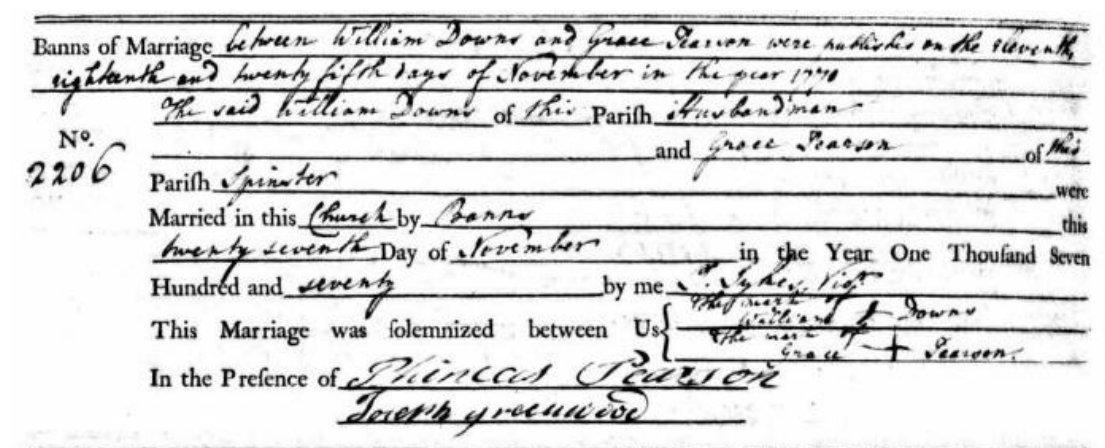


Yorkshire Farms and Mills

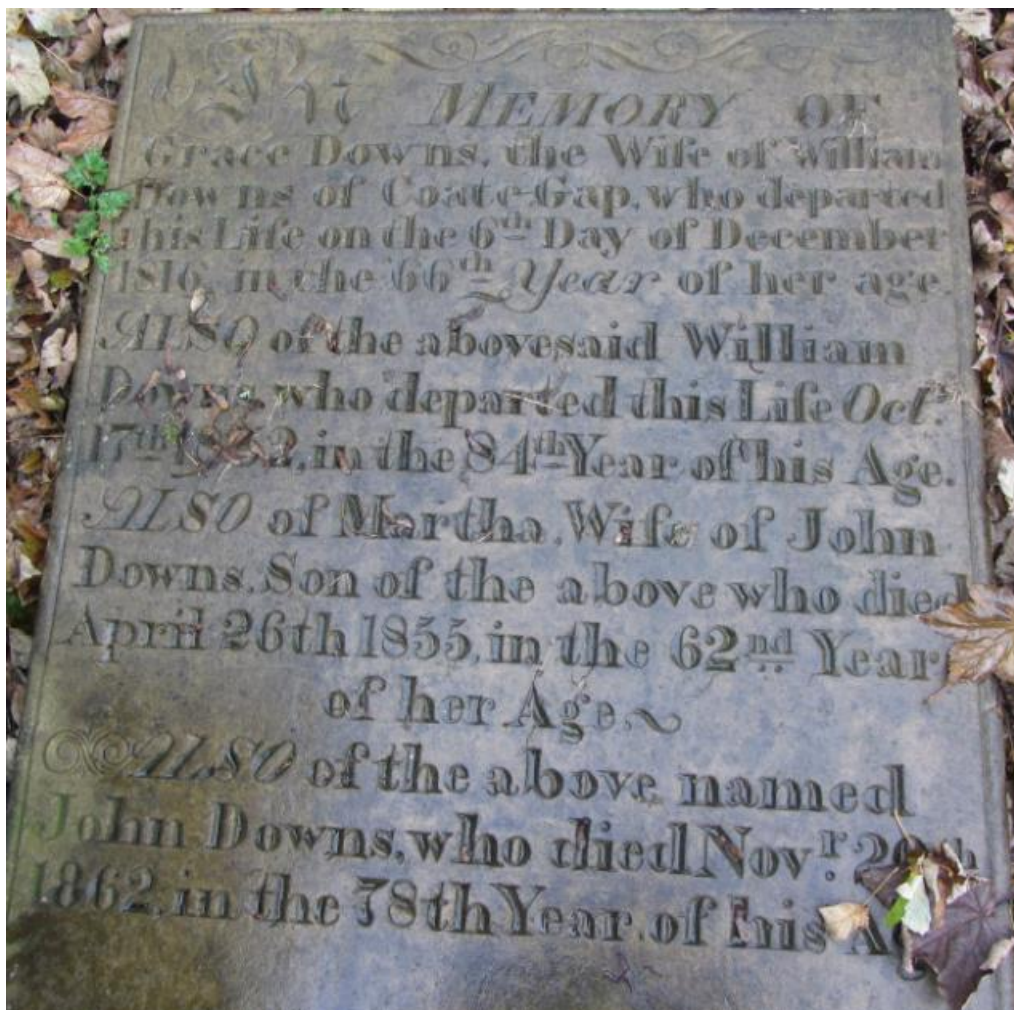
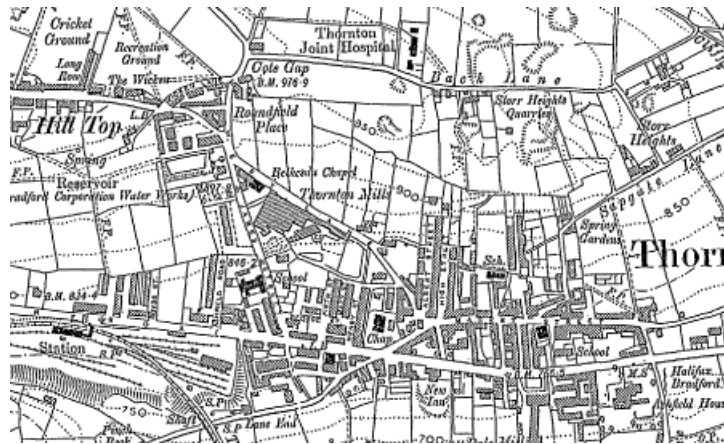
The Downs

