

THE SAM HILL STORY – FORTUNES, FEUDS AND SCANDALS AUDIO E-TRAIL SCRIPT

Stop 1: “Nice of you to come”

Good day to you! I am Sam Hill, and I welcome thee to this fine village of Ripponden. It warms my heart to think that folk are still interested in me – old Sam Hill – after all these years. In my day, the name of Sam Hill of Soyland was known across Europe and as far away as Russia when it came to making good woollen cloth. There was no one could touch me around these parts for kersey, bay and shalloons and I’ll not deny I made a bob or two out of it.

But what’s that you say – “what’s kersey and bay”? Well, it’s not the type of cloth you’d make your fancy suits out of, no, but it would make you a stout overcoat or a soldier’s uniform. As for shalloons, well that was much finer stuff, better suited to ladies’ dresses.

My roots were humble, my father James was a clothier too, and it wasn’t ‘til I set up on my own at Mecking Place that I began to make a penny or two. Like any true Yorkshire man, I spent it wisely. I bought property and land, built mills and houses and paid my workers not a penny more than the going rate. There was many a family in this valley that owed their living and the roof over their heads to Sam Hill.

It would be nice to say that my fortune passed on to my children but you can see from the names on this tomb that five of them went before me (HE SIGHS) – sad times indeed for me and my poor wife Elizabeth. Richard, my eldest, survived but he was not the son I wished for. I went out of my way to make sure he didn’t get his hands on my money! – but more of that later. Those who say that wealth brings happiness should think again.

Anyway, enough! It’s about time you were on your way. I hope you enjoy your walk down the lanes I used to tread. Imagine me in my fine house, and my weavers toiling at their looms. You’ll find things changed from my day, but when we meet again at your journey’s end I hope you’ve got a bit of respect for old Sam Hill!

Stop 2: Sam’s ‘empire’ – the extent of his land & properties

You’ve already walked across land and past buildings once owned by Sam Hill and you’ll be doing so for most of the rest of our journey. Most of the actual buildings have now gone – demolished or replaced by later ones. You’re now in Royd Lane and on the edge of the Brig Royd estate, bought by Sam in the 1750s and one of his most valuable properties. Altogether, Sam owned great tracts of the Ryburn valley, including 3 large estates of land and over 80 other individual properties such as cottages, farms and mills – all these added to his empire as a multi-millionaire. We know this because, in 1759 – the year he died aged 82, he himself wrote a list of them all, with their precise cash values at that time.

Sam Hill:…two cottages at Flat Head £50, Ripponden Mill Farm £400, Ripponden Mill House, barn, meadow & paddock £150, Spout & Stubbins Ripponden £250, rent out of Swan Inn Halifax £5, rent out of Parson’s Dam Ripponden £4, Brigroyd and Brownhills £1,805, Maud Lane End cottage £50,...

Names live on longer than buildings, hence the new Brig Royd Surgery, just visible through the trees next to Lower Brig Royd and the modern Maude House behind you. Sam made his millions from the textile trade, but not through the huge mills of Victorian times – most of his workers produced the cloth in their homes – carding the wool, spinning it, and then weaving it on handlooms set up (usually) in their top rooms where they had rows of mullioned windows to let in as much natural light as possible – to save on expensive candles. They worked for Sam on piecework rates. He paid them per yard they produced, and, being a tough businessman, he would pay them at the lowest rates possible, and then only if the cloth they’d produced was of the highest quality.



Stop 3: A weaver's cottage – an insight into the life of a piece worker

The cottages on your left are called Birks. There has been a succession of cottages here since Elizabethan times and the ones in Sam's time belonged to him. Tenant workers lived here and were employed by Sam to take raw wool and turn it into woven cloth. Hundreds of local people, and their families, would be working at home, on piece rates, for Sam Hill.

