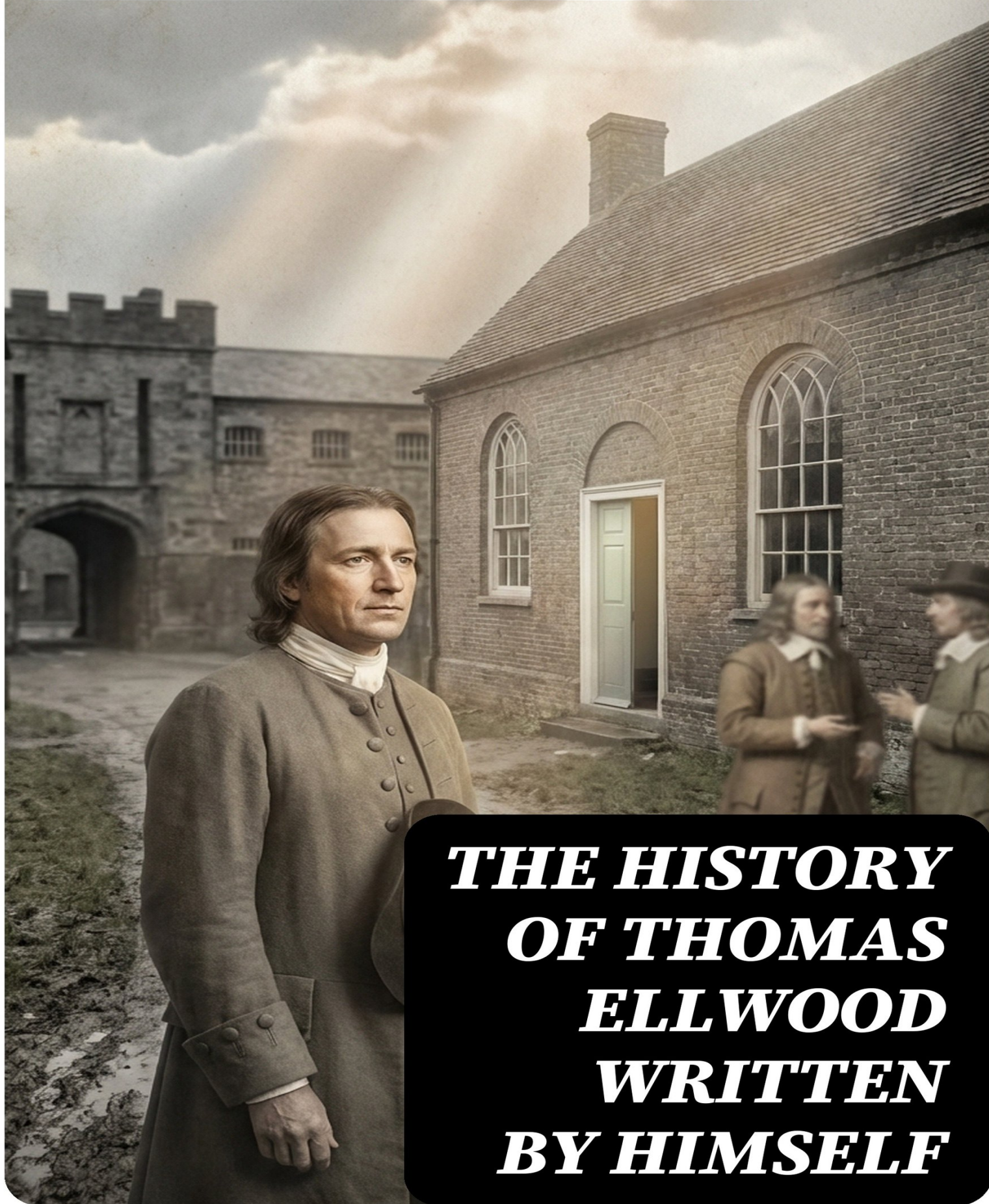
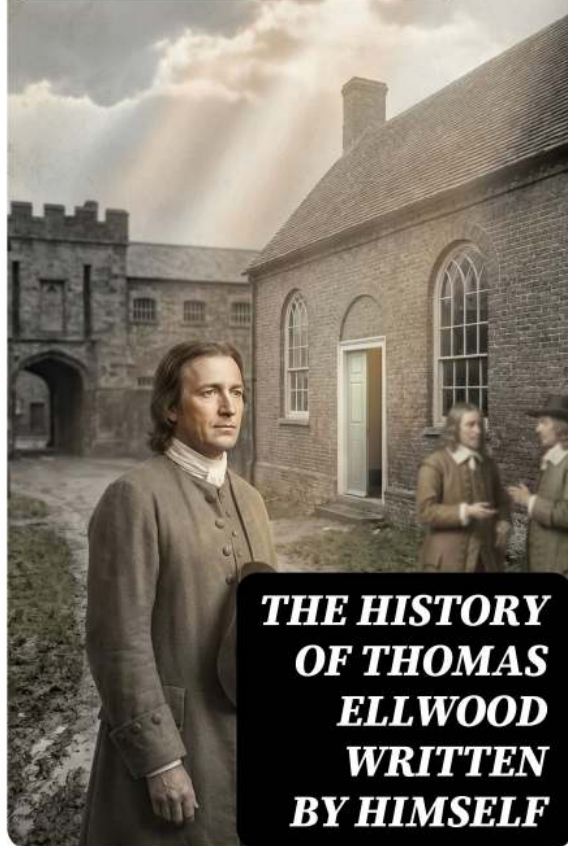


