



AS TIMELY NOW AS IT WAS THEN: "Such mischeefes as are imputed to witches, happen where no witches are; yea, and continue when witches are hanged and burnt; whie then should we attribute such effect to that cause, which being taken awaie, happeneth nevertheless?"

--Reginald Scott, *The Discoverie of Witches*, 1584

A Friendly Letter

ISSUE NUMBER 121

ISSN #0739-5418

FIFTH MONTH, 1991

Dear Friend,

Last summer, before we were all so *rudely* interrupted, I asked (in AFL #111) for your counsel about what Quakers today have to say about sex. The immediate occasion was a planned First Day School class on the subject for fourth to sixth graders at Langley Hill Meeting, to be taught by my wife and another Friend.

The class was held as scheduled, through the autumn and winter of 1990-91. Reports from participants, including one particularly discriminating consumer, our daughter Gulie, indicate that it was a success. MaryLou was joined in the teaching by Walter Sullivan, another member of our meeting. In the meantime, many of you responded to our request for input, some at length. The letters came from older and younger Friends, single and married, straight, gay and bisexual. All were read here eagerly, with much benefit and gratitude.

I have not forgotten the promise to share some of these letters with you. To do this best, I have collected twenty-one of them into a document entitled *Some Quaker Letters About Sex*, which is now available to interested Friends. Along with it is a tape of a conversation with Walter Sullivan, MaryLou and Gulie, reflecting on teaching, and taking, such a class.

The letters were thought-provoking and deeply felt; some were quite eloquent. They show that the task of sorting out issues of gender and sexuality has not been ignored by Friends, even amid war and the other distractions we have had to grapple with. Moreover, they give the lie to conservative claims that there are no standards or serious thinking about sexuality among those within other cultural circles. The tape and *Some Quaker Letters About Sex*, which is about 40 full-sized pages, are available as a set for \$9.95 postpaid, from my address.

And if you're interested in more reading in this area, there's another publication you absolutely shouldn't miss, called *Sexual Ethics: Some Quaker Perspectives*. This 100-page paperback contains a series of papers delivered at the 1989 gathering of the Quaker Theological Discussion Group, held in Richmond, Indiana. QTDG, which throughout its thirty-year history has been something of a stronghold of Orthodoxy, has also made good faith efforts to listen to opposing sides of many issues. It took

them a long time to tackle sex, and in particular the dreaded H-word, which takes up most of this book, but the results were worth the wait.

The book opens with Ben Richmond, of the Friends United Meeting staff, cogently critiquing the arguments of some liberals that the biblical passages condemning homosexuality don't really say what they seem to say. I think he's right, too: those biblical writers who mentioned homosexuality clearly didn't like it. But in response, Bob Fraser, a gay Christian Friend who takes scripture just as seriously, asks, in essence, "*So what?*" Many biblical injunctions are ignored by orthodox Christians. How do we decide which, if any, of its many commandments ought to be followed today? In sum, where Ben Richmond excels in *exegesis*, i.e., figuring out what the biblical words actually mean, Fraser is ahead in *hermeneutics*, which has to do with interpreting and applying the texts, whatever they mean.

As good as this exchange is, the Scottish Friend Hugh Pyper's paper, "*Without Apology: Reflections on Quaker Theology and Sexual Morality*," is even better. The sincerity, biblical learning and humility Pyper displays in sharing his struggles as a gay Christian Friend are so affecting that they leave his respondent, the prominent Quaker critic of homosexuality Herb Lape, all but struck dumb with respect, showing much humility on his part.

These two exchanges are so fine they make it possible to pass quietly by a discordant, gossipy tirade by Ruth Pitman on *Sex, Society and Quaker Theology*, which mainly serves to highlight the unhappier features of the Wilburite tradition she hails from, and to underline unwittingly why it has declined so precipitously.

Sexual Ethics: Some Quaker Perspectives, is an excellent publication. It is available for \$8.00 postpaid from QTDG, 128 Tate St., Greensboro, NC 27403. Copies can also be ordered from my address, at the same price.

Yours in the Light,

Chuck Fager

Chuck Fager

THE ORKNEY CASE: QUAKERS CAUGHT IN A MODERN SATANIC WITCHHUNT

It began in a manner at once farcical and chilling--like a Kafka story staged by Gilbert and Sullivan: Early on the morning of 2/27 of this year, six policemen and four social workers burst into the bucolic home of William and Sandra McEwen, Friends on South Ronaldsay, one of the Orkney Islands off the northern coast of Scotland.

