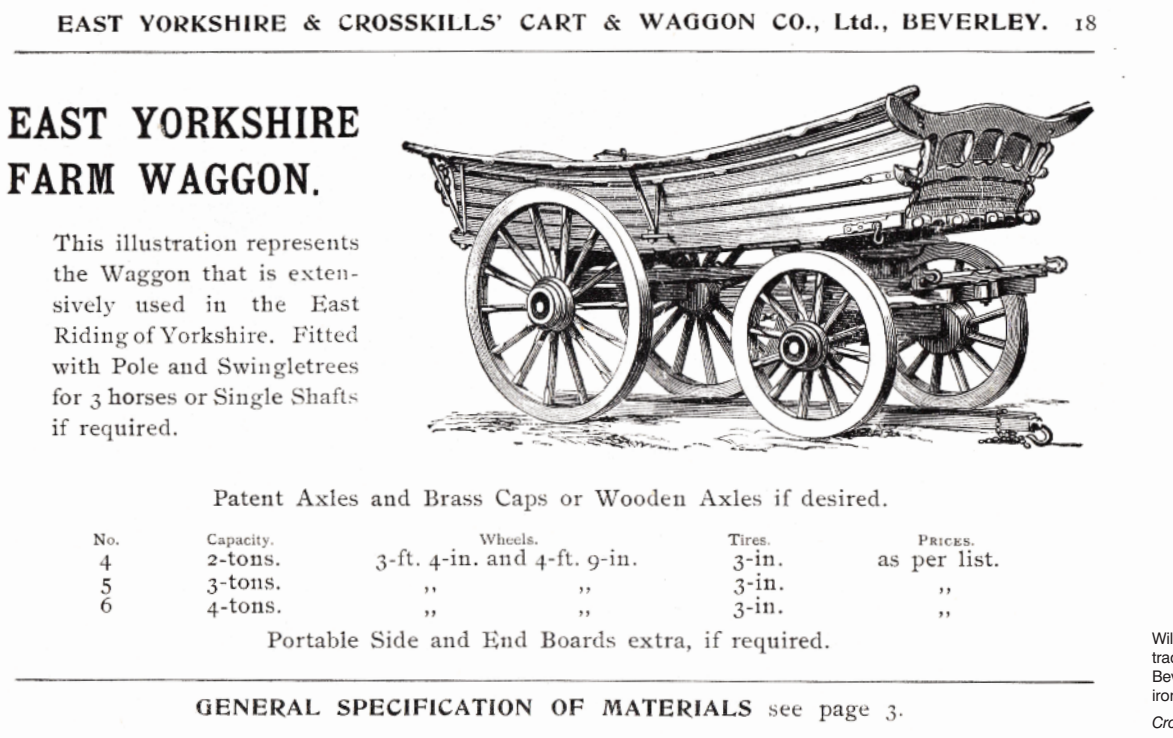
The Story *of the* Wolds Wagon

History



EAST YORKSHIRE & CROSSKILLS' CART & WAGGON CO., Ltd., BEVERLEY. 18

EAST YORKSHIRE FARM WAGGON.

This illustration represents the Waggon that is extensively used in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Fitted with Pole and Swingletrees for 3 horses or Single Shafts if required.

Patent Axles and Brass Caps or Wooden Axles if desired.

No.	Capacity.	Wheels.		Tires.	Prices.
4	2-tons.	3-ft. 4-in.	and 4-ft. 9-in.	3-in.	as per list.
5	3-tons.	,,	,,	3-in.	,,
6	4-tons.	,,	,,	3-in.	,,

Portable Side and End Boards extra, if required.

GENERAL SPECIFICATION OF MATERIALS see page 3.

William Crosskill manufactured trade and agricultural vehicles at Beverley. He pioneered the use of iron hubs and patent iron axles.

Croskills' Catalogue 1904

Carts have two wheels and wagons have four. Every part of the UK had a different design of wagon.

Three Yorkshire wagons, the Dales, Moors and Wolds wagons are very similar in design but differ in size. The Dales wagon from Bilsdale, Bransdale, Rosedale and the other moorland dales of North East Yorkshire were just 8 feet long and 5 feet wide. The Moors wagon from the coastal districts North of Scarborough were 10 feet long and 5 feet wide. The Wolds wagon was the largest at 12 feet long and 6 feet wide. They could carry 4 tons and were fitted with a pole for a pair of horses to work side by side.

Wagons have smaller wheels at the front to allow part of the wheel to turn under the body of the wagon and so increase the turning circle.

There were a number of wagon makers in the Wolds each with their own style. Wagons were made to order and farmers would demand modifications and particular colours.

The wagon lasted on the farm for over 200 years but by the 1950's was a rare sight and the new tractors and steel framed trailers with pneumatic tyres had replaced them.

The wagon is driven by a postilion, rather than someone sat on the wagon itself, a tradition that lasted on the Wolds well into the 1930's. The clumsy old wains were drawn by oxen but by the late 18th century they had been replaced by the wagon drawn by horses.

George Walker Costumes of Yorkshire 1814.

A Wolds wagon at harvest time harnessed unicorn fashion.
A moors wagon can be seen at the Ryedale Folk Museum, a Dales and Wolds wagon at the Beck Isle Museum and a Wolds wagon at Sledmere.

"About the time we beginne to cut grass or howsoever the weke afore wee intende to leade hey, wee sende worde to the wright to come and see that the axcle trees and felses of the wains bee sownde and firme" Henry Best of Elmswell 1642.

