

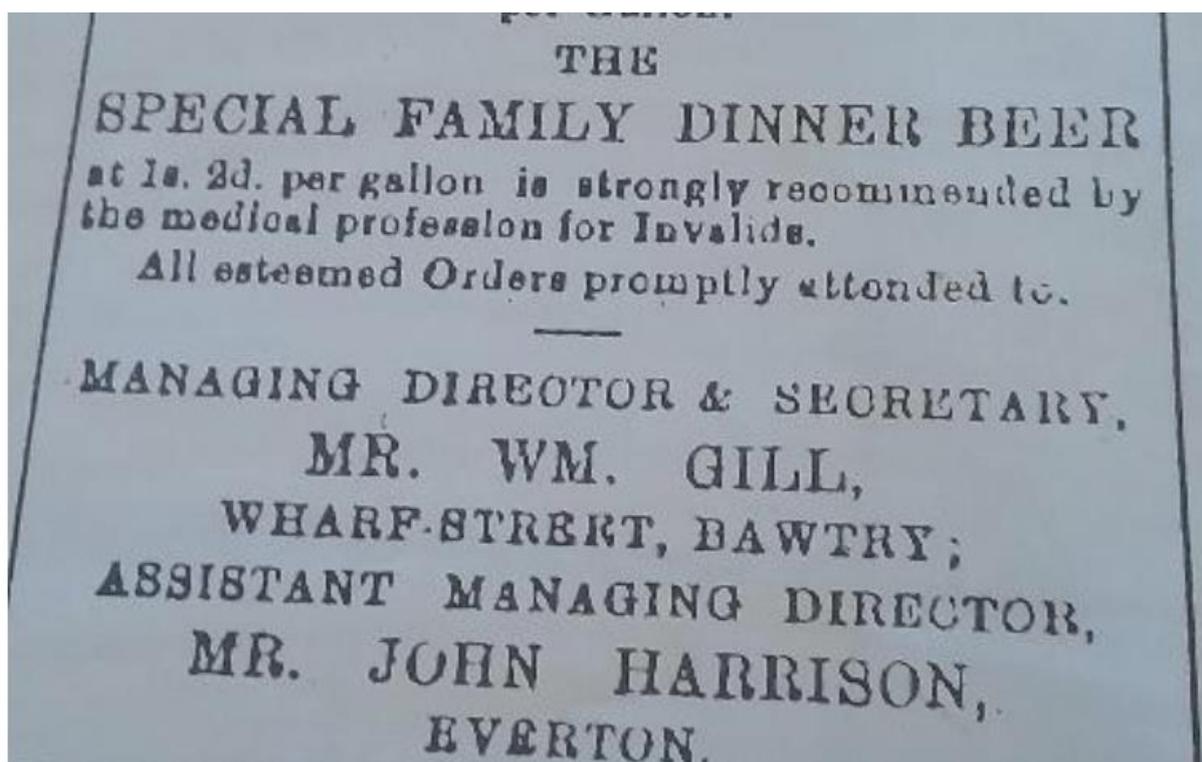


Bawtry Heritage Group

Preserving our Past for the Future

Registered Charity No. 1188945

The life of William Gill and John Harrison, residents of Bawtry in the 1880's and 1890's



Sherelle Hawes

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Bawtry Heritage Group was given a framed original advert, advertising products of two men; one living in Bawtry and the other from Everton. A member of the group has researched these men as the advertisement is to go on show in the Heritage Centre at Bawtry Community Library and we wanted a little background information on these two men.

The history of William Gill of Wharf Street

William was born in 1849 at Adwick Le Street near Doncaster.

On the 1861 Census William was with his parents William and Mary and five servants. His father's occupation was a farmer. By 1871 the family had moved to Scrooby and oddly there was another son with them, also called William, who was born in 1862. Looking at the 1881 census William's name was changed to Walter C. On the 1891 census Walter had moved to Misson with his mother and she was widowed; William the father had died. Walter's occupation was an auctioneer and a farmer.

William married Elizabeth Wharran on 18 December 1873 at St John Baptist Chapel in Misson.

