

**RIMINGTON, SAWLEY,
TWISTON & RATHMELL's**

**LEADING EARLY
QUAKERS**

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Please don't jump straight to a family you may be interested in: you'll miss important background information in earlier chapters if you do!

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This article may bear my name, but has been supported throughout by Rimington archivist and local historian Brian Stott, whose local knowledge and collection of local documents are both phenomenal! I couldn't have done it without him!

Enid Briggs

2026

INTRODUCTION

Those of us who feel the northern slopes of Pendle¹ to be in our blood, and have any interest in Quakerism, might tend to date the movement from founder George Fox's famous mystical experience on the top of Pendle in 1652.

Descending to Downham, says his journal, *at night we came to an alehouse and stayed all night and declared much to the man of the house ... And the man of the house did spread the paper up and down and was mightily affected with Truth.*

Following the end of the Civil War, the country was three years into the Commonwealth - effectively a religious state, ruled by rigid Puritans under the leadership of Oliver Cromwell. Whereas the years leading to the Civil War were characterised by Protestant fear of resurgent Catholic influences in the national church, the Commonwealth saw a fracturing of the Protestants into several groups - united, one might even say, only by a horror of Quakerism!

The fundamental belief of Quakers² which outraged them was that God ('the Light of Christ') is present in everyone. This led to belief in the spiritual and ministerial equality of men and women, and rejection of official religious leaders and religious ceremony: they rejected baptism, held 'public statements of mutual consent' to marriage in members' homes, and were buried on private land.³

The State reacted fiercely: offences with which Quakers could be charged included not attending their parish church (or *absence from national worship*) refusing to pay tithes⁴ and Easter Dues to the parish priest, refusing to contribute towards the repair of church buildings, hosting or attending unofficial religious meetings or *conventicles*, preaching at such, and refusing to take oaths. The latter was a particular trap, as arrested Quakers were asked to swear an oath of loyalty to the Crown - a loyalty they mostly held, but would not swear to.

¹ the name *Pendle* itself combines two words, *Pen* and *Hyll*, each meaning hill: I prefer to allow the name to stand alone, rather than adding yet another 'Hill!' At only 557 metres, Pendle can be seen from surprising distances; and, although famous for its 'Mist', on a very clear day, from its summit you can, like George Fox, see the sea!

² or *The Religious Society of Friends*, or their own term for each other, *Friends*

³ church weddings were replaced during the Commonwealth by marriages in front of civil authorities: in a sense, Quakers were normalising this change; the outrage from 1660 was that they were depriving the clergy of fees

⁴ a type of tax, 10% of the harvest, payable to the parish clergy, or to a lay impropiator

Punitive - often ruinous - fines, distraints (seizure of goods) and periods of imprisonment - often ending in death - were imposed, but pacifism was a prime Quaker principle and persecutions or 'sufferings' were endured patiently.⁵ Our area was not one to naturally embrace religious change. But there must have been considerable discontent and unease with established religion, because very soon after Fox's short visit, Quakerism took deep, committed root in Rimington, Twiston and Sawley.⁶

**A handful of families, with all to lose socially and materially,
but absolutely convinced of the spiritual gains, led the way.
This article will look at some of these local families.**

Historian Christopher Hill speaks of *a great overturning, questioning, revaluing of everything in England* between 1645 and 1653: *old institutions, old beliefs, old values came into question,*⁷ in a fluid movement between new groups and ideas, each experimenting in the search for an ideal society.

Fox had travelled extensively in the North and East Ridings of Yorkshire during 1651/2, and by 1653 Yorkshire was considered one of the main areas of *convincement*, or conversion. Response came, particularly, from those known as 'Seekers'.

William Dewsbury, originally from the East Riding, met Fox in 1651 and became a Quaker minister the following year, preaching throughout Yorkshire and adjoining counties. In 1653, from Settle, he *was moved to go to Colne and preach at the market cross*; and only a couple of years later, he is credited with setting up the first worshipping community at Marsden, now Nelson, between Burnley and Colne, and establishing the 'Marsden Monthly Meeting',⁸ a cross-county administrative body covering a wide area, including Grindleton, Sawley and Rimington in the north-west, Brierfield and Briercliffe in the east and Rossendale in the south.

Numerous small *Preparatory Meetings*, such as Newby, in Rimington, and Trawden, came under Marsden Meeting's jurisdiction, and were to meet two or three times midweek, as well as on Sunday, and join together in the larger group monthly.

⁵ no deaths in prison have been identified from the local area under consideration

⁶ for readers from further afield: the Sawley under discussion is near Clitheroe. It is now in Lancashire but was in Yorkshire until the boundary changes of 1974. Do not be led astray to Sawley near Ripon!

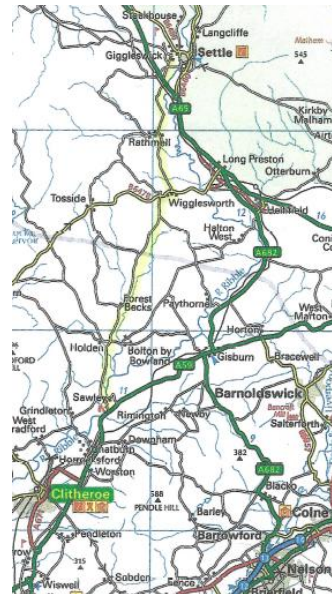
⁷ *The World Turned Upside Down*, 1972

⁸ henceforth, the Meeting will be abbreviated to 'MMM' and quotations and information from the minutes referenced in footnotes as MMMM

Observers of the MMs in later decades might see excessive control and interference, but Dewsbury's original vision was to establish community and mutual support. He wrote,

Watch one over another ... and let no hard thoughts lodge in your breasts one towards another ... When you see any draw back ... be faithful in ministering to the pure in them, to raise up the seed to restore them again, and then forgive one another your offences ... and exhort one another in love to the building up in your most holy faith.

If Dewsbury came directly south from Settle via Sawley, this formidable evangelist may have founded, or at least been the inspiration behind, several small Quaker Meetings on the Forest Becks road, which fell under the jurisdiction of the Settle Meeting. These were, in fact, the very sort of areas in which the earliest Quaker groups tended to take root - away from parish centres such as Gisburn and Clitheroe, in hamlets and along less-travelled roads.



Little and Great Marsden covered a wide area, but the isolated Marsden Heights, to the east of Briercliffe, proved a safe-haven for the larger Meetings: the Quaker 'traffic' from our area to Marsden is indicated by the contemporary naming of an existing wooden bridge over Pendle Water, Brierfield - *Quaker Bridge*, and it was around this time that the bridge was rebuilt in stone.⁹ Meetings comprised independently-minded, mobile and literate yeomen farmers and craftsmen.

The Preparatory Meeting to which our earliest local Quakers first belonged was that of Twiston, in the shadow of the Pendle - certainly off the beaten track, but home to some very resolute, strong-minded people!

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⁹ <https://redrosecollections.lancashire.gov.uk/view-item?i=304663&WINID=1769376830474>

CHAPTER 1: WHIPPS & BULCOCKS

It's tempting to think that Fox met **James Whipp**¹⁰ on his way down from Pendle!

According to records available to us, he was one of the first Quakers in Pendle, and - illegally - made his home at Red Syke available as a Quaker meeting place.



In the shadow of Pendle, Red Syke, partially rebuilt in the late 18th century but surely retaining the door which **James Whipp** might have used

James had served in the Parliamentary Army during the Civil War, 1642-1651, and was a recent 'incomer' from Padiham, first leasing, then buying land at Brownlaw, Twiston only in the early 1650s. In 1657, he married **Mary Bulcock** of Foothouse Yate, in Wheatley Booth, Pendle (she was his full cousin, aged 18 to his 36!) and by 1659 both are recorded as Quakers; nevertheless, separation from the established church was a new and developing idea, and the couple brought children to baptism at their parish church at Downham in 1659 and 1662.

Mary's brother and sister-in-law, **William** and **Elizabeth Bulcock**, were also prominent Twiston Quakers, probably living around Hill Top, in the northern part of the village, and meetings were also held at their home; but they, too, brought children to baptism at Downham until the late 1660s.

¹⁰ 'colour-coding' is used in this article and the family trees to help differentiate between generations

In our area, the State took a while to mobilise against the Quakers, and the first recorded proceedings against Twiston Quakers were in 1660, when six men and women, including **James Whipp**, were arrested at the house of another: all were committed to prison for ‘refusing the oath.’¹¹

Local prisons were used as a temporary measure, but Quakers were, in effect political prisoners, rather than criminals, and they were housed at York Castle, or, if their offence took place in Lancashire, at Lancaster Castle. Whilst **James** might have known some hard billets during his army service, deprivation of freedom and the dire living conditions must have come as a great shock to decent, normally law-abiding early Quakers. Farmers would also be deeply concerned about leaving their land at important times – and never knowing how long they would be away. The families suffered as much as the prisoners, not only worrying about their welfare, but taking over their roles for an indeterminate time. Of course, imprisonment was intended as a deterrent, and certainly discouraged some; but those who returned to prison over and over again must have been particularly committed.

Registers of births within the Marsden Monthly Meeting (hereafter ‘MMM’) began in 1654, burials in 1656 and marriages in 1658. Births were simply reported to the Meeting to be recorded; marriages took place in private homes identified in the records by the name of the householder and an imprecise location such as *Newby*. Burials are more problematic: often no location is recorded, but we know that a burial ground called The Hill was in operation at Marsden from 1656, and one close-by at Heyhead, Brierfield, from 1664; but these were some distance from, say, Sawley or Rossendale – a long way to carry a bier. Sometimes burials took place on family land: Robert Bulcock of Ravensholme buried his daughter Margaret in his orchard in 1662.¹²

When his wife, **Mary**, died in 1669, **James Whipp** took her to the Quaker burial ground at Salterforth, near Barnoldswick, rather than to one of the two mentioned above. Salterforth Meeting, part of the Settle MM, was also founded by William Dewsbury. Soon after, **James** transferred one of his Twiston fields *to certain persons*, for use as a burial ground. The first recorded burial there was that of his baby son **James**, in 1670: very soon after, proceedings were issued against him for *not bringing his wife and child to be buried at Chapel, but burying them in the field.*¹³

¹¹ this and many later proceedings recorded in Nightingale, B, *Early Stages of the Quaker Movement in Lancashire*, 1921

¹² orchards were a preferred choice, the land remaining undisturbed for many years after

¹³ Nightingale. The wording has often been taken to mean that **Mary** was also buried at Twiston, but this suggestion is disproved in various MMM and Salterforth records

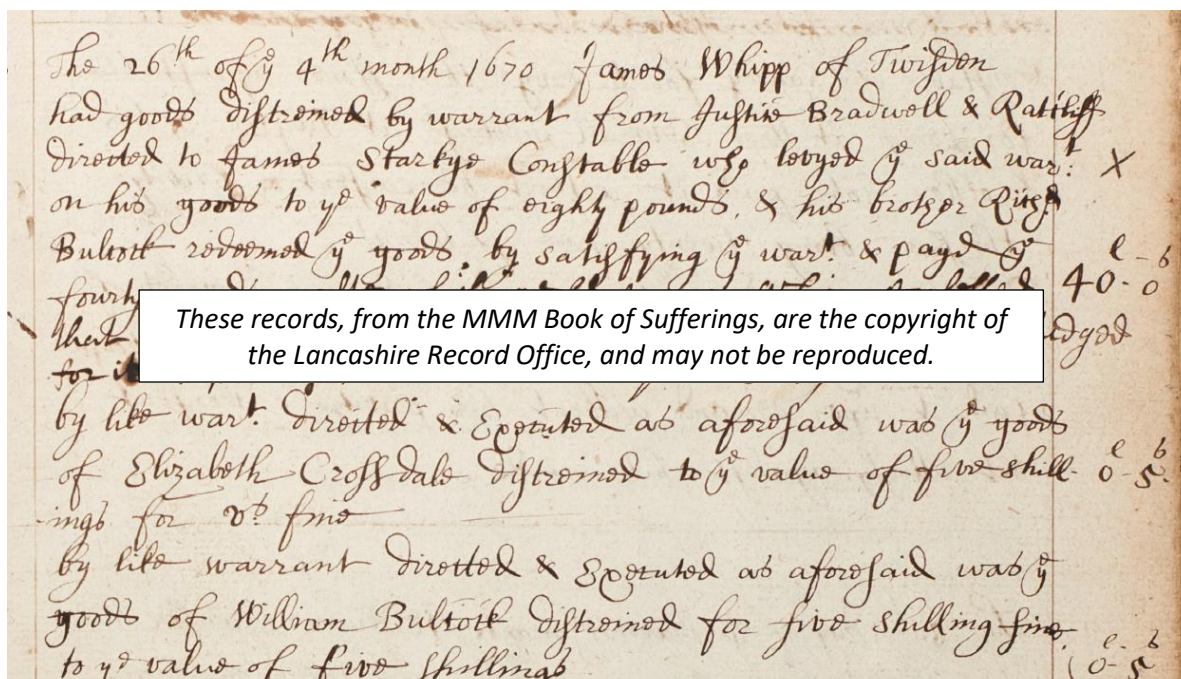
Simple marker stone in the outer wall of Twiston Burial Ground, later known as *The Sepulchre*¹⁴



The Sepulchre, winter, 1986

Friends' 'Sufferings' were recorded in detail, often as verbatim accounts.

In 1668, [James Whipp](#) was imprisoned in Lancaster Castle for attending a meeting in Padiham, and subsequently refusing 'the oath'.



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¹⁴ the burial ground was conveyed by [Nicholas Dryver](#) to [John Dryver](#) and [William Oddie](#) in 1722

Here, in 1671, **James**' tithes to the value of 4 shillings and 4 pence are redeemed by the seizure of four lambs – worth 16 shillings: the authorities had realised that 'distrain' could be quite profitable!

Three entries in November 1675 and January 1676¹⁵ record the burials, at the Sepulchre, of the three Twiston stalwarts:



James' will appointed brother-in-law **Richard** as guardian of his surviving children, along with staunch Quaker **William Holgate**: how decisions were reached is intriguing, but **Richard**'s influence prevailed, and none of **James** and **Mary**'s children continued in the Quaker religion.¹⁶

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¹⁵ Quaker dates are problematic: there are many records available, but dates often vary between them, compounded by the fact that Quakers would use only numerals for months (the usual names, to them, having pagan connotations) and the year began in March. So, 'the eighth month' might mean October! Unless absolutely necessary, dates herein are restricted to years.

¹⁶ one might think that **Richard** betrayed **James** in bringing his children back to the Church of England; but it would be quite legitimate for **Richard** to see it as 'saving' them from a 'cult'

CHAPTER 2: HOLGATES

Some researchers credit [William Holgate](#) with persuading [James](#) to make over the land for the burial ground - both gift and provocative rebellion against the church. Locally, the two have emerged notable for the extent to which they suffered fines and forfeits and even imprisonment in Lancaster and York Castle prisons, although many others suffered the same. But in America, [William](#) is regarded as pre-eminent – because many Americans claim descent from him!

He was certainly not one to ‘keep his head down’!

The earliest action we find against him is in September, 1670, when his goods were seized for attending a Quaker meeting; they were redeemed by another, but, he made it clear, *without his consent but utterly against his mind*. He is described as a Gisburn shopkeeper.¹⁷

Two months later, challenged by the Constable who broke up the meeting at [James Whipp](#)’s home, he said they met *as a company of friends to discourse of Scripture and their religion, meaning no hurt to neither King nor Country*. To pay a fine of 10s levied on another attendee, Isabel Brown, an unmarried woman of Newfield Edge, Middop, the authorities took from him 5 yards of canvas, worth 7s-6d, other textiles to the value of 5s and 2 pewter quart vessels and 2 pint vessels – with a total value of 20s-10½d, more than twice the fine.¹⁸ Still with regard to attending the meeting, the following March, chests, boxes, weights and scales were distrained from his shop.

Usually thought of as living in Sawley, this was not always the case. [William](#) had eight children, [Matthew](#) and [Elizabeth](#) possibly by a first wife, then [Frances](#), [William](#), [Robert](#), [John](#), [Mary](#) and [Ann](#), by his wife [Elizabeth](#).¹⁹ and the births of all but [Matthew](#), who was born before Quakerism was established, were registered with the Marsden MM; unusually, in all cases but one, a residence is not stated, only that [William](#) was *of Twisden Meeting*. The entry for [John](#), in 1664, says [William](#) was *of Gisburn*. Neither this nor the 1670 description preclude a Sawley residence, as the village is in Gisburn parish. But, like [James Whipp](#), [William](#) and [Elizabeth](#) were ‘incomers’. With a more unusual name, [Matthew](#)’s baptism should be easy to find, but no [Matthew Holgates](#) of the right age are to be found in the registers of Gisburn or ten nearby parishes;²⁰ neither has the couple’s marriage been located.

