

## London Yearly Meeting, 1779

THE following account is from the pen of Joseph King, of Newcastle, in a letter to Joseph Wood, of Huddersfield :

Glasshouses,  
29<sup>th</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> Mo. 1779.

Dear Friend,

Thy Favour of y<sup>e</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> Month last came safe with y<sup>e</sup> Copy of y<sup>e</sup> Remarks drawn up by y<sup>e</sup> Friends in Lincolnshire on y<sup>e</sup> general Visit, for both w<sup>ch</sup> thought<sup>r</sup> my self obliged, Though hitherto omitted<sup>r</sup> a proper Acknowledgement Thereof.

Having lately returnd from attending y<sup>e</sup> yearly Meeting at London & being apprehensive a Short Sketch of my Journey may not be altogether unacceptable, I take up my Pen to hand thee some little Account Thereof.

I set out from home on y<sup>e</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> Mo in Company with Jane Waldie, of Kelso, a Public Friend & her son, all three in a Post Chaise ; we got to London in 3½ days w<sup>ch</sup> is 273 miles from hence.

Y<sup>e</sup> names of y<sup>e</sup> Publick Friends who attended this year were Isaac Sharpless, Jonah Thompson, George Boone, Thomas Rutter, John Storer, Catharine Phillips, Lydia Hawksworth, Elizabeth Gibson, Esther Tuke, Samuel Spavold, Isaac Gray, W<sup>m</sup> Rathbone, Mable Wigham, John Kendal, Benj. Evans, Jno. Cash, Tho<sup>s</sup> Cash, W<sup>m</sup> Cookworthy, and many more whose Names do<sup>r</sup> not at present Recollect.

Y<sup>e</sup> Meetings for Worship that I attended (w<sup>ch</sup> were, mostly, Gracious Street & Devonshire House) have been very large & much favoured, in w<sup>ch</sup> Jonah Thompson, Isaac Sharpless, Geo. Boon and Tho<sup>s</sup> Rutter and Cath<sup>a</sup> Philips had y<sup>e</sup> Weight of y<sup>e</sup> Service in y<sup>e</sup> Ministry, who came under very proper & suitable qualifications, and indeed shone with great dignity in y<sup>e</sup> cause of Truth. Y<sup>e</sup> Meetings for discipline were alsoe very large & Conducted upon y<sup>e</sup> whole I believe to general Satisfaction.

<sup>r</sup> The omission of the pronouns *I* and *thou* is of frequent occurrence in letters of the eighteenth century. See e.g. *William Law and Eighteenth Century Quakerism*, by Stephen Hobhouse, 1927, p. 239.

At y<sup>e</sup> first Sitting of y<sup>e</sup> yearly Meeting Seconday Afternoon, 3 o'clock, y<sup>e</sup> representatives' names were called Over from y<sup>e</sup> diffrent Counties & Comittes appointed to go upon y<sup>e</sup> Appeals if any shou'd be & to draw up answers to y<sup>e</sup> Foreign Epistles. Several Epistles were read from Wales, Scotland, Holland & America, also Ireland. It fell to y<sup>e</sup> Southern district to chuse a Clark who proposed Doctor Fothergill to y<sup>e</sup> Meeting and he was accordingly Nominated this year for that Service. By y<sup>e</sup> accounts from America it appears that Friends in divers parts have Suffred much but that many were enabled to bear these great Trials with a degree of Resignation and that their yearly Meetings had been held in diffrent parts of America & w<sup>ch</sup> were, notwithstanding y<sup>e</sup> Commotions there, very large, many Friends attending from distant Parts particularly a number of y<sup>e</sup> youth. . . . Y<sup>e</sup> friends that were banished, to Virginia were all returnd home again but two who died, Jno Hunt & Tho: Gilpin.

On reading the Epistles it appeared that divers publick Friends were deceased who had visited this Land in y<sup>e</sup> Service of y<sup>e</sup> Gospel—Joseph White, James Daniell, Eliz: Shipley & Esther White.

Thirday forenoon. The yearly Meeting Queries were read, alsoe y<sup>e</sup> answers from several counties Thereto. . . . the points spoke to were respecting training up of Children in Plainness of Speech behaviour & Apparell, against dealing in Smuggled or Run Goods, w<sup>ch</sup> particularly in Cornwall appears to be very difficult to keep perfectly Clear of. This last Matter Thomas Rutter spoke twice upon in his usual beautiful manner. . . .

Thirday Afternoon. Mett again when answering y<sup>e</sup> Yearly Meeting Queries were finished & taking y<sup>e</sup> account of Sufferings last year. After w<sup>ch</sup> y<sup>e</sup> affair of Ackworth School was brought before y<sup>e</sup> Meeting by David Barclay, but as thou woud no doubt get a particular account Thereof at your Qr. Meeting a few days agoe, makes it unnecessary my entering upon it here.

There was no particular business came further before y<sup>e</sup> Meetings, save answering y<sup>e</sup> Epistles as usual, and That affair of y<sup>e</sup> Appeal from Ionson<sup>2</sup> against our Quarterly Meeting

<sup>2</sup> This was James Ianson, son of Joshua Ianson, of Darlington, who came into wide notoriety in connection with his appeals to the Y.M. regarding transfer of certificates of membership. For a matrimonial

w<sup>ch</sup> I suppose we shall get clear of & either friends at Leeds or Devonshire house where he now resides will have to take y<sup>e</sup> Matter up & deal with him. Y<sup>e</sup> Matter was like to have Occasioned some unprofitable debate in y<sup>e</sup> yearly Meeting, but it was got put by. After w<sup>ch</sup> our worthy Friend Isaac Sharpless d<sup>dd</sup> a weighty & living Testimony, containing advice to Elders & Middle Aged, alsoe y<sup>e</sup> youth to whom he blew y<sup>e</sup> Gospel Trumpett & calld up for Volunteers to enlist under y<sup>e</sup> banner of Christ. The great duty of Prayer he enlarged upon & in a very affecting Manner mentioned our Suffering friends in America & wished that Friends here who lived in Affluence might dwell humble & Lowly in mind demonstrating Thereby whose followers They are. This Testimony brought a sweett Solemnity over y<sup>e</sup> Meeting & made it Close much more agreeably then I looked for or expected.

Seventhday forenoon concluded y<sup>e</sup> yearly Meeting. I staid in London ten days afterwards, having a little business to do, but I was tired of it before I left it—came down again in y<sup>e</sup> diligence to N<sup>o</sup>ampton & from Thence (w<sup>th</sup> y<sup>e</sup> same Companions I had up to London) in Post Chaise by way of Nottingham Sheffield & Leeds home.

I passed by thee w<sup>th</sup> Reluctance but was So circumscribed in Point of time coud not make it outt to Visit Thee w<sup>ch</sup> would have been truely pleasing to me.

My Paper reminds me its time to conclude. W<sup>th</sup> atender of d<sup>r</sup> love, I subscribe my Self,

Thy truely affectionate Friend,

JOSEPH KING.

E[dmund] Gurney is expected in a few days at this place whom I never yet Saw. I shall be glad to be favoured w<sup>th</sup> hearing from thee.

[Addressed]

Joseph Wood,

at New House,

To be left at the Talbott,

Huddersfield,

Single Sheet.

Yorkshire.

offence he was disowned in 1800. He was married thrice. His three children were received into membership in Stockton M.M., but all were soon disowned for "marrying out." See *My Ancestors*, by Norman Penney, pp. 207-209.