

Reminiscences of the Friends' Meeting, Manchester.

Written by Thomas Tonge from Reminiscences by his father-in-law, James Fellows, of Ashton-upon-Mersey, near Manchester; reprinted with alterations from *The Manchester Examiner* of 1883.

When somewhat released from the ordinary avocations of life, the mind naturally turns to review the past, and, having been urged to put my recollections and hearsay knowledge of Manchester Friends into writing, I have complied with the request. . . .

My father came to Manchester soon after 1790, and was a member of the Meeting during the time of the old Meeting House in Deansgate, at the corner of Jackson's Row. I have frequently heard him say the number of Friends was then so small that when assembled together a cart sheet or a wagon sheet would have covered the whole.

One of the Ministers of that time was John Thorp, who, in 1797, was a tailor in Cupid's Alley (now called Atkinson Street), Deansgate. Another Minister was Joseph Atkinson, hat manufacturer, Cupid's Alley. He died suddenly in the Ministers' gallery during meeting.

My earliest recollections are of the Meeting House in South Street, which was built in 1792, the old Meeting House in Jackson's Row being converted into a school, at which the children of most of the Friends of the period were educated. It was conducted by John Taylor, the father of John Edward Taylor, the founder and first editor of the *Manchester Guardian*. On the occasion of the disturbance at Peterloo in 1819, many of the people took refuge from the yeomanry in the old Meeting House in South Street, and the blood from the wounds of some stained the floor for a long time, notwithstanding efforts to eradicate the marks.

The South Street Meeting House was finally pulled down, on account of its not being able to accommodate the Friends at the period, the meetings being very large,

owing to the attraction of the then Ministers, Isaac Stephenson and others. It was chiefly at the suggestion of Isaac Stephenson that a new and more commodious Meeting House was built facing Mount Street, in 1828-9, the meetings during the interval being held in a room in Dickenson Street, known as the Diorama.

The leading Friends of sixty years ago in the gallery were Isaac Stephenson, Isaac Crewdson, John Bradshaw (clock and watch maker, Deansgate), and John Raleigh, who, in 1829, was a grocer in Oldham Street. Under the gallery there were Wilson Crewdson, William Fowden, William Boulton, Thomas Crewdson, Joseph Crewdson, also Thomas Hoyle, and his three sons-in-law, William Neild, Joseph Compton, and Alfred Binyon.

In 1828, Isaac Stephenson was a corn factor (or, as it was then termed, a flour merchant), 27, Gartside Street. He had three daughters and one son. Sarah married Joseph Rowntree, of York, and Elizabeth married Shipley Neave, a partner with Samuel Eveleigh in the hat manufactory in Greengate. Descendants of Isaac Stephenson still attend the Meeting.

The Crewdson family came from Kendal. In 1800, Thomas and Isaac Crewdson were silk and cotton manufacturers, 66, Market Street Lane, and Isaac had a house at 4, Aytoun Street, and in 1811, Thomas had a house at 8, Booth Street, Piccadilly. Isaac Crewdson finally went to live in a large house at the eastern extremity of Ardwick Green, on the site of the present Industrial Schools. Joseph, the fourth brother, silk merchant, in 1828 lived in Tipping Street, Ardwick. Thomas Crewdson was the second brother, and after leaving Booth Street, Piccadilly, lived at 61, Grosvenor Place, Oxford Road, which was more in the suburbs. He had a warehouse in Cannon Street, as a silk manufacturer, but in 1824, in conjunction with John Robinson (also a Friend), he started a Bank just behind the old Town Hall, in the block used until comparatively recently by the gas and water offices. The business did not, however, answer; and notwithstanding serious losses and adverse circumstances, he honourably paid 20s. in the pound. His partner, John Robinson, formerly, I believe, lived at No. 4, Fishpond Street, a pleasant suburban spot bordering the meadows near

Garratt Hall, and now known as Leamington Place, just over the canal past the Mechanics' Institution, but when I was young he was a dentist in John Street, Deansgate. Wilson Crewdson, of Dacca Mills, the last survivor of the brothers Crewdson, died not many years ago at Whalley Range. I recollect he lived in Plymouth Grove many years ago, which was then very different from what it is now. No descendants of the Crewdson family are now connected with Manchester Meeting, most of them having seceded about 1836.

