



YORKSHIRE VERNACULAR BUILDINGS STUDY GROUP

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Newsheet No 102

March 2021

Dear Member,

Welcome to our 102nd Newsletter – our first for 2021. Have you renewed your membership yet? You can do it now by a banking app from your mobile – so no excuses such as ‘Sorry I’m isolating and can’t post a cheque!’ Yes, I’m pleased to report that we have moved into the twenty-first century, one of the results of our changed circumstances at this most difficult of times where online communication can be a lifesaver. It is now time-critical for you to renew soon, as if you don’t within the next month you will no longer receive future Newsheets and emails detailing our future activities, such as our next Zoom talk. I hope those of you that booked enjoyed the first couple of talks. If you missed them, you can do a ‘catch-up’ and view them at your leisure – details overleaf. However, I am hopeful that the mass immunisation programme will, given time and patience, bear the fruit of more YVBSG activities perhaps six months down the line; we’ll let you know our thoughts and ideas in our next Newsheet.

Last time I reported that I’ve always liked coincidences, and this is the theme of my letter to you. As most of you know I live in Barnsley and every month I receive a free magazine delivered to our S75 postcode published by www.titomedialtd.co.uk with regular features and articles of general interest to the region. In the latest magazine for January 2021 (Issue 129) I was interested to read Mel Jones’ regular local history article – this month on ‘Street and Road names ending in – GATE’. Some of you visited his house, Kirkstead Abbey Grange, with me on my Rotherham walkabout a few years back – a partial pre-medieval survivor with cusped lights and an extraordinary roof truss featured in our last journal. He refers to an article he came across in *The Local Historian* written in 1968 by ‘a reader called Kenneth Hutton who

lived in York’. Kenneth was husband of Barbara Hutton and I first met him on a training course based in Askrigg run by Barbara on how to record buildings in the early 1980s when I was Calderdale’s newly appointed Architectural Historian tasked with re-surveying the Metropolitan Borough for listed buildings. Following that event, she published a book that featured plans I had contributed to, and my drawing of an interior. So Mel’s piece reminded me of Kenneth and Barbara and how instrumental they both were in the founding of YVBSG and how it should be organised. Our President Barry Harrison wrote a fine obituary for Barbara in Newsheet 82 published in December 2015; new members would find it instructive to read this. She met Kenneth as a student at Oxford University during the Second World War, and after graduating they both became teachers in Hatfield. When Kenneth was appointed a Schools Inspector for the North Riding they moved to Clifton on the outskirts of York, and so it began!

To return to Mel’s article, he tells us of Kenneth’s research – York has 35



The corner of two ‘gates’ in York: Stonegate and Petergate. The building probably dates back to the 14th century but has a date of 1646 carved on the corner post.

streets called ‘gate’. He had found 151 places that contained at least one ‘gate’ street name, nearly half being in Yorkshire at the heart of the Danelaw prior to the Conquest with a large old-Norse-speaking population, the word deriving from the Scandinavian *gata* meaning ‘way’ or ‘road’. This was usually leading to, or from, a landmark such as the church (Kirkgate) or bridge (Briggate), but might also be directional including the points of the compass, as found in the old part of Elland where Northgate, Southgate, Westgate and Eastgate run around the church linked by Church Gate (Kirkgate) off which St Mary’s Gate runs (the church is dedicated to St Mary). Moorgate leads to and from the common or open moorland, while Towngate is self-explanatory. Perhaps you might like to try a bit of research yourself using an A-Z map book of your area to see how many gate roads you can find (in the index) and report back for our next Newsheet? I used the *Calderdale Street Atlas* and found Bridge Gate in Hebden Bridge that leads to the ancient sixteenth century stone packhorse bridge that crosses the Hebden Water leading to Old Gate. The conjoined version of Briggate is rarer and usually defines an ancient main street, as it still does in Leeds where the medieval borough was laid out along Briggate, with Upper and Lower sections as it’s such a long street. Kenneth mapped in all some 469 ‘gate’ streets – how many of those can you find? Try and find some that mention different types of food? Good hunting!

