

Margaret Edmundson (c.1630-1691)

HER HUSBAND'S TESTIMONY

The first book of record of Mountmellick meeting (now preserved at 6 Eustace Street, Dublin) contains an elaborate title page, several pages of accounts of "sufferings" from 1655 onwards, family lists of marriages, births and deaths, marriage certificates (with the original signatures of the witnesses), papers of condemnation and testimonies to deceased Friends. It seems to have been begun by William Edmundson in 1667 and part at least seems to be in his own handwriting. The first "family list" is his own, "William Edmundson the son of John and Grace Edmondson". On the next page he has written the following beautiful testimony to his wife Margrett. On another page is a poem written by a sorrowing father on the death of his little daughter.

ISABEL GRUBB.

THE testemony of William Edmondson for my dear wife Margrett. She was born at Bramly in Darbyshire, Thomas Stanifords daughter a resposable famely and of good esteem and account in that country, we were married in the year 1652, she willingly & freely left her relations & country, and came with me to live in Ireland, and when I was convinced of gods blessed truth, & the lords hand heavy upon me because of transgression she never reflected or opposed me as touching religion, nor in my testemony against tithes & priests forced maintenance, but joyned wth me in all such things, and in all my imprissonments for truths testemony she bore it cheerfully, and never went any indirect way to obtain my liberty, which she knew was contrary to my mind, and if any lawfull way presented for my liberty with my advice she would with diligence use her indeavours for my inlargemts, and when I was called to travell in the service and labour of the gossell of our lord and saviour Jesus Christ she never opposed me but gave me up, and with all readiness would provide things nessesary & suitable to my journey whether in this kingdome or in foreign countries to make things as easy to me as she could, and my labours without charge to others; I was three times in the West Indies in truths service and the least was a year and a half

from her, and my expence much, which she knew was supplyd mostly by her endeavours, and I never heard her mention the charge in way of reflection,—but on the contrary if my occations were answered that I did not want, it was satisfaction to her, she tooke the charge of our outward concerns & famely upon her in my absence, and stood in her testimony against tithes, and the lord increased things under her hand beyond ordinary, and in these times of great trouble and calamety wch lay heavy upon us in that part where we lived she was allways ready to bear her full share of ye burthen, & in desperate danger would venture her life to save me, and I doe not remember if ever she was terrefyed or affrighted though occasion enough to affright any body, but often on the contrary she would tell me she was not afraid, neither ever did I find her desire to leave ye place where we lived, though shee see many flee and leave their places that had not been exercised wth troubles as she had been many times, and when ye cruell & bloody raperies besett our house & poured in shott on both sides in at the windows with many oathes threatning our destruction setting the house on fire, we being in it till about two parts of it was consumed, I did not hear her complain or show fear of death but attended me to know my mind, and when I opened the doors & they tooke me and my two sons from her, prissoners barelegged and bare[headed] and left her striped into her shift, and she many days not knowing whether we were alive or dead, and about a week after she fell in their hands ye second time, they stripped her stark naked, except shooes and and she went neer two miles in cold winter, and all this she bore wth much and though they destroyed our house & all yt was in it, & tooke away [our] stock, when it pleased god miraculously to restore me and my [sons] to her she was well content and satisfied and often would [say that she was] glad yt we were eased of our troubles, and we haveing I was desirous to goe to london to friends year[ly meeting] shee came wth me to dublin & was there at our national halfyears meeting of friends, after wch we parted, & she returned to mountmelick about some small busines we left behind, & accomplished it in about a weeks time, and returned wth our son in law to his house six miles from dublin, & two days after tooke sickness, and for some weekes bore it wth great patience being resigned up into ye will of

god, & willing to dye in ye pressence of her children, wth whom she left her charge to fear god and love his truth & obey their father, & gave up her last breath as one goeing to sleep ye 15th of ye 5th mo 1691 being something above 60 years of age she was decently buried in dublin in friends burying place & her funerall honourably attended wth many friends all things answered as though she had finished her work appointed her, & I hope she enjoys to her comfort the fruits of honest endeavours. William Edmondson.