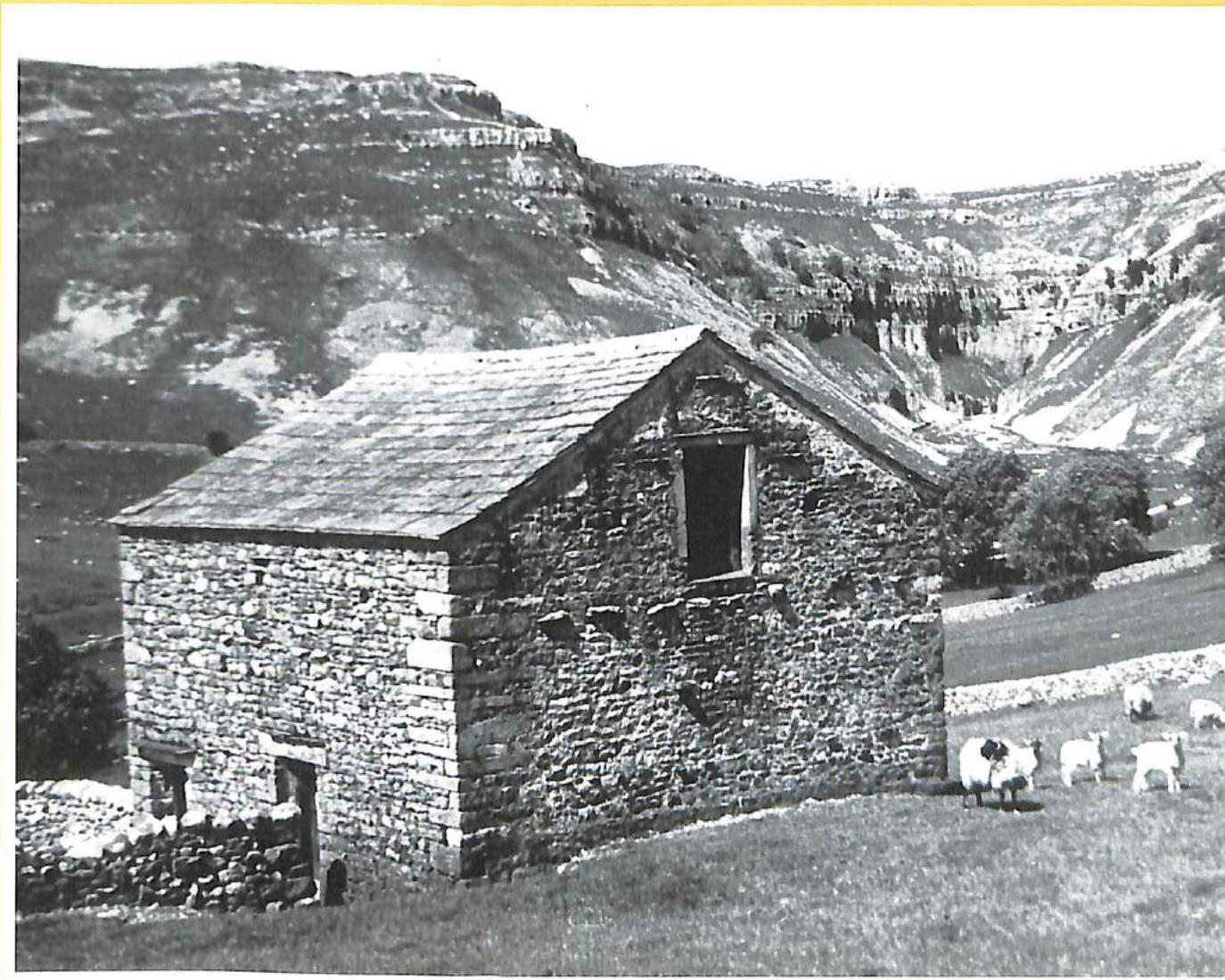


Yorkshire Dales Review

No.63 Summer 1998



- *Leader – Clearing the Air*
- *Ecological Issues on the River Swale*
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YORKSHIRE
DALES
SOCIETY

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Yorkshire Dales Review · No. 63 · Summer 1998

Journal of the Yorkshire Dales Society

Editors Colin and Fleur Speakman

Clearing the Air

Some months ago, the Yorkshire Dales Society made an objection to the National Park Authority about a planning application to develop a green field site at Carperby, near Aysgarth, for use as a "horse hospital".

Members may recall the leader in Autumn 1997 where we raised the very serious question of what or were not "members' interests" when several members of the Park Authority, who also happened to be members of the Yorkshire Dales Society, were accused by certain of their colleagues of having a special interest in the Carperby issue. The suggestion was made that as the YDS was a formal objector, somehow these members had an "interest" which they should declare and perhaps not vote on the matter.

In view of the fact that our position was to actually support the Park's own officers, to uphold the very Local Plan policies democratically approved by the Authority itself and sanctioned by the Secretary of State, there was a rich irony in the situation.

Nevertheless, the innuendo was wounding, and one member of the Authority who was a long standing member of the Society chose to resign from the Society rather than have her position compromised, whilst another, who was also a YDS member of Council, felt he had no option but to resign from Council. Two other members of the Park Authority who also happen to serve on our Council of Management, Ralph Atkinson (who is an elected North Yorkshire County Councillor) and Dr Jim Burton (who is a Secretary of State Appointed Member) chose to continue as Members of our Council.

But we felt it was important to clear the air, and we consulted the Council for National Parks who, realising the potential seriousness of the matter, took the question direct to the Secretary of State

The Minister, Angela Eagle, has now responded, in terms which are unequivocal:

"It is important to remember that these people (Appointed Members) are appointed to serve on the National Park Authority by the Secretary of State, not as a representative of a Society or organisation of which they are also a member, but as an individual to represent the wider national viewpoint. In the Department's opinion, membership of a National Park Society or other organisation or parish council, should not in any way conflict with a person's appointment and role as a Secretary of State Member of the National Park Authority. It must be left to the member's own discretion to decide whether they personally have an interest in a particular matter which may affect their ability to consider it in line with the requirements of the local Government Acts."

