

Edmund Peckover, Ex-soldier of the Commonwealth, and Quaker.

Edmund Peckover, son of Edmund Peckover, of Chalton, Northamptonshire, was born April 15th, 1613, o.s. He was in Cromwell's army for nine years, in Fleetwood's regiment, and obtained his discharge in 1655, evidently leaving the army because he had embraced the principles of the Society of Friends and believed war to be unchristian.¹

¹ This Discharge is here reproduced (see illustration) from a photograph supplied by Alexander Peckover, LL.D., F.S.A., owner of the original. The Discharge is signed by Joseph Blissett and Hugh Parrye. It is a cause for surprise that a soldier leaving the Cromwellian army for conscience sake should receive a discharge in such favourable terms, especially as many other soldiers were leaving the profession of arms for the same reasons.

The following quotation from Firth's *Cromwell's Army*, 1902, pp. 344; 345, is interesting in this connection :—

“ In Scotland the progress of another sect caused Monck some alarm; namely, the Quakers. George Fox's account of his journey to Scotland says that he converted many officers and soldiers to his principles. ‘ I think,’ wrote Monck to the Protector, ‘ they will prove a very dangerous people should they increase in your army, and be neither fit to command nor obey, but ready to make a distraction in the army and a mutiny upon every slight occasion.’ Monck's officers made similar complaints to their general. ‘ I fear,’ wrote Major Richardson, ‘ these people's principle will not allow them to fight, if we stand in need, though it does to receive pay.’ Colonel Daniel represented that Quakerism was subversive of all discipline, and quoted the case of his own captain-lieutenant, Davenport :

“ ‘ My Captain-Lieutenant is much confirmed in his principles of quakeing, makeing all the soldiers his equals (according to the Levellers strayne), that I dare say in [a] short time his principles in the army shall be the root of disobedience. My Lord, the whole world is governed by superiority and distance in relations, and when that's taken away, un-avoydably anarchy is ushered in. The man is growne soe besotted with his notions that one may as well speake to the walls as to him ; and I speake it from my heart, his present condition is the occasion of great trouble to mee. Hee hath been under my command almost fowerteen yeares, and hitherto demeaned himselfe in good order, and many of these whimsyes I have kept him from, but now there's no speakeing to him, and I doe professe I am affraid least by the spreading of these humours the publique suffer, for they are a very uncertayne generation to execute commaunds, and liberty with equallity is so pleasing to ignorance that proselytes will be dayly brought in, and any rationall person that speakes or acts against it shall be censured as proud, or a disturber of liberty, and when I thinke of the Levelling designe that had like to have torne the army to pieces, it makes mee more bold to give my opinion that these thinges be curbed in time ; otherwise, wherever this principle remaynes there will bee great factions, which I shall counterplot and discourage in my regiments, and will cast all the water I can upon it. There was one example last day when he came to St. Johnston ; hee came in a more then ordinary manner to the soldiers of my company, and asking them

These are the forty five some if many more that Edmund Peckover & William Jones as
of the in the troops of 1655 the Parliament. Mingo: after he had been taken by the
and hath still the command of the same: and under the command of the Right Honourable
of the Honourable General Bartholomew the word when is Colonel in the service of the Parliament
in England and Scotland from the year of our Lord on thousand six hundred
forty five: until the year on thousand six hundred fifty and five: during which
time he behav'd him self with faith full vigour and vigour as he could afford it
and was rewarded of new honours here in 1655
Edmund Peckover

To Joseph 23 E. 1. 1654
Hugh W. 1655

HB
A.

RELEASE OF EDMUND PECKOVER FROM CROMWELL'S ARMY, 1655. (See p. 88.)

In 1657, he settled at Fakenham, in Norfolk, on property which still remains in the family, where he kept a shop or store. He married Margaret Monk,² whose parents both died while suffering imprisonment for conscience sake, in the persecution which followed the Restoration. It was not long before Edmund Peckover himself was arrested for refusing, on Quaker principles, to take an oath. The magistrate who committed him was himself soon afterwards imprisoned for refusing to take the oath of allegiance to Charles II., on political principles, and the two, while imprisoned together, became quite friendly.

