

HERITAGE AND COUNTRYSIDE

A Day In Scissett – Part 2
By Matt Ottey

The Church

As my walk took me along the main road, which is uncharacteristically busy for such a small village, I passed the church. One of the aspects of Scissett I find most alluring is the closeness of the community. I encountered one lady who epitomised how different the way of life is in a small village such as Scissett in comparison to that I'm used to in Leicester. She told me that she grew up in the village, as well as living and working there also. However, she also informed me that she currently lives with her 90-year-old mother who was christened and married at the church as well!



I made my way through the church grounds, and couldn't help but notice (somewhat morbidly, I suppose) that the names on many of the gravestones, as well as the names on the plaques at the mill, correlated with names I've come across at Nortonthorpe CC, further reinforcing my view of Scissett as a tightly-knit community. Obviously though, with increasing housing development and a rising population, this closeness was no doubt more evident in the past.

I walked along the church path, taking in the beautiful masonry work of the stone building, noticing that inside the door of the church reads an inscription: 'In loving memory of Thomas Norton of Bagden Hall, patron of this church, who was born 28th October 1845 and died 4th April 1935'. Another example of how the Norton brothers became pillars of the community in which they worked and lived.

Nortonthorpe School

Finally, I climbed the hill to Nortonthorpe School, former home of Joseph Norton and brother of George. As I strolled through the gates I noticed that there was one building away to my left that was clearly part of the original premises; these, as it turned out, were the stables.

Nortonthorpe Hall, as it was originally known, was an exact structural match to Bagden Hall; however, where the main building once stood now stands a skate park and interactive learning centre. The school itself specialises in teaching children with severe behavioural difficulties, and the hall acted as a residential building for these children for 40 years, before, due to structural problems, the authorities pulled it down to make way for a different building.

The house was acquired by the West Riding Education Authorities in the 1950s and was eventually turned into a school; and now, due to the nature of its occupants, it is known in Scissett as the 'naughty boys' school' and has been for many years.

The structural similarities isn't the only thing the two buildings had in common, with both houses sharing extensive and astonishingly beautiful surroundings, looking out across the vast countryside.

Hopefully these two articles have inspired you to take time on the next sunny day to go out and explore part of Yorkshire's countryside and take in its rich heritage. If I can spend a day out wandering through woods filled with wildlife and appreciating the character of a village such as Scissett, then anyone can. It's just a shame it's not cricket season, yet!