In fact, after much debate and a site visit, the National Park Authority subsequently turned down the Carperby application, albeit by a small majority. They did so very much for the reasons outlined in their own officer's excellent report, which we had supported. It was not an easy decision. Nobody should talk about defeats or victories but in taking a long term view, which always requires difficult decisions. In coming to their view, the Authority members demonstrated maturity and strength of purpose, just as they did on the Hawes golf course application at Hardraw which had equally vociferous local support, though a less intrusive site in the area could well be supported in the future.

And the future role of the YDS? Interesting that the Secretary of State, well aware of what has been happening in the Dales, has just re-appointed, after an absence of some years, a founder member of the Yorkshire Dales Society, one of our Council Members who is nationally known for his outspoken support for National Parks. We are delighted to see Jerry Pearlman back on the Park Authority and no doubt he will be reminding his colleagues of what exactly is that national interest they have a duty to uphold, if and when the occasion arises.

Colin Speakman

Ecological Issues on the River Swale

Ecology and Nature Conservation

The ecological importance of the River Swale lies in the unique contribution it makes to a number of species groups of major national biodiversity value within such a dynamic landscape setting. Its ecological resources are nationally and internationally important. However, it is becoming clear that this value is being seriously threatened by past and existing agricultural and land use policies in the uplands, notably the inextricably linked moorland gripping and drainage which has led to a catchment-wide deterioration in river function, and sheep stocking densities which have led to massive overgrazing and deterioration in habitat quality of moor, in bye land and pastures. There are also a number of indirect effects of land use policies which have caused deterioration in the landscape and ecological quality of the river system.

Hydrology and flows

The frequency of flash flooding on the River Swale and the speed of the river during periods of flooding has increased significantly over the past 30 years or so. This, and the increased speed of run-off down gulleys and ghylls, has been caused by moorland gripping and drainage, funded largely by government grants in the late 1960s and 70s, under the false assumption that wet moorland was bad for grouse and sheep. On the contrary, research has shown the importance of moorland hydrology to the ecology of the uplands and to the sustainability of the whole river catchment. The moorland bogs absorb water during times of prolonged rain and snow melt, and release water gradually to the river system. With increased gripping and drainage, water is taken off the moor quickly leading to flash flooding, a massive rise in river water levels in a short time period, and major

environmental damage. The changes to the river's physiography have been dramatic and erosion problems are now widespread along the river.

Many of the senior members of the local community recall far more pools and riffles* where there are now simply boulders within the river bed. Stories of local people catching numerous wild brown trout in their youth are plentiful whereas now the species is seriously in decline. In addition, grazing sheep to the edge of the river rather than fencing in a few metres of the riparian zone* from which grazers are excluded, has led to the loss of bankside vegetation, adding to the erosion problem. Bankside plants trap silt and, with their intermingled roots, help stabilise banks so



The Valley shut in by Fells - a woodcut by Marie Hartley from "Swaledale" by Ella Pontefract and Marie Hartley

that further colonisation takes place. At one time, ancient woodlands would have existed along the riparian zone. In the lowlands, floodplain forestry is being advocated as a means of creating new habitats in otherwise species impoverished arable farmland. Erosion as a result of unstable and dramatically episodic river flows, and increased grazing pressure along river habitats, has resulted in the loss of bank vegetation, increased the extent of exposed rocks, removed ephemeral habitats and has given rise to extreme and erratic buffeting of existing habitats.

It is apparent that the river bed has lost riffles and pools and the main substrate* is now comprised of large boulders rather than fine gravel deposits. As a result of all these factors, in-stream aquatic invertebrates and brown trout populations have declined. In addition, some acidification has probably taken place, and where pH levels drop below 5.5, fish such as brown trout are badly affected.

continued

Species indicators

Upland river systems such as the Swale provide key habitats for a range of special species, largely restricted in their range to only a few rivers. Key birds are Dipper, Grey Wagtail, Common Sandpiper, Oystercatcher and Goosander. The latter feeds on fish so a healthy fish population is important for this species. Oystercatcher numbers breeding on inland rivers have increased in recent years though it is highly likely that breeding success is influenced by spring and summer flash flooding. Similar impacts probably affect breeding Common Sandpiper, Dipper and Grey Wagtail,



which will also be affected by reduced food supplies as invertebrate communities are regularly destroyed by fast floods and the dramatic movement of materials within the river bed substrates. Some key species also use habitats adjacent to the river; Oystercatcher feed in adjacent pastures. Redstart, Pied Flycatcher, Tawny Owl, Great-spotted Woodpecker, Woodcock and Tree Pipit, live in riparian woodlands and woods adjacent to the river. Other species depend on the river for practically all their resources: Kingfisher and Sand Martin feed in or over the river and nest in steep banks along it. Bank erosion and flooding destroys nests and can seriously reduce the breeding opportunities for both these species.

The decline in fish undoubtedly affects the value of the river for Otters. In addition, breeding habitat in linear woodlands, and holt locations, have been seriously reduced. If fish populations and bankside vegetation can be increased, new holts constructed, and flood risk at holt locations removed or reduced, there is no reason why Otters could not be brought back to the Swale. They were known to inhabit the river in the not too distant past.

Another species which has clearly suffered from the increased flow rates and the loss of pools and slower flowing sections, is the Water Vole, recently placed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981, 1985 as amended) and hence afforded full legal protection. Local consultation has revealed that the species was once common along the river but its disappearance appears to have gone unnoticed. It is now extinct on the upper stretches of the river and little is known about its population between Grinton and Richmond.

