

INTRODUCTION

This book is a record of the village of Litton as it was in the year 2000. It contains contributions from all thirty-two households in the parish. In these we have expressed ourselves in many different ways: with factual information about how we live now; photographs, drawings and histories of our houses; memories and narratives of times past and present; poems and opinions. There has been no attempt to be comprehensive or systematic but we hope that readers now and in the future will find much of interest here and gain an insight into the character of the village and its inhabitants at the beginning of the third millennium.

This portrait of Litton is made at a time of change and after decades that have seen profound changes. Although farming is still at the heart of village life, there are now far fewer farms and farm workers than half a century ago. For the first time for centuries, cows no longer walk daily through the village in summer on their way to the milking shed. The people too are different. Until the last few decades, all of the residents were born in Litton or Littondale, or came from the surrounding area. Now most of us come from much further afield, and the old continuity from one generation to the next is dwindling. But those that have come in, have come from choice, and it is evident throughout this book that their love for Litton and its dale and their sense of privilege at living here, matches that of the older Littondale families.

Through all these changes, the appearance of Litton has changed very little – almost all of the present buildings in the village are shown on the first Ordnance Survey map of 1852 (although a good number have a different use and now house people instead of farm animals and their fodder).

The book is arranged as a tour of the village, starting at the first house, Foss View, as one comes down into Litton from Halton Gill and the Pen-y-Ghent road. From there we follow the houses along the right hand (south) side of the road, making a short diversion to East Garth Farm, the only house remaining from an ancient settlement across the River Skirfare from the present village. Beyond the main village on the Arncliffe road is the little group of houses at Stonelands, part of Litton Parish, and from there we return via the houses on the north side of the road, ending at the recently converted Armistead Farm Barns, opposite our starting point. As well as photographs of all the houses and their occupants, we have included other views from around the village. There is also an appendix giving lists of plants, birds and animals known to occur in the dale now or in recent years.

This book is the work of the whole village, but it could not have come into being without the dedicated labours of Lyn Morgan, Janet Taylor and Beryl Turner. The photographs were taken by ^{David Turner and} Barry Cliff, or supplied by various residents. The maps were drawn by Beryl Turner. We are grateful to Trevor Croucher of Hebden who did the page setting and the printing of the archive volume.

David Turner
Chairman of Litton Parish Meeting