

Early Discipline in Southwark

1. A Marriage. 2. Two Schoolmasters.

Communicated by IRENE L. EDWARDS

AN interesting collection of manuscripts lately given to the Library at Friends House by Kingston and Southwark Monthly Meeting consists of over 1,000 pages, bound in four volumes, comprising letters, certificates, bills and other papers supplementing the Minutes of Horslydown and Southwark Monthly Meeting.

A few of the documents have already been printed, in *Jnl.* xxii., 53f., and xxvii., 59ff. Further extracts on two matters before the meeting are now given. The first case is a mixed marriage which caused a difference between Horslydown Friends and the local Church of the General Baptists in 1667. The second gives the decisions of some Horslydown Friends on the question of a difference between two schoolmasters in 1676.

I. MARRIAGE. FRIENDS AND BAPTISTS, 1667

It has been assumed that many of the early members of Horslydown Monthly Meeting on the South side of London Bridge were drawn from the congregations of Baptists already strong in the neighbourhood.

This has never been proved, but the supposition is strengthened by this correspondence. It suggests that some of the Horslydown Friends had a special interest in the local Baptists when they brought this matter of a marriage before the Baptists across on the north side of the Thames. For they say, "But now we really having a better belief of some of you who are under the same form or profession than that you either own or countenance such wickedness" and "Also we would not have you let such grossness and corruption go unreprieved lest it give advantage and power to them who are both yor enemies and ours." The case is

also interesting as showing certain similarities between the views of Baptists and of Friends, and ultimately in their disciplinary methods.

Dr. W. T. Whitley, F.R.Hist.S., honorary secretary of the Baptist Historical Society, has kindly examined the correspondence and writes that though the incident is new to him,

the general attitude to marriage is familiar. Baptists of this type were extremely strict upon marrying within the fellowship, and the matter was discussed fully on the fourth day of the third month 1668, as printed in my edition of the General Assembly's doings, pages 23.* The dates suggest plainly that the debate arose out of the specific case you cite, for the decisions go far beyond those of 1656.

Marrying out was considered by them a sin deserving of excommunication, but unfeigned repentance was to be accepted by the Church as an alternative. It was decided not to attempt separation of the parties in such cases, which appears to have been the unwise course followed in the previous year in the case here described. Dr. Whitley's note on the proceedings (*op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 24) says

This strictness of discipline was perhaps a legacy from the continental Anabaptists, but was not without parallel in the proceedings of the Presbyterians and of most Puritans; when, however, applied to enforce endogamy within the narrow limits of the Six-Principle Baptists, it did on the one hand keep a succession so that the same family can be traced for generations, but it also drove out all who would not submit to it and thus contributed to weaken the body.

Here we have an experience closely parallel to that of our own Society. But both points of view were evidently very strongly held for we read that neither the orthodox nor the offender were to affirm or to deny that "marrying out of the Lord or out of the Church" was equivalent to fornication.

The paper preserved in Southwark MSS. I, 26, is as follows:—

To the teachers and elders of ye several congregations (or churches) of ye Baptized people in & about Southwarke side. Friends, this is to informe you yt some of us (*viz*) of ye people called quakers, who are zealous for ye Lord our god, and tender of ye honor of his Name and ye proffession

of Faith comitted to us, yt it may be kept cleare of all occasions of reproaches and scandalls and therein our innocency might appeare forthwith. And some of us on ye 13th day of ye second Month 1667, att John Friths in Tuleys Street, did meet with some of your Brethren (viz) John Cleaton,^t Henry Akhurst, Richard Elmer & (and some others) who make themselves Teachers of others; First to cleare ourselves and our principle from ye darke & underly proceedings of a couple who came together as man and wife without giving publique notice of their marriage, yt man being owned as a member of their societies and ye woman being supposed one of us, but noe such custome nor discipline have wee amongst us. Nor doe wee owne yt maner of their proceedings therein, but have given an open testimonie against all such things. Wee did reason with ye men above-said touching their parting ye sayd couple after they were come together as man and wife and had concluded and agreed between themselves to continue, as they themselves there confessed. As also touching ye mans taking another [torn] yet still he owned and indicated amonge them in his putting away or leaving ye first and taking a second wife, John Clayton thanked God that he had a hand in parting of them. And after he had reckoned ye man a knave and her as bad or worse, he pleaded yt they were unequally yoaked, for ye man was a believer and shee an unbeliever and therefore they parted them; upon which they reckoned ye guilt of his sinn (in their being unequally yoaked) was done away; and now hee is owned as a member amongst them, having taken one to wife of his owne Faith. Though when they were asked whether or noe they acquainted ye woman he hath last taken of his proceeding with ye other woman before he was married to this last, they would not answer to it. Upon which discourse with many more words and many witnesses being present, this John Clayton and the rest of them, being by some of us Charged with causing ye Man to goe into Adultery and with maintaining him in it, whom some tymes they called a Knave and other tymes a beleiver, . . . then, as the Ranters used to doe, they pleaded ye Jewes putting away their strange wives and those yt were borne of them, Ezra 9. . . .

