

Presidential Address

AT the Annual Meeting a year ago¹ William Charles Braithwaite dealt so thoroughly with the usefulness and importance of the Friends Historical Society that it is needless for me to go over that ground. I will only echo his concluding suggestion for the visitation of Friends' Meetings in order to catalogue all documents and to enquire are there records in private hands which should be brought into the Monthly Meetings?

Friends' records in my own district (Munster Province) are at Cork in a small fire-proof room, where are a large number of minute books and other documents, records of Cork Meeting and of the extinct Meetings of Youghal, Bandon, Castle Salem, Charleville, etc. At Limerick there are a few books, at Clonmel the records are more numerous and extend back to about 1690; they include an interesting record of the families of Friends which removed from England and Wales to the County Tipperary in the seventeenth century and who mainly formed the Meetings in that county. At Waterford there is a larger collection. This rich mass of historical information is practically unexamined and awaits the historian's perusal.

Such stores have a tendency to decrease, some zealous Friend does too much spring cleaning among them.² I listened to a truly pious and benevolent Elder calmly proposing to Monthly Meeting that all the Meeting records should be burned. Another Friend at another time enquired could not the records be sold and turned into money? I think that W. C. Braithwaite's suggestion cannot come into operation too soon.

I propose to refer to some extracts from our local records which may enable us to see a little of the life of early Friends in our Province. Before doing so, I want to say how greatly we in Ireland are indebted to Dr. John Ruddy, of Dublin (died 1775), who in 1751 published

¹ See THE JOURNAL, x. 181.

² See the small folder, entitled, *Preserve our History*, to be obtained gratis from the Librarian at Devonshire House, Bishopsgate, London, E.C.

his monumental work *The Rise and Progress of Friends in Ireland*, part by Thomas Wight, of Cork. This history covers from 1653 to 1751 and records the first settlement of Meetings in Ireland and the names of Ministering Friends and others in Ireland. John Ruddy was an earnest Christian (see his *Spiritual Diary*), an eminent medical practitioner, an author of works on natural history, meteorology, mineral springs, hot and cold, as well as on medicine and diseases and on religious subjects.

Two other small works give a vivid account of Friends' sufferings in Munster—Holme and Fuller's *Brief Relation of Sufferings, 1660 to 1671*, and *The Great Cry of Oppression, 1671 to 1681*; both contain sad records of Friends fined, imprisoned and otherwise punished on account of Tithes and Priests' Maintenance, for not Swearing, not observing Holy days, not supporting Worship houses, and for meeting together to worship God. Of sufferers, I will only mention Esther Lun and Sarah Spalton, imprisoned at Waterford for eight months, and Sarah Davis, a poor widow living near Clonmel, having but two lambs had one of them taken away for tithe!

And now for extracts from local records. At Waterford as early as 1655 an expulsion order was made against Quakers who were ordered to be shipped away to Bristol and committed to the care of that city.

Edward Burrough, aged 27, arrived at Waterford January, 1655-1656, and his activity may have led to the making of this expulsion order. A long interesting letter from him to Margaret Fell, dated, Waterford, 5 xi. (Jan.) 1655, is among the Swarthmore papers in D.

He had come to Waterford from Dublin *via* Kilkenny, where he had spent sixteen days, and where "a few in that city rec^d our report." In 1661 William Edmondson wrote to Margaret Fell, "I hear of many in prison at Waterford, Cork & Limerick; many Friends are fined in great sums of money for meeting."

LIBERALITY

The first Minute of Waterford M.M. tells us that Women Friends were not so absorbed in their own sufferings and local affairs as to overlook the troubles of others. It reads:

At our womens mtg, 6.3.1680.

Men friends made us acquainted that they were about contributing something to be sent to Cork towards the redeeming of some English people that were in slavery in Algeire and desired us to be contributors towards the same & indeed we could do noless than be fellow helpers for the redeeming of them out of slavery & bondage which if it were our own case we should desire the like help. . . . We made up £3 & sent it by Elinor Holme to the Womens Mtg at Cork & . . . E. H. delivered it & it was very acceptably received by friends, who s^d it gave a president to the rest of the womens mtgs.

About the same time considerable sums were sent from our Province for the relief of the sufferings of Friends in England, where persecution was more severe than in Ireland.

EDUCATION

In 1675 the National Meeting at Dublin directed the Province Meetings to make enquiry for an able good Friend to teach youths and to keep school; they also enquired as to the number of children of school age. The subject of education is frequently mentioned in our minutes at Waterford.

