

KIRKBURTON CC

DOWN YOUR WAY

SHOOTING AND SWORD DANCING

The Village

The name Burton, a common place name meaning 'fortified farmstead' or 'farmstead near a fortification', would have originally referred to the settlement we know today as Highburton. After All Hallows was built (c.1200) people began to settle just down the road in what is today Kirkburton and Burton became Highburton. Highburton thus became known as the Burton on the hill and Kirkburton the Burton near the church.



Prior to the building of Kirkburton Church (and there is some dispute over when All Hallows was erected – some historians say that there had been a religious building on the site prior to the thirteenth century while others believe the church was built during Edward III’s reign, 1327-77) most people would have preferred to build their farms higher up the slopes in Highburton.

Indeed, the Burton family, who had been granted the manor by the Earl of Warrenne, (which he received as a gift from William the Conqueror as a reward for his loyalty during the Norman Conquest) built their manor house at Highburton.

After the building of All Hallows Church, however, Kirkburton became the larger of the two settlements. And certainly by the time Elizabeth I was sorting out the problems left by her siblings (Mary and Edward VI), many people had moved into the village and the manufacture of woollen cloth was well in progress.



Unfortunately, Kirkburton's fairly large population was to suffer a setback during the sixteenth century, in the form of the Black Death, or plague as it is more commonly known. Indeed the outbreak was so virulent (120 people died in just four months) that during 1557 and 1558 there were more burials in the area than baptisms and 'plague time' was entered against the months July, August and September in the parish register.

The plague wasn't the only cause of death in the village. During the unsettled period of the English Civil War, which divided friends, families, neighbours and communities in the mid-seventeenth century, the vicar's wife, Hester Whitaker, was shot dead.

The vicar of Kirkburton Church, Reverend Gamaliel Whitaker, came out in support of the Royalists (he was apparently connected to several of the leading Royalist families in the North).

His views, however, were at odds with those of the majority of parishioners who supported Parliament. Thus one theory of Hester's fatal shooting was as follows: on 12 January 1644 parliamentary soldiers based in the area, set out to arrest Reverend Whitaker but on arriving at the vicarage there was some confusion which led to Hester being shot.



She died later and is buried in Kirkburton churchyard. Her death did not stop the soldiers carrying out the task they had been set and Reverend Whitaker was duly arrested and taken to a prison in Manchester, where he died a few weeks later on 1st February.

The other postulated cause of Hester's death is that John Firth, the leader of the Quakers in the area, played a part in the event. He had been arrested and was being marched to Halifax when he escaped and hid in a wood. This enraged the leader of the soldiers who shot at the window of Kirkburton vicarage where Firth was believed to be hiding, killing Hester in the process.

This version of events seems less plausible as it does not explain why Reverend Whitaker was subsequently arrested. Whatever the truth of Hester's tragedy, she was an innocent victim of the Civil War and a ghost, thought to be hers, is believed to roam around the old vicarage.

During the eighteenth century the rise began of the two industries that transformed Kirkburton from a small hamlet into a 'busy centre for coal mining and woollen manufacture'. By the sixteenth century Kirkburton had an established woollen trade and in 1787 the village's first textile mill was built at Dogley followed by Linfit Mill (the home of George Hey & Son) a few years later.



Indeed Linfit Mill, unlike many other mills in Kirklees, was deliberately built away from water to make use of the fuel from the nearby coalfields. Both industries – coal and textiles - grew rapidly and in tandem; the coal deposits in the area aiding the development of the

textile industry. By 1850 it is estimated that there were 20 small pits in the area and by 1880 there were eight mills.

Kirkburton today is no longer busy with coal and wool. The mines and mills have long since gone as has the railway, another product of Kirkburton's industrialisation in the nineteenth century. (The railway offered both passenger and goods services but the first fell victim to the arrival of bus services in the 1930s and the goods trains discontinued in 1965 presumably because of the decline of the mines and mills).



Kirkburton does, however, have much to offer its residents with its semi-rural location, several pubs, numerous shops, a fantastic library (with its new e-

library facilities) and the picturesque All Hallows Church.

The village's inhabitants are also given a treat in the New Year when the Kirkburton Rapier Dancers tour through the village sword dancing (Shelley Welly Walkers who walk the village's boundaries on New Year's Day may need to be careful at this time). Perhaps then it is fair to say that even though George Hey & Sons (one of the largest employers in the area) is no longer in operation, Kirkburton is still in its heyday.

TARTS & TAVERNS

Kirkburton: 4 Key Facts

1. ANYONE FOR TREACLE TART?

Many of the villages in Kirklees have something bizarre associated with them: the Marsden cuckoo, the Denby Dale pie and the Skelmanthorpe ear'ole biters.

Kirkburton is no exception. It is said that in the nineteenth century a wagon carrying barrels of treacle overturned at Low Town, spilling the contents of the barrels out. Apparently locals made the most of this unusual event, collecting the treacle in whatever they could find. In memory of this treat there is a house known as Treacle Cottage and the road Low Gate is known by some locals as t'Treacle 'oil'. Be careful if you are offered treacle tart in Kirkburton today as it did indeed fall off the back of a lorry!



2. THE LORD GIVETH AND HE TAKETH AWAY

By the time Edward III was on the throne (1327-77), Kirkburton was a prosperous little place, so much so that the vicar of Kirkburton was entitled to receive a tithe of lambs, wool and mill produce. A tithe was a tax of one-tenth of the annual produce of land or labour, levied to support the church and clergy. Tithes were not abolished officially until the Tithe Act of 1936.

3. PUBLIC HOUSES

Prior to the building of Town Halls, community centres, village halls and the like, public houses were used as meeting places by various clubs and associations.

Records show that on Saturday 26th June 1869 the Kirkburton United Society of Canary Fanciers held their first annual feather show at the Spring Grove Tavern.



Huddersfield market

4. NO ROOM AT THE INN

After Huddersfield was granted its market charter by Charles II in 1671 many traders descended on Huddersfield each Tuesday (market day). Many folk did not want to ride home in the dark for both safety and security reasons and this led to inns

providing refreshments and accommodation springing up close to the market. Indeed, some traders would carry on buying and selling in the inns. However, to some an overnight stay proved very costly.

A Kirkburton butcher, John Smith, had gone into Huddersfield on market day and had been prevented from making the 5 or so mile journey home because of the weather. He therefore decided to stay the night in Edward Shaw's inn. Unfortunately, whilst he was asleep three men came into the house and were said to be 'very bussie' about his person (removing his money). No doubt the next morning Smith woke up wishing he had made the short journey home.

CHURCHES & CAVALIERS

Key Dates in the History of Kirkburton before the Birth of the Cricket Club

1086 Kirkburton, or Bertone as it was then known, is mentioned in Domesday Book.

c.1200 All Hallows Church is erected.

1558 June: Residents of Kirkburton, as well as High Burton, are victims of the Plague (Black Death)

1587 People of Kirkburton again victims of the Plague.



Roundhead



Cavalier

1644 12 January: Hester Whitaker, the vicar's wife, is shot by parliamentary soldiers (Roundheads).

c.1787 The first textile mill is built in the area at Dogley.

c.1800 Linfit Mill is built. The population of Kirkburton is estimated to be 1,400.

1831 The census records that there are 2,650 people living in Kirkburton.

1834 Springfield Mill is built.

1857 Gas is first used in the village.

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



Cumberworth



Lepton



Shelley



Shepley



Skelmanthorpe