

This information by courtesy of Dr Michael Whitfield

The Maurice Family

Doctor 1

Joseph Maurice was a successful apothecary in Bristol in the late 18th Century. He was born in 1765 may have been born in Springfield, Haverford West as that is where he retired and died in 1824, but he led a very successful business in Bristol as a surgeon apothecary at the bottom of St Michael's Hill.

According to a hand written document in the scrapbook of the Infirmary surgeon, Richard Smith¹, Maurice came as a poor boy from Haverford West and went to Charlton Yeatman [an apothecary who became the apothecary to the Infirmary in 1783] then at the Hotwells. After some time he went to London to better himself and got into a druggist's shop and after 5 years came home to see his friends and called on Yeatman who recommended him to old Browne, an apothecary. He stayed with him two or three years and had his name associated with Browne as a partner – he visited patients. Went to Lewin's Mead and was taken up by the Unitarians. Got acquainted with a baker [probably a banker]- married daughter 5000£ with her.

Mortimer was his nephew and he brought him up in Bristol - took him as apprentice. Lent him £1000 to buy partnership with Benjen .

His shop and dwelling house was quite large as there is evidence that he paid land tax in 1799 of 14 shillings for the house and 3 shillings for the garden in Griffin Lane that is the continuation between Park Row and Maudlin Street. That is considerably more than his neighbours paid for their properties. He and his wife Eliabeth Gillam had a number of apprentices, one being William Jeffries in 1793, Thomas Pople in 1795 and William Mortimer in 1799. Elizabeth was the eldest daughter of Benjamin Gillam, a partner at the Old Bank until 1789 and he was also Treasurer to the Incorporation of the Poor. They had six children William b 1789, Elizabeth b 1790, Benjamin Gillam b 1792 and Ann Gillam b 1793, Rosina b 1794 and Mortimer b 1796 and the elder four were Baptised at the Lewin's Med Presbyterian Church nearby. The later two were baptised at the Lewins Mead Unitarian Church and Mortimer, the youngest, was personally baptised by the Revd JP Estlin the famous minister who lived higher up St Michael's Hill.

Joseph Maurice is mentioned in the 1797 Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Volume 16: Poetical Works, where Coleridge mentions staying the evening at our friend Maurice's house and Robert Southey 1774-1843 mentions Maurice in a letter in December 1799: "*I am satisfied with the advice of Maurice (long my apothecary)*" These references are not perhaps surprising as the two poets were associated with the Unitarians at Lewin's Mead.

Maurice died in 1824 aged 59 in Haverford West in Pembrokeshire.

Doctor 2

William Maurice was educated at JP Estlin's school in Estlin's house, was indentured to his father in 1808 and became a pupil to Mr Hetling at the Infirmary (with Joseph, one of the Medical Reading Society), before going to the London Hospital. In 1812 he was elected a Burgess of Bristol on the recommendation of his father. He then joined the army and was in attendance upon the detachment of the British at Quartre Bras and retreated after the action at Waterloo. He received a medal for his services on that dayⁱⁱ. In September 1816 he was in the British camp in the Bois de Boloyné near Paris and then became assistant surgeon in the 7th Hussars in Flanders. He returned to Flanders and joined his father in practice and then his father soon retired to South Wales. His father proposed him as a Burgess of Bristol in 1818 with his brother Benjamin. He married Mary Rigby in 1815 but she died in 1824 and William then married Charlotte Mechelen in 1832 from whom he had six children.

Both father and son joined the Bristol Medical Reading Society¹, William being one of the original members together with his ex apprentice, William Mortimer and his minister's son, Dr JP Estlin

On March 28th, 1807, some medical men of Bristol decided to form "The Medical Reading Society, for the purpose of promoting medical knowledge and a friendly intercourse among its members, and for purchasing medical books." Some practical rules, very similar to those of most book or magazine clubs, received the approval of these eleven members:

THOMAS JERMYN, Surgeon and Apothecary, 17 Queen Square.

HENRY DANIEL, Surgeon, 52 Queen Square.

RICHARD EDGELL, Surgeon, 68 College Street.

BENJAMIN SPENCER, Surgeon and Apothecary, Paul Street, Kingsdown.

WILLIAM MORTIMER, surgeon & apothecary, 17 Bridge St

ROBERT LAX, surgeon & apothecary, 11 Queens Square

BENJAMIN GUSTAVUS BURROUGHS, Apothecary, Portland Place, Clifton.

JOSEPH MAURICE, Apothecary and Man-Midwife, Upper Maudlin Lane.

WILLIAM HETLING, Surgeon, 18 Orchard Street.

NATHANIEL SMITH, Surgeon, 34 College Green.

JOHN BISHOP ESTLIN.

The members were to meet at one another's houses once a month at half-past six o'clock. When the names were called over at seven, anyone then absent was to be fined one shilling. The fine for retaining a book longer than the time allowed was fixed at three pence each day. At the end of the year the books out of circulation were to be sold by auction, and any work not realising more than half its cost was to be taken at that price by the member who proposed it. It was considered necessary to insert in the rules that no druggist should be admitted into the Society, and it was laid down that no one should be elected a member except by a unanimous vote. One rule stated that " Each member shall keep an account of the books received by him and to whom forwarded, which account shall be regularly sent to the monthly meetings at or before seven o'clock." Omission to do this involved a penalty, apparently five shillings and half a crown at different times. The book in

1 Griffiths LM Bristol Med-Chi J. 1907, XXV: 97, p 222 – 235

which the member was supposed to keep this record was afterwards known as "his green register," and notes about it frequently occur in the minutes and rules.

William was appointed to the Medical Reading Society in 1820 when his father resigned.

●Bristol Mercury 1841

To be sold by auction. A dwelling house with surgery at the junction of Mandlin Street with St Michaels Hill in the City of Bristol.

Formerly occupied many years by the late Mr Joseph Maurice Apothecary afterwards by his son Mr William Maurice surgeon. Dwelling house and shop held under a lease dated 1787 to the late Benjamin Gillam for 900 years at 10 shillings a week.

In the 1851 census William is described as a retired surgeon and is living in Westbury on Trym in north Bristol with Charlotte and the children. He died in 1852.

Doctor 3

Benjamin Gillam Maurice b 1792 was also elected a burgess of Bristol in 1818 after completing his surgical training and he joined the Hon East India Service as Assistant Surgeon in 1818 His military records can be found in the British Library IOR/L/MIL/9/374/163-68 : 1822

retired to Bristol in 1842 and married Martha Westcombe but died in 1844.

Doctor 4

Benjamin Maurice, son of William, was born in 1839 and trained at the Bristol medical school and qualified MRCS and LSA in 1863 but in 1862 he was recorded as resigning from the post of resident medical officer of the small Redland Dispensary in Bristol that had very recently been started as a branch of the Clifton Dispensary. He moved to Brighton and remained in practice there until he returned to Clifton with Margaret his wife whom he married in 1881 and in 1880 he was living in Apsley Road, Clifton with his sister, In 1887, according to the Medical Directory, he was still living in Brighton at 20 Bedford Square. Unfortunately Maraget died in 1896 and there were no children. Benjamin died in Clifton in 1907.

Benjamin's younger sister, Emily b1841 married James R Garaway one of the two brothers who ran a large nursery just off the Whiteladies Road in Bristol that has existed up until the beginning of the twntyfirst century!

ⁱ BRI Biographies h (7) BRO 35893/36/g

ⁱⁱ BRI Biographies h (8) BRO 35893/36/h