

# *The Bowdon Sheaf*

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## Contents

The Booths and The Tippings: Landed Gentry and Yeomen  
Retainers by Peter Kemp Part 6.  
Samuel Okell 1838-1932, A Bowdon Resident.



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**Bowdon in the 16th and 17th centuries**  
**The Booths and the Tippings - Landed Gentry and Yeomen Retainers**  
**by Peter Kemp**  
**Part Six**

It would seem that, some time after 1684, William Tipping returned to live in Dunham Massey, possibly in 1686 when his son and heir, also William, came of age and may have taken over the Benchill farm which is where we find him later. The 1st Lord Delamer had died in 1684 and had been succeeded by his son, Henry, as the 2nd Lord and who was to become 1st Earl of Warrington in 1690. William may have returned in the hope of some advancement considering his long association with the Booths, as well as that of his father as Bailiff and his uncle as Steward. A new Steward, John Edmonds, had been appointed, but it is not known who became Bailiff in succession to William's father. At age 55, he may have been considered and rejected on age or ability grounds.

William returned to a property in Dunham Massey lying between the Dunham Massey Park boundary and Watling Street, called New Bridge, so named from its proximity to the main Chester road bridge over the river Bollin at Newbridge Hollow. Here, on the Dunham Massey side, the escarpment of the Bollin flood-plain is still called Tippings Bank and a field adjacent is called Tippings Field. It seems very likely that the house was on or very near the present site of Dunham Home Farm, where the large pond could possibly have had its origin as a moat around New Bridge, but this requires investigation. He now styled himself as a gentleman and was a man of some substance from a reading of his will of 17 May, 1698, but his total worth is unknown since no inventory has survived. The size of New Bridge is indicated by the Dunham Massey Estate Survey of 1701 where it is described as being of 5 bays within and 8 without, of comparable size to the only other large house (other than the Hall) in Dunham Massey, gentleman William Millington's. A 5-bay house was comparable to the old Bowdon Hall in size, and it is understood that the "8 bays without" refers to the extent of the outbuildings. Clearly, this was an important house to rent from the Booths, and it seems unlikely that they would let it to anyone who was not in their employ and of some importance on their estate.

William made his will on 17 May, 1698, ten days before he died, as recorded in the Bowdon parish register where the entry reads "27 May 1698 W<sup>r</sup> Tipping Sen: of New bridge, gent, (buried 29)". This was four years after the 19-year old George Booth had succeeded to Dunham Massey and its vast estates as 2nd Earl of Warrington and was to bring in a new era of efficiency and control so restoring the family fortunes after years of neglect. The Tipping association was now nearing its end as "new brooms" came in to sweep away the past. His will left Anne "my dear wife All her wareing Apparell for her body as well Woollen and Linnen, together with the Mourning Ring I now ware on my ffinger and also the Sume of Ten Pounds to ffurnish her a Chamber, as allsoe my spectacles". He gave his brother Robert of Yarwood "one Close or parcell of land call'd by the Name of Buckley ffields Lying and being in Millington", to his son Isaac "my silver Tobacco Box" and "all rents and boons of my Land Lying in Timperly", and "all my estate Lying and being in Appleton CommonlyCall'd by the Hill-Side".

The fact that he left his eldest son and heir only "the Signett Ring I now ware" seems to signify the final act of handing on the family seal to complete his inheritance of the Benchill estate. For Bowdon, the most interesting item in the will is his legacy to provide payment for a schoolmaster - "Allsoe I give and bequeath unto my Executors herein after named the Sum of Ten pounds, the same withall Convenient speed by them The Vicar and the Schoole-Master of Bowden (ffor the time being) to be lett and putt out at Interest, and the yearly product and Interest thereof to be yearly payd for ever towards a Schoole Master for a ffree Schoole at Bowden aforesaid". The school at Bowdon, one of the very oldest in Cheshire, had been founded in 1553 and the schoolhouse had been re-built in William's time at the expense of the parish in 1670. There is another instance of Tipping involvement in educational provision in Derek Robson's book "Some Aspects of Education in Cheshire" where he says that Seamons Moss School was founded in 1710 by a Mr. Tipping and a Mr. Halsgrave. One wonders if that was where William Tipping's bequest went rather than to Bowdon School as he wished. In 1698, when he was making his will, Henry Ocklestone was schoolmaster and witnessed William's will. As a friend, Henry may have made the suggestion to leave money to the school, but William was a well-read man as his spectacles, and the books he bequeathed to his wife which she listed in her will, seem to suggest.

