



Bugle

2000

A MILLENNIUM REMEMBERED

Welcome to 'Bugle 2000', our special edition compiled from photographs lent to us by you, our readers. It has been put together to show life in Alport, Middleton and Youlgrave in celebration of the New Millennium.

THREE VILLAGES STEEPED IN HISTORY

The area around Alport, Middleton, and Youlgrave has been in continuous occupation from early times. Bronze Age barrows and monuments such as Arbor Low to the north of Middleton, the Nine Ladies on Stanton Moor and many other minor sites bear testimony to this. There is evidence also that the Romans discovered lead in the area - Romano-British pottery was found at Smerrill in 1844.



A view of Middleton Square showing the Primitive Chapel and a peep of the agricultural building that stood in the square.



Raenstor Rock, Alport. The top portion you can see here had to be blasted away as it had become dangerous to users of the coach road.

WHAT'S IN A NAME

In 1086 the Saxon Lord of the Manor's name was Colle. His grandson, Robert, gave the estate to the Abbey of Leicester, in the reign of Henry II. It has been said that the name Youlgrave is a development of the village's name at that time, 'Giolgrave', meaning 'Yellow Grove'. Several of the larger farms around the villages still have the name Grange, indicating that they were once inhabited by monks, who farmed, dispensed hospitality to travellers, made herbal remedies and cared for the sick.

Over the last decade the Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Rutland and Sir Humphrey Davey Thornhill were principle owners of the land surrounding the villages and were, until recent times, owners of many of the village buildings. The Duke of Rutland was the Lord of the Manor.

As farmers are finding it difficult financially, some are tapping into the tourist industry. Barns are converted to provide camping facilities and farmhouse bed and breakfast is offered. In fact, tourism must now form the major part of the local economy - a testimony to the unspoilt villages and wonderful countryside.



A view of the bridge 'Down Bradford' taken at the turn of the century before the current front row of cottages was built.

CHURCHES & CHAPELS



PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHURCH (above)

Completed in 1895 at a cost of £1,035 7s 6d, the Primitive Methodist Church and Sunday School were built at Coldwell End. An earlier Primitive Chapel had been erected at Bank Side in 1822, following the establishment of the Primitive Methodist movement at the turn of the Eighteenth Century.

This chapel is also the home of Youlgrave Silver Band.

ALL SAINTS CHURCH (right)

This magnificent building dates back to 1130-50. Extensive alterations and extensions were undertaken during the Fifteenth Century and again in 1869-70, the latter of which included the installation of a heating system, much to the delight of the congregation, I'm sure.

Notable features at All Saints include a Norman font, which had been found abandoned at the church at Elton. A new east window was installed in 1876, supplied by Messrs. Morris & Co (William Morris) and designed by the eminent Victorian artist, Burne Jones.

As in centuries gone by, village life continues to be strongly influenced and supported by the faith of its inhabitants. Magnificent buildings, charitable works and a flourishing social structure were born out of religion, as we see below. Our children were educated, our poor fed and our general well-being nurtured.

Our villages are no exception: indeed, Youlgrave's splendid Parish Church, standing proud and tall, and visible from miles around, physically dominates the village. Youlgrave and Middleton, however, are also host to a fine array of other religious buildings, namely the Methodist Chapel, the Wesleyan Chapel and the Independent Chapel in Youlgrave, whilst Middleton has its church, a Chapel of Ease.



MIDDLETON CHURCH (below)

Middleton Church has a service once a month. There used to be two other Chapels in the village also, namely, the Congregational, which is now a private house, and the Primitive Methodist, a wooden building that stood in the area where the telephone box now stands. This was removed in the early sixties.



WESLEYAN REFORM CHAPEL (above)

The Wesleyan Methodist Reformers built a chapel in 1857 on a plot of land donated by William Pole Thornhill of Stanton Hall. In 1860 a school room was added, and the building further extended in 1886. Indeed, it was the first chapel to be lit by electric light.

Later alterations in 1913 added a new classroom and kitchen, the enlargement of the chapel, the introduction of stained glass windows and other improvements.



And life after Church . . .

The rich religious heritage of Youlgrave, Alport and Middleton is still very visible in those buildings which once served as places of worship but which have since passed into private hands. Here is just a brief history:



The Church of England Hand Bell Ringers (above) c 1950.



THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CHAPEL, (above)

Little information still exists about this chapel, except that the Chapel was erected in 1807 and extended in 1907 when it was enlarged and a new frontage was built.

The Wesleyan Sunday School (photo on page 15) was built in 1887, but is now a private residence.

The Chapel itself became what it is today, a Country Pursuits Centre for a Kent school.



The Church of England Sunday School (above) 1950.

CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL (above)

Thomas Bateman, landowner & archaeologist established his own independent chapels locally, one of which can be found at Coldwell End, Youlgrave, the other in Middleton (pictured below.)

In 1927 it became the domestic science centre for the village school (see photograph on page 14). However, with the onslaught of the Second World War, its role was to change again: between 1939-45 it was taken over by the Women's Voluntary Service.

It finally became the home of the Youlgrave British Legion in 1955 and was renamed the Knoll Club after the hill at Coldwell End, at the west end of the village.



CHURCH LIFE

Outside the chapel walls, the churches' influence flourished also with the education of village children alongside other societies and clubs for adults, including the Bell Ringers. Indeed, the bells of All Saints Church continue to ring out across the village of Youlgrave, thanks to the dedication of the bell ringers. And, as in centuries gone by, they welcomed in the New Year and a New Millennium this year.

As the array of church and chapel schools show, education and religion have long existed side by side: indeed, the church regarded it as a duty to instruct the local children in moral life and basic education. This took the form of Sunday Schools and, as these pictures show, they were an integral part of village life for the local children.



The Primitive Methodist Chapel Sunday School (above) during the 1953 Coronation celebrations.