Thomas Lurting, Fighting Sailor turn'd Peaceable Christian

Teachers	
Topic:	Thomas Lurting, Fighter turned Peacemaker
Spiritual reflection:	**Psalm 145:8-9** The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and great in mercy. The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works.
REsources	*Journal of Thomas Lurting* (below) *Lighting Candles in the Dark*, Friends General Conference
Preparation	Volunteer studies the account of Thomas Lurting in preparation for a conversation with the class. Wear simple costume suggesting a sailor in 17th century England. Bring a rope and a sheet (sail) props.

Opening:	Go around the circle, say your name and one person who has helped you, or one person you have helped.
	▪ What makes a person a hero?
	▪ Share something about someone you look up to.
	  ▪ Who are they?
	  ▪ What are they like?
	  ▪ What do you admire about them?
	Today we will have a Quaker time machine visit from Thomas Lurting, an English Quaker from the time of George Fox. In 1646 when he was 14, he was taken onto an English ship as a fighting sailor in England's wars with Holland and Spain. Some surprising things happened when he met some Quaker.

Questions for Visit with Thomas Lurting	*[NOTE: Thomas should be hidden behind or in the time machine listening as the class brainstorms question.]* Think about what you would you like to ask him. *[If so led, give a few of the suggestions below to prompt brainstorming]* ***Possible Questions:*** *When and where did you live?* *What was it like to be taken onto a ship when you were only 14?* *What was it like to be on a ship at war?* *Tell us how you first met Quakers.* *How did you become a Quaker?* *What are you most proud of about your life?* *What would you like to ask us as kids living today?*
Visit with Thomas Lurting	**Teacher:** *Let's set the Quaker time machine to 1656, which is when Thomas Lurting was 24 years old.* *[Thomas steps through time machine, gives a hearty sailor's greeting and talks with the class.]* Would you like to say "farewell" to Thomas Lurting or introduce him to the Meeting at the rise of worship?
Closing/Preparation for MfW	Gather in a circle: One thing I learned today. If the class decides to introduce George Fox, choose who will do it.
Home note:	Today we continued our series on Quaker history with the story of Thomas Lurting, who was pressed into service as sailor at the age of 14. Like George Fox, Thomas turned into a peaceable Christian as a result of Quaker convincement.

Thomas Lurting, Fighting Sailor turn'd Peaceable Christian

Quaker Heritage Press online texts

In the Year 1646, I being then about Fourteen Years of Age, was impress'd (or forc'd) and carry'd into the Wars in *Ireland*, where I remained about two Years in the time of the Long Parliament; then was carry'd to *London*, and I went into the Wars against the *Dutch* and *Spaniards;* in which I had many Deliverances, too long here to mention; yet they all at that time, wrought but little upon me. Then I was turned over into the *Bristol*-Frigot, in which Ship, in process of time, it pleased God to convert me; as will appear in the following Treatise.

As I was Boatswain's Mate, I had the Command of about 200 Men in this Ship, and it was my Place, to see that the Men attended, and were present at the time of Worship; and I was diligent in the performance of that Service; and when any refused to obey my Command, in that respect, I endeavour'd by force to compell them.

Now of the many Deliverances, I shall only hint at three or four that happen'd in one Day, which wrought some Remorse upon me. The aforesaid four Deliverances, was at a place call'd *Sancta Cruze*, in the Island of the *Canaries;* where I had not only those Four, but many Deliverances.

New being brought to our General *Blake*, as we lay in *Cales-Bay*, that sixteen Sail of Galeons arriv'd at *Sancta Cruze* from the *West-Indies*, we instantly went out, and in a few Days got thither, and found as it was reported; and several Ships went in before us, to make Discovery how they lay, and anchoring at some distance, about half Gun-shot from the Castle, which was large, and had 40 Guns at least, and there was several Forts and Breast-Works, of about 8 or 10 Guns each. The Wind blew very right on the Shoar, and we coming in, in a latter Squadron, went under our General's Stern to know where we should be? and were answered, *Where we could get room.* So we ran in, But could get no room to bring up our Ship; so we went a-Stern all our Ships, and the Smoak being somewhat abated, we found our selves to be within half a Cable's length of the Vice-Admiral's Galeon, of about 50 Guns, and 300 Men; and not above a Cable's length from the Admiral, a Galeon of about 50 or 60 Guns, and having also about 400 Men, and within half Gun-shot of a large Castle, of 40 Guns; and within Musquet-shot of some Forts and Breast-Works.

