

Y The Yorkshire Dales Review

NO. 4
AUTUMN 1983



**FOCUS ON NIDDERDALE
TWO NEW NATURE RESERVES
BOOKS FOR AUTUMN
BROTHER FOX**

20p

THE YORKSHIRE DALES REVIEW is the quarterly journal of the Yorkshire Dales Society, and is published by the Society with the help and financial support of the Countryside Commission, who contribute support to the development and work of the Society. Views expressed in the REVIEW are those of individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Society.

A Thriving Infant

The Yorkshire Dales Society has, during 1983, already more than doubled its membership.

That isn't so very remarkable bearing in mind that the Society began two years ago from very modest beginnings. And the growth reflects both the special reduced rate designed to attract new members during the Summer of 1983, and the article and advertisements in The Dalesman as well as excellent coverage elsewhere in local and regional press.

May we issue a very warm welcome to all the many new members who have joined the Society in 1983, both those lucky enough to live in the Dales, and those living farther afield who we hope to meet often in the Dales? It's your Society, and we hope you'll keep in touch with us in every way you can, coming to events, writing to us, giving us ideas, suggestions (contributions to the REVIEW especially welcome) and support in every way. We need every new member we can recruit, every bit of financial support because in the none-too-distant future the Society must achieve financial independence.

We believe we've been able to make an excellent start. It's easy to be cynical and say that it's impossible to try, as we have done, to bring together farmer and conservationist, rambler and small businessman, villager and tourist into one organisation united by a common love for the area.

Well, we've already proved quite a few people wrong. Membership is around the 350 mark, which in two years is no mean feat. We've had many people, not all of them members of the Society, at our meetings, warmly responding to the discussions, the interpretations, the insights, glad of an organisation which stressed moderate, rather than extreme opinions, rational rather than emotional arguments. Seminars have spawned useful initiatives (Opera Bus, Local transport Guide), the REVIEW has been quoted in the press, even in an editorial of one major regional newspaper. Gradually the Society gains credibility - not immediately. Things don't happen like that in the Dales. But a grudging respect among people who believe in actions rather than words.

Not that there isn't a long way to go. Manpower (and womanpower) we have available is hopelessly overstretched. There's so much more that could be done if members of our Committee of Management only had more time in between the demands of busy professional or business lives.

You can help in so many ways. As a member of the Society you can recruit others. You can come along to events of various kinds, and you'll find the autumn programme especially stimulating, with an interesting variety of events to join in. If you've time to serve on a Working Party or sub-Committee we'll be especially grateful to hear.

Our second Annual General Meeting, to be held this year in Nidderdale, in Pateley Bridge, on Saturday October 8th, promises to be particularly interesting. There are many things happening in Pateley of interest and relevance to other Dales and to rural communities outside the Dales, and there'll be time to look at and hear about some of these things.

