

THE CHANGING VILLAGE

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PREFACE

A visitor to Dinnington to-day would see what is in the main an industrial village. Only a few stone buildings in the square give any hint that for centuries Dinnington was once a small agricultural village with only the few crafts necessary to the existence and prosperity of rural life. Recently some of these stone buildings were demolished, and it may be that soon more will crumble under the massive hammer of the demolition squad.

The study includes many memories gathered from my conversations with people who lived through the years from 1894 - 1914. During these years a great change occurred in Dinnington, and an attempt has been made to recapture the thoughts and attitudes of the people involved. Local history of necessity depends a great deal upon documented records and statistics, but it is determination to survive and the ability to adapt to unavoidable change on the part of the people that shapes the history of a village.

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INTERVIEWS

Mr. & Mrs. Burgess

Mr. Cupit

Mr. Crummock

Mr. Harvey

* Mrs. Highfield

Mr. & Mrs. Revill

* Mrs. Turner

* Mr. Turner

* Mr. Walker

* Miss Wortley

* cassette recording included in study

Acknowledgements to

The Reverend M. Jackson for use of the Enclosure
Map and Award 1779.

Mr. J. Patricks surveyor. Map of Dinnington based
on Ordnance Survey 1892.

Mr. J. Mellard. Cover design.

LINES ON DINNINGTON

(Excerpt)

by David Makinson September 3rd 1846

There is a village scene
Beneath the dome of heaven
'Tis Dinnington I mean
That name this place had given

Here nature as she will
Scatters her gifts around
While verdure clothes each hill
And fields with flowers abound

The woods and plains are seen
Attractive to the eye
Arrayed in varied green
Contrasting with the sky

The rural sights appear
Abundant in the vale
And sounds salute the ear
Full rustic in the gale

Or o'er those fertile meads
Which stately trees adorn
And where the by-path leads
Through fields of golden corn

Such then the poet's spell
To Dinnington hath given
Most hamlets to surpass
Beneath the dome of heaven

CHAPTER I

A BRIEF EARLY HISTORY

When William the Conqueror ordered a survey of all his lands in this Country he gave us “the most impressive record of royal administration in the Europe of its day”. The Domesday Book contains many errors, and was never really completed. Nevertheless it remains for the historian a valuable source of information on the structure of feudal society and the land they all depended upon. A manor was a unit of land held in return for services rendered to the lord of the land, the King. This manor could embrace many villages, or parts of villages; one village might be held by one, two or more “Lords’. Dinnington, written “Dunnitone” in the Domesday Book 1086-7, was held in part by Roger de Busli, Lord of the Honour of Tickhill, in the Wapentake of Strafforth, who held four caracutes, while three caracutes were held by William de Warenne, son in law of William the Conqueror. There was also some forest land adjoining. 2

There are no records of any pre-Norman settlement in Dinnington. However, the Norman barons were not in the habit of establishing new villages, but seized existing anglo saxon settlements, imposing their own feudal pattern on village life. The Domesday Book also records not only the value of land in 1086 but also that of twenty years earlier, and Dinnington being mentioned as part of de Busli ‘s possessions, we can be sure that people did live here before the arrival of the Normans.

Life in the village would not be easy. From dawn till dusk the men and women would be scratching a subsistence living out of the land and their animals. The peasant was given the use of his share of land in return for working on the demesne of the Lord of the Manor, his duty to the Lord coming before his own field work. Three or four days work might be due to the Lord of the Manor weekly, together with extra work at busy times such as ploughing, sowing and harvesting. The forest laws were very strict at this time, and permission was needed to gather wood and allow their pigs to feed there. There would probably be some waste, where animals were allowed to graze, held communally by the villagers.

Some time before his death in 1088 William de Warenne founded and endowed the Priory of Lewes in Sussex. Between 1091 and 1097, his son, the second Earl Warenne confirmed the grant to it of the Church of Conisborough and the churches, tithes and lands appertaining to it which included Dinnington. Successive Earls confirmed this grant until 1220. In consequence, Dinnington, which had previously paid tithes to the mother church at Laughton, became an isolated village surrounded by a different parish.

In 1535 the rights of presentation was leased by the Priory of Lewes to the Waterhouse family in Halifax. After the Dissolution these rights passed to Thomas Cromwell, then were leased again to the Waterhouse family for ninety-nine years.

After the terms of lease ran out the Crown held the rights until they passed to the Athorpes, who are still the patrons of the living. ³

Dinnington in 1379 was still a small community of less than one hundred men, women and children. In this year King Richard II ordered the compilation of the Poll Tax Roll. All persons over sixteen years of age were to be listed, showing their status or trade, and their tax assessment. The entry of Dinnington gave a count of sixteen married couples and eight single men and women, there would also be several children who were not required to be listed. The tax was graded according to occupation; from five pounds for a judge to fourpence for a labourer. Small traders were taxed sixpence.

The population of Dinnington included Robert and Alice Taylor who were tailors, John and Beatrice Derlyn, wryghts, and Robert and Sybil Carter, wryghts. These were taxed at sixpence a family. The rest were taxed fourpence as labourers. One Robert de Denyngton was classed as a labourer.⁴ Earlier mentions of a family with the surname 'de Dinnington' previous to this are in 1290, though this was a wealthy family with land in several nearby parishes.

Over the centuries, from the Domesday Survey to the end of the eighteenth century the Lordship of Dinnington passed through the hands of several families. In the early thirteenth century

Stephen de Segrave bought an estate from Alice, Countess of Eu, who held the Honour of Tickhill, in Dinnington and several nearby villages. The Lordship remained in his family until the death of his great nephew John de Segrave in the fourteenth century. His widow, Margaret Duchess of Norfolk, married Sir William Manny, who became Lord of Dinnington Manor. The estates of the Lords Segrave, the Duchess of Norfolk and the Mannys were continued under him. On his death the estates were split up and John, Lord Mowbray, son of John de Segrave and Margaret became Lord of the Manor of Dinnington. His son, Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk became Lord of the Manor, and eventually the estate passed to a descendant of one of his daughters (the Marquis of Berkeley). The estates passed to the Talbot family, Earls of Shrewsbury, then again to a descendant of another daughter of Thomas Mowbray, the Howards, Dukes of Norfolk. The Lordship of the Manor of Dinnington changed hands once again in 1677, when Henry Howard, sixth Duke of Norfolk, sold the Manor of Dinnington to John Athorpe of Weston-sub-Edge, Gloucestershire. It was to remain in this family until 1935, when the land in Dinnington was sold in separate lots. The right of presentation of a Rector to the church remains to this day.

Almost a full century later Robert Athorpe became Lord of the Manor after the death of his uncle Henry Athorpe in 1769. A prominent figure in South Yorkshire, he was Justice of the Peace for the West Riding and Colonel of the Sheffield Regiment of Volunteer Infantry.

Two innovations were to take place in Dinnington in the time that the Manor of Dinnington was in the hands of the Athorpe family. The first soon after the Athorpes held the Manor with the Enclosure Award of 1779; the second was to be towards the end of their Lordship with the sinking of the first shaft at Dinnington Main Colliery in 1902. Both events brought great changes to the village.

NOTES

- 1 Brooke Christopher. From Alfred to Henry III 811 -1272. Page 102. Sphere.
- 2 Victoria "History of County of Yorkshire" Vol. 2 page 253.
- 3 Returns for the West Riding of the County of Yorkshire of the Poll Tax (A.D. 1379) page 184.

CHAPTER II

THE AGRARIAN COMMUNITY IN DINNINGTON

In the eighteenth century great interest was being shown in the new improved farming methods which were spreading from the continent. This, together with the meteoric rise in population, with its increasing demand for food which British farmers could not meet, were the influencing pressures which led to the widespread enclosures in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Many landlords saw an opportunity to make better profits, and seized it with both hands. The old open field system did not lend itself to experiment; drainage was almost impossible with a landlord's strips scattered about the fields; Dinnington was no exception to this move towards land enclosure, and we find that the relevant Enclosure Award is dated 1779.

Figures given in the Award give Dinnington an acreage of 1607. There appear to have been some earlier enclosure of unknown date in parts of the parish, of one hundred and five acres. The Duke of Norfolk was returned as Lord Paramount, and awarded one sixteenth of the common land. Robert Athorpe, Lord of the Manor received one sixth of the common land. The rest was divided between Reverend John Clark, the Duke of Leeds, Anthony St. Ledger and John Garland.

I have no record of the effect of these enclosures upon the villagers. Did everyone in the village prosper as a result of

extra work in hedging, drainage and fencing as many landlords told their tenants? When the labourers lost their land and use of the common, were the deserving poor found land in return to enable them to live, or were they turned out of their cottages and driven away because they could no longer earn a living out of the land and their animals? A look at the size of the population may give a small clue. When Archbishop Herring visited Dinnington in 1743 the population was less than one hundred, in 1801 it had risen to one hundred and sixty-two, which taking the already mentioned current rise in total population into consideration, could mean that the labourers were not too badly treated.

Looking at the census of 1801, we find that in addition to the Squire and the Rector there were nine resident farmers. Some land was farmed by farmers living in neighbouring villages. Crafts in the village were nail-making, shoe-making, tailoring and scythe-making, and there were also blacksmiths, bakers and masons. In 1821 the population was one hundred and eighty-nine,² this number increasing to two hundred and sixty-five by 1892.³

A study of the occupations in the village seems to show that a little hamlet was beginning to feel the relentless march of industrialisation by the mid-eighteenth century. The rapidly flourishing iron and steel companies, together with the introduction of new machinery of all kinds caused the disappearance of many country village crafts.

In Dinnirigton we see that by 1838 ⁴ there was no longer a nailmaker or a scythe-maker. The mason had also disappeared, taking with him his craft and skill, whereas a wheelwright was still working in the village in 1892. The skill of the blacksmith was still in demand in 1917; ⁵ the horse had not yet been put on the industrial scrap-heap.

