



THE LIFE OF FRANCIS HOWGILL

1618-1669

MEMOIRS of FRANCIS HOWGILL,

WITH EXTRACTS FROM HIS WRITINGS.

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PREFACE

The following work is chiefly compiled from the writings of Francis Howgill, which were collected after his death, and published in the year 1676 in one volume folio, containing 730 pages, and entitled *The Dawning of the Gospel Day, and its Light and Glory Discovered, &c.*

The first part, comprising the life of Francis Howgill, has however received many additions from writings of some others of the Society of Friends, and from manuscript letters addressed by Francis Howgill and Edward Burrough to

Margaret Fell, with which the compiler was kindly furnished by one of his friends; and he hopes it may prove a useful specimen of the labors and exercises into which the faithful laborers, in the earlier periods of the Society, were introduced, in bearing their testimony to the Truth as it is in Jesus.

Many of Francis Howgill's other writings besides those from which extracts are here given, contain much valuable matter; but those presented to the reader in this volume, appear to comprise the substance of most of the others; and to set forth the most important of the doctrines which he believed himself called upon to advocate.

In digesting the whole into its present form, the compiler has endeavored to keep to the style and expressions of the originals, as much as the correction of verbal inaccuracies peculiar the day in which the essays were written, and the reduction of great redundancy of expression, would admit. And he desires that the perusal of the records of the lively zeal, and patient and faithful labors, of such as were successful advocates of the Truth, may tend to stir up others to diligence, in the most important object of life, which is righteousness; so that they may know its work, which is peace; and may prove its effect to be quietness and assurance forever.

LIFE of FRANCIS HOWGILL

CHAPTER I

Francis Howgill, (1618-1669), received a university education in preparation for the Episcopalian ministry. He became a minister in the Episcopal church; but afterwards left it, being dissatisfied with the superstition which he saw remaining in it, and joined himself to some Independents, among whom he became a teacher. Still lacking that spiritual comfort after which his soul thirsted, he went among the Anabaptists, thinking that they walked more in accordance with the Gospel of Christ. Still he remained destitute of that peace of mind which he so earnestly longed for; and at length, in about the thirty-fourth year of his age, he joined the

persecuted society called Quakers; among whom he became a widely respected member and evangelist. In prison, he died as a noble martyr of truth, after having been an eminent minister for sixteen years, leaving an account of his writings and sufferings.

He has left a particular account of his early religious experience, starting as an Episcopalian in a work entitled, *The Inheritance of Jacob discovered after his return out of Egypt*; from which the reader is here presented with a copious extract.

"From twelve years old I set my heart to know that God whom the world professed, and whom I read of in the Scriptures; whom Abraham, Noah, Moses, the Prophets, and the rest of the Fathers worshiped. I fell into the strictest worship that there was in that part wherein I lived; and often I desired to be alone, and attended much to reading and meditation. And as I was sober and serious, I began to see that all the sports and pastimes, and such as youths delight in naturally are vanity, and that they last but for a moment. And while I was in folly and wantonness, doing them, the nature which had run into transgression had pleasure in them; but as soon as I was gone from among them, I was judged in myself for what I had done; and it often made me weep. Then I resolved in my will that I would never do so again; and for some time refrained from the common practice of those things that I had walked in; but as soon as I came among them I acted those things again, which before I had seen to be vanity. But, long before that, I was checked for many things; and so I walked often condemned in myself, and had no peace when I was serious; and then, not knowing what to do, I was in much sorrow when I was alone. I had a desire to be alone where I might not see or suffer any folly of the world, and did not go to the former excesses, although something in me still desired after them; but when I did not yield, I was glad and had peace. I began to oppose my friends, with whom I had walked in lack of restraint; and they began to revile me, and hate me, and scorn me; yet I didn't care.

Then I read much, and prayed in words, often three or four times in a day, yet I did not where God was, but imagined a God at a distance; and so went on. Then I began to grow in external knowledge, which is sensual; and I was puffed up pride for knowing, for the world admired me. But still I was condemned for vain words and actions; and the root of iniquity grew in me. I followed a more strict course, often traveling five or six miles to hear some more excellent means, as they called it, and so got more words; but still I was the same, even worse, for knowledge continued to elevate my pride. Then at about fifteen years of age I sought by travel to hear the most excellent sermons; and so became acquainted with all those called *eminent Christians*, in the region where I lived. My parents despised me; and of the world made a wonder; and great reproach came upon me; but still I saw they knew nothing, and therefore I didn't care. So, much sorrow fell upon me for four or five years; and when I turned within I was judged for all my former iniquities, and my heart was still shown to me, that it was corrupt; but as I kept within, to the Light in my conscience, I was restrained from many actions which I had a will to do; and in the instant, when I was doing any unrighteousness in actions or words I was often stopped. And when I saw that I could resist and not follow the temptation, a great joy arose in me; but when I had done anything forwardly or rashly I was judged. But this the teachers without said was a natural conscience, that kept from sin, and restrained it; so I listened to their imaginations and slighted the Light as too low a thing to be nothing but common grace that preserved out of gross evils. But they said the saints had a peculiar grace and faith; and so I listened to them, and was still convinced of sin. Then they told me that the saints believed in Christ, and so sin was not charged to them, but they were all righteousness based on his righteousness; and so I must seek him in the means, as prayer, and receiving the *sacrament*, as they called it; and they judged me a worthy communicant; and I was, in great fear that I would eat unworthily. No one could instruct me what the body of

Christ was.

At one time I read all the Scriptures that spoke of Christ's sufferings. The teachers said I must believe He suffered for me; and I believed all that they *called faith*; yet I could not see how He died for me, and had taken away my sins; for the witness in my conscience told me, I was the servant of sin while I committed it. They told me I must not omit that ordinance (or so called sacrament of communion), for thereby faith was confirmed and strength added. So on the one hand they pressed it as a duty; and on the other I saw that the Scripture said: "He that eats unworthily, eats damnation to himself," I was in fear, though none could accuse me from without; yet afterward a great fear fell upon me, and I thought I had sinned against the Holy Ghost, and great trouble fell upon me. Then they said, I had not properly prepared for the sacrament; and yet I had all the preparation that they had spoken of; but they were all physicians of no value.

So I fasted, and prayed, and walked mournfully in sorrow, and thought none was like me, tempted on every hand. So I ran to this man, and the other; and they applied promises to me; but it was only in words, for the witness of Christ showed me that the root of iniquity stood, and that the body of sin was whole. And, despite that I was kept from gross evils, still sorrow compassed me about, and I questioned all that ever I had had, which they said was grace; repentance, and faith.

Then I told them there was guilt in me; and they said sin was taken away by Christ, but the guilt should still remain while I lived, and brought me the saints' conditions who were in the warfare, to confirm it. So I said in myself this was a miserable salvation, that the guilt and condemnation of sin should still stand in me. Thus I was tossed from mountain to hill, and heard them preach confusion; and therefore I mattered not for them, and said, surely this is not the ministry of Christ! So I ceased for some time except for short bursts of falling, and did not mind them; but kept still at home and in desert places,

solitary, in weeping. Everything I had done was laid before me, in that every thought was judged; and I was tender, and my heart broken. And when I could feel sorrow the most, I had most peace; for something spoke within me from the Lord; but I did not know Him then. And they said, that it was heresy to look for the word of the Lord to be spoken now in these days, for the word was only in the Bible. So I disregarded it mostly; yet often I was made to do many righteous things, by the immediate power and Word of God. And then peace and joy sprang up in me, and promises were spoken that He would teach me Himself and be my God. I often obeyed Him contrary to my will, and denied my will. But they told me to obey out of fear was the legalism of the law, and that it made me a slave to the law; but instead I should act from evangelical obedience. So I got above fear, and yet acted the former things, which they called ordinances; and they said that was son-like obedience, and Christ had done all; there was nothing more for me to do.

Then there appeared more beauty in those called Independents [Congregationalist Puritans]; and I loved them, and so joined myself to them; and all the money I could get I purchased books with; and I walked with and owned the Independents as more separate from the world; and they pressed separation. But at the last I saw it was only in words, that they would choose officers and members of themselves; and so made an image and fell down and worshiped it. Yet there was some tenderness in them at the first; but the doctrine was the same with the world's, words without, about others' conditions; [simply reading and talking about the experiences in the Bible].

Then those called Anabaptists appeared to have more glory, and to walk more according to the Scripture, observing things written without; and I went among them; and there was something I loved among them. But afterwards, they denied all but those who were in their way, as being out of the fellowship of the saints, and doctrine of Christ. And I saw the ground was the same; and their doctrine out of

the life, with the rest of the teachers of the world; and that they had separated themselves, and made another likeness. But still all said the Bible was the word and rule; and Christ who was at a distance, without, had done it all for us; there was nothing for an individual to do. Some of them holding free-will, others opposing, but all was done in their own wills.

Still I loved those who walked honestly among all these. But though I had seen and owned all that I had heard, except the figure, which I saw was outward; and that was their greatest glory, and I saw that they would have all fall down to it, else no communion; yet I found no peace, nor guide. Then some preached the doctrine of free grace, as they called it, that all sin was done away, past, present, and to come; that only believing in this doctrine and all is finished; and so preached salvation to the first nature, and to the serpent that bore rule. To this I listened a little, and so lost my condition within. But still wherever I went, this was spoken to me: “His servant you are, whoever you obey;” and so being overcome by sin, I had no justification witnessed in me.

Then some preached Christ within, but they themselves were without; but yet they said all must be within, unto which your soul must cleave. And they spoke of redemption and justification, and all within; and of God appearing in man, and overcoming the power of the devil; and the Light in my conscience, bore witness that it must be so; and I was exceedingly pressed, to wait and find it so; and something in me breathed after the Living God. And I had a true love to all who walked honestly of any profession whatever; and I hated reviling one another, and that they should strike one another, and persecute one another; and I always took part with the sufferer. But still I saw, that though they spoke of things within, and of a power to come, they enjoyed not what they spoke of; for, the same fruits were brought forth.

At I last I saw that those who walked as the ministers of Christ, none that pretended to the ministry had any such gift, neither pastor, nor

teacher; nor were any of them such members as were in the apostles' time.

So, having passed up and down, hurried here and there, I saw that all the teachers of the world sought themselves, and fed poor people with dead names and deceit; and that they were not the ministers of Christ. I saw them all in deceit, who did not abide in Christ's doctrine; and I quit association from most of them, forever. As I dissented from their judgment, they hated and persecuted me!

Now it was revealed in me, that **the Lord would teach his people himself**. So I waited, and many things opened in me of a time at hand. Sometimes I would have heard a priest; but when I heard him, I was moved by the Lord, and his word in me orderd me to speak in opposition; and often as a fire it burned, and a trembling fell upon me; yet I feared reproach, and so denied the Lord's motion.

It was revealed in me to wait, and I should know his counsel; and that the word of the Lord was in me, that the time was at hand, when the dead should hear the voice of the Son of God. It burned in me as a fire, that the day was near, when it should not be said, "Lo here, nor lo there;" but all the Lord's people should be taught of Him. But still my mind ran out, and out of the fear into carelessness; for I knew not the cross of Christ. Yet, I say, I was wiser than the teachers that I met with in that generation. I do not glory in it, for condemnation is passed on it all forever. Yet still as my mind was turned to the Light, I always had pure openings; and prophecies of things to come; and belief that I should see the day, and bear witness to his Name. So when things opened so fast, the wisdom of the flesh caught them; and I went up and down, preaching against all the ministry; and I also ran ahead of my guide with that, which was revealed in myself. I preached up and down the country, from the fullness that was in the old bottle; and so was wondered after, and admired by many, who had waded up and

down as myself had. We fed one another with words; and healed up one another in deceit; and all laid down in sorrow, when the day of the Lord was made manifest. For I was overthrown, and my foundation swept away; and all my righteousness and unrighteousness were judged, and weighed, and found too light.

As soon as I heard one* declare, that the Light of Christ in man, is the way to Christ, I believed the eternal word of truth; and the light of God in my conscience sealed to it. So not only I, but many hundreds more, who thirsted after the Lord, but were betrayed by the wisdom of the serpent, were all seen to be off the foundation. All our mouths were stopped in the dust; and we all stood condemned in ourselves, and saw our nakedness, and were ashamed; though our glory was great in the eye of the world, but all was vanity.

* George Fox at the Sedburgh fair, to be detailed later.

