

**The Relinquishment of Plain dress:
British Quaker women's abandonment of
Plain Quaker attire, 1860-1914**

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A thesis submitted in partial
fulfilment of the requirements of
the University of Brighton for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy

June 2016

Abstract

This thesis discusses how British Quaker women negotiated relinquishing their religiously prescribed Plain dress from 1860 to 1914 in the context of developments in Quaker feminine identity. This thesis approaches its subjects by examining the primary source of surviving Quaker garments in British dress collections. These items provide the basis from which research methodologies and the personal narratives of Quaker women and their case studies are developed. Surviving garments, alongside historical letters, diaries, religious texts, department store catalogues, photographs and period dress illustrations are analysed in order to understand how women Quakers practised their religion and organised their public appearance through dress during this period.

The original quality of this research is the outcome of an interdisciplinary approach. No other research project in the international dress history or religious history fields has discussed and critically considered the identity of British Quaker women through an analysis of their surviving clothing between 1860 and 1914. This aspect of British social history and therefore British identity has until now remained unexplored and unacknowledged.

By 1860 Quakerism had undergone extreme doctrinal upheaval, which had led to the abandonment of those rules which enforced Plainness of speech and apparel that same year. Even prior to 1860, this thesis reveals that some women were incorporating fashion into their religious Plain dress, by using fashionable silhouettes and high-quality fabrics albeit eschewing bright colours and ornamentation. After 1860 however, male and female Quakers had complete individual freedom of choice in their clothing.

During this period of religious turmoil, female Victorian Quakers vocalised a range of opinions on women's emancipation, education and welfare, on their role within the religious society and their opinions concerning dress through published correspondence in Quaker journals. This thesis identifies a variety of views concerning dress between 1860 and 1914, as Quaker women negotiated their individual freedom of choice in attire in a ternary

manner. Moreover, this thesis proves that this ternary interpretation was acknowledged by Quakers themselves and discussed within Quaker journals in the 1860-1914 period.

Quakers of the period identified these ternary interpretations as ascetic, moderate and fashionable. This thesis proposes a new set of classifying terms, Non-Adaptive, Semi-Adaptive and Fully-Adaptive, in reflection of the extent to which Quaker women adapted their religious clothing to incorporate fashion alongside their differing interpretations of Quaker belief. Four case studies illustrate further these three adaptive interpretations, and show how individual Quaker women chose to present themselves to their religious community and wider society.

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Chapter 9 Fully-Adaptive Case Studies: Lucretia Seebohm, 1874 and Mary Ann Seebohm, c.1891

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<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O249340/wedding-dress-unknown>

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Chapter 10 Debate and Discussion of Findings

No images.

Acknowledgements

I am sincerely grateful and indebted to my supervisors, Professor Lou Taylor, Dr. Charlotte Nicklas and Dr. Peter Collins, for the support and guidance they have given me throughout the PhD process. This dissertation would not have been possible without their belief in my abilities and support. From my initial meeting with Professor Lou Taylor, she displayed an infectious passion and confidence in my proposal and invested countless time and energy in guiding both my application and the resultant project to completion. I am thankful for her firm and steady assistance and supervision and it has been an unforgettable honour studying under her. Alongside her, Dr. Charlotte Nicklas and Dr. Peter Collins expertise in dress history and Quakerism, respectively, and their intelligent instruction and encouragement enabled my research to remain focused, pertinent and stimulating, even when my research path seemed multifocal. Each of my supervisors has at varying points provided encouragement and castigation when required, and for both of these I thank them all. I would also like to show my gratitude to the costume collection curators and assistants whom took the time and effort to allow me to visit their collections and discuss my project with them. Particularly, Ali Wells at Herbert Museum and Art Gallery, Coventry; Anita Spencer at Bakewell Old House Museum; Ann Petty, assistant at Whitby Museum; Anna Buruma, archivist at Liberty's of London; Gerry Connelly, curator at Worthing Museum and Art Gallery; Henrietta Lockhart at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery; Miles Lambert, curator at Gallery of Costume Platt Hall Rusholme, Manchester; Martin Pel, curator at Brighton Royal Pavilion and Museums; Nicola at the Herbert at Hull History Centre; Sarah Nicol at Snibston Discovery Park, Northern Society of Costume; Shelley Tobin, curator at Killerton House National Trust, Devon, Costume Collection and Charlotte Berry, curator at Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive in Street. To those of you who allowed me to rummage for hours through their stores unsupervised, or perch in corridors rifling through old catalogue files and historical journals, this dissertation would not have come to fruition without your patience and generosity. In addition, I also extend my heartfelt thanks to Jennifer Milligan and Melissa Atkinson at the Library of the Religious Society of Friends, Euston. Their consistence and patience in answering my never-ending enquiries regarding their archives has been a lifeline and their guidance to the most relevant sources has kept

my research on track in a way they can little imagine. I thank you, both. Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for their unwavering patience and moral support when my anxiety and self-doubt seemed insurmountable. Thank you to them for helping me reach this summit.

Declaration

I declare that the research contained in this thesis, unless otherwise formally indicated within the text, is the original work of the author. The thesis has not been previously submitted to this or any other university for a degree, and does not incorporate any material already submitted for a degree.

Signed

Hannah Frances Rumball

Dated

21st June 2016

Introduction

My Dear Sisters - will you bear with me while I endeavour to bring before your impartial notice a subject, which to some may be rather distasteful, while others may regard it as a matter of trivial importance; [...] our Christian duty as regards personal attire [...] there are many voices heard on this subject: some are saying, 'God looks only at the heart' [...] 'It is right to appear attractive and graceful to those around' again, 'It is fitting to dress according to our rank and position in society' further, 'It does not answer any good purpose to be peculiar and odd in our dress', and 'It is our duty to make our religion attractive to the world.' These plausible statements [...] tend in the case of some to silence a voice within, and soothe the mental disquiet which may at times be felt, while considering some such plain Scripture as the following - 'Be not conformed to this world.'¹

On 1st November 1870, the female Quaker J.M. Richardson wrote to the Quaker journal *The Friend* with concern, reflecting on the increasing acceptance of fashionable dress amongst the women members of the Religious Society of Friends. Here, Richardson summarises fellow Quaker women's reasons for adopting fashionable attire. Yet her letter contested every statement and instead called for 'Christian simplicity and moderation' which she framed as a religious duty.

Richardson's words provide an appropriate introduction to this thesis, which discusses how British Quaker women negotiated relinquishing their religiously prescribed Plain dress between 1860 to 1914 in the context of Quaker feminine identity, after Plain or 'peculiar' dress was made optional by the Religious Society of Friends in 1860. This thesis concludes just before the start of the First World War, because this event overwhelmingly influenced the societal role and sartorial decisions of British Quaker women and marked a social and sartorial turning point beyond the scope of this thesis.

¹ J. M. Richardson, "An Address to Christian Women," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal*. X. 119. (1st November 1870): 261

The key aims of this thesis therefore, are to investigate how Quaker women negotiated displaying religious affiliation alongside fashionability in their dress after 1860 through a series of four case studies. These will identify how long the incorporation of fashionable dress took after the change in Advices in 1860 and whether it took some time for fashionable dress to be incorporated; evaluate the extent to which Quaker Advices regarding dress continued to play a role in Quaker women's attire even after their relaxation in 1860; evaluate the extent to which familial relationships effected Quaker women's sartorial choices; discover whether the Quaker community was mindful of diverse interpretations being undertaken by Quaker women for incorporating fashionable dress into their wardrobes; illustrate how the ternary (composed of three) stances, classified as Non-Adaptive, Semi-Adaptive and Fully-Adaptive, were manifested through a study of the actual garments being worn. Finally, a methodology will be outlined for approaching the study of late nineteenth century Quaker women's dress. Furthermore, this thesis comments not merely on generational clothing preferences, but analyses surviving garments worn by Quaker women during this period in order to extrapolate theories regarding issues of negotiating personal identity, religion and dress.

My research makes an original contribution to our understanding and knowledge of dress, self-representation and religious clothing within Britain beyond the established dress history approach which has largely ignored nineteenth century Quaker clothing. No other scholar or academic project in the fields of international dress history or religious history has critically discussed the identity of British Quaker women through an analysis of their clothing during the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As such, this aspect of British social history and therefore British identity has until now remained unexplored and unacknowledged, making this thesis a unique and new contribution to knowledge in Quaker history, religious history, dress history, fashion theory and British identity.

Early in this research the key factor which cemented my decision to pursue this theme for doctoral investigation was the scarcity of garments with acknowledged British Quaker provenances in dress collections and on display in British museums and galleries. Such a lack of easily accessible relevant examples of Quaker garments and an absence of institutional

acknowledgement of their relevance to British consumption habits, supported my conviction that this subject has been under represented and required further investigation to raise its profile.

Since the conception of the religion in the seventeenth century, members of the Religious Society of Friends have been influential in many spheres of British culture. As the historian Elizabeth Isichei has acknowledged, Victorian Quakers, despite being a minority religion, made an impact on their contemporaries which was 'quite disproportionate to their numbers.'² The national specificity of this thesis therefore sheds light on a neglected aspect of British social and religious history and a religious movement which was historically influential in the moulding of British identity.

Historical context

Organised in Britain around 1652 by the English dissenter George Fox, the Religious Society of Friends, also known as the Quakers, was initially one of many rebellious Protestant groups which sought to oppose the religious teachings practised by the established Church of England.³ Still thriving to this day, the main tenets of the group's religious beliefs focus on the notion that every person, man or woman, may experience 'direct or unmediated religious experience.' They emphasise the significance of this personal revelation for religious guidance, over and above Church teaching and the authority of scripture.⁴ Amongst the new religious practices the Quakers adopted, by the 1670s distinctive material culture, particularly dress and furniture, striking for its simplicity and termed 'Plain' or 'peculiar', was added to their customs.⁵

² Elizabeth Isichei, "Introduction," *Victorian Quakers* (Oxford: University Press, 1970) xix.

³ Often referred throughout this thesis simply as 'the Society'.

⁴ Ben Pink Dandelion, *The Quakers, A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: University Press, 2008) 5 and J. William Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," *Quaker Aesthetics. Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003) 16.

⁵ Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 17. These aspects of the founding of religion, their beliefs and the introduction of the Plain lifestyle are discussed in Chapter 3.

From the beginning of the movement, Quakers subjected themselves to strict discipline. This included the circulation of rules and regulations which came to be known as 'Advices'. These were intended to guide the behaviour of Quakers in their everyday lives. The Advices were circulated via an increasingly efficient and effective organisational structure comprising local, regional and national meetings at which decisions were made and legitimised.⁶ The earliest Advices for the religion's followers concerning clothing, were specifically framed in reference to Biblical teachings which advised against adopting 'corrupt fashions and dealings and language of the World their overbearing and vain fashions.'⁷ During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, these official Advices regarding self-presentation became increasingly strict and specific, and therefore followers who failed to conform to these recommendations could be 'disowned' or ostracised from the religious community.⁸

Yet by the beginning of the nineteenth century many earnest and conscientious British members of the Society of Friends felt that both sexes use of Plain attire was, 'felt to be a weak point, scarcely susceptible to defence at all[...].'⁹ These criticisms were so rife that by 1861 a formal committee of male British Quakers made 'peculiarity of dress and speech' optional.¹⁰ Thus, for the first time since the adoption of Plain dress in the seventeenth century, British Quaker men and women were granted individual freedom of choice in the style of their attire.¹¹

Literary context

⁶ William C. Braithwaite. *The Beginnings of Quakerism*. (London: Macmillan and Co. [1912] 2012)

⁷ "Of Friends Christian Testimony against the Corrupt Fashions and Language of the world." *Yearly Meeting Minutes*. 17th March 1675. YM/Volume 1. Microfilm 13. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

⁸ Frost. "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture." 24. Any Friend who was not in unity with Quaker practices could be excluded from the Society's affairs and were encouraged to disassociate themselves from the religious community. Reasons for disownment included marrying a Non-Quaker, immorality, insolvency, fraud and non-attendance at Meetings.

⁹ *Observations of the Quaker-Peculiarities of Dress and Language*. (London: Effingham Wilson, Royal Exchange. 1836) 5 and 12. The motivations behind this shift in ideology are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

¹⁰ Isichei. *Victorian Quakers*, 159.

¹¹ Isichei. *Victorian Quakers*, 164.

Within the scholarly writings on Quakerism discussed in Chapter 2: Literature Review, dress is often presented in conjunction with broader ideas of the Society's restrictions on culture and recreation, rather than as a unique and very particular mode of Quaker expression. Leading academics on Quakerism including theologian Rufus Matthew Jones and anthropologist Professor Richard Bauman fail to consider specifically female interpretations of Quakerism, but simply set all Quaker Advices and negotiations of the faith within the generalised context of mediation by a homogeneous, sexless organisation.¹² Meanwhile, contemporary American scholars *have* examined the history and evolution of American Quaker women's attitudes to design and consumption, but only on their own continent.¹³ Recently however, British scholastic publications have begun to critically analyse the practices, beliefs and choices of British Quaker women. Authors, such as early modern Quaker historian Althea Stewart, have discussed English women Quakers' 'enthusiasms [...] attitudes and disciplines' during the seventeenth centuries through surviving examples of their life-writing.¹⁴ Yet even within these approaches, the critical analysis of clothing is merely used as one brief example of Quaker women as dissenters and protesters with no specific analysis of, or comment on, the actual garments they wore. By exclusively critically analysing Quaker women's dress between 1860 and 1914, this thesis attempts to fill this significant gap in the literature.¹⁵

Methods and Methodology used in the thesis

The central methodology of this thesis focuses on understanding Quaker material culture, in that the research on which this thesis is based, begins and ends with the study of surviving British Quaker women's garments. Provenanced garments are the foundation upon which

¹² Rufus Jones. *Later Periods of Quakerism. Vol. 1 & Vol. 2.* (London: Macmillan and Co. 1921). Rufus Jones. "Simplicity and Depth of Life." *The Faith and Practice of the Quakers.* (Methuen & Co. Ltd. 1927). Richard Bauman. *Christ Respects No Man's Person: The Plain Language of the Early Quakers and the Rhetoric of Impoliteness.* Working Paper 88. Austin, Texas: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. November 1981.

¹³ Emma Jones Lapsansky et al. *Quaker Aesthetics. Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003).

¹⁴ Althea Stewart. 'From Iconoclasts to Gentle Persuaders: Plain Dress, Dissent and Narrative Voice in Some Early Modern Quaker Women's Writings'. *Women's Writing.* 17. 1. (London: Routledge. 2010) 112.

¹⁵ Sandra Stanley Holton. *Quaker Women. Personal Life, Memory and Radicalism in the Lives of Women Friends, 1780 - 1930.* (London: Routledge, 2007) 95.

the research methodologies and the personal narratives of specific Quaker women presented here are developed. Alongside the clothing, historical letters, diaries, religious texts, department store catalogues, photographs and period dress illustrations are critically analysed, to provide contextualisation and evidence of both fashionable dress and Quaker clothing practices during 1860-1914. The interdisciplinary nature of this study is reflected in the use of dress history and fashion theory, cultural studies, anthropology, religious history and design history. These serve as approaches which support the material culture-focused investigation of the study and the result of this interdisciplinary approach is a unique and original body of new research.

Four Quaker women have been deliberately selected as case studies who illustrate the ternary (or trio of) responses of adapting their Plain attire to incorporate fashionable dress which developed between 1860 and 1914. These responses, identified through examination of surviving garments, are identified as Non-Adaptive, Semi-Adaptive and Fully-Adaptive and are described in detail in Chapter 4: Women and Quakerism 1860 - 1914 in the context of debates about women's role in society in general.

The selection of these Quaker women however, has also been based on two practical considerations. Firstly, only surviving garments which can be analysed in person are considered as case study material, ultimately observed at fourteen costume collections which accommodate surviving examples of Quaker female dress.¹⁶ Secondly, only garments with a known provenance are discussed, in order to conduct genealogical research about the wearer. Therefore, the choice of British Quaker women for case studies has been mediated first and foremost by the survival and accessibility of their garments.

Thesis Structure

Material culture methodologies discussed in Chapter 1: Research and Research Methodologies are used to observe, record, elucidate and explain variations in fashionable

¹⁶ For a full list see Appendix 1.1: Museums contacted and visited.

or Plain cut, design and embellishments in surviving Quaker garments. These observations culminate in my formulation of a new theoretical model of analysis of Quaker dress based on a trio of stances taken by British Quaker Women. These ternary divisions, outlined in Chapter 4: Women and Quakerism 1860 - 1914 in the context of debates about women's role in society in general, reveal and compare the extent to which each woman adapted, or resisted adapting, their religiously guided dress to incorporate conventional, seasonally fashionable dress after 1860. This thesis proposes a new classification of these stances as Non-Adaptive, Semi-Adaptive and Fully-Adaptive, and are featured as case studies in:

Chapter 6: Non-Adaptive: Case study Elizabeth Petipher Cash, 1873

Chapter 7: Fashionable Semi Adaptive: case study Helen Bright Clark, 1866

Chapter 8: Aesthetic Semi-Adaptive: case study Geraldine Cadbury, 1891

Chapter 9: Fully-Adaptive: case study of Lucretia Anson Seebohm, 1874.

Within these chapters, the ancestral backgrounds, garment choices, religious sentiments and lifestyle choices of these women are analysed in comparison to secular fashionable trends of the period. Such contextualisation identifies the sartorial choices of these Quaker women as a deliberate mindful selection in a religious environment based on self-policing which historically connected all actions and presentation of the body with the articulation of personal spirituality.

As the methodological approaches and the literature review are considered in the first two chapters, chapters three and four consider the Society, its environment and tenets, before and after 1860, respectively. Chapter 3: Women and Quakerism Pre-1860 considers the formulation of and decision to implement Plain dress Advices and ultimately the decision leading up to the repealing of the prescription. Chapter 4: Women and Quakerism 1860 - 1914 [...] reflects on the wider political and spiritual environments within which Quaker women were functioning during this period, which this study will show influenced their sartorial decisions. In parallel, Chapter 5: Fashionable Dress Compared to Quaker Dress 1860-1914 outlines the function of fashionable dress and the etiquette of seasonally changing fashions during these decades, as evidence of the complicated lexicon of secular

sartorial decisions these women were newly navigating. Each of the case studies follows the ternary interpretations of Chapter 6: Non-Adaptive, Chapter 7: Semi-Adaptive and Chapter 8: Fully-Adaptive, after which Chapter 9: Debate and Discussion of Findings explicitly summarises the findings from the previous three chapters in relation to the thesis's aims.

Conclusion

The key aim of this thesis and its contribution to new knowledge is through discussion of four British Quaker women negotiating relinquishing their religiously prescribed Plain dress between 1860 to 1914 in the context of Quaker feminine identity, after Plain or 'peculiar' dress was made optional by the Religious Society of Friends in 1860. The original contribution of this thesis is firmly illustrated as a unique endowment to the fields of Quaker history, religious history, dress history, fashion theory and British identity, through the pursuit of a subject which has previously been neglected by fellow scholars.

Having introduced the ternary adaptive interpretations which Quaker women developed in order to negotiate incorporating seasonally changing fashions, the following chapter, Chapter 1: Research and Research Methodologies, introduces the archives and dress collections consulted. Alongside these, it outlines the methods used to approach these sources which resulted in the formulation of my original ternary classifications.

Chapter 1 Research and Research Methodologies

The primary sources of photographs, diaries, journals within archives as well as surviving garments in dress collections used for this thesis, are introduced in this chapter. A discussion of how these items were approached and considered is prefaced by describing the relevant methodologies selected to analyse and interpret these material culture sources which were found in archives and museums.

Initially, section 1.1 describes the methods and approaches of scholars working in the field of material culture, specifically that of dress history, and considers the relevance of their methodological practices to this research. The section also discusses the dress collections where surviving Quaker women's garments are located- their national locations, the type of garments which have been preserved, and the dearth of Quaker women's garments within these collections.

Relevant archived photographs used within this thesis are then considered in section 1.2. Once again, the suggested methods applied by scholars to analyse period photographs are outlined and their relevance to this thesis considered. The contents of the images sourced during my research are described, and how these images are integrated into this study is discussed. Key issues including the provenance of the photographs, the use of photographs as primary evidence as well as the role of the perspective of the photographer, are assessed.

More broadly, the specific religious and business archives used in this investigation are described and evaluated in section 1.3. The academic uses and interpretations of archives, and their limitations, along with methodological approaches best suited to this practice are discussed. Furthermore, my own experiences of using the archives which proved pertinent to my thesis are described. Correspondingly, 1.4 considers the life writing sources of letters and diaries discovered for this study from archival research, alongside discussing established methodological approaches for interpreting such material. While 1.5 considers best practices for approaching secondary source biographies. As this thesis begins and ends with

a material culture interpretation of historical Quaker women's garments, the recommended methodological practices for the handling of this material are considered first.

1.1 Overall interdisciplinary object-based material culture applied to the interpretation of objects of clothing related to Quaker women 1860-1914

In her twenty-three year old article, "New Directions: Fashion History Studies and Research in North America and England" published in 1993, fashion curator Alexandra Palmer particularly praises the writings of dress historians Valerie Steele and sociologist Elizabeth Wilson. These women's research, according to Palmer, approach the study of fashion garments by combining 'historical and cultural analysis with feminist, postmodern and critical theory' whilst reflecting 'the latest academic trends.'¹ Palmer however, criticises other dress history studies as not appropriately using material culture due to their ambivalence towards using 'object analysis to support or inform the history. Images of material culture are sometimes included to 'illustrate' the text, but rarely to inform it.' Palmer also comments that material culture analysis is a divisive scholarly issue which has 'raised questions concerning the appropriate methodology for the study of dress.'²

To illustrate the division between scholastic and museum-based approaches, Palmer lists categories for classifying the approaches of varying dress scholars, described by material cultural scholar Nancy E. Rexford as long ago as 1988. These categories Palmer quotes and defines as:

'Connoisseur', which she defines as 'someone concerned with beauty'; 'Antiquarian' or 'scholar who accepts all objects as having value because each one contributes to a balanced and comprehensive understanding of the past'; and 'Historian', the one 'who sees his essential function as interpreting the past'.³

¹ Alexandra Palmer, "New Directions: Fashion History Studies and Research in North America and England," *Fashion Theory*, 1.3. (1993): 300.

² Palmer, "New Directions," 301

³ Nancy Rexford, "Studying Garments for their Own Sake: Mapping the World of Costume Scholarship" *Dress* 14 (1988): 68-75. Qted in Palmer, "New Directions," 301

Palmer includes Rexford's classifications because she includes 'Antiquarian' which acknowledges the method of a material culture approach. Furthermore, Palmer praises the scholars Beverly Lemire and Jill Fields because they, in her view, also favour and have developed the material culture approach of analysing garments and using 'formal analysis [...] to reveal evidence of attitudes, belief systems and assumptions which shed light upon a culture.'⁴

Rexford's 1988 categorisations however, did not foretell current inter-disciplinary integration, which explains why my approach falls into more than one of her categories. These are, firstly, antiquarian, through my use of a range of surviving garments to create a reading of past dress practices, and secondly, 'historian,' though my intention to reveal the approaches and belief systems which shed light upon the Quaker culture.⁵ Later in her article, Palmer describes her own 'best' methodology of dress study, as a 'multi-layered' or interdisciplinary method. According to Palmer, she seeks to reveal the personal biographies rooted in the clothes by using 'oral histories', 'archival research, both documentary and visual', 'newspaper and magazine reports' and the application of 'current academic scholarship and theory.' All of Palmer's recommended practices are in use throughout this thesis, alongside additional methods which, according to Palmer, 'overcome the limits of the evidence.'⁶ As such, the material culture methodology of garment analyses praised by Palmer and practised by Valerie Steele, Elizabeth Wilson, Jill Fields and Beverly Lemire, is particularly suited to my research. It combines disciplines, and provides a range of primary evidence by which to assess the attitudes, beliefs systems and personal biographies of Quaker women. It also acknowledges the importance of using multiple sources alongside garment analysis, which is particularly useful for this research where all the information required about a Quaker woman's sartorial choices are not readily evident in archival

⁴ Palmer, "New Directions," 302. See, Jill Fields, *The Production of Glamour: A Social History of Lingerie, 1909-1952* (University of Southern California: 1989) and Beverly Lemire, "Reflections on the Character of Consumerism, Popular Fashion and the English Market in the Eighteenth Century," *Material History Bulletin* 31. Spring (1990): 65-70

⁵ Rexford, "Studying Garments for their Own Sake," 68-75. Qtd in Palmer, "New Directions," 302

⁶ Palmer, "New Directions," 302

sources such as the Religious Society of Friends' ambiguous Rules of Discipline, official Meeting minutes or indeed in surviving garments as stand-alone sources.⁷

The Search for Surviving Garments

With Palmer's suggestions in mind, the identification of surviving items was the clear starting point for this study which uses material cultural analysis of period Quaker women's clothing as the primary source from which to gather information. Beginning in August 2012, I contacted forty-five British dress collections housed in museums and galleries, asking whether they held any Quaker women's garments in their collections from the latter half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁸ I contacted institutions from across the country, including Preston, Exeter, Whitby and Worthing, in order to avoid any pre-determined regional bias in the sourcing and interpretation of garments, as well as to increase the likelihood of positive responses.

Of the thirty-two emailed responses, only eleven collections confirmed that they hold Quaker women's garments dated between 1860 and 1914, revealing the dearth of surviving Friends' clothes in museum collections. This scarcity was compounded when it became apparent that some of these collections hold very few items. For example, Tunbridge Wells Museum's Quaker garment collection consists of only three objects- one coal-scuttle Quaker woman's black satin bonnet in its original red glazed paper hat box, circa 1910; the original wearer is unknown.⁹ One handmade, soft, baby's 'Quaker-style' bonnet, circa 1910, bequeathed in 1967 with no established Quaker provenance.¹⁰ Finally, a miniature doll, with a painted stoneware face and legs and padded canvas body in a Quaker-style outfit of grey dress, white shawl, grey bonnet, red flannel petticoat and white cotton petticoat. The original owner of the doll is also unknown.¹¹ These examples illustrate the scarcity of

⁷ The Rules of Discipline and Meeting structures for the religion are comprehensively discussed in chapter 3.

⁸ For a full list of the institutions contacted and the responses, see Appendix 1.1.

⁹ Black silk Quaker bonnet, 1910. 90/162. Tunbridge Wells Museum. For further details see Appendix 2.1.

¹⁰ Cream satin baby's 'Quaker style' bonnet, 1910. 67/23(2). Tunbridge Wells Museum. Appendix 2.1.

¹¹ Painted Miniature Doll. 1850-60. 70/94. Tunbridge Wells Museum. For further details see Appendix 2.1. Recorded in the museum archives as of German origin, 1850-60, it was acquired from the Haughton family of Crowborough in 1970. The Haughton family appear to be non-Quakers as, according to Religious Society of

archival Quaker dress items and the problems of their sometimes dubious Quaker connections.

Prown's approach to material culture methodology

Yet this apparent scarcity of surviving Friends' clothes from 1860 to 1914 was challenged by my viewing all possible Quaker items, meaning I investigated even the most meagre collections so the garments could be touched and evaluated. This process was described by art historian Jules David Prown in 1982, as the 'mechanics of artifactual cultural expression.'¹² Prown's seminal method of garment analysis was used during all my garment viewings to scrutinise the Quaker garments, and as such it is described and evaluated in detail here. It is imperative to note here however, that whilst his methodological approach was applied to each garment when viewed, this thesis does not talk the reader through these steps for each garment examined.

In his 1982 article, "Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method," Prown articulates using three distinct techniques to evaluate material culture (objects), which he classifies as:

[...] *description*, recording the internal evidence of the object itself; to *deduction*, interpreting the interaction between the object and the perceiver; to *speculation*, framing hypotheses and questions which lead out from the object to external evidence for testing and resolution.¹³

Prown, in this procedural structure therefore, 'proposes a particular methodology based on the proposition that artefacts are primary data for the study of material culture, and,

Friends Librarian and Archivist Jennifer Milligan, they do not appear in either the *Dictionary of Quaker Biography* or lists of members of Sussex and Surrey General Meetings. See Appendix 1.2 for email correspondence regarding this family.

¹² Jules Prown, "On the 'Art' In Artifacts," *Canadian and American Approaches to Material Culture*, ed. Gerald L. Pocus (Canada: Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1991) 145

¹³ Jules David Prown, "Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method," *Winterthur Portfolio*. 17.1. (1982): 7

therefore, they can be used actively as evidence rather than passively as illustration,' a proposition which is basic to this research.¹⁴ For his initial method of 'description', Prown recommends, beginning with large, comprehensive observations and progressing methodically to 'more particular details.' He advocates using 'whatever technical apparatus is appropriate and available' but the terminology used should be 'as accurate as possible [...] as long as they [the terms] can be understood.'¹⁵ In describing 'deduction' however, Prown sub-categorises the process into three actions, defined as sensory engagement, intellectual engagement and emotional response. Sensory engagement is how the researcher touches the article to feel its 'size, weight, configuration, and texture.' Intellectual engagement asks the researcher to consider for what purpose and how the item functions, which 'may need to precede or accompany the sensory engagement.' Emotional response meanwhile, asks the analyst to consider whether the object in question triggers reactions of 'joy, fright, awe, perturbation, revulsion, indifference, curiosity, or other responses that can be quite subtly distinguished.'¹⁶ Therefore, every garment viewing conducted for this thesis, in response to Prown's methodology, began with looking in detail at and describing the garments and 'recording data about the physical and formal properties.' Nine years later, in "On the "Art" in Artifacts" from 1991, Prown restated this methodology. In this later article however, Prown describes why objects analysis is so important to a researcher and asserts that 'the potency of artifacts as cultural evidence is not as bearers of information [...] Rather, artefacts are indicators of belief, of value [...] and my argument is that they primarily express belief and value metaphorically.'¹⁷ Such an argument entirely aligns with the ambition of this research- to use garments as indicators of their wearer's values and beliefs.

Whilst viewing each surviving garment, photographs were taken and, where possible, archival index cards and documentation were photocopied or transcribed. Furthermore, I devised an object analysis form (see Appendix 2.2) for the handling sessions, to guide my recorded detail away from conjecture and to ensure that the most accurate,

¹⁴ Prown, "Mind in Matter," 1

¹⁵ Prown, "Mind in Matter," 7-8. Prown also called description 'substantial analysis.'

¹⁶ Prown, "Mind in Matter," 9. Whilst Prown does consider the deliberations required for the intellectual engagement of an image, as the applicability of his methodology for this thesis is to garments, such discussion is excluded here. Furthermore, Prown notes that whilst these emotional responses are personal, they should be 'significant' enough that other analysts can sympathise with the emotional response to the object.

¹⁷ Prown, "On the 'Art' In Artifacts," 145

comprehensive, relevant, and crucially, similar types of details were always observed. The document prompted me to record Prown's suggested details of each object's 'size, weight, configuration, and texture,' as well as its maker, fabric, colouring, components, appearance, wear and tear and visible alterations. Further details deduced, included suspected uses, were also noted to aid comparisons between objects in future. The object analysis form was particularly valuable because it meant the tangible qualities of the garments deduced through handling and touching them were recorded alongside their appearance and factual details. Touching the garments and noting their qualities was particularly important because the experience of touch is subjective and difficult to garner from photographs or museum accession records.

Susanne Küchler also discusses the importance of using touch to evaluate surviving objects in her 2005 chapter "Why are there Quilts in Polynesia?" from the anthology *Clothing as Material Culture* which she edited alongside Daniel Miller.¹⁸ She examines, as a case study, the qualities and non-monetary values of cloth-things (including quilts, tablecloths and pillow covers) in Polynesia. According to Küchler, these local women deliberately reuse pieces of cloth from second-hand clothing in these products because of their associations with death and renewal through their transference of purpose.¹⁹ Küchler argues however, that these values are not merely ascribed to these pieces of fabric but are also communicated in the very nature of the flimsy and decaying fibres. This imbues the choice of using this cloth in these products, rather than any other material, with a deeper significance.²⁰ Whilst Küchler's essay engages with a different subject matter than my thesis, she advocates the method of touch in order to consider the qualities of the material from which an item is made and what characteristics the fabric itself communicates.

¹⁸ Recent publications have more specifically tackled the topic of design and sensory culture, which seek to consider the role of the senses in society and how the senses mediate our experience of the world. These publications have considered how the senses mediate between mind and the body, idea and object and self and environment. Publications include: *The Senses and Society* (London: Bloomsbury journals, 2014), Michael Bull and Jon. P Mitchell, *Ritual Performance and the Senses* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015) and Nina Levent and Alvaro Pascal-Leone, *The Multisensory Museum: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives on Touch, Sound, Smell, Memory, and Space* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014).

¹⁹ Susanne Küchler, "Why are there Quilts in Polynesia?" *Clothing as Material Culture*. ed. Daniel Miller and Susanne Küchler (New York: Berg, 2005): 176.

²⁰ Küchler, "Why are there Quilts in Polynesia?" 176.

Visiting the collections and touching their surviving Quaker garments also enabled me to interact and assess the environment in which they are stored and displayed. Observations about these Quaker garment's display, or lack thereof, reveals where they are located within the hierarchy of value by each institution. Furthermore, by witnessing whether garments are collated by type, fabric, purpose, wearer, producer or religious affiliation, it is possible to gauge how the process of their archiving has mediated the items and how each institution values them- as Quaker items or for another purpose.

Prown's other category of 'speculation' however, asks the researcher to move beyond both the tangible aspects of the garments and the institutional setting of their storage, and requires instead 'creative imaging' and 'free association' by the scholar so that they may develop 'theories that might explain the various effects observed and felt.' Prown warns however that in doing this, the analyser must not 'make the mistake of assigning intentionality or even awareness to the fabricating culture.' Prown suggests that in order to avoid this, the researcher should develop 'a program for validation, that is, a plan for scholarly investigation of questions posed by the material evidence,' whereby various disciplines are used to test the researcher's hypothesis.²¹

In order to capture any speculations (alongside factual details) which the curators or costume assistance may hypothesise during my viewings, I digitally audio recorded our discussions (see Appendix 1.2). Unfortunately, in several cases these recordings chronicle little more than the unfamiliarity of the curator with Quaker garments and the lack of provenance and accession information regarding each item. Other transcribed recordings and emails featured in Appendix 1.2 however, conversely illustrate how these conversations can provide the researcher with details impossible to garner from either the provenance and ascension records or the objects themselves. Furthermore, these discussions often aided my interpretation of the objects through the consideration of the curator or assistants point-of-view as well as their professional knowledge, as illustrated through my discussions with Jim Ranahan regarding the Cadbury wedding photographs in section 1.2. Of note is the elderly volunteer museum assistant, Ann Petty at Whitby Museum, who personally

²¹ Prown, 'Mind in Matter.' 10

remembered a Quaker named, Miss Sewell, who donated her family's garments to the museum's dress collection. Whitby Museum houses four Quaker garments donated in 1993 by a local Quaker, Stella Adelaide Sewell.²² These garments consisted of a black silk bonnet, c.1840,²³ a handmade white machine lace and black silk pinafore, a well-worn cream cotton lady's waist apron and a cream *broderie anglaise* baby's bib, all from the nineteenth century.²⁴ Ann recalled that Sewell, 'was a teacher, she taught some of my children, at the primary school, and she was a maiden lady, and [...] her mother lived to about a hundred, but they originally had a confectionary business in Whitby.'²⁵ No such detail was retained in the archival records. Whilst the museum catalogue information for each item was sparse, Ann Petty's lively and informative recollections of the donor and her family, alongside our speculative discussion during the viewing (see Appendix 1.2), proved both a surprise and invaluable for further historical and genealogical tracing of the family and Quakers in the area, after the visit.²⁶ Hearing Ann Petty's recollections, alongside the other documented conversations and emails transcribed in Appendix 1.2, also supports Alexandra Palmer's advocated method of sourcing 'personal biographies embedded in the clothes' through the use of 'oral histories', and illustrates the very real research value of communicating with and then recording discussions with those who keep the collections.²⁷

Fashion curator and historian Valerie Steele, also outlines and evaluates the 'description, deduction and speculation' material culture methodology devised by Prown in 1982, in her 1998 article "A Museum of Fashion is more than a Clothes Bag", published one year after Alexandra Palmer's article.²⁸ In adding her own recommended methods to the practice of analysing garments however, she states that whilst 'Prown does not explicitly say so, the comparison of objects is also an important part of [his] methodology.'²⁹ The practice of

²² This was the initial location where a matching of Quaker women's garments and a known provenance, was found at Whitby Museum in the North East of England in October 2012.

²³ Black Silk Bonnet, c.1840 WHITM:GBB101-WHITM:GBB124. Whitby Museum. See Appendix 2.1.

²⁴ Lace and Silk pinafore, c. 19th Century, WHITM:GBB107. Whitby Museum. Ladies Cotton Waist Apron, c. 19th Century, WHITM:GBB101. Whitby Museum. Babies Bib, c. 19th Century, WHITM:GBB105. Whitby Museum. See Appendix 2.1.

²⁵ Interview with Ann Petty. 7th March 2013. See Appendix 1.2.

²⁶ These records listed only the accession number, fabric, one line description and donor.

²⁷ Alexandra Palmer, "New Directions: Fashion History Studies and Research in North America and England," 302.

²⁸ Valerie Steele, "A Museum of Fashion is More Than a Clothes Bag," *Fashion Theory*, 2.4. (1998): 329

²⁹ Steele, "A Museum of Fashion is More Than a Clothes Bag," 330.

comparison between historical garments as a method of analysis is also condoned by Valerie Cumming (who has had a long career as a dress historian at the Museum of London) in her 2004 book, *Understanding Fashion History*. According to Cumming, comparison has become increasingly possible since 1999, because during the past two decades a growing number of museum dress collections have been assembled, photographed and placed on museum websites.³⁰ Steele warns of this method however, that the choice of garments for comparison is influenced by the 'questions asked' by the researcher and their preferences concerning producer, wearer, period, construction or appearance. Steele also acknowledges that this bias influences the researcher's outcomes. Alongside Steele and Palmer, Cumming, in her 2004 chapter "Understanding Fashion History," also warns of bias encroaching on the evaluation process of the researcher whilst analysing garments. Cumming mentions the approaches of Alexandra Palmer, Giorgio Riello and Peter McNeil, but warns that contemporary investigative methodologies are increasingly influenced by the need to explain and contextualise our findings. Her chapter criticises that not enough garment-focused, 'pure, unadulterated detective work- sifting, collating and following up leads from fellow scholars' is being undertaken.³¹ According to Cumming, this focus is imposed by our contemporary environment because we 'cannot recapture the past without imposing upon it our [contemporary] systems of values.'³² Her warning is valid. Through this thesis I am careful, however, to use the surviving material cultural as the main source of evidence. To heed Steele and Cumming's warning therefore, my own material culture research focused first-and-foremost on the garments, and only on those which met my research criteria of gender, nationality, religious affiliation and period range, in order to deduce the most relevant comparisons from the clothing.³³

³⁰ Valerie Cumming, *Understanding Fashion History* (London: Batsford, 2004) 29.

³¹ Cumming, *Understanding Fashion History*, 29. *The Fashion History Reader: Global Perspectives*. ed. Giorgio Riello and Peter McNeil (London: Routledge, 2010), was consulted for this methodology, however whilst it illustrates the multi-disciplinary scholarship and research being conducted throughout the field none of the texts explicitly probes assessment of surviving garments. Whilst Riello and McNeil's anthology usefully emphasises the needs for contextualisation, other sources which have explicitly outlined their methodological approaches have been consulted here to facilitate the establishment of a critical methodology for studying Quaker women's dress in England, 1860-1914, for this thesis.

³² Cumming, *Understanding Fashion History*, 28-29.

³³ It is imperative the researcher considers either a plethora of comparisons, which is problematic due to both scope and time restrictions, or that focus on key themes of study is practiced, in order to deduce the most relevant comparisons.

Another method of material cultural analysis identified by Steele (identified first by the scholar E. McClung Fleming) describes the researcher discovering the relationship between the artefact and its culture, to discern its original uses, role and non-functional or 'symbolic' associations.³⁴ This process however, is complex when analysing historical garments because of the changing meaning of signs over time. Thus, 'supplementary information must be obtained from other sources' to provide the researcher with period details which contextualise the object. In the case of my research however, the Quaker devotion to collecting and creating written records for both religious instruction and family memory made this process relatively straightforward. The authoritative Quaker archives at Religious Society of Friends in Euston, London, which houses religious documentation and family memory, provided documented details of many of the Quaker women's families and confirmed their Quaker provenance.

For example, before my visit to Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery (BMAG) in January 2013 to view items of clothing belonging to Geraldine Cadbury, I conducted initial genealogical and familial study at the Religious Society of Friends, London. Whilst conducting this genealogical research prior to viewing the material cultural items contravenes Prown's linear process of analysis, my heightened awareness at the risk of inferring pre-determined meaning onto the garments, combined with my use of the object analysis form, prevented Prown's process from being entirely inverted.

During my object handling session at BMAG, four garments and one complete fancy dress outfit were viewed, most with well-provenanced family histories and the names of wearer connected to the items. A similar collection, was also found in April 2013, at the Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall in Manchester, which houses several well-provenance Quaker garments. In fact, Platt Hall houses the largest collection of Quaker dress in Britain, some of it collected before 1947 by Dr. C. W. Cunnington.³⁵ The Quaker garments in their collection include a beige watered silk wedding dress belonging to Helen Priestman Bright Clark, from her

³⁴ E. McClung Fleming, "Artifact Study: A Proposed Model," *Winterthur Portfolio* 9 (1973) and Steele, "A Museum of Fashion is More Than a Clothes Bag," 329.

³⁵ Much of the collection was compiled by Dr Cecil Willett Cunnington, and his wife, whom avidly collected a range of historical and contemporary garments throughout the early twentieth century, when hardly any garments were being collected by museums. In addition, Cunnington collected photographs, books and fashion journals; now housed at Platt Hall.

marriage 24th July 1866, as well as the wedding dress worn by her mother, Elizabeth Priestman. Her Plain wedding ensemble features a pale grey satin dress, matching pelerine, cream silk bonnet and cap, from 1839 and is discussed in chapter 7.³⁶

Such detailed provenance and accession information recorded by both BMAG and Gallery of Costume Platt Hall, alongside my own genealogical and religious research, enabled me to quickly identify Helen Priestman Bright Clark's 1866 wedding dress and Geraldine Cadbury's Aesthetic Liberty & Co. wedding dress from 1891, as ideal dresses for case study analysis.³⁷ Due to their excellent preservation, their connections to powerful and well-known Quaker families, and both garment's dates within the timeline of this investigation, they are the articles upon which the Semi-Adaptive case studies for chapters 7 and 8 respectively, are based.

Valerie Steele finishes her article, "A Museum of Fashion is More Than a Clothes Bag," by articulating that the value and purpose of the method of deduction lies in its ability to illuminate the 'relations of the artefact to our culture' and to explain clothing in a manner which gives it relevance to a contemporary audience.³⁸ Such an aspiration is also the fundamental principle of this thesis. Throughout, I seek to explain Quaker women's negotiations of fashionable dress in a critical and analytical manner and express to a contemporary audience how the non-verbal culture of female clothing has been used for centuries to intentionally communicate non-conformist messages.

³⁶ Watered silk wedding dress, 1866. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester City Galleries. See Appendix 2.1 and Wedding dress and pelerine, 1839. 1960.222. Bonnet and cap, 1960.223/2. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester City Galleries. See Appendix 2.1. The collection also holds their collection houses a slate grey-blue and sage green silk bodice with two matching skirts, 1873-1877, and an ivory silk shawl circa 1860-1870, all worn by the Quaker Annie Neave (née Newman) who perished in 1916 on the torpedoed RMS Arabic. The collection also boasts an assortment of six Quaker bonnets and a cap as well as a brown silk Quaker dress with a muslin collar circa 1905-1915, all without provenance.

³⁷ Wedding Dress, 1891. 1698M68. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. See Appendix 2.1. Wedding shoes, 1891. 1968M72. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. See Appendix 2.1. Silk skirt, 1898. 1968M64. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. See Appendix 2.1. Alongside Cadbury's wedding dress, her pair of Marsh & Moore bridal shoes of blue silk are also part of the collection, as well as an Agnes Edward & Soeurs silk day skirt she wore in 1898. All of these garments were presented to the museum, along with photographs of the 1891 wedding, by the Cadbury family during the 1960s.

³⁸ Steele, "A Museum of Fashion is More Than a Clothes Bag," 332.

A year after Steele's article, Sophie Woodward also proposed an additional solution to Cumming's anxiety about the researcher imposing their system of value on their primary sources, (in this case the garments and their wearers). In her 2005 essay, "Looking Good: Feeling Right- Aesthetics of the Self," she identifies period photographs as a supporting source of evidence, which enable the researcher to view the wearers' original 'complex construction of the surface', through the assemblage of their outfit as a whole.³⁹ In agreement with Woodward's suggested method, surviving photographs are used throughout this thesis to illustrate the composition of the ensembles worn and in which settings, by case studies of Elizabeth Petipher Cash, Geraldine Cadbury, Helen Priestman Bright Clark and Mary Ann Seebohm. Therefore, methodologies for handling photographic sources are now discussed, particularly those which address evaluating nineteenth century portraits.

1.2 Established methodologies for the interpretation and use of photographs

In his 2003 chapter, "Reading an Archive: Photography between labour and capital", Allan Sekula argues that photographs should always be interpreted by researchers in a critical manner.⁴⁰ For Sekula, these 'fragmentary glimpses of the past' are only successfully interpreted if the researcher acknowledges that historical photographs captured subjects considered significant events, or 'spectacles.' As such, he states that a historians failure to comment on 'these initial uses is naive at best, and cynical at worst.'⁴¹ For Sekula, a researcher successfully reads a photograph when using a methodology which considers the negotiation between the historical social context of the original production, its appearance and the modern archival interpretation of the image.

Peter Burke's 2001 publication *Eyewitnessing*, went even further than Sekula, in arguing that in period photographs not merely the subject matter but also the stance and gestures of the sitter must be critically analysed. According to Burke, nineteenth century portrait

³⁹ Woodward, "Looking Good: Feeling Right- Aesthetics of the Self," 22.

⁴⁰ Sekula, "Reading an Archive: Photography between labour and capital," *The Photography Reader* (London: Routledge, 2003) 448.

⁴¹ Sekula, "Reading an Archive," 448.

photographs are structured according to 'a pattern and are often loaded with symbolic meaning.'⁴² Burke describes how the photographer and sitter 'colluded' to create a flattering presentation and that the conscious choices of posture, gestures and accessories 'generally reinforce their self-representations.'⁴³ Miles Lambert in *Fashion in Photographs 1860-1880*, agrees. Furthermore, Lambert is also critical of the dress worn and notes that in posed studio portraits the 'dress is invariably smart, formal, respectable and presumably, often new.' He explains that "dressing up" for a portrait was the norm, even in the lowest circles.⁴⁴ As such, when analysing studio-based portraits from the middle of the nineteenth century, the researcher needs to exercise caution in noting that the garments worn by the sitter may have been the best they owned or could afford and therefore not the garments they would have worn on a day-to-day basis. According to Joan Severa some photographers even lent garments kept in the studio to their customers.⁴⁵ From Sekula, Burke, Lambert and Severa's recommended critical examinations of photographs therefore, the practice of examining the event or spectacle, the posture and gestures of the sitter and their clothing is undertaken throughout this thesis.

Furthermore, according to sociologist and film historian Annette Kuhn in her 1995 book *Family Secrets*, each photograph constructs a broader narrative of what she referred to as the 'cultural construction of family.' She argues that the family's photograph collection is a means by which they construct their idea of their family story through images of their past.⁴⁶ Kuhn explains that, 'in the process of using - producing, selecting, ordering, displaying- photographs, the family is actually in the process of making itself.'⁴⁷ As such, for researchers such as myself throughout this investigation, in using bygone familial photographs they should, in part, also be handled as surviving relics of an attempt to

⁴² Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence*. (London: Reaktion, 2001): 25.

⁴³ Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, 26.

⁴⁴ Miles Lambert, *Fashion in Photographs, 1860-1880* (London: Batsford, 1991) 12.

⁴⁵ Joan Severa, *Dressed for the Photographer. Ordinary Americans and Fashion, 1840-1900* (Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1995) xii.

⁴⁶ Annette Kuhn, *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination* (London: Verso, 1995) 17. Clearly, several photographs from the same family are required in order to assess such a construction, however in the cases of Geraldine Cadbury and Helen Bright Clark several images were sourced and therefore this has been possible.

⁴⁷ Kuhn, *Family Secrets*, 17.

produce, as Kuhn states, a 'better past tomorrow handled by the family photography industry.'⁴⁸

Such conscious construction of a scene for later veneration was not however, restricted to the image of the family group by nineteenth century photographers. In his 1994 publication, *Theatres of Memory, Past and Present in Contemporary Culture* British historian, Raphael Samuel, recalls the 'disconcerting' feeling of becoming aware that, 'much of what we reproduced [...] was fake-painterly in origin and intention even if it was documentary in form.'⁴⁹ His acknowledgement that many period photographs are staged, even those that appear documentary in form, emphasises the importance of using inter-disciplinary methods of research. These allow photographic evidence to be weighed against surviving garments and written documentation. However, any evidence of construction or staging of familial or religious sentiment in the found photographs for this thesis can be interpreted positively. These details reveal how the sitter wished for themselves to be portrayed, be that particularly Plain or fashionable, for example.

Samuel, Sekula, Kuhn, Burke and Lambert however all agree on the concept that, 'historians, like anyone else, expect a photograph to tell a story.'⁵⁰ As such, newly found photographs of Quaker women from 1860 to 1914, taken outside of the studio setting have been helpful in the creation of a narrative of the female case studies offered here. At BMAG for example, stored in their collection alongside Cadbury's Aesthetic wedding outfit, are copies of monochrome wedding photographs taken of the bridal party on the wedding day on 8th September 1891, as discussed in chapter 7.⁵¹ One photograph (Fig. 1.1) depicts twenty members of the Cadbury and Southall families, including the bride and groom.⁵² Taken in a garden setting, with a background of shrubbery and grass at their feet, the two young flower-girls are seated, cross-legged on a small rug at the front of the group. The composition draws the eye toward the bride and groom, seated in the centre of the image,

⁴⁸ Kuhn, *Family Secrets*, 20.

⁴⁹ Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture* (London: Verso, [1994] 2012): 319

⁵⁰ Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, 328.

⁵¹ Janet Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury 1865 – 1941: A Biography* (London: George Harrap and Company Ltd, 1948): 42.

⁵² Cadbury Wedding Photograph, 8th September 1891. MS466A/603. Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery.



Fig. 1.1: *Cadbury Wedding Photograph, with the bride Geraldine Cadbury at the centre.* 8th September 1891. MS466A/603. Birmingham Library. © Cadbury Archive, Mondelēz International.



Fig. 1.2: *Wedding photograph depicting the bride, groom and bridesmaids. The image is clearly blurred.* 8th September 1891. MS466A/604(a). Birmingham Library. © Cadbury Archive, Mondelēz International.

whilst the elder members stand around them. A subsequent photograph (Fig. 1.2) depicts the bride, groom, bridesmaids and flower-girls, in a very similar garden setting.⁵³ Low walls of rocks, pebbles and earth are all visible, whilst the shrubbery infringes on the sides of the photographic composition, implying the sitters have been moved to a garden alcove. Most strikingly however this photograph is out of focus. As these two photographs stored at BMAG are high resolution copies, it was imperative to view the original prints in order to verify the more intimate photograph's blurriness. Handling of the original print, on 14th November 2013 at the Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham at Birmingham National Archives, clearly revealed the image would have been out of focus to even its original owners. The original preservation and contemporary archiving of a blurred photograph raises questions as to why such an indistinct image should have been kept and collected. Upon interviewing Library of Birmingham Archivist Jim Ranahan, he noted:

[...] when a large collection is appraised we would not normally expect to study individual records or photographs, so occasional poor quality items may enter the collection. A further point in an archive context (as opposed to a gallery or museum context) is that the evidential value of the item may carry greater weight than its informational value. There may be important reasons to retain a blurred image if the print offers other contextual data or if the print is the only accessible version.⁵⁴

In assessing these images, the blurred photograph depicts Geraldine Cadbury smiling directly into the camera, whereas the larger, focused photograph of the wedding party depicts her looking downcast towards the floor. Perhaps therefore, for the family, despite its indistinct nature the bleary image represented a happier depiction of the bride and therefore as Kuhn notes, a more desirable 'cultural construction of family.'⁵⁵

Significantly, however, Raphael Samuel emphasised that photographs require historical criticism if we are to use them as evidence. Samuel therefore offered his criteria of 'formal analysis' which any historian using photography as a source should heed. Whilst the other

⁵³ Cadbury Wedding Photograph, 8th September 1891. MS466A/604a. Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery.

⁵⁴ Interview with Jim Ranahan, Archivist of the Photograph Collection at the Library of Birmingham. 4th November 2014. See Appendix 1.2.

⁵⁵ Kuhn, *Family Secrets*, 17.

photographic texts mentioned in this section touch upon several of Samuel's criteria, his text defines these points most succinctly into a usable method for analysing photographs. He identifies four key factors, two of which are particularly relevant to this research. These are, firstly, assessing the 'composition, lighting and frame-the grammar of photography-could tell us something of what the camera is up to.' Secondly, examining 'why a photograph is, in contemporary terms, appealing.'⁵⁶ For example, Helen Priestman Bright Clark's wedding photograph discussed in chapter 7, is of particular insight for this research because of its ability to depict to me, as a contemporary researcher, the fashionable mantle and bonnet she wore for her marriage despite only her Semi-Adaptive wedding dress having survived.

Photographs are also an already established resource used by dress historians seeking to find historically accurate evidence of the appearance of period ensembles. Miles Lambert's *Fashion in Photographs 1860-1880*, uses well-provenanced and dated images to 'present a photographic and thus historically accurate, record of the clothes worn by men, women and children [...] using unpublished photographs.'⁵⁷ Chronologically arranged and supported by 'extracts from fashion magazines of the day, and comments from contemporary observers' each photograph, according to Lambert, reveals the 'sitter's costume, hairstyle, footwear, jewellery.'⁵⁸ Similarly, in American costume curator Joan Severa's 1995 publication, *Dressed for the Photographer*, black and white photographs are analysed in turn and annotated with comments regarding the cut, fabric, date of the garments worn as well as the sitter's posture, how their hair is worn, and whether any of these features reveal details of the sitter's class or age. She uses surviving photographs of nineteenth-century Americans from across the class spectrum to analyse what is really being worn in the pictures, in order, according to Claudia Kidwell's foreword, to make the portraits meaningful for costume and material culture studies.⁵⁹ Far from focusing on a critical history of photography, for Severa's publication, 'the photographic means is unimportant except in a demographic sense, as it

⁵⁶ Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, 330.

⁵⁷ Lambert, *Fashion in Photographs, 1860-1880*, 9.

⁵⁸ Lambert, *Fashion in Photographs, 1860-1880*, 9.

⁵⁹ Claudia Bush Kidwell, "Foreword," *Dressed for the Photographer: Ordinary Americans and Fashion, 1840-1900* (Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1995): xi.

relates to [...] the clothing under analysis.⁶⁰ The same is true for the use of photography within this thesis.

Severa however, uses photographs not only as a way to reveal the compositions of outfits worn during certain periods, as Lambert does, but also to display examples of how fashions were not merely a clean linear progression, as Elizabeth Petipher Cash's portraits in chapter 6 reveal. Severa discusses a daguerreotype from 1854-56 featuring two young girls, Emma and Libby Marvin, and notes that the pressed fan pleats on the girl's bodices were 'not typical.' She comments that, "'best" dresses often carried over some detail of a quaint or old-fashioned nature for the mere sake of being picturesque.⁶¹ According to Severa therefore, photographs provide evidence that older fashionable features intruded into later styles and therefore makers and wearers brought individual interpretations of fashions to their garments. Thus, photographs provide evidence of the overall ensemble of a wearer of a specific date, how the garments were worn on the body and what they were worn with, as well as how fashion was individually interpreted. These details are impossible to grasp from a surviving dress or garment stored flat and solitary in a museum- making the use of photography as a supporting method of research into Quaker women of vital importance.

Photographs of nineteenth-century Quaker women are held in the Religious Society of Friends, London, collection and include hundreds of alphabetically arranged anthologies of *cartes de visite* photographs of British and American Quakers, named *London Friends' Institute*, collected between 1887 and the subsequent two decades (Fig. 1.3 and 1.4).⁶² As an accompanying 1888 publication *Biographical Catalogue being on Account of the Lives of Friends and others whose portraits are in the London Friends' Institute*, explains, the Society sought to 'print a biographical catalogue respecting the Friends and others whose portraits

⁶⁰ Kidwell, "Foreword," xvii

⁶¹ Joan Severa, *Dressed for the Photographer: Ordinary Americans and Fashion, 1840-1900* (Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1995): 152.

⁶² Hannah Rumball, *Unpicking the Quakers: Prescription and Practice in 19th Century British Quaker Dress*. Masters by Research Thesis. Kingston University. 2010: 63. These photographs are stored alongside other visual sources including paintings, drawings, prints and posters, which are accessed by consulting old leather-bound, type-written catalogues listing each visual source alphabetically by sitter or subject, and then requesting a viewing of the item from the librarian. Evidently, the *London Friends Institute* project was considered ongoing as at the end of each alphabetical entry there are several blank pages, presumably so more entries could be added as they were sent in over time.

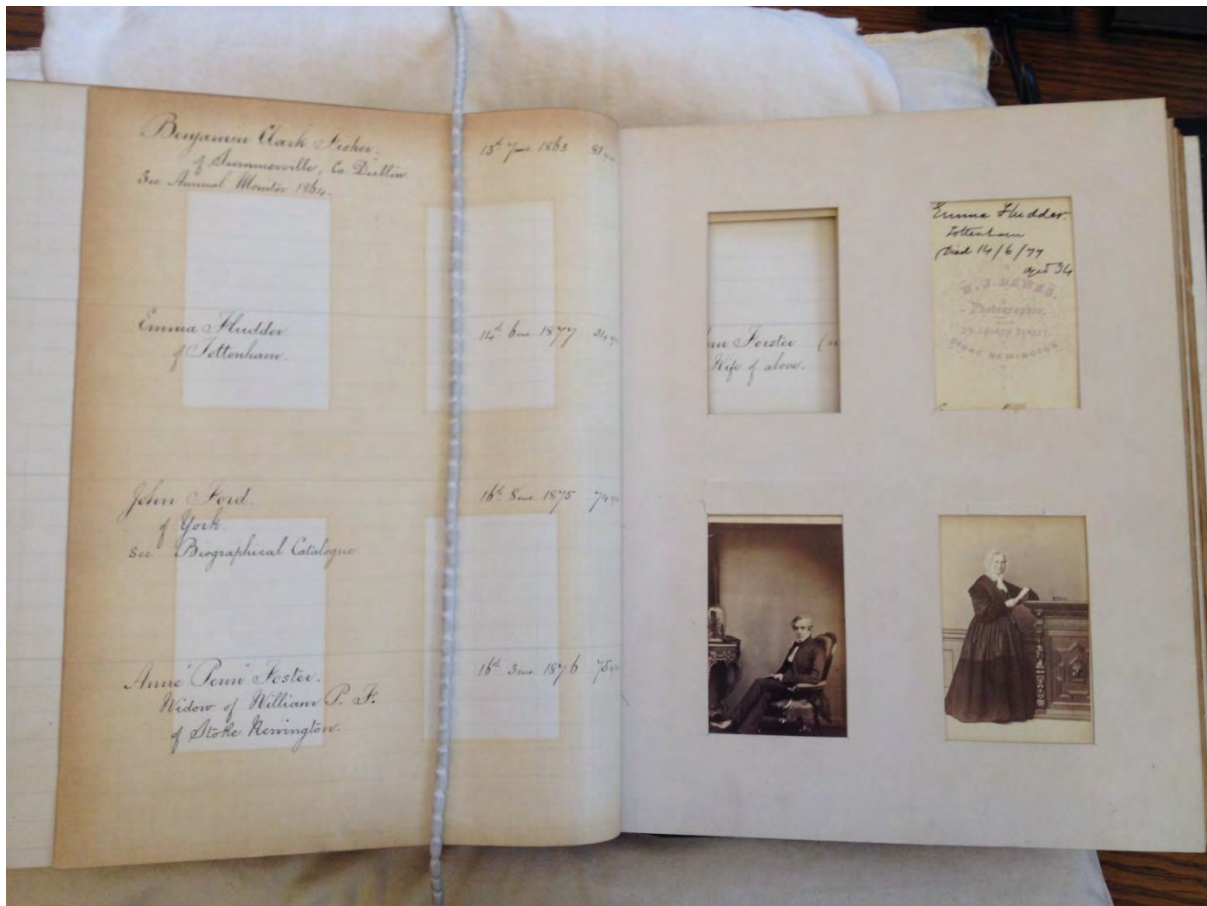


Fig. 1.3: Double page spread from the C-F London Friends Institute. Showing the heavy card page with 4 rectangular windows for the carte de visite which slot in place, faced with a paper page containing the name, place and date of death for each of the sitters. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends. NSA13 Shelf 4. Personal photograph by the author. 5th March 2015. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.



Fig. 1.4: Selection of *carte de visite*, revealing studio compositions which include more than one sitter. Q-S London Friends Institute. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends. NSA13 Shelf 4. Personal photograph by the author. 5th March 2015. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.

were in a collection hung in the gallery of the London Friends' Institute.' These *carte de visite* were posted to the Library by family members to illustrate this publication (Fig. 1.5).⁶³ These portraits therefore illustrate members of the Society who had died and whose biographies were being compiled for archival records and memorial. As such these studio portraits, taken in the sitter's lifetime, depict solitary figures, with some husband and wife or mother and child compositions, yet none depict large family groups.⁶⁴ My Master's dissertation considered this source as a 'social inventory of shifting personal presentations adopted within the Quaker religion' as well as, 'a bond unifying these Quakers' identities [...] with inclusion in the Headquarters anthology becoming a visual signifier of membership and classification as a follower.'⁶⁵ In this thesis however, a selection of these *cartes de visite* are used as a cross-section of visual supporting evidence, as Miles Lambert described, to reveal a historically precise verification of the garments actually worn by Quaker women and to provide confirmation of the general ensemble of a wearer; how the garments were worn on the body and what they were worn with.⁶⁶

Through Sekula, Burke, Lambert, Severa, Kuhn and Samuel's methodological considerations, a set of five critical analyses has therefore been applied to every relevant nineteenth century photograph viewed for this research, although not every factor is explicitly described for every image in the text. These are, firstly, awareness that such images may 'present a photographic and thus historically accurate, record of the clothes worn by men, women and children.' These must however, be examined with the recognition that the garments worn may have been the best they owned or could afford and not the garments they would have worn day-to-day.⁶⁷ Secondly, that the 'archival standards' at work upon the photographs, may reveal each image's connection with photographic 'sponsorship, authorship, genre, technique, iconography, subject matter,' which despite being absent

⁶³ *Biographical Catalogue being on Account of the Lives of Friends and others whose portraits are in the London Friends' Institute. Also descriptive Notices of those of the Friends' Schools and Institutions of which the Gallery Contains Illustrations &c.* (London: Friends Institute, 13, Bishopsgate Street Without, 1888) 092.1.BIO. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London.

