

Friends of Brighouse Station



Joseph Blakeborough & Sons

From a humble start in the cellar of 2 Bradford Road in 1855 Joseph Blakeborough's company grew into one that was known worldwide for its range of valves used in many applications

In 1866 Joseph bought the Commercial Iron and Brass Foundry and then, in 1875, made the move to the Birds Royd Lane site

Joseph died in 1886 but his sons continued to grow the business and by 1900 the company employed 200 people

During the 1st World War the company was run by the Admiralty and manufactured a wide range of products including submarine conning towers and by the end of the war some 500 people were employed. In the 2nd World War the company was also active making bomb casings and parts for tanks amongst other things.

Although principally known for valves, in the early 1920's the Company began manufacturing fire-fighting equipment and this business grew to the point where in 1933 it was split off into a separate company, Nu-Swift, which still manufactures extinguishers.

In 1928 Joseph's Grandson Walter organised a trip to Blackpool for some 2000 employees, families and friends and this needed 2 chartered trains. This was nominally the 100th Anniversary of the Company but it is thought that it was actually that of Joseph starting his apprenticeship as a plumber.

There is now little trace of the once extensive works but the Blakeborough Bridge across the River Calder, opened in 1962 as a private bridge between two parts of the Blakeborough works, remains a lasting reminder of Brighouse's industrial history

At its peak the Company employed over 1200 people but In 1965 J. Blakeborough & Sons was taken over by Hopkinsons of Huddersfield. Although the works closed permanently in 1989 and J Blakeborough & Sons no longer exists valves are still being manufactured bearing the Blakeborough brand name.

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