

## Betsy Ross and Lydia Darragh

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(See xiv. 122, 128, 139)

**H**ORACE M. LIPPINCOTT, of Philadelphia, has favoured us with a letter respecting the persons above-mentioned, who are also referred to in his attractive book, *A Portraiture of the People called Quakers*. Our Friend holds to the opinion that the incidents connected with these two women are historical. He writes: "The Betsy Ross tradition is a strong one in her family . . . and is of great age"; he encloses a copy of a letter from a descendant of Betsy, who states: "We do believe that she made the first flag after being waited upon by a committee from Congress. We only claim that she suggested how the five-pointed star could be cut quickly—with one clip of the scissors . . . and yet have no documentary proof to show."

What has the new edition of Preble's *Origin and History of the American Flag*, to say about Betsy Ross?

With regard to Lydia Darragh, H. M. Lippincott sends an offprint from a publication of the City Historical Society of Philadelphia, containing an address on *Lydia Darragh, one of the Heroines of the Revolution, 1915*, which presents a statement in favor of the historicity of the narrative.

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## The Family of Flounders

**N**UMEROUS members of this Quaker family resided in the county of Durham and in N.E. and N.W. Yorkshire. Births are recorded from 1672 within Richmond and Guisbrough Monthly Meetings, and somewhat later in York M.M., and later still at Ripon and Huddersfield. Of the seven children (born 1672-1684) of John and Katherine

Flounders of Kirklington (Richmond M.M.), four died in infancy and one before reaching ten years, and in other branches of the family infant mortality was also great.

Benjamin and Barbara Flounders, of Crathorne, Yorks, had a son, Jonathan (c. 1743-1785), who married Ann Lotherington (c. 1741-1811) (Pickering M.M.) in 1770. He was a distiller in Manchester. Jonathan and Ann Flounders had seven children, the youngest being Jonathan (1780-1840), who was a commission agent in Liverpool and married Mary Waterhouse (c. 1791-1874) in that city in 1817. Jonathan and Mary were Elders in their Meeting. The former is said by Joseph Smith (*Cata.* i. 620) to be the author of two anonymous pamphlets, *The Christian Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, 1814, and *Some Observations on the Gospel Ministry of Women*, 1822.

But the Flounders name is known best in connection with the Flounders Institute at Ackworth for the training of young men as teachers in the schools or families of Friends.

Benjamin Flounders (1768-1846), of Yarm, Yorkshire, who founded the Institute, by deed, dated 25th November, 1845, was the son of John and Mary (Bickerdike) Flounders, residing at Crathorne, Bleachfield, near Yarm. The account of the Institute which appears in the *Biographical Catalogue of London Friends' Institute*, states that the youthful Benjamin was educated at Ackworth School, but the secretary of the School asserts that he does not appear to have ever been a scholar there. He married, firstly, in 1800, Mary, daughter of John and Mary Walker, of North Shields, after whose death in 1803, aged twenty-eight, one day after an infant daughter, leaving him with one child, Mary, born 1801, he married Hannah, daughter of William Chapman, of Whitby, by whom he had one child, John, who died a few weeks before his mother, in 1814.

On the death, in 1844, of his daughter Mary, who had married and become Lowe, he was left without descendants and in feeble health. At this time he was visited by his old schoolfellow and friend, Edward Pease, of Darlington (1767-1858), to whom he confided his condition, and to whom he showed a letter from his maternal

uncle, Gideon Bickerdike (c. 1747-1810), of Staines, Middlesex, respecting the disposal of property bequeathed to his nephew with the desire that in the case of the nephew's death without family, it might be devoted to the interests of the Society of Friends. Thus there came into the hands of trustees the sum of forty thousand pounds to be devoted to education. J. J. Gurney gave £500 to purchase the land at Ackworth and the Flounders Institute for the training of teachers in the Society of Friends was opened in 1848.

In *The Diaries of Edward Pease*, 1907, we have some intimate references to Benjamin Flounders. It appears that the proposed disposition of his uncle's estate nearly failed of going into effect owing to the ill-health of the legatee. When recording his death (19 iv. 1846), E. Pease describes him as "once an overscrupulous member of the Society of Friends," and on the occasion of a visit to Ackworth he writes: "I shall ever retain an especial interest about this establishment, which had its unexpected foundation from an apparently unexpected result, viz., my call of condolence to B. Flounders on the death of his daughter."

Benjamin Flounders was a J.P. for co. Durham, N.R. Yorks, and co. Salop (the Bickerdike, and, later, Flounders estate was at Culmington, near Ludlow, in this county). He and one other were the only two of all the landed gentry of co. Durham who were not opposed to the introduction of the railway (*Diaries of Edward Pease*, p. 98).

It is curious that in all cases noted, save the *Copy of Benjamin Flounders' Trust Deed*, 1874, the "uncle" is referred to without name.

The Flounders Institute was opened in 1848, the building having cost £4,800, and it accommodated twelve resident students. The eight foundation trustees were John Pease, Joseph Pease, James Backhouse, John Church Backhouse, Samuel Tuke, Joseph Rowntree, Joseph John Gurney and Joseph Gurney Barclay. Isaac Brown was the first principal, and he was succeeded in 1870 by William Scarnell Lean, M.A.

In 1894, with the object of offering the advantages of a resident course of study at a University College, the

Ackworth premises were given up, and the Institution made its home in Leeds, the students attending the Yorkshire College, which became the University of Leeds in 1904.

William S. Lean retired from the principalship in 1899 and was succeeded by Francis Henry Brown, M.A., a nephew of the first principal, and a former student at the Institute.

After fifteen years in Leeds, another change was made in the administration of the Trust. A new scheme was sanctioned by the Board of Education permitting students to reside outside the limits of the county of York. This allows a wide freedom of choice as to the University which might best suit the needs of individual students. The common residence was given up, and the income devoted to providing "exhibitions" to enable students to meet the expense of a University course. The number of students assisted in any year is no longer dependent on the accommodation provided at a common hostel.

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" Though to study the Scriptures for the sake of using them in preaching could not befit our principles, yet I am increasingly persuaded, that by the mind being attentively fixed upon their sacred contents oftener than the day, a store of gold is obtained, ready to be coined at the King's command."

Letter from Hannah Chapman Backhouse, 1841, printed in her *Journal and Letters*.

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" My prison shall be my grave before I will budge a jot ; for I owe my conscience to no mortal man. I have no need for fear. God will make amends for all."—WILLIAM PENN, in the Tower of London, 1668.

Quoted in *William Penn*, by J. W. Graham, 1917.

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" The foundation principle of the Society of Friends is a belief in the universal and direct revelation of God to every human being, and the object of the Society is to awaken everyone to a consciousness that God speaks to him directly without any intermediary."

HORACE MATHER LIPPINCOTT, see *Friends' Intelligencer*, 31 iii. 1917.