

A NEW LOOK AT



**OLD
BROMPTON-ON-SWALE**

60p

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Foreward

This booklet has been prepared by the Brompton-on-Swale Workers' Education Association evening class in local history during the Spring Term, 1984, with David Hall as tutor. It follows the earlier publication of a Guided Walk Round Old Brompton-on-Swale and expands some of the points raised in that work.

These short articles are not to be seen as definitive statements. They have been compiled from a wide range of sources including fieldwork, printed material, documents, old photographs and oral evidence, and represent the interests and observations of class members. It is hoped that by sharing findings in this way, material which might otherwise be lost, may be valued and preserved.

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Acknowledgements

We thank all those who have given us access to property, houses, farms, fields and the school, the base for all our work. Likewise the Librarians and Archivists who have opened their collections for us and the many past and present inhabitants of the village who have given us their time and recollections or lent us documents and books. Elspeth Robinson and Anne Cowan have given us help and encouragement, June Hall has assisted with advice and editing, and Mark Savage has drawn all the illustrations and supervised the art work generally - we thank them all.

Should anyone reading this booklet have photographs, documents, objects, or memories of the old village please contact one of the students noted above. We hope to produce more publications of this sort and in so doing stimulate an interest and concern for a fast disappearing cultural heritage.

David Hall, (Editor), June 1984

The Brompton Sword

Michael Taylor

The oldest man made object found in the district (NZ 201001) is the Iron Age Sword (illustrated below). It was found by Mr. Jim Catterick during quarrying operations in 1963 and identified by Mr. Sidney Jackson of Bradford Museum as a Hallstatt type bronze sword date between 550 B.C. and 300 B.C.

Source: Yorkshire Archaeological Journal 1970 p. 388



The Miller and his Mill

Joy Ellis

When the Romans came to Brompton-on-Swale they used [querns](#) (hand mills) to grind their grain to flour. They also brought the upright [water wheel](#) to England. In Saxon times the lord of the manor owned the mill and a ban was put on home grinding. A tax imposed by the lord required people to grind their corn at the manorial mill. The miller took a proportion of corn from each sack he ground ([multure](#)). In 1066 [William the Conqueror](#) came to England, and in the [Domesday book](#), made in 1086, the entry for [Brunton \(Brompton-on-Swale\)](#) tells of a manor, its lands and a mill. In 1285, Peter Gretvehed and Elizabeth his wife rented, from Rouald le Botiller and Margaret his wife, a [messuage](#), land, woods and a [moiety](#) (half) of a mill at Brumpton-super-Swale, for the yearly rent of a rose at midsummer and service to the chief lords. Peter Greathead is recorded as owner of one third of the manor of Brompton under Rollas in 1286. By 1301 Peter's wife was the owner noted in the Yorkshire Lay Subsidy, followed in 1316 by their son John. In 1367 William Moubray owned the mill, then William de Whitton. It is believed that in 1371 it belonged to the Scrope family who gave it, along with other lands, to the [White Canons](#) of [Easby Abbey](#) and that at the [Dissolution](#) it returned to the [Scropes](#), with whom it remained until the death of [Emmanuel Scrope](#) in 1630. In 1648 Matthew Smelt left it to his son Christopher. MR. Wainwright is the next recorded owner, followed by the Wandesford family. In 1725 Mary Wandesford (spinster) gave the mill along with other lands to the [Old Maids Hospital](#) in York, an Anglian home for poor spinsters of gentry families. The miller paid rent to the York Hospital until 1950 when it was bought by Mr. Robert Henry Layfield.

Skeeby Beck opens out into a wide pond, dammed by a fine cobble-built weir, interlaced with stout timbers, on one side of which is the millrace. The waterwheel and all the machinery have now gone but several old millstones set into the walls of the mill suggest that parts of the mill have been rebuilt. A hundred years was about the lifespan of a mill, by which the continual pounding and vibration of the working parts made rebuilding necessary. The majority of the property dates from a rebuilding in the 18th century.

The Terry family worked the Brompton-on-Swale mill for generations. As one miller became too old, brothers, relatives or grandsons took over and carried on the family tradition. Other mills in the Dales area, notably Askrigg, Bainbridge and Coverdale were also run by millers called Terry. James Terry died in 1923, leaving his wealth to charitable organizations. His brother Francis operated Brompton mill during the later years and when Francis retired Robert Henry Layfield took over, breaking the Terry connection. Older residents of Brompton remember the mill in the time of Mr. Layfield, the noise of the rhythmic thuds, of splashing water and the sight of many cogs turning.

During the summer months the millstones were lifted out to be redressed and the 16 foot diameter, high breast wheel was repaired ready for another year's work. Inside the two storey mill, were chains and hoists to pull up the sacks of corn. Wooden cogs often broke and needed the immediate attention of the village wheelwright. Local people brought their wheat to the mill in small quantities, for once ground, it did not stay fresh for very long. There were three sets of millstones : one ground the flour, another ground animal feed and the third set was kept in reserve. The miller also ran a farm where stables, calf houses, pig styes and a granary formed a pleasing group of vernacular buildings around the mill, the house and [garth](#). Much of the history of this ancient site is lost, but someone carved his initials H.M. over the corn-mill door in 1762.

With the coming of modern milling methods and large commercial flour companies, Brompton-on-Swale water driven corn-mill came to a close in 1947 and the old cogs and millstones were removed in the 1950's. It is now the home of another craftsman, a Cabinet maker.

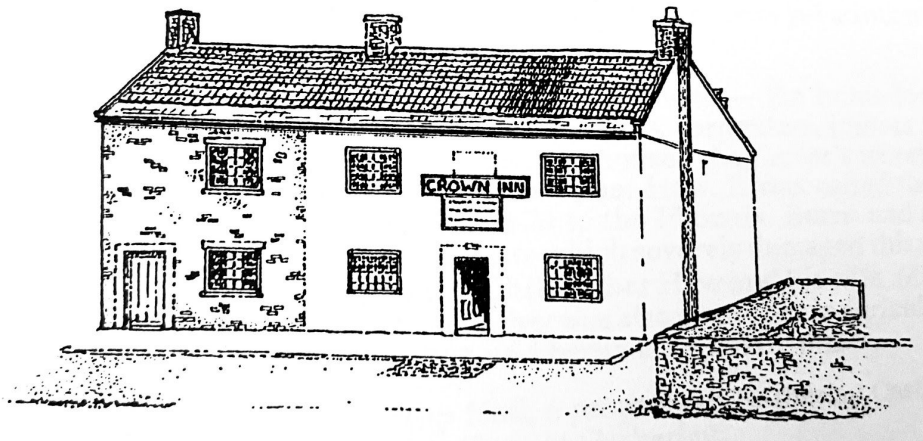
Sources include the Title Deeds examined with the kind assistance and permission of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Stanley, the present owners. Several senior citizens gave helpful information.

