

# A Brief History of Crayke

## The Roman Period

It is speculated by some antiquarians<sup>1, 2</sup> that a Roman watchtower was situated on Crayke hill in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, though the Roman Itineraries or geographers make no mention of the place. An ancient track way of the Brigantes, from Teesmouth to York (Eboracum), passed by close to Crayke. The Royal Society of Antiquaries map of Roman roads in Yorkshire shows a road from York passing near or through Crayke, across Hambledon to the mouth of the Tees, and the Roman road from Aldborough (Isurium) to Malton (Camulodunum) via Appleton and Barton-le-Street would have passed close by. The first firm evidence<sup>3</sup> for a Roman settlement seems to be the discovery of fragments of Roman pottery (assigned to AD 370-395) and glass during the excavation of a tennis court on the hillside in 1937 at the home of Mr E M Rulter (now Crayke Hall). Then more recently, evidence of a significant Romano-British settlement was uncovered to the south of the present sports field when the land was being trenched to lay an underground gas pipe. As reported in the British Archaeology magazine<sup>4</sup>, a large stone building of Romano-British date was found, along with a cluster of roundhouses, signs of metalworking and a kiln. The building, measuring over 30 metres by 10 metres, included a portico. It lies near a spring and could perhaps have been a native temple.

## The Saxon, Viking and Norman Periods

It is recorded that Cuthbert, a monk and later Bishop at Lindesfarne (c. 634-687), was so much admired by Ecgfrid, the Saxon king of Northumbria, that he added greatly to the possessions of his church. Among his donations was the vill of Crayke (Saxon ‘Creca’) in 685, together with all the surrounding land within a circuit of 3 miles<sup>5</sup>, i.e. c. ½ mile radius from the hilltop. It seems that Crayke was intended to be a resting place for the Bishop Cuthbert on his frequent journeys between Lindesfarne and York.

Though there is no archaeological evidence to support it, nor any support from the writings of his contemporary, Bede (c.673-735, a prolific writer who also journeyed between Jarrow, Lindesfarne and York), some sources speculate that Cuthbert founded a

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<sup>1</sup> *Vallis Eboracensis*, comprising the history and antiquities of Easingwold and its neighbourhood by Thomas Gill, 1852. Copies in the university libraries of both Durham and York, in York Minster library and York public library history collection. Contains a 20-page article on Crayke contributed by the then rector, Edward Churton.

<sup>2</sup> *York and the North Riding*, by C Whellan & Co., 1859.

<sup>3</sup> *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, Vol.34, 1939. Contains an article by T Sheppard on ‘Viking and other relics at Crayke’ which records the findings in 1937 when levelling the land for a new tennis court at the home of Mr E M Rulter (now Crayke Hall).

<sup>4</sup> *British Archaeology*, Issue 68, December 2002; web site <http://www.britarch.ac.uk/ba/ba68/news.shtml>.

<sup>5</sup> *Registrum Palatinum Dunelmense*, V.I. 1873. Chronicles and memorials from the Middle Ages. Durham University archives.

monastery on Crayke hill which continued for more than 200 years.<sup>6, 7, 8, 9</sup> This story has a distinctly mythical air about it, though the remoteness of Crayke at that time, situated deep in the ancient forest of Galtres, could perhaps lend some plausibility. Alcuin, then a monk in York, testified to this remoteness when he wrote of an anchorite (hermit) named Etha who ‘led an angelical life’ dwelling ‘on a lonely hill’ in the ‘wilderness’ of the deep forest<sup>10</sup>. The hermit Etha, according to much later writings of Simeon of Durham<sup>6</sup>, died at Crayke in 767 and it is perhaps unlikely that a man living in the close proximity of a monastery at that time would qualify as a hermit. Moreover, and somewhat confusingly, Simeon (c. 1060 – 1140) also tells that a party of monks fleeing from the Viking invaders with St Cuthbert’s body was given hospitality by Abbot Geve at this monastery for 4 months in the year 883. The Vikings, who occupied York in 867 and made a practice of destroying all religious establishments, seem unlikely to have left a monastery only 12 miles or so outside York unmolested. Furthermore, it is recorded that Ella, another of the Saxon kings of Northumbria, launched an abortive attack on the Vikings occupying York from Crayke some few years earlier than St Cuthbert’s body was said to have rested there in 883 and it seems unlikely that the place would have remained undiscovered in these circumstances<sup>10</sup>. These were turbulent times, and Simeon’s reference to the monastery - in an account written some 200 years or so after the events - appears to be highly speculative.

