

for 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.

	First Day	Meetings	Albans
1722 ^o		Afternoon	Barking Joseph Gelling Nicholas Davis Charlewood.
1723 ^o	Morning — William Gibson William Gibson	John Gopsill	
Bulland } Mouth: }	George Chalkley Simon Warner	Samuel Scot John Baker	Croyden
Devonshire = house.	Thomas Hory William Dimicstead	Thomas Hory Zach Routh W Shmitsford	Debitford
Gracech = = Street	Jana Brooks Walter A. Gidberry	Walter Newberry. John Esthugh	Esping
Horsely } = down }	Isaac Pickereil John Gopsill	Simon Warner John Padley	Han Syllith John Hewlett
Parke	Lamford Godfrey R. S.		Albans Hartford Dan, B. B.

but settled in London about 1670. He was an able minister and in good esteem among his brethren. He died in 1684, at the age of 55 years, and it is said that more than a thousand Friends followed his remains from Lombard Street to the Friends' Burial Ground, Bunhill Fields.⁴

In 1699, William Gibson (secundus) was in business as a mercer, occupying, with Peter Collinson,⁵ a haberdasher, part of a house in Gracechurch Street. Some disagreement arose between these two Friends, which was reported to the Bull and Mouth Monthly Meeting. The decision of that body was evidently against William Gibson,⁶ for he appealed to the Quarterly Meeting of London and Middlesex in 1706, whose decision was that the judgment of his Monthly Meeting against him should be withdrawn, but that the book⁷ he had printed should be called in and suppressed. This was eventually agreed to by all parties concerned.

Although his Quarterly Meeting granted him a certificate, in 1713, to travel as a minister, it is clear that some dissatisfaction with him and his ministry was becoming apparent.⁸ In 1723 the Morning Meeting of Ministers objected to his putting his name into the Book of Ministering Friends,⁹ which action caused him to appeal to the Quarterly Meeting and Yearly Meeting, on the ground that

⁴ Beck and Ball, as above, p. 154.

⁵ Believed to be the father of Peter Collinson, F.R.S., the noted botanist.

⁶ The minute books of the Bull and Mouth Monthly Meeting, and many other valuable documents, were burnt in the fire which destroyed the Gracechurch Street Meeting-house on 1st day, the 9th of 9th mo., 1821.

⁷ Entitled *Bigottry and Partiality Ruinous and Destructive to Pure Religion*, etc., 1705. The copy at Devonshire House (D. 334.9) has the following, written at the foot of the title page, "To be had by none but Friends."

⁸ *A Vindication*, published about 1728, says (p. 8) "for many Years, not less than twelve."

⁹ Turning to these Books, preserved in D., we find the first entry of his name, in bold characters, on the 27th of 11 mo., 1722, in the space for the names of Friends intending to visit Kingston Meeting. The name re-appears at intervals, sometimes re-written after having been crossed out; and here and there Wm. Gibson has added remarks of various kinds, some in bad taste, which quite disfigure Benjamin Bealing's otherwise neatly written book. A portion of a page of one of these Books, is here reproduced. For further particulars of these Books of Ministering Friends see *The Friends' Quarterly Examiner*, 1897, pp. 254—9, *The Friend* (London), 1901, pp. 442, 719.

the minute of the Morning Meeting implied his "disownment as a minister." This the Morning Meeting denied, and the Yearly Meeting of 1723 decided that "the Sole Right to disown any Minister or other Person belongs to Monthly, Quarterly, Halfe Yearly, or Yearly Meetings, and that no person's name, from and after the 8th day of the 7th mo., be entered in the Morning Meeting Book of Ministering friends¹⁰ as a minister, till he or she produces a Certificate from the Monthly or Quarterly Meeting to which he or she shall belong." It is evident that in the right to place his name in the Book of Ministering Friends, we have the "acknowledgment" of a minister in an early form.

William Gibson appears to have given much trouble to Friends both by the manner and the matter of his preaching. His sermons were very strange, if we may correctly judge from the specimen of one given at Gracechurch Street on "Sunday, May 14, 1727," and recorded by Elias Bockett.¹¹ On this occasion "a great multitude of other persons besides *Quakers*"¹² attended the meeting in anticipation of hearing the strange preacher. As soon as William Gibson commenced, a Friend present stood up and said, "Friends, this Man is Disowned by us; we have no Unity with him or his Ministry."¹² On another occasion he was taken out of the meeting by constables, who kept him moving from place to place till the meeting concluded. But on his refusal then to go home he was imprisoned for some thirty hours.¹³ He was also prosecuted as a rioter at the King's Bench, but was acquitted.

The Gibson case, becoming notorious, drew public attention to the claim of Friends that their ministry was exercised by divine appointment and authority, and the result was the issue of several pamphlets challenging this assertion, and containing statements to prove the contrary, such as the case of a woman who, "at a burial at Horselydown Meeting stood up, making an Oration of neither Head or Tail, of the Angel and the Ass, till a Man, a Friend Preacher contradicted her, bidding her be silent, for she knew not what Spirit she was of; but she answered him, 'Be Thou

¹⁰ Wm. Gibson's name appears in this book, on the last opportunity for inserting it before the new rule came into effect!

