

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

" MY LIFE " WRITTEN BY JOSHUA MARGERISON. (1815-1903)
11th. DECEMBER 1896.

I have often been asked if I had written my life; if not, if I would do so, but my reply has always been that no one would care to read it, and if any did waste time perusing its pages, many would doubt the most important circumstances in my chequered history. But if I must tell the tedious story of my life, it is proper I should begin as near the beginning as I can, and tell you how I began the journey on the 7th. May 1815, in the parish of Hoghton on a small farm called Cripplegate, near Stanley Coppice.

My father was James and my mother Elizabeth Margerison. She was my father's second wife, and I was her 4th. child. There were six of us, and there were nine by a former wife, making a fine round family of 15, all living at father's death. At the date of which I am writing, hand loom weaving was the employment of the whole county, and that part of it was employed in the fancy department, such as tape checks, satin checks, spots and satin stripes etc. The beginners were employed upon the more simple fabrics, and I was early taught to weave with two treadles, a narrow plain light make called 74. and was 26 inches wide, and a cut was over 30yds. for which we received 2/6 for weaving. My mother dressed my yards, and I was early taught to weave this cloth. I distinctly remember going to Blackburn with mother, when I was seven years old, and she told the Cotton Master that I was seven years old that day, and had woven 11 pieces of that 74. I remember he gave me some warm words praise, and a nice bright penny.

How about your schooling in those happy days of yore - well I must tell you that schools were very few and very distant, the nearest one was about 5 miles distant, but fortunately we had a Sunday school at the Methodist Chapel, Hoghton Tower, where we gathered a knowledge of our letters and improved each other at home. I never went to school but a fortnight which arose from an accident. Old Starkie kept a mule which stood in an open stable, and a neighbour named Timothy Pearson, who had received a more liberal education than others, fell in love with a lady on Mellor 6 miles away and used to borrow the mule (his neighbour's) while he slept. On one of those happy visits Mr. Mule was convinced he was unjustly treated and resolved on revenge. He immediately uplifted his heels, shook off the saddle and rider who sprained his ankle and unfitted him for his usual employment, and he began to teach school in his father's house. I don't remember much of the schooling, but it was here I learnt to spell the first word. It was a wet drizzly day and the master resolved to give us 'hats'. The master got one in his hands and asked the boys what it was and several primitive efforts were made to spell it, but not succeeding he said "it is a hat" - now spell hat, but we could not - H A T he said - this I carried home and I never forgot the spelling. I can just tell how you gathered your little knowledge. My elder brother invited me to his house on a Saturday night, and I stopped working sums until 11 or 12 o'clock and entered them during the week. I must not forget that in those days Hoghton Sunday School gave instruction in writing, which was of great importance to hundreds of young men at certain times of the year. We ran to a night school at Roach belonging to the factory, taught by Fred Bates whose legs were twisted in the most marvelous way.

At this time of life years revolve rapidly and I gave my mind to improvement in the art of fancy manufacturing, and was engaged upon a fancy cambric spot of a large diamond pattern which took 14 treadles to produce the pattern. At this period, a circumstance occurred which affected the future of my life. I was

as stated engaged upon this complex pattern, it was in the afternoon, and the sun was shining fiercely on my window, which made the yarn brittle and caused it to break most provokingly. I lost my temper and turned myself upon my seat board, threw up my leg as high as it would, and brought it down with a force enough to split the board, and exclaiming in loud and vehement words "I will never be a weaver, I will rise above it". My sisters enquired, whatever was the matter. I related my perplexity and repeated my firm resolve. I then began in solemn determination to work out my task. I bought slate and arithmetic and set to work. I was then about 15 years of age. Morning, noon and night, often after 12 o'clock, found me at my works, either working out my sums or copying them into my book.

Another circumstance occurred at this time which contributed materially to turning the tide of my life. It was Whitsuntide and we generally went to Preston on the Monday, and as we were returning home we were reminded it was preaching night, and it was probable some girls would be there, which we had a great fancy for seeing. we therefore bent our steps to the Methodists Chapel, Hoghton; there was not a large congregation, but those were there we expected to see. Adam Fletcher was preaching (a very solemn preacher) , and I never forgot the text. "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke". It reached my heart, and deepened the resolve I had made to begin a new life. Resolved to say my prayers and pray in secret, and avoid all wicked and improper words. Whoever has determined to turn the stream of life, after it has run 15 years in it's channel, and succeeded, know something of the works which I had engaged to accomplish. Just before this Rev. Thomas Henry Walker, a great revivalist, was in the circuit and his preaching was of the sort that stirred the deepest depths of my soul, and was the means of turning many of the Sunday scholars from darkness to light, and a great work was wrought in the congregation. It was a time of great awakening and several new classes were added to the society. My interest in preachers had long existed, and I had been mindful to find a seat where I could see the first approach of the preacher to the chapel, and form an opinion of him at first sight. I was fond of a lively man, earnest and active in the pulpit. It puzzled my head however, the minister kept on talking without reading from a book, and have wondered many times since. For two or three years I was kept closely pursuing my studies, and gave close attention to the Sunday. The work of the spirit in my soul was considerable, by the addresses given in the Sunday school by a stonemason named George Heap, the reader of a class, and I used to wonder why he or some other under him, did not invite me to their class.

I was now in my 16th. year; I had a brother Abraham, employed in Preston at Horrocks Jackson & Co. who had promised to keep a look out for an opening in their firm. He gave me notice I might be called for soon, as a vacancy was presenting itself. A letter was recieved asking me to go over and take my books and see Mr. Horrocks. I went, trembling and wondering how I should succeed. I met the gentleman, and found him very courteous, he requested me to be seated, examined my books, asked me a number of questions, and amongst them for a reference which staggered me. I told him I could give him a reference to the Superintendent of the Sunday School. He said very good, very good, and I left cheered and hopeful, and to come on Tuesday. On the Tuesday after I went again, I presented my Sunday School character, which was accepted as quite satisfactory. I was apprenticed until I was 21. --17.years 9/-; to 18years, 9/6 to 19years, 10/6 to 20years, 12/6 to 21years, 15/- . These were the conditions. My duties in the warehouse were giving out warps and weft to weavers, and every alternate week to take the books and pay the wages £200 to £300.

