

Hest Bank Lodge or Hest Bank House (including Prospect Cottage)

Introduction

Elizabeth Livesay, a copyholder on a list of local residents of 1763, died in 1768 leaving all her property in Slyne and Hest to her daughter Elizabeth Wilson. The estate included Throstle Grove farm in Slyne and two houses and a farm in Hest. Elizabeth Wilson died in 1801, she had no children, and she bequeathed Throstle Grove to Edward Lodge and the Hest property to Richard Aldren. This included Hest Bank Lodge, Marine Lodge and the Old Hall farm. The history of all these properties is therefore closely linked.

Richard Aldren was the first owner about whom we have some information. Richard was a rope maker and a twine spinner living in Lancaster. He was a successful business man and became a Freeman of the City of Lancaster in 1802. He and his wife came to live in Hest Bank after his inheritance and he was appointed to the Jury of the Manor Court in 1802 and was made foreman of the Manor Court in 1807.

Hest Bank Lodge, earlier known as Hest Bank House, was a beautiful mansion house situated on Peacock Lane. Unfortunately we do not know precisely when the house was built but a date between 1760 and 1810 seems most likely. It was regrettably demolished in 1960 to make way for the present Wimpey Houses. On the day of its destruction villagers who had known and loved the house all their lives watched the scene, many of them in tears. The house had a "pleasure ground", a large garden, and plantations extending along Peacock Lane.

The Jackson Family

Richard died in 1814 leaving his property to his daughter Ann. The same year Ann Aldren married Robert Jackson of Bolton-le-Sands. From this union the ownership of the Hest Bank property was transferred to Robert Jackson who was also described in the Baines's Directory of 1824 as a gentleman living in Slyne-with-Hest. From 1814 to 1830 Robert and Ann and their children lived at Hest Bank Lodge and one of their children died there in 1817.

The Jacksons moved to Liverpool about 1830 after Robert and Ann mortgaged part of their property in Hest Bank in order to set up a business. Their property included the Old Hall, Hest Bank Lodge, the Warehouse, Marine Lodge and about one hundred acres of land; the tenant of the Lodge in 1831 was John Alexander Hunter. Robert Jackson died suddenly in January 1832, aged 43 and his wife Ann later moved back to Hest Bank where she died at The Prospect in 1859 aged 70.

The death of Robert and Ann's first child is recorded as follows:

**1817. Richard Chippindale Jackson, Hest Bank Lodge, aged 3 months.
[Bolton-le-Sands Register of Deaths]**

Two other sons Edmund and Robert were enrolled at Lancaster Royal Grammar School and appear from the record to have had successful careers:

**1830, 28th July, Edmund Jackson of Hest Bank, brother of Robert and Richard.
An Edmund Jackson of Cable Street Lancaster attended the Old Boy's Dinner in 1862.
July 1830, Robert Jackson of Hest Bank, brother of Edmund and Richard.**

**A Robert Jackson, attorney, was appointed a director of The Lancaster Bank on his return from Cheltenham in 1873.
[Lancaster Royal Grammar School Register]**

An entry from the Gazette records the marriage details of their second son Robert in 1846:

**June 13th 1846. On the 2nd inst at St Philips Church, Liverpool by the Rev. R L Townend. Mr. Robert Hall Jackson, second son of the late Robert Jackson Esq. of Hest Bank near Lancaster, to Emma, eldest daughter of Mr. Robert Bennett of Manchester, sol., and granddaughter of the late Robert Bennett Esq. of Mottram in Longendale in the County of Chester.
[Lancaster Gazette]**

The Draft of the Mortgage in 1827 which the Jacksons raised to finance the Liverpool business is interesting because it mentions a House and a Dwyhouse (presumably a dyehouse). It also gives us an indication of the value of part of the property owned by the Jacksons, for they are seeking a mortgage of £4,000; today's equivalent would be roughly £400,000.

**Made this third day of March in the year of our Lord 1827. Between Robert Jackson of Lancaster in the County of Lancaster Gentleman and Ann his wife of one part and Edmund Jackson and Richard Jackson both of the same place, Gentlemen, of the second part--- are trustees under a civilian order of the Court of the City of Lancaster.
A Farm at Hest, Stable Shippon, and outbuildings and land all in the possession of Robert Foxcroft, tenant, and also all that messuage and Dwyhouse also situate and being at Hest Bank, with the Garden adjoining and now in the possession of Margaret Elizabeth Thornton and Jane Thornton as tenants. And also all that dwelling house now in the possession of Robert Gibson.
[Original document, Lancaster library]**

Clearly the farm referred to is the Old Hall. The house with the dye-house could have been one of the cottages which the Jacksons owned, or more likely the Canal Warehouse. The dwelling house in the possession of Robert Gibson is now The Prospect. Robert was the Vicar of Bolton-le-Sands Church. Hest Bank Lodge itself was apparently not included in the mortgage.