¹⁷ Nightingale

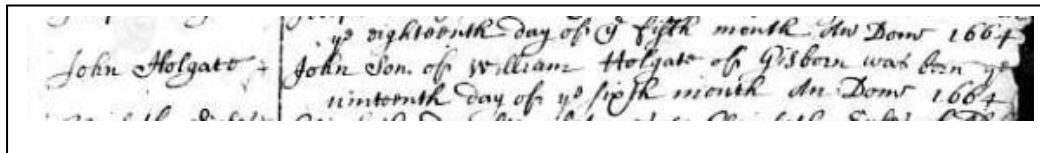
¹⁸ Nightingale & MMMM

¹⁹ confirmed by her 1709 will, which names [William](#) as her *oldest son*, but does not mention [Matthew](#), [Elizabeth](#) or [Robert](#); [Matthew](#) and [Elizabeth](#) may, by then, have died and [Matthew](#), if alive, was in America

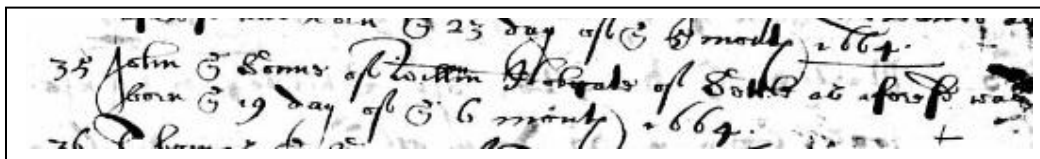
²⁰ some registers are incomplete

Quakerism insisted that no person was superior to another; nevertheless, those gifted in preaching, evangelism or administration did rise to an elder-type status, some even being called ‘ministers’. William’s sudden arrival on the scene, but immediate acceptance into Quaker leadership, suggest that he was, in fact, a semi-itinerant Quaker preacher, arriving well-recommended. And this is confirmed by further birth records for William, Robert and John, and an indenture.

A curiosity of Quaker records is that they were copied and widely circulated to other MMs: Mary’s birth, for example, can be found, in exactly the same format, in the records of Lancaster, Lancashire and even Norfolk MMs. However, the births of the three sons are not only recorded by the Marsden MM, but also separately, not as copies, by the Settle MM, where William is described as *of Settle*. So – the family belongs to *Twisden Meeting*, but is living, in 1659, 1662 and 1664, in Settle.



Marsden record



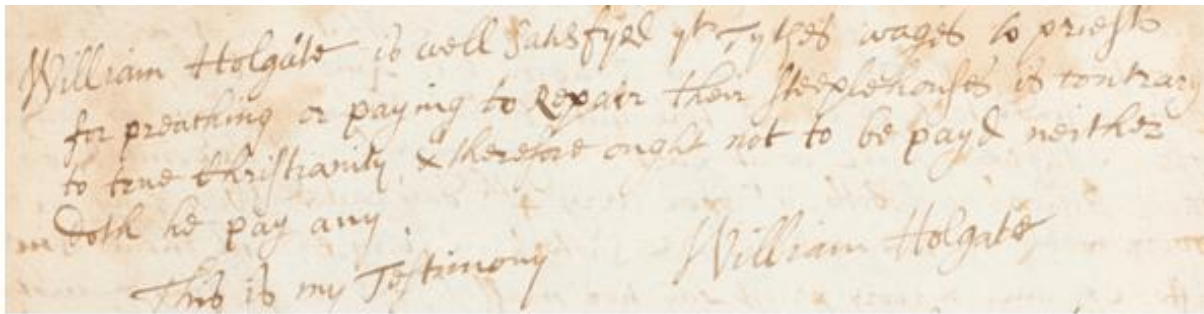
Settle record

As to the indenture, the link does not seem to have been previously noticed by researchers, but it shows that the land on which the Settle Meeting House was built, but which initially served simply as a burial ground, 18 x 27 yards in extent and known as Howson's Croft, had been purchased from none other than William Holgate on 2nd March, 1659 by five leading local Quakers, and transferred to the first Trustees in 1661 for a rent of one peppercorn.²¹ How long he had owned the land, or whether he bought it specifically to sell cheaply to the others, we cannot say. But it suggests that he was used to dealing in land and property, and well enough off to sell cheaply in pursuit of the cause. Evidence of similar involvement with other Meetings may come to light in the future. It also indicates that he had no intention of becoming part of a building management group, valuing his freedom to travel and evangelise.²²

²¹ Oliver Pickering, *The Building of Settle Meeting House*, at matt.phillpott,+05+The+building+of+Settle+Meeting+House-1.pdf

²² there is another William & Elizabeth Holgate of Settle at this time, but they rule themselves out of Quaker involvement by baptising a son, John, at Long Preston in 1661

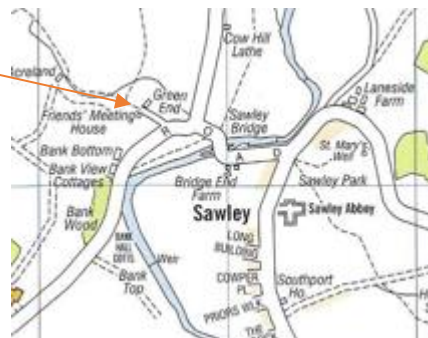
The Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660, and the subsequent appointment of less-Puritan clergy, did not lessen the animosity between parish clergy and Quakers, largely centring on the non-payment of tithes, and, in many cases, depriving clergy of part of their income. In 1679, **William**, along with **Thomas Dryver**, **William Oddie** and **John Tipping** (all of whom we shall meet later) made declarations that they would not pay tithes to the Vicar of Gisburn: this means that all three were parishioners, and confirms that **William** had finally settled at Sawley.



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In 1682, he was fined £20 (£3,780 in 2025)²³ for holding a Quaker meeting at his own home, Sawley Manor – conveniently, on the road out of Sawley towards Settle.

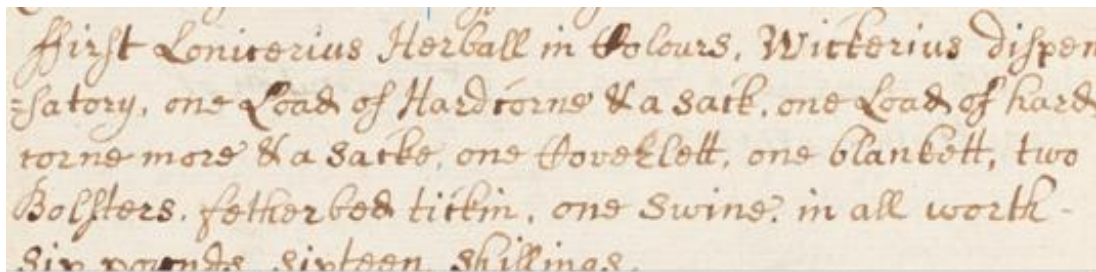
The Holgate Home,
now mapped as
Friends' Meeting House



At the same time, proceedings were taken against **William Oddie** and his son **William**, **William Atkinson**, **Thomas Driver** and other local Friends.

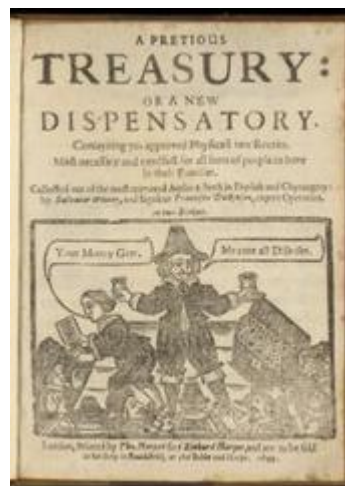
²³ <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator>

William's fine was (partially) redeemed over two months: the first seizure, which he valued at £6-16s, included a coverlet, a blanket, two bolsters,²⁴ featherbed ticking²⁵ and a pig, but also a remarkable item – a *dispensatory*, defined as a *book or medicinal formulary containing a systematic description of the drugs and preparations used in medicine*:²⁶ it would seem that William or Elizabeth (or both) were acting as local herbalists, apothecaries or pharmacists, creating remedies such as tinctures, teas, and salves.



This record, from the MMM Book of Sufferings, is copyright of the Lancashire Record Office, and may not be reproduced.

The book must have been a rarity - the record notes its coloured illustrations, and its value probably made up a substantial part of the seizure. But what a travesty to take away, not only the couple's source of income, but their means of offering healing medicines to the whole local community.



A 1649 Dispensatory

Hardcorn was probably rye, being a more hardy cereal than barley and wheat. This is its only mention in the MMM *Sufferings* and cannot be occurring because nothing else would grow in Sawley: the soil there was more fertile than in Rimington. It was, perhaps, 'bought in' and used in medications.

²⁴ long pillows

²⁵ the cloth used for mattresses, tightly woven to avoid the escape of the filling

²⁶ Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dispensatory>

The following month, the Constable took 12 pecks of meal,²⁷ 2 sacks (of value themselves), a saddle, a table, a harrow, a barrel, 2 chairs, pewter, a wooden vessel and forms, in all worth £1-12s-6d.

Undeterred, William hosted another meeting in December of the same year and the Constable brought him before the local Justices, who found the offence unsubstantiated. However, they required him to take the oath of allegiance to the Crown and, when he refused, committed him to York Castle.

The *Mittimus* (committal warrant) has been preserved with records of Yorkshire *Sufferings*.²⁸

*Hard Case of
W. Holgate.*

Hard was the Case of *William Holgate*, who because he permitted religious Meetings to be held in his House, not only had his Goods taken away by Distress to the Value of 26 *l.* 19 *s.* 8 *d.* but also was committed to Prison by the following *Mittimus*, viz.

“ West-Riding, Com. Ebor.

*His Mittimus
to Prison.*

“ FORASMUCH as *William Holgate*, of *Sawley*, in the said Riding, Husbandman, was this Day brought before us by Virtue of a Warrant from his Majesty’s Justices of the Peace at the last General Quarter Sessions of the Peace held at *Wakefield* for the said Riding, for the apprehending of all such Persons as should be found present in any Conventicle, Meeting, or unlawful Assembly, and charged to have of late been present in a Conventicle or unlawful Assembly in his own House, being an House frequently noted for unlawful Assemblies, whereupon he was by us required to find sufficient Sureties, as well for his personal Appearance at the next General Quarter Sessions of the Peace to be holden at *Wetherby* for the said Riding, then and there to answer the Premises, as also in the mean Time to be of the good Behaviour. And whereas he was likewise required to take the Oath of Allegiance, pursuant to the Form of the Statute in that Case made and provided,

“ all which he hath wilfully and peremptorily refused to do: These are therefore, in his Majesty’s Name, to will and require you, immediately upon Sight hereof, safely to convey the said *William Holgate* to his Majesty’s Goal at the Castle of *York*, and the Goaler thereof is hereby required to receive him, and him in safe Custody keep, until such Time as he shall have fulfilled the Law in this Behalf provided: Whereof you, nor any of you, are to fail at your Peril. Given under our Hands and Seals this 19th Day of *December*, Anno regni Caroli secundi, nunc Angliæ, &c. 34^o. Annoq; Dom. 1682.

YORK-
SHIRE.
1682.

To the Constable of *Sawley*,
These.

“ THO. PARKER,
“ CHR. WILKINSON.”

²⁷ probably oatmeal, a peck being a variable measurement but, with regard to dried goods, being around 8-10 pounds, 3.5-4.5kg; so roughly 50 kilos

²⁸ Besse, Joseph, *Sufferings of Early Quakers*, 1753, republished county by county by Sessions Book Trust from 1998: Yorkshire volume, pp 148-9. Besse’s comprehensive collection of Quaker *Sufferings*, arranged by county, was a 24-year undertaking based on Yearly Meeting Minutes, 1652-1690. Whilst Besse’s own work is highly regarded, his source material had passed through so many stages that its accuracy and comprehensiveness leave much to be desired. For example, Besse has no mention of James Houlst of Newfield Edge, Middop, and we know only of his imprisonment at York from the 1684 report of the Rimington Constable. Besse cannot, therefore, be used for statistical purposes, but any information he does offer on individuals can be regarded as accurate, but, perhaps, incomplete.

In **William**'s absence, the Constable returned to the Justices with a further witness to the meeting; they imposed another £20 fine, and, on the assumption that it would not be paid, simultaneously issued a warrant to *make distress* to cover it.

On 21st March, 1683, assisted by ten neighbours, the Constable *in a Riotous manner broke open **William Holgate's** doors ... breaking open doors and locks with a great hammer* and other ironware, despite only his wife **Elizabeth**, *two young children and a Lad* being in the house.

She demanded, several times, to see the warrant, but was refused, and the intruders took 7 oak chairs, a salting tub with lids, a large tub, 4 coffin boards, 3 bushels²⁹ of wheat, 6 bushels of barley, a table, 2 ash table planks, a form, haircloth,³⁰ a counter,³¹ an ark,³² 2 pans, pewter, a chest, boards and rails; in all, these were worth £11-9s-8d, but, as the Constable refused to give a list of what he was taking, several items were unaccounted for. Before his arrival, he stated his intention to *leave nothing but the bare walls*.

The next day, accompanied by only six others, he took a chest, a *load* of meal, malt, a table leaf, tubs, 3 basings (basins), a flasket and wooden vessels, an implement for dealing with thorn bushes, a chest, a counter, 2 pairs of bedstocks,³³ and a small chest, totalling £4-14s-2d.

On the third days, with just four men, he took a chair, 2 cushions, 2 bushells of beans, a *stubbing hack*,³⁴ iron curtain rods, wheel and crook and other ironware, three flaskets, 2 sacks, a trough, a rope and a saddle.

One wonders, indeed, what was left, within the 'bare walls'.³⁵

Meanwhile, **William** was busying himself as one of five signatories of a letter to the London *Meeting for Sufferings* from Quaker prisoners at York. The letter is cheerful and positive and, throughout, gives glory to God; although it does put in writing the names of Justices of the Peace who have been particularly active in their persecution!³⁶

²⁹ each equivalent to 8 gallons or 36.5 litres

³⁰ a coarse material, especially used for drying malt or for sieving

³¹ a desk or table suitable for counting money

³² large chest

³³ the bed-head and footboard, made up into a bed by adding 2 side pieces

³⁴ a tool used to stub up tree roots, persistent weeds, etc.

³⁵ details of the distraints are from the Marsden Monthly Meeting's Book of Sufferings, held at the Lancashire Record Office

³⁶ Besse, pp 147-8

In 1684, he was one of fourteen signatories to a letter to the King himself, from the 227 Quakers, 119³⁷ (including himself) from the West Riding, imprisoned at York.³⁸ It mentioned many concerns, including the length of time many had been imprisoned *for no other cause than their conscientious religious concern in the Matter of their Duty to God, greatly aggravated by the cruel and unreasonable ... informers and bayliffs carrying out distrains tending to the Ruin of many Families, more especially in the West Riding of this County.* Concerning the oath of loyalty, the letter stressed that they were willing to sign a statement of loyalty - but not swear; distrains from all over the county were listed; in the West Riding, goods to the value of £68 had been taken from just four prisoners in 1682 for non-attendance at church; and, without naming him, William's own experiences were recounted:³⁹

“ In the Latter-end of the Year 1682, one Friend within the said *West-Riding*, for speaking of the Things of God in a peaceable Meeting, had Goods taken away worth 30*l.*
 “ The same Person in the Year 1683 was committed to Prison for not Swearing to his Answer, when proffered in the Bishop's Court, to an unjust Libel exhibited against him, and when he had been above six Months Prisoner, fifty Miles distant from his own Dwelling-house, was fined for a peaceable Meeting in his said House, and had Goods taken worth 23 *l.*
 “ Again, the same Person, in this Year 1684, for a peaceable Meeting in his said House, and whilst still a Prisoner fifty Miles distant, had his Goods taken worth 30 *l.*
 “ Also, two Neighbours of the aforesaid Person, one for praying in the aforesaid Meeting, and the other for having a peaceable Meeting in his House, had Goods taken worth 40 *l.*

The letter continued more generally⁴⁰ that those who ...

“ were concerned in making Distresses, have been so cruel and destructive, yea void of common Humanity, that when there were not Goods ready to answer their greedy Desires with, they have taken all they could lay their Hands on, the very Bed from under the Sick, and broken down the Bedstocks and Ceiling, continuing at the Houses of Husbandmen six or eight Days, till they had threshed out their Corn, and then carried it away. They have taken away Tradesmens Work-tools, and even all that divers had, to the Ruin of many Families, no longer able to keep their Farms, or carry on any Trade, or keep their Families together. So that through Imprisonment and Spoil of Goods, such Desolation seems to hasten upon many, as all sober People lament to see.
 “ This also we have taken good Notice of, that little or nothing at all that we have heard of, hath been given to the Poor of any Parish where any of the aforesaid Spoil by Distresses hath been made, though several Officers have fought for the Poor's Part, but got none.

³⁷ 52%

³⁸ Besse, pp 160-2

³⁹ Besse, p 161

⁴⁰ Besse, p 162

A covering letter appealed to king to take *The Case ... into thy serious and Christian consideration, and that thou would give relief to the Oppressed, and set the Innocent free. That thy throne may be established in Mercy, and the Cry of the Prisoners, the Poor, the Oppressed, the Widow, and the Fatherless, may not be heard in thy Land.*⁴¹

As we shall see from his 1682 grant of American land to William Penn, Charles II was sympathetic towards Quakers, uneasy with the persecution of loyal subjects. But he died just four months after the letter was written - and may not even have seen it. It was left to the government under William and Mary to bring in the 1689 Toleration Act, granting freedom of worship to Protestant Dissenters and allowing private homes to be registered for religious gatherings: William's home, Sawley Manor, was immediately so registered.⁴²

William died on 7th May, 1693 and was buried on 10th *in his own ground*,⁴³ with the stated intention that the site should become a burial ground for Sawley Meeting; he may have intended to make legal arrangements similar to those in Settle, handing his entire home to the Sawley Meeting, when his wife and family no longer required it. As it was, his wife continued to host meetings, and, in 1698, a marriage took place *at Elizabeth Holgate's house in Sawley*.

