

George Fox's 1662 Appeal for Money

I

QUITE early in the history of the Society of Friends there arose a need for a common fund to meet the requirements of travelling Friends, so that there soon developed a collection at Kendal "for the service of truth." Margaret Fell, "a tender nursing mother unto many," played such an important part in the establishment and development of this Kendal Fund that its accounts were submitted to her by George Taylor and Thomas Willan in 1654, 1655, 1656, and 1657.¹ The earliest contributions appear to have come from Margaret Fell and the Westmorland Seekers. At the end of 1654, however, an appeal was made to Friends in North Lancashire and Cumberland. Before long gifts were also being received from Yorkshire and Durham.²

In the earliest days of this fund for the service of truth appeals for contributions went out from Margaret Fell or the two Kendal treasurers, Taylor and Willan.³ Durham Friends, having likewise developed a similar "stock" quite early, supported some travelling Friends (especially in Scotland), and also made gifts to the Kendal Fund in 1655 and 1656.⁴ London Friends about the same time established a meeting of men Friends, held fortnightly or monthly, to deal with the physical needs of the poor, sick, weak, or persecuted. This London fund also helped support Edward Burrough and Francis Howgill in their Irish ministry.⁵

By 1657, with the great expansion of Quakerism in England, Scotland, Ireland, continental Europe, and even the American Colonies, it had become clear that the backing of the whole of Quakerism would be needed for the support of the ever-expanding service of truth. George Fox and others took this necessary step in 1657, as Fox records in his *Journal*,

¹ William C. Braithwaite, *Beginnings of Quakerism*, 1923, p. 135. See also Henry J. Cadbury, "History in Cash Accounts," *Bulletin of Friends Historical Association*, L (1961), 49.

² Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, pp. 136, 317.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 317-20.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 319-20.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 320.

there was established and ordered for general collections to be for the service of Truth and Friends that travelled beyond seas, through all the nation, which charge had lain mostly upon the Northern Counties before this time.¹

Response was immediate with receipts of £443 3s. 5d. and expenditure of £490 12s. 5d. in 1657-8.²

At the 1658 General Meeting held at Scalehouse near Skipton there was issued a call for a second collection, seeking:

in the Lord's name and power, to move and stir up the hearts of Friends in these counties, whom God hath called and gathered out of the world, with one consent freely and liberally to offer up unto God of their earthly substance, according as God hath blessed every one, to be speedily sent up to London as a freewill offering for the seed's sake that the hands of those that are beyond the seas in the Lord's work may be strengthened and their bowells refreshed, and others that are moved to go may be encouraged and provided for.³

The money thus raised was to be sent to London and entrusted to Amor Stoddart, Gerrard Roberts, John Bolton, Thomas Hart, and Richard Davis who would use it "for the supplies of such as are already gone forth, or such as shall be moved of the Lord to go forth into any other nation, of whose care and faithfulness we are well assured."⁴ This appeal was signed by forty Friends, thirty-eight of whom Braithwaite identifies as being from Yorkshire, Durham, Northumberland, Cumberland, Lancashire, Westmorland, Notts, and Derby.⁵

Later general meetings issued other calls for money—with a third collection being authorized by the 1660 General Meeting at Skipton and a fourth by the General Meeting of the Northern Counties held at Kendal in 1661. By this time the appeal for a general collection had become almost an annual development (being omitted only in 1659).⁶ It is in the light of these developments that George Fox's undated letter (actually written at the end of 1662 or the beginning of 1663 at the very latest), can best be understood—for it is really the appeal for the fifth general collection.

¹ *Cambridge Journal*, ii, 337, as quoted in Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

² Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, p. 324.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 325-6.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 325-6.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 326. None of these forty were signers of the 1662 appeal.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 328, 336-8.

