

The Brudenell Family and the Headingley Connection

Those of us who live in Headingley are familiar with the names Brudenell and Cardigan, there are 6 streets named 'Brudenell' and 5 bearing the name 'Cardigan' - as well as 2 called 'Lancastre' (in Bramley) but more of that later. These names actually refer to the same family, the Brudenells became Earls of Cardigan in 1661.

Headingley was merely a part of the vast estates of the Brudenells - by 1863, they owned 15,724 acres in Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Rutland, Lincolnshire and South Yorkshire, the rents from which maintained Deene Park and the aristocratic life style of the Brudenell family in London.

With one rather famous exception, the Brudenells were not a distinguished family who appear in our history books, there are no Prime Ministers, diplomats, famous generals or patrons of the Arts. Although they often sat in Parliament and were members of the House of Lords, they were not terribly interested in Politics (they were, of course, Tories), but in the 18th century, they often had official positions in the courts of George II and George III.

Early History of the Family

The origins of the family were more obscure - the first written record is in the 13th century when the Brudenells were small freeholders in Northamptonshire. Their social advancement came about due their sons becoming lawyers, a series of shrewd land transactions and judicious marriages over years which allowed them to build up their great estates. By the 16th century there were sufficiently wealthy and important for Queen Elizabeth to stay with them at Deene, but their status was placed in jeopardy by their adherence to Roman Catholicism at a time when this was a crime. In 1626 Thomas Brudenell was convicted of Resucancy and two thirds of his possessions and the rents from his estates were forfeited to the King. Although this was partially rescinded later, their religious faith represented a serious threat the family's fortunes.

During the Civil War, the Brudenells supported the King - at the time of the Restoration Thomas claimed to have spent £1200 on horses and arms for Charles I as well as giving him £500 in cash. His house at Deene was occupied by the Parliamentarians and its furniture and pictures

destroyed; for 8 years, Thomas lived the life of a fugitive and spent a short period as a prisoner in the Tower of London. It was in return for their loyalty that when Charles II was restored to the throne, the Brudenells were created Earls of Cardigan (1661).

The Yorkshire Connection

The connection of the family with Yorkshire came as a result of Francis Brudenell's marriage in 1668 with Lady Frances Savile. On her marriage, she brought with her £5000 and then on the death of her brother, all the great Savile estates in Yorkshire including Headingley cum Burley which the Saviles had acquired in the 1560s, passed to the Brudenells. It was their son, George who, in 1708, abjured the family's allegiance to Roman Catholicism and joined of the Church of England. Once a year the Earl of Cardigan came up to Yorkshire to collect his rents. He usually stayed in a farm house, Haigh Hall between Leeds and Wakefield where his Yorkshire steward was based. On Rent Day, the tenants travelled to the hall to pay their rents, were reprimanded for any infringements of their tenancies and when tenants had died, questions of inheritance were sorted out and recorded. Rent day would be rounded off by a great meal for the tenants. There then followed a couple of days riding round the estates to see that everything was in good order and the annual visit was sometimes completed by a trip to the races at York.

Whether the Earls ever visited Headingley I don't know, but the area was of sufficient interest for George Brudenell, the 3rd Earl to commission his agent, John Dickenson to draw up an estate map of the Headingley manor in 1711. Every field is identified by name and given a number which in an accompanying folio details the names of the tenants and the quality of the land. We don't know how many people were actually living in Headingley in the 18th century as the manor included both Burley and Kirkstall - but in 1775 it has been calculated that in the whole area, there was only 657 people.

Although the Brudenells were absentee landlords, in the 18th century, they were keen to increase the wealth that they derived from their property. This period was period known to historians as the Agricultural Revolution when landowners and more particularly their stewards and estate managers used their power of granting leases to tenant farmers to drive through improved farming methods. One such lease of 1793 stipulated that Samuel Waddington who farmed four and half acres in Headingley, must keep two thirds of his land in fallow at any one time,

only two crops of corn should be grown before the land returned to fallow. On the fallow land crops such as beans, clover and turnips (to be eaten by cattle and sheep) could be grown, and the land was to be replenished with 12 cart loads of manure or 25 loads of lime per acre.

Other ways of increasing the returns from land were to exploit it for minerals (coal in this part of the world); none was found in Headingley but in the 1790s 21 leases for collieries were signed in the Wakefield, Dewsbury and West Ardsley areas. Other money-making ventures were the building of water mills and the opening of quarries and a number of these were to be found along the Meanwood Valley. As a result of these initiatives, the annual rental value of Headingley increased from £1198 in 1791 to £3200 by 1827.