Inns, Alehouses and Taverns

Joy Ellis

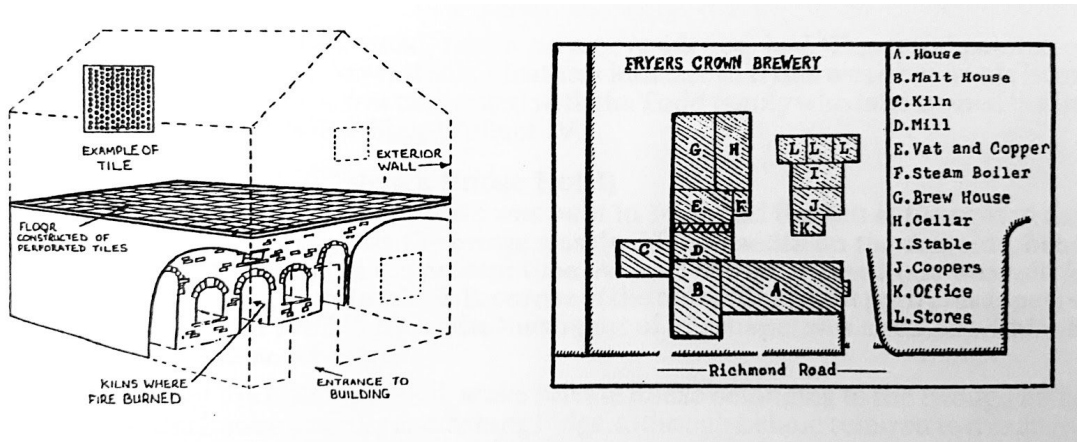
With the busy [Great North Road](#) passing close to Brompton-on-Swale and a [Turnpike Road](#) as the village street, it is hardly surprising that Brompton-on-Swale had many [inns and alehouses](#): Inns for travellers to rest overnight or to break the journey for refreshment, and alehouses, rooms in someone's house where drinking was permitted. They included the Catterick Bridge Hotel (formally the George and Dragon) and at least nine inns and several alehouses and taverns.

Brompton-on-Swale had alehouses and small brewhouses attached to the [King William IV](#) and The Crown. At King William's Inn, brewing ceased sometime after 1882 but we do not know the precise date, but by 1934 [John Smith's Brewery](#) owned this inn.



The Crown Inn was the property of the Stapleton family, who owned one third of the Manor of Easby. The Fryer family were known to have been [brewing](#) in the village in the early 1800's. By 1861 John Fryer, a 40 year old landlord and brewer, was at the Crown and his family, over the years, transferred their business from the small brewhouse behind the Crown to the Manor House next door which they purchased from the Stapleton's. Buildings at the Manor House were converted and a kiln built. The firm of [Fryer and Sons, Brewers and Maltsters](#) became well known throughout the area when few breweries could claim to have their own kiln. The Fryers were notable for making their own [malt](#) in Brompton-on-Swale.

This helped to employ the village people, farmers growing barley, coppers making and repairing vats and casks, and delivery men etc. In 1920 a brewery at [Stokesley](#) was bought by J. Fryer and Sons who by them, had purchased many public houses and inns in [North Yorkshire](#) and [Cleveland](#) in which to sell their beer. Lemonade was also made at the brewery. [Pale Ale](#) and [Stout](#) were made at [Hawes](#) under the Fryer label.



Fryer's Brewery at Brompton closed in 1956 and in October 1964, the executors of Mr. J Johnson Fryer auctioned the "Implements, Tools and Brewing Equipment". Fryer's beer and lemonade bottles, now collectors items are still found in the district. The brewery became a private residence. The Crown Inn was bought by the [Wilson Brewery](#) and is now the property of [S. Webster and Sons](#) of [Halifax](#).

The Railway Hotel - also known at the Horse and Jockey (1840) Cross Keys (1849) and Cittadilla Inn (1857) - badly damaged in 1944 in the [explosion](#) of an ammunition truck at [Catterick Bridge Station](#) and later demolished. The buildings to the right of the Hotel were used for the Livestock Mart and as stables for [Catterick Racecourse](#).

Bay Horse - Registered in 1822-26, to Thomas Thompson, 1827-29 to Richard Harrison. Its location has not been identified, but it may have been yet another sign for the Railway Hotel.

Phoenix - at the corner of River Lane and Richmond Road - the home for several generations of the Carter family who were wheelwrights, carpenters, joiners and inn-keepers. A workshop (now demolished) at the rear, housed Carter's woodworking business, when the recorded licensee was Christopher Haw. It was called the Stag in 1822, changed in 1823 to the Buck, and in 1829 to the Phoenix. Burnt and scorched timbers found in the house give evidence of a fire which severely damaged this property. Did the Phoenix Inn arise from the flames? Christopher Haw and his wife, Mary, were victuallers, shopkeepers and grocers. Christopher was also employed in agriculture. The Phoenix, as an Inn, closed in January 1907 and became a private house.

Cowslip Inn - sometimes called Cowslip Hall, a property of Gatherley Castle Estate. The site is now lost under the A1 intersection at Gatherley.

Black Bull Inn - stands beside the North bound carriageway of the A1, a three storied building know as Oak Grange Farm, which would have been an overnight stop for many weary travellers. An old track from the back of the house joining the Inn to Park Gate Lane. It is commonly believed in Brompton-on-Swale that Park Gate Lane was a [drove road](#). This could have been the reason for the name Black Bull. The County Record Office has documents dated 1751 concerning two small Calf Closes, attached to this Inn, where drovers left their cattle overnight. Timothy Pattison was the

landlord for many years, and the Pattisons are connected with Maltsters, Brewers and Spirit Merchants of Richmond Vaults who owned property in Brompton-on-Swale in the 1700s.

