

Hest Bank Farm



Introduction

Thomas Toulmin of Ingleton died in 1802. He left three estates in Slyne-with-Hest: Bellemont, Standerlands and Hest Bank. His Hest Bank estate consisted of one dwelling house, two barns and two orchards and its area was twenty seven acres and one rood with had a rent of £1-3s-9d. A further dwelling house, with outbuildings and fifty five acres of land, had a rent of £1-5s-3d, this was Hest Bank Farm. Thomas Toulmin had no children but in his will he bequeathed his three estates to Bryan Waller of Masongill, Yorkshire, and William Marriner of Ingleton. By 1816 both men were dead, Bryan Waller dying intestate. After this date the process of inheritance was complicated by the many relatives, all having a claim to the estates. The estates were divided into fourteenths, one heir sold his part before he had tenure of it and the whole case ended in the Court of Chancery.

In 1816 Robert Bradley, the highest bidder at the London Auction Mart, secured a two seventh part of the estate for £700 and by 1846 Robert Greene Bradley and Thomas Greene owned all three estates.

[If anyone is interested in the complicated inheritance process which took place between 1816-38, I do have the original documents, which they may read.MF]

We are clearly dealing with two farms which make up the Hest Bank Estate. The Farm with fifty five acres of land was numbered 137 on the Tithe map, and is the Hest Bank Farm house we see today, it is located opposite the side of the Hest Bank Hotel. The smaller estate, number 138 on the Tithe map, was demolished many years ago and may have been located behind Mowbrick Farm. The Hest Bank Farm is an unlisted building and could have been built as early as 1720. The barn behind the farm, which belonged to it, was converted into two dwelling houses in the 1970s. When the Ackeroyd family moved into the house in the early 1960s, they found some lathe and plaster internal walls.

Tenants in the Nineteenth Century

The earliest document I have found is a notice advertising that the farm was to be let in 1824. Robert Bradley and Richard Procter, who was one of Thomas Toulmin's heirs, were the joint owners of the property:

The letting of an Estate called Hest Bank.

To be Let By Proposal for a Term of years all that Estate called "Hest Bank" within Hest with Slyne Consisting of ; One Capital Dwelling House, other suitable outbuildings, and 36 acres, 3 roods, and 12 perches, statute measure, be the same more or less, of arable, meadow, and pasture land, late in the occupation of Thomas Wilkinson.

Joseph Parke, of Belle Mount, will shew the Premises; and Proposals will be received by R. Bradley Esq. of Slyne, and Mr. Richard Procter, of Ingleton, till the 23rd. of Jan. instant, after which the tenants will be declared.

Ingleton, Jan. 2nd. 1824.

Christofer Bush obtained the tenancy and he was also the tenant at Mowbrick in 1824. The two farms together were of a considerable size and their rent in 1834 was £140 per annum. Christofer was a voter from 1834 to 1838 and this meant that he also owned some land in Hest Bank, enough to bring in rent of £10 per annum. These £10 "copyholders" were given the vote in 1832 by the great reform act, previous to the act landowners and Freemen only had been allowed the vote.

[Note:

Copyhold; A form of land tenure, so called because the holder had a copy of the record of his holding in the manorial role. By the 15th century most villeins had become copyholders as most of the services they owed to their lord were commuted to money payments. "£10 copyholders", those with land worth £10 annually, were given the vote in 1832 and "£5 copyholders" in 1867. The last feudal obligations attached to copyhold were abolished in 1935.]

Christofer died in 1839 and it was obvious from the death notice that he was well known and popular in the village:

March 16 1839.

On Tuesday last, aged 54, Mr. Christopher Bush, of Hest Bank. A more worthy neighbour, or kind-hearted friend never passed into the grave. His loss will be deeply regretted.

[Charles Quarme, Editor of the Lancaster Gazette, living at The Prospect, Hest Bank.]

Christofer Bush must have sub-let all or part of the property to Thomas Moore before his death as may be seen from another letting notice of February 1839. Thomas at that time was Landlord of the Hest Bank Inn. The letting must have taken place in the Old Hall, opposite the Hest Bank Inn where Mrs Jane Wilkinson lived. Thomas Knipe obtained the tenancy.

Hest Bank Farm for Rent.

Feb. 16 1839.

A Valuable Farm at Hest Bank. At the house of Mrs Jane Wilkinson, Innkeeper at Hest Bank, on Saturday March 2, 1839, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

All that valuable farm with a good house and convenient Outbuildings situate at Hest Bank in the Township of Slyne-with-Hest. Consisting of 50 statute acres of excellent Arable Meadow and Pasture land. The Whole is well fenced and watered, and late in the possession of Thomas Moore, as tenant thereof.