II

[late 1662]¹

Deare Freinds

In the Everlasting seed of god, by which all things was made & Created, in which all may feele every ones Condition as their owne, and now as y^e Lord god of heaven & Earth, who by his mighty power & hands is spreading his truth over all y^e Earth, to y^e exalting his kingdome & his name. And this Island being as a family of prophets & traineing up by y^e virtue of y^e god of life, to goe forth into other barren Nations, & wildernesses beyond the seas, where some are cast into prison, by y^e hard hea[r]ted darke powers of the Earth, As two lyes in prison about Hungaria, goeing towards the Turkes Campe to declare y^e message of truth to him, & two woemen have long layne in Malta, & are lately come forth, who have left a sweet savour behinde them, and given a good report to truth, whome the Lord hath brought backe safe And alsoe a shipp y^t freinds of necessity was faine to hire in the beginning of last winter was a twelve moneth, to Carry the kings letter, in behalf of our poore freinds, that lay in prison in New-England, about 40 then lyeing in prison, & some of them had bin banished on paine of death, & were returned back againe after banishment, & being in prison the generall Court at Boston drew neare, who had murthered foure of our deare freinds before, & knowing their bloody mindes wee were necessitated to hire a Shipp on purpose, the hire of which came to 140£, who ventured their lives (goeing soe neare winter) for their lives, & that brought the truth over them all, through which freinds have their liberty, & it hath not bin soe bad since, & besides freinds are under great sufferings y^t way, where truth is but young, And George Wilson is lately dead in Irons in a prison in Virginia, & though some are bad yet truth prospers & spreads, & hath a good report, even among y^e very heathen, & freinds are dayly goeing over, & there is 240£ & upwards paid out, more then what hath bin received. And therefore it is thought fitt, y^t a generall manifestation of yo^r loves, might be manifested by way of a Collection in every County, & sent up to Gerrard Roberts, Amor Stoddartt, John Bolton, or Thomas Coveny. And you may shew this at every mens meeteing y^t is appointed

¹ This estimated date seems most probable.

for such services, & alsoe to every perticuler meeteing in Every County, & Consider y^e thing with Care and speed, & send up the thing together, and not by peeces with speed, as every one as he is moved freely of the Lord god, for outward things is the least love, for many friends are moved of y^e lord to passe beyound sea who have not much of y^e outward, & this is only for such, for they that have of their owne, they can spend it no wayes better then in y^e service of y^e lord: Soe this is y^e intent, that nothing may be lacking, then all is well, & all is preserved low, as a family in y^e order of y^e everlasting life, w^{ch} was wth y^e father before y^e world began.

G.F.

“And whereas there have bin severall Collections formerly concerning this service, all being disbursed upon y^e same account before mentioned, as by o[u]r accounts may appeare to any who desire to see them: Soe our desire is that you minde the thing, it being of so publique concernment to y^e general good of spreading y^e trueth, & y^e supply of friends who are moved thereunto.

“This is from London where friends had a meeting where was many of the ministers of y^e everlasting trueth & gosple of god.”

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| Francis Howgill | Thomas Briggs |
| Samuel Fisher | Thomas Thurston |
| George Whitehead | Adam Gouldney |
| Joseph Fuce | Josiah Coale |
| John Moone | Joseph Coale |

III

This undated appeal, found in Friends House Library, Portfolio 24, item 27, appears to have been written at the very end of 1662. John Philly and William Moore, who had been in Germany at the beginning of 1662, were the two Friends drawn to Hungary to visit the Hortesche Brethren (a type of Baptists who held their property in common, lived together in “families” of several hundreds, and refused to fight or swear). Their imprisonment began shortly after their arrival in Hungary early in 1662 and lasted until 4th

of 7th month, 1663 for Moore and 6th of 7th month, 1663 for Philly.¹

The two women who were imprisoned in Malta were Katherine Evans, wife of John Evans of English Batch near Bath, and Sarah Cheevers, wife of Henry Cheevers of Slaughtford in Wiltshire. These two women were on their way to Alexandria and Jerusalem when they stopped in Malta in 1659. They were imprisoned there by the forces of the Inquisition and remained prisoners for about three and a half years, finally reaching home toward the end of 1662.²

