

American Letters of Edmund Peckover.

In the possession of Alexander Peckover, of Wisbech, are nine letters written by Edmund Peckover in connection with his visit to America in 1742-43, to his brother and sister-in-law, Joseph and Anne Peckover, of Fakenham, Norfolk.

Some extracts from these letters are here printed. These give a touching insight into the inner feelings of a travelling Minister, not often revealed in printed Journals—a tender love to family and friends, a longing for news from the home-land, and a happy prospect of return when the right time should come.

Many of the Friends referred to are mentioned in Albert Cook Myers's *Hannah Logan's Courtship*.

I.

London, 8th of 5^{mo}, 1742.

We are to go on board on 7th day morning to Graves end, the ships name, *The Frances*, Judson Coolidge, Commander. Friends have provided very plentifully for us all. There are very good accommodations; the vessel is about 200 Tons. I sold my horse to a Fd. at Hartford for 5 Guineas.

II.

ffrom the Downs, 11th of 5^{mo}, 1742.

We are just come to anchor here, 10th hour this morning. Several men of War were ordered out to Scour the Channell from Privateers. My dear companions, M. L.¹

¹Michael Lightfoot was born in Ireland in 1683. In 1712, with wife and family, he emigrated to Pennsylvania, and was resident at New Garden, Chester county, until 1743, in which year he removed to Philadelphia. He travelled extensively as a preacher, including a visit to Ireland and England in 1740-42. For eleven years he filled the post of treasurer to the Province of Pennsylvania. His death took place, after a short illness, in 1754. He was a son of Thomas Lightfoot, of Cambridgeshire, later of Ireland, and lastly of Pennsylvania.

For M. Lightfoot, see THE JOURNAL i. 95n; *The Friend* (Phila.), vol. 31 (1858), pp. 148, 156; Bowden's *Hist.*, ii. 387; Woolman's *Journal*; *Coll. Mem. Penna.* For Thomas Lightfoot, see *The Friend* (Phila.), vol. 29 (1855), pp. 28, 36, 45, 53, 60; Bowden's *Hist.* ii. 260.

and J. H.,² hold yet bravely from sickness. I forgot, in my list of Debts, to mention 4^{li} od money due to Robt Carrick, of Newcastle, for 2 Casks of Raisins Haggitt bought of him. I hope thou wilt please to write to Poor Haggitt, for whom my heart almost bleeds.³ Please to let my daughter know the contents hereof.

III.

Dangeyness, 25 5^{mo}, 1742.

We have hitherto had but very indifferent settings of, having been several times of in the Channell, but could not Get forward for Contrary winds. We are in company of Near 40 Sail of ships, which are forced to Anchor as well as we. If Newgate had been Searched for a heathenish, Swearing Company, I think it could not have furnished a Worse Sett than we have got. We have 12 men, besides 2 passengers, & our Selves. Pray let me have the Benefitt of your Prayers. It is now a time of great Probation to us, being thus destitute of our beloved Fds company, & yet cannot Get hardly any way forward. Tis now 2 Weeks, & have got but 30 miles. It is Counted a very good passage if it can be made in 5 or 6 Weeks time from the Lands End. Pray, dear Sister, mention if [thou] hears anything from my Poor Prodigall.

IV.

Philadelphia, 25 7^{mo}, 1742.

I wrote to you the day after we Landed, which was at New York, 15 Jnstant, after a Passage of 9 Wks and 5

² John Haslam was of Handsworth Woodhouse, Yorkshire. At about twenty-five years of age he received the call to the ministry, and travelled in various countries. His death took place in his eighty-fourth year, at his home, in 1773.

See THE JOURNAL, i. 95, n, 96, 102, 107; *Piety Promoted*.

³ Haggitt Peckover was the eldest child of Edmund Peckover, and was born in 1718. In 1747, Jonathan Belcher, the newly-appointed governor of New Jersey, "at the request of some ffd's in London, brought over Edmund Peckovers son, who, for his father's sake, he says, he will prefer on his reformation," but in 1748, the still wayward youth had to leave the Governor's service "for some misdemeanor." Later particulars of Haggitt are not forthcoming, except the fact that he lived at Yarmouth, Eng.

