

## John Philley in Turkey

FURTHER consideration of the subject of my note in this Journal<sup>1</sup> enables us now to identify John Philley with more certainty as the Friend referred to in the letter, dated from Pera, 20th October, 1665, from Heneage Finch, 2nd earl of Winchilsea, to his cousin, and future holder of the same office, Sir John Finch (1626–82)<sup>2</sup>. Though the letter does not name the Quaker concerned, his identification with John Philley need not be doubted, since Robert Frampton is known to have been in Constantinople at about this time on Levant Company business.<sup>3</sup> Before passing on to a consideration of the political context of Lord Winchilsea's letter, it may be noticed that he does not mention the presence of any companion of Philley, whereas Frampton does. We need not attach too much importance to this minor discrepancy in the narratives, since the companion seems from Frampton's account to have played a secondary role. However, it would seem more than likely that the unnamed companion was William Moore, the Scottish Friend who accompanied Philley in central and eastern Europe after their meeting in Holland in the latter part of 1661. They spent some considerable time in Austria and Hungary in the next two years, presumably after their ejection from Constantinople.<sup>4</sup>

In order to appreciate more fully Lord Winchilsea's attitude to Philley's appearance in the capital, it is necessary to survey his own diplomatic manoeuvres over the previous five

<sup>1</sup> *J.F.H.S.*, lii (1968), pp. 62–3.

<sup>2</sup> Report on the manuscripts of Allan George Finch. [Edited by S. C. Lomas.] Published by the Historical Manuscripts Commission [71]. Vol. 1 (1913), p. 400. (Henceforth referred to as Finch MSS.) The material portion of this letter has already been printed in *J.F.H.S.*, xxii (1925), pp. 76–7; the editor did not know the Friend referred to in the letter.

<sup>3</sup> Finch MSS., Vol. 1, pp. 407–8. Letter of Consul Lannoy to Winchilsea, dated Jan. 15/25, 1665/6, from Aleppo: "The reverend Mr. Frampton arrived on the 7th instant, in good health, and at a court (called to hear your Excellency's letters) he gave a relation of what concerned our affairs . . .". Robert Frampton was at this time chaplain to the English factory at Aleppo; he later became dean, and then bishop of Gloucester (deprived as a non-juror, 1691); *D.N.B.*

<sup>4</sup> Besse, *Sufferings*, ii, pp. 420–32.

years. Lord Winchilsea had arrived in Constantinople at a particularly propitious time for the advancement of English interests at the Sublime Porte.<sup>1</sup> The French ambassador's son had lately been thrashed at Court and the ambassador himself had been thrown into prison as retribution for insulting behaviour.<sup>2</sup> The position of other diplomatic representatives also was rather uncertain. Moreover, the office of Vizier was then held by Mohammed Kiuprili (d. 1661), whose ambitions were directed against Germany, in which Transylvania (over which Turkey then exercised suzerainty) was to act as a stepping stone; the latter's usurping ruler, Kimenyi, was believed to be receiving encouragement from the Emperor,<sup>3</sup> and rumour had it that Kiuprili was intent ultimately in carrying the war into the imperial domains. Such a war would have been welcomed by Winchilsea as a means of diverting the Emperor's attention from France, then England's ally, and he began to press his view in his official despatches; however, he received no encouragement from the English ministers, who possibly doubted his power to effect anything of note. When the prospects of a war between Turkey and Austria seemed to be vanishing that summer, Winchilsea's letters sounded a note of disappointment.<sup>4</sup> In further letters he reiterated his regret at not having received instructions from the King to promote the possibility of war, which, he felt sure, he could do without risk of

<sup>1</sup> The name usually given to the seat of the Sultan's government.

