



THE HISTORY OF THE HUDDLESTON FAMILY by Tristram Frederick Croft Huddleston (1848 – 1936)

I have been requested to put together what may occur to me as most likely to interest relations in New Zealand, and I do this willingly on the understanding that the following account of ourselves does not profess to be complete or exhaustive.

1. THE CROFTS

The Crofts were a Yorkshire family from Leeds. Two centuries ago they were in a partnership, as silk mercers, with Huddlestons of Lincolnshire, which ended about 1745. My great-grandfather, James Croft was a Freeman of the Goldsmiths Guild, in which Company I am informed by their clerk, I may still take up, for a consideration, the lapsed 'freedom'. A similar privilege may, for all I know, belong to other descendants of our ancestor.

He had also a vote for the City of Westminster, and all his connections were 'Whig', I do not doubt that he exercised this right in favour of Charles James Fox and against the government candidate.

This great-grandfather married an heiress, Elizabeth Mosely and was living at 'Bath' when his portrait and that of his eldest daughter, Deborah, were painted by Lemuel Abbott. The one picture represents a typical citizen of dignified respect, the other a graceful girl of 27 in a Gainsborough hat. We have also miniatures of Deborah, and her early death was a great blow to a large family, whose mother had died some years previously. Her place was taken by an aunt, Frances Markham (nee Croft), the widow of Dr. Robert Markham, Chaplain to George III.

My grandfather, George Croft, was the second son, and the godson of his father's old partner, George Huddleston, whose name and property he inherited in 1819.

II. THE HUDDLESTONS

This brings me to the Huddlestons. The godfather bore the arms of the well-known Lords of Millom Castle, in Cumberland, a branch of whom settled in Lincoln, where several Huddlestons are recorded as Mayors. They held land in the same County, sold by my own father in 1835. My own name, Tristram, appears as far back as the time of Henry VII, whose eldest son was Arthur and it is my fancy that such names were due to a cult of the Round table in compliment to the Brittany connections of the King. My grandfather, George Huddleston, and his brother Tristram were partners, and when Anne, Tristram's daughter, married Richard Jervoise of Herriard in Hampshire, the gossip in the Gentleman's Magazine gives her dowry as 12,000 pounds. George Huddleston's father was the Steward of the last Earl of Rockingham of Rockingham Castle, and I append the last wishes of his mother, lady Sondes, 'to be delivered after death';

"In my letter I this day wrote to be given to Lewis, if I dye, I desire he will change his Governour, Mr. Daffas (Bathhurst), keep out of Tory principles, and to the Church of England, avoid the errors of the other; follow his wise father's principles and his own mind as he did who had great opinion of Mr. Huddleston's honest and faithfull Service and so have I. Febye. 12, O.S."

There is in my possession a double-handed silver cup, on which are inscribed the arms of Huddleston, and 'E dono Ludovici Comititis de Rockingham'.

Apropos of this old family, it would be well to record what Professor Skeat, the well known Anglo Saxon Scholar, told me about the probable origin of the name. It denotes, he thought, the seat (ton) of Huddil, or Little Hudda, a name very frequent in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. This 'seat' may or may not have been the famous Huddleston Quarry, near Tadcaster in Yorkshire, which still appears in Carey's maps as Huddleston Park, the limestone from which, known as agnesian, was employed in the building of York Minster, King's College Chapel, the Chapel Royal at Windsor and King Henry the Seventh's Chapel at Westminster. When my own College Chapel, for many years incomplete, was finished it was

with a less beautiful if more durable stone from Northhamptonshire. By that time the Yorkshire Quarry had been exhausted.

The old Huddleston crest is interesting. It is a scalp, held up by two mailed arms. The legend is that the Knight of Millom had been taken prisoner in Palestine, and lay bound in a dungeon, with his long hair fastened to a beam. Him a fair Saracen loved, and in the darkness of the dungeon and in the agitation of her feelings she not only cut her knight's bonds, but scalped him withal. How long they lived happily together at Millom is not known; but this huge Castle on the Cumberland coast, - (a refuge from Scottish inroads, like Brougham and Wordsworth's Peele Castle) fell on evil days. In the Civil War it was stoutly held for King Charles, and as stoutly battered by the North Country Parliamentarians. Its owners were heavily fined as Malignants, and they themselves completed their downfall by unfortunate speculations in iron minings. Its last heiress married Sir Hedworth Williamson who sold all to the Lowthers.