And when we had brought up our Ship, we were about half a Cable's length from the Vice-Admiral, just in his Weak, or in the Head of him; then our Captain call'd to me, to make all read, or get to veer nearer the Galeon: *For I will*, said he, *be on Board the Vice-Admiral.* So we veer'd to be on Board of him, and so fast as we veer'd towards him, he veer'd from us, until he came about Musquet=shot of the Shoar. Then the Captain call'd to me, to get a Hauser out of the Gun-Room-Port, and clap a Spring on the Cable; when done, we veer'd out Cable, and lay just cross his Hawse, about half a Musquet-shot from him; then we run all the Guns we could on that side towards him, which were in Number 28 or 30, and all Hands went to it in earnest.

And the second broadside some of our Shot, as we judged, fell into his Powder-Room, and she blew up, and not one Man escaped, that we could perceive.

Then the *Spanish* Admiral, was going to serve us, as we had served his Vice-Admiral; which we perceiving, ply'd him very close; with about 28 or 30 Guns; and the third Broadside, all his• Men leap'd over Board, and instantly she blew up.

And there was a small Castle on the other side, which (after the *Spanish* Admiral was blown up) we went to work against its Fort, and in a short time made them weary of it.

And as for the Castle of 40 Guns, we were got so far into the Bay, that they could not bring upon us above two or three Guns.

But when we went off, they ply'd us close with their great Guns, but did us no great damage.

After this Expedition was over, and that we had blown up the two *Spanish* Admirals, I took the Long-Boat, to go on Board a Galeon, that lay on Shoar near to another Castle, supposing that the Men were not on Board; but there were some, and they lay close on Board, until we came within two or three Ships length of them, and then they rose up and fir'd several Guns at us; but being so near their Ship, all their Shot went over us: Which I call the first great Deliverance. Then on our return towards our Ship, they from several Castles and Breast-Works, fir'd briskly at us with great and small Shot, which came very near us; notwithstanding we• all got safe on Board our own Ship: And this I call the second great Deliverance.

In a little time, the Smoak of their Guns being gone, I saw three Galeons on Shoar, all on Board one another; one of them along the Shoar, and one cross her Hawse, and the other cross her Stern, about a Musquet-Shot from our Ship; and there was a Castle on one side of them, and a Breast-Work on the other, with about 50 or 60 Men in it, as was supposed; and the Galeons lay about half a Cable's length from the Castle, and the same distance from the Breast-work, and about fifty Yards from the Shoar. Then I took the Pinnace, and two Men with me, and was going to set them on Fire; but the Captain saw me, and call'd me back, and sent five Men more with me; and on our setting forward, our Ship fir'd a Gun, and in the Smoak thereof we got on Board the Galeon, and received no harm, (the *Spaniards* having left them) and I instantly set one of them on Fire, which burnt the other two Galeons.

And when we could stay no longer, by reason of the Fire, and our Ship's Crew not being as formerly, mindful of us, to fire some Guns, that in the Smoak thereof we might have retir'd back, without being discovered by any from the Breast-Works, but they seeing of us, we were forc'd, by reason of the Fire, to return presently towards our own Ship. The Breast-Work then having full Sight of us, discharg'd a Volley of about 50 or 60 small Shot, and kill'd two of our Men, and shot a third in the Back; and I sat close to one that was kill'd, between him and the Shoar, and close to him that was shot in the Back, and receiv'd no harm: And this was a third and Eminent Deliverance.

And coming out of the Bay, we came within three or four Ship's length of the Castle, that had 40 Guns; and they kept them in readiness, until we came directly over against the Castle; then they fir'd, but we were so near, that most of the shot went over, and did us little harm, only in our Rigging: And I was on the Clue of the Main-tack, getting the Main-tack on Board, and a Shot cut the Bolt-Rope a little above my Head: And this was the fourth Deliverance, and all in six Hours

time, and never to be forgotten by me; but I desire to be thankful to God, who from these and many other Dangers, has apparently delivered me.

And the aforesaid 16 Galeons, were very large Ships, from 300 Tonns to a 1000, and upwards; and the first that I burnt, as our Men judged, had a great deal of Silver on Board, being a Ship of about 800 Tonn, and the other two Richly Laden, and about 7 or 800 Tonn, and all perished together; and all the rest of the Sixteen, being Richly Laden, not having time to get their Lading out, we being so suddenly upon them, were all burnt and destroyed together, with their Lading. But then I neither was a *Quaker,* nor were any of the people so called on Board our Ship; nor ever to my Remembrance, had heard of any called by that Name.