William Downs was born c1748 and died in 1832 aged 83¹. He was a farmer at Coate Gap Farm, Thornton, near Bradford in West Yorkshire. His wife, Grace Pearson, died in 1816 aged 66 (her funeral at Thornton was conducted by the Rev Patrick Bronte, the father of the literary sisters, who was minister there at the time). They had married at Bradford in 1770 (at the time, marriages could only be carried out at the parish church in Bradford, not in the chapel at Thornton).

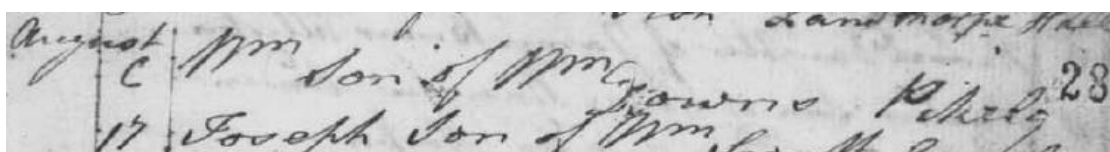


Co(a)te Gap Farm, Thornton. 2013

¹ It is possible that the Downs family came from Bakewell in Derbyshire. A William Downs was born there in 1748, son of William Downs, and he had uncles Joseph and John, both being names which appeared later in Thornton (John in 1732, when he would have been 24, and Joseph in 1764 when he would have been 45). William's grandfather was Joshua and his mother was Martha, both names which occur in the Downs of Thornton. The Downs disappear from Bakewell around this time. This does not explain the earliest Thornton Downs record, that of William who died in 1722, however.



A son William was born in 1780, when his father was at Pikely north of Thornton and baptised at Kipping Chapel.



Another son John was born in 1784 (see Appendix 2). Daughter Hannah was baptised at Kipping Chapel in 1789.

Daughters Betty and Mally had been baptised at Thornton church in 1774 and 1777 (d 1778) and the death of a daughter Grace was recorded there in 1786. William was then described as being a farmer of Allerton. William sen. was churchwarden at Thornton in 1806-7 and again in 1811.

William jun. married Mary Carr at Bradford parish church in 1804.

(The Year 1804)

Page 59

No. 73	William Downs	of this Parish
Husbandman		
and Mary Carr of this Parish spinster		were
Married in this Church by Banns		
this Ninth Day of July	in the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred	
and four	By me	John Joseph Pear
This Marriage was solemnized between Us		William Downs
		Mary Carr
In the Presence of	Samuel Jennings	
	Abraham Foster	

A son John was born in 1804 and baptised at Kipping Chapel, as were Mary Ann (18-06), Ruth (1809), Simion (1811), Joseph (1814) , Benjamin (1816 – see Appendix 3), William (1819), Jonas (1821, d 1888, buried Kipping K38 “Kerbstones only – no inscription found”) and (another) Joseph (1826). William senior died in 1830 and is buried at Kipping (note 17th April 1830 is recorded but see gravestone below).

Inscriptions taken from the Old Burial Ground [Manse] of Kipping Independent Chapel of Thornton (Parish of Bradford)
 Transcribed by Geo. P Townend Fellow of the Society of Genealogists (Lond).
 and presented to the Yorkshire Archaeological Society May 1912
 These gravestones were no longer evident when Arthur Blackburn made his recordings in 1932.
In memory of WILLIAM DOWNS of Black Dike Lane who died the 12th of April 1829 aged 49 years.
Also of MARY wife of the above named WILLIAM DOWNS who died Feby 23rd 1864 in the 85th year of her age.

Mary can be found in the 1841 and 1851 censuses, still in Black Dyke Lane.

	1	Bryanum Down	21		Worster Weaver	1/4
		Benny do	20		do	1/4
		Mary do	3			1/4
		William do	9			1/4
	1	Mary Down	60		Farmer	1/4
		William do	90		Ag Lab	1/4
		Jess do	15		do	1/4
		Joseph do	14			1/4
		Hannah do	4			1/4

1841 census

30	Black Duke Lane	Mary Down	Head	Woman	47	do do	
		Joseph do	Son	11		do do	

1851 Census

Eldest son John, a shoemaker at the time, married Mary Illingworth (at Bradford 1826) and a son William was born in 1827.

