

*Frances Clarkson.* In my paper on Laurence Clarkson (*Proceedings*, vol. xxvi, p. 161) I had to leave Mrs. Clarkson's name undetermined. Now I can supply it, thanks to Ludowick Muggleton. In vol. iii of *The Works of John Reeve and Ludowick Muggleton* (1820) there is 'A Volume of Spiritual Epistles'—Muggleton's letters on matters concerning his church. On pages 16 to 31 are several letters dealing with Muggleton's quarrel with Clarkson. On 25 December 1660 he writes to Clarkson:

... You have made use of your beloved Frances and Ananias and Sapphire like, you have consulted with that venomous serpent your wife, and have made her your council in all spiritual matters . . . your continual consultation with the Devil your wife, hath enraged your wife against the believers in this Commission, and against me; for which I do pronounce your wife cursed and damned to eternity, though she hath been damned by John Reeve already, therefore I have set to my seal, that John Reeve's damnation shall be true upon her.

Frances, being a Devil, of the seed of Cain, could be damned. Clarkson himself, having already been justified as of the seed of Adam, could not, much as Muggleton might have wished it. He could only write:

... you shall be as one of the least of believers of this Commission, and you shall become a reproach to saint and devil.

He could also punish Clarkson by cutting off the salary the latter seems to have been receiving from the Church. So on 2 January 1661 he writes to Christopher Hill, one of his followers in Maidstone, that payments to Clarkson were to cease:

... let him betake himself to some employment in the world as well as the rest of the believers do; for I do not see fit that he and the serpent his wife should be maintained in idleness and pride.

Frances Clarkson was evidently a woman of spirit, as well as of remarkable loyalty to her erratic husband. It is interesting, and I think pleasing, that her spirit overcame her loyalty to the extent that she could not follow him in at least the last of his many changes, and that she had sufficient independence of mind to reject the pretensions of the Muggletonian prophets.

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