From Crompton to Shaw

A Celebration of 150 Years of Local Government in Shaw and Crompton
Prior to 1864 the government of Crompton was undertaken by four unpaid officials:

**The Churchwarden.** The church was the focal point of the town’s affairs. The Churchwarden was responsible for maintaining the property and goods of the church with the ensuing financial obligations.

**The Constable.** He was responsible for law and order in the township. A citizen of the township was elected annually to serve for a period of one year, during which time he had to take an active and personal share in the pursuit and arrest of offenders, and escort them for trial at the Quarter Sessions in Manchester. He was also responsible for collecting taxes levied by the higher authorities, the other township officials being responsible for collecting rates levied locally for their own particular purposes.

**The Surveyor of Highways.** He was responsible for the upkeep of public roads. According to surviving surveyor records for 1784-1797, the township was divided into two parts: Above Beal and Below Beal, with a Surveyor appointed annually for each area. They were responsible for collecting ‘Composition Money,’ the name of the rate levied for road repairs, and for allocating work to be done and for paying the workmen. Although originally it was compulsory for people to work six days on the roads, it was now mostly commuted to money payments, though some men did work with their horse and carts in lieu of payment.

**The Overseer of the Poor.** He was responsible for collecting money from the townspeople to be used in caring for the needy, i.e. in the workhouse (above).

By the mid 19th century Crompton was an important centre for the production of cotton yarn (small amounts of cloth were also woven here). However in the 1860s the American Civil War resulted in a severe depression in Lancashire, as the supply of cotton from that country had virtually ceased. To a community such as Crompton which was totally dependent on the cotton industry, it was disastrous. Mills closed or went on short time, causing massive unemployment and consequently great hardship. There was no unemployment benefit in those days.

The situation was so desperate that in 1863 the Public Works Act was passed which allowed properly constituted local authorities set up under the Local Government Act of 1858, to borrow money in order to carry out public works, so employing a large number of unemployed mill workers.

On 28th September 1863 a public meeting was held in Shaw National School (above) to decide whether to adopt the Local Government Act of 1858 and so become a local authority. In those days only ratepayers and property owners were allowed to vote. The proposal was carried and the Act adopted. At the meeting it was decided to divide Crompton into four wards, with three representatives for each ward.

In February 1864 nominations for candidates, from people who held property to the value of at least £500, were invited. Only the requisite 12 names were put forward, probably to save time and expense. Most were already existing members of the Board of the Surveyor of Highways. The following month on 4th March they were declared elected as the Local Board for the township of Crompton.
The first meeting was held on 10th March 1864 in the Blue Bell Inn (right), which sports a Blue Plaque to commemorate the event. Joseph Clegg was elected Chairman of the Board and John Crompton appointed Clerk. At this first meeting the Board agreed to apply to the Public Works Board for a loan of £2,330 to be used for the improvement and sewerage of roads. It was also decided that the Local Board offices would be in the former school on High Street.

The Board constructed a Town Hall, which was due to open under the auspices of the Urban District Council, but the Act that was to re-constitute the Board as a UDC was held up in Parliament and the Town Hall opened while the Local Board was still the governing authority on 28th December 1894. The first meeting of Crompton UDC was 7th January 1895. While the Local Board maintained roads and cared for the poor, the UDC provided a wider range of services both under its own power and in co-operation with Lancashire County Council. It maintained the Town Hall, library, baths, parks, market, cemetery, sewage works and was responsible for public health, planning, the upkeep of public roads and for building council houses.

The Council opened two sewage disposal works: one at Newhey in 1889 (enlarged in 1921 and 1923) and the other at Low Crompton in 1896 (closed in 1973 when the system connected to the newly constructed Thorp relief sewer in Royton). The Council also opened a Cemetery on 21st October 1891, a Public Baths on 11th November 1899 and a Carnegie Library on 2nd February 1907.

The centenary of Local Government in Crompton was celebrated at a dinner held in the Town Hall on 13th March 1964. The Chairman of the Council presented the town with a plaque to commemorate the event. An exhibition was held in the library outlining the development of the district in the past and proposals for the future. The idea of publishing a history of the town was also conceived at this time and resulted in Elsie Ballard, the librarian at Crompton Library, publishing a book ‘Chronicles of Crompton’ in 1967.

