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# THE JOURNAL OF THE FRIENDS' HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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## QUAKERS AND THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION

**T**he early history of the Quakers has been transformed during the past generation. The new discoveries started from non-Quakers – Alan Cole and Barry Reay; but they have now been accepted for publication by the *Journal of the Friends' Historical Society*. Most of what I shall say derives from the work of Barry Reay. Early Quakers were not pacifists, nor did they abstain on principle from political activity. Fox and others advocated an international millenarian crusade. The Peace Principle was first published in January 1661. It took time and a good deal of organization before it was adopted by all who called themselves Friends: there were many splits in the process. The Society which emerged was very different from the Quakers of the 1650s – so much so that perhaps we need a different word for the period 1651 to 1661, with which I shall deal.

Our first problem is that of sources. Quakers re-wrote their own history. They edited earlier texts, including Fox's *Journal*. Many tracts of the 1650s either were not reprinted or were reprinted only in a modified form. There is nothing wrong with this, of course: Lodowick Muggleton drastically edited writings of the chief prophet, John Reeve, when he republished them after Reeve's death. When John Toland edited the republican Edmund Ludlow's *Memoirs* for publication in 1698 he omitted much of Ludlow's millenarianism so as to make his anti-

militarism more acceptable to late seventeenth-century Whig opinion. His object was to make Ludlow useful to the Good Old Cause in changed circumstances: Ludlow I am sure would have agreed. What was important for later Quakers was the message of salvation: bellicose millenarianism would have given the wrong impression after 1661. But the practice created problems for historians, who until very recently relied on later reprints of pamphlets of the 1650s.

Who were the first Quakers? It is not an easy question to answer with certainty. Early Quaker historians relied, necessarily, on George Fox's *Journal* for the early years of what became the Society of Friends. Naturally Fox's *Journal* is about the groups which owed their convincement to him. But Fox and other early leaders were bringing together pre-existent groups such as Fox found waiting for his message when he journeyed north in 1651 – Grindletonians, Seekers, Ranters, Muggletonians, what Fox called “shattered Baptists.” There was in this decade very little Quaker organization, though possibly rather more than in other “sects” to which we give labels. The word “Quaker,” like the words “Puritan,” “Anabaptist,” “Leveller,” was a label applied by enemies, rather like “red” today: it has no more precise meaning than that. The Quakers originated in the North, and such organization as they had was for long centred on Swarthmoor Hall, where Margaret Fell lived. In 1652 the only groups regarding themselves as followers of Fox were in the northern and north-western counties. But then they undertook a campaign to the South, and by 1656 they are to be found over most of England. It was a rapid and most impressive spread – to enemies rather frightening.

Sectarian names are largely applied to historians after the event, names which would not have meant much to contemporaries. We still argue about whether Bunyan was a Baptist or a Congregationalist. We do not know what label, if any, to apply to Oliver Cromwell or John Milton – fairly documented characters. Sectarian labels are a product of the period after 1660, when persecuted communities had to organize and discipline themselves in order to survive, and when governments wanted them to be labelled in the interests of keeping them under control. But Quakers in fact even in the 1650s kept up by correspondence perhaps better organization than any other group which we later recognize as a sect.

Quakers are a product of the revolutionary decades of the forties and fifties, the greatest upheaval in English history. Before 1640 all Englishmen and women were deemed to belong to the national church, and had a legal obligation to attend worship in their parish church every

Sunday, to listen to a clergyman in whose selection they had had no say, and whose theology and/or personality they might detest. Before 1640 there was a strict censorship, which prevented the printing of “unorthodox” books. The bookseller George Thomason, a friend of Milton’s, realizing that he was living in momentous times, started in 1640 to buy and keep a copy of every book or newspaper published, and he continued until 1660. In 1640 he bought 22 books; by 1642 the number was 1,966, and it continued to average over 1000 a year until 1660. In 1640 he bought no newspapers: they were illegal. By 1641 there were 4, by 1645 722. We can only guess at what this meant for a reading public which had clearly been starved of material under a censorship which prevented the publication of legal works by Sir Edward Coke, of works on the millennium by scholars like Thomas Brightman and Joseph Mede. Thomas Hobbes chose not to publish at all before 1640, when he was 52 years old – the age at which Shakespeare died.

There was a similar liberation of religious discussion. Hitherto illegal groups were now free to meet where they could – in private houses, in ale-houses, in the open air – to discuss what they wanted to discuss, not what the university-educated parson of their parish decided they should listen to, without discussion. In an age with no daily press, no TV, no radio, the clergy were the opinion-formers. The government’s object had been to have an approved interpreter of the Scriptures – the source of all wisdom and truth – in every parish in the country. But now men and women were free to form their own groups, under an elected chairman – so-called mechanic preachers – and to discuss what interested *them*, as *they* wished. Women took part in these discussions: some women preached, to the horror of traditionalists.

The parochial system was financed by tithes. Every man was supposed to pay 10 per cent of his income to the parson. Tithes fell especially heavily on the peasantry who had to pay in kind – one-tenth of their crops or animals. Radicals had long opposed tithes, and Quakers took over this opposition, though the campaign preceded them and was not limited to them. Milton thought that religious freedom was impossible without abolishing tithes. The Quaker Anthony Pearson said that tithes should have been cut off with the King’s head. But abolishing tithes would have undermined the national church and substituted a voluntary system. Tithes were also a form of property: many gentlemen had inherited tithes which before the Reformation had gone to monasteries and since then had been collected by the lay successors to monastic property. In any case refusal of a long-established customary

payment like tithes would set a bad precedent: “no tithes, no rent” was a frequent cry of alarm from the gentry. Some churches actually closed down for lack of maintenance. This was a real problem for conservatives as they tried to consolidate their revolution in the fifties. Cromwell is alleged to have said that no temporal government could survive without a national church that adhered to it. But tithes were naturally unpopular.

Before 1640 it was assumed that politics were the exclusive concern of the upper classes. An Elizabethan Secretary of State declared that ‘day labourers, poor husbandmen, yea merchants or retailers that have no free land, copyholders and all artificers ... have no voice or authority in our commonwealth, and no account is taken of them, but only to be ruled’. This applied in practice. When in 1628 Charles I ultimately and grudgingly accepted the Petition of Right, embodying the first concessions made by the monarchy to parliamentary claims, the Commons asked that it should be printed. Charles refused, furious at the idea of the vulgar seeing such a document and perhaps even discussing the extent of the royal prerogative. In 1641, a year before civil war, the House of Commons drafted the Grand Remonstrance, a catalogue of all the ways in which they thought the king’s ministers had been at fault. A very critical document, it passed in the House by a narrow majority. It was then suggested that the Remonstrance should be printed. This caused outrage among the minority, that criticisms of the King should be exposed to the lower classes. Swords were actually drawn in the House – for I believe the only time in history, so far, so outrageous did the proposal seem.

Yet with the breakdown of censorship, with freedom of assembly and with no limits on what might be discussed, there were no longer any secrets of state. In the free-for-all discussion which followed, every subject under the sun was canvassed. Levellers called for a democratic republic, and proclaimed human equality, Diggers advocated a communist society, others equality of women and men, marriage and free love. The authority of the Bible and the existence of heaven and hell were questioned. Ranters asserted the eternity of matter (which at one time interested George Fox) – all these were freely discussed. Milton’s *Areopagitica* proudly hailed this new world of liberty. Ministers and bishops were mocked. In London and especially in the Army there was a free-thinking milieu from which Levellers, Ranters, Muggletonians, Quakers and Bunyan emerged. Quakers were later said to have ‘reclaimed such as neither magistrate nor minister ever speaks to’ – which suggests that the first Quakers appealed to a lower social class than they did later.

After Parliament's victory in 1647 the radical New Model Army of the career open to the talents took over effective power. Two years later it purged Parliament and brought the King to trial as a traitor to the people of England. The House of Lords was abolished, the republic proclaimed. Bishops had been abolished in 1646. Anything might happen.

Many expected King Charles to be succeeded by King Jesus. Millenarian hopes were rife, founded on the best scholarly interpretations of the Biblical prophecies, which seemed to point to the 1650s as the period when the millennium was likely to begin. George Fox thought he was living in "the last times;" "the mighty day of the Lord is coming" when the saints will reign – "of whom I am one," Fox added. Such remarks were not reprinted in later collected editions of Fox's works.

Among the few specific things Fox tells us about his early preaching – which in the *Journal* sounds orthodox enough – is that he had 'great opening concerning the things written in the Revelation,' which was for him the most relevant book in the Bible. It may well be that millenarianism played a far greater part in his preaching and in the interests of his audiences than he was later to record. After the Restoration the millenarian moment had passed, and Quakers played it down; but that was not true of the fifties. The only movement which enjoyed a comparable popular success was that of the Fifth Monarchists, also millenarians. Gerrard Winstanley, who founded a communist colony in Surrey three months after the execution of the King, held that the Second Coming meant the rising of Christ in all "sons and daughters." He believed that Christ was reason, and that his rising would lead all to see the rationality of co-operation rather than competition, and would lead to the peaceful establishment of a communist society. And, he said, he expected to see no other Second Coming. Many were later to attribute the origins of the Quakers to Winstanley – wrongly, I think.

The free-for-all of the forties released long-held but suppressed radical traditions which Quakers inherited – refusal of hat honour, use of "thou" to social superiors, demands for law reform, for better treatment of the poor, for "handfast" marriages rather than a church ceremony. Burrough at least among the early Quaker leaders was aware of the heretical tradition which the Quakers inherited.

In the civil war most of those who were later to become Quakers had been staunch Parliamentarians, 'they stood by [Parliament] in time of greatest dangers in all the late wars' said Howgill. Many Quakers had been in the Army, 'many precious men ventured their lives and lost their

blood' to win liberty 'as men and Christians.' James Nayler agreed; Quakers 'generally did venture their lives and estates with those that are in present government [1658], purchasing their freedom as men with great loss.' The Army, Margaret Fell said, had been 'a battle axe in the hand of the Lord.' George Bishop told Oliver Cromwell in 1656 that the original Parliamentary Cause was 'the highest on which men were ever engaged in the field.' Bishop rebuked Cromwell for betraying this cause.

Quakers did not resign from the Army on pacifist grounds when they were convinced: they were expelled for refusing oaths, Fox and Burrough complained. Henry Cromwell thought 'their principles and practices ... not very consistent with civil government, much less with the discipline of an army.' But Byllynge claimed to be 'an owner of the sword in its place.' Fox thought that one Quaker soldier was worth seven non-Quakers. Far from disapproving of military service he wrote a tract for members of the Army, urging them to 'see that you know a soldier's place ... and that ye be soldiers qualified.' The New Model Army was a uniquely democratic force, which for a time played a very radical role. Without it there would have been no religious toleration, no abolition of monarchy or House of Lords, no protection for Quakers against J.Ps. – and no conquest of Ireland, of which Quakers showed no disapproval. But the Levellers failed to win control of the Army in 1647-9; the Fifth Monarchists in 1653-5. Quakers went on hoping that the Army might resume its radical role right down to 1660.

Fox often urged Oliver Cromwell and the Army to undertake a crusade against popery in Europe. In January 1658 he told the Protector that if he had 'minded the work of the Lord as he began with thee at first ... the King of France should have bowed his neck under thee.' 'Let thy soldiers go forth ... that thou may rock nations as a cradle.' Later, addressing "inferior officers and soldiers" as against the generals, Fox said 'never set up your standard till you come to Rome.'

Quakers frequently used disturbing military metaphors. 'Gird on your sword,' Burrough urged 'the Camp of the Lord in England' 'and prepare yourselves for battle.' 'Let not your eye pity nor your hand spare, but wound the lofty and tread underfoot the honourable of the earth.' Howgill cried 'spare none, neither old or young; kill, cut off, destroy, bathe your sword in the blood of Amalek.' Audland repeated the message: 'the sword of the Lord is in the hands of the saints, and this sword divides, hews and cuts down deceit.' Burrough, envisaging the imminent Second Coming, insisted 'all that would not that Christ should reign, slay them before him.' And Fox warned 'a day of slaughter is coming to you that have made war against the Lamb and against the



saints. The sword you cannot escape, and it shall be upon you before long.'

How seriously are we to take this alarming language? When Margaret Fell asked in 1656 'How is our war prospering in England?', she presumably referred to the successful propaganda campaign which Quakers had undertaken. But were the reiterated public threats of Quaker leaders all metaphorical? Conservatives may perhaps be forgiven for not being quite sure: they did not know, as we know, that the Quakers were to proclaim pacifism as a principle after 1661. In the 1650s they knew only that Quakers were a radical group, reproducing many of the ideas of Levellers, Diggers and Ranters, all of whom had been suppressed between 1649 and 1651, immediately before the appearance of Quakers on the national scene. In the mid-fifties Quakers were recruiting rapidly. Alarm was not entirely unreasonable. Quakers were "turners of the world upside down" – to cite words used by William Penn in his Introduction to Fox's *Journal* in 1694.

Some Quakers defended regicide. George Bishop expressed approval of the Army's purge of Parliament in December 1648, and thought that Charles's execution had been 'for the preservation of the public interest.' It was God, Burrough believed, who 'overthrew that oppressing power of kings, lords ... and bishops, and brought some tyrants and oppressors to just execution.' "Some tyrants" could hardly have excluded Charles I, Stratford and Laud. Bishop defended Cromwell's brutal conquest of Ireland: no Quaker seems to have opposed it on principle. The Irish were antichristians.

Quakers, as Levellers had done, cried out against the oppression of the poor. A rich man, Fox said, is 'the greatest thief,' since he got 'his goods by cozening and cheating, by lying and defrauding' – another tract not reprinted in Fox's *Works*. Here was strong Biblical language again. 'Weep and howl, for your misery is coming,' Nayler told 'great men and rich men.' Fox strongly supported law reform, and opposed hanging for theft. 'Throw away all law books,' he recommended; law should be made known to the people. 'Away with lawyers' – recalling Winstanley this time. 'If a lord or an earl come into your courts,' Fox said, 'you will hardly fine him for not putting off his hat ... It is the poor that suffer, and the rich bears with the rich.' With reference to the Quaker refusal of oaths he added 'Some you have made to swear, some you have made a pay for swearing' (Neither of these tracts was reprinted in his works). Quakers came to believe that the Cause had been betrayed.

Slow disillusionment set in as Cromwell tried to come to terms with the "natural rulers," as generals got rich and the Army was deliberately

depoliticized. It came to exist only to collect the taxes to pay for the Army to collect the taxes ... Burrough warned Cromwell that he and his government had neglected 'to take off oppression, and to ease the oppressed,' ignoring 'the grievous cry of the poor.' Like Winstanley, he insisted that 'the same laws stand still in force by which tyranny and oppression is acted.' 'You have promised many fair promises to the nation,' said Fox, 'but little have you performed.'

In May 1659 the Army restored the Rump of the Long Parliament to power, and with it hope for the radicals. Fox announced euphorically that 'the Lord Jesus Christ is come to reign. ... Now shall the Lamb and the saints have victory'. 'The way of the coming of his kingdom hath seemed to be prepared,' Burrough told M.Ps., by the "mighty things" done in England. But this hope depended on the survival of the republic. Fox laid a programme of reform before Parliament – toleration, abolition of tithes, law reform, a large programme of expropriation – of church, crown and royalists' lands, and of monastic lands which had been in the possession of gentry families for over a century. The proceeds would go to pay for the Army and to the poor, who should also have all manorial fines and profits, 'for lords have enough.' This was a larger programme of expropriation than ever the communist Winstanley envisaged. Howgill in 1660 pointed out that confiscated estates would maintain 'an army in the nation for many years' – a double cause of alarm to landed gentry.

Burrough asked Parliament 'to establish the [Leveller] Agreement of the People'. He emphasized Englishmen's birthright freedom in Leveller language, describing himself as 'a friend to England's Commonwealth,' as 'a freeborn Englishman.' 'We look for a new earth as well as a new heaven' he announced ominously. But the hope was short-lived. As the threat of a restoration of monarchy loomed, Quakers (and other radicals) became more desperate. 'Is there no hope of your return to the Good Old Cause?' Burrough asked the Army – four months before Charles II returned to the throne. 'Whoever are against the Good Old Cause and perfect freedom,' he declared, 'we are against them and will engage our lives against them.'

Quakers were opposed on principle to the restoration of monarchy. 'Those who desired an earthly king,' said Fox, were 'traitors against Christ.' 'Talk of [restoring] the House of Lords' was 'a dirty, nasty thing.' Burrough assured the Army that 'we will engage our very lives against the enemies of the Good Old Cause.' A royalist feared that 'the whole Army should be reduced to follow the Quakers.' The consequence was panic fear of Quakers, which Barry Reay, the best-informed historian on this subject, thinks contributed significantly to

the speed with which Charles II was – to his own surprise – recalled to the throne.

The fear was to be well-founded. Quakers' numbers were uncertain, but they had rapidly increased in the decade of their existence. They repeated many Leveller, Digger and Ranter claims. They rejected oaths, believed to be the cement of society, and tithes, the foundation of a national church. They taught that the Bible was so internally contradictory and inconsistent that it could not be the Word of God. The Quaker Samuel Fisher argued this case in a weighty scholarly tome published in 1660. It influenced Spinoza, and through him enlightened European opinion generally. For the Baptist Thomas Collier Quaker doctrine meant 'No Christ but within, no Scripture to be a rule, no ordinances, no law but their lusts, no heaven nor glory but here, no sin but men fancied to be so.' Fox claimed to be freed from sin on earth; renewed 'to the state of Adam ... before he fell.' Burrough taught that the saints 'may be perfectly freed from sin in this life so as no more to commit it.' Fox and many others denounced preachers who 'roar up for sin in their pulpits.' 'We have given our money and spent our labours in following them,' Fox exploded, 'and now they have gotten our money, they hope we will not look for perfection ... on this side of the grave, for we must carry a body of sin about us ... Oh deceivers!' Not to believe in the existence of sin had disturbing social implications.

As far as the Quakers were concerned, by 1659-60 the Army offered the only hope for reform – if it could be radicalized again. Bishop, Burrough, Howgill, Isaac Penington, all defended the Army's intervention in politics in 1659. Burrough acted as political leader of the Quakers in this period: Fox withdrew into the background. Burrough, Byllynge and other Quaker leaders negotiated seriously with the republican government for co-operation to prevent a restoration of monarchy, and for social reforms. In 1659-60 Quakers were rejoining the Army, and there was much talk of "arming the Quakers." Quakers acted as commissioners of the militia, as J.Ps. They were the last defenders of military dictatorship in England. But the defeat of the radicals, when it came, was so overwhelmingly decisive that it had to be accepted as the work of divine providence. How were Quakers to react to the collapse of their political hopes?

Here I want to speculate briefly, asking questions which go beyond the evidence. Had the Quakers a political programme? In the light of what we know of post-restoration Quakers it seems a silly question: in the light of what we now know of Quakerism in the 1650s it forces itself upon us. Quakers expected the rule of the saints (of whom Fox was one), and expected that rule to bring about a better society. I have cited the

programme which Fox put before the restored Rump in 1659; it would necessitate legislation. But had Quakers an *agreed* political programme?

The Nayler case in 1656-7 must have caused serious re-thinking among Quakers. Nayler's entry into Bristol, re-enacting Christ's entry into Jerusalem, led to what must have been a totally unexpected political storm. Parliament spent months fiercely debating whether or not Nayler should be condemned to death. Conservatives seized on Nayler's alleged blasphemy to call for stricter laws preventing free discussion, controlling itinerant ministers appealing to the lower order. Nayler's main defenders were Army officers. Cromwell used the occasion to negotiate a new, more conservative constitution, which would both limit toleration and get rid of Army rule and replace it by the rule of traditional law.

How did the Quakers re-act? Their tactics of demonstration and confrontation had been useful advertisements in local politics, winning support for Quakers who were roughly handled by magistrates. But the Nayler case had brought the whole power of the state to bear against Quakers, something beyond their ability to resist. They virtually disavowed Nayler. The attempted alliance with Army and republican governments in 1659-60 against a restoration of monarchy seems to have been a last desperate attempt at winning some share in policy making. When that failed there had to be a total rethink.

From about August 1659 to the beginning of 1660 George Fox withdrew from all activity, and seems to have undergone some sort of a spiritual crisis, if not a nervous breakdown. He took no part in the negotiations with republican politicians and Army leaders which Burrough and others undertook at this time, and seems to have been increasingly sceptical of them. He was unenthusiastic about Quakers taking up arms, but did not come out against it, even when asked. When he emerged from his "time of darkness", by which time the restoration was clearly looming, he seems to have decided that political action must be renounced. 'Nothing but hypocrisy and falsehood and fair pretences were seen among you', he told 'those that have been formerly in authority'. 'When you pretended to set up the Old Cause, it was but your silliness; so that you long stunk to sober people.' Fox must have realized during his period of abdication that the restoration of monarchy was inevitable, and that the millennium was not coming just yet. Perhaps indeed his withdrawal had been due to his recognition of the "silliness" and irrelevance of the frenzied activities of the republicans, and to his inability to prevent Quaker participation in them. So Charles II came back in May 1660.

Eight months later, in January 1661, there was a violent revolt by Fifth Monarchists which for a short time terrorized London. Many Quakers were arrested on suspicion of connection with this revolt. Twelve days later the “peace principle”, henceforth characteristic of Quakerism, was declared. ‘The spirit of Christ,’ Fox declared, ‘will never move us to fight a war against any man with carnal weapons.’ This was a new principle. There had been Quaker pacifists in the fifties, including John Lilburne and the sailor Thomas Lurting. But there was no official endorsement of pacifism. As late as December 1659 Hubberthorne had publicly rebuked Baptists for declaring that they would be obedient in civil matters to any government established in England. Hubberthorne thought that this sold the pass to Charles Stuart. If he should ‘come ... and establish popery and govern by tyranny,’ he told the Baptists, ‘you have begged pardon by promising willingly to submit ... Some did judge ye had been of another spirit.’ But as the cause of the republic crumbled, Fox’s new-found pacifism won rapid acceptance. Burrough came to see the restoration as a judgement of God upon England for the betrayal of the 1650s. ‘They once had a good cause,’ he told Charles II, ‘and the Lord blessed them in it.’ This was intended as a warning to the restored monarch. But within a week of the King’s arrival in London Margaret Fell had drafted a declaration renouncing “carnal weapons,” which was signed by Fox, Richard Hubberthorne, Samuel Fisher and four others. The Peace Principle seven months later was also signed by Fox, Hubberthorne and ten others. The restoration came because the Parliamentary radicals were hopelessly divided. Quakers themselves were not united. Support for the peace principle was by no means unanimous. Some thought that the new discipline which accompanied it amounted to apostasy – a breach with the absolute individualism of the inner light in all believers.

1660 was a defeat for all radical social policies. It marked the end of millenarian hopes. The peace principle recognized these unpleasant facts, and differentiated Quakers from irreconcilable Fifth Monarchist insurrectionists who advocated inaugurating Christ’s kingdom by immediate military violence.

So acceptance of the peace principle marked the end of an epoch – recognition that Christ’s kingdom was not of this world, at least not yet. Abandonment of the rule of the saints, possibly through the Army, ended the perceived Quaker political threat, though it took some time for non-saints to appreciate this. It marked the end of the doctrine of perfectibility on earth as a political principle. It was a great turning point, shared by most other dissenters – as they now reluctantly became.

Early Quakers had attacked the very idea of a state church: some disliked any form of organization. They insisted that they were not a sect, not a church. But after 1660 some form of discipline (“good order”) became increasingly necessary, if only to withstand persecution, to agree on appropriate forms of presentation of their message, to define who was and who was not a Quaker. The sense of the meeting was the compromise which gave a minimum of organization: but above it a traditional hierarchical structure had to be erected – quarterly meetings, national meetings.

Financial questions were involved. Who paid for itinerant ministers? Fox had money in his pocket when he started on his mission, but he was dependent on sympathizers for hospitality *en route*. There were dangers here, as for more conventional sects – of becoming dependent on the rich and respectable, and so giving them privileged treatment. Some have seen a take-over of Quakerism by the well-to-do Margaret Fell and William Penn, the friend of James II, and Margaret Fell’s husband from 1669, George Fox. The first suggestion of a peace principle in 1660 seems to have come from Margaret Fell. There was of course no conspiracy here: any leader would have had to take similar action if the Society of Friends was to survive. Ranters who remained disorganized disappeared; Muggletonians who were almost equally without organization were subjected to the discipline imposed by the infallible Lodowick Muggleton, and anyway were not interested in proselytization.

The peace principle distinguished Quakers from the irreconcilable Fifth Monarchists who had risen in hopeless revolt in January 1661. The Quaker leadership tried hard to live down their image as “fanatics.” They ceased to perform miracles: George Fox’s *Book of Miracles* was not published. Public gestures like “going naked for a sign” were discouraged. Itinerant ministers were restricted, not least by the Act of Settlement of 1662. (This had been a wonderful liberation, especially for women Quakers, wandering unchaperoned all over Great Britain, rebuking Oxford and Cambridge undergraduates, journeying to the Pope, the Great Turk and to New England – least tolerant of all).

Some Quakers thought the peace principle and accompanying discipline amounted to apostasy, betraying the absolute individualism of the inner light. Many were the splits – Perrot, whom Fox admonished for wearing a sword, and who rather endearingly objected to holding meetings at stated times and places. (Dewsbery in 1659 had pleaded with Friends ‘to meet as near as may be at the time appointed’). The Story-Wilkinson separation was more specifically on issues of discipline. Many Quakers continued to plot against the government. 400 pairs of

pistols were said to have been imported for "the Quakers" in August 1661. In 1663 many Friends had a "deep hand" in the Northern Plot; 1,000 were expected to rise, and many did. As late as 1685 at least a dozen Quakers joined in Monmouth's rebellion, of whom three were executed. A Quaker commissioned by Monmouth to recruit Clubmen enlisted some 160 by appeals to the danger of popery. Quakers held state office in the New England colonies, and lobbied in Parliamentary elections in England in 1678-80, when the radical cause seemed to be reviving. Penn was election agent for the republican Algernon Sidney.

This brings me to a question on which I hardly dare to touch: how far was Fox the undisputed leader of the Quakers before 1661? Was there such a leader? Nayler was described as "the head Quaker" in Parliament in 1656-7, and the savagery of his punishment suggests that he was seen as a symbolic target. Nayler was eight years older than Fox. He wrote the first Quaker book, in 1653; between 1655 and 1656 he published no less than 13 pamphlets answering attacks on Quakers. Edward Burrough – a much younger man – seems to have been the political spokesman for Quakers from the mid-fifties; he took the lead in negotiations with the Commonwealth government in 1659-60, when Fox withdrew from activity. Margaret Fell at Swarthmoor seems to have been in charge of correspondence and had much organizational responsibility. I imagine that such leadership as there was before 1660 must have been collective rather than individual. Fox's mysterious withdrawal after August 1659 may have been the result of the defeat of his preferred policies, which were finally vindicated in the acceptance of the peace principle.