¹¹ *Punchinello's Sermon* (D. 308.6).

¹² *A Vindication*, pp. 10, 11.

¹³ *A Little Switch*, p. 19.

silent, for thou knowest not what Spirit thou art of !' Pray who is to be Judge in this Case ? Was the Woman moved to talk Nonsense ? No, no."¹⁴ The advice to "beware of laying stress on the authority of your ministry"¹⁵ is still needed.

Other causes, however, than unsound doctrine entered into the controversy between W. Gibson and the Friends of his day. He was charged also with immorality, and underwent examination and imprisonment several times.

His Monthly Meeting seems to have acted in a very considerate manner towards him, frequently deputing Friends to visit him, but the Meeting in 1 mo. 1725/6, felt

concerned to declare that they have no unity with William Gibson as a minister because to them his ministry carries no evidence of its arising from a Gospel spirit, but it appears rather to be from a wild unruly inclination of his own to sport himself in the handling of sacred things deceitfully, and to gratify his own private resentments, by smiting at particular persons and things in such unseemly terms and turns as shew the vanity of his mind and therein how unlike he is to a minister of Christ—and therefore disapprov'd of as such by this Meeting.¹⁶

It is evident from the Quarterly Meeting minutes that the Monthly Meeting proceeded further, in 1727, and disowned its turbulent member, and its decision was upheld by the Quarterly Meeting. But for some time after, he troubled the meetings of the Society, though he had a preaching place of his own, at Plaisterers' Hall, "where the most despicable Wretches of the Town are his chief Followers."¹⁷

Reference may here be made to an undated document¹⁸ which shows the kindness of Friends through all this sad time :—

Whereas it hath been represented that W. G. is Reduced to such Miserable Low Circumstances as to be unable to Pay 2s. 6d. in ye £ to his Crs, who have Agreed to Accept the same in full, Without being Drove to the Necessity of selling his houshold Goods, and although heretofore

¹⁴ *Saul's Errand*, p. 8.

¹⁵ Advice to Ministers in Friends' *Book of Christian Discipline*.

¹⁶ From an early copy of the minute, recently added to D. (John Thompson MSS. 258). This and a few other papers respecting the Bull and Mouth Monthly Meeting, in D., are very valuable seeing the original minutes were destroyed.

¹⁷ *Sermon preach'd by William Gibson at Plaisterers-Hall, on Sunday the 15th of October, 1727.* (p. 8.) (D. 334.5)

¹⁸ D. John Thompson MSS. 262c.

his Conduct hath been very Disagreeable to Freinds in Generall, Yett in as much as he hath of late been very Quiet and peacable Towards them, and in hopes he will Continue so for y^e Future Several Freinds in Com-miseration of his Present Distress have agreed to contribute towards his Relief as Follows:—

Thomas Cox 7 7 0	John Baker 1 1 0
John Freame 5 5 0	Richd. Pike 1 1 0
Humphry Hill 2 2 0	Joseph ffreame .. 4 4 0
Joshua Gee 2 2 0	John Bell 1 1 0
Richd. How 5 5 0	Tho: Plumsted .. 1 1 0
Daniell Phillips .. 2 2 0	Wm. Marks 1 1 0
Jeremiah Harman .. 7 7 0	Daniell Vanderwall .. 1 1 0
Anto. Neat 2 2 0	John Hudson 1 1 0
Davd. Barclay 2 2 0	Tho: Gould, junr. ¹⁹ .. 4 4 0
Josh. Grove 7 7 0	: : : : : .. 1 1 0
A perticular frd. .. 5 5 0	James Larkes 1 1 0

According to our Registers, William Gibson died of consumption on the 20th of 9 mo., 1734, aged 59, and was buried in Friends' Burial Ground, Bunhill Fields.

Of William Gibson (tertius), we know but little. He was born on the 31st of 5 mo., 1712. He entered warmly into the controversy, in support of his father, and wrote *A Little Switch for the Old Snake . . . being the Son's Vindication of his Father, in Opposition to Joseph Wlyeth and his Abbetors*, etc. The reply to this pamphlet, *A Rod for the Author of the Little Switch*, printed in 1728, refers to him thus (pp. 13-15):—

A young Lad about sixteen Years of Age : : : Is it not enough for the Father to have thus exposed himself to Ruin or Contempt, but must he introduce his Son to the same Fate? It would have become him better to have subjected him to good Discipline while tender, than to let him thus fly not only in the Father's Face, but a whole Body of People, whose Garb or Dress and Language he is distinguished by. : : : Had his Father been at Home in his Study, and less at the Taverns, the Father had not been the Subject of the Son's Satir, nor the *Quakers* his Poetry, nor both the Jest of the Publick.

Here he disappears from sight, and an episode sad and little known, but not without its bearings on the subsequent history of the Society of Friends, comes to an end.

EDITORS.

¹⁹ Probably father of Thomas Gould, who was clerk to the Society, 1773 to 1783 (see p. 12).