As I turned my mind within, to the light of Jesus Christ, with which I was enlightened, which formerly reprov'd me for all vanity, and also as I owned it, led me into all righteousness, I saw it was the true and faithful witness of Christ Jesus. My eyes were then opened; and all things were brought to remembrance that ever I had done; and **the dreadful day of the Lord fell upon me**; sorrow and pain; fear and terror, for the sight that I saw with my own eyes. In the morning I wished it had been evening, and in the evening I wished it had been morning; and I had no rest, but trouble on every side. All that ever I had done was judged and condemned; and all things were accursed. Then the lion suffered hunger. My eyes were dim with crying; my flesh failed of fatness; my bones were dried, and my sinews shrank. I became a proverb to all; yes, to those who had been my acquaintance; they stood away from me. The pillars of heaven were shaken; one woe poured out after another. I sought death in that day, and could not find it; it fled from me. I sought to cover myself anyway, or with anything, but could not. And Babylon, the mother of harlots,

came into remembrance that day; and the sea dried up, and all the merchants that traded with her stood afar off, for the cup of fury was poured forth. I would have run anywhere to have hidden myself; but there was nothing but weeping, and gnashing of teeth, and sorrow, and terror. I roared out for the lack of quietness in my heart; and the kingdom was full of darkness. I knew not the right hand from the left. I became a perfect fool, and knew nothing; and as a man distracted. All was overturned; I suffered loss of all. All that ever I did, I saw was in the accursed nature.

Then something in me cried, "just and true is His judgment." My mouth was stopped; I dared not make mention of His name. But as I bore the indignation of the Lord, something in me rejoiced; the serpent's head began to be bruised; and as the judgment was pronounced, something cried, "just are you Oh Lord, in all your judgment!" And as I gave up all to the judgment, the captive came forth out of prison, and rejoiced. My heart was filled with joy; and I came to see Him whom I had pierced. My heart was broken. I saw the cross of Christ, and stood by it; and the enmity was slain by it. **The new man was made**; and so peace came to be made; and eternal life was brought in, through death and judgment. Then I received the perfect gift, which was given from God; and the holy law of God was revealed unto me; and **was written in my heart**. His fear, and His word, which did kill, was now made alive.

"Now it pleased the Father to reveal his Son in me through death; and **so I came to witness cleansing by his blood, which is eternal**. Glory unto his name forever! And I have rest and peace in doing the will of God; and I am entered into the true rest, and lay down in the fold of God, with the lambs of God, where the sons of God rejoice together, and the saints keep holy days. Glory unto Him forever!"

CHAPTER II

It appears that the great change just alluded to started in the year 1652. He was at a fair, at Sedburgh, to the west of Yorkshire, through which, George Fox passed, declaring the day of the Lord. George Fox went afterwards into the steeple-house yard; and many of the people of the fair went to him, with a number of priests, and professors of religion. There he declared the everlasting truth of the Lord, and the word of life for several hours; showing that the Lord had come, to teach his people himself; and to bring them off from all the world's ways, and teachers; that these teachers were like those that were of old, condemned by the prophets, by Christ, and by the apostles. He exhorted the people to come off from the temples made with hands; and to wait to receive the Spirit of the Lord, that they might know themselves to be the temples of God. Not one of the priests opened his mouth against what he declared; but a captain said: "Why will you not go into the Church? This is not a fit place to preach in?" George Fox told him, he denied their church. Then Francis Howgill stood up, who had not seen George Fox before, and answered the captain: "this man speaks with authority and not as the scribes," which put the captain to silence.

The following account of the remarkable meeting, at which, Francis Howgill, John Audland land, John Camm, Richard Hubberthorn, and many others were convinced of the everlasting truth, is extracted from George Fox's Journal:

The next First-day I came to Firbank chapel, in Westmoreland, where Francis Howgill and John Audland had been preaching in the morning. The chapel was full of people, so that many could not get in. Francis said, he thought I looked into the chapel, and his spirit was ready to fail, the Lord's power did so surprise him; but I did not look in. They made haste, and had quickly done, and they and some of the people went to dinner; but most stayed until they came again. John Blakelin and others came to me, and desired me not to reprove them publicly; for they were not parish teachers, but pretty tender men. I

could not tell them whether I would or not, though at that time I did not have any inclination to publicly declare against them; but I said that they must leave me to the Lord's movings. While others were gone to dinner, I went to a brook, got a little water, and then came and sat down on the top of a rock close by the chapel. In the afternoon the people gathered around me, with several of their preachers. We estimated there was over a thousand people there, to whom I declared God's everlasting truth and word of life freely and greatly for about three hours. I directed them all to the spirit of God in themselves that they might be turned from the darkness to the light. And believing in the light, they might become the children of the light, and might be turned from the power of satan to God; and be led into all truth by the spirit of truth, and sensibly understand the words of the prophets, of Christ, and of the apostles; and might all come to know Christ to be their teacher to instruct them, their counselor to direct them, their shepherd to feed them, their bishop to oversee them, and their prophet to open divine mysteries to them; and might know their bodies to be prepared, sanctified, and made fit temples for God and Christ to dwell in. In the openings of the heavenly life, I opened to them the prophets, and the figures and shadows, and directed them to Christ, the substance. Then I opened the parables and sayings of Christ, and things that had been long hidden; showing the intent and scope of the apostles' writings, and that their epistles were written to the elect. When I had opened the apostles' state, I also showed the state of the apostasy that has been since the apostles' days. That the priests have gotten the scriptures, but are not in the spirit which gave them forth; and have put them into chapter and verse, to make a trade of the holy men's words; that the teachers and priests now are found in the steps of the false prophets, chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees of old, and are such as the true prophets, Christ and the apostles cried against, and so are judged and condemned by the spirit of the true prophets, of Christ, and of his apostles; and that none in that spirit and guided by it now could own them. Many old people went into the chapel, and

looked out at the windows, thinking it a strange thing to see a man preach on a hill or mountain, and not in their church, as they called it; at which point I was moved to inform the people, "That the steeple-house, and the ground whereon it stood, were no more holy than that mountain; and that those temples, which they called the dreadful houses of God, were not set up by the command of God and of Christ; nor their priests called, as Aaron's priesthood was; nor their tithes appointed by God, as those among the Jews were; but that Christ was come, who ended both the temple and its worship, and the priests and their tithes; and all now should listen to him; for he said, "Learn of me;" and God said of him, "This in my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased; hear you him." I declared that the Lord God had sent me to preach the everlasting gospel and word of life among them; and to bring them off from all these temples, tithes, priests, and rudiments of the world, which had got up since the apostles' days, and had been set up by such as had erred from the spirit and power that the apostles were in. 'Very largely was I opened at this meeting, and the Lord's convincing power accompanied my ministry, and reached home to the hearts of the people; whereby many were convinced, and all the teachers of that congregation. (who were many), were convinced of God's everlasting truth that day.

In a testimony respecting Francis Howgill, by George Fox, he states him to have been,

"one of the Lord's worthies, that preached His everlasting word of life, from about the year 1652, until the year 1668. That, he had great acquaintance with the higher sort of priests; and after he had received the Lord's power, and word of life, he was a torment to them. And he confessed to some of the priests, that the knowledge of God and his truth, he knew no more of while he was among them, as to the inward enjoyment of it, than a child of five years old. When John Audland and he, who had received some money for preaching, at a parish called Colton, in Furnace Fells, in Lancashire, had received the gospel freely,

and the word of life from Christ, they were commanded of the Lord, to go and return that money back again, to the parish and people, from whom they had received it; which they did. This made the priests, and the professors, the more to rage."

As the Son of God came to be revealed in him, he began to know his command: to powerfully and freely preach Him, and his word of life. John Audland and he, all the days of their lives, after their conviction, preached Christ Jesus freely, as they had received Him, and turned many to God. But, no sooner was his mouth opened, than the priests, magistrates, and professors, began to rage against him, and to be offended at the word of God, and the gospel.

Francis Howgill was one of the friends alluded to, in H. Tuke's Biographical Notices, vol. 2 page 69, who with James Naylor, designed to have held a religious meeting, at Orton, in Westmoreland, in the year 1652.

The priests invited them to hold a meeting in the town field, and they accepted the offer, seeing that a private house was not sufficient to accommodate the numbers collected. Here the priests began to dispute, on the propriety of meeting there, and collecting so many people together to break the peace. Much wrangling succeeded; after which, James returned to the house of one of his friends, where the meeting was held, though with much disturbance from rude people, who were collected for the purpose of mischief; no material injury was, however, sustained; and that evening, James left the place, and thus, for the present, escaped the fury of his enemies.

The priests in this country, appear to have been uncommonly violent and cruel. Not content with preaching against Naylor, and imputing to him blasphemy, with many other false accusations, they raised an armed multitude, who came to the house where he was, threatening to knock out his brains against the wall, or to pull down the house if he would not come out; and when they were told that the doors were open, the people informing the priests, they rushed violently into the house, seized James Naylor by the throat, dragged him into the yard, and afterwards, with

a pitch fork, struck off his hat, commanding him to answer such questions, as the priests should ask him. They put many questions to him, which he answered so well, that they could not take any advantage from them to prosecute him. After much wrangling, one of the priests advised the people, not to receive James Naylor into their houses, and then departed, leaving him and his friends to the violence of the rude multitude. But a justice of the peace who was present, seeing the dangerous situation in which Friends were placed, kindly assisted them in returning to the house from where they came, which they entered without receiving much harm.

On this occasion, James was publicly engaged to praise the Lord, for the wonderful deliverance from the power of his enemies, which some of them hearing, said, "if we let him go on thus, all people will run after him." He was therefore, again haled out of the house, taken by the justice and priests to a neighboring ale-house, and then committed to Appleby jail. He was taken to Kirby Stephen that night; and a guard placed over him in a chamber. Several of his friends followed him, and among them was Francis Howgill, who took an opportunity of preaching to the people, who were collected in the street in a great number. When a complaint of his preaching was made, he was sent for before a justice, who commanded him to take off his hat. He answered, "I know of no such law." One of the priests, five of whom were present, testified that Francis had said, "he will tread both the ministry and magistracy under foot." Francis replied, "you are a false accuser, prove your accusation." Then one of the bystanders took off his hat, and threw it into the fire. Then the justice said: "What is this you speak against the ministers?" He answered, "What have you to accuse me of," at which point the justice said that Francis had stated that any minister who persecuted those who did not give him money was not a minister of Jesus Christ. He said, "you speak against the law, for the law has given them their maintenance." Francis said, "I do not meddle with the law, but with their persecution." Then Francis said to the priest, "did you ever know a minister of Christ that was a persecutor, or who labored to imprison any?" And after more discourse, he said to the priest, "I have seen a great deal of tyranny and persecution in this day's actions." Then the justice said to the people: "Take notice, he said the law I act by is tyranny and persecution;" to which the people

assented. Then Francis said, "you may give out to the people what you will, but I speak not of the law, but of your actions." Upon that they made out a mittimus to send him to prison, placing over him a guard of eight men, who spent that night in drinking, swearing, and filthy talking; and the more they were reprov'd the more often they repeated their wickedness. The next morning he was sent to Appleby jail, along with James Naylor.

While these innocent sufferers were in prison, their enemies were busily employed, in obtaining all the accusations they could against them. At the sessions held at Appleby, in the month called January, 1652, James Naylor was tried on an indictment for blasphemy. This charge was occasioned by the doctrine preached, and particularly insisted on, by our early Friends, that of the light of Christ universally communicated to the human race, as John said: the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. This they further explained with Paul's letters referring to, "Christ in you the hope of glory;" and further illustrated by an exhortation of the same apostle: "Prove yourselves; know you not yourselves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except you are reprobates."

This doctrine, the enemies of the Society endeavored to convert into a blasphemous application of Christ to themselves; but, despite the strenuous endeavors of some of the justices, the charge could not be substantiated; and Anthony Pearson, who then sat on the bench, was convinced by the examination of James Naylor. Benson was another of the justices, and was fully sensible of the insufficiency of the evidence to prove the charge of blasphemy; but notwithstanding the evident innocence of the prisoner, two other justices were so violent as to commit him upon the petition of the priests, though at the hazard of being fined by the judges at the assizes. It was therefore ordered that James Naylor and Francis Howgill should remain in prison, where they were arbitrarily confined about five months and then discharged.

After Francis Howgill was set at liberty, he grew valiant and bold for the name of the Lord and traveled up and down on foot preaching the everlasting Gospel. He went to many steeple-houses, to warn both priests and people of the day of the Lord that was coming upon them; directing them to Christ Jesus, their Teacher

and Saviour.