In 1974 Crompton became part of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council as a result of Local Government Reorganisation. However 1987 saw the formation of Shaw and Crompton Parish Council, which has kept the original four wards but with 14 elected members. Their first Parish Council office was in the shop on the corner of Duke Street and Beal Lane across from the Carnegie Library. In 1992 it moved to High St, but since 2013 has re-located to the former Housing Office on Kershaw St East. The Parish Council acts in an advisory capacity to the Metropolitan Borough and has developed an environmental programme in conjunction with Groundwork Trust.

The Chairman’s chain was presented by Sir Frank Platt in 1937 with additional shields purchased by the Parish Council. It lists all the Chairmen since 1937. The Ladies Chain was presented by Cllr. John Howarth in February 1942 although the chain was replaced in 1961. New medallions for the Chair of the Parish Council and their consort were designed by Brian Karran in 1987. The chain for the former now comprises shields with the names of the Chair of the Parish Council, whereas the Consort’s chain is the original Ladies Chain of the UDC.

For the past few years Oldham has declared a commitment to developing a co-operative future, one where people, partners and staff work together to improve the Borough and create a confident and ambitious place. As such, some aspects of the council’s work has been devolved to district level, for example parks and gardens and community safety, so putting the clock back to how services used to be provided locally. Shaw and Crompton’s District Office is based in Royton Town Hall.

Frances Stott

Some of the information for this introduction is taken from Elsie Ballard’s book ‘Chronicles of Crompton’.
These events, which occurred in Crompton between 1864 and 2014, are intended to give a flavour of happenings in the town and to prompt many more memories for the reader.

There has always been a debate about the name of the town. In all the official documents, which go back centuries, the township was and is Crompton. It was made up of small hamlets, one of which was Shaw. This area around the Blue Bell pub was to expand into the town we know today. The postal authority issued a Shaw postmark stamp for the whole of the township and refused to change it. Similarly the railway station was called Shaw (although this was later changed to Shaw and Crompton), as was the telephone exchange. So now we have the township of Crompton with a postal address of Shaw. Today most people seem to use a mix of both names.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>The first meeting of the Local Board was on 10th March. The 1861 census had listed the population as 7,032.</td>
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<td>1865</td>
<td>Joseph Clegg of High Crompton held a supper at the Black Horse Inn for the workmen involved in the construction of his new home. Five hundred people from St John’s Church School, Miles Platting, arrived by train at Shaw station for a day’s recreation in the fields. The first stone of the new spire at East Crompton St James Church was laid by Abram Crompton, Esq.</td>
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<td>1866</td>
<td>The Pineapple Inn, mentioned as having been run by the Pomfret family from as early as 1796, was now being run by landlady Mrs Hannah Hibbert. She had come from a beerhouse in central Manchester and was known as a ‘rough diamond’. After several brushes with the law her license was revoked and she left in 1868.</td>
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<td>1867</td>
<td>The Crompton Co-operative Society (formed in 1851) opened a new central premises on Beal Lane. They later opened branches at Beal Hey, Higher Shaw, Shore Edge, Broadbent, Rochdale Road and Provident Park. There was one licensed premise for every 174 people.</td>
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<td>1868</td>
<td>A black Spanish hen, weighing 4lb, the property of Mr Thomas Goddard, Shore Edge, laid an egg which measured 7(\frac{3}{4})” in circumference and 6(\frac{1}{4})” round the girth. It weighed 3(\frac{1}{4})” oz.</td>
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<td>1869</td>
<td>Miss Mary Cocker laid the foundation stone for the new Holy Trinity Church (below), built as a replacement for Shaw Chapel.</td>
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<td>1870</td>
<td>Shaw Brass Band was founded.</td>
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<td>1871</td>
<td>Population: 7,302. Greenhill Methodist Church, High Crompton (below) opened; construction had begun the previous year. The foundation stone was</td>
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1872 - St Mary’s Church, High Crompton (above) was built, although the parish boundaries were not settled until 1878.

1873 - Shore Edge Chapel (below) built to replace the former Ebenezer Chapel.

1874 - A Roman Catholic Church, St Joseph’s, was established in a fustian mill at Shaw Side • The Limited Liability movement, where Limited Companies could raise capital by issuing shares, took hold in Shaw with the construction of Shaw Spinning Company’s Mill on Salts Street, which was completed the following year • Greenfield Lane School opened with Mr Wallace as Head Teacher.

1875 - Smallbrook Mill constructed.

1876 - Moorfield Spinning Company Mill constructed.