William's death left his wife Anne in some difficulty with regard to one of the Booth settlements of which he had been one of the trustees. The second Earl had brought an action in Chancery against Sir James Langham and Anne Tipping, widow, on March 8, 1698/9, saying that, by articles of 17 June, 1670, between the Earl's grandfather the 1st Lord Delamer, and Sir James, it had been agreed that when his only child, Mary Langham, married Lord Delamer's eldest son, Henry who became 1st Earl of Warrington (i.e. the second Earl's mother and father), Sir James was to pay Lord Delamer £10,000 within 3 months of the marriage and a final £10,000 within 6 months of Sir James's death, making a marriage portion of £20,000 in total. Lord Delamer made various provisions for the second Earl's mother and father in expectation that the full amount would be forthcoming, and soon after the marriage took place and the first £10,000 was paid. By a deed of 21 September 1680, Lord Delamer, intending to make provision for his younger children, charged his lands with considerable sums of money and agreed that the remaining £10,000 should be paid to four trustees - William Tipping, gentleman, Nathaniel Booth, esquire, Thomas Ashton, esquire, and William Andrewes, gentleman, who had all died by 1698, leaving Anne Tipping as administratrix for her husband, the last surviving trustee. The second Earl's grandfather, mother and father being dead, he, as eldest son and heir, had become entitled to the lands so charged, and his petition in Chancery sought to disengage the lands and the sums charged upon them by his grandfather and father in anticipation of the final £10,000 of the marriage settlement. He asked the Court to request Sir James Langham to pay the money now at a reasonable discount or to give better security for payment after his death so that he might form a fund to offset the charges on his estate lands, and said that, because Sir James was now aged and infirm and had remarried and alleged that he no longer felt obliged to pay the £10,000, even though he had previously declared he was bound in honour to pay it, the Earl asked the Court to find in his favour.

The case was dismissed, whereupon the Earl appealed. Poor Anne Tipping now had to put her answer before the Court, which she did on 20 March 1698/9, pleading that she did not know "how far her concurrence was requisite to assist Appellant" and submitted herself to the directions of the Court of Chancery, and now to their Lordships of Appeal. The case was heard on 1 April, and a manuscript minute records that on 1 May, 1699 "the House was informed that the [parties in the] case of the E. of Warrington and Sir J. Langham are agreed". (Manuscripts of the House of Lords, New Series iii, pages 364-5). This is a good example of the 2nd Earl's determination to clear outstanding matters affecting the financial health of his inheritance of the estate, and is hardly surprising when one thinks that £10,000 in 1699 is around £5-£6M in today's currency !

Anne seems to have survived this unwanted ordeal unscathed, for she retired to Tabley where she lodged with a joiner, Thomas Robinson, and, presumably, was able to "ffurnish her a Chamber" with the ten pounds her husband had left her for that purpose. Her will has not survived but her detailed inventory has, where the list of her linens and clothing describe exactly what a country lady of that time wore. She had "In Plate, 4 Silver Spoons, one Salt, one porringer, a large wrought bowl & a Sugar box, weighed by Troy weight 21bs one ounce and a quarter at 4s.4d. per ounce = £7.3s.5d.", and a note below the total value of all her goods in the inventory, £21.10s.9d., records "Item one silver Tankard weighing 16 ounces wch Coll. Daniel seized for an herriott". Colonel Daniel was lord of the manor and made sure he exercised his rights even upon the estate of a widow. The most interesting items are the books which she may have read standing at the reading desk listed. There were 15 of them:-

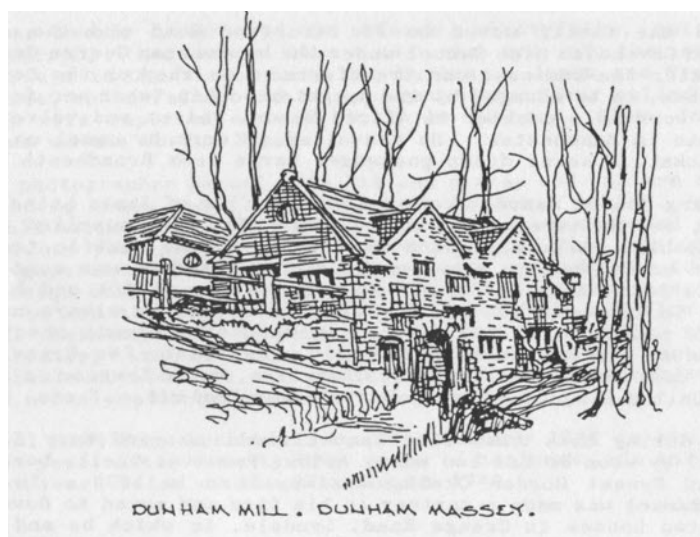
- 2 Expositions on the Book of Job
- 2 Annotations upon the Holy Bible
- 1 The power of Godliness of a Godly Life
- 1 The beast dominions over Earthly Kings
- 1 Glassographer, or a Dictionary interpreting all hard words
- 1 An exposition of the 10 Commandments
- 1 Mr. Richard Baxter's work
- 1 The Souls Exaltation
- 1 Mr. Baxter's 3rd edition
- 1 A Treatise showing the subordination of the Will of Man
- 1 Heaven taken by Storme
- 1 The psalms of David
- 1 Spirituall Songs