See *Hannah Logan's Courtship*, pp. 28n, 123, in addition to references in the Index to this book.

days from London, and 6 Wks & 5 days from Land to Land. Tis a long time to look towards my Coming back, but I am well Content, & know I am in the Way of my Duty to my Great & Good Master. Dear Hearts, let me hear of my Poor Haggitt; J cant mention him wth out Tears; nor dare I ask too much of you, who are such Good Parents to your own & mine. Pray, write me Long Letters. Oh! how do J long to hear from you.

V.

Virginia, 5th 9^{mo}, 1742.

I have been altogether Employed in my Journey of visiting the Churches, and am now about 500 miles from Philadelphia, & expect next week to be in Carolina, the furthest part of my Journey upon the Continent Southward. I have been at Abundance of Places in this Wilderness Country, where there is scarce 5 houses together in a 100 miles riding, and have been at some places, which I cannot possibly describe, or you conceive, being so different for building, scituation, and manner of way of Living to what is in Old England. I am blessed with a very good State of health, can Eat Indian Cornbread very well. I drink nothing but water, & In many places no other Liquor to be had. They have no such thing as Malt drink, nor do I either Covet or want it. Please to mention what you think requisite about all my Poor Children & family, and wether there is a likelihood of Peace wth Spain or war wth France. I am near the place that I have heard my Father speak of he was at when in this country.⁴ Margt Preston⁵ (that was Langdale) is lately dead, also Robt. Jordan,⁶ both very Eminent ministers.

⁴ Alexander Peckover writes (1906), "We have no account of Joseph Peckover (E. Peckover's father) having been a Minister, nor any mention, besides that given in E.P.'s letter, of his having been to America."

⁵ Margaret Preston's maiden name was Burton. About 1710 she married Josiah Langdale, of Bridlington, Yorks, a noted Minister, who died while *en route* to America with his wife and children, in 1723. In 1724, she married Samuel Preston, of Philadelphia. Her death took place in 1742 at the age of fifty-eight.

See *The Friend* (Phila.), vol. 30 (1856), pp. 20, 28, 36, 93.

⁶ Robert Jordan sprang from a well-known Quaker family of Virginia. His grandparents, Thomas and Margaret Jordan, his father, Robert the First, his uncle, Benjamin, and his brothers, Joseph and Samuel, were prominent members and Ministers. Robert the Second was born in 1693. His elder brother, Joseph, and he were spiritually aroused by a visit, in 1718,

VI.

Philadelphia, 9th of 12^{mo}, 174²/₃.

I have been quite through Virginia & Carolina, and some other parts, have travelled about 1,800 miles, have got about $\frac{1}{3}$ p^t of the Continent done. J. Haslam is here, & but in a poor state of health. We have not travelled to gether. It would not have suited either of us. He is naturally of a heavy, dull Temper & Disposition, &c., & Friends were pleased at the first we were easie to Go apart. In this City is Computed between 2 & 3,000 who Go under our Name. D^r M. Lightfoot is now with me. He have at present a Great deal of outward concerns on his hands that he Cannot write to his Friends in O. E. I think he is one of the Finest in this part of the world. They have had Great Losses that way in about 14 months time, about 6 of the most Eminent removed by Death, w^{ch} is no small loss to the Churches here, & several of them, if not all, have been in England, viz^t: John Salkield⁷, Marg^t. Preston (who was Langdale), Esther Clare⁸, Thomas

from Lydia Lancaster and Elizabeth Rawlinson, of England, and both gave a large amount of time to gospel work in their own land, and in Europe. R. Jordan was several times imprisoned for nonpayment of tithes. In 1728, he set out for Europe, in company with Samuel Bownas, and paid a lengthy visit to the British Isles. He was in England again in 1733. He died in 1742. There are several letters, written by R. Jordan to Thomas Story and Joshua Toft, in D.

See THE JOURNAL, i. 98, n; *Piety Promoted*; *The Friend* (Phila.), vol. 30 (1856), pp. 45, 53, 60, 68, 76, 84, vol. 34 (1860), pp. 4, 12; *Our Quaker Friends*.

⁷ John Salkeld was born at Caldbeck, in Westmorland, in 1672. He was "a lad of uncommon quickness at repartee and a very keen sense of the humorous." His missionary journeys were numerous and extensive. In 1704, he married Agnes, daughter of Edmund Pawley, of Whinfield, Westmorland, and in the following year his wife and he emigrated to Pennsylvania. After much active service in his adopted land, and a visit to his native country, he departed this life, in the year 1739.