Peter Thornborrow, Chair

We are sad to report that, since Peter prepared this article, we have heard that Professor Melvyn Jones died suddenly at home on 14 January 2021. We very much appreciated the extensive historical knowledge he shared with us during our visit to Kirkstead Abbey Grange in 2018.

YVBSG Events for your diary

Third Thursday Talks

We are continuing to offer a series of monthly online talks which you can attend from the comfort of your home. These normally take place by Zoom at 7.30pm on the third Thursday of the month and there will be the opportunity for questions after each talk. The talks are open to all (including non-members) and are free of charge.

The current programme is listed below; further details of each talk will be circulated by email and published on the website. Please book by following the link from www.yvbsg.org.uk, which will take you to the Eventbrite booking page. Joining instructions will be sent by email before each talk.

Vernacular architectural features in Upper Wharfedale Part 1: the complex of buildings at Kilnsey

by Malcolm Birdsall, on Thursday 18 March 2021

During a week self-catering at 'The Old Chapel' in Kilnsey in October 2020, Malcolm's past memories of various vernacular buildings in the Upper Wharfedale area were ignited. With some of his past recording and recent research he has put together a presentation that includes architectural assessments in Kilnsey: The Old Chapel – was it originally a Chapel?, The Old Hall, the partially ruinous gatehouse (with a conjectured original layout) and a detached bakehouse.

Please note that Malcolm had initially also intended to talk about corn-drying kilns during this presentation, together with architectural features in Grassington, Parceval Hall at Skyreholme, and Mock Beggar Hall at Appletreewick. However, because of the amount of material of interest, these topics will now form a separate talk (Part 2) at a future date to be confirmed.



Kilnsey Old Hall.

The two dovecote entries under the eaves have alighting shelves and provide access to internal stone nesting boxes.

Revising Pevsner in the North Riding

by Jane Grenville, on Thursday 15 April 2021

Vernacular houses in Carleton

by Sue Wrathmell, on Thursday 20 May 2021

Bricks and mortar – rural industry and the supply of building materials 1700-1900

by George Sheeran, on Thursday 17 June 2021

Recordings of previous talks

The previous two talks can now be watched by following the links on the website: *Ships timbers ahoy! Ways to convince it's not part of the Armada* by David Cant, and *A farmer-miner landscape: cowhouses and the practice of smallholdings in Castle Bolton (lower Wensleydale)* by Hannah Kingsbury.

AGM and talk

The Annual General Meeting will be held by Zoom at 3pm on Saturday 27 March 2021. Prior to commencement of the formal agenda, David Cant will give a short talk, *From Maypole to Daisy Bank; rebuilding a timber-frame at the end of the nineteenth century*, which will describe the moving of a timber-framed house in 1890 from the centre of Halifax to a new site.

All members of the group are formally invited to attend. If you are unable to attend the AGM and wish to raise any matter, you may do so in writing to the Secretary, Mary Cook. Please send any nominations for officers or members of the committee to Mary (contact details on back page).

The agenda and the Zoom link for the meeting will be circulated by email and will also be available on the Members' Area of the website, together with the annual accounts and the minutes of last year's AGM.

Membership renewal for 2021 – a reminder

Membership fees for 2021 became due on 1 January and renewal notices were sent out in December 2020. If a reminder is enclosed with this Newsheet, this means that you have not yet renewed your membership for 2021. We gently remind you that in line with our Privacy Statement which came into effect with GDPR in 2018, membership may be terminated if you do not renew within three months from 1 January each year and you would then receive no further correspondence from us, so please do renew soon – we don't want to lose you!

Renewal payment (£12) can be by cheque payable to YVBSG, or by using direct bank transfer (BACS). Whichever method you use, please also post or email your completed renewal slip (making sure that you've ticked all the boxes to show your

preferences) to the Membership Secretary, Pat Leggett, at the address shown on the slip.

For BACS transfer these are the details you require:

Account name: Yorkshire Vernacular Buildings Study Group
Sort code: 09-01-56
Account number: 52840000
Reference: Please use your surname

The password to the Members' Area of the website changed in January and you'll receive the new details when you renew your membership. The Members' Area now provides access to around 1,900 newly-digitised building reports and 150 articles from back issues of *Yorkshire Buildings* up to 2017.