III. THE HUDDLESTONS OF HUTTON JOHN:

Two branches of the old stock have special interest for us in Hutton John and Sawston. One of the Millom Huddlestons married the heiress of the Huttons, and their descendants still reside at their picturesque home on the Eden, a few miles from Greystoke in Cumberland. Father John Huddleston (1608-98), the 'Benedictine monk, whose loyalty in aiding to save King Charles II after Worcester is recorded in Clarendon, was the son of Joseph, who bought Hutton John from his uncle and was first cousin to William Huddlestone then owner of Millom Castle. After the Restoration the Father's name was always exempted from prosecution, and it is recorded in all the histories how on the king's death-bed, he was brought in to administer the last sacraments.

Here let me note that there is no confirmation whatsoever for the assertion by Macauley that Huddleston was an ignorant and illiterate preist (see Dictionary of National Biography). The Hudlestons of Hutton John, as they elect to spell the name, have been chiefly conspicuous for service in India. About 1894 I wrote on behalf of the Unionist Association of Cambridge to Sir Henry Lawrence inviting him to become a candidate for East Cambs, and Lady Lawrence began her answer, - 'Are you related to Governor Huddleston who sent out, as cadets, the six heroic brothers?) The Huddlestons may claim therefore, indirectly, to have saved India.

Curiously, my sister Frances Croft Huddleston, married Colonel Josiah Hudleston of the Madras Staff Corps, first cousin to the owner of Hutton John, and I have often answered when asked if I had any blood-connection with the Huddlestons of Sawston, "No, but my nephew has".

IV THE HUDDLESTONS OF SAWSTON:

Let me now take up this other branch from Millom. In the Wars of the Roses one of the Millom Huddlestons won distinction on the Yorkist side, and received for his reward an heiress of the Nevilles, Lady Isabel, niece of the Kingmaker, Warwick. He took up his abode at Sawston about six miles from Cambridge, and it was in this house that Mary Tudor, flying from London after her brother's death, rested on her way to Framlingham and her adherents in East Anglia. Thereupon the populace at Cambridge which was then very Protestant, and as now, quite ready for a riot, sallied out and burnt Sawston Hall. Perhaps we need not regret this, for otherwise the beautiful mansion, erected out of the ruins of Cambridge Castle

granted by Queen Mary in compensation, might not have been erected, with its baronial hall, graceful Tudor amenities and 'Priest's Hole.'

And Sawston too has its romance, much less mythical than that of the Crusader Knight of Millom Castle. In the early fifties of the last century, Ferdinand Huddleston, the young heir to Sawston, was in high society at Paris, and became engaged to the beautiful and accomplished Eugenie de Montijo - half Spanish, half Scottish. But no less a personage intervened than Louis Napoleon himself; and Huddleston like Gibbon, sighed as a lover and submitted as a philosopher, - to be consoled by the Empress with the hand of one of her most charming maids of honour, who alas, did not long survive her marriage with him.

V. THE CROFT HUDDLESTONS:

But to revert to George Huddleston (nee Croft) he married most happily Elizabeth, daughter of Peter Gauntlett of Winchester who was uncle to Dr. Howley, Archbishop of Canterbury. When the nephew gave another uncle, Dr. Samuel Gauntlett, Warden of New College, Oxford, some honorary position under him, wits like Sidney Smith called it a case of inverted nepotism, and it is worth while to quote Sidney himself on his brother Wykhamist:-

"I was at school and college with the Archbishop of Canterbury. Fifty-three years ago he knocked me down with the chessboard for check-mating him - and now he is attempting to take away my patronage. I believe these are the only two acts of violence he ever committed in his life; the interval has been one of gentleness, kindness, and the most amiable and high-principled courtesy to his clergy."
(Letter to Archdeacon Singleton)

When Sir Walter and his daughter Anne Scott visited London, and all society vied in attentions to them, Dr Howley, then Bishop of London, was often of the company, and Scott's dictum, given in his Dairy, may be remembered /'The Whigs against the Wits, for a guinea.' But Scott, naturally enough preferred legal Wigs to episcopal Wigs. To me lawyers stories show too much the seamy side of human nature. Many have seen the picture where in the early hours of the morning the Archbishop and Lord Chamberlain kneel before the girl Queen Victoria to announce her accession to the throne. My grandmother had a brother Samuel, captain in the 29th. Regiment who was mortally wounded at Talavera, and after his death in the town, was carried back by his comrades to be buried on the hill they had so victoriously held.

