

See pages 115-121.

A Short Account of John Reckless and his Family.

PART II.

It is somewhat difficult to determine which was the eldest of John Reckless's family, as it is evident the older children were born before he joined the people called Quakers.

I have placed Samuel first on the list, as I find from the digest Register of the Society of Friends at Nottingham that he was married the earliest. He married Anne Smith, of Nottingham, 13 ii., 1672 or 3, and died 3 viii., 1681. Anne Reckless, who died 30 iv., 1697, would, I think, be his widow. These entries show that he was in sympathy with Friends, though from the Minute Books he does not appear to have taken a very active part in the work of the Society.

John Reckless, Junr., died in 1677; he, like Samuel, is not mentioned in the records.

Jonathan is described as a "miloner"; he was twice married, his first wife being Sarah Wattson, of Nottingham, the mother of three of his children, and his second, Ann Theaker, by whom he had a very large family. He appears to have had much influence, and certainly from the numerous duties undertaken by him he must have had the interests of the Society deeply at heart. He was one of the first Trustees under the will of Elizabeth Heath, of Mansfield, who endowed twelve almshouses there, and left very considerable property to be administered by Friends, although it is uncertain whether she was actually a Friend herself; her name does not appear in the record of the Sufferings of Friends in Mansfield, and it seems hardly likely that a woman possessing so much property would have escaped persecution if she had openly espoused the cause. She died in 1693, and was buried at the back of the almshouses at Mansfield in the graveyard which she gave. Her death appears in the Friends' digest Register at Nottingham, and the Trust is still administered by Friends.

On "7 of ye 6th mo., 1708," Jonathan Reckless was appointed with John Johnson, Senr.,

to speak to Will^m Wrogden to mind his business, & take due care of his family, it having been observed by some ffrds y^t if they had not been supplied in their illness they might have suffered much.

From the Nottingham Monthly Meeting Minute Book, 1706-1765, we find that Jonathan Reckless was constantly appointed for the work of the Society. He gave notice, 9 ix., 1708, of a "collection for y^e poore, y^e same to be collected y^e first day following." On 7 ix., 1710, his name, with many others of the family, appears "To a Subscription for y^e Service of Truth—Repairs of y^e Meeting and Grave Yard wall." In 1713, we find him exhorting a certain Daniel Potter. There is an interesting letter, addressed :—

For Jonathan Reckless, or to some other friend of the quarter meeting of the people of God called Quakers, the 28th of y^e 2nd mo. 1717.

To friends of the quarterly meeting for the county of Nottingham.

These few lines may let you know I have ordered my Brother, John Need, of Arnall, to return you three pounds towards the Relief of your poor honest friends, as you may see cause ; also I have Desired him not to hinder friends of the priviledge of that small Burieing place near my house in Arnall, as it may be of some service to friends thereabout ; and if these Lines come to your hands Lett me hear how it is answered.

Soe with our Dear Love to all faithfull friends, we rest yours in the truth,

'JOSEPH & REBECKAH NEED.

From Darby, in the County of Chester, in the Province of Pensilvania.

Jonathan Reckless died 7 x., 1721, and his widow, 24 i., 1725/6.

Joseph Reckless married Grace Richardson, of Nottingham, 12 iv., 1681 ; they had several children. His name also appears in the Monthly Meeting Minute Book, though not so frequently as that of his brother.

On 11 vi., 1707, we find this entry :—

Agreed y^t Joseph Reckless & John Johnson, Sen., take a convenient opportunity to speak to such as are remiss in coming to y^e mo. meeting & weekday meeting & First day morning meeting and y^t they speak to such as make a practice of sleeping in a meeting.

His wife died 16 viii., 1698, but there is no notice of his death in the digest Register. He was not living,

however, in 1714, for when John Stephenson, of Hinckley, and Sarah Reckless declare their intention of marriage, 7th of 8 mo., 1714, she is described as daughter of Joseph Reckless, late of Nottingham, deceased, and her uncle Jonathan being present, gave his consent.

Hannah Reckless was born in 1650, and in 1671 her name appears as one of the "women friends appoynted and named for publicke service" in the Quarterly Meeting. The Quarterly Meeting Minute Book shows that she took a considerable share in the work of the Society. It is possible she kept house for her father after her mother died, as she did not marry till after his death. Her husband was Richard Snazdale, or Sneedale, of Ramsey, Huntingdonshire; he evidently was highly esteemed by Friends, as a great many names were appended to the minute of the Monthly Meeting which liberated him for his marriage. I do not know whether any of their descendants are living, as I have not searched any of the Huntingdonshire records.