1877 - A fire occurred at Vale Mill, situated near the railway station, causing £40,000 worth of damage.

1878 - St Mary’s Parish boundaries established • The horse-drawn fire engine was out for an afternoon’s practice. The horse objected to this and attempted to return back to its stable. It took the combined efforts of two firemen to persuade the horse to continue • Strikers at Jubilee Colliery accepted a 2d in the shilling reduction in pay and resumed work.

1879 - Two sisters were attacked with a hammer on their way home from Smallbrook to Rushcroft Farm. John Pilling, aged 27, was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment, despite pleading his innocence. He was released in 1893.

1880 - Oldham Joint Stock Bank opened a branch on Market Street.

1881 - Population: 9,997

1882 - The first Salvation Army Citadel in Shaw was established in a first floor room above an engineering works on Beal Lane, near the Railway station.

1883 - Ash Spinning Company Mill, after initially collapsing during construction, and the Duke Mill were built • The Lancashire County Constabulary Police Station (below), Rochdale Road, opened. It was later demolished to make way for the by-pass • Platt Brothers purchased Jubilee Colliery.
1884 - John Clegg’s ‘New Mill’ at High Crompton re-built. It was destroyed by fire in 1929 • Fern and Duchess Mills constructed.

1885 - Congregational Church started holding services in Crompton Co-operative Hall on Market Street.

1886 - Corrugated iron building erected for Congregational worship at present site on Rochdale Road.

1887 - An old ash tree at the bottom of Cheetham Hill blew down. Some of the wood was used to make a pair of clogs which were displayed in clogger Mr Mellor’s window.

1888 - The Local Board borrowed £14,000 to complete the new cemetery.

1889 - Beal Mill opened • Crompton Local Board constructed a sewage works in Newhey.

1890 - Elm Mill constructed, renamed the Newby in 1932.

1891 - Population: 12,901 • The National Telephone Company bought 24 Horton Street to establish a telephone exchange. The exchange was named ‘Shaw’; the directory contained 17 business numbers and seven private individuals • The Public Cemetery (below) on Fraser Street was opened by John Wolstencroft, Chairman of the Local Board.

1892 - A lark singing contest took place at the Woolpack on 4th June. There were 28 competitors and each bird was hung for 13 minutes. The winner was Mr Garside whose bird sang for 12 minutes, 41 seconds • Joshua Milne Cheetham, JP (1835-1902), a director of A&A Crompton Ltd., Park and Woodend Mills, Shaw, was elected Liberal MP for Oldham, serving until 1895. He was also Chairman of the Oldham Joint Stock Bank.

1893 - Foundation stones laid for new Congregational Church on Rochdale Road, which opened the following year.

1894 - John Wolstencroft, Chairman of Crompton Local Board, opened the Town Hall (above) • Well known Crompton-born artist, author and critic Philip Hamerton dies.

1895 - The local authority is now re-named Crompton Urban District Council, following the Local Government Act of 1894. The first meeting was held in January.
1896 - A purpose built Roman Catholic Church and school opened at Shawside by the Bishop of Salford • Crompton UDC constructed a sewage works (below) at Low Crompton. It closed in 1973.

1897 - The Postmaster General was asked to change the name of the town from ‘Shaw’ to ‘Crompton’ – this he refused to do • The Railway station name changed to Shaw and Crompton • St George’s School opened by Miss Crompton, but it was not used as a school or Sunday school until the following year • Shaw Wesleyan Cricket Club formed with a cricket ground near Holebottom Colliery. It is now known as Shaw Cricket Club • Oldham Joint Stock Bank built a new branch on Rochdale Road. The bank was taken over by the London City & Midland Bank the following year. The branch, by now the Midland Bank, closed in 1992.

1898 - There was one licensed premise for every 341 people • The Congregational Church Sunday School building opened.

1899 - Public baths opened • Horse ambulance (above) presented to the Council by Supt McQueen of the County Police • Cape Mill constructed.

1900 - Wakes Clubs were started.

1901 - Population: 13,427 • Crompton UDC Tramways Order passed • The ‘Store Clock’ erected on the central premises on Beal Lane (above), to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the founding of the Crompton Co-operative Society in 1851 • Dawn Mill erected.

1902 - The Shaw and Crompton Tradesmen’s Association founded • The town celebrates the Coronation of Edward VII. An ox and a pig were roasted beside a tent erected on the market ground (above), and a bonfire was lit at Doghill • New Primitive Methodist Chapel built on the site of the old Chapel on Refuge Street.

