

ARTICLES on Abraham Goldsmid
Compiled by Katie Fretwell

'Fete of Abraham Goldsmid Esq.

newspaper cutting: [handwritten date: Aug 26 1806]:

Friday Mr Goldsmid was honoured at his newly-erected Villa at Morden, with the presence of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, his Royal Brothers, the Lord Chancellor of England, and a select assembly of the first persons of distinction. This illustrious party honoured him with their company to dinner, and in the evening there was a numerous assembly of his friends to a concert. This was the first entertainment since the house was finished, which is unique in its character.

Mr Groves has the merit, and great it is, of planning and designing the whole of it. Messrs Crace, whose abilities have been so successful at Brighton, completed the decorative part, and Mr Files of Lamb's Conduit-street, has displayed his taste in the furniture.

The PRINCE arrived at about seven o'clock, accompanied by Earl MOIRA, Major BLOOMFIELD, Mr SHERIDAN, &c and the Dukes of KENT and CAMBRIDGE arrived in their barouches immediately after. They were introduced into the saloon, and about eight o'clock they sat down to a most sumptuous dinner in the eating room. On the removal of the cloth the company retired to the saloon. There was a most superb desert [sic] and viands set out. - On Mr A GOLDSMID giving the health of the PRINCE, he rose, and in a very animated speech of a quarter of an hour concluded by giving the Messrs Goldsmid, with three times three, which Mr B GOLDSMID answered in a short and neat speech, expressing how much they felt the honour done them. After the desert there was a Concert, in which BRAHAM, Signora STORACE, Mr W PORTER &c assisted. The band was led by ATTWOOD, assisted by SALOMONS. MATHEWS, the Comedian, gave his imitations of the different Actors &c. The gardens were illuminated by 3000 or 4000 lamps, which had a very elegant effect on the water. There was a pleasure boat illuminated, with the Prince's feathers &c and had a very singular and beautiful effect. The grounds were completely lighted, with various devices. The whole of the illuminations &c were by Messrs Parker & Perry. Among the company present, besides those already mentioned, were

Lord BERKELEY	Mr & Mrs B GOLDSMID
Sir Robert BURNET	Mr & Mrs A GOLDSMID
Colonel McMAHON	Mr & Mrs N SALOMON

& about 300 fashionables'.

***Times* Saturday 29 September 1810**

DEATH OF MR ABRAHAM GOLDSMID

'It is with sentiments of peculiar regret and sorrow that we have to announce the violent termination of the life of Mr Abraham Goldsmid yesterday, and by his own hands. The general philanthropy, the ready munificence, the friendly demeanor, the mild and unassuming manners of this gentleman, have been long known and esteemed, both by the circle of his private friends and by the public at large; of whose notice, the magnitude of his money concerns, and the multiplicity of his commercial engagements, attracted as large a portion as ever fell to the lot of any individual unconnected with the administration of the State.

There are not many men, we believe, who have ever performed more kind acts in social life, or more liberal ones in what may be esteemed his public one, than Mr Abraham Goldsmid; no one, indeed, of any class or description, ever became tolerably well known to him, without improving their fortunes in some degree by the connection; so that the list of those whom gratitude or the sense of kindness received in one way or other had bound, or ought to have bound, to him, was almost endless.

The City of London was thrown into the greatest agitation yesterday morning by the news received of the melancholy event. He had, it appears, shot himself with a pistol through the head, in the Wilderness, at the back of his own house, at Morden in Surry, about 8 o'clock in the morning. The medical gentlemen from the neighbouring villages were summoned as soon as the fact was ascertained, but their skill was unavailing; he executed his design too effectually for human aid to be of an use to him.

