

FRIENDS' MEMORIAL AT ELDROTH.

A link with the past, over 250 years ago, was reformed at Eldroth, a hamlet between Settle and Clapham, on Easter Monday. Eldroth Hall has always been known as a rendezvous of Society of Friends during the troublous times when they were persecuted. It has not only been the home of some of the stalwarts of the cause, but part of the farmyard has been used as a Quaker burialground. It was the members of the Society of Friends who refused to pay their tithes and it was by reference to the tithe map that the burial ground was established.

Monday's gathering was consequent on the erection of a memorial stone set in the barn adjoining the burial ground. It took the form of a plain sandstone, with the simple phrase, "Friends Burial Ground 1662," inscribed thereon. Two of the plain unlettered stones covering the last resting places of those former worshippers was denuded of its covering of soil and exposed to the view of 40 or 50 persons gathered there. Mr H.R. Hodgson of Bradford, opened the brief service, and two hymns were sung. Mr J.T. Hadwin, of Sandiway, Northwich, gave an excellent history of former owners of Eldroth Hall. It was about 1600 that the family of Moore came into possession of the homestead. He read an excerpt from the will of Giles Moore, who left the rent of two fields towards the provision of a school at Eldroth. It is interesting to note one of the fields enumerated in the will was named "Old Eldroth," and this name survives today. Then they were in the parish of Clapham, but now they are situated in Ingleton. The rental still goes towards the provision of the school. Giles had a grandson John, who left the established religion and became a member of the Society of Friends.

About the year 1660 he was visited by George Fox, who stayed at the Hall for a short time. John was interested in the Quaker religion because of his marriage to a Miss Camm, of Camm's Ghyll, near Preston Patrick. In fact his father-in-law, Thomas Camm, a well known Quaker preacher, died at Eldroth Hall and was one of the sixteen interred in the burial ground. John was a well educated man, as far as education went in those days. He was a farmer's son, and yet was a great botanist and authority on herbs. Continuing his history, Mr Hadwin explained that he was not a member of the Society of Friends, but was interested in the day's gathering on account of his connection with the family of Moore. In 1714 Sarah Moore married an Isaac Hadwin, and through them he claimed direct descent. He had with him the original marriage contract recognised and drawn up by the Society of Friends.

In those days Eldroth was the recognised way of spelling; Giggleswick was only allowed one "g"; Clepham and Settell were the two neighbouring parishes. There were apparently numerous Armisteads at the ceremony and close by to-day there was Armistead Hall, which might have some connection.

John Moore, who met George Fox, had a son and a grandson who were both named John. The grandson was clerk to the Settle Meeting of Friends in 1730, after which all traces of Moore's connection either with the district or Eldroth Hall disappeared. Perhaps there were people in the district who could trace back their connections to the Moores of the 18th century and he would welcome their assistance. There was at one time a book in the district with the names of the deceased buried there, but this had been lost.

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Eldroth Hall next came into the possession of the Coulthurst family, who owned it for 100 years. They disposed of it to the present owner, Mr Edward Hird, who had rendered them every assistance in their researches and in the erection of the memorial stone.