

1845

# Testimonies Concerning Deceased Ministers: 1845

London Yearly Meeting

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TESTIMONIES  
CONCERNING  
DECEASED MINISTERS.

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PRESENTED TO  
THE YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS,  
HELD IN LONDON, 1845.

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## A TESTIMONY

*From the MONTHLY MEETING for the MIDDLE DIVISION  
of BRISTOL and SOMERSET QUARTERLY MEETING, con-  
cerning our dear Friend, MARY OVENS, deceased, late  
of Street, in the County of Somerset.*

SHE was the daughter of John and Jane Clark of the same place, born in the year 1770, departed this life the 12th of 7th month, 1844, in the 74th year of her age, and was interred in Friends' burial-ground at Street, the 17th of 7th month, 1844.

There appears no memorandum that throws any light on her early life, more than of her being a consistent and amiable character. On her marriage she became a member of the North division Monthly Meeting, within the compass of which the principal part of her valuable life was spent. In the year 1818 she was appointed to the station of elder, in which capacity she moved to the comfort and satisfaction of her friends, being qualified to enter deeply and tenderly into sympathy and feeling with those engaged in the ministry, as well as others whose circumstances claimed her regard; while her cheerful, exemplary deportment endeared her to her friends generally, and rendered her distinguishing character that of a nursing mother in the church.

In the year 1840 our dear friend was acknowledged a minister, shortly after which she returned to Street, her native village, where she spent the remnant of her days. Though her service in the church was not extensive, yet her ministry was characterized by that liveliness which evinced its origin

to be the spring of the Gospel; her general deportment corresponding therewith, rendered her a twofold preacher of righteousness; and the remembrance of her innocence, love, and dedication of heart, is precious.

About the beginning of 1844 the disease from which she had for some time been suffering assumed a more decided character, and the prospect of its fatal termination was contemplated with calmness and resignation; although she passed months in a state of suffering, yet no murmur escaped her lips, and frequently she enjoyed the company of her friends. When confined to her bed, she petitioned her Heavenly Father, if consistent with his will, to cut the work short, and receive her into his kingdom. And speaking of the goodness of Almighty God, she said, "Nothing but goodness and mercy hath followed me all the days of my life, 'praise ye the Lord!'" She continued to see her friends as they called to inquire for her; and in taking leave of them, her earnest desire for their welfare was expressed, and suitable advice extended to all. Truly, it may be said, the evening of her day was calm, her end was peace.

Signed in, and on behalf of the Middle Division Monthly Meeting, held at Street, the 12th of 3rd month, 1845.



## A TESTIMONY

*Of DARLINGTON MONTHLY MEETING, concerning our dear friend, WILLIAM BACKHOUSE, deceased.*

Our dear friend, William Backhouse, was the third son of Jonathan and Ann Backhouse, of Darlington, in the county of Durham, at which place he was born on the 17th day of the 11th month, 1779.

From his parents he received a guarded education in the way of truth, as professed by us; and we believe that the parental care extended to him proved, through the aid of Divine grace, a means of preserving him in the circumspect walk which marked his future life, the duties of which, as a husband, parent, and friend, he was enabled to discharge in an exemplary manner.

As an overseer and elder, the kindness of his disposition, and the frankness and openness of his conduct, gained for him a ready access to those whom he felt it his duty to counsel or reprove; and as a sympathising friend, his visits to the sick or the afflicted were often peculiarly acceptable, tending to encourage and comfort them under their trials. His concern for the good of others was early evinced, by his compiling, in conjunction with his brother-in-law, James Janson, a small work, entitled a "Guide to True Peace," extracted from the writings of Fenelon and other pious authors.

He was a man of unassuming manners, cheerful disposition, and an humble mind, and religiously inclined from his youth. It appears to have been his care frequently to seek op-