Robin Hood - now a private residence beside the old A1, once a Tavern in the hamlet of Cittadilla. The name Cittadilla given to the road from Catterick Bridge towards Gatherley, a small hamlet included in the Parish, was spelt Citta Dilla on old deeds presumably from the word citadel.

Inglenook - 15 Richmond Road, now a private residence, had "Taproom" painted on one of the internal doors. Several other features indicate that this was once an ale house or tavern. In about 1733, it was connected with the Todd family who later owned the Inn across the road, now called King William IV.

George and Dragon - (Catterick Bridge Hotel)

The 'new' bridge over the river Swale was built in 1422 and the Inn is thought to date from this period. In later years the bridge was doubled in width on the East side, hence its proximity to the Hotel at the present time. A small chapel where Mass was said for the passing travellers, stood at the S.E. corner of the old bridge, but it partly disappeared with the widening in 1793/4 when the lower part of chapel was encased within the foundations of the new bridge.

The main part of the hotel, it is said, was a private house belonging to the Brough Estate and used by the Lawson family as a fishing lodge, although [Leland](#) referred to it as an Inn at Catterick Bridg around 1535.



It was famous in the days of the [Mail Coaches](#) as a [Post House](#) where horses were changed for the next stage of the journey on the London to Glasgow or Edinburgh routes. The Glasgow Mail, The Express, The Telegraph (1781) and the Herald (1826) were all coaches that regularly changed horses at the George on journeys which took three days to complete. In 1779 Mr. Dan Ferguson was the landlord here, a position he retained for 40 years, followed in the 1820s by Mr John Fryer. Mrs Margaret Fryer, wife of John, became the licensee of the George and Dragon in 1849.

Farmers Arms - in 1821 there is a record of this Inn which retains its name today. Many of the landlords have been connected with cattle dealing or farming. It was owned in the 1800's by the Warwick family, brewers of Darlington. In 1926 it was sold to [North Eastern Breweries](#) who in turn sold it to [Vaux](#). The Inn became famous when the beer was delivered by waggon in a [tun cask](#) (depending on which conversion chart is used; 1 tun = 4 hogsheads = between 210 and 252 gallons). Situated as it is beside the old A1, the landlords were used to travellers arriving in huge parties and an old postcard of the inn claims "come in thousands as the Romans did in days of yore".

Oddfellows (1828) - **Kings Head** (1840) - **King William IV** (1849)

This inn was renamed in memory of the monarch, King William IV (1830-1837). Originally several small cottages stood here joined as a group to those which stand next door, with brew house and out houses attached. Thomas Todd, owner, shopkeeper, alehouse keeper, brewer, etc. resided here in the 1770's followed by Henry Todd. In 1787 William Todd held the licence and the family name continued for another 38 years until 1825 when William stood guarantor for a new licensee, John

Rushforth, to be on the Register of Alehouse, Inns and Taverns. In 1828 William Todd sold the licensed premises to John Lumley who kept Mr. Rushforth as his landlord, the property then became known as The Odd Fellows. The Register of Alehouse, Inns and Taverns of 1822-1829 at the County Record Office, shows the property and the landlord. The Recognizance of Licensed Victuallers for Brompton-on-Swale, 1775-1809, lists the name of the landlord and their surety, but gave no indication of individual Inns by name or sign.

Sources: Deeds, Indentures, Documents, etc. in private hands, Q.S.V at County Record Office and information kindly given by Vaux and Smiths Breweries and Mr. J. Fryer who assisted with information regarding the Crown Brewery.

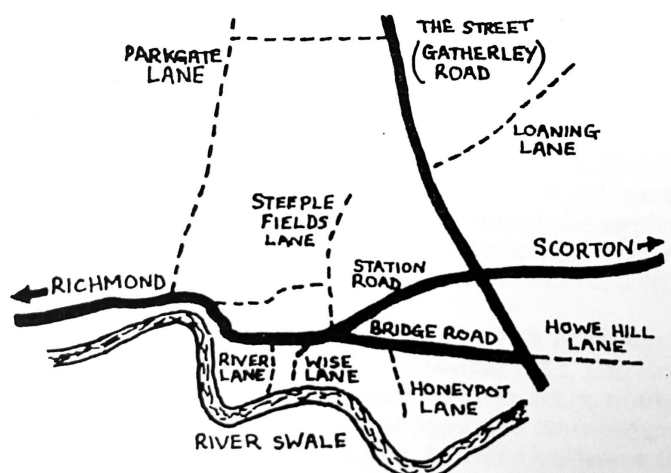
Lanes in the Township

Joseph Shield

East of Brompton two interesting areas to the North of Station Road are Thornistone Close and Citta Della, both very old names. Historians tell us that a place prefixed by 'Thorn' may well have had Roman occupation and there is no doubt about Citta Della having such an association. The dictionary defines Citta Della as Italian, the diminutive of cittade and derived from the Latin civitas, meaning city. Catterick has been mentioned as a Roman city, therefore, could this be the area referred to? The location of Citta Della as shown on old maps is the area around Catterick Bridge Railway Station and it is said that during the building of the station two stone lions were found and identified as Roman. They are now in a museum at York.

Travellers going North by [Watling Street](#) with Waterfall Field on the East turned East into what was probably a minor Roman road. This lane, under the influence of the Danish settlers, became known as the Loning, and entered Waterfall Fields near a farm called Street Gatherley and continued a short distance in the Township of Brompton. The Loning continued East, as the boundary between the Townships of [Moulton](#) cum Gaterly and [Scorton](#), through the middle of [Uckerby](#) and on to the [Cowtons](#). Some idea of its importance in former times is found in the conveyance of 1720 mentioning a parcel of land situated near "the Loning in the Township of Scorton". Nearby here was the site of [Cuddie Kell](#), a Cell of monastery dedicated to [St. Cuthbert](#).

Two old ways close to the village are Honey Pot Lane, which comes off Bridge Road to service fields near the river - the origin of its name is obscure, and Steeple Field Lane North of Station Road giving access to the Steeple Field. This is thought to have been associated with a [chantry](#) associated with [St. Edmund](#). The house called St. Edmund's stands between the village and the river and is approached from Grange Road, formerly known as Wise Lane. This lane branches off the village street and runs down to the river where we find a large limestone boulder called the blue stone. It was probably lodged here after the Ice Age and is reputed to have been used by the women of Brompton-on-Swale as a clothes washing place. Tragedy is also associated with the blue stone, it having been the scene of a child's drowning.