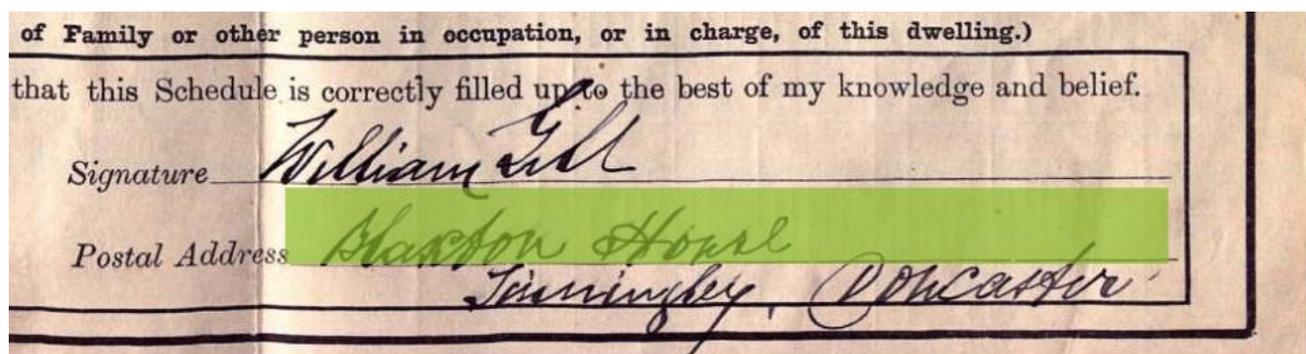
On the 1881 Census William was living in Bawtry with his wife on Wharf Street. His occupation was cited as an auctioneer. The family were still there on Wharf Street on the 1891 census. William was still an auctioneer and valuer. Interestingly the house he was living in has been researched by Bawtry Heritage Group and was Leigh House, the boys' boarding school on Wharf Street, Bawtry. This closed in the 1870's so I am guessing that William bought this property.

By 1901 William and Elizabeth had moved to Bennethorpe in Doncaster and his mother Mary was living with them. His occupation was an auctioneer and land agent.

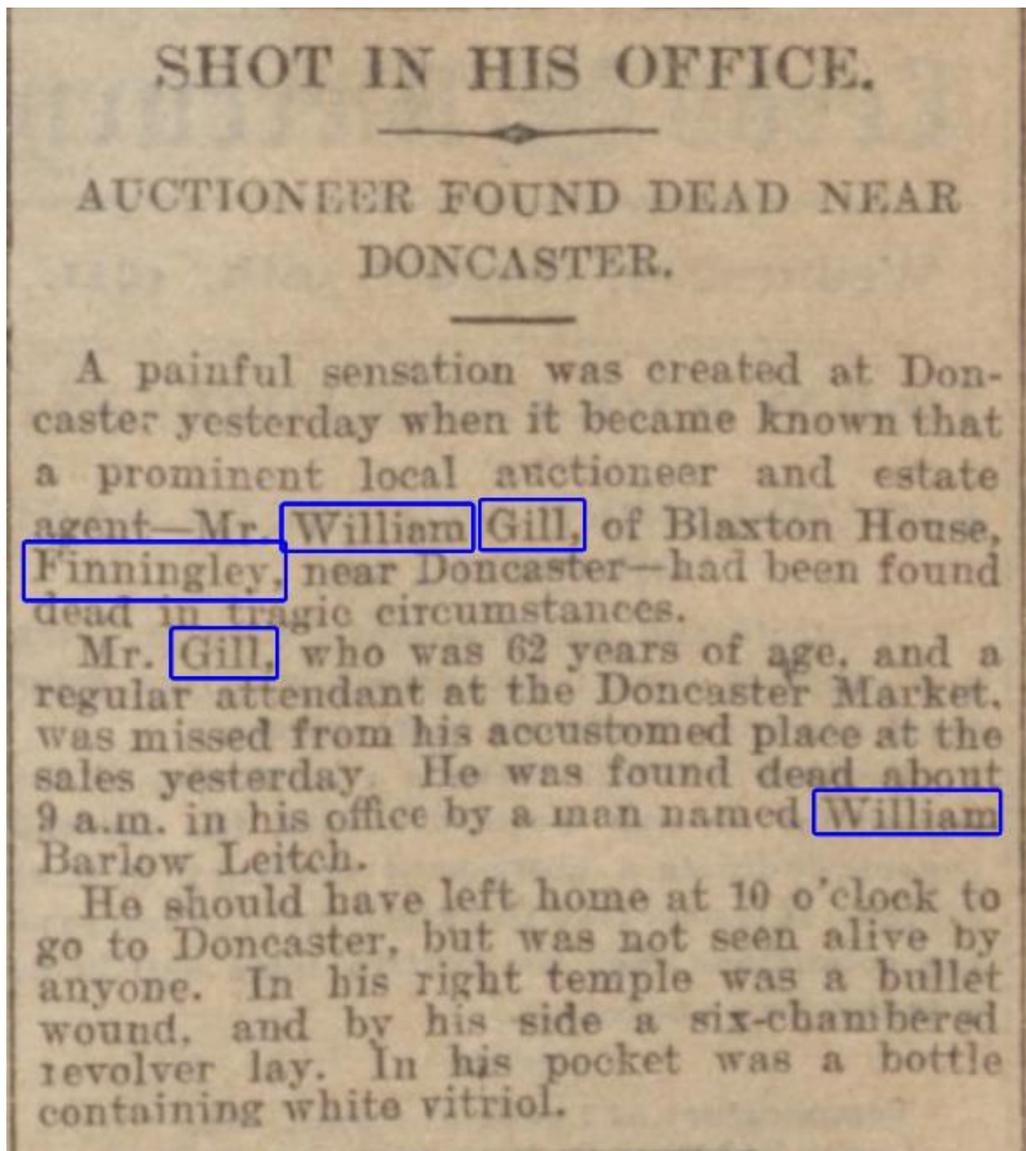
William's mother was Mary Gillot and she was born in 1824 at Bolton on Dearne. She married William Gill on 14 December 1848 at Bolton on Dearne.