CHAPTER III

In the spring of 1654, Francis Howgill went to London in company with Edward Burrough, and Anthony Pearson the justice before mentioned, but who had now become a preacher of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. They are said to have been the first, who publicly preached the doctrines of Friends in London.

A meeting was appointed at the request of Francis Howgill, who had written by post from York on that account. It was held on a first-day, at the house of Robert Dring, in a close yard in Watling-street. Before Francis Howgill and Anthony Pearson arrived, a great many people were assembled, whom the former addressed. As soon as he ceased many wild people came in, who made a great noise. They went to Simon Dring's, in Moorfields in the afternoon, where they met many people of honest, simple hearts, to whose conditions they were much drawn forth to minister, and who received them gladly. Edward Burrough is said to have been that day at an assembly of a separate society.

Previously, however, to the arrival of these laborers in the Gospel, the workings of the power of truth were felt by some tender hearted people in and about London; and a few were convinced and turned to the Lord. Two women who came out of the north, namely Isabel Buttry and her companion, became acquainted with Simon Dring of Moorfields, and Amos Stodart who had been a captain in the parliament's army, but having been convinced of the truth had left his military calling. These women having in their possession, printed copies of an Epistle addressed by George Fox, "to all that would know the way to the kingdom, whether they be in forms, without forms, or got above forms," to direct people to turn the attention of their minds within, where the voice of God is to be heard, dispersed them among such as would receive them; and walking in company with Amos and Simon in the fields towards Stepney, they were overtaken by Ruth Brown, who was then about sixteen years of age, and who afterwards became the wife of William Crouch.

Isabel Buttry looked steadfastly on her, and gave her one of the epistles, on reading

which she was convinced of the truth, and added to the small number who believed. After this they, with Anne Downer, who afterwards married George Whitehead, held private meetings at Robert Dring's house, in Watling-street, and at Simon Dring's in Moorfields, in which Isabel Buttry sometimes spoke a few words; but Anne Downer is said to have been the first woman of this society, who preached publicly in London.

On the first-day week after the arrival of Francis Howgill and his companions, they appointed another meeting in Moorfields, for those only who appeared to be simple hearted, and who had been much borne down by the violence of the people among whom they were mixed, before the coming of these friends. But many wild spirited people also came to the meeting; and after Anthony Pearson had said a few words, a Ranter* stood up and spoke until Francis Howgill became grieved in spirit; and he, under a sense of the power of God, stopped him with he and Anthony speaking again. Then several men and women fell down on the ground, in a Ranting spirit, and confessed that their ministry was of God; but F. Howgill and his friends denied them and declared against them, so that the simple hearted ones were much comforted and strengthened.

*Ranters were a group of people who believed anything done in faith was not sin, including drunkenness, adultery, etc. They believed that Jesus had freed them from the penalties of the law, making it easier for them to sin guilt-free. They presumed Jesus had made them to be a Son of God, licensed to do whatever they pleased. (Sound familiar?) Most of them eventually were converted to Quakers.

The next first-day, they had another public meeting in Watling Street; but before they got there a Ranter spoke, and another opposed him, and there was a great contest, so that the people were much troubled. At length, under a sense of the power of the Lord, Francis Howgill stood up and spoke; and all the others were silent. The mouths of his fellow laborers were afterwards opened in great power, so that many owned their ministry. In the afternoon many more came and there was strong opposition; but Francis and his companions, after speaking to them for

about two hours, withdrew, and were followed into another room by the honest hearted, whom they addressed; being much concerned to get them separated from among the mixed multitude. In a short time, John Audland, John Camm, and Richard Hubberthorn, arrived in London and took part in the labors of the day. Francis Howgill informs us that on the same day Edward Burrough and Richard Hubberthorn were at a place in the City, called the Glass House, which was a great meeting place of the Baptists; and that after Edward Burrough had spoken, Richard Hubberthorn stood up and addressed the assembly; but presently they shut him out and bolted the door. Edward remained silent within, until another person had spoken, and then he said a few words; but they stopped him, and after a little dispute he left them.

The same day, John Camm was with a people who had been called Lockers, whose hireling teacher had left them; and had afterwards been promoted. Richard Hubberthorn went to him from the Baptists, and they had liberty to speak for a good while and cleared their consciences. Francis Howgill, with Anthony Pearson, were the same day at a meeting of a people called Waiters, in Cheapside, where a man was speaking when they went in; he soon ceased on seeing them. Here the former spoke three quarters of an hour; and one Colonel Rich then confessed that the Light was the guide, but said that it led into innocence, and that he looked for a greater which would lead into glory. This was not satisfactory to them, therefore Anthony Pearson said, a few words on the subject; after which Francis again addressed them; and Edward Burrough coming in also spoke a few words; after which they parted with the people in much love.

On the sixth day following, they appointed a meeting for those who were convinced. On first day, Francis Howgill and Edward Burrough had a meeting at a large place called Ely-house, of which the governor of the place began to Speak; but soon ceasing, another person, a Ranter, stood up-in a pulpit and spoke a while; so that they saw they were in danger of losing the opportunity. Edward Burrough therefore stood up and addressed the meeting, the people being very attentive. After he had finished, the Ranter spoke again; and Francis, under a sense of the power of the Lord, then stood up and addressed them. Upon which the Ranter and the rest of the people were silent for nearly an hour longer. Afterwards the Ranter

said the people could not but witness that he spoke to their conscience as well as Francis and his companion; but the people, with one consent, said he did not, and were very loving to them. But the governor, perceived that in the eyes of the people his honor and the Ranter's honor were gone. So he refused to let them have a meeting there in the afternoon. So they appointed one in Watling Street.

The same day, John Camm went to a great meeting of a society who were translating the Scriptures anew, and were judging of them by their own reason. At mid-day they all met again; and Richard Hubberthorn went to Friends' meeting, and Anthony Pearson and Francis Howgill to that of the Bible people, and there they spoke a little; but except they would dispute and be tried by the Scriptures, they would not hear them; they therefore consented, and were furnished with wisdom, so that they soon confounded their opponents. Passing from them they were joined by Richard Hubberthorn, and went to Edward Burrough who was at a steeple-house in Lombard Street, which most of the high notionists in the City frequented. They got to him before the priest had done; and after he had ceased, Edward stood up on a seat and addressed the people for about an hour, with a loud voice, and in much power; they being very still and calm. When he had finished, Francis also addressed them ; and they cleared their consciences and went away. The same afternoon, John Camm was at a meeting of Baptists, where he had an opportunity of preaching the Truth to them. In the evening they all met again; and closed the day in peace, in their Heavenly Father's love.

After a short time, Anthony Pearson went into the county of Durham; and John Audland, John Camm, and Richard Hubberthorn into Oxfordshire; but Francis Howgill and Edward Burrough still remained in London, diligently; having three or more meetings every week, larger than could be contained in any place they could conveniently obtain for the purpose.

One fourth-day, they had a meeting in Southwark, in a large room where the Anabaptists met on first-days; several of whom, with many hundreds of people attended. The Anabaptists, after it, fell out about them. Those who heard them pleaded for them, while others who were absent were offended, and blamed those, 'who gave them liberty to use the room;' and one of the Anabaptist teacher's who

had been in the north, brought many false reports respecting Friends, which those who were at the meeting, would not give credit to. This occasioned many of the Anabaptist congregation to secede, which made the others greatly afraid of Friends.

The ministerial labors of these devoted servants of the Lord were blessed with signal success; being attended with a convincing power, impressing awful considerations, and awakening the consciences of the audience to a sense of their conditions, and to earnest desires after salvation. Being prepared for the work of the ministry, by the previous work of inward sanctification, and believing themselves "called of God as was Aaron," to that arduous undertaking, they were eminently qualified for the service in which they were engaged; not only possessing a sound understanding and a sufficient share of literature, but the superior qualification of that experience of the quickening power of inward religion, which they endeavored to recommend and propagate a religion not amusing the head in curious speculations, but purifying the heart, and cleansing the conscience from dead works, to serve the Lord in newness of life.

CHAPTER IV

In the autumn of this year, both Francis Howgill and Edward Burrough left London for Bristol, after having a meeting with many of their friends who came say goodbye to them. In this meeting they commended their friends to the Lord, to whom they had directed, settled, and charged them to meet together. It was a time of great brokenness of heart; the tendering power of God being witnessed among them, so that the recollection of it often raised the hearts of many of them in thankfulness and praise to God.

On the first-day after the arrival of Howgill and Burrough in Bristol, they had a meeting in the castle, at which were many hundreds of people. After it was over they went out, hoping to get away from the multitude; but the people followed them along the streets to the house of a captain, which was filled with them until late in the evening. Every day in the week these friends had meetings in or about the city; and on the first-day following, they had one in the house of one captain

Bishop; (probably George Bishop who became convinced of the truth, and suffered imprisonment for it). The rooms in this house were huge, but both were insufficient for the meetings; and therefore they went in the afternoon to a place called *the fort*, where about two thousand persons were assembled, among whom were many great men and women. All the people were very still, though Howgill and Burrough could scarcely raise their voices so as to be heard by the most distant of the them; and the people were so unwilling to leave them, that they were obliged to go into the house of a captain, and hide themselves in a private chamber.

These things were great news through the city, and the priests and magistrates were soon in an uproar, seeking to find something against these laborers in the Gospel. Two priests went to hoar them in order to entrap them, but were disappointed. On the second-day of the week they went into the city; to the house of a merchant; and the mayor, aldermen, justices of the peace, and priests assembled in the hall; and sent a sergeant to desire them to come to the council, to where they went freely, many captains and great men of the city accompanying them. When they reached the place, a great concourse of people was gathered together; they were therefore taken into an inner chamber, into which many persons of respectability who were kindly disposed to them went also, but they were not permitted to stay; while their opposers were freely admitted. Howgill and Burrough informed the magistrates, that they had come there according to their request. The magistrates then queried of them, if they knew to whom they spoke. They answered, that they believed they were before the magistrates or rulers of the city. The magistrates were displeased, that they neither bowed to them, nor put off their hats; but they informed them, that they did not omit doing so in contempt of authority, but for conscience' sake. The magistrates then asked of them their names and country, which they declared to them, telling them also, that they had been in London about a quarter of a year. The magistrates next inquired their purpose for coming to Bristol, to which they answered they came in response to the commandment and motion of the Lord, to bear witness to his Name, and to declare the gospel committed to them. The priests then began to ask them questions; but they refused to answer any persons except the magistrates, to whom they signified their readiness to answer. These then inquired whether their call was mediate [implicit] or immediate [explicit]; to which they replied, immediate. They

were then asked if they had an immediate call to declare it. Francis therefore told them what kind of preacher he had been, and what he then was, and informed them that he, and his companion had witnessed the same call, which Abraham had to leave his country and his habitation; and had left their habitations at the command of God. The magistrates listened to him quietly for about a quarter of an hour. They then queried if the friends could work miracles. They answered, that they should not boast of those things; but on being urged, they stated, that many persons could bear witness, that by their ministry many had been turned from darkness to Light, and from Satan to God. The priests then inquired whether they accused all the ministers in England; and they told them, that there were many ministers of Christ in England, and with them they had unity; not all hirelings, and those who sought their gain from their quarter they denied. The priests pleaded for hire, and said, that Francis and Edward dishonored the Gospel; that the Light was natural; and that everyone had it not, which was contradictory to their own declaration that it was natural. After much striving and contending, when they found that they could not; ensnare the prisoners, they consulted together and said, that the friends had held tumultuous meetings; to which one of their own number answered, that there were many godly, honest papule met, and without tumult.

When the magistrates could find nothing against them, they commanded them to depart out of the city. To this they answered: "We came not in the will of man, nor stand in the will of man; but when He moves us to depart, who moved us to come here, we shall obey; but your wills we cannot obey, for your will is no law. If we are guilty of the transgression of any law, let us suffer by it; but rather than we will transgress the righteous law of God, written in our hearts, by subjecting ourselves to your wills and lusts, we shall choose to walk in the law of God, and to suffer under your wills what you can lay upon us. We are free born Englishmen, and have served the Commonwealth in faithfulness, being free in the presence of God from the transgression of any law. To your commands we cannot be obedient; but if by violence you put us out of the city, and have power to do it, we cannot resist." Having said this they went out of the court, but tarried in the city until night; and the next day returned and walked In the streets.

