

## THE FOLLY HALL UPRISING 1817

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Just after midnight in the early hours of Monday June 9th 1817 a small band of men from the Holme Valley, some armed with firearms, others with scythes or similar makeshift weapons, exchanged a few shots with a handful of mounted Yeomanry at the bridge near Folly Hall, Huddersfield. Beating a hasty retreat, the Yeomanry returned with reinforcements to find only the trampled grass in the fields and the echo of distant signal shots, as evidence of the rebel army which had melted into the night and the security of their cottages.

What had led the cloth-dressers, weavers and other craftsmen and labourers to attempt this desperate venture? The exploits of the Luddites, which occurred only five years before, have earned a place in local history and tradition and completely overshadowed the uprising of 1817. The efforts of the revolutionaries of 1817 were not so spectacular as those of the Luddites, nor were their fates so tragic, but they have an important place not only in local history, but also in the long struggle for democratic rights and social justice.

At the end of 1812, the Luddite leader, George Mellor of Longroyd Bridge, awaiting the gallows in York Castle, sent his name along with that of nearly forty other Luddites to a friend in Huddersfield to be added to a petition calling for reform of Parliament. The Luddites saw themselves not as wreckers and assassins but as fighters against a corrupt and oppressive government (1). They had the sympathy of many who did not approve of their methods. Parliament *was* corrupt, the vast majority of seats in the Commons being held by landlords or their nominees. The aristocrats had plunged the country into a long war with France which was ruining trade and bringing distress to the manufacturing districts, already suffering the turmoil of industrialisation.

In January 1813, the executed Luddites still fresh in their graves, Major John Cartwright, a leading advocate of parliamentary reform visited Huddersfield to meet a correspondent, Samuel Clay, a respectable linen draper. Some workers came to see Cartwright and as a result a club for parliamentary reform, named after Hampden, the champion of the Commons against Charles I, was established (2). After 1815 when the long-awaited peace brought not prosperity but increased suffering, such clubs grew rapidly throughout the country, and at the beginning of 1817 Huddersfield Political Union Society had become established as a mass movement. Thousands attended meetings at Huddersfield and Holmfirth in January which condemned aristocratic misgovernment, taxation without representation, and the expense of supporting royalty and a standing army (3).

Alarmed at the extent of popular unrest, the government not only ignored all the petitions from reformers throughout the country, it went into the offensive.

Meetings were banned and the Habeas Corpus Act suspended, thus permitting arbitrary arrest. Those ultra-radical reformers, who had consistently argued that the working man could only win the vote by armed force, were the most persecuted, but also the most prepared, and the closing of legal channels of protest brought others into their ranks. Lancashire plans for an uprising were defeated by the arrest of delegates at a meeting at Ardwick, (one of these, John Lancaster of Middleton, came to live in Almondsbury after his release from gaol and was accused of involvement in the attempted revolution of 1820) but one of the Ardwick delegates, Joseph Mitchell, escaped to carry on preparations (4).

Mitchell was a follower of the ideas of Thomas Spence, who believed that the power of the aristocracy could only be destroyed by the confiscation and distribution of their estates. The London Spenceans, led by Arthur Thistlewood, (hanged and beheaded for his role in the 1820 revolution) were already in contact with Mitchell when he visited the city again in April. On this occasion he was introduced to a Radical known as Oliver who expressed a wish to accompany him as London delegate on the next tour of the provinces. Oliver and Mitchell found preparations for an uprising underway in the Midlands and the West Riding and in early May, Oliver visited Huddersfield and the house of George Dawson at Folly Hall (5).