Lords of the Manor as well as viewing their estates in commercial terms, also accepted that they had certain duties and responsibilities to their tenants (paternalism). In 1717, a small parcel of land on Headingley Moor was enclosed and sold to increase the salary of the curate to £200. In 1770, the 4th Earl allowed 40 acres of waste and common land on the Moor to be enclosed for the benefit of the curate of St Michael's and the Holly Dene parsonage was built in 1777 on Otley Rd. In 1783, Lord Cardigan endowed Headingley's first school next to the church with a house for the schoolmaster - financed by selling a piece of waste land and a £50 contribution from the Earl. In 1798, Mr Martin, the owner of a paper mill on the Beck petitioned the 5th Earl for the right to enclose a piece of the Moor for a reservoir and the five guineas a year paid for this privilege, was used to pay a schoolmaster to teach six poor children - but not clear where this school was. At the same time, Lord Cardigan contributed 20 guineas to the enlargement of the school master's house. The Brudenells also gave the land for the building of a school in Kirkstall and a little later for the building of St Stephen's Church.

I have not mentioned so far the manor house, Headingley Hall situated on what is now Shire Oak Rd. If you look at this house today, you can see two distinct parts to the house - an older section built in 1649 and an extension and remodelling that belongs to the 1830s. The house was probably let in the 18th century - the recorder of Leeds, John Walker lived here for a time but by 1830s it was occupied by the Cardigan's land agent, George Hayward and it was here that Lord Cardigan stayed whilst he was in the north with his regiment.

The Enclosure of Headingley Moor

Another way landowners sought to increase the revenue generated by their estates was by the sale of building leases for residential development, but the Brudenells seemed loathed to do this despite the fact that from the 1820s, Headingley was developing into a middle class suburb. Probably the reason for this lack of action was that the status of the aristocracy was very much bound up with the size of their landed estates - earlier generations had expended great efforts to accumulate as much land as possible and it was one's responsibility to pass on the estate intact to one's heirs. However there was an area of land in Headingley which might be developed without any loss of status, and that was the Moor. All over the country common lands were being enclosed - commons legally belonged to the lord of the manor but villagers had certain rights to use the land and therefore an act of parliament was required in order to suspend these rights. Headingley Moor consisted of 130 acres of land, bounded in the north by Weetwood Lane and stretching to the south as far as what was to become Wood Lane (originally called Oil Mill Lane). On 22nd May 1829, The Earl of Cardigan with support of other major land owners in the district applied and received permission to enclose the Moor. An enclosure commissioner was appointed to survey the land and to consider how the land was to be divided between local land owners - according to custom, the lord of the manor was to get at least one sixteenth of the land. The Brudenells actually got more this and perhaps this was because George Hayward, the estate manager was appointed as the enclosure commissioner. Their share of the Moor was to the south and joined up with other parts of the Cardigan estate. For fifteen years, this land was rented out for agricultural purposes but in 1850, it was divided into plots for building development - the beginning of the building of villas along Shaw Lane, Monkbridge Rd, Mill Road (Grove Lane), Alma Rd and Wood Lane.

The Seventh Earl: Lord Cardigan

Four years later the man who had authorised this sale, the 7th Earl of Cardigan was fighting in the Crimea. The most famous member of the Brudenell family, James Brudenell was born in 1797, an only son with six sisters. No doubt pampered as a child, he grew up into a handsome and hot-tempered young man whose passions were for soldiering, hunting and women. Against his parents wishes he joined the army in 1824 and by 1832 was commanding a cavalry regiment- according to The Times, he paid between £30-40,000 for this position. He served with his regiment in Ireland in the 1820s and 30s. A furious disciplinarian, notorious for his

use of flogging and courts martials, his haughty and overbearing manner became an embarrassment and in 1836 he was packed off to India but a year later his tour of duty was cut short by the death of his father.

The new Earl was one of the richest men in Britain with an annual income of £40,000 (worth £2m today) - much of it coming from royalties on his Yorkshire coal mines. But money was not something men like the Earl concerned themselves about unduly and certainly he living beyond his means which lead him to raise loans by mortgaging his Yorkshire estates. For the next few years, James served with the home garrison and in the 1840s was much employed in the manufacturing districts of the North of England dealing with Chartist riots.

In 1854, Britain and France declared war on Russia and the Earl of Cardigan was sent to the Crimea. Laying the siege to the great Russian fortress of Sebastopol, Lord Cardigan's Light Brigade was ordered to seize a Russian position at the head of the Balaclava valley. It was a totally inept order and military historians have argued ever since about who was responsible for it. It certainly wasn't Lord Cardigan, he realised it was a death trap as Russian guns commanded the valley heights, but just as he insisted on military obedience from the men under his command, so he, too, was obliged to obey orders. As he set off, he was heard to say '*here goes the last of the Brudenells*'. The Russian position was captured and he, of course, survived the battle but two thirds of his men were killed.

