

W. CRUMBLEHULME & SONS

(Ironfounders)

William Crumblehulme was born in 1831 into a very poor family who lived in the Folds Road area, Little Bolton. His father died of cholera when he was five, and his mother re-married. He was determined to 'better' himself, so he learnt to read and write first at the Sunday School later furthering his education at the Mechanics Institute, until in 1851 at the age of twenty he was able to leave the mill to find work as a timekeeper at a foundry in Gas Street, Great Bolton, this was where his lifetime connection with foundries started.

In 1863 William had become unemployed through the effect of the American Civil War on trade in Bolton. He was fortunate enough to find work through his connection with fellow member of the Temperance Society, John Hiton. He was employed as a cashier/travelling salesman for Messrs. Hiton & Brown, a small foundry, employing twelve men and eight boys.

This business was founded in 1854 under the name Brown, Altham & Co. later becoming Hiton & Brown. The foundry was in Emblem Street, Great Bolton, and William lived at 36 Emblem Street – a two up two down house - with his wife and five children.

Crumblehulme & Edge 1875 - 1879

Having worked for Hiton & Brown for over eleven years William decided that it was time to set up in business for himself. His three eldest sons were now in a position to help him – John a blacksmith, James a joiner, and Alfred, a foundry worker, and he had the expertise and connections gained through many years working for Hiton & Brown. In 1874 he found a suitable business at Chorley – and with financial help from Mr. James Edge, a long standing friend of his, he bought Towns Green Foundry, St. Thomas Road, from Henry Banks for £800, and by 1875 'Crumblehulme & Edge' was in business.

In 1879 'Hiton & Brown' came up for sale – so William returned to Bolton and took over the foundry, this time as 'the boss' of the business where he had started all those years ago, but now it was known as 'W.Crumblehulme & Sons'. What a proud moment it must have been!

W.Crumblehulme & Sons Emblem Street

Messrs. W. Crumblehulme & Sons,
 (LATE JOHN BROWN),
DERBY IRONWORKS, BOLTON.

Ironfounders and Manufacturers

OF ALL KINDS OF

FIRE RANGES, COOKING STOVES,

IRON MANTELS, MANTEL SHAMS,

FULL REGISTERS, and all other kinds of GRATES.

ALSO,

WROUGHT AND CAST IRON PALISADING,

WITH GATES COMPLETE.

Bath and every other kind of domestic Boilers fit up
 with Brass Pipes and Unions.

All kinds of

MARBLE and ENAMELLED SLATE CHIMNEY PIECES

Supplied to the Trade.

All kinds of BUILDERS' CASTINGS made and fitted
 to Architectural Designs, and every description
 of Blacksmith work done.

ENGINEERS, SQUEEZER MAKERS, & COTTON MILLS

Supplied with Cast and Wrought Iron Work of every description.

The business prospered and the Emblem Street works were extended several times, now incorporating premises at Every Street. The reputation of the firm grew because of the quality of their products which included stoves, kitchen ranges, ovens, domestic boilers and steam washers. Especially popular was the Whitaker patent convoluted stove with automatic regulator, and the 'Otto' stove adapted for Turkish baths and hydros, both of which were greatly improved by the firm. They obtained many high class awards at exhibitions held throughout the country leading to a great increase in demand for their goods. These were installed in cathedrals, churches, chapels, colleges, hotels, institutions, public baths and theatres all over Great Britain – including Ireland,

They also specialized in beautiful ornamental cast and wrought-iron palisading with gates to match. Other work included Jacquard machines, general mill work, and gas lamps (which were only ever made at Emblem Street).

1888 Derby Ironworks, Rothwell Street, Bolton



William needed to expand the business because of the huge increase in orders so he bought Messrs. Howarth & Cryer, Lodge Bank Ironworks, Rothwell Street, Bolton. This foundry had its own branch railway line which was of great value to Crumblehulme's, both for sending orders out to customers and for taking in delivery of coke, pig iron, limestone and other materials needed in the foundry. This became their main depot and was known as the Derby Iron Works, with the Emblem Street foundry becoming the branch works. Communication between the two foundries was by telephone – quite an innovation in 1888 - the number was 111.



