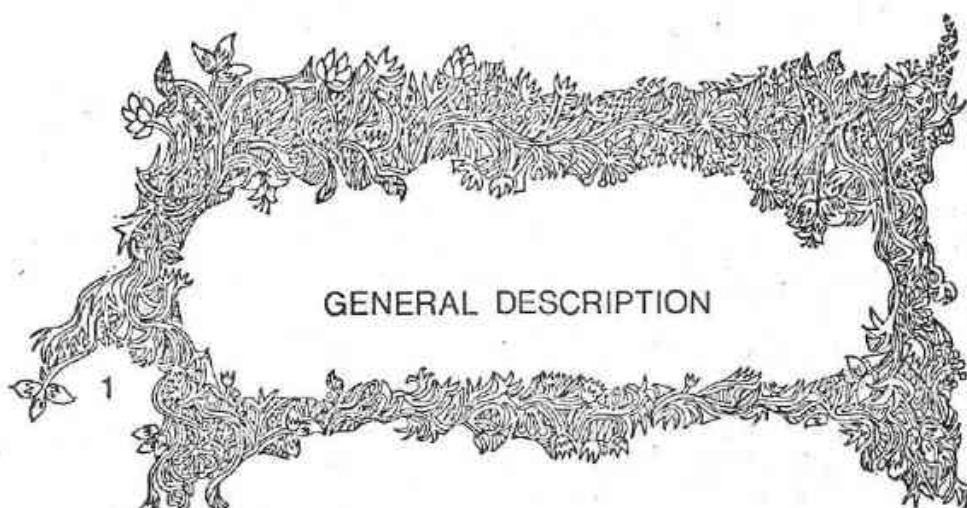




Bedale, a small market town in North Yorkshire, consists mainly of a broad High Street flanked by cobbles and bordered by shops and attractive old houses built in Georgian times. If you go along this street in a north westerly direction, pass the Parish Church on your right hand and continue along road A684 you will arrive, after two miles, at the village of Great Crakehall.

It is a typical English village. No momentous events have taken place here, there are no magnificent houses or monuments, the surrounding scenery is not spectacular, nor, so far as I can discover, has it even been the home of any person of great importance so there is little here to attract the tourist. Yet the life of the village has gone on without a break for 1,300 years, the land ploughed and tilled, corn sown and reaped, generation after generation of people born, married and buried here; its tranquillity has been disturbed time after time by war and pestilence, but, after each tragedy, the rhythm of village life has gradually got back to normal, the daily toil resumed, and, in time, even the memory has been erased.

North Yorkshire contains many attractive villages but not one is more pleasing to the eye than Great Crakehall. The quadrangular village green with its magnificent sycamores and limes covers about five acres and is surrounded by houses which are predominantly 18th century. Not one of them strikes a discordant note.

Perhaps the best way to describe the village is to start in the north-east corner of the green and walk round it in a clockwise direction. The east side is dominated by the Hall, a large building with a typical Georgian facade, built in 1732, fronted by a gravelled forecourt, the high garden wall extends to the attractive buildings of the Hall Farm in

the south east corner of the green. In front of the garden wall some fine sycamores, about a hundred years old, form the boundary of the cricket pitch which has been played upon since before the trees were planted. Rooks nest in these trees and their cawing makes a pleasant background noise to the daily life of the village. On the south side of the green are five detached houses or cottages, including the Hall Farm, also built about 1730 and the houses of the constable and vicar. Then comes the main road that bisects the village beyond which a row of cottages, the Methodist Chapel, Manor House Farm and further cottages lead to the "West End" in the south-west corner of the green where Station Road leaves the village.

The western edge of the green is slightly higher than the rest. A row of cottages runs alongside the croquet lawn and finishes at the house of the School Mistress beside which a narrow passage leads to the Village School. The inn, the Bay Horse, comes next with an unmade road connecting it with the A684.

Beyond the inn is a farmhouse, more cottages and finally the village store and Post Office. We now reach the A684 as it leaves the green in its north-west corner.

Apart from Bridge House and an ancient adjoining cottage the north-west of the green is bordered by Crakehall House, a pleasing, creeperclad 18th century building, and its row of pantiled service cottages. Beside the garden wall a great beech tree spreads its branches over the green.

Crossing another lane we are now back at the Hall. The Anglican Church occupies an island site on the southern side of the green. Built in 1839 the simple church has no pretention to grandeur, yet together with the cedars, pines and hollies in the churchyard it adds to the beauty of the village.

In the spring the green is bright with daffodils. Later in the year the scent of lime flowers fills the air. Behind many of the houses surrounding the green long narrow gardens or garths, varying considerably in their standard of cultivation, stretch into the surrounding fields. Add a few houses beside Station Road, the old vicarage, the petrol station, and a close of old peoples' bungalows and you have the remainder of Great Crakehall.

If you follow the main road from where it leaves the village at the north-west corner of the green and cross the old stone bridge over the beck you come to Little Crakehall. Apart from three early Georgian houses beside the beck, one which was an inn, the Malt Shovel, two corn mills which no longer function and some old cottages it has neither distinction nor architectural interest. A few farms and cottages, a council housing estate and some new bungalows and that is all. Yet its history is as interesting as that of Great Crakehall and its population must be nearly as large. There is a good deal of healthy and good humoured competition between the two sections of the village.

Crakehall lies at a height of little more than 200 feet above sea level where the hills flanking Wensleydale debouch into the Vale of Mowbray. The area surrounding the village is fairly flat but one can see Witton Fell (1,250 ft) and Pen Hill (1,792 ft) to the west and the Cleveland and Hambleton Hills to the east. The land is well-drained loam, rich, fertile, and well farmed, approximately one half being arable, mainly barley, and the remainder meadows and pasture. Trees grow well upon it particularly elms and sycamores. Crakehall beck which flows between the two villages is a rippling stream, fifteen to twenty feet wide running from west to east and eventually joining the River Swale a mile below Morton Bridge. It is fairly clear and unpolluted and contains a few trout and a good many grayling.

Most of the older houses are built of stone, either limestone quarried in the parish or boulders from the land or beck. Where the latter are used the square corners and the chimney breasts of the houses are of bricks, hand made and fired near the village.

Many of the roofs are pantiled but gritstone or slate roofs are not uncommon, nor is the combination of pantiles edged with stone slates.

Crakehall is a small village, the combined population of both Great and Little Crakehall at the 1971 census being 372. One could describe it as "mixed", a fair balance between young and old, rich and poor (with no extremes), agricultural and non-agricultural. There is an increasing proportion of "retired" and people who work outside the village. This mixture has helped to make a "live village" with a number of flourishing clubs like the W.I., Over 60's, and several sports clubs, while services like "Meals on Wheels" cater

for the older folk and the Village Green Committee looks after the green and other common land.

There is a good community spirit and fund raising efforts for village amenities are invariably well supported.

I hope this brief description will give a general picture of our village. I now propose to tell something of its history.



250 million years ago the surface of the earth bore no resemblance to the world we know. A shallow sea covered the whole of what is now the Yorkshire Dales and in its warm water myriads of primitive creatures lived and died. The accumulation of their shells and skeletons formed the magnesium limestone which is the underlying rock of Crakehall and from which many of its houses are built.

Millions of years later the earth's surface was folded and contorted by internal heat and explosions, mountain ranges were thrown up and valleys formed. In the course of time the climate changed completely, the heat gave way to Arctic cold, and the valleys and all but the highest hills were covered by enormous glaciers which, during thousands of years, remorselessly ground down most of the ridges and lesser hills and carried the debris away. The place where Crakehall now stands was somewhere near the junction of the great Wensleydale glacier and the even greater glacier travelling south through the Vale of Mowbray. Certainly it was under several hundred feet of ice.

Nothing is static, the earth's climate changed again and this time it became warmer, the glaciers gradually melted and the debris brought down by them in the form of mud, clay, sand, gravel and stones was deposited over much of the lower dales and Vale of Mowbray, including of course the Crakehall area. From the clay deposits our bricks and pantiles are made and from the glacial deposits as a whole we get our fertile, well drained land. Levelling part of the village green recently we dug up two boulders of red sandstone which could have been glacier borne from what is now the Vale of Eden.

From remains uncovered there is evidence that man settled in this area from very early times, probably from Neolithic times, 2,000 years before Christ. This is the era when

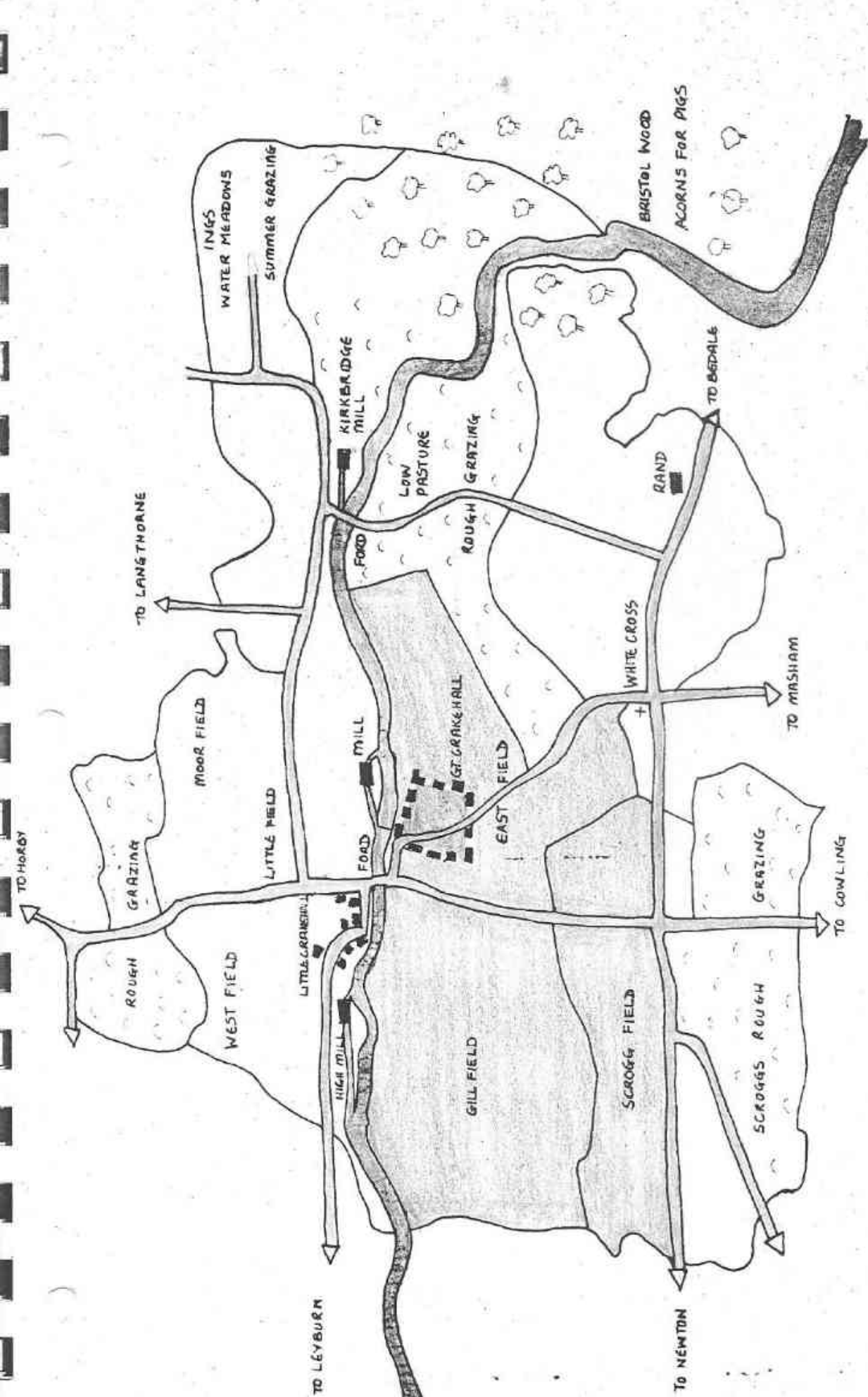
stone tools were first ground and polished, when seeds were first sown and crops reaped, when animals were first domesticated and kept for meat or milk.