THOMAS ELLWOOD



***THE HISTORY
OF THOMAS
ELLWOOD
WRITTEN
BY HIMSELF***

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Thomas Ellwood

The History of Thomas Ellwood Written By Himself

Enriched edition.

Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Darren Fox

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INTRODUCTION.

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THE life of the simple Quaker, Thomas Ellwood, to whom the pomps and shows of earth were nowhere so vain as in association with the spiritual life of man, may serve as companion to another volume in this Library, the “Life of Wolsey” by George Cavendish, who, as a gentleman of the great prelate’s household, made part of his pomp, but had heart to love him in his pride and in his fall. “The History of Thomas Ellwood, written by Himself,” is interesting for the frankness with which it makes Thomas Ellwood himself known to us; and again, for the same frank simplicity that brings us nearer than books usually bring us to a living knowledge of some features of a bygone time; and yet again, because it helps us a little to come near to Milton in his daily life. He would be a good novelist who could invent as pleasant a book as this unaffected record of a quiet life touched by great influences in eventful times.

Thomas Ellwood, who was born in 1639, in the reign of Charles the First, carried the story of his life in this book to the year 1683, when he was forty-four years old. He outlived the days of trouble here recorded, enjoyed many years of peace, and died, near the end of Queen Anne’s reign, aged 74, on the first of March 1713, in his house at Hunger Hill, by Amersham. He was eleven years younger than John Bunyan, and years younger than George Fox[2], the founder of that faithful band of worshippers known as the Society of Friends[1]. They turned from all forms and ceremonies that involved untruth or insincerity, now the temple of God in

man's body, and, as Saint Paul said the Corinthians, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you," they sought to bring Christ into their hearts, and speak and act as if Christ was within governing their words and actions. They would have no formal prayers, no formal preaching, but sought to speak with each other as the Spirit prompted, soul to soul. They would not, when our plural pronoun "you" was still only plural, speak to one man as if he were two or more. They swore not at all[1q]; but their "Yea" and "Nay" were known to be more binding than the oaths of many of their persecutors. And as they would not go through the required form of swearing allegiance to the Government whenever called upon to do so, they were continually liable to penalties of imprisonment when imprisonment too often meant jail fever, misery, and death. George Fox began his teaching when Ellwood was eight years old. Ellwood was ten years old when Fox was first imprisoned at Nottingham, and the offences of his followers against established forms led, as he says, to "great rage, blows, punchings, beatings, and imprisonments." Of what this rage meant, and of the spirit in which it was endured, we learn much from the History of Thomas Ellwood.

