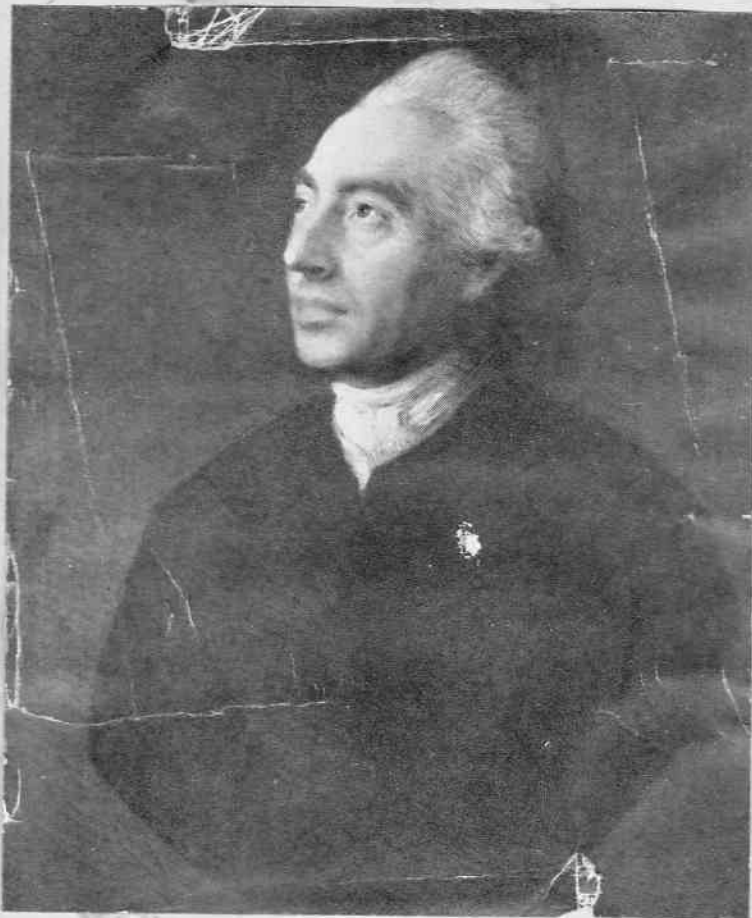


Humphrey Gainsborough

Engineer

Inventor

Congregational Minister at Henley-on-Thames, 1748-1776



Reproduction of his Portrait as painted by his brother

Thomas Gainsborough R-A

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The Life and Work of
Humphrey Gainsborough,

Engineer, Inventor, and Congregational Minister
at Henley-on-Thames, 1748—1776.



By
GEORGE H. PETERS,
Minister, Henley Congregational Church.



Price: Two Shillings and Sixpence.

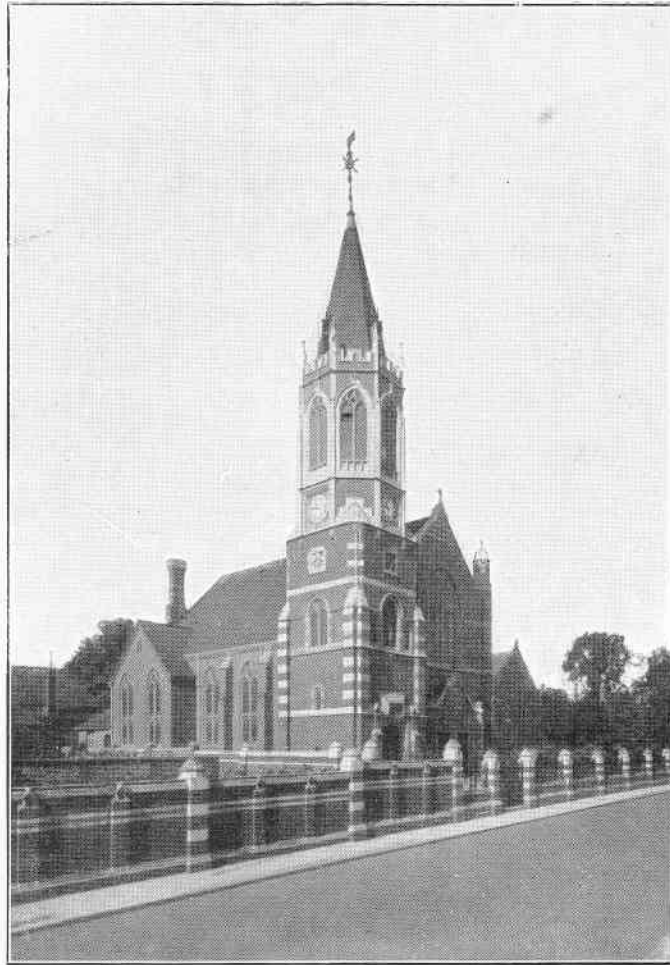
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PRINTED BY HIGGS AND CO., HENLEY.

1876







HENLEY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. Opened on Tuesday, July 21st, 1908, when the Rev. C. Silvester Horne, M.A., was the special preacher. This beautiful building was erected during the ministry of the Rev. Sidney T. Tucker (1900-1919). (See page 30 for a picture of the old Independent Chapel, Henley).



Preface.

MOST people think of Henley as the Mecca of the Rowing man, and with good reason, for the first Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race took place at Henley in 1829, and since 1839, the Annual Regatta has been a predominant feature in the life of this river-side resort.

Nevertheless, Henley has other claims to distinction. The purpose of this little book is to honour the memory of a Congregational Minister who settled here in 1748, and for 28 years devoted his leisure hours to engineering and scientific matters. Humphrey Gainsborough was a remarkable character whose achievements and genius should be more widely known and appreciated. A study of his life gives a fascinating insight into the social history of the 18th Century.

May I take this opportunity of thanking the numerous people who have so kindly helped in various ways to make possible the production of the book, especially my wife, who typed and re-typed the manuscripts, and my friends at the Henley Congregational Church who have encouraged me in the undertaking. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, and to give due acknowledgments to those who have supplied data.

I hope to issue another book in due course, dealing with the History of Henley and giving an account of the Henley Congregational Church which dates back to the Great Ejectment of 1662.

GEORGE H. PETERS.

The Manse,
Reading Road,
Henley-on-Thames.

April, 1948.

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Valuable information has been found in the following books:—

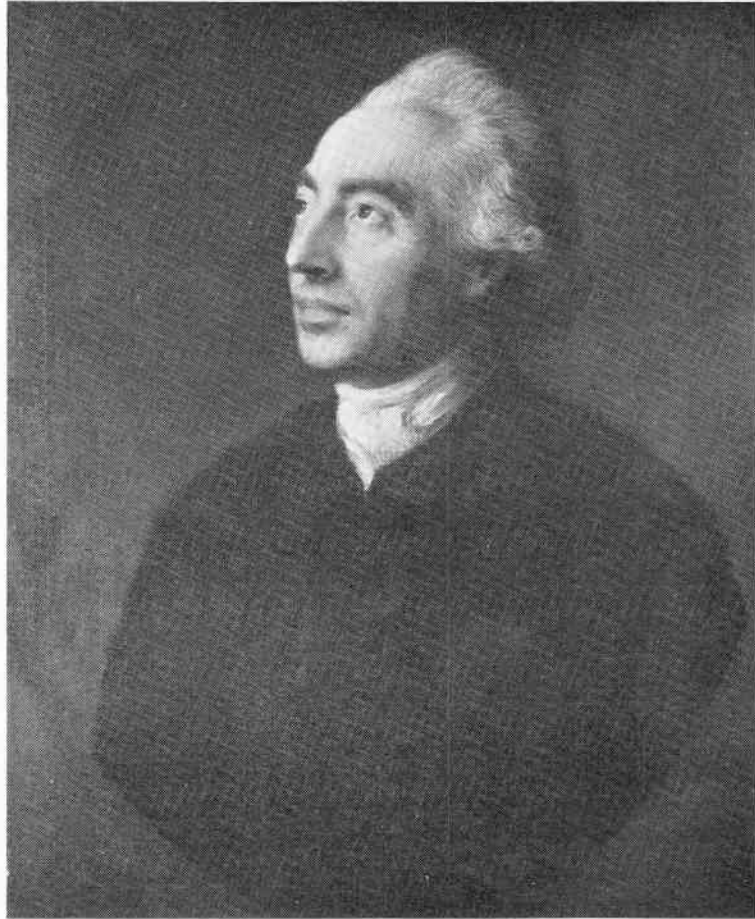
- "LIFE OF THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH, R.A.," by *G. W. Fulcher* (1856).
"A HISTORY OF HENLEY-ON-THAMES," by *J. S. Burn* (1861).
"THE HISTORY OF SHIPLAKE, OXON," by *E. J. Climenson* (1894).
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- THE REV. CHARLES E. SURMAN, B.A. Secretary of the Congregational Historical Society, for the data he has supplied and for his unfailing helpfulness.