The Saxons recovered control of Northumbria finally in 948 when the last Danish king Eric was defeated at the battle of Castleford by the Saxon king Eadred<sup>1</sup>. However, a Danish earl named Thured<sup>1</sup> appears to have remained in control of at least part of Crayke in the year 990, though it had reverted entirely to the Saxon Bishops of Durham (Cuthbert’s successors) by the time of Domesday (1086)<sup>11</sup>.

There certainly was no monastery at Crayke at the time of Domesday, and the writer of the respected Victoria History was highly sceptical about its existence<sup>12</sup>. Knowles and Hadcock<sup>13</sup> also make no mention of a monastery at Crayke, though they and others<sup>7, 14, 15</sup> do present evidence for there having been a hospital or hospice there, St Mary de Pratis, at the much later date of 1228.

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<sup>6</sup> *Symeonis Dunelmensis*. Simeon of Durham, being a collection of writings of Simeon (c. 1060-1140), a monk at the Jarrow monastery, including a history of the kings of the Angles and Danes, a history of St Cuthbert, etc., all in Latin but with an English preface. Editions by the Surtees Society, 1867, and by HMSO 1885 and 1965 held in the Minster Library, York.

<sup>7</sup> *Lawton’s Collecto*, 1842. Minster Library and Borthwick Institute.

<sup>8</sup> *Ecclesiastical History of Yorkshire*, 1758. Minster Library.

<sup>9</sup> *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, Vol.16, 1802. Contains article by Canon Fowler entitled ‘The Early History of Crayke’. Minster Library.

<sup>10</sup> *The Early English Church*, by Edward Churton, 1858. York University library.

<sup>11</sup> *Domesday Book*, 1086

<sup>12</sup> *Victoria History of Yorkshire, North Riding*. Copies held in York Public Library, York University Library and the Borthwick Institute.

<sup>13</sup> *Medieval Religious Houses*, by D Knowles and R N Hadcock, 1953. Borthwick Institute.

<sup>14</sup> *Historia Ecclesiae Dunelmensis*, Simeon of Durham. Bedford’s edition, 1732. Durham University Archives.

<sup>15</sup> *History of Durham*, by Hutchinson, c. 1790. Durham University Archives.

## The Church of St Cuthbert in Crayke

After his death on Farne Island in March 687, his monks took Bishop Cuthbert's body back to Lindesfarne where it probably was embalmed, since it was reported to exist in an undecayed state even as late as Henry VIII's reign<sup>16</sup>. It was this uncorrupt state of Cuthbert's long-dead body that convinced the monks of his saintliness, though during his lifetime many miracles of healing also had been attributed to him. When the Danes repeatedly invaded Lindesfarne, between 793 and 875, the monks finally fled the island, taking with them the body of Cuthbert with their Gospels and relics of some other Northumbrian saints. Simeon<sup>6</sup> wrote that 'wherever the body of the saint rested during the seven years of his wanderings (c. 876-883) ... a church or chapel was built and dedicated to him.' It seems possible then, that the foundation of a church at Crayke could be dated to the time of the events related above, when the party of Cuthbert's monks were said (again by Simeon) to have rested at Crayke in 883, though this conclusion must be at least as speculative as the events themselves.

Archaeological support for the possible existence of a monastery or church on the Crayke hill in pre-Norman times, i.e. pre-1066, is scarce and comes only from the finding of the arm of a sandstone Saxon cross bearing decorative detail characteristic of the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century<sup>3</sup>. The lack of weathering of this stone suggested that the cross was broken soon after it was made – perhaps by Viking invaders? An earlier (7<sup>th</sup> century, the lifetime of Cuthbert) small Saxon pendant in the form of an openwork Maltese cross set in a bronze ring of c. 1 ¾ in. diameter was found in the same location, perhaps suggesting a stable Christian settlement in Crayke at that time. A number of ironwork Viking relics, including a sword from the 8<sup>th</sup> century, also were found at this same site, as was a well-characterised pottery kiln with lots of shards from the 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Much of the present church building dates from around 1490<sup>17</sup> and the parish registers exist from 1558<sup>18</sup>. The north aisle was added in 1863 and the original roof timbers replaced. Two stone figures from the late 16<sup>th</sup> century and placed close to the south wall near the reading desk are believed to be effigies of Sir John Gibson and his wife Margaret Woodhall who died around 1584<sup>18</sup>. The pulpit and sounding board are dated 1637 and the pews and font cover are from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The font may be as old as the church itself but the stained glass was not installed until 1848 when most of the external gargoyle and stone finials were renewed and the chancel was reseated in oak. Two of the three bells are inscribed with the dates 1669 and 1759.

