

Harry Payne Bingham

Oliver Hazard Payne bequeathed at least \$2,000,000 and the Esopus estate to Harry Payne Bingham. Harry Payne Bingham and Harry Payne Whitney were Oliver's two favorite nephews. Oliver left his Thomasville, Georgia property, \$2,000,000 and a large share of the Payne estate to [Payne Whitney](#) (who dropped the Harry), about whom much is written, since he continued his father's love of race horses to become the most prominent race horse owner of his time.

Harry Payne Bingham was born 9 December 1887 to Charles William Bingham (b 22 May 1846 in Cleveland; d 1 Mar 1929 in Cleveland) and Mary Payne, Oliver's younger sister. Charles' parents were William Bingham and Elizabeth Beardsley. Charles Bingham was identified with the business interests of Cleveland and was the head of William Bingham Company, manufacturer and distributor of hardware, founded by Charles' father. Charles and Mary were married 8 June 1876, and had five children:

- Oliver Perry, b Cleveland on 2 December 1877, d 11 February 1900 at Palm Beach, Florida, of injuries sustained while a member of the Yale crew team
- William, b 31 July 1879, listed as unmarried in 1954
- Elizabeth Beardsley, b Cleveland 29 Sept 1881, married Dudley Stuart Blossom
- Frances Payne b Cleveland, 29 March 1885; d Cleveland, 9 Mar 1977 married Chester Castle Bolton
- Henry Payne (later usually called Harry) b 9 Cleveland December 1887; d NYC 25 March 1955 was married three times.

Harry Payne Bingham graduated from Yale in 1910 with the degree B.A. Until at least 1912, he and his wife lived in Cleveland, Ohio. He served with the Army during World War I with the rank of Captain in the regular field artillery and saw active service at the front. He was at the estate only intermittently until his return from Europe in early 1919. He married his first wife, Harriette Caleb Gowen in Cleveland, Ohio on January 13, 1912. His wife Harriette and their two children Harry and Barbara, moved into the mansion to live.

"My sister remembers that they brought a children's brown pony and a pony cart and coachman. Harriette, 'nouveau riche' as she was, immediately wanted to show her importance by making changes. My father (the estate supervisor, Julian Burroughs), who tried to please her, says in his memoirs that she even wanted to change the driveway with its old trees and cobblestone gutters. In the mansion, those of the household staff who remained were distressed because, as they told my father, she did not know the value of anything. Some of her changes were having the silk curtains of the long drawing room, which had been made especially for it, dyed and having the gold tracery of the gold and ebony room removed with chemicals and the ebony painted a putty color" -- Elizabeth Burroughs Kelly

"The new year, 1918, began with very cold weather and bad news for us. Captain Bingham was making changes and cutting down expenditures

and my father lost his job and would have to find something else to do. We had until April 1 to move." -- Elizabeth Burroughs Kelly

The Bingham probably never used the Esopus estate as their principal residence. The 1920 Federal census lists them as living at Palm Beach Florida together with twelve servants. The 1930 census lists Harry Bingham living on 72nd Street in New York City with his wife Grace L. Momand Breese, whom he married in Paris France in 1927. Harry married a third time, in April 24, 1937 to Melissa W Yuille Burks.

At some later time, the Bingham moved to 690 Park Avenue (near 68th Street) in New York City and later 834 Fifth Avenue (about 63rd Street). Bingham donated the Esopus property to the New York Protestant Episcopal Mission Society of Bleecker Street in 1933.

Eugene Donnelly told me that during the year he cooked (1947-1948) a gentlemen arrived in a chauffeured limousine outside the mansion and introduced himself as Harry Bingham. Gene invited him to look inside, but Harry declined. There was a lady in the car.

Bingham died March 25, 1955 and left a will dated December 7, 1954. The bulk of the estate of the "philanthropist-sportsman-art patron" was left to his wife and three children. He directed that his former residence at 690 Park Avenue be sold with the proceeds going to St. Thomas Church, Lenox Hill Neighborhood Association, Yale University, Memorial Hospital, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which also received two Goya paintings and other art works. He left \$10,000 and a life income from a \$200,000 trust to his secretary, Alice Surber. Upon her death, the trust would be shared by the museum and the Sharon Hospital, Sharon, Conn.

Mr. Bingham also set up trusts for his widow, Mrs. Melissa Y. Bingham, and other members of his family. His three children are: Harry Payne Bingham Jr., Oyster Bay, L.I., Mrs. Barbara Gingham Moore, Washington, and Burks Bingham, 834 Fifth Avenue.

Elizabeth Burroughs Kelley refers to Harry's wife as Harriette. On the deed transferring the property to the New York Protestant Episcopal City Mission Society dated 6 April 1933, the wife is listed as Grace M. Bingham, and the NY Times obituary notice cited Melissa Y Bingham.

Mr. Bingham was a trustee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the American Museum of Natural History, the New York Zoological Society, and the Peabody Museum of Natural History. An Episcopalian in Religion, he was a vestryman of St. Thomas's Church, New York City. In politics he was a consistent Republican. He was interested in outdoor sports, particularly golf and was a former holder of the Long Island Amateur Championship.

He was a director of the First National Bank of New York and the Northern Finance Corporation of New York. His various club memberships include the Knickerbocker, Tennis and Racket, and Piping Rock.

Harry Bingham's oldest son Harry Payne Bingham Jr, was born 3 December 1911. During World War II he joined the US Naval Reserves in March 1941, and served as a Lieutenant; being attached to the Naval Air Force he spent sixteen months in the South Pacific; honorably discharged in

January 1946, with the commission of Commander. Married Lilla Fisk 6 April 1935. This marriage produced two children: Harry Payne Bingham 3rd, born 17 March 1936, and Belinda Bingham, born 27 June 1937.

Barbara Bingham, born 28 November 1914, married Rear Admiral Edward P. Moore, USS on 5 March 1935. This couple have two children, Barbara Bingham Moore, born 16 Jan 1936 in San Diego CA, and Susan Moore, born 3 Jan 1939, in Baltimore MD.

No information available on Burks Yuille Bingham born 20 Jan 1939.

Harry Bingham's older sister was Frances Payne Bingham who married Chester Castle Bolton. The couple had three children: Charles Bingham Bolton, Oliver Payne Bolton(1917 - 1972) and Kenyon Castle Bolton. Oliver Payne Bolton's son Charles Payne Bolton purchased the section of the original Payne estate containing the dairy and barn buildings just west of route 9-W in 1985.

Frances Payne Bolton served as Congresswoman from Cleveland's 22nd District for 29 years. She was also noted for her financial support of many projects, particularly in the fields of nursing, health and education.

References

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return to [top of page](#) [home page](#)