

The Revesby Land Agent

GEORGE BELL



Between 1842 and his retirement in 1872, the Revesby estate in Lincolnshire was transformed by this innovative and forward thinking popular land agent.



Delvine, Scotland.

George Bell was born 18th January 1804 at Delvine Perthshire.

He was the fourth and youngest son of Henry Bell (born 1771) and Henrietta Fowles (1771-1839). His father was a Factor (or land agent) latterly at Delvine, in Perthshire, and he followed his footsteps as factor. Henry's ancestors came from this area of Scotland, but his father had moved to Morpeth in Northumberland. Henry had married Henrietta Fowles at Caputh, and the fact that George was born at Delvine indicates his father had moved back to the area and is believed to have been Factor on the Estate.

George's brother Henry Bell (1800 – 1838) was killed in the shipwreck of HMS Forfarshire in 1838 (Grace Darling). According to Frances Hay Bell (Wright Robinson), he was factor to Lord Kinnoull near Perth. "Hay" is the family name of the Earls of Kinnoull (also Lord Hay of Kinfauns) which are areas close to Perth. "Hay" was the middle name of George's wife Margaret Hay Robertson, and became the middle name for many of their descendants, both male and female. The Hay link to Kinnoull may have come via Margaret or Henry, or both. The connection continued until at least 1870, as evidenced by bequests of chattels to William Bell and Robert Henry Bell, both sons of George, from No 1 Ivy Cottage Kinnoull.

A further relation is believed to be Rev Patrick Bell, inventor of the reaper in 1828. His family came from Auchterhouse about 10 miles from Delvine. For many years the Bell reaper stood next to Stephenson's Rocket in the British Museum as landmark inventions of the Industrial Revolution.

George married Margaret Hay Robertson (1809-1887) the daughter of a Perth shopkeeper. According to Frances Hay Bell (daughter of Stanhope Bell) "Margaret was a very tidy, dainty person and loved pretty clothes, especially thin shoes. They were married Scottish fashion in the dining room of the bride's family home (22, High Street Perth) on January 18th 1831 (by Rev W.A.Thompson, Minister of the Middle Kirk Perth), and I have been told that after the ceremony the bridegroom galloped off with his bride on the back of his horse. As she must have had to ride sideways, and would be wearing very full skirts, she would have to hold very tightly to her husband. I was also told that the rest of the party galloped after them and the first one to catch up to them would get a kiss – but no one did".

Their first child Jesse Syme Bell was born at "Nether Aird" Delvine in November, 1831, when George would have been 27 and Margaret 23. (Jesse's middle name was after her maternal great grandfather (James Syme 1741-1807); she married Edward Elsey (1821-1893) and the families kept in touch. Nether Aird is a substantial stone built farmhouse which had a good set of farmbuildings.

George and Margaret had 15 children. 3 of their (then) 6 children died in 1841 and their loss as well as George's brother (in 1838), and mother (1839) may have led in part to the family's move in 1842 to Lincolnshire. Most of the later children were born at Home Farm, Revesby. At that time, however, Margaret was pregnant and James Hay Bell was born at Nether Aird, Delvine on 6th July 1842. George would have been 38, and Margaret 33, with children Jesse (10), Henrietta (9), Helen (1), and James (0).

George was (prior to the summer of 1842) **factor** to Sir. John Muir-Mackenzie Bart at Delvine on the banks of the Tay. He was obviously capable and well thought of because by the time he left at the age of only 38, he was given a solid silver tea kettle “as **an heirloom for his descendants** and a testament of the respect and admiration in which they hold his character and talents, as a man of business and a gentleman of the strictest integrity, most agreeable manners, and most extended liberality of sentiment and disposition..... donated by numerous friends and tenantry”.



Sir Joseph Banks

George Bell may have been head hunted as the Revesby estate needed a new land agent and was a prestigious 6000 acre estate with splendid history through its former owner Sir. Joseph Banks who died 22 years earlier in 1820. On Sir Joseph Banks' wife's death his estate at Revesby was split so that the main part at Revesby went to the Stanhope family (and the balance at Tumbly to the Hawley family). Both families were related through marriage to Sir Joseph Banks. The Stanhopes inherited the ownership of the many various Banks properties in Horncastle also (including our office at Old Bank Chambers), with about 1500 acres at Fulstow and Marshchapel, north of Louth.

Sir Joseph Banks (1743 – 1820) had inherited the Revesby Estate in 1761 and had great botanical interests, sailed with and sponsored Captain J.Cook's first voyage to the South Seas, helped with the discovery of New Zealand and Australia (1769-1771); President of the Royal Society for over 40 years: Sponsor of fellow Lincolnshire cartographer Mathew Flinders, "Father of Australia": founder of Kew Gardens: carried out drainage of the fens, enclosures, canals, and generally progressive agriculture.



This print of Sir Joseph Banks, after Thomas Phillips RA, published in 1812, (restored in 2019) hangs in our office at Old Bank Chambers Horncastle.

In 1842, the Revesby estate was inherited by James Banks Stanhope, (note the inclusion of “Banks” in his name to reflect his illustrious relation). James Banks Stanhope was grandson of Sir Joseph Banks’ cousin, and also related by marriage to former prime ministers William Pitt the elder and younger.

His parents both died when he was a baby. His mother died in childbirth in 1823, and the child was stillborn. (Her marble tomb carved by Sir Francis Chantrey is at Chevening.) His father, who had been wounded at the siege of San Sebastian, but had also been an aide to Wellington at Waterloo, subsequently took his own life, so James was an only child, and he inherited a substantial fortune at an early age. He had the wealth to be able to expand, modernise and renovate his estates at Revesby. He came of age (at 21) in 1842. No doubt, he wanted a new skilled agent to help him develop his estates.