Sam's business was too large to use only local suppliers so he bought wool in the London markets, had it shipped to Hull, and brought to his mills in Soyland by packhorse trails and over bridges like the one you crossed at the start of our walk. It was then given out to workers like the tenants here at Birks. Between the bale of raw wool and the finished piece of cloth was a long sequence of processes. Some workers specialised in preparing the yarn by untangling and straightening the fibres, and then spinning it. Others wove this yarn on their handlooms, sending the cloth to Sam's Kebroyd Mill for the final stages of dyeing, fulling (which thickened the cloth by beating it in water) and cropping with shears to improve the finish of the cloth.

At your next stop you'll find out what happened to the cloth which started life here. But to hear what conditions were like for cottage piece-workers, press the next level.

LEVEL TWO:

The writer Phyllis Bentley, herself the daughter of a Halifax mill-owner, wrote several novels about the Yorkshire woollen industry. 'Manhold' is the fictionalised story of Sam Hill and his family, and is a jolly good read! It's out of print now, but you can order a copy through your library, or pick one up second-hand. Here's Phyllis herself to tell you about it:

Daniel Defoe, the author of 'Robinson Crusoe' and a renowned travel writer, travelled in this area in the 1720s and in my book I imagine Mr Defoe visiting the cottage of one of Sam's workers. On the other side of the stream was a piece of pastureland with a low stone wall around it and a 2-storied cottage.

Daniel Defoe: Is anybody about the place, think you? What is that clacking sound?

Local man: It's the shuttle, sir. That long row of upper windows looks like a loom chamber to me. Someone is weaving.

Daniel Defoe: The clack of the shuttle ceased and presently the door was pulled back and the man of the house stood before us. He had rough dirty clothes and dull tangled hair, but was not unpersonable, being well-shaped though slight and a little bowed from the loom: large clear blue eyes shone intelligently in his handsome face.

Phyllis Bentley (READING THE NOVEL): Inside the cottage it was dark and close and pervaded with a choking odour disagreeably compounded of the acid smells of dirt, sweat and wool. Other objects emerged from the darkness – the flagged floor, the fire, the kettle, the creel above the hearth on which hung oatcake, the wooden table, the spinning wheel in the corner.

Daniel Defoe: A child picked up the work which our knocking had interrupted. She was carding wool ready for her mother to spin; she moved two boards round and round and up and down with her swollen red hands, patiently, and the wool between the short wire spikes became slowly a soft white sheet.

Such were the harsh living and working conditions in cottages like these, many of which are now converted to desirable modern homes in the beautiful Ryburn valley.

Stop 4: From Soyland to St Petersburg – how Sam supplied an international market

From here, almost all the land you can see below, on this side of the River Ryburn, belonged to Sam Hill. And behind you, about half a mile away, was his base in Soyland. While you enjoy the view, let's think about the sheer scale of his international business. By 1747, his turnover was equivalent to £4.5 million today. His cloth went, via



Hull, to towns in northern Europe like Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht, Antwerp and Bremen. Also to Spain, Portugal, Italy and even to St Petersburg, and on from there to Iran!

So, how on earth did Sam become such a successful and wealthy entrepreneur? Copies have survived of some of his correspondence with customers and they give us real clues as to his character and hard-headed business methods! Here is Sam dictating to his clerk a letter to a merchant in Europe telling him to sell one of Sam's new top-quality brands very cheaply at first, and then put the price up later.

Sam Hill: Now then, lad. Mr Van Broyes is complaining he cannot sell my very best shalloon cloth. Put this in my letter: "I am studying to out-do all England with these shalloons but must earnestly beg of you to let them go for a small profit, till they be known, and then hope that they will become known such as will render you more."

And here he is keeping a Dutch customer happy by his explanation (or excuse?) for a late delivery.

Sam Hill: "I here enclose you Invoice of one bale of Kerseys which I would have sent sooner if possible I could, but we have had so much rain and snow upon these hills that we could scarce get anything dry."

To hear another couple of examples of Sam's tough attitudes, press for the next level. And then it's time to move on to Kebroyd which has many connections with Sam and his family.

LEVEL TWO:

In this letter, Sam is protecting his brand image – a familiar modern concept – by dictating instructions to a merchant to remove the Sam Hill label on the cloth before selling it at a rock-bottom price.

