

# Origins

This chapter looks briefly at the lives of the grandparents and parents of George Binns and Margaret Watson, in the period before the latter were born.

## Grandparents

### Joseph Binns

Joseph Binns was born on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 1711 at Farnhill, Craggtop, near Kildwick, Yorkshire.<sup>1</sup>

A slater, of Cononley Woodside, Kildwick, he married Isabel Burton on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 1737/8 at Leeyeat, Dent, Yorkshire.<sup>2</sup>

Although “his life was attended by many trials and temptations,” he had always been religiously inclined, and began to minister around 1760. Between 1757 and 1770, with his wife, he visited Westmorland, Lancashire, several parts of Yorkshire, and also Ireland.<sup>3</sup>

A farmer, of Cononley Woodside, he died very suddenly in the shearing field on the 27<sup>th</sup> August 1776, and was buried at Skipton, Yorkshire, on the 30<sup>th</sup>.<sup>4</sup>

### Isabel (Burton) Binns

Isabel Burton was born at Scalegillfoot, Dent, Yorkshire, on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 1710.<sup>5</sup>

At the time of her marriage, in 1737/8, she was a resident of Warescale, in Dent. Their children were John (1739), David (1740/1), Daniel (1744), and Margaret (1747), all born at Cononley Woodside.<sup>6</sup>

A minister of the Society of Friends for several years, she was “a plainly spoken, honest woman of tender spirit.”<sup>7</sup>

She died at Cononley Woodside on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 1773, and was buried at Skipton on the 28<sup>th</sup>.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The National Archives: RG 6/1091, /1279.

<sup>2</sup> TNA: RG 6/1235, /1279, /1616A.

<sup>3</sup> ‘An account of the Family of the Binns's from the Year 1663’ [Binns notebook], MS vol. S 494, Friends House Library; *Dictionary of Quaker Biography*, Friends House library typescript.

<sup>4</sup> ‘Binns notebook’; RG 6/785.

<sup>5</sup> RG 6/1547.

<sup>6</sup> RG 6/1616AW; Pearson Thistlethwaite (1979) *Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting, (1665–1966)*.

<sup>7</sup> ‘Binns notebook’.

<sup>8</sup> RG 6/1091, /1279.

## **John Robinson**

John Robinson was born on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 1704/5, in Marsden, Lancashire.<sup>1</sup>

A yeoman or clothier, of Sweet Clough in Great Marsden, he married Margaret Wilson on the 28<sup>th</sup> November 1728, at Marsden meeting.<sup>2</sup>

By 1769 he was resident in Crawshawbooth, Lancashire, where he died on the 16<sup>th</sup> August 1787, and was buried there on the 19<sup>th</sup>.<sup>3</sup>

## **Margaret (Wilson) Robinson**

Margaret Wilson was born in about 1705. At her marriage in 1728 she was a resident of Forest of Trawden, Trawden, Lancashire. The Robinsons' children were Richard (1731), Ellen (1735/6), Jane (1736), Margaret (1739), John (1741/2), Mary (1744), and Ann (1747), all registered by Marsden MM.<sup>4</sup>

By 1769 she was resident in Crawshawbooth, where she died on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1786, and her body was buried at Crawshawbooth on the 26<sup>th</sup>.<sup>5</sup>

## **Hugh Watson**

Hugh Watson was born in Allendale, Northumberland, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1702.<sup>6</sup>

Some time after the 4<sup>th</sup> March 1746 he married Hannah (Coates) Dixon. From 1747 to 1753 he lived at Raby, Durham, but he settled at Staindrop, Durham, as a shopkeeper.<sup>7</sup>

He died on the 15<sup>th</sup> April 1767. Administration of the estate of Hugh Watson of Staindrop was granted to his widow Hannah, the sole executrix.<sup>8</sup>

## **Hannah (Coates) Watson**

Hannah Coates was born at Cars Lee, Durham, on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 1709. Her first husband was John Dixon, with whom she had two children: Michael (1736), and Margaret (1738/9); the latter was born

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<sup>1</sup> RG 6/1616A; RG 6/807 & /969 suggest a birth year around 1699.

<sup>2</sup> RG 6/970 f0; RG 6 /1616A.

<sup>3</sup> RG 6/807; RG 6/969; RG 6/1616A.

<sup>4</sup> RG 6/807; RG 6/969; RG 6/1616A.

<sup>5</sup> RG 6/1616A; entry in digests of Society of Friends

<sup>6</sup> RG 6/1271, /1549.

<sup>7</sup> *DQB*; Ms Pedigree in Watson box, Society of Genealogists' library document collection; the latter refers to him as 'Sir' Hugh Watson; digest of Durham Quaker births: index; J.J. Green (1906) History of the Coates Family, (Friends' House library, TS).

<sup>8</sup> RG 6/1012; RG 6/1549.

at Raby.<sup>1</sup>

With her second husband, Hugh Watson, she had four children: Michael, Joshua (1747), Michael or Michell (1749), and Joseph (1753). She was said to be of Langley-dale.<sup>2</sup>

A widow of Staindrop, she made her will on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1784. She died on the 25<sup>th</sup> May 1785, and was buried at Staindrop.<sup>3</sup>

### **Joseph Grainger**

Joseph Grainger was born at Raby, Durham, on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 1718/9.<sup>4</sup>

He married Elizabeth Coates after the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1744. He was described as a merchant, of Raby, Durham, where he died on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1763.<sup>5</sup>

### **Elizabeth (Coates) Grainger**

Elizabeth Coates was born at Lynesack, Durham, on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 1719.<sup>6</sup>

Her children with Joseph Grainger were Caleb (1746) and Rachel (1748/9).<sup>7</sup>

She died at Raby on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 1758.<sup>8</sup>

## **Parents**

### **David Binns**

David Binns was born at Cononley Woodside, Kildwick, Yorkshire, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1740/1.<sup>9</sup>

He moved to Crawshawbooth, Lancashire, in 1765, and married Ann Robinson there on the 26<sup>th</sup> May 1769.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Green; RG 6/1549; RG 6/653 and RG 6/1150 suggest birth year of about 1707; Ms Pedigree in Watson box, Society of Genealogists' library document collection; *DQB*; I'm presuming 'Cars Lee' is what is now High Kay Lees, about 2 km north of Lynesack.

<sup>2</sup> Ms Pedigree in Watson box; Green; *DQB*.

<sup>3</sup> Durham Probate Records, DPRI/1/1785/W6; RG 6/653, /1150.

<sup>4</sup> RG 6/1549.

<sup>5</sup> Green; RG 6/1012; RG 6/1549; Durham Probate bonds, DPRI/3/1747/A; Durham wills.

<sup>6</sup> RG 6/1549; Green.

<sup>7</sup> RG 6/1549; Green.

<sup>8</sup> Green.

<sup>9</sup> RG 6/1091, /1279, /1616A.

<sup>10</sup> RG 6/806, /810, /1616A; *DQB*.

Throughout his life he was described as a clogger or clogmaker, except once in 1806 when he was described as a leathercutter (as he was also posthumously, in 1831).<sup>1</sup>

### **Ann (Robinson)**

Ann Robinson was born at Sweet Clough, Lancashire, on the 25<sup>th</sup> November 1747.<sup>2</sup>

David and Ann had six children, all born at Crawshawbooth, before George's birth: Joseph (1769), John (1771), Margaret (1773–1777), Isabel (1775–1776), Richard (1777), and Margaret (1779).<sup>3</sup>

### **Joshua Watson**

Joshua Watson was born on the 28<sup>th</sup> April 1747, at Staindrop, Durham.<sup>4</sup>

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1762 he was apprenticed to John Ecroyd or Acroyd, apothecary, of Kendal, Westmorland, for a term of seven years and a premium of £45.<sup>5</sup>

Of Staindrop, he married Rachel Grainger at Raby, Durham, on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 1770.<sup>6</sup>

By 1777 he was practising as a surgeon, and he continued in this profession at Staindrop for much of the rest of his life, despite having gone bankrupt in 1788.<sup>7</sup>

### **Rachel (Grainger) Watson**

Rachel Grainger was born on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 1748/9, in the catchment area of Darlington meeting.<sup>8</sup>

Joshua and Rachel had eight children before Margaret's birth: Joseph, Hannah (1777, Staindrop), Grainger, William, Elizabeth, Sarah (1780, Staindrop), Henry (1782, Staindrop), and Hannah (1784, Staindrop).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> RG 6/1616A; RG 6/1168B; RG 6/806; RG 6/785; RG 6/203; RG 6/527; RG 6/710; RG 6/1156; RG 6/1005; RG 6/710; DQB.