Yorkshire Buildings 48 – a progress report

Members are probably asking themselves what, apart from this Newsheet, will they be getting for their annual subscription, during these 'sore distracted times'? Well, the good news is that work is underway on the next issue of *Yorkshire Buildings* (No 48), and hopefully it will appear later this year.

This issue will cover the weekend conference held at Sheffield in the far-off days of 2019 when such events were possible. We gave it the title of 'Hallamshire and the Dark Peak', which was rather more alluring than 'Sheffield and Environs' (no offence to Sheffield) which we could have used. The rural area has long been renowned for the survival of numbers of cruck-framed buildings, some of which will feature in this issue, while within the City of Sheffield are some surprising survivals from its rural past.



The cruck-framed Oak Fold Barn in Shiregreen, Sheffield, perhaps early 17th century with later alterations.

The day school topic of 'Extraordinary Yorkshire Buildings' provided David Cook with the opportunity to re-examine Ingleby Manor, probably the largest single building ever recorded by the YVBSG. We also venture over the border into Northumberland with Peter Ryder to look at defensible buildings. Hopefully, this article will allow us all to distinguish hall houses from tower houses, and stone houses from bastles, as well as bastle-derivatives and urban quasi-bastles.

The walkabout featured in this issue will be somewhat different from usual, and is based on Robert Hird's *Annals of Bedale*. Bedale is a small town about eight miles west of Northallerton, and Hird was a shoemaker in the town, where he spent his whole life. Unusually, and possibly uniquely, he wrote his memories of the town, its buildings and its inhabitants, in verse, in 3000 quatrains (four-line verses). These verses were annotated at various dates with marginal notes recording subsequent changes. The *Annals* record the period from Hird's childhood in the 1760s, almost up to his death in 1841, and there is a constant thread of improvement running through them. He noted the changes in Bedale's buildings from timber framing and thatch to brick new building or rebuilding. He notes too the changes in landscape gardening at Bedale Hall from the enclosed Baroque garden of statues and basins of water to the open

parkland setting that remains. Hird allows us to look at some of the buildings he describes, and to see the town through his eyes.

We have a larger than usual crop of 'one off' recorded buildings, a couple at Gammersgill in Coverdale, the Old Hall at Bellerby near Leyburn, and others in the old West and North Ridings. However, we do not, as yet, have any book reviews, so if anyone has been able to obtain any publications with a vernacular buildings slant and has the urge to see their thoughts in print, please let me know.

Thinking ahead, with the lack of recording activity last year, Issue 49 is likely to be rather thin. I would appeal to members to look through their collections of photographs, notes and drawings to see whether they have any material which may be of interest to the wider membership.

The YVBSG began to record buildings back in the early 70s, since when the mania for country living and home improvement have transformed many a rural wreck into a des-res, often losing much interest in the process. (Did anyone see the 'restoration' of that Cornish mill on *Grand Designs* recently? Even Kevin McCloud was appalled.) So, photographs from the recent past can be of historic interest, and worthy of a wider audience.

Tony Robinson

Publications

The Holme Valley in the Middle Ages by Peter A Burton, available from medbook21@outlook.com, £9 plus £2 p&p. A recorded talk on this subject by YVBSG member Peter can be found by following the link on our 'Online Occupations' web page.

Histories of People and Landscape: Essays on the Sheffield Region in memory of David Hey edited by Richard Hoyle. Publication March 2021. David was the Sheffield and South Yorkshire historian of our times: he published what is likely to remain the standard account of Sheffield as well as accounts of the landscape of South Yorkshire, and more. These essays cover topics including deer parks, Sheffield cutlers, the steel industry, lost Domesday landscapes, a Peak District yeoman family, boundary settlements, and personal names in the south Yorkshire Pennines. Paperback approximately £19.

Power in the Land: The Ramsdens and their Huddersfield Estate, 1542-1920 by Edward Royle, Brian Haigh, David Griffiths, John Halstead, Christopher Webster, Stephen Counce and Meriel Buxton. A collection of essays including a chapter on Longley Hall. Available for free download from <https://t.co/7rgy6oflDq?amp=1>.