An interesting newcomer to the village by 1888 ⁶ was the thrashing machine owner. An elderly gentleman told me a story that he heard from his father.

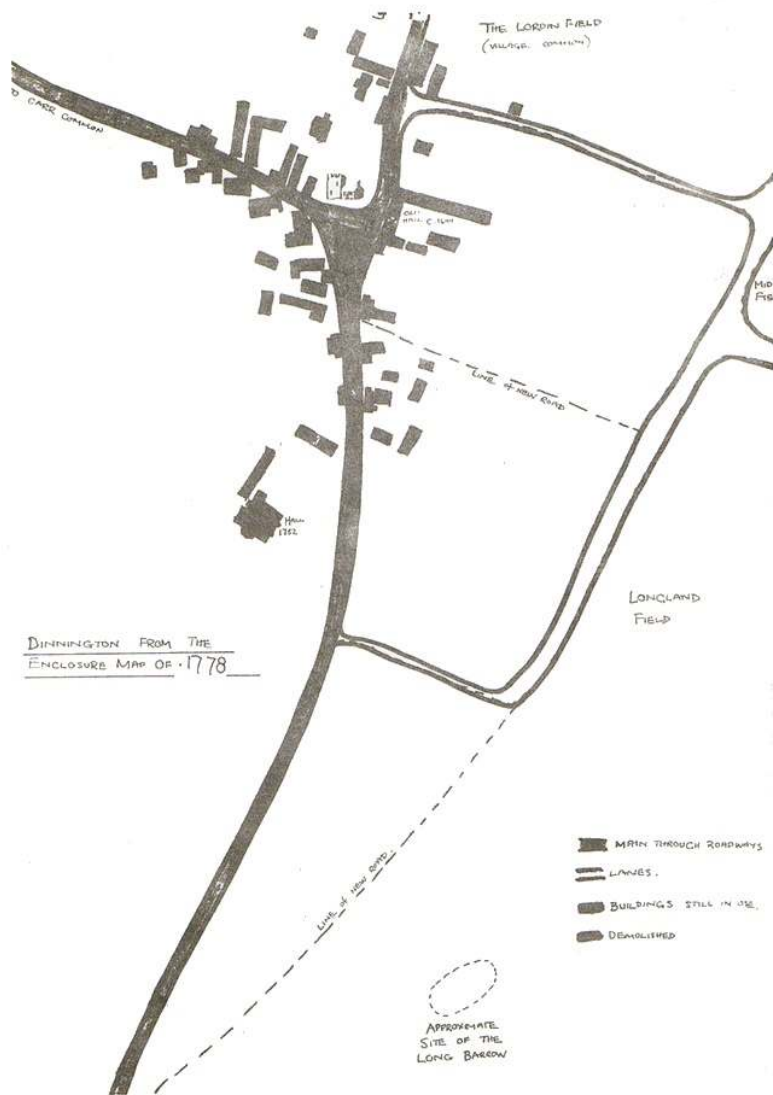
“A thrashing machine come... the first to come to Dinnington. It were pulled with eight horses... there were four handles on it and a man at each corner turning it to thrash... and me grandmother, she led the riot... all the work people in Dinnington went down to smash it up... They lost work with it, see... it was at the back of Dr. Rawlins' surgery... Amen field.” ⁷

The thrashing machine is still in the village four years later. The rebels did not achieve their objective, but their actions were symptomatic of the feeling of antipathy on the part of farm-labourers throughout the country toward the mechanisation of farming.

It can be seen from the maps of 1778, 1850 and 1892 that the structure of the village scarcely changed in over two hundred years. The major alteration appears to have been to the through

road from Dinnington to Anston, which was diverted some time before 1854 by the Squire. This was probably done to prevent travellers passing too close to the 'new' Dinnington Hall, built in 1752. ⁸ A few cottages were built in Barleycroft Lane, also before 1854. The village was clustered around the triangular green, the principal buildings being the church, the Falcon Inn, and the 'old' Hall, once the Squires residence. Farms and cottages completed the village. Set slightly apart from the village, in its own parkland is the eighteenth century hall, property of the Athorpe family, successive Squires of Dinnington.

By the turn of the century farming in Britain was beginning to recover from the, depression of the 1880's, and farmers were benefiting from the gradual rise in prices. However the farm-labourer's wage altered very little and this, together with the increase in the cost of living caused much distress and misery for many of the agricultural workers. Great discrepancy existed between wages paid in varying parts of the country, from as little as 10/6d (52p) in Suffolk to 18/- (90p) and 19/- (95p) in Durham and Lancashire. An average weekly wage in Yorkshire was 16/- (80p) ⁹ This discontent with wages and conditions lead to the formation of union movements and a struggle for a better standard of living. According to the memory of two residents of Dinnington, whose fathers were farm-labourers, the average wage here appears to have been 18/- (90p), which compares favourably with the average wage of 16/- (80p) in Yorkshire. ¹⁰



Looking at wages alone may not always give us a true picture of the conditions of the farm-labourer at the end of the nineteenth century. Wages often included extras such as harvest money, beer at harvest, produce from the farms and reduced or free-rent cottages. Payment was very much a matter of agreement between farmer and labourer, resulting in variations in the overall value of a man's wages throughout the country. Much depended upon the generosity of the farmer. Mrs. Turner, born in the last decade of the nineteenth century remembers that in addition to her fathers wage of 18/- (90p) he received many extras.

“A stone of beef at Christmas, plenty of potatoes and swede.... plenty of apples and pears.... and milk... .“

Though work was hard often involving the whole family the farm-labourers seem to have been well treated and content. I have heard no tales of real poverty or misery in Dinnington. Mrs. Turner told me

“We never went short,”¹³

and considering the position of many farm-labourers at that time, perhaps that is all they hoped for.

NOTES

- 1 Enclosure Map 1779 in the possession of the Rector of Dinnington.
- 2 Census Returns.
- 3 Kelly. Directory of the West Riding of Yorkshire.
- 4 White. Directory of Yorkshire - 1838.
- 5 Kelly. 1917.
- 6 Kelly. 1988.
- 7 Mr. R. Walker - memories recorded.
- 8 Pevsoner N. The Buildings of England.
- 9 Groves R. Sharpen the Sickle. page 111.
- 10 Mr.Walker; Mrs. Turner - memories.

CHAPTER III

MEMORIES

It is now seventy-five years since the first sounds of hammer and drill were heard at Dinnington. Living memory of life in the village before that time is becoming rare, but there are still a few who can give us an idea of the little hamlet and the people who lived there,

Mrs. Smith, now ninety-eight years old, is probably the oldest person left from the original village. She told me how she left school at nine years of age, and her first job was running up and down the fields knocking sticks together to scare the birds. The last decade of the nineteenth century saw a reduction in the employment of women and children, in the fields, but many children still worked before going to school and in the holidays. Mrs. Highfield remembers pulling 'kettlets'* out of the corn-fields in the holidays for which she was given 6d (2½p) a day. Water at that time was drawn from pumps scattered about the village, but these were private, and not all of them were fit to drink from. Many villagers had to carry water from the 'Town Well Yard' which was well down Church Lane. Mrs. Highfield remembers how she and her sister earned money for carrying water.

"When we went to school we used to call at Miss Adams shop (Barley Croft Lane)... collect two buckets and bring her two buckets of water, four on Saturday we got 3d" (1½p)

*a bright yellow weed

Mr Turner remembers that he used to pick up turnips to feed the cows, and his brother milked the cows before they both went off to school.

Life for the children in the village was very quiet. They had to make their own amusements because as Mrs. Turner says

“we never saw anybody”

Some of the games they played were marbles, skipping, shuttlecock and fivestones. A favourite pastime was watching Mr. Hawke the blacksmith shoeing the horses. ¹ They looked forward to annual events such as the Whitsuntide walk.

“Oh we had a walk, only a few of us you know until the pit came, then it got bigger we used to have a tea and games down in Mr. Gurhill’s farm I got a new dress for it.” ²

The annual ‘feast’ was another important event, when members of the family from neighbouring villages came to visit, and eat the delicious food which was prepared for them; rabbit pies, beef, joints of ham and other delicacies. Two stalls came to the village, a gingerbread stall and one with ham salads. Games were played, there were bicycle races and ‘bowling for a pig’.



Mr Fisher Hawke at 75yrs in 1949



On wet days refreshments were sold in the Falcon Inn for 6d (21/2p).³ The villagers were entertained in a similar manner when they visited 'feasts' in nearby villages. ¹

Christmas was another opportunity for merrymaking. Card playing was popular and over the Christmas period card parties were held in most houses, with families and friends visiting each other in turn. The school took on a festive look with the Christmas tree given by the squire.

"The squire, he had a Christmas tree put in the old school we all had a present I remember I got a Noah's Ark Mr. Barlow used to have a sponge on a long pole to damp out the candles so they wouldn't set the tree on fire". ⁴

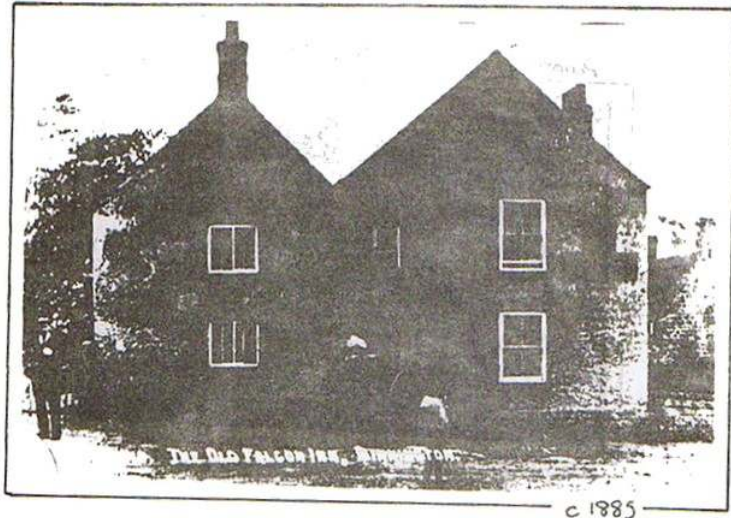
The squire at that time was the Reverend G.M. Athorpe, and he often visited the school taking sweets for the children. Mrs. Highfield remembers his visits with amusement

"Squire came to visit in school.... he called at Miss Adams and gave her some money ... she used to throw us sweets then he'd wave his stick at us and say 'I'll have the lot of you drowned'".