I got a lodging near the warehouse, joined the class, united myself with the Temperance Society, took a seat in the Church and began a new life. I also joined myself with the prayer leaders band and sought earnestly the Forgiveness of Sins. One night after earnest seeking, while in bed I experienced such a curious change from darkness to light, as I never felt before. Darkness was gone, guilt gone, all condemnation gone, the voice of praise was given for sorrow, and I fell asleep praising God for his goodness and mercy, and have ever regarded that even as devine.

"My chains fell off, my heart was free
I rose, went forth and followed Him".

When about 13 or 19 years of age, I and my young friend were at the Temperance meeting, which was "Moderation". The meetings were held monthly. "Abstinence" had sprung up in Preston, which soon afterwards degenerated into "Tee Total", through an ill informed man trying to pronounce the word "Total Abstinence", blundered out "Tee-total". The man was Dicky Turner, a poor man who sold cockles. At this meeting it came out that we had members amongst us, who acted upon the abstinence principle. Benjamin Barton, Chemist, an honest friend, came up to Tom Whittaker, took him by the collar and insisted that he should tell the meeting, if he could do his work as well without, as with beer. He then served me in the same way, and somehow I managed, they said very well, to bear testimony to the abstinence principle. This was the first time I had stood upon my feet in any public audience.

In my early life, my first indispensable want was a pronouncing dictionary; to buy this was a great effort, Walkers was 4/9 and my only source was my weekly wages. Words which I did not know the meaning of, and was doubtful of their pronunciation, I put down on a piece of paper and carried in my waist coat pocket, and groped out the meaning as best I could. I met a young man who had gone over this ground and could help me a little. I shall long remember the day when out of about 7/-, I went up the street, and ventured out of that sum to spend 4/9 on a Walker's Dictionary. The feeling as I carried it down the street can never be forgotten. I can tell, it was made some use of every day, and many a time was it used every day. My friends said I must have some books, and advised me to buy "Lock on the Human Understanding", and a book on the Resurrection. I need not say I wanted a dictionary and used mine morning, noon and night. During two years I applied myself to words, and their pronunciation grammar, and the improvement of the mind generally in reading grammar. I got a seat in the chapel where I could make observations without being noticed by others, noted in a small memorandum book, the pronunciation of every word I did not know, and every new word. These were sought out in the Dictionary, and their exact definition pencilled down. This book was carried in my breast pocket, and looked at many times a day, to impress upon my memory their precise meaning. By these means, I was more able to understand the books I was most unwisely counselled to buy. For two years my friend and I pondered night and day in pursuit of knowledge. Thursday was at this time half a day often idle, and this time was mostly used in trying to frame a sermon. The first text was "Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning", but I never made ought of it.

About this time a circumstance occurred that drew away my mind from the main object that engrossed my attention. The fact that two young men were in Blackburn, who were acting upon Total Abstinence principle, brought a band of zealous abstainers from Preston, who took the Theatre for a week. Joseph Livesey, Slender Billies, Thomas Swindlehurst who had been 30 years a drunkard, I. Cartwright, Jean Anderton and others, who fired the town with zeal for abstinence. They carried me with them and made me secretary. This circumstance

diverted my mind from the closer study of theology on which I was set, and engaged me on a Sunday, in visiting reformed men, on whom we had got influence. Among these were Jim Whittaker, whom we found in a cellar, who was then a dresser for power looms. We watched him diligently, and others most diligently, until he was in a nice cottage, with three children and a bright little wife.

About this time, when I was in my 20th year, I got my mother to arrange during the week with the good people at Samlesbury Mill, for meetings on a Sunday night, where we called prayer meetings, and I gave earnest addresses on my own account in the cottages, and much good was done. Tidings of these things came to the notice of the Church, and the Rev. Ranson sent me and James Illingworth on a Sunday, to fill an appointment that was vacant. My friend took the afternoon, he went up like a rocket, and exploded at a great height. This alarmed me very much, and I wondered how I should go on at night. Turn came, and I was seen in the pulpit for the first time, I resolved, being cautioned by my friend, not to soar, but keep nearer earth, and nearer the hearts of my audience. I succeeded in filling the time and interesting the people. We had to walk home 6 or 7 miles, and had opportunity of reviewing our performance and drawing practical lessons. This was the beginning of my public Church Life.

We now approach a period of Church strife. It was about the year 1835 when a shaking occurred, in the connection arising out of the case of Dr. Warren who after aiding the Theological Institute, turned against it in the bitterest way possible, when the conference did not nominate him to be professor. At this time, the friends in Blackburn had invited the Dr. to preach the School sermons. Mr. Ranson objected, but the people insisted and he came and preached. While this was going on the agitation heightened, and the disaffected decided not to hear Mr. Ranson again, and rented a small Chapel in Salford, and invited a local preacher named Clitheroe to preach for them. He did so which greatly grieved Ranson, and he forbade him to preach there, and if he did, he would strike his name off the circuit plan. The Sunday before the L.P.M.; a meeting of Local Preachers was called in Mr. Pickup's parlour, and it was decided to stand by Clitheroe. When Clitheroe's name was called in L.P.M., he would not promise to desist, and his name was cut off with 25 others. The circuit was broken up. This led to the foundation of the Paradise Chapel, and I was carried with the tide, for all my friends were in the company struck off. A new plan was made, and my name was put upon the plan of the reformers. Under these circumstances, great efforts were put forth to induce me to go with the reform ministry. I had three deputations at least, they said they must have a man who could advocate, when I positively declared I would not advocate and so this ultimately settled the Question.

About this time my engagement with Horrocks Tootell & Co. was up, and I was removed to Goosnagh where I went upon the Westleyan Plan, and worked in the Garstang Circuit. This appointment continued about 12 months, when I was sent to Preston and was put on the Lune St. Plan (1837) on trial with Peter Watson, and continued there for many years. At this time I was employed at Atkinson & Tootells, and was master over the winders, and living in lodgings with Mrs Smethurst in Preston. My wages were 20/- a week. My lodgings were 8/- and she ran up my meat and food bill to 12/- 16/-. I soon saw I was going wrong, and could not see my way to improvement without a radical change. I the articles charged to me were not consumed by me, and gave notice of a change in a few weeks. At this time I was about 23 years, and need not say as a great secret, I had thought of someone besides myself, and contemplated making a change, and engaging a manager

for my 20/- a week. I had made my selection about 7 years previous Mary Croasdale, her parents some years at first objected very strongly, and obliged Mary to break off the connection, which was one for one year. Then a mutual agreement was come to with another sweetheart which was never very sweet. We did not agree very well, and agreed to part as we met, good friends; we shook hands.