However, Sawley Manor was still the legal property of the Holgates; it is probable that a similar situation pertained in Newby, whereby meetings and marriages took place in the homes of local Quakers, without any properties actually being owned by the Meetings.

It would seem that Elizabeth's removal to the Trawden home of her daughter, Mary Kippax, during her last years, signalled the (temporary) end of Sawley Manor as unofficial meeting house.

There had been a general malaise at Sawley following the loss of William's leadership: weekday meetings were being missed, and, at one point, Sawley wanted to leave the Marsden MM and join Settle's. MMM minutes of a report from the local meeting in 1709 are headed *Sawley Meeting, now, Newby Meeting*.

Elizabeth left nominal amounts to her *oldest son*, William, and her three surviving daughters; the remainder of her estate, presumably including Sawley Manor, to her youngest son, John.

⁴¹ Besse, p 160

⁴² Lofthouse, J, *Three Rivers*; Nightingale

⁴³ Marsden Meeting burial records

William's eldest son, Matthew, though a child, perhaps embraced Quakerism at the same time as his father. He 'conformed' sufficiently to marry Mary Midgeley at Newchurch-in-Pendle in 1677, and their daughter, Mary, was baptised at Padiham in 1679. Sadly, Mary died the following year, and was buried as a Quaker at Heyhead. Matthew is variously described in these records as of Higham and of Pendle (which are not inconsistent).

In 1680, he was arrested in Padiham: it is not stated whether he was living there (in which case the offence could be one of several) or was attending a meeting there; there is no record of the penalty imposed. Unusually, MMM lent him 5 shillings in the January of that year and he repaid it by the end of the year; but the Meeting would not have lent him money to pay a fine!

Perhaps fearing the fate of his father - continual fines, distrains and even imprisonment - in 1685, he obtained a Letter of Certification from Marsden MM, to enable him to emigrate, and join a Meeting in the new Quaker colonies of Pennsylvania.

Philadelphia was but three years old: the founder, Quaker William Penn had obtained from Charles II an extraordinarily generous charter which made him the world's largest private (non-royal) landowner, with over 45,000 square miles! Penn originally named his land 'Sylvania' ('land of woods or forests') but the king insisted on the prefix *Penn* in honour of Penn's Royalist father. Penn first landed on American soil in 1682, journeyed up the Delaware River and founded Philadelphia (meaning 'place of brotherly love').

Matthew and six-year-old Mary set sail from Liverpool on the *Rebecca*,⁴⁴ arriving in Philadelphia on 31st October, 1685. By 1698, he was able to buy land on which he built a fulling mill.

He made a second marriage to fellow-emigrant Sarah Sturgess (whose father kindly left Mary five shillings in his will); they had two children, Matthew and John, who each had six children - and untold American descendants!

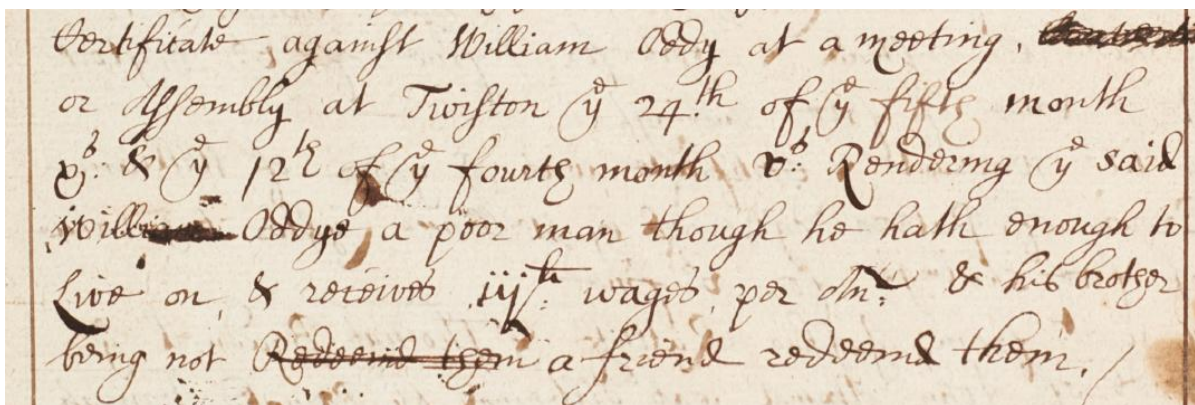
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⁴⁴ at least one other Marsden MM family sailed on the same ship, that of James Ratcliffe of Chapel Hill, Rossendale.

CHAPTER 3: ODDIES

Back in Rimington, we have noted that [William Oddie](#) declared in 1679 that he would not pay tithes. Almost a decade earlier, in 1670, he was fined for attending a Quaker meeting at Red Syke. From his parents' home, Martintop Farm, he would cross Ings Beck and make the long steady 'pull' up to Clough Head (then known as Willows i' th' West) and across to Twiston. The journey crosses not only parish, but county boundaries, so we need to trawl Lancashire legal records to find this Yorkshireman! After the death of the resident Twiston Quakers, the Meeting's focus shifted to Sawley (safely in Yorkshire!)

Whilst obviously one-sided, the Records of Sufferings are not emotional, and unusual concern is shown for this 23-year-old *poor man*, with no savings or property, earning £3 a year, and now fined 5 shillings – a full month's wages. There is no condemnation, either, that he allowed his older brother, [John](#), to pay off the fine.



Certificate against William Oddy at a meeting, ~~at~~
or Assembly at Twiston y^e 24th of y^e fifth month
y^e 12th of y^e fourth month 1671. Considering y^e said
William Oddy, a poor man though he hath enough to
live on, & receives iij^s wages per an^m & his brother
being not ~~referred~~ ~~to~~ a friend referred them.

Neither his parents nor his siblings were Quakers and we will never know who drew [William](#) into Quakerism, although he almost certainly knew [Elizabeth Bulcock](#), who, although about ten years older, grew up in Middop, to the east of Martintop, and he must surely have encountered [William Holgate](#)!

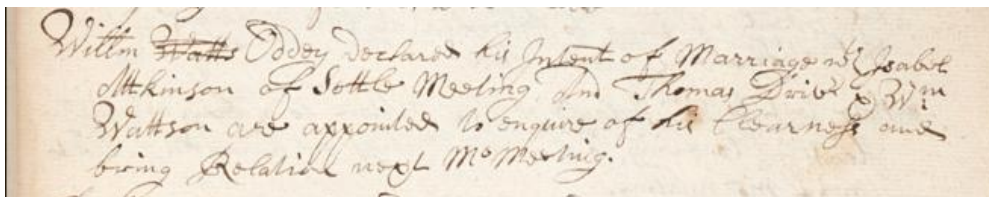
He was truly a Quaker *by conviction*,⁴⁵ and remained so for the rest of his life – and he was a Rimingtonian through and through: we find his great-grandparents at Gaisgill at the beginning of the 17th century. At the age of 25, their son [John Oddie](#) inherited Martintop, a farmhouse with two hearths, on the death of his father-in-law, [William Latham](#). Here, [John](#) and his wife [Ann](#) raised a large family, the eldest being another [William](#), who, between 1644 and 1656 fathered six children there – [John](#), [William](#), [Ann](#), [Thomas](#), [Mary](#) and [Edward](#) (although the latter died in infancy) all baptised at Gisburn.

⁴⁵ as Friends referred to their converts

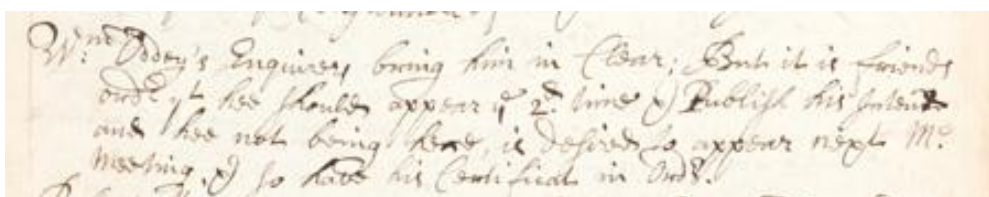
The daughters married into the Brearley family of Mutta/Wood and the Watson family of Middop. **William** left Martintop to his eldest son in 1678, and **William** inherited a *laithe* (barn) and land called Hudson Gills⁴⁶ (now known as Lower Gills). Perhaps this inheritance, at 31, enabled him to pursue his trade as a tanner independently; he would require a strong physical constitution, access to a water source, pits for soaking and materials for the labour-intensive, foul-smelling process of cleaning, scraping, and treating animal hides. The natural agents used were urine and dung, which contained the ammonia and other compounds needed to soften and preserve the hides.

He was certainly trading in his own right by 1683, when the authorities seized from him a tanned hide worth 10 shillings, in lieu of a 5 shilling fine for attending another meeting at **Elizabeth Bulcock's**.

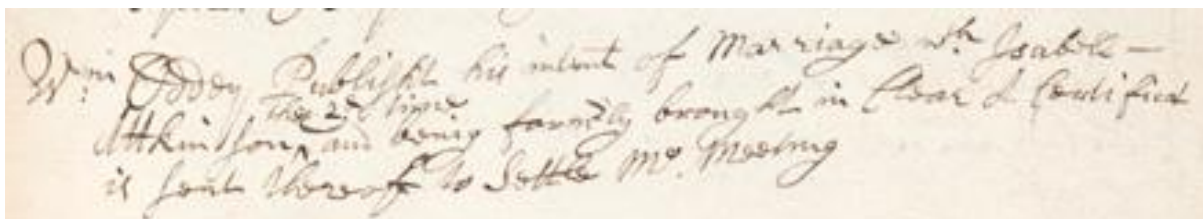
From around 1680, **William** began to take on responsibilities on behalf of the Sawley Meeting, *herebefore called Twiston*, enquiring into the 'clearness' of members hoping to marry, and representing the Meeting at marriages elsewhere and at the MMM. But on 19th April, 1683, **William** declared to the MMM his intention of marrying with **Isabel Atkinson** of Settle Meeting, and **Thomas Driver** and William Watson were appointed to enquire of his 'clearness'.



On 17th May, it was reported that the enquiries were *clear*.

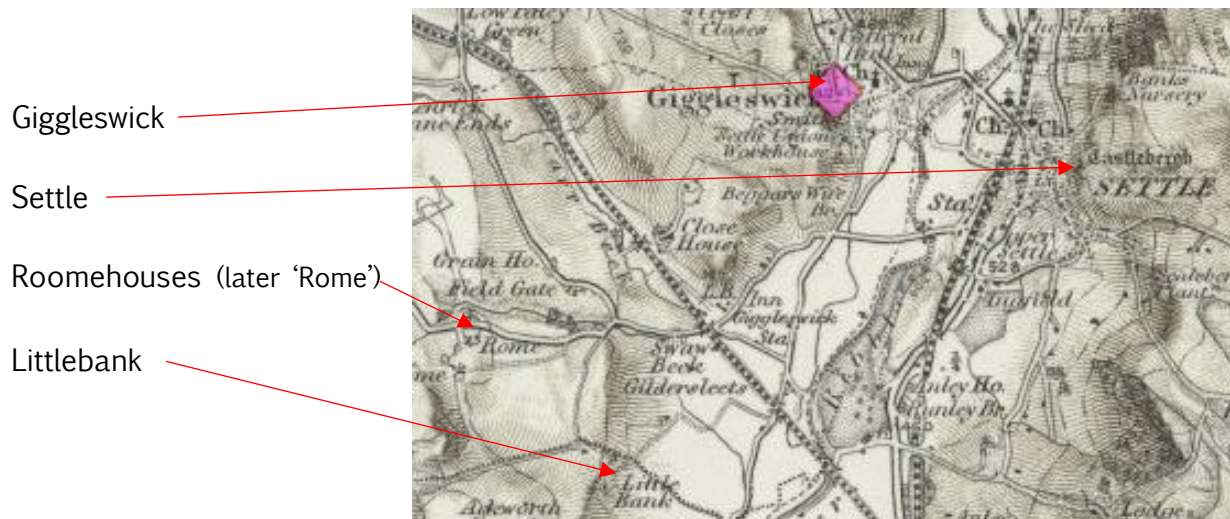


Nevertheless, the Meeting demanded he appear again before them. Finally, a certificate was granted on 21st June, and forwarded to Sawley Meeting.



⁴⁶ named after Denis Hudson of Gills who lived there at the turn of the 17th century

The Quaker registration of the birth of Isabel Atkinson to George Atkinson, on 6th March, 1657, makes her an early ‘cradle’ Quaker. George lived at Littlebank, in the township of Rathmell, just south-west of, but in the parish of, Giggleswick, near Settle, and under the jurisdiction of Settle Monthly Meeting.



The fact that there is no record (Quaker or parochial) of the birth of Isabel’s older brother, or of their parents’ marriage, may mean that the family’s Quaker allegiance – or, at least their disillusionment with national religion - was very early. Three of George’s brothers embraced Quakerism and the next generation embraced it 100%.

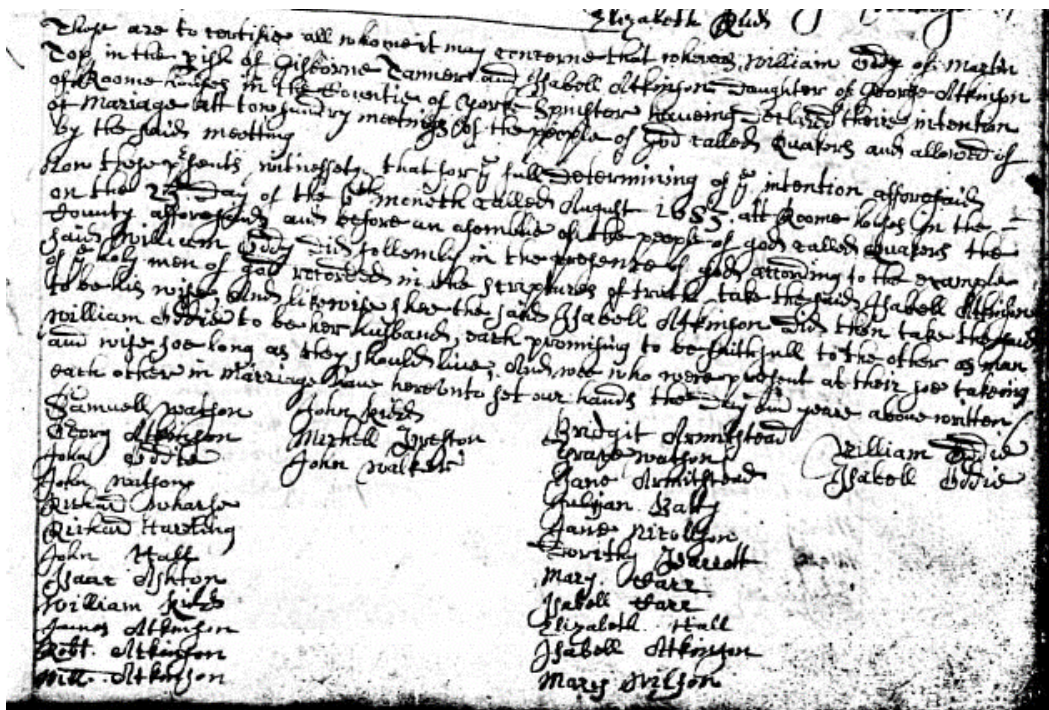
George and his brother Robert were two of the West Riding’s 229 Quakers imprisoned as early as 1661 for refusing the oath, *being taken, many from their peaceable meetings, some on the highway, others from their own houses and lawful employments, and some out of their beds.* Most remained in prison for about four months, and, in their absence, several had goods distrained to cover the cost of conveying them to prison! In 1671, the four brothers George, James, Robert and William were, along with another, seized of crops and goods worth £11 in lieu of tithes, and in the same year George was fined 10 shillings for attending a meeting.

In 1673, during a lull in prosecutions, Settle Friends began to plan a purpose-built Meeting House. Donations were sought, and work began in 1678. The final accounts show that George Atkinson was paid £1-10s-0d for *leading* (carting) *slate* (stone roofing slabs); however, the payment to him is one of five added to the total paid to craftsmen and suppliers, to make the disbursements balance the donations: this implies that they had not charged for their work, but a surplus had been divided proportionally between them.

The political climate changed, and in 1689 **George** and his sons **John** and **James**, by then all of Roomehouses were, between them, seized of goods worth £7-11s-0d, whilst **Robert**, still at Littlebank, lost £3-11s-4d-worth of goods.

Roomehouses, a little north of Littlebank, was owned by a Thomas Taylor and Robert Falthrop back in 1499; **George Atkinson's** mother, after whom **Isabel** was surely named, was **Isabel Taylor**. Following **George's** inheriting part of the Roomehouses estate in 1664,⁴⁷ he and his family joined his brother **William** there around 1670, when **Isabel** was about thirteen.

And it was here that, in August, 1683, she and **William Oddie** undertook the Quaker form of marriage. For absolute clarity and transparency, Quakers recorded lots of witnesses to marriages. Here, Settle MM members predominate, including **Isabel's** father, **George**, her sister and brother-in-law **Elizabeth** and **John Hall**, her uncles **James** and **Robert**, William, who could be her brother, uncle or cousin, and uncle **James' wife Isabel**. **William** has brought along non-Quaker (but clearly supportive, fine-paying!) brother **John Oddie** and perhaps others from the Sawley Meeting.



