

Catterall Mill Race Sluice Gate



The sluice was constructed to supply water from the River Calder, via a series of lodges (ponds) to Catterall Mill. The mill, once part of Messrs. Fielding's calico printing works on Stones Lane, closed in 1830 when it began worsted wool production. In about 1859 it was converted to Catterall Bobbin Mill and after 1891 became Catterall Iron Works. Holden's Tannery and Curriers Works was also supplied via the sluice gate.

Catterall Mill was described in the sale of 1880 as *‘The water supply which is indispensable to a good paper mill is one of the finest in the Kingdom both for purity, quality and quantity, being brought from the River Calder by a large sluice and stored in 4 large reservoirs – there are ample settling provided for purifying the water before it is returned into the river.’* The mill also had 64 cottages, one of which was used as a shop.

The water rights were so coveted that Mr. A. Simpson of Elmhurst purchased the land in 1885 on behalf of the Fylde Waterworks Company. He considered that the River Calder, on which the mill stood, would be required by the company. The buildings were gradually demolished and the only survivors are the terraced houses called Brock Place on Catterall Gates Lane, which are the remnants of the two rows of terraces built as dwellings for mill workers, and Lodge House, Calico Drive.

The population of Catterall fluctuated greatly, dependent on the success of the Mills. In 1801 the population was 560; in 1841 it was 1,102 and in the 1891 census records it was 336. Many kinds of industry took place in Catterall, from calico printing, bleaching, cotton spinning and papermaking, but they came and went; and all were disastrous for their owners.

Photographs of the excavation work and re-construction can be viewed at:
www.catterallparish.org.uk/reconstruction



During the work on the sluice Catterall Parish Council asked residents for information on the history of the mills and received a number of reports the result of some painstaking and dedicated research.

The first report has been kindly produced by Mr John Waite .Newhaven Drive,
Catterall and revised on the 1st November 2022

Catterall Worsted Mill, Pyrmont Works, Catterall Works and the sluice gate

The sluice gate was used to take water from the River Calder via a mill race which fed a series of lodges or ponds to provide water to a mill which had been part of the **calico printing works of Watson, Myers, Fielding and Co.**, located on the present Collinson's silo manufacturing site. (1) Baines described the former calico printing works as "one of the oldest and most flourishing print works in the County of Lancaster employing between 400 and 500 inhabitants." (2)

Originally, there was a weir in the river just downstream of the sluice gate to raise the water level to feed into the mill race. (3)

The Yates map (surveyed in 1779) shows that the calico printing works may have been fed originally from the Little Calder River (then shown as Balton Brook). (4)

Later, Fielding's premises were extended and a new mill, **called Pyrmont Works** was built adjacent to the present Catterall Gates Lane. This was fed from the River Calder near **the Old Print Works** at the end of Stones Lane to a large lodge adjacent to the printing works. **The Old Print Works** was built by Fielding adjacent to the canal to take advantage of the coal and limestone which arrived by barge, and there the dyes and chemicals were prepared for the calico printing process. (5)

The printing works were closed in 1830 when the two surviving partners, Joseph and Jeremiah Fielding, were declared bankrupt. (6)

In 1835, Mr S L Behrens acquired the printing works and transformed it into a cotton weaving mill with an adjacent cotton spinning mill. **(Pyrmont Works)**. Cottages for the workers were built opposite the mills. (7) The works were bought by the Catterall Family from Preston in 1850, who then ran the business as Messrs Catterall & Co, Cotton Spinners and Weavers and the premises became known as **Catterall Works**. (8)

In 1877, **Catterall Works** was converted to a paper mill which only survived for about three years, after which the mill became derelict and was demolished in the early 1900s. (9) In 1885, the mill pond was bought by Albert Simpson on behalf of the Fylde Waterworks Company to gain access to the water rights from the River Calder. (10)

The original calico printing works on the site of the present Collinson's Silo works became a **worsted woollen mill** run by William Lambert of Manchester. (11) The sluice gate and mill stream near the playing fields were probably installed to supply

water to the mill after Messrs Fielding had vacated the premises. In about 1860, the building was converted to a bobbin works, later acquired by Richard Nickson & Sons who ran it as **Catterall Bobbin Mill**. (12) Two adjacent properties were known as Bobbin Mill Cottages, which were eventually renamed as Wyrebank.

