The Founder's Birthplace

BY

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But it is not of great Salopians in general that I am thinking now; it is of Charles Hastings, Knight, the revered founder of our British Medical Association. Ludlow was my headquarters during my quest of the birthplace of this great man; Ludlow with its pride of position and its imposing castle. Without doubt one of Shropshire's most picturesque towns.

From Ludlow, about four and a half miles in a north-westerly direction, lies Bitterley Rectory, Sir Charles Hastings's birthplace; and nearly another mile in the same line is Bitterley Church. Near by, and looking down on the church and village, is Titterstone Clee, rising to 1,700 feet or more—a mass of volcanic rock, some of which has found its way into many of the towns and villages of England on account of its superior road-making qualities. A little farther away, in a northern direction, and rising still higher, is "Brown Clee," a favourite hunting ground for the mycologist. An archaeologist would have much to say about the church, for it is obviously old and full of interest. What struck me most was the font, over 800 years old; and the old oak chest, over 6 feet long, with its massive hinges and rusty padlocks. This chest takes up a good part of the middle aisle. I should say that it is one of the oldest pieces of oak-work anywhere to be seen, and possibly was made of the sessile oak, which has died out in many parts of England, but is still found in that part of Shropshire.

SHROPSHIRE, home of some of England's best agriculture, gives us minerals, and has given us men: men of action, like Lord Clive of Indian fame; men of science, like Charles Darwin, most patient and accurate of observers, most logical of reasoners. And much could be said of the divines and men of letters who were born "Proud Salopians."

BITTERLEY RECTORY, SHROPSHIRE

It was in October, 1791, that the Rev. James Hastings, father of Charles, came as rector to Bitterley, and he left at the end of 1795 to take up his new appointment at Martley in Worcestershire.

The Hastings family, a big one even for those days, would have been considered a very big one in these. There were eleven children, and they were no weaklings, as sometimes is the case in so large a family. They all grew up fit and strong, and fulfilled their mission in life well. There was one centenarian in the eleven, quite a good percentage in those days, or in our own. Miss Joanna lived to the age of 104. She died at Malvern, and is buried there. Sir Thomas Hastings, Sir Charles's eldest brother, gained a knighthood for his work in the Navy. He became captain of the gunnery school, and afterwards superintendent of the Royal Naval College at Portsmouth. He died in 1870, aged 80. Francis Decimus became an Admiral of the Fleet. And so one might continue working his way through the members of this interesting family.

Such was the physical and home environment of the founder of the Association, and into this goodly company, this veritable school of young folk, each with his own will and his own mental outlook, Charles, the sixth son, was born on January 11th, 1794, at Bitterley Rectory. It has been stated that Sir Charles was born in one of the hotels of Ludlow, owing to the condition of the rectory at that time. This is most likely inaccurate. When Charles's father came as rector he found the rectory too small for his big family, and he proceeded at once to enlarge it. The alteration and additions were commenced in 1791. Now it is hardly likely that the additions would

be allowed to drag on for three years. I believe it is a fact that one child was born at Ludlow, but it was not Charles. Charles, I feel sure, was born in the large bedroom in the commodious and beautiful rectory of Bitterley. I myself have seen the entry of his baptism in the parish register kept in the old chest. This was witnessed by Thos. Gwyn, curate.

Charles, a small boy of less than two years, left Bitterley and was taken across the border into Worcestershire at the end of 1795. He started school life at Martley in the old school, which at that time was a half-timbered house, since pulled down. It stood in the churchyard, and was virtually a grammar school. I am told by Sir Charles's grandson, Mr. W. G. W. Hastings, that he remained at work at Martley for some years, and if there was any interval between this school and his apprenticeship at Stourport it was spent at a private school at Worcester.

But this is not certain. He left school to be apprenticed to a firm of surgeons and apothecaries at Stourport; and Stourport Church speaks eloquently from a brass tablet of the worth and influence of one of his masters. After a few months' study in London, and with no qualification, he was, at the age of 18, appointed house-

surgeon to the Worcester County Infirmary. Under the direction of Dr. Watson Phillips, one of the physicians to the hospital, he made numerous experiments on the nervous system. In 1815, when he was 21 years old, he entered Edinburgh Infirmary, where he continued his work on experimental physiology and microscopy in medical research. He graduated M.D. in 1818, and was at once appointed physician to the Worcester Infirmary, and for many years was the leading practitioner in that city.

At this point I should like to express my sincere thanks, and the thanks of the Association, to the members and friends of Sir Charles Hastings's family for their exceeding kindness in giving so generously of their time and in furnishing me with so many important facts: the Rev. F. G. Shepherd, M.A., the rector of Ludlow, Prebendary Burton, M.A., the rector of Bitterley, and Mr. W. G. W. Hastings.

The founding of the British Medical Association has been described by another pen. I will only complete what I set out to do, to give a full-sized portrait of this great man. He was a vigorous, active-brained, generous-hearted man, fond of work, and held high ideals of his chosen profession. Being a member of a large family he learned early to think of

and to consider others, and the same spirit helped him to found the British Medical Association. I am told that the study of geology and natural history was his chief hobby and recreation; nor are we surprised at this, considering the nature of his surroundings during childhood and youth—a land

furnishing many fossils, ferns, and fungi, and abundance of wild flowers. He wrote on the geology and natural history of Worcestershire, and especially on the Malvern Hills, and he largely developed the Worcester museums. He took a great interest in politics, and was strong on the Liberal side. He was deeply interested in the sanitary question, and was a president of the Public Health Section. He married in 1825 the eldest daughter of Dr. George Woodgate, by whom he left an only son, G. W. Hastings, M.P. for East Worcestershire in 1880 and following years, and two daughters. He died on July 30th, 1866, aged 72.

