contact me (Greg Smith, 76 Dene Road, telephone 3695) if they notice any damage which ought to be put right straight away. The P.F.A. hopes that the equipment will provide entertainment, adventure and scope for initiative for all the young people in the village (not to mention a few who are rather older).

A wide range of other activities will soon be starting up on the field. Although the last football fixture will be in early May, it is intended that a local five-a-side football league should be organised. Cricket, of course, cannot be played on the field until next year because of the immaturity of the square, but two concrete strips have been constructed to allow both senior and junior teams to practise intensively. The tennis net will be put up on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and on Saturdays (weather permitting) so that people can go along and play as they wish. Although there will be no "booking" arrangements to start with, players on court should not keep others waiting more than half-an-hour.

A variety of other equipment is available, and to repeat something that has been said before, the P.F.A. is relying on people interested to get together into formal or informal clubs. These clubs can be directly responsible for getting out the equipment they use, and for its safety and return. Names to contact if you are interested are:—

## Clock Golf & Croquet—

Mrs. M. E. Jacobson, 14 Algernon Terrace (Tel.: 3598)

## Cricket—

Jim Miller, 8 Welburn Close, Ovingham (Tel.: 998-32686)

## Football (Including Five-a-side)

Alan Power, 75 Dene Road (Tel.: 3759)

## Netball & Rounders—

Mrs. A. Bell, 2 Hackworth Gardens

## Volleyball—

Roy Bradley, 92 Dene Road (Tel.: 2438)

No charge will be made for the use of the field's facilities this summer, but keeping them in good repair is expensive, and a small charge may be necessary at a later date.

Talking of finance, and apart from the need to cope with the huge annual cost of maintaining the field, the P.F.A. want to further improve facilities. A step in the direction of raising the money needed is being taken in June, when this year's Field Day will be held, complete with barbecue in the evening. Would anyone who would like to organise a stall, and who has not yet been asked, please contact Tony Mitcham, Meadowfield, Wylam Wood Road, Telephone 2128, as soon as possible.



*Some of the new play-equipment in use on the Jubilee Field.*

## New books of local interest

The North-East is fortunate in having a fairly prolific publisher in Frank Graham who specialises in books about Northumbria and its history, and has also reprinted many books of local importance.

Among his recent publications are two gazeteers of buildings in Northumberland "The Castles of Northumberland" and "The Old Halls, Houses and Inns of Northumberland." The books are extensively illustrated with engravings, drawings and photographs of many of the buildings described.

Wylam Hall gets mentioned in both books as a castle and a hall. Holeyn Hall and Close House are described briefly and

George Stephenson's birthplace is also included and illustrated.

Both volumes are fairly comprehensive and undoubtedly meet a need—not met by any other single volumes available.

Another publication due out next month is "Northumberland Yesteryear", a collection of more than 100 old photographs of life in Northumberland from the Victorian era up to the 1930's. Assembled by the Northumberland Local History Society specially for this book, few of the photographs have been published before. There are photographs from most parts of the county, including Wylam. Copies of this book will be on sale in the village.

## Extension of Riverside Park westwards

The County Council are proposing to extend the riverside recreational area westwards from Hagg Bank to Ovingham Bridge. Much of the land which lies between the railway and the river is already owned by the County Council including the mounds of chalk waste, and its official designation as a recreational area/country park will enable it to be satisfactorily managed and maintained.

In making comments to the National Park Officer—the Parish Council gave its support for the idea, but expressed some reservation about a proposal to provide a small car park off the road between Hagg Bank and West Wylam, and in particular the possibility that this would encourage an increase in traffic along this narrow road. The main car park to serve this length of riverside is proposed at the end of Ovingham Bridge, near Prudhoe Station.



# Water Co. banish tuberculation

The work recently carried out by the Water Company off Holeyn Hall Road and on the Dene Estate has resulted in many queries from local residents, and we therefore asked Mr. H. D. M. Speed, the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company's Engineer to provide us with some information on what is being done. He writes:—

"Most of the water used in the Tyne-side conurbation is supplied from the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company's Whittle Dene and Horsley Treatment Works via four large diameter trunk mains. These mains, located in the Tyne Valley on the north side of the river, are routed through Wylam and Newburn where they connect with the distribution system supplying water both north and south of the river.

One of these mains was constructed in the early 1890's using 30" diameter cast iron pipes. The structure of the pipeline is still in excellent condition after some 80 years of uninterrupted use, but a build up of deposit on the inside of the pipe has the effect of reducing its carrying capacity. This build up is in the form of nodules and is terminated "tuberculation."

In order to restore the capacity of this main and provide for probable increases in demand in the future, the Company decided to carry out a pro-

gramme of rehabilitation of this pipeline.

