

The First Century of Quaker Printers

II

TACE RAYLTON'S name does not appear after 1749, so let us now turn from this period of toleration which we reached with the Sowle firm in a former article,¹ and go back to the close of the reign of Charles II, and study the minor printers who then emerge from the anonymity which press licensing rendered politic.

JOHN BRINGHURST is the first of these, and he comes into prominence in 1680 as the printer of William Rogers's *Christian Quaker*. For his work on this "ungodly and pernicious booke" he was obliged to apologize to Devonshire House Monthly Meeting. He also printed his "recantation," a document which illustrates the strength of Friends' hold upon their printers,² whether from the effect of threats to withdraw patronage (as enemies suggested) or (as John Bringhurst's paper seems to exemplify) from the printer's own sense of responsibility as a "publisher of Truth." This testimony is printed on a leaf inserted after the title-page of Christopher Taylor's *Epistle of Caution to Friends to take heed of that Treacherous Spirit that is entred into W.R. and his Abettors. (As appears in his Malicious Book, falsly called, The Christian-Quaker, &c.)*, which was issued in 1681 with Bringhurst's imprint. The printer states that since he was given the *Epistle of Caution* to print it had occurred to him several times to add a short testimony against that "spirit of division, and its fruits," particularly as he might

¹ *Jnl. F.H.S.*, xl (1948), 37-49. For a reference to the Sowle firm as "well-affected to King George" see in Negus's list, 1724, printed in Howe, E., *The London compositor* (1947), 37. Luke Hinde (*ibid.*, 38) is said to be a "high-flyer."

² I am grateful to Henry J. Cadbury for bringing to my notice a reference to a letter from George Fox to Andrew Sowle, 17.iii.1676 which shows how this influence might be used. Item 73F on page 139 of the *Annual Catalogue of George Fox's Papers*, edited by Henry J. Cadbury (1939) enters this letter (which is in a manuscript not now extant) as follows: "To Andr. Sowle, Dear Andrew, I received thy letter and thy books, and I strange, thou shouldst so soon go upon printing Wm. Bailey's books, and to leave so many of the Ancient Friends . . ."

be expected to show some reason for his former printing of the book complained of,

especially since it has been so noised about, both in City & Country by the Propagators and Encouragers thereof, that a Friend Printed it, I can do no less . . . than declare publickly, that I was led thereto by the Enemy of my Souls Peace (though I saw it not at first to be of an Evil Nature) and when I saw my Peace was departed, & a weight & load came upon my Mind . . . in which time of Exercise, Breathings often went up to the Lord, that if I might find favour in his sight, he would be pleased to shew me the way how I should come out of this snare & great sin against him, and enjoy his Peace: and the answer I in that day received was, *That I was not to expect Peace with the Lord while I persisted in the thing which caused his Displeasure*; which was the real cause of my putting the Book out of my hands before finisht, the Spirit of the Lord pursuing me . . . till I had rid me of it (though now I stand accused of Injustice for so doing) and then did the Lord, who had given me Trouble, speak Peace to me, and gave me access (in measure) to the Throne of his Grace.

John Bringhurst then addresses the publishers,¹ asking them carefully to consider the book and its tendencies,

for if things were as pretended in that Book (which I cannot believe) I aver the Lord is against any ones discovering the Nakedness of his Brethren or Fathers in his spiritual Israel this day, as in the dayes of Ham, or laying stumbling Blocks in the way of the weak, as in the dayes of Balaam, &c.

John Bringhurst was born in 1655. He had been apprenticed to Andrew Sowle, and between 1681 and 1685, after his work on *The Christian Quaker*, he published forty-six works for Friends. Until 1683 his sign was the Book, in Gracechurch Street (near Cornhill), but in the latter year he appears to have moved to the Book and Three Black Birds in Leadenhall Mutton Market. During the few years in which his imprint appears, Bringhurst comes as near to being the official printer to the Society as the Sowles at this period ever did. He was employed (probably in rough justice for the part he played with Rogers's work) as printer for Friends' replies in the Wilkinson-Story controversy, and in 1681 all but one of his productions relate to that

