

## A. R. Barclay MSS

Extracts. Continued from vol. xlix, p. 118

*Notes are not supplied to Friends respecting whom notes appear in "The Journal of George Fox," Cambridge edition, 1911, or "The Short and Itinerary Journals," 1925. The use of capital letters has been reduced and the punctuation and paragraphing adapted where necessary in the interest of clarity. The A.R.B. MSS are in the Library at Friends House, and also available on microfilm.*

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CXLV is a letter from Ralph Fretwell of Barbados which poses a dating problem not yet resolved; but with the assistance of Professor Henry J. Cadbury we are able to point to various possibilities.

At first sight the opening paragraph gives an unexceptionable clue in the mention of "ye Six weeks meeting 8 dayes since;" unfortunately, the minutes of Barbados Six Weeks Meeting do not survive.

The mention of Pennsylvania leads one to suppose a date in the 1680s, up to 1686, sometime before Fretwell's death (reported in a letter from Roger Longworth, 14.xii.1686 [February 1687]; see *Cambridge Journal*, ii, 430). The way in which William Penn is mentioned, seems to place him in England at this time—that is, before the middle of 1682, or (more likely) after the autumn of 1684.

Philadelphia records have a certificate for Ralph Fretwell from Barbados, dated 11.xii.1683 [Feb. 1684] (A. C. Myers, *Quaker arrivals at Philadelphia*, 1902, p. 2), and although there is no certificate to date Fretwell's return home, this may be dated approximately from Philadelphia Monthly Meeting minutes, 4.iii.1685, when he laid before the meeting his intention "of going out of this province" (*Publications of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania*, i.282).

Other matters dealt with in the letter do not provide information at present helpful in settling the date, which, for the moment, is left with the suggestion: "probably 1685 or 1686."

### CXLV

RALPH FRETWELL to GEORGE FOX  
G.F.

Most deare & honnoured Friend, the inclosed will shew as to Friends in this place & ye Government agreed for us to give at Qrterly meeting and communicated to ye Six weeks meeting 8 dayes since.

H. Curre<sup>r</sup> hath somthing for Bermudos which hee intends shortly to visit. As for Carrolina in ye south partes, Johnathan

<sup>r</sup> Henry Curre signed the Barbados letter to Thomas Curtis and Arthur Ismead, 20.ix.1678 [Friends House. Portfolio 23.156.]

Fitts having layd downe ye bodie, and Ed. Mayo is gon to live about Roanoke his wiffe being dead, which wee understand by your letter and not from himself or Friends, soe yt wee are at a stand how to communicate testimonies there for servis. But hope yt some Friends travilling will see into things there and give thee an accompt that wee may bee advissed how to mannage yt affaire. Henry intends to write unto thee beffore he goes.

I wrote unto thee at my coming from Pensilvania, and inclosed severall papers, and also to Wm Pen, but have not heard from either since.<sup>1</sup> The[y] were delivered in charg to Jos: Lovet a Friend yt somtyme lived in or nere Waltham Abby. Hee went in Tho. Taylors vessell for Bristoll. I also wrote from hence when wee sent yr adrese and to Jno. Rous (there was one scripture omitted intended to bee placed in ye margent at large).

We here off a Friend in ye Ministrie coming from Ierland & a schoolmaister. I have had three letters from Ch[hristopher] Taylor since I came backe, one of ym from Rood Iland with other Friends full of love in ye truth for mee and in remembrance of mee, Blessed be ye Lord for all his mersies and loving kindnesse.

With due respects to thee, Margett & every branch of your famillie, I rest

Ra. Fretwell

CXLVI-CXLVIII are three West Country letters. In the first, James Fletcher of Knowsley gives George Fox an account of a ministerial tour in the west of England in the unsettled autumn of 1687. The toleration of James II had brought persecution to an end, and James Fletcher found "an openness amongst the people" towards Friends, and Friends "in a good peace amongst themselves". Cornwall was the exception—little addition to report to the small meeting at Launceston.