In 1891, Thomas Crossley established **Catterall Iron Works** at the site and lived at the nearby Willow House. (13)

Collinson plc acquired the site in 1978 and have since continued to develop the business of silo manufacture, automatic feed systems and storage buildings.

The Old Print Works near the canal. After Messrs Fielding closed the calico printing works, the factory by the canal was used variously as a spindle and fly makers business, a saw mill, a bobbin manufacturer and finally a calico printers known as Catterall Print Works. The premises were burnt down in 1878 and later rebuilt as a two-storey dwelling. (14)

The Tannery The original building probably formed part of Fielding's calico printing works and were converted to a tannery in the 1850s, being run by the Holden family who originally worked a tannery on Byerworth Lane. (15) It closed in 1966 and was demolished in 1982. (16)(17)

A fuller description of the former industries of Catterall can be found in "A ramble round Catterall and district" by Joe Lane. (Chapters 2 and 7)

References

1. C Russell *Lancastrian Chemist* p27 & p28
2. E Baines *History of the County Palatine of Lancashire 1824/1825* p640
3. OS Map 1: 10000 1847 – 1853
4. William Yates Map of Lancashire 1786
5. Greenwood's Map of Lancashire (1818) and Hennet's Map of Lancashire (1829) both show a large lodge adjacent to Catterall Gates Lane. Fielding and Myers bought land adjacent to the canal near Sturzaker House Farm 1795 where "The Old Print Works" were built. (Lancashire Record Office Ref DDFZ/557).
Thus, Henry Fielding, the main partner of the calico printing works, had a right to use water from the River Calder by the canal. He gave permission for the Lancaster Canal Company to take water from the River Calder to fill the canal adjacent to the printing works. (R Swift *A Walker's guide to the Lancaster Canal* 1998 p 76.)
John Rennie's survey for the canal of 1791 states that the works are a calico printworks. (Lancashire County Archaeological Service SMR No. PRN 4558-MLA4558)
This land acquisition would have enabled Fielding to form a new mill stream to feed the lodges shown on the Greenwood and Hennet maps. The mill stream ran parallel to Stones Lane and crossed the turnpike road at Duckworth Cottage Bridge.
When the printing works were put up for sale in 1832, the notices of sale mentions " an abundant supply of water from the River Calder with a fall of 18ft". (Lancaster Gazette 23 June 1832). The "Old Print Works" site is described in a legal case involving the sale of the printing works. (D Barton *Analytical Digest of Cases* Published in the Law Journal Reports Vol 3 1834)
6. London Gazette 1831 p 2136 refers to a Commission of Bankruptcy against Joseph and Jeremiah Fielding on 13 Nov 1830.
7. Preston Chronicle 24 May 1838 – A legal case, Seddon v Behrens, mentions the alteration of the printing works to form a cotton mill by S L Behrens, a Jewish gentleman from Manchester. Power looms were installed and weaving commenced in 1837. Weavers' cottages were built opposite the new mill, originally called Brunswick Place and Pymont Place, being later renamed Calder Place and Brock Place.
8. Preston Chronicle 21 Feb 1863 described when Paul Catterall bought the mill (originally called Pymont Print Works) and commented on the destitution of the workers during the Cotton Famine.

