

Extracts from the Diaries of William Dyer

William Dyer, b. in 1730, of Bristol, kept diaries for about fifty years. Extracts are in the possession of Edward Gregory, of North Weston, Somerset. He was by religion a Methodist. He was a brother of Samuel Dyer (1747-1809), the Friend, whose eleven hundred pages of diary are on loan in D.

THOMAS RUTTER, OF BRISTOL

March 23, 1778. In the night died in Castle Street, Mrs. Rutter, wife of Thomas Rutter.

Feb. 8, 1780. Thomas Rutter was married at the Friars Meeting to Miss Hester Farley, daughter of Felix Farley, late printer in Castle Green. [Her parents were both deceased.]

July 22, 1793. Thos. Rutter returned from 4 months Journey thro' Ireland on religious visits, during which he travelled 1700 miles, which probably laid the foundation for shortening his mortal life, tho' I have no doubt in exchange for a higher and better life.

Dec. 7, 1797. Electrised Thos. Rutter the 3rd time, and many times after for reducing a swelling on his finger, but without effect. It was an excrescence occasioned by reins of a bridle in his journey thro' Ireland. He was electrised in all 22 times ending 30 Jan. 1798.

Sept. 2, 1800. Died this evening about 10 o'clock, my much esteemed Friend Thomas Rutter. The 6th Sept. Bonner, at my request, inserted in his Bristol Journal the following paragraph :

"Died Tuesday evening of a long and painful illness, borne with resignation, Mr. Thomas Rutter, of Castle Street, an eminent speaker among the people called Quakers, in whom were united the Christian and the man of public utility, of whom it may truly be said : 'A great man is fallen this day in our Israel,' about 59 years of age."

Sunday morning the 7th Sept. I attended by invitation at the Widow Rutters, where from 80 to 100 persons assembled. But the numbers that joined in procession were amazing, probably about 300 men and women, to the Fryers burial ground, where the corpse were interred, prior to assembling in the meeting house. Parson Haynes walked by my side. He was in haste to get away in order to do duty at Mangotsfield, of which parish he is the Minister.

[Thomas Rutter (c. 1741-1800) is also frequently referred to in the diaries of Samuel Dyer. His first wife was Ruth Waring of Alton and his second was Hester Farley. See *Pen Pictures*.]

ABRAHAM RICHARD HAWKESWORTH, OF BRISTOL

Oct. 29, 1768. Died Mr. Abraham Richard Hawkesworth, a very worthy man and a man of learning, I think understood seven languages and was much admired for his eloquence and learning, and during many

years lived like other natural men ; but at length, was awakened to a deep sense of the vanity of all human knowledge and became an exemplary Christian, endowed with a universal love for men of all persuasions though he continued in the profession of a Quaker, in which he was brought up ; and was remarkably charitable to the poor.

[See *Jnl F.H.S.* xvi.]

GEORGE EATON, OF BRISTOL

Jan. 8, 1760. My friend George Eaton appointed School Master at the Quakers Fryers, a place supposed to be worth £150 a year, but did not turn out as expected.

March 19, 1773. Died my old friend Geo. Eaton, a most worthy man, and I trust is gone to Eternal Rest. His complaint was a wound in one of his hands, which broke out of itself and probably of the Scrophulous kind.

March 19, 1789. Died in St Thomas St., Mrs. Eaton, widow of my late friend, George Eaton. She died of an asthma, aged about 73 years.

William Sewel on George Fox

Sewel, the historian, writes of George Fox from personal knowledge in the following terms ;

“ It was his life and joy to declare the gospel and to proclaim the word of God, for which he had an excellent ability, and [when] he spoke to the ungodly world, an awful gravity appeared in his countenance and his words were like a hammer and a sharp sword.

“ But, though he was a son of thunder, yet his agreeable speech flowed from his mouth like a pleasant stream, to the consolation and comfort of pious souls.

“ Oh ! how pathetically have I heard him pray, when he, as transported and ravished, humbly beseeched God that it might please Him to reach to the hard-hearted, to support the godly, and to preserve them steadfast ; nay, with what a charming and melodious voice did he sound forth the praises of the Most High in his public prayers ! But his work was now done ; he had finished his course, and a time of rest from his labors was come.”

SEWEL, *History*. New York ed. 1844, ii. 162, quoted in Janney, *History*, ii. 226.

From Phillimore's Cornwall Parish Registers, Vol. IV., *St. Minver* (pp. 119-154), pub. 1903 :

“ John, son of George Croker, & Ann, dau. of John Peters, did solemnize their marriage ye 14th day of ye month called July at ye Meeting House.” 14th July 1696.