CXLVII is a letter from Adam Gouldney of Chippenham to George Fox, telling of the disturbances of meetings by members of the Wilkinson-Story party in Wiltshire in 1682.

In CXLVIII Thomas Robertson gives an account of his arrest at Bristol meeting, 27 January 1682, his refusal of the oath of allegiance and committal to prison. This is touched on in the contemporary pamphlet, *The distressed Case of the People called Quakers in the City of Bristol*, 1682. Robertson wrote to Sarah Meade, 29th September, 1682, from Newgate, Bristol (ARB. CXII).

<sup>1</sup> Possibly the letter dated 12.xi.1681 to William Penn [Friends House. Portfolio 2.4] and the following letter to George Fox [Portfolio 2.5].

## CXLVI

JAMES FLETCHER<sup>1</sup> to GEORGE FOX. Bristoll, 19th  
8 m. 1687

Dear G.F.

My very dear love in the lord Jesus is very dearely remembered unto thee, and in the same doe I most dearely greet and salute thee with all the faithfull in Christ, in whom there is life and salvation & peace and asuerants [assurance] for ever, in which the faithfull in all ages ware and are presarved out of the evill of ye world, & could reach one unto another. & tho abscont in body yett present in the spirit: behoulding the Lords goodnes to be renewed every day, in which I desire the lord to keep my poore soul with thine and all the faithfull for ever, for indeed my love is more unto thee then I can exprese, & ever was, and I hope will be for ever to the end, dear G.F.

This is to lett thee know that I am well, and as to my journey & the Truth afares where I have been. I went through Hamshire. Things are prity well. & I went thorough dosettshire & had good service; Truth doth spread there & frends are in a good peace amongst themselves, & there is mettings in fresh places. I went through deū [Devon] where there an openes amongst the people & things are [torn] iate amongst frends, but little in exon [Exeter] still but at the quarterly metting the[y] have agreeded to take a house for a metting. And I went thorough Cornell. Things are indiferant well; in this open tyme people comes in, but there is but little mt at Lanson [Launceston] and little addison. Richard Hoskin<sup>2</sup> I left at the lands end amongst his relasions. I came throw Somersetshire, where there is great openes and great mettings. There is Elias Osborn is a good insterment in that contery who came with mee to this city last 6 day, but went away yesterday. Tho: Whitehed was hear yesterday, but is goene away this morning into Wales. James Dickson [Dickinson] is to be at Chew [Magna] tomorrow, who is allso for Wales. Things are indiferant quiat heare. I think of staying first day over, & then I know nothing at this tyme but to goe towards Woster [Worcester]. This is the most

<sup>1</sup> For James Fletcher of Knowsley see *First Publishers of Truth*. A letter from him to Ralph Fretwell (copy) 1676, is in Friends House [Portfolio 2.3].

<sup>2</sup> For Richard Hoskins of Barbados and Philadelphia see *The Friend* (Philadelphia), xxviii (1855), p. 6.

that I have to acquaint thee with, but rest thy very loveing  
 Frend in my measure  
 James Fletcher

Many did inquire for thee, to whom I gave the remembrance  
 of thy loveing to g w & Alex. Parkr. to B. A. & J. Elson  
 & wife my love to will. M[eade] & his dear wife & to honest  
 Lenard fell if there. Rich. Snade [Snead] & his wife dear love  
 is to thee

[address] For  
 Benjamin Anterbus  
 at plow and harow  
 in Cheap side to give  
 To G.F. with Care  
 London.

[endorsed] For R. Richardson  
 to Read in ye 2d dayes  
 Meeting.  
 read 24. 8 mo. 87  
 Bristol  
 From Ja. Fletcher

## CXLVII

ADAM GOULDNEY to GEORGE FOX. Chippenham,  
 22 [ ] 1682.

Deare G.F.

