

Notes relating to Elizabeth Heath, of Mansfield, Foundress of Heath's Charity¹

THERE is some difficulty in tracing the history of Elizabeth Heath, as there were certainly two or more families of the same name resident in Mansfield during the lifetime of the foundress of the Charity, and they were nearly related. Elizabeth Heath is described in several documents and in her will, as the widow of Henry Heath; her husband appears to have had three brothers, Thomas, John and Richard. Thomas died about 1632. It is interesting to note that the wives of John, Richard and Henry were each of them named Elizabeth. The four brothers were the sons of Henry Heath, who in 1614 purchased a house "situated near a Bridge called y^e Church Bridge in Mansfield," from the Cooke family. The estate was of considerable extent and there were tanyards included, the price paid being £250, or thereabouts. An extract from the Register of St. Peter's Church, Mansfield, shows that on 8 July, 1636, "Henry Heath, Sen^r, one of y^e eight Assistants," was buried, and by Surrender Dated 1637 "the feofees of Henry Heath De^{cd} surrender tenement in Churchgate, Mansfield, with Tanhouses in the occupation of John and Henry Heath sons of the de^{cd} Henry Heath"; this with other property came into possession of Henry Heath. The husband of Elizabeth Heath is in several documents described as a Tanner, or sometimes a Currier. In connection with the property purchased in 1614, one deed shows that there were as well two crofts and malt kilnes in a Lane called Le Blynde Lane. From boundaries given, the house seems to have stood between The Ram Inn and the old Eight Bells, probably next The Ram. It is quite possible that the old tanyards which were in use within the last

¹ The information has been obtained from ancient deeds and court surrenders in the possession of William Pickard, West Bank, Mansfield, acting trustee.

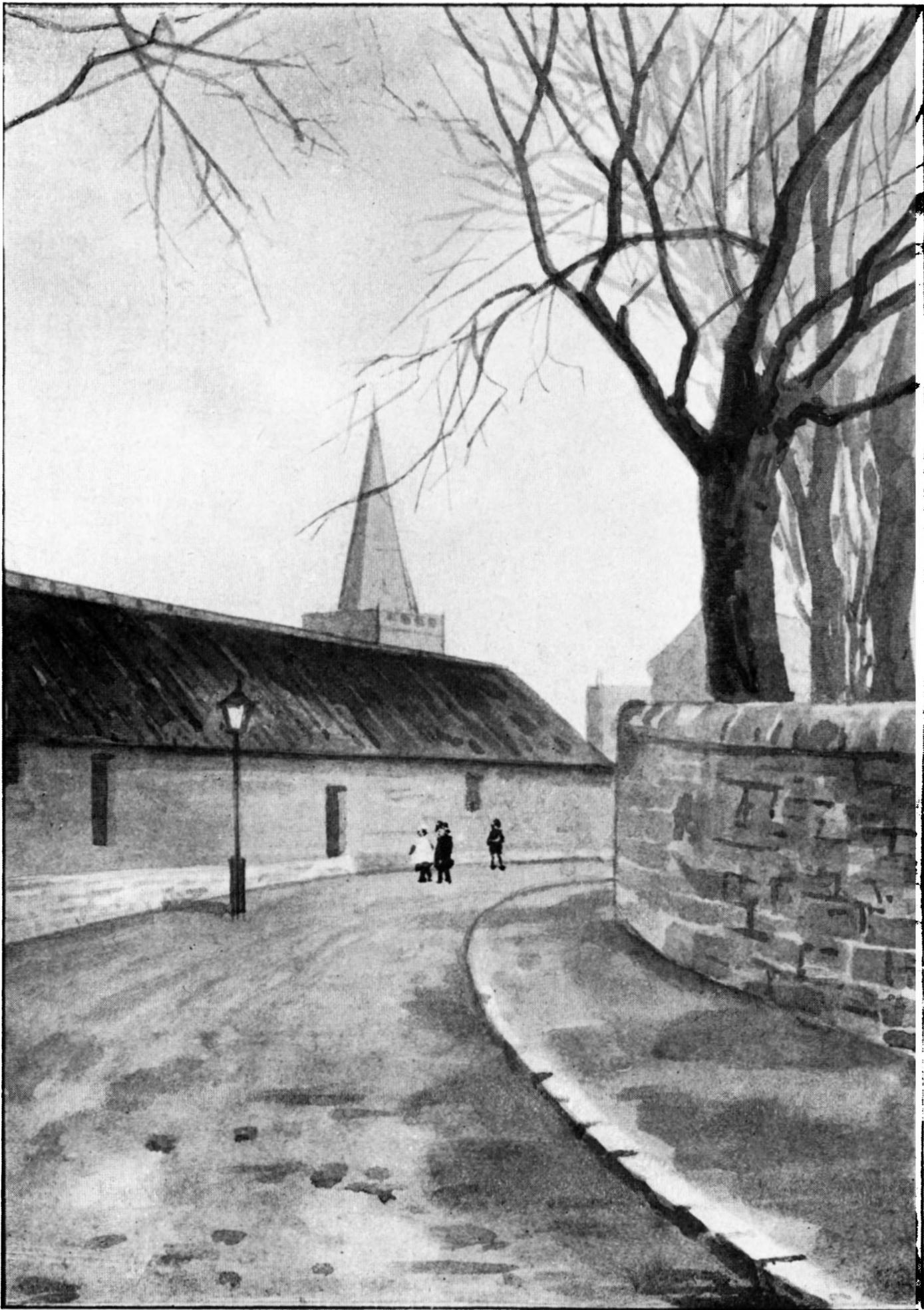
twenty-five or thirty years were on the site of the tanyards mentioned in the deeds. At the back there was a croft with the malthouses on its southern side, thus accounting for the maltings mentioned as being in Blynde Lane ; malthouses still stand there, though not now used for their original purpose.² In the inventory taken, after Elizabeth Heath's death, of furniture, etc., in her house, there is mention of one table in the tanyard and " five pieces of lead pipe in the Brige House, also Hay in the Barns and The Hussoilments in the House, out houses and yards," so there is no doubt it was a house with a considerable amount of ground attached.

