THE FUNERAL OF MEYRICK BANKES OF WINSTANLEY, 1827

TO live richly was good, but to die richly was of supreme importance. Such was the case in nineteenth-century England. It was especially so among "the not so great", whose funerals displayed the greatest ostentation. One would expect a lavish display for the obsequies of the really great, but for their less important brethren the spectacle was often only slightly less magnificent.

Examples of this extravagance in London were frequently seen in the long hat-bands and black gloves worn by the mourners, the nodding plumes of feathers which decorated the horses' heads and the heavy black cloak worn by the driver of the hearse. The following extract from the *Gentleman's Magazine* of March 1804 graphically describes the obsequies of an unfortunate young man who had been shot in a duel.

"At the shop of Mr Dawes, undertaker, in Dean St, Soho. . . . The covering of it [the coffin] is a beautiful crimson velvet with double rows of silver nails on the lid, besides a multitude of escutcheons and silver ornaments, a Baron's coronet is placed at the head, at the feet a smaller one, and between both a square silver plate with the arms of Camelford engraved upon it. . . . The sides of the coffin are superbly adorned with silver cherubim, coronets, handles and a variety of ornaments. The body, shrouded in white satin and laid in a leaden coffin, was placed within it preparatory to its being deposited in a vault under St Anne's church, Soho. There it can remain till it can be conveyed to Berne in Switzerland, agreably to his Lordship's desire".

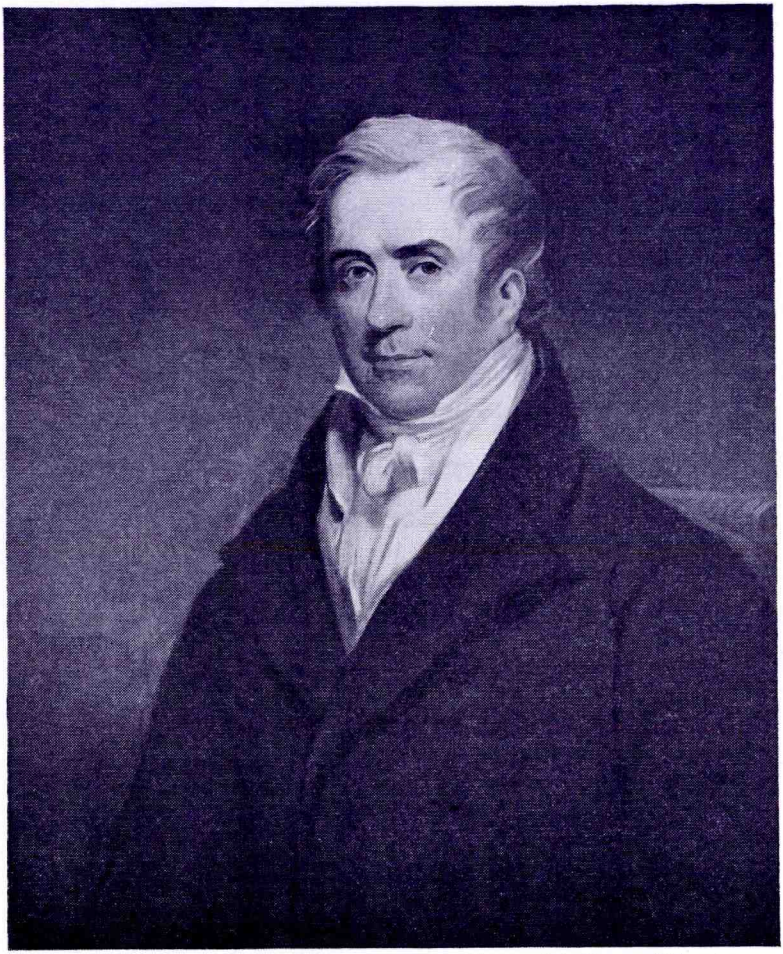
In the country, although not so magnificent as the corresponding ceremonies in London, funerals were great affairs, and it may be of some interest to examine details of one which took place at Up Holland near Wigan in 1827. The deceased was Meyrick Bankes, Esquire.

The Bankes family had been resident at Winstanley near Wigan for over two hundred years by the time that William Bankes, the then owner of the property, died without issue in 1800. Like many land-owning families of that period, the Bankes's fortunes had varied, but, on the whole they had prospered well, principally due to the coal which had been worked in and around Winstanley.

William Bankes's heir was his cousin, the Rev. Thomas Holme, curate-in-charge of Up Holland from 1758 to 1767, who, after succeeding to the estates did not survive long, and died in 1803. He and his wife, formerly Mary Meyrick, had

Photograph by Browns of Wavertree.

Plate 16. LIEUTENANT MEYRICK HOLME, 1794
Attributed to John Raphael Smith, 1752-1812.



Photograph by Browns of Wavertree.