This was at Blackburn. I turned on my heel and determined to go and see Mary. I found her at her work; she seemed pleased to see me, and she cheerfully asked what had brought me down. I said "I thought I would just run in and see how they were, Ann Jane and I had broken off". "No you don't persuade me that". I assured her it was true, and asked her if she would step to the door a minute, which she did, and I said if she had no objection, we would piece up where we left off. She said "she had not". I said. "Let us have a kiss". Which sealed the contract, which went on without a jar to our wedding on the Queens Coronation (1837), and from then for nearly ten years, to the time of her death. A happier marriage never was lived. We entered into our cottage 3/9 a week, Maudland Bank. I kept to my business, we gathered a few needful things into our little home, we hallowed it with prayer and reading the scriptures, making sermons and preaching them, and keeping a strict watch upon expenses, which ran about 9/- to 14/- with rent 3/9.

We remained in our first house for some months, and then arranged to take from Mr. Kid, the house 12, Bow Lane at £14 per year. Soon after this change, I obtained another situation at Paul Catterals, to examine the cloth from 300 power looms, at 26/- per week, but with this inconvenience, that I had to be there at 6 o'clock in the morning, which involved a removal to a house near my work, and we went into Moor Lane. We could not remain here long by reason of a colony of fleas, having localized themselves in one part of the house, and refused to live at peace or vacate the premises, so we had finally to yield to superior numbers! From this house we went to 6, St. Paul's Sq. and remained there about two or three years. Here James our first child was born.

In the meantime, I got a situation at my old firm Horrocks Jackson, Turks Head Yard, and we moved to 73, Oxford St. where we remained several years. When a great panic came on in business, and the company were lessening their hands, and every month lessened our staff. I calculated my turn would come soon under these circumstances. I looked out for another situation, feeling certain my turn could not be far off, and heard of an opening with John Heaps & Co. of Manchester, at their Blackburn warehouse, and shifted our home to Montgomery St. generally Branch Road. When I gave in my notice to my employers at Preston, they were utterly astonished, as I was the man they had intended to keep. "Was I finally engaged"? I assured them I was. I was greatly disappointed, as I was perfectly satisfied with my situation, but could not see it could last. This situation at Blackburn was not comfortable, and I only stayed one short year. My daughter Mary was born here, but neither myself nor my wife liked the place, and I made enquiries for another situation, and soon found one. I soon heard of an appointment at Preston, with Atkinson and Tootle, to manage their warehouse with two Dandy Shops. There I found a dwelling place at 12, Gt. Avenham St. and remained in this situation at 30/- per week.

* (A Dandy was the most advanced Hand-Loom developed. The frames of these looms were made of cast iron instead of heavy timber, and looked just "Dandy", hence the name. the word "shop" is short for "workshop". These Dandy Hand-Looms were probably used to produce the more complicated or special weaves, which were perhaps beyond the scope of the contemporary Power-Loom. J.M.M.)

Now came a temptation of entering into business. Mr Miller of Euxton offered to find me money, if I would enter into business with their son John. They would find all needful capital at 5% and half the profits. I was taken with the offer and agreed to accept; the offer when fully explained, was only 20/- per week advance to live upon, and the division of the profits never came.

There came a panic in the cotton trade, and it was impossible to sell stock. Increased money kept being needed, and they ceased to find same, they said I must sell. This could not be done to profit, and I had scores of weeks to borrow money for wages on Saturday mornings, when I did not know where to go to get £10, and they gave no attention to my urgent letters. This continued for many months. Ultimately, I consented to refer the whole matter to arbitration, and my portion of the profits was about £28; £15 of which I had to pay to the concern, which left me about £13. in pocket. Of this I had to pay £6. for $\frac{1}{2}$ year's rent, and several small sums were wanted.

What next? Was an important question. In the thick of my difficulties, I met with Mr. Smethurst in Manchester, to whom I related my difficulties. He sent me to see their agent, Mr Pilkington, whom I found a pushing Manchester man. He relieved me kindly, for we had bought fine yarns from them. He said. "Can you make broad gold headings"? I said I have made many a thousand. "That is not it". Said he, can you make them. I can make them if anybody can. It is not doing what other folks do that succeeds, it is doing what other folks cannot do,"that succeeds". Now I learnt a lesson in this, that has been immense value to me in life, and have ever since acted upon it.

I was now in the face of great difficulty. A sick wife and three small children, no work, no money but a few shillings. My doctor insisted upon my wife in order to continue her health, and looking round resolved to go to Leyland, and see if I could find aught to fix my thoughts upon.

I saw a small cottage on Golden Hill £8. a year, and took it. We soon got a tenant for our Preston house, and resolved we would open a small shop at Leyland, and await events. A friend who was out of work agreed to put up the fixings, and give me his work. This done. I went to Preston and bought on credit all my little fixings, and as much stock as would just float our little enterprise, but all on credit, and my actual cost was not 5/-. We opened and a few pence came. My sickly wife could make fine bread. This was soon known, and our first few shillings came from my helping my wife to make bread, and watch through the window for customers, and to see them pass with their baskets was no small trial. This continued for a few months, then I ventured to rent a large shop with brick oven, in the centre of the village, and began to make bread, and added grocery. This was an advance in the right direction, and increased the amount of our returns.

No sooner was this done, than my wife came incapable of managing the small shop, and a woman was engaged to do it, this was a considerable expense. As my business increased, this woman was brought to the Leyland shop, and another put in her place. My expenses increased, and no reliable hope was entertained of the recovery of my wife. Hope perished; she gave up the children, and on the 19th. December 1843 passed away. We buried her at Hoghton on the 23rd. Dec. Many times had I come home, fearing to find her gone. One night I was summoned hastily to see the last. On my approach she said, "I am glad you are come, I am going, they are waiting- the angels are

waiting, I asked them to wait. Do you see (pointing to the upper corner of the bed) goodbye, you will come too will you? I will do my best to do so.

