

What do the names mean?

The History behind the Whitcliffe House names

In 1902 West Riding County Council education authority decided that the Spen Valley should have one secondary school at Heckmondwike. That school was built and in time became Heckmondwike Grammar School.

Cleckheaton councillors and employers were furious that Cleckheaton could not have its own secondary school. Due to the number of diverse and highly skilled industries which flourished in Cleckheaton, well-educated young people were vital to its future economic success.

Five men, dubbed the 'Cleckheaton Conspirators', were instrumental in pushing forwards plans for a school. They were John G Mowat, George Whiteley, J Walter Wadsworth, Reginald M Grylls and Will H Clough. These people's families have played significant roles in Cleckheaton's history.

MOWAT - The Mowat family built Cleckheaton Library in 1930.

WADSWORTH - J Walter Wadsworth's father owned Broomfield mill (now West End Drive) and employed up to seven hundred people. He also led the town hall committee that raised funds to build Cleckheaton's town hall. William H Clough was the indefatigable secretary of this committee. J Walter Wadsworth's son Edward became an internationally famous Vorticist (modernist) artist and invented a way to paint battleships to camouflage them.

GRYLLS - Reginald Grylls maintained his interest in local education and a middle school in Hightown was named after him – R M Grylls.

Faced with the refusal of the county council to provide a school, these five men decided that they and Cleckheaton residents would go it alone and provide one themselves. A charitable Trust was formed; the public was invited to subscribe money and raised £3,447, 11 shillings and 6 pence which together with Cleckheaton Council and other benefactors' contributions met the cost of the school, which was £19,621, 17 shillings and 4 pence.

The first stone was cut on March 31, 1909, and the Foundation stone was laid on June 5, 1909.

The new school opened its doors to 95 pupils and 10 staff on September 15, 1910, as Cleckheaton Secondary and Technical School.

The original school was designed by the well-known Leeds architect William Henry Thorp.

Nostalgia

Whitcliffe Mount
School in 1912

