

PRICE, JOSEPH TREGELLES (1784 - 1854), Quaker and ironmaster

Name: Joseph Tregelles Price
Date of birth: 1784
Date of death: 1854
Parent: Anna Price (née Tregelles)
Parent: Peter Price
Gender: Male
Occupation: Quaker and ironmaster
Area of activity: Business and Industry; Religion
Author: Watkin William Price

Born 17 January 1784, in Cornwall, the son of Peter Price (1739 - 1821), and his wife, Anna (née Tregelles) Price (1759 - 1846). The family moved to Neath in 1799 when the father became the manager of the Neath Abbey Iron Works in which they were interested with other Quaker families. The father was a faithful member of the Society of Friends, noted for acts of charity, relieving the poor and distressed, supporting missionaries and the Bible Society. He erected a free school for the poor children of Neath Abbey. The mother was one of the most remarkable women of her time, taking an active part in Quaker meetings and promulgating the benefits of peace. In addition to the Neath Abbey iron-works, with their blast furnaces, forge, and foundry, the Prices were also interested in coal-mining, in iron ore working at Aberpergwm, and in copper smelting in the locality. On 6 December 1817 Joseph Tregelles Price advertised the iron-works for sale, but on 31 March 1818, obtaining a new lease, he, with his brother, H. H. Price, and others, signed a contract to take over the works, paying therefor £1,000. Joseph became managing director of the new company in 1818. For a long period of years the firm had the reputation of pre-eminence for the manufacture of all kinds of machinery, pumps, boilers, marine and stationary engines, etc. The *Western Mail* of 30 May 1923 reported that machines that had been made at the Neath Abbey works a century earlier were still used to commercial advantage in the Forest of Dean.

Price visited ' **Dic Penderyn** ', then under sentence of death (1831), in Cardiff gaol, became convinced of the prisoner's innocence, and rode post-haste to interview lord Melbourne, the Home Secretary. He obtained a reprieve, but only for 10 days. It was due to him that the first Peace Society was formed in 1816 in London; of this he became the first president. He never relaxed his rule that no cannon, shot, or gun was to be made by his men. He was also patron of the Anti-Slavery Movement, and the chief promoter of the Neath Abbey works school, which was reported on by the Educational Commissioners of 1846-7. After a most successful business and philanthropic career, he died, unmarried, on Christmas Day 1854, and was buried in the Friends' cemetery at Neath. The works were afterwards carried on for a while by his nephew, HENRY HABBERLEY PRICE (born 1825). Another nephew was **Elijah Waring**, biographer of **Edward Williams** (Iolo Morganwg), while ISAAC REDWOOD, his brother-in-law, assisted **Iolo** in his old age [see under **Tregelles**].

Author

Watkin William Price, (1873 - 1967)

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Published date: 1959

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