

Henrietta Gurney, 1761-1828

Communicated by ARTHUR J. EDDINGTON

John Gurney (1655-1721), the first of the name to be a Friend, was the father of John (1688-1740) and Joseph (1691-1750). Henry the father of Henrietta, here described, was a son of the younger John, called the weaver's advocate. The Gurneys of Earlham are descended from the 2nd son Joseph, and his wife Hannah, both familiar through the fine engraved portraits of them.

Notes by HUDSON GURNEY :

Henrietta Gurney was the youngest [daughter] of Henry & Elizabeth Gurney's 7 children. She was born 24^h Jan 1761, no doubt at her father's house in Pitt St S^t Augustines P^s & which was formerly called S^t Olave S^t which was afterwards the first bank house. Her Mother died about 1787, 10 years after her father. When H. was about 26, all her other sisters & brothers having been married some time, she & her next sister Maria removed (we suppose) to the house she afterwards lived in about half way down Bank St, where they settled down into old maids. Maria died in 1804 aged 45, after they had lived together 17 years. H. then became Miss G. of which she was proud, as also of being a mem. of the Gs, at least so says D. G. Henrietta was a most valuable member of the family, as it was *she* who remembered so many of the family traditions & stories, & she drew up a pedigree & made many of her relations take a copy at £5 each. She was in person "very fat & rather round, with a squeaking voice", but with a very kind heart & most useful to the Poor S^c. D. G. says in his F. R. that "she was always ready to help without a tendency to interfere, & was very active in her charities". D. G. in speaking of her visits to Earlham says they used to come in a sort of demi-quaker costume, & always with fans that opened with a spring. . . The only picture we have of her represents her ladling out soup to the poor. D. G. says, "She had always prayed she might die in her sleep, & was found dead in her bed without, I believe, any previous illness." She died 2nd May, 1828, aged 67.

Notes by JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY :

Aunt Henrietta lived in a small house near the Bank, & had a collection of stuffed birds. . . . I particularly remember one case among them containing a polecat coming out of his hole to spring upon a brood of young partridges. Aunt Henrietta used to dislike fine words, one of her sayings was "When I was young horse doctors were called farriers, now they call themselves Veterinarian Surgeons!" She used to sit at meeting on the seat next under the Ministers Gallery & my sister & I always used to meet her (we being then very small) as she came from her seat after meeting, when she would pull from her pocket a box somewhat the shape & size of a large ivy leaf made out of walnut wood (I think) bound with Silver,

from which she took two pink lozenges & gave us each one. She was a principal founder of the Norwich Sick Poor Society & the Annual Sale of fancy articles for the benefit of the Society called the "Repository" used to be held in the large room of the Angel Inn now the Royal Hotel, the goods being exhibited on tables arranged in the form of a horse shoe with long arms, & Aunt Henrietta always sitting at the head of the horseshoe in the middle of the outside bend, assisted by her niece Lucy Aggs Jun^r.

Gurney MSS. ii., 95 and 96, Friends House.

The Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting was held at Friends House on March 1st, with the President, Margaret Sefton-Jones, F.R.Hist.S., in the chair. She referred to the great loss sustained by the Society in the death of Norman Penney, the editor of the *Journal* from its first issue in 1903.¹ Isabel Grubb was appointed President, J. Travis Mills Vice-President, for the ensuing year, and John Nickalls editor of the *Journal*. The Committee and other officers were re-appointed.

The President then delivered her presidential address, entitled "Nine Pages from the Book of Jordans". With the help of archæological finds and of ancient field names, she cast light on the life of the neighbourhood in the ages before history, showing that nearby was worshipped the Horned God of Palæolithic man, and that there was a sacred grove in Romano-British times. Other evidence indicates a Romano-British settlement and various industries. Claimants to the honour of having given the place its name of Jordans were considered, one being Jordan of Tintagel, who figures in the Arthurian legends, the other the twelfth century Jordan de la Penne, probably an ancestor of William Penn. The succession of Jordans farm in the Grove family from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries was traced until in 1519 William Gardiner, a London grocer, bought it. The first Quaker owner was William Russell, whose father obtained it in 1610. The meeting house was built in 1688. From then onwards the story was full of familiar Quaker names, Penns, Peningtons, Ellwoods, and others and was enlivened by many illustrations from the minute books of Uppeside Monthly Meeting. Margaret Sefton-Jones is now completing a book on the History of Jordans and its locality of which her presidential address gave us a number of pleasing glimpses in advance.

The Statement of Accounts is on page 68.

¹ An account of his services to Quaker history by M. Ethel Morland, with appreciations from members in America, was printed in the *Journal*, xxx. (1933).