The above estate will be either together or in parcels as may be agreed at the time of letting.

Mr. T Hodgson, Land Surveyor, Chapel Street Lancaster.

Mr. F. Pearson, Sol, Kirby Lonsdale.

The Knipe Family

Thomas Knipe became the tenant at Hest Bank Farm in 1839. He had been living in Hest Bank for some time and was also a £10 copyholder, having 22 acres of land on the south side of Hest. In 1841 he was the Enumerator of the census, it is clearly written and no inaccuracies were found. The Knipe family inhabited Hest Bank Farm for more than fifty years from 1839 to 1891. From the 1841 census we find that Thomas had five children, including the inevitable set of twins, with ages from 30 years to 1 year:

Thomas Knipe, aged 60, farmer.
Sarah, wife aged 55.
Thomas, aged 30.
John, aged 20.
Sarah, aged 20.
Mary, aged 15.
James, aged 1.
Emma Swainson, aged 19, Harriet Swainson, aged 14 and Joseph Bayloife(?) aged 30, were lodgers.
[1841 census return]

By 1845 Thomas Greene and Robert Greene Bradley owned the whole of Hest Bank Farm, and a year later they bought the remainder of the old Toulmin estate including Standerlands and Bellemount. In fact Thomas Greene paid £280 for the one-fourteenth share owned by the heiress Eleanor Jane Maitland (nee Ansley). Thomas Knipe continued as tenant of Hest Bank Farm.

Unfortunately the 1851 census was unreadable but the 1861 census shows Thomas had died and his wife Sarah was the farmer. The farm was then called Greene's Farm. According to the Church register Thomas died in 1858 aged 82, this meant that his age was wrong on the 1841 census by five years. Sarah Knipe's age was also wrong by five years, maybe there was some reason for them to reduce both their ages? When the census enumerator called the family must have had a housefull of visitors:

Sarah Knipe, aged 80, farmer of 62, acres. Greene's Farm.
Thomas Knipe, aged 50, employed on the farm.
Margaret Knipe, aged 47, employed in the dairy.
John Knipe, aged 43.
Cawhie (?) Moss, aged 33, visitor, Druggist's wife.
Frances E Wallwort, aged 14, visitor.
Emily and Edith Wallwort, both aged 11, visitors.
Harold, Arthur T, and Charles Moss, respectively aged 5,2,1, visitors.
Agnes White, aged 13, female servant, house.
Isabella Stackhouse, aged 17, female servant. [1861 census return]

Sarah Knipe died in 1866 aged 87. Again there was a discrepancy in her age from the census of 1861. It is possible that people did not know their age to the exact year and their children only became aware of their parents ages when they died and were recorded by the vicar in the registry at Bolton-le-Sands. By 1871 John Knipe, the younger son, was in charge of the farm. Neither of the brothers, nor their sister Margaret, appeared to be married:

John Knipe, head, aged 53, farmer of 54 acres.
Thomas, brother, aged 60.
Margaret, sister, aged 57, housekeeper.
John Knipe, great nephew, aged 17, agricultural labourer.
Margaret Moss, servant, aged 17.
Esther Blinthorn, aged 28, visitor. [1871 census return]

In the village directory of 1879 John and Thomas described themselves as the Brothers Knipe and by 1881 they had two nephews living with them. The farm had the address 58, Hest Bank Village.

John Knipe, head of household, aged 63, farmer of 54 acres.

Thomas, brother, aged 70, farmer.

Margaret, sister, aged 65, housekeeper.

John, nephew, aged 16, scholar.

Thomas, nephew, aged 14, scholar.

Eleanor Sharples, servant, aged 18. [1881 census return]

Sister Margaret died before 1891 and two female servants had then to be hired to look after four single men!

John Knipe, aged 73, single, farmer.

Thomas Robert Knipe, aged 24, Great Nephew, farm servant, born in Newcastle.

Thomas Knipe, brother, aged 80.

Martha Makinson, aged 32, servant.

Mary Westworth, aged 15, servant.

William Pool, aged 15, agricultural worker. [1891 census return]

I can find no mention of the family Knipe living in Hest Bank after 1891. In 1913 the farm was rented by Mr. Dixon, a surveyor. When the Dawson-Greenes sold all their estate in Slyne-with-Hest in 1920, Hest Bank Farm was 45 acres in extent and its rent was £91-16s-0d a year.

Marcellus Thompson was the tenant at that time and may have bought the farm in 1920 for he was still living there in 1933.