Sam Hill: Now this one's for William Handley or the fool will lose me my reputation. "As to long Bays, I am sorry to see that you cannot sell. Sold they must be and, if it must be to loss, pray take out the Sam Hill name in the head end and let them go as well as you can and that's all I shall say at present."

But Sam had no hesitation in copying other people's brands.

Sam Hill: Now I hear that Van Broyes seems to admire Broadcloth from Norfolk instead of mine! Well, if that's what he requires, we will make our own Broadcloth look just the same as theirs. Write this: "If the Broads must be sold in imitation of those made in other parts of England. then I think you should have the bales made as like them as possible which if you describe to me I shall imitate as near as I can."

Stop 5: The family feud – the conflict between father and son

Good-day to you – I am Richard Hill – only surviving son of the famous Sam Hill. My father built this gradely place for me. Kebroyd Hall. Early in the 1740s, he'd taken over Kebroyd Mills – a spit away from the Hall – and he made a right big to-do over building me this grand house nearby. It was his way of tying me in, right tight, to his business!

Betty and I wedded, and moved in, in 1745. Me and her were only wed for 2 year – she was just 19 when she died. But we had a lovely daughter – we called her Betty as well. And I was set up in partnership with my father. He had it all planned out for me – I was the eldest of his six children. So he expected me to learn every aspect of his textile empire – to get ready to take it all over – "in due course". But by, he was a right hard taskmaster – renowned all over as a stubborn, difficult man. His friends, and those he did business with, reckoned he was fair – seemed to respect him. To me, he was hard-headed, blunt and spared no-one – mind, that included himself, I'll give him that. I was always a right disappointment to him. He'd spent £4,000 – aye, £4,000! – on building Kebroyd Hall for me. And by, didn't he let me know it! "I've done right by you – now you've to prove to me you can be a son I can be proud of!"

Our partnership lasted about 6 years, that was all. Well, he would never let up! – on at me for not being tough enough. And at me for taking up with Ann Wyld. She was daughter to Edward Wyld who worked as a cloth



dresser for my father. And by, she was bonny! I couldn't keep away! She was working as a servant at my father's house – Making Place – just a spit from Kebroyd Hall as you'll see from your walk. My father came from nowhere, but all of a sudden Ann was “of lowly stock”, and “an unsuitable match for the son of an upstanding member of the community” – pompous old gimmer! She was like ripe fruit, a smile that could stop rain – my heart...aye, and my loins! – were full to bursting with her. So me and father warred – he wouldn't have it that I wanted to marry her; and I wouldn't have it that he was such an interfering old snob! Aye, we split.

So, I set up in business on my own – he didn't like that! And I drew up a proper agreement for Ann to work as a pattern setter and be my housekeeper. I paid her 100 guineas a year – the best money I ever spent! And we lived – and loved – together at Kebroyd Hall. But the old bugger had the last laugh I grant you. I could never match my father's ruthlessness at business – so before long I was bankrupt. And the old fella kept me waiting for long enough for my inheritance! Lived till he were 82 – 82! Then, when he finally popped his clogs – 22nd October 1759 it was – I found he'd disinherited me! Settled it all on Betty – my daughter – tied to her and her alone – with trustees and all that. Not a brass farthing left to me! He'd left me destitute! So, I grabbed up me quill and wrote straight forth to the trustees: “The situation my father has left me in is too deplorable to relate and too shocking for an honest man to believe! Surely sirs, such a will was never formed or invented but by the devil?”

Stop 6: Tim Bobbin – mill clerk and poet

The stone steps you've just walked down have been worn away by the clogs of thousands of millworkers, who, over the centuries, have clogged it down to the mills to work. There was a cloth mill on this site as early as 1661. And this is the spot – when Sam took over Kebroyd Mills in the 1740s – that you've just heard about from Sam's son Richard. It was here that Sam extended the mill, built warehouses and a counting house, before building Kebroyd Hall.

