

A L I F E O F  
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LL.D., of Ashburne, Rector of Bosworth,  
Prebendary of Westminster, & friend of  
DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON  
Together with an Account of the  
TAYLORS & WEBSTERS of Ashburne

---

WITH PEDIGREES AND COPIOUS  
GENEALOGICAL NOTES  
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## PREFACE

“ Of making many books there is no end.” The corollary, that it is natural to make books, seems obvious. Nevertheless a few words are required, in order to explain the reasons which have impelled the writer of this biographical sketch of Dr. Taylor to indite and issue it in its present form.

In early youth — some time before he read Thackeray’s memorable passage in the *Four Georges* extolling the greatness of Dr. Johnson as humanist and scholar and forthwith determined to enroll himself among Johnson’s disciples — he had been made acquainted with the personality, and in some measure, the character of him who has always been known as Johnson’s Friend.

Years passed and the writer found himself immersed in genealogy, at first as a source of recreation and afterwards as a more or less serious pursuit.

The accounts of Dr. Taylor gathered from tradition and from books were found to be, like the gossip of the world, “very flowing

very flippant and very contradictory. ” While one writer described him as theologian another spoke of him as “a Doctor of Divinity whose sermons were very quaint. ”

The eighteenth century was not fruitful in theologians ; Bishop Butler was a phenomenon rather than a normal product. Dr. Taylor was neither a theologian nor a Doctor of Divinity. He probably knew more theology than the average cathedral dignitary of to-day, but if he had depended for fame upon the extent of his excursions into that Divine Science, he would, for all practical purposes, have been 'as little known to posterity, as the two steady jolly postilions who drove the large roomy postchaise which conveyed Johnson and Boswell from Lichfield to his house at Ashburne.

But further, we are told that his sermons were very quaint, and quaint sermons, could they be preached in sufficient quantity, would surely redeem any reputation, in fact any epoch of religious history, from barrenness. During the seventeenth century scores of quaint sermons were preached, but their quaintness was a quality unsuspected and unrecognised by those who heard them ; it was a quaintness moreover which provoked the derision rather than the edification of those who read them later on. In the next

century quaintness was confined almost exclusively to Quakers. Even Sterne with his tongue in his cheek, as he mounted the pulpit stairs, ceased to be quaint. In the Middle Ages indeed quaint sermons, — idyllic, tender illuminating and gracious — are to be found ; but such sermons have somehow been a scarce commodity ever since. Dr. Taylor never preached a quaint sermon, and was probably incapable of preaching one.

In order therefore to understand something of his character, it became necessary to combine oral tradition and the printed notices, which appeared after his death, with such evidence as might be acquired by means of historical research. The result was the disclosure of a character not unlike that which Boswell described but even more alive, a character vigorous, domineering and capricious.

Who then was this divine who won and retained the friendship of Dr. Johnson ? The writer had been taught to believe that he was a near blood relation of his own great grandfather. It became therefore in some measure a personal matter and only research could reveal the connection. Research eventually showed that the relationship was not so close as it was supposed to be. To make that discovery however it became

necessary to examine a large number of wills, registers, deeds and public records. From year to year the store of genealogical memoranda grew, almost automatically, until at length all the necessary material was in hand for an authentic pedigree of Dr. Taylor's family, and for a short description of his life and character.

Dr. Birkbeck Hill's great edition of Boswell appeared in 1887 and, in 1892, his *Letters of Dr. Samuel Johnson*. The latter work, especially, contained observations respecting Dr. Taylor which the writer felt to be unjust, but which he had not, at that time, the means of disproving. It was futile to meet those charges, which were none the less injurious because they were suggested rather than alleged, with an expression of the feelings of pain, surprise and regret which they inflicted, and the House of Commons had not then expounded the mysteries of that dialectic which enables a speaker or a writer to give the lie direct to an opponent without being considered unparliamentary. It was not until the writer became acquainted with the vastness of the resources of the Public Record Office, and with the facilities afforded by its indexes for the examination of contemporary domestic history, that he saw his way to deal with these charges in

such a way as to render their repetition a moral impossibility.

There were, in fact, three points which required careful examination. There was, in the first place, the pleasant raillery of Johnson himself contained in a letter to Mrs. Thrale dated 25 May 1780. This, as annotated by Baretti and endorsed by Dr. Hill, was made to convey the impression that Taylor was lacking in education or in culture. There was, in the second place, the suggestion attributed to Sir Joshua Reynolds that the friendship between Taylor and Johnson was insincere or was, at any rate, the outcome of self-interest. There was, lastly, the grave charge already mentioned which, had it been substantiated, would have destroyed the reputations of both Taylor and Johnson, by showing the one to have been a clergyman of loose character, and the other a moral teacher who privately condoned that which he publicly denounced.

These charges are, in the following pages, shown to be groundless.

The next question which arose was how to present the main features of Dr. Taylor's life and character, and at the same time to utilize the mass of genealogical material which had been gathered. There was no thought of repeating what had been written

by Johnson, Boswell and Mrs. Thrale. Those who were interested in Johnson's visits to Ashburne had examined those sources of information for themselves, and needed no one to tell them what they already knew ; those who desired a summary of what had been written on the subject, could obtain what they required in a pleasantly written article by Mr. Henry Kirke, B. C. L., in the current number of the Journal of the Derbyshire Archaeological and Natural History Society.\*

Two courses were possible. The first and most obvious was to print the genealogical matter in one of the journals ; and to give independently, but narratively as in the present volume, an account of Dr. Taylor and the family to which he belonged — in short a biography and pedigree unsupported by evidence, — the special abomination of the genealogist and the object of just suspicion to the ordinary reader. The second course was that which is here attempted namely to furnish a readable biographical sketch and a *collectanea genealogica* by way of appendix. The life and character of Dr. Taylor are given here in the form of narrative and criticism, references to printed works being appended as footnotes, while those statements, which are less obvious or which

\* *Journal of the D. A. & N. H. Soc.*, vol. xxxii, pp. 113-122.

represent the results of research, are distinguished by numerals and derive their support from the evidence supplied in the Appendix.

Dr. Taylor's personality made and left a deep impression upon the people of Ashburne and its neighbourhood, and the present writer has not hesitated to introduce such stories as have come down and have been repeated within recent years. They will be accepted for what they are worth. To discard oral tradition entirely is obviously illogical and impossible ; to accept it without examination is to become the victim of credulity. Oral tradition preserves the truth while exaggerating and distorting it. *La vérité est bien dans les opinions du peuple mais non pas au point où ils se figurent.* \* No one will probably take upon himself to deny the substantial truth which underlies such stories as are still current. The popular verdict founded upon a long life of 78 years, spent almost entirely at Ashburne, is doubtless correct. Such discrepancies, as are observable between that which is commonly reported and that which is actually recorded, will present no difficulty to anyone who has given attention to the above principle enunciated by Pascal. It is possible therefore to believe Dr. Taylor to have had the strongest possible dislike to

\* Pascal, *Pensées* ; art. xxiii.

pay his debts, while accepting the evidence of his hospitality and benevolence ; to believe him to have been careless of the laws of grammar when excited and out of hand, without denying to him education and culture ; to believe him to have been slack in the performance of professional duty, and as a clergyman unconventional in his habits, without suspecting him of being a libertine ; to believe that his last will was a shock to expectant relatives, without receiving as literally true the romantic story which they told of its reading.

If the perusal of this brief memoir gives to the reader a tithe of the pleasure which its inditing has given to the writer of it, the time expended on its composition — an interlude of last year — will not have been thrown away. Whatever its literary defects, the collectanea will be welcomed by those who are interested in family history.

To Lady Grant Duff the writer desires to express his great obligation for permission to reproduce and include the two portraits of Dr. Taylor. Both the earlier one by Wright of Derby and the later one by Opie are here published for the first time. They not only enhance the value of the book, but they will be a welcome addition to collectors of Johnsoniana, no portrait of Johnson's

friend having apparently been hitherto issued! To Mr. Frederick Taylor Webster of Herefordshire, a doughty sportsman and a courteous correspondent now in his 84th year, who has supplied valuable and accurate information, he would in the words of the immortal hostess of the *Green Man* “tender most grateful thanks and having no power to make any other return offer sincerest prayers for his happiness in time and in a blessed eternity.”

The face, manner and figure of another helper in the same field, one who revered Johnson and was keenly interested in Taylor — the late Rev. Francis Jourdain, vicar of Ashburne and now alas! no more — come back to the writer hardly, if at all, blurred by the fourteen years which have intervened since the vicar generously permitted him to examine his registers. Mr. Jourdain had a considerable store of archaeological learning, some of which, preserved in the form of lectures delivered at Ashburne, he kindly allowed the writer to read. He used the form of spelling for the name of his parish which has been followed here as being the more ancient and correct. R. I. P.

The view of the Mansion is from a photograph by Messrs R. & R. Bull of Ashburne whose permission to use it was granted with

a ready courtesy which is believed to be characteristic of the inhabitants of the historic old town and its neighbourhood.

# CHAPTER I

## DR. TAYLOR'S PARENTAGE

The problem of Dr. Taylor's ancestry is one which requires close examination. He was accepted apparently without demur as the representative of a family, which, though not originally of Ashburne, had been intimately associated with it for two generations ; a family which had in like manner replaced another of the same name at Ashburne. By marriage all three families were related.<sup>1</sup> It is probable that all three sprang from a common stock, and it is possible that further research may reveal the common ancestor.

With the Taylor family which throve at Ashburne in the sixteenth century, and which became extinct in the male line on the death of William Taylor<sup>2</sup> in 1660, there is no need to deal. Its supreme achievement was to supply the clergy of Ashburne and their relatives with wives.<sup>3</sup>

The family, a scion of which removed to Ashburne from Ballidon, achieved a larger

measure of worldly success. At Ashburne, at Chesterfield and in London, this family built up a considerable fortune. Thomas Taylor, described as of Ashburne in 1618, was a younger son of Henry Taylor of Ballidon, whose will was proved at Lichfield in 1585.<sup>4</sup> George Taylor, his elder brother, succeeded his father at Ballidon, a manor which was granted in 1436 by Sir John Cokayne to John Taylor and his son Robert for a yearly rent of 66s.8d.<sup>5</sup> Richard Taylor, Thomas Taylor's youngest brother, became a merchant at Chesterfield<sup>6</sup> and was the father of Samuel Taylor a major in the Parliamentary army, and after the accession of Charles II, governor of Tangier.<sup>7</sup> His granddaughter Bridget Taylor married Thomas White of Tuxford, and brought him the estate of Wallingwells where several portraits of the Taylors are preserved. An interesting account of this branch has been privately printed by Miss White in her *Memoirs of the House of White of Wallingwells and its Collateral Branches*. The above mentioned Thomas Taylor,<sup>8</sup> described in the grant of arms made to his son George as a mercer in Ashburne, married Audrey, daughter of John Milward of Eaton Dovedale, and had by her two sons who arrived at man's estate, and three daughters. They were ; —

1. George Taylor of Durant Hall near Chesterfield who by his second wife Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Milnes,<sup>9</sup> left an only daughter and heir. The inscription, copied by Bassano from his monument in Chesterfield church, states that he was a merchant in London, and, as such, was made free of the worshipful company of Vintners, but escaped the office of sheriff and alderman by the payment of a fine. He died on the 8th of May 1668 in his 66th year "not so much loaden with years as worth and piety, which he hath manifested by his charity in bequeathing large and lasting alms to pious and charitable uses both to the place of his nativity (Ashburne) and to this where he ended his earthly race." The various objects of his charity are specified.<sup>10</sup> His daughter Hester<sup>11</sup> married Sir Charles Skrymshire, by whom she was the mother of three daughters, the eldest of whom, Elizabeth, married Thomas Boothby of Tooley Park, who took the name of Skrymshire, and by her was the grandfather of Ann Boothby Skrymshire wife of Hugo Meynell the great fox hunter.

2. Paul Taylor married Elizabeth daughter of Robert Boulton of Underwood. There were several children of this marriage, but only one survived infancy, and she died

unmarried, at the age of 19, in 1655. Paul Taylor died in 1640. Like his brother George, he was a considerable benefactor to the town of Ashburne, his benefactions being liberally supplemented by those of his widow. The walking staves of ebony with silver mounts, still used by the governors and assistants of the Ashburne Grammar School, were purchased by his executors with money bequeathed by him for that purpose.<sup>12</sup>

3. Anne Taylor. She married (a) Joseph Taylor lecturer of Ashburne, and (b) John Hieron the famous nonconformist divine, who had succeeded Joseph Taylor in the lectureship. In the *Life of John Hieron* she is described as "the daughter of parents that were considerable and of very good reputation in Ashburne. She had many brethren and sisters (some of whom I knew) and I think I may truly say that few families produced more persons of good brains and excellent behaviour. I knew none of them mean in the world and some of them made a considerable figure in it." Her only surviving issue by her first husband was a daughter, Anne, who died unmarried in 1688.<sup>13</sup> By John Hieron she had several children.

4. True Taylor married Edmund Franke, vicar of Bonsall, and left issue.

5. Susanna Taylor married (a) William

Wheeldon, and (b) Robert Webster of Ashburne. By her first husband she had a daughter, Anne, wife of Capt. Doughty of Finderne, who held a command during the Rebellion.<sup>14</sup> By Robert Webster she had a son Paul, whose descendants are given at some length by Hunter; \* a daughter, Lydia, who married William Wingfield of Wirksworth, and a daughter, Elizabeth, who married Benjamin Taylor, attorney of Ashburne. Hunter expresses some doubt as to the existence of this last named daughter Elizabeth, who for the present inquiry is the most important member of the family. It is certain however that Benjamin Taylor's wife was named Elizabeth, and it is admitted by Hunter that she was the daughter of Robert Webster, while Bassano distinctly states that she was his daughter by his wife Susanna Taylor.

From the foregoing it will be seen that there remained no descendants, in the male line of Thomas Taylor after the death of George Taylor in 1688. Henceforth the most considerable persons who bore the name at Ashburne were Benjamin Taylor and his descendants.

Benjamin Taylor is said to have been the son of Richard Taylor and to have had a

\* *Fam. Min.*, vol. i, p. 236

brother Joseph. The statement receives support from the Duffield parish register, wherein are recorded the baptisms of Richard, Ellen, Benjamin and Joseph, the sons and daughter of Richard Taylor of Turnditch, afterwards (in 1632) of Hulland Ward near Ashburne.<sup>15</sup> If the Benjamins are identical, Benjamin Taylor of Ashburne was born in 1630. He acquired a good practice as an attorney, and by his wife Elizabeth had a large family. At the time of his death, which occurred in 1690,<sup>16</sup> two sons and two daughters only appear to have been living. These were Thomas Taylor also an attorney, George Taylor who went to reside at Sandybrook, Lydia wife of John Johnson of Ipstones, and Ann Taylor who was unmarried. By his last will he left *his new house*, at the time in the possession, i. e. occupation, of Mr. Charles Chancy, to his wife for her life and after her death to his son Thomas. His lands in Sandybrook, Doveridge and Ashburne were to be divided between Thomas and George, the latter receiving Sandybrook. The house here referred to is that known then and now as the Mansion. According to the late vicar of Ashburne, the Rev. Francis Jourdain M. A., who collected much information respecting the Taylors, and supplied the writer with the Taylor entries from

the parish register, the Mansion, which Johnson's visits have rendered historic, was built upon the site of the residence, once occupied by the priest who served the chantry of the Holy Cross in Ashburne church, the all sufficing pew in which Boswell said his prayers occupying the space formerly allotted to the chantry itself.

Thomas, son of Benjamin Taylor, was twice married. His first wife was his cousin Margery, daughter of Henry, son of Robert Webster. A deed in possession of the writer shows that by devise she acquired from her brother Robert extensive lands in Offcote and Underwood, which at her death in 1707, without issue, passed to her husband.

Thomas Taylor married secondly, in 1708 Mary daughter and heir of Thomas Wood,<sup>17</sup> and by her he had a son Thomas who died in infancy, *John the Friend of Dr. Johnson*, baptised on the 18th of March 1710-11; Thomas, Mary, Dorothy and James who died unmarried, and Elizabeth, who married an apothecary of the name of Galliff or Getcliffe, and whose quarrel with her brother John called forth that letter from Dr. Johnson which Taylor endorsed as the "best letter in the world." \*

We have been unable to learn any further

\* Dr. Johnson's Letters (Ed. B. Hill), vol. i, p. 71, note.

particulars respecting this the only surviving sister of Dr. Taylor.

Thomas Taylor died in November 1731. By his last will he gave the whole of his real estate to his said son John in tail, except the lands in Snelston and Doveridge which he settled upon his son James, upon whose death in 1744 without issue, they also passed to the said John. To his daughter Elizabeth he gave £1,500 and to his son James £1,000. He constituted Samuel Taylor, son of his brother George, next in remainder upon failure of issue of his sons and daughter. The extent of his possessions is not fully disclosed, but the lands in Ballidon are mentioned, in respect of which a deed of partition had been executed in 1719.<sup>18</sup>

Before bringing this chapter to a close, it will be convenient to add a few particulars respecting the descendants of George Taylor of Sandybrook, younger son of Benjamin Taylor.

George Taylor married Mary, daughter of Walker or Walter Webster of Ashburne. The latter was the son of Henry Webster and brother of Margery, who married Thomas Taylor of the Mansion. By his wife Mary, George Taylor had three sons — Thomas an attorney, Samuel and Webster who are mentioned in his will<sup>19</sup> (made in

1711 and proved after his death in 1721) ; also two sons, Paul and William, and a daughter Elizabeth, baptised at Ashburne church in the years 1712, 1716, and 1719 respectively. \*

A case which came before the Court of Exchequer in the Easter term of 1736 shows that between Thomas, George Taylor's eldest son, and two of his younger brothers, quarrels had arisen respecting the administration of their father's estate. The plaintiffs were the said Webster Taylor of the Inner Temple and his brother Paul Taylor, described as coffeeman who alleged that in 1727 Thomas Taylor (their brother) bound himself in the sum of £400 to Thomas Taylor of the Mansion deceased to pay to the said Webster and Paul £50 each with interest when they were of full age, that in 1729 Thomas Taylor (their brother) being in want of money prevailed upon Webster Taylor to lend him ten guineas, for which he gave him a promissory note and other sums, that he also got possession unfairly of certain securities and in particular of a note for £24 from Mr. Thomas Birds, that he invaded his chambers in the Temple, and sold his goods and a gold snuff box, and now pretends that not only has he discharged

\* Ashburne Registers.

the debts owing by him, but that there is a considerable sum due to him. Webster Taylor begs therefore that he may be allowed to furnish a statement on oath, and his brother Paul claims £64 from the said Thomas Taylor. The answer of Mary Taylor, widow of Thomas Taylor of the Mansion who died in 1731, one of the defendants, is that bonds exist whereby Thomas Taylor (son of George Taylor) is to pay Webster Taylor £50 for the use of Paul Taylor, £50 for the use of William Taylor, £50 for the use of Elizabeth Taylor and £50 for himself, but that if the said Thomas Taylor shall have spent money upon the education of the beneficiaries, allowance is to be made. We have not found the judgment delivered in the above case.

The said Thomas Taylor, eldest son of George Taylor, married in 1728 Anne Birds of Youlgreave, and by her had a son John Taylor and four daughters, — Anne, Mary, Elizabeth and Dorothy.<sup>20</sup> He died in 1746. By his last will he devised £200 to each of his daughters and his lands in Sandybrook, Offcote and Underwood to his wife Anne for life with remainder to his son John whom he appointed sole executor.

When the will, which was unattested, was presented for probate in the following

year, John Taylor described as the 'eldest' son of the testator did not appear, and administration was granted to John Odingsells Leeke of Wirksworth to whom there was owing the sum of £30, Thomas Boothby of Tooley Park being also a creditor to the extent of £122. 18s. 4d. We have been unable to trace John Taylor, whose descendants, if any, would now represent this branch of the Taylors, assuming, as is probable, that Dr. Taylor's sister above mentioned left no issue.

Anne Taylor, eldest daughter of the last named Thomas Taylor, described as of Longford, was married by licence at Ellastone church on the 8th of August 1756 to John Brunt, the witnesses being Samuel Colles and George Smith. There is reason to believe this was a runaway match, and that John Brunt was inferior to his wife in social position. They made their home however in the small and remote hamlet of Ramsor, and their children were baptised at Ellastone church. Tradition, which is here probably only the transmitted verdict of disappointed relatives, says that John Brunt was a gypsy. The register does not state his rank or condition, but simply records the marriage of John Brunt and Anne Taylor and the baptisms of the five children of John and Anne Brunt, namely

— Paul in 1761, James in 1765, Sarah in 1767, William in 1772 and James in 1774. Further particulars are given later on, and the foregoing genealogical details summarised in a pedigree.



*Dr. Taylor,  
From a painting by Wright of Derby.*



## CHAPTER II

### HIS LIFE

Samuel Johnson was eighteen months older than John Taylor. The school at Ashburne, situated directly opposite the Mansion, may have imparted the rudiments of education to the latter, but it was at Mr. John Hunter's school at Lichfield that he was prepared for the University. The passage describing it in Boswell is given as the verbatim testimony of Taylor. It was here that his life-long friendship with Johnson was formed, a friendship which, as we hope to show, was as sincere as it was disinterested, notwithstanding the suggestion attributed to Sir Joshua Reynolds and zealously circulated by the Rev. Samuel Hayes after his death. The disappointment of Mr Hayes may indeed palliate, if it does not excuse, his uncharitableness.

