

AN EARLY VERSION OF GEORGE FOX'S
'LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR OF BARBADOS'

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ABSTRACT

This essay explores the textual history and history of the 'Letter to the Governor of Barbados', referred to in its earliest published version (1672) as 'For the Governour and his Council and Assembly'. Most publications of this letter are based on the version of this letter in Thomas Ellwood's 1694 edition of Fox's *Journal*. The fuller, more defiantly polemical, more strongly Quaker, and less ecumenical version reproduced below was the only text of this letter that was published in Fox's lifetime. The external Christ in this 1672 letter differs from the internalized Christ featured in Fox's other major Barbados publication, a sermon to fellow Quakers, as well as most of his other writings. It is argued here that Fox was the chief author of the letter, although others assisted him. The original form of the letter was strongly shaped by his conflicts with Anglican priests on Barbados, and Ellwood's changes de-emphasized that aspect. The form of the letter most widely circulated among American Friends de-emphasizes Friends' distinctives to an even greater extent than Fox himself did, dropping the latter's contention that the Bible is 'the words, not Word, of God'.

KEYWORDS

George Fox, Barbados, slavery, Anglicanism, Thomas Ellwood, doctrines of Christ, confessions of faith, creeds.

THE ARGUMENTS THAT THIS TEXT WAS DESIGNED TO MEET

The historical context for this letter is adequately explored elsewhere (Dunn 1972; Winkelmann 1976; Gragg 2009; Block 2010; Angell 2011). Briefly, seventeenth-century Barbados was a wealthy sugar island. Quaker missionaries began to witness there in 1656. Some of the Quaker converts were wealthy English plantation owners who possessed many slaves. The Quaker movement was controversial for many reasons, not least because Quakers refused to contribute to the militia on an island where the fear of slave revolts was always present. Still, Quakers managed to build a network of six meetinghouses on the island by the

time of George Fox's visit there in 1671. Fox's visit temporarily aided the Quakers, as after his departure numerous Barbadians—up to one thousand—flooded the meetinghouses established by the sect founded by this eminent man (Winkelman 1976; Gragg 2009).

When Fox visited Barbados in 1671, the Governor was absent, so he met twice with the Deputy Governor, a thirty-one-year-old man (and sixteen years Fox's junior) named Christopher Codrington (Gragg 2009: 54). Codrington appears to have received Fox quite cordially. Both the Quakers and their staunch opponents on the island, the Anglicans, sought to influence Codrington. In the battle over religious influence on the island, the civil authorities were really the only force with any ability to listen to both sides.

The text of this early edition of this 'For the Governour and his Council and Assembly' comes at the end of a 79-page book. Since the portion reproduced here comes from the last fourteen pages of this book, it is necessary to summarize the content of the first 65 pages, so that the context in which this letter is embedded can be better appreciated.

The book as a whole is a reply to Anglican ministers who have made wide-ranging charges against Fox and other Quakers on Barbados. Nine of these ministers are mentioned by name: William Lessley, John Bernad, William Johnson, John Hopgood, Mathew Grey, John Page, William Frith, William Walker, and Daniel Dyke. Of course, charges had been levied both ways: Quaker itinerants sharply attacked the Anglican Church in Barbados from their first arrival in 1656 (Gragg 2009: 49-50). Some of the Anglican charges against Quakers were lodged in formal complaints to the civil authorities in Barbados, while others circulated more informally through the grapevine. The following eight charges are representative of the complaints that the Anglican ministers had concerning the Quakers:

1. Quakers were disruptive of good church order. The ministers complained that they 'frequently and irreverently interrupted' Anglican Church services. Quakers also were disrespectful of the Anglican ministers. The ministers complained that they were 'Uncharitably Pursued and Anathematized with Words, and Execrations, and Bitter Invectives' (Fox 1672: 48).
2. Quakers had a negative effect on church attendance, as they convinced many Barbadians to absent themselves from Anglican services. The ministers believed that the Quakers were the main cause of the 'Poysoning, if not the utter Ruin of many Well-meaning Souls in our Flock, who being infatuated and inveighed with their Pernicious Tenets, do desert the Publick and Consecrated Places of God's Worship' (pp. 48-49).
3. More informally, George Fox was charged personally with being a sorcerer. He was alleged to have hanged ribbons on people's arms, by which means he would bewitch them (p. 8).
4. Equally scurrilously (at least from the Quaker point of view), Fox was charged with other improprieties, mostly of a sexual nature, such as an accusation that he had sexual intercourse with a young woman who accompanied him from England, and that he would be willing to have sex with his sister (p. 8).

5. Quakers were charged with denying God, Christ, and the Scriptures (pp. 65, 76).
6. The Anglican preachers also contended against many specific aspects of Quaker doctrine. Thus, they denied that there was any such thing as a supernatural, saving light of Christ within human beings, opting to understand any light within humans as a natural light. Also, the Anglican preachers disputed the Quaker contention that perfection is possible for saints this side of death (pp. 41-47).
7. Quakers were charged with encouraging black slaves to rebel (pp. 69, 77).
8. Finally, in an argument directed toward the Governor and his Council, the ministers asserted that the mere existence on the island of small Quaker worship groups, or 'conventicles', to use the contemporary pejorative term, violated numerous laws of England. These laws were being insufficiently enforced for the taste of the Anglican ministers, and hence they called for more vigorous enforcement (p. 49).

What we know today as Fox's letter to the Governor of Barbados was directed at charges 5 and 7, which were indeed very serious and threatening charges. The book as a whole, however, was dedicated to rebutting all of these charges, as well as launching a vigorous counterattack on the Anglican clergy.

Fox asked the Anglican ministers, 'unless you be in the same Power and Spirit the Apostles were in...to present the immortal Soul to the immortal God: Do you pretend to watch for the spiritual and everlasting Good of the People?' This wide-ranging counterattack covers such matters as the Quaker testimonies on the non-observation of Christian holidays (Fox 1672: 12-15), a free gospel ministry unsupported by state-collected tithes (pp. 16, 18-19), and the openness of the Christian ministry to ordinary laboring folk without college degrees (pp. 31ff.). All of these points struck at the base of the very priestly activities that the Anglican ministers on the island were engaged in.

