

# **The History of Antony and Dorothea Gibbs & of the early years of Antony Gibbs and Sons**

**By John Arthur Gibbs - 1922**

## **CHAPTER XVII EPILOGUE OF THE FAMILY**

With Dorothea's death I have brought this family history to the limit in point of time which I set myself. It remains to say a few words in this epilogue about the subsequent history of relatives who were still alive—other than John Hucks and descendants of John Gibbs of Topsham, whose stories I have already concluded - and in the following chapter to complete the history of A. Gibbs & Sons to the end of 1820 and to round it off in another epilogue.

In 2 or 3 weeks after Dorothea's death her late husband's youngest sister Catherine died, Hardly anything has been said in these pages about Catherine since just after her mother's death in 1803. The weakness in her character referred to before had grown upon her, and she had ceased to associate much with any of the family. She had lived for years as a paying guest in different houses in Devonshire, but her brothers and sisters had still cared for and helped her. In 1816, when she was living with a Mr. and Mrs. Davis, with whom she had been since 1813 (the place is not mentioned), she became engaged to a man called Bellett Burrows, of Taunton, who was "in the commissariat," and him she married in or about August 1816 much against the wishes of her family, who warned her that they would never have any communication with him, though nothing definitely worse appears of him than that he was below them in station. Sir Vicary wrote of him in December 1818 that he "seems really to be more foolish than wicked and though there may have been much to reprehend in his conduct I think there is also something to pity." He had behaved well, at any rate in laying out what money his wife had in an annuity settled on her for her life, and in being kind to her. He was in financial difficulties in December that year, and Sir Vicary, who before Catherine's marriage had been in the habit of assisting her with money through his late brother George and of repaying to his sisters what they spent on her, wrote to his nephew George who now had the matter in hand:

I wish to have it fully understood that I am not desirous of sparing any expense which justice, or affection, or decency, or even a desire to stand fair in the eye of the world may seem to require. If any of these motives should in your opinion call upon me to make the trial whether, as she represents, a little present assistance would enable him to weather the storm, I would cheerfully make it, though I am clear it would be no more than a temporary relief.

After her death in March 1820 we hear no more of her husband.

One other death in 1820 must be mentioned, that of Henry's and Caroline's infant daughter Anne, who after Dorothea's death remained in the charge of her aunts Harriett and Anne at

Redland, and died there on 10 May. Her parents had been there in March. Caroline refers to her enforced separation from her in the following letter from Stowe, dated 6 December 1819.

We have certainly more encouragement now to hope with respect to our poor dear little girl than I had dared to indulge before we had heard such evident marks of improvement as to smile and crow. It gave me more delight than I can express when I first heard that she had really without a doubt been able to show these signs of pleasure, but I still feel notwithstanding that it is dangerous to indulge much hope.... I long to see the sweet little thing but Henry says that even if it were practicable or right for herself to be in Town it would be dangerous for my little Boy (Henry Hucks Gibbs) just beginning to take notice to be with her for fear of catching her tricks. This I can hardly conceive but I suppose he knows best and I never think of her unfortunate state without feeling the greatest thankfulness for our great good fortune in her being placed where she has every advantage of care and nursing from such dear kind friends that one has not a wish for anything beyond the success of those means which [they] are using for her recovery,

In July 1820 Henry went for a holiday to Paris taking with him his wife, her sister Mary Crawley, and his sister Anne, and leaving his little son Henry Hucks with George and Harriett at Knole. William, who was travelling home from Spain overland, was expected to join them in Paris in August, and doubtless did so.

In September 1821 Henry gave up 2 Powis Place, removing to 11 Bedford Square in London which was his home for the rest of his life. From 1822 he was a director of the London Assurance Corporation. He and George Gibbs and Robert Bright were among the chief promoters of the Great Western Railway Co. from the inception of that undertaking in 1833, and he was a director of that Company in London. He retained both his directorships and his headship of Antony Gibbs & Sons till he died (at Venice) in 1842 at the age of 56. Aldenham House, Clifton Hampden, and the other estates of the Misses Noyes came to him only a few months before his death. "His premature death alone prevented his good works from equalling in number and extent those of his younger brother William... Both brothers united fervent piety towards God with unbounded goodwill and well regulated beneficences towards men." The lease of Bedford Square was sold in 1849 by his widow Caroline, who in 1846 had gone to live at Aldenham House. She died in 1850 aged 55. Henry's 11 sons and 3 daughters were born between 1818 and 1839. The three last surviving (and the only ones who have left descendants) were the eldest son Henry Hucks, Lord Aldenham (d. 1907); Mary Dorothea (1833-1906) the wife of George Edward Adams, afterwards (1873) Cokayne, Clarenceux King of Arms, whose eldest surviving son is Lord Cullen of Ashbourne; the Rev. John Lomax Gibbs (d. 1914), my father: the head of this branch, and of the whole Gibbs family of Clyst St. George origin, now being Alban George Henry, Lord' Aldenham.

