

Two Lincoln Worthies

Y the kindness of Mr. J. W. F. Hill, LL.M., of Lincoln, we are able to present some details of the lives of Robert Craven and Abraham Morrice.

ROBERT CRAVEN

Robert Craven is introduced to us anonymously by George Fox, who, in 1654, according to his *Journal*¹, held meetings in the county of Lincoln, to one of which

came the sheriff of Lincoln; and he made a great contention and jangling for a time, but the Lord's power struck him and he received the word of life and was convinced. He and his wife abode in the truth till they died.

The new convert accompanied Fox into Derbyshire and to London and we find his name attached, with that of Thomas Aldam, as a witness to that famous letter of Fox to Cromwell, in which he refers to himself as "the son of God."² He was again in company with G. Fox and others in 1656, in the Fen Country, and having learned something of the wealth of strong language used by his friends, he addressed an opposer: "Thou son of Eve, thou shames Christianity." Fox mentions him again in 1667, but in no case in the narrative of the manuscript *Journal*³ is his name given, only his office as "sheriff of Lincoln."

It is probable that Craven was appointed one of the two sheriffs of the city in September, 1653, and, unless (of which there is no evidence) he was deprived of office on becoming a Quaker he would go out of office in September, 1654. (The corporation minutes for the Commonwealth period are missing.) Fox describes Craven by his official

¹ Camb. ed. i. 149, wording modernised.

² *Ibid.* i. 161.

³ Now printed and known as the "Camb. *Journal*."

title in 1656,⁴ but in 1667, when a county meeting was held at his house, he is : "he that was the sheriff of Lincoln." Fox's first editor, Thomas Ellwood, more accurately gives : " Robert Craven, who had been sheriff of Lincoln," under date of 1654 (that is, 1654/5), and also in 1656.

Craven's first wife, Ann, died xii. 1658 ; a second wife, Jane, is mentioned in his will.

The will of Robert Craven, made 4th March, 1670, and proved in the Consistory Court of Lincoln, 23rd May, 1671, describes him as "of Botham in the County of Lincoln, Husbandman." Wife Jane and daughter Mary executrices —brother John Craven and son Thomas Durrance supervisors —amounts of money left to brother Richard Craven and to descendants of the names of Durrance, Gillitt, and Yorke—"house in Lincoln, occupied by Thomas Jessop," to daughter Mary. Mr. Frank Hill writes :

Boultham (or Botham) is a village just outside Lincoln. Perhaps he retired from his house in Lincoln after his shrievalty to live at Boultham. No house there appears in the will ; he was probably only a tenant. He died, however, at Newport, Lincoln [26 x. 1670].

Thomas Craven of Torksey, Lincoln, Quaker, is mentioned in an Episcopal Visitation in 1662 (xi. 13, 14).

The Friends' Registers for Lincoln do not contain more than the dates of the deaths of Robert and Ann Craven.

ABRAHAM MORRICE

Abraham Morrice was a prominent citizen of Lincoln, of whom Mr. Hill writes :

Abraham Morrice, who provided the Quaker burial ground here, applied under James II to be made a freeman of the city of Lincoln. He was a mercer, and had qualified by his seven years' apprenticeship. When he was refused he obtained a letter of James II dispensing him from the usual oath. He was admitted, but expelled again after the Revolution. After the statute of 1696

⁴ It was not unusual for Fox to continue to use a title after it had been discarded by the bearer, especially in the case of ex-soldiers, e.g., Captains Stoddard, Lawrence, Davenport, Ward ; Lieutenants Foster and Love ; Sergeant Birkhead ; and others.

which allowed Quakers to make declarations, he sued out a writ of mandamus against the mayor and citizens. Lord Holt (Chief Justice, King's Bench) seemed to think that but for a technical flaw, on the ground of which it was quashed, the writ might have been good. I do not know whether there were any subsequent proceedings. The references are Lord Raymond's Reports, i. 337 and iii. 203; Hist. MSS. Commission, 14th Report Appendix, part viii. pp. 111, 112.

The date of Morrice's first attachment to Friends is not known,⁵ nor is the date of his marriage, but as the dates of births of children of Abraham and Elizabeth Morrice proceed, with some regularity, from 1672 to 1686, we may presume that the marriage took place about 1670. Infant mortality appears here as so often elsewhere in Quaker families. Of the eight children three died in the year of birth and two in the year following birth. One died at the age of nine years and one only of each sex survived—Abraham, born 1673 and Sarah, born 1686. Of the former see below. Sarah is no doubt the minor referred to in an Administration Bond, dated 2nd May, 1705, reciting William Morrice⁶ as "the lawful guardian of Sarah Morrice a minor."

Elizabeth Morrice died in 1687, and in 1689, the widower married a widow, Isabel Yeamans, of Stockton, Co. Durham, whose husband had died fifteen years before. She was a daughter of Thomas and Margaret Fell. At the date of his second marriage Morrice is reported to be "of Navenby M.M., Leics." Abraham Morrice died 21 i. 1704/5, a few months after the death of his wife, which event took place 26 viii. 1704. His name occurs frequently in the minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the S.W. Part of Lincolnshire. Other members of the name Morrice resided in the county of Lincoln.

Of Abraham Morrice, the younger (1673-1704), only surviving son of Abraham and Elizabeth Morrice, little is known and that only from his will, dated 20th March, 1703/4, and proved 28th April, 1704, in which he is described as "Abraham Morrice, junior, of St. Peter at Arches, in the city of Lincoln, mercer." From this it appears that he

⁵ The burial ground was presented to Friends in 1669.

⁶ Abraham Morrice had brothers William and Joshua. Their father's name was William.

was of the same trade as his father. He married Ann, daughter of Edward Cooper, of Northampton, and there was, apparently, one daughter, Elizabeth. His will leaves "to daughter Elizabeth Morrice £200 at marriage or at 20, and also one silver tanker with a coat of arms ingrained thereon and four silver spoons marked 'A.M. junr.' To wife Ann Morrice, who is appointed sole executrix £300," etc.

In his *Charge* against Friends which appeared in 1716, Henry Pickworth wrote (p. 99) :

Abraham Morrice, of Lincoln, broke and had rotted in gaol for Debt, for what appeared to the contrary, had not been chiefly instrumental in the discharge of him.

We do not know whether this refers to father or son.

The Annual Meeting

The F.H.S. Annual Meeting was held in the Library at Friends House on the 29th March, under the chairmanship of Lucy F. Morland. T. Edmund Harvey was elected president, Herbert G. Wood, vice-president and John L. Nickalls and Muriel A. Hicks, Friends House, secretaries.

The retiring president, Herbert Corder, gave an address entitled *The Making of our Quaker Queries*, in the course of which he introduced many entertaining anecdotes illustrative of the life of the Society of Friends at all periods.

A report of the meeting appeared in *The Friend* (Lond.), 15 April. For the financial statement see page two.

Quarterly Meeting Dinner

An old country Friend, who used to come in for some Q.M. (I know not where), was very careful to get the best dinner he could, and when invited to dine, always asked what was for dinner, and then replied : "Thank thee, I'll see." This habit was so well-known that a facetious Friend said one day : "Thou must come to me, I have a dish come over from America called 'lobscouse' and I want thee to try it." When they sat down, there was nothing on the table but the dish of stew. The visitor ate a mouthful, then pushed his plate away, and with tears in his eyes, said : "How could thou ask me to eat such stuff as this, when Jossy Robinson offered me a good roast goose?" Then the host replied : "Put it away, Samuel, put it away, there's roast beef coming."

JOHN D. CROSFIELD.