The ship that Friends were "faine to hire in the beginning of last winter was a twelve month" belonged to the Quaker captain Ralph Goldsmith. The King's order, putting an end to the hanging of Quakers in New England, was dated 9th September 1661. Goldsmith's ship, carrying Samuel Shattuck as the King's messenger with the King's missive, left within ten days and arrived in New England six weeks later—at the end of October or early November.³ The time of the year, with its added danger for sailing, raised the price more than such a trip would ordinarily have cost. Yet, it should be noted that this 1662 appeal gives *a much lower cost* than is usually recorded. Jones, basing his figure on Besse's account, lists the fee at £300. The 1662 appeal, however, says that the amount was £140.

George Wilson had laboured in New England, Maryland, and Virginia, in 1660. After being banished from Virginia in 1660, he returned, via Barbados, to that colony once again in late 1660 or early 1661. This return journey to Virginia brought about his imprisonment in Jamestown. Wilson has left behind him a fascinating little manuscript written in minuscule script (nine lines to the inch) in which he described his prison experiences. On the 20th of 9th month, 1661, Wilson noted that he was writing from "James City

¹ Joseph Besse, *Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers*, 1753, ii, 420-32; "A Narrative of the Sufferings of John Philly and William Moore in Hungary and Austria" in William Evans and Thomas Evans [eds.], *The Friends Library* (Philadelphia, 1840), iv, 469-79; Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, 415.

² Besse, *op. cit.*, ii, 399-420; Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, pp. 428-32.

³ Besse, *op. cit.*, ii, 225-6; Rufus M. Jones, *The Quakers in the American Colonies*, 1923, pp. 92-102. Concerning the hanging of Mary Dyer, Marmaduke Stephenson, William Robinson, and William Leddra, see James Bowden, *The History of the Society of Friends in America*, 1850, i, 173-203 211-18.

soe called where I am a prisoner and was chained to an Indian, which is in prison for murder; we had our legs on one boolt made fast to a post with an ox chaine, but [I am] not now though in Irons.¹ Wilson died in 1662 as a result of "the heavy irons with which he was fettered irritating his flesh."²

The four Friends in London, to whom the 1662 collection was to be sent, include three who had been entrusted with the second collection (1658).³ Amor Stoddart (d. 1670) first met George Fox in 1647 and was his travelling companion in 1655 and 1656. After that Stoddart appears to have settled in London and suffered imprisonment in Newgate.⁴ Gerrard Roberts (1621?–1703) was long active in the financial affairs of the Society of Friends, so that he became the leading London Friend in all matters of business. He was one of the original members of the Six Weeks Meetings, established in 1671 "to weigh & Consider of such affaires relating to Truth & y^e service thereof as might not be judged fitt to be publickly discoursed of at the ffortnights Meeting."⁵ John Bolton, the third of those entrusted with the 1658 collection and now named in this 1662 appeal, also became a "charter" member of the Six Weeks Meeting. A short note in one of the Friends House manuscripts says "John Boulton, a goldsmith, was convinced about [16]54 & a faithfull man & minister for y^e L^d & went through great suffering both in Olivars days & since y^e King came in & finished his testimony (having kept it to y^e end) in London about 1680."⁶

To these three, who along with others had been managing the general collections for several years, was now added another Friend—Thomas Coveny. Coveny (d. 1670) was one of the three authors of *Some Grounds and Reasons Drawn from the Law of God and this Nation, to Manifest the Unlaw-*

¹ Manuscript journal of George Wilson, Friends House Library, London.

² Besse, *op. cit.*, ii, 381. Wilson here describes the terrible conditions in the "nasty stinking prison" and "dirty dungeon" (where the windows have been sealed up with Brick and Lime") in which he was imprisoned in Jamestown; still more descriptions are in the small manuscript journal.

³ Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, p. 326.

⁴ Dictionary of Quaker Biography, typescript in Friends House Library, London.

