

## Some Unpublished Works of John Whiting

JOHN WHITING (1656-1722) is best known as the first bibliographer of Quakerism. But, like many—one almost says most—Friends of his generation, he also wrote and suffered for the Truth. In his own *Catalogue of Friends' Books* (1708) he lists eight of his works, and Joseph Smith, his nineteenth-century successor as Quaker bibliographer, cites eleven more, most of them published after 1708. In addition, Smith mentions “a manuscript volume of John Whiting's” which, he says, “was once in my possession, but which I disposed of to a Friend in Philadelphia.”<sup>1</sup> This manuscript volume is now in the Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College. It formerly belonged to Charles Caleb Cresson—presumably the “Friend in Philadelphia” to whom Smith sold it; the flyleaf bears Cresson's pencilled note: “Invoice 7mo. 16. 54/ £3. 3.” The volume contains six separate works in Whiting's autograph, all but one written during his long imprisonment (1679-86) at Ilchester for nonpayment of tithes.<sup>2</sup>

There is a title page, which reads: “Severall Bookes and Papers Written by Me John Whiteing.” It seems apparent, however, that Whiting cherished the hope that these pieces (together perhaps with his already-printed tracts) might be gathered into a volume and published under a collective title after the manner of his friend Richard Samble's *Handful after the Harvest Man* (1684), or Francis Howgill's *Dawning of the Gospel Day* (1676) or Robert Barclay's *Truth Triumphant* (1692). For bound in this volume is a slip which reads: “Some Gleaning of Grapes after the Vintage, being A Collection of severall Bookes & Papers of yt upright man and faithful servant of God according to his measure.—Written with his own hand and Dedicated to ye mens monthly meeting o’

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Smith: *Descriptive Catalogue of Friends' Books*, II, 921-22.

<sup>2</sup> For a brief sketch of Whiting's career see this *Journal*, IV (1907), 7-16; for his imprisonment see his *Persecution Expos'd, in Some Memoirs Relating to the Sufferings of John Whiting* (London, 1715), and Joseph Besse, *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers* (London, 1753), I, 611 et seq.

the northside of Mendip there to remain wth them in manuscript (If they do not see meet to print itt) among ye Rest of ffrds Bookes & writings bequeathed to them with other things by his Last Will & Testament.—As a memoriall of him & his respect to them when he is gone.”

The first two items listed by Smith are really parts of the same work—“A Testimony against the Hireling Priests and their Tything Trade.” It is in the form of a letter addressed to Edward Ancketyll, the parish priest who was responsible for his imprisonment, and is printed in full in Whiting’s *Persecution Expos’d* (pages 35-52). (The first page, which Smith considers a separate item, was apparently intended as a title page; on the back are some comments on Ancketyll’s death, treated, of course, as a divine judgment.)<sup>1</sup>

There follows a four-page statement headed “The Cause of My Imprisonment the 4th month 1679.” This piece, which recites the circumstances of his arrest and detention, is the rather bitter outpouring of a man who knows himself wrongfully treated; it adds little, however, to our knowledge of the facts in this well-documented case.

Next is “A Short Testimony to all them whom itt may concerne where this may come,” a series of reflections which came to Whiting on Twelfth Month 1, 1679, as he lay in bed in his prison chamber, “waiting on ye Lord . . . & pondering in my heart the things of God.” A certain mellowness and charity has supervened. Persecution arises, he finds, when men depart from the spirit of Truth in their own hearts,

for . . . they yt keep to truth in their own hearts will never oppose it in others, for they being in unity with ye spirit of truth in themselves, they can never oppose ye work thereof, but will have unity with it in whomsoever it is made manifest.—This I witness in my own particular and therefore can set to my seal yt it is true.

By the same token

They yt own ye Judgments of ye Lord in their own hearts, & bring all their deeds to ye Light, yt they may be approved in ye sight of God & hides nothing in their own particulars yt is contrary to ye truth—such will never be afraid to stand to ye Judgment which ye Lord hath given to his church.

He develops this theme for eight closely written pages and ends with the request that his paper be copied, circulated among monthly and quarterly meetings, and, “if friends

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Persecution Expos’d*, pp. 149-50.

thinke fitt," printed. So far as I can tell, it never appeared in print.

We know something about the origin of the next tract, an essay of forty-six pages entitled *A Threefold Apology for the people of God in derision called Quakers*. Whiting tells us in *Persecution Expos'd* how he "hapned into some Discourse with one Walter Singer, a Presbyterian in the town [Ilchester], envious enough against Truth," who cited John Faldo's *Quakerism no Christianity* against him. Later, in his prison chamber at the Friary, he wrote out the arguments he had used against Singer, disposing them under seven heads and adding two sections in refutation of Faldo's charges. (He did not know then, he says, that William Penn had already answered Faldo in his *Quakerism a New Nick-Name for Old Christianity*.) The work is dated "Ivelchester where I yet Remaine a prisoner at the friery for ye testimony of a good conscience. The 1st month 1680/1."

*A True Testimony concerning the Life & Death, Tryalls, Travell & Exercises of my Deare Sister Mary Whiteing*, which follows, is a variant of *Early Piety Exemplified*, which Whiting published many years later.<sup>1</sup> It includes, as in the printed version, two epistles and a poem written by Mary Whiting.