A quaint little book, printed in 1679, called *The Lamentable Cry of Oppression*, relating to the persecution of the Quakers in Norfolk, gives details of the fines levied on Margaret Peckover, Edmund Peckover's wife, for "three first-days non-attendance at the steeple-house," and these details give some idea of the goods sold in their shop, which she managed during her husband's absence in prison:—

4th month, 1668	..	3¼ yards of Scotch cloth..	..	value 5s.
5th	..	goods 6s. 6d.
6th	..	piece of fine vermillion 7s.
7th	..	caligo lawn 6s.
8th	..	Scotch cloth 6s. 6d.

Fines of 5s. or 10s. were frequently levied on Edmund Peckover and his family for attendance at meetings. One of these meetings consisted of four Friends talking together in the roadway to Thurning. Two informers saw another man near by, and swore it a meeting!

howe they did, and the men doeing their duty by holding off their hats, he bade them put them on, he expected no such thing from them. My Lord, this may seeme to bee a small thing, but there lyes more in the bosome of it then every one thinkes, and though it's good to bee humble. yet humility would be known by the demonstration thereof, and where all are equalls, I expect little obedience in government.'

"When Davenport was brought before Monck, he remained firm to his principles, refused to take off his hat, and 'theed' and 'thoud' his commander-in-chief. Not unnaturally he was sentenced to be cashiered. Half a dozen other officers of the same sect shared his fate, and all the regiments in Scotland were, during the course of 1657, thoroughly purged of Quakers." See *Scotland and the Protectorate; Clarke Papers; Thurloe Papers*.

This opinion respecting Captain Davenport is in strong contrast with that of George Fox, given in his *Journal*, i. 409.—EDS.

² This was a second marriage. His eldest son, Joseph, is described in the Birth Registers as son of "Edmond and Mary," while the rest of his children are registered as the issue of "Edmund and Margarett." The second marriage must have been prior to 1668.—EDS.

Edmund Peckover's son, Joseph, was the father of the Edmund Peckover who became an eminent minister of the Society of Friends and paid a religious visit to America.³

E. JOSEPHINE PENROSE.

County Tipperary Friends' Records.

WILLIAM DOVER, SCHOOLMASTER.

From our Monthly Meeting at Knockgraphan in County of Tipperary, ye 15th of ye 3rd mo., 1709.¹

These are to certifie all whome it may concern that the bearer hereof, William Dover, Schoolmaster, hath taught Schoole for ffriends of this County above seven years, in which employment he was very diligent and reasonably well qualified for the same, and a good example to his scholars. He was brought forth in a publick testimony for truth in our meeting, &c., which was to the edification & comfort of ffriends & his Deportment amongst us was becomeing his profession. He left us by consent & in good unity with us. We recommend him to the care of ffriends where his lot may fall & desires his preservation in the truth, which, with the Salutation of brotherly Love to ffriends where this may come, we conclude, your loveing ffriends :—

STEPHEN COLLETT, JOSHUA FFENNELL, JAMES RUSSELL, ISAAC NEWBOULD, BENJAMIN FFENNELL, THOMAS LUCAS, BENJAMIN MASON, CHARLESS HOWELL, SAMUEL BARRETT, THOMAS BARGER, SOLOMON WATSON, SAM: CHERRY, JOHN WELDEN, JOSEPH COLLETT. [also] THO. WIGHT, JOSEPH FFENN [? FFENNELL], two of Corke, who happened to be at that meeting.

³ For account of this Edmund Peckover's American travels, and for notes on the Peckover family, see JOURNAL, i. 95-109.

There is no record of the dates of the death of the ex-soldier or those of his wives, in the Registers for Norfolk and Norwich.—EDS.

¹ From a copy in D (Gibson Bequest MSS. iii. 179).

For previous records of Friends of County Tipperary, see JOURNAL, i. 110.