



Home of the Colne Valley Male Voice Choir



This old photo shows **Britannia Road** in **Slaithwaite** with our rehearsal room down on the left.

Your editor doesn't know if the building was then the Conservative Club or whether it had another function.

Nor does he have a clue as to the date but it seems plausible this might have been taken in the early 1920's - about the time our illustrious Choir was forming.

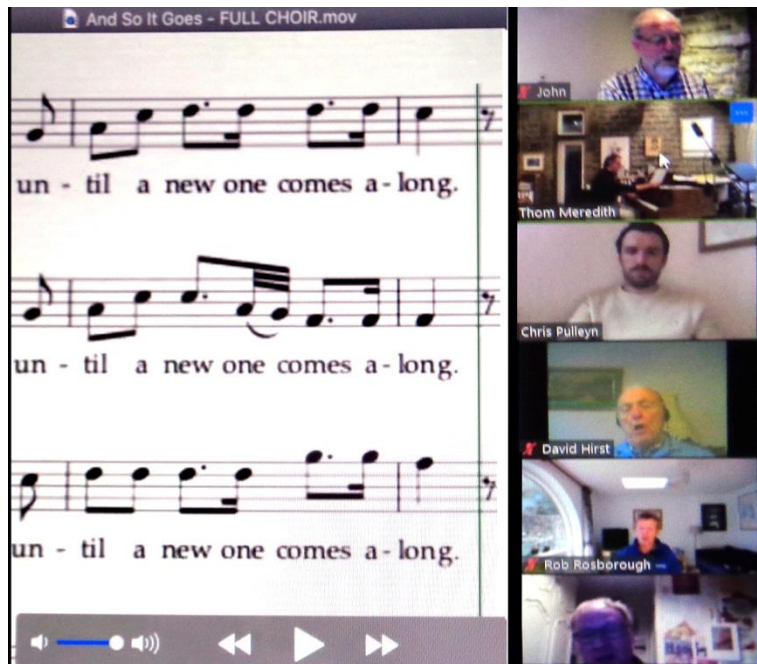
Does any reader know more?

Do get in touch

Zoom rehearsals off to a good start

We may not individually be too comfortable with Zoom but nearly all the members were able to join Thom and Chris for the first round of 'sectional rehearsals'.

Thom and the rest of the members are spared the noises we might be making in out bedrooms and cubbyholes. The reason: we are 'muted' because if we try and sing together - aloud - the time differences and delays render any kind of choral union impossible.



Maybe when we've got our parts 'down pat' in the various new songs we've been practicing, we can sing and record our parts as we listen to the 'mastertrack' on earphones. Then the individual tracks can be collected and mixed together as if we were all singing ensemble. Chris is a 'dab hand' at that, apparently. That's the way many singers, bands and orchestras have been doing it.

But for now; just seeing your Choir chums and singing a bit is enough. Well done to Thom and Chris. They've put in a lot of work to get it going and the members are grateful. They've worked so well, the word is we might be changing the groupings and making the rehearsals longer.

Said one, 'Never seen so many men more in need of a haircut'. This lot are mostly Baritones so look relatively smart. VotV couldn't bear to show readers the Basses!



So farewell then Ennio Morricone

Maybe Italy's greatest composer of the late twentieth century, Morricone, who has died in Rome in his early 90's, made his biggest impact in film music.

His was the sound behind the archetypical, Spaghetti Westerns of the 1970's.

Amongst his many haunting scores is the theme to the film, 'The Mission' which became known as **Gabriel's Oboe**.