VI. THE DICKENS:

There are many sisters also whence alliances with Atherleys, Evelegghs, Forrests, Hills - all amiable. I remember specially Capt. J.H. Forrest, whose portrait is in the Army and Navy Club as its oldest member who was Chief Constable of Hampshire. His daughter Christina still lives at Bournemouth.

Many too were the children of George and Elizabeth. I will take the daughters first; Caroline (1816-1859) married Dr. Aldersey Dicken (1794-1879) Fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge, and the successful Headmaster of the famous West Country School, 'Blundell's', Tiverton, whence came Archbishop Temple, who always spoke warmly of Uncle Aldersey Their daughter Florence (1848-1910) married Canon Herbert Stratham (1842-1922),

And their only son, Purefoy, is the Rector of Purley, an important benefice in the Metropolitan area; Captain Rowland Dicken, R.N., (1845-1923), Married Charlette Dyer, and their eldest son, Alldersey, fell in the War.

Admiral Charles Gauntlett Dicken married, (1) Christina Cornish and (2) Ada, daughter of General Byron, collateral to the family of Lord Byron. His eldest son Vernon, after taking, like his grandfather, high Honours at Cambridge, has now retired from the Egyptian Civil Service, and is acting as Administrator of the Tangier Zone under the Sultan. His brother, Commander Edward Dicken, O.B.E., D.S.C., R.N., has just vacated the post of Naval Attache at Paris. His half-brother John Alldersey, also did good service in the War, and has now retired from the Navy. Edith still resides at Torquay, transmitting to all her nephews and nieces the love and devotion she herself and her sisters received from her own maiden Aunts Elizabeth, Mary-Anne, Frances and Emma Huddleston in their London or Exeter homes.

VII. THE CROMWELLS

Their brother, Thomas Huddleston, married Mary Esther, nee Russell, grand-daughter of the last Oliver Cromwell, and lineal descendant of the 'Protector's son, Henry (1628 – 1674), Deputy of Ireland. After her husband's death my aunt Mary Esther lived in a house in Bishopsteignton, Devon, where the family pictures were stored in trust for the heir of the Cromwells, Paul Cromwell Bush. It is useless to speculate what might have happened if the capable Henry succeeded to the Protectorship and not the weak 'Tumble-down Dick'. In romantic moments one even imagined Augusta Burn and her sister, Oliveria Prescott, as Royal Princesses. But why lug these ladies in? Because it was at Robert Burns' house in Cambridge that amongst his other old Trinity pupils, I met the Bishop of Nelson, N.Z., who was never tired of praising cousin Maud Huddleston. I never saw my Uncle Purefoy, who married my cousin Frances Gay of Thurning Hall, Norfolk. Nor did I ever know James who emigrated to Canada, nor as far as I remember, Frederick, who emigrated to New Zealand.

VIII. THE LEES

There remain the two brothers, George and Peter. George, my father was at Winchester School and Merton College, Oxford. Peter was at Rugby, and like Thomas, became a Barrister. Both married sisters, Anne and Elizabeth, daughters of Major William Lee (1762-1845) of Upwellin the Isle of Ely. His eldest daughter, Mary, had married James Gay, formerly of the Ceylon Civil Service, who had purchased Thurning Hall from the Elwins, where his granddaughter, Rose Gay is still living.

