

A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON THE SALT FAMILY

This book builds on recent research by local historians and three members of the Salt family to show that besides Manufacturing, Sir Titus Salt and four of his sons were also involved in Agriculture and Farming.

The author, Alan Cattell has collated and combined that research, with his own, and this text presents a narrative account of the extent to which the Salt family were involved in farming.

In their Forewords to the book Nick Salt the Great-Grandson of Titus Salt Jr and Pat Ainger the Great-Granddaughter of Herbert Salt note:

"I am grateful that Alan has taken the time to gather together and correlate research carried out by a number of people into the farming interests and developments of various members of the Salt family. In doing so he has additionally combined this with his own research to create a fascinating book, which has revealed a pleasantly unexpected aspect of some of the other roots of my family history".

Nick Salt

"Traditionally, researchers have focussed on the manufacturing side of Titus Salt's business. Alan's account places the agricultural side of the Salt's nicely in its historical context, that of the 'golden age' of farming. This account, alongside the traditional narratives, gives a much more rounded account of the life and business of Titus Salt and his sons".

Pat Ainger

In reading the book also use the Chronological Timeline to trace key events in the Salt family approach to Agricultural Improvement in the Victorian Age.

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SIR TITUS SALT AND SONS - A FARMING LEGACY

ALAN CATTELL

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FOREWORD BY NICK SALT

The story of Titus Salt and his sons usually centres around his success in the Bradford worsted industry during the early and mid 19th Century, leading to the building of the historically important worsted mill and model village at Saltaire. That part of the story is very well known and documented, but I now realise that I grew up with a somewhat idealised, sketchy and incomplete version of it. It is only relatively recently that I began to appreciate the deep involvement of my great-great grandfather, and other members of the Salt family in a wider range of industrial, political and philanthropic activities including agriculture and horticulture.

Daniel Salt, the father of Titus, had originally worked as a whitesmith (tinsmith) and a drysalter (dealer in dyes, gums and chemicals etc.), but then in 1813 set up as a tenant farmer near Wakefield, which he eventually gave up in 1822 to become a woolstapler in Bradford. Titus had spent the latter part of his childhood on the farm and in his book *Thrift* (1875 pp210) Samuel Smiles observes of Titus “*his inclination for agricultural pursuits was such, that it was thought he would continue to pursue this vocation*”.

But in 1820 Titus left the farm to be apprenticed as a wool stapler, and then to gain experience of all the other aspects of woollen manufacture. He later joined his father’s business in Bradford, and expanded it into spinning, which became “the foundation of Mr Salt’s fortune”. At length, after twenty years labour as a manufacturer, Mr Salt thought of retiring from business, and again “*betaking himself to his favourite agricultural pursuits*” but instead he carried on working as hard and creatively as ever, and built Saltaire.

It is becoming increasingly clear that Titus never lost his connection with his childhood farming roots, which he later continued to develop at Methley Hall and at his beloved house and country estate of Crow Nest. He also appears to have passed on his agricultural interests to



Titus Salt Jr and Catherine Salt (right).

© *Saltaire Archives.*

Titus Salt Jr

The 1871 Census shows that Titus Salt Jr, Worsted Spinner and Manufacturer lived with his family at the mansion that he had built at Milner Field, Gilstead, but at this stage Milner Field Farm had not been built.

By 1872 the farm had become an entity and Titus Jr was exhibiting and selling shorthorn cattle. In the same months, Edward was altering his farm buildings, possibly converting them to the model farm layout in tandem with his brother Titus Jr. Several months later Titus Jr was elected as a Lifelong Member of the Yorkshire Agricultural Society. John McKie was Farm Manager/ Bailiff from 1872 to 1880.

From 1872 to 1879 Titus Jr participated primarily in local agricultural shows on a small scale. Milner Field Home Farm was put up for let in



Above and left: Over time, some of the outbuildings have been modified, as with all farms, using breezeblock walls etc.