James Banks Stanhope was to lay the foundations for the Revesby estate that we see today. For the next 42 years he steered the helm as the owner of the estate, and a further 20 years as an interested benefactor. (A total of 62 years). He built a huge mansion in anticipation of a wife and family. He greatly improved the estate, with new farmhouses, cottages, land drainage schemes, farm buildings, woods, and roads. His philanthropy saw the inauguration of the Revesby Agricultural Society. He was a significant personality in the various affairs of the county. He was MP from 1852 to 1874. He helped to bring the railway to the locality. His patronage helped many causes in his local town of Horncastle. During his lifetime, he gave the estate to another (married) relative, but continued to take an interest in local affairs, so that one can see his influence in his successor’s generosity in giving the Market Square, the cattle market, and the site of the Town Hall to the people of Horncastle.

James Banks Stanhope 1821-1904

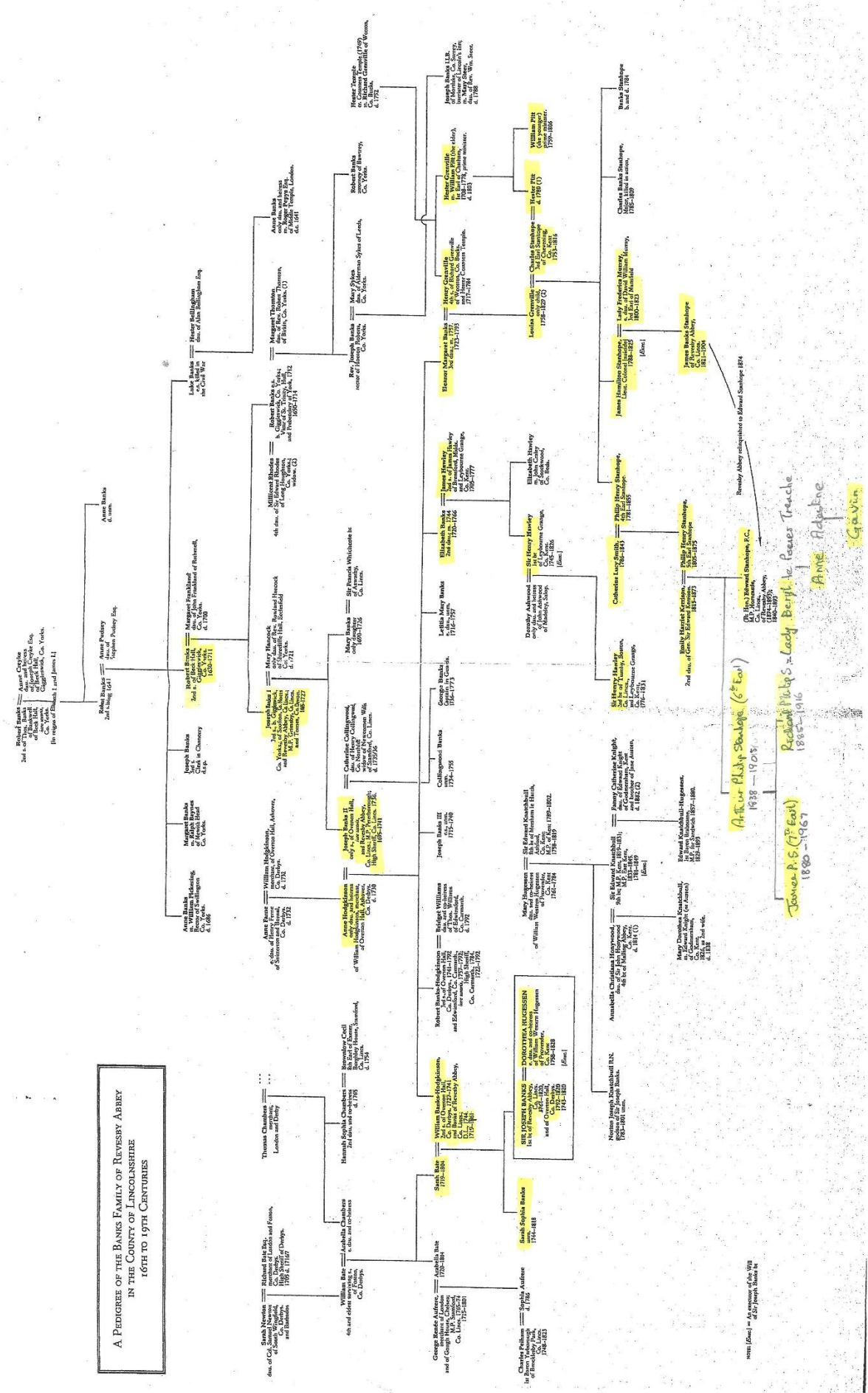
- Described by Sir John Thorold as
- “a dear bargain to any woman that gets him.....but has manner
- unaffected, kind and hearty,
- much to be praised for building
- a house, improving his property,
- and living on it as a country
- gentleman should.”



He was MP for North Lincs, 1851-1868.
He lived a quiet life and never married.

His father was badly wounded at the seige of San Sebastian. He also fought at Waterloo. He took his own life in 1825 following the death of his wife in childbirth in 1823.

