

Captain Thomas Taylor, of Brighouse, co. York, Yeoman.

Thomas Taylor, of Brighouse (c. 1621-1684) was formerly, we understand, one of Cromwell's Ironside Captains, but changed his profession of carnal to spiritual warfare, and cast in his lot with the then despised Quaker community, as early as 1654. This Thomas Taylor must not, however, be confused with his more celebrated namesake, Thomas Taylor (1616-1681), a puritan clergyman at Skipton and Richmond, and later the distinguished Quaker Minister who, after a dedicated life in the service of the gospel, and in which he underwent much suffering for his religious principles, died at Stafford in 1681, three years before the above-named Captain Taylor.

In George Fox's *Journal*¹ we read that early in 1654:

Before I came to Synderhill Green, we passed through Halifax, a rude town of professors, and came to one Thomas Taylor's, who had been a captain, where we met with some janglers; but the Lord's power was over all: for I travelled in the motion of God's power.

Again, the same year, after his visit to Synderhill Green, Holderness, etc:—

Then I came to Thomas Taylor's, within three miles of Halifax [at Brighouse, probably], where was a meeting of about two hundred people; amongst which were many rude people, and divers butchers, several of whom had bound themselves with an oath before they came out, that they would kill me (as I was told); one of those butchers had been accused of killing a man and a woman. They came in a very rude manner, and made a great disturbance in the meeting. The meeting being in a field Thomas Taylor stood up, and said unto them, "If you will be civil, you may stay, but if not, I charge you to begone from off my ground." But they were the worse, and said they would make it like a common; and they yelled and made a noise, as if they had been at a bear baiting.

George Fox continues a long account in his *Journal* of the uncivil behaviour of these butchers, two of whom later came to grief; but at this time he had "a glorious powerful meeting," and "the Lord's power came so over them all and answered the witness of God in them, that they were bound by the power of God."

¹ Vol. i., pp. 189, 195, 196.

Again Fox writes, in 1666,² "From this place [somewhere near York apparently], we passed to Thomas Taylor's, formerly a captain, where we had a precious meeting."

Again, in 1669,³ Fox says: "I came to Henry Jackson's, where I had a great meeting. Thence to Thomas Taylor's, and so to John Moor's at Eldreth."

In 1660, Captain Thomas Taylor, with 228 other persons, including his friend, John Greene, of Liversedge, near Brighouse, was committed to York Castle, about January or February, for refusing the Oath of Allegiance and Supremacy.⁴

The Record of Sufferings in York Quarterly Meeting amplifies this arrest as follows:—

Anno 1660. At a Meeting at the house of Tho: Taylor in Brighouse ye 20th of ye 11th mo: were Willm Lothington, Joⁿ Green, Abr. Wadsworth [brother-in-law to John Green], Abr. Shackleton [and four others], taken by the constable of Brighouse, and his assistants comanded by him, who tendered them the oath, but they not being free to swear in any case, he committed them to Yorke Castle, where they were kept prisoners till the next Assizes, and the said Justices granted a warrant to the constable of Brighouse to distraine for convaying the said persons to Yorke Castle.

Again we learn that in 1662, on the 29th [October], Thomas Taylor, of Brighouse, was taken by a warrant from his own house,⁵ and sent to York Castle, apparently for the same cause as before.

In 1665, the York Records inform us that:—

Thomas Taylor, of Brighouse, Richard Hanson of Hofe-edge, John Green of Liversedge, William Pearson of Oakenshaw was all taken 'at Meeting ye 24th of ye 2nd mo. 1665 at the house of Tho: Taylor aforesaid by Jo: Armitage and Jo: Thornhill called Justices, and being convicted upon the first offence upon the said late Acts upon Transpor[ta]tion made against conventicles . . . were sent to prisson for one month.

In 1678, Captain Thomas Taylor appears as a signatory to "A Representation presented to the Members of Parliament for Yorkshire," dated "this 3^d Day of the First Month called March, 1678," referring to the unjust

² *Journal*, vol. ii., p. 77.

³ *Idem*, p. 105.

⁴ Besse's *Sufferings*, vol. ii., p. 102.

⁵ *Idem*, p. 106.

prosecution of the Quakers on the Statutes made against Popish Recusants.⁶

Shortly before this we learn that, by the will of his friend, John Greene (dated 8 July, 1676, and proved at York, 8 October), who died a prisoner for the Truth in York Castle, 13th July, 1676, Thomas Taylor was appointed one of his trustees.

We next learn from the Northowram Register,⁷ kept by Oliver Heywood, the ejected minister, that "Capt. Tho. Taylor, of Brighouse, died Apr. 27 [1684], a rich Quaker, aged 63." Again in Heywood's *Diary or Register*⁸: "Capt. Th. Taylor: buryed in his own backside, Apr. 30, 1684, a quaker, but a rich man, aged 63." And again: "Captain Taylor, of Brighouse, his wife dyed Oct. 28, 1684, buryed on Oct. 31, in their garden with their head upward, standing upright, by her husband, daughter, etc., being quakers, aged 60."

