

Our Recording Clerks.

The following list of Recording Clerks which I prepared some time ago, and which has already appeared in *The Friend* (London), 1903, p. 76, may suitably reappear here:—

		ASSISTANT CLERK.	CLERK		
			From	To	Years.
1.	Ellis Hookes		c. 1657	1681	24
2.	Richard Richardson ..		1681/2	1689	7
3.	Benjamin Bealing ..	c. 1687	1689	1737	48
4.	Benjamin Bourne ..	1733	1737	1746	9
5.	Joseph Besse		1746	1748	2
	Benjamin Bourne (cont.) ..		1748	1757	9
6.	Jacob Post	1755	1757	1757	1
7.	Robert Bell		1757	1759	2
8.	William Weston	1758	1759	1773	14
9.	Thomas Gould	1763	1773	1783	10
10.	John Ady		1783	1811	28
11.	William Manley		1811	1844	33
12.	James Bowden		1844	1857	13
13.	Charles Hoyland		1858	1890	32
14.	Isaac Sharp (to whom long life and service)		1890		

No. 1. ELLIS HOOKES. c. 1657-1681.

Among many of the little known adherents to the cause of Quakerism in its early days may be reckoned Ellis Hookes, who heads our list of "Recording Clerks,"¹ and as we piece together the records of his life obtained from various and mostly from obscure sources, we produce a picture of a man in many ways unlike the more noted early Friends, and we catch a glimpse of work for the early Quaker community of a less known, but not less important nature than much that is portrayed in the memoirs of the day.

HIS PARENTAGE AND YOUTH.

Ellis Hookes was born about the year 1630. Of his youth we know little, but he appears to have been religiously inclined from his early days; he says in a letter to Margaret Fox, dated in 1671—"I have loved the Lord Jesus from a child." It is not clear where his parents resided during his

¹ The term "recording" clerk is here used by anticipation. I do not find it earlier than in connection with William Manley.

youth, but his convincement of Quakerism appears to have been distasteful to them, for in his own handwriting in the second of the two books of Sufferings which he compiled, we get a glimpse of his relations with them in a curious encounter between the Quaker clerk and the Parliamentary general and his household.

Ellis Hookes in the year 1657, went with a Letter to his Mother, who was at the house of him they call Sr Wm. Waller at Stanton Harcourt, in Oxfordshire, and the said Waller's Wife, a woman making great profession in Religion, thought she might have converted the said E. H. (as he heard afterwards) from his Religion, and so sent for him up to her Chamber where was his mother. And because E. H. did not put off his hat to the said Waller's Wife she said, "If you have no manners, young man, I will teach you some"; and took away his Hat from of his head, and gave it to her man who carried it Clear away out of y^e Room. Then E. H. said to his mother, If she had any Answer to send back, else he thought to go. So Waller's Wife said, "No, you shall not go," and lockd the Dore. And the said E. H. spoke not one word to her all this while, not withstanding she scofft at him and mockt him, and said, "Now his hat was gone his Religion was gone, and he could not speak but only hum." Then at last E. H. spake to her, saying, "Woman, shew thyself a sober woman." For w^{ch} words speaking she fell a beating the said E. H. about the Head and pulling him by the Hair in a cruel manner, and said She was never called Woman before. Then when she had done beating him, he being lockt in, walked up and down y^e Room, wherefore she fell a beating him again and pulled him about the room by the hair of the Head, all w^{ch} E. H. patiently bore not giving one word; but when she struk him on the one side he turned the other and resisted not. Then after he had received many blows about the head, and she had wearied herself, E. H. spoke to her, saying, "Woman, I deny thy Religion that cannot bridle thy Tongue nor thy hands"; then she fell a beating him again in a Cruel manner and lugging him about the Room by the hair of the head, and commanded her man and her son to stand before the said E. H. and keep him up in a corner of y^e said Room, that he might not walk, and called for a stick saying her fists were sore with striking him, and bid her man beat him, and oftentimes she said to his mother, "Turn him out of your dores and never have anything to do with him, for," said she, "the Ravens of y^e Valleys will pick out his eyes." Then E. H. said again, "Thy Religion is in vain that cannot bridle thy tongue nor thy hands"; that she fell a baiting him again and lugging him by the hair of the head in a Cruel manner. Then E. H. said, "Instead of shewing thyself a sober woman thou hast shewed thyself more like a Beast." Then William Waller being in the Room struck the said E. H. such a Cruel Blow on y^e Head with his Fist that the said E. H. was ready to sink under it. And y^e said Waller's wife had hold of y^e said E. H. and beat him about the Head, and her man had hold of him, and they all cried "Out of y^e Dores with him"; and then y^e Dore was opened and they trust [thrust] him with such Force

