

LEATHER & TANYARDS

A tanyard was set up close by the river at the southern end of the Village by the monks of Battle Abbey . For several hundred years the tanyard was here around what is now 1, 2 and 3 Tanyard Cottages.

Farmland surrounded the village as it does today and there were plenty of cattle about. Beasts were killed in the village slaughteryard and their hides brought to the tanyard for turning into leather. No part of the animal was wasted even the hair and bristles were used for clothing and brushes. The business of turning hides into leather was long, messy and smelly taking up to two years and again involved the timber industry as tannin used in the process was obtained from the oak tree bark. Battle was the hub of the leather industry and people even came from the continent to buy at Battle's weekly market. Fellmongers and leather dressers, both occupations connected with the tanyard, are recorded living here in the 19th century just before this tanyard closed.