⁵ Manuscript Minutes of Six Weeks Meeting, I, 2. These are in Friends House Library, London.

⁶ Manuscripts, Portfolio 17, item 7, Friends House Library, London.

fulnesse of the Practice of those Magistrates, and others, who commit men to Prison (London, 1660) and with Gerrard Roberts and others *For the King and both Houses of Parliament* (London, 1661). Coveny, who lived at Newington Green, Middlesex, died of a fall from his horse in 1670 and was buried at Checker Alley.¹ Coveny, Stoddart, and Boulton were all three among the 163 Friends who offered, in 1659, to lie "body for body" for their fellow Friends in prison.²

IV

Following George Fox's appeal that the collection be speedily made and sent up to London, there appears a short postscript signed by ten influential seventeenth-century Quaker ministers. They mention the "several collections formerly made and state that the accounts of disbursements were available to any who desired to see them. This mention of accounts open for inspection may have been occasioned by the 1656 differences over the Kendal Fund.³ These ten Friends, writing "from London where friends had a meeting where was many of the ministers of y^e everlasting truth and gosple of god," then asked all Friends to give serious and prompt attention to this new collection.

One is struck by the names attached to the postscript. Several are among the Quaker "greats," while others now have been largely forgotten. Today the first three are the best known of the lot. Francis Howgill (1618-1669) of Todthorne, near Grayrigg, Westmorland, received a college education in preparation for the Anglican ministry. Dissatisfaction with the Church of England led him first to the Independents and then to the Baptists. Like Thomas Taylor, he ministered to the Seekers before his own conviction by Fox's preaching at Sedbergh Fair in 1652. He began work in London in 1654 and made a deep impression upon many people, speedily rising to a top-rank position among the early Quaker leaders. By the time of the 1662 collection Howgill had become a prolific writer, publishing

¹ London and Middlesex Quarterly Meeting Burial Register.

² *A Declaration of the Present Sufferings of above 140 Persons of the people of God (Who are now in Prison) called Quakers*, (London, 1659). pp. 24, 25, 44.

³ Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, p. 319.

dozens of his works. His ministry and his writing made his name a valuable one to accompany the appeal.¹

Samuel Fisher (1605–1665), whose signature appears in second place, was the son of John Fisher, “shopkeeper of Northampton.” At one time he possessed the vicarage at Lydd and may possibly have held it up to the time of his convincement in 1655—although there is some suggestion of a Baptist interlude between 1649 and 1655. Fisher travelled widely in France and the South of Europe in 1658, 1659, and 1660. An M.A. from Oxford, he wrote several learned works quite early. All of these were published in 1679 as *The Testimony of Truth Exalted*, a folio volume of 800 pages. Thomas Danson, who in 1659 debated with Fisher (as well as George Whitehead and Richard Hubberthorne) said “this Mr. Fisher . . . was sometime a Minister, and well reputed of for his gifts in this County.” While a prisoner at Southwark, he died of the Plague in 1665.²

The third signer, George Whitehead (1636?–1723), was born in Westmorland and raised as a Presbyterian. Whitehead, who later became a schoolmaster, was convinced while still in his teens and became one of the “First Publishers of Truth.” He, too, was a prolific writer—so that Smith uses twenty-five pages to list Whitehead’s works.³ Whitehead’s life and work easily qualified him as one of the signatories of this letter. The remaining seven signers, however, are much less well-known today than Howgill, Fisher, and Whitehead. Several are barely mentioned in published sources, while no thorough study has been made of any of them.⁴

Joseph Fuce (d. 1669), convinced about 1654, was sentenced to be shipped to Jamaica in 1655 but was not actually banished. In 1660 Fuce was committed to Dover Castle,

¹ Smith, *Descriptive catalogue of Friends' books*, i, 987–97; E. E. Taylor, *The Valiant Sixty*, 1951, pp. 72–89; Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, pp. 87–8, 157–62, and *passim*.

