

John Bunyan and Andrew Gifford.

THE linking of the names of these two men in connection with an interesting and undoubtedly authentic relic of Bunyan (now in America), has led to some research, the result of which is here given as deductive rather than conclusive evidence; in the hope that proof may yet be forthcoming.

A silver tankard exists which was presented in 1671 to Elizabeth, John Bunyan's second wife, by Nathaniel Ponder, the publisher of *The Pilgrim's Progress*; and when Bunyan died in 1688, his widow passed on the gift to Andrew Gifford. Gifford was described by *The Chicago Tribune* (in or about 1884) as the pastor of "the Baptist Church in Bedford"—confusing him, no doubt, with John Gifford (who died in 1655), Bunyan's spiritual counsellor and predecessor at Bedford. Andrew Gifford, of course, lived at Bristol.

The question therefore arises, Did John Bunyan and Andrew Gifford ever meet? Apparently neither Gifford nor Bunyan is known to have mentioned the other in print; but that does not signify that they had never met; for it seems highly probable that they were in touch, not only with one another, but also with others whom each knew, although when, where, or how, still needs to be determined. The present writer ventures to suggest that Bunyan and Gifford were sometimes present at the gatherings of those who formed the Fifth Monarchy Movement, as Gifford, it is recorded, was often in London, and Bunyan was there not infrequently—even whilst serving his imprisonment at Bedford.

As early as 1654 the Fifth Monarchy Movement began, when certain of Cromwell's Army regarded the Protectorate as opposed to their vision of a theocratic republic. And before then, attempts that had been made to reorganise the Church as it was (with no alternative form of government) only brought about a state of chaos: partly due to those who created themselves ministers and lived as best they could. Parliament was loth to take responsibility, although Doctor John Owen, "the reputed head of the Independents," had put forward a scheme which proposed the continuance of the National Church "with dissenting bodies by its side." However, "the limits of toleration" killed the project. The people of England—although not unwilling for a temporary dictatorship—had no inclination to be ruled by a Puritan minority. The country

could not and would not be forced into Puritanism. Vavasour Powell is stated to have exclaimed: "Lord, wilt Thou have Oliver Cromwell or Jesus Christ to reign over us?" But Cromwell had no desire to claim Christ's crown for himself. The Protector, whilst recognising the mistaken enthusiasm and yet appreciating their zeal, regarded somewhat crushingly the Fifth Monarchy Movement as "A notion I hope we all honour, and wait for: that Jesus Christ will have a time to set up His reign in our hearts; by subduing those corruptions and lusts and evils that are there; which now reign more in the world than, I hope, in due time they shall do."

Yet so prevalent was the belief in the immediate coming of Christ to reign on earth that no denomination at the close of the Commonwealth was devoid of it; so much so that it was even feared that Christianity (if allowed full scope) might take the place of civil government, and that those who did not comply would "be put to the sword." The fanaticism of both leaders and followers of the Fifth Monarchy Movement did not abate: rather did it spread—especially among Anabaptists who had "largely officered Cromwell's Army" in the Civil War, for Cromwell had favoured praying Baptists; and John Bunyan had been, when serving in the garrison at Newport Pagnell, in close quarters with some of those who figured prominently as Fifth Monarchy men, including Paul Hobson.

It was about the year 1651 that Bunyan himself became Anabaptist, so it is not unreasonable to assume that he for-gathered with others whom he knew—John Owen, Vavasour Powell, and William Dell included—at the Fifth Monarchy conclaves in London, and met there Andrew Gifford, of Bristol. But none of these could have suspected the machinations that were eventually to lead to rebellion and outrage; because at its inception the Movement was without doubt sincere and spiritual: its members living in expectation of the speedy return of Christ to reign in literal sovereign power, until Venner's perfidy and fanatical massacre in 1661 disillusioned them. Venner, with his mad venture, was renounced by John Bunyan's friend, George Cockayn.

