



High Spen No 1 Detective Agency



To think about

- Do you think these men look smart? Are they dressed in their best or in their clothes for working?
- Where do you think they are standing? Look at the sign above the doorway.
- Why do you think there are only men in the photograph? What might it tell us about why women weren't supposed to be here?
- Why might they have taken their hats off for the photograph?
- Many of the men appear to have flowers in their button-holes. What might be the occasion for this?

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?



High Spen No 1 Detective Agency



To think about:

This is Front Street in High Spen – date unknown.

- What time of year do you think it has been taken?
- What types of buildings can you identify? (Look carefully at the building after the first shop)
- There seem to be about three children standing outside the second shop along the street. What might this shop be selling?
- What do you think the first shop might be selling?
- Motor cars were very expensive and few would have been seen on the streets. How do you know this is an early type of motor car? Look at the tyres, headlamps and steering wheel.
- How do you know that the motor car is causing a lot of interest in the village. Notice where the children are? What is the man in the front of the photograph doing?

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?



High Spen Band

To think about

- What instruments do the men have?
- What are they dressed like?
- What types of instruments are not included in the band?
- Who appears to be the leader of the band?
- At what events might the band play?
- How might the boy help him?
- The man second from the left is George Wishart. How is he remembered in the village?

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?

Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?



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To think about

- How many footballers are in the team? Is this a usual number? What might the extra members be for?
- There are also four men in suits. What jobs might they do for the football team?
- Do you think these men would be professional (paid a wage as a footballer) or amateurs (not paid as footballers but had ordinary jobs during the day). Think of the size of the village.
- Does the cup look very special? Why do you think this?

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?



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To think about

- What buildings does this photograph show? Start with the nearest on the left hand side. The colliery comes after the row of houses. What parts of the colliery can you identify?
- What is on the right hand side of the photograph? Are there any buildings there?
- What is different about the road surface compared to the road today?
- How have the buildings changed today in high Spen compared to those on the photograph?



Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?





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To think about

- What is different about the road surface compared to the roads today? What might this tell us about the traffic that used it?
- Do you think the people who lived in these houses were comfortably off? What evidence can you see in the photograph that makes you think this?
- What is different about Hugar road today compared to how it looked in 1900s?

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken? Can you see there is a number on the photograph. What might this have been for?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?



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To think about

- What is the name above the doorway? Is it a large building or a small one?
- Would it have been able to hold a lot of people inside or only a few?
- Does it look as though this building is still in use?
- The photograph was taken long after the building was built in 1911. Are there any clues in the photograph that might tell you this?
- Can you guess what it might have been?

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?

Do not turn over until you have thought about the questions.



The Palace Cinema belonged to a colourful character in Mr. John Henry Fisher. He was determined to fill his cinema and on some evenings showed two films with an interval between them. This he filled with live entertainment. Sometimes a singer or a comedian would perform, sometimes he operated the spotlight above the stage, slowly moving it around the audience, building up the tension, finally letting it come to rest on a member of the audience. This person was then presented with a voucher for a joint of meat at Mr. Cooper's shop. On one occasion he produced a woman boxer and offered a prize to anyone, man or woman who could outbox her. Joe Ward, a local pugilist, accepted the challenger and with a leer at the audience proceeded to win this easy money. Within seconds she was battering him about the stage and only the intervention of John Henry prevented him from being battered insensible.

The first moving film lasted only 2 seconds and appeared in Leeds in 1888. It quickly became clear that films could become a mass entertainment and special buildings, cinemas, were built all over the world where people could watch for very little money. Most cinemas were built before 1914 and High Spen was no exception. The Palace Cinema was opened in 1911 and remained popular up until the coming of television in the 1950s. Like many cinemas they could not compete with the comfort of being entertained in the comfort of their own home and audience numbers fell sharply. In 1962, the Palace closed its doors.



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To think about

- Do you think the man and woman in the trap (a small carriage) look smart? Are they dressed in their best or in their clothes for working?
- The man looks very young, perhaps an older boy. Why is he driving the carriage and not the woman do you think? Do you think they are well off? Who might they be if they live in the village?
- What other type of transport can you see in the picture? Who might it belong to?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of these two types of transport?

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand the picture?



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To think about

- This is a difficult one to sort out so let's begin with what we can see. Who is in the photograph?
- The boys appear to be in a costume. What can you see in the photograph that they are wearing which makes it look like a uniform?
- Look at the man on the left of the boys. Is there anything about him that tells you what might be happening in the picture?
- Look at the man on the right. What is the musical instrument he is playing? Does this give you a clue as to what the boys might perform?

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?

Do not turn over until you have thought about these questions



The boys are members of a Rapper dance team. The sticks they hold are modelled on swords and during the dance the boys would weave these into different patterns. The earliest memories of rapper dancing in High Spen date back to around 1880, when men dancers were lead by George Stobbs. Little is known about the details of the dance performed, but the names of some dancers are known, including George Gibbon, who was taught by George Stobbs and who founded a rapper team called the Vernon Troupe after the First World War. Other known members of George Stobbs' early side included Robert D'eath and Jack Keith.

The Vernon Troupe were named after the Fred Vernon, the landlord of the *Miners Arms*, where the side practised. The dancers included George Gibbon, Tommy D'eath, Eddie Blyth, Eddie Gibbon, Jack Keith, John Coulson and Arthur Watson, and their musician was Victor Robson.

The High Spen Blue Diamonds were founded as a children's team by Fred Forster in 1926, after he met some boys from the village carrying sticks and showed them how to tie a rapper lock with them. He was assisted in teaching the boys by his brother-in-law George Gibbon, of the Vernon Troupe.