Inside the foundry at Rothwell Street



Outside the foundry Rothwell Street



In 1895 the firm became W. Crumblehulme & Sons Ltd.

1900 was a special year for ‘Crumblehulme’s’ as it celebrated its ‘Silver Jubilee’.



At the Co-operative Hall in Bridge Street, Bolton, 570 persons sat down to tea, including customers, friends, workers and wives. Congratulatory speeches were made, Mr. W. Crumblehulme Sen. remarking that the firm was very proud of their workers and owed its success to them in making great progress despite the severity of the competition, and with the co-operation of the employees there need be no limit to its development.

This was proved to be true when in 1900 they received their most prestigious order for the ‘improved hot air heating system’ which was installed at Woolwich Arsenal allowing the words ‘Contractor to Her Majesty’s Government’ to be put on all their business correspondence.

William was a good employer, who, being a staunch Independent Methodist preacher, practiced what he preached. He was always concerned about the welfare of his workers and because of this Crumblehulme's never had a strike at their works. He never enquired whether any man was a trade unionist, and employed both union and non-union men. Mrs. Dorothy Yarwood (nee Broom) remembered her father telling her about old William Crumblehulme's kindness to older workers, or sick workers. He used to let them work when they could and pay them accordingly. He didn't 'turn them off'. One of his favourite sayings was "to be diligent in business is quite compatible with the life of active Christian service"

W. CRUMBLEHULME & SONS, L^{td}.

Contractors to His Majesty's Government, ESTABLISHED 1854.

General Ironfounders,
HEATING ENGINEERS, and

Manufacturers of Improved and Highly Finished . . . Kitchen Ranges, Stove Grates, &c.

All kinds of Bakers' and Confectioners' Ovens, Mantel Shams, Register Stoves, Range and Domestic Boilers.—Wholesale Makers to the Trade.

All the latest Registered Designs of Iron, Enamelled Slate, and Marble Chimneypieces, Hand-painted Tile Hearths, Tile Stoves and Curbs.

The Trade supplied with Hot-water Pipes, Rain-water Goods, all sizes kept in stock.

Ornamental Cast and Wrought-Iron Palisading, With Entrance Gates to Match, made and fixed complete to Architects' Designs.

GENERAL CASTINGS for Cotton Mills, Machinists, Ironmongers, Builders, and others.

TURNING, GRINDING, and GLAZING, And every description of Blacksmith's Work executed.

Having largely extended our Works, we are now prepared to execute all orders for Heating Churches, Chapels, Schools, or other Institutions; also Greenhouses, Baths, &c., upon an improved system of Hot Air, Water, or both combined, all orders for which will receive prompt attention.

Experienced and skilled Workmen sent out to Fix, Repair, or Re-fix Ranges, Chimneypieces, Tile Hearths, Stoves, Palisading; or Heating of Churches, Schools, Greenhouses, &c.

Special Buildings and Plant have been erected for the Enamelling of Stoves, Ranges, and every kind of Iron Goods; also for Nickel-plating, Polishing, and Lacquering Iron and Brass Goods. All parts of Bicycles Enamelled and Nickel-plated.

Derby Ironworks, Rothwell Street and Emblem Street, **Bolton.**

Registered Offices and Showrooms:—Rothwell Street.
Telephone No. 111, National.

Some examples of items produced at the foundries.



These gates can still be seen on the Polish Church, High Street, Bolton

Gates and railings were shown on photographs of houses belonging to members of the family.



Anne Flitcroft (nee Crumblehulme)
172 High Street Bolton

No. 284.

