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OLD COTTINGLEY

Men and Houses of Long Ago

We are indebted to Mr. Harry Pratt, F.R.S.S., of "Wendron," Woodlands Grove, Cottingley, for the following historical notes on the village of Cottingley, culled from many sources as the result of most patient research.

The pleasant village of Cottingley was one of the Domesday manors included in the ancient parish of Bingley under the name Cotinglei.

There has been some doubt as to the origin of the name but it is fairly obvious that it comes from the Anglo-Saxon Goding or Goting, a family name, and ley, leah, a cultivated district. The site of the Old Hall is entrenched, and this may have formed part of the original defences of the Teutonic settlers.

The Old Hall stood at the top of the village, being the last house on leaving it in this direction. It was a picturesque Jacobean building, but much decayed, and had been long divided into cottages when it was pulled down in 1872. It bore the double cross of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem, indicating that the hall was held under the "Manor of St. John of Jerusalem." The initial stones were removed to St. Ives. Upon one are the initials R.F. A.F. with the date 1659, the initials being those of Robert Ferrand, (died 1674) and Anne, his wife, (died 1667). Doubtless it occupied the site of a much older building, for the Franks, who had very honourable family connections, resided at Cottingley Hall long before the Reformation. William Gascoigne, of Gawthorpe, son and heir of William Gascoigne, married Agnes, daughter and heiress of Nicholas Frank and had a son, Sir William Gascoigne, Chief Justice of England. Stephen, son of William Frank, gent, was living at Cottingley early in the reign of Elizabeth, and had several sons and daughters, the eldest of whom, William, was born at Cottingley in 1581. Stephen died in 1620, and in his will, which is dated 29th March, 1617, he mentions his son and heir, William, who, it would appear was something of a vagabond and spendthrift. It is ordered that unless he "live frugally and thriftily" a certain sum of money is to be left in trust to Alice,

daughter of Stephen, who was wife of Thomas Leach, for the benefit of her children absolutely. It is doubtless the same William Frank who was fined in 1617 for what seems to have been unprovoked assaults on his father and another Cottingley man.

Claim to a Bed.

When Queen Mary in 1557 revived the Order of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem there was issued out of the Manor of Cottingley, the sum of 6/8d. and service, then or late of the heirs of William Franke. At the Court held at Cottingley, on April 6th, 1621, a copy of an ancient deed was presented, showing that the Prior of St. John and Henry Walrush had entered into an agreement whereby on the death of a tenant of the Order, the lord of the manor claimed the best chattel in the possession of the tenant at the time of his death. Thus the Court sought the executors of the above Stephen Frank to compound with the lord of the manor "for the bed wheren he dyed, or deliver ye same to ye said Lord." Whether the bed was actually delivered or compounded for is not stated.

The manor was subsequently, about 1620, acquired by the Sunderlands, and in 1669 it was in possession of the Dobson family, of the Vicarage, Bingley. Thomas Dobson, Esq., of Cottingley House, in 1723 devised the same to his only child, who marrying in 1737 the Rev. William Lamplugh, carried the estate to that family. The issue of this marriage was again an only daughter, Elizabeth Lamplugh, married in 1761, at Bingley, to Henry Wickham, Esq., J.P., after whose death in 1804 the property was sold to the trustees under the will of Benjamin Ferrand, Esq. and added to the settled family estates.

The Wickhams.

Cottingley House, now known as Cottingley Hall, was a handsome old mansion. The original building consisted of three stories, the principal entrance to it was obliterated by the wing build by the Wickhams, having been at the west end. Over the front door was carved a buck's head; being the crest of the Wickhams. Formerly the coaches passed through the park enclosing the mansion, and emerged on the road by the archway (now blocked) opposite the town well, continuing upwards past the Sun Inn, and ascending the hill through Cottingley. There was a private bath house close behind the old toll bar house, and from the Hall down to the fishpond, beside the highway, there was a long shaded walk by an avenue of stately trees. The walk continued to the riverside, where the Wickhams had also a boat house.

The Wickhams were a distinguished family, intimately associated with Royalty. William Wickham, who died in 1595, was Bishop of Winchester and his wife Anthanina was a daughter of Bishop Barlow. Their son, Henry, became Archdeacon of York Minster in 1697. He married Annabella, daughter of Sir Henry Cholmeley and their son, Tobias, who became Dean of York, was also buried in York Minster.