Agricultural debris and other direct impacts

An indirect impact of increased flooding frequency, coupled with the Environmentally Sensitive Area mechanism, the switch to silage production, and the direct provision of fodder on the moor in black plastic silage wrap, has caused a major environmental problem. Agricultural debris in the form of discarded empty feed bags and black plastic silage wrap is entering and staying in the river at an alarming rate. In a survey of the Swale between Ravenseat and Grinton in the summer of 1997, over 2000 fragments of black plastic, a staggering 420 feed bags and about 1500 lengths of baler twine, were discovered in the river. Not only is this a potential hazard to wildlife but the carefree practice of discarding such material on the part of the farmers, is causing a major aesthetic and landscape impact in an area of such international environmental quality. The whole issue needs to be addressed and impacts removed. A report by Hill & Ward (Ecoscope 1997) outlines the need for whole farm environmental audits to be implemented by MAFF before farmers receive subsidy payments or environmental grants. The main thrust of the report's recommendations is that environmental grant aid must not be given to schemes which have such an environmental impact and the whole process should be reviewed if real environmental gains are to be achieved.

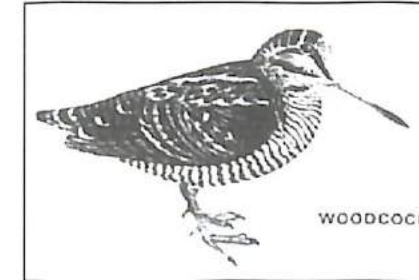
The increased flow rates and rapid increases in amplitude of the river, cause this debris to accumulate in bankside vegetation. The Ecoscope study confirmed that the debris is worst and most concentrated in the most vegetated sections of the river. Consequently, any proposals for increased riparian planting as part of the Regeneration Project, will need to take account of this debris issue. Part of the project should include clearing the river of such materials by addressing the source of the problem so as to maximise the benefits of new riparian planting.

Reducing impacts - what needs to be done ?

A number of general restoration measures are required to initiate regeneration of the river and return it to its former glory.

Clearly moorland gripping and drainage needs to stop and drains blocked up. This is being addressed by the Moorland Association proposal

for the catchment. One of the benefits of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Regeneration Project is that it provides added value to the large moorland grip blocking project. This blocking will aim to reduce run-off speeds and hence the violent changes in the amplitudes of the river. In turn, the Regeneration Project will target key areas to receive a range of restoration prescriptions, each being enhanced by the reduced flooding and erosion problems that it is envisaged will stem from the



Moorland Association initiative.

Grazing plans should aim to remove sheep and other livestock from feeding

within 5-10m of the river. This will enable vegetation to recolonise, establish a significant root system and trap silt, thereby forming a natural barrier or buffer to erosion. Trials undertaken by the Environment Agency have shown how this simple and relatively inexpensive method can generate major environmental and ecological benefits. It is well documented that the diversity and abundance of wildlife groups is disproportionately high along the riparian zone of the river compared to the adjacent pastures. Therefore, maximum benefits for conservation can be achieved by concentrating effort in the riparian zone.

There are sections of the river where significant erosion has occurred and habitat condition has severely deteriorated. Attention should be given to regrading some banks and slopes in order to dissipate the energy of the river and planted up with dwarf willows and other species in order to counter the erosion process.

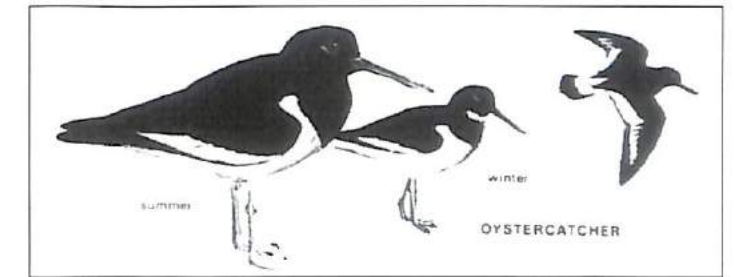
As stated previously, planting of bankside vegetation and protection from grazing, reduces erosion and provides habitat for birds, invertebrates, mammals and, indirectly, fish. A mosaic of short shrubs and trees would provide the preferred mixture.

Ecological prescriptions

This section provides a list of prescriptions which could be incorporated along the length of the river following intensive survey and audit of the existing condition of habitats and species.

- Stabilise water flow and rate and decrease of river levels so as to improve fish runs and pools and to improve invertebrate populations.

- Bankside planting to provide habitat for birds, mammals, invertebrates and fish, and to stabilise banks and counter erosion through natural processes.
- Provide pools and riffles for fish.
- Re-introduce Otters after building a series of Holts in association with restored bankside cover vegetation.
- Re-introduce Water Voles following a reduction in flow rates, the stabilisation of river-water levels and creation of pools and riffles.
- Creation of Sand Martin nesting banks which could be used by Kingfisher.
- Retain large sand banks as nesting habitat for Oystercatcher and Ringed Plover.
- Provision of off-river areas as ephemeral pools and seasonally wet areas for amphibians and Snipe.



- Creation and clean up small tributaries and runs for spawning brown trout.
- Creation of gravel beds in slower flowing areas of the river.
- Creation of wet alder woodland along sections of the river.
- Planting up of ghylls and tributaries, and fencing out of stock to remove grazing impacts to provide habitat for Black Grouse using alder, willow and aspen.
- Increase breeding habitat for Common Sandpiper by fencing off 5m wide sections of the river and encouraging mixed grasses and herb communities including sedges.
- Clean up existing debris within and adjacent to the river, and target the introduction of a whole farm management system to remove the problem at source.

David Hill, Ecoscope Applied Ecologists.

Editor — *riparian zone - along the riverbank area.
*riffles - channels. *Substrate - bedrock.

Dales Charity Scoops Top Award

The Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust has won a prestigious award under the Yorkshire Tourist Board White Rose scheme. The Trust won the Tourism and Environment category, in recognition of its outstanding work in conserving the Yorkshire Dales, a key tourism destination for the region.

Accepting the Award on behalf of the Trust, Roger Stott, Chairman said, "This is the first time the Trust has entered the White Rose awards, and we are thrilled to win the important Environment category. The Trust works closely with local communities in the Dales, offering grants towards key landscapes, wildlife and community features. The judges highlighted the excellent use we make of national lottery funding, and the fact that we have managed to approve 100 grants by the end of our first year."

