

31 May 2012

Dear Dr Ravaty

I noticed in my Halkyn Society mailing that you were standing for election and that you came from Bridge, near Canterbury and were President of its local history society. By entire co-incidence we recently found in our archives here the will of my 9.9.9. grandfather, also Lawrence Banks and I thought you might like the enclosed copy - you will see that he also lived at Bridge - we have some other papers of his but whether any of them relate to Bridge I do not know but if

Flat 8, 65 Hamilton Terrace, London NW8 9QX
Tel: 020 7289 1612

is of interest my ancestor will look.
My g.g. grandfather Richard Banks
moved here in Herefordshire in 1814
and practised as a lawyer and banker.
I hope this may be of some interest.

Yours sincerely

Lawrence Banks

LAWRENCE BANKS.

41 Bridge Down
Bridge
Canterbury CT4 5BA
01227 830508
mmraraty@btinternet.com

10 June 2012

Thank you so much for the unexpected but interesting and intriguing package. I am always on the lookout for information that will add to a picture of Bridge in the past.

1811 of course predates any really useful personal information that one can glean from the censuses, and I have no information from an earlier period that mentions anyone of the name of Banks. It is a pity that the Will is not more specific about the location of Lawrence's property in Bridge. He was clearly well-to-do, yet Bridge was by no means particularly so: the only substantial house in Bridge is Bridge Place (built in 1638 by Arnold Braems, whose brother was Customer of Dover), and its history is pretty well known. Little Bridge Place nearby, which I think was built at much the same time, and is very likely the Dower House, is a possibility.

Boys Hall in Willesborough is now a Conference/Wedding venue and is a big house, and £11,000 is a very large sum for 1811. Do you know any more of Lawrence's background? Was he the first in the family to accrue such wealth? I, perhaps presumptuously, am inclined to think so, as he is keen to mention the amount he has (recently) paid for the Hall. It suggests also that maybe his dwellinghouse in Bridge was not so grand. Bridge Street at the time possessed two inns, a forge and a number of tradesmen, a farm (owned at one time by R H Barham, the author of the *Ingoldsby Legends*) and various artisans' cottages – it owes its existence of course to the road from Dover to London. I enclose a copy of a drawing by Willem Schellinks, made when staying with Arnold Braems while on a tour of England. It predates 1811 by some 150 years of course. The three tall chimneys in the centre of the picture rise from the farm, scandalously demolished in 1962. The horseman is outside the *White Horse*, still in existence. It is also perhaps of some significance that Lawrence's son Richard very soon moved away to Herefordshire.

I hope this is of some interest, and shall always be pleased to learn more.

Re. Lawrence Banks, Esquire

Address:- Bridge, Nr. Canterbury, Kent. Described in the will as a house and estate.

Wife:- 1. Anne Ramsay, Ripple Court, Deal.
2. Mrs widow of
3. Sarah Sladen.

Sons:- With first wife:- Richard and Lawrence (see p.3 & 6 of the Will)

Daughter: Alice m Thomas Oliver of Rhydolog.

Will dated: 4th December 1811

Executors:

Guardians of minor children:- Matthew Flower, Esquire of Walworth, Surrey John Sladen, Gentleman of Folkestone, Kent, Richard Banks, Son.

Solicitors Address:- 14, Gate Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Beneficiaries:- See guardians above:- All my freehold copyhold and leasehold messuages tenements lands and hereditaments with the exception of the house at Bridge left to Sarah for her lifetime and widowhood.

One third of the residue of the Estate in equal share to the three children.

Bundle LB 1:1

LB 1/1/1 4th December 1811. Lawrence Banks, Bridge near Canterbury. 'My son Richard Banks shall if he please become the purchaser of my estates in the parishes of Willesborough and Sevington... called Boys Hall lately purchased by me of Mr John Wall at the sum of eleven thousand pounds... within the space of one year from the time of my death.'