

OAKWOOD AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



OAK LEAVES PART FOURTEEN AUTUMN 2014

CONTENTS

Please see on the back cover.

COPYRIGHT

The copyright of the articles in this book belongs to the individual authors. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the permission of the publisher.

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, hired out or otherwise circulated, without the publisher's prior consent, in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser. Published by Oakwood and District Historical Society.

The contact for the Society is
Margaret Plows,
email: miggythirsk@btinternet.com
telephone number: 0113 2665884

Thanks to the kindness and generosity of the Oakwood Church, the Society's website at :
<http://homepage.ntlworld.com/nev.hurworth/ODHS.htm>
is moving to the Oakwood Church Website at :
<http://www.oakwoodchurch.info/odhs.html>

The picture on the front cover is ...

A group photograph of the Kitson family taken in 1905 outside Gledhow Hall. By kind permission of Leeds Library and Information Services, www.leodis.net.

See Anne Wilkinson's article about 'My dear Emily ...' in this edition of Oak Leaves.

Oakwood Clock Refurbishment. Congratulations and Thank You.

Congratulations to OTRA (The Oakwood Traders' and Residents' Association) on their successful bid for Heritage Lottery funds to save our iconic landmark, the Oakwood Clock. It is mainly thanks to their efforts that this was achieved earlier this year. We must especially single out the major part played by Martin Plimley who sadly passed away not long after the news became public.

Other organisations and individuals could be mentioned but the list is long and rather than risk offence by failing to record all concerned, no further details will be recorded here. Thank you all.

The Society was pleased to help in supplying material for the bid documentation explaining our activities especially in producing the Oak Leaves books over the last twelve years or so. We considered saving the Clock to be so important that we gave one thousand pounds, money from the sale of the Oak Leaves books, to the fund.

Your financial support in buying Oak Leaves has therefore contributed to the funds needed to save the Clock. We are happy to record here our thanks to you for your help.

William Gustavus Nicholson (1845 – 1918), Field Marshal Lord Nicholson of Roundhay. William Nicholson Nicholson's son who became head of the British Army.

By Neville Hurworth



Fig. 1. William Gustavus Nicholson. Field Marshal Lord Nicholson of Roundhay.

In recent books in the Oak Leaves series I have written essays about some of the sons of the last squire of Roundhay, William Nicholson Nicholson and his wife Martha. William and Martha had a large family and the behaviour of three of their older sons was far from exemplary.

For several years, their eldest son, Thomas Nicholson (1830-1860), was a soldier of no more than average distinction. Afterwards he spent much of the rest of his short life spending money extravagantly and accumulating large debts against his inheritance.

William's next son, Rhodes, was also a disappointment. His father disinherited him when he married a Maori chief's daughter and had children by her. Unbeknown to William, another son, Albert Nicholson, fathered children by his brother's wife. He was supposed to be looking after her and the children while his brother was in England. Both brothers abandoned their Maori children. So far as I know, their New Zealand family received no financial legacy on the death of either brother or their Nicholson grandfather.

When Rhodes Nicholson arrived in England, he was ordained and began practising his holy orders. When he found out about his brother's behaviour with his wife, however, he changed completely. Disillusioned with his Nicholson family both at home and abroad, he had no further contact with them. He assumed another name, emigrated, married bigamously, had more children and lived out a totally different existence.

William Nicholson Nicholson was never to know the whole story of their misdeeds. Albert still received his inheritance and indeed the only child of his marriage, a daughter, received a legacy from her grandfather.

Against this background it is sad the parents did not live to appreciate the achievements of William Gustavus Nicholson, the last but one of their sons. Like his older brother Thomas, he became a soldier. His parents died when he was just starting out on his chosen career. Unlike Thomas, he was very successful.

William Gustavus Nicholson was born in Roundhay in 1845. All the records I can find give his place of birth as the Mansion at Roundhay Park. This is interesting, if it's true, as Roundhay Park Mansion was then the home of Stephen and Sarah Nicholson.

Stephen was William Nicholson Nicholson's uncle, son of his sister Mary. Sarah was therefore Martha's aunt by marriage but they were also connected by a blood relationship. Both ladies belonged to the Rhodes family who were Leeds dyers and wool merchants over the years, from whom several females married into the wealthier families in the area. In fact Martha and Sarah were cousins. The age gap between them reflected the difference in the ages of their fathers who were brothers (See Fig. 2).

It is perhaps surprising that William Nicholson Nicholson's aunt and uncle lived on their own surrounded by servants in the Mansion while he and his

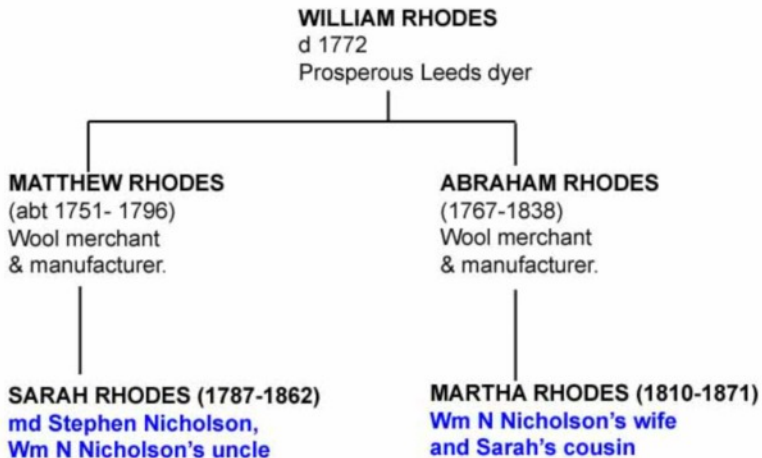


Fig. 2. William Nicholson Nicholson's wife, Martha, was his aunt Sarah's cousin.

growing family lived in a more modest home called Park Cottage, part of the present Roundhay Fox group of buildings, but long since demolished. Perhaps Martha was allowed to give birth to her later children in the Mansion where she could be looked after better and away from her younger children for the occasion.