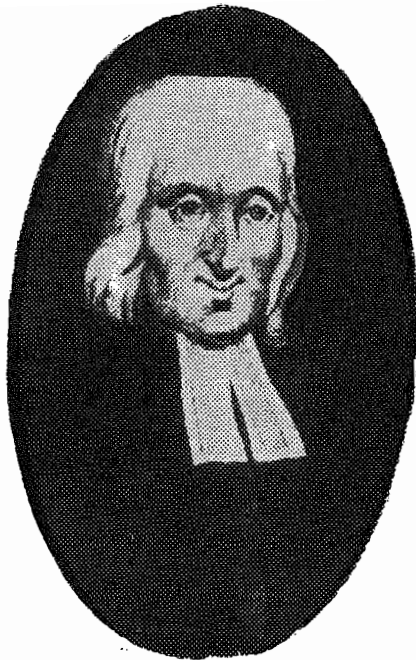
A document sent to Cromwell from Bedfordshire in 1653, returning two members to his "Parliament of Saints," contains, with others, the names of not only "that reverend man," John Grew, but also of John Gifford, William Dell (at whose church at Yelden Bunyan preached in 1659), John Donne, John Gibbs (the vicar of Newport Pagnell)—and John Bunyan, whose signature, because written in a cultured hand, is repudiated by the late Dr. Brown. But as Bunyan was so intimately connected with the men whose names are here mentioned, there can be no



JOHN BUNYAN

1628—1688

*From the original Drawing by Robert White in
the Cracherode Collection in the British Museum.
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ANDREW GIFFORD

1641—1721

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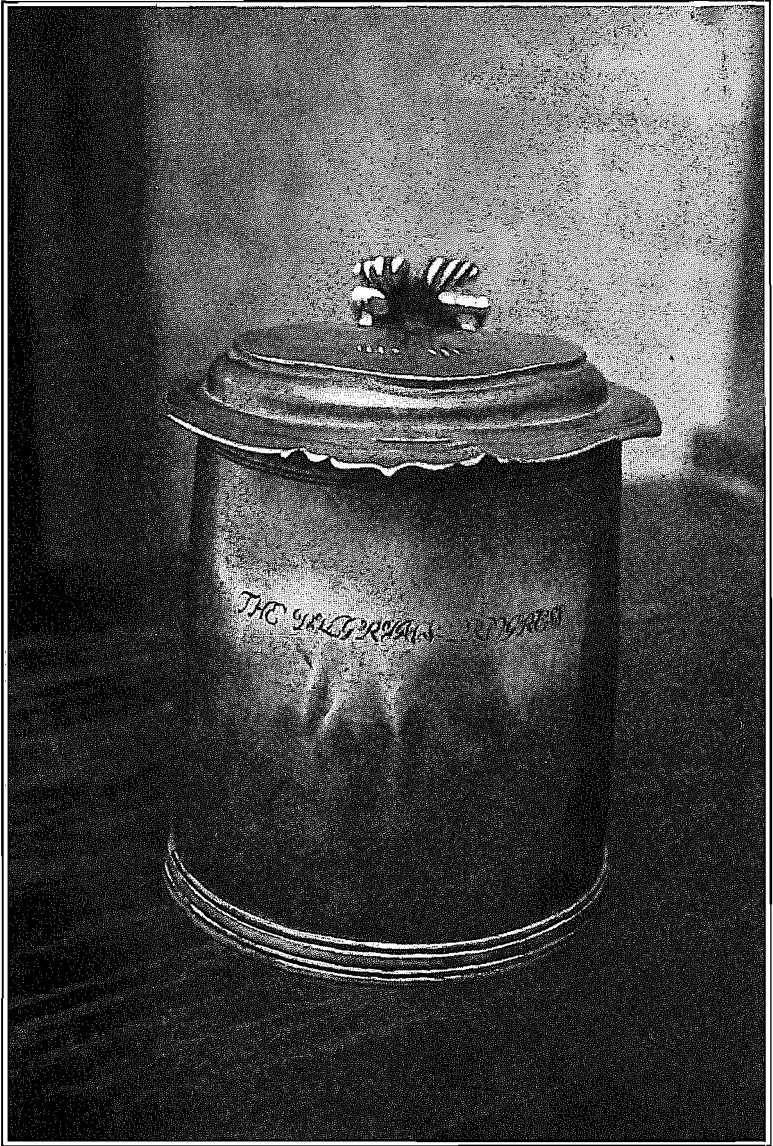
valid reason for rejecting his: despite its unresemblance to his authentic signatures. Most of the men above-named had been or were in the Fifth Monarchy Movement. But to what extent Bunyan might have been involved (until its religious merged into political significance) at this distance of time it is impossible to say. Some of its supporters must have withdrawn by the time the Venner insurrection broke out; and Bunyan's own record of Paul Cobb's visit to Bedford Gaol in 1661 is convincing proof that the prisoner was strongly, though unjustifiably, suspected of attending seditious gatherings in London. Bunyan's reply to a question from Cobb certainly confirms his innocence of the charge: "I look upon it (said Bunyan) as my duty to behave myself as a man and a Christian." Bunyan was loyal to his monarch in all civil matters, however much he claimed liberty of conscience in things spiritual; and at a time when the rule of the King and the Church were supreme over the minds of the people, it is sheer outrage on language to translate Bunyan's actions into rebellion. Such interpretations were bad enough in his own day, but to continue the argument now is contemptible. And yet it is done. In Bunyan's time "dissent and republicanism were synonymous terms," because it was then thought impossible "for a dissenter not to be a rebel." Bunyan suffered severely for conscience' sake; and the fact that, at the coronation of Charles the Second, prisoners were pardoned and released whilst Bunyan was retained in gaol, leads to the assumption that he was still the martyr of revenge: too strong and bold a man to be freed. No wonder is it then, that at the time he wrote with a sigh—"thus was I . . . left in prison."