In Sam's day, none of the machines for spinning or weaving on an industrial scale had been invented – Arkwright's 'Spinning Jenny' wasn't invented till 1770, and Cartwright's power loom not until 1780, so Sam's mill would have been used for fulling, dyeing and finishing the cloth that was supplied to him by his hundreds of home-based piece-workers. Everyone in the home would be involved in producing the cloth – children for carding, women for spinning, men for weaving.

Over the next century, the mills were extended further as these new spinning machines and power-looms became available, and production moved from homes to these modern 'manufactories' employing hundreds of workers – a lot of them young children. But the whole of Kebroyd Mills was destroyed in a fire in 2006 and now, of Sam's main mill, not a stone remains. As you can see, the site is now being redeveloped for housing.

Richard's head clerk at Kebroyd Mills was John Collier, better known in these parts as Tim Bobbin – a cartoonist and poet. He didn't enjoy his time as mill clerk much – as he now tells us.

Tim Bobbin: How did I meet a mill-owner? Well, Mr Hill's son Richard had chortled over some of my writings, laughed at my cartoons, and we became good friends. He offered me the job of Head Clerk in his counting house at Kebroyd Mills – a good salary, and a 3-year contract. So I gave up schoolmastering and came to work here. I tell thee, it was fun and games when Richard's father came round! – checking up on Rich – making sure he was screwing the last farthing from the workings of the mill! But Rich's heart wunt in it – he was forever dashing off to Making Place to his fancy woman Ann. T'old man would come in to check on Rich, and within a minute Sam Hill would be red as holly berries, and bellowing fit to burst! Rich didn't have the handling of the sales or the administration right – why, you've got more sense in your little toe than Rich had! After near on a twelve-month, I was finding the work hum-drum so I returned home to be schoolmaster again – and my career as a poet prospered!

To find out more about Tim as a cartoonist and poet, press the next level.



LEVEL TWO:

Tim Bobbin was a cartoonist and poet, and was also famous for his prose and engravings. He was known as 'The Lancashire Hogarth' – after the famous London cartoonist and engraver William Hogarth who produced the infamous series of engravings called 'The Rake's Progress'. Tim Bobbin was also interested in local accents, and often wrote in the broad Lancashire dialect although, as a schoolmaster, he definitely wouldn't have spoken in such a strong accent.

Tim Bobbin: Why, I'll give thee a short recital from one of my most famous works. It's called: 'The Lancashire Dialect as spoken by Thomas and Mary'. Ar't ready?

Tummus: Odds mee, Meary! Whoon the dickens wou'd o thowt o'leeting o thee here so soyne this morning? Where has to bin? Theaw'rt aw on a swat, I think; for theaw looks primely.

Meary: Beleemy, Tummus, I welly lost my wynt: for I've had sitch a traunce this morning os eh neer had a'meh life: For I went to Jone's o'Harry's o'Lung Jone's, for't borrow their thible to stur th' furmetry weh, un his wife had lent it to Bet o'my Gronny's: So I skeaw'r't eend wey, un when eh coom theer, hoo'd lent it to Kester o'Dick's, un the dule steawnd him for a brindl't carl, he'd mede it int' shoon pegs! Neaw wou'd not sitch o moonshine traunce potter ony body's plucks?

Tim Bobbin isn't around anymore to translate for us – so make of that what you will!!

Tim was clearly a man who never missed an opportunity to have his say, because, just 20 minutes before he died, he wrote his own epitaph. This is carved on his gravestone in Rochdale, Lancashire: 'Jack of all trades...left to lie i'th dark'

Stop 7: Waterpower

Although its history of fire and dereliction means there's not much left to remind us of the Kebroyd Mills of Sam's day, what does remain is the water system. This has been extended since Sam's day – by the millowners who took over his mill. This water system was used to power all the mills which stood on the site – a significant engineering feat in its own right! The path follows the course of Lumb Clough stream and, if you keep looking down to your right, you'll see traces of the four mill dams linked by water channels called goits used to take the water down to the mill.