<sup>2</sup> RG 6/970.

<sup>3</sup> RG 6/806, /810, /1616A.

<sup>4</sup> RG 6/1151.

<sup>5</sup> Email to the author from Dee Cook, archivist to the Society of Apothecaries, 4 July 2002, citing P.J. & R.V. Walls (1988) *Eighteenth Century Medics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn.

<sup>6</sup> Entry in digests of Society of Friends

<sup>7</sup> RG 6/527; RG 6/626; RG 6/1012; RG 6/1151; RG 6/1157; Ms Pedigree in Watson box; *Newcastle Journal*, 1832-09-01.

<sup>8</sup> RG 6/778; RG 6/1549.

<sup>9</sup> RG 6/527; RG 6/626; RG 6/1012; RG 6/1157; manuscript pedigree in Watson box.

# Early life

## George Binns

George Binns was born at Crawshawbooth, Whalley, Forest of Rossendale, Lancashire, on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1781, his parents' seventh child and fourth son. The birth was witnessed by Alice Ormeroyd, midwife, and Margaret Smith.<sup>1</sup>

All his siblings were born at Crawshawbooth: in his lifetime, Daniel on the 30<sup>th</sup> May 1783, Elizabeth on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 1786, Isabel on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 1788, then Ellen on the 16<sup>th</sup> November 1790, and finally Sarah, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1796.<sup>2</sup>

He attended Ackworth school from 1792 to 1794, starting there at the same time as his sister Margaret, both residents of Crawshawbooth, and the first of their family to do so, though Margaret was only there for a year.<sup>3</sup> I have covered life at Ackworth in this period at quite some length in my booklet on [James and Susanna Pollard](#), so won't repeat this here.

George's sister Sarah died at Crawshawbooth on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1796, aged just three and a half; she was buried in the Friends' burying-ground on Boxing Day.<sup>4</sup>

George's elder brother Richard, a clogger in Crawshawbooth, married Sarah Dougill at the old meeting house, Dacre in Netherdale, on the 11<sup>th</sup> April 1797. Sarah was daughter to John Dougill, stone mason of Menwith with Darley, and his wife Grace. Witnesses were John Binns, cardmaker, Crawshawbooth; Joseph Spence, flax dresser, Birstwith; and Thomas Thomasson, twist-spinner, Edgworth, Lancashire.<sup>5</sup>

Ann (Robinson) Binns, George's mother, died on the 1<sup>st</sup> May 1797, and was buried on the 4<sup>th</sup> at Crawshawbooth.<sup>6</sup>

George's sister Elizabeth, a resident of Crawshawbooth, followed in her siblings' footsteps at Ackworth school from 1797 to 1799.<sup>7</sup>

George is understood to have had a strict upbringing, which was later said to have endowed his

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<sup>1</sup> RG 6/806; RG 6/810.

<sup>2</sup> RG 6/806; RG 6/810; RG 6/963; RG 6/1623; RG 6/1624; RG 6/1625.

<sup>3</sup> Ackworth School Centenary Committee (1879) *List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779–1879*, Ackworth; letter & enclosures from Alison Turton, House of Fraser archivist, to me, 9th January 1985; David Binns, Ms autobiography (photocopy of transcript in my possession); 1837 *Annual Monitor*; Testimonies & Certificates 1788–1811 p. 81, Tyne & Wear Archives Service, MF 188; minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 168.

<sup>4</sup> RG 6/643, /969.

<sup>5</sup> RG 6/785, /862; Edward H. Milligan (2007) *Biographical Dictionary of British Quakers in Commerce and Industry 1775–1920*. York: Sessions Book Trust.

<sup>6</sup> RG 6/643, /806, /810, /969.

<sup>7</sup> Ackworth School Centenary Committee.

business with a special character. Some time before September 1800 George moved to within the compass of Newcastle Monthly Meeting—probably to Sunderland. The removal certificate from Marsden Monthly Meeting reads as follows:<sup>1</sup>

To Friends of Newcastle M<sup>o</sup>. Meeting

Dear friends—George Binns a member of Marsden Mo Meeting having some time since removed to within the compass of yours and requested our certificate, this may inform you that he was of sober conduct, and that on enquiry nothing appears but that he left us clear of debts & marriage engagements—we therefore recommend him to your Christian care & oversight & remain with love your friends—

Signed in & on behalf of the aforesaid	} Will <sup>m</sup> Manriot Clerk
Meeting held at Crawshawbooth the	} John Wood
18 <sup>th</sup> 9 <sup>th</sup> Mo. 1800.	} Henry Ecroyd
	} John Earnshaw

On the 10<sup>th</sup> November Newcastle Monthly Meeting reported that:<sup>2</sup>

A certificate from Crawshawbooth monthly meeting on behalf of Geo: Binns, removed to Shields, has been here read and accepted. Jos<sup>h</sup> Procter is appointed to visit him.

George's sister Isabel, normally resident at Crawshawbooth, attended Ackworth school from 1799 to 1801; their sister Ellen followed the next year, also for two years.<sup>3</sup>

David Binns, George's father, died on the 17<sup>th</sup> February 1809, and was buried on the 19<sup>th</sup> at Crawshawbooth.<sup>4</sup>

## Margaret Watson

Margaret Watson was born at Staindrop on the 31<sup>st</sup> July 1786; the witnesses were Ann Watson and Ann Taylor (Taylor had witnessed the three previous births, too).<sup>5</sup>

Margaret's only younger sibling, Rachel, was born at Staindrop on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 1788.<sup>6</sup>

On the 25<sup>th</sup> March 1788 their father, Joshua Watson, apothecary and druggist of Staindrop, was made bankrupt; his assignees were among the parties to the first part of a lease for one year of a close in Staindrop, formerly part of the glebe of Staindrop. It may have been as a result of this bankruptcy that by the 15<sup>th</sup> February 1806 he had sold a parcel of land at the lower end of Staindrop to

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<sup>1</sup> Letter & enclosures from Alison Turton, House of Fraser archivist, to the author, 9 January 1985; Testimonies and Certificates 1788–1811 p. 81, TWAS MF 188.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 168.

<sup>3</sup> *Ackworth School Centenary Committee: List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779-1879*, Ackworth 1879

<sup>4</sup> RG 6/203; RG 6/710; RG 6/1005; RG 6/1616A.

<sup>5</sup> RG 6/626; RG 6/628; RG 6/775; RG 6/1149.

<sup>6</sup> RG 6/626; RG 6/652.

Christopher Atkinson the elder, of Staindrop.<sup>1</sup>

Margaret's brother, Grainger Watson, a gardener of Isleworth, Middlesex, married Elizabeth Temple at Isleworth meeting-house on the 19<sup>th</sup> July 1796.<sup>2</sup> Her sister Elizabeth married Thomas Brady, a draper in Reeth, Yorkshire, on the 26<sup>th</sup> December 1798, at Staindrop.<sup>3</sup> Her eldest brother, Joseph, a linen draper of Watling Street, London, married Hannah Temple at the Friends' meeting-house near Brentford on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 1799.<sup>4</sup> Her brother William, a surgeon of Yarm, Yorkshire, married Martha Waterhouse at Liverpool meeting-house on the 16<sup>th</sup> July 1800.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> South Durham Deeds, 293, Durham University Archives & Special Collections; Durham RO D/St/D1/14/105

<sup>2</sup> RG 6/542; RG 6/1157.

<sup>3</sup> RG 6/49; RG 6/527; RG 6/777.

<sup>4</sup> RG 6/542; RG 6/1157.

<sup>5</sup> RG 6/380; RG 6/1156.