We know the Brigantes, that warlike tribe of iron-age people, lived here and although they were eventually conquered by the Romans, it is not thought that all their land was confiscated, nor that they were driven out of their settlements. Catterick and Aldborough, principal settlements of the Brigantes became important Roman stations but the probability is that the Romans were never thick enough on the ground to occupy every settlement in the forest clearings.

The first three or four centuries of the Roman occupation seem to have been a fairly settled period when much forest was cleared and land brought under cultivation using captive Brigantes as slave labour. In addition to settlements at Catterick and Aldborough the Romans had farms and villas at Well and Middleham. But by the fifth century A.D. the power of Rome weakened throughout Europe. The Picts overran Hadrian's Wall and there were raiding parties of Scots from Ireland and Saxons and Angles from Germany. Slowly the Romans withdrew southwards and finally left Britain to the tender mercies of the raiders.

The invading Angles settled in many places in this area and the layout of Great Crakehall itself is typical of an Anglian village, a circle of dwellings surrounding an open space (later to become the Green) above the high bank of a stream. The name Crakehall was derived from "Craca's Settlement". Craca is a Saxon name and this would date the original settlement somewhere about 650 A.D. Behind the huts the forest was cleared, areas of Common Land levelled by terracing and cultivated. This land was ploughed by teams of oxen in long strips known as lynchets and the outlines of such strips can be traced above the beck on Pasture House Farm (Mr. Bowes) and in fields on the right of the Hackforth Road behind Mr. Morgan's house.

This, the "Dark Ages", was a period when no man's life or property was secure and for hundreds of years the settlers had to withstand repeated raids or invasions, sometimes more Angles and Saxons, other times Danes equally determined to grab what they could and destroy what they could not grab. Many times settlements must have been wiped out and stock and land taken over by the raiders. At other times the newcomers carved out new settlements for themselves and intermarried with their neighbours. A further menace,



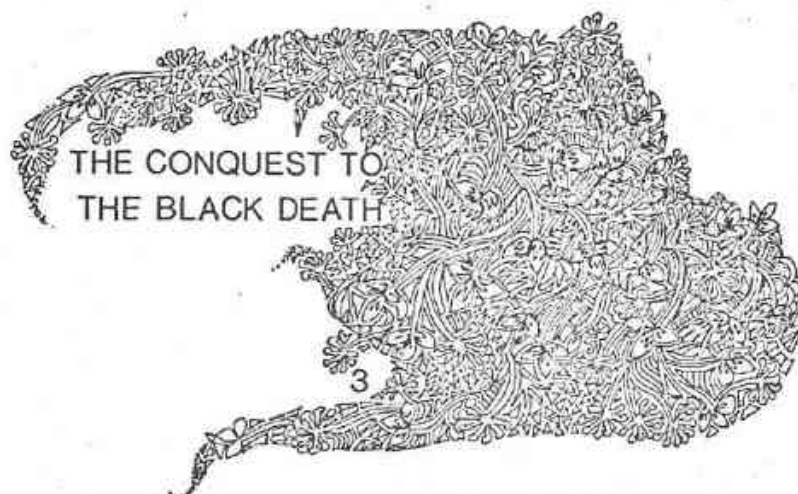
- GT. CRAKEHALL
- LT. CRAKEHALL
- CART ROADS AND BRIDGEWAYS

Crakehall prior to 1599 SHOWING COMMON FIELDS

the Vikings, swooped over the Pennines from the west and no doubt took their toll, but they do not seem to have settled in this district.

The first written record of Crakehall that I can find is in Domesday Book (1086) compiled by William the Conqueror's instructions to ensure that everything taxable was taxed. It reads "In Crakehall for geld (tax) twelve carucates and seven ploughs may be there. Ghille and Ulchil had two manors there. Now two knights have them of the Earl (of Richmond) and two ploughs are there in the demesne, eight villanes and six bordars with five ploughs and one mill of four shillings (annual value) eight acres of meadow wood pasturable two quaranteens in length and as much in breadth the whole manor one leuga (league or mile?) in length and one in breadth. In the reign of Edward (the Confessor) it was worth forty shillings now thirty eight shillings". A carucate is believed to be that portion of land set out for one plough, varying according to the lightness or stiffness of the soil, it was about 100 acres. The value of the Manor of Crakehall after the conquest varied little from what it was before. If William, as we read in the history books, "laid waste the north", did he overlook or take pity on Crakehall? About this time Crakehall consisted of fourteen families, some living round the green in Great Crakehall, others to the north of the beck in Little Crakehall. It was one of the most important settlements in the district, at that time being larger than Bedale. Great and Little Crakehall both had three open fields each about 200 acres in extent as can be seen on the plan facing this page. The fields belonging to Great Crakehall were known as Gillfield, The Scroggs, and the East, those for Little Crakehall being West, East, and Little Fields. Each family was allowed so many strips in each of the three fields and every year two fields were ploughed and one was rested as fallow. In addition to their own strips the tenants had to join in cultivating the 120 acres belonging to their landlord, the Lord of the Manor.

Surrounding these cultivated fields was an area of rough pasture, mixed scrub and grass, where each family could graze a limited number of cattle, sheep or geese, while the oak-woods between Crakehall and Bedale provided rooting for herds of pigs. The Ings, a low lying area east of Kirkbridge, much subject to flooding, but nevertheless producing some hay and pasture, was Common Land for both Great and Little Crakehall. All this land was unlikely to have been available before the end of the 11th or even 12th century, but it is obvious that here was a well organised and settled community that demanded nothing more than to be left alone.



At the Battle of Hastings the rearguard of William's army was commanded by his cousin Alan Rufus, so called because of his red hair, who was the son of Eudo, Earl of Brittany. When William marched north Alan accompanied him and during the six month's ~~siege of York~~^{campaign} he impressed the Conqueror by his courage and ability. ~~The city~~^{York} was defended by Edwin, Earl of Mercia, and his brother Morcar and, when it fell, William rewarded Alan by giving him the great possessions of Edwin and created him an Earl. These possessions included 164 manors in what became Richmondshire, some of which were in the Wapentake of Hang East. In local government jargon Crakehall is still described as being in the Petty Sessional Division of Hang East. A Wapentake (or Hundred) being an area in Saxon times settled by a hundred families or capable of providing a hundred able men for the King's wars.

Alan Rufus saw the strategic value of the great rocks protected on two sides by the River Swale, and in 1071 began to build Richmond Castle, living meanwhile in temporary quarters at Gilling West. Under the feudal system, introduced by the Normans, Alan held Richmond "in fee" for the King and he allocated the surrounding manors to his kinsmen and supporters who held them "in fee" for him. The "fee" being the service of so many knights at certain times of the year to attend the King or the Lord as the case might be. Crakehall with other "fees" was granted to Bodin, supposed to have been one of Alan's bastard brothers. He lived to a great age and presumably died without issue as between 1100 and 1120 he willed Great Crakehall, then consisting of 4 carucates together with Middleham to his brother Ribald. The service of the Middleham "fee", which may have included Crakehall, was fifteen knights to render castle guard at Richmond throughout June and July. Ribald, Lord of Middleham, gave two sheaves of corn from the tithes of his demesnes at Crakehall to St. Martin's Priory, Richmond. It would appear that Crakehall consisted of two manors, one, probably Great Crakehall held by a knight as tenant of the Lord of Middleham

who in turn held his land "in fee" of the Earl of Richmond, and the other, probably Little Crakehall, held by a knight directly "in fee" of the Earl.

Deeds or wills of the 12th and 13th centuries contain frequent references to the knights of Crakehall. About 1170 Elinant de Crachalle was witness to a deed transferring land to the hospital of St. Peter at York, between 1184 and 1189 Morcher de Cracale is mentioned in another transfer of land, while a marriage settlement of about 1250 refers to Parnell, daughter of John de Crakehall. A few years later Elias de Crakehall, son of Constance de Crakehall, heir to Conan, Seneschal of the Earl of Richmond, granted lands to Sir Richard Fitton, who in turn followed him as Seneschal. At that time the Crakehall "fee" was the service of five knights at Richmond Castle in April and May.

In 1270, four generations after the first Ribald, son of another Ribald left to his daughter, Joan, wife of Robert de Tatersale three knights' "fees" in Well, Crakehall and Thoraby. This same Robert de Tatersale is mentioned in the 15th Statute of King Edward I (1272-1307) part of which reads: "Little Crakehall, there are here 5 carucates of land held by Jon de Brittany, Count Richmond, the same of the King. Great Crakehall and Rande, there are here 4 carucates held by Robertus de Rande and Gilbert, son of Hainoise, from Robert de Tatersale who held it of the King".

On the death of the Earl of Richmond in 1298 a survey of Crakehall Manor records the population of Great Crakehall as 14 families and that of Little Crakehall as 6 families, probably 80 souls in all.

The mill referred to in Domesday Book is again mentioned in a deed of 1271 by which Robert de Eaglescliffe receives "2½ carucates of land and a quarter of a water mill, part being in Little Crakehall". In 1301 Robert and Wymar de Crakehall held Little Crakehall from the Lord of Middleham, and later Thomas, son of Wymar, held 2 carucates in Little Crakehall "part of the Yorkshire fee of the hereditary Butler of the Lord of Richmond."

Despite sporadic raiding by the Scots the 12th and 13th centuries must have been a comparatively settled period of consolidation by the Normans in the Lower Dales. As well as building great castles at Richmond and Middleham they enlarged or rebuilt the local Saxon churches at Bedale, Hornby and Masham. Many of the surrounding abbeys and

priories were founded in this era, Fountains (1132), Jervaulx (1145), Easby, Coverham, Marrick and Richmond. A little later we read of Richard Crakehall building the fine church at Catterick for a fee of £1,000 and a mason's gown. Nor was trade neglected, markets were granted to Richmond (1144), Wensley (1202) and Bedale (1251).

The establishment of abbeys was accompanied by the grant of lands from which they could draw an income towards their upkeep. The Scots raided and damaged Coverham Abbey in 1313, and to help the monks with the cost of restoration considerable lands at Crakehall were sold to them at a nominal price. They did not occupy this land but drew the rents, valued at £14 a year.

Although the lands around the village were gradually being improved, more scrub cleared, and the marshy fields beside the beck drained, little benefit was felt by the villagers. They were still serfs; tied to the Lord of the Manor in many ways, they had no legal right to their holdings and could be turned out without notice. Whenever he chose to demand it the Lord was entitled to so many days service each year and we can visualise in a year of bad weather when hay or corn had to be garnered in a hurry during a fine spell it was more than likely that my Lord's crops would have preference over those of his tenants. The serfs' children could only marry with the consent of their Lord. All corn must be ground at the Lord's mill on whatever terms it suited my Lord to stipulate and, on the tenant's death, his Lord could claim his best beast.

From relics remaining in the village it is possible to visualise the houses of the common people. Built into the walls of two buildings still standing are the "Cruck" beams which formed the framework of houses in the 13th and 14th centuries. Great curved beams, the natural shape of the main branches of some great oak they stand on boulders at ground level and meet at the apex of the roof. Three or four pairs of these, stayed by a big beam which formed the ridge of the roof, tied by smaller horizontal beams between ridge and ground and we have the frame. The gaps would be filled with brushwood and wattle daubed with clay to keep out the wind and the rain, a few sods would reinforce the roof. Two stout doorposts and a door on leather hinges, no windows, an earthen floor, covered with straw or rushes, an open hearth but no chimney and that is the house. Practically no furniture, straw pallets for beds and a round log for a bolster.

