



A Testimony given forth from our Yearly-Meeting, held at Philadelphia, for Pennsylvania and New-Jersey, by Adjournments, from the 29th Day of the Ninth Month to the 4th of the Tenth Month inclusive, 1777

[Philadelphia]: (1777)

\$8000

A TESTIMONY given forth from our YEARLY-MEETING, held at Philadelphia, for Pennsylvania and New-Jersey, by Adjournments, from the 29th Day of the Ninth Month to the 4th of the Tenth Month inclusive, 1777.

A Number of our Friends having been imprisoned and banished, unheard, from their Families, under a Charge and Infination that "they have in their general Conduct and Conversation evidenced a Disposition inimical to the Cause of America;" and from some Publications intimating that "there is strong Reason to apprehend that these Persons maintain a Correspondence highly prejudicial to the public Safety;" may induce a Belief that we have in our Conduct departed from the peaceable Principles which we profess; and apprehending that the Minds of some may thereby be misled; for the clearing of Truth, we think it necessary publicly to declare, that we are led out of all Wars and Fightings by the Principle of Grace and Truth in our own Minds, by which we are restrained either as private Members of Society, or in any of our Meetings, from holding a Correspondence with either Army; but are concerned to spread the Testimony of Truth and the peaceable Doctrines of Christ, to seek the good of all—to keep a Conscience void of Offence towards God and Man—to promote the Kingdom of the Messiah, which we pray may come, and be experienced in Individuals, in Kingdoms and Nations; that they may beat their Swords into Plow-shares and their Spears into Pruning-hooks, and Nation not lift up Sword against Nation, neither learn War any more, Hai. ii. 4. And we deny in general Terms, all Charges and Insinuations which in any Degree clash with this our Profession.

As to a nameless Paper lately published, said to be dated at Spank-Town Yearly-Meeting, and found among the Baggage on Staten-Island, every Person who is acquainted with our Style, may be convinced it was never wrote at any of our Meetings, or by any of our Friends. Besides, there is no Meeting throughout our whole Society of that Name; nor was that Letter, or any one like it, ever wrote in any of our Meetings since we were a People. We therefore solemnly deny the said Letter and its Authors; and wish that those who have assumed a fictitious Character to write under, whether with a View to injure us or to cover themselves, might find it their Place to clear us of this Charge by stating the Truth.

And as from the Knowledge we have of our banished Friends, and the best Information we have been able to obtain, we are convinced they have done nothing to forfeit their just Right to Liberty; we fervently desire that all those who have any hand in sending them into Banishment, might weightily consider the Tendency of their own Conduct, and how contrary it is to the Doctrines and Example of our Lord and Law-giver Christ Jesus; and do them that Justice which their Case requires, by restoring them to their afflicted Families and Friends: And this we are well assured will conduce more to their Peace than keeping them in Exile.—We give forth this Admonition in the Fear of God, not only with a View to the Relief of our Friends, but also to the real Interest of those concerned in their Banishment.

Having been favoured to meet to transact the Affairs of our Religious Society, which relate to the Promotion of the Cause of Truth and Righteousness, we have felt a renewed Concern for the Good and Happiness of Mankind in general; and in the Love of the Gospel have issued forth this Testimony, for the clearing ourselves and our Friends, and the warning of those, who from groundless Suspicions and mistaken Notions concerning us, may be persuaded to seek our Hurt, to the wounding their own Souls and the Loss of the Community.

Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Yearly-Meeting, by

ISAAC JACKSON, Clerk.

A scarce revolutionary war broadside petitioning for the release of Quakers held without trial under charge of a "Disposition inimical to the Cause of America."

Quarto (8" x 10"). Printed in letterpress at the bottom of the sheet: "Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Yearly-Meeting, by Isaac Jackson, Clerk." Untrimmed. Dated "1777" in manuscript on the verso. Small piece of recent clear tape on verso, fine. Printed at the height of the Revolutionary war, this broadside addresses the issue of Quaker neutrality during the war, and accusations made against them of having Loyalist sympathies. It reads, in part: "A Number of our Friends having been imprisoned and banished, unheard, from their Families, under a Charge and Insinuation that 'they have in their general Conduct and Conversation evidenced a Disposition inimical to the Cause of America;' and from some Publications intimating that 'there is strong Reason to apprehend that these Persons maintain a Correspondence highly prejudicial to public Safety ... we think it necessary publicly to declare, that we are led out of all Wars and Fightings by the Principle of Grace and Truth ..." A fine, untrimmed copy.

Evans 15302; Hildeburn, *Pennsylvania* 3638; Smith, *Friends' Books* I, p. 762; *ESTC* W5972.

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