⁶⁴ Taken during the sitters lives, the surrounding studio scenery is sparsely furnished with rugs, curtains, chairs and tables to resemble a homely environment, yet photographed against a plain un-wallpapered backdrop, so as not to obscure the sitter.

⁶⁵ Rumball, *Unpicking the Quakers*, 69.

⁶⁶ Lambert, *Fashion in Photographs, 1860-1880*, 9.

⁶⁷ Lambert, *Fashion in Photographs, 1860-1880*, 9.



Fig. 1.5: The reverse of Samuel Rhoads of Philadelphia's carte de visite, with the postage stamp still in place where the carte was sent to the Religious Society of Friends

headquarters. Q-S London Friends Institute. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends.

NSA13 Shelf 4. Personal photograph by the author. 5th March 2015. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.

from the archival classification may be perceived through a discerning and rigorous methodology.⁶⁸ Thirdly, an acknowledgement that historical photographic subjects may have been taken as recording significant events, or 'spectacles.'⁶⁹ Fourthly, 'the photograph is a prop, a prompt, a pre-text,' and that therefore the role of the photograph is not as an end product but as one aspect, in a longer process of memory-making.⁷⁰ Fifth, that familial images display a 'cultural construction of family.'⁷¹ Such varied analytic influences, far from obscuring the content of the photograph, cumulatively create a thorough methodology of analysis of surviving monochrome photographs for this investigation.

Acknowledged in this methodological list are the archival processes which affect how the researcher responds to an image, because of the classification already placed on it by the archival institution. As a number of archives have been used throughout the research for this thesis, I now consider the best methodological practices for approaching these collections.

1. 3 Established methodologies for the interpretation of archives

Other cultural constructions are present in environments in which material culture is stored, as well as in the subject or staging of the photograph itself. As many of the photographs and textual documents used for my research have been found in archives, the established methods for the analysis of these sources are discussed. Whilst few methods for approaching archives are explicitly outlined by scholars, their writings repeatedly emphasise the need for the researcher to be wary of the limitations of archival sources and self-reflexive of subjectivity encroaching on their research.

In her 1999 article "The Seductions of the Archive: Voices Lost and Found", historical sociologist Harriet Bradley considers how the physicality of an archive frames its collection. She warns that through researchers' engagement with these collections and their

⁶⁸ Sekula, "Reading an Archive: Photography between labour and capital," 446.

⁶⁹ Sekula, "Reading an Archive: Photography between labour and capital," 448.

⁷⁰ Kuhn, *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination*, 12.

⁷¹ Kuhn, *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination*, 17.

endeavour to 'recover' memories of the past, 'we also inevitably rewrite history, that is, re-create the past in new forms.'⁷² Bradley begins by describing how the act of conducting research in a physical archive, pulling leather bound volumes from shelves and leafing through reports, is a 'rite of initiation into the profession' of being a historian.

Drawing on her experiences of the Bodleian Library, Bradley describes how the 'institutional forms of modernity' become a 'home' for the researcher and help craft their 'occupational identity,' which resonates deeply with my own experiences. Hours spent in the British Library, London, from October 2012 onwards have normalised the institutional surroundings and heightened my awareness of fellow academics' research processes. My process induced a sense of, what Bradley defined as, 'belonging' and impacted into my research and writing process through my conforming to a routine- including always using the same locker and studying in the same reading room on the same desk. Furthermore, Bradley also warns that:

[...] the research induces yet another sense of belonging, at a deeper psychic level, as she 'uncovers' the history of her chosen group [...] and identifies them ever more firmly as 'her tribe'. Identifying them as hers, she may slide towards identification with them, becoming in fancy 'one of the tribe.'⁷³

Whilst Bradley's descriptions initially appear light-hearted, her observations identify the universal nature of how researchers struggle to retain objectivity throughout their research process. The researcher's subject may increasingly be mediated by the projection of his/her own desires, nature and personality onto the historical narrative. Thus, the researcher must remain aware of their own subjectivity. Yet Bradley also notes that the archive itself is not an entirely objective construction, stating that:

This seduction is of course in great part illusion. Only what has been stored can be located (the voices have been already selected and in a sense heard); and it can be approached only by the application of a code, the archivists' cataloguing or

⁷² Harriet Bradley, "Seduction of the Archive: Voices Lost and Found," *History of the Human Sciences* 12.2. (1999): 108.

⁷³ Bradley, "Seduction of the Archive: Voices Lost and Found," 110.

classificatory system in combination with that of the historian herself. Only what has been pre-judged as relevant is likely to be recovered.⁷⁴

Indeed, Bradley's warning concerning the pre-judgement of the institution was all too evident during my research at Liberty's Business Archive, Westminster City Archives. The Liberty Historic and Artistic Costume Studio catalogue from the year that Cadbury's dress was made, 1891, was missing from their collection, although catalogues for 1890 and 1892 were found. Furthermore, client and garment ordering details from the late nineteenth century had never even entered the archive.

Bradley therefore acknowledges that competing forces influence the researcher's process, that the institutional archiving process is discriminatory, and that subjectivity continually intrudes on the researcher's analytical process. These points are often overlooked in object-based articles which consider research methodologies. Whilst Bradley's article offers no solutions to these obstacles which 'influence and distort,' her article provides a warning to the researcher that 'we may only find that which we bring with us.'⁷⁵

Similarly, the Reverend August R. Suelflow's American religious archive 'manual', *Religious Archives: An Introduction*, published in 1980, observes the influence that even a religious institutions archival practice has on its collection. He notes that, 'a modern observer of religious archives can detect the role once played by individual collectors, denominational officers, church history professors, historical societies and seminal libraries.'⁷⁶ Whilst Suelflow's publication specifically discusses archives belonging to the 'Reformed Church, Presbyterians, Mormons, Lutherans and others,' and fails to mention Quaker archives, the text is written in such a way as to render its advice universally relevant.⁷⁷ Suelflow's acknowledgment, illustrates in practice, Bradley's assertion that within archives only what has been collected can be uncovered by the researcher.⁷⁸ Suelflow also acknowledges the

⁷⁴ Bradley, "Seduction of the Archive: Voices Lost and Found," 113.

⁷⁵ Bradley, "Seduction of the Archive: Voices Lost and Found," 119.

⁷⁶ August R. Suelflow, *Religious Archives: An Introduction* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1980) 6. Whilst his text is twenty-five years old it is no less relevant.

⁷⁷ Suelflow, *Religious Archives*, 6.

⁷⁸ Bradley, "Seduction of the Archive: Voices Lost and Found," 113.

'tension' religious archivist's face between the dual obligations 'to preserve and serve.'⁷⁹

Whilst Suelflow offers no advice to the researcher to overcome these influencing factors, he suggests that 'for the historical well-being of a parish it is recommended that the congregation or local group establish the office of archivist,' a practice which in my experience is frequently implemented.⁸⁰

At the Religious Society of Friends, Euston, for example, many of the archivists or librarians at these collections are practicing members of the Quaker community. Therefore, these practitioners are a resource of pertinent religious historical and social information to the researcher in these collections. At the Religious Society of Friends, London, Senior Library Assistant, Jennifer Milligan, responds to the majority of communications to the archive. She is the initial person with whom I have negotiated and who has responded to all my Quaker related research enquiries, suggesting relevant source material to consult or alternative local archives. Access to this library and its archives is entirely at the discretion of the librarian on duty. These protective systems however are essential to preserve the vast archive which may be consulted, which, Marcia Pointon discusses, include 'the writings of diaries, letters, tracts, responses, essays and books [which are] an endemic part of the dissident religious tradition in Britain.' For Quakers, these forms of communication 'provided the framework of an organisation that worked by linking local groups to regional [...] to a central body' and thus are imperative to a researcher's understanding of the religious network.⁸¹

The difficulty in gaining access to many religious archives is also acknowledged by Irish women's historian Rosemary Raughter's 2005 publication *Religious Women and their History: Breaking the Silence*. Raughter's study discusses the use of Irish convent records as a 'prime source for the history of women in Ireland', yet her assertions are also relevant to religious archives of other denominations.⁸² Written from the perspective of women's history and their role in female spirituality and religious practice, she discusses the types of

⁷⁹ Suelflow, *Religious Archives: An Introduction*, 29.

⁸⁰ Suelflow, *Religious Archives: An Introduction*, 30.

⁸¹ Marcia Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," *Art History*. 20.3 (1997): 422.

⁸² Rosemary Raughter, *Religious Women and Their History: Breaking the Silence* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2005) 98.

records stored within such collections.⁸³ She states that, 'convent archives are private records. Not all convents have the resources or facilities to assist researchers. It can sometimes be very difficult to gain access to records.'⁸⁴ She therefore suggests writing to the 'archivist of the community', as has been done in all archives used for this thesis, and that 'approaches to research the history of a community and their work are generally looked on favourably.'⁸⁵

Yet, as the Quaker specific *Your Meeting's Records: A handbook for Clerks and Custodians of records*, from 2004 reveals, archival policies and operations are put in place to prevent researcher's access to certain records. Similarly to Suelflow's manual, published for those who already run or intend to run a Quaker archive, the handbook outlines the practicalities of the management and use of records in detail. Of relevance to this research however is, 'Closure periods and sensitive areas.'⁸⁶ This clause states that:

It is the responsibility of monthly meetings to decide which records shall be available to students, whether Friend or non-Friend [...] Many meetings make available records more than fifty years old, subject to exceptions where particular discretion is needed (e.g. overseers' minutes).⁸⁷

According to the handbook, records 'may be legitimately closed for a longer period if they contain information which might cause embarrassment or distress to living persons or next of kin, or information [...] which might constitute a breach of confidence.'⁸⁸ Furthermore, 'an unknown non-Quaker researcher [...] should not be given access without a very good reason.'⁸⁹ As such, access to documents related to the Religious Society of Friends is entirely at the discretion of those whom create, produce and store the records. During my regular visits to the Religious Society of Friends, upon entering the reading room it is

⁸³ Including the community annals, congregational histories, copies of the sisters' constitutions, registers of women entrants and financial records

⁸⁴ Raughter, *Religious Women and Their History: Breaking the Silence*, 115.

⁸⁵ Raughter, *Religious Women and Their History: Breaking the Silence*, 115.

⁸⁶ *Your Meetings Records: A handbook for clerks and custodians of records* (London: Library Committee of the Religious Society of Friends, 2004): 28.

⁸⁷ *Your Meetings Records: A handbook for clerks and custodians of records*, 28.

⁸⁸ *Your Meetings Records: A handbook for clerks and custodians of records*, 28.

⁸⁹ *Your Meetings Records: A handbook for clerks and custodians of records*, 29.

required of all visitors to sign in and state whether they attend the Quaker London Yearly Meeting, clearly signalling to the librarian whether the reader is a practicing Quaker. On one occasion, upon requesting a miscellaneous folder entitled *Uncatalogued Yearly Meeting Papers Answers and Queries eighteenth century*, the librarian stated that the papers had not yet been authorised for viewing. Whilst her refusal to allow me access probably centred on their need for conservation and organisation rather than my religious preferences, the example does illustrate the power those who create, produce and store the records have over researchers' access.

Therefore, through Bradley, Suelflow, Raughter and *Your Meeting Records* considerations, a set of four critical analyses have been considered when approaching each archive used during this research, although these factors are not explicitly described for every archive throughout the chapters. Firstly, that archives control what is included and excluded, and what is accessible and inaccessible, in order to create a collective (and selective) memory. Secondly, such a practice is also reflective of the 'power that is structured in and through the official knowledge discourse of the archive.'⁹⁰ This dove-tails with Bradley's acknowledgement that, thirdly, such 'seduction' is a false impression because only what has been stored is located, the voices of the past are pre-selected and the archive is only approachable through the application of an established system.⁹¹ Fourthly, such archival information can also only be located and approached at the archivist's discretion.

The archives used for this research have included a variety of materials, including photographs, family letters, business letters and catalogues. Specifically, the Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham and the Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive in Street, house personal family letters which have illuminated the thoughts and feelings of the Quaker women, their use of language and their topics of discussion. These letters and diaries which are presently referred to as life writing are now discussed with particular emphasis on forming a methodology for their handling and analysis.

⁹⁰ Richard Harvey Brown and Beth Davis -Brown, "The Making of Memory: the Politics of Archives, Libraries and Museums in the Construction of National Consciousness," *History of the Human Sciences* 11.4. (London: sage, 1998): 21.

⁹¹ Bradley, "Seduction of the Archive: Voices Lost and Found," 113.

1.4 Established methodologies for interpreting life writing including the letters and diaries of Quaker women as research sources

According to communication and theatre historian Jennifer Adams, in her 2007 essay, "Recovering a Trashed Communication Genre: Letters as Memory, Art and Collectible," letters are unique in that they represent a 'mediated interpersonal communication in that they paradoxically result from absence and yet retain presence.'⁹² Education historian Joanne E. Cooper agrees, in her 1987 essay "Shaping Meaning: Women's Diaries, Journals and Letters- The Old and The New." She states that letters are unique in that they:

[...] are addressed to a particular person. Both the tone and the form of the chronicle is then coloured by the audience and the writer's degree of intimacy to the audience. In addition, letter writers tend to support each other while diarists primarily support the self.⁹³

As Cooper acknowledges therefore, often letters, unlike diaries or journals, reflect the relationship between the writer and the receiver or the letter's intended audience. Adams however further acknowledges that letters are a 'construction' and that 'the letter is to some extent a fabrication that has been created by the author as a particular type of representational self.'⁹⁴

Similarly, English Professor Lynn Bloom in her 1996 essay, "I Write for Myself and Strangers: Private Diaries as Public Documents", for the anthology *Inscribing the Daily: Critical Essays on Women's Diaries*, warned that some diarists also write with an audience in mind, leading to a process whereby the entries become carefully crafted and self-censored.⁹⁵ Writing specifically on the subject of the analysis of women's diaries, Bloom notes that, 'very often

⁹² Adams, "Recovering a Trashed Communication Genre," 186.

⁹³ Joanna E. Cooper, "Shaping Meaning: Women's Diaries, Journals and Letters, the old and the New," *Women's Studies International Forum* 10.96 (1987): 96.

⁹⁴ Adams, "Recovering a Trashed Communication Genre," 187.

⁹⁵ Lynn Bloom, "I write for Myself and Strangers: Private Diaries and Public Documents," *Inscribing the Daily: Critical Essays on Women's Diaries*, ed. Suzanne L. Bunkers and Cynthia A. Huff. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996) 24.

in either the process of composition over time, or in the revision and editing that some of the most engaging diaries undergo, these superficially private writings become unmistakably public documents, intended for an external readership.¹⁹⁶ Bloom argues that, for a professional writer there are no 'private writings' and that 'the presence of an audience [...] requires accommodation.'¹⁹⁷ As such, any writer's awareness of the presence of an audience colours all aspects of the style and narrative of their writing. As Bloom argues, those diaries which are truly private contain a style of writing, 'written with neither art nor artifice [... so that] no reader outside the author's immediate society or household could understand them without extra-textual information.'¹⁹⁸ Such a 'truly private' letter was written by the Quaker, Anna Southall, to her eldest daughter Geraldine Cadbury on the 19th July 1898, and reads:

R. and L. left us last evening- we had a very pleasant visit from them- Louis very well and much enjoyed himself and R did too- poor girl she having no real rest from care and even now nothing is definitely fixed about L.- The present proposal (by telegraph) is for Mrs Harris to come to Malvern today to stay with L. till the end of the month- for R. to go home and get the house ready and Mamma to go back this day week.⁹⁹

This fragment of the letter located in the Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham, primarily concerning the holiday arrangements for the daughters and grandchildren of Anna Southall, represents merely one example of the regular letter-writing correspondence between the pair. In the Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham, twelve letters from Anna Southall to her daughter are stored, from between 1891 and 1905. Alongside these, are held letters to Geraldine Cadbury from her father Alfred Southall, from her brothers John and Stephen, from Cadbury to her mother, and other additional correspondence from friends and acquaintances of the family. In all, the letter writing correspondence of Geraldine Cadbury's family is comprised of twenty-eight letters which represents a fraction

⁹⁶ Bloom, "I write for Myself and Strangers," 23.

⁹⁷ Bloom, "I write for Myself and Strangers," 24.

⁹⁸ Bloom, "I write for Myself and Strangers," 25.

⁹⁹ Anna Southall to Geraldine Cadbury. 19th July 1898. MS 466A/591/3a, 3b & 3c. Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham, Birmingham National Archives.

held in the Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham as a whole. The Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive houses an even greater repository of family letters between members of the Clarks, Bright, Priestman and McLaren families. Overall the archive contains 'thousands' of diaries and journals, travel accounts, photographs, literary and local history writings, scientific papers, artwork and autobiographies.¹⁰⁰

Comparatively however, the private circulation publication, *A Dear Memory: Pages from the Letters of Mary Jane Taylor* from 1914, is a collection of transcribed letters from the Quaker Mary Jane Taylor (née Cash) and her mother Elizabeth Petipher Cash edited by her granddaughter, Elizabeth Mary Cadbury, and used in chapter 6. Cadbury asserts that publishing the letters, gave her an 'opportunity' 'to introduce [her] grandparents to the younger generation' as well as to a wider familial readership.¹⁰¹ The book, held at Library of the Religious Society of Friends, in London, contains four letters from case study Elizabeth Petipher Cash between 26th September 1863 and June 22nd 1880, as well as family oral history testimony regarding reminiscences of the beauty of Elizabeth Petipher Cash in the preface to the publication.

Organised chronologically, the anthology also reveals the changing language used across the generational divide between the Quaker writers, which is not obvious in the later Cadbury letters from the Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham. Elizabeth Petipher Cash, systematically used the ritualised Quaker linguistics of 'thee' 'thy' and 'thou', writing in a letter from 21st March 1864, 'I was very much interested in hearing of thy welfare and happiness through my dear Mary Jane, who much enjoyed meeting with thee when thou wast last in London.'¹⁰² Her daughter, Mary Jane Taylor however, used Quaker linguistic conventions in her letters whilst still a young girl, noting to her mother on 7th September 1836 that, 'I have had much pleasure in making thee a pin cushion, which I hope thou wilt like.'¹⁰³ Yet, years later her language usage appears to have relaxed, incorporating

¹⁰⁰ C.B. "Family Archives" Alfred Gillett Trust Heritage Collections of the Clark family and C&J Clark Ltd. 11th Word Press, May 2015.

¹⁰¹ Elizabeth Mary Cadbury, *A Dear Memory: Pages from the Letters of Mary Jane Taylor*, ed. Elizabeth Mary Cadbury (Birmingham: Cornish Brothers Limited, 1914) 1.

¹⁰² Elizabeth Petipher Cash, *A Dear Memory: Pages from the Letters of Mary Jane Taylor*, ed. Elizabeth Mary Cadbury (Birmingham: Cornish Brothers Limited. 1914) 214.

¹⁰³ Taylor, *A Dear Memory*, 28.

honourific pronouns, including 'you', alongside Quaker linguistics of 'thine' and 'thou', as this letter from Mary Jane Cash to her mother Elizabeth Petipher Cash on 3rd October 1850 displays, 'I do not doubt that you much felt travelling so far on the L.B & S. C. Railway [...] I also thought of you again looking at the magnificent sea; I knew how many recollections it would bring to your mind.'¹⁰⁴ As Adams asserts, letters 'represent a fragment of the life experience of that person,' and therefore the alteration in penned linguistics across the time frame of these artefacts is recognisable as the modern appropriation of secular linguistics by a younger member of the Quaker faith, despite their conservative Quaker heritage.¹⁰⁵

Throughout the anthology, Elizabeth Mary Cadbury provides annotations to particular letters, 'to identify the people, places and allusions [and] explain the meaning of actions and events.'¹⁰⁶ As such, the publication differs from the Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham through the provision of 'extra-textual information' as well as 'development and detail to make it self-coherent.' This transforms the letters from the realms of what Bloom classifies as 'truly private' into an audience-aware sphere of comprehension, supporting Bloom's argument that 'the presence of an audience [...] requires accommodation.'¹⁰⁷

According to Julia Swindells's, in her 1989 essay, "Liberating the Subject? Autobiography and 'Women's History', A Reading of the Diaries of Hannah Cullwick," however, all autobiographical writings occupy a grey area. As in Bloom's article, Swindell discusses academic criticism of autobiography as history that argues autobiography 'lacks objectivity, is too parochial' and 'distorts reality.'¹⁰⁸ Swindells actively uses the subjectivity in autobiography however, to produce a reading of the autobiographical book *The Diaries of Hannah Cullwick, Victorian Maidservant*, which simultaneously reveals the personal voice

¹⁰⁴ Taylor, *A Dear Memory*, 79.

¹⁰⁵ Adams, "Recovering a Trashed Communication Genre," 187.

¹⁰⁶ Adams, "Recovering a Trashed Communication Genre," 26. On one letter written on 23rd October 1844 by Mary Jane Cash, which mentions 'Please give my dear love to Rachel,' a footnote by Elizabeth Mary Cash reads, 'Rachel Gregory, nurse at 'The Rye' for many, many years; a Friend, quaint and independent; she lived in a little cottage, cared for by all the family, till about 1880.' Cadbury, *A Dear Memory*, 32.

¹⁰⁷ Bloom, "I write for Myself and Strangers," 24-26.

¹⁰⁸ Swindells, "Liberating the Subject?" 25

and the capitalist power relations which underpin the text.¹⁰⁹ Swindells uncovers the perspective from which the author writes and how her written account fits into other narratives regarding the historical episode concerned. As Swindells' text displays, autobiographical accounts have credibility as historical sources not as exclusively stand alone documents but in the broader context and narrative of the personal interpretation of historical episodes.¹¹⁰

Letters to and from Elizabeth Petipher Cash, Helen Priestman Bright Clark and Geraldine Cadbury, have therefore been employed in chapters 6, 7 and 8, not as standalone documents but as one element of a collection of empirical sources that achieve the layered understanding that Swindells endeavoured to reveal. These autobiographical writings are employed for the subjective qualities which many academic historians have previously criticised. Salutations such as 'Dearest Mother', 'My Dear Family', and 'My very dear Geraldine', and sign-offs including 'Your loving mother', 'Your loving daughter', 'With much love to all, Ever your affectionate daughter', and 'I remain your loving brother', whilst perhaps in part conforming to period letter writing conventions, reveal the depth of love between the family and the mutual nature of this care and respect.¹¹¹

Additionally the letters reveal the wider social liberal activities members of the family undertook including the women. Helen Priestman Bright Clark's letters to her aunt Priscilla Bright McLaren confirm her active involvement in politics. In a letter to her aunt on 6th May 1867, she discussed suffrage, the work of Disraeli, Gladstone and the Tories.¹¹² The letters' subjectivity, opinionated delivery and individuality are precisely the qualities which reveal the nuances of the negotiations which the women case studies undertook and used in managing the changes in dress advices within their religion. The differences and

¹⁰⁹ *The Diaries of Hannah Cullwick, Victorian Maidservant*, ed. by Liz Stanley (Virago: London 1984).

¹¹⁰ Swindells, "Liberating the Subject?" 27

¹¹¹ Geraldine Cadbury. MS 466A/509/2, 9th October 1887. Geraldine Cadbury. MS 466A/508/3-4, undated (circa 1883). Geraldine Cadbury. MS 466A/508/1, 10th March 1883. Grubb R. to Geraldine Cadbury. MS 466A/573, 1890. Anna Southall. MS 466A/591/6, 23rd April 1905. Geraldine Cadbury. MS 466A/510/3, 20th VI, 1894. Geraldine Cadbury. MS 466A/509/2, 9th October 1887. Stephen Southall. MS 466A/595, 25th May 1893. Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham, Birmingham National Archives.

¹¹² Helen Bright Clark to Priscilla Bright McLaren. 6th May 1867. MIL59. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

discrepancies within each personal narrative shed light on these women's personal interpretations within the broader context of their religious and social communities.

Art historian Marcia Pointon however, identifies the limitations of Quaker writings in her 1997 article "Quakerism and Visual Culture, 1650-1800," especially with reference to material culture and consumption. Pointon acknowledges the presence of self-censorship relating to consumer goods in Quaker writings, noting that:

Quakers have left behind a vast mass of documentation. But search as one may, it is extremely rare to find statements [...] that make reference to consumer goods. Diaries and letters are filled, as one might expect, with spiritual autobiography; yet there is in general a silence with regard to the struggles with material superfluity.¹¹³

According to Pointon, early Quakers who were in ownership of luxurious items evident in the possessions left to relatives in their wills, never mentioned such articles in surviving correspondence.¹¹⁴ According to Pointon, such a practice of textual censorship reveals the Quaker 'self-consciousness about the fashioning of human identity as a manipulable, artful process.' She suggests these documents as history are handled as one of the 'mechanisms for the control of identity', which according to Pointon, 'set out the parameters for an articulation of the invisible (the spiritual life) through the identification and demarcation of the secular visual.'¹¹⁵ Pointon's assertion that Quaker writings were controlled and self-censored which 'maintained their sense of separateness whilst continuing to live in the metropolitan world', mirror Jennifer Adams's secular argument that letters are a 'construction' and that 'the letter is to some extent a fabrication that has been created by the author as a particular type of representational self.'¹¹⁶

Pointon suggests case studies are an approach to overcome this textual suppression. When discussing the Quaker 'Dr John Fothergill, the highly successful and internationally

¹¹³ Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," 422.

¹¹⁴ Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," 423.

¹¹⁵ Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," 426.

¹¹⁶ Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," 426 and Adams, "Recovering a Trashed Communication Genre," 187.

distinguished London physician', Pointon notes that neither 'his correspondence nor his will reveals anything of the material conditions in which he lived.'¹¹⁷ Letters written by his surviving sister however, illuminate the textual handling of these items by Quakers through her 'series of disclaimers' and use of a 'postscript' when gifting the items to an acquaintance.¹¹⁸ Pointon therefore reveals that postscripts must not be overlooked by the researcher when approaching surviving Quaker letters and diaries. Conversely, during my research on Helen Priestman Bright Clark and Elizabeth Petipher Cash, I was struck by the explicit discussion regarding clothing and gifts in their letters. A series of letters between Helen Priestman Bright Clark and her aunt Priscilla McLaren in 1866 explicitly discuss clothing her wedding dress and bridal trousseau, including the fashions, where to purchase them and their costs. Clearly, such a discrepancy between my own experience of Quaker women's discussions of material culture in surviving letters, and that of Pointon's, illustrates both the shifting Quaker attitudes to clothing across the centuries and further emphasises the personal interpretations each woman undertook.

Therefore, through recommendations outlined by Adams, Bloom, Swindells and Pointon, each article of life writing has been scrutinised using four criteria throughout this research, although these factors are not explicitly described for every letter or diary throughout the chapters. Firstly, consideration of who the writer and receiver of the letter are and how their relationship may influence the subject or writing style. Secondly, consideration of the audience the source was written for, and whether the producer may have written with a broader audience in mind. Thirdly, consideration of how any editing or censorship may have affected the surviving source. Fourthly, that any annotations or postscripts must be read and considered for their ability to provide additional information.

Empirical evidence including letters and diaries as revelations of biographical narratives however, are only one element of the biographical research undertaken in this thesis. Previously penned biographical accounts of Quaker women are also used as secondary source evidence for the collecting of historical and personal data. How these sources can be

¹¹⁷ Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," 423.

¹¹⁸ Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," 423.

handled as source material has already been tackled by many scholars on the history and analysis of biography and therefore these are now considered.

1.5 Established methodologies for interpreting biographies as research sources

Both scholars Nigel Hamilton, in his 2007 publication *Biography* and Barbara Caine, in her 2010 book, *Biography and History*, agree that biography is a suitable source for historical research. However both scholars also agree that a biography is not a definitive account of a life and is instead one attempt in a wave of interpretations and must be treated by a researcher as such.¹¹⁹ More specifically for this research, according to Catherine Parke in her 2002 book, *Biography: Writing Lives*, 'feminist biography counterbalances a lives-of-the-great notion of history not only by taking women as its principle subjects, but also by narrating history as group movements rather than acts of individuals.'¹²⁰ In illustration of her view, Parke critically examines Jean Strouse's biography of Alice James, published in 1980, as an example of a female biography which seeks to re-evaluate the life of the subject through the postmodern lens of feminism.

Before her examination of the text however, Parke discusses at length her methodology for how feminist biography should be approached as a research source. She identifies three characteristics, specific to feminist biography, which the researcher must consider when appraising the text. Firstly, that feminist biography seeks to represent the subject as a representative of a wider social picture.¹²¹ Secondly, the researcher must confront the implications of the subject's gender. Here she discusses how the identity of the subject as female creates a set of unique criteria. For example, the subject's possibility of bearing children and the constraints and conditions experienced by them in both the public and private sphere, must be acknowledged. According to Parke however, these conditions should be used by the feminist biographer as a, 'methodological asset for examining

¹¹⁹ Nigel Hamilton, *Biography* (London: Harvard University Press, 2007) 279 and Barbara Caine, *Biography and History* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

¹²⁰ Catherine Neal Parke, *Biography: Writing Lives* (London: Routledge, 2002) 93.

¹²¹ Parke, *Biography*, 93.

women's lives differently from men's.¹²² Thirdly, Parke notes that feminist biography not only uses but celebrates the use of subjectivity in their biographical accounts.¹²³ Such use is, according to Parke, due to the conscious or unconscious similarities between their personal maternal relationships and their subjects.¹²⁴ That feminist biography not only uses but celebrates the use of subjectivity is a concept acknowledged by many writers including Hamilton, and Charles Middleton in his 1974 article, "Biography as History: The Humanist Tradition in Historical Scholarship."¹²⁵ They both acknowledge that subjectivity is prevalent in feminist biography, and Middleton even asserts that the writer must, 'don the intellectual and emotional garb of his subject as well.'¹²⁶ According to Parke however, this subjectivity is easily negotiated by the researcher acknowledging its use in the narrative.

Biographical works are used throughout this thesis not as 'definitive accounts' of the women's lives, but as single sources to illuminate and chronicle the actions, attitudes, tastes, manners, education, religion and prejudices of individual characters, whilst being read with an awareness of the subjectivity of their authors. Two biographies used in my research include, Janet Whitney's 1948 publication, *Geraldine S. Cadbury. 1865 – 1941* and feminist historian Sandra Stanley Holton's 2007 book, *Quaker Women. Personal Life, Memory and Radicalism in the Lives of Women Friends, 1780 - 1930*.

Whitney's account is definitively subjective, littered with laudatory descriptions throughout. She openly acknowledges her subjectivity in the narrative however, and therefore her text still has merit as source material.¹²⁷ Furthermore, the appendix of Whitney's publication contains details of when she, 'visited the Birmingham Juvenile Court four years after Cadbury's death, and nine years after her retirement', where Geraldine had sat as

¹²² Parke, *Biography*, 94

¹²³ Parke, *Biography*, 94.

¹²⁴ Parke, *Biography*, 94-95.

¹²⁵ Parke, *Biography*, 94-95 and Charles R Middleton, "Biography as History: The Humanistic Tradition in Historical Scholarship," *The Historian* 36. 3. (1974): 525.

¹²⁶ Middleton, "Biography as History," 525 and Hamilton, *Biography*, 273. He briefly cites Janet Malcolm's *The Silent Woman: Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes* (London: Picador, 1994), where her, 'feminist heart had, paradoxically, gone out not to Sylvia Plath, but to Plath's husband' in her biography on the relationship between Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes.

¹²⁷ Parke, *Biography: Writing Lives*, 94-95.

Chairwoman of the panel.¹²⁸ There Whitney observed the court in session and interviewed those who had worked with Cadbury. In the present day, sixty-seven years after the original publication of the biography in 1948, it provides insight into locations, activities and people no longer accessible due to the passage of time.

Holton's *Quaker Women* alternatively identifies her publication as a 'collective biography.' Focusing on, 'six women, selected from among three successive generations of this kinship circle to allow the narrative to move across time.'¹²⁹ Holton in her introduction acknowledges the importance of the family archive of letters, diaries, and memoirs collected together and stored by the female members of the Priestman-Bright family, which is presently part of the Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive in Street.¹³⁰

Holton openly admits that the six subjects of her publication were chosen for their 'particularity, not for their typicality, or as exemplars.' Therefore she sets her collective biography apart from Parke's notion that biography, 'while focusing on an individual protagonist, reads this woman's life as a sign of her times.'¹³¹ Holton also admits her bias in her selection of case studies from the family circle by her personal preference for, 'the power of individual voices, some of which emerge more strongly than others from the archive.' According to Holton, she sought women whose voices had the ability to 'communicate between the living and the dead, to represent the self with some force in what was written and still may be read.' Holton's selection from the Priestman-Bright family circle was therefore formed by her opinions of their ability to communicate with power and in a perennial manner, as a 'significant' type of personal narrative.¹³² Holton's account of Helen Priestman Bright Clark, whilst a narrative of the protagonists' political and personal achievements, guides her story using emotive recollections concerning her family relations from her personal letters and diaries.¹³³

¹²⁸ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury 1865 – 1941*, 176.

¹²⁹ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 6.

¹³⁰ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 2.

¹³¹ Parke, *Biography*, 93.

¹³² Holton, *Quaker Women*, 6.

¹³³ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 172.

Some neutrality is partly possible in this thesis due to the application of Prown and Steele's material culture methodologies which place emphasis on the detailed recording of the 'physical and formal properties' of each garment, as well as my use of an object analysis form. These have guided my recorded descriptive details away from conjecture and ensured the documentation of the most accurate, relevant and similar types of detail.¹³⁴ Despite this, the use of surviving garments, which form the basis from which the personal narratives develop, are, admittedly, an inherently problematic source. As mentioned throughout this chapter, many variables, including provenance, survival and absent comparative objects, can make the garments less than objective. For example, a dearth of surviving Quaker garments in dress collections means comparison is challenging through absence of further examples. Meanwhile, the disproportionate prevalence of Plain Quaker bonnets in dress collections (discussed in chapter 5) illustrates how curators historically placed value on items seen to illustrate a typical Quaker appearance. Furthermore, the absence of detailed provenance and accession information, at Tunbridge Wells Museum for example, means the items' connections with a Quaker owner or maker may be dubious. These variables however, serve to illustrate and justify why I have conducted such careful and consistent analysis.

The pursuit of the personal biographies which accompany the garments, either their humble or noble origins, memorialised through family archives, letters and photographs, is an inherently subjective activity however. As Hamilton, Caine, Middleton and Parke acknowledge, such feminist biographies which celebrate women as representatives of a broader social picture are valuable historical documents despite an objective approach remaining allusive.

Conclusion

Despite its thirty-five year age, the methodological process of description, deduction and speculation, theorised by Prown has been the process which has proven itself most relevant

¹³⁴ Prown, "Mind in Matter," 7-8 and see Appendix 2.2 for object analysis form.

to the material culture items of this study. This methodology is imperative in extrapolating 'the artefacts [...] indicators of belief, of value' which Prown so decidedly believed that material culture products communicate to the researcher.¹³⁵ Alongside this process however, methodologies of the inclusion of oral testimony, suggested by Alexandra Palmer, and Valerie Steele's acknowledgement that using external written evidence supports speculations, are both processes which are implemented to illuminate further the histories of the female case studies and their garments beyond the limitations of my own speculations and observational abilities. Whilst the results of Prown's methodology are not described for each garment in this thesis, it has been used in the research of every item and the deduction and speculation processes are evident in the wider discussions of each case study in chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9.

Considering the most pertinent methodology for the consideration of photographs used in this research, it has been Severa and Samuel's processes which are revealed as most relevant in the interpretation of largely undated black and white portraits. Whilst it is unnecessary to repeat fully the best methodologies laid out at the end of section 1.2 of this chapter, it is worth noting that both scholars' methods approach images with an acknowledgement that many influencing factors such as photographer, event, purpose, location, have manipulated the present photograph. These mediating factors are acknowledged throughout this thesis when discussing the photographs, in order to interpret them beyond their tangible representations. The treatment of photographs leads appropriately into the handling of the next source, archives, as the second methodological recommendation for interpreting photographs in the conclusion of section 1.2 has been the treatment of the items by the archives in which they are housed.

Whilst specific methodological recommendation for interpreting archives is scant, scholars who discuss archives do note that the researcher's ability to remain vigilant to the possibilities of mediation allows them to recognise when the structure of the archive may be influencing their research and findings. Harriet Bradley's warning that researching may fall into a routine allows me to resist complacency to the archives influence. Bradley and

¹³⁵ Prown, "On the 'Art' In Artifacts," 145.

Suelflow's acknowledgement that within archives, only what has been collected can be uncovered by the researcher, is also kept in mind when approaching these collections.¹³⁶ Most importantly for this thesis, these recommendations encourage an awareness of such mediation by the archival process throughout my research, in order that I may recognise when these factors are influencing my research and findings. Within such situations, archivists and librarians to religious archives, often deeply involved in the religious community, are used throughout this research as an additional resource of pertinent religious historical and social information.

Whilst religious archives such as the headquarters of the Religious Society of Friends, London, have been consulted, many of the personal records for the case studied women, referred to as life writing, are found in secular archives. Similar to the discussion regarding the most apt methodology for interpreting archives however, methods for handling life writings sources proved equally non-specific. As letters are an important format through their capacity to 'personalise and memorialise' historical events, as discussed by Adams, they are used throughout this research for such a purpose. These sources however are handled with the awareness that, as Bloom discusses, they may have been written with a particular audience, wider than the sole recipient, in mind. Letters and texts featuring abbreviations reveal that they were intended for a recipient to whom such abbreviation would be easily interpretable. Other sources written in a personal style have actually been edited and mediated through being selected and annotated for a wider public. For example, the published letters of Elizabeth Petipher Cash and her daughter Mary Jane Taylor, or as discussed by Pointon, self-censorship because of anxieties about discussing items of material culture. Yet such censorship and mediation is not entirely detrimental, as any exclusion of topics from letters through their absentia reveals a discomfort with such subjects. The ability to still garner such detail from the letters despite their self-censorship or pre-selection confirms that these sources are useful even in circumstances where others have pre-judged and filtered them.

¹³⁶ Bradley, "Seduction of the Archive: Voices Lost and Found," 113.

Personal narratives, both autobiographical and biographical, have also been employed within this thesis not as detached documents but as one element in a collection of empirical and secondary sources, in order to accomplish the layered understanding which Swindell's discusses. Indeed, this multi-disciplinary practice, as stated at the start of this text, is a methodological exercise which has characterised the handling of the garments, photographs, archives, life writing and biographies for this thesis. None of the practices have been approached as standalone sources but as elements which when combined reveal a more comprehensive understanding of the Quaker women case studies.

Other scholars have investigated, overall but not specifically, the subject of this thesis of Quaker Women during the later part of the nineteenth century. It is these publications which the following chapter discusses. In it, I consider scholars who use the methodological practices I have just described within their own works, with particular attention to those discussing Quaker women. The following chapter therefore reveals the extent to which my thesis is comparable or dissimilar to other scholars working in the same and related fields and how my thesis adds to the field of Quaker scholarly writings.

Chapter 2 Literature Review based on Key Critical Themes of the PhD

The previous chapter introduced the methodological approaches used by academics in the analysis and interpretation of archives, photographs, letters and diaries, biographies and surviving garments, as well as those practiced during the research for this project. This chapter now considers the scholarly work related to key critical themes of the PhD.

This chapter's first theme, section '2. 1 The Quaker Woman', introduces relevant writers of recently published research on Quaker women's history and their place in the Religious Society of Friends. It also considers recent critical analysis of Quaker's attitudes to material culture. In '2.2 The 'New Woman' and Quakerism, 1860 -1914', the involvement of Quaker women in progressive emancipation causes are considered, through the writings of feminist women's historians such as Sophia van Wingerden and Sandra Stanley Holton.

The scant scholarly writings concerning late nineteenth and early twentieth century Quaker female dress, are discussed in '2.3 Critical Approaches to the Analysis of the role of Dress and Fashion in Quaker Culture, Society and Religion, 1860 - 1914'. Pierre Bourdieu's concept of a 'clash of civilisations', from his 1962 article "The Peasant and His Body" and Petr Bogatyrev's 1937 publication *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, used as anthropological frameworks throughout the thesis, are discussed alongside broader writings on concepts of cultural clashes relating to dress. From here, contemporary social attitudes towards women's fashion and consumption are considered in '2.4 Fashion and Consumption contrasted with Quaker attitudes to Consumption especially dress and fashion'. Selected scholarship on the role of dress, fashion and consumption in society are reviewed. These findings are considered in relation to contemporary Quaker ideological attitudes concerning dress. Once these are discussed, the key thematic arguments of the thesis commence in chapter 3.

2. 1 The Quaker Woman

One of the best known critical evaluations of the ideology and habits within Quaker history and practice, is anthropologist Richard Bauman's 1981 paper, "Christ Respects No Man's Person." He addresses the use of 'politeness phenomena: greetings and salutations, titles and honorific pronouns,' and considers the behaviour of seventeenth century Quakers who, as Bauman describes, '[were] constantly violating norms of deference and politeness'.¹ Whilst Bauman's paper considers the forms Quaker verbal practice took in seventeenth-century Britain, including their refusal of 'ceremonial' and 'deferential acts', his analysis of Quaker greeting and leave-taking extends, briefly, to actions which involved dress, including doffing the hat and curtseying.² Bauman uses direct quotes from mid-seventeenth century Quaker writings to reveal the ideological underpinnings of, and justification for, such behaviour. For Bauman, acknowledging historical written sources is essential in the extrapolation of the origin of the behaviour and beliefs of the members of a religion which are defined by the absence of any official creed or doctrine.

The absence of a formal doctrine in Quakerism means Quaker researchers rely on Quaker Meeting minutes and personal writings, including life writing, for evidence of early practices and beliefs. It is the importance of these sources which has been acknowledged by, and which has largely been the focus of, many contemporary Quaker historians' texts, including Peter Collins, David Booy and Catie Gill.³ Similarly, American Quaker writer and theologian Rufus Matthew Jones in his 1927 publication *The Faith and Practice of the Quakers*, further emphasises that these autobiographical texts communicate the writer's personal interpretation of their spirituality, warning future writers of such passages that they, 'must be consistent with all we have proved and verified, and they must be tested by our own soul's experience.'⁴

¹ Richard Bauman, "Christ Respects No Man's Person: The Plain Language of the Early Quakers and the Rhetoric of Impoliteness," Working Paper 88. (November 1981): 3 and 4.

² Bauman, "Christ Respects No Man's Person," 3, 2 and 5.

³ Peter Collins, *Quakers and Quakerism in Bolton, Lancashire 1650-1995: The History of a Religious Community* (Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2010). David Booy, *Autobiographical Writings by Early Quaker Women* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing, 2004). Catie Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community: A Literary Study of Political Identities, 1650-1700* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2005).

⁴ Rufus Jones, "Simplicity and Depth of Life," *The Faith and Practice of the Quakers* (Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1927) 91.

Jones' text is relevant here because he also tackles an evaluation of the role of dress in Quaker society, instead of analysing it as an extension of politeness phenomena, as Bauman's text does. Jones states that, 'in the days of [Queen] Elizabeth [1st] it is said that "the dressing of a fine lady was more complicated than the rigging of a ship." The persistent aim of Quaker simplicity is to put dress in proper subordination to life itself.' Even Jones's largely personal opinions however, compare the Quaker negotiation of a 'becoming appearance' with the wider pursuit of 'play and recreation.'⁵ Both Jones and Bauman therefore, critically analyse dress as merely one element in a broader complex negotiation of simplicity in life, rather than analysing the negotiation and role of dress as a unique and very specific form of self-presentation.

Historian Elizabeth Isichei's 1970 book, *Victorian Quakers* is useful for its discussion of varying aspects of the religion during the nineteenth century including theology, Quaker organisational structure of Meetings for Worship, the economic and demographic structure of the religion, politics and philanthropy. It even, unlike Jones and Bauman, evaluates the position and role of women within the organisation of the religion and references Quaker women's personal written accounts from journals and publications as supporting evidence throughout.⁶ Unlike Isichei, Jones and Bauman do not tackle specifically female interpretations of Quakerism. Instead both scholars place all aspects of Quaker Adices and faith within the context of mediation by a homogeneous, sexless group. However, similarly to Jones and Bauman, Isichei's text reveals ambivalence towards critically analysing dress as a unique and very particular mode of religious expression.

In the last two decades, other scholars have begun to specifically investigate further the historical role of Quaker women in the religion, including their positions, activities and behaviours. Peter Collins's 2010 publication, *Quakers and Quakerism in Bolton, Lancashire 1650-1995. The History of a Religious Community*, discusses the role of Quaker women in

⁵ Jones, "Simplicity and Depth of Life," 96-98.

⁶ The autobiographical writings Isichei references include: Josephine Butler, *Personal Reminiscences of a Great Crusade* (London: H. Marshall & Son, 1896). Mary Howitt, *Mary Howitt: An Autobiography* (Wm Isbister Ltd, 1889). Beatrice Webb, *My Apprenticeship* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1926). As well as various letters written by the American Quaker Lucretia Mott.

Marsden's religious community by analysing Marsden Women's Monthly Meeting minutes. Collins' text does usefully reveal the Meeting's specific Advices communicated to women regarding dress between 1678 and 1738, and how any rule-breakers were disciplined. However Collins adheres strictly to the evidence presented in the Meeting minutes and as such consults no further material cultural sources. Yet Collins' approach is not unique. The re-evaluation and reclamation of official Quaker Meeting minutes and works of 'early modern Quaker women writers' has been the key source of many contemporary Quaker researchers.⁷

Althea Stewart's 2010 article "From Iconoclasts to Gentle Persuaders: Plain Dress, Verbal Dissent and Narrative Voice in some Early Modern Quaker Women's Writing," discusses Quaker women's seventeenth-century texts which have an, 'intimate narrative voice, acknowledging past enthusiasms and recounting new religious attitudes and disciplines.'⁸ Stewart discusses three seventeenth-century Quaker women writers based in England, using their autobiographies and letters as her primary source. The works she evaluates focus on these women's 'pilgrimage into Quakerism' as she frames their adoption of Plain dress as one aspect of their conviction. However, for Stewart, these sources are particularly illuminating because they were, 'supplied by the subject herself.'⁹ Similarly, Catie Gill's *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community* of 1995, and Gil Skidmore's *Strength in Weakness*, published in 2003, also critically analyse Quaker women's writings from the seventeenth and eighteenth century as evidence of the women's spiritual journey, the 'network of encouragement that existed' and their influence on Quakerism.¹⁰ These texts have been particularly useful to contextualise the role of women in the history of the Quaker religion, as discussed in chapter 3.

Despite Stewart, Gill, Booy, Bauman and Jones's divergent analysis and historical studies on Quakerism however, the importance of autobiography in the understanding of Quaker

⁷ Althea Stewart, "From Iconoclasts to Gentle Persuaders: Plain Dress, Dissent and Narrative Voice in Some Early Modern Quaker Women's Writings," *Women's Writing*. 17. 1. (May 2010): 111.

⁸ Stewart, "From Iconoclasts to Gentle Persuaders", 112.

⁹ Stewart, "From Iconoclasts to Gentle Persuaders", 115. Once again however, despite Stewart's title implication the essay explores Plain Dress, it merely addresses the practice as one aspect of these women's spiritual conviction without any assessment or critical analysis of the garments they wore.

¹⁰ Gil Skidmore, *Strength in Weakness: Writings of Eighteenth Century Quaker Women* (Oxford: Altamira Press, 2003) 15 and Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community*.

communities and the followers' spiritual interpretations, is an aspect of critical practice they all emphasise. These scholars acknowledge the significance of Quaker life writing in contemporary academic discourse on British Quakerism, and thus illustrate the established scholarly belief in harnessing such documentary evidence. Yet whilst Bauman, Jones and Stewart briefly acknowledge Plain dress as a distinctive Quaker practice, none of them critically analyse the garments actually worn or evaluate surviving material cultural sources.

Contrastingly, the multi-disciplinary American anthology *Quaker Aesthetics: Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption* published in 2003, seeks to 're-examine the connections between 'Quaker' and 'aesthetic.'¹¹ Many of these essays do employ surviving material culture as evidence, alongside photographs, biography and textual sources. William J. Frost's essay "From Plainness to Simplicity" has been particularly useful for his discussion of the Scriptural basis for Quaker plainness. He explores the Quaker Plain Advices since the 1680s and assesses the rationale for Plainness in North American Quaker communities during the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Once again however, Frost exclusively employs textual sources as evidence.¹²

Most relevant, is Mary Anne Caton's chapter, "The Aesthetics of Absence," which discusses 'Quaker women's plain dresses and accessories, and explores questions about the changing meaning of plainness in the Delaware Valley.'¹³ Similarly to this thesis, Caton uses surviving Quaker Plain dress as 'material evidence of Quaker plain aesthetics, reflecting personal interpretations of plainness created within the very broad guidelines presented in the *Rules of Discipline* about dress.'¹⁴ Whilst her surviving garment sources derive from Westtown Friends School, Winterthur Museum and the Chester County Historical Society collection, in south-eastern Pennsylvania, her analysis of the dress as her primary form of evidence, is

¹¹ Emma Jones Lapsansky, "Past Plainness to Present Simplicity: A Search for Quaker Identity," *Quaker Aesthetics. Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption* (University of Pennsylvania Press. 2003) 1.

¹² William J. Frost, "From Plainness to Simplicity: Changing Quaker Ideals for Material culture," *Quaker Aesthetics. Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption* (University of Pennsylvania Press. 2003) 16.

¹³ Mary Ann Caton, "The Aesthetics of Absence: Quaker Women's Plain Dress in the Delaware Valley, 1790 - 1900," *Quaker Aesthetics. Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption* (University of Pennsylvania Press. 2003) 246.

¹⁴ Caton, "The Aesthetics of Absence," 247.

identical to the key methodology employed in this thesis which instead uses British women and sources as its focus.

Carolyn Kinder Carr's essay, "Sara Tyson Hallowell," meanwhile explores the life of the American Quaker as a case study and 'the various forces that may have intersected to create Hallowell's lively and innovative history.'¹⁵ Sara Hallowell was, 'the first female to make exhibition management a career [...] her status and authority in the late nineteenth century art world was no doubt informed by the leadership models she found in her own extended family.'¹⁶ Carr uses Hallowell's Quaker family business experience in real estate and pharmacies, their charity work, as well as American Quaker organisational structure and teachings, to illuminate driving forces behind Hallowell's life choices. Carr's essay is of particular relevance because it illustrates the case study to be a substantiated methodological approach in Quaker scholarly work. Similarly to this thesis, Carr employs case study analysis to reverse the sparse critical examination that has been undertaken regarding the historical role of nineteenth-century Quaker women, their beliefs and choices.

Quaker Aesthetics's stress on North American Quaker attitudes to material culture however, emphasises the dearth of similar British studies. Dr. Anna Vaughan Kett's 2012 doctoral work, *Quaker women, the Free-Produce Movement and British anti-slavery campaigns: the free labour cotton depot in Street, 1853-1858*, has recently sought to examine 'the relationship between middle-class Quaker women, free produce activism, practical expressions of anti-slavery feeling and clothing made from free or 'ethical' cotton cloth.'¹⁷ Kett's examination of Quaker women's aspiration to produce ethical clothing during the first half of the nineteenth century has, similarly with this thesis, sought to address the dearth of examinations into specifically British nineteenth century women's attitudes to dress.

¹⁵ Carolyn Kinder Carr, "Sara T. Hallowell: Forsaking Plain for Fancy," *Quaker Aesthetics. Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003) 272.

¹⁶ Carr, "Sara T. Hallowell," 275.

¹⁷ Anna Vaughan Kett, *Quaker women, the Free-Produce Movement and British anti-slavery campaigns: the free labour cotton depot in Street, 1853-1858*. University of Brighton PhD (2012) 1.

The role of Quaker women as radicals and reformers is perhaps the most widely discussed character of the Quaker woman in contemporary academic discourse.¹⁸ In part, this is because those Quaker women who actively engaged in radicalism wrote most passionately on their subject and thus, left bodies of writing as a historical legacy. Modern scholars, such as Thomas C. Kennedy, Sandra Stanley Holton, and Sophia Van Wingerden, have accessed and explored specifically nineteenth and early-twentieth century Quaker radical's writings, which place Quaker women's roles in the broader context of the 'new era in female history.'¹⁹

2.2 The 'New Woman' and Quakerism, 1860 -1914

According to Sophia A. van Wingerden's brief 1999 comment in *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain*, 'it was precisely their religious tenets, the very fact of unquestioned equality, which Women Friends have always enjoyed that delayed the founding of the Friends League for Women's Suffrage.'²⁰ Whilst Wingerden's comments in her publication on the involvement of the Quaker faction in the suffrage cause are extremely brief, her inclusion of their involvement at all acknowledges the marginal yet notable role Quaker females played in the movement.

Sandra Stanley Holton has since focused on Quaker women whose role in the women's movements was most definitely 'to the fore.'²¹ *Quaker Women: Personal Life, Memory and Radicalism in the Lives of Women Friends, 1780-1930*, published in 2007, notes that Quaker women who did actively engage in women's emancipation causes wrote passionately on the subject which may explain the emphasis afforded to these particular characters by recent female academics and historians of Quakerism. Holton resolves discussing Quaker members varying stance on women's emancipation by examining the lives and political involvement of members of the Quaker Priestman-Bright circle, as a collective case study. Mindfully, Holton

¹⁸ Stewart, "From Iconoclasts to Gentle Persuaders," 113.

¹⁹ Sandra Stanley Holton, "Kinship and Friendship: Quaker Women's Networks and the Women's Movement," *Women's History Review*. 14.3 & 4. (2005): 4.

²⁰ Sophia Van Wingerden, "Quakers, Actresses and Gymnasts and other Suffragists," *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain, 1866 - 1928* (London: MacMillan Press, 1999) 112.

²¹ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 5.

selects one married and one single member from three generations, in order to reveal both the, 'new opportunities arising for the single women among the middle class' during the nineteenth century noting that, 'marriage among this circle of women seems often to have been less constraining than the conventions of the day might lead us to expect.'²²

Holton chooses to place significant emphasis on discussion of Quaker M.P. John Bright, father of suffrage campaigner and political 'radical' Helen Priestman Bright Clark, discussed in chapter 7, due to his political encouragement of his daughter despite his disagreement with women's suffrage.²³ Bright Clark accompanied her father to political meetings and Holton notes that he, 'would write to recommend particular issues to her attention, and advise on which paper to read for the best coverage.'²⁴ However, he was 'irate' years later when she addressed a Reform Convention in Leeds in 1883 and 'secured a vote in support of the inclusion of women in the Reform Bill', making clear his disapproval of her participation in the various campaigns for women's emancipation.²⁵ Evidently, John Bright was conservative, almost reactionary, in his views on women's emancipation. Additionally, Holton acknowledges that divisions in beliefs regarding the emancipation issue occurred even between female Quakers, as illustrated in chapter 4. This revelation and the acknowledgment of differing political interpretations and views amongst men and women within the Society, stresses, similarly to this study, the markedly varied negotiations such women undertook.

Thomas C. Kennedy, in his chapter "'Kindly Silence the Men a Bit': Women in the Society of Friends, 1860-1914", in his 2001 publication, *British Quakerism 1860-1920*, analyses how the contrast between the Quaker ideal of male and female equality and its imperfect practice, caused some Quaker women to seek emancipation, both in and outside of the Society.²⁶ Unlike Holton however, the life writing which Kennedy employs to analyse these women's arguments for emancipation are largely the nineteenth century letter correspondence published in the Quaker journals, *The Friend*, *Friends Quarterly Examiner* and *British Friend*.

²² Holton, *Quaker Women*, 6.

²³ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 179.

²⁴ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 133.

²⁵ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 179 and 171.

²⁶ Thomas C. Kennedy, *British Quakerism 1860-1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) 216.

Further consultation of these published letters, in archived anthologies at the headquarters of the Religious Society of Friends, London, revealed that social commentary written by men and women on these correspondence pages encompassed attitudes on the role of women in the Society of Friends, women's suffrage as well as, pertinently, fashionable and Plain dress. Furthermore, many of the letters were written by Quaker women whose garments I had already examined at dress collections. Thus, these journals have proven one of the most significant textual sources employed in this thesis, as discussed at length in chapter 4.

Unlike Kennedy, Holton briefly acknowledges the issue of the negotiation of dress amongst these women, noting that, 'the wedding preparations of Margaret Priestman [...] involved negotiating between the 'plainness' preferred by her parents and her own aspirations for a degree of fashionability at least.' Each of Holton's declarations on Quaker dress however, are used only as contextualisation for how the 'demands of personal and public life continued to work upon one another', with no specific analysis, or even comment on, the actual garments chosen.²⁷

This thesis therefore builds on Wingerden, Kennedy and Holton's analysis of the roles and actions of late-nineteenth century Quaker women, by introducing the sartorial decisions these women made alongside their negotiations of their civil emancipation and the position of women in the Religious Society of Friends. As this thesis also contributes to a broader understanding of dress history however, scholarly texts which critically analyse fashionable garments and their critical approaches are now considered, in order to relate them to analysing the role of dress and fashion in Quaker culture, society and religion, 1860 - 1914.

2.3 Critical approaches to the analysis of the role of Dress and Fashion in Quaker Culture, Society and Religion, 1860 - 1914

Pierre Bourdieu's anthropological article, "The Peasant and his Body," originally published in 1962, was initially consulted for analysing the negotiation of the shielded Quaker

²⁷ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 95.

community with newly accessible secular fashion.²⁸ His text succinctly theorises and discusses the concept of external fashion forces on traditional rural dress. In it he describes the behaviours of young men and women in the rural French village of Bearn during the 1960s, and the 'resulting devaluation of the young men from the hamlet as urban categories of judgement penetrate the rural world.'²⁹ In his study, Bourdieu combines his own observations with statistics, social history and ethnography in order to 'dissect the culture clash between country and city.'³⁰ Through his case study, Bourdieu describes how the 'tenue' of the men, roughly translated as one's bearing, appearance, clothing and conduct, was read by the young women as a symbol of their 'economic and social standing.'³¹ According to Bourdieu, the young women were 'more open to the ideals of the town.'³² For Bourdieu however, the 'country ball is the scene of a real clash of civilisations' and it is this concept of a 'clash' which resonates with this thesis and the Quaker negotiation of fashionable influences during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.³³

Two aspects of Bourdieu's article are specifically relevant for this thesis. Firstly, his specific focus on sartorial signifiers, specifically clothing and 'techniques of the body', to illustrate one's 'economic and social standing.' Secondly, his concept of 'a clash of civilisations' occurring between these rural and urban sartorial influences when they meet in a traditional community. According to Bourdieu, it is the women of these traditional rural communities who are more 'adept and quick than men to adopt urban cultural models.' According to Bourdieu, their feminine cultural training, or the sartorial discussions which occur between women, teaches them to observe 'urban models and integrate them.' Bourdieu chronicles how the sudden pressure on men, or those who wish to conspicuously preserve their traditional dress, to adopt the signifiers of urban society, in fact, demands of them a 'veritable change in 'nature.'³⁴ Such negotiation, their 'coming to grips with the

²⁸ Pierre Bourdieu, "Les Relations entre les sexes dans la société paysanne," *Les Temps Moderne* 195 (August 1962): 307-31.

²⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," *Ethnography*, 5. 4. (December [1962] 2004): 579.

³⁰ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 579.

³¹ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 584.

³² Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 585.

³³ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 582.

³⁴ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 584.

urban world', mirrors the negotiation undertaken by Quaker women, from 1860 to 1914, between traditional religious modesty and the increasing influence of new fashionability.³⁵

Bourdieu's article may also be viewed as ensuing from Petr Bogatyrev's 1937 publication *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*. He analyses traditional rural clothing by also positing a notion of the 'opposing forces' between traditional village and new urban dress.³⁶ Bogatyrev discusses the site-specific clothes worn by the peasants of Moravian Slovakia and why they preserve the wearing of their local costume despite being 'closely tied to the towns.'³⁷ Much of Bogatyrev's publication discusses episodes of resistance by the locals in a time and regional specific manner, including recalling the episode of a man of the village who wore a 'new, town-style dubenak' and was consequently 'not even permitted to take his turn at the rotating office of chief village magistrate.'³⁸ However, Bogatyrev uses the Moravian case study to reveal wider theoretical meanings of the 'functions' of traditional dress to display cultural affiliations, independence, custom, and pride in their background, opposition, class and national identity.³⁹ In the same manner, throughout this thesis, Quaker women's use of clothing is presented as illustrating their religious, cultural and social affiliations.

In addition to the analogous methodological approach, Bogatyrev, much like Bourdieu, discusses a theoretical foundation from which the analysis for this investigation draws. Bogatyrev's study specifically relates this 'regionalistic' form of dress as an example of opposition which ultimately concedes to adoption.⁴⁰ As Bogatyrev describes:

In the case of villager-versus-townsmen, we find that even during a period of great tension between the two, at a time when the villager was consciously preserving his

³⁵ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 585. Bourdieu's study is a first-hand ethnographic investigation written during his period in question, unlike this thesis which is a retrospective analysis of clothing choices and behaviours. Bourdieu's article however, frames a 'clash of civilisations', using ethnographic and anthropological modes of analysis which are particularly relevant as a theoretical foundation for this study.

³⁶ Petr Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*. Translated from Slovak by Richard. G. Crum, (Re-printed by The Hague & Paris: Mouton, [1937] 1971): 58.

³⁷ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 56.

³⁸ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 56-7. A 'dubenak' is a long tanned leather coat.

³⁹ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 58-59.

⁴⁰ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 59.

old dress against the onslaught of urban styles, it happened that some individual peasants were emboldened to 'betray' their costume, thus weakening the tradition [...] Once a few individual peasants allow themselves to make drastic, town-orientated changes in costume, then all or nearly all will feel free to adopt small details of urban dress.⁴¹

Bogatyrev's study analyses the process of opposition to urban dress and yet ultimately 'betraying' and 'weakening the tradition' of traditional rural dress over the course of the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Similarly, this thesis provides as a cross-section of how far the four female Quaker case studies 'betrayed' their Plain Quaker attire and adopted details of fashionable dress or opposed it between 1860 and 1914.

Indeed, the analysis of clothing as a secular form of protestation or dissent has been thoroughly critically discussed by multiple authors since Bogatyrev and Bourdieu's studies. Whilst both authors undertook specific regionalistic investigations, other authors have sought to theorise the role of clothing under far broader categories which define their functions. Fred Davis in his seminal 1992 publication *Fashion, Culture and Identity* dedicates a portion of his text to 'antifashion', a category which Polhemus and Procter defined as early as 1978 as 'all styles of adornment which fall outside the organised system or systems of fashion change.'⁴² Davis argues however that the categories of folk, peasant and fetish costume should actually be defined as 'nonfashion', because these clothing types 'lie outside' fashion rather than function in what Davis saw as the 'oppositional' nature of antifashion.⁴³ Since the role of Quaker Plain dress and the rhetoric used to describe it were often defined in terms of 'protection' from non-Quakers and 'a refusal to follow the dictates of fashion', rhetoric of both conflict and opposition, I believe it is applicable to define Quaker Plain dress within Davis' terms of antifashion.⁴⁴ Davis also describes antifashion as a 'symbolic gesture' which serves to 'deflect [...] violent and destabilizing forms of political

⁴¹ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 60.