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<sup>16</sup> *The Life and Death of St Cuthbert*, by C J Stranks, SPCK, 1964. In pamphlet form, Durham Cathedral.

<sup>17</sup> *St Cuthbert's Church (1490)*. Expenditure records since 1840, containing entries for 1848, 1863, 1864. Borthwick Institute.

<sup>18</sup> *Crayke Parish Registers*, since 1558. Held by the rector, the Revd K Nelson, in 1971. 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Bishops' transcripts held in Durham.

## Crayke Castle

The foundation of the castle is of uncertain date. Some have assigned it to Bishop Pudsey (1153-1195)<sup>1</sup>, others to Bishop Bek (1283-1310) or Kellow (1311-1316)<sup>19, 20</sup>, though it is recorded<sup>21</sup> that Bishop Pudsey spent a night at the castle in 1195 where he suffered from food poisoning which led to his death the following day in Howden. As it is known<sup>5</sup> that the land on and around Crayke hill was gifted to Bishop Cuthbert by the King of Northumbria in 685, it seems likely that the Saxon Bishops of Durham would have had a hall or country house of some kind, presumably run by monks from Lindesfarne or Jarrow, on the hill before the time of the Norman Conquest<sup>2</sup>, though no firm archival or archaeological evidence of this has been found. The earliest Norman castle probably was of timber construction and of the motte-and-bailey design, later rebuilt in stone. Most of the castle had fallen into a ruinous state by the early 16<sup>th</sup> century<sup>20</sup> and little remains of it today. The present castle is of 15<sup>th</sup> century construction, built by Bishop Neville around 1450 with stone quarried from Brandsby and Yearsley. The now ruinous remains of the ‘New Tower’, probably of late 15<sup>th</sup> century construction, stand to the north east of the castle.

It is recorded that King Edward III lodged at the Norman castle on 19 October 1345<sup>1, 2</sup> and that King John (in 1209, 1210 and 1211), Henry III (in 1227), Edward I (in 1292) and Edward II (in 1316) all stayed there<sup>12</sup>. The Bishops of Durham maintained a deer park around the castle up to the time of King James I (1603-1625). There is no record of any skirmish in Crayke during the civil wars (1642-1651), though a couple of canon balls have been found in the area. As for ‘The Grand Old Duke of York’, this well-known nursery rhyme refers to an incident in the Battle of Wakefield on December 30, 1460, during the Wars of the Roses, when Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York and claimant to the English throne, was defeated by the Lancastrian army near his hilltop castle at Sandal, 2 miles south of Wakefield - a long way from Crayke!

The ruinous old castle on Crayke hill was ordered by Parliament to be destroyed in 1646 and in 1648 the manor of Crayke was sold by the Puritan Parliament to William Allenson, a former Lord Mayor of York<sup>22</sup> and then member of Parliament for York. Allenson’s son Charles repaired and restored the 15<sup>th</sup> century Great Chamber and this is essentially all that remains of the castle today. The manor reverted to the see of Durham in c. 1667 but was leased and sub-leased variously until the last of the Bishop Princes, Van Mildert<sup>20</sup>, procured an Act of Parliament enabling him to sell it to private ownership in 1827<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> *Associated Architectural Societies’ Reports and Papers*, 1869. Containing an article by Canon Raine on Crayke Castle. Mr T M Higham, decd., formerly of Crayke Castle.

<sup>20</sup> *The North Riding of Yorkshire*, by J E Morris, 1904. Minster Library.

<sup>21</sup> *Historia Dunelmensis*, Gaufr. de Coldingham. Durham University.