It will be seen that all but one of these books were religious. The Tipping Bible, bought by William the Bailiff, her husband's father, had been passed to Robert of Yarwood without any will bequest ; the only family details of birth, etc. in the Bible relate to William the Bailiff's children, Robert of Yarwood's and those of Robert's son William, yeoman of Rostherne, ending in 1786. The books listed in Anne's inventory of 22 November, 1703, seem to be from her and her husband's younger days, since Richard Baxter was a Puritan divine who had served the Parliamentary cause throughout the Civil War, whose learning Charles II had so much respect for that he made him one of his chaplains after the Restoration.

William's eldest son, William, who had taken over the Benchill farm, died on 23 October, 1701, aged only 36, and was buried 3 days later as recorded in the Bowdon parish register "23 October 1701 Mr. Wm. Tipping of new Bridge (buried 26)". Like his father, he had returned to New Bridge to live even though his main estate was at Benchill. No will was forthcoming and his widow, Elizabeth, who went to live in Salford, legally declined to act as administratrix, appointing William's brother Isaac, now of Simmondley, near Glossop, Derbyshire, as administrator of the estate on 28 April, 1702.

The Tippings had now dispersed away from Dunham Massey and Bowdon, and their long service and association with the Booth family of Dunham Massey Hall had ended. The second Earl distrusted most of his father's (and, indeed, his grandfather's) servants, so, even if a Tipping had shown some expertise or usefulness necessary to hold office in the Booth estates, it is very doubtful that they would ever have been considered. The Tippings had had their day.

As a postscript, it is interesting that, like the Booths whose names and associated localities are remembered in street names in Bowdon and Altrincham, the Tippings have such a link in Hale, through the Pownall connection with Robert Tipping of Yarwood. Robert's great-great-granddaughter Mary married John Pownall as heiress of the Yarwood estate, and their son and grandson were both named William Tipping Pownall. The family farmed at Yarwood Heath, Rostherne, and owned the land by the railway next to Hale Road Bridge where the housing development after 1860 as part of Newtown had its terraced streets named "William", "Tipping", "Pownall", "Yarwood", "Rostherne" and "Heath View". Despite their inferior construction, the houses were homes to a great many people until demolition in the 1970s, with the names preserved to this day in the new housing.



**Samuel Okell 1838-1932 A Bowdon Resident**  
**Article written from notes supplied by his son Alec Okell**

Samuel Okell was born in Jamaica on the 31st July 1838, the day on which slavery was abolished in the British Empire. His father, William Okell, a missionary and school master, and his mother, formerly Hannah Knight, lived at the Manse at First Hill, Trelawney, but later moved to Arcadia Estate, Trelawney, where their second son William Okell was born on the 3rd April 1840.

William's career in Jamaica came to an end when he developed malaria and was invalided back to this country to recuperate on his father's farm at Dutton Lodge near Runcorn, in which area the Okell family had lived since 1475. A daughter, Sophia, was born here at this time.

On recovering from his illness, William Okell established a drapery business at 176 Medlock Street, Hulme in Manchester, where the children played in fields on which the Central Station and Midland Hotel were later built, and attended the Zion Chapel in Stretford Road.

In 1848 the family moved to 70 Stretford Road and the sons attended Cavendish High School under the headmaster George Corney B.A. Later the business was transferred to a shop on the Downs, Altrincham, to be managed by the daughter Sophia, when her father went to work as a cashier to Alfred Simon, velvet and velveteen merchants in Manchester. He travelled to work by canal on the fast packet, a horse drawn passenger barge from Broadheath.

On leaving school Samuel Okell joined the firm of James Laing Son and Co., Dry Salters, as an office boy. The firm supplied dyes and finishing materials, such as starch, to the textile trade, and when he had become experienced and promoted he was sent, in 1871, to South America to buy logwood (a dye stuff) and blood albumen in Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro and he always noted that his passport, at the time, consisted of a single sheet of paper dated 8th day of November 1870, granted by "We Granville George, Earl Granville, Viscount Granville, Baron Leveson, a Peer of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland ..." etc. etc.

