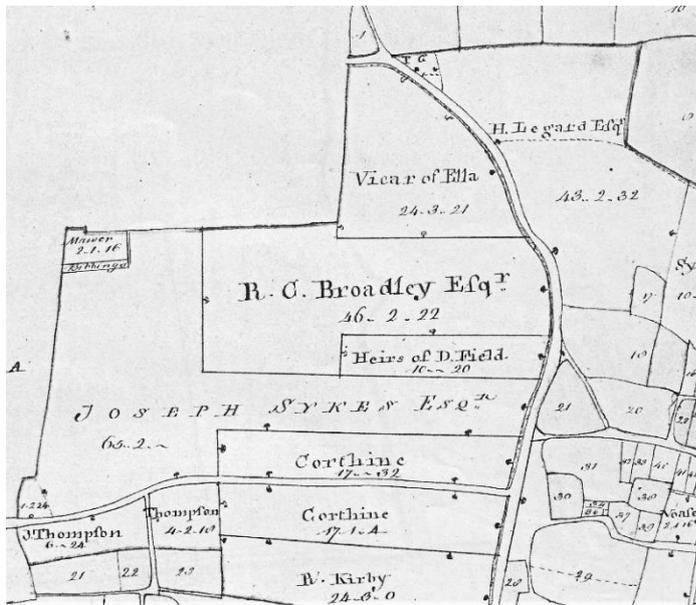


South Ella Hall, Anlaby

Part 1 – Beginnings

Introduction

Anlaby, at the turn of the 19th century was a small hamlet, about 4 miles to the west of Hull, in the parish of Kirk Ella. At that time, it was described as ‘a pleasant country village, situated at a convenient distance from Hull, and in a good air’. No doubt, this portrayal of bucolic tranquility is what had attracted a number of wealthy Hull merchants to migrate from the congestion and pollution of Hull and build large mansions in the village as a means of escape to the country. In 1808, the lure of owning his own country estate in Anlaby is what caused Robert Copeland Pease, a Hull banker, to buy a parcel of land to the west of the village on which to build his new home.



Detail from 1796 map of Enclosure of Hessele, Wolfreton, Tranby and Anlaby. The plot of land purchased by Robert Copeland Pease from R.C. Broadley is shown in the centre. From north to south it extended, roughly, between modern-day South Ella Way and Woodland Drive.

the main Hessele to Beverley Turnpike (Beverley Road) and would have been located just to the south of where South Ella United Reformed Church now stands.

The 46-acre plot he purchased had been awarded to Robert Carlile Broadley following the Enclosure of Hessele, Wolfreton, Tranby and Anlaby Act of 1796.¹ It was probably from Broadley that Pease acquired the land and it is here that he built a white brick house which he called Mount Ella, although the name was soon changed to South Ella. The house was built at the west end of the plot and would have commanded a fine view of the town of Hull from its slightly elevated position. At this time, the main carriage entrance would have been on

¹ By this Act the open fields of Hessele, Wolfreton, Tranby and Anlaby were transformed into hedged fields owned by various individuals

Both the house and the estate were enlarged during the ensuing years by later owners so that by the end of the 19th century the house was surrounded by over 100 acres of wooded parkland stretching from West Ella Road in the north to Tranby Lane in the south. By the 1920s, land on the periphery of the estate was beginning to be sold off for housing development, and after the Second World War the house fell into decay and was demolished in 1959. After this, more houses were built around the perimeter of the estate and from 1968, the central core was occupied by the buildings and sports field of Wolfreton Upper School. The school buildings were demolished in 2017 and plans to build up to 240 dwellings on the site are now being proposed.



The former grounds and sports field of Wolfreton Upper School (now demolished) were once part of the South Ella estate. This photograph, taken from South Ella Way in 2020, shows part of the original plot acquired by Robert Carlile Broadley in 1796 and then purchased by Robert Copeland Pease in 1808 (the houses in the distance on the left are on Woodland Drive).

A detailed history of the house and grounds and their development, properly concerns those who lived in it and what follows provides an account of their lives and times. Needless to say, extant records only provide snapshots their affairs and events in their lives but, nevertheless, these afford a fascinating insight into the local history of the area from the late 1700s to the present time.

Robert Carlile Broadley (d. 1812)

Robert Carlile Broadley of Ferriby Hall was a Hull banker who seems to have put much of his money into land. During the second half of the 18th century he bought property in both Hull and rural East Riding, and by the end of the century his holdings comprised 5120 acres. Amongst his many acquisitions was a 46-acre plot of land between Anlaby and Kirk Ella with access to the Hessle to Beverley turnpike road (see map on page 1). This was eventually to become the South Ella Estate.

