History on Your Doorstep

Tameside Inventors & Inventions
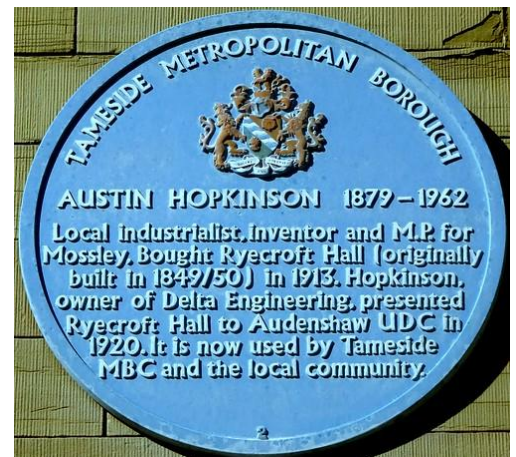
Austin Hopkinson 1879 - 1962

Interior Ryecroft Hall around the time Austin lived there

- He served as a Councillor on Audenshaw Urban District Council from 1917 to 1934, and led the Council from 1923 to 1924.

- He was elected as MP for Prestwich in October 1918. On taking his seat he wore his uniform as a Trooper of the Royal Dragoon Guards.

- He invented a coal boring machine (above) and founded the Delta Works in Audenshaw to manufacture it. His staff received a higher wage and worked shorter hours than others in the area. He built houses for his workers. In 1926 he introduced a profit sharing scheme for his employees.

- He was MP for Mossley from 1918 to 1929 and from 1931 to 1945.

- He wrote to the Times newspaper, suggesting that voting papers in elections should have an extra box for no-one worth voting for.

- Alfred Augustine Hopkinson was born on 24 June 1879. His Grandfather had been Mayor of Manchester, and his father became Vice Chancellor of Manchester University.

Austin Hopkinson in his soldier's uniform

- As a soldier, he served in the Boer War, and the first and second World Wars. He was seriously injured in World War 1 at Ypres.

- Ryecroft Hall (pictured above), his home, was used as a nursing home in World War 1.

- He gave Ryecroft Hall to Audenshaw Borough Council in 1921. It was used as Council Offices and for meetings of local groups.

- He died on 2nd September 1962.