The Trust, an independent charity, has just completed the first year of the £8 million Dales EnviroNet project. Funded by a £4 million grant from the Millennium Commission, the EnviroNet project covers a wide variety of schemes aimed at environmental and community improvements in the Yorkshire Dales.

Ann Shadrake, the Trust's Fundraising Manager, added: "This has been a fantastic year for the Trust. We were delighted to meet our Patron, His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, last month on his

visit to the Dales. His Royal Highness viewed a number of projects funded by the Trust during his tour of the Dales, in particular the new community hall at Cracoe."

"Prince Charles unveiled a foundation stone for the new hall, met the Trust staff and Trustees, and spoke to many of the local people and families who will benefit from the new building. Later in the evening, a lithograph donated by His Royal Highness raised a very substantial part of the £12,000 from our May Ball auction at The Devonshire Arms Country House Hotel at Bolton Abbey. All in all, a wonderful week of celebrations for the Trust's first birthday!"

Congratulations also to Yorkshire Dales Society members who to date have contributed a staggering total of £3,700 to the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust.

Ann Shadrake

For more fund raising details contact Ann Shadrake, Fundraising Manager on 015242 51002, fax 01542 51150, email: info@ydmtr.org or Website: www.ydmtr.org or at their office at: The Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, Beckside Barn, Church Avenue, Clapham LA2 8EQ.



Yorkshire Tourist Board White Rose Awards for Tourism: Councillor Gemmell (left) presents the Tourism and Environment Award Winner 1998 to Roger Stott (right), Chairman of the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust.

List of Yorkshire Dales Society Council of Management 1998/9

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT – KEN WILLSON (Addingham)
 CHAIRMAN – CHRIS WRIGHT (Skipton)
 VICE CHAIRMAN – JIM BURTON (Ilkley)
 COMPANY SECRETARY –
 ALAN PEASE (Bardsey)
 TREASURER – DAVID SMITH (Ilkley)

COUNCIL OF MANAGEMENT

RALPH ATKINSON (Bentham)
 HILARY BAKER (Long Preston)
 JOHN BELL (Silsden)
 JULIE BRADWELL (Leeds)
 DAWN BURTON (Ilkley)

DENNIS CAIRNS (Barnoldswick)
 GRACE CAIRNS (Barnoldswick)
 COLIN GINGER (Conistone)
 CHRIS HARTLEY (Menston)
 CHARLES HEPWORTH (Muker)
 JOHN HONE (Pateley Bridge)
 SHEILA MARKS (Ilkley)
 JERRY PEARLMAN (Stalling Busk)
 PETER SHARP (Malham)
 ALAN WATKINSON (Hawes)

SECRETARIES

COLIN SPEAKMAN (Ilkley) (policy)
 FLEUR SPEAKMAN (Ilkley) (administration)

CALLING ALL MEMBERS

It would be **very helpful** if members were always able to let us know about any change of status, for example retirement so we can adjust our records accordingly. Similarly if you change your address, do let us know to avoid the return of postal packages to the YDS office.

Finally, every quarter the office has to request some members yet again to **update their Bankers Orders** which costs the Society both time and postage.

Current rates are : Single Adult £11, Family/Couple: £15, Single Retired £9, Retired Couple £12 and Student/ Unwaged £6.

The Society address is : The Yorkshire Dales Society, The Civic Centre, Cross Green, Otley, West Yorkshire, LS21 1HD. Tel. 01943 461938 (Answerphone).

Please wait till after the tone if you decide to leave a message on the office answerphone. In order that we can respond as soon as possible, please ensure your name, phone number and any details are clear, brief and to the point. Remember that the office is normally manned on Monday mornings and only on an occasional basis during the rest of the week. (Much YDS work is carried out elsewhere)

Many thanks !

Full copy of the YDS accounts available with A4 size sae to the YDS office.

Yorkshire Dales Society Chairman's Report - 1998

This is my fourth annual report as your chairman of the Yorkshire Dales Society.

Much interest has continued with the organisation of the new National Park Authority. George Hallas has retired as the Park Officer of the Authority after nearly twenty five years of service and we all send him our good wishes in his well deserved retirement at Askrigg. George has had the role of steering the new authority through its formative months, which have been described by the chairman Robert Heseltine as "two years of volatile transition".

Some aspects have caused us some great concern, following our formal objection to a planning

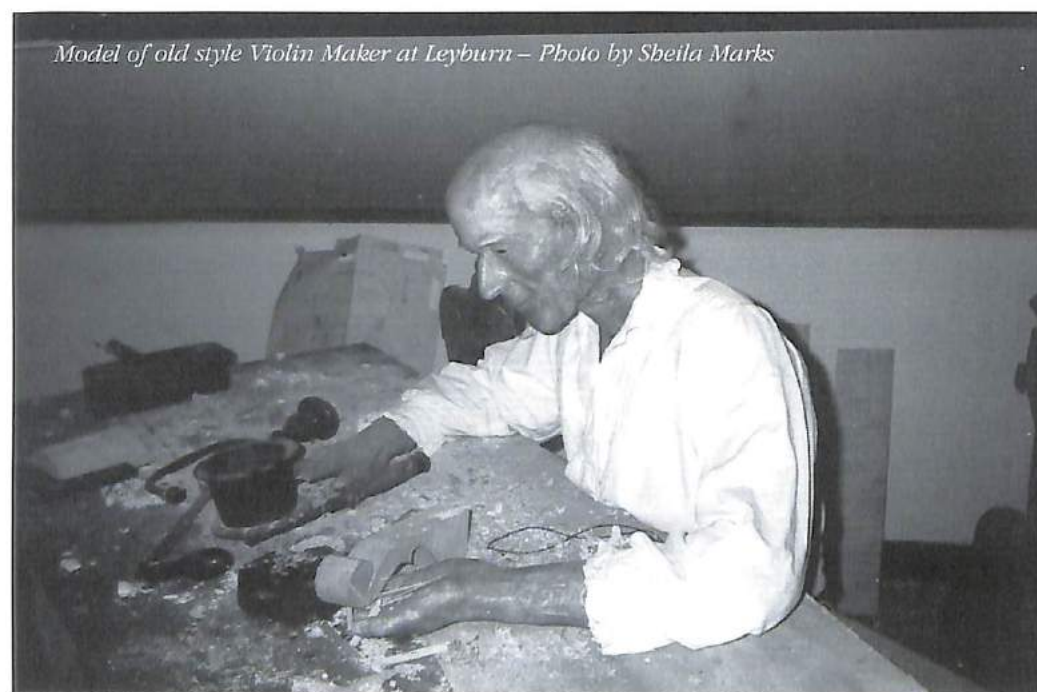
an ordinary member to feel that they should suspend membership of the YDS in one case and withdrawal from the YDS council in another. Clarification of this particular issue has been taken up at national level by the Council for National Parks and this has been recently resolved at ministerial level which states unequivocally that:

Membership of a National Park Society, or other Organisation or local parish council, should not in any way conflict with the person's appointment and role as a Secretary of state member of the National Park Authority.

Meanwhile we are delighted to welcome Heather Hancock as George's successor. We know she has a good grasp of many issues facing the National Park.

The Society itself has continued with its varied programme for members since last year's AGM in Kettlewell. Two very different visits were to the Black Sheep Brewery at Masham and the Violin Maker at Leyburn. Summer sun helped two evening events with a tour of Victorian Ilkley and Chris Hartley's sunset walk to Beaver Dyke near Harrogate, but sadly rain was more the order of the day for Alan Sutcliffe's Dalesbus walk in Wensleydale however.

This year we had the honour of hosting the annual seminar for National Park Societies in November. This was based in Malham using the excellent facilities provided at a very modest cost by the YHA at the John Dower Memorial Hostel. A full account of the seminar has been written in the Review, but we all regard the meeting as a great success. This was due entirely to the hard work by Colin and Fleur, our secretariat, and the members of the committee. Thanks are also due to many people in Malham who helped in a variety of ways, but particular thanks to Julie Boocock, chairman of Malham Parish Council, and local council member Peter Sharp. We planned the



Model of old style Violin Maker at Leyburn - Photo by Sheila Marks

application for a small development at Carperby. Our grounds for objection was simply that this particular application was a departure from the Yorkshire Dales local plan and the North Yorkshire structure plan. Some members of the National Park Committee are also members of the Yorkshire Dales Society Council of Management as well, and no doubt, other affiliations as well, and this was put forward as a conflict of interest. It should be pointed out that no member of the Authority is appointed by us, membership of the YDS being coincidental.

It has unfortunately led to a council member and

meeting to be financially self supporting without outside sponsorship or support as had been necessary for previous events of this kind and this goal was achieved, indeed we even a slight surplus.

More recently the Society co-hosted with the Yorkshire Dales Public Transport Users Group, a day seminar on Integrated Transport in the Dales. This was held at Skipton in March attracting over fifty delegates. Words were put into action the following weekend with a well supported bus walk between Skipton and Grassington.

Our winter programme of walks and talks was again well supported with a wide variety of topics covered. We are always interested to hear any ideas for speakers or particular topics any members think may be of interest. I would like again to thank all who helped with walks. Rod and Judith Clough also have to be thanked for yet again always managing to cope with making tea under a variety of conditions.

The *YDS Review*, so ably edited by Colin and Fleur Speakman, continues to be widely admired. We always welcome any contributions and have had some wonderful pieces contributed during the year.

Our Treasurer will as usual give a full and concise report this afternoon. Can I say how much support and help we have had over another difficult time from both David Smith and Alan Pease. I would also like to thank the members again for their patience and help with the direct debit system. This has been an added burden for our hard pressed team of volunteers in the office. Fleur, Brenda Parkin, Sheila Marks, Margaret Rhodes and we thank Margaret Blakeborough for joining the team.

Your Council has met in various parts of the Dales. We were sorry to lose the services of John

Cumberland and Derek Parkin from the Council of management and would like to thank them for all their support and help. We are delighted to welcome Peter Sharp from Malham onto the committee. On a sad note members of the Society were very sorry to hear of the death of John Blakeborough, a founder member who devoted



Malhamdale Plover - Photo by Peter Sharp

much time to the society he loved as a member of the office team, after a wonderful life of service. Collections taken at the funeral and a later meeting have been donated to the Millennium Trust, contributing to the wood planting scheme. John's name is placed in the "In Memoriam" book at the Millennium Trust office and in other National Park centres.

Last year we commended the Trust to our members and gave our full support. Members have contributed a magnificent £3,700 to the Trust which after matching will make a superb contribution. It is wonderful to know that this will be such a positive contribution to the long term beauty of the Dales and that you helped make it happen.

May I conclude by thanking you all for your support, particularly fellow council members and also of course our joint secretariat Colin and Fleur and for their unfailing hospitality at Ilkley.

Remember again the strength of our Society is in the membership and I urge you all to make every endeavour by personal recommendation to try and increase our current membership base. Thank you

C.J. Wright Chairman YDS.

The Yorkshire Dales Society Ltd

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31st March 1998

	<u>General Fund and Total 1998</u>	<u>General Fund and Total 1997</u>
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE		
Incoming Resources:		
Donations	1,951	1,560
Subscriptions	12,266	11,466
Tax Recoverable on Convenants	1,022	643
Profit on Events	878	153
Turnover	249	576
Interest Receivable	883	770
Total Incoming Resources	£ 17,249 =====	£ 15,168 =====
Resources Expended:		
Direct Charitable Expenditure	-	-
Other Expenditure:		
Management & Administration of Charity	14,620	19,092
Cost of Sales	84	434
	£ 14,704 =====	£ 19,526 =====
Net Incoming/(Expended) Resources for the Year	2,545	(4,358)
Other Recognised Gains & Losses	-	-
Net Movement in Funds	2,545	(4,358)
Fund Balance Brought Forward 1.4.1997	22,304	26,662
Fund Balance Carried Forward 31.3.1998	£ 24,849 =====	£ 22,304 =====

The total funds are unrestricted.