Broadley was descended from a well-established family of wealth which gave him a position in society and provided opportunities which were only available to the privileged few. The Broadleys had made their money as merchants in Hull during the expansive years of the Industrial Revolution, from whence they moved into property and banking.

Early on in his career, Robert C. Broadley was taken into partnership by Sir Christopher Sykes in the East Riding Bank which had branches in Hull, Beverley and Malton. When Sir Christopher retired, the whole concern was carried on by Broadley until Robert Raikes joined him as partner, the firm then becoming known as 'Broadley and Raikes'. It operated under this name from 1801-1805.

In 1807, Broadley suffered a number of financial reverses and he may have sold the land in Anlaby to Robert C. Pease to recoup some of his losses.

His own country seat was at Ferriby Hall, which he inherited in 1784 and he lived there until his death in 1812 at which time the house passed to his nephew, Revd. Thomas Broadley.

Robert Copeland Pease (1747-1835)

Robert Copeland Pease was the founder of the South Ella Estate and it was he who began to build a grand mansion on land purchased from Robert C. Broadley in 1807 or 1808. He was the grandson of Joseph Pease who became Hull's first professional banker and the story begins with him.



Joseph Pease (d. 1778), the grandfather of Robert Copeland Pease.

In 1708, Joseph's father, who was in business in Amsterdam, sent him to England to establish a family business in London. Although unsuccessful in London, he went on to Hull where he was to found a business empire. Backed by the Cliffords, business associates in Amsterdam, Joseph established himself in High Street, the traditional home of Hull's business, shipping and trading concerns. Here he found himself a site with a house and access to the river and docking facilities, and enough room to construct warehouses (two of which are still standing, though converted to residential

apartments). From there he established the family in whaling, milling, shipping, lead, paint and whiting manufacturing, underwriting and, eventually, banking.

In 1717, Joseph married Mary Turner and they had four children in a, sadly, all too short marriage: Robert, Joseph, Hester and Mary. Mary died in 1728 and Joseph lived on as a widower for another fifty years. Of his children only Mary, the younger daughter, had a legitimate child. Joseph died in infancy and Hester, though married had no children. But what of Robert, the eldest son, who stood to inherit when his father died? Robert never married but did have an illegitimate son with Margaret Copeland who was named Robert Copeland Pease. Why Robert did not marry Margaret and make an honest woman out of her, despite describing her as 'my valuable friend Miss Copeland' and declaring that Margaret Copeland 'hath been and is an honest and civill mayden', is not known. Little else can be discovered about Margaret's family background.

In 1754, Joseph Pease established what is believed to be Yorkshire's first bank in partnership with his eldest son, Robert (father of Robert Copeland Pease), who predeceased his father in 1770. When Joseph Pease died in 1778, he left an estate of £80,000 and a business empire valued at half a million pounds and a legacy as being "one of the greatest entrepreneurs of the eighteenth century".

Robert Copeland Pease, Joseph's illegitimate, but eldest, grandson was educated at Pocklington School, although it is said that due to his family's chagrin at his being born on the wrong side of the blanket, he was 'hidden away' until he was eleven years old. Following his education, it seems that Robert Copeland Pease was dispatched to various parts of the growing business empire of the Pease family. In 1774, he was to be found in Haarlem and, in 1777, Amsterdam from where he wrote letters to his grandfather, Joseph.

Robert Copeland Pease, being the son of Joseph Pease's eldest son, Robert, might have expected to inherit his grandfather's fortune after Joseph died in 1778 (his father having already died in 1770). However, because of his illegitimacy this was not to be. Instead, Joseph's fortune descended to Joseph Robinson Pease, the only surviving son of Joseph's daughter, Mary, who had married Robert Robinson, an industrialist from Manchester. This fact possibly influenced the next few decades of Robert Copeland Pease's life.

By the 1780s, Robert Copeland Pease was back in England, writing letters to his cousin, Joseph Robinson Pease, from London and Guildford. He had good reason to be in the latter town as, on 28th October 1782, he married Sarah Elizabeth

Haydon (b. 1754, Southwark), daughter of William Haydon, banker, and his wife, Jane, of Guildford. The ceremony took place at St. Nicholas Church, Guildford, with his cousin, Joseph Robinson Pease, as witness. Following their marriage, they had three sons, namely, Robert Haydon (b. 19th Dec. 1786; d. 13th Jul 1807), William (b. 14th Apr. 1789; d. 26th Dec. 1789) and Henry (b. 24th Jan. 1795). Both William and Henry were baptised in non-conformist chapels in Hull, William at Bowlalley Lane Chapel (Presbyterian) and Henry at Holborn Street Chapel (Congregational).