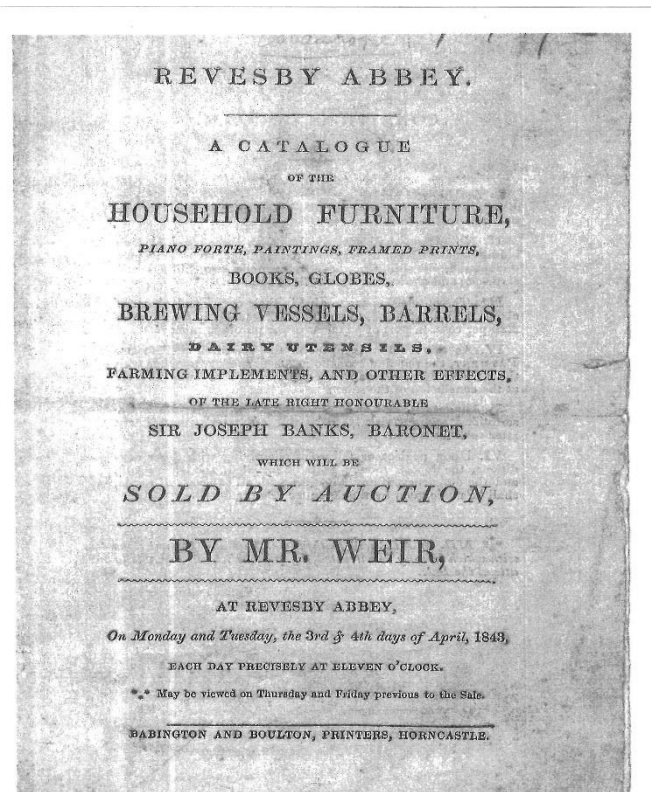
**A PEDIGREE OF THE BANKS FAMILY OF REVESBY ABBEY
IN THE COUNTY OF LINCOLNSHIRE
16TH TO 19TH CENTURIES**



The Bell family moved to Revesby in 1842. George was aged 38 and his patron (James Banks Stanhope) aged 21.

When Sir Joseph Banks died in 1820, his widow, Dorothea had moved to London, and the old Abbey House was empty. In 1823, John Burcham, land agent of Coningsby, had written "the estate and buildings are now in a most dilapidated state". In 1830 J. Pacey, surveyor of Boston had written saying he considered the old house was beyond restoration.

In 1843 the remaining contents of the Old Abbey were sold by auction by our predecessor, Mr George Weir.



Mr. Weir sold his business in Horncastle in 1855 to Mr. Parish. The firm moved to Old Bank Chambers Horncastle in 1872, and is still there. George Bell's grandson Robert Hay Bell became an articled pupil to Mr. W.B.Parish at Old Bank Chambers in 1897. The trading name is now ROBERT BELL & COMPANY.

Work began in 1844 on a new mansion to the architectural plans of a fellow Scot, William Burn, who designed Harlaxton Hall and Stoke Rocheford Hall both in South Lincolnshire, all around the same time. It was in Jacobean style built in Ancaster stone and replaced the previous house, built in 1660, which had been close by and so many of the exotic Banksian garden plants and trees remained. (Two headstones in Revesby churchyard record workers who died during the construction.) The mansion adjoins and overlooks the 190 acres park with its fallow deer. Splendid wrought iron gates erected in 1848 at the roadside formed an impressive entrance, with drive flanked by lime trees. Revesby Abbey had an impressive hall with heraldic shield decorations around the stairwell. To the rear was a huge stable courtyard.

REVESBY ABBEY

Built to the designs of fellow Scot, William Burn, who was architect for Harlaxton Hall and Stoke Rochford Hall, Lady Vyner laid the foundation stone with a silver trowel in Sept 1844. After dinner and speeches, there was a ball opened by Mr Stanhope and Mrs Bell, the "lady of his land agent".



REVESBY ABBEY

Whites 1856 Directory records that the Revesby estate "has been much improved, since 1842, by drainage, and about 200 acres of new plantations. The present owner has also rebuilt the farm houses and the Parsonage House, and has erected many neat cottages, and a new school etc., so that the village has now a handsome appearance".

Extract from White's Directory 1856

REVESBY, a pleasant village, 7 miles S.S.E. of Horncastle, 12 miles N. by W. of Boston, and 8 miles W.S.W. of Spilsby, has a pleasure fair, on Oct. 24th. Its parish has 4978 acres of land, and 668 inhabitants, including the hamlets of *Medlam* and *Moor Houses*, the latter of which is in the *West Fen*, on the south side of the parish, near *Newham Drain*, which is navigable to the river *Witham*. Wm. de Romara, Earl of Lincoln, then lord of this manor, founded an ABBEY here, for Cistercian monks, in 1142, dedicated to the Virgin Mary and St. Lawrence. This abbey received many subsequent benefactions, and, at the dissolution, its yearly revenues were valued at £349. 4s. 10d. It was granted in 1538 to Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, from whose family it passed to the Howards, Dukes of Berkshire, and from them to the wealthy family of Banks. The present large and handsome mansion, called *Revesby Abbey*, has extensive gardens and pleasure grounds, and stands on an elevated spot near the site of the ancient abbey, in a beautiful park of about 350 acres, about a mile east of the village. It has been erected on the site of the old mansion since 1842, in the style which prevailed in the reign of James I., and has elegant fronts and extensive outbuildings, all of Ancaster stone. The late mansion was built about 1660, by the Hon. Craven Howard, whose son succeeded his uncle as Earl of Berkshire; but it was afterwards enlarged and improved by the family of Banks. The park is well wooded, and has about 400 head of deer, and it and the surrounding estate here have been much improved since 1842, by drainage, and about 200 acres of new plantations. The present owner has also rebuilt the farm-houses and the Parsonage House, and has erected many neat cottages, and a new School, &c., so that the village has now a handsome appearance. Near the village is the site of an ancient *encampment*, measuring 300 by 100 feet, encompassed by a broad fosse, and having at each end a lofty tumulus, supposed to cover the remains of some distinguished British chiefs. The late *Sir Joseph Banks, Bart.*, president

