

Leeds Friends and the Lancashire Cotton Districts Relief Fund, 1862-66

WHEN the American Civil War began to affect the supply of raw cotton to mills in Lancashire, several thousand workers became unemployed. Funds were started in several towns to relieve the distress this caused. In Leeds £29,000 was promised within a few months of the fund being set up, and so much was collected that it could not all be used. Part of the unspent residue was returned to contributors (at their request); the unclaimed remainder was divided among the Leeds General Infirmary, the Public Dispensary, and other local institutions.

A collection of papers concerning the Leeds Fund has recently been deposited in the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds (Leeds University MS. [Deposit] 1973/1), by Robert Jowitt & Sons, Ltd., Bradford. These papers indicate that several Friends were involved in the fund, whether as members of the committee appointed to administer it, or simply as donors. The notes which follow concern only those Friends whose names appear in the Index to the papers. Copies of the Index are available from the Brotherton Library, and there is a copy in Friends House Library.

For Leeds Friends generally, see Wilfrid Allott's "Leeds Quaker Meeting", in *Publications of the Thoresby Society, Miscellany*, vol. 14, pt. 1 (1966), pp. 1-77.

Additional details have been supplied from Jean E. Mortimer's MS. index of Leeds Friends.

Wilson ARMISTEAD (1819-68; son of Joseph, 1793-1861, and Hannah (Wilson) 1792-1827), oil merchant (see *Jnl. F.H.S.*, vol. 50 (1963), 158-63). Committee member; gave £100.

Samuel BIRCHALL (1818-64; son of Samuel Jowitt, 1788-1854, and Maria (Atkinson) d. 1820), wool merchant (see *Bootham School Register*, 1935). Committee member; gave £100.

Henry BROADHEAD (1802-82; son of James, d. 1835, and Rachel (Holmes) 1774-1856), brush manufacturer. Gave £30.

Edwin EDDISON (1806-67) Leeds town clerk 1836-43; solicitor. An attender. Committee member; gave £50; on 17 xi 1862 he brought before the committee certain resolutions concerning the inadequate agriculture of the cotton districts, but withdrew them at the committee's suggestion.

- F. EDDISON (referred to in the Headingley Ward committee minutes as Mr Eddison jnr.). Probably Frederic[k] Eddison, b. 1837, son of Edwin and Hannah Maria. An attender. In a letter to Henry Appleton, 25 xi [1862], he declined to serve on the Headingley Ward committee.
- Robert Lawson FORD (1809–78; son of John, 1762–1833, and Mary (Lawson) d. 1862), solicitor. Gave £100; on 22 v 1865 he asked for the return of the unspent portion.
- Thomas HARVEY (1812–84; son of William, and Susanna (Atkinson) d. 1870), chemist. Committee member. On 12 iii 1863 he raised in committee the subject of distress in the Irish cotton districts. After detailed enquiries into the extent of the distress in northern Ireland, the committee resolved, 2 iv 1863, to give to Jonathan Joseph Richardson, a Friend, of the Island Flax Mills, Lisburn, £200 for the Lisburn relief fund.
- John JOWITT (1811–88; son of Robert, 1784–1862, and Rachel (Crewdson) 1782–1856), wool merchant. (Left Friends in 1837 and joined the Congregationalists.) One of the four secretaries of the committee; following rumours that mill-hands were refusing alternative work, he spent two days in Preston and neighbourhood, and reported that the rumours appeared to be untrue and that the administration of relief was satisfactory. His firm, Robert Jowitt & Sons, promised £150, of which £75 had been paid by June 1864.
- George TATHAM (1815–92; son of Thomas, 1773–1851, and Ann (Witchell) 1780–1860; married i. (1845) Hannah Maria (1819–52) dau. of Robert, 1796–1867, and Elizabeth, d. 1848, Walker; married ii. (1855) Elizabeth (1822–87) dau. of Thomas, d. 1868, and Martha, d. 1838, Morris), leather dresser; thrice mayor of Leeds. Committee member. His firm, Wilson, Walker & Co., of Sheepscar Leather and Glue Works, gave £100, but on 17 v 1865 requested the return of the unused portion. In a letter of the same date, written on his own account, George Tatham made a similar request concerning his personal donation, on the grounds that he wished to assist local institutions which worked on the principle of prevention being better than cure. From letters he wrote on 4 viii and 7 viii 1865 it seems that there was some difficulty in finding a record of his own donation of £5, which he said was sent on 26 ix 1862 (before the fund was started) “probably through a member of our own Society”.
- Edward WALKER (1826–1901; son of Robert, 1796–1867, and Elizabeth, d. 1848), of Springfield Mount; his widow, Celia, d. 1903. On 19 v 1865 he asked for the return of the unused portion of his subscription; he received £8 10s. on 17 viii 1865, so he had presumably given about £12.
- Robert WALKER (1796–1867; son of Joseph, 1757–1814, and Sarah (Armistead) 1756–1839), father of the above, wool merchant. Gave £50, but on 23 v 1865 requested the return of the unused part so that he could give it to another institution very deserving of support; received £35 12s. 6d. on 14 viii 1865.

Thomas WALKER. Probably Thomas Walker, flax spinner, d. 1873, aged 70; son of John, overlooker, d. 1837, and Sarah, d. 1828, Walker; married i (10 vii 1833) Betty (1805-54) dau. of Joseph, 1772-1852, and Sarah (Thompson) 1774-1845, Smith; married ii (22 iv 1857) Lydia (1814-1900) dau. of James, d. 1835, and Rachel (Holmes) 1774-1856, Broadhead. Promised £30, but is listed in June 1864 as having paid £20 only.

John WHITING (1819-99; son of John and Margaret Whiting of Hitchin; married (1850) Anna Rebecca (1829-97) dau. of James and Mary (Sturge) Gilpin), linendraper. One of the four secretaries of the committee; his firm, Hotham and Whiting, gave £60, and their employees collected an additional £12.

R. H. DAVIS

Employer and Employed: Ford, Ayrton & Co. Ltd., Silk Spinners With Worker Participation, Leeds and Low Bentham 1870-1970. By Elizabeth R. Pafford and John H. P. Pafford. Pasold Research Fund Ltd., Edington, Wiltshire. 1974. pp. x, 77. Cloth £1.75. Paper 90p.

The authors of this book are the daughter and son-in-law of Charles Ford, who managed the firm for nearly 60 years. It is a valuable addition to our records of the small family business, Quaker-owned and Quaker-inspired, which were for so long an integral part of the life of the Society of Friends in England. This firm is of particular interest as a pioneer in "worker participation", meaning by this not only profit-sharing but the inclusion of employees in management and policy-making. The story is skilfully told, drawing on personal reminiscences as well as on the firm's papers; and, although the authors modestly disclaim any expert knowledge of technical matters, their account of silk-spinning processes and techniques will also interest many readers. With the firm's closure in 1970, the last British silk-spinning mill wholly concerned with the business ceased operations.

A.W.B.

We are glad to record that William Sessions Ltd., of York, are now publishing or distributing a number of books of interest to Friends; among others, they will be responsible in future for the distribution of the two volumes of Quaker history by William C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* and *The Second Period of Quakerism*.

Two other works recently published by them may be mentioned: *Alcuin of York*, which is a selection of the letters of this scholar of the "Dark Ages", edited by Stephen Allott, formerly of Bootham, and *Bishophill, York*, by George G. Pace, a detailed survey, beautifully illustrated, of this little-known district of the city. Of especial interest to Friends will be the appraisal of the Friends' Burial Ground (disused), which the author calls "one of the major aesthetic experiences in York".