I was alone with two businesses, 3 children, 2 women and 1 baker. I was staggered; must go on; there is no stopping place. I worked hard and earnestly, but I saw money was melting. Then I resolved I would learn to wheel the truck from one shop to the other, which was a task, but I managed to conquer it, and could do it without blushing, and was not above my business. I now approach a time full of circumstances of the most solemn character, am alone with my children, heavy expenses, new things could not prosper unless watched with the most vigilant care. I knew my expenses were too much for my income, and could not see how to reduce them, and I resolved to think. I first thought what I really wanted. I concluded she must be a Methodist, she must be a respectable, sober, good woman, who knew something of business, and not ashamed of helping in a free and hearty way.

At this time my little daughter Mary was taken ill. I got some medicine, and it did not answer my expectations. I called in the Doctor and he examined her, and came to me and frankly said "She will die". I was thunderstruck: "Yes" said he, "nothing can save her, her bowels have been neglected so long, it is impossible to make them act, she will live about a fortnight, and you cannot save her". She lived 2 weeks in great agony, and was added to her mother. (Mary died on the 2nd. March 1849 aged 5. years. Just over 10. weeks after her mother, who was 34. years old).

My attention was more closely directed to my "memorandum paper;" and I recorded all names I could think of, and they numbered about 14. I put it in my cash drawer and looked at it several times a day, and crossed a name off that would not do, and put the paper back into the drawer, and thought again. In about a fortnight, the list was reduced to two, and these were sisters.

My next move was to get to know something about them. I remembered a farmer's wife that knew these two, and had lived near them as neighbours. I went to see her, told her my difficulty, told her my list was run down, and I wanted her to give me a candid opinion. She said "I knew them both very well, they are both most excellent women, but there is a difference, the elder is about 30 years; fond of books, and really a clever woman, but is not fond of children! The younger is 28. years, very good, fond of children; but I don't know if either will marry, but they are most excellent women, and either of them would be a blessing.

I resolved to see them with my own eyes; and did so. I was planned to preach at Freckleton, the village where they resided, in a fortnight, but I changed with a man who was planned the next Sunday, and this gained time, and saw them a week sooner. I arrived at the Chapel, but at the time the school was coming out, and met the sisters as I went into Chapel; the elder one first, who shook hands coolly and very modestly. The younger approached me next, and gave me a warm Methodist shake with a smile of a cheery welcome character, which moved my effections and fixed me in my choice. I went home and thought; then wrote her a letter stating my case, and saying I had been much taken with her, and begged an interview. My reply was a negative. I urged again, and got a consent to meet them at the house of their married brother on the next Thursday. I did so but did not make much progress. However, I found out it was the elder sister who had written the letter. This was an important point, and I wrote again and begged for a personal interview, that we might talk over the matter. This was granted, after a few interviews consent was obtained

and several letters were passed. Finally at Freckleton, on a stone bridge, in the back lane, she said "Well, I suppose it must be so". In the meantime my dear daughter died, so she never saw her.

About a month after this, we agreed to be married. (to Margaret Cook the oldest sister) Mr John Brown of Roach agreed to be first. We took a carriage from Preston, drove to their house, took up the two ladies, drove to Kirkham, and were Married there on April 5th. 1849. an event I never regretted. Time was short, necessity was great a better women was never united to a man. We united hand and heart, she took charge of the home shop. I went heartily with the town shop, and we soon turned over £50 to £60 a week. We were soon tempted to take hold of other things, and made ourselves too busy, but will add hereafter.

There are few people who know when they are doing well, and possess courage to let well alone. I knew a manufacturer of fine jac- onets, and when we had gone on some months, a friend of mine, who em- ployed about 20 weavers, told me he was withdrawing from the trade, and if I would, he would give me his connection just as it stood, for a more nominal sum, and introduce me to his employees. To this I agreed and bought the machinery necessary to carry on the small concern. Took a warehouse, and a partner to help me in the business.

We had not been at work more than 12 months, when a man I had known many years, got an agency to sell 500 power looms. He introd- uced the sale of them to me, and assured me they were nearly new, and exceedingly cheap. He induced me to buy 200 at £2 a loom, and believ- ing in his judgement, as a thoroughly practical man in power looms. I was caught in a trap. Before closing I took and showed him a prem- ises at Dolphinholm, which was advertised to let at a low rent, thus I was drawn away by bad machinery. About Christmas we sold out our Leyland business, and moved bag and baggage to our new home, and en- tered upon our new venture. We put all our energies into the new enterprise, started the water power, planned the winding and warping mill, started about a hundred of these old looms, which proved utt- erly unfit. Alas! too late, too late, ruined by a friend. No new thing in the world. We found money was too slow. I need only add we were overthrown, and finally I was obliged to leave the place.

I came to Preston, took a house in Victoria St. about the 4th. house on the north side of Philadelphia St. My money was done; my fortune was in the hands of others. I instructed the carrier from Dol- phinholm to buy 5 or 6 bundles of straw and put them in the house I had taken, where I had got a ton of coals. We rose early in the morn- ing before our caretaker was up, got our breakfast, and myself, wife and 2 small children made our way to the first train from Bay Horse to Preston, made our way to the new home without furniture save pan, kettle, 2 stools, 6 blankets and 3 pillows which we had brought with us, and thus we began housekeeping again.

We entered boldly in our new task, and had a few shillings- perhaps ten all told. I think it was Thursday and winter. My first move was to see Mr. Goodier, who had often spoken kindly to me, and thought he might find me work. When he saw me, he asked me if I had seen his advert. I said "No". He said I was the exact man he wanted in the grey room, but he had put in the advert, and could not say

((Joshua's grand-daughter, Louise Mary (1884/1979), states that Margaret Cook had some money and it was all lost at Dolphinholm Mill.))

finally until Tuesday morning, when I was to go down again. I was there at the time, he hailed me most cheerfully, and said it is between you and another. What will you come for? I said "40/-" (£2). He was very sorry, he could not give it. "I will begin at 35/-" ... "I will give you 30/-" ... "No" I said, "I will not!" ... "Why"? ... "Because it will not keep my family"... "Very well, we must accept the other for 28/-". "Very well", said I and left him.

