

# *Editorial Practices in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia: The Journal of Thomas Chalkley in Manuscript and Print*

IN THE ARCHIVES of the Pennsylvania Historical Society are two important manuscripts of a journal which permit the rare opportunity to correlate the author's intended and actual portrayal of himself and to study editorial procedures in colonial times. *The Guide to the Manuscript Collections of the Pennsylvania Historical Society* lists the first item as "Some Account of the Life and Travels of Thomas Chalkley."<sup>1</sup> The other, entitled "Journal of Visits to Friends' Meetings, 1724-1727," is not mentioned in the *Guide* but cited in the card catalog. The printed version of these works was first published in 1749 by Benjamin Franklin and D. Hall and in a variety of forms republished and reprinted approximately twenty times, well into the nineteenth century, with imprints from Dublin, London, and Paris, and translations in French, Swedish, and Danish.<sup>2</sup>

How similar are the manuscripts to the first printed edition? If there are changes, what is their nature? How much editing has there been? By whom? What was the procedure? Why was this work so popular? To which generic tradition does it belong? Before answering these questions, it is helpful to look briefly at Chalkley's life, best understood in terms of his family, business affairs, and religion.<sup>3</sup>

Thomas Chalkley was born in Southwark, south of London, on May 16, 1675 into a devout Quaker family. His father was a trader in meal who sent him to a Friends' school and later apprenticed him for seven years. In 1699 Chalkley married Martha Betterton, also a Friend, and

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<sup>1</sup> *Guide to the Manuscript Collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania*, 2nd. ed. (Philadelphia, 1949), 129.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Chalkley, *A Collection of the Works of Thomas Chalkley, In Two Parts* (Philadelphia, 1749). Subsequent reference to the printed text are to this edition.

<sup>3</sup> These details are taken from Chalkley's journal manuscripts.

together they had five children, all of whom died at an early age. In 1699 they emigrated to Maryland but moved permanently to Philadelphia in 1701. Martha died in 1712, and two years later Chalkley married Martha Brown, a widow with two children. Raising the children to adulthood with his second wife was also difficult; by 1723 he had buried his tenth child, and of their own seven children only one, Rebecca, survived them. Meanwhile the Chalkleys moved to a large house on the Delaware River in Frankfort, and on November 4, 1741, Thomas died on the island of Tortola in the West Indies, a devoted husband and father who maintained intimacy through letters while on extended trips abroad.

Young Chalkley acquired training in business from his father, and at an early age he made for him trips throughout the local countryside. When he came to America as a young man, he had sufficient wealth to buy land immediately and set up a grain mill and saw mill in Maryland. In Philadelphia, which became the headquarters for his commercial interests, he owned a retail store and warehouses. Nearby in Pennsylvania and New Jersey he had farms, and he had similar operations in Bermuda. Throughout his mature years Chalkley was also in the shipping business, mostly in the West Indies trade, and at fifty-nine was the captain of his own ship, the *Barbadoes Packet*.

Despite considerable success, Chalkley experienced hardship, both economic and social, beginning in 1724. Part of this was attributable to losses of cargo at sea and destruction of goods by fire and flood; and part was a function of the times, when many affluent Friends who forgot piety and simplicity were publicly scorned by their meetings. By 1727, however, Chalkley had received the aid of Friends in accumulating a large cargo assignment and after many trips to the West Indies was able to pay off all his debts and reclaim his stature in the community by 1734. Upon his death he left his family a considerable fortune.

For almost all of his life Thomas Chalkley was nevertheless a devout and respected member of the Society of Friends and one of its most exemplary public ministers. It was on one of his early business trips for his father that he discovered his success in preaching, and once he had the approval of his meeting punctuated the rest of his life with ambitious and arduous missions on behalf of his faith. The first took place in southern England; the second in Scotland; and the third, lasting a year, in the eastern sea board colonies of America. Upon his permanent re-

moval there, moreover, Chalkley made successive trips through the colonies, as well as to Bermuda, the West Indies, Ireland, Scotland, England, Holland, and Germany. Between 1716 and 1720 he made lengthy visits to Europe, and shortly after his return experienced a brief but humiliating rejection by his fellow Friends whose similar accumulation of wealth induced worldliness, incompatible with Chalkley's often outspoken insistence on piety and simplicity. On a later mission this Public Friend fell ill and died. Prophetically, the last address he gave was based on the apostle Paul: "*I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness.*"<sup>4</sup> For most people Thomas Chalkley was a model Friend, and it was therefore appropriate that the Yearly Meeting in Philadelphia approved a laudatory testimony for him.