William was a scholar at Leeds Grammar School and became one of the first members of the school Officers' Training Corps. At the age of eighteen he went to the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich where he passed out as the top of his class taking the prestigious Pollock Medal. From here he became a lieutenant in the Royal Engineers where he remained for most of his active army field career.

William served in the West Indies, India, South Africa and Japan before he was appointed to the new post of Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS) in 1908. He was now head of the British Army in spite of never having commanded a unit nor graduating from Staff College.

Here he was influential in shaping the British army in line with government policy. Throughout his career his strength seems to have been his organisational skills. It was said 'He combined the temperament of a soldier with the mental equipment of a scholar.' He is credited with playing a great part in reforming the army and the Territorial forces in preparation for WW1.

On the negative side he was dismissive of aviation which he thought was 'a useless and expensive fad' so it is fortunate that he retired from the army council in time for the role of aircraft in modern warfare to be developed to be used in time for the coming conflict. Also, he could be a difficult person to deal with, so much so that in some quarters he was known as 'Old Nick.'

In 1912 he was knighted and became Baron Nicholson of Roundhay, choosing to record the place of his birth in the title. He adopted the Nicholson coat of arms from his great uncle Stephen. These can still be seen (through the Christmas lights) above the door of the nursery which was the old Roundhay School on Wetherby Road.

Sources

The Internet contains quite a lot of information about Lord Nicholson of Roundhay. I have been selective in reproducing only a small part of it here. I have tried to concentrate on more local issues of Nicholson's life drawing on research material I have had for several years and which has been used extensively for essays in earlier issues of Oak Leaves and other work on the Nicholsons of Roundhay Park.

My dear Emily ...
Letters to Emily, daughter of James Kitson Jr.,
Leeds industrialist and politician.
 By Anne Wilkinson

This article is based on letters sent to Emily, third child and eldest daughter of James Kitson, later Lord Airedale. A great many of these letters, held in the Kitson papers at WYAS Leeds, are from father to daughter, signed 'your affectionate father James Kitson' and later 'your affectionate father Airedale'.

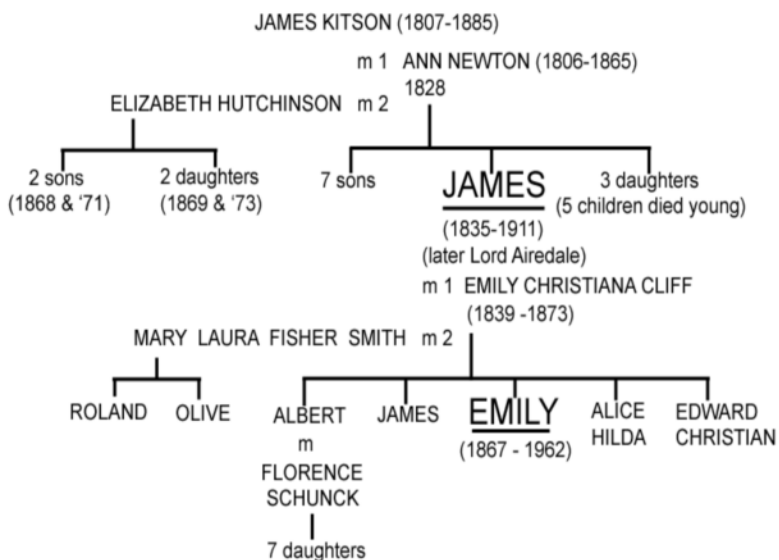


Fig. 1. Emily's Kitson family tree.

When James married in 1860 it was to a fellow Sunday School teacher from Mill Hill Unitarian Chapel in Leeds city centre. The bride was Emily Christiana, daughter of a Mr Joseph Cliff of Wortley, and the honeymoon was spent abroad, partly at Rolandseck and Godesburg on the Rhine,

for it was recalled in a much later letter from James to his daughter, sent from Cologne on 22 July 1894; he spoke of the area as one 'where your mother and I came some 34 years ago. It brought back many memories. ... It gave us many pictures which we used to paint over again in the years that are no more', for Emily Christiana had died shortly after the birth of her fifth child in 1873.

Some years after Emily's death James remarried. In June 1885 he wrote to his daughter Emily from Monk Bridge Ironworks in Leeds, when she was staying with Grandfather and Grandmother Smith (his second wife's parents) and he sends them his best wishes. The day of writing (1 June) is described as 'a day which has been very full of events to me and mine' and these included his marriage four years earlier to Mary Laura, daughter of the Fisher Smith family. Emily seems then to have gone on to Cambridge, where her grandfather wrote to her saying 'you will be glad to get back to Gledhow. Everything will be "apple pie" by that time I expect. With love your aff.[ectionate] g.f. E. Fisher Smith.'

James's letter of 1 June 1885 is significant as it is full of family information; it describes the leaving of the old family home at Headingley, Spring Bank, and the move to Gledhow Hall. Whether or not the former was not grand enough for the new Mrs Kitson or she wanted to get away from memories of James's first wife we cannot know. James reported on progress at the new family home: 'we are making rapid changes at Gledhow', and he told Emily about her room with a new tiled hearth and 'wood mantel' [sic]; 'now that it is finished it looks so pretty I am sure you will be very fond of it, and be almost anxious to see the cold weather near to be able to have a fire and sit and admire it.' He had also said farewell to Spring Bank: 'The old home at Spring Bank is dismantled all the furniture has gone, and I went round the house on Saturday to say farewell to it, and all its memories. It brought much of sorrow and many joys to me, so I felt rather sad to say good bye to the home of near fifteen years.'