In 1711 two Friends were appointed

to visit the schools & to take care that nothing may either be taught or given away to, that truth allows not of & to caution the mistress to be careful in her conduct to the scholars & to admit of none but such as friends has freedom with, therefore have appointed Pheby Jacobs & Robert Dennis is to go & in 6 weeks give account to the womens meeting.

[In 1717] Mary Carty that hath lived some time with Thos: Barnes for to wash his children being now about to leave him applies to friends to have their children to teach, this meeting agrees to make trial of her for some time to teach the children. 19 children from 9 families are committed to her care fees £3 per quarter for the lot, & she is to take in no other peoples children without the consent of the meeting.

In 1719 James Nelson, schoolmaster, is to get £10 per year and £8 to Jemima Badcock for his diet. Many following minutes show the continued carefulness of Friends as to education.

In 1763 the salary allowed for a schoolmaster was £50 yearly.

In the County Tipperary Friends' records we read:

Att our monthly mens meeting at Knockgraffon 12th 8^{mo} 1701.
Samuel Cooke is by this meeting ordered to treat or write too William

Douer³ an English young man, being a scullmaster & hier him for one year, too teach friends children belonging unto this and our Six weeks meeting. Clonmel is the place opinted too settle said scull in the meeting houss for the present untill Remufd by concent & order of this meeting

7 of 10 mo. 1701

Samuel Cooke advises this meeting that according to opintment & order he hath agreed with William Douer too keep scull in this County within the limits of this meeting & to instruct friends children as a scull master for which hee is to have twenty pounds for one year Sallerrey he finding himself diatt lodging, &c.

Another Minute reads, 1701 :

Ordered by this meeting that all such friends that have sons abroad at School do bring them home & send them to our School at Clonmel.

OVERSIGHT

Detailed care was bestowed on members.

1716 John White & wife just married are cautioned not to buy too much furniture.

1714 A paper of condemnation read against Dorothy Ariher for purloining her mistress goods.

1714 An inventory to be made of the goods of David Hutchinson & a copy of his will—The total was £168 & the dun & grey mares but the wine would not sell @ 1/- a doz it was not good.

1722 John Badcock to assist T. Fawcett in taking care of sleepers in meeting.

some young men & others are runing into the Fashions of the world by having

1 Th^r Shoe buckles too large

2 Th^r hats tied up in 2 or 3 places

3 Th^r coats too wide in the skirt [and worst of all]

Th^r coats w'out collars & open at the breast.

It was ordered that a copy of this minute be sent to each Particular Meeting and visiting Friends to have it with them when they go on their service.

1718 Nathaniel Ruby becoming bald cut off his hair & got a wigg without consent of Friends 4 men Frds are named to visit him, he consented to put off his wig as soon as his hair was groun.

1729 Frds not to powder & curl their hair

More Christian activity is displayed in the following:

1733 The Province Meeting wants an account of Elizabeth Jacob's travels in Holland [for references to these, see THE JOURNAL, xi. 78ff.].

1736 A young peoples meeting held on first days at 6 p.m.

³ For William Dover, see THE JOURNAL, i. 110 ; ii. 90.

BIBLE READING

Several Minutes advise Friends to read the Holy Scriptures more regularly.

TEMPERANCE

The first Temperance Work traced is 1682, distribution of G. Fox's paper for Vintners. Munster Friends took 300 copies, a note mentions that 1,000 would cost 40s.⁴

In the same connection we must not forget Dr. John Rutty's paper against whisky drinking, about 1755.

BOOKS

Literature was liberally provided by the Meeting.

1695 Co Tipperary Frds had 24 copies of Tho^s Carletons writings [he was a Cumberland Friend who died in Ireland aged 48.]

1696 50 primers distributed to 4 Co Tipperary meetings.

1697 15/6 is paid for a cover & bag for Geo. Fox's Journal which is going the round of Friends

1701, 63 copies Barclays *Apology*, £7 10 0 paid for Isaac Penington's books.

While mentioning literature I should not omit to notice Gershon Boate (1648-1704),⁵ the only early

⁴ This is doubtless the 4to tract *A Warning to Innkeepers and Vintners*, 1682, (not in D.; see Smith's *Cata.* i. 681), and may be the same as Epistle No. 381—"A Way to Prevent the Indignation and Judgments of God from coming on a Kingdom, Nation, or Family; commended to the Consciences of all concerned," addressed to vintners and innkeepers (see Sessions, *Two and a Half Centuries of Temperance Work*, 1893).