William and George Gibbs were staying at Exwick House in October 1820, and the following written by the latter thence affords an interesting illustration of William's character and of the love which he kept up all his life of his old home near Exeter.

William has lost none of his affection for this part of the world and his manner to the old servants and people of that sort whom he has seen reminded me very strongly of what you used to say of his resemblance to your dear father [Antony] in this respect, a resemblance which I am continually detecting and which gives me a sort of gratification that you can understand much better than I can express it. His friends here seem quite delighted with him and there is something so feeling and affectionate and at the

same time so hearty and cheerful in his manner to Aunt Banfill and Aunt Bell [Sibella Gibbs] that I am not surprised at their appearing so much pleased with his visit. He and his sister] Anne set off for Foxdown to-morrow.

William, after coming home in the autumn of 1820, started again for Cadiz overland in April 1821 and took his brother Joseph with him. He made a forced journey in order to be first at Cadiz with the news that Lord Cochrane, in command of the Chilian fleet transporting the "Liberating Army of Peru" which had sailed from Valparaiso on 20 Aug. 1820, had on the following 6 Nov. cut out the Spanish frigate Esmeralda from under the guns of Callao, but was just too late to turn his information to advantage. The intention was that Joseph should return home from Bayonne, but on the way they settled together that it would be preferable that he should make some stay in Spain in hopes that he would become better prepared to face the business life. Joseph, after spending some time at Madrid and Granada, rejoined William at Cadiz, and when William returned home in the spring of 1822 he entered the Gibraltar office.

During this visit to Spain William became engaged to be married to Doña Francisca (Frasquita) de la Peña, of Chiclana, near Cadiz. "She was a charming woman, very clever and cultivated and of an excellent family, great friends of his. Her letters are admirable. The question of religion stood in the way: both her family and his were averse to a mixed marriage and neither of them would leave the faith of their fathers."

William went to Spain again in January 1824, accompanied on that occasion by his sisters Harriett and Anne and by George Gibbs, and returned the same year. He does not seem to have paid another visit there till 1831, and then not again till 1853 (his last visit). In London his home was with his brother Henry, until, in 1839, he married Matilda Blanche (d. 1887), 3rd daughter of Sir Thomas Crawley Boevey (3rd Bart., 1st cousin of Caroline Gibbs).

After his marriage he occupied successively several houses in Paddington, but 16 Hyde Park Gardens there from 1851 till his death in 1875 at the age of 84. In 1844 he bought Tyntesfield in Wraxall, Somerset, for his country home. He was head of A.Gibbs & Sons after his brother Henry's till his own death, and sole partner from 1843 to 1847. He had 4 sons and daughters, born between 1840 and 1853. Some reference will be made in the next chapter to the great prosperity which came to him from A. Gibbs & Sons' business from the late 40's onwards and to the good use he made of it. His eldest son Antony Gibbs (d. 1907) and eldest grandson George Abraham Gibbs (the present owner) succeeded him successively at Tyntesfield. Henry Martin Gibbs of Barrow Court, Somerset, is his 6th child. The families derived from William Gibbs are those of Antony, Henry Martin, and of his 3rd child Alice, the wife of the Rev. Alfred Gurney.

Joseph was at home again from Spain before the middle of 1823. His stay abroad seemed at first to have cured him of the wish to leave his brothers' profession, but after his return he still found that he could not reconcile himself to office life. He went to Worcester College, Oxford, in 1824, took his degree in 1828, was ordained to Holy Orders, and took a curacy to the Rev. Neville at Hawarden in Flintshire. In 1830 Anne Noyes presented him with the perpetual curacy of Clifton Hampden. He was the first incumbent to be resident there, at any rate since a great many years, if not actually the first. He married in September 1831 Emily, daughter of Charles Vaughan, of Crickhowell, Breconshire. At first he and his wife lived in lodgings in the village, but a year or two after they entered the parsonage which Anne Noyes gave to the living, and about

13 years later the new parsonage built by Caroline Gibbs. He died in occupation of the living in 1864 aged 62, and his wife died in 1869. They had 6 sons and 3 daughters born between 1832 and 1846. The eldest branch of the families derived from him is that of his and son George Louis Monck Gibbs, the others being those of younger sons Joseph Hucks Gibbs, the Rev. George Henry Gibbs, and the Rev. William Cobham Gibbs, and of daughters Emily Harriett wife of the Venble. Archdeacon Alfred Pott, Dorothea Barnetta wife of the Rev. George Heberden, and Harriett Theresa (the latter still living) wife of Lieut. Col. James Sparrow Mordaunt.