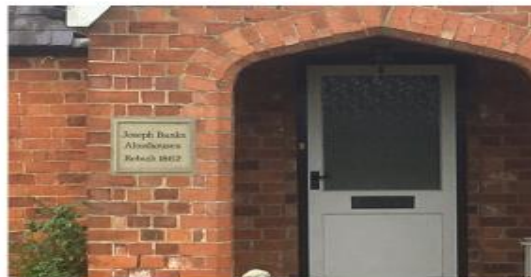
MAIN GATES REVESBY ABBEY



Revesby has a lovely village green around which lie the alms-houses, school, post office, old Rectory, Church, and several houses. It has been well conceived and dates from this period. No doubt George Bell had a significant part in this development. Not only do many of the buildings have unusual stylish barge boards, several still have a decorative style of slate (a combination of rectangular followed by rounded slates) that is said to have come from the estate at Delvine. Indeed the lodge near the entrance to the Delvine estate still has this, as do the Red Lion pub and various dwellings at Revesby.

THE ALMSHOUSES, REVESBY

Originally built in 1727. Rebuilt in 1862.



The row of alms-houses were rebuilt in 1862. There are however few date plaques on other dwellings. There is a date of "1869" on the gable end of the Carpenters Workshop, at the rear of 24 The Green. (The Blacksmithy, run by the Gosling family was at no 25).



The Church and Lych-Gate



The Green



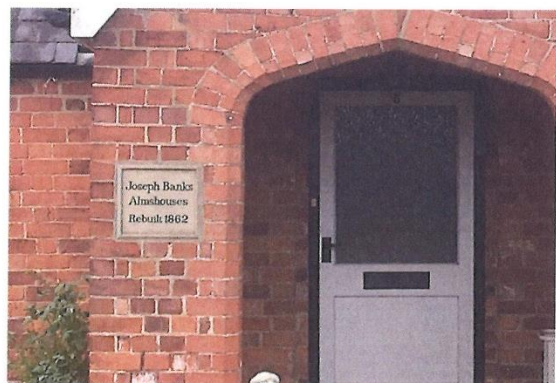
The Red Lion



No.1 and No.2, The Green



The Green



Porch to the Almshouses

1 and 2, The Green, Revesby



ties on both the Revesby Estate and The Lodge at Delvine, have a distinctive style of roofing slates, four rows of rounded slates followed by four rows of rectangular slates.

There are distinctive moulded fascia boards and finials, as well as attractive diamond paned windows, especially on the properties around the Green at Revesby.

The Lodge Delvine



Note the rows of rounded slates, followed by four rows of rectangular slates on the Lodge at Delvine.

The Revesby Style

There were a great many farmhouses, cottages, almshouses as well as the "Parsonage", main residence, lodge, gates, pub, school and school house built whilst George Bell was agent between 1842 and 1872. Nearly all the houses around Revesby Green, (apart from the almshouses which were rebuilt, the Georgian Post office, and possibly the late Georgian brickwork of No 16), date from this period. Many have the unique style of four rows of rounded slates, alternating with four rows of rectangular slates. (The Revesby style). Those that still have the original roof style show that slate roofs will last well over 150 years. The old school and school house have more recent tiled roofs, but the style with the mixture of rectangular and rounded slates has been sympathetically repeated.

There would be an additional cost in having rounded slates, and roofing in a more complicated style. This extra expense would not be incurred lightly. It was presumably incurred in order to make Revesby a special place. In today's parlance, it would be a "Destination Venue".

Although the style is mainly to be seen on The Green, Revesby roofs and other facets appear on other dwellings right across the Estate; (and even The Red Lion Pub, which dates from this period, but is no longer owned by the Estate). One is reminded of Lord Barnard who decreed that all his farmhouses should be painted white so that he would know which were his.

The high quality style continues on into the wonderful bargeboards. These are highly decorative with a particular "wavy thorn" style of embellishment. Dormers over windows, arches over porches as well as bargeboards have this particular style, all possibly made in the carpenter's workshop on the estate. A singular exception was made for the Lodge by the Main Gates to the Park. This was built in 1848 and has highly ornate "carved and figured scrolled barge boards on curved wooden brackets". Slight variations occur at St Scythes and The Foremans House porch.

Most of these porches and dormers end with an ornate finial to give added distinction.

Many windows on the estate have small diamond panes. Those for example at The School house, the Almshouses and Nos 1 and 25 The Green are set in metal frames. The Victorians saw considerable innovation and change in working materials and practices, and these typify new techniques. The School, and nos 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 23, The Green each have one large single diamond set in each wooden frame.

Other more individual features include the lovely oriel window at the north end of the Almshouses, shaped bay windows at nos 5 and 7 Abbey Road, the special layers of unusual bricks at nos 6 and 7 Abbey Road, and the wonderful dog runs at Shirewood Cottage.

There are however few date plaques. The Almshouses are dated "1862"; there is a plaque "1869" on The Carpenters Workshop at The Cottage near the Green. Revesby Abbey dates from 1844-1848, and the Gates and Lodge from 1848.

All these items of style combine to give Revesby a special atmosphere, which may then be useful for obtaining good and happy tenants.