May I add that the knowledge that I have seen a patient of Sir Charles Hastings gives me both pleasure and pride? The mother of Prebendary Burton's wife was attended

by Sir Charles when the babies came, and I am pleased to say that at 87 she, like her husband, is only aged in years, not in tissues or outlook.

CHARLES HASTINGS, 1847

From the oil painting presented to the Worcestershire Natural History Society. Reproduced by permission of the Committee of the Victoria Institute Museum, Worcester.

Centenary Meeting: Oversea and Foreign Guests

We print below the names of oversea representatives, delegates, oversea representatives of kindred bodies, and foreign guests who will be attending the Centenary Meeting, with their temporary addresses in this country.

Name	Home Address	English Address	Name	Home Address	English Address
Dr. Maude Abbott ...	Canada	C/o Dr. Helen Ingleby, 33, Cromwell Road, Kensington, S.W.	Professor Wm. Burridge, M.D.	India	—
Major H. G. Alexander, I.M.S. (and Mrs. Alexander)	India	C/o Manager, Lloyds Bank Ltd., 125, Oxford Street, W.1	Professor William Boyd, M.D., F.R.C.P. (and Mrs. Boyd)	Canada	Savoy Hotel, London
Dr. A. Lloyd Anderson...	Canada	C/o London House, Caroline Place, Guilford Street, W.C.	Privatdozent Dr. A. Butenandt	Germany	—
Dr. Carlos de Silva Araujo (and Madame Araujo)	Brazil	64, Romford Road, Stratford, E.15	Dr. A. D. Campbell	Canada	—
Professor Ludwig Aschoff	Germany	C/o Sir Charlton Briscoe, 30, Harley Street, W.1	Lt.-Col. J. H. Campbell, D.S.O., R.A.M.C.	Egypt	C/o Glyn Mills and Co., Kirkland House, Whitehall, S.W.
Dr. A. T. Bazin ...	Canada	Savoy Hotel, London	Dr. Russell L. Cecil (and Mrs. Cecil)	U.S.A.	New Clarges Hotel, Half Moon Street
Dr. Mary V. F. Beattie ...	British West Indies	C/o A. C. Richmond, Esq., 21, Gordon Place, Kensington, W.8	Dr. Emile Colling ...	Luxembourg	—
Dr. Jorgen H. Berner ...	Norway	Hotel Ambassador, Woburn Place, W.C.1	Dr. John B. Colquhoun	Australia	Corfrach Banaire, Invernesshire
Dr. Bir Bhan Bhatia (and Mrs. Bir Bhan Bhatia)	India	87, Cowley Road, Mortlake, S.W.14	Col. Sir Frank Connor, I.M.S.	Bombay	St. James's Palace Chambers, Ryder Street, S.W.1
Brig.-Gen. H. S. Birkett (and Mrs. and Miss Birkett)	Canada	Herbert Tilley, Esq., F.R.C.S., 72, Harley Street, W.1	Dr. Rolf Creasy, jun. (and Mrs. Creasy)	India	Waverley, Lee-on-Solent, Hants.
Dr. H. Bodkin ...	SouthAfrica	C/o Mrs. Beryman, Boveagh, Collington Lane, Bexhill	Major J. A. Cruickshank, M.C., I.M.S. (ret.) (and Mrs. Cruickshank)	India	Lismoyne, Fleet, Hants.
Mr. H. E. Brawn, F.R.C.S. (and Mrs. Brawn)	SouthAfrica	Axmens Ford, Ramsdell, Basingstoke	Dr. F. Daubenton (and Mrs. Daubenton)	SouthAfrica	Royal Palace Hotel, Kensington, S.W.
Dr. A. Breinl ...	Australia	C/o The Agent-General for Queensland, Strand, W.C.	Dr. W. T. F. Davies ...	SouthAfrica	Nutcombe, Limpsfield, Surrey
Dr. R. Briercliffe, O.B.E.	Ceylon	Burwains, Rhyl, North Wales	Dr. S. L. Dawkins (and Mrs. Dawkins)	SouthAfrica	C/o Australia House, Strand, W.C.
Dr. W. H. Brodie (and Mrs. Brodie)	Hong-Kong and China	C/o Chartered Bank of India, Australia, and China, 38, Bishopsgate, E.C.	Professor P. P. Debono, M.D., F.R.C.S.	Malta	10, Bedford Place, London, W.C.1
Rev. David M. Brown, M.D.	Rhodesia	21, Morningside Park, Edinburgh	M. le Dr. F. Decourt (and Madame Decourt)	France	Ambassadors Hotel, Upper Woburn Place, W.C.1
Mr. R. Graham Brown, F.R.A.C.S.	Australia	5, Adam Street, Portman Square, W.1	Professor Armand Deille	France	Clifton Hotel, Welbeck Street, W.1
Dr. G. Buchanan ...	SouthAfrica	C/o Mrs. Lee, Blagdon Barton, Paignton, South Devon	M. le Dr. Pierre Dibos (and Madame Dibos)	France	Ambassadors Hotel, Upper Woburn Place, W.C.1
			Lt.-Col. A. M. Dick, O.B.E., I.M.S.	India	C/o Messrs. Grindlay and Co., 54, Parliament Street, S.W.1
			Dr. J. R. Dickson, O.B.E. (and Mrs. Dickson)	British West Indies	70, Lancaster Gate, W.