At twenty-six, **Isabel** was ten years younger than **William**; and he brought her home to Gills.

⁴⁷ will of Jane Taylor (relationship not established)

The following year, they were both reported as being absent from church: [Isabel](#) probably never set foot in Gisburn parish church!

In October, 1686, 3 months after their marriage, [Mary](#) was born, probably named after [William](#)'s mother, and registered with the MMM.

Marsden MM's *Book of Sufferings* gives [William](#)'s own account of seizures in lieu of tithes in the previous month, September, 1686. He had successfully harvested and brought into store a field of corn and was beginning a second field, when a servant of the Gisburn Tithes Impropiator came into the field, saying, *Thou wilt to York*, (ie imprisonment, for non-payment) *nobody can hinder thee. Hast thou not housed a field of corn and never told me.* [William](#) replied, *What should I tell thee for when I house my own corn. Thou shalt have none with my consent.* Nevertheless, the man and his son took nine stooks of corn, worth 6 shillings. [William](#) warned him that he would 'stall' his horses – commit them to their stalls through injury or overloading - because he came by the corn so unjustly; and, indeed, he did, and had to go for help to take it away.

1686. The thirteenth day of ye seventh month in ye year
one thousand six hundred eighty six.
Willm Lambert of Gaiggall servant of John Dyhton of Gisburn
Impropiator for Tythe, after I had housed one field of corn
& begun of another came into my field & said to me, as thou
wilt to yorke nobody can hinder thee. Hast thou not housed a
field of corn & never told mee. I replied, what should I tell thee for
when I house my own corn. Thou shalt have none with my
consent notwithstanding he & his sonne took nine stooks
of oates worth 6^s 00^d
and further I told him I would he would stall his horses
he came so unjustly by ye corn, which he did before he gott
out of my field, & was faine to gett help.
Willm Oddy,

These records, from the MMM Book of Sufferings, are the copyright of the Lancashire Record Office, and may not be reproduced.

A stook or hattock was a mini haystack, arranged to dry out the grain. It usually comprised twelve sheaves, and thus became a measurement for corn at this stage in the harvest process.



In what was to become an annual event, the tithe collectors were back the following year, taking 10 stooks, worth 5 shillings, and 16 stooks, worth 8 shillings, the next. In 1690, not only were oats to the value of 8s-10d taken, their fence was pulled down to obtain access. And so it continued.

On 9th February, 1688, [William](#) and [Isabel](#)'s only son, another [William](#), was born. In 1691, [Ann](#) was born, but lived only a few months, and was buried at the Twiston 'Sepulchre'.

On 14th September, 1693, [Isabel](#) gave birth to their fourth child, [Sarah](#), but died, presumably of childbirth complications, eight days later, on 22nd. She, too, was buried at Twiston, the following day. It is thought that 'family' graves existed at Twiston from the start; so she would be buried with [Ann](#). But instructions had been issued in 1691 that there should be no coverings on coffins, and that they should be no other colour than that of the plain wood. [William](#) was left with a five-year-old son and a baby daughter: much would be expected of their sister, seven-year-old [Mary](#).

Following the 1689 Toleration Act, in 1695 [William](#) registered Gills as a Quaker meeting place. He appears to have been renovating the premises, perhaps even rebuilding from scratch, as the date 1698 and initials 'W.O.' survive in the plasterwork over the fireplace.

Gills, now known as Lower Gills



In 1697, a seizure related to a non-payment was made by churchwarden [John Oddie](#) – very likely [William](#)'s own cousin, from Howgill. Constable William Atkinson probably lived a short distance away at Willows i' th' West (now Clough Head). This highlights the divisions that Quakers' anti-authority stance caused within small communities. Justices, constables and tithe impropiators' servants were simply doing their job; they were within the law and those withholding tithes and fines were not. There was little sympathy for Quakers 'taking a moral stance': why should they refuse to pay tithes when everyone else had to pay them?

Clerical tithes, in fact, were a substantial part of a clergyman's income in poorer parishes, without which they could not survive. Those due to lay landowners, who had acquired them (or whose ancestors had) as business ventures were more complicated: Quakers opposed clergy being paid for their ministry – but they did not oppose entrepreneurship! In fact, many Quakers were entitled, themselves, to collect tithes! From the turn of the century, seizures seem to just become a way of life.

[William](#)'s seizures in lieu of tithes over 13 years are recorded below. The percentage figures are my own.

<i>year</i>	<i>crop</i>	<i>total produced</i>	<i>seized</i>	<i>value</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>% crop</i>
		<i>hattocks (& sheaves)</i>						
1699	oats	115	11		5	6		9.6%
	oats	134	12		6	0		9.0%
1700	oats	110	6 + ?		13	0		?
1701	oats	80 (& 6)	8		3	4		10.0%
	barley	?	5		2	6		
	oats	232	21		8	9		9.0%
1702	oats	112	} 11		7	0		6.0%
	barley	64	}					
	?	304	19		6	0		6.3%
	<i>William got his remaining corn 'housed' before they came again</i>							
1703	barley	53	5	}	15	4		9.4%
	oats	300	28	}				9.3%
1704	oats & barley	223	30		12	6		13.5%
1705	oats & barley	377	35		1	3	2	9.3%
1706	oats	451	44		13	8		9.8%
1707	oats	168	16		8	0		9.5%
1708	wheat, oats, barley	482	47		1	2	10	9.8%
1709	oats & barley	137	25 (& 8)		17	2		18.0%
	<i>following an earlier distraint of a great part of his corn</i>							
1710	oats & barley	520 (& 8)	49		1	10	0	9.4%
1711	oats & barley	297	32		1	1	4	10.8%

We know little of his tanning; but **William** is following typical crop production for the region – mainly oats, with barley on better land, and very occasional wheat. Production increases in later years, perhaps as son **William** grows to adulthood or as land is improved or more acquired.

Sadly, **Mary Oddie** died in 1701 at the age of 14. She was buried at Twiston. In 1709, **William** and **Sarah** witnessed his brother-in-law **William Atkinson's** Quaker marriage in Giggleswick. **Sarah** was a beneficiary of her father's will, but nothing is known of her after this.

In the last year of his life, **William** had been less involved in representing Newby Meeting at MMs. No death or burial record has been found, but the MMM noted on 15th March, 1711 that he had died since the meeting on 15th February. Only then do we find that he was an Elder, and later that he was a Visitor, but the latter role is not clear. So there ends a life of patient, resolute resistance.

It might seem that 'only' one son remained to carry on the Quaker lifestyle and ethos. In fact, two months after his father's death, equally-resolute **William** was representing Newby Meeting, and the MM was being held at his home. His numerous descendants formed, across south Lancashire and west Yorkshire, a wide network of influence in education – an area in which Quakers were trail-blazers, not least in providing equal education for girls and boys, and subsequently employing them as head-teachers. Not much money was made; but the extended family was held in great respect.

On the 23rd October, 1711 **William** had married into the Quaker Ecroyd family: **Mary Ecroyd** was the grand-daughter of **John** and **Elizabeth**⁴⁸ **Ecroyd** of Briercliffe. Following **John's** death at the age of 28 in 1649, and the posthumous birth of their son **John**, **Elizabeth** married **John Veepon** and they embraced Quakerism when it reached their area: Veepons and Ecroyds were to figure prominently in the Marsden records covering Briercliffe. When she died in 1681, **Elizabeth's** was the first of six burials in *John Ecroyd's Orchard* at Foulds House, a six-hearthed farmhouse built by **John** on the moors east of Briercliffe.

John Ecroyd married **Alice Pollard**, and a second 'orchard' burial was their son **James**. **John**, **Elizabeth**, **Mary** and **Richard** survived. When **John** died in 1721, unusually, he had a public testimony as a *minister* and travelling evangelist.

⁴⁸ **'Mary'** according to the parish registers of Burnley, where the marriage took place, **Elizabeth** in several other records

Mary's brothers John and Richard are regarded as the founders of Nelson's cotton industry, but John also took an interest in education, at one time running a small Quaker boarding school at Foulds – leading him often to be known as 'Dr.' John Ecroyd. We will return to children of Mary's siblings later.



Foulds House



Edgend

In 1753, the Ecroyds built Edgend, Briercliffe, as a second, or dower, house. After William Oddie's death in 1763, Mary and a daughter moved here: an elegant residence, rather than a working farmhouse, it testified that the family was going up in the world!


Whilst carrying on the tanning business probably by employing others, William Oddie himself rose to yeoman status. The acquisition of land and property at Matchers, west of Gills, and elsewhere enabled him to increase crop production from the level of his father's time, as is evident in the seamless continuation of tithe recovery.

year	crop	total produced hattocks (& sheaves)	seized	value	£	s	d	% crop
1712	oats	387	35	}	1	1	0	9.1%
	barley	51	5		}			
1713	oats & barley	389	36		1	1	8	9.3%
1714	oats & barley	340	28			18	8	8.2%
1715	oats & barley	340	34		1	2	4	10.0%
1716	oats & barley	322	31		1	1	2	9.6%
1718	oats	250	25			18	11	10.0%

Of William and Mary's eight children, two are notable: John married another Briercliffe bride, Martha Skelton, and they settled in Colne. Six of their children died in infancy; only Ann, who married and moved to Salford, and Matthew, who died at 44 in Colne, survived. Following Martha's death, John, too, relocated to the Ecroyd home at Edgend, where he died at the age of 80. Obituaries describe him as *a very respectable ironmonger, much esteemed for his honest and upright dealings.*

Youngest son, weaver **Richard Oddie** and his (second) wife, **Betty Hargreaves** of Monibent, took over Gills after **William's** death. They had eight children and a huge number of descendants, many of whom moved to the Warrington area, and many of whom figured in the annual *Quaker Published Memorials*.

As mentioned, many, like **Rachel Oddie** and **Robert Brierley Oddie**, were highly respected in education:




Robert Brierley Oddie was educated at **Penketh Q School** 1861-3, and was apprentice teacher there 1863-9. He taught at **Brookfield Quaker School, Wigton, Cumbria**, then moved to **Ackworth School**, where he met pupil-teacher **Elizabeth Mason Strout**; they married in 1878. From 1880 to retirement in 1906 he was headmaster of the Quaker School at **Sibford Ferris, Banbury**. He and his wife had three sons followed by four daughters; the first son became a pharmacist, the second a dental surgeon; the youngest daughter taught at **Ackworth and Penketh**, then became a secondary school domestic science teacher.


RACHEL ODDIE 78 22 3 1917
Southport. For many years "governess"
 at Ackworth School. An Elder.

Rachel Oddie lived as a child at Ackworth School, her mother, Jane Oddie, holding the post of "Governess," or as it would now be styled "Head Mistress" at the School, a position which her daughter afterwards filled to great satisfaction for many years. Rachel Oddie earned the esteem of all by great dignity and efficiency in the fulfilment of her duties. After her retirement, in 1896, she went to live with her brother at Weston-super-Mare, but her later years were spent at Southport.

Edwin Oddie was a successful grocer, tea dealer and baking powder manufacturer in large premises (7-9 **Bacup Road**) in **Rawtenstall**.

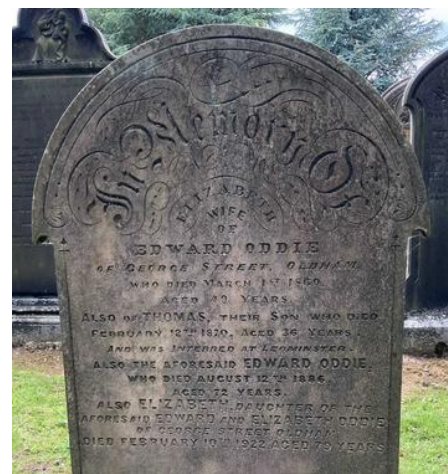


He married and had three daughters; son **Truman William Oddie** was educated at a Quaker Boarding School at **Rawden**, near **Leeds**; sadly he died aged 21.



Edwin's death was noted in the Quaker Memorials in 1916.

Many flourished in trade, especially as drapers and grocers.



And Master Clogger **Edward Oddie** was so proud of his **George Street, Oldham**, address that it's mentioned twice on the tombstone in **Chadderton Cemetery**!

Some were, or married, Quaker ministers. A brother and sister died in **Ballarat, Victoria, Australia** and **Heidelberg, Germany**, respectively, and one branch of the family moved to **County Antrim**.

And all **Rimingtonians** by descent!

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CHAPTER 4: DRIVERS

[Thomas Driver](#) may have had links with Drivers living in Rimington in the early 1600s, but the earliest certain record of his family is in Colne, where felt-maker [Nicholas Driver](#) and [Susan Blakey](#) were married in 1624 – very likely by Rimington-born Richard Brierley of Mutta, who was curate of the extensive parish of Colne from 1599-1636. He very likely also baptised their five children, [Nicholas](#), [James](#) (who died at 18), [John](#), [Thomas](#) and [Joseph](#) between 1624 and 1635.

The family lived at Flaghte moore or Flaggemoor, now known as Flax Moor Farm, just east of Blacko. [Nicholas](#)' occupation was felt-making, unsurprising in Colne, with its rapidly-growing woollen industry specialising in kersey - a thick, sturdy cloth made with poorer quality wool; as the back of the cloth was napped and shorn after fulling, producing a dense, warm fabric with a smooth back, kersey could, in fact, be thought of as half-way to felt.

But he had a very forward-looking side-line or hobby: he made cogs and wheels for watches, on precision lathes. This was very early days for watchmaking; in fact, technology had not yet produced a reliable, portable watch. Nevertheless, there was [Nicholas](#) at the cutting edge of the industry. Perhaps his prized possession was a chiming clock – feasibly the only one in Colne!⁴⁹

[Thomas](#) and [Joseph](#) were craftsmen, [Thomas](#) a felt-maker and [Joseph](#) a tailor; curiously, their father left the watchmaking tools and lathe - and the clock - to [Thomas](#), and hat-making equipment to [Joseph](#). Both brothers embraced Quakerism, joining the Marsden Monthly Meeting.

[Thomas](#) obtained a licence to marry [Jane Nowell](#) at either Colne or Gisburn, and the ceremony, in fact, took place Gisburn parish church in 1663. It is fortunate that a record of the licence has been preserved elsewhere, as Gisburn registers record her as 'Jane Watson' – Watson being her mother's maiden name! [Jane](#) was the only daughter of [John](#) and [Ann Nowell](#) of Gaisgill, Rimington; their only son, [Charles](#), died three years before [Jane](#)'s marriage, and, following the death of her parents, the Gaisgill property came into Driver hands. [Ann](#) died in 1671 at Newby – which could explain how [Thomas](#) and [Jane](#) also began to accumulate Newby property.

⁴⁹ one wonders if he was in contact with mathematician, astronomer, meteorologist - and horologist - Richard Towneley of Towneley Hall, Burnley, who innovatively used a barometer to measure the air pressure at different heights on Pendle in 1661. In 1676 he invented the 'deadbeat escapement' for the clocks at Greenwich Observatory, leading to accurate, stable timepieces. Towneley was known to involve his tenants in his experiments, one being commissioned to make one of the first micrometers in 1667.

The sad lack of Manor Court Rolls for Rimington makes it very difficult to track the possession of various parcels of land. Unless we hit lucky with a reference in a local will, or very lucky with an indenture or lease, we are unable to ascertain whether an occupant had freehold - 'owned' the land - or held it copyhold or leasehold, as a tenant; we are therefore unable to assess their wealth. On top of all this, boundaries have changed, and a name might now cover a much larger or smaller area than in the past. Parish registers may give us locations, but whether people were established landowners or seasonal labourers 'passing through' - or anything in between - we can only guess. A significant factor for Quakers is that refusal to swear oaths could actually prevent anyone being admitted as tenant to a copyhold estate: the estate, which may have been in a family for centuries, was forfeited to the Lord of the Manor.

So, we can say that [Thomas](#) (and [Jane](#)?) came to hold land and property at Gaisgill through [Jane](#)'s family, and that they began to acquire land rights in Newby and elsewhere; but we cannot be specific about the legal nature of their landholding.

However, we know that, for the rest of his life, [Thomas](#) farmed at Gaisgill, also developing his trade of felt-making into that of hatter. 17th-century hatters worked with woollen felt and fur, producing ever more-complicated designs with ribbons and plumes; but as a Quaker, [Thomas](#) would be restricted to making plain felt hats, so, perhaps, avoiding the neurological issues common to hatters, caused by the mercury compounds used to treat fur.⁵⁰

The couple's first child, [Ann](#), was baptised and buried at Gisburn in 1664, but when [Nicholas](#) was born in 1665, he was registered with the Quakers, as were [Charles](#), [Joshua](#), [John](#), [Thomas](#), [Joseph](#) and [James](#), between 1667 and 1682.

In 1674, [Thomas](#) was prosecuted at the Consistory (Ecclesiastical) Court for contumacy - persistent flouting of church authority and law - and was committed to York Castle prison.

He figures regularly in the MMM minutes and in the Book of Sufferings from 1682, when, in lieu of a fine of two shillings for attending a meeting at [William Holgate](#)'s, he was seized of a pan and a pewter chamber pot worth 8s-4d. The same year, at Wetherby Quarter Sessions, he, along with [William Oddie](#) and 79 others, were charged with non-attendance at church, and when they refused the oath, were imprisoned.