¹ Who the publishers were, and whether the same as the printer who took up the work when Bringhurst laid it down is not known. It is noteworthy that by November 1680 scarcely fifty of the five hundred odd pages of the five parts of *The Christian Quaker* remained to be printed, so that by far the largest portion of this rambling production came from Bringhurst's own press. See Whitehead, G., *The Accuser of our Brethren Cast Down* (1681), 22-23; Ellwood, T., *An Antidote* (1681), 27.

matter. In 1682, jointly with Benjamin Clark and Andrew Sowle, he was concerned in the augmented second edition of William Penn's *No Cross, No Crown*, and in the same year eight of Fox's pieces appeared with his imprint. John Bringhurst was committed to Newgate for a time for reprinting George Fox's *Primer*, which contained matter offensive to the government, and finally in 1684 he was fined 1s. and ordered to stand for two hours in the pillory.¹ In 1685 he was still printing for Friends; Dorcas Dole's *Salutation of my Endeared Love to the Faithful*, dated 17.xii.1684 from Newgate, in Bristol, and three papers from George Fox, including his *Concerning the Pure and Undefiled Religion*, dated 4.ii.1685, came from John Bringhurst's press in that year. It appears that he went to Amsterdam later in the year and ceased to print for Friends, but he was back in London in 1690 selling stocks of books to Friends to help discharge his debts,² and died about 1699.

Of THOMAS COOKE nothing is known save that in 1682 he issued reprints of *William Penn's last farewell to England* and William Loddington's *Salutation to the Church of God*. It may be significant that both authors had an interest in the plantations, but no evidence has come to light that Cooke was a Friend.

MARK SWANER or rather SWANNER, on the other hand, was a Friend, but there is no direct evidence of his activity as a bookseller. The second edition of William Penn's *No Cross, No Crown* (1682) was "Printed for Mark Swaner: and sold by A. Sowl, in Devonshire Buildings; B. Clark, in George yard; and J. Bringhurst, at the Book in Grace-Church Street." This probably implies simply that Swanner saw the work through the press and supervised distribution on behalf of William Penn when the author was busy with his preparations for Pennsylvania.

WILLIAM SKEATE is another little-known bookseller of George Yard, Lombard Street. His imprint is found in

¹ Besse, J., *Collection of the Sufferings* (1753), I. 466 n.

² See Andrews, C. M., *The Quakers in London and their printers there, in Byways in Quaker history*. Edited by Howard H. Brinton (1944), 195-196; Littleboy, A. L., *A history of the Friends' Reference Library* (1921), 9. There is an entry in Norman Penney's edition of *The Short Journal and Itinerary Journals of George Fox* (1925), 136, 334, which indicates that Bringhurst was perhaps to be asked to print *Anti-Christian Treachery Discovered*, an account of the Wilkinson-Story controversy (8.ii.1686).

connection with two slight works of Thomas Ellwood, *A Caution to Constables and other inferiour Officers, concerned in the Execution of the Conventicle-Act*, and *A Seasonable Disswasive from Persecution* (both 1683). Whether he succeeded Benjamin Clark in George Yard, or has any connection with Thomas Howkins who followed at this address, cannot be determined. Perhaps so, for Ellwood had dealings with both these.

As a publisher for Friends, THOMAS HOWKINS, bookseller in George Yard, did little. Between 1683 and 1685 he issued seven works for them, and then again, in 1692 he published the third edition of William Mather's *The Young Man's Companion: Or, a very useful Manual for Youth Containing Plain Directions whereby Youth may attain to Read and Write true English*. His publications continue to appear in the *Term Catalogues* until 1693. The general silence after 1685 may imply a lapse from Friends, for until then he had issued works for George Fox, Thomas Ellwood, John Field and John Whiting. It is most likely that Howkins followed Benjamin Clark, for his label (dated 1684) is found pasted over Benjamin Clark's imprint on some copies of the second edition of William Penn's *No Cross, No Crown*. Thomas Ellwood's *Discourse concerning Riots*, which was authorized by Morning Meeting (10.vii.1683) to be printed by Benjamin Clark is also found with Howkins' imprint.¹

There is no evidence to show that Thomas Howkins was a Friend, and similarly his wife Sarah, who continued the business in 1694 and 1695, is known to Friends only from her issue of three controversial works for William Mather, including the undated *A Novelty: or, A Government of Women, distinct from Men, erected amongst some of the People, call'd Quakers*. The fact that Mather's subsequent works were sold by Samuel Clark may indicate that the latter succeeded Sarah Howkins.