Whether or not the Huddersfield reformers played a part in the Manchester conspiracy in March, it is indisputable that a rising in Huddersfield was being prepared *before* Oliver arrived. As around Manchester, the leading revolutionaries were former members of the outlawed Political Union societies. George Dawson, who was a listing maker, first met Michael Waller (later to become the Roberttown delegate) at the Huddersfield reform meeting in January, when he asked him to sign the petition (6). Tom Riley, a 60 year old tailor of Crosland Moor and a veteran radical, who had been under suspicion for inciting Luddite attacks in 1812, later recollected that the question of a rising had first been mentioned at a meeting of Reformers to discuss the payment of a bill for advertising in Baines' *Leeds Mercury* (7).

In Holmfirth the main advocates of insurrection were two of the founders of a "Union Club" there in December 1816, which had over 100 members before it was disbanded. Ben Whiteley, a cropper who had been arrested as a Luddite, was the Holmfirth delegate, and a clothier, Richard Lee, attempted to organise ex-members of the Union Club for the rising (8).

John Buckley, a shoemaker of Longroyd Bridge, said he first heard of the intended rising at the beginning of April when visiting the house of Dawson. George Taylor, the Honley delegate, known as the huntsman's son, was there. After dropping some hints about what was afoot, Taylor was urged by Mrs. Dawson to

let Buckley in on the plans. Dawson explained, "petitioning was of no use and therefore there is a plan formed to overthrow the present system of government", and Taylor affirmed "the business was going forward well and would put the country to rights." Money had been collected at Lockwood for gunpowder to make cartridges and someone called Liddell had donated £1. Dawson had brewed ale and bought in rum to put the men in the right spirits (9). Buckley, like all those who later gave depositions, was for obvious reasons reticent about his own role. Tom Riley also only admitted attending two meetings, claiming he had refused to join because of doubts about the success of a venture which was known to too many people. He said he was in contact with a delegate, however, who had been to "central meetings" at Yew Tree, Roberttown, and one in Honley Wood. Other witnesses attributed a more enthusiastic role to Riley. William Schofield of Honley said that in the course of a conversation about "trade and such like and the badness of the times and the Upper Country disturbances", Riley had told him there was to be a general rising, and had said a few days before the event "I expect you will be there". Buckley had frequently been approached by Riley "to join, or bring about the Revolution, as he termed it", and was offered the loan of an old halberd "used in Ludding time", and given lead and a bullet mould to prepare ball (10).

Riley was trying to make out he was not deeply involved. He admitted having been asked to a meeting to be a delegate with the men who had come up from the Hampden Club in London, but he had refused. However, if he was as little involved as he said, it seems strange that he should then be so well-informed by the delegate who did go to this meeting, as to the preparations in the rest of the West Riding.

Arriving in Wakefield on the 27th April, the London delegates, Mitchell and Oliver, learned that revolutionary committees existed in Ossett, the Spen Valley, Sheffield, Leeds, Barnsley and Huddersfield areas, and the delegates of these committees sometimes met at central meetings. Halifax is notable by its absence in these preparations and Riley offers a cryptic explanation, "Halifax would put no confidence in Huddersfield on account of Ludding times. Halifax corresponded with Sheffield, when a delegate attended from Huddersfield there was none from Halifax."

The nature of West Riding links with other manufacturing districts and London are even more enigmatic. There is no evidence for contact with Thistlewood's group apart from *via* Mitchell. Just how well known Mitchell was in the area is not clear but, on the 4th May he left the coach en route from Liverpool to Wakefield to visit someone at Huddersfield and was arrested near Golcar. Consequently, from now on, liaison between the different manufacturing districts was mainly carried out by "the London delegate", Mr. Oliver.

The major meeting Mitchell was returning for went ahead in his absence at Wakefield the next day. Tom Bacon, a veteran republican and Luddite suspect

from Pentrich in Derbyshire was present, (fresh from a meeting with Samuel Bamford, a leading radical of Middleton in Lancashire). William Wolstenholme was the Sheffield delegate, John Smaller represented Horbury — both had been members of republican United Englishmen committees in 1802 — and there were delegates from Birmingham, Leeds and Barnsley. Dawson and (an otherwise unknown) Sykes attended from Huddersfield and claimed they could raise 8,000 men (11).

