

THE PROCTER FAMILY AT LOWER BURNT HILL FARM.

In the 19th century three generations of the Procter family lived at Lower Burnt Hill Farm over a period of about 60 years. The farm is situated right at the top of Harden Clough, above Kelbrook and in the furthest corner of Thornton-in-Craven parish, near to the old road between Skipton & Colne. At that time the farm had about 26 acres of land in a narrow strip from the lowest point where Harden Beck rises to its highest point at the old Lancashire boundary on top of Burnt Hill, close to the turnpike at Hainslack known as Howshaw Bar. The land was north facing, exposed to the prevailing winds and between 850ft and 1150ft above sea level. It must have been a hard, uncomfortable life, but the Procters appear to have thrived.

Samuel Procter took the tenancy of the farm sometime between 1826 and 1828, coming with his family from a farm called Saltersyke, down the road towards Colne. There is (or was) a sale notice in Colne Library for Saltersyke dated 1826, so perhaps Samuel moved when the new owners took over.

Samuel was born in Cowling in 1780, the son of **John Procter & Elizabeth (nee Carrington)**. He was baptised on 7th January 1781 at Kildwick Parish Church.

Samuel had married **Ann Whitaker** on 4th July 1800 at Kildwick Parish Church and three of their children were baptised together at Ickornshaw on 21st September 1809.

John Procter son of Samuel & Ann born 29/11/1802

James Procter son of Samuel & Ann born 17/08/1804

Samuel Procter son of Samuel & Ann born 20/02/1806

Ann died aged 25 on 7/9/1808 and is buried at Kildwick, so her children were baptised as Wesleyan Methodists after her death. I know very little about these children, but it is possible that this is the **John** who later lived at Procter Heights in Lothersdale and then Salt Pie, founding the Lothersdale and Earby branches of the Procter family. The History Society has a copy of the Lothersdale Procter Pedigree starting with John born 1803. His eldest son is called Samuel, and in later census returns he gives his birthplace as Cowling, so there is some evidence that he is the son of Samuel & Ann.

Samuel was married again in 1822 at St Bartholomew's in Colne to a widow called **Mary Smith** the daughter of **James & Mary Hartley** of Lidgett nr. Colne. They had the following children:-

Thomas Procter son of Samuel & Mary of Saltersyke baptised St Bart's 17/8/1823 (buried 11/5/1824 Winewall Inghamite Chapel)

George Procter son of Samuel & Mary of Saltersyke baptised 10/7/1824 Earby Baptist Chapel

Benjamin Procter son of Samuel & Mary of Saltersyke baptised 12/2/1826 Earby Baptist Chapel

Joseph Procter son of Samuel & Mary of Lower Burnt Hill baptised 29/10/1828 Earby Baptist Chapel

Peter Procter son of Samuel & Mary of Lower Burnt Hill baptised 31/10/1830 Earby Baptist Chapel.

Samuel is first described as a blacksmith like his father & grandfather in Cowling, and then as a butcher when he married Mary and when Thomas was baptised in Colne. I wonder if he carried on either of those trades here, or just farmed?

Samuel Procter died in 1838 aged 57. He was buried on 30/9/1838 at St Andrews, the parish church in Kildwick.

The 1841 census finds **Mary Proctor** aged 55 still at Lower Burnt Hill and described as a farmer, with her sons **George** 15, and **Peter** 10. (George would actually have been 16 or 17.) There is another family living at the farm, **Thomas Whiteoak**, 27 Ag Lab, his wife Margaret & 4 young children.

I haven't been able to track **Benjamin** down beyond his baptism, but I have found **Joseph**. He is living at Midge Hole, Salterforth with the family of **Hiram Ellis**, a wool carder. **Joseph**, age 12 is also described as a wool carder. There is a 15 year old girl called **Mary Smith**, a cotton weaver, also living with this family.

Finding this answered one question I hadn't been able to answer before. **Mary Procter** died in 1842, aged 57 and was buried at Winewall Inghamite Chapel. The informant on her death certificate was a **Mary Smith** of Midge Hole, but I couldn't discover where this was. What connection was there between them? I have found a baptism at St. Bart's, Colne on 21/5/1826 for a **Mary Smith**, daughter of **Betty Smith** of Saltersyke. Was Betty a daughter of Mary's from her first marriage to John Smith and was Mary Smith her granddaughter?

On the census return Midge Hole appears between the Inn at Lane Head and White House in Salterforth. There was a mill called Midge Hole in that area.

Samuel & Mary's son **George**, aged only 17, must have taken over the farm when Mary died. I don't know if he would have been able to take on a tenancy at that age, but the following year on 9th January 1843 he married **Ann Hopkinson** of Colne, who was just 16, at Thornton-in-Craven Parish Church.

Ann was the daughter of **John & Ann Hopkinson** and in the 1841 census they are living at Piked Edge Farm, between Jerusalem Farm and the pub at Black Lane Ends.

George & Ann produced a family of 13 children at the farm, and 2 more when they had moved to Pasture Farm and all but one child, Mary, survived into adulthood. It is hard to imagine how tough it must have been to bring up a family of that size in what can only have been a one up -one down house nearly 1000ft up a hillside. The birth dates are unconfirmed, I have found baptisms for the first 2 children at St Bart's, but it would be a lifetime's work to track them all down! These dates are from an IGI file which I downloaded from the Family search website over 12 years ago.