Mother (the second Mrs Kitson) was to ride out with her husband to see the bluebells in the Gledhow woods and was

said to be 'a little better' but 'she will require to rest for a long time before she regains her strength' (after what is not mentioned) though by 16 June she must have recovered sufficiently to make a trip to Goring, as a letter to Emily of that date from Harold Fisher Smith (Mary Laura Kitson's brother) mentions seeing her there. Emily never married though I am sure she must have had many admirers, of whom Harold I believe was one. On 25 June 1885 he wrote to her saying that he had been to the Handel festival in London and had 'tried to find her without success'; presumably Emily was then staying at the family's London home. He wrote again the following day from the Salisbury Club, St. James's, and yet again on 9 July when he obviously felt his advances had been spurned. He said, 'a certain Miss who alas! Is a lass who never, except perhaps in a lassitude, gives a thought to affectionately yours Harold.'

Later letters from James to Emily talk of business affairs, some being written from trips abroad. In 1898 he visited Baku where he met Prince Galitsin (governor of the Caucasus), who had come at noon, 'preceded by Cossacks and outriders. He stopped his carriage, descended and shook hands with us, was very cordial ... we made a good show.' He had been to Baku before, and commented in his letters on the fact that the Russian trains travelled slowly, and there were problems with 'the total absence of sheets, the dearth of water, and the irregularity of feeding'; and 'picturesque men' posed for photos. A letter from the Grand Hotel Hungaria, Budapest, dated 30 November 1898, contains the germ of the idea for the splendid bathroom at Gledhow: 'By contrast with the places we have been in this hotel is superb. I have had a luxurious bath in a white tiled room which I quite envy and long to reproduce.' The return journey had been made via Constantinople, of which he said, 'Spare me from Constantinople which is picturesque and strange, but nothing compensates for dirt and neglect.'

The letters in this collection are probably only a few of those that must have been sent to Emily over the course of

her long life (she died aged 95 in 1962), for she seems to have spent extended periods away from home, sometimes in hotels on the south coast and sometimes abroad, though when she was at home she concerned herself with household affairs at Gledhow Hall, for James Kitson's second marriage was not to last. After the birth of a daughter it foundered and when it was suggested that the children of the marriage might leave Gledhow with their mother their elder half-siblings were horrified; Emily and her sister Alice Hilda in particular were very fond of the youngsters. The second Mrs Kitson is referred to as 'that woman' and some years later was reported to be living in Buenos Aires where she had a son. Running Gledhow Hall included entertaining her father's friends and also the workers from the Colne Valley constituency, for which he was Liberal MP for some years. Emily's notebook records the amounts of food and drink provided for these occasions, and details of the extra staff needed to serve sometimes hundreds of guests.

A number of letters are addressed to Emily at various hotels on the French Riviera, advising her on travel and hotels; she was at the Hotel des Anglais, Menton, when her father wrote telling her and her companion to take seats in a sleeping car for the journey to Paris, telling them where to stay and that they should take some wine and water for the journey. Other advice concerned the hiring of carriages. James (who had returned from the trip to attend a family funeral) also mentioned the weather at home, and skating parties on the lake at Gledhow; 'Yesterday Saturday I was favoured of the company of numerous skaters. The usual party. Mrs. Talbot Baines actually felt constrained to come to speak to me on my own ice.' The night temperature 'is near zero. The Elmete Thermometer which always goes one better than anyone else's, was 5% [sic] below zero on Friday night.' (James's brother lived at Elmete Hall, their father's home). So even though it seems to be dull and cold in Menton, Leeds is even colder. But a box of 'Gledhow flowers' is to be sent for Emily's hostess. The same letter reveals James Kitson's support for a Distress Fund set up in Leeds,

'This arctic weather stops all building and public work out of doors, thus inflicting great privation on those who are employed in these undertakings.' (10 February 1895).

There seem to be no letters from Emily's sister Alice Hilda in this collection, but there is correspondence from her brothers. The letters from Edward and Roland (her half-brother) are short notes thanking her for Christmas presents, but the letters from her eldest brother Albert are longer and more interesting. In 1890 Albert married Florence Schunck (whose mother was Kate Lupton); Emily's diary records the date of the wedding and the fact that Mrs Schunck had provided a wedding breakfast. On his wedding tour, Albert wrote to Emily from the Grand Hotel in Paris, saying how beautiful his wife looked and how well she had stood up to the journey. Instead of going to Cannes as planned they were going instead to Monte Carlo and he awaited confirmation of rooms for them at the Metropole Hotel there. He asked Emily to send on the *Leeds Mercury* and *Yorkshire Post* to meet them at Monte Carlo so that they could read the reports of their wedding. A later letter from Albert (from Gledhow Lodge) to Emily when she was staying at Swallbach in Austria, told her of the birth of a third child, another daughter. He feared they would never have a son, indeed he thought they would not have more children, but they went on to have a total of seven children, all of them girls. In due course these children would be known in the family as 'the seven', with the eldest as ringleader. James Kitson wrote to Emily of Florence's disappointment that it was another girl, but he said he 'had told Albert he would be able to open a girls' school'. Some years later, writing to Emily from Cober Hill near Scarborough where Albert and his family were then living, James told Emily of the 'little children' playing in the garden, and that Edward Schunck's grandson was enjoying 'the companionship of his cousins' as the only little boy among seven girls!

Some of the letters from James talk of his political career, like the one written on 28 January 1908 from the Reform Club to Emily at Bournemouth. It seems he was about to

make an important speech and said, 'The mat of the hansom in which I returned just now from the Foreign Office was stamped EK, [i.e. Emily Kitson] so I thought that was lucky ... I have finished my notes. I am anxious to deliver my speech as soon as possible.'

The last few Christmases of James Kitson's life saw Emily away from Gledhow, as seen by the fact some letters are addressed to her at a Bournemouth hotel in December 1908, and it has been suggested that she may not have felt able to organise a big house party or could not face the noise.