But now wee really having a better beleife of some of you who are under ye same forme or profession, than that you

either owne or countenance such wickedness as to assume such an Authoritie ; Higher than ye Bishops or as high as ye pope, as those yor Bretheren aforesayd have done, as to part man and wife and owne ye man in taking another wife while ye first is alive, if he be counted a beleiver before he hath taken ye first, yt we are not willing to lay such a thing to yor charge in ye Generall as ye Baptists principle till wee may know yor Judgmts, but rather Judge it to be some grocenesse and corruption crept in among some perticulers as there mentioned, who if they had not preched it up as they did in the presence of many witnesses, but had Judged and condemned what had been amisse in ye parties concerned in ye first of our Discourse, and themselves concerning them, wee had not made mention of therin writing upon this occasion.

But it being ye principle and doctrine of ye said John Clayton and others of them that if a beleiver take an unbeleiver to wife they were to part them because they were unequally yoked ; so yt if their Brethren take wives of another persuasion, they can assume a power to part them, and it seems give a dispensation to take wives of their owne persuasion. But then if some woman of their owne faith take husbands of another beleefe yt will not part with their wives, how will they doe in yt case to gett authoritie to part them ? . . .

That a man should leave his wife under pretence of being an unbeleiver and take another, it argues great hardness of heart, and an unchristian like spirit. . . .

And even these yor Bretheren who were ye occasion of such wickedness deserve to be cast out, and whereas they urged as the main argument Marriage in ye Lord and whom God Joynes together &c, as Implying & takeing an Authority to part such as were not Married in ye Lord, Now, herein as in divers other things, they perverted and abused ye Scriptures. For both they and you know there are many marriages having been suffered in a lower state, which persons being Joyned in and become man and wife it is not Lawfull to part them nor goe about to absolve them from yt engagement and covenant they are under as man and wife ; for it was sayd its better to Marry than Burne, which is much below some Marriages. And though Moses suffered ye Jewes because of the hardness of their harts to putt away

their wives and give a writing of disownment, yett in ye beginning it was not soe. Christ gave another Law and taught another Doctrine which all professing Christianity ought to be subject to ; yea when his disciples asked him of this matter he sayd whosoever shall put away his wife and marryeth another comitteth adultery &c Mark 10 : 10 : 11 : 12 Marke ye wordes and how Generall they are. Much more might be sayd, but these things we leave to yor considerations, desiring to know yor Judgmts touching ye matter herein in charge against those yor Bretheren mentioned, and weather you owne them in their principle, yea or nay, for wee Judge it both bad & scandellous, alsoe wee would not have you lett such Grossness and corruption goe unreproved lest it give advantage and power to them who are both yor enimies and ours to stir them up yt are against you and us

Yor Friends Tho : Padley²
Abraham : Shapton³
Walter : Miers.⁴

The reply is as follows, (Southwark MSS., Vol. I, No. 27.)

22nd of the 4th month 1667.

To the people comonly called quakers or to so many as are concerned in this business hereafter expressed.

We have latly sen a paper directed to the Teachers and Elders of the baptized congregations in or about Southwark subscribed by Thomas Padley Abraham Shapton Walter Miers, in which paper there is a complaint of som of the Teachers of the baptized churches, that is to say John Clayton, Henry Akhurst, Richard Elmore, with some others concerninge a couple of persons (as saith the paper) that has agreed together to live as man and wife in which complaint we take notice of these three thinges as the grounds of it :—

First that these Teachers have ben instrumental to seperat the said persons.