Fox also exhorted the Anglican ministers not to instigate religious persecution against the Quakers. One biblical text to which he appeals is Matthew 13, one of Jesus's parables which asserts that the wheat and the tares are not to be separated until the harvest, which Jesus explains is a figure of speech for the Last Judgment. Fox asks the Anglican ministers, 'Now what's the matter with you and others, who will be Gatherers when Christ hath forbidden you, lest you pluck up Wheat instead of Tares; seeing it is the Angels Work to sever the Wheat from the Tares, and the Wicked from the Just?' (p. 29). Drawing on Ezekiel 34, Fox asserted that the Anglican ministers are 'the False Prophets and Shepherds, who fed themselves, and cloathed themselves with the Wool, &c. when they should have fed the Flock' (p. 23). In effect, what the Anglican ministers were presenting as the maintenance of law and order, Fox was presenting as unfounded religious persecution.

There are several cases of clergy misconduct alleged in Fox's text. Two of the Anglican ministers on Barbados, William Lessley and John Hopgood, were alleged to have beaten peaceable Quaker men very severely, without any provocation. In Hopgood's case, for example, he is said to have 'struck one Charles Bream on the

Head, as they rode together on the high Way, by which stroke the said Charles received much harm and prejudice, and not long after dyed' (pp. 18, 50). At least one Anglican minister was alleged to have used alcohol in an abusive way. The custom at celebrations at Barbados was for jugs of alcohol to be passed around to all in attendance. Parson Matthew Gray, however, having a fondness for brandy, 'drunk up the brandy' when it reached him, justifying his selfish practice with a biblical quotation that, in Fox's view, was clearly misapplied: 'be filled with the Spirit' (pp. 17-18).

Fox protested with great indignation the unfounded rumors spread about his own personal life. As you will see below, his 'Addition' to 'For the Governour and his Council and Assembly' traces the rumor of Fox being a witch to an Independent minister in England during the mid-1650s. On the matter of alleged sexual improprieties, Fox responded that 'I abhor, detest, and scorn such things; it being well known in England...that I was never tainted with the least Unclean action, nor thus taxed, till I came here amongst you' (p. 9).

The final pages of Fox's text are concerned with some doctrinal matters on which the differences between the Anglican and Quaker positions were relatively clear. First, on the matter of Quakers 'owning perfection here in this Life', Fox does not deny the existence of original sin, but he finds the devil to be the sole source of original sin, and clears both God and Christ of any responsibility for it. As regards perfection, Fox asks, 'Is not the Command of Christ to us to be Perfect as our Heavenly Father is Perfect? And was it ever the work of the Prophets and Apostles to preach up Imperfection for Term of Life; but always...the Prophets, Christ, and the Apostles pressed, and presseth us to Perfection? and what, do they press us to that which is impossible to be attain'd unto?' Christ will 'present his Church perfect...without Spot, or Wrinkle unto God the Father', but Fox imagines that the Anglican ministers will present their Church to God 'with a Body of Death, and a Body of Sin' (pp. 41-43).

After a brief treatment of spiritual baptism as Christ's one baptism instead of water baptism, Fox proceeds to expound the Quaker understanding of the Light of Christ. The Anglicans believe the Light to be 'Natural and Created, and a Made Light'. Yet according to Fox, they misunderstand the nature of the Light. It is really

a Heavenly Light and a Spiritual Light, wherewithal He Enlightens every one that comes into the World, which he commands us to believe in, through which we become Children of Light... And so, as men are turned to the Light, and believe in the Light, they are ingrafted into Christ... And as Peter speaks of the Light, which was a Sure Word of Prophesie, whereunto you do well that you take heed, as unto a Light that shines in a dark Place, until the Day dawn, and the Day-Star arise in your Hearts, signifying that this Light was sufficient to bring them unto the Day-dawning... In the Light they see more Light, and it shines more and more to the perfect day (pp. 46-47).

At this point, it would appear that Fox has adequately answered all the charges that the Anglican ministers have levelled against the Quakers except the two most serious ones: (1) that Quakers deny God, Christ, and the Scriptures; and (2) that

Quakers have encouraged black slaves to rebel against their slave masters. These are the two matters centrally addressed in the 'For the Governour and his Council and Assembly'.

TEXTUAL HISTORY OF 'FOR THE GOVERNOUR'

'For the Governour' had very little oversight from Fox in getting to press. Fox is presented to the public as the author of *To the Ministers, Teachers, and Priests, (So called, and so Stileing your Selves) in Barbadoes*, but when this book appeared in 1672, Fox was still traveling in the wilderness of North America. It would appear that the publication of this book was arranged by the mariner John Hull, who had transported Fox to Barbados and effectively functioned as his secretary. Indeed, *To the Ministers* contained two writings explicitly designated as Hull's. The first was a lengthy letter to Lessley, Walker, Johnson, Frith, Dyke, and 'the rest of the Priests and Ministers in Barbadoes', which reprimanded these Anglican ministers for their persecuting ways, and called upon them to repent and 'live forever with the Lord', or alternatively, to face God's judgment (Fox 1672: 51-60); and a post-script to that letter which contained even more fiery and prophetic denunciation of the ministers, after one of them subsequently preached an unfriendly sermon before the Barbadian Assembly (pp. 61-64).

Possibly if Fox had seen this book through the press himself he would have edited it substantially. We will never know about that road not taken, but another publication that issued from his three months in Barbados he did feel was important enough to delay its appearance and to give it a thorough editing. This second publication was *Gospel Family-Order: Being a Short Discourse concerning the Ordering of Families, Both of Whites, Blacks and Indians* (1676). It was based on a sermon he had preached at Thomas Rous' house in Barbados in 1671. With regard to the two major themes of 'For the Governour', this publication was quite continuous in its treatment of slavery, emphasizing the importance of Quaker heads of families to provide religious instructions for their slaves. However, it was quite discontinuous in its treatment of theology, reverting from the theology of 'For the Governour' which stressed Jesus as he lived and died over sixteen centuries earlier, to (in this 1676 volume) a Jesus and indeed an entire religion that internalized all aspects of the sacred history of Israel and the early Christian church (as 'types') and made that history relevant only by experience in one's heart and then living it out in one's own life. Thus, *Gospel Family-Order* is much more typical of Fox's theology as it had been developing over the previous quarter-century.