² Smith, *op. cit.*, i, 613; Besse, *op. cit.*, i, 289, 432, 691, 693, and ii, 395; Thomas Danson, *The Quakers Folly Made Manifest to All Men* (London, 1659), pp. 9, 11, 12–13, 52.

³ Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, pp. 138, 162–4, 187–8, 359–60; Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 41; Smith, *op. cit.*, ii, 884–908. Whitehead moved to London about 1670. He was extremely successful in pleading the cause of his fellow Quakers—appearing before Charles II, James II, William III, Anne, George I, and George, Prince of Wales.

⁴ This writer is at present engaged upon study of the lives of Josiah Coale and Thomas Thurston.

where he was very cruelly treated. Two of his works published in London during 1659 were *A Visitation by way of Declaration unto the Manifestation of the Spirit in you Rulers and Heads of Nations*, and *The Fall of a Great Visible Idol*. Fuce, like Fisher and Whitehead, was also questioned by Thomas Danson in 1659. Joseph Fuce died while imprisoned in White Lion prison in Southwark where he had been taken from his home in Kensington. Besse gives the date of his death as 1665, but the Burial Register of Surrey and Sussex Quarterly Meeting places it in 1669.¹

John Moone was one of the first to proclaim Quakerism in Dorset, and with Joseph Coale (another signer of this Appeal) he travelled in Ireland in 1659. In 1657 and 1658 Moone produced several publications including *The True Light Hath Made Manifest Darkness [etc.]* and *The Revelation of Jesus Christ Unto John Moone, in the Fourth Month, 1658*. Moone was one of the twenty-six Friends who signed a document dealing with the 1660 persecution of Friends in Cambridge. In 1666 John Moone married Sarah Snead at Bristol, and both of them were witnesses at the marriage of George Fox and Margaret Fell. Finally, with their children the Moones removed to Pennsylvania where John served as a Justice of the Peace.²

Thomas Briggs (1610?–1685) was an early “messenger” in Cumberland and Lancashire in 1653, travelled in Gloucestershire in 1655–1656, and was active in Dorset and Somerset in 1656. At least three different missionary journeys were made by Briggs into Ireland. He was one of George Fox’s companions in his great trip to the American colonies in 1671–73. No work of his is recorded in print before the time of this 1662 appeal, so that it was his reputation as a travelling Friend in the ministry and as one who had suffered

¹ Smith, *op. cit.*, i, 824; Besse, *op. cit.*, i, 291–2, 708; Thomas Danson, *The Quakers Wisdom descendeth not from Above*, 1659, appendix.

² *Journal of the Friends' Historical Society*, v, 36; ix, 101, 104; x, 104; Smith, *op. cit.*, ii, 182; *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, xviii (1894), 421–2; Francis Bugg, *The Pilgrims Progress From Quakerism to Christianity*, 1698, p. 138. Smith, *op. cit.*, ii, 182, has mistakenly connected this John Moone with Carhouse near Garstang. The John Moone of Carhouse married Margaret Harrison at Lancaster in 1665 and continued to live at Carhouse near Garstang until his death in 1689. His widow Margaret died in 1693. Our John Moone was in Bristol early, married Sarah Snead there in 1666 and four of their children are listed in the Bristol and Somersetshire Quarterly Meeting Births from 1667 to 1676.

greatly for the Truth which qualified him as a recommender of this collection.¹

Perhaps the most colourful signer was Thomas Thurston (1622?-93). Thurston was one of the eight English Quakers who in 1656 went to New England in the *Speedwell*. In late 1657 he returned to America with Josiah Coale, and they were imprisoned in Virginia for several months before going on to Maryland in 1658 for further labour and imprisonment. Then they took the back-door route into New England by travelling overland through the wilderness, since no captain would carry them by ship to New England. Thurston, a Gloucestershire man coming from Thornbury, settled in Maryland in 1663 where he long was a disturbing influence in American Quakerism. John Burnyeat attacked him for his Maryland "wickedness" during Burnyeat's visit to America in the summer of 1665. And George Fox, while in Maryland in 1672, sent for Thurston "to bring the truth over his bad actions." Thurston, in spite of several condemnations and acknowledgments, continued to be an embarrassment and source of trouble to Maryland Friends and to the larger Society until his death. Unlike most of the other signers of this Appeal, Thurston was not known as a writer. His place as one of the First Publishers of Truth and his widespread travelling in the ministry recommended his inclusion in this list of those recommending the collection.²