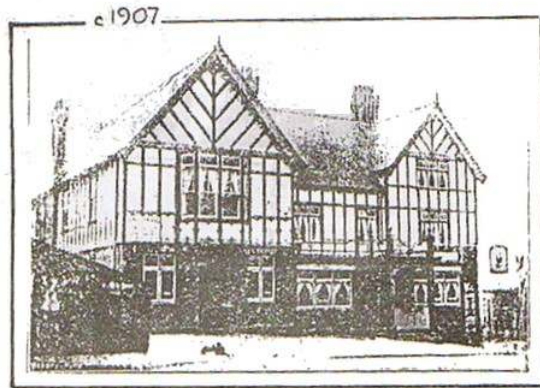
The Falcon Inn was the centre of many activities and Christmas was celebrated there with card parties and dancing. I have heard many older people speak of 'Old Tup' and 'Old Horse'. The origins of 'Old Tup' are very vague, but it is believed that it may be connected with harvest thanksgiving, thanking the ram for his contribution to their prosperity. As the years have passed the original meaning seems to have been lost, but Dinnington people connect it with Christmas time. They remember that groups of men and boys came to the Falcon, one dressed as a woman, another had the skeleton of an animal's head on a long pole, and a shawl draped around him. Some of the boys blacked their faces before going out, a tradition which still lingers to-day, although the origin of this also has faded with time. Miss Wortley eighty-three years old, still manages to sing a few bars of the song they sang to 'Old Tup'.

At least one of the activities carried out at the Falcon was of a more serious nature.. This was the meeting of the Friendly Society,³ which carried on until the passing of the National Insurance Act of 1911. Working men who could afford the subscriptions paid about 6d (2½p) a week, and in times of sickness or unemployment were entitled to draw a certain amount of money each week to enable them to buy food.

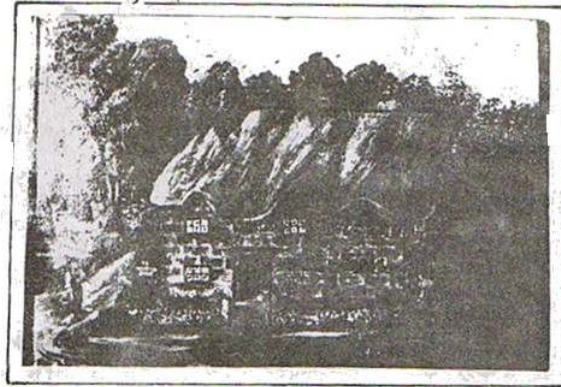
There is an oil-painting in the present Falcon Hotel which depicts a cottage inn with the sign 'Wayside Inn' upon the wall.



THE 'FALCON'



Painting of "THEWAYSIDE INNE"



A village wedding at the turn of the century.



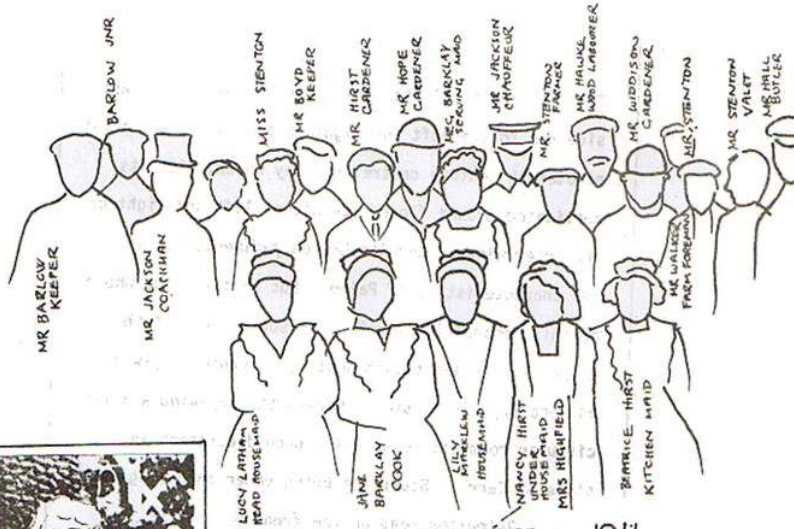
Mrs. Jane Mintonson

Miss Wortley

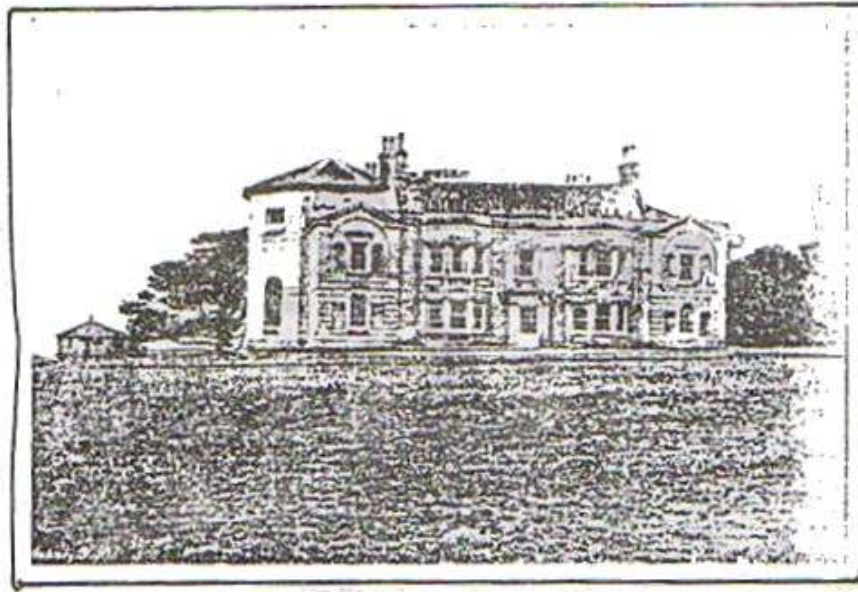
Tradition in the village claims that this was the first inn in Dinnington, before the Falcon Inn seen in the photograph was built. There has been a Falcon Inn in Dinnington at least since 1838, when Mary Makinson is listed as innkeeper.⁵ The name of the inn is connected with the Athorpe family, who were at one time the owners. A member of the Athorpe family, court official, was reputed to be a very fine falconer, and became Chief Falconer to James I. The falcon was then included in the family crest, and the inn built at a later date was known as the 'Falcon Inn' ⁶

Miss Wortley, now eighty-three, is the niece of the last Makinson to live in the Falcon Inn. Makinsons have been the licencees since 1838 ⁵ at least. Miss Wortley told me how the Falcon Inn came to be in the care of the Makinsons. Her great-grandfather, once butler to the Athorpe family was granted the tenancy of the inn at a token rent in return for good service while the squire was away from home. It remained with the Makinson family until after the mine was sunk, when it was bought by Mappin's Brewery. The licencee was then a Mr. Adams, and the old inn was demolished in 1906. In its place a much larger building was erected in a mock-Tudor style. While the new hotel was in the course of construction stables were used for serving beer to retain the licence.

The only transport in the village before the turn of the century was farm-carts and milk-carts. Only the privileged few would own their own trap. I have heard of men walking to



THE STAFF 1911.



DINNINGTON HALL

“An interesting eighteenth century house. The east side has to the left and right of an indifferent early nineteenth century centre, one bay which, with its rusticated ground floor, its niches left and right of the upper window, and its broken pediment, has all the characteristics of Paine. But what was the whole of this composition like? The south front of the house is late eighteenth century. Canted bay-window and one bay either side. Behind the bay-window a fine circular room with discreet stucco decoration in the style of Carr. Staircase being under an oval glazed dome. Rainwater-head on the front dated 1752.”

Pevsner

Sheffield to play a game of cricket, then walking home again afterwards. It wasn't until after the mine was sunk that wagonettes came to Dinnington, when Mrs. Stenton would take people to Worksop and back in the wagonette for 6d (21/2p). The roads were still unmade and rutted and lined with the wild flowers and bushes of the countryside.

“only little lanes down Outgang Lane
we used to go gathering violets and primroses
on there”. 3

“the roads weren't like this you know, there
were ruts we used to go for walks on the
common, and all the sides of the road were that
yellow gorse and blackberry bushes.” 2

In 1892 there were only three shop-keepers in Dinnington, a tailor, a butcher and one other. The villagers depended upon the carrier to bring in provisions or anything else that might be needed, and looked forward to Friday night when the bakers cart sold buns and cakes. On Saturdays the 'pyklet' cart arrived from Sheffield. Mrs. Turner told me about her grandfather who divided his time between his farm and his work as a carrier.

“he was an afternoon farmer he used to
have a carrier's wagon, he used to go to Sheffield

twice a week, Tuesdays and Fridays what people wanted round about, he used to bring it tobacco, lard and butter happen.... once he brought a bag of cement on a Thursday he used to collect butter and eggs from Mrs. Skinner at Throapham and take them to a shop at Firbeck.... he used to work in his field when he had time.”

Towards the end of the nineteenth century it was thought that domestic service was a much more respectable kind of work for a girl than working in the field. She was preparing herself for marriage and motherhood by learning how to run a home. The girl who went into service with a farming family had a hard time.