Saturday left us with some plain food to sustain us until Monday. We said our prayers, and got again into our straw bed for the third time. There was not much in the cupboard, and less in the pocket. It was 10 o'clock, we had not long been there when a knock came to the front door, and on enquiring was asked if I lived there; there was a basket for me, and they left. On opening the door we found the basket was packed with good things. These fitted us over the week, at the end I had to go to Leyland, where I was promised some money, on the first Saturday. The day was dark and wet, the money was done, and I said, it is no use hesitating.

I put on my coat, seized my umbrella and started on my way; got there wet and weary. The first I heard was "why had I come today", they had no money... they told me the first Saturday, and I was on the wrong day... This was the last Saturday in the month. I saw I was wrong. I said I must have some money, for I have none. He said, we have a side of bacon, and if you will carry a slice, you can have a slice, and he cut off a slice, about 10 lbs. and asked me to weigh it, he would accept my weight. He wrapped it in paper, and I started off home, but found it heavy to carry. I called at two other places where they owed me money, and I got 2/- at one, and 1/6 at the other.

It was raining heavily, and I hesitated whether I should go home by rail or not, but ultimately decided to take rail, come what might. I went to the station, and spent 7d in a 3rd. class ticket to Preston. No sooner was I nicely seated, than I saw a man I thought I knew, and I questioned him if his name was not Cooper. He said "Yes", and asked if my name was not Margerison. I said "Yes". After more conversation he asked what I was doing. I replied, at present nothing... What was he doing? He said he had just been down to Liverpool, engaging afresh with his old masters, Blackies & Sons. We want a man; can you sell books?... I suppose I can sell anything that other folk can sell... Some men do well, must I write for you to Robinson, the head man, after I get home? I consented that he might do so, and I promised to write on the Monday.

When I had done so, I said to my wife, have you any money? She said, no not a penny, only a ½d... Well we must not post a letter like this unpaid. I will go over to Proctors, who said his wife was not at home, but would go upstairs and search. After moving about from one room to another, he came down stairs with ½d. between his two fingers, and said this is every farthing I can find in the house. I said it was all I want. I put the two half-penny's together, bought a stamp at the bottom of Friargate Post Office, posted my letter, and went to our straw bed.

M.L.M. (Louie) States; "Mr. Proctor who helped with the stamp, was a wholesale Chemist in Preston, and his wife and the wife of the Photographer, Mr. A. Winter, were sisters!" She continues: "Benjamin Cooper mentioned above, later became my grandfather on my mother's side. He and Joshua both worked in Bristol for Blackies. B. Cooper first. My mother was born in Preston, and went to Bristol. My father, W.M.M. was born at Marlborough Hill Bristol (1856). Mother was a year older than father". - We might add that 3 of Joshua's children married into the Cooper family.

John Hodson called that night, and told me he had two beds, and I should have one of them. I thanked him, but said I would not accept his offer, as it only further complicated my difficulties. In the morning about 11 o'clock, a sharp rap came to the door with a parcel 1/9 to pay, be quick. We looked at one another and said, is there anyone here who has noticed us. She said, there is that woman across the street, she moves to me when I am washing the step. I wish you would step across, and ask her to lend us a couple of shillings. She did so and she lent us 2/6. We opened the parcel, it was samples. I took them out that night and earned 3/6.

With this company I canvassed about 12 months, and earned about 40/- per week; when I heard Benjamin was likely to be promoted. He had done so much business since he came back, they thought he was the right man to make into an agent. This is a man who is relied upon for his integrity and ability, to engage and push me forward. He was sent to Bristol agency, which then embraced South Wales. The firm appointed me in his place, and gave me the care of the stock and cash. I put several men to work, thus kept the return increasing, so in about 9 months I had nearly doubled the Preston District returns. By this time they had found they had made a mistake, they had promoted the wrong man, for the Bristol business was stagnant, while the Preston business was improving every month.

The firm proposed that I should take Bristol, and Benjamin should return to his old and familiar business, of delivering books to his old and familiar customers. We gathered our traps together and took our departure, to take hold of the Bristol and South Wales agency. I found very little business upon the ground. I shaped my actions according to the learning of the business, and very soon saw an improvement in things. I got men and went with them, and pushed on the business with a will. When the business was growing, they advanced me from 40/- to 60/- per week, with free house, and light and coals. I was soon on the plan (probably meaning the Local Preachers Plan); and commanded many new friends in business. In this situation I remained 3 to 4 years. The business had grown to 3 fold what it was, when I took hold of it, when my employers intimated their intention, of dividing the ground, and putting a man upon the South Wales ground. To this I objected, and insisted it was not fair; I had worked up the ground, and ought to be paid for doing it. They were sure it would yield more profit, thus I would not accept, gave them notice and finally left them.

After being idle some weeks, I made application to James Virtue & Sons, and they engaged me to take their agency at Nottingham. We soon packed up and moved there, after a few days we found a house in Arberetan St. and set to work on a new set of books. At this time Bunyan's Complete Works were just coming out, and a friend of mine, a supernumerary Methodist Preacher, whose voice had temporarily failed, was resting there, and after some months, got him to try and sell Bunyan, and I helped him. We sold 52 complete copies, which indicated new life in the trade.

Here we had a new baby added to our stock, a girl, Jane (Oct 6th. 1859). We also had the scarlet fever in the family, and lost a little girl about 5 years of age, which was a great trial, and broke our spirit with grief. While these dark days were passing, a new inspector of agencies was appointed, and he proved to be an atheist, who had no love of religion, who brought down a man for me to instruct in the duties of agency work, which I engaged to do.

When he had been with me two days, he said, "I cannot remain here under false colours". I see what sort of man you are, and I must candidly tell you, I am engaged and sent here to take your situation". I immediately sent in my resignation to Virtue & Co.

My friend Richard had taken up the sale of Henry's Horse and Cattle Food, and was doing well. I wrote him to know if there was any additional room. They wrote me to go over to Hull. I did so at once, and they engaged me to go to Liverpool, and plant a depot, and offered me what I considered liberal terms as a dealer. I was not long before I was on the ground, and at work with a resolution to carry all before me. Never came!! and I could make no terms with either Henry's or the Banks, and agreed to give over the business to Henry's, which was nearly £200 due to me, if they would do the best they could with the bank, and I would turn out as traveller for them, on condition that they would send me £3 a week.