Her family sent Emily the following on Gledhow notepaper, signed by the assembled guests:

A Happy New Year and renewed
Health to Emily
Is the wish of 22 of the Kitson family

Christmas is here - and so are we
We wish you were with us under the
Family Tree

To Emily our dear one, tho' now so far away
We send our heartiest greetings on this
Our Festal day

The Guests at Gledhow are alert
And Hearty
Our host is wanting to complete
The party.

Sometimes Emily's health was referred to as 'delicate' (although she lived into her 90s) but after an operation in autumn 1910 she seems to have rallied and was fit to accompany her father and brother on an annual winter visit to the south of France. Roland had written on Christmas Day 1910, 'I wish you as merry a Xmas as you feel up to. I hope you can tackle my chocolates.' Edward

had written to his sister 'hope you will get quite well and strong again during 1911 ... Father talks of you and he is going to Beaulieu in the middle of February for a month.' James Kitson was still fit and active and reported in a letter to Emily that on 13 January 1911 he had left Leeds by train at 7.50 am, had a nice breakfast on the train and arrived at 11.10 for a midday meeting at his bank in London, going via his club to leave his portmanteau. This must have been one of the last letters Emily received from her father.

Emily, James and Roland made the trip to the south of France in spring 1911. On the return journey James Kitson suffered a heart attack on the train outside Paris, and was taken to the Hotel Meurice where he died. The cable sent by his children read 'Father died here, after a journey from Beaulieu, from heart attack, that came on early in the train this morning.' How fitting that Emily should have been there with her father as he lay dying, far from home, and that of all his children she is the one who is remembered in St John's churchyard, and the one who is said to have been concerned that there would be no-one to look after the graves of her parents and grandparents in Roundhay.

It is said that the break-up of James Kitson's second marriage had two effects – the first that he looked forward to the future and not back to what might have been, and the second, that his daughter Emily devoted herself to his well-being and never married. The family chronicler wrote, somewhat cryptically, 'always he had Emily. She was the only one who did not suffer from some physical failing or some lack of control.' Was she the favourite child, the only one who caused him no trouble and put his interests before her own? The last word must go to James Kitson, in a letter dated 12 February 1895 about a note of thanks for Gledhow flowers sent to a hostess in the south of France; 'Mrs Armitstead says such charming things about you, I dare not tell you, you would indeed be my spoilt child.'

... your affectionate father, Airedale

Biographical note on James Kitson:

Born 1835 to James Kitson and his wife Ann (nee Newton)
Married Emily Christiana Cliff, 1860 (5 children). She died in 1873.

Married Mary Laura Fisher Smith, 1881 (2 children).

Liberal MP for the Colne Valley from 1892 – 1907. Elevated to the peerage as Lord Airedale in 1907.

Chairman of the family firm, Kitson and Company Limited, Airedale Foundry and the Monkbridge Iron and Steel Works.

Died Paris, 1911, succeeded by his son Albert, 2nd Lord Airedale.

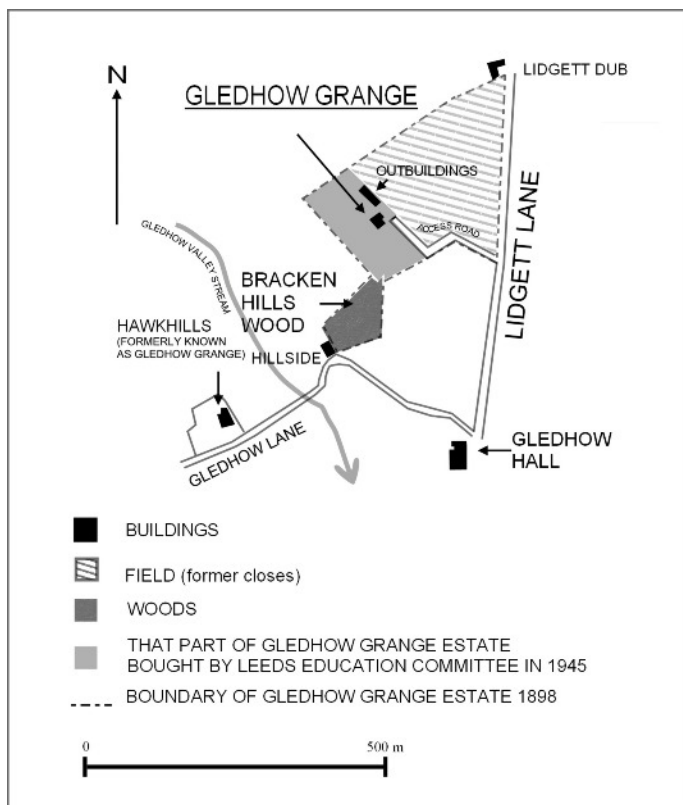
Note on the cover photo:

Lord Airedale is seen on the right, wearing a top hat, between his daughter Emily and son Albert. Other family members in the group include his daughter-in-law Florence and her mother (Baroness Schunk, nee Kate Lupton).

The use of material from collection WYAS 893, West Yorkshire Archive Service, Leeds, is acknowledged with thanks.

A longer version of this article appears in the Newsletter of the Family and Community Historical Research Society, October 2014.

The Mysteries of Gledhow Grange. By Anthony Silson



Gledhow Grange and its setting.

The private ownership years

On either side of the entrance to Gledhow Christian Care Home (Brackenwood Drive) is an old weathered stone pillar. These pillars look to have been there well before the modern building occupied by the Care Home. Such a difference in ages hints that an older building once

occupied the site of the Home. This is indeed the case, and the older building was known as Gledhow Grange. It is *this* house that is the focus of this article.

Confusingly, another demolished detached house had the same name and was only about 500 metres to the south on Gledhow Lane. It was this Gledhow Lane house that was occupied by William Middleton, the Duchess of Cambridge's ancestor. Shortly after 1870, Middleton changed the name of his house to Hawkhills.

