



George Leat and Folk Museum

HIGH CORN MILLS • SKIPTON • N. YORKS • TEL. 2883

Skipton as a Farming centre

SKIPTON for many years has been a centre of farming interests, its history goes back many centuries. Very early records suggest that two corn mills were working in the area in the days of the Norman Conquest. One such being on the site of the High Corn Mill. It is thought that milling in one form or another has been done on the site of the present mill, perhaps even in the days before the Normans came to the north of England. Early records mentioned a mill in the 12th century and records have been made of tithes being paid about that period. Perhaps the site was in use before the 12th century, although no definite proof, it is generally thought that this was so. For a long period of years the mill was part of the Skipton Castle Estate, dating back to the early Normans and then in later years by the families which followed. The Cliffords for many years owned the Castle and the lands around including the Corn Mill. Tenants were compelled to bring grain to the mill, this being part of the condition of the tenancy agreement. The authority of the Lord of the Manor was all powerful, heavy penalties were handed out to those who failed to keep the agreement. The landlord usually let the mill to the miller who in turn, took a handful or so out of each bag ground as his payment, it was said that the miller with the largest hand made most profit, but was not very popular with those who had to use his services.

It will be appreciated that only brief mention can be made of the history of the mill in a note such as this, it is hoped at some future date to produce a more informative article.

The Museum

The Museum is privately owned and maintained and will be open to the public most days at noon, except for a period in the Winter when it will be closed. The owners will endeavour to open the Mill/Museum, Bank Holidays, but reserve the right to close at any time without notice if thought necessary to do so.

Visitors

Visitors are very welcome to visit the mill, we ask that you do not take risks, moving machinery can be very dangerous – **remember – you come at your own risk.** Please, if you have children keep them near you and under control, like us we are certain that you would hate to see a child hurt. 20p adults, 10p children charge is made to visitors, but the owners reserve the right to make a charge increase and add any other conditions should it prove to be necessary at a later date.

Parties

Parties can be arranged at times other than normal opening hours, providing such times and dates meet with the approval of the owners. Please write enclosing S.A.E for reply to the owners, giving details of parties, likely size, date of visit, time of visit, etc.

The owners reserve the right to refuse to admit any person or persons they think fit to do so. Children must be in the care of some adult, they will not be admitted otherwise.

Architects for the project were Malcolm Riley Associates of Skipton.



a link with the industrial past



In 1954, the Skipton Castle Estate was broken up and sold.

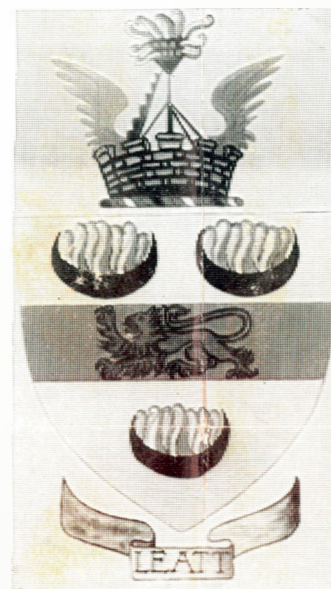
The mill became the property of George Leatt in 1964, he had been connected with the mill some years previous, as had his mother who came to the mill as a young girl to be with the Mattock family who leased the mill from the Castle Estates for many years.

The restoration and repair and the installation of many of the machines was started in 1965. Few items were left in the mill which represented the old days of milling. One item was the larger water wheel, this was rusted and in a very bad state of repair, everything was rusted fast, it seemed very nearly impossible to repair. The challenge was taken up by the first team and in due time the wheel was restored and working once again. The first team were Paul Mackay, Oliver Shone, Ian Horn and the owner, plus son-in-law Robin Addyman, in later times Ernest Mawson and William Green joined the team. At the present time, Oliver Shone, Stanley Blythe and the owner are still working, adding items of interest.

The aim was to restore the mill more or less as it was in the early days and to this end numerous machines of one kind and another, plus things of general interest and more or less connected with the Milling industry have been added to the collection. The aim is that every machine must be able to do the job it was first made to do. All are driven by one of the two water wheels now installed. Visitors will find that some of the machines are not working, it is felt that due to their great age they would not stand the constant turning, they are only therefore used at times convenient to the owners.

The smaller of the two water wheels, which has been added in recent years replacing a much larger wheel dismantled about the year 1900, drives two pairs of mill stones. This is 14 ft. diameter and turns at about 2-3 revolutions per minute. The larger wheel 28 ft., turns much faster at about 40 revs. This drives all the machines on the first floor. From the foot bridge on the first floor it can be seen that a very small amount of water is required to turn the wheels.

The building was in a bad state of repair, much effort and money has gone into the repair and restoration. It will be noted that the old part of the mill is built from solid stones of great size, this can be seen in the Blacksmith's Shop area, this part of the mill is thought to be very old indeed. It is recorded that the last major alteration of the mill took place in 1750, the date can be seen cut into the archway in the mill room on the first floor of the building. This was found when the archway was rediscovered in 1967. It is thought that the part of the mill which leads from the old mill building to the canal was added about 1700-1750 which is about the period that the canal first came to the town.



WE TRUST YOU ENJOY YOUR VISIT TO THE MILL AND TO SKIPTON. REMEMBER, DON'T TOUCH MOVING MACHINES, DO NOT TAKE RISKS. KEEP CHILDREN CLOSE TO YOU AND UNDER CONTROL.

CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL PARTIES

Visitors are welcome, they come at their own risk. Parties must state they accept this condition in writing at the time of booking the party visit.

Due to ever increasing overhead costs to maintain the museum an admission charge will be made.

ADULTS 20p CHILDREN 10p (under 15 years of age)

Party applications should be made in good time before the date of the proposed visit, giving full details of organisation, number of people in the party giving separate number for adults and children.

When making application for party visits:

Please enclose letter accepting that the party comes at its own risk.

Note that parties cannot be accepted before 2.00 pm or later than 7.00 pm.

Party leaders would be expected to treat the attendant's who would be giving their time to act as guides.

Every effort will be made to accept all parties, but the owners reserve the right to refuse applications if they feel that it is right for them to do so.

S.A.E appreciated for reply.

OWNERS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO INCREASE ADMISSION CHARGES.

WE ARE NOW **WHOLEMEAL FLOUR**
MILLING

RESTORATIONS OF THIS KIND
COULD NOT BE ATTEMPTED
WITHOUT HELP FROM OTHER
SOURCES. WE HAVE BEEN
FORTUNATE TO BE ABLE TO
CALL UPON MANY INTEREST-
ED PARTIES FOR HELP AND
ASSISTANCE. WE THANK ALL
THOSE WHO HAVE HELPED,
EITHER BY DONATIONS OF
MACHINERY OR HELP IN ANY
WAY.

TO THESE OUR SIMPLE YET
VERY SINCERE THANKS.