## Middle years

George and Margaret were married at Staindrop on the 30<sup>th</sup> January 1805. George was a draper of Sunderland, as he was again to be described at the registration of the births of all his children through to 1828. Both parties signed their names on the certificate. Witnesses to the marriage included Edward Robson, draper of Darlington; Nathan Robson, linen manufacturer of Darlington; and Thomas Brady, draper of Staindrop.<sup>1</sup>

Their first child, Eliza, was born at Sunderland on the 21<sup>st</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> December 1805.<sup>2</sup>

It's not clear exactly when George moved to Sunderland, but at that time (according to the 1801 census) the central area including Bishopwearmouth, Monkwearmouth, and Sunderland itself had a combined population of 24,444, of which 51% lived in Sunderland parish. The town was to grow slowly in the years before 1830, but rose dramatically thereafter.<sup>3</sup>

George's sister Isabel married George Pilkington, a woollen manufacturer, at Haslingden, Lancashire, on the 5<sup>th</sup> August 1805.<sup>4</sup> His sister Elizabeth married William Hanson, a timber dealer of Todmorden, at Crawshawbooth meeting-house on the 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1806.<sup>5</sup> According to David Binns, Hanson, "by giving way to evil practices and keeping bad company, brought ruin and distress upon his family."<sup>6</sup>

In January and November 1806 George was one of two representatives from Sunderland at Monthly Meeting held at Newcastle.<sup>7</sup>

On the 30<sup>th</sup> September 1806 George's brother Joseph married Mary Labrey at Preston Patrick meeting-house. She was the daughter of William Labrey of Camsgill, Westmorland, farmer, and Esther his wife.<sup>8</sup>

George's sister-in-law Mary (Labrey) Binns died at Crawshawbooth on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1807.<sup>9</sup>

George and Margaret's daughter Ann was born at Sunderland on the 21<sup>st</sup> March 1808.<sup>10</sup>

In June 1809 George was one of two representatives from Sunderland at Monthly Meeting held at

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<sup>1</sup> RG 6/527; RG 6/628; RG 6/775; RG 6/1149.

<sup>2</sup> RG 6/628 (25 December); RG 6/775 (21 December).

<sup>3</sup> Gillian Cookson (2010) *Sunderland building a city*. Chichester, Phillimore: 117.

<sup>4</sup> Haslingden parish register.

<sup>5</sup> RG 6/529; RG 6/1156.

<sup>6</sup> Reminiscences of David Binns, typed transcript.

<sup>7</sup> Minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 167.

<sup>8</sup> RG 6/710; RG 6/853; RG 6/1568.

<sup>9</sup> Reminiscences of David Binns, typed transcript.

<sup>10</sup> RG 6/628; RG 6/775.

Newcastle; he fulfilled the same function at Shields in October that year.<sup>1</sup>

On the 5<sup>th</sup> July 1809 George witnessed the marriage of his sister-in-law Rachel Watson to William Rowntree, at Staindrop.<sup>2</sup>

George and Margaret's first son, Henry, was born at Sunderland on the 19<sup>th</sup> January 1810.<sup>3</sup>

Prior to 1810 Sunderland had little in the way of town government, other than the River Wear Commission and civil parish officials. In that year both Bishopwearmouth and Sunderland gained improvement commissions which were empowered to levy rates to light, police, clean, and maintain the streets. Both commissions were to be replaced in 1835 by a municipal corporation.<sup>4</sup>

In 1810 George represented Sunderland at Monthly Meeting on three occasions: at Newcastle in February and December, and at Sunderland in August.<sup>5</sup>

He attended Monthly Meeting at Newcastle as a Sunderland representative in April 1811, but this was to be the last time he did so for the next three years. Doubtless he was fully occupied with his new business, for that year he purchased the woollen draper and linen shop of Thomas Ellerbury at 176 High Street, Bishopwearmouth, which employed a journeyman and three apprentices. Here he earned a reputation for quality merchandise and integrity in every transaction.<sup>6</sup>

Thomas Watson Binns, the couple's second son, was born at Sunderland on the 15<sup>th</sup> December 1811. The infant just failed to reach his first birthday, dying at Sunderland on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1812. The body was interred at Nile Street, Bishopwearmouth.<sup>7</sup>

On the 8<sup>th</sup> April 1813 Margaret's brother Henry, a resident of Friday Street, London, married Harriet Hooper, at Wandsworth meeting-house.<sup>8</sup> Then on the 15<sup>th</sup> July that year George's brother Daniel married Elizabeth Suart, at Haslingden chapelry.<sup>9</sup>

George and Margaret's daughter Rachel was born at Sunderland on the 5<sup>th</sup> January 1814.<sup>10</sup>

George represented Sunderland at Newcastle Monthly Meeting held at Newcastle in March 1814 and

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 167.

<sup>2</sup> RG 6/527.

<sup>3</sup> RG 6/628; RG 6/775.

<sup>4</sup> Cookson: 118.

<sup>5</sup> Minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 167.

<sup>6</sup> Minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 167; *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*; letter and enclosures from Alison Turton, House of Fraser archivist, to me, 9 January 1985.

<sup>7</sup> RG 6/226; RG 6/628; RG 6/775.

<sup>8</sup> RG 6/541; RG 6/972; RG 6/1157.

<sup>9</sup> Parish register.

<sup>10</sup> RG 6/775.

at North Shields in June and August that year.<sup>1</sup>

George's sister Margaret married a non-Friend, Robert Ogden Halliwell, a Whitechapel oil and colourman, on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 1815, at St James's, Haslingden, by licence.<sup>2</sup>

On the 12<sup>th</sup> July 1815, with Robert Foster and four others, George Binns was appointed to a committee of Monthly Meeting to attend to the (Friends') Schools.<sup>3</sup>

On the 6<sup>th</sup> December 1815 George Binns was born to George and Margaret, at Sunderland.<sup>4</sup>

George's sister Margaret Halliwell died on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 1815, and was buried in the Whitechapel burial ground.<sup>5</sup>

In November 1814 George had engaged his nephew David Binns as an apprentice, and David has left some vivid memories of his uncle's household in the pages of his manuscript autobiography:

During my Apprenticeship I had one serious dispute with my Uncle, who I thought was imposing labour upon me that was not fit for me to undertake and that my strength was not equal to perform. Some correspondence took place betwixt my Uncle and my parents, which with the kind advice given to us by my Uncle Joseph Binns caused the breach to be made up. Another cause of dispute was during a bad harvest about 1817, when nearly all the corn in the country was spoiled and in consequence of the Corn Laws then in force, caused wheat to advance to a great price (flour 6d per pound), besides being so bad and we the shop boys had bread and milk only to our breakfast and supper and when the bread was cut into and put in the basket it all run together like paste, excepting the crust which we considered a dainty bit, if we could get it. We seldom tasted coffee to breakfast, except on First Days and we got our meals very irregular as when we were busy in the shop it was business first, meals after and frequently it would be 2-3-4 o'clock eer we got dinner and tea as it happened. Our shop hours were very uncertain as we were expected to clear all up before closing and in summer often 10-11-12 eer we got out of the shop.

My Uncle had a good sized garden, which he took great delight in, and produced a many vegetables for the family. We occasionally went to tea there on a First Day afternoon.

I was allowed to visit my parents every two years.<sup>6</sup>

George and Margaret's fourth son, John, was born at Sunderland on the 31<sup>st</sup> January 1817.<sup>7</sup>

George represented Sunderland at Newcastle monthly meeting in September 1817. One senses that he was not universally popular among local Friends: the journal of William Robson notes, at the 18<sup>th</sup> November 1817, "Preparative Meeting to the M.M. at Newcastle – T(homas) Mounsey appointed

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 167.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop's transcript; RG 6/406; *Lancaster Gazette*, 15 July 1815; *Morning Advertiser*, 4 October 1832.

<sup>3</sup> Minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 169.

<sup>4</sup> RG 6/404; RG 6/775.

<sup>5</sup> RG 6/406; RG 6/414; RG 6/957; RG 6/1096; *Reminiscences of David Binns*.

<sup>6</sup> David Binns, autobiography, transcript.

