

ACCOUNT OF HENRY QUICK

Written on 2 November 1873 by Henry Nicholls of the Zennor Tin Stamps, for Mr. Henry R. Cornish of Penzance. This is written in a highly eccentric style, and is most inaccurate as to dates and other facts, but it is valuable as an account of Quick by one who had known him well.

(extracts from MS in possession of P.A.S. Pool)

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I beg to send you the memors of the deceased Henry Quick, i.e. his life and death, who was born the only child of his parents at the Concor in the Lady Downs, situated part in the Parish of Zennor and the remainder in Towednack.

His father in 1789 had not long before from Madron came, to build a house and improve a farm at the Concor Downs, his heir to have. Disappointed by his father's death that brought the widow and child in want and woe, was oblige to sell the place to Deef Dick for little worth, and to the parish for relief did go.

They had to shift their quartens and settled in Mill Downs to spin and gather brooms, and carry them about to sell to them they knew, as the parish on them no mercy shew. Untill grown a man, and as a waterwheal that hast no stream that could not work, then took delight and self taught both day and night to meditate and compose his pious books.

In 1849 death took his tender mother at the age of 75, that almost cost his precious life, to weep and mourn his fate of loss and single life for 3 long years, untill mercy sent Jane Harry a maiden woman of 76 to offer herself his bride, acceptance of consent hastened them both to Morvah church to bind the bond of man and wife. With joy he home did take his bride, that only lived 7 years before laid on her grave of dusty bead.

For 4 years a widow's life, his scanty meals so poorley able to fit and git. And so meanly feed that reduced his strength at last to keep his dying bead. Then a disgraceful neighbour did him tend, to waste his 4 tons of tattered collected book. And some do say was hurried out of time to rifle before his death of all he left behind. His pilgrimage was only 63 to 1855, and if was better feed I think much longer would be alive. Now 18

years ago up to 1873 since he is dead, and nearly forgot of what manner of man he was. That now in dust with mother wife and so many more together in Zennor acre lie till the final sentence past.

His father and mother was Madron people, for this I proved in the year of 1850, by the evidence of the said deceased Henry Quick that was then alive before the Board at the Union, 23 years ago when Zennor made me Overseer. That lasted the whole day, as I had as much opposition to contend to find out Henry Quick true settlement after the old laws, before got the victory of proving him to be a Madron person on the a/c of his parents' parish, that had unfairly been chargeable on Zennor upwards of 16 years at 1/6d weekly relief. As to his wife family, she was one of the Harryes of Morvah's ancient family.

I also enclose you some riddles of Henry Quick's composing in the manner that he self taught himself, that he made me a present of in the year 1852. Hoping this will reach you and that you will be able to unfold the riddles and understand his mode of writing and my information in the way I give it to you.

Henry Quick was the most singular stature that I ever saw. True it is I never saw two person exactly alike. Henry Quick's stature when first formed in the womb was allotted to be a woman's, but something altered him to be born a male child contrary to order, for all his visible members agreed to that of woman wearing man's apparel. His voice visage and manners in labours and in company reserved and shamefaced of men. Quite unfit for business indeed there was no manly part altho so modest and good behaved.

I spent the whole day in the neighbouring where he resided for the most of his life, to obtain further information of all the precise exact dates of all the said occurrence. Finding all the aged people gone dead, and the young nearly forgot of what manner of person he was, to no purpose. But as I have omitted the exact day of dates, the years you may rely on to be pretty near.