9. Lancaster Gazette 20 June 1877 described a “ frightful accident” at Catterall Paper Mill. Lancaster Gazette 19 Oct 1878 described the opening of a working men’s club at the paper mill by Lord Winmarleigh (John Wilson Patten MP). Lancaster Gazette 6 March 1880 – Closure of Catterall Paper Mills.
10. C Arthur *History of Fylde Waterworks 1861 – 1911* p 130
11. The Tithe Map and Schedule for Lower Catterall 1845/1846 show the print works building as a Worsted Mill. Mannex & Co Directory of 1851 stated that Wm. Lambert of Manchester worked the woollen mill in Catterall.
12. Lancaster Gazette 16 June 1866 described a fire at the premises of Richard Nickson & Sons, Catterall.
13. E Collinson’s notes on the Worsted Mill provided by Canon R Greenall.
14. Preston Chronicle 26 Oct 1839 stated that the building at “New Pymont Wharf” was used by John and Richard Seed as spindle and fly makers. The Tithe Map of 1845/1846 described the works as a sawmill occupied by Mrs Thompson and owned by S L Behrens Esq. In 1851, William Smith was a bobbin manufacturer there according to the 1851 Census for Lower Catterall. Edwin Ramsey, calico printer, was the last occupier of the works and was declared bankrupt in 1877. (Manchester Courier & Lancashire General Advertiser 12 May 1880).
15. Census for Lower Catterall 1861.
16. The tannery was occupied by Walter and John Clegg in 1912 who then purchased it in about 1920. Thomas May bought the business in 1966. Stan Whaite later occupied the knackers yard on the site. (Research notes from Ben Andrews).
17. Although the tannery was located adjacent to ponds fed from the sluice gate by the playing fields, the water for the tannery was supplied from the large mill pond at Catterall Works. (Research notes from Ben Andrews).

Revised 1 Nov 2022

Further information was received from Mrs. Linda Walker of Calico Lane, Catterall;

Catterall Mill – a potted history

1794 – Henry Fielding inherits £1000.

1796 – Preston Lancaster canal was opened

The mill was built by Henry Fielding as a calico printing mill. I presume the raw materials were brought via the canal, down Stones Lane.

According to Anthony Hewitson, who was a local historian, at the turn of the century (1899 – 1900) wrote for The Preston Guardian and published “Northward” in 1900. He wrote about the Catterall Works that it was “of a very ancient date” and housed “many kinds of industry” including calico printing, bleaching, cotton spinning and paper making all ending disastrously for the promoters. In 1880 the mill was in a ruinous state and was put up for sale as part of the late Henry Fielding’s estate.

Mr Simpson (MP) of Elmhurst bought the land in 1885 for the water rights.

As can be seen from the 1880 map, the water for the mill was fed from the River Calder from what is now Stones Lane, under Duckworth Cottage Bridge and into a Mill pond on the mill site. This is now part of the Parklands estate.