In 1348 the village, like most of England, was stricken with

Bubonic Plague, the Black Death, which killed at least two people out of five. Because the plague was spread by fleas which flourished in the straw of their dark houses the poorer people suffered more than those of higher station who were less flea-ridden. By 1349 when the first wave of plague had passed there were insufficient serfs left to till the fields and care for the flocks and herds. Shortage creates demand and demand increases wages. The wages of serfs, which were 2d a day before the Black Death, doubled to 4d a day within two years. In Crakehall the Lord of the Manor found it impossible to find serfs to cultivate his 120 acres of arable land and had perforce to rent it to his tenants.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE LORDS OF THE MANORS
FROM 1350 TO THE PRESENT TIME

The Lords of the Manor kept changing. Great Crakehall, as we have seen, came under Middleham which passed by marriage in 1270 to the great family of Nevilles, Earls of Warwick, and again by marriage, to Richard of Gloucester who became King Richard III. He was killed at Bosworth Field in 1485 and his estates were confiscated and held by the crown. At the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII the Coverham Abbey lands in Crakehall were also sequestrated and these, together with those lands which belonged to Middleham, were held until James I sold the whole of the Great Crakehall Estate in 1624. Since then there has been a succession of owners. The Place family of Well held it for 100 years but mortgaged most of it and when they sold the Manor and the land in 1732 to Mary Turner for £3,459 two thirds of this sum went to pay off the mortgage.

This Mary Turner converted the Hall from a much smaller house to its present size also in 1732. Her descendants married into the Dodsworth family of Thornton Watlass who for a time lived at the Hall.

Henry Percy Pulleine bought the estate in 1810 for £7,200 when it consisted of the "Mansion House with stabling for twenty horses and 91 acres of land. The Manor House (now occupied by Mrs. Godlee) with gardens, adjoining cottages and "Jack Close". In addition 148 acres were let and there were 31 acres on the Ings, a total of 270 acres. Henry Pulleine came of an old Yorkshire family, his grandfather, Master of the Stud to King William III, was Sheriff of Yorkshire from 1696 to 1703. When Henry died the Crakehall Estate passed to his second son James who also succeeded to the Clifton Castle estate on the death of his cousin, Timothy Hutton, in 1833. Since then the manor has never had a resident Lord.

Georgina, daughter of James Pulleine, married Major (later General) Sir John Clayton Cowell, Master of the Household to Queen Victoria. Following the marriage of their daughter to Vice Admiral Sir A.G. Curzon Howe the lordship of both Clifton and Crakehall passed to the Curzon-Howe-Herrick family who held it until the 1960's.

This is a potted history of the Manor of Great Crakehall. We now turn to Little Crakehall.

Early in the 14th century the lordship of the Manor of Little Crakehall passed from Thomas Wymer to his son, John, a canon of Ripon, who in turn settled it on John Crakehall Junior, Elizabeth, his wife and their heirs. They died childless and somehow the manor got into the hands of Thomas de Fryth and John de Wakefield. In 1367 John Wymer sued them for its restitution. Presumably he was successful for we read that in 1391 Nicholas de Sheffield held the tenements in Crakehall "late of John, son of Thomas Wymer."

Before 1426 the Manor was purchased by Christopher Conyers of Hornby Castle. The Conyers held it until 1556 when John, Lord Conyers, dying without male heirs, it passed to one of his four daughters. Subsequently the estate came into the hands of the Lords Darcy, one of whom was created Earl of Holderness by Charles II. In time both the Earldom and the Barony of Darcy became extinct, but Amelia, daughter of the last earl, became Lady Conyers in her own right. She married Francis Godolphin Osborne, Marquess of Carmarthen afterwards fifth Duke of Leeds and the Lordship of the Manor of Little Crakehall remained with successive Dukes of Leeds until recent times.



VILLAGE HISTORY, MAINLY 16th CENTURY

The changes in the Lords of the Manor probably had little effect on the every day life of the village; for most people it was a life of continuous toil to eke out an existence. Yet the village was growing. The Inquisition post-mortem of Ralph de Neville (1367) includes "Crakehall, a chief messuage with a water mill, a fulling mill, a brew-house and a common oven", the people it grades as "tenants at will, free tenants, tenants in bondage and cottars". It mentions "the herbage of the chapel garden" so presumably there was a chapel. The common oven referred to was on the green opposite Mr. Ripley's house and near to it were the stocks. In a later document a forge is mentioned.

The 15th century saw a gradual change from serfdom to tenant farmers and labourers, and farms tended to increase in size. It must have been a difficult time for the common man because during the century the price of bread doubled. With the accession of the Tudors in 1485 the feudal system came to an end.

The reign of Henry VIII was a particularly unsettled period in Yorkshire where his dissolution of the monasteries and priories caused great resentment.

In 1536 many people in the north, led by Robert Aske, rebelled and marched south to restore the Catholic faith on what is known as the "Pilgrimage of Grace". The rebels passed through Crakehall, where 28 men, almost the entire able-bodied male population of the village, joined their forces. The rebellion was a formidable threat to Henry, but by false promises, he persuaded Aske to disperse his army. The threat having been removed the King broke his promises and wreaked vengeance on the rebels, eleven Crakehall men were tried for treason, three were hanged and the remainder fined.

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It was a brutal age when the use of force was accepted as normal. Only the year before Thomas Ley leased one of the mills and some land from the King, paying the accustomed rent, but when he sent his men to occupy the property "fourteen or more men of Crakehall in riotous manner arrayed with bows, bills, swords and bucklers, pitchforks, pikes, staffs and other weapons lay in wait and beat, wounded and wilfully had intended to murder them contrary to Your Grace's (the King's) law and peace".

Nor was force confined to grown men, it was an age when children were brought up with great severity. Child marriages were frequent and we read that, in 1480, Elizabeth Paston, aged eleven, the child of a rich wool merchant, had the temerity to hesitate to marry a battered and ugly widower of fifty, favoured by her father. "For nearly three months she was beaten regularly, sometimes twice in one day and her head was broken in two or three places".

During the reign of Elizabeth I another rebellion, the Rising of the North, this time in support of Mary, Queen of Scots, was actively supported by men of Crakehall. It was shortlived, many were taken and some of the local men "were hanged on the green within sight of their homes".

In 1563 a severe outbreak of the Plague hit Wensleydale particularly badly, so much so that Wensley, then the market town, was completely abandoned and never regained its market. People were accustomed to epidemics, communities were at the mercy of any disease that was introduced and, as well as plague, smallpox and diphtheria were rife. Infant mortality was extremely high and the following example is by no means exceptional. Wm. Husband married Elizabeth Harrison in 1579, they lived in Little Crakehall, and she bore him eight children. Within ten years the father and seven children died, three in one week, two on the same day.

A momentous event took place in 1599 which altered not only the way of life of the villagers of Great Crakehall, but eventually the actual lay-out of the village. The tenant farmers petitioned Queen Elizabeth I, the owner of the village, requesting permission to abandon the open field system of farming and to enclose the common fields so that each man could cultivate his holding in his own way. The petition was granted and a committee of local people, chaired by an independent professional surveyor, allotted small fields to each of the farmers in the village in proportion to his previous holding. Each of these fields was enclosed and the result was the pattern of fields more or less as we

know it today. The farmers still lived on the perimeter of the village green, the shape of which was almost identical with what it is now, and it was a century or more before they began to build their homes in the middle of their holdings. Prior to the enclosures there were 35 farms in the village but only 11 exceeded 20 acres, and 9 consisted of nothing more than croft behind the house. Twenty two tenants were named in the Great Crakehall Enclosure Act and they received between them 312 acres from the Common Fields (arable), 49 acres of meadow from the Ings and 182 acres of pasture from Scroggs and Low Pasture. About this time the old Coverham Abbey lands in Crakehall were leased by the Queen to Sir Richard Theakston, who in due course became James I's bailiff for the area. The inhabitants of Little Crakehall retained their open field system until much later.

"Scroggs" pasture referred to was common pasture for Great Crakehall and Cowling and probably covered the slopes to the south of the Bedale/Newton road behind the house formerly known as the "Black Horse". In 1593 The Exchange Commission partitioned it, two thirds to Crakehall, one third to Cowling and marked the boundary with large stones and a tumulus, which is still marked on the 1" O.S. map. The whole area was subsequently enclosed.

Incidents recorded indicate that the changeover from open fields to enclosures was not altogether "plain sailing." Miles Metcalf, having enclosed land to which he was not entitled, "the men of Crakehall pulled down his fences and turned their cattle on his enclosures." A lawsuit followed but the verdict went against Metcalf.

Anyone who neglected his duty to the community or overstepped his rights was soon pulled up. A record of the Richmond Quarter Sessions of 1610 refers to Will Clapham and Will Clarke, constables of Crakehall, convicted for neglecting their duties. About this time a Crakehall yeoman was also convicted of stopping a footpath at Kirkbridge Closes "being an ancient footway between Langthorne and Bedale for church and market." Also during the reign of James I, Margaret Crakell was tried at the Quarter Sessions for not conforming to the Anglican religion, presumably she was a Catholic. By 1701, although Catholicism was still proscribed, more tolerance was being shown to other sects, for example the house of Henry Clarke in Great Crakehall was set apart for worship by Quakers.

A keen eye was kept on the way people behaved and there were prosecutions for not taking care of geese or swine.

"Decaying Husbandy", that is allowing arable land to revert to rough pasture, caused four prosecutions in 1607/8. Brewing ale without a license, paying too high wages to servants, and "for using the trade of usury, taking three shillings in the pound" were cases which indicated a certain amount of snooping in the village. Marion Metcalfe, a married woman of Little Crakehall was put in the stocks for illtreating her mother. A large notice told passers-by the nature of her misdeeds and she was not released until she promised to beg her mother's pardon on her bended knees. The Metcalfes must have been a difficult family for, about the same time, her husband was convicted of felling the King's oak trees without permission. Accusations of witchcraft were not uncommon and, as the tests of guilt or innocence were by no means fair and the penalty on conviction was death, this was a serious accusation to face. 1687 was the last recorded occasion when a Crakehall woman was accused of witchcraft in court and what a relief it must have been to her when she was acquitted!

THE LORDS OF THE MANORS OF GREAT CRAKEHALL
WELL AND SNAPE FROM 1100-1577

RIBALD (brother of ALAN RUFUS, Earl of RICHMOND) Died 1132

RANULPH (His Son)

RALPH FITZRANULPH (His Son)

ROBERT (His Son) Built the KEEP OF MIDDLEHAM CASTLE 1190

WALRAN (His Son)

RANULPH (His Brother) Founded COVERHAM ABBEY 1213. Died 1251

RALPH FITZRANULPH (His Son) Died 1270. Married Anastasia,
daughter of Lord PERCY

JOAN (His Daughter, died 1315) Married ROBERT de TATESHALL
(died 1297)

ROBERT de TATESHALL (Her Son) Died 1303

ROBERT (Died 1305, age 15)

MARY (Sister of JOAN) Mary de NEVILLE known as Mary of
MIDDLEHAM (Died 1319)

RALPH (Her Son, Died 1331) He was a bit of a rip and was
excommunicated

RALPH NEVILLE (Died 1367) In 1331 'License of FREE WARREN'
granted to him in his Manors (including
CRAKEHALL). In 1346 he helped to raise
army that defeated Scots at battle of
NEVILLES CROSS in Durham)

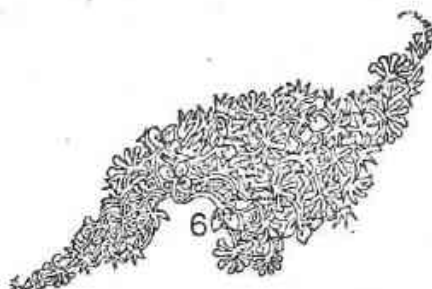
JOHN NEVILL (Died 1388) Governor of BAMBURGH CASTLE,
SENECHAL of BORDEAUX, Lieutenant of
AQUITAINE

RALPH NEVILLE (supported HENRY of LANCASTER (later HENRY IV) against RICHARD II. Appointed EARL of RICHMOND (1399) and EARL MARSHALL OF ENGLAND. Married (2nd wife) JOAN BEAUFORT, daughter of JOHN OF GAUNT. Had 23 children (14 by JOAN, of whom RICHARD, the eldest, was father of the EARL of WARWICK (the KINGMAKER)). The 4th Son became 1st LORD LATIMER of SNAPE. The 14th child, Cicely, married RICHARD PLANTAGENET and was mother of EDWARD IV and RICHARD III. JOAN died 1441.

