

Saltaire essay essay sample

[Environment](#), [Air](#)



Using the evidence available to you from documentary sources and from your visit to Saltaire, explain why you think that Titus Salt built Saltaire. I think that Sir Titus Salt built Saltaire for several significant reasons. Salt began work on relocating his numerous mills, which were dotted about Bradford, under one roof at the age of forty-five. As a man of great self-earned wealth, Salt could have sold all of his mills, bought a stately home in the country away from the business of Bradford to retire in luxury. But Salt decided to build the biggest mill of its day and a model village to house the “steam-god’s” workers.

In 1853 Lord Harewood asked him “ Why? ” To which Sir Salt replied, “ My Lord, I had made up my mind to do this very thing, but on reflection I determined otherwise. In the first place I thought that by the concentration of all my works in one locality I might provide occupation for my sons. Moreover, as a land owner I should feel out of my element... Outside of my business I am nothing. In it I have considerable influence. By the opening of Saltaire I hope to do good to my fellow men. ” In this quote, Salt gives us many answers to the question, but others remain.

The first reason he gave in the quotation was for the employment of his sons. Salt had six sons to employ, William-Henry, George, Edward, Herbert, Titus and Whitlam, after all of which he named a street after. He also stated that he would feel ‘ Out of his element’ meaning out of his normal environment and social circle as a landowner rather than as a mill owner. He would have missed his authority and status within Britain, which he had through his great influence in the wool industry. Salt closed his statement by

saying that in the opening of Saltaire he hoped to do ' Good to my fellow men.

This proves that Salt was a philanthropist and this is shown through out his village. Salt had provided his workers not only with homes with very reasonable rent, but also Almshouses, an institute for leisure and recreation, a boathouse and little details such as boot scrapers to the side of every front door. The Almshouses even had their own chapel to save its residents the trouble of the walk down to the main Church each Sunday. Salt employed two, well know Bradford architects to design and build his village; he took the care to provide the different rank of employee with a house of an appropriate size with their size of family.

Older couples with no children could live in larger houses and take in borders, or at retirement age, live in one of the Almshouses. Large families could live together in comfort and un-crowded dwellings. Another reason that Salt built the village next to his mill was to get away from the high taxes and unhealthy environment of Bradford. In Victorian times, Bradford was a town growing very quickly and it had a lot of mills and factories polluting it. In the 1840's, Bradford was described as " Where Satan keeps his seat"; this was in a Methodist hymn.

It was regularly related to the devil- " In Bradford however you think that you have been lodged with the devil incarnate" Georg Weerth, who was a German living in Bradford in the 1840's quoted this. It was also related to hell because to get to the town, you had to go down a hill, from any direction, and this, in a sense resembled the decent into hell. The sulphurous

coal, used by many of the mills and factories at that time made a yellowish coloured smoke which gave a hell like illusion.

Salt, as a former Town Mayor, Magistrate, MP and Alderman of Bradford had campaigned, unsuccessfully to introduce an “ incorporation to pay for improvements”. At his mill in Saltaire he experimented with types of fuel to burn to produce less pollution and encouraged other mill owners to do the same. Housing in Bradford was described as “... the back to back” Streets as “... Narrow and filthy and the general arrangements of the buildings is unfavourable to health. ” These quotes come from a report in the Bradford Observer about the living conditions of Wool combers in Bradford. The main supply of water came from the Beck.

This also supplied the Bradford canal with water, “ On the side of this stream, there are a great many factories of various kinds, the soil, refuse and filth of which fall into the Beck. ” The health and safety of his workers was very important to Salt, he had the mill designed to be fireproof, using virtually no wood in the construction of it. Many windows were put in place to allow daylight and air to flow through the huge building. In his mill he took many precautions such as placing the drive shafts of its machinery underneath the floor, so operators would be less susceptible to injury.

For in the unlikely event of which, or for sickness he erected the Saltaire hospital. In Victorian times ‘ making your mark’ was very important, all over Saltaire are the Salt coat of arms and the creators initials, TS. He was not a very modest man, this is shown even in the name of his village, and the church is another example of this, where all around the ceiling are his

initials. Wealth was possibly one of Salts motives; to show it off, though I feel that this is unlikely as Salt, who was never a very public man didn't like to disclose such information.

But his church and the mill were very extravagant buildings and the estimated total cost of the building can be measured in millions of pounds. Salt liked to set examples to other mill owners. He did this not solely by the construction of his great mill and village, but by the placement of things within it. The Almshouses are on the main road, as is the Institute and the school (school was not compulsory, when the mill school was built) these are examples of Salts ingenuity.