
KIRKWOOD



Continuing through Penistone the River Don flows under Boulder Bridge, an ancient crossing point on the route to Wakefield market or the Court of Pontefract. In 1495 William Wordsworth left 10 pence towards the building of the bridge in his will. Further along the valley the river reaches Kirkwood, in Oxspring, the first occupied building from Church Street, Penistone until 1859 since it was mostly commons.

After the Conquest Oxspring and Birchworth were given to de Lacey followed by Richard de Oxspring in the reign of Henry III (1216–1272). The Oxspring line continued until after the death of William about 1472 when his co-heiresses Ann and Elizabeth shared the inheritance. The Eyres continued for three generations when one Richard sold his share to Godfrey Bosville and the other Richard to Thomas Rockley. The first part was purchased about 1548 and the latter in 1553, by Bosvilles of Gunthwaite.

At this time the land south of the River was known as Roughbirchworth though some of it was called Kirke Wod. Ralph Jesup, Bartholmew Troos, William Burgon and William Waterhouse as tenants were told to make a fence and keep it in repair at the court of Godfrey Bosville in 1575. Field strips can still be seen from the air across from Roughbirchworth to Castle Green which continued in use until enclosures began in 1696.

A brook forms part of the boundary line separating Penistone from Oxspring. Nearby this was the 230 yard long goit from Castle Dam, on an early map called Kirkwood and Hawksworths Dam, as it supplied the water to work the mill wheel at Kirkwood. The Hawksworth family were clothiers and in 1707 Elias paid 19s.9d tax so it may be assumed they were quite wealthy people.

Upper Don Watermills



Castle Dam

In 1770 Elizabeth Hawksworth, formerly wife of Samuel Sadler afterwards wife of Edward Bramhall, died at Shepherds Castle after riding pillion on a horse returning from Penistone Races when it threw both her and her husband. Soon after in 1748 the Bosvilles bought Shepherds Castle. John Hawksworth in 1776 paid £8 for a half year's rent at Whitsuntide to the Bosvilles.

The Hawksworth family continued to live in the area as John Hawksworth voted in 1807, dying in 1815 aged 36 years. In a directory of 1822 Jonathan Hawksworth was mentioned as a scribbling miller as this process was now being done in the factory and not in the home. The Greaves family were residing at Kirkwood as deaths were recorded at Penistone Church 1792-1843, William Greaves being a cloth dresser.

In 1830 the Bosville family put Kirkwood up for sale as they were using Thorpe Hall, Rudston as their main residence and needed more money for renovations and improvements. Consequently in the 1835 and 1837 directories the Booth family were listed at the mill. John Booth of Whitefield, farmer and innkeeper, probably of

the *Travellers Inn*, as these were in the same area, seemed to be involved at this time with other shareholders.

Money was not plentiful amongst the clothiers so it was customary to have a number of people joining together to run the mill.

More changes occurred in 1845 when the Bray family residing in Thurlstone became managers. John Booth, John Dransfield, Samuel James Bray of Edale and Thomas Tomasson of Thurlstone each had a share. The enclosure of 1828 granted them rights of way 12 feet wide for carts and carriages into the highway from Roughbitchworth. Plans were being formulated for the extension of the railway and four acres of woody ground called Kirkwood were purchased by the railway company from the scribbling mill belonging to George Hawkworth of Sheffield, druggist, John Dransfield, solicitor, Penistone, Joshua Pearson, John Booth and Mary his wife, Edward Pearson, book keeper, Samuel James Bray and Thomas Tomasson.

Samuel James Bray converted the premises into a cloth mill with engine house, water wheel, shafting machinery and fixtures with two cottages, by partly pulling down and reconstructing the original building. After Samuel's death in 1858 Henry Bray and William Tomasson Bray continued as owners until Henry's death in 1864.

