

**A BRIEF DISCOURSE OF THE  
TROUBLES BEGUN AT  
FRANKFORT IN THE YEAR 1554,  
ABOUT THE BOOK OF COMMON  
PRAYER AND CEREMONIES**

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Common Prayer and Ceremonies by William Whittingham

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**WILLIAM WHITTINGHAM**

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A BRIEF DISCOURSE

OF THE

TROUBLES BEGUN AT FRANKFORT,

IN THE YEAR 1554,

ABOUT THE

Book of Common Prayer

AND

Ceremonies.

REPRINTED FROM THE Black-Header Edition of 1575,

WITH AN INTRODUCTION.

*W. H. C. Huntington*

LONDON:

JOHN PETHERAM, 71, CHANCERY LANE.

MDCCCXVI.

INTRODUCTION  
TO THE  
PRESENT EDITION.

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IN the Preface to the following "Brief Discourse," and in a subsequent page of the same work, its author has, in a few words, given us the reasons which induced him at that time to publish the same to the world. Though a great part of it might have been arranged a short period before the date which it bears in the title-page, the materials must have existed in a tolerably complete form, and certainly bear marks of having been written at the period to which it refers. Evidently an actor in the troubles which he describes, the author does not speak doubtingly; there is no appeal to memory; for, though he could not be a personal witness of what was simultaneously occurring at Frankfort, Geneva, and elsewhere, those who furnished him with information were such as he could rely on, and were deputed probably by him to register events as they occurred: this portion also bears the same internal marks of truth. This narrative, remarkable for its character, deeply interesting from its subject, possesses claims to our notice that cannot be disputed. Whoever has had occasion to inquire into the state of the exiles for religion during the Marian per-

secution must appeal to it; no other known evidence exists on the subject; and though, strange as it may appear, conclusions favourable to the Church of England on the one side, and the Puritans on the other, are drawn from it, its undeniable authority is admitted by all; and hence, in a convenient form, appeared the necessity for its republication.

The author, in the preface, refers to a sermon preached at St. Paul's Cross, in November, 1573, by D. Yonge, and afterwards to another sermon at the same place, in October, 1573, by M. Mullins. The former of these was probably Dr. John Young, Bishop of Rochester; the latter, whose name appears in the present work, was an exile during the reign of Mary, and officiated as Greek Reader at Frankfort. At a subsequent period, we find him mentioned as Archdeacon of London, Canon Residentiary of St. Paul's, and Rector of Bocking. (Strype's *Whitgift*, i. 245, sub anno 1583.) These sermons appear never to have been printed; or, if they were, have become lost; which is to be regretted, because they might, and especially the latter, have given some facts or allusions to enable us to identify the author of the "Brief Discourse." From the statement in the Preface, it is evident, that for some especial purpose a detail of the unhappy disturbances which had occurred at Frankfort, was given by M. Mullins in this sermon. That it was not entirely favourable to the party of the author of the "Brief Discourse" is certain, because he says, "So I in this discours, thought it needefull, least happelic that honorable audiēce might mistake the matter, to set fourthe by writinge the verie order, maner, and proccadinge off the same." (Preface, p. 3.)

To adventure upon any thing like an attempt to identify the author of the work where so little evidence, and that pre-

sumptive only, exists, appeared to me useless; and I should have published the work without note or comment, had not a literary friend, who was aware of my difficulties, volunteered a letter on the subject to Professor M'Crie, of Edinburgh, who, with promptitude, and in the kindest manner, gave his views at some length, with full permission to use them. The evidence which they contain is so much more satisfactory than any which I had before met with, that I cannot do better than transcribe them in his own words, with these variations only, that the references by him given to the edition of 1642 are adapted to the present edition. After stating that he had met with no direct evidence as to the authorship of the "Brief Discourse," Professor M'Crie proceeds to give his reasons for inferring that the author was *William Whittingham*, who is so frequently mentioned in the course of the narrative:—

"Whittingham, you may be aware, was a celebrated Puritan, who afterwards was made Dean of Durham, and who, along with Knox, Goodman, and Gilby, &c., translated the 'Geneva Bible.' He was ordained at Geneva, and though, through the interest of the Earl of Leicester, his patron, elevated to the deanery, he was a well-known enemy to the ceremonies of the Church of England, and died in June, 1579, while the process of his deprivation on account of his Presbyterian ordination was in dependence. The evidence on which I conclude him to have been the author of the 'Troubles' is as follows:—

"1. Whittingham was one of the most active of those who endeavoured to reform the Liturgy at Frankfort. Strype mentions him and Knox as 'the main instruments of the new office.' (*Life of Grindal* <sup>ii</sup>.) He must therefore have been



well acquainted with the whole history of 'The Troubles begonne at Franckford;' and feeling himself personally interested, must have naturally been anxious to give a true account of the affair, in answer to the misrepresentations to which he adverts in the Preface.

