

# The Quaker Family of Bevan

---

**B**Y the publication of *A History of the Bevan Family* we can add another to the "Quaker incursions into family history."<sup>1</sup>

This book of 144 pages has been written by Mrs. Audrey Nona Gamble, *née* Bevan. The author traces the family back to the last Prince of Glamorgan, Jestyn ap-Gwrgant, about 1030 A.D. The Quaker period, as in similar family chronicles, provides much material. Mrs. Gamble writes :

We should regard WILLIAM BEVAN, the Quaker (1627-1701/2) . . . as the Father of our Family, for, emerging from the shadowy past, he takes definite shape and personality. . . . Researches amongst Quaker documents have brought many new facts to light concerning his life and religious beliefs.

William Bevan was a merchant in Swansea, a Quaker *ante* 1656 when he gave a meeting-house to Friends. A letter is extant in **D** in which Bevan asks the help of Bristol Friends to counter the proposed marriage to a non-Friend of his daughter Mary, resident in the city.

In the Glamorganshire portion of Rees's *Quakers in Wales*, 1925, we read that Bevan was put in prison and in chains for using his boat to bring back two Friends who had been turned out of the town (pages 79 and 90 and more respecting the Bevan family).

We now come to SILVANUS BEVAN (1661-1725), son of William, merchant of Swansea. He married Jane Phillips (d. 1727), daughter of William Phillips, a Swansea Quaker, in 1685, and had eleven children. He was not so enthusiastic a Friend as his father. Of the children SILVANUS BEVAN (1691-1765) became the founder of the famous Plough Court Pharmacy ; Mary (1698-1784) married William Padley, of Swansea, at the Bull and Mouth Meeting House in

<sup>1</sup> See vol. xx. p. 2

London, in 1726, and had issue; Susanna (1701-1784), spinster, removed to London and resided at Hackney near her brother Timothy; Timothy (1704-1786), the stem father of the branch of the family traced downward by Mrs. Gamble; Paul (1706-1767).

Chapter two deals with SILVANUS BEVAN (1691-1765), of Plough Court. He left Swansea for London and married Elizabeth Quare in 1715 (*Camb. Jnl. Supp.*, p. 339) and later Martha Heathcote, but had no children to grow up.

His brother TIMOTHY BEVAN (1704-1786) followed him to London and became a partner in the Plough Court firm. Timothy married in 1735 Elizabeth Barclay (d. 1745), daughter of David, of Cheapside. By this wife he had three children in succession named Silvanus. Timothy Bevan married, secondly, in 1752, Hannah Springall, *née* Gurney (1715-1784, see xx. 73). The noted Quaker, Joseph Gurney Bevan (1753-1814, see xx. 72) was their only child. SILVANUS BEVAN (1743-1830), the surviving son of Timothy and Elizabeth Bevan, was educated at Hackney, probably at the school of Forster and Hodgkin (xx. 85). He was only a short time at Plough Court and in 1767 he joined his uncle, James Barclay, in the more congenial work of Banking. (Mrs. Gamble here gives a résumé of the history of Barclay's Bank.) In 1769 he married, at Devonshire House, Isabella Wakefield (1752-1769). "Isabella's story is both brief and pathetic. The poor little Bride of seventeen lived but seven months after marriage, died of fever and was buried at Bunhill Fields" (p. 47). The widower married again in 1773, a non-Friend and was, in consequence, disowned by the Society. Thus, in this direct line, the Quaker element began before 1656 and ended about 1773.

In another line there were Quaker Bevans for another century.

PAUL BEVAN (1706-1767), the youngest son of Silvanus Bevan (1661-1725) and his wife Jane Phillips (d. 1727), had a son, SILVANUS BEVAN (1743-1830). This Silvanus had a son named PAUL BEVAN (1783-1868), who married, firstly, Rebecca Capper (c. 1783-1817), daughter of Jasper and Ann Capper (*Piety Promoted*), and secondly, Judith Nicholls Dillwyn (1781-1868), daughter of William and Sarah Dillwyn, of Walthamstow, in 1831 (*Annual Monitor*, 1869, p. 8).

His collection of books became part of the present Bevan-Naish Library in Birmingham (ii. 91ff). Paul and Rebecca Bevan, of Tottenham, had a son, WILLIAM BEVAN (1812-1876), who married Sofia Read and had five children: the late PAUL BEVAN, Mary Crewdson, Antonia Williams, Constance Topham and Elsie Blomfield (p. 135); also a son SAMUEL BEVAN, who wrote *Sand and Canvas; a Narrative of Adventures in Egypt, with a Sojourn among Artists in Rome*, with a plate representing a "Friends' Meeting in Rome." It is said that when Paul Bevan, in an admonitory tone, said: "Samuel, Samuel," the son rejoined: "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth"! Presumably Paul Bevan's sons left Friends. Bevan Quakerism came to an end in this branch of the family.

*Addendum*

Dr. Bevan Lean, of Sidcot, Somerset, writes:

So far as I know, there was no connection between my grandfather, Dr. Thomas Bevan and the Bevans who were bankers and chemists. My grandfather was a Welshman, of a Swansea family, and joined the Society of Friends in Swansea. I believe all his sons left Friends when they were young men.

But the Bevans came from Swansea, as stated early in this review. Might not some branch of the family of William Bevan, the first Quaker, have lapsed and after many years returned to the faith in the person of Dr. Thomas Bevan, of London? In *My Ancestors*, by Norman Penney, 1920, we find this note (p. 146):

Hannah Marishall Bevan (1798-1874), daughter of William and Hannah Bennett, married Thomas Bevan, M.D. of London in 1827. Dr. Bevan died in 1847, and was followed soon after by two sons. Hannah Bevan settled at Darlington and her daughter Marianna married William Scarnell Lean. H. M. Bevan was a Minister (see *Annual Monitor*, 1876, p. 3).

Thomas, son of Dr. Bevan, was the author of several papers on the subject of "Lindley Murray Hoag and the Society of Friends," in 1853. He wrote under the name of "Custos." For L. M. Hoag (c. 1808-1880) see xi. 17 and other vols.