Butterburrs – Photo by Peter Sharp



Book Review

POPULAR WALKS AROUND HARROGATE - Ramblers Association Harrogate Group

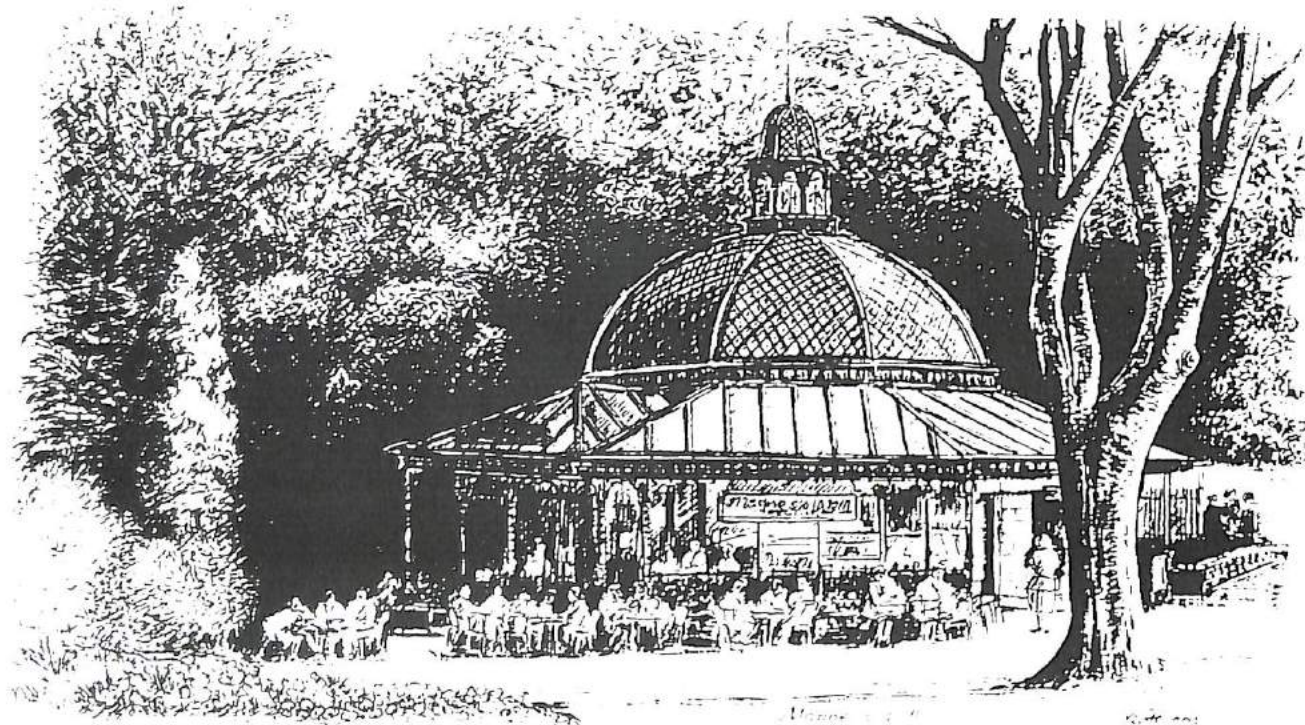
Given the high price of walking guide books these days, it's nice to find something under £5 - a mere £3.50 in fact for no less than 22 walks, most, but by no means all circular walks, around Harrogate, Ripon and Pateley Bridge.

This is actually the second edition of the guidebook, with two new walks and revised maps added. Some of the walks are within what is now the Nidderdale AONB - the Eastern Dales, including Lower Wharfedale and Washburndale - but others are close to urban Harrogate in countryside which is surprisingly unspoiled and less heavily visited, making a welcome change from the more crowded higher Dales such as Upper Wharfedale where on a

fine Sunday you have to queue to get over a stile. Between 3 and 9 miles in length in gentle countryside, all are within the capacity of the average family walker. Wherever possible available public transport is mentioned, though more details of actual services would have been easy to provide.

They are all well tried and tested walks, with clear descriptions, edited by John Dickinson and Stella Barclay, and excellent sketch maps and illustrations by Ken Fozard. It's available from local shops or you can order a copy direct from John and Margaret Taylor, price £4 to include postage from 171 Otley Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG2 0DA.

The Magnesia Well, Harrogate by Ken Fozard



Under Wether Fell

On the 23rd May, the 89th birthday of the Reverend James Alderson of Gayle, near Hawes, a reprint of his book *Under Wether Fell* will be launched. It appeared soon after his official retirement from the Methodist Ministry in 1974, which he continued in his own village for a further 20 years. The first edition was out of print within a couple of years, and many people have sought a copy in vain. 500

copies of the book have now been printed - 50 of them signed and numbered - and will be available from three outlets in Hawes: Mason's Newsagents, Pennine Gifts and Kit Calvert's bookshop at £5.95 each or by post for £7 (to include postage and packing) from T. Cluderay, Burnside, Burtersett Road, Hawes, North Yorks. DL8 3NT. Cheques to be made out to T. Cluderay.

Daleswatch Report

1. Is it all right to roam?

One of the most engaging characteristics of our "new" government has been its determination to find out just what it is that makes the country tick. Consultation and seminar have followed consultation and seminar seamlessly, on almost every subject that affects our daily lives. Indeed, there must be an awful lot of paper piling up somewhere. And, probably not surprisingly, the hoary old subject of the public's access or otherwise to the open countryside has been getting its very fair share of attention, and a major consultation is currently under way.