1903 - There was an outbreak of smallpox in the town.

1904 - First granite sett taken up in July, near Shaw Edge, to prepare for the arrival of the tramways. The first tram ran...
from Oldham to the Coach and Horses in November • A memorial to those who served in the South African Wars, (1899-1902) was unveiled at the Town Hall by Sir James Travis-Clegg, Chairman of the War Fund Committee • Lily no 1 mill erected.

1905 - Tram service to Werneth via Royton inaugurated in April • Bank House Colliery, Grains Road, was closed • Kate Garrity (above), aged 17, of Mosshey, was found strangled. Jack Griffiths, a former boyfriend, was charged with her murder.

1906 - Local cotton trade profits said to be over £100,000 • Briar Mill erected • Old Brox Mill, High Crompton, demolished. A large crowd gathered to watch the demolition of the chimney.

1907 - Carnegie Free Public Library on Beal Lane (below left) was opened by J. W. Cockroft, former Chairman of Crompton UDC. The Co-operative Society presented its own library to the Carnegie Library • Dee and Rutland Mills erected • Crompton and Royton Golf Club formed at Higher Park.

1908 - Plot of land at Shawside, known as Hilton’s Brickyard, presented to the Council by Miss C. M. Cocker and Mrs Ormerod for use as a playground • Trent and Hawk Mills erected • St Saviour’s Church on Buckstones Road was dedicated by the Bishop of Manchester • A severe rainstorm caused serious flooding in Crompton. Mill cellars flooded, as well as houses at Smallbrook.

1909 - Tradesmen’s Almanack listed 29 cotton mills • The Shaw Brass Band (below), became known as the Shaw Prize Band after winning the National Brass Band contest held at the Crystal Palace, London, winning the 1,000 Guinea Trophy • General Booth of the Salvation Army paid a visit to Shaw, where he was welcomed by enthusiastic crowds.

1910 - Shaw vicar Rev. Hope resigns as 'not strong enough for the work.' • Tom Taylor, owner of Oak Mill, Moor Street, closed the mill for a day on his Golden Wedding anniversary, to take his workers to Blackpool.
1911 - Population: 14,750 • Shawside Park opened for public use on Coronation Day, by Miss Cocker • The Shaw Picturedrome (later the Pavilion Cinema) opened on Beal Lane. It continued until the 1960s when it became a bingo hall. It was finally demolished in 1994.

1912 - Dunwood Park opened to the public on 14th September (above). The land had been given to the town by Captain Abram Crompton and his nephews, and had been formally handed over to the Council on Coronation Day, 22nd June 1911.

1913 - Crompton and Royton Golf Club moved to High Barn, Royton from Higher Park, Shaw.

1914 - The partly erected Lilac Mill was blown down during a severe gale; fortunately this took place at 6.35pm when the 200 men employed to construct the building had left the site • Wye no 1 Mill erected • The Co-operative Society built houses on Shore Avenue, Dingle Avenue and Park Parade • Manor House, Cowlishaw, used to house Belgian refugees.

1915 - An appeal was raised to provide a Crompton ambulance for the war front. Once purchased, the ambulance was deployed at Dunkirk • A passenger train ran into stranded wagons at Shaw station. Passengers were badly shaken but not seriously hurt • The memorial window was unveiled at East Crompton Church.

1916 - Boys caught ‘swealing’ grass in Dunwood Park.

1917 - Motor Ambulance (above) purchased jointly by Crompton and Royton UDC • The Belgian Artists Committee held a musical concert at the Co-operative Society Hall to raise money for starving Belgian children • Second Lily Mill erected.

1918 - ‘Gun Week’ (above) was held between 18th and 23rd November; this turned into ‘Thanksgiving Week’ with the cessation of hostilities on 11th November. The Crompton Gun Committee aimed to raise £478,500 to invest with the Government. The total amount raised came to £656,321, an average of £43 per head of the population; this earned Crompton the title of ‘Champions of the British Isles’.
1919 - A tank (below) was given to the people of Shaw in recognition of their record-breaking war savings effort. It was driven from Shaw Station to Dunwood Park, where it remained until being given for use as scrap metal during the Second World War • The tramway was extended to Wren’s Nest • The ‘Education’ statue was given to the Public Library by J.W. Cockroft.