Park Gate Lane is entered by a right turn off the Brompton to Richmond road near the mill. The word Park Gate may be a corruption of the word Pye Gate. A conveyance of 1792 for a field adjoining this lane calls it 'Par Gate otherwise Pye Gate'. The dictionary definition of a 'pyet' is Magpie and Water Ousel. There is now a bird reserve at the confluence of the river Swale and Skeeby Beck so this derivation could easily be correct. On the other hand the word Gate often referred to a road. Park Gate Lane also has close to it, by the mill, the Bull Park where the bull was kept to be used by all the village cowkeepers. This lane also has the characteristics of an eighteenth century 'Drovers Road'. An entry in the [Bolton-on-Swale Parish](#) Church register, records the burial of Robert Fawel, a drover, who died at Citta Della in 1765. Park Gate Lane ends at Oak Grange, formerly known as the 'Black Bull Inn', thus giving some credence to the story that it was once a coach road.

Skeeby and Brompton are [chapelries](#) in [Easby Parish](#) with a common burial ground at Easby. Coffin Lane crossed the Brompton to Richmond road at St. Trinians farm and was used by the inhabitants of Skeeby travelling to their Mother Church. It is a public footpath today, some three hundred yards in length, and remarkable for the quality of its roadside walls.

East of the Great North Road

Dorothy Fenton

The road between Brompton-on-Swale and Scorton was built around 1747 as part of a system of [turnpikes](#). Previously the road east began at [Howe Hill Lane](#), a green road which still has public access near the Farmers Arms, and followed the river to Bolton-on-Swale before going on to Northallerton. This route was used by farm vehicles until the nineteen forties, when quarrying brought it to an abrupt end. It is now a popular footpath, forming part of the [Coast to Coast Walk](#), but walkers must eventually leave the river bank and join the road to Scorton.

Before Howe Hill Lane reaches the river a track to the North once led to at least two farms, Hollow Banks, not many yards from the lane, and Rosey Hill. The track to Rosie Hill has only recently been lost through quarrying operations. The field to the right of this track is known as Potter Close. Gypsies are known to have camped in the vicinity and in Howe Hill Lane.

Hollow Banks may be a derivation of Holy Banks since early baptisms, by Bishop [Paulinus of York](#), took place along this stretch of the river about 630 A.D. In the [Quarter Sessions](#) Records of 1681 Hollowbanke referred to the King's highway in that region. The banks had been worn away by the river and had apparently become so dangerous that the road had to be widened.

The farmhouse known as Hollow Banks was built in the nineteenth century, to replace an earlier one at the other side of the present drive. The original house is incorporated in the out-buildings. From the late nineteenth century until recent years the landlord lived in France and for much of this time the farm was tenanted by the Sinclair family. Frank Sinclair was a steam engine enthusiast and contractor who travelled to many farms with his [threshing machine](#).

In the early 1940's an aeroplane, a Mosquito from [Scorton airfield](#) crashed into the side of the house. Both pilot and navigator were killed and the house was extensively damaged. The house received another shaking in 1944 when the explosion at Catterick Bridge Station blew out two window frames. Although no longer a farm, the house is still a land mark, being one of only two houses along the road to Scorton within the parish of Brompton-on-Swale.

On the site of Roper Caravans was an earlier house with business premises, where Dave Boyd built poultry houses prior to the Second World War. The Boyd poultry house was of national repute at a time when most small farmers were poultry keepers.

During those years the field across the road was used as a training ground for trotting horses by William Coates of nearby Minto Grange. In 1939 his horse Grace Dewey was one of the fastest trotters in England, never beaten in a five mile race. The war put an end to racing for some time and Grace Dewey ended her days in Ireland. In the mid forties Mr. Coates sold mineral rights to Mr. Anderson of St. Trinians and the field was quarried before becoming a waste disposal site for the County Council.

For a brief period there were two other houses along Scorton Road. In 1936 Mr. Coates' son Tom built a house, known as Dewey House, in the corner of his father's field. It was one of a pair semi-detached, the other occupied by David Boyd junior. After just six years they were pulled down, along with the house and premises of Mr. Boyd senior, because they were in direct line with the newly built wartime airfield at Scorton. Pilots complained of great difficulty in missing the houses. Mr. Boyd moved his business to Darlington, where it prospers to this day. Swaledale Cleaners had their premises on the old Boyd site for a time during the fifties.

Nothing now remains of the short-lived houses, as the site has since been quarried. However, a patch of [goldenrod](#) along the roadside marks the spot near which well kept gardens had already been established.

Ironically the airfield was used for a remarkably short period and very few planes flew after the houses were demolished. The runway remained for many years and in 1956 permission was granted for the site to be used as a temporary transit camp and permanent mobilization centre in national emergency. The plan was abandoned in 1960 and the area was then quarried.

Of the many activities that have taken place along Scorton Road one of the most unusual was the playing of polo in Mr. Barker's field beyond Howe Hill. Alongside were croquet and tennis lawns, attractively landscaped with trees and a pavilion. On August 8th, 1906, Catterick Bridge Polo Club held a Ladies and Gentlemen's Open Gymkhana here. Polo playing ended a year or two later, but tennis continued until the nineteen thirties, when the groundsman was Fred Richardson, who lived for some years at Robin Hood. When the buildings were taken down one was re-erected at Tancred Grange, where it still remains.

Scorton Road has probably seen more change over the past fifty years than ever before. It is no longer a quiet country lane, widened and improved in 1970, it is now a busy road. The area is rich in sand and gravel, extraction of which has had a dramatic effect on the landscape. Change continues at a steady pace and is likely to do so for some years to come.

The Village in 1851

Michael Taylor

The census for 1851 for the township of Brompton-on-Swale shows the names of each person who was present in Brompton-on-Swale on the night of 30th March 1851. In addition it gives ages, marital status occupations and places of birth. This last piece of information shows that although the Richmond Branch line had been opened in 1846, very little impact had yet been made on the mobility of local people. Only 18 people were born outside the County of Yorkshire and of these 12 came from the neighboring county of Durham.