Copies by R. L. Knight, Ltd., Photographers, Barnstable.

REV. HUMPHREY GAINSBOROUGH. Reproduction of his portrait
as painted by his brother, Thomas Gainsborough, R.A.

THE LIFE AND WORK OF HUMPHREY GAINSBOROUGH,
ENGINEER AND INVENTOR,
and
MINISTER OF HENLEY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,
1748—1776.

The Gainsborough Family.

HUMPHREY GAINSBOROUGH was the grandson of "Robertus Gainsbrow," who was Chief Constable at Sudbury, Suffolk, in 1681 and 1682. His father, John Gainsborough, was born there in 1685 and became a crape and shroud maker. This was a thriving business in days when each English town believed in local protection and a rigid exclusion of "foreigners."

John Gainsborough's business was made still more profitable after he had succeeded, while on a visit to Coventry, in discovering the secret of woollen shroud making, of which, until then, the Midland town had held the monopoly. He was popular with his work people, as he always set his face against the common practice of levying on them "a toll of a third of their weekly wages." He seems to have lost large sums of money, and became bankrupt in 1733, owing to his too kindly disposition and good nature, which would never allow him to press a creditor unduly. This generosity was inherited by his son, Humphrey Gainsborough. John Gainsborough travelled for business purposes as far afield as France and Holland and is reported to have indulged in a little smuggling! He is described as being a fine looking old gentleman, very careful in his dress and person, a skilful ambidextrous fencer, loved and respected in Sudbury. He died in 1748, at the age of 63, the same year that his son, Humphrey Gainsborough, settled in Henley. For four generations, that is from 1685 to 1852 the lives of the Gainsboroughs were bound up with the Old Meeting House, Sudbury (now Friar Street, Congregational Church), and most of them were clothiers, crape makers or milliners.

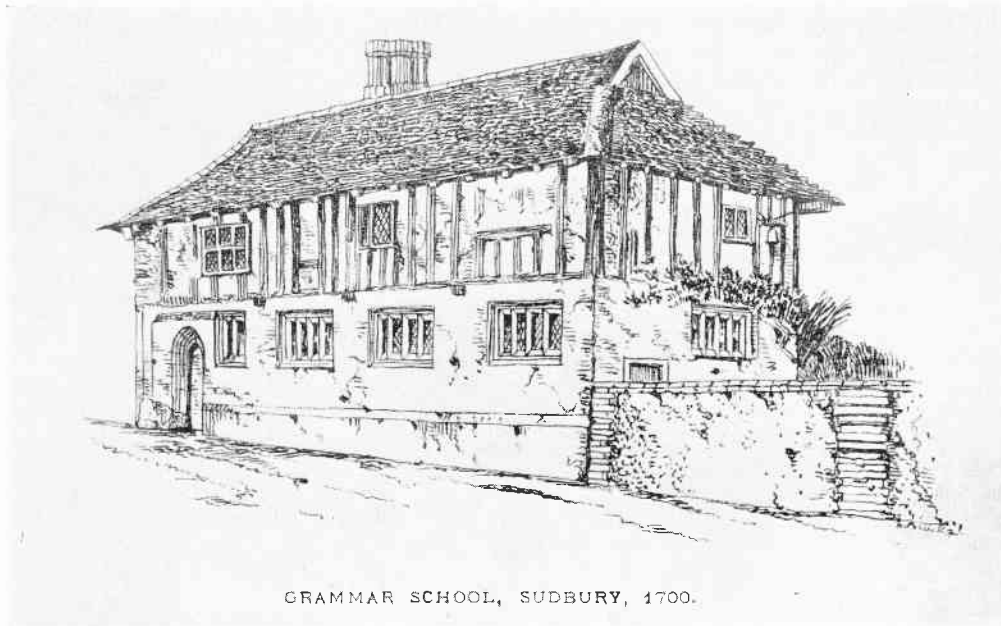
The exact date of Humphrey Gainsborough's birth is not known, but the year 1719 inscribed on his memorial stone, now affixed to the wall of Henley Congregational Church, is incorrect, as he was baptised by the Rev. Josias Maultby at Friar Street Congregational Church, Sudbury, on April 13th, 1718. Assuming he was about the usual age for infant baptism, he was probably born in March, 1718. Humphrey Gainsborough was therefore about nine years of age in 1727 when his brother Thomas, was born, who was destined to become England's greatest portrait and landscape painter. (Thomas Gainsborough was baptised at Friar Street Congregational Church on May 14th, 1727). The eldest brother, Jack (born 1711), was then a gawky lad of 16, and was usually known as "Scheming Jack." (There were two other brothers and four sisters).

Boyhood Days.

These three remarkable and precocious boys, Jack, Humphrey and Thomas, attended the Sudbury Meeting House. As the Sudbury historian, W. W. Hodson, has said, "We could readily picture on a Sabbath morning the Godfearing parents calling in their large family from the orchard and arbour at the back of their house, once "The Black Horse," in Sepulchre Street, and conducting them in orderly procession, two by two, with serving maids and shop men behind, to the Old Chapel."



THE GAINSBOROUGHS' HOUSE AT SUDBURY, SUFFOLK (This reproduction from an old engraving, was kindly loaned by the Editor of the "East Anglian Magazine"). The house has been modernised and is now a private hotel. Until recent years, the pear tree known to Humphrey Gainsborough and portrayed by Thomas Gainsborough, R.A., in his picture "Tom Pear Tree's Portrait," was still in the garden at the back of the house.



GRAMMAR SCHOOL, SUDBURY, 1700.

Copies by Geo. Bushell & Son, Photographers, Henley-on-Thames.

THE SCHOOL (as it was in Humphrey Gainsborough's time) where his uncle, the Rev. Humphrey Burroughs was Headmaster. (From an illustration included by W. W. Hodson in his brief history of the Sudbury Grammar School, written in 1891 when the school celebrated its 400th Anniversary. This brochure was kindly loaned by R. L. Gillingham, Esq., M.A., Headmaster of Sudbury Grammar School).

It is to be feared that they often permitted their thoughts to wander from the learned sermons and long prayers of the Rev. Joshua Foster, and even from the stirring addresses of the Rev. John Ford, "preached to very crowded congregations," to their contemplated pranks at "Cousin Addison's," their rambles and their favourite mechanical inventions. Humphrey Gainsborough and "Scheming Jack" thought more of wheels and springs as they sat in the family pew, than of scripture and the doctrines of the Christian faith. Whilst the congregation listened to the lively tunes which were sung in the Singer's Gallery, accompanied by bass-viol and fiddle, trombone and clarinet, the practical-minded thinker, Humphrey, and the absent-minded "Scheming Jack," would dream their dreams again, and mischievously change the words of the religious refrain to "We want to see the wheels go round." Seated by his older brothers, the impulsive young Thomas would be oblivious to most of the service, as his mind pictured pleasant vistas in the Brunden Woods, a broad panorama from Brakemoor Hill, shady nooks in Old Saint Bartholomew's Lane, and attractive scenes near Cornard Mere. Had they dared, Jack and Tom would have surreptitiously caricatured the preacher, or precentor, or pew-opener, in the inside cover of their hymn books as Tom used to do the master at Sudbury Grammar School in his copy and exercise books, but their father, John Gainsborough, was a subscriber to the then new Sudbury Meeting House (the building of which was commenced in December, 1709), and dealt sternly with any member of his family who misbehaved in Church!

The boys were educated at Sudbury Grammar School, where their uncle, the Rev. Humphrey Burroughs, was the school master. There are no recorded incidents of Humphrey Gainsborough's boyhood, but the references to "Scheming Jack" and Thomas are most illuminating.

Jack Gainsborough, the Elder Brother.