By 1845 the owner of the Lodge was Edmund Jackson, eldest son of Robert and Ann Jackson and the tenant was Joseph Pickard. Later the house was occupied by the Peacock family. The Tithe map of 1845 clearly shows that there were plantations along the whole length of Peacock Lane and these were also owned by Edmund Jackson. People who have lived in the village all their lives remember having to take umbrellas with them when they walked along Peacock Lane, not because it was raining but to protect themselves and their clothes from the many bird droppings!

The plantations along Peacock Lane became mature and were up for sale on February 1st 1840. These plantations must have been replanted at various times for they were said to be seventeen years old in 1831. They were probably planted in rotation, then harvested at intervals over the years. The mature trees we now see on Peacock Lane are possibly about one hundred and fifty years old. The Lancaster Gazette had the sale notice:

To Be Sold By Auction.

At the house of Jane Wilkinson (Old Hall) Hest Bank Lancaster, on Thursday 6th. February next at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, either together or in lots suitable to Purchasers.

A Plantation of Excellent Alders, about one acre, of 16 years growth, fit for the best Bobbin Wood, now growing upon the estate of the late Robert Jackson, at Hest Bank, three miles from Lancaster, and close to Lancaster Canal, consisting of Larch, Birch, Plane Tree, Elm etc. Also a quantity of large Poplars. For further particulars inquire of Thomas Miller, Wood Dealer, Gressingham or T. Hodgson, Burton Colliery near Bentham. [Lancaster Gazette]

Sale Notices

In 1831 all the property belonging to Robert Jackson was sold, it was divided into eleven lots. Hest Bank Lodge was then known as "Hest Bank House" and at the auction it was described as "The Freehold Property situated in the Township of Slyne-with-Hest with an extent of nine acres". The advertisement emphasised that the Lancaster Canal, on which there were daily Packets, ran through the estate. There was also a lithograph, by J. Rothwell of Lancaster, showing the front of the property.

Lot 1 Hest Bank House , in the possession of John Alexander Hunter, Esq. Mansion House and Pleasure Grounds, Lodge, Gardens, Yard, and Plantations, Also a good Pew in Bolton Church.

John Hunter was the tenant between 1830 and 1831. His wife gave birth to a daughter on March 1830. The family moved away in 1831 and we have a record of the sale of his property:

**Sale of property of a Gentleman of Hest Bank, J.A.Hunter (moving from the District.) 1831.
A brown Mare, accustomed to harness and of capital action; with Gig and set of Harness complete. A small Bay Pony, steady and quiet to drive, with a neat Pony Phaeton and Harness (nearly new). Two Short-horned Cows, and a quantity of Dairy Utensils, two Pigs, two Carts and Wheels, and a good set of Cart Harness, Saddles Bridles and also (by the thrave) Two Stacks of excellent wheat, and about 150 yards of Hay. A number of Greenhouse Plants and other effects, all the property of a gentleman removing from the neighbourhood.**

In 1840 Hest Bank Lodge was advertised to be let. The notice below gives us a very good description of the house. It is interesting that mention is made of the coming railway and that it would not pass over Morecambe Bay!

To be let by Private Treaty with immediate possession all that Elegant Mansion called Hest Bank House. In the present possession of Edward Salisbury Esq. Situate in the Township of Slyne-with-Hest three miles from Lancaster. Pleasure Grounds Gardens, Greenhouses, Plantations, Coach House, Stables and other buildings, containing together with the beautiful Lawn in front of rich land, about five and a half statute acres, or thereabouts.

The House comprises on the ground floor, a Dining Room, 13 feet-6 inches by 12 feet-6 inches, a Drawing Room, 19 feet by 17 feet-3inches. Entrance Hall, Breakfast Room, Library. Five Bedrooms are on the first floor and servant rooms in the Attics.

The Mansion is very beautifully situate on the most interesting part of Morecambe Bay (over which no fear of a Railway being made for this century at least) and commands lovely views of the Lake Mountains. The canal from Kendal to Lancaster and Preston passes a short distance below the house, and Swift Water Witches sail by daily.

Hest Bank Lodge became a School

The following advertisement was published in the Gazette on the 17th. March 1840 and shows that the Lodge opened as a boarding school for young gentlemen.

Hest Bank House.

Late the Residence of E. D. Salisbury Esq.

Mr. Thomas Bond, Respectfully announces his intentions of receiving (after the Midsummer vac.) a limited number of Young Gentlemen for Boarder and Instruction in the usual branches of a Liberal Education.

Having had many years experience as a Private Tutor in families of the first respectability; Mr. Bond feels assured of being able to give entire satisfaction to those parents and guardians who may entrust their children to his care.