“When I were thirteen I went to work on a farm at Maltby... I used to get up at four o'clock in the morning, I had to give the men their breakfast before six o'clock, then I had to feed the cows —I went to bed at nine o'clock... .I kept crying to come home but I were determined to earn my own living.”²

Mrs. Highfield now eighty-two years old, had quite a lot to tell about life in Dinnington Hall from the servants point of view.

The following timetable is a copy of the instructions for Mrs. Highfield's work as third housemaid.

NANCY

Before Breakfast Sweep Schoolroom and Top Landing,
Stairs and Hall.

After Breakfast Sweep and Dust Dining Room and
Smoking Rooms and do Fireplaces
of same.

Wash lavatories.

After Dinner do any work not overtaken before

Sewing given out by Finlayson.

SPECIAL WORK

Monday Vacuum Hall. Do Nursery and Miss Storrar's Room.

Tuesday Drawing Room

Wednesday Dining Room and Smoking Rooms

Thursday Rond Room

Friday Servant's Room

Saturday School Room and Jungle

If guests are in the house their rooms must be done on these days.

“I was third housemaid, we had to get downstairs for about half-past six we had a cup of tea then we got started, cleaning up fireplaces then the gentry, they had to be called at eight o'clock and breakfast was at half past eight we had our breakfast then we had to get cracking on the bedrooms we were at it most of the day they had late dinner we used to finish about eight, then we used to go for a walk in the park from about nine till ten o'clock ...but it was ever so nice ... they were happy days there if you were ill they looked after you ... they were wonderful .“

For this work Mrs. Highfield received 3/6d (17^{1/2}p) each week and was well fed. She worked seven days a week with an hour off each evening. On Sundays the servants did the minimum of work but had to attend morning and evening service. There were thirty-three indoor and outdoor servants in all, almost all of them natives of the village. At one time Mrs. Highfield had two sisters and a brother working there with her. She remembers those days as happy ones.

“We were always joking and playing tricks on one another you could always find some time I can't say we were killed with work”.

The household had an ingenious method of keeping things cool, and I believe that many large households of the period had a similar arrangement.

In the Hall grounds there was an ice-house. Mr. Walker, whose father worked in the gardens spent a lot of his childhood days there. He describes the ice-house

“there was an ice-house in the middle of the wood ... that were thirty feet deep all the farmers used to collect ice from the fish-pond and break it up into little bits.... pour boiling water over it and shovel it int' ice-house it were pyramid shaped as it settled down it was just one block .“

As well as being used for keeping food cool and making ice-cream for the 'gentry 1, I have been told many times anyone who was ill in the village was given ice-bags to cool a fever.

The Reverend G.M. Athorpe was a patriarchal figure in the village, and well thought of by his staff and tenants. He left Dinnington Hall for a lengthy period, and on his return the people of the village arranged a touching welcome for him. The people lined the street through the village.

“I can remember them coming back My father and ever so many men they took the horses out of the shafts and they pulled the squire and his sister up from the bottom of Laughton Road right up to the house they were so pleased to see them back.” 4

It is apparent that many people thought a great deal of the Reverend G.M. Athorpe, Squire of Dinnington, and his treatment of the people in his employ. However they were still very much aware that the relationship between them was one of 'them and us'.

One woman told me

“we knew our place” 2

and yet another, who to judge from her conversation with me obviously loved and respected her employers.

“they were very nice, but in those days we were sort of afraid of the Rector we always had to curtsey, and if the boys didn't raise their cap they were ever so angry.”

Although the older generation accepted this and were apparently content, the younger people were beginning to resent their dependence upon the 'gentry'. One man's description of his first day of work at the Hall in 1913 reflects this growing dissatisfaction. He went to join his father who had worked at the Hall for many years

“I were leading the pony when they were mowing the lawn - it were, 'go here, go there' I kept on with it for an hour, so I said 'I'm just going into the wood a minute' - and I went and took a job at the pit.' “

His father was well treated, receiving 18/- (90p) a week and a rent-free cottage. In addition he was given five tons of coal each year, a ton of potatoes and a pig to fatten, plus vegetables grown in the Hall gardens. This however, was not sufficient to replace the independence which the young boy craved. He told me of his father's life on the Hall farm

“They used to go and fetch him any time. If he were ploughing the field they’d go and fetch him to go out with the wagonette to Kiveton.”

One may get the impression on reading this chapter that everyone living in Dinnington before 1902 was working in agriculture or in the Hall. However this was not so, there were some men who worked at Kiveton Park Colliery or in nearby quarries. When these men heard the news’ that a colliery was coming to the village they

“threw their hats in the air”

These men walked to Kiveton Park, at least three miles distant, there and back six days a week. They were delighted with the news that a colliery would provide them with work so near to their homes.

NOTES

- 1 Mr. Burgess. Memories - recorded
- 2 Mrs. Turner. Memories - recorded
- 3 Miss Wortley. Memories - recorded
- 4 Mrs. Highfield. Memories - recorded
- 5 Kelly. Directory of the West Riding of Yorkshire 1838.
- 6 Worksop Guardian. May 27th 1932.
- 7 Mr. Walker. Memories - recorded

CHAPTER IV

THE ADVENT OF THE MINE

Dinnington Main Colliery before nationalization was one of a group of collieries run by Sheepbridge Iron and Coal Company of Chesterfield. Sinking the first shaft began in 1902, although the company had hoped to begin operating earlier. The thirty-seventh Annual Report of the Directors dated June 30th 1901 reads

“The commencement of sinking has been delayed until the future of the railway, linking Dinnington, is certain”.

The following year in the thirty-eighth Annual Report dated June 30th 1902, we read

“The sinking of Dinnington Main Colliery is proceeding rapidly, and satisfactory arrangements have been made for railway accommodation”.

The organising and running of the colliery was to be in the hands of the Sheepbridge Company, the main shareholders receiving dividends. The principal landowners from whom the “take” * was leased were to receive a royalty of 6d per ton of coal removed from the mine.

* “the land beneath which the coal measures worked lay”

In the latter half of the nineteenth century there was an ever increasing demand for coal. The railways and steamships, the expansion of iron and steel manufacture, the increasing population with increased domestic use, the expansion of existing markets and ever growing export trade all contributed to the country's need for more and more coal.

Dinnington Main Colliery lies on the perimeter of the South Yorkshire coalfield, near to Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. It had been known since the middle of the nineteenth century that coal lay beneath the Magnesian Limestone which covers the area, but it was thought to be very deep and difficult to reach. The advanced machinery of the day, the better methods of ventilation and drainage, together with the expansion of the railways made exploitation of the concealed coalfields possible.

By 1902 all five major railway companies serving Yorkshire had drawn up plans to penetrate the new coalfields south of Doncaster. The uncertainty of railway facilities at Dinnington which held up the initial sinking were resolved as the various companies vied with each other for lines to the proposed colliery at Dinnington, which promised to be a most valuable working. In 1901 the proprietors of the Dinnington Colliery were granted the Wales and Laughton Light Railway licence. The proprietors later withdrew their scheme, on the provision that the Shireoaks, Laughton and Maitby Railway 1 extended their line to Conisborough. A report on the 'New Local Railway Schemes' quotes the Parliamentary

Estimate of New Capital Expenditure

“£395,300 will be spent on the construction of new lines within the South Yorkshire coalfield, the main line of which will commence at Thurnscoe and junction with the authorised Hull and South Yorkshire Extended Railway which is now in the course of construction and will terminate at Dinnington, junctioning with the authorised Shireoaks, Laughton and Maitby Railway.~’

There was no provision for a passenger service at this time, and it was not until 1910 that such a service was available at Dinnington and Laughton station. From Dinnington the line joined with the Sheffield to Retford line of the Great Central Railway. ³

This new passenger service must have made quite a difference to the people of Dinnington. Previously, to get to Sheffield or Wôrksop they had to walk to Kiveton Park station, three miles away. To get to Rotherham one had to walk to Wickersley, roughly six miles distant, then catch a tram to Rotherham. Other than this they might get a lift on a milk carrier or farm cart. ⁴

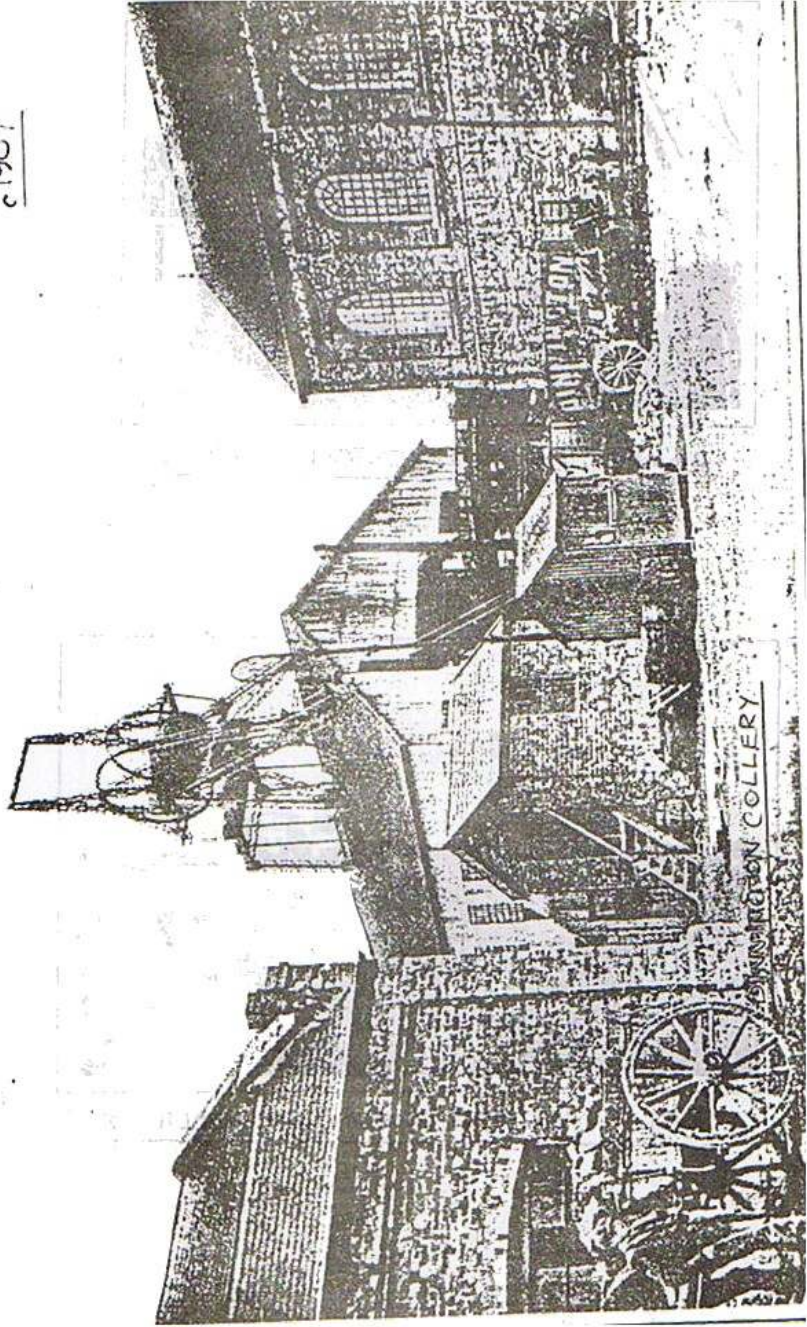
Once railway facilities were guaranteed the Sheepbridge Company began work. By June 1902 work on the first shaft had begun, and work on a second shaft was started in 1903. In August 1904 the Barnsley coal seam was reached at a depth of