The last of these George Yard booksellers who merits notice is THOMAS NORTHCOTT. He was most active between 1690 and 1692, when his annual output of thirteen or fourteen items exceeded that of the Sowles, but thenceforward his production fell away. In all, between 1685 and

¹ The date 1687 which is given in *Short Journal*, p. 300, for taking over Clark's business may thus be an error. John Dunton (*Life*, 1818, p. 292) mentions "noisy H——kins."

1702 he published nearly eighty items of size varying from George Fox's *Journal* in folio (1694) to the duodecimo of that other classic, Penn's *Some Fruits of Solitude*. As well as the enduring works, Northcott issued many of the polemical tracts which punctuated the new-found peace of the early 1690s. George Whitehead, Joseph Wyeth, Steven Crisp, John Field and Edmund Elys all wrote books which came from Northcott's press. John Dunton appears to have borne "Friend Northcott" no malice for his part in publishing Joseph Wyeth's *Athenian Society*, and other answers to the hostile strictures on Quakerism in Dunton's *Athenian Mercury*. Thomas Northcott's later history is as yet obscure. In 1697 he appears to have been in financial straits, and London meetings were raising money for him by the sale of stocks of his books in bulk.¹ Thereafter there is a break, and he is found merely re-issuing William Penn's *Key* (1699 and 1700) and the sixth edition of *Some Fruits of Solitude* (1702), both of which works he had issued in earlier editions. In the imprint, too, "George Yard" has by this time become "George Alley." The seventh edition of *Fruits of Solitude* was published by Tace Sowle in 1706, so doubtless Northcott had retired from business before then.

From this time Tace Sowle had the London work much to herself, and we have to move on a quarter of a century before we meet another who may come within our field. JAMES SMITH of George Yard and the Bible in Lombard Street makes a brief appearance in 1726 and 1727. He is known only as publisher of controversial pamphlets for Elias Bockett (disowned in 1717), including *Punchinello's (Wm. Gibson's) Sermon; preached at the Quaker's Meeting in Gracechurch-street: on Sunday, May 14, 1727*. James Smith may be identical with the J. Smith of "near Fleet Street" who had issued the same author's *All the Wonders of the World out-Wonder'd* (1722).

JOSEPH ADY, in Marshall Street, the Bank-side, Southwark, and John Ady, comb maker, over against the South Sea House, are not known to have been Friends, but they jointly sold a collection of sermons, printed and edited by Joseph Ady, and entitled *Sermons of several of the People called Quakers, taken in short hand, as they were spoken in*

¹ See Devonshire House M.M. 2.i.1697/8 (Minute book, vol. 1, p. 111). George Fox's *Journal* (the folio edition) was priced 8s. 3d.

their Meeting Houses, and made publick to prevent the clamour and misunderstanding of many people, about their manner and method of Preaching (1738).

LUKE HINDE, who carried on the George Yard printing business from the middle of the eighteenth century alone, can first be traced there in 1735. In the next fifteen years he issued over seventy works for Friends, more than sixty of them being produced in conjunction with Tace Raylton. Their collaboration appears to have begun with the sixth edition of Barclay's *Apology* (1736) and, after a break in 1737 and 1738, continues to 1749. The earliest item yet ascribed to Luke Hinde alone is Josiah Martin's edition of *The Archbishop of Cambray's Dissertation on Pure Love* (1735). In 1741 Hinde and Raylton published Martin's *Letter from one of the People called Quakers, to Francis De Voltaire, occasioned by his Remarks on that People*. Further portions of *Piety Promoted* came from this press during these years, and new works by Joseph Besse, Samuel Bownas, John Fry of Sutton Benger, David Hall, Benjamin Holme and Jonah Thompson appeared side by side with frequent reprints of standard Quaker authors. Tace Raylton died in 1749, and Luke Hinde continued alone until his own death in 1766, when the business was carried on by his widow—but this is much beyond our period.