Secondly that the said Teachers were a meanes to keep the said man in communone though they know him a fornicator.

Thirdly that the said Teachers were Instrumental to marie the said man to another woman.

To the first we answer that though we cannot say as you say to clinch so hard that they were man and wife,

for then we think we should so much justifie that unclean action, and might incurig [encourage] others too much to the sam practise, which we beare our testimony against. But thus we believe that consideringe the sinfullness of their proceedings, and the Difference of their Judgments, if they two could agreed to have separated, and to have lived single all their Dayes, they had don well, and it would a ben a means to have recovred themselves out of that snare that they were fallen into for we beleeve that their caridge was filthy and uncleane. But for others to have a hand in their separation as is expressed in the paper, and before there was an endeavour that both persons might be satisfied, or for such endes as is signified by the paper, we beleeve such councill is not safe nor becomege a Gospill Spirit.

As for the second in their keepinge of him in comunion (as yor paper say) aft they know him a knave and a fornicator (and had a fare oportunity for the church to meet to Excamon the mater and to deall with him) was contrary we beleeve to the mind of God, and ought to be disowned, for the sin was a Great sin and ought to be punished by the Church in and by the power of the Lord, and that their should have been time as well as words to have manifested the repentince before the Church had medled any more with him.

As to the third, their counclinge of him to marie with another (accordinge to your paper), we beare our Testemony against it as an uncleane thing for we beleeve he was not fit for any other woman much less for a faithful honest woman and we feare it was so much the more sinfull in as much as it was don so suddenly. Thus we have given you a short account in which you may understand that such pratrises (as it is stated in yor paper) is besid our principles, though John Clayton, who you charge, doe say that you have not stated the case right. But as the case is stated we disowne it and you say in conclusion that the Enemy that hate both you and us, may take an advantage by it, we confese that is true, but you may as well bringe it upon you and us by yor open publication of it as they did by their unadvised doeing of it, which we Leave to yor considratinge and rest

Christopher Miles⁵

Joseph Taylor⁶

Sam. loveday⁷

Randall Roper⁸

John Foxwell⁹

II. FRANCIS LEA¹⁰ AND RICHARD SCORYER¹¹

This case concerns the conflicting interests of these two schoolmasters.

Horslydown Friends on 20.ii.1670 had asked leave from "the meeting in London" for "Francis Lea to keep schol" in the Meeting House. How soon it was begun is not known, but Horslydown Meeting House was shortly afterwards pulled down by Sir Christopher Wren under an Order in Council and so for a time at any rate the school would have to be elsewhere. Evidently it settled in the other Meeting House for six years later the Monthly Meeting on 7.iv.1676 asked Wm. Shewen to write to Francis Lea "about the school in the Park".¹⁹ The matter was brought up again next month, before an answer had been received from Francis, who was in Cardiff gaol. We gather that Richard Scoryer started his career in Southwark as assistant to Francis Lea—the minute of 5.v.1676 states that "the Freinds of this Meting doe desire Richard to kepe the Scole for a month or two untill we hear whether Francis come up or noe and if Francis doe not give him satyfaction for his soe doing that then Friends may find a way to consider him something but Freinds dooe thinke that Richard shall have the whole wages that the Scole produces from henceforward till Francis come home." At last came a letter from Francis written 29.iv.1676 in Gaol (Southwark MSS., Vol. I, 101).

From it we learn that Francis is frequently absent on the service of truth and that Richard has been employed by him to keep the school going during his absences. These have been so frequent that Richard thinks he should take the whole proceeds of the school fees, or else set up one of his own. Francis says the school produces more than enough for Richard's wages and thinks Richard would have done better to await his expected release and return or at least to have written to his employer direct to be freed from his contract, before taking the matter to the monthly meeting. Francis on his part has not failed to keep the contract and he is sure they can part as amicably as they came together and hopes the monthly meeting will not interfere until they have had a chance to do so.

The dispute seems to have involved wider issues than are apparent from this letter and Southwark friends met

together to go into the whole question carefully with a view of preventing "future differences among friends about matters of trade". Their decisions here printed show a high standard of love and forbearance.

Southwark MSS., Vol. I, 108.

Southwarke the
29th of 7th Mo. 1676.

Upon ye debate & consideration of ye Case of Difference betweene Francis Lea & Rich. Scories.