Benjamin, the youngest son of John and Hannah Reckless, was born in 1655; in 1681 he married Anne Gilbert, of Leicester, at Leicester, and they had several children. His name does not appear as frequently on the Minute Books as the other members of the family, but under date 5 v., 1697, we find an "Epistle from the Quarterly Meeting of Women Friends, London, to Women Friends, especially of the younger generation," addressed to Benjamin Reckless, Shopkeeper, Nottingham. Benjamin Reckless and J. Reckless also signed the liberating minute for William Thompson on his marriage with Elizabeth Theaker. The death of Benjamin Reckless is registered at Nottingham, 4 xii., 1704.

Mary Reckless was born in 1658. She married Danjell Abbott, of St. Ives, County of Huntingdon, 27 i., 1681. He is described as a "Tinne man." I have not attempted to trace their descendants, but it is possible that readers of THE JOURNAL may be able to give information respecting them.

We now pass on to the grandchildren of John and Hannah Reckless, who were very numerous, though

comparatively few took any active part in the work of the Society.

On the 3 x., 1709, we find that John Reckless and Samuel Reckless, with others, "be spoke to by Sam^l Coulson to come to y^e next meeting, if they be willing to join ffr^{ds} in y^e Service of Truth"; and at the Monthly Meeting, 14 iv., 1709, "Above ffr^{ds} signified their willingness." Samuel Reckless would, I think, be the son of Samuel; he was born in 1674. In 1710, Samuel Reckless subscribed "to repairs of y^e Meeting House and Graveyard wall." "10 viii., 1713. It is agreed that Sam^l Reckless give notice of a Collection for y^e Poor the next first-day to be collected y^e first-day following." In 1711, 1716, and 1717, Samuel Reckless is appointed to visit certain delinquents. I find no notice of his marriage or death in the Friends' Registers.

Jonathan Reckless, Junr., the son of Jonathan and Anne Theaker, his second wife, was born in 1684. He declared his willingness to "serve y^e Truth," 7 ix., 1707. In 1710, he subscribed to repairs of the Meeting House. I find no mention of his marriage. He died in 1715.

There is mention in the Minute Books of John Reckless, who would, I think, be the second son of Jonathan, born in 1685. His name appears on subscription lists, and on 3 x., 1709, he is asked to join Friends in the service of Truth. I cannot find a record of his marriage. He appears to have died in 1731.

There is very frequent mention of an Anne Reckless, who was possibly a daughter of Jonathan, but it is difficult to determine, as there are several of the same name; she was a most active member of the Society, and might be said to have held the office of almoner for Friends; there are many entries of this kind: "Ann Reckless is desired to give four shillings to the Widdow Senior according to an Agreement last Mo. Meeting."

There is a curious little account in existence in connection with the re-building of the Meeting House, Spaniel Row, Nottingham, in 1737, which is receipted by Anne Reckless:—

Joshua, the fourth son of Jonathan and Anne, born 1696, married, firstly, Sarah —, and lived at Mansfield; they had three children. In 1731/2 Joshua Reckless was appointed in Mansfield Meeting to receive Books and to register Marriages, Births, and Deaths. In 1741, he was appointed to attend Yearly Meeting. He was also a Trustee of Elizabeth Heath's charity. In 1749, the affairs of the Widow Horner received the attention of Friends, and help was given her from the Meeting. Joshua Reckless was constantly appointed to relieve her necessities: this went on for many years. His wife, Sarah, died in 1756, and in 1761 Joshua Reckless solved the Widow Horner's difficulties by marrying her.

