

## **DRY DICK REDMAN**

Richard Redman was a clothing manufacturer and a partner in Redman Brothers, wholesale clothiers who from 1890 were based at the former Foster Mill, just off Victoria Road. The mill had become famous in 1888 when it suffered a huge fire and was burnt to the ground and locals still talked of how it had lit up the hill from one side to another and led workers to celebrate 'in a manner of wild excitement'. Being a religious man, Redman believed that the demise of the Foster Mill had been as a result of the unholy values and immoral living of its former owners who were also pub landlords. (The Foster Family had run The Stubbing Wharf since the opening of the Rochdale canal in 1804). He therefore took great pains to ensure the good Lord find no reason to punish him, or to destroy his property by becoming a vehement Methodist.

Both Redman and his wife Sarah were actively involved in the running of the Sunday school here (before it became a dentists and later a pub which is pretty ironic really). And because Redman employed a number of child workers at his mill this enabled him to guarantee that they too stayed godly. Woe betides anyone who failed to attend his Sunday school! Even, his adult machinists were expected to stay on the straight and narrow. As Hebden Bridge was well known as the valley of a 100 churches this was not exactly an impossibility though it seems that 'The Old White Horse' off Garden St and the other pubs I've mentioned also had rather a significant pull! It was undoubtedly these 'fallen' who he passed on his way to and from the mill to the Sunday school each week who gave him the nickname 'Dry Dick Redman.' How they would smile now... How he would frown!