Were there divisions? Francis Howgill continued to use bellicose language after January 1661. 'The godly,' Howgill still proclaimed, would 'trample down the powers of darkness and the seat of violence, for ever.' Ames, also after the peace principle, said 'the battle is the Lord's and strength and power is from the Lord manifest in you ... The might of the noble of the earth shall vanish as the smoke, and the strength of kings shall be as stubble before the fire; not by the arm of flesh or carnal weapons to destroy the creatures, but by the spirit of the living God.' Who exactly of the leadership supported the original peace principle in 1661? Did Howgill? Did Ames? But all this is mere speculation.

Fox's takeover of leadership was facilitated by the premature deaths of most of the other leading figures. Parnell had died in 1656 at the age of 19, Camm and Lilburne in 1657, Nayler in 1660. George Fox the Younger followed in 1661, Burrough, Hubberthorne and Ames in 1662, Audland in 1664, Fisher in 1665, Farnsworth in 1666, Howgill in 1669.

It is a remarkable tribute to the killing-power of seventeenth-century gaols, a long sentence in which only the toughest, morally and physically, could survive – as Fox did, as Bunyan did. There were resignations – Perrot, Pearson, Bishop, Byllynge – and emigration. Whitehead and Dewsbury were virtually the only surviving leaders from the fifties. The way was clear for Margaret and George Fox who were married in 1669 to take over and for Robert Barclay to rewrite Quaker theology in his *Apology for the True Christian Divinity* of 1676. It was published in the same year as his *Anarchy of the Ranters*, disavowing unseemly “enthusiasm.”

Another consequence of the Peace Principle and the discipline necessary to enforce it was that the Society of Friends became *in fact* a sect like other sects – something which had seemed impossible for earlier Quakers expecting the rule of the saints. ‘The laws of man can but settle a sect,’ Edward Burrough had said; ‘true religion can never be settled by that measure’ (*Works*, pp. 509-13), but true religion in Burrough’s sense has not yet been settled in England.

After 1661 the publications of Quakers were subjected to *de facto* censorship – first informally by Fox, after 1672 more formally. In consequence the writings of Nayler disappear from sight, and his name is rarely mentioned. Even in 1716 his *Collection of Sundry Books* was published only after much debate and with many misgivings; and many of his writings were omitted. Writings by Burrough, Howgill and George Fox the Younger were reprinted, but again with significant omissions, notably of Burrough’s writings around 1660. Isaac Penington’s works from his pre-Quaker period were not reprinted, and there were omissions from those of his political tracts of 1660 which were reprinted. George Fox, in editing his *Journal* for publication from the so-called *Short Journal* (1663-4), omitted many passages referring to his millenarian expectations, to his Cromwellian sympathies, his claims to be the Son of God or Moses, to his miracles, to the fact that he lent a meeting-house to soldiers. Thomas Ellwood further edited it for publication in 1694 so that ‘nothing may be omitted fit to be inserted, nor anything inserted fit to be left out’. What was fit in 1694 was very different from the revolutionary fifties.

So the world was left with the eighteenth-century image of pacifist Quakers using quaint, old-fashioned speech-forms like “thou” and “thee,” refusing to swear or to remove their hats in court in a quaint, old-fashioned way. This image was easily read back into the seventeenth century, not without some help from the Quakers. So it was surprising to re-discover what Quakers had been like in the 1650s.



But that must not be the last word. Quakers have given the world more than any other seventeenth-century group. And the essential Quaker message was not lost. Margaret Fell recalled Fox saying, on the second day of her acquaintance: 'You will say that Christ saith this, and the apostles say this; but what canst *thou* say?' 'I saw clearly we were all wrong,' Margaret Fell commented; he 'opened us a book that we had never read in, nor indeed had never heard it was our duty to read in it, to wit the light of Christ in our consciences' – the consciences of ordinary men and women.

*Christopher Hill*

The above is the text, slightly amended, of a lecture delivered at Friends House London on 1st March 1991. Ed.

## A PARCEL OF BOOKS FOR MORGAN LLWYD

In the spring of 1654 Morgan Llwyd received a parcel of books from London. The man who sent them, Philip Rogers, was an elder in the Congregational church at Wrexham of which Llwyd was the minister, and was well placed to know what sort of books Llwyd wanted.<sup>1</sup>

Readers of Fox's *Journal* are familiar with the 'preist att Rexam in Wales one ffloyde' who 'sent two of his preachers Into ye north to try us & see what a manner of people wee was: ... & one of y<sup>m</sup> stands a fine minister for Christ to this day: one John appe John.'<sup>2</sup> Llwyd himself, though he had contacts with Friends,<sup>3</sup> did not join them; but that his lively inquiring mind was sympathetic to the Quaker message has appeared from a number of recent studies.<sup>4</sup> He died prematurely in 1659, aged only 40, and in the history of Quakerism in Wales he stands like a Moses who did not enter the promised land.

It is consequently of considerable interest to know what he was reading, especially at a time when, it would seem, he had not yet made up his mind and was still casting around. The parcel of books he received early in 1654 is also a useful reminder of the *context* of incipient Quakerism: we see the *sort* of writings read by those Friends were hoping to convince, pieces with which they often had to enter into competition.

Two passages in a letter from Rogers<sup>5</sup> to Llwyd read thus:

The bookes I sent you were these, Divine Essayes, by Is. Pennington, the Discovery of Mans returne, newes coming from the north, light out of darknes, the olive leaffe, the man of peace, & A voyce from heaven.

here be some other bookes, w<sup>ch</sup> I had thought to send you, namely the tryall of spirits, put forth by Will Dell, & the examination of Accademies treatinge of the nature of things put forth by Mr. Webster, & some bookes put forth by the qua: (so called) but I did not know that you might have them already.

The nine pieces referred to are these:-

Isaac Pennington, *Divine essayes* (1654)

William Dewsbury, *The discovery of mans returne to his first estate* (1654)

(George Fox,) *Newes coming up out of the north* (1654)

(Richard Farnworth,) *Light risen out of darkness* (1654)

William Erbury, *An olive leaf* (1654)

William Erbury, *The man of peace* (1654)

(Arise Evans,) *A voice from heaven* (1652)

William Dell, *The tryal of spirits* (1653)

John Webster, *Academiarum examen, or the examination of academies* (1654)

Most of these tracts were published in 1654, and when despatched to Llwyd were hot from the press.<sup>6</sup> As many as three of them were written by Friends. The one by Dewsbury has his name on the titlepage, and also states that it was 'written by one, whom the people of the world calls Quaker.' The other two were anonymous; but in *Newes coming up out of the north* Fox's signature occurs twice (pp. 26, 46) and in *Light risen out of darkness* Farnworth's name occurs twice (pp. 5, 59). With Fox Llwyd was already in touch. Even if Farnworth's name was not known to him, the statement on the titlepage of *Light risen* that it was 'written in Reply to a Book<sup>7</sup> that was set forth by the dry and night Vines in and about Beverley, who scornfully nicknameth the People of God ... Quakers' can have left him in no doubt about its provenance. All three tracts were, in fact, part of a concerted programme of propaganda on behalf of the new movement. At this time, 'Fox, Farnworth and Dewsbury exercised a real leadership,' in writing, with Fox seeing everything before it was printed, as well as in active mission, especially in the East Riding, where Farnworth and Dewsbury followed close on Fox.<sup>8</sup>

For Llwyd, the tracts by Fox and Farnworth were not the happiest choice. *Light risen* was one of a growing number of pieces of Quaker controversy, in which the opponent's charges are taken apart and rebutted, sentence by sentence, leaving an impression of contentious prejudice rather than of coherent argument. This was common practice but not at all in Llwyd's manner. The title *Newes coming up out of the north* may have led him to hope that through it he might get to the bottom of what had taken hold of John ap John; but all he found was Fox at his most abusive.

You may apply the Scriptures and say, you are redeemed by Christ; but he will say, and saith, Go ye workers of iniquity into everlasting punishment, howl and weep, misery is coming upon you ...

all you Priests, you blind guides, dissembling hypocrites, without the Kingdom of God, plagues and woe is comming to be poured upon you. Wo, wo, wo, the third woe is coming, ...<sup>9</sup>

The effect of this may have been only to recall the recent visit of the Quakers to Wrexham, when, as Braithwaite puts it, 'they failed to recognize the open-mindedness, faithfulness to conviction, and freedom from convention which distinguished Morgan Llwyd's own

deeply mystical character.’<sup>10</sup>

The piece by Dewsbury, *The discovery of mans returne*, includes the usual attacks on hireling priests, water baptism, human learning, ‘studied sermons’ and hymn-singing, and in places the language is robust;<sup>11</sup> but over all the tone is different. Braithwaite characterizes Dewsbury as ‘perhaps the sweetest and wisest of the early Friends,<sup>12</sup> and the tract is positively, forward-looking, hopeful, encouraging.

be faithfull in following the Lamb dayly through the Cross, and none be discouraged; in temptations be content; look up to the Lord to keep you in the hour of temptations; for it is no sin to be tempted, but to yeeld to the tempter; and when the Lord delivers you from the power of the Tempter, watch that your will get not from under the Cross, but sink down into the Love of God.

wait on the Lord for power, and he will give thee power to obey, and in being faithful in a little, more will be communicated from the Lord ... until ... you can no longer live without the loving kindness of your Father in Christ Jesus.

All give up, give up freely to be guided by the counsel of the Lord the light in you, beleiving in his power that is present with the light; he will lead you dayly through the Cross in the streight way of his sufferings and death, where the old man will be put off with his deeds, and so you shal have right to the tree of life, and shal enter with him through the gates into the City New Jerusalem.<sup>13</sup>

Such mingling of appeal and assurance is more what Llwyd was seeking. It will have affected him as, we know, it affected John Lilburne; but it did not make a Quaker of him, as it did of Lilburne.<sup>14</sup>

The book by Isaac Penington is different again. Penington was not yet a Quaker. Like Llwyd, he was still seeking, even if he is careful to state of the faith that seeks the Spirit of God, ‘Nor doth it only seek, but so fast as it finds, it fastens upon him ... And so far as it finds and fastens, it hath rest.’

*Divine Essays* consists of 14 discourses in which, after discussing in turn the nature of knowledge in general, scripture knowledge and radical or original knowledge, and drawing the usual contrasts between law and gospel and between flesh and spirit, Penington distinguishes between natural man and man in Christ, that is to say man brought low and broken as Christ was; for ‘God when he breaketh Christ, breaketh him yet more terribly than he hath yet broken man,’ and man in Christ must go through the same torment; till at last God ‘reneweth both his knocks and his beams of light’ to those who are his, ‘as their condition, need and capacity requireth.’ The style is calm and patient; in language which Penington carried with him into Quaker maturity, ‘For my part I profess I would not (though fairly I might) aspire beyond my present state.’

## A PARCEL OF BOOKS

Man hath a kind of intercourse with God ... There is yet a touch left, there yet remains a wilde portraict of the glorious work of God upon man.

what a poor imaginary thing is the Christ which many (if not most) apprehend! ... Little do they perceive how they build an imagination upon an imagination.

Do ye know how sweet it is to taste the true nature of the Life of God! to enjoy and live upon the breath of his Spirit! to walk in the light and love of the Lord! If ye truly know these things (the sweetness of them) then ye may be able to give a guess at what it is to have them broken.

happy, happy, thrice happy are they whom God leadeth through a wilderness and the dismal exercises thereof, into his land of rest.<sup>15</sup>

The fact that Penington's tract comes first in Rogers' list and is the only one with the writer's name may indicate that Llwyd had requested it. Rogers seems to have known that Llwyd already possessed some things written by Friends, and in sending the Quaker pieces was perhaps drawing a bow at a venture. With the tracts by William Erbury this was not the case.

In Quaker historiography Erbury is a shadowy figure remembered only as the father of the Dorcas Erbury who was one of the women escorting Nayler into Bristol in 1656. He was, however, a man with an original cast of mind and a considerable influence. He had been Vicar of St. Mary's, Cardiff, and was a Puritan of the older generation, who had turned towards a deeply allegorical mysticism; it was probably through Erbury that Llwyd was led to Jacob Boehme, two of whose works he translated into Welsh. Llwyd had long admired and trusted Erbury. *An olive-leaf* and *The man of peace* may not appear to say much of significance, but from Llwyd they were sure of a welcome.

We know this from the correspondence<sup>16</sup> between the two men, in which Llwyd refers to 'the Milk and Honey (ever remembred friend) which formerly I sucked in your Ministration ... It's many years since I looked on you as an Image', and continues:

I do both long and profess to become a little child again, willing to learn my A.B.C. anew, if my once dear Schoolmaster Erbury can teach it me ... I am daily longing to withdraw into the inner world ...

Erbury replied to Llwyd's 'lines ... so ... full of divine elegance, of love and delight,' and Llwyd in turn gratefully acknowledged 'the sweetness of the Fathers love (for so I take it) in you,' adding:

We never write, hear, or speak in the light of the Father, but when our inner man is withdrawn out of the spirit of this world, which is the devils street, in which his coaches trundle ...

Erbury not only wrote back, but now published Llwyd's first letter. To this Llwyd demurred.

I desire to find (not notionally, and after the flesh) a spring in us the hope of glory (the flowers in our own gardens, the hope of Summer) ... but whereas you have printed my Letter, I desire you to let me be a privat seeker, lest I should be spiritually a loser, and seem more than I am ...

Even so genuinely modest a man as Llwyd cannot have relished seeing himself described not only as 'this honest man, acquainted at last with the heavenly nature, walking up to the Angelicall world, and withdrawing himself into the inner world,' but as 'a man in the Clouds, come with me to<sup>17</sup> his A.B.C. after all his teachings; not knowing what God is.' Erbury, however, defended his action:

Your Letter I printed for publick use, because I count you as one of the Angels of God ... I would not be a Hermite cloystered in a Church, but fly through the world that's more than publick preaching, though this I do also ...

This last return from Erbury is dated May 1653, less than 12 months before Rogers despatched his parcel of books. There is one further letter from Llwyd, ending with the words 'When you cry Abba, forget not your poor, tryed, tempted, tyred, and through mercy sustained and renewed Lover and Brother.'<sup>18</sup> In April 1654 Erbury died.

The nature and purpose of *An olive-leaf* and *The Man of peace* are described by J(ohn) W(ebster) in his foreword to Erbury's *Testimony*, 'To the Christian Reader:' 'such Christians who were pure and innocent in all appearances were much owned by this friend: he had a first and a second Olive-leaf for them, wherein he endeavours to heal and reconcile the broken spirits of the scattered Saints.'

This is borne out by the titlepages of the two tracts. *An olive-leaf* continues with the words *or, some peaceable considerations ... Also, the reign of Christ, and the saints with him, on earth ... and the day at hand*. The tone is millenarian, but politically quietist. *The man of peace* continues with the words *or, the glorious appearance of God in his people ... being a second olive-leaf, springing 1. to heal the nation ... 2. to humble the princes ... 3. to heighten the spirits of the English ... and bring them ... to the government of Jesus*. In this tract Erbury draws on Micah v.5-6 ('this man shall be the peace'), and identifies 'the man of peace' as 'the mighty God manifested in flesh,' 'taking mans flesh into Union with God in himself, and manifesting this Union in us by the Spirit.'<sup>19</sup>

Perhaps Llwyd took this as Erbury's farewell message to him. He would have found its language intelligible and acceptable: in one of his

own books, published in the previous year, after glossing Immanuel as 'God with us in our flesh,' he asks the question 'What is that? Is he in our flesh?,' and answers 'He is, if we are in his Spirit.'<sup>20</sup> The truth is that among radical Puritans, including Friends, the connotation of 'flesh' is deeply ambiguous. On the other hand, "'flesh'" is a comprehensive term for those things which obscure man's vision of God;<sup>21</sup> on the other, 'flesh' can be taken 'into Union with God.' The explanation is that behind the ambiguity there were dynamics. The 'inspiring' of 'flesh' in the personal sphere, like the redemption of power in the political, was part of the larger overcoming of 'the world,' that resulted from the imminent return of Christ.

With *A voice from heaven* we move from the metaphysical to the visionary. Its author, Rhys (or, as he called himself, Arise) Evans, was a dreamer and prophet whose oneiromancy and vivid writing appeal to students of psychology and literary expression<sup>22</sup> but have little religious content. Perhaps the fact that Evans was born at Llangelynnin in Merioneth, some 30 miles from his own birthplace at Maentwrog, gave Llwyd an interest in him. Perhaps *A Voice* was only added to the parcel as a makeweight.

The remaining two books in Rogers' list stand somewhat apart from the rest. Each was a work of some substance, by a writer of some note. John Webster became well known as a preacher. Like Erbury, whose *Testimony* he edited and commended, he was an admirer of Boehme. In the *Academiarum examen* he criticised university education. In this he was like William Dell, who nevertheless continued to be Master of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, where *The Tryal of Spirits* was first preached by him in Great St. Mary's. Dell, in fact, came to be considered 'so much one with Friends in principle, though not of the Society', which 'adopted and published' some of his writings, including *The Tryal*, that the Quaker bibliographer Joseph Smith included him in *A Catalogue of Friends' Books* (1867).<sup>23</sup>

In the event neither *The Tryal* nor *Academiarum examen* was sent to Llwyd. Even without them the variety of the books he received gives support to Dr. Tudur Jones' assessment of him.

He gathered his flour from many mills, but baked his bread in the glowing furnace of his own experience. He learned from Jacob Boehme, from Peter Sterry, from John Saltmarsh, from Erbury and from the Quakers. He leaned on the Cambridge Platonists and on Richard Baxter. He was acquainted with the views of the Fifth Monarchy Men and the Levellers. He knew his Calvin and, like all the Puritans, he was above all steeped in his Bible. But though his interests were catholic, he gave his personal impress to the world. His way was not so much to borrow as to assimilate.<sup>24</sup>

Through his parcel of books we see the omnivorous reader setting to work.

Geoffrey F. Nuttall

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> For Rogers, see A.N. Palmer, *A history of the older Nonconformity of Wrexham* (Wrexham, [1888]), 48-9; T. Richards, *Religious Developments in Wales (1654-1662)*, (1923), 499-500.
- <sup>2</sup> G. Fox, *Journal* (1911), ed. N. Penney, i.141. For John ap John and his convincement, see W.G. Norris, *John ap John, and early records of Friends in Wales* (JFHS Supplement, no.6, 1907), esp. p. 6; G.F. Nuttall, *The Welsh Saints 1640-1660: Walter Cradock, Vavasor Powell, Morgan Llwyd* (Cardiff, 1957), 55-6, 62-3, 84, 87.
- <sup>3</sup> For the return visit to Wrexham paid by Richard Hubberthorne and John Lawson, when 'Richard had something given him to speak to the priest who was much stricken', for a later visit by Fox, when 'many of Floydes people came to us', and for correspondence between Llwyd and Fox, see G.F. Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience* (Oxford, 1946), 151-2, with references; *The Welsh Saints*, 56-7.
- <sup>4</sup> Cf. W.C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* (1912; 2nd. edn., Cambridge, 1955); J.E. Southall, 'Morgan Llwyd and his times', *F.Q.E.*, liii (1919), 23-5; E.L. Evans, 'Morgan Llwyd and the early Friends', *F.Q.* viii (1954), 48-57; E.L. Evans, *Morgan Llwyd* (Lerpwl, 1930); G.F. Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit*, esp. ch. x; H. Bevan, *Morgan Llwyd y Llenor* (Caerdydd, 1954); G.F. Nuttall, *The Welsh Saints*, esp. ch. iii; R. Tudur Jones, 'The healing herb and the rose of love: the piety of two Welsh Puritans', in *Reformation Conformity and Dissent* (1977), ed. R.B. Knox, esp. sect. ii; M. Wynn Thomas *Morgan Llwyd* (Writers of Wales, 1984).
- <sup>5</sup> The letter is MS 11439 D in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth; a typewritten transcript is in the library of the University College of North Wales, Bangor. See E.D. Jones, 'The Plas Yolyn collection of Morgan Llwyd's papers', *Merioneth Historical and Record Society Journal*, iii (1955), item 27. An edition of these MSS by Dr. Geraint Gruffydd and Dr. R. Tudur Jones is expected shortly as vol. iii of Llwyd's *Gweithiau*.
- <sup>6</sup> Rogers' letter is dated 4.1. (i.e. March) 1654. That the year was 1653/4 (not 1654/5) appears from a reference to reading the proofs of the Bible then being printed, i.e. *Y Bibl Cyssegr-lan* (1654; Wing B2813A), for which see T.H. Darlow and H.F. Moule, *Historical Catalogue of the Printed Editions of Holy Scripture* (1903-11), item 9590, and a forthcoming history of the Welsh Bible by Dr. R. Tudur Jones; its printer and publisher were the same as those of Llwyd's *Llyfr y Tri Aderyn* in the previous year.
- <sup>7</sup> *A faithful discovery of a treacherous design of mystical antichrist ... in a letter to the faithful in and near to Beverley* (1653); a second edition (1655), commended by Christopher Feake, John Simpson, George Cockayn and Laurence Wise, revealed its authors as Joseph Kellet, John Pomroy and Paul Glisson. See Wing F568-9, as by Feake, and P2803, as by Pomroy; *Catalogue of the Congregational Library*, i. (1895).173, as by Kellett (*sic*), and *Baptist Bibliography* (1916), ed. W.T. Whitley, item 31-1653, as by Kellett; *Bibliotheca Anti-Quakeriana* (1873), ed. J. Smith, 184-5, as by Feake. For Pomroy, Lecturer at Beverley Minster, see *Calamy Revised* (Oxford, 1934), ed. A.G. Matthews, s.v. (Smith, following Calamy, erroneously gives Bransby (i.e. Brandsby) in place of



- Beverley): G. Fox *Journal* (Cambridge, 1952), ed. J.L. Nickalls, 74, n.1. For 'the dry and night vines', cf. Joel i, 12-13.
- <sup>8</sup> W.C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 134, 71.
- <sup>9</sup> Pp. 12-13.
- <sup>10</sup> W.C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 123.
- <sup>11</sup> E.g. 'you whose wills guide you, are painted Beasts, bewitched with the Mother of Harlots' (p. 20).
- <sup>12</sup> W.C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 63.
- <sup>13</sup> Pp. 13, 32, 30.
- <sup>14</sup> Cf. G.F. Nuttall, '“Overcoming the World”: the early Quaker programme', in *Sanctity and Secularity* (Oxford, 1973), ed. D. Baker, 157.
- <sup>15</sup> Pp. 18, 104, 121, 12, 101, 130-1, 115, 121.
- <sup>16</sup> The bibliography of the correspondence is confusing. The sequence appears to be as follows:-
1. Llwyd to Erbury, Wrexham, 29.4 (June) 1652. *Call to the Churches* (1653), repr. in *Testimony* (1658), 234-5; his 'first letter' (*Testimony*, 217).
  2. Erbury to Llwyd, in reply. *Call*, repr. in *Testimony*, 235-9.
  3. Llwyd to Erbury. *North-Star* (1653), repr. in *Testimony*, 104-5; his 'second letter' (*Testimony*, 105).
  4. Erbury to Llwyd, in reply. *North-Star*, repr. in *Testimony*, 105-110.
  5. Llwyd to Erbury, Wrexham, 3 m. (May) 52 (mispr. for 1653). *North-Star*, repr. in *Testimony*, 111-12.
  6. Erbury to Llwyd, in reply, London, May 1653. *North-Star*, repr. in *Testimony*, 113-16.
  7. Llwyd to Erbury. *The Babe of Glory* (1653), repr. in *Testimony*, 95-6. Letters 1, 3, 5 and 7 are reprinted in M. Llwyd, *Gweithiau*, ed. T.D. Ellis and J.H. Davies (1899-1908), 256-63, 259-60; Letter 5 also in B. Brook, *Lives of the Puritans*, (1813), iii, 329-30, not quite correctly. Letters 4 and 6 are reprinted in *National Library of Wales Journal*, xxvi (1989), 20-3, with many deprivations, mainly omissions of words, phrases and whole paragraphs.
- Like Fox (*Annual Catalogue of George Fox's Papers* (1939), ed. H.J. Cadbury, item 22, 13A), Erbury also wrote 'To the gathered church at Wrexham': *North-Star*, (repr. in *Testimony*, 103-4; repr. in *N.L.W. Journal*, xxvi, 19. This church was a normal Congregational church, neither 'revivalistic' nor 'Baptist', *pace* H. Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England* (New Haven and London, 1964), 49 and 85.
- <sup>17</sup> Presumably a misprint for 'to me with'.
- <sup>18</sup> *Testimony*, 234-5, 239, 104, 111-12, 218, 217, 114, 96.
- <sup>19</sup> P. 203.
- <sup>20</sup> Cf. *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, 153.
- <sup>21</sup> R.T. Jones, 'The healing herb', 166.
- <sup>22</sup> Cf. N. Smith, *Perfection proclaimed: language and literature in English radical religion* (Oxford, 1989), 96-8, with reference to C. Hill and M. Shepherd, 'The Case of Arise Evans,' *Psychological Medicine*, vi (1976). 351-8; J. Crofts, *Wordsworth and the seventeenth-century* (Oxford, 1940), 72, quoting 'seeing the sun at its rising skip, play, dance, and turn about like a great wheel, I fell upon my knees.'
- <sup>23</sup> Vol.i.520; for 'honest Erbury' and 'Divine Webster' as seen by Friends before the end of the seventeenth century, in association with Dell and without him, and on one occasion with Llwyd, as their spiritual forerunners, see *The Holy Spirit*, 13, n.2, with addendum on 184; and for fresh attention to Dell and Webster in the early years of the present century, *ibid.*, App. I, with reference to R.M. Jones and Theodor Sippell;

see also comment by H.J. Cadbury in *The Beginnings of Quakerism* (2nd. edn.), 544.

<sup>24</sup> R. Tudur Jones, *Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru* (Abertawe, 1966), 63 (translated).

For access to many rare tracts I desire to thank the Librarian of Woodbrooke, Christina Lawson.

## RICHARD HUBBERTHORNE AND HISTORY: THE CRISIS OF 1659

1659 was the year Quakers and other English radicals came face to face with history. The army was restive, republicans quarrelled with each other and with Commonwealthmen, while monarchists bided their time and the protectorate stumbled toward its denouement. The inexperienced, weak, and indecisive Richard Cromwell, since the previous September successor to his father Oliver as Lord Protector, watched helplessly as the loyalty and allegiance of his personal bodyguard ebbed away. Anxious Presbyterians and Independents made common cause lest their feared sectarian opponents gain the upper hand; before long they were championing return of the monarchy as the only solution to these radical challenges and widespread disorder.<sup>1</sup>

As the climax moved inexorably closer, champions of the revolutionary “Good Old Cause” found themselves confronting the increasing likelihood that their hopes might well be shattered and swept into the trash heap reserved for such failed experiments.<sup>2</sup> The Quakers, an enthusiastic sect that emerged in the Midlands at about the time the execution of King Charles I dramatically ended the monarchy a decade before, had become the spiritual refuge of many who wanted to impel the revolution forward.<sup>3</sup> Radicals as notorious as John Lilburne, the Leveller, and possibly even Gerrard Winstanley, principal spokesman for the communal Diggers, found their way into Quaker ranks.<sup>4</sup> Army officers and ordinary soldiers, as well as Baptists and other dissident sectarians, including some feared as antinomian “Ranters”, gravitated to the side of those who proclaimed that harkening to the leadership of the inward Christ could lead to the establishment of a just and righteous social order, a new world indeed. Some of these refugees now seemed prepared to take up arms to defend the cause for which so much had been sacrificed.