Plate 17. MEYRICK BANKES, 1815

Copied by Samuel Mountjoy Smith in 1835 from a miniature painted by T. Hargreaves twenty years earlier.

twelve children, of whom the eldest surviving son was the Meyrick who died in 1827.

Meyrick started life as a midshipman in the Royal Navy, but appears to have left the service in the late 1790s. On the death of his father in 1803 and by the will of the late William Bankes, he assumed the name and arms of Bankes. In 1798 Meyrick married his first cousin Anne Lally, daughter of the Rev. Edward Lally, vicar of Whitegate, Cheshire. An heir was looked for in 1809, but all hopes were shattered when the poor lady died shortly after the birth of her stillborn son. In the following year Meyrick married as his second wife Maria Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Langford Brooke of Mere, Cheshire. Two sons were born, Meyrick in 1811 and Thomas in 1812.

Meyrick and his family lived at Winstanley and engaged in the usual country pursuits of the period. He carried on a considerable colliery enterprise on his own account and purchased additional land "which adjoins the publick highway which leads into the Wigan and Warrington turnpike road, and affords an easy and valuable communication by which the coal gotten in the principal estates in Winstanley and Pemberton might be brought into the market with facility and advantage". In 1812 he agreed to an extension of the lease of the Orrell collieries originally granted by his cousin to Messrs. Clarke and German in 1792. The manager of these collieries, Robert Daglish, introduced the first commerically successful steam locomotive used in the Lancashire coal-field, by which means coal was conveyed to the Leeds and Liverpool canal.

Meyrick was high sheriff for the County in 1805, and appears in the lists of commissioners of the peace in 1814 and 1820. The elder of his two sons was educated at Eton, and it was during his residence there that Meyrick rented Cromwell House, Old Brompton Road, London. Here he died after a long illness in the spring of 1827.

The fashionable firm of Gillow & Co. of Oxford Street, London managed the funeral, and the steward at Winstanley had the responsibility of making all arrangements for the arrival of the funeral cortège, which appears to have taken a fortnight to reach its destination. Instructions were conveyed to the steward by Gillow & Co. in the following letter:

"You will see to the vault at Up Holland being ready in time and everything also needful, that the clergyman is in attendance at a little before 12 o'clock. Hang the pulpit at Up Holland with black cloth (not too expensive) also the pew and pulpit at the Chapel which the family use[1] (a cloth of about 14/- a

[1] The Bankes family usually worshipped in Billinge Church. William Bankes and his wife were buried there, and Meyrick had presented a panel of the royal

yard is what we use). You will be pleased to provide 8 men as bearers for Saturday morning, also four mourning coaches with 4 horses each either from Wigan, Warrington or Liverpool, to be at the house at the latest at 10 o'clock on Saturday morning. Mr Langford Brooke wishes the horses that come from London to be stabled at the Hall, there are 14 in all, 9 of our own had better go to the nearest public house where good accommodation can be had. The funeral leaves here at 6 tomorrow morning by way of Manchester. We are sir, your obt. servant

Gillow and Co."

The coaches which followed the coffin were occupied by the following mourners:—

1. Lord Balcarres.
2. Mr. Hulton.
3. Sir Robert Leigh.
4. Major Clayton.
5. N. Starkie Esq.
6. Col. Hargreaves.
7. Thomas Woodcock Esq.
8. Mr. Hale.
9. B. Wilbraham Esq.
10. Sir P. Dickson.
11. T. Langford Brooke and the Rev. Mr. Hordens.
12. — Sherbourne Esq.
13. Mr. Wagstaff, solicitor.
14. The medical gentlemen attending the family

The account paid to Gillow & Co. reads as follows:

London.

Funeral of Meyrick Bankes Esq.,
Performed by Gillow and Co.

1827.		
Mar. 1.	To a 6′ 9″ elm coffin lined and ruffled with fine cambric muslin.	2.12.0
	To a lead Coffin, solder and workmanship.	8. 8.0
	A lead plate of Inscription.	6.0
	To a fine Cambric muslin robe, sheet and head Dress	3. 8.0
	A mattrass and Pillow	1. 5.0
	To a man to measure and 6 men with coffin	18.0
	To an oak case cover'd with fine black cloth, finished with brass nails, cherub ornaments, brass handles and gripes, burnished.	16.10.0
	To a brass plate with the Arms and Inscription engrav'd and lacker'd	3.12.0
	6 men carrying the case and moving	1. 1.0
	A man to make up	3.6
	To use of a best Pall, 14 days	3.10.0
	Do. a lid of feathers.	4. 0.0
	2 porters Dresses 15/-	1.10.0
	To a Hearse and 6 horses, 14 days 7.12.0.	106. 8.0
	Feathers and velvets for Do.	10. 5.0
	6 hearse Pages to Stonesend[2] 4/-	1. 4.0
	To a Coach and 4 horses 14 days 5.0.0.	70. 0.0
	Feathers and velvets for Do.	5. 5.0

arms to Billinge Church to commemorate the victory of Waterloo. See TRANSACTIONS, Vol. 61, p. 38.