Barns of Cumbria. Occasional Paper Number Three, December 2020, published by the Cumbria Vernacular Buildings Group following a workshop in August 2019. £5 plus postage. This excellent little publication comprises general notes on barns as well as illustrations and details of individual buildings including tithe barns and bank barns. For details contact secretary@cvbg.co.uk.

Map coming soon!

We mentioned in a previous Newsheet that we planned to create an interactive online map showing the location of all buildings recorded by the Group. Good progress has been made and further details of this exciting development will be given in the next Newsheet. However, it's likely that the map will be available before then so keep an eye on the website over the coming weeks!

YVBSG on YouTube

The YVBSG now has its own YouTube channel where we can publish videos, such as recordings of talks. The easiest way to find the channel is probably to follow the link from the YVBSG website at www.yvbsg.org.uk. Clicking on the 'Playlists' tab within the channel will offer you some suggested other videos which might be of interest.

A look at some unusual Calderdale windows ...

An attempt to reduce window tax at Flail Croft, Todmorden

Flail Croft is a small mid-seventeenth century two-cell farmhouse near the 875-foot contour, off Parkin Lane, Todmorden, Calderdale, West Yorkshire. The River Calder, running through the centre of Todmorden, was the boundary between Lancashire and the West Riding until 1888, when the boundary was moved further west. As Flail Croft is located west of the River Calder, the house was firmly in Lancashire before 1888.

Facing south-east, the housebody window has five lights, the fire window two lights. Inside, there is said to be a parpoint wall. For more information on these walls, see *Yorkshire Buildings* 43 (2015), page 63.

Two square openings measuring five inches by five inches were later made between the two two-light mullion windows over the housepart, and then glazed. This was due to a window tax, first imposed in 1696, then augmented from 1747 to 1808, reduced in 1825. Finally repealed in 1851. For tax purposes, two windows became one, as long as the stones between the 'false window' and real window were no more than twelve inches wide.



The small glazed openings at Flail Croft



Flail Croft, with the glazed openings between the right-hand upper windows

Another local house with small glazed squares between first floor windows is the Hare and Hounds public house (c1800) at Old Town, near Hebden Bridge, which has four little false windows between four original windows. A house dated 1630, near Eastwood Old Hall, Todmorden, has two blocked, recessed, rectangular openings between ground floor windows. This needs investigating further.

There are several brick houses in Lancashire (Carr House, near Chorley) and further north in the Fylde (Shepherd's Farm, Cockerham), where vertical channels have been cut, then glazed, connecting lower and upper mullion windows. To see these visit [www.twitter.com](https://www.twitter.com/JKevinIllingworth), then type 'J Kevin Illingworth' (my username or handle). My Tweet with four photos appeared on 24 November 2020. All five houses mentioned in this article have been photographed by myself.

For some of this information, we can thank the late W John Smith, a YVBSG member until 2008, who ran many courses in both counties, especially before the year 2000. We learned much from his approximately 70,000 slides, measured drawings and so on.

Further information on the window tax is in Alec Clifton-Taylor's book *The Pattern of English Building* 1972, page 397. And for more detailed information, see *A History of Taxation and Taxes in England* by Stephen Dowell, 1965. Thanks to David Shore for sending me some pages from this book.

Kevin Illingworth

Is this the smallest mullion window in Yorkshire?

The unlisted Lower Strines Barn, New Road, Blackshaw, near Hebden Bridge, has been converted into a house in modern times. The re-used, puzzling, tiny blocked two-light window with a chamfered mullion in the east gable must be late seventeenth or early eighteenth century.

The outline of an earlier lower building can be seen in both of the gables, probably late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. The walls were then raised in the early nineteenth century, including a venetian window to the north elevation, typical of many early nineteenth century barns in the area, some dated.



The small mullion window



Lower Strines Barn, showing position of window in east gable

Lower Strines Farmhouse (late sixteenth century) and Higher Strines laithe-house (1827) are nearby, in this small hamlet of Strines.