⁵ Gershon Boate, primus (1648-1704), was convinced about the year 1670 and travelled in the ministry in the British Isles. "He was of quick apprehension, great abilities courage very serviceable to the country on several accounts particularly with regard to the Rapparees that infested it; was wonderfully preserved through many imminent dangers from those blood-thirsty men who lay in wait for mischief." (Rutty, *Rise and Progress*, p. 205.) His home was at Borrisoleigh, Co. Tipperary; later he removed to Mountrath. His name does not appear in E. N. Armitage's *Quaker Poets of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1896. For his father, Gerard Boate, see *D.N.B.*

Gershon Boate, secundus (1678-), son of Gershon above-named, is mentioned in Wight and Rutty (p. 212)—in 1696, he accompanied other Friends to England in relation to the Affirmation Act. In the *Life of John Fothergill*, 1753, we read of a visit to Gershon Boate's at Dunmoor, in 1724.

Gershon Boate, tertius (1701-1773), is described by John Fothergill (*op. cit.*, p. 223) as "Gershon Boate, jun. of Mary's-town," anno 1724.

Gershon Boate, quartus, lived only a few weeks.

County Tipperary Friend poet known to me, author of *The Maiden's Best Adorning*, &c. I quote 4 lines :

Make room for Christ, let not so base a guest
As Earth, have any lodging in thy breast.
Be much at prayer, it is the begging trade
By which true Christians are the richest made.

POOR

1696 County Tipperary meeting owned Cows specially branded which were lent to poor Friends.

ADVANCED VIEWS

Minutes about a Liberal Friend are to this effect :

THOMAS TENISON.

Admitted to membership about 1783. Sent a letter to Friends dated 20.2.1787. stating :

1 As he had been a magistrate before joining Friends he wished to feel at liberty to help the community & to continue in the office & that of attorney . . . would have to administer oaths.

2. Thought it only tradition & not useful to wear his hat in meeting.

3. Thought it prevented love and friendship to disown those marrying out.

4. Thought it wrong to prevent those who had done wrong & then repented from marrying.

5. Friends read their own epistles in meeting, it would be full as decent comfortable & instructive to read the epistles of Paul &c.

6. The general disuse of the plain language to be regretted for literary & grammatical reasons, but Friends ought not to make themselves peculiar in the matter & if they do they ought to use it grammatically & not say thee for thou.

This letter was too bad to be discussed in meeting so it was considered privately, and a committee was appointed to visit the writer at his house in Tramore. He refused to see them, saying that since being at College thirty-one years ago he was not accustomed to lectures, he had given his reasons and did not chose to be a useless drone in the community. As a result he was disowned.

DISORDER IN A MEETING

At a Six Weeks Meeting, in Clonmel, 9 of 12mo., 1753 : Solomon Watson, the younger, having offered at last mens meeting complaints against Joshua & William Fennell for having given a partial judgment on an arbitration between him & Joⁿ Newsom, the said complaint was read in this meeting, & contains several gross charges on said Fennells,

who positively deny the same ; therefore said Solomon is sent for that this meeting may know whether he has any proof to advance besides his own bare assertions, but he was gone out of town, so that occasions this meeting to adjourn to next 5th day.

Clonmel, 13 of 12mo., 1753 :—Solomon Watson attended but refused to prove to this meeting his charges against Joshua & William Fennell.

30 of 12mo., 1753 :—The Mens meeting attended pursuant to adjournment & having considered Solomon Watsons complaint against Joshua & William Fennell & also that said Solomon did, at last adjournment, refuse to prove to this meeting (to which he complained) his charges against said two friends, on pretence he believed said meeting partial or prejudiced & not fit judges for his purpose. . . . Its clearly believed that he cannot support his s^d charges. Tis also the unanimous sense of this meeting that the s^d Joshua & W^m Fennell have not been partial or biassed in judgment or any award they have given between Solomon & John Newsom. . . . Wherefore this meeting is of opinion that the s^d Solomon Watson, junior, indulges a spirit of contention, & has slighted & reflected on s^d meeting, & treated s^d two friends (he complained of) unjustly, wherefore said meeting thinks he ought to give satisfaction for so doing ; the w^h : W^m Banfield & Joseph Grubb are desired to acquaint him of.

20 of 1mo., 1754 :—Report is made that s^d fr^{ds} delivered the mind of the meeting to S. W. and received from him an answer not satisfactory. Solomon Watson, the Elder, is added to the Committee, who are to speak to him again.

3 of 3mo., 1754 :—Report is made that Solomon Watson, the younger, notified the Province meeting that he would complain to next National Meeting [at Dublin] & the Province meeting ordered that the proceedings be sent to Richard Allen, the writing Clerk of the Province Meeting. . . .

14 of 4mo., 1754 :—Com^t report they stop^t Solomon Watson, Jun^r, at the rise of a meeting at Clonmel & he would have nothing to do with the message from this meeting & w^{nt} off. Com^t continued. . . .