Perhaps one of the most remarkable aspects of Chalkley's life was his successful implementation of the Friends' business ethic of combining the simple life with a career in commerce. His journal recounts frequent queries from skeptics about these paradoxical activities, and at times he reveals a tone of defensiveness. In the passage from 1719 below, however, Chalkley addresses the question of serving both God and Mammon and thoughtfully concludes that while one's priority in work must always be for God, other work is legitimate. Accordingly, Chalkley believes that his daily coordination of business and the ministry is Christian:

. . . we have Liberty from God and his Dear son Lawfully & for Accomodation sake to work or seek for food & Raiment tho' that ought to be but a work of Indifference to the Great Work of Salvation our Saviour saith Labour not for the Meat wch Perisheth but for that wch endureth forever or to Eternal life, by which we do not understand that Christians must not do their necessary Occasions & their outward trades & Calling, but that their Chief Labour & Greatest Concern ought to be for their future well being in his Glorious Kingdom. . . .<sup>5</sup>

In spite of his busy life Chalkley was also an avid reader. When he died he left 111 volumes in his personal collection to the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting for its lending library, and approximately twenty-four

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Chalkley, *A Collection of the Works*, 325.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Chalkley, "Some Account of the Life and Travels. . ." MS AM 72151, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Part Two, p. 59. Hereafter cited as Manuscript A.

volumes survive in the Quaker Collection at Haverford College.<sup>6</sup> From them and references to other works in his journal, one gets the clear impression that Chalkley's reading was primarily devotional. Lacking the catholicity of taste of James Logan, for example, Chalkley seemed to prefer the works of fellow Friends like George Fox, George Whitehead, William Penn, and Robert Barclay. Chalkley also thought well of the writings of William Dell, who anticipated Quakerism in the seventeenth century, and he possessed works by Francis Rous, the Puritan mystic, and by the Anglican divine, Jeremy Taylor. If Chalkley was familiar with the writings of Archbishop Tillotson, none survive in the remainder of his bequest. Beyond theology, Chalkley admired the essays of Joseph Addison, the celebrated stylist and contributor to the *Tatler*.

The Bible remained Chalkley's favorite book, and according to his own account he began to read it when he was tempted to evil ways as a young boy. He refers to it frequently in his journal and in this excerpt from a letter to his son-in-law, Abel James, who became one of the unofficial editors of his works:

I perceive thou art inclined to read pretty much: I pray thee, that thy chief Study in Books may be the holy Scriptures. Let all other Books (tho' of Use, and good in their Places) be subservient to them.<sup>7</sup>

Chalkley was as active a writer as he was a reader. Aside from routine business and personal correspondence he wrote a 350 page journal of his life, approximately twenty essays and pamphlets, and thirty poems, many of which were either published or intended for publication. Moreover, he actually planned to have his journal and other manuscripts published after his death. His will instructs the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to supervise the process and provides for the coverage of costs through the sale of as much of his "Wood Land as will defray the Charge of Printing and Binding."<sup>8</sup>

Specifically, the manuscripts under scrutiny are both folios, but here the similarity stops. The first, hereafter referred to as Manuscript A, is leather bound and contains 250 pages in all, divided into Part One and

<sup>6</sup> Frederick B. Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House: The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia, 1682-1763* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1948), 154.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 146.

<sup>8</sup> C. William Miller, *Benjamin Franklin's Philadelphia Printing, 1728-1766: A Descriptive Bibliography* (Philadelphia, 1974), 252.

Part Two, with separate pagination for each. This is the title page for Part One:

Some  
Account of the Life  
&  
Travels of Tho: Chalkley  
who was born in the year. 1675. the 3rd of the  
3 mo in Southwark  
London

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### The ffirst Part

Crossed out at the bottom is a quotation from Daniel 12:3. What follows are 131 numbered pages describing Chalkley's life between 1675 and 1712. Throughout he interspersed two letters, a prayer, five essays, and some verse he wrote after his first wife's death. This part of the manuscript also contains some rather professional looking calligraphy on the title page and at the beginning of paragraphs. Part Two, filling 100 numbered pages and describing Chalkley's life between 1712 and 1724, follows this inscription:

Some  
Account of the  
Life  
and  
Travel's of  
Thomas Chalkley

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### SECOND PART

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Many shall Run to and frow  
and Knowledg Shall be  
Increased—Dan 12:4

As in Part One Chalkley incorporated other writings into his personal account, including two more letters, two essays, and five poems of rhymed couplets on subjects ranging from the meaning of true friendship to the habits of flying fish. At the very back of this folio are twenty-one pages of verse, sixteen poems in all, which the author notes he wrote mostly at sea.