out, that he had much adoe to recover himself from falling downstairs, and the said E. H. was fain to go 3 Miles bare-headed, they detaining his Hat from him. And with y^e Blows w^{ch} were very many he was so deaf that he could not hear a Week after, so well as he could before. And having an Impostume in his head w^{ch} he had from a Child, it was so bad about a Month after he received those blows that black gore blood ran out of his Ear. And they stirred up his Father by a Letter they sent to him the next day, to have nothing to do with y^e said E. H. but to turn him out of y^e Dores, which he did. (See also Joseph Besse's *Abstract of Sufferings*, i. 197, and *Collection of Sufferings*, i. 564.)

It is satisfactory to know, however, that his father was reconciled to him ere he died, as the following extract from a letter to Margaret Fox, dated "London, 1st. 8th mo., 1672," will show :—

Since I wrote thee, my old ffather is dead. I was with him at his lodgings on 6 day was a month since and he was very well and writeing and I askt him to let me help him and he did, and it was the last busines he did, and he asked me to walk with him in the woodyard, and I never knew him so kind and I walkt with him a pretty time, and that night he was taken sick and the next day having busines at Whitehall I went in to see him again, and he was layn down on y^e bed not well, and the First Day morning I went on purpose to see him, and he died at 2 in y^e morning. I think he hath left me pretty considerable more than I expected, and soe the outward riches of this world is added to me that I am grown rich of a sudden, and so blessed be the Lord who is worthy to have the glory and praise of all, and I hope I shall all my days serve him with my whole heart and with all that I have.

Mention is made in Ellis Hookes's will² of sisters Anna Hookes and Margaret Fuller, and of brothers Robert and Nicholas,³ and also of an "Uncle Sudley of Odiham, co. Southton." I do not know whether any of his relations became Friends. There is no other reference to the name in the registers of London and Middlesex Quarterly Meeting.

HIS SERVICE FOR FRIENDS.

The only clue to the date of E. Hookes's engagement to Friends is furnished by the statement in the Register of his death that "He was twenty-four years a clerk to Friends."

² Given in *Quakeriana*, ii. 103, see also ii. 118.

³ Among the "Original Records of Sufferings" MSS., at Devonshire House, there are two or three references to a Nicholas Hookes. From one dated "2th month [16]82," and signed by Richard Kirton, we learn, "Nicholas Hookes impropiator of Kinsington hath exhibited a bill in Chancery against us both, and wee heare he Intends to bring it to a Sequestration." In 1686, "Nicholas Hooks, Impropiator," is again mentioned. I do not find his name in Besse's *Coll. Suff.*

As his decease occurred in 1681, he must have entered Friends' service in about 1657, at the age of twenty-seven. The first reference to him that I have found in any official minutes occurs in the "Six Weeks Meeting" (Business Committee of London and Middlesex Quarterly Meeting) of 8mo., 1671, not long after the commencement of the records of this Meeting. On the 16th of 12mo., 1674/5, this Meeting decides "that Ellis Hooks be desired to attend this Meeting for y^e future to keep this Book & that he draw out Copies of what Concerns the Monthly Meetings, Two Weeks Meeting [the oldest meeting for discipline in London, largely occupied with passing persons for marriage], & Meeting of Twelve [a finance committee of London Friends] respectively, & to send it to them." He was appointed by the "Morning Meeting of Ministers," in 1673, to "attend every second Day to write things then agreed upon in a book," and he signs the first recorded minute of the Meeting for Sufferings, 8mo., 1675.