portunities for retirement and silent waiting, as at the footstool of the Most High, a practice from which, we doubt not, he derived strength and consolation, and experienced a growth in the spiritual life, and in love to his fellow-men, and his Redeemer. The line of business in which he was placed presented opportunities for engaging in speculations, with a view to increase his property ; these he resisted, preferring such moderate pursuit of the things pertaining to this state of being, as admitted of frequent abstractions from the world ; and we find, from various memorandums, that in these seasons a solicitude dwelt on his mind, not only to be redeemed from a money-getting spirit, but that his favourite pursuits of botany, horticulture, and natural history in general, might be so bounded as to leave him ever alive to the pointings and impressions of heavenly wisdom. Thus watchfully alive to the teachings of the Holy Spirit, he was led to feel a travail of soul for the well-being of his fellow-professors, under the influence whereof he was constrained to speak as a minister in our religious meetings, and in the year 1842 was recorded in that station. His communications in the ministry, while generally short, were evidently delivered under a feeling of Gospel love, and a tender concern for the welfare of all those whom he addressed ; and his life comporting therewith, a testimony was raised in the minds of many, similar to that which our blessed Lord bore of Nathaniel, " Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile."

In the 8th month, 1843, he communicated to his Monthly Meeting, with much humility and tenderness of spirit, a concern, which for some time had rested on his mind, to visit a few solitary, suffering Christian professors, much united to the Society of Friends in faith and practice, residing in the South of Norway ; and having received certificates of the concurrence of his Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, he spread his prospect in the 5th month, 1844,

before the Yearly Meeting of ministers and elders. He was encouraged by them to a faithful attention to the requirings of his gracious Lord and Master, and returned home in sweet peace, fully resigned to leave all, and go forth into a distant land, whither he believed himself called. His nephew, Edward Backhouse, Jun., kindly offered to accompany him. Their berths were engaged in a steam-vessel from Hull to Hamburg, the route by which they expected to proceed; and it was their intention to have embarked on 6th day, the 14th of the 6th month.

On the first day preceding, our dear friend was cheerful and in usual health; and in the evening meeting, rose apparently to address his friends, when he suddenly sank down near the feet of those who were in the gallery with him, and instantly, but quietly expired; his countenance retaining very remarkably its placid and serene expression, so that those around him, at the solemn moment, might well feel the force of the language of the Psalmist, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

In closing this testimony of our love to our dear departed friend, and to the goodness of our Lord, through whose grace he was what he was, we have to record, that the vessel in which our beloved friends expected to have sailed, never reached its intended port, but was lost, and all on board perished.

His remains were followed to the grave by a large company of relatives and friends, and amidst striking manifestations of the great regard of his fellow townsmen. He was interred in Friends' Burial Ground, Darlington, the 14th day of the 6th month, 1844, aged 64 years, an acceptable minister many years.

Given forth by Darlington Monthly Meeting, held at Darlington, the 21st day of 1st month, 1845.



## A TESTIMONY

*Of the MONTHLY MEETING for the SOUTH DIVISION of WALES, concerning WILLIAM MOYSE, late of SWANSEA, deceased.*

IN preparing a testimony respecting our departed friend, William Moyse, we have thought it may not be without instruction to retrace some of the Lord's dealings with one whose life was chequered by many deep trials as well as mercies, and whose end was, emphatically, peace.

He was born at Stratton, in Cornwall, about the year 1779, and was educated in the views of the Episcopal church. At about eleven years of age he quitted his home, and entered upon a seafaring life: his steadiness of conduct advanced him in his profession, and at the age of eighteen, he was acting lieutenant on board a king's frigate. His retirement from that service was occasioned by conflict and mental suffering, from witnessing the distress of the captain of a French vessel which he had been engaged in capturing. He then entered the merchant service; but at the commencement of his career, his vessel foundered at sea, and he and his crew were providentially rescued from their danger by a ship which passed at the perilous moment. He subsequently, during some years, successively commanded several large merchant vessels.

This dear friend's mind appears to have been for many years directed to a serious inquiry after truth. He was for a considerable period united in membership with the