<sup>22</sup> *Parliamentary Survey of the Manor of Crayke*, 1647. Detailed description and valuation of houses and land, including a copy of the 1595 rental. Durham University.

In 1780 the castle was used as a farmhouse<sup>15</sup>; the main ground-level room had an earth floor and probably was used as the kitchen, with the vaulted undercroft, originally a store room set below an earlier kitchen of which nothing remains, serving as a cattle shed. The original entrance to the main hall of the castle, which took up most of the first floor and was warmed by two large fireplaces set into the west and south walls, was at the eastern end of the north side of the building and now is blocked up. The floor above had a similar entrance, the two probably being connected originally by an external wooden staircase. The smaller entrance to the ground floor was originally on the east side, now partly blocked to form a window. The internal staircase linking the ground and first floors and the sub-division of the floors into separate rooms were later, probably Victorian, additions, as was the wing built on the north east side. Water for the castle had to be carried or pumped up from the village well until the installation of a mains supply between the two world wars. The castle was used as a billet for the Women's Land Army during the second war.

To the north-west of the castle, the first hill on the road to Oulston is marked on OS maps as Gallows Hill. Presumably this was the site of an executioner's gallows at some time and probably is associated with some part of the history of the castle, though no records have been found.

## Rectory and Rectors

As recorded above, the church has been dated to 1490, but the priest's house is of uncertain origin. The lower part of the house, now The Old Rectory, is built with thick stone walls which may have come from the ruins of the castle located nearby. Brief descriptions are found in the Glebe Terriers<sup>23</sup> which date back to 1663 and an earlier Parliamentary Survey<sup>22</sup> of 1647 which states that 'the parson hath a handsome house in good repair'. In spite of the predominantly Georgian character of the present house then, it appears to date back at least to the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and possibly earlier.

In 1647 the rectory had 'one stable, one hayloft, and one barn or laith; one garden and a croft; two closes of land called Carleygates, containing 20 acres or thereabouts; and one close or parcel of ground called the Shaire, containing 25 acres or thereabouts'. The Carleygates were on either side of the Oulston road just outside Crayke, beyond Gallows Hill. The Parson's Shaire was off the Brandsby road just beyond Wyndham Hall (now known as Crayke Manor) and included a barn marked as Crayke Glebe on the Ordnance Survey map and accessible today by a public footpath. The locations of the rectory house and land are given in detail in the 1716 Glebe Terrier<sup>23</sup>.

The rector in 1716 was John Turner who was born in Crayke in 1659<sup>18</sup>. His predecessor was Luke Mawbarne (rector 1665-1668). The Diocese Book of 1793 records that there were then 90 houses in Crayke, all occupied by farmers and labourers except John

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<sup>23</sup> *Terriers of the Rectory House and Glebe, Crayke*. For 1663, 1716, 1727, 1849, 1861 and 1865 held in the Borthwick Institute, York, and for 1788 and 1792 in the Dept of Palaeography, University of Durham.

Bowman Esq. and the rector Thomas Bowman<sup>24</sup>. The records of the parish tithes include such items as ‘Every house pays a hen at Christmas or else sixpence’ and ‘Everyone pays 2d for his or her Easter offering who then receives ye Blessed Sacrament of ye Lord’s Supper’. The Tithe Commutation Act of 1836 formally replaced tithes with a rent charge to be paid to landowners, including the church; these were converted by the Tithe Act of 1936 to annuities to be paid to the state, were transferred to the Inland Revenue in 1960 and finally ended by the Finance Act of 1977.

Detailed Accounts of expenditure on alterations to the rectory house in 1803-6, organised by the outgoing rector Robert Gray (who then became Bishop of Bristol) for his successor Powell Colchester Guise, show how £717-10s (*c.* £42,000 in today’s money)<sup>25</sup> was spent on improving the house. The builder was John Cobb and the work, perhaps inspired by the multi-storey hall of the neighbouring castle, included adding a 3<sup>rd</sup> storey to the house. In 1820 Guise had an underground reservoir built to contain around 6,000 gallons of water, its location being ‘in a direct line from the butler’s pantry window, about 5 yards from the back kitchen wall and 2 yards from the great tree’<sup>26</sup>. He laid wooden pipes to carry water from the church roof to this reservoir in March 1824 and increased its capacity to 11,196 gallons in June 1826. When the wooden pipes rotted they were replaced by tile ones in October 1834. The reservoir ensured a supply of soft water to supplement that drawn from the deep well located at the north-west corner of the house. Now it has been adapted to form a small swimming pool on the west side of The Old Rectory.