GEORGE (1st LORD LATIMER). Married ELIZABETH, daughter of EARL of WARWICK. Became insane. Estates administered by his brother, EARL of SALISBURY (beheaded after BATTLE of WAKEFIELD (1460) GEORGE'S only Son, HENRY, rebelled against EDWARD IV and was killed at the battle of EDGEWORTH (1464) during his father's lifetime.

RICHARD NEVILLE, Earl Warwick ("the Kingmaker") was appointed Custodian of GEORGE'S estates.

An Inquisition dated 1481 stated that the Manors of WELL and SNAPE were both held of the DUKE OF GLOUCESTER (later RICHARD III) "as of his MANOR of CRAKEHALL". RICHARD was killed at BOSWORTH FIELD (1485) by HENRY TUDOR (HENRY VII). His estates, including Crakehall, were confiscated and held by the CROWN until CRAKEHALL was sold by JAMES I in 1624.



VILLAGE LIFE, MAINLY 17th AND 18th CENTURY

"Comparative tranquility" could well describe the 17th century. There were the civil wars of course but I have found no records to indicate that they made any impact on Crakehall. Following the enclosures the land was more intensively cultivated, rough pasture was ploughed and turned to arable and marginal land improved. Best meadowland, worth five shillings an acre in 1605, was fetching sixteen shillings by 1630, and the value of arable and pasture increased proportionately.

Gradually more men worked for a wage and by the end of the century a craftsman earned two shillings a day, a labourer less than a shilling. The staple diet of the common people was bread or oatcakes and beer, with meat on two or three days a week. Great Crakehall green was much the same shape as it is today with all the houses round the perimeter. The villages were growing steadily, by 1674 there were 44 houses in Great and 22 in Little Crakehall and the residents included a leather washer, a weaver, a shoemaker and a tailor.

In the 17th century houses were still crude, lath and plaster on a "cruck frame". Most of them consisted of three rooms, the forehouse, the parlour or chamber and the milk house. People lived, cooked and ate in the forehouse, where there was an open fire with a spit, and a reckyn, the moveable bar on which the cooking pots were hung. Wood and peat provided the fuel, there was no coal. The parlour or chamber was the bedroom with mattresses of straw and coarse sheets, sometimes of linen. The gentry by this time had feather beds. A churn, milk bowls and cheese presses furnished the milk house.

A study of the wills of Crakehall men during the period 1610/1676 is revealing. Growing crops and livestock were bequeathed and, of course, listed in the will, so that we know what each farmer grew and reared. Everyone seemed to grow

a bit of everything, winter corn (wheat), rye, barley, oats, white peas, grey peas and hay. Oxen were kept for ploughing, the small farmers owning two, the larger ones up to six. It was customary to leave the best pair of oxen and the best plough to the eldest son. Draught mares are mentioned presumably for hauling wagons, geldings for riding as well as brood mares and foals. A few milk cows were kept, sometimes a bull, some calves, a herd of pigs and a flock of sheep. The wives no doubt had geese and hens.

Together with the wagons, ploughs, harrows and other implements these items constituted their wealth, and compared with these the value of their furniture and personal effects was very meagre. A bedstead or two, 2 pairs coarse sheets, a "coverlette", very occasionally a feather bed, a long table, two forms, a couple of stools, a chest and a spinning wheel comprised their furnishings. Other possessions included brass or copper vessels, pewter or brass candlesticks, usually a sword, a few spoons (no forks) and always the fireside equipment "a spit, a reckyn and a pair of tongs."

These were the possessions of the average tenant farmer and compared to him the farm labourer or the craftsman was badly off. Robert Andrew of Crakehall, agricultural labourer, who died in 1686 left an estate valued at £10/14/-. In the forehouse was reckyn, tongs, spit, 2 pans, frying pan, table, form, 2 chairs, 2 stools, 8 pewter dishes, salt, 2 saucers, 18 spoons (a lot), pewter tankard and bowl. The parlour contained 3 beds, spinning wheel, flour sieve, trough, chest, 2 pails, wooden dishes and wood trenchers. His livestock consisted of one cow, 5 ewes, 4 lambs which he would keep in the small garth behind his cottage.

A weaver's will (John Wetherall, Crakehall, died 1680), was very similar except that in addition to the forehouse parlour, and milk house he had a workhouse containing five looms with geans. As well as 3 cows, 6 sheep and 3 lambs he owned a horse presumably to carry his bales of cloth. His estate was worth £12/16/4.

The total population of England in 1688 was estimated at 5,500,000 and this contemporary analysis of the "working" population showing the numbers in each class and their average annual earnings, though probably far from accurate, is interesting.



ADULT MALE POPULATION OF ENGLAND 1688



Class	Total Number	Average Annual Income
Temporal Lords	160	£3,200
Spiritual Lords	26	£1,300
Barts, Knights, Esquires and Gentlemen	17,000	£ 600
High Officers	5,000	£ 240
Lesser Officers	5,000	£ 120
Eminent Merchants and Traders	2,000	£ 400
Lesser Merchants and Trades	8,000	£ 200
Eminent Clergy	2,000	£ 72
Lesser Clergy	8,000	£ 50
Freeholders (Better Class)	40,000	£ 100
Freeholders (Lesser Class)	120,000	£ 50

Class	Total Number	Average Annual Income
Farmers	150,000	£42
Arts and Science People	15,000	£60
Artisans and Craftsmen	60,000	£38
Shopkeepers and Tradesmen	50,000	£45
Naval Officers	5,000	£80
Army Officers	4,000	£60
Common Seamen	50,000	£20
Common Soldiers	35,000	£14
Labourers, Outservants	364,000	£15
Cottagers and Paupers	400,000	£ 6½
Vagrants, Gypsies, Thieves and Beggars	30,000	

"Cottagers and Paupers", the largest class, were those who had no regular employment but eked out an existence doing odd jobs when help was needed such as haytime and harvest, they kept a few geese and pigs on the Common or in the small field behind their cottage. The next largest class, "Labourers and outservants" had, in addition to their wages, some rights on the Common and probably maintained a small holding but they had insufficient land to be classed as farmers.

Although Bedale Grammar School was founded in 1588 only the children of the well-to-do could afford to go there, the great mass of the people were quite illiterate although many were competent craftsmen, well skilled with their hands after a long period of training as an apprentice. At the time of the Great Crakehall Enclosure Act (1599) only 8 of the 22 farmers involved could sign their name.

Between the years 1700 and 1800 great changes took place in the villages. On the whole it was a period of prosperity notable for the development of the "Landed Gentry" or "Country Squires". In this century most of the old houses now standing in the village were built, replacing the wood-frame houses; local stone or brick, frequently a combination of the two, being used. As we have seen the Hall was enlarged to its present shape in 1732. Many of the outlying farms were also built, Pasture House, Greengates, Mirefold, and Hunter's Hill among others. The great sycamore on the green near the inn is said to have been planted by Queen Anne, this may be hearsay but it could have been planted in the first half of the 18th century. Towards the end of this century (1791) a great gale is recorded which blew down elm trees on the green.

Apart from this the green itself remained unchanged, as Thomas Hind (1768/1841), the Bedale poet, expressed it:

"In Crakehall vast improvements seen
Since that I first it knew
They've altered much but not the green
Nor must they ever do.

For its the beauty of the place
And quite adorns the town
New houses they the margins space
And old ones have come down."

His sentiments are better than his poetry.

There were fewer but larger farms and, while they were still owned by the gentry, the tenants tended to become solid yeomen of some substance. Agriculture improved, the weight of the average cow or sheep doubled in the space of a hundred years and in the same period yields of wheat and particularly barley increased tremendously. Wheaten bread tended to replace ryebread as the staple food of the working class. Industry came to the district, linen was woven at Kirkbridge and bleached and finished in Little Crakehall, bricks were made at Langthorne and, together with tiles, at Rand, malt was made and beer brewed at the Malt Shovel and wagons came from far afield for the lime burnt in Kilngarth Wood.

The village, though almost self sufficient, was no longer isolated. ~~Turnpike~~ ^{Marble} roads slowly replaced the rutted cart tracks which had sufficed until now. On the ~~turnpikes~~ ^{roads} public transport in the form of the stage coach made its appearance. Drawn by two or four horses it began as a cumbersome vehicle with great wagon wheels and no springs. It carried six inside, one or two on the box and the humble were allowed to hang on to the baggage on the roof.

Local Government was through the Manor Court which dealt with all minor matters directly affecting the village. All adult residents were summoned to attend and fined if they failed to do so. It was presided over by the Lord of the Manor and employed a bailiff to enforce its decisions. Householders were permitted to graze cattle, sheep and geese on the green and other Commons between 6 a.m. and sunset, but the Court regulated the numbers and the classes; pigs, bulls, stallions, asses and tups were prohibited. All unauthorised animals were "impounded", that is, put into the pound or pinfold by the bailiff, and only released on payment of a fine.

Villagers were fined for all kinds of petty offences, not scouring their watercourses, failing to repair their stretch of road, not cutting branches which obstructed the stream, or for making stacks of hay or straw on common land. Other offences included "not caring for horses after sunset", not taking care of geese or swine, not ringing swine and allowing geese on the common between June 1st and Michaelmas (September 29th).

It was a time when the poor were sometimes treated with inhuman severity by those in authority. Squire Matthew Dodsworth, Lord of Crakehall Manor in 1775 was "feared by all for his severity to vagrants or to those who touched his game". His woods were guarded by strong hooks to tear the clothes of trespassers. One poor fellow caught fishing

in the beck was convicted at the assizes and died in prison.

Magistrates were concerned constantly to ensure that bastard children did not become a charge on the parish. No doubt the poor mother was bullied and cross examined until she revealed the name of the father who was then hauled before the bench. Thus in 1793 Margaret Pounder of Crakehall gave birth to a child of which John Birbeck, a miner of Low Row, Swaledale admitted he was the father. He provided surety for £100 to ensure that he would pay the cost, if the child became chargeable to the parish. The cost consisted of £1/5/- for the lying-in and thereafter 1/3d a week for maintaining the child.

As an illustration of the hours worked and the wages paid in 1760, John Homer was employed as bailiff by the Crakehall Manor Court. His duties were to attend the Ings from St. Bartholomew's Day (August 24th, the traditional day when cattle were turned into the meadows after haytime) from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. for a wage of 10d per day and to drive all horses, cattle and sheep which were there without right into the "pound". The walls of the pound still stand at the bend in "Blind Alley", where the old road went down to the ford.

Due to a variety of reasons cheap gin supplanted beer as the common drink, particularly between 1726 and 1729, and the dire consequence of this showed immediately in a dramatic increase in the death rate and an equally frightening fall in the birthrate compared with the twenty five year average. The annual death rate in Bedale during those years rose to 59 per thousand inhabitants against an average of 25, while births slumped to 20 per thousand compared to 29 average. This was typical of the rest of England, the Authorities, thoroughly alarmed, put a swingeing tax on gin and stopped the rot.

Life, though hard, was not unceasing toil. Wrestling, boxing and single stick contests took place on the green as well as a rough game of football between Great and Little Crakehall. Knur and Spell, an ancient northern game, was played and there was a cockpit for cockfights. No doubt there was dancing on May Day and other festivals.

In 1739 nine acres at Crakehall known as the Hazleflatt Estate was purchased with benefactions given to the Rector of Bedale and the "Four and Twenty". It was let at £25 a

year of which two thirds went to the poor and one third to Christ's Hospital, Firby. This charity is still administered by the "Four and Twenty" although Christ's Hospital is derelict.



