

the thrift which guided their early days, they made a profitable business journey of the honey-moon, going by sea to Plymouth from London, and thence home slowly by coach, taking orders and gathering in payments on the way. - My Mother's sister Jane, 10 years her junior accompanied them as brides-maid after the fashion of the times (*ride Miss Squeers in Nicholas Nickleby*). They had a rough sea voyage and all suffered much from sea-sickness and discomfort. On returning home, my Uncle Solomon Maw came to live with them at 55 Alderman-bury'. And on June 2nd, 1829, at St Michaels, Wood Street, Solomon married his sister-in-law Jane.

This conjunction of the Johnson and Maw families is important in our story because there was a remarkably large tribe of descendants, among whom some members served the Johnson companies down to the present day. Like John Wesley and his brothers, the early Maws came from the Isle of Axholme, that part of Lincolnshire which is west of the Trent. Some found their way to London and we find in the directories for 1820 the name of George Maw, pewterer, of 49 Whitecross Street, Cripplegate. This man had two sons, the two bridegrooms mentioned in our last paragraph, and they being energetic young men, had struck out in the newest branch of the family business, the making of surgical instruments. This was a success from the beginning and grew up at 11 Aldersgate Street into a very important business, some more details of which, and of the Maw families, will be given in Chapter VII.

The first contact between the Maw brothers and John Johnson seems to have arisen from some question of metallurgy concerning the surgical instruments, which led to a visit by John Hornby Maw to Maiden Lane. The date of this would be about 1820 and his daughter Mrs Wood relates the story a follows:

'My grandfather Johnson, with characteristic kindness and hospitality invited my father to drive down with him in his pony chaise the next day and sleep at Stoke Newington at his country house in Church Street and get a breath of country air. My grandmother Johnson, when the impending visitor was announced to her, exclaimed "John! You are always bringing some Jack of Noakes or Tom of Styles home with you".

He replied, gently, as was his wont: "Ah, Mary, this poor young man is too ill to trouble you for long!" The pale and overworked young man however stayed and in courting Mary Ann for six years laid the foundations of the long and close relations of the two families.'

The Johnson household at Stoke Newington was naturally much reduced by the actual departure of one daughter and the increasing imminence of that of the other, following upon the deaths of Charles and Martha and the marriage of Percival. Obviously they had to decide to go into smaller quarters, and this proposal came to a head, probably about 1828, when they moved to 'a nice little house in a row in Kennington'. The 'row' has been traced to Canterbury Row, Kennington, a terrace of fairly large houses which in 1865 was incorporated in Kennington Park Road. The precise date of the removal is uncertain because Johnson still had a certain amount of interest in the 'expiring lease' of the house at Stoke Newington when making his last will in May 1831.

It was also in 1829 that John Johnson definitely associated with him in the business his two youngest sons, George Richard, then aged 22, and Arthur Harry, who was 20, and, in the traditions of the Johnson companies, it was in this year that the title of Johnson & Sons began to be used. That may well be so, but the change did not penetrate into the directories at once, a state of affairs that will be discussed in Chapter IX.

It is most interesting and fortunate that we can get from two sources some ideas about the Maiden Lane premises and work as they were in the 1820s. First of all, Mrs Wood gives us her memory:

'The assaying business was, in an antique, and maybe Elizabethan house in Maiden Lane - where the glow of its rows of white hot cupel furnaces could be seen from its small dingy office, where my Grandfather Johnson and his sons sat on high stools, carefully weighing out the tiny assays of gold and silver on which so much value depended. One could see the fires from the narrow lane, through the small-paned latticed and mullioned windows.'

And later there is a story of the ancient maid Betty who had served John Johnson I, who 'used to pass her holidays standing