Estate Management

The Lincolnshire Archives have plans of the woods as well as a specification in 1843 for planting 28 acres at 4' spacings. Amongst other items it requires the planting to be done by local parishoners. 247 acres at Fulsby Wood were replanted, and new woods in many other places. The estate has many wonderful woods and many mature trees which add a further dimension and interest.

George Bell was land Agent for nearly 30 years at Revesby (from 1842 to 1872). During the term of his office there were several purchases and sales including:-

PURCHASES:-

1843	bought	845 acres	from Sir Henry Dymoke at Claxby	for	£31,000
1843	bought	415 acres	from Mr. Christopher at Revesby	for	£18,000
1852	bought	995 acres	from Turnor Trustees at East Kirkby	for	£48,500

SALES:-

1847	sold	1203 acres	at Marshchapel	for	£56,294
1854	sold	977 acres	at Fulstow	for	£41,718
1863	sold	site for courthouse	at Horncastle	for	£300
1869	sold	287 acres	at Horncastle	for	£27,055
1869	sold	359 acres (34 lots)	at Revesby	for	£27,788

There were many properties in Horncastle owned by the Revesby estate. These included the whole of the Market Place (which at that time had the Square full of shops), the cattle market and site of the Town Hall, Banks' town house in the High Street, lands alongside the Wharfs (including our offices at Old Bank Chambers) and fields up the Louth Road. Horncastle Church was renovated in 1861 and James Banks Stanhope chaired the organising committee, and bore the expense of repairing the Chancel. He was also on the committee arranging for the railway to come to Horncastle in 1851. He was MP for North Lincolnshire from 1852-1868.

In 1843 and 1849, land was given by James Banks Stanhope for the school and playing field at Mareham le Fen. The vicar at that time was Rev William Goodenough, and he was instrumental in getting the school on its feet. He had taught at his previous post, and one of his pupils, who followed him to Mareham was John Bowes, who went on to found the Bowes Museum at Barnard Castle.

According to White's Directory, the (National) school at Revesby dates from 1858.

Land was provided at Miningsby, at the instigation of Herbert Ingram, (the founder of The Illustrated London News) for the Boston Water Works to build a reservoir to provide water for that town. The estate has the continuing benefit of the fishing rights.

According to the Archives

The 1866 Rent roll included lands in Marshchapel, Thornton, Thimbleby, Mareham on the Hill, Revesby, Mareham, Wood Enderby, Roughton, Haltham, High Toynton, West Ashby, Low Toynton.

Notable local names include

Bell (M),Benton (R),Coney (WE),Dawson (M),Dennis (EK), Ellwood (M),Hodgson (EK),Houldershaw (Haltham), Johnson (M), Kime (M),Stennett (R), Vinter (WE),Boulton (H), Carlton (H and L/T), Claypons Garfit & Co (H), Clitherow (H), Crowder (H),Danby (H),Dixon (H), Elsey (H), English (H), Harrison (H), Henry Lunn (H), Joseph Parish (H), Lancelot Rolleston (H), F.Tweed (H).

In 1868 the rent roll was:-

Revesby Estate rents	£4,932
Horncastle	£1,247

The Garden: Alexander Blaikie

In 1846, on completion of the new mansion, Revesby Abbey, Alexander Blaikie, a fellow Scot was appointed Head Gardener. His note book records the planting of varieties of peaches, nectarines, apricots, pears, cherries and plums. Alexander Blaikie was born in August 1813 and died in August 1890. He is buried close to George and Margaret Bell with a tombstone in matching red Scottish granite in Revesby Churchyard.



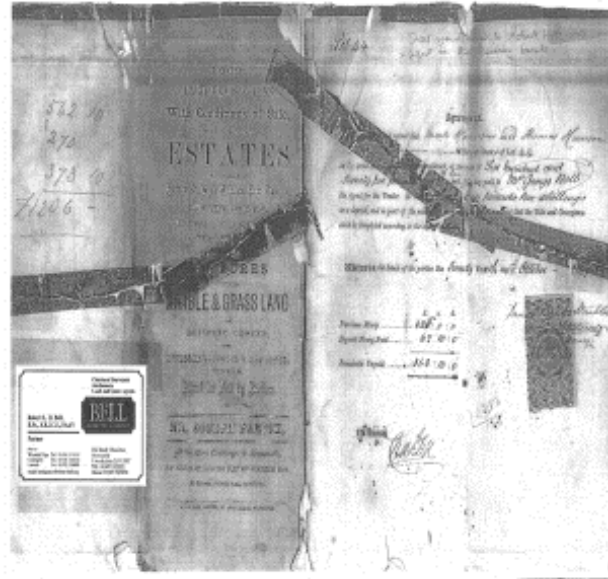
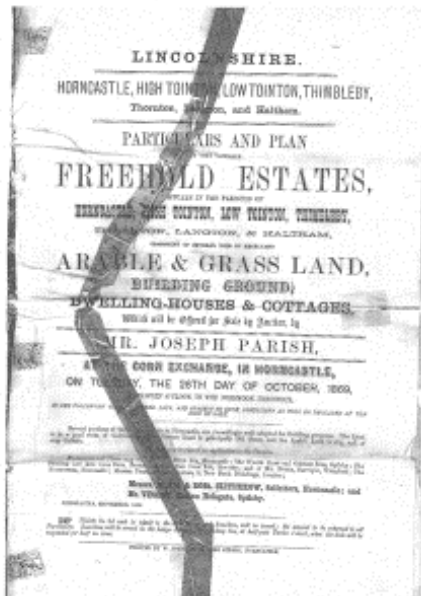
The Revesby Agricultural Society.