To what extent, if any, Andrew Gifford involved himself in the Fifth Monarchy Movement, there is no discovered record to disclose. He may have been for a time carried away under Venner's influence, for afterwards (in 1685) Gifford narrowly escaped execution for the part he played, with other Baptists, in the Monmouth rebellion.

The date, 1671, on Ponder's gift to Elizabeth Bunyan, clearly shows that he and Bunyan were intimately acquainted at least seven years before the first edition of *The Pilgrim's Progress* appeared in 1678. This now established fact supports the statements made by biographers of Bunyan, prior to the comprehensive work by Dr. John Brown, that *The Pilgrim's Progress* was composed long before it was printed; for no doubt it was written in the County Gaol at Bedford and not in the Bridge Prison—as Dr. Brown surmises and so cleverly argues. But the delayed publication of the work needs elucidation. It seems not improbable that Bunyan postponed the printing of it when released from prison through King Charles's Act of Indulgence:

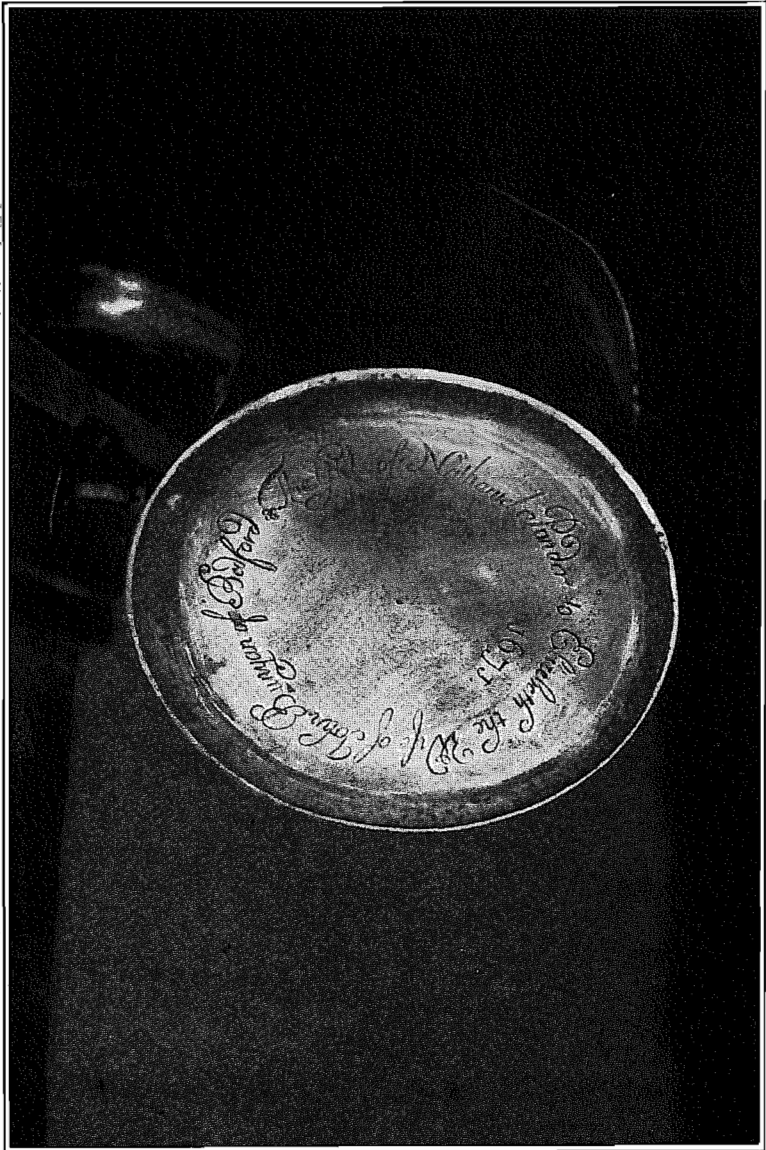
a freedom thankfully accepted by Bunyan, who, "in the first warmth of his gratitude" (as Lord Macaulay puts it), had eulogised the King in a tract; but upon discovering that the Monarch's magnanimity was to restore in England the religion of Rome, Bunyan evidently determined to print the manuscript he had set aside for several years, notwithstanding his papal references. Why Ponder had not been employed by Bunyan previous to 1678 is still a mystery, for Bunyan had already published twenty-two works bearing various imprints—but not one with Nathaniel Ponder's. It is common knowledge that some of Bunyan's earlier publishers were mixed up with the Fifth Monarchy men, but whether Ponder himself was is doubtful, although his first patron (in 1668), Doctor John Owen, did have some connection with the movement; and Owen, it is assumed, brought together Bunyan and Ponder. That being so, Ponder too might have been amongst them. It is, however, inexplicable why Nathaniel Ponder should have presented the tankard to Elizabeth and not to Bunyan himself. It may be that Ponder wished to celebrate the occasion of her husband's release from gaol; or, is it unreasonable to suggest that Bunyan's wife was related to Ponder? There is no known record to show who either wife was before marriage.