The police began searching the house, confiscating such items as all their videocassettes ("Mostly programs taped off the TV," William McEwen said ruefully, "no sex or violence; some constable will have a very tedious time watching them all"), a framed picture of a stand of trees, an old photo album with snapshots of the family visiting a ruined abbey, and a gas lantern used for night farmwork.

At the same time, the social workers were hustling the McEwens' two younger children, aged 11 and 15, out of their beds, into their clothes and through the door. No stops for food, bathroom, or personal items were allowed; in seven minutes they were gone. Then the parents were interrogated by the police for several hours.

POOR WAND'RING ONES?

The interrogation disclosed that the McEwens have been teachers for more than twenty years, first in Surrey, where they ran a unique working farm as part of a school program aimed at providing problem kids a therapeutic hands-on experience. There they became Friends in the early 1970s, joining Petersfield Preparative Meeting. And there they began to feel drawn toward a life centered more on farming and less on fulltime teaching.

This quest led them to the Orkney islands, where land was affordable and the people reserved but open-minded. The islands also had a wild kind of beauty, with their nearly treeless fields dotted with sheep and clad in heather. To some visitors the Orkneys seemed desolate, but the McEwens loved them. They bought land and moved there in 1984. Now they farm and William McEwen teaches part-time, a couple days a week, flying in to schools on various of the islands.

"It's all we wanted and more," William McEwen affirms happily.

* * * * *

About the time that the McEwens were finding their idyll on an island in the North Sea, a police captain in Ohio named Dale Griffis was becoming known among police departments around America. He gave professional seminars on what an admiring reporter called "satanic worship, mind-control cults and destructive religious groups." Griffis was but one of a growing number of circuit-riding "cult crime" specialists, who during the 1980s spread warnings among law enforcement, social work, and church groups about what they said was a rising wave of hideous outrages committed by such underground criminal conspiracies.

THE FOEMAN BARES HIS STEEL

This cult crime wave, Griffis and the others told their typically large and rapt audiences, was not simply a matter of church or synagogue vandalism, heavy metal music and drug use. Nor was it limited to bizarre and gruesome murder cases involving the likes of Charles Manson and Los Angeles' "Night Stalker" killer Richard Ramirez, who ranted about Satan at his trial.

Even more ominous and unnerving, they alleged, these underground satanic cults engage in widespread human sacrifices, usually accompanied by horrible tortures and hideous rituals. The production of kiddie porn and snuff films are also said to be among their specialties. As many as 50,000 such human sacrifices are committed per year in the U.S. by these groups, many of them children borne on demand by captive women "breeders." Griffis, among others, insists that behind these bloody crimes is an international underground network of hereditary satanist family groups, made up of persons outwardly respectable or even distinguished, but secretly dedicated to their grisly rituals and supremely skilled in concealment.

These lurid stories alarmed one of the early attenders at these cult crime seminars, a researcher named

Robert Hicks. Hicks, who had been a cop in Tucson and also done graduate work in anthropology at the University of Arizona, now works as a criminal justice policy analyst in Virginia. Soon he was attending cult crime seminars as a professional task, one after another, becoming familiar with practically all the self-proclaimed experts working the police training circuit, as well as their stories and claims. He took many notes and collected thick files of the materials handed out at the seminars.

"At first alarmed by what I heard at the seminars," he says, "I became progressively more skeptical, then even more alarmed by the cult experts' anti-intellectual and anti-rationalist stance." Trained as a working cop to find evidence that can stand up in court, Hicks soon went beyond taking notes at seminars; he began challenging the experts to back up their claims about a satanic cult human sacrifice bloodbath with a police officer's bottom line: hard evidence.

THEY UNCOMFORTABLE FEEL

Here the experts began to hem and haw. On the one hand, they could point to people like Manson, or a band of drug murderers in Matamoros, Mexico, some of whose killings were indeed accompanied by torture and strange rituals. But in the Matamoros case, for instance, while there was a mishmash of Afro-Cuban and Aztec rituals, there was no identifiable Satanism; and neither Matamoros, Manson, nor the Night Stalker cases involved anything resembling a hereditary "family" undertaking; the perpetrators were either loners or small and shortlived groups of unrelated people.