William Pollard built Gledhow Grange (Brackenwood) in 1870. Shortly afterwards, he moved from Allerton Grange into Gledhow Grange, though some Pollards continued to live at Allerton Grange. Pollard seems to have been well-off because as well as buying the Gledhow Grange estate (from John Dixon), he increased its size by buying two closes immediately to the north by 1871. In contrast, Middleton mortgaged his property in 1870, so he must have needed a loan. Perhaps Pollard wished to perpetuate the grange name in his new house, and paid Middleton to change the name of *his* house. In any event, Pollard's house was known as Gledhow Grange by 1875.

In 1898, Pollard sold the whole Gledhow Grange estate to Sir James Kitson, soon to become Baron Airedale, of Gledhow Hall. As the two estates were adjacent, Kitson may have wished to extend the Gledhow Hall estate.

Kitson leased Gledhow Grange to Arthur Currer Briggs and his wife Helen. Arthur's main interest lay in coal mining but he found himself Lord Mayor of Leeds 1903-04. It was Helen, though, in her capacity as Lady Mayoress, who was largely responsible for establishing a holiday camp for the financially poor children of Leeds. The camp still exists today, and is situated at Silverdale. Following Arthur's death in 1906, Helen tenanted Gledhow Grange until 1912.

Sir James Kitson's second daughter, who never married, was called The Hon. Alice Hilda Kitson. In 1911, Sir James died suddenly, and a year later Hilda replaced Helen Currer Briggs as tenant of Gledhow Grange. It was

not until 1920 that she bought the Gledhow Grange estate. Little is known about Hilda's life while she inhabited this rather lonely house. There is no evidence of her engaging in civic duties. Other writers have stated that she gave Gledhow Valley Woods to Leeds Corporation. This is not the case. The woods were conveyed from the Rt. Hon. Albert Ernest Baron Airedale to Wade's Charity, which still own them, though they are on long-term lease to Leeds City Council. Hilda's only known interest was in local and family history.

Hilda died in 1944, and Roland Dudley Baron Airedale, and George Kitson inherited the house. They were eager to sell, and on 13 April 1945 Cyril Banks of Oakwood Grove bought the Grange.

The Local Education Authority (LEA) Years

Leeds Education Committee had shown some interest in buying Gledhow Grange from the Kitsons. But there had been a delay, thought by the LEA to be occasioned by the Ministry of Education, and the house had been sold to Cyril Banks. The LEA still wanted Gledhow Grange, and could have compulsorily purchased the property. Instead, on 31 August 1945 Banks was paid the £5000 he had paid for the house and grounds. In October 1945 Leeds City Council approved this purchase. Gledhow Grange had been bought without even a valuation from the district valuer. After the purchase, the district valuer estimated the value to be £3500! The LEA should have sought approval from the Minister of Education prior to purchase but approval was sought only after purchase. There followed a prolonged exchange of correspondence between the Council, including the LEA and the Town Clerk, and the Ministries that was not resolved until 17 March 1948! But at least it found in the Council's favour.

It is not known why the LEA wanted Gledhow Grange. After the purchase, the LEA reviewed its school provision for educationally sub-normal (ESN) children. The review stated that Gledhow Grange might become a residential ESN school as it was large enough to accommodate about twenty children and there was room to expand in the grounds should the need arise. However, the LEA had an immediate need to accommodate the ESN children who had been evacuated to One Oak, Ilkley. And from 29 June 1946 Gledhow Grange became these boys' home.

Before this, some modifications had been made to the house. 1945-46 was a time of enormous shortages; builders needed prior approval from a government department to obtain materials. Unfortunately for the contractor doing the job the Council failed to gain prior approval for his materials and the contractor presumably went short for his other work.

Even with these changes, the building failed to meet building standards regulations, but the boys were admitted anyway. Perhaps worse than the physical problems, were the staffing problems. The LEA found it hard to recruit and retain staff. For some time the only resident staff were a warden and his wife, and a female attendant who also acted as cook. When the warden and his wife had a day off it was left to this one attendant to control up to twenty ESN boys. Before long, the attendant was dismissed for alleged cruelty to the boys. However, towards the end of 1948, an inspector's report found conditions at the home had improved.

Just as the Home was settling down the Council decided, apparently without consultation, to transfer the Home from the LEA to the Care of Children Committee in October 1948. But bodies such as the Ministry of Education were not informed until May 1949. This sudden decision ruffled a few feathers and led to another exchange of correspondence, but the various bodies outside the Council had eventually to accept a *fait accompli*.

The Care of Children Committee Years

The transfer of Gledhow Grange Home from the LEA to the Care of Children Committee was much more than an administrative change. It meant that the possible long-term aim of Gledhow Grange becoming a school would never be realised. In addition, although Gledhow Grange continued to be a home for ESN children until 1954, children who were emotionally or mentally disturbed then gradually replaced ESN children. The boys were very difficult, an issue exacerbated by frequent changes of staff. To cope, the number of boys in the Home was reduced as a temporary measure. In 1965, the maximum number of children accommodated at Gledhow Grange returned to twenty, but half of the children were to be girls, instead of all boys. Perhaps it was felt the presence of girls would have a calming influence on the boys. If this was the case, there is scant knowledge of the children's behaviour 1966-91 to permit an assessment of the effect of girls.

However, it is known that four teenage girls started the first of two disturbances that occurred in December 1991. The girls had been drinking during a visit to a friend's house. When they returned to Gledhow Grange, they threatened staff, and the police had to be called. Shortly after this incident, two boys who had truanted from school were forbidden a meal at the Home. This sparked a riot, which did much costly damage, including eight broken windows. The next day, Councillor Peggy White called for the Home to be closed down, but Keith Murray (the then director of Social Services) stated that 'closure was not being considered'.