<sup>7</sup> RG 6/404; RG 6/775.

clerk and Cashier in the place of George Binns; a very acceptable change.”<sup>1</sup>

From the 26<sup>th</sup> November to the 8<sup>th</sup> December 1817 George was away in Manchester, on a purchasing trip.<sup>2</sup>

Eliza Binns, still normally resident in Sunderland, was at Ackworth School from 1817 to 1819.<sup>3</sup>

In January 1818 George and Margaret both went to Newcastle Monthly Meeting. George went to Shields on the 12<sup>th</sup> February and to Newcastle on the 14<sup>th</sup> February. George and Margaret were at Monthly Meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> March 1818.<sup>4</sup>

From the 4<sup>th</sup> March 1818 George spent six weeks in Manchester. On the 1<sup>st</sup> May David Binns recorded that “Uncle talked me over about getting a narrow brimmed hat.” From the 6<sup>th</sup> May George spent about six weeks in London.<sup>5</sup>

In June 1818 Margaret and George attended Monthly Meeting at Shields, on behalf of Sunderland Preparative Meeting. On the 21<sup>st</sup> June they both went to Ralph Hills to tea. George went to Manchester on the 17<sup>th</sup> July. Margaret set off for Ackworth General Meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> July. George must have joined her there, as he returned from Ackworth with her on the 1<sup>st</sup> August.<sup>6</sup>

In November 1818 George represented Sunderland at Monthly Meeting held at Newcastle. That year he put his nephew David in charge of three young men (Thomas Weatherald, Alfred Waterfall, and John Hanson), and first permitted him to buy goods in Manchester market. Around this time George acted as executor for Elizabeth Brady of Staindrop.<sup>7</sup>

George and Margaret’s son William was born at Sunderland on the 24<sup>th</sup> July 1819.<sup>8</sup> That year he was a subscriber to George Garbutt’s History of Sunderland.<sup>9</sup>

Ann Binns, normally resident in Sunderland, attended Ackworth School from 1819 to 1821.<sup>10</sup>

In January 1820 George was one of two representatives from Sunderland at Newcastle Monthly Meeting held at Newcastle. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of that month he was elected as a member of the committee

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<sup>1</sup> Typescript of the journal of William Robson, 1817–18, p. 116, Friends House Library.

<sup>2</sup> David Binns, autobiography, transcript.

<sup>3</sup> *Ackworth School Centenary Committee: List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779–1879*, Ackworth, 1879.

<sup>4</sup> David Binns, autobiography, transcript.

<sup>5</sup> David Binns, autobiography, transcript.

<sup>6</sup> Minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 169; David Binns, autobiography, transcript.

<sup>7</sup> Minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 169; David Binns, autobiography, transcript.

<sup>8</sup> RG 6/404; RG 6/775.

<sup>9</sup> [www.royalarch97.org](http://www.royalarch97.org).

<sup>10</sup> *Ackworth School Centenary Committee: List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779–1879*, Ackworth 1879.

for setting up soup kitchens in Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth.<sup>1</sup>

From the 23<sup>rd</sup> July to the 13<sup>th</sup> August 1820 George and Margaret were on a “very pleasant” journey in Lancashire, with Sarah Watson, Margaret’s sister.<sup>2</sup>

In 1820 George Binns was listed as an elector, in Easington ward, Sunderland.<sup>3</sup>

On the 12<sup>th</sup> November 1820 David Binns recorded the following:

I, having to go away tomorrow, I went upstairs for some silver and I took the opportunity of informing Uncle that I should be loose next day, he said, so soon as that – I informed him yes (says he), let’s look and see if thou has not made the same mistake as G. Bennington did, but he found I was correct, so he gave me my indentures and I asked him if he wanted, having any objections to my asking a few friends to come tomorrow, which he said I had not, so I went upstairs and he sent Eliza up to ask how many I intended to ask. I said 1 dozen, what for, so that we may have a little supper ready, so I said I was much obliged, but there was no occasion for that – that was what passed.<sup>4</sup>

So David was allowed to invite his friends for supper, to celebrate his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. On the day itself,

Uncle and Aunt came down to supper, which I was very much pleased with and after supper they retired upstairs again and left us to ourselves. They sent us down two bottles of made wine and some apples, which we demolished . . .<sup>5</sup>

Henry Binns, normally resident at Sunderland, was at Ackworth School from 1820 to 1823. It was recorded of him that:

. . . as a schoolboy he was wayward and difficult. As a senior scholar he was appointed to a position of trust, not because he merited it but in the hope that he would respond to responsibility and this proved to be the case.<sup>6</sup>

George and Margaret’s ninth child, Watson Binns, was born at Sunderland on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1820.<sup>7</sup>

From the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1821 George was at Quarterly Meeting, at Darlington. He had a very stormy journey home, there having been a very heavy fall of snow.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 169; *Durham County Advertiser*, 1820-02-05.

<sup>2</sup> David Binns, autobiography, transcript.

<sup>3</sup> Poll book, cited in David Binns gedcom.

<sup>4</sup> David Binns, autobiography, transcript.

<sup>5</sup> David Binns, autobiography, transcript

<sup>6</sup> *Ackworth School Centenary Committee: List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779-1879*, Ackworth 1879; *Dictionary of Quaker Biography*

<sup>7</sup> RG 6/404; RG 6/775.

<sup>8</sup> David Binns, autobiography, transcript

On the 9<sup>th</sup> January 1821 George's brother John died. He had been a cotton spinner and manufacturer of hand loom calicoes.<sup>1</sup>

On the 15<sup>th</sup> August that year Margaret was appointed by Newcastle Monthly Meeting as an overseer in Sunderland meeting. On the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> November George and Margaret attended Monthly Meeting, in the afternoon. George was one of the two representatives from Sunderland Preparative Meeting. George carried out this function again at Newcastle in February and December 1822.<sup>2</sup>

A daughter was born at Sunderland to George and Margaret on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 1822, and was given her mother's name.<sup>3</sup>

On the 27<sup>th</sup> May 1822 George's sister Ellen married William Hunter, at Haslingden, Lancashire.<sup>4</sup>

On the 20<sup>th</sup> November that year George appointed his nephew David as manager of the Staindrop branch of his drapery. David parted with a good degree of ill will:

I left Sunderland and came to Staindrop. Uncle and I settled accounts the night before I came away, when I thought he behaved very shabbily, as he gave me expectations of more than my paid salary, for the first year. I was journeyman which was £35 and the second £40 and as I had travelled for him nearly 4½ years, I had never received any recompence for wear and tear, besides having all the necessaries to find, to equip myself for the journeys. I thought I was entitled to something more, but may blame myself in part for not hinting it to him at the time. I think probably he thought he had recompenced me in another way by getting me E. Brady's situation, still that didn't come out of his pocket.<sup>5</sup>

On the 30<sup>th</sup> December 1822 George and Margaret Binns, with Sarah Watson, went to Staindrop overnight, for Darlington Quarterly Meeting.<sup>6</sup>

A new meeting-house was opened in 1823, in Nile Street. The cost of about £2500 was met by twenty families of the meeting, and it seems likely the George Binns would have been among the contributors.<sup>7</sup>

George was one of the Sunderland representatives to Monthly Meeting at Newcastle in February and June 1823.<sup>8</sup>

In October 1823 David Binns noted that "I paid a visit to Sunderland at the Quarterly Meeting and was much pleased with my visit, Uncle's family being so extremely kind to me and paid very great

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<sup>1</sup> RG 6/406; RG 6/644; *Lancaster Gazette*, 8 February 1821.

<sup>2</sup> David Binns, autobiography, transcript; minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 169.

<sup>3</sup> RG 6/404; RG 6/775.

<sup>4</sup> Haslingden parish register; Journal of David Binns; *Manchester Evening News*, 15 February 1870.

<sup>5</sup> David Binns, autobiography, transcript.

<sup>6</sup> David Binns, autobiography, transcript.

<sup>7</sup> David M. Butler (1999) *The Quaker Meeting Houses of Britain*, Vol. I, London: Friends Historical Society.

<sup>8</sup> Minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 169.

attention, which I little expected.”<sup>1</sup>

The following month David recorded a nasty accident befalling his uncle:

Uncle George Binns had a narrow escape along with M. Brady and two of his daughters last month, in coming down Keeverstone Bank, the shaft broke and they were all tumbled out and the gig mashed in a most strange manner. Uncle was the only one any worse, he having his shoulder bruised, which continued for a length of time before it recovered, so that he could use it properly. Several of his children has had the measles, Rachel has had them here at Staindrop, she having come on a visit.<sup>2</sup>

In January 1824 George visited Staindrop.<sup>3</sup>

Around this time Henry Binns attended Lawrence Street school in York, the forerunner to Bootham. He is said to have attempted to run away from school with John Bright.<sup>4</sup>

Margaret gave birth to a son, Frederick, on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1825, at 176 High Street, Sunderland. Frederick was fed by bottle, but even so he loved his mother much more than his father.<sup>5</sup>

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1825 George’s brother Daniel was reinstated to the Society of Friends.<sup>6</sup>

In February 1826 George was one of two trustees appointed by Ann Wood of Staindrop (Margaret’s first cousin once removed), and was similarly co-executor of her will.<sup>7</sup>

Sarah Binns was born to George and Margaret at the old house in High Street, Sunderland (nearly opposite the Golden Lion), on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 1826.<sup>8</sup>

George Binns junior, a resident of Sunderland, attended Ackworth School from 1826 to 1829. From then, until his parents’ deaths in 1836, he worked in the family drapery business.<sup>9</sup>

The 1827 Durham directory records George Binns as a linen and woollen draper, of 176 High Street, Sunderland, as does Pigot’s Sunderland directory for 1834. George Binns’s drapery store constituted the commencement of Binns & Co. department stores, later to be absorbed into the House of

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<sup>1</sup> David Binns, autobiography, transcript.