But as early as 1660 we find from a letter to George Fox that he is at work collecting records of Friends' sufferings out of the different counties, and he inquires of him "whether they sh^d be printed or wrote in a great book now I am not soe much imployed but y^t I may setle to write them, or if thou thinkst Tho. Forster may doe them, who I beleive would doe them better." Other letters on the same subject follow, the result being the two bulky volumes of *Sufferings* in E. H.'s handwriting, preserved at Devonshire House, the first of a series of 44 volumes of records of sufferings. This must have been an immense work, and it is a standing testimony to E. H.'s zeal and diligence. The two volumes contain about 1,300 pages, measuring 18 inches by 14 inches, and are bound in full calf.

Ellis's letters, mostly addressed to Margaret Fell (Fox), a number of which are preserved in the Society's archives,⁴ give a vivid insight into his continuous labours for Friends.

In these letters he also sends information of events happening in the public world of London, which must have

⁴ D. Swarthmore MSS. and A. R. B. MSS., etc. I have copied the letters in the Swarthmore MSS. from the transcription beautifully made by Emily Jermyn in 1866-1869, as it is undesirable to finger the originals more than is absolutely necessary. The best known of E. H.'s letters is the one dated 16th of 11mo., 1669, which gives an account of Friend Carver, who carried King Charles on his back during the escape of the latter, to France,

greatly interested his correspondent in the far north. Further sufferings were from time to time drawn up by our worthy clerk, and given to the press for publication, but he found it difficult to execute this work as rapidly as desired. George Whitehead writes in 1664, "Since I came to this City, I have been somewhat troubled that the books of sufferings were not delivered sooner. How E. H. ordered the business I know not. . . . Yesterday I went up and down a great part of the day about getting them delivered. This morning women are to deliver them."

In 1672 we read of heavy work connected with arrangements for obtaining King Charles's "Pardon"⁵ for nearly 500 Friends then languishing in gaol. G. Whitehead was the moving spirit, but upon our friend Ellis came the brunt of the business. He describes it in a letter to M. Fox as "such a troublesome business to go through as I have not mett wth the like." In this same year, in a letter to M. F., we read, with a feeling of relief, that "Friends did at the Quarterly Meeting take into Consideration my paines and care in y^e service of truth and are willing to allow me a man to assist, wch is some encouragement to me, for wch I cannot but bless the Lord, and I hope through the Lord's assistance to performe my office in faithfullness to the end." The more we read of this good man the more we feel sure that his hope was realised. Such help seems to have continued to the end, as "Ellis his Man" is referred to in the minutes of the Meeting for Sufferings down to 1681.⁶

For his multifarious and onerous duties Ellis Hookes was paid £50 per annum. Francis Bugg tells us this in a passage in his *Picture of Quakerism*, to be referred to in connection with succeeding Clerks. His office was "The Chamber," perhaps at the Bull and Mouth in the earliest days and later at White Hart Court. "Ellis his Chamber" was often the meeting place of committees and other small gatherings.

In addition to his public work he was of great assistance to Friends in financial and literary matters. He writes to George Fox, under date 1669, of the death of Joseph Fuce, and adds, "He hath left thee a Legacy of fifty pounds. I shall forbear to give thee an account of my stewardshipp

⁵ D. Lower Strong Room.

⁶ Ellis's "Man" may have been Joseph Miles, who sends to Luke Howard on the 24th of 10th month, 1681, a document described as the "last Epistle of my decd. Mr."

at present, hoping to see thee heere ere long. Only I paid ffifty pounds to Gerrard [Roberts] soon after thee wentst away, it being by thy desire towards a pte of that new shipp, but a sixteenth pte amounts to soe much yt thee and I cannot reach it soe I think to dispose of mine some other way and Gerrard *must satisfie thee for the use of thy money.*" He is also useful to Margaret Fox in purchasing books for her and in other ways.

HIS SHARE IN SUFFERINGS.

The more private nature of his occupation would probably shield our friend Ellis from much of the fierce persecution which raged around the more public preachers of Quakerism, but it was meet that he who first collected the records of suffering should himself feel something of its edge. Besse tells us (in the earliest mention of Ellis I have found other than the record of ill-treatment already given), that he and others were pulled by force out of a Meeting at Westminster in "February, 1659," and he himself knocked down and dragged about, and that during the Lord Mayoralty of the noted persecutor Richard Brown, in 1660-61, he, with many others, was imprisoned in Newgate gaol. In his Preface to the works of Samuel Fisher he briefly refers to an imprisonment in "the Compter in Wood Street," where he and nine others "were for some time put into a little hole, into wh. we went with a ladder where was not Room for all the Company to lye down at once."