Marriages solemnized in the Parish Church, BRADFORD,
in the County of York, in the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Twenty ~~Two~~

I John Down of this Parish
Cordwainer
and Mary Illingworth of this Parish
Spinner
were married in this Church by Benny with Consent of
this twenty-fifth Day of
October in the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Twenty ~~Two~~
By me Mary Vicar

This Marriage was solemnized between us } John Down ~~do~~
} Mary Illingworth ~~do~~

In the Presence of } John Barber
} Lomas Fisher

No. 331

Mary died in 1840 and John remarried in 1846:

1846. Marriage solemnized at <u>St Peter's Church</u> in the parish of <u>Bradford</u> in the County of <u>York</u>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
432	4	<u>John Down</u>	42	<u>Widower</u>	<u>Farmer</u>	<u>Thornton</u>	<u>Mellian Down</u>	<u>Farmer</u>
	4	<u>Hannah Robinson</u>	34	<u>Spinner</u>	<u>Maan</u>	<u>Thornton</u>	<u>Joseph Robinson</u>	<u>Maan</u>
Married in the <u>parish Church</u> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by <u>Benny</u> by me								
This Marriage was solemnized between us, <u>John Down</u>			in the Presence of us, <u>Piscilla Robinson</u> & <u>Charles</u>			<u>St. Peter's Church</u>		

John died in 1874.



In 1857, William married Emma Sutcliffe (b1829, Thornton), a power loom weaver, at Bradford.

Emma was the daughter of Jonas and Sarah Sutcliffe. Jonas (b1777-81) was a weaver living at Back Field, Thornton. Sarah (nee Robinson) was born in 1781-6. They married in 1803. Sarah died in 1841 and Jonas in 1849.

In the 1861 census, William and Emma were farming 8 acres at, Bunkers Hill, Thornton. Their younger daughter Mary, was born that same year.



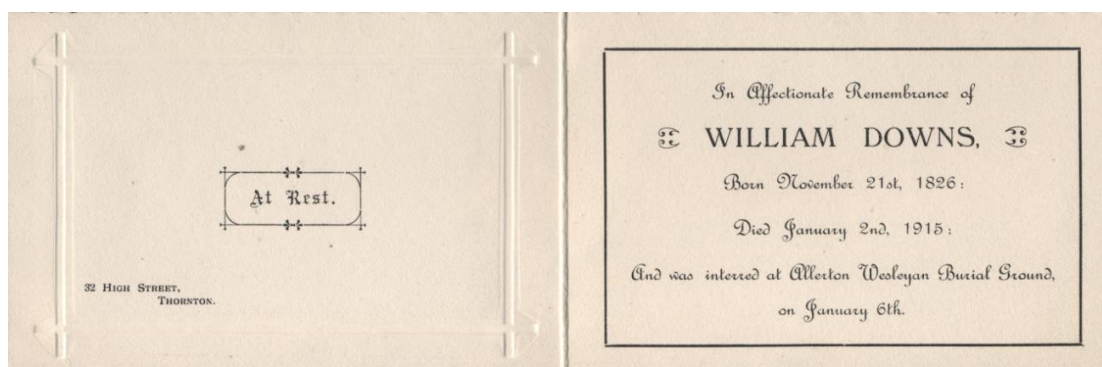
Ten years later, William had moved to a larger (29acres) farm at Norr House, Crack Lane, Wilsden (between Bradford and Keighley) and by 1881 he had given up farming on his own account and was a farm manager (bailiff) at Birks Head Farm, Wilsden. Mary was a “power loom worsted weaver”, most probably at a mill in Wilsden, possibly even Birks Head Mill (see map).

Mary married Fred Foster in 1889 at Bradford Parish Church. Her brother, John W Downs was one of the witnesses. She is recorded on the marriage certificate as living at 146 Washington Street at the time, a street parallel to Girlington Road where Fred Foster resided at the time. These were streets of mainly terraced housing built for the workers of the mills of Manningham and Allerton.

By 1891, William had retired, and he and Emma were living at 35 North Dale Road, Frizinghall. Their younger son, John William Downs, was a “stuff warehouseman”.

Emma Downs died later that year and William remarried Sarah Robertshaw in September 1892, the widow of Simon Robertshaw (a farmer of 20 acres at Bailey Fold, Allerton). Sarah was living at 13 Stone Street, Sandy Lane at the time. Sarah was the daughter of Joseph Hartley, a farmer.

By 1901, William and Sarah have moved to 32, High Street, Thornton. In 1911, they have living with them Sarah’s daughter Mary Cross and her husband Walter, who is recorded as being a “tinner”. William died in 1915 at the age of 88 and Sarah in 1922, aged 77.



DOWNS William of 32 High-street Thornton **Bradford** died 2 January 1915 Probate **London** 23 February to John Downs manufacturer. Effects £1309 15s.

DOWNS Sarah of 32 High-street Thornton **Bradford** widow died 27 February 1922 Probate **London** 26 May to Mary Cross widow. Effects £948 8s. 6d.

John W Downs went on to have a very successful career as a mill owner, establishing the international firm of Downs Coulter at Thornton Mills (see Appendix 1) . By 1911, he was living at Woodlands, a large house in Thornton, with his wife Mary, two servants and children Emma, Fred (see Appendix 3), George and Hannah Alice (b1905). Three other children, William, James and John (Jack) were at New College, Harrogate, the prep school for Ashville.