"Scheming Jack" acquired his nickname after he had attempted several unsuccessful flights to the Tower of St. Peter's Church, Sudbury, from the roof of a summerhouse in the school garden. In preparation for these flights, he made a pair of large cardboard wings which he fixed to his back. He then gave several flaps and took a huge leap from the summerhouse roof, but, instead of flying upwards to the tower, he landed safely on a stable heap. He also made a mechanical cradle for rocking babies to sleep. His self-rocking cradle was advertised as a "Boon to Mothers." "Scheming Jack" invented a cuckoo to sing all the year round, a wheel which turned in a still bucket of water, and an instrument to measure longitude.

Jack, like his brother Thomas, was a gifted artist. One day, he was commissioned by the landlord of "The Bull," a quaint old inn at Sudbury, to paint a sign for his establishment. "I will tie up the bull with a handsome gold chain for 30s.," he bargained, but the landlord insisted that 20s. was sufficient, and the sign was painted at the lower rate. The night after the sign was hung, it rained, and the next morning a crowd gathered outside "The Bull," laughing and pointing to the sign. The landlord came out to find the cause of their mirth and saw a black silhouette where the bull had been. The scenery at the back was unharmed, but as the bull itself had been painted in soluble distemper, it had been washed away during the night. The landlord wrathfully called Jack to the inn, and inquired why the bull on the sign had disappeared. Jack, with his characteristic Suffolk wit, replied that he would have chained the bull to a tree with a gold chain for 30s., but as 20s. was the pre-arranged rate, this was not possible, and the bull had escaped!

One year Jack's parents invited some friends from London to spend the summer at Sudbury. On the day of their arrival, Mrs. Gainsborough had prepared a sumptuous dinner for her guests, to which Jack was not invited. As soon as the

guests were seated, Jack ran down to the meadow which was separated from the garden by a high brick wall. There he harnessed his donkey to a cart, loaded on to it a haystack which stood in the meadow, and led the donkey along by the side of the wall, so that only the top of the haystack was visible to the guests. It appeared to them that the haystack was moving of its own accord, and, consequently, they all rushed out to see the strange sight more closely. Whilst they were investigating, Jack stealthily crept into the house and ate a large portion of the dinner prepared for the guests!

"Scheming Jack" appears to have exhausted all his inventive powers in his youth, for there is no record that he ever achieved anything of a useful and practical nature.

Thomas Gainsborough, The Painter.

Humphrey Gainsborough's younger brother, Thomas, was equally full of boyish pranks. G. W. Fulcher, in a "Life of Thomas Gainsborough," published in 1856, two years before the old Grammar School was demolished, and the present buildings erected, wrote this little verse about Tom—

"The bench on which he sat, while deep employed,
Though mangled, hacked, and hewed, not yet destroyed,
The wall on which he tried his graving skill,
The very name he carved existing still."

He also made this comment, "Near his initials is a deep-cut figure in the mouldering wall, an evident caricature of the school master, which it requires no great stretch of imagination to attribute to the pen knife of Master Gainsborough."

At the age of 10 Thomas Gainsborough had made some progress in sketching and at 12 was a confirmed painter. His copy books were "illustrated with cuts" and his school mates' exercise books testified to his skill as a caricaturist. As a set-off for these pen-and-ink drawings, his chums would work his sums and prepare his Latin verses, so that his progress in learning was not rapid. Whenever he could, he would ramble in the woods and meadows, taking a crust of bread for his frugal lunch, and return at night with his sketch book filled with "studies" of landscapes and buildings and cottage homesteads. His father, as a special favour, would occasionally write to his uncle, the Rev. Humphrey Burroughs, asking for a holiday for Tom. One day, when he had declined to do so, the boy imitated his father's handwriting, and presented his uncle with a slip of paper, with the customary request, "Give Tom a holiday." Tom then started off on his planned sketching expedition minus, however, the lunch. His absence without leave was discovered and his father, fancying he saw in his son a dangerous forger, wrathfully exclaimed, "Tom will be hanged!" When, however, Mrs. Gainsborough laid the truant's spirited sketches before the irate father, he changed his tone and declared "Tom will be a genius!"

At about 14, Thomas Gainsborough was sent to London to study art. He married at 18, and achieved success as a portrait painter at Ipswich. When he was 33 (that is, in 1760), he removed to Bath and became a popular figure in fashionable circles. When the Royal Academy was inaugurated by Sir Joshua Reynolds in 1768 he was a foundation member. Many of Gainsborough's pictures are immensely valuable to-day. "Lady Mulgrave" was sold in 1895 for 10,000 guineas, whilst his most famous portrait of "Master Buttall" known as the "Blue Boy," changed hands at nearly a quarter of a million pounds, but these sale prices were wholly exceptional.

Over 200 of his works were shown at the great Gainsborough Exhibition in 1885, including the portrait of his brother, the Rev. Humphrey Gainsborough.

Extract from the Will of Thomas Gainsborough, Clothier, of Sudbury.

The following is an extract from the Will of Thomas Gainsborough, clothier, of Sudbury—uncle of Humphrey Gainsborough—from the Probate Copy in Bury St. Edmunds Muniment Room :—

“ 23rd February, 1738.

“ And whereas I have for some years past taken upon myself the care of Hump. Gainsborough, one of the sons of my Brother, John Gainsborough, who is now in London, a pupil at the Academy where Mr. Emes is Master in order to be trained up for the Ministry, my will is that my Executors do pay twenty pounds a year towards defraying the charges that may attend his being trained up as aforesaid for three years from the date hereof. . . I bequeath . . . to Humphrey Gainsborough, John Gainsborough, Thomas Gainsborough, Sarah Gainsborough, Susan Gainsborough, and Elizabeth Gainsborough, six of the Children of my brother John Gainsborough, Ten Pounds a peice . . . I also give to the Presbyterean or Independent Minister that shall stately preach the Gospell at the Meeting Place where I myself do attend to hear the Word of God preacht, who is now Mr. John Ford. But if it is the said Mr. Ford or whoever else it may be that shall be regularly chosen to succeed him stately to preach at the said Meeting Place, I give to him ten pounds. . . I give to the poor that shall be in Communion and esteemed members of the dissenting Church of which I myself am a member ten pounds. I also give to the poor that attend to hear the Word of God preacht at the aforesaid Meeting place but that are not members ten pounds. . .

[He also refers to other charitable bequests of himself and his sister Margaret Fenn ; and he instructs his executors to see that Thomas Gainsborough, another of the sons of his brother John, may be brought up to some light handicraft trade likely to provide a comfortable maintenance, and to give up £20 to bind him out to such trade.]

Proved in Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 5th April, 1739.”

Humphrey Gainsborough's Entry Into The Congregational Ministry.

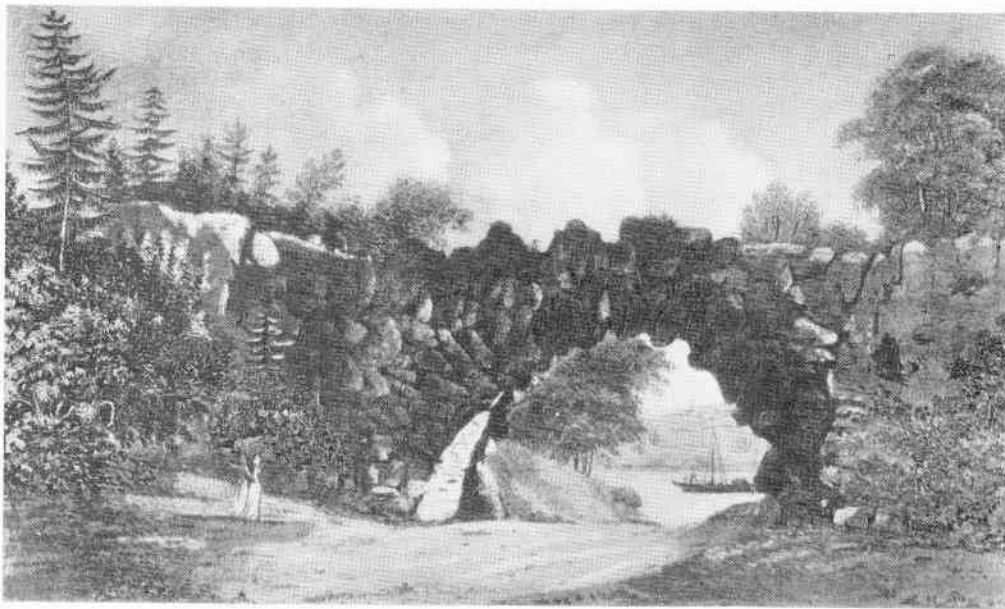
Of Humphrey Gainsborough, a correspondent in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1785, said : “ One of the most ingenious men that ever lived and one of the best that ever died.” The same writer also said “ Perhaps of all the mechanical geniuses this or any nation has produced, Mr. Gainsborough was the first.”