As the year went by and prospects drew increasingly dark for the Good Old Cause, Quakers confronted not only the same political situation as its other supporters, but they also had to bolster their own standing and credibility. Hoping against hope, George Fox, founding organizer of the Religious Society of Friends, as Quakers later came to be known, relieved himself of a last-ditch, detailed proposal to revitalize lost dreams by an open letter to law makers in 1659. It contained 59 suggestions for the “Regulating of things.”<sup>5</sup> Then toward the end of the year, discouraged, he slipped under a deep depression that isolated and

totally immobilized him for ten crucial weeks.<sup>6</sup> Edward Burrough, another leading Friend and a youthful evangelist for the Truth, authored two broadsides indicating that he was pondering the use of force to forestall a counter-revolution aimed at returning the Stuarts to the throne<sup>7</sup> Other Quakers, their exact number unknown but certainly more than a dozen, accepted parliamentary appointments as commissioners of militia, thus committing themselves to finding men to rise to the defence of the Good Old Cause.<sup>8</sup> In Scotland, the royalists' man on horseback, General George Monck, tried to halt Quaker infiltration but watched as his officers succumbed to the appealing spiritual blandishments offered by the Friends.<sup>9</sup>

Of course Quakers could not elude Clio, history's muse, and look into the future, so they did not know the final outcome of the developments they apprehensively saw unfolding. One, however, reflected on his past experiences and made a studied attempt to use the past as a way to gauge the future: Richard Hubberthorne (1628-1662) must thus join Fox and Burrough as Quakers who mounted sustained efforts to forestall the inevitable. A native of Yealand in Lancashire, who had served as a cavalry captain,<sup>10</sup> he published four pamphlets and a broadside in 1659; these served to place the events of that pivotal year in the context of the previous two decades of English experience. What made his contribution so striking was that, unlike all the other Quakers who faced the impending threats to the Good Old Cause, Hubberthorne approached the problem with a clear sense of history. As one who had personally fought for the cause at Dunbar and Worcester, he took pains to inspire his readers by demonstrating that people had history in their grasp and that in making decisions in the present they could create the future. In October 1659 he styled himself a member of God's army 'who makes war with the sword of his mouth'.<sup>11</sup> Sharing the millenarian convictions of his fellow-believers – that, as Fox phrased it, because 'Christ has come to teach his people himself,'<sup>12</sup> his followers had little need of outward teachers, guides, or rulers – Hubberthorne was not content simply to await a new regime imposed by supernatural intervention. He understood, in other words, that followers of this ever-present Christ had ample leeway to fashion their own new world just as the forces of Parliament had endeavoured to do during the Civil War.

Joining the New Model Army only in 1648, the impressionable 20-year old Hubberthorne came late to the ideology that poured from the Parliament's revolutionary fighting force,<sup>13</sup> but the zealous officer drank deeply from it, occasionally preaching to his troopers.<sup>14</sup> Convinced of the truth of Quakerism in 1652, he was one of Fox's

earliest converts. Within two years, on an evangelistic tour into the south, the itinerate found himself incarcerated in Chester.<sup>15</sup> From that time on he emerged as a veritable bulldog of the faith, answering numerous accusations against the Quakers.<sup>16</sup> In his pamphlets of 1659 he resurrected the broad goals of the New Model and exuded his commitment to what some dared to call the Good Old Cause: liberty of conscience, popular government, opposition to the monarchy, the abolition of church taxes or tithes, which amounted to a levelling attack on property. Yet Hubberthorne's writings soared beyond these grand ends to suggest creation of an even more fundamentally egalitarian regime, one that would find ways to assure that true Christians would act, as he put it, 'so there may not be a beggar in England'.<sup>17</sup>

In his first 1659 pamphlet, one aimed at 24 London baptists who had signed a statement to disassociate themselves from perceptions that they were opposed to the magistrate, the resourceful Hubberthorne responded to unfriendly critics. He used his response to castigate supporters of the revolution who seemed ready to renege on their former commitments. Refusing to give any regime an advanced blank check, he reminded them that some among them had once taken a different position. 'For you to give up yourselves willingly and peacefully unto whatsoever government is or shall be established in this nation,' he thundered in his first line, 'without any limitation, and to submit unto any power or magistracy that does or shall rule, as the ordinance of God, without any limitation or qualification, is far below that spirit which was once in some of you ...' Submit only to a government based on equity, advised Hubberthorne, refusing to believe that a restored monarchy could meet that high standard. 'And what did you bear arms or fight for,' the former captain bluntly demanded, 'if not for a government according to truth and that righteousness may establish the nation?' 'And if now you resolve to live peaceably and submit to whatever government is established, then your fighting is at an end,' he concluded more sadly than bombastically.<sup>18</sup>

Hubberthorne, of course, could hardly restrict himself to such generalities and hope to garner support for his position. A constant theme was his attack on a ministry paid with money collected from tithes. In the period of the Interregnum this Quaker appeal was a popular one. It came couched as excoriation of those who ministered because they were paid and officials who forced people to render a tenth to support clergy with whom they disagreed. Unfortunately Hubberthorne saw the hope of abolishing tithes disappearing as more and more former supporters defected to the opposition or sat by silently while the forces of reaction massed their challenge. The impending change of

government he insisted would fasten on everyone, regardless of conviction, support of a state church.<sup>19</sup>

On the matter of tithes, as on other issues of the time, Hubberthorne was grievously torn between reality and his faith. He believed a mass rallying to the cause could prevent it from slipping into the darkened recesses of the past, but he also saw Baptists and others like them falling away faster than autumn leaves on a rainy day. Hence he fell back on his faith in divine intervention, even as, hope against declining hope, he wrote his appeals to muster others to the cause. Christ's great work, he penned wistfully, observing the growth of reaction, 'is so upon the wheel that man is not able to stop it though he should fight ever so fiercely against it.'<sup>20</sup> Let faithful people be contrite, let them not grow slack or tempt God by losing their patience, he advised in another piece, and God would revive their hopes and redeem the promise of liberty that had grown in England since the execution of the king ten years before.<sup>21</sup>

Hubberthorne moved easily from this point to broader millennial themes, for early Quakers imbibed the spirit of millenarianism so endemic to the age. He and his fellow believers were convinced that Fox's seminal teaching that Christ had returned to teach his people had transported them to a glorious time ere the first parents fell in Eden. The hallmarks of the corrupt world would erode away. Confident that an age was possible when money could no longer divide humans, Hubberthorne believed that God would give judges, counsellors, and priests as they were originally, that is, they would discharge their obligations freely, without requiring payment. Then, coming back again to ministers who lived on tithes, Hubberthorne explained 'everyone now will be given to love and freeness one to another, for he that has spiritual things will minister them freely, and he that has carnal things will minister them freely.' All would then live without resort to law, in a kind of heaven on earth that needed few laws. "Christ's spirit," he emphasized, 'will be found among all sorts of people, ministers of the law, ministers of the gospel, and subjects of the nation,' 'then every man will not seek his own but everyone another's good.'<sup>22</sup> His vision was as worthy as any uttered in favour of the Good Old Cause.

In May 1659, the army's command was galvanized into believing that bringing back the Rump Parliament, gone now six years, would renew the radical cause. As it turned out, this hope was as unlikely as some of the cavalryman's dreams, but the future hid both these conclusions. The same month Hubberthorne produced his most important exploration of the history of the two previous decades, *The Good Old Cause Briefly Demonstrated*.<sup>23</sup> Nothing else he wrote better illustrated the early

Quakers' attitudes toward that crucial period, the hopes they remembered having for it, and the historical background they found for their political programme in 1659. With Fox's relatively better known open letter to Parliament<sup>24</sup> and Burrough's two broadsides, all the same year, this document fills in the picture of activist Quaker attitudes during the crisis year 1659. Neither Burrough's posters or Hubberthorne's booklet hinted that, within the short space of two years, Quakers would renounce all war and outward conflict – to the contrary, these publications assumed the legitimacy of struggle, particularly for a righteous end, which to their authors the Good Old Cause clearly was.<sup>25</sup>

Quakerism for Hubberthorne represented the spiritual culmination of the Cause, and he condemned Commonwealthmen who contended with the sword for one religious opinion or another and never recognized that 'the pure and undefiled religion remaining still the same' – 'the light of Christ in the conscience, in the soul, a spiritual hearing [of] the voice of the beloved son of God, the true teacher.' Whenever any ruler or group attempted to govern without this true religion, they marred whatever they touched, as any could see by glancing backwards at Oliver Cromwell's regime.<sup>26</sup> But in the right hands the sword was never borne in vain but to be wielded, he stressed 'soberly in the fear of the Lord for the punishment of evil doers and praise of them that do well, ... to take off the heavy burdens, to quiet men's spirits, and thereby prevent their inclinations to seek outward help any other way.'<sup>27</sup>

Then Hubberthorne launched into a Quaker summary of the history of England's civil wars and the Interregnum, the period of the English revolution. The conflict, he explained, began to defend the people's 'rights and liberties (also called the privileges of Parliaments and liberties of the subjects)' and was initiated because the king and his party took up arms. The army the people called into existence, he went on, had been filled with 'choice spirited men,' seeking liberty of conscience and religion, men who risked their outward bodies, and freely brought their horses, plate, arms, and 'other habiliments of war' to the struggle. The royalist enemy naturally could not prevail against a force so imbued with God's presence and power and accordingly 'split themselves upon that rock' and fell back shattered.

The victors, however, had lately permitted themselves to be sullied and would no longer, Hubberthorne decided, 'hear tell of our rights and liberties,' the very thing they had sacrificed so much for. Worse: the overlords 'made laws to punish us for using them.' Of course, the former calvaryman was thinking of the plight of his fellow believers, many of

whom had had their property distrained for refusing tithes or had been jailed for eschewing oaths of allegiance. Hence his warning was a bit sect-serving, especially when he told his compatriots to ignore those who advised that the nation's main problem was the need to suppress heresies and the dissidents bedeviling the church. Yet he could hardly overlook the general principle: it was deceitful when supporters of the Good Old Cause were told that they 'must be sure to satisfy your own consciences by taking care of [other] people's souls.' Hubberthorne affirmed that a human soul was simply 'too great, too high, too weighty' for another person to meddle with.<sup>28</sup>

The English revolution was a bourgeois revolution, one reflecting the hopes and aspirations of a rising middle class, a class conscious of its wealth and potential power but convinced that they had been denied the prerogatives they deserved.<sup>29</sup> Like a revolving wheel Hubberthorne's essay came round again to the utopian hope that the Good Old Cause had promised but had not delivered: 'only settle us in our external rights and liberties, establish them in us, and defend us therein from fraud and violence.' 'We have not had our liberties in our persons or estates,' he spoke using the tones of the middle class, 'nor are we in any better condition than slaves, bondsmen, and bondswomen; our bodies, and what else, we hold and labour for at the will of other men.'<sup>30</sup>

Hubberthorne's protest against dismissal from the army and civilian service of numerous Quakers must be read in this same light, fear of a concerted effort to turn the state over to enemies of the people's rightful liberties. He explicitly gave these arguments an economic twist in his complaints about excessive tolls, foreign traders, monopolies – 'not permitting such as have served the Commonwealth in their ways to exercise their trade' – and what he deemed 'slavish land tenures.' He dipped his pen in sarcasm when it came to such conditions: if some wanted to continue in their state of bondage, 'because so kept from their youths up,' he said, 'be pleased to have that their liberty, under Antichrist, until they shall be willing to be otherwise free, but let it be by their own act and will.' So long as people were permitted to enjoy the fruits of their own labour and land, he believed people would favour using public funds to buy impropriated tithes and pay the army's arrears.<sup>31</sup>

Hubberthorne concluded with a barely veiled warning, one calculated to speak to an age expecting the ready appearance of Christ. Take heed, he wrote, 'when the Lord Jesus Christ, with thousands of his saints, rides on gloriously, conquering, and to conquer, treading down all rule and all authority, contrary to him, under his feet.'<sup>32</sup> No earthly authority – no king, no prince, no monarch, no potentate – could



survive who attempted to set himself up as defender of the faith and sought to command a particular type of worship. Hubberthorne clearly believed the Lord of Hosts and his army of righteousness would take special umbrage at any attempted restoration of an English monarch who styled himself, in the fashion of all King Henry VIII's successors, "Defenders of the Faith."<sup>33</sup>

In a series of queries published the following month, June 1659, Hubberthorne went so far as to raise the spectre of a shadowy, manipulating conspiracy of ministers that had succeeded from the beginning in 1642 in arraying the party of the King against the party of Parliament. Although he very carefully did not name names, he implied that they were Presbyterians motivated by a desire to slip into vacant parishes and sweep up tithes as their opponents conveniently killed each other off. Then as the government tottered, these same men found ways to use the Committee for Plundered Ministers to take by force the cattle, money, and goods of their loyal fellow citizens. At the same time these Presbyterians stirred up Londoners against the leaders of the militia, calling them sectaries and not to be trusted, thus driving a wedge between the people and Parliament's army. And once the New Model Army was established, they tried to undercut it by sneering about "rawheads" in the "New Noddle." Hubberthorne alleged that spies all over the nation had supplied Presbyterian Thomas Edwards with news of serious believers so that he could compile his well-known *Gangraena* of 1646, 'stuffed with mistakes, forged inventions, and filthy lies.' Fearful that Parliament might prevail and the nation be set on a path of righteousness, they stirred up so-called "Clubmen," rustics supposedly trying to defend themselves and their land from being plundered but in fact people sowing divisions.<sup>34</sup>

Although Hubberthorne did not charge these Presbyterians, the same kind of manipulators who were trying in 1659 to restore the Stuarts, with responsibility for Charles I's execution, he implied as much. In their sermons they deluded the monarch into refusing to agree to some of the reasonable proposals from Parliament and hence prevented a reconciliation to forestall his trial and conviction. Knowing he aspired to absolute rule, they twitted him by asking 'whether he would make himself a subject.' Charles' negative response, sure and foreknown, brought him straightway and inevitably to the scaffold. These sly, fox-like men, Hubberthorne said as he closed, lurked in their dens, now beholden to one authority, now to another, 'at some times crying out against authority and at other times to authority to help them and defend them.' He deigned not to say what they deserved, leaving that task to the Judge of the universe who 'had already taken his people's cause into his

own hands.’<sup>35</sup>

Hubberthorne’s broadside, dated 24 October and designed for easy distribution among his former army comrades, was his final public statement on the crisis year 1659.<sup>36</sup> It reads yet like a cry from the heart, a wounded heart its owner feared was about to be stabbed again by an unfaithful remnant. The people of England, sighed the afflicted one, ‘have by deep and sad experiences not only seen the falseness and pretences, whereby they have been betrayed ..., but they also through their deep sufferings have learned to know the spirits of men.’ While not ready to disinter and behead Oliver Cromwell, whom he tagged a ‘covenant breaker and betrayer of the people’s liberties,’ he was hardly sad to have him gone. He reminded his readers that the Protector had many times professed his support of liberty of conscience and had prayed before Dunbar that if God would deliver him he would sweep away tithes. Yet Cromwell permitted “murdering” magistrates and priests to lord it over people of tender conscience and enforced laws requiring payment of tithes. ‘For the elect’s sake,’ exalted Hubberthorne, ‘his days were shortened.’ The lawmakers of Richard Cromwell’s time had promised the same things, but, refusing also to grant ‘liberty and freedom to the army and to the people of God,’ they too had been swept away. The Rump Parliament was a bit better: it had freed those who refused tithes and swearing, however much it had avoided making the nation a free commonwealth, ‘not in name but in nature.’ But it corroded its reputation when it harkened to the so-called plundered ministers, loosing them on the nation to extract the goods of innocent people.

Then Hubberthorne turned to address the army directly, but he evinced almost no hope. ‘And now you, the army, have your day from the Lord, wherein you will be tried and proved.’ He proffered little specific advice. Use your power, he averred, to choose men who feared God and hate covetousness, pride, honour, and ambition. Mentioning a Quaker who was not heard the day before in a Westminster court because he would not swear, he admonished the army to see that no such actions occur in its name. And he again harped on the inconsistent evil of requiring former soldiers who had sacrificed their money for horses and arms to pay tenths to support a church they opposed. ‘So both the law and priesthood are joined together in oppression of the people,’ he signed off.<sup>37</sup> The lack of specificity in this broadside suggested that the author had grown tired and expected little to come of his effort; it seemed too much like a protest for the record.

Richard Hubberthorne did not again inform the public of his disquiet in 1659, but he grouched privately about the endless and fruitless policy

debates engaged in by army officers. He was especially irritated that they never seemed able to unite on a policy involving tithes, even while they responded to his lobbying by promising, as he phrased it, 'to stand for good things.'<sup>38</sup> His understandable frustrations no doubt led him to abstain from further overt political activity. His writings thus focused nevermore on history, the former cavalry officer turning away to tilt at safer doctrinal and theological windmills. In his more neutral political stance, a new one for him but one he weened necessary in the world of the Restoration, he mirrored the experience of his fellow Quakers, both then and later.<sup>39</sup> After Charles II returned to a happy London in May 1660, his regime presently bolstered by stringent laws against dissenters of all stripes. Quakers prepared to sow the seeds of pacifism that had lain almost completely dormant among their ideological stock. Hubberthorne, hat firmly clapped on his head, visited the restored King to plead for release of his Friends,<sup>40</sup> a hardly threatening chore that foreshadowed the retreat from politics they embodied in their famous "Peace Testimony" of 1661.

Written by Hubberthorne and Fox, this statement grew most immediately out of the public excitement and fears occasioned by the uprising of a band of millenarian Fifth Monarchists in London on 6 January, 1661.<sup>41</sup> Committing the sect formally to forsake war and plotting, it was carefully crafted to answer shrill attacks on the Friends, the most troubling one in the King's recent proclamation on the rising. But the statement's only use of history was to misread it, for it asserted that in the past members of the Society of Friends had rejected the use of arms and implied that they had always been non-political and thus unconcerned with "carnal" matters. 'Our principle is, and our practices have always been, to seek peace,' they announced. 'All bloody principles and practices, we, as to our own particulars, do utterly deny ... for any end or under any pretence whatsoever.'<sup>42</sup>

The Testimony marked the transformation of the Society of Friends into a sect markedly different from the creative, exuberant, and confrontational company of the turbulent and exciting 1650s, the one Hubberthorne spoke for in his 1659 review of that period's history. Leaving behind their earlier enthusiastic and ecstatic improvisations, they gradually withdrew to concern themselves with internal problems, some reminiscent of more compelling days, true, but many involving separation from the outside world, with a stolid attention to what became quaint practices. The Restoration raised the curtain on a sober second scene, "the second period of Quakerism,"<sup>43</sup> in which the Society of Friends matured and assured its survival after its heady earlier act. Richard Hubberthorne had tried to get others to join the sect in

rewriting the script and thus refashioning the ending. Instead he and his fellows had to be content to exit right. They would get no chance at an encore.

*H. Larry Ingle*

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> On this period, see Godfrey Davis, *The Restoration of Charles II, 1658-1660* (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1955), for Richard Cromwell, 82-84, 188. A more recent and broader study of this period is Ronald Hutton, *The Restoration: A Political and Religious History of England and Wales* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).
- <sup>2</sup> The best study of reactions to the events of 1659 is Christopher Hill, *The Experience of Defeat: Milton and Some Contemporaries* (New York: Penguin Books, 1985). On the Quakers and this period, see Barry Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution* (London: Temple Smith, 1985), part 3.
- <sup>3</sup> The standard study of the rise of Quakerism is William C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1923), updated by Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1964).
- <sup>4</sup> The evidence is not finally in on Winstanley's conviction. For the latest, see J.D. Alsop, 'Gerrard Winstanley: Religion and Respectability,' *Historical Journal*, 28 (1985), 705-09.
- <sup>5</sup> George Fox, *To the Parliament of the Common-Wealth of England, Fifty-nine Particulars laid down for the Regulating of things* (London: no publ, 1659). (In all quotations, I have modernized punctuation, spelling, and grammar.)
- <sup>6</sup> *A Journal or Historical Account of ... George Fox* [ed., Thomas Ellwood] (London: no publ, 1694) (hereinafter cited as *Journal*, Bbb. 198-99, 213; Margaret Fell, Jr. to Mother, 27 Aug. 1659, Spence MSS, III, 2G, Library of the Society of Friends, London (hereinafter cited as LSF). See also my biography, "First among Friends: George Fox and the Quakers" (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, forthcoming), ch. 13.
- <sup>7</sup> Barry Reay, 'The Quakers and 1659: Two Newly Discovered Broadside by Edward Burrough,' *Journal of the Friends Historical Society*, 54 (1977), 101-11.
- <sup>8</sup> There were seven from Bristol, five from London, at least one in the north. Alexander Parker to George Fox, 7 Aug. 1659, LSF; Swarthmore MSS, III, 143, Robert Rich, *Hidden Things Brought to Light on the Discord of the Grand Quakers among Themselves* (Np: no publ, 1678), 29; Norman Penney, ed., *Extracts from State Papers Relating to Friends, 1654 to 1672* (London: Headley Bros., 1913), 138.
- <sup>9</sup> William Caton to Fox, Caton to Thomas Willan, 14 Nov, 20 Dec. 1659, LSF; Swarthmore MSS, IV, 268, 279.
- <sup>10</sup> The best, however inadequate, biography is Elisabeth Brockbank, *Richard Hubberthorne of Yealand: Yeoman-Soldier-Quaker, 1628-1662* (London: Friends' Book Centre, 1929). A more up-to-date sketch can be found in Richard L. Greaves and Robert Zaller, eds., *Biographical Dictionary of British Radicals in the Seventeenth Century* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982-84), II, 118-19.
- <sup>11</sup> Richard Hubberthorne, *A Word of Wisdom and Counsel to the Officers and Soldiers of the Army in England* (London: no publ, 1659), broadside.

- <sup>12</sup> *Journal*, 73. On Fox as a millenarian, see my "George Fox Millenarian," *Albion*, forthcoming.
- <sup>13</sup> On the army, see Mark A. Kishlansky, *The Rise of the New Model Army* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1979).
- <sup>14</sup> William Sewel, *The History of the Rise, Increase and Progress of the Christian People called Quakers* (Burlington, NJ: Isaac Collins, 1774), 104.
- <sup>15</sup> See Hubberthorne's letters in Hugh Barbour and Arthur Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings, 1650-1700*, (Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., 1973), 155-60.
- <sup>16</sup> For a list of Hubberthorne's writings, see Joseph Smith, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Friends' Books* (New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1970), I, 1010-17.
- <sup>17</sup> Richard Hubberthorne, *The Real Cause of the Nations Bondage and Slavery, here Demonstrated* (London: no publ, 1659), 3. Fox used these words in his own pamphlet, probably basing them on the promised results of obeying divine law. See Deuteronomy 15:4 (Coverdale).
- <sup>18</sup> Richard Hubberthorne, *An Answer to a Declaration put forth by the general Consent of the People called Anabaptists* (London: no publ, 1659), 3-4. Burrough, who wrote half this pamphlet, predicted that the Baptists' 'Antichrist monarchy, the beast with all his heads and horns, shall fall.' *Ibid.*, 23.
- <sup>19</sup> But Hubberthorne was not consistent in what read like a defence of liberty of conscience. He did not think that any church should be permitted to employ ministers, for example, if they were 'enemies to the public peace' or involved themselves with civil government. Richard Hubberthorne, *The Good Old Cause Briefly Demonstrated* (London: no publ, 1659), 12.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 My "ever" corrects the obvious misprint "never."
- <sup>21</sup> Hubberthorne, *Real Cause*, 5.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 5-6.
- <sup>23</sup> The compilers of Hubberthorne's writings did not, significantly, choose to reprint this particular pamphlet. See Richard Hubberthorne, *A Collection of the several Books and Writings of that Faithful servant of God, Richard Hubberthorne* (London: William Warwick, 1663).
- <sup>24</sup> Fox, *To the Parliament* I say 'relatively better known' because, unlike many of Fox's works, this one has never been reprinted and escaped the notice of all biographers, most of whom have been content to concentrate on his *Journal*, concerned primarily with theological issues, and have shied away from such explicit political topics.
- <sup>25</sup> For a older and contrary emphasis but recently reiterated, see Peter Brock, *The Quaker Peace Testimony 1660 to 1914* (York, Eng.: Sessions Book Trust, 1990), 9-23.
- <sup>26</sup> Hubberthorne, *Good Old Cause*, 10 [2]. (Four pages of this pamphlet are mispaginated; when referring to them, I have placed the correct numbers in square brackets).
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 11 [13].
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-15 [7].
- <sup>29</sup> In another of his essays, Hubberthorne specifically identified himself, and presumably other Quakers, with Puritans. Attacking the church of James I's day for promoting of sports and dancing, often on Sundays, he reminded his readers of the "grief" this policy had caused those "scornfully called Puritans" and other sober minded people. Hubberthorne, *Common-Wealth's Remembrancer* (London: no publ, 1659), 4.

- <sup>30</sup> It was not incidental that Hubberthorne included women among those denied their rights at the hands of others, for Quakers customarily drew few distinctions between men and women.
- <sup>31</sup> Hubberthorne, *Good Old Cause*, 9-12.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.
- <sup>34</sup> Hubberthorne, *Common-Wealth's Remembrancer*, 8-11, 14-16.
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 20, 33.
- <sup>36</sup> Hubberthorne did produce a fairly lengthy booklet that has been tentatively dated in 1659 (Smith, *Catalogue*, I, 1014), but it concerned itself entirely with doctrinal disputes. See Richard Hubberthorne, *The Quakers House Built upon the Rock Christ*. (no publ, [c. 1659]). That it concentrated on safer doctrinal matters and omitted the usual publisher's information suggests that it was published late in the year as it became clearer that the monarchy would be restored.
- <sup>37</sup> Hubberthorne, *Word of Wisdom*, broadside, no pagination.
- <sup>38</sup> Hubberthorne to Margaret Fell, 21 Nov. 1659, LSF. Caton MSS, III, 400-03.
- <sup>39</sup> On 1659, see Hill, *Experience of Defeat*, esp. chapter 5; on later, see H. Larry Ingle, 'On the Folly of Seeking the Quaker Holy Grail,' *Quaker Religious Thought*, 25 (1991), 17-29.
- <sup>40</sup> *Journal of George Fox*, ed. John L. Nickalls (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1952), 393 (hereinafter cited as Nickalls, *Journal*).
- <sup>41</sup> On the apprehensions concerning the plot, see Samuel Pepys, *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, eds., Robert Latham and William Matthews (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1983), II, 9, 11.
- <sup>42</sup> Nickalls, *Journal*, 397-403.
- <sup>43</sup> This is, of course, the title of the second volume of the standard history of the Quaker movement: William Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1919).