William Downe	Boarder	14				School	390			John Pudney
John Carter Barnett	Boarder	12				School				John Pudney
James Downe	Boarder	12				School				John Pudney
John Downe	Boarder	13				School				John Pudney



John W Downs and his wife Mary (nee Dornan). Courtesy Hilary Barnes

Hannah was later known as “Aunty Hannah” to Mary Carr and Michael Kipling and lived for many years near to the Carrs and Kiplings in Heaton, having married a solicitor by the name of William Shackleton, from whom she later separated.

1930... Marriage solemnized at The Parish Church in the Parish of Burley in Wharfedale in the County of York

No.	When Married	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at the time of Marriage	Father's Name and Surname	Rank or Profession of Father
248	June 19 th 1920	William Beckworth Downe Shackleton	39	Bachelor	Solicitor	Hill Crest Burley in Wharfedale	William Shackleton (deceased)	Gentleman
	1920	Hannah Alice Downe	25	Spinster	—	Woodland, Thornton Bradford	John William Downe	Manufacturer

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church by License or alter by me,

This Marriage was solemnized between us, William Beckworth Downe in the Presence of us, Emma Hasgoun W. C. Allan Vicar

Henry Drury

(140cs)



*Hannah and one of her sons, John Shackleton, outside
'Woodlands' at the wedding reception for Robert Kipling
and Mary Carr. 1948*

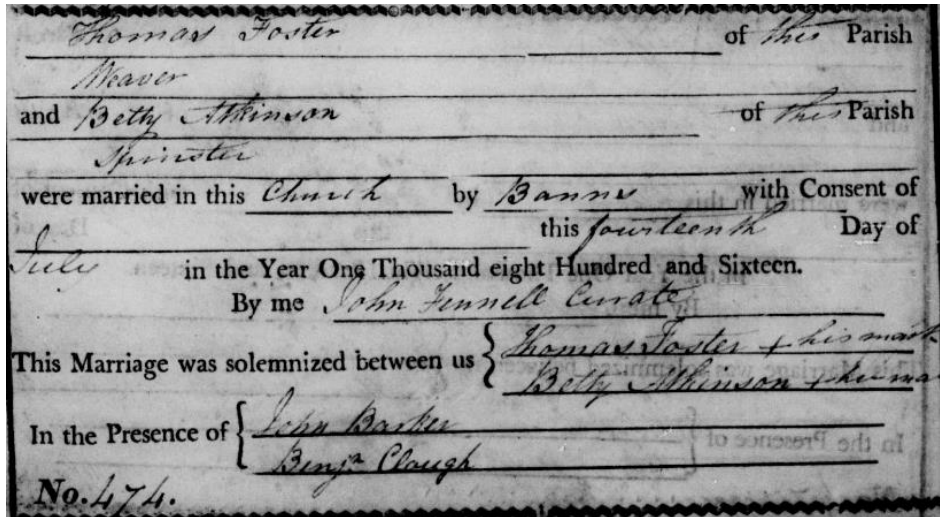
John W Downs died in 1956, a wealthy man.

DOWNS John William of Woodlands West-lane Thornton
Bradford died 10 February 1956 Probate **London** 19 April
to William Downs John Downs and James Downs textile
manufacturers. Effects £49366 13s. 8d.

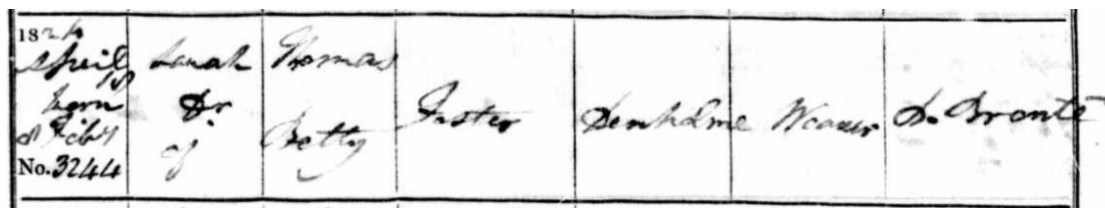
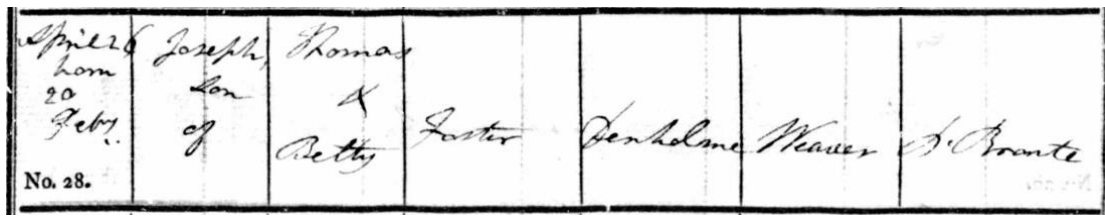
Each year, Edith Downs Carr (daughter of Fred and Mary) used to receive a goose at Christmas from John W Downs.