It is not known when Humphrey Gainsborough left Sudbury Grammar School, or what led him to become a Congregational Minister, but he was a Theological student in 1736, when he was about 18 years of age, for he received a grant from the Trotman Trust. He studied at the Congregational Fund Board Academy at Moorfields, London, where John Eames, F.R.S., was the tutor. The hymn-writer, Isaac Watts, described Humphrey Gainsborough's tutor as “ the most learned man I ever knew.” John Eames was a friend of Sir Isaac Newton, and attracted some most distinguished pupils to his Academy, one of whom was Samuel Pike, who was minister at Henley Congregational Church, 1740–1747, and later succeeded John Eames as Tutor, when the Academy was removed to a house in Hoxton. As John Eames gave lectures in mathematics, Humphrey Gainsborough owed not a little of his scientific and mathematical distinction to his able tutor in Moorfields Academy.

It is probable that he also studied under Dr. Doddridge at the famous Academy at Northampton, but his name is not included in the supposedly complete list of Doddridge's students compiled by the Rev. Job Orton. On October 1st, 1740, Dr. Doddridge wrote to the Rev. Mr. Needham that “ He hoped the people at Newport Pagnell were likely to be very happy in a worthy and excellent young minister who was just coming among them.” The young student minister referred to by Dr. Doddridge seems almost certainly to be Humphrey Gainsborough, who was called to the pastoral office at Newport Pagnell on October 20th, 1743.



Copies by Geo. Bushell & Son, Photographers, Henley-on-Thames.
PARK PLACE, BERKSHIRE, as Humphrey Gainsborough saw it from the Oxfordshire side of the River Thames. (From an 18th Century engraving). Park Place was the home of Frederick, Prince of Wales, from 1738-1752.



Copies by Geo. Bushell & Son, Photographers, Henley-on-Thames.
THE GREAT ARCH AT PARK PLACE, built by Humphrey Gainsborough, which carries the road from Henley to Wargrave across the "Happy Valley."

The Engineer and Inventor, of Henley.—The New Road.

When Humphrey Gainsborough settled in Henley in 1748 at the age of 30 (the exact date of his induction to the pastorate of the Congregational Church is, unfortunately, not known) his powers of invention and skill at engineering were soon appreciated. One of his first achievements at Henley was the construction of the road over White Hill, thus making the town more accessible. This necessitated cutting off the top of this steep hill and moving the gravel and chalk to fill in the valley below to make the causeway. Gainsborough did this by his arrangement of a loaded truck at one end of a long chain and empty wagons at the other end. This procedure was similar to that practised by Ralph Allen when he was building Prior Park at Bath and working the stone quarries in that neighbourhood.

Two further cuttings were made in 1829 and 1831
26" was the depth of these cuttings.

The Improvements to Park Place.

In 1752 General Conway bought Park Place from the executors of Frederick, Prince of Wales (Son of George II and father of George III) who had lived there with the Princess of Wales since 1738.

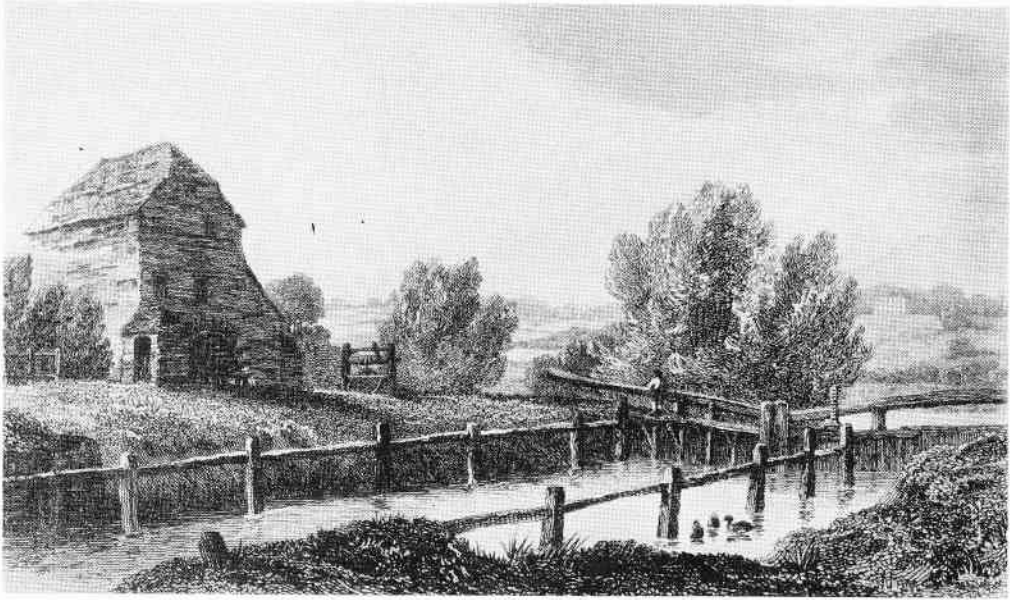
General Conway endeavoured at Park Place to turn his sword into a plough share, and he made many improvements to the estate. In all these improvements he consulted Humphrey Gainsborough, and we can be quite certain that Gainsborough was known to George III and all the eminent visitors who came to Park Place. It was one of the cultural and social centres of 18th century England, and typified the patronage which the aristocracy and the upper middle classes gave to the arts and science. One of the most notable of the improvements to the estate was the building of the bridge over what is called the "Happy Valley," which carries the road from Henley to Wargrave. The engineer and adviser for this bridge building was Humphrey Gainsborough. The stones for the bridge were brought from the ruins of Reading Abbey, and though they adorn the bridge, one must lament this act of vandalism typical of England in the 18th century. Horace Walpole (afterwards Lord Orford) was an intimate friend of General Conway and in his Letters (volume 4) he said, "Oct. 3rd, 1763: The works at Park Place go on bravely, the cottage will be very pretty, the bridge sublime, composed of loose rocks that appear to have been tumbled together there, the very wreck of the Deluge. One stone is of 14cwt.! It will be worth a hundred of Palladios' that are only fit to be used in an opera."

A BRICK ARCH
STONE BALUSTRADE

General Conway lived at Park Place until his death on July 9th, 1795. During the long residence of the Conways at Park Place, a large number of celebrated and distinguished people visited them. Son of the first Lord Conway, he was born in 1720, educated at Eton, and entered the army, taking part in the Battles of Dettingen, Loffelt, and Fontenoy. He commanded the British Forces in Germany in 1761, but was dismissed in 1765 on account of his persistent resistance of war and corruption! He returned to London and became a Member of Parliament and Secretary of State from 1765 to 1768, and then went back to the army. He became a Field Marshal in 1782, and Governor of Jersey in 1785.

General Conway is the only resident of Henley to share with Humphrey Gainsborough the honour of being painted by Thomas Gainsborough. Conway's portrait was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1780 and now belongs to the Duke of Argyll at Inveraray Castle.

His wife was the beautiful and accomplished widow of the Earl of Aylesbury, and his daughter, the Honourable Mrs. Damer (born in 1748), became an eminent sculptress. When the present Henley Bridge with five arches was erected in 1786, Mrs. Damer chiselled the two masks on the centre arch, the one to the north representing Old Father Thames, and the other Isis. She modelled an eagle, a statue of George III (a frequent visitor to Park Place) and one of Mrs. Siddons, a bust of Nelson and of George IV, and a bust of Charles Fox which she gave to Napoleon Bonaparte in 1790.

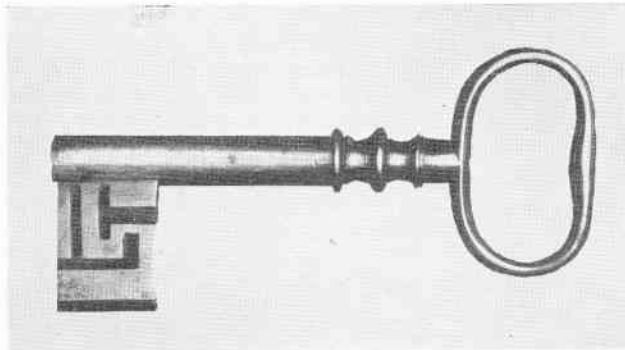


Copies by Geo. Bushell & Son, Photographers, Henley-on-Thames.