## RICHARD FARNWORTH OF TICKHILL

**R**ichard Farnworth was born in Tickhill Yorkshire in 1625. His father was another Richard and his mother Gartrude Dickinson. His parents, who married in 1622, had only one son and five daughters (three of whom died young). Richard, senior, died in 1633 when Richard, junior, was only nine years old. The family lived on a farm (probably in the Sunderland district of Tickhill) and his mother continued to work the farm after his father's death.<sup>1</sup>

As a youth of 16 the Lord's work began within him and he became zealous in hearing sermons and in Bible reading and private prayer. In 1644 Richard's mother died leaving him the farm then valued at £5 p.a. He does not seem to have worked the farm but went to live with one Thomas Lord of Brampton-en-le-Morton in the parish of Treeton a few miles southwest of Tickhill. The Lord household was a strict Puritan one and in it Richard studied the new sects which were at that time springing up all over Britain. In his early manhood there was no more ardent Puritan and Roundhead in the district than he and he 'could have persecuted even unto death those who were licentious and did not walk as he did.'

At about 21 years of age questions began to arise in Richard's mind and disturb his religious complacency. He was to become a Brownist and then an Independent. He came to believe that he should look for Christ inside himself, rather than seeking intercession involving others. Following this belief he refused to join the household in family prayer. This brought him into conflict with Thomas Lord and he was dismissed. He then went to work for Coronet Heathcoat as a husbandman. Heathcoat has not been identified but there was a Heathcoat family in the nearby Cinderford (where the woman destined to become Richard's wife was born) and this may have been the area to which Farnworth moved.

At this time he came into contact with a group of Seekers based in Warmsworth and with them he seems to have found a spiritual home. They had found the "Quaker Experience" independently of Fox and worshipped by sitting alone in darkness and silence awaiting the word of God from within.

At this time George Fox was preaching in his native Leicestershire and had been committed to prison in Derby in 1650 after being found guilty of blasphemy. It would seem that Fox and Farnworth were

already in touch as, in a letter to Fox dated in 1653, Richard Farnworth referred to 'those letters that thou desired to have which were written to thee whilst thou was in prison in Derby.'<sup>2</sup> It seems that soon after Fox was released in October 1651 he travelled north to meet the Warmsworth Seekers and he spoke with them "at Balby." Some of the Warmsworth Seeker Group, including Richard Farnworth, were convinced. It is unlikely that this historic meeting actually took place in Balby as this group was based in Warmsworth, but it would have been in the district of Balby. At the time the village of Warmsworth was in the act of moving some five miles to its present position and the new village where the Seekers met may not, at the time, have had a name - hence the use of the district name Balby. The meeting may even have taken place in Richard's home town, the nearby Tickhill, as this was referred to as "Tickhill, Balby" at that time. The Warmsworth Seekers formed themselves into a Quaker Group out of which grew the Balby Meeting. The Balby meeting actually met in Warmsworth and in 1672 a meeting house was built there opposite the house of Thomas Aldham.<sup>3</sup>

It is interesting to note that, in addition to Farnworth, amongst those who were convinced at the Balby meeting was Thomas Aldham whose mother, Margaret, was the sister of Thomas Lord with whom Richard Farnworth had lived. The wives of Thomas and John Killan, who were convinced at the same time were also daughters of Margaret Lord.<sup>4</sup>

Richard Farnworth and the Aldhams and Killans accompanied Fox towards Wakefield and at Stanley another meeting was held where more were convinced. These included William Dewsbury and James Nayler as well as Thomas Stacey whose daughter Mary was later to become Richard Farnworth's wife. Thus in a few short weeks Fox had convinced and collected about him the nucleus of the Yorkshire Friends who were to serve him well as the Quaker Message spread throughout the land.<sup>5</sup>

In 1652 Fox again visited Balby and the new Quaker group that had been formed there. This time he fell foul of the Church as he visited the local churches (steeplehouses as he called them) and spoke during the services. One of these churches was St. Mary's Tickhill in the town of Farnworth's birth. There are conflicting reports of the events at Tickhill but the best in detail is that taken from Nickalls' edition of Fox's *Journal* which includes information from other sources.<sup>6</sup> It would seem that there were several Quakers in Tickhill at the time and that a meeting was held there. Certainly in the years to follow there is evidence of Quaker activity in the town centred in the Sunderland area. Fox attended a Meeting at Tickhill and was moved to leave and enter the church where he caused considerable disturbances. (Fox seems to have



often been moved to leave a Quaker Meeting to preach at a nearby church).

Thomas Rookby, the priest at Warmsworth took out a warrant against both Thomas Aldham and Fox but it seems to have been served only on Aldham. Nevertheless Fox travelled with the arrested Aldham towards York and the party seems to have stayed at Lt. Roper's house where they met up with Farnworth and others and held a meeting. The party seems then to have broken up as Aldham was sent to prison in York and the others dispersed to continue their ministry.

Farnworth continued in Yorkshire, speaking in churches. This was not so unusual during the seventeenth century and at the time it was allowed except during the sermon. By May 1652 Fox and Farnworth were again together and we find them travelling in Yorkshire visiting various Seeker Groups. They visited Halifax and continued up the Dales towards Lancashire where they came to Pendle Hill.<sup>7</sup> Fox and Farnworth climbed the hill and it was at this time that Fox had a vision and proclaimed the day of the Lord – the point often taken as the start of Quakerism. The two stayed on the hill until hunger forced them to descend into the valley. Before nightfall they reached an inn by the riverside and spoke with the alewife who agreed to circulate a paper prepared by them in the inn which was addressed to all priests and professors (i.e. those professing the Christian Faith). The great movement which was to lead to Quakerism had started. In Farnworth's words:-

Wee have pitcht our Tents, drawn our swords, made Ready for ye Battel : it is begun

James Nayler joined Fox and Farnworth in the Lake District at Kendal where they stayed at the house of Francis Howgill at Todthorne in Grayrigg (about 6 miles from Kendal) and at this house they had a 'great and effectual meeting.' Fox stayed in Lancashire but Farnworth returned to his native Yorkshire continuing preaching as he went. We find him, in the summer of 1652 perhaps as early as July, in Malton with Jane Holmes a noted Quaker minister who may have originated from Farnworth's home town of Tickhill. Jane Holmes was arrested and put into York prison where she suffered a fever and ranted in 'wild airy spirit.' Farnworth visited her in prison but could avail nothing.<sup>9</sup>

In July Farnworth and Nayler were travelling together in Lancashire following Fox and they caught up with him at Swarthmoor just as Judge Fell had returned to find that his household had taken to Quakerism.<sup>10</sup> Farnworth discussed the matter with him and was given a fair

reception<sup>11</sup> and Swarthmoor Hall became the headquarters for the movement in the north. Both Farnworth and Nayler returned to Yorkshire in the autumn of that year and at Christmas we find Farnworth at Malton again, this time with Dewsbury, when nearly 200 Friends gathered.

In autumn 1652 Farnworth was in Stanley, near Wakefield and many were 'wrought on by the power of the Lord.' These included 'a captain's wife who ripped off her silver lace to humble herself.' Later Farnworth held a meeting there at the house of Dr. Hodgson where he (Farnworth) spoke forcefully. That night the Quakers were stoned as they left the town and the 'stones flew as fast as bullets in battle,' but no one was hurt.<sup>12</sup>

After visiting Friends in York prison, including some Balby Friends, the group went to Malton where they had a powerful meeting for two nights and a day.<sup>13</sup> The party, accompanied by many Malton Friends, then made back for York over-night and pushed on back to Stanley via Selby.

Farnworth wrote of this occasion:-

So I see the Lord glorifying himself every way to His own praise: but the world is on fire. I am much threatened of my life but fear not what man can do: I hear that there is warrants out as for blasphemy that I should say 'I am the light of the world.' Ah, dear hearts be valient the lord rides on triumphantly.<sup>14</sup>

Not all churchmen rejected the movement, as in 1652 we find that Fox and Farnworth were at a church 'on the moor near Pickering' which seems to have been at Thornton Risebough. There they were welcomed by the vicar, a man called Boyes, who was chaplain to Justice Robinson.

Later in 1652 we find Farnworth back near his home at Balby. During this period Farnworth does not seem to have spent too much time away from his native area as we again find him near his home in 1653. He wrote a letter to Fox<sup>15</sup> in that year outlining his return from "Worsop" [Worksop] via Tickhill (where he stayed amongst Friends) to Balby, (which probably meant Warmsworth). The letter is addressed:-

ffor my Brother  
Geo: ffoxe where  
he is these are

This rather vague address seems to have found Fox as the letter probably

travelled by hand to Swarthmoor and then on by hand to Fox wherever he was ministering.

Farnworth now moved on with his ministry spreading the word away from his native Yorkshire. His method of preaching is indicated in a letter from him to George Fox in 1653<sup>16</sup> where he writes:-

I am out of all friends and creatures whatso ever and lives only by faith in the sense of love and power of the LORD and readeth revalation much; and often that is the book that I preach out of. I am as a white paper book without any line or sentence; but as it is revealed and written by the Spirit, the Revealer of secrets so I administer

In 1653 he visited the Midlands and was in the Isle of Axholme (Lincolnshire) and spent half a week amongst Friends at Sturton and three nights at Mansfield and then went on to the home of Elizabeth Hooton.<sup>17</sup> The minister at Mansfield was John Firth and Farnworth called him 'a very high deceiver.' Firth was boarded for a quarter at a Friend's house where Farnworth disputed with him for three hours until he was 'much cut and confused' and all other Friends present were 'made bold everyone to take a bout with him' – one feels sorry for the poor minister!<sup>18</sup> In July 1654 a number of the inhabitants of Mansfield petitioned Cromwell for Firth to be made a permanent minister and amongst the reasons given was that in the absence of a permanent minister 'the common enemy of mankind ... hath poisoned the spirits of very many with that erroneous spirit of Quaking, whereby the interests of satan hath increased more and more ...'<sup>19</sup>

In January 1654/5 Farnworth was preaching, again with George Fox in Leicestershire and was also there in March when he was with Fox as he visited his family. Together they had a dispute with Nathaniel Stephens, vicar of Fenny Drayton and other priests on 12 and 17 March.

He was continuing travelling as in May he was at Gainsborough causing more controversy. At the nearby Glentworth on 31 May he confronted a group called Manifestarians (or Mooreans) – a sect gathered about Thomas Moore at Kings Lynn and in the adjacent Fen Country. Farnworth challenged their teachers to go preaching with him for a fortnight, neither party taking any sustenance but a little spring water nor looking in a book during the time.<sup>20</sup>

He is reported at Banbury in autumn, 1655 and he attended Ann Audland's trial there in September. Ann Audland was found guilty of blasphemy but refused to make a bond of good behaviour so was imprisoned. Feelings were running high in the town against Quakers

and when a woman spoke against the trial in church the following Sunday she was dragged off to gaol. Afterwards Farnworth met the Mayor and a Justice in the street but refused to remove his hat and was immediately imprisoned. His trial was by the Borough Bench and produced a long debate on such diverse matters as immediate revelation, swearing oaths and the preaching of women. The Bench seemed to be intent on removing Farnworth from the borough and he was offered his freedom if he paid the cost of his night in prison and agreed to leave the town. Characteristically he refused, and as a consequence suffered eight months imprisonment. During his stay in prison he continued his preaching through the prison grating and convinced others.<sup>21</sup>

In the North Midlands again towards the end of 1656 Farnworth was travelling and preaching with Thomas Goodyear keeping up the momentum of the work. At Baddesly in Warwickshire he found a thriving Meeting of nearly 100 Friends and reported Meetings working at Leicester, Lichfield and Swannington.<sup>22</sup>

This was certainly a year of much travel for Farnworth but he still found time to write detailed instructions for the holding of General Meetings each month in all settled Quaker groups and named Friends to see that this was done.<sup>23</sup>

These instructions contained the now famous postscript:-

These things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by; but that all, with a measure of light, which is pure and holy, may be guided ...

which now stands as one of the corner stones of the Quaker ideal.

The next year, 1657, was also a hectic one as we find Farnworth in Drayton-le-Clay (Fenny Drayton), Leicestershire with George Fox and still in dispute with priests. Fox and Farnworth were in debate with the local vicar, Nathaniel Stephens, and others centring on the payment of tithes. This was a major problem for Quakers at the time as they refused any payment rejecting the concept of a paid ministry in any form. Later that year he was in Kidderminster, Worcestershire with Thomas Goodyear and spoke at Richard Baxter's church but the vicar avoided direct debate preferring to carry out the discussion in print.

Baxter's efforts in publishing tracts against the Quakers were not unusual at the time and it was common to publish such tracts for and against various causes. The Friends were not slow to use this method and Richard Farnworth was one of the most prolific early writers. He had a particular dispute in print with John Statham, vicar of Terling, Essex, and in one of the anti-Farnworth tracts<sup>25</sup> we find published a copy of a certificate from Samuel Kendall, vicar of Warmsworth. It shows

Farnworth in a very poor light but it contains interesting details of his earlier life which enabled us to identify his town of birth and his family background. Also in 1657 there was a joint crusade in Bedfordshire and Farnworth took his part together with Fox, Edward Edwards and others.

By 1658 Farnworth seems to have reduced his travels although in November of that year he was in Lincolnshire composing differences amongst Friends. He became based in London where he published some 40 works of a religious nature. A listing of Farnworth's writings is found in Joseph Smith's *A Catalogue of Friends' Books*. The earliest record is in 1652 – a religious text outlining Farnworth's discovery of the "Truth". Most of his works were in the nature of tracts or were pamphlets putting the Quaker point of view in answer to attacks in other publications. His last publication was in 1665, being an answer to an open letter, attacking the Quaker stance, from John Perrot in Jamaica to those in England.

Farnworth married Mary Stacy of Ballifield Hall, Cinderhill on 13 July 1658. Although he must have known Mary in Yorkshire he probably met her again in London. Before marriage she was a powerful Quaker minister who travelled the country spreading the word. In 1658 she is recorded as preaching in St. Austell, Cornwall.

In 1661 John Perrot, having just been released by the Inquisition in Rome, returned to London bringing with him a number of ideas which were to cause considerable internal dispute amongst Friends. Some problems, at this distance in time, seem minor (such as the difference between praying with one's hat off and doing so only if moved to do so) but these minor matters were outward signs of a wider division between orthodox Friends and the Perrot Group who followed Perrot's imaginative mysticism. Fox, Dewsbury and Farnworth each faced the matter in their own way. Fox was trenchant, holding to his austere standards of Quaker conduct and lovingly reproached Perrot from his turning from the established way. On the other hand Dewsbury, while acknowledging the hurt done, felt less outrage and more need for healing and restoration. Farnworth came to the fore in the movement at this time and applied his strong reasoning power and his literary bent to the situation. In October 1661 Dewsbury wrote to Margaret Fell<sup>26</sup>:-

Richard Farnsworth is raised up in the great power and have been abroad among Friends: the sweet presence of the Lord hath gone along with him.

In the summer of 1663 Farnworth wrote a confutation of the Perrot position.<sup>27</sup> He pointed out that the inward man was the seat of religion

and that outward forms were only a bodily exercise which profited but little, and he held that the inward man was subject to spiritual laws government and worship and no outward law could extend to it.

Farnworth was again in London in April 1664 and remained in that city until his death. With Josiah Cole and others he continued to combat the Perrot faction. His death of fever in July 1666 (only a year after Perrot's) was regarded by the Perrots as a judgement against his opposition to them. In his driving testimony Farnworth spoke out against this group who wore "linsey-woolsey garments" (prohibited by Deuteronomy xxii 11) and denied that he was 'under a cloud for something'.<sup>28</sup>

In his final years Farnworth had also been in conflict with the Muggletonians. This sect was based around John Reeve and Lodowick Muggleton who claimed to have been the two witnesses referred to in Revelation xi who should seal the elect and the reprobate before the final coming. John Reeve died in 1652 but Muggleton continued the cause believing he possessed a commission of the Spirit to curse or bless for all eternity. Muggleton and Farnworth had a number of clashes in print about this time. Muggleton claimed to have been instrumental in the deaths of a number of Friends after damning them and one of these was Farnworth. In 1673 Muggleton wrote<sup>29</sup>:-

... a great red dragon, very fierce and fell: he was exceedingly fat and full of fury: he has two great wings on the sides of his breasts, and his tongue was, as it were, all in a fire with the poison that was in it ... and this dragon died about a year and a little more after he was wounded – this great dragon was Richard Farnworth.

Farnworth's wife, Mary, seems to have returned to her old family home at Cinderhill as her will was made there in 1679 and she died there on 21 October 1680 and was buried "at Balby". There is some doubt about the date of her death as one version of the Friends Burial Book at Balby Meeting gives the date as 20 October 1680, but the older one clearly states the date to be 'the twenty and one day of October'. Strangely, against normal custom the name of the month is given for this one entry only in the burial book. The significance of this is not known.<sup>30</sup>

The above outlines the life of Richard Farnworth who was born in a minor Yorkshire town and who was an active Quaker minister and a close friend of Fox from the earliest time, being a part of the Quaker movement from its very beginnings on Pendle Hill, until his untimely death at the age of 41 only 16 years later.

*Tam Llewellyn-Edwards*

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> The parish records of St. Mary's Tickhill (at the Doncaster Public Library, Archives Branch).
- <sup>2</sup> LSF Swarthmore MSS, iii, 53.
- <sup>3</sup> Warmsworth is still a separate township lying to the south of Doncaster. The Quaker meeting still survives having now moved into Doncaster.
- <sup>4</sup> W.C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism to 1660*, (1979 edn), 59.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.
- <sup>6</sup> *Journal of George Fox*, ed. J.L. Nickalls, (1986 edn.), 98 *et seq.*
- <sup>7</sup> Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, 103 *et seq.*, also *Journal*, 103 *et seq.*
- <sup>8</sup> *Journal*, 101-104; Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, 78; E.E. Taylor, *The Valiant Sixty*, (Ebor Press, 1988), 13 *et seq.*
- <sup>9</sup> Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, 75.
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 119; also see Margaret Fell's account in *Ellwood Journal*, ii, 513.
- <sup>12</sup> See letter from Farnworth to Fox and Nayler, LSF Swarthmore MSS, iv., 229, reprinted in *Letters of Early Friends*, ed. A.R. Barclay (1841), 216.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>14</sup> Quoted in Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, 76.
- <sup>15</sup> LSF Swarthmore MSS, iii, 52.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.
- <sup>17</sup> Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, 127-8.
- <sup>18</sup> LSF Swarthmore MSS, iii, 52, letter from Farnworth to Fox.
- <sup>19</sup> *Extracts from State Papers Relating to Friends* (1st. Series), 2-3.
- <sup>20</sup> LSF Samuel Watson MSS (MS vol. 41), 208.
- <sup>21</sup> Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, 199-200.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 193.
- <sup>23</sup> The original letter is still in existence and is preserved in the records of Marsden Monthly Meeting. There is an imperfect copy, wrongly attributed, in *Letters of Early Friends*, 277-83.
- <sup>24</sup> *Journal of George Fox*, 184.
- <sup>25</sup> *The Reviller Rebuked* by John Stratham (1657).
- <sup>26</sup> LSF Swarthmore MSS, iv, 148.
- <sup>27</sup> LSF John Penington MSS, (MS vol. 344), iv, 40.
- <sup>28</sup> Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, 247.
- <sup>29</sup> *The Answer to William Penn* by L. Muggleton (1673).
- <sup>30</sup> Microfiche copies of the Balby Meeting Registers are available at the Doncaster Public Library, Archives Branch.

ROBERT BARCLAY (1648 - 1690),  
THE FATHERS AND THE INWARD,  
UNIVERSAL SAVING LIGHT:  
A TERCENTENARY REAPPRAISAL

**L**et the *Quakers* henceforth cease to lay any claim to the Authority of St. Augustine, or any other of the *Ancient Fathers, Greek or Latin*, that lived either before him, or in his time; as if they favoured this Vile Error; for no doubt St. *Augustine* better knew the mind of those holy Ancients, than any of the Quakers, or this their Apologist.<sup>1</sup>

Such was the stern judgment of George Keith (1638 - 1716). Raised a Presbyterian, Keith became a Quaker in 1664. He was Robert Barclay's mentor and friend, though ten years after Barclay's death he left the Friends and was ordained in the Church of England in 1700.<sup>2</sup> Keith directs us to our task, for he prompts the questions, to what extent did Barclay draw upon the Fathers? why, and with what degree of success, did he have recourse to them?

It is noteworthy that of Barclay's contemporary critics, Keith alone makes extensive reference to Barclay's use (or, as he thinks, abuse) of the Fathers; nor is this subject investigated in detail by recent expositors of Barclay's thought.<sup>3</sup> It may be suggested, as a reason for this neglect, that Barclay's appeal to the Fathers was, if not purely formal, at least not original – on the contrary, it was at secondhand. On this matter Keith, by now a hostile witness, 'spilled the beans'. Barclay, he alleges, took most of his references 'at Second Hand, as I myself did the like, as touching many of them, which he had from me...'<sup>4</sup> Keith hastens to point out that he has subsequently returned to the original sources.

What shall we make of Keith's charge? As a person of integrity, he is *prima facie* trustworthy. He admits that he had plundered Vossius and Grotius for patristic references, and that he had shared these with Barclay. By tracing Barclay's identifiable patristic quotations to their sources in the Greek and Latin, we shall show that he did not always attend to the context of the passages plundered, and that he was selective in his usage of the Fathers: he takes little account of them where they appear to oppose him. This, coupled with Keith's suggestion of a 'crib list', may suggest that Barclay was unaware of contrary points. In any



case, of his general indebtedness of Keith there can be no doubt, as witness the linguistic echoes of Keith's earlier works in Barclay's *Theses* of 1674.<sup>5</sup>

Despite the lack of originality in Barclay's appeals to patristic sources, it is our contention that the fact that he made the appeal at all is illuminating in respect of his apologetic objectives and method, and it poses a serious question to present-day Friends. Accordingly, we shall proceed to a consideration of Barclay's objectives and method in the *Apology* (Latin 1676, English 1678). We shall then investigate his actual use of the Fathers. Scattered references to patristic sources may be found throughout the *Apology*, but since the Fathers are quoted (as distinct from listed) in significant numbers in connection with the themes of inward and immediate revelation and the universal saving light, and since these are Barclay's major doctrinal distinctives, we shall concentrate upon these matters. Finally, we shall presume to offer some kindly-intentioned, albeit non-Friendly, reflections upon our findings.

### I

No doubt, as W.C. Braithwaite averred, one of Barclay's motives in writing the *Apology* was domestic, so to speak: 'The corporate consciousness that had come to Friends with the organization established by Fox was bound to crave for some systematic manual of Quaker principles...'<sup>6</sup> But there was more to it than that: Barclay's purpose was political as well as "denominational". He wished to assert and defend Quaker teachings in such a way as to show the authorities that they had no need to continue persecuting so peaceable, upright and orthodox a people. In pursuing this line Barclay was also, by implication, distancing the Friends from more violent and seditious groups. As Alexander Gordon explained,

*Apologia* is of course a vindication, yet it is clear that Barclay did not understand by this a defence in the nature of a justifying explanation, which is the meaning Dr. Newman has taught us to attach to the word, but rather a defence in the nature of a fortifying outwork or advanced guard... His object was to secure for [Friends] an immunity from misrepresentation, a liberty of development, a position of acknowledged respect and weight.<sup>7</sup>

The benefits here mentioned were nowhere more to be desired than in Barclay's Aberdeen, where Quakers were represented as 'demented, distracted, bodily possessed of the devil, practising abominations under cover of being possessed by the Spirit and as to their principles, blasphemous deniers of the true Christ, of Heaven, Hell and Angels'.<sup>8</sup>

As if this were not enough, Quakers were accused of being agents of Popery.<sup>9</sup>

A third motivation was Barclay's desire to defend God's honour, as he understood it, from Calvinism's sterner features. In this respect the *Apology* is a reply to the Westminster Shorter Catechism (1647), and Barclay's first thirteen *Theses* follow the order of the latter's questions. In this connection it is not without significance that (assuming Keith to be a reliable witness) Barclay utilised references culled from Gerard Jan Vossius (1577-1649) and Hugo Grotius (1583-1645), both of whom were Arminians who wished to distinguish their position from Pelagianism, and the former of whom argued in his *Historia de controversiis quas Pelagius ejusque reliquiae moverunt* (1618) that the doctrine of predestination was unknown in the early Church. Barclay made it quite clear that he 'intended never to write of those things concerning which we do not differ from others'.<sup>10</sup> This decision undoubtedly focused his polemics and enabled him to emphasize Quaker distinctives but, as we shall see, it had the effect of diverting attention from some of the fundamental Christian doctrines.

The fact that Barclay is fighting on more than one front influences his method. Thus, in introducing himself to 'the friendly reader', he cautions that his method may appear not only deficient, but contrary to that of 'the men called *divines*'. He explains that, far from admiring *school-men*, he despises them, for they destroy the Christian religion. He has not sought to accommodate his work to 'itching ears' – rather, 'what I have written comes more from my heart than from my head'. He has 'followed the certain rule of the *Divine Light*, and of the *Holy Scriptures*'.<sup>11</sup> Consistently with this, he later distinguishes between 'the saving heart-knowledge, and the soaring, airy head-knowledge'.<sup>12</sup>

On the other hand, when addressing Charles II the political motive is to the fore: 'if thou wilt allow thyself so much time as to read this, thou mayest find *how consonant [Quaker] principles are both to scripture, truth, and right reason*'.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, in the complete title of the *Apology* Barclay declares that he intends to offer 'A full explanation and vindication of [Quaker] principles and doctrines, by many arguments deduced from Scripture and right reason, and the testimonies of famous authors, both ancient and modern'.

Finally, with Christians of other traditions in mind Barclay appeals to the tradition at large, and to the Fathers in particular. He piles up his authorities with a view to showing that 'it was the consensus of Christian authorities that there is something better than the authority of men'.<sup>14</sup> Not indeed that Barclay's opinion of the Fathers was particularly high. Thus, in a 'Table of Chief Things' prefixed to *Truth Triumphant*, he points

out that the Fathers did not always agree on points of biblical interpretation, and that they sometimes contradicted one another – and themselves. On which theme Barclay is in the line of the Reformed pastor of Paris, John Daillé, whose *A Treatise Concerning the Right Use of the Fathers, in the Decision of the Controversies that are at this Day in Religion* had been translated into English in 1651. Nevertheless he does think it worthwhile to make his appeal to the Fathers.