Now I shall a little hint at the first Rice of the People called Quakers in our Ship: There was some Soldiers put on Board us, and one of them had been at a Meeting in *Scotland,* of the aforesaid People; and there was two Young Men in the Ship, who had some converse with him, but he was taken away from the Ship in a little time, but the two Young Men made little appearance of any Conviction or Convincement, until about six Months after. The first thing observable was, they refused to hear the Priest, or put off their Hats to the Captain, for which they called them *Quakers:* These two met often together in Silence, and their so meeting caus'd a serious Enquiry among others, and their Number increased, and as they increased, so Persecution increased against them; and the Captain was sore troubled and disturbed at their Increase, himself being a *Baptist Preacher;* the Priest that officiated in our Ship, was Cruel and Bitter against them; crying out thus to me, *O Thomas, an honest Man, and a good Christian! Here is a dangerous People on Board,* (that is to say the *Quakers) a Blasphemous People, denying the Ordinances and Word of God.* The which made me as Cruel as himself, and I gave them many a Heavy Blow, and I was Violent upon them, and a great Persecutor of them; but the Remembrance of the aforesaid Deliverances stuck close to me, and the Lord wrought so much upon me, that I could no more beat any of the People called *Quakers;* and in a little time the Lord gave me a true sight of the Priest, for when I could not do his Work, and beat and abuse the said People, then I was accounted neither an *honest Man,* nor *good Christian* by him; so I began to look upon the said People with a single Eye, for good. And the Lord by his in-shining Light, open'd my Understanding, so that I saw a great deal of difference between them, and other Professors; whereupon I made many Promises unto the Lord, to be better; but they being made in my own Will, were of little Effect: Then the Lord shewed me, that in those many Promises, and not keeping them, I was not benefited thereby, and that caused much trouble to me; so that I seperated from all sorts of Professors, except on *Roger Dennis,* who was called a *Quaker,* whom I intirely loved; and in all my Cruelty exercised upon, and against the said People, I never struck him: For he had a Check upon me, tho' he spake not a Word; and many times when I had resolv'd to seperate the People called *Quakers,* when met together in a Religious manner, either by Blows or otherwise; then he looking upon me, I durst not touch one of them. After some time, I desired to be much alone, and in my still and quiet Retirements, the Lord was very good unto me, and gave me many a heavenly Visitation, and tho' it was in Judgment, yet that was my Portion, and I patiently bore them, and came to love his Judgments and Visitations, and they became to me very Sweet and Pleasant, and of more Value than *Rubies,* and was my great Delight; and with them I was very well pleased, because they brought me into much Tenderness, for the which I loved them at my very Heart, for it was a Heart Work; and many times when alone, the Lord would break in upon me, by the in-shining of his glorious Light in my own Heart, melted me,

and mollified me: Yea, so Powerfully many times, that I could not contain, or forbear crying out, *O Lord!* Insomuch that the Professors could not tell what to make of it. But I knew and felt it to be the mighty Power of God, which brought and wrought Deliverance into my Soul; and with this Exercise, and many more, I continued about six Months, being taken off all outward Concerns, and being alone, some said I was Mad, others I was Distracted, and so wrote Home to *England.*

Many came on Board to see me, thinking the Shape of my Body was alter'd, and I heard some say, that *my Body was of the same shape, but I looked like a Dumb Saint.* In short, I was a Scoff and a Derision with all Sorts of Professors, except the People called Quakers; but I was one of them in my Heart, tho' not yet joined to them, for the Cross was too hard for me as yet; but many a time I felt that Living Eternal Power, which hath made me both to Tremble and Quaker, and was glad when it was so with me; yet then I was no profess'd *Quaker,* for the Cross was still too hard for me.

But it was the lord's good Will, and blessed be his Holy Name for it; that after the many Judgments and sore inward Afflictions, it was his good Will and Pleasure, to bring my Will, to be subject to his Will; for in those dark Times, I was fully given up; yea, Life and all, to have Peace in my Conscience with God, for that was the thing, and the only thing that my Heart thirsted after.

