

The Incident that led to the epitaph Of Daniel Knight in St Mary's Church Luton (250710). (see also RELATED DOCUMENTS for Will).

Here lyeth the body of Daniel Knight
Who all my lifetime lived in spite.
Base flatterers sought me to undoe
And made me sign what was not true.
Reader take care whene'er you venture
To trust a canting false dissenter.
Who died June 11th, in the 61st
Year of his age, 1756.

(see MEMORIALS SECTION of my website).

From: 'Parishes: Luton', A History of the County of Bedford: Volume 2 (1908), pp. 348-375. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk>

From the book "History of Luton"(Luton Archives).

"The incident which led to this epitaph occurred in 1747. Samuel Marsom, a linen draper and minister of the Old Baptist Meeting House at Luton had a nephew named Samuel Marsom who was in practice as an Attorney in the town. The latter was employed to draw up a Deed of Conveyance of the tenement and garden in Luton, owned and occupied by Daniel Knight as a security for an advance made by a Mr Edward Fossey. The property was subsequently reconveyed.

It does not appear why Mr Knight was dissatisfied with the way in which these documents were prepared but it is clear that he feely expressed an opinion that he had been defrauded in the transaction.

Marsom, who was much respected, insisted on a public apology for the slander and in the Northampton Mercury of 22nd November 1747, Daniel Knight published an ample apology in which he declared "that the Deeds were faithfully drawn, pursuant to the agreement between himself and Fossey : that he perfectly understood the same before they were executed and was perfectly satisfied with them: and that the reports he had made to the contrary were malicious and scandalous : that he apologised to Mr Marsom and that he would never offend in the like manner again."

Few epitaphs have been more frequently quoted than the one on Daniel Knight's tombstone, but not many of those who have repeated it were aware that Knight had signed and published the retraction and apology above mentioned ; but his venom found permanent vent in his epitaph."