six hundred and seventy-two yards. This seam which outcrops at Barnsley, hence its name, slopes down towards the sea. On sinking to this depth other seams of coal were met with, the 'High Hazels' three feet thick, for instance. These were left unworked in order that the more productive Barnsley seam might be worked first. The seam was about four feet three inches thick, said to be a very clean and valuable coal, of excellent quality. Dinnington Main was believed to be one of the most valuable coalfields in South Yorkshire. Indeed once output began in 1906 the production of coal remained high for many years, with a gross weekly output of 16,500 tons. Maximum Bull Week tonnage reached 19,299 tons in December 1928, and 19,492 tons in July 1953; the record was 19,894 tons in December 1956. The hopes of the Sheepbridge Company and the Dinnington Colliery shareholders were fully justified.

The shafts of the colliery were nineteen feet in diameter, one being fitted up for coal winding and the other for lowering and raising men and materials. When the shafts were finished there was still much work to be done below ground before the coal could be won. Work carried on steadily under the management of Mr. H. Walters, and output began in 1906/7.

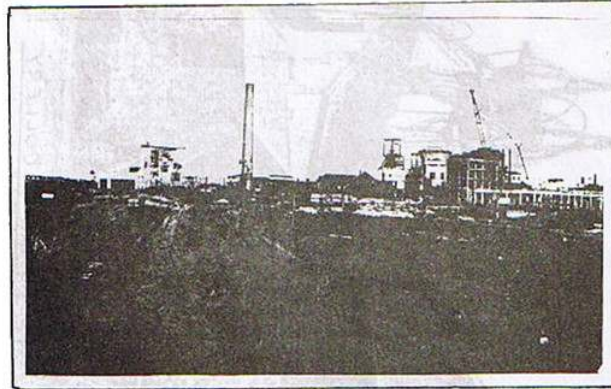
The coal was 'hand-got' with picks and shovels in the early years of the mine. It was put into tubs and hauled by ponies to the main rope haulage. The coal seam was divided into 'districts' of one hundred and thirty yards, each district further

c.1907





DINNINGTON AND LAUGHTON STATION.



RAIL LINKS WITH DINNINGTON COLLIERY

divided into thirteen stalls of ten yard 'stints'. Five men worked in each stall hewing coal. The men were paid by the 'butty' system, one man 'the butty man' being in charge of the group. He would arrange terms of payment per ton of coal removed from the stall, with the colliery officials. He in turn paid the men a previously agreed wage out of the money he received, keeping his own wage. 7

This system was used in most collieries at this time, and was a bone of contention with the miners for many years. Not only was it open to abuse, some 'butty' men being less than honest in their dealings with the men, but it could mean real hardship for some. Being paid at piece-rate meant that a man working in a poor seam was unable to earn a living wage; one Dinnington miner's comment was

"It was alright for some"

It was customary for a wage to be secured by payment of a 'consideration' sometimes called 'con'. These were sometimes fixed at the individual mines and paid as a matter of course, but many miners had to negotiate each claim with the colliery officials and this led to growing dissatisfaction amongst the miners.

The tendency in the first decade of the twentieth century was for 'consideration' payments to be reduced. As a result

many men worked harder than ever when working in a poor seam, often beyond their strength, for very little return.

In 1912 the M.F.G.B. drew up a bill for a minimum wage for underground workers. They stipulated that no man should receive less than 5/- (25p) a day and boys not less than 2/- (10p). The rate for hewers was fixed in individual Districts. The minimum day wage asked for in Yorkshire was 7/6d (37½p). The coal owners refused the claim and the miners prepared for strike action. On March 1st 1912 one million miners stopped work. After several hearings and many amendments the Minimum Wage Act was passed by Parliament, but it was in principle only. No minimum wage was secured. The miners returned to work on April 6th 1912, disappointed and bitter men.

Dinnington was a modern colliery with a good seam.

“It was not a bad pit to work in.”⁷

Nevertheless the Dinnington miners supported their fellow miners. It meant real hardship for them and their families. Miners had little opportunity to save for ‘a rainy day’ and they must have been desperate.

The Dinnington Colliery Institute Company (founded 1908) helped to ease the burden by granting fully paid up members two tickets valued at 6d (2½p) each, for each week they were on

strike, to be paid on Tuesdays and Fridays. These tickets were to be spent in the local shops - on

“Bread, or bread and cheese”.

Two members were suspended for obtaining tickets under false pretences, and ordered to appear before the next Directors meeting. 9

A visitor to Dinnington in 1902 10 (September) describes what he found there. He describes the site of the pit-head as

“Partly a field, partly common”.

Heavy boilers and machinery lay scattered about in profusion.

“There were dynamos and steam engines, tools for cutting, tools for boring, tools for drifting and stones for damming water.”

A brick-making plant was nearby. Apart from all this ironmongery lying about, the site was still predominantly rural. About seventeen small huts had been built, evidently meant as housing for the sinkers. They were built of wood on a brick foundation and covered with corrugated iron. Each house had a

“Little lattice work porch painted green”.

In spite of the drilling and hammering, and the sudden influx of industrial workers, Dinnington had not yet felt the full impact of industrialisation. The little group of houses which were later to be known as "Tin Town"

"Front a country lane ragged with brambles and,
when we were there, sweet with the scent of
hawthorn and the wild rose".

The visitor left with the satisfaction of having seen the village while it was still clean and healthy, but with grave doubts as to the future.

NOTES

- 1 Joy, David. JA Regional History of the Railways of Great Britain. Vol.8. page 230.
- 2 Rotherham Advertiser, February 21st 1902.
- 3 Joy, David. (Reference)
- 4 Mrs. Turner - memories.
- 5 40th Annual Report of the Directors of the Sheepbridge Iron and Coal Company.
- 6 Dinnington Main Colliery - Information Pamphlet.
- 7 Mrs. Davies - memories.
- 9 Dinnington Main Colliery Institute Directors Minute Book.
- 10 Rotherham Advertiser. September 27th 1902 (Vulcan)

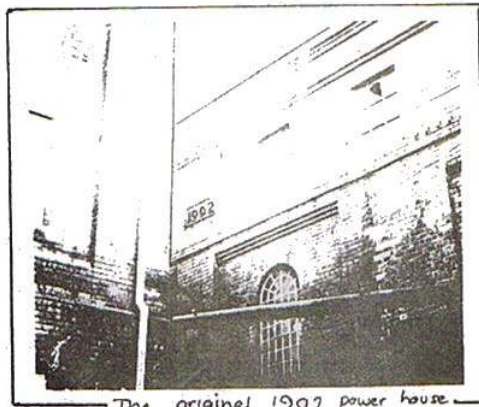
Tin Town



1905



A Tin Town dwelling now used as a bicycle shed.



The original 1902 power house.

CHAPTER V

"TIN TOWN" AND AFTER

By the time Barnsley Seam was reached in 1904 the seventeen dwelling houses seen by the visitor to Dinnington in 1902 had increased to one hundred, and all were occupied by the sinkers and their families. Because of their corrugated iron coverings this cluster of dwellings became known as "Tin Town". The houses were laid out in streets and squares, although since they were obviously temporary structures there were no street names. Three of the houses were used as lodgings for the single men.

In spite of the fact that these houses were not meant to be permanent, the colliery owners had made some attempt to make their employees comfortable. The spring which had been tapped during the sinking of the first shaft provided water at a rate of 10,000 gallons an hour, and this was used not only by the colliery but also to provide domestic water for Tin Town. ² With electricity provided by the Power House built in 1902, the inhabitants of Tin Town had an amenity which was to be denied the original village for some time. The houses were small, each comprising only two rooms, and must have been very cramped for large families. To judge by the photograph they soon took on the appearance of a collection of garden huts in a sea of mud. However the conditions of the streets would be

no worse than many rural roads of the day, and as to the houses themselves, one gentleman living in Dinnington today remembers them as being “very cosy”.³

At the end of the main roadway into Tin Town there was a large canteen and a grocer’s shop. In front of these, the men played skittles on a skittle alley. There was also an alehouse in Tin Town where the men could spend their leisure hours.