The Fosters

Thomas Foster was the son of Joseph Driver Foster. He was born in 1796 in Bradford parish. He was a worsted hand weaver. He most probably married Betty Atkinson at Bradford in 1816.



His sons Jonas, James and Joseph were baptised at Haworth in 1817, 1821 and 1829 respectively and daughters Sarah² in 1824 and Mary in 1826. All except Jonas were baptised by the Rev Patrick Bronte.



In 1841 he was living at St Helena, Denholm, with children was the youngest (the Jonas, James, Mary and Joseph). Thomas would appear by then to be a widower, although I can't find a record of Betty's death.

He remarried in 1847 to Ann Tidswell.

² Sarah Foster married a George Mighton and emigrated to Canada. Autosomal DNA tests link her (via me) to the Hadley family of Canada, descended from relatives of George.

1877. Marriage solemnized at <i>St Pauls Church Denholm</i> in the <i>Parish</i> of <i>Denholm</i> in the County of <i>York</i>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
1	January 15 th	Thomas Foster	full ag.	Widower	Weaver	Denholm	Joseph Tinsley Foster	Weaver
		Ann Tidswell	full ag.	Widow	—	Denholm	Timothy Tidswell	Comber
Married in the <i>Church of St Paul Denholm</i> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by <i>Rev. Canon Philip Eggleston</i> by me.								
This Marriage was solemnized between us,		<i>Thomas Foster</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>her</i> <i>Mark</i>	in the Presence of us,		<i>John Ferris</i> <i>John Wright his</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>mark</i>			

In 1851 they had two of his children and two of hers living with them at St Helena. Ann was also a hand weaver but three of the children were worsted power weavers, including Joseph, and one a worsted spinner.

They were still living in Denholm (at 5 Pit Street) in 1861, next door to some other Tidswells. Thomas died in 1866. By 1871, widow Ann was living with son Matthew Tidswell, at St Helena.

In 1852, son Joseph married Mary Jowett.

1852. Marriage solemnized at <i>St Pauls Church</i> in the <i>Parish</i> of <i>Bradford</i> in the County of <i>York</i>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
167	6 September	Joseph Foster	23	Widower	Weaver	Denholm	Thomas Foster	Weaver
		Mary Jowett	21	Spinster	Weaver	Denholm	William Jowett	Farmer
Married in the <i>St Pauls Church</i> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by <i>Rev. Canon</i> or after <i>Canon</i> by me, <i>W. C. Hodgson</i> <i>Sept 6th 1852</i>								
This Marriage was solemnized between us,		<i>Joseph Foster</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>her</i> <i>Mark</i>	in the Presence of us,		<i>William Jowett</i> <i>John Smith</i>			

In 1858, the widowed Joseph (by then of Thornton) married again, to Hannah Mitchell (b1830, Bradford). In 1861, they were living at 41 Gurlington Road. Joseph was by then a power loom overlooker. Hannah's maiden name was Sutcliffe. Hannah was probably the power loom weaver married to Thomas Mitchell a wool comber lodging with a John Foster (b1816, Thornton) at Foreside Bottom, Thornton, possibly a relative.

Hannah was probably the daughter of John and Susannah Sutcliffe of Driver Square, Thornton, both born in Yorkshire in 1801. It is interesting to speculate whether these Sutcliffes of Thornton were related to the Sutcliffes of Thornton who married into the Downs family³).

³ It is also interesting to speculate if they were related to the Sutcliffe line from which Peter Sutcliffe the Yorkshire Ripper descended. This appears not to be the case, at least as far back as the records go.

Peter William Sutcliffe (b1946) was the son of John W Sutcliffe and Kathleen Coonan of Bingley, who married in 1945. John Sutcliffe was the son of Joseph A Sutcliffe and Ivy Speight who married in 1921. Joseph was the son of John William Sutcliffe (b 1878, Bradford) who was the son of Thomas Sutcliffe (b 1847, Oxenhope). Thomas was the son of Robert Sutcliffe, born 1821 in Haworth.

In 1864, their son Fred Foster was born at 59 Gurlington Road. He had a sister, Sarah Elizabeth (b1866) and a brother Clayton (b1868). By 1871, it seems that Hannah was a widow and had moved to 75 Gurlington Road. By 1891, Hannah was living with Elizabeth (a stuff weaver) and Clayton (an iron moulder) at 99 Gurlington Road and Fred had married Mary Downs (as noted earlier) and was living next door at number 97. Fred was by then a weaving overlooker as his father had been.

Fred and Mary had three daughters. Emma was born in 1890, Mary Hannah in 1894 and Edith Downs Foster in 1900. Edith Foster married Bernard Carr and their daughter Mary Carr married Robert Furze Spencer Kipling (see “The Carrs of Ireland”).

Mary never married and looked after Fred Foster, who lived into his 90s, at 58 Durham Road, a road parallel to Gurlington Road.

Emma married John William (‘Willie’) Preece of Guiseley and lived there at Ashtofts



Mount. They had no children. The 1911 census records Willie as a bootmaker, living with his mother and father on Otley Road, Guiseley. His father is described as a railway gatekeeper. The 1901 census shows them as living at the Old Station House, Hellifield, near Settle in the Yorkshire Dales. Willie’s father John Preece came originally from Winforton in Herefordshire and his mother Mary from Hallaton in Leicestershire.