In 1850 names of influential gentlemen were sought to co-operate with His Royal Highness Prince Albert to assist in the Great Exhibition of the Works Industry which was later opened by Her Majesty the Queen on May 1st, 1851. Amongst those asked for support were Mr T. Tomasson, Mr J.C. Milner, Messrs. John and Henry Rolling and William Bray all connected with local industries.

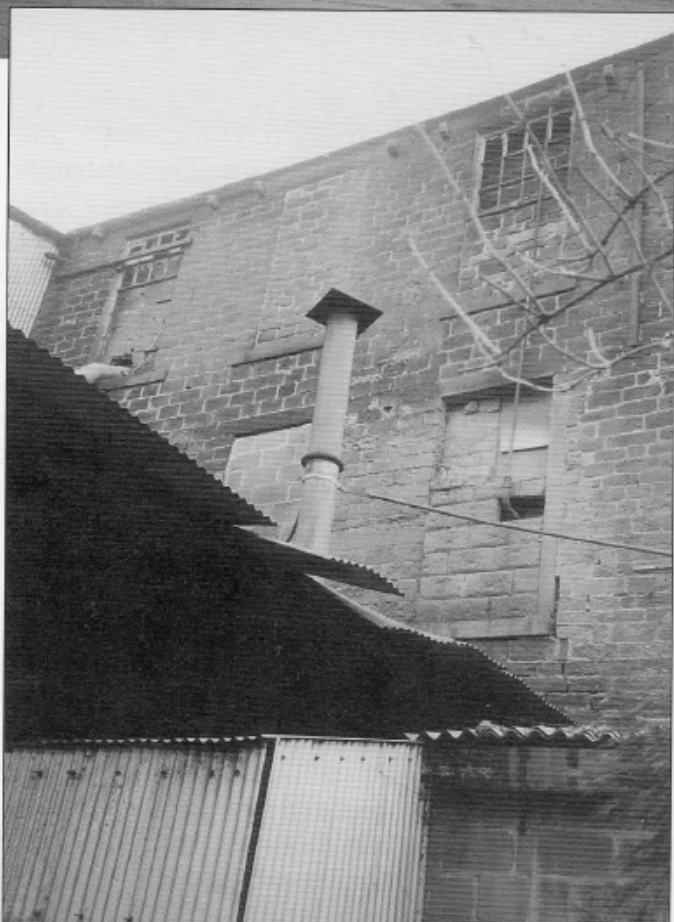
Changes again took place, Mary, Hannah and Eliza Bray of Horbury had one share while Hugh S. Tomasson, son of Thomas, had the second share and George William Craik, colliery proprietor of Barnsley now had the third share of the mill by 1875.

Interesting to note that Miss Mary Bray died in 1894 and Miss Hannah Bray in 1897 both leaving money in their Wills totalling £5,600 for the building of a church in Thurlstone. The site was given by Mr H.S. Tomasson of Plumpton and it was begun in 1904 and consecrated in 1905 at a total cost of £7,500.

Work in the industry declined so the mill was not used for about thirty years when in 1908 Charles Reginald Andrews of Totley, steel merchant, Doctor William Dyson of Sheffield and Charles



*Kirkwood
(oldest
building)*



Hodgkinson of Penistone sold to William Hoyland of Millhouse. At this time there were 2 closes of land 4a.2r.36p and the mill premises as before with two cottages occupied by John Wadsworth and Joseph Brown. Some chemical experiments were thought to have been executed by the Hoyland family who made umbrellas at their factory in Millhouse.

After the death of Benjamin Goldthorpe of Bullhouse Mill in 1938, his son Arnold decided to leave the family business and start up on his own. George Hoyland now owner of Kirkwood Mill gave him permission to use the premises as a Corn Mill. An agreement was finalised in 1949 between John Clement Hoyland, Fred Potter solicitor, Henry Redfern secretary, Arnold Goldthorpe and Jessie Goldthorpe his wife.

The stone built mill, three storeys high with two cottages and outbuildings, land and gardens 4a.3r.16p numbers 225-230 on Ordnance map 1893, together with the shafting, water wheel of iron and other metal affixed, subject to the reservation of mines and minerals reserved by the enclosure act and later coal acts was transferred for use by A. Goldthorpe.