HIS PUBLISHED WRITINGS.

The published literary work of E. Hookes is mainly of an historical character, and his object seems to have been to gather, from all past time, samples of constancy under persecution, and to publish the results of his inquiries "for general service" in his own day. He first issued *The Spirit of Christ and . . . of the Apostles and . . . Martyrs . . . which beareth Testimony against Swearing and Oaths*, 1661. This was enlarged and re-issued later. The results of his further study of the past were given to the world in his *Spirit of the Martyrs Revived*, a work of over 350 folio pages, published before 1682, and several times reprinted. With George Fox's assistance, E. H. issued in 1667 *The Arraignment of Popery*, dealing likewise with the history and persecutions of the Church. This also passed through several editions. These two Friends also wrote *A Primmer and Catechism*

for Children,⁷ and *An Instruction for Right Spelling*. From our knowledge of the vagaries of George's own spelling, we may well believe that the services of his Friend, Ellis, were desirable and valuable! Into the mazes of controversial literature our author does not appear to have ventured far, for even Francis Bugg writes, "Ellis Hooks was a stranger to me," but the issue of such "abusive and sordid pamphlets" as *The Monstrous Eating Quaker*, *The Quaker turned Jew*, and *The Quaker and his Maid*, which were cried up and down the City, stirred him too deeply for silence, and he issued a refutation, in broadside form, with an appeal to the magistrates to put a stop, in the interests of public morals, to these libels. He also published *A Testimony against "The Spirit of the Hat,"* and against another scurrilous book, which opposed authority in the Church, though I do not find that he is referred to among many Friends mentioned in these books. Amid numerous other pressing duties, Ellis Hookes found time and strength to edit Edward Burrough's works in 1672,⁸ Wm. Smith's and Jas. Parnel's in 1675, Francis Howgill's in 1676, Samuel Fisher's in 1679 and Stephen Smith's in 1679, although he had previously, in 1671, informed Margaret Fox that he had "left off all employment in printing of books, by reason of weaknes." These six volumes represent about 3200 pages in folio 500 pages in quarto and 400 pages in octavo.

HIS PERSONALITY AND PRIVATE LIFE.

His life may be summed up in the words used of him, "A publique Servent to Freinds." We read little of him beside his work in this capacity. He does not appear to have been a preacher in the gatherings of early Friends, and there is no notice of him among the memoirs in *Piety Promoted*.

He writes warmly yet respectfully to George Fox on business matters, such expressions occurring as "If thou thinkst fitt," "It may bee as thee orders." The various Meetings he served as clerk were not slow to remind him of

⁷ Of this book Ellis writes to G. Fox, "It is well liked by everybody that sees it." Wm. Rogers says in Part VII. of his *Christian Quaker* that he knows a Friend who can prove "that the manuscript of the Primmer was sold for thirty pound, 'tis reputed to contain but two or three sheets." It really contained six sheets. All Ellis's books are in D.

⁸ The author of *Saul's Errand to Damascus* says that "E. Burrough's Works were shov'd into the world by G. Fox, G. Whitehead. Josiah Cole, and Francis Howgill."

his position and duties. The "Meeting of Twelve" under date 1679, after his twenty-two years of service, minutes its decision that "Ellis Hookes doe give an account what work and service he doth once every quarter to this Meeting in wrighting, that it may appear whether his work deserves his yearly Sallery, and before he hath his last qrs. bill pd to shew cause why he chargeth," etc. Friends were exact and exacting, and having to act as clerk to several separate bodies, must have made him a man of many masters.

Francis Howgill, writing to him from Appleby, in 1664, says, "Though some slight thee, heed not that, but do what thou can and be diligent." Wm. Rogers in his book against G. Fox and others, writes disparagingly of "the testimony of Ellis Hooks (a Clark for his yearly Sallery.)"