The son of Tobias, Henry, also found a last resting place in the Minster in 1735 and another son, William, was Clerk of the Peace at Wakefield. Henry married Margaret Archer of Barbados, and their son, Henry D. D. Guiseley, appears also to have been a cleric, for we learn that he was buried at Bath Abbey.

Henry of Cottingley, son of this Henry, was born of September 7th, 1731. He became a lieutenant-colonel and a justice and was married and buried at Bingley. He married Elizabeth, daughter of William Lamplugh, of Cottingley, Vicar of Dewsbury. One of their sons, William, became a Secretary of State and a Privy Councillor and another son, Lamplugh, who took the name of Hird on his marriage, became Vicar of Paull in the East Riding.

Henry Wickham, son of Lamplugh, was M.P. for Bradford and another son, Lamplugh, became a justice at Low Moor.

William, grandson of the Secretary of State, born in 1831, also became a member of Parliament.

Richard Thornton, Friend of Livingstone.

After the death of Colonel Wickham in 1804, Cottingley House was occupied by Mrs. Sarah Ferrand, and upon her leaving it in 1819, the old

mansion remained untenanted for a number of years. It was then leased, about 1835, by Mr. Richard Thornton, of Bradford, who for some time up to his death in 1843 was clerk to the old Court of Requests in Bradford. He was a gentleman of literary tastes, and was one of the founders of the Bradford Library. Richard Thornton married in 1821, Eliza Hastwell of Askrigg. Twelve children were born of this marriage; the eleventh child being Richard Thornton, the gifted friend and companion of David Livingstone on his exploration of the unknown regions of Africa. He was born at Cottingley Hall, April 5th, 1838 and was barely 20 years of age when he left England with Livingstone for the hitherto unexplored track of the Zambesi. As young Thornton grew up he showed such an aptitude for studies of a scientific kind that his family, who had removed to Bradford, sent him to the School of Mines, in London, and when David Livingstone decided to re-visit Africa in 1858, Sir Roderick Murchison recommended Thornton to him as an excellent geologist and geographer. After spending some time on the Zambesi, he detached himself from the party, and accompanied Baron Von Decken, the famous traveller. These two intrepid travellers were the first Europeans who were able to settle by actual observation the question of snow-capped peaks in Equatorial Africa. The Baron, who communicated the important results of this expedition to the German Government wrote in high admiration of the labours and assistance of this indefatigable young Bingley man.

On February 13th, 1863, Thornton went on alone to visit the "Universities' Mission" and found that district suffering from famine, and the whole population in a most pitiable state. The commiserating young traveller, in conjunction with the Rev. Henry Rowley, volunteered to undertake a journey overland to Tete to purchase sheep, a distance of about 80 miles. The privations and exposure which he had to undergo on his toilsome march through a barbarous, hot and swampy fever stricken country, returning with about 100 head of sheep and goats, told heavily upon a constitution already weakened by over-exertion. They reached the mission station on April 2nd and on the 11th, Thornton, then in a weakly state, was with Livingstone on board the "Pioneer" when he was suddenly taken ill with dysentery and died on April 21st, 1863. On the 25th Dr. Livingstone communicated the sad news to Sir Roderick Murchison. I give below an extract from this letter.

“Murchison Cataracts”
(on the Shire)
April 25th, 1863

My Dear Sir Roderick,

With sorrow I have to communicate the sad intelligence that Mr. Richard Thornton died on the 21st current. He performed a most fatiguing journey from this to Tette and back again, and that seemed to use up all his strength, for, thereafter, he could make no exertion without painful exhaustion. His object was to connect his bearings of the hills at Tette (on the Zambesi) with the mountains here. I knew nothing of his

resolution till after he had left. He had resolved to go home after he had examined Zomba and the Malanje Range, but on the 11th he was troubled with diarrhoea, which ran into dysentery and fever. We hoped to the last that his youth and unimpaired constitution would carry him through, as he had suffered comparatively little from fever, but we are disappointed. An insidious delirium prevented us learning aught of his last wishes. All his papers, etc., were at once sealed up, and are sent home to his brother at Bradford. He is buried about 500 yds. from the foot of the first cataract, and on the right bank of the Shire.