## II

Having affirmed, in his first Proposition, the necessity of that knowledge of God which brings life eternal, Barclay proceeds in Proposition Second to elucidate the nature of ‘inward and immediate revelation’ (to use the *two* adjectives in the Latin text: the English gives only the latter). Divine revelation, he declares, is not subject to rational or scriptural tests; it is self-authenticating. It ‘is that which is evident and clear of itself, forcing, by its own evidence and clearness, the well disposed understanding to assent, irresistibly moving the same thereunto, even as the common principles of natural truths do move and incline the mind to a natural assent; as, *that the whole is greater than its part; that two contradictories can neither be both true, nor both false*’.<sup>15</sup> He proceeds to distinguish between literal (in the head) knowledge and spiritual (in-the-heart) knowledge. The latter alone is true knowledge of God, and it ‘is revealed inwardly by his own Spirit’.<sup>16</sup> At this point Barclay produces his first batch of ‘testimonies of the ancients’.

He first summons Augustine who, in his homily upon 1 John 3: 18-27, declares that there is an inward teacher, Christ, and that in the absence of his inspiration and unction, ‘it is in vain that words are beaten in [or, make a noise?] from without’.<sup>17</sup> Clement of Alexandria is next invoked for the way in which he distinguished between what anyone may say of the truth, and what the self-interpretative truth itself declares. The former derives from ‘exercise and discipline [learning and practice?]’, the latter from ‘power and faith’.<sup>18</sup> However, Clement immediately proceeds to quote John 7: 17 to the effect that we come to know the truth by doing it. Barclay does not follow him here, though he may not necessarily deny the point. Even so, the impression he leaves, consistently with his other citations, is that the truth is within, whatever we do: it is not (as Clement thinks it is) acquired as we ‘walk the paths of righteousness’. Barclay’s desire to shun Pelagianism (of which heresy Clement was, of course, happily innocent), would probably have restrained him at this point had he read Clement in detail.

Tertullian is called next. In his *Liber de Virginibus Velandis* Tertullian designates the Comforter, the Spirit, the Scripture-revealing ‘Vicar of the Lord’.<sup>19</sup> Jerome further assists with his conviction that a revelation is required if we are to understand the law, which is spiritual.<sup>20</sup> Jerome reiterates his point in more general terms later in the same letter: ‘in the holy scriptures one can make no progress unless one has a guide to point the way’.<sup>21</sup> Barclay does not quote this remark, nor does he treat us to Jerome’s delightful analogy drawn from Horace on poetry: ‘We all write poetry, whether we are taught or not’.<sup>22</sup> ‘The garrulous old woman’, Jerome complains, ‘the feeble-minded old man, the verbose sophist – all take up [the Scriptures], tear them to pieces and teach them before they have grasped their meaning’.<sup>23</sup> Barclay does, however, quote Jerome writing to Hedibia to the effect that we need the Holy Spirit if we are to find our way through the ‘great obscurities of Paul’s Romans’.<sup>24</sup>

Barclay’s fifth supportive Father is Athanasius, who rejoices that ‘The Saviour daily expends great effort to draw us towards religion [or, piety]’.<sup>25</sup> With Barclay as our only guide we should not know that Athanasius’s assertion falls in the context of his discussion of the implications of Christ’s resurrection. His point is that, by contrast with the risen Saviour, the gods and evil spirits of those who disbelieve the resurrection of Jesus are dead. *They* cannot teach about immortality, reveal the knowledge of the Father, or inspire faith in the face of death. On the contrary, they ‘become dead at the appearing of Christ’. No one else can achieve all of this, and hence Christ’s resurrection is proved.

Gregory the Great and Cyril of Alexandria are Barclay’s final witnesses on this point. Gregory argues that apart from the inward teacher, a teacher’s efforts are in vain,<sup>26</sup> while Cyril insists that without the illumination of the Holy Spirit, we cannot know that Jesus is Lord.<sup>27</sup> It is noteworthy that while, on this occasion, Barclay does not violate his authors’ meanings, the context of their remarks has to do with the activities of the triune God. If Keith is to be believed, Barclay may not have known this; if he did know it, it is perhaps surprising that he did not take the opportunity of adverting to it, since Quakers, especially Penn, had been accused of disbelieving in the Trinity.<sup>28</sup>

The question cannot but arise, ‘What is the relation of the inward illumination to tradition and Scripture?’ As to the former, Barclay deems it an unreliable guide, citing as evidence the disagreement between Polycarp and Anicetus over the proper way of celebrating Easter.<sup>29</sup> In this matter, unwittingly or not, Barclay is selective in quotation. Thus, for example, when arguing that because of the errors

of copyists the Bible cannot be finally authoritative, he quotes the complaint of Jerome to the wealthy Spaniard, Lucinius, that the scribes ‘wrote not what they found but what they understood’.<sup>30</sup> However, Barclay is silent upon Jerome’s reply in the same letter to Lucinius’s query concerning fasting on the Sabbath and the daily reception of communion: ‘The best advice I can give you is this’, writes Jerome: ‘Church-traditions – especially where they do not contradict the faith – are to be observed in the form in which previous generations have handed them on; and the use of one church is not to be annulled because it is contrary to that of another’.<sup>31</sup>

Despite the perils of transcription, Barclay quotes Augustine with approval to the effect that if anything in the canonical Scriptures should seem ‘repugnant to truth, I shall not doubt to say, that either the volume is faulty or erroneous; that the expounder has not reached what was said; or that I have in no way understood it’.<sup>32</sup> As to ‘those great heaps of commentaries’ which have been written on the Scriptures, Barclay agrees with Jerome that it is harder to understand the expositions than to understand what is being expounded.<sup>33</sup> [A lever this for those Quakers who gloried in their *uneducated* state.] Important though the Scriptures are, ‘they are only a declaration of the fountain, and not the fountain itself, therefore they are not to be esteemed the principal ground of all truth and knowledge, nor yet the adequate primary rule of faith and manners...they are and may be esteemed a secondary rule, subordinate to the Spirit...Seeing then that we do therefore receive and believe the Scriptures because they proceed from the Spirit, for the very same reason is the Spirit more originally and principally the rule’.<sup>34</sup>

None of which pleased John Brown of Wamphray. Known as ‘the Presbyterian David’ on account of his small stature and pugilistic aptitudes, this ardent Calvinist rushed into print before the English edition of the *Apology* appeared, and produced a reply which was longer than the text to which it was an answer.<sup>35</sup> He is especially opposed to Barclay’s understanding of the immediacy of revelation. To him, revelation is *via* the Scriptures, and he considers that Barclay’s position necessarily demotes the Bible. He claims the Fathers (and others) whom Barclay cites as belonging to his own camp, and throws down his challenge thus:

can he produce any of the Fathers, or of our Reformers, maintaining such Inward and Immediate Revelations of the Spirit, as the *Quakers*, with their predecessors, the *Enthusiasts*, do assert now to be necessary, and do pretend to? If he is so well acquainted with the writings of the Fathers, as by these his citations, he would have us believe, he hath done wisely for himself, but not very honestly, in concealing what several of the same Fathers, and Others, write expressly against

such high Pretenders, as the *Quakers* now are, and in whose footsteps they, in many things, now tread...<sup>36</sup>

Brown proceeds to catalogue a list of patristic and later sources against imposters such as Valentinus and enthusiasts such as the Montanists, and here he is on firm ground. He takes Barclay's point that spiritual illumination is essential, denying only that it is immediate. But, alas, 'it is usual with this sort of men, to speak...after an high and loftie manner, as if they were alwayes ravished in an ecstasy; for as they alwayes have the Spirit in their mouth, so they use a strange idiome, that such as hear them are at the first amazed; and this they affect of purpose to deceive their hearers, and raise in them an admiration of them and their Opinions'.<sup>37</sup>

No doubt Barclay's emphasis upon inward and immediate revelation was in part prompted by his realisation that literalistic biblical interpretation is a game that more than one can play. It could, as he was well aware, lead to Socinian reductionism.

### III

Although in Proposition IV Barclay has taken sin and humanity's resulting estrangement from God with full seriousness, in Propositions V and VI he contends against the 'horrible and blasphemous' doctrine of reprobation, and in favour of his view that Christ's redemption is universal in scope, and that everyone is a recipient of saving and spiritual light.

Barclay refers, without quoting, to Augustine in support of his view that until the Pelagian heresy broke upon the world, the doctrine of reprobation, which is 'contrary to the scripture's testimony, and to the tenor of the gospel' was passed over 'with a profound silence'.<sup>38</sup> This, declares Brown in his rejoinder, is simply, 'the old saying of the *Arminians*'. In fact, he continues, the doctrine of reprobation is to be found in the Scriptures, though it is true that before Pelagianism, 'that Enemy of the grace of God arose, the Church had no occasion to debate such questions...'<sup>39</sup> Brown further notes that Augustine does cite Ambrose, Gregory of Nazianzus and Cyprian as agreeing with him. But his most telling point against Barclay is the *tu quoque*: 'Is this mans Religion grounded upon the authority of men? And will he beleieve no more, than what the Fathers said in the first foure ages? Let him follow what cisterns he pleaseth, we will satisfie ourselves with the Word, as ther ground of our Faith...'<sup>40</sup> In other words, on Barclay's own principles concerning the primacy of inward, immediate revelation, he should not make so much of an appeal to patristic silence.

Barclay proceeds to produce a further catalogue of quotations from the Fathers by way of underscoring his point that while ‘there is not one scripture, that I know of, which affirms, *Christ not to die for all*, there are divers that positively assert, *He did*’. Furthermore ‘all the *fathers*, so called’, of the first four centuries ‘boldly held forth the gospel of Christ, and efficacy of his death; inviting and entreating the *heathens* to come and be partakers of the benefits of it...not telling them that God had predestinated any of them to damnation, or had made salvation impossible to them, by withholding power and grace, necessary from them’.<sup>41</sup> Barclay’s case thus is that the universal call of the Gospel is meaningless if the reprobation of any is predestined. He turns to Augustine for support, which he presents thus: ‘The blood of Christ is of so great worth, that it is of no less value than the whole world’.<sup>42</sup> The reference is indeed to Augustine’s *Enarrationes in Psalmos* XCV.5, but Barclay has telescoped his words, which are as follows:

The blood of Christ was the price. What is equal to this? What, but the whole world? What but all nations? They are very ungrateful for their price, or very proud, who say the price is so small that it bought the Africans only; or that they are so great, as that it was given for them alone. Let them not exult, let them not be proud: He gave what He gave for the whole world.<sup>43</sup>

This, of course, is a long way from the claim that all will actually be saved, but Brown took Barclay as intending this. Barclay, he loftily replied, ‘bewrayeth much impudence, seeing it is sufficiently known to all, that are acquainted with [Augustine’s] writings, that he was of a far other opinion’.<sup>44</sup> Brown lists a dozen passages from Augustine in support of his view that Barclay is quoting selectively, among them one from *De Trinitate* in which Augustine declares that the devil cannot draw to himself ‘anyone of those whom Christ...had redeemed by pouring out his blood without being obliged to do so; but that they belonging to the grace of Christ, foreknown, predestined, and chosen before the foundation of the world, should die only in so far as Christ Himself died for us, by the death of the flesh only, not of the spirit’.<sup>45</sup> It cannot be said that Barclay positively asserts that all will be saved in the section under review, but his use of the Fathers when they are emphasizing the universal call of the Gospel, and his relative shunning of them when they are proclaiming predestination, makes Brown’s anxiety intelligible.

Prosper of Aquitaine is next in line. Barclay quotes accurately the first sentence of Prosper’s *Responsiones ad Capitula Gallorum*, and then adds other material:

the Redeemer of the world gave his blood for the world, and the world would not be redeemed because the darkness did not receive the light. He that saith, the Saviour was not crucified for the redemption of the whole world, looks not to the virtue of the sacrament, but to the part of infidels, since the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ is the price of the whole world; from which redemption they are strangers, who either delighting in their captivity would not be redeemed, or after they were redeemed returned to the same servitude.<sup>46</sup>

In context, however, Prosper is not advocating a universal light which actually saves all – as Brown was quick to point out.<sup>47</sup> Not indeed that Barclay says he did – he is still concerned with the universal call of the Gospel. But he certainly makes no reference to Prosper's 'inconvenient' point in the same passage to the effect that 'though it is right to say that the Saviour was crucified for the redemption of the entire world, because He truly took our human nature and because all men were lost in the first man, yet it may also be said that He was crucified only for those who were to profit by His death'.<sup>48</sup> Prosper does make much of the fact that salvation is not limited to the Jews, but he also, in the same passage from which Barclay quotes, declares that 'no man attains eternal life without the sacrament of baptism' – a complicating ecclesiological point on which Barclay is silent. A similar silence is detectable in Barclay's immediately following, and seriously garbled, quotation from Prosper. In his version, Barclay refers to Christ, 'whose death was so bestowed upon mankind, that it belonged to the redemption of such who were not to be regenerated'.<sup>49</sup> Prosper has nothing like this. On the contrary, he writes, '[Christ's] death did not act on all of humanity in such a way that even those who would never be reborn in baptism would share in the redemption, but so that the mystery accomplished once and for all in the person of Christ should be renewed in each and every man by the sacrament of baptism which he is to receive once also'.<sup>50</sup> As before, Barclay makes no reference to the necessity of the sacrament of baptism. His third quotation, from Prosper's *De Vocatione Omnium Gentium* (*The Call of All Nations*) is correctly given (though wrongly placed in chapter 6). Prosper's emphasis here is upon the fact that people of all nations are called, and that the grace of Christ cannot be confined within Roman territorial boundaries.<sup>51</sup>

Barclay proceeds to cite John Chrysostom once and Ambrose twice, to the effect that if the light is not received, it is not because it is unavailable, but because it has been spurned.<sup>52</sup> Barclay omits from his second quotation from Ambrose the telling words, 'Those who perish, therefore, perish through their own fault, while the saved are freed by the judgment of Christ, who wishes all men to be saved and to come to the recognition of truth'. As before, Brown cites John Chrysostom and



Ambrose against Barclay, as if Barclay were claiming that the Fathers teach that all will in fact be saved.

Barclay takes an important step further when he affirms

*That God, in and by this Light and Seed [that is, by the inward Christ], invites, calls, exhorts, and strives with every man, in order to save him; which, as it is received and not resisted, works the salvation of all, even those who are ignorant of the death and sufferings of Christ, and of Adam's fall, both by bringing them to a sense of their own misery, and to be sharers in the sufferings of Christ inwardly, and by making them partakers of his resurrection, in becoming holy, pure, and righteous, and recovered out of their sins.*<sup>53</sup>

Clearly, the patristic emphasis upon baptism and the Church is far from his mind at this point. He does not invoke the Fathers here, and hence Keith's rebuke, in which he refers to the divines just named as if Barclay attributed the point now made to them, is unjust.<sup>54</sup>

It must be emphasized that to Barclay the light, the seed, is, or contains, *Christ*. Barclay is not advocating the presence of a natural light, or of a general principle of illumination in all human beings as such. Indeed, he can speak of the light in strongly trinitarian terms. He says that the light which enlightens everyone is

*not the proper essence and nature of God precisely taken, which is not divisible into parts and measures, as being a most pure, simple being, void of all composition or division, and therefore can neither be resisted, hurt, wounded, crucified, or slain by all the efforts and strength of men; but we understand a spiritual, heavenly, and invisible principle, in which God, as Father, Son, and Spirit dwells; a measure of which divine and glorious life is in all men as a seed, which of its own nature draws, invites, and inclines to God; and this we call *vehiculum Dei*, or the spiritual body of Christ, the flesh and blood of Christ, which came down from heaven, of which all the saints do feed, and are thereby nourished unto eternal life...but we are far from ever having said that Christ is thus formed in all men, Or in the wicked.*<sup>55</sup>

Negatively, he continues, the light is not our natural conscience or reason, both of which are liable to corruption.<sup>56</sup>

Against the suggestion that, by denying predestination and asserting the free offer of the Gospel, Barclay has embraced Pelagianism, Barclay reiterates his view that the creature is called not to *resist* grace – in other words, passivity is what he has in mind. At which point he enlists the aid of Cyril of Alexandria: 'Let not the world accuse the word of God, and his eternal light, but his own weakness; for the sun enlightens, but the creature rejects the grace that is given unto it...'<sup>57</sup> Two further barrages of patristic quotations (some garbled) are presented in support of belief in the universal light. The first comprises references to Clement of Alexandria, Justin Martyr and Prosper of Aquitaine;<sup>58</sup> the second, to

Lactantius (citing Cicero), Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria and Augustine.<sup>59</sup>

We have already noted Barclay's view that, provided they did not resist it, even those who had not heard of Christ could be saved by the universal light. The reference to Justin just noted strongly reinforces this point, for Justin declares that Socrates, Heraclitus, and others who lived according to the light, were Christians.<sup>60</sup> No doubt in Justin and others the Logos can signify both God's eternal reason and his outgoing Word,<sup>61</sup> but the question of the relation of the former to the latter remains. Barclay, as we have seen, does not intend to denigrate the Scriptures; rather, he holds that apart from divine illumination their meaning will not come home to us. So far, so good: the difficulty is with the converse. If *knowledge* of Christ's saving act is not necessary for salvation, how far is the act itself necessary – will not the inward universal light suffice by itself? George Keith certainly thought that Barclay was tending towards an affirmative answer at this point, and he has a number of polemical pages in which he turns Barclay's sources against him by claiming that the Fathers cited did not intend to suggest that any could be saved apart from the historic act of God in Christ, to which the Scriptures testify. The Christian cannot but construe the inward divine light very differently from the heathen.<sup>62</sup> Keith concludes that when it serves their purpose, the Quakers 'magnifie the Fathers'; when it does not, they 'slight them, and prefer their own writings to them'.<sup>63</sup> He even invokes the Quaker Thomas Ellwood, who had charged Keith with 'supposing Friends Books to have been written with no better Guidance nor clear sight than theirs, who lived and wrote in those dark Times'.<sup>64</sup> Keith clearly felt that patristic darkness would have served Friends better than Quakerish light.

#### IV

What are we to make of our sometimes agonised pursuit of Barclay's patristic sources? We have seen ample proof that he is not always accurate in quotation or referencing; and that he selects what suits his case (or relies on his 'crib list' for it), whilst neglecting contrary opinions expressed by the Fathers whom he cites. Brown and Keith were by no means entirely unprovoked in giving their counter examples. Barclay, as we saw, did not take too lofty a view of his patristic and other authorities but, and this leads us to our first concluding reflection, he did think it appropriate to draw upon the heritage of Christian testimony.

Three hundred years after Barclay's death, where do Friends stand on this point? This is by no means only an 'in house' Quaker matter. It is of

some ecumenical importance, and that is why an outsider is impertinent enough to raise it. Not, indeed, that voices within the Friends are altogether silent on the subject. For example, the contemporary Friend Alastair Heron has recently expressed his conviction that 'we must look more closely at the fact of our Christian heritage, and what it means to Friends today'.<sup>65</sup>

Friends seriously intent upon addressing this matter will find a perusal of Barclay very revealing. For in Barclay we have one who, of set purpose, did not set out to elaborate upon those doctrines held by all Christians in common. Rather, he wished to emphasize Quaker distinctives in such a way as to show that they were not hostile to the public authorities, or to the generally received tradition. Thus, while he makes a number of references to the Trinity and to the Atonement,<sup>66</sup> he does not elaborate upon these, or refer them unproblematically to the inward, universal light. To put it otherwise, while he wishes to counter what he regards as Calvinism's predestinarian slighting of God's justice, he is so convinced of humanity's total depravity that he knows that the forgiveness of sins is by the sacrifice of Christ alone. Yet the universal light, which shines upon those who have never heard of Christ, and can save them provided they do not resist it, cannot but divert the gaze from the historic Cross and raise the question of the relation of the universal light to a particular Calvary. Our second concluding reflection may be encapsulated in the question, 'How do contemporary Friends stand on the relation of inward Christ to the outward?'

Barclay's lack of definition at this point opened the way for some later Friends, under the influence of Enlightenment rationalism, or under that of post-Hegelian immanentism, to sit loose to the historic events, and to focus upon the inward light, now construed not Christologically, but as a natural possession of all people. The Cambridge Platonist Henry More went too far in saying that the Quakers excluded 'the external Christ from the business of Religion' in favour of the 'internal Christ',<sup>67</sup> but it is not difficult to see how the balance of Barclay's material could tempt others in this direction. Later Quakers have taken the point,<sup>68</sup> none more bluntly than D. Elton Trueblood.

There are many things wrong with 'that of God in every man' as an effort to state the essence of Quaker faith and life. One is that it makes no reference to Christ. This, of course, is one of the reasons for its popularity in our generation, for there are some who do not want to face the fact of the Christ-centredness of the Quaker commitment. They want an eclectic system which they think is superior to a faith centred in Christ... We do not need to be very astute to see that this is

really a disguised humanism...It is partly because of the intellectual vigour of Robert Barclay that Quakerism is not tied to such a position.<sup>69</sup>

Francis B. Hall's rueful comment is similarly motivated: 'Most Quakers accept the universalism of Barclay and of the early Friends, but some are happy to drop entirely the particularity'.<sup>70</sup>

Our own conclusion is that Robert Barclay did not draw *enough* on the Fathers. They could have helped him – and perhaps later Friends – on the questions: What was done for our redemption? Who alone could do it? How is the Christian understanding of redemption to be expressed in trinitarian terms? As it is, there is some justification for Alexander Gordon's judgment:

No doubt [Barclay's] theology is of the *solus Pater supremus* type. It would not be fair towards Barclay's own estimate of his position, or we should on this ground characterize his Confession as in its essence Unitarian; not that this would be true, in the sense of identifying it with any extant school of Unitarian faith; but the reason is mainly this, that no existing Unitarian school is strong enough to take up and assimilate Scripture so completely and *ex animo* as Barclay does.<sup>71</sup>

This suggests a somewhat cheekier way of posing our question: 'How happy are contemporary Quakers to be endorsed, on doctrinal points, by a distinguished Unitarian?'

May it be that Friends and others need to return to the heritage of Christian testimony in order to recover emphases which Barclay did not dwell upon because they were common currency? If so, our reason for doing so will be that the currency has subsequently been devalued.

*Alan P.F. Sell*

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> George Keith, *The Standard of the Quakers examined, or An Answer to the Apology of Robert Barclay*, (1702), 240.
- <sup>2</sup> For Keith see *DNB*; E.W. Kirby, *George Keith, 1638-1716*, 1942; J. Philip Wragge, 'The debt of Robert Barclay to George Keith', unpublished typescript, 1946; id., *The Faith of Robert Barclay*, (1948), 21-34; John Eliot in *The Yorkshireman*, III, (1834), 4-15.
- <sup>3</sup> Eleanor P. Mather, *Barclay in Brief*, 1942; J.P. Wragge, op.cit.; Brand Blanshard, 'Early thought on the Inner Light', in Howard H. Brinton (ed.), *Byways in Quaker History. A Collection of historical essays by friends and colleagues of William I. Hull*, (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill, 1944); Gerardina L. Van Dalfsen, 'The faith and theology of Robert Barclay', *Bulletin of Friends Historical Association*, XXXVII, no. 2, (1948), 51-62; Leif Eeg-Olofsson, *The Conception of the Inner Light in Robert Barclay's Theology*, (Lund, 1954); Francis B. Hall, 'The thought of Robert Barclay: An

evaluation', *Quaker Religious Thought*, VII, no. 1, Spring 1965, 2-31, with replies by Maurice A. Creasey, 32-5, James Flood, 35-8, and D. Elton Trueblood, 38-43; D. Elton Trueblood, *Robert Barclay*, 1968; Donald S. Nesti, *Grace and Faith: the means to salvation. An analysis of early Quaker soteriology and sacramentality: 1650-1689*, (Pittsburgh: Catholic and Quaker Studies, 1975); and the following unpublished theses: George Passmore Hayes, *Robert Barclay: His Life, Works and Position in the History of Quaker Thought*, Harvard University, 1927; Maurice A. Creasey, *The Theology of Robert Barclay*, University of Leeds, 1951; James J. Flood, *A Catholic Critique of the Quaker doctrine of the Inner Light*, Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, 1963.

- <sup>4</sup> G. Keith, *The Standard*, 230. Keith repeats his confession on p.241.
- <sup>5</sup> See P. Wragge's tables of parallels between Barclay's *Apology*, and Keith's *Immediate Revelation* (1668, but written 1664-5), op.cit., 31-33.
- <sup>6</sup> William C. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism*, 2nd edn., 1961, 386.
- <sup>7</sup> A. Gordon, 'The marrow of Barclay', *The Theological Review*, XII, (1875), 389-90.
- <sup>8</sup> R. Barclay, *Truth Clear'd of Calumnies*, 1670, Preface.
- <sup>9</sup> E.g. by Henry More the Cambridge Platonist. See M.H. Nicolson (ed.), *Conway Letters: The correspondence of Anne, Vicountess Conway, Henry More, and their friends, 1642-84*, (1930), 416. the Aberdeen divinity students were among others who reiterated the charge - well aware that Barclay had been educated in the (Roman Catholic) Scots Theological College in Paris, of which his uncle Robert was Rector. See Barclay's vindication of the Quakers in *A True and Faithful Account*, 1675; also his *Quakerism No Popery* 1675, a reply to the accusations of John Menzies in his *Roma Mendax* 1675. Menzies was Professor of Divinity at Aberdeen University.
- <sup>10</sup> R. Barclay, *Truth Triumphant*, 1st edn., 1692, 732.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ib.*, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity as the same is held forth and preached by the people, in scorn, called Quakers, etc.*, xi. We here use the widely-available 14th edn., 1886.
- <sup>12</sup> *Ib.*, 12.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ib.*, vi.
- <sup>14</sup> D. Elton Trueblood, *Robert Barclay*, 134.
- <sup>15</sup> R. Barclay, *Apology*, 11.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ib.*, 13.
- <sup>17</sup> See Migne, PL XXXV, 2004, where the last words are: *Ubi illius inspiratio et unctio illius non est, forinsecus inaniter perstrepunt verba.*
- <sup>18</sup> R. Barclay, *Apology*, *ib.*, referring to Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* I.vii = Migne, PG VIII, 733-4.
- <sup>19</sup> Tertullian, *Liber de Virginibus Velandis* = Migne, PL II, 889-90.
- <sup>20</sup> Jerome to Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, Ep. LIII.4 = Migne, PL XXII, 543. The *Apology* wrongly cites Ep. CIII. In *Barclay's Apology in Modern English*, 1967, 19 n. 5, Dean Freiday mistakenly describes this letter as a 'commentary on the Epistles of Paul'.
- <sup>21</sup> *Ib.*, = Migne, PL XXII, 544.
- <sup>22</sup> Horace, Ep. II.117: *Scribimus indocti doctique poemata passim.*
- <sup>23</sup> Jerome, Ep. LIII.7 = Migne, PL XXII, 544.
- <sup>24</sup> Jerome, Ep. CXX, question 10 (though in the *Apology* Ep. CL, question 11 is wrongly given).
- <sup>25</sup> R. Barclay, *Apology*, 14, quoting Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* XXXI = Migne, PG XXV. 149-50.

