

The Story of Martha and Mary

WILLIAM G. SMEAL, of Glasgow, draws attention to the fact that this delightful story appeared in *The British Friend*, vol. I (1843), p. 114, over the name Mary Howitt. Since the note in THE JOURNAL, iii. 37 was written other references have been added to the card-catalogue in D. under "Martha and Mary, Story of." The earliest location of this story yet found is in Mary Howitt's *Tales in Prose*,¹ of which the first dated edition was issued in 1841. The date of the original edition was probably 1837, for the story was transferred to the pages of *The Friend* (Phila.), 1837, p. 233 (dated Fourth Month, 1837) via *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*. Whence M. Howitt obtained this story, or whether indeed it is her own composition, is not known.

Here is the bibliography, so far as at present known:—

Mary Howitt's *Tales in Prose*, c. 1837, and later edd.

Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.

The Friend (Phila.), 1837, p. 233.

The British Friend, 1843, p. 114.

Wilson Armistead's *Select Miscellanies*, 1851, vol. iv.

The Friend (Phila.), 1856, p. 201.

The Friend (Lond.), 1856, p. 80.

Mary S. Wood's *Social Hours with Friends*, 1869.

Jane M. Richardson's *Apples of Gold*, 1896.

Joseph J. Green's *Souvenir of Addresses to the Throne*, 1901.

Lydia Cope Wood's *For a Free Conscience*, 1905.

The Friend (Phila.), 1907, p. 164.

The Walter Pixley of history was a shoemaker of Uttoxeter, Staffordshire. In 1675, he married Christian Alsop, of Inistrey. Their children were numerous but there was not any Martha among them. In 1697 Walter Pixley married Dorothy Twigg. He died in 1718 and his wife died in 1746/7, aged eighty-eight years.

Walter Pixley, with others, signed a testimony of disownment against "a certain woman whose name is Margrett Phillips," in 1689, and a similar paper against "Nathaniell Cawn, a reputed member of our Society," in 1710. John Pixley, of Uttoxeter (presumably one of Walter's family; Walter had a son, named John), was disowned, at a Monthly Meeting held at Rudgeley in 1710, for "debts and reproachfull conduct." (D. Crosfield MSS.) Walter Pixley does not appear in Besse's *Sufferings*.

¹ In this book appears a curious little woodcut, representing the old beggar woman handing over the baby Mary to the care of its future foster-mother, Martha, the seven year old daughter of Walter Pixley, living near Stafford.

Our losses are often made judgments by our guilt, and mercies by our repentance.

PENN, *Reflections and Maxims*, ii. 151.