And one Evening being alone, for in that I took great Delight, and being low in my Mind, I was very earnest with the Lord, to know what People I should join my self unto, for then I was alone; and it was plainly shewed me the *Quakers;* of which Number the Man I loved so well was accounted; and being one that I formerly highly esteemed, and who had the Check upon me, when I was in the height of Cruelty against the People called *Quakers,* then on Board, as is before mentioned. But the thing at that time did startle me, that I desired of the Lord, rather to die than live, for the reasoning Part got up: What to such a People, that both Priest and Professors are against! What to such a People, that I have been so long Beating and Abusing, and that without just Cause! Death would be more welcome to me. And here the Enemy, that old subtile Serpent, was not wanting to insinuate many things into my Mind: But God was pleased to put me in Mind of the manifold Preservations and Deliverances he had brought me through; so I took up this Resolution, by the Assistance of the Lord, *Whether* Quaker, *or no* Quaker, *Peace with God I am for:* Yet it cost me many a bitter Sigh, and many a Tear, before I could give up to go to *Roger Dennis,* my Friend called a *Quaker:* But good was the Lord, and for ever Blessed be his worthy Name, who followed me with his Dreadful Judgments and Reproofs: Insomuch that I could contain no longer, but gave up and went to my Friend *Roger Dennis,* and said, I would speak with thee, and he very mildly answered, I will go with thee: I having a Cabin, we went down, and when in, I shut the Door, and we sate some time; and before he opened his Mouth, the Hand of the Lord was upon me, and melted my Heart, and brought me into great Tenderness, and then he spake but a few Words, but they were in great Humility and Tenderness towards me, hitting the Mark to a Hairs's Breadth; so that I had great Satisfaction, being quiet in my Mind, and we parted in great Love.

Not long after that, the old Enemy, the Devil, was very busie. What, to join thy self to such a foolish People! And many more of his Stratagems, for he was like to lose his dominion, which

made him the more furious to attack me. So that I was even weary of my Life, yet longed for the first Day, that I might go to the Meeting; and it was the first that ever I was at. And at the time appointed, I went to the Meeting with a great Dread upon my Mind, and sat me down in great Quietness amongst them, they being then but six Men.

I had not been long there, but it was reported in the Publick Place of Worship, that I was amongst the *Quakers,* at which, many of them left the Priest and his Worship, to come and see me: And they made a great Noise and Bustle. When the Worship was over, the Captain ask'd the Reason of that Noise? and it was told him, that I was amongst the *Quakers:* Then he sent for me to himself, and divers more of his Officers were there: the first that began, was the Priest, saying, *Thomas, I took you for a very honest Man, and a good Christ, but I am sorry you should be so deluded.* The mean while, the Captain turning the Bible from one end to the other, to prove the *Quakers* no *Christians.* All this while I was very quiet and still in my Mind; for I found therein was my Strength: And when they saw they could not prevail upon me, then they fell to Slandering of me, saying, That at such and such a time, the *Quakers* came to me, saying, Do such and such a thing; Which was all false, by which I got great Strength: For never any *Quaker* came to me, but *Roger Dennis,* one that I dearly loved, and desired his Company, and that was but the Night before. So when they had done, I went to my Friends in great Peace and Satisfaction, saying to them, That *when I went to the Captain, I was scarce half a* Quaker, *but by their Lyes and false Reports against me, they have made me almost a whole* Quaker, *or at least I hope to be one.* My Friends received me in much Love and Tenderness, and ever after I kept to their Meetings.

After this, Truth prevailed very much, and had a great sway in the Ship, and several were convinced; so that when I came among them, there was but six, but in less then six Months after, we were twelve Men, and two Boys, of which one was the Priest's.

There was such a Blow given to Persecution, that it never got up again, whilst in that Ship, tho' much try'd for by the Captain; for he got several Men out of other Ships, on purpose to Persecute the *Quakers;* who came with great swelling Words, as tho' they would have devoured us at once: But, blessed be the Lord, they never had Power to touch one of us; for their Horns were nip'd in the Bud, and several of them in a short time were cut off by Death, insomuch that Men were afraid to be in that Office to abuse us.

About this time we had a great Sickness, which swept away above forty in a little time; and most of us, called *Quakers,* had the Distemper, but none died of it, yet were brought very low. We took great care one of another when Sick, that nothing was wanting amongst us, but what one had, was free for all of us; and our Diligence and great Care of the Sick amongst us, was such, that I have heard some Men say, when upon a Languishing Pillow and Death-Bed, *Oh carry me to the Quakers, for they take great Care one of another, and they will take some care of me.* At this time, the Captain was very kind to me, and frequently sent me part of what he had, and order'd me a Cabin; for before I lay in a Hammock. And now all was very quiet, no Persecution, but a general Love amongst all sorts of Persuasions that were then on Board, and Truth had great Dominion, and several were Convinced.

After I began to be well, I sent to the Captain, to know if I might have that Cabin I lay in before I was convinced; and he granted my Request, for no one inclined to lie therein; alledging, It was troubled with an Evil Spirit, for no less then three or four had died in it, in a short space of time; And it proved very serviceable; for I not only lay therein, but made use thereof for our Meeting-place.