Cardigan returned to England in 1855 a popular hero, and the charge of the Life Brigade was immortalised in verse by the Poet Laureate, Lord Tennyson written even before Cardigan's return.

*Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
Into the valley of death,
Rode the Six Hundred*

The poem expressed a whole host of Victorian values: honour, duty, obedience, glory, a victory against the odds, and undoubtedly Cardigan revelled in the adulation he received (we even named a kind of woollen jacket after him). He was invited to Windsor Castle to describe the battle to Queen Victoria and her family and then he set out on a celebratory tour of the country. In August 1856 a public dinner was held

in his honour in Leeds at the Stock Exchange in Albion St. and he was presented with a jewelled sabre costing 250 guineas raised by public subscription - memorabilia of this event can still be seen in the Cardigan Arms.

I am not going to talk about Lord Cardigan's hunting prowess though there are an inordinate number of paintings of his favourite horses on the walls of Deene Park, but what of his passion for women? Whilst in Paris in 1824, Lord Cardigan began an affair with a married woman, Mrs Johnstone who was separated from her husband. When Mrs Johnstone's husband finally obtained a divorce in 1826, the pair were married but it was not a happy relationship. Both were promiscuous, and when his wife finally left him for Lord Colville in 1842, Lord Cardigan told him '*you have done the greatest service that one man can render to another*'.

He himself had already embarked on an affair with the 17 year old, Adeline Horsey and was to set up house with her in London; seventeen years later after his wife's death in 1858, the pair were married - he was now aged 60 and she was 33.

'Society' was scandalised, no respectable families would invite them into their homes and although men might stay at Deene for the hunting, they were never accompanied by their wives. Queen Victoria gave instructions that the picture painted on the occasion of Lord Cardigan's visit to Windsor be altered: although Prince Albert and the royal children can still be seen, her image has been painted over. Despite their ostracism, the marriage appears to have been a happy one: Adeline enjoyed hunting, was as enthusiastic as her husband about horse racing and yachting, and was prepared to overlook the Earl's continuing sexual liaisons. The marriage lasted ten years, in 1868 Lord Cardigan died after falling from his horse.

Adeline Brudenell

In one of the accounts of Lord Cardigan, I read in preparation for these notes, Adeline is described as a 'colourful widow' and that's putting it mildly! The estate of 25,000 acres with a rental yield of £35,000 had been left to her for life but her husband had died with a debt of £174,000 secured on his Yorkshire estates. Adeline was to live for another forty seven years during she appears to oblivious to her precarious financial situation. Before long she was partying and flirting including a relationship with the recently widowed Benjamin Disraeli.

According to her memoirs she received 12 proposals of marriage and in 1873 she married Don Antonio Manuelo, Count de Lancastre, a member of the Portugese nobility.

The couple ended their honeymoon with a progress through her Yorkshire estates. Arriving in Harrogate by train, they drove in a carriage and four with outriders to Kirkstall Abbey where they were received with a salute of fifteen guns, a loyal address was read out by the vicar of St Stephens signed by over 300 tenants. The enthusiastic crowd that had assembled, then removed the carriage horses and harnessing themselves to the carriage pulled it up to Kirkstall Forge where 900 employees were lined up to meet the Countess. This was followed by a grand dinner for the Countess' tenants. But Don Antonio hated English country life and reading between the lines, there were also quarrels about her money: they separated after six years.

By the 1880s Adeline was in serious financial difficulties - non-payment of a debt of £1000 brought the bailiffs into Deene. Finally to stave off further financial embarrassments, the Yorkshire estates were sold. In Headingley, this meant that 211 acres appeared on the market and in 22 sales between 1884-1893 raised the sum of £92,000.

Adeline grew increasingly eccentric as she grew older, there were still lots of rather seedy parties at Deene where she appeared in extravagant dress, heavily made up with a blond wig and a rose in her hair. She organised 'steeple chases' over the grave stones in the church, had her own coffin brought into the Great Hall and used to climb into it asking visitors how she looked. Sometimes she dressed in Lord Cardigan's clothes and cycled through the village or else appeared as a ghost - every stately home has to have its own ghost! She died in 1915 aged 91.

Deene Park

The first building on this site was a grange farm belonging to the Abbots of Westminster Abbey and remnants of this medieval building can be found in the east range of the house. The house was bought by the Brudenells in 1514 and is still lived in by the family. What we see today, is largely a 16th century house built around a courtyard with rooms added in the 18th and early 19th centuries.