In the *Yorkshire Genealogist*, by J. Horsfall Turner,⁹ is a Latin pedigree of Hanson taken from "a beautifully written one, on two skins, probably compiled two centuries ago by Hanson the antiquary, of Woodhouse in Rastrick, in the parish of Halifax" [with extensions]. In this we learn that Arthur Hanson married Sarah, daughter and co-heir of Thomas Bottomley, by whom he had issue a sixth child, Judith, who married Thomas Taylor and had issue. Mr. Horsfall Turner adds:—

This Arthur Hanson resided at Brighouse, when he died in 1661, and was buried at Elland, amongst his ancestors. His wife, Sarah, was buried there in 1643. Of their children we may note in passing that . . . Richard [was baptised there] in 1629. Judith became the wife of Captain Taylor, a noted Quaker, of Brighouse, mentioned by Oliver Heywood, etc. The Taylors were buried in their garden at Brighouse, two grave-stones still remain. Richard Hanson, Judith's brother, was a prominent Quaker, of whom, and his children hereafter.

Last year, when at Friends' Meeting House, Paddock, Huddersfield, we were much interested in seeing the two monumental slabs, named by Mr. Horsfall Turner, placed upright and side by side in the verandah at the front entrance of the Meeting House. Through the kindness

⁶ Besse's *Sufferings*, vol. ii., p. 144.

⁷ Edited by J. Horsfall Turner, 1881, pp. 69, 70.

⁸ Same editor, vol. ii., pp. 148, 149.

⁹ 1888, vol. ii., pp. 86-91, 156-163.

of the present writer's cousin, Joshua Wheeler Robson, J.P., of Dalton, Huddersfield, we are able to give an illustration of these inscriptions. J. W. Robson informs us that Matilda Unsworth, a Friend of Huddersfield Meeting, resident at Yates Lane, Milnsbridge, says that the stones were in the garden of a house at Brighouse, bought by her uncle, Thomas Dearnaly, and on the death of his widow, her own aunt, she presented them to Huddersfield Meeting. These very handsome and splendidly preserved stones measure six feet one inch by two feet five inches.

The present writer was under the impression that, at one time, there existed another stone, for Judith Taylor, *née* Hanson, but J. W. Robson, on reading this paper, we think rightly controverts this idea, and says:—

I do not agree with the assumption that [Judith] Taylor had a gravestone, which is missing. My opinion is that the large empty space on her husband's stone was left for her; but that the scapegrace of a son was too careless to have the necessary inscription cut after his mother's death. The Captain, no doubt, looked well after the work of cutting his daughter's epitaph, and it is very noticeable what a difference there is between it and his own; the spelling is so much worse and more careless. The son perhaps did not give it much care, and when the time came to place his mother's epitaph upon the stone, he may have delayed the matter till it was too late.

It will be noticed in the accompanying illustrations how admirably the stone to Tabitha Taylor is cut, but singularly the letter G is always reversed, and it will also be noticed that the O in Taylor was originally an E in both stones, in that of Thomas Taylor so badly altered as to look like a D.

We must add a sad note from Heywood's *Memoranda*¹⁰:—

This year, *viz.*, A.D. 1689, there have failed in their estates a great number more than I have formerly observed, especially in November, Decemb. The latter end of this year, some four that come to my knowledge or near us are—[here follows particulars of 23 cases, and the second is] “Tho. Taylor of Brighouse, his father was a great quaker, he hath been a ranter, kept gentlemen's company, owes 1,000*li*, his goods were seized and now a selling to pay creditors, January, 1690.

JOSEPH JOSHUA GREEN.

¹⁰ Edited by J. H. Turner, 1881, vol. ii., p. 192.

HE ÆRE WAS LAYD
THE BODY OF
TABITHA TAYLOR
DOUGHTER OF
THOMAS TAYLOR
OF BRIDHOVSE
WHO DEPARTED
THIS LIFE THE
SEVENTH OF THE
NINTH MONTH IN
THE YEARE 1672
HER ÆGE BEING
SEVENTEENE
YEARES AND FIVE
MONTHS SHE VICE
DID FLYE AND
LICHT DID RETAINE
WHOSE SOVLE TO
ÆLL ETERNITYE
IN HEAVEN DOTH
REMAINE



HERE LYSE
THE BODY OF
MRS. TALEDR. OF
BRIGMOVS. DEPAR
TED THIS LIFE
THE TWENTIED
SEFEN OF APRIL
1684

THESE STONES WERE REMOVED FROM
BRIGHOUSE AND PRESENTED TO
HUDDERSFIELD FRIENDS BY
MATILDA UNSWORTH
1902