In December 1843, James Banks Stanhope arranged a meeting at The Red Lion, Revesby, and the Revesby Agricultural Society was born. It was to promote the improvement of livestock and farming methods, good conduct, skill and industry amongst the tenants and adjoining parishes. The first Annual meeting took place in October 1844, when there were prizes for stock, classes for good cultivation, hedges, fences, ploughing, and classes for labourers. The President/ Chairman was James Banks Stanhope, and the secretary was George Bell, who read out the list of prizewinners at the evening assembly. John Ellwood won the prize for the best calf, and the best plough. He spoke on behalf of the tenants to propose the health of their landlord, and commented that Mr Stanhope didn't hesitate to carry out improvements, and that with such confidence in a benevolent landlord, a great deal could be achieved.

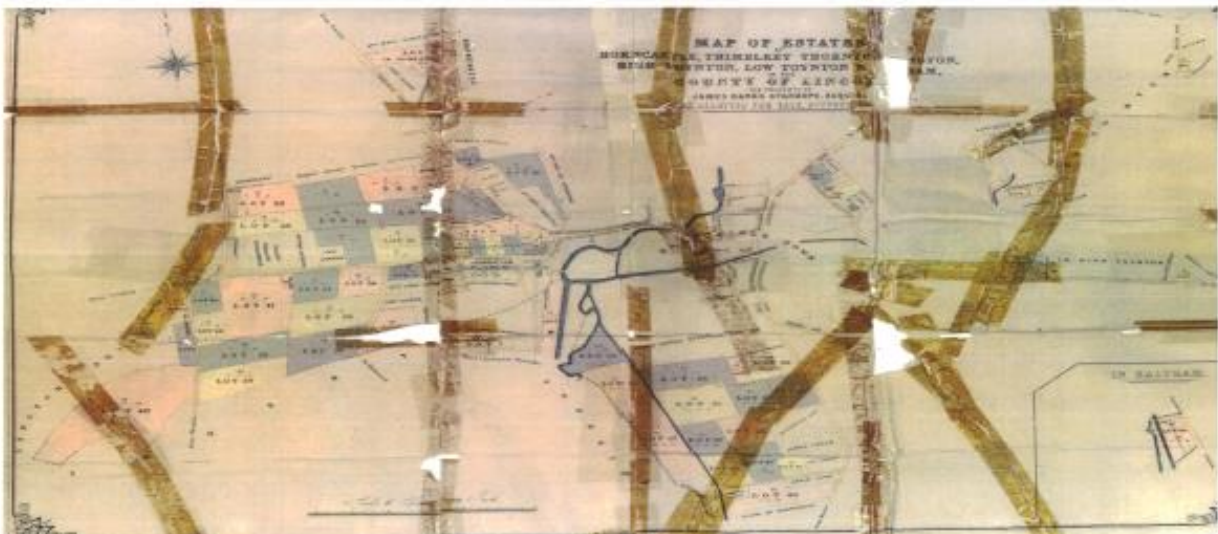
1869 Auction

By 1869, George Bell was approaching retirement. His employer, James Banks Stanhope, was 49, and still single. Sales of various parts of the estate were arranged. The auctioneer was our predecessor, Joseph Parish.

1869 Auction Catalogue



Plan for 1869 Auction, Horncastle



Revesby Land Agents

George Bell followed a line of notable land agents at Revesby – Benjamin Stephenson from 1741 – 1792 who sent weekly reports to Sir Joseph Banks – John Parkinson senior of Asgarby (1792-1820), who helped with the drainage of the Fens, and whose son, John Parkinson of Old Bolingbroke, employed to assist his father, had three main aims, which led to the Crescent at New Bolingbroke (found a city), Ostlers Plantation (plant a forest) and the Spa at Woodhall (sink a coal mine).

George Bell was succeeded as land agent by Joseph Walker who was agent for another 27 years, and is also buried in Revesby Churchyard.

George and Margaret Bell



Many of George Bell's descendants became Land Agents.

Two of George Bell's sons (Robert and Stanhope) married sisters (Helen and Fanny Harrison). A grandson (W M Childs) became the first Vice Chancellor of Reading University, which happens to be the home of the College of Estate Management.

Retirement

When George Bell retired in February, 1872, a collection was made together with a presentation of a silver soup tureen.

1872 Presentation to George Bell

Presented
by the
Tenants on the Revesby Property
with a purse of 100 Guineas
to
Mr George Bell

as a mark of their respect & esteem
& in recognition of his uniform Courtesy, &
good feeling evinced by him during the
29 years he has been Steward for the Estate
Revesby 5th Feb 1872.

The above was on the silver
Soup Tureen presented on the
above date.

Extract from the local paper at the time in early 1872 read:-

“REVESBY On Monday evening last, a meeting was held at the Red Lion Inn by the tenantry of the Revesby Estate for the purpose of presenting a testimonial to Mr. George Bell, who has been agent for J. Banks Stanhope Esq., for upwards of 29 years. After the usual loyal and patriotic toasts, the Chairman (Mr. W. F. Ealand) proposed the health of Mr. Banks Stanhope, which was received most enthusiastically. Mr. Ellwood then proceeded to present the testimonial, which consisted of a chaste and massive soup tureen and ladle, and a purse of 100 guineas, accompanied by an illuminated parchment scroll commemorative of the occasion, and inscribed with the names of the subscribers. Mr. Ellwood spoke in warm terms of the merits of Mr. Bell, as a gentleman whose honour and integrity were beyond reproach, as a man of business whose punctuality courtesy, and straightforward dealings were proverbial, and as a friend whose sincerity and kindness of heart endeared him to all who have the privilege of meeting him in the social intercourse of private life. Many of those present would no doubt remember the Revesby property 29 years ago- neglected, almost ruinous and it was in a great measure due to the painstaking persevering industry of Mr. Bell backed by a liberal landlord that it was now among the best managed estates in Lincolnshire. Mr. Bell responded in a very feeling manner, reviewing the past 29 years which he had spent amongst them, and concluding by hoping that they might long continue a happy tenantry under a good landlord.”