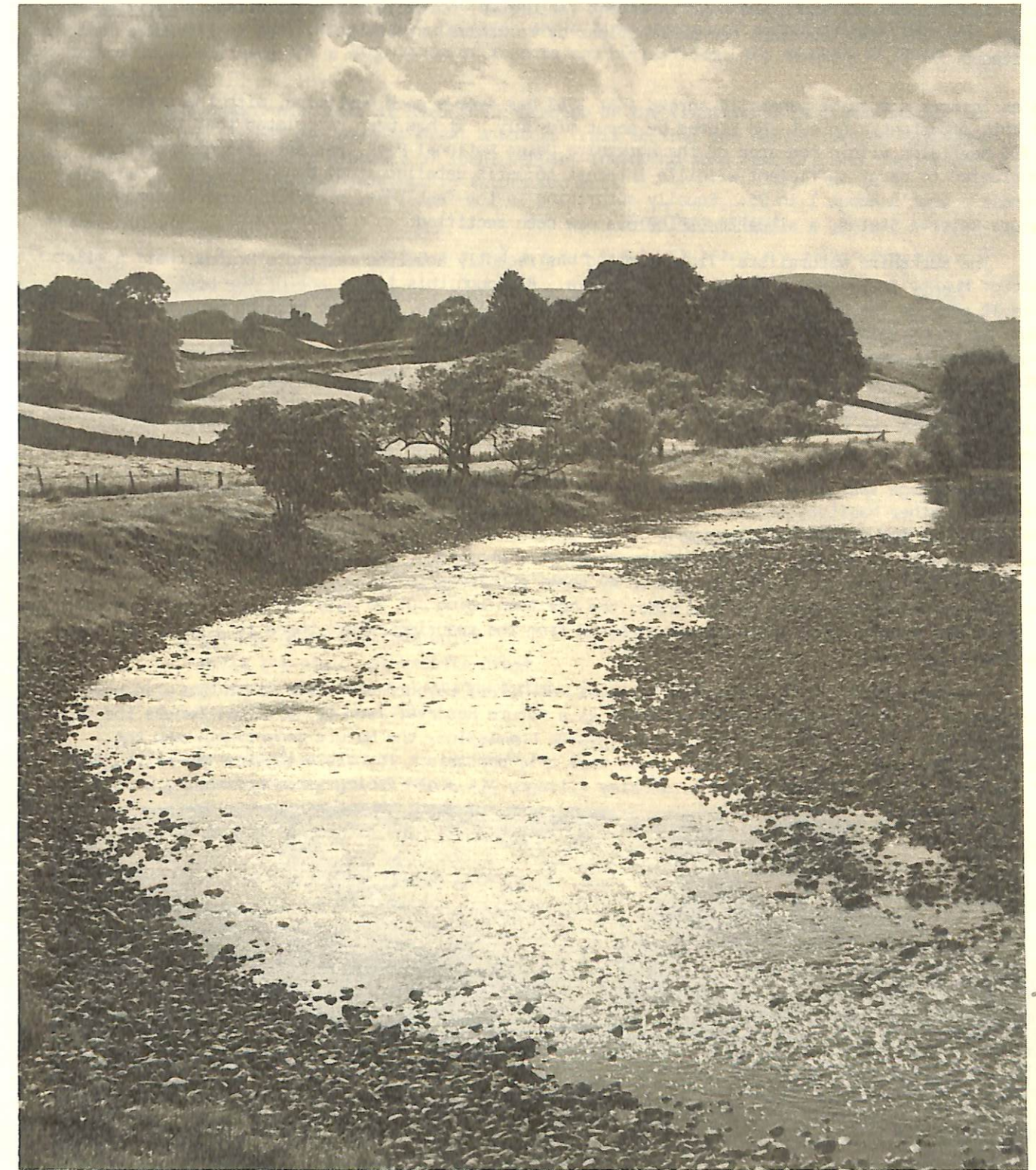
So we look forward to meeting you at Pateley Bridge in October, or if that isn't possible, whenever you can be with us.

COLIN SPEAKMAN

Cover picture: Kilnsey Show, Upper Wharfedale

(Enid M. Pyrah/David Clough)

The River Ure at Hawes



Photojournalists Derek G. Widdicombe's work will be familiar to many lovers of the Dales, appearing in many magazines and books, not only in Yorkshire, but throughout the world, including the latest Herriot book (The Best of Herriot Michael Josephs/Readers Digest), calendars and a planned book on industrial archaeology. In 1982, Derek was one of five top Dales photographers, including Geoffrey Wright, Simon Warner, John and Liza Forder, who took part in an exhibition of Dales photographs sponsored by the Yorkshire Dales Society as part of the Grassington Festival.

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Two New Nature Reserves in the Dales