⁴² Ted Polhemus and Lynn Procter, *Fashion and Anti-Fashion* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978) Qted in Fred Davis, *Fashion, Culture and Identity* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1992) 161.

⁴³ Davis, *Fashion, Culture and Identity*, 161.

⁴⁴ Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 162.

confrontation' creating further correlations with Quakerism through pacifism being an 'official tenet of their church.'⁴⁵

Davis also defines several sub-categories within the overarching movement of antifashion. Two of these are pertinent to evaluate where Quaker Plain dress lies in the spectrum of antifashion. Davies' sub-categories 'utilitarian outrage' and 'minority group disidentification' assume attitudes which mirror Quaker rhetoric regarding the negotiation of fashionable dress.⁴⁶ Utilitarian outrage mirrors Quaker Plain dress in both sentiment and appearance. Davis describes the category as 'when persons object to the waste, expense and inconvenience entailed in casting aside perfectly wearable garments to make room for the new fashion.'⁴⁷ Davis also goes on to identify how this sub-set tend to dress in garments which 'consist typically of an array of very simply styled, usually loose fitting, single colour garments, which [...] carry their wearers through the purposes and places of the day and [...] from one season to the next.'⁴⁸

'Minority Group Disidentification' categorises the use of dress in religious denominations to 'serve as testimony to the group's solidarity and oneness with their religious beliefs, but it quite purposefully erects a barrier to interaction with others.'⁴⁹ Such rhetoric parallels the linguistic justification for Plain dress adopted by Friends- 'as a hedge, as a convenience, as a good thing.'⁵⁰

Davis, Bourdieu and Bogatyrev's theoretical modes of analysis become even more pertinent upon the consideration that such critical evaluative and theoretical forms of assessment have never been incorporated specifically into the investigation and analysis of British Quaker women's attire. Marcia Pointon's article exemplifies a unique instance where academic theoretical analysis has been applied to Quaker practices of consumption. In her 1997 article, *Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650-1800*, Pointon evaluates Plain Quaker

⁴⁵ Davis, *Fashion, Culture and Identity*, 166 and Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 220.

⁴⁶ Davis, *Fashion, Culture and Identity*, 168.

⁴⁷ Davis, *Fashion, Culture and Identity*, 169.

⁴⁸ Davis, *Fashion, Culture and Identity*, 170-1.

⁴⁹ Davis, *Fashion, Culture and Identity*, 181.

⁵⁰ John Stevenson Rowntree, *Account of the 1859 Yearly Meeting*. 1859. Mss Vol S 368. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London.

attitudes to consumption and ornamentation, though the broad evaluation of male and female Quaker attitudes to items of visual culture. In her text, Pointon analyses Quaker attitudes to their meeting houses, home interiors, furniture, silverware, tableware, textiles, portraits and apparel.⁵¹ Pointon describes how all objects were negotiated for their ornamentation versus their necessity by early Quakers, because every object's practicality and absence of ornamentation reflected for Plain Quakers a 'testimony and guarantee of Plain living.'⁵²

Similarly to Collins, Pointon quotes Quaker Meeting minutes to illustrate the frequent enumeration 'for what women and men should not be wearing.'⁵³ Her article, however, critically evaluates the use of Quaker Plain clothing to signify meaning, instead of its appearance.⁵⁴ Whilst discussing eighteenth century female Quaker clothing, Pointon argues that 'it is not only the minuscule detail of a visual and technical kind that we should notice here but also the cumulative impact of the build-up of exotic terms into an almost frenzied metonymy of the female body.'⁵⁵ Paradoxically however, Pointon's article noticeably lacks such 'minuscule detail of a visual and technical kind.' Debatably, her ambivalence to describing items of Quaker Plain dress in detail is due, as Pointon notes, to the fact that 'it is extremely rare to find statements [...] that make reference to consumer goods.'⁵⁶ Previous scholars, however, have overcome this handicap by combining source material to undertake Quaker sartorial analysis.

Amelia Mott Gummere's 1901 publication, *The Quaker: A Study in Costume*, is an early example of an analysis of Quaker dress using a variety of sources.⁵⁷ Whilst Gummere describes and analyses only six types of Quaker garment, she does acknowledge the sources for her study in detail, arguing that:

⁵¹ Marcia Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," *Art History*, 20. 3. (1997): 398.

⁵² Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," 404.

⁵³ Minutes of Lancashire Women's Quarterly Meeting, 5th July 1695, MS. Temp. 508/10. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London, Qted in Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800", 409.

⁵⁴ Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," 408.

⁵⁵ Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," 411.

⁵⁶ Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," 422.

⁵⁷ Amelia Mott Gummere, *The Quaker: A Study in Costume* (Philadelphia: Ferris and Leach, 1901).

Despite the lapse of time, there still exists ample material for the study of Quaker costume [...] the flat hat is a treasured relic in more than one family, and old silhouettes, daguerreotypes, portraits and pen drawings are to be found in many a household.⁵⁸

Clearly, Gummere gathered surviving garments and other visual sources to create a detailed impression of the garments being worn by seventeenth and eighteenth century Quakers. Furthermore, she attempts to describe the Plain outfits in detail, however, disappointingly, her descriptions often veer into generalisations. Despite quoting factual sources, including Meeting minutes in support of garment descriptions, specifically regarding the cut of 'cross-pockets' and 'broad hems on cravats' she also fabricates styles from her own imagination.⁵⁹ Whilst discussing the garb of Margaret Fox, Gummere hypothesises that 'we shall not be far wrong I think if we imagine George Fox's wife in a hood of black wadded silk, a short, full skirt, standing well out from the hips and held in position by an array of petticoats [...] but we are not privileged to possess descriptions of her personal appearance.'⁶⁰ This lack of factual rigour is compounded by Gummere's confusing and inaccurate tendency to discuss both American and British Plain Quaker dress interchangeably. Despite these subjective lapses in accuracy however, Gummere's publication is still regarded as culturally important and can be regarded as having laid the foundations for further studies in Quaker dress.

Presently other academics, particularly dress historians, *are* attempting to define the 'minuscule detail of a visual and technical kind' of Quaker dress through an analysis of surviving garments.⁶¹ English costume historian Nancy Bradfield's publication *Costume in Detail 1730-1930*, illustrates studied garments 'entirely from private collections [...] too frail or too soiled ever to be put on view.' Bradfield describes how she, 'studied them in detail before their delicate charm is rotted away and lost to us for all time.'⁶² In the appendix of the 2007 reprint of her original 1968 publication, a 'Grey silk Quaker dress 1806-10 and black silk bonnet' and a 'White muslin dress 1806-1810, mob cap and long linen mittens' are

⁵⁸ Gummere, *The Quaker*, 3.

⁵⁹ Gummere, *The Quaker*, 32.

⁶⁰ Gummere, *The Quaker*, 124.

⁶¹ Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," 411.

⁶² Nancy Bradfield, *Costume in Detail 1730-1930* (Hawkhurst: Eric Dobby, 2007) v.

featured.⁶³ According to Bradfield, both garments 'belonged to Mrs Fayle, a Quaker and great-great-grandmother to Lady Corfield who has kindly presented them to my collection.'⁶⁴ Bradfield provides a sketch of the garments, illustrating their construction, including the pleats, linings, interior ties, belts and seams as well as the full measurements of each of the details of the items. Bradfield also discusses the wearers and owners of the garments, the collections where the garments are held, their condition including deterioration, wear and tear, the colours and textiles used and their natures such as 'transparent' or 'crisp.'⁶⁵ She notes that:

It is interesting to compare the cut of this silk dress, made with a wrap-over front to the bodice, a style which appears in many fashion plates and actual dresses early in the 19th century, with that of its companion, the fine white muslin dress, which has a high stomacher front, giving a straight line across the bosom, the apron front of the bodice being joined from the skirt front, a fashion which is commonly found 1800-10. With this type of front, the back is usually cut extremely narrow, giving the illusion of a tiny waist.⁶⁶

Bradfield's descriptions provide a commentary which alongside the images, give 'a true picture of the fashions of the period' by communicating details of the garments which are impossible to convey through the sketches alone.⁶⁷ Such a technique is used in this thesis, where descriptions of the garments are illustrated with photographs, both contemporary and period. Such a multi-disciplinary approach is also additionally supported through the implementation of the theoretical analytical techniques discussed in the works of Bourdieu, Bogatyrev, Davis and Pointon.

In this thesis, the detailed approach of Bradley is combined with the broad critical analysis of Bourdieu, Bogatyrev, Davis and Pointon, to produce a uniquely comprehensive critical analysis of British female Quaker garments not previously produced. In order to complete

⁶³ Bradfield, *Costume in Detail 1730-1930*, 371-374. These garment analyses first appeared in the journal *Costume* in 1974 and were reprinted in the books' appendices as an addition.

⁶⁴ Bradfield, *Costume in Detail 1730-1930*, 371.

⁶⁵ Bradfield, *Costume in Detail 1730-1930*, 373.

⁶⁶ Bradfield, *Costume in Detail 1730-1930*, 372.

⁶⁷ Bradfield, *Costume in Detail 1730-1930*, v.

such an endeavour, extensive reading of scholarly publications regarding fashion, and specifically feminine fashion consumption, has been essential, in order to contextualise and contrast Quaker female attitudes to dress and consumption within the wider academic output on the secular subject.

2.4 Fashion and Consumption contrasted with Quaker attitudes to Consumption especially dress and fashion

Ann Smart Martin's 1993 article, "Makers, Buyers and Consumers," presents a useful overview of scholarly writings on consumerism. Whilst Martin's study is written from the perspective of 'consumerism as a central problem of America's heritage,' the theories she raises are by international scholars and therefore are equally valid when discussing Western consumerism outside of America. Martin elaborates on the precise definitions of consumerism and consumption, citing 'consumerism' as 'the cultural relationship between humans and consumer goods', whilst 'consumption' she associates (though other consumption theorists do not) with notions of 'waste, decay and to be used up.'⁶⁸ Most relevant to this thesis, is her acknowledgement of the negative associations which have historically persisted between materialism and religion. Martin articulates this relationship as set within:

[...] a society obsessed with the material - as opposed to the spiritual - world. This is not new; social critics have decried materialism throughout history and every major religion has denounced it. To study materialism then is to study consumer behaviour but also to examine shifts in intellectual feelings about the core relationships between humans, God, and society.⁶⁹

Whilst Martin's article is not concerned with the spiritual connotations of consumption, (she posits her arguments as a secular discussion of society), her acknowledgement of the relationship between consumerism and religion supports the intent of this study- to

⁶⁸ Martin, "Makers, Buyers, and Users," 141-143.

⁶⁹ Martin, "Makers, Buyers, and Users," 143.

examine the historical and tangible manifestation of the negotiation between God, society and consumer behaviour within the framework of the Quaker religion. Her assertion implies too that this thesis has much wider implications outside of a religious and dress history academic interest- to provide the wider consumption theory community with a material example of interaction between people, religion and objects which has previously been overlooked, particularly since Quakers were suspicious of the material world.

For Martin, it is also important to bring 'theory down to individual realities,' by creating theories which clarify and reveal the meanings of real objects rather than existing as merely detached hypotheses. Martin asserts that 'many historians do not allow the objects themselves to be a critical part of the story.' She therefore places objects at the centre of her argument when hypothesising a methodology of 'how to think about consumerism and the process of acquisition.' Martin asserts that the criteria of an object being 'affordable, available and desirable' need to be met in order for the object to be possessed. She does, however, acknowledge the limitations of these criteria when items are gifted or inherited.⁷⁰

Similarly, Daniel Miller in "Consumption as the Vanguard of History" in his 1995 publication *Acknowledging Consumption*, discusses why 'economics have succeeded for so long as an ideological abstraction based on quite bizarre models.' He also considers why scholars 'have been so ready to accept premises and beliefs that, once put under the microscope of consumption, come to look so patently absurd.'⁷¹ Miller believes that a previous reliance on out-dated consumer theory created a void in scholarly analysis of consumerism and was duly filled with misconceptions. Thus, in 'Myths of Consumption', Miller both lists and 'challenge[s] the key myths' surrounding consumption and consumer behaviour.⁷² Miller addresses four apparent myths of consumption, which include 'consumption is opposed to sociality' and 'consumption creates particular kinds of social being.' He lists their attributes and then discusses ulterior perspectives.⁷³ There is little purpose relating verbatim Miller's

⁷⁰ Martin, "Makers, Buyers, and Users," 144 and 156.

⁷¹ Daniel Miller, "Consumption as the Vanguard of History," *Acknowledging Consumption* (London: Routledge, 1995) 2.

⁷² Miller, "Consumption as the Vanguard of History," 20. It is worth noting here that whilst Miller's study focused on the 'post-Fordism' or contemporary period, many of his assertions on 'First World' consumerism are applicable to the abiding and historical concerns regarding peoples relationships with objects.

⁷³ Miller, "Consumption as the Vanguard of History," 21-17.

arguments, as not all are pertinent to this study. Several of his statements in his debate are however, deeply relevant when considering female Quakers' negotiation of fashionable clothing.

Miller argues that consumerism has been historically represented as a 'misleading act which mystified the true nature of personhood which lay deep within.'⁷⁴ This notion reveals clear linguistic parallels with Quaker attitudes. As Marcia Pointon notes, Quakers have historically connected the actions and presentation of the body with the articulation of spirituality, which ultimately resulted in their adoption of 'a Plain outward appearance.'⁷⁵ Miller notes that this 'myth' is based on the idea that a perfect spirituality once existed in humanity, which he categorises as an 'absurdity.'⁷⁶ Likewise, many Quakers opposed making Plainness in dress and speech optional due to the tradition of the practice and its association with ancestral religious practices.⁷⁷ Clearly, some in the Quaker community held an idealised notion that a historical state of 'pure sociality' once existed. Clearly, they aspired to the notion that their ancestors rejected consumerism in an outright and unswerving manner, in the same way that the myth of a heritage which valued the natural person above and beyond manufactured appearance and goods exists today. Miller's assertion supports the notion (which has been vocalised by practicing Quakers aware of this researcher) that care must be taken not to position this study of mid-nineteenth century changes in Quaker dress in a 'pure' state of an idealism that all Quakers were historically strictly and equally Plain.

Wrestling the positive and real actions of consumerism away from the historically negative or idealised connotations is also proposed by Hungarian psychology Professor Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, in his 1993 essay "Why We Need Things." Whilst Miller's study considers consumerism from an economic perspective, Csikszentmihalyi discusses humans' 'psychological dependence on objects.'⁷⁸ According to Csikszentmihalyi, society's materialism is in a 'large part due to a paradoxical need to transform the precariousness of

⁷⁴ Miller, "Consumption as the Vanguard of History," 23.

⁷⁵ Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," 407.

⁷⁶ Miller, "Consumption as the Vanguard of History," 25.

⁷⁷ Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800", 412.

⁷⁸ Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, "Why We Need Things," *History from Things: Essays on Material Culture*, ed. S. Kingery Lubar (London: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1993): 22.

consciousness into the solidity of things.⁷⁹ Csikszentmihalyi discusses the distinction between objects which in his view, represent male and female identities, stating:

The power of women has traditionally been expressed through objects symbolizing equally stereotyped feminine qualities, such as seductiveness, fertility, and nurturance. Dresses, ornaments, jewellery, furs, silver, china, domestic appliances, and fine furniture witness to a woman's ability to control energy (often meaning the psychic energy of men) and hence the importance of herself.⁸⁰

According to Csikszentmihalyi, women's clothing is intrinsically invested with a heightened sense of self-identity and thus, it illustrates the character and beliefs of the wearer in a more nuanced manner than Quaker men's clothing. His assertion, therefore further clarifies the focus of this thesis on Quaker women's dress. Csikszentmihalyi's assertions however, suffer from a stereotypical bias and an oversimplification, ignorant to exceptions to the rule, and are not all applicable to a religious community, such as the Quakers, because *both* sexes were preoccupied with a complex system of self-representation.⁸¹

Before Martin, Miller and Csikszentmihalyi's articles were published however, Grant McCracken's *Culture and Consumption*, 1988, broadly discussed consumption theories as applied to clothing.⁸² McCracken discusses 'culture in the consideration of clothing,' by highlighting dress' various roles and functions as a communicative tool.⁸³ Usefully for this thesis, McCracken considers the role of consumer goods in the change and continuity of the

⁷⁹ Csikszentmihalyi. "Why We Need Things," 28. Yet he also believes that those who live in richly symbolic cultures where poetry, song, craft, prayer and ritual are at its core are 'freed from reliance on an objectified consciousness.'

⁸⁰ Csikszentmihalyi. "Why We Need Things," 24.

⁸¹ Frustratingly as well, despite Csikszentmihalyi's reference to specific objects his study fails to, in the words of Martin, bring 'theory down to individual realities,' and does not apply his pronouncements to specific objects in any more than a cursory way.

⁸² Grant McCracken, *Culture and Consumption* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988).

⁸³ McCracken, *Culture and Consumption*, 58. Disappointingly however throughout these discursive sections, McCracken posits his debate through discussion of the work of other scholars and their findings or broad historical periods, rather than through reference or analysis of specific items of clothing as examples. Furthermore, whilst McCracken alludes very briefly to specimens which illustrate his arguments, including 'the ornamentation of Elizabethan doublets and breeches' and 'the Ethiopian toga', little to no description is allotted to the specific garments nor discussion of the visual features of the items which manifest McCracken's theories.

'modern world.'⁸⁴ He describes how 'the innovatively minded group [...] begin to adopt the goods of other groups, so to experiment with and perhaps to take possession of the meaningful properties that exist therein.' According to McCracken, such appropriation is manifested in the adoption of particular types of clothes or fashionable features to reflect 'an appropriate set of symbols.'⁸⁵ This form of adoption is seen in Geraldine Cadbury's use of Aesthetic dress discussed in chapter 7. McCracken himself even acknowledges that a prime example of this adoption may be seen 'in the manner in which women of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have used clothing to fashion a new concept of themselves.'⁸⁶

Since McCracken's 1988 publication however, other consumer theorists have since applied more specific critical analysis to women's consumption of fashion. Christopher Breward's 1994 article, "Femininity and Consumption: The Problem of the late Nineteenth Century Fashion Journal," sought to 'define a more fluid characterisation of the nineteenth-century female of consumer' through an object based study of period fashion journals.⁸⁷ According to Breward, nineteenth-century fashion journals supplied their readers with 'social guidance' which sprang from the 'realisation by publishers that feminine culture, or fashion, was a marketable commodity.'⁸⁸ Breward discusses fashion journals for disparate classes, including *Myra's Dress Journal* and *The Queen*, and specifically analyses how these journals promoted themselves and endorsed particular shops or styles. Breward's identification that these women engaged 'with a commercial material world' is particularly relevant. It was this same secular social, commercial space which the Quaker women case studies were negotiating, particularly a 'specific form of femininity' in this 'feminised consumer culture.' In their cases however, their sartorial choices were further influenced by an awareness of a religious wariness of materiality.

Equally relevant, is Breward's assessment that in the evolving content and tone of the fashion journals, there 'was a clear shift from the contradictory demands of morality and fashionability [...] towards a more wholehearted embrace of the possibility of public life, and

⁸⁴ Grant McCracken, *Culture and Consumption*, 130.

⁸⁵ McCracken, *Culture and Consumption*, 135.

⁸⁶ McCracken, *Culture and Consumption*, 136.

⁸⁷ Christopher Breward, "Femininity and Consumption: The Problem of the Late Nineteenth Century Fashion Journal," *Journal of Design History* 7. 2. (1994): 71.

⁸⁸ Breward, "Femininity and Consumption," 71-72.

shopping in particular.' This shift in tone offered by women's journals represents a wider social movement towards a rendering apart of consumerism's, and specifically fashion's, association with morality. This is not to say that reactionary, traditional commentaries on 'the problem of the modern woman' ceased to appear, but that the changes in tone which saw 'no conflict of interest' between 'wifely duty and the pursuit of beauty' reflected a wider social sea-change in attitudes towards the consumption of fashionable garments and feminine morality.⁸⁹ Clearly, this change subtly altered the commercial environment Quaker women were seeking to negotiate in the final decades of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. An awareness that philosophies of feminine consumerism during this period were turbulent, rather than static, must therefore be appreciated in order to understand exactly what types of propaganda these Quaker women were attempting to mediate.

Other dress historians however have considered more broadly the 'evolution and scope of the discipline [...] to make the case for the plurality of the subject and to argue for parity in all approaches.'⁹⁰ Valerie Cummings 2004 book, *Understanding Fashion History*, reviews the literature produced on the subject of dress since the seventeenth century and their alternate observations. Throughout, Cummings notes how diaries, satirical papers and journals provide 'contemporary information about dress and textiles as both an economic national strength and as indication of social customs' illustrating that a multi-disciplinary approach to dress history is increasingly the norm.⁹¹ Cummings account illustrates the ability of the study of dress to illuminate and inform broader aspects of historical, social, economic and cultural knowledge. However in Cummings opening debate of dress history, is her acknowledgement of the previous belittling of the field, mocking the assertion that, 'the studying of 'old clothes' are [historically] less significant an element in understanding history than 'old' paintings, engravings, ceramics, furniture and metalwork.'⁹²

Dress historians' campaign against such dismissal was apparent in the scholastic output until the millennium. In the article, "New Directions: Fashion History Studies and Research in North America and England" from 1997, discussed in chapter 1, fashion curator Alexandra

⁸⁹ Beward, "Femininity and Consumption," 76-77.

⁹⁰ Valerie Cumming, *Understanding Fashion History* (London: Batsford, 2004) 1.

⁹¹ Cumming, *Understanding Fashion History*, 18.

⁹² Cumming, *Understanding Fashion History*, 24.

Palmer notes that the study of dress 'often carries negative associations' and quotes Negley Harte's comment that the field may be viewed as 'one long picnic attended by [...] enthusiastic girls.'⁹³ Similarly, Valerie Mendes and Amy de la Haye's, 1999 publication, *20th Century Fashion*, acknowledged the ridicule dress history had historically suffered, describing it as 'dismissed as merely frivolous aesthetic phenomenon.' Mendes and de la Haye's publication however, has been particularly useful in chapters 4 and 5 for its accurate chronicling of the prevailing Paris and London-based twentieth century fashions, particularly for this thesis up until 1914. Whilst they admit that the compact size of the publication 'precludes minutely detailed analyses', their publication acknowledges the main achievements of twentieth century designers and these are illustrated with period fashion plates, historical photographs and images of surviving dress.

Similarly useful for their description and chronology of fashionable nineteenth century dress has been Anne Bucks' 1984 publication *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, Lucy Johnston's 2005 publication *Nineteenth Century Fashion in Detail* and Edwina Ehrman's 2011 publication *The Wedding Dress: 300 Years of Bridal Fashions*. These are all highly detailed examinations of surviving garments with sumptuous illustrations.⁹⁴

Geraldine Cadbury's choice of an Aesthetic wedding dress, discussed in chapter 7, however also meant specific contemporary scholarly works on Aestheticism have been consulted.

⁹³ Alexandra Palmer, "New Directions: Fashion History Studies and Research in North America and England," *Fashion Theory*, 1.3. (1993): 297.

⁹⁴ Anne Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories* (London: Herbert Jenkins, [1961] 1984). Lucy Johnston, *Nineteenth-Century Fashion in Detail* (London: V&A Publications, 2005). Edwina Ehrman, *The Wedding Dress: 300 Years of Bridal Fashions* (London: V&A, 2011). Publications such as Cassie Davies-Strodder, Jenny Lister and Lou Taylor, *London Society Fashion 1905-1925: The Wardrobe of Heather Firbank* (London: V&A, 2015) as well as Amy de la Haye, Lou Taylor and Eleanor Thompson, *A Family of Fashion: The Messel Dress Collection* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 2005) have recently analysed specific nineteenth and early twentieth-century women's surviving wardrobes as their garments have been kept, collected and handed down. These publications are relevant to this study for their similarity in considering specific women's consumption of fashion, as well as chronicling the women's biographical stories and their places in society. Whilst these books were read and considered, they are not discussed here due to their explicit focus on specific women for whom large collections of fashionable clothing have survived. For example, the Messel collection consists of over 500 items of clothing, see "Fashion and Fancy Dress: The Messel Family Dress Collection", *Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton and Hove, Brighton and Hove City Council* [n.d.]. As the focus of my thesis is conversely the comparative study of a range of Quaker women's differing sartorial stances, many of whom have very little surviving clothing, and these book have not been specifically used in the research nor the write-up of this thesis, these publications have not been engaged with in this literature review.

Alison Adburgham's 1975 publication, *Liberty's. A Biography of a Shop*, specifically her "Chapter 6: Godwin and the Costume Department Antique Embroideries," describes Liberty's Costume departments aims, ideologies and Aesthetic women's garment styles.⁹⁵ Whilst Adburgham's publication is now 40 years old, the book incorporates catalogue, newspaper and advertisement sources as well as first-hand recollections. In 2000, however, art, costume and society historian, Geoffrey Squire published an article regarding the founding of the studio at Liberty & Co. for the journal *Costume* entitled "E.W. Godwin and the House of Liberty." Squire explained that E.W. Godwin's appointment by Arthur Liberty as director of the Artistic and Historical Costume Studio, 'was the outcome of a long and complex series of interlinking events, each of which needs to be considered in its context before the situation can be fully appreciated.'⁹⁶ This contextual consideration by Squire, as well as by Adburgham, illustrates the similar attention paid to the lexicon of influencing factors exercised throughout chapter 7. Both scholar's lack of discussion regarding the dresses produced by Liberty & Co. during the late nineteenth-century however, mean that many other sources are crucial for a detailed understanding of the sartorial identity of the Studio.

Adburgham and dress historian Judith Watt's chapters in dress curator Stephen Calloway's 1992 publication *Liberty of London: Masters of Style and Decoration*, introduce links between artistic developments during the era and the Aesthetic garments being produced at Liberty & Co. and elsewhere. Watt's chapter, "Costume", focuses exclusively on describing the colour, texture, drapery and hang of the garments produced by the Studio. Watt also discusses the colours of the Liberty dress materials, dyed exclusively with all-natural products, stating that the department 'rejected the bright aniline dyes worn by the more conventional fashionable ladies.'⁹⁷ Liberty's current archivist Anna Buruma's 2007 article "A Clinging Liberty tea-gown instead of a magenta satin': The Colour Red in Artistic Dress by Liberty & Co." similarly discusses the use of colour in Aesthetic fabrics and

⁹⁵ Alison Adburgham, "Chapter 6: Godwin and the Costume Department Antique Embroideries," *Liberty's. A Biography of a Shop* (London: George Allen & Unwin Limited, 1975) 51.

⁹⁶ Geoffrey Squire, "E.W. Godwin and the House of Liberty," *Costume*, 34, (2000): 81.

⁹⁷ Watt, "Costume," *Liberty of London: Masters of Style and Decoration* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1992) 68.

paintings, particularly shades of red, despite its 'working-class taste' associations.⁹⁸ Buruma's article spends little time musing over neither the environment of Liberty & Co. nor the aims of the Studio where the garments were produced, and instead discusses Liberty fabrics, and specifically Liberty dresses made of red materials, in their broader social and fashionable context. Her article is one of the first to acknowledge that social anxieties regarding respectability influenced Aesthetic dress, which has parallels in the Quakers' preoccupation with material culture, particularly clothing's ability to represent spirituality and propriety. Both Buruma and Watt describe and include images of dress designs from original Liberty & Co. catalogues, as well as surviving Liberty & Co. garments from the period, to demonstrate the clothing's appearance, which is also done throughout chapter 7. Primary source material was however, still essential in the study of Cadbury's Liberty wedding dress as none of these scholars discuss design or cost in any detail.

Liberty & Co.'s Artistic and Historical Costume Studio director, E.W. Godwin's 1884 publication, *Dress and Its Relation to Health and Climate*, specifically praised 'old Hellenic', or Greek, dress as the 'most elegant European costume', the style chapter 7 case study Geraldine Cadbury chose for her wedding gown of 1891.⁹⁹ Godwin focused upon the health benefits of particular types of dress as much as their appealing aesthetics, and therefore located his own Aesthetic movement designs as in agreement with the advice advertised by advocates of the nineteenth century Rational Dress movement. Therefore, Godwin's text creates very convincing and clear links between the two movements, which for other scholars such as Adburgham 'seem poles apart.'¹⁰⁰ For chapter 7, such an association between Rational and Aesthetic dress became an important aspect in understanding Geraldine Cadbury's choice of Aestheticism as the style of her wedding garments following the realisation that her mother was a Rational Dress advocate.

Recently however, Kimberly Wahl has pursued the connection between Aestheticism and Rational Dress in her chapter "Picturing the Material/ Manifesting the Visual", in the 2015

⁹⁸ Anna Buruma, "'A clinging Liberty tea-gown instead of a magenta satin': The Colour Red in Artistic Dress by Liberty & Co." *Costume: The Journal of the Costume Society* 41 (2007): 106.

⁹⁹ E.W. Godwin, *Dress and Its Relation to Health and Climate* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1884) 77.

¹⁰⁰ Alison Adburgham, "The Aesthetic Movement," *Liberty of London: Masters of Style and Decoration*. ed. Stephen Calloway (London: Thames & Hudson, 1992) 39.

anthology *Dress History: New Directions in Theory and Practice*. Unlike any of the other authors on Aestheticism, Wahl compares nineteenth century visual representations of Aesthetic dress with the 'material record' of surviving Aesthetic garments, in an attempt to 'reconcile' the two. Similarly to this study, her text uses a case study approach of the surviving dresses whilst also using fashion plates as supportive material, to examine the artistic design features of the gowns alongside their more conventional elements. Her article however, only uses two case studies, and as such consultation of surviving Liberty & Co. catalogue dress designs was essential to reveal a clearer picture of the sartorial preferences of the Studio.¹⁰¹

Liberty & Co. catalogues, even those published after Godwin's death in 1886, such as *Liberty Art Dress, Fabrics and Personal Specialities, 1886-1887* and *Form and Colour Developments, 1890*, included illustrations of garments in his advocated Hellenic style. *Liberty Art Dress, Fabrics and Personal Specialities* featured a full length loose chiton dress with long sleeves called 'Athene', in 'Nagpore silk with a Gauze Himation'.¹⁰² *Form and Colour Developments* published at least three years later included a very similar gown, yet with short sleeves, entitled 'Clymene. Reproduction of Classic Greek Costume (4th Century B.C.)'.¹⁰³ Alongside descriptions and fabric suggestions, the text in these catalogues included prices of the garments when made in differing fabrics. It is significant that the cost of Liberty & Co. clothing was not mentioned in *any* of the preceding secondary source articles discussed here. The monetary details of these garments, readily available in the catalogues, is particularly relevant for chapter 7 as these prices enabled me to hypothesise an informed estimate of the price of Geraldine Cadbury's gown as well as to appreciate their relative high cost by comparing Liberty prices with those of other manufacturers during the same period. These catalogues became crucial in aiding my understanding of the expense of the Studio's garments. Evaluations of the wealth and economic status of Geraldine Cadbury's family through examination of the cost of the garments she chose for her wedding has been particularly valuable, because such an endeavour has been impossible with

¹⁰¹ Kimberly Wahl, "Picturing the Material/ Manifesting the Visual: Aesthetic dress in late-nineteenth-century British culture," *Dress History: New Directions in Theory and Practice*, ed. Charlotte Nicklas and Annabella Pollen (London: Bloomsbury, 2015) 97.

¹⁰² *Liberty Art Dress, Fabrics and Personal Specialities* (London: Liberty And Co, 1886 – 1887) 17. Westminster City Archives.

¹⁰³ *Form and Colour Developments* (London: Liberty And Co, 1890) 14-15. Westminster City Archives.

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Having outlined the scholarly work used within this thesis as well as where this work lies in a broader academic landscape, this study will now begin in earnest, by initially articulating the position of women in Quakerism during the early centuries of the religion. The following chapter introduces and historically contextualises the religion and its followers through a period of growing consumer demand in the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries prior to 1860.

Chapter 3 Women and Quakerism Pre-1860

Introduction

Research for this chapter began with Quaker history publications that discuss the beliefs of the Religious Society of Friends, its formation, structure and particularly its attitude to material culture, including, Ben Pink Dandelion's *The Quakers, A Very Short Introduction* and the American anthology *Quaker Aesthetics: Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption*. Ultimately, however, the subject of this chapter is women and Quakerism pre-1860 with particular attention being paid to Advices regarding dress. Publications including Phyllis Mack's *Witness for Change: Quaker Women over Three Centuries*, Catie Gill's *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community: A Literary Study of Political Identities, 1650-1700*, and David Booy's *Autobiographical Writing by Early Quaker Women*, have been essential in finding and presenting female voices and written first-hand accounts of their experiences from the inception of the religion until the nineteenth century. To support this published material, particularly as some sources were American in origin, it was crucial to source primary evidence from British Meeting minutes and Quaker tracts held at the Library of the Religious Society of Friends in London. As such, minutes taken during Quaker Meetings at all levels of the religious hierarchy, from as early as 1675, have been quoted throughout this chapter, with emphasis placed on minutes taken during Women's Meetings, so that their voices are authentically represented without the mediation of a male speaker or writer. Alongside personal accounts, Advices disseminated from the Yearly Meeting regarding Plain dress and self-presentation have also been included, as first-hand evidence of the specificity of regulations being advised.

According to Mary Anne Caton, 'the challenge of interpreting [*Quaker*] women's plain dress comes from both the complex relationship of the Society of Friends to the larger, non-Quaker world and from the Society's written and ambiguous Rules of Discipline.'¹ Caton acknowledges that even before the amendment of the queries in 1860, which made

¹ Mary Ann Caton, "Quaker Women's Plain Dress in the Delaware Valley," *Quaker Aesthetics: Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption* (University of Pennsylvania Press. 2003) 246.

plainness in dress, speech and behaviour optional, 'the varied styles worn by Quaker women and permitted by the meeting have complicated the understanding of Plainness.'² This chapter discusses the history of Quaker women's dress before 1860. It then untangles the classification of Plainness during this period and its significance to the religious community through reviewing the dress Advices disseminated by the religious governance. Also discussed are Quaker women's positions within the religious hierarchy and their roles in the Meetings, as well as a consideration of Quaker women's challenge and acceptance of their position and the Advices, through a consideration of their writings from this early period. Throughout this chapter, for reasons of brevity, the Advices for Plainness will be discussed over and above analysis of exactly how and to what extent female Friends implemented these recommendations, as undertaking the analysis of both of these lies beyond the scope of this PhD. These pre-1860 Plain dress Advices however continue to be an important influence during this thesis's chosen period, thus justifying their examination.

Formation, Beliefs and Structure of the Religious Society of Friends

During the mid-seventeenth century several dissenting Protestant groups were established which sought to oppose the religious teachings practiced by the Church of England. Amongst these non-conformist religions, were those known among contemporaries as Quakers. Initially organised around 1652, the Religious Society of Friends, was formed as a 'response to [...] direct or unmediated religious experience they described metaphorically as the discovery of the Inward Christ, Seed, or Light of God.'³ Generally credited with the founding of the religion, George Fox emphasised the importance of personal revelation for religious guidance, over and above Church teaching and the authority of scripture.⁴ This is a tenet of the religion which still sets it apart to this day. Early Quakers saw the Light as a 'purging' of all sinful sensibilities and actions which enlightened the convert to 'what was

² Caton, "Quaker Women's Plain Dress in the Delaware Valley," 246.

³ Pink Dandelion, *The Quakers: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: University Press, 2008) 1 and J. William Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," *Quaker Aesthetics: Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003) 16.

⁴ Dandelion, *The Quakers: A Very Short Introduction*, 5.

required to be a servant of God.⁵ Such revelation and purging was often physically enacted through trembling or shaking during worship, hence the Quaker 'nickname applied to the group.'⁶

Quaker historians Ben Pink Dandelion, William Frost and Peter Collins explain that submission to the Inward Light was practiced through 'a denunciation of music, plays, gambling and many recreations as wastes of time' whilst the 'transforming experience available to all did away with the need for priests and sermons.'⁷ In addition, seventeenth and eighteenth-century Quakers adopted external expressions of their beliefs by denouncing, 'tithes, paying ministers, oaths, using "you" for addressing an individual (they used thee/thou), titles (like "Your Grace" or Lord) and the pagan names of days and months instead of strict numerical references.'⁸

According to Frost they also adopted many new religious practices, including 'women's spiritual equality with men, Christ's turn inwardly to teach his people the possibility of perfect submission to God [and] strict personal morality.'⁹ Their meetings for worship consisted of silent gatherings, whereby they waited for God to communicate through one of them and if so roused the man or woman would rise and offer ministry.¹⁰ Although Quakers developed no creed, these shared customs were collected together and outlined as 'Testimonies' during the seventeenth century.¹¹ Catherine Lavoie and Collins explain that adherence to these collective beliefs was 'strictly maintained from the outset' through the organisation of a structure of gathering, decision making and disseminating 'Advices' in the form of 'minutes' from each assembly, or 'Queries' which sought to 'prompt proper Quaker

⁵ Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 16-17.

⁶ Dandelion, *The Quakers: A Very Short Introduction*, 2 and Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 17.

⁷ Dandelion, *The Quakers: A Very Short Introduction*, 2. Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 17 and Peter Collins, "Ethical Consumption as Religious Testimony: The Quaker Case," *Ethical Consumption, Social Value and Economic Practice*. ed. James G. Carrier, Peter G. Luetchford (Berghahn Books, 2012) 187.

⁸ Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 17.

⁹ Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 17.

¹⁰ Collins, "Ethical Consumption as Religious Testimony: The Quaker Case," 187.

¹¹ Collins, "Ethical Consumption as Religious Testimony: The Quaker Case," 187-8.

conduct' through a hierarchy of 'Meetings.'¹² The Yearly (National) Meeting, generally held in London, made major decisions, and minutes from there were disseminated down to the religion's followers at Quarterly (Regional) Meetings, Monthly (County) Meetings and Preparative (local congregation) Meetings.¹³ Conversely, 'Concerns' or 'Queries' or 'Answers to Queries' from the local level could be sent up the hierarchy for discussion by a group of Quakers from a variety of districts at each level, as each Preparative Meeting elected a temporary representative to go to each Meeting within the hierarchy.

From the outset, The Religious Society of Friends promoted 'women's spiritual equality with men [...],' through the notion, as Phyllis Mack stresses, that 'as all Quakers in the light had transcended their carnal selves, a woman preaching in public had actually transcended her womanhood.'¹⁴ Due to this 'women were drawn to early Friends in considerable numbers and some of them gained prominence [...]'¹⁵ David Booy notes that such 'provocative' and 'subversive' religious ideas, which were fundamentally in conflict with the doctrines and practices of the established (Protestant) church of England were met with 'apprehension and hostility' by their contemporaries and 'condemned by the clergy, dealt with harshly by concerned or antagonistic justices and civic officials and often treated with scorn and violence by the ordinary people.'¹⁶ Concerning such treatment, the seventeenth century Quaker Margaret Fell, member of the gentry and later wife of George Fox, in the 1710 publication *A relation of Margaret Fell, her birth, life, testimony and sufferings for the Lord's everlasting truth [...]*, explained of her experiences in London, that:

At this time Friends' meetings in London were much troubled with soldiers, pulling Friends out of their meetings, and beating them with their muskets and swords; insomuch that several were wounded and bruised by them; many were cast into

¹² Collins, "Ethical Consumption as Religious Testimony: The Quaker Case," 189 and Catherine Lavoie, "Eighteenth Century Development of the Meeting House," *Quaker Aesthetics: Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003) 173.

¹³ Collins, "Ethical Consumption as Religious Testimony: The Quaker Case," 189.

¹⁴ Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 17 and Phyllis Mack, "Gender and Spirituality in Early English Quakerism, 1650-1665," *Witness for Change: Quaker Women Over Three Centuries*. ed. Elizabeth Potts Brown, Susan Mosher Stuart (Rutgers University Press, 1989) 48.

¹⁵ Thomas C. Kennedy, *British Quakerism, 1860-1920* (Oxford University Press, 2001) 211.

¹⁶ David Booy, *Autobiographical Writings by Early Quaker Women* (Ashgate Publishing, 2004) 4.

prison, through which, many lost their lives; and all this being done to a peaceable people, only for worshipping God, as they in conscience were persuaded.¹⁷

Catie Gill explains in her 2005 study *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community: A Literary Study of Political Identities, 1650-1700*, that such punitive treatment was not solely preserved for the male members of the sect. Despite the 'positive advantages to women of being part of a community formulated on collectivist principles' their sex did not prevent them from experiencing violent and humiliating punishment.¹⁸ Quaker women's imprisonment during the seventeenth century was 'regularly the result of preaching to a resistant crowd' or public preaching, the crime for which the Quaker Dorothy Waugh recounted her 'confinement to a scold's bridle.'¹⁹²⁰ Her written account, 'A Relation Concerning Dorothy Waugh's Cruell Usage by the Mayor of Carlile' from 1655 described how:

[...] they tare my clothes to put on their bridle as they called it, which was a stone weight of Iron by the relation of their own Generation, & three barrs [sic] of Iron to come over my face, and a peece [sic] of it was put in my mouth, which was so unreasonable big a thing for that place as cannot be related, and the mayor said he would make an example to all [...] and charged the officer to whip me out of town.²¹

According to Catie Gill, these 'sufferings narratives [...] defined by their extended focus on the persecution, trial and imprisonment of Quakers', were one means by which Quakers composed their public identity in print.²² Quaker women's sufferings were 'a small part of any sufferings pamphlet' during the seventeenth century, but unlike Waugh's account, these women's experiences were commonly described after the event, second-hand, by an author

¹⁷ Margaret Fell, *A relation of Margaret Fell, her birth, life, testimony and sufferings for the Lord's everlasting truth[...]* (London: J. Sowle, 1710) Qted in Booy, *Autobiographical Writings by Early Quaker Women*, 154.

¹⁸ Catie Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community: A Literary Study of Political Identities, 1650-1700* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2005) 52.

¹⁹ Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community*, 43.

²⁰ Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community*, 71.

²¹ Dorothy Waugh, 'A Relation Concerning Dorothy Waugh's Cruell Usage by the Mayor of Carlile', *The Lambs Defence Against Lyes* (London: Giles Calvert, 1655) 29-30. Qted in Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community*, 72.

²² Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community*, 42.

(or authors).²³ In many cases, due to the abbreviation of the second-hand account, 'it is not possible, from this, to get a feel for her language, her actual defence, or its tenor.'²⁴ In addition, little evidence exists about Quaker women's participation in these works of compilation. According to Gill, therefore, 'it seems likely that sufferings narratives multiply the number of men in authorial and decision-making roles.'²⁵ Such examples, whereby Quaker men wrote on behalf of the women, restricted the female presence in the account. According to Gill, these examples reveal that the community of Quaker sufferers during this period was 'fractured and gendered,' by presenting an image in print of communal suffering whilst using a form of textual representation which silenced the female voice.²⁶

The complicated position of Quaker women within the religious hierarchy was also enacted in other Quaker customs during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Initially, according to Thomas C. Kennedy, Quaker meetings admitted the presence of women but required them to remain silent. By the 1670s however, George Fox himself encouraged the formation of 'separate women's monthly meetings with special concern for charitable activities. This was apparently done in most places, especially in the north of England.'²⁷ Sometime between 1675 and 1680, a letter was circulated around British Quaker women's meetings from the *Lancashire Meeting of Women Friends* written by Sarah Fell, which contained practical advice for how to conduct a women's Monthly Meeting, justification for their creation and acted as a witness of fellow Quaker women's faith. The letter advised that, '[...] where the men's monthly meeting is established, let the women likewise of every monthly meeting, meet together to wait upon the Lord, and to hearken what the Lord will say unto them.'²⁸

Quaker Women's Meetings, their duties and power

²³ Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community*, 42 & 53.

²⁴ Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community*, 56.

²⁵ Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community*, 70.

²⁶ Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community*, 75.

²⁷ Kennedy, *British Quakerism, 1860-1920*, 212-213.

²⁸ Sarah Fell, "A Seventeenth Century Women's Declaration," *Signs, Journal of Women and Culture and Society* 1:1 (1975): 231-245. Qted in *Witness for Change: Quaker Women Over Three Centuries*, 26.

As Quaker historian Gil Skidmore asserts however, although equality was an ideal which George Fox encouraged throughout the religious community, 'it has often been fulfilled imperfectly. Friends after all are a part of the wider society and reflect the general mores of their times.'²⁹ Female Quakers were accepted within the religion as vocal ministers, due to the 'irrelevant' nature of gender when the word of God was spoken, yet as Peter Collins notes, Quaker women's lives are more difficult to picture than those of their male counterparts during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries because of the slender and unenlightening Preparative (local) and Monthly (county) Women's Meeting records.³⁰ Whilst women's Meetings ran parallel to those of the men, and co-operated with them, the records from this period reveal that women played a negligible role in the formal decision making processes during Meetings.³¹ As Thomas C. Kennedy noted, if Quaker women did have spiritual equality in worship and ministry, it did not extend into the business of controlling the day-to-day dealings of the Society.³²

According to the Religious Society of Friends in Britain's *Central Organisational Structure* records, as early as 1753 the exclusively male London Yearly Meeting considered a proposal for the establishment of a Yearly Meeting for Women Friends. However, it was not until 1784 that the Men's Yearly Meeting finally agreed, formally, to compose the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends to be held in London.³³ It was, as described in the minutes of the first Yearly Meeting of Women Friends on 5th June 1784:

[...] at liberty to correspond in writing with the Quarterly Meetings of Women Friends, to receive accounts from them and speak such advice as in the Wisdom of Truth [...] yet such Meeting is not to be so far considered a Meeting of Discipline as

²⁹ Gil Skidmore, *Strength in Weakness: Writings of Eighteenth Century Quaker Women* (Oxford: Altamira Press, 2003) 5.

³⁰ Skidmore, *Strength in Weakness*, 5 and Peter Collins, *Quakers and Quakerism in Bolton, Lancashire 1650-1995: The History of a Religious Community* (Edwin Mellen Press, 2010) 175.

³¹ Collins, *Quakers and Quakerism in Bolton, Lancashire 1650-1995*, 177.

³² Kennedy, *British Quakerism, 1860-1920*, 212.

³³ "Yearly Meeting of Women Friends (1784-1907)," *Central Organisational Structure: W-Y*, 2002. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

to make rules nor yet alter the present Queries, without the concurrence of this Meeting.³⁴

It is also evident from the Monthly Meeting of Women Friends of Westminster records, that even into the nineteenth century female Quakers also submitted to the decisions of their parallel Men's Monthly Meeting, with one entry noting for example, that permission had been received for the travel of a female Friend:

23rd of 7th month 1848: A certificate has been received from our men's meeting liberating our dear friend Caroline E. Parken to pay a visit in gospel love to the Quarterly Meeting of Cumberland and Northumberland, in parts of Westmorland and Durham and in some other places in going and returning [...]³⁵

Due to the legal restrictions on the Quakers' constructing meeting houses throughout the seventeenth century, Meetings were largely held in private homes where women, in domestic environments, felt relaxed.³⁶ According to Sandra Stanley Holton this tradition of using the Quaker home for religious meetings meant that far from being a restrictive, exclusively domestic feminine sphere, '[... it] was a relatively open space where religious and ethical values might be enacted, where the obligations of citizenship as public service might be performed with the like-minded from the broader community, and where recreation might be shared with co-religionists.³⁷ During the seventeenth century, women's Meetings, epistles and letters written by fellow female Friends from across the country were read out, which helped to build the Friends' sense of community.³⁸ Additionally, such writings reminded those present of the responsibilities that came to be associated with women's Meetings, including 'helping poor families, overseeing marriages, supporting newly-married

³⁴ *Yearly Meeting of Women Friends Minutes (1784-1792)*, 5th of June 1784, Case 27. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

³⁵ *Westminster Monthly Meeting of Women Friends 1770-1861*, 23rd July 1848, MM/11b7. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

³⁶ Mary Maples Dunn, *Witness for Change: Quaker Women Over Three Centuries*. ed. Elizabeth Potts Brown, Susan Mosher Stuart (Rutgers University Press, 1989) 74

³⁷ Sandra Stanley Holton, *Quaker Women: Personal Life, Memory and Radicalism in the Lives of Women Friends, 1780 - 1930* (London: Routledge, 2007) 54.

³⁸ Margaret Benefiel, "Weaving the Web of Community Letters and Epistles," *Hidden in Plain Sight: Quaker Women's Writings 1650-1700*, ed. Mary Garman, Judith Applegate, Margaret Benefiel, Dortha Meredith (Pennsylvania: Pendle Hill, 1996) 449.

women, supporting mothers of young children and caring for the sick: all essential tasks in the building and sustaining of the Quaker community.¹³⁹ In addition, these tracts delivered warnings for women Friends to maintain high standards of conduct, 'that you all may be kept low in his humble self denying Life, where safety is to be found.'¹⁴⁰ One such letter from 1679, reminds female Quakers of the importance of raising their children to reject fashionable clothing, saying:

Traine up your Children in the Blessed truth and fear of the Lord, So may you have hope they will not depart from it (when they are old.) And take heed of giving way or suffering them to get into pride, and the vain and foolish fashions, which are a shame to Sober people, and a great inlet to many evils, for they are prone to that by nature, and it may soon be set up, but hard to get it down [...]¹⁴¹

Prescriptions of Plain dress

Discussions about suitable dress for Quaker women and men developed early in the existence of the religion, particularly after the Restoration of Charles II in 1660. According to J. William Frost, during the seventeenth century, 'early Friends dressed as others of their class and occupations [...] because most Friends were artisans, tradesmen, or farmers, these men and their families dressed like others: neither above nor below their station.'¹⁴² Yet the Restoration brought with it a new enthusiasm for ornamental fashion including the use of elaborate wigs, perfumes, laces and silks in court dress, as displayed in the dress of court favourites such as one of Charles' mistresses Barbara Villiers.¹⁴³ In contrast, according to Frost, the newly organised Society of Friends who sought humility, truth and spiritual enlightenment, were 'appalled' by the dissoluteness of the extravagant

³⁹ Benefiel, "Weaving the Web of Community Letters and Epistles," 449.

⁴⁰ Mary Waite, *A Warning To All Friends. Who Professeth the Everlasting Truth of God, which he Hath Revealed and made manifest in this his Blessed Day (whether on this Side, or beyond the Seas)*, 10th. 2d. Month, 1679. Qted in *Hidden in Plain Sight: Quaker Women's Writings 1650-1700*, 25.

⁴¹ Waite, *A Warning To All Friends*. Qted in *Hidden in Plain Sight: Quaker Women's Writings 1650-1700*, 486.

⁴² Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 19.

⁴³ Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 20

Court clothing and they reacted to these events.⁴⁴ Frost's argument however ignores the reality that such extravagant attire would have been inappropriate for the rural and provincial lives he asserts early Quakers engaged in but also far from their economic means. In addition, if these early Friends were practicing farmers and tradesmen, they would not have been influenced by, or engaged with, aristocratic court attire. Whilst Frost's reasons for such an adoption seem dubious, he asserts that by the 1670s 'distinctive dress and furniture would be added to their customs or testimonies,' which later became termed a Plain lifestyle.⁴⁵

Frost also acknowledges that such a justification for the adoption of a distinctive form of Plain dress ignores the importance of the inherited Christian tradition 'of using mortification to prove the subordination of physical pleasures to spiritual awakening.'⁴⁶ In Biblical teachings, dress is often equated with outward attitude, particularly in the gospel of Luke, and as early Friends 'essentially relived the Bible as an illustration of their spiritual journey' many Friends absorbed the inherited Biblical teachings about dress.⁴⁷

The earliest Advices regarding clothing were specifically framed in reference to these Biblical teachings. In the minutes from the Yearly Meeting on 17th March 1675, under the sub-heading *Of Friends Christian Testimony against the Corrupt Fashions and Language of the world*, it warns:

And lastly it is brought upon us to put Friends in remembrance to keep to the Christian Testimony Truth begot in our hearts in the beginning against the spirit of the World and for which many have suffered cruel markings, beatings and stonings; and particularly of their corrupt fashions and dealings and language of the World their overbearing and vain fashions, that the Cross of Christ in all things may be kept

⁴⁴ Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 20

⁴⁵ Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 17.

⁴⁶ Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 18.

⁴⁷ Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 18. Passages in the Gospel of Luke which equates wealth, excess and dress with outward attitude include 9: 57-62, 14: 33, 15: 11-32, 18: 18-30.

to which preserves Friends blameless and honours the Lords name and trust in the Earth [...]'⁴⁸

Such 'remembrance' however suggests that the shunning of corrupt and vain fashions was, by 1675, already an established custom for Friends. According to Frost, following the English Government's endorsed acceptance of all Protestant beliefs and the allowance of Friends to make affirmations instead of taking oaths in the late seventeenth century, Quakers looked to Plainness as a way to 'safeguard the spiritual life in the face of worldly freedom.'⁴⁹

Towards the close of the seventeenth century, Meetings begun referring to Plainness in official Advices, and as such became 'a subject for discipline; that is, in theory at least a person could be disowned for not observing the Quaker testimonies on dress or speech.'⁵⁰

Frost also asserts that early Quakers were most concerned about the role of clothing as a sign of pride and generally condemned all superfluity or excess, rather than specific clothes or garments.⁵¹ High-profile seventeenth century Friends such as William Penn and Robert Barclay, asserted the importance of conquering self-will and Plain dress was essential in this development.⁵² A study of written minutes and Advices from the Yearly, Quarterly and Westminster Monthly Meetings, confirm that official Advices regarding dress consistently offered generalised recommendations.

⁴⁸ "Of Friends Christian Testimony against the Corrupt Fashions and Language of the world," *Yearly Meeting Minutes*, 17th March 1675, YM/Volume 1, Microfilm 13. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London. The word 'fashion' to describe a style of garments was used as early as the sixteenth century. According to Eric Partridge, *A Short Etymological Dictionary of Modern English* (London: Routledge, [1958] 1966) 196: 'The predominant social sense of fashion arose early in the sixteenth century, via the sense of a special manner of making clothes.' As such, it is reasonable to read the corrupt fashions referred to in the quote as clothing.

⁴⁹ Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 25. Ben Pink Dandelion, *An Introduction to Quakerism*, (Cambridge University Press, 2007) 67.

⁵⁰ Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 24. Any Friend who was not in unity with Quaker practices could be excluded from the Society's affairs and were encouraged to disassociate themselves from the religious community. Reasons for disownment included marrying a Non-Quaker, immorality, insolvency, fraud and non-attendance at Meetings. This was a serious matter. Quaker elders also sought to safeguard the remaining community from the disowned Quaker's inappropriate conduct. Disownment did not mean they could not attend Meetings for Worship, but they were not allowed to attend Meetings for Discipline nor partake in any decision making processes.

⁵¹ Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 19.

⁵² Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 22.

Advices concerning dress were also often framed with reference to avoiding 'train[ing] up their children in the World's ways.'⁵³ The Yearly Meeting Epistle of 1690, sent to 'the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings of Friends in England, Wales and Elsewhere,' related numerous Advices to 'all Friends concerned (so far as they are able or may be capable)' regarding the religious upbringing of the younger generation.⁵⁴ Advices included, 'not to send them to such schools, where they are taught the corrupt ways, manners, fashions and language of the World', to 'train up your children in the good nurture, admonition and fear of the Lord, in that Plainness and Language which becomes Truth' as well as to 'be good examples to them, in a sober and godly conversation and plainness of speech.' Finally, Advices stated that Friends should not 'suffer your substances to be bestowed on your Children to furnish them with such things as tend to pride and to lift them up in vanity, or affect them with the vain fashions of the World.'⁵⁵ Towards the close of the seventeenth century, these Advices were formulated into what was commonly referred to as the Third Query, which proscribed that Friends:⁵⁶

[...] endeavour by example and precept to train up their children, servants and those under their care, in a religious life and conversation, consistent with our Christian profession, in the frequent reading of the Holy Scriptures, and in plainness of speech, behaviour and apparel.⁵⁷

The Third Query therefore acted as a prompt from the Yearly Meeting for all followers to lead Plain lifestyles and to encourage their households to do the same. In addition, it acted as a pledge from Quakers to the hierarchy of the religion, as Preparative and Monthly

⁵³ "At the General Yearly Meeting of Friends in Truth. At the Adjournment of the Yearly Meeting at Bull, the 11th 4th month 1690," *Yearly Meeting Minutes*, 11th April 1690, YM/Volume 1, Microfilm 13. Archive of Religious Society of Friends London.

⁵⁴ "Yearly Meeting Epistle. To the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings of Friends in England, Wales and Elsewhere, from Our Yearly Meeting held in London the 9th, 10th, 11th dayes [sic] of the 9th month 1690," *Yearly Meeting Minutes*, 1690, YM/Volume 1, Microfilm 13. Archive of Religious Society of Friends London.

⁵⁵ "Yearly Meeting Epistle. To the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings of Friends in England, Wales and Elsewhere, from Our Yearly Meeting held in London the 9th, 10th, 11th dayes [sic] of the 9th month 1690," *Yearly Meeting Minutes*, 1690, YM/Volume 1, Microfilm 13. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

⁵⁶ Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 24.

⁵⁷ "Answers to the Yearly Meetings Queries from the Quarterly Meeting for the Counties of Derby and Nottingham held at Nottingham 4th mo 19th: 1814," *Yearly Meeting of Women Friends Answers to Queries*, 1814, YM/YMWF File 1. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

Meetings regularly sent 'Answers to Queries' up the hierarchy, reporting on the extent to which its congregation were complying.

Whilst the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends was not allowed to make rules or alter the present Queries, a substantial volume of their epistles dealt with discipline by reiterating Advices concerning the religious guidance of children, specifically their apparel, 'as much of the weighty Charge [is] devolved upon Mothers.'⁵⁸ One epistle from 1805, encouraged women Quakers that:

[...] the children may be early trained in the habit of obedience to their parents, as one means of preparing their minds for subjection to the Cross of Christ and that mothers may maintain a steady watch with regard to the dispositions which they cherish in their tender offspring lest instead of nipping the first buddings of vanity they should be gratifying their own inclinations in ornamenting their persons of their infant charge, even when the temptation may have ceased as to themselves.⁵⁹

Whilst many Yearly Meetings of Women Friends epistles simply promoted a broad religious condemnation for the 'vain and intoxicating fashions of a degenerate world,' specific recommendations were extended from the authority of the Yearly Meeting for particular items of clothing felt to be particularly 'vain and superfluous.'⁶⁰ One epistle of 1691 for example, urged Friends to 'avoid pride and immodesty in apparel, and extravagant wiggs

⁵⁸ *Yearly Meeting of Women Friends Minutes (1784-1792)*. 5th of June 1784, Case 27. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London and "Information and Advice from the Yearly Meeting of Women held in London 1792 to the Quarterly Meetings of Women Friends in Great Britain of Ireland; An Epistle from the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends held in London," *Yearly Meeting of Women Friends Answers to Queries 1668- 1896*, 1792, YM/YMWF. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

⁵⁹ "To the Quarterly Meeting of Women Friends in England, the principality of Wales and Women Friends in Scotland. Yearly Meeting 1805," *Yearly Meeting of Women Friends Answers to Queries 1668- 1896*, 1805, YM/YMWF. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London

⁶⁰ "From our Yearly Meeting of Women Friends held in London by adjournment from the 16th of the 5th month 1791 to the 23rd of the same inclusive," *Yearly Meeting of Women Friends Answers to Queries 1668- 1896*, 1791, YM/YMWF. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London and "Yearly Meeting Epistle. To the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings of Friends in England, Wales and Elsewhere, from Our Yearly Meeting held in London 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Dayes {sic} of the 4th Month, 1691," *Yearly Meeting Minutes*, 1691, YM/Volume 1, Microfilm 13. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London

[...]⁶¹ Another enquiry sent up from the Cumberland Quarterly Meeting, 1693, asked whether 'it's agreeable to our ancient Testimony against pride and superfluity, to make, wear or sell flowered printed stuffs, fringes, neckcloths and sword belts.'⁶² As though in answer, Collins, in his article *Ethical Consumption as Religious Testimony: The Quaker Case*, quotes minutes from Marsden Monthly Meeting in 1704 which recommended, 'concerning buying, selling, making or wearing stript Cloth, Stuffs, Silks or any sort of flowered or figured thing of different colours [...] - Friends stand clear of all such things', at a time when floral, printed cotton textiles were newly fashionable.⁶³

In accordance with this final suggestion to reject striped and floral fashionable textiles, Amelia Mott Gummere, in her 1901 study, *The Quaker: A Study in Costume*, stated that 'after the opening of the eighteenth century plain colours were universal amongst Quakers.'⁶⁴ One surviving garment, a silk dress of 1806-1810 in the Killerton House National Trust collection, exemplifies this muted and plain colour palette Quakers favoured for their clothing.⁶⁵ The dress, illustrated in black and white by Nancy Bradfield in 1974 for *Costume*, is made of a soft twilled silk and according to Bradfield, 'its fascination lies perhaps in the subtle quality of its colour, the grey having a hint of olive green [...]'⁶⁶ On first-hand inspection the Empire line dress, features a wrap-over front to the bodice typical of the period and lined with white cotton (Fig. 3.1), and full-length sleeves, full and pleated at the shoulders. Fullness is achieved at the centre back by eighteen pleats at the waist band (Fig. 3.2). The dress is trimmed with simple narrow matching silk cording at the turned over cuffs (Fig. 3.3), neckline and on the waistband. The cut of the dress is 'most fashionable and

⁶¹ "Yearly Meeting Epistle. To the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings of Friends in England, Wales and Elsewhere, from Our Yearly Meeting held in London 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Dayes {sic} of the 4th Month, 1691," *Yearly Meeting Minutes*, 1691, YM/Volume 1, Microfilm 13. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London

⁶² "At the Meeting for Sufferings. Met again at the Grace church Street Meeting House 6th day of the 4th month 1693," *Yearly Meeting Minutes*, 1693, YM/Volume 1, Microfilm 13. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London, 342. Whilst the *Yearly Meeting Answers to Queries* from this period are being conserved by the Religious Society of Friends Library the guidance elicited as regards these articles remains unknown.

⁶³ Collins, "Ethical Consumption as Religious Testimony: The Quaker Case," 184.

⁶⁴ Amelia Mott Gummere, *The Quaker: A Study in Costume* (Philadelphia: Ferris and Leach, 1901) 31.

⁶⁵ Drab Silk Day Dress, c.1810. KIL/W/05274. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. See Appendix 2.1.

⁶⁶ Nancy Bradfield, "A Quaker's Dresses- Early 19th Century," *Costume: The Journal of the Costume Society*, 8. (1974): 35.



Fig. 3.1: *Wrap over front of Quaker Dress. 1810. Drab Silk. KIL/W/05274. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author. 18th November 2014.*



Fig. 3.2: Eighteen pleats on the back of the skirt from the waist band of Quaker Dress. 1810. Drab Silk. KIL/W/05274. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author. 18th November 2014.



Fig. 3.3: *Open twist silk cording at cuffs of Quaker Dress. 1810. Drab Silk. KIL/W/05274.*

Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author. 18th November 2014.