So where, Hicks demanded, was the evidence of the traditional satanic family cults, with their breeders and their human sacrifices? Fifty thousand corpses a year, far more than the official murder tally, makes for a lot of disposal work. Surely some of the remains must show up somewhere. As apocalyptic as the claims about them were, there must be evidence.

Unfortunately, the experts didn't

have any. In 1985, for instance, Griffis persuaded an Ohio sheriff to excavate 500 square feet of parkland in search of 50 to 75 ritually murdered bodies. Nothing turned up. Hicks heard numerous other investigators admit, when pressed, that despite all their scare-talk, they had never found such evidence or made an arrest of a traditional satanic cult figure.

But paradoxically, this lack of evidence did not bother the cult crime experts, or their supporters. A police lieutenant from Richmond, Virginia, after acknowledging he had no evidence of human sacrifice, told Hicks flatly: *"No evidence can be evidence."* Adds Griffis: *"The most dangerous groups are the ones we know nothing about....They are the real underground."*

But if they lack the kind of evidence that police usually look for (and find) in "normal" crimes, the cult cops believe they have plenty of living "victims" of these shadowy traditional satanist families, in the persons of numerous purported "survivors," usually female psychiatric patients who have, typically after lengthy therapy and often under hypnosis, begun describing what they believe are memories of ritual abuse as children and youths.

COMING WITH STEALTHY STRIDE

These "memories" include taking part in torture and sacrifices and/or being used as breeders, sometimes decades earlier. The survivors' stories are usually vivid, and the emotional reactions they have in the telling are intense. Many psychiatrists and counselors who work with them have become persuaded, on the basis of this internal evidence, that their stories must be true.

But again, Robert Hicks points out that these stories, however powerful as psychological experiences, have yet to produce the hard evidence needed to unmask and successfully prosecute an actual traditional satanic cult. Nor is this surprising, since the "memories" usually concern events that happened long before, in a childhood when fact and tortured imagination are hard to separate. Hicks also points out that the investigative "tools" developed by cult cops and experts is based

largely on techniques which require an advance presumption of abuse, and which thus can make "evidence" out of anything, even things one might expect would be exculpatory.

Take day care centers, for instance, in which occasional child abuse undoubtedly occurs, but which according to the cult cops are shot through with *sub rosa* satanic nests. One widely-distributed list of characteristics of cult-infiltrated preschools, by California therapist Catherine Gould, warns that:

"...being able to walk directly into the classroom does not guarantee safety. We believe that a 'watch' person alerts perpetrators that a parent is arriving, and the child is quickly produced...the ability to look into the classroom and see what is going on provides no deterrentPersonnel at offending schools do not seem obviously 'strange'....Some personnel at offending schools may even be exceptionally 'solicitous' of the child's academic progress."

A NEW METAMORPHOSIS

Another widely-used diagnostic approach, developed by psychiatrist Roland Summit, insists that abused children are likely to deny that anything happened to them, and then retract it after it has been admitted. Such denials must not be accepted by therapist/investigators; the questions must be repeated and repeated.

Summit's critics have pointed out that his theory was based on work, not with children, but with adults recalling what may have happened to them years before. Furthermore, while it may have value as a therapeutic tool in breaking through denial when abuse is independently known to have occurred, such contradictory "testimony", especially when produced in the course of repetitive, leading interrogation of children, can hardly serve as convincing evidence regarding the truth of abuse claims without external empirical confirmation.

Not the least of the shortcomings of these approaches are that they take many of the characteristics of healthy people, such as truthfully denying that abuse

occurred, or of a good, safe preschool, (openness, solicitude for kids' welfare) and turn them into Catch-22 evidence of evildoing, whence they can be substituted for more specific proof of actual abuse. Hicks calls this "spectral evidence", and draws direct parallels between it and the kind of "testimony" of children (also accompanied by intense, convincing emotional displays) which produced the infamous Salem witchhunts and other fatal outbreaks of mass hysteria.