Fox's teaching as it related to slavery was mostly consistent between public settings, with non-Quakers present, and private settings, with only Quakers present. However, a major omission from *Gospel Family-Order*, something not found in the letter to the Governor, was Fox's suggestion that slave owners free their slaves after 'a considerable term of years' (Angell 2011: 22, 25). On theological issues, what he taught in public was quite different from what he taught in private, with the outward Jesus and the external face of the Christian religion receiving emphasis only in the letter to the Governor, not the sermon.

A desire for proof on the part of the Anglicans and the (Anglican) governing class in Barbados that Quakers were safe both on matters of slavery and on Christian profession may have been intertwined, as the word 'Christian' was seen as a marker of the status of the master class on Barbados and 'heathen' as a marker of slave status (Ligon 1657: 50; Jordan 1968: 22-24, 63-66, 87, 93-94). From an economic viewpoint, 'the majority of the plantocracy had concluded that profits depended on a subservient, brutalized, and emphatically nonevangelized labor force' (Carey 2012: 45). That Fox wanted to invite slaves to worship after the manner of Christian Friends would therefore have made him suspicious in the eyes of non-Quaker slaveholders.

Fox never reprinted *To the Ministers* during his lifetime, as he did several of his other tracts. Thus, the next time that the letter to the Governor of Barbados was considered for publication was immediately following his death, as his colleague Thomas Ellwood struggled to determine how to put together Fox's *Journal* from a variegated set of manuscripts.

The manuscripts for Fox's *Journal* have no narrative concerning his experience in Barbados, and Ellwood and every editor of Fox's *Journal* since has struggled to determine how to handle those important months in Fox's life absent a ready narrative. They have arrived at very different solutions to the problem. Let us look briefly at the solutions of two modern editors: Nigel Smith omits those months altogether, since there is no narrative coming from Fox. John Nickalls provided a selection of letters, as well as 'For the Governour', reproduced in the main from *To the Ministers* (Fox 1998; 1975: 594-608).

Ellwood, in the early 1690s, adopted a solution that no modern day editor would adopt. He took all available sources and crafted a narrative that represented Fox himself as speaking in the first person. For example, he took a letter that had been written about Fox in Barbados in the third person and included that letter in his edition of the *Journal*, with the main change being switching pronouns from the third person to the first person (Fox 1694: 352-61). The only part of *To the Ministers* that Ellwood used was the letter 'For the Governour', without the Addition that had been attached to the letter in the 1672 work. The language has been smoothed out since 1672, and this is most likely Ellwood's doing. The angry assertion that 'we call the *Scriptures* as Christ and the Apostles call'd them..., namely *The WORDS of God*', was retained, but without the provocative capitals (Fox 1694: 359). Ellwood eliminated the puzzling assertion from the 1672 text that Christ 'was made to be as Sin, or an Offence and Curse for us, who knew no Sin'. While these statements have biblical precedents (2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13), this sentence makes little sense in light of the traditional Christian emphasis on Christ's sinlessness. Ellwood's modification that 'Christ was made a *Sacrifice* for *Sin*; who knew no *Sin*, neither was *Guile* found in his Mouth' (Fox 1694: 358) may well have had its intended clarifying effect, and had the added benefit of Scripture references all of its own. Jesus' guileless speech was a theme of 1 Pet. 2:22.

While Ellwood's text was not as streamlined as some later versions, it undoubtedly was intended to provide a modest help to Quakers who had to face the authorities in the 1690s. In the wake of the Act of Religious Toleration in 1689,

when Quakers had been included only after a concerted lobbying campaign, any evidence of Quaker orthodoxy as Christians was most welcome. The Quakerism of the 1690s had to face periodic renewal of its toleration, and its leadership, men like Ellwood and George Whitefield, were cautious and conservative (Barbour and Frost 1994: 83–85). Quaker statements resembling creeds were welcome, if they helped to fend off attacks by Anglicans and apostate ex-Quakers like George Keith, attending London Yearly Meeting in the year that Fox's *Journal* was published to press his case against Pennsylvanian Quakers as insufficiently Christian. There were several such statements that resembled creeds written and disseminated widely in this conservative decade. Fox's uncharacteristically well-organized letter 'For the Governour' could also be useful in this circumstance, more so than the more typical spiritualist *Gospel Family-Order*, a tract for which Ellwood could not find a place in his edited work. Whether it had a positive effect immediately is a more difficult question. Since it was buried deep inside Fox's *Journal*, it would require careful readers who could provide it with effective publicity in a receptive era in order for large numbers of Quakers to pay attention to it.

The most significant nineteenth-century edition of Fox's *Journal* was the 1831 edition published by Marcus Gould and Isaac Hopper. Based on Ellwood's edition, it also has the letter to the Governor of Barbados embedded in it (Fox 1831: II, 117–20). There are some relatively minor changes between the 1694 and 1831 versions of Fox's letter, a few of which are noted below.

HISTORY OF INTERPRETATION

In the eighteenth century, the century after the publication of the Ellwood edition of Fox's *Journal*, Fox's letter seems to have been little noticed, at a time when there were few disputes over religious doctrine among Quakers. For a long time after his death, personal reminiscences of Fox were more important to Quakers than Ellwood's edition of his *Journal*, and the documents therein. For example, Samuel Bownas's dream about George Fox some decades after the latter's death was affirmed in the truth of its portrait of Fox by another Quaker who had been with him on Barbados (Bownas 1795: 94). Not only Fox but also Barbados had multivalent meanings for Quakers. It had been the location where some English Quakers had been transported involuntarily, and the fierce persecution against Quakers on the island had also seared itself into the Quaker consciousness, something to which Joseph Besse's work testified (Besse 1753: II, 278–352).