Often ye remembrance of my dear love with my wifes  
 & mothers & sisters is dearly to thee and all good friends yt  
 knows us. These are to lett thee understand: That yesterday  
 being ye 21st of this instant, there came into our Meeting, a  
 younge man and brought a booke of Wm Rogers in with him  
 and read a great part of it. It was promoted & ordered to be  
 read by Wm Jones Sen. & Wm Dyer Senr: It was ye 7th part  
 of yt which is called ye Apostate & Innovater.<sup>1</sup> It was a  
 great greif to honest friends to have it, soo we beard our  
 testimoney against it, and desired ye abovesaid promoter to  
 put a stopt to it, for I tould them the friends concerned was  
 not there: but it was never ye near, they would goe on  
 in their worke of mischeife. I told them yt ye booke had a  
 tendancy to bring friends into sufferings, there being some of  
 ye people of the world there, and I did acquainte them that it

<sup>1</sup> William Rogers: *The Seventh Part of the Christian Quaker*, 1682.

was never friends practice to read such great contentious books in meetings. They had never any example from us soe to doe, and I tould them it was not friends practice to read a booke at ye begining of a Meeting and soe hold on reading almost to ye end. The reader heave not been at our meeting, not above 3 or 4 times I belive this 12 months; I suppose he scarsely ownes himself by ye name of a Quaker. The abovesaid promoters said they did own ye booke, and would stand by it. Wm Dyer said it was a hue and cry; its sport for him, soe I told him; but I told them ye Lord would clear ye innocent in his time. Oh ye wicked things yt they heave writ against thee dear G.F. They read the friends names in ye book, but I heave forgotten all, but thee art ye cheifest.

I wished with my whole hart yt friends names had been to yt booke which is called ye Accuser of our bretherne,<sup>1</sup> if antient friends names had been to it, as G. Whitheads, Elexander Parkers, & Wm Gibsons & Wm Penns he being a popolor man, it had been I believe a meanes to heave weiged down this Spirit. I am for ye hands of friends & harts against this Spirit, for it is a Spirit yt tends to all manner of loosness, and ye Lords name is prophaned by them amongst proffessors & prophane. And I know not why friend[s] should be afraide of their names. They are Gods enemies & his peoples enemies & ye worst they ever met with, I believe, since they made a proffession of ye Truth. I would to God all was vallient against them. Our exercise have been sore with this opposeing Spirit, & is: but blessed be ye Lord he gives us patience to indure it. It is but one meeting at Chippenham yt is soe much disturb with them. Friends be pretty clear of yt Spirit in most meetings in our county: onely there is one standing sepperate Meeting which I supose thee knowst of yt is at Sutton & soe they moves it from please to please [place to place]. But friends are clear of them. I understand there is but few follows them; they have very small meetings. Yt meeting was cheifly sett up by N. Coleman<sup>2</sup> & Jno Jenings.<sup>3</sup> Gods power is over them all, & I doe not question but

<sup>1</sup> George Whitehead: *The Accuser of our brethren cast down*, 1681.

<sup>2</sup> Nathaniel Coleman of Sutton Benger, Wilts. (*Cambridge Journal*.) Nathaniel Coleman of Hullavington, married (i) 17.iii.1660, Ann Atkins of Sutton Benger (she died 1669); (ii) 25.iv.1672, Katherine Blanford of Marten.

<sup>3</sup> John Jenings of Sutton Benger. Friends registers record five of his children (John, Elizabeth, Thomas, Ann and Joseph) born between 1670 and 1677.

yt in time this spirit will be quite woren out. Soe haveing  
noe more, I rest thy loveing & effectionate Friend

Adam Gouldney<sup>1</sup>

[*at the side*] Francis Brown one of their preachers, was  
at ye meeting & never preacht nor prayd, neither did he  
indeavor to put a stop to ye reading of ye wicked ungodly  
booke, but harked to it very dilligently, & I belive taken  
with it [*torn*] but which may say every berth will love its  
owne: he is a [*torn*] man & a gross lyer.

[address] To

George Fox

[endorsed by G.F.] Adam govden of/Chipnam  
in wiltsher to/g F. 1682

### CXLVIII

THOMAS ROBERTSON. *Bristol*, 1682.