A Six Weeks mens meeting in Clonmel, 10 of 11th mo., 1754 : The paragraph relating to the appointment to speak to Solomon Watson, jun, concerning a report which came before this meeting, was unanswered at our last meeting at Cashell, *viz.* 29 of 9th mo. last, on acc^t of the meeting ending irregularly, occasioned by the said S. W., jun., coming there towards the latter end thereof, & with him a ruffian like man, he, the said Watson, locking the outside or yard door, & gave the key to said man, & then in the meeting house, he, said Watson drew out a large, naked, basket-hilted sword & a case of pistols, & pulled out a powder horn to prime said pistols ; after which he behaved in a very rude, turbulent manner with many menaces, in order to terrify friends, saying, He had many more to assist him outside, & could get 50 more, if he had occasion of them, repeatedly telling how well he was prepared, & that he always would be so, & threatened in a very positive manner, swearing by the sacred name, he would lay the place in blood,

split friends down with said sword, cutt off heads, & with many more threats, calling friends rogues, villians, & devils; & in this manner behaved about the space of two hours, hacking the door & forms, often brandishing said sword, even at his father, threatening in a very positive manner what he would do at him if he did not keep off, & seemed greatly enraged that friends should enquire into his conduct, or send him any message, Friends all the while behaving in a quiet, peaceable manner not giving him any provocation to so behave. Wherefore, as friends cannot have any unity with suchlike behaviour, this meeting is unanimously of opinion that they can do no less than publicly testify against said actions, & him to be of us & friends, concluded now to draw up a testimony here & that the same be read in a Public Meeting on a first day in Clonmel by a friend of said place.⁶

LOSS AND LIBERALITY

In 1688-1690 when Ireland and perhaps more especially my own county, Tipperary, was ravaged by the regular and the mercenary troops and followers of James II. and to a lesser extent suffered from the presence of William III.'s partly victorious armies, Friends, in common with all classes of the community, suffered extremely in person and property. There was an exodus from the towns and cities, many found a temporary asylum in England, and in our Munster Province several Meetings ceased to exist at that time and were not resumed.

Our minutes record the great liberality of English Friends to their co-religionists after this time of distress; even from Barbados pecuniary aid was received.

To Friends in America Irish Friends sent considerable sums to relieve the distress caused by the War of Independence.

In 1798 the south-east portion of Ireland was smitten by civil war. Friends suffered considerably as regards loss of property, but the subscriptions raised in other parts of Ireland, as Cork, Clonmel and Waterford, etc., more than sufficed to recoup their losses, and a considerable sum was returned to the subscribers.

⁶ A Solomon Watson, formerly a Friend, died at his residence, near Clonmel, some years ago, & his son Colonel Solomon Watson, D.L., J.P., who was engaged in the South African War, lives near Clonmel, and occasionally preached at the Soldiers' Home, at Clonmel, which is on the premises of Friends' Meeting House there. He is of the same family as that mentioned in our records. The late Watson Grace, Sec. Friends' Foreign Mission Association, was a cousin of Colonel Watson's.

At the same time Friends were foremost in relieving the War Victims' distress after the battle of New Ross, the officers of the Coldstream Guards who were engaged in the battle liberally assisting.

In the awful famine period of 1846-1847 English Friends united with Irish Friends in the relief operations, but nothing could arrest the awful scourge of death and disease which arose from anterior economic conditions. Some Friends who were active in relieving others succumbed to Famine Fever. During the Smith-O'Brien rebellion of 1848 almost all the Protestants at Carrick-on-Suir fled from their homes. The Friends who remained were wholly unharmed.

My time has expired and I have only touched the fringe of our subject, but I must leave time for the speakers who are to follow me.

J. ERNEST GRUBB.

*Carrick-on-Suir,
Ireland.*

Professor Firth on Early Quaker Biography

SOMETIMES in the lives of the Quakers we get glimpses of great men and great events. Fox's *Journal* brings Cromwell before us; in Ellwood's *Life* Milton appears for a moment; the story of the sailor [Thomas Lurting] who served under Blake before he was converted supplies us with one of the best accounts of the battle of Santa Cruz. But in general the special merit of the lives of the Quakers is that they introduce us to a wider circle than the memoirs of courtiers and noble-men; all sorts and conditions of men appear in their pages; a picture of the middle classes and the people could be put together from them.

CHARLES HARDING FIRTH, M.A. Oxon, Regius Professor of Modern History, art. "Some Seventeenth Century Diaries," in *The Scottish Historical Review*, July, 1913.

Christianity is the sole religion of the world that is built on the principles of love.

WILLIAM PENN, *Good Advice to the Church of England*, 1687, pt. 1, p. 2.