Now all things were in quiet, and the Captain continued our Friend for some time, and shewed us more Kindness than any other Professors: The Captain would often say, *Thomas, take thy Friends; do so and so, or such and such a thing;* and I took my Friends, and did it far beyond his Expectation, by which he got great Credit: For as yet we were not brought to Testifie against Fighting; yet we would take none of the Plunder. And in all our desperate Attempts, wherein we were then concerned, we received no hurt, tho' several others were killed and wounded, who sat close by us; at which time the Captain would say to other Captains, *that he cared not if all his Men were Quakers, for they were the hardiest Men in his Ship.*

In this time of Liberty, I looked upon it but a forerunner of farther Exercise; for what was done in pretended Friendship, was but to serve their own Ends: I expected a time would come to try all Foundations; which accordingly did, and drove every Man to his own. We being now at *Leghorn,* were ordered to go to *Barcelona,* to take or Burn a *Spanish* Man of War; and our Station was to lie against a Castle to batter it, the which we did; and one Corner of the Castle play'd some Shot into our Ship, and I was for beating down that Corner: And we, called *Quakers,* fought with as much Courage as any, seeing then no farther; and for my part, I was strip'd into my Wastcoat, (every one in fighting Habit) and went to it in earnest, and with as much Courage as ever; and I went into the Fore-castle, and levell'd the Guns; *but,* said I, *Fire not till I go out to see where the Shot lights, that we may level higher or lower;* and here I was as great a Fighter as most: But he that hath all Mens Hearts in his Hand, can turn them at his Pleasure; yea, he in a Minute's time so far chang'd my Heart, that in a Minute before, I setting my whole Strength and Rigor to kill and destroy Mens Lives, and in a Minute after I could not kill or destroy a Man, if it were to gain the World; for as I was coming out of the Fore-Castle Door, to see where the Shot fell, the Word of the Lord run through me, *how if I had kill'd a Man;* and it was with such Power, that for some time I hardly knew whether I was in the Body or out of it; but when I came to see, and felt what it was, I turned about, and put on my Clothes, and walked on the Deck, as though I had never seen a Gun fir'd, under a great Exercise of Mind; and some ask'd me, *If I was Hurt?* I answered, *No, but under some scruple of Conscience on the Account of Fighting,* altho' I had not heard that the *Quakers* refused to Fight. And when Night came we went out of the Castle Shot, and I much desired to know, what the Friends would say to this: I sent for two of them, one was the Man I loved so well, and I queried much with them about Fighting; to which they gave me little Answer; but said, *If the Lord sent them well home, they would never go to it again;* my Answer to them was, with a Dread and Fear upon me, *That if I stood honest to that of God in my own Conscience, and if we came to it to morrow, that with the Lord's Assistance I would bear my Testimony• against it.* For this I plainly saw, that inasmuch as we had been so great Actors in it, now we must bear our Testimony against Fighting; not doubting but way will be made for my Delivery; but if not, the Will of the Lord be done. The next Day, we heard that several were kill'd on Shoar; the which added much to my Sorrow. Some time after, a Friend went to the Captain to be cleared; he asked his Reason? His Answer was, *He could Fight no longer:* Then said the Captain, *He that denies to Fight in time of Engagement, I will put my*

Sword in his Guts. Then, said the Friend, *thou wilt be a Man-slayer, and guilty of shedding of Blood;* For which the Captain beat him sorely, with his Cane and Fist: Although he was a *Baptist-Preacher.*

So here the Captain, who had been our Friend, and a Shelter to us from wicked Men, is now become again our Enemy, and we left open to every wicked Spirit, to kill us, whensoever we deny to Fight: for the Printed Orders fixed upon the Ship says, *If any Man flinch from his Quarters in time of Engagement, any may Kill him:* Yet for all the hard things, I had a secret hope and belief, that if we stood true to what the Lord had made known unto us, the Lord would deliver us out of all their Hands.