Another leading Friend of sixty years ago was Thomas Hoyle, of Mayfield. He was the son of Thomas Hoyle, originally a common dyer, who discovered a superior method of dyeing black, thereby gaining a reputation which enabled him to establish a business which has since developed itself into the present firm of Thomas Hoyle and Sons. In 1788, they were described as Thomas Hoyle and Sons, dyers, Bank Top. In 1797, Thomas Hoyle lived at 12, Piccadilly, but I think that would be Thomas Hoyle, Senior. The Thomas Hoyle I remember lived on the premises at Mayfield, Ardwick. The three eldest daughters married respectively William Neild (afterwards Alderman and Mayor), Joseph Compton, and Alfred Binyon. These sons-in-law all lived in houses adjoining the works. The fourth daughter married John Atkinson Ransome, surgeon. There are now no descendants of the Hoyles connected with Manchester Meeting.

The medical profession was formerly well represented in the Society in Manchester. There were John A. Ransome and Joseph A. Ransome, surgeons; the former lived at one time in Mosley Street, and afterwards, in 1828, at the corner of St. Peter's Square. There were also John Ferneley, M.D., who, in 1828, lived in St. Peter's Place, Mosley Street; and John Windsor, F.R.S., who lived for many years at the corner of Port Street and Piccadilly, and was celebrated for his skill in eye diseases. William White, surgeon, lived in John Street and Gartside Street, and removed afterwards to Southport.

There were many merchants and manufacturers then connected with the Meeting. Thomas D. Crewdson, afterwards Alderman, was a nephew and partner of Wilson Crewdson. James Hall and James Hall, Jun.,

Salford, lived in Ordsal Lane. David Dockray, formerly in the Manchester trade, lived at one time near Ardwick Green, and afterwards in Rusholme Road. His wife, Abigail Dockray, was a highly respected Minister fifty years ago. Joseph and John Rooke, manufacturers of iron liquor,¹ Scotland Bridge or Red Bank, are still represented in the Meeting. I remember them when they lived at the town end of York Street, Cheetham.

John Raleigh, and Joseph, his son, were latterly fustian manufacturers. John Raleigh ended his days in Mount Street, in a house which overlooked the field called Peterloo. William Boulton, merchant, had a warehouse somewhere about Peel Street. About 1825, he lived up Oxford Road in a house near to Owen's College, on the same side, but which house was then the last up the road. He had a large garden at the back, and grew very fine peas.

Benjamin Pearson, blanket manufacturer, occupied the warehouse in Marsden Square, where his sons now carry on business.

John Rothwell was a dyer in Water Street, and had a partner, Huitson Dearman. He lived at the corner of Great Jackson Street and Chester Street, then a nice locality. John Wadkin, Sen. and Jun., lived in Pendleton. The latter was a smallware manufacturer. Henry Wadkin also lived in Pendleton, and was a sewing cotton manufacturer, and at one time in the Town Council. His business was succeeded to by John King, Jun., elected a City Councillor in 1856, Alderman in 1867, mayor for one year 1874-5. Peter Taylor was a cotton merchant in Back Square.

David Holt, a cotton manufacturer, formerly had mills at Holt Town, named after him, as also in Temple Street, in a large house adjoining which latter he lived at one time. He accumulated a collection of pictures, then considered large, which ultimately sold for £4,000. He was not successful in business. The mills in Temple Street afterwards came into the possession of Waterhouse and Thompson. David Holt left a son, David, who attained

¹ Iron-liquor, acetate of iron, used as a mordant by dyers and calico printers. *Encyc. Dict.*

some celebrity as a poet, and was for many years with the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

Joseph Flintoff was in the Manchester trade, and lived eighty years ago in Dickenson Street.