- <sup>26</sup> Gregory the Great, *XL Homiliarum in Evangelia*, Hom. XXX on John 14: 23-31 = Migne, PL LXXVI, 1222.
- <sup>27</sup> Cyril of Alexandria, *Thesaurus de Sancta et Consubstantiate Trinitate* = Migne, PL LXXV, 206ff.
- <sup>28</sup> A fact of which I am reminded by Dr. Geoffrey F. Nuttall.
- <sup>29</sup> R. Barclay, *Apology*, 38. The correct reference is Eusebius, *Eccles.Hist.*, V.24 = Migne, PG XX, 507.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ib.*, 56. The correct reference is Jerome, Ep. LXXI,5 to Lucinius = Migne PL XXII,671. Jerome here refers to the transcribers of his own writings, explaining that although he had ordered corrections to be made, he had been so occupied with passing pilgrims that some errors had no doubt gone uncorrected.
- <sup>31</sup> Jerome to Lucinius, Ep. LXXI,6 = Migne, PL XXII,672. Cf. Augustine to Jerome, Migne, PL XXXIII,281.14, from which Barclay next quotes a different point.
- <sup>32</sup> R. Barclay, *Apology*, 57, quoting Augustine's letter to Jerome, Migne, XXXIII, 277.3.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ib.*, 59. The correct reference is Jerome's letter to Cyprian, Ep. CXL.1 = Migne, PL XXII,1166.
- <sup>34</sup> *Ib.*, 46.
- <sup>35</sup> For John Brown (1610? – 1679) see *DNB*.
- <sup>36</sup> J. Brown, *Quakerisme the Path-Way to Paganisme...an examination of the Theses and Apologie of R. Barclay, etc.*, (1678), 21.
- <sup>37</sup> *Ib.*, 23.
- <sup>38</sup> R. Barclay, *Apology*, 78.
- <sup>39</sup> J. Brown, *Quakerisme*, 145.
- <sup>40</sup> *Ib.*, 145-6. For John Owen and Richard Baxter on this point see Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *Visible Saints. The Congregational Way 1640-1660*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1957), 59 and n. 2.
- <sup>41</sup> R. Barclay, *Apology*, 88.
- <sup>42</sup> *Ib.*
- <sup>43</sup> Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, XCV,5. The reason for the telescoping is that Grotius copied incorrectly from Vossius, Keith made the best sense he could of the mangled Latin, and passed the result to Barclay. See A. Gordon, 'The Marrow of Barclay', 403 n.3.
- <sup>44</sup> J. Brown, *Quakerisme*, 211.
- <sup>45</sup> Augustine, *De Trinitate* XIII,15 = Migne, PL XLII,1029.
- <sup>46</sup> R. Barclay, *Apology*, 88.
- <sup>47</sup> J. Brown, *Quakerisme*, 211.
- <sup>48</sup> Prosper of Aquitaine, *Pro Augustino Responsiones ad Capitula Gallorum*, IX = Migne PL LI,165-6.
- <sup>49</sup> R. Barclay, *Apology*, 88.
- <sup>50</sup> Prosper of Aquitaine, *Pro Augustino Responsiones ad Capitula Objectionum Vincentianarum*, I = Migne, PL LI,177-9.
- <sup>51</sup> *Id.*, *De Vocatione Omnium Gentium*, II.16 = Migne, PL LI,702.
- <sup>52</sup> R. Barclay, *Apology*, 88-9, citing John Chrysostom, *Homiliae LXXXVIII in Joannem*, Hom. VIII on John 1:9 = Migne, PL LIX,641. Ambrose, *Expositione psalmum CXVIII, Sermon VIII* = Migne, PL XV,1318.57, and *id.*, *De Cain et Abel*, Lib. II, III,II = Migne, PL XIV,346.
- <sup>53</sup> R. Barclay, *Apology*, 93.
- <sup>54</sup> G. Keith, *The Standard*, 230.
- <sup>55</sup> R. Barclay, *Apology*, 96-7, 100.

- <sup>56</sup> *Ib.*, 102; cf. 351. This is the most interesting *philosophical* contention in the whole of the *Apology*. Barclay's denigration of reason in the cause of his light, and his differentiation of the latter from the former, placed him at odds with his Cambridge Platonist critic, John Norris, who found Barclay's *Vehiculum Dei* 'gross' and 'material', given that, in his own opinion, there is 'no medium between God and the creature'. (See his *Two Treatises Concerning the Divine Light*, 1692, the second of which is addressed to Barclay). The pressing of the Platonist way of asserting the matter/spirit dualism cannot but threaten a doctrine of Incarnation; but that doctrine is likewise threatened by Barclay's view – if the seed is utterly apart from conscience and reason. (Cf. Brand Blanshard in the chapter cited at n. 3 above; and for a contemporary Quaker advocate of dualism see D. Elton Trueblood, *art.cit.* n. 3 above.) As to the degree of affinity between the Cambridge Platonists and the Quakers, Geoffrey F. Nuttall has written, 'In actual fact there is...an utter difference of spiritual climate between the rationalist Cambridge men's *logos* theology and the theology of the Holy Spirit which the untutored Quakers worked out in their own experience'. (See Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, 1946, 18.) On the other hand, Melvin B. Endy, Jr. thinks that 'Even Nuttall was misled here', because 'The Spiritualists' conviction that the inward Christ provided them with a direct knowledge of divine realities was similar in certain ways to the rationalists' conviction that the structure of the human mind was congruent with, if not a replica of, the structure of the divine mind, and both epistemological principles were used to put forward the belief that true knowledge of God was universal'. (See his 'The interpretation of Quakerism: Rufus Jones and his critics', *Quaker History*, LXX, Spring 1981, 20.) To us it appears that Mr Endy is misled in not distinguishing the psychological-charismatic import of the position he is attacking from his own epistemological concerns. However the matters here broached are finally to be resolved, there is *prima facie* evidence that when Quakers have misconstrued Barclay's 'light' as 'natural light', and when Platonists have contented themselves with immaterialism, fundamentals of the Christian Gospel have been at risk.
- <sup>57</sup> *Ib.*, 115.
- <sup>58</sup> *Ib.*, 120-22. The readily identifiable quotations are to be found in Clement of Alexandria, *Stomateis*, II.6 = Migne, PG VIII,961-2; *id.*, *Cohortatio ad Gentes* XI = Migne, PG VIII,227-38; *id.*, *Paedagogus* 1.3 = Migne, PG VIII,257-8.
- <sup>59</sup> R. Barclay, *Apology*, 134-7, citing Lactantius, *Divinarum Institutionum* VI.8 = Migne, PL IV,660-1; Justin, *1 Apology*, LXI; Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* XVIII,47 = Migne, PL XLI,609; *id.*, *Confessionum* XI (wrongly given as II) 9 = Migne, PL XXXII,813-4.
- <sup>60</sup> *Ib.*, 135.
- <sup>61</sup> Cf. Maurice Wiles, *The Christian Fathers*, (1966), 27.
- <sup>62</sup> G. Keith, *The Standard*, 240-8, 276-7. For the 'historic act' see further Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, 159, and the cited reference to H.G. Wood, 'William Penn's Christian Quaker', in H.H. Brinton (ed.), *Children of Light*, (New York, 1938), 23.
- <sup>63</sup> *Ib.* 346.
- <sup>64</sup> *Ib.*
- <sup>65</sup> Alastair Heron, *Speaking to Our Condition: A Ministry of Friends*, Canadian Quaker Pamphlets, 30, (Argenta, BC: Argenta Friends Press, 1989), 5.
- <sup>66</sup> We have quoted him on the Trinity; for the Atonement see *Apology*, 143-4, 159.
- <sup>67</sup> Henry More, *Divine Dialogues*, (2nd edn., 1713), 565.

- <sup>68</sup> E.g. Edward Grubb, *The Historic and the Inward Christ*, (1914) 51; Maurice A. Creasey, 'Comment' on F.B. Hall's paper (see n. 3 above), 34-5; P. Wragge, op.cit., 43, 46; D. Elton Trueblood, *Robert Barclay*, 127; M.A. Creasey, review of L. Eeg-Olofsson, op.cit., in *Journal of Theological Studies* N.S. V, (1954), 288; H.G. Wood, review of same, *Theology* LVII (1954), 351.,
- <sup>69</sup> D. Elton Trueblood, 'Comment' on F.B. Hall's paper (see n. 3 above), 40-41.
- <sup>70</sup> Francis. B. Hall, *ib.*, 19.
- <sup>71</sup> A. Gordon, 'The Great Laird of Urie', *The Theological Review* XI, (1874), 545-6.



## SEEKING GOD'S WILL: A MONTHLY MEETING AT WORK IN 1804

**Y**ou may remember Dr. Johnson's opinion of Quakers – that they did not deserve the name of Christians being little better than Deists and upstart sectaries. To which the well-read and confident Mary Knowles replied that Quakers believed 'what is called the Apostles' Creed with these 2 exceptions only – our Saviour's descent into Hell and the resurrection of the body'. These mysteries she said, 'we humbly leave just as they stand in the holy text' – whatever that was. Now that would start a lively correspondence in *The Friend*.

An account of this exchange was printed in June 1791 when Quakers were becoming unpopular and were soon to be much more so. They were by 1800 blamed for the radicalism of Thomas Paine, for failing to support their country in the war against France, and for hoarding corn in order to increase their wealth. Many magazines denounced their lack of patriotism.

Ministers and Elders were alarmed. Unlike Mary Knowles they knew that Deism had indeed infected Quakerism. Had not the London Yearly Meeting epistles for 1739 and 1740 warned Friends to be very careful to prevent their children and servants from reading 'vile books' which rejected 'the divine authority of Holy Scripture in favour of Deism, atheism, and all manner of infidelity'? Subsequently a 'large northern Quarterly Meeting' specified the works of Woolston by name, and directed that they be collected and burnt.

Accordingly Ministers and Elders had set about establishing a better discipline and since 1786 had met as a separate and select body. By the turn of the century, marshalled by the redoubtable Joseph Gurney Bevan, they did their best to institute a Quaker orthodoxy. Henry Tuke's *The Faith of the People called Quakers in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ set forth in various extracts from their writings* appeared in 1801, and a second edition was printed the same year. In 1805 the same writer was responsible for *The Principles of Religion, as professed by the Society of Christians, usually called Quakers, written for the instruction of their Youth and for the information of Strangers*. By 1852 this had gone into 12 editions, and was also translated into French and German. In this way it was hoped to stem the dangerous free thought undermining the Christian basis of the Society.

It was too late; the damage, if damage it was, was already done. Abraham Shackleton in Leinster and John Hancock in Ulster had brought matters to a head, and in 1798 Ireland Yearly Meeting appointed a committee to investigate the Quaker tendency to schism. A year later it recommended the disownment of those out of unity with Friends' beliefs, and by 1801 that policy was being vigorously implemented. Thomas Greer was not exaggerating when he declared that these events were 'of such magnitude as to threaten the downfall of Quakerism in Ireland'. Although the parallel events in England did not merit so apocalyptic a description, the Hannah Barnard affair revealed equally profound differences.

Needless to say, there had always been Quaker rebels, those like Henry Finch, Henry Portsmouth, and William Matthews. They learned with dismay that great numbers of Irish Friends were being disowned, and that in London Hannah Barnard was being rudely harassed by J.G. Bevan. Surely something ought to be done. Thomas Foster, Robert Ransome, William Matthews, John Hancock, and William Rathbone exchanged letters. Eventually they decided to publish to the world the facts of the Irish Separation and, with some difficulty, persuaded a reluctant William Rathbone to edit them.

This highly successful Liverpool business man was the IVth of a famous line of William Rathbones. The sixth of them can be seen today as a statue on the river side of St George's Hall gazing out confidently as though welcoming the challenge of the future. His grandfather, our man, a courageous advocate of unpopular causes, the French Revolution and anti-slavery among them, had lived in a beautiful house, Greenbank on the outskirts of the city, and had pursued a lively intellectual life along with a number of mainly unitarian friends. His reading and discussions had made him dissatisfied with orthodox Christianity. We are concerned with his conduct in 1804, but he was openly expressing his religious doubts as early as 1793. In that year his sister Sarah Benson discussed with Job Scott of America her 'travail of spirit' on William's account when Job stayed in Liverpool on the way to Ballitore where he died ten weeks later (November 1793). A long letter which Job sent to William urging him not to put 'human reason in place of the Heavenly Light' will be found in the University of Liverpool's special collection.

William IV's father, William Rathbone III, for many years a Minister and Elder, had been widely respected as a Quaker of the old school. As long as he was alive the fourth William seems to have dutifully followed his example, but after his death in 1789, the son's Quakerism was apparently expressed mainly in his attendance at Meeting for Worship.

What, we may wonder, did he gain from it? Did he ever minister? After all, his well-known Manchester contemporary John Dalton was never known either to speak in Meeting for worship or even to mention religion in his private conversation. There is no knowing.

With the publication of *A Narrative, of Events that have lately taken place in Ireland*, however, William Rathbone challenged the Quaker hierarchy and did so in a very public way. In addition to querying the literal truth of the Bible, he complained that Elders were too powerful and that the American visitor David Sands was causing division. Yet he was quite unrepentant and continued to attend worship as usual. What should Friends do? Pretending everything was normal was scarcely possible. While a colourless 'good morning' or even 'Good morning, William' might serve before worship, such formulae seemed insufficient for the conversation in the lobby before going home. Perhaps some risked 'Nice day', or 'And how is thy family?' but neither were exactly inspirations for breaking tension. Somebody ought to do something. Overseers?.....Elders, perhaps?.....

Then on 24 June 1804 at the conclusion of a Preparative Meeting some Liverpool overseers spoke to him. Failing to persuade him that his book was a mistake, they met him again in similar circumstances seven weeks later and told him that they had reported the matter to Monthly Meeting which would now deal with it. So Hardshaw Monthly Meeting began its consideration of the 'Rathbone case' on 23 August 1804. It made its final minute on the affair six months later on 5 February 1805.

Typically as soon as it was over William Rathbone published his own account of it in his *Memoir of the Proceedings of the Society called Quakers belonging to the Monthly Meeting of Hardshaw in Lancashire in the case of the Author of a Narrative etc.* Though rare it is still to be found and is valuable because it gives in full the various written submissions Rathbone sent to the Meeting. But there is also, it transpires, another and more detailed account of the whole business. For after each of the Monthly Meetings one of Rathbone's friends sent him an account of what had been said, and William, methodical man that he was, filed these accounts away in his papers along with much other fascinating Quaker material. They form a small part of the Rathbone Collection in the University of Liverpool.

These accounts of Monthly Meeting, which claim to be 'uninfluenced by either partiality or prejudice', are prefaced by the admission that they are the result of 'imperfect recollection'. It is clear from the manuscript alterations and additions, however, that they were checked by a number of Friends, a fact which makes more likely their reliability; it is a guard

against the warning in Mark Twain's remark that the older he got, the more vivid became his memory of those things that never happened. They are the source of the rest of this account.

So on 23 August 1804 some 50 Friends (perhaps more) met at Hardshaw Monthly Meeting to begin their consideration of the Rathbone case, five months after the offending book had appeared. They were all men since in those deplorably unregenerate days women Friends still met separately for business. Acting as Clerk was Robert Barnard of Manchester. Aged 43 he was an experienced Friend who had in 1803 been Clerk of London Yearly Meeting so that he must have had close connection with many of the leading Quakers of the time. He could read Greek and know William Rathbone well since both were active members of Manchester's Literary and Philosophical Society where he had come to disapprove strongly of Rathbone's religious opinions. His assistant was Nicholas Waterhouse, a wealthy Liverpool cotton-broker.

On this first occasion the case was dealt with briefly and late in the agenda. Samuel Blain, a Liverpool overseer, reported that a book had been published by a member, William Rathbone, which tended 'to lower the Society in the eyes of the world'; he had refused when visited to 'confess error'; 'we therefore thought it best to lay the matter before the meeting'. This clear statement produced a variety of reactions: to show charity to the author; to take no notice of the book; and 'to bestow more labour before going further'. Although the Clerk voiced his disagreement with this last idea ('it does not seem to me that any good will be answered'), it was strongly supported so that he minuted that a committee of three was to visit Rathbone and report back. The American visitor Jesse Kersey was prominent in the discussion, pointing out that in his native land books were not published unless sanctioned by higher authority. Then, prompted by the barely controlled indignation of Samuel Blain and his ally Warrington elder John Bludwick, he urged Friends to keep 'their minds free from anything like warmth'. 'Already', he said,

has one anonymous reply appeared written in a very illiberal manner, containing harsh and invidious suppositions as to the motives and views of William Rathbone. This is certainly improper.

No trace of the anonymous reply has survived.

The three Friends deputed to visit William Rathbone were James Cropper, his friend and one-time business colleague, Joseph Atkinson, a much-respected Manchester Quaker, and the steady John Field,

possibly related to the John Field of London whose many books are listed in Smith. They were received with courtesy and told William Rathbone of Monthly Meeting's concern. After discussion, their host left them alone for a while to compile their report. On his return he asked them for their findings and they briefly indicated them. Rathbone was afraid that he had not been correctly understood and further exchanges followed, until it was agreed that he would send the Meeting a written statement to accompany their report. So when at the start of Monthly Meeting on 25 October 1804 Joseph Atkinson handed the Clerk the committee's findings, he also gave in a letter from William Rathbone.

The Meeting proved long and difficult, a demonstration of the great risks Friends take in conducting their business discussions as they do. It started disastrously. For David Sands, the American who had with courage and success taken Quakerism into Maine and then crossed to the Old World, ministered at length in the opening period of worship. Far from drawing Friends together as they tried under guidance to find a common mind, he chose for theme the extreme political and religious conservatism that was a main source of the difficulties of Rathbone and his supporters. He compared the

former good times when men feared God and honoured the King with the present degenerate state of politics in the Society when so many of its members were dissatisfied with the Government under which their lot was cast. But when these disorders appeared he recommended a vigorous attention on the part of Friends to use the sword as if it grew out of the wrist like fingers, adding from the Holy Scriptures 'cursed is he that spareth blood' (meant only in a spiritual sense).....

There was much more in the same vein.

When the Meeting eventually turned its attention to the committee's report, it fell at once into lively disagreement not about what it said but about their right to see it before William Rathbone. Why was he shown a private communication to others? What possible justification could there be for such a breach of confidence? There were heated exchanges between James Cropper and John Bludwick, the latter finally apologising 'for the warmth he had been led into.....Now as he got older he was apt to be nervous and had not that command over his temper he once had'. On hearing this brave admission John Taylor, loyal friend and travelling companion of David Sands, declared that there was no need for apology: 'John Bludwick has the good old cause at heart'.

At this point the Clerk said that Friends had not yet decided whether

or not William Rathbone's letter should be read – there were ten pages of it.

It would have been better if William Rathbone had come to the meeting. It would have done away with the need for this discussion.

Here, says the account,

was a long, low conversation upon whether or not the letter should be read.

It then lists those in favour of having it read, those against, and those undecided. Finally it was agreed that it should be heard in full.

As soon as the reading was completed, David Sands rose to condemn the letter's

smooth, plausible language...I see with concern that it has produced a strong impression on the meeting.

And he complained of the treatment he had received in *A Narrative*. But Friends now became restive, several expressing disapproval, until one, William Leicester, announced in strong terms that David Sands ought to be silent. Others agreed, and after brief exchanges it was made clear that he should keep silent.

By now, apart from having heard William Rathbone's letter, the meeting was no further forward. There had been much speaking, some of it ill-tempered, none of it about William Rathbone and his book. Was there any way of bringing Friends to consider the matter before them? The Clerk tried once more. Perhaps, he said,

the proper way is to appoint a number of Friends to examine the book and point out anything objectionable.

It was a simple, even obvious idea, and it had the merit that if acted on, it would allow Friends to get home in reasonable time. It brought Joseph Atkinson to his feet again. In addition, to presenting the Committee's report he has several times urged Friends not to hurry their deliberations, and it was he who now firmly set the Meeting on its right course. Indeed, in the end it was this quiet, public-spirited Manchester hat-manufacturer who, more than anyone, saw to it that Friends kept at their task until it was completed.

He now pointed out that the Clerk's idea was the right one, and should have been adopted at the outset. The business of whether or not

*A Narrative* should have been submitted to higher authority (the issue with which the committee had been largely concerned) was really an irrelevance: he was as much to blame as anyone for the time spent on this. It was clear that 'the best way to get right was to tread back the old steps and begin afresh'. It was perhaps an unfortunate choice of words, and the sorely tried Clerk, who had not seen the position as clearly as Joseph Atkinson, momentarily abandoned his detachment to exclaim,

Begin afresh! Why, I think we are exactly in that situation we should be. The book is acknowledged by its author: he says were it to do over again, he should do it. A great deal of labour has been bestowed without producing any good effect, nor is it likely any extension of this labour would be attended with success, for I well know William Rathbone's opinion on such subjects, and I do not know that we could wish for more.

Nevertheless Friends came slowly to adopt the new idea.

There were, it is true, irrelevances and uneasy moments – 'Samuel Blain rose evidently violently agitated in defence of Liverpool overseers', James Cropper became 'rather warmed', and Roger Merrick, a man it seems of few words, told the persistent John Bludwick, 'Yes, thou hast often told us so, but the meeting is not of the same opinion'. These passages at arms inevitably prolonged the discussion but Friends firmly agreed to ask some of their number to examine the book and report back.

The meeting ended with a warning, this time from the Clerk:

I hope no Friend now present will attempt to give a sketch of the speeches and sentiments expressed about this business for after so much has been said it is impossible to do it with any degree of correctness.

Before the start of the next Monthly Meeting on 22 November the Committee had 'laid their report on the table'. The formalities over, the Assistant Clerk read it through twice. Its findings were uncompromisingly clear:

- i) William Rathbone approved the unorthodox views of the separatists, particularly in undervaluing the Bible;
- ii) he had selected unrepresentative passages in Barclay and Penington to support his own views;
- iii) he had given the impression that Quaker discipline was persecution; and
- iv) he did not hold the Quaker view of 'immediate revelation', but generally 'threw down' the rules necessary and common in all well-regulated religious communities.

These damning conclusions meant that William Rathbone had lost his case. The eight Friends who had examined the book, though they had not for some reason included his friend James Cropper, were of differing outlooks; that they should have brought in such charges left little room for further discussion.

The Monthly Meeting seemed at first taken aback by the temerity of its own committee. There was, of course, no shortage of speakers; in that respect it was a typical Quaker business meeting. Its early exchanges were prompted by James Cropper's concern that Friends should understand and be fair to William Rathbone. As a result tensions revealed earlier, now re-appeared. Samuel Blain put clearly the dilemma known to all of us:

It appears that there are two opposite opinions entertained by the Friends now present. I hope they will give each other credit for the sincerity of their intentions, and I think the majority should decide the question.

By this time it was clear that most Friends endorsed their committee's findings (by no means always the Quaker way).

Then without warning an unexpected intensity took hold of Friends. The Clerk mildly observed that William Rathbone had obtained the material for *A Narrative* 'with great secrecy', the implication being that this involved a breach of confidence – 'we all know that every society has some secrets of its own'. At these words William Haselden, a Liverpool shipbuilder, rose excitedly, saying:

Secrets! Friends! I do not understand what these secrets can be. What! are we assembled as a papish enclave (*sic*) under a Vatican? Are we acting in a way we are ashamed of anyone knowing? If we are doing right what need have we to fear who sees our proceedings? The more they are examined if they are just, the more honour they will confer on us. Truth appears more beautiful from a nice examination. And while I am up I will just say, notwithstanding almost every Friend in the Meeting disapproves of this publication, that I believe that the writer was actuated by motives as pure, and had the cause of truth as much at heart, as any man in this Meeting. It was an act of justice and I return him my hearty thanks for having brought forward the subject in the manner he has.

Assuming that the words are a fair indication of what William Haselden said, and of the speech rhythms he used, it seems that he was moved to utterance in spite of himself. He plainly felt that William Rathbone was not receiving a sympathetic hearing – he may have admired him as a business colleague and fellow-Quaker, or he may have shared his views. Whatever the explanation, the use of the word 'secrets' had been



enough to release his pent-up feelings. The meeting had been taken to a deeper level. It remained there.

For William Haselden's words worked powerfully in John Bludwick, the Friend most angered by *A Narrative*. He spoke again now, with great bluntness and out of his pain and outrage that any member of the Society he loved could, by disloyalty, so undermine it. Friends must know, he asserted,

that this book is of great public notoriety; it has been very industriously circulated up and down this kingdom and Ireland not only amongst the Society but amongst others of different religious professions. Can any man possessing common sense peruse this book, see the manner in which it exposes the Society and holds it up to the world, consider this a common case? I confess I cannot keep myself cool when I consider it. I am astonished that William Rathbone did not leave the Society before he published such a work as this. It is impossible he can consider himself as one of the Society after expressing such sentiments.

He cannot be one of the Society who holds opinions like these. They completely undermine the very groundwork of our original profession, they sap the very root of every religious society as well as ours. Oh! It is a grievous thing. Friends! What must the world think of our Society if a member of it published sentiments like these? I really think the Committee have given a report such as every candid mind would expect who has perused this book. I do not see how they could consistently have done otherwise.

Here John Bludwick paused and sat down. But he had not unburdened himself of all he had to say, and after sitting through exchanges mainly to do with the need to visit William Rathbone and inform him of the committee's report, he rose again in

great concern that William Rathbone should have suffered himself to have been twisted and worked upon in the manner he has by these people who have been disowned (ie. the Irish rebels). I regret it the more when I bring before my mind the character of his father, for so long a respectable member of our Society. For many years I was in the habit of considering him as a pillar of this Monthly Meeting. I looked up to him as a Father and I well recollect when I was first appointed Clerk to this Monthly Meeting his sitting by my side and assisting me, and it is a grievous thing, Friends, that a man with an understanding like that the son seems to possess should have ushered into the world a work like the present. But such is my regard for his Father that if William Rathbone could bring his mind to come openly forward and condemn the book, being convinced of his error, I should feel disposed to advise the Meeting to drop the business here, but I think we cannot expect anything of this kind from the deliberate manner in which this work has been published.

Even 200 years later these are deeply felt words. They may perhaps stand as a justification of the Quaker method of encouraging all members, young and old, lettered and unlettered, to take part in the

making of decisions. Something of the sort needed saying and John Bludwick was the man to say it. He was 64 at this time, had given a lifetime of service to Friends, and along with his Elizabeth was still a regular attender at Yearly Meeting. Underlying all the arguments was one simple fact: what Friends were struggling with was a denial of ways hallowed by their forefathers. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the disagreement it was painful for all of them. To the sensitive and thoughtful, calling in doubt the wisdom of our ancestors (Edward Burke's expression) always is.