Wesleyan Methodist Society ; and both he himself and wife were held in much esteem by their serious associates of that body—but he found not his rest here. The principles of our religious society became clearly unfolded to his view, and he felt that his peace was concerned in a full adoption of them. The deep exercises of his mind during this memorable period of his life, are thus reviewed by him in a memorandum he has left, written some years subsequently, of which the following are extracts :—“ Twenty-fifth of 2nd month, 1820—Lying in the Downs, bound to Penzance. This day, whilst reading the journal of a valued ancient friend, my mind was suddenly turned to those days of deep trial, in 1814, when my Heavenly Father was pleased to point out and prescribe to me a narrower path than I had been accustomed to walk in. Those were indeed days of deep probation, and such as can only, I believe, be fully known by those who have drank of the same cup, and been baptized with the same baptism. I was united in Christian fellowship with those I loved, and to separate myself from them seemed more than I could bear. They undertook, as they supposed, to convince me that I was wrong ; they used argument and entreaty, and they wept over me ; but I was mercifully favoured to see that necessity was laid upon me to come out from what appeared to me to be shadows and forms, for the more enduring and soul-satisfying substance.” Our friend William Moyse had an extensive acquaintance among various classes in Swansea, where he resided ; and when he felt called upon practically to carry out his religious principles in his intercourse with the world, to take up the daily cross in the use of the plain language, and to relinquish those practices which spring from a conformity to the spirit of the world, his memorandum thus describes his conflict :—“ I sunk, and was brought on a sick bed, even to the gates of death ; a rapid decline was supposed to be making inroads on my constitution, and I thought myself



fast approaching a never-ending eternity. In this state my cry was unto Him who had graciously brought me out of darkness to see a glimpse of his marvellous light, that He would be pleased to enable me, and make me willing to bear all his baptisms, and submit to all his requirings, and that not my will, but his might be fully accomplished in me. And as this cry ascended to Him, so did He mercifully condescend to afford comfort and peace, and a willingness was felt to do and suffer all his righteous will. Oh! how did my heart rejoice at this time, feeling that such a poor worm as myself, was counted worthy to suffer for Jesus' sake. My soul felt a peaceful calm, a sweet resignation, come life or death: the world and all its allurements were counted as nothing, when compared to Him who was become my chiefest joy." In the year 1814 he was received a member of our religious society; and while his seafaring life led him much to other parts, whither his vessel traded, it is believed that he was diligent in availing himself of all opportunities for assembling for religious worship with his friends, and that he maintained a conduct and conversation consistent with his Christian profession. An instance illustrative of this occurred at Naples, a port he frequented. There, whilst walking up one of the principal streets with a resident merchant, a popish procession, on some extraordinary occasion, was coming in the opposite direction, and it was expected that all who passed at the time should fall on their knees. The merchant did so; but our dear friend, regarding the commandments of God more than the doctrines of men, would not comply; whereupon a soldier in the procession aimed a bayonet at him in anger; he, however, escaped injury, and often spoke of it as a providential deliverance.

Having for some years felt himself required to express a few words in the ministry, he was frequently heard in that line, not only in his own meeting, but in others, where his

lot was cast; and his offerings being to the comfort and satisfaction of Friends, he was, in 1824, recorded as a minister by the Monthly Meeting of Carmarthenshire and Glamorganshire.

He retired from the sea-service, and settled in business at Swansea in 1833. Many domestic cares and trials were the portion of our dear friend during this period; but though often brought very low, he was not forsaken, but was enabled, from time to time, to evidence, and to declare to others, that "the name of the Lord" remains to be "a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." His communications as a minister, towards the latter part of his life, were more than usually bright, instructive, and acceptable to his friends. His health had been for some time declining; but early in the 7th month last, he attended the small meeting of ministers and elders of his own Monthly Meeting, and ministered encouragingly to his friends. Soon afterwards, an injury received from being thrown out of his carriage, terminated his life in a few weeks.

To a friend who called upon him a little before the close, he expressed a very precious degree of resignation: he was then passing through the valley of the shadow of death, but feared no evil. In reply to the remark, that he appeared very ill, "Yes," said he, "I am, but all is well within: all is peace within!" This was followed by the friend's remarking, that it was an unspeakable favour to have the dear Saviour so near at such a time; "Oh, yes," he replied, "it is worth all—worth all!" here the powers of articulation nearly failed, and after some hours of bodily conflict, the fetters were loosed, and the immortal spirit, we humbly believe, admitted into a mansion of eternal rest and peace.

He died on the 9th of the 8th month, 1844, aged about 65 years; a minister 20 years.

The interment took place at Swansea, on the 15th of the



same month, and was attended by a large number of his friends and acquaintances.

Read and approved at our Monthly Meeting, for the South Division of Wales, held at Neath, the 13th of 3rd month, 1845.