Hicks also noticed and documented the close and reinforcing ties between many of the cult crime experts and fundamentalist Protestant and Catholic groups, which are traditionally big on Satan and demonic possession. The Cult Crime Impact Network, based in Boise, Idaho, and its influential *File 18 Newsletter* is typical. *"The only true and lasting solution to 'devil worship' or satanic involvement is a personal encounter with true Christianity,"* it declared in a 1989 article, one of many such comments. Dale Griffis agreed: *"We are seeing in the streets the sign of Armageddon."*

THE TRIAL, REVISITED

Numerous fundamentalist groups have chimed in with this chorus, spreading the stories among their highly Satan-sensitized constituencies. (The effects of such stories in this same subculture about similarly demonic witchcraft "conspiracies" were examined in AFL#114-115.)

Hicks has assembled and analyzed his extensive fieldwork, interviews and research into a book, *In Pursuit of Satan*, just published by Prometheus Books. The book is a stunning, carefully documented, rational but angry and very convincing exposé of, in his words, a:

"...law enforcement model of cult crime [which] appeared to me shoddy, ill-considered, and rife with errors of logic (including faulty causal relationships, false analogies, lack of documentation, and unsupported generalizations) and ignorance of anthropological, psychological and historical contextsModern cult crime claims traverse a familiar historical landscape replete with public venom against nonconformists,

creation of scapegoats for real or imagined social ills, the political exploitation of rumor and innuendo as a basis for public policy, and a willingness to sacrifice civil liberties because of the argued necessity to protect our children from an imminent threat."

In my judgment he makes a compelling case, one corroborated by my inquiries into similar responses to modern witchcraft. He also points out that this gospel of satanism has been exported to other countries, such as Canada and, increasingly in recent years, England.

* * * * *

Which brings us back to the Orkney Islands and the McEwens last Second Month, watching their children being bundled off and their home searched, and wondering what the devil, so to speak, was going on.

THEY'VE GOT A LITTLE LIST

The specific allegations(not formal charges) finally came out: The social workers had taken the children because they had "evidence" of their being subjected to "ritual abuse." The term "satanism" was avoided; but the "ritual abuse" was said to have happened under the cover of darkness (that explained the seizure of the gas lantern), in ceremonies involving loud music, outlandish costumes, wild dancing and forced sex between children and adults, including parents.

Three other families were said to be involved; their homes were also raided, many personal items confiscated, and seven more children, one only eight years old, similarly whisked away. One of the families the McEwens knew well: they were attenders at the small meetings for worship held in the homes of Friends on the island; a third family they were acquainted with; but the fourth were, they say, virtual strangers.

Nonetheless, they all were accused of being conspirators, and of a most fiendish kind, in the abuse of children. After reflecting on the shock of the seizures and the questioning, the McEwens and the other parents did what just about any such Quaker-

influenced body would do: They formed a committee, and called the press.

The British media responded with a vengeance. England's press laws are very restrictive about coverage of such cases: for instance, it is illegal to name the children, which may be reasonable; but beyond that, it is also illegal to publish any information which would make possible the identification of the children. (This means, for instance, the publication here of William and Sandra McEwens' names would itself be actionable; let's hear it for the First Amendment!)

But strictly interpreted, these laws would all but forbid even printing the location of the case, since in a community as small as South Ronaldsay, with perhaps a thousand inhabitants, identification of those involved would be only too obvious. And indeed, in London, the staff of *The Friend* was advised by counsel that even to publish the words *Quaker* and *Orkney* in the same item would put the weekly on very thin legal ice; hence *the Friend* has printed only one very brief and very elliptical reference to the case, in Third Month.

WHAT, NEVER? HARDLY EVER

The rest of England's media, however, went after the case with a vengeance, pushing to the limit of the legal restrictions. For instance, they printed many details about the families, who maintained what the *Glasgow Herald's* reporter Iain Wilson called "*an extraordinary 'open doors' policy with the media*", *inviting them in and answering any and all questions*. Reporters also dug into the background and experience of the social workers who had taken the kids. They jumped on the disclosure, at a preliminary hearing, that each child had been examined for medical signs of abuse and none had been found.

Here their investigations soon turned up a series of facts which, in light of Robert Hicks's work, sound all too familiar:

♦ The Orkney social workers had, only a few months before, attended a conference in Aberdeen on satanic-

ritual abuse, led by a crusading fundamentalist cult "expert." One staffer was part of a local evangelical fellowship whose members had become very concerned with demonic possession and satanic activity.

♦ The nine children were separated from each other, taken to the mainland, and questioned repeatedly according to a protocol closely following Roland Summit's model in which denial is denied, and "No," really means "yes." (Perhaps a new term is in order for this process: *Shrink rape*.)