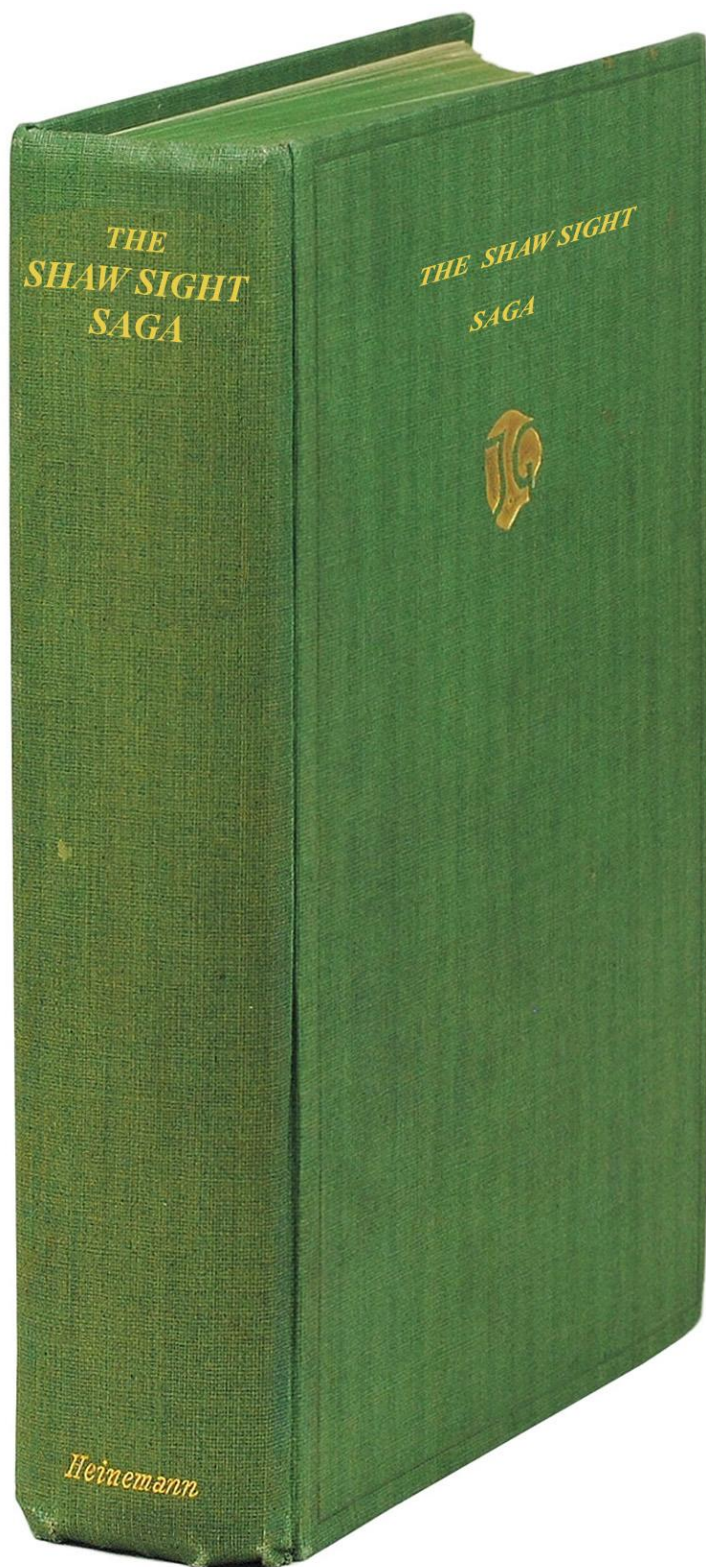
It's also well known to Colne Valley Male Voice Choir as '**Nelle Fantasia**'. It has been in our repertoire for some years. It maybe sounds a bit odd sung in our Yorkshire accents but we do strive to find our 'Inner Italians'. 'Nelly Fantasy' is a fine, fine piece and a pleasure to sing.

This soundtrack version is set against some beautiful countryside.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Gvrp20_WXM

RIP Ennio 10/11/1928 – 6/7/2020



The Shaw Sight Saga?

The story so far...

Your Editor had come across an ingenious work called '**shelf-Isolation**' which cleverly tells the corona virus story through book titles. He put it in VotV.



VotV Reader, Carole Shaw as soon as she caught sight of it, reported that it was her brother-in-law, Phil, who had made the work.



VotV researchers found that **Phil Shaw**, Huddersfield born and trained, is an internationally renowned artist and print-maker and dug out a photo of Phil and his two children, **Florence** and **Arthur**.



Now read on: the next chapter ...

