

situation of the town on the borders of the three counties, Nottingham, York, and Lincoln, and the comparative facility it afforded for flight to foreign countries in the event of persecution.

It is more than likely that William Hickman and his godly mother worshipped with Brewster and Bradford within the walls where conventicles had been held in Queen Mary's days, and we can picture the small band of zealous reformers wending their way to service in the Old Hall from Austerfield and Scrooby, through vast fields of wheat and sweet country lanes—the lovely lanes so dear to the memory of Priscilla, the Puritan maiden of New England, immortalized by Longfellow—

“I have been thinking all day,” said gently  
the Puitan maiden,  
“Dreaming all night, and thinking all day  
of the hedgerows of England,—  
They are in blossom now, and the country  
is all like a garden ;  
Thinking of lanes and fields, and the song  
of the lark and the linnet,  
Seeing the village street and familiar faces  
of neighbours  
Going about as of old, and stopping to  
gossip together,  
And, at the end of the street, the village  
church, with the ivy  
Climbing the old grey tower, and the quiet  
graves in the churchyard,—  
Kind are the people I live with, and dear to  
me my religion ;  
Still my heart is so sad, that I wish myself  
back in old England.”

These secret gatherings were dangerous to all taking part in them, and more especially to the Lord of the Manor and his brave mother, who, in sheltering the little company, kept covenant with their Lord to serve Him in all ways whatsoever it should cost them.

The first pastor of this infant church was John Smith, who, later, when driven from Gainsborough, practised as a physician in Amsterdam.

During three or four years,

through winter cold and summer heat, this devoted band walked every Sabbath day to the Old Hall for their weekly service and prayer and praise, until, their numbers becoming so considerable, they decided to found another church, and the brethren nearest to Scrooby met there on the Lord's Day in the old Manor House, which was then the home of William Brewster.

The good and venerable Richard Clifton was chosen pastor of the Scrooby Church, and associated with him was the enlightened teacher, John Robinson, the founder of Independency and recognized pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers, whom Gainsborough claims as a native. We thus see that the district about the borders of Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, and Lincolnshire is the cradle of the freedom of conscience and worship, with Gainsborough as the nursery where the characters of the men, destined by their example and teaching to furnish the principles on which the institutions of the United States are founded, were moulded and developed through tribulation and much suffering.

It is curious to note that from this same Manor House at Scrooby, in which Wolsey spent three months on his journey to York, after being dismissed from royal favour, there should go forth a little band of earnest men who carried across to the New World beyond the Atlantic the principles of freedom and self-government he was doing his utmost to crush with his dying hand.

So intolerant was the spirit of the time that the Pilgrims at last resolved to emigrate to Holland. This was by no means easy, however, for it was as unlawful for them to flee from their native land as to remain in it without conforming. Again and again they attempted to reach the coast, only to be discovered