

Weldbank

An Account of its Establishment for a Catholic Chaple (sic) and of its Funds, History etc. etc. etc. relating to it collected by me R. Thompson Incumbent from the best Authorities.

Until the year 1774 the Catholics of Chorley and its Neighbourhood had not the happiness of having a fixed and established Chapel and a Priest to reside amongst them. They were therefore, under the necessity of going to the neighbouring Chapels of Euxton, Wrightington, Stonedelf, Blackrod, where there was Mass said one Sunday in the Month, or other places at a distance. At Burgh Hall there was occasionally prayers said one Sunday in the Month by some Priest, who was directed to assist the Congregation in this manner. And at one time the Congregation was assisted by a Mr Brockholes, who had formerly served Manchester and who died at Burgh.

He left one hundred pounds in the hands of Mr Chadwick of Birkacre or Burgh, the interest of which was regularly paid to the Priest who assisted the Congregation the one Sunday in the month, being left by Mr Brockholes for the Secular Clergy Priest, serving the Congregation. The Revd. John Chadwick who was Missioner at Ladywell now Farnyhalgh from Oct: 6 1755 till Oct: 6 1770 – came from Ladywell to Burgh Hall, one Sunday in the month to assist the Catholics of the Neighbourhood during those 15 years. He then quitted Ladywell and resided with his Brother at Burgh Hall and assisted the Congregation regularly until the year 1774. During these four years of his residing with his Brother, he was employed in raising subscriptions and devising a plan for erecting a Chapel in the Neighbourhood for the more comfortable accomodation (sic) of the Catholics there. Edward Weld Esq.

induced by the motives of charity and zeal for Religion at the intercession of Friends, liberally offered Land for the Building and annexed the Farm till then called Thurstan Hodsons, now Weld Bank for the use of the Incumbent. The extent and conditions of which are as here stated: viz – two fields in one of which the House and Chapel was built and Garden joined called Fearnly in extent 3 Acres..2 Rods..12 Perches the other also called Fearnly in extent 2 Acres.. 3 Rods..1 Perch. These two fields were granted to the Incumbent on paying an annual acknowledgment of two shillings and sixpence per Annum to Mr Weld. The rest of the Farm viz Barn Croft 2 Acres ..0 Rods ..27 Perches and Croft A..R3..P0 House croft 1 Acre..2 Rods .. 21 Perches were to be charged with a rent of £3 10s 0d per annum. It was on this part of the farm, on which the Farm House, ?Barns and Out Houses stood before the House and Chapel etc. were built were built (sic) on the higher ground. For the security of Mr Chadwick and of the Congregation, Mr Weld engaged, though he did not live to execute it, a long Lease, or a Lease of ?98 years, as I have often heard from the mouth of Mr Chadwick himself, during and more especially a little before his death: and as it, indeed, appears from a Letter of Thos. Weld Esq brother and Heir to Mr Edward Weld, addressed to Mr Chadwick soon after he came to the estate, dated June 16th 1776, and which I have in my possession. The Chapel, House, and Out Buildings were all built, on the confidence of Mr Weld's executing the promised Lease, as he had engaged to do when he should come down to Lancashire. Accordingly Mr Chadwick waited upon Mr Weld, the first time he came into Lancashire and was kindly received by him. Mr Weld being particularly engaged at that time begged Mr Chadwick would have the goodness to defer it a few days, when he should be at Wrightington, on a visit with Mr Dicconson, where he should be happy to meet him and satisfy his request and execute the Lease.

Mr Chadwick, according to engagement repaired to Wrightington when Mr Weld told him he was sorry to disappoint him a second time but that he was called up to London very unexpectedly and which should prevent his executing the promised Lease for the present, that he should, however, return to the Country in a short time when he would realize his engagement. Almighty God was pleased to call him out of this world before he returned again to Lancashire, which frustrated Mr. Chadwick's endeavours and Mr. Weld's pious intentions. Such is the precise statement relative to this affair as I had it from Mr Chadwick himself a little before his death who seemed anxious to leave to Posterity a true account of this affair. He, therefore, endeavoured to impress these particulars on my mind as he did some other things which he wished to be remembered after his death in those awful moments in which he was preparing for eternity, as a duty he had to discharge before he appeared in the presence of his God and Judge. The circumstance of having no security to leave to his Successor and Congregation, was ever a subject of painful reflection to him: still did he hope he had omitted no exertion to procure security, which had been promised. Immediately on the demise of Mr E Weld and the accession of his Brother Mr Thos. Weld to the Estate he made application to him to fulfil his late Brother's engagement. Mr Weld, however, declined the solicited Lease. Mr Chadwick was not so easily satisfied, but carried on an urgent correspondence with Mr Weld, the only Letter of which correspondence that I can meet with, is the following.