## A TESTIMONY

*Of the MONTHLY MEETING of RATCLIFF and BARKING,  
concerning ELIZABETH FRY, of PLASHET COTTAGE,  
EAST HAM, near LONDON, deceased.*

THIS, our beloved friend, was the daughter of William Storrs and Elizabeth Fry; and was born in London in the year 1779. She received from her parents a guarded education, and had the great advantage of the example and oversight of a valuable mother. In very early life, as she has thankfully acknowledged, she was drawn to love her Saviour, and desired to dedicate herself to his service; and as she advanced in years, it became increasingly her concern that she might walk in the fear of the Lord; and that obedience to his requirings might be faithfully adhered to, even in what might appear to some to be small matters. In these respects, and in great uprightness of character, her example has often been felt to be instructive to her friends.

But although conscientiously attached to her own religious principles, she cherished Christian love towards the faithful of different persuasions, and was tenderly careful of the feelings of those with whom she had intercourse; solicitous to promote love and goodwill in all around her, and to discourage any remark tending to the disparagement of others.

She was acknowledged as a minister in the 12th month, 1814, by the Monthly Meeting of Gracechurch-street; from

whence she removed into this meeting in the year following. Her ministry was sound and edifying, arousing and searching to the unfaithful and the sinner, yet sympathising and comforting to the sincere hearted.

In 1816 she accompanied Elizabeth Robson on a religious visit to Friends of Pymont and Minden, and to those in profession with us in the South of France. She was frequently engaged in visiting the meetings of Friends in various parts of England, mostly in company with her sister, Elizabeth Joseph Fry; and in 1827, they, in conjunction with Joseph John Gurney, had extensive religious service in Ireland, both among Friends and others; including visits to some of the prisons, and other institutions of that country. She also united with her sister in a visit to the Channel Islands, and to nearly all the meetings and families of Friends in Scotland.

Our dear friend was of a delicate constitution, and her health became increasingly infirm during the few last years of her life; until, in the latter part of 1843, she was wholly confined to the house, and gradually sunk under the effects of disease. During this time of suffering, it was her frequently expressed desire to be preserved in entire patience and resignation to the Divine will. She said to a friend who was visiting her, after she had been some weeks confined, "I have no anxiety about the issue of this illness, not an anxious thought;" and when informed by her medical attendant of its probable issue, she remarked, "It is a blessed thing to be without fear, and to have a good hope." At another time, to some friends who had been sitting silent beside her, she said, "The Lord is good, He is a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knoweth them that trust in Him. I have found Him to be a stronghold, and I can encourage you *all*, my dear friends, to trust in him." She greatly prized seasons of silence and waiting on the Lord; and sometimes after such would



say, under a sense of the Divine presence, "All his peace, perfect peace."

She was much concerned for the youth amongst us, and expressed her earnest desire that they might become sensible of the great importance of true dedication of heart to the Lord; that, were they thus given up in obedience to his will, they would experience that wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths peace.

She once observed, that those words of Holy Scripture had been brought very forcibly to her remembrance, "Pray without ceasing." "O!" she said, "I do feel the need of constantly living in the spirit of prayer, not always using words, but of being in the *very spirit of prayer*."

The clothing of her spirit throughout her illness was deep humility; and she repeatedly said, "It is all of mercy;" and remarked, "I particularly wish that it may be known to my friends, that I have been brought to the deepest self-abasement; that I feel I have nothing to trust to but mercy." She added, "I can indeed acknowledge that it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but of His mercy, He saveth us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Lord;" repeating, with much emphasis, "through Jesus Christ our Lord."

As she approached the close of life, she had to pass through great conflict of body, and often expressed her longing to be released and to be with Christ; but with deep submission to the will of God. Indeed, it was manifest throughout this solemn season, that she was favoured to have her spirit settled on the Rock of Ages. "You know," she observed to those about her, during one night of much suffering, "You know the foundation on which I have built, and *there* I rest day and night."

Thus graciously supported, and with a hope full of immortality, she peacefully departed, the 2nd of the 7th



month, 1844, aged about 65 years, a minister about 30 years; her remains were interred in Friends' burying-ground at Barking.

Signed on behalf of our Monthly Meeting aforesaid, held at Ratcliff, the 17th of 12th month, 1844.

## A TESTIMONY

*Of PEEL MONTHLY MEETING, concerning ANN HUBBERT,  
deceased.*

Our meeting having lately sustained a loss, in the removal, by death, of our dear friend Ann Hubbert, (formerly Ann Riseley,) we feel engaged to give forth a testimony concerning her, in the hope that a brief notice of her dedicated life and peaceful death may prove animating and instructive to others.