SHIPLAKE LOCK, approximately as it was in 1773, when the first Pound Locks on the River Thames were built under the superintendence of Humphrey Gainsborough. (From the engraving by S. Owen in 1809).



Copies by Geo. Bushell & Son, Photographers, Henley-on-Thames.



Copies by Geo. Bushell & Son, Photographers, Henley-on-Thames.

THE FIRE-PROOF BOX AND KEY made by Humphrey Gainsborough.
This Cast-iron Box is believed to be the oldest Fire-Resisting Safe in
the world.

Gainsborough's Pendulum Clock.

He also made an ingenious clock which Philip Thicknesse described as an approach to perpetual motion. Thomas Gainsborough gave the clock to Thicknesse after Humphrey's death, who presented it to the British Museum in 1788. This also has not yet been traced, though it is entered in the Museum registers.

In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1785, Philip Thicknesse says, "I have a clock of his making in my possession, and which I have seen go with accuracy, though all the parts were not finished (for if it had, it would have been a perfect perpetual motion), that is a wonderful piece of mechanism, every part of which was made by his own hands. It is a pendulum clock in which a tin box is charged with a certain number of musket bullets. When the clock goes, a little ivory bucket appears loaded with one of them, and having slowly descended to the bottom of the case, it is so received there as to open a valve and discharge the load. It then ascends empty to the clock, and there receives a fresh charge and thus goes till it has expended the whole of the original ammunition; and had the ingenious artist lived, I perceive there are inactive wheels which were designed to fetch up the bullets and do what must now be done by hand."

Another writer, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1786, says, "As to the bullet clock which Polyxena is in possession of, I well remember it; it is a curious piece of mechanism and deserves a fuller description than he has given. The inactive wheels were, as he rightly imagines, intended to fetch up the bullets by means of a vane, which was to have been kept in motion by a current of air directed against it; but Mr. Gainsborough was too sensible a man, and too good a mechanic to dream of forming a "perfect perpetual motion,"—just such a perpetual motion as this would have been, are the present new-invented watches, which require no other power to keep them going than that motion which is communicated to them by the play of the thigh in walking."

The Oldest Fire-Resisting Safe in the World.

He was the first man to invent *fire-proof boxes*. Climenson states, "He gave one to a friend; a fire happening, it was dug up and the contents found uninjured." One of these fire-proof boxes is in the church vestry now, and it seems reasonable to claim that it is the oldest fire-resisting safe in the world. The managing director of Chubb & Son's Lock and Safe Co., Ltd., states, "Pride of place is given to a Richard Scott (1801) who was given the first grant of Letters Patent for a fire-resisting safe. The next one was William Marr (1834) and then Charles Chubb (1835), but, of course, it may very well be that Gainsborough invented a form of construction which was not patented."

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF CAST-IRON BOX AT HENLEY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

(KINDLY GIVEN BY MR. P. J. PACKMAN, M.S.I.A., Mechanical Engineer,
of Twyford Berks.

The box is 21in. long, 13½in. wide and 12in. deep. It is made of cast iron, approximately ¾in. thick with a hinged cast-iron lid which is a remarkably good fit between the front and side walls, especially as there are no machined faces or edges.

When shut, the top surface of the lid coincides exactly with the top edges of the front and sides of the box, so that the external appearance is that of a clean rectangular block except that the top and side faces are ornamented by panels.

The quality of the casting is most striking; the flatness of the large surfaces, the clean finish of the panels, and the freedom from blowholes indicates great skill

on the part of the founders. The ornamentation on the panels is very similar to that which was used on valve boxes of very early steam engines.

Below the cast-iron lid is fitted a lock having three connected bolts which slide through rectangular holes cut in a sheet iron casing. These bolts are connected to a steel frame which is operated by the key. The key is a fine example of craftsmanship equal in quality to the work of a modern tool maker or instrument maker, and the manner in which the ward slots are cut and the way that they co-operate with the internal elements of the lock, indicate mechanical ingenuity as well as good craftsmanship on the part of its maker.

The key (which is 3½ in. long) has to be inserted through a keyhole in the centre of the lid, but this keyhole is normally shielded by a small pivoted brass cover. The cover is locked in the shielding position by a concealed spring-loaded dowel, which can be disengaged by pressing a button located at the side of the keyhole. The button fits the lid so well that it is not readily noticeable, and as the keyhole cannot be exposed without the discovery, and proper operation of the button, it would be difficult for any uninformed person to open the box even if the key was available.

The hinges, handles, parts of the lock, and even the main screws securing the lock casing, are all the work of a first class blacksmith.

There are no identifying names on the box to indicate its age or the maker's name, but the symbol N 282 is cut on the lid.

The Tide-Mill, the Drill Plough and the Weighing Machine.

The Royal Society of Arts awarded Gainsborough £50 for his invention of a Tide-Mill in 1761, and £30 for a Drill Plough in 1766. In 1776 Henley required a weighing machine for wagons, carts and other vehicles in the market place, and the Corporation of Henley paid Humphrey Gainsborough £5 5s. for his weighing machine. The first compound lever machine for heavy weighing was made by Wyatt in 1741, so that Gainsborough was not the pioneer for this particular instrument.

HENLEY
REPLACED
IT 3 YRS
LATER

Hydraulic Machines and Tool-Making.

Richard Edgeworth, the inventor, who once lived at Hare Hatch, said of his friend, Humphrey Gainsborough, in his autobiography (*Memoirs of R. L. Edgeworth*, 1820, Volume I, page 158), "I do not think that I have ever known a man of more inventive genius. As many parts of the high land in the neighbourhood of Henley were ill supplied with water, every contrivance that promised to facilitate the means of raising it, were eagerly adopted. This induced Mr. Gainsborough to turn his thoughts to this subject. His inventive faculty might have been applied more advantageously, for it must be obvious, even to those who are slightly conversant with mechanics, that no possible application of the powers of men or animals can alter their effect in any considerable degree, and that the application of wind is too variable, and of steam commonly too complicated for domestic purposes. He, notwithstanding, erected several ingenious hydraulic machines in various parts of the country, which showed a fertile invention, and in all their parts a sound knowledge of the principles of mechanics. In many instances he gave a large scope to his genius in obviating local difficulties and *inventing tools* to execute his purposes in country places where he could not enjoy the resources of the Capital. He was, besides, an excellent workman, and he had early trained his thoughts to the construction

of timepieces for ascertaining the longitudes. I make no doubt that he would have succeeded as well as any man who could have been his competitor. I believe I took from him hints for some small contrivances which I have since executed, but, were he alive, he would not complain . . ."

Inventor of a Steam Engine with a Separate Condenser.

The most remarkable of all of Humphrey Gainsborough's achievements was the invention of a working model of the *Steam Engine* with a separate chamber for condensing steam. Some have believed that Humphrey Gainsborough, and not James Watt, deserved the credit for being the first to discover the principle of the separate condenser. James Watt (1736-1819), was repairing a model of Newcomen's engine in 1763 and conceived the idea of the separate condenser in 1765. Watt patented a model of the steam engine in 1769.

The earliest authoritative evidence that we have of Gainsborough's connection with the steam engine is just before the Bill for the extension of Watt's patent was brought before Parliament in February, 1775. Watt's petition was presented to the House of Commons on February 23rd, 1775, but *17 days earlier*, on February 6th, 1775, Humphrey Gainsborough entered a petition for a patent for his invention of "a steam engine upon a new construction much more useful to the public than the common steam engine, by having much greater power and velocity." (*State Papers, Domestic. Entry Book*, Vol. 265, page 355). No patent was granted on this petition and this was due primarily to the action of Watt, who filed a caveat against the grant. The effect of this proceeding was that the Solicitor General could not allow the petition to go forward until he had satisfied himself that Gainsborough had an invention different from that of Watt, or until the caveat was withdrawn. Watt endeavoured to arrange a meeting in London to discuss the matter and wrote to Gainsborough as follows:—

"I am sorry to have had occasion to give you this trouble, but judged it better for both parties that the matter should be cleared up now than to be left to be the source of lawsuits afterwards, as might be the case if the inventions clash with one another, as I hope they do not."

