

BF078246

YORKSHIRE
VERNACULAR BUILDINGS
STUDY GROUP 1242

North Yorkshire: Thornton Steward, The Blacksmith's Shop. SE 176871.

Miss J. Bell and Miss J. McSweeney,* The Cottage, Thornton Steward.

The blacksmith's shop stands between two dwelling houses, facing north, in the south row of Thornton Steward. It fronts onto the green and the village street. It is wholly of one build and has under the same roof two small store rooms to the west and a part of the house to the east. The porch part of the house is a recent addition. The site slopes steeply north to south and the floor level is made up. Part at least of the floor in the east house part was lower as there is a blocked doorway to the garden.

The whole is built of stone, loosely coursed, with cobbles, rubble and some well dressed pieces. The roof is comparatively new with pantiles above two rows of grey flags. The original materials are not recorded. The chimney is of brick and it remains undisturbed. All the old doors and window frames have been removed but most of the roof timbers remain though reset. There are two basic nineteenth century trusses with tusk tenoned purlins.

Tethering rings remain beside the front door and in the double stall. A high timber partition, with trial horn burnings, marks off the stall. The floor in this part is flagged.

The brick built hearth has been demolished down to its foundation courses, two flues remain in the wall above. The bellows, made by Alldays & Onions, Birmingham, are complete. There is a shuttered air vent in the wall near the bellows. The stiddie base, a tree trunk, remains but the iron anvil has gone. The base is set in concrete. There is a work bench attached to the wall and a few horse shoes and bits of iron and leather remain. The walls, roof timbers and woodwork are all smoke blackened.

The Stead family were blacksmiths in Thornton Steward for three generations and are said to have used this building throughout. What dating evidence there is in the present structure suggests that the original erection would fall into their period if not into their hands. It is said in the village that Lord Polton owned this property, the Stead family gave up their business and left the village about 1965, and that they had had a hooping stone for cart wheels on the village green. The hearth was roofed or covered in and had a slaking trough beside it. The smithy was reinhabited and filmed for a BBC episode of All Creatures Great and Small in the 1970s.

Surveyed by CH and JB. 10 November 1985.

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