Others are known as booksellers for Friends for whom there is no imprint evidence,¹ and authors also are noted as selling their own works. Among these latter we may mention Thomas Crisp, and George Keith, who in 1696 and 1697 sold some of his own books "at his House at the Golden Ball, over against Red Lion Street in Whitechapel."

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During the seventeenth century there were few Friends in the book trade in the provinces of sufficient note to have left their names in print on title-pages. The earliest in time, and not least in interest, was THOMAS WAYTE in the Pavement at York. In 1653, before Friends had ventured south, Wayte was selling James Nayler's *Lamentacion . . . over the Ruines of this oppressed Nacion*, William Tomlinson's

¹ e.g. Henry Boreman, who was imprisoned for selling Friends' books and died in jail (1662). *Antiquarian researches*, 11; *A Brief Relation of the Persecutions . . . since . . . 7th Month* (1662), 6-7; Besse, *Sufferings*, I. 389.

Word of Reproof to the Priests or Ministers, who Boast of their Ministry and Ordinances, and yet live in Pride, and the London printed *England's Warning-Peece gone forth*, by Richard Farnsworth. For the next forty years Thomas Wayte acted as Friends' local book agent and was one of the leaders in York Quakerism. He died in 1695.¹

We have no further record of any Quaker bookseller in York until NATHANIEL BELL, in Pavement, from 1739. In 1739 and 1740 he sold three of Thomas Story's works, printed by James Lister at Leeds. About 1744 he sold Steven Crisp's *Thirty Sermons*, also from Lister's press, and six years later he was selling an edition of John Rogers's *Memoirs*, printed at York by John Gilfillan. He died in 1778.

Elsewhere in the north Friends do not appear to have been active in the book trade. THOMAS WILLAN the Kendal schoolmaster is the only one who springs to mind. He is known solely from the imprint to William Caton's *Abridgement or a Compendious Commemoration of the Remarkablest Chronologies . . . in that Famous Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus*, printed in Rotterdam in 1661, but he does appear (as Thomas Williams) in the list of Dispersers of Quaker books, preserved in the State Papers.²

Turning south, the earliest centre of Quaker bookselling outside London, and a centre of Quakerism for the west of England, was Bristol. At the early period, even with the fuller London evidence, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish Friends from near-Friends or mere political pamphlet-sellers. The more so is this the case in Bristol and smaller centres. An illustration in point is provided by RICHARD MOON, bookseller, of Wine Street. He may perhaps be identical with the Richard Moon, at the Seven Stars, near the Great North Door, in St. Paul's Churchyard, London, who published for John Lilburne and Samuel Fisher between 1653 and 1655. More likely, however, he is the same member of the Broadmead church who took a leading part in controversy with Friends when they first came to Bristol.³ However, in 1660

¹ *First Publishers of Truth* (Supp. 1-5 of this *Journal*), 318 n.

² Printed in *Extracts from State Papers* (Supp. 8-11 of this *Journal*), 228-229, from State Papers, Domestic, cix. 44. See also the *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*, 1664-5, 142. The document is dated c. 1664.

³ See Hollister, D., *The Skirts of the Whore Discovered* (1656), sign. A2a, and pp. 14-23.

he was selling the London-printed *Presentation of Wholesome Informations, unto the King of England*, by Edward Burrough, and George Bishop's *Tender Visitation of Love, to both the Universities*, and his *Warnings of the Lord to the Men of this Generation*, all of which have a Bristol interest. Later on, Richard Moon was in trouble for selling seditious literature.

Although he was not a Friend there is much of interest for us in the career of WILLIAM BONNY, the first printer to come to Bristol and set up a press when the Licensing Act lapsed in 1695.¹ His first year's work included Thomas Beaven's *John Plimpton's ten charges against the people called Quakers briefly answer'd*, and in 1698 he printed for Bristol Friends² *Jeremiah Hignell's Loving and Friendly Advice and Council, Given forth to the Inhabitants of Bristol*, a broadside containing exhortations to piety and a warning against pride. In the following spring he printed for them *The Truth of God, As held by the People called Quakers, Further cleared from Mistakes. . . . Published by some of the said People in the City of Bristol*, a controversial work by William Penn and Benjamin Coole against Francis Bugg and the Norfolk clergy declaration.³ The booklet has an errata list on the final page, but the corrections noted there, with some others, and the missing section-titles on pages 23, 26 and 27 have been filled in in ink. The date of these emendations can be fixed exactly from a minute of Bristol Men's Meeting, 13.xii.1698, which reported that the books were printed, " & wanting som. small Correction " eight

¹ The Licensing Act had been renewed in 1685 for 7 years (1 Jac. II, c. 8, §15). The Act was continued to the end of the Parliament then sitting (4 & 5 Will. III, c. 24, §14) but was not re-enacted afterwards.