In 1728 Taylor wished to be entered at Pembroke College, Oxford whither his friend had proceeded six months previously, but he

was dissuaded by Johnson from entering that college by reason of the tutor's incompetence. He matriculated in consequence at Christ Church on the 10th of March 1728-9, being then in his eighteenth year. Boswell tells us that the lectures of his tutor, Mr. Bateman, were so excellent that Johnson "used to come and get them at second hand from Taylor." It says a great deal for the latter's abilities that he should have been even indirectly the means of transmitting knowledge to one whom Dr. Adams the Master of Pembroke regarded as 'above his mark.' This will be clear to anyone who considers the futility of a future senior wrangler or senior classic at the sister university deriving assistance from the notes of lectures taken down by a passman.

We have never seen it suggested that it was Taylor, who left the new pair of shoes at Johnson's door to enable him to appear to better advantage within the precincts of Christ Church, although the paragraph in which the episode is related is that which supplies us with the foregoing account of Mr. Bateman's lectures. Taylor probably knew his friend better than to suppose that this, by no means extravagant indelicacy, would not be resented.

Of Taylor's university career nothing

further is known except that in 1742 he became a Master of Arts and in 1752 a Doctor of Laws.

It had been his intention to follow his father's profession of the law and it is not improbable that for some years after leaving Oxford he did follow that profession. So much indeed is suggested by the ill natured remark of which Taylor was the butt, that a broken attorney made a notable parson. \* In the register recording his first marriage in 1732 he is styled John Taylor gentleman (*generosus*), and in a deed executed July 31, 1736 whereby lands belonging to the Ashburne Grammar School were exchanged through his instrumentality for lands in St. Francis street Dublin, <sup>21</sup> he is mentioned as John Taylor esquire.

It was probably through the influence of Taylor, <sup>22</sup> or in order to be near him, that Johnson had hopes in the year 1732 of succeeding "either as master or usher in the school at Ashburne." † How many times Johnson visited Taylor during the earlier years of his life it is impossible to say. A visit between the years 1737 and 1740 is recorded on the testimony of the daughter of Dr. Lawrence, when Johnson made or

\* Nichols, *Lit. Anecdotes*, vol. ix, 58.

† Boswell, *Life of Johnson* (Ed. 1824), vol. i, p. 353, n. 2.

renewed his acquaintance with the Meynells at Bradley, Miss Hill Boothby and Mrs Fitzherbert.

The death of John Taylor's father in 1731 had placed him in a position of affluence. Accordingly in the following year he married, at Croxall church, Elizabeth Webb, described as cousin german of the Rev. Samuel Pipe. \* She was the daughter of William Webb. † It was a childless marriage, but without doubt a happy one, and the intimacy between Johnson and Taylor was shared by Taylor's wife. Johnson's letter dated 18th March 1752, § upon the death of his own wife, requests Taylor to "desire Mrs Taylor to inform him what mourning he should buy for his mother and Miss Porter and to bring a note in writing with him." Elizabeth, wife of Dr. Taylor, was buried at Ashburne church on the 13th of January 1745-6. A proof of his regard for her memory and for her relatives is afforded by the fact, that by his last will he made "Thomas Webb of Hermitage in the county of Stafford gentleman son of his relation William Webb gentleman" & his heirs, second in remainder after the Brunts to the whole of his estates,

\* Nichols, *op. cit.*

† A. L. Reade, *Reades of Blackwood Hill*, p. 274.

§ Printed by Boswell.

and "Thomas Green son of (? Richard) William Green of the city of Lichfield surgeon and apothecary by Theodosia his wife daughter of his said relation William Webb gentleman" & his heirs third in remainder.

Between the years 1736 and 1740 John Taylor was admitted to Holy Orders and, in the latter year, presented to the valuable rectory of Market Bosworth in Leicestershire. There is little doubt that he obtained this preferment by purchase. Gisborne, Taylor's banker, having his suspicions aroused owing to the large sums drawn upon him, marked some of the coins which he found were duly returned to the bank by the patron as vendor of the next presentation.

It is not surprising that a shrewd banker should watch closely transactions connected with his own bank, but it is surprising to find one bearing an honoured name resorting to a species of cunning worthy of a tenth rate detective, and still more surprising to learn that he was not ashamed to boast of its success. It is probable that Taylor would have considered it more shameful to disclose professional secrets, than to purchase a next presentation which under certain restrictions was permissible, until the passing of the Benefices Act in 1898, and which was in his day very common. The real eccle-

siastical scandal of the 18th and earlier half of the 19th century consisted, not so much in the traffic in advowsons and next presentations, as in the facilities which were afforded for non residence and in the toleration of pluralities. In the use made of those facilities Taylor, it must be confessed, was a notorious offender. He is not known to have resided for any considerable length of time in any parish of which he was incumbent, and at the time of his death he held at least three if not more benefices, besides a prebend in the collegiate church of Westminster and a chaplaincy to the Duke of Devonshire. In addition to the rectory of Market Bosworth he acquired a prebend of Westminster in 1746, the preachingship of the chapel in the Broadway, Westminster in 1740, the rectory of Lawford in Essex in 1751, the perpetual curacy of St. Botolph's, Aldersgate in 1769, resigning the same in 1776, and the rectory of St. Margaret's, Westminster in 1784. His desire for preferments was insatiable. A letter in 1742 from Johnson to him shows that he was expecting to obtain something considerable — a bishopric or deanery — through the offices of his patron, the Duke of Devonshire, who was at that time Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; in 1776 a letter from Johnson to

Mrs Thrale states that livings and preferments were running in his head as if he were in want with twenty children; in 1779 he was hoping for the deanery of Rochester; and in 1781 for that of Lincoln.

In the mean time he was not inactive. Duties and responsibilities, secular rather than religious, engrossed his attention. The list of gamekeepers' deputations, now in the custody of the Derbyshire County Council, shows that in 1732 Taylor, in right of his manor of Ballidon, deputed a gamekeeper to act in accordance with an act passed in the ninth year of Queen Anne, the deputation being renewed by him in 1767.\* Lands in Ballidon and Ashburne were the qualification furnished by him in 1767, when he and at the same time his friend and neighbour Brooke, afterwards Sir Brooke Boothby, were sworn in magistrates for the county. † Taylor was probably already in the commission of the peace for the county of Leicester.

It is not possible to say when the structural alterations were made by him at the Mansion, which provided the large octagon room facing the lawn by utilising the space between the two wings. This was the room which contained the chandelier which

\* J. C. Cox, *Records of Derbyshire*, p. 321.

† *Ibid.*, 286.

Johnson, during his visit in 1777, wished to have lighted, and when reminded by Boswell that the following night, which had been suggested by his host, would be most appropriate because it was his birthday, led him to exclaim sternly that he would not have it lighted on that day.

The alterations, which provoked the animadversions recorded in Johnson's letter dated 26th July 1784, were possibly the addition of the pediment with the large round window beneath it which hides the gables situated on the north side of the house.

Johnson described the Mansion in a letter to Mrs. Thrale in 1770 — she had not at that time visited Taylor at Ashburne — as a very pleasant house with lawn and lake and twenty deer and five fawns on the lawn.

Taylor had, according to local tradition, enclosed a piece of waste land in the township of Clifton and Compton, and this was afterwards used by him as a deer-park, and has since gone by the name of the Paddock. He procured handsome gates, a portion of which only still remains, some of the iron work, much damaged, having been removed to Lowtop. There was a deer barn on the south side, which was built in a fanciful manner with battlements to remind Dr. Johnson of a similar building to which he had



THE MANSION



been accustomed when staying with him at Market Bosworth. The bedroom occupied by Johnson has been the subject of controversy. The earlier tradition, which is now generally accepted, says that it was a comparatively small one on the first floor, on the right as you face the house from Church Street. The table and chair used by him are now in the possession of Mr. Frederick Taylor Webster of Huntingdon near Hereford. The lake with its swans has long disappeared. It was constructed by Dr. Taylor, who for the purpose dammed the water of the river which was subsequently diverted to the south of the paddock.

A railway line has within recent years been carried through the paddock, and the house, which twenty years ago was regarded as a suitable habitation for persons who loved its traditions and had the means to live there in good condition, was, when the writer last saw it, untenanted. Taylor was at great pains to adorn the interior. The marble columns in the hall, in style similar to those at Kedleston, the mantel pieces of modest design but exquisitely carved, the plaster mouldings—the work of Italian artists, the stone staircase leading from the hall to a balcony, the wrought-iron railing which supported the emblazoned shield of arms

granted to George Taylor of Durant Hall and assumed, possibly with authority, by Dr. Taylor's father by virtue of his descent from George Taylor's sister — everything tended to confirm and illustrate the description given us by Boswell, a picture in which Mr. Peters, the upper servant, a decent grave man in purple clothes and a large white wig, like the butler or major domo of a bishop, found a suitable place. Taylor's beer reverently preserved in bottles bearing his crest, — one of which was in possession of the late Miss Dalby — was of special excellence and much appreciated by the Duke of Devonshire and his friends when visiting Ashburne.

The letters written by Johnson to Mrs. Thrale in the year 1771 vividly describe the ample fare and the dainties which the sage enjoyed at Ashburne. Strawberries and cream are no longer confined to the rich man's table, but few, who live beyond the fringe of the Staffordshire Moorlands and the Pennine range, know anything of the allurements of 'bilberry pye.'

As a breeder of cattle Taylor was widely known and justly celebrated. His talk was of bullocks. He who in 1777 sold Mr. Chapplin of Lincolnshire a cow for the sum of £126 was something more than a beginner.

Some of his cows brought even more. Though respected for his bounty towards the people of Ashburne, he was not popular with the farmers at Market Bosworth. They were liable to pay him tithe of milk, but rather than pay it they are said to have thrown the milk away. When not entertaining his friends and prosecuting his enemies, his time was divided between breeding horses, cattle, deer and bull dogs and experimenting with different kinds of grain. What had at first been a source of recreation became as years went by, and with them the hopes of deaneries, bishoprics and the like, a serious, profitable and congenial occupation.

Taylor's second marriage was disastrous. Johnson knew all the circumstances, and knowing them had no word of censure for his friend. He censured in no measured terms his ineptitude, irresolution and absurd generosity, and counselled a more downright method of treating one who had deserted him, and whose duty it was "to return home and mend her behaviour." Dr. Birkbeck Hill more than once insinuates that Taylor was unfaithful to his wife, a charge which has no foundation in fact. The circumstances are as follows. Somewhere between the years 1746 and 1764 Dr. Taylor married for his second wife Mary, the daughter by

his first wife of Roger Tuckfield of Fulford in the county of Devon. She had an uterine sister Catherine wife of George Mill, two half brothers, John Tuckfield and Henry Tuckfield, and a half sister, Elizabeth. With his wife Dr. Taylor received £4000 and upon her he settled £400 a year. In 1763 his wife deserted him and went to live with her sister Elizabeth. A deed of separation was drawn up whereby he allowed her £160 a year. Johnson had counselled him not by an absurd generosity to pay her for disobedience and elopement. The reason assigned by her, six years afterwards, for leaving him was that "she frequently received very personal ill usage from him which he continued notwithstanding she frequently made great complaints on that account and declared to him that she should be obliged for her own comfort and safety to leave him." She further stated that she had never agreed to go back to him "being persuaded that he would treat her very ill." This ex parte statement whether true or false should suffice to remove suspicions of a more serious charge. In 1769-70 Dr. Taylor petitioned the Lord Chancellor, \* alleging his marriage with Mary Tuckfield and the death of her brother John, who left personalty amounting

\* Chancery Suits 1769-70, Taylor v. Tuckfield.

to £10,000 of which he, the petitioner, had not received his third part ; also the sale of jewellery to Mr. Buller for £415, and asking for a statement on oath. It was this suit which elicited the particulars already given. What the judgment was the writer has not been able to discover. It is a matter of no great consequence. Dr. Taylor's lawsuits occupy a prominent place in the letters written by Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, but we doubt whether they were as numerous as is generally supposed. There is no evidence that Mrs. Taylor returned to her husband.

Dr. Taylor read the Burial Service over the remains of his illustrious friend in Westminster Abbey on the 20th of December 1784. He died at Ashburne on the 29th of February 1788 and was interred at Ashburne church. It is remarkable that no monument should have been placed to his memory either by his executors or by those who inherited his property.

# CHAPTER III

## HIS WRITINGS

Dr. Taylor realised his limitations. While his friends and contemporaries were at work upon essays, sonnets, plays and more serious literature; while they elaborated theories and discussed the niceties of literary expression, he was, in his usual way, superintending the hay harvest, estimating the productiveness of Polish oats and Siberian barley, getting a bull to his cows and a dog to his bitches.

He was nevertheless keenly interested in politics, and the administration of local affairs; and, in spite of his secular habits and neglect of official obligations, as they are now commonly understood, he possessed resources upon which Dr. Johnson did not disdain to draw when desolated by calamity and the fear of death.

In 1787, three years after Johnson's death, there appeared the following letter upon the Subject of a Future State, which it has been thought desirable to reproduce here *in extenso*,

copies of it having become extremely rare. There is no mention of the date of its composition or of the circumstances under which it was composed, but the extract from Johnson's Prayers and meditations, wherewith its author thought fit to introduce it, bears date 14 October 1781. The Duke of Devonshire, to whom the Letter was dedicated, was the fifth duke, grandson of the third duke, whose chaplain Dr. Taylor became soon after his ordination. Brooke Boothby junior, the writer of the sonnet, was the eldest son of Sir Brooke Boothby fifth baronet of Ashburne Hall, and succeeded his father as sixth baronet in 1789. His only daughter Penelope is commemorated by the touching monument in Ashburne church by Thomas Banks, R. A., and her death by her bereaved father in "The Sorrows of Penelope."

The Letter is thus described ;—

*A Letter to Samuel Johnson LL.D. on the Subject of a Future State*, by John Taylor LL.D. Prebendary of Westminster, Rector of Bosworth, Leicestershire, and Minister of St. Margaret's, Westminster. London printed for T. Cadell in the Strand 1787.

It is prefaced by a dedicatory letter, a note explanatory of its purport, and a sonnet as follows :—

To his Grace William Duke of Devonshire.

My Lord,

For inscribing the following Letter to your Grace, I shall make no apology, since justice requires you to protect what you have commanded to be published.

How properly *you* may engage in the defence of others who have so few faults of your own to palliate or correct, I am afraid of declaring, lest, however I may be acquitted of flattery by the rest of the world, I should be suspected of it by your Grace, and forfeit that esteem which your discernment will only suffer you to pay to integrity and to truth.

I am, my Lord,

With the greatest esteem and zeal,  
Your Grace's most obliged,  
most faithful, and most humble servant.  
John Taylor.

The Author of the following Letter, having heard that his friend Dr. Johnson had said, that he would prefer a state of torment to that of annihilation, waited upon the Doctor, and told him that such a declaration, coming from a person of his weight and character, might be productive of evil consequences. Dr. Johnson desired him to

arrange his thoughts on the subject. This request was complied with, and the arguments, then drawn up, have, since the Doctor's death, been enlarged, at the request of some particular friends who saw, and approved of them.

The Reader will meet with a reference to the above in Mr. Strahan's publication of Dr. Johnson's prayers, where he says "At Ashbourn, I hope to talk seriously with" —

To the Rev. Dr. Taylor, on his letter to Dr. Johnson, stating the proofs of the Christian Religion.

When doubts disturb'd the dying Johnson's breast,  
From thee, his long tried Friend, he sought for rest;  
Thy clearer reason chas'd the clouds away,  
And on the senses pour'd the living ray,  
Hence taught, the path of faith he firmly trod,  
And died in full reliance on his God.  
But oh ! not here the blest effect should end,  
No ; Let thy purpose to the world extend :  
Flash bright conviction on a doubting age,  
And leave to latest times thy well-wrought page ;  
Teach weaker minds the mighty truths to scan,  
Not more the Friend of Johnson, than of man.

BROOKE BOOTHBY, JUN.

### A LETTER TO SAMUEL JOHNSON LL.D.

My dear Sir,

According to my promise, I here send you my thoughts upon the subject of a

future state, and the best arguments I could think of, to prove the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body. If the fare I have provided for you, be not so delicate, or so highly seasoned as you may have expected, you must remember, that it was all to pass your digestion and your finish (A new word for you).

A very superficial inquiry into the nature of the human mind will convince us, that the fear of death is the great disturber of human quiet, and therefore, of all speculations, none can be so interesting to the wise and to the good, as such as will discover to us the most efficacious remedies against the restless horrors of these most terrifying expectations, and afford us the best and most certain lights to cheer the gloomy passage through the valley of the shadow of death.

To do this, is the prerogative and privilege only of religion, of that religion which shews us, by irresistible evidence, the certainty of a state of future existence ; a state, in which we shall see all the objections to the divine government of the world solved ; all the seeming inequalities of providence adjusted ; and all the distributions of our Creator justified ; a state, in which it will appear, that in the course of existence, the judge of all the earth has done right ; and

in which, every man shall receive the due reward of his works, whether they be good, or whether they be evil.

That there will be in some other place a review of our present life ; that what seems a total dissolution of our nature, and absolute privation of all sensitive and intellectual powers, is, in reality, only a change of the manner of life, only a removal to some other state, and a separation of our immortal from our perishable part, has been indeed generally believed, and evinced by many moral and physical arguments.

It has been always discovered by the most negligent observer, that this world afforded to human understandings no proof of a distribution of happiness or misery according to the deserts of virtue or of wickedness ; or according to the sacred rules of reason and of justice. It was found that men were often prosperous in their crimes, and distressed by their virtues ; at least, that good and bad men were promiscuously happy and miserable without distinction. And therefore, since truth and falsehood, benevolence and cruelty, seemed unalterably opposite ; since the one seemed universally worthy of approbation, and the other unchangeably detestable ; they could not but imagine, in every age, that a time would come, in which

practices so different in their natures, would differ likewise in their consequences ; and in which, those who had endeavoured to spread happiness over human life, would be distinguished by the universal Author of existence from them, who had only laboured to deface his works, and to blast, with misery and discontent, the being which his bounty has bestowed.

As they saw the world wisely made, they very reasonably supposed it to be wisely governed ; and as they could not reconcile the appearance of the present state with the idea they had formed of the wisdom of the Creator, they concluded, and concluded with great justice, that they saw only part of his works ; that the present state was imperfect, and that there was another existence necessary to complete the scheme of divine wisdom.

There were some Philosophers, men capable of the most abstruse ratiocination, who both embraced the same opinion, and also, with diligence and sagacity, examined further into the nature of the soul ; in which there appeared nothing common with corruptible and changeable matter, nothing which could involve it in the dissolution of the body, or subject it to the same laws with an organical and compounded frame, of

which, each part is subjected to external accidents, and of which, one particle wears out another by attrition, till the whole is consumed by corruption. In contemplating the faculties of the mind, they found it able to perform more than the necessities of the present life require, able to comprehend a thousand powers to which the body cannot attain, and form a thousand wishes, which, thus entangled, it never can enjoy.

They perceived that it was always soaring beyond the senses, and the appetites ; therefore they could not imagine that the Creator, who in other instances has so exactly proportioned the means to the end, should lavish upon the mind of man such superfluous excellencies ; should create a being to desire so much, and to obtain so little ; whose performances are so inadequate to his conceptions ; and of whom, one part should know the imperfection of the other ; and know it only to lament it ; know it without hope of remedy, and feel it only to despair.

These Philosophers, by the mere light of reason, even without any assistance from, or knowledge of, revelation ; by inquiring into the nature of the soul of man, discovered that it is a substance distinct from matter ; and upon the most steady contemplation and investigation of matter they established this

truth ; that as matter is incapable by any powers of its own, either of action or sensation, that therefore the soul is independent of the body, and therefore immaterial, and consequently immortal. Here you see that natural religion alone proves, beyond a doubt, the immortality of the soul, consequently the absurdity and folly of annihilation.

When I told you that I had heard from Mr. Jodrell, of your conversation with Dr. Brocklesby about annihilation, you said, “ that nothing could be more weak than any such notion ; that life was indeed a great thing ; and that you meant nothing more by your preference of a state of torment to a state of annihilation, than to express at what an immense value you rated vital existence. ” Upon this part of the subject it is very necessary that you should be precisely exact, and very forcible.

But the reasons above, as they could only be collected by the speculative and the wise, could not exert sufficient influence upon the generality of mankind.

It was therefore necessary that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body, that it might influence all, should be established upon such evidence, as all could understand ; which might operate upon the passions as well as the judgment ;

which might be learned in infancy, and which in old age could not be forgotten.

Such evidence we have by an actual exemplification. He therefore, who taught the great doctrine of the resurrection, has given an invincible attestation to its truth by rising himself.

Our all-merciful Creator has made men free and moral agents ; as such he has sent them into this world, into a state of probation ; suffers them to be masters of themselves, and restrains them only by coercions applied to their reason ; by the hope of rewards, or the fear of punishments. But to prevent the sin of suicide, a sin that most opposes the designs and schemes of his providence, and the most heinous of all sins in his sight, our God omnipotent has applied every exertion of his almighty power ; and by his prescient care at our creation in framing, in mixing, and in uniting, in our nature, in our reason, and in our senses, this first principle, this miraculous law of self-preservation, He, the mighty Lord, hath taught us how offensive in his sight is the crime of self-murder ; a sin certainly unpardonable, because it seems impossible, if death be the instantaneous consequence of the act, that it can be repented of ; and by his miraculous care to prevent it we cannot but

deduce this conviction, how outrageously they must offend him, who shall dare to desert the station in which their God has a right to place them.

I was once desired by a Friend to give him my opinion of the crime of suicide. My answer was the argument above ; and the effect of it was most amazing. He immediately turned pale ; his lips were convulsed ; and it was some time before he could recover himself. You have frequently, and very lately, reminded me of this occurrence.

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is, doubtless, clear to our reason ; and the doctrine of the resurrection of the body sufficiently evident for our faith ; but the constitution of man is such, that abstruse and intellectual truths cannot by any other means be so forcibly impressed upon our minds, as by sensible evidence ; and it may be a speculation worthy the chase and pursuit of men of the strongest reasoning, and most clear intuitive powers, to examine for what wise cause or causes, our omniscient Creator, who has already established these doctrines by evidence so clear to our reason, and so sufficient for our faith, should refuse to gratify our curiosity with such lights to our senses.