The population at the time of the census was 301 of which 148 were male and 153 female. There were 32 infants under the age of 5 years and a further 60 children aged between 5 and 14. Five of these children are shown as employed, the youngest being a boy of 11 who had a position as a house servant to one of the more prosperous farmers.

Farming, as might be expected, was the industry employing the largest percentage of the working population and 71 people were shown to be working in agriculture. This included 25 female field labourers whose ages ranged from 14 to 69 years. The total number of people working on the farms was probably greater as farmer's wives, sons and daughters were not shown as having an occupation, even though many would be working full-time on the family farm.

The craftsmen and tradesmen in the village totalled 41 and comprised the following: 1 miller, 3 carriers, 2 blacksmiths, 4 masons, 1 joiner, 3 carpenters, 1 millwright, 4 cordwainers, 2 shoemakers, 4 tailors, 1 dressmaker, 5 grocers, 1 collier and a family of 9 potters.

Several of the farmers and craftsmen had servants and the census shows 12 house or farm servants, housekeepers, charwomen and gardeners.

Also shown are the schoolmaster, a road surveyor, 3 innkeepers and 1 railway labourer.

With vegetables and meat produced locally and the miller supplying flour for the baking of bread, Brompton-on-Swale in 1851 was almost completely self-sufficient.

Source: P.R.P.H.O 107/2381, 1851 census returns, microfilm at North Yorkshire County Library, Northallerton.

Schools

Barbara and Ann Chambers

We understand from the Parish Bundle for Easby, in the Leeds District Archives, that there was a schoolmaster in Brompton in 1774, but the first reference we found was the mention of a Schoolmaster, Joseph Duck, [in Baines Directory of 1823](#).

In 1838 a [Chapel of Ease](#) was built and part of it was used as the first school. Although it was only one room there were in fact two entrances. One entrance is still discernible though blocked up. A letter dated 7 Nov of that year states that a resolution was passed by which "the school was united with the National Society for promoting the education of the poor in the principles of the Established Church". The 'old' school, as we now know it, was built next to St Paul's Chapel in 1872 on land conveyed from the Rev John Thomson to the Vicar and Waredens together with the Rules of Management. The first headmaster of the Church of England school was George Thornton. In 1872 the school house was built and occupied by the headmaster George Thornton. In 1931 the then headmistress no longer wished to live there, so the house was let. In 1932, the tenant Mrs E.M.Lyth was appointed caretaker and from then until the school closed it became the caretaker's house.

The second classroom was added in 1896; prior to that all the children had been taught in one room. With the increase in population, a third classroom was added in 1966 and a fourth in 1971, these were both temporary classrooms. However, it was not until it became a [controlled school](#) in 1952 that the sanitary arrangements were modernised and piped water laid on.

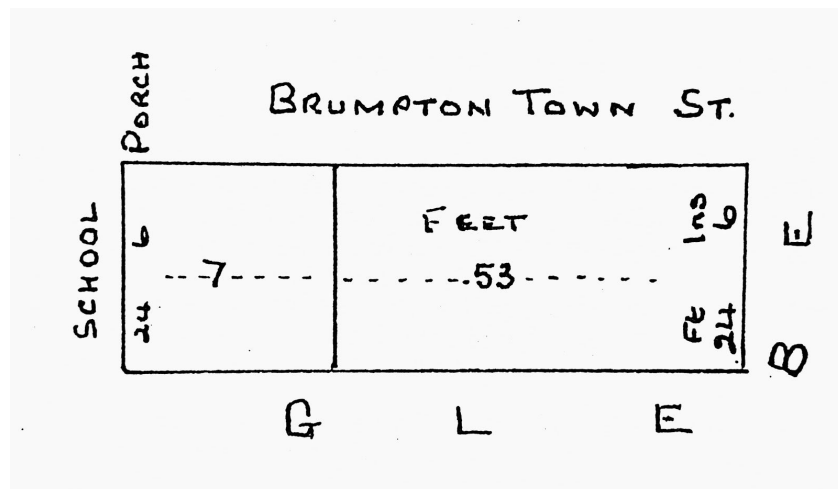
In 1958 the school catered for children aged from five to fourteen years. In the early years the older children took time off school for haymaking, potato picking and turnip lifting. Although the set school holidays were not long, the school was often closed because of bad weather and school functions, for which the building was required, and quarantine for infectious diseases. Diphtheria, measles, chicken pox, mumps and whooping cough were rife. The latter also accounted for poor attendance. In 1958, the thirteen+ age group went to Richmond, but it was not until 1960 that the school finally became a primary school and all other children left for their secondary education.

During the second world war some children from Gateshead were evacuated to this area. From September 1939 to November 1940 they shared the school with the children of the village. The evacuees used the school in the morning and the village children in the afternoons. In late 1940 the evacuees moved to the [W.I.](#) hut.

The present school, on a new site in Brompton Park, was opened on 6 June 1983. It has three classrooms, modern dining facilities, a computerised electric heating and ventilating system and spacious gardens and playground. Mrs A.P.Reed, the present headmistress, and her staff, have added new technology to the old traditions.

Sources: Lg Books made available at the school by the Headmistress, Mrs A.P.Reed; Parish Council Records and Diocesan Records at Leeds City Archives.

Copy of plan
from conveyance
of land, dated
15th October, 1872



The Church

Dawn Savage

[St Paul's](#) church is a small [chapel of ease](#) in the [Parish of Easby](#). It was built in 1838 and on 22nd March 1841 was consecrated at a cost of £12 3s 4d. For writing the appropriate letters, deeds and parchments etc. Ten years later on 19th May 1848 a licence to perform the offices of [Baptism](#), the Administration of the [Sacraments](#) and the [Churching of women](#) was granted by the Lord [Bishop of Ripon](#) but as no licence for marriage has ever been granted wedding must be performed at [St. Agatha's Church, Easby](#).

Until the erection of a school in 1872 the church was divided by a partition and the [nave](#) was used by the village children as their schoolroom.

In 1892, a new organ, screen and choir benches were added making 100 sittings. On the 30th October, 1947, the vicar, the Reverend Francis Johnson Lindley applied for an electric organ blower and two months later on 5th December, one was duly installed. A stone [font](#) stands at the West end of the church but very little is known about its exact date as it is said to have been dug up in the garden of Brompton Grange (formerly St Edmunds) when alterations were taking place, and removed from there to its present position.