John Goodier, calenderer, of Pool Fold, was one of the wealthy men of the Meeting. In 1788 and 1794, his works were in Crow Alley, off Exchange Street, being in reality on the site of the present Exchange, and his residence was No. 9, Dickenson Street. His works, fifty years ago, were in Pool Fold. He was very fond of ornithology, and had a nice collection of birds in the garden at the back of William Boulton's house. His death was caused by an accident at his works.

William Fowden, merchant, also lived up Oxford Road, next door to William Boulton.

Josiah Merrick, recently deceased, was in the Manchester trade, and was the son of Roger Merrick, whom I always heard spoken of by my father as one of the influential Friends at the close of the last century. In 1794, Roger Merrick's place of business was at 36, Cannon Street, but his house was 23, York Street.

In my early days there was a considerable number of shop-keepers, prominent among whom were the Binyons. Eighty years ago, Thomas Binyon, Sen., was a fustian manufacturer, 5, Blue Boar Court, and Benjamin Binyon was a fustian manufacturer, 26, Cannon Street, his house being No. 4, Booth Street. In 1811, Thomas Binyon lived at No. 20, Byrom Street. This, I think, would be Thomas Binyon, Jun., who opened his shop in St. Ann's Square in 1819, and lived on the premises, having previously had a sort of manufacturing chemist's shop in Water Street. About 1830, John Hunter was admitted a partner, residing on the premises, and Thomas Binyon removed, I think, to Plymouth Grove. Edward Binyon lived over the shop in Oldham Street. George Robinson, who was afterwards a partner, served his time with Thomas Binyon, and at one time had a shop in Swan Street. In 1829, Deborah Binyon had a ready-made linen warehouse at 45, Piccadilly, and Hannah and Ann Binyon were tea and coffee dealers at 23, Piccadilly.

Samuel Eveleigh carried on business as a hat manufacturer in Openshaw, and afterwards at Springfield Lane,

Salford. Joseph Eveleigh, of Oldham Street, was a furrier and hat manufacturer, and afterwards tea dealer in Deansgate. He was an ardent botanist of some note. Samuel Satterthwaite, leather dealer, at one time in the Town Council, lived at Gorton for a good while. His business premises were up an entry in Shudehill.

Ishmael Nash, tea dealer and money changer, of Smithy Door, lived at one time in Charles Street, off Lower Byrom Street, Deansgate. His grandsons still conduct the money changing and banking business in King Street.

John King, the father of Alderman King, I think came from Darlington, and in 1811 was a woollen draper in what was then called the New Exchange, but in 1819 he lived at his shop in St. Ann's Square, where Alderman John King, Jun., was born in 1819. Afterwards he had a house in Quay Street.

George Danson, chemist, Piccadilly, wore knee-breeches and fine cotton stockings. J. H. Cockbain, silk mercer, Piccadilly, lived over his shop, which was a favourite one with rich ladies ; his business was afterwards taken by the late John Hodgson. William G. Ansell, chemist, St. Mary's Gate, also lived on his business premises. George Bradshaw, the originator of *Bradshaw's Railway Guide*, came from Ireland, and lived at 10, Albion Street, Crescent, Salford, and at one time near Windsor Bridge, in a house overlooking the Liverpool line ; he achieved a wide reputation for canal maps. He died when on a visit to Christiania, Norway, and was buried there.

Michael Satterthwaite, bootmaker, lived in Chapel Street, Salford, so far back as 1811 ; he was highly esteemed, and left a numerous family—Dr. Satterthwaite, the late Thomas Satterthwaite, Hannah Thistlethwaite, of Wilmslow, etc. Matthew Corbett (the father of Edward Corbett, surveyor) eighty years ago was a joiner in Brazen-nose Street. About the same time Thomas Fellows lived in St. Ann's Alley, off Police Street, and I have heard him tell that, while resident there, he saw the face of St. Ann's church clock, during a severe gale, blown off and curled up like a sheet of paper, as it was made of lead.

