

REFERENCES TO TANSLEY IN DERBYSHIRE TIMES - 1910  
(From microfilm in Local Studies Library, County Offices, Matlock)  
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29 January 1910  
CHESTERFIELD Edn.

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**NEWS SUMMARY.**

Mr Thos. McMunn, who has just retired from the headmastership of Tansley School, after 34 years' service, was on Monday presented with a gold watch by old scholars and friends.

29 January 1910  
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**TANSLEY SCHOOL-  
MASTER'S FINE RECORD.**

**34 Years' Devoted Service.  
Old Scholars' Presentation.**

Thirty-four years constitute a long portion of a man's life, and the man who spends them in one position is at least deserving of gratitude.

Mr Thomas McMunn, of Tansley, recently retired from the position of headmaster of the Tansley School, after filling it with honour to himself and advantage to the community for 34 years. His retirement a couple of months ago was marked by the presentation of an easy chair from the present scholars, and on Monday the old scholars gave him a handsome gold watch.



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Mr McMunn's record is a most remarkable one, for he has only taught in two schools. He started his scholastic career as assistant in the Trafalgar Square Schools, Ashton-under-Lyne, and went from there in 1874, to the Chester Training College, where he passed the examinations with distinction. He came out at the top of the list of certificated masters, and also gained the science and art certificates. Leaving College in 1875 he went directly to Tansley to become the headmaster of the school, and there he has been ever since.

Mr McMunn has seen great changes in matters educational, but his school has always been noted for the soundness of its training, and without exception the reports of inspectors have been most gratifying to those responsible for the conduct of the school.

Thousands of scholars have received instruction from this veteran schoolmaster, and many are now occupying important positions in various parts of the world.

Mr McMunn has always taken a prominent part in the social, religious and political life of the village. For upwards of 20 years he was superintendent of the Church Sunday School, a position from which he retired only about 12 months ago, and for 12 or 14 years he officiated as voluntary organist at the Church. Unionism has no more loyal supporter in Tansley than Mr McMunn.

At present the subject of this brief sketch holds the positions of Clerk to the Tansley Parish Council, and assistant overseer.

#### **The Presentation.**

The presentation referred to took place on Monday evening, at the Institute, Tansley. Col-Sergt. J. W. Marriott had acted as treasurer, and the other members of the committee were: Messrs J. Barber, junr., W. Fox, S. Holland, H. Knowles, J. Stone, J. Palfreyman, J. Forbes and E. Marriott.

Mr J Palfreyman, in handing the watch to Mr McMunn, explained that the gift was from the old scholars and friends, and expressed the donors' regard for their old teachers.

Responding, Mr McMunn remarked that 34 years was a long time to spend in one place, but when he looked back, it did not seem long since he came to Tansley.

"I have always been very comfortable," he said, "and I love the place very much. I think the proof of that is to be found in the fact that I have stopped here. When first I came, educational matters were different from what they are now. At that time schools were springing up all over the country. There was a dearth of teachers. A teacher had then no difficulty in getting a school – in fact, there were a great many more schools than teachers. Now there are a great many more teachers than schools."

Mr McMunn went on to say that he always tried to do his duty, and to act fairly and squarely to everybody. He thought they would bear him out when he said he never had any favourites in school. (Hear,

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hear.) He thanked them heartily for their gift. (Applause.)

The function then terminated.

An inscription on the watch reads: -

“Presented to Mr Thos. McMunn, from old scholars and friends, in recognition of his service for 34 years as schoolmaster at Tansley, Jan. 24<sup>th</sup>, 1910.”

April 23, 1910

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**TANSLEY'S LOSS.**

**Death of Mrs. Grace Sturgess.**

It is with regret that we today record the death of Mrs. Grace Sturgess, widow of the late Mr. Wm. Sturgess, of Mount Pleasant, Tansley. Mrs. Sturgess had been in failing health for some time, but appeared to have partially recovered. She was, however, somewhat suddenly seized with syncope, and passed quietly and peacefully away on Sunday morning, the 10<sup>th</sup> inst., at the age of 87, and was interred at Holy Trinity Church, Tansley, on the 14<sup>th</sup> inst.



