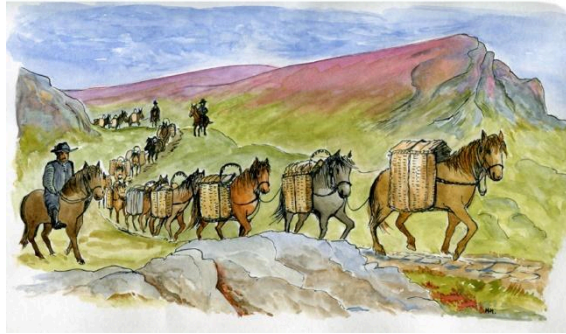


PANNIERMENS WAYS AND EARLY ROADS



THEIR HISTORY

Many early Paths and Roads used or followed the old Roman roads and the Panniermen's Way otherwise known as TRODS date back to Medieval times. There was a reference to them locally in 12th. Century documents, in 1325 there was mention of a "King's Carter in Pickering, one William London who had a Cart and 6 Horses and was paid four and a half pence per day which included an assistant's wages.

In general when goods needed to be transported where at all possible the river systems were used as it was a considerably cheaper method, it was reported in 1365 that to transport lead using mainly the river system for approximately 16 leagues, the cost was £2 14s but by using land the cost was nearer £7 4s

Pannierways were extensive in this area particularly on the North Yorkshire Moors and were usually constructed using flat stones quarried locally sometimes on a raised bank of earth. They frequently connected religious foundations like Rivaulx and were also used to carry goods between important centres like Whitby & Rivaulx, or Rivaulx and salt pans around the Tee and routes linking their various Granges and Lands.

One of the locally best preserved trods is up Kirby Bank leading into Bilsdale and beyond to places south of Kirby. At many places on the moors there were stone markers showing the direction to Stokesley with one standing to this day near Hutton le Hole, some of these were engraved with the name Stoxla although this spelling of Stokesley may have been due to the illiteracy of the stonemason doing the carving.



It is interesting to note that in 1170 a "Ryedale Charter" was issued outlining an agreement between a number of religious houses to build bridges and build and maintain trods and early roads in the Ryedale area.

Many trods and early roads have eventually developed into today's roads as evidenced for instance on the Stokesley to Hutton Rudby road, where even today one can see a few of the original stone slabs of the trods just beside the Tarmacadam surface of the present day road.

ROUTES INTO STOKESLEY

As Stokesley was an important town with its regular market dating back to 1223 when it was first granted its Charter and Fairs, it certainly had a number of Pannierways and early roads leading into it but we are slightly uncertain about some of the exact routes taken by Panniermen into Stokesley.

We do know that one of the routes they must have taken came down Kirby Bank Trod then made its way by a route which led down to the River:Leven. It then followed the river to Stokesley, crossed one of the two fords and of course when it was built they would have come over Packhorse Bridge.

There was also an alternative route which was probably from the Whitby area and would have been via the pannierway down Birkbrow (See aerial photograph above)



Another route may have been via Carlton in Cleveland as there is a metal ring in a wall beside a Farm at which it is rumoured the panniermen tethered their pannier train whilst they had a break in their journey.

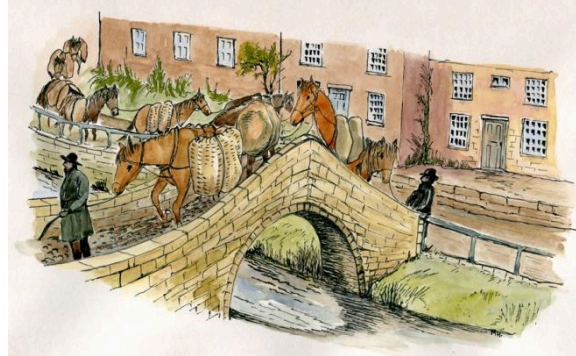


There must also have also been a pannierway from Stokesley to Yarm, which in medieval times was an important port, and on to Stockton. It is likely that it started from what is now North Road and went down to Neasham Farm then turned left over to Seamer and on to Yarm and Stockton.

It is interesting to note that the A172 road going northwards from Stokesley is to this day known as "Pannierman's Lane".

Panniermen's ways were still in use in the early 1700's but had largely died out by the end of the 1800's due to the advent of the railways.

STOKESLEY'S PACKHORSE BRIDGE



The bridge was an important route into Stokesley town for the packhorse trains, it may have replaced an even earlier wooden bridge and it is interesting to note how it is raised up well above the level of the River Leven presumably to avoid flooding which must have been quite extensive in the past, and there is a raised Causeway leading from the bridge around Bethel Chapel which is still visible to this day.