The cause of this rash act is not difficult to assign:- Mr Goldsmid was a joint contractor for the late loan of 14 millions with the House of Sir Francis Baring, and taking the largest probable range that he had dealt amongst his friends one half of the sum of money allotted to him, the loss sustained by the remainder, at the rate of 65l. per thousand, which was the price of Thursday, was more than any individual fortune could be expected to sustain. Ever since the decline of *Omnium* from par, Mr Goldsmid's spirits were progressively drooping; but when it reached 5 and 6 per cent discount, without the probability of recovering, the unfortunate gentleman appeared evidently restless in his disposition, and disordered in his mind; and, as we have reason to believe, not finding that cheerful assistance amongst his monied friends which he had experienced in happier times, he was unable to bear up against the pressure of his misfortunes; and hence was driven to terminate a life which till then had never been chequered by misfortune. The moment intelligence of the distressing event reached the city, which was about the period of the opening of the Stock Exchange, the Funds suddenly felt the effects, and *Consols* fell in a few minutes from 66h to 63l@4. *Omnium* declined from about 6@2 to 10l@4 discount, and then remained steady at that price for some time.

We understand that Mr Goldsmid had determined, if possible, to perform all his contracts at the Stock Exchange, hoping still to have a competency left to retire with into private life from the wreck of his fortune. He had already commenced his retrenchment by discharging all the workmen and outdoor labourers employed on his extensive premises at Morden.

The mutability of human affairs has been strongly evinced during the last few weeks. Sir Francis Baring and Mr Goldsmid, who were considered as the pillars of the city, are both dead within that time. The effects their deaths have had on the funds of the country will best bespeak the support they gave them while they lived.

We have since been informed that Mr Goldsmid received some friends at his house the night preceding his decease, and even joined with a party of cards; but at intervals his mind seemed totally absorbed in the thought of other subjects. Another circumstance which is said to have accelerated his death is, that he had borrowed of the East India Company five hundred thousand pounds, for which he gave them ample security; but, notwithstanding, they wishing to have the security redeemed, had fixed on yesterday or Monday for that purpose; and, it is supposed, he felt a difficulty in complying with this engagement. The house, however, continues to discharge all demands upon it; and, it is believed, will have no occasion to suspend its payments.

'Further Particulars

About half -past seven o'clock yesterday morning, Mr Goldsmid was seen to pass over the bridge which leads to the Wilderness or Rookery in the grounds at Morden-house; shortly after, the coachman, as was usual, enquired what horses were to go to town, upon which he was referred to Mr Goldsmid being told at the time which way his master had walked. The coachman went in search of him, and was the first that found him weltering in his blood, with the pistol grasped in his right hand. Life was not quite extinct, but before any aid could be procured Mr Goldsmid expired.

Sept 29 [1810]

An inquest was assembled at Merton, on the body of Mr Abraham Goldsmid, who had shot himself. The coachman of the deceased was the first witness examined; and he deposed that, having followed his master into a part of his grounds called the Wilderness, to receive orders as to the time of carrying him to town, he found him lying on the ground, the blood flowing copiously from a wound under his chin, and his hand still sustaining the fatal pistol. He continued to breathe, but was totally insensible, and expired shortly after his removal to the house.

Several witnesses deposed, that since the unfortunate death of his brother, Mr A Goldsmid had been subject to an occasional depression of spirits, in the highest degree alarming to his family - so great in fact we understand, as to have induced, on two or three occasions, the appointment of persons to attend him, with a view to his safety from self-violence. The accident he lately encountered in Lombard-street, in being beaten down by an over-drove ox, appears likewise to have contributed to the derangement of his nervous system, and rendered him more susceptible to the mortification and embarrassment which the late depreciation of omnium exposed him. On Thursday, while on Change, he displayed more than usual impatience and irritability, and spoke very incoherently as to the revenge he proposed to himself, in the punishment of the two parties opposed to him in the money market.

The evidence was conclusive; and the jury immediately found a verdict of *insanity*.

Mr Goldsmid's losses by the late loan are stated to have amounted to nearly 200,000l, the average dealing of his house was estimated at 100,000l per day.

Times Monday 1 October 1810 CORONER'S INQUEST

'An Inquisition was held on Saturday on the body of the late Mr Abraham Goldsmid, at his house at Morden. Among the Jury were some of the most respectable and intelligent persons of the vicinity. The proceedings lasted but a few minutes when the following verdict was returned - "Died by his own hand, but not in his senses at the time". There was but one evidence examined, and he but as to the fact of the suicide. Some of the Jury had been witnesses, in the course of the preceding fortnight, to unequivocal proofs of mental derangement in this lamented gentleman. They had consequently no difficulty in coming to the conclusion they did.