In 1982 a new screen was presented to the church by the late Mr. George Wilson, who was himself a church warden for St Paul's for 30 years. The screen was made locally, and given as a memorial to his wife Ena.

Sources: Leeds City Library Archives
Ripon Diocesan Registry
Easby/Brompton Parish Records at N.Y.C.R.O

Leather Crafts

Joy Ellis

The River Swale, one of the fastest flowing rivers in the country, emerges from Swaledale at Richmond. The river having already flowed miles down from the peaty moors above Kelf, continues on to Brompton-on-Swale and the Vale of York to join the Ure and then the Ouse. Cloud bursts, melting snow or continual rainfall can result in a rise of water level, flash floods and flooding in the lower land.

Here in Brompton-on-Swale early records reveal many occasions when the swollen river Swale has caused damage in the village and homes and roads washed away and families left to depend on charity for help and assistance to acquire another home in the village. In 1673 a whole house washed away, in 1682 big floods swept away a bridge and in 1691 a new bridge had to be built over Skeeby Beck. Many like accounts continue and tell of damage within and around the village.

The river course has changed over the years, noticeably between Skeeby Beck and Crow Holes.

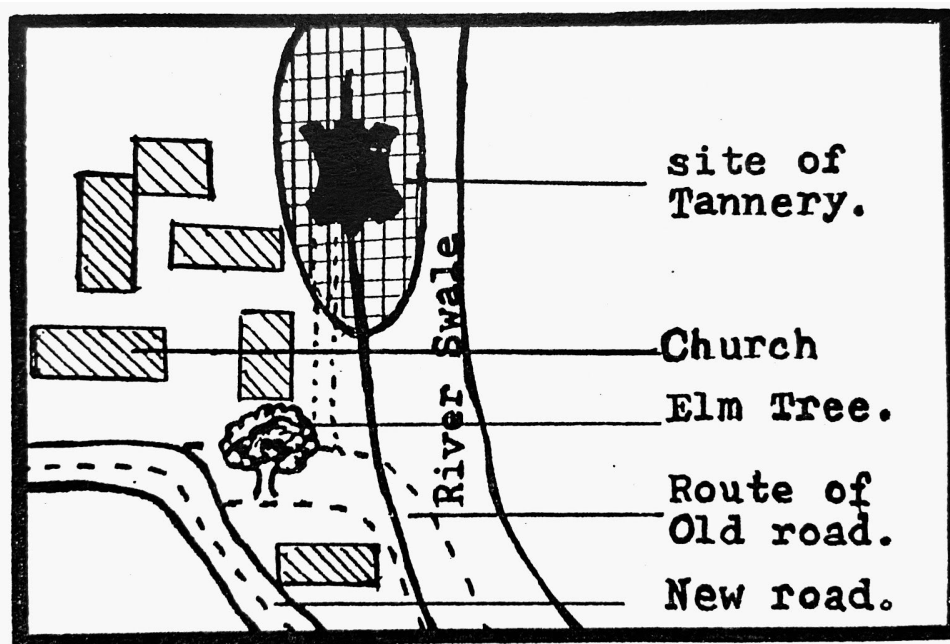
Each year storms and floods eroded the high river bank on the North side a little more and many times structural work has had to take place there. In the 1840s a meeting was held to discuss diverting the course of the river which overflowed the highway.

Stand at the Jetties high above the Swale, turn to the left and here is the sharp bend in the river, which, over the years has changed old Brompton considerably. Cottages and houses have been washed away and the road through the village has had to have a new route. The pound for stray animals, the elm tree, village allotments, all were here in this area. Here too was located the Tannery, using water from the Swale and lime from the kilns across the river. A wide track was still here in living memory and foundations of many buildings and cottages were unearthed by the village mason in the course of his work. Huge stone built vats are also known to have been there.

The following accounts give reference to curriers in the village and numerous master cordwainers.

The making of leather and its use must have played a not inconsiderable part in the occupation of the Brompton-on-Swale people, but all this appears to come to a sudden halt in the 1870s.

The shoemakers could have had cottages anywhere in the village, but the Tannery was dependent on the river for a plentiful water supply. The present day cottages and houses which stand at this corner of the village have been altered and rebuilt and its hard to envisage what it was like as an area filled with crafts and industry, for the river has obliterated their remains. Was it that Mother Shipton's prophecy "Brompton will wash away by Swale when God sees good", did come true and we have lost a large part of old Brompton-on-Swale ?



Currier - a curer and dresser of hides, a maker of leather

The earliest record which we have found of a currier in Brompton-on-Swale is date 1823 and the name was Robert Thompson. Both Richmond and Catterick had leather works and tanneries, showing leather working as an occupation in the district. Craft workshops, especially the dirtier or more obnoxious ones, were usually on the edge of the settlement.

In 1835, Henry Sayer was at Brompton-on-Swale and there are many records of him throughout the following 32 years as a Tanner and Leather Seller. In 1851, he was according to the Census, 54, born in Richmond, holder of the Currier Master's Cup, with a wife aged 48, born in Scotland. Two Scottish Journeymen lived with Henry and his wife. A Journeyman was a qualified man, employed and paid by the day. George Huntingdon, son of an Innkeeper at Catterick Bridge, became a Currier Journeyman and he worked here for many years, during which the village had employment for seven showmakers.

The census of 1881 has no detail for the tannery or curriers and only one shoemaker remained. Henry Sayer and his wife had no children at home to continue in the trade and so it appears that the making of leather came to a halt in Brompton-on-Swale when Henry retired in about 1868.

The "Big Flood" of 1884 washed away two roads in the village and the water rose up to the upper floors in some of the cottages on the river bank. One house was completely washed away and the river left a trail of disaster and damage throughout Swaledale. The remains of the tannery are thought to have disappeared with this flood, for it is understood that they were in a ruinous state previously. So came to an end all visible evidence for the Brompton-on-Swale leather makers, for by the 1900s, shoes were repaired but not made in the village.