The second manuscript, hereafter referred to as Manuscript B, is bound in well-worn gray paper and contains 102 consecutively numbered pages. There is no title page; the top of the first page simply says, "Journal 1724." This narrative is also interrupted by a variety of other writings: nine letters, twelve poems, an essay, Chalkley's brother's account of their father's convincement, and an acrostic for his daughter which is crossed out. Although the journal stops at 1727, which Chalkley says is the end of the third part, the last pages of the manuscript are devoted entirely to these other writings. Unfortunately, the manuscript covering the last fourteen years of his life, and presumably the fourth part, is missing.

Almost certainly these folios are written in Chalkley's own hand. His autograph on them is comparable to letters he wrote, and beside the narrative are marginal notes written in the first person. Throughout both of them, moreover, is considerable evidence that they are not the day to day jottings of an active man but a self-conscious effort to prepare the story of his life for publication. Most surely, these documents are based on material written at different times and thoughtfully rearranged and rewritten to present a coherent whole. In several places, for example, repeated words are crossed out, obviously an error in copying. More significantly, Chalkley himself refers to sources in marginalia which are extant. Following page ninety in Manuscript B is this notation: "An Acco't of my Barbados voiage is a little book I wrote at sea and is to come here after the word Peace." Surprisingly enough, this very "little book" is actually sewed into the manuscript and has thirty-two pages dealing with the trip in April, 1727. A copy of a similar little book is in the Friends' Library in London. It deals with Chalkley's last days and is written in the hand of John Pickering, his close friend and Governor of Tortola, who testifies on the last page that he found the original in Chalkley's pocket at his death.

As ambitious as Chalkley was in preparing his work for publication, he did not complete the task: the manuscripts are not fair copies. Marginal comments and addenda abound. At one place he refers to "a little Brown paper covered book" containing material to be inserted; a few pages later he notes he wants to add something about his impressment aboard a ship at Cowes which is described in a little brown book; and on the same page he writes, partly to himself, and partly to subsequent editors, that in the years 1721 and 1722 he visited a number

of meetings omitted through his own neglect in the narrative.<sup>9</sup> Since the number of refinements and general changes decrease from the beginning of the first manuscript to the end of the second, one concludes that Chalkley died before he completed his task. The gradual decline in legibility supports this point as does the absence of a folio covering the last years of his life. Perhaps he never composed one, and the comparable portion of the printed version was compiled from assorted notebooks like the ones described.

Whatever Chalkley left unfinished his editors took into account as they prepared these and possibly other manuscripts for publication during a period of eight years after his death. In fact, Chalkley's printed journal is not unique but belongs to a well-established literary tradition, including the work of George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends, who also kept little notebooks later transcribed into a single manuscript first published in 1694.

Without a creed and liturgy, the Friends relied for inspiration on the writings of Fox and succeeding religious leaders, some of whom were known as Public Friends or self-appointed ministers. With the official blessing of their meetings, these zealous men and women travelled throughout the land, gathering new members and inciting old ones to keep the faith.

As early as 1672 the Yearly Meeting in London gave a sub-committee the responsibility of approving manuscripts submitted for publication. Friends in this country maintained a similar practice of editorial control. In 1709 the Yearly Meeting of Friends for Pennsylvania and New Jersey appointed a committee of eight, any five of whom were "to take care to pursue all writings or manuscripts that are intended to be printed, before they go to the Press, with Power to correct what may not be for the Service of Truth, otherwise not to suffer any to be printed."<sup>10</sup> Subsequently, these Overseers of the Press, as the committee was later called, exercised the same kind of censorship as its counterpart in England. When necessary the Yearly Meeting also underwrote the cost of publication.

Although Chalkley himself was appointed an Overseer of the Press in 1722, at least five of the following were responsible for his own

<sup>9</sup> Manuscript A., Part Two, p. 68.