As you near the end of the path, you come to the weir. Weirs were used to slow down the river, so the valuable water didn't rush away too quickly downstream (to power someone else's mill!). The weir makes the water pool behind it, this makes it easier to direct the flow from the pool through a sluice gate. And from here it flowed to the mill dams and down to the mill through a number of goits.

The waterwheel would have been either inside or outside the mill buildings and this drove the machinery through a system of belts and pulleys. Sections of the stonework built to create the weir and dams can still be seen if you walk a short way along the lower path which leads from the weir but take care as this is not on a right of way and can be slippery.

The earliest goits in the Lumb Clough system are simple stone-lined channels topped off with paving slabs, but those added in later years were made of clay piping. By storing the water in the dams, the mill was guaranteed a supply to the waterwheel all year round, even in dry weather when the stream was at its lowest. Regulating the water flow had a knock-on effect downstream, and court records show that disputes often arose over stream diversions in the area. These even led to armed feuds! To find out more about a local feud press for the next level.



LEVEL TWO:

In 1599, at Luddenden Foot (which is about 5 miles from here), there were two fulling mills that stood on opposite banks of the brook. Court records show that the millowner at one of these mills, Michael Foxcroft, accused Henry Farrer (of the other mill) of industrial sabotage. Here's Mr Foxcroft laying out his charge:

Michael Foxcroft: "Henry Farrer and his many friends did come with swords, daggers, rapiers, staves, pitchforks, gavelocks, picks and diverse other weapons and cast down my dam and filled up my goit with stones! Two of my men were killed in the fighting therein, and, ever since, myself, friends and workers in my mill have had to mount an armed vigil to guard our water!"

If you'd like to see what a waterwheel inside a mill looks like, visit Innovations café on St George's Square in Hebden Bridge where there is a large old wheel. They still use water power for their café and shop – but now they get this from the river using a modern Archimedes screw which you can see working next to their café terrace.

Stop 8: Sam Hill tries to turn back time!

Sam Hill was always looking for ways of screwing another penny from his investments. So, when he took over Soyland corn mill in the 1750s, he tried to revert to Norman feudal law, and prosecute those who were not bringing their corn to his miller! Soyland Mill had been the manorial corn mill for the township of Soyland. Manorial mills were set up by the Norman invaders – and they dictated that the villagers could only grind their corn at the Lord of the Manors' mill. However, in 1621 – a mere 555 years after the Norman invasion! – those who lived more than two miles away from the mill were at last granted the right to grind their own corn. But Sam had other ideas, and he tried to prosecute locals who didn't bring their corn to his mill to grind!

The residents of Soyland eventually took things into their own hands, and a meeting took place in a local tavern:

Voice one: Now then fellow Soylanders, we're here tonight to talk about our so called 'lord of the manor' robbing us of our rights. Sam Hill wants to stop us grinding our own corn but I say that's against the law!

Hear him! Hear him!

He's taking us to court for something we've been doing rightfully for over 100 years, just so he can add to the piles of cash in his counting house. I'm not lugging my corn all the way to Soyland Mills to line his pockets. It's time to make a stand against 'Squire Hill' and show him he can't bully us!

I don't like to cross him – there's more than a few here who owe their living to Mr Hill.

Aye! He owns my house – what if he throws us out?

Aye. And I don't have the money to pay for expensive lawyers.

But Jed, you've already been fined for milling at home, how long will it be before we've all been before the magistrate? There's strength in numbers, friends. He can't sack us all. If we fight this together, we can share the costs.

And that's just what they did – but not until Sam died in 1759 when they finally went to court to win the right to mill their corn at home. The fact they waited til Sam was dead is a real reflection of Sam's influence and hold over the community! Later, as with lots of corn mills, Soyland Mill became a dual-purpose mill – milling flour and also being used as a fulling mill powered by two water wheels.

To find out about the fulling process, press the next level.