[2] *Stonesend* occurs in several localities and indicates a point on a trunk road from which distances are measured. The Librarian of the Guildhall, London, informs me that here it probably relates either to Hyde Park Corner or to the former boundary stone at the junction of Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road.

2 coach pages and wands 3/9	7.6
To 4 Horsemen 14 days 19/-	53. 4.0
A feather man 14 days 10/-	7. 0.0
To 9 best crape Scarves 20/-	9. 0.0
36 „ Hatbands 5/-	9. 0.0
27 rich lutestring [glossy, silky fabric] Scarves gentlemen clergyman steward servants etc. 24/-	32. 8.0
To 39 silk Hatbands, the above and sundry other servants 14/-	27. 6.0
36. Do. Do. bearers, constables, clerk, sexton, servants, masons, carpenters 10/6	18.18.0
33 Do. Do. coachmen pages feathermen	8.13.4
To 30 pair silk Gloves 5/-	7.10.0
24 „ kid „ 4/3	5. 2.0
1 „ habit „ [riding habit gloves?]	3.6
48 „ beaver „ 2/6	6. 0.0
16 „ cotton „ 1/10	1. 9.4
To 2 horsemens Clokes and 3 for Coachman 6/-	1.10.0
A case wrapper	6.0
To a 1½ yard Atchievement of Arms, the frame in black flannel	6.16.6
Wall Hooks Tacks etc.	2.6
	444.3.10

Cash Paid.	
Mens beer with coffin, Case to Stonesend, Bran and Plumbers	16.4
Expenses of Company on the Road, Mens Board Wages, Room for the corpse, washing, Carriages, sitting up with corpse etc etc.	86. 5.0
Turnpikes 13.15.2 Carriage of Atchievt 8/6	14. 3.8
Stamp Duty for saddle horses[3]	4.18.0
Minister at Up Holland [Rev. John Bird]	5. 5.0
Clerk and Sexton	2. 2.0
	113.10.0
Sundry Coach hire to Brompton to take orders Postage of letters and cards of invitation	1. 0.0
	£558.13.10

[Receipt attached to the end of the account]

176 Oxford Street.

Received March 8th 1828 of the Exors of Meyrick Bankes Esq., Five hundred and fifty eight Pounds 13/- Amount of Funeral Account delivd. for Gillow and Co.

£300. 0.0 pd Aug 13 27.
258.13.0 „ Mar 8th 1828.

558.13.0

[signed] Gillow and Co.

[3] Presumably every post master was charged duty for hire of horses. See 20 Geo. III *c.* 51, and *Chambers Cyclopedia* (1786), Vol. III.

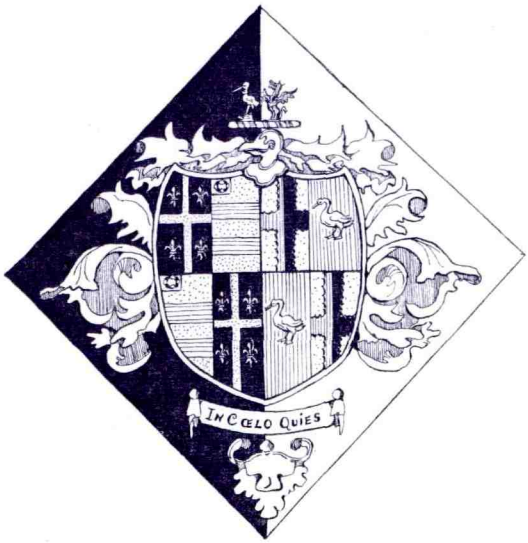


Figure 18. THE HATCHMENT OF MEYRICK BANKES

The hatchments of the Rev. Thomas Holme, Anne Bankes, his daughter-in-law, and Meyrick Bankes, his son, are all in Up Holland Church.

The arms of Bankes and Holme impaling Brooke and Langford are depicted on the hatchment of Meyrick Bankes as follows:

Bankes: *Sable, a cross or, between four fleur de lis argent, a canton of the second.*

Holme: *Or, two bars azure, on a canton vert a chaplet gules.*

Brooke: *Or, a cross engrailed party per pale gules and sable.*

Langford: *Gules, a shoveler argent.*

The Bankes family motto *Nullius in Verbe* (Not trusting in words only) gives place to *In coelo quies* (There is rest in Heaven).

After the funeral the hatchment, or achievement, was hung on the house of the deceased for the period of mourning, after which it was removed to the church where the interment had taken place.

There is a note from Gillow and Co. which reads as follows:

"London 6 March 1827.

Sir.

We shall be provided with everything except such as we have named to you. We sent off an Atchievment yesterday by coach. Our men will fix it after the funeral".

The two wives and the two sons of Meyrick Bankes are all buried at Up Holland. Maria Elizabeth, the second wife, survived her husband until 1850.

JOYCE H. M. BANKES