Yet in February 1992 Leeds City Council resolved to permanently close the Home. Social Services claimed it was under-used and run-down. The Home's teenage



Gledhow Grange taken at the time of the December 1991 riot. Reproduced by kind permission of Yorkshire Post Newspapers.

residents suggested Social Services had let it become run-down in order to close it. Perhaps the most likely reason for closure of the home was to save money as the Social Services budget had to take huge cuts. Whatever the reason, the closure didn't go smoothly as the nine teenagers still living at the Home protested that they had not been consulted before the decision was made. Social Services responded by saying they would start the process again. Meanwhile the youths were trying to take Social Services to court. The Council was advised that they would probably be found to have acted unlawfully if the case proceeded, so the closure was postponed to July 1993, and the case never reached court.

After the Home closed, the house remained vacant for a few years before it was probably burnt down one bonfire night. The end came on 16 November 1998 when the land was transferred from the Council to Christian Projects Limited.

Main Sources

Chapel Allerton large scale Ordnance Survey maps, 1849-1915.

Chapel Allerton Tithe map, c. 1846.

www.tracksintime.wyjs.org.uk

Correspondence relating to Gledhow Grange, 1945-49.

National Archives ED122/66.

Directories of Leeds, 1851-1914.

Leeds City Council Annual Reports: Care of Children Committee, 1950-66.

Phill-dvsn(user) Posted on 29 Jan 2010.

www.secretleeds.com/forum accessed 26-10-13.

Stowell John, Obituary Currer Briggs 1906.

www.stowell.org.yk accessed 17-01-14.

Wade's Property Charity Adviser. Ownership of Gledhow Valley Woods. www.wadescharity.org

West Riding Register of Deeds: 1855 ST 594 682. 1870 644 120 142. 1870 644 627 674. 1871 665 315 374. 1898 24 194 104. 1920 90 891 322.

Yorkshire Evening Post and Yorkshire Post, 1991-1992.

The Goodman family of Hunslet, Gledhow and Roundhay.

By Neville Hurworth

As the industrialisation of Leeds developed in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the town became increasingly crowded and unhealthy. The rich and poor were living more and more, side by side each other, with poor sanitation and polluted air. Prosperous merchants sought to distance themselves and their families from the factories and the town by setting up homes in the outlying areas.

Benjamin Goodman of Benjamin Goodman and Sons, (woollen) stuff merchants of Hunslet was one of these. In 1815, he bought the land on which he built 'Goodman House', now known as 'Beechwood', a handsome mansion on Elmete Lane off Wetherby Road where it can still be seen today. This land was part of the Roundhay estate of a deceased bankrupt Quaker, Samuel Elam. Samuel Elam and another Quaker, Thomas Nicholson, had acquired Roundhay from Lord Stourton in 1803 and Thomas went onto develop his Roundhay estate with the main features of today's Roundhay Park.

It seems that the rural life did not suit Benjamin and it was not long before he sold Beechwood to his eldest son, John, and returned to his home in Hunslet. John, his wife and growing family lived at Beechwood until 1842 when he sold it to his younger brother (later Sir) George Goodman, a life-long bachelor. During the last few years of his life, as his health was failing, Benjamin returned to Beechwood to be with his younger son George. He died there in 1848 in his 85th year. He had been a 'very religious' man, 'a zealous friend of charitable institutions' helping to found the Lancasterian Schools for poor children.

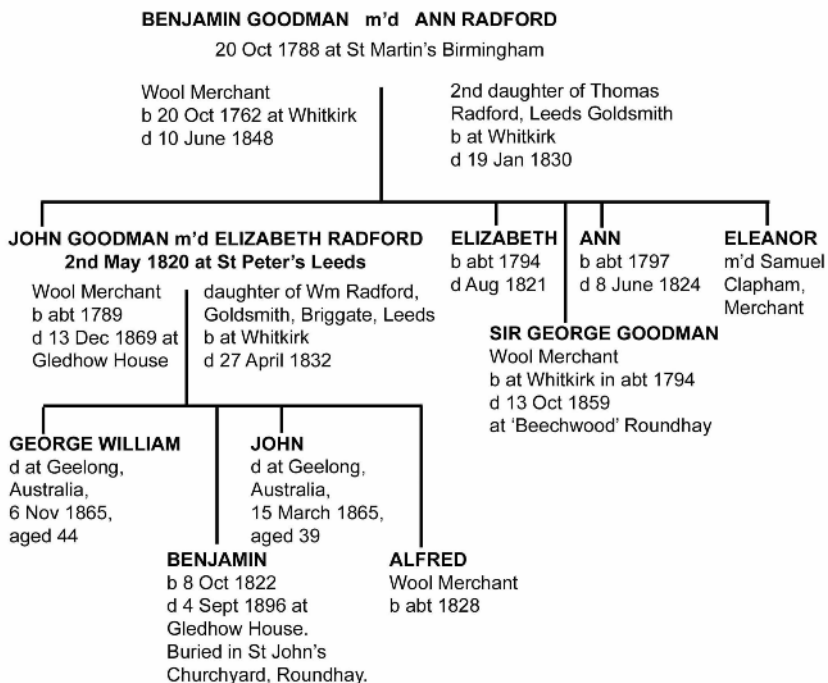
In 1836, George Goodman became the first mayor for the borough of Leeds under the Municipal Corporation Reform Act of 1835. He served again as mayor in 1847, 1850, 1851 and 1852 and was MP for Leeds from 1852 to 1857. He was knighted on the 26th February 1852 at the Queen's Levee and died at Beechwood in 1859, allegedly worn out by a life of



'Beechwood', Elmete Lane, Roundhay.



Sir George Goodman. Portrait by Simpson.



The Goodman Family of Sir George Goodman.

arduous public service. His portrait, painted by John Simpson, was presented to the council on the 23rd October 1837.

After leaving Beechwood, John Goodman lived for many years in Wortley, but about the time his brother Sir George died, John bought a couple of acres of land in Gledhow, part of the grounds of Gledhow Hall. Here, John built Gledhow House, which still exists at the junction of Gledhow Lane and Lidgett Lane at the top of Little Switzerland (although not much of it can be seen from the road). The vendor was John Dixon of Astle Hall, Cheshire, whose family had in earlier years owned Gledhow Hall and much of the surrounding land. The Dixons had long since left Yorkshire but still owned many acres of land in Gledhow.