More Cottingley History

Charlotte Bronte Turned Down

SOME INTERESTING BUILDINGS

We give below more historical details of Cottingley compiled and written by Mr. H. Pratt. He tells how Charlotte Bronte failed to secure a post as governess to the Thornton family because she could not teach music and gives details of early wool and leather workers.

Richard Thornton and also his brother Hastwell, went to Bingley Grammar School. The latter brother became a doctor of medicine, and died in Canada. Richard, on leaving Bingley, was a pupil at the Bradford Grammar School, and subsequently, as already mentioned, he went to the School of Mines. It is also interesting to know that while the Thorntons resided at Cottingley Hall, the distinguished novelist, Charlotte Bronte, applied there for a situation as governess, but as Miss Bronte could not undertake to give music lessons to Mrs. Thornton's children, she was not engaged.

Cottingley Hall was subsequently occupied by the several families of Lupton, Firth and Stansfield. In 1887 it was taken by Mr. Charles H. Priestley.

After the death of Mr. Priestley, his wife continued to live at the Hall until her death when it was sold to Mr. Harry Briggs who occupied same until he let it go to Mr. Asa Lingard. The Hall was eventually pulled down during the war of 1914/18.

Outstanding Houses.

Hill Top Farm stood at the back of Cottingley Church and it was here that prisoners were housed before being sent to Bradford. The last occupiers were the Dibb family, the farm being pulled down.

Cottingley Manor was built in the early years of the reign of George V. The Manor gives one the impression of being a very old mansion but in view of the fact that it has only been up for 30 years one feels somewhat disappointed. The house was built by Mr. Harry Briggs who also built Cottingley Hall shortly afterwards for his son, Mr. Edward Briggs.

Cottingley Grange opposite the ancient Sun Inn, is another old homestead and at one time the residence of the Hollings family. A stone on an out-building is inscribed I.H., M.H., 1671, G.H., and in front of the house appears the double cross indicating that it was formerly in possession of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem. In the yard behind was an old bakehouse, with spacious fireplace, once used as a drying room for leather. A number of tan-pits formerly existed near an old

homestead close by, appropriately named Bark House (now pulled down), and the business of leather dressing was carried on at Cottingley for a long period. The Lister family were engaged in the trade here in the time of the Civil Wars, and two centuries ago the same business was carried on by some of the Hollings. The family had been connected with Cottingley from at least the reign of Henry VIII.

Early Wool Workers.

Before the adoption of steam power most of the villagers of Cottingley were engaged in combing and spinning by hand, and for many years up to his death in 1838, Mr. Edward Berwick kept nearly half the inhabitants employed. He resided in the old Grange, and in the building in the yard adjoining he used to store his wool before weighing it out to the hand combers. He occupied Dixon's Mill at Saltaire for about 20 years. Besides manufacturing, he farmed the land belonging to Mr. Thomas Baines, as well as that included in the property of Mr. Henry Mason, of Bankfield. Mr. Berwick is remembered as a capable and considerate employer, and was well known in the trade and greatly respected. In middle life he had the misfortune to meet with an accident which necessitated in the amputation of one of his legs. The operation was performed at his residence at Cottingley, and it is said he bore the trial with remarkable fortitude, chloroform being at that time not used. The old Grange was ultimately divided into two separate dwellings.

"The Sun."

The old Sun Inn was used sometimes as a stopping place before the new road was made and the toll bar erected in 1825. It is the only "public" in the village, and has doubtless been an inn for centuries. It has been impossible to arrive at any nearer estimate of its age than that "it hed allus been thear." In the old Parish constable days and before the erection of the Town Hall, cases used to be tried in a ground-floor room, afterwards used as the "snug" and meetings were usually held here for the transaction of public business. The inn over a century and a half ago was kept by a man well known to the drivers of the coaches as Joss Smith, whose widow, Jane Smith, continued in the house until her death at an advanced age in 1812. It was then taken by the Fosters, who had it for forty years. Joseph Foster died in 1832 and his widow Hannah in 1852, when their son, James Moore continued the occupancy.

Bankfield was built in 1848 by Mr. Wm. Murgatroyd who was Mayor of Bradford in 1854. It is a handsome erection in Tudor style and has a frontage to the road of 120 feet long. Mr. Henry Mason acquired the property and enlarged it in 1871.