The sleepy little village must have felt overwhelmed by the numbers of alien people who suddenly invaded it. In addition to the sinkers in Tin Town there were also many navvies working on the construction of the new railway lines, in drainage, sewage and water pipe-lines.³ (Originally “navigational construction workers”, this term was soon shortened to “navvies”). These were the men who built the canals and railways of the country, and were the first of a new class of men, the casual labourers who travelled round the country from job to job. A “motley” crew, many of them were the unemployed and unskilled from the industrial towns. Others were Scottish crofters driven from the highlands by greedy landlords, or Irish farmers who had left when their crops failed too often. There were deserters from the army and navy, and even criminals trying to escape the arm of the law. Mr. Turner reveals that most of the navvies who came to Dinnington were Scottish or Irish. These men with their alien tongues and rough ways had a reputation for hard drinking at week-ends, and fighting was a regular pastime after a night

in the village inn. As one man told me

“They’d sooner have a good fight as a good dinner”.

The reputation of the navvies and the sinkers was well known and the week-end brawls must have confirmed their reputation in many Dinnington villager’s mind. However there are people living in Dinnington today who remember these men more kindly. One lady of the village kept a lodging house in Church Lane, and over a number of years gave a home to many navvies. She remembers them as big, loud, rough, hard-working men who liked their beer at the week-end, but, she says

“There wasn’t one of them ever said a wrong word to me all the time they were here”.

The sinkers also had a reputation for drinking and brawling, yet one man who lived in Dinnington at the time, and was a pole-boy for the colliery surveyor, visited houses in Tin Town and felt that their reputation was unwarranted, based on the behaviour of the minority. ³ I have heard many people speak of Black Mick, a sinker, who was ‘king-pin” in Tin Town . It has been said that it took three policemen to hold him when drunk. He was certainly the type of character of whom legends are made.

Once the mine began to produce coal in 1905/6 the village began to take on a new appearance. For the past century the

population had remained fairly steady, being two hundred and sixty-five in 1891, and two hundred and fifty-eight in 1901.

Suddenly all this was to change. In 1903 the colliery employed one hundred and sixty-six men above ground, and one hundred and twenty-nine below ground. By 1911 these numbers had increased to four hundred and fifty men above and one thousand five hundred and sixty-eight below, a total of two thousand and fifteen in all. ¹ Most of these men travelled from the neighbouring villages of Laughton, Maitby, Bramley, Wickersley, Kiveton Park, Wales, Todwick, Aston and Anston, some walking and others cycling. The housing was developed by the colliery company, and as these were completed miners and their families moved into Dinnington.

With the exploitation of the deeper coalfields the tendency was for the early twentieth century collieries to be isolated in a rural landscape. Industrial housing was usually built close to the pit head, not enclosing but adjacent to the old village. Tin Town was typical of this, as we can see from the photograph. The first brick houses built by the colliery company were in New Street, and we can see from the map that these were a little further away from the pit head, but still separated from the stone cottages of the old village. At the same time colliery housing was being developed in Doe Quarry Lane, Coronation Street and Recreation Terrace.

A visitor to Dinnington in 1904 found that

“the builder is in strong force here.... there are villas springing up here and there, rows of houses which seem to be well built with plenty of room about, and in pleasant situation”. 7

These were not the curved avenues of the “garden-city” schemes, which were to come later, but were built in blocks of ten or eight, with gardens and wide streets. Although many of these houses were to deteriorate in later years, at the time of building they were a great improvement on the endless rows of back to back terrace houses, with no gardens and toilets across muddy public alleyways, which were usual in most mining communities. Unfortunately, in spite of their being built further away from the pit head than many such villages, the spoil-tip grew so large over the years that it almost enveloped some of the housing in Coronation Street looming large over the village itself. It was a landmark for miles around, until operations began for its removal fairly recently.

Together With the industrial housing there was a great deal of private housing and commercial building. In Kelly’s 1908 Directory we find one architect, two builders, two plumbers, a joiner and three painters. The tradespeople in the area were quick to realise the commercial potential of the new colliery village. In 1904 the Handsworth Woodhouse Industrial Co-operative Society Limited had a fine new building on the corner of Laughton Road and New Street.

In 1892 eighteen families were listed in Kelly's Directory as being involved in commercial enterprise, seven of these were farmers; others included one thrashing machine owner, one blacksmith, one wheelwright, two gardeners, one tailor, one butcher, one shopkeeper and shoe-maker, one shoe-maker and the innkeeper. There was a post office for receiving letters and postal orders were issued but not paid. South Anston was the nearest money order office and Kiveton Park the nearest telegraph office. The year 1908 showed a vast change in the commercial amenities of Dinnington. The village was well served, and almost every need of the people could be met in the village. There were grocers, butchers, shoe and boot makers, drapers, greengrocers, confectioners, tailors, carriers, newsagents, a dairyman, a furniture dealer, an engineering tool dealer, ironmongers, a milliner, bakers, a fish and chip shop, painters, a surgeon, one music teacher, an architect, in fact no less than eighty five commercial enterprises of one form or another. There were five farms in operation. three of which were still in the control of the same families which had worked their¹ in 1892. The village now had its own post office in Barley Croft Lane, where money orders could be cashed, and a sub-branch of the Sheffield Banking Company opened on Fridays from one o'clock to three in the afternoon. The Working Men's Club and Institute (now the Comrades Club) and the Workmen's Institute were already established. By 1917 there were well over a hundred business establishments serving the village.

Private housing was developed in Church Lane, Lordens Hill, Laughton Road and Barley Croft. Some business premises were built in the latter in the belief that this was to be the main shopping centre. 8 However most of the commercial enterprise developed in Laughton Road, linking the new community to the old.

NOTES

- 1 Dinnington Main Colliery - Information Leaflet.
- 2 Sheffield Independent September 1st 1904.
- 3 Mr. Turner memories - recorded.
- 4 Mr. Walker - memories - recorded.
- 5 Census Returns 1891.
- 6 Census Returns 1901.
- 7 Rotherham Advertiser. July 2nd 1904.
- 8 Mr. W. Revill - Builder and Resident of Dinnington.

CHAPTER VI

THE GROWTH OF A COMMUNITY

With the development of housing and commerce, which was discussed in the previous chapter, the immediate needs of the people were adequately being met. It was now that old institutions in the village felt the pressure of the increased population and the need for expansion. At the same time the newcomers were to establish new activities which were to become an integral part of village life.

As already mentioned there has been a church at Dinnington at least since the eleventh century when William de Warenne granted the advowson of certain churches, including Dinnington, to the Priory of Lewes. Since that time it has been altered or rebuilt on several occasions. Very little is known about the early church. In 1327 it was burnt and a grant of wood from Conisborough was made to assist in the repair. In 1785 Colonel Robert Athorpe, the man who had enclosed the village farmland in 1778, rebuilt the church, the old church being

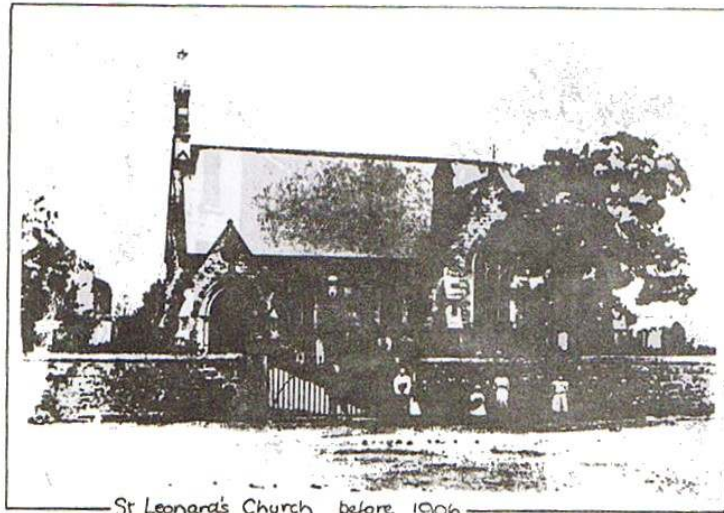
“pulled down to prevent mischief”.

The only indication we have of the possible structure of this church is a small sketch on the map of the Enclosure of 1778, which shows a simple nave with a castellated tower. The old church was dedicated to St. Nicholas, but the church mentioned

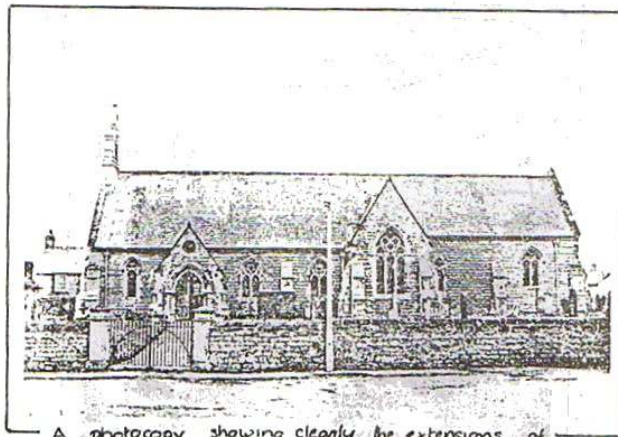
in the Enclosure Award is dedicated to St. Leonard. In 1868 this church was again rebuilt at the expense of John Carver Athorpe. A limestone building in the Gothic style, it consisted of a chancel, nave, transepts, south porch and a turret containing one bell, with seating for one hundred and fifty. By the year 1906 it would seem that this church could no longer accommodate an increasing congregation, for we find that it was enlarged in this year. The nave was extended westward by thirteen feet and a new north aisle and vestries were added, at a cost of £2000. This church now seated two hundred and seventy. Later in 1911 the church was again altered by the enlarging of the chancel. Choir stalls were added dedicated to the memory of the late Reverend G.M. Athorpe (1870-82), the whole at a cost of £900. In 1911 the church had seating for about three hundred and seventy. 2

A great deal of social activity was centred around the church. Some of the activities connected with the church were a flourishing choir, Boy Scouts Clubs, Boys Brigade, Mothers Union and a concert party. 3

Methodism had also established itself in Dinnington in the early nineteenth century. The Ordnance Survey Map of 1854 shows a Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Barley Croft Lane. As the population increased this little chapel was no longer adequate and St. Andrew's Methodist Church was built in 1904 2 on Laughton Road.