1920 - Land at High Crompton given by Cllr. William Hopwood for a public park • Foundation stone of the first block of council houses on Moor Street was laid. • Land at the site of the old Wren’s Nest mill was purchased by Cllr. William Hopwood and presented to the Council by a deed dated 31st December 1920, for use as public recreation ground.

1921 - Population: 14,971 • It was announced in the New Year’s Honours List that the King was to confer a knighthood on Cllr. William Hopwood JP. Sir William, who died in 1936 aged 73, was a self-made man who started life as a tubber in a cotton mill. He later became a piece, spinner and eventually a mule overlooker. He was the first manager of the Trent Mill and later was on the board of directors of 34 spinning companies. He was a generous benefactor to Shaw. However he lost all of his money in the slump and was declared bankrupt • The tram service was extended to Hollinwood.

1922 - Bank House, Rochdale Road, built for the Manager of Williams Deacon’s Bank.

1923 - The death occurred of Sam Fitton of High Crompton who was a painter, cartoonist, actor, elocutionist and writer • Crompton War Memorial, containing 346 names, was unveiled by General Sir Ian Hamilton (above). The Sculptor was R.R. Goulden, the cost was £4,000, but the total cost including the site and the layout came to £6,067.

1924 - The Queen Ann pub rebuilt • Crompton Musical Society founded.

1925 - The ‘new’ Post Office was built on Rochdale Road • Second Wye Mill erected – this was the last mill to be built in Shaw • The Princes Cinema on Newtown Street opened – it is now the home of Crompton Stage Society • The ‘Big Lamp’, an oversized gas lamp, which stood at the junction of Manchester, Oldham and Church Roads, was pulled down • A
A drinking fountain was installed in Dunwood Park sculpted by R.R. Goulden who also designed the war memorial.

**1926** - The family home of the Crompton family (above) was given for use as a school by Miss Mary Crompton and Mrs Ormerod of New Bank, Shaw. Crompton House School was opened in October of this year by the Dean of Manchester. The Memorial Gardens, situated behind the war memorial, were opened by Cllr. S. Taylor.

**1927** - Shaw to Rochdale, and Shaw to Middleton via Royton bus services began.

**1928** - Williams Deacon’s bank (above) opened its new premises on Rochdale Road (later became Williams and Glyn’s, now the Royal Bank of Scotland).

**1929** - Lyon Mill (right), High Street, destroyed by fire.

**1930** - Newhey to Manchester bus service, via Shaw and Broadway started. The memorial to the South African wars was moved to the Memorial Gardens from the front of the Town Hall.

**1931** - Population: 14,794. Rev. Kathleen Hendry became one of the first women priests when she became Minister of the Congregational Church, Rochdale Road. She was asked to resign when she married in 1938, but returned ten years later. Mr James Wild of Over Peover (formerly of Shaw) gave 11 1/4 acres of land at New Barn for use as Playing Fields.

**1932** - The Shaw and Crompton branch of the Royal British Legion was founded. Jubilee Colliery closed (above). The pit was allowed to flood, the water level joining with Butterworth Hall seams, to make a vast underground reservoir. A new section of Rochdale Road was built, straightening the part which previously ran along by what is now The Orchards.

**1933** - Local elections were held. Cllr. M. Pilling was defeated; Cllr. Joseph Wright became the new Chairman. There were later complaints regarding the wording of the Labour party election leaflet.
1934 - Vale Mill demolished • Crompton Stage Society formed in the Oddfellows Hall, Farrow Street.

1935 - Motor buses replaced the previous tram service between Shaw and Oldham and the service was extended beyond Oldham to Manchester, via Mills Hill • Duchess Mill demolished • George V’s Silver Jubilee led to decorations at High Crompton Post Office, the Town Hall and the war memorial. A bonfire and fireworks were held at Doghill in the evening.

1936 - A memorial service was held at Holy Trinity Church to commemorate the late King George V • The market is listed as having 90 stalls • Three boys admitted disorderly conduct in the public library. A public apology was printed in the newspaper.

1937 - The Chain of Office worn by the Chairman of Crompton UDC was presented by Sir Frank Platt.

1938 - Springhill Mill, belonging to Joseph Clegg, High Crompton, demolished • Crompton Stage Society (founded in 1934) re-located to the old Methodist Chapel on Gordon Street.

1939 - Tram to Hollinwood (below) replaced by bus service.