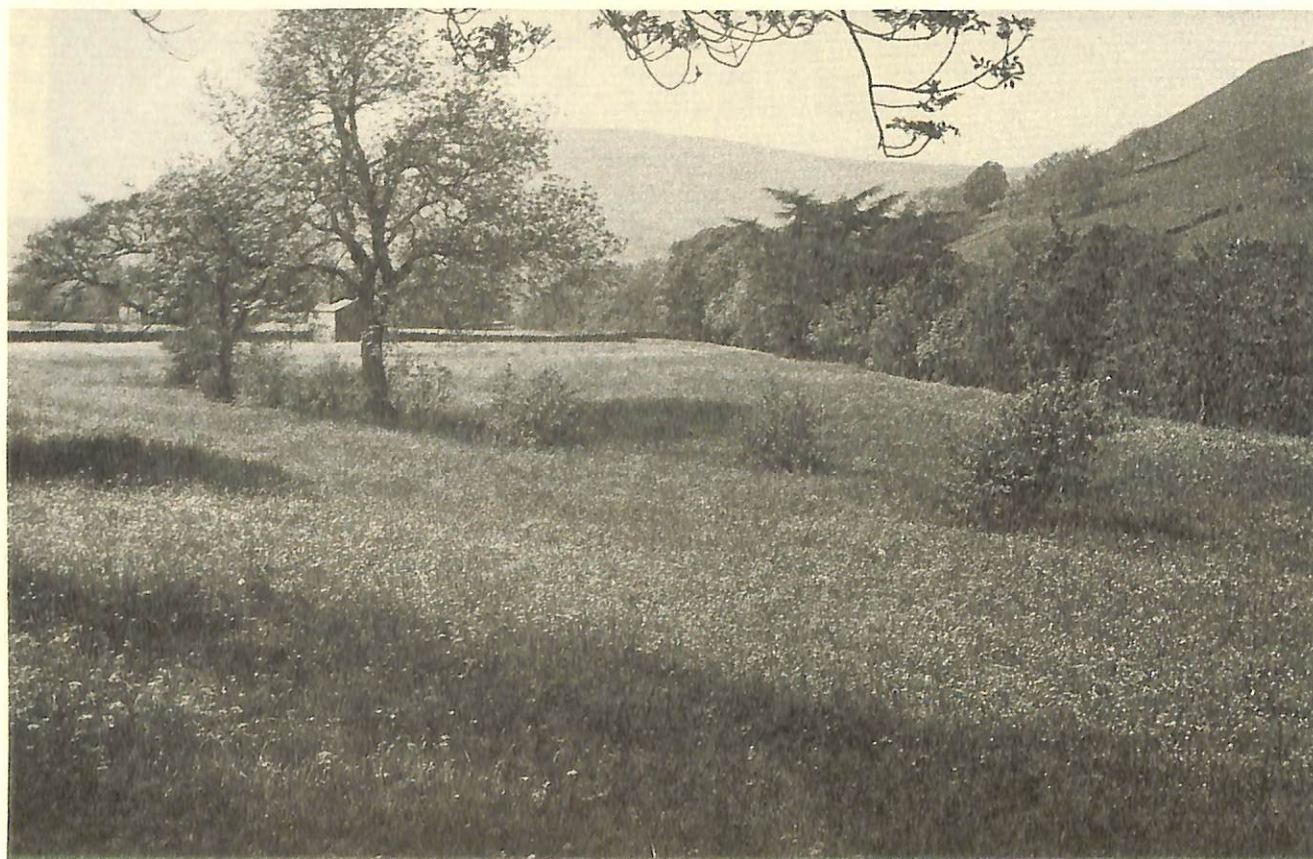
Herb-rich meadows are among the most important features of our unique Dales heritage. Geoffrey Wright describes two important new acquisitions by Yorkshire Naturalists' Trust to safeguard this heritage.

Dales farmers should be generally agreed that 1983 has seen a good haytiding, with the greater part of this important crop cut and stored by about mid-July. It has been calculated that there are over 3,700 hayfields within the area of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, yet only 145 of these are considered to be of sufficient wildlife interest to merit detailed study by the Nature Conservancy Council - that's about 1 in 25. Equally surprising is the fact that, hitherto, none has enjoyed Nature Reserve Status, a situation which has now been rectified.

The Yorkshire Naturalists' Trust Limited has recently acquired Yelland's Meadow, half a mile east of Muker, in Swaledale, as a Nature Reserve. Although this is not one of the best sites, when it came on the market it was too good a chance to miss, so, with the help of generous grants from the Countryside Commission, the World Wildlife Fund and the Yorkshire Dales National Park, together with some of its own Appeal Funds, the Trust bought this 3-acre traditional hay-meadow between the road and the south bank of the River Swale (GR SD 919978). A clear stream runs diagonally across the field separating two distinct types of meadow, with a rich sward of flowers between the stream and the road, and Yorkshire fog and yellow oat more prevalent between the stream and the river - the difference probably the result of management in the past.

An average species count shows 22 species per square metre in cut areas, augmented by plants growing in other habitats on the site - the stream banks, the river bank, the roadside hedge, and the alders by the stream. A management scheme agreed, with a local tenant farmer, will ensure that the meadow will be managed in the traditional manner, whose most important aspect is the absence of mineral fertilisers. It will be grazed by sheep and lambs in the spring, closed in May for the hay-crop, with manure spread at this time, the hay then being cut in July (or August in a bad year). An excellent view of the meadow can be obtained from the roadside, where there is a small roadside car-park.

