



Gayle Mill, Mill Lane, Gayle, Hawes, North Yorkshire DL8 3RZ

PRESS RELEASE

THE GAYLE MILL STORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 26 May 2011

Over 170 years ago there was a proposal to turn Gayle Mill near Hawes into a school. A letter dated July 1840 from John Routh, son of Oswald Routh, one of the owners at the time, speculated about obtaining a grant of £50 (around £2200 today) for the conversion of the Mill. Had this happened, Gayle Mill would have had a very different history to the one visitors learn about today.

This letter and other documentary evidence revealing more about Gayle Mill's history were discovered by Angela Leathley who undertook a research project, part funded by the Friends of Gayle Mill and Gayle Mill Trust. The purpose of the research was to seek documentary evidence and supporting information on the history of Gayle Mill and the people involved which could then be incorporated into the Gayle Mill Story.

It has also been confirmed that the bell, now at Hawes Primary School, was once at Gayle Mill where it announced the start and end of the working day in the 1840s, when many local people will have been employed at the Mill.

Conclusive evidence also confirms that the Mill was occupied as a domestic dwelling in the mid to late 1800s. The 1871 census recorded Thomas Lambert, his wife and their four children were living at the Mill. It is also known that by 1881 he had moved to West End, Gayle with a new wife, and also had built Providence Steam Sawmill on Gayle Lane, which competed directly with the woodworking activities at Gayle Mill.

“This research has enabled us to lay some myths and misconceptions to rest, but it has also exposed new areas where data and hard information are lacking” said William Lambert, Chairman of the Gayle Mill Trust. “We would welcome contributions from anyone who can help us with further information about the history of Gayle Mill” he added.

These and other nuggets of information have contributed valuable data to the history of the mill at Gayle. Its changing fortunes over two centuries have been incorporated into a new edition of “The Gayle Mill Story” written by Angela Leathley. The new publication gives a vivid account of the people who influenced the Mill, how it adapted to the developing technology of the time, and the role it played in providing work in Upper Wensleydale.

The new guide book has been launched for the start of Gayle Mill's 2011 visitor season and can also be obtained from Gayle Mill or Dales Countryside Museum in Hawes.

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