The first phase of the rehabilitation is currently in progress in the section between the Company's new Treatment Works at Horsley and Newburn, a distance of approximately five miles. This work initially involved the internal scraping of the pipeline to remove the nodules, using a mechanical scraping machine propelled through the full length of the pipe by water pressure. After scraping the internal surface of the main, it is lined with a thin layer of cement mortar which is spun into position and trowelled smooth mechanically. This lining is essential to prevent the recurrence of the tuberculation problem in later years and assists in preventing internal corrosion of the pipeline.

In order to carry out the lining operation, it has been necessary to gain access to the pipeline at intervals by excavating and removing a short section of the main which is subsequently replaced. Two such access points are located at the Company's property in Holeyn Hall Road and in the amenity area in the north west corner of Dene Estate.

The lining operation is programmed for completion during April when the pipeline will be recommissioned."

# Survey of leisure needs

Tynedale District Council are carrying out a survey of leisure facilities and are asking parish councils for information on existing facilities and on the need for new facilities in the future.

Wylam is lucky in already possessing a wide variety of leisure facilities either within the village or nearby.

After discussing possible future needs, the Parish Council felt that there was little that the village needed (and could justify) in extra leisure facilities, but agreed to seek the views of local residents. If you can think of any new outdoor or indoor sporting/recreational/cultural facilities which the village needs write them on a postcard and hand it to Mrs. Roan at 88 Dene Road, by the beginning of May.

## Buy your books here

The Children's Book Group holds regular "bookshop sessions" in the School. These are open to everyone in the village (whether you have children attending Wylam School or not).

Come and buy children's books at this local bookshop—all profits go to help school funds.

## Improvements in Progress

A team of youngsters under the Job Creation Scheme is at present working on the rough ground recently purchased by the Parish Council in Engine Dene. As well as removing the rubble and rubbish dumped on the site, the hedges on the boundaries are being cut back—and the rough verges which lie between the footpaths and the boundary hedges are being cleared, levelled and grassed, (and then regularly cut) to discourage those residents who have got into the criminal habit of dumping their rubbish there. Some of the other bushes are being trimmed and dead and damaged elder bushes removed. The blackberry bushes are being preserved.

It is intended to provide a street lamp on the heavily used path which crosses Engine Dene onto Woodvale Gardens.

## Outings with Friends

The programme of outings by the Friends of Wylam this summer is as follows:—

June 14th—Bowness and Windermere.

June 29th—Whitley Bay.

July 13th—Pickering and Flamingo Park.

September 14th—Alnwick and Rothbury.

Any old-aged pensioner in Wylam is eligible to go on these outings, and further information can be obtained from Mrs. T. Pattinson at Wylam Wood (Tel.: 3121).

*Correspondence relating to this Newsletter should be addressed to Mrs. M. Roan, The Clerk of the Parish Council, 88 Dene Road, Wylam. (Tel. 3669).*

*Printed for Wylam Parish Council by The Gilpin Press, Houghton-le-Spring.*

## Any offers for this job?

An Honorary Secretary is required for the Wylam branch of the W.E.A. to undertake the organisation and development of evening classes in adult education in Wylam.

Anyone who is willing to offer his/her services in this capacity is asked to contact, Bill Yelder, 27 Woodvale Gardens. Tel.: 3301.

## Allotments Secretary

In the last issue we reported that Jane Tomlin had taken over as Secretary of the local 'Shelter' group—now her husband Richard has become the new Secretary of the Allotments Association.

So contact the Tomlins (20 Tynedale Close; Tel.: 3688) for information about Shelter, or the Allotment Association.

## VILLAGE DIARY

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| May 13  | Spring Fair — 2 p.m. Wylam School.     |
| June 10 | St. Oswin's Garden Fete.               |
| June 19 | Charity Concert — 7 p.m. Wylam School. |
| June 24 | Field Day — Jubilee Field.             |
| July 1  | Labour Party Fete.                     |

## Stop this vandalism

Damage to lamps at the Falcon Centre, street lamps on Falcon Terrace and to property at the station are recent examples of local vandalism. Repairs cost you—as taxpayers or rate payers—money, so it's in your own interest to call the police if you see acts of vandalism.

## Corrections necessary

Two small printing errors occurred in the last issue—the issue number should have been 19 (not 17) and 1981 is of course the bicentenary of Stephenson's birth (not centenary!)

## Appointment of new Parish Council Clerk

Mrs. Margaret Roan is moving to Edinburgh during the summer and will shortly be resigning her post as Clerk of the Parish Council.

The Council now wish to appoint a new Clerk to commence duties during July, and applications are invited from persons with suitable secretarial experience.

Further particulars of this part-time appointment can be obtained from Mr. J. B. Robinson, Chairman of the Parish Council, "Haverbrack," Elm Bank Road, to whom applications should be sent not later than 2nd June, 1978.