It was proved before the inquest, that about six o'clock Mr Goldsmid left his house, and coming out of doors he desired the watchman to tie his shoes (his usual custom). He remarked to the watchman that it was a fine morning; and after walking a few yards from the house, he returned and went in doors. Mrs Goldsmid, alarmed by his restlessness through the night, immediately

dressed herself, and came down stairs, inquiring of everybody she saw if they had seen Mr Goldsmid? Getting no information from anyone, a search was immediately set on foot, and about seven o'clock the house carpenter found him in a watercloset in the Wilderness, sitting with his head reclined on his right shoulder, a pistol in his left hand, and apparently dead. A surgeon being sent for, on examining him, found the ball had gone through the brain. The pistol, it appeared, had been put in the mouth of the deceased.

Soon after the Jury had returned their verdict, the body was conveyed to town, to be placed at the disposal of the Elders of the religious community to which Mr Goldsmid belonged. Mrs Goldsmid was to leave Morden yesterday on a visit to the house of a friend.'

'Mr Goldsmid's Superb Fete

Yesterday evening Mr GOLDSMID was honoured at his newly erected villa at Morden, with the presence of His Royal Highness the Prince of WALES, his Royal Brothers, the LORD CHANCELLOR of England, and a select assembly of the first persons of distinction. This illustrious party honoured him with their company to dinner, and in the evening there was a numerous assembly of his friends to a concert. This was the first entertainment since the house was finished, which is unique in its character.

A more picturesque and romantic place in point of rural scenery cannot be imagined. Before the house is a beautiful lawn, diversified with orange and lemon trees, aloes, and the various exotics of the most luxuriant climes. On the right side of the vestibule or entrance, is a conservatory, .i..ed with the choicest productions of the vegetable world, on the left is an aviary, stocked with the rarest assemblage of birds from the Tropics. As you enter the grand mansion, the eye is dazzled with a rich diamond cut lustre, suspended from a cieling [sic] painted by artists of the first celebrity. The apartments are fitted up in the most costly manner, particularly the one in which the dinner was served up. The table was adorned with a plateau, composed of the most fanciful and ingenious frame work, decorated with Egyptian and Greek figures. Four silver branches diffused their resplendent lights. The whole service was of the most costly plate. On the sideboard were three silver gilt urns with ornaments behind them to correspond. To describe the profusion which reigned at this festive board would be impossible. Every delicacy the most refined appetite could imagine was placed before the guests. As soon as the sumptuous repast had concluded, the company retired to the grand hall, an apartment vying with the most perfect models of antiquity. The desert [sic] consisted of the choicest fruits and wines of the first quality. After the desert the company amused themselves in various ways. Some indulged in aquatic excursions on the river, which meanders through the grounds attached to this elegant abode. A gondola, surmounted with the Prince of Wales's feathers in variegated lamps, was occupied by the illustrious party in the immediate train of the heir apparent. The bridges across the river and the adjacent shrubberies were illuminated with equal splendour, and emitted a degree of radiance which rivalled the sun. The festivities were terminated with a supper, to which the Gentry of the vicinity were invited. Pleasure and conviviality reigned'

FC 46 The Englishman No 167 August 1806

'FESTIVITIES AT MORDEN

The entertainments given by Abraham Goldsmid, Esq. at his superb Mansion at Morden on Friday last were on a grand and extensive scale.

All Royal Dukes were expected, but only Cambridge and Kent could come. Prince of Wales regretted he could not arrive earlier and walk over the grounds before dinner - 'laid out to such superior advantage.