My grandfather is associated with one of the saddest epochs of English rural history. In May, 1816, the year after Waterloo, the price of wheat rose to 8 pounds the quarter, and that of bread in proportion, and the poor labourers mustered together in tumultuous despair. Major Lee commanded a troop of the Norfolk Yeomanry Cavalry at his home about midway between Wisbech and Downham. At both towns there were disturbances. Taking his troops to Wisbech first, he pacified the rioters and at once rode back to the Norfolk town, where the labourers held the sitting Magistrates as hostages. Ordering his troopers to use only the back of their swords, he secured a parley, after which it was arranged that all should disperse, wages be raised and that bygones should be bygones. His tactful and humane action, so unlike the stupid and brutal conduct of so many local and military authorities at the time, was warmly welcomed by the Government, and Lee received a letter of thanks from the

Prince Regent with the offer of a Baronetcy. As he had no son, he declined this and was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant for Norfolk.

IX. HUDDLESTONS OF HAMPSHIRE.

My father married in 1832 - a year associated in rural England not so much with the Great Reform Bill as with the Great Cholera, and won the respect and affection of his parishioners by returning at once from his honeymoon on the outbreak of the pestilence. He built a house in Upwell, but on the death of his father-in-law moved in 1846 to Tunworth Rectory in Hampshire, presented to him by the ancestral friend of the family, George Purefoy Jervoise of Herriard House. Here he lived until 1877, surviving my mother by nine years. Her place was taken by their eldest daughter Anne, who, as in earlier generations, with the help of unmarried sisters, lovingly cared for the children of her sister Frances until they too were settled in life.

A. FRANCES HUDLESTON

Frances, as stated above, married Colonel Josiah Hudleston (Colonel of the Madras Staff Corps) of the Hutton John family. Of their children, Francis Hudleston, C.B.E., is the Librarian of the War Office. Frances published two books of military history written from a humorous angle. These had a wide sale in U.S.A. In the office library there is a tablet to his memory on which he is described as 'Historian, Scholar and wit, of infinite jest and most excellent fancy'. Eleanor married George Townsend Warner, Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, and master at Harrow, and their only daughter, Sylvia, is well known in the musical and literary world. Winifred married Joseph Gerald Pease, C.B.E., the Umpire, under the Unemployment Insurance Acts and Reader in Common Law to the Council of Legal Education. Dorothea married the well known Essayist Arthur Machen.

B. ANNE E.C. HUDDLESTON

Their devoted Aunt Anne died last year (1924) in our Cambridge home at the age of 91. (This Aunt Anne was a skilled embroideress and Winifred Pease had an ancient four-poster bed with curtains embroidered in Jacobean style of Aunt Anne.) Caroline also died at our Cambridge home last July, aged 86 and Mary, now 91, survives with Ellen Fraser and myself. We had sold our share of the Upwell Estate by 1908, but we maintained the friendliest relations with our old Agent, J.F. Balding, and on September 1st. 1923, my cousin Ellen Fraser and myself paid him and his wife a final visit. He was 90 and Mrs. Balding 98.

Like my sister, she retained strong and active powers, could still read and enjoy reading, and do fine needlework. (Anne passed on her love of fine needlework to her great-niece, Joan, only child of Francis Huddleston, the War Office Librarian. Joan obtained a diploma in Fine Arts at Reading University and certificate in embroidery. She married Graham Hyde, youngest son of Capt. John Francis Hyde, of Hyde End, Berkshire. They went to live in N.Z. (1935). My great Aunt, Dorcas Lee (1769-1832) was similarly active and skilful. So it was settled that in honour of Dorcas each should do a piece of work for the other for their next birthdays. Anne sent a charming tea-cloth, and Mrs. Balding a beautifully worked bag, which now holds a letter from the husband telling how he and his wife had voted

at the General Election of 1924, and a copy of the telegram sent by the King the next month congratulating Mrs. Balding on her completing her century.

C. GEORGE C. HUDDLESTON:

My older brother, George, (1837-1896) was a King's scholar, at Eton, when he left for Balliol College, Oxford. Here he was in the boat which in 1855 went head of the river. He joined the 13th. Hussars, and on the Regiment as Lieut. Colonel he was appointed Adjutant to the Yeomanry Regiment of Montgomeryshire, and resided near Welshpool, of which Borough he was twice Mayor. He married the only daughter of W.N. Massey, Finance Minister of India and Historian of England under George III.