So it should be. The cry for a "right to roam" is an evocative one. Englishmen have lived in, loved in and died for their country over the centuries. Should they not now have the right to walk upon and enjoy what many see as their birthright - that of the freedom to wander at will over those parts that are still open, and are not yet built upon or despoiled? And it has to be remembered that its use during the 1930s led to the days of the Mass Trespass in the Peak District and of the emergence of our National Parks as areas to be protected for their special qualities of landscape beauty and of spiritual recreational value. But there is another side to the story (there almost always is). For many of the people who live in these very special places - and, for that matter, elsewhere - have to earn their living from the land that is not only beautiful but it is also the practical raw material that is essential to their industry. And there are other complications. Some landowners simply do not like people impinging on their property; whilst some walkers impinge too hard and make a thorough nuisance of themselves. There are also problems in the more sensitive areas, where numbers of visitors might well disturb wildlife or rare species of vegetation.

It is natural that the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority has taken a leading role in grappling with the problems associated with the current investigation. Meetings and discussions have been widely held throughout the Park and the views of all sides of the debate have been sought. A considerable number of tricky questions have been debated (one being to come up with a simple definition of the term "open countryside"). Nationwide it is probable that the present exercise will lead to a greater level of public access throughout the country as a whole, but it is to be hoped, and seems most likely, that changes to

current practice will be by agreement and not by regulation. The portents are favourable for a satisfactory outcome to the consultation: should that occur then the work within the Yorkshire Dales will be seen to have made a positive contribution to its success.

2. The Wensleydale Railway

The Yorkshire Dales National Park has many positive things to its credit, but a definite minus has been the level of its public transport or rather lack of it; a charge which could be equally levelled at North Yorkshire. Potentially there could be long-needed changes - an Access and Visitor Management Strategy has been compiled: a scheme for a local service to help visitor and resident alike within the Bolton Abbey area, linking it to Ilkley and the Embsay Steam Railway (prepared by the Yorkshire Dales Society in consultation with the YDNPA and North Yorkshire Highways and the Bolton Abbey estate) has been in existence for several years. But, apart from the Wharfedale Wanderer bus service (Sundays only up Wharfedale), and some minor improvements in the northern Dales, an already sparse provision shows little or no sign of improvement. And, recently, we even lost the 804 bus service to Malham, one of the busiest destinations within the National Park.

Fortunately there is one shining light on the horizon. A small number of enthusiasts, technically competent and with an ably run organisation, continue to fight for the restoration of passenger services along the former railway line between Garsdale (on the Settle to Carlisle line) and Northallerton (on the route of the Flying Scotsman), passing through Hawes and Leyburn and linking the heart of the National Park with those parts of the country our visitors come from. Further, they also seek to feed into an integrated system of buses which they aim to develop within the northern dales. An extension to link this with the Wharfedale Wanderer and an increase in the latter service could see the beginnings of a genuinely viable service, serving both visitor and resident alike, a reduction in the number of cars within the National Park and increase in the prosperity of Dales businesses as people find it easier and cheaper to get about. The prospect of a truly integrated transport system is there for all to see. It would be tragic for the Dales if the opportunity were spurned for the lack of a proper vision of the future.

3. Dalesmasts

A near universal nationwide complaint at the moment is that our countryside is being visually polluted by a growing array of ugly little masts that are springing up all over the place. These totemic objects are apparently erected to serve the gods of instant communication, enabling practitioners of the art to contact each other without a moment's delay - frequently without paying attention to the need to pull into the side of the road before saving those few precious seconds.

Those horrible objects will become redundant within a few years as technology removes our need to use them; and our capacity for rapid communication from almost anywhere is already at a level that copes very adequately with the needs of the better organized members of our society. It is a pity that the needs of the others and the rapacity of commercial competition between them are going to continue to create a series of blots in the countryside. And it is an even greater pity that

even the glorious areas of our National Parks cannot be exempted from these effects.

Jim Burton

Further information about Daleswatch Local Groups can be obtained from the individual convenors as listed below:

LIST OF DALESWATCH LOCAL CONVENORS

Dentdale	Judith Newsham (015396 25486)
Nidderdale	John Hone (01423 711471)
Ribblesdale	Hilary Baker (01729 840609)
Airedale/Malhamdale	John Bell (01535 655418)
Swaledale	Charles Hepworth (01748 886397)
Wensleydale (Upper)	Alan Watkinson (01969 667785)
Wharfedale (Lower)	Peter Young (01943 466858)
Wharfedale (Upper)	Ken Lord (01756 753202)



The River Swale at Richmond and the Old Bridge - Photo by R. B. Fawcett

(See Swaledale article on pages 3 to 5)

Summer Events

We've some unusual and interesting events planned for this summer. Join us for all or part of a day in the Dales, for a visit, talk, or not too strenuous walk with the Dales countryside looking its summer best.

SATURDAY JULY 4TH - RURAL WALK IN URBAN AIREDALE It's easy to forget that Airedale is not just roads, factories and houses, but a real Yorkshire Dale with stretches of delightful countryside, rich in history. Join Rod Clough for a moderate walk of approximately 9 miles. Meet at Saltaire Station at 0955 (train 0934 from Leeds, 0931 from Bradford FS for a short walk to Hirst Woods car park Saltaire where motorists should park (next to Canal) and meet group at 1015. Bring packed lunch. the walk will finish at around 4pm. tel 01274 752092

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 19TH - 10.30am A VISIT TO SWINDEN QUARRY For most visitors to the Dales, quarries are just an eyesore. But is there more to it than that - local employment, a contribution to the national economy. So what are quarry operators Tilcon - who recently won major planning permission to extend the life of the quarry - doing to reduce the impact of the quarry and its traffic? We shall be guests of Tilcon, so to find out more, come along and see for yourself. Because of Health and Safety requirements at this working quarry, size of the party is strictly limited so please book early - letter/postcard to YDS office or phone call to Sheila Marks on 01943 608968 by July 18th please.

BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY AUGUST 31ST WASHBURNDALE Join Colin Speakman on the Fountains Flyer, Service 802 to Blubberhouses, leaving Bradford 0900, Leeds Central Bus Station 0930, Headingley Arndale 0940, Otley 1000 (motorists park in Otley), arrive Blubberhouses 1025 for 11 mile walk along Washburndale back to Otley. Packed lunch.

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 19TH WENSLEYDALE CREAMERY and the DALES COUNTRYSIDE MUSEUM - a joint meeting with the North York Moors Association

Meet our colleagues from across the Vale of York to share a morning visit to the award winning Wensleydale Creamery, cheesemakers extraordinary, (tour begins 11.30am) and an afternoon visit to the new Dales Countryside Museum (2.15pm). Numbers are limited - bookings



to Sheila Marks at YDS office or phone 01943 608968 by August 17th. Park at the National Park centre in Hawes or take the 0845 train to Garsdale for the 1020 bus link to Hawes (return 1700).

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 27TH YORKSHIRE'S LITTLE SWITZERLAND Catch the Fountains Flyer (times as above, plus connection on service 24 from Harrogate to Pateley Bridge then catch the 1130 Nidderdale Rambler from Pateley Bridge (service 25) to Ramsgill, arrive 1147 for a seven mile walk.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 10TH WALK IN STRID WOODS, BOLTON ABBEY to open the Walks and talks season with John Cumberland 01943 608961 (meet Cavendish Pavilion at 1030am). Packed or cafe lunch.

LECTURE PHOTOGRAPHING THE CHANGING COUNTRYSIDE from Simon Warner top Yorkshire photographer at 2.15pm in Bolton Abbey Village Hall.

Airedale - A Changing Landscape

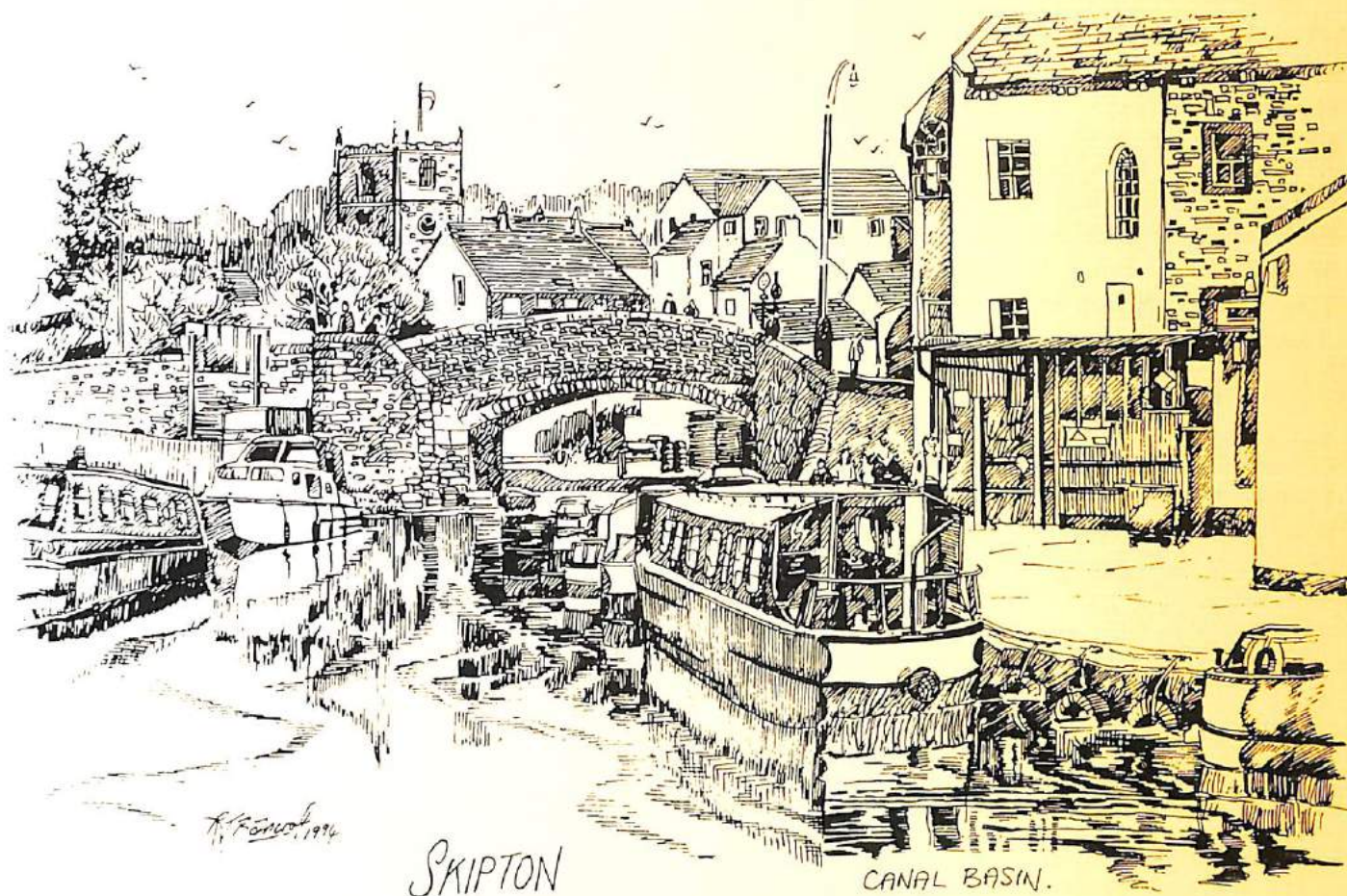
*Photographs by
Simon Warner*

Craven Museum, Skipton
till 18th July 1998

**Leeds Industrial Museum
Armley and Thwaites Mills
Museum, Stourton**

25th July - 20th September 1998

East Riding Museum, Hull
26th September -
22nd November 1998



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Back Cover picture: Skipton Canal Basin by Richard Bancroft.

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