In Wensleydale, just outside the National Park area, Leyburn Old Glebe Field has also been acquired by the Yorkshire Naturalists' Trust as a Nature Reserve, from its previous owners the Church Commissioners. Grants from the Countryside Commission, the Nature Conservancy and the World Wildlife Fund, plus Trust funds, have made this possible. The field adjoins the north side of Low Lane about half a mile east of Wensley village, its south-facing slope commanding a fine



Yelland's Meadow, Muker, Swaledale (photo: Geoffrey N. Wright)

view across the dale to Penhill. The Reserve is the richest-surviving part of Ellershaw, an area well known to naturalists since early last century, and its calcareous grassland includes over eighty species of plants, including green-winged and burnt-tip orchids - not great rarities, but here they are close to their northern limits. Cowslips and a fine display of summer flowers make this Reserve a likely area for a wide range of insects and butterflies, and studies of these are now under way.

A simple management plan aims to keep the character of the traditional pasture, unaffected by modern improvements. It is hoped to create a Nature Trail so that the public can see practical conservation in operation, and a number of local people, including some teachers and their pupils, are expected to take a practical interest in future projects.

Geoffrey Wright

Anna Adams of Horton-in-Ribblesdale, poet, painter and sculptress, delighted a Yorkshire Dales Society audience in June as part of the Grassington Festival with examples of her work. Anna has a growing national reputation, and the Yorkshire Arts Association carried a feature and interview on her in the Summer '83 Arts Yorkshire magazine. Her work combines a superb and imaginative use of language, with a rare accuracy of observation and feeling for the landscape, especially of Ribblesdale, which moves from the particular to the universal, as in this example, Brother Fox, from a forthcoming collection.

BROTHER FOX

Men net the seeming-docile hills
in mesh of walls, but fail
to kill the fox of the high fells
who lives beyond the pale.

I trickle under drystone walls
while the staid law-keepers dream,
and creep, when mooncast shadow falls,
towards the valley farm.

The serpent writhes in my backbone,
the snake dances in yours,
and treacherously lets me in
to snap my wanton jaws.

Men load the valley fields with walls
but still cannot subdue
the bandit of the stony fells
who lives, deep-earthed, in you.

I trot, blood-dark, close by the wall
under the snow-smothered moon,
printing bad news with each footfall
towards the winking town.

The serpent writhes in my backbone,
the snake dances in yours,
and hypnotises gentlemen
into bloodlust and wars.

ANNA ADAMS

(from Brother Fox and other Relatives to be published in November by the Mid Northumberland Arts Group, Town Hall, Ashington, Northumberland, price on request.)

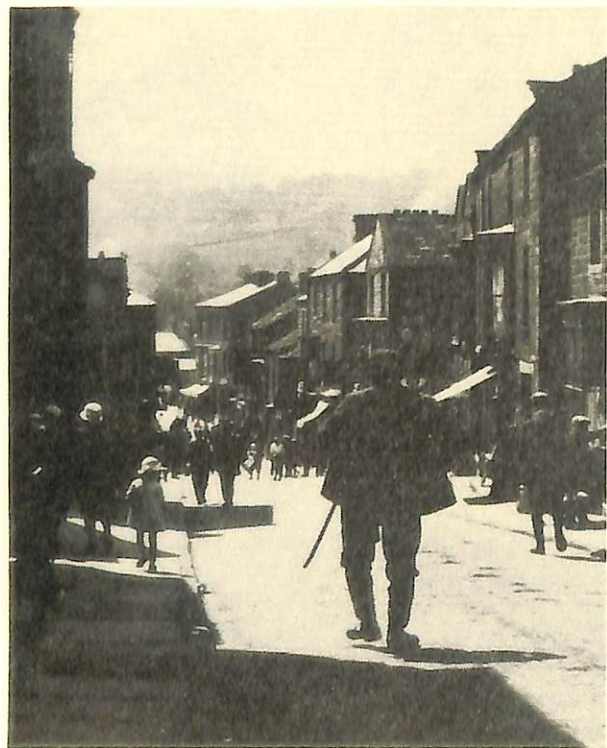
Focus on Nidderdale

Few people can explain why NIDDERDALE, that dramatically beautiful eastern dale, should have been excluded from the Yorkshire Dales National Park, containing as it does landscapes of superb quality, conservation and recreation opportunities, and a special character of its own.

1983 has seen the reprinting of a remarkable piece of community history, A History of Nidderdale published by the Nidderdale History Group.