Kevin Illingworth

Using the YVBSG Archive

During the various lockdown periods, I have been involved in digitising the building recording reports from the YVBSG archive. As part of this process, I went on to identify the exact location of each building surveyed, using Google Maps, Street View, Grid Reference Finder and the National Library of Scotland maps. I have found myself walking virtually around Yorkshire, often in glorious sunshine, locating some remarkable buildings.

I have put together a small tour of Ripon which can be done at home using Google Maps Street View, or it can be saved until you can visit Ripon in person. This is designed to encourage the use of the digitised reports (indicated in brackets) which can be accessed on the YVBSG website; this will be even easier when our new interactive map is available. I have included some snippets to whet your appetite ... enjoy!

Mary Cook

Ripon walking tour

Commence the walk at High St Agnesgate at the Bondgate Green end facing east.

1 High St Agnesgate is otherwise known as Thorpe Prebend House. 'The house was occupied by the last Abbot of Fountains, who became Prebendary of Thorpe shortly before the Dissolution, and then retired to this house, which he is very likely to have improved or rebuilt. The stone range parallel to the street, with a distinctive chimney in the middle and another at the west end, is similar to a number of late sixteenth century stone houses without cross-passages in the county, e.g. East Layton Old Hall.' (NYCVBSG 226) Dendrochronology has revealed two separate phases of construction of the internal timber framing with wood felled in 1517 and then between 1583-4.

Twenty metres further east on the north side is Old Hall adjacent to the grounds of Minster House. This brick building is home to 'exquisite plasterwork. The lower ceiling immediately within the front door has a cupid in a roundel framed with leafy drops; the main ceiling has a Judgment of Paris, while Minerva's owl is shown, not in the scene itself but presiding over the swags that crown the staircase window. Other swags of flowers and fruit ornament the upper walls.' (NYCVBSG 110)

Almost immediately opposite on the south side of the street is St Michael's House. (NYCVBSG 661) This too has a central chimney stack, but less pronounced than that of Thorpe Prebend House. At some point in time, windows have been inserted into the external wall of the stack.

The next-but-one house, 16 High St Agnesgate, is the distinctive looking St Agnes House. (NYCVBSG 127) The large ornate external chimney stack dominates the west gable and the front façade is famed for the circular windows faced with flat stone. The north-south range contains three king-post trusses. Dendrochronology results indicate the trees were



St Agnes House

felled between 1542-1573, whereas the east-west range contains five cruck trusses, dated 1625-1641.

Continue a further 60m east along High St Agnesgate then turn left and follow the footpath through the graveyard to the front of Ripon Cathedral. (This can be done virtually by turning left along Low Agnesgate, then left onto Minster Road.)

The Church of St Peter and St Wilfred was known as Ripon Minster until 1836 when it became the Cathedral Church for the Diocese of Ripon. In 2014 this was incorporated into the Diocese of Leeds. The nave roof consists of fifteen truncated trusses, consisting alternately of single larger oak principal rafters and of close-set pairs of very slightly smaller oak principal rafters. Radio carbon dating indicates a date of 1868 when it is very likely that the entire roof was replaced.

More information about the cathedral can be found at www.riponcathedral.org.uk and by visiting the dedicated YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/channel/UCt1jF1zSES6ON0d1Rjlt8sQ/featured.

On leaving the cathedral from the west doors, over the road and slightly to the north is the Old Court House. 'It is a long, two-storey building of stone, except that the upper part of the south end is framed in timber.' (NYCVBSG 56)

Now proceed along Kirkgate. On the south side, near the junction, is 19 Kirkgate. (NYCVBSG 160) Documentary evidence presented within the building report dates from 1671.