Entering the courtyard from the north, in front of us is the hall range of 1571-2 with its Renaissance inspired porch which has Ionic capitals and frieze of foliage scrolls with putti and mermaids holding a shield showing the Brudenell and Bussy arms. The east wing is earlier and was built by Robert, the first Brudenell occupant of Deene (d.1531), and the west range, largely a service block, also dates from the Elizabethan period. Both the eastern and western ranges have gables added in the 17th century. The prominent crenellated tower at the NE corner is an addition of Sir Thomas Brudenell (1578-1663) and its highest stage is decorated with shields of arms.

Looking back through the archway of the north range (17th century) we see an obelisk by Rodney Melville erected to commemorate the millennium of 2000.

Moving round the exterior of the house, the southern elevation facing onto the gardens and park consists of two sections divided by octagonal castellated turrets: to the left is a mock-Tudor design of the early 19th century (a suite of reception rooms with bedrooms above), and to the right, an original 16th century structure but with sash windows inserted around 1752. The east side of the house is the most interesting in architectural terms, its highlight is a two storey eight light blind window which bears the initials of Edmund Brudenell (d.1585) and his wife, Agnes Bussy (d. 1583). The north wing dates from the 17th century.

The visitor enters the house through a small doorway in the East Wing leading to the Great Hall . In 1571 Sir Edmund Brudenell wrote in his diary: '*Laid the foundation of my hall at Deene*', it was one of the last halls to be built in the medieval style and was originally heated by a fire in the middle of the room. There was also a gallery across the far end of the room but this was demolished in the 18th century. The splendid double

hammer beam roof is made from sweet chestnut. The chimney piece removed from the older hall, bears the date 1571 and is ornamented with Brudenell coat of arms impaled with those of the Bussy family and the Latin motto, *Amicus Fidelis Protexio Fortis* ('a faithful friend is a strong bulwark') Originally there was wooden panelling on three sides of the room but much of this was sold in the 1920s and all that remains is in the east wall. The large refectory table and benches dates from the early 17th century and have always been in the house. The stained glass showing the coat of arms of the Brudenells and families who they were related to was installed in the 17th century when the Brudenells became Earls of Cardigan. It was badly damaged in 1943 when an American bomber crashed nearby, the glass was then removed and not reinstalled until 1959. On the left of the fireplace is a painting of Sir Robert Brudenell painted a hundred years after his death by Gaspar. The picture on the panelling is thought to be the First Earl as a young man. Over the fireplace is a picture of Robert, Earl of Ailesbury and Elgin painted by Sir Peter Lely - one of the Ailesbury daughters married George Brudenell. Other family portraits are of the first Earl of Cardigan as an old man, his son Edmind and the 3rd earl and his wife in the robes they wore for the coronation of George II.

I am not sure of the route of our tour of the house, but the eastern range contains the Smoking Room/ Billiard Room with a portion of a 13th century arch to the right of the fire place - the only visible remnant of the medieval house. The room with its bay window is the lower part of Sir Robert Brudenell's Hall originally three storeys high but subdivided horizontally in 1571 when it was relegated to secondary functions after the building of the present Great Hall. It was here that Sir Robert entertained Elizabeth I on her visit to Deene in 1566. The principal staircase behind the smoking room is Jacobean. Of the same period is the Tapestry Room above the Smoking Room, it has a fine stucco ceiling with pedants. Above the fireplace is a portrait of Two Princesses of Orange by Gerard Honthorst. In the tower is a bedroom with a plaster ceiling and armorial design over mantle (1610). On the ground floor at the south east is the Oak Parlour with 17th panelling removed from Howley Hall, the home of the Savile family. This leads to the main reception rooms of the early 19th century block.

The elegant Bow Room added in the early 19th century, was originally the library - its name derives from the shape of the fireplace wall. Over the fireplace is a portrait of Mary, Duchess of Montagu, wife of the 4th Earl,

painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds. The Drawing Room contains a group of charming 17th century family portraits, two inlaid tables of the 1680s and an equestrian statuette of Adeline, wife of Lord Cardigan. The picture over the fireplace is of Mary Tresham, first Countess of Cardigan painted by Van Dyck. On the left is Anna Maria Brudenell (d 1702), daughter of the 2nd Earl and notorious in her day. Married to the Earl of Shrewsbury, Pepys wrote of her, '*My lady Shrewsbury, who is whore, and is at this time and hath for a great while been the whore of the Duke of Buckingham*'. When Shrewsbury challenged Buckingham to a duel, Anna dressed as Buckingham's page and held his horse while he fatally wounded her husband. On the right is Anne Brudenell who married the Duke of Richmond, the illegitimate son of Charles II. Her memorial and marble bust are in St Peter's Church.