Carole, who lives on Marsden Lane, got in touch again. She says, *"It's somewhat ironic - seeing myself featured in a '**Choir**' Newsletter as I was not allowed in the Golcar Junior School choir due to my absolute tone deafness. I was heartbroken at the time.*

There's music in the family though." she tells me. *"Did I know that Phil is in a band?"*

It seems he's part of an outfit by the name of '**The Egyptians**' and that Phil is the lead-singer and sometime drummer.

Like the Colne Valley men he can't get onstage with the other chaps but - next best thing - he's got his pal, Jimmy, to help him in this lockdown version of, '**Don't worry, Be Happy**'



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PrKbPdYL3Xs>

And there's more ...

It turns out that Aunty Carole's niece, **Florence Shaw**, fronts up-and-coming, 'Post Punk' band: **Dry Cleaning**.



If it hadn't been for the virus **Dry Cleaning** would have been on tour in the States still.

As it was they'd just got to **New York** as corona struck. They did a live recording session and a couple of gigs in Brooklyn and then - suddenly - all the tour was cancelled, leaving them to get home as best they could.

Dry Cleaning

“Dry Cleaning are a band of jarring juxtapositions, as guitarist, Tom Dowse, drummer Nick Buxton and bassist Lewis Maynard could be mistaken for a metal band -- there was a lot of hair flipping -- while vocalist Florence Shaw's stage presence is as dry as her spoken word delivery.” (Brooklyn Vegan)

Dry Cleaning's Florence

Florence, lecturer, artist and cultural commentator says she's not really a singer but agreed to join the band when they asked: she talks mostly but delivers the lyrics, very effectively, in a deadpan style.

Your Editor likes this video best - 'Viking Hair' - nice incongruities between the words and the visuals. Cool.



So yet more good things come out of the Colne Valley - they Shawly do!

If I were her auntie, I'd be made up!

Colne Valley men say, 'We are staying up'

There been some fretting done that our local Championship Team, Huddersfield Town, is heading for the drop. It's been bumping around the 'Relegation Zone' for much of the season - and now play has resumed, post lockdown, it doesn't look much better. VotV consulted life-long Town Fan and Leader of the second tenors, **David Morrison** for an expert opinion. Are they going down?

"We'll stay up." says David authoritatively.

Is that just the blind loyalty of a life-long fan asked VotV?

"Oh no." replied David, *"It's more a dispassionate assessment of their chances. We're staying up. You can't go and see them at the ground, of course, so we are all armchair fans but they looked pretty sound, getting a good point against Preston on Sunday - and Preston are a decent side. Remember, too, most of the relegation contenders lost their recent matches. We should be OK if we get 50 points. We got another good point away to Reading on Tuesday. There are 4 games to go and if we beat Luton we're pretty well there!"*





"They'll stay up if they get enough points" prognosticates Bass **Brian Hibbert**, somewhat cryptically. And will they, asks VotV, get enough points, that is?

*"They should do. Trouble is they've been inconsistent this season. They made a bad start, picked up mid-season and now who knows what they'll do. It'll maybe come down to redemption by **Wigan**. If mid-table Wigan get demoted because of their financial troubles, then only two clubs will go down on playing form - that could yet save Huddersfield.*

I didn't renew my season ticket this year anyway; they're not that good to watch that it's worth all the dressing up and going out in the cold."

Second Tenor, **Tom Law** reckons Town will do it too - and so does **Betsy**.

(Betsey is probably a more appreciative fan now – she's coming up to three years old.)

He tells VotV: *"Yeah, it's not good but we've got a chance. We're a couple above the drop. We've got Luton in a few days. They are the bottom team so if we beat them we might be in the clear.*

Fingers crossed!"

18		Middlesbrough	42	47
19		Huddersfield	42	47
20		Charlton	42	46
21		Stoke City	42	46
22		Hull City	42	45
23		Barnsley	42	42
24		Luton Town	42	41

10/7/2020



Your VotV Editor, a comer-in from Hull - can't feel as optimistic about his home team.

Day the Germans bombed Meltham



Amazing Escapes as enemy targets village

These pictures flash back to the devastation that faced Meltham 60 years ago (Friday August 25th 1940) when 100 bombs were dropped on and near the village.