Upon ye 27th of ye 11 month 1681 I was att our freinds  
meeting att Bristol amongst ye peaceable people of God  
called Quakers, & there speaking words of comfort & con-  
solation to Gods people yt faithfully suffers for his name &  
truth. & after a little time thatt I began to speake some of  
worlds people came near unto ye place where they might  
hear. I then spoke to them tenderly in ye word of Life, that  
they might come to hear him whom Moses spoke of, who said  
that they that would not hear him whom God would raise  
up of ye [*yr?*] owne people should be cutt of from amongst  
ye people. Therefore I exorted all to hear him that they  
might live by him, & feed on him for he is ye true bread yt  
comes downe from God out of heaven, with severall good  
exortations to beleive in his Light which leads out of death  
and darkness to God from whence it comes.

So two men came & one very much in hast with his hand  
lifted up, tooke me by ye arme and said I must goe with him,  
& I said I desire to speak a little more, & you may hear and  
bear wittness against me if I speak not ye truth, but he  
would not, but put mee and another friend, (*viz.*) Wm. Prigg,  
into a house for sometime till he he had taken ye names of  
ye rest of our friends, and then they tooke us out of yt house,

<sup>1</sup> Adam Gouldney, son of Adam, of Chippenham, married, 24.ix.1674,  
Mary Knight of Bromham (she died, a minister, 13.iii.1716). Adam Gouldney  
died 24.iv.1684.

& had us to Newgate. & thence att night wee were had before Alderman Oliffe<sup>1</sup> and some other magistrats or officers of ye city. And one John Hellyer (when they had informed him yt I did preach att ye meeting) asked mee by what authority I came to preach there there, I answered by ye authority of Jesus Christ and I came to bear wittness to ye truth according as I had received of ye spirit. And some said yt was canting. And I said, except ye same Spirit be in yout [you] yt raised up Jesus Christ from ye dead, ye are none of his. And one said, wee tooke up to high a degree upon us for priests now are higher then they were under ye law. And I answered yt ye disciples & ministers of Christ were to be meek and lowly, & as ye apostle said servants to all for Christ sake.<sup>2</sup> Ay but, saith he, but you intrude your selves, And Uzza<sup>3</sup> touched ye Arke and he was smitten yt he died; and I answered yt ye Ark was set on a new cart & carried by two milch kind which lowed as they went, & yt ye Arke shaked, but our heavenly Arke Christ Jesus yt is on his way never shakes & need no fleshly Arm to support him.

And I said, besides this I have found some thing of an outward concern to lay before you also, And I desire you to hear mee patiently & yt is I was informed by report yt I mett with yt ye ship yt my son was in was took to Argier, and seeing ye bishop did not do his office (as I fear) for a bishop is an overseer, but he not releiving them of Bristoll yt are in captivity, it was a concern in my mind, having a fatherly respeck to see after him. And so they read me ye Oxford Act,<sup>4</sup> & said yt I must be kept in prison six monthes unless I would pay 40*li* for preaching. And I said it was an unreasonable request to demand 40*li* of me for preaching when some gitt so many forty pounds for preaching. & they said you have not ye knack of it. And ye Alderman Oliffe said we have nothing but trouble with you for our parts, and I said Jerusaleme is a burthensome stone,<sup>5</sup> and so they gave me mind to drink and one said he beleived I was an honest man, and being but one Justice they sent for another, but none came, so they could not comitt me by one Justice, but told

<sup>1</sup> Ralph Oliffe, landlord of the Three Tuns, Bristol; sheriff 1664-5; mayor 1674-5.

<sup>2</sup> An echo of I Cor. ix, 19.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Sam. vi, 3ff. 1 Chron. xiii, 7ff.

