



### **William Higginbotham**

The name William Higginbotham may not mean a lot to you, but he brought entertainment and pleasure to many people in Macclesfield. He was the founder, in 1922, of the Majestic Picture House Ltd.

William, the son of Edward and Mary Higginbotham, was born in 1865 and baptized on 18 June 1873 at Christ Church Licensed School Room Macclesfield (later St John's), together with his sister Mary Jane, and brother Thomas.

In 1881, William, was at 55 Crossall Street Macclesfield with his father, Edward, a master wood turner who was employing his two sons, William, aged 15, an apprentice brush maker and John, aged 18 a wood turner. Also at home were mother Mary and sisters Ann, aged 27 a silk winder, Edna, aged 20 a silk weaver, Mary Jane, aged 12 a scholar and Emily, aged 4.

On 5 April 1893 at Prestbury parish church, William married Mary Alice Bamford. He gave his occupation as brush maker, and both gave their place of residence as Butley. They had two children Doris Devereux Higginbotham born on 24 March 1894 and William Stanley Bamford Higginbotham born on 14 September 1895.

Kelly's Cheshire directory of 1896 lists William Higginbotham as a brush maker of 111 Mill Street with his works at 7 Samuel Street Macclesfield.

In 1921 William, now a widower, was at 93 Mill Street with his son William S. B., also a brush manufacturer, and daughter Doris D.

In 1922 William converted his china and brush shop into the Majestic Cinema which opened on 21st December 1922. It evolved into a handsome 1,022 seat cinema with a distinctive tower faced in white faience tiles. It had a small stage which was used for variety and local amateur productions. The Majestic Cinema outlasted all the other cinemas in the town and finally closed on 2nd April 1998 with "The Man in the Iron Mask". The name lives on in the Macclesfield Majestic Theatre Group.

William, now of 403 Park Lane, died in 1931. His gravestone in Macclesfield cemetery reads; 'Sacred to the memory of William Higginbotham passed on August 28th 1931 aged 65 years also Mary Alice wife of the above passed on October 5th 1920 aged 52 years also Doris Devereux Higginbotham passed on August 18th 1979 aged 85 years.

William was the founder of Macclesfield Majestic Picture House Ltd 1922.'

His son William S. B. Higginbotham, took over the running of the cinema after his father's death and his daughter Doris D. Higginbotham was a shareholder in the company.

William S. B. married Nora Bennett at Christ Church on 27 February 1924 and they had two children Sheila Mary Higginbotham born in 1926 and Peter William Higginbotham born in 1932. William S. B. of Little Moss Farm Gawsorth died on 13 January 1958.

Peter William Higginbotham then took over the running of the cinema.