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| <p>No. 281—Cast Railing, made (strong) 2ft. 2in. high ; (light) 1ft. 5in. high (cut to lengths, ready for fixing.)</p> <p>Price per yard, 2ft. 2in. high</p> <p>Price per yard, 2ft. 2in. high, fixed</p> <p>Price per yard, 1ft. 5in. high, fixed</p> <p>All Curves and Ramps charged extra. Special Pillars charged extra.</p> <p>Gates, with Fittings, ready for fixing, each</p> <p>Do, fixed</p> <p>Do, fixed</p> <p>Locks for Gates charged extra. Gates for over 2ft. 6in. opening, charged extra.</p> | <p>No. 284.—Cast Railing, made 18in. high, cut to lengths, ready for fixing.</p> <p>Price per yard,</p> <p>Do, fixed</p> <p>This pattern is also made without bottom part—13in. high—price per yard</p> <p>Do, fixed complete</p> <p>All Curves and Ramps charged extra. Special Pillars charged extra.</p> <p>Gates, with Fittings, ready for fixing, each</p> <p>Do, fixed</p> <p>Gate pillars for same, each</p> <p>Do, fixed</p> <p>Locks charged extra. If opening is over 2ft. 6in. with Gates charged extra.</p> |
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Handwritten notes in red ink:

Light pattern 17.0

1 pair pattern gate 18 each

do 1 do pillars 10/3 each

If better pattern railing fixed 16/6 per yard extra

do do gate pillars 12/6 each extra



Covering for cellar 133 High Street
James Crumblehulme lived here
for many years



There are still many examples of 'Crumblehulme' ironwork in Bolton

Two examples of kitchen ranges – much sought after today!



In 1901 William retired to Southport leaving the management of the business to his eldest son John. The firm (apparently) continued to grow and prosper; at this time all six of his sons were involved in the running of the foundry and all seemed to be going well, then in 1910 William Crumblehulme died.

William's coffin was brought by train from Southport to Bolton; and was carried from the platform to the hearse by five foundrymen who had been with the firm since its foundation. The funeral cortege went past the foundry, where all the men stood outside to pay their last respects, then went on to Heaton cemetery for his interment in the family vault

His epitaph was "fervent in spirit, diligent in business, serving the Lord"

After William's death

Only 5 months after William died the business was in deep trouble and went into receivership. On May 31st 1911 - W.Crumblehulme & Sons Ltd. was put up for auction but there were no bids, it was later offered for sale as a going concern by Public Tender but without success. So on the 13th August 1912 the Company was sold piecemeal. No further contracts (excepting small ones) were accepted and orders on the books of the Company were worked out - some examples being:-

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| Thomas Heald, Chorley | |
| Verandah columns (lamps 9'6" long + brackets) | £1 5s 6d each |
| Heavy Roadway Manholes covers & frames | £1 0s 6d each |
| Grid & frame | 5s 3d each |
| Inspection cover/frame | 3s 4d each |
| Manhole covers + frame | 17s each |

Picture Hall Tyldesley End Chair Stands tip up pair 3s 6d

Hippodrome Bolton Tip up chairs for level floor - 5d each

Imperial Hotel No.6 Convoluted Stove 12 convolutes £97 10s 0d

War Office Russell Sq. London 2 x Convoluted Stoves £150 each

Sadly by October Emblem Street had closed down completely and the decision was taken to sell the Emblem Street and the Rothwell Street Works separately.

1913 By the 1st January Emblem Street had become Bolton Moor Foundry Co. Ltd. A different name, but the same directors - James Crumblehulme, William Crumblehulme Jnr and the foundry doing the same work. This company lasted until 1925 when it went into liquidation. After this there were many business using the old foundry buildings for different purposes, but for many years now the world famous Bolton Turntable Co. have occupied the premises and they are still there today.

Rothwell Street

Brothers John, James and William Crumblehulme Jun. bought the Rothwell Street part of the business back. They paid £9500, for which they wanted the goodwill and also to trade under the name W.Crumblehulme & Sons Ltd. so the foundry carried on as before but on a smaller scale.

Crumblehulme Ltd.

In 1918 William Crumblehulme Jun. was the last Crumblehulme connected with the foundry, so he went into partnership with Thomas Brown and John Briggs (coal and coke merchant) and the firm became known as Crumblehulme Ltd.