Soon after this I met with a rather severe trap accident, on my return from preaching at Winterburn; and another on the way north at Derby. When two sections of the train were being united at a time when I was upon my feet, adjusting my clothes, which cast me on my back, on the back rail which divides the two sections of the 3rd class compartments, and hurt me severely. I went on to Settle from where I was working, and reported myself to the Midland Co. They came to see me, and I made a claim through Mr. Ayre, their Bristol agent, but could not get any settlement for 6 months. Then the agent had an accident returning from Weston, from which he died.

There was rather a singular circumstance connected with this Mr. Ayre, Solicitor. Bristol. He had two homes, one in the neighbourhood of Bristol, and the other at Bath. This lady he got connected with in business, and finding she was wealthy, married her and put her in a nice house at Bath. It was at this time he had his accident near Weston-Super-Mare, and he elected to be conveyed to his second wife's home. His accident took bad ways and he made his Will, and appointed his two wives joint executors, with equal interest in his estate.

Then I consulted a friendly Solicitor, a Mr. King, who wrote the company, and got £200 as a settlement of my accident, but the suffering from it remained with me in a moderated form for years and indeed is the weak place even yet.

My wife about this time came into about £300. It was during the time of the American War, or we should have gone direct out to the States or Canada, which had been the waking dream of my life. We went to Downend, to a nice cottage, and rented a warehouse to do a little business in Bristol. It was at this time a necessity arose for doing something until the American War closed, and we decided to merchant potatoes, and make a few tons of cattle food. Into these two articles we entered potato roll and cattle food. Was by a thief who intercepted in the delivery, and in less than 3 months I had neither stock nor money, save about £50 left of the £500. In these circumstances, I had an offer pressed upon me to go to Liverpool, and appoint agents for a London Insurance Office for a few months; they would give me £8 a month. This I consented to do, and before

I left home, I lifted my hand and in great earnestness struck my right thigh and said, "I will go to Liverpool and will fetch back every penny I have lost."

At the end of two months my wife was down from Bristol it was Sunday morning, we got two letters. The first said "We cannot employ you any longer, unless you will collect money from your customers to pay your salary". I opened the second and it said, "See Mr. Cope on Tuesday morning, he has a place for you". I went and was engaged. On Tuesday morning I saw Mr. Cope, I found him the director of a company called, The Richmond Lavender Co. who had obtained permission from Government to boil Tobacco Liqueur to dress flocks, cattle, sheep and gardens for the purpose of dressing gardens.

I engaged to sell this article on salary and commission, I prepared myself with information on the subject, and in about a fortnight was at work, and travelled over all the counties where sheep are kept. This was continued from 2 to 3 years; when they gave me notice to leave, they said I did so much business, I should take all their money to pay me.

I then put an advertisement in the Liverpool paper, to importers and large dealers in tobacco. It was answered by G.W. Gamble & Co. an American House. He told me they were growers, packers and importers of tobacco, and now consigned it to brokers, who sold it sometimes in two or three years, and then deducted warehouse rent, interest, delivery and agent dues, and remitted the remnant. He wanted a man to sell to consumers. He expressed great doubts whether it could be done. He asked my conditions, I told him to make me an offer. he looked at me and said, "I will give you £100 for three months, as an experiment. I think it will be a dead loss, but we are sure to learn something out of it. They instructed me in terms, and showed me how to handle tobacco, and in a week I went out in my new trade with 4 cwts of samples. My first week gave a fair return, and in about 8 weeks I said, "Now you have seen a sample of my work, and the way I do it." Well said he. "We will work it to the year's end". He then said he would have another year, if I was willing. I said very well.

Then a Scotsman offered to do it on commission; it was first offered me on commission, which I declined, and I left them. I had then saved £2,000 in Liverpool, in less than 5 years, thus redeeming my promise to fetch back every penny of the lost money.

At this time I had my family at Cripplegate Farm, where I was born and brought up. My second son was the farmer. "What next?" said I. We have the money again, and the engagement. All agreed, so my son Joshua, and myself at once prepared to go to investigate this new scheme of emigration.

It was May and the season settled; we took 3rd. class passages on a Cunard boat, and she sailed on the Saturday. But we were wise enough to prepare for contingencies. We took tea, new butter, cooked beef with a number of small matters to meet the contingencies of life; and away we went to the land of promise, of which we had been dreaming for nearly 20 years. We had taken this farm to teach the lads not to be afraid of dirt, and they had made considerable progress, in this important part of an emigrant's education.

Our passage was very pleasant. We formed a very nice company

with some ladies, who were going out to join their friends; and by reading, conversation, and relieving the sea-sick, we contributed very much to the comfort of other passengers, so much so, they designated me doctor, and I was quite looked to, and was a favourite on the voyage. In seven days we landed in New York, and met an old friend, whom I found very hard up for money. We put up with him, and stood same for about 3 weeks, went through the market, and found most very poor and unfed.

After thus wandering about, and conversing with several Land Sellers, for everyone's a "Land Dealer" if he finds the newcomer has got any money. We went down the country into Virginia, and saw several farms about Oregon Court House. But found the roads in such an awful condition, they were impassable without a horse, and he would have great difficulty, We met at this place, Bass Ale at 1/- a small bottle, every teetotaler will suppose I speculated in a bottle or so, I will not enter into the matter. We saw here a nice piece of land, over 200 acres & 27 dollars an acre, premises wood built. They treated us in the best way they could, but the flies were an awful matter, three boys with fans keeping them from eating us up. Hundreds of large black flies, hungry and thirsty, determined to have our breakfast. We went over the land, and questioned the owner upon the distance from the market, the amount of taxes, the value of labour, the hours the men worked, the commission he paid the agent for selling his corn, and also for buying and forwarding his household requirements, which added together, amounted to a considerable amount. We then contrasted these figures with what we had to pay at home, and found to our astonishment, it was cheaper to farm at home, and resolved to return home as soon as we could. Wiser and more satisfied men.

We went next day to the Bank, and drew as much money as would carry us home, booked our passage home, remitted our money hard cash, and soon bid farewell to the land of the brave and the free. In less than 8 days, we saw the fringe of our native soil, left the boat with our luggage about 8 o'clock to 10 o'clock, found how difficult to be in Liverpool after 11 o'clock. It was impossible to get refreshments without going to an hotel and engaging beds for the night. We wanted to get home as soon as possible, therefore, went to the station. We paid the porter, and he put us into a waiting room until 1-30 a.m. when we took train to Preston, and arrived after 3 o'clock, and started on our way to Hoghton. It was late in June, the morning was calm, bright and warm. We arrived soon after 5 o'clock and knocked the family up. Found them all well, greatly disappointed we had come back, when they were fully expecting an order to sell out, and come to America at once. We were all glad to see each others faces in peace.