<sup>4</sup> Five mile Act, 17 Car. II, cap. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Zech. xii, 3.

ye Goaler yt he must have us away, & we must be brought to Tolsey ye next day, which was done, & I only brough to ye Tolsey before ye Mayor<sup>1</sup> & Bishop<sup>2</sup> and other Magistrates, where as (I suppose) by reason of ye bishop, who seemed to be very angry & so ye first mittimus was laid by and ye bishop said I am glad I have mett with yo here, I will make you fast enough & he would take a course with me, and yt he would have me whipt. And I said I value not a pin ye worst yt thee canst doe. An I said yt a Bishop must not be soon Angry, & he must be no striker, and so they proffered me ye oath & I must swear, and I tould them I could not swear for conscience sake and Christ Jesus forbids swearing and ye Apostle James saith above all things swear not &c. And ye martyrs of Xt refused to swear; and then they asked me from whence I came & who came with me & I answered yt I came alone out of Westmoreland, and yt I lived in the parish of Kendall when I was in ye contrey. Then they said you would be a bishop. I said he yt desires ye office of a bishop desires a good work. And so I desired to be heard, for I had something to say. & then I spoke as I spoke ye night before, yt I came to bear wittness to ye truth, & ye bishop did not take care of ye people of Bristoll yt are in Argier as an overseer should, that so if it were possible my son might be redeemed if he were in captivity. & now I am like for so doing to go into a hold, yt if I were in Argier might be sooner redeemed then I am like to be here, & so you make your City an Argier. And they asked me whose Apprentice my son was. And I said he was Charles Halfords<sup>3</sup> 7 years & going into 8 his factor and others.

Upon the 27th of the 11th month 1681 I was at<sup>4</sup>

And to ye kings costome office he hath brough severall years above a 1,000*li* a year for goods yt have gone through his hands.

And ye Bishop and ye Mayor asked me questions what age I was, and when I tooke ye sacrement and some asked me when I tooke ye sacrement of ye eucarist. I said I have not heard such words used in England but as they were brought out of France and Spain, and then they said I was

<sup>1</sup> Sir Thomas Earle.

<sup>2</sup> William Gulston.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Harford (1631-1709); see *Jnl. F.H.S.*, xliii, 77, note 3 (1951).

<sup>4</sup> At the head of the second folio; repeats the opening words of the MS.



a Jesuite, & tooke ye cap of[f] my head to see if I was not shaven and one said he had seen me beyond ye seas and I told him I was never beyond ye sea. So the Bishop asked whether I had taken ye sacrement for 20 or 30 years, and I said when I was young I took ye sacrament as you call it, but not of late, for ye word sacrament is not in ye Scriptures, and I am a true Christian protestant and I asked the Bishop if he had gone to Church all this 30 yeeres past, and he said yes & then I said yt Bishop had turned his coat, and ye people laughed, and ye people laughed and he satt downe as I think. & after they had cryed sylence ye Bishop stood up againe & said do you not think yt there was an episcoparian Church in Olivers dayes, and I said if there was such a Church they never told us of it, nor sent us neither epistle nor goppell, but left us to the devourers and presbiters & ye like. Then yt Sherife said I was an honest fellow, & I asked ye Bishop why he did not come to preach to us, & some said you would not have him preach to you, & I said we would have him come & preach to us, & if wee like his preaching better then we do our owne, wee will receive it, but he said he would have me whipt, & he would keep me fast enough. & I said if I perished in prison my blood should ly at his doore, & he said that it should not, & yet he hath signed my mittimus. And I said that you can suffer ballad singers in your streets to gather great companyes togeather, but if we meet togeather to wait upon ye lord & exort people to live in his feare, wee must bee spoyled & badly used. And ye mayor said I should see the whipt, & I told him they should first be spoaken to & informed. & he asked me where I was last Sunday as hee caled it, & I said Kensham.<sup>1</sup> & he asked me other questions, as about preaching or such like, & I said if any man had anything against me, I was there to make my answer & I need not accuse myselfe. & the major said yt I answered well, and so they had me away & signed the mittimus with ye seales & the Bishop one of them.

Thomas Robertson.

[endorsed by G.F.]

also

t. robson from  
bristo prison to  
gF 12 mo 1681  
R Richardson

<sup>1</sup> Kenysham, Somerset.