

# The Household Account Book of Sarah Fell of Swarthmoor Hall

Edited by NORMAN PENNEY, F.S.A.

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## PRESS OPINIONS

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“Only rarely are we permitted that intimate insight into household management of bygone centuries which a well-kept account book capably edited affords....The manuscript, so illuminative of times past, was rescued from possession of a grocer, who was using it as waste paper: a few pages are missing. It has now a permanent resting place in the Friends' Library at Bishopsgate. The Cambridge University Press make it accessible by this reprint in most attractive form, in which the editor and his band of helpers have made plain many obscure passages.”—*The Daily Telegraph*

“For Quakers and for others the old book has an interest from the light it throws on George Fox and his friends....There is abundance of interest in this old record of a household....The book is a record of the kind that illumines the life of the days; it is a page of English history which we shall not turn again.”

*The Daily News*

“A book with such a lineage, in which the most trivial item of daily expenditure in a remote Lancashire manor house is scrupulously noted, is plainly an original source of exceptional authority for the study of domestic economy.”—*The Times*

“Has a two-fold interest. It is a record of careful management in a large Lancashire house during the years 1673—1678; and

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## THE HOUSEHOLD ACCOUNT BOOK OF SARAH FELL

merely as a record of wages and prices for the period it would have been well worth publishing. But the house in question is also famous in religious history....The accounts are elaborately annotated and indexed....They throw a flood of light on the routine of daily life in Fox's home."—*The Manchester Guardian*

"Although Sarah Fell, of Swarthmoor Hall, in Furness, was a step-daughter of George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends, and therefore a person of measurable importance in her day, she certainly cannot have dreamt that the household accounts which she kept with such particularity would be handsomely printed and published by the Cambridge University Press a couple of centuries after she had finished all earthly reckonings....It has now been edited by Mr Norman Penney, whose notes explain many of its personal allusions and the bearing of various entries upon the life of what was then an isolated agricultural district....The historian of domestic economy will find the five hundred pages of Miss Fell's accounts a rich quarry of detail."—*The Observer*

"Here is a record which, rescued in earlier days from the sacrilegious hands of a grocer, has been preserved through the ages, and now appears admirably edited. At first sight the long rows of accounts look dull, but they are full of interest to one who knows the period and the people concerned."—*The New Statesman*

"It is admirably printed, and with the necessary notes, introduction, and index, is a document of very real value to students of history. Others than such students may also find good entertainment in a book that tells us how a sober-minded, prosperous middle-class household, resident in a corner of North Lancashire, spent its money in the days of Charles II."—*The Outlook*

"Here is a valuable and curious footnote to such social history as Macaulay's 'State of England under Charles II.'...All praise is due to Mr Penney for making the old life of England live again by his skilful editing of a record which might have been dry and unfruitful to the general reader."—*The Christian World*

"This is essentially a book for the reference library, but students of the early history of the Quakers will delight in conning these somewhat complicated lists, while for the general lover of history the book 'affords a fairly complete account of the conditions of life in one of the larger houses in Furness in the latter part of the seventeenth century.'"—*The Inquirer*

On breaking out of the war in 1914, Government took over for a short time its entire fleet ; from the autumn of 1914 its *Magic* and *Heroic* were commandeered by the Admiralty until 1919.

### NEWRY AND DUNDALK

In 1837, a steamship company was established in Dundalk, and later one was formed in Newry. James N. Richardson, of Bessbrook, Newry (born 1846) was on the Board of the latter for several years. On the amalgamation of the two concerns under the title of the Dundalk and Newry Steam Packet Co., Ltd., Henry Barcroft, of Newry (1839-1906), became a Director, and continued so until his decease.

The services are between Dundalk and Newry with Liverpool, Glasgow and Ardrossan.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Note the number of "firsts" in this article. Friends were to the fore in many lines of useful service.

<sup>2</sup> The *Great Western* steamship left on the 8th April and arrived at New York a few hours after the *Sirius*.

<sup>3</sup> In a letter written by John Grubb from London, 9 viii. 1838 (original in possession of J. Ernest Grubb, 1920), we read :

"Daniel Wheeler is indeed an extraordinary man. I heard he sailed last week [1 viii. 1838, see *Memoirs*, 1842, p. 688] in the *Sirius* steam vessel for Russia,—the first vessel of that kind which ever sailed for Russia."

This letter opens out an interesting question :

Did Joseph Malcomson and Daniel Wheeler sail on the same vessel ?

Was that steamer the same as the famous transatlantic voyager ?

The presence of his friend, Daniel Wheeler, on the vessel might have added to the interest taken in its arrival by the Czar.

The *History* informs us (page 33) that the *Sirius* "made a second voyage to New York . . . and on her return in July, 1838, she resumed her station in the cross-Channel trade between Cork and various English ports until unfortunately she was lost . . . having struck, during a fog, a reef of rocks . . . on the morning of Saturday, 16th January, 1847." But could she not have sailed for Russia very shortly after her return from New York, and before resuming her passages across Channel ?

A note to this reference to the *Sirius* states that "on one of her usual voyages to Liverpool the 'Sirius' collided off Haulbowline with the Brigantine 'Luvius,' which was coming up the river. The 'Luvius' belonged to Messrs. Harvey and Newsom. The latter vessel was sunk and remained 14 months in the mud, subsequently salvaged, repaired, and sold, but was lost on the next voyage."