John had four sons. His first and third sons died in their middle ages at Geelong, Australia, a growing wool export centre. Of John's youngest son Alfred, little is known except that he married and left Leeds.

John's second son, Benjamin Jnr remained at home in Leeds and soon after John died at Gledhow House in 1869, Benjamin Jnr sold the Goodman house and business premises in Hunslet Lane and Wilson Street, (described in the sale particulars as 'the large and most capacious private warehouses in Leeds' with 'counting houses and offices'), along with a cellar of 350 dozen fine wines. No-one was admitted to the sale room without buying a catalogue, price one shilling, 'in consequence of the immense expense incurred in sampling such rare and costly wines.'

From then onwards Benjamin Jnr lived the life of a gentleman and in 1880 he became a JP. His death at Gledhow House in 1896, still a bachelor, ended the association of the Goodman family with north Leeds.

In earlier years the Goodmans had connections with Whitkirk, where the family had a vault in the parish church, St Mary's. Benjamin, John and Sir George Goodman are interred here along with several of their family. Benjamin Goodman Jnr however, was buried in St John's churchyard at Roundhay.

Main Sources of Information

Joan Newiss, *Goodman House, Roundhay. A Detective Story*, Yorkshire Archeological Society Local History Bulletin No. 36, Summer 1995.

Phil Ward, Report on *Beechwood*, LCC Development Department, 1998.

Leeds Central Library, Directories and Newspapers.

The National Archives, *Documents On-Line*, various wills.

West Yorkshire Archive Service in Leeds, and the Registry of Deeds at Wakefield.

Another Roundhay Childhood. Alma's Story.

By Gwyneth Spurr

Noticing that the row of cottages once known as Dutch Barn Cottages, and more recently as Park Cottages, was being renovated and put on the market prompted me to wonder about the people who used to live and work in them and in the buildings and stables surrounding the Mansion. On impulse I telephoned a number which I thought might belong to Jack & Alma Agar, who both lived in adjoining cottages behind the Roundhay Fox when they were young.

Sadly, Jack had passed away just weeks earlier in April 2013 but I had a long conversation with Alma and we have kept in touch ever since. We found that we have many memories in common and between us we remember many of the families who lived in Park Cottages in the 30's and 40's.

This is Alma's Story:

I must have been about two when I went to Cobble Hall Farm. My father Harry Benn worked, not at the farm but at the Mansion at Roundhay Park. There were two cottages and a big yard and the farmer's house where Mr Ashby lived with his wife and daughter. We lived in one of the cottages and my sister Sheila was born there.

There was no electricity and I remember seeing my father trim the lamps and fill them with paraffin. We had no bathroom, just a toilet at the back of the house and I don't think there was any hot water. The cottage next door was the Birdsall's until they left and went into an almshouse next to St. John's School on Wetherby Road where, when I was old enough, I went to school.

Cobble Hall had a Mr and Mrs Kirk living there. I think Mrs Kirk was Alma, Craven Gilpin's niece and she had a daughter, Joan.

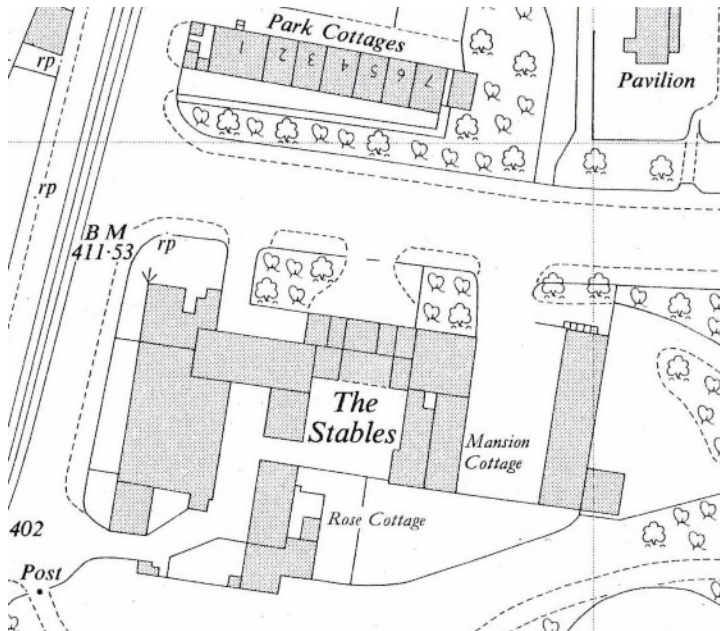
On one occasion we were snowed in and no-one could get through. My uncle got just past Elmete Hall Lodge where Hepworth's lived and had to turn back. Fortunately, my mother baked her own bread and cakes in the fire oven. She always knew the right temperature.



**Mansion Cottage in Clock Tower Yard
where Alma lived in her younger years.**



**Mansion Cottage in 2014. Now
without the extension and the garage.**



1953 OS Map. The Carriage House, Mansion Cottage and the Stables at Roundhay Park. Crown Copyright.



Once the Agar's family house behind Mansion Cottage and back-to-back with it (2014).

I would have been about five or six when we went to Mansion Cottage on Mansion Lane because the Gilpins wanted my father nearer the Mansion where his work was. Sheila would only have been a little toddler. It was a nice cottage, much bigger and better than the one at Cobble Hall because it had gas and electricity. There were four rooms with a kitchen and bathroom in a single-storey extension. Outside was a large yard, Clock Tower Yard, half cobbles and half concrete and opposite was the long Carriage House (see below).



At the Mansion Lane end of the building was an ice house where Mr Fosco, an Italian, made ice-cream for the Mansion and we usually had some given. Later, during the Second World War, the same building was used for Air Raid Wardens' meetings. Gwyneth's father, Bill Evans, and Jack Agar were both wardens. The building was planned to be a decontamination unit in case of a gas attack. Then there were two garages with old hay mangers on the walls. From the second garage were steps up to the loft.