The laws, by which the propagation of our species is enforced, and our existence

continued, are the laws of sense in a very eminent degree. And if our omniscient God had given those lights to our senses to see farther by them beyond the grave, than he has permitted us, he could not but know how these lights must militate against those first laws of nature ; and that by the power of such lights to our senses the present constitution of the world must be destroyed, and infinite mischief and inextricable confusion be the consequences.

By these lights, our faith, that faith which in our present state of probation will be the test of our belief in God and our obedience to his laws, for which we shall be judged, condemned, or acquitted ; that faith that hath saved thee, and by which we shall be justified (Luke vii. 50) ; that faith which hath subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions (Heb. xi. 33) ; that faith which our God has taught us ; and by every impulse of persuasion, and every inducement of privilege, and promise of blessings, hath impressed upon us, would be totally annihilated. St Paul's definition of faith is, that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen : But by these lights things hoped for would be seen, and hope changed into certainty.

The shallow powers with which we are endued cannot foresee, nor circumscribe, the dreadful consequences of thus overturning the omniscient schemes of providence, and the grand and stupendous miracle of nature.

The temptations to the sin of suicide must be infinitely multiplied, and the law of self-preservation to prevent it would become of little effect. The impatience of man under the pressure of his common and daily afflictions must be infinitely magnified, and existence (existence in this world) must be intolerable to him, who sees how the penitent thief, in one moment, is conveyed from the misery of the cross, to the felicities of Paradise ; from a state of the most agonizing torture, to a state of bliss, such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.

I have somewhere read, that whilst an almost Christian Philosopher was descanting to his audience, on the immortality of the soul, and describing, with all the warmth of a fine imagination, the pure and inexhaustible source of intellectual pleasures, to which it would be admitted, on being separated from the body, some virtuous Youths were so transported with the idea, that they could hardly be restrained from laying violent hands upon themselves, in order to anticipate

those supreme enjoyments, from which the immortal spirit was detained, by its present connection with gross, unthinking matter — not considering that the social duties of life were first to be discharged, and its various trials sustained, ere the soul could be entitled to a blissful immortality.

The following tetrastick of Callimachus is to the same purport :

Cleombrotus exclaimed, “ Farewell, O light ! ”  
 From the high tow’r then plung’d to Stygian night,  
 No ills he felt that urg’d the desp’rate thought,  
 But wish’d to realize what Plato taught.

Hence you must observe, how nearly the force of reason in the Heathen Philosophers equipoizes the powers of the law of self-preservation, and see, how infinite the wisdom and mercy of our Creator is, in withholding from us any fuller prescience of the blessed state in the world to come ; to enter upon which, nothing could prevent mankind from storming the avenues and gates of death, but the grand obligation to a patient continuance in well doing, enjoined them by the Gospel.

We have another very stupendous instance of our Creator’s infinite prescience and provident solicitude for the happiness of mankind, by the covenant which our God established between himself and man, from the

foundation of the world. Since from the moment that man was created liable to sin, from that same moment a remedy was prepared, and the propitiation offered by the Son was accepted. The Lamb was sacrificed from the foundation of the world, and took place from the first formation of man. Here you see that the tender mercy of God the Father, and God the Son, hath delivered the posterity of him who broke the covenant, from the consequences of his fault, and given us the means of grace and the hope of glory. — Upon the whole, I am for my part convinced, that the evidence which God has given to my reason, and by the Scriptures to my faith, is sufficient and perfect ; that God hath done all, and left nothing undone, that is necessary for our guidance in the ways which he hath set before us. We are in this world, as I before observed, in a state of probation : and by our belief in God, and our obedience to his laws, we are to be tried, punished or rewarded. We are very certain (Acts xvii, 31) that the Lord will judge the world, and (Proverbs xxxi. 9) that he will judge righteously ; that he does not require us to know what he has hid from us ; and that he will punish us for the neglect or misapplication of talents, and not for the want of them.

We know that the schemes of unerring providence cannot be improved or amended, either by adding new, or taking away the old lights ; and with great truth and sincerity I say, to God only wise be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

All the knowledge that we have of the resurrection of the body we derive from the Scriptures ; which, as it may give you much comfort, and me little trouble, I will extract for your consideration.

In considering the doctrine of the resurrection, we can only declare what is delivered in the holy Scriptures. It is not necessary, nor proper, to examine all the wild opinions which enthusiasm or folly have published to the world ; or examine all the questions which presumptuous curiosity, or subtilty, ill employed, have ventured to propose ; questions, to which, since God has not been pleased to resolve them, no answer can be given by human wisdom. The scriptures are written with pity to the infirmities of man, but with no indulgence to his pride ; and they who will not humbly stop at those limits which their Creator has set to their knowledge, are deservedly left to wander in the labyrinths of endless intricacy, when they have forsaken the light of revelation, to wander after the illusive meteors of fanciful conjectures.

It is indeed not necessary that man should wholly restrain himself from searching into the government of God, even farther than God has expressly revealed it.

An inquiry into the general scheme of providence is surely a very noble and interesting speculation. But let such inquiries be begun with humility, and conducted with piety. Let him that searches into the ways of God, remember the boundless disparity between his intellectual powers, and the subject that employs them ! And first, resolving to rest his soul upon the word of God, let him exert his reason with due subordination to his faith ; let him search with reverence, and assert with modesty, and he may indulge his curiosity without a crime, and perhaps with some advantage both to others and himself.

But the discoveries of one man's reason will be sometimes doubtful to the reason of another ; and the utmost that any man can hope, is but to arrive at ingenious conjectures, which may gain applause ; but the word of God alone can demand our faith. And in the word of God, though the vain inquirer may sometimes fail of satisfaction, there will be found all that is necessary to comfort misery, to repress pride, to reform corruption, and to encourage virtue. Though

those are condemned as fools who arrogantly ask how are the dead raised, and with what bodies will they rise ; we are however told that this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality ; and shewn that this change is possible because it has already been effected, for Christ is now risen from the dead.

These Scriptures farther inform us, that those who at this great day shall be left alive, shall not die but be changed. From whence we may conclude, without much straining for a conjecture, that this change will be from an earthly to an heavenly body, with which we are assured the dead shall arise.

In the Scriptures we have also sufficient information to fill the heart with awe, to raise devotion to ecstasy, and turn our thoughts from the present life to the great day of total consummation : That day in which death, the last enemy, shall be overcome ; on which the trumpet shall sound, and the universe, at the command of God, assume a new form, as it first arose, when the voice of creation summoned it to being. When those who have long slept in the grave shall rise again, and the sea shall give up her dead ; when all, from the east and the west, and the north and the south, shall be assembled together, and all the generations

of men, from the first to the last day, shall stand ranged before the tribunal of all powerful justice. Then will that Jesus who died to redeem us appear in the clouds, surrounded by the armies of heaven, and shining with the visible splendors of divinity. Then will everyone see the genuine and unmingled effects of vice and virtue. Those who have passed their lives in charity and piety ; who have loved God with all their might, and their neighbour as themselves ; who have clothed the naked, and whose houses have been open to the destitute ; who have prayed without ceasing, have watched against temptation, and laboured to make themselves perfect, even as their Father which is in heaven is perfect ; shall appear before their judge with humble faith, and support the day of the Lord with hopes of mercy. Then shall those who have despised the threatenings of God, who have walked after their lusts, and known no other motive of action than the enjoyment of present vices ; those who have laid up treasures by oppression, and looked on misery without pity ; who have persuaded themselves to say there is no God, or have drawn near him with their lips, when their hearts were far from him ; shall now feel those terrors which luxury or pomp had formerly

laid asleep. They shall then find themselves without refuge ; the time past not to be recalled, and the time to come insusceptible of change. They shall wish to fly from the sight of omniscience, and to withdraw themselves from the presence of infinity, and shall call upon the mountains to fall on them, and upon the rocks to cover them. But all wishes are now too late, the trial is now past, and the sheep are severed from the goats, the wicked are for ever divided from the good. Those that have done well enter with their Saviour into the kingdom of his Father, and they that have done wickedly are sentenced to the everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels.

I hope you will approve the part which I have done ; and I have no doubt but that I shall be perfectly satisfied with your superstructure upon this foundation.

I am, my dearest Sir,

Yours, Etc.

JOHN TAYLOR.

This letter to Johnson was obviously never intended to be more than a brief summary of some of the principal arguments in favour of the soul's immortality and of a future state. Johnson had formed a high opinion

of Taylor's intellectual powers. When he and Boswell were together at Ashburne in 1777 "Johnson told me," says Boswell, that Taylor was "a very sensible acute man and had a strong mind." We can hardly suppose that he had an equal respect for his friend's attainments, and if he really desired to have Taylor's help he was probably led to desire it by reason of the latter's natural gifts and good sense rather than by reason of his learning as theologian and philosopher.

That the Letter was taken too seriously, by those who read it after Johnson's death, there can be no doubt. The *Monthly Review* and the *Gentleman's Magazine* reviewed it, the latter lending its pages to a somewhat heated controversy in which one attacked while another defended its main propositions. The *Annual Register* considered that it gave an indistinct account of the grounds on which the ancients believed the doctrine of a future state, and an incomplete view of the natural and moral arguments by which modern writers supported it.\* The sentence in which it is stated that "as matter is incapable, by any powers of its own, either of action or sensation that therefore the soul is independent of the body and therefore immaterial and consequently immortal" was con-

\* *Monthly Review*, 1788, vol. 1, p. 83.

demned as hasty and ill considered. The *Gentleman's Magazine* held that Johnson could himself have treated the subject with more propriety — a proposition no one will dispute ; while a correspondent signing himself *Candidus* bestowed upon its writer praise, which would have been almost excessive if bestowed upon the author of the *Analogy*. The novel argument that God has withheld a fuller knowledge of the future life from mortals, lest overpowered by the inestimable and eternal reward, they should be induced to anticipate it by a premature and voluntary extinction of their present existence, was declared by *Candidus* to be irrefragable and an important contribution to natural theology. He further cited a letter from Dr. Erasmus Darwin to Taylor, in which the author of the *Botanic Garden* stated that Taylor's argument "was coincident with an observation of the great Malbranche who in some parts of his metaphysical researches was a more accurate observer of the powers of the human mind than Mr. Locke," and *Candidus* concluded his letter with the declaration of his solemn belief that "most eminent advantage must accrue to the world at large" from the publication of Taylor's epistle. \* Another correspondent took the

\* *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1787, p. 873.

more obvious view that the man who deserted the post which Providence had assigned him by an act of self destruction was as truly guilty of murder as the man who killed his neighbour. \*

Without discussing here the intrinsic merit of Taylor's work, which was certainly not very great, it may be permitted to call attention to the felicity of expression which characterised all but the first and last paragraphs which are somewhat stilted and jejune.

It shows that its writer, who in conversation and extemporised argument was violent, incoherent and ungrammatical, possessed a degree of culture and a choice of language which enabled him to write with grace and dignity, and it makes one hesitate, if it be only for a moment, to endorse the popular verdict concerning the authorship of the *Sermons left for Publication*, which appeared shortly after Taylor's death.

Of these Sermons there were two small octavo volumes. They were published or edited by the Rev. Samuel Hayes M.A., described as usher of Westminster School in 1788, when the first volume appeared, and as late senior usher of that school in the following year, when the second volume followed. No word of explanation was

\* *Ibid.*, 1788, p. 37.

offered for the unusual title of the work, which embraced in all twenty-five sermons, the fifth of which in the second volume was stated to have been preached at Ashburne, and the last to have been written by Samuel Johnson LL.D. for the Funeral of his Wife.

It was Boswell's opinion that Johnson composed many sermons for Taylor, and he states that on one occasion he found one which Johnson had begun to write. *Concio pro Taylora* is also found in one of his diaries. Boswell's regard for Taylor was already on the wane when he indited this criticism. He adds, however "he would not have it thought that Taylor did not sometimes compose sermons as good as those which we generally have from very respectable divines," and he states that Taylor showed him one with notes in the margin in Johnson's handwriting, and that he was also present when he read another which Johnson pronounced to be "very well."

It seems not unlikely that the whole of the twenty-five had passed through Johnson's hands. The subjects dealt with—marriage, repentance, fasting, charity and so forth—are treated in the Johnsonian manner. The following passage may serve to illustrate the style of them when at its best.

"But most certain is the disappointment

of him who places his happiness in comparative good, and considers not what he himself wants, but what others have. The delight of eminence must, by its own nature, be rare, because he that is eminent, must have many below him, therefore if we suppose such desires general, as very general they are, the happiness of a few must arise from the misery of the many. He that places his delight in the extent of his renown, is, in some degree, at the mercy of every tongue; not only malevolence, but indifference, may disturb him; and he may be pained, not only by those who speak ill but by those likewise that say nothing.”

It is not merely in the justness of thought and expression that we detect the judgment and skill of the great writer. The very subjects and the method of their treatment are precisely such as Johnson himself might have chosen. It will be remembered that Taylor was a Whig, who in the defence of his principles was roused to a pitch of bel-lowing, yet these sermons might have been written by a Non-juror. One preached on the 30th of January is very noteworthy. Having spoken of the execution of King Charles, the preacher proceeds, — “as the end was unjust the means likewise were illegal. The power of the faction, com-

menced by clamour, was promoted by rebellion and established by murder; by murder of the most atrocious kind, deliberate, contumelious and cruel; by murder not necessary even to the safety of those by whom it was committed, but chosen in preference to any other expedient for security.”

Another sermon calls for remark, that preached at Ashburne. Here I conceive we have a real sample of Taylor's manner. Taylor was conspicuously the friend of the poor, and at the time dissatisfied with their treatment at the hands of those who administered the local benefit fund, whose officers invited him to preach. This is the kind of flogging he gave them.

“Since this society,” he says, “has called me to stand here before them I hope no one will be offended that I do my duty with fidelity and freedom. Truth requires that I warn you against a species of fraud sometimes found among you and that of a very shameful and oppressive kind.” Here we can imagine the violence \* with which he bellowed.— “It is always to be remembered that a demand of support from your common fund is not a petition for charity

\* In a letter to Taylor when he was ill, Johnson says Sir John Hawkins told him that he “preached on Sunday with great vigour.”

but a claim to justice. The relief thus demanded is not a gift but a debt. He that receives it, has first purchased it. The denial of it therefore is a fraud and a robbery; and fraud the more atrocious and detestable, as, by its nature, it must always be practised on the poor. When this succour is required there is no place for favour, or for resentment. What is due must be paid because it is due. Other considerations have here no weight. The amiable and perverse, the good and the bad have an equal right to the performance of their contract. He that has trusted the society with his money cannot without breach of faith be denied that payment which, when he paid his contribution, was solemnly stipulated.”

As the close of a torrent of denunciation against the “robber who lurks in secret,” and the “man of fraud who holds up his head with confidence and enjoys the fruits of his iniquity,” he concludes “Let him therefore that has stolen steal no more, let him who has gained by fraud repent and restore, and live and die in the exercise of honesty.”

The last sermon of the series was written by Johnson for the Funeral of his wife. It is said to have been Taylor’s judgment which withheld it from publication. \* Johnson

\* Mrs. Piozzi, *Letters*, etc. vol. ii, p. 276.

asked Taylor to compose a discourse for the occasion, and upon his refusal on the ground that he could not commend a character he little esteemed, Johnson sat down and composed the sermon in question. This he asked Taylor to read, and when he still refused he tore the manuscript, which was carefully put together again and a fair copy made and preserved. Taylor objected to its publication because he thought the person undeserving of the panegyric it contained.

It is noteworthy that the Rev. Samuel Hayes, under whose imprimatur it eventually appeared, is not mentioned either in Johnson's or in Taylor's will. The notice of Taylor which was supplied by the *Gentleman's Magazine*, after his death, states that, after Johnson's death, Taylor frequently talked of leaving his money to Hayes, and actually placed his will, which presumably contained provisions to that effect, in his hands, but that the latter was prevented by feelings of delicacy from reading it. It is difficult to reconcile this statement with what actually transpired, and equally difficult to discover a motive for giving publicity to it whether it was true or false.

Johnson, as is well known, believed firmly in the efficacy of intercessory prayer and following primitive practice, did not confine

his petitions to the betterment of those who were alive upon earth. In spite of obvious drawbacks he found the house at Ashburne not unfavourable to the cultivation of piety. It was at Ashburne in 1777 that he spent his 69th birthday and composed a prayer for Divine guidance during the coming year. It was at Ashburne, Taylor being sick and he himself solitary and depressed, that he prayed for his friend in words which should for ever dispel the suggestion that his friendship was dictated by considerations of self-interest,—

Almighty and most merciful Father, who afflictest not willingly the children of men, and by whose holy will [Thy servant John Taylor] now languishes in sickness and pain, make, I beseech thee, this punishment effectual to those gracious purposes for which Thou sendest it; let it, if I may presume to ask, end not in death, but in repentance; let him live to promote Thy Kingdom on earth, by the useful example of a better life; but if Thy will be to call him hence, let his thoughts be so purified by his sufferings, that he may be admitted to eternal happiness. And, O Lord, by praying for him, let me be admonished to consider my own sins, and my own danger, to remember the shortness of life, and to use the time which Thy

mercy grants me to Thy glory and my own  
salvation, for the sake of Jesus Christ our  
Lord. Amen. \*

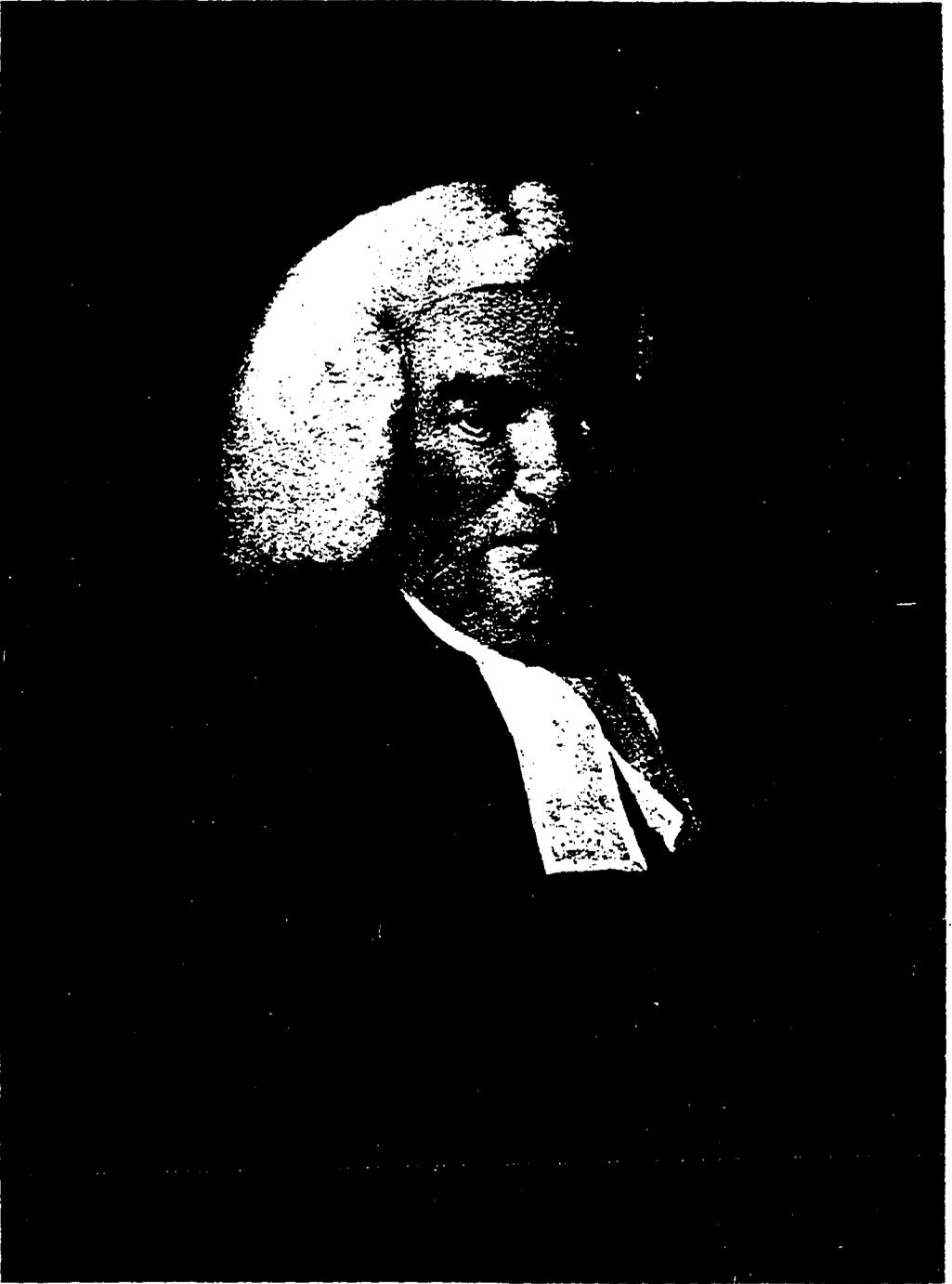
\* *Prayers and Meditations of Saml. Johnson.* Edited by Rev. H.  
Higgins. p. 126.

## CHAPTER IV

### HIS CHARACTER

Boswell's description of Dr. Taylor, on the occasion of his first visit to Ashburne in the year 1776, is one of the gems of his marvelous biography. Like the establishment he portrays, it leaves nothing to be desired. It was the perfect correspondence of one mark of opulence with another, which so impressed Boswell; and, with the abandon of a guest whose welcome has been warm and generous, he wrote exuberantly of his host's hospitality.