Fig. 3.4: Noticeably Plain through its lack of ornamentation and muted colour on Quaker Dress. 1810. Drab Silk. KIL/W/05274. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author. 18th November 2014.

elegant⁶⁷ according to Bradfield, but the garment is noticeably Plain through its absence of ornamentation and its muted colour (Fig. 3.4). Unlike Bradfield's description with its emphasis on the grey of the garment, in day-light the shade is revealed as drab, a soft light brown colour with a hint of green and grey, yet the fabric is sturdy with a lustrous silk sheen revealing its high quality.

The high quality of materials used within Plain Quaker women's garments was a characteristic acknowledged within the popular press. The article "The Decline of Quakerism" in *The Chester Chronicle* on December 24th 1858 levelled a strong charge of hypocrisy at Quaker dress practices. The anonymous author criticised the Quaker trait of adopting high quality fabrics by arguing that the 'demon of finery', far from vanishing in Plain dress, exists instead in a different form, namely the high-quality expensive material. Such criticism also affirms that anti-Quaker sentiment existed well into the nineteenth-century:

The demon of finery, in finding it excluded from shape and colour, takes refuge in material, and fastens with determination upon that single article, resolved to get as much out of that one element of dress as the loose world does out of all the elements together- perhaps more, the taste having the advantage of having been condensed upon one point, instead of being dissipated over several. The Quaker ladies have always been famous for the exquisite delicacy of their materials.⁶⁸

Other surviving examples of this 'exquisite delicacy' of the material used in Quaker Plain garments exists, in, for example, the beige satin wedding bonnet of Quaker Eliza Westwood (née Nickalls), worn for her marriage in 1840 in Reigate, Surrey (Fig. 3.5).⁶⁹ The beige silk-satin bonnet features a deep brim stiffened with card and a matching bavolet.⁷⁰ The crown is gathered with beige twisted silk cord (Fig. 3.6) and stiffened with buckram (stiffened cloth), whilst pale grey Petersham ribbons hang from the brim though they have detached

⁶⁷ Bradfield, "A Quaker's Dresses- Early 19th Century," 36.

⁶⁸ "The Decline of Quakerism," *The Chester Chronicle*, 24th December 1858: 2.

⁶⁹ Beige Satin Bonnet, 1840. 1961/491. Worthing Museum and Art Gallery, Sussex. See Appendix 2.1.

⁷⁰ A bavolet is a fabric curtain or trim attached to the back of a hat or bonnet at the base to cover the nape of the neck.



Fig. 3.5: *Eliza Westwood (née Nickalls) Wedding Bonnet*. 1840. Beige satin. 1961/491. Worthing Museum and Art Gallery, Sussex. Personal photograph by the author. 1st November 2012.



Fig. 3.6: *Beige twisted silk cord on bavolet of Eliza Westwood's (née Nickalls) Wedding Bonnet. 1840. Beige satin. 1961/491. Worthing Museum and Art Gallery, Sussex. Personal photograph by the author. 1st November 2012.*

from the bonnet with decay (Fig. 3.7). Pale bonnets were in fashion during 1840. According to an article in *The Oxford City and County Chronicle* titled "Fashions for March", '[...] in Paris the height of elegance and fashion is a bonnet of white velvet.'⁷¹ Whilst by "Fashions for July", an article in *The Sussex Advertiser*, recommended that, 'for Bonnets, the materials are always, crepe, organdy, straw, paille de riz [rice straw], Leghorn, poult de soie [a type of ribbed silk] or lace; the colours are green, lilac, paille, blue [...]'⁷² Whilst beige is never mentioned as a desirable shade, the similar shade of paille (a pale straw colour) is. The choice of colour however, is most likely to have been selected as it complied with the 'quiet' or muted colour choice recommended for Plain Quaker women of the period, rather than its pale fashionability.⁷³

The shape of the bonnet is typically Quaker, and contrary to the description of fashionable bonnets in *The Sussex Advertiser* on 4th May 1840, detailed as, 'made rather straight, short in front, and not quite so low at the ears as those of last year; the shape is round in front, and very small; the crown quite low [...]'⁷⁴ Most strikingly Quaker, however is the lack of ornamentation on the bonnet in opposition to the recommended Paris fashions of the year. *The Sussex Advertiser's* "Fashions for May" article continues, 'the bonnets at Longchamps were white, with marabouts, glacés, silks, poult de soie covered with bouillons [puffs] of crepe mixed with violets; pink bonnets with veils, reps covered with crepe, which was 'bouillonne' [ruffled] at the edge, but in folds under and on the crown.'⁷⁵

Plain satin does appear to have been slightly cheaper than corded silk during this period. One advertisement from Harrison & Co. from 16th May 1840, in *The Hampshire Advertiser*, offers 'rich Corded Silk Velouté bonnets made to order complete for 25s; Plain French Satin ditto ditto 21s; Dress and Simple Caps &c. equally moderate.'⁷⁶ The excellent quality of the Westwood bonnet's satin is still apparent through the subtle colour, lustrous sheen, very

⁷¹ "Fashions for March," *The Oxford City and County Chronicle*, 7th March 1840: 3.

⁷² "Fashions for July," *The Sussex Advertiser*, 6th July 1840: 4.

⁷³ Sarah Josepha Hale, *The Workwoman's Guide* (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co, 1838) 166.

⁷⁴ "Fashions for May," *The Sussex Advertiser*, 4th May 1840: Front page.

⁷⁵ "Fashions for May," Front page. The term 'marabouts' refers to the feathers and plumage of the Marabou stork which were used as a decorative embellishment.

⁷⁶ "To the Ladies. Dress Making by First Rate London Hands," *The Hampshire Advertiser*, 16th May 1840: 2.



Fig. 3.7: Evidence of decay on Eliza Westwood's (née Nickalls) Wedding Bonnet. 1840. Beige satin. 1961/491. Worthing Museum and Art Gallery, Sussex. Personal photograph by the author. 1st November 2012.

fine weave of the textile and lack of decay despite its being nearly one hundred and eighty years old.

The emphasis on the use of high quality materials in Quaker Plain garments is also evident in dress descriptions in pre-1860 autobiographical Quaker women's writings, whereby women's Plain dress is often described as evidence of piety and 'duty'.⁷⁷ The anonymous writer of *Quakerism or The Story of my Life by a Lady who for Forty Years was a member of the Society of Friends*, describes the 'pretty and plain' eighteenth century dresses of her youth, with their emphasis on hand worked finishes:⁷⁸

As I had then no intercourse whatever with the "people of the world", I had no idea how other children were attired; and we were undoubtedly the best dressed in our Meeting. Our first day frocks were made of beautifully fine cambric, with rows of herringbone, exquisitely worked, over each of the six tucks. Our Friends' bonnets were of the richest and most delicate drab silk; and our silk tippetts, to match, had a row of stitching over the broad hem, instead of the plain running.⁷⁹

Later in the volume, during a 'near verbatim' recount of one Monthly Meeting she attended as a girl, she discusses how, '[...] as to Friends maintaining Plainness of speech, behaviour and apparel. It appears to be the most important of all the dogmas of our Society; at least there is always more preaching about it, and a stricter scrutiny [...]'⁸⁰ During the Meeting, one Friend 'studiously Plain in her dress', entreats 'her dear sisters [...] to wear plaits in their bonnets, instead of gathers' whilst the 'Minister, who had opened the Meeting' urges them to 'cast away those outward adornings - those frills - those plaited frills'.⁸¹ According to the narrator, often Advices on dress were delivered 'as if the speaker were under the influence of immediate inspiration' and 'different articles of dress, curls, side-combs; every possible minutiae has [...] been expatiated on and censured'.⁸² Yet despite these censures, as Mary

⁷⁷ *Quakerism or The Story of my Life by a Lady who for Forty Years was a member of the Society of Friends* (London: R.B. and G. Seeley; Whitaker and Co, 1851) 5.

⁷⁸ *Quakerism or The Story of my Life*, 5.

⁷⁹ *Quakerism or The Story of my Life*, 6.

⁸⁰ *Quakerism or The Story of my Life*, 31.

⁸¹ *Quakerism or The Story of my Life*, 32.

⁸² *Quakerism or The Story of my Life*, 36.

Anne Caton explains, 'plain dress combined personal belief and taste, with an understanding of what was allowable within one's own Meeting,' presumably alongside financial feasibility and the availability of suitable products.⁸³

Surviving publications such as *The Workwoman's Guide, containing instructions to the inexperienced in cutting out and completing articles [...] usually made at Home*, written in the United States yet published in London, contained 'patterns, which comprise all the necessary parts of clothing in great variety, to suit both rich and poor,' for both fashionable and Plain Quaker garments.⁸⁴ The 1840 publication, was intended for use by 'persons of her own sex, who in any condition of life, are engaged, by duty or inclination, in cutting out wearing apparel in a family [...]'⁸⁵ Fashionable patterns within the guide included a 'remarkably pretty little morning or bonnet cap', 'a velvet, plush or satin [...] carriage or dress shawl' and 'a very pretty [...] dress spencer.'⁸⁶ These non-Quaker garment patterns were placed significantly for this research, alongside a 'cap for a young member of the Society of Friends', 'cap for an elderly member of the Society of Friends' and a 'Bonnet for a member of the Religious Society of Friends.'⁸⁷ One 'shawl for a member of the Society of Friends', is described as:

[...] a square of about one yard, twelve nails, and is made of either fine white, or very pale drab, grey, or other quiet coloured cloth, with a satin ribbon the same shade and one nail broad, laid on all round it. It may be lined or not according to pleasure.⁸⁸

Whilst evidently garment patterns were available that accommodated the Quaker aesthetic, during the eighteenth century, according to Frost Quakers 'constantly in contact with the "world's people" could not avoid subtle outside influences.'⁸⁹ As evidence of this, the

⁸³ Caton, "Quaker Women's Plain Dress in the Delaware Valley," 247.

⁸⁴ Hale, *The Workwoman's Guide*, 3. Hale was an American writer and edited the influential ladies fashion journal *Godey's Lady's Book* for almost forty years.

⁸⁵ Hale, *The Workwoman's Guide*, 3.

⁸⁶ Hale, *The Workwoman's Guide*, 127, 166 & 168. A spencer was a short, close-fitting jacket, worn by women and children.

⁸⁷ Hale, *The Workwoman's Guide*, 126, 127 & 160.

⁸⁸ Hale, *The Workwoman's Guide*, 166.

⁸⁹ Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 27

presence of these Plain Quaker garment patterns in non-Quaker publications in 1840 meant that Quaker women were consistently exposed to the new 'vain and intoxicating fashions of a degenerate world'.⁹⁰ In addition, the recurrent condemnation of members remiss in their practice of the teachings of the Third Query are evident throughout the minutes, also illustrating the community's anxieties of encroaching worldliness on some Friends attire.

The narrator of *Quakerism or The Story of my Life by a Lady* [...] suggests, many young female Quakers 'did not quite relish' the consistent addresses in Meetings concerning Plain attire, which contributed 'little to the commonsense of the sisterhood'.⁹¹ Quakers who adhered to Plain dress shared the characteristic of recognisable absence of fashionable patterns, colours and embellishments. However the diversity of individual interpretations, due to the fact that it was not a uniform, meant that 'out of the perceived threat of disorderliness' disciplinary structures were put in place, which sought to marry the 'oppositional nature of formality and spirituality'.⁹² As Catie Gill asserts, the Quaker idea of inner guidance seems to have caused difficulties in the process of regulation. Yet despite this, 'attempts were made to formulate disciplinary and other practices,' and it is these disciplinary structures and the attempted enforcement of them which shall now be discussed.⁹³

The enforcement of discipline to the Quaker Testimonies in Women's Meetings

Peter Collins emphasises that alongside the formal organisational structure of the religion to disseminate and enforce its Testimonies and Advices, as already described, Quaker women were 'perpetually exposed to the critical eye of one's peers'.⁹⁴ This critical eye focused not only on clothing but also on matters of feminine behaviour. As Sarah Fell wrote in a letter from the *Lancashire Meeting of Women Friends* records, circa 1680:

⁹⁰ "From our Yearly Meeting of Women Friends held in London by adjournment from the 16th of the 5th month 1791 to the 23rd of the same inclusive," *Yearly Meeting of Women Friends Answers to Queries 1668-1896*, 1791, YM/YMWF. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

⁹¹ *Quakerism or The Story of my Life*, 36.

⁹² Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community*, 36.

⁹³ Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community*, 36.

⁹⁴ Collins, "Ethical Consumption as Religious Testimony: The Quaker Case," 191.

If there be any that walks disorderly, as does not become the Gospel, or lightly, or wantonly, or that is not of a good reporte [sic]: Then send to them, as you are ordered by the power of God in the meeting to Admonish, and exhort them, and to bring them to Judge, and Condemn, what hath been by them done [...]⁹⁵

Lavoie explains that the role of 'overseer' was instituted to support the Meetings in monitoring each Quaker community's behaviour, as described in a letter from 1668, stating, 'be you diligent in every of your Women's Meetings, and order two faithful Women, in every Meeting, to take the care upon them.'⁹⁶ These Friend's duties included, 'home visits to ensure that members upheld Friends Testimonies.'⁹⁷ A minute from Monthly Meeting of Women Friends Westminster, on 13th March 1851, describes a visit made by overseers to a member of the Westminster Meeting who had married a non-Quaker and who was therefore disowned, in order to formalise her leaving the Quaker community:

The committee appointed to visit Rebecca Brown (late Hagger) on her marriage by a priest, report that they have attended to the appointment. They were received by her in a manner evincing much kind and friendly feeling – at the same time she fully expressed her opinion that the step which she has taken, does, in effect separate her from our society [...]⁹⁸

According to Catherine Lavoie, 'disciplinary action was generally taken at the Monthly level, and rarely would the Yearly Meeting intervene [...]'⁹⁹ Yet the admonishment of Friends by their overseers, especially regarding inattentiveness to the Third Query of Plainness of

⁹⁵ Sarah Fell, "A Seventeenth Century Women's Declaration," *Signs, Journal of Women and Culture and Society* 1:1 (1975): 231-245. Qted in *Witness for Change: Quaker Women Over Three Centuries*, 25.

⁹⁶ Lavoie, "Eighteenth Century Development of the Meeting House," 174, and "A Testimony for The Lord and Truth. Given forth by the Women Friends at their Yearly-Meeting at York; being a tender Salutation of Love to their Friends and Sisters in their several Monthly-Meetings in this County and Elsewhere. From our Yearly-Meeting at York, the 28th of the Fourth Month, 1668," *Yearly Meeting of Women Friends Answers to Queries 1668- 1896*, 1668, YM/YMWF. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

⁹⁷ Lavoie, "Eighteenth Century Development of the Meeting House," 174.

⁹⁸ "Westminster Monthly Meeting of Women Friends: Volume: 18th of 8th month 1842 until 2nd Month 1864," *Women's Monthly Meeting Minutes, 1770- 1861*, MM/11b7. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

⁹⁹ Lavoie, "Eighteenth Century Development of the Meeting House," 174.

speech, behaviour and apparel, appears to have produced some discomfort in many Women's Monthly Meetings. Throughout the highly formulaic *Women's Quarterly Meeting Answers to Queries* records, the criticism is recurrently levelled at the Monthly Meetings that 'it does not appear that much admonition has been extended to the remiss.'¹⁰⁰ On occasion, the clerk even admits that in regards to the Third Query, '[...] we fear to give too full an answer to the more important parts of this Query. Some admonition has been given.'¹⁰¹

According to Frost it is hardly surprising that reprimanding fellow members was difficult because, 'in analysing the rigor with which discipline was applied, we should remember that the process involved neighbours imposing discipline on people they knew well.'¹⁰² Such discomfort in the reprimanding of fellow followers may also be due, according to Cathie Gill, to the Quaker texts being 'precariously balanced in their rhetorical manoeuvres.'¹⁰³ As Gill explains, established policies asserted the need for discipline, whilst simultaneously claiming that the objective was not to impose on others.¹⁰⁴ As such, the religious tracts circulated from the seventeenth century onwards attempted to maintain an impractical contradiction between the right of the religion to enforce discipline and the right of individuals to convey their inner spirit.¹⁰⁵ This precarious balance was however ultimately resolved during the nineteenth century as debates increased as to the purpose and religious validity of Plain dress on the Society's members, which shall now be examined.

Debates leading to the proposal to make Plain dress and speech optional

¹⁰⁰ "Answers to the Yearly Meetings Queries from the Quarterly Meeting for the Counties of Derby and Nottingham held at Nottingham 4th mo 19th: 1814," *Women's Quarterly Meeting Answers to Queries*, 1814, YM/YMWF File 1. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

¹⁰¹ "Answers to the Queries from the Quarterly Meeting of Women Friends for Lancashire. 1824. To the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends to be held in London," *Women's Quarterly Meeting Answers to Queries*, 1824, YM/YMWF File 2. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

¹⁰² Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," 27

¹⁰³ Lavoie, "Eighteenth Century Development of the Meeting House," 174.

¹⁰⁴ Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community*, 36.

¹⁰⁵ Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community*, 37.

Regarding the function of Plain dress, as early as the seventeenth century, concern was expressed from within the religion that emphasis on outward presentation, specifically clothing, could become 'a distraction from or even a substitute to piety.'¹⁰⁶ To this day, *Quaker Faith and Practice*, which seeks to outline the main beliefs of the religion and its structure, includes seventeenth century Quaker Margaret Fell's warning:

It is a dangerous thing to lead Friends much into the observance of outward things which may be easily done. For they can soon get into an outward garb, but this will not make them true Christians.¹⁰⁷

By the beginning of the nineteenth century however, it had become a serious topic of contemplation by many earnest and conscientious members of this Society that the use of Plain attire by both sexes of the religion was, 'felt to be a weak point, scarcely susceptible to defence at all.'¹⁰⁸ By the 1830's several high-profile Quakers, including the banker and Quaker minister Joseph John Gurney, had spoken of the lack of 'moral virtue' in the adoption of the Quaker 'uniform', and noted that to be adamant about Plain dress was to impede genuine Christian simplicity.¹⁰⁹ Yet one anonymous Quaker, sympathetic to Gurney's argument, observed in the tract *Observations of the Quaker-Peculiarities of Dress and Language*, 1836, that eminent members of the religion still actively encouraged Plain dress in the younger generations and looked upon Quakers who were not Plain with derision, stating:

[...] yet we know how much pains the rising generation are moulded into the due dimensions and configuration of "consistent friends"; and we often see with what complacency our spiritual rulers look upon these, and with what an eye of pity and

¹⁰⁶ Emma Lapsansky, "Past Plainness to Present Simplicity: A Search for Quaker Identity," *Quaker Aesthetics: Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003) 2.

¹⁰⁷ British Yearly Meeting, *Quaker Faith and Practice* (London: Britain Yearly Meeting, 1995) 19.

¹⁰⁸ *Observations of the Quaker-Peculiarities of Dress and Language* (London: Effingham Wilson, Royal Exchange, 1836) 5 & 12.

¹⁰⁹ *Observations of the Quaker-Peculiarities of Dress and Language*, 12.

disparagement they will turn to their, perhaps more humble and pious, but less orthodox associates, who happen to be wanting in this badge of sectarianism.¹¹⁰

Clearly by this early nineteenth-century period, whilst the conviction of dissent to Plain speech and attire was being promoted through writings, in practice many Quakers of both sexes felt compelled to maintain orthodox Plain dress. Yet some Quakers felt that the continuance of these peculiarities was not motivated by 'true Christian simplicity and plainness.'¹¹¹ Instead the anonymous writer argues that most Quakers continued Plain living from both fear of ostracism from the society, coupled with a resentment of peer criticism which focused on their attire. As the anonymous writer describes, Quakers who maintained all other Quaker principles were still made to feel social discomfort if they failed to adhere to Plain dress practices:

[...] from the moment they throw off the badge of Quakerism, they are looked upon as delinquents and treated as such. Thus the advantages of membership, -namely, communion and co-operation with men of kindred opinions and feelings, are lost to them: - they feel, that although attached in other respects to the principles of the society, yet having violated these minor peculiarities, they are accounted to have passed the Rubicon, and henceforth have no alternative but to join in fellowship with some body of Christians who will look more charitably upon their conduct [...]¹¹²

Indeed, this notion that Plainness was often observed more for fear of disownment than from a religious sympathy to simplicity, is supported in *Quakerism or The Story of my Life by a Lady* [...] Following an episode of ridicule whereby her non-Quaker schoolmates 'tittered' at her Plain dress and language, her mother advised her that '[...] to be Friends, and to use the Plain language, we must do so among Friends, but that there was not one word about such thing in the Bible.'¹¹³

¹¹⁰ *Observations of the Quaker-Peculiarities of Dress and Language*, 13.

¹¹¹ *Observations of the Quaker-Peculiarities of Dress and Language*, 18.

¹¹² *Observations of the Quaker-Peculiarities of Dress and Language*, 17.

¹¹³ *Quakerism or The Story of my Life*, 10.

These significant debates which contested and ultimately led to the relaxation of the ritual of certain practices, as Elizabeth Isichei asserts, characterised nineteenth-century Quaker faith.¹¹⁴ As early as December 1858, both *The Inverness Courier* and *The Chester Chronicle* reported, slightly pre-emptively, that important changes were being adopted within the Religious Society of Friends, specifically focusing on the amendments to Advices concerning dress. Stating:

A clause in a certain disciplinary formula, which has always hitherto been imposed on members of the society, relating to "plainness of apparel," and which by a traditional [sic] interpretation has always been taken to signify the regular Quaker costume, is to be removed, and the Quaker conscience is to be left free in its choice of dress [...] This new arrangement is not made before the exigencies of the society itself have required it. The Quakers have been for a long time a numerically declining body [...]¹¹⁵

The article went on to explain that the younger generation of Quakers were already consistently renouncing the Plain lifestyle, whilst some families who had risen to 'wealth and station' felt compelled to leave the Society due to its insistence on committing to the peculiarities.¹¹⁶ Yet *The Chester Chronicle* openly criticised the changes, stating:

[...] even Quakerism gives way at last; it is obliged to bow to all powerful time and fashion, to show that it is not immutable, not eternal. Who can wonder at the decadence of the British constitution, when the broad-brim-adamantine institution, emblem of fixedness and constancy- betrays a perishable nature?¹¹⁷

Such condemnation by a non-Quaker source reflects the disparity in opinion and intellectual turmoil also occurring within the religion, even before the amendments had been formally debated in the Yearly Meeting and passed into action. The article also acknowledged the steadily declining numbers of British Quakers, which during the first sixty years of the

¹¹⁴ Elizabeth Isichei, *Victorian Quakers* (Oxford: University Press, 1970) 164.

¹¹⁵ "Revolution in Quakerism," *The Inverness Courier*, 23rd December 1858: 7.

¹¹⁶ "Revolution in Quakerism," 7.

¹¹⁷ "The Decline of Quakerism," *The Chester Chronicle*, 24th December 1858: 2.

nineteenth century had fallen by a third.¹¹⁸ Isichei's extensive discussion as to the patterns of Quaker membership during the nineteenth century, including a study of the reasons behind recruitments, expulsions and resignations, notes that 'in absolute terms their membership statistics exhibit a very striking and unusual pattern [...] steady decline until the middle 1860s, and then equally steady expansion,¹¹⁹ as can be seen in Isichei's 'Membership of London Yearly Meeting graph' (Fig. 3.8).¹²⁰ Whilst Isichei goes onto note many influencing factors for this decline followed by growth, she states that perhaps the most influential of all the factors was the relaxation of Advices to Friends regarding marriage with non-members and Plain dress. Isichei comments that, once the Advices were formally changed in the 1860s, '[...] the change was immediately mirrored in membership trends. For the rest of the century, recruitment outstrips losses through expulsions and resignations.'¹²¹

Yet these extensive revisions to Quakers *Christian Doctrine, Practice and Discipline*, which did not formally occur until 1861, were conducted in exclusively male congregations, because the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends were not allowed to 'make rules nor yet alter the present Queries', despite Women Quakers practicing an informed negotiation of Plain dress in practice.¹²² As J. William Frost explains, Quaker 'males [...] decided every important local and national question without reference to Women's Meetings or Women's opinions.'¹²³ It is of little surprise therefore that surviving testimonies regarding the heated deliberations surrounding the official 'proposal to make peculiarity of dress and speech optional,' are exclusively male.¹²⁴

Personal accounts of the Yearly Meeting in 1859 from John Stevenson Rowntree and Josiah Forster reveal in detail the arguments from each attendee regarding amendments to the Query. According to Rowntree's account, the Yearly Meeting on 24th May 1859 'was large,

¹¹⁸ Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 112.

¹¹⁹ Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 113.

¹²⁰ Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 111.

¹²¹ Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 115.

¹²² Kennedy, *British Quakerism, 1860-1920*, 217 and *Yearly Meeting of Women Friends Minutes (1784-1792)*, 5th of June 1784, Case 27. Archive of Religious Society of Friends London.

¹²³ Kennedy, *British Quakerism, 1860-1920*, 217.

¹²⁴ Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 159.

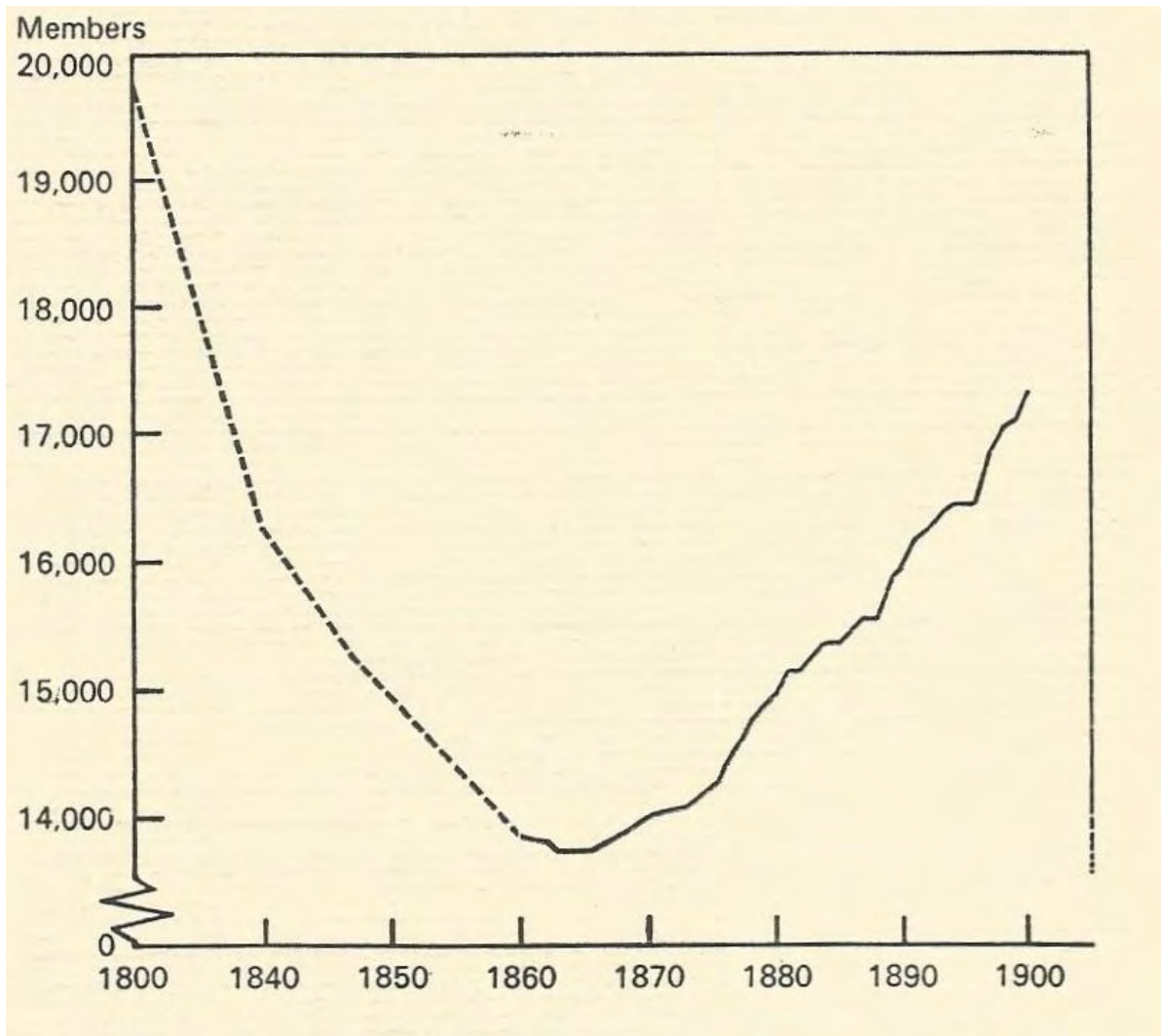


Fig. 3.8: *Membership of London Yearly Meeting, 1800-1900.* Elizabeth Isichei, *Victorian Quakers* (Oxford: University Press, 1970) 111. © Oxford University Press.

the day hot and some were restless.¹²⁵ Throughout, roughly thirty to forty male friends gave their opinion on the 'proposal to make the peculiarity of dress and speech optional.'¹²⁶ Isichei notes that Quakers during this period were 'haunted by the consciousness of their decline.' Yet initially, the opinions raised in the Meeting on amending the Query were fractured as many 'thought the 'peculiarities' had been useful in many ways and should be sorry to see them given up.'¹²⁷ These Plain dress advocates argued that it acted as 'a hedge, as a convenience, as a good thing – the clergyman of the parish then knew who were Friends and expected certain things from them as such.'¹²⁸ Yet despite the fact that this afternoon Meeting of three hours was focused exclusively on this debate, a decision could not be agreed, and the Meeting was adjourned to the following evening.¹²⁹ The subsequent day however the tide appeared to turn in favour of an amendment and Rowntree noted in his journal that:

[...] the assertion that 'plainness' did mean a costume was felt to be so objectionable that it appeared to me many friends now felt that what to begin with was an alteration of detail not very important – now became one of principle, as there were not many who deemed it the duty of the Church to impose a costume per se.¹³⁰

Yet whilst dissenters did ultimately make the revision of this Query regarding a Plain lifestyle impossible during this Meeting, the following year in 1860, a committee finally made 'peculiarity of dress and speech [...] optional,' and it was formally written into *Christian Doctrine, Practice and Discipline* in 1861.¹³¹ Thus, for the first time since the adoption of the Third Query in the seventeenth century, Quaker men and women were granted individual freedom of choice in the style of their attire.

¹²⁵ John Stephenson Rowntree, "John Stephenson Rowntree's account of the 1859 Yearly Meeting 5th month 24th 1859," Mss Vol S 368. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

¹²⁶ Rowntree, "John Stephenson Rowntree's account of the 1859 Yearly Meeting 5th month 24th 1859," Mss Vol S 368. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London and Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 159.

¹²⁷ Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 112 and Rowntree, "John Stephenson Rowntree's account of the 1859 Yearly Meeting 5th month 24th 1859," Mss Vol S 368. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

¹²⁸ Rowntree, "John Stephenson Rowntree's account of the 1859 Yearly Meeting 5th month 24th 1859," Mss Vol S 368. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

¹²⁹ Rowntree, "John Stephenson Rowntree's account of the 1859 Yearly Meeting 5th month 24th 1859," Mss Vol S 368. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

¹³⁰ Rowntree, "John Stephenson Rowntree's account of the 1859 Yearly Meeting 5th month 24th 1859," Mss Vol S 368. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

¹³¹ Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 159 and Kennedy, *British Quakerism 1860-1920*, 216.

Conclusion

Whilst Quaker women's equality with the men of the sect was promoted from the outset, particularly by the founder George Fox through the 'irrelevant' nature of gender when the word of God was spoken, it was, during this early period, practiced imperfectly.¹³²

Despite Quaker women's liberty to preach publicly and their consequent persecution for their religious beliefs, Catie Gill has revealed that their suffering narratives were often textually mediated by the men of the religion through their second-hand writing-up, editing and publication, which ultimately altered and silenced the female voice within the printed representations of Quakerism throughout the seventeenth-century.¹³³

Women even had to fight for representation within the Meetings hierarchy, through the foundation of their own Women's Meetings. It was over 130 years before the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends was established in 1784, which even then was still only 'a deputation [...] to the Men's Yearly Meeting.'¹³⁴ As such the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends were never allocated equality with the Men's Yearly Meeting, as they were prevented from '[...] [making] rules nor yet alter[ing] the present Queries, without the concurrence of this [Men's Yearly] Meeting.'¹³⁵

Yet, throughout the minutes taken during Meetings it is clear Quaker women during this period travelled, whilst Quaker Dorothy Waugh's account reveals that they also publicly preached and wrote of their experiences and sufferings.¹³⁶ When it came to Plain dress, even prior to the mid-nineteenth century alteration in religious Advices, women were finding ways of incorporating fashion into their attire, as displayed in this chapter, with its assessment of a fashionably-cut 1818 silk dress, which nevertheless met Quaker Plain

¹³² Skidmore, *Strength in Weakness: Writings of Eighteenth Century Quaker Women*, 5

¹³³ Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community*, 53.

¹³⁴ "Yearly Meeting of Women Friends (1784-1907)," *Central Organisational Structure: W-Y*. 2002. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

¹³⁵ *Yearly Meeting of Women Friends Minutes (1784-1792)*, 5th of June 1784, Case 27. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

¹³⁶ Dorothy Waugh, 'A Relation Concerning Dorothy Waugh's Cruell Usage by the Mayor of Carlile', in James Parnell *The Lambs Defence Against Lyes* (London: Giles Calvert. 1655) 29-30. Qtd in Catie Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community*, 72.

requirements with its plain drab colour and limited trimmings. It is these adjustments which comprise the premise of this thesis, along with the consideration of how women Quakers negotiated their relinquishment of Plain attire in an alternative manner.

Ultimately however, despite widespread dissatisfaction, even amongst high-profile Quakers, regarding the purpose and function of Plain dress, women Quakers were excluded from the formal discussion process of relaxing Plain lifestyle Advices, due to their inability to '[...] alter the present Queries.'¹³⁷ As Thomas C. Kennedy has asserted however, during the mid-nineteenth century period of great Quaker doctrinal upheaval, 'female Friends never suffered entirely in silence. Whether from a modicum of education or the residuum of spiritual equality, some Victorian Quaker women did publicly speak their minds.'¹³⁸ Such 'steadily expanding commentary on the condition of Quaker women' during the following half of the nineteenth century shall now be considered, alongside how as 'Friends [...] are a part of the wider society and reflect the general mores of their times,' women Quakers shunned, reflected or involved themselves in the pace of social change, specifically regarding women's emancipation, during this period.¹³⁹ My theory, based on a trio of interpretations of how women Quakers negotiated a route between incorporating their new found freedom to wear fashionable dress with the habits of Quaker Plainness during the latter half of the nineteenth century, will now be outlined in detail, with supporting case studies discussed in chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9. This chapter will also discuss Quaker women's changing position within the religious hierarchy by considering Quaker women's dissention or acceptance of their position and official Advices through a consideration of their own writings from this later period.

¹³⁷ *Yearly Meeting of Women Friends Minutes (1784-1792)*, 5th of June 1784, Case 27. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

¹³⁸ Kennedy, *British Quakerism, 1860-1920*, 217.

¹³⁹ Skidmore, *Strength in Weakness: Writings of Eighteenth Century Quaker Women*, 5.

Chapter 4 Women and Quakerism 1860 - 1914 in the context of debates about women's role in society in general

Introduction

As Quaker historian Thomas C. Kennedy notes, although Quaker women comprised a 'clear majority of the Society's dwindling membership' during the latter half of the nineteenth-century their position in the religion was still considered as subordinate to male members.¹ Despite their exclusion from the formal debate and decision-making processes in the religious community, these female Victorian Quakers did not reticently endure such segregation. Instead these women increasingly found formats through which they vocalised their opinions. Above all, the platform of published correspondence in Friends journals allowed Quaker women to express their opinions directly, rather than at second-hand, through the mediation of a male author (or authors), as had occurred in previous centuries.² Inclusion of these female letters nevertheless, was only due to male editors permitting the inclusion of the female voice as the editors of the Friends journals were all male. As such, this source has been used extensively and primarily here, over-and-above secondary source material, in order that the voices of these nineteenth-century Quaker women and their opinions may be heard.

Scholars such as Sandra Stanley Holton have acknowledged that women Quakers were not amongst the intellectual architects of feminism. Nevertheless, she does concede, alongside other Quaker historians including Kennedy, that many Quaker women who publically commented on the situation of Quaker women and women in general had links to broader social movements of female emancipation gaining support during this era.³ These Quaker historians are two of the few who have analysed the political agenda of Quaker women during the later decades of the nineteenth century, particularly through the use of case

¹ Thomas C. Kennedy, *British Quakerism 1860-1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) 216.

² Catie Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community: A Literary Study of Political Identities, 1650-1700* (Hampshire: Ashgate. 2005): 42 & 53.

³ Sandra Stanley Holton, "Kinship and Friendship: Quaker women's networks and the women's movement," *Women's History Review* 14. 3 & 4 (2005): 366 and Kennedy, *British Quakerism 1860-1920*, 219.

studies and primary source documents. As such their publications have been crucial in the research and completion of this chapter which discusses the unrelenting efforts many Quaker women undertook to improve their positions within the Religious Society of Friends as well as their positions within society in general. This chapter considers their involvement in radical social and political movements concerned with women's emancipation, as well as the efforts of numerous male and female Friends to oppose them.

During this post-1860 period, many Quaker women were also seeking to negotiate relinquishing the now optional Plain dress with, in some cases, the incorporation of fashionable attire, and scores did this alongside campaigning for female enfranchisement. Others however, chose to maintain their Plain dress. In consequence, my theory presented in this chapter is designed around the complexity of the garment based evidence of this negotiation, which constitutes a trio of interpretations. These interpretations I have categorised as Non-adaptive, Semi-adaptive and Fully-adaptive, and they will be clearly outlined in this chapter, in order to introduce the interpretations adopted by each of the case studies in future chapters.

Quaker Women's involvement in radical social and political movements

Feminist historian Sophia A. van Wingerden, in her 1999 publication *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain, 1866 - 1928*, argued that for many Quaker women, religious beliefs impeded them from accepting women's emancipation. According to van Wingerden, Quaker women's interpretation of Christian teachings and the fact that they enjoyed what she classified as 'unquestioned equality' in their Quaker communities, actually "'made Friends just a bit slow in realising the need of many others who have not that equality.'"⁴ Whilst van Wingerden's assertion that many Friends were anti-suffrage is correct, her declaration ignores the vigorous roles that other pro-suffrage Quaker women played. Indeed, van Wingerden's generalisation also fails to grasp the complex role of Quaker women in their

⁴ *Free Church Suffrage Times*, March 1914: 35. Qted in Sophia Van Wingerden, "Quakers, Actresses and Gymnasts and other Suffragists," *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain 1866 - 1928* (London: MacMillan Press, 1999) 113.

own religious community, as enjoying spiritual equality yet inequality in the decision making processes. As such, her assertion handles the complex interplay of Quakerism and women's emancipation in a perfunctory manner, which Quaker historians have recently begun to challenge.

In her 2005 article "Kinship and Friendship: Quaker women's networks and the women's movement," Holton argues that Quaker women's crusades in secular women's emancipation movements came before their late nineteenth-century battle for total equality in the Religious Society of Friends. Thus Quaker women's activities of political agitation for sexual equality and other causes actually heightened their consciousness of their subordinate role in the Society and empowered them to challenge it.⁵ As Holton states:

A preliminary examination [...] suggests a more complex relationship between their membership of the Religious Society of Friends and their prominence in the women's rights movements, for their involvement in the campaign for sexual equality in the 1860s was *followed*, from the early 1870s, by determined efforts to reform the position of women within their church.⁶

As early as the late eighteenth century, Quakers had already taken steps towards political activism in the wider world through the anti-slavery movement which according to historian James Walvin was 'essentially Quaker in origin.'⁷ Quaker women were actively involved in the cause through the organisation of anti-slavery public meetings, petitions and publications.⁸ Quaker women's involvement in the anti-slavery movement had a direct influence on their later associations with causes promoting women's emancipation. Holton acknowledges that during this anti-slavery campaigning of the early-nineteenth century many inter-continental friendships based on 'common reform interests' were created between British and American Quaker female activists.⁹

⁵ Holton, "Kinship and Friendship," 367.

⁶ Holton, "Kinship and Friendship," 367.

⁷ James Walvin, *The Quakers: Money and Morals* (London: John Murray, 1997) 140.

⁸ Walvin, *The Quakers: Money and Morals*, 140. For further reading on this topic see Anna Vaughan Kett, *Quaker Women, the Free Produce Movement and British Anti-Slavery Campaigns: The Free Labour Cotton Depot in Street, 1853 – 1858*. University of Brighton PhD. 2012.

⁹ Holton, "Kinship and Friendship," 374

As one example, the Quaker sisters Mary and Anna Maria Priestman (Fig. 4.1) first formed a friendship with the Non-Friend, American anti-slavery advocate, and later leading suffrage reformer, Elizabeth Cady Stanton (Fig. 4.2), during her visit to London on her honeymoon in 1840.¹⁰ That year, the World Anti-Slavery Convention commenced on June 12th, organised and overseen by the Quakers Joseph Sturge and Samuel Gurney respectively. The object of the twelve day conference '[...] was by all peaceable, religious and powerful means to carry into effect the total abolition of slavery throughout the world.'¹¹ Controversy marred the opening day of the event however, due to the decision to exclude female delegates from the conference on account of their sex, including the American Quaker and abolitionist Lucretia Mott (Fig. 4.3) and British Quaker prison reformer Elizabeth Fry (Fig. 4.4).¹² Henry Brewster Stanton, Elizabeth Cady Stanton's husband, was a delegate at the convention and she viewed his inclusion from the visitors' gallery where these activists could listen in silence to the proceedings.¹³ It was there that she first begun her friendship with the Quaker reformer and also excluded American, Mott, as well as with the Quaker Priestman sisters.¹⁴ Stanton asserts that this episode of humiliating exclusion resolved all these women to take action on female emancipation. As Stanton recalls in her memoirs:

The action of this convention was the topic of discussion, in public and private, for a long time, and stung many women into new thought and action and gave rise to the movement for women's political equality both in England and the United States.¹⁵

¹⁰ Holton, "Kinship and Friendship," 374. The female Priestman family included Elizabeth Priestman, mother of Chapter 7 Case Study, Helen Priestman Bright Clark.

¹¹ "British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. Grand Meeting at Exeter Hall," *The Staffordshire Advertiser*, 27th June 1840: 2.

¹² W. Caleb McDaniel, "World's Anti-Slavery Convention," *Encyclopaedia of Antislavery and Abolition*, Volume 2. ed. Peter Hinks and John McKivigan (London: Greenwood Press, 2007): 760.

¹³ McDaniel, "World's Anti-Slavery Convention," 761 and Holton, "Kinship and Friendship," 374.

¹⁴ Their reform activities in America have been thoroughly discussed in publications such as Eleanor Flexner *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States* (New York: Atheneum, 1971) and Jean Fagan Yellin and John. C. Van Horne, *The Abolitionist Sisterhood: Women's Political Culture in Antebellum America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994). Sandra Stanley Holton, *Quaker Women. Personal Life, Memory and Radicalism in the Lives of Women Friends, 1780 - 1930* (London: Routledge, 2007): 70.

¹⁵ Elizabeth Cady Stanton, *Eighty Years and More (1815 - 1897): Reminiscences of Elizabeth Cady Stanton* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1898): 82.



Fig. 4.1: (L-R) *Margaret Tanner (née Priestman), Mary Priestman and Anna Maria Priestman.* 2nd August 1890. JBG8/28. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street. *Courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust/C & J Clark Ltd.*



Fig. 4.2: Veeder. *Elizabeth Cady Stanton*. c.1900. Black and white film copy negative. LC-USZ62-28195. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographic Division, Washington D.C. Web. 27 March 2015. Courtesy of the Library of Congress LC-USZ62-28195 (b&w film copy neg.) <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004670381/>



Fig. 4.3: *Lucretia (Coffin) Mott, three-quarter length portrait, seated, facing right, in Plain Quaker dress. circa 1860-1880. Black and white film copy negative. LC-USZ62-42559. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographic Division, Washington D.C. Web. 27 March 2015.*

Courtesy of the Library of Congress LC-USZ62-42559 (b&w film copy neg.)

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/97500244/>



Fig. 4.4: Auguste Thomas Marie Blanchard. *Elizabeth Fry*. 1823. Line engraving. 16.2cm x 11.2cm. NPG D7613. National Portrait Gallery, London. Web. 27 March 2015. © National Portrait Gallery, London.

<http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw41580/Elizabeth-Fry?LinkID=mp01694&search=sas&sText=elizabeth+fry&role=sit&rNo=2>

In fact, these friendships, alongside family and religious networks, were crucial to Quaker women's action on reform interests, through both the emotional and intellectual stimulation they offered as well as the practical organisation of chains of communication these already established Quaker networks provided. As Holton notes, during the 1860s:

[...] extensive kinship and friendship networks of Quaker women, networks that served to link the varying provincial centres to each other and to the metropolis, proved especially valuable [...] in the formation of a number of the earliest provincial women's suffrage societies [...].¹⁶

The national and transatlantic friendships between women reformers forged during the anti-slavery campaigns ultimately bridged both continental and generational divides, with Stanton later visiting the Priestmans' niece, Helen Bright Clark (Fig. 4.5), in 1882 and supporting her during her 'appeal for the recognition of women's political equality' at the Liberal Conference in Leeds of that year.¹⁷ Yet alongside these established networking platforms of visitation and letter writing, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, Quaker women increasingly used publications to vocalise their reform opinions.

Quaker Women's commentary on female emancipation

In 1869, the disowned Quaker Louisa Stewart's book *The Missing Law; or Woman's Birthright* sought to 'direct public attention to the striking want of earnest work in the world, especially amongst the women of this land, and to consider the means by which the evil may be arrested.'¹⁸ Throughout, she condemned the social position of middle and upper class women as 'unuseful' and idle due to the pervasive concept that women's further education and employment was viewed as 'not *necessary*' to their subjugated position in

¹⁶ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 140

¹⁷ Stanton, *Eighty Years and More (1815 - 1897)*, 364 and 372. See chapter 7 Fashionable Semi-Adaptive case study: Helen Priestman Bright Clark, 1866.

¹⁸ Louisa Stewart, *The Missing Law; or Woman's Birthright* (London: W. Tweedie, 1869): 1. Stewart was disowned in 1855 after 'marrying out' to the Non-Quaker John Stewart. She did however remain pious. After her death, she was still closely associated with the Quaker religion despite her official disowning, through several biographies which described her Quaker upbringing.



Fig. 4.5: *Helen (Priestman) Bright Clark*. c. 1860-1870. 7.1 cm x 4.8 cm. 81.148.

Massachusetts Historical Society, USA. Web. 27 March 2015.

http://www.masshist.org/database/viewer.php?old=1&item_id=1033

society.¹⁹ She noted that women were merely ornaments in a man's world, and that men were so accustomed to the present state of society that they enjoyed and upheld the position of women as 'merely the home playthings of their leisure.'²⁰ Of particular relevance to Quakerism of this period however, was that Stewart's arguments regarding the root causes of such 'evil' were based around evidence of scriptural misinterpretation by many Christians whilst she mentioned the Quakers and Moravians as communities where the unification of male and female work was most complete.²¹ As the Quaker, Richard Westlake, explained in his appreciative review of 1869, society's revulsion to women working was based on the misinterpretation that God's sentence of work to man for his disobedience in the Garden of Eden was a punishment rather than a blessing.²² Quoting Stewart, Westlake explained:

[...] Secondly, in the wrong notion that the sentence passed on man for disobedience was *work*, hence inferring that work is a punishment or degradation. "But work being given to man simultaneously with his creation, 'to dress and keep the garden,' could not have been designed otherwise than as a blessing. *Toil in Work* - sorrow - these formed the sentence on account of man's transgression. Work, as work, is the prerogative of the Creator himself [...]"²³

Stewart's book however, was not a key moment in the support of female suffrage by the Quakers. Similar rallying cries from female Quakers supporting increasing women's position in civil society were elicited on the pages of Quaker journals, including *Friends Quarterly*

¹⁹ Stewart, *The Missing Law*, 17.

²⁰ Stewart, *The Missing Law*, 19.

²¹ Stewart, *The Missing Law*, 34. The Moravians are a Protestant denomination founded during the Reformation in Bohemia (now part of the Czech Republic) during the 15th century. Their emblem is the Lamb of God and the religion places an emphasis on personal piety, the carrying out of mission work and the use of music in religious services.

²² Richard Westlake, "The Social Position of Women," *The Friends Quarterly Examiner. A Religious, Social & Miscellaneous Review conducted by Members of the Religious Society of Friends*. XI. (July 1869): 432 - 441. The 'moderately progressive' *Friends Quarterly Examiner* begun in 1867. Westlake was the brother of the then editor, William. His article criticised J.S. Mill's for '[...] exaggerat[ing] the martyrdom of women to the pride and domineering power of man' and he preferred Stewart's work for its 'appeal to Scripture arguments throughout the volume.'

²³ Westlake, "The Social Position of Women," 432 - 441.

Examiner, *The Friend* and *British Friend*, throughout the 1870s and 1880s.²⁴ Their comments reveal however, that those campaigning for support were operating against a wave of indifference and opposition to the cause from both men and women within the religious community.

In 1873, Elizabeth M. Sturge wrote to *The Friend* (Fig. 4.6), criticising the lack of recognition the issue of women's suffrage received in the journal, suggesting that, 'it ought to stand first and foremost in helping to place women in their right position as "helpmeets" in ruling, as well as in all other vocations of life.'²⁵ In support, Anna Southall drew attention to the incongruous behaviour of the Society, whereby they acknowledged women's religious equality yet in some cases opposed their legal equality:

E. M. Sturge's letter in last month's *The Friend* will, I hope, induce some to consider whether they are doing right in looking so coldly on the Woman's Suffrage movement. Many Friends not only regard it with indifference, but even oppose it; some M.P.'s members of our Society, have voted against it. It is surely a strange contradiction [...]²⁶

In order to convince these anti-Suffrage Friends, scriptural texts were regularly quoted in the advocates' published letters as evidence that their cause was sanctioned by God. Jane E. Taylor's letter of 1886, "Woman's Place in the Christian Economy" was described by Kennedy as being written with 'all the urgency of a Hebrew prophet.'²⁷ Taylor recounted the teachings of Genesis and The Acts as evidence that the emancipation of female bondage

²⁴ The editors for these journals during these decades were William Westlake (*Friends Quarterly Examiner*), Joshua Rowntree, John Stevenson Rowntree and Joseph Stickney Sewell (*The Friend*) and lastly, Robert Smeal and William E. Turner, (*British Friend*).

²⁵ Elizabeth Sturge, "Woman's Suffrage," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal*. XIII. 145. (1873): 15. The Quaker journal *The Friend*, was established in 1843 and has been continuously published without interruption since this date. It is the only Quaker weekly magazine in the world. It publishes articles on international and UK Quakerism, Friends' activities and theological debate, as well as minutes from the Meeting for Sufferings. Since its inception the correspondence pages have been an outlet for Quakers to express their opinions on a variety of matters.

²⁶ Anna Southall, "Woman's Suffrage," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal*. XIII. 146. (January 1873): 35. Anna Southall was the mother of Semi-Adaptive Case Study Geraldine Cadbury, see chapter 8.

²⁷ Kennedy, *British Quakerism 1860-1920*, 223.

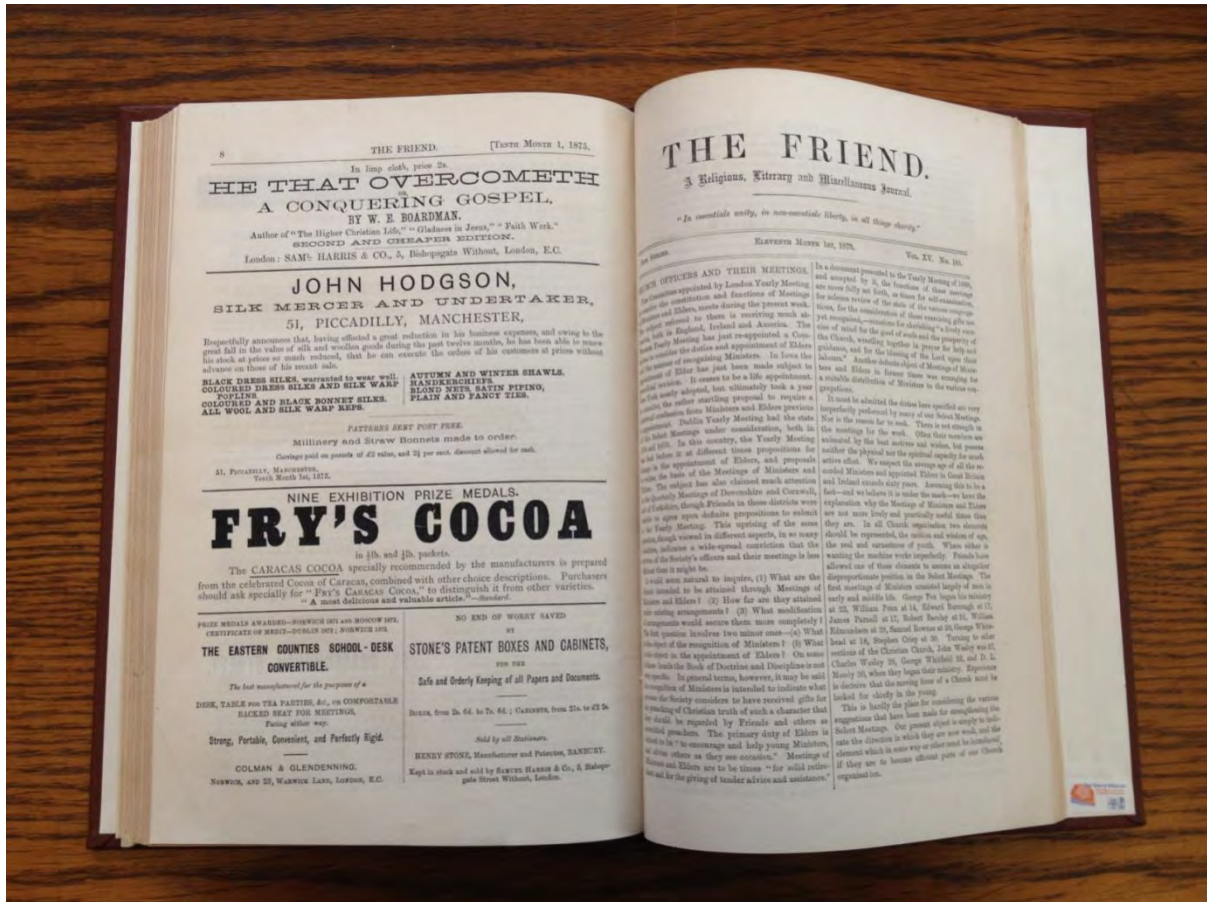


Fig. 4.6: *The Friend*. 1st November 1875. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London. Personal photograph by the author. 13th March 2015.

was ' proclaimed by our blessed Lord throughout His life.'²⁸ She described the subjugated position of women as woeful, sinful and an action of moral decay. She argued that women's emancipation was a prophecy commanded by God and that true Christian women should observe the teachings of Christ, over and above those delegated by society. Taylor ended with a rallying cry for women to prepare themselves for the suffrage victory, so woman may 'take her rightful place by man's side.'²⁹

Yet clearly even identifying passages of scriptural support failed to persuade many Quakers to the suffrage cause. Even as the decades advanced, Quaker suffrage supporters were still forced to placate the conservative factions and their consistent criticisms that advancing women's position in civil society would lead them astray from their feminine duties. In January 1882, in response to an Anti-Suffrage correspondence from a Mrs Garfield, a letter entitled "Mrs Garfield on Women's Work II (To the Editor of The Friend)", sought to reassure Quaker readers that women who were given the vote would not evade their wifely and motherly duties, but would in fact feel more dignified in their position. The letter argued:

[...] the ordinary daily duties of a woman need no more be "shirked," because she has the opportunity once in three or four years to vote for a member of Parliament, than the duties of a man need be. The more dignified the position of women is made, the less likely are they to "feel their duties a disgrace, and to fret under them or to shirk them."³⁰

Most striking about this letter however, is that it was written by a Quaker man, William S. Clark, whose wife, Helen Priestman Bright Clark, was a leading suffrage campaigner. Such letters provide evidence that the movement was both supported by men as well as women from the Society, but that also many of the Quaker female suffrage activists campaigned with the vocal support of their husbands.

²⁸ Jane E. Taylor, "Woman's Place in the Christian Economy," *The Friends Quarterly Examiner. A Religious, Social & Miscellaneous Review conducted by Members of the Religious Society of Friends* LXXVII (January 1886): 116 - 123.

²⁹ Taylor, "Woman's Place in the Christian Economy," 116 - 123.

³⁰ William S. Clark, "Mrs Garfield on Women's Work II (To the Editor of The Friend)," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XXII. 255 (January 2nd 1882): 11

Despite this male support however, as Kennedy notes, British Quakerism shrank from agreeing to any official decrees advocating women's suffrage and as the debates rumbled on into the early twentieth century many Friends argued that the Society appeared to have become apathetic to the subject.³¹ In part, such indifference was complicated by the increasing militarism of the civil suffragette movement, which repelled the peace-loving Quakers. One female Quaker suffragist, Isabella Sharp, in 1913 admitted that she was so offended by the military tactics of the Non-Quaker organisation the WSPU (Fig. 4.7), that she was ready to relinquish the cause entirely, explaining:

Many of us who are thoroughly in accord with the movement and would gladly have joined others in reasonable methods of agitation, are now so scandalised with the action of the militant party, as to be ready to forego the desired privilege rather than appear even to countenance such action [...]³²

Even the Friend's League for Women's Suffrage, during their annual meeting of 1913, admitted that their campaign '[...] had been rendered more difficult by the actions of the militants.³³ During the same year however, the Quaker journal *The Friend*, finally published a statement written by the then editor, Edward Bassett Reynolds, in support of the emancipation of women, encouraging all Friends to support the suffrage movement by encouraging a peaceful campaign and using Christian teachings to further the cause. The article argued that all Friends, '[...] are called to bear our share in bringing this movement to its full fruiting [...] by bringing Christ into the heart of the movement, [and therefore to] lift it on to the highest possible plane.³⁴

Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century however, the campaign for women's voting rights had to vie for the attention of female Quaker organisations and activists

³¹ Kennedy, *British Quakerism, 1860-1920*, 223.

³² Isabella G. Sharp, "Women's Suffrage," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* LIII. 10 (7th March 1913): 158.

³³ "Friends League for Women's Suffrage." *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* LIII. 21 (23rd May 1913): 339.

³⁴ Edward Bassett Reynolds, "Editorial Statement," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* LIII. 23 (6th June 1913): 375-376



Fig. 4.7: *WSPU Procession. Artists from the Suffrage Atelier league can be seen holding banners, palettes and ribbons. 23rd July 1910. 009023. © Museum of London Photographic collection, London. Web. 27 March 2015.*

<http://www.museumoflondonprints.com/image/681634/unknown-wspu-procession-23-july-1910>

alongside other civil causes such as the Temperance movement, the Married Women's Property Committee established in 1855 and the Ladies National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts established in 1869, amongst others.³⁵ Often Quaker women, even within family or friendship networks, divided their labour among these causes, and as such, it is evident that the suffrage campaign appears to have often been approached by Quaker women as one of a series of worthy Christian and women's emancipation causes, unlike the approach of those members of the focused secular suffrage groups. In addition, Quaker women were simultaneously negotiating and campaigning for change within their own Society. One cause which preoccupied many Quaker women campaigners was promoting the position of women within the Religious Society of Friends, and, once again, evidence of their vocal campaign was published in the public platform of the Friends journals alongside their beseeching for women's emancipation.

Quaker Women's commentary on their position in the Religious Society of Friends

In August 1873, suffrage campaigner and daughter of the Quaker MP John Bright, Helen Bright Clark, wrote to *The Friend* regarding "The Position of Women in the Society of Friends." Specifically her letter complained of the recent Men's Yearly Meeting's decision to exclude women from a conference that same year on the 'State of the Society' which would discuss how to rectify its dwindling membership numbers and attendance at Meetings. However, Bright Clark also used the published platform to vocalise her displeasure at the 'delusion' that women held any advantages in the Society, and questioned how their 'playing at business' could possibly be of interest to adult women, given that women's Meetings for Discipline were impotent to making or altering the Rules for Discipline. Whilst her letter was written in a moderate and sympathetic tone, conceding that many men 'no doubt [... had] hardly given the subject a thought', she caustically questioned why female Quakers should remain loyal to, or even assist, a religious body which failed to acknowledge the total equality of one half of its members.³⁶

³⁵ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 171.

³⁶ Helen Priestman Bright Clark, "The Position of Women in the Society of Friends," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal*, XIII. 152 (August 1873): 203.

Yet despite the whole-hearted agreement within the Society of the *spiritual* equality of Quaker men and women, Bright Clark's demand for practical and disciplinary equality was met with derision from many male and female Quakers. During the following four months, at least six other letters were published in Friends journals on the same subject, with varied opinions.

In September, Mary Waddington wrote in agreement with Bright Clark's letter, and went even further, encouraging all Women's Monthly Meetings to convey to the conference on the State of the Society their disapproval at 'divided discipline'. Less temperately than Bright Clark, Waddington described the sexual division as a 'mischief', 'hindrance', a 'mistake' and 'an active evil', suggesting that the Society needed to be 'overhauled and ventilated, and made more healthy if it can be.' She mourned that many active and thoughtful female Friends had left the Society from frustration at the 'languid sham co-operation' present in the community, and asserted her belief that the decline in the Society's membership could only be reversed through the equal union of male and female followers.³⁷

Yet in the same issue, another female correspondent, also in response to Bright Clark, stated that, whilst she did not enjoy her subjugation, the subordinate position of women to man was ordained in scripture and therefore appropriate. Such an assertion does confirm van Wingerden's contention of anti-suffrage sentiment in the Society, however, such letters written by fellow *women* do appear to have been in the minority. The correspondent, 'A.B.', quoted Biblical passages from Corinthians and Timothy which promoted the silence and obedience of women to their husbands and the church, and stated that any woman who sought equality in either the Religious Society or the nation at large was 'stepping out of her sphere.'³⁸

One final response, again in the same issue, from a male reader, Alfred W. Bennett, stated rather patronisingly that he could not remember any request for women Quakers to attend

³⁷ Mary Waddington, "The Position of Women in the Society of Friends. I. To the Editor of The Friend," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal*, XIII. 153 (September 1873): 226-227.