The Revd P C Guise died in 1835 and was succeeded by Edward Churton, then aged 35 and rector of Monks Eleigh in Suffolk<sup>27</sup>. Churton soon had trouble with the house. Its location on the crest of the hill exposes it directly to the prevailing south-westerly winds and heavy gales in 1836 blew away the zinc water spouts on the south and west sides and damaged the poorly built bow windows carried up the whole south side. Churton replaced the spouts with wooden ones in March 1836 and restored the bow windows with new cementing, spending £60 (*c.* £4,200 today)<sup>25</sup> on these repairs to the house and another £25 (*c.* £1,750 today) on building a porch to the north door, ‘very important to the internal warmth of the house’. However, his troubles were far from over. A ‘great storm’ in January of 1839 did so much damage to the house that Churton determined to take down the ill-advised and vulnerable 3<sup>rd</sup> storey, to build an equivalent for it to the west of the main building, and to rebuild the bow windows in a more substantial form. He also had the whole of the south and west sides of the house rendered with Roman cement to protect them from the weather. This major building modification was completed at a cost of *c.* £500 (*c.* £31,500 today) in the summer of 1839 with financial support from friends: the Venerable John James Watson, archdeacon of St Alban’s and

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<sup>24</sup> *Diocese Book of 1793*. Contains a description of the parish of Craike in some detail. Durham

<sup>25</sup> *How much is that worth today?* See web site <http://eh.net/hmit/ppowerbp/>

<sup>26</sup> *Gilbert’s Act of 1776: Queen Anne’s Bounty*. An account of disbursements for the repair of the Rectory of Craike, 1803-6; expenditure £717-10s. Durham University archives.

<sup>27</sup> *Churton’s Charges, etc.* A collection of Edward Churton’s sermons, letters, etc, including a short memoir of him and his life, 1800-... York Minster Library.

former rector of Hackney where Churton was his curate in 1831-35 and married his daughter Caroline in 1834, and Joshua Watson Esq. of Park Street, Westminster<sup>27</sup>.

In 1840 the Crayke living was worth £900 a year (around £57,000 today)<sup>25</sup> to Churton who also had private means<sup>28</sup>. He was made Archdeacon of Cleveland in 1846 and later recruited William Inge, then a Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford, to come to live in Crayke and tutor his sons and his nephew. Inge took holy orders, became Churton's curate in 1854 and married his daughter, Susan Mary, in 1859. A substantial wing was added to the curate's house, known as Crayke Cottage, in 1868; this is located lower on the hill, facing the village green. Three of Churton's sons won open scholarships to Eton, testifying to the tutorial abilities of William Inge who remained Churton's curate until 1874 when he moved away to Alrewas near Burton-on-Trent. In 1860 Inge's son William Ralph was born, later to become a distinguished and scholarly Dean of St Paul's Cathedral in London. Dean W R Inge spent the first 14 years of his life in Crayke and later wrote warmly of this time, recalling as one of his earliest memories the view of York Minster 12 miles away from the south-facing windows of the rectory, 'seeming like a ship at sea on the plain of York'. After one term in a prep school (Mr Perry's in Slough) the young Inge went on to Eton and Oxford. The eldest of Churton's sons, also named William Ralph, was a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, from 1859 to 1899 and was Godfather to Inge (his 'uncle Willy'). Dean Inge wrote of the Churtons as being academically distinguished, 'excellent scholars and notable divines'<sup>28</sup>.

The average number of people attending Crayke church services in 1865 was around 200, with some 30 or so of these being communicants<sup>29</sup> (this compares with 50 reported for 1793)<sup>24</sup>. Churton stated that the total church attendance for a typical Sunday in 1865 was 300, i.e. more than half the total population of the village which at that time was around 500. He commented on 'some cases of irreligion and immorality' which were 'I trust, not on the increase.'