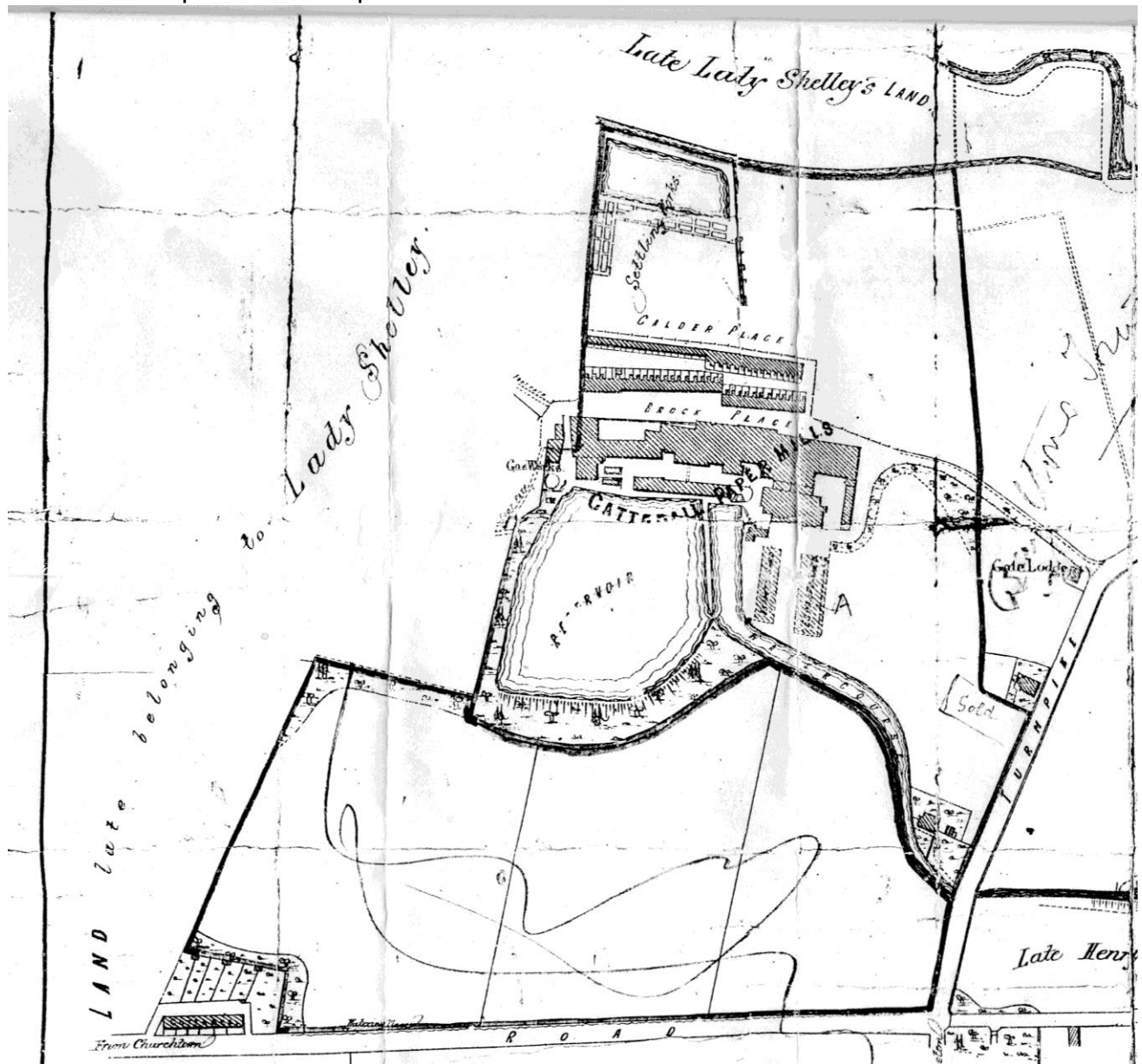
The terraced houses called Brock Place are the remaining remnants of the two rows of terraces built as dwellings for the mill workers. Lodge House, Calico Drive is the only part of the mill remaining today.

The now restored sluice gate is shown as “Mill Race” on 1847 and 1893 maps running to a pond which I believe fed the tannery (shown on 1893 map).

Catterall must have been a very busy, smelly place 200 years ago.

Linda Walker

Linda has also provided a map of the sale of the mill dated 1880:



Lot 1

Freehold Works and Premises known as "The Catterall Paper Mills" together with the land forming the site thereof and the Farm Land adjoining the same and occupied therewith containing in the whole 24a. or. 1p.; and also the valuable Water Rights, Reservoirs, Growing Timber, Priviliger and Wharfage on the Lancaster Canal connected therewith; also 64 cottages one of which is used as a shop, adjoining the works.

The mill is a two machine paper mill having ample accommodation for the whole of the Machinery and Plant with storerooms of every description for the storing of raw material finished paper stores etc. large

esparto shed machine shop, smithy, offices watch house and cottage
gashouse, roasting shed to.*