The next day Oliver went to Huddersfield to see Mitchell who, after 26 hours in the town's "Towser" — "the most damp and nauseous dungeon imaginable, having no fire in it, the floor of which was nearly covered with human excrement" — was moved to a room and allowed visitors. Mitchell asked Oliver to visit Dawson who passed on to him a letter from the prisoner to his wife in Liverpool. This is the first evidence of Oliver contacting revolutionaries in Huddersfield (12).

According to the *Leeds Mercury*, Oliver also met George Taylor and after trying twice unsuccessfully to arrange meetings in Huddersfield had told Ben Scholes the Wakefield leader that he was "dissatisfied with the apathy of the country." He had more hopes in the people of Ossett which he toured with Smaller on the 10th as they appeared "more desperate than any others" (13).

On Sunday 11th a central meeting was held near Roberttown which John Buckley attended along with an unnamed delegate from Almondbury. Whether it was because of genuine apprehension about the state of readiness amongst some of the leaders themselves, or purely on the initiative of Oliver, it was decided three days later to postpone the rising from the 26th May to 9th June, ostensibly to avoid a night of a full moon.

This decision was made in Sheffield and Wolstenholme requested Tom Bradley, who was in fact an informer, to convey the news to delegates at Thurlestone on Sunday the 18th. Only the Holmfirth and Huddersfield delegates arrived at the Waggon and Horses, that is, Ben Whiteley, Joseph Beaumont of Scholes and a Lockwood man, all of them croppers. Recognising Bradley by a blue ribbon in his buttonhole, they initiated conversation, and after complaining about the fatigue and expense incurred by all the meetings, Whiteley expressed concern that the Barnsley lads "were rather too forward" and asked for an answer from Wolstenholme to a man in Sheffield who had offered to make sixty pikes in return for payment in cloth (14).

A Sheffield proposal to seize Wentworth House and an arms depot at Doncaster was agreed on with Whiteley promising to send a Huddersfield detachment to help. Although this plan may have emanated from Oliver it was similar to the tactics proposed elsewhere. In Huddersfield a plan to raid Milnsbridge House and take the arms there was attributed to Tom Veevers; while at Hightown, Ben Hepponstall, a cropper and old friend of Riley was to capture William Cartwright and the Reverend Roberson — both lead-

ing anti-Luddites in 1812. According to Bradley, Smaller planned to attack Bretton Hall where 100 stand of arms were kept, and to seize the weapons in the Town Halls and Houses of Correction. Thus well armed, and with their main opponents captured the revolutionaries expected to surround and disarm the military garrisons with little resistance (15). Their confident attitude was summed up by Whiteley, "the rising would be general of all the nation and once they were agate there would be plenty of forces" (16). After the postponement of the rising there were at least two more meetings in Sheffield. The last of these, on the 30th May, was raided by magistrates acting on information from Bradley. Although only 4 out of 30 delegates were arrested it must have been apparent that the arrest of Wolstenholme would seriously affect Sheffield's contribution to the rising. Michael Waller, a collier and publican of Roberttown, was asked by Dawson to attend a meeting to finalise arrangements at the Sportman's Arms at Thornhill Lees on the afternoon of 6th June. Again due to intelligence from Bradley this was turned into a trap by the authorities.

Ten delegates were arrested, including Whiteley, Waller, Smaller, Joshua Midgeley an Almondbury clothier, William Walker a Thornhill Lees clothier and James Mann a Leeds cropper and prominent reformer along with others from Manningham, Wakefield and Hightown. They were escorted into Wakefield by a troop of Yeomanry Cavalry which was stoned and an "immense assemblage" gathered around the Court House (17).

Oliver apparently managed to escape and made his way to Wakefield where John Dickinson, a Dewsbury reformer and linen draper, who had refused to become involved in the revolutionary movement saw him talking to a coachman. Inquiries revealed that the coachman was in the service of General Byng, the northern military commander, who had been visited by Oliver only a few days before. Oliver was in fact a spy who had been regularly reporting the revolutionaries' plans to his paymaster, Lord Sidmouth, Secretary of the Home Office – but these revelations were not made public until a week later.