Eileen Burgess, a member of that Group, explains how the production of that book by WEA members in Pateley Bridge lead naturally to the creation of the excellent Nidderdale Museum. But Pateley, now a centre of micro-technology, is by no means preoccupied in the past as the establishment of a lively and successful Theatre, by the community's own efforts, proves.

This summer, Pateley Bridge, the small Nidderdale market town, with its twin village Beverley across the river, was ablaze with colour. There were gardens and displays everywhere filled with flowers. Last year Pateley Bridge won the Yorkshire, England and Great Britain "Britain in Bloom" competitions, and in October was awarded the European "Entente Floreale", the glass trophy which is now proudly displayed in a High Street shop window. As a result of co-operation with Harrogate District Council and all sections of the local community, the whole environment of the town has been improved, and both public and private displays are a joy to see.



Pateley Bridge High Street in the 1920s (photo H. Moyses)



Gouthwaite Reservoir, Upper Nidderdale
(Geoffrey N. Wright)

But flowers are not the only attractions to visitors. The Nidderdale Museum, established eight years ago, houses a very large collection of folk exhibits extending through seven large rooms. An entire cobbler's shop, a haberdasher's collection, a chemist's shop and a Victorian living room are featured, as well as numerous conventional displays in cases, relating to all aspects of Nidderdale life in the past. There are large numbers of agricultural tools, examples of chapel crockery and relics of mining, brewing and stone quarrying which gave Pateley its prosperity last century. Sections of machines brought from a former twine mill, with examples of its products, show the flax and hemp spinning which led to the development of several new villages and hamlets in the dale in the nineteenth century.

Thanks to the acquisition of three more rooms on the top floor of the Victorian workhouse in which it is situated, the Nidderdale Museum Society which administers and staffs the Museum entirely voluntarily, is now expanding the displays. The Museum is open every afternoon in summer, and on Sundays in winter



Inside a Nidderdale lead mine

(Photo Pyrah/Clough)

intimacy and immediacy it would be hard to equal. The Society has always aimed to present shows of a high standard and is often ambitious in its choice of plays: during the past two years Arthur Miller's "The Crucible", Somerset Maugham's "The Constant Wife" and a second production of Noel Coward's "Blithe Spirit" have been amongst its productions. Each play is presented for a week, almost always to capacity audiences drawn from a wide area.

Across the river Nidd in Beverley is the delightful old monastic chapel. Situated in a small garden just beyond the village green, it dates from the early 16th century, when Marmaduke Huby was Abbot of Fountains Abbey. His initials and motto "Soli Deo Honor et Gloria" which also appears on his great tower at the Abbey, are carved in the stonework on the outside of the east wall of the building. Above can be seen the groove made by the rope pulling the bell used when the building was used as the village school between 1678 and 1818. After a varied use, it was restored and once more dedicated as a place of worship by the Anglican parishioners in 1965.

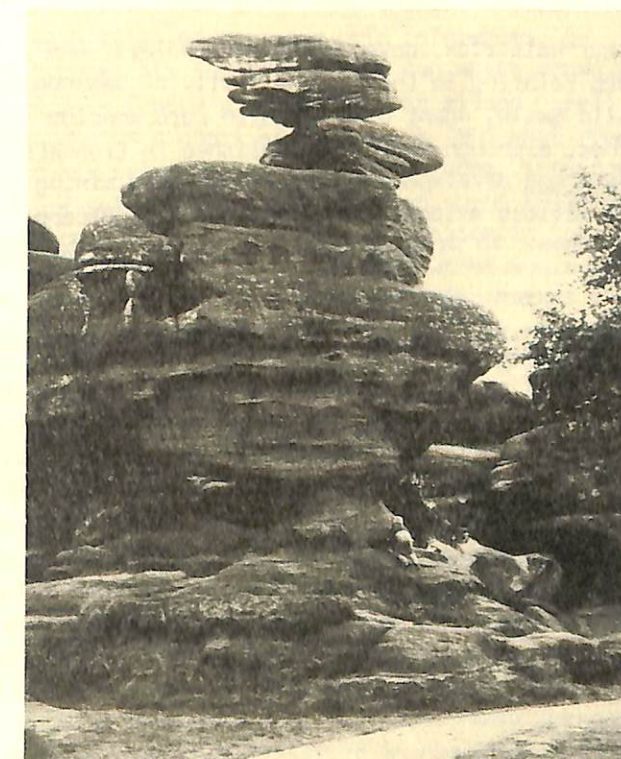
The other early place of worship in Pateley - St. Mary's Church - is now a peaceful ruin high on the hill above the town. The earliest records, as a chapel of ease to Kirkby Malzeard, go back to the 14th century. It was abandoned in 1825 when the present church of St. Cuthbert was built nearer the town.