It was during this time that Samuel Okell married Mary Ellen Percival by whom he had two sons, Arthur Percival Okell, born in 1865 and Ernest Gordon Okell, who was born in 1868. In due course Samuel was made a partner in his firm and moved to Bowdon, buying two houses in Grange Road, Lyndale, in which he and his family lived, and Firdale which he rented to a tenant. In 1888 he bought a corner site on Vicarage Lane and Langham Road and paid Martin Stone, a builder from Manchester, £2,053. 11s. 0d. to build two houses for him. One of the houses, Overley, was his residence, and the second, Netherley, he rented to a tenant. His son Arthur Percival Okell, who had joined the firm of James Laing Son & Co, moved into Lyndale in Grange Road. His other son Ernest Gordon Okell having pursued a career in electrical engineering became Chief Electrical Engineer of Plymouth and Davenport.

Arthur Percival's daughter Ruth, later became headmistress of Altrincham Girls Grammar School in the 1960's.

Following the death of his wife, Samuel travelled to Pretoria, and on the journey met Mary Lever Burdekin, who was joining her brother in South Africa to keep house for him and his small child following the loss of his wife. A friendship grew between the couple, and on her return to this country on the 24th March 1906 Samuel met her at Southampton in his Belsize 1906 vintage car, and they were married three days later at Hale Congregational Chapel on 27th March 1906.

They settled at his house Overley where their son Alec was born in 1907.

Samuel Okell continued his business activities for many years, and was regularly seen walking from his house to Hale Station in the morning, on his way to work, a tall figure with a long white beard, wearing a square bowler hat, and black jacket, with an oversize umbrella. He enjoyed long strenuous hill walks at Grasmere, when over ninety years of age, and in 1920, he took his family on a visit to Jamaica for six months to recuperate from bronchitis, to the annoyance of the headmaster of Bowdon College, who disapproved of Alec's resultant absence from school.

He was keenly interested in science, electricity, astronomy, photography, and motor cars, and was one of the earliest motorists in Cheshire owning two Hurtus, a James and Browne, a Belsize, and a Fafnir and he employed a chauffeur called Bates. These were reported on very fully by his son, Alec, in early copies of the Bowdon Sheaf [issue 2, 1984].

As a photographer Samuel made his own plates and lantern slides, including those taken on his travels in South Africa, Jamaica, as well as those in this country, and he was a successful pioneer of colour photography in the early years of this century. He also experimented with x-ray and helped a local doctor to locate a foreign body in the arm of a patient, but it was in astronomy that he was the most successful, being elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, and building a well equipped observatory at his house with the very latest instruments available at the time, and lecturing widely on the subject. He also occasionally preached at local chapels.

Samuel died from bronchitis on 20th January 1932 in his ninety third year, after seventy five years in business, his wife dying eight years later on the 28th August 1940.

## Society Notes

Members will be interested in the latest publication of a book entitled "Schools in Victorian Bowdon" by Myra Kendrick. Extensively illustrated with contemporary photographs and well researched, the book is immensely interesting and is on sale in local book shops or from the author.

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On May 14th, this year, 21 members of the Society paid an evening visit to Chester and after a brief guided visit to the Booth Mansion, they were given a talk on Chester Silver at the Ridgway Gallery at the Grosvenor Museum. This was followed by a visit to the Roman section of the Museum and the Art Gallery to see the recent oil painting of Canon Ridgway, after whom the Silver collection is named. Canon Ridgway, as former Vicar of Bowdon and founder member of the Bowdon History Society, had planned to join the visit, with Mrs Ridgway, but they were prevented from doing so at the last moment.

An article on the Booth Mansion will appear in a future issue of the Bowdon Sheaf.

R.T.

Twenty-four members of the Bowdon History Society were warmly welcomed at Capesthorpe Hall on the evening of June 26th. Our most informative guide described the building's vicissitudes over the centuries and showed us round the newly refurbished rooms. The descent of the ownership of the hall (Davenports, by marriage, from the mid-eighteenth century) is cleverly shown in the arrangement of the family portraits in the saloon. Among the many interesting contents, I have space to pick out just a few. I recall the wonderful early seventeenth century embroidered bed canopy on which Dame Dorothy Davenport spent sixteen years; Alan Ramsay's portrait of Rousseau, who spent several years as the guest of his admirer, Richard Davenport, the guardian of a future owner of Capesthorpe, and the face of Mr Gladstone (a political enemy of a late nineteenth century Bromley Davenport) portrayed as the felon with a rope round his neck, which was the Davenport crest, signifying their centuries-old jurisdiction over Macclesfield Forest.

The visit ended with the chapel, transformed in 1884 by William Bromley Davenport's widow into a memorial to him. Most striking is a large, glittering mosaic, based on Giotto's 'Dormition of the Virgin', then at Capesthorpe (now in Washington), but curiously incorporating the likeness of the dead man. Finally, we wandered in the attractive gardens and absorbed the tranquillity of the park and its lake in the late evening light.

M.C.