Taylor made an even deeper impression upon the inhabitants of the little town in which he lived. If Boswell had never been born something would still have been known of the "King of Ashburne," for as such he was regarded at a time when there were others living there, who were his equals, if not superiors in wealth and position. His influence indeed was so great that if he had ordered the parishioners to pull down the



*Dr. Taylor*  
*From a painting by Opie.*



Church spire—the most unthinkable folly in the world, to any one who has gazed upon what has been not inaptly styled the Pride of the Peak—they would have done it. \* It was not his beneficence, which was great, or his resources which were considerable, which gave him this pre-eminence. He was a man who loved display, and who had not only the means but the discernment and taste, to make it effective, while not making himself ridiculous. It was not his fault that his geese were not all swans. He strove to make them swans. While the long expected chariot wheels of preferment tarried, though he was loath to close the lattice and to shut his ears, he redoubled his efforts to improve the breed of his horses and cattle, his bull dogs and his hens. If we had not the actual records of his achievements as a country squire, we might almost have doubted whether the whimsical references in the letters to Mrs. Thrale were not intended to exhibit the futile but vainglorious attempts of a tyro. We know, however, that they were not only very serious attempts, but very successful. No one doubts the enormous stores of knowledge which Johnson possessed, and it is quite possible that he may have been brought into close contact with dog fanciers. He may

\* Testimony of the Rev. Fras. Jourdain.

even have been right when he refused to allow that the bull dog, which Taylor considered to be perfectly well shaped, was defective. It may have been lacking, as Johnson said it was, in the quick transition from the thickness of the forepart to the tenuity — the thin part behind, which a bull dog ought to have, but most of us would have accepted Taylor's judgment on a question of this sort before that of Johnson. Taylor's will shows that he knew something also of horticulture. His orange trees and lemon trees and plants in the greenhouse *inter alia* were to be preserved as heirlooms for the use of his successor. He had moreover a superb collection of silver, of pictures and of china, \* some of which is now in the possession of Lady Grant Duff, as one of the representatives of his heir. His house was visited by all the more considerable persons in the county and was open equally to Windham the scholar and statesman, to the Thrales who, as the friends of Johnson, were doubly welcome, and to the gentleman farmer who played the fiddle and denounced, regardless of Johnson's presence, the Earl of Eglintoune for a damned fool. For Johnson himself there was an ever open door, and between the years 1767-1779 he only failed thrice to pay his friend a visit.

\* Information given by the late Rev. F. Jourdain.

A notable attempt of his to turn geese into swans has been handed down. Wishing to impress the Duke of Devonshire, whom he had carried off to dinner in his large roomy postchaise, with the beauty and extent of his domain, Taylor ordered his postilions to drive twice round his paddock.

Another instance of his love of display was afforded by the family pew in Ashburne church. As a prebendary of Westminster he became entitled, by way of perquisites, to a portion of the velvet trappings used at the Coronation of George III. They had been used for ecclesiastical purposes. Many men would not have scrupled to use them otherwise. They would have sold them or converted them into hangings for their doors, or perhaps have made horse cloths of them when they had lost their richness and their novelty. Taylor hit upon something much more appropriate. He gave the cushion upon which the crown had rested for the use of Ashburne pulpit ; the rest he applied to the adorning of his own pew. It was a roomy pew standing on the site of the ancient chantry of the Holy Cross. Furnished with large shelves for bibles and books of devotion, supported by gilt brackets, and lined with velvet it was brought into perfect correspondence "with his substantial creditable equipage." It was

not without reason therefore that as he sat or reclined therein, one Sunday in the autumn of 1777 Boswell felt "great satisfaction in considering that he was supported in his fondness for solemn worship by the general concurrence and munificence of mankind."

Boswell was perplexed about one thing only. His problem was this. How was it possible that Johnson, a Jacobite and a scholar, a master of happily chosen phrases and well turned sentences, of vast learning and deep reverence for learning, a lover of cities and of literary men, could welcome the friendship of one who was a Whig and therefore in Johnsonian phrase a scoundrel, whose tastes were bucolic and whose talk was of bullocks, who rose early in the morning in order to direct the operations of his farm, leaving his friend to breakfast alone, and who retired to bed before his friend's return from paying a visit, who had abundant wealth, and therefore the means of intellectual improvement, but who busied himself with a multitude of useful but trivial tasks, being occupied with constructing water-falls, building deer barns, breeding cattle, bull dogs and horses, and who consequently had little or no time for the exercise and exchange of thought upon those subjects which might

have more profitably employed a clergyman, and have been more edifying both to himself and his guest — how came it to pass that these two men so dissimilar in tone, temper and habit were so friendly and so constant in their friendship? It was not because Taylor importuned Johnson to be near him but rather the reverse. Boswell thought he had solved the riddle when Sir Joshua Reynolds informed him that Taylor intended to make Johnson his heir. He was mistaken. The man who as an undergraduate, ill clad and ill shod, scornfully flung away the shoes which had been too eagerly offered though in no unkindly spirit, whose resentment was more justly aroused and never more strongly expressed than when the Earl of Chesterfield proffered his patronage, upon the completion of the Dictionary,—this was hardly the man to devote the best part of a life-time to the simulation of a friendship, for the sake of a fortune which he might never live to enjoy. Friendship such as subsisted between Johnson and Taylor is deeply rooted in the moral fibre and would cease to exist if self-sacrifice were exchanged for self-seeking. It may be stimulated by friendly actions, on the principle, that he who would have friends must show himself friendly, and Taylor's hospitality may have served that purpose, but it requires

something more to satisfy the Johnsonian definition that "a friend is one who supports and comforts us while others do not." Taylor himself satisfied it and so did Johnson. It would otherwise strike one as strange that a man of strong and acute mind such as Taylor was, a lawyer by instinct and education, should fly to the scholar when troubles in the law courts arose respecting his second wife ; and that Johnson, the man of piety, should fall back upon the unclerical cleric when in direst need. Strahan indeed ministered to Johnson in his last moments, and the reason is sufficiently explained by the fact that Taylor was hindered by illness and age, and that he had shortly before tendered advice which Johnson resented. But it was Taylor who, on the death of Johnson's wife, was summoned at three o'clock in the morning to pray with him ; it was Taylor whom he consulted when he was harassed by doubt, and it was Taylor who in his own words, "best knew his heart." Taylor's faults were obvious ; his habits were ' by no means sufficiently clerical, ' and Johnson's eye of perpetual disapprobation was powerless to correct them. He was an accentuated type of the well-beneficed clergyman of that day, who thought it no harm to buy livings and to scheme for preferment. It was not on these grounds however that

Johnson blamed him, for he himself admitted that “no man could at that time be made a bishop for his learning and piety; his only chance of preferment was his being connected with somebody who had parliamentary interest.” It was his neglect of the responsibilities, duties and proprieties of his sacred office which provoked Johnson’s censure.

In familiar conversation, if Johnson’s grotesque parody is anything more than a mere *tour de force*, Taylor’s language was apt to degenerate, when he was excited, into a curious compound of self-destroying phrases, horribly involved and strongly flavoured with the pleonastic verbiage of a deed of settlement.

Like Johnson he believed in phlebotomy and was bled once a month.

Lawsuits occupied a considerable portion of his life. Three of them are referred to in the letters written by Johnson. The first is concerned with the desertion of his second wife, the second with a settlement executed in favour of a Mrs Rudd or Wood, which he wished to have set aside, in order that he might bequeath a reversion to the son of Mr. G.—, who was nearly related to Mr, W.—; and the third with a Miss Collier who had apparently sought his assistance for the purpose of obtaining redress from her stepfather a Mr. Flint.

Sufficient has already been said concerning the first ; and the third is, for the present purpose, unimportant. The second, referred to in a cryptic letter written by Johnson, dated 7 March 1776, has aroused unwarranted suspicions, which the Editor of the *Letters* unhappily allowed to disfigure his useful and painstaking work. As Mr Percy Fitzgerald has pointed out,\* had Dr. Hill compared this letter with another bearing date 14 May 1776 and, Mr. Fitzgerald might have added, with yet another addressed eight days later, he would have seen how groundless such suspicions were.

The extraordinary thing is not that a critic should have presumed to interpret the letters in a bad sense, but rather that he should have ventured to interpret them at all, unless indeed he had first taken every possible precaution to avoid a wrong interpretation. A day at the Public Record Office would have enabled Dr. Hill to discover the Chancery suit of Taylor *versus* Rhudde, and to examine the pleadings.

He would have found that the suit was brought by Dr. Taylor for the purpose of enabling him to establish his right to the reversion of certain lands in the parishes of Leigh, Cheadle, Checkley and Uttoxeter

\* *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. cclxxv, p. 150.

which he had acquired by gift and by purchase from Ralph Wood, a nephew of his first wife, and great-grandson of a sister of his grandmother. He would also have learnt that Ralph Wood married Mary, the daughter of Daniel Astle, sister of Thomas Astle, an attorney of Whitehall, whom Taylor charged with conspiring with Anthony Rhudde, whom Mary Astle married after Ralph Wood's death, to set aside a deed of settlement of the said lands in his favour. Of Mary Rhudde we learn from the evidence given by Thomas Slade, clerk, of Market Bosworth, that during Wood's life-time a 'treaty of marriage' was arranged between the deponent (Thomas Slade) and the said Mary, which was to take effect after her husband's death! Dr. Taylor was at that time the non-resident rector of Bosworth, and Ralph Wood lived with his intriguing spouse in the rectory house, an arrangement which the defendants in the suit, Anthony and Mary Rhudde, declared was calculated to influence unduly Mary's late husband in favour of the plaintiff. It seems certain from the following letter that Taylor was, in or about 1765, greatly concerned as to the disposition of Wood's estates. He wrote to the latter as follows :—

Ashbourn, June 5, 1765.

DEAR SIR :—I have read over the deeds and think they are very right. They must be executed both by you and Mrs. Wood, before Mr. Ladbroke and another witness, as you observe they are executed by Mr. Green and Mr. Astle before Mr. Broome and Mr. Pouncey. Two witnesses are necessary. I beg when you write to Mr. Astle that you will send my compliments. I have neither seen nor heard of the Captain. The post-chaise will be at Burton by nine o'clock, and I shall be sincerely glad to see you and Mrs. Wood and Miss Philipps. I beg you will present my compliments to them. I am, most affectionately yours, John Taylor.

In support of the plea of undue influence a will alleged to have been executed by Dr. Taylor in 1769 was brought forward. By it he bequeathed his estates to Mary Wood for life, and after her death to her children by Ralph Wood. The real issue which the Lord Chancellor had to decide appears to have been whether a settlement, made by Ralph Wood subsequent to the transactions already recorded, held good or whether the plaintiff was entitled to the reversion. \* The decision was in favour of the defendants.

\* Chanc. Proc. (1758-1800), pp. 1361 and 1563.

The Mr. G... of the letter in Dr. Hill's collection \* was clearly Thomas Green of Lichfield, a near relative of Ralph Wood, to whom by his last will the Doctor bequeathed an estate in remainder.

It has been found necessary to give the above facts somewhat in detail, in order to remove a stigma, which, had it been well founded, would have compromised not only Taylor but Johnson.

While it would be idle to pretend that Taylor was all that a clergyman ought to have been, or what, even during the Georgian era, he might have been, it is preposterous to argue that because a priest is worldly or unclerical or eccentric, he should be suspected of being licentious.

The very pleadings which refute Dr. Hill's interpretation of the cryptic letter afford evidence that Taylor, benevolent as he was, and "very sweet" as he could be on occasion, † sometimes allowed his temper to get the better of him. One Mary Morris, a servant of Mrs. Rhudde,—a hostile witness, it is true—alleged that she once saw him "take Ralph Wood by the nose and shake him in anger and call him a scoundrel"! She was constrained however to add that

\* *Letters of Samuel Johnson*, vol. 1, p.400.

† *Letters to and from Dr. Johnson* by Mrs. Piozzi, p. 231.

“ Wood was then in liquor. ” Daniel Astle, another hostile witness, testified that on another occasion, Taylor was so exasperated with Wood that “ he coursed him round the table to beat him ” but that a Mr. Burslem interfered.

On their way to Derby in 1777, Boswell observed to Johnson that they were that day to stop where the Highland army did in 1745. Johnson described the expedition as a “ noble attempt ” and advised Boswell to write an account of it. If Boswell had taken the matter in hand, he might have gathered some particulars from Taylor, for, if tradition may be trusted, Taylor had, in spite of his staunch Whig principles, thought with Falstaff, that the better part of valour was discretion, when the Pretender’s troops appeared at Ashburne unopposed demanding supplies. When they came to the Mansion the servants in obedience to orders rushed out into the garden and at once cut a score of cabbages, and without washing them — they were full of slugs that year — boiled the cabbages caterpillars and slugs all together in a copper with some broth, and served the steaming mess well seasoned with salt to the Scotsman, who heartily enjoyed it. A more gruesome story is related of their reception in the neigh-

bourhood which Mr. Ward declares to be “ unquestionably true if there be any truth in oral tradition not quite a century old. ” The narrative is given in the form of a dialogue, in the Moorland dialect, and the following is an extract.—

“ LEIGH. Th’ yung Purtender wi’ his officers steydn to brexfast at th’ squeirs [Squire Murhall otherwise Meverell of Bagnall-Hall] an’ arterwards th’ Scotch sojers rob’t his hâhis of his foire arms an’ money and meydn him shew ’em th’ road to’ard Darby.

TELWRIGHT. But they fund’n the’r wey back ogen pratty seun afore the duke cud meet wi’em ?

LEIGH. They didn ; an’ th’ squeir thout he’d ma’em amends for robbin’ his hâhis ; so he catch’t a lâisy Scotch rogue as had lagg’d behinnd, — tuck’t him up wi’a hawt’r o’er a soin-post at Leek, had him fleead loike a cawf an’ sent his hoide to th’ tan-yord t’ may into leather for a drumyead. ” \*

Towards the arming of the volunteers in the same year Dr. Taylor contributed £50. Although Dr. Taylor was benevolent and hospitable, tradition has furnished another side to his character, with which these virtues exhibit little correspondence. He disliked paying his debts. The Rev. Francis Jourdain obtained the following story from Mr. Goodwin of Hinchley Wood. Venison,

\* John Sleigh. *Hist. of Leek*, p. 205.

as we know, was one of his favourite dishes, and was as plentiful at Ashburne, baked, roasted and fried as it was under the greenwood tree when Robin Hood entertained his merry men. Taylor got it from Sutton Park, near Chesterfield. It was the agent's business to see that he paid for it. Accordingly knowing his man and that he was dining on a certain day from a haunch, which he had supplied but for which he had not been paid, he presented himself at the Mansion and requested to have audience with the Doctor. He refused to see him. Pushing aside the servants, the agent made his way to the dining room, where he found Taylor, Johnson and some other guests, just on the point of sitting down to table. The venison was there too, hot and appetising. Without needless preliminary, the obtruder demanded payment. The Doctor sharply told him to go about his business using the language of the squire rather than that of the parson. Determined not to be worsted in the encounter, the agent deftly and unobserved twisted the table cloth round his hand, and just as the objurgations reached a climax, swiftly turned round as if to leave the room, and brought down dishes, plates, venison and all, with a great crash on the floor.

Johnson had observed to Boswell that

Taylor's habits were by no means sufficiently clerical. The laugh was not always against him as another anecdote from a reliable source will show.

A well-known drunkard was brought by the constable to his house, to be dealt with summarily by him as magistrate. He sent word that the man should be brought to him in the dining room, which over-looked the lawn and lake, with which readers of Boswell are familiar. After a severe reprimand he ordered the man to run away through the lake, he himself opening the door which led to it. As soon as he saw him well in the water he violently rang the bell for the constable, who was waiting in the servants' hall, and on his appearance exclaimed vigorously "There! you see where that fellow is, if you don't catch him he will escape." The constable, not loath to demonstrate his official zeal under the very eye of his superior, at once plunged into the stream which, as Johnson tells us, had a tendency to silt up and become boggy. Spluttering and splashing, wading and wallowing, constable and prisoner together laboriously ploughed their way to the other side and emerged, the prisoner with the constable at his heels. The latter undaunted by his immersion, though heavily encumber-

ed by the dripping uniform, still pursued his quarry across the paddock and up the hillside beyond, while the reverend dispenser of justice shook his sides with laughter at the ludicrous spectacle. It will be remembered that *Trappolin, a Supposed Prince* was written but a short way off, at Ashburne Hall.

Dr. Taylor's income, as given by Mr. Jourdain, was about £7,000 a year. Such however was his habitual indolence, when disturbed by hapless creditors, that after his death they are said to have threatened, at the time of his funeral, to seize his body and throw it into the street. This may be a mere fabrication, but if so, it tends to confirm the tradition, that however liberal he may have been in his benefactions, and in this regard there is abundant evidence to show that he was most princely, he was nevertheless in some other respects a hard man to deal with.

## CHAPTER V

### HIS WILL

Dr. Taylor's will of which the following is an abstract consists of upwards of 11,000 words. It will be convenient to reserve any comments upon it until its main provisions have been stated.

He beseeches his Heavenly Father to receive his soul through and for the sake of his Blessed Redeemer Jesus Christ. He directs his executors, John Allsopp and Robert Longden, to cause his body to be placed in a lead coffin and interred in a grave to be dug in the bottom of his vault in Ashburne church, and to be laid by the remains of his first wife and his brother James Taylor, the grave to be filled with earth and the pavement to be repaired with a vault. He directs all his just debts and funeral expenses to be paid out of his personal estate.

He gives to Sarah Vigras, his servant, the yearly sum of £50 ; to Elizabeth Taylor,

Dorothy Taylor and Ann Brunt, widow, all of Ashburne [the daughters of Thomas, son of George Taylor of Sandybrook, his father's brother] the yearly sum of £30 each ; to Johanna Bradford of Wirral and to Catherine Harris, widow, a guinea each monthly ; to John Bradford of Ashburne, labourer, 8s. monthly.

Subject to the payment of the above annuities he gives :—

1. To William Brunt “ now residing with me ” in tail male, all his lands and messuages etc. in England, and in default of male issue the said lands etc. are to pass to the daughters of the said William Brunt as tenants in common and in default

2. To Paul Brunt brother of the said William Brunt subject to the same limitations and in default

3. To James Brunt brother of the said Paul Brunt subject to the same limitations and in default

4. To the said Elizabeth Taylor subject to the same limitations and in default

5. To Dorothy Taylor subject to the same limitations and in default

6. To John Johnson of Crowgutter near Ipstones in the co. of Stafford subject to the same limitations and in default

7. To Thomas Webb of Hermitage in the

co. of Stafford gent. "son of my relation William Webb gent," subject to the same limitations and in default

8. To Thomas Green <sup>23</sup> son of William (? Richard) Green of Lichfield surgeon and apothecary by Theodosia his wife and daughter of his said relation William Webb, subject to the same limitations and in default

9. To William Walker 'second son of Edward Walker of Ashburne gent. subject to the same limitations and in default

10. To his own right heirs for ever.

Provided that the said William Brunt and his sons as they come into possession of his lands etc. shall take the surname of Webster, "being the name of my grandmother and common ancestor of myself and the said William Brunt" and by that name and no other shall write and style themselves, and in case the said William Brunt and his sons neglect to use and bear the name of Webster they shall not take any interest whatsoever.

Provided also that the estates so devised and limited to William Brunt, Paul Brunt, James Brunt, John Johnson, Thomas Webb, Thomas Green and William Walker are so devised and limited that "if the said William Brunt, etc. shall marry or take to wife any of the daughters of Richard Beresford of Ashburne esquire or any of the daughters of

Francis Beresford of Ashburne gent. or any other woman of the Beresford family in the county of Derby, then the said William Brunt etc. and their issue male or female shall not take any interest therein whatsoever under and by virtue of this my will. ”

He gives to the said Sarah Vigras in addition to the annuity of £50 the sum of £500 and a further sum of £500 at the expiration of six months after his wife's death. He gives to his executors £300 to be applied in placing out James Fieldhouse, son of John Walter Fieldhouse, of Alrewas in the co. of Stafford farmer, to some trade and a further sum of £250 to be paid him when he is 21 years of age.

He gives to his godson, Joseph Thomas Taylor Bateman, son of Thomas and Mary Bateman, £500 when he is 21 years of age.

He gives to his Grace the Duke of Devonshire all his horses, guns and dogs, also to his Grace “ the same piece of gold which was given to my late friend Dr. Samuel Johnson deceased by her late Majesty Queen Anne, and which he wore suspended by a ribbon and on which piece of gold is the following inscription Soli Deo Gloria and on the reverse Anna D.G. Br. F.D. Reg.; to her Grace the Duchess of Devonshire his harpsichord.

He gives to the said John Allsopp his gold watch ; to Sarah Vigras his gold repeating watch.

He gives to the churchwardens of Ashburne and their successors “ my long silver cup which was given to me by the Company of Cheesemongers in the city of London, as an addition to the Communion plate used and belonging to the church of Ashburne ” and he directs that “ it shall be gilt and the letters thereon be enamelled and the expense thereof paid by my executors. ”

He gives to Mrs Elizabeth Tuckfield the picture of her brother John Tuckfield esquire and also the picture of his wife ; to Thomas Dowdeswell of Pool Court in the co. of Gloucester son of the Right Hon. William Dowdeswell chancellor of the Exchequer deceased the pictures of Mrs Tuckfield and Mrs Brewin.

He gives to every servant in his service at the time of his decease, except Richard Peters his butler, one year's wages ; to the said Richard Peters for his service £100 and in case he shall die during his lifetime the said £100 shall be given to John Smith of Ashburne, breeches maker, who married the sister of Richard Peters, to be divided between him and his children ; To Matthew Hawkesworth of Clifton, farmer £100 ; to

the said John Allsopp 500 guineas ; to the said Robert Longden 500 guineas ; to his servant Margaret Vigras £500 ; to Thomas Sowter "now living with me" £100 to place him in some trade or business at the discretion of his executors ; to the said William Walker £500 on condition that his uncle John Walker shall convey to his executors all his interest in a piece of land formerly part of Dyehouse Croft and Dyehouse Green purchased by him of Brooke Boothby Esq.