At about the time St. Mary's was built, the Archbishop of York was granted the right to a market and a fair in the town. The market has long since disappeared, but Pateley Feast continues on the first Monday after 17th September, principally in the Nidderdale Show. It attracts thousands of visitors, being

with a very small admission charge.

The Museum was a logical development from the publishing in 1967 of A History of Nidderdale, the result of eight years work by the WEA Local History Class under its tutor, Bernard Jennings. It was highly acclaimed at the time as having set new standards for this type of co-operative work - 28 people from all walks of life pooled their talents and energies. Over 2,000 wills from the 16th and 17th centuries were studied, many still tied with the parchment strips which had never been touched since the wills had been proved. The book had been out of print for a number of years and second hand copies were extremely expensive and difficult to find. In June this year a second edition was brought out, containing an additional chapter at the beginning, bringing in recent developments in the dale, and an extra chapter on houses was added at the end, followed by an index, and nearly all the photographs have been changed. With a laminated cover, and priced at £11, the second edition of 2,000 is already nearly half sold.

A Stone's throw from the Museum is another example of the lively spirit of the town. In 1968, the Pateley Bridge Dramatic Society, already 30 years old, opened its own theatre, converted from a Primitive Methodist Chapel, and seating 75 people in comfort. The horseshoe gallery of the chapel provide the auditorium round a thrust-type stage, giving an atmosphere of



Brimham Rocks, Nidderdale (National Trust)

(photo: Pyrah/Clough)

the last show of the year, and usually blessed with glorious weather.

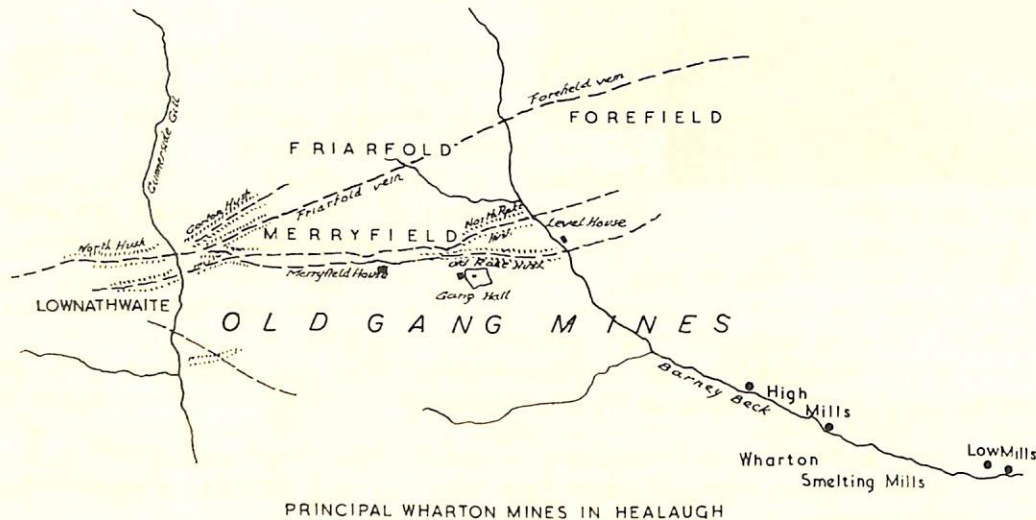
Nidderdale people, both native and incomers, are proud of the beauty of the Dale, and this is reflected in the liveliness of so many community projects to preserve the past and enhance the present.

Eileen Burgess

Members will have opportunity to visit the Nidderdale Museum and to visit the Pateley Bridge Theatre for the Yorkshire Dales Society AGM in October - full details back page. A History of Nidderdale, (Second Edition), edited by Professor Bernard Jennings, and published by the Nidderdale History Group, is association with Sessions of York is obtainable price £11 from local booksellers or direct from Miss M. Swires, Goose Green, Pateley Bridge, via Harrogate, North Yorkshire. Please add £1.25 for postage and packing. and make cheques payable to the Nidderdale History Group. It is hoped that copies will be available at the YDS AGM.

