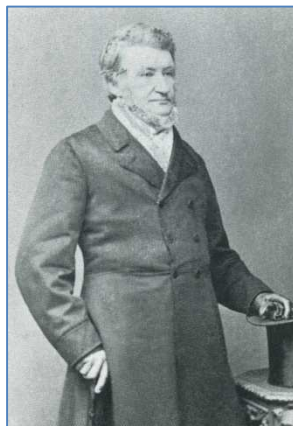


Matthew Habershon

Matthew Habershon was born at Bradgate in 1757. He married Mary Jones in November 1785. He worked at the Walker Works in Holmes. He was a witness to the will of Samuel Walker and then had to watch as the Company was sold off in the 1830s. He died on March 18th 1841 and was buried at Masbrough Chapel. His wife inherited considerable property from an uncle and it is probable that this was used by the next generation to establish the family name within the industrial history of the town.



Joseph Jones Habershon was a son of Matthew Habershon. Joseph was born on September 8th 1796 and died in 1882. He had three sons and three daughters. He lived on College Street (1861); Wood Bank, Doncaster Road (1871); Holmes Villa next to his son, John (1881). He set up in business in High Street in 1824 and then, with his father and brother, took a lease on the Holmes Works. His brother, Henry died in 1831.



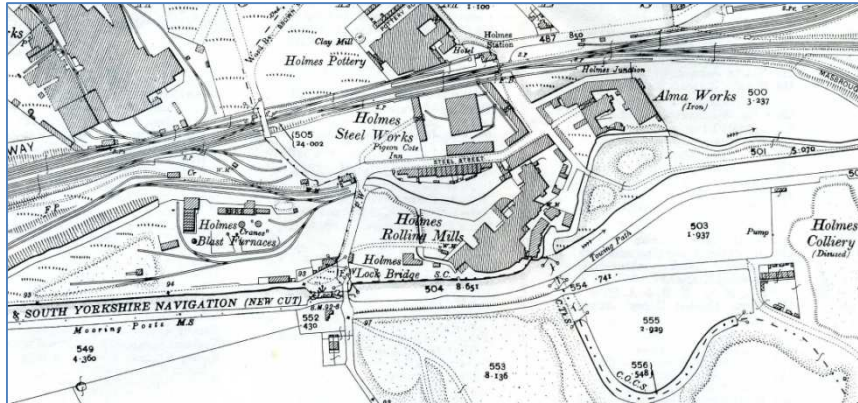
Among the early products turned out during the expansion of Colonial trade were quantities of sickle steel for use in the West Indian sugar industries.

Although in those times illumination of workshops was, by modern standards, both crude and feeble parts of Holmes Mills were equipped with gas lighting as early as 1833.

In that year the invention of the steel pen nib with its great advantages over the use of quills, gave a new impetus to the progress of the firm, whose thin cold rolled sheets of hard steel

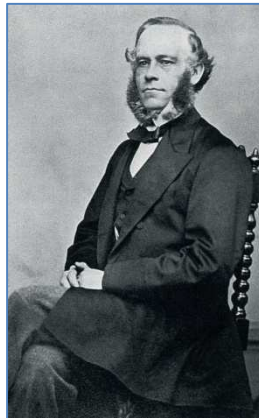
gave complete satisfaction to the pen manufacturers of Birmingham. A further example of Habershon's capability to meet — and at times to anticipate trade requirements occurred when, due to changing fashions, the firm supplied cold rolled strip from which the hoops used in crinolines were made. Another product of that era, steel for corset springs, is still rolled at Holmes Mills.

Histories of Various Firms 1957



1901

John Matthew Habershon, was born in 1824 in Rotherham and was living in Holmes Villa in 1881. He was married to Lydia, a daughter of William Beatson; he was an alderman and partner in a steel rolling mill employing 95 men and 62 boys. There were four children living at home on Census night; Sarah, Lydia, Matthew and Arthur. In 1871 he was Chairman of the Local Board of Health at a time when the talk was of Incorporation of the Borough and he played a part in securing that historic goal in local government. He became the town's first Mayor in 1871. John died in 1894.



Their eldest son, William Beatson Habershon lived and married in London before retiring to Weston Super Mare (1891). Another son, John Broadhurst Habershon, married and lived on Parkfield Road, Clifton.

About 1870 John Broadhurst Habershon came into the business. A man of great initiative ability, besides shrewdly promoting the firm's interests, he did much to foster the already good relationship between master and man.

Born in 1881, Alfred Rix Habershon, who 40 years later as Mayor of Rotherham, was to receive the Prince of Wales (later the Duke of Windsor), joined his father in the business in 1899.

Histories of Various Firms 1957

John Matthew Habershon's partner in the Holmes Rolling Mill was his cousin, Matthew Henry Habershon, who was born in Rotherham in 1824. Matthew Henry was living in London in 1881.

Towards the turn of the century many new uses for steel strip, sheets and sections were found, not least of which were the requirements of the newly created cycle industry. In this connection Habershon steel was used in the manufacture of cycle wheel rims, chains, hubs, mudguards and other fitments.

Histories of Various Firms 1957