

## Notes on the Travels of Aaron Atkinson in America, 1698, 1699

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**A**ARON ATKINSON (1665-1740) was born at Masthorn in the parish of Stapleton, Cumberland, and became a packman, apprenticed to William Armstrong. Master and man both became Friends. "They attended various Meetings and preached together, and drew large audiences. . . . They prospered too, in business, which at first after their conversion declined, but afterwards revived, as they were found to be honest in their dealings" (Ferguson, *Early Cumb. and Westm. Friends*, 1871, p. 104). Atkinson travelled to many parts of the British Isles. He attended Yearly Meeting in Philadelphia in 1698 and 1699 (Box Meeting MSS. in **D.**). On return he took up a residence at Leeds, where he died.

See *Christopher Story*, 1726; *Thomas Story*, 1747 (many reff.); *Collection of Testimonies*, 1760; *William and Alice Ellis*, 1849; mss. in **D.**

"That there was a great openness and tenderness in North Carolina, and Some Negroes broke into Tears.

"And in Virginia them called the Hatt Men none left, and of the ungodly Ranters but one left y<sup>t</sup> troubled ffriends.

"And there are young and Middle aged People among them very tender and Truth prospers and there was great tendreness and Epistles hence are comfortable to them.

"Jn Western shore in Maryland very zealous in great love and keep up their Meets for Business and are of good Esteem among the people y<sup>t</sup> are not ffriends & the Governour and very loving to publick ffriends, & Life Springs every where, where ffriends are, and he and Tho: Story were at their Yearly Meet at the Eastern shore and had a Comfortable Season with them.

"And there is a fine people at West Jarsey, at East Jarsey some y<sup>t</sup> were hurt by that sp<sup>t</sup> y<sup>t</sup> G. Keith went forth in, were tendered and Returned to ffriends the Separation G. K. caused there comes to little.

“ Jn Long Jsland a good people, and they had a Comfortable Meeting, but one Meet: of the Ranters Remains in the Woods, and had good service among those people, where there had been Ranters, and in Road-Island; And also at Boston in New England, where ffriends were Executed, and Tho: Story was with the Governr abot ffriends Sufferings, and the Lord is at work there,—and there is a great tenderness among the people, and proposed y<sup>t</sup> some books of Antient ffriends sufferings there, might be Reprinted, and sent thither, And had a Meet: at New London, where there did not use to be a Meet: and the Lords power came over all: —and they had oppertunity to acq<sup>t</sup> the people they were none of the Ranters; and also to declare the Truth, and had another Meet: after the Priests had their Conference there.

“ Jn Pensilvania a great opennes and a large Meet: House 4 Schooles good Meets: and the Lord with them in a great Measure was at two Yearly Meetings where he was greatly comforted.

“ Friends in Maryland, Virginia and Pensilvania are greived w<sup>th</sup> ffashionable things sent from England. They carrye it well to y<sup>e</sup> Indians.”

Copied from the Minutes of London Yearly Meeting, vol. ii., p. 302 (*anno* 1700), in the handwriting of Benjamin Bealing, Recording Clerk.

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## Mary Whitall and Her Bonnet

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ONE day, when quite a little girl, she was crossing the bridge over Woodbury Creek on her way to school, when her dislike to her bonnet grew so strong that she took it off and kicked it before her. The deed weighed heavily on her conscience, and, as she was returning home in the dusk of evening, she was startled, upon reaching the middle of the bridge, to see a dark shadow at a little distance up the creek. This, to her excited imagination, assumed the appearance of a figure coming towards her, with finger uplifted in solemn warning. Filled with terror at what she felt a deserved rebuke, she ran home as fast as her trembling limbs could carry her, resolved henceforth to wear her bonnet in full submission. As she grew older and could better understand the reasons for her plain dress, her childish objections to it passed away, and she quietly settled down to the simplicity in which she was educated.

*Memoir of Mary Whitall* (1803-1880), 1885, p. 6.