

# The Convincement of Remington Hobbie

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**J**N the *Journal of David Sands* (1745-1818), who travelled much in the ministry and whose labours were specially fruitful in New England, we have an account of the circumstances which were the means of attaching Remington Hobbie to the Society of Friends. Aside from the references in the *Sands Journal*, we know only one account of R. Hobbie, *viz.*, in *The Society of Friends in Kennebec County, Me.*, by Rufus M. Jones, then principal of Oak Grove Seminary (a pamphlet of thirty pages, illustrated, New York, 1892, recently added to **D**).

We subjoin the notice which appeared in the latter publication :

Remington Hobbie was at first undoubtedly the strongest and most influential member of the little society at Vassalboro, Maine. He was a magistrate in the place and inhabited a spacious house, built like the old English homes, with a front hall so large that a "yoke of oxen with cart attached could be driven in the front door, up the hall and turned around in it," as the neighbours said. When David Sands and his companion were in Vassalboro, holding their first meetings, Remington Hobbie said to his wife: "I hear these Quakers are decent, respectable looking men. I believe I shall invite them to my house, as they must be but poorly accommodated where they are." She agreed and they were invited. When they came they were shown into the common room or kitchen. After being seated, they remained in perfect silence. Remington Hobbie being entirely unacquainted with the manners of Friends, was at a loss to account for their remarkable conduct, and attributed it to displeasure at being invited into his kitchen. He at once had a fire made in his parlor, saying to his wife: "I believe these Quakers

are not pleased with their reception: we will see how they like the other room." He invited them in, but the same solemn silence continued, at which he became almost vexed, and thought to himself, "they are certainly fools or take me to be one."

As these thoughts were passing in his mind, David Sands turned and fixed his eye full in his face and in the most solemn manner said: "Art thou willing to be a fool?" when he paused and again repeated, "Art thou willing to become a fool for Christ's sake?" He continued with such power that Remington Hobbie could not withstand it, and in a short time he was fully convinced of Friends' principles and practices. He was ever after a most intimate friend of David Sands and often his co-laborer. "His gift for the ministry was acknowledged," and for many years he preached the Gospel acceptably. In the affairs of the Church he was a "weighty man."

David Sands dates this visit "in 1777 or 1778." Two letters to David Sands from his close friend are printed in his *Journal*, but they do not provide any historical data. Hobbie travelled widely and frequently through various sections of the country. He was on the island of Nantucket in 1788, 1796 and 1800. We have not before us the date of his death.

In *Kennebec County*, we are told that the school at Vassaboro, during a portion of its short life had "William Hobbie (grandson of Benjamin Hobbie) a vigorous spirited man and a natural teacher" as its first principal, *anno* 1850, but nothing more appears to be known of the family of Hobbie in connection with Friends.

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It may be the "pernickitiness" of years, but I dislike to see a Bible carelessly handled, or turned back cover to cover, or its texts alluded to in the flippant modern style of "John three sixteen"—reminding me of the Irish priest who remarked to a tyro that was constantly alluding to the great Apostle as "Paul": "Shure, if ye can't bring yourself to say 'Saint,' say 'Misther.'"

From *Reminiscences of Friends in Ulster*, by James N. Richardson, 1911.