

Robertshaws

1860-2005
"145 Years Young"

1860



People



The local community has always been important to Robertshaws, providing both the workforce of the company and an important part of the customer base.

Former employees paint a picture of energetic industry. The boiler-man was always first in, according to Mr. Openshaw who worked in the Saw Mill in the 1940's. The staff used to wait outside whilst the boiler man fired up the boiler which then started all the machinery, kicking up huge plumes of dust in its wake.



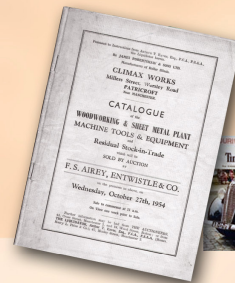
1940's employees Mr. & Mrs. Openshaw (pic, R).
Mr. Openshaw began work in 1948, at the age of fifteen.



This pre-war photo, taken sometime in the 1940's, shows the two ladies who worked in the "Dip House", taking a well deserved break from their daily tasks.

These involved dipping metal stair-rods and similar items into a coating solution.

The identity of the ladies pictures is thought to be Mary Memory, accompanied by either Mrs. Rose or Mrs. Blanchflower.



After the '52 fire, the company was sold to the then Manager, Mr Arthur Harrison, with the company's assets going up for auction. Items included in the sale were four pairs of Wellington boots and a 1947 Morris 8 h.p Saloon car.



Health & Safety rules and regulations weren't the same as they are nowadays and the workers inhaled dust and fumes as a part of their everyday lives. Fires were a daily threat in the factory, and the company was threatened with financial ruin by huge fires in 1933 and 1952. Sawdust was the main hazard, constantly coating the floorboards and falling through the cracks and onto the hot cables beneath. Clouds of smoke would quickly cover the factory and floorboards were hastily pulled up to put out the flames.