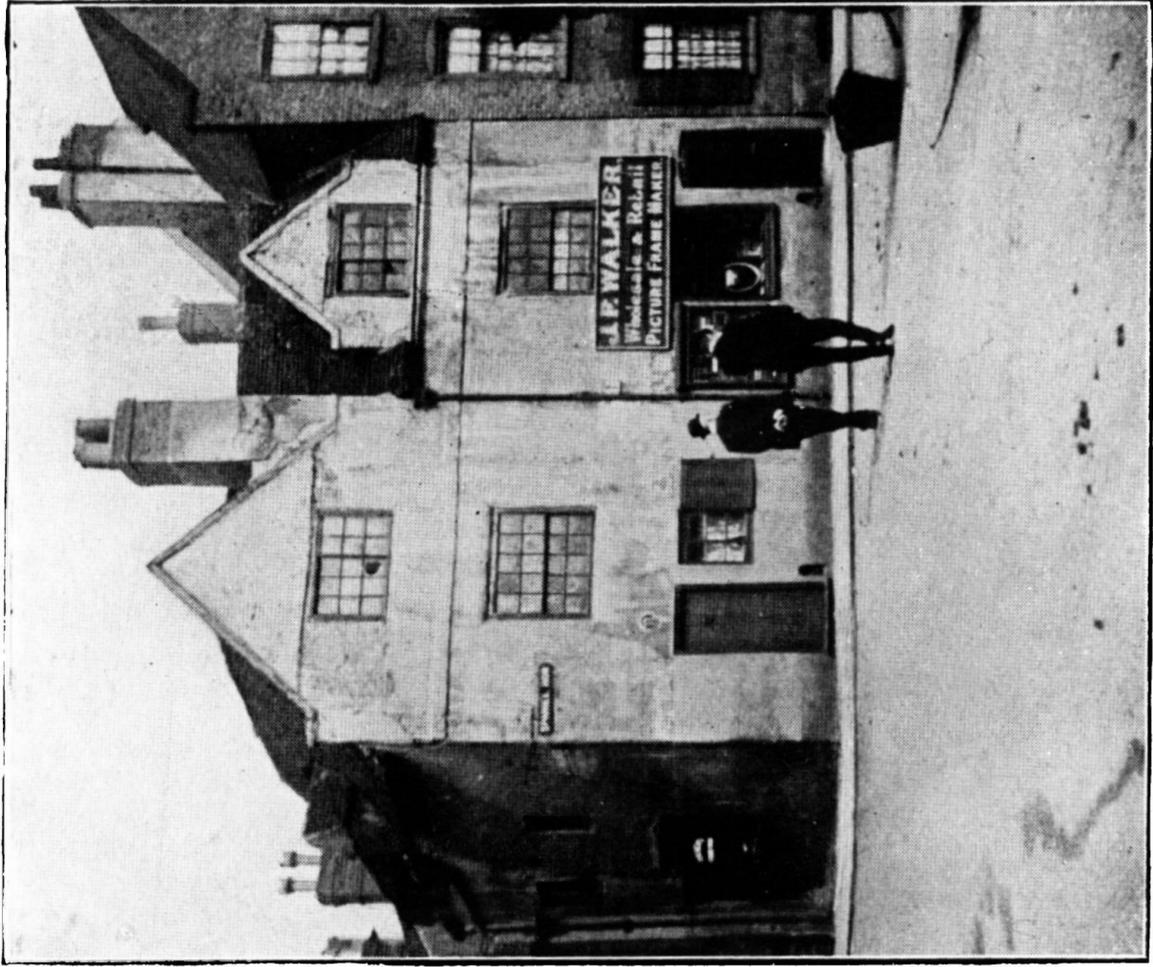
The book of Sufferings shows that his goods were taken for tithes, etc., between the years 1756 and 1766. After his death in 1767, we find his widow's goods were distrained upon, and pewter and silver were constantly taken.

W. Trevelyan Thomson, of Middlesbrough, who is descended from the Widow Horner, has in his possession an early edition of George Fox's *Journal*, which bears the following inscription: "David Horner Son Livre, Le Don de sa Grand'mère Anne Reckless, le vingt huit du six mois, L'an mil sept cent quatre vingt quinze." Anne Reckless died in 1796, aged about eighty-five years; she and her husband were buried at Mansfield.