After this, they had several very large meetings; it being supposed that there were at one of them, about three thousand persons. They staid about seven weeks in and about Bristol, laboring diligently; and many received the Truth which they preached. For the last three weeks of their Stay, they had the company and joint labors of John Audland and John Camm, who had also been there before them, and whom they left in this extensive field of labor. Some time after they left Bristol, the magistrates issued the following warrant to the constables of each ward of that city, under pretension of an information, the absurdity of which must appear to ever unprejudiced reader, as the parties named to it were well known to be natives of England. But the spirit of persecution which raged in those days, seemed so blind that nothing, however improbable or foolish, if it could be turned to the disadvantage of this harmless, but despised people was thought too low to be pressed into service against them, by many of those who ought to have been a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them who do well.

To the constables of the peace of the ward of ---, and every of them.

Forasmuch as information has been given unto us upon oath, that certain persons of the Franciscan order in Rome, have of late come over into England, and under the notion of Quakers, drawn together several multitudes of people in London. And whereas, certain strangers going under the names of John Camm, John Audland, George Fox, James Naylor, -and Edward Burrough, and others unknown, have lately resorted to this city, and in like manner, under the same notion of Quaker, drawn multitudes of people after them, and occasioned very great disturbances among us; and forasmuch, as by the same information, it appears to us to be very probable, and much to be suspected, that the said persons so lately come here, are some of those that came from Rome, as aforesaid. These are therefore, in the name of his Highness the Lord Protector, to will and require you to make diligent search throughout your ward for the aforesaid strangers, or any of them, and all other suspected persons, and to apprehend or bring them before us, or some of us, to be dealt with according to law. Hereof fail not.

Given the 25th of January, 1654.

Signed, John Gunning, Mayor

William Gunn, Henry Gibbs, Joseph Jackson, George Hellier, John Lack, Gabriel Sherman, Richard Vickris.

While Francis Howgill and Edward Burrough were in Bristol, twelve Baptists came out of Wiltshire to encounter them, who quickly defeated in their dispute and hastily left. On their return home, they reported that Francis and Edward were cursers and swearers, and denied Christ and the Scriptures. So when Francis and Edward were returning to London, they stopped in Wiltshire; believing the false report spread about them, the people were very fierce in their reaction to them. However, they appointed a meeting in the market-place. When Francis and Edward were traveling to the meeting place, they felt themselves very low and weak; but when the people had come together, they felt the Power of the Lord arise in them so powerfully that they spoke for two hours without resistance, and they cleared the Truth. Two of the Baptists then spoke, and they disputed with them for four hours, at the expiration of which they parted; the Baptists laying aside their boasting. A justice of the peace who was present on this occasion, declared that he never heard any who spoke like Howgill and Burrough, and invited them to his house, to which they went the following day. The mayor of the town went to them in the evening, and confessed that they spoke the Truth; and that, if he failed to acknowledge it, his conscience would witness against him. They had many meetings in this court; and among those who were convinced of the Truths they taught, were a justice of the peace and his wife, by the name of Stookes. The Stokes asked them to come to their house, where they had a large meeting, and stayed two days; after which, they set out for London; the justice kindly sending his man and horses with them, fifteen miles on their journey.

CHAPTER V

On the return of Francis Howgill and Edward Burrough to London, they saw the fruit of their labor in that city, and rejoiced; for the mighty power of God had so

manifested itself, that many mouths were opened to bear testimony to the Truth, and several meetings were established; and those who continued in their doctrine were more separated from the multitude. A meeting was held for some time at the house of a widow, named Sarah Matthews, in White-Cross Street, on first-day mornings; and one at Simon Dring's, in Moorfields, in the afternoons; and sometimes at Glazier's Hall, at the house of Sarah Yates, a widow, in a Court in Aldersgate-Street.

They continued some weeks in London laboring diligently, not only among those who were thus gathered from such as cried: "Lo! here is Christ," and "Lo! He is there," to the knowledge of his clear arising in themselves, as the lightning coming out of the east, and shining unto the west; and to the witnessing of his Spirit abiding in them, and giving them strength to overcome sin; but they had also many public meetings, at which numbers of people were convinced. During their stay in the city, they were joined by George Fox, Richard Hubberthorn, James Naylor, and some other laborers in the same cause.

About the beginning of the year 1655, Francis Howgill went with John Camm to visit Oliver Cromwell, in order to warn him, and to deliver some papers addressed to him by some friends, reasoning with him in regard to several laws, which were at that time so rigorously put in force against friends, that many of their ministers and others were suffering imprisonment under them. In a letter to Margaret Fell on this occasion, Francis says of the Protector: "He is full of subtlety and deceit; and will speak fair; but hardens his heart and acts secretly underneath." Soon after this visit he addressed the following letter to Cromwell:

‘Friend,

I was moved of the Lord to come to you, to declare the word of the Lord with the Love of the Lord. And when talking to you, I was commanded not to petition you for anything; but to declare what the Lord had revealed to me, concerning you; and when I had delivered what I was commanded, you questioned it, whether it was the word of the Lord or not, and sought by your reason to put it off; and we have

waited some days since, but cannot speak to you. Therefore I was moved to write to you, and clear my conscience, and to leave you.
Therefore hear the word of the Lord.

Thus said the Lord: I chose you out of all the nations, when you were little in your own eyes, and threw down the mountains and the powers of the earth before you, which had established wickedness by a law, and I cut them and broke the yokes and bonds of the oppressor, and made them stoop before you, and I made them as a plain before you, that you passed over them, and trod upon their necks. But thus said the Lord, now your heart is not upright before me, but you takes counsel, and not of me; and you are establishing peace, and not by me; and you are setting up laws, and not by me; and my name is not feared, nor am I sought after; but your own wisdom you establishes. What, said the Lord, have I thrown down all the oppressors, and broken their laws, and you are now going about to establish them again, and are going to build again, that which I have destroyed?

Wherefore, **thus said the Lord:** Will you limit me, and set bounds to me, when, and where, and how, and by whom I shall declare myself and publish my name? Then will I break your cord, and remove your stake, and exalt myself in your overthrow.

Therefore **this is the word of the Lord to you,** whether you will hear or forbear: If you do not take away all those laws which are made concerning religion, whereby the people which are dear in mine eyes are oppressed, you shall not be established; but as you have trodden down my enemies by my power, so shall you be trodden down by my power, and you shall know that I am

the Lord; for my gospel shall not be established by your sword, nor by your law; but by my might, and by my power, and by my Spirit.

To you **this is the Word of the Lord:** Restrain not the eternal Spirit, by which I will publish my name, when and where, and how I will; for if you do, you shall be as dust before the wind; the mouth of the Lord has spoken it, and he will perform his promise. For this is that I look for at your hands, said the Lord, that you should undo the heavy burdens, and let the oppressed go free. Are not many shut up in prison, and some stocked, some stoned, some shamefully treated? And some are judged blasphemers by those who know not the Lord, and by those laws which have been made by the will of man, and stand not in the will of God. And some suffer now because they cannot hold up the types, and so deny **Christ is come in the flesh;** and some have been shut up in prison, because they could not swear, and because they abide in the doctrine of Christ; and some, for declaring against sin openly in markets, have suffered as evil-doers. And now, if you let them suffer in this nature by those laws, and count it just; I will visit you for those things, said the Lord, I will break the yoke from off their backs another way, and you shall know that I am the Lord.

Moved of the Lord to declare and write this, by a servant of the Truth for Jesus' sake, and a lover of your soul, called,

Francis Howgill

William Sewell, in his *History of the people called Quakers*, says in reference to this letter: "How this was received I am not" acquainted; but this I have understood, that some of Cromwell's servants, and among these one Theophilus

Green, and also Mary, afterwards wife of Henry Stout, were so reached by Francis Howgill's letter, that afterwards they entered into the society of the Quakers."

In the second month of this year, Edward Burrough went to Edmond's Bury where Francis Howgill joined him; and they went from there into the Isle of Ely, at the time of the assizes, and had a very precious meeting.

The Baptists at Cambridge had challenged James Parnell to a dispute; these friends therefore returned with him to Cambridge on the day appointed. The Baptists had fixed on a steeple house to dispute in; but when they went down they found themselves shut out. The towns and scholars were in an uproar; and when the Baptists perceived that Francis and Edward were there, they were unwilling to meddle. Howgill and Burrough were so thronged, that they conceived they were in danger from the multitude, who were very rude; and therefore made their way to the house of justice Blackley. The Baptists then perceiving the people to be on their part, ran up to the shire-house, and James Parnell went after them. When the multitude was appeased, Francis and Edward also went up. The Baptists then asked James a question, to which he did not give them they and answer that they had hoped; they therefore went away, and desired the people not to let Friends stay after them. In a short time, Francis and his companions went to the house of a Friend in the town; to which they sent for their brethren and a number of others, and had a meeting that evening with them. The next day, they went to a place where they had two meetings in yard, at which many persons were convinced; among whom were some who had been unruly.

On the following first-day, they had another meeting in the Isle of Ely; at which there were about seven hundred people. To this meeting Col. Russel, whose son had married Cromwell's daughter, sent two priests, one of whom was an Independent; but they were both confounded, and returned to Russel, and told him, that the Quakers were far ahead of them; upon which, he wrote asking the friends to come to his house, or send him word where they would be, and he would come to them. They readily accepted his invitation and were kindly received. All the family came together, and they declared to them the Way of Life. The colonel's wife was much affected and wept greatly. The next day the colonel sent to inform

them, that if they would go to the house of the Independent, he would send him word and acquaint the people. They gladly received this message and went, as did also the colonel, his wife, and many of their family, along with the Independents, with many other people of the parish, and their teachers. Here they spoke powerfully as the Spirit gave utterance; and the priests being convinced of the truth of their doctrine, hung down their heads, and shame covered them; but the hearts of the people were drawn to the friends in love.

In the course of this journey, they visited the city of Norwich; in which, as well as in most of the market-towns of Norfolk and Suffolk, they had meetings.

On their return to London, they were again refreshed among their friends, whom they found prospering and growing in wisdom; and Howgill informs us, that "several of them were moved to go forth in the ministry:" two young men and two young women for Barbados, a young Scotchman for Scotland, two other young women for Wales, and two others to Oxford; and many others to preach the Gospel to the congregations they had formerly belonged to, and they were yet preserved at liberty.

CHAPTER VI

Francis Howgill spent five weeks in Kent about this time, and had meetings every day but two. Here he was attacked with an sickness, and brought near to the grave. "But," he says, "the Lord for his work's sake gave me strength, and many great meetings I had in that county; the magistrates were moderate."

He returned to London again after this visit; and so many people wanted to hear the doctrine preached by Friends that they frequently had about twenty meetings in a week; feeling that the laborers were few in proportion to the harvest.

After remaining a while in London, Francis Howgill believed it was required of him to pay a religious visit to Ireland. In a memorandum, dated the 7th day of the 4th month, he stated his belief that Christ had commissioned to go to Dublin with Edward Burrough; and it was strongly impressed upon his mind that a door was

opened for them, so that the living presence of the Lord would go before them, and that his righteousness would be their reward; that his everlasting blessing and eternal power would be with them; and that He would open their mouths in wisdom, in utterance, and understanding. They understood that His power would compass them as a wall of brass; and that many should bless them in his name, and say: "What has God wrought?"

By a memorandum left by Edward Burrough it appears, that he also received a similar impression, on the 10th day of the 4th month, to which he submitted on the 30th of the same, not knowing whether his brother, by which it is presumed he meant Francis, should go with him or not; and that he had the comforting assurance, that nothing should befall him, but what should be permitted of the Lord; and that his life would be preserved, although it was required of him to give it up freely to the keeping of Him, who called him to the great work of declaring his Word in that nation.

They spent about three months in Dublin without being disturbed, though they took advantage of every opportunity to declare the doctrine of Truth; and a small meeting was settled there. After this they believed it their duty to separate, traveling in different directions. Francis went to Kilkenny, Waterford, Youghall, and Cork; at each of these places, meetings were gathered, and all seemed as a level plain before them. After being separated five months, he wrote to Edward Burrough, desiring him to join him in Cork, where Francis often had great liberty in public. He had often great contests with the Baptists; and many were raised up in the Lord's power, to bear witness daily against the Priests, so as to become a torment to them. The governor was moderate toward him, but his family was very receptive; and many officers of different descriptions went to hear him. At Bandon there was a meeting gathered, and at Kinsale also, where the governor was kindly disposed to him; and among those who were convinced, were some soldiers. At this place Francis, had many meetings in the garrison, which greatly enraged the priests, who informed against the officers that had received him, and rode to Dublin to procure an order to examine him. They sent him bound to Dublin in the eleventh month; but the justices to whom the order was directed him sent to Cork,

where place he went; and they seeing into the malice of the priests set him at liberty. On which release, the priests lodged an information against them also. At Cork he was again joined by Edward Burrough; and the priests obtained an order from Henry Cromwell, then Lord Deputy of Ireland, to banish them out of that nation; and a guard of soldiers was ordered to conduct them from place to place, until they were shipped off. The soldiers were kind to them, and allowed them to have meetings where they came; so that several received the Truth.