Amazingly, although the Thornhill arrests had practically smashed the revolutionary organisation in the West Riding, some of the Huddersfield and Holmfirth radicals resolved to carry on – partly in desperation. A weekend of frenetic activity ensued. That evening, a Friday, Dawson went into hiding at Moldgreen and the next day Riley went to see a copy of the *Leeds Mercury* to find out what was happening. It carried a story of "Rumours of Threatened Insurrection" and Riley told Buckley, "all was up for the plan was completely broken into ... it must either be done now or we shall all be hanged." Buckley received a message from Dawson telling him to go to Manchester, and Riley instructed him that the people there "must be ready to strike at the time appointed" (18).

On the way into Lancashire, Buckley overtook Hepponstall of Hightown engaged on a similar mission. Evidently the revolutionaries were less well informed

than General Byng who had notified the Home Office on the 4th that Manchester had abandoned the attempt after the Sheffield arrests. George Taylor also set off on horseback over Holme Moss to relay news of the Thornhill arrests and seek support in Stockport (19). On that Saturday morning a stranger visited Lee at Holmfirth with news of Whiteley and Dawson and a request to be put in touch with a contact in Sheffield. Lee took him to Joseph Beaumont at Scholes and the latter gave him a note of introduction to Thomas Beaumont who was staying at a pub in Sheffield. After the stranger left, Lee went unsuccessfully to try and borrow a gun.

A Honley cropper and another man from Honley arrived at the home of Richard Haigh, a clothier, at Holmfirth on Sunday afternoon and he accompanied them to Lee's. They asked him if Holmfirth was ready to rise that night as the authorities would be on the alert on the 9th. Lee complained that they had no weapons to go with, but the Honley men said there were plenty, and if not, "they would begin a-Ludding", seize all the guns in Honley, march on Huddersfield and having placed a guard on Folly Hall Bridge, disarm the soldiers; "it would not be above 10 minutes work". Despite Lee's later claims of reluctance some of the other participants recollected differently. At four o'clock he met some of the former Union Club members and told them of the message from Huddersfield, "we must go lads for it will do nothing dodging on it ... it was to be death or liberty." Joseph Beaumont reported that a quantity of cartridge had been prepared and that the men of Scholes and vicinity were ready. Lee went that evening to borrow a pistol from George Exley, the former treasurer of the Union Club. However Lee failed to turn out that night, claiming his wife was sick and his house was under surveillance (20). Perhaps as few as 10 Holmfirth men arrived at the rendezvous at Far Bank at Honley at 11 o'clock.

Meanwhile, *via* a detour to avoid arrest, Taylor had arrived back in Honley and assumed command. Rumours that he was a veteran of Rawfolds fight in 1812 seem confirmed by his conduct of the rising. After a debate whether to go home or continue with the 30 to 40 men present, two sentinels were placed on Honley Bridge and the party marched in formation with the gunmen in the front into the village. In Luddite fashion arms were demanded at six houses and one occupier threatened with the use of "Enoch" on his door.

Clement Dyson, an attorney's agent, was away on business in London and his wife was alone when she was awakened by hammering on the door, and the demand, "Your firelock – immediately." She claimed that there wasn't one in the house, but on threats to break the door down she fetched a pistol her husband had got for defence against the Luddites. "You are a set of Ludding rogues" she said as they took the weapon, "you will never be quiet until you are hung in a string". Someone suggested that they "blow a ball through her", but she was left fuming as they formed up in order and marched off. The house of



the wealthy clothier, William Leigh, in Church Street was also visited and his kitchen window smashed in – it remains blocked up to this day – but Mr. Leigh refused to leave the security of his bedroom (21).