There is only one incidental reference to Ellis in George Fox's *Journal*, though we know from the correspondence with Margaret Fell that he travelled with G. F. in Hampshire in 7mo., 1668.⁹ I have not found any reference to him in the memoirs of Edward Burrough or Francis Howgill, although Ellis must have been very serviceable to them in a business capacity. He seems to have been of an humble, retiring disposition, accounting it his "greatest honour to serve the Lord and his Servants."¹⁰

We do not read of any wife or family, and it is doubtful whether he was ever a householder, though in his will he leaves £2 to his "old servant, Katherine Andrews." This

⁹ The date of the original letter in which this fact is noted seems to me to be clearly 1668, though the letter is endorsed in G. Fox's own writing, 1664, and this latter date has been attached to the letter in transcription in the place of the former. G. F. was in close confinement in Lancaster Castle in 1664, while we know from his *Journal*, that he was in Hampshire in 1668. He does not refer, however, to E. Hookes as a travelling companion.

¹⁰ The Preface to Burrough's *Tender Salutation*, 1661, from which these words are taken, is worth quoting in full, as a sample of the spirit in which the author undertook his work:—

" Friends,

" This following Epistle being committed to me, I have found it convenient to disperse it on this wise to the Churches of Christ, for whose service chiefly it hath been written as I perceive ; and this being a time, wherein each Friend in God ought to serve another, and to be a strength and encouragement one towards another in the Wayes of God, and therefore according to my duty, wherein I stand bound to the Lord and his Servants, I have dilligently endeavoured your benefit and edification in sending this unto you, who accounts it my greatest honour to serve the Lord and his Servants.

ELLIS HOOKES,"

will informs us that his home was with "Anne Travers, of Southwark, widdow, at who's house I have lodged these twenty years, and for her tenderness and care over me, being a weake man, I am greatly engaged." In his correspondence with Margaret Fox, he often refers to domestic events in the household of which he formed a member, with sympathetic interest, and not at all in the spirit of the proverbial "crusty old bachelor." At various periods his address is also given at other Friends' houses, such as at "Edward Man's, Without Bishopsgate," and at "John Staple's, near the Three Cups in Aldersgate," also at "3 Kings Court, in Lumbar Street."

His letters breathe a beautiful spirit of meekness and of trust in his divine Sustainer. On the 27th of 3mo., 1670, he writes, "I have the most cause of any man in ye world to remember the Lords Love to me, because I have p'taken of so many mercyes both inwardly and outwardly, and I am bound to Magnifie and serve him for ever, and my heart is every day engaged more and more unto him, and the more I taist the more I desire of his Love and Kindnesse." His letters also contain many expressions of warm attachment to George and Margaret Fox.

HIS DECLINING HEALTH AND HIS DECEASE.

I do not gather that E. Hookes was ever very strong. We have already noticed a reference to much suffering in his head ; and his constant and close attention to business, especially during such trying times as the years of the Plague and Fire, must have made inroads upon his limited store of strength. In 9mo., 1665, at the time of the Plague, he writes to Margaret Fell, "Anne Travers deare love is to thee there 3 been [? there have been three] buried out of our ffamily in a Months time, and her child has had the distemper but is recovered againe. Deare Margt, I have been preserved well, but soe as a brand is pluckt out of the fire soe has the Lord delivered me for I have often laid downe my head in sorrow and rose as I went to bed, and not slept a wink for the groanes of them yt lay a dyeing, and every morning I counted it a great mercy that the Lord gave me another day, and I was made a strength and a help to poore Anne." In 1671, when only a little over 40, he writes, "My tryalls are many, and exercises, and my bodily weaknes is a great exercise to me," and succeeding letters also refer to ill

health and to troubles from which he hopes, however, to be set at liberty before long.

The following beautiful letter was addressed to Friends of the London district on the 27th of 8mo., 1681, very shortly before his death at a comparatively early age. It is copied from an original sent to Ratcliff Friends, now in possession of Ratcliff and Barking Monthly Meeting. I find that the author also sent his letter to Friends in Kent.