It was concluded as followeth :—

First. It is Agreed & Judged meet by ye freinds met ye day above whose names are underwritten That our freind or freinds ought [not ?] to make a Bargaine to leave and forsake his or their trade & Employment & Remove their dwellings & transport him or themselves beyond ye seas or into another County without due & weighty counsell and the consent & approbation of their wives if they have any. And if any doe make, have or shall make such a weake, rash, forward, unadvised Bargaine they ought to repent of it & Acknowledge their folly & weaknes therein, And if he or they have or shall doe any particular person any wrong by their weaknes & folly such ought to make restitution to ye person soe wronged.

Being very late at Night ye Meeting adjourned till ye 3rd of ye 8th Month & met accordingly.

Secondly. Upon the further weighing & consideration of ye case betwixt frances Lea & Rich. Scories wee find that R.S. without due & weighty counsell weakely and unadvisedly and without ye consent of his Wife hath made a bargaine as above is expressed, And that by declaring his Intention to fullfill ye same hath Induced F. Lea to yeild to easier tearms & to take less money for his Interest in ye Scoole for ye time past then otherwise he would have done.

Therefore we Judge it the duty of Rich Scories not only to confess his weakenes, folly & forwardness in declaring his purpose or intentions to leave his present Employment & dwelling &c, But allsoe to give Frances Lea the same satisfaction in money which would might or can appeare to be his due & right if he had knowne that he had Intended to stay & keepe a scoole in Southwarke as now he doth ; Therefore we doe order & advise that they treat with each outhr in ye same capacity which they were in before the late conclusion

betwixt them was, According to their former Bargaine, & if they cannot agree then to call a freind or two to assist them.

[Autograph Signatures]

Jno. Grove ¹²	Wm. Shewen ¹⁴	John Potter ¹⁶
Ralph Gouldsmith ¹³	Thomas Padley	Griffiths Jones ¹⁷
Walter Miers	Gabriel Earwood ¹⁵	James Craven ¹⁸

Now for ye preventing the like difference among freinds about matters of trade we declare our Judgment further on as followeth

That it is not of good Report reasonable nor according to truth for any freind to tye or endeavour to tye and Ingage their servant or servants, partner or partners, yt when their time is out, or when they part not to use their trade, or if they doe they must goe into some other parish, towne, or County, or at some such distance where they may not take away part of their Customers or lessen their trade, this we say is unbrotherly Contrary to truth and unlawfull and of an evill report, being the fruit and effect of a private narrow selfish covetous sperit.

2dly. We conclude yt if a freind & Brother Be wise Juditious & full of foresight & discretion to manage & order his affairs & he meet with another freind & Brother who is not soe wise Juditious discreet & considerate &c, That he ought not to make any advantage upon him for selfe Interest by taking hold of any forward unadvised words, promises, or covenants, But rather to Instruct advise and informe him for ye best, as he would be done by himselfe. And if he does not this he is more guilty and blameworthy in the sight of God & all good men, then the weake, forward, Indiscrete & ignorant And will receive Judgment from god for ye same.

3dly We Judge it contrary to & Inconsistant with ye universal testimony of truth that any freind or Brother should grudge in his Mind first against & be discontented with another freind and Brother that is of ye same trade and imployment because he comes to dwell neare him or sets up his trade in the same parrish, streete, towne, or County. This is an evill sperit even ye sperit of envy and evill will, & not of him who would have all come to ye knowledge of ye truth and be saved. And if all were contented and become freinds to ye truth this love would Ingage to live together in peace, unity & love And keepe downe the

Contrary, giving dominion over all selfe Interest that leade to hate or hurt a brother, or neighbour upon the account of outward trade, gaine or loss.

4th We judge that if a freind or brother who is weake in his Judgmt and so forward and unadvised in his undertakings should in yt state make a bargaine, or covenant with another freind or brother to doe that which is not convenient nor consistent with his lawful Interest good and well being inwardly & outwardly, and afterwards comes to a sight and understanding therein & confesses his folly, weakenes, forwardness and unadvisedness, and desires his Brother to forgive him and Release him, we Judge yt it is the Duty of a Brother soe to doe, And if he doth it not, he doth not fullfill ye Law of Righteousnes, nor doe as he would be done by, neither hath he learned ye heavenly lesson to forgive those that trespass against him as he would be forgiven.