THE 19th CENTURY

For England as a whole the period 1800/1899 brought profound change. A nation mainly agricultural was transformed in a comparatively short time into the greatest manufacturing country in the world. Industry flourished particularly in areas where coal and iron were available and transport was easy. The population exploded, chiefly in the towns where jobs were plentiful. The wealth of the country increased tremendously but went mainly to the middle classes, the poor still worked long hours for low wages. Communications were revolutionised, metal roads proliferated, a network of canals was built, one even reaching Bedale, but the greatest change came with the introduction of the railways which, in an incredibly short period penetrated every corner of the country.

Crakehall, an agricultural community with no manufacturing towns nearby, was not substantially affected by the industrial revolution; there was certainly no population explosion. The census was first taken in 1801 when the population of Crakehall Township, which included Langthorne, was 473. From that year it increased by thirty or forty every ten years until 1841 (the "hungry forties") when it began to slow down. It reached its peak in 1851 at 609 and then it declined until by 1901 it was down to 421. In 1971 it was 372.

Until 1840 Crakehall benefited from the prosperity of the country as a whole; agriculture flourished, the growing towns providing ready markets for its produce, labour saving machines on the farms were a rarity and a great deal of manual labour was needed. By 1860 the picture was less rosy. A series of bad harvests and the mass importation of cheap corn from Canada caused a depression in agriculture. Moreover machines were being invented which reduced the need for manpower on the farms. This tendency continued beyond the end of the century. The acreage under corn in

England shrank by two million between 1860 and 1900, and in Crakehall scarcely one new house was built from 1860 to 1930.

Despite the prosperity of agriculture in the first half of the century poverty was widespread. From 1839 to 1848 the heaviest charge on the Crakehall rates was for "outdoor relief", amounting to £213 in 1848, this despite persistent efforts to deport paupers from the village on the grounds that it was not their birthplace nor had they served an apprenticeship there. Sometimes paupers, deported from other areas, had to be accepted by Crakehall, for example in 1825 a pauper, Jane Pounder and her three little girls, were sent here from Darlington. There are reams of correspondence between the overseers of Crakehall and those of other parishes disputing their liability to support paupers who they tried to prove had no claim on the parish. One can imagine the poor people starving while the correspondence dragged on.

The record of one such woman who was eventually accepted by Crakehall gives some idea of the struggles of the poor. She was Elizabeth Hall, married to a soldier who was discharged when part of the army was disbanded after Waterloo. They had seventeen children, six still alive, and lived in a single small room at Richmond. Eventually he died and his wife, now middle-aged, got a cottage at Hackforth and looked after the hens of the Duchess of Leeds of Hornby Castle. As she got older she was given other jobs but on reaching sixty she became destitute and applied for relief. After a lot of correspondence she was given the princely sum of two shillings a week.

Then there was Mary Stelling, a single woman from Crakehall, hired by a farmer of Hutton Hang for £6/10/- a year. She worked for him for thirteen years, at the end of which she became a pauper and claimed relief from the Hutton Hang overseers who first granted her two shillings a week, then withdrew it on the grounds that she was the responsibility of Crakehall where she was born. Again correspondence dragged on for months and eventually a writ was issued against the Crakehall Overseers, who had to pay up.

In 1848 the parish of Crakehall maintained nineteen paupers, most of them elderly, and paid each between 2/- and 3/6 per week. A widow with four dependent children received 5/6. Occasionally the Overseers would pay for repairs to the cottages of the poor and needy. Between March and September 1848 £14/8/2 was paid for the maintenance of lunatics in

asylums. The Overseers of the Poor were empowered to bind poor children as apprentices, thus Thomas Calvert, aged 13 was bound until he reached 21 to George Brown, a linen weaver of Hornby, for a fee of £6/6/6. Paupers had a hard and degrading life. Often they were sent to the workhouse in Northallerton and a bill for their upkeep was sent to the Crakehall Overseers. The Workhouse Master was under constant pressure to keep expenses low and I have seen one bill dated 1837 for maintaining a pauper at Northallerton for 55 days at 4½d a day - one wonders how they fared on such a meagre sum.

Of the 567 inhabitants of Crakehall in 1831 29 were female servants living in the village. The remainder consisted of 135 families, an average of four to a family. There were 139 males of twenty years or over and of these 17 were farmers and 47 farm labourers. 51 men were employed in retail trades or were manual workers not on the land, 4 were profession men. Retail trade and manual workers included 3 publicans, 2 beerhouse keepers, 3 corn millers, 2 cartwrights, a tallow chandler, a stonemason, 2 blacksmiths, a ropemaker, 6 boot and shoe makers, 2 grocers and 3 tailors. Many people did two jobs, postmaster and shoemaker, licensee and butcher, farmer and corn miller, molecatcher and property owner and so on. Thus two thirds of the working population was directly or indirectly concerned with farming.

One would think that, with a village population of less than six hundred, three inns and two beerhouses (The Crown, Black Horse, Bay Horse, Malt Shovel and Railway Inn) indicated a hard drinking community but that it was also God-fearing is revealed by a report of 1851 declaring that about 200 people attended church or chapel service every Sunday morning, and the same number went to evening service.

The names of fields on the Crakehall Estate recorded on a sale notice of 1810 are interesting: "Lucerne, First Jackson, Far, Little, and Low White Cross, High Hemingbrough, Horse Park and Old Horse Park, Machell Hill, Butter Lopes, Crabtree Walk, Dobraine, Oxthwaite, Scroggs, Lunds, Allan Dog Flatts." The White Cross referred to marks the boundary between Rand Grange Lordship, Crakehall and Bedale. On a map of 1634 it is shown at the junction of "the great street from Crakehall to Bedale" and the road to Masham. Originally a cross, only the staff and base now remain near the railway bridge on the Bedale road.

Several public buildings, still standing in the village, were built between 1839 and 1855 while the Pulleines were Lords of the Manor. The site for the church having been agreed upon by the Pulleines and the Bishop of Ripon, it was built in 1839 at a cost of £1,000, much of which was raised by public subscription. At first the living was a perpetual curacy worth £160 a year in the gift of the Vicar of Bedale, but by 1890, when the living was the gift of Sir Henry Beresford-Peirse, it had increased to £298, supporting a vicar and a curate. The school was built in 1852, most of the cost also defrayed by subscription. Although it was built for 100 children there were only 46 there in 1859, by 1890 this had increased to 70, in 1971 there were 52, but all the older children now go to Bedale. In 1890 it was supported by school fees, a government grant and voluntary local rate of 3d in the pound.

Other new buildings of note were the old Wesleyan Chapel (1839) and the Primitive Methodist Chapel in Little Crakehall (1855). The old communal bakehouse was "cleared away by Mr. Musgrave" in 1829, and in the same year "old Kit Collinson had the smithy at the corner of the lane leading to the well (now Mr. Tomlinson's house) and kept game-cocks". Later it became an inn.

It was a period of building activity, the fords and the wooden footbridges over the beck were replaced by stone bridges wide enough for stage coaches, that at Kirkbridge in 1813 and at Crakehall in 1829. By 1839 several stage coaches passed through the village every weekday, the "Royal Mail" each morning from Bedale to Hawes returning in the afternoon and the "Union" plying between Bedale and Leyburn also in the morning returning before lunch. If the traveller could not afford the stage coach he could get a lift for a small sum on the carrier's cart which went to Leyburn and Middleham every Tuesday and to Richmond on Tuesday and Friday. Even more important the railway from Northallerton to Leyburn was completed in 1856 with a station at Crakehall. Travel throughout the length and breadth of England was now easy and comfortable and wider markets became available for agricultural produce, much milk being sent daily from Lower Wensleydale to London and other centres of population. The postal service in 1890 differed little from that of today. Mail arrived via Bedale reaching Crakehall at 7.30 a.m. (1974 - 7.30 a.m.) and was collected at 5.45 p.m. in Summer and 4.45 p.m. in Winter (1974 - noon and 6 p.m. throughout the year).

Strenuous efforts were made to improve the land, particularly down the Ings where the meadows beside the Scurf Beck, only 100 ft. above sea level, were badly drained and subject to flooding. A major attempt to improve the drainage in 1811 failed and a more comprehensive scheme in 1820 involving straightening, widening and deepening Crakehall Beck at a cost of £812, a large sum in those days, proved successful. This was followed by the "Crakehall Ings and Waste Ground Enclosure Act" of 1833, the actual wording of which ran "Whereas there are within the Township several open fields, Ings, Commons, Meadows and Waste Grounds containing together 176 acres, exclusive of two certain portions of Waste Ground forming part of the village of Crakehall commonly known by the name of Crakehall Green and Mill Batts - and whereas Henry Percy Pulleine, the most noble George William Frederick, Duke of Leeds, Sir Edward Dodsworth Bt, John Hutton, Henry Mayhew and several other persons are said owners of the said open fields etc. And whereas it would be advantageous to the persons entitled to the said open fields etc, excluding Crakehall Green and Mill Batts if the said open fields etc were divided and allotted into and among them according to their respective rights an order has been made that such allotments may be enclosed."

Three watermills still stand near the village, the High Mill in the gill to the west, Miss Hobson's Mill close to the river bridge and Kirkbridge Mill about a mile downstream. The method of driving the mill machinery is the same in each case; a dam built across the beck, well upstream of the mill, diverts water into the goit or mill race. This being narrow, of uniform depth and having a steady fall provides a constant pressure of water, which, passing through a sluice, falls onto the paddle boards fixed to the rim of the great water wheel and pushes it round. As the wheel turns the axle tree revolves with it and by means of a fascinating variety of cogged wheels and shafts turns the grindstones, drives the shafting and hoists or lowers the sacks of corn or flour.

The original water wheels and axle shafts were of wood, but nearly all were replaced with cast iron in the 18th century. All three mills at Crakehall still have the cast iron wheels, and at Kirkbridge the wooden wheel spokes and the great oak axle shaft remain. Many of the upper shafts and cogged wheels in each mill are of wood, although often the cogs themselves are of iron.

You will recall that a cornmill existed in Crakehall in Saxon times and was recorded in Domesday Book, and that a second mill, a fulling mill, was mentioned in a record dated 1297. Which two of the existing three mills these were is not known,

all three are old, probably all were originally of timber and have been rebuilt in stone within the last 300 years. Old grindstones at each mill are evidence that corn was ground at all three at one time or another. The majority of these grindstones are made of millstone grit, but at Kirkbridge there are several faced with "French Burr", a very hard rock favoured for grinding wheat into fine flour. One stone is fashioned from a black igneous rock almost like "Whinsill", and another, in gritstone, is dated 1764.

In medieval times the cornmills were operated for the Lord of the Manor. Local folk were compelled to have their corn ground there and a proportion, usually about one twentieth, was kept by the Lord as fee. Miss Hobson's is the smallest of the three mills and does not give the impression of having been adapted or extended for any purpose other than that for which it was built; corn was being ground there as recently as the 1930's. The level ground between the goit of this mill and Crakehall Beck is known as the "Batts" and is common land now owned by the Parish Council. The origin of the name "Batts" is obscure, but level land beside the river at Richmond is known by the same name and is believed to have been originally the "butts" where archery was practised.

Mr Wilson of High Mill Farm remembers the High Mill working in 1950. Various early references to the "fulling mill" describe it was being in Little Crakehall so that it must have been one of these two mills. "Fulling" was a process for "finishing" bales of cloth. There were various "finishes" but the object of each was to make the cloth look smoother and handle better. This "Fulling Mill" with land and tenements attached was let in 1729 at £11 a year, but by 1765 the rent had increased to £25. There is a bill dated 1778 from the miller, Joseph Moses, to Miss Goddard who lived at the Hall:

"22 yards Table Linnen bleached at 3d yd	s - d
28 yards " " " " " "	5 - 6
1 stone fine Pearl Barley	7 - 0
34 yards Sheeting Cloath at 2d yd	4 - 0
	5 - 8"

The spinning of yarn and the weaving of cloth were very much cottage industries until the late 18th century and the weavers would take their bales to the fulling mill for treatment. The invention of the "Spinning Jenny" (1769) and the "Flying Shuttle" (1733) enabled spinning and weaving to be done at much greater speeds in mills built for the purpose in the towns and the cottage industry gradually declined.