<sup>2</sup> David Binns, autobiography, transcript.

<sup>3</sup> David Binns, autobiography, transcript.

<sup>4</sup> Edgar B. Collinson, ed. (1935) *Bootham School Register*, 2nd edn.

<sup>5</sup> RG 6/404; RG 6/775; Reminiscences of Frederick Binns.

<sup>6</sup> QFHS, Quaker Wills, also citing Alfred Peel (c. 1939) *Crawshawbooth and District*. He is believed to have been disowned for marrying before a priest.

<sup>7</sup> Durham wills, DPRI/1/1826/W23.

<sup>8</sup> RG 6/404; RG 6/775; Reminiscences of Frederick Binns.

<sup>9</sup> *Ackworth School Centenary Committee: List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779–1879*, Ackworth 1879; Herbert Roth (1990) ‘Binns, George 1815–1847’. *Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1b22/binns-george>.

Fraser.<sup>1</sup>

John Binns, normally resident in Sunderland, attended Ackworth School from 1827 to 1831.<sup>2</sup>

In August 1827 George attended Newcastle Monthly Meeting at Shields, on behalf of Sunderland Preparative Meeting. He fulfilled the same function again at Newcastle in July 1828, February 1830, and January 1831; at Sunderland in July 1830; and at Shields in September 1831.<sup>3</sup>

Edward Binns was born to George and Margaret on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1827, in a house at the corner of Durham Street and Coronation Street, Bishopwearmouth.<sup>4</sup>

Sophia Binns was born to George and Margaret on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 1828, at John Andrews's house, Frederick Street, Bishopwearmouth.<sup>5</sup>

William Binns, normally resident in Sunderland, attended Ackworth School from 1829 to 1833.<sup>6</sup>

George and Margaret's 15<sup>th</sup> and youngest child, Lucy, was born on the 14<sup>th</sup> August 1830, probably in the house at the corner of Durham Street and Coronation Street, Bishopwearmouth.<sup>7</sup>

Watson Binns attended Ackworth School from 1831 to 1835.<sup>8</sup>

On the 13<sup>th</sup> April 1831, at Preston Patrick, George's brother Joseph, described as a leather cutter, of Crawshaw Booth, Forest of Rossendale, Lancashire, married for a second time, his bride being Christian Anderson of Kendal, daughter of James Anderson, late of Kelso, Roxburgh, North Britain, grocer, and Margaret his wife, both deceased. The next day George and Margaret's daughter Eliza married John Bowron, a tea dealer from Sunderland, at Bishopwearmouth; both parties signed their names; witnesses included Henry Brady, surgeon of Gateshead.<sup>9</sup>

John Binns was apprenticed to Mr Henry Brady of Gateshead, apothecary, for 7 years from the 19<sup>th</sup> May 1831.<sup>10</sup>

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In 1831–2 Sunderland was hit by an epidemic of Asian cholera. No less than one in 200 of the

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<sup>1</sup> William Parsons and William White (1827) *Durham Directory*; Pigot's *Directory* for Sunderland, cited in David Binns gedcom; letter & enclosures from Alison Turton, House of Fraser archivist, to the author, 9 January 1985.

<sup>2</sup> *Ackworth School Centenary Committee: List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779–1879*.

<sup>3</sup> Minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 169.

<sup>4</sup> RG 6/775; Reminiscences of Frederick Binns.

<sup>5</sup> RG 6/404; RG 6/775; *Annual Monitor*.

<sup>6</sup> *Ackworth School Centenary Committee: List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779–1879*.

<sup>7</sup> RG 6/404; RG 6/1149; Reminiscences of Frederick Binns.

<sup>8</sup> *Ackworth School Centenary Committee: List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779–1879*.

<sup>9</sup> RG 6/202; RG 6/527; RG 6/710; RG 6/853; *Lancaster Gazette*, 23 April 1831; *The Friend*.

<sup>10</sup> Email to me from Dee Cook, citing Candidates' Entry Book (ref: GL Ms 8241/13).



population was killed, and Sunderland's reputation was badly damaged by denials that the disease was rife, occasioned by a desire to protect the coal trade. But in fact it was less devastating than the measles epidemic of 1824, which took the lives of 406 people, one in 86 of the population. Sunderland was heavily polluted and lacked basic sanitation. In addition to the exceptionally high death rates, overcrowding gave rise to concerns about morality as well as ill-health. Waste and sewage disposal was unregulated, and many people had no access to clean water. "The better-off tried to avoid the worst stench and mess, but could not isolate themselves entirely from threats of disease and early death, or even from inconvenience and unpleasantness."<sup>1</sup>

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George and Margaret's first grandchild, Eliza Ann Bowron, was born at Sunderland on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1832, witnessed by Margaret.<sup>2</sup>

George Binns represented Sunderland for the last time at Newcastle Monthly Meeting, at Newcastle on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 1832.<sup>3</sup>

Rachel Binns died aged 18 on the 12<sup>th</sup> May 1832; her body was buried at Nile Street, Bishopwearmouth, on the 18<sup>th</sup>. The cause of her death isn't known, but cholera must surely be suspected.<sup>4</sup>

The first general election after the great Reform Bill was passed took place in January 1833. George's son Frederick recalled:

They were very different to what they are now. They used to take 3 days for a Borough election—the nomination day—the polling day—& the clearing day. Every time the bands of each party met, there was sure to be a battle—once they met opposite our house & being short of weapons they pulled the wooden spout down from the side of our house. At night—after dark—they used to roll lighted tar barrels down the High St—which had a steep incline. It was a grand sight for us children—for we were perched up at the top windows to see the sight.<sup>5</sup>

George and Margaret's first grandson, John George Bowron, was born on the 5<sup>th</sup> June 1833, witnessed by Margaret.<sup>6</sup>

Their daughter Margaret, a resident of Sunderland, attended Ackworth School from 1833 to 1836.<sup>7</sup>

Possibly influenced by his sister's recent death, George made his will on the 18<sup>th</sup> March 1834,

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<sup>1</sup> Cookson: 121–122.

<sup>2</sup> RG 6/404; RG 6/1149.

<sup>3</sup> Minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 169.

<sup>4</sup> RG 6/226.

<sup>5</sup> Reminiscences of Frederick Binns.

<sup>6</sup> RG 6/404; RG 6/1149; *The Friend*; *The British Friend*.