LEVEL TWO:

Fulling was the process of beating the wet cloth with huge wooden mallets. These were called stocks, and were driven by water power. This beating made the cloth thicker by matting or felting the fibres together. It also cleaned



out oils and dirt from the cloth. Firstly the stocks beat urine into the cloth, then fuller's earth (a type of clay) was added, then hot soapy water, and then the cloth was thoroughly rinsed in clean water.

After the cloth had been fullled, it would be hung out to dry on tenter-frames set up where it could get the best sunshine to help bleach the cloth. These wooden frames were fitted with tenterhooks to stretch the cloth between to make sure it didn't shrink. This is where the term "being on tenterhooks" comes from.

Stop 9: The village that nearly wasn't

Sam Hill's involvement with the village of Mill Bank was just one stage in the textile history of this village which, in many ways, represents the industry in a nutshell. For centuries, pack horse trains moving between Yorkshire and Lancashire used Mill Bank as a resting place, watering their horses down below at the bridge over Lumb Clough. Going back even further, it probably echoed to the sound of marching feet as Roman soldiers passed through the hamlet on the military road from Manchester to Ilkley.

As the meeting point for several streams, it was a natural spot for the development of the water-powered mills carrying out the fulling process, and, by the 1500s, Mill Bank families were weaving cloth in their homes. Sam Hill developed this cottage industry and bought up a great deal of property here. If he was to walk through the village today he would find several of his houses still standing. Further along the road from where you are sitting, the building on the right was once the Anchor Inn – try and spot a real anchor set up opposite to mark the spot. Before the anchor, down on your right, is Rawson Farm and several cottages, and after the anchor is Sawterhouse Farm – all of these were owned by Sam.

Mill Bank grew steadily throughout the 17 and 1800s, maintaining its textile roots. At one point there were nine mills operating in the area, all powered by the Lumb Clough water system which we looked at earlier. So, instead of standing in a sleepy rural village, back then you would be surrounded by noise, wagons coming and going, workers hurrying about – a hive of industrial activity!

Sam's successors at Kebroyd Mill, the Hadwen family, supported the development of the village, building the school and a church at nearby Cottonstones. By the early 1900s, Mill Bank was a thriving community with several shops and even a silver band. But, as the village moved further into the 1900s, a cloud was waiting on the horizon which would put its textile history, and the village's future, at risk.

In 1967, the Sowerby Bridge Urban District Council put forward a plan to demolish what they considered 'sub-standard housing' in the village – this caused an outburst of protest. The community joined together to fight the proposal, aided by another notable entrepreneur and local resident, Sir Ernest Hall, the developer of Dean Clough Mill in Halifax, and his wife. The 'Save Our Village Campaign' finally won and the council agreed to designate Mill Bank as a general improvement area. Homes were modernised and Mill Bank and Cottonstones were made a Conservation Area in 1976.

It's now time to descend back down into lower Mill Bank and, as you walk, look out for more of Sam's properties – The George, sitting below the level of the road, consisting of several cottages; Knowlesley Farm, the site of a row of his cottages; and beyond the bridge, Homestead Cottage.

Stop 10: Making Place – hub of Sam's empire, and a world-famous Academy

You are now looking at the location of what was Sam Hill's home, Making Place. The original Making Place or Mecking Place as it was known locally, dated back to 1624 and probably stood a short distance away from the building you see now.

When Sam moved to Making Place Farm in 1706, he was 29 and relatively poor. He began manufacturing woollen cloths, following in the footsteps of his father, who was also a clothier.



By the age of 35, only 6 years after moving to Making Place, he spent £8,000 on re-building on a very grand scale! He made old farm buildings into workshops and built extensive warehouses and a grand mansion for him and his family. The site was a hive of industry, and the mainstay of employment for the local community.

Making Place also housed Ann Wyld, who was employed by Sam as a servant girl, and, as you heard in track 5, it wasn't long before Richard became infatuated with Ann – and this led to the feud with his father, and Richard subsequently being disinherited.

Sam was a well-connected man, highly respected in the community. Imagine the high-calibre businessmen and local dignitaries that he entertained in his grand mansion. It is little wonder that he frowned on his son's relationship with servant-girl Ann!