Isaac Penington[3], whose influence upon young Ellwood's mind is often referred to in this book, was born in the year of Shakespeare's death, and had joined the Society of Friends in 1658, when his own age was forty-two and Ellwood's was nineteen. He was the son of Alderman Isaac Penington, a Puritan member for the City of London, who announced, at a time in the year 1640 when the Parliament was in sore need of money, that his constituents had

subscribed £21,000 to a loan, which the members of the House then raised to £90,000, by rising, one after another, to give their personal bonds each for a thousand pounds. Isaac Penington the son, whom Ellwood loved as a friend and revered as a father, became a foremost worker and writer in the Society of Friends. In a note upon him, written after his death, Thomas Ellwood said that “in his family he was a true pattern of goodness and piety; to his wife he was a most affectionate husband; to his children, a loving and tender father; to his servants, a mild and gentle master; to his friends, a firm and fast friend; to the poor, compassionate and open-hearted; and to all, courteous and kind?” In 1661 he was committed to Aylesbury gaol^[4] for worshipping God in his own house (holding a conventicle^[7]), “where,” says Ellwood in that little testimony which he wrote after his friend’s death, “for seventeen weeks, great part of it in winter, he was kept in a cold and very incommodious room, without a chimney; from which hard usage his tender body contracted so great and violent a distemper that, for several weeks after, he was not able to turn himself in bed.” “His second imprisonment,” says Ellwood, “was in the year 1664, being taken out of a meeting, when he with others were peaceably waiting on the Lord, and sent to Aylesbury gaol, where he again remained a prisoner between seventeen and eighteen weeks.

“His third imprisonment was in the year 1665, being taken up, with many others, in the open street of Amersham, as they were carrying and accompanying the body of a deceased Friend to the grave. From hence he was

sent again to Aylesbury gaol; but this commitment being in order to banishment, was but for a month, or thereabouts.

“His fourth imprisonment was in the same year 1665, about a month after his releasement from the former. Hitherto his commitment had been by the civil magistrates; but now, that he might experience the severity of each, he fell into the military hands. A rude soldier, without any other warrant than what he carried in his scabbard, came to his house, and told him he came to fetch him before Sir Philip Palmer, one of the deputy-lieutenants of the county. He meekly went, and was by him sent with a guard of soldiers to Aylesbury gaol, with a kind of mittimus, importing ‘That the gaoler should receive and keep him in safe custody during the pleasure of the Earl of Bridgewater,’ who had, it seems, conceived so great, as well as unjust, displeasure against this innocent man, that, although (it being the sickness year) the plague was suspected to be in the gaol, he would not be prevailed with only to permit Isaac Penington to be removed to another house in the town, and there kept prisoner until the gaol was clear. Afterwards, a prisoner dying in the gaol of the plague, the gaoler’s wife, her husband being absent, gave leave to Isaac Penington to remove to another house, where he was shut up for six weeks; after which, by the procurement of the Earl of Ancram, a release was sent from the said Philip Palmer, by which he was discharged, after he had suffered imprisonment three-quarters of a year, with apparent hazard of his life, and that for no offence.”

This was not the end of the troubles of Ellwood’s patron and friend. He had been home only three weeks when “the

said Philip Palmer” seized him again, dragged him out of bed, sent him, without any cause shown, to Aylesbury gaol, and kept him a year and a half prisoner “in rooms so cold, damp, and unhealthy, that it went very near to cost him his life, and procured him so great a distemper that he lay weak of it several months. At length a relation of his wife, by an *habeas corpus*[\[5\]](#), removed him to the King’s Bench bar, where (with the wonder of the court that a man should be so long imprisoned for nothing) he was at last released in the year 1668.” “Paradise Lost[\[6\]](#)” had appeared in the year before. Yet a sixth imprisonment followed in 1670, when Penington, visiting some Friends in Reading gaol, was seized and carried before Sir William Armorer, a justice of the peace, who sent him back to share their sufferings. Penington died in 1679.

