

Chapter 16 The Methodist Chapel and School

(Appendix 16)

The early site history

In late mediaeval times there may have been 20 to 30 families in Langcliffe and the site of the Chapel and School was most probably waste land or occupied by some sort of houses at that time. Two useful maps of the village centre are those of the old road diversions of 1800 and the Tithing Map of 1841. Other evidence comes from deeds registered at Wakefield after 1704.

The road diversion map of 1800 shows a rectangular property on the site of the later Methodist Chapel and School with the name M. Jackman by it. However the buildings shown are nominal in shape and size and the map is not accurately drawn. The Jackman property is shown on the east side of the brook which is now culverted across the Village Green.

A deed registered in Wakefield in May 1827 is a mortgage between Jonathan Jackman (slater) and Christopher Wright (mule spinner) "concerning all that messuage or dwelling house now occupied as two messuages one barn and one garden thereunto adjoining. All which said premises are situate standing lying and being on the East side of the Rivulet or Brook in Langcliffe aforesaid and are now in the tenure of the said Jonathan Jackman and Jonathan Jackman the younger." One of the witnesses is John Hartley of Settle, Gentleman.

In December 1827 there is a further deed of mortgage between Matthew Jackman (slater and plasterer) who is the son and heir of Jonathan Jackman (yeoman, deceased) and Christopher Wright (mule spinner), and James Yeadon (cordwainer) and John Yeadon (cotton spinner) of the third part, perhaps since these latter two might have been tenants. "Concerning all that cottage tenement or dwelling house lately erected and built by the said Matthew Jackman upon a certain piece of Ground given to him by Jonathan Jackman his late father deceased and adjoining on the north end to houses and premises belonging to the Mother of the said Matthew Jackman. And on the East West and South by waste grounds belonging to the Township of Langcliffe aforesaid together with liberty to lay timber upon the Gable End Wall of the house belonging to his said Mother which said messuage or dwelling house and premises are now in the tenure or occupation of the said Matthew Jackman." This third cottage was perhaps built on the garden referred to in May 1827. By the end of 1827 Christopher Wright therefore holds mortgages on the three Jackman properties.

A deed of assignment of July 1829 concerns Christopher Wright (mule spinner) of the first part, William King (grazier) of the second part and Matthew Jackman (slater), Jonathan Jackman (cotton spinner), Nanny and Ann Jackman (spinsters), Charles Wilson (mule spinner) and Mary his wife of the third part, and William Clayton of the fourth part. This deed concerns all those several messuages etc. on the east side of the brook, late the property of Jonathan Jackman deceased and now in the several tenures or occupiers of the third party and John Lund and William Metcalf their undertenants. Thus the Jonathan Jackman property of two messuages mortgaged to Christopher Wright is then passed to William Clayton the mill owner, with Jackmans and others as tenants.

In February 1834 Matthew Jackman (slater) refers to Indentures concerning his 'lately erected' messuage and Thomas Redmayne of Taitands, still occupied by Matthew Jackman.

The Tithe Apportionment list of 1844 shows Matthew Jackman as landowner of this single cottage. Jonathan Jackman now owns a house on what is now St John's Row. The listing of 1844 accompanying the Tithe Map shows that William Clayton now owns property on the site (school and chapel site, number 7 on Tithe Map) which comprised houses occupied in 1844 as tenants by Elizabeth Silverwood, John Redmayne, and George Bentham. At the rear of the chapel site Matthew Jackman owned and tenanted a small house (number 8).

The High Mill sited by the Locks was run as a cotton mill from 1783. Langcliffe Place was built for the mill owners (in 1783 they were George and William Clayton (Senior) and R. Walshman). William's son, William Clayton, was sole owner by 1823 - he was a successful business man and partner in the Preston Bank. In 1849 the cotton trade failed and this brought about collapse of the bank along with Wm. Clayton. The mill, and presumably other Clayton property, was sold to Richard Bashall to pay the creditors. Bashall also failed to make the mill profitable and the mill closed in 1855. Many of the workers moved to Accrington to find work.

An Indenture of 21 December 1849 concerns the sale of the mill naming Richard Powdrell Hobson, John Stevenson and William McCartney of the first part, William Clayton and Isabella Eliza his wife of the second part, Richard Bashall of the third part and John Winstanley of the fourth part.

The Trustees

A deed of 1850 shows that Richard Bashall of Langcliffe Place owned three cottages as a result of buying the mill from Wm. Clayton. Wm. (These three may earlier have been the two messuages referred to in deeds). Clayton had refused to sell the land to the Methodists who wanted to build a meeting house in Langcliffe but Richard Bashall was amenable. He sold the cottages to William Foster of Settle for £150 and Wm. Foster then transferred ownership to twelve Trustees for 10 shillings on trust to erect a Wesleyan Methodist Chapel. Richard Bashall donated £50 to the trustees so obviously approved the project. The tenants in 1850 were George Bentham (as in 1844), Richard Hudson and John Smith.