⁵⁰ the progressive, incurable disease is the source of the saying *mad as a hatter*.

For attending the meeting at [Elizabeth Bulcock's](#) the following year, he was fined ten shillings to [William Oddy's](#) five, and seven pewter dishes and eight pewter porringers (bowls) worth sixteen shillings were seized in lieu. A double fine could indicate that a wife was also present – unacknowledged, but still, in effect, fined!

In 1686, tithes were recovered violently by a William Lambert and his son. The uncomfortable fact here is that the Lamberts were near neighbours, also living at Gaisgill: how divisive the seizures for tithes had become. They took 8 stooks of wheat, 23 stooks of oats, 3 of barley and 2 of beans, together worth a pound; but also broke down his fences.

And so it continued, for the rest of his life.

<i>year</i>	<i>crop</i>	<i>total produced</i>	<i>seized</i>	<i>value</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>% crop</i>
		<i>hattocks (& sheaves)</i>						
1687	barley	?	5	}				
	corn	?	c 9	}		13	0	
	oats	?	6	}				
	beans	?	2	}				
1688	oats	?	42(&6)	}	1	19	4	
	beans	?	4	}				
1689	oats	?	9	}				
	barley	?	5	}	1	3	0	
	wheat	?	2	}				
1690	oats	?	20			15	0	
	wheat, oats, barley	?	40		2	7	4	
1691/2	wheat	?	15	}				
	barley	?	15	}	2	5	4	
	oats	?	27	}				
1696	wheat	80	8		1	0	0	10.0%
	oats	226	33		1	5	0	14.6%
1698	oats	286	45		2	0	6	15.7%
1699	wheat	70	7			10	0	10.0%
	oats	179	22		1	1	0	12.3%

Nevertheless, tithes and other fines did not impoverish [Thomas](#). He made his will in April, 1700⁵¹ and died just a month later; but probate was not granted until December - possibly because the will bequeathed certain parcels of land twice over!

⁵¹ one of the witnesses – in a youthful but educated hand – was [Mary Oddie](#), [William's](#) young daughter

He owned Newby Hall (then named Forts', the previous family there being of that name), a house known as Brearley's with two gardens and a smithy, and other Newby land. Gaisgill property seems to have previously passed to [John](#), and property at Whatley, Sawley and land in Colne and the Forest of Pendle to [Charles](#) and [Thomas](#) respectively. [Joshua](#), [Joseph](#) and probably [James](#) pre-deceased him.

Inventories comprised moveable goods, livestock, debtors, etc., and did not include land-rights. When his was drawn up after he died (one appraiser was [William Oddie](#)), the value was £100-10-4 (£18,000 in 2025)⁵² plus another £30 owed to him. He and his family had run a mixed economy of arable and dairy farming (no sheep), weaving and felt-making. In livestock, he had 2 mares, 3 cows, 3 calves, 2 mature oxen and 10 young oxen (probably 1, 2 and 3 years old), with £15-worth of animal-feed – this in spring, when stocks were run down. He had £3-10s of wheat, the best grain for bread, presumably for personal use, and meal and malt for brewing. There were 11 pieces of woollen fabric worth £1 each, no doubt ready for felting.

The house had an attached workshop, the upper storey extending over the 'shop', and there were no less than six beds – one, with its bedding, worth £4. One table had seven chairs. There were the usual items of small furniture (chests and cupboards) kitchen utensils and farming implements. And there were luxuries: a piece of fine crewel embroidery and a wooden clock. The family prospects, in the hands of four staunch Quaker sons, seemed secure.

[Thomas](#) and [Jane](#)'s eldest son, [Nicholas](#), married, the year before his father's death, [Ellen Brearley](#), daughter of Quaker [Hugh](#) of Watclose. The marriage took place at [John Tipping](#)'s home, Sawley Grange. The couple lived and farmed at Newby Hall, but had no children.



In this much later view, Newby Hall retains the shape of a typical 17th-century frontage, with a room over the porch

⁵² <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator>

They became liable for tithes in 1702, possibly the date they actually moved to Newby Hall.

1702	oats	110	11		6	0	10.0%	
1703	oats	80	8		4	0	10.0%	
1704	oats	160	16		8	0	10.0%	
1705	oats & barley	120	12		9	6	10.0%	
1706	oats & barley	232	23		11	2	9.9%	
1707	wheat, oats, barley	215	20(&9)		13	6	9.8%	
1708	oats	135	13(&2)		10	6	9.6%	
	also, for a 3s demand plus 2s costs, goods taken					5	0	
1709	wheat & oats	189	20		18	0	10.6%	
1710	oats & barley	200	20		15	8	10.0%	
1711	oats	160	16		10	0	10.0%	
1712	oats	215	20	1	5	0	9.3%	
1713	oats & barley	133	12		8	0	9.0%	
1714	oats & barley	127	12		12	0	9.4%	
	also, for a 4s demand plus 5s costs, oatmeal taken					9	0	
1715	oats	170	17		10	0	10.0%	
1716	oats	90	8		4	0	8.9%	
1717	oats	86	8		6	0	9.3%	
1719	oats	125	12		10	0	9.6%	

With the turn of the century, there did seem to be an attempt to recover only the legitimate 10% for tithes. However, damage to fences, hedges and gates was never reimbursed.

Nicholas was 81 when he died in 1745, having served Sawley and Newby Meetings well, and outlived all his brothers. His is one of only two gravestones at Twiston Sepulchre: it is not known whether there had been others, but a 1717 directive from the London Yearly Meeting banned the use of gravestones and said that existing ones should be removed where possible.

As it happens, **Nicholas** actually owned the Sepulchre at that point! He conveyed it to his brother **John** and **William Oddie** in 1721 when the MMM recorded the opinion that such burial grounds should not be in the hands of one person.

Friends having under Consideration the present title of friends houses & their meeting houses and burying grounds this meeting judges it needful that where the trust is reposed in one or two only that they transfer their trust to more and yt further advice be taken how it may be done safely and to satisfaction

By 1745, of the two, only **William Oddie** was alive: perhaps he turned a blind eye to a gravestone, in the light of **Nicholas'** previous care and custody of the burial ground.

Like his father, **Nicholas** began transferring his own property to family members before his death. **Thomas**, son of his brother **John**, received property in Blacko in 1742, and this was followed on his death by the rest of his Newby estate, including the Hall. **Ellen** was able to remain there until her death four years later. Five surviving children of **John** also benefited financially, and *the poor of Rimington*.

Charles was still at Gaisgill when his father died, perhaps accounting for his only recorded tithe 'Suffering', in 1700:

1700	wheat	32(&6)	7 (&3)	6 0	21.8%
	?	125	16	12 0	4.8%
	barley	25	2	10 0	8.0%

Though not as often as **Nicholas** and **John**, he regularly appears in MMM minutes, representing the Sawley and Newby Meetings. In 1705 he married **Mary Wilkinson**, and they lived at Whatley, Sawley - tithe-free.

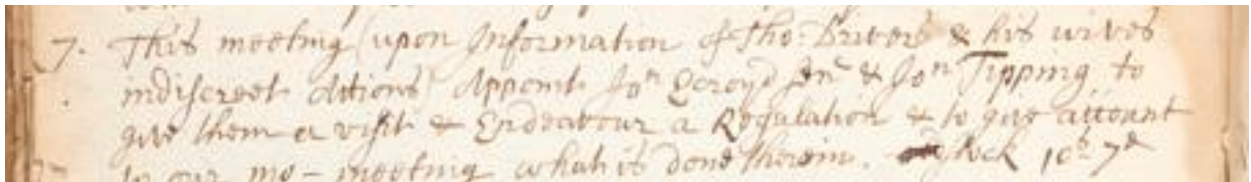
The following year, he was reprimanded by the MM for some *unseemly and dishonest action* but swiftly acknowledged his error:

Minutes of the Meeting of the Members of the Sawley and Newby Meetings
 Charles Driver of Sawley Mo. Meeting being found Guilty of some unseemly & dishonest action contrary to the Truth he profess'd which was of trouble & George's to friends. He hath given for the a paper & gain'd his said Error to be Rectified by this Mo. Meeting.

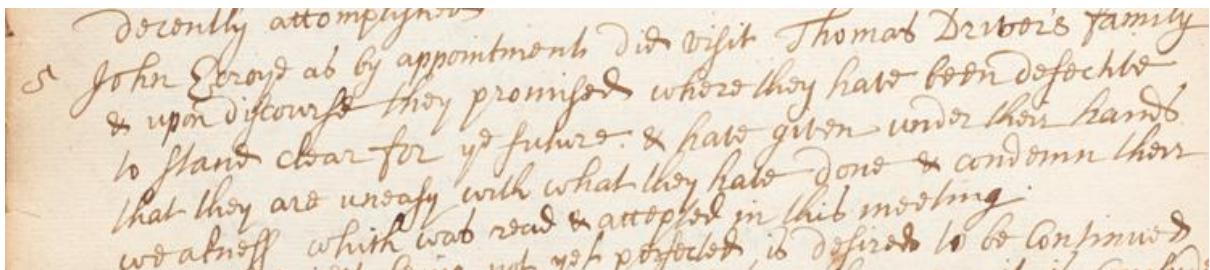
Like **Nicholas** and **Ellen**, the couple had no children, and died three days apart in 1730. **Charles** had allowed **Mary** the unusual freedom to dispose of as she wished a legacy of £32 *to her relation she has a mind to bequeath it to*, as well as an annuity. Brother **Thomas'** children, **Thomas** and **Stephen** received £10 each; everything else went to brother **John**.

Setting aside **John** for a moment, **Thomas** and **Jane**'s youngest son, **Thomas**, continued to live at the family home at Newby. At 39 years of age, he placed before the MM his intention to marry widow **Margaret Pawson** of Newsholme (northwest of Gisburn), and this was accomplished before March 1716.⁵³

They were soon in trouble! In July, 1718, the MM heard of their *indiscreet actions*, appointing **John Ecroyd** and **John Tipping** to intervene.



By the next Meeting, the couple were repentant and all was resolved.



Between 1718 and 1721, the family moved to Newsholme - taking his mother: **Jane** died there in 1722. Sons **Thomas** and **Stephen**, were born in 1718 and 1720; curiously, whilst both were registered as Quakers, **Thomas** was also baptised, at three months, at Gisburn.

Thomas died in 1729, but his will made careful provision for his married step-daughter **Lydia**, and was at pains to appoint Trustees, his brother **Nicholas** and two others, to bring up his sons *to be instructed in some honest employment* to the age of 21. **Thomas** was to receive *all my land within the Forest of Pendle and Parish of Colne* and his grandfather's clock and desk. **Stephen** should have all his father's Newby lands, suggesting that the Pendle and Colne properties were the more valuable. If either son died before reaching 21, the other was to have the bequest; if both died, the whole reverted to brother **John**.

Sadly, both sons did, indeed, die in their teens; but the terms of **Thomas**' will were not adhered to.

⁵³ though not recorded in Quaker records

Thomas died aged about 15 in 1733; but his mother had married again, just 12 months after **Thomas**' death. The marriage, to tailor **John Knowles** of Long Preston, had taken place at his parish church, but **Knowles** moved to **Margaret**'s Newsholme home. Within the established Trust, **Thomas**' estate, inherited from his father, should have passed to **Stephen**, but **Margaret**, guided by her new husband, not only applied to be the administratrix of her son's estate, but claimed to be the administratrix of her husband's, when he had actually appointed other executors. Having re-married, she was only receiving £2 per annum from **Thomas**' estate: did it rankle?

On 1st January, 1734, **Stephen** received Church of England baptism at Gisburn at the age of 13. Just weeks later, two of his father's Trustees applied for his Tuition - as they probably should have for both brothers on their father's death - only for this to be overruled nine months later, by the granting of Curation to **John Knowles**! This is an unusual, formal court appointment to manage someone's property or estate; no doubt the court was easily persuaded that **Knowles** was already caring for the child as his own ... and managing his land and property for him. The grant even states that it was made *according to the Voluntary election of the said Minor ... at thirteen??*⁵⁴

Did the two trustees fight the Curation? And what was the third trustee, **Stephen**'s only surviving uncle **Nicholas Driver**, (not) doing or thinking! This was twelve years before his death, and he was still active; yet he was content to see his brother's will disregarded?

Then, in 1741, **Stephen**, too, died, aged 19. Administration of his affairs was granted to his mother, **Margaret** and, according to the inventory she presented, his goods - which should have included his great-grandfather's clock and his grandfather's desk - were valued at less than £20.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, they were, by his father's will, legally the property of his dead uncle **John**, and presumably, therefore, his sons'?

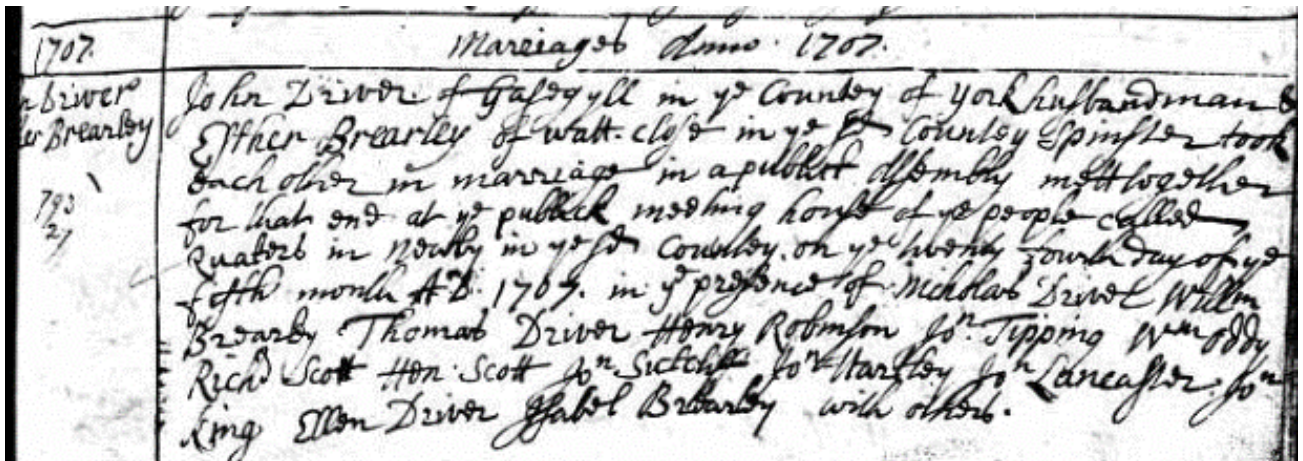
And as to his father's landholdings in the Forest of Pendle, Colne and Newby - who knows? As we have said, there are no Manor Court Rolls to turn to, and **Thomas**' properties are not individually named. If anyone has a better legal understanding of these events than I (it wouldn't be difficult!) or if any Newby resident believes they occupy once-Driver land or property, I should love to hear from you!

⁵⁴ C 364B-65-01, and -02, Borthwick Institute for Archives, University of York; Brian Stott holds copies

⁵⁵ C 364B-65-03, Borthwick; Brian Stott holds a copy

Finally, **Thomas** and **Jane**'s middle son, **John**, remained at Gaisgill after his father's death, carrying on his farming activities, and was active in the Sawley and Newby Meetings.

In 1707, he married **Esther Brearley**, sister of **Nicholas**' wife. The wedding took place at the Newby Meeting House. Unfortunately, the building's location is not known, but the entry confirms that there was such a building.



Amongst the witnesses are **John**'s brothers **Nicholas** and **Thomas**, **Esther**'s brother and sisters **William**, **Ellen** and **Isabel**, **John Tipping**, **William Oddie** and **Richard** and **Henry Scott**. Five children followed between 1708 and 1721, all born at Gaisgill and registered as Quakers, although the sixth, **John**, was not so registered.

John's tithes suggest a lower output from Gaisgill than his father achieved but the land-holding may have been slightly different:

1707	oats	100	10		5 0	10.0%
1708	oats	175	17		12 9	9.7%
	also, for a 7s6d demand plus 2s costs, goods taken				9 6	
1709	oats	150	15		13 9	10.0%
1710	oats	510	51		1 14 0	10.0%
1711	wheat, beans, barley, oats	319	31		1 4 8	9.7%
1712	oats	172	16		9 4	9.3%
1714	oats	148	14		9 4	9.5%
1715	wheat & oats	292	29		1 4 0	9.9%
1719	wheat	55	5.5	}		10.0%
	oats	447	45	}	2 8 6	10.1%

On inheriting Whatley from Charles, John moved there, the fate of the Gaisgill property unknown, but he died just two years later. Two daughters married Quakers, two 'married out'. John inherited Whatley from his father, but is not found after this: he certainly disappears from Quaker records.

The older son was another Thomas. Born in 1716, in 1732 he inherited from his father the *messuage, shop and gardens* at Newby, and in 1742 received property at Blacko from Nicholas.⁵⁶ But on 10th August, 1745, this *young man come off the Quakers* received baptism at Downham, and, the same day, married Hannah Starkie from Twiston. Nicholas did not amend his will, and the following year, Thomas received *all and every messuage, lands, tenements and heriditaments with appurtenances lying ... at Newby*, including, it would seem, Newby Hall.