Although the arms raids had not been very fruitful, it was decided to continue the march on Huddersfield, encouraged by Taylor's oft-quoted speech, "Now lads, all England is in arms – our liberties are secure – the rich will be poor and the poor will be rich!" (22)

Meanwhile, the men from Berry Brow and Lockwood were gathering near Folly Hall, knocking up supporters on the way. Some, like Nathan Taylor, a shoemaker, claimed later it was under duress they left their homes that night. Another shoemaker, George Armitage, said he had been out courting at Lockwood when he was given the choice of joining the insurgents, or being shot. Given the leading role of Buckley, it is just as likely that other shoemakers would have been willingly involved, but as higher up the valley, it was mainly croppers and weavers who turned out. The revolutionaries congregated in a field at Folly Hall. At the most 70-80 men were present, only about a tenth of them with firearms. Ammunition was distributed from handkerchiefs spread on the wall top and Joseph Croft, who had assumed command, ordered them to kneel each side of the road over Engine Bridge, facing Huddersfield, ready to receive a group of horsemen trotting down the hill.

Captain Armitage, commander of the recently formed Huddersfield Yeomanry, a volunteer body of well-to-do merchants, manufacturers and tradesmen, had been alerted to the suspicious activities. Summoning six privates and George Whitehead, the deputy constable, he headed towards Engine Bridge to reconnoitre. David Alexander rode ahead and shouted that he could see figures on the bridge. What then followed was confused by the pace of events and later controversy. Whitehead went forward to question the men but was challenged by Croft who then, possibly after a shot from the Yeomanry who had their pistols drawn, gave the order to fire. The first gun flashed in the pan but failed to discharge and was followed by a ragged volley. Alexander's grey reeled beneath him with a wound to its head, but recovered and on Armitage's order the party galloped back to the town.

The insurgents had lost the advantage of surprise and it was decided to desperse – some had probably slipped away as soon as the shooting started. During the retreat a signal shot was heard from Taylor Hill, probably fired by the Honley detachment, and one of the Lockwood croppers replied with his pistol. In great disappointment the revolutionaries returned to their firesides (23).

On the following day one of the delegates who had been to Manchester learned of the failure from Riley. "The damned fools", he retorted, "they knew it was *Monday* night". He was not to know that the outcome would have been no different if the pre-arranged time had been kept, for only one small area was to rise. That night in the villages around Pentrich a scene was enacted similar to that in the Holme

Valley twenty four hours earlier. About 100 framework knitters, miners, quarrymen and other labourers marched towards Nottingham under Jeremiah Brandreth, but were dispersed merely by the approach of cavalry. Unfortunately this near-farce was marred by tragedy – the insurgents accidentally shot and killed a man at a house where they were demanding arms.

Around both Pentrich and the Holme Valley numerous arrests were made over the following weeks. Troop reinforcements were moved into Huddersfield to assist in rounding up suspects and making arms searches. Fears persisted that the insurgents were planning another attempt and signal shots and beacons on the hills were reported. About thirty men were held for questioning and then taken under cavalry escort to York Castle (25).

Although he had not been present at the rising Tom Riley was accused of "procuring, commanding or abetting others to bring about and commit certain riots, unlawful assemblies and felonies", a charge which was later, on the instructions of the Home Secretary, turned to one of High Treason. Riley expressed great remorse at their failure, allegedly lamenting, "he had for many years kept the law and the government at defiance and now he was betrayed to destruction by a set of his own block-heads." Whether this is a true account of his opinion or not he was certainly so despondent that he tried to hang himself from his bedstead whilst detained in Huddersfield (26).

Dawson, Taylor and Croft went on the run. On the 13th June Lee was arrested. Matthew Bradley, the magistrate's clerk, entered his house with a posse of men and forced him at pistol point to come with them without even chance for a wash or a few words with his wife. Her illness added to his anxiety while confined in the Towser and she was not allowed to see him. He was offered an improvement in conditions if he told all he knew, but refusing inducements he was escorted to York in irons on 16th to face trial for Treason.

