

CUMBERWORTH CC

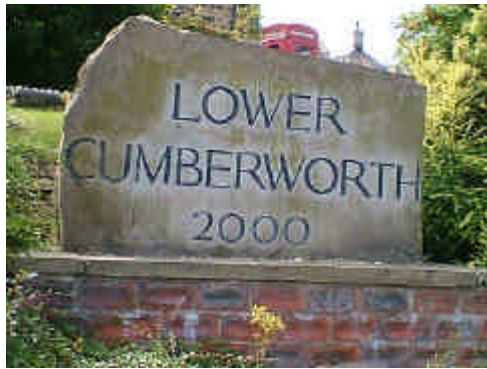
DOWN YOUR WAY

HIGHWAYMEN, WEAVERS & RADICAL CLERGY

CUMBERWORTH: THE VILLAGE

Cumberworth (meaning enclosure of a man named Cumbra) is the umbrella term for the two settlements of Upper Cumberworth and Lower Cumberworth. It is believed that Cumberworth is one of the oldest settlements in the Dearne Valley, the Celts apparently being the village's earliest inhabitants (Cumberworth is one of the few Celtic place names in the area).

No-one is quite sure when the Celts first arrived in Britain, or in Cumberworth for that matter, but they were around in Europe in 500 BC and it is estimated that they may have started arriving in this country between 200 and 100 BC. The Celts, then, were certainly around to witness Roman England and are said to have lived fairly peacefully alongside the Romans, even after Julius Caesar referred to them as 'a bunch of savages'.



After the Romans left Britain (c.450 AD) leaving behind many of their customs, it is likely that Cumberworth continued to be inhabited and some of the land in the area farmed.

From the mid fifth century Anglo-Saxons and then later Vikings arrived in the country and many of these new settlers would have lived alongside the existing population and in some cases even married the native population (the Angles were certainly keen to intermarry).

It was not until the eleventh century, when William the Conqueror's Norman soldiers visited Cumberworth, that significant change took place. The Domesday Book entry of 1086 is evidence of the devastation the Normans had inflicted: before 1066 Cumberworth was valued at 6 shillings and owned by Leofwine and Alric.

After the Norman 'harrying of the north' it was declared 'waste' in the Domesday Book and had been given to one of William's cohorts, Ilbert de Laci (Laci received a large amount of land, chiefly in the West Riding, along with 204 manors in Yorkshire as reward for his loyalty to William).



Like many other villages that had suffered a similar fate, it would have taken Cumberworth a while to recover from this devastation (houses and crops had been burned and people and livestock killed). But eventually people began to return to the area, land was again cultivated and new buildings erected.

One of these new buildings would have been Cumberworth's church. Although an exact date for the building of the church is not known (one writer estimates it to have been in existence in 1255) the church had certainly been built by 1299 as it appears in records for this year.

Records show that in 1379, although not as wealthy as some other villages in the area (Cawthorne and Denby), the residents of Cumberworth paid 5s 6d in Poll Tax. Incidentally this tax introduced by Richard II was as unpopular as the one introduced by the Thatcher government in the 1980s and some historians argue that the response to Richard II introducing this tax led to the 'most significant outbreak of popular protest in British history' because it was the first major rising where the protestors came from areas all over the country making it a 'national revolt'.



Life in medieval Cumberworth would have centred very much on agriculture but during the Stuart period (1603-1714) mining and the spinning and weaving of wool became well established in the village. By 1806 records show that there were 91 weavers, 3 cutters and 6 clothiers in the village. Only 32 men were not employed in textiles. No wonder then that Cumberworth became renowned for the ‘fine quality of its woven cloth’.

Unfortunately for Cumberworth’s nineteenth century residents this was not set to continue; with the introduction of power-looms and the building of mills in nearby Denby Dale, the weavers of Cumberworth were redundant. As a result of the changes the Industrial Revolution brought to the area, many of the village’s population (those who could not find work at Denby Dale’s mills) were left in a state of poverty.

In the mid-nineteenth century the situation in Cumberworth was so bad that the parish curate, Reverend Charles Dunn, wrote to the lady of Bretton Hall to ask for help. Reverend Dunn was not one to sit back and watch people suffer. He disliked capitalism

and believed that people should work together for the common good. He also supported the Co-operative movement which was unusual for an Anglican clergyman given Robert Owen's (the inspiration behind the movement) vociferous attacks on the Church.