He gives to his executors in trust the furniture, plate, linen, china, pictures, brewing vessels, orange trees, lemon trees and plants in the greenhouse of his mansion at Ashburne to permit the same to remain as heir-looms for the use of such persons as by virtue of his will shall become seised of the freehold of the said mansion ; to such of his servants as his executors think fit his wearing apparel, gown and cassock ; to the Governors of Swifts' hospital his leasehold lands in Dublin ; to his executors in trust all his interest in the mine called Hubber Dale mine and Weal Sough and the residue of his personal estate to sell and invest in lands to become part of and descend with his real estate.

Dated 2 January 1787. Witnesses—Ro-

bert Dale, Uriah Corden and W.L. Lockett clerk to Mr Leaper J.P. Proved at London 13 March 1788 and letters of administration granted to John Allsopp and Robert Longden esquires.

A few notes are required respecting those who benefited under the above will. Exclusive of real estate the testator distributed legacies amounting to £4350 and life annuities amounting to £140. His heirs and next of kin were the daughters of Thomas, son of George Taylor, his father's brother, assuming that his sister Elizabeth Getcliffe died without issue, and also that John son of the said Thomas Taylor had died likewise without issue. To them he gave trifling annuities of £30 each. He ignored the descendants, if any, of Samuel, Webster, Paul, William, and Elizabeth Taylor, brothers and sister of Thomas Taylor. The selection of William Brunt who was younger than his brother Paul Brunt, and older than his brother James to be his heir, indicates that personal preference was the guiding principle and consequently leaves us uncertain as to the existence of various collateral relatives. John Johnson of Crowgutter was a descendant of his aunt Lydia. Thomas Webb and Thomas Green were, as we have seen, related to him by his first marriage.

William Walker was the son of Edward Walker by his wife Elizabeth, daughter of William Evans of Derby, and grandson of John Walker of Ashburne, gentleman. His relationship to Dr Taylor is unknown. We have been unable to identify Mary Bateman. The Thomas Taylor above mentioned had a daughter Mary who was baptised in 1735, and it is possible she may have married Thomas Bateman.

The condition requiring the assumption of the name of Webster applied to William Brunt and his descendants only ; but that which forbade marriage with the Beresfords applied to all who by the above settlements might become entitled, with the exception of Elizabeth Taylor, Dorothy Taylor, Mrs. Mary Bateman and their heirs. No explanation has been suggested of this extraordinary proviso. It may have originated in professional jealousy, the Beresfords of Ashburne like the Taylors being lawyers.

The bequests to the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire are intelligible, the testator having been chaplain to three generations of the Cavendish family. The Cheesemongers' silver cup given to Ashburne church was retained and in use until 1839, when the shape and design were discovered to be so distinctly secular, that it was either melted

down or exchanged like too much church plate elsewhere, which was secular neither in shape nor in design. It is not surprising that the testator should have given to Mrs. Elizabeth Tuckfield the pictures of his wife and of his wife's brother; it is surprising rather that he should have retained them so long. The bequest of £100 to Richard Peters, Boswell's "decent, grave man" is smaller just as the bequest of an annuity of £50 a legacy of £500 and a deferred legacy of £500 to Sarah Vigras is much larger than we should have expected. It will be noticed that the latter legacy is contingent on his wife's death. This and the mention of her picture are the only references to his wife, who is thus shown to have been alive, throughout the will.

For some reason which is not evident Dr. Taylor's will was received with amazement, and the impression which it produced at the time is not wholly forgotten though 120 years have elapsed since it was made. Dr. Birkbeck Hill in the *Atlantic Monthly* for January 1896 has related the story which differs little, if at all, from that which was furnished to the present writer by the late Rev. Francis Jourdain. It is a story which still appeals to the popular imagination. According to the received version Taylor

being seriously ill was visited by relatives who are assumed to have borne his name. They believed him to be dying, and having assembled in a room adjacent to his bedroom began to discuss in heated language the distribution of his wealth, which they were given to understand was to be made amongst them. The several bequests were regarded as anything but satisfactory. Hearing the sounds of controversy, the old man rose from his bed, went to the door and listened. Then he went back to bed and soon afterwards to their astonishment recovered. Now there was in the house a young boy, employed in a menial capacity, William Brunt by name. He with the rest of his fellow servants had on a certain occasion been presented with half a crown by his master, who some weeks afterwards learnt with supreme satisfaction, that the boy had carefully saved the coin. William Brunt was still employed in the house when his master died, and after the funeral when the relatives were assembled in the dining room in order to hear the will read, he was summoned to put coals on the fire. He was leaving the room when the lawyer stopped him and said "young man, take off that livery, put on your plain clothes and come hither and hearken." The boy obeyed. When the will

was read and the boy heard his own name mentioned as that of the heir to Taylor's estates he exclaimed "Why, that's me"! and fell down in a swoon. Such is the story. William Brunt or, as he was subsequently known, William Webster, was 16 years of age at the time of Dr. Taylor's death; his brother Paul was 27 and his brother James 14. It is possible of course, but most improbable, that "William Brunt now residing with me" was employed as an underservant. It is certain that he was not, as Dr. Hill suspected, an illegitimate son of the testator. His precise relationship to the testator is established beyond all question in the first chapter of this work. The inconsistency of the will is shown not so much in the exclusion of the Taylors, if any near relatives of the name existed besides those already mentioned, but in the selection of one member of the Brunt family for a magnificent inheritance to the exclusion of his brothers and sister, who under the will received not a penny. Even William Brunt's mother had to be content with the trifling annuity of £30 while a maid servant was awarded £50 a year and £1,000 in money.

Whatever adverse comments may have been passed at the time, Dr. Taylor's heir could not complain of lack of subsequent

recognition. To be a county magistrate was then a distinction, and William Webster was under 31 years of age, when he was appointed a magistrate for the county of Derby.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE WEBSTERS <sup>24</sup>

William Brunt, in pursuance of the provisions of Dr. Taylor's will, assumed the name of Webster. The Websters were a family of some standing in the town of Ashburne in the seventeenth century. Henry Webster who married Agnes or Ann, daughter of John Blackwell of Blackwell, in 1590, died in or about 1615. He left three sons, Thomas, Robert and George, and appointed William Wheeldon and Thomas Taylor to be overseers of his will. Robert Webster the second son, baptised at Ashburne church in 1594, married Susanna, daughter of Thomas Taylor, and relict of William Wheeldon. By her he had two sons, Paul and Thomas, a daughter Lydia, who married William Wingfield of Wirksworth, whose mother was a daughter of William Booth, by his wife Anne, daughter of Henry Taylor of Ballidon, a daughter Ann who married John Hawksworth, of Clifton, and a daughter

Elizabeth, who married Benjamin Taylor. He had also a son Henry who is said to have been by his wife Mary, daughter of John Hill, of Upper Mayfield. By deed dated 28th March 1659, Robert Webster granted a rent charge of £1 yearly, out of a field in Offcote, to the Governors and Assistants of Ashburne Grammar School, to enable them to pay £1 yearly to eight alms-people as directed by Paul Taylor's will ; also, at the same time, in consideration of a sum of money paid to him by Paul Taylor's widow, he granted a rent charge out of his land, 52 shillings of which was to be expended in bread for six poor people weekly, 24 shillings for poor widows, widowers and impotent people on Good Friday, and 20 shillings for the poor of Owfield's Alms-houses. He was buried at Ashburne on the 4th May 1659.

Paul Webster removed to Chesterfield where are numerous monuments to him and his family, all of which are set forth in pedigree form by Hunter.\* Of Thomas Webster nothing further is known. Hunter's suggestion that he was identical with Mr. Thomas Webster, alderman of Chesterfield, who died in 1699 at the age of 43, is refuted by the fact that his name occurs in Thomas

\* Hunter. *Fam. Min. Gent.* (Harl. Soc.), vol. xxxvii, p. 236.

Taylor's will, which was proved in 1646. He probably died without issue and may have been the Thomas Webster of Bradley, whose will was proved in 1695.

Henry Webster, son of Robert Webster, by his wife Dorothy, whose parentage we have been unable to discover, had three sons, Robert, Walter or Walker, and Thomas, and a daughter, Margery, the first wife of Thomas, the father of Dr. Taylor. As already stated Robert Webster devised his lands in Offcote Underwood, Scropton and Mappleton, to the said Margery.

Walker Webster had a daughter Mary, who married George, brother of the last-named Thomas Taylor, and was the mother of Thomas Taylor, father of Anne Taylor, the wife of John Brunt.

Anne Taylor had therefore a descent from Elizabeth Webster, Dr. Taylor's grandmother, and two descents from his great-grandfather Robert Webster, and it was something more than mere caprice, which led Dr. Taylor to select one of her descendants to bear her surname and to inherit his lands.

William Brunt, afterwards Webster, was as already stated sixteen years of age at the time of his patron's death. A manuscript written by his youngest surviving son,

Edward Webster, and now in possession of the latter's nephew, Frederick Taylor Webster, for whose benefit it was written, gives some interesting particulars of Dr. Taylor's heir. He was in his eighth year when Dr. Taylor sent for him with a view to his education and preferment, his elder brother Paul Brunt being then presumably too old to profit sufficiently by the curriculum which would enable him to take his place at Ashburne. From the Mansion he was sent as a day-boy to the Grammar School, and was afterwards placed with the Rev. Mr. Ward near Derby, as a private pupil. Thence he proceeded to Cambridge, where he became the intimate friend of Copley, afterwards Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst, and of others who became eminent in the legal profession. To complete his education he made the usual tour of Europe, had a narrow escape from a bear, between Thun and Berne, and witnessed the return of what remained of the Swiss Guards, after the massacre of their comrades during the Reign of Terror. Returning home, he became a magistrate for the county of Derby in 1803, and afterwards a deputy lieutenant. In 1820 he was pricked for the office of sheriff, but owing to domestic trouble he obtained release from serving. He was a man of varied attainments and of

sterling good sense in the management of affairs ; he had the reputation of being the best magistrate in the county. Unfortunately he neglected to resettle the family estates, when his son William attained his majority, and this omission eventually led to their dispersion after his death. In 1794 he married Dorothy Goodwin, daughter of John Goodwin <sup>25</sup> of Ashburne, attorney, of the family of that name, which settled at Hinchley Wood in the parish of Mappleton, and which is now represented by Gladwin Errington Esq. By her he had, besides the said William, his eldest son, three sons, — John, Edward and Charles, and four daughters, — Mary, Emma, Ellen and Anne. He died at Ashburne on the 29th of September 1843.

Of his daughters and of two of his younger sons there is little to record beyond what is given in the accompanying pedigree. Charles, the youngest son, died without issue in 1833. John the second son was buried at Rothley in Leicestershire and left a son, who went to Australia and prospered, and other children who were not so successful. Mary married a Mr. James ; Emma married first William Greave and secondly Edgar Ratcliffe ; Ellen married Henry Windsor and their family went to South America ; Anna died unmarried.

William Webster, his eldest son, at an early age acquired a taste for out-door sports, and the story of his riding for a wager upstairs to bed is still repeated at Ashburne. Entering holy orders, he was presented in 1827 by his father to the vicarage of Preen Church in Shropshire, having previously married Louisa, daughter of John Port of Ilam, great-grandson of Bernard Granville, of Calwich. By his wife Louisa he had two sons, William Granville Webster and Frederick Taylor Webster, and a daughter Louisa Wilhelmina, who lived for many years in France and died there unmarried. The Rev. William Webster died at Ashburne on the 19th of January 1843, at the age of 46. His eldest son, William Granville Webster, survived him only three years and left no issue.

Frederick Taylor Webster, who thereupon became the representative of the family, was born in 1827, and is still living. A born sportsman, resolute and intrepid, he married Miss Aston of the Shropshire family of that name whose uncle, the late Mr. John Baker, was successively master of the Albrighton, Wheatland and North Warwickshire fox hounds, and was widely known as one of the best sportmen in England. Mr. Webster himself has also a record which it would be hard to beat. He has hunted with twenty

different packs of foxhounds, ridden over fifty steeplechases, and won some big events, besides hunting the Peak of Derbyshire harriers. He has moreover taken out no less than sixty game certificates. With the Shropshire foxhounds, after a run of three hours and fifteen minutes he killed his fox, after swimming the river Severn near Shelton Rough twice, and the river Perry once. On this occasion he was riding a thoroughbred by Iron Sue out of Wild Vassell, the winner of the Derby in 1855, and had the hounds for over an hour entirely to himself, and was alone in at the finish. Borderer in *Baily's Magazine* described him as rivalling the famous John Mytton for daring, and almost as desperate. At eighty-three he thanks God sincerely that he is as he is.

Edward Webster, third son of the first named William Webster, born on the 16th of December 1804, unlike his brothers was a man of legal mind and of literary tastes. He was called to the bar, and lived for many years at North Lodge, Ealing, where he died in 1874. By his wife Hannah daughter of Richard Ainsworth, of Smithills Hall, a magistrate and deputy lieutenant for the county of Lancaster, he had an only child, Anna Julia, who in 1859 married the late Sir Mountstuart Elphinstone Grant Duff,

the eminent statesman who occupied the post of Under-Secretary for India from 1868 to 1874, and that of Governor of Madras from 1881 to 1886. Sir Mountstuart was also a Fellow of the Royal Society, a Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India, a Privy Councillor, and was twice elected Lord Rector of Aberdeen University. Sir Mountstuart died in 1906, leaving four sons and four daughters, all of whom are living, and are entered on the accompanying pedigree. Lady Grant Duff, who survives, has made Earl Soham Grange her usual place of residence.

Of her sons two are in the diplomatic service, one in the army and the youngest in the navy.

## CHAPTER VII

### ARMS OF THE TAYLORS & WEBSTERS.

The arms granted to George Taylor of Durant Hall by William Dugdale, Norroy King of Arms on the 6th of December 1662 were, — ermine on a cheveron gules between three anchors sable as many escallops argent ; and the crest : — a crane or stork argent reposing the dexter foot on an anchor erected sable. \* There is a curious similarity between these arms and those of Manlove (azure a cheveron between three anchors ermine) which were claimed by Edward Manlove and proved to the satisfaction of Sir Richard St George, Norroy, in 1614.

Benjamin Taylor's descendants, within less than half a century, assumed the arms granted to George Taylor, whether by authority or not we are unable to say ; they certainly had as much right to them as any who bore the name. In 1715 a seal bearing these arms appears at the foot of

\* Journal of D. A. & N. H. Soc. vol. xxxii. 62, 64.

Richard Spalden's will, which was made by Thomas Taylor and witnessed by him and his wife Mary Taylor and Isabel Statham.

We find the same seal used in the case of Dorothy Spalden's will, which was made by the same Thomas Taylor. His son Dr. Taylor had them emblazoned on a shield, attached to the balustrade of the corridor, at the head of the staircase, overlooking the hall of the Mansion. The shield was *in situ* in the year 1890, but had disappeared when the writer made enquiries respecting it about ten years ago.

The Taylors of Wallingwells, descended from Richard, son of Henry Taylor of Ballidon, bore arms somewhat similar, the charges varying from time to time. On some silver boxes presented to Bridget Taylor, is a lozenge bearing, — quarterly 1st and 4th a cheveron between 3 escallops, 2nd and 3rd a sword in bend point downwards. These are clearly intended for Taylor and Gee, Bridget Taylor's father, Major Samuel Taylor, having married Barbara Gee of Retford who, Hunter tells us, was killed by accident during the rejoicings for the Restoration. Burke gives the cheveron between three escallops as the arms of Taylor of York. On the other hand two family seals of the Whites of Wallingwells, who by the

marriage of Thomas White with Bridget Taylor became entitled to quarter the Taylor arms, have for the first quartering, — argent a cheveron gules charged with three mullets, between as many anchors, while a window in the Foundling Hospital, in a vault of which the descendants of Taylor White, son and heir of Thomas and Bridget White, one of its founders, have a right of burial, gives for the Taylor quartering,—a cheveron gules between three anchors azure.

The Taylors of Clifton and of Huntly Lodge, Cheltenham, descendants of Colonel Abraham Taylor of Philadelphia and his wife Philadelphia, only daughter and heir of General Patrick Gordon, governor of Pennsylvania, bore the arms granted to George Taylor of Durant Hall. Burke states that Col. Taylor was “the lineal descendant of George Taylor Esq. of Derbyshire, a magistrate for that county and an East India merchant.” (*Commoners iv. 7*). It is certain however that George Taylor to whom these arms were granted left no male issue. Of Abraham Taylor’s origin we have no information. Abraham as a Christian name is not found in use by any of the Ashburne Taylors, or by any who may be presumed to have been their collaterals. Wills of Abraham Taylor of Sheen, and of a namesake

of Leek, were proved at Lichfield in 1701 and 1707, but neither of them left sons bearing that name, nor is there any evidence that they were connected, either with the Ashburne Taylors or with Col. Taylor, whose will unfortunately throws no light upon his parentage. According to records preserved in America, he was born in England about the year 1703, and emigrated to America from Bristol. Entering into partnership in 1724, with John White a merchant adventurer, whose interest he subsequently purchased for the sum of £7000, he rapidly acquired a large business. In 1741 he became a member of the Governor's Council, and in 1744 succeeded Governor Bedford, as collector of customs. He was elected mayor of Philadelphia in 1745, but declined to serve, and in 1747 was appointed colonel of the regiment of Associators for Defence. A claim to 20,000 acres of land, which he had purchased, was withheld by the Proprietaries, whereupon, with the object of coercing them, he attempted to shew that the southern boundary of Pennsylvania did not extend south of latitude  $40^{\circ}$ . This action was resented by the Proprietaries, who unsuccessfully attempted to remove him from the city council. He visited England in 1750, and finally departed from America in

1762 to settle at Bath (Charles P. Keith *Provincial Councillors of Pennsylvania*, 1883). By his wife Philadelphia Gordon, whom he married in or about 1733, he had an only son and heir, John Taylor, who won distinction as a landscape painter. John, son and heir of John Taylor, and also his son, John Taylor, became famous in the Medical profession. The latter who was one of the physicians of King William IV and assumed the additional surname and arms of Gordon, by his wife Eliza Barham, daughter of Richard Massey Hansard, left two daughters; Louisa Burt who married the Rev. Henry Stonhouse, prebendary of Hereford cathedral, and Eliza Luther who married Colonel Samuel Hughes, C.B.

The arms of WEBSTER,—azure, on a bend argent cotised or, between two demi-lions rampant, a rose gules seeded and leaved proper, between two boars' heads coupéd sable langued of the fifth—appear to have been used by various Derbyshire families bearing the name. James Webster, described as “a rich old attorney” of Brickhouse near Chesterfield, and Robert Mower “who stole away Sir Charles Skrymshire's lady (Hester, daughter of George Taylor, of Durant Hall) before she was married, whose father was her guardian” are among those whose names

are set down by the heralds in a list made on the 15th of January 1687, for grants of arms (Derbyshire Visitation MS. in *Four. of D. A. & N. S.* xxxii. 69.)

We have been unable to determine the descent of the above James Webster, but a useful note is given concerning him in the Parker pedigree. (Harl. MS. 5802 fol. 68b.) Thomas Parker of Anglesey Abbey, a grandson of the Earl of Macclesfield's ancestor William Parker of Parwich, had for his wife, Isabel, daughter of James Webster of Chesterfield, gent., an attorney and a captain in the Parliament Army; "sister of James Webster of Brickhouse near Chesterfield, living in 1710, aged 82 and with a plentiful estate."

We do not know whether a grant was actually made to James Webster, but it is very probable that such was the case.

## APPENDIX

*The numbers by which the articles hereunder given are distinguished correspond with those affixed to the several statements in the foregoing text.*

1. The earlier family was also of Uttoxeter. See the will of John Taylor (Tellyar) of Uttoxeter, dated 14 Dec. 1581 and proved at Lichfield 7 June 1588, in which he bequeaths legacies to "my cousin Roger Tellyar of Ashburne and to his children" also to "Richard Tellyar my cousin and godson, of Ashburne". Ellen, daughter of William Taylor of Uttoxeter, married Richard Milward of Eaton Dovedale and by him had a son, John Milward, whose daughter Audrey was the wife of Thomas Taylor of the later family; another grand-daughter of the said Ellen was Anne Morley, who married Richard Taylor of the earlier family. See pedigree of Milward (*Genealogist*, vol. ii, p. 391 New Series, and vol. viii, p. 21.)

2. William Taylor was the son of the Roger Taylor mentioned above. He married Eleanor, daughter of Thomas Sheldon of Stanton, uncle of Archbishop Sheldon, but died without issue. At the time of William Taylor's death Dr. Sheldon was living in retirement at Snelston. In the following year he became Bishop of London, and

in 1663, Archbishop of Canterbury. William Taylor bequeathed to him a small legacy, the greater part of his property being devised to nephews and nieces. (See his will proved at Lichfield 1660.)

3. In 1603 Thomas Peacock, vicar of Ashburne, married Alice daughter of the Roger Taylor above mentioned, and by her had two sons Christopher and Richard and a daughter Elizabeth (Ashburne Par. Reg<sup>r</sup>.) Richard Peacock suffered severely under the Commonwealth, being required to pay in 1655 no less a sum than £2,742, in order to compound for his estates. In 1616 Paul Hull, son of William Hull, lecturer of Ashburne, married Margaret daughter of Roger Taylor, widow of Henry Barker, and sister of the said Alice. A manuscript book of Latin verse, composed by Paul Hull, was, fourteen years ago, in the possession of the Rev. Francis Jourdain, vicar of Ashburne. One of their daughters, Catherine Hull, married Edward Manlove, the author of the *Rhymed Chronicle*, first printed in 1653, and re-issued in 1829, by Glover in his *History of Derbyshire* (vol. i. Appendix 1). Among Margaret Hull's legacies occurs that of a 5s. piece of gold to her son-in-law Edward Manlove. (Will proved at Lichfield 1646.)