Willie was a private the RAMC during the Great War, serving in India (Deolali) 1917/18 where he won two football medals, one marked “34th WGH”.

Willie and Emma at Scarborough

Coincidentally, in 1977, Peter Sutcliffe and his wife Sonia moved to live in Garden Lane, Heaton, which was one of the street leading to the rear entrance of St Bede’s Grammar School in Heaton which Michael Kipling (son of Robert Kipling and Mary Carr) attended from 1970 to 1975. Sutcliffe carried out his murders between 1975 and 1980.

Peter Sutcliffe began using his mother’s maiden name, Coonan, as his surname some time after his conviction.

APPENDIX 1

Downs Coulter & Co. Ltd, Lining Mfrs, 4 Currer st.	★Bradford	21182
Thornton mills West lane.....	★Thornton	2191
Spring mills Wilsden.....	Cullingworth	8146
Downs Frank, Bldg Contr, 33 Hastings st. .	Bradford	20368
Downs H, 13 Royal ter	Milnsbridge	727
Downs H. & Sons, Iron Founders, St. Andrews rd.	Huddersfield	2036
Downs J. A, Genl Frnshr, Market pl.	Meltham	275
Downs Jack, Rookwood Daisy hill.	Bradford	44712
Downs James, Greenlow Carlton lane.	Guisley	166
Downs Jno. W, Woodlands.	Thornton	2125
Downs William, 27 Coniston grove.	Bradford	44366

1948

Downs, Coulter and Co, textiles, has gone into administrative receivership with the loss of 45 jobs. (Telegraph & Argus 04/02/02).

Landmarks that should be saved

SIR - It is with great sadness that in the near future Thornton residents will witness the demolition of one of its finest historical houses.

Woodlands, on West Lane, formerly the house of Thornton Mill's owners and managers, is to be pulled down to make way for 13 houses despite a petition sent to Bradford Council's planning department which clearly demonstrated the strength of feeling in favour of saving the building.

Permission has also been granted to demolish parts of the adjoining Thornton Mills to build a housing estate.

Despite the fact this house and the mills are particularly significant in the history of Thornton, they were never listed nor included in the conservation area.

Although the oldest part of the mills is going to be preserved, the same considerations were not applied for the house which will soon no longer be part of Thornton's landscape.

The house is a key part of Thornton's cultural heritage and represents one the most important village landmarks.

Although it may be too late to save Woodlands, I believe the Council should review its policies on conservation areas and adjust their boundaries in Thornton and Bradford so they include buildings of local historical importance.

Yannick Minvielle-Debat, Wicken Lane, Thornton.

Mill's sad demise

SIR - I would like to support the concern of Yannick Minvielle-Debat (T&A, May 13) regarding the demolition of "Woodlands" the house originally the home of the Downs family in West Lane, Thornton.

The building has been vandalised both in and out to such an extent that it is no longer of any historic value.

The Downs Coulter mill employed many local people since before World War One and was eventually the only manufacturing mill to be operational out of six in Thornton.

It seems there was no interest when the premises went on the market though I'm sure the large shed could, with some enterprise, have been developed for community use in Thornton.

While housing conversion takes priority, the heritage and conservation of buildings within our community are equally important.

John Buffham, Ashfield Road, Thornton. May 2005

John was the bastard son of John Downs (1784) and Martha Bairstow of Kildwick.
The elder John was another son of William Downs and Grace Pearson.

IN THORNTON.	
On Friday, the 16th day of April, 1841, at 4 o'clock in the Afternoon, at the Talbot Inn, in Bradford.	
ALL those several Farms, Buildings, and Lands, in Thornton, in the respective occupations of Messrs. John Downes, Stephen Robinson, and Jonathan Atkinson, in the following Lots—namely,	
occupies.	LOT 1.
	A. R. P. A. R. P.
John Downes—Farm House, Barn, Stable, four Cottages and Homestead.....	0 0 39
Croft	1 0 13
High Cote Dole...	2 1 0
Low Cote Dole ...	2 0 12
	5 2 24
	LOT 2.
Stephen Robinson—Roundabout Close	1 0 7
	LOT 3.
Stn. Robinson—Hedge House Farm	
Farm House, Barn, Stable, & Homestead	0 0 25
The Brow.....	1 3 11
Laithe Close ...	2 0 16½
Kew Croft.....	1 0 13
Far Middle Field	1 2 26
Near Middle Field	1 2 9½
	8 1 23
	LOT 4.
John Downes—Near New Field ...	3 1 4
Far New Field.....	1 2 30
	4 3 34
	LOT 5.
John Downes—The Island	0 1 22
Little Storr	1 0 29
Great Storr	1 3 24
Four Days' Work ..	2 1 13
Cross Lands	1 0 14
Three Days' Work	2 0 0
Beck Field.....	1 1 37
	10 1 19
	LOT 6.
John Downes—North Cliffs	1 0 31
	LOT 7.

T 4 West

In loving memory of ELLEN, daughter of WILLIAM & HANNAH DOWNS of Market Street, who died in her 3rd year.

Also the above WILLIAM DOWNS who died Feb 23rd 1882 aged 54 years.