In the first book of St. Peter's Parish Registers, the following entries occur:—" Christened, Elizabeth, daughter of Henry Heath and Elizabeth his wife, July 11, 1638 ; Frances, daughter of Harry Heath & Elizabeth, March 24, 1640 ; William, son of Henry Heath [wife's name not mentioned], June 26, 1650." The last two names do not occur in any of the deeds, but in the Marriage Register of St. Peter's Parish : " 1654, June 22. Mr. George Griffith of Cambridge and Elizabeth Heath of this P. married." This Elizabeth was certainly the daughter of Henry and Elizabeth Heath, for lands and property were surrendered to her and her husband, doubtless as her marriage portion. It is probable there were no children of the marriage, and that she pre-deceased her husband, as in his will he bequeaths all the property that came to him on his marriage to his " dear Mother, Elizabeth Heath." He died in 1686, and his mother-in-law, Elizabeth Heath, was his sole executrix. He is described as M.A. of Queen's College, Cambridge. He also left small legacies to his wife's " kindred Henry Heath and his younger daughter, Anne." The Parish Register shows that a Henry Heath was buried 1 Nov., 1678, and as in a deed dated 1680 we find Elizabeth Heath described as a widow he was presumably her husband.

Nothing has been found in the deeds to support the popular story that Elizabeth Heath of the Charity lived at The Queen's Head in Queen Street.³ Mention is made of a house called The Talbot situated in Wass Lane ; and

² See illustration.

³ Repeated in *Camb. Jnl.* ii. 405.



From a Sketch by A. S. Buxton.

[See page 62.]

BLIND LANE, MANSFIELD.

no deeds have been examined which relate to any house bearing the name of The Queen's Head. The story may have arisen from the fact that a Henry Heath lived at The Talbot in 1689; this is shown by William Dernelley's surrender of that date. He was a blacksmith, and his wife, Mary, was sister and co-heiress of Henry, William and John Heath, deceased; the property called The Talbot was in the occupation of Henry, the father of Mary Dernelley. The property is surrendered to William and Mary Dernelley on the condition they pay to "Elizabeth Heath, widow, the sum of £102 : 10 and forty shillings and 10/- besides." It is possible that The Queen's Head may be on the site of The Talbot, and that as there is no mention of Queen Street in any deeds, the district round there may have been known as Wass Lane.

The Almshouses which Elizabeth Heath built and endowed in her lifetime were erected, *circa* 1687, on what was known as Broad Close, which is described as "lying near a Lane called Nottingham Lane." The houses are twelve in number; six are occupied by poor persons of Mansfield, and six are reserved for members of the Society of Friends. The Charity also provided for a payment of eight shillings a month to the inmates, and the first payment was made the first month after 15 January, 1691, "a coat or gown to be given at the trustees discretion marked on right arm E.H. each to be of the value of 10/- and no more, to be delivered 24th December in each year." "One cart waggon or wayne load of Coals value 6/8 to be laid down before their respective doors." The houses were re-built in 1855, and in 1844 six more houses were built, which are occupied by the poor of Mansfield. The weekly stipend has been increased from time to time, and the initials E.H. are no longer worn on the right arm. Elizabeth Heath left all her property connected with the Trust to be administered by Friends: the names of the first Trustees were John Hart of Nottingham, Tallow Chandler, Jonathan Reckless of Nottingham (son of John Reckless the Sheriff of Nottingham), miloner, John Seaton of Blyth, Yeoman, Richard Clayton of Chesterfield, Yeoman, Robert Moore of Mansfield, Cordwainer.

A deed dated 1692 refers to the purchase of a further portion of Broad Close and mentions it as lying next

adjoining to the houses called the Almshouses ; the Deed is endorsed " Surrender of y^e back side of the Almshouses."

The Friends' Register of Burials at Nottingham shows that Elizabeth Heath of Mansfield died 24 ii. 1693. She was buried in the Hospital Graveyard at Mansfield, 26 ii. 1693, where her tombstone is still to be seen, though the ground which is now the garden of the Almshouses has, of course, long ceased to be a burial ground.⁴ There is nothing to show she openly joined Friends, and it is fair to suppose she did not, as her name does not appear in the ancient Book of Sufferings belonging to Mansfield Meeting. It is evident, however, that she sympathized with Friends and held them in high esteem.

EMILY MANNERS.

Mansfield, Notts.

Letters to Daniel Wheeler in England from his Family in Russia, 1832;3

A SERIES of letters addressed to Daniel Wheeler by members of his family, copied into a book, has been presented to D. by Francis Fox Tuckett, of Frenchay, near Bristol. The book was sent to him in August, 1911, by Frances Pumphrey, of Stocksfield-on-Tyne, who found the letters among the papers of her aunt, Margaret Tanner. The book bears the name of Elizabeth Tuckett, who died in 1845. It passed from this Friend into the possession of Margaret Tanner, the sister-in-law of Sarah Tanner, *née* Wheeler.

The following *résumé* has been prepared by the donor:—

" This book contains copies of letters addressed to Daniel Wheeler, then in England, preparing for his Missionary Journeys, by his daughter Sarah and his son William, with some notes from the younger daughter Jane. They are dated from the farm at Shoosharry

⁴ See illustrations.