Mrs. Sturgess was an old and respected resident, having lived at Mount Pleasant, Tansley, for 32 years. Born at Matlock Cliff in 1822, her maiden name was Knowles, her ancestors being engaged in the lead mining industry, and connected with Matlock and district for many generations. She was cousin to the late Mr. Jno. Knowles, of Knowleston Place, Matlock, also the late Mr. Henry Knowles, Matlock. Mrs. Sturgess leaves one son. The funeral arrangements were under the superintendence of Mr T. Dawes, Tansley. The

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service was conducted by the Rev. F. D. Grant, Matlock Bank. A large number of floral tributes were sent. The following relatives and friends were present: - Mr Jno. Sturgess (son), Cheltenham; Mrs Hodder (niece), Cambridge; Mrs S E Holmes (niece), Lea; Mr Wm. Holmes, Miss Grace Knowles (niece), Lowestoft; Mr E Bartram (nephew), Grindley; Mrs Bartram (sister-in-law), Mr J. G. Knowles (cousin), Mr and Mrs M. H. Mills (brother-in-law and sister), Barrow-in Furness; Mrs. A Cropper, Mr Harold Cropper (cousins), Manchester; Mr J. W Goodall (nephew), Barrow; Mrs Sydney Smith, junr., Mr Sydney Smith, Mr Wm. Staley, and others.

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**Bull Baiting.**  
**Old Time Sport at Tansley.**  
**Matlock Man's Reminiscences.**

A hundred years ago bull-baiting and bear-baiting were popular sports in the Matlock district. The people of that time regarded a bull-baiting very much the same as the people of the present day regard a football match, and they would walk many miles in order to see a bull fastened to a ring and then set upon by dogs.

There are very few bull rings left in England. There is one at Snitterton, which has been restored by the Derbyshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, and another at Leyburn, a village in the North Riding of Yorkshire, but if there are others we are unable to tell our readers where to find them.

That bull-baiting was popular was proved by the fact that although the sport was made illegal in 1835, by an Act which forbade "the keeping of any house, pit, or other place for baiting or fighting any bull, bear, dog, or other animal," it was practised in Tansley several years after the passing of the Act.

A representative of *The Derbyshire Times* set out the other day with the object of finding someone who had actually witnessed the sport, and his object was soon attained.

I first went, he writes, to see Mr Wm. Mountney, at Snitterton, and passed the bull-ring, which is almost opposite his house, without noticing it. Mr Mountney was reading *The Derbyshire Times*, and, pointing to the photo of Mr J. Critchlow, of Monyash, remarked "I've known him all my life."

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The photo was taken outside Hall Dale Farm. It shows Mr. John Young, his daughter (Mrs. Lambert), and his granddaughter (Annie Lambert).

Mr Mountney said that he was born and brought up at Elton, that he afterwards lived at Bonsall, and then came to Snitterton. He had neither witnessed a bull-baiting, nor heard stories of any. "There was Joseph Stone, of Winster," he added, "who said he remembered bull-fighting, but he's dead."

And then he vouchsafed the information that "there's owd John Young." He pointed out the bull-ring to me, and then I went to see Mr Young, of Hall Dale Farm, which is between Matlock and Snitterton. Mr Young is 78.

#### **Did Not Favour the Sport.**

Mr Young's father was a Wesleyan local preacher, and very properly refused either to witness a bull-baiting or to give his children permission to witness one.

"But we went all the same," said Mr Young. "I was a nipper then. I remember thirty or forty men going to fetch the bull, and, big man that I was, I must catch hold of the rope. The baitings took place in the middle of a croft belonging to the George and Dragon Inn at

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Tansley. A post had been driven into the ground, and the bull was tied to it. Then they set dogs at it, and, as near as I can tell you, the dog that could pin the bull by the nose was called champion. They came from all round to watch. The bull was fetched from a farmhouse somewhere near, because they didn't keep bulls just for baiting."