At this time the goit was still flowing from the reservoir at Castle Dam and the shafting water wheel of iron 32 feet in diameter was the second largest in Yorkshire, the largest being at Kirkburton. Since the wheel was no longer required it was dismantled by a



Arnold Goldthorpe

Upper Don Watermills

Silkstone firm and the goit was filled in by refuse from Browns. Improvements were made to provide a good access from the main road and the property was fenced in. Two Crossley Diesel engines were then installed.

Kirkwood then became a corn mill in 1939 and by 1940 Arnold Goldthorpe was advertising in the *John Woods Penistone Almanack* as sole agent for Silcocks and could be contacted by telephone. He offered cakes, poultry food and pig meals with rations mixed to order, also dog foods. Farmers could bring their corn for rolling and grinding after threshing at home to remove the chaff and straw.

Ben the youngest son of Arnold joined the business on leaving school and travelled to the farms seeking orders first on a motorbike then with Herbert Hill as driver while he acquired his own licence to drive. Meantime his brother Hugh was in the Navy and his other brother John was in the Air Force during the War 1939-45. John continued for a few years after the end of the war taking part in a number of important missions before coming back to the business to work at the mill.

The business, but not the premises, was bought from the Hinchliff brothers Charles Harold and Thomas Henry of Nether Mill. Charles Harold Hinchliff introduced the Goldthorpes to the farmers who had been his regular customers.

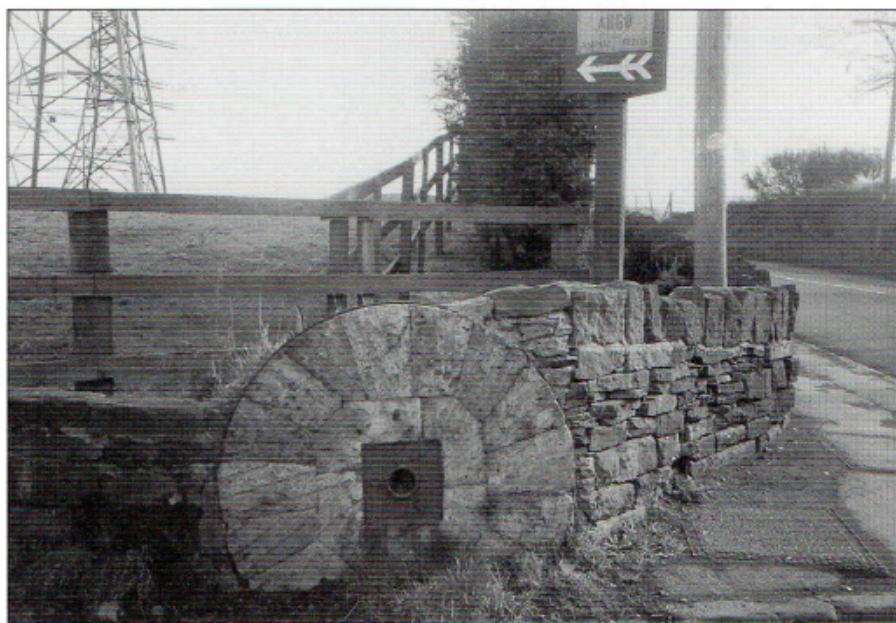
In the mid-fifties the Farmers Trading Society at Hornthwaite, Thurlstone, ceased trading and the premises were purchased and used for drying off corn in the kiln. The top floor housed 1500 battery hens cared for by Garside Brooks of Hornthwaite Farm. Besides this the Penistone Young Farmers, of which Ben was a founder member, starting in 1944, catering for ages 12 to 26 years, used one floor for meetings. He later became President holding office for 25 years and was made Honorary Life Member in 1995. Hornthwaite was later sold and used by the Council as a depot.

