

Robert Booth of Kirkby Woodhouse.

ROBERT BOOTH was the second son of an elder Robert Booth of Annesley Woodhouse, on the north-western edge of Notts., and of Elizabeth Bradley of Kirkby-in-Ashfield, who died in 1800, leaving brothers Thomas and Elias. Our Robert had an elder brother Abraham, who was schoolmaster and preacher at Sutton-in-Ashfield, then from 1769 pastor at Little Prescott street, London. Another brother, Jacob, also went south to Hadley Green. At Annesley Woodhouse in 1800 was a third brother, William, about to marry; and a sister Mary who had married away, and had a daughter married at Grantham, but had come back to the old town. Robert lost three children of consumption, and was about to lose a fourth; William died at Kirkby Woodhouse in 1836, a bachelor; the eldest son Robert had moved to Nottingham, where he built the first hosiery warehouse in the town, but in December 1844 he too was buried at Kirkby Woodhouse, a bachelor; two daughters had married, the elder to James Smith, treasurer of the General Baptist Academy.

Our Robert was attached not only to his own church, but also to the Particular Baptist church at Sutton-in-Ashfield, which owed its origin to his brother Abraham: of this interest he gave tangible proof in a gift by which the church still profits. It seemed a little strange that Abraham never came back to see this church; but one of Robert's descendants has sent the Society five letters from Abraham to Robert, which indicate that his health prevented any distant travel. One of them seems interesting on many counts, and may well be printed: he was sixty-four years old, and had just over five years left:—

“ London, Dec. 5, 1800.

“ Dear Brother, I here send you an Old Great Coat for
“ uncle Elias Bradley. If, however, you think he has no occasion
“ for it, you may give it to William Alleyn, or any other person
“ whom you may consider as having the most need.

“ I should be glad to be informed by you, the first
“ opportunity, whether you think Uncle Elias stands in present
“ need of assistance, for it would be our sin & our shame to
“ suffer him to want the necessaries of life. Give my duty to
“ him: & may the Lord prepare him for his approaching end!

“ Should be glad of information, how it is with the labouring
“ Poor; what are the prices of Provisions; & what your Parish-
“ Rates are to the Poor. Should be glad to hear, whether you
“ think Sister Morrell is comfortably situated at Grantham.

“ My Cough, at present, is not violent; but I expect it will
“ be worse after a while: & my respiration is becoming rather
“ worse & worse every year. At this, however, I have no reason
“ to wonder; for I am now an old man. My Wife also is pretty
“ well. But were a sharp frost to set in, & to continue a good
“ while, it would probably be very trying to us both, & perhaps
“ finish our days: as it would probably exceedingly affect our
“ respiration. Blessed be God for a *good hope through grace!*—
“ Wm. Robinson is getting better, and attends his business; but
“ his wound heals very slowly.

“ How goes brother William on? Are you intimate one
“ with another now? How goes the cause of religion on at your
“ Meeting, & among the Baptists at Sutton? O, Brother, in such
“ times of distress as these, we have need of spiritual supports!
“ & I am very apprehensive the state of things will be worse,
“ before it be better. May the Lord fit us for his will in all
“ things! My Wife & Children unite in love & duty, as due.
“ I remain,

“ dear Brother, yours in fraternal affection, A. BOOTH.

“ Mr. Robert Booth, Kirkby Woodhouse.”