<sup>10</sup> "A Collection of Christian and Brotherly Advices Given Forth from Time to Time by the Yearly Meeting of Friends for Pennsylvania and New Jersey," MS 10, The Quaker Collection, Haverford College Library.

manuscript: Thomas Griffiths, James Logan, Israel Pemberton I, John Brighthurst, John Kinsey II, Anthony Morris II, Isaac Norris II, and Israel Pemberton II. In addition to some of these officials two other Friends were also involved in the editing of Chalkley's work. One was Abel James, his son-in-law, who was a close friend of Benjamin Franklin and a partner of Henry Drinker in a highly successful shipping and importing firm. The other, John Smith, James Logan's son-in-law, was also a wealthy merchant and man of letters whose well-documented life reveals his ideal qualifications as an Overseer of the Press even though he did not have the title until 1752.

Like Chalkley, Smith was an avid reader, familiar with the popular Quaker literature of the day, including the journals of George Fox and George Whitehead of earlier times and the more contemporaneous works of William Edmundson, Richard Davies, John Burnyeat, John Fothergill, and Thomas Story. Smith also knew the exemplary writings of Addison as well as those of Richard Steele. By his own admission Smith took great pleasure in writing, and he was the author of the "Lives of the Ministers of the Gospel among the People Called Quakers," a three-volume manuscript in the Quaker Collection of Haverford College Library, as well as many other works including his own unpublished diary in the Library Company of Philadelphia.

In this diary we get a good sense of how volunteers like Smith and Abel James incorporated the responsibility of editorial oversight into their daily routine. Here is Smith's entry for January 4, 1745:

. . . after we came home drank & dish of Tea at John Armitt's & spent the Evening at my store with Abel James in Examining and Correcting Thomas Chalkley's Journal, which we likewise had been upon several Evenings before.<sup>11</sup>

Evidently the editorial process took a long time because more than two years later Smith made this notation upon returning from the Monthly Meeting in Philadelphia on March 31, 1748:

A Testimony on behalf of our Antient & worthy friend Thos. Chalkley, to be prefix'd to his Journal, was read at this meeting, drawn by I.P. jnr. — committed to the Overseers of the Press to be Completed. & then ordered to be signed by the Clerk on behalf of the meeting.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> John Smith, "Diary," MS No. 2 (1745-46), The Library Company of Philadelphia.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 7 (1748).



Testimonies were official eulogies prepared by meetings for prominent members and included as prefaces, justifying the authenticity of authorship in published journals. The "I.P. jnr.," cited by Smith, is Israel Pemberton the younger, and the testimony does indeed appear in Franklin's first edition and subsequent ones as well. Very likely this Pemberton was also involved with Chalkley's work, for some months later, on January 4, 1748, after noting that the weather was very cold, Smith says that he spent the afternoon at Israel Pemberton's, with the Overseers of the Press, going over the journal.<sup>13</sup>

Even after the book was published in 1749, Smith continued his association with it. In his entry for July 18 he says that in the afternoon he began "an Index of the names of persons & places to Thos. Chalkley's Journal," which does not appear in the first editions of the printed text.<sup>14</sup> Smith nevertheless had a Franklin edition immediately upon its release because on July 31 he notes in his diary that he sent copies of it to a friend and an aunt.<sup>15</sup>

Although relatively little of the Overseers' actual written editing is evident in the two Chalkley manuscripts themselves, there is some. At one point the word "delete" is handwritten by another hand next to a postscript of Chalkley's and is missing in the printed version.<sup>16</sup> Another example is illustrated in two quotations, the first from the manuscript, the second from the Franklin text. The brackets, in pencil in the original, surround material absent in the second quotation, and the ungrammatical use of the verb "to be" in the first is corrected silently in two places in the second.

From Philadelphia I went to Burlington & so to Crosswicks where we had a large Meeting under the Trees [in the woods,] where some was convinced, [one Edward Andrews was convinced here, who lived & died a powerful Minister of Christ.]<sup>17</sup>

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From *Philadelphia* I went to *Burlington*, and so to *Crosswicks*, where we had a large Meeting under the Trees, where some were convinced of the Truth.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 7 (1748).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 8 (1749).

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 8 (1749).

<sup>16</sup> Manuscript A, Part One, 28.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>18</sup> Thomas Chalkley, *A Collection of the Works*, 17.