Some time after, (about the Year 1655.) we were at *Leghorn,* and we were order'd to go a Cruizing; and one Morning, we espied a great Ship bearing down upon us, which we supposed to be a *Spanish* Man of War, with whom we had Wars: So orders was given to make the Ship clear to Fight. *Now comes a trying Time, to prove every man's Foundation.* I being then upon the Deck, a great weight fell upon me, and I desired very earnestly of the Lord for Strength, to bear what was coming upon us, to try our Foundation; and farther, I desired of the lord, what to do in such a Streight? and it was answered me, to have a Meeting. And this seemed to be very strange; for all the Men were in an Uproar, one heaving one way, and another another; and then I queried, whether Friends would meet? and it was answered, if they met not I was clear. So then I went down, with a Dread upon me, and spoke to two or three of them; and they met all of them in a little time, twelve Men and two Boys, at our old Meeting-place, to my great Satisfaction; for only two of them knew of my Exercise, and how it was with me at *Barcelona:* But blessed be the Lord, who open'd my Mouth, and I declared to them how things was with me, and that things seemed very Dark and Cloudy, or words to that effect; yet my Hopes and Belief was in the Lord, that I had• not the least scruple, but that the Lord would deliver me, and not me only, but all such as were of my Faith and Belief; adding, I lay not this as an Injunction upon any one, but leave you all to the Lord, to do as he shall direct you; yet one thing I have to advise you of, that you be not ensnared; in a little time they will call you to your Quarters; which if you go, you shew your selves Men for their turns. And farther, I must advise you, that the Captain puts great Confidence in you; therefore let us be careful, that we give him no just Occasion. Therefore, all that are of my Mind, let us meet in the most publick Place upon the Deck, in the full view of the Captain, that he may not say we deceived him, in not telling of him that we would not Fight, that he might have put others in our room or place. And as we were sitting together, one of the Ship's Company came to a Friend, saying, *I will put a Crow in thy Guts;* and another saying, *I will kill thee;* and as they had an Antipathy against them, so they threatned. Then I went with a great Dread of God upon my Mind, but clear of all fear of Man; for blessed be the Lord, all fear of Man was taken away. And when I came upon the Deck, I set my Back against the Geer-Capstan, with my Face towards the Captain, where he had a full view of me; standing there awhile, I turned my Head to see who was coming after me, and when I saw my Friends there behind me, my very Heart leap'd for Joy, and I was overcome with the sight of them; for to me they were the loveliest that ever I beheld, and my very Bowels rowled within me for them, and my Life was given up freely for them, to see them given up as Innocent Lambs, ready for the Slaughter, standing all together. In a little time comes the Lieutenant, and says to one of them, *Go down to thy Quarters;* his answer was, *I can Fight no more:* The which was what he looked for; for he was our great Enemy. Then he goes to the Captain, and makes the worst of it, saying, *Yonder the*

Quakers be altogether, and I do not know but they will mutiny, and one says he cannot Fight; then he ask'd his Name, and came down: He first heaved his Hat Over-board, and took hold of his Collar, and beat him with a large Cane, and then dragged him down to his Quarters. Then the Captain goes upon the Half-Deck again, and call'd to his Man to bring him his Sword; which done, he drew it in as much Fury and Indignation, as ever I saw Sword drawn; for Passion had overcome him. No sooner was his Sword drawn, but the Word of the Lord ran through me like Fire, saying, *The Sword of the Lord is over him: And if he will have a Sacrifice, proffer it him:* And this Word was so Powerful in me, that I greatly quivered and shook, tho' endeavoured the contrary, fearing they should think I was afraid of the Sword, but I was not: And when the shaking was a little over, I turned my Head over my shoulder, and said to the Friend I loved so well, *That I must go to the Captain:* His Answer was, *Be well satisfied in what thou dost:* My Answer was again, *There is a necessity upon me to go.* Then his Answer was, *I will go with thee.* Then watching the Captain, as he came forward with his drawn Sword in his Hand, I fixt my Eye upon him, with the great Dread of the Lord upon my Mind; I step'd towards him, and he furiously looked on me, to have daunted me; but I was carried above all his furious Looks: I had about five Paces and six Steps upon the Quarter-Deck before I came to him, I still keeping my Eye upon him, in much Dread, and step'd the five Paces, and on the third Step, his Countenance changed Pale, and he turned himself about from me, and went off, and called to his Man to take away his Sword: I standing there awhile, said to my Friend, *The Captain is gone, let us return to our Friends;* who receiv'd us very kindly, and were glad to see how we were delivered. In a little time, the Ship we thought to Fight withal, prov'd a *Genoese,* our Friend; and before Night, the Captain sent the Priest to me, to desire me not to be angry with him, for it was in his Passion; my Answer by the Priest to the Captain was, *That I had nothing but good Will to him, and all Men living;* and bid him tell the Captain, *That he must have a Care of such Passions, for if he killed a Man in his Passion, he might seek a Place for Repentance, and might not find it.* And ever after this the Captain was very kind and respective to me.

And thus the Lord brought me through many and various Exercises, for which I bless his worthy Name; for if the Trial, or Exercise was ever so great, if I was but made willing to give up to that he made known unto me, to be his Will and Mind, he never fail'd to carry me through it; to whom be Everlasting Praise, saith my Soul.

