

Nathaniel Morgan and the Duke of Gloucester, 1822

DIARY OF NATHANIEL MORGAN

24^h of 8^{mo} 1822. Duke of Gloucester came to Ross & lodged at y^e King's Head.

25^h 8^{mo}. This morning y^e Duke of Gloucester went to see the "Man of Ross'" house. I saw him about y^e Saracen's Head, & asked him if he would like to see an original painting of y^e "Man of Ross" I would shew it him with pleasure, he signified he should, & seemed well *pleased with my noticing him*. He immediately asked me if I was a native of this place. I said "Yes," & that my Father was living now in his 90th year, & that his father & grandfather were all residents in this town, & other anecdotes of them, that they were all members of the Society of Friends. He asked me if I knew William Allen, I replied "yes."

He spoke most highly of him. I told him of the death & burial of his wife which he had not heard of. I told him of his going to Russia, which he well knew.

He asked me if I "knew Elizabeth or Betsy Fry," he said "she was one of y^e brightest ornaments of her sex," & I think said "She would be an ornament to any Society."

He asked me if I knew Thomas Clarkson, though he was not a member of our Society, & spoke of the great good of his labours. He asked me if I knew George Harrison. I said "very well" and that he was a very excellent man & one of our greatest legislators; he spoke very highly of him, & that he was one of y^e first in Slave Trade, which I had forgotten myself.

I told him of y^e Emperor going to our Quaker Meeting in London & wishing to see Allen & Wilkins [on] after & spending an hour with them. He said he well knew it. I told him of my ancestors being fined for holding a meeting in Ross at y^e time of y^e Conventicle Act, & that they on being turned out of it sat in y^e streets to worship God, & that their goods were sold for such behaviour. He

asked me if such losses were made up to them. I said "not anything of y^e sort was done," or to that effect. I told him then that I & my Father had refused to pay y^e Income Tax on account of War, & had refused it on its first coming out, & withstood it 16 years, except when Peace was declared, & that our goods were sold by auction to pay it. This seemed to excite his curiosity, & made a stand to hear further, on y^e steps above y^e engine, going down to y^e river ; asking me if we got anything by that, meaning, was anything refunded by y^e Society for such suffering. I immediately replied, "Yes, Peace of Mind, which was worth all." I told him I believed there was not 6 in y^e kingdom as had done so & that I myself had brought y^e subject many times before y^e Yearly Meeting in London, & could never be once well seconded or supported ; this seemed to him a matter for surprise, saying "Do you say, you brought it forward, & no one seconded it?" I said, "Yes, few saw it from y^e same point of view." I told him we had written y^e Commissioners saying we would suffer loss of goods, fine, or imprisonment rather than pay it, it being specifically collected for war, & that if for any other purpose we would most willingly pay it, it being the most just mode of raising money, as had been adopted. . . .

He then parted with me, shaking hands on y^e banks of y^e river, in y^e most friendly manner, I telling him I hoped y^e Lord would bless him. When he got on board of y^e boat which was Old James Evan's he was saluted from from y^e shore by y^e multitude who was highly gratified when he most kindly acknowledged their attentions.

Nathaniel Morgan, the artless author of this Diary was a banker, living at Ross-on-Wye, in Herefordshire.

He was born in 1775, married Sarah Taylor of Ruxton in 1806, and died in 1854. In recognition of his philanthropic activities and his services in the cause of education, the gentlemen of the County subscribed to have his portrait painted by Lucy. It was given to Ross School, but it has now come into my possession.

MARGARET SEFTON-JONES,
Great great niece of Nathaniel Morgan