



The Beverley Barge Preservation Society

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BILL'S BLOG 5

BECKSIDE - MY KIND OF PLACE

From 1933 onwards, Beckside, Potter Hill and the adjacent areas of Flemingate, West Terrace, Brougham Row, Holme Church Lane, Figham Pastures, Barmston Drain, River Hull and the Beck became a part of my life and fascinated me with its characters, its industry and the way of life in a tiny tight knit community.

The industry along Beverley Beck included Hodgson's Tannery warehouses, storing all raw materials for the Tannery in Flemingate, Barkers & Lee Smith Cattle Feed Mill making all manner of feedstuffs for farm animals transported by horse and cart, and then lorries all around Yorkshire, Cumbria, Northumberland and Scotland.

Beverley Gas Works used coal transported by barge to burn and make gas for heating and lighting the town's gas lights. Cinders and coal tar were also made from the gas coal. Coal Merchants, of which there were many trading on the banks of the Beck, supplied each and every household in Beverley with domestic coal. Fred Birch, Ernie Otter, Arthur Freeman and Fred Bell were just some of the merchants involved with the supply of coal and coke.

The Beck also had a shipbuilding and repair yard at the eastern end with dry docking. Hunter Brothers operated the yard and made many lifeboats for the trawlers that were built at the Grovehill Road, River Hull site of Joseph Scarr's Shipbuilders later to become Cook Welton And Gemmell.

Beckside also had a Whiting Works that used crushed chalk from quarries on Queensgate to make white wash used in all houses in the early 1900s

The Beverley Beck provided a very lucrative living for the Keel and Sloop Barge Owners and the carting agents who carried goods from the barges to the many industries Beverley once supported. Horse and carts were in abundance in the 1930-40s; then came the internal combustion engine and lorries.

Barkers and Lee Smith were the first to have a steam driven Scammell truck which my uncle drove. Ernest William Walker was his name.

Beckside was well served with all manner of shops and services, so no residents of the area had to venture into the town centre. There were Grocers, Greengrocers, Butchers and Bakers; A Post Office, 7 Pubs, a Fried Fish Shop, Fish Monger, Cobblers, Barbers, Undertakers, Horse dealers, Blacksmiths and an Outfitters (Ladies & Gents). There was also a Toyshop, Fellmongers, Ice cream Maker and Garages selling Petrol, Paraffin, Bicycles, Accumulators For Wireless Sets plus a Reading Room and a Lodging House.

In addition to all this industry and commerce the countryside was never far away and once past all the moored barges on the Beck, the rural Figham Pastures offered walkers a pleasant peaceful country walk along the banks of the River Hull and beyond.