Mr. Parks who now has the Kirkbridge Mill says that in times past much flax was grown on surrounding farms. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries it was spun and woven into linen at the mill presumably using the recently invented machines driven by water power. Many people were employed and accommodated nearby; the upper floor of his farmhouse at one time contained fifteen bedrooms, the three houses known as "Rose Cottages" used to be six cottages and there were bedrooms for mill-hands in what are now Mr. Richardson's outbuildings. Hemp was also processed at Kirkbridge and made into ropes and there are references to "ropemakers" in Crakehall lists of 1830 and 1857. Later in the 19th or early 20th century some of the earlier agricultural machines were made there by a Mr. Sherwood who had an inventive mind. He produced one of the first "self binding machines" and a Canadian soldier, visiting the mill during the war, remembered seeing "Sherwood of Kirkbridge" on an old binder at his home farm.

Watermills, particularly on small streams, were not an efficient way of providing power, the water supply was erratic and the wheel was slow and wasteful of power. They were superseded by the steam engine in the mid 19th century and gradually fell into disuse.

A great gale in 1881 blew down many of the trees on the Green and young limes and sycamores were planted to replace them. I have seen a photograph of the Cricket Team, probably taken before 1890 and in the background are the newly planted sycamores in the south-east corner of the Green. At that time they were still inside their tree-guards, now they are grown into the splendid trees where the rooks nest.

About the time this photograph was taken two girls were born in nearby cottages overlooking the Green. Now as elderly ladies, Mrs. Stelling and Mrs. Bird, they live in adjacent houses within a few yards of their birthplace. Between them they have spent 171 years in the same row of cottages looking across the same stretch of Green and they have seen the sapling limes and sycamores grow into shapely trees, but, this apart, the view is unchanged from what it was 85 years ago.

They have watched generations of children pass their windows on the way to school and listened to their shouts as they played on the Green. They have seen them grow, marry and bring up families of their own. Like many others their roots are deep in the village and they are typical of that continuity, that living link between past and present, which is such an endearing feature of village life.



In previous chapters I have tried to describe the changes in our villages from the earliest time to the beginning of the present century. It only remains to tell briefly the story of the last seventy years.

You will remember how the population rose to its peak in 1861 and then fell steadily as the demand for agricultural workers declined. This fall has continued and nowadays few of our local farmers employ anyone outside their family except for short periods like potato picking. Modern farm machinery enables them to run their farms efficiently almost singlehanded.

This fall in the agricultural population has been partly balanced by an influx of retired folk and people who live in the villages but work in Bedale, Northallerton or Catterick Camp. The latter need a good bus service or more likely run their own car, and it is the proliferation of the motor car that has made the greatest impact on the people of Crakehall, particularly in the last thirty years.

No longer are people dependent for their goods and services on tradesmen living in the village, their clothes, shoes, food and household supplies they buy from as far afield as Darlington. For their dances, domino drives, concerts and bingo they go to surrounding towns and villages or are entertained in their houses by radio and television.

The shoemakers, tailors, innkeepers, butchers, grocers, carpenters, wheelwrights, stonemasons and others who formerly were a substantial slice of village life are no longer needed, only one of the inns and one shop remain. The character of the population has changed.

In a village with so long a settled history as Crakehall one would expect to find many families whose forbears lived here for centuries but this is not so. Looking through the lists of inhabitants at several dates in the last century, and ignoring names common to all villages, Smith, Brown, Simpson etc., one finds only Hobson, Pounder, Remmer and Stelling that live in the village today.

The mass impact of the motor car was not felt until after the Second World War. Up to that time people tended to depend on the village for their requirements and entertainments. Indeed during the 1920s and the 1930s the sporting and cultural activities probably reached their peak. The occupier of the Hall at this period, Captain Stirling-Stuart maintained a substantial establishment, the stables were filled with hunters, the pleasure grounds were extensive and well cared for. His grooms, gardeners and servants occupied many nearby cottages.

Captain Stirling-Stuart together with Mr. "Tommy" Thompson, who lived in Crakehall House, were stalwarts of the cricket team, which, although it had functioned since 1850 or thereabouts probably reached its heyday between 1924 and 1935. "Tommy" Thompson was a first rate wicket-keeper as well as a batsman of note. Those were the days of mighty hitters, and many of the great "sixes" are still remembered and grow bigger as the years go by. These include one hit over the Hall Farm roof on to the back lawn, another over the Hall itself into the kitchen garden, while perhaps the biggest of the lot was one over the main road that pitched near the door of the "Bay Horse". Few teams could beat Crakehall in those days. About the same period Crakehall school had a very successful boys' cricket team which won several cups up and down the Dale. Since the Second World War the cricket club has had a chequered existence. Twice it ceased to function through lack of support, but after a gap it was twice revived and still struggles on.

Quoits was a popular game on the green from 1925 until the war. For some years knockout competitions organised by Mr. Leo King's father attracted competitors from far and wide and clocks (value, 7/6) and watches (2/6) were the prizes and it was not unusual for several hundred people to attend. While levelling part of the green in 1973 the pitching area of the old quoits pitch was uncovered. Outlined by heavy timbers it consisted of a centre "pin" surrounded by puddled clay, the object being to throw the heavy iron quoit on to the pin or as near to it as possible. The game is still popular further up Wensleydale and Swaledale as well as in Darlington.

Croquet has been played on the green on and off since 1930. Originally played on the cricket pitch it is now played in front of the school house and has a good following. Other flourishing sporting clubs are for fishing in the beck and for chess.

A Horticultural Society, started in 1925, held an annual show followed by sports and dancing. It flourished until 1932 and there are pleasing old photographs of children dancing round the maypole, possibly on "Show Day". Nowadays a highly successful Children's Sports followed by a dance invariably draws large crowds of competitors and spectators on the last Monday in August.

Building in this century has been confined to two small housing estates, a filling station, and several bungalows at the "West End" and on the Leyburn Road. Mains electricity was brought to the village in 1935 and in 1940, universal tap water replaced the old pumps and wells. But it was not until 1968 that all houses were connected to the main sewer and had indoor sanitation instead of septic tanks or the dry closets at the bottom of the garden.

Crakehall railway station closed down in the 1960s when the Northallerton/Leyburn line ceased to carry passengers. It had served the village for just over one hundred years, not quite so long as the stage coaches. The bus service now provides the public transport and one wonders how long that will survive and what will follow it.

A great event between 1971 and 1973 was the transfer of the ownership of the green and the Batts to the Parish Council and the setting up of a Village Green Committee, which, by planting bulbs and trees and cutting the grass has done much to improve the appearance of the villages.

As I write on a spring evening a dozen or more children are playing happily and safely on the green opposite my windows, just as children have played there for centuries. Their shouts and laughter mingle with the cawing of the nesting rooks and the singing of the blackbirds. Soon the older folk will trot out their croquet mallets and the young men their cricket bats. Idyllic you think, but what of the future? What will Crakehall be like in another hundred years?

The Green and Batts are protected and provided the villagers

are vigilant to prevent encroachment, my belief is there will be little change so far as they are concerned. A few of the older trees may die but they will be replaced. Nor do I think the houses round the green will be much different as many are also preserved.

Some may think the place is already a backwater to be escaped from as soon as possible. Perhaps they feel that the past is unimportant but that the present and the future count, that history is alright for students but Crakehall needs livening up. If such people exist they are a very small minority. One has only to talk to people in the village, young and old alike, to realise the deep affection so many of them have for it. They may know little or nothing about its long and varied history but they sense the feeling of continuity that gives the place its character and they ask for nowhere better to live.



CRAKEHALL, HIGH MILL

by G. HANCOCK

When the Domesday Book was compiled in 1084 there was a watermill in Crakehall (of 4/- annual value). It might have been in Great or Little Crakehall because the two villages were not described separately, but by the 13th century there were two mills, one of which, almost certainly, was the forerunner of High Mill. In 1298 Great Crakehall and part of Little Crakehall were part of the Neville family's Lordship of Middleham as the share allotted to Joan Neville and her husband, Robert de Tateshale (who lived in the 'Manor House' at Crakehall). When Robert died a Survey of Crakehall was made (1) and described two mills, one of which was a corn mill and the other a fulling mill (Lay Subsidy Rolls of 1327 name "Radolf Fuller" and Hugh Mercer). This was the first fulling mill recorded in Yorkshire, but there were probably others in the Bedale area, because it was an important cloth making region (John of Bedale was a cloth merchant who became Lord Mayor of York in 1417).

The two mills were still there in 1374 and no doubt continued through the Middle Ages grinding the villagers' corn and processing the cloth of the village weavers.

The next written record of the mills dates from 1538 (2), when a Thomas Ley took the lease of a mill at Crakehall. When he tried to take possession on 22/23 September 1538 he was opposed by some 20 men of Crakehall "in riotous manner arrayed, with bows, bills, swords and bucklers, pitchforks, pikestaffs and other weapons". In the 1605 survey of the Lordship of Middleham (3) only a corn mill is mentioned. However the fulling mill must also have been in existence

- (1) YAS Record Vol. 12 54 H3 24
- (2) Star Chamber proceedings for Yorkshire
- (3) ZBA 11/8/5

because, about 50 years later, it was bought by Edward Place of Well with the rest of the Manor of Crakehall. By this time the fulling mill can be firmly identified as High Mill which was now called the "Warp Miln". It seems probable that the 1298 Fulling Mill was also High Mill. In 1707 Henry Place sold Crakehall to Edward Goddard, the recorder of York, and the sale included:

"All that fulling mill called the Warp Miln, with the dams, closures, wheels, coggs, axletrees, and all the other appurtenances therewith belonging, with such ground as John Musgrave doth therewith enjoy".

Musgrave rented the mill and a house with "Cherry Garth" and "Broad Garth" (probably what is now the Norman Wilson's High Mill Farmhouse) for £11 per annum.

In 1765 the mill was rather dilapidated and was leased to Johnson Moses, a fuller from Barnard Castle, with an agreement that Goddard (who lived at Crakehall Hall) should pay for its modernisation and for the installation of new machinery both for grinding barley and for bleaching cloth. He also rented the farmhouse and "several closes of meadow or pasture known as the Bothams, on which the mill and tenters are erected". The tenters were used for stretching the drying cloth and still more were built for Moses. In return for these improvements the rent was raised to £24 per annum. A receipt for the bleaching equipment that Moses installed describes it as "a lead and copper bottom press and screw" and it cost £25.-

William Hird of Bedale, who remembered Moses, recorded in his Diary (1768/1841):

"The old mill at Crakehall was called the Walk Mill, on account of woollen cloth being densed and milled here by old Mr. Moses and his son Joseph a religious and pious family, and of the first here that were called Methodists. Besides the corn mill they had a crab mill, and a large bleach yard".

"On Market Day we did them see they brought a large pack load to the tollbooth both soberly."

(The Tollbooth was at Bedale and at about the same period, i.e. late 18th century, Kirkbridge Mill was engaged in the production of linen.)

41

Obviously Mr. Moses made the best use of the water power available to him with the various trades he practised. There is a receipt for work he carried out for Miss Goddard in 1778:

"Received the 24th July, one pound two shillings and eightpence for bleaching in full to this day:

22 yards Table Linen bleached at 3d yard	5s 6d
28 " " Ditto	7s 6d
1 stone of fine pearl barley at 4s	4s 0d
34 yards of Sheeting Cloth at 2d	5s 8d
To half ginnieh returned	10s 6d
To half years land tax	7s 6d"

In 1778 Miss Goddard married William Withers, an alderman of York, who promptly sold his newly acquired lands to the Huttons of Clifton Castle. The property was valued for the sale, and the mill and lands were, as they had been 13 years earlier, still let for £24 per annum.