THE ELLWOOD FAMILY

John Ellwood, who proposed the Testimonial, was born in 1808, and was “Sponsor” or godfather to several of George Bell’s children. His family have continued to farm Manor Farm, Mareham le Fen on the Revesby Estate for several generations until the death in 2019 of his great grandson, another John Ellwood. This says a lot about continuity on the estate.

There were several members of the Ellwood family who served in the Lincolnshire Regiment. The elder John’s son Arthur Ellwood (1848-1915) was a Lieutenant Col. His elder son Arthur Addison Ellwood (is this after the Addisons on the estate?) (1886-1943) was a Colonel who won an MC and was killed in the Second World War. Another son, Charles Hugh Ellwood (1888-1915) was killed in the First World War. A daughter, Phoebe Harding Ellwood (born 1883) was an auxiliary nurse. The Ellwoods were connected to other local families such as the Scorers and Soulbys some of whom farmed on the estate.

Since John Ellwood the younger never married and there were no close family, the family heirlooms were sold by Robert Bell & Company at auction in 2019.

Death

Within three months of his retirement, George Bell had died. His funeral was attended by the Horncastle as well as the Revesby tenantry and led by Mr. James Banks Stanhope. George and Margaret are buried in Revesby Churchyard with a significant tombstone alongside the pathway leading from the lych-gate. Their daughter, Helen Donaldson Bell (1840 – 1889) is buried nearby.



His widow continued to live in a cottage on the estate, after his death on the 29th April, 1872, very shortly after his retirement.

Gravestone of George Bell, Revesby.



It was quite extraordinary for George Bell to achieve such a glowing tribute when he left Scotland at the age of only 38. After nearly 30 years in his position as land agent at Revesby, the tributes were equally full of praise. But perhaps of even more significance is the fact that these came from both tenants as well as landlords in both cases. Often agents are seen as either “landlords” or “tenants” men, and in the case of a resident agent almost always as working solely for the landlord to the detriment of the tenants. George Bell showed the people on both Delvine and Revesby estates that all could work together to improve the cottages, farms, and estate for the benefit of the whole community.

Burglary Shortly after his death, there was a burglary and the silver kettle was stolen. The local "bobby" inspected and identified a footprint in the flower bed outside the broken window. He managed to identify the culprit and the silver kettle was discovered in the thatch over some lambing pens in nearby Mareham le Fen.

EXTRACT from the local paper in 1879: "On Sunday night last a daring burglary was committed at the house of Mrs George Bell, near to Revesby Bridge, and for the two succeeding days, despite the vigilance of Superintendent Truelove and a large staff of officers, baffled any attempt to trace a clue to the offender. The house was broken into whilst Mrs and Miss Bell were absent from home. They left shortly after 6 o'clock, and attended Divine Service, after which they stayed for some little time at the house of Mr Addison. On their return they found that someone had broken the back kitchen window, unfastened the screw, and in this way had affected an entrance into the house. Upon a search being made it was discovered that a large quantity of silver and plated goods had been stolen, some having been taken from the pantry, sitting room, and a bedroom. Mrs Bell at once returned to Mr Addison who accompanied her back again, and sent to the neighbouring village (Mareham le Fen) for police Constable Eyre. He immediately went to the house of a young man named Porter, aged 22 years, who at the present was under police surveillance, having five times been convicted of a felony: once for breaking into Mrs Bell's former house, and stealing therefrom a much smaller quantity of silver and other articles. The house was searched, but nothing was found therein, and a strict watch was kept on it for the whole of the night.

Early on Monday morning Superintendent Jarvis was informed of the burglary and he, with Inspector Wright, arrived at Revesby about half past five. They apprehended Porter and took possession of his boots, and found that they, in every respect corresponded with some footprints in the garden. A search was made on Monday in every direction for the stolen articles, and on Tuesday the staff of officers was augmented by a supply from Spilsby. The woods, stacks, dykes and hedges for some distance were examined but all to no avail till Wednesday morning, when all the articles were found by Constable Mackerel secreted in a linen bag in the straw roof of an old lambing house in a field belonging to Mr Addison. The field is about 400 yards distant from Mrs Bell's and a similar distance from Porter's father's house. The police in the neighbouring town had of course been informed of the burglary, but Superintendent Truelove, with his usual keen preception, had satisfied himself that there had been no accomplices to take the goods away, and in this instance, too, his suspicions were correct. Mr Benton, of Horncastle, as a practical shoemaker, went over on Monday to examine the footprints, and he had no doubt that they were made by the boots in the possession of the police. Porter who declared his innocence, was taken before the Rev. F Pickford at Hagworthingham, on Tuesday, and remanded until today (Saturday).

