

17 Oct. 1705, aged 78, and was bur. in F. B. G., Bunhill Fields, 21 Oct. His will is dated 10 Sept. 1705, and proved in the P. C. C. 2 Nov. 1705 by Elizabeth Owen his relict. The preamble says "being aged and willing to set my house in order that I may have nothing to do but to dye." He leaves to the poor of Sevenoaks 20s., to Friends' Meeting, Rochester, £10. He bequeaths to his wife the residue of his property to enable her to pay off the mortgage of £400 on the house "in which I now dwell called 'Hillborrowes in Seavenock,'" which house he also leaves to her and after her death to his son Benjamin, and he also gives her the house and lands called "Forwards" in Minchinghampton, county Gloucester.

It is not unlikely that Hildenborough near Sevenoaks has some affinity with "Hillborrowes." Quakers' Hall Road, in Sevenoaks and the Quakers' Hall Estate are perhaps derived from Nathaniel Owen's residence, where Friends' Meetings were held, and, as far as we know, there was no other Meeting-house.

Elizabeth (Elkington) Owen, Nathaniel's widow, had taken from her, 6 Dec. 1705/6, by force of warrant, "3 Cows and 2 Calves, value £8 10s., for tythes of hoppes and offerings valued at £4 15s."

She, who was born circa 1645, died of age 25 Nov. 1725, aged 80, and was bur. in F. B. G., Bunhill Fields, 30 Nov.

J. J. GREEN.

*To be continued.*

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**William Dewsbury and John Whitehead to  
George Fox, 1654.**

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THE following letters, both written on one folio sheet, were recently presented to D by William Edward Brown, of Halstead, *per* William H. F. Alexander. The late owner writes that the document had been in his possession about 40 years. It had previously belonged to John Brown, of Hertford, the donor's grandfather, who died in 1833. W. E. Brown says, "I fancy it may have come to the Browns, who lived in Hertfordshire for many generations, through a

certain 'Aunt Jackson' (Ruth Jackson), held in great veneration by my grandparents who had books with her name in." Among several endorsements to the letters is one in the handwriting of George Fox.

The letters are referred to by John Barclay in his notes to Edward Smith's *Life of William Dewsbury* in *Barclay's Select Series*, vol. ii. p. 86.

dear Bro

in ye etternall puer being. thee I acquaint wth ye work of ye lord he is Carrying on by ye arm of his mighty power in this part. And his ordering of vs according to his will : on ye 10 day of ye 10th Month we wear brough[t] forth of prison before three men Called Justices at ye sessions in Northampton. the Mittimas the Jaoler denied us accopy of. ther was Read in ye Cort as a Charg against vs ; & in it was writ su[s]piction of blasphemay dangeres papers against ye lord protictor : When they wear to prove wt ye blasphemay was they wear Confounded befor ye peopl. then they asked if I would own ye papers they took from me wch wear tow Coppys of ye word of ye lord I was moued to send to olevr Croomwell : thee answer was to showe what I have sent to him I wittnes to be ye word of ye lord : then they demanded of vs men to be bound for our appearnc at ye Sizes, or to prison againe. then was demanded of them to Read vs a law wee have transgrest befor you Require any to be bound for vs, but they were Confounded and could not but still demanded of vs som to be bound for vs. the answer was to y<sup>m</sup> not any shall be bound for vs hear is our bodyes, do wth them wt you have power : then they commanded the Jaoler to tak vs away and putt vs in prison wch was doon att ther Commands. befor we wear brought from them a Coppy of ye mittimus was demanded of them in ye open Cortt [by Justice Crute but it<sup>1</sup>] was denied. But ye lord in his puer wisdom did spread his truth abrod yt day, frends wear much strengthened And ye decaitts of ye men Caled Justices manyfest, so most of ye peopl yt wear present their who by ye power of ye truth of god was conuined yt day And great is ye thirst yt it Raised vp in ye hartes of many hear awaye towards ye nam of ye lord

<sup>1</sup> The words within brackets were added between the lines, by John Whitehead. He, doubtless, intended to refer to Justice *Crook*.

Dear Bro I am moued to writt to thee if thou find mouings to Com hear aways it will be in [ . . . . <sup>2</sup>] sarvic for many dear Childeren hath our father in thes partts the harvist is great A mighty peopl our god is bringing forth heare aways to waitt vpon him for his wisdom to guid y<sup>m</sup> to his praise and glory.

if thou be ordered hear awayes dear Bro if way be maid y<sup>t</sup> frinds have knowledg of thy Coming then will they meght [<sup>?</sup> meet] together. if thou Com to horborow ther is at dingley tow miles from it John allin y<sup>t</sup> harth of y<sup>e</sup> earth. ther is a seed y<sup>e</sup> lord will Raise vp in y<sup>t</sup> famaly tho at pre-sant much doth not apear. they would Recaive [thee,] in lou[e] and be no burden to them. And from that plac vntill thou Com at Justic Cruks<sup>3</sup> and James Neills<sup>4</sup> in bickeringspark<sup>5</sup> in whom ther is much lou[e] to y<sup>e</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Word or words missing owing to the tearing of the sheet where the letter was sealed;

<sup>3</sup> Justice Crook, of Beckerings Park, was convinced in 1654 and became a leader among the early Friends. He suffered greatly in person and estate. John Barclay does not seem to have recognised the person referred to, and gives "Justice Crutt" in his reading of another letter from Dewsbury.

<sup>4</sup> John Barclay reads "James Nagill" in another Dewsbury letter, but here it is clearly "Neill."

