

SOME HOUSES AND OCCUPANTS

"Safe as houses" the phrase rings hollow when one considers the unceremonious demolition of the Hall in about 1960 and Manor Farm in the 1970's, the latter after an unsuccessful struggle for its retention.

Possibly the oldest existing house in Middleton is therefore the chalk built building alongside the pond now at present as "Quackers".

A local authority description which accompanies its listing and the second edition of the Pevsner guide date it as early 18th century and built originally as a block of cottages. A former owner Paul Martin carried out an investigation of its history and found out that its previous uses included a saddle shop and village shop. A previous owner was the widow of a clock maker (Appleton) whose family owned this property and many others in the village for over 100 years. The main garage was a coach house and the extension was a two storey, two roomed cottage which apparently housed a family during the construction of the railway.

The property known as the White House in Station Road also consists of some construction work in chalk.

In pre-enclosure days chalk was the building material of the wolds, often with mud instead of lime mortar and with thatch roofs. Chalk was not an ideal building material because it is porous: water easily soaks into it. In winter this water freezes, expands and cracks the material. For this reason it was common to protect the surface from the weather with a coating of paint or other medium.

At the time of enclosure it was common for local people to be awarded the right to extract chalk from nearby pits for roads and houses.

After enclosure of the open fields in 1805 seven farmsteads were built away from the village. At the east end of the parish is Eastfield Farm and at the west end Kipling House Farm. These were built by the Duke of Devonshire and are substantial buildings with hipped roofs and other farm buildings. They were built with bricks from Newport, the brick and tile making settlement established in the 1770's on the Market Weighton canal. Whilst Horsecold Farm was built about 1810 for the Rector and probably designed by Peter Atkinson Junior of York.

There are two other interesting buildings from this period in Greenfield Lane. One, the present "Joiner's Cottage", originally three cottages has deeds going back to the 1840's.

One building feature of which there are examples in Middleton in properties on Church Hill and Front Street is "brick tumbling". A past exhibition in the Treasure House, Beverley, gave a description of this:-

"Because of the particular weather protection problems of gable walls various special details for example "tumbling in" were developed. On the end walls of gables and sometimes at the base of chimney stacks, the brickwork was laid diagonally to form a series of triangles, which were not only ornamental but also practical. Also as the bricks were laid at right angles to the slope of the roof, this thereby provided a smooth base for the coping.

The use of tumbling is limited to the East Riding and is thought to be a result of an historical Dutch influence in our area."

Another brickwork feature of which there is an example on Station Road near the present takeaway is of "slit breathers" described as "patterns of brickwork which allow ventilation of agricultural buildings such as barns".

The old Dower House opposite the church and Robin Hood pub was once owned by the Rector, the Reverend E. J. Wilson and occupied by his two spinster sisters, Fanny and Mabel. It was sold in 1910 to Doctor Ernest Clements together with St. Andrew's Cottage and was used by him as a doctor's residence and surgery and later by his son Patrick who continued the practice.

In South Street the house name South End was formerly the laundry to The Hall.

North End House in Station Road was occupied in 1901 by Ebenezer Medforth, 1838-1908, a farmer. His daughter Mary Selina, known as May, married F. Lionel Johns a former violinist with the Halle Orchestra who was a light orchestral conductor when seaside orchestras were flourishing. There is a photograph of him, immaculate in white tie and tails when he was a conductor of the orchestra at St Anne's in Lancashire styled "The Idol of St Anne's". He also worked at Bridlington at the time of the 1937 coronation. His wife gave the polished oak desk in the vestry of Middleton church in memory of her mother Clara Simpson Medforth who died in 1938.

The village expanded in the 1970's with new housing in the Greenfield Road area and the Paddocks. There are long term plans for more developments with the old Manor Farm site being considered at present. (2013).