The last manuscript in the volume stands apart from the others in that it was not written at Ilchester during Whiting's imprisonment but at Wrington, where he was living a decade and a half later. It bears the following title:

The Antiscriptural Baptists } Scripturally { Detected  
 And ye Apostolicall Quaker } { Defended  
 Against the circumstances of composition are set down in *Persecution Expos'd*. Whiting had been present in October 1695 at a theological dispute at Melksham in Wiltshire between Jo. Plimpton, a Baptist, and John Clark of Bradford, a Friend. After his return to Wrington, he "writ some Anim-

<sup>1</sup> Smith (if one may judge from his placement of the title in his *Catalogue*) assumed that this latter pamphlet was published between 1706 and 1711, though he notes that it bears "No printer's name, place, or date." Donald Wing in his *Short-Title Catalogue*, supplies "London, 1681", but this is clearly an error. The piece was composed in October 1681, but in its printed form bears the note: "The foresaid Account . . . was written in the Time of my Imprisonment at Ivelchester; but by an accidental Omission, hath lain by for some Years . . ." The fact that Whiting did not mention it in his *Catalogue* argues for a date of publication after 1708. A second edition was published in 1711.

adversions on this Dispute, and the several points handled in it. . . ." This is the manuscript now in the Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore. It is of more than routine interest by reason of the glimpse it gives us of one of the greatest Friends of the age in action.

The dispute opened, as usual, on the basic issue between Friends and the rest of Protestantism: whether "A Manifestation of the Spirit of God is given to every Man to profit withal." Before the day was over the disputants had ranged over many other points—water baptism, the Lord's supper, perfection, the resurrection of the body. Clark quoted Scripture tirelessly in defense of the Quaker positions, "but the Baptist wrangled on." Near nightfall William Penn, who had apparently been there throughout the day, "broke out over his Head in Testimony to the People, which were many . . . and so ended the Dispute, concluding in Prayer to God."<sup>1</sup>

Whiting's manuscript account of the way the meeting broke up is more detailed and vivid.

So ye dispute having held near so many hours as there were particulars & drawing towards a conclusion, some prest [Plimpton?] to be short if he had anything more to say because some or other might have somewhat to offer to ye people, wch he perceiving said, there should be no preaching there today, tho yt was not in his power to hinder, except he would usurp authority over another mans freehold, but hereby he showed his [illegible] what he would have done if he had had the power, but cross cows have short horns as they use to say<sup>2</sup>, & soon after Wm Penn from a convenient standing began to declare to ye people with admiration that ever a man should stand up so long wth a bible in his hand to oppose ye plainest scripture in ye bible, &c at wch ye Presbyterian (immoderate) moderator & some others of yt party made a Hidious noyse to prevent him, but he going on ye baptist putt of his Hatt, saying, "You are Mr Pen, you writt the sandy foundation shaken did not you," to wch W.P. answered, "I am not come here to be Cattedchiz'd by thee, for yt would be to begin another dispute when ye day is too far spent, but if thou hast anything to object agt me or my bookes, I'le meet thee or any of thy party at any time or place in England day or night wth my bookes & my bible in my hand to vindicate them" &c or to yt purpose, & so went on directing them to ye Grace of God &c wch ye baptist seeing he could not prevent came down & went away wth about half a dozen more, ye people beginning to be pretty civell & so continued till he had done, after wch he concluded with prayer about candle lighting.

<sup>1</sup> *Persecution Expos'd*, pp. 239-40.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs*, p. 6: "A curst cow has short horns."

This manuscript, which covers eighteen closely written pages, is dated November 11, 1695. There is a five-page postscript in which Whiting tells of the refusal of Penn's opposers to meet him and make good their charges. On the last page is the endorsement "Give this to H. Goldney," and the further notation (in what appears to be the hand of Mark Swanner): "The frd to be advised that frds desire it may ly by awhile to see if the Baptists dont print—at ye meet 27 2/mo. 1696." Whiting himself tells us he sent his "animadversions" to London to be printed, "but the Baptist not Printing, mine was not either."<sup>1</sup>

So another of John Whiting's works remained unpublished, to come to rest finally, *via* Joseph Smith, in a transatlantic Quaker library.

FREDERICK B. TOLLES

---

Albert D. Mott, of the Department of History, University of California, Berkeley, Cal., is writing a study of Ranterism, particularly a comparison with the Quaker definition of the Inward Light, in the period 1640-1660. This work is being prepared for a Ph.D. degree and author has been engaged in research among original sources in the the Library at Friends House.

---

*The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 78, no. 4 (October, 1954) opens with an editorial notice of the recently published Index to volumes 1-75 (1877-1951) of *The Pennsylvania Magazine* which will provide an immediate guide to the whole resources of a periodical which has for many years published valuable historical material dealing not only with Pennsylvania and its founders, but with the neighbouring states and American history as a whole, particularly, but not exclusively, for the colonial period.

The January, 1955 issue (vol. 79, no. 1) includes an article "Artist in Exile: the Story of Thomas Spence Duché"—who came to London from Philadelphia during the American Revolutionary war—some material for this study by Professor A. F. Gegenheimer of the University of Arizona comes from the diary of Samuel Shoemaker, a Quaker loyalist also from Philadelphia who spent the years 1780-1786 in London. There is also an article by Professor A. O. Aldridge of the University of Maryland on the poetry of Thomas Paine.

<sup>1</sup> *Persecution Expos'd*, p. 240.

William Penn would have seen the manuscript (dated 11.ix.1695—the day that Penn appeared before Bristol Men's Meeting setting forth his proposals to marry Hannah Callowhill) when he was at Wrington meeting, 14 November, 1695, and perhaps the postscript dates from that time. The mention of Henry Goldney's name brings to mind the views he expressed concerning Penn's proposed marriage, in letter of 12 November, 1695 (Locker-Lampson: *A Quaker Post-Bag*, p. 62).