Thankfully today's residents do not suffer unemployment or poverty like that suffered by their antecedents, nor do they fear being attacked by the notorious highwayman, Dick Turpin. Turpin is thought to have stalked the byways and highways around the Dearne Valley; an area of Cumberworth, Turpin Hill is named after him.



Today the villages (Upper and Lower Cumberworth) are described by the Cumberworth Community Association's website as 'quiet and rural with a lot of friendly people and plenty going on' and indeed the Cumberworth Carnival suggests this to be the case. It only leaves one wondering why, if the villagers are so friendly, the medieval stocks can still be found in the churchyard.

Perhaps it is just in case there is another Dick Turpin or any of the residents resume the apparently common practice in times gone by of emptying the contents of their chamber pots onto the highway.

HABITS & HIGHWAYS

CUMBERWORTH (THE VILLAGE): 3 KEY
FACTS

1. RAILWAYS AND ROYALTY

Cumberworth might not have its own railway station but there is a railway tunnel passing underneath Cumberworth cricket pitch where an art work, the 'Cumberworth Steppes', have been created.

At the tunnel end there is a wildlife site where you may find a plant called *planta genista*, a yellow broom flower which Count Geoffrey of Anjou, the father of King Henry II, took to wearing in his hat or helmet. His habit gave rise to the nickname 'Plantagenet' to the monarchs who ruled England for 331 from Henry II (1154-1189) to Richard III (1483-1485).



Henry II

2. SANITATION PROBLEMS?

A medical officer, Dr Duncan, was employed in the 1870s to investigate Cumberworth and Denby's health problems.

These are some of his findings: the house of Edward Hinchliffe in Upper Cumberworth had a doorless privy which was causing odour problems; that it was the habit of Cumberworth residents to leave the contents of their privies in the highway; and that many people were emptying the contents of their chamber pots into the highway.

In 1898 a bye-law confronted some of these problems by forbidding residents from emptying their chamber pots on the road and from shaking their rugs or mats on the highway.



Richard III

3. TRANSPORT

During the seventeenth and eighteenth century turnpike roads spread across the country. These roads were supposed to be self-financing – users were charged a toll for using the roads and paid these at the gated entrance to a town or village called a turnpike.

In 1845 the Barnsley to Shepley Lane Head turnpike was proposed and although opposed by locals, building went ahead. The tolls for using this turnpike were paid at the Star Inn, Upper Cumberworth, where travellers were no doubt encouraged to spend a few more pence!

TROOPS & TAXES

CUMBERWORTH – KEY DATES BEFORE THE CRICKET CLUB WAS FOUNDED

c.1069 Laid waste by William the Conqueror's troops.

1086 Cumberworth is mentioned in the Domesday Book.

1299 The Church of St Nicholas is mentioned in records.

1379 Total amount of poll tax collected from Cumberworth residents is 5s. 6d.

c.1600 Coal is mined in the village.

c.1700 Cumberworth residents begin spinning and weaving wool. Weavers cottages in Lower Cumberworth.



c.1800 The village is recorded as having 89 weavers, 6 clothiers, 3 cutters and 11 tradesmen. Only 31 men were not employed in the manufacture of cloth.

1834 Cumberworth appears in Pigot & Co's National Commercial Directory. The entry describes Cumberworth as 'a chapelry in the parish of Silkstone and Half-Cumberworth, a township, in the parish of Kirkburton'. Entry also says that the village has a national school and that the population is 1,374.

c.1845 Works begins on the Barnsley to Shepley Lane
Head turnpike road.

1851 The chapel at Lower Cumberworth is built.

1865 It is estimated that there are 11 mines in the area,
including one in Cumberworth.

180 NOT OUT!

KEY DATES IN THE EARLY HISTORY OF CRICKET IN KIRKLEES

1825: Lascelles Hall Cricket Club founded.

1842: Dalton play Sheffield for £30.

1867: *Huddersfield Examiner* publishes scores or reports on 209 matches featuring 107 different teams.



1868: Fartown ground leased by Huddersfield St. Johns C.C.. Savile Ground, Dewsbury, hosts game between All England XI and United All England XI.

1873: Batley legend Louis Hall makes Yorkshire bow.

1883: Lumb Cup and Heavy Woollen Cup born.

1886: Huddersfield Cricket Association is formed.

1887-9: Dewsbury Savile C.C. win hat-trick of Heavy Woollen Cup titles.

1892: 10 Clubs take part in inaugural Huddersfield & District Cricket League competition.

LOCAL RIVALS!

OTHER NEARBY CRICKET VILLAGES



Clayton West



Denby



Denby Dale



Nortonthorpe



Shelley



Shepley