

# **John Ousey 1799 -1875**

Going all the way back to 2007 just after the demolition was underway of Red Hall Chapel on Audenshaw Road, Audenshaw; I received a telephone call from the demolition crew Manager to attend the site as soon as possible. As in his own words "it was breaking his heart to put wonderful pieces of local social history in the skip". I alerted George Walker (one of our founder members of our group) and together we went to the site to meet the caller. We soon found ourselves in an attire of high vis jacket and hard hat, we were guided inside to what was remaining of the shell of the Chapel and had to carefully negotiate across the broken floor onto deck boards as the original joists were all that remained of the base of the staunch structure of what once was such a powerful landmark in our area.

Our tour guide led us to the "John Ousey" marble which was still in situ on the stone wall far into the building high up on the left hand side where this monument had been installed in remembrance of this great man and his wife Jane. He offered the piece to us with a promise of getting a couple of lads from his crew who would rescue it on our behalf to be taken away into our safe keeping, the next question was addressed to George "have you got a car with you?". After George's positive response he urged him to bring it round the front, he then ordered a couple of his employees up onto some ladders and scaffolding to retrieve the marble and surround with as much delicacy as their crow bars would permit. To watch this rescue at this point was breath taking as it could have shattered or disintegrated before our eager eyes in the flick of a bar of metal, there was a few hairy moments as the "Boss" barked a few choice words (although he apologised swiftly enough afterwards) at the crew members. We were delivered unto the boot of George's conveyance a true example of the finest Italian marble you could ever wished to find (which was now totally non-existent as supplies dried up many years ago). This moment sparked a journey through a period of time which was to span from 2004 when the church joined with Guide Lane Methodists and Bridge Street United Reformed to form Trinity church Audenshaw in the Red Hall building.

So the journey of this piece of local social history began, together with the 1876 date stone and logo from above the doorway which after strenuous efforts we also rescued from the demolition site, which are now installed in the United Utilities stone wall on Audenshaw Road opposite the church site.

Mr and Mrs George Walker became caretakers of the John Ousey marble for many years over which time I did work very hard with due diligence to place the item in the most appropriate place, but alas this was not to be. Until most recently our very own Gem in the crown of Tameside Ryecroft Hall had the accolade of being our very own Civic building in Audenshaw. This seemingly gave us some leverage as we had managed to return the original Grant of Arms for Audenshaw back in the public domain now hanging in the Hall's reception area the previous year.

I am pleased to report the unveiling of the "John Ousey" marble installation at Ryecroft hall Audenshaw took place on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2017. Special thanks go to Sue Mitchell your research was invaluable I couldn't have done this without you. Thanks must also go to Pamela Watkin and all the Management committee volunteers at Ryecroft Hall who have helped us fund this project and make it all possible. Also, the local Councillors for their invaluable input. Plus all our wonderful members, friends family and continued volunteers of our own Audenshaw Local History Society.

**John Ousey** was born 28<sup>th</sup> February 1799. Son of John Ousey and Jane of Denton. He was privately baptised and then received into St Lawrence Church, Denton on 24<sup>th</sup> March. His sister was also baptised at the same church in 1802. Her father's occupation was given as hat manufacturer.

John married Jane Ingham (formally Andrew) the widow of Robert Ingham on the 4<sup>th</sup> February 1826 at St Johns Church, Manchester. John's occupation was given as hatter and his place of residence as Hooley Hill. Jane was also from Audenshaw. She had 2 daughters Alice Andrew Ingham born 1818 and Jane Warren Ingham born 1820.

Alice died on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1829. She was the first person buried in the family grave.

In 1833 John converted the hatting warehouse attached to Jessamine Cottage into a post office and living accommodation for Mrs Ann Cumberbeach.

In 1841 the Ousey family are listed on the 1841 census as living at Jessamine Cottage. John's occupation is given as Registrar. The family consists of John, Jane, Ann Singleton Ousey aged 20, Ester Elizabeth Ousey aged 13, Eliza Parker Ousey aged 11 and Jane Warren Ingham aged 20.

Eliza Parker Ousey died on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1845 and was the second person in the family grave. She was followed by her mother Jane who died 26<sup>th</sup> March 1847.

Ester Elizabeth married Jabez Waterhouse in 1849.

John remarried on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1850 at the Mount Taber Chapel, Stockport. He had given his occupation as Gentleman. He married Ann Thornhill (formally Barker) the widow of Jonathan Thornhill of Bramhall. She has three daughters. Ann, Dora and Amy.

In 1851 John and Ann are still at Jessamine Cottage together with his daughter Ann. His occupation is given as Registrar.

Ann Ousey married George Heath Bamford in 1853.

In 1861 John and Ann are listed at Manchester Road. His occupation is given as Registrar.

In 1871 John and Ann are listed at Jessamine Cottage. Listed with them are Dora Bagshaw Broome and William Richard Broome. They are the children of Ann's daughter Amy Broome (formally Thornhill)

John died on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1875. He was the last person interred in the family grave.

This grave was moved into the grounds of the new Red Hall Chapel in July 1877 ahead of the construction of the Audenshaw reservoirs

### **John Ousey`s Obituary as reported in the local press**

The late Mr John Ousey. - Our Obituary today records the death of Mr John Ousey of Audenshaw. Born in the year 1799, he had attained the ripe old age of 74 years and during the whole period had resided in Audenshaw. Distinguished by remarkable energy of character and untiring devotion to the public service, he was well known and much esteemed by his neighbours. An earnest and consistent Liberal in politics, and in religion an Evangelical Nonconformist of the Methodist New connection; he had been associated with political reformers and religious workers in all struggles and triumphs of the past fifty years. In the construction and administrations of local government especially he took a foremost part and was assigned a foremost place devoting his keen faculties to the detection and removal of abuses in the body politic, and guided by rare insight his vigorous mind, always on the alert, was quick to devise and prompt to execute measures of public advantage. Local Government Board of the day of Mr Ousey`s death he had been the leading spirit of the place, and so well was his fairly- earned position recognised by his colleagues that recently a handsome silver testimonial was publicly presented to him in acknowledgement of his lifelong services. On Saturday last, the mortal remains of Mr Ousey were interred in the Red Hall Chapel, where, in Christian fellowship, the happiest hours of his life were spent. This neat village sanctuary was dedicated to worship and honoured by the presence and preaching of *John Wesley*, the founder of Methodism, some 80 years ago. It was John Ousey`s selected place in life, and he desired to rest there. Followed by family and friends to a grave brightened by Christian hope, the mourning procession was preceded by ministers of the denomination, and by all the officials of the neighbourhood, who testified their respect for the deceased by assembling on the occasion; and so, full of years and labours, and with fitting honours, our old friend John Ousey has passed away.

We meet on the last Monday of the month at Ryecroft Hall 7.15pm for membership enquiries please contact 0161 371 0770 or visit our website. Come along and support your local volunteers or become a volunteer yourself. All made welcome to our friendly group established in 2000. Thank you Julie Fisher Chairman.

[www.audenshawlocalhistory.org.uk](http://www.audenshawlocalhistory.org.uk)

