

Joseph Crossley

1813 - 1868

Joseph Crossley was the second of the three brothers, born on the 26th December 1813. As a young man, he was specifically taught the business of a dyer. The quietest of the three, he was the least in the public eye. And yet he was the real managing partner in the business, almost always in attendance at Dean Clough; and it was largely because of his unremitting devotion to the firm's business that his brothers were able to give so much of their time and effort to voluntary activities for the benefit of Halifax. It was Joseph who carried into execution the joint plans of the partners, taking personal charge of the erection of the new mills and machinery at Dean Clough, which became necessary during the 1850s to cope with the ever-increasing business after steam-driven power-looms for carpet weaving had been successfully invented.

Joseph was described as a man of wonderful energy and strong decision of character. Having prospered, eventually he built a residence known as Broomfield, which stood in about twenty acres of ground, the other side of Skircoat Moor Road from Manor Heath. He left a lasting memory of his philanthropy in the Arden Road Almshouses, intended for those poor residents of Halifax who had a good record of attendance at church or chapel. Each dwelling came with a weekly dole of 10/- per couple, or 7/- for a single person. Eventually, 48 collegiate-style almshouses were built, though the project was completed by his son Edward after Joseph's death, the total cost standing in excess of £26,000.

During the summer of 1868, Joseph went for a break to the Lake District. On a trip to Ullswater, he fell when getting out of his carriage, fracturing his thigh; this required many weeks' recuperation. In September, he was able to return to Halifax in an invalid carriage, but just a few days later, on the 14th of the month, he collapsed at home, dying from a severe heart attack before a doctor could be called. His youngest daughter was ten months old at the time.

Joseph was the first of the three notable brothers to die; he was buried at Lister Lane on the 19th September following. He married twice, and his first wife also lies buried here, as does his son Edward, and other members of his family.