Site Editor's Comment: Thousands of soldiers became Quakers. The Quaker ministers never mentioned that they must lay down their arms and not fight, nor did John the Baptist, nor did Jesus, nor did Paul, nor did George Fox. Sometime later, in the mid 1700's the Quakers decided (in error) to lecture governments and soldiers on their evil occupations, rather than let Christ teach them and lead them as individuals to lay down their arms in the time that Christ saw fit. Today the Quakers have hostile confrontations with the military in their *peace protests*, (an oxymoron). See [Submission to Government](#) for more.

CHAPTER VII

After returning from Ireland, Francis Howgill and Edward Burrough separating for awhile, going through many counties of England, holding numerous meetings, and meeting again at Bristol. This was the time of the fair, where they had a meeting with about five thousand people on a first-day.

In a short time they received letters from London, by which they were informed that some who had been convinced of the Truth there, had lent an ear to certain deluded people, and had been turned from the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ. On this occasion Edward Burrough went speedily to that city, to endeavor to prevent the spreading of the delusions by which these people had been led away. But Francis Howgill and John Audland still remained in Bristol, and from where, after holding a few more meetings, Francis also hastened to London; where he

continued with his companion for some time, laboring particularly for the restoration of those, who had fallen into the delusions before alluded to, until things were again brought into a more settled state.

Few particulars appear to be found, respecting the labors of Francis Howgill, from the latter part of the year 1656 to 1661. But he is stated by George Fox, to have gone with him from Robert Widders', along with Thomas Curtis, to Swarthmore, in 1660. And George Fox says, in a Testimony concerning him, that he continued in the labor of the Lord, from the time of his return from Ireland, until the year 1661; when he was imprisoned in London with many others, on suspicion of being concerned in the insurrection of the fifth Monarchy people. Friends, notwithstanding their avowed testimony against all war and bloodshed, as utterly inconsistent with Christianity, were often charged by persons evilly disposed towards them, with being parties in any plots or disturbances which happened to occur; and, by this means, they were subjected to long and unmerited imprisonments.

Being cleared of this charge, the Friends imprisoned on this account were set at liberty. Their weapons being spiritual, they fought not earthly power; but patiently endured suffering, in the hope of obtaining, by submission to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, a better inheritance, through the mercy of God, and the mediation of Jesus Christ.

After the liberation of Francis Howgill, he traveled into various parts of the nation in the work of the Lord, and turned many to God. This being a time of hot persecution, he was concerned to give forth the following paper, which, with many other powerful exhortations of such as stood boldly for the cause of Truth, and never left the oppressed flock of its professors, tended greatly to their encouragement; for however furious their enemies were, these, nevertheless, continued faithful in supplications and fervent prayers to God, that He might be pleased to assist them in their upright zeal, as they aimed at no selfish end; but acting from a true fear and reverence before Him, they dared not omit their religious assemblies. And thus, persevering in faithfulness to what they believed the Lord required of them, in process of time, when their enemies had taken such

measures as they were persuaded would suppress, and ultimately extinguish the Quakers, the Almighty was pleased to overrule and confound the wicked devices of their persecutors; although in unsearchable wisdom He saw fit before that time, to permit many of his humble followers to seal their testimony with their lives, in close prisons, and under severe bodily privations.

In a time of great persecution in London, Francis Howgill wrote from his deep, rapturous experience in heaven:

‘The stirrings of my heart have been many, deep, and ponderous some months, weeks, and days, concerning this people which the Lord has raised to bear testimony unto his name, in this the day of his power; and intercession has been made often for them to the Lord, and a patient waiting to know his mind concerning them for the time to come; which often I received satisfaction in as to myself but yet something I was drawn by the Lord to wait for, that I might comfort and strengthen his flock by an assured testimony. And while I was waiting out of all visible things, and quite out of the world in my spirit, and my heart upon nothing but the living God, the Lord opened the springs of the great deep, and overflowed my whole heart with light and love; and my eyes were as a fountain because of tears of joy, because of his heritage, of whom he showed me, and said unto me in a full, fresh, living power, and a holy, full testimony, so that my heart was ravished there with joy unspeakable, and I was out of the body with God in his heavenly paradise, where I saw and felt things unutterable, and beyond all demonstration or speech. At last the life closed with my understanding, and my spirit listened unto him; and the everlasting **God said, "Shall I hide anything from them that seek my face in righteousness? No, I will manifest it to them that fear me; I will speak, and you listen, and publish it among all my people, that they may be comforted, and you satisfied."**’

And **thus said the living God of heaven and earth**, upon the

28th of the Third month, 1662.

'The sun shall leave its shining brightness, and cease to give light to the world; and the moon shall be altogether darkness, and give no light unto the night; the stars shall cease to know their office or place; my covenant with day, night, times, and seasons, shall sooner come to an end, than the covenant I have made with this people, into which they are entered with me, shall end, or be broken. Yes, though the powers of darkness and hell combine against them, and the jaws of death open its mouth, yet I will deliver them, and lead them through all. I will confound their enemies as I did in Jacob, and scatter them as I did in Israel in the days of old. I will take their enemies; I will hurl them here and there, as stones hurled in a sling; and **the memorial of this Nation**, [the early Quakers] **which is holy unto me, shall never be rooted out, but shall live through ages**, as a cloud of witnesses, in generations to come. I have brought them to the birth, yes, I have brought them forth; I have swaddled them, and they are mine. I will nourish them and carry them, as on eagles' wings; and though clouds gather against them, I will make my way through them; though darkness gather together on heap, and tempests gender, I will scatter them as with an east wind; and nations shall know they are my inheritance, and they shall know I am the living God, who will plead their cause with all that rise up in opposition against them.'

These words are holy, faithful, eternal, good, and true; blessed are they that hear and believe unto the end; and because of them no strength was left in me for a while; but at last my heart was filled with joy, even as when the ark of God was brought from the house of Obed-edom, when David danced before it, and Israel shouted for joy.

Francis Howgill

In the 12th month, 1662, he was at Reading, in Berkshire, where he wrote a Testimony concerning the life, death, trials, travels, and labors of Edward Burrough, who died in Newgate that year, aged twenty-seven years, a prisoner for the testimony of Jesus. They had been companions and fellow laborers in the Gospel for many years. They were closely united to each other, having their hearts set upon the propagation of that Truth, by which liberty from the bondage of sin is obtained, and salvation received through Jesus Christ, the true Light of the world.

When his dear friend and fellow preacher, Edward Burrough, had died in Newgate prison earlier, Francis Howgill then gave forth the following beautiful and powerful testimony: [which is also descriptive of Francis' own accomplishments]

Shall days, or months, or years, wear out your name, as though you had no being! Oh no!

Shall not your noble and valiant acts, and mighty works which you have wrought

through the power of him that separated you from the womb, live in generations to come! O yes!

The children that are yet unborn, shall have you in their mouths, and your works shall testify of you, in generations, who yet have not a being, and shall count you blessed.

Did your life go out as the snuff of a candle? O no!

You have penetrated the hearts of many, and the memorial of the just shall live forever;

and be had in renown among the children of men forever.

For you have turned many to righteousness,

and shine as a star of God in the firmament of God's power, forever and ever;

and they that are in that, shall see you there, and enjoy you there, though you are gone away from here, and can no more be seen in mutability;

yet your life and your spirit shall run parallel with immortality.

Oh Edward Burrough!

I cannot but mourn for you,

yet not as one without hope or faith,

knowing and having a perfect testimony of your well-being in my heart, by the Spirit of the Lord;

yet your absence is great, and years to come shall know the want of you.

Shall I not lament as David did for a worse man than you, even for Abner;

when in wrath he perished by the hand of Joab, without any just cause, though he was a valiant man?

David lamented over Abner, and said, did Abner die as a fool dies? (Oh No! He was betrayed of his life.)

Even so have you been bereaved of your life by the hand of the oppressor, whose habitations are full of cruelty.

Oh your soul, come not you within their secret,

for your blood shall be required at the hands of them who thirsted after your life;

and it shall cry as Abel's who was in the faith;

even so were you, it shall weigh as a ponderous millstone upon their necks,

and shall crush them under, and be as a worm that gnaws, and shall not die.

When I think upon you, I am melted into tears of true sorrow;

and because of the want that the inheritance of the Lord has of you, my substance is even as dissolved.

Shall I not say as David did of Saul and Jonathan, when they were slain in mount Gilboa,

the beauty of Israel is slain upon the high places;

even so were you stifled in nasty holes, and prisons, and many more who were precious in the eyes of the Lord;

and surely precious were you to me, oh dear Edward;

**I am distressed for you my brother, very pleasant have you been to me,
and my love to you was wonderful, passing the love of woman.**

Oh you whose bow never turned back, nor sword empty from the blood of the slain;
from the slaughter of the mighty;
who made nations and multitudes shake with the word of life in your mouth.

You were very dreadful to the enemies of the Lord, for you did cut like a razor.

And yet to the seed of God brought forth, your words dropped like oil, and your lips as the honeycomb.

You will be recorded among the valiants of Israel, who attained to the first degree,

through the power of the Lord, that wrought mightily in you in your day,

and were worthy of double honor, because of your works.

You were expert in handling your weapon,

and by you the mighty have fallen,

and the slain of the Lord have been many.

Many have been pricked to the heart through the power of the word of life;

and coals of fire from your life came forth of your mouth,

that in many a thicket, and among many briers and thorns it came to be kindled,

and did devour much stubble that cumbered the ground, and stained the earth.

Oh how certain a sound did your trumpet give!

And how great an alarm did you give in your day,

that made the host of the uncircumcised greatly distressed!

What man so valiant, though as Goliath of Gath, would not your valor have encountered with,

while many despised your youth!

And how have I seen you with your sling and your stone, (despised weapons to war with), wound the mighty!

And that which had seemed contemptible to the dragon's party, even as the jaw bone of an ass,

with it you have slain the Philistines heaps upon heaps, as Samson.

You have put your hand to the hammer of the Lord,

and have often fastened nails in the heads of the Lamb's enemies, as Jael did to Sisera;

and many a rough stone have you polished and squared, and made it fit for the buildings of God;

and much knotty wood have you hewed in your day, which was not fit for the building of God's house.

Oh, you prophet of the Lord,

you shall for ever be recorded in the Lamb's book of life, among the Lord's worthies,

who have followed the Lamb through great tribulations,

as many can witness for you from the beginning;

and at last have overcome,

and been found worthy to stand with the Lamb upon mount Zion, the hill of God;

as I have often seen you,

and your heart well tuned as a harp, to praise the Lord, and to sound forth his great salvation;

which many a time has made glad the hearts of those who believed, and strengthened their faith and hope.

Well, you are at rest, and wound up in the bundle of life;

and I know tears were wiped away from your eyes, because there was no cause of sorrow in you;

for we know you witnessed the old things done away, and there was no curse,

but blessings were poured upon your head as rain, and peace a mighty shower,

and trouble was far from your dwelling;
though in the outward man trouble on every side,
and have had a greater share in that, for the gospel-sake, (though a
youth), in your time, than many besides;
but now you are freed from that, and have obtained a name through
faith, with the saints in light.

Well, had you more to give up than your life for the name of Jesus in
this world? No;
and to seal the testimony committed unto you with your blood,
as you have often said in your day, which shall remain as a crown upon
you forever and ever.

And now you are freed from the temptations of him who had the
power of death;
and from your outward enemies, who hated you because of the love
that dwelt in you;
and remains at the right hand of God, where there is joy and pleasure
for ever more in the everlasting light;
which you have often testified unto, according to the word of prophecy
in your heart,
which was given unto you by the Holy Ghost;
and you are at rest in the perfection thereof, in the beauty of holiness;
yet your life and your spirit I feel as present, and have unity with it,
and in it,
beyond all created and visible things, which are subject to mutation
and change;
and your life shall enter into others, to testify unto the same Truth,
which is from everlasting to everlasting;
for God has raised, and will raise up children unto Abraham, of them
that have been as dead stones;
his power is Almighty, great in his people in the midst of their
enemies.'

Francis Howgill

With these sublime expressions Francis Howgill lamented his endeared friend Edward Burrough.

Site Editors Note: I call your attention to his eulogy above, where he said to Edward: *my love to you was wonderful, passing the love of woman.* As Christ said:

I give you a new commandment: that you should love one another.

