

# A WALK BY THE SLAIDBURN SCHOOL LANDS

to mark the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of Brennand's Endowed School, Slaidburn

led by Chris Spencer - meet at the car park on Slaidburn Green at 1pm, Saturday 15 July 2017



John Brennand's likeness sculpted in stone, watching from above the school's first floor windows (photo courtesy of Slaidburn Archive)



Plaque over front door: *'This Grammar School was erected and endowed by John Brennand late of Panehill in this Parish Gentleman who died the 15<sup>th</sup> day of May in the Year of our Lord 1717'* (photo courtesy of Slaidburn Archive)

John Brennand of Pain Hill in Slaidburn was a 'collector in the excise' and over the last twenty years of his life, he invested in farmlands near Slaidburn village. Brennand's Endowed School was founded in 1717 as instructed by Brennand's will, and the school building we see today was erected shortly thereafter. Brennand endowed the new school with the payment of £80 per annum for staff: to the headmaster (£50) who was to be an Anglican clergyman, and to the usher (£30), secured on and payable by his farms now known as Pain Hill, Crawshaw, Parrock Head, Burn Side, Laytham's with Huntington's, and Higher Stony Bank.

Brennard bequeathed all these his lands to his cousin William Geldard (charged with the above £80 per annum for the school salaries), but also on condition that Geldard should spend up to £200 'to make, build and erect a good, firm and substantial new school house within or near the town of Slaidburn'. The will was contested, unsuccessfully, by a cousin of the same name, John Brennard of Raingill farm. The school governors appointed in 1717 were: Edward Parker of Browsholme, Roger Nowell of Read, Thomas Lister of Westby, Ambrose Pudsay of Bolton by Bowland esquires, the Rector of Slaidburn for the time being and his successors, John Walker of Hungrill and Henry Wiglesworth of Slaidburn gentlemen.

In 1741, William Geldard sold the 'school lands' to Edward Salisbury of Newton in Bowland, a lawyer, for just £150. Salisbury had married Alice Leigh, a granddaughter of Leonard Leigh (see below). Salisbury's son and heir, Thomas, sold the school lands in 1777 to a cousin by marriage, Richard Sclater of the city of Bradford, for £2400. Sclater died in 1782 and the school lands were auctioned at the Hare and Hounds Inn at Newton in Bowland (now a private house called Sunnyside) when the purchaser at a price of £2600 was Dr Abraham Chew of Billington near Whalley (of Chew's asylum). Dr Chew heavily mortgaged the school lands, and by 1801, £6000 was owing on two mortgages. Leonard Wilkinson of Slaidburn purchased the school lands at auction that same year for £6800, leaving just £800 for Chew's son and heir, James. The school lands became part of the emerging Slaidburn Estate, until all of the school lands farms were sold off, except Higher Stony Bank, in 1927.

Crayshaw and Higher Stony Bank were later substituted by Ellerbeck or Woodhouse Hall farm with regard to paying a portion of the £80 per annum for the schoolmasters' salaries.

The 1826 Charity Commissioners' Report described the school lands as about 400 acres, but the Slaidburn Tithe schedule of c1838 has slightly more acres:

Pain Hill 80½a

Crayshaw 44¼a

Parrock Head 46¼a

Laytham's (with Huntington's) 114½a

Burn Side 66a

Higher Stony Bank 125a

TOTAL 476.5 a (less at least 22 customary acres = 35 statute acres bought later than 1717)

**Pain Hill** – in Tudor times this was a freehold farm owned by the Witton family and was then often written as 'Penell' or 'Penil' and due to its location, the etymology of this farm name is believed to be the same as Pendle Hill (from Wikipedia: 'The name "Pendle Hill" combines the words for hill from three different languages. In the 13th century it was called *Pennul* or *Penhul*, apparently from the Cumbric *pen* and Old English *hyll*, both meaning "hill". The modern English "hill" was appended later, after the original meaning of Pendle had become opaque).

Pain Hill was sold by Thomas Witton to Leonard Leigh in 1666, who in turn conveyed the farm to his second son Christopher Leigh in 1688, who sold it back to his father in 1698 for £220, and the same Leonard Leigh sold the farm to John Brennard in 1699 for £600, it then consisting of 20 customary freehold acres (32.4 statute acres). Over time, sundry nearby fields which were copyhold of the Manor of Slaidburn were added to the farm. The farm house was rebuilt in 1867 for the Wilkinson family (as part of their Slaidburn Estate) but the late 17<sup>th</sup> century lintel was retained and can be seen today over the back door '16 C<sup>L</sup>M 89' for Christopher and Margaret Leigh, née Hide.

**Crayshaw Farm** – in Tudor times, this was also a freehold farm, probably once part of the Domesday vill of Battersby. The Battersby family still owned the farm in the late Tudor period until Richard Shireburn appears to have become the owner, along with Dunnaw Hall (formerly known as Battersby Hall). Crayshaw was sold to John Brennand in 1700 by Shireburn's grandson, Jeremiah Webster, for £355, it then consisting of 22 customary acres (35.6 statute acres). The barn at Crayshaw has a plaque over the entrance upon which is carved 'IB 1701', undoubtedly for John Brennand who must have paid for a new barn to be built shortly after he purchased this farm.