William Gill junior was elected to join the School Board of Bawtry and Scrooby for the United School District in September 1893.

By 1911 William and Elizabeth had moved to Blaxton House in Finningley. William was still a land agent. The image below shows Williams handwriting and his signature.



William died in 1911 and is buried in Finningley churchyard. His death, in very sad circumstances, was reported in the newspaper. In 1903 there had been an accidental shooting of James Maidmant who William had been out rabbiting with. William's gun had gone off and he shot and killed James. I guess he had struggled with the guilt about this for several years.



AUCTIONEER'S SUICIDE.

UNACCOUNTABLE AFFAIR NEAR DONCASTER.

The circumstances attending the death of Mr. William Gill, aged 63 years, auctioneer and land agent, of Blaxton House, Finningley, near Doncaster, were investigated yesterday.

The evidence showed that Mr. Gill had suffered from the return of a painful complaint. On Monday morning he left his house presumably to go to Doncaster, but was never seen alive again. He was not known to have any domestic or family trouble. Some years ago he had a shooting accident, and this had preyed upon his mind.

On Tuesday morning Mr. William Barlow Leitch, a lay reader in charge of St. Saviour's Church, Awkley, who lived with Mr. Gill, went into Mr. Gill's office to study, and to his horror saw Mr. Gill sitting in his chair dead. He had a revolver bullet in his right temple. On the floor lay a six-chambered revolver, one cartridge of which had been recently discharged. In the easy chair into which the man had fallen was a pool of blood.

In the right-hand pocket of his jacket was a packet labelled "white vitriol." It had been broken open, and a portion of it had apparently been taken. Mr. Gill's lips and mouth were very blue, and seemed to have been corroded.

The jury returned a verdict of "Suicide whilst temporary insane," and expressed their deep sympathy with the family.

Williams burial record in Finningley parish church and a photo of his headstone in the churchyard:

William Gill	Blaxton High Blaxton	31 Aug 1911	62 Yrs	R. E. ... Rector
No. 606.				



Sales by Mr. William Gill.

By Order of the Mortgagee under Power of Sale.
BAWTRY.

TO be SOLD by AUCTION, by Mr. **WILLIAM GILL**, at the Crown Hotel, Bawtry, on Thursday, the 1st day of October, 1908, at 4.30 o'clock in the afternoon precisely. Subject to the Conditions of sale to be then produced.

A VALUABLE FREEHOLD PROPERTY consisting of that building known as the BAWTRY PUBLIC HALL, with the yards, outbuildings, and appurtenances hereto belonging.

The Building contains a large central room or hall about 48 feet long with a width of 26 feet 10 inches thereabouts, two smaller rooms on the ground floor with lavatory and w.c., a large room above these about 31 feet long by 13 feet 10 inches wide or thereabouts. Also large and commodious cellars and two yards, one about 62 feet long, with an average width of about 10 feet, and the other about 55 feet long with an average width of about 12 feet 6 inches, and the whole containing an area of 384 square yards or thereabouts.

The property has a frontage of about 51 feet to Bawtry Market Place. The Building is situated on slightly rising ground on the west side of the High Street or Market Place, close to and in full view of the large motor traffic passing along the Great North Road, and would be very suitable for a Motor Garage or repairing works, or for a Warehouse, Shops, or other similar business purposes.

The property is in thoroughly good repair and condition, and offers an excellent investment for business men and others.

For further particulars apply to the Auctioneer, Blaxton House, **Finningley**, Doncaster; or to
CARTWRIGHT and WALKER,
Solicitors.
Bawtry, Yorkshire, 14th September, 1908.

Challenge Cup.

LOCAL AWARDS.

Class 13 : Yearling fillies, 53 entries, 4th prize £5, Thicket Wealthy, exhibited and bred by Mr J J Dunnington-Jefferson, Thicket Priory. Com-mended, Everton Fascination, exhibited by Mr John Harrison, of Everton, Bawtry, and bred by Mr William Gill, Bawtry; Birdsall Belle, exhibited and bred by Lord Middleton, Birdsall House, York.

William and John both appeared in lots of local newspapers in the 1880's and 1890's. William was also a seed merchant along with an auctioneer. He often appeared selling property at Bawtry Crown Hotel.