Of Thomas Ellwood’s experience as reader to Milton, and of Milton’s regard for the gentle Quaker, the book tells its own tale. I will only add one comment upon an often-quoted incident that it contains. When Milton gave his young friend—then twenty-six years old—the manuscript of “Paradise Lost” to read, his desire could only have been to learn what comprehension of his purpose there would be in a young man sincerely religious, as intelligent as most, and with a taste for verse, though not much of a poet. The observation Ellwood made, of which he is proud because of its consequence, might well cause Milton to be silent for a little while, and then change the conversation. It showed that the whole aim of the poem had been missed. Its crown is in the story of redemption, Paradise Found, the better Eden, the “Paradise within thee, happier far.” Milton had applied his

test, and learnt—what every great poet has to learn—that he must trust more to the vague impression of truth, beauty, and high thought, that can be made upon thousands of right-hearted men and women, than to the clear, full understanding of his work. The noblest aims of the true artist can make themselves felt by all, though understood by few. Few know the secrets of the sunshine, although all draw new life from the sun. When Milton—who, with his habitual gentleness, never allowed Ellwood to suspect that he had missed the whole purpose of “Paradise Lost”—showed him “Paradise Regained,” and made him happy by telling him that he caused it to be written; he showed him a poem that expanded the closing thought of “Paradise Lost” into an image of the Paradise within, that is to be obtained only by an imitation of Christ under all forms of our temptation.

Of Ellwood’s life after the year in which he ends his own account of it, let it suffice to say, that he wrote earnest, gentle books in support of his opinions and against the persecution of them. He lived retired until the year 1688, and occupied himself with an attempt at a *Davideis*, a Life of David in verse. He had not then seen Cowley’s. Ellwood carried on his verses to the end of David’s life, and published them in 1712. When George Fox died, in 1690, Thomas Ellwood transcribed his journal for the press, and printed it next year in folio, prefixing an account of Fox. He was engaged afterwards in controversy with George Keith, a seceder from the Friends. His intellectual activity continued unabated to the end. In 1709 he suffered distraint for tithes; goods to the value of £24 10s. being taken for a due of

about £14, after which the distrainers “brought him still in debt, and wanted more.”

Ellwood’s life was healthy, except that he was asthmatic towards the end. His wife died five years before him. Of her, J. Wyeth, citizen of London, who was the editor of “Ellwood’s History of his Life,” and wrote its sequel, says that she was “a solid, weighty woman.” But the context shows that he means those adjectives to be read in a spiritual sense. “The liberal soul shall be made fat,” says Solomon.

H. M.

November 1885.

THE HISTORY OF THOMAS ELLWOOD. WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

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ALTHOUGH my station, not being so eminent either in the church of Christ or in the world as others who have moved in higher orbs, may not afford such considerable remarks as theirs, yet inasmuch as in the course of my travels through this vale of tears I have passed through various and some uncommon exercises, which the Lord hath been graciously pleased to support me under and conduct me through, I hold it a matter excusable at least, if not commendable, to give the world some little account of my life, that in recounting the many deliverances and preservations which the Lord hath vouchsafed to work for me, both I, by a grateful acknowledgment thereof and return of thanksgivings unto him therefor, may in some measure set

forth His abundant goodness to me, and others, whose lot it may be to tread the same path and fall into the same or like exercises, may be encouraged to persevere in the way of holiness, and with full assurance of mind to trust in the Lord, whatsoever trials may befall them.

To begin therefore with mine own beginning, I was born in the year of our Lord 1639, about the beginning of the eighth month, so far as I have been able to inform myself, for the parish register, which relates to the time not of birth but of baptism, as they call it, is not to be relied on.

The place of my birth was a little country town called Crowell, situate in the upper side of Oxfordshire, three miles eastward from Thame, the nearest market town.