Thus because wee understand that Francis Lea (notwithstanding his giving up ye matter & promising to consent or acquiese with our Judgmt and advice therein) doth shew himselfe discontented and dissatisfied with wt we have done, thinking himselfe wronged by our Judgment, going about wth a complaint among freinds & would trouble freinds to heare & judge the matter againe, therefore we have added these few particulars which may something demonstrate the reason of our concluding ye difference soe and soefar as we did. And we doe further offer that if any freind in London or elsewhere shall signifie that they are dissatisfied or are doubtfull that we have not concluded aright in ye matter, or that we are mistaken in the same, that then wee shall be ready and willing to meet such freind or freinds and endeavour to give them full satisfaction. And further we signifie that if any fds are desirous to be judged in ye matter and can demonstrate any erroniousness in our proceedings & Judgment thereoff we are and may be ready to give it up into their hands and receive correction and a better understanding from them.

[Autograph Signatures]

Ralph Gouldsmith

Jno Grove

Wal Miers

Wm. Shewen

Gab Earwood

8th Month 13th 1676

NOTES

* W. T. Whitley: *Minutes of the General Assembly of the General Baptist Churches in England, 1654-1728*. 2 vols. 1909-10.

¹ John Cleaton was an elder, of Fair St. General Baptist Church when it met at Dockhead or Shad Thames, Southwark.

² Prominent in early minutes of Horslydown Monthly Meeting. No relation of John Padley whom he adopted. (See John Padley's *Testimony*.)

³ Cheesemonger. Had severed connection with Friends by 1704 when he wrote to Horslydown Monthly Meeting asking for return of money he had subscribed towards the building of the Meeting House and the purchase of the Park burying ground.

⁴ Cheesemonger and by company Citizen & Shipwright of London. Lived at Bridge House, Southwark. Friend and correspondent of the Swarthmore household.

^{5, 6, 7, 8, and 9} Some of the leaders of the General Baptist Church in London. See also W. T. Whitley "The Baptists of London" and "Minutes of General Assembly of General Baptists 1654-1728."

¹⁰ Information about Francis Lea is scanty. He wrote three tracts, the first of which, *Judgment Brought Forth unto Victory*, is dated from the Fleet Prison, i. mo. 1671. In it he says that he had lived like the prodigal son and run through his portion, after which he resolved to imitate Dr. Faustus and sell his soul to the Devil if he could have whatsoever he desired while he lived. He oftentimes called upon the Devil for this purpose "but the Lord was pleased to prevent this evil design". He was convinced by reading one of George Whitehead's tracts and joined himself to Friends. His letter and handwriting, besides his avocation after his convincement suggest that he was a man of good education. The case here discussed suggests that he travelled in the ministry and he was twice imprisoned. The death of a Francis Lee is recorded in the London Registers, 18.ix.1682, aged 35 years, of consumption.

¹¹ Richard Scoryer, or Scorier, maintained a very successful school at the Park Meeting House, Southwark, and afterwards at Wandsworth. In 1697 he was attacked by Rev. Charles Leslie, in *The Snake in the Grass*, with a charge of not teaching Scripture but using George Fox's Journal instead, to which R.S. replied, with witnesses. In the same year he was recommended, in a paper issued by the direction of the Yearly Meeting, as one suitable to instruct young men who would become teachers. He died in 1715. See also *J.F.H.S.*, vii., 45, 46; xiii., 174; xxii., 84; xxx., 49.

¹² Mariner of Rederiff.

¹³ Mariner. See Whittier: *The King's Missive*, and Swarthmore MSS.

¹⁴ Pinmaker "at the upper end of Barnaby (Bermondsey) Street", author of several works in Smith's *Catalogue*.

^{15, 16, 17 and 18} Names occur in Minutes of Horslydown Monthly Meeting.

¹⁹ The *old* Park Meeting House was built about 1674 at the junction of Ewer and Park Street, on Bankside Southwark, within a few yards of the site of the old Globe Theatre and Bear Garden. The name was derived from the old town house and park of the Bishops of Winchester. In 1685 the Meeting House was seized and used as a guard house by James II for about a year and a half. Horslydown and Park Meetings were about a mile apart and composed Horslydown M.M.