



YHA (England and Wales)
Youth Hostel Profile

compiled by the Association's volunteer archivist, John Martin, rev2020-01-01

Horton-in-Ribblesdale Youth Hostel 1933 to 1939

Welterburge Café [1933 supplement]; Wane's Café [from 1934], Horton-in-Ribblesdale, Yorkshire.

Historic County:
Yorkshire (West Riding)

YHA Region:
West Riding

GR: SD 809723

Horton-in-Ribblesdale youth hostel was a typical pre-war West Riding Region establishment based upon a small accommodation and café business on the main street about half a mile south of the station. The only known photograph of the functioning youth hostel showed the property as Wane's Café and YHA. It opened on the 1st of August 1933, too late for the annual handbook, and was almost certainly an adopted hostel, like Kirkby Malzeard, Grassington and others; the regional group received a proportion of the overnight fee, probably a small one.



The only found illustration of Horton-in-Ribblesdale youth hostel. There is known to have been a hut, now demolished, at the left side of the house, and this may have provided or supplemented the accommodation. The hostel featured the strikingly bold black and white enamel YHA triangle design of the times (author's collection)

At first there were beds for eight men only, but by October this had increased to accommodation for 10 men and four women. The following year there seems to have been uncertainty about the hostel's continuation. A brief heading in the first edition of the 1934 national handbook advised enquiry at the regional office; the difficulties seem to have been resolved by the second edition, however, possibly when Mr Crawley, the first warden, gave way to Miss Wane in that year. Accommodation was now more equitably provided for 22, and remained so until closure.

The handbook entry for 1935 read:

HORTON-IN-RIBBLESDALE	W/R	YORKSHIRE DALES
WAIN'S CAFE,	Side of main road.	P.M.K.F.S.
HORTON-IN-RIBBLESDALE.	Maps : O.S.20, J.14.	M.P. S.B.H.
MISS WAIN.	Station : Horton, $\frac{1}{2}$ m.	Ingleton 12 m.
	Bus : Settle—Horton	Askrigg 20 „
All Year.	Store : Premises.	Grassington 16 „
M. 12 ; W. 10.	P.O. : Horton.	Slaidburn 19 „

In 1935 Bertha Gough of the Merseyside Region attended a meeting in Yorkshire. Her YHA diary entry read:
 25th-26th May 1935: Northern Advisory Board meeting at Ilkley hostel. After the meeting on the Sunday, we all went up to Grassington, Kettlewell and across a moorland road to Ingleton and Horton-in-Ribblesdale. This hostel was a very tiny one and very cramped quarters, but a beautiful situation.

The accommodation numbers peaked in 1936, at just over a thousand. In December 1938 West Riding Region sent an inspector to assess its hostels, most of which were small and cramped. A frank review described the hostel as an insoluble problem, even if money were to spare.

Horton-in-Ribblesdale hostel closed in September 1939. It is not known if the closure was enforced by the war or by the inadequacies of the accommodation showed up against the region's recent developments at larger, fully controlled hostels such as Ingleton and Malham.

Some 40 years later, in 1979, at the height of the Pennine Way's popularity, YHA were seriously contemplating a modern replacement for Stainforth hostel, in a new-build partnership project rather along the lines of Hawes hostel. A site in the heart of Horton-in-Ribblesdale became available during the year, but planning permission was refused in the light of intense opposition from the local community.



The former youth hostel and Wane's Café, functioning some 70 years later in September 2005 as the village post office and general store. It still serves as a shop (author's photograph)

After hostel use, the property was used for many years as a general store and post office. It is still a village store, known as the Trading Post, while the post office has been incorporated in to the Crown Inn, the famous start-and-end-point of the Three Peaks Walk.

<i>Overnights – inclusive periods each year as follows</i>									
<i>1933-1939: previous Oct to Sept</i>									
...	<i>1931</i>	<i>1932</i>	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939
...	54	773	904	1040	860	844	396