Despite the absence of very many editorial marks, one nevertheless learns a good deal about the Overseers' procedures through comparison of the manuscripts with the first printed edition. In general the revisions fall into two categories, rhetorical and substantive.

Beginning with elementary matters, the Overseers standardized spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. They also separated run-on sentences and corrected grammatical errors. For example, they took the clause "it was judged there was about 500 people" and revised its diction, imposed the subjunctive mood, and inserted the standard forms for printing numerals and capitalizing nouns: "It was thought there were about five hundred people."<sup>19</sup> Elsewhere, the Overseers rejected Chalkley's awkward phrase "wearing clothes" in favor of the more formal "wearing Apparel," and revised his wordy and inaccurate phrase "Priest or Teacher of the Episcopal Protestants" to read "Priest of the Church of England."<sup>20</sup>

In addition to revising grammar and standardizing forms, the Overseers also rewrote whole passages to create the right nuance of meaning. The following example comes from the section in the manuscript in which Chalkley reflects on his youth and his first encounters with temptation:

And about this time there was a Great Concern upon my mind rightly to distinguish between Christ's voice, and the Devils, and thus it open'd to me, that Christ or Truth always speaketh good, and for a good end. . . .<sup>21</sup>

What follows shows how the editors rejected Chalkley's implied equivalence of the voice of Christ and the voice of the Devil by reducing the latter's to a "whisper," thereby emphasizing the supremacy of Christ's power over the devil. The passage also shows how they reworked the phrase from the manuscript equating Christ and the truth to one suggesting synonymy.

About this Time there was a great Concern on my Mind, rightly to distinguish between the Voice of Christ, and the Whisperings of Satan, and thus it open'd to me: That Christ, the Truth, always speaketh Good, and for a good end. . . .<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Manuscript A, Part One, 33; Thomas Chalkley, *A Collection of the Works*, 18.

<sup>20</sup> Manuscript A, Part One, p. 127 and Thomas Chalkley, *A Collection of the Works*, 74; Manuscript A, Part Two, 1 and Thomas Chalkley, *A Collection of the Works*, 78.

<sup>21</sup> Manuscript A, Part One, 6.

<sup>22</sup> Thomas Chalkley, *A Collection of the Works*, 8.

As significant as these rhetorical changes are, and there are many of them, they are not as important as the substantive ones, many of which involve the ordering of material. In preparing the journal for publication Chalkley organized his narrative chronologically, punctuating it with a variety of his other writings. Despite such an arrangement in similar works by Public Friends, Chalkley's editors took most of these pieces and placed them at the back in a second part of the volume with other items. In a few exceptional cases, however, they paraphrased an intrusion, such as a letter, and left it in the place Chalkley intended.

Chalkley's editors also studied carefully the sequence of paragraphs, and in several places rearranged them. In one they took an exclamatory paragraph describing God's support of Chalkley's spirit after a near disaster at sea and put it several paragraphs further on where it serves as a concluding commentary on similar episodes. Elsewhere, recognizing Chalkley's error in citing the date of Jonathan Dickinson's death in 1772 and an earthquake in Pennsylvania in the same year, the Overseers took his account of the latter and inserted it correctly with the material relating to 1724, many pages beyond in the printed book.

Beside paraphrasing and reordering, the Overseers also amended Chalkley's writing. With access to his little notebooks they borrowed from them and followed some of his marginal notes to amplify the tale of his impressment by adding a whole new paragraph. Similarly, they supplied the full quotation of a biblical verse merely cited by the author. In the margin next to a passage about the author's attraction to worldliness and the need to reject it there is a reference to the eleventh verse of the Eighty-fourth Psalm, which the book quotes in its entirety: "*No good Thing will be with-hold from them that walk uprightly.*"<sup>23</sup> The editors likewise amplified the text later on by giving in a footnote the actual names of four Friends put to death in New England in the seventeenth century to whom Chalkley only refers indirectly in his manuscript. Moreover, sensitive about Friends' controversial relation with the Indians after William Penn's first conciliatory meeting with them, they added a letter by an Indian woman named Mary Doe which Chalkley neither quotes nor cites in the margin of his manuscript. In this same section the Overseers also composed their own footnote praising Penn's fair treatment of the Indians and describing the natives peaceful ways in Pennsylvania in contrast to their combativeness elsewhere in the col-

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

onies. Clearly, these representatives of the Meeting wanted to stress Friends' peaceful coexistence with the Indians.