Where the couple and their young family lived during the first decade of their married life is not known, although for part of that time, at least, they could have been in Kirk Ella. However, by 1795, Robert Copeland Pease and his family were



Kirk Ella House

certainly resident in the village, where they were to be found occupying Kirk Ella House on Town Street (now Church Lane), which Pease had acquired from William Williamson. In 1797, he bought two acres of land opposite, on the north side of the street, and on this proceeded to erect stabling sufficient to house ten

horses, three carriage houses and a harness room with chambers for corn and hay. All were arranged around three sides of a cobbled yard. The entrance was through a brick wall with stone facing alongside the road. Maybe the cobbled entrance to the house now standing opposite Kirk Ella House on the corner of Church Lane and St. Andrew's Mount is a remnant.

Although brought up in a fine tradition, Robert's career in the family firm was somewhat erratic. Robert was described as unstable, with 'a fine line in flattery, uninhibited by any respect for truth' and it appears he made no bones about joining a company whose partners had defrauded his grandfather. He had joined a relative, another Robert Pease, in his banking business in 1793, which then began to trade under the name Pease, Harrison and Pease. In reality, Thomas Harrison, was not a member of the partnership. On an earlier occasion, Harrison had misled Robert Pease about mounting debts in the business and had been quietly dismissed. He had been replaced as a partner by Robert Copeland Pease. Harrison had not taken kindly to his dismissal and was 'busy perfecting another underhand scheme'. In this, it seems that he was in league with Robert Copeland Pease and large amounts of money were being siphoned off into Harrison's

brother's business. This scheme was discovered in 1795 and R.C. Pease was 'cast adrift' for his misdemeanours being described as 'a person highly improper to be introduced into a bank' and a 'spendthrift and gambler, owing almost all he had to the generosity of his cousin'. He did, however, receive a payoff of £2,500.

There was more to come. Both Harrison and Robert Copeland Pease were dissatisfied with their treatment and determined to exact revenge. Henry Bedford was also unhappy that his proposal to become a profit-sharing partner in Pease, Harrison & Pease was not accepted. Harrison and Samuel Nicholson set up a new bank and brought in Robert Copeland Pease and Bedford to trade under the name of Harrison, Pease and Co., the name being deliberately chosen to cause confusion and undermine the original Pease bank. Notwithstanding, the new venture became successful and continued to trade until the middle of the nineteenth century. The business was initially established at 183 High Street, Hull where it remained until about 1815, when it moved to premises at the corner of Parliament Street and Whitefriargate. It was around this time that Henry Pease, Robert's son, joined the business.

Back in Kirk Ella, shortly after the completion of the stables and coach house, Robert Copeland Pease's wife suffered a lingering illness and Sarah Elizabeth Pease died on 5th April 1800. Her funeral took place on the 11th at St. Andrew's Church, Kirk Ella, although her body was laid to rest, some months later, 200 miles away in the small village of Layer de la Haye, near Colchester in Essex. A family connection with this part of the country has yet to be established, although we will see, at the end of this story, a connection there must have been.

By the year following his wife's death, Robert Copeland Pease had gained both a new house and a new wife. On 6th June 1801, just over a year after Sarah Elizabeth died, he married Elizabeth Richardson, daughter of Rowland Richardson of Streatham, at St. Leonard's Church, Streatham, Surrey. He had not moved far to a new marital home, as The Old Hall in Kirk



The Old Hall, Kirk Ella

Ella, where he and his new bride, Elizabeth, settled was next door to Kirk Ella House. He bought The Old Hall from the trustees of Francis Bine, the previous occupant who had died in 1787. At the same time, he retained possession of Kirk

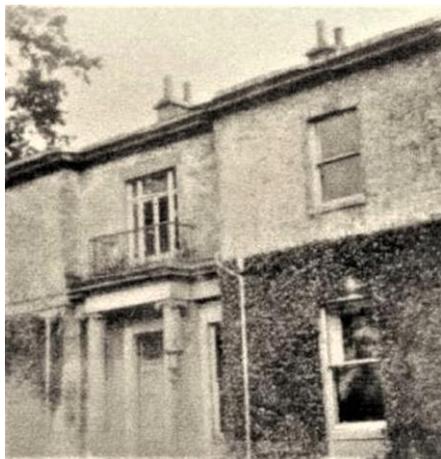
Ella House, which he possibly rented out for around five years, as in 1806 he sold The Old Hall to Matthew Dobson, Hull brewer, and moved back into Kirk Ella House where he and his family lived until 1808.