<sup>7</sup> *Ackworth School Centenary Committee: List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779–1879*, Ackworth 1879.

appointing Margaret as one of the executors:<sup>1</sup>

This is the last Will and Testament of me George Binns of Sunderland near the Sea in the county of Durham Draper made this eighteenth day of the third Month (called March) one thousand eight hundred and thirty four, that is to say, I give devise and bequeath unto and to the use of my dear wife Margaret Binns my son Henry Binns my friend Francis Grey of Bishop Wearmouth in the county of Durham Miller and Shipowner and my son in Law John Bowron Junior their heirs Executors administrators and assigns all and every my real and personal Estate and effects upon the trusts nevertheless hereinafter mentioned and declared concerning the same, that is to day, Upon trust by and out of the rents issues and profits arising out of and from all my said estate and effects to pay an annuity or yearly sum of equal to and for the maintenance and support of my said wife and my children who shall be living born or unborn at the time of my decease and so long as my wife shall continue my widow, that the said trustees shall give unto my children an education suitable to the amount of income arising from my Estate and Effects (that is to say) it is my desire that my children have a guarded and as liberal an education as my circumstances will admit of and that this trust be exercised impartially towards each. That if my wife shall marry again then and in that case her trusteeship shall thereupon cease and I appoint the said Henry Binns, Francis Gray, and John Bowron exclusively to be trustees of my real and personal Estate and effects to and for the use of and benefit of my children Eliza, Ann, Henry, George, John, William, Watson, Margaret, Frederick[,] Sarah, Edward[,] Sophia, and Lucy, and any other or others my child or children who may be living at or may be born after my decease and so long as my wife shall remain my widow my mind and will is that a competent part of the rents issues and profits of my estate and effects be applied to and for the use of my said wife and children during her natural life and till my youngest child for the time being shall attain the age of twenty one years and from and after her decease or second marriage whichever shall first happen and on my youngest child for the time being attaining the age of twenty one years my estate and effects to go to and be equally divided amongst my children who shall survive all these events share and share alike as tenants in common and their respective heirs Executors administrators and assigns Provided nevertheless in case any of my children shall not survive all these events but shall leaving issue surviving, then my will and mind is that the share or shares of my child or children so dying and leaving issue in my Estate and Effects shall go to his her or their respective issue in equal shares as tenants in common and their respective heirs Executors administrators and assigns But in case my wife shall die or marry again my youngest child for the time being shall attain the age of twenty one years my will and mind is that my said other trustees shall continue their Trusteeship to that period, that is to say, until my youngest child for the time being be twenty one years of age And my will and mind is that my said trustees or the survivors or survivor of them or their heirs Executors administrators or assigns of such survivor shall and may either sell or retain my Dwellinghouse and shop situate in the High Street of Sunderland aforesaid and call other my estate and effects as shall appear to them him or her most for the interest and benefit of my said wife and children and may continue or discontinue the trade in the said shop as to at their his and or her discretion but and if my said trustees or trustee shall think it advisable that the business be carried on and continued with suitable arrangements and assistance I should wish it to be done And in case of the sale of my said house and shop and my other Estate and Effects I hereby declare that the receipt in writing of my trustees or the survivors or survivor of them or the heirs Executors administrators or assigns of such survivor shall be an effectual discharge to the purchase or purchasers thereof for so much of the purchase money as shall therein be acknowledged or expressed to be received and that such purchaser or purchasers shall not afterwards be answerable or accountable for the appreciation of such purchase money or any part thereof or for the loss misapplication or non application thereof

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<sup>1</sup> Durham Diocese registered wills, DPRI 2/46 pp895-897; Death Duty Registers, TNA: IR 26/1140; IR 27/1140.

or be bound to inquire into the necessity or reasonableness of such sale I hereby constitute and appoint my said dear wife my son Henry Binns my friend Francis Gray and my son in law John Bowron Executrix and Executors of this my last Will and Testament and my will and mind is and I do hereby desire it to be considered that my said trustees and executors shall only be answerable each one for the acts of himself and herself and non one for the acts of the other of them and that they respectively shall not be accountable for any loss or miscarriage that m[a]y happen touching my estate and effects and the trusts hereby created by the failure of any security or securities or otherwise nevertheless trusting they will exercise all needful and necessary care and that they respectively shall be paid or may retain out of the trust Estate all such costs charges Damages and expences as shall be occasioned to them in the execution of the trusts hereby reposed in them In Witness where I the said George Binns the testator have hereunto set my hand and seal the day and year in the beginning written

George Binns (SS)

[Witnesses: Robt Smart, Bishopwearmouth, Solicitor, Geo Wilson Bishopwearmouth Confectioner, Wm Hayton Clerk to Mr Smart]

George was a strict Quaker, and was believed to have been fond of corporal punishment. His son Frederick remembered being shut up, for a crime unknown, in a very large drawer at the back of the shop, used for keeping carpets in, by way of punishment. Certainly he was not much loved by Frederick.<sup>1</sup> A more caring side, though, is perhaps shown by another of Frederick's memories:

I remember my father carrying me up the High St. to the Doctor's—about breakfast time. I had got my forefinger jammed with the parlour door. It was a bad crush only hanging by the skin. It shows the mark yet.<sup>2</sup>

Henry Binns was resident in High Street, Bishopwearmouth, in 1834. In May that year he was one of two Sunderland representatives at Newcastle Monthly Meeting, held at Sunderland.<sup>3</sup>

Frederick Binns, normally resident in Sunderland, attended Ackworth School from 1834 to 1839.<sup>4</sup>

In 1835 George's brother Richard was a provision dealer and draper at Crawshawbooth.<sup>5</sup>

The last grandchild born while George and Margaret were still alive was born to the Bowrons on the 30<sup>th</sup> April 1835, and named Edward; the birth was witnessed by Margaret.<sup>6</sup>

George Binns died, apparently of tuberculosis of the lung, on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 1836. An autopsy was performed, the report of which survives:

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<sup>1</sup> Reminiscences of Frederick Binns.

<sup>2</sup> Reminiscences of Frederick Binns.

<sup>3</sup> David Binns gedcom; minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 169.

<sup>4</sup> *Ackworth School Centenary Committee: List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779–1879*, Ackworth 1879; Elfrida Vipont (1959) *Ackworth School from its foundation in 1779 to the introduction of co-education in 1946*. London.

<sup>5</sup> Brian Davey: Thistlethwaite CD, 2005.

<sup>6</sup> RG 6/775; RG 6/1149.



Appearances observed on dissecting the body of the late M<sup>r</sup> Geo: Binns.

*In the thorax*, the pleura was found so strongly adherent to the right lung, that it was impossible to separate them without tearing. This lung was rendered completely solid by tubercular deposition. Many of the tubercles were (as its termed) rude; but several, especially in the upper part, were softened and filled with ordinary cheese-like matter. The left lung, though looking gorged and vascular, was crepitating throughout much the greater part of its extent; there was, however, one large tubercular mass towards its upper, and back part. The lining of the trachea was healthy, but that of the bronchi, as far as it could be traced, was vascular.

*In the abdomen*, the lining of the stomach was considerably inflamed towards its left (cardiac) extremity. The liver was healthy in structure, but the bile contained in the gall-bladder was thinner and paler than is usually observed. One portion of small intestine was found strongly adhering to the caecum and the vermiform appendix was lost in the adhesion, – the whole showing that inflammation had existed there. The right kidney was softened, and vascular<sup>1</sup>

The body was buried at Nile Street, Bishopwearmouth, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February.<sup>2</sup>

George Binns's will was proved at Durham on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 1836, his estate being sworn under £5000.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Autopsy report in House of Fraser archives, photocopy sent me by the archivist, 9 January 1985. The page ends here, without a full stop, so the report may be incomplete.

<sup>2</sup> RG 6/226; RG 6/1151; 1837 *Annual Monitor*; genealogical notes by Sidney Beck; letter & enclosures sent me by Alison Turton, House of Fraser archivist, 9 January 1985.

<sup>3</sup> Durham Diocese registered wills, DPRI 2/46 pp895-897; Death Duty Registers, IR 26/1140; IR 27/1140.

## Margaret's widowhood

Henry Binns, draper of Bishopwearmouth, married Elizabeth Bowron, daughter of John Bowron, tea dealer of Sunderland, at Bishopwearmouth on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1836; both parties signed the register; witnesses included William Rowntree, maltster of Gateshead, and Ingram Chapman Watson, umbrella maker of North Shields.<sup>1</sup>

Margaret died on Christmas Eve 1836, and was buried at Nile Street, Bishopwearmouth, on the 29<sup>th</sup> December.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> RG 6/202; RG 6/527

<sup>2</sup> RG 6/228; RG 6/1151; 1837 *Annual Monitor*.



# Afterlives

## Siblings

Richard Binns died at Crawshawbooth on the 25<sup>th</sup> May 1841.<sup>1</sup>

Daniel Binns, who worked as a clogger and farmer, died at Rawtenstall, Lancashire, on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 1841.<sup>2</sup>

Joseph Binns died at Rawtenstall, Lancashire, on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 1849, and was buried in the Friends' burial ground at Crawshawbooth.<sup>3</sup>

Isabel Pilkington was living as an annuitant in Haslingden in 1851. She died on the 30<sup>th</sup> December 1851, and was buried at Crawshawbooth.<sup>4</sup>

In 1851 Ellen Hunter was living as an annuitant in Cheetham, Manchester. She died on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 1870, and was buried in Prestwich, Lancashire, on the 16<sup>th</sup>.<sup>5</sup>

Sarah Watson died in Newcastle on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 1837, and was buried on the 15<sup>th</sup>.<sup>6</sup>

Grainger Watson, a farmer, who had emigrated to the United States in 1820, died in Greenwich, Ohio, on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 1838.<sup>7</sup>

Joseph Watson, a grocer in Peckham, Surrey, died on the 21<sup>st</sup> June 1839; he had been disowned in 1820 for the extent of his debts.<sup>8</sup>

Elizabeth (Watson) Brady, a retired general tradeswoman, died in Newcastle on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1853.<sup>9</sup>

William Watson, who had emigrated with his family to North Adelaide, South Australia, became a Justice of the Peace for South Australia. A chemist, he died on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 1858, and was buried in the Wesleyan cemetery at Walkerville, South Australia.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> GRO index; 1842 *Annual Monitor*.