The meeting now drew to a close, though persuading Friends to make up the committee to see William Rathbone proved very difficult. The Clerk advised anyone 'weak or mean enough to report at second hand' things said in the meeting to

take care to inform William Rathbone that the objections which individuals have made to being on the present committee do not arise from any fear of him, but the respect we bear him as an individual, and it arises also from the delicacy that is felt in having a conference with him on a subject in which we differ so widely from him. I know that somebody communicates to him the speeches which are here delivered.

'I hope', said William Haselden, 'thou dost not allude to me'. 'No', said the Clerk, 'I do not mean to particularize anyone, but I know someone does it, and if thou art conscious.....' William Haselden interrupted: 'I can tell thee, Robert Barnard, I came here for no such purpose'.

It remained only to make a minute appreciative of the service of David Sands and for that worthy to minister and pray in his customary style. Friends had sat for 2¾ hours.

The Friends appointed to tell William Rathbone of Monthly Meeting's judgment met him at his Queen Anne Street office on 19 and 20 December 1804. He has left his own account of their conferences and sad reading it makes, witnessing to the antipathy between him and Robert Barnard and to his own determination to admit no fault on his side. Twice he charged the group in one particular with 'mean, dishonest and contemptible conduct'; then he became loftily magisterial, the Grand Inquisitor asking all the questions and sweeping aside any answers not to his liking. At one point he launched into a declamation, preferring the Separatists to the cold and lifeless disciplinarians as much as day to night and light to darkness – there is no point in quoting more of the exchanges. To their credit the five Friends remained quietly in control of themselves, and made a few shrewd remarks of their own. Later James Cropper said he did not think William Rathbone

'justifiable' in the language he had used, and William Rathbone admitted that he had been 'intemperately and culpably warm'.

From now on the affair moved steadily to its inevitable conclusion. William Rathbone, undismayed and still absenting himself from Monthly Meeting, wrote the Clerk a long screed defending himself against each of the eight charges he considered the committee to have made against him. It lay on the table at the start of the Meeting of 24 January 1805. No doubt, said Robert Barnard, the 'parcel of some bulk' related to the business before Monthly Meeting: should it be read in the Meeting or should a group of Friends retire, study it, and report? After a long, inconclusive discussion, John Thorp, a recorded Manchester Minister then just rising 60 (see the entry in Smith, Vol. 2 p. 742), said to the Assistant Clerk 'in a low voice' 'Nicholas Waterhouse, read it'.

So Nicholas read the first half, the Clerk the rest. This took some 20 minutes. At the end of it, the Meeting 'fell silent for 15 minutes'.

The Clerk then said that William Rathbone's submission no way altered anything: he was obviously 'not one of us'. But as before, the Monthly Meeting refused to be rushed, and predictably Joseph Atkinson urged Friends to take their time. A long debate broke out as to whether it was better to defer continuation until next month or to adjourn and resume later that day. Again there was 'a noisy discussion'. On the whole adjournment recommended itself. Still no agreement, until John Field remarked that their exchanges looked like taking as long as the proposed adjournment: why not 1½ hours? So 1½ it was.

The re-assembled Meeting was extraordinarily thorough. It heard read the whole of the proceedings since last August, six months ago, and then for the second time that day the whole of William Rathbone's latest submission. Then each of the eight charges was taken separately, re-read and discussed. Of course many of the arguments already used were repeated and Friends maintained the positions they had adopted at the outset. But there was dignity in the measured pace, and although the Clerk and others wanted to move things on, they were firmly restrained, as point by point the Meeting upheld each of its eight charges. It remained merely to appoint Friends to draw up a formal disownment.

Alas, just as it seemed the marathon proceedings were over a final problem presented itself. No one was willing to serve. John Bludwick suggested a period of silence, but Friends went on talking. The harassed Clerk at last lost his cool.

I think we have now spoiled all – [he burst out]. We have gone on regularly till now and when we are just come to conclusion we show ourselves weak – I take a share of the blame myself. but the Meeting knows my reason. I have been particularly pointed at and marked out as being active in the business. I am unconscious of having the least personality towards William Rathbone. I may as well be open with you Liverpool Friends and say you are cowards. It happens that William Rathbone is a great man and you are his neighbours and therefore you wish to be excused.

Isaac Hadwen, Liverpool silversmith, said at once

I do hope if such language as this is warranted by anyone's conduct he may be privately dealt with and not be attacked in this public manner.

Samuel Blain concurred, while John Goodier trusted that all felt brotherly love towards the erring William. Decorum thus re-established, three Friends were appointed to draw up a testimony of disownment – Samuel Blain, John Bradshaw and Joseph Atkinson. On 28 February in Manchester it was duly endorsed, a copy to be given to William Rathbone. It was also to be read out in Liverpool Meeting. The long business had ended.

At this point I find myself in difficulty. For on an occasion such as this you will properly expect some illuminating comments on these distant happenings. It is the historian's privilege to establish cause and effect, motive and achievement. We see so much more clearly and are so much wiser than our predecessors that we can pass confident judgment on them. Alas, I am no historian. I shall have to content myself with a few cautious observations.

First, we may agree, I think, that Hardshaw Monthly Meeting did pretty well. Compared with Liverpool Methodists ten years earlier Liverpool Friends were models of civility. For Methodist factions were so hostile that Superintendent Moore dug a hole in his garden and buried the Kilhamite pamphlets of Mr Isaac Wolfe. In reply Mr Wolfe's supporters nailed the preacher (Kilham himself) into the Mount Pleasant pulpit to prevent his forcible ejection, whereupon Superintendent Moore sent a servant to clear the chapel. There were similar if less violent diversions in Manchester and Leeds, and they did the Methodists little good.

Not that disowning a prominent and highly respected citizen did the peaceable Quakers any good either. Towards the end of 1804 they found themselves derided in an anonymous lampoon whose 24 verses are given in full in 'A Record'. *The First chapter of the Book of William the Scribe*

1. In the days of Napoleon the Emperor, when George III was King, a

man of the tribe of Levi whose name was William lived in an island of the Sea.

2. And behold this man.. wrote a book and got it printed.

3. And this book, behold it contained an account of the Children of Israel in the land of Erin.....

6. Then certain of the Israelites were exceedingly troubled.....

7. And they sought to turn him out of the Synagogue.

8. And he greeted them with an epistle.....

Ridicule is a great enemy of religion, though less damaging than apathy.

For William Rathbone there can be both sympathy and criticism. There must today be many Friends like him – questioning and individualistic. If we disowned them all how many members of the Society would be left? And in his case his many virtues pleaded for him trumpet-tongued. Yet at the same time he was an awkward customer. Like most modern Friends he had to test everything by his own understanding, and was either unaware of or indifferent to the pain he inflicted on others. And why did he choose to bombard Monthly Meeting with written words instead of attending it? If any of my hearers wish to judge him, they are unlikely to do so more devastatingly than did his friend William Roscoe, the pre-Ruskin enthusiast for Italian Renaissance Art. He (and no doubt other members of Liverpool's Unitarian circle) deplored the whole business of formal Monthly Meeting proceedings, arguing that once *A Narrative* had appeared it should be allowed to speak for itself.

If you quit the Society, let your conduct be marked by that generosity which has distinguished every action of your life.

You fight with unequal weapons and on different ground, and can never meet in fair contest. Consider my dear friend whether the fault you condemn in others may not attach to yourself; whether a society may not be persecuted by an individual as well as an individual by a society.

It was advice he would have done well to hear. [University of Liverpool, Rathbone Papers, II, i, 146.] Perhaps it was not in his nature to do so. He failed, for example, to learn from John Hancock who had supplied information for *A Narrative*. When their interchange of letters began John Hancock had already challenged Quaker orthodoxy; William Rathbone had yet to do so. The fact did not prevent him from taking the role of senior partner. This much is clear even though his letters have not survived. John Hancock's are full of rueful reflections – that Irish separatists were too precipitate (Rathbone Papers, II, i, 91), that 'asperity and irritation' had been harmful, (103) that many were prey to

unrecognised motives, that pleas for a conference for a candid exchange of views had been declined, and that he was left feeling despondent (Rathbone Papers, all 126). It seems that William Rathbone lacked John Hancock's quietly reflective honesty, his willingness to see both strengths and weaknesses in this position.

All these Quaker excitements in Liverpool were, it hardly needs saying, only a footnote to the story of the struggle of British Christians with the Enlightenment which by the end of the eighteenth century had, in Basil Willey's words, given them 'immunity from disturbing contacts with the transcendental'. So I would like in conclusion to indicate briefly some lines of approach to this unresearched problem as it affected Friends.

The leader of conservative Quaker resistance to the New Lights was the redoubtable Joseph Gurney Bevan who devoted much of his wealth, learning, and Quaker tutelage to resisting the reformers. The Bevan-Naish collection in Woodbrooke is built around the pamphlets he assembled as part of his campaign. Some are carefully annotated, and there are in one of the volumes two original letters from his opponents John Hancock and Samuel Stephens. Hancock pleads reasonably for a replacement of 'intemperate zeal' by calm investigation of the differences between Friends – 'if the new ideas are of God they will stand'. Bevan marked the letter with numbers to denote points on which he wished to comment. There are 21 of them and the paper expounding his objections is still in the Woodbrooke volume.

It was a battleground that had long been fought over, well described in John Redwood's *Reason, Ridicule, and Religion. The Age of Enlightenment in England 1660-1750*. Because of their efforts to be 'separate from the world' Quakers had kept clear of the contest until with Hancock, Rathbone and others it caught them up. The extremes of the two sides are Joseph Priestley's championship of free enquiry ('should free inquiry lead to the destruction of Christianity itself, it ought not on that account to be discontinued') and the Rev. Edward Copleston's 'The scheme of Revelation is closed and we expect no light on earth to break in upon it. Oxford must guard that sacred citadel'. (It was Copleston who caused Shelley to be sent down from Oxford for his *Necessity of Atheism*.)

The two extremes did not trouble William Rathbone. He never doubted that he was bringing Christianity up to date. His opponents must have found infuriating his claim to the very christian truths which they accused him of abandoning. He claimed to regard as of primary importance the apostolic injunction – 'Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ'. Yet, as one of his submissions to Monthly Meeting

stated clearly he regarded only 11 or 12 psalms as canonical, did not accept the virgin birth of Jesus, and denied his miracles and resurrection.

Unfortunately there were at the time no Quaker thinkers of authority who might have helped Friends through their difficulties. The only man who might have done had died in 1793: Job Scott. Again here is an eighteenth-century Friend who needs researching. According to J. William Frost of Swarthmore College, none is in progress. Yet when Scott came to England for the final months of his life he had a formidable reputation. On what did it rest? Can his background be investigated? Anyway he gave William Rathbone's "Reason" short shrift, and it is difficult to understand the reformers' repeated claim that Job supported their views.

This battle of long ago is still unresolved. Is truth to be found in the unchanging Christian revelation for all times and places, or is that revelation to be modified by say post-Enlightenment Liberalism? Who in Thomas Mann's *Magic Mountain* wins the argument between Naphta and Settembrini? Faced with the choice most Friends, I suspect, do what William Rathbone IV did – make some long-established basic assumptions, discard what seems out-of-date, and then complete their beliefs with their own home-spun ideas. Dr Johnson's 95th *Rambler* (12 February 1751) indicates the dangers of doing this; and Daniel Rops' *Church in the 18th Century*, while saluting Quakers as 'most estimable and harmless of heretics', asserts them to be 'too lacking in doctrinal bases to enjoy permanent success' (pp. 160-161) – it is not clear how Father Rops defines success in this context.

Unfortunately for Rathbone by 1800 great changes were afoot. What we call the Romantic Movement was bringing fresh ideas. Wordsworth was replacing Thompson, and Turner's paintings were calling in question the sober findings of Reynolds' *Discourses* (already infuriating William Blake). There was, in short, a different way of perceiving reality: Locke's mirror was being replaced by Coleridge's lamp or, to put it another way, the dissecting and recording of Reason's findings gave way to the search for the creative image. It is a pity that Rathbone did not have Coleridge for a friend, for by the early years of the nineteenth century he was vigorously attacking Locke, and was soon to encounter Schleiermacher's thinking which saw the Bible not as God's ventriloquist (Basil Willey again, on its use by fundamentalists), but as a historical and artistic document of a particular kind. It was an approach that rendered the eighteenth-century debate irrelevant.

It is sometimes claimed that Quakerism is a good meeting-place for theists of any faith, that it is well able to accommodate itself to the

changing fashions of belief that test all religions. Perhaps it could be, but it can hardly sustain the claim at the moment. There are apparently some 17,000 of us. – just imagine, 17,000 hot lines to God! It must seem to dispassionate observers that we are a collection of individuals rather than a disciplined group. Like William Rathbone each of us tends to press his or her own individual conviction, regardless of the hurt this may be doing to others. So Quaker Agnostics, for example, are mistaken in the eyes of Quaker Christians, and vice-versa. Whether or not it is possible to hold together in one society, let us say, Christians, Agnostics, Rationalists and Buddhists, I do not know. True, we put up with each other's mistaken beliefs. I am not aware that we try to see the world from the other's point of view. That needs a great effort of imagination.

In a letter to *The Friend* dated 3 November 1989 David Murray-Rust, the best Swarthmore lecturer the Society never had, reported that he along with Frances his wife and Hugh Doncaster, represented non-aligned Friends at a Woodbrooke conference where Quaker evangelicals, the New Foundation Group and the Open Letter Movement exchanged views. There was, wrote David, 'much fellowship and also much non-listening. I was apprehensive that a serious rift in the Society might occur'. It has, it seems, so far been avoided. Perhaps it does not matter. One interpretation of Thomas Aquinas' sudden suspension of work at the end of his life on his *Summa Theologiae* is that it was revealed to him that even his magisterial tomes were no better than straw for the burning compared with God's love. If that applies to religious systems, it perhaps applies no less to our historical theorizings.

#### POSTSCRIPT

There was one curious postscript to the William Rathbone affair. In attendance at the last Monthly Meeting was a young man born in Kendal but recently married and settled for the time being at Ardwick near Manchester. He was 24 and his name was Isaac Crewdson. Thirty years later he was to cause another separation among Quakers by publishing *The Beacon*, so called because it claimed that the Bible beckoned to men as the great light of truth which would answer their needs: it was the literal word of God. In common with all present he heard William Rathbone's disownment read twice. It included these words:

“(William Rathbone) also appears not to have that belief in, or possess that reverend regard for the whole of the holy scriptures, which is due unto them: professing to believe, that with the genuine revelations, are blended not only many imperfections, but also some important errors.”



The young Isaac Crewdson was the first to speak after the second reading. 'I hope', he said,

the meeting will concur with me in thinking it best to leave out the whole of that paragraph relating to the Holy Scriptures".

Was he distressed to think of the impression it might make on other Christians? Or was he testing the feelings of Friends present? Whatever his motive, the meeting firmly refused to remove the words. This, the Clerk said, was no time 'to let the Bible fall to the ground'. His view was strongly supported. Was the Friend who objected satisfied? 'Yes', said Isaac Crewdson, 'I am satisfied'.

Even as the Rathbone affair came to an end, another separation was already in the making.

*Neville H Newhouse*

The above is taken from a tape prepared by Neville Newhouse and supplied by Irene Newhouse. It was played on 9 November 1991 following Neville Newhouse's death on 27 October 1991 during his tenure of the Presidency of the Friends Historical Society. Ed.

## JOHN DALTON: AN ACCOUNT OF HIS FUNERAL

**J**ohn Dalton was a lifelong Friend and a scientist of world renown. The conflict between society's perceptions of these two roles led to his having a funeral remarkable not only for its scale, but also for the behaviour of the mourners.

Born in Eaglesfield in Cumbria on 5 September 1766, he came from a Quaker farming family and his father had limited means with which to educate his children. Dalton went to a school kept locally by another Quaker, John Fletcher, at the Friends' Meeting House, Pardshaw. There he was educated until the age of twelve, at which time Fletcher retired. Dalton himself took over the teaching, at intervals assisting his father on the farm.

In 1781, at the age of fifteen, he moved to Kendal to teach in a Friends' School. Twelve years later, he procured the position of the Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy at the Manchester Academy. After the publication of the first part of his *New System of Chemical Philosophy*, in which he put forward his views relative to the Atomic Theory, or doctrine of Definite Proportions, or Chemical Equivalents, Dalton's scientific reputation had become established. In the following years he toured many of the large towns of England giving lectures.

In 1837 he had a 'severe attack of paralysis' (probably a stroke) which affected his speech and left him with only partial use of his left side. A few months later he had a second attack. From these he recovered well enough to be able to continue many of his everyday commitments. Then, three months before his death, he suffered a third attack which reduced his strength still further.

On the evening of 27 July 1844 he retired to bed after his usual supper of oatmeal porridge. The following morning his servant, who slept near him, spoke to him at about six o'clock, then left the room. Half an hour later he returned to find Dalton in a state of insensibility in which he remained until his death later that day.

Despite his commitment to Friends, his funeral was a very ceremonious affair. The first stage occurred on the Friday evening. Shortly after nine o'clock the coffin, which was constructed of highly polished, curled Spanish mahogany, with frosted brass handles and a brass plate, was placed in a hearse. (The outer coffin contained an inner coffin made of lead, upon which was soldered a copper plate which bore

a lengthy inscription praising his many achievements). It was drawn by four horses, preceded by two mutes and followed by a mourning coach. Dalton's remains had been removed from his lodgings to a large room in the Town Hall which had been converted to a funeral apartment for the occasion. The room was darkened, allowing in no daylight; instead the coffin was lit by two gas chandeliers and eight candles. The public were admitted to pay their respects between the hours of eleven and six on the Saturday. It was calculated that no fewer than 40,000 people passed through the room. It was described as

...what in other cases would be termed the "lying in state"  
...The term, however, would here be a little out of place; for every appearance of state was, with excellent taste, suppressed. Some immense funeral plumes were withdrawn; and the only objects that could for a moment withdraw the eye from the plain though beautiful mahogany coffin were the breast-plate which ... was placed on a pedestal at the foot of the platform, and a copy of the vote of thanks from the (Manchester) Literary and Philosophical Society.<sup>1</sup>

On the Friday the Mayor issued a placard ordering that the streets along which the funeral procession would parade should be freed from obstruction. He also intimated that as a mark of respect warehouses and shops should be closed from eleven to one o'clock on the Monday.

On the Monday morning, 12 August 1844, the procession started forming at ten o'clock. So many people took part that its head formed some three quarters of a mile from the Town Hall. At about 10.20 the hearse arrived at the Town Hall to collect the coffin. It was one of the funeral carriages peculiar to Manchester, sculptured in "applicable" allegorical subjects. It was drawn by six black horses with black velvet quarter cloths, led by two grooms in mourning attire.

The procession began to move at 11.5 a.m., with representatives from many local bodies and societies leading the hearse. Nearly 400 of the borough's police were on duty, lining the streets and keeping them free from obstruction. There was no attempt on the part of the dense crowds to force their way and they maintained quiet, orderly behaviour, and silent and respectful demeanour along the whole distance. So large a multitude had never been seen manifesting its presence and numbers with so few audible signs. The procession took 1¼ hours to travel 1½ miles to the cemetery gates. Along the way the bells of nearly every church it passed were tolling. The recommendation of the mayor was observed and warehouses, shops and other places of business along the route were closed, their windows being filled with women in mourning. The roofs of the houses, too, were occupied by observers; never before

had so general a wearing of mourning been seen in the community. The coffin was taken to the vault with four mutes and eight pall-bearers, as the registrar of the cemetery recited passages from the Bible. Then the coffin was lowered into the vault and the usual burial service was read, followed by a prayer pre-composed by the registrar himself. The funeral service was concluded with the usual benediction and most of the parties forming the procession then left after seeing the coffin in the vault. During the afternoon the public was freely admitted and throngs of people came to view the vault and coffin. At six o'clock in the evening a large stone was placed over the vault and the crowds quietly retired from the cemetery.

Apparently,

...various members of the Society of Friends ... expressed an interest to attend the funeral, and a place was assigned to them.<sup>2</sup>

Certainly they appear on the programme of the procession, as fixed by the committee of arrangement and in fact the 'active executor' was a member of the Society of Friends. Yet, for the actual procession, they are not reported as having been present.

...On reaching the cemetery, we found there nearly a hundred members of the Society of Friends, of both sexes, who, having a conscientious objection to forming a part of the procession, had gone direct to the cemetery from their respective residences.<sup>3</sup>

Directly following the report of his funeral in the *Manchester Guardian*, is a letter to the editor from a few members of the Religious Society of Friends, explaining their abstention from the procession, and expressing their disapproval. It was the first time a Friend had ever been "honoured" by a public funeral. Many Quakers felt it to be a day of real mourning for the occurrence of the sort of event which they were well known to have always had a testimony against.

...In thus recording our unqualified disapproval of the entire proceedings, we would not be misunderstood. We impute not motives: but as regards the "lying in state", we certainly cannot admire the judgement, neither do we envy the feelings, of those who could originate such an exhibition; and we have no sympathy with the taste of the forty thousand who afterwards joined in it. Doubtless many, very many, of those who attended the funeral, did design to give expression to their sincere regard for the estimable and disinterested character of the deceased. We are certain that they did; but we think that the mode of manifesting it was most inappropriately chosen. And we more than think, that such proceedings are entirely prohibited both by the letter and by the spirit of Christianity.<sup>4</sup>

Elsewhere it was questioned how it could happen that a Member of their Society should be thus interred. They felt that the fact that the mortal remains of a man who had been a member of the Society of Friends all his life could be consigned to the grave in such ostentatious pageantry was wrong. Whereas a general feeling against such a funeral was believed present amongst others than Friends, it would appear that once plans had been made people were unwilling to draw back. Friends of Manchester Meeting did make their views and wishes clear to the committee for arrangements, however these were forgotten or ignored.

And yet, from the removal of the funeral plumes from the lying in state, and the general quietness of manner of the procession, it is obvious that those not connected with the Society of Friends felt that the pageantry that could otherwise have been expected had been greatly restrained.

Thus one of the great men of English Science, a very shy, humble man, was given a funeral the like of which had never before been seen in Manchester. It is ironical that the man whose remains lay at the centre of so much attention, would have been so very upset and embarrassed by such ceremony.

*Anne Banks*

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> *The Manchester Guardian* Wednesday, August 14th 1844.

<sup>2</sup> *The Manchester Guardian* Saturday, August 10th 1844.

<sup>3</sup> *The Manchester Guardian* Wednesday, August 14th 1844.

<sup>4</sup> *The British Friend* 31 August 1844.

Also used in the writing of this report was:

*John Dalton: A Bibliography*, by A. L. Smyth, (Manchester U.P., 1966).

## BOOKS RECEIVED

*Quakers World Wide: A History of Friends World Committee for Consultation.*  
By Herbert M. Hadley, F.W.C.C. 1991, pp. xvi + 220 illus.

*Russian Poetry.* Translated by Natalia Uspenskaya, William Sessions Ltd.,  
York, 1991, pp. 32. £2.00.

### *Noted*

An article 'East London and Elizabeth Fry' in *East London Record*, No. 14,  
1991, pp. 21-28.

*Conscience Be My Guide: An Anthology of Prison Writings.* Edited by  
Geoffrey Bould, Zed Books Ltd., 1992. £9.95 + 95p. p&p. See review  
in *The Friend* 31 - i - 1992.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

*Some Rural Quakers: A History of Quakers and Quakerism at the Corners of the Four Shires of Oxford, Warwick, Worcester and Gloucester.* By Jack V. Wood. William Sessions Ltd., York, 1991. Pp. 154. £6.00 + £1.00 p&p.

This is a detailed local history not of a single meeting but of all the Quaker communities in the area now covered by Banbury and Evesham Monthly Meeting, which was created from parts of four separate monthly meetings in 1986. The book falls into two parts: the body of the text takes the form of a chronological account of Quaker witness in the area (from the origins of the local meetings in the 1650s, through the years of persecution up to 1689, the 'quiet years' from 1700 to about 1860, to the surge of evangelical mission work from the 1880s), while a substantial and very useful appendix provides notes on all meetings, past and present, in the area covered by the book and gives cross-references to local detail in the body of the text. The arrangement thus enables the reader to gain a broad picture of the history of Quakerism in the monthly meeting area or to home in on the history of any particular meeting. The book is arranged helpfully in other respects as well: anticipating a non-specialist (and, indeed, non-Quaker) audience, Jack Wood sets the local events into a national context and explains Quakerly terms in an introductory chapter. His sensitivity to the needs of his readers extends to issuing a warning that one chapter in particular contains meaty discussion of detailed evidence which might prove indigestible!

Notwithstanding his warning, that chapter (entitled 'The Evangelical Surge') is arguably the most important in the book. In it the author draws attention to an important, but often forgotten, aspect of English Quaker history, the growth of Adult Schools and Friends missions in the later nineteenth century and the resulting development of programmed meetings for worship. Quaker involvement in the Sunday School and temperance movements, coupled with the evangelical theology of leading members of London Yearly Meeting in the nineteenth century, led to an expansion of mission work, particularly in industrial working-class communities, from the 1880s. Jack Wood has performed a useful task by drawing together the evidence for such activities in his area. Mission meetings were established at Badsey, Banbury, Evesham, Littleton and Shipston. They declined after the First World War, but the programmed meetings, Sunday schools, Adult Schools and Bible classes which were the fruits of this mission work continued well into this century. The weekly fellowship meeting at Littleton is one of the handful of such programmed meetings which survive within London Yearly Meeting today.

No two Friends' meetings share identical histories, but local histories of Quakerism tend to follow well-trodden paths, principally those determined by the pre-occupations of preparative and monthly meeting minute books in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. What makes *Some Rural Quakers* stand out is the welcome attention it pays to the home mission movement later in the nineteenth century. In examining this in some detail, Jack Wood has demonstrated the importance of local research in laying the groundwork on which broader historical study must be built. It is to be hoped that *Some Rural Quakers* will encourage other local historians to explore a significant aspect of Quaker history which has not hitherto received the attention it deserves.

*Angus Winchester*

*George Fox Speaks for Himself.* By Hugh McGregor Ross. William Sessions Ltd., York, 1991. £5.95 + £1.00 p&p.

This book is the product of a unique scrutiny of George Fox's writings. In the mid-70s Hugh McGregor Ross imposed upon himself the task of reading the hundreds of George Fox's papers, published and unpublished, in the chronological order of their appearance, bearing one question only in mind, 'Is there anything in this for our generation?' Hugh maintained this effort for several years. Part way through it I asked for his impressions: 'George Fox is a spiritual giant. I only come up to his knee!', was his reply. His achievement is another landmark in the recovery of the lost teaching which motivated the seventeenth-century Christians nicknamed Quakers.