An interesting sketch of Manlove's *Rhymed Chronicle* is given by Mrs. Meade-Waldo in her lucid and succinct *History & Customs of Lead Mining in the Wapentake of Wirksworth*. See *Journal of the Derbyshire Arch. & Nat. Hist. Soc.* vol. xxxii, pp. 174 et seq.

4. In this will of Henry Taylor mention is made of "Elizabeth my wife", "George my

son", "John my son," "my brother John late deceased", "the rest of my children", "my brother Thomas", "Anne my daughter" and "Johan Iley my wife's sister". Elizabeth, Henry Taylor's widow, made her will and died in 1618. The will was proved at Lichfield in the same year. In it George Taylor is styled "my son-in-law". There are also mentioned, "his (George's) brother Thomas Taylor of Ashburne mercer", "my son Richard Taylor of Chesterfield mercer", "my son-in-law William Booth," "Anne Booth my natural daughter", "my brother John Iley", "Thomas Iley my nephew", "John and Anne Iley children of my brother George Iley deceased", "Robert Taylor son of John Taylor deceased which I now keep and maintain".

The terms "son-in-law" and "natural daughter" had not yet come to be used exclusively of a daughter's husband and of a daughter born out of wedlock. Here they denote respectively stepson and lawful daughter. George, Thomas and John were the sons of the said Henry Taylor by a former wife; Richard and Anne children by his wife Elizabeth Eyley or Iley who survived him. Hunter (*Fam. Min. Gent.* 234, n. 1) states that Henry Taylor married a daughter of Beresford; if so, she was probably the former wife. Of George Taylor who succeeded him at Ballidon we have found no will. He was living at Ballidon in 1641 when he paid 16s. 8d. to the subsidy of that year. His two daughters Anne and Elizabeth married respectively Edward Lane of Brassington and Thomas Lane of Newthorpe co. Notts, sons of Edward Lane, of Brassington. Anne, whose will was proved at Lichfield in 1673, left no

issue ; Elizabeth had four sons and three daughters whose names are mentioned in her sister's will.

John, brother of George Taylor, also lived at Ballidon, and left three sons, John, Robert and Henry, and two daughters, Amy and Grace. He died intestate in or about 1617, and administration was granted to his brother George, the sureties being Thomas Taylor and John Tomlinson of Ashburne.

5. The deed was in the possession of the late Rev. J.D. Cannon of Darley, who married Katherine the only daughter and heir of Arthur Dakeyne of Holt House, and succeeded to the Dakeyne papers, among which Mr. J. Pym Yeatman discovered the grant referred to in the text.

6. Richard Taylor was an alderman of Chesterfield. By his first wife, Charity Woodward, who died in child-birth, he had no issue ; by his second wife Elizabeth, daughter of George Mower of Greenhill, he had three sons who survived, Samuel, Joseph, and Richard ; and four daughters, Anne, Elizabeth, Rebeckah and Mary. Joseph Taylor was of Worksop, and died unmarried in 1669, having by his will bequeathed his estate in equal portions to his brothers Samuel and Richard. (Will proved at York 20 Jan. 1669-70.) The last named Richard Taylor, described in his will as of Woodall in the parish of Darfield, married Elizabeth daughter of Edward Mundy, of Radborne, but left no issue. To his wife he bequeathed £2,000, an annuity of £100, together with all " his husbandry gear and stock " and his furniture and plate at Woodall and one third of his goods within the manor of Beuerly for her

life, with remainder to his nephew Richard Taylor of Wallingwells. To his cousin Rebecca Ash he gave an annuity of £5, and to his cousin, Anne Benthall, £1,000 if she married with the consent of his wife and of his said nephew. The above mentioned Rebeckah Taylor married at Howden, in October 1656, Stephen son of Nicholas Arlush of Knedlington (see Howden Reg<sup>r</sup>). Stephen Arlush graduated at Peterhouse, and is described by Calamy as a "man of singular parts, an excellent preacher and of a very publick spirit. He had a good estate and did good to many with it. He spent the latter part of his life at York where he dy'd in 1680". Hunter gives some particulars of his children, but his conjecture that his father was Nathaniel Arlush is contradicted by the parish register at Howden, from the vicarage of which he was ejected by the Act of Uniformity.

7. Samuel Taylor was probably identical with the Captain Taylor whom Sir John Gell charged in 1642 with having along with Captain Clarke unworthily "runne away from us" and joined Lord Grey the Parliamentary general at Nottingham, by whom "they were entertained when they should have been punished" (Glover vol. i, appendix, pp. 65, 74). It is interesting to observe that while the Ashburne branch remained faithful to the Royalist party, the descendants of Richard Taylor became active supporters of the Parliament, with the usual result that both throve greatly during the Commonwealth. The portrait of Major Taylor at Wallingwells represents him with a large wig, a buff leather jerkin, steel cuirass and long lace cravat.

Richard son of Samuel Taylor was M.P. for Retford in 1690 and sheriff of Notts in 1699. He married Bridget daughter of Sir Ralph Knight of Langold, who served with distinction under General Monk. The Fitzherbert MSS., printed by the Historical Manuscripts Commission, shew that Knight was one of those trusty lieutenants of Monk who, by winning over the army, made possible the *coup d'état* by which Charles II was placed on the throne (MSS. of Sir William Fitzherbert, pp. 3 et seq.)

8. Thomas Taylor's will, dated 18th of April 1645, exhibits so many points of interest to the genealogist that it may well be given in full. After stating that he is of good memory, and committing his soul to God, and directing that his body shall be decently buried at Ashburne, Bradbourne or elsewhere at the discretion of his executors, the testator proceeds :—" I give unto six of the poorest people in the town of Ashburne ten shillings apiece in money for ten years. And to two other of the poorest in Compton ten shillings apiece in money for ten years, and sixteen penny loaves in bread weekly to six other poor people of Ashburne for ten years and will that the poor people that are to enjoy the same be nominated by mine executors etc. I give to be dealt in money, as my executors shall appoint, to the poor of Ashburne £5, to the poor in Compton 30s., to the poor in Mappleton 20s., to the poor in Snelston 20s., to the poor in Sturston a mark, to the poor in Yeldersley a mark, to the poor in Hulland a mark, to the poor in Ballidon 30s., and to the poor in Bonsall—if it please God I die in the town—20s. I give unto my loving and dear wife, Aldrey

Taylor, the sum of £450 to be paid to her within six months after my decease or otherwise to be disposed of for her use and benefit as she and my other executors shall agree upon. Also I give unto her all my household and other goods now at Ashburne and in other places except my plate. I give unto my son George Taylor the debt owing me by Sr Richard Fleetwood's bonds, and that other debt owing me by Master Thomas Fleetwood's bonds and the debt owing me by Master Thomas Smith of Waterfall his two bonds, and my copyhold land in Ashburne and Dedich's house besides the land that descends upon him and his heirs if my son Paul Taylor's daughter Lydia dies without issue, and his estate in the house I dwelled in at Ashburne which I will (Lydia?) may have the rent of during her life. I give unto my daughter-in-law Frances the wife of my son George Taylor £20. I give unto my son-in-law Master Edmund Franck £6. And I give for my executors to pay out only for my daughter True his wife £20 that she may hereafter dispose of it at her pleasure and her husband not to have to do therewith. Also I give unto her the silver porringer which she long since gave unto me. And I give unto her son George Franck £5 and to her son John Franck £5 and to her daughter Susan Franck £5 to be paid to them as they attain the age of 21 years etc. And I give unto my son-in-law Master John Hieron £5 and for my executors to lay out only for the use of my daughter Anne his wife £20 that she may have hereafter and dispose thereof and her husband to have nothing to do therewith. I give unto her son Joseph Hieron £5 and to Ann Taylor her daughter by Joseph

Taylor £5 to be paid to them when they attain to the age of 21 years etc. I give unto my daughter in law Elizabeth Taylor my son Paul's widow 20s. to buy her a gold ring to keep for my sake. And unto Lydia Taylor his daughter I give £10 to be paid to her at the age of 21 years if she be then living. I give unto my son in law Robert Webster £5. And I give unto my daughters £30 for them to lay out and dispose of only for the good of Susan Webster my daughter or to add to the jointure and dowry which her husband should make her, at his and their pleasure and her husband to have nothing to do therewith. And I give unto Paul Webster her son £5 and to my godson Thomas Webster £6 and to Lydia Webster her daughter £5. And to Ann Wheeldon her daughter by William Wheeldon deceased I give 20 marks etc. I give unto my daughter Ellen Taylor the sum of £144 which I put long ago into the hands of my son George Taylor together with such profit as he shall think fit to allow for the time he has had it in his hands and 20 nobles more to be paid her within six months of her marriage etc. provided that she do not marry without the approbation and free consent of all my executors but if she do marry without their consent then she shall have but 100 marks for her portion etc. And in case my daughter Ellen live a single life and marry not at all then my will is that she have £100 which she may be free to dispose of at her pleasure at her death etc. I will that my other plate without one silver salt, one can, one beaker, one bowl and 18 spoons be equally divided amongst my daughters after my wife's decease. I give to my brother George's two daughters Anne and Elizabeth Taylor each of

them 20s. to be paid to them when they come to the age of 21 years. And I give unto my sister Anne Booth 20s. to buy her a gold ring to wear for my sake. And unto her two sons William and John Booth each of them 20s. And unto the three children of her daughter my cousin Milicent Wingfield every one of them 20s. etc. I give unto my cousin Grace Cundie her three children now living every one of them 20s. etc. I give unto my executors to divide amongst the servants in the house where it shall please God that I shall die 10s. And to the 8 almspeople of Ashburne each of them 5s. and to Andrew Hensor clerk of the church 5s. And my will and desire is that my wife and my son George Taylor, my son Master Edmund Franck and my son Master John Hieron be the executors of this my last will. And my desire is that my wife will likewise add to all her daughter's legacies when it please God to call her out of this world etc. And if any be displeased at their legacies and accept them not willingly my mind and will is that they have nothing at all out of my estate. I desire Master John Hanson of London and my cousin James Wingfield of Moton Staires in this co. of Derby to be overseers of this my will etc. Dated 18th day of April 1645. Witnesses—George Franck, John Franck, John Collers."

Codicil. And in regards that Ann Hieron daughter of the said Thomas Taylor hath a daughter born since the sealing of this will it is his further desire that Rachel Hieron so born shall have £5 paid to her at the age of 21 years. And that Ann Hollingworth a blind widow shall have 10s. and her son Arthur Hollingworth 10s., and

his servant Richard Spencer 10s., Ann Yates 10s., William Brunt 10s., Katherine White 6s.8d., George Osborne 6s.8d., William Jessopp 6s.8d., and every one of his godchildren 2s.6d. And 10s. to Mistress Elsee an antient widow and 10s. to William Cantrell of Ashburne. [Proved in the P.C.C. Twisse 174.]

9. Richard Milnes married Dorothy daughter of John Woodward sister of Charity the wife of Richard Taylor. (See Bassano's *Church Notes*.) From him is also descended the Earl of Crewe, the present leader of the Liberal party in the House of Lords. The marriage of George Taylor to Elizabeth Milnes took place at Dunstone "by and before Samuel Taylor Esq. (his cousin) one of the justices of the peace for the county of Derby according to the late Act of Parliament, in presence of Mr. John Billingsley vicar of Chesterfield, Mr. George Milnes and Mr. Richard Taylor" (his cousin) and is entered in the Chesterfield parish register.

10. The will of George Taylor is rather long but of great interest. In it are recorded particulars concerning the charities he founded, and much valuable matter respecting his commercial enterprises, political views and family connections.

The following is a complete abstract. After reciting a deed of trust executed on the 10th of August 1665 and commending his soul to God, he directs that his body shall be buried in the church or chancel of Chesterfield church, or at Ashburne "where I was born". He gives to the corporation of Chesterfield £120, to be lent from time to time to 12 young tradesmen at 5 per cent., and the interest to be given in the form

of bread to 12 housekeepers. He gives 8s. a year to the keeping in repair of the causeway from his house called Durrant Hall to the church, and from the said house to the market place. He gives £1 a year to be distributed among 40 housekeepers on the 23rd and 24th of December to buy something for their Christmas dinner. He gives 20s. yearly to the repair of the church steeple and 20s. yearly to the vicar to preach a sermon on Good Friday or on Thursday in Easter Week "for the preparation and good of those that are to communicate at the Sacrament of our Lord and other hearers," the vicar to mention "his gift, to stir up the charity of others". He gives £10 to buy 24 leathern buckets to be kept in the cross north aisle of the church in case of emergency; £60 towards the "removing of the west gallery from over Durrant quire and setting it upon the north side of the church," and with the consent of the bishop and vicar to appoint two of the best seats next Durrant quire for his heirs and others who from time to time shall live at Durrant and Tapton Hall. He gives to the Governors and Assistants of the school at Ashburne £100 to be lent to 10 young tradesmen at 5 per cent., the interest to be given in bread to the poor, to 8 almshouse people and to the poor for their Christmas dinner and to the vicar for preaching a sermon on every Tuesday in Easter Week, at Midsummer and at Ascension, the vicar to mention the gift and also the similar legacies of his late brother Paul Taylor. He gives 20s. yearly for the repair of Ashburne church and steeple, 20s. yearly towards the increase of the schoolmaster's wages, provided that the Lammas land upon which it is

charged shall never be enclosed, or the rights of the people therein prejudiced. The rights included the ancient privilege of putting in their cattle to eat the after-math.

He gives to his cousin (i.e. relative) George Franke £160 ; to Sarah his now wife £10 ; to his sons Samuel and George £100 each and to every other child £50 ; to the said George Franke £30 yearly during his life for his children's education. He gives to his "cousin Susanna Doughty now wife of Mr. Nathaniel Doughty" £50 and to the said Nathaniel £10. He gives to "my sister Buxton" half of William Cantrell's debt and forgives him the rest ; and to his servant, Gervase Prince, 50s.

He gives £10 to augment the schoolmaster's salary at Chesterfield, 20 marks for distribution among the poor of that town after his burial, 20 nobles for the poor of Ashburne in like manner.

He gives to his cousin Anne Lane £2 and to her sister Elizabeth's children £5 to be paid out of moneys owing to him by her husband and her brother Thomas Lane. He gives to his brother-in-law, Mr. John Hieron, £10, to his niece Anne Taylor £20 ; to his niece Rachel Hieron £50, to his nephew and godson Joseph Hieron £40, together with an annuity of £15 ; to his cousin Mr. Samuel Doughty £40, to his wife Anne Doughty £60, to Samuel Doughty's children,—Samuel, George, Elizabeth and Seth—£30 each. He gives to his nephew Paul Webster £20, and to his wife £5, to Thomas Webster, brother of the said Paul, £5 yearly, to his niece Lydia Webster £35.

He gives to his cousin Mr. Samuel Taylor

“ my uncle Richard Taylor’s son £10, and to him and his son Richard ” the £300 which the testator disbursed for him at Bawly Grove [?Beeley Greaves] and £100 more by bill given. To the said Samuel’s brother, Mr. Joseph Taylor, £20, and the money owing in respect of the above Grove ; to Joseph’s brother, Mr. Richard Taylor, £10, and what he owes in respect of the aforesaid Grove ; to the said Samuel Taylor’s son Richard Taylor, £60 towards placing him abroad in some suitable calling, and to him out of a close called Whitebankes in Boythorpe, £10 yearly for 10 years.

He gives to his cousin William Booth £10 ; to his cousin John Booth £12 for pains in his business, to his deceased cousin Millicent Wingfield’s children £8, William Wingfield one of them to have at least 40s ; to his cousin, Mrs Elizabeth Abbott, £20 besides the £100 owing by her husband and the £100 owing by her brother, Mr. Thomas Milward, and her mother ; to the said Elizabeth’s daughter, Mrs Elizabeth Sparke, £10, and to her son, Mr. Morrice Abbott, £10.

He gives to the children of his cousin Grace Cunday £6 ; to his “ worthy kinsman Colin Milward Esq. £10, his worthy friend Nicholas Wilmot Esq. £5 to buy a ring, to his cousin Mr. Robert Mower 20 marks to buy him a gelding, to his cousin Mr. Robert Milward of Chesterfield £10, to his son, the testator’s godson, £5. ”

He gives to the Company of Vintners that he is free of £5 to buy plate with to add to “ the two great silver flaggons I formerly sent them to keep at their hall for my sake ” ; to Mr. Cooper vicar of Chesterfield £2 to preach his funeral sermon ; to his worthy friend Mr. John Hanson and his

brother George Hanson 40s. each and to his factor at Hull Mr. Edward Thompson and to his factor at Bawtry Mr. Jerome Phillips 40s. each, to his 'milner' William Bolt and to his carrier John Webster 40s. each, to his servant Robert Bennett 40s. to John Finny 5s. and to his other servants £10.

He gives to his wife's niece Elizabeth Whittington £5, to his godson George Milnes 40s., to his godson George Thorpe 40s., to his godsons Thomas Bosvile and Samuel Gardner, and to his goddaughter Mrs Sarah Stringer, 10s. each to buy them rings, to his godson George Woodward of London 40s., to all other godchildren 5s. each, to his cousin Mr. Ralph Tomlinson, if he be yet living, £5.

He gives to his worthy cousin Godfrey Clarke Esq. and to Mr. Gilbert his son, to his brother-in-law Mr. George Gregson, Mr. George Milnes and "my good cousin" Captain John Milward of Snitterton; to his cousin Mr. George Poole, Mr. Charles Whittington, Mr. John Lees, Mr. William Walker of Ashburne, to his cousin John Eyeley of Bakewell, to Mr. John Rolleston, Mr. Christopher Hollily, Mr. Andrew Clayton, Mr. James Moseley, to his cousin Mr. Richard Milward and his brother Thomas, to Mr. Thomas Wright and Mr. William Wright of Longson, to his cousin Mr. Francis Burton, to his cousin Mr. John Woodward, to everyone of them a black enamelled mourning ring with a death's head enamelled upon it, about 10s. each in value; also one to Mr. Roger Jackson Mr. Hanson's nephew, and one to his (testator's) 'worthy cousin' Mr. Thomas Taylor, parson of Sutton; also one to

Mr. Cooper, one to Mr. Bennett and one to ' my friend ' Mr. John Frogat.

He gives to his sister, Mrs Margaret Whittington, 40s. to buy her a ring ; to the corporation of Chesterfield £10 to set persons to work in the manufacture of kerseys and cloths.

He gives to his dear and loving wife, Elizabeth Taylor, his house called Durrant Hall for 7 years until Hester his daughter is 14 years of age, and the mills called Bayley Smithies Mills, rented for £23.10s. yearly, the profits of Bishops Mills, also £500, half of his plate, linen, brass, pewter and books, his cows and horses and the use of his household goods. If she prefer to leave his daughter and to live in Market Street where his cousin Milward lately dwelt, rather than at Tapton Hall, she may do so.

He gives to his daughter Esther his manor houses and all other houses at Tapton, Chesterfield, Litchurch, Ashburne, Newbold, Boythorpe, Offcote, Underwood, Clifton, Osmaston, Taddington and elsewhere, his share of the Greves at Bawley near Bonsall and Cromford Moor etc., his plate, watch, rings, jewels, cabinets, etc., provided that she build 6 alms houses near the Moote Hall, in accordance with directions here given. If he has a son born to him, he is to have the lands and Esther is to have £3000 ; if he has another daughter she is to have the Litchurch lands. If his wife die or marry, Colonel John Milward and his good friend German Poole of Radborne and his cousin Godfrey Clarke and his cousin John Milward are to be his daughter's guardians. If Esther die, the estates are given to his nephew George Franke, and his cousin Mr. Samuel Doughty successively in tail,

provided that his heir build the almshouses. He gives £20 to erect gravestones to the memory of his father and mother, himself and relations.

He continues—"And whereas there is owing to me £2049.12s. for 171 fother and 16 hundred weight of lead that the Lord Ferdinando Fairfax and his sonne and one Mr. Robert Goodwin sold of mine at York in July 1644 without my consent unto Thomas Dickeson then alderman of York and treasurer of the Committee there and unto Ralph Clarke then alderman of this town of Chesterfield and George Gill of Leeds a major for the Long Parliament and £170 more for 100 piggs of lead the said Lord Fairfax sold of myne at Hull in 1643 to one James Blades and £36 for 17 piggs of lead he caused one Drake of that towne to take of myne to melte into Bullets, and £122 more owing by the executors of David Jackson and Henry Appleton of Hull for 61 piggs of my lead they took at Stockwith which they said they bought of Sir John Meldrum that he as well as the old Lord Fairfax had seized, upon pretence of my malignancie against the Parlyament and £98 more that one Rogers then alderman of Hull owes for 49 piggs of lead he had of myne at the woolhouse at Hull in 1643 which he said one Mr. Ursley bought for him at Gainsborough of the aforesaid Sir John Meldrum and £60 more for 40 piggs of lead that the old Lord Fairfax took about Stockwith besides £4 more in fother lost in price at York and elsewhere etc. If hereafter the King's Majesty and his honourable Parlyament happen upon any occasion to repeale the act of oblivion or to make any law whereby to obtain and recover any satisfaction for any such kind of losse then I give unto

Esther my daughter one third part and to my wife and my cousin Samuel Doughty the elder, my nephew George Franke and my cousins Samuel Joseph and Richard Taylor the other two thirds.”

