

Miller Manuscripts

The persistent efforts of the Librarian at Friends House to find the present location of the Miller MSS., included by Maria Webb in her *Fells of Swarthmoor Hall*, has resulted in the discovery of them in the possession of Norman Miller Doncaster of Castle Hill, Burley, Hants, and as Burley is easily reached from Bournemouth, I made arrangements by invitation and permission of the owner to examine the precious documents.

There are several volumes of papers, beautifully arranged by the late William Frederick Miller, uncle of the present owner, and sumptuously bound in leather. One of the volumes contains the seventeen items, which once formed a portion of the papers preserved at Swarthmoor Hall till it passed into stranger hands in 1759, on the break-up of the Abraham family, descendants of Margaret (Fell) Fox's youngest daughter, Rachel. This section reached W. F. Miller from his grandmother Ellen (Abraham) Cockin. Emma C. Abraham of Swarthmoor Hall writes (Jan. 1933): "I have a letter from my grandfather, Thomas A., stating that, with his permission, his sisters, Mrs. Cockin and Mrs. Thirnbeck, took some of the family papers from a box in which they were kept." The Thirnbeck Collection is now at Friends House, the property of the Society.

The transcription of some of the letters printed in *Fells* was collated by me with the originals and produced some curious results. This volume should be consulted in connection with the following letters.

JOHN ROUS TO SARAH FELL

London, 15 vi. 1670.

This is printed in *Fells* and in *Letters, etc.* The original reads: "one Robt. Meede"; and the following has been omitted in both printings: "John Penniman is discharged from his imprisonment and is joined to the bad spirits who have long run out from truth."

DANIEL ABRAHAM TO HIS WIFE

Lancaster Castle, 12 i. 1684.

" . . . We rode fast but had tide enough over sands." . . .
" Roger Haddock spoke some thing that Henry Coward would meet me at the gaoler's house, but he came not while I stayed." . . . "great charge and trouble in carrying us to and fro. I perceive the reason in part to be a friend that came from near Ormskirk whom the constable bore his charge. But after a very few words with me, he ordered the constable to carry me up to the Castle." . . . Addition to close of second paragraph: "So

they kept us there until night, and then Henry Coward came and we were laid down and I came to my old quarters Judah Yates of the corner where I now am with Richard Johnson and Joshua Crosby. I am very well in health and I trust shall be satisfied, however I be disposed of"

Taken from *Fells*, p. 350, with additions.

SARAH MEADE TO HER MOTHER

London, 17th 3d mo. 1684.

My dear and honoured Mother.

My dear husband gave thee an account last week how mercifully the Lord hath been pleased to deal with us and being indifferent well at that time, I now write a few lines myself that thou might know how it is with us. I was about six hours in travail, and though it was sharp the Lord was good to me in giving me strength to go through it and endure it and gave me deliverance in his own good time of a sweet babe.

My sweet babe has been very likely thus far, and is thriving as much as could be expected in the time. He has been a little froward this day and last night, but I hope it is but wind, and that he will soon be better again. I am fine and well and endeavouring to make a nurse if the Lord give me milk¹ and strength to do it. The weather is hot at present, and so may be some hindrance to my milk coming so freely yet as I hope it may be here after. He is a fine child, and we desire never to forget the Lord's mercy in giving him, and that we may resign him to the Lord, committing him to His arms, who is able as He pleases to give life and death, and unto whom we are to be subject in all things.

Sister Rous and all her children are in town and indifferent well, as is Father. We have yours by H. Coward. I cannot enlarge only to add my husband's and sister's affectionate duty and respect to thee, with our kind love to brother and sisters.

I am thy dutiful daughter,

S. M.

Frances Kent stayed with me a week after I was laid. She is a fine woman; it was the Lord sent her to me. It was the Lord's mercy to me that I had her, who is a very skilful and tender woman for that employment.

Nathaniel (afterwards Sir Nathaniel) Meade (1684-1760) was the only child of William and Sarah Meade. The letter is somewhat modernized.

RACHEL ABRAHAM TO HER HUSBAND

Swarthmoor, 7th 11mo. 1694.

This letter is printed in *Fells*, p. 383. There are certain omissions. In the paragraph *re* tithes is added: "Betericks Curan seems also served with

¹ Maria Webb gives *ability*, either from a mis-reading or an excess of prudery.

one of them which I sent up. She seems much concerned about it." Where " paper torn and words obliterated " is enclosed in brackets, we read : " whatever exercises outwardly may attend us." Later : " Robert Salt-house with many more desire dearly to be remembered to thee " ; and a postscript reads : " Our dear loves dearly to all our relations, in particular to brother and sister Lower and cousins. My mother bids me write thee— would be glad to hear from brother Lower, being he is so intelligible. Love to James Dickinson."

JOHN ABRAHAM, OF SWARTHMOOR, TO WILLIAM RAWLINSON,
OF GRAYTHWAITE

21 ii. 1707.

My honoured Friend,

I must say it is not in the power of language to express the surprize the near exercising account I just now receive in thy affectionate lines of my dear Jennie's being seized with the small pox. I am in the greatest distress, in the greatest agony, for my Jenny, *for her* who is the dearest of women. We have none to rely upon, none to confide in, save the sure providence of God, who is infinitely merciful to us all.

I shall be sure to write by tomorrows post to thy son Thomas, desiring an account by the very next post after.

My dear father is not yet returned from Manchester, which makes my dear mother and self uneasy lest he should not be well ; and the weather so very bad we sent one of our men last 6th day in order to meet him.

My mother's cordial respects are presented to thy honorable self and consort, which, with my most affectionate duty,

I am with the greatest sincerity thine in all services

JON. ABRAHAM.

John Abraham (1687-1771) was the home-grandson of Margaret Fox, the only surviving child of Daniel and Rachel Abraham. Was there an engagement for marriage with " Jennie " ? He married Sarah Foster in 1722. A Jennie Rawlinson, grand-daughter of the William who " turned Quaker," married in 1732 " Henry Arderne of Stockport, Esq." (E.C.A.). The letter has been somewhat modernized.

EDITOR.

Register of Hooton Pagnell, S. Yorkshire

Burials Año 1699.

John Burgesse the quaker in his own burial place. 7br 19th.