Thomas and Hannah went on to bring nine children to baptism at Gisburn, at first from Newby, then Middop, then Hollings farmstead. And so ended the line of Quaker Drivers.

ooooooOoooooo

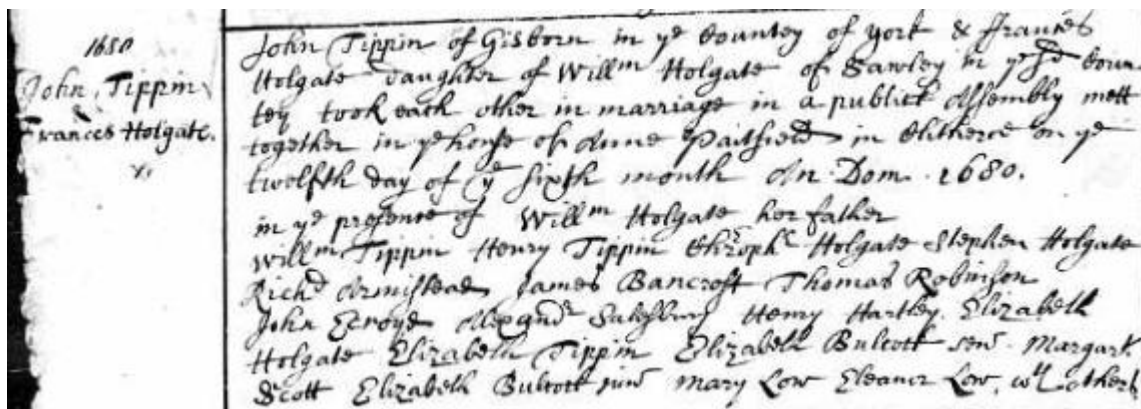
⁵⁶ Forest of Pendle Court Rolls

CHAPTER 5: HOLGATES, TIPPINGS, SCOTTS & KIPPAX

We left the Holgates in Sawley, having considered, of [William](#) and [Elizabeth](#)'s children, only [Matthew](#), the eldest.

Their eldest daughter, [Elizabeth](#), was born in 1657. She appears not to have married, and nothing further is known of her.

[Frances Holgate](#), born in 1658, married [John Tipping](#) of Gisburn in August, 1680, at the Clitheroe home of Quaker Ann Paitfield, although her own home was then functioning as Sawley Meeting House.

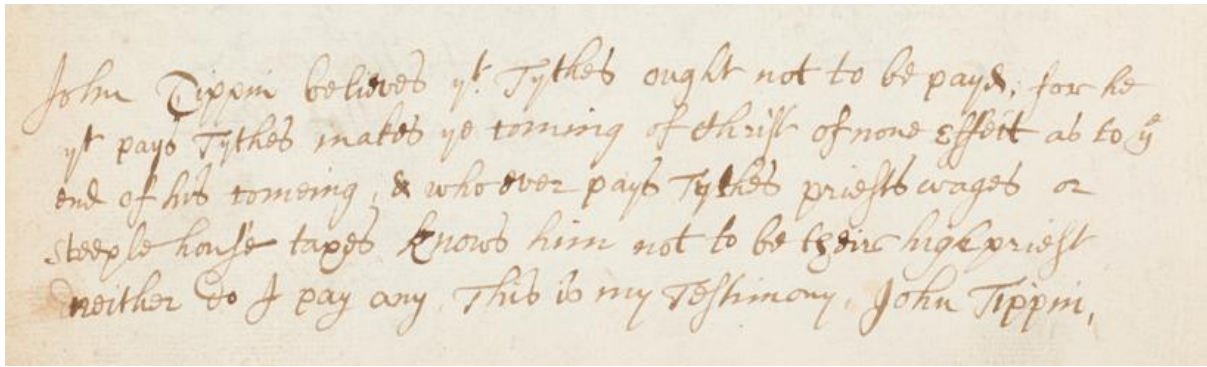


We see present [Frances](#)' parents and [John](#)'s non-Quaker sister, [Elizabeth](#), and father, [William](#).

[John](#) was the eldest son of yeoman [William](#), who moved to Gisburn on inheriting his uncle [John Blakeburn](#)'s Gisburn, Rimington and Clitheroe estates in 1661. [John](#)'s brother [Robert](#)'s, baptism is found at Gisburn in 1665, but [John](#)'s and middle brother [Anthony](#)'s birthplace has not been found; their mother was probably named [Esther](#). I am grateful to Brian Tipping's privately-published 2011 book, *Family Facts and Fancies: Some Times and Places of the Tipping Family* for some interesting background information on the family.

When [William](#) died in 1682, [Robert](#), a sadler, inherited the family home or *mansion house* - with six main rooms. [John](#) received everything else, including yeoman status in his early twenties.

His first appearance in Quaker records is his 1679 statement, along with [William Holgate](#) and [William Oddie](#)'s, that he would not pay tithes:

A handwritten note on aged paper, written in cursive. The text reads: "John Tippin believeth yt Tythes ought not to be payd; for he yt paye Tythes maketh ye tithing of Christ of none effect at the end of his tithing, & who ever paye Tythes priestes wages or steeple house taxps knowe him not to be your high priest neither do I pay any. This is my Testimony. John Tippin,"

The same year, he represents 'Twiston' at the MMM. but, the next year, the focus switches to 'Sawley', with the phrase, *Sawley, herebefore called Twistin.*

About a month before his and Frances' marriage, John was subject to a very rowdy distraint, recorded at the time in great detail. Gisburn priest 'Henry Constantine' personally undertook to demand his tithes, or money in lieu – and possibly the fee the priest considered due to him following their Quaker marriage.⁵⁷ John told him had no right to anything of his, nor had he done him any service deserving money.

The priest quickly went off and returned, bringing two men onto his property; when John forbade them entry, they stood at a distance, but the priest began to counting and overturning the bales of hay. John and his workers impeded him by moving those he had counted.

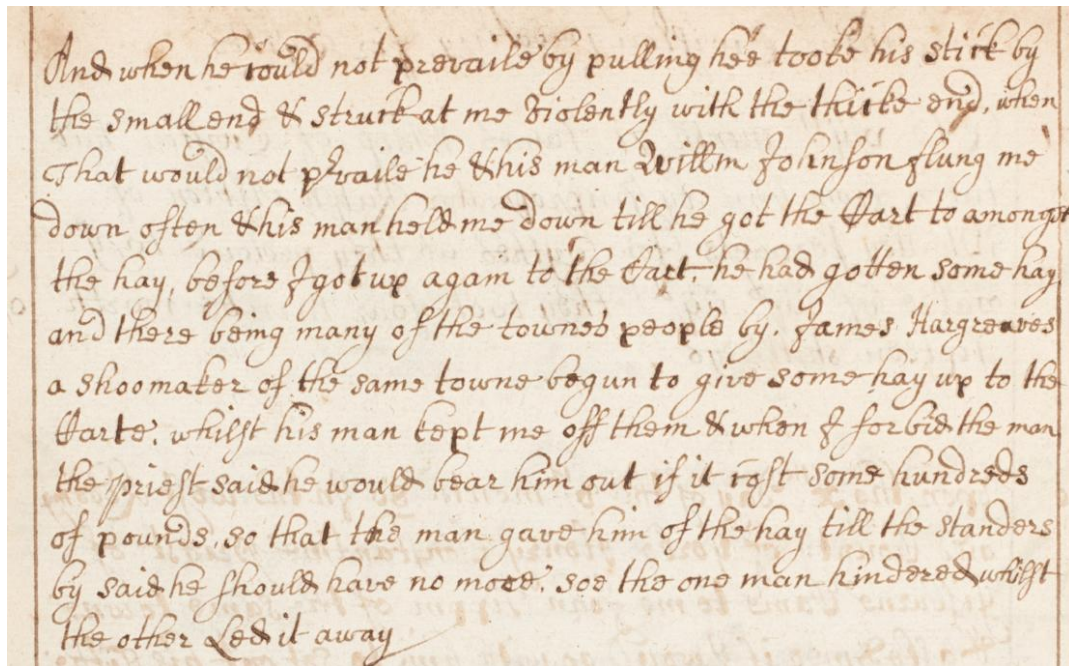
The cleric began to gather up loose hay, and was about to throw it over the hedge, onto the path. John restrained him, whereupon he gathered more hay and lay down upon it, on the ground! John pulled the hay from under him, and put it back where it belonged. The priest went for his cart, giving John the opportunity to lock his gate; but he and the men rammed the gate with the cart and broke the lock. The men unwilling to retreat, John unhitched their horse and took hold of its bridle to lead it out. The priest pulled John's feet from under him, John still holding on to the bridle.

⁵⁷ a John Constantine was Vicar of Gisburn from 1683, but not in 1680: <https://theclergydatabase.org.uk>

ther, but of having two or three to worke we strowd them
abroad with the other soe that he gave over counting and
gathered of that which was strowd & would have flung
it over a hedge but that I hinderd him & strowd to the
other so he gathered more & laid him down upon it but I
pulled it from under him & strowd it to the other, then he
went for the Cart & I laid a fork upon the yate, but he
& a man or two & the Cart rams & he brot open the
locke, I seeing went to hinder the Cart for coming in and
told his man that he had nothing to doe there, but his man
not willing to goe I struck the horse & took hold of the
Bridle to have gotten him out, but the priest rams and
pulled my foot from under mee, & I hold mee by the bridle

1680 Upon the xth Day of the vth month. soe In the west Riding
and County of yorke, Henry Constantine Priest of
Gisburns came to me John Tippin of the same town
& asked mee if I would go with him to set out his Tythe
or I would give him monny, I said I know no right he had
to any of mine nor done me any service deserving monny
that I know of, untill he had Convinc'd me of the one
or proved it by Law I would hinder him if I could of both,
So that he went in a hast & brought two men with him
into the Close, J. L. & E. B. both of Gisburns to see that
heo did right as he said, but I forbid the men for coming
on my ground, so they stood at a distance but hee began to
Count the Cart's of hay & turned up them one after ano-

Unable to detach him, the priest took his stick by the smaller end and struck [John](#) violently with the thick end, finally, with his man, flinging [John](#) down; and, as his man held him there, the priest took his cart amongst the hay and began to load it up. He was joined, by this time, by other townspeople, who assisted him; as [John](#) continued to try to prevent one of the men, the priest told him he would 'bear him out' if it cost 'some hundreds of pounds'. Eventually, the bystanders agreed that the priest had taken sufficient, when he left with his cart of hay.

A snippet of a handwritten manuscript in cursive script, likely from an 18th-century text. The text describes a scene where a man is being held down by another man while a cart is loaded with hay. The man being held down is identified as John. The text mentions that the priest threatened to 'bear him out' if it cost 'some hundreds of pounds'. The snippet ends with 'so that the man gave him of the hay till the standers by said he should have no more: soe the one man hindered whilst the other led it away'.

Nine days before the wedding, early in the morning and unbeknown to [John](#), the priest went into another close and took, or caused to be taken away, more hay 'at his will and pleasure'.

Twelve days after the wedding, the same thing happened again, and, the day after that, servants of the Tithe Officer took nine stooks of barley, one and a half of wheat, and twenty-seven of oats, in all worth 19 shillings. None was returned as 'overpaid'.

The following year, with a new harvest, 6th August saw a repeat performance. This time, before taking things into his own hands, the priest threatened [John](#) with the Law, to have him imprisoned. [John](#) responded that Christ suffered by a Law, and by that Law he could have his tithes: but he would rather suffer than give them to him, who neither needed them, nor did [John](#) any service for them. The priest retorted that they were not for service due, but because of his 'temporal estate', ie his position. Arguments continued, but the priest decided to take his tithes anyway.

1681 Upon the vi.th day of the vi.th mon: 81 Henry Constantine
priest of Gylburne in the westriding of the County of York came
to me John Toppin of the said Town & County into a Close of
mine & said he was come for his due meaning Tythe hay &
would have it by fair means if he could. I said I know no due
he had to any thing there, I would hinder him if I could for
Taking any goods of mine, he said that it or I should go, for
he could have Law to send mee to the gaol if I hindered him
I told him Christ suffered by a Law, & by that Law he could
have Tythes I had rather suffer than to ^{give to} them who neither
needed nor did mee any service for it, he said he did not de-
mand it for any Religious service but as his temporall estate.
I said he must prove it & fente it off. he said he could both

by the Law of god & man prove it to be his. I said these are
but words, & it is the use of some men to say more than they
can prove for an end to themselves, but he said he could prove
it but that he thought it better both for him & mee to take it,

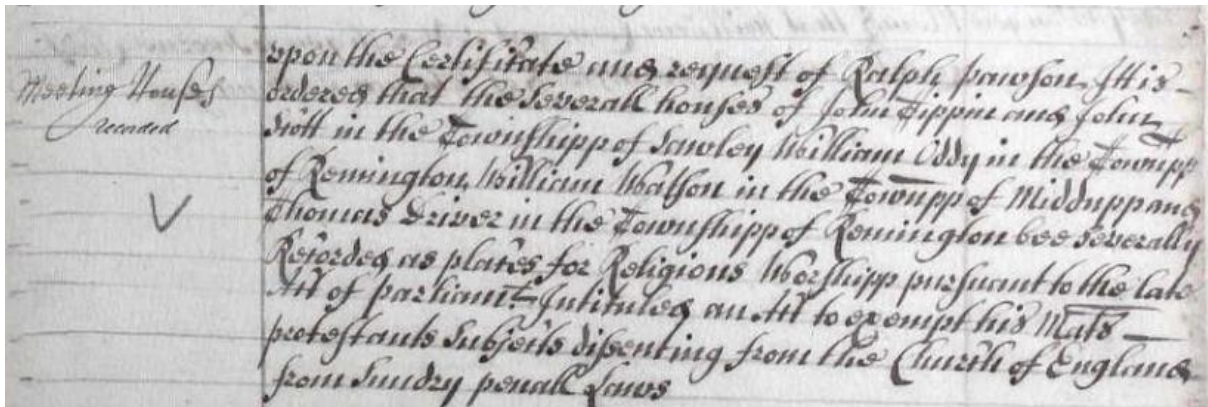
He measured the close, as though to calculate his tithe, then began to collect up stooks. **Frances** intervened this time, redistributing the hay around the close. The cleric went for his cart, pulling apart the fence, then opening, and leaving open, a gate onto the road which had been tightly fastened with an iron staple. When **John** found it open, he fixed a new staple, but the priest returned and broke that open, saying he had returned 'to see if they hay was ready'. He went off yet again, and **John** again refastened the gate. The priest's mother then appeared, with a man and maidservants, and the cart. The gate holding, the man tried to chop it open with an axe, only for the axe-head to become impaled in the gate. **John** took the axe-head and flung it away, but all three 'began violently and thrust in upon me by force'. The man flung **John** down and tried to hold him there; when **Frances** tried to stop their entry, one of the servant-women flung her down, and the mother ran for the Constable, who ordered men to hold **John** and **Frances** whilst the priest's people took what they pleased. **John** believed they took an eighth of his harvest.

So he went & measured the breadth & length of the Close, & then went & flung together that which was in the Close, & I & my wife flung it abroad againe with the rest, & then he went and pulled open my fence for the Cart. & then went & opened a yate that was to the high way that was fastened with a staple hard up & left it open. but when I found it so I got another & made it againe; the same day he rams againe and burst open the yate againe & said he was come againe to see if the hay was ready. soe he went againe & I made the yate againe with another staple of Iron, but after a small time the same day his mother his man & maidservants came with a Cart, but when they could not get in with thrusting his man William Johnson took an axe out of the Cart & would have cut the yate in sunder, but the axe head rams of & stuck in the yate. I took it & flung it by, then they all three began violently & thrust in upon me by force, & the man flung me down often & strove to hold me down, & when my wife offered to hinder them for coming in Bridget Smith the servant woman flung my wife down, & the priest's mother raised the Constable James Hargreaves to be sought, & he rams & charged men to hold us, untill they had taken what they pleased & carried it away before I had gotten any out of the Close. & it is believed that they took an Eight part of the hay in the Close;

Another morning, that same month, the man and maidservants entered another close and took away stooks of hay to dry elsewhere, [John](#) unaware at the time.

And in September, tithe officers *violently did take* from [John](#) between thirty and forty stooks of oats and barley worth £1-2s-6d.

The following year, in 1682, [John](#) and [Frances](#) removed to Sawley Grange, a mile north-east of Sawley village – a clever move, as Sawley was *ex-parochial*: originally Abbey property, it was not subject to tithes! With the arrival of ‘toleration’, in 1695 they registered their home as a Quaker Meeting Place, along with [John Scott](#) of Langham Row, Sawley, [William Oddie](#) and [Thomas Driver](#) of Rimington and William Watson of Middop.



Wakefield Quarter Session, 1695.



Sawley Grange.

The property is - and was - extensive, and it is not possible to discover which part the Tippings owned /occupied.



The couple had five sons and a prodigious number of descendants, a dynasty through which the name ‘Frances’ runs like a thread. However, the allegiance to Quakerism was already cracking in 1708 when their eldest son, [William](#), married at Bolton-by-Bowland parish church. The general decline in Quakerism around the turn of the century has been attributed to the *suicidal madness* of disowning Friends who ‘married out’, which came close to *extinguishing the Society*.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Rowntree, JW, *The Rise of Quakerism in Yorkshire*, 1905

But **William** returned to the fold, and inherited, on **John**'s death, all his Gisburn and Rimington properties and a messuage at Tosside, to add to the extensive Dockber estate north-east of Sawley village, where he was already farming.

