



3 KNIGHT STAINFORTH HALL

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Quaker Meeting House ...*

Stainford Scotan (nobody seems to know the meaning of this), Little Stainforth (as distinct from Stainforth under Bargh across the river), Knight Stainforth: all these names refer to the little cluster of grey stone houses above the River Ribble, about two miles from Settle. Little Stainforth looks back to the time of the titled gentry who lived in this small hamlet that has mirrored the changing scenes of England over the last five and a half centuries.

The Domesday book of 1086 reveals that Craven was just about the furthest limit of William the Conqueror's rule to the North West of England. It also reveals that the first post-Conquest lord of Little Stainforth (or Stainford Scotan as it was then) was Roger of Poitou, one of William's stalwarts, who was also created Earl of Lancaster. As referred to in Chapter 1, Roger never would have lived here and, as something of a rebel, was banished in 1102, losing his earldom and his estates, which passed to the Percy overlords for the next four centuries.

Sir Richard Tempest

The importance of the manor of Stainford Scotan is shown in a Poll Tax levied in 1379 by Richard II to pay for his wars with France (see Appendix 2). Robert de Stainford paid 20 shillings (£1) in line with other prosperous gentry, but the rate went down to 3s 4d (17p) for humbler landowners. Around that time, a de Stainford daughter married a Tempest son from Bracewell and the manor became the property of that important family following the death of Robert in 1391. Their prominence is shown by the countless times the name Tempest appears as witness to important documents and by the numerous occasions they fought for their king at famous battles. Sir Richard Tempest was born about 1425. A prominent Lancastrian in the Wars of the Roses, he was knighted by Lord Clifford at the Battle of Wakefield in 1460. But these were troublesome and precarious times and he was accused of treason in 1461. However, in 1465, Edward IV forgave him and he lived to see the end of the Yorkist kings, dying in 1488 during the reign of Henry VII.

Sir Richard Tempest married twice. His first wife, Dame Sibill, died sometime between 1460 and 1470 and his second wife, Dame Mabilla,

outlived him and died in 1511. She was, apparently, a lady of drive and influence. A staunch Roman Catholic, she obtained permission from the Pope for a portable altar to be set up at Knight Stainforth Hall for the celebration of Mass.

Sir Richard himself must have been no ordinary man. When he died he was buried along with the head of his favourite charger beneath the floor of the Tempest Chantry Chapel in Giggleswick Church. One wonders at the fate of the poor horse; was it deliberately put to death?

Effigies of Sir Richard and his two wives were placed in Giggleswick Church, the wives resplendent in the colourful white, yellow and crimson garb of the Guild of Corpus Christi of York. And then they disappeared, maybe during the abolition of the chantry chapels in 1547. These only came to light during restoration work at the church between 1890-92, mutilated and headless, but with the bright colours of Corpus Christi still apparent. They have faded now, but can be seen near the tower screen in Giggleswick Church. The effigy of Sir Richard lies near the place where he was buried and the effigies form touching memorials to three people who were part of the history of Knight Stainforth Hall.

Lord Darcy

Upon the death of Dame Mabilla in 1511, Knight Stainforth Hall passed into the possession of Lord Thomas Darcy, who had married Sir Richard's daughter, Douce.

In 1536, the insurrection known as 'The Pilgrimage of Grace' broke out in the North. This started out as genuine concern over the activities of Cromwell and the apparent threat to the Church, and the protesters were mainly abbey tenants and labourers. Then a more material consideration raised its ugly head—jobs and ways of life would be lost if the monasteries were abolished. 'Rent a mob' and ambition joined the ranks and the 'pilgrimage' got seriously out of hand. The elderly Lord Darcy, staunch supporter of King Henry and defender of Pontefract Castle, was captured by the 'pilgrims', or 'commons'—who by now seemed to possess little grace—and made to sit on their Council as a 'trophy'.

Eventually, the insurrection was put down and poor old Lord Darcy was thrown into the Tower and then executed, most unfairly some would say, for simply being a pawn in the game. The enraged King seized Sawley Abbey and presented its lands to Lord Darcy's second son, Sir Arthur, who apparently had no scruples in benefiting from the murderers of his father. Sir Arthur also owned lands in Stainforth under Bargh; thus both Stainforths came under the ownership of the same man.

Samuel Watson

Around 1547, Sir Arthur and his wife, Mary, sold Knight Stainforth Hall to Anthony Watson, a member of a respected yeoman family. Anthony Watson



*Knight Stainforth Hall. showing windows blocked up to avoid the Window Tax
- photo courtesy the Maudsley family*

was one of the first governors of Giggleswick School and succeeding Watsons followed him in this prestigious role, including Samuel Watson. Samuel showed a certain independence of spirit. In 1652, he became caught up in a lawsuit concerning the use of the manorial corn mill and the dues therefrom. He lost his case, refused to pay the fine, and was clapped in prison in York. Here he met some members of the new Quaker movement and the course of his life was changed.

