

Clive Froggatt Interview: 16th May 2006

Clive was born in Thornhill in 1926 but was christened in the Methodist chapel on Hugh Lane at Yard Head.

His father worked for the water board on the construction of the Howden and Derwent dams and went on to become Top (Howden) Dam Keeper. They lived on the east side of the Howden dam, not in Birchinlee (which was on the other side of the dam). Clive was living by the Howden dam when the Dam Busters (617 Squadron) practiced their runs for the planned attacks against the German dams. He was on the dams most nights but doesn't recall having seen or heard the aircraft. He does remember going out with his father on the moors up at Howden. His father carried his shot gun and the targets were hares. Some times they bagged so many that they struggled to carry them back. The animals were strung together in pairs and slung over Jack Froggatt's shoulders. If he happened to slip and fall over it was a great struggle to stand up again.

Although Clive only came to live in Bradwell in 1989 he had been associated with the village in one way or another all of his life (most of which was lived in Bamford as a lorry driver). He recalls that during the Second World War 'Ikey' Middleton playing dance music on a gramophone in the Newburgh Club.

During one of his wartime visits to Bradwell he went up to Nether Water to inspect the crater formed by German bombs but found the disappointingly small, probably these were incendiary bombs. Although there was an anti-aircraft emplacement at Coplowdale Clive doesn't believe that was the intended target. The aircraft might have been *en route* to Manchester but the pilot decided to turn for home and dropped his bombs to lighten the load.

Clive recalled a story that Barnes Wallis had paid a wartime visit to Stretfield Mill possibly to visit the Chief Chemist of Earle's who was living in/near the Stretfield Mill. He also thinks that the Mill might have been used to house refugees but doesn't know of what nationality or why. (It now seems likely that the Wallis visit was to Vincent Works in Brough where some of the steel companies had been moved from Sheffield).