What the Overseers added to the journal of Thomas Chalkley, however, is very limited in comparison to what they reduced and deleted. At one place Chalkley describes at length how he spent his time at sea and completes the passage with this rhapsodic hymn of praise:

O! my Soul Glorify God thy Maker & Christ thy Saviour forever in the great sense of his Goodness and Mercy (even to the, O! my Poor & needy Soul.) Both by Sea & Land, by night & day, Thus O! thus, (through the help of God, and Grace of Christ) our Course was Steer'd through the ocean of the mighty, Inso much that in Truth thou can say, O my Soul, Sweet is the contemplation of the world when it exercised in True Divinity.<sup>24</sup>

What follows is the Overseers' reduction of it, which in contrast seems to lack religious enthusiasm and spontaneity:

O my Soul! glorify God thy Maker, and Christ thy Saviour for ever, in the Sense of his Goodness and Mercy, both by Sea and Land, by Night and by Day.<sup>25</sup>

Further on, in Part Two of Manuscript A, Chalkley illustrates well his talent for telling a good story:

After I had finished my concerns I Imbarkt in the Sloop Dove for Phila, shee being consigned to mee in the former and this voiage it being pretty much calm and small winds our provision Grew a little scant wee were about 12 person in the vesell little and Great and but one peice of beef in the Barrill so that for severall Days the wind being a head or against us the people began to murmur and tould dismall story about people Eating one another for want of provisions the wind still being against us and for ought we could see likely so to continue they murmured moore and moore and at last against mee in perticular becaus the vesell and cargo was consigned to mee and was under my care so that my Inward Exercise was Great about it for neither my selfe nor any in the vesell did Imagine wee should bee half so Long as we were on the voiage but since it was so I seriously considered the matter and to stop theire murmuring I tould them I was very fatt and I did beleve I should make them many a good meal and that there would bee a great deale of Good meat in mee, and that they should not need to cast lots which was usuall in such cases which of us should dye first for I would

<sup>24</sup> Manuscript A, Part One, 48.

<sup>25</sup> Thomas Chalkley, *A Collection of the Works*, 25.

freely offer up my Life to them to do them Good. One sd God bless you I will not Eat any of you Another said hee would Dye before he would eat any of mee and so said severall.<sup>26</sup>

The language Chalkley uses, such as "murmur" and "dismal stories," stimulate the reader's imagination, and his admission of corpulence adds a tone of self-mockery and shock, compounded by the actual suggestion of cannibalism. Chalkley nevertheless avoids ghoulishness as he emphasizes his role as leader aboard ship. By rejecting lots in favor of sacrifice, with its Christian relevance, moreover, he maintains the larger spiritual theme of his book. Dramatically, he completes the tale by describing the appearance of a large dolphin, which he instructs the passengers to catch. Spared of his life by this, Chalkley in yet another way illustrates the hand of Providence at work.

The Overseers wisely retained this well-shaped tale, enhancing its readability by correcting mechanical errors in sentence structure, punctuation, and capitalization. Although they kept the essentials, the Overseers also imposed euphemism and decorum by deleting Chalkley's description of his own meatiness and offer of himself as a meal. In doing so, they certainly lost a splendid example of the author's sense of humor and surprise, two important ingredients in the art of story-telling.

After I had finished by Concerns I embarked in the Sloop *Dove* for *Philadelphia* (she being consigned to me in the former and this Voyage.) It being often calm and small Winds, our Provision grew very scanty. We were about twelve Persons in the Vessel, small and great, and but one Piece of Beef left in the Barrel; and for several Days, the Wind being contrary, the People began to murmur, and told dismal stories about People eating one another for Want of Provisions; and the Wind being still against us, and for ought we could see, like to continue, they murmured more and more, and at last, against me in particular (because the vessel and Cargo was consigned to me, and was under my Care) so that my inward Exercise was great about it; for neither myself nor any in the Vessel, did imagine that we should be half so long as we were on the Voyage: But since it was so, I seriously considered the Matter; and to stop their murmuring, I told them they should not need to cast Lots (which was usual in such Cases) which of us should die first, for I would freely offer up my Life to do them Good. One said, "God bless you, I will not eat any of you." Another said, "He would die before he would eat any of me;" and so said severall.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Manuscript A, Part Two, 36.