Unfortunately, Humphrey Gainsborough was ill, and unable to come to London, so on May 16th, 1775, he wrote from Henley to James Watt:—

"Those who know both inventions have assured me that mine is totally different from yours. I must, therefore, leave you to act at your pleasure at the Patent Office, especially as it is impossible for me to be in town at present, and when God only knows, both I and Mrs. Gainsborough being very ill. As you have been ungentle enough to give me unnecessary trouble, I am only sorry that I did not endeavour to hinder your Bill passing in any form, which I have good reason to believe would have been in my power. However, I wish you success so far as your invention can go, being well persuaded it will do me no harm, it having once been my own, but was for many reasons given up for that which I am now upon." (*Doldowlod Papers. Gainsborough to Watt, 1775, May 16th*).

This makes it clear that Humphrey Gainsborough had been at work for some time on the problem of the improvement of the steam engine, and that he had already given up Watt's plan for another that he considered better.

Humphrey Gainsborough's petition seems to have remained in abeyance until July, 1776, when, upon a reminder from his solicitor, Boulton proposed a meeting at the office of the Solicitor General. Again Gainsborough was unable to attend, but Boulton did meet him later on, and seems to have made some proposition, the nature of which is not stated.

His Failing Health.

It is important to understand the circumstances which hindered Humphrey Gainsborough in pressing his claim for making improvements in the steam engine. He was deeply attached to his wife, Mary. Unfortunately, she had a cancer on the breast, and through a long and painful illness he nursed her himself, with unparalleled devotion. As Philip Thicknesse in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1785 said, "Such was his affection and care for her that lest she should want his spiritual and corporal assistance, he would not quit either her apartment or her bed; the consequence was that it proved fatal to both." Mrs. Gainsborough died of cancer on October 27th, 1775, and was buried on the north side of the Independent Chapel at Henley.

Thomas Gainsborough, R.A., was now at the height of his fame as a portrait painter, and had taken apartments at Schomberg House, Pall Mall, from 1774. Royalty and the aristocracy of 18th century England were all proud to claim that they had sat to be painted by Thomas Gainsborough. In spite of great pressure of work, the painter found time for occasional visits to Henley, to comfort and cheer the brother whom he loved. After Mrs. Gainsborough's funeral, Humphrey Gainsborough stayed with Thomas at Schomberg House for a short period. The following is a quotation from a letter that Thomas Gainsborough wrote to his sister, Mrs. Gibbon, wife of a Dissenting Minister at Bath.

"London. Nov. 13th, 1775.—Dear Sister, We return you our best thanks for the excellent present of fish, which turned out as good as ever was eaten, and came very timely for brother Humphry to take part with us. He went home to Henley to-day, having been with us ten days, which was as long as he could well be absent from his business of collecting the tolls upon the river. He was as well as could be expected, considering the affliction for the loss of his poor wife. We did all we could to comfort him and wish him every possible happiness, as he is a good creature . . ."

Humphrey Gainsborough was now rapidly failing in health and on August 23rd, 1776, he had an appointment to dine with some friends who lived by the river. When he did not appear, his friends became alarmed and sent out enquirers to seek for him. He was found dead on the river bank in the "Lion" meadows, having about £20 (Burn says £70), of the river tolls in his pocket. A publication by Mr. G. W. Fulcher, in 1847, has this interesting comment, "The immediate cause of his death was a fit of apoplexy. He was on the point of contracting a second marriage when the melancholy event took place." He was buried by the side of his wife on the north side of the Independent Chapel, and directly over the spot (according to Burn) a plain white marble slab was placed on the chapel wall with the following inscription:—

To the Memory of
Mary, Wife of the Rev.
Humphrey Gainsborough
who died 27th October, 1775,
Aged 64 years.

also the above
Mr. Gainsborough
Died suddenly, After being
upwards of 28 years minister of
This Congregation.
23rd August, 1776.
"Be Ye also ready."

There is an old slip of paper in the handwriting of the Rev. John Nelson Goulty, second cousin of Lord Nelson, who was minister of Henley Congregational Church, 1815-1824. This records the words on Humphrey Gainsborough's memorial stone and is practically identical with Burn. Mr. Goulty, however, wrote the word "Obit" in front of the date of Gainsborough's death, and added after the date, "Aged 57 years."

When the old Independent Chapel was demolished in 1908, a stone was re-erected on the south wall of the new Henley Congregational Church, where it may now be seen. Curiously enough the wording on the stone does not agree with the wording recorded by Burn in 1861. The inscription on the stone existing to-day, which appears to be a Portland Slab and is probably the grave-stone, reads as follows :

In memory of the
Revd. Humphry Gainsborough
28 years minifter in this place
born in 1719
Died fuddenly Augt. 23rd, 1776.
Also of
Mary, his wife
who died 27th Octr., 1775
Aged 64 years.

The Portrait by Thomas Gainsborough, R.A.

Humphrey Gainsborough's portrait was painted by Thomas Gainsborough, and he is the only Congregational Minister ever to have had that honour. The portrait was said to have been painted for Thomas Hall, of Harpsden Court, Henley (who was buried in a Vault in the Independent Chapel Burial Ground on February 21st, 1793, aged 73) and was sold by Hall's descendants on May 8th, 1897. It came into the possession of Lord Leith of Fyvie by 1904, and now belongs to his grand-daughter, Mrs. G. E. R. Prior, of Hatherleigh, near Okehampton. By courtesy of Mrs. Prior, this portrait of Humphrey Gainsborough has been photographed and is reproduced on page 8. Mr. G. W. Fulcher in his *Life of Thomas Gainsborough* described the portrait as, "Admirable; the face looks towards the light and is full of life" and mentioned that Mr. W. A. Sharpe spoke of it as, "A face denoting great intelligence, refinement and piety, somewhat sorrowful withal." It is thought that this portrait was painted between 1774 and 1776 when Thomas Gainsborough was living at Pall Mall, only about 35 miles from Henley and when he was paying visits to his brother during and after Mrs. Gainsborough's illness. The portrait in its artistic treatment is akin to that of the famous "Parish Clerk" in the National Gallery.

Another portrait of Humphrey Gainsborough painted by Thomas Gainsborough, a replica of the picture now with Mrs. Prior, is owned by Mr. W. S. Sharpe, of 12, New Court, Carey Street, London, W.C.2, the grandson of Mr. W. A. Sharpe, who died in 1865. This portrait was purchased in 1841 by Mr. W. A. Sharpe from Mr. Richard Lane, A.R.A., the grandson of Humphrey Gainsborough's sister, Mrs. Susannah Gardiner (of Bath).

A third portrait of Humphrey Gainsborough was painted by a nephew, Gainsborough Dupont, and was a copy of the portrait by Thomas Gainsborough. It was bought by Mr. J. H. Chance at Sudbury on May 29th, 1874, and exhibited as an original Gainsborough portrait at the Royal Academy in 1886, but it has not been heard of since.

The Loss of Humphrey Gainsborough's Steam Engine.

Thomas Gainsborough acted as his executor, and the following extract from another of his letters to Mrs. Gibbon, is most illuminating :—

London. Nov. 5th, 1776.

Dear Sister,

I have been going to write to you every post for this month past, but was desirous of acquainting you with what I had done towards settling my brother Humphry's affairs, and therefore postponed writing till I had sold the stock Mr. Cooper* advises me to keep on the house till we can make the most of the steam engine, (as the work, if taken to pieces, perhaps may never be put together again) and also the maid in the house, lest any discovery should be made of it. The goods are sold, but none of the beds, nor have I any account yet from Henley, so as to be able to settle anything . . .

This letter raises two problems—what happened to the steam engine after Humphrey Gainsborough's death, and which was the house in Henley where he lived and where he kept it ?

Philip Thicknesse said that Thomas gave him the " model of his steam engine ; that engine alone would have furnished a fortune to all the Gainsboroughs and their descendants, had not that unsuspecting, good-hearted man (*i.e.*, Humphrey Gainsborough) let a cunning designing artist see it, and who surreptitiously carried it off in his mind's eye . . ." H. W. Dickinson and Rhys Jenkins state (in *James Watt and the Steam Engine*, O.U.P., 1927) " Thicknesse in turn presented it to Fores, a bookseller in Piccadilly, who offered to sell it to Boulton and Watt. This was in 1785, nine years after the death of the inventor ; Fores refers to it as " the much improved and last finished model made by the late ingenious Mr. Gainsborough of Henley for raising water by steam " and says that " it is very much decayed and disordered by being exposed to the weather by his brother in Pall Mall " ; he concludes his letter with the statement, " I am told it will make any man's fortune who can carry it into execution." Boulton and Watt did not buy the model, and its ultimate fate is not known."

