

MARIA HOUGHTON died 16 July 1834

Memorial 85

GEORGE HOUGHTON died 17 February 1853

George Houghton was baptised at St Paul Exeter on 8 September 1765¹, the eldest of four children born to Richard and Mary(I) (née Rolston; m. 13 October 1751)¹. Richard was a mercer, but he and his co-partner William King were declared bankrupt in 1784². A few years later, on November 2nd 1789, George (then aged 24) was entered onto the Roll of Freemen of Exeter, having been apprenticed to his father Richard Houghton as a Druggist³. The Exeter Pocket Journal for 1796 lists "*Houghton & Sons, druggists, south-street*", and it seems that Richard lived for some years in a '*convenient dwelling house, situate opposite the Little Stile, in the Parish of St George*'⁴. George married for the first time on 6 April 1794 to Mary(II) Brownscombe (b. 1752), in the parish of Clyst St George. There is no record of any children from this marriage. The Militia List for the parish of St Olave (1803) states that George, a druggist by profession, served as a Constable⁵. Richard died in March 1815⁶ at the age of 86, leaving amongst other bequests a legacy of 10 guineas to the Exeter Charity Schools⁷.

In June 1817 an advertisement appeared in the *Exeter Flying Post* for the sale by private contract of a dwelling house, warehouse and tenement at 101 Fore Street in St Olave's parish⁸. George Houghton is named in the advert and the premises are claimed to be

*Eligible Situation for a Druggist,
Grocer, and Tea Dealer.*

THO be SOLD by private Contract, (with the Land Tax redeemed.) all that DWELLING-HOUSE, WARE-HOUSE, and TENEMENT behind and adjoining the same, situate in the parish of St. Olave, No. 101, Fore-Street, Exeter, where the above business has been successfully carried on nearly twenty years.

The Dwelling-house consists of a large shop, a good cellar under, a parlor, drawing-room, five bed-rooms, and a garret; kitchen, pantry, and a courtage, with river water, and other conveniences.—The Ware-house contains three large rooms, and being detached, may be converted into a Dwelling-house.

The Tenement has two cellars, and four rooms over; a court, with a well of good water, and an entrance from the Butcherow.

The Premises are in good repair, and are held for terms of years, determinable on lives, subject to yearly conventional rents, amounting to thirty shillings, during the possessionary interest; and to forty shillings during the reversionary term.

For viewing the same, apply to Mr. George Houghton; and for particulars, (if by letter, to be post-paid,) to Messrs. Bruton and Ford, solicitors, North-Street; or to Mr. Henry Powning, builder, South-Street, Exeter.

The Stock, which is not very large, with the FIXTURES, UTENSILS, &c. must be taken at a fair valuation.

N. B. The Business will be continued until the Premises are disposed of. [923

suitable for a druggist, grocer and tea dealer, where "*the...business has been carried on for nearly twenty years*". It seems that George, then aged 52 and without a child to continue the business, had decided to sell up. The successors at 101 Fore Street were William and Henry Matthews and they advertised that fact in the *Exeter Flying Post* on 18 September 1817, next to a notice of thanks to his friends and customers from George Houghton⁹. George and Mary had moved to St Sidwells, close to the "*Black Boy Turnpike*"⁹, prior to the sale of the business, but the precise address is as yet unknown. Sadly, less than one year later, on 6th September 1818, George's wife Mary(II) died in her 66th year¹⁰. Her passing was "*much regretted*"¹⁰.

George re-married in October 1820, aged 55. His wife was Maria Huxham "*of Alphington*"¹¹, but she had actually been born in Harberton and baptised on 5 December 1781¹². They married in Alphington Parish Church under licence – he as a Gentleman and widower, she as a spinster¹³. Maria's parents, Thomas and Rebecca (also Rebekah) had eight children, the last four being born in Ashburton where their eldest son, John, became a vicar. Henry

Matthews (*vide supra*) and his wife Elizabeth, who married in June 1820, were witnesses at the marriage of George and Maria¹³. Both were buried in the Dissenters' graveyard.

In 1822 and 1823, George took a lease on seven dwelling houses being built by Thomas Simons on land leased by the feoffees of St Sidwells to Thomas Binford in 1803¹⁴. Known as Hampton Buildings, still located on Blackboy Road in Exeter, George and Maria occupied number 5¹⁵.