Samuel	27/5/1844	James	8/12/1856
John	1/10/1845	Elizabeth Ann	27/7/1858
William	29/11/1847	George	9/02/1860
Benjamin	20/5/1849	Joseph	30/5/1861
Mary	28/4/1851	Hartley	9/5/1863
Sarah	23/2/1853	Peter	23/11/1865
Henry	19/9/1854	Margaret	11/6/1867
		Ellen	27/4/1869

The 1851 census for Lower Burnt Hill shows **George Procktor** 25 Farmer of 26 acres, **Ann** 24 farmer's wife, **Samuel** 6, **John** 5, **William** 3 and **Benjamin** 1.

The 1861 census for Lower Burnt Hill shows **George Procter** 36 Farmer of 26 acres and drainer, **Ann** 34 Farmer's wife (giving Trawden as a birthplace) **Samuel** 16 drainer, **John** 15 drainer, **Benjamin** 11 carter, **Sarah** 8 scholar, **James** 4 scholar, **Henry** 6 scholar, **Elizabeth A.** 2, **George** 1.

Mary hadn't survived beyond her first year.

William 13 is listed as a farm boy at the Wilson's Arms Inn, at Old Stone Trough between Foulridge & Kelbrook.

Henry seems to change his name to **Thomas** at some point before the 1871 census.

It is impossible to tell exactly how & when **George & Ann** left Lower Burnt Hill and took the tenancy of Pasture Farm at Black Lane Ends which was across the border into Lancashire, but it was sometime between 1861 and 1866. I don't know if they kept the tenancy of LBH farm as well, but by the 1871 census **George & Ann's** son **Samuel** is farming here.

Going by the evidence of the 1871 census return **George & Ann's** children, up to and including **Peter** in 1865, were born in Thornton in Craven, only **Margaret & Ellen** were born in Lancashire. However their eldest son **Samuel's** abode when he married **Ann Bentham** at St Bart's on 26th October 1863 is given as Pasture and he is described as a farmer.

Samuel & Ann's first child **John W.** is born in Keighley in c1864, **Hargreaves** the second child in Lancashire in c1866 and their third child **Mary** is born in Thornton in Craven in c1869 so they are probably at Lower Burnt Hill by then.

The 1871 census is confusing because the enumerator has put the **Procter** family into a second farm at Higher Burnt Hill and a family called Rushton at Lower Burnt Hill missing out Brown Hill Farm completely. Brown Hill is the third of a close group of three properties and where the Rushtons are in 1861 & 1881. It appears to be a mistake by the enumerator.

It shows **Samuel Procter** 26 farmer, **Ann** 27 wife born Arncliffe, **John W** 7 born Keighley, **Hargreaves** 5 born Colne, **Mary** 2 born Thornton in Craven, **David** 2 mths born Thornton in Craven.

Ann was the daughter of **Miles Bentham** of Arncliffe, but when **Samuel & Ann** married in Colne her abode is given as Barnside Hall, Foulridge. In the 1861 census she is a servant in a house in Starbotton, so I am guessing that she was also a servant at Barnside, which is just over the hill from Pasture above Laneshawbridge. (This area was a part of Foulridge Parish known as Foulridge Detached.)

Samuel is noted as the occupier of Lower Burnt Hill in 1877 when it is sold to the Wainman Estate, and he is still there in the 1881 census with four more children, **Sarah, Smith, Ann & Tom.**

By the 1891 census **Samuel and Ann** have moved to Hainslack Farm, back into Lancashire again but in reality just up the road. I think Hainslack's land would have met with that belonging to Pasture at Warley Wise Lane. They have had a couple more children, **Ernest** who is 7 and **Elise** 2. Ernest born in Yorkshire and Elise in Lancashire which tells us that they left Lower Burnt Hill sometime between 1884 and 1889.

The farmhouse was improved and extended at some point around then and given two extra bedrooms, a bigger kitchen & a sitting room. I wonder if the Procters were given notice by the owners so that the work could be done, or if it was just a convenient moment when **Samuel & Ann** moved on.

Though they no longer farmed at Lower Burnt Hill, the Procter family continued to tenant other farms in the area.

Hargreaves Procter 34, his wife **Susan** 32 and children **Thomas H.** 12 and **Florrie** 5 are farming at Higher Burnt Hill in the 1901 census. There is a **David** Procter 29 and wife **Alice** 26 at Scald Bank Farm.

Samuel died on May 18th 1898 aged 54, he is buried in Colne Cemetery, but his wife **Ann** is head of household at Hainslack in the 1901 census with her sons **Smith, Tom and Ernest**.

Samuel's brother **James** is farming Pasture following the death of **George** in 1890. **George's** wife **Ann** is still living there aged 74. She died in 1903 and together they are buried at Winewall Inghamite Chapel.

By 1911 **Tom** Procter is farming at Hainslack, **James** is still at Pasture and **Hargreaves** at Higher Burnt Hill.

It must be tempting for descendants of the Procter's to believe that their ancestors owned the farms where they lived for so many years, but they were tenants, not owners, of the farms in this area.

Lower Burnt Hill was passed down through generations of the Shaw family till it was sold to the Wainman Estate in 1877, finally being sold to an owner/occupier in 1947.

Pasture was sold to a Mr Tunstill of Reedyford in 1906 and **James** Procter was the occupier at the time.

In the Tythe Survey of Colne in 1842 "Ayne Slack" was owned by a John Foulds. In 1926 Oswald Folds mortgaged Hainslack for £220 when **Thomas** Procter was the occupier.

Higher Burnt Hill & Scald Bank both belonged to the Wainman Estate.

For any one researching this Procter Family tree there is a comprehensive pedigree on the shelf in Colne Library.