To Mr John Chadwick at Burgh near Wigan Lancashire.

Britwell June 6th 1776

“Sir,

After mature deliberation and not without consulting proper persons on the occasion I am come to the following final conclusion relative to the affair you mentioned to me at Stonyhurst. As you built in consequence of a promise my brother made you of having a Lease of ?98 years (or at least a long Lease) of the Land, I will consider you and inform you that the Land that was first designed for the Chappell and for you that you may have and enjoy it during your life by paying a small yearly acknowledgment. As to the other small parcell of Land that was added afterwards, and for which you stand in my Books in arrears, I will forgive all arrears on that head on Condition you will agree to pay the yearly value theroff for the future. If you write soon, direct to me at Brithwell (sic) near Nettlebed Oxon. If after a fortnight from the date of this direct to me at Lulworth Castle near Wareham Dorsets.

I am yr. hble Servt; Thos. Weld.”

This letter of Mr Weld to mr Chadwick shows Mr. Weld's conclusion to grant no security at Weld Bank, and not to ratify the promised Lease of his Brother. Hence, was the Chapel, from the too great confidence of Mr C. in the honor, virtue, and Religion of Mr. Weld's Family, built without that security, he ought previously to have procured in a matter where so much depended upon it. Mr C. had, before the year 1776, when he recd. Mr. Weld's refusal of ratifying his Brother's engagement, completed the building of his Chapel and other adjoining Buildings, having opened the New Chapel at Weldbank

and said his first Mass in it on the first day of Nov. 1774. By his own indefatigable exertions and the help of his Friends he raised a Sum nearly sufficient to defray all the expenses. His Congregation were little able to assist him, being only 27 communicants at Easter Anno 1771.

It does not appear from the list of Subscribers that Mr Weld made any Benefaction towards the Buildings. Likewise those, who were employed to raise Subscriptions, say that he did not. Such were the circumstances relative to the establishment of the Chapel at Weld Bank, which was raised by exertions of Mr Chadwick. To him likewise, are, in great measure, to be attributed the merits of procuring the principal part of the Foundations towards the support of the Incumbent. Small as was, at first, the Income it gradually kept increasing by the charitable Legacies of his Friends, and other pious and charitable well-wishers to him and the Congregation. In the first place his eldest Brother Mr Thos. Chadwick then in possession of the Burgh Estate, agreed, on his coming to remain at Weldbank and establishing a Chapel there, to pay annually to him and to the Priests succeeding to him ten Guineas per Annum and to supply him with Coals. Paying annually ten Guineas, he was to enjoy Seats in the Chapel; for the Family and for the Servants.

2nd Mrs Martha Cragg Sister to the Revd. John Chadwick by her last will, dated June 1 1770 bequeathed the sum of £400 to be placed out on Int= (Interest) or to be laid out in the purchase of Lands or Tenements according to the discretion of her Trustees, who then were Mr Thos. Chadwick her Brother and Mr John Chadwick her Nephew; and Revd. John Chadwick her Brother (as far as related to these £400). And it was her desire (expressed by

word of mouth, as an Instrument in my hands annexed to the Codicil of her Will bears testimony, which Instrument is witnessed by her Brother Revd. Jn Chadwick and her Nephew Mr Jn Chadwick) that the Vicar General of the Secular Clergy for the time being should always be one of the trustees. Mrs Cragg annexed as obligations on the Priest who should enjoy the above Interest of these £400 to say one mass in a year for her and her Friends and expressed it as her earnest request (but not of obligation) that one Mass per Month be said for them i.e. for the health of her Soul, and the Souls of her Father & Mother, and Sisters & of all her Ancestors. Which will appear from the from the (sic) following copy of Mrs Cragg's Codicil to her Will.