<sup>27</sup> Thomas Chalkley, *A Collection of the Works*, 85-86.

It is interesting to note that another story teller and Friend, John Greenleaf Whittier, who became acquainted with Chalkley's work when he visited Philadelphia in 1836, recognized the dramatic value of this passage, for he incorporated it in "Snowbound," his lengthy epic poem cast in heroic couplets. Here, the mother serves as narrator:

Then, haply, with a look more grave,  
And soberer tone, some tale she gave

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Of faith fire-winged by martyrdom,  
Or Chalkley's Journal, old and quaint,—  
Gentlest of skippers, rare sea-saint!  
Who, when the dreary calms prevailed,  
And water-butt and break-cask failed,  
And cruel, hungry eyes pursued  
His portly presence mad for food,  
With dark hints muttered under breath  
Of casting lots for life or death  
Offered, if Heaven withheld supplies  
To be himself the sacrifice.  
Then suddenly, as if to save  
The good man from his living grave,  
A ripple on the water grew,  
A school of porpoises flashed in view.  
"Take, eat," he said, "and be content;  
These fishes in my stead are sent  
By Him who gave the tangled ram  
To spare the child of Abraham."<sup>28</sup>

Exploiting the literary possibilities to their fullest, Whittier elevated Chalkley to an epic hero by using the kenning, so popular in Old English epics, in naming him a "rare sea-saint." Effective as this distillation is, one nevertheless wonders what Whittier might have done had he been familiar with Chalkley's original work.

In many other passages the Overseers of the Press limited Chalkley's fervor, but their actual deletions are more numerous. The largest kind includes the letters, essays, prayers, and poems, written throughout the manuscripts and excluded from the large section of similar works at the back of the printed text. In fact, there are twelve or more of these items, including a letter to his parents, an essay on God's love of man, covering

<sup>28</sup> John Greenleaf Whittier, *The Poetical Works* (Boston and New York, 1848), 289.

almost fifteen handwritten folio pages, several love poems, and a poetic apostrophe to the Heavenly Father.

The second category of deletion concerns subject matter of a specific kind, and in comparing the manuscripts with the printed text one notices how the Overseers almost always expunged material dealing with the author's personal relationships, especially his family; his own personal feelings; his observations of nature; and his encounters with individuals of different religions and races. Examples abound for each type, but it is useful to cite a few representative ones.

Despite his uneven success in trade and his life-long commitment to the ministry with frequent absences from home, Thomas Chalkley was indeed close to his family so fraught with tragedy. It was natural for him to write about these matters, yet in almost every instance the Overseers exercised their editorial rights. This is true of manuscript sections in which Chalkley describes his grief upon the loss of his first wife, his justification for marrying a second time, and his depiction of Abigail, the first daughter of his second marriage, as angelic, naturally wise, and comforting to his mother while he is absent. The Overseers also dropped several sentences about the anxiety of his daughter and maid for his welfare in the midst of a hurricane, and one in which the author describes how his wife, finding him writing in his room, spontaneously writes a few lines of verse to which he responds by setting down a few of his own.

Objecting to Chalkley's general fascination with nature except when it could be subsumed under a larger issue of religion, the Overseers also excluded a lively section on sea-monsters, fish, dolphins, porpoises, pilot fish, and others about the mysteries and dangers of fog and icebergs. They also dropped a particularly graphic section about a dog eating a black man in Barbados.

A close reading of Thomas Chalkley's manuscript journal in relation to the Franklin edition shows clearly a difference between the way he saw himself and the way he appears in print. In terms of family, business, and religion, he certainly emphasized the latter in his own version, but he also devoted a significant portion to his family and business and their harmonious integration into his daily routine. At the same time he shows himself as one willing to share his vulnerability, his vicissitudes in domestic and commercial matters, and his range of emotions from intense grief to elevated ecstasy. With the inclusion of so

many other works by his own hand, Chalkley also reveals himself as a man of letters whose achievements in prose and poetry he thought sufficiently valuable for publication although by subsequent literary standards the latter are hardly worthy of public attention. In his printed work, in contrast, Chalkley emerges primarily as a religious man, a man of deeds, a Public Friend par excellence, whose active life in the ministry is one of reason and restraint, worthy of emulation. Accordingly, his personal and commercial lives have little intrinsic value, except in the way they support his religious activity.