To the extent that Quakers noticed Fox's writings from Barbados at all, they often focused on his remarks about slavery, rather than his reflections on theology. Thus, in his *Views of American Slavery*, Anthony Benezet employed a quotation from *Gospel Family-Order* to show Fox's 'concern and fellow-feeling for the bondage of the negroes' (Benezet 1858: 47–48). Elizabeth Gurney Fry and Caroline Stephen in the nineteenth century were among those who found positive value in this part of Fox's Barbadian ministry (Fry 1848: I, 32; Stephen 1891: 181). Fox's ministry had also appealed to pro-slavery religionists, as both sides in the slavery debate wanted to utilize Fox's ambiguous statements on the issue (Frost 1991: 80).

Intense interest in 'For the Governour' seems to have been stirred up among evangelical Quakers in the early nineteenth century. Three Quaker writers—Elisha Bates, Thomas Evans, and Elizabeth Fry's brother, Joseph John Gurney—were especially vocal in their advocacy of Fox's letter as a document that could be used to define religious orthodoxy among Quakers (Bates 1825: 77; Evans 1828: 65–66, 248–49; Gurney 1848: 8, appendix 1). Still, 'For the Governour' had not achieved the kind of doctrinal pre-eminence among Friends that it later would. It was cited as one of a long list of orthodox Quaker confessions and declarations of Christian faith by both Gurney and Evans. For Gurney, it was one of ten Quaker statements, issued on or before 1731, that confirmed 'the divine origin and authority of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament'.

Gurney found Fox's letter to be useful in establishing two vital doctrinal points. In addition to confirming 'the divine origin and authority' of the Scriptures, Gurney cited it in order to establish 'that our Lord Jesus Christ himself, in all his gracious offices, is the only foundation on which the church is built; and that the free mercy of God in Him is the sole ground of the Christian's hopes' (Gurney 1848: 8, appendix 1).

Samuel Janney, a historian from the Hicksite tradition, fashioned a subtle response to the privileging of 'For the Governour' over the numerous other texts that Fox had written in his lifetime. Janney thought that Fox's letter was a rather shallow series of Scriptural texts, and that there were much more profound thoughts, many more riches, to be had elsewhere in Fox's works. But, in good Quaker fashion, he did not tell this so much as show it. In an appendix of his life of Fox, he arrayed in parallel columns the text from the Letter to the Governor of Barbados with corresponding insights from other of Fox's writings (Janney 1853: 431–36). Janney intended that the 'extracts from his other writings...show what [Fox] understood those Scripture texts to mean'. Janney, like Fox, believed in the Divinity of Christ, but he rejected 'the doctrine of Vicarious Satisfaction, which I think George Fox also rejected' (Janney 1881: 138).

By the end of the century, 'For the Governour' was no longer just one of many confessional statements, but had become the main statement of doctrines from early Friends to which Gurneyite Orthodox Friends appealed. I have not found any reasoned explanation of why this particular doctrinal statement leaped to the head of the list, but its clear organization, relative brevity, and the authority given to it by its association with Quaker founder Fox must have been among the reasons that it had become so highly regarded. Still, there were problems. At the 1887 Richmond Conference, Hannah J. Bailey from New England Yearly Meeting discussed the difficulty of instructing converts on the nature of Quaker beliefs. 'They ask us our creed, and we tell them we have no creed but the Bible. We can get them to read George Fox's letter to the Governor of Barbados, but there is much that is not included in that.' In her view, Fox's letter needed supplementation, and the 1887 Conference ended up providing this with a fuller, and also quite controversial, statement of Quaker doctrines entitled the 'Richmond Declaration of Faith' (General Conference of Friends 1887: 71). But Gurneyite Friends became divided over whether the Richmond Declaration, or Fox's letter

which was still reprinted alongside it, could be regarded as creeds (Barbour and Frost 1994: 224, 239-40).

Within the Gurneyite fold, there soon arose a modernist faction that was strongly opposed to understanding 'For our Governour' and the Richmond Declaration of 1887 to be creeds. Rufus Jones was an especially vocal advocate for the modernist position. In a 1924 letter to Harry Keates, an advocate for his opponents, Holiness Quakers, Jones criticized 'For the Governour' in the following fashion:

I have always found fault with this Letter. It is not the specific doctrines in it that I object to; it is, as I pointed out in my second article in the *Friend*, that George Fox seems here for once to have changed his interpretation of Christianity. Everywhere else he appears as the champion of a religion of life and experience and he strongly disapproves of statements of doctrine and formulation of views which he calls 'notions'. But in Barbados he either wrote such a statement or had his friends write one which he signed. I took the position that here he surrendered, at least for the time being, his usual religious attitude. I believe that my position is historically sound and I doubt if any body else in this generation has given as much time to the careful study of George Fox as I have (Rufus Jones to Harry Keates, 26 November 1924).

Howard Brinton, for many years the co-director of Pendle Hill, a Quaker study center in Pennsylvania, was a vocal advocate of Fox's epistles as the best and most vital expression of his spirituality. Brinton, however, did not believe that 'For the Governour' had been written by Fox:

The so-called 'Letter of George Fox to the Governor of Barbadoes'...does not appear in the 1698 folio [which contains most of Fox's genuine letters]. Inserted in Thomas Ellwood's 1694 edition of Fox's *Journal*, it has occasionally been used as a creed by some bodies of Friends. That letter differs in style and content from the epistles in the folio collection, even from the nine letters of undisputed authorship to Friends in Barbados. Fox was seriously ill on the voyage from England to Barbados and needed constant attendance. The letter seems to have been prepared by members of the group. In editing the *Journal*, Thomas Ellwood supplies an introductory sentence to this letter beginning: 'We drew up a paper, etc.' Had he believed Fox wrote the letter, he would no doubt have said 'I drew up a paper, etc.' Fox unfailingly signed his letters 'G.F.' and here no such signature appears (Brinton 1973: 100; Carey 2012: 48-49).