At the time of the tankard episode, the Anabaptist Francis Smith was publishing Bunyan's writings. Smith, a bookseller and preacher, was certainly involved in the Venner trouble, but to what extent it is difficult to judge, for the alleged charges against Smith made by Muddiman, the King's Journalist, are so prejudiced that they are unworthy to rank as evidence. Through neglect to renew the Printing Act of 1662, Charles had allowed it to lapse when he prorogued Parliament in 1679; but by the end of his reign the Press was restored to order, and dissent had been subdued. Smith's premises were, however, constantly raided under L'Estrange's censorship, and his books seized or damasked: amongst them were some by "Mr. Bunyan." Ponder, too, in 1676, was sent to the Gatehouse for publishing, as far back as 1671, Andrew Marvell's *The Rehearsal Transpros'd*; and Simon Dover, another printer employed by Bunyan, had died (in 1664) whilst in prison for having issued literature that had been denounced as seditious. Roger L'Estrange with determination "had broken up the knot of dishonest booksellers"—and not until 1679 was another rebellion started, when Titus Oates' plot to murder the King was projected. This, according to the King's Journalist, was but a revival of the Fifth Monarchy Movement. Other of Bunyan's publishers who came under the lash of the law included George Larkin and Benjamin Harris. The author-publisher, Harris—says the



THE SILVER TANKARD

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BOTTOM OF TANKARD.

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unreliable though witty John Dunton—"scandalised Truth by pretending to write for it"!

As has been already intimated, during the first half of his twelve years' imprisonment, John Bunyan had a certain amount of freedom, even to leaving Bedford for short seasons; and at that time, according to Ivimey, Andrew Gifford "was a very active promoter of a General Union of the Baptist Churches in England and Wales, and attended all the meetings in London"; and as Bunyan had run amok of the Strict Baptists by contending (as Dr. Brown states) "for the reception of saints into Church fellowship as saints, independently of water baptism," he was violently assailed "by leading London Baptists who upheld strict communion": a toleration which apparently dates from the Restoration. The acceptance of Christians into fellowship, whether immersed or not immersed, brought upon Bunyan anathemas from the merchant-preacher William Kiffin and others: such as were opposed to open communion. Nevertheless, Bunyan was a Baptist, but a Baptist with a vision beyond rites and ceremonies. So at these London gatherings Bunyan and Gifford might well have met.

Ivimey gives, too, the text of a letter received in 1675 by Andrew Gifford at Bristol from Joseph Morton. It was signed by William Kiffin and, amongst others, by Nehemiah Coxe. Coxe was for some time a member of Bunyan's congregation at Bedford, and his name establishes yet another link, for it is stated in the Bristol Baptist Records that Andrew Gifford, "the third minister," was ordained at Bristol on "the 3rd of the sixth month, 1677, by the laying-on of hands of Brother Daniel Dyk [Dike] and Brother Nehemiah Coxe, elders in London, with fasting and prayer in the church." Gifford, a cooper by trade, was born in 1641 (when Bunyan was a boy of thirteen), and was baptised in 1659. He began his ministry at Bristol two years later—at the time when persecution was rife and John Bunyan was already in gaol. Like Bunyan, Gifford preached in churches and barns and houses, as well as in fields and woods. He was imprisoned four times. He claimed—as also did Bunyan—that he "ought to obey God rather than men"; and, by curious coincidence, each man was on one occasion arrested on a warrant signed by thirteen county magistrates. When in 1672 the Declaration of Indulgence released both Bunyan and Gifford, the preaching licence granted to Andrew Gifford by Charles the Second and Lord Arlington, bore the denominational designation "Presbyterian." This was "crossed out (presumably by Gifford himself), and in its place "Baptist" appears, inscribed in bold, black ink.