A map was made in connection with the sale, and it shows the mill building slightly nearer the beck than the present one, and a much shorter mill stream simply cutting across the loop in the beck around the mill field. In 1810, 32 years later, a map shows the same arrangement but almost immediately after, the mill was rebuilt in its present position as part of the Hutton estate improvements. The new mill shows many of the typical features of the farm buildings erected by the Clifton Estate workers of that period, notably the slightly arched windows in the local magnesium limestone walls. The stone of which the mill was built was probably excavated from Kiln Garth Quarry which was active at this time.

The new mill incorporated a much longer millstream running over half a mile from the Crakehall/Patrick Brompton boundary where a weir was constructed to divert the beck (at Allerton Deepes where the village children used to swim some 80 years ago). A sluice gate was constructed near the weir (the stone pillars still remain) and another much nearer to the mill to control the flow of water down the mill race (again the remains are very clear). This new race provided a much greater fall of water than the original one, and to take advantage of it, a modern wheel was installed in the mill. It was an iron one cast by Henry Sugden of Bramley near Leeds and had bucket-like paddles instead of the old-fashioned flat wooden blades. It was the overshot type of wheel, and had the power to drive four large grindstones.

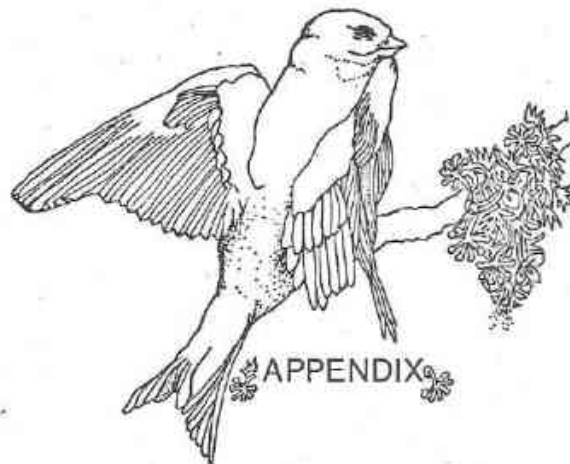
The fulling hammers of the old mill were not replaced, and since that time it has been used as a cornmill.

The main building also had a grain drying room with a floor of perforated, glazed tiles that admitted warm air from the room below, in which there was a fireplace and a chimney in the thickness of the wall (traces of these tiles can still be found). The new wheel was so finely balanced that just a few gallons of water would set it in motion. The three-storey type of mill such as this is common in Wensleydale and one which is reasonably intact (but not in use) can be seen near Danby Hall.

During the 19th century the mill was run by several generations of the Musgrave family, who also ran the mill at Hackforth and owned Crakehall Low Mill (near the Bridge). On the fine timber beams of the grinding room at High Mill, one of them carved his name "Henry Musgrave 1892". The mill continued to grind corn until after the Second World War. In the 1970s it was converted into a private house by Mr. Gilbertson (who retained the great iron cog-wheel as a "feature") and was further modified by Mr. Fraser in 1975.

List of Millers

1554-1574	Metcalf
1621	Richard Vittie
1705-1707	John Musgrave
1718-1732	William Benson
1760	William Benson Junior
1765-1778	Johnson Moses
1801	Joseph Moses
1826	Tobias Bateson
1831-1840	William Buck
1845	Leonard Musgrave
1892	Henry Musgrave
1895	Simpson
1898	Thomas Hobson
1918	Kettlewell
1923	Kirk
1928	John Wilson
1954	Norman Wilson (son of John)



Having tried to tell something of the lives of the human inhabitants of Crakehall perhaps I ought to add a few notes about the flowers and birds to be found there. My knowledge of botany is superficial and I can only list the more common flowers and give them their everyday English names.

Crakehall stands amid fertile and well cultivated land and in these days of intensive spraying against weeds and pests this tends to restrict wild life be it birds or flowers. Fortunately our farmers are not quite so ruthless as those in many places and there are sufficient uncut hedges, unsprayed pastures and meadows, and uncultivated bosky banks, streamsides and copses where flowers can flourish undisturbed and birds nest in reasonable safety.

So, to take flowers first, the surroundings of Crakehall can be described as "floriferous". To walk up the beck, particularly through Kilngarth Wood and beyond in Spring or early Summer is sheer joy. Our climate is not harsh, we are neither high nor windswept and our soil, in the main, is well drained light loam so spring flowers bloom early. Snowdrops are usually in flower about January 20th and are profuse but I think they are garden "escapes". Winter Aconites do well in orchards and gardens and they too are out in January. Apart from daisies which flower throughout the year, perhaps the only really wild plant to bloom before the end of February is the Winter Heliotrope, a large bed of which scents the air on the Batts beside "Blind Alley".

But March brings a host of flowers beginning with Dogs Mercury in the woods beside the beck, wild gooseberries in the hedges and Barren Strawberries on the banks. By the middle of the month Wood Anemones and Celandines are seen in profusion followed closely by the first primroses which will soon cover the steep hillsides beside the beck known as "Primrose Hill".

On sheltered banks below hedges scented violets, both white and purple, are common. Wood violets on the steep barren sides of the Millgoit in the woods come a week or two later. Other flowers that are seen everywhere in March are Dandelions, Marsh Marigolds and White Deadnettles.

A comparative rarity, the Yellow Star of Bethlehem, is found in several places in the woods beside the beck in early April, usually a short time before the much more profuse white variety. In April too white drifts of Blackthorn line those hedges that have not been ruthlessly cut back, the Sycamore and the Elm, two of our commonest trees are in bloom and Pussy Willow usually makes a show for Palm Sunday. Woodsorrel and Cuckoo Pint flourish in shady places.

In May and June wild flowers reach their peak. May blossom is often profuse, but there are few wild crab-apple trees, so apart from orchards, we don't see much apple blossom. Horse chestnuts do well and it is surprising they are not more common. Cowslips are more widespread than primroses, although not quite so numerous and isolated clumps of oxlips are to be found. On north facing slopes the Early Purple Orchid is common followed by a smaller pink orchid whose name I do not know. Yellow Flags, Ladies' Smocks, Ragged Robin and Bugle cover the damp ground beside the stream. Pastures and meadows unless they have been sprayed are a mass of Buttercups, Wild Carrot and Red and White Clover, the last named flowering also in great masses on road verges. Only occasionally do we see a cornfield red with poppies. Blackberries, Wild Roses and Honeysuckle spread over unsheared hedgerows and in the woods, Forget-me-nots and Red Campion take over from the Star of Bethlehem. By the roadsides and in ditches or hedges Hemlock, Stitchwort, Garlic Mustard, Vetch, Bladder Campion and Herb Robert all flourish until the roadmen come round with their mowing machines. Meadow Cranesbill and Oxeye Daisies are common on road verges and in meadows. By the end of June thistles are a sweet smelling nuisance in the pastures and often manage to seed before the farmer cuts them down. Water lilies, white and yellow, cover the little lake east of the Hall, and Bullrushes and Docks flower on its borders.

By early July ditches or damp ground are a mass of Willow-herb, both Rosebay and Greater, often mingled with Meadow Sweet, and, very occasionally, clumps of Purple Loosetaife are found with them. The heady scent of Elder bushes reminds us of haytime when the hedges are smothered by Ladies' Bedstraw and Bryony. Another heady scent comes from the three shapely lime trees on the Green. Indian Balsam is spreading by the beck below Kirkbridge. In mid-July and

August the spate of flowers abates, although the occasional neglected pasture is covered with Ragwort. Here and there Harebells and Scabious are seen but they are not numerous. The Orchids on the banks are replaced by Betony and Goatsbeard and in Kilnsgarth Wood and in hedges the Greater Bellflower makes a brave show. Large masses of Mimulus beside the beck near the road bridge are probably escapes from gardens. By the end of harvest, apart from Persicaria in the stubble and a few Yarrow, flowers have given way to fruit, yet, I like to think that we get a good deal more than our share and have every reason to be thankful.

Birds

I have identified 89 varieties of birds in Crakehall parish and of these 60 probably nest here. Crakehall is not hilly or wild enough to attract moorland birds although more and more curlews nest in our meadows and pastures and flocks of golden plovers winter on the Ings. Nor are there sufficient large expanses of water or wet marshland to provide the background for a great variety of duck or other aquatic species. But, apart from these and, of course, sea and shore birds, we have a fair cross section of common British birds.

Perhaps the simplest way is to list these birds I have seen and to indicate against each name how common it is, the time of year and place where it was seen and other relevant notes.

Dabchick (Little Grebe)

Seen on rare occasions in beck below Kirkbridge in winter.

Heron

Fairly common along beck throughout year. Large heronry at Kirkby Fleetham.

Mallard

Numerous throughout year on lake, ponds and beck.

Tree Creeper

Not uncommon. See mainly winter on sycamore trees round Green, trees beside beck and Hall Farm orchard.

Skylark

Numerous. Widespread in fields.

Carrion Crow

Fairly common. Nests on island in lake and many other places.

Rook	Numerous throughout year. Rookeries on Green and Kilngarth Wood. Great gatherings on plough or stubble with jackdaws in winter.
Jackdaw	Fairly common and widespread. Large gatherings with rooks in winter.
Jay	Seen rarely. Often heard in Brick-kiln Wood.
Magpie	Seen rarely. Three, Bowes Farm (8 October 1974).
Great Tit	Fairly numerous. Widespread.
Blue Tit	Very numerous. Widespread.
Coal Tit	Seen occasionally. Comes regularly to nut containers in winter.
Marsh Tit	Fairly common throughout year in trees near beck. Also comes to bird table in winter.
Long Tailed Tit	Fairly common. Family parties in trees and hedges. More often (but not always) in winter.
Wren	Numerous and widespread throughout year.
Mistle Thrush	Fairly numerous and widespread throughout year.
Fieldfare	Numerous from October 10 (approx) to early May. Starts on Hawthorn berries and finishes on windfall apples.
Redwing	Numerous from October 10 (approx) to end March.
Song Thrush	Numerous throughout year - more in spring/summer than winter.
Blackbird	Very numerous and widespread.
Sedge Warbler	Rare. Seen once, Langthorne New Covert (11 June 1972). Pair nested by lake 1975.

Blackcap	Fairly common. Arrives April 12 (approx). Several pairs, Kilngarth Woods, further up beck and elsewhere. Pair nested Mr. Hancock's garden (1974).
Garden Warbler	Fairly common, Kilngarth Wood, Hall Farm orchard and elsewhere.
Whitethroat	Seen occasionally, Langthorne New Covert, getting scarcer.
Willow Warbler	Fairly common and widespread. Arrives April 20/23, leaves early September.
Golden Crested Wren	Rare. Very occasionally in trees by beck above Kilngarth.
Teal	Fairly common in winter on lake.
Canada Goose	Skeins pass over in autumn and winter.
Buzzard	Seen once only (21 July 1970) by beck above Kilngarth Wood.
Kestrel	Fairly common throughout year.
Sparrow Hawk	Rare. Seen once (5 November 1970) in open fields.
Red-Legged Partridge	Rare. Once only (May 1970), Bowes Farm.
Partridge	Fairly numerous throughout year.
Lapwing (Peewit)	Numerous and widespread throughout year. Large winter flocks on Ings.
Moorhen (Water Hen)	Very numerous throughout year - along beck and by ponds.
Coot	Two or three pairs on lake throughout year.
Golden Plover	Flocks on Ings in winter.
Snipe	Fairly common throughout year.
Woodcock	Rare - seen one only - Primrose Hill (4 April 1974)

Curlew	Fairly common in spring and summer - nests in meadows and pastures.
Sandpiper	Seen occasionally beside beck. Not common.
Green Sandpiper	Seen twice only (in winter).
Herring Gull	From time to time flocks on newly manured stubble in autumn and passing overhead.
Lesser Black Backed Gull	Flocks up to 100 on stubble in autumn.
Black Headed Gull	Large numbers following ploughs or passing overhead to roosts.
Wood Pigeon	Numerous and widespread throughout year.
Turtle Dove	Uncommon but seen occasionally in summer on roads.
Cuckoo	Fairly numerous. Arrives first week of May, leaves about third week of August.
Barn Owl	Uncommon. See occasionally in car headlights.
Little Owl	Not common, but more than Barn Owl, usually in winter in hedge trees or orchards.
Tawny Owl	Fairly numerous. Frequents trees around Green and beside lake and beck. Nests here.
Swift	Numerous. Usually arrives last week April and leaves August.
Swallow	Numerous. Arrives about April 20. Leaves September 28/October 6.
House Martin	Numerous. Arrives about April 20. Leaves September 28/October 6.
Sand Martin	Fairly common beside beck. Arrives with Swallows and leaves a little earlier.