A close reading of this letter, however, gives reason to believe that Fox participated in this letter's preparation. His contemporaries usually deferred to him on matters of Quaker faith, and this is no exception. Many of the biblical texts employed were Fox's favorites. Note the occurrence of the phrase 'I say' on page 70, surely an upwelling of Fox's own voice, a phrase that was amended by much later editors to 'we say', probably to emphasize the group contribution to this composition. (On the other hand, 'we say' does occur in the version published here in other locations—page 68, for example.) While others may well have made contributions, Fox's voice is dominant here.

Many books of Friends' discipline have included extracts from 'For the Governour', including *Christian Life Faith & Thought, Being the First Part of the Book of Christian Discipline of the Religious Society of Friends in Great Britain* (1922), on pages 73-74, 99. The title given to it was 'Epistle addressed by George Fox and others to the Governor of Barbados in 1671, at the time of their visit to America'. It does not appear in subsequent editions of books of discipline published by London or Britain Yearly Meeting. An extract also appears in the *Faith and Practice of the Five Years Meeting of Friends in America (Book of Discipline)* (1945), on pages 103 to 105, entitled 'Extracts from George Fox's Letter to the Governor of Barbadoes, 1671'. Many of the books on faith and practice from individual Yearly Meetings within Friends United Meeting continue to include these extracts. The extracts in the British and American books of discipline differed, with the British book preserving more of the situational prose which describes the reason that Fox (together with his companions, in the British view) composed the epistle, and also preserving more of the Quaker distinctives that Fox (and others) included in the epistle. The American version, by way of contrast, is edited in such a fashion as to remove all situational elements, thus making the statement appear more timeless, and also to remove Quaker distinctives, thereby turning it into a Christian statement less tied to denominational peculiarities.

APPENDIX: HISTORICAL DOCUMENT

(From George Fox, To the Ministers, Teachers, and Priests, (So called, and so Stileing your Selves) in Barbadoes, 1672, pp. 65-76)

[65]
 FOR THE
GOVERNOUR¹
 And His
Council & Assembly,
 And all Others in Power, both Civil and
 Military in this Island; from the People
 Called *QUAKERS*.

(With an ADDITION)²

Whereas many Scandalous Lyes and Slanders have been cast upon us,³ to the rendring us the more Odious (viz.) *That we do deny God, and Christ Jesus, and the Scriptures of Truth, &c.* This is to inform you, That all our Books and Declarations (that for these many years have been published to the World) do clearly testifie to the contrary; but yet, for your sakes this is now given forth.⁴

That *God* (who is the Only Wise, Omnipotent, and Everlasting God) we do Own and Believe in,⁵ who is the Creator of all things both in Heave and in Earth,⁶ and the Preserver of all that he hath made; who is God over all; blessed forever; to whom be all Honour, and Glory, [66] and Dominion, and Praise and Thanksgiving, both now and for evermore.⁷

And that⁸ *Jesus Christ* is his Beloved and Only Begotten Son,⁹ in whom he is Well pleased; who was Conceived by the Holy Ghost, and Born of the Virgin *Mary*;¹⁰ in whom we have Redemption, through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins; who is the express Image of the Invisible God, the First born of every Creature; by whom were all things created that are in

Heaven, and that are in the Earth;¹¹ Visible and Invisible; whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers.¹²

And we do own and believe, that he was made to be as Sin, or an Offence and Curse for us, who knew no Sin;¹³ and was Crucified for us in the Flesh, without the Gates of *Jerusalem*; and that he was Buried, and Rose again the Third Day, by his own Power,¹⁴ for our Justification; and we do believe, that he Ascended up into Heaven, and now sitteth at the Right Hand of God.¹⁵

And that this *Jesus* is the Foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, and our Foundation;¹⁶ so that there is no other Foundation to be laid, but what is laid, even *Christ Jesus*: and that he tasted Death for every man,¹⁷ and shed his Blood for all men: that he is the Propitiation for our Sins, and not for our Sins only, but for the Sins of the whole World:¹⁸ For saith *John* the *Baptist* of him, *Behold, the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sins of the World*, John 1.19.

And we do believe, That he is our Alone Redeemer and Saviour,¹⁹ even the Captain of our Salvation;²⁰ who saves us from Sin, as well as from Hell, and from the Wrath to come, and destroys the Devil and his Works;²¹ who is [67] the Seed of the Woman, that bruises the Serpent's Head,²² to wit, *Christ Jesus*; who is *Alpha* and *Omega*,²³ the *First* and *Last*.²⁴

That he is (as Scriptures of Truth say)²⁵ our Wisdom, Righteousness, Justification and Redemption;²⁶ neither is there Salvation in any other; For there is none other Name²⁷ under Heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved:²⁸ it is he alone who is the Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls,²⁹ he it is that is our Prophet,³⁰ whom *Moses* long since testified of in *Acts* 3.22, 23.³¹ *A Prophet shall the Lord our God raise up unto you, of your Brethren, like unto me, him shall you hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you: and it shall come to pass, that every one that will not hear that Prophet, shall be Destroyed from among the People.*

He it is that is now come, and hath given us an Understanding, that we may know him that is true; and a Rule in our Hearts,³² even his Law of Love and of Life in our Inward Parts,³³ which makes us free from the Law of Sin and Death.³⁴

And we have no Life, but by him; For he is the Quickening Spirit, the Second *Adam*, the Lord from Heaven;³⁵ by whose Blood we are cleansed,³⁶ and our Consciences sprinkled from Dead Works,³⁷ that we might serve the Living God,³⁸ by whose Blood we are purchased.³⁹ And so he is our Mediator, that makes Peace and Reconciliation between God offended, and Us offending; being our Surety of the New Testament, and⁴⁰ the Oath of God, the New Covenant of Light, Life, Grace and Peace; the Author and Finisher of our Faith.⁴¹