DEAR FRIENDS,

I have near finished my Course in this World In ye blessed ffaith of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to my Measure, But before my Departure, My Dear friends, Bretheren & Sisters, of ye Men's & Women's Meetings in London, I have a short Testimony in ye openings of ye father's Love w^{ch} flows in my Heart, at this Time Towards you. Oh my dear friends, whose blessed Order in your Men's & Women's Meetings I have been a Wittnes to, from the Beginning and my Soul has been greatly Comforted many a Time To behold ye many Great services you have done for ye Lord & his People ffor ye w^{ch} the Lord hath greatly blessed you, and Encreased your strength in him.

And now dear Friends, we have knowne God to be a Pure God yt Loves Justice & Truth in the Inward Parts, And to see it Executed Outwardly alsoe. And my Soul's desire is, & it is my believe alsoe That True Justice and Judgment shall be sett up without respect of Persons among you. I am One of the Poorest & least amongst you, yet through ye Lord's Love have Obtained Mercy, and now my dear Friends, as Concerning those That have set themselves in ye Serpent's Spirit to seek to hinder this your Glorious Work & service My believe is the same with you yt God will scatter ye Chaffe amongst them ; but where there are any that Retaine Sincerity (amongst them) They will be Restored & ye Rest will be burnt up as Chaffe.

Thus with my Dear Love in ye Lord Jesus once more Recommended unto you all

Remaine your Dear Brother in the Blessed Truth,

ELLIS HOOKES;

Despite his many physical drawbacks our Friend continued in his beloved service till very near his end. He appears to have attended the Meeting for Sufferings for the last time on the 30th of 7mo., 1681, but he is referred to on the 28th of the next month as still acting for the Meeting. He died on the 12th of 9mo., 1681, at the early age of 50 years, of consumption; and was buried on the 15th, at Chequer Alley [Bunhill Fields], his remains being carried thither from Devonshire House. On the 16th of 11mo., the "Meeting of Twelve" paid to Henry Snooke "½ a quarter's wages

ffor Ellis Hookes and for $\frac{1}{4}$ year's Chamber rent due 25th, 10mo. last."

E. H.'s will was proved the 3rd December, 1681, by oath [?] of Anne Travers, the executrix. He is described as of Newington Butts, Scrivener. He leaves various sums of money to Francis Camfield, James Claypoole, William Shewen, Henry Snooke, and James Parke, also to relations previously mentioned, to the poor of Odiham, etc., Anne Travers being his residuary legatee.

[BIBLIOGRAPHY.—The only article on Ellis Hookes that I have seen appeared in *The British Friend*, of 1860. I am glad to have done something more to revive the memory of a good man, whose value, I fear, has been overlooked by successive generations of Friends.]

NORMAN PENNEY.

The Case of William Gibson.¹

In an historical survey of the relations of the Society of Friends in various periods with the ministry exercised in its meetings and those who have exercised it, the case of William Gibson, early in the 18th century, with the successive regulations which arose from it, comes into prominent view, and may be studied by the aid of various pamphlets issued at the time.²

William Gibson appears to have been the son of William and Elizabeth Gibson of Bull and Mouth Street, London, and if so was born in London, 30th of 11 mo., 1674.³ William Gibson (primus) was a Lancashire man in early life,

¹ Written in view of the Conference on the Ministry to be held in York this month, to which a document, containing a slight reference to William Gibson, will be presented.

² *A Little Switch for the Old Snake*, n.d.; *Saul's Errand to Damascus, or the Quakers turn'd Persecutors*, 1728; *Birds of a Feather, or a Wheedling Dialouge*, etc., n.d.; *A Vindication of the Quakers*, n.d.; *A Rod for the Author of the Little Switch*, n.d.; etc.—(D. 334.1—9). We do not know of any pamphlets on the controversy written by Friends, although Friends' actions in the matter were vindicated by several writers.

³ Joseph Smith (*Cat. of Fds.' Bks.*, i, 842) is not aware of any relationship between the two William Gibsons, but the Friends' Registers seem to us to make the above relationship clear. This is confirmed by reference to Beck and Ball's *London Friends' Meetings*, p. 79. See also *Saul's Errand*, p. 15, and *A Rod*, p. 7; this last pamphlet states that the second Wm. Gibson "was born a Quaker," p. 6.