William and Jonathan Labrey were tea dealers. William had a shop in the Market Place, at the corner of

Bull's Head Yard. Jonathan's shop was at the corner of Brown Street and Market Street, and his business finally came into the hands of Jonathan Walker, and is now known as Labrey and Walker, in Fennel Street. Thomas Labrey was also a tea dealer in the city.

John Harrison carried on the business of a printer in Market Street, and his partner, Joseph Crosfield, was afterwards connected with the District Bank.

The late Godfrey Woodhead came from Yorkshire about 1830, and his first shop overlooked the river at the old bridge on the site of the present Victoria Street. Charles Cumber lived in a house at the corner of Dickenson Street and Mount Street, and for many years carried on the Friends' School on the premises now used as the Friends' Institute.

James Nodal had a school in Camp Street, Alport Street, in 1811. His son, Aaron, in 1829 had a grocer's shop in Downing Street, and was one of the first three Councillors elected for Ardwick ward, and an active member of the Anti-Corn Law League. His other son, John, was for many years cashier with Messrs. Binyon, St. Ann's Square. Aaron's son, J. H. Nodal, as Editor of the *City News*, has been the chief cause of the success of that paper.

So I might go on, were it not probable that an old man's gossip might prove tedious. I must, however, refer to Dr. Dalton and his friend, Peter Clare, both of whom I well remember. The doctor lived in George Street many years, lodging with a Dr. Johns close to St. James's church, and almost directly opposite to the Literary and Philosophical Society's rooms. He was a small man, stooped in his gait, and wore brown knee-breeches and gaiters, a low-crowned broad-brimmed hat, and large round spectacles. Peter Clare was noted for his ability as an horologist, and he made the well-known clock in the old Town Hall, King Street. He lived in Quay Street, in a house, now used as a workshop, with a little area in front and steps up to the door. He always wore black Kerseymere breeches and silk stockings to match. His father was a man fond of scientific pursuits, particularly electricity. He once electrified a goat, which, on receiving the shock, bolted through the window. He also attached a wire to the hook on which a watchman hung

his lamp in one of the old fashioned watchmen's boxes then in vogue, so that when the man came to lift the lamp down he was very considerably astonished.

Of this long list of Friends whom I have known, all are gone. In some cases the families are extinct, in others none are now left in the Society. Many of the Friends, the subjects of this gossip sketch, were buried at Jackson's Row, and their remains were subsequently removed, only a few years ago, to Ashton-on-Mersey; but many others sleep their last sleep under the flags in front of the Meeting House in Mount Street, unheeded, or rather unknown, by the busy crowds who daily pass by; and I may appropriately conclude with a few words from Longfellow's *Evangeline* :—

Thousands of toiling hands,
 Where theirs have ceased from their labours;
 Thousands of aching brains,
 Where theirs are no longer busy;
 Thousands of weary feet,
 Where theirs have completed their journey;
 Thousands of throbbing hearts,
 Where theirs are at rest for ever.

Women Ministers Stopped by Highwaymen.

Travelling in those days was very different from the easy recreation it now is, and many were the long weary journeys on horseback taken by "guides" to ministering Friends. On such occasions the good Friends used to envelope their hats or bonnets in oilskin covers, terminating in capes over their shoulders, and the men encased their lower limbs in long riding gaiters, termed "spatterdashes"; martial-looking cloaks, half covering horse as well as rider, were also worn. On one occasion our grandfather [George Miller, 1759-1831] was enveloped in one of these cloaks when acting as guide to Deborah Darby and Rebecca Young across a long dreary district of moorland in the South of Scotland. He had been delayed behind them a short time, when the women Friends, pushing ahead, were suddenly stopped by highwaymen, but as soon as the martial figure of the guide loomed in sight, galloping toward them at full speed, the rascals took to their heels, doubtless mistaking him for a dragoon, or other military character!—*Memorials of Hope Park*, p. 23.