In the Year, 1660, about the time of King *Charles* the Second's coming into *England,* for the space of two or three Years, I met with many Sorts of Exercises, being Forc'd or Press'd divers times; all which the Lord brought me through. And of the many, I shall hint a few, that if any should meet with the like, they may not distrust the Lord's Goodness and Strength, for he is able by his Everlasting Power, to preserve to the uttermost, and will plead the Cause of such who put their whole Trust and Confidence in him.

In the Year, 1661. Early one Morning, going from my Quarters, towards the Ship I belong'd unto, I met four Press-Masters, and I might have shunned them, but durst not; and when we met, they ask'd me, *Whether I was a Master, or a Mate:* I denying to be a Master, they reply'd, *You must go with us:* Not so, said I; then they took hold of me, two under my Arms, and two under my Hams, and lifted me upon their Shoulders, and carry'd me about three Hundred Yards, with my Face upwards; so that by the Signs I could discern which way they carry'd me, which was to *Horsley-down Mill-Stairs;* and then it was in my Mind, that they would heave me over the

Wharf; then I considered what time of Tide it was, and being young-Flood, the Boat came to the Wharf side, and they heav'd me from their Shoulders, over the Wharf, cross the Boat-thaughts, which was about five Yards high, and had not Providence preserved me, they had killed, or else crippled me, and I lying still for some time, one of them cryed out, *What shall we do, we have kill'd the Man;* but getting up, I went into the Boat's Stern, at which they were glad and rejoiced; and so carried me over the Water, and put me on Shoar.

Another time (in the Year, 1662.) going to *Harwich* laden with Cord, and no sooner we came to an Anchor, but a Press-Boat came on Board us; and the first Man they laid Hands on, was me, saying, *You must go with us. I hope not so,* said I. Then they swore that I was a lusty Man, and should go: Then they laid Hands on me, and lifted me into their Boat, and carried me on Board the Ship *Mary*, one *Jeremiah Smith* Commander, who was a very loose and wicked Man: So when I came to the Ship side, they bad me go in, the which I had not Freedom to do: Then they ty'd a Rope about my Waste, and with a Tackle hoisted me, making a Noise, as if I had been some Monster, and lower'd me down upon the Main-Hatches, where I sat about half an Hour, that all might have their full view of me: Then I got up, and walked abaft (or behind) the Main-Mast, amongst the Officers, and when Night came, I went under the half-Deck, and laid me down between two Guns, on the Boards, and slept very well. The next day the Steward came to me, to know my Name; I asked him for what? He reply'd, That I might have my Victuals. I told him It was time enough when I came for my Victuals. So I continued without any Food *five Days*, only at times a Draught of Water, for I was sensible, if I had eat of their Victuals, they would have kept me. The Seamen were very kind to me, and many came in great Tenderness, and proffer'd me of their Victuals. I accepted of their Love, but none of their Victuals. The Captain was a very Furious Man, and frequently in Drink, so that I could not have opportunity to speak with him; and I often desired of the Lord for Strength to oppose him, or else to be still and quiet. And on the sixth Day in the Morning, from the time I came on Board, I found much Exercise attending my Mind to go to the Captain, and I spake to the Master to tell him of it, which he did. The Captain, having most of his Officers about him, sent for me by his Man, himself being on the half-Deck; and as I was going along the Gallery, his Man turns about, saying, *You must pull off your Hat when you come to the Captain*, whose Back was towards me; and his Man offering to pull it off, I held it on, which caused a Bustle. The Captain said, *Let his Hat alone, I know the Quakers very well, What is thy Business with me?* To which I answered, *I acquainted thy Men when they took my from my Imployment, that I was not for their Turns, and am come to acquaint thee;* I also said, *It is not unknown unto some in this Ship, that I have been as great a Fighter as others, but now no more so. I hear so,* said the Captain, *and thus thou hast had a Command, and so thou shalt have here; or else thou shalt stand by me, and I will tell thee what I will have done, and thou shalt call the Men to do it; or else thou shalt stand by the Fore-Braces, and I will call to thee to do so and so; and this is not killing of Men, to hale a Rope.* I answered, but I will not do that. *Then*, said he, *Thou shalt be with the Coopers, to hand Beer for them, there is great occasion for it.* I answered, But I will not do that. *Then,* said he again, *I have an Imployment for thee, which will be a great Piece of Charity, and a saving of Mens Lives, Thou shalt be with the Doctor, and when a Man comes down, that hath lost a Leg, or an Arm, to hold the Men, while the Doctor cuts it off; this is not killing Men, but saving Mens Lives.* I answered, But I will not do that, for it's all an Assistance. Then he said, *I will send thee a-shoar to Prison.* I answered, *I am in thy Hand, thou may'st do with me what thou pleasest. But,* said the Captain, *I hear thou wilt starve thy self. Not so,* said I, *for I have Money in my Pocket, and if thou*

wilt sell me any Victuals, I will eat before thee. The Captain said, *I cannot sell the King's Victuals.* I answered, *Nor I cannot do the King's Work, therefore cannot eat the King's Victuals.*