The question soon cropped up. What next?... In a few days I saw an advertisement in a Liverpool paper, for a man with a small capital, to join another who had started a profitable business, but had not enough money to carry out his idea. I made my way to Liverpool, found the place, and that the business was white soap and brown toilets (soap). He showed me his calculations; the profits were good; the sale quick, and in my way we agreed to buy some material, and I would pay for it; bring my sons from Hoghton, and if it worked out, would rent a warehouse, and go into business.

In a day or two I went down to Liverpool, and we bought some material wanted in the manufacture, and took my sons, melted the material and began the process. My partner made about 6 batches of soap, and half of this turned out hollow, and entirely unfit for sale, but the maker said the fault was ours, in not keeping the paddling continually in motion. But it really arose from the fact, that he did not understand the process. However, I was convinced there was something in the process, and took a small warehouse in Preston, and bought additional stock, and the man came to Preston, and made soap at the new works, where the same imperfections were manifest, and he freed himself from blame, and cast the blame upon the paddling.

At this time I drew up the verbal conditions upon which we had agreed to work. His Still $\frac{1}{3}$, Labour $\frac{1}{3}$, and Capital $\frac{1}{3}$. I submitted the written conditions on which we had agreed. He looked them over and said. "I will not sign them". "Are they not those on which we agreed"? "Yes, but I will not sign them, unless I have 10% additional upon every ton of soap made here or elsewhere, by you or anyone else over whom you may have command". Well said I. "That matter will require consideration". Very well said he. "I will put on my coat, and go to Liverpool, and when you are ready I will come over".

I went to the top of the stairs, and called the lads and said. "Rome is gone"; "come here... Now, here we are with everything but knowledge, what do we know about soapmaking? Just look round the place, and see if you can find ought that will lead us to anything practical". There was nothing but about 1 quart of liquor left in an old iron pan. We sent and got an instrument which tested the strength, we found it much too strong. We tried again, now said I. "The heat and strength is somewhere between those two strengths, but where? ...Where"? He had his instrument marked with letters, and carried it in his pocket, and I had no idea he would cut up so short. We turned to chemistry, but we were not much helped. Being ignorant we read books, but no light came on the subject of white soap.

In these circumstances, we sought and got a man to make common soap. We turned to common soap for manufacture, and James sold in Yorkshire for one or two years. Also a little fine pale soap, but the manufacture of these articles was not in quantity, or profit, to meet our requirements.

We then got an old man, who had gained some experience at some time in cold soap; and by this time, we had gained a little by experience, and had got one traveller who sold several tons a week. He and the old man put their heads together, and intimated to the customers, that they were going to make soap, and if they wanted more of the soap, they must order it from them. When they sent in their first delivery, it was found to be rubbish, and they were obliged to come back to us for soap. Thus we got back our customers, and a new traveller, who could do more business, than the one who had gone to begin business.

Our own business was increasing every week, & our new opponents were doing nothing worth mentioning, and they were contriving all methods conceivable, to prejudice our friends against our manufactures. At this time, on the 29th September 1879. I called at the warehouse, and found it had been set on fire, and all burnt down but for about 7 casts of tallow. Fortunately, we had insured for £2,250. We were responsible for the building and stock, and after about two months, we got the building repaired, and bought all the damaged stock for about £2.15.0. The persons who set fire to the place, must have been accustomed to the works, for they

found tools which could not have been found by anyone, who was not accustomed with the arrangements of the warehouse, and must have worked in the place, because these tools were only known to a few men. We could guess at either once or twice, who it was, but we did not see him fire it, but we could see the man the day before, in his working clothes in the town, 30 miles from home, and he went away the same night (Sunday night) and left the fire burning. The troublemaker is dead, and we are living.

The object of the fire was no doubt to shut us out of the market, while someone else got in, but if this was the object, they were not successful, as we were at work in 8 days, and supplied every customer as he wanted. Indeed this even gave us business, inasmuch as the advertisement of the fire, created an extensive curiosity to see the new soap.

About this time we put on a new traveller. I travelled myself to a number of the larger towns, and introduced into new and important fields, so that, which was intended for our ruin, was turned to our advantage. About this time we were extending in all sides, and I planted a man at Birmingham, who proved a thief. I got another man, who helped me find out the defects, and he was convicted for 18 months. This new man united himself with another, and these two put me in for nearly £400. I gave them into custody, and they were transplanted (transported), each for 5 years.

We got wisdom, and next hired a man with a character and security which has worked well ever since. By this time we were getting well hold of trade, when we found our own old man, was going every Sunday to teach a firm at Manchester, all he knew about white soaps. When this came out we sent them a writ, stood a trial, lost the cause, paid £500, came out wiser, and went home resolved to have no more law.

Our borders extended on all sides by dealing uprightly, and giving close attention to our business. By this time the lads were getting older, and of more use in business, and we began to think what to do with the branches, and where to plant them, when they were likely to multiply again. We viewed the country over to find new ground, but only saw little. The lads considered this country was too small, and was used up for making money out of it. One morning, I was told that James and William were going to America as soon as they could get ready, with their wives and children; and in due time they were ready. (1883) James went almost without furniture, and William with nearly the whole of his. They shipped

(At the time of the fire, grandfather lived in the country at Swillbrook House, Lea, by the canal. He stored paraffin for his lamps at the Soap-works, and this was used to start small fires, all the office books were used. Fortunately Uncle James took the order books home with him at weekends. The reason he and father went to America was, grandfather would not pay them a wage, and they were both married and each had three children. Also grandfather was very stubborn, and believed any soapmaker before his own sons. Father sold the empty tallow casks for his wages, his 5 brothers had other perks for wages.)

L.M.

for Philadelphia where they rented house, and engaged a warehouse, and finally began to turn out White Windsor soap. We were all very much disappointed with the very limited demand for it. The money was so difficult, it was difficult to sell, and also to get paid for what you sold. The distances are so very remote, that to fetch the money by going several times, cost more in travelling, than the account was worth. So folks were not very anxious to pay, knowing well that the creditor could finally get weary of coming, if the debtor would not pay.