The next stage in the foundry's history was its purchase in 1958 by Messrs. Hargreaves Hamilton (Engineers). They bought Crumblehulme Ltd. because they needed a small foundry to produce textile castings.. They asked Mr. Norman Robinson to go into partnership with them and run the foundry.

Hargreaves Hamilton bought old and unwanted textile machinery from mills which they would refurbish for re-sale both at home and abroad especially to India and Pakistan. The new parts for this machinery were made at the foundry which had changed from being a 'casting foundry' to becoming a 'craft' or 'jobbing' foundry, which was capable of producing castings of up to 4 tons by the installation of two overhead travelling cranes.

Norman Robinson was interested in acquiring the business for personal reasons because his father, Tom Robinson, had worked there as a moulder from 1890 till his death in 1938.

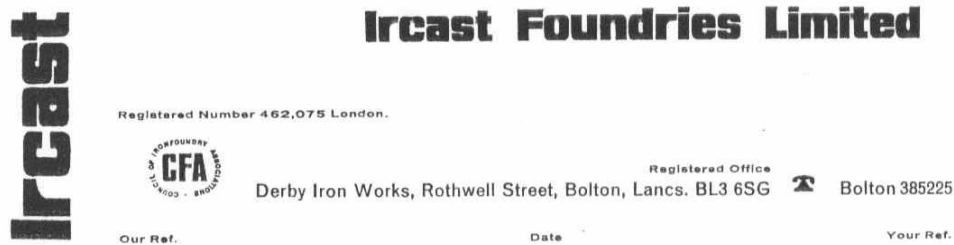
When he was a little boy Norman took his father's breakfast to the foundry every day. One morning he found Mr. William Crumblehulme who used to walk to work, lying on the floor near the foundry. He ran for help but to no avail, Mr. Crumblehulme had died of a heart attack. He had been known as 'Old Sweaty' because he used to say 'I've got where I am today by the sweat of my brow!' He was a very clever man whose inventions had improved the firm's kitchen ranges to suit modern kitchens; whilst during the war he devised an improved method of moulding aerial bombs which was generally adopted resulting in cheapening the bombs and expediting their production.

Norman's first job was to demolish the terrible toilets in the yard. There was a stream underneath the toilets and the toilet 'waste' went directly into the stream. He had new toilets built upstairs, plus a canteen and a small changing room and also put brick toilets in the yard. At times he had to be the 'furnace man' and he spent many Bolton holidays re-building the kiln.

To use up excess iron all manner of small items such as ash trays, nutcrackers, door stops, Punch & Judy door stops, 'Black Sambo' money boxes, Companion sets -poker, shovel & brush etc. etc. were made and either used for gifts for

customers or used as samples to show the various finishes available such as stove enamelling, especially popular were the cast iron 'Last Supper' plaques.

IRCAST



In 1979 Ircast bought Crumblehulme Ltd. from Hamilton Hargreaves as their own foundry was under a compulsory purchase order, changing the name Crumblehulme Ltd. to Ircast.

Ircast were the manufacturers of precision shell moulded iron castings as used in Perkins Diesel engines. They were major suppliers to the Automotive, Pump and Valve, Textile Machinery, and Electrical trades. There was more automation now, using a conveyor belt system to facilitate in the production of castings.

At one time the foundry was used in scenes from the film 'A Kind of Loving' starring Alan Bates, June Ritchie and James Bolam.

By 1987 production was in decline, and an application was made to the council to convert the works into units for light industry and warehousing. This was refused on the grounds that 'the foundry buildings had reached the end of their useful life and should be demolished' and eventually this did happen.

Mill View Nursing Home

In 1990 the final chapter in the life of the foundry was written. Derby Ironworks was bought by Takare plc, the buildings were demolished, Mill View Nursing Home being built on the site, and it is still there at the present time. A sad end perhaps to what had once been a vibrant, thriving business, but at least the land where it stood is being used in a positive way and many people will still have fond memories of working at 'Crummies' as it was always known.