Exhibition from
The Museum of the Wagoners Special Reserve.

Supported by
Museum Development Yorkshire

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The Story of the Wolds Wagon

Timbers

A pollarded oak where branches have been regularly cut for their particular shape leaving a short tree with a thick trunk.

Thomas Bewick 1753 – 1828

Wagon makers would go out into the woods and choose particular trees to fell and season for their work.

Where the finished part of the wagon was curved or shaped they would choose trees and branches with that same curve rather than cut a curve from a straight piece of timber.

Oak

Oak for the wheel spokes was split rather than sawn along the grain for greatest strength.

Ash

Ash for the felloes or rim of the wheel. Ash has great flexibility.

Elm

Used for the Nave or central hub of the wheel. Elm is hard and does no easily split.

Pine

Planks from pine trees for the panels and sides of the wagon.

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Trades

Fitting a wheel. From William Pyne Microcosm 1802

To make a wagon you need; a wheelwright, a blacksmith, a cartwright or wainwright, a sawyer to fell and shape the timber and a painter. Many businesses would have all these trades and produce the finished wagons from tree to the final coat of paint.

During the 19th century wagon makers could buy in some of the parts ready made in particular the metal axles, brass hub caps, hinges, metal work and nails.

Blacksmiths Mark and Harold Fletcher hooping a wheel with a hot metal rim. The metal rims were heated up and quickly cooled with water to shrink it on to the wheel.

Photo ©Sydney Smith Collection, Beck Isle Museum and Mrs Barbara Sokel.

Two men one above and one below planking an oak tree in a saw pit.

Photo ©Sydney Smith Collection, Beck Isle Museum and Mrs Barbara Sokel

Cyril Sissons wheelwright from Beswick demonstrates making a wheel.

Photo The David Morgan Rees collection at Sheffield Hallam University

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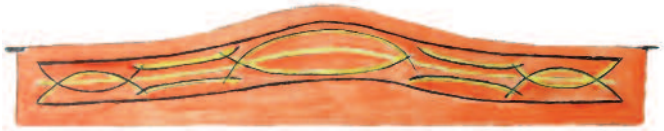
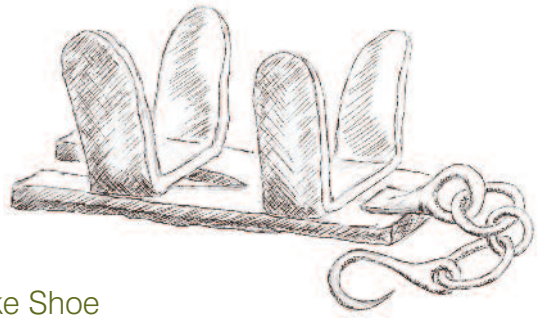
Tackle



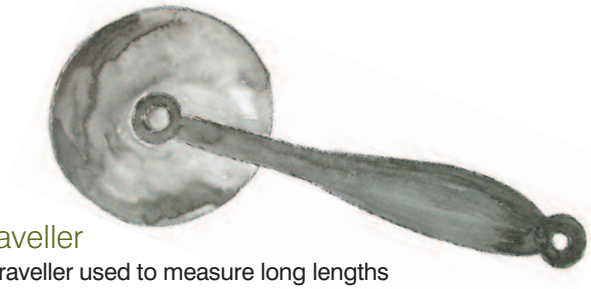
Greedy Boards

So called because they allow a larger load of smaller produce to be loaded, such as turnips or swedes. Tractor trailers today still use greedy boards.



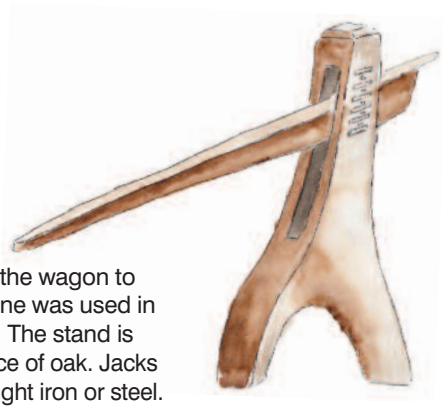
Brake Shoe

Fitted to the rim of the wheel before going down a steep hill. It slows down the wagon but damages the surface of the road.



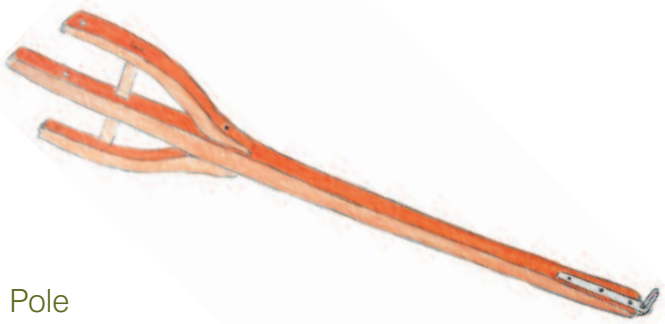
Traveller

A traveller used to measure long lengths such as the circumference of a wheel.



Cart Jack

Used to lift the body of the wagon to remove a wheel. This one was used in the Sissons' workshop. The stand is made from a single piece of oak. Jacks can be made from wrought iron or steel.



Pole

Attaches the horses to the wagon.

Tool

This tool is used to remove the pins that hold the wheels onto the axle.

Swingle Tree

Helps to balance the pull from alternate shoulders as the horse pulls the wagon.

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