1940 - The Moulder’s Arms pub, now the Cricketers, rebuilt behind the original pub, ostensibly for road-widening, which has still to take place! • A Messerschmitt 109 fighter plane (below) was displayed on the market ground, when the town was again asked to contribute funds to the war effort. The Spitfire Fund raised £1190.16s.

1941 - A branch of the Air Training Corps was launched • A War Weapons Week was held – children born during the week were given a Savings Certificate.

1942 - The Chairman’s Ladies Chain was presented by Cllr. John H. Howarth • Sir James Travis–Clegg dies. He was the son of John Travis Clegg of High Crompton and Newtown Mills and born at Moorfield House, High Crompton, in 1874. He changed his name by deed poll to Travis–Clegg in 1895. He was a member of Crompton Urban District Council for several years from 1896 and was Chairman in 1902-3-4. He was the elected representative for Crompton to Lancashire County Council from 1898 – 1911 and later was Chairman of the County Council. Knighted in 1933 he was Constable of Lancaster Castle. He retired from the County Council in 1937.

1943 - Collier’s Arms, High Crompton, closed as a public house, becoming a boarding house for Polish refugees around 1947.
1944 - Beating of the Bounds took place. This event dates back to medieval times as the means of defining the boundaries of the town for a population where the majority could neither read nor write. The custom was revived in the late nineteenth century and usually takes place every seven years. Two of the more unusual aspects of beating Crompton’s bounds were to swim across Besom Hill reservoir and climb over the roof of the King’s Arms pub at Grains Bar (above, photo taken in 1965). Twenty two mothers and 59 children were listed as evacuees. Crompton raised £109,000 during Salute the Soldier week; a plaque was presented and placed in the Town Hall.

1945 - Local man Captain James Alwyn Hartley was awarded the Military Cross. Flight Lieutenant Wilfred Dawson was awarded the DFC. There were great celebrations for VJ Day; there was a bonfire and a fairground. Local children were given tickets for free rides on the fairground.

1946 - Authorisation was given for the building of 66 three bed roomed houses on Duchess Street; tenders were invited. Groups of schoolchildren were taken on a tour of Lilac Mill. First post-war Civic Ball at Crompton - Chairman was Cllr. C. Bradley. There were 450 guests.

1947 - A new centre for the town was planned, including a by-pass (below). The centre, which included a Civic Hall, bus station, youth club and a cinema, was never built. Traffic lights were erected at Four Lane Ends.

1948 - Crompton’s biggest ever Chairman’s Churching Parade took place, with thousands lining the streets between the Town Hall and St James’ Church. The new Chairman, Cllr. Thomas Mann, JP, was so overcome with emotion after the Church Service that he was unable to lead the procession back. After medical attention he was driven back to Market Square to give his address.

1949 - The Ministry of Health gave further authorisation for 62 more homes to be built on Lower Rushcroft estate, making a total of 162 council homes in the town. Miss E.M. Herd was the first woman elected to the Council.
1950 - Panels containing the names of those who died during the 1939-45 war added to the war memorial and unveiled by Cllr. Turner, Chairman of the Council.

1951 - Population: 12,559

1952 - Crompton Hall demolished (above) • Wren’s Nest children’s playground opened to the public.

1953 - A local boy, David Howarth, aged 8, a cub scout, received the Royal Humane Society Testimonial for rescuing three boys from drowning in a local mill lodge • All local schoolchildren were given a beaker and a spoon to commemorate the Coronation.

1954 - Her Majesty the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh (above right) visit the Lilac Mill.

1955 - Founding of the Crompton Literary Society

1956 - A new vicarage for Holy Trinity church was built on Church Road.

1957 - Refuge Street Methodist Chapel closed.

1958 - Shaw and District Motorcycle Club founded • Diesel trains were introduced on the local line • Beating of the Bounds took place (see also under 1944).

1959 - The council submitted plans for a £250,000 road improvement scheme which included a by-pass.

1960 - Princes Cinema on Newtown Street, finally closed. It had first closed in 1958 but continued as a charity cinema for two years.

1961 - Population: 12,707 • The Chairman’s Ladies Chain was replaced by one provided by public subscription. • Our Lady’s Roman Catholic high school opened in Royton to serve the Parishes of Crompton and Royton • Wakes holidays moved from August to June.

1962 - The Shaw and Crompton Committee of the National Society for Cancer Relief was founded.
1963 - Greenhill Methodist Church, High Crompton closed • Shaw and Crompton railway goods yard (above) closed • Crompton Playhouse Theatre on Gordon Street burned down following a performance of Jane Eyre.