My father's name was Walter Ellwood, and my mother's maiden name was Elizabeth Potman, both well descended, but of declining families. So that what my father possessed (which was a pretty estate in lands, and more as I have heard in moneys) he received, as he had done his name Walter, from his grandfather Walter Gray, whose daughter and only child was his mother.

In my very infancy, when I was but about two years old, I was carried to London; for the civil war between King and Parliament breaking then forth, my father, who favoured the Parliament side, though he took not arms, not holding himself safe at his country habitation, which lay too near some garrisons of the King's, betook himself to London, that city then holding for the Parliament.

There was I bred up, though not without much difficulty, the city air not agreeing with my tender constitution, and

there continued until Oxford was surrendered, and the war in appearance ended.

In this time my parents contracted an acquaintance and intimate friendship with the Lady Springett, who being then the widow of Sir William Springett, who died in the Parliament service, was afterwards the wife of Isaac Penington, eldest son of Alderman Penington, of London. And this friendship devolving from the parents to the children, I became an early and particular playfellow to her daughter Gulielma; being admitted, as such, to ride with her in her little coach, drawn by her footman about Lincoln's Inn Fields.

I mention this in this place because the continuation of that acquaintance and friendship, having been an occasional means of my being afterwards brought to the knowledge of the blessed TRUTH, I shall have frequent cause, in the course of the following discourse, to make honourable mention of that family, to which I am under so many and great obligations.

Soon after the surrender of Oxford my father returned to his estate at Crowell, which by that time he might have need enough to look after, having spent, I suppose, the greatest part of the moneys which had been left him by his grandfather in maintaining himself and his family at a high rate in London.

My elder brother (for I had one brother and two sisters, all elder than myself) was, while we lived in London, boarded at a private school, in the house of one Francis Atkinson, at a place called Hadley, near Barnet, in Hertfordshire, where he had made some good proficiency in

the Latin and French tongues. But after we had left the city, and were re-settled in the country, he was taken from that private school and sent to the free school at Thame, in Oxfordshire.

Thither also was I sent as soon as my tender age would permit; for I was indeed but young when I went, and yet seemed younger than I was, by reason of my low and little stature. For it was held for some years a doubtful point whether I should not have proved a dwarf. But after I was arrived at the fifteenth year of my age, or thereabouts, I began to shoot up, and gave not up growing till I had attained the middle size and stature of men.

At this school, which at that time was in good reputation, I profited apace, having then a natural propensity to learning; so that at the first reading over of my lesson I commonly made myself master of it; and yet, which is strange to think of, few boys in the school wore out more birch than I. For though I was never, that I remember, whipped upon the score of not having my lesson ready, or of not saying it well, yet being a little busy boy, full of spirit, of a working head and active hand, I could not easily conform myself to the grave and sober rules and, as I then thought, severe orders of the school, but was often playing one waggish prank or other among my fellow-scholars, which subjected me to correction, so that I have come under the discipline of the rod twice in a forenoon; which yet brake no bones.

Had I been continued at this school, and in due time preferred to a higher, I might in likelihood have been a scholar, for I was observed to have a genius apt to learn.

But my father having, so soon as the republican government began to settle, accepted the office of a justice of the peace (which was no way beneficial, but merely honorary, and every way expensive), and put himself into a port and course of living agreeably thereunto, and having also removed my brother from Thame school to Merton College in Oxford, and entered him there in the highest and most chargeable condition of a Fellow Commoner, he found it needful to retrench his expenses elsewhere, the hurt of which fell upon me. For he thereupon took me from school, to save the charge of maintaining me there; which was somewhat like plucking green fruit from the tree, and laying it by before it was come to its due ripeness, which will thenceforth shrink and wither, and lose that little juice and relish which it began to have.