Anne Gibbs, the stepmother of George Gibbs of Belmont, lived on at Redland, as I have already said, till her death in 1832.

George Gibbs and his wife Harriett moved their home from Redland to Knole Park in May 1820, taking with them Harriett's sister Anne, who continued to live with them till she died unmarried in 1852. In 1828 they changed to Belmont in Wraxall where they lived for the rest of their lives, George dying in 1863 aged 84, and Harriett in 1865 aged 79. They had no children, but made Belmont a second home for those of her brothers Henry and Joseph. Belmont was at first taken on lease from George Turner Seymour, but was afterwards bought with about half the estate, Seymour keeping the other half and building Tyntesfield on it. George bequeathed Belmont to go (after Harriett's death) to Joseph and Emily Gibbs for their lives, and after them to their eldest surviving son George Louis Monck Gibbs. The latter sold it in 1870 to his uncle William Gibbs who reunited it in one estate with Tyntesfield, which, as mentioned before, he had bought in 1844. George remained chief partner in his business till 1839 but then retired from taking an active part, retaining however a small share in it till his death. The business was continued by Robert and Samuel Bright and their sons after them till their firm (Gibbs, Bright & Co.) was taken over by A. Gibbs & Sons in 1881.

Lady Gibbs lived on in the house on Hayes Common till her death in 1843 at the age of 88. It will be recalled that her daughter Maria separated from her husband Major Andrew Pilkington a few months after their marriage in 1808 and returned to live with her parents, but about 1820 they came together again partly through the intervention of George Abraham Crawley. Her husband had meanwhile become Colonel and had been serving (1809-15) in Nova Scotia. Their home became Catsfield Place, near Battle, Sussex, which he bought. He was knighted (K.C.B.) in 1828. became Lieutenant-General in 1841, and died in 1853. Maria died in 1879 at the age of 93. They had two children born respectively in 1822 and 1824, Maria Georgina (who married the Rev. Burrell Hayley, rector of Catsfield) and is still living, at Catsfield Place, and Louisa Elizabeth, who married Richard Thomas Lee, of Grove Hall, Yorkshire. Both of them have descendants. The freehold of the Hayes house (now called Hayes Grove) was left by Lady Pilkington to her daughter Mrs. Lee.

Dr. Remmett, the son-in-law of George Abraham Gibbs, and the consulting physician of all the family, died in 1822 or 1823. His son Robert Remmett died at the age of 47 in 1825. The intimacy of the latter with his Gibbs cousins has been shown in these pages. He had been made solicitor to the Customs on the recommendation of Sir Vicary Gibbs, supported by the opinion of Mr. Justice Dampier, but there was something unsatisfactory about him which is not recorded but which caused George Gibbs to write on 27 November 1823; "It seems that my uncle's [Sir Vicary] memory, for which in spite of myself I have a great reverence, has suffered from an appointment which I am sure was made from the best motives." Robert was at this time applying

for a pension which seems afterwards to have been granted to him. Two letters of his of August 1825 show that he was then intending to make a home for himself and his family in the country. He was a man "of plethoric habit and rather too fond of the pleasures of the table." His eldest son Robert (1815-52) was a barrister. The eldest child of the latter, who also was named Robert, was the last male of the family. He was murdered in Mexico in 1901.

Samuel and Anne Banfill had, as had become known in the family early in 1820, had their means sadly diminished owing to a falling off in the business of the cloth factory at Exwick during the previous 3 or 4 years. Anne Banfill was beloved by all the family, but George Gibbs wrote of her in February 1820 that she could not have known the situation of her husband's business or "assuredly she could not have gone on year after year entertaining the county gentry" as she did, but now "we must acquit them both of a fault which we used to consider belonged to them, that of stinginess." William wrote of the matter in March 1820: "Poor uncle Banfill's misfortune I am truly sorry for. He has sometimes behaved improperly, but I cannot forget that he is the husband of an Aunt who is justly dear to us and that to me at least whilst a boy and ever since he has always behaved with great kindness." Banfill's firm had changed its style in 1814 from Granger & Banfill to Banfill, Shute, & Co., he and his partner Edmund Granger having quarrelled and Granger's place having been taken by George Shute & Sons, clothmakers of Crediton. The factory was advertised for sale in September 1820 but apparently without result. Banfill, Shute, & Co. struggled on, the Banfills continued to live at Exwick House, and Anne Banfill died there in 1828 at the age of 70. She never had any children. Henry Hucks Gibbs records that he remembered staying at Exwick House in 1827 and that his recollection was that the factory was still being worked by Banfill, but in what capacity he did not know.