♦ The parents were denied all access to the children or communication with them. Visits and messages from relatives or friends were also turned away. So too were the efforts of British Friends, many of whom not only wrote letters of protest, but also sent postcards with messages of encouragement to the children. Over 2000 such cards were sent, but *none* were delivered to the children while they were in custody. This is, however, standard anti-satanist procedure: the cultists are believed to use coded "satanic indicators"--cards, images, words--to exercise control over their victims from a distance, a la the movie *The Manchurian Candidate* (a frequently mentioned "reference" in cult crime seminars).

ENOUGH OF THIS RUDDY GORE

♦ And what would be news to foreign readers, Orkney was but the latest in a series of sensational cases brought by British social workers alleging satanic or ritual abuse. Two previous cases, in Rochdale and Cleveland, had been thrown out for lack of evidence of any "ritual abuse", with social workers being chastised for their breach of good practice.

♦ The McEwens in particular had previously tangled with island social workers, protesting the removal of several children from a family in which they had been abused by a father who is now in jail. The social workers wanted the children out of the home; the McEwens argued that the children would be better off staying with their mother and receiving services; and they took their case to public officials. Many reporters suspected that the

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McEwens were raided partly in retaliation for these protests.

The social workers' persistence in the face of negative court findings shows how deeply ingrained the satanic cult abuse myth has sunk into the professional cultures involved. These are people who feel they have a job to do, in the face of fiendish, unseen forces working ceaselessly to thwart them.

In the Orkney case, not only was the media against the social workers, but they also had to contend with the opposition of their own fellow Orcadians as well: most of the population of South Ronaldsay signed a petition ridiculing the charges and demanding the nine children's return.

When the charges were finally brought before a judge (called a sheriff in Scotland), the social workers received an even bigger jolt: On 4/4, the second day of a proceeding expected to last for weeks, Sheriff David Kelbie, who had spent most of the previous night reading transcripts and listening to tapes of interviews with the nine children, abruptly threw the case out of court, saying it was fatally flawed procedurally. He went on to heap scorn and ridicule on the interview "evidence," and the methods of questioning:

CHILDREN IN A PENAL COLONY

"Far from being left in places of safety, they have been repeatedly taken to other places and subjected to cross-examination designed to break them down and admit being abused. There is no lawful authority for that whatsoever. This was, in my view, another example of a failure to regard the children as persons possessed of rights."

He added that the transcripts included emphatic denials by seven of the children that any abuse had ever taken place. The only "ritualistic music" referred to in the questioning was by performers such as Michael Jackson and British rockers. He said the children should be returned home as soon as possible.

Trailed by reporters, the jubilant parents then stormed into the social workers' office and demanded that their

children be returned at once. When the workers hemmed and hawed and talked about administrative details, some parents lost their cool; voices were reportedly raised, and one worker was even called a name which will go unmentioned here, except that it is commonly applied to female dogs and rhymes with rich. The unnerved social workers soon relented, and the children were flown back to the island that night on a chartered plane.

End of story? No. The social work department has appealed the sheriff's decision, insisting that there *is* evidence of abuse that has not yet been fairly considered. Furthermore, a police investigation, which could result in criminal charges, is still open. Social work sources indicate they are clearly not persuaded that they were in error. One such source, hinted darkly to me that the sheriff's decision was just the kind of public relations victory that a ritual abuse cult would have wanted. Furthermore, this source added that they suspected there might be different levels of involvement in the ritual abuse among the four families: *"This could be a matter of the periphery versus the core,"* this source reflected.

COMING: TRIAL BY JURISTS

So the social workers will have a second chance—two of them in fact. The British minister for Scotland has announced that following the appeal there will be a full judicial inquiry into the Orkney Case. Such an inquiry, by an independent panel of judges, carries great weight in British lawmaking, and guarantees a full public investigation, with massive press coverage sure to follow. It could also yield recommendations for legal changes that are likely to be enacted.

It could even serve, at least in England, as the definitive needle to prick the balloon of official witchhunting for traditional satanic family cults that thus far have not been shown to exist in any case that had to bear the cold light of formal judicial proceedings.

With any luck, Hicks's book can help do the same in the U.S. If so, it would free up substantial amounts of police time and resources for work on

real crimes against children and parents, instead of wasting them in wild ghost chases. It ought also to cause some second thoughts and soul-searching among therapists who have bought into the macabre tales of cult "survivors."