The Church.

The Church of St. Michael and All Angels was consecrated by the Bishop of Ripon on September 29th, 1886. The building had been erected in 1877 as a mission church of the parish of Holy Trinity, Bingley. In 1881 a schoolroom was added by the liberality of Mr. Henry Mason, and early in 1886 Mr. Mason offered a sum of £1,500 towards the endowment of an independent Parish Church. A district comprising 985 acres was assigned by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners out of the Parish of Holy Trinity, and the Rev. John Simpson, M.A., from Grasmere, who had been nine years curate-in-charge was appointed first incumbent.

The Town Hall.

A unique village is Cottingley. In the year 1876, the principal, in fact the only public building of any kind was the Town Hall, in which the social, religious and educational institutions were located. This building was of such proportions as were not frequently met with in a district of 800 inhabitants. In the early 19th century the children were taught to read and write on Sundays in a small chamber, but this proving very inconvenient, a barn was taken for the summer months, and in winter the parlour of a Mrs. Stanley. After some little time, however, a blacksmith's shop was procured, which, with some alterations, was turned into a school. It was also used for divine worship by different sections, and for a day school when the village could support a master. At length a memorial was got up to Wm. Ferrand, Esq., to give a site for a new building, and also to John Hollings, Esq., to give the old school and the land surrounding it. These gentlemen generously responded, a subscription was commenced and the result was the erection of the present building. The Town Hall was opened in March, 1865, having cost £3,000. The hall is a substantial structure of Italian design and contains lecture room, classrooms, and a schoolroom in the basement. The cost was all liquidated by voluntary subscriptions. The management of the hall, as well as of the day school, held in the basement of it, was to be strictly undenominational.

In October, 1865, the Cottingley Mechanics Institute, which had existed for some years in limited quarters, was removed to its new home in the Town Hall. The Institute was established in 1852, when twenty-two members were enrolled, a library commenced and classes formed. The number of members and subscribers in 1875 was 141. There were 620 volumes in the library, from which about 1,000 issues were made each year.

Cottingley Court.

As mentioned previously a court used to be held at Cottingley, the following are extracts taken from Court records.

**Court held at Cottingley,
April 3rd, 1616.**

Proving Wills. The administrators or executors of the will of Richard Jowet of Helwick, deceased, who died under the crosse at Helwick, shall make their appearance here at the next court, and prove the will of deceased on pain of 30s.

Assize of Ale. That William Longe, Edmund Fairburn, William Wright, and John Stymson are common typlers and alehouse keepers, and that they have not kept the assize of ale, but sould the same contrary to the Statute, therefore they are amerced as in the Statute.

Sabbath desecration. Abraham Willman for playing football upon the Sabbath : fine 3/4d.

No satisfactory pedigree of the Frank family has yet been compiled, though they were well-to-do people at Cottingley from the days of the Reformation, as proved by the Parish Registers (Bingley), and William Frank, of Keighley, was buried in the Chancel at Keighley in 1578.

Stephen Frank, of Cottingley - Gent - was a juror at Leeds Sessions in 1597.

Cottingley people were interested in the Parliamentary elections over 200 years ago and from old records we are told that at the election of Member of Parliament for Yorkshire in 1741/2 – W. Lamplugh, John Lister, Oldroyd Skirrow. John Booth all voted for George Fox, Esq., whilst Bryan Lister and Joseph Hollings voted for Cholmley Turner, Esq.

The Church Wardens books of Bingley give information concerning Cottingley people and the following are extracts from same.

- 1689 John Dobson of Cottingley, son of Thomas Dobson of Bingley, buried at Bingley, aged 31.
- 1697/8 February 19th. Mr. John Walker married a daughter of William Rawson, and William Lister married a daughter of Dobson of Cottingley. Feb. 18th. Both of these young men stole their wives.
- 1701 October. Michael Maud of Cottingley buried aged 62.
- 1702 April 11th. Matthew Foster of Cottingley had not been well but breathed heavily, found by his wife, aged 74.
- 1716 August 10th. Isaac, son of John Hollings of Cottingley, buried, a hopeful young man designed for the Ministry.
- 1719 March 2nd. John Hollings – Cottingley, buried his wife.
- 1737 Joseph Hollings of Cottingley and Miss Marshall near Rawdon, married.