

THE HISTORY OF GREEN MOUNT, THE GREEN By Alan Howe

Green Mount, situated at the junction of Southdale Road and Ossett Green, is *an elegant residence, erected on the site of the cottage tenanted by successive generations of Pickards*. Part of the history of the house is also the history of this branch of the Pickard family who lived at Green Mount, albeit for only a relatively short period of time, between 1876 and 1891. Before that though "*the Pickard family lived there for nearly a century past.*" This land, part of which was to become Green Mount, a grand Victorian house was purchased by Andrew Pickard in May 1876. By 1891 the Pickard siblings David, Andrew and Hannah who lived there succumbed to various illnesses which were to prove fatal.



Green Mount purchased in 1876 by Ossett mill owner Andrew Pickard.

From humble beginnings two of George's children, David and Andrew, rose from being the sons of a shopkeeper to become wealthy mill owners and these Pickard brothers each amassed a considerable fortune.

Ossett grocer and draper, George Pickard (born 9th April 1798, a Quaker birth) married Hannah Mitchell (born 1805) in 1824 and they had four children, two boys and two girls: Sarah, born in 1826; David born in 1830, Andrew born in 1835 and Hannah born in 1838. The family lived in a cottage, said to be where Green Mount would later be built, at the junction of Southdale Road and The Green. In 1841 their neighbour was John Greenwood, surgeon of Sowood House. George Pickard died in 1852 and his wife Hannah died in 1862. It is also thought that George's daughter, Sarah Pickard, died in her teens sometime between 1841 and 1851.

Meanwhile, George Pickard's two sons, David and Andrew, had done well and by 1871, David (aged 41) was a "*Cloth Manufacturing Master*" employing 100 women, 20 boys and 90 men. He was then in partnership with Mark Wilby and they were the co-owners of Manor Mill, Ossett which was used for rag grinding and scribbling. David was still single and living with his unmarried sister Hannah (32) at the Pickard homestead on the Green. Andrew (35) was also single, but had moved to live in

lodgings in Leeds where he is described as a "*Woollen Manufacturer*", with mill premises in Aire Street, Leeds.

On 8th May 1876 Andrew Pickard purchased*all that Capital messuage or dwellinghouse called **Green Mount*** from the wealthy Charles, Richard and Caroline Wheatley of Hopton; Charles & Caroline were siblings and Richard was their cousin and also husband of Caroline. Charles was a bachelor and a cousin of the immensely rich Haigh family and *inter alia* Charles inherited this land and property from the Haighs on the death of the last of that line in 1857. The Haighs of Longlands House, Flushdyke once owned 300 acres, 10% of Ossett's total acreage.. <https://ossettheritage.co.uk/local-history/locations/houses/>

The house, *with the outbuildings, greenhouses and pleasure grounds thereto belonging*, reflected the wealth that the Pickard brothers had achieved in business. Portions of Green Mount appear to have been freehold, and parts copyhold, land and the latter would have been subject to the customs of the Manor of Wakefield. This meant that Andrew Pickard and his heirs would require the consent of the Lord of Wakefield prior to any subsequent disposal by way of sale or inheritance of the copyhold parts.

On 10th October 1881, Andrew Pickard purchased further freehold land adjacent and to the north of Green Mount. Once again the vendors were Charles, Richard and Caroline Wheatley. The area of land was substantial, perhaps as much as 12 acres, known as the Raven Royd and Southdale Close. In 1843 this land was owned by the Haigh family and tenanted by Thomas Moss. By 1881 it was occupied by shopkeeper and farmer, Bennett Brook, who subsequently farmed Sowood Farm with his son, Fredrick. Bennett most probably rented the land from the Wheatley family for farming.

By 1881, David and Hannah Pickard, of Green Mount, were unmarried, but living with them was Leeds born 'George Pickard' aged 10. He was described as David's son. David Pickard died suddenly, aged 52 years, on the 6th July 1882 without leaving a will. The administration of his estate was granted to his brother Andrew, Aire Street, Leeds. By the time of his death, David also owned a Mill at Horbury Bridge and had shops in Ossett. David Pickard left an estate to the value of £48072 11s 7d.