In 1806, the banking business that R.C. Pease had established with Robert Harrison and Henry Bedford ten years earlier took on James Kiero Watson as an additional partner and, later, Thomas Bentley Locke joined the partnership.

Meanwhile, at Kirk Ella House, on 10th October 1807, a son, Frederick, was born to Robert and Elizabeth Pease. His baptism took place in a Unitarian chapel in Bowlalley Lane. His cousin, Joseph Robinson Pease was a leading Unitarian in Hull, which possibly influenced Robert to associate himself with this particular branch of the church.

However, a time of joy at the birth of another son was soon to be replaced by sadness, as Robert Haydon Pease, Robert's eldest son from his previous marriage, died in Exmouth, Devon, on 13th July 1807 at the age of 21. This is the first reference to an intriguing series of connections with this area of Devon.

Also, in 1807, his cousin, Joseph Robinson Pease died, reportedly leaving at least £140,000, mainly in property. Whether any of this money filtered down to Robert Copeland Pease is not known, but in the same year, or in 1808, Robert Copeland Pease purchased 46 acres of land in Anlaby from Robert Carlile Broadley. As we have seen already (see page 1), this plot of land lay to the west



South Ella Hall (date unknown)

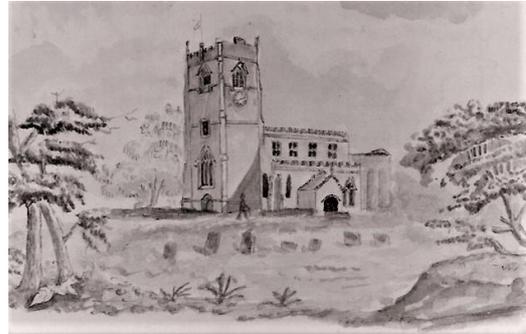
This rather blurred image appears to be the only extant picture of the house.

of the Hessele to Beverley turnpike and comprised a green-field site for Robert to establish his own personal estate and build his dream home, which was eventually to become known as South Ella. At the same time, he sold Kirk Ella House to Joseph Egginton, a Hull merchant, 'with the outhouses, garden ground and appurtenances thereto belonging', he excepted only 'the pew in the parish church, anciently belonging to the said messuage', which he then attached to the much grander house he was building for himself half a mile south. Clearly, despite his apparent leaning

towards non-conformism, Robert Copeland Pease still wished to keep his ties to the Anglican church alive.

And so, it was that in 1808, Robert and Elizabeth Pease moved into their brand-new house, built in striking white brick, with the infant Frederick and twelve-year old Henry. The house was initially known as Mount Ella or more simply as The Mount, only later becoming known as South Ella.

The family had not been settled into their new surroundings very long before Robert became a widower for the second time when Elizabeth died in 1809. Her funeral took place at St. Andrew's Church on 21st April and, although no headstone or memorial survives, we are left to assume her final resting place was in Kirk Ella churchyard.



St. Andrew's Church, Kirk Ella, as it would have looked in 1809 at the time of the death of Elizabeth Pease. The church assumed its present appearance, after extensive renovation, in 1860.

Shortly before Elizabeth died, their new home suffered a break-in on 14th March, during which some silver was stolen together with a lantern. The thieves then went on to the house of a Mrs. Middleton, also in Kirk Ella, where they broke open a small, portable desk, stole 13 guineas, some silver, a pair of boots and a great coat, before leaving the lantern and making off. It is not known whether the thieves were ever apprehended.

It took Robert C. Pease just over three years after the death of his second wife, Elizabeth, to find another new wife. Thus, in 1812 on 14th October, he was before the altar again at St. Oswald's Church, Sowerby-by-Thirsk, with Ann Brooke, the daughter of J. Brooke of Sowerby, on his left arm. By this time, he was sixty-five years old and she thirty-five years his junior. Ann returned to South Ella to become step-mother to the teenage Henry and six-year old Frederick.