Joanna Gibbs, George's sister, had died at Exwick House in 1823 after a final period of distressing illness and been buried in the parish (St. Thomas') churchyard. She left in her will £500 and (for life only) the interest on £2,700 to her Aunt Banfill, to whom this kind act must have been a great help.

Sibella Gibbs (who at least as late as 1820 still had her house on St. Davids Hill) seems to have been living at Exwick House when Anne Banfill died, and afterwards she remained there to keep house for her brother-in-law. A letter from Banfill to Sibella of November 1830 speaks of his just going to move to the cottage," and from other later letters it is clear that it was then that he abandoned Exwick House. In May 1832 we read that Exwick" (probably the house together with the factory) was to be offered at auction shortly. Exwick House (Antony Gibbs' old home when he was working the factory in partnership with Granger & Banfill 1786-9) no longer exists as such, but the mill of the factory is still in use, though not for cloth making, an industry which, if it did not come entirely to an end in Exeter and its outskirts with the closing of Banfill's factory, was at least by that time reduced to very small dimensions.

On leaving Exwick in 1830 Sibella Gibbs was persuaded by her nephews George and Henry Gibbs to take a house in Long Ashton, a village near Belmont on the high road thence to Bristol, and there she lived unmarried for the rest of her days. She died in 1841 aged 81. She left Banfill £100 a year. Banfill was still living in 1842. I can find no record of the date of his death.

As to the Crawley family. The Rev. Charles Crawley (uncle and father-in-law of G. Henry Gibbs) remained rector of Stowe nine-churches till his death in 1848 at the age of 92. I need not add to what I have said about his daughter Caroline Gibbs. The marriages of his daughter Anne

to her 1st cousin the Rev. John Lloyd Crawley (Boevey), and of Elizabeth to the Rev. George William Daubeny have been already mentioned. Mary and Susan never married, but Charlotte married in 1822 the Rev. William Crawley (Boevey), brother of Anne's husband, and perpetual Curate of Flaxley. There are living descendants of all the married daughters.

Turning to their brothers, Charles and George Abraham, Charles Crawley married in May 1825 Eliza Katherine, daughter of Abraham Grimes, of Coton House, Warwickshire. Charles, taking his wife with him, went to S. America in 1828 for A. Gibbs & Sons, returning in 1833. Though always loyal he was not very efficient and by a private arrangement which G. Henry and William Gibbs made with him his partnership in A. Gibbs & Sons ceased at the end of 1838, but he was still in receipt of a salary and continued nominally to occupy the position of a partner till the end of 1846. At that date A. Gibbs & Sons changed the style of their South American firm from Gibbs Crawley & Co. to William Gibbs & Co. He succeeded Geo. Henry Gibbs in 1842 as a director of the London Assurance Corporation, retiring from that post in 1865 in favour of George Louis M. Gibbs. He had built himself a house at Littlemore, a village on the road between Clifton Hampden and Oxford. He was an intimate friend there of the Rev. John Henry Newman (afterwards Cardinal), indeed it was his desire to be in close touch with the Oxford Tractarian movement which led him to settle at Littlemore. His house was eventually bought by William Gibbs, to whose grandson, George Abraham Gibbs of Tyntesfield, M.P., it now belongs. He died in 1871 aged 82 or 83 and his wife in 1881. His only surviving child, Charles Edward (1827-93), married twice and had children by each wife, 3 of whom are (1921) alive.

George Abraham Crawley (1795-1862), the Solicitor, married in 1826 Caroline (1804-75), 3rd daughter of David Powell, of Loughton, Essex. From 1839 he made his home at Fitzroy Farm, Highgate. He had 3 sons and 8 daughters of whom Edith (b. 1837) alone survives (1920), unmarried. The Rev. Charles David Crawley (b. 1835), Caroline (b. 1829), and Anne (b. 1830) were also unmarried. Those of them who married have all left descendants, viz., the Rev. Robert Townsend Crawley (b. 1832), George Baden Crawley (b. 1833), Mary (b. 1827) wife of the Rev. Henry Manning Ingram, Fanny (b. 1839) wife of the Rev. George Jelf, Agnes (b. 1841) wife of the Rev. Thomas Robinson, and Bertha (b. 1846) wife of Thomas Lowndes.