The eldest of **William**'s three sons, **John**, carried on both the Dockber farm and the Quaker allegiance, strengthened, no doubt, by marriage into the Ecroyd family: **Mary** was the daughter of 'Dr.' **John** of Foulds House, whom we have met, and niece of **Mary Oddie**. They had ten children, many migrating to Liverpool, becoming prosperous Quaker merchants and one the Keeper of Liverpool Corn Exchange. Others extended north into Holden Clough, leasing and buying to the extent that they held most of the village properties and surrounding farmland.

William's other children, and all but the youngest of **John** and **Frances**', drifted from Quakerism. As official persecution lessened, more restrictive rules arose within the Quaker community itself, for example, rulings against *wearing or selling striped, flowered or figured cloths, stuff or silks*, avoiding *overwide skirts, red coats and great long cuffs*, young people not to attend fairs, and, even, advice to Quakers not to leave parts of their estates to non-Quaker children. No wonder disillusionment was setting in amongst the younger generation!

John and **Frances**' youngest son, Quaker **Thomas**, married **Ann Whalley**, daughter of **Mary Oddie**'s sister, Elizabeth.⁵⁹ Their daughter, **Frances Tipping**, married her cousin-once-removed, **Richard Ecroyd**, son of **Mary**'s youngest brother, **Richard** of Edgend.

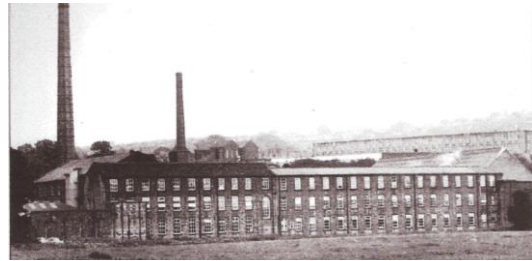
The location of the house at Marsden Heights originally licensed, in 1689, for Friends' Meetings is not known. But we do know that it was superseded by a purpose-built meeting house erected on Ecroyd land and licensed in the name of **Richard Ecroyd** in 1734. The property has been much altered, but a disused burial ground is said to survive behind it: there appear to have been a number of these in the area, but records are not specific – rather on the basis that whoever needed to know, knew which ground was in use at the time!



1926 view of Lomeshaye House which **Richard Ecroyd** built for **Frances** and their eleven children in 1757.

⁵⁹ **Elizabeth** as **Mary**'s sister; **Elizabeth** as **Thomas**' mother-in-law!

In 1780, he built Lomeshaye Mill, a water-powered worsted spinning-mill on Pendle Water, rebuilt (as shown) by later Ecroyds in 1845, but still regarded as Nelson's oldest surviving industrial site.



[John Tipping](#) died at Dockber in 1728. It is clear that property mentioned in his will was but a fraction of the family's holdings, most of which had been passed down in his lifetime. And cash bequests were almost 'loose change'! His Sawley Grange farm had gone to his second son, [John](#): he now received five shillings! Third son [Henry](#) had been given Roddel, west of the Holden road out of Sawley, and died a few months after his father, a young - but wealthy - man, leaving £200 to each of his three daughters, sums to his brothers, and an inventory valued at £725. Rathmell properties bought from the Bradleys of Littlebank as late as 1726 must have passed almost immediately to his youngest son, [Thomas](#), who, with a Slaidburn grandson who was one of [John's](#) executors, transferred it in 1764 to Newhall (Rathmell) Atkinsons, grandson and great-grandson of [George Atkinson](#).⁶⁰

[Frances](#) received lands in the Forest of Gisburn and a tenement in Dudland, to the north of Sawley Grange. In 1748 she transferred Gisburn properties - a messuage, two cottages, stables, barn, gardens plus 120 acres of land - which had been [John's](#), to [William](#), further expanding his property portfolio. She died at Cowgill, between the Grange and Dudland, in 1754.

Many of their descendants turned to the professions, especially law, but also medicine, and even archaeology; there were Tipping MPs. Many, like [John](#) and [William](#), simply continued to build up their land-holdings, reaching levels where they could live solely off the income, thus becoming *gentlemen*. It was always the aim to consolidate small parcels into a large holdings, which were then worth far more than the sum of the parts. Fifty years after [John's](#) death, on top of what they actually owned, Tippings were leasing *for three lives* 513 of the 1,935 acres comprising the Manor of Sawley - fertile, tithe-free land! One can visualise a huge swathe of Tipping-owned/leased land stretching from Roddel and Holden Clough in the west, via Dockber, Greenhead and Sawley Grange, east to Cowhill and Dudland - right to the Rimington border!

⁶⁰ see both agreements in Appendix 4

[William Holgate](#)'s second son, [William](#), married [Elizabeth Scott](#) of Langham Row, Sawley, which, if it is the location preserved in the name *Langden Row Farm*, was very close to Sawley Grange. The marriage, some time after 1682, has not been found, but is confirmed by her will, drawn up in 1721. He had died in 1715, making a will just two days previously, leaving lands in Sawley and Rimington. and naming as executors his *beloved wife* and his brother [Robert](#). He was buried at his family home, Sawley Manor.

[Elizabeth](#) was from a solidly Quaker family which moved south from the Bolton-by-Bowland area to Sawley. Her parents [John Scott](#) and [Isabel Slater](#) had five children, [John](#), [Elizabeth](#), [Thomas](#), [Margaret](#) and [Richard](#), and there was an older step-brother, [Henry](#), who remained in the family home. This and the next generation regularly appear in the MMM, taking roles of responsibility and representing first Sawley, then Newby Meetings.

[Richard](#) raised a family in Rimington, at Newby, and died at Great Middop.

Others moved away: [John](#), having obtained the necessary permission and certification from Marsden, emigrated to Pennsylvania with his family in 1699.

[Thomas](#) married [Elizabeth Bulcock](#), daughter of [William](#) and [Elizabeth](#) of Twiston and they lived at Easington, in Gisburn Forest.

[Margaret](#) married [Robert Frankland](#) of Skelshaw, Easington, in June, 1682: the pre-nuptial formalities took place at Settle Meeting, but the actual marriage at [William Holgate](#)'s home in Sawley, witnessed by, amongst others, [William Oddie](#). We also recognise [John Scott](#), [John Scott](#), [Thomas Scott](#), [John Tipping](#), [William Holgate](#) and his future wife [Elizabeth Scott](#), [Robert Holgate](#), [Thomas Scott](#), [Isabel Scott](#), [Elizabeth Scott](#) (née [Bulcock](#)) and [Elizabeth Holgate](#); and there are others from Marsden MM.

Robert frantland of Scotland my County of York Esquireman and Margot Scott
 daughter of John Scott of Darlington in the County of York Esquireman, having desired
 their intentions of marriage with each other in several public meetings of the people
 of god called Quakers at home and other meetings attending to the good and benefit
 of them whose proceedings after a deliberate consideration thereof and consent of their
 and voluntary consent was approved of by the said meetings, now that we have con-
 sidered this fourth day of June in the year according to our English Account
 1682 that the said Robert frantland and Margot Scott together in a plain
 and public assembly of the aforesaid people met together for that the said
 marriage at the house of William Holgate in Darlington and a solemn manner
 according to the custom of the holy men recorded in the Seriptures of
 I take Margot Scott to be my wife in the presence of god and you his people
 promising unto her to be a faithful husband as long as we both live as of
 the earth, and the said Margot Scott did in like manner take the said Robert
 unto him to be an obedient wife so long as we live in these words to wit
 I take

And the said Robert frantland and Margot Scott as a further Confirmation
 and here subscribed, being present at these hands, and we whose names
 here marry and subscription in witness aforesaid as witnesses thereof do
 here after to these proposals subscribed our names, in the year above written

Nicholas frantland	Richard Smith	Ellin Esdaile
John Scott	William Codd	Margot Ingdon
John frantland	John Dixon	Sarah Bayley
Thomas frantland	Thomas Scott	Robert Bayley
John Scott	John Shors	Ellin Clarke
John Hayhurst	Abraham Scott	
James Vignin	Elizabeth Scott	
John Walker	Sissy frantland	
John Walbank	Ellin Vignin	
Thomas Dixon	Elizabeth Scott	
John Vignin	Elizabeth Scott	
William Holgate	Ann Briggs	
Robert Holgate		

The next month, many of these were indicted at Skipton Quarter Sessions:

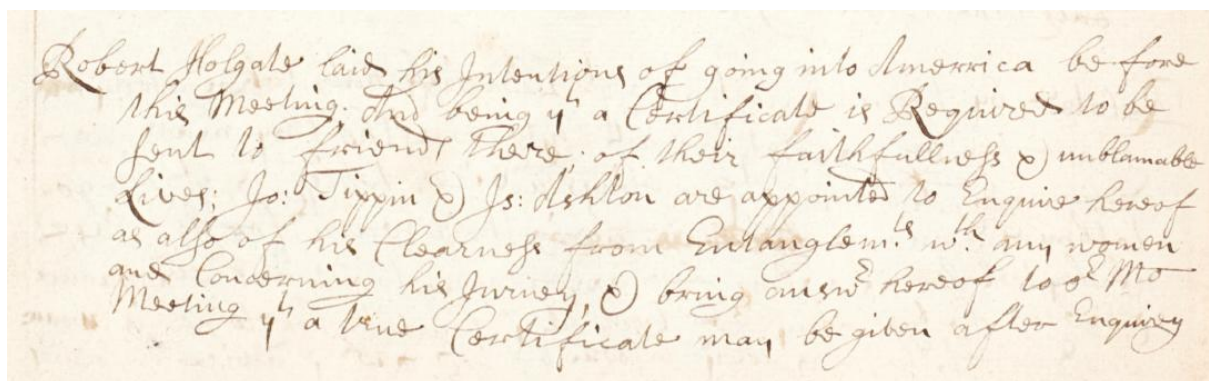
at Skipton Under the Vic July 22. 66
 Reqs
 William Holgate uny de Darlton in cond p d laborer
 William Hanson uny de Darlton in cond p d labor. James Thompson uny
 de Skipton in cond p d labor. Elizabeth Scott uny de Darlton in cond p d labor
 John Scott uny de Darlton in cond p d labor. Thomas Scott uny de Darlton in cond p d labor
 John frantland uny de Darlton in cond p d labor. Thomas frantland uny de Darlton in cond p d labor
 John Scott uny de Darlton in cond p d labor. John Hayhurst uny de Darlton in cond p d labor
 James Vignin uny de Darlton in cond p d labor. John Walker uny de Darlton in cond p d labor
 John Walbank uny de Darlton in cond p d labor. Thomas Dixon uny de Darlton in cond p d labor
 John Vignin uny de Darlton in cond p d labor. William Holgate uny de Darlton in cond p d labor
 Robert Holgate uny de Darlton in cond p d labor.

Once again, we recognise Sawley residents [William Holgate](#), his future bride [Elizabeth Scott](#), her mother [Isabel Scott](#) (described as the wife of [John Scott](#)) and [Elizabeth's](#) half-brother [Henry Scott](#), and, of Gisburn, [John Tipping](#). The men are all described as labourers but were of higher status.

As we have said, six months later [William Oddie](#) was fined for attending the gathering at [Elizabeth Bulcock's](#) home. Also present were [John Scott, son of John Scott of Longamrow, husbandman, Elizabeth Scott, his sister, spinster, Thomas Scott of Easington, husbandman](#) and nine others. Not all were fined, but [Elizabeth Bulcock](#), for hosting the meeting, was fined £20 - £3,780 today.⁶¹ Undeterred, a few weeks later she, [William Holgate](#) and at least a dozen others attended a meeting in Clitheroe and were arrested. [Elizabeth's](#) son, [Henry](#), who had rejected Quakerism, stepped in and *looseth the goods and paid 2/3 of the fine* (the other third going to the poor, as was customary). Neither she nor the Meeting would approve of this! But there is no record of her being disciplined.

Finally, among the Scotts, to [Elizabeth](#), and the dispositions of her will. The marriage had been childless so, in strict order of nearness of kin, she first mentions her own nephews and nieces – [John](#), [William](#), [Isabel](#) and [Elizabeth](#) the children of [Richard](#), Pennsylvanians [John](#) and [Thomas](#) the sons of [John](#), and [Nicholas](#) the son of [Robert Frankland](#). Next come her late husband [William's](#) relations – his brother-in-law, [William Kippax](#) of Trawden, and nephew [Robert](#), son of [Robert Holgate](#) of Sawley.

[William](#) and [Elizabeth's](#) wills throw light on the fate of [Robert Holgate](#). American researchers insist that he, too, went to Philadelphia - in 1682, three years before his eldest brother, [Matthew](#). This is based on the February, 1682, minutes of Marsden MM, which state that [Robert intends to sail for America](#).



Robert Holgate laid his intentions of going into America before this Meeting. And being y^t a Certificate is Required to be sent to Friends there of their faithfulness & unblamable Lives; Jo: Tipping & Jo: Ashton are appointed to Enquire howof as also of his Clearness from Entanglem^{ts} wth any woman and Concerning his Juveny, & bring over such Proof to o^r Meeting y^t a true Certificate may be given after Enquiry

⁶¹ <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator>

In March, a Certificate of Removal was granted - essential for acceptance into a new American Meeting - but he is not found in any passenger list. Further claims are that, before departing, he purchased 250 acres of Pennsylvanian land from William Penn and that he landed there in September, 1683. All this at the age of 21? It seems unlikely.

And we have found him still in Sawley in June, 1682 on the occasion of his brother William's marriage, and his executor in 1715. Elizabeth's will further places him in Sawley, and tells us that he has a son Robert. However, he does not appear in his mother's 1709 will. So, if he did go to America - he came back: because there he was, in Sawley, in 1715!⁶²

It is, perhaps, to be hoped that William Holgate never knew that Robert ceased to be a Quaker, despite this happening in other families. The sufferings of pioneer Quaker parents often disinclined children to follow in their footsteps. Perhaps Robert did go to America, and was completely disillusioned! But he does not seem to have reverted to the Church of England: no marriage or burial can be found for him, nor a baptism for his son Robert; a wife Ann survived him when he died in 1744.

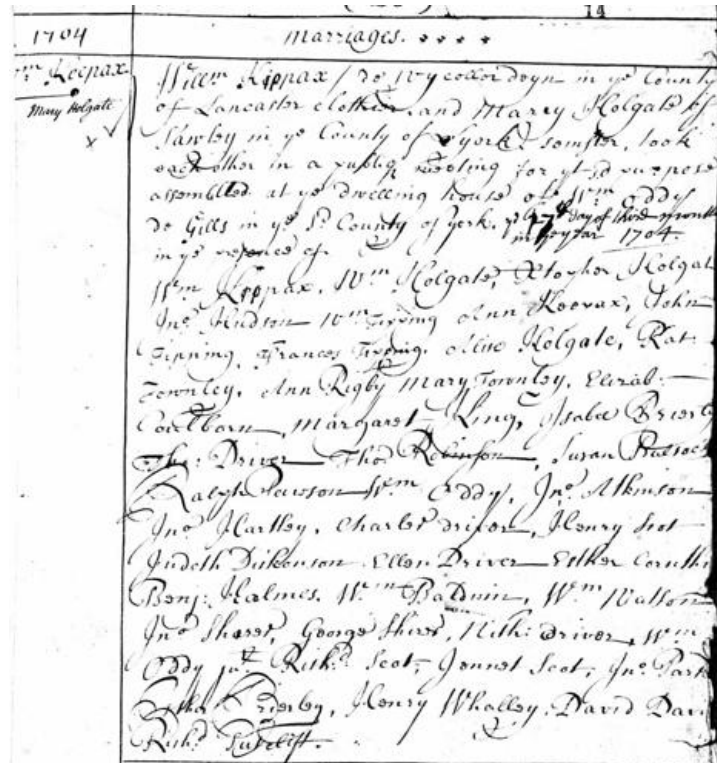
He differs from his brother William in another respect: he - or, at least, his son - goes up in the world! Perhaps he sold his alleged Pennsylvanian lands at a profit. We shall soon find his son Robert allied to the prosperous Tippings - and Atkinsons. He had been living in Sawley, but married Jennet Page at Downham in 1731; she was from Clitheroe, and they settled there to raise four daughters who lived to adulthood; their only son, John, died at the age of ten. When Robert died in 1783, daughter Frances Holgate appears to have been his chief beneficiary, inheriting his freehold property in Sawley.

The youngest Holgate son, John, is a shadowy figure, easily confused with a contemporary namesake raising a family in Sawley, but baptising children at Bolton-by-Bowland. However, his mother's 1709 will, after leaving a shilling each to four of her children - William, Frances, Mary and Ann - leaves everything else to John and appoints him her executor.

By the time he writes his own will in 1730, he is a yeomen, living at and owning Sawley Grange, home, by then to several of his relations. As we have not yet met most of his beneficiaries, we shall return to him later.

⁶² this fact also proves that he was not the contemporary Colne Robert Holgate that some have suggested

At 36, seamstress [Mary Holgate](#) made a late marriage to [William Kippax](#) at [William Oddie's](#) home at Gills, in 1704. With over 40 witnesses, many of whom we have met, perhaps they used his original inheritance - the barn!



We see [William Kippax](#) snr, [William Holgate](#), [William Tipping](#), [Ann Kippax](#), [John Tipping](#), [Frances Tipping](#), [Isabel Brierley](#), [Thomas Driver](#), [William Oddie](#) jnr, [Charles Driver](#), [Henry Scott](#), [Ellen Driver](#), [Nicholas Driver](#), [Richard Scott](#) and [Esther Brierley](#).⁶³

The groom was a clothier - cloth seller - of Wycollar Dene, and the family were prominent Quakers. The couple lost two sons called William in infancy, but the third [William](#) survived, and from him descended increasingly prosperous generations. The Kippaxes later lived at Draughtgates, Trawden, and here [Elizabeth Holgate](#) spent her final days, dying in 1713.

