

law, had been connected with the Carr's Lane Independent Chapel, from which the Steelhouse Lane body seceded in 1803. He had afterwards gone to Liverpool, where he connected himself with Dr. Raffles' church, and I think it is quite probable that, as he was a very enterprising man, a good speaker, and probably a local preacher like Mr. Wilkes in the chapels of the villages around Birmingham, he had taken a trip to Canada in the missionary spirit, like Mr. Joseph Silcox did in 1817, but had become disheartened like him by the bitter experience of a Canadian winter in the forest and on the lake shore, and had returned to England. Like Mr. Silcox did in Frome, Canada, he founded a very remarkable family in Dudley which has been very active in church, municipal, educational and social work there for 100 years. Some members of the family have recently occupied the Mayor's chair and have filled other prominent positions from which their ancestor was excluded by law a century ago. (One is just now touring the States and Canada as the head of a large representative body of British Dry Goods Merchants.) If I am correct Mr. Cook was missionary, preacher, energetic business man, and reforming politician; resembling Mr. John Aston Wilkes, his fellow townsman and fellow church member of the same age, in all three characteristics. Mr. Cook's strong advocacy of the rights of the common people about 1832 naturally resulted in ill-treatment by the Anti-Reform mob in that well-known election. It shows some connection between the two families that Mr. Cook's granddaughter and Mr. John Aston Wilkes both intermarried with the family of Rann of Birmingham and Dudley. I mention this connection as I think it helps to prove that Mr. Cook and Mr. Wilkes were moving in the same circles, and must have known each other well, and that Mr. Cook's knowledge of Little York had an ultimate influence in Mr. Wilkes's settlement in that village after a year in the United States in 1819. Dudley and Birmingham are within sight of each other, and Mr. Wilkes was a commercial man and prominent Independent and would naturally visit any Birmingham friend who had been out to Canada, as he was thinking of emigrating thither himself or of going to America.\*

Just here perhaps it would be as well to study the history of the Church which trained and sent out Mr. and Mrs. Wilkes, their family, the Phillipses and the Days on their long pilgrimage.

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\*I have a picture of Mr. Samuel Cook taken in 1858 and another one of 1860, in the courtyard of Dudley Castle as one of the Committee of Dudley Castle Fête, held every year. From 1850 to 1901 they collected at these Fêtes £20,478-0-3, which was distributed among the local Geological Society, the Blind Men's Fund, the Mechanics' Institute, the School of Art, the Free Library, the Guest Hospital, and the Technical School. At one of these Fêtes, attended by 100,000 people from the most densely populated ironworking region in the world, an immense panorama of Canada and North America was shown. Probably Mr. Cook may have thus helped to make Canada well known in the Black Country over sixty years ago in memory of his visit to Muddy York in 1818.