The tradition of Gifford's disguise as a tinker (when in

trepidation of being arrested and persecuted) may or may not be explained through his acquaintance with Bunyan; it is here noted for what it is worth and not as evidence. But the copy of a *Concordance* (1671), compiled by Vavasour Powell, now in the Bristol Baptist College Library, with Bunyan's signature (supposedly in his own handwriting) is a matter for consideration, as no doubt Powell (who was an open communionist) and Bunyan undoubtedly knew one another, as both enjoyed the intimate friendship of Dr. John Owen. Owen in fact contributed the preface to the *Concordance*—to which John Bunyan is said to have added 9,000 extra references. The above-mentioned copy was possibly in the valuable collection bequeathed to Bristol by Dr. Andrew Gifford (grandson of "old" Andrew), who for many years was sub-librarian at the British Museum, as well as being at the same time minister of a Baptist Church in London.

Unquestioned evidence that John Bunyan and Andrew Gifford were not unacquainted is adduced from the fact that Ebenezer Wilson, son of John Wilson, of Hitchin, went to Bristol apparently to assist "old" Andrew Gifford in his duties towards the end of his ministry. John Wilson, who "was a very dear friend of John Bunyan," took charge of the congregation formed by Bunyan at Hitchin in 1677—the very year in which Andrew Gifford began his work at the church in the Pithay.

Mention should also be made of the Prospectus issued in 1691 by Charles Doe, of Southwark, announcing the publication of his Folio Collection of Bunyan's works, as it contains in its list of subscribers "the Church at Brostol [*sic*]": no doubt the church at which Andrew Gifford was then ministering, and at which he continued to minister up to the year 1721.

Whilst one was affectionately known as "bishop" Bunyan—Andrew Gifford is described as "the Apostle of the West." Both men founded congregations: Bunyan in the midlands and Gifford in the western counties. Gifford, like Bunyan, visited "with parental fondness" the churches he had established. He also assisted in a practical way in the education of young ministers, and when asked why he was so zealous of giving his grandson (afterwards Dr. Andrew Gifford) such a liberal education, which neither he nor his son, Emmanuel, possessed, "he smartly replied, 'for that very reason'." Nevertheless, judging by his neatly written sermons at Bristol College (if in his own hand), "old" Andrew Gifford was no mean scholar himself. Nor was John Bunyan.

FRANK MOTT HARRISON.

Authorities consulted include: *The Baptist Quarterly*, Vol. viii., No. 5; *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society*, Vol.

vi., No. 1; Frith's *Cromwell*; *Congregational Historical Society Transactions*, Vol. xii., No. 5; Bunyan's Account of his Imprisonment; Muddiman's *The King's Journalist*; Carlile's *A History of English Baptists*; Brown's *Life of Bunyan*; Macaulay's *Essays* (Bunyan); Urwick's *Bible Truths and Church Errors*; Ivimey's *A History of English Baptists*; Barclay's *Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth*; Whitley's *Minutes of the General Assembly*. Thanks are here accorded to Prof. F. E. Robinson; and to Mr. T. M. Williams for notes supplied from the Broadmead Records.

A TREASURER'S ACCOUNT, 1773-4. No British member has made any suggestion concerning the query on p. 107 of our last issue, but Mr. Edward C. Starr, Curator of the Samuel Colgate Baptist Historical Collection, Hamilton, N.Y., writes: "This might be a guess, possibly wide of the mark—might not the *lion* be *lieing*, i.e. possibly referring to the bedding down of the horse, possibly even for Bro. Perkins? This occurs to me for in Webster's *New International Dictionary*, 1918, under *lie* v.i. pret. *lay*, it states:

8. To reside, esp. temporarily; to sojourn; to lodge; sleep; specif., of an army, fleet, ship, or commander, to be in camp or quarters temporarily stationed . . .

The note which follows completes the case or guess:

The forms of *lie* are often ignorantly or carelessly confounded with those of the transitive verb *lay*."