A comparison of the two works also illuminates precisely the involvement of the Overseers of the Press. The range of their work—from detailed punctuation to large revisions and deletions—indicates how completely they reworked the manuscripts. In reducing so much, perhaps the Overseers partly had their eye on cost of publication and readability. In expunging some of Chalkley's most emotional passages, however, they were following the Quaker practice of their time to avoid public display of sentiment, so characteristic of the early days of the movement, and emphasize a more rational impression of their faith. The net effect is the loss of personal statement, of individuality, of spontaneity, and instead a creation of a work conforming to the long-established tradition of published journals of other Public Friends. Perhaps the very conformity of Chalkley's work partially explains its continual appeal. In a larger context the Overseers' production is comparable to the Quaker formulations in *Piety Promoted*, collected by John Tomkins and John Field, and to the medieval tradition of saints' lives, with their emphasis on the sacrificial life and modes of instruction. Considering the popularity of Chalkley's printed text, it is practically impossible to say that his intended version would be more so. But it would be very different.

Inevitably, a study like this has implications regarding earlier scholarship on Friends' journals, particularly the role of the Overseers of the Press. For example, Luella Wright, in her study of their role in England, claims that they were primarily censors. In light of this evidence, however, it would seem that they were more than suppressors of morally objectionable material.<sup>29</sup> While John Smith, Abel James, and others certainly deleted many of Chalkley's passages for ideological

<sup>29</sup> Luella M. Wright, *The Literary Life of Early Friends: 1650-1725* (New York, 1932), 97-109.



reasons, their function was much broader and is best understood in terms of editorial expertise assuring readability in the framework of a tradition. Given the enormous popularity of the work, their role cannot be ignored. More specifically, a reading of the manuscripts with so many extended passages of Chalkley's personal and emotional relation with God excised by the Overseers brings into serious doubt Wright's statement that he "seems less conscious of the mystical guidance than some and relied more on the faculties of the intellect."<sup>30</sup> Similarly questionable in light of the manuscripts in their entirety is an article of Henry Cadbury's which focuses on only a small section and makes the generalization that the Overseers left out passages relating to slavery and gruesomeness.<sup>31</sup> In fact, Chalkley barely discusses slavery in the manuscripts, and the Overseers' deletions far exceed gruesomeness. Equally dubious for the same reasons is the implication of Howard Brinton that, despite an emphasis on the inward life, individuality is missing in books like Chalkley's because these Public Friends really developed a group consciousness.<sup>32</sup> It is almost possible to say that the manuscript passages missing in Franklin's text are the most individualistic of all, and the same may be true of writings by others also revised by the Overseers of the Press.

Finally, the study of Chalkley's manuscripts raises the whole question of generic identity. Traditionally, such works in print have been called "journals," or "confessional narratives," and more recently "spiritual autobiographies." The latter term, used by Howard Brinton and Daniel Shea, among others, sets works like Chalkley's apart from the main stream of autobiography. According to Brinton, the qualifying adjective is necessary because these books "contain very little material about the writers' families and undertakings not directly related to their inner life," and Shea finds Chalkley's book limited to value because like so many similar Quaker works it lacks sufficient self-examination and because it subordinates the individual to the ideal.<sup>33</sup> Had

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 191.

<sup>31</sup> Henry J. Cadbury, "A Quaker Account of Barbados, 1718," *The Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society*, 10 (1943), 118-124.

<sup>32</sup> Howard H. Brinton, "Stages in Spiritual Development as Exemplified in Quaker Journals," in *Children of Light: In Honor of Rufus Jones*, ed. Howard H. Brinton (New York, 1938), 384.

<sup>33</sup> Howard H. Brinton, *Quaker Journals: Varieties of Religious Experience Among Friends* (Wallingford, Penna., 1972), vii, Daniel B. Shea, *Spiritual Autobiography in Early America* (Princeton, N.J., 1968), 16, 22.

these scholars and others like them access to the manuscripts, they would have realized their place in the larger tradition of autobiography, which Robert Sayre suggests "may be the preeminent kind of American expression."<sup>34</sup> If this is true, then Thomas Chalkley's own work, and those of a thousand Public Friends like his, deserve fresh recognition and further study in the context of autobiography.

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<sup>34</sup> Robert E. Sayre, "Autobiography and the Making of America," in *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*, ed., James Olney (Princeton, N.J., 1980), 147.