

## Stories from the Archives. Hope in the 1850s

### 22. Edale Road – Town Head

At the end of Edale Road is a cluster of cottages known as Townhead. Croft Head, the first of these, was probably built in the late 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century. It was a farm of 48 acres owned by the Earl of Newburgh (of Hassop Hall). The tythe map allotment shows George Bocking as tenant. He was at this time landlord of the Old Hall hotel and seems to have lived there with his family rather than at Croft Head. He describes himself as an innkeeper and coach proprietor so perhaps Croft Head is where he kept the horses and coach for the transport business. There were two farm servants as part of the hotel establishment who may well have worked here.



I am indebted to Di Curtis for the following information on the property now known as Townhead Cottage. It was originally called Townhead Farm and was also owned by the Earl of Newburgh. It is one of the older houses in the village, probably dating to the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. The building consisted of a house and attached barn and fits the description of a Derbyshire Croft and Toft. The house roof was supported by two cruck trusses, one of which has been truncated during the many alterations

which have since taken place. The land holding consisted of approximately 4.5 acres and is still intact today.

The Ashton family lived there around this time. We cannot say with certainty, but it was either George Ashton, an agricultural labourer and his family, or Nathan Ashton, a gardener. George Ashton is described as a water bailiff in the 1861 census and his memorial in Hope churchyard records that he was “Head keeper of Peak Forest Angling club for 40 years.”

The Hall family who also live at Townhead have been associated with Hope in written records since at least 1585, when Thomas Hall’s name appears in the muster book taken at the time of the Spanish Armada. Thomas and Robert Hall were local volunteers during the Napoleonic wars. In more peaceful times the family are recorded regularly in the Parish Records during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century as churchwardens and charity trustees. In the 1851 census their home was occupied by Thomas Hall, who farmed 55 acres with help from his elder brother, Micah and nephew, George. His sister Hannah kept house for them helped by niece Harriet and Mary Frith.

*Sources: Di Curtis – “Townhead Cottage”. 1847 Tythe allotment, 1851 Census return.*

*Ann Price.*