

Dr. Pope and the Highwayman.

Elizabeth Beck¹ when young was often a guest at Dr. Pope's²; there was a relationship between him and the Lister family through the Stevens. She used to say that on one occasion when accompanying the Dr. on his round, his gig was stopped by a highwayman in a mask, who made the demand for money in the usual way. E. Beck said she had left her purse at home. "I believe you, madam," said the highwayman, whose pistol she observed pointed towards them. The doctor handed what loose cash he had in his pocket, and E. Beck observed how white was the hand put out to take it, showing it was a gentleman who had thus taken to the road; and now said he to the Dr., "Your watch, sir." The Dr. felt for it and was surprised not to find it in his fob as usual, and told him so, at which the highwayman turned his horse's head and rode away. Scarce was he out of sight, when the Dr. feeling again, found his watch was in the fob, and the chain, usually outside, had fallen, and so deceived him into thinking it was lost. "I must drive back, and tell him," said he, and would hardly be persuaded by E. Beck to desist from such a purpose through her assurances that he had told what at the time he believed was the truth, and had become entitled to profit by what was so unexpected a result. The watch was of great value, but the doctor's conscientiousness would have made it as nothing to ensure a maintenance of truth in all his acts and words.

From a MS. found among the papers of the late William Beck; see also *Biographical Catalogue of London Friends' Institute*, 1888.

"Ellen Macarty, of Muncy, Pa., for some years had to walk to meeting every meeting day, a distance of five miles, and over very bad roads. She often had to carry a child in her arms, and wade through deep snow the whole distance. On three successive meeting-days she had met with a bear in the woods."

From William Hodgson's account of a visit to Muncy Monthly Meeting in 1841, in his *Letters and Memoirs*, 1886.

¹ Elizabeth Beck (*née* Lister) was the wife of Thomas Barton Beck, of Dover and Hitchin. She died at Stoke Newington in 1857, in her ninetieth year. (Beck, *Family Fragments*, 1897.)

² "Dr. Pope, an old resident at Staines, enjoyed a large professional practice all around, extending through the highest circles to the Royal Family, where he was medical attendant to the Princess Amelia, yet through all he preserved his character of a consistent Friend, and was remarkable for punctual attendance of meetings. His daughter, Margaret Pope [1778-1867], ever manifested a warm interest in the affairs of the Society, and filled the station of minister during her later years." (Beck and Ball, *London Friends' Meetings*, p. 294.) Robert Pope, M.D., died at Staines in 1827, aged 79. His widow, Margaret Pope, died in 1829, aged 77.