Now this *Lord Jesus Christ*, the Heavenly Man, *Emanuel*, God with us, we all own and believe in; whom the High Priests⁴² raged against, and said, *He had spoken Blasphemy*;⁴³ and the Chief Priests, and Elders of the *Jews*, took Counsel together,⁴⁴ and put him to Death; the same [68] whom *Judas* betray'd for Thirty Pieces of Silver, which he had from the Priests;⁴⁵ who gave a Large Sum of Money to the Souldiers, to broach a Horrible Lye, namely, that they should say, *That his Disciples stole him away by Night, whilst they Slept*.⁴⁶ And after he was risen from the Dead, you may see in the *Acts of the Apostles*,⁴⁷ how that the chief Priests and Elders Persecuted the Disciples of this *Jesus*, for preaching *Christ*, and his *Resurrection*: this (we say) is that *Lord Jesus Christ*, whom we own to be our Life and Salvation.⁴⁸

*Now concerning the Holy Scriptures.*⁴⁹

We do believe, That they were given forth by the Holy Spirit of God, through Holy Men of God, who spoke (as Scriptures of Truth say⁵⁰) *As they were Moved by the Holy Ghost*, in 2 Pet. 1.1.⁵¹ and that they are to be Read, and Believed and Fulfilled; and he that fulfils them is *Christ*. And are profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, and for Instruction in Righteousness; that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all Good Works, 2 Tim. 3:16[-17]. and are able (as Divinely Inspir'd)⁵² to make us Wise to Salvation, through Faith in *Christ Jesus*.⁵³ And we do believe, That the Scriptures⁵⁴ are the Words of God; for its said in *Exod.* 20.1. *God spake all these Words, saying &c.* meaning the *Ten*

Commandments, given forth upon Mount Sinai: and in Rev. 18,⁵⁵ saith John, *I testify unto every man, that heareth the WORDS⁵⁶ of the Prophesie of this Book; if any man addeth unto These—and if any man shall take away from the WORDS (not Word) of the Book;*⁵⁷ So in Luke 1.20 *Because thou believest not my WORDS:* and John 5.47 & 15.7 & 14.23 & 12.47. So that we call the *Scriptures*⁵⁸ as Christ and the Apostles call'd them, and as the Holy Men of God call'd them, namely *The WORDS of God*.

[69] Another Slander and Lye⁵⁹ they have cast upon us, is, namely, *That we should teach the Negars⁶⁰ to Rebel*.

A Thing we do utterly *abhor* and *detest* in and from⁶¹ our Hearts, the Lord knows it, who is the Searcher of all hearts, and knows all things, and so can witness and testify for us, that this is a most Egregious and⁶² Abominable Untruth.

For, that which we have spoken and declared to them is, to exhort and admonish them, To be Sober, and to Fear God,⁶³ and to love their Masters and Mistresses, and to be Faithful and Diligent in their Masters Service and Business; and that then their Masters and Overseers will Love them, and deal Kindly and Gently with them:⁶⁴ And that they should not beat their Wives, nor the Wives their Husbands; nor multiply Wives, nor put away their Wives, nor the Wives their Husbands, as they use frequently to do:⁶⁵ and that they do⁶⁶ not Steal, nor be Drunk, nor commit Adultery, nor Fornication, nor Curse, nor Swear, nor Lye, nor give Bad Words to one another, or unto any one else. For there is something in them, that tells them, That they should not Practice those Evils (or any other) before mention'd: Which if notwithstanding they should do them, that there are but two Ways; the one, that leads to Heaven, where the Righteous go & the other, that leads to Hell, where the Wicked and Debaucht, Whoremongers and Adulterers, Murderers, Lyars & Thieves⁶⁷ go: To the one the Lord of Heaven and Earth will say, Come ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Foundation of the World; but to the other he will say, Depart ye Cursed into Everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. The Wicked, into Everlasting Punishment; but the Righteous, into Life Eternal, Mat. 25.

Now consider, Friends, that its no Transgression, for a Master of a Family to instruct his Family himself, or else, some others in his behalf; but rather, that it is a very great Duty lying incumbent upon them: As Abraham did, and [70] Joshua did; as to the first, the Lord said, *I know that Abraham will command his Children, and his Houshold after him; and they shall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Justice & Judgment that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him:* And as for Joshua, said he, Josh 14.15. *And if it seems Evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this Day whom you will serve, whether the Godds which your Fathers served, that were on the other side of the Flood; or the Godds of the Amorites, in whose Land ye dwell: But as for me, and my House we will serve the Lord.*⁶⁸ And further consider this, That it is a Duty lying upon us, to Pray⁶⁹ and to Teach, Instruct and Admonish those in and belonging to our Families, it being the Command of the Lord, the Disobedience to which will incur⁷⁰ the Lord's Displeasure; as you may see in Jer. 10.25. where its written, *Pour out thy Fury upon the Heathen, that know thee not; and upon the Families, that call not upon thy Name.* Now Negars & Tawny Indians⁷¹ make up a very great part of Families here in this Island, for whom an Account shall be required⁷² at the Great Day of Judgment, when every one shall be Rewarded according to his Deeds done in the Body, whether they be Good, or whether they be Evil: In that Day, I say,⁷³ of the Resurrection, both of the Good and of the Bad, of the Just and of the Unjust; when the Lord shall be revealed from Heaven with his Mighty Angels, in Flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with Everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power, when he shall come to be Glorified in his Saints,⁷⁴ 2 Thess. 1.8.⁷⁵

AN EXCERPT FROM 'THE ADDITION' TO 'FOR THE GOVERNOUR'

[75]...Another *Slander* they have got up here, *That G.F. should Hang Ribbons upon peoples Arms, by which means they were Bewicht*, Which was first forg'd by an *Independent Priest*, one of *Oliver Cromwell's News-Mongers*, who put it into his

Weekly-News-Book:⁷⁶ and when he was question'd, where he had the Information; first, he said, *it was a Woman*, and then afterwards, said, *it was a Man that told him of it*; but never could we get from him *the Name of that Man or Woman, or of the Town and Country where he or she lived to this day*. And this *Lye* and *Slander* went for credit, it being printed in the *Dyurnal*; and the *Priests* likewise publisht it in their *Pulpits*; and others would Swear, *that their Brother Independent Priest caused it to be put into the News-Books*, when they perceived many of their *Hearers* to forsake them, *who would not put into their Mouthes any longer*; therefore they raised this *Slander*, thinking thereby, *to cast a Stumbling-block before the [76] people, to stop them from coming to embrace the Truth*: but they were deceived in that; for that manifested their *Folly* the more, and their *Lyes* and *Slanders*; and confirmed the people the more in the *Truth*. And these *Independents* were the first that gave the *Nick-name* of *Quakers*; as, one *Bennet*⁷⁷ at *Darby*, 1650.