The Dining Room dates from c. 1810. Over the fireplace is a painting of the 7th Earl on his charger, Ronald, leading the Charge of the Light Brigade. The other pictures of Lord Cardigan's hunters painted John Ferneley. On the sideboard is the jewelled sabre presented to Lord Cardigan in Leeds.

The White Hall added to the western end of the Great Hall, was built out of a courtyard to provide easier access to the bed rooms above. It has an elegant staircase with a handrail supported by wrought iron work, and an octagonal glazed dome above. Constructed by the 5th Earl, James Brudenell (1725-1811), his coat of arms bearing the crescent as the distinguishing mark of the second son, is repeated in the iron work of the stairs.

In the White Hall is the picture by James Sant depicting the Earl explaining the Charge of the Light Brigade to the Royal Family at Windsor Castle (the image of the Queen herself has been painted over); there are other mementoes of the Crimean War including the stuffed head of Lord Cardigan's horse, Ronald. Bits of Ronald are scattered round the house: his tail hangs under the stairs in the main hall and his hoof mounted in silver, stands on a table in the Bow Room. Ronald outlived his master dying in 1872. When Lord Cardigan died in 1868, Ronald took part in the funeral procession having been sedated by laudanum to calm his thoroughbred temperament!

Another room which we will undoubtedly see is King Henry's Bedroom With early 16th century panelling; Sir Thomas Brudenell was so convinced that Henry VII had stayed in this room before the Battle of Bosworth that he set up Henry's coat of arms in the room

For some of you, parts of Deene Park may appear familiar, it was used for the filming of 'The Cock and Bottle', the recent film of Sterne's 'Tristram Shandy'. For those with longer memories, the BBC used the house to represent Thornfield Hall in their serialisation of 'Jane Eyre' in 1983.

St Peter's Church

Although the church dates from the 12th century, it was radically restored and extended by Adeline, Lady Cardigan between 1868-9 in memory of the 7th Earl. The architect was MD Wyatt. The best examples of medieval work are to be found in the West Tower. The nave and aisles are austere but the chancel built by Wyatt, was sumptuously furnished and decorated in 1890 by GF Bodley, probably the finest church architect and designer of the period.

The pulpit is in alabaster and Caen stone and is a memorial to Lord Cardigan

In the Brudenell chapel is a stone reredos of 1635, originally from the main church. It dates from the time when the family were Roman Catholics and is particularly interesting for its carving of the Sacred Heart, a cult usually associated with the 18th century. Monuments of the Brudenell Family fill the chapel. In chronological order:

Sir Robert Brudenell (1461-1531) with his two wives, Margaret Entwhistle and Philippa Power. The heads of the alabaster effigies were probably carved from death masks

Brass to Sir Edmind Brudenell (1524-85). The Latin inscription translates as:

Edmund Brudenell Knight, sprung from eminent lawyers is buried in this tomb. He was much given to hospitality and to the Muses, sacred and profane - great glory to his country. Distinguished for his skill in setting forth the old blazons of the nobles.

On the canopy over the tomb is carved a further inscription:

*Christ was to me as lyf on earth
And death to me is gaine*

*Bicavse I hop throghe Hym alone
Salvation to obtaine*

Classical monument to Agnes Bussy, wife of Sir Edmund Brudenell who died in 1583. Their's was not a happy marriage, not only was it childless but there was constant friction with the Bussy family over property and money. It was even rumoured that Sir Edmund had her poisoned. Frequently unfaithful, within six months of her death and desperate for an heir he married again but having given birth to a daughter, his second wife died in child birth in 1584.

Anne, Duchess of Richmond (d.1722), daughter of Francis Brudenell and Frances Savile made a second marriage with the Duke of Richmond, illegitimate son of Charles II. A very fine monument with a bust by Guelfi on an inscribed base surrounded by decorative frame with two caryatids outside the frame.

Seventh Earl of Cardigan with his wife, Adeline by the German sculptor Edgar Boehm who had recently arrived in Britain. Life size, recumbent effigies executed in marble on a big sarcophagus with scenes of the Crimean War and seahorses at the corners (both James and Adeline were passionate about yachting). Notice how Adeline with open eyes turns to face her husband. The heads of both figures are based on death masks taken in 1868 but Adeline, of course wasn't dead, however she dreaded being placed by her husband as an old woman!