

Gleanings from Some Old Account Books

Continued from vol. xxvi, p. 10

WILLIAM MILLER, Junior, succeeded his father as Treasurer about 1720, and his carefully penned statement of accounts extending over thirty years or more is still extant. A few extracts may be not unacceptable :

1726. 9. 18 "By cash p^d for House hire in conveying John Yeats to Kelso & Shoeing & bleeding his Horse, £6. 0 4.=."

"By D^o p^d for guiding Betty Wilson & her Companion to Montross £12. 12," & the same amount for guiding Tabitha Hornor & Hannah Dent.

1727. 3. 27 "By Cash for a warrant to throw out a Tennents Furniture in the Floor above the Meeting House £=. 12. =." 1727. 4. 14 "By Do for Charges of a Guide to Linlithgow with John Hudson, & to Garshore with him & Peter Hudson £4. 16. =." "By D^o for two nights Grass of his Horse £=. 12. =."

1729 . . . "By D^o p^d for Rob^t Jordans Horse Six Nights & the Horstler £=. 6. 6=."

1731. 3. — "By D^o for making Francis Husbands grave £=. 2. 6." 1731. 5. 21 "By D^o to W^m Wood for curing W^m Glenney's hand £1. 1.—." "By D^o to the Town Clerks for Infestment upon the Meeting house &^c £5. 8. 7½."

1734. 5. 11 "By Cash given to the young man the printer in going to Ireland £1. 1.—." 1734. 10.— "By Cash paid for transcribing several Copies of a paper from London, £—. 2. 6."

1735. 3. 8. "By Cash to Tho^s Morton for Charges in conveying Benj. Holme to several places and having Meetings in hired Houses with him £1. 9.—." 1735. 4. 5 "By Cash for fraught of two Irish Friends on foot over the Water [!] £—. —. 8."

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1741. 3. 8. "By D^o to A. Scaffinger for cleaning the street about the Meeting house £—. 1. —". 1741. 9. 11 "By D^o for Horse hire & Charges to Montross with Betty Smith & Molly Storrs £1. 14. 9".

1742 — — "By D^o to Tho^s Gifford for bleeding a Horse & Oiling his shoulder £—. 2. 6."

1745. 3. 13. "By Cash for charges of M. Drummonds Horse 11 nights £—10. 2." "By do. for shoeing said Horse £—. 1. 8." "By do. for 100 Tiles to the Meeting house £— 6. 8."

1762. 4.—"By cash for Thatching Melvils house all over, mending windows, &c £2. 8.—." This was probably the cottage attached to the burial ground in the Pleasants for some years occupied by a poor Friend, a linen weaver. In 1764 poor Melville sent the following naive letter to W^m Miller,¹ the Meeting's Treasurer and factotum :

"Pleasants, the 25th day of the month called January 1764.

"Friend William Miller,

"I am sorrow that I am obliged to present thee with no better account of my situation in life than to tell thee that necessity has driven me to crave thy friendly aid : I here assure thee that I have had a great conflict between my distress and my bashfulness before I could give up to adress thee to consider my case. I have labour'd this winter under indisposition of body both in myselfe and family, and also under disappointment in business, and I am not for any way lying a burden on our Society, but having hopes of retrieving my circumstances I would crave the favour of thee to lend me some money. I hope next summer to be able to pay thee again ; I trust thou wilt sympathise with me and delight in an act of commisseration when it is not a case of my own procuring either by negligence or extravagance.

"I cannot say it was my unbelieve in thy friendly lenity, but it was my bashfulness (to adress any body with a case of this nature) made me decline from making my case known unto thee by a personal visit, and had it not been my incappable children lying upon me I believe thou should not have seen this letter, the which letter I desire thou may spread before the Lord the Author of all mercy."

There is a memorandum on the back of the document, "Jan^y 28 gave Melvill forty sh." The poor man afterwards removed with his wife and family to South Shields where he died in 1808 aged 103.

¹ William Miller (1722-1799) was the third of that name in succession at Edinburgh, all leading Friends. He was locally known as "the king of the Quakers." He was the grandson of the good, old "patriarch," and father of William Henry Miller (1789-1848), the great bibliophile.

To be continued