Books for Autumn

The Wharton Mines in Swaledale - Arthur Raistrick (published by the North Yorkshire County Record Office County Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire price £3)

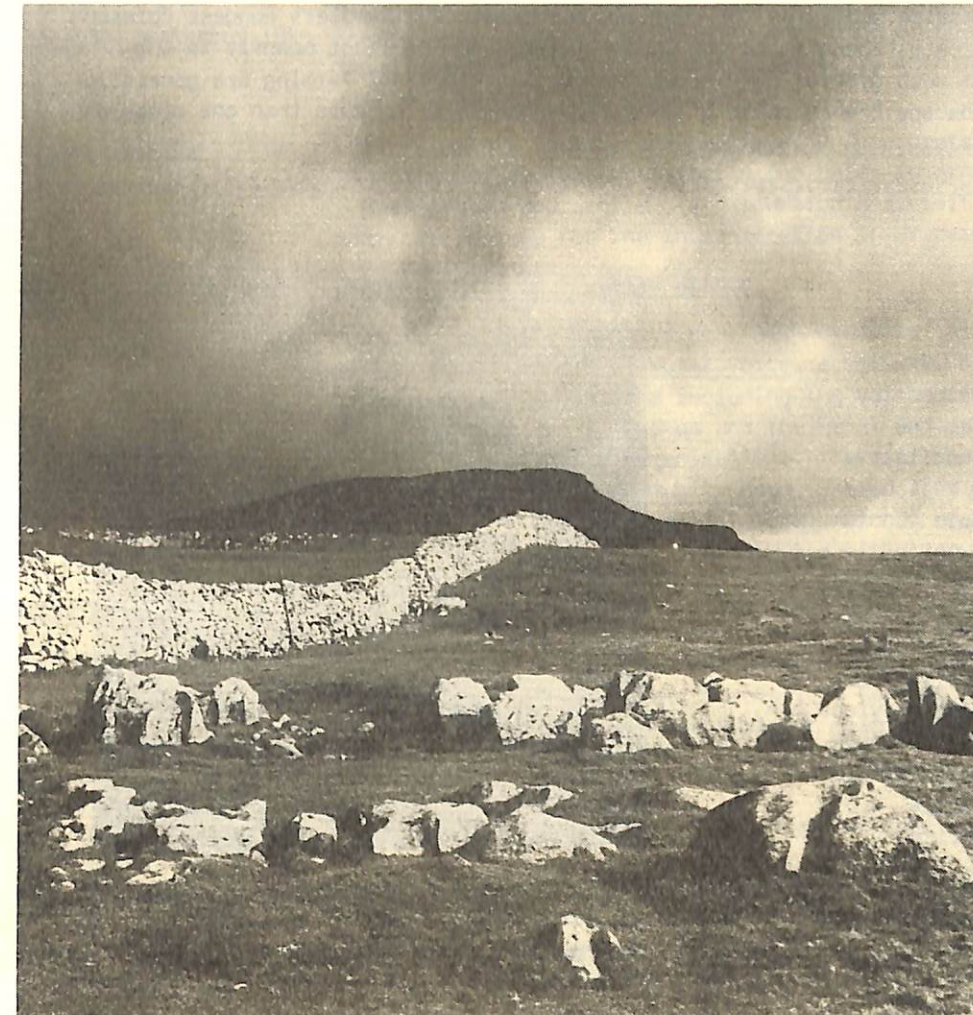


Dr Arthur Raistrick, doyen of Dales scholars, has, for a number of years, been researching documents relating to the Wharton family of Swaledale, and in particular the correspondence of one Philip Swale, agent of the fourth Lord Wharton in the seventeenth century. Dr. Raistrick's researches, although here only published in truncated form, present extraor jinary insight into the growth and development of the great lead-mining industry in Swaledale,remains of which are still so vividly evident in the Swaledale landscape. The bound photocopied format is basic, but fills the requirement to produce a piece of Dales scholarship at low cost for those who seek insight without any frills.

The Book of Skipton - Geoffrey Rowley (Barracuda Press £13.50)

A price of £13.50 for a mere 135 page book, however profusely illustrated, may seem excessive, even by today's inflated prices, but this has clearly been prepared as a collectors' item to a high standard. Dr Rowley is a fine historian, and the concise, carefully researched text is both scholarly and entertaining. It is organised in a series of thematic essays rather than a continuous chronological narrative, and this gives a lightness and sharpness often missing from local histories. The photographs are absorbing and will be of particular interest to Skiptonians. A book worth affording if you know and care for this characterful and unspoiled Dales town.

