

## Is it Cross End or Davy's Corner?

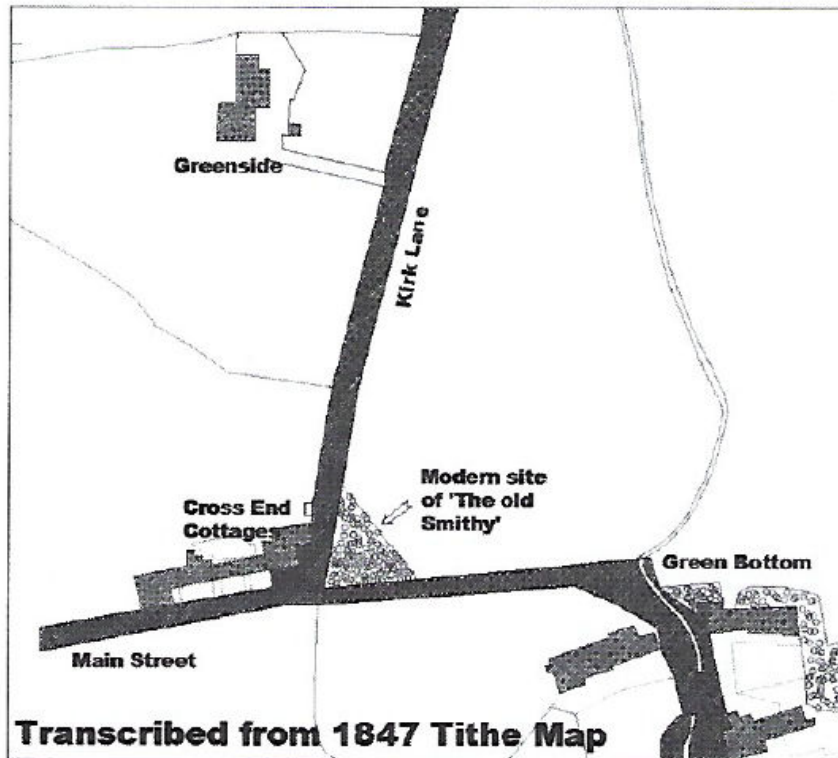
What is the name for the junction of Kirk Lane and Main Street? Is it Cross End or Davy's Corner? The straight answer to the question is both. But the names derive from different centuries.



*Illustration: Cross End with Davy's former warehouse (now private houses) on the right, on Kirk Lane*

The name 'Cross End' is supposed to be because the Embsay market-cross stood near to this location. In the history of Embsay-with-Eastby which she edited in the 1970s, Winifred Wharton states that the shaft of the cross stood near Green Bottom Farm until 1820 and that it was believed that some of the stones from the cross were used in the construction of the barn which is now the house on the corner called the Old Smithy. This is perfectly possible. Old redundant constructions were frequently re-used in building barns and houses. Is there any more evidence?

The earliest map we have of Embsay is the 1847 'Tithe Award'. This shows all the buildings at the Cross End part of the village. It shows a small tree or bush-covered corner where the Old Smithy now stands, so it shows that the original barn was not built until after 1847. But the cross, in all likelihood existed. Maybe the reason there was a small corner set aside was that the Embsay market cross stood there. From 1155 until about 1350 a fair was held on three days at the feast day of the translation of St Cuthbert (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> September).



At first the fair provided a good income for Bolton Priory, but it became less successful as the 14<sup>th</sup> century progressed. The fair was probably held on the Village Green, although, on the 1847 map, the field names below Bondcroft (Great Nunwells and Little Nunwells) imply part of the fair took place here (the Latin word for 'fair' in the Bolton Priory records is *Nundinas*). A medieval green was not the enclosed, close-mown green that we would think of today. It was an open field on which all villagers could graze their animals. Greenside, the house on Kirk Lane, probably stood beside the medieval Green. Green Bottom Farm also stood on or by the Green, but the bottom of the Green was probably below Shires Lane. As Emsay was part of the monastic estate of Bolton Priory, the cross will have stood until at least the dissolution of the priory in 1539.

The name 'Davy's Corner' comes from the later 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. From the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the houses and warehouse on the corner made up a complex of grocery stores and shops. The 1841 census records a William Mattock running a grocery and drapery business from Cross End. In 1861 John Mattock (William's brother) and his wife Sarah were living there with Mary Mattock, his 78-year-old widowed mother living next door.

By 1871 a John Davy was living in the same house as John Mattock and he took the business over a couple of years later, running it with his wife Sarah until he died in 1905. The grocery business continued with Sarah at the helm, probably with her son Arthur, until Sarah died in 1924, and Arthur in 1925. The last recorded Davy living at Davy's Corner was Bertha who lived there until her death in January 1976. Bertha was the daughter of John William Davy who lived on Main Street before moving to Hunslet, near Leeds. She was a distant cousin of John and Arthur Davy.

*Chris Lunnon, Emsay-with-Eastby Historical Research Group (2019)*