Just as I have loved you, so you too should love one another.

By this shall all know that you are My disciples, if you love one another. John 13:24-25

I recall when I was searching for evidence in Christian history for something close to what was described in the Bible, in love and power. I came across a book, called *Early Quaker Writings*, not written by Quakers, where they mentioned that the early Quaker men wrote letters to one another, expressing their love for each other - something they said was unique in all their historical research. That was the tip off for me to dig deeper into the early Quaker record. Howgill's statement is a reflection of the Christian love that all the brothers and sisters in Christ felt for one another - a pure, clean, holy love that evidenced their true Christianity. When you add their love for each other, to their persecutions, and consider the power they exhibited - the authenticity of their promise of their faith is without question. And so, therefore, is their promise of perfection and purity, for the grace that brings salvation shows one's sins, and the same takes them away.

CHAPTER VIII

Francis Howgill did not remain at liberty long, after the decease of his friend and

fellow-laborer, Edward Burrough; for in the latter part of the fifth month, 1668, he was sent for "Out of the market," at Kendal, in Westmoreland, where he happened to be about his ordinary occasions; being summoned by the high-constable, to appear before the justices of the peace, then present at a tavern, who tendered to him the oath of allegiance and supremacy; and because, for conscience's sake, in obedience to the commands of Christ, he could not swear, they committed him to Appleby jail, where they kept him, in a smoky hole, from the sessions until the assizes; at which he appeared, and had the same oath tendered to him in court, by the judges; and for not taking it he was indicted, not had liberty to answer to the indictment the next assizes. In the mean time a jail-delivery occurring, he was, in order to ensnare him, required to enter into bond for good behavior, which he refusing, the judges again tendered him the oath; and he was recommitted to prison for persevering in his testimony against all swearing.

It is probable, that it was in the interval between the time of his being recommitted, and the following assizes, that the justices indulged him with a few days liberty, to settle his affairs; in the course of which time he visited a justice of the name of Duckett, who lived at Grayrigg-hall. He was a great persecutor of Friends and also one of the magistrates, who committed him. Francis Howgill was accompanied by a Friend whose initials were J. D. according to one of the accounts, of this visit, of which the editor is in possession of three, which he has received through different channels, all to the same import. By these it appears, that the justice was much surprised at seeing Francis, and said unto him: "What is your will now Francis. I thought you had been in Appleby jail." Francis replied to this effect: "No I am not; but I have come with a message from the Lord. You have persecuted the Lord's people; but His hand is now against you, and He will send a blast upon all that you have; and your name shall rot out of the earth; and this your dwelling shall become desolate, and an habitation for owls and jackals."

When Francis had delivered this message, the justice trembled, and said: "Francis are you in earnest." Francis replied: "Yes I am in earnest. **It is the Word of the Lord to you** ; and there are many now living, who will see it."

This prediction appears to have been remarkably fulfilled; for according to the

testimony of James Wilson, who was an approved minister among Friends, and who lived at Grayrigg Root, in Westmoreland, and afterwards at Darlington, in the county of Durham, this justice Duckett had several children, and all his sons died without issue, and some came to poverty. James Wilson had also himself, repeatedly given alms at his own door, to a woman who was the last of the Duckett family.

Burns, the historian of Westmoreland and Cumberland, also speaking of this family in allusion to Anthony Duckett, Esq. and the Grayrigg-hall estate, about the year 1670, says: "Not long after this, the said Anthony sold the estate to Sir John Lowther, and died without issue; all his brothers also died without issue male; and the name and family, in Westmoreland, is now, 1771, extinct Grayrigg-hall, being the ancient manor house, was a strong old building, in a quadrangular form, adapted more for defense than convenience. It is now, 1777. totally in ruins, most of the lead and timber thereof having been removed to Lowther." Since the time of Burns, the ruins which "owls and jackals" had long inhabited, have been removed; and a farm house has recently been erected upon the site of the old hall.

CHAPTER IX

The account of the examination of Francis Howgill, and of his trial, is given at the commencement of a volume containing his works, entitled, *The Drawings of the Gospel Day*; from which the following is extracted.

Being at the assizes, he had liberty to speak freely before the judges, and great men of the country, and many others. Indeed the Lord made him without fear, girded his heart with strength, and opened his mouth with wisdom, so that he gained on his adversaries; for which glory is given to God, who was present to help him in a time of need.

Having come into court before the judges arrived, he spoke to the clerk of the assizes, and told him that he did not know whether they expected his appearance then or not. The clerk said, 'You have done well,' and that he would acquaint the judge, and he should only engage to him to appear the next assizes, to answer the

indictment against him, and that he should not appear in court. Francis told him, do what he would. In the meantime Sir Philip Musgrove, (so called), an adversary to the Truth, and the great and chief prosecutor of Francis, had informed the judges against him, that he was a dangerous person, a ringleader, and a one who kept meetings of dangerous consequence, and destructive to the peace of the nation; so then they concluded he should appear in court; and so the clerk informed him, and told him about what time he should be called. So the court began. Judge Twisden gave the charge to the grand jury, in which he said, there was a sort of people, who under pretence of conscience and religion, seemed to build upon the king's declaration from Breda, [King Charles' promise of liberty of conscience], and under excuse of this, hatched treasons and rebellions, and gave the jury charge to inquire and present such, that the peace of the nation might be preserved; so they impaneled the jury, and Francis was called to the bar, and the judge spoke as follows:

Judge, speaking calmly to him, said, the face of things was much altered since the last assizes, and made a large speech to him and the country, telling him that all sects under pretence of conscience did violate the laws, and hatched rebellions, 'Not, (he said), that I have anything to charge you with; but since the oath of allegiance was tendered to you the last assizes, and you refused to take it, it was looked upon that such persons were enemies to the king and government;' and said, 'I will not trouble you now to answer to your indictment, but I must do that the next assizes; in the meantime you must post a bond for your good behavior.'

To which Francis Howgill answered, I desire liberty to speak, which he had without interruption, and said as follows :

F. H. Judge Twisden, you very well know upon very slender an account, or none, I was brought before you the last assizes, where you were pleased to tender me the oath of allegiance, though I believe both you and the rest of the court, did know it was a received principle among us not to swear at all. Many reasons I gave you then, many more I have to add, if I may have audience; for it may appear to you an absurd thing, and obstinacy in me to refuse it, if I should not tender a reason. I am,

(said he), done of those that make religion a cloak of maliciousness, or conscience a cloak to carry on plots or conspiracies; the Lord has redeemed me and many more out of such things, and seeing I am engaged to appear at the next assizes, I desire no further thing may be required of me.

Judge. You must enter into bond this dangerous time, and therefore consider of it, and tell me now, or before the assizes end. The second day of the assizes he was called again.

F. H. Seeing you are pleased to let me answer to the indictment, which I am willing to do, I have been of good behavior, and shall so continue. But it seems a hard thing to me, and full of severity, that seeing I am obliged to appear to answer an indictment of so high a nature, (if prosecuted against me), which leads to the loss of my liberty for life, and my estate forever, I hope the court will not envy my liberty for five months.

Judge Tumer said, We do not desire your imprisonment, if you will be of good behavior,

Francis pressed that they would not put him upon giving bond to be of good behavior, knowing himself to be bound by the truth, that he could not misbehave himself.

One Daniel Flemming, another persecuting justice, had framed another indictment against him for meeting, and stood up, (fearing the snare of giving bond would not hold), and said as follows:

D. Flemming. My lord, he is a great speaker, and the Quakers want him.

Judge. Let him be what he will, if he will enter into bond.

F. H. said he had nothing to accuse himself of; for his conscience bore him witness that he loved peace, and sought it with all men.

Judges both spoke. What do you tell of conscience? We meddle not with it; but you

show contempt for the laws, and keep up great meetings, and preach not to church.

F. H. We are fallen in a sad age; if meeting together peaceably, without arms, or force, or intention of hurt to any man, only to worship God in Spirit, and exhort one another to righteousness, and to pray together in the Holy Ghost, as the primitive Christians of old, that this should be reckoned breach of peace and misbehavior.

Judge Twisden. Do you compare these times with those? They were heathens that persecuted, but we are *Christian* magistrates.

F. H. It is a doctrine always held by us, and a received principle which we believe, that Christ's kingdom could not be set up with carnal weapons; nor the gospel propagated by force of arms, nor the church of God built with violence; but the Prince of Peace was manifested among us, and we could learn war no more, but could love enemies, and forgive them that did evil to us.

Philip Musgrave stood up, and said, 'My Lord, we have been remiss towards this people, and have striven with them, and put them in prison again and again, and fined them, and as soon as they are out they meet again.'

Then stood up John Lowther, called a justice, and said, 'My Lord, they grow insolent, notwithstanding all laws and the execution of them, yet they grow upon us [they are increasing in number of Quakers], and their meetings are dangerous.' [This was the real problem: the Quakers were growing in number, at the expense of the Protestant sects; therefore the power structure of the entire country plotted to destroy them by enforcing laws designed to trap them into violation, resulting in the loss all their property, (by which their persecutors became richer), and being imprisonment for life.]

Philip Musgrave stood up, and produced a paper, (and justice Flemming seconded him), in great capital letters, and gave it the judge; he told the judge, that it happened some Quakers were sent to prison, and one of them died at Lancaster, and they carried his corpse through the country, and set that paper upon his coffin,

'This is the body of such an one, who was persecuted by Daniel Flemming until death.'

Judge. We have spent much time with you; I will discourse no more.

F. H. I acknowledge your moderation towards me, allowing me liberty to speak; I shall not trouble you much longer; I shall be willing to appear to answer to the indictment at the assizes, and in the meantime to live peaceably and quietly, as I have done, if that will satisfy.

Judge. You must enter into bond to go to no more meetings.

F. H. I cannot do that; if I should, I were treacherous to God and my own conscience, and the people and you would not judge me a hypocrite.

They were loath to commit him, yet at last they did.

This was in the latter part of the month called March, and he was kept about five months as before in a bad room, and no one was allowed to speak with him, except those who got secretly to him without the jailer's knowledge.

Francis Howgill now appeared again at the assizes, which was held at Appleby, in the month called August. When he got liberty to speak with the clerk of the assizes, he told him that he believed their purpose was to prosecute him to the maximum; which proved so, as will appear by what follows, for the county justices had incensed the judges against him before hand. Yet Howgill endeavored all he could to convince them of his innocence; and to that end drew up the substance of the oath into several points, which he could subscribe to. To these points, he joined another paper to judge Turner, showing the cause of his first commitment and the former proceedings against him: and how unequal it was to prosecute him upon a statute made against Roman church recusants. He also signified in that paper, that he was a man of a tender spirit, and feared the Lord from child, and had never taken any oath but once in his life, which was twenty years ago; and that his refusing to take the oath of allegiance, was not in any evil intent to the king's

person or government, but merely upon a conscientious account, and that he could not swear, being otherwise persuaded of the Lord, seeing it was against the command of Christ, and the apostle James' doctrine. Besides, that he was able to make it evident to be against the example of the primitive Christians for several hundred years, and so was no new opinion. That he did neither in willfulness nor obstinacy refuse it, being sensible of the damage that would come thereby, if they did prosecute him upon that statute, he having a wife and children, and some small estate, which he knew lay at stake in the matter; but that though it were his life also, he could not revolt from, or deny that which he had most certainly believed in; but if any could convince him either by scripture or reason, he had an ear to hear. And therefore all those things considered, he desired he might be dismissed from his bonds, and from their persecution of him upon that account. These papers were delivered to the judges and justices before he appeared in court, and were read by them. He then being called to the bar at the assizes held at Appleby, judge Turner said to him 'Here is an indictment against you for refusing to take the oath of allegiance; so you must plead to it, either guilty or not guilty.'

Howgill with a heart girded up with strength and courage, said, 'Judge Turner, may I have liberty to speak, and make my defense, for I have none to plead my cause but the Lord?'

Judge. You may.

