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Dean House, Midgley

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PART VII

Early after he came to Dean House Thomas Foulds sold to the builders of Peel House Mills eight and a half days' work of land, the pieces being known as the Vicarage Bank (Brook Terrace stands on this), the Spa Holme, the Breary Bank and lower or Little Wood. Some part had already gone for the Bracken family to build The Woodlands.

Thomas Foulds had evidently a share in the small mill at Oats Royd built by his father. Several times while at Dean House he served the township as overseer (as indeed had several previous tenants), and frequently he witnessed the correctness of township accounts. When he died at the beginning of July, 1846, aged 90, he had directed that after the funeral there should be a dinner for 45 persons at the Lord Nelson Inn, Luddenden, kept by a relative, Ruth Wormald, and, wrote his undertaker, William Patchett, "we had a sixpenny glass each allowed by order of Thomas Foulds."

In 1952 and 1953 a Mrs. Mary Ellen Levett, of Hampstead, London, wrote to me that she had a painting of her great-grandmother, Frances Foulds. Behind the picture was engraved "Frances (relict of Thomas Foulds, Esq.), of Dean House, Midgley, who departed this life on Thursday the 13th April, 1865, in the 82nd year of her age." Mrs. Levett said that Mrs. Foulds was blind in her old age. Next to the portrait was a sampler made by her daughter, the writer's grandmother. Mrs. Levett added that she also possessed a blanket chest on which was inscribed "Dean House"; this belonged to her grandmother, Ellen Foulds, who became the second wife of William Crabtree Patchett, of Haufax. Continuing, Mrs. Levett wrote that she had a pedigree of the Halstead family which included Ellen Foldys, wife of Richard Foldys, of Dancer House, near Padiham, dated "the 22nd year of Elizabeth." It was believed, she added, that these Foulds came from Yorkshire.

Among the residents at Dean House, or part of it when it was two farms, were the Garnetts. This family, which emanated from Westmorland, were of note during the Civil War, but lost their estates for being Royalists. A branch settled in Sowerby and spread into every local district including Midgley and Warley where, besides living at Dean House, they occupied at various times most of the old farms and houses including Gatehouse, Height, Goose Nest, Arrowbutt Lee and others. Many of them were engaged in the

home cloth trade. In 1756 William Garnett was entered in the township accounts as buying cloth. He was overseer, house tax collector, and in 1760 he was elected Constable for Midgley.

Before leaving the Garnetts let me quote this very unusual entry among Luddenden Church baptisms: "1808, August 17, Susannah, Sarah, and Betty, of John and Susannah Garnett, Midgley, weaver, was delivered of four girls at one birth; they were all born alive, and three of them were baptised as above."

In the latter part of the last century Mr. John Murgatroyd, J.P., of Broadfold, bought the Dean House estate. In 1892 he also bought three fields adjacent to Cow Lane and the road to Booth, reaching on to Booth. These were later added to the Dean House estate. The estate remains Murgatroyd property, but it is of interest that now it is in the tenancy of Mr. Robert Midgley, a member of the oldest Midgley family. Under his direction, farming on modern lines, the farm land reaches something approaching its ancient size by the use of fields from Dean House along under Oats Royd Mills as far as Old Lane.

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(Concluded.)