"2. If you look into the first part of the Troubles, you will easily, I think, perceiue, from the frequent introduction of Whittingham's sayings and doings, that they are recorded by himself. First, he generally calls himself plain 'Whittingham,' while others are Maister Knox, Maister Goodman, &c. Then, while he merely gives the substance of what others advised, we have whole speeches of his own; one of them beginning with, '*Then spake Whittingham, and said.*' (p. 56.)

"3. A little before this you will find the author telling us of *private* interviews which Whittingham had with Bullinger and Calvin, and with all that passed, which none could have reported, or would have thought of reporting, but himself. (p. 45-6.)

"4. It appears that Whittingham left Frankfort for Geneva in the end of 1556; and of course he could no longer speak of what passed afterwards in Frankfort from personal observation. Here, accordingly, he introduces a long narrative, entitled 'the History of that Stir and Strife which was in the English Church at Frankfort *from the 15th day of Ian. 1557 forward.*' (p. 62.) This history ends at p. 181, when the author of the 'Brief Discourse' again takes up the tale, in these words, 'This controuersie which yow haue now harde from the 13 of Ianuary hitherto, I finde written by the handes off such as are bothe lerned and off credit, but yet I must nedes say, by those that were parties in this broyle.' This exactly agrees with Whittingham's history, who during 'this broyle'

was in Geneva. The 'hands of credit' from whom he received this part of the account, (which forms fully half of the volume, and is certainly the least interesting part of the whole,) may have been some of the seniors or deacons whose names so often appear; and, perhaps, David Whitehead, the pastor, who died four years before the publication of the Troubles. This clearly shows it to have been the production of some one or other of the ministers who left Frankfort at that period.

"5. To bring it still closer to Whittingham, we know that he was not only one of the translators of the Bible at Geneva, but that he translated some of the Psalms into metre. Some of his translations are included in the version of Sternhold and Hopkins, and were signed originally in the Common Prayer-Book with his initials, W. W. Now, if you consult p. 192, you will find the author going very much out of his way to introduce the translation, and also 'the Psalms both *in meeter* and prose;' and then, with all the becoming modesty of one who could say '*quorum magna pars fui,*' he adds, 'And with what *successe* those workes were finished, (*especially the Bible,*) I must leaue it to the iudgements of the godly lerned, who shulde best iudge off the same.'

"6. We know the names of all the translators of the Geneva Bible, and there is none of them to whom we can ascribe the authorship of the Troubles, without being guilty of anachronism, except Whittingham, Goodman, or Gilby. As to Goodman, he was by far too vehement a nonconformist to have written in the smooth and almost subdued style in which this work is composed. And we cannot conceive of Gilby writing about 'the humbleness of Gilby and his godly zeal.' (p. 37.)

"7. Again, we are informed that Whittingham accompanied the Earl of Warwick in his defence of Newhaven against the

French. There he was a preacher for some time; and, as Wood observes, though he was ready in his ministerial function, he dissuaded his hearers against conformity. Compare this with what the author of the *Troubles* says, p. 196, 'The Erle off warwick at his beinge in Newhauen, had in dede with him certeine Ministers for a time, but after that the Cannon came and began to roare, &c. then (I weene) not a Minister there left but Maister Kethe alone.' Now it is certain that Whittingham was there, and though he may have felt unwilling to mention his own name, from modesty, or desire of concealing himself as the author, would any other person, especially a nonconformist, as the author certainly was, have omitted to mention him in these circumstances? He appeals, too, to the Earl of Warwick (as 'that right noble Erle can vppon his honor testifie'), as one who had personal evidence of the fact he stated, evidently in the style of a confidential companion.

"8. Above all, I place much weight on the style of the piece. In general, it is written in a style of great calmness, caution, and restraint, as by one who, though conscientiously opposed to the ceremonies of the English Church, felt that he lived in a house of glass, and might suffer for his freedom. Strype says that he first refused to subscribe the articles, but afterwards yielded, and was preferred to the deanery. He is wrong in putting the preferment after the subscription: for it appears he was made dean in 1563, and did not subscribe till 1571. (See Brooks' *Puritans*, i. 230—231.) But his subscribing the articles is perfectly consistent with his writing this book; many subscribed who opposed the ceremonies; and Wood describes Whittingham as a lukewarm conformist, an enemy to the habits, and a promoter of the Geneva doc-