This our *beloved* friend was born in the year 1784, at Ashwell in Hertfordshire, but on her parents removing to Honeywood Farm, near Potter's Bar, she became a member of Tottenham Monthly Meeting, and was placed for two years at Ackworth School.

At twenty-five years of age she first opened her mouth in public testimony at Winchmore-Hill Meeting with these words, "Blessed is that man, whom, when his Lord cometh, he shall find watching."—Being careful in after life to regard this Divine injunction, we believe she was frequently favoured to partake of the reward annexed thereto—"Verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them."

She was an example of diligence in the attendance of our religious meetings; and, whilst at home, she had frequently to walk, particularly on fourth-days, a distance of more than six miles from her father's house, to enjoy that privilege.

Some time after the period alluded to, she removed into a Friend's family at Staines, and whilst there, was acknowledged as a minister in unity by Longford Monthly Meeting ; and on her marriage with our friend John Hubbert, in 1819, she became a member of this meeting.

The public services of our dear friend were pretty much within her own meetings, and although her communications in the ministry were not very frequent, nor in many words, there was a savour to be experienced which answered to the witness for truth in the minds of many of those who heard her.

It was her concern reverently to wait for the arising of that Divine life and power in the heart, which can alone qualify for service in the church of Christ ; and under this contriting influence she was engaged to proclaim the truth as it is in Jesus, and to hand a word of counsel and encouragement to the help and comfort of her friends.

Being careful not to exceed the measure of life and power of the gift intrusted to her, her ministry was acceptable and instructive : and we believe not a few can bear their testimony to its baptizing influence.

She was remarkably diffident and retiring in her disposition, and, to all those who witnessed her Christian life and conversation, she was a bright example of meekness and humility.

The health of our dear friend began to fail some years previous to her decease, and her last illness was attended with considerable bodily suffering, under which she was favoured with much patience and resignation, deriving her consolation and support from the Divine source of mercy and strength.

Some expressions which she uttered towards the close of her life have been preserved, a few of which may not unsuitably be revived here.

A week previous to her decease she petitioned thus :—



“Not my will, but thine, O Lord! be done; yet if it please Thee to release me from my sufferings, a joyous change it would be.” And, after a pause, she added, “I feel no fear of death.”

She frequently expressed her desire that she might not be deceived with regard to her soul's salvation; and, on one of these occasions, she added; “But there seems no accusation brought against me.” At another time, when evidently under a feeling of her Heavenly Father's love, she expressed herself to this effect, “Oh! how precious the feeling of this love!” One evening she said, “What a favour to have a hope, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast!” adding, “If there was nothing for the poor mind to lean upon at such a time as this, what *should* I do? like a poor bark upon the mighty waters.” One morning, being under great suffering from difficulty of breathing, she supplicated, “Thou, O Lord, knowest my sufferings: if it please Thee, cut the cord and set me free; but, Thy will be done.” In the afternoon of the same day she expressed a hope that her confidence might not fail her. On the last first day morning, when her husband had returned from meeting, on going to her bedside, she sweetly said to him, “Peace with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!” Her medical attendant shortly afterwards coming into the room, she remarked, “The Lord's time is ever the best time”—adding, with considerable emphasis, “mind that.”

At a later period she very sweetly uttered these words: “Now, lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation”!<sup>2</sup> When the conflict with pain and suffering had ceased, she lay for a considerable time as in a quiet sleep, until she peacefully breathed her last; when her purified spirit left its frail tabernacle for one—as we reverently trust—of those many mansions which the Saviour hath prepared in his Father's house, for all those who love and serve him. She departed this life the 13th of



11th month, 1844, and her remains were interred at Winchmore Hill, on the 24th of the same, aged 60 years; a minister about 35 years.

Signed in Peel Monthly Meeting, held by adjournment, the 23rd of 3rd month, 1845.

## A TESTIMONY

*From the MONTHLY MEETING at NORWICH, concerning  
SARAH BLECKLY, deceased.*

OUR beloved friend, Sarah Bleckly, was the daughter of William and Sarah Bleckly of Dickleburgh in the county of Norfolk; and born the 24th of 8th month, 1763. A lively testimony is recorded (in the Monthly Meeting of Tivetshall) of the valuable life and gospel labours of her father, William Bleckly; a minister, sound in doctrine and dearly beloved; and we are informed that her mother, Sarah Bleckly, was in the station of elder, and of good report, labouring with her husband to train up their numerous offspring in the paths of virtue and uprightness, ruling their house in love.