The history of John Harrison

John was born in Morton, Yorkshire to parents George and Elizabeth. George was a farmer and maltster. He had three sisters and one brother. On the 1881 census he was a farmer's son. The family was living in Everton. One of the sisters was born in Scrooby so I guess he was there at the same time as William Gill who was also in Scrooby on the 1871 census. John was still living at home on the 1891 census in Everton. By 1901 John had married Margaret and had one daughter - Mary - and they were living in Market Place, Bawtry. John's occupation was a farmer and inn keeper. He had married Margaret White at Bawtry Saint Nicholas on 12 January 1898. In 1911 the family had moved to Graby Folkingham Aslackby in Lincolnshire, and they had had another daughter, Sybil. John was a farm bailiff. By 1921 he had died, as his wife Margaret had moved to East Retford and was a widow.

The Lincolnshire Echo of 16th April 1894 had an interesting story about John Harrison and an argument with the local vicar:

THE RECTOR OF **EVERTON** AND HIS PARISHIONERS.

DISORDERLY VESTRY MEETINGS.

POLICE COURT SEQUEL.

On Saturday, at the Retford Police Court, a case was heard which excited much interest in the district, in consequence of some unpleasant incidents which have occurred from time to time in public affairs connected with the parish in which the parties to the action reside. Mr. **John Harrison**, farmer, and one of the managers of the National Schools at **Everton**, near Bawtry, and Mr. Jesse J. Hayes, schoolmaster of the same village, were summoned by the rector, the Rev. William Byron Ramsey, for assaulting him at the Easter vestry meeting, held on the 5th inst. Mr. W. E. Clegg, of Sheffield, prosecuted, and Mr. T. Bescoby defended. The magistrates on the bench were Mr. W. H. Mason (in the chair), General Ruck-Keene, and Captain Otter.—The complainant said the defendant **Harrison** attended the Easter vestry meeting in the schoolroom. The meeting was extremely disorderly, and the principal person engaged in the disturbance was Mr. **John Harrison**. The interruptions were such that he was quite

UNABLE TO TRANSACT THE BUSINESS

of the meeting, and declared it adjourned until the 5th of April, when both defendants attended, and there were further disorderly interruptions, but he managed to transact the business, signed the minute-book, and closed the meeting. He proceeded to the door, and was here stopped by Mr. **Harrison**, who stood with his back against the door, and his arms folded, and told him he was not going out yet, as the meeting was not over, and he would have to go back to his desk. He demanded to be allowed to pass, and put out his hand to take hold of the handle of the door, when defendant pushed him away. He called to his churchwarden, George Hurst, to witness the obstruction, and Mr. **Harrison** again pushed his hand away. Mr. **Harrison** then mounted a form and addressed the meeting, and the defendant Hayes stood with his back to the door, and prevented complainant from passing out. He then turned to Mr. Metcalfe, a former rector and patron of the living, and asked if he approved of such disorderly conduct, and he replied, "Certainly not; I will come forward and speak." He made two or three attempts to get out, and at last Mr. Hayes opened the door a little so that

HE COULD SQUEEZE THROUGH.

Cross-examined by Mr. Bescoby, the complainant said there had been a good deal of unpleasantness of late years in the parish. Mr. Harrison's father had been churchwarden forty years. When he died he (complainant) caused the doors of the church to be locked on the day of the funeral. There had been some questions asked about the charity money, and he had been charged with having put it in his own pocket. As a matter of fact he had three or four years' charity money in his own possession. He had, however, always made a correct return to the Charity Commissioners. He had appointed a London solicitor his parish clerk.—Mr. Bescoby: I didn't think we could get so low as that.—Mr. Clegg: What? A London solicitor come down to be a parish clerk? (Laughter.) It was not because he could not get a clerk in Everton.—Mr. W. H. Metcalfe, patron of the living, said when he was vicar it had always been his custom to render an account of the charities at the Easter vestry meeting. The

DISORDER ON THIS OCCASION WAS CAUSED

by the refusal of Mr. Ramsey to allow the charities to be discussed. In his opinion the meeting had not been properly closed because it was not put to the meeting. Mr. Harrison stood up against the door and asked Mr. Ramsey to go back to the chair, but he was not there more than two minutes. He did not think the interruptions were such as to warrant Mr. Ramsey in closing the meeting. A resolution was proposed by Mr. Harrison, and seconded, but Mr. Ramsey did not put it to the meeting.—Mr. Harrison and Mr. Hayes both gave evidence, and denied that they ever pushed Mr. Ramsey's hand away from the door. They stood there, and told him the meeting had not been properly closed, and that it could be settled at once if he would go back, and put it to the meeting.—Mr. George Culley, a farmer, also corroborated, and the Bench dismissed the case.