Whiteley, released after his arrest at Thornhill was rearrested on the 4th July by Blythe the Holmfirth constable who made a thorough search of his house. Charged with treason he was committed to Coldbath prison in London and then, after examination before the Home Secretary, was sent to Worcester goal for five months. Both Holmfirth men and Riley suffered short but harsh terms of imprisonment without trial. Those who appeared before a jury were more fortunate (27).

The Whig *Leeds Mercury*, which had investigated the role of Oliver in the uprising, supported a limited and peaceful reform of Parliament and was therefore glad of an opportunity to criticise the Tory government. It condemned the way that Oliver, as a government agent, had actually encouraged the revolutionaries by false assurances of support in London, and so, by the time of the York summer assizes, there was widespread sympathy for "Oliver's dupes".

Some of the insurgents gave evidence against their comrades. Sam Wimpenny of Honley, a clothier,

claimed he had been coerced into joining. The main witness against 8 weavers, croppers and labourers, accused of stealing arms in Honley, was Mrs. Dyson, who testified that she recognised Joseph Sykes of Berrycroft amongst the attackers.

George Armitage, the shoemaker, was the main prosecution witness against the Lockwood men accused of tumultuously assembling at Folly Hall, although a defence witness said that Armitage had confided to him that he had been involved but had not mentioned being coerced. Both Armitage and Hearnshaw, the friend who had been with him that night, had themselves been in custody six weeks and the prosecution work was severely weakened when they refused to call Hearnshaw. He later swore that this was because he had turned down the bribe of a few oranges offered to him to testify that the Yeomanry had definitely not fired first.

Besides the reliability of the prosecution witnesses being challenged a number of respectable character witnesses spoke for the defendants. George Woffenden, a young cropper from Lockwood, was said to be a religious man who was looking after his widowed mother, "good, honest sober and very peaceable". None of the others had any stain on their character. After only a quarter of an hour the jury returned a not guilty verdict and some of those awaiting trial were discharged without a case even being brought against them. With a stern warning from the judge about their future conduct the revolutionaries returned to a hero's welcome. The esteem in which they were held in their communities was reflected both in the number of people willing to travel to York to testify in their favour and also in the large crowds who came out to greet them on their joyous reunion with their families (28).

Their Derbyshire counterparts were less fortunate — three were hanged and fourteen transported from 14 years to life. The Yorkshire trials also had a tragic sequel. Riley, still in York Castle in October, cut his throat, leaving a widow and large family. Lee was left to clean up the suicide cell. He was released at the end of the year, as was Whiteley, when the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act expired, the government preferring to let the embarrassing affair drop (29).

The 1817 uprising reveals amateurism and self deception amongst the insurgents, but they can not be dismissed as mere dupes of Oliver (30). They were motivated by a deep-rooted, local revolutionary tradition. The revolutionaries of 1817 began where those of 1812 left off. Three years later, in 1820, when another national rising was planned and the villages to the north of Huddersfield were preparing, it was said that the men of the Holme Valley would "wait till the next day and see how the new government went on." They had learnt a bitter lesson in 1812 and 1817, but some, like Lee and Whiteley, continued the long struggle for political rights and human dignity for the working class.