Opposite top: Ferniehurst Farm showing cast iron cow stalls. There is no trade name or date on these stalls.

Opposite bottom: The cow stalls may have originated from the Crystal Palace Exhibition of 1851. Research shows that Cottam and Hallas of London exhibited there as major makers of agricultural fittings. However, there is no name plate or date on any of the stalls.

POSTSCRIPT

Introduction

In the first print of this book the Chronological Timeline showed that in **1857 Titus Salt** had **exported alpacas, sheep and angora goats** to a **sheep farmer in Australia**. Research by Tony and Christina Hart (née Salt) in Australia and subsequently by myself in the UK has revealed further information. Consequently this Postscript expands on what was originally known when the first print was published.

That research identifies that the sheep farmer was actually a **nephew** of Titus Salt named **John Frederick Haigh** who had emigrated to Australia in December 1848. He was the son of George Haigh a Bradford Woolstapler. In 1820 George Haigh had married Amelia Whitlam, the sister of Titus Salt's wife Caroline, consequently John Frederick was a nephew of Titus.

This Postscript is intended to highlight the interactions between Titus and Australia and the background to exporting alpacas to John Frederick Haigh. Using his contacts Titus appears to have found ways round an embargo which the Peruvian Government had placed on the direct export of alpacas to Australia.

But how did he source the alpacas?

Obtaining Alpacas for Crownest

In the year that the mill at Saltaire was opened, Titus purchased a flock of pure bred alpacas from the Earl of Derby. In September 1853 the Leeds Intelligencer reported

*“The alpaca has not hitherto been extensively cultivated in this country. His Royal Highness Prince Albert has a small quantity at Windsor Park and the Earl of Derby has a flock of about sixty at Knowlsley..... A recent notice of the alpaca states that “ the Earl of Derby possessed a few and these are at present in the hands of **Mr Salt** and giving **promise of multiplying**”.*

Eventually, as described on page 18 of this book Titus would in 1856 invite his entire workforce to Crownest where amongst other

3 - COMBINED CHRONOLOGICAL TIMELINE OF SALT FAMILY INTERESTS IN AGRICULTURE

- 5/9/1846 | Leeds Intelligencer. Calder Vale Agricultural Association. **Titus Salt Snr**, Best Coach Horse.
- 11/9/1847 | Leeds Intelligencer. Calder Vale Agricultural Association. Shorthorn Cows, **Titus Salt Snr**, 2nd Best 2 Year Old and Best 3 Year Old.
- 2/9/1848 | Leeds Times. Calder Vale Agricultural Association. Short Horned Cows, **Titus Salt Snr**, 2nd 4 Year Old.
- 30/8/1851 | Leeds Mercury. Calder Vale Agricultural Association. Cows and Pretty Alderneys, **Titus Salt Snr**.
- 24/9/1853 | Leeds Intelligencer. **Titus Salt Snr**, Alpaca from the Earl of Derby.
- 10/3/1855 | Illustrated London News. Alpaca from the Earl of Derby, settled and naturalised at Crownest by **Titus Salt Snr**.
- 1/9/1856 | Leeds Mercury. Calder Vale Agricultural Association. **Titus Salt Snr** Crow Nest, Best Alderney Bull, Best Alderney Cow.
- 21/3/1857 | Adelaide Observer. **Titus Salt Snr**. Report of the arrival of 6 goats, 4 alpacas (1 male - 3 female) and 4 sheep in Australia.
- 18/6/1857 | Bradford Observer. Export of alpacas to Australia. Letter from nephew J F Haigh to **Titus Salt Snr**
- 27/6/1857 | Huddersfield Chronicle. Update from J F Haigh on progress, **Titus Salt Snr**.
- 27/6/1857 | Illustrated London News. **Titus Salt Snr**, Arrival of alpaca at Port Lincoln.
- 27/8/1857 | Bradford Observer. **Titus Salt Snr**, eminent manufacturer exported alpacas, sheep and goats to a sheep farmer in Port Lincoln, South Australia.