The greatest sympathy has been felt for Mrs Bell in what at first seemed to be a hopeless recovery of the goods, as some of the silver was presented to her late respected husband, who for many years was Steward on the Revesby Estate. The total value of the articles stolen all of which have been recovered, amounts to about £98. The following is a complete list:- one teapot, one sugar basin, one cream jug (the following inscription being on each of them – 'presented to Mr George Bell, on the occasion of his retiring from the situation of factor on the Estate of Delvine, as a testimony of the esteem entertained for him by the tenants and a numerous circle of friends in the surrounding district, 1842').....etc.'

James Banks Stanhope

James Banks Stanhope never married. Revesby Abbey would have been a huge home, and expensive to run, and a burden to look after, especially for one person.

In 1885, at the age of 65, he decided to hand it on to the next generation, and he gave the whole estate to the younger son of his cousin (the Earl of Stanhope, from Chevening in Kent). This was Edward Stanhope, (1840 – 1893), who was then 44 years old, and married. Edward Stanhope was a bright MP, who became Secretary of State for War, but who died of a heart attack in 1893, (before his benefactor).

Whites Directory of 1892 records James Banks Stanhope as the “late owner, still resides at the Abbey. Almost every house and farm on the property has been rebuilt, the land drained, woods have sprung up and the whole country shows the care which has been bestowed on its improvement.”

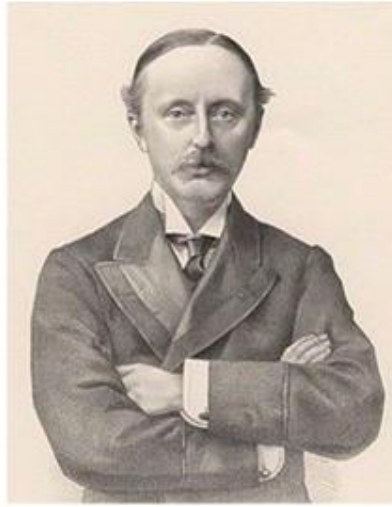
James Bank Stanhope obviously kept his connection with Horncastle as evidenced by his presentation of a silver cup for the best pen of three sheep at the 1903 Horncastle Christmas Fatstock Show. This would have been one of the first shows in Horncastle and quite a prestigious prize. It was won by John Redmore (1848-1907) who was a registered breeder of Lincoln Longwools at The Grove, Hemingby.

In 1890-1892 St Lawrence’s Church at Revesby was rebuilt, at the joint expense of James Banks Stanhope and Edward Stanhope. James Banks Stanhope lived until 1904. Our firm valued one or two Lincolnshire properties for his probate valuation, as well as cigars, books and gold seals. His trustees were Mr Stanhope of Chevening, and Sir John Thorold of Grantham. His address at that time was given as St James’, London.



Edward Stanhope, 1840-1893

Given Revesby, 1884.



He was MP from 1874 until his early death from a heart attack in Dec 1893. He rose through the ranks to become Secretary of State for War. During his proprietorship of the Revesby Estate, the Market Place, the Cattle Market on the Wong, and the site for the new "Town Hall" were given to the people of Horncastle.

Edward and Lucy Stanhope did not have any children either, and in 1907, the estate passed again to a younger son of the Earl Stanhope, Richard Philip Stanhope, who was killed on the Somme in 1916. The ownership of the estate now rests with the descendants of his widow. (The Wiggins Davies family).

APPENDICES

1. Extract from the Caputh Kirk records.
2. Notes on Grace Darling and HMS Forfarthshire.
3. 1842 Meeting about George Bell's move from Scotland: 1872 press cutting about his retirement from Revesby, and 1872 funeral.
4. "Hay" of Kinfauns.
5. Inscription on the 1842 silver teakettle.
6. Extract from "Sir Joseph Banks at Revesby" by David Robinson 2014 on the Abbey.
7. Banks' Revesby Abbey, (published by George Weir, forerunner of our firm)
8. Copy of the sale catalogue of chattels at Revesby Abbey 1843.
9. Article on Revesby Abbey by Christopher Sturman.
10. 1855 Stanhope letter.
11. Copy extract from White's Lincolnshire 1856.
12. 1867 Grant of land in Horncastle subject to a rent charge, typical transaction.
13. Photos illustrating the Revesby style.
14. Inscription on the 1872 soup tureen.
15. Newspaper report of the 1879 burglary.
16. Extracts from the October 1869 auction of Horncastle properties by Mr Joseph Parish. One buyer being Mark Harrison.
17. Wikipedia and other notes and listings for Revesby Abbey, The Entrance Gates, The Lodge, 1 and 2 The Green, and The Almshouses.
18. Extract on John Parkinson from David Robinson's book.
19. Extract on John Parkinson jnr from J Conway Walter.
20. Lincoln Archives references.
21. Wikipedia James Banks Stanhope and his parents.
22. Copy of "Dedication" for J Conway Walter's Book "Notes on Parishes around Horncastle", published by W K Morton in 1904, the year of JBS's death.
23. Wikipedia Edward Stanhope and Richard Stanhope.
24. Maps of Revesby.
25. Recollections on the Bell pedigree by Francis Hay Robinson (nee Bell) 1966.
26. 1969 letter from Charles Grant, Swinhope.
27. Copy of the Bell Family Tree.
28. Extracts from the Bell Family Bible.
29. Copy of the Ellwood family tree.
30. Photos of Delvine House and Nether Aird.
31. Victorian Valuation of chattels at Ivybank, Kinnoull.
32. The George Bell household in 1842.
33. Letters from Margaret Hay Bell 1874 and 1886.
34. Correspondence with Dennis Mills about Alexander Blaikie 2018.
35. For house photos,

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/q9emm2b2rx85ua/AADohyI2dNOAqDZ2H2oMZG5Da?dl=0>

Available on request