## REFERENCES

- 1 Radcliffe MS (RAD) (Microfilm, Huddersfield Library) 126/127a; Public Records Office (PRO) Ho. 42/132, letter from George Mellor to Tom Ellis.
- 2 *Leeds Mercury (LM)* 23 Jan. 1813; RAD 126/117 22 Jan. 1813
- 3 *LM* 18 Jan., 15 Feb.; *Leeds Intelligencer (LI)* 20 Jan. 1817
- 4 For Manchester connection see Samuel Bamford, *Passages in the Life of a Radical* (1844); H.W.C. Davis, "Lancashire Reformers 1816 — 1817" in *Bulletin of John Rylands Library* (Manchester 1925). For John Lancaster see *LM* 14 Feb. 1818, 29 Apr. 1820.
- 5 For Oliver and Mitchell see Bamford, op.cit.; E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* pp 711 — 726; J. Stevens, *England's Last Revolution: Pentrich 1817* (1977)
- 6 PRO Ho. 42/166 "MW" of Roberttown deposition.
- 7 Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments (WWM) Sheffield City Library F.45/191, Tom Riley's deposition. For Riley and Luddism see RAD 126/133, 135.
- 8 PRO Ho. 42/166 R. Lee deposition.
- 9 WWM F. 45/189, Buckley deposition; Taylor is referred to as the "huntsman's son" by John Oldham of Honley in Ho. 42/166. c.f. Almondbury Parish Register christenings 1794, Mar. 8 which mentions Ben, son of George Taylor, Huntsman Honley.
- 10 WWM F. 45/188, 189, 191, Schofield, Buckley and Riley's depositions. "Upper Country" refers to Manchester.
- 11 PRO Treasury Solicitor's papers TS.11.351, Oliver's report.
- 12 House of Commons Papers 13 Feb. 1818, Mitchell's petition; PRO Ho. 40/9(2) 17 — 24, Oliver's report.
- 13 *LM* 21 Jun. — 19 Jul. 1817.
- 14 PRO Ho. 42/165, Bradley's deposition.
- 15 Ibid, also 42/166; WWM F.45/189 Buckley's deposition. Tom Vevers was a Dalton wool stapler and an active radical into the Chartist period.
- 16 PRO Ho. 42/166, Lee's deposition; Ho. 40/9 (4) 500. To be "agate", dialect, to be doing something.
- 17 *LM* 14, 21 Jun.
- 18 WWM F. 45/191, 189, Riley and Buckley's depositions.
- 19 Stevens op.cit. p 45; PRO Ho. 42/166 Richard Haigh's deposition.
- 20 PRO Ho. 42/166, Lee's deposition; ibid. John Langley of Deanhouse deposition.
- 21 Ibid. H. Alexander, H. Dyson, M. Hirst, W. Leigh, B. Varley, B. Swift, Jos. Armitage, Sam. Wimpenny, John Donkersley, Josh. Kemp, Jos. Sykes, John and Abe Oldham deposition. Also *LM* account of York Assize 25 Jul.; Mrs. Dyson had been raided twice by Luddites in 1812 and had gone to York to give evidence at the Special Commission in 1813 but was not called. Wm. Leigh's account is given in M. Jagger *History of Honley* pp 55 — 56. I am grateful to Mr. Raymond Hallas of Church Street for drawing my attention to the blocked window.
- 22 *LM* 19 Jul. 1817.
- 23 *LM* 2 Aug. 1817, Taylor and Armitage's evidence. According to Whitehead there were about 400 insurgents, but David Alexander estimated only 60-70 on the bridge. Even if there were others in the fields it could not have been hundreds. The only other event that night was a raid on the house of a member of the Yeomanry at Ossett for arms.
- 24 Stevens op.cit.
- 25 *LM* 14 Jun. — 25 Jul.; WWM F. 45/186 Armitage to Fitzwilliam 12 Jun.
- 26 *LI* 16 Jun. — 28 Jul. 1817; *LM* 27 Feb. 1818.
- 27 House of Commons 23 Feb., Lee's petition; ibid. 24 Feb. Whiteley's petition also *LM* 4 and 25 Apr. 1818 and 9 May 1818 for their cases.
- 28 *LM* 2 Aug.; *LI* 28 Jul. York Assizes.
- 29 *LM* 27 Feb. 1818; *LI* 9 Mar. 1818.
- 30 Nor were they poor ignorant desperadoes. The evidence emphasises that the leaders were master craftsmen with flourishing trades. Whitley and his wife were said to have a weekly income of £4 a week for example.