The sides of the Bridge appear to be slightly higher than they were originally when they were lower in order to accommodate the panniers slung either side of the ponies

It is well documented that in 1632 the inhabitants of Stokesley were fined for allowing the early roads in the area used by wheeled traffic, to fall into a state of disrepair to such an extent, that it was easier for people and goods to be brought in via the pannierways and over the Packhorse Bridge, even the Bridge had to be repaired before "Michaelmas next"

TYPES OF TRAFFIC USING THE TRODS

Ponies and horses were used and the horses were either Galloways or Cleveland Bay, both of which were known locally as Jaggers all of which were strong and had plenty of stamina. and those under 4' 10" were particularly suited to negotiating the local steep paths. The Cleveland Bays were actually bred at Rivaulx Abbey which held a licence to breed non military horses.

Packhorse trains could consist of up to 40 horses although normally there were 12-14 horses with the lead horse being called a "Bell Horse", as it had a collar bearing seven bells which warned people of the approach of the Packhorse Train. When the train had stopped for a rest the lead horse would automatically push its way to the front to lead the train.

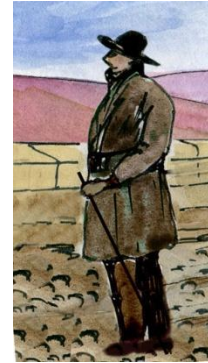
Sometimes people travelled on foot although this was a very slow method as a horse could cover 40 to 50 miles per day. and people very rarely left their own village or town.

Carts and coaches were also used although the latter were only used by royalty and noblemen and must have been incredibly uncomfortable to ride in..Sleds were also used and sometimes these were fitted with 2 wheels placed near the back and became known as “Wains”

PANNIERMEN

Due to the fact that pannier trains carried quite heavy loads, strong men were required to load and unload the panniers .Some locals referred to the pannierman as chapmen

They lived off hung beef, fat bacon and thick oat cakes which were fried in the fat from the bacon, and the panniermen also drank two quarts of ale a day ! They generally wore knee breaches with calf skin waistcoats carried large sticks and when en route stayed overnight in wayside inns.



It was recorded that in 1820 there were 5 carriers in Stokesley although we can't be certain how many were panniermen and how many were carters .

We do know however where they started from and their destinations-Thomas Johnson went from the Three Tuns every Wednesday and Saturday to Guisborough and Whitby.

John Snowball went from the Black Bull every Saturday to Northallerton.
Francis Peacock and John Middleton travelled from their residences every Monday.
Wednesday and Friday to Stockton

A Francis Peacock went from his residence each Wednesday and Sunday nights to Thirsk and an Aaron Reed called at The Three Tuns every Saturday to deliver to Yarm.

GOODS CARRIED

Glass from Rosedale, textiles, cottons and linens from local mills and in 1823 Flax Mills in Stokesley and Hutton Rudby were sending linen to Newcastle upon Tyne market via a packhorse train comprising up to 40 mules based in Hutton Rudby.

Timber from Pickering Forest, salt and fish from Scarborough and Whitby and the Tees estuary

Alum from local mines to be used by Courriers in Stokesley and tanners in Great Ayton.

Goods of all sorts to the many local markets.

Coal and ironstone which was carried in specially adapted panniers called Hottefs which had hinged bottoms so that the coal and stone could be unloaded by merely undoing the bottom of the pannier. We do know that coal was being transported from

Durham via the Stokesley area up into Bilsdale and being ultimately delivered to Helmsley as recently as 1868.

SMUGGLING GOODS

Packhorse trains were on occasions used to carry smuggled contraband goods on the Pannierways and it is rumoured that some packhorse trains could carry contraband from Marske near Saltburn all the way to Stokesley unaccompanied by panniermen so that if stopped by excise men there was no one to punish !

MOST RECENT DISCOVERIES

In 2012 an amateur archeology team headed by a local resident John Watson were carrying out a dig near Guisborough in the hope of finding the remains of an ancient Leper Hospital, instead they uncovered the well preserved remains of a medieval Trod as can be seen in the picture.



During the excavations a number of artefacts were uncovered including shards of flintstones which indicated that it had been used in much earlier times as a path for Mesolithic hunters and later by panniermen, as a trod to carry fish and salt to Rivaulx Abbey and later finds have shown that it was also used to carry coal, iron ore and jet from the Roseberry area, as can be seen from the picture showing the trod going in the direction of the local well known landmark of Roseberry Topping.



There appear to have been approximately 4 trods all coming into the site from the North, South, East and West and various remains which show that it might have even been a rest place for the panniermen and their horses, almost the equivalent of a modern Motorway Service Station.

The last picture shows a Stone plaque discovered when York University carried out a survey at Rivaulx Abbey. The plaque shows part of a panniertrain and the building they were approaching which may have been part of the Abbey.