What Hugh Ross does is to let Fox speak for himself by grouping passages dictated by him on important subjects, such as worship in silence, the spiritual contribution of women, ministry in meeting, spiritual counsel on church life, 'the offices of Christ', and Christ as teacher. This method points the way forward, I believe, to future more detailed studies: for example, Quakers in Britain today need to read everything Fox wrote on the travelling ministry to give solidity and direction to their present vague aspirations in that direction.

A substantial proportion of the passages presented have not been printed before and Hugh speculates as to why this is. The temptation to omit ideas that are uncongenial to oneself or to the current generation has beset Fox's editors from the beginning. Hugh's own attitude seems to me to reflect the openmindedness of his own scientific training - Christ 'is a difficult word for many of us, but Fox uses it and we cannot escape from using it too... Here we have to allow Fox to use these terms without more ado' (p. 47). Fox's contemporaries excluded his most important writing on 'the offices of Christ' which is now printed for the first time (pp. 68-71). It is the fullest account of what is arguably Fox's most important contribution to the recovery of our understanding of the early Christian faith, the prophetic element, which is the historical source of our traditional Quaker social concern. Elsewhere Fox's references to it are constant but brief. This is some of the material necessary for a long overdue re-consideration of Fox's concept of Jesus as the Christ. I am equally impressed by the material Hugh has quarried from published sources, including some of Fox's longest and more turgid-looking tracts. We must not neglect them.

The material presented by Hugh Ross bears the marks of the enquiry that produced it. After two years he summarised for his own instruction, and now offers for the reader's, examples of what may be called Fox's theological positions. Although not comprehensive this list of brief formulations will be useful to those who have not yet grasped that behind the apparent confusion of Fox's prose is a mind as clear and ordered as it is full and profound. Also included is a short piece by Jacob Boehme, the German nature mystic, 1575-1624, paralleling suggestively a piece by Fox on stilling the spirit. The editorial cross-headings and comments throughout are helpful. Altogether this little book is a worthy outcome of a sustained effort to understand Fox, of which there have been all too few.

*Joseph Pickvance*

*The Silent Stream. A History of Grisdale, the little Quaker dale.* By John Banks. Penwork (Leeds) Ltd., 1991. £5.95.



This is a clear introduction to a remote dale, lovingly written. It covers, first, the Catholic, then the Quaker, and latterly the Methodist periods of history. In addition there are splendid word-sketches of people and events. The cost of printing, and his broad canvas prevents Mr. Banks from developing (in this context) the Quaker story as an historian; it is an appetiser well worth reading. His main discoveries are the wills of the Winn family from the Lancaster Record Office, and the minutes of the Grisdale Preparative Meetings for men and women. These are supplemented with the records of the Sedbergh Monthly, and the Kendal Quarterly Meetings. In the area of persecution the suffering of Garsdale and Grisdale Friends was even more serious than space allowed. The Book of Sufferings at Kendal gives them in tabular form. But Mr. Banks has advanced our knowledge. I hope that further studies will be considered on two grounds.

(1) When Jervaulx Abbey was dissolved it had the farm of the demesne lands of Grisdale. The tenants would pay ancient rents yearly, and on the change of tenant by death or alienation, a fine to the Abbey of so many times the rent. In 1584 lord Wharton acquired the manor from the Crown, and from 1580 he had been engaged in changing all his former monastic manors to lay ownership. This involved the levying of a general fine on all tenants at the change of each lord. This would apply to Grisdale. In addition there was the yearly matter of tithes payable to the vicar of Sedbergh. Also there were the periods of bad harvest and disease in 1585, 1597, 1623, and the acute poverty at the end of the Civil War. There was a further serious factor increasing poverty. From about 1575 to 1600 there was a move in the northern dales to divide the upland cattle farms. In Mallerstang 12 primary farms were divided into about 60 holdings. Thus when Fox came to Sedbergh and Grisdale in 1652 his radical view of religion and society gave hope, perhaps illusory, to a distressed and neglected people. There was no escape from the poverty.

(2) Though Grisdale had its own early Meeting, for the first 25 years the Winns, Harkers and Wilsons worshipped at Dovengill in Ravenstonedale; they appear in that register. Abraham Dent who was the first burial at Scale in 1679 came from Dovengill. By the early eighteenth century, Grisdale Meeting was stronger than Ravenstonedale and Garsdale. By the mid eighteenth century local parish registers record much poverty; and the slow decline of Quakerism dates from then, as families moved to find work. It was then that the preachers of the Countess of Huntingdon, Benjamin Ingham, and later of Wesley (especially Stephen Brunskill of Orton) started very slowly to fill the gap. They gathered the remnants of the Presbyterian and Quaker communities at Birks, Dovengill, Cautley, Grisdale, Dent, Kirkby Lonsdale, Kendal and other places. Much of Fox's work remains: a free society of Christians outside the established church, staffed by unpaid local preachers, meeting in their plain chapels. The early spiritual searchings of Stephen Brunskill might well have been written by John Fothergill (II) (1676-1744) of Carr End.

For these two reasons I hope that Mr. Banks can be persuaded to write a scholarly work from the MSS, already examined, particularly from the inventories of wills. Also to expand the extracts from the Preparative Meetings to illustrate the discipline, charity and heroism of those early Friends. From 1652 to 1760 was the Golden Age of the Society.

*J. Breay*

*The Quakers of Kirbymoorside and District 1652-1990.* By Mary Rowlands, published by Kirbymoorside P.M. 1990. Pp. iv + 30. £1.80.

The slim books lovingly researched and produced by those with a particular knowledge of a region or a Meeting House are, as it were, variations on a theme. The theme was splendidly and sonorously set out by William C. Braithwaite; the variations are local, with a personal touch and a humorous aside. Mary Rowlands' account of the Quakers of Kirby has amongst its portraits of its early days the debt owed to Robert Hebden, their prop and stay, the grant by Robert Pearson of burial space in his garth, and the touching story of Henry Wilson and his large family. With the Toleration Act of 1689 and the building of local meeting houses we read about how the weavers and farmers of the areas increased and cared for the fabric, the burial grounds and generally the property of the meetings. One strong character of the eighteenth century was John Richardson whose travelling in the ministry included journeys to America, and whose friendships brought to Kirbymoorside visitors who, in their turn, enriched the worship of the meeting. From the decline of membership in the nineteenth century to the Adult Schools, the revival of strength after the Manchester Conferences and the peace testimony of the twentieth century, Mary Rowlands shows us the story of Kirbymoorside Meeting as one meeting in the great array of Quaker endeavour.

Kathleen L. Cottrell

*Quiet Haven: Quakers, Moral Treatment and Asylum Reform.* By Charles L. Cherry. Associated University Presses, London and Toronto, 1989. Pp. 237. Illus. £25.00.

This book makes a timely appearance given the bicentenary of the founding of the Retreat at York. Its major theme is an exploration and assessment of the role of particular Quakers and the institutions they pioneered in 1796 and 1817 at York and Philadelphia. The initiative for the Retreat was in part a reaction, Professor Cherry argues, to the charges of irrationality which the religious radicalism of seventeenth-century Friends provoked in their opponents and which the quietism of eighteenth-century Friends could not wholly dispel. Philosophical and medical attempts to explain madness from Locke to Rush set the scene for the independent efforts of Pinel and William Tuke to pursue a new approach to mental illness in France and Britain. Samuel Tuke's *Description* of the work at the Retreat was a major influence on the founding of Friends Asylum, Philadelphia and both in turn were formative in the continuing development of mental health care in the United States between 1818 and 1839. In both institutions the practice of moral treatment in preference to medical attention was adopted. This concept had a strong religious element, stressing the Inner Light, from which, in a caring "family" environment, the individual could be helped back to sanity. Friends thus involved themselves with compassion and commitment to the care of the mentally ill when its causation was not clearly understood.

The concept won widespread renown but Professor Cherry concentrates largely on American developments after 1840. The reassertion of medical approaches undermined the practice of moral treatment from the 1830s. Thomas Hodgkin's failure to establish a Southern Retreat in England between 1839-41, to pursue medical as well as moral treatment, may be seen as a major blow to continuing Quaker influence in this field. Two unfortunate legal cases in Philadelphia in 1849 and 1851 damaged both Friends' reputations and the work of Friends Asylum. Beyond this, what was possible in small,

private Quaker establishments, catering largely for Quakers, was not possible in large State institutions responsible for the wider community. A low cure rate here led to greater emphasis on custodial care, affecting Friends institutions too, whilst the debate on legal definitions of and medical knowledge of insanity continued.

The book has a generous selection of illustrations but less might have been given to Chapter 1 in order to illustrate some of the individuals, issues and institutions discussed in the last part of the book.

This fine study summarises a considerable amount of important material, appraises contemporary historical writings and raises some interesting questions in the relation of ideas of mental and physical divisions to literature. Quakers are placed in a broader context and their efforts critically assessed. The result is a very stimulating and exciting work.

*Howard F. Gregg*

*They Chose the Star: Quaker War Relief Work in France, 1870-1875.* By William K. Sessions. Sessions Book Trust, York, 1991. 2nd edn. rev. Pp xiv + 102. Illus. £5.00 + £1.00 p&p.

This is a welcome reissue of a work first published in 1944 to which has been added an article on "Bulgarian Relief Work from 1876" first published in the *Journal of the Friends Historical Society* in 1947. The connection here is James Long, a remarkable non-Friend, who gave unsparing time and effort to supporting Quaker relief in France and Bulgaria in the 1870s.

From study of the original records and associated writings William K. Sessions presents the moving story of Quaker concern for the unfortunate on all sides in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War. The Quaker response was administered in London but undertaken by field Commissioners who went to various parts of northern France to investigate, facilitate and supervise assistance both in immediate needs and in long term practical projects such as the resumption of food production. Seed potatoes and steam ploughs were important means here. The work was undertaken with the co-operation of the French and German authorities. The origin of the distinctive Quaker star as the emblem for Friends relief work is detailed. Civil war and disease were two hazards those involved in the work had to face. The Allen family of Dublin lost one member from smallpox whilst another member lost the sight of one eye from erysipelas. One Friend, in a quest for souvenirs inadvertently compromised the Friends Peace Testimony against the bearing of arms. Friends were fortunate in having the service of non-Friends, two of whom were able to stay in France for longer periods to facilitate and continue the relief effort. Most of the Friends involved in France took short periods of time off from their work to support the concern. The techniques of investigation and assistance were partially modelled on experience gained in Quaker relief work in the Irish Famine of the late 1840s. Three of the Field Commissioners and at least four members of the General Committee had taken an active part in the earlier effort.

The Quaker foundations for Stanley Johnson's later work in south-west France are well set out here. There are useful maps and a superb set of photographs of those who undertook this mission of mercy. The book is attractively published and would be a good addition to meeting library shelves in its reminder of past Quaker witness on which much has been built.

*Howard F. Gregg*

*Once a Quaker: The Story of a Worcestershire Family through Four Centuries.* By Richard Burlingham. Published by the author, 19 Mount Road, Evesham, WR11 6BE. £7.50 + £1.25 p&p.

Richard Burlington has done considerable research into his family's history, and has added this on to what others have discovered in the last 30 years, to make what he calls a cross between a chronological C.V. and a story. It is the history of a family and, in part, of their business, moving from Shipston on Stour to Worcester and Evesham, with later branches settling in East Anglia where there were already many Burlinghams, and where the greatest number live today.

A glance at the outside of the book showed similarities with my own family history in the yellow of its cover and the black silhouette of a late eighteenth-century Quaker. Inside however, his approach is much more scientific. Each generation is allocated a capital letter, and each member of it a number in chronological order, with spouses getting also a small letter, for easy identification. Each person is taken in order through the book under their name as a heading, starting with Edward Burlingham, married 1613, d. 1656. I personally found this rather distracting and isolating, taking away some of the sense of family.

Edward's son John was apparently still a member of the Church of England when he married for the second time in 1662, but is mentioned as having goods taken by the officers in 1683. Quaker records give few personal details. Over the next generations the burials took place mainly in Sansom Fields in Worcester, and later at Cowl Street in Evesham. It was a Richard who, in the early 1700s moved to Worcester and became a glover. His great-grandson Richard started a business in Evesham at the 'New Iron Warehouse', expanding over the generations from ironmongery to fertilisers and chemicals, a firm with a reputation you would expect of Quakers.

A helpful list gives the surnames of those whom sons and daughters married, a list of such familiar names as Corbyn, Trusted, Gregory, Southall, Gulson, Grubb and Clarke, and others. In 1803 daughter Lucy married Edmund Darby of Coalbrookdale. Lady Labouchere was able to offer the use of papers and letters of Lucy who died aged nearly 90, 60 years after her husband.

The most detail to survive would seem to concern Henry, born 1813, starting with an account book he kept at the age of 14. He was educated at Thornbury; later members of the family attended Bootham and other Quaker schools. In 1837 he became a partner in the firm with his father and uncle. The business expanded, taking advantage of the railway's arrival as well as its riverside location.

Henry and Hannah's first and tenth (last) children, Lucy and Elizabeth, never married and finally lived together in High Street, Evesham. Elizabeth, who died in 1913, was the last of the family to be buried in the Quaker burial ground at Cowl Street.

A later diagram shows the very limited number of lines which continue the name today.

*Margaret E. Gayner*

*Quaker Work for Prisoners of War in South-West France, 1945-1948.* By Stanley Johnson. Sessions Book Trust, York, 1990. Pp. viii + 35. £2.50.

Stanley Johnson was one of two individuals released by *Secours Quaker* in October 1945 to work exclusively with prisoners of war in Southern France. This booklet gives

his account of the work attempted and the very difficult circumstances in which it had to be done. The booklet is organised on a thematic basis with stories to illustrate the various points covered. The terrible complexity of post-war France, devastated by war, recovering from occupation and with already serious problems of refugees and material needs is well conveyed. Useful explanations are also given of the Geneva Convention and the various kinds of relief work undertaken in France in 1945.

Prisoners of war presented particular difficulties for they were not planned for in the already serious situation in post-war France, a country most of them had recently occupied. Lack of food, inadequate accommodation and lack of work opportunities were early major problems which did see change as time went on. To make matters worse there was no official peace treaty to facilitate the work of the International Red Cross or of repatriation. The reader will need to follow Charles Carter's advice and refer to Roger Wilson's *Quaker Relief* to appreciate the full context in which Quaker relief work was undertaken and why it came to an end of 1948.

Within this broader context Stanley Johnson clearly was able to be an important and constructive influence, part of the humanizing and practical Quaker presence for a forgotten and unpopular group of people. He had much to contend with but was able, through trust and co-operation with senior French military officers, to effect change and stop abuse on occasion. In 1947 he was still helping 34,000 prisoners of war. His is a self-effacing approach in the booklet for not even the presentation of the German appreciation to him in 1947, showing the Good Samaritan, is related. The problems are centre stage. The wonder is he survived so long in such a daunting assignment. His story however is worth the telling and is a timely reminder of the ever present need for practical compassion and the heavy cost it exacts.

*Howard F. Gregg*

# NOTES AND QUERIES

## EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY QUAKER DOCTORS

*The Medical Enlightenment of the Eighteenth Century*. Edited by Andrew Cunningham and Roger French. Cambridge, 1990.

This collection of 11 essays contains numerous references to Friends and in particular to John Coakley Lettsom and to John Fothergill. Francis M. Lobo's chapter on 'John Haygarth, smallpox and religious Dissent in eighteenth-century England' contains interesting material on the network of intellectual societies of dissenters and some Friends' involvement in them. Robert Kilpatrick's '“Living in the light” dispensaries, philanthropy and medical reform in late eighteenth-century London' is largely concerned with Lettsom. It describes the General Dispensary in Aldersgate Street, founded by Lettsom in 1770, in some detail pointing out that it was the model for all subsequent dispensaries. The account of Lettsom's medical ideas and their inter-connection with his philanthropic ideals is valuable. There are useful observations here and elsewhere in the book about the medical education of dissenters.

*David J. Hall*

## FRIENDS IN OXFORDSHIRE

The 12th volume in the Oxfordshire series in the *Victoria County History* (Oxford University Press, 1990) deals with Wootton Hundred. Quakers are noticed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in various locations to the west of Oxford; notably Cogges, Eynsham, Kidlington (Nathaniel Faulkner), North and South Leigh, and Woodstock.

The occasion when Ellis Hookes visited his mother at Stanton Harcourt in 1658 and was ejected from Sir William Waller's house for refusing hat-honour is recounted (from Besse's *Suferings*, i.564).

*Russell S Mortimer*

CONTEMPORARIES OF BULSTRODE WHITELOCKE, 1605-1675 -- biographies, illustrated by letters and other documents, Ruth Spalding. An appendix to *The Diary of Bulstrode Whitelocke*. Records of social and economic history. New series XIV. Published for the British Academy by the Oxford University Press, (1990).

Biographical notes on political figures of the seventeenth century fill this memorable study of the friends and contacts of one of the central figures in the troubled governments of the "English revolution" period. Reference is made to William Penn's little volume of Whitelocke's sermons (1711, 1715) *Quench not the Spirit*, and Penn's assessment of Whitelocke. Thomas Fell, George Bishop, James Nayler and John Swinton also figure in the volume, as does Ruth, third wife of William Lilly the astrologer. Ruth Lilly 'was a Quaker, but, to Whitelocke's evident surprise, she entertained them very well' (31 May 1664).

Sidelights of interest include comments on the sympathetic, or unsympathetic attitudes taken by parliamentarians like Philip Skippon the Major General, Walter Strickland, and William Sydenham during the Nayler debates; and the possible influence of colonial governors on the reception given to Friends travelling in business

or in ministry or both. In conversation with Lord Willoughby of Parham (d.1673), Governor of Barbados, Whitelocke noted that Willoughby 'seemed a good friend' to liberty of conscience.

The *Diary* forms a separate volume. It records not only Whitelocke's doings and his meetings with the great and good, but also family, household and estate events. For instance, on 17 November 1673 he had a visit from his tenant at Fawley Court Farm: 'Jonathan Up & his wife came to the Lodge, both converted to be Quakers, and telling the Workings of God in their hearts about it.' (*Diary*, p.818)

R.S.M.

#### BRISTOL MERCHANTS

A further addition to the Bristol Record Society's series of volumes entitled *Bristol, Africa and the eighteenth-century slave trade to America*, edited by David Richardson (vol. 3, 1746-69) provides little to add to the extended note which appeared in this *Journal*, vol. 55, pp.154-56 (1987). By mid-century Friends had retired from this branch of trade, although one does find a return cargo from South Carolina of barrels of pitch, logs and square blocks of mahogany on freight to Cowles and Harford of Bristol in the *Sally* (150 tons; no guns) in the Autumn of 1764; and there are other Quaker or erstwhile-Quaker names to be found, like Rogers, Reeve, Devonshire and William Champion.

R.S.M.

#### AMBROSE GALLOWAY, OF LEWES

*The Fuller letters 1728-1755: guns, slaves and finance*, edited by David Crossley and Richard Saville (Sussex Record Society, vol. 76, 1991) is based on the letter books of John Fuller senior (1680-1745) and junior (1706-1755).

Three Ambrose Galloways (father [sufferer in the 1660s, 1670s and 1680s; see Besse; d.1696], son [sufferer; d.1718] and grandson [d.1738], substantial merchants in Lewes, make their appearance. 'They had wide business connections, and links with Holland, from where they had bought wrought iron'.

R.S.M.

#### EAST YORKSHIRE MEETING HOUSES BEFORE 1914

David & Susan Neave's *East Riding chapels and meeting houses* (East Yorkshire Local History Society, 1990) includes a gazetteer of a dozen meeting houses before 1914. Houses at Hornsea and Owstwick are illustrated.

Listed houses are: Barmby Moor, 1707; Beverley (Lairgate, 1702; Wood Lane, c.1810); Bridlington (St John St., 1678; Havelock St., 1903); Bubwith, 1879; East Cottingwith, 1788 & burial ground; Elloughton (unknown; & burial ground); Hornsea, 1711; Hutton Cranswick, 1706/7; Knapton (used by Methodists); North Cave, 1687 & burial ground; Owstwick, c.1670; Skipsca, late 17th cent.; Welwick, 1718.

R.S.M.

## RECKITT AND PRIESTMAN, OF HULL

The families of Reckitt and Priestman make appropriate appearances in a chapter headed "Good men, Goodtimes" in the extensively illustrated book by John Markham: *The book of Hull – the evolution of a great northern city* (Buckingham, Barracuda Books, 1989). There is a reproduction of an engraving of Holderness House on the Jallands estate, which was later purchased by Sir James Reckitt and T.R. Ferens to plant a Garden Village (1908).

R.S.M.

## SUFFOLK

Suffolk Records Society vol. 33

*The Oakes diaries. James Oakes's diaries 1801-1827.*

p. 182 7 July 1814 [celebrations - victory]

"The Quakers never light up."

[no mob action taken against them]

p. 236 30 March 1819 [embezzlement case at the Assizes]

"The Bungay Bank a Branch of Messrs Gurneys"

"The Quakers declin'd to indite Capitally"

[sentence: 14 yrs transportation]

R.S.M.

## PENNSYLVANIA

*Lawmaking and legislators in Pennsylvania. vol. 1.*

page 728, column 2, line 10 from foot of page  
for 1678? read 1677

page 731, column 2, note 2 should find space for the following information:

"The Bolland Meeting original register, recently received back into custody [Carlton Hill Archives H 25] gives dates of the first Margaret: birth, 3 viii[October] 1676; death, 28 i[March] 1677."

R.S.M.

## QUAKER BUSINESSMEN

H.L. Malchow, *Gentlemen capitalists - the social and political world of the Victorian businessmen* (Macmillan, 1991)

A chapter of over 90 pages, entitled "God and the City", deals widely with the character of Sir Robert Fowler (1828-91), son of Thomas and Lucy (Waterhouse) Fowler of Bruce Grove Tottenham. From his base in banking (his father's bank was Drewett and Fowler) Robert became active in Conservative politics, Lord Mayor of London and a baronet. The drift of nonconformists into the Church overcame for many families the barrier to accepting honours from the government.

The volume ranges from many banking, industrial and social topics and brings in families like Backhouse, Pease and others. A chapter of Observations at the end, rounds the study off, and there are brief statistical analyses of the levels of support for various pressure groups on such diverse topics as the suppression of the opium trade, protection of City churches, Crime prevention and public museums and free libraries.



For Sir Robert, Thomas Hodgkin wrote a memorable survey of his life for the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

R.S.M.

#### DEVON AND CORNWALL

*Unity and variety: a history of the church in Devon and Cornwall*. Edited by Nicholas Orme. (Exeter studies in history no. 29). Pp. 242. University of Exeter Press, 1991.

This collection of essays on the various periods of church history is graced by a contribution on the Middle Ages by Christopher J. Holdsworth, and includes some brief references to Friends in the contributions by Jonathan Barry (17th and 18th centuries) and Bruce Coleman (19th century).

The Quakers, 'subversive and egalitarian', came to the South West in 1654 (p. 82). 'Intense tradition of family loyalty' enabled Friends to 'perpetuate themselves' (p. 107). 'By the late eighteenth century old dissent [including Quaker meetings] had become heavily urban in character.' (p. 133).

The volume is illustrated, and includes statistical tables. In studying dissent in the Religious Census of 1851, it is noted that 'The only denomination stronger in Cornwall than in Devon was the tiny sect of the Friends (Quakers).' (p. 143).

R.S.M.

#### WILTSHIRE FRIENDS

North Wiltshire villages are surveyed in the recent volume of the *Victoria History of the counties of England* (volume 14: Malmesbury Hundred), Oxford University Press, 1991. More than a dozen parishes provide evidence for the presence of Quakers in the district – in strength in the seventeenth century, lessening in the following 100 years, and surviving in the nineteenth century in scattered localities. It may be remarked that Malmesbury Meeting now is in Gloucester and Nailsworth Monthly Meeting.

Places studied include Brinkworth, Charlton, Hullavington (the Bullock family; a meeting house), Lee (a burial ground), Burton Hill in Malmesbury (a Sunday School from 1827), Seagry (the Kerfoot and Wheeler families), Great Somerford (the Sealy family), Stanton St. Quentin (a burial ground at Lower Stanton), and Sutton Benger (Nathaniel Coleman the Separatist; the Frys in the eighteenth century).

There are many useful footnote references to source material.

R.S.M.

#### MARGARET CUTHBERT McNEIL 1910 - 1985

JOURNALS, DIARIES, ARTICLES AND MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS  
RELATING TO HER RELIEF WORK AMONG DISPLACED PERSONS  
IN GERMANY 1945 - 8 WITH 124 TEAM, FRIENDS RELIEF SERVICE.

Edited by Tim Evens and Elizabeth Sullivan  
and deposited by them in the Library at  
Friends House, London, in 1990.

“Some things are of that nature as to make  
 One’s fancy chuckle while his heart doth ache.”  
 - John Bunyan, quoted by M. McNeil in the foreword  
 to ‘By the Rivers of Babylon’.

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#### EDITORS’ INTRODUCTION

We were, from the start, members of the Friends Relief Service team in which Margaret McNeill was a senior colleague and, later, leader. This association led to our life-long friendships with her. A short time before her death, she passed these documents to us, asking us to offer them to the Library in Friends House, London, after due preparation. This work we have now done and it has been a pleasant - though much-interrupted - task.

The main welfare work of FRS Team 124, described here, was with “Displaced Persons”, as they were officially designated. In the Goslar area they were from Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and from those districts of Ukrainian and Ruthenian populations now (1990) in the Soviet Union but which between the world wars had been under Polish or Czechoslovak rule. Later, in Schleswig, the team also worked among Yugoslavs. All these refugees, in 1945, found themselves living in the wreckage of Hitler’s tyranny whilst seeing their homelands coming under the domination of another tyranny, Stalin’s Soviet Union. As we write these notes, this domination is coming to an end as a result of the changes in the Soviet Union itself, initiated by Gorbachev.

For those engaged in it, emergency relief work is a blend of urgency, chaos and improvisation, although situations differ greatly. We are unable to compare the work described here with that done, for instance, in famines or after earthquakes. We can only confirm from having shared in it that the work described in Margaret McNeill’s pages was both exciting and exhausting. Minor frustrations like the frequent breakdowns of the team’s increasingly decrepit cars and trucks have to be added to the major difficulties of trying to help insecure and needy people in a milieu of constant change and with neither effective health and social services nor adequate supplies of essential goods. But these papers are far more than a mere account of relief work problems. They are highly readable because they reveal the author herself: her difficulty in getting up in the mornings; her liking for tidiness; her prejudices and, throughout, her saving graces of self-knowledge, humour and wit.

Tim Evens  
 Elizabeth Sullivan

readable because they reveal the author herself: her difficulty in getting up in the mornings; her liking for tidiness; her prejudices and, throughout, her saving graces of self-knowledge, humour and wit.

*Tim Evens*  
*Elizabeth Sullivan*

FHS, Occasional Series No. 1 MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER and MANCHESTER AGAIN: from 'SOUND DOCTRINE to 'A FREE MINISTRY'. By Roger C. Wilson. 1990. Members £2 Non-Members £3.

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