For that matter, though this may be too much to hope for, Hicks's book, and a consideration of the Orkney case ought to move even some of the more fervid Satan-obsessed fundamentalists and evangelicals to reexamine whether their estimates of the devil's priorities correspond to the actual course of evil in today's world.

After all, the toll of authenticated satanic cult sacrifice victims, after years of witchhunts, still stands at zero. By contrast, in barely four months, the number of victims claimed by Molech in the Persian Gulf is approaching two hundred thousand and is still mounting up. Do we have another case here of Matthew 23:24—straining at gnats while swallowing camels??

THE YEOFRIENDS OF THE GUARD

If the planned judicial inquiry does result in damping down the satanic cult hysteria, this will in no small measure be due to the steadfastness of the Friends caught up in the Orkney case. They have maintained, according to reports and my own inquiries, a remarkable degree of calm throughout their ordeal. As reporter Iain Wilson noted in the *Glasgow Herald*, *"Asked why they refused to go to 'any limits' for the return of their children, the parents' response was: 'Violence breeds violence. Good will overcome evil. We will win, our way.'"* And they have won, the latest round at least.

But they are not out of the woods yet. The task of preparing for the judicial inquiry will be demanding and expensive; the chair of the local parents support committee estimated it could be as much as \$30,000 per family. And that's not to mention the wear and tear of another bout of national and international publicity. One wonders, when all this is over, whether the McEwens will look at their adopted Orkney island home with the same affection. Let's hope so.

FIRST CLASS MAIL

INSIDE: QUAKERS IN THE ORKNEY ISLANDS,
CAUGHT IN A MODERN WITCHHUNT

Address Correction Requested

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THIS MONTH IN QUAKER HISTORY

Of all the unlovely fallout from the 1827 Separation in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, the case of Western Burial Ground was among the worst. The cemetery, near Seventh and Arch in downtown Philadelphia, had once been managed cooperatively by a committee of trustees drawn from all five meetings in the city, and Friends from all these meetings were buried there.

When the yearly meeting separated, the five city meetings divided also, and there were sharp conflicts over control of the various properties. The Orthodox elders managed to keep many of the properties in their hands, because they held most official positions and many of them were experienced in business and law.

The Western Burial Ground, though, was not as easily controlled as, say, a meeting house. The Orthodox majority among the trustees expelled the two Hicksites among them; but keeping their supporters out of the cemetery was not so simple, even though there was a wall around it with a locked gate. Both sides had many relatives buried there, and numerous Hicksite families looked to it automatically in their time of loss.

On one occasion, when the Trustees refused to let the family of Ann Shotwell, a young girl of seventeen,

bury her there, one of the Hicksite trustees scaled the wall, broke open the lock with an ax, and let them in. After a second such incident, the rump trustees met and authorized the building of another, Hicksite gate in the cemetery wall.

And so it came to pass, on Fifth Month 31, 1828, that a crew of workmen, among them the Hicksite Trustees, showed up at the Western Burial Ground and proceeded to knock a large hole in the wall. When the outraged Orthodox saw what was going on, they complained to City Hall, and the mayor himself swore out a warrant against the intruders, charging them with forcible entry and rioting.

Five of the Hicksites were accordingly arrested. They refused bail, and stayed behind bars for five days, until a judge tossed out the charge and freed them. Nonetheless, the Orthodox trustees bricked up the new gate and still refused the Hicksites entry.

(In the end, history's joke was on the Orthodox. Western Burial Ground eventually passed into the care of Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, the Hicksites' major stronghold; and today its turf is open to the remains not only of them, but of non-Quakers also.)

QUAKER CHUCKLES

Upper Creek Monthly Meeting was once visited by a new young elder from Philadelphia. The visitor preached eloquently at First Day worship--so eloquently that Lucretia, Upper Creek's senior minister, suspected him of being infatuated with city notions and affectations, and in need of seasoning.

Her suspicions deepened when she heard the young elder declaiming after meeting to some of the male elders.

"Friends," he asserted, "the truly wise are always in doubt. Only the foolish are sure of their case."

Lucretia spoke up quietly. "Is thee sure of that?"

The young elder did not hesitate. "Yes," he answered. "Absolutely."

"That's what I was afraid of," Lucretia murmured.