<sup>2</sup> Finch, *loc. cit.*, p. 105. Letter from Lord Winchilsea to Henry Jermyn, earl of St. Albans, ambassador at Paris, dated 1st April, 1661, from Pera: "Some months since . . . the French ambassador, magnifying to the Vizier the greatness of his master, and threatening revenge for the injuries his subjects had sustained, the Turks, who cannot suffer anything that savours of a threat, struck his son in the face, dragged him by the hair of his head out of the Vizier's palace and committed the ambassador to the Seven Towers, where he was kept two months." Bettina Laycock's "Quaker missions to Europe and the Near East, 1655-1665" [unpublished typescript, 1950, in Friends House Library], p. 19, is wrong in assuming that the reception accorded to Mary Fisher by the Sultan and Vizier was representative of the Turks' posture towards all foreign dignitaries. The Turks were prepared, as in the case mentioned here, to maltreat offending ambassadors. They were to mete out further punishment on this son some five years later when he succeeded his father as ambassador. After having struck the Vizier accidentally on the breast with his portfolio, he was beaten, and thrown into a "bad, low chamber under the stairs", where he remained for four days before he was released on Winchilsea's intercession. (Finch, *loc. cit.*, pp. 406-7.)

<sup>3</sup> Finch, *loc. cit.*, pp. 105-6. Letter to Lord St. Albans.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 127-8. Letter to Secretary Nicholas, 17th June 1661.

detection;<sup>1</sup> Constantinople, he pointed out, was not so distant that any success he might have would not be apparent at home.<sup>2</sup> The death of the elder Kiuprili in October, 1661, did not change the Turks' covert war policy. Kuprili's son Ahmed was also intent on waging a successful war against Germany. In such circumstances, it is unlikely that Winchilsea would not have entertained still his hopes of open warfare.

However, by 1665, when Philley came to Constantinople, Winchilsea had changed his tack completely, for reasons which require a brief digression by way of explanation. Since the establishment of the Ottoman empire, foreign subjects had been allowed to reside and trade in its territories under the terms of so-called "capitulations". The earliest European nations to take advantage of these guarantees after the fall of Constantinople (1453) were the Italian trading republics, followed later by France, which eventually acquired the right of protection over all European subjects in Ottoman territories who were not represented by their own ambassadors in the capital. Matters stood thus when English trading contacts with the Turks became properly established at the end of the sixteenth century with the granting of the Levant Company's charter of incorporation. As England and other smaller states, e.g. the Netherlands, established ambassadors in Constantinople, they gradually won the right of protecting their own subjects. This loss of their former privileges the French never accepted, and were making a determined effort to recover them when Philley arrived. Winchilsea was, of course, determined that the French plan should not succeed, and accordingly instructed his secretary, Paul Ricaut, and dragoman (i.e. interpreter) Georgio Draperiis in Adrianople to impress on the Vizier England's long-standing friendship towards the Sultan (as evidenced by the absence of English troops from the imperial armies then ranged against him), in contrast to the hostile attitude and activities of the French.<sup>3</sup>

While such delicate intrigues were in progress, Winchilsea would naturally react strongly to the activities of one of his own countrymen which might upset things, especially when

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130. Letter to the same, 21st June, 1661.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131. Letter to the Privy Council, 24th June, 1661.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 368, letter dated 15th April, 1665.

that countryman belonged to the troublesome sect of Quakers, with whom he had had dealings earlier. Moreover, if the Quaker's letters had reached the Vizier, the appearance of official English support for a Turkish-Hungarian war which the ever-suspicious Turks would have seen in them would have placed Winchilsea himself in grave danger of being thrashed and thrown into prison. The Turks, he knew well from personal observation, had no compunction in maltreating a foreign representative who displeased them.<sup>1</sup> In his anger at Philley's activities in Constantinople—a hypocritical anger, since earlier he himself had not only harboured hopes of a Turkish-Hungarian war, but also tried to obtain official support for his schemes, dropping these only when he deemed it in England's interests to adopt a different attitude—Winchilsea was concerned solely with the possible political consequences of Philley's actions. Winchilsea did not mention any anti-papal motives on Philley's part, although Robert Frampton's account<sup>2</sup> notes that zeal against popery was the cause of the Quaker's journey. In this respect, Laycock's insistence on the absence of sectarian motives in the Quakers' missionary activities at this time on the Continent and in the Near East is to be born in mind.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See note <sup>2</sup> on p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in my note in *J.F.H.S.*, lii (1968), p. 62.

<sup>3</sup> Laycock, *op. cit.*, p. 3.