Even so it fared with me. For being taken home when I was but young, and before I was well settled in my studies (though I had made a good progress in the Latin tongue, and was entered in the Greek) being left too much to myself, to ply or play with my books, or without them, as I pleased, I soon shook hands with my books by shaking my books out of my hands, and laying them by degrees quite aside, and addicted myself to such youthful sports and pleasures as the place afforded and my condition could reach unto.

By this means, in a little time I began to lose that little learning I had acquired at school, and by a continued disuse of my books became at length so utterly a stranger to learning, that I could not have read, far less have understood, a sentence in Latin: which I was so sensible of

that I warily avoided reading to others, even in an English book, lest, if I should meet with a Latin word, I should shame myself by mispronouncing it.

Thus I went on, taking my swing in such vain courses as were accounted harmless recreations, entertaining my companions and familiar acquaintance with pleasant discourses in our conversations, by the mere force of mother-wit and natural parts, without the help of school cultivation; and was accounted good company too.

But I always sorted myself with persons of ingenuity, temperance, and sobriety; for I loathed scurrilities in conversation, and had a natural aversion to immoderate drinking. So that in the time of my greatest vanity I was preserved from profaneness and the grosser evils of the world, which rendered me acceptable to persons of the best note in that country then. I often waited on the Lord Wenman at his house, Thame Park, about two miles from Crowell, where I lived; to whose favour I held myself entitled in a twofold respect, both as my mother was nearly related to his lady, and as he had been pleased to bestow his name upon me, when he made large promises for me at the font. He was a person of great honour and virtue, and always gave me a kind reception at his table, how often soever I came. And I have cause to think I should have received from this lord some advantageous preferment in this world, as soon as he had found me capable of it (though betwixt him and my father there was not then so good an understanding as might have been wished), had I not been, in a little time after, called into the service of the best and highest Lord, and thereby lost the favour of all my friends, relations, and

acquaintance of this world. To the account of which most happy exchange I hasten, and therefore willingly pass over many particularities of my youthful life. Yet one passage I am willing to mention, for the effect it had upon me afterwards, which was thus.

My father being then in the Commission of the Peace, and going to a Petty Sessions at Watlington, I waited on him thither. And when we came near the town, the coachman, seeing a nearer and easier way (than the common road) through a corn-field, and that it was wide enough for the wheels to run without damaging the corn, turned down there; which being observed by a husbandman who was at plough not far off, he ran to us, and stopping the coach, poured forth a mouthful of complaints, in none of the best language, for driving over the corn. My father mildly answered him, "That if there was an offence committed, he must rather impute it to his servant than himself, since he neither directed him to drive that way, nor knew which way he drove." Yet added, "That he was going to such an inn at the town, whither if he came he would make him full satisfaction for whatsoever damage he had sustained thereby." And so on we went, the man venting his discontent, as he went back, in angry accents. At the town, upon inquiry, we understood that it was a way often used, and without damage, being broad enough; but that it was not the common road, which yet lay not far from it, and was also good enough; wherefore my father bid his man drive home that way.

It was late in the evening when we returned, and very dark; and this quarrelsome man, who had troubled himself

and us in the morning, having gotten another lusty fellow like himself to assist him, waylaid us in the night, expecting we would return the same way we came. But when they found we did not, but took the common way, they, angry that they were disappointed, and loth to lose their purpose (which was to put an abuse upon us), coasted over to us in the dark, and laying hold on the horses' bridles, stopped them from going on. My father, asking his man what the reason was that he went not on, was answered, "That there were two men at the horses' heads, who held them back, and would not suffer them to go forward." Whereupon my father, opening the boot, stepped out, and I followed close at his heels. Going up to the place where the men stood, he demanded of them the meaning of this assault. They said, "We were upon the corn." We knew by the route we were not on the corn, but in the common way, and told them so; but they told us, "They were resolved they would not let us go on any farther, but would make us go back again." My father endeavoured by gentle reasoning to persuade them to forbear, and not run themselves farther into the danger of the law, which they were run too far into already; but they rather derided him for it. Seeing therefore fair means would not work upon them, he spake more roughly to them, charging them to deliver their clubs (for each of them had a great club in his hand, somewhat like those which are called quarter-staves): they thereupon, laughing, told him, "They did not bring them thither for that end." Thereupon my father, turning his head to me, said, "Tom, disarm them."