Adam Gouldney (d. 1684) remains almost unknown today. He was the father of Henry Gouldney, at whose house George Fox died. In 1678 Adam was one of the witnesses to Thomas Camm's offer to prove the charge he had given against John Wilkinson. A 1682 letter by Gouldney refers to someone reading one of the writings of William Rogers. What little is known about Adam Gouldney shows him to be a champion of Fox and the main body of Friends in the

¹ Smith, *op. cit.*, i, 318; [Thomas Briggs], *An Account of Some of the Travels and Sufferings of that Faithful Servant of the Lord, Thomas Briggs*, 1685, pp. 12-14; Norman Penney, *First Publishers of the Truth*, 1907, pp. 37, 79, 106, 222, 226, 227. Probably Briggs, who became ill in the West Indies, did not go on to Maryland with Fox and his party.

² Penney, *The First Publishers of Truth*, p. 109; *The Truth Exalted in the Writings of That Eminent and Faithful Servant of Christ, John Burnyeat*, (1691), pp. 33-4; Bugg, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, p. 139; Kenneth L. Carroll, "Persecution of Quakers in early Maryland, 1658-61", *Quaker History*, LIII (1964), 67-80. This author is working on a detailed study of Thurston's life.

Wilkinson-Story separation. No hint of the nature of his early position of importance has been found, either as a writer (for Smith does not mention him) or as a travelling minister.¹

Among the more influential signers of this Appeal was Josiah Coale (1633–1669) of Winterbourne in Gloucestershire, who was convinced by John Audland at Bristol in 1654. His long series of imprisonments began in 1656 with a time in Newgate Prison, London. He was likewise imprisoned in Virginia in 1657 and Maryland in 1658, before travelling overland with Thomas Thurston through the swamps and forests of the wilderness to New England where he met still more persecution. Later travels took him to Barbados, Maryland, and Virginia in America and to Holland. His first publication was *An Invitation of Love to the Hungry and Thirsty*, published in London in 1660. Three works, one written in New England and one in Barbados, were published in 1662.²

The final Friend who signed this request for funds was Joseph Coale (1636?–1670) whose suffering and imprisonment began as early as 1655, not long after he became the first person convinced in Reading. Shortly after his conviction he bore testimony to the Truth he had then received. Coale's travels led him to Cornwall in 1656; later that same year he was active in Dorset, apparently in the company of George Fox. His first published work was *A Testimony of the Father's Love*, published in London in 1661. His travels outside England seem to have been limited to Ireland where he worked in 1660. Joseph Coale spent the final six years of his life in Reading goal "because he conscientiously refused to swear," dying there 26th April 1670.³

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¹ Dictionary of Quaker Biography, Friends House Library, London; *Journal of the Friends' Historical Society*, ix, 193.

² Besse, *op. cit.*, i, 41, 87–88, 165, 577, and ii, 196, 380; *Journal of the Friends' Historical Society*, i, 18; x, 120–1; xxxiii, 57–8; Smith, *op. cit.* i, 433; and *The Books and Divers Epistles of the Faithful Servant of the Lord, Josiah Coale*, 1671.

³ *Some Account of the Life, Service, and Suffering, Of an Early Servant and Minister of Christ, Joseph Coale*, 1706, pp. A3, A4, A5, A6, 11–12, 32; *First Publishers of Truth*, pp. 8, 21–2, 24, 27, 79; Smith, *Catalogue*, i, 436.