An obituary notice in the *Weekly Mercury*, of Philadelphia, states that "he was long a noted Preacher, and by some folks called Bishop Salkeld. . . . He would, on Meeting days that were not Sundays, work with the plough or other husbandry, till the time called him to meeting, whither he would go in his leather jacket and deliver a lively discourse. . . ."

See *The Friend* (Phila.) vol. 33 (1860), pp. 372, 380, 388, 397.

⁸ Esther Clare, with her husband, William Clare, removed, in 1714, from their home in Newtown, Cheshire, to Philadelphia. Her ministry was exercised over a large area, including Great Britain and Ireland, which were visited in 1721-23. She died in 1742, aged sixty-eight.

See *The Friend* (Phila.), vol. 30 (1856), p. 36.

Chalkeley, Robt Jordan, John Estaugh⁹, Jno Cadwalader,¹⁰ all famous in their day & Ended well, & left good savours behind them. There are 2 English Friends on the Continent be sides myself, visiting the Churches, viz. J. H. & Samll Hopwood.¹¹ This Frd Came over wth Dr Moses Aldridge¹² (whom I have not yet seen, nor Eliphall Harper,¹³ who has had a very great loss by sea, & Poor Woman, is very much reduced to low circumstances),

⁹ John Estaugh was born at Kelvedon, in Essex, in 1676. He was first impressed with Friends' views by attending the funeral of a Quaker neighbour, at which Francis Stamper preached. In 1700, he accompanied John Richardson, Thomas Thompson, and Josiah Langdale across the Atlantic. On the accomplishment of his service, not feeling any drawing to return to his native land, he settled in America, and shortly afterwards married Elizabeth Haddon, of Haddonfield, N.J. In 1708 he visited England, and again in 1720-23 (see his name in the "Book of Ministering Friends," THE JOURNAL, i. 23), and 1725. With John Cadwalader, he visited Tortola, in 1742, and on this Island, these two earnest labourers laid down their lives within a few days of one another, J. Estaugh having caught cold at the funeral of his friend.

Elizabeth Estaugh gives some valuable information respecting her husband in her Testimony, prefixed to J. E.'s *Call to the Unfaithful Professors of Truth*, a little book printed by B. Franklin in 1744, and several times reprinted. Further particulars of his life may be seen in *The Friend* (Phila.), vol. 30 (1856-7), pp. 108, 116, 124, 132, 141, 148, 156, 165, 172, 180; *Piety Promoted*; *Fragmentary Memorials of John and Elizabeth Estaugh*, prepared by Hannah (Joseph) Sturge in 1881; Longfellow's *Elizabeth*; Wood's *Social Hours with Friends*, p. 240.

¹⁰ John Cadwalader appears first on the page of Quaker history as a travelling preacher in Pennsylvania, and he must have spent much of his life visiting from place to place. He was in England and Ireland in 1732-34. In 1742, in company with John Estaugh, he landed on the Island of Tortola, and here, shortly after, he laid down the body and rested from his arduous labours, aged nearly sixty-six years.

See THE JOURNAL, i. 96n; *The Friend* (Phila), vol. 30 (1856), p. 101.

¹¹ Samuel Hopwood was born at Tadcaster, Yorkshire, in 1674. He settled at St. Austell, in Cornwall, and married Ann Freeman at Tregangeeves, in 1706. He engaged in ministerial work in England, Wales, and Ireland, and, after the death of his wife, for five years, in America. His death occurred in 1760.

See THE JOURNAL i. 95, n, 107; *The Friend* (Lond.), vol. 5 (1847), p. 21. For an account of his son, Alexander, see *Piety Promoted*; Evans's *Youthful Piety*.

¹² Moses Aldridge was born in 1690 and was convinced of the principles of Friends when about twenty-five years old. He travelled in the ministry in many parts of his own country, and in 1739 visited Great Britain. His death took place in 1761.

See D. Robson MSS. ; THE JOURNAL, i. 103.

¹³ Not much seems known of this Friend, save that she travelled in the eastern parts of North America, and visited Europe in 1730. She died at Wilmington, 1747.