I stood ready at his elbow, waiting only for the word of command. For being naturally of a bold spirit, full then of

youthful heat, and that, too, heightened by the sense I had, not only of the abuse, but insolent behaviour of those rude fellows, my blood began to boil, and my fingers itched, as the saying is, to be dealing with them. Wherefore, stepping boldly forward to lay hold on the staff of him that was nearest to me, I said, "Sirrah, deliver your weapon." He thereupon raised his club, which was big enough to have knocked down an ox, intending no doubt to have knocked me down with it, as probably he would have done, had I not, in the twinkling of an eye, whipped out my rapier, and made a pass upon him. I could not have failed running of him through up to the hilt had he stood his ground, but the sudden and unexpected sight of my bright blade glittering in the dark night, did so amaze and terrify the man, that, slipping aside, he avoided my thrust, and letting his staff sink, betook himself to his heels for safety; which his companion seeing, fled also. I followed the former as fast as I could, but *timor addidit alas* (fear gave him wings), and made him swiftly fly; so that, although I was accounted very nimble, yet the farther we ran the more ground he gained on me; so that I could not overtake him, which made me think he took shelter under some bush, which he knew where to find, though I did not. Meanwhile, the coachman, who had sufficiently the outside of a man, excused himself from intermeddling under pretence that he durst not leave his horses, and so left me to shift for myself; and I was gone so far beyond my knowledge, that I understood not which way I was to go, till by halloing, and being halloed to again, I was directed where to find my company.

We had easy means to have found out who these men were (the principal of them having been in the daytime at the inn, and both quarrelled with the coachman, and threatened to be even with him when he went back); but since they came off no better in their attempt, my father thought it better not to know them, than to oblige himself to a prosecution of them.

At that time, and for a good while after, I had no regret upon my mind for what I had done, and designed to have done, in this case, but went on in a sort of bravery, resolving to kill, if I could, any man that should make the like attempt or put any affront on us; and for that reason seldom went afterwards upon those public services without a loaded pistol in my pocket. But when it pleased the Lord, in his infinite goodness, to call me out of the spirit and ways of the world, and give me the knowledge of his saving truth, whereby the actions of my fore-past life were set in order before me, a sort of horror seized on me, when I considered how near I had been to the staining of my hands with human blood. And whensoever afterwards I went that way, and indeed as often since as the matter has come into my remembrance, my soul has blessed the Lord for my deliverance, and thanksgivings and praises have arisen in my heart (as now at the relating of it, they do) to Him who preserved and withheld me from shedding man's blood. Which is the reason for which I have given this account of that action, that others may be warned by it.

About this time my dear and honoured mother, who was indeed a woman of singular worth and virtue, departed this life, having a little before heard of the death of her eldest

son, who (falling under the displeasure of my father for refusing to resign his interest in an estate which my father sold, and thereupon desiring that he might have leave to travel, in hopes that time and absence might work a reconciliation) went into Ireland with a person powerful there in those times, by whose means he was quickly preferred to a place of trust and profit, but lived not long to enjoy it.

I mentioned before, that during my father's abode in London, in the time of the civil wars, he contracted a friendship with the Lady Springett, then a widow, and afterwards married to Isaac Penington, Esq., to continue which he sometimes visited them at their country lodgings, as at Datchet, and at Causham Lodge, near Reading. And having heard that they were come to live upon their own estate at Chalfont, in Buckinghamshire, about fifteen miles from Crowell, he went one day to visit them there, and to return at night, taking me with him.

But very much surprised we were when, being come thither, we first heard, then found, they were become Quakers; a people we had no knowledge of, and a name we had till then scarce heard of.