HOUSE

elevation: Grecian

south front: portico in Athenian style, principal entrance. Pass through lodge or small vestibule of Portland stone. On each side 2 conservatories, with oranges, lemons etc

centre of house: octagon 38' by 54' high. Ceiling divided into 8 panels, separated by ribs springing from pilasters and painted to look like red marble decorated with white marble. 4 niches with figures of same marble effect holding lamps. 16 figures on painted glass - seasons, sciences, elements and 4 quarters of the globe, by day appearing as windows, and by night lit from behind.

Near saloon is library: neatly fitted, bright yellow walls, doors, shutters etc yellow sattin [sic] wood

Opposite library is breakfast room: a most beautiful unique room, with one window into conservatory and the other into a 'most elegant and extensive aviary'.

On opposite side of saloon is eating-room: 'most strikingly elegant, 40' by 22' with groined ceiling painted like white veined marble and with bronzed ribs. Walls in same manner. 4 recesses with fixed stoves with plated furniture. On each a huge vase 61 high, one containing water for the table.

From here folding doors to final drawing-room: 'so connected with the large drawing-room to make the two rooms look like one'. These two are superbly fitted - ceilings painted with Chinese ornaments, sides covered with Indian paper (grey, with silver birds, flowers, foliage etc). Shutters and other woodwork painted blue. Furniture in this room in blue silk, in festoons which go round the whole of these two rooms.

The rooms by Mr Crace of Queen St, under Mr Graves' management. Curtains and draperies by Mr Fildes of Lamb's Conduit St.

Table adorned with plateau of fanciful frame work, decorated with Egyptian and Grecian figures. 4 silver branches diffused resplendent lights. Whole service of most costly plate. 3 silver gilt urns on sideboard with ornaments behind them to correspond. 'Whole is a masterpiece of ingenuity'.

about 50 guests to dinner at 7 after dinner Mr Braham sang several airs speeches and appropriate and loyal toasts health drunk to Prince; he responded. Then he proposed toast to 'one of the best men living... united with a band of brothers, all benevolent like himself... Mr Goldsmid had not only a heart to feel for the woes of others but a hand always stretched out ready to relieve them; added to this, he knew him to be the tried friend of his country, for he had "Done the state much service And she knew it - " and was one of the most zealous for the prosperity and glory of the nation'. HRH's speech was received with reiterated plaudits.

9.30 pm: company returned to grand hall. Now dark, and lawn was ablaze with variegated lamps in trees, and pheasant-houses on lawn were decorated with lamps.

4 bridges across river, one, a triple bridge remitted a degree of radiance rivalling the sun. Letters PW on trees in lamps with a star between. Gondola [decorated as FC 45,2] 'shone with refulgent brightness'.

From garden and shrubberies party assembled in the concert room, where they were joined by all the neighbouring gentry and friends from town. Now there were more than 200 persons.

10 pm: concert
Instrumental: Mr Salomon, the Schrams, Petrides etc
Vocalists: Mme Storace, Mr Braham, Naldi, T Walsh, Goss etc Attwood at pianoforte
Act 1 Mozart symphony
Attwood glee 'The Harp's Wild Notes'
It concerto horns
song 'Ye Sainted Spirits'
Trio Storace, Braham, Naldi
Act 2 Haydn symphony
song Naldi
duet Storace, Braham

Finally, duet by Attwood sung by Braham and Walsh. Full words given.
chorus 'Fill then the bowl with myrtle bound Let Morden's roof with mirth resound And every tongue this strain declare "Long live Britannia's Joy and Heir".

Another song by Braham concluded Act 1.

12 midnight: Company sat down to supper, under Mr Birch.
Prince ate supper in room separated from general supper room with selection of AG's guests.

When cloth was withdrawn Mr Mathews of Haymarket Theatre displayed astonishing powers of imitating performers of the day', including ventriloquism. Prince: "Bravo, bravo". Mathews also imitated an ideot [sic], with great effect.

Prince did not leave his seat till after 2 am. Dukes left after dinner. Rest stayed till late hour.

Thus terminated an entertainment which has not been surpassed in the annals of elegant and genuine hospitality in which "The feast of reason and the flow of soul" were conspicuous and which reflects no less honour on the fine table than the boundless liberality of Mr Goldsmid.

Aug 22nd 1806" [pencilled]