

## **John Dyson Hutchinson** **1822 - 1882**

John Dyson Hutchinson was the son of a Halifax cardmaker, and was educated at Hipperholme Grammar School. As a young man, he travelled on the Continent to improve his language skills. Soon after the *Halifax Courier* was founded as a weekly newspaper in 1853, Hutchinson was employed as a leader writer. In 1856 he was appointed the newspaper's Editor, and two years later he became joint proprietor and publisher. At that time, the *Courier* office was at 17 Northgate, and in 1874 this was moved to Regent Street, King Cross Street, adjacent to its location today.

Like many other public-spirited figures of the time, Hutchinson was a keen believer in improving the education of the working classes. From 1857 he lectured and gave lessons in German at the Mechanics' Institute, Crossley Street. He served as a member of the borough council for 12 years, becoming an Alderman. He was Mayor in 1868- 69 and again in 1871-72. When John Crossley retired as a Member of Parliament in 1877, Hutchinson was chosen to replace him as Liberal candidate for Halifax, winning the seat at a by-election. Re-elected in 1880, Hutchinson helped see a new bill through Parliament regarding the freedom of the Press and the law of Libel. Although absent from Halifax for a good deal of time on parliamentary work, he continued as editor of the *Courier*, and by 1882 the paper's weekly circulation was approaching five figures.

In 1881, Hutchinson's health declined alarmingly, and he resigned his parliamentary seat on August 14th. Thereafter, he lived quietly at South Kensington, where he died on the 25th August 1882. His body was brought back to Halifax, and buried in Lister Lane Cemetery, the funeral being attended by large crowds.

In 1885, his widow remarried a much younger man, Richard Marsden Pilkington Low, of Philbeach Gardens, Kensington, physician, surgeon and gynaecologist, who adopted the additional surname of Hutchinson. Marianne died on the 30th January 1908 aged 82; Dr. Low - later awarded the O.B.E. - died in 1935, aged 84.