Richard's refusal to end his relationship with Ann was a constant worry to Sam, and in time it affected his health. Eventually, at the end of his tether, and in a fever on his sick bed, he called for his lawyers and altered his will so Richard was disinherited and clauses were inserted to ensure that, should Ann and Richard marry, Ann would get nothing nor would any offspring of the marriage.

A few days later, in a moment of clarity and feeling better, Sam realised what he had done. He was distraught and in a frenzy to re-instate Richard as heir, but alas, the stress had taken its toll, and Sam died before being able to make amends. Sam Hill died in 1759, but Making Place went on to become famous again almost a century after his death. To find out about its new lease of life, press the next level.

LEVEL TWO:

It became Making Place Academy, one of the country's most progressive commercial colleges, housing students from all over the world. William Dove and his wife opened their school for boys in 1832, and it became known as William Dove's Commercial College. William greatly altered and extended Making Place, so there's little left of the grand mansion Sam built.

The school opened with just 12 pupils, but it prospered because it pioneered the use of Pitman Shorthand – a very fast way of accurately writing down dictation. By 1847 the number of pupils had increased to 70 and continued increasing, reaching 200. The success of the school even attracted a pupil who was to become British Prime Minister – Herbert Asquith, who was born in Morley. When he became Prime Minister in 1908, Asquith introduced old age pensions. This paid "those over 70 whose annual means do not exceed £31, five shillings a week". That's 25p in today's money.

Twenty masters were employed at the school, and they taught vocational subjects useful for industries of the time, which other establishments did not, and therefore the school was popular. The school had an interesting regime: The boys were drilled in the school grounds at 6am each day. Imagine the sounds of barked orders from the teachers, and the huffing and puffing of 200 boys on a cold dark morning! The school was also unusual because it had an early form of Pupil Council: for any boy misbehaving, a Jury consisting of pupils was elected, and the Jury decided what punishment a pupil would receive.

A list of larder provisions makes fascinating reading: 2 rolls of beef, 1 whole pig, 8 flitches of bacon, 89 hams, 27 tongues, 18 pig chaps. They obviously didn't know about cholesterol in those days!

William Dove died on the 22nd of October in 1865 aged 58, and a memorial window was erected in St Bartholomew's Church Ripponden by his pupils and engraved "To the Glory of God and in Memory of William Dove for 27 years principal of Making Place Commercial College." You can still see the window today – have a look when you return to the church at the end of the trail.

The school was taken over, but never achieved the same success without the drive and enthusiasm of William, and eventually the college was closed in 1880. Making Place fell into ruin for a number of years and by 1903 was described as "in a state of utter ruin, helped by much depredation and wanton destruction." Later, it changed back



to use as a farm, and eventually was renovated and converted into the homes you see today. The structure left standing is all that's left of William's academy.

It's interesting that this historical site has been home to two great men in diverse occupations, who both achieved wide acclaim and respect for their achievements.

Stop 11: Quality counts – the range of cloths that made Sam a millionaire

You've now almost returned to Sam's last resting place. On your right is Ripponden Mill. There have been mills here for over 500 years although the present buildings (and the bridge behind us, carrying the 1772 turnpike road) are later than Sam's time. Sam had a fulling mill here, where the finishing processes would be completed before his cloth went out to his customers.

So far we have seen evidence of the scale of his empire and his wealth, but what about the actual product on which all that was based – the cloth itself? What did it look like? What did it feel like? Why did his customers choose to buy from Sam Hill rather than his competitors?

In Phyllis Bentley's novel 'Manhold' (mentioned in Track 3) there is the following scene in which she imagines Ann Wyld finding Richard Hill working in the parlour at Kebroyd Hall:

Ann Wyld: What is that, Richard?

Richard Hill: It's a pattern book I'm making. My father scoffs at it, but many clothiers have them nowadays.