Finally, to the youngest Holgate sibling, [Ann](#)

ooooooooOoooooooo

⁶³ Christopher and Alice are unrelated Dockber Holgates

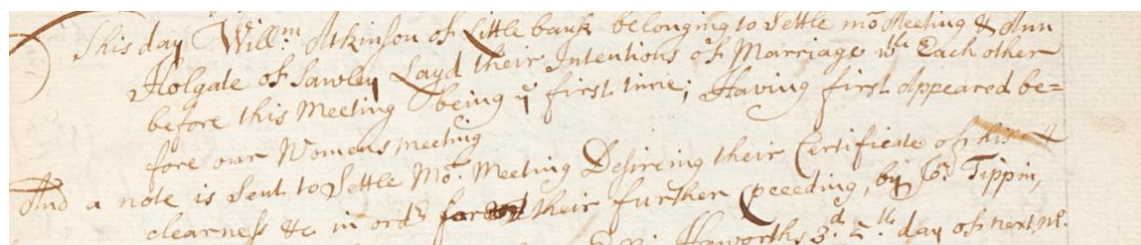
CHAPTER 6: ATKINSONS OF RATHMELL AND SAWLEY

The earliest Atkinsons in the Marsden records concern a Briercliffe family. We don't find Sawley Atkinsons there until 1709 – because they were still in Rathmell!⁶⁴

Far from links between Sawley and Rathmell (and the Settle Meeting) being broken by the deaths of both [William Holgate](#) and [Isabel Oddie](#) (née [Atkinson](#)) in 1693, they were strengthened further the following year.

By the old road through Forest Becks and Rathmell, the villages are but a dozen miles apart,⁶⁵ and [William Holgate](#) had, no doubt, travelled the road regularly – perhaps occasionally accompanied by his youngest daughter, [Ann](#), and perhaps also calling on the Atkinsons at Littlebank in Rathmell. The second entry in the Marsden marriage register shows that on 10th May, 1694, the year after her father's death, [Ann](#) married [Isabel Oddie](#)'s cousin, [William Atkinson](#), at the Grindleton home of Henry Bailey.

Their intentions had first been placed before the Marsden MM more than a year before, on 20th April, 1693, and [William Oddie](#) and [John Tipping](#) were, in fact, attending in an official capacity, appointed by Marsden MM to bring back a copy of the marriage certificate.



This day [Willm Atkinson](#) of Little Bank, belonging to Settle mo Meeting & [Ann Holgate](#) of Sawley, sayd their Intentions of Marriage wth Each other before this Meeting being ist time; Having first appeared before our Womens meeting
And a note is sent to Settle Mo. Meeting Desiring their Certificate of the clearenesse &c in ord^r for their further proceeding, by [J^r Tipping](#),
Min. Howorths. 3. d. 2. 16. day of April. 1693.

The records, fortunately, clearly state that [William](#) was the *son of [Robert Atkinson](#) of Little Bank, in the parish of Giggleswick*, so avoiding confusion with [Isabel](#)'s brother, [William](#), son of [George](#). No marriage can be found for [Robert](#), so the groom's mother is unknown. Unsurprisingly, we also see [Ann](#)'s youngest brother, [John Holgate](#), [Isabel Oddie](#)'s brothers and sister [John](#), [William](#) and [Margaret Atkinson](#), [Ann](#)'s mother and sister [Elizabeth Holgate](#) and [Frances Tipping](#), and [Elizabeth Bulcock](#).

⁶⁴ they appear, also, to be unconnected to the non-Quaker Atkinsons in Rimington and Middop

⁶⁵ 16 miles, via Gisburn

1694.
 Willm Atkinson
 Anne Holgate.
 77217

William Atkinson son of Robert Atkinson
 of Littlebank in y^e parish of Giggleswood
 in y^e County of York husbandman &
 Anne Holgate daughter of Willm Holgate
 vicar of Sawley in y^e County of York
 took each other in marriage in a publick
 Assembly mett together at y^e publick meet-
 -ing place in y^e house of Henry Barby at y^e
 Hill in Gindilton in y^e County of York
 tenth day of y^e third month An Dom. 1694
 in y^e presence of -

John Holgate	Thomas Carr
Richard Midsbrooke	Elizab: Holgate
John Brown	Francis Tiffin
Thomas Cottell	Elizab: Bullock
John Holgate	Anne Carr
George Robinson	Margaret Atkinson
John Atkinson	Jane Wood
Willm Atkinson	Rebecca Tompson
Tho: Mulgrave	with others.
Henry Barby	

And [William Atkinson](#) took his bride home to Littlebank. [George Atkinson](#) having moved to Roomehouses around 1670, we presume that it was [Robert](#) who was responsible for rebuilding the main house in 1693.⁶⁶



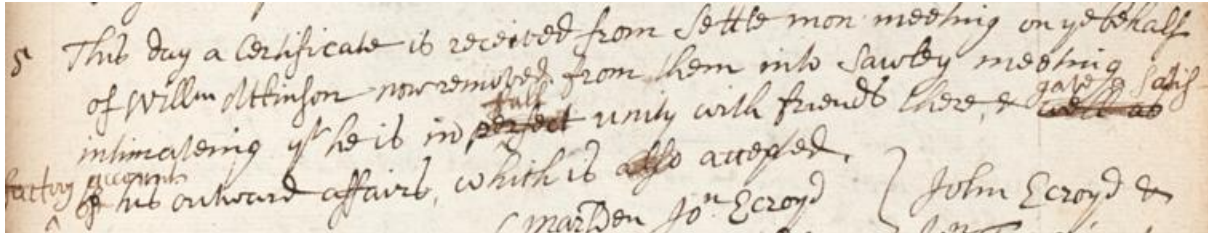
The rebuilt Littlebank, where the newly-wed [William](#) and [Ann](#) lived with his father, [Robert](#)

The Settle Quaker registers show seven children born to [William](#) and [Ann](#) at Littlebank between 1695 and 1710, [Ann](#), [Robert](#), [Elizabeth](#), [Mary](#) (who died in infancy), twins [Frances](#) and [Mary](#) (the first actually a day older than the second!) and [Isabel](#).⁶⁷

⁶⁶ there also were smaller houses around it, making a small hamlet

⁶⁷ all but Isabel are names of [Ann](#)'s brother and sisters, but Robert, of course, was also the name of William's father

However, the record of Isabel's 1710 birth describes her father, William, as *late of Littlebank*. In fact, he had moved in 1709 to Sawley, and was living alongside the Tippings at Sawley Grange! The move from Settle to Marsden MM was recorded in September of that year:



This day a Certificate is received from Settle mon meeting on y^e behalf of Willm Atkinson now removed from them into Sawley meeting intimating y^e he is in perfect unity with friends there, & ~~gave~~ ^{gave} satisfaction of his outward affairs, which is also accepted. } John Ecroyd & Marsden Joⁿ Ecroyd

Ann is described in her mother's 1709 will as *of Sawley Grange*, yet Isabel's 1710 birth is recorded at Settle as taking place at Littlebank.

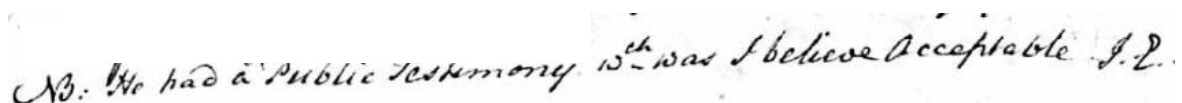
William was soon active within Newby Meeting and when, following William Oddie's death in 1714, only one Visitor remained, he was appointed in his place.

When he drew up his will, at Sawley Grange, he named three more children, William, John and Alice. It seems strange that, in the close Quaker community of Giggleswick, three children from one family should escape registration; but it could suggest that the family was not always in residence at Littlebank, and that William was a travelling evangelist like his father-in-law, maintaining a family base at Littlebank. We shall later find that the unregistered Alice was born at Littlebank around 1711, two years after William had moved to Sawley.

According to convention, in his will he named the children in order of seniority, but boys-before-girls: so Robert remains the eldest son, followed by William. However, placing Alice before Isabel was incorrect! William is concerned with lands in Rathmell and Giggleswick (his Atkinson inheritance, no doubt including the Littlebank land and property - his father, Robert, having died in 1707) and the will was witnessed by his neighbour and brother-in-law, John Tipping and John's son Thomas.

He died on 24th December, 1717, age unknown.

He had become highly respected in Quaker circles, and, at his death, is described as a Minister. Like John Ecroyd, but, again, very unusually, the following is added by the recorder below the entry:



NB. He had a public testimony 15th was I believe Acceptable J.P.

The MMM requested that an account of his life should be drawn up and sent to London Yearly Meeting, which received it well and took a copy.

He was buried at Sawley, his father-in-law [William Holgate](#)'s home still serving as the burial ground for the Newby Meeting.

[William](#) and [Ann](#)'s eldest daughter, [Ann](#), died soon after her father and [Elizabeth](#) is assumed to have died before 1760.

[William](#) married [Margaret Horner](#) in 1745 (no witnesses are recorded).

[John](#) probably lived in one of brother [William](#)'s Sawley village properties, surely the John Atkinson who, according to 1741 Land Tax records, held freehold lands in Skipton, but lived in Sawley.

[Frances](#) married Kildwick Quaker [David Davy](#) in 1751, when the witnesses included her four siblings, [Robert](#), [William](#), [Isabel](#) and [Alice](#),⁶⁸ sister-in-law [Margaret](#), cousin [George Atkinson](#), Richard Horner (presumed relation of [Margaret](#) and perhaps the farmer who was to augment the Sawley Meeting House land), [William](#) and [Mary Oddie](#) and their sons [John](#) and [Richard Oddie](#), aunt [Frances Tipping](#) and [John Tipping](#)'s wife [Mary](#); but there is no sign of her mother, [Ann](#). No children of this marriage have been found.

[Robert](#), who, unmarried, had continued to live at Sawley Grange, died in 1754. Unlike his father and brother, he did not leave a will, which suggests that, although he was described as a yeoman, he had not accumulated land and property; in the absence of a will, [William](#) would have been his heir.

When the unmarried and childless [John Holgate](#) drew up his will in 1730, he was concerned with these nieces and nephews, children of his sister [Ann Atkinson](#). And we find that he actually owned their home, Sawley Grange, and lived there, too! [William](#) received, for life, the half of the property in which his mother lived, on condition that she should remain living there with him. She also received 20 shillings p.a. for life, and he received other land. Brother [Robert Holgate](#) received £12, and nephews and nieces [Robert](#), [John](#), [Elizabeth](#), [Frances](#), [Mary](#), [Isabel](#) and [Alice](#) each received £10, as did nephew [William Kippax](#). It is not known when he died, but probate was not granted until 1740.

⁶⁸ note that [Alice](#) is listed after [Isabel](#), suggesting she is younger

In 1731, he is recorded as owning both Sawley Grange and property in Sawley Monastery: very likely he had inherited Sawley Manor from his mother, but we do not know who next owned it. It was possibly placed into a Trust for use, as his father had intended, as a Meeting House, and there was a smooth transition when Newby Meeting closed in 1746.

Further land was donated by farmer Richard Horner in 1777, enabling the erection of a new Meeting House, incorporating what is now described as a 'cottage' – all or part of William's 'manor'? – and the cottage itself was extended in 1907/8.

Sawley Quaker Meeting House,
where Friends continue to meet.



William Atkinson built up his own property portfolio: Appendix 4 includes an indenture⁶⁹ dated June 1750 in respect of which he was working closely with cousins Thomas Tipping - the son of John and Frances (née Holgate) - and Robert Holgate the son of Robert: all three Sawley landowners, living off, but no longer working, the land.

By the time William died in 1760, he held the lease of Sawley Grange, land nearby called Roger or Castle Croft (incidentally being farmed by his second cousin, William Oddie), messuages (dwellings) and tenements in Dudland, freehold land in Rimington and land called the Holme (location uncertain), a messuage, farm and tenement in Clitheroe and four messuages, tenements and outbuildings in and around Sawley - in one of which he may, by then, have been living.

He had not, however, inherited his father's landholdings in Rathmell and Giggleswick: these were still held by his mother, Ann - who, since her husband's death had been judiciously augmenting them, acre by acre! Where attorneys were required, she looked to the Tippings, and many relevant documents were witnessed by her great-nephew, attorney William Tipping (son of William of Dockber) who had set up practice in Settle.

⁶⁹ legal contract

It seems that Ann was, by 1760, living at Littlebank: when Frances' husband died in 1762, she returned not to Sawley, but to Littlebank (dying there in 1777).

But who, in 1760, was to receive William's remaining Rimington, Sawley and other local property? He and Margaret were childless. His will was witnessed by brother John, so we presume they were on good terms; but John received nothing, perhaps having been adequately provided for by their father, or by William during his life. William mentions four sisters, Isabel, Alice, Frances and Mary, but no surnames or locations are mentioned and the assumption might be that they were all unmarried, and living with him at Sawley Grange – wrong on many levels!

We know that Frances was, in 1760, married and, as she and Mary received only £20 each, it is likely that Mary had also married and both were sufficiently provided for. Mary may, indeed, have married back into the Church of England: a possible marriage took place at Gisburn in 1757, between a Mary Atkinson and a John Parker.

Isabel and Alice inherited William's interest in the Grange and Roger or Castle Croft as tenants in common, meaning the survivor would get the whole of the bequest – thus keeping it in the family! His *loving wife* Margaret received the Sawley village properties which included her home, all the household effects and £300 to use as she wished, plus a half share, with Alice, of his investments and interest thereon; but none of this was hers to dispose of: at her death (or possibly if she remarried) they would revert to Isabel, Alice and Trawden cousin William Kippax.

The latter also received land and property in Dudland and Rimington, provided he paid Robert Holgate an annuity of £7 (in lieu of a share). Robert had moved back to Sawley, to Greenhead, close to Sawley Grange, though still owning property in Clitheroe, and received William's interest in more property in town. His four daughters, Mary, Elizabeth, Frances and Jane received bequests from William, the eldest receiving £20, the others another £20 between them.

William Kippax junior, and nephew John Horner received £20 each and *my cousin* (actually his second-cousin) William Oddie received an annuity of £2.2s for life.

The only bequests outside the family were to a former servant and two current servants, who received a guinea each. His executors were Margaret and Alice, which suggests that Isabel was no longer local, but had also returned to Littlebank, to Ann and (soon) Frances.

Margaret did, indeed, remarry (a Quaker) in 1765, but there were no Atkinson witnesses: if Alice had also joined her mother and sisters, there were no longer any Atkinsons in Sawley.

But Sawley was not forgotten. When Ann Atkinson died at Littlebank in 1764, at the age of 94, she was, at her own request, brought home for burial at her Holgate childhood home, Sawley Manor.

Incidentally, the 1777 Trustees of the new Meeting House on the site were Margaret Atkinson's second husband James Dickinson, a Horner relation Robert, William Tipping (son of John and Mary, née Ecroyd and great-grandson of John and Frances Tipping) and Richard Ecroyd (husband of Frances Tipping, a grand-daughter of John and Frances). Nothing like keeping it in the family!

Building on the bequests, leases and acquisitions of their brother and mother, Isabel and Alice lived on at Littlebank, accumulating a portfolio of land and property interests in and around Giggleswick and Rathmell. They were assisted by their second-cousin George Atkinson and his son George, near-neighbours at New Hall, Rathmell, also consolidating their holdings. In each case, the increments were small, but, joined up, worth much more than the total of the separate parcels.

When Isabel died at the age of 91, in 1801, there were a dozen bequests, but most of her estate passed to Alice.

When Alice died aged 97, in 1808,⁷⁰ the estate, for probate purposes, was stated to be 'under £3,500'. The Bank of England Inflation Calculator describes this sum as *truly immense*:

⁷⁰ finally proving that she was younger than Isabel, being born around 1711; however, we will never know if she was born at Little Bank or Sawley Grange

What £3500 could buy in 1808

In 1808, a sum of £3500 was truly immense, representing decades of a skilled labourer's wages. Here are some estimates of what it could purchase:

- **A substantial family home:** You could have acquired a large, comfortable family home in a respectable provincial town, or a smaller but well-situated residence in a fashionable part of London. 🏠 Property values varied greatly, but this was a significant sum for real estate.
- **A good-sized agricultural estate:** Alternatively, it could have bought you a significant agricultural estate, perhaps 50 to 100 acres of prime land, providing both status and a steady income from farming. 🌾 Land prices were highly regional, but this amount could secure a valuable holding.
- **A small commercial venture:** For the enterprising, it might have funded the purchase of a new, medium-sized merchant vessel 🚢 for trade, or equipped a fleet of several new stagecoaches for a transport business, offering significant commercial potential.

But it all was to be realised, and divided between no less than 53 beneficiaries!

In true Quaker spirit, women's equality was recognised, bequests going directly to them, and not to their husbands or fathers!

But in true 'maiden aunt' fashion, the sisters had also kept track of the exponentially growing Atkinson and Holgate families, and of the 53 beneficiaries, almost all were descendants of Quaker pioneers [George Atkinson](#) and [William Holgate](#)!

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