"What was the feeling in Tansley when bull-baiting was stopped?" I asked.

"The rougher class no doubt would be vexed," Mr Young replied. "but I was not old enough to notice how they took it. I don't know what made them stop it, but they did."

When I mentioned that bull-baiting was made illegal in 1835, Mr Young replied, "Well, I know they did it a long time after that. I was born in '32, and if there had been no bull-baitings after '35 I shouldn't have known anything about it, but I can remember it distinctly."

**A Bear at Matlock Fair.**

"I remember as well a bear-baiting at Matlock Fair, one September. There were lots of folk at that. It was near a public-house there, and during the baiting the bear got loose. It bolted into a house, and went out at the back door, but what became of him afterwards I don't know. There were stocks there then, under the Churchyard wall.

"Of course there were bull-baitings at Snitterton, but I didn't live on this side then."

Mr Young could not recollect ever witnessing a cock fight, although it was as late as 1849 when this form of sport was prohibited.

**Of Another Age.**

For the age in which he lived, Mr Young had quite a liberal education. After attending a "dame's school" he was sent to Lea School, where the master was Mr Robt. Wildgoose, whose son erected the tram shelter in Crown Square, Matlock. When Tansley School was built he went there.

"The first schoolmaster at Tansley was Mr Crofts," said Mr Young. "they learned us to read and write – but not shorthand or owt o' that," he added, as a smile lit up his face.

"Tansley has altered a bit since then. There used to be a common, but it is all taken in now."

His father was a hand-loom weaver, and there were then many hand-loomers in Tansley. But Mr Young now has no connection with that village, having left it sixty years since.

He worked at the Lea Close Lead Mine until it was closed.

When asked for his photo, Mr Young expressed himself quite averse to anything appearing in the paper about himself, but soon yielded when told it was for *The Derbyshire Times*, which he said he had taken for many years.

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October 1, 1910

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**FARMERS CONTENT.  
FINE HARVEST.  
GOOD PROSPECTS.**

**Special Reports From All Parts of the County.  
Tansley.**

Mr. Benjamin Taylor, of Knowl Farm, Tansley, reports: -

Hay. - A good average crop. Those who mowed early were fortunate in being able to get the crop in excellent condition. Seeds were exceptionally heavy and fine.

Corn. - Not for some years have the corn crops been so good, and though the prospect of fine weather for harvesting seemed remote at first, practically the whole crop of this district has been got in fine condition.

Potatoes. - A fair crop. The prevalence of wet weather has rendered them of little use for keeping.

Mangolds. - Below the average. Nipped by cold weather early in the year.

Turnips and cabbages. - A splendid crop. Much above the standard reached for several years.

General. - All crops, with the exception of mangolds, are above the average.

**HINTS ON POTATO GROWING**

Mr A. Jackson, Daisy Bank, Tansley, observes: - The crops of oats, wheat, and barley are a good average, and the length of straw about the average, which will be cheap to buy. Grass has been plentiful, and cattle have done well on it.

There has been a total absence of the gadfly, and I do hope we have seen the last of this troublesome pest. Hay a fair crop, and most of it was gathered in prime condition.

Potatoes are a good average, and those that have been lifted are of good and even size.

In order to obtain the best results for the production of this necessary, nutritious, and paying crop, it is advisable to have a change of seed each year. I have practised this plan for many years, and have not found it to fail in the wettest seasons.

Cabbages are a very heavy crop, the season having been so wet we could transplant at any time, and the young plants never failed. Turnips are a good average. Mangolds are poor and disappointing.

I have on several occasions mentioned in my reports the ever-increasing burdens of rates and taxes in the hope that through your kindness in giving publicity to them, this might have some slight influence on the spending departments. One thing is quite certain, that these increases will have to stop some day, or our backs will break under the load.