D. F.F.C. HUDDLESTON:

I was myself also a King' scholar at Eton and in 1867 was Captain of the school and Newcastle Scholar. To this I accidentally owe my best chance of a modicum of immortality. It was in this year that the College was naming the various new streets then completed on their Primrose Hill property, and my name was given to one, and survived when the streets were renamed. I had forgotten all about it when a friend told me he had felt quite at home strolling about the old names; but any pride I might have felt was somewhat dashed when I read the very next morning that an atrocious murder had been perpetrated in Huddleston Road, N.W. I came up from Eton to King's College, Cambridge, as Scholar, and for the six Years 1868-73 rowed stroke to our boat which went up from, 23rd to 8th on the river. After my degree I was elected Fellow the same year, and subsequently Lecturer and Bursar.

X. THE CHATAWAYS:

I resigned service in the College on my marriage in 1879, with Bessie Drinkwater, second daughter of Rev. James Chataway of Rotherick in Hampshire. Her eldest Sister, Ethel, married Charles Moberly Bell, Manager of the 'Times' (1890-1911). Six of her brothers went to the Dominion and settled there and the seventh made his career in Egypt. Of those who settled in the Dominions, Vincent was Minister of Agriculture in the Queensland Government. Thomas was in the Senate at Melbourne until rejected by Labour. Norman became Administrator at Umtali, Rhodesia, while Clifton was in the Lands Department, Canada, during the early days of the Yukon.

On my marriage I exchanged College for University service, and was appointed in 1890 to take charge of Fitzwilliam Hall and its Non-collegiate students. Amongst these were, several pupils from New Zealand, and I specially remember one of very fine physique and character, who has recently revisited Cambridge and his old friends as Dean of Christchurch. I resigned this University appointment in October, 1907, and left Cambridge with the purpose of spending two or three years abroad. My wife soon after contracted a fatal illness and died the following April, aged 51.

We had two sons, the younger of whom, Capt. Purefoy Gauntlett Huddleston, R.E., after Clifton and Woolwich was appointed to the Indian survey in which he surveyed in 1913-14 country in Aborland never before visited by Europeans, on the foothills of the Eastern Himalayas overlook the great river Brahaputra and Tibet and Assam. He fell near Ypres on the night of 25th March, 1916, in command of the 84th Field Company of the Royal Engineers (Div. XX). He had a singularly frank and genial disposition, thoughtful

beyond his years (29), was handsome, like his mother, 6ft. 4 inches, with a span of 7 feet, and according to Col. Statton, the Signaller of the Twentieth Division, and now Tutor of Caius College, the finest man he had ever seen.

XI THE ELWINS:

My elder son, Arthur James Croft Huddleston, was, like myself, a King's Scholar at Eton, and was 'Keeper of the Hall' (School Football Eleven). Leaving in 1889 for King's college, Cambridge, he rowed in a winning Trial Eight with Bruce of Trinity Hall, one not unknown throughout Australia. He joined the Sudan C.S. in 1904 and is now Governor of the Blue Nile Province and in charge of the great dam now just completed. He married Mary Symonds whose father Dr. Edmond Symonds, and whose mother was Mary Elwin, one of the Elwins of Norfolk who had sold Thurning to my Uncle James Gay. They trace their descent from John of Gaunt. The present head of the family, Mr. Fountain Elwin of Booton Hall, possesses a picture of Princess Pocahontas, with whom, through the Rolfes of Norfolk (spelt Rouths in Canada) the Elwins are connected.

XII. HUDDLESTONS OF LITTLE HAUGH.

Let me now go back to my Uncle Peter, who purchased after his marriage with Elizabeth Lee, the Manor of Little Haugh in Norton, Suffolk. Of his daughters the youngest, Ellen, married Colonel John Logan Fraser, of the Suffolk Regiment, a great grandson of the celebrated painter Sir Henry Raeburn. Of their sons, the youngest fell in Allenby's advance of Palestine, and is buried at Gaza; the eldest, Raeburn, did good service as an Electrical Engineer during the war; and the second, Yalden, is high up in the employ of the London, Midland and Scottish Railway.