NOTES

1. 1694 edition adds 'of Barbadoes' here.
2. 1694 edition omits this phrase '(With an Addition)', along with the corresponding text, the last nine pages of the 1672 book. For reasons of space, I have also omitted most of the Addition.
3. The passive tense obscures the identity of the accusers, who were Anglican ministers on Barbados, and the preceding text in *To the Ministers* identifies the following persons by name: William Lessley, John Bernad, William Johnson, John Hopwood, Mathew Grey, John Page, William Frith, and two ministers identified by last names only—Priest Walker and Priest Dyke.
4. 1694 edition substitutes 'Yet notwithstanding, for your Satisfaction, we do now plainly and sincerely declare' for 'yet, for your sakes this is now given forth'; 1831 edition omits 'notwithstanding'.
5. 1694 and subsequent editions straighten out the sentence structure: 'we do own and believe in God, the only wise, omnipotent, and everlasting God, who is the creator of all things...'; 1831 edition omits 'do': 'we own and believe...'. The 'Extracts from George Fox's Letter to the Governor of Barbados', published in 1922 as part of *The Authorized Declaration of the Faith of the Five Years Meeting of the Friends in America*, begins with this sentence.
6. Starting from the beginning of the paragraph, this phraseology is very similar to the opening of the Apostles' Creed: 'I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth'. It is also reminiscent of the Nicene Creed, which has God 'the Maker of all things visible and invisible'. Divergences from these creeds introduced by Fox and his companions strengthen Scriptural resonances: God 'only wise' is found in Rom. 16:27; 1 Tim. 1:17; God 'omnipotent' in Rev. 19:6; God 'everlasting' in Gen. 21:33; Ps. 93:2; and others; 'Creator of all things' in two deuterocanonical texts: Sir. 24:8; 2 Macc. 1:24.
7. See 1 Tim. 1:17; 1 Pet. 5:11; Rev. 4:11; 5:13; 7:12.
8. 1694 edition, omitting 'that', states: 'And we do *Own* and *Believe* in *Jesus Christ*...' 1831 edition omits 'do'.
9. Compare to the Nicene Creed (Constantipolitan): 'one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten son of God', and the Apostles' Creed, 'Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord'. This is also Scriptural language. For 'beloved son', see Mark 1:11 and others; for 'only-begotten son', see John 1:18; 3:16. For Fox, it was far more important that his language be Scriptural than creedal.

10. The Apostles' Creed speaks of Christ 'who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary'. Matt. 1:20 uses the language 'conceived...of the Holy Ghost' to refer to Mary's baby. This creed was part of the prescribed morning and evening prayers for Anglicans in the *Book of Common Prayer*.
11. 1694 edition follows this text; 1831 edition omits the second 'that are': 'that are in heaven and in earth'.
12. Col. 1:14-16. 1831 edition omits all but the final 'or'. 1694 and subsequent editions add, after 'powers', 'all things were created by him'.
13. 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13. Doctrinal obscurity appears to have prompted a change when the letter was inserted in the *Journal*. Instead of 'that he was made to be as Sin, or an Offence and Curse for us, who knew no sin' the 1694 version has 'he was made a *Sacrifice* for *Sin*; who knew no *Sin*, neither was *Guile* found in his Mouth'. Biblical citations for the amended version are: Heb. 10:12; 1 Pet. 2:22.
14. Instead of 'by his own Power', the 1694 edition has 'by the *Power* of his *Father*'.
15. Again this last half-sentence is similar to both the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds. The wording of the Nicene Creed is: 'was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father.'
16. 1694 and subsequent editions change this to: 'This *Jesus*, who was the *Foundation* of the Holy *Prophets* and *Apostles*, is our *Foundation*;...' Note that the 1694 edition is the first to preface 'Prophets and Apostles' with the word 'Holy'.
17. Heb. 2:9. 1694 edition: 'and we do believe that there is no other *Foundation* to be laid...' 1831 edition omits 'do'.
18. 1 John 2:2.
19. Isa. 49:26; 60:16. 1694 edition: 'We *believe*, that he alone is our *Redeemer* and *Saviour*...'
20. Heb. 2:10.
21. 1 John 3:8.
22. Gen. 3:15.
23. 1694: '*Christ Jesus*, the *Alpha* and *Omega*...'
24. Rev. 1:11; 22:13.
25. 1694: '(as the *Scriptures* of *Truth* say of him)'
26. 1 Cor. 1:24, 30. 1694: '*Wisdom* and *Righteousness*, *Justification* and *Redemption*'.
27. 1694: 'no other name'.
28. Acts 4:12. 1694: 'whereby we may be *saved*'.
29. 1 Pet. 2:25. 1831: 'He alone is the shepherd and bishop of our souls...'
30. 1831: 'he is our prophet, whom...'
31. Of course, the Acts of the Apostles was not written by Moses, but this passage from Acts is based on Deut. 18:15-19. Also, Acts 3:22 quotes Moses by name. The 1694 edition erroneously changes this citation to Acts 2:22, 23; subsequent editions perpetuate this error.
32. 1694: 'and he rules in our hearts by his law of love and life'.
33. 1694 edition omits 'in our Inward Parts'. Compare original with Jer. 31:33.
34. Rom. 8:2.
35. 1 Cor. 15:45-47.
36. 1 John 1:7.
37. Heb. 9:14; 10:22.
38. 1694 edition changes this phrase: 'to serve the Living God'.
39. 1694 edition omits 'by whose Blood we are purchased', a phrase deriving from Acts 20:28.
40. 1694 edition omits 'our Surety of the New Testament, and', a phrase deriving from Heb. 7:22.
41. Heb. 12:2.