The Three Peaks of Yorkshire - Harry Ree and Caroline Forbes (Wildwood House £9.95 hardback)



PENYGHENT
one of the
photographs by
Caroline Forbes
from
The Three Peaks
of Yorkshire

Notwithstanding publishers' blurb that contends that the Three Peaks area is a "comparatively unknown" part of England (to London publishers perhaps ?) this is an interesting, ambitious book on our best-loved hills. Ambitious because the publishers have tried to do many things - produce a guide book of a size to fit into a rucksack pocket, with detailed maps and grid references, to use in the field, to have a text by a writer who both knows his subject and can write prose that flashes and sparkles with the freshness of a moorland beck (there's not much to be missed here) and photographs of a superb quality by a photographer who is a pupil of Fay Godwin (and what finer recommendation). Basically, the book is built around six walks in the Three Peaks area, interlaced with topographical essays. I'm not sure if the mixture quite works. If you've spent £9.95 on a book which contains such fine photogarphs and text you don't take it out on Whernside in the rain, so why some of those splendid photographs in small squares when a larger format would have given so much more scope for layout and design? It's an epic landscape and the scale deserves to be felt in the occasional double-paged spread. But these are minor criticisms of a book which deserves to be on every fell walker and Dales lovers' shelf - an ideal Christmas stocking filler.

Make for the Hills - The Ramblers Association (available from the Ramblers Association, 1/5 Wandsworth Road, London SW8 2LJ price 50p plus 30p postage).

The preface to the RA's contribution to the "Uplands Debate" will raise a few hackles when it describes the operation as a "fatuous and time-wasting exercise", a statement the RA itself contradicts by producing a first class, trenchantly argued paper. It is a timely reminder not only of the enormous importance of recreation to the overwhelming majority of people of these islands (a point stressed by John Dunning at the YDS' own meeting in May) but the economic importance of recreation in the hills. "Benign" tourism as they define it, which creates jobs in the local community, should be encouraged rather than the vast subsidies for activities that destroy the quality of the environment and with it the economic potential tourism represents - for example earning £70 million in the Lake District compared with £15m from hill farming. They quote Martin Fitton, Countryside Commission Officer for Wales in suggesting "there has been a tendency to view recreation in the countryside as a problem to be contained rather than a welcome opportunity for people to enjoy themselves".



YORKSHIRE DALES SOCIETY

The Second

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of the

YORKSHIRE DALES SOCIETY

will take place on SATURDAY OCTOBER 8th at 4.30pm

in The Playhouse, Pateley Bridge

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the First Annual Meeting of 9th October 1982
3. Matters Arising
4. Annual Report and Financial Statement (to be presented to the Meeting by officer)
5. Adoption of Annual Report
6. Election of Officers and Committee of Management for 1984
7. Membership subscription 1984
(The Committee of Management has proposed an ordinary membership subscription of £4 ordinary, £5 family and £4 retired couple for 1984)
8. Any other business

Prior to the Annual Meeting

Welcome to NIDDERDALE !

Meet members of Nidderdale Museum Society at the NIDDERDALE MUSEUM (in the old Council Offices, near to the Church - parking available) for a special tour of the Museum. Please arrive by 1.30pm. The Museum has an outstanding collection of Nidderdale material and has recently been expanded.

At 2.45pm we shall move across to the Pateley Bridge Playhouse to hear a little of the energy and inspiration that went into the creation of a unique theatrical venture from a converted chapel and at

At 3pm Dr. Peter Annison of W.R.Outhwaite and Son, Ropemakers, of Hawes, runners up 1983 (middle category) in the Shell UK competition for small businesses at Durham University, will speak on Industry in Rural Areas - a topic of vital concern to the Yorkshire Dales Society.

A short pause for afternoon tea around 4.15pm before the commencement of the Annual Meeting.

It may be possible to arrange a morning walk in Upper Nidderdale if sufficient people are interested - let the Secretary know if you would like to join a short (3-5 miles) ramble.

Transport to Pateley Bridge West Yorkshire Road Car service 24 from Harrogate (connections from Leeds, Bradford, York) 0920 (service 804) 1020, 1120, 1220 1230(23M) 1320 - Dalesrider unlimited travel tickets valid. Pateley Bridge well supplied with cafes, pubs, fish & chips etc.

We hope to see as many people as possible at Pateley on October 8th.

Colin Speakman
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