

## Burton Burial Ground, South Yorkshire

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**J**N THE JOURNAL, vol. iii. p. 19, appears an article by the late Charles Brady, of Barnsley, on "Disused Burial Grounds in South Yorkshire," in which there is a reference to Burton and the curious inscription once affixed at the entrance to the Burial Ground.

The inscription (not included in above article), said to have been composed by Richard Farnsworth, is as follows :<sup>1</sup>

ANNO DOM. 1657.

Though superstitious minds doe judge Amisse of this Buriall place, yet let them know hereby that the scripture saith, the Earth it is the Lord's, And I say soe is this, therefore being soe, and by his People also sett Apart for the Churches use or A Buriall place, it is as holy or conuenient and good for that use and seruice as any other Earth is : And it is not without scripture warrant, or examples of the Holy men of God to Burie in such A place : for Joshua a seruant of the Lord, and Commander in cheife, or Leader and Ruler of the People of God, when he Died was neither Buried in A steeplehouse now called A Parish Church, nor in A steeplehouse yeard, but he was Buried in the border of his jnheritance, And on the north side of Mount Gaash : as you may read, see Joshua the 24 :<sup>th</sup> Chapter and the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> : verses : And Eleazar Arons son, who was Called of the Lord, when he Died they Buried him, not in A Parish Church nor A Steeplehouse Yeard, but they Buried him in the Hill of Phinehas his son : wich was giuen him in Mount Ephraim, as you may Read Joshua the 24 :<sup>th</sup> the 33 :<sup>d</sup> And these were noe superstitious Persons but the beloued of the Lord, and were well Buried : And soe were they in Abrahams bought field, Geneses the 23<sup>d</sup> Chp̄ter, the 17 : 18 : 19 : and 20<sup>th</sup> verses : Though superstitious minds are now unwilling unto the truth to bow : who are offended at such as Burie in their jnheritance, or bought field Appointed for that use :

An inexact transcription of above is given in *South Yorkshire, i.e., The History and Topography of the Deanery of Doncaster*, by the Rev. Joseph Hunter, 1831. The Author states the "inscription . . . was placed there by the first Gamaliel Milner of Burton Grange." This statement having been submitted to William E. Brady, of Barnsley, he has kindly looked into the question and written as follows :

Regarding the statement in Hunter's *Deanery of Doncaster* that the brass plate was placed at Burton Burial Ground by Gamaliel Milner. This may be correct, but I have never heard it so attributed by Friends here. I note Hunter gives no authority for the statement.

<sup>1</sup> A photograph of the plate, supplied *per* William E. Brady, of Barnsley, is in D.

In the Diary of John Hobson of Dodworth (two miles west of Barnsley, Burton being about the same distance east), published in Vol. 65 of the Surtees Society's Proceedings, for 1875, the following entry occurs under date September 10, 1728 :

“ That day Michael Milner, a noted quaker, buried at the burying place at Burton, in the same grave that his father Gamaliel Milner and his mother were buried, who occasioned that place to be enclosed for that use and she was the first to be interr'd there.”

To this entry there are two editorial notes as follows : 1 “ See the remarkable inscription engraved on a brass plate fixed over the door of entrance by Gamaliel Milner, 1657, in Hunter's *South Yorkshire*, vol. ii. pg. 397 ”; and 2 “ 1657. Hellen, the wife of Gamalian Milner of Munkbretton abbey was buried the xiii day of August, in the burying place at Burton, a quaker.” (Roystone Parish Register.)

This statement by Hobson suggests that in his day Burton Burial Ground and the Milner family were inseparably united in the common mind. This is quite natural ; it appears that most Burton Friends were of very humble origin ; the Milners of Burton Grange were of some local note (when in 1697 Friends proceeded to build a Meeting House, Michael, son of Gamaliel Milner, was the second largest contributor to the building fund), and by Hunter's time had come still further to the front in local affairs, and I suspect it was the tendency to associate everything connected with Burton Friends to the Milner family which led Hunter to ascribe the plate to Gamaliel Milner, as apparently it had led Hobson into the error of stating that this prominent Friend had originally caused the ground to be enclosed. The donor of the ground was George Ellis. From the deed, dated 1658, it would appear that the ground was enclosed, the plate fixed—at any rate prepared—and at least one interment had taken place before the execution of the deed of gift.

On the other hand Gamaliel Milner was financially able to have the plate prepared and fixed, and it might be argued that as his wife's funeral was for some months the only one that had taken place in the graveyard, he had a special incentive to justify himself amongst his neighbours, who would be more or less scandalised at the idea of burial in unconsecrated ground.

The whole matter is, however, of minor importance. Personally I believe the plate is part of the original equipment of the ground and contemporary with the building of the enclosing wall—the corporate expression of the infant Burton Meeting, not the later addition of an individual member. I venture to suggest, however, that for your records, which I doubt not you wish to be distinctly accurate, the ascription of the plate to Gamaliel Milner should not be unqualified.

Thomas Shillitoe refers to Burton and the plate in his Journal, under date of 1807, but he does not mention either Gamaliel Milner or George Ellis.

In the MSS. of Joseph Wilkinson, author of *Worthies of Barnsley*, etc., which were presented by his Executors to the Barnsley Naturalist and Scientific Society, is the following reference to the plate :

“ On the meeting house at Monk Bretton being pulled down, this inscription, remarkable on several accounts, was removed to the new meeting house which was erected at Barnsley, in 1815, and there it was placed in the porch. It is as follows:—[Wording follows.] The person who presented land for this graveyard was Mr. George Ellis of Monk Bretton, a member of a quaker family who long resided there. By deed of gift in 1658 he conveyed to several trustees therein named a parcel of ground at Burton for a burying place for the people called Quakers, on which was afterwards erected a meeting house, etc., but which meeting house was subsequently taken down, and the materials carried away in consequence of a more commodious meeting house having been erected at Barnsley. The death of George Ellis took place, according to the Burton Register, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> 6 mo. 1676, when he was buried in the graveyard he had presented.”

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### *Friends in Current Literature*

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THE memory of John Dalton, whether as man or scientist, deserves to be kept green, and we welcome the recently issued treatise by Professor W. W. Haldane Gee, Dr. Hubert Frank Coward and Dr. Arthur Harden, giving the history of John Dalton's lectures: *John Dalton's Lectures and Lecture Illustrations*, from Volume 59, Part iii., of "Memoirs and Proceedings of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society," Session 1914-1915 (Manchester: 16, George Street, price 1s. 6d.). It consists of 66 pages of matter and twelve well-executed plates. The discovery in the House of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society of a roll of diagrams, 150 in number, many of which "were annotated with the unmistakable handwriting of John Dalton," now carefully cleaned and preserved, led to the publication of a summary prepared and elucidated by comparison with the Dalton manuscripts also in possession of the Society. The summary is to be followed by a more detailed description of some of the lectures.

Dalton was but twenty-one years of age when, at Kendal in 1787, he ventured upon a lecturing career in addition to his school duties. No information is forthcoming as to the success of the venture. A framed copy of the syllabus is in possession of the Society. The next syllabus was dated 1791, and the profit and loss account of the lectures with its error in casting is reproduced in Plate II. Among the items are "Candles 4/10½," "Sundry small expenses 1/4½," "Profit and Loss, gained £6 4s. 6d."

In 1793, Dalton went to Manchester to teach Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, remaining there six years. In the winter of 1803-04 he was engaged to give a course on Mechanics, Electricity, Magnetism, Optics, etc., before the Royal Institution, London. His first lecture he wrote out in full—read it to Sir Humphry Davy, who from the furthest corner of the room listened and criticised. Then Davy