“Whereas in & by my last Will & Testament, duly published & executed, bearing date the first day of June one thousand seven hundred & seventy. I the underwritten Martha Cragg have amongst other things therein contained ordered & directed my Executors therein named to pay any Sum or Sums of money not exceeding in the whole the Sum of four hundred & seventy Pounds to such person & persons & for such ever intents or purposes as I by any writing under my hand should order direct or appoint. Now it is my will and mind, & I do hereby order & direct Thos. Chadwick & Jon Chadwick two of my Executors in the same Will named to receive the said sum of four hundred and seventy Pounds and to put four hundred Pounds part thereof out to Interest, or to lay the same out in the purchase of Lands or Tenements as they in their discretion shall think best & most advantageous, and the growing Interest or the Rents or Profits of such Lands or Tenements to be paid and applied to & for the sole & proper use & behalf & for the maintenance of a Secular Clergy Priest to be resident or to officiate at Burgh within Duxbury in the County of Lancaster, or in the Neighbourhood

thereabouts, to say Mass there & to do & perform all other priestly functions, for the help and assistance of the Catholics in that Neighbourhood and to pray for the health of my Soul and the Souls of my Father, Mother & Sisters and of all my Ancestors, which I make it my earnest request may be done once in a Month (but not of Obligation) yet once in a year of Obligation for ever And it is my Will & mind that the same Thos. Chadwick & John Chadwick & also John Chadwick of Fernihalgh in the said County of Lancaster shall be Trustees for the ordering & management of the said sum of four hundred Pounds and that they or the survivor of them shall have the nomination & appointment of other Persons to be Trustees in the management thereof after their deaths to succeed them in the same Trust and such Successors from time to time to nominate other Persons to succeed them. And so from time to time to appoint others for the same purpose as often as need shall require, so that there may be a perpetual succession of Persons to take care of & execute the said Trust. And I do hereby make this as a Codicil to my said last Will & declare my will & mind to be that the same be accepted and taken as part of my said Will and that my said Trustees or Executors will faithfully truly fully perform and execute the same and every part thereof to all intents & purposes as my Trust is in reposed. In witness hereof I have hereunto inscribed my name this second day of June one Thousand seven hundred and seventy.

Signed in the presence of Edwd. Chadwick

Signed Martha Cragg

Whereas the above written Martha Cragg survived the within mentioned Thomas Chadwick, but did not live to nominate or appoint any other Trustees for the above mentioned sum of four hundred Pounds in writing but mentioned her desire by word of mouth that the Vicar of the Secular Clergy for the time being should always be one.

Witness Thos. Chadwick – Feb 19th 1778

Signed John Chadwick

John Chadwick

The above £400 is placed out at Int. in the Burgh Estate at £4 10s per Cent per annum. The security is Mrs Craggs Will.

Transcribed from the handwriting of Rev. Richard Thompson

Weldbank Farm				Weld's Town's Book			
	7 yds to the Rod	1 yds to the Rod		7 yds to the Rod	1 yds to the Rod		
	A R P £ S D	A R P £ S D		A R P £ S D	A R P £ S D		
Fearnley (v3. Household gas)	3 2 12	7 9 9 0		2 3 1/4	2 11/4 9		
Fearnley	2 3 1	7 9 9 0		2 0 9	5 2 9		
Barn Croft	2 0 27	7		0 3 0			
Croft	0 3 0	7 14 0 0		0 3 0	14 3 9		
House Croft	0 2 21	7		0 3 30			
	11 0 3 28	9 0		8 2 13 41	6 3		
Rent Paid to Weld	3 12 6			Assessed Value			
Land Tax	0 6 2			29 10 0			
Annual Rent	3 18 8						

Loose insert showing the acreage (in Acres, Rods and Perches) and rent paid to ?W Weld as well as the acreage and assessed value for the 'Town's Book'. The acreage for the rent is calculated at 7 yds to the Rod whereas for the Town's Book the note says '7 1/2 yds to the Rod'.

Valuation of Weldbank.			Measure	Purchase Value
	A. R. P.	L. S. D.		
Old land which pays } The two Fearnleys } 2/6 a year } worth £5 per acre }	6	1	13	£ 949 13 9
The Land which pays } The 3 Crofts } £3..10 a year } at £4 per acre }	4	3	30	£ 592 10 -
				£ 1542 3 9

Loose insert showing the Valuation of Weldbank with measure and Purchase Value.

	A	R	P	£	s	D
Old land which pays} The two Fearnleys}	6	1	13	949	13	9
2/6 a year} worth £5 per acre }						
The Land which pays} The 3 Crofts	4	3	30	592	10	-
£3..10 a year } at £4 per acre						
				£1542	- 3	- 9