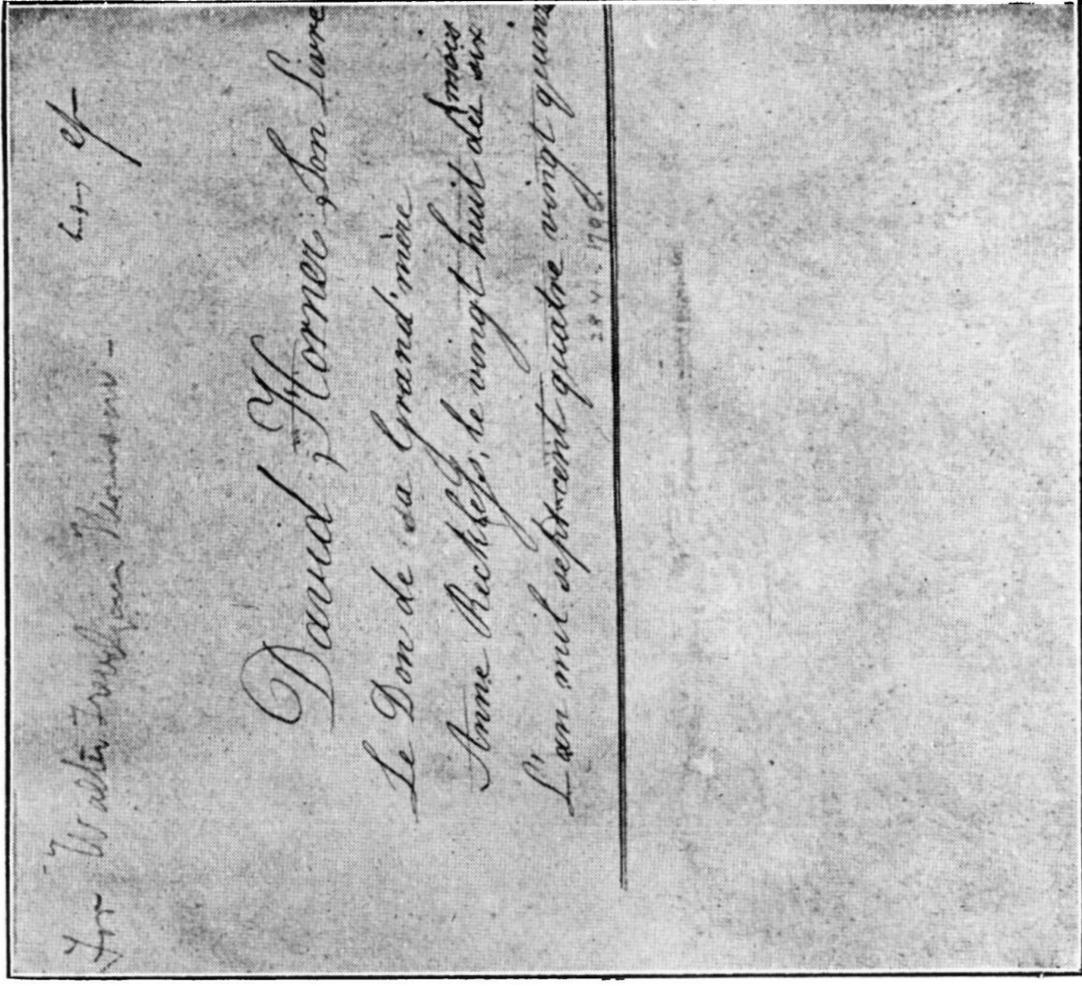
Of the children of Benjamin Reckless we find but little mention. A Benjamin, who, I think, would be his son, is frequently exhorted for drunkenness and ill-using his wife; finally a Testimony is issued against his "vile practises" in 1733.

I am unable to say to which families the following belonged: "5 vi., 1738: A Certificate agreed on and signed on behalf of Hannah Reckless to Frds at Savoy Mo. Meeting at London, signifying her clearness and being in Unity with Frds here."⁵ "12 vii., 1739, Appeared

⁵ Her removal was in order to marriage. The Minute Book of Westminster M.M., under date 5 v., 1738, records the proposal of marriage between Thomas Woster, of Westminster, and Hannah Reckless . . . daughter of Benjamin and Rebecca Reckless, of Nottingham, the latter deceased. This alliance took place at "Savoy in the Strand," 2 vi., 1738. Eds.



THE HOUSE OF JOHN RECKLESS.
 (The corner block, including both gables. See page 121.)



INSCRIPTION IN JOURNAL OF GEORGE FOX.
 See pages 120-121.

Mathew Hudson, Framework Knitter, and Ann Reckless, both of this town [Nottingham], and declared their Intentions of Marriage, this being the first time." They appeared a second time, and the marriage was solemnised the 16th day following. 19 xi., 1743, a Minute of this Meeting shows that a Samuel Reckless was buried in the Friends' Burial Ground, Nottingham. 12 vi., 1745, we find this entry: "Whereas Richard Reckless, Samuel Parr, Jun^r, Samuel Bullivant, and John White has enlisted themselves for soldiers and living in a disorderly way to the Scandal of our Society, this Meeting declares its disunity with them." 5 x., 1750, Anne Hudson and R. Reckless appear on subscription list for National Stock. 6 i., 1831, Milicent Reckless, widow of Paul Reckless, cooper, Loughborough, died at Loughborough, and was buried at Castle Donington. After this the name does not appear in the records of the Society of Friends.

A letter has been handed to me from a lady living in Nottingham, in which she says:—

The most interesting event in connection with Mr. Jonathan Reckless which I can recall is his farewell to the Scots Greys on their departure to the Crimea, July, 1854. They marched from the barracks to the Market Place, where they were met by the Mayor, Alderman Reckless, and the Corporation. In a felicitous speech he bade them emulate the prowess of their predecessors, and told them he remembered that same regiment marching out of Nottingham for Waterloo.

Many seasons have come and gone since the name of Reckless figured in our Quaker annals; yet in busy Nottingham to-day the old home of the worthy Sheriff still stands—a memory of days long past—a bridge across the chasm of the years.

EMILY MANNERS.

Mansfield, Notts.

[I have to acknowledge the help of my daughter, Rachel L. Manners, for photographs of the inscription in George Fox's *Journal* and of John Reckless's house.]

Any information respecting descendants of John Reckless would be welcomed by the Editors. As this issue goes to press, information is received that there are descendants of John Reckless among Friends in the United States.