1964 - A dinner held in the Town Hall celebrated the Centenary of local government in Crompton. A plaque of commemoration was presented by the Chairman of the Council, Cllr. R.W. Mills • A flood cascaded from the quarries above Buckstones Road (below). Pingot, Buckstones Road, Milnrow Road were all affected • A new St James School opened by Mr and Mrs L. Barker • Smallbrook Mill demolished.

1965 - There was a proposal for a ‘New Oldham’, which would absorb many local districts, including Shaw and Crompton • One of the outer walls of the Town Hall was said to be leaning • Beating of the Bounds took place (see also under 1944).

1966 - St Andrew’s, Trent Road, opened to replace the demolished Greenhill Methodist Church. The congregation had been meeting in St Mary’s Church in the interim three years • Following a fire in the early 1960s, Crompton Stage Society re-located to the old Princes Cinema on Newtown Street which became known as Playhouse 2.

1967 - Refuge Street Methodist Chapel demolished • St George’s school demolished, replaced by a new school on the opposite side of Scarr Lane. It was opened by Mr and Mrs F. Everington.

1968 - The official opening of Royton and Crompton School took place in October. It replaced the Crompton Central School on Kings Road, which now became Newbarn Primary School (above) • Woodend Mill demolished.

1969 - King’s Arms pub at Big Lamp re-opened on Oldham Road in new building • New roundabout constructed and work started on the by-pass • Shaw National School, on Manchester Road, closed, the pupils transferring to Newbarn School, in the building of the old Crompton Central School.

1970 - The by-pass, Crompton Way, was completed • Two women were killed and four homes lost in a gas explosion on Linney Lane.

1971 - Population: 17,081
1972 - The last Beating of the Bounds under Crompton Urban District Council took place (see also under 1944)
  • Shaw Spinning Mill demolished • A new St Joseph’s infant school opened • St Edmund’s RC Chapel at Ease at Wren’s Nest was opened by the Bishop of Salford.

1973 - Shaw and Crompton Station buildings (above) demolished • A new ‘All in One’ health centre opened on High St on the site of the previous centre, which had been demolished the year before.

1974 - Last council meeting held on 14th March, with the last Civic Procession held on Sunday 31st March. The last Chairman was George Read. On 1st April Shaw and Crompton became part of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council. • Wye 1 and 2 Mills, as well as Moorfield Mill demolished • Railway Station named just as ‘Shaw’.

1975 - Joseph Clegg’s mills ceased production • New St Joseph’s Junior School opened • St Paul’s School closed, staff and pupils moving to the new Beal Vale School on Salts Street. At the same time the Chapel building was closed, the Church Hall was converted to a dual purpose room.

1976 - Joseph Clegg’s mills at High Crompton demolished • The ‘Education’ statue was moved to St. James’ churchyard.

1977 - The Town Hall was demolished.

1978 - St Paul’s Methodist Chapel building proposed for demolition – it was later discovered to be a listed building, fund-raising for repairs is still ongoing • The new Yorkshire Bank building opens on Market Street, next to the original building, which was later demolished.

1979 - Littlewoods opened the Shaw National Distribution Centre, as a warehousing and returns centre, in the former Lily Mills.

1980 - Shaw to Rochdale railway line made into single-track • Beating of the Bounds took place (see also under 1944).


1982 - Greenfield Lane School closed, later to be demolished and Aldi Store built on site.

1983 - New Collier’s Return, replacing the demolished Collier’s Arms, High Crompton, opened • The Fern Mill demolished • Farrowdale House preparatory school opened • Proposals for Parish Council put forward to Oldham Council turned down.

1984 - New Community Centre (above) on the site of the former Town Hall opened • Dee Mill demolished • New St Joseph’s Roman Catholic Church built at Shawside.

1985 - New diesel ‘Pacer’ trains introduced • Ash Mill demolished.

1986 - Beating of the Bounds (see also under 1944).
1987 - Shaw granted Parish Council status. The first Chair was Edith Buckley, with Mike Hambley as Clerk. He took over as Chair the following year.

1988 - New ‘Big Lamp’ (an extra large gas lamp) erected in November on the roundabout at the junction of Oldham, Manchester and Church Roads and Crompton Way.

