

MILLS AND MILLERS

At the time of the Domesday survey the existence of mills was recorded but as these would have been water mills there would not have been much scope for this type in Middleton or the Wolds area in general.

In Mrs T. Smith's reminiscences of Middleton (sheet no. 30) she refers to three grinding mills in the village, two driven by wind and one by steam, the latter situated in the field behind Mrs Jenkinson's house. The 1855 ordinance survey map shows two mills, one situated near the parish boundary on the North Dalton Road in an area designated as a chalk pit which is now used for grazing. This is described as "the old post mill, corn". The other is located near the Goodmanham Road on the footpath known as "Mill Trod" and simply called "windmill". A photograph exists of a tower mill in Middleton with a male figure in the foreground which probably dates from the early years of the last century which is thought to be of this particular structure.

A post mill was the earliest type of windmill and could be turned round to face the wind by pivoting on a bearing on top of the main post. These posts were massive uprights which were held in position by two or three crosstrees. As they required constant attention post mills were eventually replaced by smock or Tower mills and the design of these reduced the proportion of the structure that had to be turned to face the wind, their sails being mounted on rotating cups. Changes in milling practice however led to the rapid decline of traditional windmills from the late nineteenth century.

It is not known when the mills in Middleton vanished from the scene and it would have been interesting if, as in some places, the tower mill had been left in some form so that a tasteful redeployment could have been made at a later date. The last person listed in connection with milling was in the directory for 1901 when Arthur Dooks was described as "miller and assistant overseer". Later directories however show him as an "agricultural seed merchant".

A lasting reference to the trade was made however with the naming of the street of council houses built after the second world war as Millfield Garth.

MILLERS

A directory for 1822 lists Robert Roantree as a corn miller. The following censuses make reference to persons engaged in the trade:

Census

1841	James Webster,	age 27	South Street
1851	James Roantree	37	
	Wilsh Crowe	23	Corn miller and landed proprietor
	Robert Hillerby	34	Corn miller

1861	John Hill	35	Master miller, North End
	Wilsh Crowe	34	West End Farmer of 60 acres and miller
1871	John Hill	46	North Dalton Road, Master Miller
	George Beals	31	Front Street, Master Miller (born East Dereham, Norfolk)
1881	Joseph Imeson	68	Retired miller, North Dalton
1891	William Storey		Miller (New Primitive Methodist Chapel)

Directories

1872	Joseph Hill	Miller
1889	William Storey	Steam
1901	Arthur Dooks	Miller and Assistant Overseer later described as Agricultural seed agent.

WHITING WORKS

Sheahan and Wellan (1856) state there are quarries of chalk which is burnt into lime and used for building and agricultural purposes. One of these quarries could have been situated on the west side of north Dalton Road near to Parish boundary. Other references go back to the early years of the last century when the Middleton Whiting Company was described as a Whiting, Paris White and Lime manufacturer. The letter heads were styled "The Middleton Whiting Co. Ltd.. The managing director was F. Pillmoor and the director B. L. Pillmoor manufacturers of Paris White, Whiting, Putty Whiting and agricultural lime. In a newspaper article in February 1913 the reporter under the name of Paul Pry states that the present owner is Mr Lotherington but the works were built by a Mr Chance 20 years ago.

Heritage Sheet No. 19 contains a description of an archaeological find in the 1920's.

There exists a photograph of some of the workers and buildings taken many years ago. The cottages were eventually demolished and later the other buildings.