³⁸ A. B. "The Position of Women in the Society of Friends. III. To the Editor of The Friend," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XIII. 153 (September 1873): 227-228

the conference, merely a request that they 'should be allowed to hold a separate Conference at the same time, which should be permitted to make suggestions to the men's meeting.' In a puzzling contradiction, he asserted that permission was denied due to the subordinate position of such a woman's conference, stating that, 'several speakers, and the writer of this letter among the number, opposed this proposition on the ground that such an allowed meeting, with distinctly subordinate authority, would be a mere mockery.'³⁹

Whilst the agenda of the conference on the State of the Society held in London from the 3rd to the 6th November 1873, strikingly excluded a proposal to discuss the position of women, despite the coverage the debate was receiving in print, male representatives at the forum, clearly aware of the publicity the topic had generated, did formally debate the issue.⁴⁰

Quaker Thomas Ashby Wood of Reigate, asserted that his Monthly Meeting had already conducted many aspects of business, though not all, under the joint union of men and women for nearly the past five years, with positive results. According to Wood, 'some Friends were doubtful as to the consequences, when this change was first made, but it had answered very well. The women Friends now felt that their remarks had weight [...]'⁴¹ Despite some resistance from male members who felt that the Women's Meetings would prefer 'to be left alone', the Conference carried a motion to recommend the first concessions to women Quaker's practical equality.⁴² Yet this concession, far from being a formal recommendation or discipline, was merely, in the words of the Clerk, 'a very general suggestion that the conference of men and women Friends in our meetings for discipline, should be encouraged.'⁴³

³⁹ Alfred W. Bennett, "The Position of Women in the Society of Friends. IV. To the Editor of The Friend," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XIII. 153 (November 1873): 228

⁴⁰ The conference instead chose to debate: 1. The decrease in the attendance of meetings for worship on First-day afternoons, and on a weekday. 2. The diminished interest felt in many places in meetings for transacting the affairs of the Church. 3. The relative decline in the number of members. 4. The amount of religious teaching and pastoral care bestowed upon members. 5. The action of our religious Society upon the world at large; and 6. (In so far as not included under 4) the religious instruction of our younger members. Qtd in "Report of the Conference on the State of the Society held in London." *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XIII. 156 (November 1873): 289-290.

⁴¹ Thomas Ashby Wood, "Report of the Conference on the State of the Society held in London," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XIII. 156 (November 1873): 298.

⁴² William Brockbank, "Report of the Conference on the State of the Society held in London," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XIII. 156 (November 1873): 301.

⁴³ "Report of the Conference on the State of the Society held in London," 305.

As Kennedy has discussed in detail in his chapter, "Kindly Silence the Men a Bit: Women in the Society of Friends, 1860-1914", whilst female Quakers refused to relent in their efforts for total equality within the religious community, many Quakers, largely male, continued to advocate their subordination.⁴⁴ Whilst Kennedy concedes that the increasingly vocal opinions of female Quakers meant those disapprovers kept progressively more silent, the absence of meaningful dispensation by the Men's Yearly Meeting for women's practical and disciplinarian equality in the religious community during the 1870s and 1880s illustrate, through absence of action, the overwhelming opinion that Quaker women's subordination was believed, by many Quaker men, to be appropriate.⁴⁵

Through a consideration of Quaker women's published letters in the Friends journals during this period however, it is evident that often the debates regarding women's civil emancipation and their disapproval of the Society's sexual divisions were one and the same, framed as a general rejection of a 'rigid and patriarchal system,' for example, Jane E. Taylor's letter "Woman's Place in the Christian Economy", already described.⁴⁶ Whilst criticising female subordination as one of the 'hideous evils that afflict[s] society', her letter has also been described by Kennedy as equally condemning the Society of Friends' misuse of scriptural teachings to enforce female bondage.⁴⁷ According to Kennedy, Taylor's criticism of 'church leaders', though not specifically articulated, implicated the male leaders of the Society of Friends by association in her accusations of tyranny against women.⁴⁸ Indeed, whilst Taylor castigated 'the Church' and all Christian men and women, the sending of the letter to a specifically Quaker journal is evidence in its own right of her belief that such censure was applicable to her own religious community. Yet unlike the wider civil women's suffrage movement, total equality of women in the Religious Society of Friends did gain major strides before the dawning of the twentieth century.

By the mid-1890s, Quaker women's twenty-five year published evangelising on women's total equality seems to have attracted meaningful attention from the Society's patriarchy.

⁴⁴ Kennedy, *British Quakerism 1860-1920*, 222.

⁴⁵ Kennedy, *British Quakerism 1860-1920*, 222.

⁴⁶ Kennedy, *British Quakerism 1860-1920*, 223.

⁴⁷ Kennedy, *British Quakerism 1860-1920*, 224.

⁴⁸ Kennedy, *British Quakerism 1860-1920*, 224.

During 1895, the Committee to Consider the Position of Women Friends was constituted, and the following year the Men's Yearly Meeting met, jointly with the Women's, to discuss the position of women within the Society. *The Friend* of that year published the minutes of the deliberation. Whilst a recommendation was made for the consideration to be postponed, vocal female advocates emphasised the urgency of the debate. Male attendees, such as the Quaker, Metford Warner, feared the influx of women would fundamentally alter the 'character' of Meetings for church affairs and argued that some subjects discussed at Meeting for Sufferings were inappropriate for a female audience.⁴⁹ Yet female attendees, Helen Bright Clark amongst their number, argued that 'sentiment should not be allowed to stand in the way of justice.'⁵⁰ When the recommendations of the Meeting were published in the 29th May 1896 edition of *The Friend*, it was evident that the participation of women in all the Society's business, which Bright Clark had originally proposed twenty-three years previously, had finally come to fruition. Unequivocal sexual equality in the religious community's dealings appeared to have finally been conceded by the Meeting, with *The Friend* recording:

The principle is now conceded, without reservation, that "Women Friends are to be recognised as forming a constituent part of all our meetings for Church affairs, equally with their brethren."⁵¹

However, there were caveats to the victory. Only the opening and concluding sittings of the Yearly Meeting were to be held jointly, with the intermediate periods still spent separately. Certain unspecified topics for consideration would still be debated apart, whilst any change could not be enacted prior to 1898 as an appointed committee would require time to restructure the Meetings for Sufferings in consideration of the proposed union.⁵²

⁴⁹ "Women and the Meeting for Sufferings. London Yearly Meeting. Meeting on Ministry and Oversight," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XXXVI. 22 (1896): 357-358. 'Meeting for Sufferings' decides the priorities and sets the direction of the Yearly Meeting in the Long Term by reviewing and discussing concerns referred to it by the hierarchy of meetings.

⁵⁰ Bright Clark, "Women and the Meeting for Sufferings. London Yearly Meeting. Meeting on Ministry and Oversight," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XXXVI. 22 (1896): 357-358.

⁵¹ "Women Friends in Our Meetings for Church Affairs," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XXXVI. 22 (1896): 336.

⁵² "Women Friends in Our Meetings for Church Affairs," 336.

As the *Central Organisational Structure* notes reveal however, the meaningful concessions afforded to Quaker women in 1896 laid the foundations for a true enactment of their total equality within the Society's affairs a decade later. In 1907, the Yearly Meeting abolished all sexual divisions in church affairs, including in both the Yearly Meetings as well as the Meetings for Sufferings.⁵³

Importantly for this research however, during the same late nineteenth century period, alongside this Quaker correspondence regarding women's emancipation, debates were also being played out through these same published platforms concerning what constituted appropriate Quaker dress. Notable throughout these letters is that sexual division was also relevant to the Quaker sartorial debate, because it was *women's* fashionable dress that was almost exclusively derided. Whilst some letters concerning dress were merely reiterations of the validity of Plain attire which had been expressed earlier in the century, crucially for this thesis, some of these letters also singled out specific garments of contemporary fashionable dress as unchristian and thus unsuitable for wear by late nineteenth century Quaker women. In addition, the already discussed published letters about women's emancipation also interlinked with the published sentiments concerning clothing because the suffrage letters often condemned 'idle' women with 'no worthy pursuit' who partook in the 'the frivolities of fashionable life,' a long held Quaker view already discussed in chapter 3.⁵⁴ As such, the published sentiments expressed in these late nineteenth century Quaker letters regarding dress, shall now be considered. It is using the sentiments raised in these published clothing debates that the interpretative sartorial theory developed and engaged with throughout this thesis has been outlined and clarified.

Quaker Women's negotiation of relinquishing Plain dress and incorporating fashionable garments

⁵³ "Yearly Meeting of Women Friends (1784-1907)," *Central Organisational Structure: W-Y, YMWF*, 2002. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

⁵⁴ Westlake, "The Social Position of Women," 432 - 441

Despite the 1860s officially being the first decade in which Quaker men and women were granted individual freedom of choice in the style of their attire as noted in chapter 3, the condemnation of Quaker women for departure from simplicity in their dress, was still vocalised in Friends journals by both male and female members of the Society, during the subsequent four decades of the nineteenth century. These published sources provide evidence that the preoccupation of Quakers with the body's ability to display the wearer's spiritual state did not simply disappear overnight with the alteration of the Queries in 1860. These published sources also reveal evidence of how traditionalist members of the Quaker community, both male and female, were still trying to manipulate the sartorial decisions of its younger, female, members.

In 1866, a 'female member' wrote to the *The Friend* "On Christian Simplicity", to complain of the 'departure from simplicity amongst our younger Friends, particularly in the attire of a large proportion of our female members.'⁵⁵ Whilst she sought to reassure the reader of her disapproval of traditional Plain dress due to its 'mischief' of enforcing a particular cut on all wearers, she castigated the wearing of what she deemed to be capricious fashions by Quaker women in Meetings since the alteration of the Queries five years previously.⁵⁶ She asserted that despite the relaxation of Advices concerning dress, the incorporation of decorative features such as wide ribbons and skirts supported by cage-crinolines were still inappropriate dress for Quaker women, stating:

[...] it gives no license for the extravagantly wide and costly ribbons which are exhibited in our meetings, the expanded dresses, and the indulgence in almost every unbecoming and ever-varying fashion of the day.⁵⁷

Far from merely censuring these fashion related decisions however, she specifically described the clothing she deemed appropriate for fellow Quakers as, '[...] easily obtained,

⁵⁵ "On Christian Simplicity," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* VI. 65 (1866): 99.

⁵⁶ Written at a time when hooped crinoline petticoats were commonly worn by middle-class women, as discussed in the previous chapter.

⁵⁷ "On Christian Simplicity," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* VI. 65 (1866): 99. Cage-crinolines were hooped petticoats, which were frames created of lightweight steel rings connected by fabric tape, and allowed for large bell-shaped skirts to be supported without the weight of many layers of petticoats.

which give us but little thought, occupy little time, and which may be styled in the Apostle's sense of the expression as "modest apparel."⁵⁸

Similarly to the suffrage campaigners in these decades, advocates of simple dressing such as this anonymous writer, cited scriptural texts in their published letters as evidence that their opinions were sanctioned by God. The writer argued that, as the New Testament was still regarded as spiritual guidance to Friends, the teachings concerning 'simplicity, moderation, self-denial and spirituality' should still be observed despite relaxing Advices from the religious community.⁵⁹ Another anonymous letter in the journal *British Friend*, in August 1867, agreed. In "Plainness of Apparel", youthful readers were encouraged to view simplicity in attire as a 'privilege' which exempted them from the 'tyranny of ever changing fashion' whilst additionally reminding them of the money and time to be saved in spurning it.⁶⁰

Even scriptural guidance from Non-Friends promoting modest Christian apparel was quoted in these letters, as both evidence of the scriptural validity of their arguments and perhaps even to distance these teachings from the 'peculiarities' of Quaker traditionalism. On the 1st October 1868, one Quaker 'observer' requested in a letter entitled "Our Distinctive Vestments", that extracts from the English missionary and Non-Friend Ellen Ranyard's 1853 publication *The Book and its Story, a Narrative for the Young* be published in *The Friend*.⁶¹ These printed quotations appealed to all Christian women to follow the scriptural teachings of Peter, Timothy, Isaiah and Revelations, by rejecting ornamentation and the 'whore of Babylon's' purple and scarlet dress.' Whilst Ranyard's publication was not Quaker specific, her discussion of the teachings of Timothy 2:9 in the published extract, was the exact same scriptural tract printed in a Quaker Epistle from the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends in

⁵⁸ "On Christian Simplicity," 99.

⁵⁹ "On Christian Simplicity," 99.

⁶⁰ "Plainness of Apparel," *British Friend. A Monthly Journal chiefly devoted to the interests of the Society of Friends* XXV. VII (1867): 189.

⁶¹ Ellen Ranyard, *The Book and its Story, a Narrative for the Young. On occasion of the Jubilee of the British and Foreign Bible Society* (London: Samuel Bagster & Sons, 1853) Qted in An Observer, "Our Distinctive Vestments (To the Editor of the Friend)," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* VIII. 94 (1868): 266. Ranyard was a nineteenth century Evangelist writer and missionary who specialised in working with the London poor. She founded the London Bible and Domestic Female Mission in 1858 which sought to supply Bibles to poor women.

May 1847, which had emphasised the importance of Plainness in apparel.⁶² In fact, Ranyard's publication went further than the earlier Quaker Epistle by combining the teachings of three Apostles with her own opinions to specify examples of unchristian attire. As Ranyard detailed in 1853:

They are to, 'adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety;' which certainly would not designate the apologies for bonnets of the present fashion, which seem to be specially arranged for display of 'braided hair and gold (or its counterfeit) and pearls, and costly array of tinkling ornaments' and 'head bands,' and round tires like the moon, exactly similar to Isaiah's picture [3:16], which 'the Lord would take away.'⁶³

In 1869, fashionable French bonnets (an example of which appears in Fig. 4.8) were singled-out again, by the Quaker William Pollard, for specific censure. In "Colloquial Letters. No. 9. My Unspoken Speeches in the late Yearly Meeting" in *The Friends Quarterly Examiner*, Pollard questioned how apparently charitable Quaker women could 'have the heart' to attend Meetings for Worship whilst wearing the 'fantastic structures' of French millinery.⁶⁴ Describing the practice as incongruous, he theorised that the millinery these women wore with its 'infinite orders of decoration' had a 'numbing influence' which paralysed the good sense and charitable feelings of the women.⁶⁵ Most importantly for this thesis however, Pollard also voiced his relief that other Quaker women were counterbalancing the 'cruel sway' of fashionable dress through their graceful and Christian clothing. He described these women as 'moderates' who attired themselves in dress of 'beautiful taste', 'neatness' and

⁶² "From our Yearly Meeting of Women Friends held in London by adjournment from the 19th to the 27th of the 5th month inclusive -1847. To the Quarterly and other Meetings of Discipline of Women Friends in Great Britain and Ireland," *Women's Yearly Meeting Answers to Queries*, 1847, YM/YMWF, Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

⁶³ Ranyard, *The Book and its Story, a Narrative for the Young*. Qted in An Observer, "Our Distinctive Vestment," 266

⁶⁴ William Pollard, "Colloquial Letters. No. 9. My Unspoken Speeches in the late Yearly Meeting," *The Friends Quarterly Examiner. A Religious, Social & Miscellaneous Review conducted by Members of the Religious Society of Friends XI* (1869): 443 - 444. Millinery is the trade or business of a milliner, who sells women's hats and bonnets.

⁶⁵ Pollard, "Colloquial Letters. No. 9," 443 - 444.



Fig. 4.8: *Bonnet, produced in France. c. 1875. Straw, silk, wood, metal. 2009.300.4608 a, b.* Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of the Brooklyn Museum, New York, USA. Web. 27 March 2015.

<http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/168801>

'simplicity', whilst avoiding 'oddities'. Whilst he rebuked 'asceticism or peculiarity in dress', he equally expressed his desire that fashionable Quaker women would be reformed by the moderates, stating:

We must hope that the moderates with their quiet attire are the rising section, and that the extreme reds among us will soon, even for the sake of appearance, if for no higher motive, be all converted to their view.⁶⁶

Through his description of Quaker female dress practices, Pollard's letter provides verification significant for the purposes of this research that, after the amendment of the dress Advices, no mutual agreement existed amongst Quaker women regarding how best and most suitably to incorporate items of fashion into their dress whilst retaining a sense of Quaker identity. Yet crucially, his letter also provides clear written evidence that Quaker women, as early as 1869, had broken into three factions in this negotiation which I had already identified through the analysis of surviving Quaker garments. It also reveals that Quakers during the period were aware of this ternary division. These categories are defined by Pollard as, firstly ascetic or 'peculiar', secondly 'moderates', and thirdly women of extreme fashion or 'reds', as noted in the above quote. Throughout the remainder of this thesis these categorisations have been re-titled Non-Adaptive, Semi-Adaptive and Fully Adaptive, respectively, and will be illustrated specifically in case studies in chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9.

Surviving garments mirror this negotiation and reveal that many female followers, instead of totally abandoning or totally retaining their Quaker Plain practices, were in fact negotiating these reforms through a middle way of sartorial adjustments which incorporated and allowed for a new display of individual fashion identity whilst still retaining affiliation to the traditional Quaker image which may be identified as the practice of these 'moderates' or Semi-Adaptive women.

⁶⁶ Pollard, "Colloquial Letters. No. 9," 443 - 444.

Vocal censure of women's fashionable dress during the earlier 1860s and 1870s, by which time the use of hoop crinolines had given way to various bustled styles, was not, however, exclusively relegated to traditionalist Quakers.⁶⁷ Just as debates regarding women's civil emancipation and their disapproval of the Society's sexual divisions were intertwined, so too, during this period were Quaker women's debates regarding fashionable dress and emancipation.

Louisa Stewart's book of 1869, *The Missing Law; or Women's Birthright*, discussed the role, position and purpose of nineteenth-century women in society, which she termed the 'Order of Ladyhood.' According to Stewart, due to the imposition of idleness thrust upon many upper and middle class women they were forced to find routine and purpose through the pursuit of fashion, which was also a concern in mainstream magazines of the period.⁶⁸ Stewart argued that the character of the lady of leisure was feminised from nursery age to the end of her meagre education, from which she 'bounds as a driven pony from the halter around the open fields of liberty and leisure, often of luxury.'⁶⁹ According to Stewart, as no constructive or purposeful pursuits were developed or laid out for her, her sole goal became self-beautification through fashion and marriage. Yet in defence of these women, Stewart additionally argued that as most women of the middle and upper classes had never been familiarised with productive work or further education they simply did not have the capacity to consider pursuing them. Stewart explained:

[...] in her total ignorance of the true nature of endeavour or exertion, it never occurs to her that the brilliant displays of scientific or artistic genius, of statesmanship or philanthropy, which alone ever attract her eye over the barricades of fashion, towards their mysterious precincts, have the most shadowy connection with labour [...] she is not necessarily sensible of this; her ideas indeed have never gone down to the root of anything; she goes forward as she is impelled by that wheel of fashion, turned by the strong current of her order.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ A bustle is a frame or pad worn to support and expand the fullness of the back of a woman's skirt below the waist.

⁶⁸ Margaret Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own?* (London: Routledge, 1996) 132.

⁶⁹ Stewart, *The Missing Law*, 8.

⁷⁰ Stewart, *The Missing Law*, 9.

Indeed, the presentation of fashion as a 'barricade' or hindrance to women's emancipation was not solely presented by Stewart. The Quaker, Hannah Maria Wigham, in her 1877 letter to *Friends Quarterly Examiner*, "Woman's Work", equally condemned how the encouragement of women's gentility, fashionability, respectability, dependability and domestication, excluded them from finding intellectual stimulation, joy in work and usefulness. Wigham declared that, '[...] surely there never was a despotism more irresponsible than that of Respectability, of Fashion, of the awful irresistible "comme il faut."' ⁷¹ Later in her letter, Wigham identified a number of professions or paid employment suitable for respectable females, selecting several skilled and unpaid labours already carried out by women as part of their feminine domestic pursuits or hobbies and therefore ones that her readers would be able to undertake with ease. Within her list of appropriate paid jobs for women, Wigham highlights 'porcelain-painting, wood-engraving, illuminating, copying old masters, designing in all its branches, photography, and the tinting of photographs, the translating of books from foreign languages, copying authors' manuscripts, law-copying, book-keeping, &c.' ⁷² There is nothing within this list which was particularly radical, as none of the suggested professions required a university or college education which was only just available to women at this date. Most ironically however, despite her censure of the feminine pursuit of fashion, she highlights poorly paid fields of dressmaking, millinery and needlework, as particularly suitable remunerative labours for women. ⁷³

As further Friends' journal correspondence reveals however, William Pollard's earlier desire of 1869 for the fashionable Fully-Adaptive Quaker women to be reformed by the moderate Semi-Adaptive practitioners, and the desire of these early suffrage supporters that women's interest in fashion should be relinquished for respectable work, was not to be. Six years later in September 1875, when Victorian sartorial mourning practice was at its height, the Quaker A.F. Fowler from Woodgate, wrote to *The Friend* recounting the activities and rules of a

⁷¹ Hannah Maria Wigham, "Woman's Work," *The Friends Quarterly Examiner. A Religious, Social & Miscellaneous Review conducted by Members of the Religious Society of Friends* XLII (April 1877): 191 - 203. "Comme il faut" translates to behaving in a manner which is correct in behaviour or etiquette.

⁷² Wigham, "Woman's Work," 191-203.

⁷³ Wigham, "Woman's Work," 191-203.

Non-Quaker body entitled the *Mourning Reform Association*.⁷⁴ The association's rules sought to eradicate the time and high costs expended during these long periods of mourning, especially the custom of an entire household wearing expensive and extravagant black wool and silk fashions (Fig. 4.9), suggesting:

3. That heavy and extensive crape trimmings on skirts of dresses and on mantles be disused, as tending to extravagance and ostentation.
4. That the custom of wearing "complimentary" mourning, viz:- for connections, distant relatives, and friends, be discarded by members of the society [*Mourning Reform Association* not the Society of Friends.]
5. That children under four years old be not put into black clothes, and over that age only on the death of parents, brothers, and sisters.
6. That servants of households where a death has occurred be not put into mourning.
7. That the use of mourning stationary be in no case deemed essential, and that its entire disuse be recommended to members.⁷⁵

Whilst acknowledging an ignorance as to the details surrounding the founding of the association, Fowler suggested that Friends might promote the Association's works through 'their example and influence.'⁷⁶ Yet, in response, two letters suggested that not all Quakers were resisting the practice of extravagant mourning dress. The Quaker, Joseph Cooper, in "Mourning Habits and the Poor " in the 1st October edition, sought to communicate a gentle reminder that '[...] Friends should continue to bear a testimony against the custom.'⁷⁷ Whilst in the following month of November, again in response to Fowler's letter, 'T' in "Funeral Customs" heatedly reprimanded the increasing use of mourning garments during Friend's bereavement, observing that 'the indisposition entirely to omit them obviously

⁷⁴ Lou Taylor, *Mourning Dress: A Costume & Social History* (Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1983).

⁷⁵ A. F. Fowler, "Mourning Reform Association (To the Editor of The Friend)," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XV. 179 (1st September 1875): 239

⁷⁶ Fowler, "Mourning Reform Association (To the Editor of The Friend)," 239.

⁷⁷ Joseph Cooper, "Mourning Habits and the Poor (To the Editor of The Friend)," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XV. 180 (1st October 1875): 263



Fig. 4.9: *Mourning Ensemble*. c. 1870-1872. Silk. Length at CB (a): 18 1/2 in. (47 cm) Length at CB (b): 56 in. (142.2 cm) Other (c): 32 in. (81.3 cm). 2009.300.633a–c. Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA. Web. 27 March 2015. <http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/159185>

diminishes.⁷⁸ Whilst he acknowledged it was a natural instinct for the grieving to adopt 'some outward indication of bereavement', he described the practice as 'evil' and warned Friends to observe the same moderation and self-restraint that official Advices suggested for marriage ceremonies.⁷⁹ Even a letter by the Quaker M.P. John Bright to *The Times* in October that year, whilst declaring that mourning dress worn by many women was 'hideous', and praising the Quaker faith for its general rejection of the custom, albeit warning that its use by Quaker women had recently increased.⁸⁰

Yet in addition to these aesthetic considerations, Cooper's 1875 letter "Mourning Habits and the Poor," already discussed, also criticised how the use of mourning dress by the upper and middle classes encouraged poorer classes to emulate the custom, despite their financial difficulty in purchasing new garments in mourning colours and fashions. As Cooper states, 'when death visits their little dwellings, the poor generally think themselves obliged to follow the custom [...] they incur many debts which hamper them for years.'⁸¹ Cooper's argument therefore was structured not merely around the traditional Quaker practice of denying physical embellishment for its *spiritual* corrupting influence, but also for its ability to socially and financially corrupt and divide.⁸²

Whilst the purchasing and wearing of mourning dress by Quaker women was therefore criticised for corrupting those who wore it and inadvertently financially ruining the poor, their investment in other garments was conversely encouraged for its ability to aid the underprivileged. In agreement with this sentiment, during the 1880s, many letters appeared in Friends' journals encouraging women to purchase "Irish Knitting," because the resulting funding was distributed to poor women in Ireland. A letter of the same name in *The Friend*, from M.A. Marriage Allen in Dublin, on 2nd October 1882, encouraged British Quakers to purchase and distribute Irish knitted crossovers, vests, children's petticoats, ladies' and

⁷⁸ T, "Funeral Customs (To the Editor of The Friend)," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XV. 181 (1st November 1875): 292

⁷⁹ T, "Funeral Customs (To the Editor of The Friend)," 292

⁸⁰ John Bright, *The Times*, 26th October 1875. Qtd in *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XV. 181 (1st November 1875).

⁸¹ Cooper, "Mourning Habits and the Poor (To the Editor of The Friend)," 263

⁸² J. William Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," *Quaker Aesthetics. Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003) 18.

children's stockings, and men's and boy's socks in £3 or £5 parcels and 'dispose of its contents among their acquaintances.'⁸³ The letter appealed to the charitable nature of the readers by reporting that their purchases made a difference to the 'very poor' widows who knitted the garments, and assured them that 'the money earned through the knitting, &c., has helped many a poor home, and gladdened many a widow's heart.'⁸⁴

Clearly, Quakers had a sophisticated appreciation of the repercussions of their consumption habits on civil society and its reflection of their religious mores. More than this, these letters reveal that this awareness was nurtured through their religious community's active encouragement and that, clothing purchases, should be a reflection of their principle of encouraging social improvements.⁸⁵ An Epistle from the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends on the 31st May 1872, officially reminded youthful Quakers of the social influence their choice of clothing might prompt, warning, '[...] consider well your habits, conversation and dress, in reference to those, whether scholars or servants, who look up to you [...] Watch over yourselves, lest in anything you cast a snare or a stumbling-block in their way. This will involve self-denial [...]'⁸⁶

Even as late as the 1890s, self-denial for purposes of social amelioration was encouraged in dress, when censure was voiced at the fashionable extravagance coupled with the 'cruel' destruction in the use of decorative aigrette feathers in Quaker women's hats and bonnets, further discussed in chapter 5.⁸⁷ On the 24th April 1896, Phoebe Gibbins from Edgbaston wrote "Plumage in Ladies' Hats and Bonnets" to *The Friend* suggesting that, as much had been recently written on the subject in the civil press, Quaker women should desist in wearing such decorations for fear that they could be considered both 'thoughtless and

⁸³ M.A. Marriage Allen, "Irish Knitting," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XXII. 264 (October 2nd 1882): 263.

⁸⁴ Allen, "Irish Knitting," 263.

⁸⁵ For further reading on this topic see Anna Vaughan Kett, *Quaker Women, the Free Produce Movement and British Anti-Slavery Campaigns: The Free Labour Cotton Depot in Street, 1853 – 1858*. University of Brighton PhD. 2012.

⁸⁶ "From the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends held in London by adjournment from the 22nd of the Fifth month to the 31st of the same, inclusive, 1872. To the Quarterly and other Meetings of Discipline of Women Friends in Great Britain and Ireland," *Yearly Meeting of Women Friends Answers to Queries, 1872*, YM/YMWF. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

⁸⁷ Aigrette feathers refers to white egret's feathers which were fashionably used as decoration in hats or bonnets and is also sometimes used to more generally to describe a plume or spray of any feathers on a headdress.

heartless' to the torture and destruction the birds endured. Gibbins even appealed to the sartorial tastes of these fashionable Quaker women by consoling them that several, 'charming and becoming substitutes for feathers for use in millinery' had been developed during the previous year, so that their aesthetic tastes need not be compromised for the adherence to a moral standard.⁸⁸ In fact, the following month a memorandum read aloud at the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends, lambasted the wearing of all feathers in headdresses, not because of their fashionable ostentation, but due to the obliteration and brutality that a plethora of native bird species were facing, noting that:

[...] Friends have already done much to discourage the said custom, but still much remains to be done, and ignorance on the subject cannot now be pleaded. "Evil is wrought by want of thought as well as by want of heart." [...] many wings etc. are now manufactured from other feathers, but the example of wearing even these must still be bad.⁸⁹

Whilst censorious of the fashionable use of plumage in headdresses, both the letter from Gibbins and the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends Memorandum, as well as charting the debates over the course of the later nineteenth century, reveal that the reasons for Quaker condemnation of particular items of dress altered over the years. Arguments during the 1860s and 1870s still criticised fashions, particularly French high fashions, for their lack of religious simplicity and the fact that Quaker women who wore such clothing were not adequately engaged in Christian physical and spiritual self-denial. Yet as the nineteenth century advanced, the weight of the arguments rejecting high fashions shifted towards the wider moral duty Quakers owed to the vulnerable and less privileged, be they man or bird.

⁸⁸ "Plumage in Ladies' Hats and Bonnets (To the Editor of *The Friend*)," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XXXVI. 17 (24th April 1896): 268

⁸⁹ "Memorandum to be Laid before Women Friends on discouraging the use of Feathers and Aiglettes. 1896. Read 26th May 1896," *Yearly Meeting of Women Friends Answers to Queries, 1896*, YM/YMWF Miscellaneous. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

Conclusion

Within the Friends' journals, debates regarding the wearing of fashionable dress by Quaker women had by the start of the twentieth century had all but disappeared. It is with the disappearance of these published opinions however, that the use of surviving garment and photographic evidence become essential as witness that the ternary sartorial negotiations detailed here were still on-going in practice during the opening years of the decade.

Whilst the campaigns for gender equality for Quaker women within the religious community ultimately achieved their goals, partially before the turn of the century and completely just after, the civil crusade for women's emancipation, especially their suffrage, was at the height of contention and militancy. The continued coverage that the cause received within the Friends journals during 1900s and early 1910s, confirms that despite the revulsion expressed by many female Quakers at the violent military tactics employed by some of the civil branches of the suffrage associations, they still felt the campaign to be a potent and relevant movement to many Quaker women. Quaker and suffrage campaigner, Sarah Bancroft Clark's letter "Women's Suffrage" to *The Friend* on 14th March 1913 for example, sought to reassure Quakers over the disagreements between the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies and those who practiced violent tactics. Addressing an earlier letter asking why more confirmation of their revulsion had not been vocalised before, she asserted that, 'among Friends there is such a strong and well-established testimony against violence, that we may assume that it exists unless there is a definite statement to the contrary.'⁹⁰ Yet Bancroft Clark additionally questioned why a Society which had recently implemented total gender equality within its religious community, did not want to see such changes extended to all civil society, asking, 'If Friends really understand and appreciate the value of their own great experiment in treating men and women as equals, do they not wish to share their experience with the State?'⁹¹

⁹⁰ Sarah Bancroft Clark, "Women's Suffrage (Letter to the Editor of The Friend)," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* LIII. 11 (14th March 1913): 177.

⁹¹ Clark, "Women's Suffrage (Letter to the Editor of The Friend)," 177.

Yet these issues were soon overtaken by profound concerns at heightening political tensions with Germany. By 1913, there was an awareness within both civil society and on the pages of Quaker journals, that European nations including Britain were 'being sucked into the vortex of military preparations' with Germany.⁹² Whilst the following year in 1914 eighteen articles were published in *The Friend* alone regarding the campaign by Quaker women for female civil emancipation, by 1915 there were merely two.⁹³ On the 17th September 1915, G. Crosfield, of the Friends' League for Women's Suffrage, admitted that many suffrage associations had since felt obliged to 'postpone' their campaigns and instead focus on serving their nation during the war. Explaining that, 'the country now makes new demands on every one of its citizens, demands which perhaps were never before so important and so urgent. If we do not respond, not only individually but collectively, we come short of a manifest duty.'⁹⁴

As the outbreak of war affected all British society, even the peace-loving Quakers (who believed in non-violence and were committed pacifists), analysis of the societal role and sartorial decisions of British Quaker women were overwhelmingly influenced by these external aggressors. This thesis' timeline concludes just before the dawning of the new military era at the start of the First World War. Yet, as this chapter has illustrated, the previous five decades were tumultuous for Quaker women in their own way, through the increased political activation of these women in both civil society and their own religious communities. Alongside their increased political activism, these women were having to negotiate issues of their personal and public appearance and their dress choices on a daily basis. Despite the supposed dawning of a new era in the 1860s in which Quaker men and women were free to make their own sartorial choices regarding dress, those elders loyal to the use of Plain or simple dress were quick to express their sorrow at the incorporation of 'extravagant' fashions into younger female Quakers wardrobes. Public discussions especially through the pages of Quaker journals remained active during these decades regarding the tensions between religious simplicity and self-denial communicated by certain types of fashionable garments. Yet as the examples discussed throughout this chapter have

⁹² *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* LIII. 23 (6th June 1913): 375-376

⁹³ War was declared on 4th August 1914.

⁹⁴ G. Crosfield, "The Need of the Time and the Place For Women (To the Editor of *The Friend*)," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* LV (17th September 1915): 724.

illustrated, whilst controversy continued to surround the incorporation of mainstream fashions, including crinolines, hoops, mourning dress, French millinery and aigrettes, the arguments of Quaker religious communities against them became more specific and sophisticated towards the close of the century, and evolved from spiritual to moral and ethical issues which sometimes linked into wider nationally established campaigns.

As such, Quaker women in the final decades of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century, whether they supported or disapproved, had to negotiate their positions and values on the platforms of three major campaigns. Firstly women's civil emancipation, secondly, that of women's position in the Religious Society of Friends, and thirdly, women's ability to make their own sartorial choices. Each of these was vocally debated and often censured within the Society. These three key debates reveal the gendered religious, social and political environment in which the highly personal sartorial decisions of the following female case studies of the thesis were negotiated. Firstly, however, because Friends are also members of wider civil society, and therefore reflect the social customs of their period, it is now critical to examine the array of fashion in secular society available to these Quaker women. As such the next chapter will briefly address the fashionable garments available to women during the decades of 1860 to 1914, alongside the function of fashion in the communication of femininity and etiquette in conventional middle class social circles.

Chapter 5 Fashionable Dress compared to Quaker Dress 1860-1914.

Introduction

Dress historian Diana Crane has noted that during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries 'for a costume to be considered elegant, every detail had to be correct.'¹ Furthermore, that each separate occasion and activity for the middle and upper classes required specific garments and styles of dress. Any differentiation from socially accepted fashionable attire, by those expected to follow it, would have been immediately recognisable to the fashionable classes and read as inappropriate, even as defiance or subversion, of established customary etiquette and therefore of the social order.² Crane additionally asserts that during this period, clothing was important as a means to convey information about social role, class and character, and in Quaker women's cases, religious affiliation.³ Middle and upper-middle class Semi- and Fully-Adaptive Quaker women who chose to incorporate fashionable garments into their wardrobes after 1860 therefore had to negotiate the current social mores of fashion, where deviation from established fashion styles would have been read as a departure from traditional notions of respectability, polite etiquette and modernity.

As dress historians, including Valerie Cumming and Anne Buck have acknowledged, nineteenth and early twentieth century fashions were ephemeral and developed rapidly as a 'sequence of many styles [...] evol[ing] gradually from the one before.'⁴ New fashions were composed of slight variations which seamlessly blended between old and new until a new form was achieved and were worn by fashionable women season by season. This chapter does not attempt to discuss and describe *all* aspects of change in fashions between 1860 to 1914. Instead it specifically targets, describes and evaluates the items of women's fashionable attire specifically reserved for censure by the Quaker community, as noted in

¹ Diana Crane, 'Clothing behaviour as non-verbal resistance,' *The Fashion History Reader: Global Perspectives*, ed. Giorgio Riello and Peter McNeil (London: Routledge, 2010) 335 adapted from Diana Crane, *Fashion and its Social Agendas: Class, Gender and Identity in Clothing* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

² Crane, 'Clothing behaviour as non-verbal resistance,' 335.

³ Crane, 'Clothing behaviour as non-verbal resistance,' 335-336.

⁴ Anne Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories* (London: Herbert Jenkins, [1961] 1984) 17.

chapter 4, as well as comparing surviving Quaker garments to designs proposed by the fiat of Paris fashion plates featured in British women's magazines.⁵ Evidence of Quaker censure has here been drawn from Quaker social commentary published in the nineteenth century Friends' journals *The Friend* and *The Friends Quarterly Examiner*. This has enabled identification of the exact garments which members of the Society vocally attacked and offers an evaluation of their justifications for such criticism. Alongside these published texts, period etiquette guides and newspaper articles regarding women's fashions have been consulted. Etiquette guides offered instruction on all elements of toilette, dress and behaviour and posited the correct usage of these as 'a duty we owe to others as well as to ourselves to make the best of our appearance.'⁶ These illustrate how nineteenth and early twentieth century fashion was presented to middle-class women in popular journals, particularly through their association with conventions of good manners and etiquette.

Through these textual sources and related images, correlations and disconnections will be observed between Quaker religious and fashionable attitudes towards how dress communicated maxims of correct behaviour associated with decorum. Materially, the garments under discussion in this chapter are only those discussed in critical commentary in Friends' journals or which have been located in Quaker women's wardrobes, and are specifically those which enable comparisons between Quaker women's garment practices and fashionable recommendations. These include silhouettes, gloves, hats and bonnets and plumage. Initially however, before discussing specific garments it is useful to examine the context of their use through an assessment of etiquette guidelines.

Fashion and the advice of etiquette guides

According to Michael Curtin in his 1987 review of Victorian etiquette guides, *Propriety and Position*, 'aspirants to fashionable society paid anxious attention to their manners,' due to

⁵ As discussed by Valerie Steele, *Paris fashion: a cultural history* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988) and James G. Gamble in his article 'Dressed to Kill: The mid-nineteenth century crinoline craze' *The Pharos*, Winter (2000): 16-21, Paris during the nineteenth century was considered the undisputable capital of fashion and most Western countries looked to the capital for the latest innovation and style in clothing.

⁶ The Lounger in Society, *The Glass of Fashion: A Universal Handbook of Social Etiquette and Home Culture for Ladies and Gentlemen* (London: John Hogg, 1881) 166.

the ridicule, criticism and exclusion which awaited those who displayed imperfect conduct and misjudged subtle matters of style.⁷ Etiquette guides additionally emphasised how fashionable customs were an 'unerring revelation of a person's social advantages and position' and that their usage identified those 'entitled to be considered in good society.'⁸ Therefore, for Semi- or Fully-Adaptive middle to upper-middle class Quaker women who aspired to assimilate themselves into mainstream polite society by adopting fashionable dress, these maxims of decorous dress and behaviour were as crucial to adopt as the sartorial appearance of the fashionable dress itself. Conversely, for Non-Adaptive Quaker women, resistance to fashion would have marked them out as both sartorially as well as socially separate.

"What is a Lady?" published in *The Friend*, offered prizes to 'the boys and girls of Sidcot School for short essays on 'Your Idea of a Lady,' illustrating that by 1896, the Quaker community was pre-occupied with how dress and behaviour communicated mainstream ideals of femininity.⁹ The judge of the competition, the Quaker, Theodore Compton, then summarised the nineteen desirable qualities, stating that, 'the essentially lady-like quality [...] draws forth the good that is in others, and gives them the opportunity of exercising their attainments, moral, intellectual, and physical.'¹⁰ In addition, he recounted that 'taste' and 'keeping her desires and expenses within her means and suited to her circumstances', were essential.¹¹ The article is particularly striking because in the merits communicated, religious obedience, piety, simplicity or other desirable *religious* qualities are absent. In addition, these listed virtues are identical to those advised in printed etiquette guides of the period. *The Habits of Good Society, A Handbook of Etiquette for Ladies and Gentlemen* published in 1890, recommended that, 'an agreeable, modest and dignified bearing [...] that which may be amiable, graceful and true in taste, will always please.'¹²

⁷ Michael Curtain, *Propriety and Position: A Study of Victorian Manners* (London: Garland Publishing, 1987) 55. Such self-policing maintained through fear of ostracisation was the same behavioural technique used to maintain discipline within the Quaker community itself.

⁸ Burton Kingsland, *Etiquette for All Occasions* (London: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1901) 4 & 7.

⁹ "What is a Lady?" *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XXXVI. 34 (21st August 1896): 548

¹⁰ "What is a Lady?" 548

¹¹ "What is a Lady?" 548

¹² *The Habits of Good Society, A Handbook of Etiquette for Ladies and Gentlemen with Thoughts, Hints, and Anecdotes, concerning Social Observances* (London: John Hogg, 1890) 265.

Yet whilst both sources placed emphasis on a tasteful appearance as a signifier of a feminine ideal, late nineteenth century etiquette guides censured any kind of rebellion against fashion. This was in opposition to the continually held Quaker principle that, as described by J. William Frost, 'bowing to fashion was still deemed wrong, as it came from a spirit of vanity.'¹³ It seems antithetical therefore that these two sources both held taste and physical attainments as feminine ideals whilst one promoted the adoption of fashion and the other continued to censure its use. *The Habits of Good Society's* anonymous writer described 'superior simplicity' in dress as 'vulgar', stating that people with 'sense and modesty' followed fashion, and those who did not 'delight in the combination of colours' were 'deficient', 'indolent' and 'self-righteous.'¹⁴ *The Glass of Fashion* had earlier, in 1881, also stated that a person 'who does not dress well when he can afford to do so must either be mean and miserly, or a fool,' illustrating the depth of emphasis placed by these guides on fashion's role in social decorum.¹⁵

It appears similar sentiments had also permeated the Quaker community, though with emphasis placed on avoiding untidiness. On 13th May 1898, 'Another Man Friend' in the letter "Dress at London Yearly Meeting" published in *The Friend*, censured the 'careless' and 'untidy' clothing worn to Yearly Meeting, stating:

There is certainly no religion in untidiness of dress, any more than in any other class of untidiness; and to see either man or woman badly dressed who can afford to be otherwise is apt to create a somewhat similar impression as the receipt of a badly spelt or written letter from one who should be well educated [...] to neglect the appearance of the outer court does not make more attractive the inner and more glorious shrine.¹⁶

¹³ J. William Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," *Quaker Aesthetics: Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003) 33.

¹⁴ *The Habits of Good Society*, 160.

¹⁵ The Lounger in Society, *The Glass of Fashion*, 166-167.

¹⁶ Another Man Friend, "Dress At London Yearly Meeting (To the editor of The Friend)," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XXXVIII. 19 (13th May 1898): 294

During the six decades under discussion here however, the 'outer court' of dress altered dramatically, particularly the shape of the silhouette of female ensembles. As such, dressing fashionably not merely meant updating accessories and using them during the correct occasions, but involved the wholesale replacement of dresses to incorporate the newly fashionable skirt widths, shapes, waist heights or sleeve fits. Thus the manifestations of the shifting fashionable silhouette during the period under discussion by this thesis will provide a contextualisation of the extent to which fashionable silhouettes altered between 1860 and 1914.

Silhouettes

During the 1860s, the shape of the feminine silhouette was largely dictated by skirts supported by cage-crinolines, which had been introduced the previous decade. These hooped petticoats, which were frames created of lightweight steel rings connected by fabric tape, allowed for large skirts to be worn without the weight of many layers of petticoats. After 1865 however, the bell shape of the crinoline flattened a little in front and was emphasised by the incorporation of an un-gathered width of material at the front of the skirt and gored sections at the sides and back from the waistband.¹⁷ During this decade, dresses were made in one-piece or as separate bodice and skirt, and worn with a cape or jacket which matched the skirt.¹⁸ Nearly all long sleeves had full shoulders with deep epaulettes which were emphasised by trimmings of braid, cord or bead.¹⁹ One of the most striking features during this decade and the 1870s was the use of bright and contrasting colours in bold masses, which was assisted by the invention of aniline dyes a decade earlier.²⁰ Especially popular were bright purples which were used over the entire swathe of the gown to achieve maximum visual impact (Fig. 5.1). Thus the most fashionable hues of this decade were in direct opposition to the 'very pale drab, grey, or other quiet coloured

¹⁷ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 29-30. 'Gored' refers to a triangular piece of material, or a panel of material, inserted in a garment to give it greater width or a desired shape.

¹⁸ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 32.

¹⁹ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 37.

²⁰ Charlotte Nicklas, *Splendid Hues: Colour, Dyes, everyday science and women's fashion, 1840-1875*, University of Brighton PhD (2009) 278-283.



Fig. 5.1: Fashionable dress dyed using magenta aniline dye which was particularly popular during the decade, also featuring a skirt supported by a crinoline. 1869-1870. Ribbed silk, trimmed with satin faced with cotton. T.118 to D- 1979. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Web. 30th April 2015. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O115837/dress-vignon/>

cloth' favoured by traditional Quaker restraint.²¹ During this decade shawls were also extremely fashionable and were especially large so as to cover the skirts expanded by the crinoline. Their acceptance by the Society as suitable articles of Quaker Plain dress even prior to this decade is discussed in chapter 6.

By the 1870s, the silhouette changed dramatically, whereby the bulk of the skirt was thrown behind, over a crinolette or bustle, with a train. To further emphasise the fullness, double skirts were incorporated, in the form of a polonaise, looped up at the sides to form an apron style front. As the decade progressed however, the skirt front was increasingly drawn closely around the body by using interior tapes, and the skirts were drawn together into pleats at the rear.²² This increasing slimness at the front of the silhouette was accentuated after 1875 with the introduction of the Princess line, with the lengthening of the bodice called a cuirass bodice, which fitted closely over the hips and pushed the fullness of the bustle downwards, thus lengthening the skirt's train.²³ These cuirass bodices were worn with a separate, matching, skirt or made as a whole waistless dress. The fashionable dress of this decade featured a 'profusion of trimmings and lace' particularly conspicuous were 'silk fringe, satin braid, beads, marabou feathers, garlands and applied silk flowers.'²⁴ Thus the incorporation by Quaker women of highly fashionable, decorative trimmings would have been in defiance of the Advices elicited by the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends in 1872 which continued to encourage 'self-denial' in dress and discourage 'thoughtless expenditure or needless superfluities.'²⁵

Trimmings were still incorporated in the fashions of the 1880s. In the place of fabric decorations however, the preferred medium became real and imitation fauna, including, birds, feathers, furs and stuffed and mounted carcasses. The Quaker community's criticism of this fashion is discussed in chapter 4 as well as later in this chapter. Lucy Johnston notes that, 'there was a passion for using parts of dead animals as ornaments [...] the more exotic

²¹ Hale, *The Workwoman's Guide*, 166.

²² Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 49.

²³ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 54.

²⁴ Lucy Johnston, *Nineteenth-Century Fashion in Detail* (London: V&A Publications, 2005) 60 & 62.

²⁵ From the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends held in London by adjournment from the 22nd of the Fifth month to the 31st of the same, inclusive, 1872, To the Quarterly and other Meetings of Discipline of Women Friends in Great Britain and Ireland, YM/YMWF. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

the natural history specimen the better.²⁶ According to Buck, during the early 1880s as the train diminished, the material ceased to be pulled to the back of the silhouette and thus the skirt shape became straighter.²⁷ After 1885 however, the bustle 'did reach new and exaggerated proportions, jutting out almost at right angles from the back of the skirt.'²⁸ By the latter half of the decade whilst the volume at the rear of the skirt had reappeared it incorporated far less trimming. The 1880s bustles were also narrow and hung from the centre of the waistline, unlike the 1870s bustle which spread across the width of the back of the skirt. The Aesthetic style of dress in this decade, (favoured by supporters of the artistic Aesthetic Movement and discussed at length in chapter 8), 'rejected the bright aniline colours worn by the more conventional fashionable ladies of the day' and fashionable colours also increasingly grew more muted.²⁹ As the 1880s progressed, 'masculine' styles of tailoring became increasingly popular for women's day wear and were embellished with military inspired details such as braiding. The prevailing style of the tailoring accentuated the close-fit, cut and quality of the cloth (Fig. 5.2).³⁰ During this decade woollen fabrics were especially fashionable. Light wools, such as cashmere, were incorporated into evening gowns which demanded soft drapes whilst the heavy wools of tweeds and 'habit cloths' originally used in the construction of hunting, outdoor and travelling garments had become fashionable for urban day-wear.³¹

Whether bespoke or ready-made, tailor-made woollen costumes continued to be popular for active and day-wear into the 1890s. During this decade the components altered to a matching skirt and jacket with a frilled and tucked, muslin blouse with a high collar, which by this time could be purchased ready-made.³² The emphasis during this decade was increasingly placed on a high collar, frilled or beaded bodice or blouse with voluminous sleeves, as the skirt became less trimmed and fell in simpler and plainer lines as bustles and skirt supports diminished.³³ Distinctive of the mid-1890s fashions were the extremely large

²⁶ Johnston, *Nineteenth-Century Fashion in Detail*, 108.

²⁷ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 60.

²⁸ Johnston, *Nineteenth-Century Fashion in Detail*, 136.

²⁹ Watt, 'Costume', 68.

³⁰ Johnston, *Nineteenth-Century Fashion in Detail*, 16.

³¹ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 71.

³² Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 77.

³³ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 74.



Fig. 5.2: Fashionable wool and silk bodice and skirt ensemble, made by the British couturier 'John Redfern and Sons' in their Paris salon. The outfit illustrates the 'masculine' styles of tailoring becoming fashionable as well as military inspired braiding. 1887-1889. Wool, silk, cotton, metallic thread. 49.3.32a-e. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Web. 30th April 2015. <http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/107066>

puffed sleeve rising above the level of the shoulder which increasingly swelled in size as the decade progressed and was coupled with a tight, high collar. Named the gigot, or leg-of-mutton, this ballooned shoulder puff, which was full to the elbow and then gathered into a long cuff tight to the wrist (Fig. 5.3), was popular until 1896 when it once again diminished.³⁴ By the end of the decade sleeves were tight their entire length, with a modest swell at the upper arm.

According to Buck, 'the change which marks the end of the Victorian period in women's dress came in the year of the Diamond Jubilee' in 1897, three years before the turn of the twentieth century.³⁵ The new twentieth-century form was comprised of a separate bodice and skirt as one-piece dresses for day wear became increasingly unfashionable. The blouse, tailored skirt and jacket ensemble remained popular for day wear in city and countryside. Fashionable blouses, now commonly referred to as shirts, continued to be comprised of a stiff high collar for day-wear whilst the huge gigot sleeves of the previous decade rapidly went out of fashion. During the 1900s, sleeves were narrow at the top and widening until gathered into a band at the wrist. Following the previous decade's defined, slim waist and erect figure, the silhouette of the 1900-1906 period featured a distinct forward leaning posture, emphasising the curve of the bust and hip creating an S-bend shape (Fig. 5.4). This curvature was accentuated by pouched bodices, or bodices 'bloused' at the centre front, whereby the front hung loosely over the waistband with a gathering of fabric at the centre back of the flared skirts. These gave a flowing yet slimmer line than in previous decades. Dresses fit closely from the waist to the lower thigh, flaring out from the knee, with a train at the back, and were sometimes flounced above the hem.³⁶ During the opening years of the decade, 'the desire for the new was entirely satisfied by the introduction of seasonal colour ranges, and novel, progressively complex overlaid decoration in which Paris couturiers excelled.'³⁷ Emphasis was placed on costly fabrics in pale colours with 'good draping qualities', which were used to achieve the flowing lines of the most fashionable silhouettes. The Art Nouveau movement's stylistic depictions of flora and fauna also made

³⁴ Johnston, *Nineteenth-Century Fashion in Detail*, 90.

³⁵ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 84.

³⁶ Valerie Mendes and Amy de la Haye, *20th Century Fashion* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999) 24. A 'flounce' refers to a decorative strip or layer of material, gathered or pleated, and attached at one edge with the other edge left loose or hanging. These were used as decoration above skirt hems and on cuffs.

³⁷ Mendes and De La Haye, *20th Century Fashion*, 24.



Fig. 5.3: Fashionable, beaded, trimmed and brightly coloured high-collared bodice, with embroidered gigot sleeves. These sleeves ballooned at the shoulder and were full to the elbow, then gathered into a long cuff tight to the wrist. 1895. Made of silk satin decorated with raised embroidery and trimmed with sequined net and lined with silk and whalebone strips. t.271-1972. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Web. 30th April 2015. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London. <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O117725/bodice-l-guiquin/>



Fig. 5.4: Actress and model, Camille Clifford, displaying the fashionable 'S' bend silhouette.

c.1905. Postcard print, 124mm x 80mm. NPG x27516. National Portrait Gallery, London.

Web. 30th April 2015. © National Portrait Gallery, London

<http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portraitLarge/mw166132/Camille-Clifford>

their way into many garments during this period, which featured appliqué and embroidered motifs of flowers and insects.³⁸

After 1907 however, there was a 'significant redirection of fashion' with inspiration drawn from neo-classicism and orientalism, especially for evening wear.³⁹ Whilst a silhouette which favoured 'straight vertical lines and a high waist' was introduced slowly for evening wear from 1907, it became the dominant fashionable silhouette by 1910, championed by the designs of the Paris-based couturiers Paul Poiret, Jean Lanvin and Lucile.⁴⁰ Known as the 'Directoire Revival' style, the dress bodices were short and freed women from the heavy 'S' bend corsets as the waist height was raised to underneath the bust. Another clear influence was orientalism, enhanced by the success of the exotic productions of the Ballet Russe, notably the use of bold embroidery and bright strong gilded colours. Hem lines began to rise, revealing glimpses of the wearers feet, whilst the skirts became tubular and based on draped forms which clung to the wearer their entire length.⁴¹ Alongside these silhouette changes, strong, vivid colours over the entire gown once again became fashionable, whilst day wear favoured lighter, softly tailored woollen jackets, skirts and coats worn with blouses of many styles. As the skirt became increasingly slim with softer lines and the hem line began to rise, the hobble skirt became fashionable between 1910 and 1914. Reaching to ankle or instep length, it fitted closely at the calf and bound the legs, restricting the stride, though it also had the advantage of reducing the bulk of foundation garments worn. In addition, necklines and collar heights increasingly diminished for both day-wear and evening gowns, with the turn-down and Peter Pan collar (a flat collar with rounded points) becoming fashionable just before 1910. Whilst turbans (a long length of material wound around a cap or the head) or simple ostrich plume headdresses were fashionably favoured with evening gowns, for day-wear these slim, vertical tailored coats and silk and linen day dresses were all teamed with large, plumed hats, giving the fashionable silhouette of the 1910s a distinctively top-heavy appearance.⁴²

³⁸ Akiko Fukai, *Fashion: A History from the 18th to the 20th Century, Volume 1: The collection of the Kyoto Costume Institute* (London: Taschen, 2006) 306.

³⁹ Mendes and De La Haye, *20th Century Fashion*, 10.

⁴⁰ Mendes and De La Haye, *20th Century Fashion*, 32.

⁴¹ Mendes and De La Haye, *20th Century Fashion*, 32-36.

⁴² Mendes and De La Haye, *20th Century Fashion*, 40.

In describing these prevailing silhouettes and fashions from the period under discussion, smaller accessories may be contextualised within their broader fashionable ensembles. Whilst the middle-class Quaker women under discussion throughout this thesis are revealed to have negotiated incorporating fashion diversely and to varying degrees in their own wardrobes, Quaker commentary reveals that most Quaker women appear to have relied on accessories to express an element of fashionability in their attire. As such, accessories located in the surviving wardrobes of Quaker women are discussed to enable comparisons to be drawn between Quaker women's garment practices and fashionable recommendations.

Gloves and Mittens

Gloves worn by Quaker women for daily use survive in museum collections, particularly fine knitted mittens. Three pairs of mittens were sourced within the surviving wardrobe of the Non-Adaptive Quaker, Elizabeth Petipher Cash, whilst one pair of fashionable late nineteenth century, short, primrose-yellow Kid Gloves, survive in the Alfred Gillett Trust Archive having been worn by a female member of the Clark's family (Fig. 5.5).

One 1683 letter, quoted by Quaker dress historian Amelia Mott Gummere, reveals that leather gloves *were* considered appropriate Plain Quaker attire, at least for winter, during the seventeenth century. From the Quaker, Sarah Meade, to her sister, the correspondence bestows items of clothing including '3 pair doe skin gloves such as are worn in winter' and '1 pair same sort of gloves for brother Abraham.'⁴³ No specific religious Advices regarding gloves' as suitable in the context of Plain appearance has materialised.

Cash's mittens of about 1850 meanwhile comprised of two cream silk knitted pairs and one pair in black net (Fig. 5.6 & 5.7) (described in detail within her case study in the following chapter).⁴⁴ According to Buck, whilst knitted mittens were considered a 'characteristically

⁴³ Amelia Mott Gummere, *The Quaker: A Study in Costume* (Philadelphia: Ferris and Leach, 1901) 126.

⁴⁴ Mittens are characterised as a hand covering which enclosed the four fingers together with a separate opening for the thumb. Cream silk long knitted mittens, c. 1850. KIL/W/04481/1/2. Dark cream silk short



Fig. 5.5: *A pair of fashionable primrose yellow Kid Gloves probably worn by a female member of the Clark's family. c.1870s. Primrose yellow kid leather. COST Box 23/1. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street. Personal photograph by the author. 18th June 2015. Courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust/C & J Clark Ltd.*

knitted mittens, c. 1850. KIL/W/04482/1/2 and Black net and lace mittens, c. 1850. KIL/W/04483/1/2. Killerton House National Trust, Devon.



Fig. 5.6: *Black net mittens with decorative lace inserts worn by Elizabeth Petipher Cash. c.1850. Black net with black lace inserts. KIL/W/04483/2. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author. 18th November 2014.*



Fig. 5.7: *One pair of cream silk knitted Mittens worn by Elizabeth Petipher Cash. c.1850. Knitted dark cream silk. KIL/W/04482/2. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author. 18th November 2014.*

Victorian accessory', they were actually only briefly fashionable during the 1830s and 1840s with a resurgence in the late 1870s and early 1880s.⁴⁵ Gloves alternatively, were consistently considered fashionable and necessary. In the 1830s, wrist length mittens were fashionably worn during the day whilst the evening called for black or white embroidered elbow length silk mittens.⁴⁶ "Fashions for July" in the 1833 *Reading Mercury* however, recommended 'mittens of black silk net' in unspecified lengths for both Morning and Evening Dress.⁴⁷ By the 1840s, crocheted (a handicraft in which yarn is made up into a textured fabric by means of a hooked needle) and knitted mittens also became acceptable, with fashionable mittens being produced from black or pastel shades of silk, net, leather and fur, with embroidery, beading, ribbons and scalloped (curved projections forming an ornamental border) edging, but had decreased to wrist length for all occasions.⁴⁸

Such decorative embellishment is illustrated in a later 1840-1859 'European' pair, housed at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Elbow length in black silk netting, these are embroidered with flower and leaf motifs in pink and green cotton, with pink silk ribbon and black fringing at the elbow and scalloped embroidered edging at the fingers (Fig. 5.8).⁴⁹ "Fashions for the Week" in the December 1840 *Dublin Monitor* however, reveals that leather decorated mittens were fashionable too in Winter, recommending, 'mittens made with leather and lined with fur, ornamented with plaited ribbons [...] very pretty mittens of lilac or water-green kid [leather] are trimmed around the top with fur.'⁵⁰

Yet despite articles during the 1860s and 1870s revealing persistent attempts to re-introduce mittens into the fashionable wardrobe, by these decades they were considered an 'old fashion'.⁵¹ The *Penny Illustrated Paper* article "Paris Fashions for January", from 5th January 1867, commented upon mittens that, 'there has been some slight idea of

⁴⁵ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 141.

⁴⁶ C. Willett Cunnington, Phillis Cunnington, *Handbook of English Costume in the Nineteenth Century*. (London: Faber and Faber, [1959] 1970) 418.

⁴⁷ "Fashions for July," *Reading Mercury*, 8th July 1833: 2.

⁴⁸ Valerie Cumming, *Gloves* (London: Batsford, 1982) 62.

⁴⁹ Mitts, circa 1840-1859. Cotton and silk. 1986.523.1a, b. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

<http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/119631?rpp=20&pg=4&ft=mitts&pos=77>.

⁵⁰ "Fashions of the Week," *Dublin Monitor*, 8th December 1840: 3.

⁵¹ "New Styles and Coming Fashion (from the *Milliner and Dressmaker*)," *Sheffield Independent*, 25th March 1875: 8.



Fig. 5.8: Long evening mittens. Elbow length in black silk netting, these are embroidered with flower and leaf motifs in pink and green cotton, with pink silk ribbon and black fringing at the elbow and scalloped embroidered edging at the fingers. c.1840-1859. Cotton, silk ribbon, silk embroidery. 1986.523.1a, b. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Web. 30th April 2015. <http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/119631>

introducing long black lace mittens for young ladies' demi-toilet wear. We wish this fashion success, but do not think it will take.⁵² Instead, according to Buck, fashionable gloves were produced from kid leather worn 'at all times [which] was always correct and fashionable', in a variety of pastel or dark colours, depending on the annual seasonal fashion.⁵³ As such, whilst the Clark's gloves are undecorated in a discreet pastel yellow, this short length, simple appearance and shade would have been entirely fashionable for Spring and Summer during the 1870s. *Etiquette for Ladies and Gentlemen* published in 1876, went as far as to state that 'your gloves should always be of kid: silk or cotton gloves are very vulgar.'⁵⁴ These fashionable kid gloves were tight to the hand and were often ornamented with embroidery, varying numbers of buttons at the wrist and, by the 1880s and 1890s, frilled lace often featured at the top.⁵⁵

Yet during the mid-1870s mittens did briefly resurge in popularity, though strictly for evening wear. On 25th March 1875, the *Sheffield Independent* in "New Styles and Coming Fashion (from the *Milliner and Dressmaker*)," favourably reported that 'another return to old fashion is in the direction of long mittens, of fine black or white silk net. These mittens are very becoming to pretty arms and hands, and do not hide rings, as gloves do.'⁵⁶ One American pair from 1880 illustrate the fashionable appearance of these evening mittens, as full-length, with plain white silk covering the hand, white lace inserts at the arm and white lace edging and beige silk bows at the elbow (Fig. 5.9).⁵⁷ Yet even during this resurgence of fashionability, an 1878 Shirer and Haddon advertisement in the *Cheltenham Looker-On* illustrates that lace mittens were far cheaper than kid evening gloves, at a third of the price or less:

Evening Dress- White and light-coloured Kid Gloves, with from 2 to 20 buttons, a Special Quality, 6 Buttons, 3s. 9d., in all shades. Long lace mittens all shades 1s. 11

⁵² "Paris Fashions for January," *Penny Illustrated Paper*, 5th January 1867: 13.

⁵³ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 140.

⁵⁴ *Etiquette for Ladies and Gentlemen* (London: Frederick Warne and Co, 1876) 14.

⁵⁵ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 133. Buck gives a comprehensive chronological description of the varying fashionable gloves throughout the decades, see pages 133 to 137.

⁵⁶ "New Styles and Coming Fashion (from the *Milliner and Dressmaker*)," *Sheffield Independent*, 25th March 1875: 8.