(writes Express and Chronicle Reporter TESS COOPER)

Meltham was the first Huddersfield area to be singled out by the German enemy raiders.

Amazingly, there was only one casualty, a pony which was caught by flying splinters from a bomb that fell in a field.

Seven of the bombs actually straddled a large group of houses in Red Lane and windows were broken and slates dislodged but that was the only damage.

Broke Mains

The bombs could not have been dropped any nearer to the houses without falling on them - and yet the strong stone walls withstood the blasts.

Two other bombs fell in Slaithwaite Road (top left) and broke the water mains.



One of the bombs fell practically underneath a heavy stone chimney of an outhouse. This chimney had been leaning slightly for more than 50 years but even a German bomb did not succeed in knocking it further out of shape.

About 50 yards away from this crater, a bigger one was made near another group of houses (as can be seen from the lower picture).

Roof Smashed

Again no substantial damage was done to the stone houses. An outbuilding had its glass roof smashed but a small window above was unbroken.

The bombing left Meltham with several big craters. Many people complained of shock but there were no physical injuries.

One theory at the time was that the Germans were targeting **David Brown** tractor factory which was set up in Meltham in 1936.



This story – which links to several recent VotV features about neighbouring village, **Meltham**, comes from the now defunct local paper.

It serves to confirm what veteran Baritone, John Radcliffe, told VotV a couple of weeks ago. John said, they tried to bomb David Browns early on in the War but did no more than hit a horse and create a bit of damage around Red lane. The tractor factory was unaffected.



Get 'in the mood' with the victory sisters



A few 'Covid Bombs' won't put off the Victory Sisters either, any more than a few of Hitler's explosive ones dampened the Meltham Villagers' spirits.

Glen Miller's classic wartime song, '**In the Mood**' has got the Victory Sisters out of bed and raring to go.

Like the Colne Valley men, their performances have been cancelled but they are keeping their peckers up