So great a change, from a free, debonair, and courtly sort of behaviour, which we formerly had found them in, to so strict a gravity as they now received us with did not a little amuse us, and disappoint our expectation of such a pleasant visit as we used to have, and had now promised ourselves. Nor could my father have any opportunity, by a private conference with them, to understand the ground or occasion of this change, there being some other strangers

with them (related to Isaac Penington), who came that morning from London to visit them also.

For my part I sought and at length found means to cast myself into the company of the daughter, whom I found gathering some flowers in the garden, attended by her maid, who was also a Quaker. But when I addressed myself to her after my accustomed manner, with intention to engage her in some discourse which might introduce conversation on the footing of our former acquaintance, though she treated me with a courteous mien, yet, as young as she was, the gravity of her look and behaviour struck such an awe upon me, that I found myself not so much master of myself as to pursue any further converse with her. Wherefore, asking pardon for my boldness in having intruded myself into her private walks, I withdrew, not without some disorder (as I thought at least) of mind.

We stayed dinner, which was very handsome, and lacked nothing to recommend it to me but the want of mirth and pleasant discourse, which we could neither have with them, nor by reason of them, with one another amongst ourselves; the weightiness that was upon their spirits and countenances keeping down the lightness that would have been up in us. We stayed, notwithstanding, till the rest of the company took leave of them, and then we also, doing the same, returned, not greatly satisfied with our journey, nor knowing what in particular to find fault with.

Yet this good effect that visit had upon my father, who was then in the Commission of the Peace, that it disposed him to a more favourable opinion of and carriage towards those people when they came in his way, as not long after

one of them did. For a young man, who lived in Buckinghamshire, came on a first-day to the church (so called) at a town called Chinner, a mile from Crowell, having, it seems, a pressure on his mind to say something to the minister of that parish. He being an acquaintance of mine, drew me sometimes to hear him, as it did then. The young man stood in the aisle before the pulpit all the time of the sermon, not speaking a word till the sermon and prayer after it were ended, and then spoke a few words to the priest, of which all that I could hear was, "That the prayer of the wicked is abomination to the Lord, and that God heareth not sinners."

Somewhat more, I think, he did say, which I could not distinctly hear for the noise the people made; and more probably he would have said, had he not been interrupted by the officers, who took him into custody, and led him out in order to carry him before my father.

When I understood that, I hastened home, that I might give my father a fair account of the matter before they came. I told him the young man behaved himself quietly and peaceably, spoke not a word till the minister had quite done his service, and that what he then spoke was but short, and was delivered without passion or ill language. This I knew would furnish my father with a fair ground whereon to discharge the man if he would.

And accordingly when they came, and made a high complaint against the man (who said little for himself), my father, having examined the officers who brought him—what the words that he spoke were (which they did not well agree in), and at what time he spoke them (which they all agreed

to be after the minister had done), and then, whether he gave the minister any reviling language, or endeavoured to raise a tumult among the people (which they could not charge him with); not finding that he had broken the law, he counselled the young man to be careful that he did not make or occasion any public disturbance, and so dismissed him; which I was glad of.

Some time after this, my father, having gotten some further account of the people called Quakers, and being desirous to be informed concerning their principles, made another visit to Isaac Penington and his wife, at their house called the Grange, in Peter's Chalfont, and took both my sisters and me with him.

It was in the tenth month, in the year 1659, that we went thither, where we found a very kind reception, and tarried some days; one day at least the longer, for that while we were there a meeting was appointed at a place about a mile from thence, to which we were invited to go, and willingly went.

It was held in a farmhouse called the Grove, which having formerly been a gentleman's seat, had a very large hall, and that well filled.

To this meeting came Edward Burrough, besides other preachers, as Thomas Curtis and James Naylor, but none spoke there at that time but Edward Burrough, next to whom, as it were under him, it was my lot to sit on a stool by the side of a long table on which he sat, and I drank in his words with desire; for they not only answered my understanding, but warmed my heart with a certain heat, which I had not till then felt from the ministry of any man.