The third part of the building was the Mansion Laundry where Mrs Pimblott and Mrs Whitehead worked. In one area was a stove which my dad had to stoke up at night and leave a supply of coke for the next day. There were also two very large sinks, several

wooden tubs and a boiler. In the next room were two machines called calenders; two long rollers covered in material and heated. I remember table-cloths, serviettes, (lots of those), and sheets being ironed in this way and there were two long tables for ironing small items. The final room was boarded separately with lots of wooden planks on a pulley for drying the washing in bad weather. In summer it was strung out across the yard. Once or twice we noticed a light in the laundry at night and my dad got the police and it was an old tramp that had gone there to sleep because it was warm.

Outside one end of the building was an open flight of steps with no handrail or anything. I remember them because Jack used to jump from the top step down. Behind there used to be a kind of swamp because the dog once got in it and it smelled awful! The dog, Bruno, a black Labrador, was well known on Mansion Lane and sat at the entrance to Clock Tower Yard. Passers-by stopped to talk to him but always had to walk round him as he would not move. He was also given coppers which he took to the Mansion and came back with crisps and he used to sit outside the kitchen window there until he was given a bone.

The big garages on the cottage side were used for the Gilpin family cars including the car my dad chauffeured Mr Gilpin in and the van he drove delivering bread, cakes etc. from the Mansion bake house to the various Gilpin catering establishments. I can remember going with my father to Temple Newsam and he told me all about the Blue Lady who is supposed to be the ghost there. The van was also used for trips to Cobble Hall and to bring the milk churns down to the Mansion.

Harry and Nellie Agar's cottage was in the Stable Yard and backed on to ours. They had gas but no electricity and when they wanted to put it in they had to come through our cottage to connect it up. They had two sons Jack and Donald.

Nellie was a dressmaker and a very good pianist. It was she who got me interested in music really and I started to play but at first I played by ear then I had lessons from a Mr Woods and then from Miss Lambourne. I think she taught a lot of children in Roundhay.

Harry was a carter turned lorry driver who was also licensed to shoot vermin in the Park. Jack used to go with him and once shot

a badger and his dad told him not to touch it as he thought that was where TB in cows came from. Jack had to go for a job.

Jack's Grandpa and Grandma Agar lived at White House in the Canal Gardens for some years. I think he was the superintendent at the Park. Harry was born in a Tudor-style cottage on Wetherby Road. Nellie and Donald went out to New Zealand after the war and Harry followed when he retired. Donald has since moved to Australia.

I always played with Jack and Donald but my sister, Sheila, played with Pamela Watkins who lived with her parents Jack and Alice at 4, Park Cottages. Jack Agar and I were like brother and sister. He was always there and I was very fond of him and wrote to him while he was abroad. Jack was in the ATC. Then he joined the RAF at seventeen and later the Army and served all over the world. His friends used to come to our house too.

My mum was very hospitable and invited girls who worked at the Mansion to our house when they had their days off if their home was a long way away. I went on holiday to Ireland with one girl when she went home to see her family.

Jack, Donald and Pamela went to Talbot Road School but Sheila and I went to St. John's. We often got a lift to school when we were young. When we were older we walked down through the Park, down the hill we used to call Hill 40 then between the donkey field and the old Lakeside Café. Sometimes we'd go where the waterfall was and cut through where there was a by-wash for releasing water from the Big Lake. The water went underground and came out near Lakestream Cottage. I stayed at St. John's until I left at fourteen. We went to the Open-Air Bathing Pool for swimming lessons and down to Harehills School for cookery. One of the Birdsall daughters lived in Lakestream Cottage and ran a tuck shop where we bought sweets on the way to school.

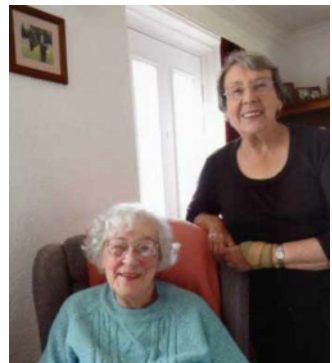
Mary Garret lived in the Gamekeeper's Lodge near the head of the Big Lake. I don't think they had any running water and probably got their drinking water from a spring in the Gorge where there was a metal cup on a chain for anyone to drink out of. Mary was a bit older than me but she used to come up and play and then she'd have to go back home to the Lodge and if it was dark my dad would walk her part way but she was used to the park and didn't seem to mind.

Both Mary and her brother John went to St. John's School. I don't know when they left the Lodge but it must have been when the war started. They were there and then they weren't. I heard that John went into the Air Force and became a teacher after the war.

I left the Park when I married in 1950. Jack married four years later. We did not meet again for nearly thirty years by which time we were both divorced. Someone gave Jack my mother's address and he got in touch with me. We were married for thirty four years. His cousin said "Jack's mother would have been pleased."



Alma and Jack in the 1990s



**Alma (seated) and
Gwyneth (2013)**

Acknowledgment

I would like to thank Alma for telling me her story and for the great pleasure we have both had in revisiting the past.

CONTENTS

**Oakwood Clock Refurbishment.
Congratulations and Thank You.**

**William Gustavus Nicholson (1845-1918). Field
Marshall Lord Nicholson of Roundhay. William
Nicholson Nicholson's son who became the
head of the British Army.**

By Neville Hurworth 1

My Dear Emily ...

**Letters to Emily, daughter of James Kitson
Jnr., Leeds industrialist and politician.**

By Anne Wilkinson 5

The Mysteries of Gledhow Grange.

By Anthony Silson 13

**The Goodman family of Hunslet, Gledhow and
Roundhay.**

By Neville Hurworth 20

Another Roundhay Childhood. Alma's Story.

By Gwyneth Spurr 24

£3