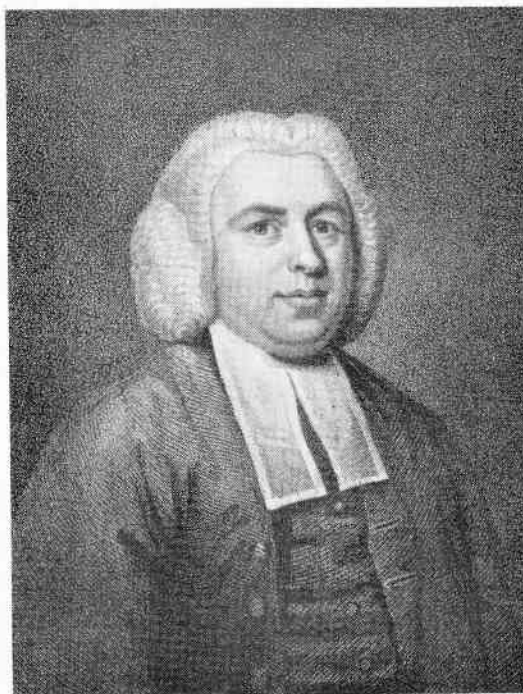
In the Boulton and Watt collection at Birmingham Public Reference Library, there is a letter from John Wilkinson, the Iron-Founder, dated 12th November, 1776, London, to Boulton and Watt, Soho, which contains this statement :—

" Mr. M(oore) informs me that Gainsbro' is dead. His Bror, a painter, has been offered from Cornwall £1000 for that invention—that he is at a loss to act being no judge—whether to sell it for that sum or take out a patent."

This appears to refer to Humphrey Gainsborough's steam engine, but it seems clear that Thomas Gainsborough failed to take any action at all.

It is a tragedy that this historic model of Humphrey Gainsborough's steam engine should have disappeared. No wonder he has never been adequately honoured for his great inventive genius! First of all, he had to compete with an engineer and rival in James Watt, who was very astute when it came to legal and financial matters, and was, therefore, able to claim the full credit for the discovery of the separate condenser. If Gainsborough's health had recovered in 1776, so that he could have argued his case before the Solicitor General in London, perhaps Humphrey Gainsborough would today rank equally with James Watt. Then, after his death, Humphrey Gainsborough was robbed of his proper place in fame by the careless way in which his affairs were handled, causing the loss of the model of his steam engine.

* Mr. Cooper became Town Clerk of Henley in 1777.



REV. SAMUEL PIKE, a fellow student with Humphrey Gainsborough at Moorfields Academy, London, and Minister at Henley Congregational Church, 1740-1747. Mr. Pike was only 23 when he came to Henley straight from the Academy, and it is probable that he was instrumental in bringing Humphrey Gainsborough to Henley. (From an engraving in Walter Wilson's "History of Dissenting Churches)."

See Page 13.

Was Watt the First to Discover the Separate Condenser?

However, even in James Watt's lifetime, there were those who spoke in favour of Humphrey Gainsborough's invention. Jabez Hornblower, in his account of the steam engine in *The Treatise of Mechanics*, by Olinthus Gilbert Gregory, which appeared in 1806, says, "About the time that Mr. Watt was engaged in bringing forward the improvement of the engine, it occurred to Mr. Gainsborough, the pastor of a dissenting congregation at Henley-on-Thames, and brother to the painter of that name, that it would be a great improvement to condense the steam in a vessel distinct from the cylinder, where the vacuum was formed; and he undertook a set of experiments to apply the principle he had established, which he did, by placing a small vessel by the side of the cylinder, which was to receive just so much steam from the boiler as would discharge the air and condensing water, in the same manner as was the practice from the cylinder itself in the Newcomenian method, that is, by the shifting valve and sinking pipe. In this manner, he used no more steam than was just necessary for that particular purpose, which at the instant of discharging was entirely unconnected with the main cylinder; so that the cylinder was kept constantly as hot as the steam could make it. The circumstances as here related, received some confirmation by a declaration of Mr. Gainsborough, the painter, to Mr. J. More, late Secretary to the Society of Arts, who gave the writer of this article the information. Whether he clothed the cylinder as Mr. Watt does, is uncertain; but his model succeeded so well, as to induce some of the Cornish mine adventurers to send their engineers to examine it and their report was so favourable as to induce an intention of adopting it."

The report of the Cornish engineers was given just after the passing of the Act of Parliament for the extension of Watt's patent for 25 years, from May 22nd, 1775. Hornblower adds, "It was asserted by Mr. Gainsborough that the mode of condensing out of the cylinder was communicated to Mr. Watt by the officious folly of an acquaintance who was fully informed of what Mr. Gainsborough had in hand." In *James Watt and the Steam Engine* there is this admission, based on the Doldowlod Papers. Boulton to Watt (May, 1775). "That Boulton and Watt had some knowledge of Gainsborough's plan seems quite clear from the fact that at the time they were in difficulties with the piston of the first Soho engine, Boulton expressed the wish that they knew how Gainsborough packed his piston." Also the same writers say, "In the course of the Actions at law brought by Boulton and Watt against infringers of Watt's first patent, the name of Humphrey Gainsborough was brought up as having forestalled Watt in the invention of the separate condenser. This was 20 years after Gainsborough's death . . ." but Dickinson and Jenkins deny the value of this by contending that Gainsborough's discovery was after Watt's.

Galloway, in his *History of the Steam Engine* (London, 1828) says, with reference to Watt's claim to the invention: "We should act unfairly if we concealed that Mr. Watt has been denied by some men of great respectability the merit of discovering the separate condenser."

The Evidence of Humphrey Gainsborough's Character.

Apparently, it is not possible now to prove that Humphrey Gainsborough was the real discoverer of the principle of the separate condenser for the steam engine, but it is high time that justice is done to the memory of one of the great Englishmen of the 18th century. Moral and spiritual factors are more reliable pointers to truth than material and legal issues. Take for example this quotation given on page 46 of *James Watt and the Steam Engine*, "While he was away Boulton wrote to tell Watt about the enquiries and orders for engines that were coming in. He further sent the disagreeable news that one Humphrey Gainsborough, an Independent

Minister at Henley-on-Thames, had made the discovery of an engine claimed to be seven times better than the common engine. Boulton wrote half humorously: "If we had a hundred wheels (that is rotary engines) ready made, and a hundred small engines like Bow Engine, and twenty large ones executed, we could readily dispose of them. Therefore, let us make hay while the sun shines, and gather our barns full before the dark cloud of age lowers upon us and before any more Tubal Cains, Watts, Dr. Faustus or Gainsboroughs arise with serpents like Moses's that devour all others . . . as to your absence, say nothing about it. I will forgive it this time, provided you promise me never to marry again."—(*Boulton Papers*, no date. Cf. Muirhead: *Mech. Inv.* II. 102).

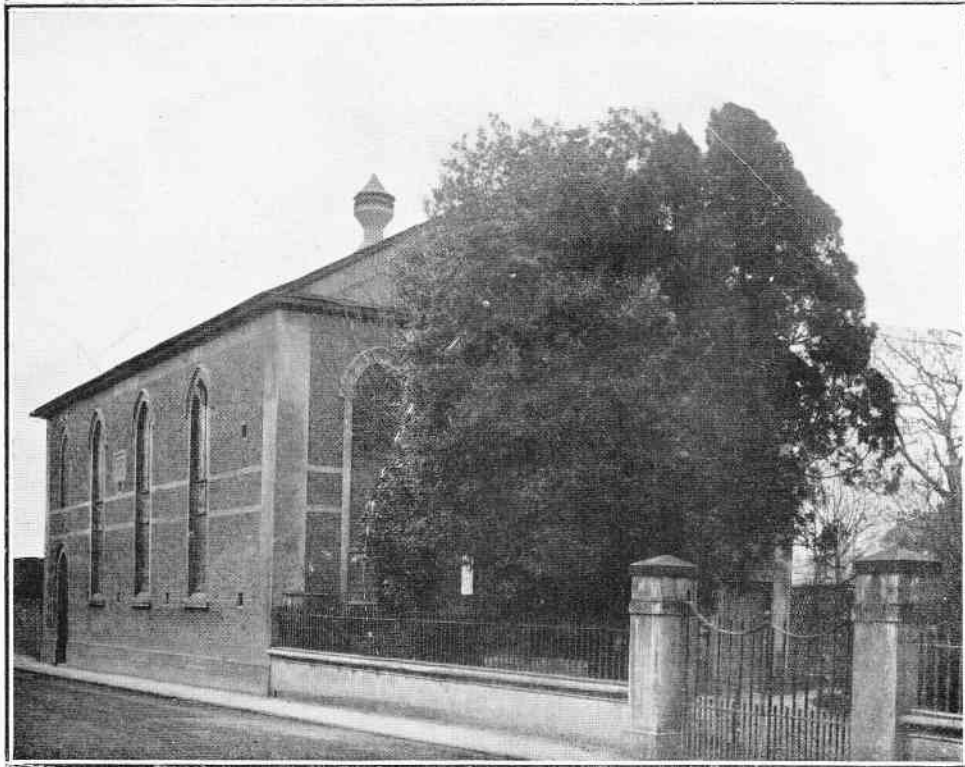
The aim of Boulton and Watt was hardly the service of humanity, but simply self interest. "Gather our barns full" was indeed their over-riding purpose.