<sup>5</sup> Beckerings Park, near Ridgmount, between Ampthill and Woburn, Beds, is thus described in a manuscript in a modern handwriting (D. John Thompson MSS. 94):—

"The mansion that John Crook lived in at Beckering's Park appears to have been built very substantially, as the walls were a full yard in thickness. There were three stories and cellars; there were many rooms, the windows were generally rather narrow ones. The principal front was towards the south, and the site of the building was surrounded by a moat about two hundred and sixty yards in circumference, with a draw-bridge over it. All of the outbuildings, as stables, coach-houses, etc., were outside of the moat, as the dwelling-house covered most of the space of ground within it.

"In 1658, at the General Meeting, George Fox and many others collected at *first* in the building, but from the great influx of people it was found to be perfectly inadequate to contain them, for, as G. Fox says in his *Journal*, 'many thousands of people were at it'; they therefore adjourned to the orchard, where the different meetings were held, and which lasted three days.

"The mansion was pulled down in the year 1824, and a farm house was erected on a part of the site. Most of the moat was then filled with earth. The stairs in the centre were wide enough for four persons to walk up them abreast.

"'Bickerings (or Beckerings) Park was the seat of John Bekeryng, who was Knight of the shire of Bedford in [the time of] Edward III., who reigned from 1227 [1327] to '77. The estate belonged to the Crown in the 17th century; after the Restoration it was granted to John Ashburnham;

truth and bold in ther measure. ther is frends all along in ye way and a great thirst on ev'ry sid whear not any frend harth yeet Comd, yt if Cartton [? certain] ffrends Com wth ye, hear will be sarvice for them. And hear is many yt harth of ye ovtward yt will Recaive thee tho Carttan frends be with ye it will be no burden, in measure they ar Redeamd from ye earth. if thou Com, dear Bro, send som to Visit ym littell Rement scattered about laicester and ther aways much care lyes on me for ym. I see much Carlesnes amongst ym.

With lou[e] wch is etternall I salute the who am thy  
Brother in the etternall Vnitty

W.D.

Joseph Stor my fellow prisoner salutes ye in ye lord.

dear bro from Coventree I Came straight to wellingbroug torovgh some frends scattered bettwene harburrow and it. at wellingbroug I had a greate meeting the last first day, since then I passed to northampton where I had two meeteings, and yesterday I had a meeteing three miles of it, and thomas Stubs had a meeting two miles of this place yesterday and is this day at a meeteing 3 miles of another way. mighty is the thirst yt is raised and many there is Convinced and brought to Loue the truth. thy Comeing heare awayes will be of greate service if the Lord make the free, frends heare do much desire it and would gladly recaive thee. those frends yt bring this Letter are Come to see the and would have the Come up with them if thou bee free to doe it, thou mayes send some of them before to appint generall meetings. one of them may be

In 1725 it was sold to the Radcliffes, and it now belongs to the Duke of Bedford.'

"It probably changed hands twice in the middle of the 17th century, as other properties in the neighbourhood did at that time, at the commencement and the termination of the Protectorate."

The famous General Meeting above referred to was, no doubt, held at Beckerings. George Fox had previously visited "at John Crook's house." This is given as "Luton" in the margins of the earlier editions of *The Journal*, but in the later the name has been inserted in the text. Perhaps the worthy Justice had houses at both places. From the "First Publishers of Truth," MSS (D. Portfolio, No. 7) it is quite clear that John Crook entertained William Dewsbury at Beckerings Park in 1654. Our interest in the important General Meeting is enhanced by the above description of the scenes amid which it was held, but the manuscript referred to is unsigned and no authorities for the description given are stated.

Convenient to be at John allens at dingley where frends scattered about harborrow will meete and thou mayest stay a night or two. and at Welingburrow there will be a Convenient place for another generall meeteing att William Pages house. from John allens it will be Convenient yt thou Come to wellingburrow ether to the house afore mentioned or to francis elingtons or William Richesons but betwixt dingley and wellingburrow there is two towns where there is frends yt would be glad to haue meetings at their houses if any Come to suply them. the name of the one is rowell<sup>6</sup> wher one bebee a baker would recave and the name of the other is Ketterin a markt towne where one Edward hackney an aturney, would freely recave any frends if a meeteing weare appointed at his house. At welingburrow and findon at John makernesses house, thou mightes Conveniently stay 14 or 20 dayes and frends yt are with the might be in greate service in the Contrith [country] round about. and all along the Countreth there is frends till one Come to Justice Cru[ks] house and a mighty thirst raised on every side. in the morning if god permit I shall go towards the meeting yt is apointed in huntingonshire. my deare brother pray for mee yt I may be kept armed with the eternall wisdome and power aboue all the worlds wisdome forth of the bands of vnreasonable men I doe salute the in the Lord and the rest of our deare frends

JOHN WHITEHEAD,  
from welingbrough the 25  
of the 11 month, 1654.

these frends<sup>7</sup> have much imployment in the ovtward and Cannot with Convenience tarry Long from it.

EDITORS.

<sup>6</sup> *i.e.* Rothwell,

<sup>7</sup> They were probably the bearers of the letters, and the sentence seems to convey a hint to G. F. not to detain them longer than necessary. We do not know whether the letter was received before G. Fox was arrested at Whetstone and imprisoned at Leicester, but doubtless this arrest and subsequent journey to London under guard prevented his carrying out the wishes of his friends. Captain Drury, who was in charge of him, permitted him, however, to visit William Dewsbury and Marmaduke Stor who were then in Northampton prison. Dewsbury must have quickly changed both his prison and fellow-prisoner, if the account given by George Fox in his *Journal* is correct as to person and place.