

THE LOST PURSE

School was closed for the day and pupils, Teachers and helpers were on a bus singing on the journey to Beamish Museum. They alighted and children were assigned to one adult, who had to be responsible for them. Mrs. Smith had six boys aged seven years, her grandson being one of them.

"O.K. boys put haversacks on your backs, pair off into two, with two more following, then the final two at the back. We must keep together all the time. If any of you should get lost make your way back to the Shops and wait until I come for you. Do you all understand?"

"Yes Mrs. Smith" they chorused.

They looked at animals on the farm, went into the School and sat at desks when they were told how boys and girls were taught years ago. They then went for a ride on a tram car, the first they had ever seen. They sat on the open top deck and had such fun. Eventually they arrived at the Station and had a ride in the carriage that was pulled along by an old fashioned train bellowing out black smoke.

"Time for lunch boys. We'll sit on the steps at the side of this Monument." They sat quietly having their picnic then jumped up and began rolling down the grass verge running wildly. Mrs. Smith took a few photographs then they packed their belongings and moved on.

They visited a house containing old fashioned furniture which was very interesting. They then went into the next house which had been a Dentists. They were in awe at some of the instruments.

"Look at the size of that drill. I wouldn't like that in my mouth" one of them shouted.

A shop at the end of the Street was selling toffee, candy rock and sweets. They went into the back and watched a man rolling out long strips of candy rock into small lengths. Everything was made on the premises. The children thought it was cool.

"As you're been so well behaved I'll buy whatever you want" Mrs. Smith said. The shop was crammed with excited children all trying to be served at once.

"Look what I've found. It dropped and hit my foot" Thomas said handing Mrs. Smith a black leather purse. She opened it and inside was a bus pass, two £5 pound notes and several coins.

"Give it to the lady behind the counter. It belongs to an old person and they may come back to see if it has been found" Mrs. Smith said. The lady took the purse and laid it on the shelf next to the jars of sweets.

"As you've been so honest in handing the purse to me I want you each to choose something you like as a thank you." The children were so excited as they chose their reward.

"We've enjoyed going on the trains and buses but the best thing is all these sweets and candy we've got given by the lady in the shop and Mrs. Smith. We've had a great time" they all shouted and each of them gave Mrs. Smith a hug.

Stella Rutherford.