

Gasegill Chapel: A further chapter.

Gasegill Chapel was mentioned in several deeds drawn up for the Pudsay family of Bolton by Bowland between the reigns of Edward I and Edward III. They are published in the Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series Vol LVI 'Pudsay Deeds.' The chapel was dedicated to St Helen and linked with Sawley Abbey. The abbey was disbanded in 1536 during the period of Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries.

Presently it is unknown if Gasegill Chapel was still in religious use up unto the dissolution or at what period it did cease to be so. But recent evidence has come to light that points to it or its site being repurposed and becoming a smallholding or something else.

On Tuesday Aug 26th 1659 Miles Jenkinson of Gasegill Chappel in the parish of Gisburne being "sick in boddie" made his will. Probate was granted virtually six years later on Aug 10th 1665. He was probably buried at Gisburn where his late wife Marie, wife of Myles Jenkinson of Geasgill Chappil was buried in 1656, but the event was not recorded in the burial register.

Sadly also unrecorded was Miles Jenkinson's occupation or status in his will. He left no tools of his trade to family, only monetary legacies, and 'keehills' which were without description or occupant. (Likely Key Hills/ Kaye Hills at Martin Top). There is no indication Gasegill Chapel had become his land or as to who owned it.

He had a farming background. His grandfather and brother, both called William Jenkinson both farmed at Hollins, as likely did his father Robert though his will states he was of Rymmington.

It is unclear how long the Jenkinson family lived at Gasegill Chapel or what other families did before or after Miles lived there. His wife's burial is the only Gasegill Chapel entry in the register. However there is one other entry that points to them living there for several years. Miles's granddaughter was buried at Gisburn in 1642. She, unnamed, was the daughter of Robert Jenkinson of Chapell. Robert moved about a bit. He lived at Mylah and at Hollins too.

Miles's will is the only one I have come across in all the probate indexes covering Yorkshire in the 17th century, which states the testator was of Gasegill Chapel. He had local neighbours witness his will in Henry Read and Richard Brearley both of Newby, besides a Robert Jenkinson who was probably his nephew of Hollins.

No known maps exist which identify the site of the chapel or of a dwelling. But presently, based on old field names and local farmer knowledge, Ribble Valley Archaeology is conducting an investigation of a prime suspect field and digging test pits and trenches to see what lies beneath it. (The lie of the land itself and aerial photographs give no hint of any buildings ever having stood on it.) But the results are very encouraging and suggest that there could well have been a long occupation there in one form or another.

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