Also HANNAH DOWNS, wife of the above WILLIAM DOWNS, aged 85 years.

(Left Side)

Also of MARY MYERS DOWNS who died Feb 2nd 1932 aged 77 years.

Also of SARAH MYERS DOWNS who died Feb 4th 1932 aged 70 years.

(Right Side) eroded

Also of MARTHA, their daughter, born October 20th 1866, died December 15th 1911.

Thy will be done

S 18 East

In loving memory of JOHN DOWNS of Cote Gap Farm Thornton, born September 4th 1819, died December 17th 1889.

Also of MARY ANN DOWNS born January 22nd 1835, died March 11th 1906.

Also of GRACE DOWNS born February 24th 1829, died January 15th 1909.

Forever with the Lord.

{F Drake}

P 9

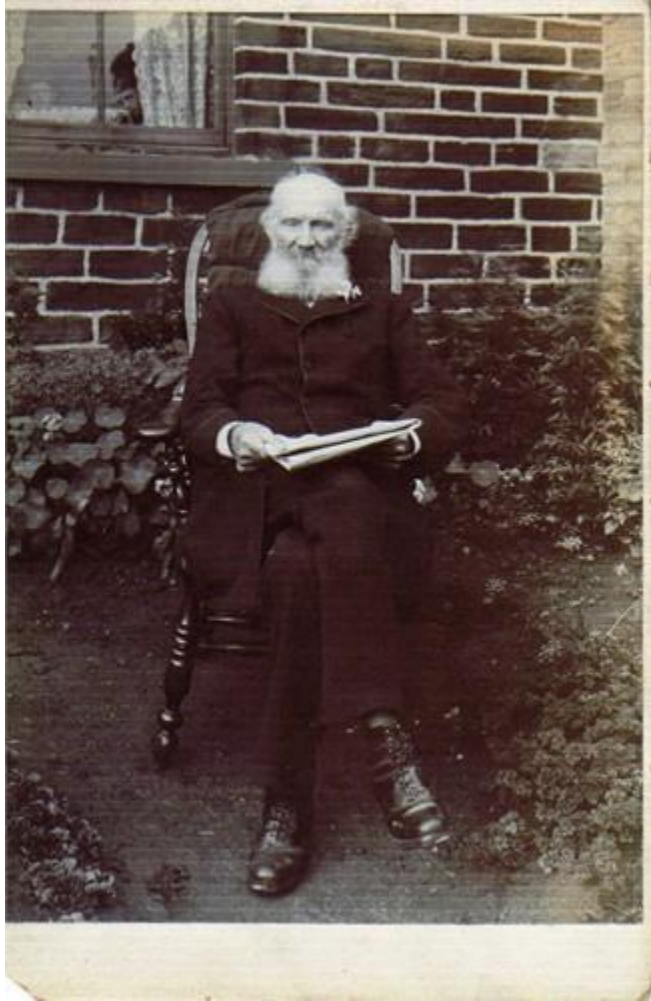
In memory of GRACE DOWNS, the wife of WILLIAM DOWNS of Coate Gap, who departed this life on the 6th day of December 1816 in the 66th year of her age.

Also of the abovesaid WILLIAM DOWNS who departed this life Octr 17th 1832, in the 84th year of his age.

Also of MARTHA, wife of JOHN DOWNS, son of the above, who died April 26th 1855 in the 62nd year of her age.

Also of the above named JOHN DOWNS who died Novr 20th 1862 in the 78th year of his age.

DOWNS John. Effects under £200.	30 November. The Will of John Downs late of Cote Gap in the Township of Thornton in the Parish of Bradford in the County of York Farmer deceased who died 20 November 1862 at Cote Gap aforesaid was proved at Wakefield by the oaths of John Downs of Cote Gap aforesaid Farmer and William Downs of Cote Gap aforesaid Woolsorter the Sons the Executors.
DOWNS William. Personal Estate £292 9s. 1d.	26 April. Administration of the Personal Estate of William Downs late of Market-street Thornton in the Parish of Bradford in the County of York Woolsorter who died 23 February 1882 at Market-street was granted at Wakefield to Hannah Downs of Market-street Widow the Relict.
DOWNS John. Personal Estate £106 2s. 6d.	10 March. The Will of John Downs late of Cote Gap Farm in the Township of Thornton in the Parish of Bradford in the County of York Farmer who died 18 December 1889 at the Infirmary Bradford was proved at Wakefield by Grace Downs and Mary Ann Downs both of Thornton Spinsters the Sisters and John Thomas Robinson of Pikeley in the Township of Allerton in the said Parish Brewer the Executors.



Benjamin Downs - 10 Roundfield Place Thornton Bradford around 1900



Kipping cemetery A 9&10 [Main Stone]

In affectionate remembrance of SARAH wife of BENJAMIN DOWNS of Thornton who died Dec 28th 1865 in the 45th year of her age.

Also of ELIZABETH daughter of WILLIAM & MARGARET DOWNS and granddaughter of the above who died March 1st 1871 aged 15 months.

Also WALTER son of WILLIAM & MARGARET DOWNS who died August 12th 1877 aged 1 year and 11 months.

Also of GRANVILLE DOWNS THEWLIS born October 9th 1882 died January 27th 1885.