Edward Churton died aged 74 years in 1874 and is buried with his wife Caroline in Crayke churchyard. During his 39 years as rector he was responsible for reseating the chancel of the church in oak, scraping the walls, erecting a raredos behind the alter and installing new stained glass windows in 1848 at a cost of £490 (*c.* £37,000 in today's money)<sup>25</sup>, building a new north aisle, making roof repairs, a new seating arrangement and a new floor in 1863 at a total cost of £1156 (*c.* £75,500 today). He also added a new piece of land to the north of the churchyard in 1864. It was Churton who, together with Dr Henry Yates Whytehead, sponsored the building of the first village school house in 1846. Whytehead lived in the house to the east of the church (now Crayke Hall), built by John Bowman who died aged 82 in 1799. The Illustrated London News of 1 Feb. 1846 pictured and described the school<sup>30</sup>; this became the Village Hall for some 20 years after

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<sup>28</sup> *Dean Inge, a biography*, by Adam Fox, 1960. York City Library.

<sup>29</sup> *1865 Rector's report for the visitation by the Archbishop of York*. A detailed account of the state of the church in Crayke and its doings, written by Edward Churton. Borthwick Institute.

<sup>30</sup> *The Illustrated London News*, 1 Feb. 1846. A cutting, owned by the Knowles family of Crayke, shows a fine etching of the original school house and describes the opening ceremonies.

the opening of the new primary school in 1979 and is now a private house on the north side of West Way.

Following Churton's prosperous period, the condition of the rectory house declined to a state where by May 1947 it was considered by the archbishop of York to be semi-derelict and uninhabitable. A grant of £468 (*c.* £12,220 today)<sup>25</sup> from the Queen Anne's Bounty<sup>26</sup> was needed to fund the demolition of a wing of the house which was built by Churton as his servants' quarters, and reconditioning of the remainder according to plans drawn up by the architects Biscomb and Ferry of York<sup>31</sup>. The work completed in 1951 by J Smith and sons of Chapel Street, Easingwold, included converting the old pantry into a back entrance porch, retiling the kitchen floor and capping the well. In 1947 the 57-year old Revd W F Cotton had accepted the Crayke living, by then worth only £528 (£13,780 today), on condition that the house was repaired. Cotton had worked for many years in Rangoon and India before coming to Crayke, the population of which had dwindled to just 393. The church authorities sold off pieces of the rectory land over the years, including a stretch extending down the hill to the south which included two grass tennis courts close to the present Easingwold Road, the adjoining land to the west where the house named West End now stands, and finally sold the old rectory house itself at auction on 10 December 1969 after building a smaller new house for the priest in what previously had been the rectory's kitchen garden.

### **Other points of historical interest**

It was not until 1844 that Crayke was formally transferred from the control of County Durham to the North Riding of Yorkshire<sup>32</sup>. Prior to this date the village formed an anomalous area of exempt jurisdiction which was not liable for North Riding rates.

Crayke castle, church, rectory, school, hall and manor house all are referred to above. The manor house, located outside the village on the Brandsby road, was formerly known as Wyndham Hall after an earlier owner and contains some Elizabethan (1558-1603) features<sup>1</sup>. A stud-built (exposed timber frame) house which stood high on the village green until its demolition in *c.* 1936 bore the inscription 'May 14 1613 Thos Johnson' cut into its door lintel<sup>12</sup>. A house of similar date still stands on the south side of West Way, across the road from the old Victorian school house. A stone of unknown origin bearing the monogram IHS in characters of the 14<sup>th</sup> century is built into the wall of the former Wesleyan chapel at the bottom of the village green, near the stone-capped well. A photograph from 1850 shows the well still in use and also a prominent public house sign on the green on the uphill side of the entrance to Key Lane, showing the location of a pub other than the Durham Ox. A building which was once a small Roman Catholic church stands at the lower end of Key Lane.

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<sup>31</sup> *Alterations to Crayke Rectory, 1947-51*. Detailed architects' plans and correspondence, including expenditure records. Borthwick Institute.

<sup>32</sup> *Quarter Sessions Records, North Riding*. Refers to Crayke's claim to be an exempt jurisdiction and not liable for North Riding rates: 1746-48 and 1811-12. Also to the inclusion of Crayke in the North Riding in 1844. County Records Office, Northallerton.