F. H. I will lay the true state of my case before you, and of the proceedings against me from the first, seeing judge Twisden is not here, who had knowledge of all the prior proceedings. I am a countryman, born and brought up in this country; my carriage and conversation is known, how I have walked peaceably towards all men, as I hope my countrymen can testify. About a year ago being at my neighboring market-town about my reasonable and lawful occasions, I was sent for by a high constable out of the market to the justices of peace, before whom I went; and when I came there, they had nothing to lay to my charge, but fell to ask me questions to ensnare me about our meetings. And when they could find no occasion, they seemed to tender the oath of allegiance to me, though they never read it to me, neither did I positively deny it, yet they committed me to prison; and so I was

brought here to this assize, and then the mittimus by which I was committed, was called for, and the judge read it, and said to the justices it was insufficient. Nevertheless judge Twisden tendered the oath of allegiance to me; many things I did allege then, and many more I have to say now, if time will permit. From that time I was under an engagement to appear at the next assizes, and so was called, and did appear at the last bail hearing, and a further obligation was required of me for good behavior, which I could not give, for fear I should be brought into a further snare; and since that time I have been committed prisoner these five months, some of which time I have been kept under great restraint, my friends not permitted to speak to me; and thus briefly I have given you an account. As to the oath, the substance thereof with the representation of my case, is presented to the court already, to which I have set my hand, and also shall in those words testify the same in open court, if required; and seeing it is the very substance the law does require I desire it may be accepted, and I, cleared from my imprisonment.

Judge. I am come to execute the law, and the law requires an oath, and I cannot alter it; do you think the law must be changed for you, or only for a few; if this be suffered, the administration of justice is hindered, no action can be tried, nor evidence given for the king, or other particular cases tried; and your principles are altogether inconsistent with the law and government; I pray you show me which way we shall proceed; show me some reason, and give me some ground.

F. H. I shall; in the mouth of two or three witnesses every truth is confirmed; and we never denied to give, and still are ready to give evidence for the king wherein we are concerned, and in any other matter for the ending of strife between man and man in truth and righteousness, and this answers the substance of the law.

Judge. Is this a good answer, think you? whether to be given with or without oath: the law requires an oath.

F. H. Still evidence is and may be given in truth, according to the substance of the law, so that no detriment comes to any party, seeing that true testimony may be borne without an oath; and I did not speak of changing the law: yet seeing we never refused giving testimony, which answers the intent and substance of the law,

it judged it was reasonable to receive our testimony, and not to expose us to such suffering, seeing we scrupled an oath only upon a conscientious account, in tenderness of conscience, for fear of breaking the command of Christ, the Savior of the world, which if we do, there is none of you able to plead our cause for us with him.

Judge. But why do you not go to church, but meet in houses and private conventicles, which the law forbids.

F. H. We meet together only for the worship of the true God in Spirit and Truth, having the primitive Christians for our example, and to no other end, but that we may be edified, and God glorified; and when two or three are met together in the name of Christ, and he in the midst of them, there is a church.

Judge, That is true: but how long is it since you have been at church? Or will you go to the church which the law allows? Give me some reasons why you do not go.

F. H. I have many to give you, if you have patience to hear me : first, God dwells not in temples made with men's hands. Secondly, the parish house has been a temple for idols, that is, for the mass and the cross with images; and I dare have no fellowship with idols, nor worship in idols' temples; for what have we to do with idols, their temples and worship?

Judge. Were there not houses called the houses of God, and temples?

F. H. Yes, under the law; but the Christians, who believed in Christ, separated from these, (and the temple was made and left desolate), and from the Gentiles' temples too, and met together in houses, and broke bread from house to house; and the church was not confined then to one particular place, neither is it now; many more things I have to say: (the judge interrupted).

Judge, Will you answer to your indictment?

F. H. I know not what it is; I never heard it, though I have often desired a copy.

Judge. Clerk, read it. So he read it: how that Francis Howgill had willfully, obstinately, and contemptuously denied to swear when the oath was tendered.

F. H. I deny it.

Judge. What do you deny?

F. H. The indictment.

Judge. Did you not deny to swear? And the indictment convicts you that you did not swear.

F. H. I gave unto the court the substance of the oath, as you all know. Secondly, I told you I did not deny it out of obstinacy or willfulness, neither in contempt of the king's law or government; for my will would rather choose my liberty, than bonds; and I am sensible it is like to be a great damage to me. I have a wife and children, and some estate, which we might subsist upon, and do good to others, and I know all this lies at stake; but if it were my life also, I dare not but do as I do, for fear I should incur the displeasure of God. And do you think I would lose my liberty willfully, and suffer the spoiling of my estate, and the ruining of my wife and children in obstinacy and willfulness? Surely no.

Judge. Jury, you see he denies the oath, and he will not plead to the indictment, only excepts against it because of the form of words, but you see he will not swear, and yet he says he denies the indictment, and you see it is without ground.

The judge then required jailer to witness and swear that at the last court Howgill had refused to take the oath, which he did; and the jury, without going from the bar, gave their verdict: guilty, and then the court broke up that night. The next day towards evening, when they had tried all the prisoners, Francis was brought to the bar to receive his sentence. Judge stood up and said, 'Come, the indictment is proved against you, what have you to say why sentence shall not be given?'

F. H. I have many things to say, if you will hear then. First, as I have said, I denied

not out of obstinacy or willfulness, but was willing to testify the truth in this matter of obedience, or any other matter wherein I was concerned. Secondly, I denied because swearing was directly against the command of Christ. Thirdly, to swear is against the doctrine of the apostle James. Fourthly, even some of your principal pillars of the church of England; as bishop Usher, some time primate of Ireland, he said in his works, the *Waldenses* did deny all swearing in their age, from the same commands of Christ and the apostle James, and it was a sufficient ground; and Dr. Gauden, late bishop of Exeter, in a book of his I lately read, he cited very many ancient fathers, to show, that the first three hundred years Christians did not swear, so that it is no new doctrine.

To which the court seemed to give a little ear, and said nothing, but talked one to another, and Francis stood silent, and then the judge said, surely you are mistaken.

F. H. I don't have the books here.

Judge. Will you say upon your honest word they denied all swearing?

F. H. What I have said is true.

Judge. Why do you not come to church, and hear service, and be subject to the law, and to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake?

F. H. We are subjects, and for that cause we do pay taxes, tribute and custom; and we give to Christ the things that are his, and unto God the things that are his, namely, worship, honor and obedience. If you mean the parish assembly, I tell you faithfully, I am persuaded, and upon good ground, their teachers are not the ministers of Christ, neither their worship the worship of God.

Judge. Why; it may be for some small things in the service, you reject it all?

F. H. First, it is manifest they change with the times: one time preaching something as divine service to people, and another time crying the same to be popish, superstitious and idolatrous; and that, which they have held to be holy for twenty years, they suddenly make shipwreck in a day; and now again call it

divine, and would have all compelled to that, themselves, once made void.

Judge. Why; never since the king came in?

F. H. Yes; the same men that preached it down once, now cry it up; for they are so unstable and wavering, that we cannot believe they are the ministers of Christ. Secondly, they teach for hire, and live by forced maintenance. Thirdly, they would force a faith upon men, contrary to Christ and the apostle's rule. The apostles would have every one persuaded in their own mind, and said, whatever is not of faith is sin; and yet they say, faith is the gift of God; and we have no such faith given. But these false preachers would force their faith upon us. Because we cannot receive their faith, they cry, you are not subject to authority and the laws, and nothing but confiscations, imprisonment and banishment is threatened, and this is their greatest plea; I could mention more particulars; (then the judge interrupted).

Judge. Well, I see you will not swear, nor conform, nor be subject, and you think we deal severely with you, but if you would be subject, we would not need be.

F. H. I do so judge indeed, that you deal severely with us for obedience to the commands of Christ; I ask you, can you show me how any of those people, for whom the act was made, have been proceeded against by this statute, though I envy no man's liberty?

Judge. Oh yes, I can give you many instances the country of those that have been premunired; [deprived of property and imprisoned for life], I have myself pronounced sentence against several.

F. H. What, against Papists?

Judge. No.

F. H. What, against the Quakers? So I have heard indeed; even though that statute was made against Papists, you leave them alone, and execute it against the Quakers.

Judge. Well, you insist on meeting in great numbers, and do increase, but there is a *new statute* will make you fewer.

(Shortly after this, a *new statute* was approved by Parliament, allowing anyone who informed of a meeting, other than the state-approved Anglican sect, the informer could share in the property of those informed against; which upon conviction, of such attending such meeting, or failure to be *sworn-in*, was forfeited - all property, both personal and real. The Anglicans wanted to stop the Quakers; they had become a threat to the Anglican religion - established in secession from the Papists, to allow Henry VIII to execute his wives and marry a new one every few years.)

F. H. Well, if we must suffer, it is for Christ's sake, and for well doing. Francis then being silent, the judge pronounced the sentence, but spoke so low, that the prisoner, though near to him, could scarce hear it.

The sentence was, 'You are put out of the king's protection, and the benefit of the law, your lands are confiscated to the king during your life; and your goods and property are confiscated forever, and you to be prisoner for the rest of your life.'

F. H. A hard sentence for my obedience to the commands of Christ; the Lord forgive you all.

So he turned from the bar: but the judge speaking, he turned again, and many more words passed to the same purpose, as before: at last, the judge rose up and said:

Judge. Well, if you will yet be subject to the laws, the king will show you mercy.

F. H. The Lord has shown mercy unto me, and I have done nothing against the king, nor government, nor any man, and blessed be the Lord, and therein stands my peace; for it is for Christ's sake I suffer, and not for doing evil. And so the court broke up. The people were generally moderate, and many were sorry to see what was done against him; but Francis signified how contented and glad he was, that he had any thing to lose for the Lord's precious Truth, of which he had publicly

borne testimony, and that he was now counted worthy to suffer for it.

And so the court broke up. The people were generally moderate, and many were sorry to see what had been done against him; but Francis signified how content and glad he was, that he had anything to lose for the Lord's precious truth, of which he had publicly borne testimony, and that he was now counted worthy to suffer for it.

That part of the sentence consigning him to imprisonment for life, was not supported by the act of Parliament, as was afterwards clearly proved in the case of Gorge Fox, before judges Hales and Wild; see Richard Davies's Journal, sixth edition, page 102-107.

CHAPTER X

Francis Howgill bore his imprisonment with great patience, and showed so much meekness, resignation, and love, that he greatly gained the love of the jailer's whole family along with many other people in the town of Appleby; and they placed so much confidence in him, that they frequently referred their differences to him for settlement.

We find he continued diligently engaged in promoting the cause of Truth and righteousness, while a prisoner, by writing letters to those of his religious fellowship, replying to the works of some who falsely represented the principles of Friends, and to those of others, who endeavored to defend a hireling ministry, and lifeless forms of worship, incompatible with the spirituality of the Gospel dispensation; and in refuting a work attempting to prove swearing lawful among Christians. He also wrote several doctrinal pieces; selections of which along with his letters, form the second part of this volume.

The peace of mind with which he was blessed, in patiently submitting to the loss of his liberty, for faithfully maintaining those testimonies, which he firmly believed, the Lord required him to espouse and defend, not being afraid "of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do," is strikingly set forth in

the following words, subjoined to one of his epistles: "From Appleby Jail, the place of my rest, where my days and hours are pleasant unto me."

When anyone noticed the great length of time he had been a prisoner, he would say: "The will of the Lord be done." He was taken ill the 11th of the 11th month, 1668; some time before which, he disposed of his estate, and set his house in order, being sensible of the decay of his "outward man." His love to his brethren and fellow-laborers was very great; and in testimony of it, he left something to several of them, by way of remembrance; he was also mindful of the Church, and left a legacy to be distributed among all the poor of the household of faith in the parts where he lived. And though the time of his departure drew near, and his sickness increased, yet his faculties were preserved clear, and he was often very fervent in prayer, and uttered many comfortable expressions, to the great refreshment of those who were with him. About two days before his departure, being attended by his dear wife and, several friends, he said to them: "Friends, as to matter of words, you must not expect much more from me, neither is there any great need of it, as to speak of matters of faith to you who are satisfied; only that you remember my dear love to all friends who inquire of me, for I ever loved Friends well, or any in whom the Truth appeared: and truly God will own His people, as He has ever previously done, and as we have daily witnessed; for no sooner had they made the act against us for banishment, to the great suffering of many good Friends, but the Lord stirred up enemies against them, even to three great nations, whereby the violence of their hands was taken off.

(From history it appears, that soon after the passage of the act of banishment, the English nation was permitted to involve itself in war with Holland, France, and Denmark. And in a work entitled *Posthuma Christiana*, by William Crouch, he says, in reference to this act, and the subsequent proceedings upon it: "It was not long before the Lord was pleased to manifest His displeasure, and to put a stop to these unnatural, unrighteous, and inhuman actions, by those severe strokes of His hand upon the nation in the years 1665 and 1666. First, the great plague, which swept away great numbers of the inhabitants, and that followed by that dreadful fire, which reduced to ashes so great a part of the city of London; and also the wars

with the Dutch at that time. And although they, like the Egyptians of old, did pursue the Lord's chosen Israel, yet God took off their chariot wheels, and they drove heavily; for the work prospered not in their hands.")