In 1786 our dear friend was engaged as governess in the family of Richard and Jane Harris of Walworth, in the neighbourhood of London: whilst in this situation she conducted herself with much propriety and striking humility of mind; and was throughout an exemplary instructress of children, evincing at the same time an amiableness and general charity of disposition, which won the affection of her associates, and enabled her to enter into true sympathy with them under every circumstance of affliction.

The exercise of mind which for some time previous to her removal from this family had been evident, caused the belief that she was under the preparing hand for service in the church. In 1795, in consequence of the decease of her father, she returned to her family at Long Stratton, to

reside with her widowed mother ; and in the course of the following year came forth in the ministry, to the satisfaction of Friends, and was acknowledged a minister in 1798.

For several years after this period, it appears that our dear friend was much engaged in religious service in different parts of England, principally in the southern and eastern counties. Her gospel labours frequently extending also to those not in profession with us, which, there is cause to believe, were to the edification of many, and to the peace and comfort of her own mind. In 1831, she removed to Pakefield ; after which, with the exception of two public meetings in the vicinity, her services did not extend beyond the compass of our Quarterly Meeting. She was sound in doctrine, and her ministry often remarkably applicable to the state of individuals, her expression simple and unadorned, her desire being, as we trust, that Christ should be all in all.

When about forty-four years of age it pleased her Heavenly Father to deprive her of sight ; which dispensation she bore with cheerfulness and resignation ; and under that deprivation most of her services in the ministry were accomplished.

With limited means, she was ready to contribute to the necessities of the poor around her, for she had remarkably experienced the providential care of the Lord, so that she doubted not its continuance unto the end of life ; being careful and economical, especially of time, almost constantly employed for herself or others, believing that idleness was unfavourable to mental or bodily health. Our dear friend frequently adverted to a snare into which she had fallen in her youth, that of perusing light and vain books ; remarking that years elapsed before the injurious effects were removed from her mind.

Her useful life, even to its close, appears to have exhibited those fruits of the Spirit, lowliness, meekness, long-suffering and godliness which, with the liveliness of her



conversation, seasoned as it was with the salt which retained its savour, were edifying to all around her. Yet our dear friend had seasons of inward conflict, and deep poverty of spirit; and she often mourned for those who had forsaken the narrow way, and who therefore came not up in their appointed places.

It was the prevailing desire of her heart, that all should repent and come to the knowledge of salvation. She was led frequently to visit her poor neighbours; to some of whom her words were greatly blessed and her counsel and advice were prized by many not of our Society. It was her practice to have the Scriptures read to her not only once, but three or four times in the day, and she would endeavour to improve others in reading them distinctly.

The only extract from her papers that has come before us, evinces the love and care that attended her mind for the preservation of the church. In a letter to a friend she writes: "From my age I can do but little for the good cause, but desire its prosperity. I believe there will yet be preserved a living remnant of Zion's travellers, who shall be strengthened to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, and these will have near unity and fellowship one with another, which, next to the feeling of the Divine presence to support under the deepest trials, appears to me the most desirable of anything here below; for, 'by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another.'"

On the 27th of 2nd month, 1844, she was released from the mortal tabernacle, being apparently spared much bodily suffering on the approach of death: some days previous to her dissolution she remarked that she was very feeble, but did not acknowledge that she was more unwell than usual. First day, the 25th, although she had passed rather a tranquil night, she was not able to join the family till the afternoon; but spent the evening in cheerful conversation

with her sisters. Before retiring for the night she took an affectionate leave of them, and of a young man who had called to speak to her. Early on second day her sisters were summoned to her bedside: all power of speech and movement was gone:—the following morning she peacefully departed; and the consoling belief remained, that, through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, she finished her course with joy, and is entered into the place of her rest.

She died in the 81st year of her age and was buried at Pakefield, on the 5th of 3rd month, 1844, a minister about 48 years. The interment was attended by many Friends and neighbours, proving a solemn season, in which the language was felt and expressed, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

Signed in our Monthly Meeting, held in Norwich, on the 13th of the 3rd month, 1845.