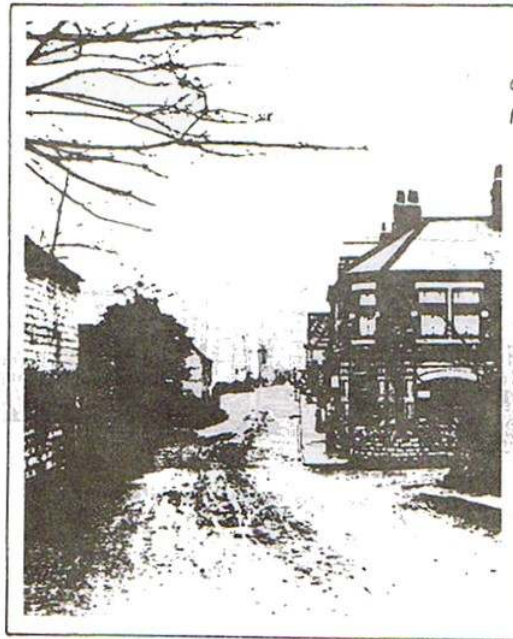
St Leonard's Church before 1906



A photocopy showing clearly the extensions of
1906 and 1911



Laughton Road 1905



and
1913

Many of the new population were members of the Primitive Methodist Church, and in 1904 open air services were held in Dinnington. The first church building was a wooden hut with seating for one hundred and seventy, which was erected on land granted by the Colliery Company. Membership increased rapidly and it soon became evident that another structure was necessary. A new Methodist school building costing £1000 was completed in 1906 after much effort on the part of members in fund-raising. One hundred and sixty foundation stones and bricks inscribed with the names of patrons of the new building were laid. In 1909 the Colliery Company again showed their support by another free gift of land for further extension, which opened in 1911.

Many of the first families to live in "Tin Town" were Irish, bringing with them the need for a place of Roman Catholic worship. The first Roman Catholic Church was a building which had originally been in "Tin Town". Mr. Turner, born in 1890, remembers a canteen and grocery store in "Tin Town". One day on his way home from the colliery he saw this building on fire. Somehow the main structure was saved and later bought by his mother, who had it removed to Monksbridge Road on the common, intending to repair it and put it to use as a grocery store. This was not a successful venture, and later the building was used as a chapel by the Roman Catholic community before St. Joseph's church was built in 1916. ² This little chapel was served by priests from Oldcotes.

The Education Act of 1870 laid the foundation of the present education system. Local Authorities were compelled to set up School Boards, whose duty it was to provide schools where they were needed for children between five and ten years. These School Boards were given the authority to levy a local education rate. They were also to assist with the maintenance of Church Schools. ⁷ It is after the provision of this Act that we find a Church School in Dinnington. Built in 1874 ⁸ in Barley Croft Lane (where the Ukrainian Recreation Club is now) it consisted of one room and one small cloakroom. It had places for fifty-five children, but there was an average attendance of about thirty-five. With the transition of the small agricultural hamlet to a growing industrial village the small church school quickly became inadequate for the needs of education in Dinnington.

The Balfour Education Act of 1902, in the same year as the sinking of the first shaft, abolished School Boards and placed the responsibility for education in the hands of the county and borough councils, under the supervision of the Board of Education. The W.R.C.C. drew up plans for a new Elementary School in Dinnington to accommodate three hundred and fifty children. Meanwhile the new Middleton Recreation Rooms, opened in February 1904 were used temporarily as overflow schoolrooms. The population increased so rapidly that plans had to be revised to provide nine hundred and fifty places. The Infant department opened in 1907, the Mixed in 1908. ² One man who started at

the Infant school in 1909 remembers his days there.

“Classes were large, but discipline was reasonably good and the cane was used to some effect in the Elementary School

He remembers that the curriculum was

“fairly straightforward with very little fancy stuff”.

Mr. Pickard, the first headmaster, writes

“the curriculum was generous, with a practical bias, and there gradually developed full courses in woodwork, metal work and gardening”.

Mr. Alan Harvey remembers

“We went for nature walks, and gardened seriously in the plot where the police station now stands, and in the allotments behind St. Andrew’s Chapel.”

There was no provision for Secondary Education in Dinnington. Children who passed examinations for Secondary Education, and those whose parents could afford the fees had to travel to Sheffield Woodhouse Grammar School. One lady remembers going

to Kiveton Park by wagonette, then on by train to Woodhouse. 10

Many capable children would be unable to take advantage of this type of education because of the economic situation in the family. The Elementary school in Dinnington provided evening classes, and opened the gateway to higher education for some. Mr. Harvey told me how, after leaving school he started work at the pit, and then went to evening classes and took correspondence courses through Rotherham College of Technology. He then went on to attend the Sheffield University lectures.

“I. went (to Sheffield University) for six years, going to Kiveton Park by bike or on foot, three nights a week.”

This was after a full days work at the pit. Kiveton Park was three miles distant, and he did not get home until after eleven o'clock at night. From this he went on to Manchester College after gaining National Certificates and City and Guilds Teaching Certificates. As he says

“The hard way”.

It takes a determined man to follow such a hard path.

Soon after the turn of the century we being to hear of a new kind of entertainment. Mr. Harvey remembers the first

cinema in Dinnington. This was 'Procter's Travelling Cinema' which was held in a large marquee on the land where the present market stands. There was a large stove in the centre of the marquee, which must have been rather hazardous. Most of the films were Cowboys and Indians, no doubt adding a new dimension to the games of the village children. Travelling players came to perform in Amen field, and Mr. Harvey remembers the ever-popular 'Maria Martin and the Red Barn'.

The first and only purpose~built cinema was the Picture Palace, built in 1913 by James England and other financial backers. ¹¹ The films at the time were silent, and the serials were very popular. One of the first shown was 'Catherine', others included 'Peg O' My Heart' and Pearl White in 'The Clutching Hand'. ¹²

The Lyric Theatre was built in 1910, again by James England and his supporters. It first opened as a Roller Skating Rink, and later it was used as a Music Hall with weekly performances. ¹¹ The children of the visiting artists were always a source of great interest to the local children. ¹⁷ The Picture Palace was used for many village functions such as the annual dances of many village associations. At one time it was used as a Salvation Army Sunday School. ¹²

These two houses of entertainment were set side by side in Laughton Road ¹³ and must have proved a natural meeting ground for the two communities.

The leisure activities of the small pre-industrial community of Dinnington and how they looked forward to annual events such as the 'feast', the Whitsuntide walk and Christmas festivities have already been mentioned. The men who came to Dinnington to work in the mine needed opportunities to relax and engage in activities they could enjoy, out in the open, after working long, hard hours in the dusty darkness of the pit.

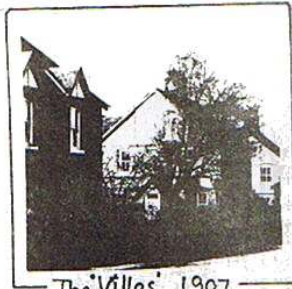
New sports clubs of every kind sprang up in Dinnington after 1908, many of them supported by the Dinnington Colliery Institute Company, which was formed in 1908. The first meetings were held in the colliery offices. Mr. Maurice Deacon, Managing Director of the Sheepbridge Iron and Coal Company and Principal Shareholder of the D.C.I. Co. was elected as the first Chairman. September 6th 1908 saw the official opening of a fine new building in Laughton Road. This opening was celebrated by a cold luncheon at a cost of 2/- (10p) per head, and was catered for by a Mrs. Kirby of the Station Hotel, Kiveton. The Reverend G.M. Athorpe and Mr. Skinner of Throapham were invited to attend. This building contained a large hall, a billiard room, a reading room and refreshment rooms. Plans were made in the same year for the provision of a cricket pitch, football ground and a cycling track. The cost was to be met by the Colliery Company, the D.C.I. Co. contributing 6% of the cost. In the years between 1908 -1914 other clubs received the support of the D.C.I. Co. Their



Laughton Road 'Coop'



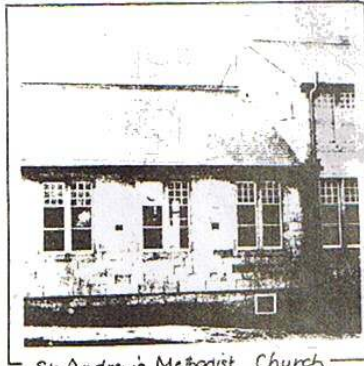
New Street 1906



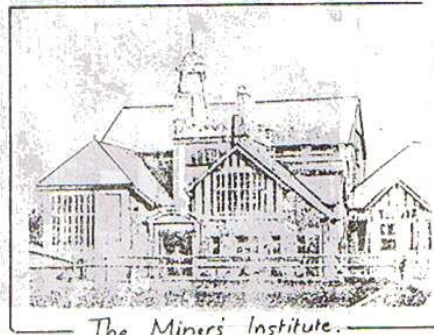
'The Villas' 1907



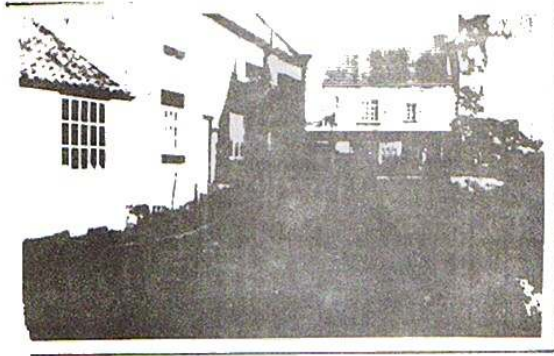
'The New' School 1908



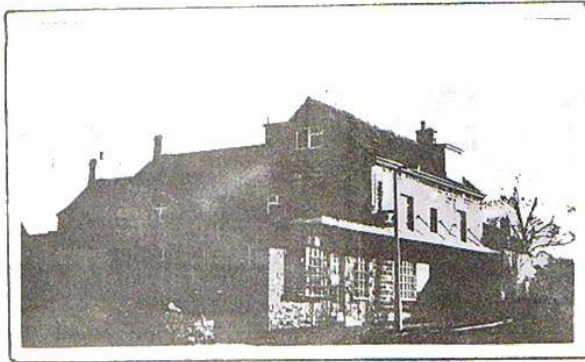
St Andrew's Methodist Church.
1906



The Miners' Institute.
1908.