Cordwainers of Shoemakers

A Brompton-on-Swale [cordwainer](#) recorded in 1797, was called Solomon Auton (the spelling in later years became Orton). His descendents were still in the village in 1857 when Robert Orton was listed as a shoemaker, married, with a daughter. Robert and his family were all born in Brompton-on-Swale. Other names given over the years as shoemakers are, William Jaques, John Clayton, John Clapham, William Greenwood, George Terry, John Smales, George Merriweather, William Gristwood and his son George, Robert Cotfield, Thomas Mawson, George Eastwood and Benjamin Robson. All these men, some of them masters of their craft made shoes in the village but not all at one time. Seven were in employment in 1851.

In 1881, our only shoemaker was George Pratt, but by 1921 no shoes were being made. Ambrose Whitehead was the village boot and shoe repairer then, Footwear by this time was bought at Catterick or Richmond, and during wartime boots could be repaired by Tom Prince at the King William IV Inn. Today, no sign of the shoe trade remains within the village, that is, apart from the little barn opposite the church, which is known to have been a Boot and Shoe Shop at sometime in its history.

Sources: Census Returns; Documents kept at North Yorkshire County Records Office; 19th Century Trade Directories etc., and information given by senior residents. Further reading on Tanners can be found in "[Rural Crafts of England](#)" by K.S. Woods

Farms and Farming

David Savage

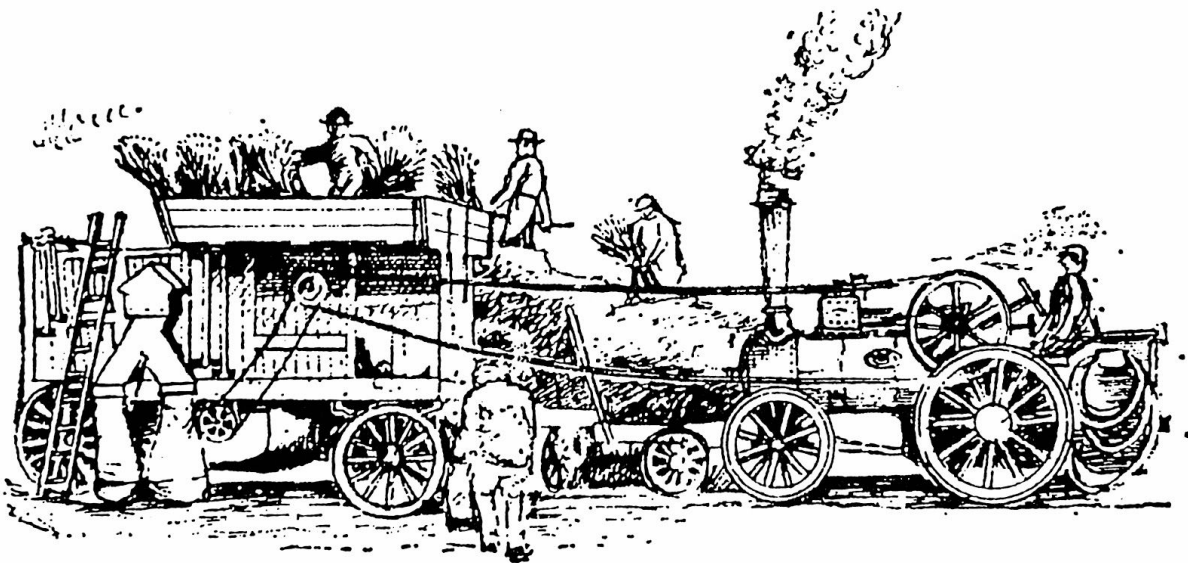
In the mid and latter part of the nineteenth century the [farming](#) community played an important part in Brompton-on-Swale's village life.

Originally, the farms were a part of the estates of large landowners, mainly the Wharton, Stapletons and Lawsons, but these were gradually sold off to individual farmers and let to others on a tenancy basis. These farms consisting mainly of small acreages would have been a constant struggle and afforded a meagre existence especially to the larger families.

The pattern of agriculture from this period differed greatly from the present time with regard to cropping. Arable farming, with a very low rate per acre, predominated. Corn, wheat, barley, oats etc. accounted for 23% and roots for 13%. Potatoes were grown in such small quantities to be possibly for home consumption alone. The balance was made up of fallow and re-seeded land. Stock consisted mainly of cows, usually only 5 to 8 per holding, unless milk sales were the main objective. Calves were reared and horses kept for cart work, but no reference is made to sheep or lambs.

The majority of tenants appeared to have changed at regular intervals with very few families continuing to farm at one place for very long. A few exceptions include the Simpsons, who, as early as 1823, were tenants at Grange Farm and in 1857 were farming 105 acres. In the census of 1871 a Joseph Simpson aged 49 farmed here in partnership with his sister and brother Isaac. In 1889 Joseph was at Mount Pleasant, a small farm of 35 acres, which prior to 1856 was called Lawes Folly. It was also farmed by a Simpson in Kelly's records of 1917. In 1937 we see the last of these Simpsons in William who stayed until the late 1940s. Thus ended an unbroken span of nearly 100 years on tenancy in the village.

Lamb was another name to continue over a long period, first at Fountain Head (96 acres) in 1837 with John until 1871, followed by George in 1872 who in 1889 took over the tenancy of Grange Farm from Joseph Simpson. In 1937 we once more have a John who stayed until approximately 1950 when the farm was sold and the land and house separated to reduce further the number of farms in the village. The family of Hugill is equally a part of village life. Joseph Hugill is noted as a "gentry" in the records of 1849 and is at Primula Grange in 1857 but Census records for 1871 and directory of 1889 place Thomas there. Kelly's Directory of 1917 shows the tenancy held by James Hugill with the farm owned by Moses, who, in the 1871 census is given as the son of Thomas. Moses in 1917 was a [Threshing Machine](#) proprietor whose business it was to go from farm to farm to thresh, bale and tie the corn harvest. In later years this business passed on to James Hugil and continued up until the 1950's when, as more farmers purchased a [combine harvester](#) and baler of their own, the need for threshers declined to the extent where it was considered an unprofitable venture and was discontinued. Hugills are still resident on the village and in business but in a different field more in keeping with modern demands.