H. W. Dickinson in *A Short History of the Steam Engine* (Cambridge University Press, 1939) says: "It is hardly necessary to state that the success of Watt's engine brought into the field both inventors of other forms of engines and also persons who sought to infringe or evade the patent. It is pertinent to observe here that Watt refused persistently to allow anyone to make his engine or any part of it under license. This policy coupled with the long period that the patent lasted, undoubtedly held back the development of the steam engine. . . We are of the opinion that Watt's master patent for the separate condenser, with the extension granted to him by Parliament, amounting in all to 31 years, was unduly long in the public interest. It had tied down progress to the wheels of Watt's chariot . . ." Watt's patent of 1769 was for 15 years. In 1775 when the patent had only eight more years to run "Boulton with his business acumen, realised that the patent would expire before the profit-making stage could be reached. The obvious thing to do was to try and get an extension of the patent." (*Dickinson*).

James Granger, the celebrated Vicar of Shiplake (1747-1766) spoke of Humphrey Gainsborough as a "clever, ingenious, and talented man." In 1893 Mrs. Climenson, wife of the then Vicar of Shiplake, in her excellent *History of Shiplake* says "His inventions and improvements here have never been sufficiently commemorated. He was offered by some nobleman in the neighbourhood good Church preferment if he chose to be ordained, but his answer was dignified and decided. "I dwell among my people," he asserted and remained where he was. W. H. Summers, in his *History of the Berkshire, South Oxon and South Bucks Congregational Churches* (1905) quotes Philip Thicknesse in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1785, "Considerable preferment was offered him in the Established Church, but nothing could prevail upon him to conform, while his conscience disapproved of the terms." Clearly, Humphrey Gainsborough was a man of integrity and high principle, and not a self-seeker. He was not the kind of man to claim that he had discovered the separate condenser for the steam engine, unless he really had done so. The character of Humphrey Gainsborough and his inventive genius in so many spheres, show that he is worthy of the highest praise for his engineering skill.

Humphrey Gainsborough and The Manse, Henley-on-Thames.

The other problem raised by Thomas Gainsborough's letter of November 5th, 1776, to Mrs. Gibbon, is the location of the house in Henley where Gainsborough lived and where he kept his steam engine. It seems possible that he lived in "The Manse" for at least the last six of his 28 years in Henley and probably for the whole of that time. A deed of July 24th, 1770, conveyed the house and garden for the sum of £100 from Thomas Hall, of Harpsden Court, to Peter Sarney. The deed states that the house was then in the possession of Peter Sarney, and his under tenants. There is clear evidence that the Manse was originally two cottages joined



THE OLD INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, HENLEY-ON-THAMES. The church where Humphrey Gainsborough laboured from 1748-1776. Prior to the erection of the chapel in 1719, the congregation worshipped in a Barn near the site of the Chapel. This Barn was demolished in 1809 at a cost of £149 3s., when presumably it had become very dilapidated. Humphrey Gainsborough therefore saw the Barn which was used during the days of persecution (1662-1689) and was purchased in 1692 for the sum of £40, by the first Trustees of the Henley Congregational Church.

together, and it is quite feasible that Mr. and Mrs. Gainsborough were under tenants of Peter Sarney, a Henley brewer, who was appointed one of the 10 trustees of the Church on July 22nd, 1758. After Peter Sarney's death in 1784, his executors, Joseph Allwright Rackstraw (a grocer and tallow chandler) and Samuel Allnutt (a mercer and draper), sold the property to the Church for £80 upon this condition, "To be used as a place of residence for the minister and his family and not to be applied to any other use." One of the ten trustees who signed this document on behalf of the Church, was Thomas Hall, of Harpsden Court. The Manse, therefore, did not legally belong to the Church until 1784, eight years after Humphrey Gainsborough's death. There is a heavy wrought-iron chain nearly five feet in length, fixed to the wall in the hall of the Manse, which can be hooked across the door as a protection against intruders. This appears to be just the kind of chain Humphrey Gainsborough himself could have made, perhaps to ensure the safety of the model of his steam engine kept somewhere in the Manse. In view of the fact that Mrs. Gainsborough was buried on the north side of the old Independent Chapel, it seems practically certain that Humphrey Gainsborough occupied the cottage which is now the eastern half of the Manse.

Humphrey Gainsborough's Work as a Minister of Religion.

Of Humphrey Gainsborough's work as a Congregational Minister, practically nothing is known, and no copies of his sermons can be traced. The records of the Newport Pagnell Congregational Church say, "The congregation was manifestly on the decline when on October 20th, 1743, the Church called Mr. Humphrey Gainsborough, a brother of the celebrated artist, to the pastoral office . . . He was not only an earnest philanthropist but a mechanical genius, several of his inventions being of general utility." In the *History of Nonconformity in Sudbury*, by W. W. Hodson (published, 1893) there is this statement, "Both Thomas and Humphrey occasionally visited their native town in after life and the latter preached in the chapel he had attended as a lad, and (Thomas says) "Delighted the people hugely."

Visit of John Wesley to Henley.

One thing however, that is known about his ministry is that he was a friend and admirer of John Wesley. John Wesley, who was educated at Charterhouse and Oxford, knew Henley quite well. He may have visited Henley during his student days at Oxford, but in his *Journal* the first reference to Henley is in 1737 when he stayed at a local inn, about a year before God "strangely warmed his heart" in Aldersgate Street. During Humphrey Gainsborough's ministry, John Wesley preached three times in the Henley Independent Chapel and Wesley's own comments on these visits are as follows :—

Thursday, Jan. 19th, 1764.—"I rode through Oxford to Henley. The people here bear no resemblance to those of Witney. I found a wild, staring congregation, many of them void both of common-sense and common decency. I spoke exceeding plain to them all, and reproved some of them sharply."

Friday, Jan. 20th, 1764.—"I took (probably my final) leave of Henley and returned to London."

Thursday, Nov. 10th, 1768.—"In the evening I preached in the Chapel at Henley to a considerable number of serious people. One or two of the baser sort made some noise, but I reproved them, and, for once, they were ashamed."

Friday, Nov. 11th, 1768.—"I returned to London."

Monday, Oct. 16th, 1769.—“ I began my journey into Oxfordshire and in the evening preached at Henley. A great part of the congregation was perfectly void both of sense and modesty, but at this time they were unusually quiet and I did not take them out of their depth, in opening and applying those words, ‘ It is appointed unto men once to die.’ ”

Tuesday, Oct. 17th, 1769.—“ We went to Wallingford. . . . ”

It is thrilling to think that John Wesley walked on the Manse lawn and saw the stately elm tree which still stands by the Church Hall, and to consider that he probably slept three nights in the Manse. How we should love to know what these two men talked about during these three visits! Most people admit that the preaching of John Wesley and George Whitefield, which ushered in the great Evangelical Revival, was the factor which saved England from violence and civil war when the Industrial Revolution was bearing its weight so heavily upon those who became the “ Hands ” in the new factories which were springing up, especially in the north of England. Humphrey Gainsborough and John Wesley must surely have discussed the social consequences of industrialisation, even though they could not foresee all that was to take place in the 19th and 20th centuries. If James Watt had died in 1776 and not Humphrey Gainsborough ; if Gainsborough had been acclaimed the inventor of the separate condenser of the steam engine and awarded a patent, perhaps his kindly Christian character would have helped things to become less hard for the working man and altered the tragic course of events which has produced so much bitterness between employers and employed. But, this is one of the “ Ifs ” of history!



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