He appoints his wife Elizabeth Taylor, his kinsman Colonel John Milward, his cousin Mr. Robert Mower and his nephew Mr. Samuel Doughty of Finderne to be executors and his good friend Nicholas Wilmott Esq. John Hanson gent. James Moseley gent. and his cousin Robert Milward to be overseers of his will. The will is dated 2 May 1668 the witnesses names being John Levicke, Dorothy Wilson and Gervase Prince. A codicil is appended which states that after the sealing of the will the testator commanded his servant to go to his closet and to bring him a leather purse and then Mr. Taylor took thereout two parcels of gold and a little box containing two rings set with diamonds and another with a little blue stone, also a mourning ring and a little gold wire ring and gave them with his own hand to his wife, saying to her “Betty, take thee these and thou mayst give Esther the new gold if thou pleasest” in the presence of Margaret Whittington and Gervase Prince. And the said Mr. Taylor after publishing the said will did also give to his niece Lydia Webster £5 more than what was expressed in the will and did likewise remit to his cousin Mr. Samuel Taylor £20 using these words to his wife and servant Gervase Prince “And let Major Taylor have £20 more if thou think fit and (speaking to his said servant) then the £100 will be but £80”.

11. Hester daughter and sole heir of George Taylor was born at Durrant Hall, in the parish of

Chesterfield, on the 23rd of December 1660 (See Chesterfield Par. Repr.) Her marriage with Sir Charles Skrymshire took place at Dunstone on the 10th of November 1675. She was therefore, at that time, in her fifteenth year. Hunter quoting Dr. Pegge states that "she was run away with and carried into Yorkshire by Mr. Robert Mower of Woodseats" and that Mower's father prohibited his son from marrying her. Lax as were the morals of those days, the abduction of a child under 16 years of age, without her guardian's consent, was a punishable offence, which was not mitigated by subsequent marriage, where the girl was an heiress. The father of the culprit was Robert Mower, the Great Lead Merchant, one of the executors of George Taylor's will, and the more probable explanation of his refusal—if refusal there was—is that considerations of propriety and of personal safety alike forbad him to connive at a gross breach of confidence. Dr. Pegge states that Sir Charles Skrymshire made Hester but a bad husband. As stated in the text there were three children of the marriage, all of them daughters, and all of them in after years suitably and honourably married. Two of them left no issue and thereupon Elizabeth's issue by Thomas Boothby became entitled to quarter the arms both of their grandfather and grandmother. The pedigree given by Nichols in his *History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester* states that the three daughters of Sir Charles Skrymshire were children by his second wife, Frances, daughter and heir of Sir William Noel, but the statement is clearly contradicted by the inscription on the first Lady Skrymshire's monument, in Norbury Church.

She was buried at Norbury on the 17th of October 1694. As stated in the pedigree now issued, Elizabeth her eldest daughter was the first wife of Thomas Boothby, the celebrated sportsman of Tooley Park, from whom, by the marriage of Anne, one of his daughters and coheirs with Hugo Meynell, the fox hunter, are descended the Meynell-Ingrams of Hoar Cross.

12. The will of Paul Taylor, dated 24th of December 1640 and proved at Lichfield in the same year, has suffered considerably from damp or from fire, the inside edges of the leaves being destroyed. The testator leaves £20 to the lecturer of Ashburne to exhort the people, by a sermon on Good Friday for ever, to receive the Holy Communion, besides money to the poor of the almshouse, for the maintenance of the Thursday lecture, or failing this, £15 to buy books towards a library, 20 nobles towards making a loft in the church for the scholars [now happily removed] and money for the walking staves.

He gives £40 to his father Thomas Taylor, and legacies to his mother Audrey and his sister Ellen. He gives £10 to his brother Mr. George Taylor, wherewith to buy him a good gelding, £20 to his sister Mrs Hieron, £10 to his sister Mrs True Franke, £10 to his sister Susanna Webster, £5 to his brother-in-law Mr. Edmund Franke, £5 to his brother-in-law Mr. John Hieron and £5 to his brother-in-law Robert Webster.

He gives a legacy and his silver seal to his nephew Samuel Taylor [the son of his sister Anne, by her first husband, Mr. Joseph Taylor, the lecturer; in the *Life of John Hieron*, the said Samuel is said to have died young]; to Samuel

Taylor's sister Anne £5, and to her [half] sister Rachel Hieron £5.

He gives to his god-daughter, Susanna Franke, a sum of money, to his cousin Anne Wheeldon £5, to his godson Paul Webster £5, to his cousin William Booth, to John, brother of the said William Booth, and Millicent, their sister, 20s. each, to his [cousins] Anne Taylor of Ballidon and Elizabeth, her sister, a mark to buy each of them a Bible, and to his cousin Robert Taylor 30s.

He gives to Mr. John Wright of Ripley 20s. to buy a gold ring, and to his wife Mrs Anne Wright £3, to Philip Johnson and Thomas Allcocke 10s. each, to William Jessopp, Alice Bull, Margaret Bagley and George Osborne 5s. 8d. each, to Mr. Edward Pegge 20s. wherewith to buy a ring, and to his son, Edward Pegge, and to John Owfield, son of Roger Owfield, a noble each. To Mr. Peacocke, Mr. Stubbs and Mr. Burton a sum of money, to Andrew Hewson 5s., to every one of his godchildren besides those already mentioned 3s. 4d., to the ringers 20s.

To his loving wife he gives all his leasehold lands in Offcote and Underwood, also Palmers Farm, rents due from Roger Owfield, and £60 owing by his father. To his daughter, Lydia, £30, the reversion of Palmers Farm, £115 owing by Sir Andrew Kniveton, Thomas Pegge and Humphry Hurd, £40 due from Mr. Philip Johnson, money owing by the executors of Mr. Edmund Spencer of Long Eaton deceased and by Richard Spencer of Wirksworth. He gives five marks to buy *Acts and Monuments*. The residue of his estate he gives to his daughter Lydia, and makes Mr. Edward Pegge, Mr. John Hieron, his loving

brother-in-law Robert Webster, Elizabeth, his (testator's) wife, his brother, Mr. George Taylor, and his brother-in-law, Mr. Edmund Franke, overseers. The names of the witnesses are missing. The inventory shows that his goods were worth £1369.6s.

13. Some further light is thrown upon the Hieron family, by the will of Anne Taylor, who lived at Loscoe and was buried at Heanor on the 30th of October 1688. (Heanor Par. Regr.). This will, which we print in full, affords the only clue we possess to the parentage of her father, Joseph Taylor, the lecturer. The testatrix appears to have been hardly in touch with her maternal grandfather's relatives. Her sympathies were doubtless those of John Hieron, her stepfather. Her will is dated the 20th of October 1688. She is described as Ann Taylor, of Loscoe, spinster.

She gives to the people of Ashburne, Compton and Clifton £5 and a sum of money to the children of Ashburne, Clifton, Compton, Breadsall and Heynes Wood.

She gives to her cousin Mr. Robert Porter (the biographer of John Hieron) £30, to her aunt Hieron of Windley 20s. yearly and after her death the same to her daughter Rachel Hieron, 'my maid,' who is also to receive £25. To her aunt Hieron's three sons Samuel, Daniel and Enoch she gives £5. She gives 20s. to John Hollingworth of Ashburne, 10s. to Denis Jowett of Little Eaton, 10s. to Dorothy Tomlinson, widow, of Heage, 5s. to Philip Sayer of Ripley, 2s. 6d. to Ann Bell of Lee Lane and 2s. 6d. to Sarah wife of William Syms of Heage.

She gives to her aunt Mrs Ellen Buxton of

Ashburne 40s. to her cousin Mr. Paul Webster, the elder, of Chesterfield 40s. to her cousin Mr. George Franke the elder, of London £20, to her cousin Mrs Ann Doughty the elder, of Finderne £10, to Mrs Lydia Wingfield of Wirksworth £5.

She gives to her cousin Mrs. Sarah Foxwell 20s., "to that son of her sister my cousin Oats now an apprentice at Sheffield £5, to my cousin Mr. William Taylor of the Holt House and Elizabeth his wife 10s. apiece and to their daughter Anne Taylor £5."

She gives to Elizabeth Jackson of Ashburne who was a daughter of Grace Cunday 40s. and to her two sisters Ellen and Mary 20s. apiece, to Ellen wife of John Ollerenshaw of Sandiacre 40s. to her (testatrix's) brother's five children, Anne, Mary, John, Rachel and Joseph £10 each; to her brother Joseph Hieron the house "in which we now dwell," land bought of William Dakin and George Brentnall, land in Clifton and Compton late in the tenure of Thomas Fletcher and Elizabeth Fletcher his widow, also the messuage and land assigned to her in 1676. And she makes the said Joseph Hieron her sole executor.

The will was proved at Lichfield in 1689. The references to "my cousin Mrs Sarah Foxwell," "my cousin Oats," and "my cousin Mr. William Taylor of Holt House and his wife Elizabeth and their daughter Anne" are in some measure explained by the will of Samuel Taylor of Greenhill in the parish of Norton dated 18 September 1666 and proved in the P. C. of Canterbury in the following year. Samuel Taylor mentions the children of Ann wife of Michael Oats, his son-in-law Michael Oats, his daughter Sarah, his son-in-law

Robert Stanley and his son John Taylor, not one of whom was apparently connected with Ashburne. It is not unlikely that Joseph Taylor the lecturer and Samuel Taylor of Greenhill were brothers. Mr. William Taylor may have been a son of Samuel Taylor. Holt House and Hole House occur in more than one Derbyshire parish.

A brief ACCOUNT OF THE HIERONS will not be out of place inasmuch as descendants of John Hieron and his wife Anne Taylor, are still living.

John Hieron, the famous divine, and Samuel Hieron were the sons of the vicar of Stapenhill, near Burton on Trent. All were "puritanically inclined." John was educated at Repton and Cambridge, and was ordained by Bishop Morton, in 1630. Samuel, probably also in Holy Orders, "made no great figure in the world but was an honest man, a useful preacher and much beloved by those amongst whom he laboured." \*

Samuel Hieron retired from the vicarage of Shirley under the Act of Uniformity in 1662 and died at the Meadow House, Windley, in 1687, and was buried in the churchyard of the parish church of Duffield, leaving three sons Samuel, Daniel and Joseph and a daughter Rachel, described in Anne Taylor's will as 'her maid.' Of them we have no further particulars.

The *Life of John Hieron*, written by Robert Porter, whom Anne Taylor calls her cousin, though rare, is accessible and there is no need to repeat what is there recorded. His marriage with Anne, daughter of Thomas Taylor, and widow of the Rev. Joseph Taylor, took place in 1635. Two

\* Calamy, *Ejected Ministers*.

children of the marriage survived infancy, viz. Joseph and Rachel.

Rachel is not mentioned in Anne Taylor's will and probably died unmarried. John Hieron's wife died on the 10th, and was buried at Breadsall on the 13th of July 1657. Her burial is also entered in the Ashburne Register. The note made by her husband on the day of her death is her best epitaph,—*Mortem obit uxor, mihi carissima, nunquam satis dilecta, quâ ego non fui dignus.* John Hieron was appointed lecturer at Ashburne and master of the Grammar School in 1633. He caused great uneasiness and controversy in Ashburne by his vehement denunciation of the Book of Sports and Sabbath desecration. The Bishop of Lichfield was powerless to settle the dispute, and Hieron was summoned to Lambeth, but was discharged without a trial. At the beginning of the Civil War he was apprehended for preaching against Episcopacy, but was liberated through the influence of his father-in-law ; his house was searched, and fearing further molestation, he left Ashburne for Derby in 1643. He was appointed to the living of Breadsall by Sir John Gell but was ejected in 1662. He died at Little Eaton on the 6th of July 1682, and was buried at Heanor.\* Besides a Commentary on the Holy Scriptures and various Sermons, he left a valuable collection of materials for a topographical history of the county of Derby. This collection is now in the possession of Godfrey Franceys Meynell Esq., of Meynell Langley Park.

Joseph, son of John Hieron, mentioned in

\* Heanor Parish Register.

Anne Taylor's will as the heir to all her real estate, married Mary, daughter of Mrs Trueman of Gedling, \* and sister of the 'very searching' Rev. Joseph Trueman, B.D., an account of whom is preserved in Calamy's *Ejected Ministers*. By her he left five children, Anne, Mary, John, Rachel and Joseph, all of whom were baptised at Heanor. John, the eldest son, was born in 1681 and Joseph in 1687.

The last mentioned John Hieron left no sons. Rachel, one of his daughters and coheirs, is stated by Burke, in his *Landed Gentry*, to have married Thomas Radford of Stanley. From their son John Radford, of Smalley Hall, high sheriff of Derbyshire in 1784 and a deputy-lieutenant, are descended the Radford families of Hale End in Essex, of Carnfield Hall, and of Tansley Wood. The Duffield register records the marriage of Mr. Francis Radford of Holbrook, in 1740, with Mrs. Elizabeth Hieron, of Little Eaton.

14. The marriage of William Wheeldon with Susanna Taylor, was solemnized at Thorpe, on the 6th of August 1628. William Wheeldon's will, dated the 18th of June 1632, and proved at Lichfield in the following year, shews that he had lands in that parish leased to John Leese, and that he left two daughters, Anne and Elizabeth. Of Elizabeth nothing further is known.

Anne, styled by Samuel Doughty "his beloved wife," was living in 1689 when he died.

Captain Samuel Doughty raised a troop of militia in 1659 at Derby, and upon the arrival of Sir George Booth's emissary, Colonel Charles

\* See Mary Trueman's will (York P. C. 1680.)

White, on Friday the 12th of August, subsequently known at Derby as "White's Friday," welcomed him, shook hands and said "we are agreed." He also called upon the people to arm and induced his own company to join, showed White the powder magazine, appointed officers and gave orders for the church bells to be rung backwards. He would have arrested Captain Hope, one of the parliamentary officers, but was prevented by Colonel Mitchell. The following day a troop of horse from Uttoxeter arrived in the town, when the parliamentary proclamation was read, and orders were given for the arrest of the chief insurgents. Eight months later General Monk offered his services to King Charles II, and the Restoration was in sight. The country was tired of a Commonwealth such as it had become. The letters from which the above short account has been gathered tell us that Mr. Siden, the minister of Langleigh, formerly zealous for the Parliament, appeared before the Commissioners "with his sword and pistol cockt declaring high words to Colonel Saunders the parliamentary officer." \*

Samuel Doughty left five sons,—Samuel, George, Nathaniel, Paul and Thomas, and two daughters, Elizabeth and Anne. Richard Taylor of Wallingwells, and Samuel Pole of Radborne were the executors of his will which was proved at Lichfield in 1689. We are unable to say whether any descendants of Samuel and Susanna Doughty are now living.

15. We have found no will of either Richard Taylor or of Robert Webster. The latter died in

\* Letters from an officer of Lord Lambert printed in Glover's *History of Derbyshire*, vol. i, pp. App. 84-5.

1659, the burial of a Richard Taylor in 1661 being also recorded in the Ashburne register. A tentative pedigree in the possession of Mr. Frederick Taylor Webster gives the marriage of a William, son of Thomas Taylor, of Ashburne, on the 10th of June 1593 with Helena Birnam of Ilam. This is clearly the same marriage as that given under the same date in the register where the surname of the bride is written Bircumshaw. This William Taylor was baptised at Ashburne church in 1564. He had by his wife Helena a son Richard (whom we take to have been Benjamin Taylor's father) born in 1594, a son John born in 1601, a daughter Isabella born in 1599, and two sons, both of whom were named Thomas and died in infancy. Of John and Isabella nothing is known. The Richard Taylor who appears at Turnditch in the parish of Duffield in 1624, and who is described in the Duffield register in 1632, as of Hulland Ward in the parish of Ashburne, was married in 1630 at Duffield church to Alice Hough. He was probably a widower at the time, for the register records the baptism of Ellen, the daughter of Richard Taylor, of Turnditch in 1624. Benjamin and Joseph, his two sons, were baptised at Duffield in 1630 and 1632 respectively. Hunter states explicitly that Benjamin the Ashburne attorney was the son of Richard Taylor and that he had a brother Joseph. Their identity is therefore almost certain when it is remembered that Hunter was probably ignorant of the entries in the Duffield register.

16. Benjamin Taylor was buried at Ashburne on the 7th of August 1690, and his widow Elizabeth on the 17th of November 1693. Besides

the bequests mentioned in the text, Benjamin Taylor gave to his daughter Anne Taylor and her heirs, the messuage in the possession (occupation) of John Jackson, £150 out of the lands of her brother Thomas, £50 in money and some furniture. His wife was to have practically all his estates for her life, and one or two of his Divinity books, such as she chose. His daughter Johnson (Lydia, the wife of John Johnson of Crowgutter, in the parish of Ipstones) was to have his Bible, Common Prayer book and a broad piece of gold, and his son Johnson his 'Comelet cloake.' He gave to his brother and sister Hawkesworth, to his cousin Robert Webster, to the said Robert's sister, and to aunt Titterton, to each of them a crown. Mr. Leeke if living, or the preacher of his funeral sermon, was to have 20s., the poor of Ashburne £3, the poor of Compton 20s., Matthew Hough 5s., Gregory Walker 5s. and his man and maid servant 5s. each.

A few notes by way of explanation are necessary. Robert Webster was the son of Henry Webster, Benjamin Taylor's wife's half-brother. The sister of Robert Webster was Margery Webster who in 1700 married the testator's son Thomas. Aunt Titterton may have been either Robert Webster's aunt or the testator's—the wording is ambiguous—but it is probable she was the great aunt of the former, for John Hill of Mayfield, whose daughter Mary married Robert Webster's paternal grandfather, had a daughter Audrey, who married Richard Titterton of Mylne Meadow. (Wills of Richard Titterton 1680 and John Hill 1661.) "My brother and sister Hawkesworth" is explained by John Hawkesworth's will, proved

at Lichfield in 1692, wherein reference is made by the testator to 'my niece Margery Webster'; he must therefore have married Margery Webster's aunt, and inasmuch as his wife's name was Anne, we conclude that she was Anne, the sister or the half-sister of Benjamin Taylor's wife, who is mentioned by Hunter. The Hawkesworth connection was recognised by Dr. Taylor in his will. No pedigree of this family appears to have been issued. The wills show that the Hawkesworths were of good condition and possessed of considerable lands in Compton and in Clifton. At Clifton John Hawkesworth kept a pack of hounds.

17. Both of these marriages are given in the Ashburne register, though the first took place at Bentley. With regard to the parentage of Mary Wood it is not easy to reconcile the Ashburne register with the wills of Thomas Taylor and of Dorothy Spalden, who styles herself mother of Thomas Taylor and of Mary his wife; and who was undoubtedly Thomas Taylor's mother-in-law.

The register records two marriages the first in 1673-4 and the second in 1675-6, Thomas Wood and Elinor Oldfield or Owfield being the parties in both cases. It also records the baptisms of Dorothy and Mary, daughters of Mr Thomas Wood, in the years 1676 and 1679 respectively. It moreover records the burial of a Mr. Thomas Wood in 1680, and of Mrs Elinor Wood, widow, in 1723-4. If both parents of Mary Wood were dead before 1724, how came Dorothy Spalden to style herself mother of Thomas and Mary Taylor in 1730, when she added a codicil to her will? Dorothy Spalden whose will is given below speaks of a tankard marked TWD., which, taken in con-

junction with a lease recited in Thomas Taylor's will, belonged unquestionably to Thomas and Dorothy Wood. When the two wills are compared it seems certain that Thomas and Dorothy Wood had a daughter Mary, who married Thomas Taylor and that, after Thomas Wood's death, his widow married Nicholas Spalden. The only explanation which occurs is that there were two persons who bore the name of Thomas Wood, and that the marriage in 1676 was that of the parents of Mary Wood who married Thomas Taylor but that the bride's name was incorrectly entered.

Those parts of Thomas Taylor's will which are not given in the text may be added here. He gives,—to his son James Taylor £300, which with £400 given him by the will of testator's mother Dorothy Spalden, and with £300 already bequeathed to him will make £1000; and whereas "my said mother Dorothy Spalden by her said will" hath also given to Elizabeth, testator's daughter, £1200 and the testator has by the present will given her £300, her fortune will be £1500. He gives to his wife Mary Taylor the lands in Shirley, Brailsford, Ednaston and Yeaveley, held on lease of Earl Ferrers for the remainder of a term of 99 years "if Richard Peters and Mary Wood, daughter of Dorothy Wood, widow, or either of them, should so long live."

Dorothy Spalden's will is dated the 7th of April 1719. She was buried at Ashburne on the 19th of December 1731, and the will was proved in the same year. After the invocation and profession of faith the will continues—"Whereas by articles of marriage with Nicholas Spalden, my late husband, I was empowered to dispose of all my

ready money, goods, plate, jewels and household stuff which I was possessed of or any wise entitled to, at the time of the sealing and delivery of the said articles, whether I was married or sole, and Whereas pursuant to the said power I did, by one writing dated the 25th of September 1713, give unto my grandson Thomas Taylor, who is since dead, [he was buried on 5th of Nov. 1714] one of my silver tankards marked TWD. and unto my daughter Mary Taylor all my household goods and personal estate, I do hereby revoke and cancel that writing and bequeath the said tankard to my grand-daughter Dorothy Taylor. Also I give to my grand-daughters Dorothy, Mary and Elizabeth Taylor the sum of £1200, with interest to be paid by my son and daughter, Thomas Taylor and Mary Taylor, his wife, or their executors, at the age of 21 years or marriage, in such manner and proportions as Thomas and Mary his wife shall by writing appoint, and in default, to be equally divided between them. To the eldest son of the said Thomas Taylor and Mary his wife, who has a real estate already settled upon him I give my largest silver tankard and £40 to buy him a watch, a horse and mourning. The rest of my personal estate I give to my said *son-in-law*, Thomas Taylor and Mary his wife whom I appoint executors of this my last will."