Hest Bank House occupies a healthful and beautiful situation on the shores of Morecambe Bay, three miles from Lancaster, having extensive pleasure grounds attached, as possessing great facility of access.

References kindly permitted to, George Burrow Esq., Leonard Gate Lancaster. Enoch Broster, Vale Cottage. George Fishwick, Springfield. Rev. Dr. Beaumont, Liverpool. Rev. John Bedford, Preston. Rev. W.O. Booth Longholme, near Burnley.
Prospectuses may be had on application. 17, Queen Street, Lancaster.

Mr Thomas Bond, aged 29, was the Schoolmaster and he lived with his wife Grace and baby daughter Mary. By 1841 there were three pupils; Henery Herd, aged 14, James Heaton, aged 13 and William Taylor also aged 13. We do not know if Mr. Bond also took Day-Pupils but there were several families in the village who could have afforded private tutoring at that time. This is the first school I have come across in the Township of Slyne-with-Hest.

A further notice which I came across in the Gazette describes the type of education the boys would receive:

Hest Bank Academy.
conducted by Mr. T. Bond.
The attention of Parents and Guardians is respectfully invited to this Establishment, in which a very limited number of Young Gents will receive a sound Classical and Commercial Education, and enjoy the benefits of affectionate treatment and a beautiful sea-coast residence.
The school will open on the 20th July.
Hest Bank House May 28th. 1840.

At that time the house was in fact split into two halves, the school occupied one half and in the other half was Richard Thornton with his wife Hannah and daughter Eleanor. Richard was described as of "independent means" in the census of 1841 and he could afford four servants:

Richard Thornton, aged 30, of independent means.
Hannah, wife, aged 30.
Eleanor, aged 9.
Elizabeth Pye, aged 20, female servant.
Ann Taylor, aged 20, female servant.
Alice Kellet, aged 13, female servant.
George Loyne, aged 30, male servant.

The Peacocks

Members of the Peacock family played an important part in Slyne village from the eighteenth century. Peacock Lane was named after Robert Backhouse Peacock, author of "A Glossary of the Dialect of The Hundred of Lonsdale North and South of the Sands" (1869). The book was published after the death of Robert using all his original notes.

Robert B Peacock.

Robert Backhouse Peacock bought the Lodge in the sale of 1859 and occupied the property with his wife Dorothy. Robert was born in Slyne and became a successful solicitor. The census return of 1861 gives the details of the household and we note that they had a visitor and also a Master of Giggleswick School was a lodger:

R B Peacock, aged 47, solicitor.
Dorothy Peacock, aged 45, wife.
John Brockbank, visitor, aged 47, solicitor, Alderman of Lancaster.
Matthew Wood, widower, aged 29, Master of Giggleswick School.
Frances M'lune, female servant, aged 24, cook.
Mary Skissow, female servant, aged 24, housemaid. [Census return 1861]

Robert gathered all the information for the dialect glossary during his life but he died suddenly in April 1864 aged 50. Frederick J. Furnivall wrote as follows:

Suddenly without warning of previous illness, came the news of Mr. Peacock's death in April, 1864. No one who knew him even so slightly as I did, can have received the news without unusual regret. A bright presence was gone. A happy useful life cut short whilst in its early autumn, which one had hoped might have lasted long to gladden the eyes of his friends, One could not but wish that some fuller record of a lost helper's work should be preserved than the Paper I have mentioned; and, on my suggestion, the intention Mr. Peacock had formed of printing the words as a Glossary has been carried out, there being no separate work on the Lonsdale Dialect in existence.

The Glossary was edited by the Rev. J. C. Atkinson who corrected and revised the sheets and generally prepared it for publication. Mr. Furnivall goes on to describe Mr. Peacock as full of energy, care in his work, and says the Glossary will be valued by his friends and neighbours and is a worthy tribute to his memory. I did take a look at the Glossary and found it most useful. For example I had come across a Haver Bread Baker living at Slyne in one of the village directories: George Armistead, haver-bread baker, Kings Square, Slyne, 1913.

Havver bread-----oat-bread, Havver Keyak-----oat-cake, Havver-seck----an oat meal bag, and hence Haver-sack.

Certainly I would not have found this in any ordinary dictionary.

Dorothy Peacock

Of all the many occupants of Hest Bank Lodge Dorothy Peacock lived there the longest, she remained in the house until at least 1891. In 1857 Dorothy and Robert Peacock donated £5 to the enlargement of the Free Grammar School at Bolton-le-Sands. In 1883 the Hest Bank Mission Room was opened with accommodation for about 30 people for church services. The rent was paid by Mrs. Dorothy Peacock. She also contributed money to the building of St Luke's Church in 1890. We find the final mention of her in the census of 1891:

Dorothy Peacock, widow, aged 75, living on her own means.
Elizabeth Lowndes, aged 61, visitor from St Pancras, London, single with no profession.
Elizabeth Shaw, aged 31, house maid, single.
Elen Joans, aged 30, cook, single. [Census return 1891]

Peacock Lane Ghost?