## A TESTIMONY

*From GUISBOROUGH MONTHLY MEETING, concerning JOHN BAKER, who died on the 18th day of the 4th month, 1844, and was interred in Friends' Burial-Ground at Didderhow, near Castleton, on the 22nd of the same, being in the 70th year of his age, having been a Minister about 29 years.*

OUR beloved friend John Baker of Danbydale was the oldest son of John and Mary Baker of the same place, and born there on the 27th of the 10th month, 1774. His parents were consistent members of our Society, and their care and endeavours to train up their offspring in the fear of God were blessed to a large family of children. Brought up under the parental roof, our dear friend was concerned to remember his Creator in the days of his youth.

From the age of twelve years he appears to have been religiously inclined, and has often expressed, in later life, the gratitude he felt that he had been made willing to take up the cross and to "bear the yoke in his youth," and that he was drawn to seek after more substantial things than the vanities and delights of the world. His father dying when he was about sixteen years of age, and the care of the business devolving principally upon him, he found it needful to be very industrious. In those days many were the exercises of mind he had to pass through. It was often his practice to retire into the fields and solitary places, and to pour out his soul unto the Lord for help and for strength; whom, he had to acknowledge, he sought not in vain, and that many were the spiritual consolations he received. Persevering in



his desires after holiness, and witnessing a growth in grace, he became in early life a preacher of righteousness in life and conversation.

He was early concerned for the right maintenance of the various testimonies of our Society; and when he was about twenty-eight years of age was appointed to the important station of elder, having for some years previously acceptably filled that of overseer.

In the year 1798 he was united in marriage to Mary Ventress, a member of Thirsk Monthly Meeting, who has survived him. They were no strangers to domestic affliction: seven out of twelve children dying during their childhood. These trials our dear friend was enabled to bear with becoming resignation. After the death of a beloved and endeared daughter at Ackworth School, in the year 1810, he had successive attacks of illness, which several times brought him near to the gates of death. At some of these seasons he appears to have been filled with the love and presence of the Lord in a remarkable manner, wherein his attachment to the world seems to have become much lessened. Many were the conflicts of his spirit about this period, in the prospect of being called to appear as a minister in our religious meetings; but finding strength to yield to this apprehension of duty, and endeavouring in simplicity to follow the path pointed out, he experienced peace therein, and his ministry was to the satisfaction of Friends. From some instructive memorandums which he has left behind him, his care appears to have been very great, lest he should move in his own will and without the right anointing. In the year 1815 he was recorded as a minister; and he was several times liberated by our Monthly Meeting to hold meetings with those not professing with Friends, principally within our own limits.

These meetings we believe were to the satisfaction of Friends and those whom he visited. His last engagement

of this kind was in the summer of 1841. Although before this period his mental faculties had at times appeared to be giving way, and his bodily powers were evidently weakened by the effects of an attack of paralysis which he had had some years before, yet, notwithstanding these infirmities, he seemed in some of those meetings (whilst as it were offering his evening sacrifice) clothed with ability to preach the Gospel with power and divine authority, to his own humbling admiration and that of the Friends who accompanied him, some of whom, at times, look back to those seasons with feelings of thankfulness. After this, a complaint to which he had for some time been subject, increasing upon him, he got but little from home ; but when favoured with ability of body attended Meetings for Worship and Discipline, in which duties through life he had been remarkably diligent, being rarely absent from our Monthly Meetings, where, now deprived of his fatherly advice and assistance, we sensibly feel our loss. In a letter to a friend about a year before his decease, when confined at home by illness, he expressed much concern for those who were so engrossed with other pursuits as not to be willing to spare time for these reasonable duties ; observing, that he had been as diligent as most men in attention to his temporal concerns ; but it was then a pleasing reflection, whilst feeling the infirmities of declining years, that he had been willing to make some sacrifice to attend meetings, not only at home, but also those held at a distance, having felt great comfort therein ; adding, that he had been able to say with the Psalmist, “ I was glad when they said unto me, Come, let us go into the house of the Lord.”