To this a codicil was added in 1721 devising to her grandson James Taylor £400, and a further codicil dated 20 Jan. 1730 which after reciting the deaths of her grand-daughters Dorothy and Mary bestows upon her grand-daughter Elizabeth the £1200 which she had in her will given to all three.

The will is sealed with a seal bearing the arms

granted to George Taylor of Durant Hall—on a cheveron, between 3 anchors, as many escallop shells.

The Spaldens and Owfields were, like the Taylors, great benefactors to the town of Ashburne. The above named Nicholas Spalden, by his will bearing date the 16th of April 1710 gave to the Governors and Assistants of the Grammar School all his lands in Parwich, to distribute all the profits amongst the poor people of the 8 almshouses. He also gave his leasehold property in Dublin to the same trustees, for the purpose of building and maintaining 10 new almshouses. He moreover gave £8 towards daily services during the week preceding the first Sunday of every month, by way of preparation for the Holy Communion.

The Report of the Charity Commissioners shows that he had a nephew John Spalden who, we learn from his will, was the son of his brother, John Spalden.

Owfield's almshouses were founded under the will of Roger Owfield in 1630. His widow Thomasine, and his son Samuel, diligently carried out his wishes, and in 1652 John Owfield of London and William Owfield of Ashburne added to the endowment. Elinor Owfield was doubtless of the same family, but no connected pedigree seems to have been compiled of the Owfield, Spalden and Wood families.

18. The writ of partition related to 1700 acres of land in Ballidon and Doveridge, half the manor of Ballidon, a rent of 5s. and 1s. 6d. in Ballidon, 14s. 4d. in Lea Hall, 40s. in Tissington, 34s. 4d. in Atlow, 100s. in Brassington, 73s. 4d. in Brad-

bourne, the whole of the white tithe in Bradbourne, common of pasture in Ballidon paying the vicar of Bradbourne 13s. 4d. and the tithe of hay in Doveridge. In consequence of it, Thomas Taylor received for his share a moiety, Matthew Vernon and Henry Boothby Vernon, his son, two-fifths of a moiety, and Charles Adderley three-fifths of a moiety. The Adderleys and Vernons inherited from the Milwards, Colonel John Milward's daughters and co-heirs, Felicia and Frances, having married respectively Charles Adderley and Sir William Boothby. Sir William by his first wife, the said Frances, had two children, namely Henry, who succeeded as second baronet, and Anne who, (though ignored by Burke, and wrongly stated by Glover to have died unmarried,) after the death of her brother, married the said Matthew Vernon, and by him had a son Henry Boothby Vernon. These particulars are found in a Chancery suit brought by Baptist Trott and others against the three persons last mentioned. The pleadings show that Sir Henry Boothby was at the time of his death in debt to the complainants, and that by his will made in 1711 he decreed the payment of his debts out of his real estate, which he gave to his sister Anne. The court ordered that the debts were to be satisfied out of his personal estate and the profits of his real estate. (Trott v. Vernon.)

19. George Taylor's will is short and comparatively unimportant. At the time when it was made his youngest son Webster was four years of age, and his eldest son eleven. It is curious that he should have made the former his sole executor. It is possible that this appointment was the cause of all the trouble in the court of Chancery.

George Taylor gave to his son Thomas his lands in Sandybrook in the occupation of Rowland Mawkin and John Cockayne and a messuage in Compton occupied by Mr. Richard Bentley. To his sons Samuel and George he gave £100 each. Administration was granted in 1721 to Mary his widow, as guardian of the executor who was at that time a minor.

20. The marriage of Thomas Taylor and Anne Birds, which was by licence, took place at Youlgreave on the 15th of July 1728 and is recorded in the Ashburne register; "Mr. Thomas Taylor of Compton and Mrs. Anne Birds of Youlgreave." They had two children who died in infancy,—Mary and Dorothy; six who survived,—John, baptized 1 Dec. 1731, Anne, baptized 2 March 1732-3, Sarah, received into the church 8 Feb. 1733-4, Mary, received 8 Jan. 1734-5, Elizabeth, received 7 Jan. 1735-6, and Dorothy, received 18 April 1738. All the latter, with the exception of Sarah, are mentioned in their father's will made in 1746. Elizabeth and Dorothy were unmarried in 1788. Of John, Thomas Taylor's only son, and of Mary, his daughter, nothing is known, unless Mary be identical with the Mary Bateman referred to in Dr. Taylor's will.

21. The leasehold property in Dublin was that already mentioned, bequeathed by Nicholas Spalden, Mary Taylor's stepfather. The terms in which the bequest was stated gave rise to litigation. After making his will Nicholas Spalden bought considerable estates thereby contracting debts to the amount of £2,400. After his death the estates were seized by John Spalden his nephew and heir-at-law. The Lord Chancellor before whom

the case was tried held that his debts, legacies and charities should be made good out of his estates real and personal. In 1730 Dorothy Spalden his widow and Thomas Taylor her son-in-law, his executors, had remaining in their hands £632-12-3 and the leasehold property. In 1736 John Taylor (afterwards Dr. Taylor) son and heir of the said Thomas, acquired, with the sanction of the court of Chancery, a lease of the premises, and gave security for the laying out of the sum of £3500 by way of improvements, at a yearly rent of £210. The Charity Commissioners in their report (1819-1837) of this transaction stated as follows, "Doubts appear to be entertained by some of the present inhabitants of Ashburne as to the propriety of granting that lease. We are not enabled to form an opinion whether the circumstances of the property at Dublin were such that a building-lease thereof might have been advantageously granted for a limited term ; but with respect to the amount of rent, it appears that no proposal was received by the master of the Court of Chancery, under whose superintendence the letting took place, so beneficial as that which was accepted ; and at all events, as the transaction was completed under the sanction of that court, we apprehend it to be clear that no effectual attempt could now be made to set the lease aside." It is easy to be wise after the event. The present writer was offered in 1889 a quarter share of a gold-mine for £50. The mine when he last heard of it was honestly worth £200,000.

22. The Taylors, Spaldens and Owfields, as we have shown, had given generously in times past to the Governors and Assistants who administered

the Grammar School, Almshouses and Charities of Ashburne, and among those who had occupied with distinction the post of head-master were included William Hull, Joseph Taylor and John Hieron whose relationship to the Taylors of Ashburne has also been already set forth. Dr. Taylor does not appear as an Assistant until the year 1768 and he did not become rector of Bosworth until 1740, nine years after Johnson left that school. It is probable however that his influence with the governing body of Ashburne school was, in 1732, as great as that of anyone in Ashburne save perhaps that of Sir William Boothby.

23. Richard Green who married for his second wife Theodosia, daughter of William Webb, of Croxall Hall, told Boswell in 1776, when he and Johnson visited Lichfield and went to view Green's famous museum, that "he was proud of being a relation of Dr. Johnson's." The relationship has never been explained. If it existed Dr. Taylor would also, through the Webbs and Greens, be a remote connection, by his first marriage, of Dr. Johnson.

24. The following notes may prove useful. While it would be absurd to predicate a common ancestor for all or for even one third of the Derbyshire families who bear the name of Webster, it would be a most interesting work to articulate if possible some of the more prominent of them. We do not pretend to have seriously attempted this problem.

It is somewhat unfortunate that John Webster of Bolsover, whose name appears on a roll of persons of quality in the year 1433, should have been eagerly claimed, without any positive proof,

as the ancestor of the baronets of Battle Abbey, and that without investigating the origin of that distinguished family, the first Sir Godfrey should have been taken to be a son of Peter Webster, presumably of Whittington. In this connection the following points are of interest,—

(a) Mr. R. S. Boddington, who has permitted the writer to make use of his results, writes as follows,—

“ Sir Godfrey Webster, citizen and cloth worker of London, and afterwards of Nelves was apprenticed on the 26th of August 1663 as the son of Godfrey Webster of Chesterfield, yeoman.” In his will proved in 1720 (P. C. C. Shaller 147) Sir Godfrey mentions besides his immediate descendants the following collaterals,—his sister, Anne, wife of Samuel Phipps of Chesterfield, his niece, Mary Norway, his brother, Boroughs, of Hackney and his wife, his sister Timms, his brother John Billingsley and John, the son of the said John Billingsley. He speaks of Chesterfield as the “place where I was born” and to its poor he gives £1,100.

(b) On the other hand Peter Webster citizen and cloth worker of London, a son of Nicholas Webster, who died in 1678 and whose will was proved in the following year (P. C. C. King 12) was born at Whittington, a parish near Chesterfield, which owes much to his benefactions and to those of his son Joshua, and his grandson Peter. The name Godfrey occurs in a pedigree of five descents from him, given by Hunter (*Fam. Min.* vol. iii, p. 1011) and confirmed by the wills of the three benefactors aforesaid, but in no case is there a Godfrey, son of Godfrey. It is probable

that the Chesterfield and Whittington families were related, but the relationship has not apparently been worked out.

Until a thorough examination of all the evidence, as supplied by wills, registers and deeds, has been made, it would be rash to do more than suggest another possible origin of the Battle Abbey family.

(c) It is remarkable that the name Webster does not once occur in the Ashburne registers from 1538 to 1577, and that the first entry of that name we have found there, should be that of the marriage in 1586 of a Godfrey Webster to Philadelphia Hurt (daughter of Roger Hurt, by his wife Edith, daughter of John Cokayne, of Baddesly, who was baptised at Ashburne 28th October 1565), while at Chesterfield, under the years 1588 and 1589, there should occur the baptisms of Godfrey and John, the sons of Godfrey Webster, either of whom may have been the ancestor of Sir Godfrey.

(d) Besides those marriages given in the text, between members of the Webster and Taylor families, there are among many others the following—

|                 |      |   |
|-----------------|------|---|
| At Chesterfield | 1608 | Gilbert Webster and Elizabeth Taylor.           |
| „ „             | 1647 | Ralph Taylor of Bakewell and Elizabeth Webster. |
| At Duffield     | 1687 | Thomas Webster and Susan Taylor.                |
| „ „             | 1767 | William Taylor and Hannah Webster.              |
| „ „             | 1767 | Peter Webster and Hannah Taylor.                |

At Duffield 1774 Thomas Taylor and Anne Webster.

At Mayfield 1829 Richard Taylor and Anne Webster.

The first in the above list, Gilbert Webster, died at Chesterfield in 1646 leaving eight children,—Francis, Gilbert, William, Ralph, Godfrey, Nicholas, Anne, wife of Richard Tilley, and Eliza. In his will he mentions his cousin Godfrey Webster, who is appointed overseer ; John, son of the said Francis Webster, his cousin Mary Heathcote, and his wife Elizabeth. (Will proved at Lichfield 1646.) Either of the two last named Godfreys may have been Sir Godfrey's father.

(e) A yeoman family of Webster also lived at Hulland. William Webster who died at Hulland in 1649 left four sons and three daughters,—John, Henry, Ralph, William, Helen the wife of Abraham Needham, Amy the wife of John Cowp, and Mary. (Will proved at Lichfield 1649.) By marriage if not by descent the Hulland Websters were related to the Websters of Mercaston (Admon. of Henry Webster of Hulland 1692).

There were also Websters at Bradbourne early in the sixteenth century (Will of Nich. Taylor of Ballidon proved at Lichfield 1547).

(f) Benjamin Webster or Benjamin Nottingham Webster (1797-1882) the famous actor, manager, and dramatist was descended from a Derbyshire family. He was born at Bath, where his father, a native of Sheffield and a captain in the army, was stationed for the purpose of organizing the local volunteers. His mother was Elizabeth Moon and he had a brother Frederick (*Standard* 10 July 1882 and *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*) He may

have been a descendant of the Websters of Whittington. A Benjamin Webster of Canterbury is mentioned in the will of Peter Webster of Croydon (1754), grandson of the founder of the school at Whittington (P. C. C. Pinfield 216).

25. The following account of the Goodwins is a verbatim copy of a record preserved in an old Prayer Book,—

John Goodwin was born ye 3rd May 1644 and departed this life 1st Jan. 1707. Penelope his wife departed this life 12th March 1716; they left issue,—

1. Anne born 31st May 1677.
2. Penelope born 30th Mar. 1679.
3. Sarah born 2nd July 1681.
4. John born 28th Feb. 1684; departed this life 26th Jan. 1688.
5. Mary born 7th May 1688.
6. Joan born 19th April 1690.
7. Susanna born 23rd June 1692; departed this life 18th June 1694.
8. Richard born 27th August 1696.

[The last named] Richard Goodwin married at Mugginton, in or about the year 1721, Sarah Jessopp sole daughter and heiress of Jessopp by Lydia his wife. Issue,—

1. A child born dead.
2. Mary, who married Ralph Oakson of Waterhouse near Waterfall.
3. Sarah who married Mr. Ralph Tunnicliff of Throwley.
4. Penelope who married Mr. Thomas Marshal of Lichfield.
5. John who married Mary Ridgeway of Nottingham.
6. Richard who dyed an infant, unmarried.

7. Elizabeth who married Mr. Richard Webster.
8. William a lieutenant of the 29th Regiment, married to ..... in Ireland, and had one son, which dyed an infant about 12 years old, buried at Wexford in Ireland, and William his father afterwards dyed at the same place without issue.
9. Richard, of Friday Street, London; married to Jago, daughter of a clergyman in Warwickshire.
10. Ellen who married George Morewood, esq. of Alfreton Hall.
11. Mary the wife of Charles Palmer of Ladbroke near Southam in the county of Warwick.

[The above] John Goodwin of Ashburne, gentleman, eldest son of Mr. Richard Goodwin, late of the same place, deceased, was married at Ashburne on the twentieth day of November in the year of our Lord, one thousand seven hundred and sixty, to Mary Ridgeway of Nottingham, spinster, one of the two surviving daughters and co-heirs of Francis Ridgeway, late of Nottingham, esquire, deceased, by Dorothy his wife who dyed at Ashbourne 1765. The said John Goodwin had issue by Mary his wife to wit,—

1. A daughter born the 10th day of Nov. 1761, about 10 o'clock in the morning, baptised by the name of Frances. She dyed on the 20th day of March 1762 about 10 o'clock in the morning.
2. Richard born 19th day of June 1763. Dyed 25th of July following.
3. John born 18th of March 1765, dyed unmarried.

4. *Dorothy born 22nd of April 1767 married William Webster.*
5. Francis born 24th of April 1768.
6. Mary Ridgeway born 14th of March 1771; died unmarried.

Mary Goodwin the mother dyed at Ashbourne on Sunday the 19th December 1784. John Goodwin the father dyed at Ashbourne on Wednesday the 26th day of April 1786.

Francis Goodwin [their son] married at Wingerworth, 9th of June 1801 Frances Gladwin eldest daughter of General Gladwin of Stubbing Court, near Chesterfield, and had issue :—

1. Frances born 4th July 1802.
2. John Henry born 2nd Jan. 1804, married at Morton the 10th of October 1832 to Frances Eleanora, only daughter of the Rev. Richard Burrow Turbutt, rector of Morton and had issue :—

1. Richard Henry [Goodwin] born 15th Sept. 1833, died unmarried 28th Feb. 1895. He assumed the name and arms of Gladwin, under the will of his uncle Charles Dakeyne Gladwin.
2. Frances Isabella Turbutt [Goodwin] born 9th May 1835, married 9th Feb. 1860 to John Launcelot, 2nd son of George Henry Errington of Lexden, Essex.
3. Helen Emilia [Goodwin,] born 15th Sept. 1839 married 27th Nov. 1878 to Arthur Finch Dawson of Barrow Hill, Staffordshire, and has issue a daughter Elsie, born 20th Feb. 1880.

## ADDITIONAL NOTE

Since the printing of Chapter II, William R. Holland Esq., of Barton under Needwood, and formerly of Ashburne, has favoured the writer with some additional particulars respecting the Mansion. All who are interested in the preservation of historic buildings will be gratified to learn that the house in which Dr. Taylor was born, and in which he lived and died, the house which afforded such superb hospitality to Johnson, Boswell and the Thrales, has passed into the hands of one who values its traditions and that the inscription written for it by Dr. Johnson—*Stet Domus haec donec testudo perambulet orbem Ebibat et donec fluctus formica marinos*—has acquired a larger promise of fulfilment than it seemed to possess some years ago.

Mr. Holland remembers the Mansion between sixty and seventy years ago, before the interior was dismantled. The portrait of Dr. Johnson by Sir Joshua Reynolds then occupied an honoured place in the dining room ; and the walls of this room, of the hall and of the stair-case were completely covered with valuable pictures. One of them representing “The Death of Seneca” is now in the possession of Haughton Okeover Esq., at Okeover Hall. Mr. Holland also remembers a big walking stick which had belonged to Dr. Johnson.

## 142    ADDITIONAL NOTE

At the sale of the Webster property the Mansion was bought by Mr. John Miers of Ashburne who subsequently sold it to Francis Wright Esq., of Osmaston Manor. By Mr. Wright it was given to his wife's brother's widow, the late Mrs. Alleyne Fitzherbert. After her death it was sold by her representatives to the London and North-Western Railway Company. About this time the coat of arms, of which mention has been made, disappeared. From the Railway Company who needed a portion only of the paddock for their new line from Ashburne to Buxton, the house was at first rented, and subsequently purchased by Ernest Alfred Sadler Esq., M. D., son-in-law of Mr. Holland, who continues to occupy it.

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N. B. *In this Index, Boswell, Dr. Johnson, Mrs. Thrale, and Dr. Taylor, the persons to whom most frequent reference is made in the text and with whom the work is mainly concerned, are, for obvious reasons, omitted.*

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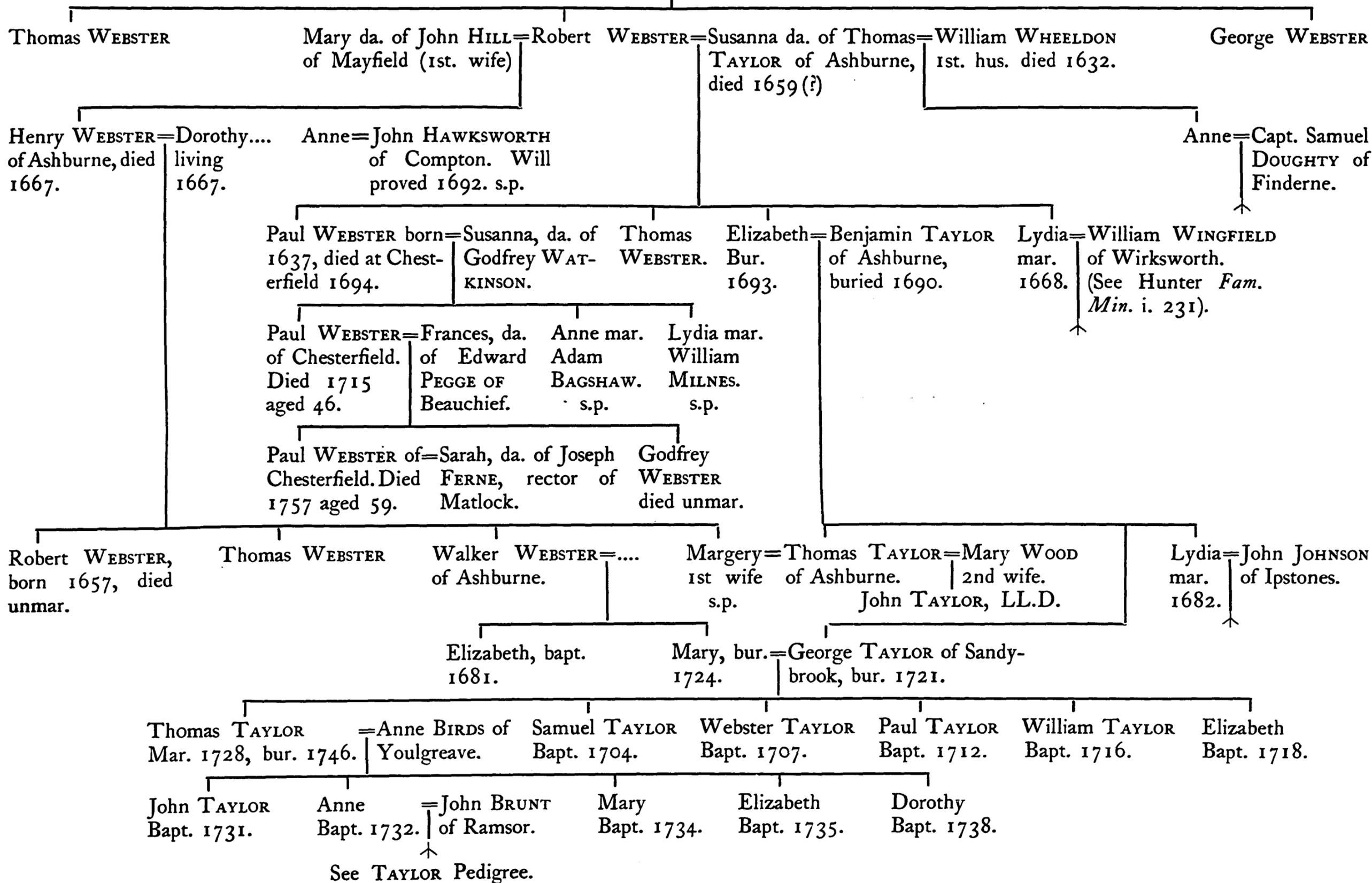
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# PEDIGREE OF WEBSTER

Henry WEBSTER of Ashburne, = Agnes or Ann da. of John  
 mar. at Kirk Ireton 1590. | BLACKWELL of Blackwell.  
 Will pr. 1615.



See TAYLOR Pedigree.



# PEDIGREE OF TAYLOR

Henry TAYLOR =1. ...BERESFORD  
of Ballidon. 2. Elizabeth sister of John  
Will dated 1 Feb. EYELEY. Will dated 13  
1584. Aug. 1618.