Samuel was converted to Quakerism, and made no secret of the fact when he returned home, much to the dismay of the Board of Governors of Giggleswick School and the 'respectable' parishioners of Giggleswick. He eventually resigned from the School Board and caused mayhem in the parish. In December 1659, he even had the audacity to stand up in his own chantry chapel during a service in the church and proclaim the truth as he saw it. For this the good Christians 'pulled him down and brok his head upon ye seates and having haled him out threw him down upon ye ice.' A year later he was imprisoned for preaching in Leeds, but on his release eight days later went straight back to his preaching in the market place.

That same year he was holding a Quaker meeting in West Burton 'when one wicked fellow with a great staff and pistol threatened to lodge a brace of bullets in his belly and with his staff struck him several blows and knocked him down so that he was thought to be dead.'

In 1670, Samuel was fined £120 (a goodly sum in those days) for holding illicit Quaker meetings. When he refused to pay he was relieved of 28 cattle, 9 horses and 130 sheep in lieu. What was it about the Quakers that

aroused such antagonism in people? Their main 'sin' seems to have been their refusal to pay church tithes and to take oaths and their leanings towards original thought. Samuel Watson was foremost amongst them in this area and for his tenacity lost most of his moveable possessions.

However, in 1689, Knight Stainforth Hall was licensed as a Quaker Meeting House—at the opposite end of the religious spectrum to when the Roman Catholic altar was placed there in 1450 for Mabilla Tempest. Samuel Watson's daughter, Ellen, became the second wife of John Moore of Eldroth Hall, another staunch Quaker and friend of George Fox.

As Samuel grew older his zeal remained undiminished. In 1696, at the age of 76, there is a record of him railing against the amusements at Settle Fair, and later he set off on a 'missionary' journey to the wilds of Scotland. Eventually, Samuel left Knight Stainforth Hall and went to live with his son-in-law near Chester, where he died in 1708 aged 88, having outlived his wife and two daughters. One cannot help but wonder how the son-in-law coped with this tempestuous old man.

In 1774, Knight Stainforth Hall featured in a rather unusual legal matter. Its owner, Christopher Weatherhead of Liverpool and Ingman Lodge near Ribbleshead, was declared bankrupt. He also owned plantations in Dominica and Tobago and the old stone Yorkshire manor house figured with these exotic locations in a list of Weatherhead's assets, which also included many Negro slaves, each set down by name. The Hall was bought by Thomas Backhouse of Giggleswick and Liverpool.

Maudsley family

Numerous tenant farmers then occupied Knight Stainforth Hall until, in 1839, Thomas Maudsley moved there from Rome Farm, Giggleswick, with his wife and young family. As was often the case in those days, most of his family died tragically young—twins James and Richard in 1845 before they were a year old and Jennet a year later at age 13. Margaret, his wife, also died in 1845, aged 41 years. Their grave and memorial stone can be seen close by the main door of Stainforth Church. It is said by the Maudsley family that during her last illness Jennet worked on a patchwork quilt and this was taken away by the grieving father to be cherished and never used as a bedcover.

This great sadness in the household no doubt had its effect on Henry, another of Thomas' sons, who went from Knight Stainforth Hall to make his mark on the world. Henry established himself in London as a leading pioneer in the field of psychiatry. He also became a famous brain surgeon, lecturer and writer. He donated £30,000 for the building of a psychiatric hospital (the Maudsley) and on his death in 1918 left a further £30,000 to the hospital in his will. He was married but had no children. The Maudsley Hospital, in association with the Bethlehem Royal, was granted a new coat of arms in 1985, featuring the Maudsley family pickaxe! The occasion coincided with the 150th anniversary of the birth of Henry, and members of the

Maudsley family were invited to London for the event.

The Maudsley family have lived at Knight Stainforth Hall from 1839 to the present day, with the exception of 25 years when John Towler was tenant from 1894-1919. 'Grandpa' Thomas Maudsley purchased the Hall in 1919 and his son, another Thomas, and his wife Marjorie eventually took the reins when 'Grandpa' Thomas died in 1968. That same year Thomas and Marjorie's son, Henry, brought his bride Susan to Knight Stainforth Hall, from Huddersfield. Sadly Henry died in 1997.

The Hall still bears the marks of its ancient past, although it was virtually rebuilt by Samuel Watson in 1672, in spite of his numerous fines, showing that he must have been a man of considerable wealth at that time. Stone floors, oak beams and thick walls are a legacy of this 17th century rebuilding, but in the cellar is a 14th century doorway, and a back door, now a window, is possibly Norman. An antiquated corn grinder skulks in an attic. Part of the Hall was burned down in 1746 and has only comparatively recently been restored. This corner of the building was referred to as the 'stick-house' by the Maudsleys because of its derelict condition. At the same time as this restoration, some of the blocked-up windows, a result of the window tax of 1784, were also reinstated.

Knight Stainforth Hall has spanned the centuries with gusto, and now has its feet firmly planted in the 21st century. What would the knights and courtly gentlemen of old have made of the friendly notice placed at the entrance to the Hall?

WELCOME TO KNIGHT STAINFORTH HALL

CARAVAN AND CAMPING SITE