It seems a man could go out from England, who was in this country very successful, who when he got there extended his commercial limits and sold anywhere, so the expense of carriage, and the cost of going for the money not being paid, made it utterly unprofitable to continue to transact business.

In the meantime we had to continue sending money by the £100 and £1,000, but none came back. At the same time, our business in this country was steadily increasing, so we cabled for them to come back, as soon as they could. They were no doubt greatly disappointed, but we wanted their labours at home, and we knew well, we could not open our trade secrets to others, without them being run away with, and so adopted the safer place, of keeping them within our own family. We therefore in a few weeks had them all together again. We need not say, it was a very heavy loss, some thousands. But it was the best thing we ever did, and now are quite satisfied, we are tenants of old England.

It was about this time, we conceived the idea of producing toilet soap of a high quality; and pushed it into the market as a leading product, and at a price within the reach of everyone, and it was fairly taken up by the public. We soon saw point of improvement, to the present time, when it has become an important item in our regular business. We soon saw the importance, of making machinery suited to the manufacture and manipulation of our business. For this, Arthur and William applied themselves to fitting up machinery to lessen labour, and so cheapen production, and perfect a considerable saving in the final finish.

About this time we were doing a considerable business, and I wrote to Mr. Campbell, to look up a few names of the best men in the London Tallow Trade, and I would come up, and try if I could not get into the London market. I got two names, and first took the best. The house was Rose & Co. Threadneedle St. I went boldly in and asked for an interview with Mr. Rose himself. Found him an old gentleman of a merchantile character. I told him who I was, and where I came from, that we had some money, but wanted a connection

(A comment by M.L.M. "Father said they had early struggles in America, but they were supplying to Railways and were just turning the corner, when grandfather had trouble with his soapmaker, and could not do without father and Uncle James. Fortunately, father learned how to make toilet soap, by helping Joseph Fels, of Fels Naptha Soap to put right some soap, which was wrong at his works, and he would not take pay, but asked to be shown the toilet soap process. They were in America 2½ years".)

in town, submitted to him a letter from Mr. Campbell, and he just cast his eye over me and said. "With your straightforward statement and your honest face, you shall have anything you want, and on the best conditions the market will afford. Thus we got with the best house in London, without any inconvenience or delay. This was a most important step, which opened for us a direct opening to buy as cheaply as any house in England, and we spent ten's of thousands with them on the best terms. We now multiplied our men, and extended our boilers on all hands, by exhibiting, advertising and travelling.

About this time, I fell into the temptation to buy property, the first I bought was one to live in, in Ribblesdale Place, Avenham, Preston. For which I gave £1,900, nearly £1,000 over its value, by reason of the heavy ground rent, which was not taken into consideration. The next property that was offered to me by the Bank, was Whinfield, Ashton, Preston for £4,000. But it lay over some time, and I never expected to buy it, although I had rented it at £150 a year, from the tenant who was in it for 2 years at £150 a year. While we were in the house, Mr. Smith came to look at it, and went to the bank, and offered an addition over the rent they had offered it to me, and he was coming at 11 o'clock, and have their final answer. He pressed me to close, but I would not spring, but finally offered £4,125. at which it was closed; and I became the owner as well as the tenant of Whinfield.

There was another vestage of hawkin property at Woodplumton. This was a beautiful grass farm of 40 acres, for which the Bank asked me £4,000. I offered £3,500 which they finally took. I farmed it by a bailiff for nearly 4 years, and I finally sold it for £4,200. After this, I saw a farm advertised near town, and on making enquiry found that it was the farm at Penwortham. First I rented it at £200 per acre, but soon after offered to buy it, and went over to Bury to meet the owner. I knew he wanted money, so when I saw him, he said. "Did you not offer me a price"? "Yes £5,000". He said he could not accept that. "What do you want"? £7,000. "That is out of the question; what will you take"? I said. "Say £3,500". "Cannot accept", he said, "will take £6,000". I said, "I will have it". In this way I got that excellent farm of 200 acres, through which the two Railways are passing, and will make a considerable amount of money. After this I bought James' house for £1,300, and this ended my purchase of farm and land.

About this time 1890, I assigned my business to my sons, and my farms to my daughters, on the condition that they allowed me £1,500 a year, free of all charge, so long as I lived, and remit it weekly £28-17-0. After this arrangement, my wife died. (1893) One of the best that ever lived, and we bought a grave in Penwortham Churchyard, and there buried her in sure and certain hope of a happy Resurrection.

In due time after this event, we came over to Kidderminster, and went to the Black Horse, and there I saw a lady we considered had all the qualifications, to make me a suitable companion for the rest of my days. I proposed to her, and after going down to Preston, and fully inspecting my position, we married at St. John's Church, Kidderminster by license, and went to reside at Blakes Hall for two years.

We found our relation to the owner any thing but pleasant, and finally it cost us about £100 to clear out. My wife was Church of England, but she went with me to the Wesleyan Chapel at Kidd-erminster, for the two years we resided at Blakes Hall. We then bought a nice cottage at Ivydene for £1,650, and before we got into it the chimneys were blown down, and it cost about £300 to repair the damage. We bought another section of land, and put stables upon, which cost us about £700 more. We have furnished it most beautifully, which has cost us perhaps a thousand more.

So here we are in our own nest, paid for, and as happy as any two can be, this side of Jordon. Long may it continue. Nearly two years ago, I was obliged to give up preaching, by reason of an attack of dizziness in my head. But here I am sound and right, 82 years of age. Can read and write without glasses. I am of the opinion, I can preach as well or perhaps better, than I have done for several years, but don't like to run the risk. We go to the small chapel at Stourport, and find it very comfortable.

January 19th. 1897.

Joshua Margerison.

Joshua Margerison died on the 18th. August 1903, at "Ivydene" Bewdley Hill, Worcestershire. He was buried with his 2nd. wife Margaret at St. Mary's. Penwortham Nr. Preston.

The date at the start of this autobiography was the 11th. December 1896, and the date at the end is the 19th. January 1897, so it would seem that it was written during this 4½ week period.

(J.M.M.)

Blakes hall was haunted; Will, went to stay with father and mother, and it was winter time, but he heard a reaping machine in the night, and someone walked down the corridor in a silk dress.

M.L.M.