"I say again, God will own His people, even all those that are faithful; and as for me, I am well, and content to die: I am not at all afraid of death: and truly one thing was of late in my heart, and that I intended: to have written to George Fox and others; even what I have observed, which thing is, that this generation passes fast away: we see many good and precious friends, within these few years, have been taken from us; and therefore Friends had need to watch, and be very faithful, so that we may leave a good, and not a bad savor* to the succeeding generation; for you see that it is but a little time that any of us have to stay here."

**Site Editor's Comment:* One wonders what *bad savor* Howgill is referring to. I suggest that it is the bad savor of death. So many of the early Quakers died in prison, particularly the leaders, (with few exceptions), resulting in fear or death by succeeding generations. I would further suggest, that when the Quakers were finally freed from persecution, (1690), they quickly shrank from their testimony against the false christianity of the Puritans, Anglicans, Presbyterians, and Baptists; as evidenced by the Morning Meeting's censorship of Fox's Journal, removing several critical statements of their persecutors, (which have been restored in this web site's pages). I say this, not critically, for I sympathize with the temptation to retreat into a peace, forsaking their testimony against the deceit of the false sects of Christianity. It must have been a terrible thing to witness, the early death of the great majority of the Quaker ministers and elders. Despite the apparent evidence, my comment is still speculation as to what Howgill meant by *bad savor*.

Often in the course of his sickness, he said he was content to die; that he was ready, and praised God for the sweet enjoyments and refreshments he had received on that, his prison-house bed, where he lay, freely forgiving all who had a hand in his restraint. He said: " This was the place of my first imprisonment for the

Truth, here at this town, and if it be the place of my laying down the body, I am content." Several persons of note, inhabitants of Appleby, as the mayor and others, went to visit him; some of whom praying that God might speak peace to his soul, he sweetly replied: " He has done it."

A few hours before his departure, some friends, who lived several miles from that place, went to visit him. He inquired of all their welfare, and prayed fervently, with many heavenly expressions, that the Lord, by his mighty power, might preserve them out of all such things as would spot and defile. And a little after, he was saying something concerning weeks, or a time, after which persecution would be ended, but his weakness was so great, and his voice so low, that it was not fully heard. A while after, recovering a little strength, he said: "I have sought the way of the Lord from a child, and lived innocently as among men; and if any inquire concerning my latter end, let them know that I die in the faith which I lived in, and suffered for."

After these words, he spoke some other in prayer to God, and sweetly finished his course in much peace, on the 20th of 11th month, 1668, in the fiftieth year of his age; after being a prisoner for the testimony of Jesus, from the latter part of the 5th month, 1663.

His solicitude as a Christian parent, is remarkably exemplified in the following address to his daughter.

CHAPTER XI

Daughter Abigail,

This is for you to observe and keep, and take heed unto, all the days of your life, for the regulating your life and conversation in this world, that your life may be happy, and your end blessed, and God glorified by you in your generation. These things I bequeath to you and counsel you to always observe, for these are the principal things alone that I have to bestow upon you, which I prize more than outward riches. Observe and keep my sayings; and I charge you before God, and by the

coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you observe what I say, which I am moved by the Lord to leave behind for you, and in tender love and affection to you, my daughter, that the Lord may give his blessing to you and make your ways prosperous, and your later end peace.

I was not born to great possessions, nor did inherit great matters in this world; but the Lord has always endowed me with sufficiency and enough, and has been as a tender Father unto me, because my heart trusted in him, and did love the way of righteousness from a child. I have no great portion to bestow upon you, of the things of this world; you of that little which I have, and God has blessed me with, something I shall give you, which I shall not mention here, but you will know at my decease; but your dear mother I rather commend you to, who I trust will provide sufficiently for you, to whom my heart has been upright before the Lord. She had a sufficient portion and dowry when I married her, of which I am sorry to lessen or impair; and whatever was hers, if it please the Lord I die before her, I freely leave to her, as has always been my intention and purpose, which has not, nor will, alter, through the strength of God, as God only knows, and bears me record; and it shall be manifest to all in due time, as it is unto the Lord, who has been with me in the midst of my many troubles, trials, and sufferings, and has lifted up my head above my adversaries, because I trusted in his Name; which at times I found as a refuge, and a present help in time of need; and so it will be to you, if you fear his Name, and trust in Him forever.

And now my dear child, listen unto the words of my mouth, and listen to my counsel; ponder these things I leave behind me, for you to observe, that your days may be long upon the earth, and blessed and comfortable to you, and an honor to God in your generation. The time when you were born and came into the world, was a time of deep exercise and trouble with me, not from the Lord, who always spoke peace to me, and did sustain me; but by reason of the adversary of mankind, who always seeks to devour the good in all, and is the sower of discord and mischief in the hearts of those who don't fear the Lord or abide in his counsel; in whom he enters, as any place is given to his temptations, and corrupts the mind. But though it was a great trial that came upon me, the Lord kept my heart in uprightness unto Him and gave me much patience; so that though the earth had

been removed into the sea, and all outward things had run into confusion, and nature had changed its course, the Lord gave me strength not to be troubled, neither offended; because He did support me.

At that time you were born, and therefore I called your name Abigail, which signifies *the father's joy or delight*, for in you I was comforted, and my then troubles were mitigated.

My counsel unto you is that you remember your Creator in the days of your youth, and fear the Lord in your youth, and learn to know him and serve him all your days. First seek the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof; it is not far from you; it is within you. It consists in life and power, and it stands in righteousness, truth, and equity; justice, mercy, long-suffering, patience, love, light, and holiness, this is the being and center thereof. Therefore don't seek God in this place or that place, without you, in this or that outward observation, for many seek there and never find it; but seek and you shall find, wait and you shall receive.

If you inquire, in what must I seek? and in what must I wait? and how must I seek? I inform you, that you must silence all your own thoughts, and you must turn your mind to what is pure, and holy, and good within yourself and seek and wait in that, in the light of Jesus Christ, by which you are enlightened, which shows you when you do evil, and checks and reproveth you. Take heed to that, and it will show your evil inclinations and thoughts; and as you love it, it will destroy them, and preserve you for the time to come out of evil. For though you are born into the world a reasonable creature, yet you must be born again, and be made a new creature, or else you can not enter into God's kingdom. You must know the seed of the kingdom in yourself, of which you must be born and formed again into God's image. I have told you God has sown it in you, a grain of it, a measure of it, a portion of it, a measure of light and truth, of righteousness and holiness; keep your thoughts focused to that, and love it, and you will feel the heavenly Father working in you, and forming you to life through Jesus Christ who has enlightened you. Doing this, you will feel the power of the Lord strengthening you, from your small

beginning, and making you grow in the immortal seed of his kingdom, while outgrowing and overgrowing all evil. So that you will daily die to evil, and have no pleasure in it; but rather your pleasure will be in the Lord, and in his goodness and virtue shed abroad in your heart, which you will taste and feel within, and in which you will have joy and comfort.

Love the Lord with your heart and soul, even him that made you, and gave you your life, and all things in heaven and earth. Be still and wait for the knowledge of him in yourself. He is not far from you, but near you, and to all that call upon him in an upright heart. Seek the counsel of your dear mother; she will inform you; she knows him, and the way to life and peace; and listen to her instructions.

God is a spirit, of light, and life, and power, that searches the heart, and shows you when you do, or think, or speak evil, and shows man or woman their thoughts. What shows the evil, is good; and what shows a lie, is truth; this is *within*, take heed to it. This is called God's Spirit in the Scriptures; believe in it, love it, and it will quicken your heart to goodness, and it will subject the evil. Here is your teacher near you; love it, and if you act contrary, it will condemn you. Therefore take heed unto this spirit of truth, and it will enlighten and enliven you, and will open your understanding, and give you to know what God is, and to do what is good and acceptable in his sight; this spirit never errs, but leads out of all error into all truth.

O Abigail, believe my words! These are the words of God, and Truth. Be sober-minded in your youth, and wait on the Lord within; listen unto him. God is light immortal, life immortal, truth immortal, an everlasting eternal Spirit: he speaks spiritually and invisibly within the hearts and consciences of men and women: hear what he speaks, and obey his voice, and your soul shall live; fear to offend him, or sin against him, for the wages of sin are death. Therefore prize his love in your young and tender years, and do read the scriptures and Friends' books, and take heed to what you read to obey it, as far as you understand; and pray often unto the Lord, that he will give you his knowledge, and open your understanding in the things of his kingdom; search your heart often with the light of Christ in you; manifest and bring your deeds to it, that they may be tried. Examine yourself how

the case stands between the Lord and you; and if you see yourself wrong, humble yourself and be sorry, and turn unto him, and he will show you mercy. And take heed for the time to come, that you do not repeat the same evil again. Keep your heart clean, and watch against the evil in yourself by the light which shows the evil; in which light there is power, and thereby you have power to overcome all evil.

And, dear child, mind not the pleasures of sin, which are but for a moment, and the end is misery; but keep low and cross your will and affections, so your mind will have no pleasure in the evil, but in good; and you will feel the immortal seed springing up in you, which God's peace and love is to.

Oh Abigail! These are great and weighty things, not to be slighted. Seek the company of the people who fear the Lord, worship him in spirit and truth, and lead a holy and blameless life and conversation; do not deny these people, but love them, and suffer with them. Take heed that you don't follow the hireling teachers and preachers, who preach for gain and money, and do not abide Christ's doctrine. Don't believe them, don't heed them, they do people no good. But you will see them yourself. They have an outside show of godliness sometimes, but deny the power of God and true holiness; remember, I who have had perfect knowledge of them, have told you. But be sure that you let nothing separate your love from God and his people. His people were ever hated and belied, and persecuted, and evil-spoken of, always by bad and evil, loose people. His people are those who keep his law, and obey Christ's voice, and lead a holy life; these are God's people, and his love, and peace, and blessing, is with them. Love and associate with his people as you grow as a natural branch, (up among them), of the living vine, and continue all your days in obedience unto God's will, and you will feel joy and love in your heart; which you should desire above all things, and you will attain and obtain everlasting peace, which the Lord grants unto you, according to the riches of his mercy and love, which endure forever and ever. Amen.

'And now, Abigail: concerning your well-being in this life, this is my advice and counsel unto you; love your dear mother, and ever obey her and honor her, and see you do not grieve her. Be not stubborn nor willful, but submit unto her, and be as an obedient child unto her, whose love and care has been too great over you and

your sisters, which has brought too much trouble upon herself. Learn in your youth to read and write, and sew and knit, and all points of good labor that belong to a maid, and flee idleness and sloth, that nourishes sin. And as you grow up in years, labor in the affairs of the country, and beware of pride, and riotousness, and curiosity, but be contented with such apparel as your mother permits you, that you may be a good example to others. Be not loose, nor wild, nor light, but temperate, moderate, and chaste; and not forward in words, nor speech, but swift, to hear, slow to speak; and always live with your mother, and be a help unto her, and cherish her in her old age and latter years, that she may be comforted in you, and her soul may bless you. Love your sisters, and be always courteous to them and your brother; encourage one another in good.

And if you live to be a woman of perfect birth, keep yourself unspotted, and do not let your mind be distracted by sports or pastimes; the end of all those is sorrow; neither after young men. If you have a desire to marry, do not you seek a husband, but let a husband seek you. And if you live in God's fear, and an honest life and virtuous, those that fear God will seek you; let not your affections out unto everyone that proffers love, but be considerate. And above all things, choose one, (if you do marry), that loves and fears the Lord, whose conversation and manner, and course of life, you know well, before you give consent. Be discreet and wise, hide nothing from your mother, and she will advise you, no doubt, for your good; and if she is living, marry not without her consent. And if you join to a husband, be sure you love him in your heart, and be obedient unto him, and honor him among all, so will his heart be more to you, and his love increase. Grieve him not, but be gentle, and easy to be entreated, and mind your own business; and if the Lord give you children, bring them up in God's fear, and good exercise, and keep them in subjection unto you, and be an example of virtue and holiness unto them, that the Lord's blessing you may feel in youth and in age, and all your life long.

Oh, Abigail remember these things, keep in mind these things, read often this writing over, get it copied over, and lay up my words in your heart, and do them, so will you be happy in this life, and in the life to come. These things I give you in charge to observe, so my mind and will, and counsel unalterable unto you, as witness hereof I have set my hand.

Your dear father,

Francis Howgill

The 26th of the Fifth Month, 1666

The End of the Memoir