The 12 Trustees were: John Read (clogger), Henry Snell (tailor), John Wildman (stationer), Thomas Oates (boot and shoemaker), William Brennand (goods clerk), Barnabas Battersby (yeoman), James Redmayne (farmer), Joseph Harger (joiner and cabinet maker), James Redmayne younger (farmer), John Snell (tailor), Richard Marsden (boot and shoemaker) and Peter Skirrow (tallow chandler).

They undertook to build a place of 'Public Religious Worship of Gods Holy Word by the sect or congregation of Dissenters called the "Wesleyan Methodists" or for the purpose of teaching in such Meeting House or Chapel a Sabbath-day School and otherwise using and permitting the said Meeting House or Chapel to be used for such Moral purposes as they the said Trustees for the time being shall agree upon' and to use funds 'for and towards the support of Wesleyan Methodist Travelling or Local

Preacher or Preachers who may reside in the district or may happen to be travelling in such manner and form as the Trustees for the time being may approve or agree upon provided that the said Wesleyan Methodist Travelling or Local Preacher shall preach no other doctrine than is contained in The Reverend John Wesleys notes upon the New Testament and four Volumes of Sermons published by him the said John Wesley' and they further agreed 'that if the said Trustees hereby appointed or any of them or any trustee or trustees to be appointed as hereinafter is mentioned shall die or be desirous of being discharged or shall lead an outwardly immoral and vicious life or refuse or become incapable to act then and so often the said Trustees for the time being may appoint any other person or persons to be a trustee or trustees in the stead or place of the Trustee or Trustees so dying or desiring to be discharged or shall lead an outwardly immoral and vicious life or refusing or becoming incapable to act so that the number of Trustees for the time being shall make up the number of Twelve Trustees'

The 1851 Census shows in one household George Bentham (formerly labourer), Elizabeth his wife, Richard his son (milk seller), John Walton son-in-law (cordwainer), Elizabeth his daughter and three grandchildren. In a second household Richard Hudson (cotton spinner), his wife and four young children. In the third household John Smith (labourer), his wife (bread baker) and eight children working at the mill. These made a total of 24 people in the three cottages. The Census does not give details of where people lived but these three families are listed one after the other, as would be recorded by the census taker on his rounds. The five Jackmans lived adjacent, presumably in the house at the rear of the chapel site owned by Matthew Jackman.

The Methodist School House was built in 1851 as shown by the date plaque and opened in March 1852. It then served as both Chapel and School. When the mill closed in 1855 the trustees had to keep paying the interest on a mortgage and other expenses out of their own pockets, helped by a grant from the Settle Methodists. The cottages to the left of the School were not demolished until about 1903 when the foundation stone was laid for the new Chapel, as shown in a photograph.

In 1886 it was necessary to have some new trustees to replace those who had died since 1851. The trustees now dead were:

John Read, Henry Snell, John Wildman, Thomas Oates, William Brennand, Barnabas Battersby, James Redmayne, Joseph Harger, and Peter Skirrow.

The survivors were:

James Redmayne younger, John Snell, Richard Marsden,

and the 14 new trustees were:

Thomas Marsden, Thomas Dixon, John Vincent Harger, Thomas Harger, John Maudsley, John Lord, Levi Wearing, Richard Clark, William Walker, Thomas Swinbank, Emmanuel Hayes, John Banks, John W. Warnes and Robert Davy.

In 1905 a further similar deed was required, and again in 1932 and 1957.

The Chapel and School House were sold in 2003 and converted into private houses.

Sources of information

Langcliffe - Glimpses of a Dales Village, The Langcliffe Millennium Group, 2000.
Publ. Hudson History, Settle.

The Ancient Parish of Giggleswick, Publ. Giggleswick School and Settle and District
Civic Society, 1975.

Wakefield Deeds Register Book RU page 62 number 72, 21 January 1851. (Copy in
possession of current owner of School House).

Chancery Deed 10 February 1851. (Copy in possession of current owner of School
House)

Deed of 31 December 1886. (Copy in possession of current owner of School House)

Census of 1851.

Plan of roads at Langcliffe 1800. QS1/139/8 at WYAS Wakefield

Deeds at Wakefield Deeds Registry Office
IT 758 777 May 1827 Mortgage Jackman/Wright
IT 763 782 December 1827 Mortgage Jackman/Wright
KM 636 529 July 1829 Assignment Wright/Clayton
LX 101 91 February 1834 Memorial Jackman/Redmayne

Compiled by M.J. and E.M. Slater, August 2007.