In a little time after, I was called to go into the Boat, expecting to be sent to Prison, but when we came on Shoar, contrary to my Expectation, the Captain bad me, *go which way I would.* This done, I enquired for my Friend *Mary Vanderwalt,* who receiv'd me very kindly, and provided for me, such things as were necessary, my Teeth being very loose. And after two or three Days, I returned to the Vessel I was press'd out of: And the next Day, being very hard at Work, heaving out Corn into a Lighter, stripp'd in my Shirt and Drawers; then a Man of War's Boat clap'd us on Board, and the Coxon jump'd in; and swore, *Here's a lusty Rogue come up,* said he, but I took little notice of him, and continued heaving Corn; at which he swore, *That if I would not come up, he would lay me cross the Shoulders.* Then I said, *Strike me not, for if thou dost, I will not come up; if thou strike me not, I may come up.* Then he swore to the Captain, that I was a *Quaker. Have him up,* said the Captain, so I went upon the Deck: *Come near,* says the Captain; so I went into the Lighter, into which we heav'd the Corn, close by him. Then the Captain, in a scoffing manner, said, *Thou art no Quaker; if thou wert, I would not take thee; for if thou wert a Quaker, thou shouldst be waiting upon the Lord, and let his Ravens feed thee, and not be toiling thy Body: So* (my Shirt being then very wet with Sweat) *Answer me,* said he. The Seamen crying, *The Spirit does not move him;* one while saying, *Pull him in,* another while, *Let him alone:* Thus it was for some time. And I got very low in my Mind, not mattering what they said; desiring earnestly of the Lord, that if I answered the Captain, it might be to the purpose, or else to be silent. And it rose fresh in my Mind to the Captain: *I perceive thou hast read some part of the Scriptures, didst thou never read, That he is worse than an Infidel, that will not provide for his Family?* adding, *I often heard the Quakers blamed for not working, but thou art the first that ever I heard blame them for working.* Says the Captain, *Turn him away he is a Quaker.* Being gone a little way, he calls out, *Pull him again, he is no Quaker: Thou art no Quaker; for here thou bring'st Corn, and of it is made Bread, and by the strength of that Bread, we kill the* Dutch; *and therefore no Quaker: Or art not thou as accessary to their Death, as we; Answer me?* I kept very still and low in my Mind: And after their many Scoffs and Jeers: Then said I to the Captain, *I am a Man that have, and can feed my Enemies; and well may I you, who pretend to be my Friends.* The Captain reply'd, *Turn him away, he is a Quaker.*

In a few Days after, I was press'd out of the same Vessel, and cary'd on Board a Man of War; and when I came on Board, was order'd to go into the Cabin, where the Captain and several officers were; and when I came into the Cabin, the Captain appear'd like a *Mad Man,* Swearing and Cursing against the *Quakers;* often swearing, *That if he did not hang me, he would carry me to the Duke of* York, *and he would.* And I said very little to them; for the Lord's Presence was with me, and carry'd me over all their high Threats. And when he had tired himself, then he said more mildly, *What dost thou say nothing for thy self?* My Answer was, *Thou say'st enough for thee and me too;* for I found it most safe to say little, except I had good Authority for it. So, when they had done, I went to my Lodging, between two Guns in the Half-Deck, on the Boards; and being betwixt Sleep and Wake, I heard a great Outcry, *Where is the Quaker? Where is the Quaker?* And the Cry much increasing, at last I said, *Here am I, what lack you at this time of the Night?* (it being about the first Hour.) *Ho!* said they, *you must come to the Captain presently.* And when I came to the Cabin-Door; said the Captain, *Is the Quaker there?* Yes, said I. *I cannot sleep,* said he: But I slept very well on the hard Boards. Then, said he, *Thou must go*

on Shoar. I answered, *I am in thy Hand, and thou may'st do with me as thou pleasest:* So the Boat put me a-shoar at *Harwich.* And this was the Man that said, *Hanging was too good for me;* who, in six Hours time, was so weary of me, that he could not take his Natural Rest, whilst I was on Board.

These, and many more of the like Exercises, hath the Lord carry'd me through, too long here to mention; for the which, I bless his worthy Name: For he was always, in the greatest Straights, ready to assist me, as I was made willing to give up to him, and to be nothing of myself.

Thomas Lurting.