THE
'OLD'
VILLAGE



PRE -
1788

activities included fishing, bowling, the brass band and an ambulance brigade. ¹⁴

The 'Institute' was obviously aware of the working man's increasing awareness of the importance of education, and in September 1910 showed their willingness to support the evening lectures at Sheffield University by granting a sum of money towards their cost. It was believed that the amount of the grant would be somewhere in the region of three to four pounds. A lending library was also formed in the institute, books being available for 1d (2p) each week for the first month of their loan, the charge being increased to 2d (4p) during the second month. New books were added frequently over the years. ¹⁴

Dinnington Main and Middleton Brass Band was founded in 1904 and quickly earned a proud reputation in the Brass Band world. After winning contests at Crystal Palace in 1906, 1910 and 1913 the band was known as the Dinnington Main and Middleton Prize Brass Band. The band began rehearsals in a round building in Dinnington Hall grounds, which at one time was used for exercising horses. They began with second-hand instruments, under the baton of Mr. Walter Crapper. Because there were no chairs the men had to stand on wooden music stands for the whole of the rehearsal. The band received support from Dinnington Colliery Institute Company with grants of money and use of a room in the Institute building until the band built their own in 1952. ¹⁵ The band has always been an important feature of special occasions in

the village. 11

The Institute appears to have been the centre of the mining community, not only in location but also in spirit, just as the Falcon Hotel and the church had been for the little hamlet before the 'invasion' of the miners. It was a means of welding together the new community of people who had come to Dinnington from many different villages. At the same time only miners who were fully paid up members of the Institute could take part in its activities, and perhaps in the first instance delayed 'integration of the two separate elements of 'new' and 'old'. As the sons of farmers and farm-labourers grew to manhood many of them gravitated towards the colliery for employment, also we must remember that some men were travelling to mines in other districts for employment before Dinnington Main Colliery began production. This, together with eventual intermarriage helped to amalgamate communities.

NOTES

- 1 Norby. The Rev. R.H. 'Celebrations in Dinnington'.
- 2 Kelly. Directory of the West Riding of Yorkshire 1917.
- 3 Mr. A. Harvey - memories.
- 4 Rotherham Advertizer. September 29th 1972.
- 5 Broadhead. 'From the Sweet Came Strong'. page 46.
- 7 Flinn. M.W. An Economic and Social History of Great Britain 1066-1939.
- 8 Pickard A. 'Celebrations in Dinnington'.
- 9 Kelly. 1908.
- 10 Mrs. Revill - memories.
- 11 Mr. Crummock.
- 12 Mr. A. Harvey.
- 13 The Lyric is still used for special functions and as a Concert Hall.
The Picture Palace is now Woods Supermarket.
- 14 Dinnington Colliery Institute Company Directors Minute Book.
- 15 Mr. J. Wadsworth. Former member of Dinnington Main and Middleton Brass Band.

CHAPTER VII

DINNINGTON IN A CHANGING WORLD

Dinnington must always have been a changing village, for the organism which fails to adapt to the pressures of external change either ceases to exist, or remains primitive in comparison with its contemporaries. It remained a small agricultural village for centuries in terms of size, but it cannot be denied that it survived the upheaval of enclosure in 1779, and continued to grow, albeit very slowly until the beginning of the twentieth century.

The establishment of a colliery at Dinnington in 1902 had a tremendous impact upon the village; the speed of the resulting growth of the village was dramatic. The few colliers already living in the village welcomed the change, but some of the farming community and those in service at the Hall were dismayed.

“at first a lot of people were opposed to it....
people just talked amongst themselves but in
those days you wouldn't dare say .. “ 1

When the first clearings began one farmer went so far as to take his gun to threaten the sinkers, but fortunately no-one appears to have been hurt. 2 Yet even these people who grumbled at first soon got used to the idea and realized that the mine could mean prosperity for the village.

The memories of some of those remaining from the pre-industrial village of Dinnington give an almost Utopian account, and show a marked reluctance to adjust to hard times. Yet hard times there must have been, but perhaps the even greater change to follow quickly on the heels of the colliery and the resulting misery were 'to wipe out any memories of previous hardship.

The event of the First World War was of such consequence: that the words

“lest we forget”

were to be 'carved deeply on a memorial to the one hundred and nine men who gave their lives in defence of their country. At the beginning of the war in 1914 many men enlisted. The Colliery Company encouraged this by paying the men two pounds each to any man who volunteered. Later in 1916, as the situation in Europe became worse conscription took many many more. The photograph shows the people of Dinnington waving goodbye to a group of men on what some of them may have felt was an adventure.

They thought, as did most of the people in Britain, that the war would be over very soon, and life would return to normal or even better. Little did they realise that the action in which they were involved was about to rock the whole of the Western Civilisation and that it was to have appalling personal and economic consequences for everyone. The First World War marked the end of an era not only in Dinnington but in the country as a whole.

NOTES

- | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|----------|---|-----------|
| 1 | Mrs. Highfield. | Memories | - | recorded. |
| 2 | Mr. Walker. | Memories | - | recorded. |
| 3 | Mr. Davis. | Memories | - | recorded. |

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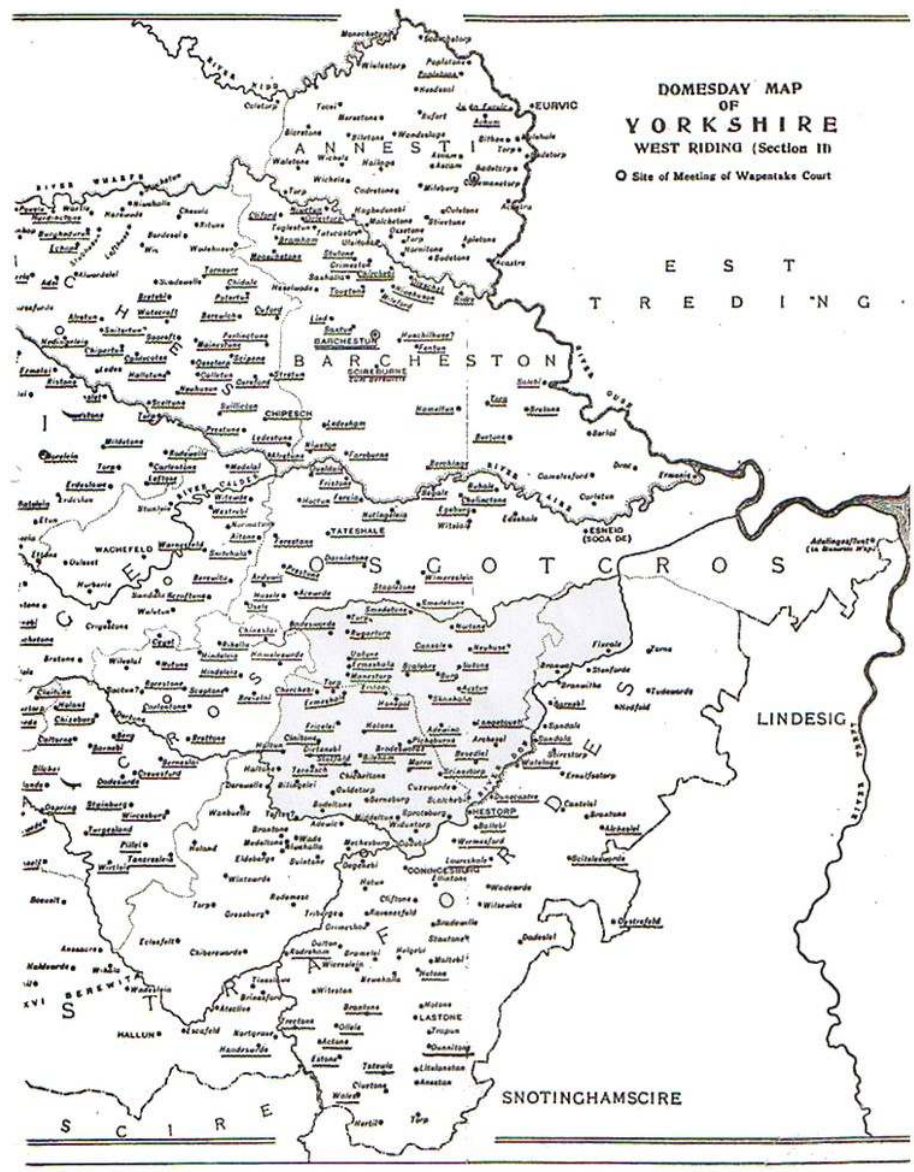
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DOMESDAY MAP
OF
YORKSHIRE
WEST RIDING (Section II)

○ Site of Meeting of Wapentake Court



E S T
T R E D I N G

L I N D E S I G

S N O T I N G H A M S C I R E

S C I R E

THE COAL-BEARING STRATA
BENEATH DUNNINGTON.