<sup>2</sup> *Annual Monitor*.

<sup>3</sup> Information from Alf Rogers; Thistlethwaite CD; gedcom from David Binns.

<sup>4</sup> HO 107/2250 f85 p1; GRO index; *Preston Chronicle*, 10 January 1852.

<sup>5</sup> HO 107/2232 f254 p9; *National Probate Calendar*; *Manchester Evening News*, 15 February 1870.

<sup>6</sup> RG 6/228; *Annual Monitor*.

<sup>7</sup> New York, 1820–1850 Passenger and Immigration Lists; New York Passenger Lists, 1820–1957; 1840 *Annual Monitor*.

<sup>8</sup> GRO index; 1840 *Annual Monitor*; DQB.

<sup>9</sup> GRO index; *Annual Monitor*; *Quaker Connections* 3:20.

<sup>10</sup> *Southern Australian*, 17 August 1841; Australia Death Index, 1787–1985; *South Australian Register*, 10 November 1858; *The British Friend*; *Quaker Connections* 11:17.



Henry Watson, a commission agent of Stoke Newington, late of Peckham, died in his 85<sup>th</sup> year on the 31<sup>st</sup> May 1867, and was buried on the 6<sup>th</sup> June.<sup>1</sup>

Rachel (Watson) Rowntree died in Gateshead on the 6<sup>th</sup> February 1845.<sup>2</sup>

## Children

Eliza (Binns) Bowron and her husband had seven children. She died at Leeds on the 4<sup>th</sup> January 1861, and was given a five-page obituary in the *Annual Monitor*.<sup>3</sup>

Ann Binns married John Peacock, a miller, of Ward Terrace, Bishopwearmouth, on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 1838, at Bishopwearmouth meeting-house. The couple had five children. Ann lived in Bishopwearmouth till at least 1862, but by 1871 was an annuitant, described as paralysed, lodging in Croydon. She died there on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 1876.<sup>4</sup>

Both his parents having died before their eldest son, Henry, reached the age of twenty, a great deal of care and responsibility devolved upon him from a young age. “As he grew to manhood he became conscious of a deep conviction of sin and felt the need of faith in the loving mercy of God, but it was not until many years later that he became a minister of the Society.” With his first wife he had twelve children. He was an active member of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and from 1862 was engaged in mission work around Britain, as well as in Iowa and Canada. In 1865, still working as a draper, he moved to Croydon. He married again in 1866, his second wife being Emma Andrews. He died at home in Croydon on 17 January 1880.<sup>5</sup>

George Binns junior opened a bookshop in 1837, and the following year co-founded the Sunderland Chartist Association. The bookshop became a centre for radical agitation and for the publication and distribution of tracts, handbills and poems, many of them written by George. He made a forceful orator in support of the Chartist cause, as he toured the countryside. In 1839 he and his business partner were arrested for sedition, but freed on bail until their trial at the Durham assizes in August 1840. Both were found guilty and sentenced to six months’ imprisonment. Following his release from Durham gaol in January 1841 George was elected to the executive of the National Chartist Association. He re-entered the drapery business, but went bankrupt, and decided to emigrate to New Zealand, leaving in August 1842. In Nelson he obtained employment supervising a whaling establishment, but the business failed in 1844. Profoundly depressed, he found new employment in Nelson as a baker, but died of consumption on the 5<sup>th</sup> April 1847, after three years of illness. His obituary in the *Northern Star* on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 1848 described him as “a handsome, high spirited talented true-hearted man—every inch a democrat.” Sadly, his own family hadn’t seen him this way: according to his brother Frederick,

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<sup>1</sup> GRO index; burial register of Stoke Newington Friends’ burial-ground; *The British Friend* XXV.7:184.

<sup>2</sup> GRO index; *Annual Monitor*; C. Brightwen Rowntree and E. Margaret Sessions (1996) *The Rowntrees of Riseborough*. York: Sessions.

<sup>3</sup> GRO index; 1862 *Annual Monitor*.

<sup>4</sup> Marriage certificate; GRO index; 1878 *Annual Monitor*; *National Probate Calendar*.

<sup>5</sup> Marriage certificate; *National Probate Calendar*; *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*; *The Friend*; *The British Friend*; 1881 *Annual Monitor*; Testimony of Kingston MM in *Yearly Meeting Proceedings*, 1880.

The family seemed to look down on him—because he joined the Chartist agitation—one of the family (I don't know which) went so far as to say that he deserved transporting.<sup>1</sup>

John Binns veered towards Unitarianism, and was disowned by Newcastle Monthly Meeting in 1839. In 1843 he qualified as a Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries, having served an apprenticeship with Henry Brady of Gateshead. By 1847 he was in general practice at Haslingden, Lancashire. He was married there on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 1848, to Ellen Hall. They had five children. He's said to have been virtually the founder of the Haslingden Institute, pioneer of the Free Library movement. He served as a JP on the Commission of the Peace for South Lancashire. He also acquired Moorsley Banks Paper Mill. He left Haslingden in 1872 to go to Durham, where he died on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 1875, and was buried in St Cuthbert's church. His will was proved at Durham, his estate being valued at £4000.<sup>2</sup>

William Binns began his working life as a woollen draper and tailor in Sunderland, but by 1861 was working as a confectioner in Bishopwearmouth. He married Elizabeth Sykes at Sunderland on the 27<sup>th</sup> November 1856. He died at home in Sunderland on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 1866, and was buried on the 14<sup>th</sup>.<sup>3</sup>

Watson Binns was apprenticed to woollen drapery with David Binns of Halifax, and became a draper in High Street, Bishopwearmouth. On the 30<sup>th</sup> June 1858, at Leominster, he married Esther Lunt Wood. They had three children. He was recorded as a minister in the Society of Friends in 1865, and the following year moved to Birmingham. From 1870 he was regularly active in the home missionary circuit, which indeed seems to have been his principal occupation. He retired to Sibford Gower, in Oxfordshire, by 1901, and died there on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 1905, in his 85<sup>th</sup> year.<sup>4</sup>

Margaret Binns spent 1838 at the Mount School, York. On the 14<sup>th</sup> August 1845 she married John Andrews, at Sunderland, where he was a store-keeper and ship-owner. They had three children. She died of tuberculosis on 30 September 1851, at Bishopwearmouth.<sup>5</sup>

Frederick Binns was apprenticed to a grocer in Barnsley, but had his indenture cancelled after his father's death. He subsequently also worked in South Shields, North Shields, Sunderland, Scarborough, York, Mansfield, Chesterfield, Belfast, and Leicester, before eventually moving to

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<sup>1</sup> Herbert Roth (1990) 'Binns, George 1815–1847'. *Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1b22/binns-george>; *Northern Star*, 5 February 1848; *Oxford DNB*; Reminiscences of Frederick Binns.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes of Newcastle Monthly Meeting, TWAS MF 169; email to the author from Dee Cook, archivist to the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries, London, 1 July 2002; *National Probate Calendar*; *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 16 December 1848; John Dunleavy (2018) "'For the mental and moral elevation of the people": the campaigning life of Dr John Binns', *Journal of the Friends Historical Society*, vol. 69: 45–65.

<sup>3</sup> HO 107/1300/7 f12 p16; RG 9/3765 f72 p6; *National Probate Calendar*; *Newcastle Guardian and Tyne Mercury*, 29 November 1856; *The Friend* VI.64:10; *The British Friend* XXIV.4:86.