Ann Wyld: Only a few pages were complete but I saw on each was pasted one of the pattern sheets recently designed by Richard with its corners decorated by a sheep, a loom, a wool bale and a ship. Each contained ten small oblongs of different cloths. I was surprised by the charming colours – blue, scarlet, brown and green – the neatness and good proportion of the samples, the regular margins, the headings with sizes, prices and comments all written with suitable flourishes in Richard's elegant and graceful hand. What is the purpose of the book, Richard?

Richard Hill: To send abroad, or to merchants here – our customers.

Amazingly, one of these pattern books – the equivalent of today's glossy promotional catalogues – has survived, giving us visible proof of the range and quality of Sam Hill's output. It is kept by the Calderdale Archives Service and can be seen, on request. You can phone them on 01422 392 636.

The pattern book has 60 pages and is over two inches thick with 100s of samples of his cloth in brilliant colours. All have precise details of measurements and prices in Sam's typically efficient and meticulous manner, but it is also stylish and decorative and the copy the Archives Service has was sent by Richard Hill in 1770 "To my much esteemed friend Mr. Francis Bequerel of Boulogne Sur Mer, Merchant". Sam Hill was not only a businessman, but a notable figure in the local community as you'll hear as you now return to the churchyard where your walk began.

Stop 12: The flood of 1722

The church you see now was built in 1868. It is the fourth on this site. The first 'chapel of ease' was founded here during the Wars of the Roses in the 1400s and the next two would have seen Sam among the congregation. On the 18th of May in 1722, the second church was virtually swept away when the River Ryburn flooded after a severe storm. Fifteen people drowned, eight from the same family, and residents had to sit on their house roofs to escape the water. Graves in the churchyard were dislodged and one coffin was found in a tree!

As a key figure in the community, Sam was heavily involved in the collection and distribution of the money raised to help the victims of the flood, and in the rebuilding of the church which was largely paid for by subscription. This is like the now popular crowd-funding of projects via the internet. Everyone in the community was asked if they could sign up to help financially and you put down your name and the sum of money you pledged. There was also a national appeal (through the nation's churches) for donations to rebuilt Saint Bartholomew's. This raised £541

Pennine Horizons e-Trails

www.pennineheritage.org.uk



and 4 pennies. By pooling lots of very small amounts of money from lots of people, large public projects could be funded. Rich people like Sam would, of course, be expected to put in much larger sums. In a letter dated 1737 – that’s 15 years after the flood – Sam refers to the flood victims, and, as usual, shows he is watching every penny!

Sam Hill: “The Trustees ordered at their several meetings that the sum of £728 11shillings be paid to the poor sufferers ... the remainder they ordered to go towards removing and rebuilding the chapel at Ripponden, which you and the other gentlemen certified would amount to £800 and upwards, but the same has (and will before it is finished) I dare say, cost upwards of £1,500 more than the sum allowed by the trustees and yet no charge upon the poor inhabitants.”

A few years later in 1751, Sam was also responsible for the planting of yew trees around the church, a job that was supervised by Tim Bobbin – his son’s clerk at Kebroyd Mill – who you met in Track 6. On October the 22nd in 1759, Sam’s funeral procession made its way from Making Place down the steep hill for his final service and burial at Saint Bartholomew’s.

Sam’s final resting place gives little indication that he was so incredibly important to the area. However, his obituary in the Halifax Union Journal of the time read: ‘On Sunday last died Samuel Hill of Soyland, aged 82. By his assiduity and diligence in the manufactory of white kerseys he had reputedly acquired a very handsome fortune and some years ago he was esteemed one of the greatest manufacturers in the kingdom.’

Sam Hill: Not a bad epitaph, eh? – for a lad who came from nowt and ended up a multi-millionaire. Well then, it’s time for you to get off home. You’ve come to the end of the walk and of my story, a sorry tale in some respects I’m sure you’ll agree but I did what I thought was right. Make of it what you will, but remember this of old Sam Hill: I set this valley on the map, put a roof over many a family’s head and money in their pockets thanks to my fine cloths and my shrewd head for business. My reputation stands to this day, even though my mills and houses are long gone – and I hope you’ll spare me a thought next time you pass this way. It’s been nice talking to thee. Good day.