50m further along Kirkgate on the south side is no. 11. The house was built on a timber frame forming twin gables towards the street, and jettied in front at the first and second floors. (NYCVBSG 267)

Next door but one, at 7, 8 and 9 Kirkgate: 'This group of three shops forms a single building facing north onto the street, with a late Regency brick front painted white with black details ... A parapet hides the roof and only the irregular disposal of the windows gives a hint that this is not a simple 19th century building.' (NYCVBSG 376)

On the north side of Kirkgate, no. 27 which was thought to be the gatehouse to the Bishop's Palace. 'The only wall framing remaining in this house is the part above the entry, where the braces run down from the posts to the rail ... The roof compares closely with roofs in York: dating around 1450, and so does the wall-framing.' (NYCVBSG 55)

Two doors down is 32 Kirkgate, surveyed in 1998. 'Within the present building, of three storeys and an attic, are the remains of a tall, timber-framed building, jettied at the front. Now encased in brick at front and rear, with the roof ridge running parallel with the street.' (YVBSG 1573)

Now follow Kirkgate round to the north for about 100m to arrive on Market Place East to find the Unicorn Hotel. Mike Younge, editor of *Ripon Market Place: The evolution of the centre of a historic Yorkshire market town*, cites meetings held in this location in 1611. However, many of the original timber-framed buildings within the Market Square were rebuilt including the Unicorn. 'None of the medieval, late medieval, or 17th century build that may have existed, now exists today. THE BUILDING AS IT NOW STANDS IS ALMOST ENTIRELY GEORGIAN.' (YVBSG 1629)

On Market Place North adjacent to Queen Street are 17, 17A and 18, currently three shops under one continuous slate roof. The report completed in 1977 noted the following features: 'At the foot of the back stairs [no. 18] modern dressing-cubicles have been built behind which can be seen the bressumer of a large open fireplace against the west wall. There is an arched 'flying joist' across the room from this bressumer to the east wall ... The stairs in no. 17 are built of oak with heavy turned balusters incorporating an unusual spool motif, and a broad handrail. The newel posts are square-sectioned with respond-balusters against them and have round knobs at the top and (where appropriate) bottom.' (NYCVBSG 344)

In the middle of Market Place West, no. 27 is the lowest in height of the buildings on that side of the square. Although the original roof was demolished, the building report is based on the photographs and measurements of the roof trusses that were taken out. Dendrochronology provided a speculative date of 1379 for tree felling. Barbara Hutton reported: 'This is only the second instance of a crown-post roof with cusping known to me in Yorkshire, the other being at Elland Old Hall where D.J.H. Michelmores recorded part of a truss with cusped braced below the tiebeam during demolition of the wing of a 13th century house. The Ripon trusses, however, are not 13th century though they could date from the 14th.' (NYCVBSG 263)

At the west end of Market Place South are no. 34 and the adjacent Wakeman's House on the corner. 'At the back [no. 34] a large room fills all the part of the building east of the

great chimney. This has a timber post in its northeast corner carrying a plate along the east wall and a tiebeam along the north wall of the room. The western part is divided into a bathroom at the north and another room to the south; these are crossed by three tiebeams, one near the north wall having a boldly-curved brace under its west end appears to be the exterior north gable wall of the original frame.' (NYCVBSG 492)

The Wakeman's House 'main roof runs parallel to the street. The diagonally-set ridge piece is supported by three principal trusses which also carry two pairs of trenched purlins with windbraces to the upper pair. Both the end trusses have a striking pattern of diagonal studding and a central king-strut.' (NYCVBSG 111)



The Wakeman's House

From your armchair ...

Many organisations are now offering online talks and conferences, many of which are free of charge. Keep an eye on the Online Occupations page of the YVBSG website for some suggestions of events, together with links to videos and recordings of events which might also be of interest.

These include a series of free talks on building-related topics currently being given by buildings archaeologist James Wright during the lockdown period, usually on Thursdays at 5pm.

Some unusual activity

As you will have read, our digital archive of around 1,900 reports is now available via the Members' Area of the website, and we hope it offers a useful resource to members.

However we recently noted an unusually high level of download activity in the archive. If you are the member who downloaded 261 reports on 12 February 2021, could you please contact the YVBSG Archivist on archivist@yvbsg.org.uk? Thank you!

Committee meeting

The next meeting of the committee will be held by Zoom on Monday 10 May 2021. If you'd like to raise any matters, or have ideas for future events, please contact the Secretary, Mary Cook.

Next Newsheet

The next Newsheet will be in May 2021 – please send any contributions to the editor by 30 April 2021. Short articles on buildings or features would be welcome, as well as details of publications or events of interest to other members.

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