<sup>4</sup> Ms Memoirs of David Binns; Ackworth Old Scholars' Association Report No 24, Eighth Month 1905; *The Friend* 1 October 1865: 226; *The Friend* NS X.Apr: 93; HO 107/2396 f282 p17; RG 13/1402 f37 p12; obituary in 1905 *Ackworth School Yearbook*; 1906 *Annual Monitor*; *National Probate Calendar*; *The Friend* XLV: 224, 7 April 1905; *The British Friend* XIV Apr: 116; AOSA Report No 24, 1905; GRO index; Margaret Page (2013) 'Watson Binns—missionary to Bewdley', presentation to QFHS Bewdley One Day Meeting, 13 April 2013.

<sup>5</sup> *The Mount School, York. List of Teachers and Scholars 1784–1816, 1831–1906*. 1906, York: Sessions; information from Alf Rogers; *The British Friend*; *The Friend*; Wallis: *Frederick Andrews of Ackworth*.

London. He is said to have married Lucy Ann Stephenson around 1852, apparently in Scotland, and was also said to have been disowned for marrying out. However, no evidence has yet been found that any marriage took place. Nonetheless, the couple had nine children. He worked in the tea colouring business, then coffee roasting, but by 1881 was a warehouseman in a tea warehouse, and by 1901 a retired grocer in Walthamstow. He died at Manor Park on the 12<sup>th</sup> August 1911.<sup>1</sup>

Sarah Binns attended Ackworth School from 1837 to 1840, followed by the Mount School, York, until 1842. She married Robert Andrew Wilson, a wholesale tea dealer, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1852, at Sunderland. She was acknowledged as a minister in 1866. By 1891 she was living in Croydon, on her own means. She died there on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 1894.<sup>2</sup>

Edward Binns attended Ackworth from 1838 to 1841. He married Margaret Eleanor Just in December 1853, after which he was disowned by Friends. Initially a grocer, he became a confectioner. For 40 years he was an active member of the Bethesda Free Church, and devoted all his spare time to Christian work among the poor. He died in Sunderland on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 1902, and was buried in Bishopwearmouth Cemetery.<sup>3</sup>

Sophia Binns attended Ackworth from 1838 to 1843. She became a governess, but died at Sunderland on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1855.<sup>4</sup>

Lucy Binns attended Ackworth School from 1839 to 1845, then began as an apprentice teacher at the Friends' School in Croydon in 1848. She married William Pollard on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 1854, at Nile Street meeting-house in Sunderland. They lived successively at Ackworth, Reigate, and Manchester, before she returned to Ackworth after her husband's death. She died of cardiac failure after many years of chronic nephritis, at Bentinck Villa, High Ackworth, Hemsworth, Yorkshire, on the 4<sup>th</sup> April 1908, and was buried at the Friends' burial ground at Ackworth on the 7<sup>th</sup>.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Reminiscences of Frederick Binns; GRO index; RG 11/423 f65 p5; RG 13/1624 f181 p40; *The Friend* LI: 568, 25 August 1911; [www.thebinnsfamily.org.uk/individual.php?pid=I606&ged=JohnBinnsAbigailKing.ged](http://www.thebinnsfamily.org.uk/individual.php?pid=I606&ged=JohnBinnsAbigailKing.ged).

<sup>2</sup> *Ackworth School Centenary Committee: List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779–1879*, Ackworth 1879; *The Mount School, York. List of Teachers and Scholars 1784–1816, 1831–1906*. 1906, York: Sessions; *The Friend*; *The British Friend* XXIV.10: 249; *National Probate Calendar*; *The British Friend* III Apr: 102–4; RG 12/593 f16 p27.

<sup>3</sup> *Ackworth School Centenary Committee: List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779–1879*, Ackworth 1879; GRO index; RG 9/3780 f75 p4; RG 10/4996 f36 p5; *Ackworth Old Scholars' Association Annual Report* 1903; *Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette*, 9 July 1902; Find a Grave; information from Alf Rogers.

<sup>4</sup> *Ackworth School Centenary Committee: List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779–1879*, Ackworth 1879; HO 107/2396 f352 p32; *The Friend*; *Annual Monitor*.

<sup>5</sup> RG 6/404; RG 6/1149; HO 107/1309/1 f56 p10; ; *National Probate Calendar*; Friends' marriage certificate; death certificate; *The Friend* XLVIII: 240, 10 April 1908; *The British Friend* XVII Apr 1908: 112; Ms diaries of Mary S.W. Pollard; *Ackworth School Centenary Committee: List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779–1879*, Ackworth 1879; Essex Record Office D/Q/ 49/12/a1; Ms notes on family of William & Lucy Pollard, by a son (probably Wilfrid) of Sophie & Joseph Sparkes, photocopy in my possession; Bedford Pollard (1937) *Quaker Reminiscences*, London: Headley.

## Grandchildren

Eliza Ann Bowron attended Ackworth School from 1842 to 1847, but died on the 30<sup>th</sup> October 1853.<sup>1</sup>

John George Bowron attended Ackworth from 1843 to 1848. He married Ellen Ward Doeg on the 20<sup>th</sup> July 1864, at Banbury meeting-house in Oxfordshire. He died in Sunderland on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 1878.<sup>2</sup>

Edward Bowron was a commercial traveller by 1871. His death was recorded in the first quarter of 1890, in St George Hanover Square, London.<sup>3</sup>

John and Eliza (Binns) Bowron had four further children: Margaret Binns, Emma, Stephenson, and Sarah Maria.<sup>4</sup>

John and Ann (Binns) Peacock had five children: John George, Mary Jane, Edward, Ann Eliza, and Emma.<sup>5</sup>

Henry and Elizabeth Binns had twelve children: Henry (later Sir Henry, prime minister of Natal), Rachel, Joseph John, Margaret Ann, Eliza, Emma, George, Charles, Edmund, George William, Alfred, and Arthur.<sup>6</sup>

John and Ellen Binns had five children: John George, Hannah, Margaret, Herbert, and Lucy.<sup>7</sup>

Watson and Esther Binns had three children: Amy Louisa, Alfred Watson, and Esther Theresa.<sup>8</sup>

John and Margaret (Binns) Andrews had three children: John Edward, Charles, and Frederick.<sup>9</sup>

Frederick and Lucy Ann Binns had nine children: Sarah Maria, Lucy Sophia, Clara, Margaret Watson, Frederick, Ellen, James Stephenson, Emma, and George Watson.<sup>10</sup>

Robert and Sarah (Binns) Wilson had nine children: Jessie, Emily, Louisa, Sophia Binns, Elsie

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<sup>1</sup> *Ackworth School Centenary Committee: List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779–1879, Ackworth 1879; Annual Monitor.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ackworth School Centenary Committee: List of the Boys and Girls admitted into Ackworth School 1779–1879, Ackworth 1879; National Probate Calendar; The Friend; The British Friend; Oxford Times, 23 July 1864.*

<sup>3</sup> RG 10/4205 f85 p42; GRO index.

<sup>4</sup> GRO index; censuses; *The Friend*.

<sup>5</sup> GRO indexes; censuses; *Annual Monitor*.

<sup>6</sup> GRO index; RG 6/404, /1149; *Oxford DNB; The Friend; The British Friend*; censuses; *Annual Monitor*.

<sup>7</sup> GRO index; Haslingden parish register; censuses.

<sup>8</sup> GRO index; *The Friend; The British Friend*.

<sup>9</sup> GRO index; censuses.

<sup>10</sup> GRO index; Fred Binns's birth certificate; censuses; 1939 England and Wales Register, TNA: RG 101.

Bowsa, Ernest, Florence B., Annie Wilson, and Harold.<sup>1</sup>

Edward and Margaret Binns had twelve children: George Welch, Annie Sophia, Lillian, Margaret Eleanor, Florence Evaline, Edward, Evelyn, Violet Miriam, Alfred Henry, Eva Just, Elsie, and Walter.<sup>2</sup>

William and Lucy (Binns) Pollard had ten children: Mary Sophia, Lucy, Ellen, Bedford, Albert, William Henry, Eliza, Constance, Arthur Binns, and Francis Edward.<sup>3</sup>

## **Living descendants**

At least 393 descendants of George and Margaret Binns are believed to be living at the time of writing.

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<sup>1</sup> GRO index; censuses; *The Friend*; *Annual Monitor*.

<sup>2</sup> GRO index; censuses; RG 101.

<sup>3</sup> GRO index; censuses; RG 101; *The Friend*; *The British Friend*; *Bootham School Register*.