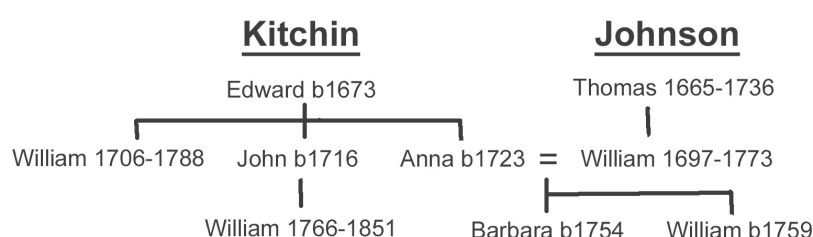


The Johnson Family and Nether End

The Johnson family were long established residents of Bubnell. Richard Johnson was in the hamlet in the late 1500s. He was succeeded by his son Alexander b1604, then by his son Thomas 1665-1736 who was described in 1701 as a yeoman (wealthy farmer).

In 1701 the Eyre family of Hassop sold an estate at Nether End in Baslow to two or three local residents one of whom was Thomas Johnson. His purchase was a strip of land adjoining the west bank of the Barbrook, from the houses opposite the Wheatsheaf Inn down to the Malt house, and 10 fields the other side of the brook. He paid £140. He built a home for himself somewhere near the present Malthouse. The rest of the family remained in Bubnell, but dispersed over the next generation. Some went to Bridge End in Baslow where they stayed until the early 1800s

Thomas died in 1736. At the time he had a mortgage on his house. He was followed by his son William 1697-1773 (or 1777) a weaver by occupation. In 1737 William had to borrow £160 from William Kitchin b1706 of Bubnell. Ten years later he had to borrow another £60. At about the same time he married Anna Kitchin, William Kitchin's sister.



In 1776 the long standing debt was cleared by transferring part of the Johnson property to Kitchin. In the same year Barbara Johnson, Williams daughter, married George Hattersley. William Johnson died either before or possibly after these events, in 1773 or 1777. (see notes on Hattersley family). The reasoning behind these arrangements is not clear.

The Johnsons retained a few fields across the brook and a plot of land opposite the Wheatsheaf Hotel on which they built Barbrook House. The fields were sold to the Duke of Devonshire in 1824 when the Park was enlarged. The family still owned Barbrook House in 1848 but the census showed that they lived elsewhere. In due course it was sold.

Nether End

William Kitchin's portion of the estate included land now occupied by the Devonshire Arms and adjoining houses, and property downstream on both sides of the brook. He built the Malt House in 1782 and next to it a brewery followed by an inn called The Barrel. Kitchin died in 1788 to be succeeded by his son, another William 1766-1851. The latter had financial problems. In 1809 he had to borrow money using the land as a surety. Ten years later things got so much worse that he had to accept a loan of £1000 from a neighbour Nicholas Broomhead, a very large sum in those days. Probably most of this was settled in 1824 when the Duke of Devonshire extended his park, buying most of Kitchin's property in the area. The Inn and the Malt house were sold separately. The Barrel Inn was developed into the Devonshire Arms in the 1850s while the remaining space became a solid block of residential housing.

The strip of land on the bank of the Barbrook, from the shop opposite the Wheatsheaf Inn to the Malthouse, was part of the original Eyre Estate. It remained freehold, and free from any interference from the Lord of the Manor, the Duke of Rutland. During the 1800s and early 1900s there was extensive development of shops and hotels, making it the centre of Baslow's visitor and tourist activities. It still is.

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