

Decker Hill Hall 1871

This fine old Hall which we use as a club house was the home of the Botfield family from around 1851 through to the early part of the 20th century. According to the 1871 census, the Head of the family was W.B.G. Botfield Esq. (Justice of Peace of Salop & Montgomery & Clergyman of the Church of England). He was born about 1817 in Nantmel Cheshire but there is no record of a wife although four children are recorded. They were; Alfred. T.G aged 20, an Undergraduate B&C at Oxford; Anne. A.G. aged 14, a scholar; twins Grace and Lucy, aged 17. Sister-in-Law Anne Dutton aged 45 was also is listed as residing in the house.

It appeared that Mr Botfield lived in some splendour as 12 house servants are listed. They were:

The Butler, James Green aged 52.
The Governess, Eliza W Freman aged 37
The Housekeeper, Mary Ralph, aged 37
The Ladies Maid, Emily Bull aged 19.
The Kitchen Maid., Elizabeth Belstone aged 18
The Laundry Maid, Martha Davies aged 19
The House Maid, Caroline Morgan age 25.
The Under Housemaid, Martha Stevens aged 19
The Cook, Elizabeth Murray aged 26.
The Footman, Richard Peters aged 20.
The Gardener, Edward Phillips age 23
The Coach Man, Thomas Windser aged 20

Further, the two Lodges were occupied by the Tipton and Fellows families who also had house duties.

The above information on Decker Hill hall was obtained from the 1871 census and little changed for a further 10 years but when looking at the 1891 census I find that the house is only occupied by 4 servants and W.B.G. Botfield and family are recorded as having moved to live with their eldest son who was the Vicar of Adwick-Le-Street near Doncaster Yorkshire, which coincidentally was the parish where I lived as a child.

Isn't it a small world!!!!

Eric Tatham; 2007