⁵⁷ Mitts, circa 1880. Silk and lace. 2009.300.5709a, b. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Fig. 5.9: A pair of decorated evening mittens. Elbow length, with plain white silk covering the hand and white lace inserts at the arm. Decorated with white lace trimming, beige silk ribbon and beige silk bows. c.1880. Silk, lace and silk ribbon. 2009.300.5709a,b. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. <http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/169920>

1/2d. per Pair. Black Lace ditto from 1s. 6d to 5s. 6d. A Large Stock of Silk, Lisle and Balbriggan Hosiery.⁵⁸

Whilst covering the hands was an essential custom of polite public society at all times, mittens would have been the most affordable option, despite being unfashionable after the 1850s. For all women, Quaker and non-Friend alike, hand-coverings whether fashionable or Plain were considered beneficial in the preservation of the hands' cleanliness, and for Semi- and Fully-Adaptive Quaker women offered another opportunity to communicate a compliance to fashion whilst also matching dictums of behaviour associated with decorum.

Correct glove *usage* also further illustrated assimilation into fashionable circles. According to the 1876 etiquette manual *How to Dress; or Etiquette of The Toilette*, 'a fine hand contributes greatly to the elegance of the personal appearance' and gloves or mittens were therefore essential in 'preserving [their] delicacy.'⁵⁹ *How to Dress* instructed on keeping the hands clean, white, shaping the nails and the importance of their covering. As a delicate feminine hand served as evidence of class, taste and culture, gloves should 'always be worn' to protect the hands from dirt, discolouration, and friction (associated with working-class women's hands) in order to keep them soft, transparent and slender as associated with upper-class leisure, so they appeared 'the colour of the inner leaves of a moss rose, with the blue veins distinctly visible.'⁶⁰ As late as 1901, *Etiquette for All Occasions*, described white gloves for receptions as 'important accessories' whilst at the theatre 'white gloves only are seen', and stating that during luncheons 'the hostess [...] of course wears neither hat nor gloves.'⁶¹

Yet despite gloves' association with politeness etiquette and mainstream fashion, the wearing of gloves by Quaker women was spared criticism by the Society. As noted in chapter 4 however, other articles of fashionable dress were singled out for fierce castigation by members of the religious community through letters on the pages of the Quaker journals. One such article were large fashionably decorated bonnets and hats.

⁵⁸ "Shirer and Haddon," *Cheltenham On-Looker*, 14th December 1878: 4.

⁵⁹ *How to Dress; or Etiquette of The Toilette* (London: Ward, Lock and Tyler, 1876) 57 and 59.

⁶⁰ *How to Dress*, 58.

⁶¹ Kingsland, *Etiquette for All Occasions*, 323.

Hats and Bonnets

Throughout the garment viewings, a total of twenty-four Plain Quaker bonnets were viewed at numerous institutions.⁶² The abundance of surviving Plain bonnets carries many significations, yet most importantly, they illustrate the habituated style and design features associated with Plain Quaker bonnets, alongside the limited colours and materials actually employed in both their manufacture and wearing over the centuries.⁶³ Importantly however, Quaker Plain bonnets are the only head-wear with acknowledged Quaker derivations present in any of the dress collections approached. No fashionable hats or bonnets documented as worn by female Friends have materialised.

Settled upon during the late eighteenth century, the typical design of Plain Quaker bonnets featured a soft crown and a stiff, deep and plain brim tied under the chin, and were 'coal scuttle' or poke bonnet in shape (Fig. 5.10).⁶⁴ The deep brim projected well beyond the face, providing an overtly modest facial shielding for the wearer from the gaze of (male) viewers. By the early nineteenth century, surviving examples reveal that these Plain Quaker bonnets often featured a corded bavolet (a ruched curtain, which was generally fashionable) at the nape of the neck, such as on the immaculate black corded and cream silk example reportedly worn by the Quaker, Frances Thompson, as late as the 1900s (Fig. 5.11).⁶⁵

Well into the twentieth century women's hats and bonnets were essential accessories for their associations with politeness and respectability as well as seasonal fashionability. Often

⁶² See Appendix 2.1: Quaker Garment Spreadsheet, for full list.

⁶³ The abundance of Plain Quaker bonnets in dress collections may signify their ease of storage for generations due to their compact size and shape and the evident value which dress collections placed on Plain bonnets as illustrations of Quaker dress.

⁶⁴ Jennifer I. Connerley, 'Quaker Bonnets and the Erotic Feminine in American Popular Culture,' *Material Religion* 2, 2. 2 (2nd July 2006): 176. A poke bonnet was a woman's bonnet with a deep projecting brim, fashionable in the first half of the 19th century, it was also sometimes called a 'coal scuttle' bonnet due to its similarity in shape to the tool.

⁶⁵ G. De Courtais, *Women's Hats, Headdresses and Hairstyles, with 453 illustrations Medieval to Modern* (New York: Dover Publications, [1973] 2006) 108. See Appendix 2.1 for full details. Black corded silk bonnet with cream silk lining, 1880-1900. 1973.127. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester. A hat is a head-covering, closed at its top end. Whereas a bonnet meanwhile, is a specific *type* of hat or head-covering which is held in place with ribbons and often covers a large proportion of the sides of the face and often ties under the chin.



Fig. 5.10: *Plain Quaker Bonnet in plain grey-blue silk with cream silk ribbons. c. 1879. Grey-blue corded silk, cream silk. 1979.3/4. Gallery of Costume Platt Hall, Manchester. Personal photograph by the author. 15th May 2013.*



Fig. 5.11: *Detail of the interior of a Black Plain Quaker Bonnet worn by Frances Thompson. c.1880-1900. Black corded silk, cream silk. 1973.127. Gallery of Costume Platt Hall, Manchester. Personal photograph by the author. 15th May 2013.*

they would have been the most fashionable item in a woman's ensemble. According to Georgina De Courtais in her 1973 publication *Women's Hats, Headdresses and Hairstyles*, hats were still not considered to be appropriate attire for church until roughly the 1880's, leaving the bonnet with the monopoly in this setting.⁶⁶ In fact, the covering of the head and hair as a sign of modesty and humility has its roots in the foundation of the theological debates surrounding the practice of the Christian faith. Recommendations regarding the covering of women's heads and faces to reflect religious modesty have existed since the original conception of Christianity and the subsequent theological debates regarding the interpretation of the Bible.⁶⁷ In mainstream Protestant society, as late as the twentieth century, the absence of a hat outdoors or in a public place was considered unthinkable and subversive to the customs of polite society. As such Semi- or Fully-Adaptive Quaker women wishing to incorporate fashionable attire sought guidance for suitable headwear from milliners and in the pages of newspapers and fashion journals as the presence of a head covering, either a hat or bonnet, would have been considered essential.

Yet, during the *opening* decades of the nineteenth century an exaggerated version of these modest, face shielding poke bonnets were also fashionable amongst non-Friends. "Fashions for December" from 1807 in the *Oxford Journal*, recommended 'a poke bonnet of basket willow, or striped velvet with full bows and long ends of shaded orange ribband on one side.'⁶⁸ Six years later, the 1813 *Lancaster Gazette* article "London Fashions for July" endorsed a heavily decorated, colourful poke bonnet for 'morning walking dress', described as:

A provincial poke bonnet of yellow quilted satin; ribband to correspond with the mantle, puffed across the crown and tied under the chin; a small cluster of flowers placed on the left side, similar to those on the small lace cap which is seen beneath.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ De Courtais, *Women's Hats, Headdresses and Hairstyles*, 130.

⁶⁷ Carly Daniel-Hughes, *The Salvation of the Flesh in Tertullian of Carthage: Dressing for the Resurrection* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011) 93.

⁶⁸ "Fashions for December. No. 3," *Oxford Journal*, 5th December 1807: 2.

⁶⁹ "London Fashions for July," *Lancaster Gazette*, 17th July 1813: 4.

Fashion plates in the woman's fashion magazine *The World of Fashion and Continental Feuilletons*, illustrate the chaste, concealing shape of fashionable poke-bonnets during the opening decades of the nineteenth century. These examples reveal the bright and varied colours employed as well as the trimmings of ribbons, flowers and plumage.⁷⁰ In contrast to these fashionable examples in yellow, adorned with orange ribbon or sprays of flowers however, Quaker bonnets were traditionally produced in muted or dull colours of silk. Greys, brown and drab silks were popularly used by Quakers, though as other surviving examples reveal, shades also included ivories, buffs and maroons depending on the wearer, date and use.⁷¹ Most significantly however, they were always unadorned and undecorated. In comparison to the descriptions of brightly coloured and heavily decorated fashionable bonnets of the same period, it is clear that the absence of adornment and bright colour on Quaker Plain bonnets would have been strikingly visible and unfashionable, even if the form had its moments of fashionability. The 1838 Answers to Queries specifically censured adornment, recommending that:

[...] we should refrain from following the vain customs and fashions of the world, and from clothing ourselves and our children in costly apparel; bearing in mind the apostolic injunction "whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel."⁷²

By the end of the 1850s, the face shielding poke shape of the Plain Quaker bonnet had become unfashionable for non-Friends. By 1853, the *Aberdeen Journal* described how 'the form of the bonnets and capotes [a long cloak or coat with a hood] is very open, the crown falling behind.'⁷³ By the mid-1850s the 'spoon bonnet' was the newest fashionable bonnet shape and it continued to be fashionable into the 1860s. It featured a shallow flared brim with a low and sloping crown, as illustrated in a fashion plate in *The Englishwoman's*

⁷⁰ Poke Bonnet, 1820-1830. Straw plait, glazed cotton, silk ribbon. 1349494. Snowhill Wade Costume Collection, Gloucestershire.

⁷¹ Connerley, 'Quaker Bonnets and the Erotic Feminine in American Popular Culture,' 176.

⁷² 'From our Yearly Meeting of Women Friends held in London by adjournment from the 23rd of the 5th month to the 1st of the 6th inclusive 1838. To the Quarterly and other Meetings of Discipline of Women Friends in Great Britain and Ireland,' *Women's Yearly Meeting Answers to Queries*, YM/YMWF. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London, quoting Peter 3:4.

⁷³ "Fashions for June (from Le Follet)," *Aberdeen Journal*, 8th June 1853: 3.

Domestic Magazine from 1862.⁷⁴ According to Valerie Cumming, by the mid-1850s, the fashionable bonnet shape featured a brim which had 'slip[ped] further back over the head' entirely revealing the face and the front of the hair.⁷⁵ By the 1860s therefore, the unchanged poke shape of Quaker Plain women's bonnets would have been considered deeply unfashionable, alongside their already unfashionable absence of decoration and narrow range of colours.

One universality for every decade of fashionable headwear between 1860 and 1914 was that specific styles of elaborate decoration played a key role in the interpretation and modification of the place of a hat or bonnet in the spectrum of fashionability. Though as Anne Buck acknowledges in *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, much of the variation of Paris fashions and its 'extravagancies' only actually reached a small portion of elite society.⁷⁶ Fashion amongst the middle and working classes was more often interpreted on an affordable basis, with the cheaper option being to replace trimmings and decoration which facilitated updates even whilst the bonnet's structural lines fell out of fashion. Illustrations of the most fashionable hat and bonnet designs could be seen in women's magazines, such as *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, which featured black and white fashion plates of the latest Paris fashions as well as a coloured steel fashion plate in every edition. Margaret Beetham, in *A Magazine of Her Own?*, acknowledges that the journal 'made available to as wide a readership as possible what was by definition exclusive and elite.' As such, economical interpretations of the fashionable aesthetic could be sought, whereby women could make copies from patterns in their homes as well as having the opportunity to adapt these designs for their practical domestic duties.⁷⁷

Women of the period had knowledge of sewing, making and millinery and consequently updated their bonnets themselves by re-trimming them at home from readily available ribbons, laces and artificial flowers, a far cheaper option than acquiring a new garment.⁷⁸ In

⁷⁴ Spoon bonnet, 1855-1860. Cream horsehair plait, cream silk, black machine lace, cream ribbed silk ribbon bow. 1349767. NT1349767. Killerton House National Trust, Devon.

⁷⁵ Valerie Cumming, *The Visual History of Costume Accessories* (London: Batsford, 1998) 104.

⁷⁶ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 8.

⁷⁷ Margaret Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own?* (London: Routledge, 1996) 76 & 78.

⁷⁸ Serena Dyer, *Bergere, Poke and Cottage. Understanding Early Nineteenth Century Headwear* (London: Codnor Books, 2011) 21.

How to Dress as a Lady for £15 a Year by Millicent W. Cook, published in 1873, the importance, and the expense, of annually purchasing new headwear to meet fashion's exacting standards is illustrated by the author's suggestion that funds for such a purpose should be the greatest expense of the entire year.⁷⁹ Meanwhile, publications such as *Practical Millinery* from 1897, gave women illustrated practical advice on hat and bonnet patterns, construction techniques, materials, tools and the creation of suitable trimmings.⁸⁰ Updating hats and bonnets at home would therefore have been a far more economical option for the majority of women to keep abreast of fashion and increase the longevity of a particular item. As such, trimmings and decoration would have played a key role in making a bonnet appear fashionable for middle class women, making the Quaker rejection of decoration and trimmings all the more publicly visible and shocking.

The tangible absence of fashionable bonnets and hats with a Quaker derivation does not however, mean that fashionable headwear was not worn by Semi- or Fully-Adaptive female Friends, but requires research from other sources as evidence of such practices, as detailed in chapters 1 and 2. Quaker social commentary on hats and bonnets attests to Quaker hostility to fancy hat trimmings, as some Friends deprecated their increasing presence amongst female members of the Society. As already noted in chapter 4, the Quaker, William Pollard, in 1869, singled out fashionable bonnets worn by Quaker women for specific censure. Pollard, in describing the creations of 'French milliners' worn by Quaker women as festooned with 'infinite orders of decoration', illustrated that by 1869 female members of the Society were actively disregarding Plain Advices and Scriptural passages which condemned fashions, in favour of wearing fashionably trimmed bonnets. These Advices sought to 'preserve them out of the vain and intoxicating fashions of a degenerate world', as well as the traditional Scriptural teachings of Peter, Timothy, Isaiah and Revelations which encouraged the rejection of ornamentation and were still regarded as spiritual guidance to Friends.⁸¹ Indeed, Pollard acknowledged this specific abandonment of Plain bonnets for fashionable headwear, by stating, 'As a mere question of taste, I grieve to see so many bony

⁷⁹ Millicent W. Cook, *How to Dress on £15 a year, as a lady* (London: Frederick Warne and Co, 1873)

⁸⁰ Jessica Ortner, *Practical Millinery* (London: Whittaker & Co, 1897)

⁸¹ 'From our Yearly Meeting of Women Friends held in London by adjournment from the 16th of the 5th month 1791 to the 23rd of the same inclusive,' *Women's Yearly Meeting Answers to Queries*, YM/YMWF. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

faces spoiled by the foolish contrivances of French milliners.⁸² However, castigation of the fashionably decorated bonnet did not solely come from the male members of the Society. In the 1st November 1870 edition of *The Friend*, the female Quaker, J.M. Richardson, objected to the arguments of female Quakers for adopting fashionable garments and cited the Scriptural texts of Isaiah and Nephi which specifically censured, 'the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, the head-bands.'⁸³ Yet throughout the following decades, some Quaker women continued to wear fashionable hats and bonnets, including those which incorporated plumage for decoration which was specifically decried.

Fashionable Plumed Hats of the 1880s and 1890s

On the 1st October 1879, Mary Bastin of Fleetwood wrote a concerned letter to *The Friend*, encouraging Quaker women to use artificial flowers instead of ostrich feathers 'as an ornament', as 'the use of its feathers [...] entail much suffering, as they are plucked from the live birds.'⁸⁴ Bastin's letter however, elicited little sympathy from fellow readers. The following month, T.P. Newman's responding letter asserted that 'the farming of ostriches for the sake of their feathers is an established trade at the Cape' and that the process of 'cutting it [the feather] off obliquely' resulted in the bird being oblivious to the operation.⁸⁵ Yet this was not the end of the matter. As the fashion for feathered hats escalated over many years, a letter in *The Friend* a decade later, on 1st August 1889, entitled "Mutilation for Decoration" from the Quaker, G.E. Richardson, raged against the fashion for 'the plumage of birds for purposes of decoration' which had 'unhappily so long prevailed.'⁸⁶

⁸² William Pollard, "Colloquial Letters. No. 9. My Unspoken Speeches in the late Yearly Meeting," *The Friends Quarterly Examiner. A Religious, Social & Miscellaneous Review conducted by Members of the Religious Society of Friends* XI (July 1869): 443.

⁸³ J.M. Richardson, "An Address to Christian Women," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* X. 119 (1st November 1870): 261: She identified the main arguments as: 'God looks only at the heart'- others, that 'It is right to appear attractive and graceful to those around'- again, 'It is fitting to dress according to our rank and position in society'- further, 'It does not answer any good purpose to be peculiar and odd in our dress', and 'It is our duty to make our religion attractive to the world.' Isaiah 3:20 and Nephi 13: 18-23.

⁸⁴ Mary Bastin, "Ostrich Feathers (To the Editor of the Friend)," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XIX. 228 (1st October 1879): 268

⁸⁵ T.P. Newman, "Ostrich Feathers (To the Editor of the Friend)," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XIX. 229 (1st November 1879): 297

⁸⁶ G.E. Richardson, "Mutilation for Decoration (To the Editor of *The Friend*)," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XXIX. 346 (1st August 1889): 218

During the late 1870s and 80s, the use of feathers in fashionable women's headwear reached epic proportions. Anne Buck asserts that whilst feathers were popularly used in millinery during the mid-nineteenth century, by the 1880s they were used not only as trimmings 'but also as the fabric of the whole hat' whilst entire stuffed birds were increasingly incorporated.⁸⁷ An 1885 V&A example from Paris milliner, *Modes du Louvre*, displays the extravagance of these mounted bird decorations. The brown felt hat features a narrow brim decorated with feathers and painted wooden beads, whilst the crown is wrapped with rust colour silk ribbon and decorated with an entire mounted and painted bird (Fig. 5.12).⁸⁸ Such profusion of feather decorations was assisted by London's position as the South African cape's principal trading partner. It's 'privileged trading relations' with the region were ensured due to Britain's colonial control of the Cape.⁸⁹ According to Sarah Stein, by the late nineteenth century, under British colonial rule, the region had been transformed into the 'world's principal ostrich feather supplier' by colonial policies which invested in communication and transportation enabling expansion of the country's export industry. International traders travelled to London to acquire the luxury feathers, buying the commodities in bulk at auction and returning them to their home countries.⁹⁰

During the 1900s, as the idealised feminine silhouette shifted to the S-bend silhouette, hats became larger whilst still flamboyantly adorned with feathers, silk flowers, fur, net and mounted birds.⁹¹ An advertisement for James Kinghorn & Son, in the *Aberdeen Journal* described their 'Faultless Fashions in Millinery' for October 1907 as:

Large Brimmed with Dome Shaped Crowns, which for the most part will be almost devoid of Trimming, save for the rather generous use of Ostrich Feathers or Feather Mounts. In Millinery there is quite a host of delightful Feather Mounts and

⁸⁷ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 120.

⁸⁸ Hat, 1885. *Modes du Louvre*. Trimmed felt, painted wood and feathers, silk chenille, silk ribbons, mounted bird. T.715:3-1997. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

⁸⁹ Sarah Stein, *Plumes: Ostrich Feathers, Jews and a Lost World of Global Commerce* (London: Yale University Press, 2008) 57

⁹⁰ Stein, *Plumes: Ostrich Feathers, Jews and a Lost World of Global Commerce*, 57.

⁹¹ Robin Doughty. *Feather Fashions and Bird Preservation. A Study in Nature Protection* (London: University of California Press, 1975) 17.



Fig. 5.12: A fashionable brown felt hat adorned with plumage and a whole bird, made by 'Modes du Louvre.' c.1885. Brown felt, trimmed with painted wood, feathers, stuffed whole mounted bird, silk chenille, silk ribbons. T.715:3-1997. Victoria and Albert Museum. Web. 30th April 2015. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1223604/hat-modes-du-louvre/>

Aigrettes, mostly of a bushy description, which will vie with the long Ostrich Feathers for popularity [...]⁹²

Several fashionable hats from this decade, wide brimmed and heavily adorned with plumage, belonging to the upper-middle class fashion follower Maud Messel, survive in the Messel collection, stored at Birr Castle, Ireland. Her wide-brimmed, pink straw, 'going-away hat' produced by Woollands in 1898, is decorated with swathes of pink chiffon, artificial silk lilacs and the wings of a white dove (Fig. 5.13).⁹³

As the correspondence from E. Phillips in *The Friend* on 2nd February 1891 illustrates, multitudes of exotic bird species were killed and mutilated internationally to meet the demand of the fashionable European milliners and their clients, including hummingbirds, egrets, small herons and Halcyon Smyrensis, harvested as far away as India.⁹⁴ London, as the principle trading market for ostrich plumes from the Cape, was the world's largest importer during the 1880s.⁹⁵ Phillips described how the 'milliners' shop windows are crowded with stuffed carcasses and feathers which he described as 'wholesale massacre'.⁹⁶ He described the women attired in these milliner's creations as the result of female vanity, and he criticised Quaker women for, 'speak[ing] in public on religious, philanthropic, or aesthetic subjects, with their heads bedecked with stuffed birds, or oftenest of all with slender spiral plume'.⁹⁷

Yet Quaker commentators were not alone in their vocal censure of the practice as similarly condemning articles appeared in the mainstream press. As early as July 1869, an article in *Hastings and St. Leonards Observer*, complained that native sea-birds were becoming 'comparatively -scarce.' The article described how, 'parent birds are shot, and the young ones perish; nests are rifled of their contents' for the 'caprice of fashion' which called for the

⁹² "Faultless Fashions in Millinery," *Aberdeen Journal*, 19th October 1907: 10.

⁹³ Going-away hat, 1898. Straw, chiffon, silk, feathers. The Messel Family Dress Collection, Birr Castle, Ireland.

⁹⁴ E. Phillips, "Destruction of Ornamental Plumaged Birds (To the Editor of *The Friend*)," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XXXI. 364 (2nd February 1891): 36

⁹⁵ Alastair O'Neil, 'Plume Raiders. Ostrich Feather in London,' *Birds of Paradise. Plumes and Feathers in Fashion* (Tielt: Lannoo Publishers, 2014) 51-52.

⁹⁶ Phillips, "Destruction of Ornamental Plumaged Birds (To the Editor of *The Friend*)," 36

⁹⁷ Phillips, "Destruction of Ornamental Plumaged Birds (To the Editor of *The Friend*)," 36



Fig. 5.13: Maud Messel's 'Going-Away' hat displaying the fashionable wide brim and embellishments of plumage, tulle and flowers. 1898. Pink straw, pink silk chiffon and white dove feathers. CCE0278. Royal Pavilion and Museums Costume and Textiles Collection, Brighton.

decorating of fashionable hats with native species.⁹⁸ Corresponding with the early Quaker appeals, such protests had little result. In October 1886, the *Liverpool Mercury* remarked how the use of plumage in garments, such as pelerines (a woman's cape with pointed ends at the centre front, popular in the 19th century), was as fashionable as ever, stating:

A walk down Bold-street, shows that the barbarous custom coming in again as bad as ever. Ladies are amongst the strongest foes of Vivisection and are proverbially the friends and helpers of all who work in the cause of dumb creatures; but the science students are justified in raising a protest now.⁹⁹

The incongruity mentioned here between destroying bird life for fashion despite women's popular opposition to vivisection, is identical to that mentioned in Quaker correspondence. Richardson's 1889 letter "Mutilation for Decoration" already mentioned, had similarly questioned whether the fashionable custom meant women who were members of the Friends' Anti-Vivisection Association suddenly advocated vivisection.¹⁰⁰ Whilst the Quaker 'H.S.S.' stated, in a letter to *The Friend* in the same year, that women's influence in the Anti-Vivisection society would be 'powerfully increased' if they simply desisted in wearing articles 'obtained under acts of gross cruelty.'¹⁰¹ Both mainstream Protestant and Quaker articles promoted the rejection of the consumption of plumage for the protection of birdlife, and used women's popular support of Anti-Vivisection associations to illustrate the contradiction in their fashionable actions.¹⁰² Clearly, Quaker and non-Quaker protesters sought the same outcome. Such similarities therefore provide evidence of Quaker historian Gill Skidmore's assertion that, 'Friends after all are a part of the wider society and reflect the general mores of their times.'¹⁰³

⁹⁸ "On Sea-Birds," *Hastings and St. Leonards Observer*, 3rd July 1869: 2.

⁹⁹ "Science Notes," *Liverpool Mercury*, 30th October 1886: 7.

¹⁰⁰ Richardson, "Mutilation for Decoration," 218

¹⁰¹ H.S.S., "Seal-skins (To the Editor of *The Friend*)," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XXIX. 346 (1st August 1889): 219

¹⁰² 'Quaker Concern for Animals,' 1889. MSS ACC 10936. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London. Quaker Anti-Vivisection associations promoted the abandonment of wearing plumage as a religious duty, asserting that, 'no physical good can compensate for a moral evil, and that mercy to the lower animals, which are to a large extent committed to our charge, is a manifest Christian duty.'

¹⁰³ Gil Skidmore, *Strength in Weakness: Writings of Eighteenth Century Quaker Women* (Oxford: Altamira Press, 2003) 5.

Semi- and Fully-Adaptive Quaker women however, continued to wear bird feathers in their hats. As evidence of this, each of the ten letters published in *The Friend* between 1879 and 1896 which condemned the use of plumage on women's hats directed their zeal specifically at female Quakers who 'encouraged this practice.'¹⁰⁴ Yet despite these censorious outbursts, the wearing of plumage continued to be fashionable, as the Messel examples attest, until 'the feather crash of 1914'. This saw the feather market collapse as the fashions for ornate feather decorations applied to hats ran its course and resulted in feathers' devaluation.¹⁰⁵ For Semi- or Fully-Adaptive Quaker women who did not advocate a continuation of Plain dress, the use of plumage as a socially acceptable signifier of fashionability in their personal headwear was inescapable between 1860 and 1914.

During these decades however, another form of fashionable attire adopted by Quaker women came under equal, if not further, censure. Correspondence regarding fashionable mourning dress worn by Quaker women regularly graced the Friends' journals, as already noted in chapter 4. Whilst the absence of fashionable mourning dress with a Quaker derivation in the dress collections examined for this research suggests the practice was not adopted by Quaker women, written condemnation by members of the Society illustrates otherwise, emphasising the vital need for the use of a wide range of period sources as discussed in chapter 1.

Mourning Dress

As acknowledged by dress historian Lou Taylor in her comprehensive 1983 publication, *Mourning Dress. A Costume and Social History*, the practice for women of adopting distinctly different garments for funerals, and the following mourning period, was first adopted from Royal and Court practice by the rising merchant classes during the sixteenth century. Yet it

¹⁰⁴ Richardson, "Mutilation for Decoration," 218

¹⁰⁵ O'Neil, 'Plume Raiders: Ostrich Feathers in London,' 53.

was during the nineteenth century that fashionable mourning attire slid 'gently down the social ladder' and permeated even the poorest levels of society.¹⁰⁶

The wearing of mourning dress flourished from 1861 as Queen Victoria, and the nation, mourned the passing of Prince Albert. Whilst middle-class subjects did not mix socially in high society circles, during their own periods of bereavement they could emulate some of the mourning practices of that class, particularly the dress of the Queen who adopted crape-trimmed mourning dress for the following forty years of her reign.¹⁰⁷ The most popular fabrics for nineteenth-century mourning dress were bombazine (a twilled, worsted silk or cotton), paramatta (a twill fabric with a weft of worsted and a warp of cotton or silk) and crape, all characterised by their dull blackness. English crape (a lightweight, semi-transparent and delicate black textile with a dull finish which was easily spoiled, even by the rain) was by far the most popular mourning fabric and was worn during the first two stages of mourning as a trimming on dresses, cloaks and bonnets and fashioned into veils and crimped into patterns.¹⁰⁸ Due to its links with royal and aristocratic customs the fabric could be sold by manufacturers at a substantial profit margin despite it being relatively cost effective to produce.¹⁰⁹

The widespread availability and popularity of wearing fashionable attire for initial 'deep mourning' and for the following period of 'half mourning' during the late nineteenth century, is evident in the proliferation of newspaper advertisements for mourning garments and their sellers. As one advertisement in the *Worcester Journal* for Scott & Company, from 22nd December 1860 illustrates, all members of a fashionable, respectable household, including the servants, were expected to wear mourning attire upon the death of a family member:

The Fashions in Millinery, Mantles, Dressmaking &c., &c., Are now arranged in the
NEW MOURNING SHOW ROOM. An early inspection is respectfully solicited.

Adequate arrangements are now perfected by which THE COMPLETE MOURNING

¹⁰⁶ Lou Taylor, *Mourning Dress: A Costume and Social History* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1983): 120.

¹⁰⁷ Taylor, *Mourning Dress*, 122.

¹⁰⁸ Taylor, *Mourning Dress*, 203-204.

¹⁰⁹ Taylor, *Mourning Dress*, 214.

ORDER, For the WHOLE FAMILY, can be executed on the premises with punctuality and superior finish. A full stock of SERVANTS MOURNING always on hand.¹¹⁰

In addition, each and every garment was made in black, often resulting in the replacement of a whole wardrobe. Edinburgh dressmakers Alexander & McNab, advertised in February 1866 that they stocked 'Best Black Mourning Silks [...] Mourning Bonnets [...] New Mourning Mantles, Crape Trimmed, [...] Mourning Veils, Collars, Ties, Weepers [a widow's black crape veil and cuffs], Handkerchiefs, Gloves, Hosiery and every other requisite.'¹¹¹ As Lou Taylor notes however, the uniformity of the appearance of mourning garments 'allowed the shops to stockpile mourning wear in advance' as ready-to-wear garments increased the stockists profits and enabled the client to be outfitted as quickly as possible.¹¹²

During the decade, mourning fashion advice was also elicited in publications for the poorer classes, such as the *Penny Illustrated Paper*. One of their articles from 4th January 1862, illustrated and described the most fashionable fabrics, silhouettes and trimmings used in 'deep-mourning' and 'half-mourning' through three separate fashionable mourning outfits, described as 'Dinner Costume', 'Indoor Dress' and 'Carriage Costume.' These provide evidence that differing customary garment styles and trimmings for differing activities and occasions were all available for mourning purposes. Despite their distinctive black fabrics and crape trimmings, these garments conformed to mainstream, decorated fashionable Paris silhouettes of the 1860s through, for example, flounced skirts supported by wide crinolines with tightly fitted bodices and wide bishop or Gabrielle sleeves (a wide sleeve that is gathered at the wrist) with closed cuffs. In fact, many magazines which elicited fashion advice described how the fashionable garments illustrated could be adapted for the purpose of mourning. Whilst the trimmings for 'Dinner Costume', were acknowledged as being 'exceedingly rich and effective', the ruffles and embroidery described for the 'Indoor Dress' were equally elaborate, comprised of:

¹¹⁰ "Fashionable Mourning," *Worcester Journal*, 22nd December 1860: 1.

¹¹¹ "Family Mourning," *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 10th February 1866: 2.

¹¹² Taylor, *Mourning Dress*, 193.

In front of the arm the sleeves are slit open, and the white undersleeves are finished at the wrists by ruffles, worked in black and white embroidery, above which are bands of black velvet. A row of black velvet buttons, encircled by passementerie [decorative trimming such as tassels, braid, and fringing], ascends up one side of the dress from the edge of the skirt to the top of the corsage.¹¹³

Founded in 1861 as an affordable read for the masses, *Penny Illustrated Paper* disseminated news and fashion advice to the poor and working-classes, such as these extravagant fashionable mourning garments, despite the fact that no poor families could have afforded such garments. Belief that they might have been tempted by such journalism to buy expensive mourning dress, led many to deride the practice. In a letter to *The Friend* in 1863, the Quaker, C. Brown, reminded Friends of the 'painful effect' which resulted from the poor in society emulating the 'affluent and comfortable', particularly in mourning dress.¹¹⁴

Middle-class Quaker families however did wear the fashion. Brown derided mourning dress for being a 'bondage to the world's yoke of arbitrary and unceasing change' and for acting as a distraction to spiritual feeling and offering a negative example to poor families, and she specifically attacked Friends who adopted the practice, stating:

Amongst Friends, as amongst others, fashions travel downwards. You care little about dress, but many others within your influence do care about it, and will imitate you in your garb, whilst they cannot imitate your indifference to mere ornament and show [...] have pity especially on another class, those who have your rightness of feeling, but have not your wealth. If you are sensitive as to the respect you use to the dead, so are they; and if your sorrow is pleasurably marked by a sombre garment, so is theirs; and you are teaching them to think so by your example. But what your dress-maker does for you, they must do for themselves [...]¹¹⁵

Whilst Brown acknowledges here that some Quakers in plain but costly un-adorned all-black mourning attire displayed an 'indifference' to the ornaments of the custom, she still

¹¹³ "Mourning Fashions," *Penny Illustrated Paper*, 4th January 1862: 15.

¹¹⁴ C. Brown, "Putting on Mourning (To the Editor of The Friend)," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* III. 31 (1st July 1863): 165.

¹¹⁵ Brown, "Putting on Mourning," 165.

portrayed it as socially 'objectionable' as it encouraged the wearing of mourning amongst the poor, which in turn led the poor to debts, neglect and destitution.¹¹⁶

Between 1862 and 1892 *The Friend* published fourteen letters criticising Quaker women's use of fashionable mourning clothes. Yet such Quaker criticism appears to have done nothing to abate Semi- and Fully-Adaptive Quaker women adopting mourning. Despite no surviving mourning dress with a Quaker derivation having as yet materialised, during these three decades the published criticisms of Quakers adopting the practice continued. Indeed, within fashionable mainstream society the custom was considered an 'essential a part of a lady's wardrobe.'¹¹⁷ During the Edwardian period the custom still continued, with General Mourning even being adopted for Edward VII in 1910 across all levels of society as well as at Ascot that year. Cheap mourning however was increasingly available as revealed in the advertisement for G.W. Ward in the 4th July 1906 *Sheffield Evening Telegraph*, 'For Cheap MOURNING MILLINERY go to G.W. WARD who keeps the largest stock of CHEAP MOURNING HATS AND BONNETS in Sheffield. Prices from 1s 11 1/2d trimmed.'¹¹⁸

With much of the population descending into mourning for Queen Victoria from 22nd January 1901, the *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* in "The General Mourning", recommended that 'all thoughts of bright-hued raiment must be brushed aside' and described suitable fashionable mourning.¹¹⁹ The paper declared 'Priestley's black wool (plain and fancy) fabrics' as 'favoured' materials, alongside crepoline and spotted crepe-de-chine.¹²⁰ Once again, sketches were included to illustrate the suitable designs and their elaborate trimmings. One 'stylishly made' gown, cut in the fashionable Princess silhouette, was described as 'opened in the front part over an inset of black taffeta silk set in lapping half-pleats'. A column on appropriate headwear, described fashionable artificial flower, feather and tulle adornments for wide-brimmed hats in mourning black hues

¹¹⁶ Brown. "Putting on Mourning," 165.

¹¹⁷ Taylor, *Mourning Dress*, 122.

¹¹⁸ "For Cheap Mourning Millinery," *Sheffield Evening Telegraph*, 4th July 1906: 6.

¹¹⁹ Taylor, *Mourning Dress*, 162 and "The General Mourning," *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 24th January 1901: 3.

¹²⁰ "The General Mourning," 3.

recommending 'small black blossoms, as violets or even hyacinths', 'black silk or muslin roses' and 'fine folds of black tulle [...] with a smart little bow or aigrette on the left.'¹²¹

Conclusion

Reviewing fashionable dress worn by women during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has served to emphasise how unfashionable Quaker Plain garments would have appeared, for their absence of decoration, muted colour palette and often unfashionable shapes and silhouettes. In addition, this text has served to illustrate the secular environment of fashionability which Semi- and Fully-Adaptive women were negotiating in making their own highly personal sartorial choices to represent their personal and public selves whilst also reflecting the wider social customs of their period. This text has shown that evidently Semi- and Fully-Adaptive Quaker women *were* incorporating fashionable mourning attire, plumage and French millinery into their ensembles. Whilst fashionable examples of these garments with a Quaker derivation have yet to materialise, Quaker correspondence in Friends' journals has provided evidence of their incorporation through the descriptions and censures targeted against them by fellow Friends. As described in chapter 1 therefore, written correspondence in Quaker journals has been crucial in providing evidence of the incorporation of fashionable accessories in Quaker dress practices, when the surviving garment evidence has yet to materialise.

For Quaker women who aspired to assimilate into wider, middle or upper-middle class polite society by adopting fashionable dress however, the maxims of selecting and wearing appropriate dress and behaviour were as crucial to adopt as the garments themselves, because they 'entitled [their wearer] to be considered in good society.'¹²² In addition, Quaker virtues relating to correct feminine taste and behaviour appear to have increasingly mirrored those advised in printed etiquette guides of the period, as seen through the comparison between "What is a Lady?" published in *The Friend* and those advocated by *The*

¹²¹ "The General Mourning," 3.

¹²² Kingsland, *Etiquette for All Occasions*, 4 & 7.

Habits of Good Society published in the same decade.¹²³ As such, those Non-Adaptive Quaker women who resisted fashion in style and decoration as well as and the etiquette surrounding its appropriate usage, deliberately and knowingly marked themselves out as both sartorially and socially separate by their public appearance.

Some Quaker women did indeed resist the snares of fashionable dress and its maxims of decorum, by actively maintaining the use of Plain attire after 1860 despite the relaxation of religious Advices making Plainness in speech, behaviour and apparel optional. Having considered the newly available fashionable garments these women could have adopted, it is most pertinent to now examine both how and for what reasons these women continued to actively shun them. As such, the next chapter will address these women, through a case study of the sartorial practices of the life-long Quaker, Elizabeth Petipher Cash, who continuously wore Plain dress her entire life and was therefore a Non-Adaptive Quaker woman.

¹²³ *The Habits of Good Society: A Handbook of Etiquette for Ladies and Gentlemen with Thoughts, Hints, and Anecdotes, concerning Social Observances* (London: John Hogg, 1890) 160 and "What is a Lady?" *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XXXVI. 34 (21st August 1896): 548

Chapter 6 Non-Adaptive case study: Elizabeth Petipher Cash, 1873

Introduction

As identified by William Pollard in his 1869 letter to *The Friend*, discussed in Chapter 4, some Quaker women chose to retain their strictly Plain attire in the decades following the Society's 1860 relaxation of Advices concerning Plainness. In 1869, Pollard referred to this as 'asceticism or peculiarity in dress.'¹ This text however, will refer to this mode of dress throughout this chapter as a Non-Adaptive style of Quaker dress.

One middle-class female Quaker who made the decision not to adapt her dress to incorporate fashionable clothing, was the Quaker Elizabeth Petipher Cash (née Lucas). Most importantly for this thesis, the selection of Cash as Non-Adaptive case study for this chapter is rooted in the sourcing of her garments at Killerton House National Trust, Devon, dress collection in November 2014 and the discovery during their viewing of their Plain appearance. Eleven garments belonging to Elizabeth Petipher Cash were seen, comprised of two shawls, three sets of mittens, four fichus and two bonnets, but no complete dresses or outer wear garments.² Nonetheless this substantial collection of mid-to-late nineteenth century accessories have still provided a clear overview of the garment styles, colours and fabrics adopted by Cash as well as providing a wide variety of garments with which to compare her sartorial practices with other Quakers and non-Quakers from 1860 to 1914.

Born on the 8th February 1796 in Warwick Street, Golden Square in London, Cash was the youngest daughter of ten children of the third-generation Quaker corn merchant Samuel Lucas and his Quaker wife Ann Hayhurst.³ Elizabeth grew up with four older sisters and

¹ William Pollard, "Colloquial Letters. No. 9. My Unspoken Speeches in the late Yearly Meeting, " *The Friends Quarterly Examiner. A Religious, Social & Miscellaneous Review conducted by Members of the Religious Society of Friends* XI. (July 1869): 443 - 444.

² Her garments are stored by Killerton through clothing type, alongside non-Quaker items and as such, multiple boxes had to be retrieved from the off-site storage facilities in order to view all of her surviving garments.

³ Elizabeth Mary Cadbury, *A Dear Memory: Pages from the Letters of Mary Jane Taylor* (39 New Street Birmingham: Cornish Brothers Limited, 1914) 4.

three older brothers. Two of the oldest girls, Mary Ann and Sarah, died in infancy.⁴ Whilst very scant details exist in the public realm regarding Cash's life, knowledge concerning her religiosity, familial relationships, moral beliefs and sartorial decisions during her life which spanned almost the entire nineteenth-century, have been constructed from multiple textual and garment sources.

Cash's obituary in the 1895 Religious Society of Friends yearly publication, *Annual Monitor for 1895 or Obituary of the Members of the Society of Friends in Great Britain and Ireland for the Year 1894*, gives a sense of her piety and pursuits within the Quaker community. The Friends' Library *Dictionary of Quaker Biography*, compiled by the Society during the late nineteenth-century, provides factual data concerning the dates of her birth, death, marriage and the birth of her ten children.⁵ These sources have been augmented through the use of her granddaughter, Elizabeth Mary Cadbury's, published, emotive recollections and mother's letters in *A Dear Memory: Pages from the Letters of Mary Jane Taylor*. Copies of many more surviving letters written by Cash to a youthful Elizabeth Mary Cadbury also survive in the Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham at Birmingham National Archives.⁶ These sources have provided insights into Cash's appearance as a young woman, her personality and also illustrate the emotional bond she shared with her family, especially her daughter Mary Jane, and granddaughter, Elizabeth Mary.

Whilst the surviving garments in the Killerton House National Trust, Devon, collection gave no sense of Cash's overall appearance, in the opening pages of *A Dear Memory: Pages from the Letters of Mary Jane Taylor*, Cash's granddaughter Elizabeth Mary Cadbury described the beauty of Cash as a young girl by recalling a family story.⁷ According to Cadbury, a youthful group of gentleman Quakers from Westminster Meeting agreed that the young Elizabeth

⁴ "Facts. Elizabeth Petipher Lucas," Ancestry, [n.d.]

<http://trees.ancestry.co.uk/tree/50108858/person/13267682224>

⁵ W. Robinson, *Annual Monitor for 1895 or Obituary of the Members of the Society of Friends in Great Britain and Ireland for the Year 1894* (London: Headley Bros. 1895) 50-62 and 'Elizabeth Petipher Cash,' *Dictionary of Quaker Biography* DQB CAS (London: Religious Society of Friends Library, [n.d])

⁶ Her granddaughter married into the famous chocolate manufacturing family and these letters are amongst her archival records. Letters between Elizabeth Petipher Cash and Elizabeth Mary Taylor, MS 466/325/1-20 and 326, Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham, Birmingham National Archives.

⁷ Cadbury, *A Dear Memory*, 6.

Petipher Lucas was by far the prettiest of the sisters due to her 'exquisite complexion and blue eyes', with Cadbury relating that:

[...] the daughters were demurely sitting by their mother with their sewing when the visitors were shown in, and wondered what was the special object of the united call; after conversing some little time on trivial matters they departed, and it was not till some time after that they heard there had been a debate amongst the young Quakers of Westminster as to which was the prettiest girl in the Meeting; and they also heard that one and all had voted in favour of Elizabeth Lucas.⁸

Alongside these linguistic descriptions, three portraits of Cash as an elderly woman have survived dated 1860 to 1873, which are housed at the Archive of the Religious Society of Friends and in the Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham (Fig. 6.1, 6.2 & 6.3). These photographs which have provided evidence of Cash's appearance as an elderly woman have also provided further evidence of the Plain clothing she wore as well as how her appearance was composed. Finally, as with each of the case studies, Cash's sartorial choices are analysed using the theoretical framework's outlined by Petr Bogatyrev and Pierre Bourdieu, in order to analyse why Cash remained Plain rather than incorporating fashionable dress into her wardrobe.⁹

Whilst her portraits, as well as her surviving garments, date from the latter half of the nineteenth-century, her education and married life during the earlier half of the century taught, instructed and influenced Cash in ways which determined her religious sentiment and sartorial decisions throughout her entire lifetime. As such, Cash's schooling and married life will first be discussed, providing a contextualisation to Cash's later clothing choices and her immersion in the Society.

⁸ Cadbury, *A Dear Memory*, 6.

⁹ Petr Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*. Translated from Slovak by Richard. G. Crum, (Re-printed The Hague & Paris: Mouton, [1937] 1971) and Pierre Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 1962. Re-printed in *Ethnography*, 5. 4. (2004): 579-600.



Fig. 6.1: *Elizabeth Petipher Cash (Right), Caroline Barrow and Ann Cash. 1860. MS466/8a/9. Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham. Birmingham Library. © Cadbury Archive, Mondelēz International.*



Fig. 6.2: C.A. Gandy. *Elizabeth Petipher Cash Carte de Visite*. 1873. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.



Fig. 6.3: *Elizabeth Petipher Cash*. c. 1873. Black and white photograph. C1.090.7. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.

Elizabeth Petipher Cash's Education and Married Life

Significantly, the Quaker school at which Cash was instructed as a child placed strict emphasis on the wearing of Plain and untrimmed garments. Following the death of her father, Samuel Lucas, in 1808 when Cash was a mere twelve years of age, she attended The Friends School in London.¹⁰ During the period of Cash's attendance in the 1810s, the school was situated on the east side of Islington Road Estate on Hermitage Fields, roughly two miles from Golden Square where Cash lived. In 1810, the building was described by A. Highmore, in the following terms, '[...] the ceilings are remarkably high, and the windows large, consequently the rooms are perfectly dry and well aired; the outside has the appearance of a villa, surrounded as it is by pleasure-grounds.'¹¹

Cash attended the school between 1808 and 1811, as both the *Annual Monitor for 1895* and the *Dictionary of Quaker Biography* record her as attending after her father's death, yet the *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School* discouraged attendance after the age of fifteen.¹² According to the introduction to the *Rules and General Regulations*, during the 1810s the 'whole number of boys and girls [... was] generally near a hundred and ten; the former to the latter in the ratio of about six to five.'¹³ Yet despite the high percentage of female attendees, admission to the school was not free. Whilst the school had begun as a charity organisation and workhouse in 1702 in Clerkenwell, by 1810 the school, now at Islington, had begun to charge a weekly fee of 5s for admission. Yet the 1870 *Rules and General Regulations* anticipate that such fees could be provided by either the parents or 'the Monthly Meeting, or other quarter from which the payment is to

¹⁰ Robinson, *Annual Monitor for 1895* and Email Correspondence with Jennifer Milligan, 9th April 2015. See Appendix 1.2 Interviews. The school is contemporarily assimilated into Saffron Walden School in Essex.

¹¹ A. Highmore, 'Pietas Londinensis: the History, Design and Present State of the various Public Charities in and near London' (Bridge Street: Richard Philips, 1810) Qted in *The Journal of the Friends' Historical Society* V. 4 (1908): 192.

¹² *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School. Established for the Education of Children who are Members of the Religious Society of Friends, and whose parents are not in affluent circumstances. Conducted under the Superintendence of the Quarterly Meeting of London and Middlesex.* (London: E. Newman. 1870) 25 and 'Elizabeth Petipher Cash,' *Dictionary of Quaker Biography*, DQB CAS (London: Religious Society of Friends Library, [n.d]) and Robinson, *Annual Monitor for 1895*, 50.

¹³ *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School*, 5.

come.¹⁴ As such, entry into the school was not exclusively reserved for families with means and could be acquired using donations and legacies from the child's local Meeting, meaning despite Cash attending a fee paying boarding school, her family may not have been wealthy.

Strict guidance regarding the articles of clothing each of the students were expected to take with them to the school including their quality and appearance, were outlined within the 1870 reprint of the *Rules and General Regulations*.¹⁵ According to the 'Notice' at the beginning of the volume, the General Regulations were 'for the most part the same in substance as that of 1853' whilst other aspects of the volume had not altered since the 1829 edition.¹⁶

These regulations can be traced even farther back into the eighteenth century. *Rules and Order for the Government of Friends School and Workhouse at Clerkenwell* were printed in 1780. According to writer Jennie Ellinor in her 1971 article, "Clerkenwell in the Eighteenth Century: A Study in Quaker Attitudes in Education", whilst the 1780 edition did not specify the garments the children actually wore, the publication is explicit enough to gauge 'the moral atmosphere' and the 'guarded education' at the school. The *Rules and Order* did however detail 'Clothing Lists' of garments which the children were given upon *leaving* the workhouse. For girls this included 'A hat and cloak, two gowns, two petticoats two under ditto [and] two hessian aprons.'¹⁷ This list is almost identical in content to the exacting lists in the *General Regulations* of 1870 of ninety years later, which detailed the precise garments every boy and girl child was to *attend* with (Fig. 6.4). The list by this date however, outlined only the minimum requirements, alongside 'Remnants of cloth, stuff, linings, '&c' for repairs.¹⁸ For the girls, the school demanded:

1 Plain bonnet and one hat, or two hats 3 Chemises

¹⁴ *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School*, 19 and *A History of Friends' Junior School* (Essex: Friends' School, 2012) 11.

¹⁵ *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School*, 22.

¹⁶ *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School*, 2. Whilst *Rules and General Regulations* of the school were not published in the 1810s, it may be presumed that equally strict clothing regulations were placed upon the child attendees during that decade.

¹⁷ Jennie Ellinor, 'Clerkenwell in the Eighteenth Century: A Study in Quaker Attitudes in Education,' *The Journal of the Friends' Historical Society* 52. 4 (1971): 290.

¹⁸ *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School*, 25.

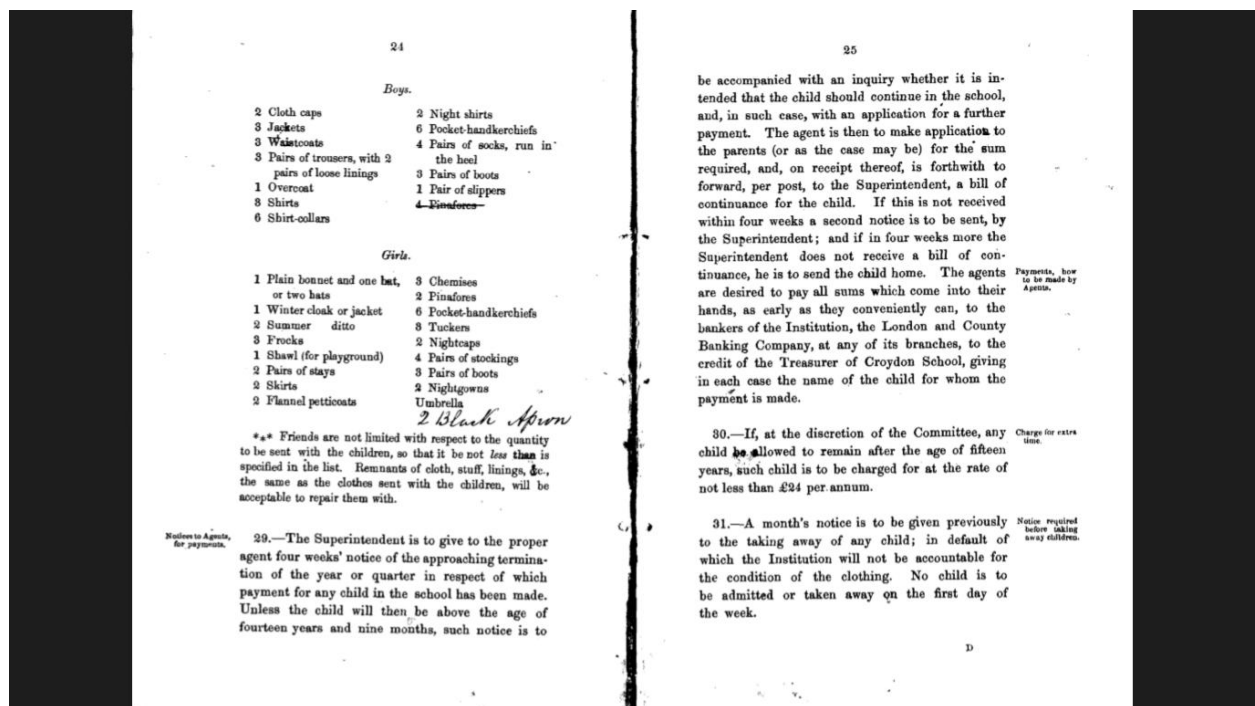


Fig. 6.4: "General Regulations." *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School. Established for the Education of Children who are Members of the Religious Society of Friends, and whose parents are not in affluent circumstances. Conducted under the Superintendence of the Quarterly Meeting of London and Middlesex* (London: E. Newman. 1870) 24. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.

1 Winter cloak or jacket	2 Pinafores
2 Summer ditto	6 Pocket-handkerchiefs
3 Frocks	3 Tuckers
1 Shawl (for playground)	2 Nightcaps
2 Pairs of stays	4 Pairs of stockings
2 Skirts	3 Pairs of boots
2 Flannel Petticoats	2 Nightgowns
1 Umbrella ¹⁹	

The 1870 publication however, specifically described that male and female children were to wear garments which were 'plain, strong, without ornamental trimmings, and adapted to school wear', warning that 'a charge' could be imposed for any deficiencies in following the rules.²⁰

The upkeep of the children's garments was carried out by the female pupils. The *Rules and General Regulations* stated that 'the girls are to make and mend their own apparel, and do such other needle-work as may be required', whilst the male pupils were employed in gardening.²¹ The 1780 *Rules and Order for the Government of Friends School and Workhouse at Clerkenwell*, had similarly detailed that the female attendees would undertake, 'reading, sewing, marking, knitting, spinning, making the new linen for the family, mending their own clothes [...]'²² Clearly, alongside religious and academic pursuits of reading writing and arithmetic, Cash would have been taught fine needlework skills as well as the value of repairing and prolonging the life of garments.²³

Another of the school's regulations further encouraged frugality regarding apparel. 'Regulation 44', stated that clothing 'supplied to the Institution' should be procured with 'due economy', as any bills which exceeded £5 would be scrutinised by the school's

¹⁹ *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School*, 25.

²⁰ *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School*, 23.

²¹ *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School*, 31.

²² *Rules and Order for the Government of Friends School and Workhouse at Clerkenwell* (London: James Phillips, MDCCCLXXX) 20.

²³ Ellinor, 'Clerkenwell in the Eighteenth Century,' 290.

Committee.²⁴ In addition to prescribing the original procuring of the garments and their upkeep, the school strictly monitored the deportment and overall appearance of the children. The 1780 *Rules and Order*, stated that it was the responsibility of the School-Mistress to ensure the female attendees, 'lay their clothes in an orderly manner' upon undressing, to ensure that they were 'habituating them to regularity in all things.'²⁵ Whilst, the 1870 *Rules and Regulations* advised that the Superintendent and Mistress would ensure that:

[...] the boys and girls dress themselves without loss of time, and come into the schools on the ringing of the bell, in a becoming manner, with their faces and hands clean, their hair combed, and their clothes in proper order and condition.²⁶

It is striking that despite the 1870 publication date of these regulations, a decade *after* the Society's relaxation of Advices regarding Plain attire, the school's recommendations still closely paralleled the rules laid out a century before. They also paralleled those Advices frequently related in pre-1860 Quaker Epistles, which encouraged followers 'to set an example of Christian simplicity and moderation [...and] prudent restriction' and to 'be preserved from everything that tends to foster in the minds of their precious children, those propensities for self-gratification, vanity, and pride,' as detailed in their Yearly Meeting of Women Friends answers to queries in 1817 and 1832.²⁷

Disappointingly, no garments from Cash's childhood have been located. Yet it may be realistically presumed that during the period of Cash's school attendance, between 1808 and 1811, when the stricter Query regarding dress and deportment was enforced through

²⁴ *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School*, 30. As Regulation 28 outlined the garments the students needed to provide themselves, it is unclear as to what these clothing items would have been.

²⁵ *Rules and Order for the Government of Friends School and Workhouse at Clerkenwell*, 19.

²⁶ *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School*, 31.

²⁷ 'From our Yearly Meeting of Women Friends held in London by adjournment from the 21st of the 5th month to the 30th of the same inclusive 1817,' *Women's Yearly Meeting Answers to Queries*, 1817. YM/YMWF Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London and 'To the Quarterly and other Meetings of Discipline of Women Friends in Great Britain and Ireland and From our Yearly Meeting of Women Friends held in London by adjournment from the 24th of the 5th month to the 2nd of the 6th inclusive 1832. To the Quarterly and other Meetings of Discipline of Women Friends in Great Britain and Ireland,' *Women's Yearly Meeting Answers to Queries*, 1832. YM/YMWF. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

threat of disownment by the Society, the environment in which she was instructed during her formative years placed strict emphasis on the wearing of Plain and untrimmed garments. This enforcement also laid stress on frugality through the limiting of spending on clothes and their consistent repair, as well as on the need for cleanliness and for a limited time to be spent on dressing. This environment in which Cash received her sartorial training during her formative years would have had a great influence on her future negotiation of matters regarding taste and any incorporation of fashionable dress, as hypothesised by anthropologists Pierre Bourdieu and Petr Bogatyrev, and introduced in chapter 2.

Bourdieu and Bogatyrev's 'clash of civilisations' and its relationship to Quakerism

According to Bourdieu's 1962 article "The Peasant and His Body," the structure of feminine cultural language, specifically the way village girls were taught to discuss and evaluate clothing and appearance from a young age, actually made the incorporation of new fashions from urban social and aesthetic networks into their country styles, easier than for their male counterparts:

[...] whereas the men, by virtue of the norms that dominate their upbringing, are struck by a kind of cultural blindness for everything having to do with *tenuë* as a whole, from bodily hexis to cosmetics, women are much more apt to perceive urban models and integrate them into their behaviour, whether it be clothing or techniques of the body. The peasant girl speaks the language of urban fashion well because she hears it well, and she hears it well because the 'structure' of her cultural language predisposes her to it.²⁸

As described in this quote, Bourdieu's article posits French urban models against the sartorial transformations taking place in the rural community during the 1930s-50s. However, Bourdieu was not the first anthropologist to posit a theory that described urban

²⁸ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body", 590

styles as fashionable and rural sartorial preferences as traditional, thus framing them as two opposing forces that must be negotiated, specifically by sartorially-minded women.

Contextualisation for Bourdieu's rural-versus-urban dress article can also be found in Petr Bogatyrev's far earlier 1937 analysis of Moravian Slovakian Folk Costume. Similarly, to Bourdieu, according to Bogatyrev, urban styles often marginalise traditional or rural clothing:

In the case of villager-versus-townsmen, we find that even during a period of great tension between the two, at a time when the villager was conspicuously preserving his old dress against the onslaught of urban styles, it happened that some individual peasants were emboldened to 'betray' their costume, thus weakening the tradition. As a result other peasants also began to disregard the sanctions of the collective in questions of dress. Once a few individual peasants allow themselves to make drastic, town-oriented changes in costume, then all or nearly all will feel free to adopt small details of urban dress. These borrowed elements then begin to spread and the costume comes more and more to resemble town attire.²⁹

Whilst the specificity of Bourdieu's deductions may not *all* be reframed for the purpose of my argument, he does acknowledge, usefully for this research, that this process represents a case study of a 'clash of civilisations.'³⁰ Bogatyrev's theory is equally pertinent, as he more broadly frames his argument as the opposition of two cultural forces - the long established village dress traditions in Slovakian rural communities set against the slow introduction of modern urban fashion. Clear similarities can be drawn here in the context of negotiations over the introduction of fashionable influences into the (once Plain) dress of sartorially minded Quaker women. As Bogatyrev notes, 'When two cultural phenomenon, either of two different peoples or of two social groups within the same people, meet, the strength of the 'aggressor' group as well as that of the 'opposing' group must be weighed when considering the outcome.'³¹

²⁹ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 60.

³⁰ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 582.

³¹ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 58.

Such an observation by Bogatyrev, as well as many of the observations noted by Bourdieu in his ethnographic study, resonate with social models outside of France and Moravia and during far earlier periods. In regards to Cash's sartorial decisions, she 'conspicuously preserved' her traditional Plain dress her entire life and chose not to 'betray' her originally religiously prescribed clothing by introducing borrowed elements from urban fashionable clothing.³² In line with Bourdieu's assertions, her decision to remain Plain may be partly explained by the fact that her feminine cultural training during her formative years emphasised traditional Quaker Plainness in dress, as a matter of both religious as well as school discipline. As such, this environment did not 'encourage and foster' an attentiveness towards fashionable dress, and thus Cash was not taught to 'perceive urban models and to integrate them into [her] behaviour.'³³

The environment of the school was closely monitored and inspected by a Superintendent and female Mistress, alongside a 'Committee' of male Friends appointed from those who attended the Quarterly Meeting for London and Middlesex as well as a parallel 'Committee of Women Friends.'³⁴ As such, the school was closely controlled and regulated by the Society of Friends, who ensured that the children were instructed 'in the doctrines of the Christian religion, as held by the Society of Friends [... and] recommended to the perusal of writings and journals of our early Friends.'³⁵ Whilst little is known of Cash's early home environment and education, we may, through these details of her school-life, establish that she was familiarised with the beliefs and customs of Quaker living and with the regulations of the religious community to conform to a Plain lifestyle from a young age.

By 1813, with her education finished, Elizabeth had moved with her mother, Ann, and three of her elder sisters, Phillis, Mary Ann and Hannah, to Tottenham.³⁶ Five years later, at the age of twenty-two, Elizabeth married William Cash Jr., on August 20th 1818 at Peter's Court

³² Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 60.

³³ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 590.

³⁴ *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School*, 15.

³⁵ *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School*, 35.

³⁶ "Facts. Elizabeth Petipher Lucas," *Ancestry*, [n.d.]

<http://trees.ancestry.co.uk/tree/50108858/person/13267682224> and Robinson, *Annual Monitor for 1895*.

Friends Meeting House, London, in a Quaker ceremony.³⁷ Whilst nothing is recorded regarding the circumstances of their meeting or courtship, from this event onwards Cash's life as an adult and a mother began with William encouraging her spiritual growth in the Quaker community and influencing her social values.

William Cash Jr and Elizabeth Petipher Cash's Married Life

Her husband was also born to a Quaker family and was equally devout. William Cash Jr. (Fig. 6.5), born in 1792, was the only surviving son of seven children to Quakers William Cash Sr. and Mary Goodall. In *A Dear Memory: Pages from the Letters of Mary Jane Taylor*, the Cash's granddaughter, Elizabeth Mary Cadbury, recalled that William was a wool merchant, whose business 'prospered so quickly and substantially that [...] he felt justified in becoming engaged [...] to Elizabeth Petipher Lucas, in 1818.³⁸ At his marriage, William Jr. was described as a warehouseman of King Street, and the Cash's first three to four years of married life were passed in central London.³⁹ There, several children were born in quick succession to the couple; in 1819 their first son, Richard, in 1821 a daughter, Selina, and in 1823 a second son, William.

By March of that year however their four year old first son, Richard, had fallen ill and died. Cash coped with the loss through religious devotion. She wrote in her diary on the 3rd May 1823, that, 'the loss is inexpressibly great, but to him great gain [...] though the chastening hand of affliction is hard to bear, [... it causes] us to acknowledge the goodness of the Lord.'⁴⁰ The following year in 1824, the family moved to Peckham Rye, then a rural location on the outskirts of the city limits. According to Cadbury, the Cash home was a 'pleasant

³⁷ 'Elizabeth Petipher Cash,' *Dictionary of Quaker Biography* DQB CAS (London: Religious Society of Friends Library [n.d]). Even less is recorded regarding the life of William Cash; yet again small details may be deduced from records of Committees he presided over and the miscellaneous recollections of his life and death in the published domain.