As threshing was once one of the major occupations of the village it is worth including a few words on the actual job which this entailed. "Thrashing day" as it was called was always an eventful day in the life of a small farmer. It was a get-together of friends and neighbours with as many men as possible gathered to make light work of a dusty and laborious job. The [thresher and baler](#) were set up, usually the day before the job was due to start, as this took a few hours to complete. In the early days the power was provided by a mobile steam-engine. In the Hugills case this was a large "[Burrill](#)" with iron wheels and hard rubber tyres, a vehicle of considerable power even by today's standards. Corn was forked from the stack on to the top of the thresher where the string around the sheaf was cut, (known as cutting bands) and fed into the top of the thresher which rotated at high speed and separated the corn from the straw to come out at opposite ends of the machine - the corn to be bagged off and the straw to be baled. This was then stacked and used at a later date for feed or bedding. The straw was not always baled, as wheat straw was often used for covering potatoes and turnips stored outside when buildings were being used for animals in Winter. In this case a tyer was used on the end of the thresher to catch the straw as it came out and tie it into long bundles, called battens. Up to a dozen men took part in the threshing which gave the farmer's wife a very busy day cooking and serving food as, by tradition she must keep everyone well fed and supplied with tea. When "Thrashing days" finally came to an end, it met with mixed feeling as, in its day, it was the nearest thing a lot of country families came to a social event.

Sources: P.R.O RG11/4881, 1871 Census Returns, Microfilm at North Yorkshire County Library, Northallerton; Directories and North Riding War Agricultural Executive Committee, Richmond Area.

Blacksmiths

Joy Ellis

The [village blacksmith](#), in a farming area such as ours, was very important, for not only was he kept busy shoeing farm and riding horses, but in making and repairing implements and tools for everyday work.

The village of Brompton-on-Swale is known to have had one and sometimes two master blacksmiths. The Great North Road has other smiths at Catterick Bridge and later at the Railway Hotel. Several local farms had their own forges where the farm men would work or the travelling blacksmith call and do the work on hand. Today the village Post Office occupies the site of what was one of the Blacksmiths' shops. Over the years many smiths have worked here. Mr John James Pennock being the last. John Pennock having served his apprenticeship at Sheffield in a foundry, moved to the Richmond Road smithy and house in 1899. His business as a blacksmith, wheelwright and farrier quickly built up. During the First World War, the army employed local smiths for shoeing the cavalry horses. The forecourt was often found to be full of army horses waiting to be shod.

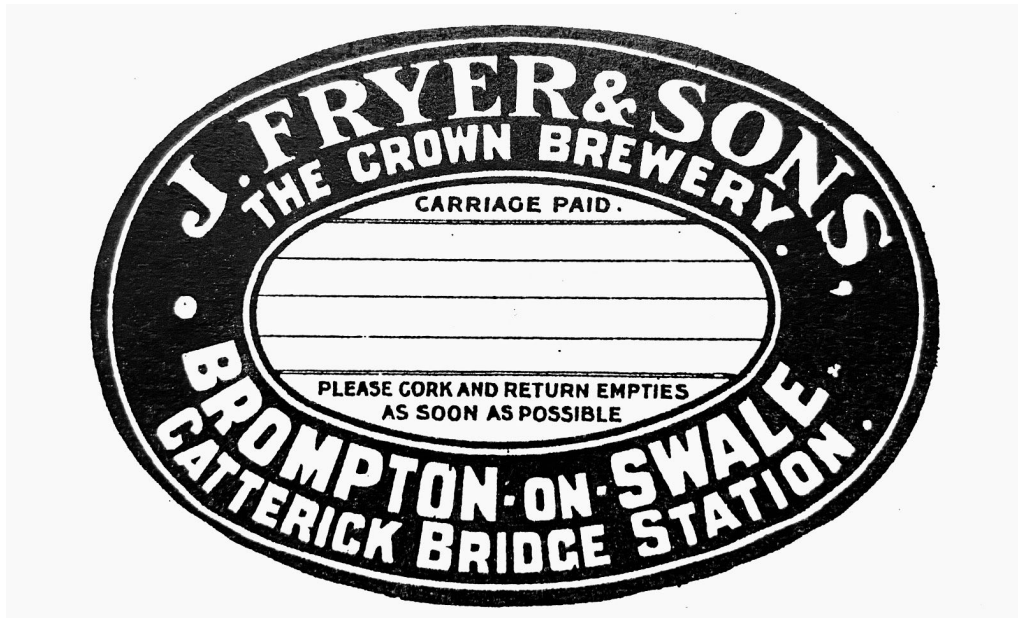
In the garden at the rear of the shop there was a well from which water was taken to be used in the smithy. Mr. Pennock also had a foundry here. He was well known for his wrought iron work which included garden gates, fire grates, hearth fenders and ornaments, foot scrapers and door stops. Moulds of Punch and Judy or lions were sometimes used in the iron work. Do we still have any cast iron work in the village with Punch and Judy worked into the design? Are they on your hearth? There was a 'hooping stone' on the forecourt of the forge upon which iron hoops were fixed to wooden wheels. Farm implements and plough shares were made or repaired at Brompton forge.

Mr. Pennock and his family lived in the cottage attached to the forge whilst his apprentice boy lived in the room above the smithy. Accommodation was rather limited as Mr. and Mrs. Pennock had five children and so he moved his business to Oakley House. Mr. Bond, a grocer from Richmond, bought the forge in 1919 and converted it into a shop selling groceries and general goods.

At Oakley House, opposite the King William IV Inn, Mr Pennock had more space for his work behind the house with a good supply of well water at hand in the garden. A large black shed housed the newly sited business and a 'hooping stone' was installed. The stone was raised off the ground to avoid unnecessary bending. ALL the Pennock family, regardless of age, assisted at the smithy. Many hands were needed to pump the bellows and to carry buckets of water from the well.

John James Pennock's son, Maurice, eventually took over the Oakley House business and the Pennock name continued in the craft. The village blacksmith flourished through another World War but the farrier's part of the work dwindled and the local farmers no longer required the services of a wheelwright. Tractors came into use on the land and the blacksmith was kept busy converting old horse-drawn implements to tractor-drawn machines with a tow bar. Maurice Pennock's skill as a joiner brought work for in house building within the village. Unfortunately, he was involved in an accident which resulted in a damaged spine and the closure of the Oakley House blacksmith's shop took place about 1955.

The above details were taken from several accounts given by the descendents of John James Pennock and senior residents. Further reading on "village blacksmiths" can be found in ['Life and Tradition in the Yorkshire Dales'](#) by Marie Hartley and John Ingilby.



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