² At a cost of 23s. See Bristol Men's Meeting minutes, vol. 2, p. 164 (21.ix.1698).

³ This was reprinted (1699) by Tace Sowle, with title *A Testimony to the Truth of God. . . .* The Bristol edition, dated 1699 but printed 1698 old style, is listed in Joseph Smith's *Descriptive catalogue of Friends' books*, II. 457, without an author. The London reprint is also listed, II. 318, but under William Penn, with Benjamin Coole as joint author. Immediately preceding this reprint Joseph Smith lists an edition of 1698, but gives no imprint. The information was probably taken over from John Whiting's *Catalogue* (p. 123) without any copy having come to light, and I think the 1698 edition must be a ghost. The ascription to William Penn and Benjamin Coole stands on the testimony of John Whiting, who would be in a position to know, and although Bristol minutes give no hint as to authorship the work is included in the edition of William Penn's collected *Works* (1726), II. 876-83 on which Whiting was at work at the time of his death.

Friends were appointed "to Meet together at the house of Ch: Harford behind Allhallou about 7th howre this Evening in order to Correct the same & to agree & pay printer out of our publick stock."¹

We come next to JOSEPH PENN who printed the Bristol Men's Meeting's *Epistle of Friendly Advice and Counsel, to the People called Quakers in the City of Bristol* (1719), and to his widow, who, in 1733, sold at her Wine Street shop the anonymous *Second Letter to the Men's Meeting of the People called Quakers in Bristol*, which sought to prove that Friends, when defending the plain language, were wrong to quote scriptural authority, as Bristol Men's Meeting had recently done in another general paper of advice, entitled *The Primitive Testimony of the People called Quakers: together with exhortations to all those, who are under that Profession in the City of Bristol, to faithfulness therein* (1732).

Two editions of this last item were printed in 1732 by SAMUEL FARLEY, in Wine Street. This Samuel Farley is the second of the name in a family honourably remembered for the part it played in establishing early newspapers in Bristol. Between 1732 and 1750² Samuel issued nearly twenty works for Friends, from his Wine Street, Castle Green or Old Market addresses. Many of his productions have a local flavour, as for instance he printed *Remarks on a Letter to the Men's Meeting* (1732), Friends' answer to the first pamphlet in the controversy on plainness of speech, and the second edition (1747) of that little classic *Some Memoirs of the Life of John Roberts*, of Siddington, Gloucestershire. Samuel Farley also printed three editions of Benjamin Holme's

¹ Bristol Men's Meeting minutes, vol. 2, p. 166. The edition was one of 500. At the following meeting, 27.xii.1698, it was decided that 400 copies were to be distributed by the same eight Friends, and 100 were placed on sale "per Elias Osburn, and he to be accountable, to freinds generall stock."

It is interesting to note that while the Bristol introduction to the Reader closes with the familiar "For no Cross no Crown," the London edition (which corrects the Bristol errata list as well as other minor points and makes good the omissions which Bristol Friends supplied in ink) stops short before this reminiscent phrase. Whether the phrase was originally used here by Penn himself, or whether it is to be attributed to the "adulatory" amanuensis (as hostile critics dubbed him) Benjamin Coole, the collected edition of William Penn's *Works* follows the corrected reading.