On 16th April 1817, the name of Robert Copeland Pease appears in the Proceedings of the Old Bailey in a case involving mail theft. In this case, Robert C. Pease was one of a number of victims of the alleged felony. The case involved a number of bills of payment sent by mail to London, addressed to Sir Charles Price & Co. The package was duly despatched from the post office in Hull but before it reached its intended destination was intercepted by one, Thomas Cosham Brown, who attempted to encash one of the bills valued at £195. His crime was discovered and he was hauled before a jury at The Old Bailey. It seems that Robert Copeland Pease was not present at the trial but was represented by his son, Henry, who had now joined his business. Henry had been the one who



Family crest of Robert Copeland Pease.

A Leopard's Head Gardant, Couped At The Neck, Collared Az., Holding In The Mouth A Sword Fesseways Ppr.

had actually entered the bills in Hull and was one of the witnesses for the prosecution. Brown was found guilty and, although the court was adjourned on a technicality, on 12th January 1821 Brown was eventually sentenced to transportation for seven years.

It is also in 1817, that we learn that Robert Coupland Pease had been elevated to the rank of Baronet, although how long he had held this title is a matter for further research. His family crest can be seen to the left.

In November 1820, the following notice appeared in The London Gazette:

Notice is hereby given that the Partnership subsisting between the undersigned Robert Pease, Robert Harrison, James Kiero Watson, Henry Pease and Thomas Bentley Locke in the business of Bankers at the Town of Kingston upon Hull was so far only as the share or interest of the said Robert Pease and Henry Pease therein this day dissolved by consent and the same business will hereafter be by the said Robert Harrison James Kiero Watson and Bentley Locke on their own account.

Dated this 3d of November 1820

Robt C Pease Ro Harrison JK Watson Henry Pease Tho B Locke

On 3rd November 1820, Robert Copeland Pease and his son, Henry, both resigned their positions as partners of the bank, and a month later R.C. Pease and his son, Henry, were members of a consortium conveying an estate in Thorpe Bassett and Scagglethorpe for £7,000. It looked as though Robert Pease was winding down his affairs in Yorkshire. By now, he was probably 73 years of age and looking to retire.

Soon after these transactions, and maybe others, the Hull Advertiser announced on 12th January 1821,

The sale of effects of R.C. Pease who is removing from Hull. A coach will begin to run on Monday next [15th January] at 9 a.m. from Mr. Foster's, Land of Green Ginger, to Mount Ella, and return to Hull at 3 p.m. each day during the view and sale, 17th – 22nd January 1821

R. C. Pease first sold his furniture and effects and then his house and estate at Mount Ella to John Broadley, a Hull solicitor, and moved lock, stock and barrel to the village of Ottery St. Mary, near Exeter, in Devon. Why he chose to retire

to such a distant location is somewhat unclear, but a connection with Devon is suggested by the fact that his eldest son, Robert Haydon, had died in nearby Exmouth in 1807. It is also interesting to note that amongst those who witnessed the Thorpe Bassett and Scagglethorpe transaction were W.H. Fryer and J.H. Paul, accountants, both of Exeter. Of further intrigue is that a Frederick Pease of Heavitree, near Exeter, married Mary McGregor at St. Martin, Exeter, by licence on 11th October 1834. Was this R.C. Pease's youngest son from his second marriage? Frederick would have been 27 years of age in 1834.

Henry Pease, Robert's son, rejoined Harrison, Watson & Locke in 1823, but it seems that Robert Copeland Pease lived out his days at Ottery St. Mary. However, there is a final twist to the story. Robert died at Ottery St. Mary on 30th August 1834, but was buried some 250 miles away in the village of Rivenhall, near Colchester, in Essex, five months later on 28th January 1835. There are no extant records available to clarify why his final resting place was the churchyard of St. Mary and All Saints Church, Rivenhall, but there are some tantalising clues.

We have already seen that his first wife, Sarah Elizabeth, who died in 1800 was buried in the churchyard in the village of Layer de la Haye in Essex, only five miles distant from Rivenhall. There is also some scant evidence that his mother, Margaret Copeland, may have come from this area but on her, as we have seen, the trail seems to have gone cold.

What became of Robert's wife, Ann, widowed at the age of 53, is not known but we can say is that she lived on to the ripe old age of 98, her death being recorded in the Registration District of Tadcaster in 1879.

The story of the life of the builder and first resident of South Ella had many twists and turns and there are still many mysteries to solve – the connections to Devon and Essex, and the relationship of his father, Robert Pease, with his mother, Margaret Copeland, are amongst the most intriguing. However, our story of Robert Copeland Pease must now come to an end.