After David's death his business at Horbury Bridge and Manor Mill was carried on by his brother, Andrew, who called together his brother's workpeople at Green Mount and distributed about £500 among them, the individual amounts being calculated at the rate of £1 for each year's service. Andrew Pickard still had the mill at Horbury Bridge.

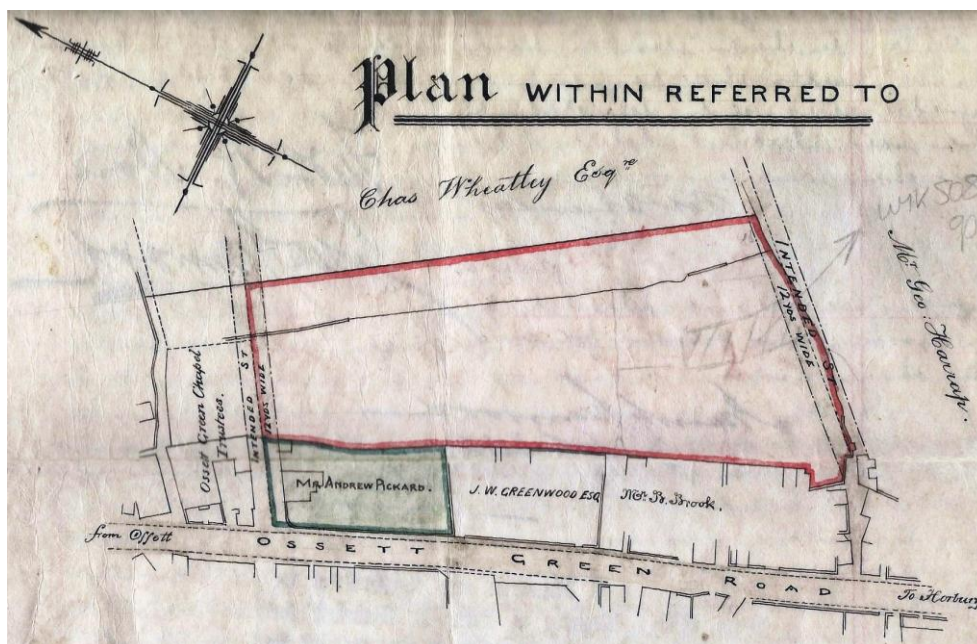
Andrew Pickard moved to live at Green Mount after his brother's death and he himself died on the 18th September 1890 whilst holidaying in Llandudno, aged 54. Andrew Pickard did not die intestate like his elder brother and he left the majority of his estate to his sister Hannah Pickard. However, he also made reference in his will to "*George Pickard, the adopted son of my late brother David Pickard deceased*" leaving him part of his estate "*in trust for when he reaches the age of 21*" with his sister Hannah acting as the trustee. Andrew left £198,447 gross and £164,093 net, a considerable sum in 1890, and the equivalent to about £15 million today based on the RPI.

Hannah Pickard died on the 29th June 1891, leaving £140,000 and with no heirs, the family fortune was inherited by David Pickard's adopted son, George, who was now 21. Hannah's will was dated 9th June 1891 and in it she left Green Mount and "*four acres of land bought from Messrs. Wheatley*" by her brother Andrew to young George Pickard, "*the Pickard family having lived there for nearly a century past.*" Hannah also left a long list of legacies to various people and organisations (see sidebar for full details).

The final twist in the story relates to young George Pickard, who as an adopted son of the late David Pickard had inherited a significant fortune and also Green Mount, which Hannah Pickard had left to him, presumably to keep the house in the Pickard family a little longer. George died in the June quarter of 1892 aged 21. On the 25th May 1894, in the High Court of Justice Chancery Division, Mr. Justice North presided over a case, which was testing the Wills of the late Hannah and Andrew Pickard on behalf of the heir of the late George Pickard "*if he was the lawful child of David Pickard.*" George's heir was one Frederick Robert Hird, but his relationship to George is unknown as is the outcome of the Chancery court case. The '*Ossett Observer*' for the 25th May 1894 carried the following report about the Pickard Will Case:

"The case reappeared in the Chancery Division before Justice North yesterday. Mr. Swinfen Eady, Q.C., for the executors, said that the point to be decided was as to ten legacies to relatives of £1,000 each. The affidavit of William Emslay read that he and the co-trustees three months after Andrew Pickard's death appropriated a certain mortgage, and subsequently paid interest for six months to the legatees. The question was whether the appropriation was properly made. Mr Humphries, for the next of kin, contested the validity of the alleged appropriation. His Lordship, after reviewing the facts as brought forward, said that the question was simply one of fact, and he could not doubt, as the two surviving trustees both certified to the fact, that the appropriation had been made, thought it would have been more satisfactory if, at the time of making it, some memorandum in writing had been made."

The Ossett Observer (17th September 1892) reported that Green Mount, an *elegant residence, erected on the site of the cottage tenanted by successive generations of Pickards, was sold.* On 21st December 1892, Frederick Robert Hird, surgeon of Scarborough, heir to the adopted George Pickard, sold the part freehold and part copyhold Green Mount to neighbour John William Greenwood, surgeon of Sowood House Ossett. In the same transaction Mr Hird also sold 3acres 3 roods and 30 perches¹ of freehold land to Mr Greenwood. This was part of the land purchased by Andrew Pickard in 1881 and inherited by Mr. Hird on the death of the illegitimate George Pickard on his death in June 1891. John William Greenwood paid £850 for the part copyhold interest in Green Mount and £2,000 for the freehold and the adjacent freehold land.



Plan from Conveyance 21 December 1892 showing Green Mount (green) & adjacent land (red) sold by F.R. Hird to John William Greenwood. Note the words "Intended Street 12 yards wide" which was to become Southdale Road.

In 1901 Green Mount was rented by **Samuel Ellis**, a woollen manufacturer with premises in Savile Town. In October 1901 his only daughter, Olive was married. Her brother, Robert Hill Ellis (subsequently a Major with KOYLI) was unable to attend being in South Africa. The bridal party adjourned to Green Mount where breakfast was served in a marquee which had been erected on the lawn.

John William Greenwood died in July 1904 and ownership of Green Mount passed to his eldest surviving son, **William Greenwood**, who was also a surgeon. By 1910, **George Henry Briggs** and his family were the tenants of the ten roomed house which was still owned by Dr. William Greenwood. The Briggs family kept a little 'zoo' in what was the garage of Green Mount where they had birds, a donkey and various other pets. George Henry Briggs died in 1915 and the family left the house soon afterwards.

Dr. William Greenwood died intestate in January 1911, aged 48 years and letters of administration were granted to his wife, Alice (nee Alford) who was also William Greenwood's cousin. Alice died in 1952, before completing the administration but it appears that Green Mount remained in the ownership of the Greenwood family for a little longer.

Between 1915 and 1918 Green Mount became home to wool extractor Arthur Jessop, his wife Ann Eliza (nee Clay) and their only son, George Edward. The Jessop family previously lived at the equally grand Victorian house, Green Lea, which they built in 1889 on Healey Lane. War with Germany was declared on 4th August 1914 and Lieutenant George Edward, aged 23, embarked for France on 21st August 1916. Granted leave in March 1918 George Edward Jessop, by then of Green Mount, married Gladys Mary Mitchell on 15th March 1918. Less than four weeks later, on 10th April 1918 George Edward was killed in action in France. Arthur Jessop J.P., died at Green Mount on 27th April 1931 and is buried at St. John's Church, South Parade, Ossett.

By 1937 Green Mount was occupied by woollen mill manager Henry Eric Firth, his wife Emma (nee Blackburn) and their two young sons. In 1939 the Firth family were still living at Green Mount which also had addresses *no. 2 Green Mount* and *Green Mount Cottage*; the former occupied by Alice Firth, aged 71 years and a domestic servant and the latter by Clarence Naylor, a railway shunter, and his wife Kathleen. Henry Eric Firth was still living at Green Mount in April 1955 when his son, Michael Eric, a pilot, married Margaret Nettleton, the daughter of Samuel Broadhead Nettleton.