1989 - The Lilac Mill and the Park Mill closed to cotton spinning. They were the last ones still working • Shaw and Crompton Parish Councillors re-enact the first meeting of Crompton Local Board, 125 years ago • Railway station re-named ‘Shaw and Crompton’ as originally named • The Carnegie Library on Beal Lane closed; the new one on Farrow St East (below) was opened by local actress Meg Johnson.

1990 - The Parish Council erected ‘Welcome to Shaw’ boundary signs.


1992 - Midland Bank on Rochdale Road closed • Official opening of the Parish Council offices on High Street.

1993 - Demolition of the Cape (right) and Rutland Mills • The Parish Council re-created the Beating of the Bounds (see also under 1944) • A fight began against the proposed closure of the public baths • Salvation Army building on Farrow Street, refurbished.

1994 - Original proposals were made for bringing Metrolink to the town.

1995 - Shaw and Crompton beacon erected in Memorial Gardens to mark the 50th Anniversary of the ending of World War II • New Housing Office built on Kershaw Street.

1996 - Local Councillor Alan Griffiths was elected Mayor of Oldham.

1997 - Parliamentary constituency changed from ‘Littleborough and Saddleworth’ to ‘Oldham East and Saddleworth’ • Unveiling of the restored painting of High Crompton from Seven Acre Field in the public library. Originally painted in 1870, the artist was J. Holland.

1998 - United Reformed Church Sunday school building demolished following severe damage caused by a gale the previous year.

1999 - Plans were unveiled to the Parish Council for a revamp of Shaw Town Centre • Plans were presented for a new supermarket in Shaw on the site of the Dawn Mill. These were supported by residents.
2000 - Beating of the Bounds (see also under 1944) • Local Councillor John Dillon was elected Mayor of Oldham • The Osram factory, in the Duke Mill, closed.

2001 - Population: 21,738 • Crompton Primary School opened as a result of the amalgamation of Newbarn Nursery, Infant and Junior Schools.

2002 - The new United Reformed Church Hall on Rochdale Road was opened by Mrs Frances Brownhill • Golden Jubilee of the Coronation of Her Majesty the Queen commemorated with a tree planted in High Crompton Park.

2003 - Inaugural meeting of the Friends of Dunwood Park.

2004 - Moor Street children’s play area built.

2005 - Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, visited the Shaw National Distribution Centre (Littlewoods) Training Centre.

2006 - Dawn Mill demolished.

2007 - Asda supermarket (above) opened on site of old Dawn Mill • Local Councillor Ann Wingate was elected Mayor of Oldham • Beating of the Bounds (see also under 1944).

2008 - 25th Anniversary of Groundwork Oldham and Rochdale which has run courses for local people and also helps to maintain several open country areas in the district. Before moving to the former Higginshaw School it had a base at Bank House, Chapel Street.

2009 - Oldham Loop train line closed in preparation for Metrolink trams construction • New Cockroft Hall (above) opened on High Street. It is now occupied by Shaw and Crompton Children’s Centre • Friends of Crompton Moor founded.

2010 - Phil Woolas, MP, was charged under section 106 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 and was forced to resign his seat. In January of the following year Debbie Abrahams was elected.
  • Lottery funding awarded for renovation of Dunwood Park.

2011 - Population: 21,082 • Beal Hey amenity tip closed, despite local appeals to retain it.

2012 - Diamond Jubilee of the Coronation of Her Majesty the Queen; beacon lit at Memorial Gardens • Gas blast on Buckley Street kills toddler Jamie Heaton and destroys several homes. Many people were evacuated, not to return for several months. Neighbour Andrew Partington admits manslaughter and is jailed • Dunwood Park re-opens to the public after lottery-funded revamp • Metrolink tram service opens to Shaw and Crompton.
2013 - Metrolink tram service (above) extended to Rochdale train station • The ‘Education’ statue (below) from St James’ churchyard was re-sited in the Memorial Gardens • United Reformed Church building demolished.


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People who wish to carry out further research may wish to visit the Local Studies Library, 84 Union Street, Oldham, OL1 1DN
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Front Cover. The Medallion from the Chairman of Crompton Urban District Council’s Chain. In the centre is the coat of arms used by the town. This consisted of the coat of arms of Lancashire County Council with the icon of a spinning wheel beneath.

Back Cover: The Medallion from the Chair of Shaw and Crompton Parish Council’s chain. The town is represented as a tree (the rounded castellated red shape, with the 1987 forming the trunk of the tree) on the bend in the river (the curve above the trunk). The 14 red discs represent the original fourteen councillors.