Also of AMY DOWNS THEWLIS born October 16th 1879 died November 5th 1889.

Also of ARNOLD DOWNS THEWLIS born November 27th 1884 died June 2nd 1900.

Also of MARGARET the beloved wife of WILLIAM DOWNS who died March 21st 1907 aged 67 years.

Also of the above named WILLIAM DOWNS who died June 7th 1914 aged 75 years.

[Side 1] In loving memory of EDWARD dear husband of CAROLINE SMITH died March 16th 1948 aged 76 years.

Also of the above named CAROLINE SMITH died May 27th 1952 aged 74 years.

[Side 2] In remembrance of EDWARD ARTHUR beloved husband of HARRIET BOOTH died November 26th 1944 aged 73 years.

Also of the above named HARRIET BOOTH died October 11th 1951 aged 78 years.

Also MARGARET DOWNS BOOTH beloved daughter of the above died March 2nd 1977 aged 69 years.

Till we meet aga



School Croft 26

In affectionate remembrance of NANNY, wife of BENJAMIN DOWNS of Thornton, who died Sep 5th 1854 in the 36th year of her age.

Also of SARAH ELLEN, their daughter, who died in her infancy.

Also of the above named BENJAMIN DOWNS who died August 18th 1908 in his 93rd year.

Fred Downs

Fred Downs, son of John W Downs, died at RAF Moreton-in-Marsh in 1942. He was a Flight Lieutenant in the RAF. His address at 13 Toller Drive, Bradford, was just two houses up from John Spencer Kipling and family. He was buried at Thornton.

MORETON TRAGEDY

A young Royal Air Force officer was found shot dead at Moreton-in-Marsh on Thursday. He was Flying-officer Frederick Downs, aged 39. The circumstances of the tragedy will be inquired into at an inquest which will be held shortly.

There was a bullet wound in the right frontal part of the head. The wound bore evidence of being self-inflicted.

NO CAUSE FOR ANXIETY

Evidence of identification was given by Mr. William Downs, a director of a textile manufacturing firm, of Woodlands, Thornton, Bradford, who said that his brother, who was aged 39, joined the R.A.F. about 18 months ago, and that he had married a French lady just before the war.

Mr. Downs added that the relationship between man and wife was of a happy character, and as regards the question of possible financial embarrassment, there was nothing to give Lieut. Downs any anxiety, as he was a comparatively wealthy man, being, like himself, a director of the textile firm.

In 1938 his brother was involved in an accident, and had sustained severe head injuries, and for some time he had complained of headaches.

OPEN VERDICT ON SHOT OFFICER

An open verdict was returned by the Coroner (Mr. J. D. Lane) at a Moreton-in-Marsh inquest on Thursday on Flight-Lieut. Frederick Downs, of the R.A.F., who was found dead last week.

Medical evidence was given by Squadron-Leader Brian Alfred Erskine Harley, Medical Officer of the R.A.F., that at about 5 p.m. on May 28 he was informed that something had happened to Lieut. Downs. On going to his rooms, he found Lieut. Downs sitting dead in his chair. He also found a Service revolver grasped firmly in Lieut. Downs's right hand.

A.C. Herbert Foster said that he was batman to Lieut. Downs. On Thursday morning Lieut. Downs had complained of feeling stiff. Foster said that he went to the room at 5 p.m. and found the officer sitting in a chair bleeding from a wound in his head. He informed the M.O.

L.A.C. Reginald Taylor stated that at about 4 p.m. Lieut. Downs talked with him for three or four minutes on normal events, and there was nothing in his manner to suggest anything not normal.

CHEERFUL OUTLOOK

Flying-Officer Kenneth Ross stated that he was a personal friend of Lieut. Downs, whom he described as a man of cheerful habits.

F/O. Ross told of how on the morning of May 28 Lieut. Downs had complained that he had never felt so bad in his life, and said that his head ached.

The Coroner, in returning an open verdict, said that the shot was fired by Lieut. Downs himself. He could not take the view that it was an accidental shot. He was not prepared to express an opinion as to the state of Lieut. Downs's mind.

The Coroner tendered his sympathy to Lieut. Downs' relatives and to the officers in the R.A.F.

DOWNS Fred of 13 Toller-drive **Bradford** died 28 May 1942 at Moreton-in-Marsh Gloucestershire Administration **Llandudno** 15 June to Ernestine Alphonsine Charlotte Renee Downs widow and William Downs manufacturer and merchant. Effects £6292 1s. 7d.

Before the war he had learned to fly at Yeadon airport.



11165
DOWNS, Fred.
Woodlands, Thornton, Bradford.
Born 24th November, 1902. ^{at} Thornton, Bradford.
Nationality British.
Rank, Regiment, Profession Textile Manufacturer.
Certificate taken on Moth. Cirrus. 85 H.P.
At Yorkshire Aeroplane Club.
Date 3.6.33.

17231
DOWNS, Fred,
13, Toller Drive,
Heaton, Bradford.
Born 24th November 1902 at Thornton
Nationality British
Rank, Regiment, Profession Textile Manufacturer
Certificate taken on Moth, Gipsy 1, 95.
At Yorkshire Aeroplane Club
Date 19.2.39.