

Hope in the 1850s

7. The Middleton farmhouse

In 1851 Middleton's farmhouse stood squarely in its farmyard opposite the end of Pindale Road. The family were one of the larger land holders in the village, farming 175 acres. In 1850 Robert Middleton had inherited the land and property after the death of his father William two years earlier. He lived in the house with his wife Elizabeth and their children. John, aged 13, was at home, but Mary, Elizabeth and Alfred were all at school. We know the farmhouse today as "Spar" grocers. The Indian restaurant and Valley Ramblers were all farm buildings around the farmyard. There was a barn down Pindale Road and the family owned or rented property in Edale Road.



The farmhouse was one of the older buildings in the village. It had a cellar, now filled in, and people may remember the old oak beams and the hooks for hanging meat and other goods, now hidden by later renovations

The photograph shows the farm as it would have looked in the late 1800s. The property that now houses "Hope Deli", "Eighteen Bikes" and the café was not built until after 1906 when the Middleton family sold up. At that time the farmhouse was bought by A.F. Hancock, the grocer and David Bramwell from Tideswell bought the farmyard and buildings and built a house and shop in the space.

Opposite the farmhouse was a set of lock up shops on the edge of the churchyard known as "the Shambles." One of them was a butcher's shop run by Joseph Watson, the "Shambles" being the traditional name for an area where butchers operated. John Proctor ran his saddlery business from another of the shops. Sarah Bolsover was a dressmaker and the other resident was Abraham Bolsover who was described as a former agricultural labourer and now a pauper. Behind the shops ran a footpath to a stile in the corner opposite the Woodroffe Arms.

The buildings built around the churchyard have long gone, demolished to make more room in the graveyard. The Shambles do not appear on the 1880 OS map although the footpath is still shown. Other houses round the graveyard on School Lane are marked on the 1898 OS map but not after that.

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Sources: 1851 Census Returns

Photograph from Edwin Chapman Collection, Hope Historical Society Archive