Several people living on Peacock Lane say they have felt a presence and have heard sounds as of a woman weeping. However there are no reports of any actual sightings of a ghost! In my research I have found nothing untoward about this house.

Inhabitants of Hest Bank Lodge

Here is a complete list of all the recorded owners and inhabitants of the Lodge in chronological order:

1768. Elizabeth Livesay.
1768-1801. Elizabeth Wilson
1801. Owner Richard Aldren, rope maker and twine spinner.
1814. Ann Aldren, aged 25, married Robert Jackson in 1814.
1817. Robert Jackson and family.
1824-25. Robert Jackson, gentleman.
1827. Robert Jackson mortgaged his property.
1831. John Alexander Hunter, tenant. [Owned by Robert Jackson of Liverpool.]
1834. Edward Dodson Salisbury of Hest Bank son of Edward of Lancaster, Merchant. Became a Freeman of the City of Lancaster.
1840. Edward Salisbury Esq. [tenant].

1841. Thomas Bond, aged 30, Schoolmaster.
Richard Thornton, aged 30, of independent means.
1845. Joseph Pickard, tenant. [Owned by Edmund Jackson.]
1851. Joseph Pickard, Gent..
1857. J. H. Davenport, Esq..
1861. R B. Peacock, aged 47, Solicitor (owner).
1864. Mrs Peacock (widow)
1891. Mrs. Peacock .
1901. W. W. Burrow.
1913. Henry Wilson Burrow, retired.

The Cottage to Hest Bank Lodge, Known as Prospect Cottage

This cottage and garden stood on the corner of Peacock Lane where the bus-stop now stands. It was a one-storey building surrounded by a high wall. There were outbuildings and an orchard numbered 288 on the 1845 Tithe map. The cottage was built originally for employees and servants working for the owners of Hest Bank Lodge, but it was also used as a farmhouse in 1841. The villagers of Slyne-with-Hest were very versatile, often following more than one occupation and designing their houses to fit the purpose.

In 1751 Hest Bank Lane was made up as a road and it became a branch of the Garstang and Heron Syke Turnpike Trust. Later, in 1845, Hest Bank Lane was designated the Hest Bank Branch of the Trust and Prospect Cottage was used as a office of the trust. There were a large number of coaches arriving at the Hest Bank Hotel to cross the Sands and the tenant may have been responsible for small repairs to the road. These trusts were set up in order to keep the roads in good repair and one of their milestones is to be found opposite the end of Prospect Drive.

The owner of Prospect Cottage in 1845 was Edmund Jackson and the house has the same early history as Hest Bank Lodge. However it was transferred later to The Prospect and in 1862 was sold with The Prospect as a gardeners cottage described as a "Cottage House and Two Gardens to the north-west of Prospect Field". It was quite a small property with a total ground area of two roods and thirteen poles.

The Inhabitants of Prospect Cottage

From the census of 1841 we find the first records of the inhabitants of the cottage, Robert Hodgson lived there with his wife Mary and four children including a new baby:

Robert Hodgson, age 40, Farmer, born in the village.
Mary Hodgson, age 30.
Sarah, age 11.
Mary, age 6
Robert, age 4
Jane, age 10 months. [Census return 1841]

Robert was still there in 1846 but by 1859 there is a record of J Battersby living there and then Thomas Towers and family appear in the 1861 census return:

Hest Bank Lane, Prospect Cottage. Thomas John Towers, aged 26, coachman.
Jane Towers, aged 26, wife.
Henry. R. Towers, son , aged 2. Elizabeth, daughter, aged 11 months.
Martha Towers, mother, widow, aged 64. [Census return 1861]

There is no record of anyone in the cottage in 1871 census, so we must assume it was unoccupied at that time.

In 1891 there is an unusual use of the term "Hind" to describe an agricultural worker. Originally a Hind was a bondsman who was at liberty to employ a helper, usually a female agricultural worker. Joseph Cross and his wife Eleanor were both agricultural workers and we can assume that she was in the employ of her husband.

Prospect Cottage, Joseph Cross and wife Eleanor, agricultural worker, born in Pilling.

Joseph Cross, aged 21, agricultural labourer. Hind , born in Pilling.

Eleanor, wife, aged 22, agricultural worker.

John Stephanson, aged 17, boarder, single, farm labourer. [Census return 1891]

In this century there are records of Ernest Peace, who was a groom at the Hest Bank Hotel, living at the cottage in 1913 and Moses Woods living there in 1933.