My uncles second son, Edward Purefoy Huddleston is the present owner of little Haugh. He married Adela Oakes, and has one daughter who survives her.

The older son, Thomas Jervoise Huddleston (1841-1885) was also a King's scholar of Eton, and at Christchurch, Oxford, obtained two First Classes. He married Laura, daughter of John Josselyn, Master of the Suffolk Fox Hounds and of St. Edmunds Hill, Bury. He died in 1885, when his son Hubert Jervoise Huddleston was 5 years old. The boy, now the heir to Little Haugh, was sent to Felsted School, and on the eve of the South African War, joined the Coldstream Guards, with whom under Lord Roberts, he marched into Pretoria in June, 1900. Soon after he was given a commission in the Dorset Regiment 'for dash and leading'. He was 'seconded' from his Regiment (1) to Nigeria where he showed remarkable personal bravery in dealing with a refractory sheikh, and (2) to the Sudan, where he commanded the New Camel Corps when inspected by King George on his return from India.

During the war it became necessary for the Government to suppress the pro-German Sultan of Darfour, and Col. Huddleston was present with his Corps at the capture of his capital. Here he was left in command with orders not to pursue the Sultan, who had escaped. Precise news, however, came in as to the whereabouts of this personage, and Hubert, after a forced night march of over 100 miles, surprised and killed him and the campaign was over.

During the preliminary advance on Palestine in 1917, Brigadier General Huddleston was given a Brigade of Australian cavalry. Commanders from the Regulars are sometimes viewed rather critically by soldiers from the Dominion, and it was so in his case. But before a fortnight was out a battle ensued at Rafa. The right wing where the cavalry were stationed faced a battery which was doing much execution, and the General ordered a retirement; but

the Brigadier, seizing an opportunity, charged and captured the battery, and the Turks and German gunners fled. The Australians were so delighted that it is said, regardless of discipline, they gave him an ovation.

In November, 1924, during Sir Lee Stack's absence, he was acting as Sirdar at Khartoum. On the day when after Stack's murder the Egyptian troops were with no little difficulty sent back by rail, news reached Hubert that some 100 men from one of the best Sudanese regiments had mutinied. It seemed to him incredible; but motoring down at once he found that these men had broken out with the obvious intention of seizing the artillery north of the Blue Nile. They were lying down in a trench (cut by Arthur when Governor of Khartoum) with rifles leveled at some Argylls and Leicesters who had been hurriedly collected to face them. Stepping forward as grandfather Lee would have done, to within hearing, he demanded:

'Do you know me?'
'Yes, Sirdar, we know you'
'Will you obey my orders?'
After a pause, 'No'.
'Then I must order fire.'

He slowly retreated and at their mercy. There is no need to continue the story, - how a city already overflowing with heroic memories was rescued from rapine and plunder.

Footnote by C. Roy Huddleston (xxxx-1992)

Tristram Frederick Croft Huddleston, the writer of this History of the Huddleston family, died in 1936. A few years before his death, his elder son Arthur (see page 7) was made a Knight in recognition of his services in the Blue Nile Province.

Footnote by David Hyde:

Tristram Huddlestons article above was in formerly in the possession of my mother, Joan Hyde (nee Hudleston), who corresponded with Roy Hudleston for many years. Tristram Huddleston's sisters, in particular Anne, assisted in bringing up Colonel Josiah Hudlestons children - (married to Tristram's sister Frances). The Colonel and his wife died in 1893, and presumably were in difficult circumstances before then. From the section IX on the Huddlestons of Hampshire, Tristram obviously knew my mother very well.

Recently I was very pleased to receive the above article from my sister, Audrey Paterson (nee Hyde).



C. Roy Huddleston - circa 1990
Photo: Audrey Paterson

AUTHORITIES:

1. H.S. Cowper's "Millom Castle and the Huddlestons"
2. Jefferson's "History of Cumberland"
3. J. A. Symond's' biography, by Horatio F. Brown, (Smith, Elder & Co.).
4. Some XVIIIth. Century Men of Letters, Vol. I., Memoir of Whitwell Elwin. (John Murray).
5. 'The Romance of a Hundred Years! by A. Minston. (Elliot Stock, 1901).