Colne Valley's Simon Armitage on Swellands and Black Moss

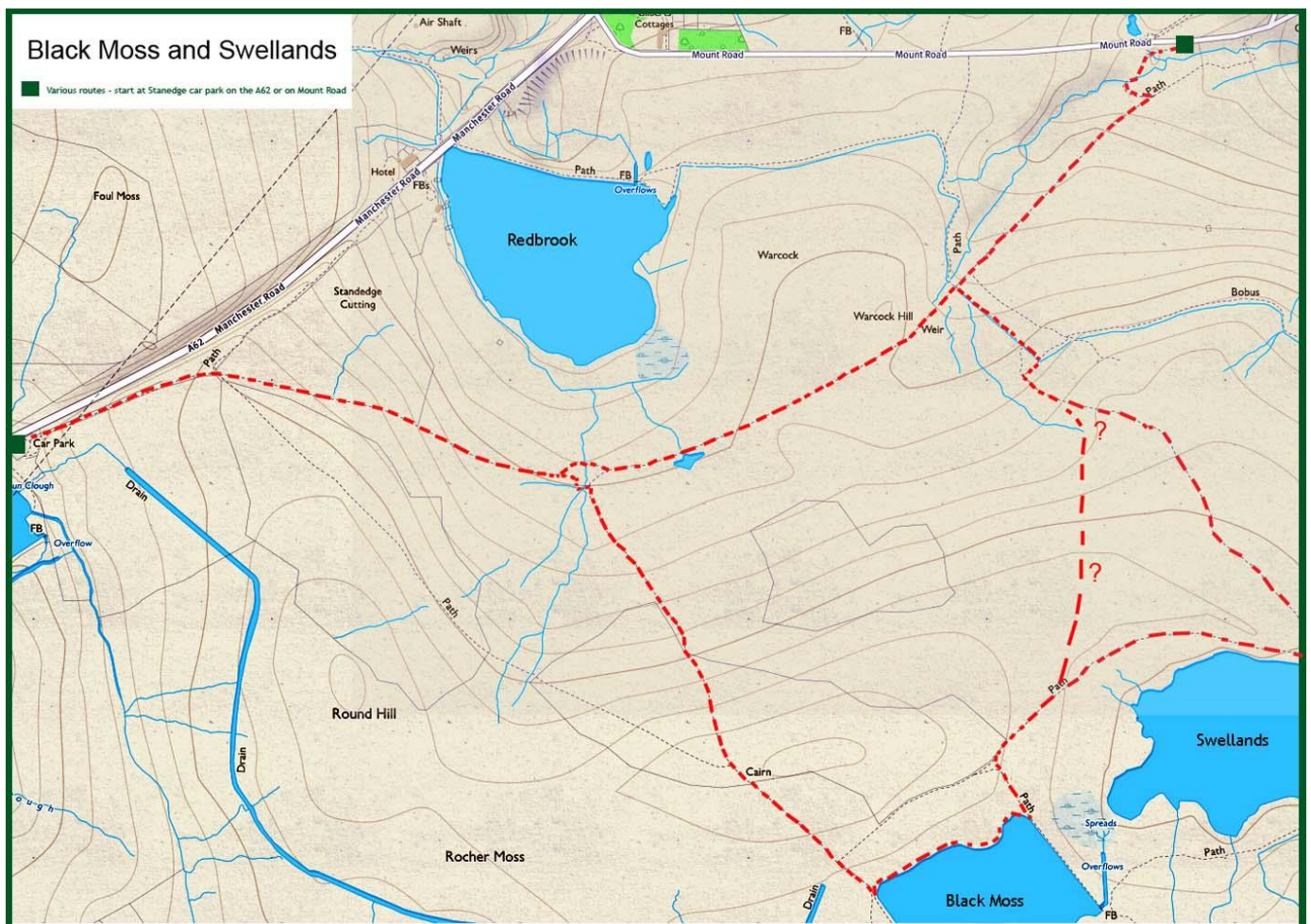
Simon Armitage, Marsden lad and current **Poet Laureate**, spent some of his lockdown time - time when he might have been doing poetry recitals - climbing up a hill to recite his Marsden Poetry to his camera phone instead.



In this poem, he recalls his youth playing at the Swellands and Black Moss reservoirs, high above Mount Road in Marsden.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kep2VWqfnQ&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR0Xua8d_ECGcf5JgPsS8OMJOHuK96vz_uYM9KjnIXXa56NaF-dDo-9JHEg

Whatever you think about his poem, it's a fabulous walk; not too arduous but high and secluded.



Pirate spotted near Dunstanborough

It seems that pirates might once again be raiding on the Northumbrian Coast.



The Irish blessing?



"It seems the wind was at his back and the road rose up to meet him..."

thanks to Private Eye



At times like these ...



It's been become increasingly difficult in the last few years to find reasons to be really proud of Britain. But if there is one thing that reflects the better part of our society, it is the National Health Service.

Recently we've been celebrating 72 years since it began just after the War and noticing afresh the enormous contribution made by our care workers, ambulance staff, paramedics, doctors, nurses and the myriad others that keep this fine service ticking over despite the pressures on its organisation and resourcing. And now they have to cope, too, with all the extra pressures heaped on by this damn virus. Astonishingly most of them remain upbeat and ready to go again.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6xNWs7vjPc>

These are two of the Ambulance Staff, who with a lot of their colleagues from the North West, have recorded the song, 'At Times Like These'.

Maybe it was to keep up their own morale.

Maybe but... well it cheered up your Editor a bit too.

Enjoy!



The Editors pick: 'Mummification' by The Egyptians



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rmgD2EqCbaA>

Send me a picture, tell me your news....

At this time of social isolation, VotV readers, whether singers or audience-members, can no longer meet each other.

But we can keep in touch.



Let the VotV Editor know if something happens to you, that might be of interest and has some - connection - however tenuous - to the Choir. Doesn't matter if you are not very confident writing, I'll help you put into publishable shape.

Voice of the Valley Editor: John C Clark

Ring Choir Secretary, Jenny, on 01484 645192 to join us or join our Readers' List or for other queries



And see our website to get the full story

colnevalleymvc.org.uk