³⁸ Cadbury, *A Dear Memory*, 3.

³⁹ 'William Cash,' *Dictionary of Quaker Biography*, DQB CAS (London: Religious Society of Friends Library [n.d]).

⁴⁰ Robinson, *Annual Monitor for 1895*, 54. Whilst it is recorded in the *Annual Monitor for 1895*, that Cash kept diaries from 1819 to 1885 and quotes extracts from them, these diaries have not as yet been located at Killerton National Trust, Birmingham National Archive or the Library of the Religious Society of Friends. Nor have any of these archives any knowledge of them. As such, these items may still be held by the family.



Fig. 6.5: *William Cash Junior*. c. 1810-1849. C1.090.7. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.

country place; there were farms and fields, and a few houses with lovely gardens.⁴¹ After the move, four more daughters and three more sons were born to the couple, the final child, Caroline, in 1838.

During these married years, Elizabeth was closely involved in the proceedings of her local (in Peckham Rye) and national Quaker community. In December 1839, at the London and Middlesex Women's Quarterly Meeting, the position of Assistant Clerk became vacant, and in March 1840, following the suggestion of an all-female Committee held on the subject, Elizabeth Petipher Cash was appointed to the post. That same year, she was nominated as one of eight women from the district to attend the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends at Devonshire House in London.⁴² According to the Society's obituary, Cash's procedural and spiritual involvement in the religious community was openly encouraged by her husband and recognised at a national level.⁴³

The couple were supporters of temperance, to the extent that they became early adherents to the Total Abstinence Cause, banishing 'all stimulants' from their home.⁴⁴ William Cash passionately promoted the cause nationally by sitting on the Executive Committee of the National Temperance Society during the 1840s.⁴⁵ These moral pursuits practised as a couple made the Cash's marriage, according to Elizabeth Mary Cadbury, 'an ideally happy one.'⁴⁶

Elizabeth Petipher Cash's encouragement to religious obedience and evidence of her pious nature

In 1849 however, the Cash family's apparent idyll was shattered. On the 4th September, William Cash died suddenly of cholera, aged fifty-seven, leaving his wife with eight surviving

⁴¹ Cadbury, *A Dear Memory*, 9.

⁴² London and Middlesex Women's Quarterly Meeting Minutes, 3rd Month 1840. QM. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

⁴³ Robinson, *Annual Monitor for 1895*, 52.

⁴⁴ Robinson, *Annual Monitor for 1895*, 53.

⁴⁵ *National Temperance Society. Second Annual Report* (London: Houlston and Stoneman, 1844). 1.

⁴⁶ Cadbury, *A Dear Memory*, 7 and Robinson, *Annual Monitor for 1895*, 51. Similarly, the *Annual Monitor for 1895 or Obituary of the Members of the Society of Friends* described their marriage as a 'singularly happy' union.

children, two under the age of eighteen.⁴⁷ The third eldest daughter Mary Jane Cash confided to her friend Hannah Cadbury that her mother's grief was, once again, relieved by her devout religious beliefs, writing:

My beloved Mother keeps up beyond what we could have expected; her unspeakable loss would have been insupportable did she not know where to go for help and on Whom to lean for support; we cannot be sufficiently thankful for having such an example left to us.⁴⁸

Elizabeth Cash's devotion to Quaker belief never wavered. She actively encouraged religious obedience and piety amongst her grandchildren. She habitually wrote to them, taking special care to send them a modest gift and a letter on their birthday and every one of Cash's letters contained ministerial exhortations. Throughout the surviving letters written to her granddaughter, Elizabeth Mary Cadbury (née Taylor) (Fig. 6.6), Cash's deeply pious nature is immediately evident. She encouraged her granddaughter to recognise with 'gratitude' the blessings bestowed by God and to acknowledge these blessings through prayer and 'thankful address unto the Father.'⁴⁹

Even into the grandchildren's teenage years, Cash's letters reveal her continued emphasis on religious obedience. In a letter to Elizabeth Mary on 4th November 1872, Cash urged her granddaughter to remain vigilant to the influence of 'various people of differing tastes' and encouraged her to pray on matters which tested her faith, advising:

⁴⁷ *Annual Monitor for 1850 or Obituary of the Members of the Society of Friends in Great Britain and Ireland for the Year 1849* (York: Executors of the late William Alexander, 1850) 13 and 'Elizabeth Petipher Cash,' *Dictionary of Quaker Biography*, DQB CAS (London: Religious Society of Friends Library [n.d]). Despite complaining of feeling unwell, William Cash left the family holiday at 4 Pelham Crescent Hastings, to attend to his business in Wood Street, Cheapside London, for the day. That night however, having returned to join his family, he was taken ill and the following morning, despite medical assistance, he died. The children were aged: 27, 25, 24, 22, 20, 18, 14 and 11 at the time of his death.

⁴⁸ Cadbury, *A Dear Memory*, 61.

⁴⁹ Elizabeth Petipher Cash, *Letter to Elizabeth Mary Taylor*, 24th 6th month 1869, MS 466/325/7. Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham, Birmingham National Archives. The gifts noted in her the surviving letters written to Elizabeth Mary from Cash, included: a saucepan in 1861, an unidentified book in 1863, a book-mark in 1865, a reticule in 1869, a watch stand in 1870, a bottle of scent in 1871 and the book *The Brides of Scripture* in 1888. See Letters MS466/135/1-20 Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham, Library of Birmingham, for these details.



Fig. 6.6: Elliot & Fry. *Elizabeth Mary Cadbury*, granddaughter of Elizabeth Petipher Cash. c.1910s. Bromide Print. National Portrait Gallery, London. Web. 1st September 2015. © National Portrait Gallery, London.

<http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portraitLarge/mw100114/Dame-Elizabeth-Mary-Cadbury>

[...] never be ashamed to acknowledge the Lord, in all your ways, and he will direct your paths [...] only I very often think of you, so far from dear home influence, [...] should you at any time, be invited or encouraged to do anything contrary to the needful discipline or good rules of school life [...] make it a subject of prayer - to be helped to accordance and to be led aright - so will you be blessed in your deeds.⁵⁰

Alongside her personal spiritual guidance which promoted 'a lasting holy influence over the hearts of her children throughout life', under Cash's charge, the entire family were regular attendees of Monthly and Quarterly Meetings. Alongside her role as head of the family, the widowed Cash spent her time becoming increasingly involved in commitments placed upon her by the Society.⁵¹

Since the 1840s, Cash had been involved in the oversight of The Friends School which she had attended.⁵² Before the death of her husband, in March 1842 she was one of twenty Quaker women appointed to attend and oversee their Annual Examinations. Even after his death, her involvement continued as she attended and oversaw the Annual Examinations again on 20th June 1851, along with her second eldest daughter Elizabeth.⁵³ By September 1866 she had even risen to sit on the school's female Committee.⁵⁴ Clearly Cash was considered reliable, pious, dedicated to her religious community and the spiritual education of her progeny by her fellow female Quakers.

Frustratingly however, despite accounts recalling Cash's piety, descriptive details of her Plain appearance or clothing either in youth or old age, are entirely absent. By 1866, Cash was an elderly woman, having reached the age of seventy and pertinently for this thesis, it is from this mid-nineteenth century period of her life from which her clothing, housed at Killerton House National Trust, Devon, has survived and the period from which three key

⁵⁰ Elizabeth Petipher Cash, *Letter to Elizabeth Mary Taylor*, 4th November 1872, MS 466 325/11-12. Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham, Birmingham National Archives

⁵¹ Robinson, *Annual Monitor for 1895*, 57.

⁵² *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School*, 5.

⁵³ *London and Middlesex Women's Quarterly Meeting Minutes*, Vol. 1830 - 1853. 11a1. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London and Mary Jane Cash, *A Dear Memory: Pages from the Letters of Mary Jane Taylor* (Birmingham: Cornish Brothers Limited, 1914) 99.

⁵⁴ *London and Middlesex Women's Quarterly Meeting Minutes*. Vol. 1830 - 1853. 11a1. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

photographs survive. These garments, owned and worn by Cash herself, were sourced and examined before any biographical details regarding Cash were garnered. All eleven surviving items belonging to Cash were donated by her great-granddaughter Mrs. M. Millior-Braithwaite in the summer of 1982. As such, these garments were clearly treasured by the family after Elizabeth Cash's death in 1894, to the extent that they were kept and preserved by Cash's family for nearly ninety years.⁵⁵ These tangible material articles have provided evidence of her religious beliefs and self-presentation through dress in a manifest form, details which were totally absent from the written biographical records regarding Cash in the public realm, which shall now be discussed.

Elizabeth Petipher Cash's Surviving Bonnets

Most aesthetically outstanding amongst Cash's surviving garments were her two preserved bonnets, strikingly and incongruously decorated with large coloured ostrich feathers, very far removed from Cash's lifelong commitment to moderation in her dress. Both bonnets were dated by Killerton House National Trust records as circa 1850. Produced in lustrous black satin, the first bonnet featured a twenty-three centimetre deep brim and is lined with cream silk. It has a high ten and a half inch tall pleated crown made of cream buckram (Fig. 6.7).⁵⁶ The twenty inch black ribbon ties are not original, being made of a raw black silk of a slightly differing shade and finish. The second bonnet, identical in size, is of dark blue ribbed silk lined with cream silk. The original matching four-inch wide ribbons, survive pinned onto the base of the brim (Fig. 6.8).⁵⁷ The main body of both bonnets are in excellent condition, testifying to the high-quality fabric and production employed in the bonnets' construction nearly one-hundred and seventy years ago. These examples typify the Quaker women's Plain bonnet, for their coal-scuttle shape, bavolet, limited and muted colours and unadorned and undecorated appearance.⁵⁸ As discussed in detail in chapter 5, whilst these

⁵⁵ Alongside two net fichus, two pairs of muslin inner sleeves, one pair of net inner sleeves, three muslin caps and one white muslin fichu, all additionally belonging to Cash, which have all since been mislaid.

⁵⁶ Black satin bonnet, c. 1850. KIL/W/04479. Killerton National Trust. See Appendix 2.1.

⁵⁷ Dark blue ribbed silk bonnet, c.1850. KIL/W/04478. Killerton National Trust. See Appendix 2.1.

⁵⁸ Further examples of surviving Quaker Plain bonnets, and dated from the mid to late nineteenth century, are located in several dress collections across England. Particularly well preserved examples have been viewed at Tunbridge Wells Museum, Kent, Gallery of Costume Platt Hall, Manchester, Hull museum, Yorkshire and



Fig. 6.7: Bonnet worn by Elizabeth Petipher Cash. c.1850. Black satin, ostrich feathers, black silk ribbon. KIL/W/04479. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author. 18th November 2014.

Norwich Castle Study Centre. See: Black Bonnet, c. 1910. 90/162. Tunbridge Wells Museum, Kent, as well as Miniature grey-blue silk bonnet, c. 1870-1900. 1936.94, Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester; Black corded silk bonnet and cap liner, 1880-1900. 1973.127, Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester; Black corded silk bonnet, c.1870. 1979.3/3. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester etc, to name but a few. See Appendix 2.1 for all examples viewed and further details.



Fig. 6.8: Bonnet worn by Elizabeth Petipher Cash. c. 1850. Dark blue ribbed silk, ostrich feathers. KIL/W/04478. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author. 18th November 2014.

bonnet shapes and bavolets were also popular with non-Friends during the opening decades of the nineteenth century, by the end of 1850, Cash's Plain Quaker bonnets would have been further removed from fashionable dress for their undecorated appearance, quiet colour and unfashionable poke bonnet shape.

As the images show however, it is evident that both of Cash's bonnets have undergone radical decorative alterations. Most notably, on the brim of the black satin bonnet, sit three obtrusive, dyed, ostrich feathers; two small in bright orange and one large in peach and brown shades (Fig. 6.9). The dark-blue bonnet meanwhile sports one large un-dyed brown and cream ostrich feather (Fig. 6.10). Laid across the brim, the feathers have been crudely attached, using a rough loop stitch in black cotton thread and cream cotton thread, net and a modern safety pin, respectively (Fig. 6.11).

The origins of their incompatible adornments became clear through examination of Killerton House National Trust, Devon, curatorial numbering practices and through testimony from the Killerton House National Trust dress curator, Shelley Tobin. The accession number etched into the calamus of the un-dyed feather differed from those sewn into the bonnet (Fig. 6.12). Consultation of Killerton House National Trust's *Accession Book 3* revealed that the feathers had been dated to the early 1900s and were acquired from a different donor, a Mrs. Phoebe Du Pontet of Honiton, Devon in the summer of 1981 along with a selection of 1930s evening dresses and 1960s shoes.⁵⁹ Correspondence with the current curator Shelley Tobin revealed how the then 'costume consultant' Atherton Harrison, 'did some horrendous things with the collection.'⁶⁰ Whilst Tobin acknowledged that Atherton played a vital role in the creation and management of the dress collection during her career, she also confessed that Atherton carried out alterations and made additions to garments when they did not meet her display requirements, and that she employed a group of 'Thursday ladies' who

⁵⁹ *The National Trust Articles Given to the Paulise de Bush Costume Collection at Killerton House Form*, 1981. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Brown ostrich Feather, circa 1900. KIL/W/03842-3. Killerton House National Trust, Devon.

⁶⁰ Email Correspondence with Shelley Tobin. 13th April 2015. See Appendix 1.2 Interviews. According to Tobin, Atherton Harrison was not a professional dress Curator, but was a self-styled 'consultant'.



Fig. 6.9: *Detail of feathers on black bonnet. c. 1850. Black satin, orange ostrich feathers, black silk ribbon. KIL/W/04479. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author. 18th November 2014.*



Fig. 6. 10: *Detail of feather on blue bonnet. c. 1850. Dark blue ribbed silk, un-dyed ostrich feathers. KIL/W/04478. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author. 18th November 2014.*



Fig. 6.11: *Detail of the safety pin used to attach the grey ostrich feather to the bonnet.*
c.1850. Dark blue ribbed silk, un-dyed ostrich feathers. KIL/W/04478. Killerton House
National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author. 18th November 2014.



Fig. 6.12: *Detail of the accession number on the calamus of the feather on the bonnet. c.1850. Dark blue ribbed silk, un-dyed ostrich feathers. KIL/W/04478. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author. 18th November 2014.*

would 'meet to do repairs and probably sewed feathers on bonnets too.'⁶¹ The knowledge that the feathers were attached sometime in the 1980s by museum staff however, allows for the bonnets to regain their Quaker origins and to be appreciated for their typically unadorned Quaker Plain aesthetic. This eliminates their incongruity in the Cash garment collection, but also reveals that these garments were, at one point and still are, not valued at Killerton House National Trust, Devon, as examples of Plain Quaker attire.

Frustratingly, none of the three surviving portraits of Cash depict her wearing an outdoor bonnet. One family portrait from Birmingham National Archives is dated 1860, and also depicts two of her fashionably dressed youngest daughters, Caroline and Ann (Fig. 6.1).⁶² The other two portraits, one *carte de visite* and another a full-length seated portrait, at the Library of Religious Society of Friends were both taken in 1873 (Fig. 6.2 & 6.3).⁶³ In all three full-length studio portraits, her centre-parted hair is covered with a white, plain, undecorated, muslin indoor cap, gathered at the centre crown and tied under the chin. The absence of a bonnet is however, explained by both the location of the portraits, indoors in a studio setting, alongside the fact that the wearing of a deep brimmed bonnet would obscure her face from view in the photograph.

Consultation of the *Friends' Institute London* late-nineteenth century photographic anthologies additionally reveals a similar absence of outdoor bonnets in studio portraits, even for women wearing fully Plain attire. Pale muslin cotton or linen caps are instead commonly adopted, revealing that the absence of bonnets in studio portraits was a compositional norm for all Quaker women, even those in Non-Adaptive attire, rather than an aesthetic choice specific to Cash. As discussed in the following section, other surviving photographic records taken out of doors however, do display the wearing of poke-style outdoor bonnets by Plain Quaker women during the mid-nineteenth century, providing a

⁶¹ Email Correspondence with Shelley Tobin. 13th April 2015. See Appendix 1.2 Interviews. Consideration that the feathers and bonnets were donated by disparate donors, in differing years from distant geographical locations, supports Eddington and Tobin's assertion.

⁶² *Elizabeth Petipher Cash, Caroline Cash and Ann Cash*, 1860. MS466/8a/9. Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham, Birmingham Library National Archives.

⁶³ C.A. Gandy, *Elizabeth Petipher Cash*, 1873 and *Elizabeth Petipher Cash*, c. 1873. C1.090.7. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London.

visual record of their continued use by sections of the female congregation during a period of sartorial upheaval.

Non-Adaptive Quaker women's dress in photographic records, 1860 to 1914

One photograph featured in the 2008 publication, *Mr Saffron Walden: The Life and Times of George Stacey Gibson, 1818-1883*, depicts a group of elderly Quakers from the market town of Saffron Walden photographed in 1855.⁶⁴ The mixed-gender group of nineteen Quakers are all attired in Plain dress. Whilst little additional information is provided with the illustration, evidently they are outdoors for a local celebration of some description, as they are photographed in a formal grouped arrangement in front of a large marquee. The women are all similarly attired and depicted wearing full-length dresses with gathered skirts and modest petticoats. The un-exaggerated shape of the skirts indicates that none of the women wear the fashionable wide petticoats. The women wear large shawls in a variety of colours and fabrics. None wear fashionable fitted jackets. They all have similar dark bonnets with wide ribbons tied under the chin. Some are additionally wearing plain aprons. Clearly, by this period visible conventions existed within the attire favoured by Plain Quaker women, bordering on a uniform appearance. Whilst such an image depicts the Plain Quaker garments adopted by women of the Society for a public formal occasion in 1855, strikingly the elements and composition of their attire is almost identical to that worn by Cash in her two 1873 studio portraits dated to eighteen years later.

Cash's *carte de visite* was taken by C.A. Gandy in his studio at 5 Bishopsgate Street Without, London, in 1873 (Fig. 6.2 & 6.13) a full thirteen years after the amendment of the Queries in 1860, which made Plainness in dress, speech and behaviour optional. Cash is nevertheless depicted wearing completely Plain attire, featuring a full-length plain dark silk dress, with long narrow sleeves and a deeply pleated full skirt, with a wide matching waist band, into which an almost certainly white cotton muslin fichu is tucked. She wears a large pale undecorated and un-fringed silk shawl and a cotton muslin cap tied under the chin. The

⁶⁴ Jeremy Collingwood, *Mr. Saffron Walden: The Life and Times of George Stacey Gibson 1818-1883* (Chichester: Phillimore & Co, 2008) 33.

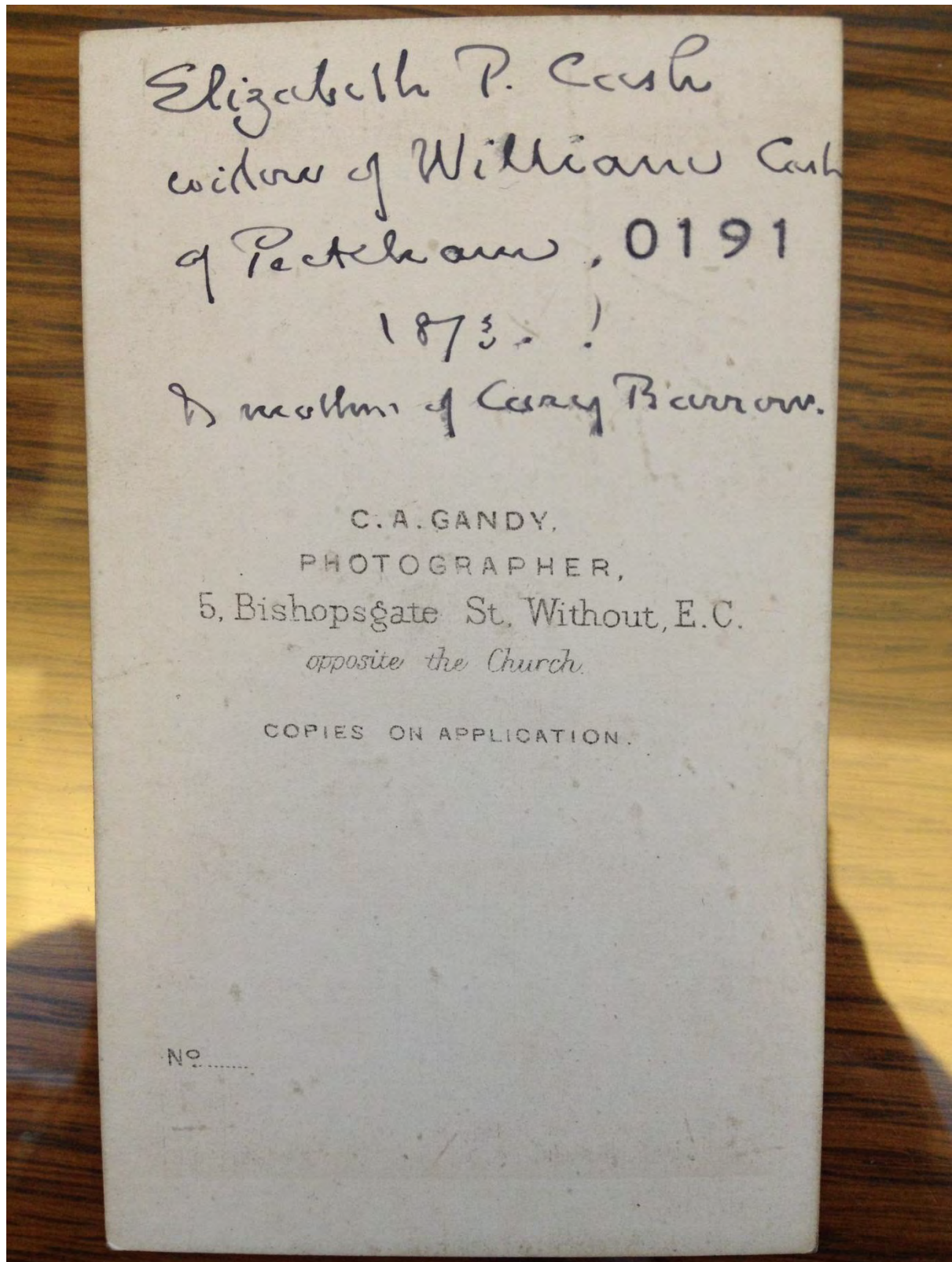


Fig. 6.13: Detail of Elizabeth Petipher Cash's carte de visite displaying photographers details.

1873. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London. Personal photograph by the author. 18th August 2014. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.

expanse of white muslin in Cash's ensemble is particularly striking as the laundering and starching of white cotton or linen muslins was an expensive, time consuming activity which created a great deal of mess and upheaval in the household.⁶⁵ Clearly from this surviving image, Cash clung tenaciously to her traditional Plain dress and was not weakened in her dress decisions by urban sartorial influences. As Bogatyrev suggests, the continued wearing of traditional dress may be read as an indicator of 'pride in their background', and clearly Cash's Plain dress would have served as a visual indicator of devotion to her Quaker belief. Thus, Cash may be read as belonging to the 'opposing' force, or those who made no drastic urban inspired changes to their dress and therefore conspicuously and deliberately preserved their traditional clothing.⁶⁶

Intriguingly, whilst some of the shawl fabrics depicted in the 1855 Saffron Walden photograph appear to be checked and striped as well as two-toned, all Cash's garments in her portraits are clearly monochromatic, un-patterned and undecorated. As such, Cash's garments appear to comply more closely than the women's attire in the 1855 group photograph, to the stricter, traditional Advices recommended in the early decades of the Society, 'concerning buying, selling, making or wearing stript Cloth, [...] or figured thing of different colours[...] - Friends stand clear of all such things.'⁶⁷

Considering Peter Burke's assertion that, 'dressing up' for a portrait was the norm, even in the lowest circles,' we may realistically presume that for this photograph, Cash chose her smartest and neatest garments, and particularly those which would 'reinforce [her] self-

⁶⁵ Christina Walkley and Vanda Foster, *Crinolines and Crimping Irons. Victorian Clothes: How they were cleaned and cared for* (London: Peter Owen, 1978) 50-54. There was no hot running water or electricity to simplify the washing process. It was actually therefore, more convenient and economical to save up dirty linens and wash a large number of garments together however this meant a great deal of work and mess when finally the job was carried out. The wealthier a family were the more changes of linen they owned and therefore infrequent washing became a status symbol as it displayed the plethora of undergarments the family owned. Those who could afford the luxury sent their washing out to a laundress.

⁶⁶ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 60.

⁶⁷ Report from Representatives to QM from Marsden Monthly Meeting, December 1704. FRM 1/3. Lancashire Records Office as Qted in Peter Collins, "Ethical Consumption as Religious Testimony: The Quaker Case," *Ethical Consumption. Social Value and Economic Practice*. ed. James G. Carrier and Peter G. Luetchford (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012): 184.

representation' as an elderly lifelong Quaker.⁶⁸ As such, whilst these images may represent a far neater version of the garments which Cash would have chosen to wear on a day-to-day basis, they do present to us the Plain Quaker self-image which Cash constructed for the camera and chose to present to the viewer. She clearly believed that traditional Plain attire represented her sense of self and religious sentiment most appropriately. Significantly, Cash's adoption of a Plain aesthetic in her 1873 *carte de visite* is not an anomaly unique to herself. Consultation of the *Friends' Institute London* portraits display multiple examples of other elderly Quaker women wearing Plain attire in their photographs after the relaxation of the Plainness query in 1860 and prove Elizabeth Cash's appearance to be typical of this Non-Adaptive Quaker dress style.

In *Friends' Institute London C-F*, the portraits of Rebecca Phillips Fox of Kendal who died 2nd January 1875 aged 81 (Fig. 6.14), and Mary Fox of Plymouth who died 27th May 1883 aged 83 (Fig. 6.15), both illustrate similar examples of Plain attire on elderly Quaker women.⁶⁹ Meanwhile in *Friends' Institute London A-B*, Mary Ann Bayes who died 22nd October 1876 aged 83 (Fig. 6.16) and Mary Bowman who died 21st December 1878 aged 82 (Fig. 6.17), are similarly attired.⁷⁰ Whilst the exact dates of the photographs are unrecorded in the anthologies, even superficial inspection of the women's faces in their portraits reveals they were very elderly when the portraits were taken. As such, these *cartes* may realistically be assessed as portraying the women in the last fifteen to twenty years of their lives and therefore displaying Plain Quaker attire being worn after 1860, which when compared with the fashionable dress of the 1870s and thereafter, as discussed in chapter 5, the contrast is extreme.

Each of the four women wear the typical components of Plain Quaker women's wear, very similar to that worn by Cash in her 1873 portraits, including a dark full-length plain silk dress with a wide waist band, a large undecorated shawl and a pale undecorated and untrimmed white muslin cap with a high crown, tied under the chin. The portraits of Rebecca Phillips

⁶⁸ Peter Burke. *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (London: Reaktion, 2001) 26. Miles Lambert, *Fashion in Photographs, 1860-1880* (London: Batsford, 1991) 12.

⁶⁹ *Friends Institute London C-F*. NSA 13 Shelf 4. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

⁷⁰ *Friends Institute London A-B*. NSA 13 Shelf 4. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.



Fig. 6.14: *Rebecca Phillips Fox*. c.1860-1875. Carte de Visite. C-F Friends' Institute Album.

NSA 13 Shelf 4. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London. Personal photograph by the author. 13th March 2015. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.



Fig. 6.15: *Mary Fox*. c.1860-1870. Carte de Visite. *C-F Friends' Institute Album*. NSA 13 Shelf 4. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London. Personal photograph by the author. 13th March 2015. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.



Fig. 6.16: *Mary Ann Bayes née Williams*. c.1860- 1876. Friends' Institute Album A-B. NSA 13 Shelf 4. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London. Personal photograph by the author. 13th March 2015. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.



Fig. 6.17: *Mary Bowman*. c.1860- 1870. Friends' Institute Album A-B. NSA 13 Shelf 4. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London. Personal photograph by the author. 13th March 2015. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.

Fox and Mary Fox do, however, reveal subtle details of adornment and decoration, as both women are wearing netted or knitted fingerless mittens.

Constructed from a dark net, the mittens also feature three lines of herringbone stitch vertically down the back seams on the hand (Fig. 6.18 and 6.19). Particularly striking, is that the mittens in the separate portraits appear to be identical. Within the Killerton House National Trust, Devon, collection three sets of mittens belonging to Cash have survived, and two of these pairs reveal design elements strikingly similar to those worn by the Foxes in their portraits.

Elizabeth Petipher Cash's Surviving Mittens

One pair of Cash's mittens, circa 1850, are thirteen and a half inch long black net fingerless mittens (Fig. 6.20), featuring 3/4 inch wide machine lace insets with flower, ball and teardrop designs and a matching lace trim (Fig. 6.21).⁷¹ Whilst the decorative floral design is not similar to those of the Fox women's herringbone stitched mittens, their fingerless, decorated black net construction is the same.

Another pair of Cash's mittens however, features similar patterns to those on the Fox gloves comprising decorative stitching vertically down the back of the hand (Fig. 6.22).⁷² These slightly shorter nine and a half inch mittens are instead however, knitted from dark cream silk using a variation of seven different types of stitches and openwork (Fig. 6.23). The vertical three rows of stitching on these mittens however, have been completed in a cross-stitch rather than herringbone, yet the aesthetic similarities are immediately apparent.

As discussed in detail in chapter 5, whilst gloves were perennially fashionable, the popularity of mittens in fashionable dress waxed and waned throughout the century. Black lace and white knitted mittens, such as those owned by Cash, were widely and relatively cheaply

⁷¹ Black net mittens with chemical lace inserts, c. 1850. KIL/W/04483/1/2/ Killerton House, National Trust Collection.

⁷² Knitted cream silk mittens, circa 1850. KIL/W/04482/1/2. Killerton House, National Trust Collection.



Fig. 6.18: *Detail of Rebecca Phillips Fox's mittens and reticule. c.1860-1875. Carte de Visite. C-F Friends' Institute Album. NSA 13 Shelf 4. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London. Personal photograph by the author. 13th March 2015. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.*



Fig. 6.19: *Detail of Mary Fox's mittens and reticule. c.1860-1870. Carte de Visite. C-F Friends' Institute Album. NSA 13 Shelf 4. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London. Personal photograph by the author. 13th March 2015. © Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.*



Fig. 6.20: Mittens belonging to Elizabeth Petipher Cash. c.1850. Cotton net, machine lace. KIL/W/04483/2. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author. 18th November 2014.



Fig. 6.21: *Detail of lace inserts on Mittens. c.1850. Cotton net, machine lace.*

KIL/W/04483/2. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author.

18th November 2014.



Fig. 6.22: Mittens belonging to Elizabeth Petipher Cash. c.1850. Dark cream knitted silk.
KIL/W/04482/2. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author.
18th November 2014.



Fig. 6.23: *Detail of cream knitted mittens.* c. 1850. Dark cream knitted silk. KIL/W/04482/2. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author. 18th November 2014.

available, often at a third of the price of kid gloves.⁷³ Valerie Cumming's assertion, in her 1982 publication, *Gloves*, that mitten patterns were widely available for domestic making, is supported by the advertisement "Useful Household Works Published by Houston and Stoneman, Paternoster Row", in the *West Kent Guardian*, 14th February 1852, selling Volumes of *Family Friend*.⁷⁴ These featured 'elegant designs in fancy needlework' for items including, amongst others, 'Modern point lace-knitted mittens' and 'Netted Mittens.' These patterns could be purchased for two pence each or a volume for 2s. 6d.⁷⁵ In fact, the home-making of mittens was even endorsed by the Royal household during 1856 with the Duchess of Cambridge and Princess Mary apparently undertaking the practice.⁷⁶

Cultivated during her formative years at The Friends School as this study has shown, where the girls were taught 'sewing and knitting', needlework was a skill which Cash would have associated with her traditional Quaker upbringing and therefore a practice eminently suited to her continued pious sensibility.⁷⁷ Indeed, according to Cash's obituary in the *Annual Monitor for 1895*, she executed 'beautiful pieces of needlework' into her old age and was highly adept at the skill her whole life.⁷⁸ As such, these combined details confirming the wide social availability of sewing patterns for mittens indicate that home-made construction was practiced by both the highest class of society and middle-class women and was therefore considered a respectable pursuit. Combined with Cash's recorded partiality for practising needlework, all of this indicates that both pairs of mittens may well have been made by Cash herself.

These apparently decorative items may therefore be interpreted as representing frugality, respectability and patient domesticity, as well as a skill that was endorsed during Cash's religious schooling. As Marcia Pointon observed, decorative objects *have* been owned by Plain Quakers throughout the history of the religion, as objects were always individually

⁷³ "Shirer and Haddon," *Cheltenham On-Looker*, 14th December 1878: 4.

⁷⁴ Valerie Cumming, "Chapter 4: Prettiness and Plainness, 1800-1899," *Gloves* (London: Batsford, 1982) 65.

⁷⁵ "Useful Household Works Published by Houston and Stoneman, Paternoster Row," *West Kent Guardian*, 14th February 1852: 1.

⁷⁶ "Court Fashion, County News, &c," *Herts. Guardian Agricultural Journal and General Advertiser*. 19th January 1856: 5.

⁷⁷ *Rules and General Regulations for the Government of Croydon School*, 31. Although needlework was very commonly taught in all schools to girls during the 19th century.

⁷⁸ Robinson, *Annual Monitor for 1895*, 59.

negotiated for their ornamentation versus their necessity.⁷⁹ As such, whilst the sartorial characteristics of these two pairs of mittens may be initially interpreted as ornamental, upon further scrutiny the presence of the mittens in Elizabeth Cash's wardrobe may have been justified by Cash because, for her they represented her personal skill, religious faith, respectability and frugality despite their mildly decorative nature. In addition, the presence of these garments in the Fox portraits proves that other Quaker women attired in Plain dress similarly accepted the inclusion of decorated mittens in their wardrobes during the late nineteenth-century. As such, Cash's decision to make or acquire these items was endorsed by other elderly Plain Quaker women from the religious community who similarly felt these garments were attuned to their religious sensibilities despite their decorated appearance.

Advertisements for Plain Quaker garments, 1860 to 1914

It is of interest therefore, to probe the sources where Non-Adaptive Quaker women such as Elizabeth Cash purchased their ready-made hats, shawls and bonnets. As late as 2nd January 1882, advertisements regularly appeared on the back pages of *The Friend* from two independent bonnet, cap and mantle makers, called Elizabeth Gray, Alexandra Road in Croydon and Sarah Bishop, 43 Bishopsgate Street Without, London (Fig. 6.24).⁸⁰ Sarah Bishop advertised herself as a 'Straw, Drawn and Fancy Bonnet Maker', whilst Elizabeth Gray's services were advertised as a 'Ladies and Juvenile Outfitters.' Both of these female outfitters however, additionally specified that they produced 'Friends' Bonnets, Caps & Mantles.⁸¹ Whilst no further descriptive detail is provided, the language suggests these advertisements were marketed at Quakers requiring bonnets and shawls which were sartorially religiously guided, despite their late nineteenth century date.

In fact, such an assertion is further supported upon the realisation that the language used in millinery advertisements within *The Friend* had hardly altered for several decades. In an

⁷⁹ Marcia Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," *Art History*, 20. 3 (1997): 401.

⁸⁰ "Elizabeth Gray" and "Sarah Bishop," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XXII. 255. (1882): 14.

⁸¹ "Elizabeth Gray" and "Sarah Bishop," *The Friend*, 14.

S.
S

ELIZABETH GRAY,
Friends' Bonnet, Cap & Mantle Maker,
LADIES' AND JUVENILE OUTFITTER.
Fancy, Drawn, and Straw Bonnets to order.
39, ALEXANDRA ROAD,
LOWER ADDISCOMBE ROAD, CROYDON.

BLOND, RUCHES, SATIN PIPING, &c.

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e
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SARAH BISHOP,
(Late **ELIZABETH M. DYNE,**)
Straw, Drawn & Fancy Bonnet Maker.
FRIENDS' BONNETS, CAPS, AND MANTLES.
43, BISHOPSGATE STREET WITHOUT, LONDON, E.C.,
28 DOORS NORTH OF FRIENDS' INSTITUTE.

A VARIETY OF SHETLAND GOODS.

Fig. 6.24: Advertisement for Elizabeth Gray Ladies and Juvenile Outfitter and Sarah Bishop Straw Drawn and Fancy Bonnet Maker. *The Friend*. January 2nd 1882: 14. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London. Personal photograph by the author. 13th March 2015.

advertisement published on 1st April 1866, Sarah Busby located at 76 Houndsditch London, similarly offered, 'Friends' Bonnets and Caps, Straw and Drawn Bonnets, Book Muslins, Blonds, Quillings, Satins, Piping &c.'⁸² In the same 1866 edition, the silk mercer John Hodgson, 51 Piccadilly Manchester, additionally advertised that alongside the 'French Merinos and Winceys, All Wool Poplins and Repp's Poplinettes' stocked by his company, that orders 'for Friends' Plain Bonnets received [... are] executed at 76 Houndsditch London without extra cost' (Fig. 6.25).⁸³ Clearly, John Hodgson used Sarah Busby's millinery skills to fulfil his orders for Friends' bonnets. Crucially however, despite its date of 1866, Hodgson's advertisement specified that Busby's business would fulfil orders for Friends *Plain* bonnets, despite her advertisement not containing the word 'Plain'. Whilst such a detail illustrates that few milliners were fulfilling orders for Friends' Plain bonnets in 1866 (as orders from Manchester were being sent to London for completion), it additionally illustrates that there was still a market for Quaker women's Plain bonnets across the country and that they were still being manufactured in London. In addition, this advertisement indicates that Friends' bonnet makers felt no need to specify Plainness in their advertisements despite producing Plain attire.

Whilst none of Cash's surviving Plain accessories located at Killerton House National Trust, Devon, reveal the locations of their production or purchase, Cash did regularly visit the area of London where Friends' garments were made. As the advertisements reveal, many of the businesses were located in the Bishopsgate district, a ready-to-wear and mercers area, which comprised Devonshire Street, Bishopsgate Street Without and Houndsditch in London's East End, during the period when the Quaker headquarters were located at Devonshire House which was located off Bishopsgate Street Without. Throughout Bishopsgate, Quaker-run businesses abounded and during the 1870s alone the Quaker businesses Edward Hicks and Samuel Harris publishers, Bowden & Hicks drapers and men's shirts manufacturers and both the Friends' bonnet makers Sarah Busby and Elizabeth M. Dyne, were all located on Bishopsgate Street Without.⁸⁴ These businesses were easily accessible to the attendees of Devonshire House and the Yearly Meetings, with drapers

⁸² "Sarah Busby," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* VI. 64 (1866): 11.

⁸³ "John Hodgson," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* VI. 70 (1866): 8.

⁸⁴ *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* Xiii. 154 (1873): 240.

JOHN HODGSON,
(LATE H. COCKBAIN,
51, PICCADILLY, MANCHESTER,
AND
76, HOUNDSDITCH, LONDON,

Is now showing new goods for the Autumn in Wool Shawls and Handkerchiefs, French Merinos and Winceys All Wool Poplins and Repp's Poplinetts and other Fancy Dresses ; Black and Coloured Silks for Dresses and Bonnets ; Jackets and Mantles ; Straw and Silk Bonnets ; Blond Nets, Book Muslins, Satin Pipings, Shawl Bindings, Genoese and Barcelona Shawls and Handkerchiefs, Coloured and Black Satinettes, Fancy Velvet Ties, &c.

Patterns sent post-free and carriage paid on Parcels above £2 in value.

Orders for Friends' plain Bonnets received in Manchester and executed at 76, Houndsditch, London without extra cost for carriage.

Orders to 51, Piccadilly, Manchester, or 76, Houndsditch London, will have his best attention.

Tenth Month 1st, 1866.

Fig. 6.25: Advertisement for John Hodgson. *The Friend*. 1st October 1875: 8. Personal photograph by the author. 13th March 2015.

Bowden & Hicks even boasting their premises 'adjoined' the Friends' Institute.⁸⁵ In 1839 we know Cash attended the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends held at Devonshire House, and in 1873, her *carte de visite* was taken by the photography studio C.A. Gandy at 5 Bishopsgate Street Without. Therefore, over five decades Cash frequented an area of London where the Religious Society of Friends had a noticeable presence and where the surrounding Quaker textile and dress accessory businesses reflected and responded to this cultural presence through advertising their manufacture of sartorially Quaker appropriate garments in Friends' journals long after 1860. Cash would have felt validated in her continuing Non-Adaption through the advertising and the physical presence of businesses which still catered to her Non-Adaptive sartorial requirements and by the fact, as proven here, that other elderly Quaker women did continue in the Plain style through the late nineteenth century. As such, Cash would have had little problem purchasing her Plain bonnets, as well as her two large Plain shawls which survive in the collection at Killerton House National Trust, Devon.

Elizabeth Petipher Cash's Surviving Shawls

As Amelia Mott Gummere noted, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the 'long hooded cloaks - cloth in winter and silk in summer', were traditionally considered the most appropriate Plain outdoor coverings for Quaker women.⁸⁶ However, Gummere explains that early in the nineteenth century, 'an instance of adaptability in dress on behalf of the Quakers' occurred, whereby unembellished shawls in muted colours became accepted as the preferred Plain dress covering for women Quakers.⁸⁷ During the 1830s these plain shawls in soft colours and produced using high-quality silk and wool, were adopted as a deliberate choice which eschewed the decorative versions which had become fashionable for non-Quakers. By the mid-nineteenth century, the wearing of Plain shawls by female Quakers was virtually a uniform. Cash's two surviving Plain shawls in the Killerton House National Trust, Devon, collection provide evidence of the high-quality materials employed in these garments. Further, they illustrate shawls' were retained by Plain Quaker women as

⁸⁵ "Bowden & Hicks," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* VIII. 90 (1868): 2.

⁸⁶ Amelia Mott Gummere, *The Quaker. A Study in Costume* (Philadelphia: Ferris and Leach, 1901) 123 & 162-163.

⁸⁷ Gummere, *The Quaker. A Study in Costume*, 123 & 162-163.

the century progressed, despite the displacement of the use of shawls amongst fashionable middle and upper-middle classes in favour of tailored jackets and coats for day-wear.⁸⁸

Elizabeth Cash's large blue-grey triangular silk shawl is made of two layers of silk, with a matt, pale blue-grey silk outer layer, lined with mid-grey silk which has a lustrous shine and a softness to the touch (Fig. 6.26).⁸⁹ Lining a shawl was extremely unusual due to the sheer expense of the double layer of the luxury silk fabric, and therefore this detail attests to the expense and high quality of this example (Fig. 6.27). At, 114 inches by 78 inches, it would have enveloped her silhouette, draping over her shoulders, as well as covering the back of her skirt and her bodice. Whilst the date of the garment is ambiguously estimated by Killerton House National Trust, Devon, as 'late-nineteenth century', Cash's wearing of similarly large, triangular, undecorated Plain silk shawls in her 1860 and 1873 portraits provide evidence that, more accurately, she wore and purchased Plain silk shawls during these two decades at the very least.⁹⁰

Small numbers of expensive Indian Kashmir shawls had begun to reach Britain from the late 1750s during the early years of the British colonisation of India, and square and rectangular shawls became particularly popular in women's dress as the fashionable neo-classical Paris silhouette became increasingly fluid and narrow by 1800 (Fig. 6.28).⁹¹ As Pamela Clabburn recounts, by 1825 shawls had become widely fashionable as warm and decorative coverings over the popular silk and fine cotton muslin dresses. British weaving centres in Norwich, Edinburgh and Paisley, increased their production of shawl designs from the 1830s in imitation of the expensive fashionable Kashmir imports. These fashionable shawls were brightly coloured and were comprised of complex, decorative geometric, floral and paisley

⁸⁸ Another example of a late-nineteenth century Plain Quaker shawl, worn by a Quaker named Priscilla Cudworth, was also viewed at Norwich Castle Study Centre, East Anglia. Quaker shawl in cream diagonal ribbed silk, c. late 19th century. NWHCM:1972.3.56. Norwich Castle Study Centre, East Anglia. See Appendix 2.1 for further details.

⁸⁹ Blue-grey silk triangular shawl, nineteenth century. KIL/W/04494. Killerton House, National Trust Collection.

⁹⁰ *Accession Book 3*. 03517. Killerton National Trust, Devon.

⁹¹ Pamela Clabburn, *Shawls* (Bucks: Shire Publications, 1981) 7.



Fig. 6.26: Large blue-grey triangular silk shawl worn by Elizabeth Petipher Cash mounted on a mannequin. Made of two layers of silk, with a matt, pale blue-grey silk on one side, and a mid-grey silk on the other. Nineteenth century. KIL/W/04494. © Killerton House National Trust, Devon.



Fig. 6.27: Large blue-grey triangular silk shawl worn by Elizabeth Petipher Cash laid out flat to reveal its shape. Made of two layers of silk, with a matt, pale blue-grey silk on one side, and a mid-grey silk on the other. Nineteenth century. KIL/W/04494. © Killerton House National Trust, Devon.



Fig. 6.28: *Imported Kashmir Shawl*. 1750- 60. Cream woven goat hair with red, yellow, blue and green floral design. IM. 17- 1915. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Web. 1st September 2015. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O139698/shawl-unknown/>

'buta' repeat patterns, which were woven, embroidered or printed into the design sometimes with embellishments of silk tassels and knotted fringing at the edges.⁹²

During the mid-nineteenth century, as the skirts of fashionable dresses grew wider due to their support by many layers of petticoats, and from 1856 the cage-crinoline, so too the size of shawls expanded to cover these skirts. Extremely large square shawls were folded diagonally and draped over the shoulders, or worn across the back and over the elbows, so the decorative shawl edging would drape over the back and down either side of the dress. Between 1840 and 1870, fashionable shawls for day and evening wear came in a vast range of decorative styles and colours, imported from India, China, France and made in Britain from luxury woven cashmeres and brocaded, embroidered silks. Cheap mass-made printed and woven wool and cotton designs were also available.⁹³ Fashionable shawls reached their upmost width between the 1840s and 1860s, as surviving examples from the Victoria and Albert museum, London, attest. One 1840 Paisley rectangular shawl, with a ground of red silk and a blue, green, white and pink silk paisley 'buta' pattern, has a length of 117.5 inches and a width of 61.5 inches.⁹⁴ Another 1852 woven Indian example from Kashmir, with a ground of dyed red goat hair and a geometric motif in green, blue, yellow and white, has a length of 137 inches and a width of 53 inches.⁹⁵ Evidently, Cash's blue-grey shawl of similar dimensions was not unusually large for the mid-nineteenth century; however her Plain Quaker example is sartorially dissimilar to the fashionable examples for being cut into a triangular form rather than being folded and draped.

By 1861, plain, woven or printed silk shawls, similar to Cash's, came in a vast range of styles and prices, including lace examples. Thus there were both cheaper and less decorated shawls, than the fashionable imported Kashmir shawls, available for purchasing. In an advertisement from the *London Evening Standard*, 21st May 1861, the Wholesale and Retail Warehouse, 35 South Audley Street, London, advertised some particularly costly, 'Real Spanish Shawls, Mantillas, 6 1/2 Guineas [and the] Best Quality in Imitation Shawls, 52s.

⁹² Clabburn, *Shawls*, 7 and Anne Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories* (London: Herbert Jenkins, [1961] 1984) 107.

⁹³ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 106 - 108.

⁹⁴ Shawl in woven wool and silk, 1840-1845. T.348- 1972. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

⁹⁵ Shawl in woven goat hair (pashmina), 1850. T.772- 1852. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

6d.', whilst spun silk shawls cost '25s 6d.'⁹⁶ As such, these plain spun silk shawls were nearly a sixth of the price of the imported Spanish shawls, and half the price of the imitation imported shawls. Ready-to-wear shawls produced using cashmere or Llama wool could also be purchased even more cheaply than these silk styles but they commonly featured decorative embellishments of quilting and trimmings. In an Amott Brother advertisement, again in the *London Evening Standard*, on 11th May 1861, quilted cashmere shawls for spring were priced at 16s. 9d. whilst 'Elegantly Trimmed Llama Shawls' were less than half the price of a spun silk shawl, at 10s. 6d.⁹⁷ The price Cash paid for her Plain shawls is not yet known though the high quality of the garment is evident on handling. Clearly, whilst Cash spared no expense on the material of her blue-grey lined silk shawl, it may be assumed that it would have been relatively economical in comparison to highly decorative imported Kashmir or Spanish shawls and plainer in appearance than many of the quilted and trimmed fashionable cashmere or Llama wool shawls, further justifying the plain silk shawl's inclusion in a Quaker wardrobe.

As the fashionable silhouette during the 1870s placed greater emphasis of the back of the skirt, draped shawls which concealed the bustle were slowly displaced in favour of shaped jackets for day-wear by the middle and upper-middle classes. Despite this however, fashionable ready-to-wear British and imported shawls were still readily available and sold alongside the new styles of outer-wear garments, such as dolmans, mantles and paletots, by outfitters including Peter Robinson and Charles M. Luccock.⁹⁸ In addition, shawls continued to be fashionably worn as day-wear during the 1880s but were often cut-up and altered into the styles of fashionable mantles and coats.⁹⁹ The article "Fashions" in *The Graphic*, on 7th February 1885, described how cashmere shawls were both worn draped and cut into new jacket shapes, stating:

Once again shawls, soft Indian cashmere, are in fashion. In Paris they are worn by a select few personages who know the secret of draping them gracefully in the old style round the shoulders; but there, as in England, they are generally arranged as

⁹⁶ "The original Spanish Depot," *The London Evening Standard*, 21st May 1861: 1.

⁹⁷ "New and Elegant Shawls. Amott Brothers," *The London Evening Standard*, 11th May 1861: 8.

⁹⁸ "Charles M. Luccock. Shawl and Mantle New Autumn Styles," *Islington Gazette*, 22nd November 1870: 1.

⁹⁹ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 107.

mantles, trimmed with fur or velvet, looped up here and there with heavy cords and tassels.¹⁰⁰

Despite women updating the manner in which they wore shawls there is limited evidence that making shawls at home from lengths of fabric was a popular or common domestic recreation, unlike domestic needlework such as the home making of mittens. Therefore whilst the manufacturer of Cash's Plain shawls remains unknown, evidence suggests they were professionally-produced and purchased ready-made. Surviving evidence indeed shows that shawls were commercially made by drapers and clothiers who specifically serviced the Plain sartorial requirements of Non-Adaptive women in the Quaker community. In one advertisement in the Quaker journal *The Friend* of January 1875, the silk mercer John Hodgson promoted 'Shawl and Mantle Cloths, Summer and Winter Shawls' (Fig. 6.29).¹⁰¹ As such, in 1875 shawls were still being promoted, sold to, and consumed by, female members of the religious community. It is intriguing to note that Quaker clothing businesses did nonetheless alter their products to align with fashionable influences during the final decades of the nineteenth century. An advertisement from C. Watkins, in May 1846, promoted, 'C. Watkins. Bonnet, Shawl & Cloak Maker [...] and hopes by industry and punctuality, to merit the favours of any Friends who may be kindly disposed to give her a trial.'¹⁰² By 1882 however, Sarah Bishop and Elizabeth Gray, advertised 'Friends' Bonnets, Caps & Mantles.'¹⁰³ Clearly, between the 1840s and the 1880s, the production of shawls by Quaker businesses was supplanted by the making of mantles. Thus Quaker dressmakers responded to style changes in fashionable clothing by incorporating mantles into their repertoire by the 1880s. Places to acquire sartorially Plain, professionally made shawls would therefore have become increasingly limited by the final two decades of the century. Yet despite this, photographic evidence reveals that Non-Adaptive Quaker women remained staunchly attached to their Plain triangular shawls, regardless of their unfashionability in mainstream fashionable circles.

¹⁰⁰ "Fashions," *The Graphic*, on 7th February 1885: 22.

¹⁰¹ "John Hodgson Silk Mercer," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* (January 1875): 10.

¹⁰² "C. Watkins," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* IV. 41 (1846): 100.

¹⁰³ "Elizabeth Gray" and "Sarah Bishop," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XXII. 255 (1882): 14.

JOHN HODGSON,
SILK MERCER AND UNDERTAKER,
51, PICCADILLY, MANCHESTER,

Having let his Shop, to be entered upon in Third Month next, for another business, must clear out all the heavier part of his stock, for which in future he will not have room. The following Goods are therefore offered at a still further reduction in price, and carriage will be paid on all parcels of £2 in value and upwards.

<p>SELF-COLOURED DRESS SILKS. BLACK SILKS, warranted to wear well. SUMMER AND WINTER FANCY DRESSES. BLACK, WHITE & COLOURED GRENADINES. SHAWL and MANTLE CLOTHS.</p>	<p>SUMMER and WINTER SHAWLS and HAND- KERCHIEFS, in great variety of kinds and qualities. KID GLOVES, FANCY SILK TIES, &c. &c.</p>
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PATTERNS SENT POST FREE.

Millinery and Straw Bonnets made to order.

51, PICCADILLY, MANCHESTER,
First Month 1st, 1875.

Fig. 6.29: John Hodgson Silk Mercer Advertisement. *The Friend*. 1st January 1875: 10.

Personal photograph by the author. 13th March 2015.

As illustrated in her surviving 1860 and 1873 portraits, Elizabeth Cash was never persuaded to 'betray' her shawls for the fashionable new mantles and jacket styles.¹⁰⁴ In part, such a sartorial choice may be further explained upon consideration of the style of Cash's entire ensemble. Cash abstained from ever incorporating the skirt supports of either the crinoline, or later the bustle, and thus her skirt shape, and therefore her entire ensemble, remained constant. In addition, for the Non-Adaptive Cash her conspicuous preservation of the use of the shawl was rooted in the adoption of the garment by the Society in the 1830s, and thus it's tradition. It represented her continued religious obedience and affiliation with traditional Plain dress customs and thus that she was sharply opposed to borrowing elements of urban fashionable dress.¹⁰⁵ For women such as Cash who opposed incorporating fashionable urban styles therefore, Plain dress acted as 'a hedge, as a convenience, as a good thing' and immediately identified them as 'peculiar' from non-Friends in wider Protestant society, even after the formal amendment to *Christian Doctrine, Practice and Discipline* in 1861.¹⁰⁶

However, whilst Cash is shown in all three of her surviving portraits dressed in a starkly undecorated triangular silk shawl, similar to the surviving blue-grey example, another shawl in her collection at Killerton House National Trust, Devon, does reveal a modest incorporation of decoration and thus suggests some adaptation. Far smaller, this shawl is woven from a soft ribbed mid-brown silk, in a rectangular shape of 69 inches by 66 inches (Fig. 6.30), rather than cut into the triangle of her blue-grey shawl.¹⁰⁷ Whilst the main body of the shawl is undecorated the edging of the shawl has been adorned with a thick knotted fringing, constructed from the shawl's warp threads, left unwoven at each end and knotted. This shawl displays an example of the employment of more 'elaborate' knotting to create two lines of knotted fringe (Fig. 6.31).¹⁰⁸ Anne Buck acknowledged that, 'the plainest is the fringe of warp threads left at each end [...] and the more elaborate knotting into two or

¹⁰⁴ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 60.

¹⁰⁵ Elizabeth Petipher Cash Qted in Robinson, *Annual Monitor for 1895*, 50.

¹⁰⁶ Kennedy, *British Quakerism 1860-1920*, 216.

¹⁰⁷ Quaker shawl, brown silk. Nineteenth century. KIL/W/04480. Killerton House, National Trust Collection. Similarly to her mittens, the surviving brown silk shawl held at Killerton, featuring a deep knotted fringe, is absent from each of her photographic portraits.

¹⁰⁸ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 108.



Fig. 6.30: *Shawl belonging to Elizabeth Petipher Cash. Late nineteenth century. Brown silk, knotted silk fringe. KIL/W/04480. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author. 18th November 2014.*



Fig. 6.31: *Detail of shawl's knotted fringing.* Late nineteenth century. Brown silk, knotted silk fringe. KIL/W/04480. Killerton House National Trust, Devon. Personal photograph by the author. 18th November 2014.

three lines of mesh.¹⁰⁹ Such a discreetly decorated example therefore, may represent an article acquired during a period when the production of Plain shawls was becoming scarce, and purchased as a compromise between her preference for Plain attire and the decreasing availability of Plain garments, even within the religious community.

Yet despite Friends' clothiers adapting their products thereby making Non-Adaptive clothing increasingly difficult to obtain, Cash did not adapt and remained a Plain Quaker her entire life whilst also remaining a loyal disciple of the authority of London Yearly Meeting and faithful to their Rules for Discipline.¹¹⁰ In doing so, Cash's Non-Adaptive sartorial decisions diverged from Quaker women who adopted more fashionable attire. However, her motivations for such Non-Adaption were different to those of conservative Friends' communities, such as Fritchley, whose commitment to Non-Adaptive dress was actually a form of *dissent* against London Yearly Meeting's authority and the Society's 1861 relaxation of Advices.

The Fritchley Schism

According to Walter Lowndes in *The Quakers of Fritchley, 1863 - 1980*, the 'serious changes [...] made to the doctrine and disciplines of the Society' in 1861 resulted in a group of Quakers separating from the main body of Friends to establish an isolated community of Quakers in Fritchley, Derbyshire in 1863.¹¹¹ The 'controversy' of the amendment to the Society's disciplines and the increasing incorporation of evangelical views and practices into Quaker worship resulted, in Lowndes' view, in many Friends 'being unable to reconcile their beliefs with the new views.'¹¹² Some of these 'conservative' Quakers consequently dissented and set up their own Meetings at Fritchley, Derbyshire and later at Bournbrook, Birmingham. Other Quaker women, such as Cash, reacted differently. They negotiated the Society's departure from traditional disciplines as a matter of personal conscience,

¹⁰⁹ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 108. The trimming and fringing of shawls was also a paid profession, with one advertisement of "Shawl trimmers and fringers wanted," *Clerkenwell News*, 7th March 1864: 4, seeking, 'Shawl Trimmers and Fringers wanted; good hands.'

¹¹⁰ Robinson, *Annual Monitor for 1895*, 59.

¹¹¹ Walter Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley* (Fritchley: Fritchley Preparative Meeting, 1986) 13.

¹¹² Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 9.

accommodating their traditional beliefs with the 'new views' of the Society. They remained traditionally Plain, maintaining the original meaning of the modest, Plain dress, whilst still attending the progressive London Yearly Meeting, as Cash's personal example has shown.

Organised by the Quaker bobbin manufacturer John Grant Sargent, the Fritchley schism comprised members of the religious community with a 'rigid commitment to the Quaker disciplines' who felt 'disturbed by the departures from the original doctrine, practices and disciplines' by London Yearly Meeting and therefore felt the body no longer served their beliefs.¹¹³ In an 1881 Minute issued by the Fritchley Monthly Meeting of Friends, the community re-affirmed its reasons for 'withdrawing', stating:

[...] we profess to be actuated by no desire for change, either in doctrine or church government, our object being, if so permitted, to continue or sustain the Society upon its original basis, as it had existed from its rise until the early part of the present century. On this ground we are opposed to those changes in Doctrine and Discipline, that have been so largely introduced [...]¹¹⁴

Emphasis was placed on the reading and consideration of the Religious Society of Friends disciplines, rules and Advices as laid out in *Extracts from the Minutes and Advices*, 1802, which were reprinted by Fritchley in their *Queries* as late as 1924.¹¹⁵ As such, and pertinently for this thesis, conservative dissenting Fritchley Quaker women represent the most profound and lengthiest community of Non-Adaptive British Quaker women during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The 1802 Disciplines, under 'Plainness', reprinted Advices from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which emphasised the importance of avoiding pride and immodesty in dress and urged followers to remain obedient to Plainness in language, habit, deportment and behaviour, one of which stated:

¹¹³ Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 4.

¹¹⁴ Minutes of the Fritchley Monthly Meeting of Friends, 1881. Qted in Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 31.

¹¹⁵ Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 7-8. Also see D.J. Hall, *An historical study of the discipline of the Society of Friends*, 1738-1862. PhD, Durham University (1972).

This meeting, under a deep sense that pride, and the vain customs and fashions of the world, prevail over some of our profession, particularly in the excess of apparel and furniture, doth earnestly recommend, that all who make profession of the Truth, take care to be exemplary in what they wear [...] so as to avoid the vain customs of the world, and all extravagancy in colour and fashion.¹¹⁶

Surviving photographs from Fritchley, republished in Lowndes' book, additionally provide evidence of how this Non-Adaptive Plainness was manifested. One group photograph of fifty Quakers taken outside Fritchley Meeting House after the wedding of Henry Blake and Susanna Darbyshire in 1927, illustrates four elderly Quaker women still attired in Plain poke bonnets (Fig. 6.32).¹¹⁷ Whilst many of the other female attendees are clearly dressed in mainstream 1920s fashions of furs, buttoned coats and cloche hats, one elderly Quaker sitting on the front row can clearly be seen attired in an enveloping mantle, a full-length skirt and a poke bonnet, tied under the chin. The un-pictured bride, Susanna Blake (née Darbyshire) went on to adopt Plain dress her entire lifetime, as she was photographed with her husband in 1950, attired in a dark-coloured full-length double breasted wool coat, instead of a shawl, and a dark poke bonnet (Fig. 6.33).¹¹⁸ As such, these photographs illustrate that, unlike young Quaker women faithful to the jurisdiction of the London Yearly Meeting who were increasingly abandoning Plain practices, young conservative Quakers of the Fritchley schism adopted Plain dress and obediently maintained the practice for their lifetimes throughout the nineteenth and well into the twentieth centuries.

However, whilst Fritchley Quakers represent the geographically densest population of Non-Adaptive British Quaker women and historically the longest proponents of the practice, their customs were factional even from the practices of the majority of the Society's Non-Adaptive British Quaker women and marginal, with only 40 fully-committed male and

¹¹⁶ 'P.E. 1703. Plainness,' *Extracts from the Minutes and Advices of the Yearly Meeting of Friends held in London* (London: W. Phillips, 1802) 130.

¹¹⁷ Lowndes, 'Group outside the Meeting House after the marriage of Henry Blake to Susanna Darbyshire, 1927' *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 161.

¹¹⁸ Lowndes, 'Henry and Susanna Blake about 1950' *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 100.



Fig. 6.32: Detail of 'Group outside the Meeting House after the marriage of Henry Blake to Susanna Darbyshire. 1927. Showing women in Plain dress on the front and second row on the left. Walter Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley* (Fritchley: Fritchley Preparative Meeting, 1986) 161.



Fig. 6.33: *Henry and Susanna Blake*. 1950. Walter Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley* (Fritchley: Fritchley Preparative Meeting, 1986) 100.

female members to the Fritchley Meeting as late as 1898.¹¹⁹ Therefore, Non-Adaptive women such as Cash and including Rebecca Phillips Fox, Mary Fox, Mary Ann Bayes and Mary Bowman, who remained Plain and simultaneously loyal to the London Yearly Meeting during the late nineteenth century, represent a more typical strand of Non-Adaption, through their commitment to their sartorial preferences of Plain dress and their immersion in the Society's religious community during a period when many female members were increasingly incorporating fashionable dress.