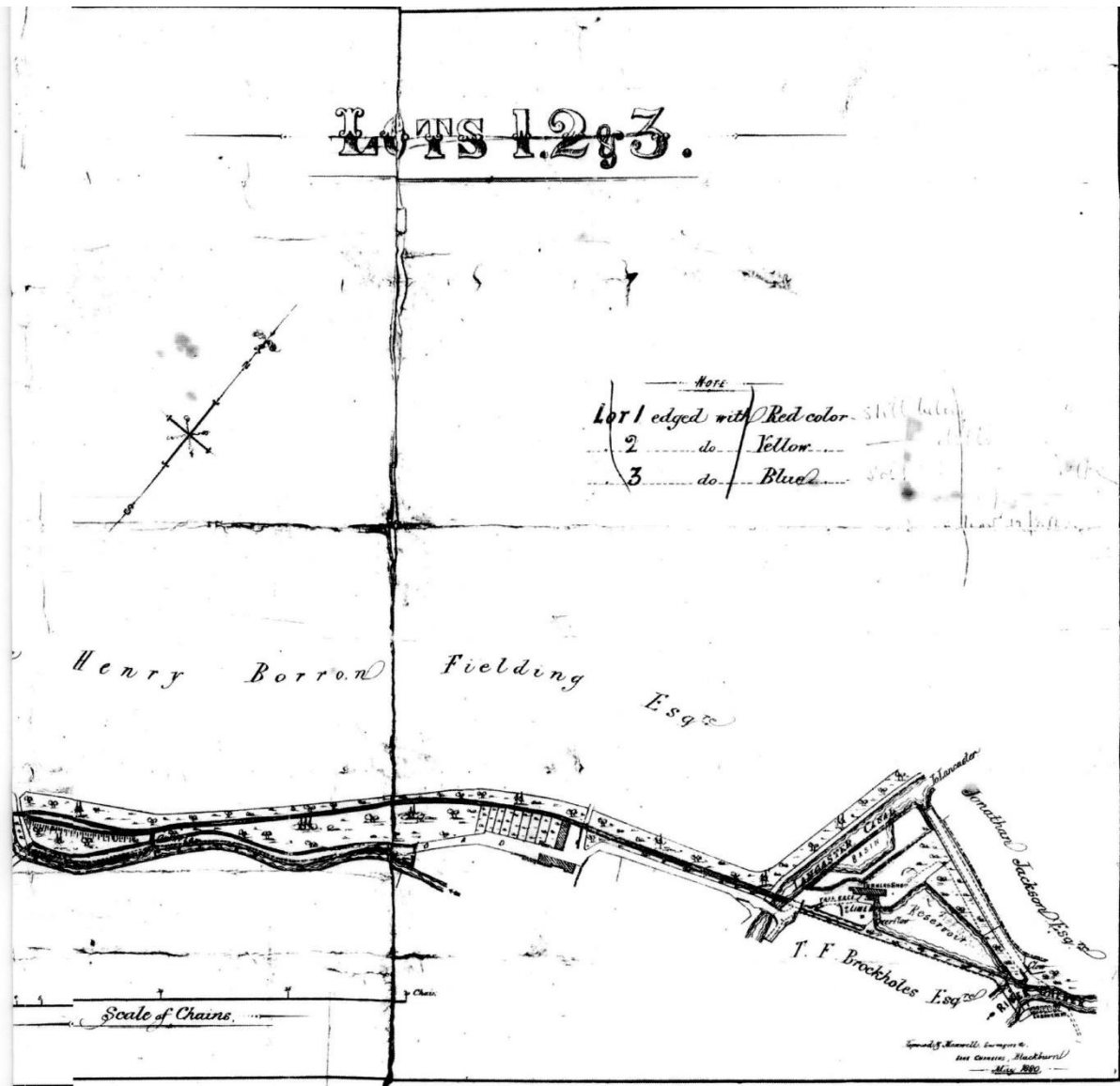
The Water Supply which is indispensable to a good paper mill is one of the finest in the Kingdom both for purity quality and quantity, being brought from the river Calder by a large sluice and stored in 4 large reservoirs - there are ample settlers provided for purifying the water before it is returned into the river.

The Mill is a very short distance from Garstang Station on the London and North Western Railway and a siding might be constructed to the mill. There is a plentiful supply of straw and other materials used in paper manufacture to use.

* Esparto is a coarse grass, native to Europe and northern Africa.

Latin name: *Stipa tenacissima*

Used on the manufacture of paper, rope, mats etc.



Lot 2

The Freehold Estate adjoining Lot 1, containing 2a 1r 39p situated fronting to and having a right of Wharfage on the Lancaster Canal and close to the London and North Western Railway Station at Garstang together with the Buildings erected thereon, formerly a Bobbin Mill but lastly used as a Print Works with the Steam Boiler, Waterwheel and other attached fixtures therein and the growing timber. Also the cottage store adjoining.

There is a good supply of water for every purpose running through the estate from the River Calder.

This is taken from the Victoria and Albert Museum online and shows the patterns produced by Catterall calico mill in 1824.