² Samuel Farley's will, dated 7.ix.1753 and proved 9.ii.1754, left the printing business to his niece Sarah, daughter of Edward Farley late of Exeter, provided she continued and married a Quaker.

much-read *Serious Call in Christian Love to all People, to turn to the Spirit of Christ in Themselves* (1738, 1745 and 1747), the second edition of John Bockett's curious tract *A Backbiter's Tongue Destructive to Religion*,¹ an edition of George Fox's *To all that would know the Way to the Kingdom* (1746), and the second edition of Claude Gay's translation of William Penn's *No Cross, No Crown*.²

Between 1738 and 1745 FELIX FARLEY issued about half a dozen Friends' works in conjunction with Samuel his brother, and in the latter year, from his address "at Shakespear's Head in Castle Green" he issued *Joshua's Resolution to serve the Lord*, a sermon by Jonah Thompson delivered at Bristol Yearly Meeting, 15.iii.1745, and taken down in shorthand.³

There are other printers in the Farley family, but I have no evidence that they were Friends. One, SAMUEL FARLEY, printer at Exeter, 1699-1727, provides a good illustration of the type of work undertaken by local printers—a few works by Friends of the district and one or two standard Quaker authors. Samuel Farley is known only as printer of works for two local Friends, Henry Hingeston and Thomas Gwin (1708 and 1709), and a reprint in 1708, of George Whitehead's pamphlet *A Few Positions of the Sincere Belief and Christian Doctrine of the People of God called Quakers (to obviate Misrepresentations and Calumnies about the same)*.

¹ There is a possibility that Samuel Bonner, Farley's foreman printer, published separately about 1746, for his name appears on an undated reprint (ascribed to this period) of John Bockett's pamphlet, but he apparently continued to act as foreman to Samuel and Sarah Farley until 1774 when *Bonner and Middleton's Bristol Journal* commenced. See *Bristol Times and Mirror*, 15th and 22nd April, 1911.

² This work is entitled: *Point de croix, Point de Couronne : ou, traité Sur la Nature & la Discipline de la Sainte Croix de Christ. . . . Seconde Edition, reveuë & corrigée*. It is a reprint of the first edition, issued without place or publisher but apparently a Raylton-Hinde production, and corrects the errors in that and introduces a few of its own, one of which it mentions at the foot of the final page, and then proceeds: "Les autres fautes ne paroissant pas materielles, on n'a point écrit d'autre Errata."

³ Felix Farley also published some numbers of a new translation of the Bible by Anthony Purver (then a schoolmaster near Bristol). The work (published 1741 or 1742 according to Joseph Smith, *op. cit.*, II. 437) was not completed, and the translation did not appear until 1764, after Dr. John Fothergill had given Purver £1,000 for the copyright and had it published in London at his own expense. I have traced no copies of the Bristol issue.

Although Dublin printing for Friends can be dated from 1693 when Jacob Milner, bookseller, at his shop in Essex Street, was selling the first Irish edition of William Penn's *Some Fruits of Solitude*, I do not find that Milner was a Friend, and it is not until the end of the second decade of the eighteenth century that any Friend appears as printer in that city. SAMUEL FULLER, of the Globe and Scales in Meath Street, is first known for his edition of Steven Crisp's *Short History of a Long Travel, from Babylon to Bethel* (1720). Within the next seventeen years until his death in 1736, Samuel Fuller was responsible for publishing nearly twenty works for Friends. Production included the 1721 issue of the first five parts of *Piety Promoted*, Thomas Ellwood's *Davideis* (1722), and his own popular work of instruction *Some Principles and Precepts of the Christian Religion by way of question and answer* (1733).

MARY FULLER, widow of Samuel Fuller, carried on the business after the death of her husband in 1736 until her own death in the following year. She is known for her reprint of May Drummond's *Internal Revelation the source of Saving Knowledge* (1736). Isaac Jackson appears to have succeeded to the business, and between 1738 and 1749 he issued some eleven books for Friends, commencing with David Hall's *Epistle of Tender Exhortation and Wholesome Advice, to Friends at their Half-Year's Meeting in Dublin*, dated from Ballitore, 29.vii.1737, and ending with a reprint of the same author's *Epistle of Love and Caution, to the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings of Friends in Great Britain*, prefaced with a recommendation from Dublin Men's Meeting, signed by Peter Judd and John Ruddy.

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The story behind the changes of imprints here outlined, and the details of printing production and selling organization await further investigation in manuscript materials in Friends' libraries in London and elsewhere, before any assessment can be made of the full Quaker contribution to the history of printing.

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