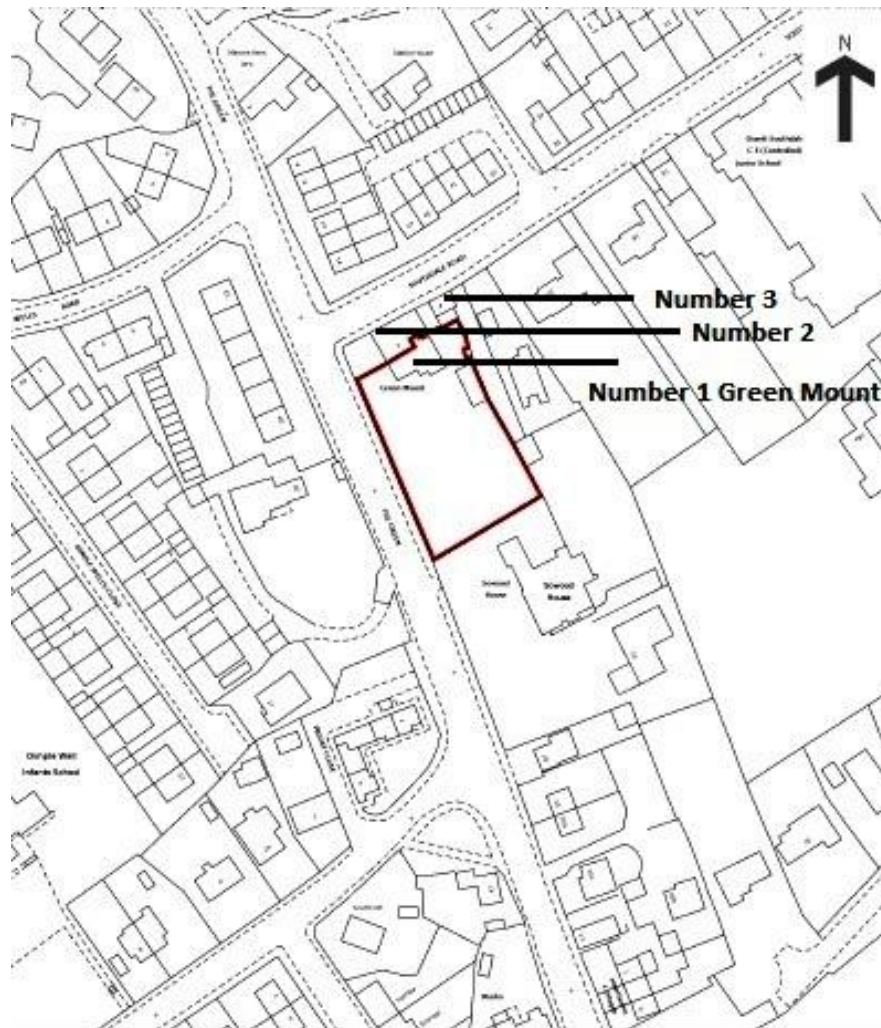
Since 1939, or perhaps earlier "Green Mount" was providing homes for three families on its estate. Numbers 1 & 2 were parts of the original 1876 dwelling known as Green Mount; Green Cottage appears to have been added (or converted) with a Southdale Road frontage. In 1957 Alice Joyce Greenwood, spinster daughter of William and Alice Greenwood, brought the Greenwood family ownership to an end. Joyce (as she was known) conveyed Green Mount in October 1957 to John Dent (no.1), in November 1957 to Arthur Frederick Morton (no.2) and in October 1957 to Clarence & Kathleen Naylor (no.3, previously known as Green Mount Cottage)

By 1961 Ronald Dent was living at no. 1 Green Mount ((4 beds, 3 baths, 2 recpts), Robert W. Spurr lived at no. 2 Green Mount and Clarence Naylor lived at Green Mount Cottage as he had in 1939. In September 2021 the ownership of all three of the Green Mount dwellings is held by Andrew Paul and Kathryn Joanne Thackray. No. 1 Green Mount was acquired by the couple in August 2005, no. 2 in June 2002 and no.3 in March 2010.



Above: **Green Mount in 2007.**

Below. Plan showing the three Green Mount property addresses



Research by Alan Howe November 2015 updated September 2021.