See *The Friend* (Phila.), vol. 30 (1857), p. 261.

about 1 yr & $\frac{1}{2}$ Since. The weather is much more uncertain here Than in England, but in the main it have been a very moderate winter. I must not bemoan my hardship that I have not heard one word from your Dr selves, nor any of my Children or Friends, Since I Left you. I endeavour to bear it as well as possible. If [you] would please to write any time to London, & direct to Tho Hyam or David Barclay, there is Scarce a month passes wth out an Oppertunity of sending to these parts. J. H. have had 2 L^{rs}. Please to Give my Dr Love to all my Dr Children, from whom I want to hear, having wrote severall times to them all. This is the 4th Letter I have wrote to you since I landed in America. I have mett wth a Daughter of Joshua Urings ; she lives in this place, is married to one John Jones, a Shoemaker, & lives very Neat, &c, does not Come to our meetings, But extreamly glad to find any of her Fathers Relations. Her name is Rebecca. She very much want to see the Book N. U. put out of his Voyages, &c. S^d Jos. Urings widdow y^t was is now living. I expect to see her to morrow in the Country. She have about 12 Children by another Husband.

VII.

Long Island, 29th 3^{mo}, 1743.

John Gurney, of Norwich, have been so kind to write me a very kind & Comfortable Letter, which I rec^d about a month since, but had not the happiness of hearing from you. There is a very honest young man, who have lived at s^d City [Philadelphia] about 7 years, is Going over in this vessell by which This Letter Goes. He promis me to come down to Norwich & Fakenham & Wells, & See you all. (His name is Elias Bland, son of Jn^o Bland, of Lombard Street, London.) He have been very often wth me & will give you a Relation of my visit, &c.

VIII.

Philadelphia, 23 7^{mo}, 1743.

I have had the Satisfaction to receive your very acceptable Letters, dated in 11mo : & 2^d mo : Last, which gave me Unexpressible Ioy. I am not unsencible how thou art affected by reason of the little sense of Religion w^{ch} I fear yet remains on my Poor Son, Haggitt. R. H. have

wrote to me how near he have been (to all appearance) being taking out of the world. I hope it may have a Good Effect upon him. Oh! my Dear & Tender Brother, still have some regard towards him. Upon me let all his misconduct & disrespect & undutyfullness towards thee, &c., Light. I would no ways have him in the Family. My Dr Son, Joseph,¹⁴ have wrote to me severall times. I have also rec^d one from my Dr Lydia & my other two Daughters. There are Two Women Friends (I suppose now on the sea), who are Going to England to Vissit frds there, Their Names are Elizabeth Shipley¹⁵ & Esther White.¹⁶ The former is Esteemed one of the finest Ministers That was Ever raised up in these Parts. They & I are well acquainted.

IX.

Philadelphia, 26 11^{mo}, 174³/₄.

I am waiting for a Passage for Barbadoes, &c. It's Expected we shall Get away in a little time. I have no Companion of a frd to Go with me. I have my Journall Copyd over, which, wth the Copys of Certificates, I hope you will receive by first Vessell y^t Goes from hence to London. This, I think, Goes by the way of Ireland. (There have no Vessells Gone from hence, I think, of 2 or 3 months for Europe.) Yesterday I had my Parting meeting here, the Greatest meeting of our Society that was ever known here. The Vessells name y^t I go in is called *The Grafton*, Thomas Bay, Master.

We are among those who believe that any who care not about their early origin, care little for anything higher.—Ancient Coates Motto. See *Genealogy of Moses and Susanna Coates*, 1906.

¹⁴ In addition to his son, Haggitt, E. Peckover's family consisted of Lydia, b. 1720, Joseph, b. 1723, Katherine, b. 1725, and Hannah, b. 1727.

¹⁵ Elizabeth Shipley was a daughter of Samuel Levis, of Springfield, Pa., and became wife of William Shipley in 1728. Her married home was at Wilmington, D.C. She died in 1777, aged about 87.

See *Coll. Mem. Penna.*

¹⁶ This Friend was daughter of Thomas Canby, of Bucks Co., Pa., and was born in 1700. Her first husband was John Stapler, and her second, John White. Her death took place in 1777; she was a Minister more than fifty years.

See *Coll. Mem. Penna.*