Arnold Goldthorpe retired in 1956 and the Company changed its name to 'A. Goldthorpe & Sons Ltd'. One customer for flour was Charles Hitchen, baker, who first began as delivery boy for Beevers on the 'Town', Thurlstone, then opened his own bake house in 1934 in conjunction with his brother Arnold. For a few years they also had a shop in Penistone High Street till the war intervened. After it was over business continued first in Manchester Road, Thurlstone then at the Junction Inn 1947 until 1971.

Some of the lorry drivers were Herbert Hill who was presented with a gold watch on retirement, Edgar Ford, Singleton, Tolladay and J. Wadsworth. Percy Helliwell was a mixer and Jim Watts general handyman.

In 1970 the name changed to 'Argo Feeds' using the first two letters from Arnold and Goldthorpe. Expanding the business in 1972 as a new venture, a subsidiary branch at Holmfirth was included. This was Bamforth's turkey and chicken farm called 'Rosenfood Farms Ltd.' Although this was successful for a number of years unfortunately the EEC new regulations meant expensive alterations, consequently it was decided to sell it.

About this time James son of Ben joined the company having taken his articles in Chartered Accountancy and gained experience at John Bedford Tools as assistant accountant. He inaugurated a new joint company in 1975 called 'Angram Ltd.' This had a registered office at Kirkwood and a trading office at York, buying hard grain from Yorkshire and Lincolnshire for resale. Later Woodend Mill was purchased at Mossley in Lancashire for a similar purpose.



Argo

Upper Don Watermills

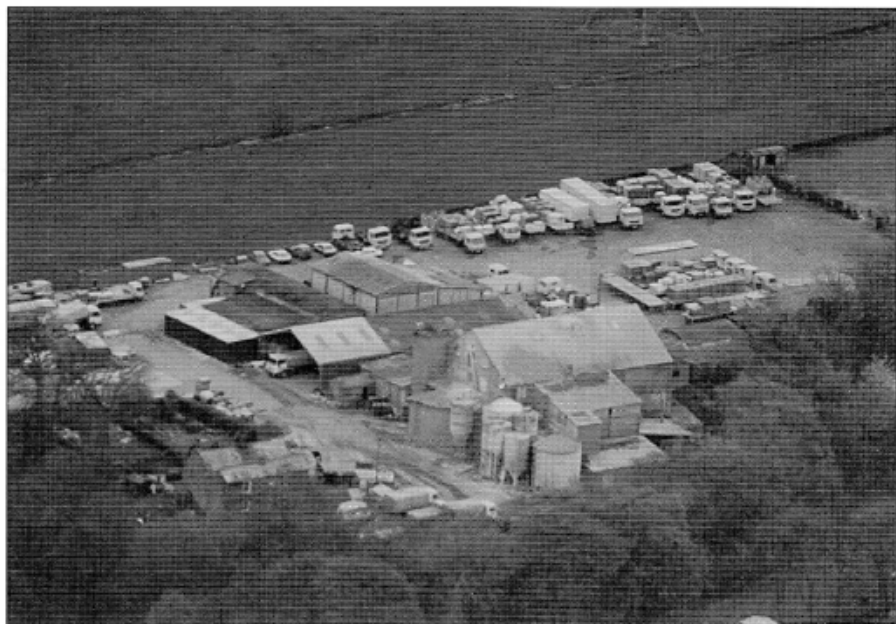
Another project was added in 1976 named 'Argo Haulage Penistone Ltd.' using 22 vehicles in agriculture and industry employing 60 people. The three brothers Hugh, John and Ben retired at different times during the 1980s leaving James in charge.

In 1997 a new brick office was built and it was found that there was water remaining in the old goit underneath which had to be pumped out and pipes installed to direct any residue into the stream.

About a hundred vehicles are involved in one way or another, many of them built to special specifications because of the weight they carry and variety of gradients they have to contend with. It will be one of the busiest organisations in the district.



John, Ben and Hugh Goldthorpe



Kirkwood