His communications in later life, when able to attend meetings, were sometimes in very few words, yet accompanied with life ; often recommending Friends to a right exercise of mind in their meetings, that so they might witness that benefit of which he appears himself to have been favoured at times largely to partake, and which he has gratefully



commemorated among the many mercies of the Lord extended to him. It appears, nevertheless, that he was often tried with deep conflicts of spirit; yet, as he approached the confines of that city which hath foundations, he was favoured to witness that He, who had been the stay of his youth and the strength of his meridian day, did not forsake him when his natural strength was fast hastening to decay. On the 22nd of 3rd month, alarming symptoms having appeared, and being told by his medical attendant that he could hold out no expectation of his long continuance here, he received the intelligence with great composure, and expressed his gratitude for the kindness which had been shown to him. He said, he hoped a place of rest was prepared for him; his trust was in the Lord, and he had now no fear of death. Two days after, he fervently prayed for an admittance into the mansions of eternal rest and happiness, and afterwards signified, he thought he heard a voice from the Lord, "Trust in the Lord Jesus—trust in the Lord Jesus." In the afternoon of the same day, he said to those around him, "May we all abide in the vine, and bring forth fruit to the glory of God: he that abideth not in Christ bringeth not forth fruit to his glory. Every one needeth to be pruned, that they may bring forth fruit to his glory. Christ is the true vine, every branch that taketh not of his sap and virtue will not bring forth fruit."

A few days after, he repeated part of the Lord's prayer, adding, "Give me ability to say, 'Thy will, not mine, be done;' and when my course here is ended, permit me an entrance into the mansions of eternal bliss, to sleep in Jesus—yes, to sleep in Jesus." At another time he said, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and goodwill to men, was the proclamation of the coming of our Saviour;" adding, "Blessed Jesus! Blessed Jesus!"

During his long illness his natural powers at times appeared to fail him; but he was mostly alive to the best



things, and he was heard to utter such expressions as these, "Oh! the sweet seasons I have felt, and am still at times favoured to feel! Oh! the effusions of thy love, which I have at times experienced! Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name! Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive riches, and power, and glory, honour, and blessing! Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are all thy ways, thou King of saints." About a week before his decease he had a visit from three Friends engaged on a religious visit, with which he several times expressed himself much comforted. Soon after this he became more feeble, and his spirit gently quitted its earthly tabernacle, and is joined, we doubt not, to that "innumerable multitude who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

On reviewing the life and character of our departed friend we are forcibly reminded of the declaration of the apostle, "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world."

Signed in and on behalf of the aforesaid Meeting, held at Ayton, 12th month 23rd, 1844.

## A TESTIMONY

*Of* GUISBOROUGH MONTHLY MEETING, *respecting* ELIZABETH DUNNING, *a Minister, deceased.*

OUR dear friend Elizabeth Dunning was the daughter of William and Ann Dunning of Bilsdale, afterwards of Borrowby, near Thirsk, and born at the former place in the year 1779.

In the year 1831, she removed with her youngest sister to the neighbourhood of Ayton, and thus became a member of this Monthly Meeting, where she was endeared to Friends by her uniform kindness and true simplicity of manner ; possessing also, in an eminent degree, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. In the year 1840 she was recorded as a minister, having for several years previously appeared in that service acceptably to her friends, though much in the cross to her own naturally diffident disposition. Her communications were delivered in great simplicity, and her ministry was sound, scriptural, and edifying. She was several times engaged, with the concurrence of this Meeting, in visiting Friends in their families, being particularly drawn towards those who are connected with the Society and not in membership, and such as had lost their birthright in it.

These engagements were entered upon under a feeling of weakness and fear, and a deep sense of the importance of the work : she was however favoured with the reward of peace.

For some years our dear friend had been liable to alarming attacks of illness, which had induced her to believe that she should be suddenly called away. On the evening of the

25th of 5th month last, she retired to rest in usual health, but about twelve o'clock was seized with an attack, which, in a short time, terminated her earthly existence. Sudden as was the summons, yet we reverently believe she was found with her loins girded and her lamp burning, prepared to enter into the joy of her Lord. "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching."

On the 31st of the same month her remains were interred in Friends' burial-ground at Ayton, aged nearly 65 years.

Signed in and on behalf of the aforesaid Meeting, held at Castleton, 11th month 18th, 1844.

THE END.





TESTIMONIES  
CONCERNING  
DECEASED MINISTERS.

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PRESENTED TO  
THE YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS,  
HELD IN LONDON, 1846.

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