The present road to Easingwold did not exist in 1840, the tithe map<sup>33</sup> showing a sharp left turn of the road at the half-way farm, the route then, as now, making a circuit back to Crayke via the Stillington road. The way to Easingwold then was by the Oulston road, taking the third turning left out of Crayke, into Easingwold via Claypenny. Several chalybeate springs, once thought to have curative properties, exist in several places at the foot of Crayke hill and the village abounds in old draw-wells, some of which are more than 140 ft deep<sup>1</sup>.

## Changing place names

Given that Crayke enjoys a striking location on the first hill north of the flat vale of York, it seems likely that its name derives from the word ‘crag’ or something similar. In the course of researching this article the following variants have been encountered: Creca<sup>14</sup> (Saxon, AD 685), Cric<sup>6</sup> (Saxon, 767), Creic<sup>11, 34</sup> (Saxon, post-Danish invasion, c. 990 and Norman / Domesday, 1086), Crec<sup>5</sup> (13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century), Crayk<sup>19</sup> (1487), Crek<sup>35</sup> (c. 1520), Craike<sup>23</sup> (1663), Crake<sup>19, 23</sup> (1716 and earlier, c. 1560), Craik<sup>5, 36</sup> (c. 1850 and earlier, c. 1662), Craikshire<sup>2</sup> (early 19<sup>th</sup> century) and finally Crayke (c.1840).

## Additional sources

The following sources provide further relevant information:

- *Census Reports, 1801 on -*. Incl. detailed report for 1831. County Records Office, Northallerton.
- *Jeffrey's Map of 1772*. Northallerton.
- *Ordnance Survey 6-inch map of 1850*. Northallerton.
- *The History of Easingwold and the Forest of Galtres*, by G C Cowling, 1968. Minster Library and York Public Library.
- *Legends and Traditions of Yorkshire*. Ref. to Ragnar Lodbrog and Crayke Castle. Mr T M Higham, decd., resident at Crayke Castle, 1959-84.
- *Easingwold Advertiser*. Cuttings recording history of Crayke and its castle. T N Higham.
- *The Life of Marmaduke Rawdon of York*. Ed. by Robert Davies for the Camden Society, 1853. T M Higham.
- *Bishopric of Durham Estates Notitia*. Multi-volume work, incl. 1743 account of the purchase of the Manor of Craike by Henry Thompson of Kirby Hall. Durham.

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<sup>33</sup> *Tithe map and list of apportionments, 1840*. Includes map of rectory land and glebe land. Rev K Nelson, 1971.

<sup>34</sup> *Liber Vitae of the Church of Durham*. Surtees Society publication, 1841. Durham University archives.

<sup>35</sup> *Leland's Itinerary, c. 1520*. Not seen, but many references made to this in other sources.

<sup>36</sup> *Bishop Cosin's Survey, 1662*. Includes a note on Craik manor being leased to Queen Elizabeth in 1586 for 80 years at a cost of £51-1s-11½d (c. £7,667 today, i.e. still very cheap!)

- *Church Commission Audits* – to 1649. Numerous refs to Crayke, e.g. Castle and Manor of Crayke viewed, 1561. Durham.
- *Faculty Papers*. 1900 and 1920 records of work done to church. Borthwick Institute.
- *Historia Rievallensis*, by the Revd W Eastmead, 1824. Minster Library.
- *History of Thirsk, 1821*. Referred to by Churton in Gill<sup>1</sup>.
- *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, by Prof Stubbs. Not seen, but refs to this in Preface to Symeon<sup>6</sup>.
- *The Venerable Bede*, by C J Stranks. SPCK pamphlet in Durham Cathedral.
- *St Cuthbert's Church, Crayke*. Pamphlet in church.

## Conclusion

This brief history of Crayke was first compiled in 1971 as a by-product of the author's efforts to research the origin and development of the rectory house bought from the church authorities in December 1969. As is evident from the sources cited, much of the information was drawn from the archives of Durham University and Cathedral as well as those held in the York Minster library and at the Borthwick Institute of the University of York. The research, based on available archival and archaeological records, failed to reveal firm evidence to support such popular historical myths as the existence of a Roman watchtower or a major Saxon monastery on the hill, or any involvement of the castle in either the wars of the roses or the civil war. However, for local historians there is much of interest in the records and it is to be hoped that this short digest may stimulate others to add to the details summarised here.

Ronald E Hester  
The Old Rectory, Crayke  
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