Kingfisher	Seen regularly throughout year. One pair nests above Kilgarth Wood.
Greater Spotted Woodpecker	Rare. Seen once (20 December 1971) by road to Cowling and once near Bowes Farm (April 1975).
Nuthatch	Rare. Seen pair (16 July 1974) in Hall Farm orchard and at bird table in winter 1974/75.
Green Woodpecker	Rare. Seen one (19 October 1975) near Mr. Richardson's, Kirkbridge.
Spotted Fly Catcher	Fairly common, nests regularly in Hall Farm orchard.
Hedge Sparrow	Numerous and widespread.
Pied Wagtail	Numerous. Often seen on lawns.
Grey Wagtail	Seen from time to time by beck, winter and summer.
Starling	Numerous. Flocks larger in winter.
Greenfinch	Fairly common - mainly spring and summer.
Goldfinch	Fairly common - small groups (2/4), spring and summer. Occasional larger flocks (30/40) in autumn feeding on thistles, and in winter feeding on groundsel or in stubble.
Siskin	Fairly common. Arrives December 5, leaves March 15 (approx), 50/100 December diminishing to 6/8 March, feed on Alder cones beside beck. One female newly killed on road (27 June 1974).
Bullfinch	Fairly common. Seen regularly but not numerous.
Chaffinch	Numerous and widespread.
Yellowhammer	Numerous and widespread.
Cornbunting	Seen occasionally, Langthorne New Covert.

Reedbunting

Fairly common winter and summer.
Near lake and Langthorne New
Covert.

Pheasant

Numerous and widespread. Lot
reared in vicinity.

Dipper

Fairly common - approx three pairs
resident on beck.

Robin

Numerous and widespread.

Linnet

Seen occasionally - Langthorne
New Covert and Hall Garth orchard.

House Sparrow

Very numerous - flocks everywhere.

Collared Dove

Rare. ^(1977-Numerous) Once only on Patrick
Brompton Road (26 October 1974)
but seen much more frequently in
autumn/winter 1975 at Hall Farm.

Waxwing

Rare. Flock of 20, Hall Farm
orchard (20 November 1974).

Whistler

Rare. One female. Bowerham (23/7/74)

12/12/74 Duck

12/12/74 Wren

Water Supply

Adjacent to the bridge on the main road is a r which raises water in the Crakehall Beck to the mill wheel. The mill is 16 feet (4.8m) higher than the beck. Water is stored in the mill pond alongside the path leading to the mill from the road. Sluices control the amount of water entering and leaving the pond.

Waterwheel

The waterwheel, 15 feet (4.5m) in diameter, is a breast-shot type. It is housed in a lean-to extension at the side of the mill. The iron frame of the wheel was made by F. Mattison & Co., an iron foundry at Leeming Bar which manufactured agricultural machinery until about 1936. The wooden buckets had been replaced in elm from the Helmsley area. The sluice, controlling the supply of water onto the wheel, also been renewed, in oak.

The stonework housing the lower portion of the wheel is original, and contains considerable evidence of the history of the mill, when less sophisticated technology required two small waterwheels to drive just two pairs of millstones. Mason's marks, the 'signatures' of the craftsmen who built the wall, and what seems to be a 17th century date, can be seen carved on the surface of the stone wall opposite the door to the wheelhouse.

Restoration

The derelict mill was bought in 1977 by Col. Holmes. The mill pond had silted up, and had to be re-excavated. A new roof had to be put on the wheelhouse. The two upper floors in the mill were boarded, and the windows and doors replaced. New foundations to the wheel axle were necessary, and new sluices. The machinery, after over fifty years of inactivity, needed considerable attention.

The mill could not have been brought back to life without the help of the following:

Mr. Tom Harrison, Millwright, of Gilling East near Helmsley, and Mr. Frank Hutchinson of York, his assistant, both of whom travelled a great distance over many months to work on the mill.

Mr. Derek Jackson, Joiner, of Spennithorne near Leyburn.

Mr. Norman Wilson, Farmer, of Crakehall, who worked the High Mill at Crakehall until it ceased to function in 1958 due to lack of water. High Mill was sold in 1971 and converted into a private house. Its machinery was later taken out.

Miss Jane Hatcher, Architectural Historian, who researched the history of the mill and wrote this pamphlet.

HELP is also gratefully acknowledged from:

The Civic Trust, for a Conservation Grant.

Civic Trust for the North East, for a Youth Enterprise project under which youngsters cleaned and repaired the wall of the mill pond.

North Yorkshire County Council, for a grant towards the restoration of the building, and for the help and advice given by Dr Roger Woods, County Conservation Officer, and his staff.

Hambleton District Council, for a grant towards restoration of the millwheel.

Shell U.K. Ltd., for a grant under the Shell Inland Waterways Restoration Awards Scheme.

3rd Platoon, 1st Bn. The Green Howards, for help in getting the mill ready to open to the public.

York Excavation Group, for help in cleaning out the mill race.

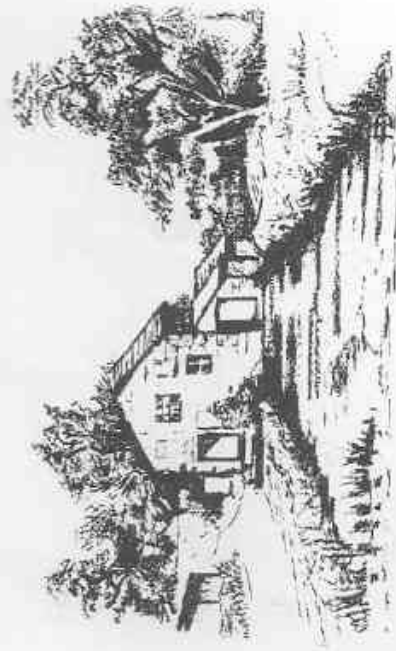
Cleveland Industrial Archaeology Society, especially the Chairman, Mr. John Harrison, for help and advice.

Mrs. F. D. Douglas, of Crakehall, for the sketches in this pamphlet.

Countryside Commission

Yorkshire and Humberside Region for a grant to excavate Mill Pond.

CRAKEHALL CORN WATER MILL



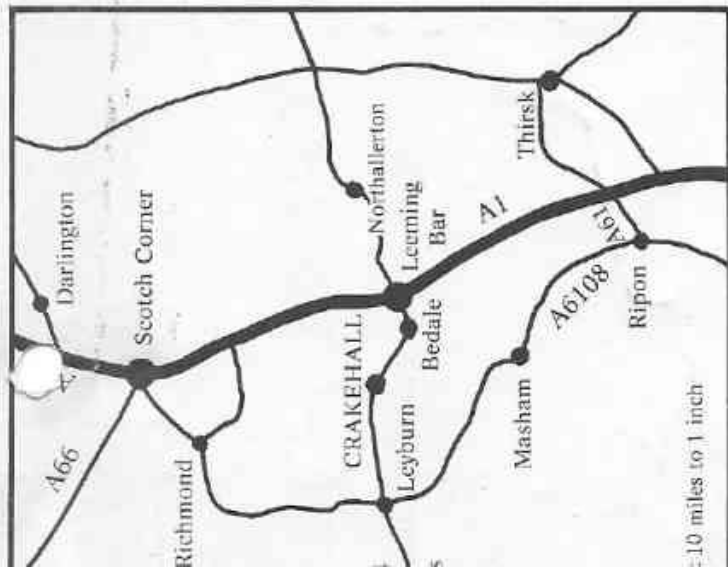
Crakehall Corn Water Mill from the mill pond

Brief History

The Mill was in existence at the time of the Domesday Book survey of 1086 when it was valued at 4 shillings. During the Middle Ages, the manor of Crakehall — including the mill — belonged to the Neville family of Middleham Castle. In the 15th century the Neville estates became Crown property, and documents in the Public Record Office in London show that in 1538 the Crown leased Crakehall Water Mill to one Thomas Ley for £1 12s 8d. His tenant, the working miller, was called Lucas Metcalfe. In 1624 the manor of Crakehall, including the mill, was sold by James I. In the 19th century the mill was worked by the Hobson family, until William Hobson died in 1924. His family carried on the mill until about 1930, when it went out of use, having been a water-driven corn mill for nearly nine hundred years. The machinery lay intact, but the building became derelict, as it was only used as a depository for unwanted household articles by members of the Hobson family who continued to live in the mill house.

Description

The present mill building is basically of 17th century date. It is constructed of poor-quality sandstone, and cobbles from the beck. The roof is mainly of pantiles, with some stone slates. The gearing machinery which drives the grinding stones is housed in the lowest floor, a little below ground level, and can only be reached from inside the mill. The machinery is spur gearing, as traditionally found in many country mills in Yorkshire, and seems to date from the late 18th century.



Location

Crakehall Corn Water Mill is situated in the village of Crakehall. It can be seen from the A684 bridge over the Crakehall Beck on the A684 Burn—Bedale road just 3 miles west of Masham. The mill is on the A1, 10 miles south of Scotch Corner. It is on the way to Wensleydale the Lake District.

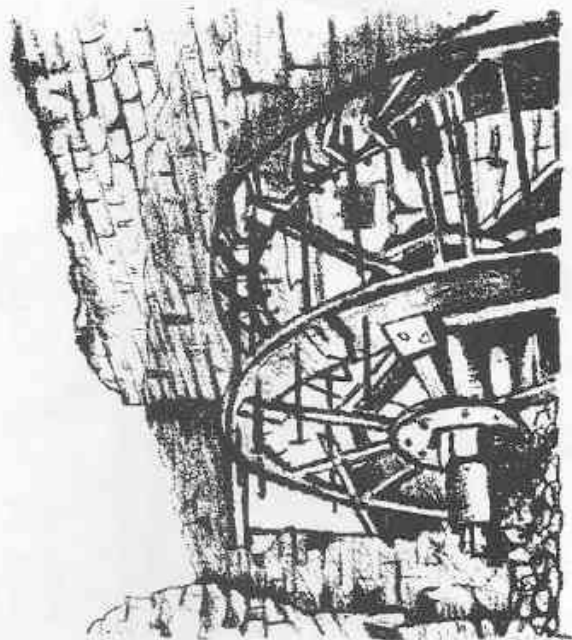
Opening Times

Open on Wednesdays and Sundays 2—4.30 pm. May to September. Other times by prior arrangement with the owner:

- 1. Whitaker Holmes, OBE, MC, TD, DL, 11 House Farm, Little Crakehall, Wensleydale, North Yorkshire, YO8 1HU
- 2. Bedale (0677) 23240

Worn-out millstones form some of the paving slabs on the lowest floor. They have also been used for the steps leading up to the main doorway. This doorway leads into the first floor, at which level are the grinding stones. There were four pairs of stones, grey stones for animal feeds, and two pairs of French Burr stones for producing flour. These two pairs have survived in working order. One of these is inscribed *W. KNOWLES, MAKER, THIRSK, 1850*. The other pair was supplied by the firm of Mountain, Newcastle upon Tyne. The flour stones retained their wooden 'furniture', which has now been repaired for use again.

The top storey of the mill is probably an extension dating from about 1800, when more storage space was required at the mill. The hoist to lift sacks of corn up to the loft is also driven by the waterwheel.



The waterwheel before restoration