The Old Roads and Trackways of

MIDDLETON & SMERRILL

Derbyshire Aggregates now occupies the site of Middleton Mine. With its regular use by visiting HGV lorries, Long Rake remains the industrial quarter of Middleton and Smerrill.

LONG RAKE

Long Rake takes its name from a rich vein of minerals that run along the northern boundary of Middleton and Smerrill. It is not shown on Burdett's Map of Derbyshire (1767) but appears on Sanderson's Map of Derbyshire County (1836).

Three tracks join Long Rake from Monyash including Derby Lane, but the courses they took over Middleton Common have been lost. Long Rake is also used as a route from Youlgrave to Buxton.

The Long Rake vein of minerals included lead ore, calcite and fluorspar and, near Arbor Low, Oakstone Baryte, a stone unique to Middleton & Smerrill. It has been a site of mines and quarries since Roman times.

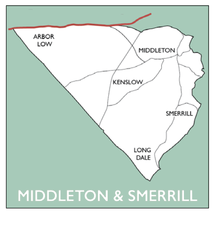
With the arrival of the Cromford and High Peak Railway at Parsley Hay (1833), Long Rake Spar (1867) and Arbor Low Mine (1922), Long Rake found a fresh purpose and vigour in the modern era. While the railways, mines and quarries have now gone, Long Rake remains the industrial sector of Middleton as HGV lorries ply the length of Long Rake to visit the gravel depots that occupy the sites of the old mines.

Riddle of the Wharf

In the Middleton Estate Surveyor's Sketch Book (1834), several sketch maps show the directions 'to the wharf'. What was the wharf? The answer lies in the Cromford and High Peak Railway, opened a few years before the surveyor opened his sketchbook. Built to transfer goods between the Cromford Canal and Peak Forest Canals, it used the terminology of canals, hence Parsley Hay Wharf (OS 8105-45). Only when a passenger service started in 1856 did it become Parsley Hay Station (OS 1830-80).

Further Reading

1767 A Survey of Derbyshire, Peter Burdett
1841 Middleton Estate Surveyors Sketchbook (Middleton Hall)
1836 Map of Derbyshire County, George Sanderson



A PALIMPSEST
MIDDLETON VILLAGE HALL
Supporting the community of Middleton and Smerrill