42. Instead of 'High Priests', 1694 edition has 'High-Priest'. The phrase 'High Priests', denoting Annas and Caiaphas, is found only in Luke 3:2, dating to the beginning of John the Baptist's ministry. While John 18 does not use the plural form, it implies that Annas and Caiaphas shared the role of High Priest. In other Gospel accounts of Jesus' Passion, only the singular form ('high priest') is found, referring to Caiaphas. According to Josephus, *Antiquities*, Annas was high priest from AD 7 to 15, and Caiaphas from about AD 18 to 37; Josephus makes no mention of a dual high priesthood. Sandmel 1976: I, 481-82.

43. Matt. 26:65.

44. 1694: 'whom the *Priests* and the *Elders* of the *Jews* took Counsel together against'.

45. 1694 edition adds: 'as a Reward for his *Treason*; who also gave'.

46. The strong emphasis on Judas and the High Priest(s) here, something rarely, if ever, found in any Christian statement of doctrines, is undoubtedly an allusion to the nine Anglican ministers who were such strong opponents of Quakerism on Barbados. By the time of Fox's death, such parochial allusions had become obscure and outdated, likely prompting Ellwood's change from 'High Priests' to 'High-Priest'.

47. 1694 edition changes this phrase: 'the *History* of the *Acts* of the *Apostles* sets forth'.

48. In the 1694 edition, this is the end of the first paragraph of the Letter.

49. 1694 and subsequent editions incorporate this subheading into the main text: 'And as concerning the *Holy Scriptures*'.

50. Instead of 'as Scriptures of Truth say', 1694 edition has 'as the Scripture it self declares'.

51. 1694 and subsequent editions correct to 2 Pet. 1:21.

52. 1694 edition omits '(as Divinely Inspir'd)'.

53. 2 Tim. 3:15. The 'Extracts from George Fox's Letter to the Governor of Barbadoes', published in 1922 as part of *The Authorized Declaration of the Faith of the Five Years Meeting of the Friends in America*, ends with this sentence.

54. 1694 edition changes this to 'the Holy Scriptures'.

55. 1694 edition corrects this citation to Rev. 22:18[-19].

56. 1694 edition lessens this emphasis on 'WORDS' by eliminating the spelling of it in all capitals, every place that 'WORDS' is thus rendered in this paragraph.

57. The harsh judgments threatened by the author of Revelation are omitted in 'For the Governour': 'I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these *things*, *God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book*; And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of *prophecy*, *God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city and from the things which are written in this book*'.

58. Again the 1694 edition changes this to 'the Holy Scriptures'.

59. 1694 edition preserves this wording, but 1831 and some internet editions omit the words 'and Lye'. Fox's use of 'Slander and Lye' to refer to the charges of the Anglican ministers on Barbados reinforces a major theme of this unabridged document. Counting minor variations, it is one of the most often repeated phrases throughout the Letter and its 'Addition'.

60. 1694 and subsequent editions use the word 'Negroes' instead of 'Negars'.

61. 1694 edition omits 'and from'.

62. 1694 edition omits 'Egregious and'.

63. Several passages of Scripture lay these requirements on persons in all conditions, but none lay them only on slaves. See, e.g., 1 Pet. 1:13; 2:17; etc.

64. This passage exhibits a loose dependence on Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 3:22-4:1; 1 Tim. 6:1-2; 1 Pet. 2:18.

65. 1694 edition omits 'nor put away their Wives, nor the Wives their Husbands, as they use frequently to do'.

66. 1694 edition has 'should' instead of 'do'.

67. 1694 edition omits '& thieves'.

68. 1694 edition considerably shortens this Scripture quotation to 'Chuse ye this day, whom ye will serve.—But as for me, and my House, we will serve the Lord.'

69. 1694 edition renders the first part of this sentence as follows: 'We do declare, that we do esteem it a *Duty* incumbent on us to *Pray* with and for, to *Teach, Instruct*'.

70. 1694 edition has 'provoke' instead of 'incur'.

71. 1694 edition has '*Negroes, Tawnies, Indians*'. In the 1672 edition, Fox was clear that the word 'Tawny' is to be taken as a synonym for 'Indian.' Fox 1672: 5.

72. 1694 edition adds 'by him who comes to *Judge* both *Quick* and *Dead*'.

73. 1694 edition preserves this wording, but 1831 edition corrects it to 'we say'.

74. 1694 edition adds these words: 'and admired in all them that believe in that day'.

75. 1694 edition's third and final paragraph ends here. It adds 2 Pet. 3:3 as a Scripture reference.

76. In Fox (1672: 8), Fox calls these 'stinking and filthy lies', it 'being full well known, that I was never tainted or blamisht with any such Uncleaness'. In the second edition of his *Some principles of the elect people of God in scorn called Quakers*, p. 51, which appeared in 1671 (Wing P1198), Fox critiques 'lying Priests and Professors' for alleging 'that we foame at the mouth, and that we bewitch men, and bind ribband about their Armes; which are altogether false and lies'. The first edition, which appeared in 1661, contains an almost identical passage (Wing F1907, p. 39). Another mention of this rumor, although without naming Fox, was put forth by nonconformist preacher Henry Hallywell (1673: 7): 'About the first rise of the Quakers in the North of England, several persons by Gloves and Ribbands and divers Charms and Incantations were really bewitched by them'. William Penn wrote a reply to this tract, but in response to this specific charge, observed that 'tis scarce worth my notice, his folly in mentioning it' (Penn 1736: II, 470). At no time does anyone identify the instigator of the 'slander' by name.

77. Justice Gervase Bennett first applied this name to Fox in derision. Fox criticized Bennett for making this description, but the new religious movement claimed numerous biblical precedents for quaking in the Spirit, and soon Fox and his companions were wearing this derisive epithet as a badge of honor.

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