**Parrock Head** – adjoins Pain Hill and can be seen from that farm in the near distance. The name of the farm is fairly recent; in the late 1700s it was known as Banks' farm, this being the then surname of the tenant. Parrock Head is now part of a major farming enterprise breeding Limousin cattle, together with Procter's, Laytham's and Ellerbeck farms within a ring fence. Parrock Head was originally a copyhold farm, meaning the land was held by copy of court roll of the Manor of Slaidburn, under payment of a yearly rent of 4d. for every acre of land to the Lord of the Manor. Copyhold tenure was abolished in the 1920s.

**Burn Side** – more copyhold land of the Manor of Slaidburn, this farm was often called Rudd's in the late 1700s, after the surname of the then tenant. The farm land from this farm became part of Gold Hill farm about 1960 and the land from both is now part of the Procter's Farm ring fence described above.

**Laytham's** – yet more copyhold land of the Manor of Slaidburn, this farm was also named in the late 1700s after the surname of the then tenant. This farm was merged with the adjoining Huntington's/Huddleston's farm about 1800. Burn Side, Huntington's and Laytham's farms all gradually evolved from combining together parcels of the commons of Burn Moor, enclosed in 1619, and this is why their farm names took some one hundred years or more to settle down.

**Higher Stony Bank** – this was a freehold farm purchased by John Brennand from John Harrison in 1697 (possibly mortgaged first for £150) and the conveyance was completed in early 1717 for a total of £291, but the extent of the farm in acres was not then stated. This farm is in Easington township and remotely situated from all the other above farms, being situated roughly north east of Slaidburn village, half way between that place and Tosside.

**Ellerbeck or Woodhouse Hall** – this farm was not part of Brennand's original endowment. It was bought by Dr Chew for £1200 in 1786 from Joshua Marriott, a bankrupt, when it consisted of around 91 customary acres and was still then called "Smithson's", having been in the possession of the Smithson family at least as early as 1551 until about 1720 (pre 1551 it was described as 10 acres and owned by a chantry priest in Blackburn parish church). The farm was sold along with the school lands to Leonard Wilkinson in 1801 by Chew's heirs. As stated above, this farm was sometime thereafter used to substitute Crawshaw and Lower Stoney Bank farms with regard to paying a portion of the £80 per annum for the schoolmasters' salaries.

The plaque over the front door of the farm house reads 'WIS IS 1694' for William Smithson and Jennet his wife, née Leigh, a daughter of the above Leonard Leigh and sister to Christopher Leigh of Pain Hill, and also for John Smithson, William Smithson's father, who was clerk to the courts of the Manor of Slaidburn for many decades until his death in 1712.

A 1776 list of the school lands rents paid to Thomas Salisbury, the then owner, lists the following tenants and acreages:

Thos Brennand	[Painhill]	£70	140 acres
Richard Brewer	[Parrock Head]	£16	30 acres
Wm Rudd	[Burn Side]	£17	36 acres
Wm Laitham	[Laytham's]	£26	57 acres
Hudleston's		£ 7 10s.	13 acres
Wm Thornber	[Stony Bank]	<u>£31 10s.</u>	73 acres
	[total:]	£168	

Note that the acreages used above are customary acres using 7 yards to the rod or pole, whereas statute acres used 5½ yards. This makes 1 customary acre = 1.62 statute acres. Painhill and Crawshaw were farmed as one unit at this time. Huddleston's or Huntington's was later merged into Laytham's farm.

It appears from miscellaneous notes on the above rental that the £80 payable to the school was paid out of the above gross rent of £168, since the school lands were then valued at "30 years' purchase", being 30 times the net rent of £88 = £2640. A year later, in 1777, Richard Sclater paid £2400 for the school lands when they were sold by Thomas Salisbury.

After Richard Sclater's death, the school lands were again sold, this time by auction in 1782 at the Hare and Hounds Inn, Newton in Bowland and the printed sale particulars describe the school lands thus:

- A farm, part freehold, part copyhold, called Painhill & Crawshaw in the townships of Slaidburn & Newton in the occupation of John Laycock, 139a 1r 20p exclusive of the Fold and Lane.
- A copyhold farm called Parrock Head in occupation of John Robinson, 30a 2r 30p
- A copyhold farm in the township of Slaidburn in occupation of William Latham 57a 1r 22p
- A copyhold farm in the township of Slaidburn in occupation of William Rudd 36a 1r 21p
- A copyhold farm, part in the township of Slaidburn, part in the township of Newton, in occupation of Nicholas Slinger, 13a 2r 7p
- A freehold farm in the township of Easington called Stonybank in occupation of William Thornber, 73a 3r 4p

Total number of acres, customary measure, 351a 0r 24p

Total yearly rents £206. 10s. 0d., less £80 payable to the Trustees of the Free Grammar School of Slaidburn, clear rent £126. 10s. 0d.

Also subject to the following yearly copyhold rents to the Lords and Ladies of the Manor of Slaidburn: Painhill £2. 2s. 5¼d., Robinson's Farm 16s., Latham's Farm £1. 11s., Rudd's £1. 5s., Slinger's 5s. 6d. Total £5. 19s. 11¼d.

Mr Abraham Chew of Billington was the purchaser, paying £2600 on 21 August 1782

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Sources used to compile this guide:

DDX 2480 Slaidburn School Deeds, C J Spencer Collection, Lancashire Archives

DDKW King-Wilkinson Deeds, various boxes, Lancashire Archives

DDHCl 5 Manor of Slaidburn court rolls, 1519 onwards, Lancashire Archives

Slaidburn Tithe Map and Schedule, c1838, Lancashire Archives

Samuel Buck's Yorkshire Sketchbook c1720 (contains a sketch of Brennand's new school and notes the founder's occupation as 'collector in the excise').