George was a dissenter for most of his life, although his father was buried in St Sidwells. George appeared on a list of members of the Unitarian Society in the West of England in 1799¹⁶, and is known to have worshipped at George's Chapel, South Street, Exeter¹⁷.

George involved himself in worthy causes, becoming an officer of the Devon and Exeter Hospital in 1829, together with several dissenters including Revd. James Manning, druggist John Hill and Mr Diederick Bielfeld¹⁸. He made several donations to public subscriptions. He also served as President of the Protestant Dissenters Charity School located in Paris Street, Exeter in 1828. At that time, Diederick Bielfeld was Treasurer and James and Sarah Bowden were the schoolmaster and mistress, respectively¹⁹.

Maria died at home (5 Hampton Buildings, Exeter) in July 1834, aged 52, after a '*long and severe illness*' and was buried in the Dissenters' graveyard²⁰.

George continued to live at 5 Hampton Buildings until his own death on February 17th 1853 at the age of 87 – "*the oldest Freeman of this city*"²¹. His will²² was written in September 1834 and in that document he left nineteen guineas to his servant Ann Newberry, and 100 pounds to Henry Matthews, but of interest is a portrait of George with his sister Mary, bequeathed to his brother-in-law James Taylor of Philadelphia. The bulk of his estate was left to his sister Mary. In his will he instructed that his remains should be interred, "*..in a decent manner in the Protestant Dissenting Burying Ground in Magdalen Streetby the side of my late dear Wife Maria...*" In codicils added in 1838 and 1841 he left money to Maria's surviving siblings, a full-length profile to his niece Sarah Wills, silver spoons, a portrait, "*..my Gold fish with the Glass Globe..*" and "*..my birds with their cages..*" to Ann Newberry as long as she was still his servant at the time of his decease. In the 1851 Census, Ann Newberry was referred to as his housekeeper, aged 44 and unmarried, and Ann Sampson, an 18-year old from Pinhoe, had joined his household as a Servant. George's will was proved on 15th March 1853 by the oath of his Executor, James Shapland, an accountant who lived at 6 Hampton Buildings¹⁵.

George was one of the last people to be interred in the graveyard before it closed in 1854.

Sources

¹ Ancestry.co.uk accessed 12 November 2016.

² The London Gazette. Number 12748, p. 195 (1786) and The London Gazette. Number 12751, p. 211 (1786).

- ³ Exeter Freeman 1266-1967. Rowe, M.M. and Jackson, A.M. Devon & Cornwall Record Society. Extra Series 1. James Townsend & Sons Ltd., Exeter (1973).
- ⁴ Exeter Flying Post. Thursday 20 February 1800.
- ⁵ Militia List 1803, Parish of St Olave, Exeter. <http://genuki.cs.ncl.ac.uk/DEV/Exeter/StOlave/StOlave1803.htm>
- ⁶ Monthly Magazine. May 1815, p. 378.
- ⁷ Exeter Flying Post. Thursday 11 May 1815.
- ⁸ Exeter Flying Post. Thursday 12 June 1817.
- ⁹ Exeter Flying Post. Thursday 18 September 1817.
- ¹⁰ Exeter Flying Post. Thursday 10 September 1818.
- ¹¹ The Monthly Magazine, 50, p. 391 (1820).
- ¹² <http://search.findmypast.co.uk/record/browse?id=gbprs%2fdev%2f007119609%2f00042>. Accessed 12 November 2016.
- ¹³ <http://search.findmypast.co.uk/record?id=gbprs%2fdev%2f100770257%2f00028&parentid=gbprs%2fm%2f514218695%2f1>. Accessed 12 November 2016.
- ¹⁴ Devon Heritage Centre 5807F/L/14/3 and 5807F/L/14/4.
- ¹⁵ Exeter Itinerary and General Directory. June 1828.
- ¹⁶ Rowe, J. A discourse delivered at Warminster, July 3, 1799 before the Society of Unitarian Christians. Bristol (1799).
- ¹⁷ Exeter Flying Post. Thursday 3 April 1834.
- ¹⁸ Exeter and Plymouth Gazette. Saturday 21 March 1829.
- ¹⁹ Exeter Itinerary and General Directory. P. 86. June 1828.
- ²⁰ Exeter Flying Post. Thursday 17 July 1834. Burial ledger.
- ²¹ Western Times. Saturday 19 February 1853.
- ²² Devon Heritage Centre 1078/IRW/H/1413.