The team used to practise in the Forster's kitchen, wearing away the linoleum until Fred Forster acquired a 5' 6" (150cm) square wooden board from the Victoria Garesfield Colliery for the boys to practise on. It has been said that this board gave rise to a team tradition that a High Spen dance should be able to be performed within such a small space.

The team practiced and performed with greenwood sticks, performing at miners' clubs until they could raise enough money to buy a set of rappers. They entered the North of England Musical Tournament in 1927, and won the junior sword dance class.



The Blue Diamonds stopped performing before the Second World War, but were subsequently revived as an adult team by the same dancers and former members of the Amber Stars in 1954. This revival was partly due to the interest in the High Spen dance traditions of Bill Cassie and the King's College team, especially Ross Hesketh, the King's College team bagman, who collected the notation of the High Spen dance from Fred Forster in the winter of 1952-53.

Fred Forster died in 1964, and was succeeded by his son Freddie. Ricky Forster, Freddie's son, took over in 1986, and continues to lead the team to this day. The team remains a family side, with Ricky, his two brothers, two sons and nephew all active members, although the team is also supported by other dancers and musicians from the local area.



The Butcher's Shop

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Agency

Shopping

Remember this was the days long before supermarkets. Housewives who did the shopping would have to visit an number of different shops each one selling one type of thing.

To think about

- Who do you think is the owner of the shop?
- What jobs do the people do in the butcher's shop? Why might the boy be carrying a basket?
- Why is the meat hanging outside the shop? Would you see that at a butcher's shop today? If not, why not?
- How would the meat be transported to the shop? Would this take a long time? What might happen to the meat, particularly in summer? What do we have today that would keep the meat fresh?

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?



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To think about

- Do you think these men look smart? Are they dressed in their best or in their clothes for working?
- Where do you think they are standing? Look at the sign above the doorway.
- There are wooden boards at the side of the downstairs windows. What are they called and why might they have them?
- Why do you think there are only men in the photograph? What might it tell us about why women weren't supposed to be here?
- Why might one of the men be holding the reins of a horse

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?



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To think about

- Do you think these men look smart? Are they dressed in their best or in their clothes for working?
- They all have aprons on and are cobblers. Who do you think owns the cobblers? Who do you think might be the head cobbler?
- Whereabouts are they standing? Is it in front of the shop or at the rear? What makes you think this?
- Who do you think the little girl in the front might be?
- How many people usually work in a cobbler's shop today? If there are at least four men working as cobblers in this small village, what might it tell you whether shoes were expensive or cheap?

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?



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The Laundry Van

To think about

- What does the laundry van do?
- How many people work the Laundry Van? Who does what?
- What is the man carrying over his shoulder?
- How might the boy help him?
- Do you think they would travel very far collecting laundry?
- Where is the laundry in the village?
- Most women would do the washing for their households. Who might use the laundry van? What sort of clothing might they send to the laundry?

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?



The Post Office

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The Post office was a very important shop in the village. Not only did it sell stamps but this is where you collected your old age pension (started in 1908) and where telegrams with important information (who had been killed in the First World War) arrived.

To think about

- Do you think this post office only sold stamps? Look in the window. What else might it sell?
- What material is the post office building made from?
- Where might the owner of the post office live? Why might they live here?
- The Post Office was on Collingdon Road. Is it still there? Has it changed very much?

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?



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To think about

- Does this man look smart? Is he dressed in his best or in his clothes for working?
- Can you work out what he is actually doing in the photograph?
- Would it be an easy job to do or skilled?
- Is he wearing any safety equipment? What might be worn now to protect the workman?
- Why would his job be considered very important at this time? Think about what the main form of transport was?

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?



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To think about

- Can you find Wood Terrace on the 1896 map? After what date must these houses have been built?
- Why were these types of houses called 'Terraces'?
- How can you tell they are fairly newly built?
- Do they face any other buildings?
- Why have they built with gardens at the front of the house?

- What are the children dressed like? Do they appear to be dressed very similar? Why might this be?
- Why do the girls wear white smocks over their dresses?

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?



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Working men

To think about

- Do you think these men look smart? Are they dressed in their best or in their clothes for working? How can you tell?
- Who do you think is in charge?
- Can you identify the tools these workmen have?
- Can you work out what sort of work they would do?
- Whereabouts are they standing? Does this help to tell you the job they do?
- What safety equipment are they wearing? What does this tell you about working conditions at the time?

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?



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Shopping

Remember this was the days long before supermarkets. Housewives who did the shopping would have to visit a number of different shops each one selling one type of thing. However, there was one type of shop that sold many different things. This was called the Coop or its full name 'The cooperative Wholesale Society'.

To think about

- How many people work in the Coop?
- The shop assistants seem to be dressed to do different sorts of jobs. What do you think each of them do?
- The Coop would buy good cheaply and then pass the savings on to their customers. Why do

you think many people would prefer to shop at the Coop?

- Can you think of any other reasons why the people of High Spen might prefer to shop at the Coop?
- The store was only on the ground floor. On the second floor was what was called a 'reading room'. What might we call a 'reading room' today? Think of books.

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?



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To think about

- This is a difficult one to sort out so let's begin with what we can see. Who is in the photograph?
- Are they well dressed or are they wearing working clothes?
- When do you think the photograph was taken? Give reasons for your answer.
- There is only one man in the photograph. He is sitting in the middle. Who do you think he might be?
- What is special about the woman who is sitting to the left of the man? What might this mean?

Pulling the evidence together

- Why might this photograph have been taken?
- Are there any questions you need to ask to fully understand this photograph?

Do not turn over until you have thought about these questions