Conclusion

Richenda Scott wrote in her biography of Cash's granddaughter *Elizabeth Cadbury: 1858-1951*, that similarly to the Fritchley Quakers, the Cash ancestors had always been prepared 'to scorn convention if necessary, to go forward undaunted in any unpopular action which appealed to them as right.'¹²⁰ Cash's conspicuous preservation of her wearing of Plain Quaker garments certainly from 1860 to 1873, was far removed from the changing styles of fashionable dress with their undecorated appearance, quiet colour and unfashionable designs. As has been discussed in chapter 5, through the examination of the Plain shawls and bonnets in her possession, this manner of dressing signalled her deep affiliation with the conservative Plain lifestyle despite its increasing unpopularity in the Quaker community and indicated her opposition to the fashionable urban styles which were increasingly creeping into Quaker wardrobes.

Yet Cash's Non-Adaptive ascetic style cannot simply be interpreted as an adult reactionary protest, as her childhood education at The Friends School had already made the Plain lifestyle inseparable from religious teachings and the regulation and Advices of the religious community of which she was a member. In line with Bourdieu's assertions, her youthful sartorial training which emphasised the importance of Plain attire therefore meant she was

¹¹⁹ Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 151. The continuation of Non-Adaptive styles of dress in American Quaker communities is far more common, in the conservative Quaker faction in Ohio for example the practice still continues to this day amongst some of its members.

¹²⁰ Richenda Scott, *Elizabeth Cadbury: 1858-1951*. (London: George Harrap, 1955) 9.

not trained to 'perceive urban models and to integrate them.'¹²¹ Cash was considered a pious, dedicated and spiritually enlightened Quaker by fellow female Friends through the entire nineteenth century, to the extent that they appointed to bestow upon her increasingly influential positions within the religious community, which entitled her to some inclusion in the formal debate and decision-making processes in the religious community regarding the issues ascribed to the Women's Meetings.¹²² These details of a life spent under the control and guidance of the religious community and in pursuit of religious obedience through an unshakable faith, are fundamental to the understanding of Cash's wearing of Non-Adaptive Plain dress despite a religious committee finally making 'peculiarity of dress and speech [...] optional,' and this decision being formally written into *Christian Doctrine, Practice and Discipline* in 1861.¹²³

By 1860, Cash was an elderly woman of sixty-five years of age. For the Non-Adaptive Cash, her lifelong employment of Plain dress was a sartorial commitment irrespective of tastes in mainstream and young Friends' fashions. Her continued observance and conspicuous preservation of Plain attire is evident in her surviving garments as well as the three carefully posed photographic portraits of Cash, taken in the 1860s and 70s, which reveal that she clearly believed that traditional Plain attire represented her sense of self and religious sentiment most appropriately.¹²⁴ Her continued use of the Plain attire, into at least the 1870s if not longer, was rooted in the traditional adoption and acceptance of particular garments by the Society centuries previously and her own commitment to never abandoning her religious beliefs.¹²⁵ As Cash advised her granddaughter in the 1870s, she lived with vigilance to the influence of 'various people of differing tastes' and prayed on matters which were contrary to the 'needful discipline.'¹²⁶ Even where decorated garments appear to have surreptitiously entered her wardrobe, such as her black net and lace

¹²¹ Bourdieu, "The peasant and his body," 590.

¹²² London and Middlesex Women's Quarterly Meeting Minutes, 1840, 3rd Month. QM. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London.

¹²³ Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 159 and Kennedy, *British Quakerism 1860-1920*, 216.

¹²⁴ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 60.

¹²⁵ Elizabeth Petipher Cash Qted in Robinson, *Annual Monitor for 1895*, 50.

¹²⁶ Elizabeth Petipher Cash, *Letter to Elizabeth Mary Taylor*, 4th November 1872. MS 466 325/11-12. Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham, Birmingham Library National Archives

mittens, the presence of these items can be seen as having undergone individual negotiation for their ornamentation versus their necessity.¹²⁷

This study has shown that, Cash's Non-Adaptive dress was not a peculiar anomaly. William Pollard recognised the continued presence of 'asceticism or peculiarity in dress,' in 1869, whilst the *Friends' Institute London* portrait anthologies, depict similarly attired late nineteenth century Non-Adaptive Quaker women from the religious community who felt that Plain garments were the truest representation of their religious sensibilities.¹²⁸ The Plain custom had become *optional*, not formally abandoned. As such Non-Adaptive Quaker women exercised their liberty and opted to remain Plain, opposing the influence of fashionable urban styles, an action which still represented obedience to the amended Query.

Even toward the end of her life, Cash was described as an 'aged pilgrim' and whilst 'one little employment after another, was given up on account of increasing feebleness' in the 1890s, she remained vigilant to her reading, studying and repeating of the Bible.¹²⁹ Numerous bouts of bronchitis increasingly depleted her health however, and on April 5th 1894, Cash died at her daughter-in-law's house in Croydon aged an impressive ninety-five years.¹³⁰ Similarly, other Non-Adaptive Quaker women, loyal to the London Yearly Meeting, died before the turn of the nineteenth century; Rebecca Phillips Fox on 2nd January 1875 aged 81, Mary Ann Bayes on 22nd October 1876 aged 83, Mary Bowman on 21st December 1878 aged 82 and Mary Fox on 27th May 1883.¹³¹ With them died too this specific style of Non-Adaptive Quaker Plain dress.

Elderly Quakers who chose to not adapt their clothing to incorporate fashionable dress would clearly have been becoming an increasing minority by 1900. However, public discussions especially in the pages of Quaker journals remained active during the late

¹²⁷ Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800", 401.

¹²⁸ Pollard, "Colloquial Letters. No. 9. My Unspoken Speeches in the late Yearly Meeting", 443 - 444.

¹²⁹ Robinson, *Annual Monitor for 1895*, 61-62.

¹³⁰ 'Elizabeth Petipher Cash,' *Dictionary of Quaker Biography*, DQB CAS (London: Religious Society of Friends Library).

¹³¹ *Friends Institute London C-F*. NSA 13 Shelf 4. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London and *Friends Institute London A-B*. NSA 13 Shelf 4. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends London. .

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries regarding the religious simplicity and self-denial communicated by certain types of fashionable garments. William Frost acknowledges that despite the amendment to the Query of Plainness, conforming fashion was still 'deemed wrong,' because it came from a 'spirit of vanity.'¹³² As such, surviving garments mirror this negotiation and reveal that many female followers, instead of totally abandoning, or totally retaining their Quaker Plain practices as Cash had, were in fact negotiating these reforms through a middle way of sartorial adjustments which incorporated and allowed for a new display of individual fashion identity whilst still retaining affiliation to the traditional Quaker image which may be identified as the practice of these 'moderates' or Semi-Adaptive women. It is to these women which this thesis shall now turn, through the examination of Helen Bright Clark and Geraldine Cadbury as examples of women who practiced moderation in dress or were Semi-Adaptive Quaker women.

¹³² J. William Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," *Quaker Aesthetics. Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003) 33.

Chapter 7 Fashionable Semi-Adaptive case study: Helen Priestman Bright Clark, 1866

Introduction

Many Quaker women, especially those of the younger generations, sought to incorporate fashionable garments into their wardrobes after the relaxation of disciplines regarding Plainness in 1860. These women sought to balance their use of fashion with a moderation that represented their continued obedience to Quakerism and respect for the sense of caution it had always conferred on fashionable garments. William Pollard in 1869 referred to these women as 'moderates' who attired themselves in dress of 'beautiful taste', 'neatness' and 'simplicity', whilst avoiding 'oddities'.¹ This study however, will refer to these women as Semi-Adaptive and one example of this style of a simple and moderate incorporation of fashionable dress may be found in the Quaker wardrobe of this case study, Helen Priestman Bright Clark (Fig. 7.1).

Of the four women chosen for case studies for this thesis, Helen Priestman Bright Clark has proven to be both the most high-profile Quaker woman and the one who has left the largest textual and material legacy. A plethora of letters, photographs and garments archived by the women of the Priestman and Clark families, now housed at the Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive in Street and The Gallery of Costume Platt Hall, Manchester have been viewed and analysed for this chapter. The textual sources have revealed the intimate relationships she shared with three of her aunts, Anna Maria and Mary Priestman and Priscilla Bright McLaren and her passion concerning the issues of women's emancipation both within the Society and nationally. They also show her reservations about her forthcoming betrothal as well as the consultation processes concerning the bridal wear she chose for her marriage in 1866. In addition, these letters have provided glimpses into Bright Clark's religious beliefs and practices and have revealed her position as a spiritually sensitive yet liberal, Quaker woman. Alongside the politically motivated letters that Helen Priestman

¹ William Pollard, "Colloquial Letters. No. 9. My Unspoken Speeches in the late Yearly Meeting," *The Friends Quarterly Examiner. A Religious, Social & Miscellaneous Review conducted by Members of the Religious Society of Friends XI* (1869): 443 - 444.



Fig. 7.1: *Helen Priestman Bright Clark, in a silk dress, with full sleeves at the shoulder, a white collar and large cameo. 1867. Sepia photograph. PHO 1/1/6/1-4. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street. Courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust/C & J Clark Ltd.*

Bright Clark sent and had published in *The Friend*, already cited in Chapter 4, her family life has previously been extensively chronicled through numerous biographies of her father, the Honourable John Bright M.P., and both of these have provided useful contextual sources.²

The initial catalyst to focus on Helen Priestman Bright Clark as a case study for this thesis developed after the viewing of her grey moiré silk wedding dress, at the Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall in Manchester, which was worn for her Quaker marriage to William Stephens Clark on 24th July 1866. Details regarding the engagement, betrothal and Bright Clark's selection of her wedding ensemble shall be extensively discussed throughout this chapter. Alongside Bright Clark's wedding dress, Platt Hall also houses the Plain grey satin wedding dress and pelerine worn by her mother, Helen Priestman for her marriage to John Bright on 27th November 1839. This garment is used within this chapter to compare and contrast the marriage ensemble chosen by her daughter, Helen Priestman Bright Clark, less than thirty years later. Another of Bright Clark's dresses, made of a grey and bright-blue striped silk and also worn in 1866, housed at the Alfred Gillett Trust of Clarks Archive, additionally provides further material evidence of Helen P. B. Clark's sartorial choices for evening wear and shall be compared with her wedding ensemble later in the chapter.³

Biographies of John Bright M.P. often mention both his and his wife Elizabeth Priestman's conservative Quaker piety as well as their active involvement in movements for social improvement during the 1830s.⁴ In addition, her aunts Anna Maria and Mary Priestman, friends of American anti-slavery advocate, and leading suffrage reformer, Elizabeth Cady Stanton (Fig. 4.2, already noted in Chapter 4), were deeply influential in her upbringing. Helen Priestman Bright Clark clearly had an ancestry formed of politically active, loyal Quakers. As such, her parents' Quaker beliefs and practices, alongside other familial influences on Bright Clark, shall initially be considered to contextualise the social and religious environment in which her sartorial decisions were made. Furthermore, her sartorial choices which were highly influenced by the recommendations of her aunt, Priscilla

² Keith Robbins, *John Bright* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979)

³ It is not known why Bright Clark's dresses are split between these two archives.

⁴ Sandra Stanley Holton, *Quaker Women. Personal Life, Memory and Radicalism in the Lives of Women Friends, 1780 - 1930* (London: Routledge, 2007): 69. According to Holton, Elizabeth Priestman was involved in 'philanthropy towards the poor', 'humanitarian and moral reform movements [...] especially [...] abolition and of temperance' and she established 'a voluntary school for the children of the poor.'

Bright McLaren, are analysed using the theoretical framework's outlined by Petr Bogatyrev and Pierre Bourdieu, in order to analyse how Bright Clark negotiated introducing fashionable urban clothing into her wardrobe despite it being in contravention to her traditional, rural Quaker Plain upbringing.⁵

Helen Priestman Bright's Parents and Early Life

Born on 20th October 1840 in Rochdale, Helen Priestman Bright was the only daughter of John Bright M.P. (Fig. 7.2) and his first wife, the Newcastle Quaker, Elizabeth Priestman Bright. Following the birth however, 'pleasure was mixed with anxiety about the mother's condition' as Elizabeth Priestman Bright's health deteriorated and 'frequent bouts of coughing' coupled with weakness made her increasingly unable to care for the baby, Helen.⁶ John Bright moved his wife away from the family home to Leamington Spa in an effort to improve her health. As Elizabeth Priestman worsened, her sister Margaret Priestman joined her and cared for the baby Helen and for her dying sister. Elizabeth Priestman never recovered and she died from tuberculosis less than a year later, on 10th September 1841 at the age of only twenty-six.⁷

Preceding her death however, John Bright's biographer Keith Robbins, notes at length the emphasis Elizabeth Priestman and her husband placed on obedience to Plain Quaker Advices during their courtship and short marriage.⁸ According to Robbins, Elizabeth Priestman stated during their courtship that unity in religious opinion was of vital importance to their future happiness. Despite her parents being active in the anti-slavery movement, they were disturbed by John Bright's increasing involvement in the national political system, fearing it would lead him astray from domestic duties and spiritual peace. Elizabeth Priestman sought assurances that his involvement sprang from a sense of duty

⁵ Petr Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*. Translated from Slovak by Richard. G. Crum, (Re-printed The Hague & Paris: Mouton, [1937] 1971) and Pierre Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 1962. Re-printed in *Ethnography*, 5. 4. (2004): 579-600.

⁶ Robbins, *John Bright*, 27-28.

⁷ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 75.

⁸ Robbins, *John Bright*, 23.



Fig. 7.2: Rupert Potter. *John Bright M.P.* 1879. Carbon Print. NPG P862. National Portrait Gallery, London. Web. 16th June 2015. © National Portrait Gallery, London <http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portraitLarge/mw14647/John-Bright?LinkID=mp00555&role=sit&rNo=3>

rather than from restlessness or excitement and ultimately Bright's encouragement and eagerness won Elizabeth over.⁹

Despite their new home, One Ash in Rochdale, being furnished with a wine cellar, the couple were teetotallers and even eschewed any liquor in desserts that were traditionally made using spirits. Bright's sister Priscilla commented that at the wedding breakfast, 'we had [...] everything in which wine is generally put, and which until now has been thought impossible to make without wine.'¹⁰ John Bright had been an active Temperance campaigner since his early twenties, having founded the Rochdale Juvenile Temperance Band in 1830.¹¹ In addition, according to Robbins, the couple agreed early in their marriage to 'not make a parade of any superior wealth and comforts they might possess.'¹² Indeed, Elizabeth Priestman's wedding ensemble provides a glimpse into the Quaker Plain sartorial choices she made during this period.

Worn for her marriage in November 1839 at Newcastle Friends Meeting House, her wedding ensemble consists of a grey satin dress, matching pelerine and pale ochre-colour silk Plain Quaker bonnet (Fig. 7.3, 7.4 & 7.5) all now housed at the Gallery of Costume Platt Hall in Manchester, near the Bright family home.¹³ Sandra Stanley Holton has commented on these garments that 'whilst the Priestmans were Plain Friends, the wedding dress worn by Elizabeth Priestman combined Quakerly restraint with fashionable detail.'¹⁴ However, as Chapter 3 argued, Plain Friends did incorporate fashionable cuts and silhouettes into their otherwise Plain attire even before 1860, as well as it being publicly acknowledged that despite eschewing trimmings and decoration, Plain Friends were 'famous for the exquisite delicacy of their materials.'¹⁵

⁹ Robbins, *John Bright*, 20.

¹⁰ Priscilla Bright to M. Lucas. 6th December 1839. Bright MS. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street as Qted in Robbins, *John Bright*, 25.

¹¹ Robbins, *John Bright*, 12.

¹² Robbins, *John Bright*, 23.

¹³ Wedding dress and pelerine, 1839. 1960.222. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester and Bonnet, 1839. 1960.223/2. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester.

¹⁴ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 68.

¹⁵ "The Decline of Quakerism," *The Chester Chronicle*, 24th December 1858: 2.



Fig. 7.3: *Wedding Dress, worn by Elizabeth Priestman. 1839. Grey silk satin. 1960.222.*
Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester. Personal photograph by the author. 15th May 2013.



Fig. 7.4: *Pelerine and Wedding Dress, worn by Elizabeth Priestman. 1839. Grey silk satin. 1960.222. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester. Personal photograph by the author. 15th May 2013.*



Fig. 7.5: *Gold coloured bonnet, worn by Elizabeth Priestman. 1839. Gold silk satin. 1960.223/2. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester. Personal photograph by the author. 15th May 2013.*

The grey dress and matching pelerine are thus constructed from a high quality mid-grey satin with a lustrous sheen.¹⁶ The triangular pelerine, 15.5 inches in length, is entirely Plain, being un-edged, unembroidered, unadorned and lined with white silk (Fig. 7.6). Pelerines were fashionable during the 1830s, and featured a v-shaped back similar in style to that chosen by Elizabeth Priestman, yet these were most commonly constructed of embroidered white muslin, not the plain, unembroidered silk Priestman chose.¹⁷ The one-piece dress is of a typically fashionable silhouette for the late 1830s (Fig. 7.7). The nearly oval shaped neckline is low on the shoulders. The main fashionable feature are the ballooning gigot sleeves with a dropped shoulder line, which feature a row of vertical pleats and gathering up the sleeve width. These types of sleeves were, however, becoming increasingly unfashionable and by 1840 most sleeves were closely fitted.¹⁸ The bodice, lined with white cotton, features panels of multiple vertical pleats across the back where it fastens with hooks and eyes (Fig. 7.8). The centre front panel of the bodice is cut with a v-shape and features flat horizontal folds of the fabric that mirror the neckline of the dress. The waistline is a little high and the skirt, lined in glazed cotton, falls in gathers from the waistband. Whilst these garment features are entirely typical of the fashionable silhouette and construction of a late 1830s dress, velvet ribbon bows, lace trimming and embroidery ornamentation typical of the most fashionable examples of garments from this period, are entirely absent. As Edwina Ehrman has asserted, despite few wedding dresses surviving from the early nineteenth century, from newspaper reports we know the most fashionable wedding dresses featured great quantities of expensive silk lace and embroidery.¹⁹ The lack of any trimmings on Elizabeth Priestman's dress is therefore particularly conspicuous. In addition, the skirt is without flouncing which became increasingly fashionable during the 1830s.²⁰ Therefore, as this garment reveals a fashionable silhouette made from fine quality plain fabric but a conspicuous lack of ornamentation and trimming, it is reasonable to

¹⁶ Silver and white, or fabric with a silver-grey sheen, were fashionable for bridal attire throughout the eighteenth and into the opening decades of the nineteenth century, as such the lustrous grey colour of Elizabeth Priestman's wedding dress would not have been particularly unusual. See Edwina Ehrman, *The Wedding Dress: 300 Years of Bridal Fashions* (London: V&A, 2011) 48.

¹⁷ Anne Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories* (London: Herbert Jenkins, [1961] 1984) 24.

¹⁸ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 20.

¹⁹ Ehrman, *The Wedding Dress*, 41 & 48.

²⁰ Ehrman, *The Wedding Dress*, 54.



Fig. 7.6: *Pelerine*. 1839. Grey silk satin. 1960.222. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester. Personal photograph by the author. 15th May 2013.



Fig. 7.7: Fashionable silhouette of the wedding dress worn by Elizabeth Priestman. 1839. Grey silk satin. Worn by Elizabeth Priestman. 1960.222. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester. Personal photograph by the author. 15th May 2013.



Fig. 7.8: Detail of back of bodice on wedding dress. 1839. Grey silk satin. 1960.222. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester. Personal photograph by the author. 15th May 2013.

classify it as Quaker Plain. Such a choice would have been fitting for the religious, solemn occasion in the presence of her Plain Quaker family.

Elizabeth's husband John Bright was equally preoccupied with maintaining sartorial simplicity in his attire his entire life, long after the relaxation of the Plainness query in 1860. Robbins notes that in 1869 Bright, who became a Liberal Member of Parliament in 1858, objected to the wearing of full Court attire, believing it compromised his 'self-respect.' Whilst once again, Robbins failed to note his sources, it appears that ultimately, Bright was permitted by Gladstone instead to wear 'plain dress of black velvet [...with] no need to sport 'effulgent trumpery.'²¹

Elizabeth Priestman Bright's early death however, prevented her religious beliefs or Plain practices having a lasting impact on her daughter and as such, other members of the Priestman and Bright families must be considered for their sartorial and religious influences. The complex organisation of Helen Priestman Bright's upbringing and education after her mother's death, which has been extensively discussed by Sandra Stanley Holton, was shared between firstly her paternal aunt, Priscilla Bright (later Bright McLaren Fig. 7.9) who kept house for her brother after his wife's death, and later by her maternal aunts, Margaret Wheeler (née Priestman) and Anna Maria Priestman.²² The Priestman women increasingly took over Helen Priestman Bright's care and education after her new step-mother, Margaret Elizabeth Bright (née Leatham and referred to by the Priestmans as 'M.E.B.') whom John Bright married in 1847, bore seven children between 1848 and 1858. Her relationship with the young Helen became increasingly strained.²³ By 1849, when Helen was nine years old, an agreement had been reached for her to spend six months of each year at the 32-year-old, widowed, Margaret Wheeler's house, Ashley Grange, where lessons were delivered by Wheeler and her younger sister Anna Maria Priestman, who was still only 21 years old (Fig.

²¹ Robbins, *John Bright*, 206-207. During 1869, men's full court attire was prescribed as a cloth coat and breeches made of black silk velvet and a waistcoat of plain white silk, white silk stockings, black leather shoes with cut steel shoe buckles, a black beaver or silk cocked hat and sword belt with a sword. Lace frills and ruffles were worn at the neck and cuffs. The levée coat was embellished with gold lace on the collar, cuffs and pocket flaps. Specifications for this 'old style' court attire can be found in Lord Chamberlain, *Dress and Insignia worn at His Majesty's Court, issued with the authority of the Lord Chamberlain* (London: Harrison & Sons, 1921) 77.

²² Holton, *Quaker Women*, 102-106.

²³ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 97 & 99.



Fig. 7.9: Elliot & Fry. *Priscilla Bright McLaren*. c.1870s. Albumen cabinet card. NPGx20340.

National Portrait Gallery, London. Web. 16th June 2015. © National Portrait Gallery, London

<http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw163806/Priscilla-McLaren?LinkID=mp102091&role=sit&rNo=0#sitter>

7.10).²⁴ Little is documented regarding the subjects undertaken, though it would be prudent to assume those chosen were sober and practical. According to Holton, the women preferred to read Helen books on modern European history rather than children's stories which they felt 'as prejudicial as the romances we hear so much condemned for older minds.'²⁵

It is unclear the extent to which these educational subjects extended to religious concerns. Anna Maria Priestman was an Evangelical Quaker who openly concerned herself far more with practical causes, especially woman's emancipation, than with theological issues. Meanwhile her sister Margaret, according to Holton, preferred the company of 'those Friends she termed the 'onward party' within the Society' and was one of the members of the community who sought 'relaxation of Church disciplines, especially [...] regarding dress, language usage, the use of headstones and marrying out.'²⁶ As such, Bright Clark was educated from a young age in international political causes by aunts who were religiously liberal and actively sought to work for the betterment of the place of women in society and for the relaxation of Quaker peculiarities.

As regards dress however, the most influential of Helen's relatives was her paternal aunt, Priscilla Bright McLaren. Sister to John Bright and wife of the non-Quaker Scottish Liberal M.P. Duncan McLaren, Priscilla Bright McLaren was formally disowned by the Religious Society of Friends in 1848, after her marriage to the Presbyterian in a registry office wedding. Despite this however, Bright McLaren continued to identify herself as Quaker and persisted in attending local Meetings for Worship in her new home town of Edinburgh as well as London Yearly Meeting.²⁷ Encouraged by the active support she contributed to her brother's political campaigning, according to Holton, the unmarried Priscilla Bright during the 1840s created a female 'salon for her Rochdale friends where visiting lecturers were

²⁴ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 102 & 106.

²⁵ A.M. Priestman to J. Pease. 11th February, 13th March, 4th April, 15th September 1850. MIL 22/01 (a). Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street. As Qted in Holton, *Quaker Women*, 102.

²⁶ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 117.

²⁷ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 100.



Fig. 7.10: (L-R) Margaret Tanner (née Priestman) in a cape, Mary Priestman and Anna Maria Priestman both in shawls. 2nd August 1890. JBG8/28. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street. Courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust/C & J Clark Ltd.

always sure of an interested audience.¹²⁸ The platform supported the work of her brother by serving as hostess to his political associates, whilst exposing a politically-minded female audience to discussions regarding women's enfranchisement, philanthropy and nationally political 'larger reform efforts.'¹²⁹ Yet even following her marriage and disownment, Bright McLaren continued to associate with radical Quaker women and encouraged Helen Priestman Bright Clark in such interests by sharing her experiences. On 11th June 1866 despite many of their letters being taken up with discussions of wedding attire, she described to Bright Clark 'a delightful visit at fellow Quaker Mrs P. A. Fayle's' where she had met the Irish social reformer and suffrage campaigner, Frances Power Cobbe, who she described as 'splendid and so talented, what a face she has for strength.'¹³⁰

From surviving photographs of Priscilla Bright McLaren however, it appears her Quaker beliefs did not extend to Plainness or moderation in dress. Her albumen cabinet card portrait (Fig. 7.10), housed in the National Portrait Gallery London, displays her wearing highly trimmed and ornamented garments and accessories. She is presented attired in a dress embellished with lace bows of ribbon, with a v-shaped bodice filled with a chemisette with a frilled collar, items which were fashionable during the 1870s.³¹ Therefore, as Bright McLaren chose to adorn herself in decorative, fashionable garments whilst being familiar with Quaker religious sartorial recommendations, her counsel would have been most relevant for Helen who, as her letters attest, aspired to display a degree of fashionability in the bridal attire.

The sartorial influence of Priscilla Bright McLaren on her niece, Helen Priestman Bright Clark

An enormous volume of letters survives within the Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive between Helen and her aunt, during the months leading up to Bright Clarks' marriage on

²⁸ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 86.

²⁹ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 86-87.

³⁰ Priscilla Bright McLaren to Helen Priestman Bright. 11th June 1866. MIL43. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street.

³¹ Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 64.

24th July 1866, specifically discussing clothing. By the beginning of June 1866 the wedding trousseau as well as furniture for her future marital home was already being chosen and purchased in several unspecified shops in London, Newcastle and Manchester.³² Bright Clark's diary entry for June 6th, notes she had been, 'shopping in the morning' whilst visiting Priestman relatives in Newcastle.³³ In addition, a letter sent to her by Priscilla Bright McLaren that same day reveals that fabric had already been purchased in London, including the grey moiré silk used to make her wedding dress, now in the Platt Hall collection. In the 6th June 1866 letter to Bright Clark, Bright McLaren also gave her detailed directives regarding the construction of the wedding dress, including allowing extra length for a train and vehemently instructing, 'Do not have the moirée [sic] lined- it flows better without and is cooler and hem it long behind. It can be made shorter afterwards if thou wishes it.'³⁴

The letter also reveals that on the 5th June 1866, further fabrics had been shipped to Bright Clark in Newcastle from Bright McLaren in London. Clearly, much of the decision-making regarding fabric and dresses was left to the fashionable aunt who whilst relishing the activity, was also 'anxious to please.'³⁵ Bright McLaren kept Bright Clark abreast of every decision, and indecision, she made regarding fabrics and garments. She recounted to Helen the process of exchanging a 'most beautiful brown [dress] with a delicate white stripe, which I thought would have been beautiful to go to Meeting in, it was six guineas.'³⁶ Yet fearing that Helen may 'grudge the expense' of this very costly item, she exchanged it, further commenting:

³² Trousseaus, or clothes for the bride, were traditionally a gift from her father to ensure she would be properly clothed for the first year of her marriage once she had legally left her father's home. According to Kelley Graham, the custom was put in place to protect the new wife against any neglect she may suffer in her new household. Whilst the practice dated back to the ancient Greeks, Victorians still insisted on its importance. The trousseau included multiples of many items including corsets, nightgowns, chemisettes and stockings as well as dresses for all occasions. Thus department stores, during the mid-to-late nineteenth century, were conveniently placed to offer the capacity of goods required alongside basic preassembled trousseaus for brides. See Kelley Graham, *Gone to the Shops: Shopping in Victorian England* (London: Praeger, 2008) 46-47.

³³ Helen Priestman Bright Diary. 6th June 1866. MIL69. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street,

³⁴ Priscilla Bright McLaren to Helen Bright Clark. 6th June 1866. MIL43. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

³⁵ Priscilla Bright McLaren to Helen Bright Clark. 6th June 1866. MIL43. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

³⁶ Priscilla Bright McLaren to Helen Bright Clark. 6th June 1866. MIL43. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

I told your Papa about it and he said I ought to have kept it and I meant to go back and change it again but my energy failed me and as the purple stripe is extremely pretty and would look very nice with a white mantle I have sent it. But I thought it would be nice for thee to buy one without any black in it at your Uncle Charles' as thou has not many dresses. I thought thou might like to let your Aunt see the lace mantle.³⁷

Such an exceptionally revealing letter illustrates that by the 6th June 1866 a dress with a 'purple stripe', the moiré silk for the wedding dress, a lace mantle and 'feathers' had all already been purchased for the bride's new wardrobe.³⁸ In addition, Bright McLaren was clearly making fashionable sartorial decisions for her niece Helen, whilst being mindful of the garments' later use at Quaker Meetings and with respect to economy.

Yet whilst the purple striped fabric Bright McLaren purchased for Bright Clark has not materialised in the dress collections consulted, another surviving dress produced for the wedding trousseau belonging to Helen Priestman Bright Clark provides further evidence of Bright McLaren's fashionable influence over her niece during this period.

Worn the day before her marriage, on the evening of the 23rd July 1866, at the family gathering held at her father and step-mother's home, Greenbank in Rochdale, Bright Clark's blue and grey striped silk dress is conspicuously fashionable.³⁹ The dress is made of a grey-blue and bright blue, vertical striped silk with a matching blue silk fringe at the epaulettes, cuffs and bordering the centre back bow (Fig. 7.11). The dress's silhouette is typically fashionable for the period and certainly would have been worn with a skirt-supporting hooped crinoline. The wide skirt is heavily pleated from the waistband around the sides and gathered at the centre-back, with less pleating across the centre-front, thus fashionably slightly flattening the silhouette of the skirt at the front. The one-piece dress has full sleeves, inserted from a dropped shoulder line with wide epaulettes trimmed with silk fringe

³⁷ Priscilla Bright McLaren to Helen Bright Clark. 6th June 1866. MIL43. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

³⁸ Priscilla Bright McLaren to Helen Bright Clark. 6th June 1866. MIL43. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

³⁹ Dress, 1866. COST Box 7/1. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.



Fig. 7.11: Dress worn by Helen Priestman Bright Clark the night before her wedding. 1866. Striped silk, silk fringe, glass beads. COST Box 7/1. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street. Personal photograph by the author. 17th June 2015. *Courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust/C & J Clark Ltd.*

(Fig. 7.12). The dress features hook and eye fastenings up the centre-front of the bodice, concealed by cut glass beads (Fig. 7.13). The turned, square cuffs additionally feature two rows of silk fringing (Fig. 7.14). Perhaps most strikingly, the dress also features a matching, separate bow which would have attached to the centre back of the waistband in two panels, similar to a small polonaise or basque, and is entirely edged with the silk fringing (Fig. 7.15).

The bright blue hue of the silk's stripe and fringing provide evidence of Charlotte Nicklas' acknowledgement of the increasing availability of aniline blue dyes during the 1860s and thus the fashion for blue dresses during the decade.⁴⁰ In fact, in support of the fashionability of the dresses silhouette, colour, fabric and trimming, the V&A houses a 'typical example of women's fashionable day wear' from 1866 (Fig. 7.16) remarkably similar in design to the Helen Priestman Bright Clark garment. The V&A dress is also composed of a grey and blue vertical striped silk, with plain width of material at the front of the skirt and gored sections at the sides and back from the waistband, clear glass beads and similarly features a silk fringing, though in a cream colour, which trims the bodice.

The fashion of this style is further confirmed through consultation of articles in the mainstream press. In May 1866, the *Liverpool Mercury* republished "Fashions for May" from the fashion journal *Le Follet*, which promoted the fashionability of striped fabrics, stating, 'we still find that striped or plain materials are more in favour than any other, they are so decidedly the most suitable for skirts on the bias.' In addition, the article recommended matching basques attached from the waistband:

[...] as the warmer weather approaches, it appears that the caraque, formed simply by basques fastened onto the waist-band, will be adopted [...] these basques must be well cut, and fitted to the waist in such a manner that they do not appear separate.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Charlotte Nicklas, *Splendid Hues: Colour, Dyes, everyday science and women's fashion, 1840-1875*, University of Brighton PhD (2009), 216.

⁴¹ "Fashions for May," *Liverpool Mercury*, 1st May 1866: 7.



Fig. 7.12: *Detail of bodice of dress. 1866. Striped silk, silk fringe, glass beads. COST Box 7/1. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street. Personal photograph by the author. 17th June 2015. Courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust/C & J Clark Ltd.*



Fig. 7.13: *Detail of glass beads on bodice.* 1866. Striped silk, silk fringe. COST Box 7/1. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street. Personal photograph by the author. 17th June 2015.

Courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust/C & J Clark Ltd.



Fig. 7.14: *Detail of cuff fringing.* 1866. Striped silk, silk fringe. COST Box 7/1. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street. Personal photograph by the author. 17th June 2015. *Courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust/C & J Clark Ltd.*



Fig. 7.15: Centre back panels and belt bow, similar to a mini-polonaise or basque. 1866. Striped silk, silk fringe. COST Box 7/1. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street. Personal photograph by the author. 17th June 2015. *Courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust/C & J Clark Ltd.*



Fig. 7.16: *Blue and grey striped fashionable dress.* 1866. Silk trimmed with bugle beads and silk fringe, lined with cotton, reinforced with whalebone. T.174&A-1965. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Web 16th June 2015. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O13841>

Frustratingly, no mention of the grey-blue striped gown appears in any of the letters between Bright Clark and Bright McLaren. It is unlikely that Bright Clark had exclusive sartorial choice over the design and construction of this highly fashionable garment, as she sought Bright McLaren's advice regarding every sartorial decision for the garments being worn by the wedding party.

In her letters, the young bride *did* attempt at times to rebuff some of her aunt's sartorial suggestions. Her answering letter to Bright McLaren, dated 8th June 1866, dismissed the suggestion from her aunt that she lacked dresses, informing her, 'I do not intend having any more dresses made except some thin ones.'⁴² However, despite her attempt to moderate Bright McLaren's proposals in the quantity of new dresses in her trousseau, Bright Clark did aspire to a degree of fashionability in her garments. At the end of the letter, Bright Clark sought Bright McLaren's opinion on the bridesmaid dress fabric, her step-mother's colour of dress, and 'what sort of scarfs or cloak' the bridesmaids should wear, asking:

[...] does thou think white muslin would do for dresses for Williams's sisters and Minnie? Mama will have white without any colour, which I think might look rather odd. And what sort of scarfs [sic] or cloaks could they wear with white muslin dresses?

White Alpaca is very silky and pretty but would not do over muslin. Grenadine is the only thing I can think of but it is expensive. Would the enclosed pattern be nice for the dress?⁴³

Alongside the letter, Bright Clark sent Bright McLaren a swatch of white silk Grenadine Muslin chosen for the bridesmaid dresses for approval (Fig. 7.17) which she admitted to her future sister-in-law, Eleanor Clark, on the 15th June were 'very thin, but have a thicker stripe.'⁴⁴ Bright Clark's choice of material and pattern for the bridesmaids' gowns met Bright McLaren's sartorial approval, as she replied, 'the muslin (white) pattern is exquisite and will

⁴² Helen Bright Clark to Priscilla Bright McLaren. 8th June 1866. MIL59. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁴³ Helen Bright Clark to Priscilla Bright McLaren. 8th June 1866. MIL59. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁴⁴ Helen Bright Clark to Eleanor Clark. 15th June 1866. MIL58. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

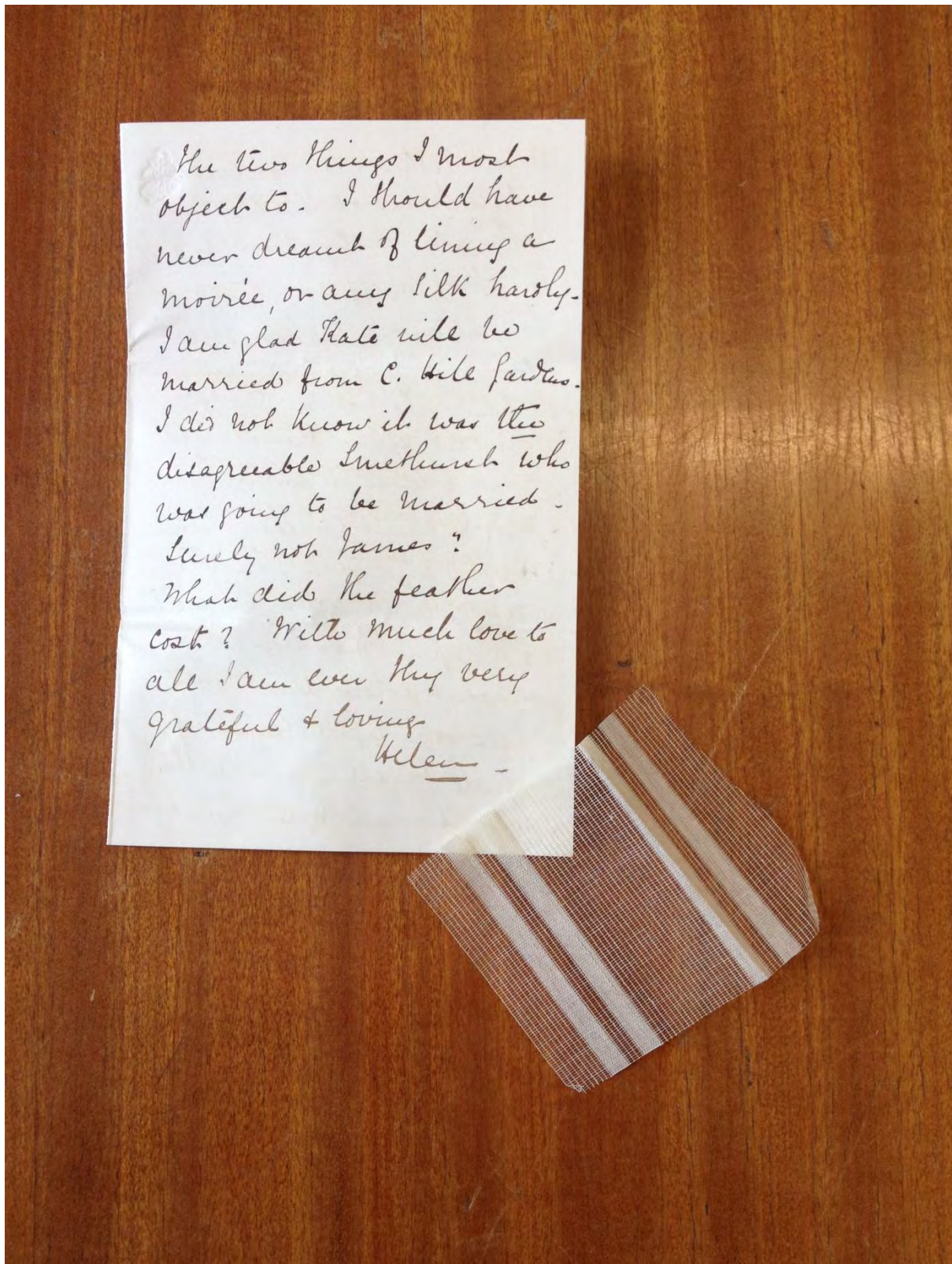


Fig. 7.17: Letter and fabric swatch for bridesmaid dresses. Helen Bright Clark to Priscilla Bright McLaren. 8th June 1866. MIL59. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street. Personal photograph by the author. 17th June 2015. *Courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust/C & J Clark Ltd.*

look lovely for the Bridesmaids.' Bright McLaren was however, in the same letter unabashed about criticising other sartorial choices suggested by Bright Clark. On 11th June 1866, Bright McLaren objected to Bright Clark's suggestions of white cloaks over the bridesmaids white muslin dresses, warning that:

White mantles will look insipid unless made of the same material trimmed with a pretty mauve ribbon, but if you would get nice blue or mauve grenadine mantles they would be the nicest. It is now so much the style to have the mantle like the dress that the same would look 'very sweet' if pretty trimmed with a colour [...]⁴⁵

By 21st June 1866, with the wedding commencing a month hence, no decision had been reached regarding the style of the bridesmaids' matching mantle and dress, despite Bright Clark claiming she would 'make some further enquiries.'⁴⁶ In response, Bright McLaren commandeered the situation, recounting to Bright Clark her visit to the fashionable London department store on Oxford Street, Marshall & Snelgrove, to enquire about circular mantles for the bridesmaids. As Kelley Graham notes, the latest information on fashionable styles during the nineteenth century was gleaned from a mixture of 'magazines, catalogues, the information network of female relatives, or even trips to larger towns,' alongside advice elicited from department store assistants.⁴⁷ Clearly, Bright McLaren was familiar with department stores, and particularly with Marshall & Snelgrove, as an aid in her quest for fashion knowledge. Whilst her visit to Marshall & Snelgrove was apparently ostensibly 'to get some dresses for Lilla' (her daughter), she was advised by a 'very nice young man [...] with a sort of prophetite perception' who recommended small circular mantles, instead of a burnous, in the same fabric as the dress and 'said scarfs were also being worn.'⁴⁸

In the one surviving wedding photograph from the occasion, taken on the lawn outside of Greenbank in Rochdale, the subtleties of the scarves and mantles ultimately worn by the five bridesmaids are sadly indistinguishable. The limited photographic techniques of the

⁴⁵ Priscilla Bright McLaren to Helen Bright Clark. 11th June 1866. MIL43. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁴⁶ Helen Bright Clark to Eleanor Clark. 15th June 1866. MIL58. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁴⁷ Kelley Graham, *Gone to the Shops: Shopping in Victorian England* (London: Praeger, 2008) 41.

⁴⁸ Priscilla Bright McLaren to Helen Bright Clark. 21st June 1866. MIL43. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

period were clearly overwhelmed by the expanse of what we know to be white, worn by the bridesmaids, flattening and bleaching the intricacies of the image (Fig. 7.18). Yet despite such limitation it is clear that the bridesmaids did wear mantles or capes, along with fashionable 'nice little bonnets' which Helen herself chose and bought.⁴⁹ These bonnets, unlike the Plain Quaker style, sit fashionably far back off the face revealing the countenance, have a clear line of frilling at the brim and are tied under the chin with wide bows (Fig. 7.19). As the five bridesmaids are scattered amongst the family group, obscured behind the bride, groom and parents, it is unclear whether they are wearing fashionable crinolines. It would be entirely appropriate to assume they are however, due to Bright McLaren's fashionable sartorial influence coupled with the fact that other women of the party clearly sport wide skirts supported by crinolines (Fig. 7.20).

Bright McLaren clearly felt the visit to the fashionable department store and the salesman's advice to be a success, as she spent several pages recommending suitable trimmings and their colours to Bright Clark for the bridesmaids' dresses, finally settling upon:

[...] a peach coloured ribbon or strap across the shoulder of the dress, something like the cappets that used to be worn and which are much used. A bow with [...] longer ends of course bound with peach and scarfes [sic] like the dress without any trimming.⁵⁰

She finalised the letter by suggesting that Bright Clark post her the material and bridesmaids' measurements, in order to 'get them made for thee at Marshall and Snelgrove.'⁵¹ Once again however, Bright McLaren's fervour was met with a muted response. In answer to the several pages of sartorial recommendations, Bright Clark simply

⁴⁹ Helen Bright Clark to William Stephens Clark. 17th July 1866. MIL55. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁵⁰ Priscilla Bright McLaren to Helen Bright Clark. 21st June 1866. MIL43. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁵¹ Priscilla Bright McLaren to Helen Bright Clark. 21st June 1866. MIL43. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.



Fig. 7.18: *Bright Clark wedding photograph.* 1866. Black and white photograph mounted on card. PHO 1/1/5/23-24. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street.. *Courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust/C & J Clark Ltd.*



Fig. 7.19: Detail of Helen Priestman Bright Clark (centre) in Bright Clark wedding photograph. 1866. Black and white photograph mounted on card. PHO 1/1/5/23-24. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street. Courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust/C & J Clark Ltd.



Fig. 7.20: Detail of guest wearing a skirt supported by a cage-crinoline (centre), in Bright Clark wedding photograph. 1866. Black and white photograph mounted on card. PHO 1/1/5/23-24. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street. Courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust/C & J Clark Ltd.

stated, 'I quite agree with thee that plain scarves will be the nicest and they are to be much worn with muslins like the dresses, I am told.'⁵²

As already noted, Bright Clark's upbringing and education after her mother's death fell to Bright McLaren for six years between 1841 and 1847. Clearly, she consequently acted as a surrogate maternal influence Bright Clark's entire life by nurturing her feminine cultural training in being 'attentive to the external details of the person,' by informing her of the latest London fashions.⁵³ According to Bourdieu's 1962 article 'The Peasant and His Body,' such woman-to-woman sartorial communication, predisposes women to be more aware of people's clothing and bearing and thus to carefully appraise their own appearance. As such, Pierre Bourdieu and Petr Bogatyrev's theoretical frameworks may now usefully be deployed in this context to analyse the structure of how Semi-Adaptive women who lived in small towns and in the country, such as Bright Clark in Rochdale and then in Street, negotiated the opposing influences of introducing fashionable urban garments into their ensembles despite it being in contravention to their Quaker Plain upbringings.

Bourdieu's 'Clash of Civilisations' and its relation to Bright Clark

In the case of this chapter, Bourdieu and Bogatyrev's proposals, introduced in chapter 6, can be used to evaluate the filtering of fashion consciousness, the 'aggressor', into the wardrobes of nineteenth-century women familiar with traditional Quaker Plain styles, here the 'opposing force', which previously scorned it.⁵⁴ Bourdieu's emphasis on how cultural shifts are manifested through 'tenue' e.g. clothing, appearance, bearing and conduct, are therefore especially relevant to this research.

Bright McLaren and Bright Clark's journeys into large cities including London and Newcastle, additionally illustrate Bourdieu's assertion that as fashion comes 'from the city', these locations are key sites for women's sartorial education. Here they may observe and identify

⁵² Helen Bright Clark to Priscilla Bright McLaren. 23rd June 1866. MIL59. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁵³ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 590.

⁵⁴ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 58

the newest fashionable clothing so they may integrate this sartorial appearance, or 'tenue', into their own wardrobe, even if modestly. For Bourdieu, the cosmopolitan city is the locus of a woman's fashionable training because 'the city represents for them the hope of emancipation.'⁵⁵ During the mid-nineteenth century, the rise of respectable public facilities for women within city centres, such as tea shops and department stores, transformed women's position by emancipating them from being 'ensconced in domesticity.'⁵⁶ For the suffrage campaigner Bright Clark and her aunt Bright McLaren, who had regularly attended the Ladies' Gallery at House of Commons to watch John Bright speak on Reform matters and witness male political figures debate, London would indeed have represented political engagement and thus political and as well as social emancipation.⁵⁷ As such, fashionable London stores such as Marshall & Snelgrove enabled Bright McLaren to communicate to Bright Clark the most fashionable appearance of the women of the city and thus adopt a 'tenue' associated with the urban and, through association, emancipation. Yet despite Bright McLaren's lengthy sartorial recommendations for bridesmaids' garments, mantles and bonnets, the only wedding garment from Bright Clark's betrothal to have survived in a dress collection is the moiré silk dress itself.

Helen Priestman Bright Clark's Wedding dress

Whilst her blue striped dress lies in the store of the Clark's Archives in Street, Somerset, Helen Priestman Bright Clark's wedding dress is housed at the Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall in Manchester along with her biological mother's wedding attire.⁵⁸ Despite being produced from striking and fashionable grey moiré silk, the garment construction and shape are simple and it is noticeably untrimmed. The watered finish of the moiré silk, created by forcing the fabric through copper ribbed rollers whilst being steamed, is particularly dominating due to both the sheer expanse of dress material employed, and the absence of

⁵⁵ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 589

⁵⁶ Wendy Parkins, "The Epidemic of Purple, White and Green: Fashion and the Suffragette Movement in Britain 1908-14," *Fashioning the Body Politic: Dress, Gender and Citizenship* (Oxford: Berg, 2002) 98.

⁵⁷ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 131.

⁵⁸ A similarly unembellished yet fashionably silhouetted wedding dress circa 1875, in plain blue-grey silk, and worn by an unknown Quaker woman, is housed at Bakewell Old House Museum. Blue-grey silk wedding dress, c. 1875. 6311. Bakewell Old House Museum, Derbyshire. See Appendix 2.1 for further details.

ornamentation which further draws the eye to the finish of the fabric (Fig. 7.21).⁵⁹ Bright Clark's choice of a grey colour for the moiré silk fabric of her wedding dress is notable, as white wedding dresses had initially become fashionable during the eighteenth century and, according to Edwina Erhman, had by the nineteenth century become 'traditional rather than merely fashionable.'⁶⁰ Moiré was a particularly fashionable silk finish however, with the *Illustrated Times*, in April 1865, describing one of the 'latest toilettes' as composed of 'grey moiré, opening, in both the front and at the back, over a breadth of blue moiré. On each seam of the grey robe is a handsome passementerie of grey and blue.'⁶¹

The one-piece dress is composed of a joined skirt and bodice, with a slim matching waistband around the slightly raised waistline creating a short bodice, as was the fashion after 1865.⁶² The long sleeves of the dress are slim and plain (Fig. 7.22). The bodice neckline is cut round and high and would have been worn with a narrow collar, as was the fashion, though none belonging to Bright Clark have survived. The high neckline and long sleeves are typical for nineteenth century bridal dresses, as bare arms and a low décolletage were considered improper for day-wear.⁶³ The bodice features centre front buttons covered in matching silk, which conceal the hook and eye fastenings (Fig. 7.23). The skirt of the dress is set onto the waistband and joined to the bodice, with a plain width at the front and pleated sections at each side and back, sweeping the fullness to the back (Fig. 7.24). The slightly-trained hem of the dress features matching braided grey silk cord (Fig. 7.25) and a lower width of the skirt is lined with pale glazed cotton, yet, in accordance with Priscilla Bright McLaren's advice, the rest of the skirt is unlined.

Photographic evidence provides further significant details of Bright Clark's ensemble for the occasion. She sports a pale mantle rather than a shawl or scarf, as the sharp, vertical line of the arm opening on the left front of the garment is clearly visible in the image (Fig. 7.19). Her hair is smoothed into a centre parting whilst a white veil flows from the crown of her head. The appearance of wide, pale ribbons tied under her chin also suggests the presence

⁵⁹ Mairead Dunlevy, *Pomp and Poverty: A History of Silk in Ireland* (London: Yale University Press, 2011) 227.

⁶⁰ Ehrman, *The Wedding Dress: 300 Years of Bridal Fashions*, 65.

⁶¹ "The Fashions," *Illustrated Times*, 8 April 1865: 222.

⁶² Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories*, 41.

⁶³ "Wedding dress Summary, T.37&A- 1951." *Victoria and Albert Museum* [n.d]. Web. 22nd August 2015. <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O122395/wedding-dress-unknown/>



Fig. 7.21: *Wedding dress worn by Helen Priestman Bright Clark. 1866. Grey moiré silk. 1960.224. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester. Personal photograph by the author. 15th May 2013.*



Fig. 7.22: *Detail of wedding dress bodice, worn by Helen Priestman Bright Clark. 1866. Grey moirée silk. 1960.224. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester. Personal photograph by the author. 15th May 2013.*



Fig. 7.23: Detail of hook and eye fastenings on wedding dress bodice worn by Helen Priestman Bright Clark. 1866. Grey moirée silk. 1960.224. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester. Personal photograph by the author. 15th May 2013.



Fig. 7.24: *Detail of back of skirt on wedding dress worn by Helen Priestman Bright Clark. 1866. Grey moirée silk. 1960.224. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester. Personal photograph by the author. 15th May 2013.*



Fig. 7.25: *Detail of corded hem on wedding dress, worn by Helen Priestman Bright Clark. 1866. Grey moirée silk. 1960.224. Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester. Personal photograph by the author. 15th May 2013.*

of a small, fashionable bonnet, however such a detail is obscured by the quality of the photographic print.

Keith Robbins has claimed that John Bright found 'the size of the bill from Marshall & Snelgrove, £48, for his daughter Helen's wedding dress [...] disturbing.'⁶⁴ Marshall & Snelgrove was a 'flourishing and famous' silk mercers and clothiers originally founded in 1837 and located on Oxford Street and Vere Street in the fashionable West End shopping district of London.⁶⁵ Department stores, such as the fashionable London based Marshall & Snelgrove, offered ready-to-wear garments alongside services where dresses could be custom made in their workshops for wealthier clients. As Graham notes, these stores also sold, '[...] hats, handkerchiefs, shoes, or almost anything a woman or man might need to get dressed' in large quantities.⁶⁶ A 23rd January 1861 advertisement for Marshall & Snelgrove details their products on sale, as 'silks in every variety, shawls, cloaks, barége, muslin, droguet, and lindsey dresses, embroideries, lace, millinery, household linen, muslin curtains &c.'⁶⁷ Bright McLaren's letter from the 6th June 1866 acknowledges that she and Bright Clark had gone shopping in the West End of London together weeks previously, looking for furniture, stating 'I have been in the shops in Baker Street but can find no writing table half as nice as what we saw in Wardour Street.'⁶⁸ However, due to the detailed directives Priscilla Bright McLaren wrote from London to Bright Clark in Newcastle regarding the style and lining of the wedding dress after she posted the fabric, we know the purchase of the material and the construction of the dress were organised independently. Also, as Bright McLaren posted the fabric *out* of London, it seems unlikely for it to have been returned for construction at Marshall & Snelgrove.⁶⁹ As such, it is improbable the wedding dress was made-up by Marshall & Snelgrove, though it is probable that the moiré silk fabric was purchased there. Platt Hall curator Miles Lambert has asserted that Marshall & Snelgrove 'probably only provided the fabric' and that whilst £48 seems a high price to pay

⁶⁴ Robbins, *John Bright*, 182. Frustratingly however, Robbins' assertion is unreferenced.

⁶⁵ Maurice Corina, *Fine Silks and Oak Counters: Debenhams 1778-1978* (London: Hutchinson Benham, 1978) 113.

⁶⁶ Graham, *Gone to the Shops*, 46.

⁶⁷ "To Ladies. Important Sale this day," *The Morning Post*, 23rd January 1861: Front page.

⁶⁸ Priscilla Bright McLaren to Helen Bright Clark. 6th June 1866. MIL43. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁶⁹ Priscilla Bright McLaren to Helen Bright Clark. 6th June 1866. MIL43. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

for the silk, roughly 14 yards he estimates, it would not have been an 'uncommon' amount to spend.⁷⁰ In fact, in comparison to the reported expenses paid by other upper-middle-class brides in the family's social circle, £48 was comparatively economical. In her 6th June 1866 letter, Bright McLaren discusses attending the wedding of the daughter of General Osbourne, where 'the chief value [consisted] in the £250 which was to be the cost of the wedding dress.'⁷¹

Yet despite Bright Clark's wedding and bridesmaids' dresses being sartorially influenced by the shop assistant's advice at Marshall & Snelgrove as well as by her fashionable aunt, who associated with members of the wealthy upper-middle class, her surviving wedding dress is strikingly simple. According to Ehrman, during the 1860s and 1870s trimmings of 'sprays and swags of orange-blossom [...] made the white wedding dress more specifically bridal', whilst expensive Brussels and Honiton lace ruffles, flounces and white satin trimmings were also highly fashionable for brides of the aristocratic and upper classes (Fig. 26).⁷² Whilst only a select few could afford the profusion of luxury trimmings which distinguished very wealthy bride's ensembles, Ehrman does concede that 'elements of the styles' worn by the aristocracy were adopted by the middle and upper-middle classes.⁷³ As such, the absence of *any* trimmings on Bright Clark's wedding gown illustrate how she evaded the overt trappings of a fashionable wedding dress.⁷⁴

In fact, in comparing Helen Priestman Bright Clark's wedding attire with that of the wedding dress worn by her mother, twenty-seven years earlier, sartorial similarities are evident. Both garments have been produced using a muted silver toned fabric, despite white being the most fashionable British wedding dress colour during the mid-to-late nineteenth century.⁷⁵ Both dresses' silhouettes accord with those fashionable in their periods and are constructed in a typical manner. Yet strikingly both ensembles have eschewed all fashionable

⁷⁰ Miles Lambert, 27th February 2015. Appendix 1.2: Interviews.

⁷¹ Priscilla Bright McLaren to Helen Bright Clark. 6th June 1866. MIL43. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁷² Ehrman, *The Wedding Dress*, 78.

⁷³ Ehrman, *The Wedding Dress*, 72. Images of fashionable Royal Weddings were disseminated through illustrated newspapers and on *carte de visite*.

⁷⁴ There is no visible evidence on the surviving gown of trimmings having been removed or the gown having been altered in any way.

⁷⁵ Ehrman, *The Wedding Dress*, 65.



Fig. 7.26: Fashionable wedding dress worn by Eliza Penelope Clay, with a large quantity of Honiton lace on the dress skirt, bodice and veil. 1865. Silk-satin, trimmed with Honiton appliqué lace, machine net and bobbin lace, hand-sewn. T. 43&A- 1947. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Web. 1st August 2015. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O78857/wedding-dress-unknown/>

embellishments of embroidery, trimmings, ribbons or lace. Elizabeth Priestman's 1839 dress was saved alongside letters and diaries by the Priestman, and then the Clark, women of the family in order to preserve family memory.⁷⁶ Thus Helen Priestman Bright Clark would have been familiar with the appearance of the Plain ensemble and of the sartorial selection favoured by her mother. As such Helen Bright Clark may have taken inspiration from the surviving garment- its colour, fabric and simplicity- in recognition of her mother's sartorial choices and in honour of the maternal presence missing from the day's proceedings and from her own life.

Elizabeth Priestman's sartorial choices as an obedient Plain Quaker however, were bound by early nineteenth century religious Advices that sought to, 'raise [Friends] above the enjoyment of trifling gratifications, [...] especially [...] music and to the superfluities of personal attire.'⁷⁷ Bright Clark's choices regarding wedding attire were being made six years after the relaxation of Advices regarding Plainness and as such were theoretically subjected to less scrutiny. Yet as discussed in Chapter 4, Quaker social commentary reveals that those loyal to the use of Plain or simple dress continued to advance the topic and remained an opposing force to the incorporation of fashionable dress. They reminded fellow Friends of the importance of 'a grave and modest attire.'⁷⁸

As Petry Bogatyrev has described, when two social groups with differing sartorial stances come together, one may be classified as the 'aggressor' group and the other side represents the 'opposing' group, in the case of this thesis, fashionable and Plain respectively. In this case, as discussed in the previous chapter, the 'opposing' group were those Quakers who remained Plain, or openly criticised fashionable dress. The opposing force seek to preserve their traditional rural dress, by using the 'preservation of their costume as a sign of their

⁷⁶ The dress remained in the family until the granddaughter of Helen Bright Clark, Anne Gillett, donated it to Platt Hall in 1960. Other garments have survived from a variety of women of the Clarks family, and are now held in another collection- the Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street. Some dresses, such as the drab green silk bodice and skirt, c. 1870s, worn by Helen Sophie Horn Clark for day-wear, show a similar adoption of a fashionable silhouette alongside an eschewal of embellishment. Drab green silk ladies skirt and bodice, c. 1870s. COST 34/1. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street. See Appendix 2.1 for further details.

⁷⁷ From the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends held in London by adjournment from the 20th of the 5th month to the 29th of the same, 1857. To the Quarterly and other Meetings of Discipline of Women Friends in Great Britain and Ireland. YM/YMWF. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London.

⁷⁸ Anonymous, "Plainness of Apparel," *British Friend: A Monthly Journal chiefly devoted to the interests of the Society of Friends* (1867): 189

status' and also seek to actively resist yielding to the influence of the 'aggressor' urban group.⁷⁹ The conservative Quakers of the late nineteenth century used published social commentary as one tactic in their active resistance of fashionable dress, just as Bright Clark did in her later crusade for women's emancipation both nationally and within the Society.

The year of Bright Clark's marriage, in 1866, one female Quaker, wrote to *The Friend* criticising, 'the extravagantly wide and costly ribbons which are exhibited in our meetings, the expanded dresses, and the indulgence in almost every unbecoming and ever-varying fashion of the day.'⁸⁰ As such, whilst Bright Clark's sartorial choices were made when Friends were granted individual freedom of choice in the style of their attire, she would have been keenly aware of the diverse Quaker sartorial opinions through the published debates. During the same decade her August 1873 letter, "The Position of Women in the Society of Friends" was published in *The Friend*, at least ten letters appeared in the same journal criticising fashionable attire, with T. Swann claiming in 1870 that fashionable dress could, 'indicate a slightly warped condition of the mind, or a weak or erroneous judgement.'⁸¹ Alongside these condemnations, even fellow suffrage campaigners during the 1860s critically framed 'the frivolities of fashionable life' as evidence that a woman had 'no worthy pursuit.'⁸² As such, the expectations of conservative members of the community and their opposition of fashionable clothing, alongside the suffrage complaint that fashion acted as a distraction, may have shaped her judgement when choosing garments for the public

⁷⁹ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 59.

⁸⁰ A female member, "On Christian Simplicity," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* VI. 65 (1866): 99

⁸¹ T. Swann, "Correspondence. On Dress," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* X. 119. (1870): 275

⁸² Richard Westlake, "The Social Position of Women," *The Friends Quarterly Examiner. A Religious, Social & Miscellaneous Review conducted by Members of the Religious Society of Friends* (1869): 432 - 441 and Hannah Maria Wigham, "Woman's Work" *The Friends Quarterly Examiner. A Religious, Social & Miscellaneous Review conducted by Members of the Religious Society of Friends* (1877): 191 - 203. Conversely however, according to Wendy Parkins, by 1903 the WSPU and the suffragette movement were deliberately using fashion 'as an expression of woman's commitment to the cause', and employed tactics associated with shopping and consumption. They wore fashionable clothing and the WSPU colours of purple, white and green as part of their 'identification and performance,' as a signifier of being political, domestic, up-to-date and feminine. Such a tactic sought to illustrate that political activation of women would not be a masculinising influence. See Parkins, "The Epidemic of Purple, White and Green': Fashion and the Suffragette Movement in Britain 1908-14," 102-103.

'religious act' of Quaker marriage at the Friends Meeting House in Rochdale which she openly acknowledged as a 'serious' event.⁸³

Moreover, the letters between Helen Priestman Bright Clark and Priscilla Bright McLaren also reveal a palpable discontinuity between the fashionable guidance encouraged by Bright McLaren and the lack of interest Bright Clark revealed for the nuances of fashionable style. Bright Clark admitted to Bright McLaren that she found the sartorial decision-making process for the occasion 'a great nuisance.'⁸⁴ To her future husband, in a letter dated 13th June 1866, she confided 'I like things plain best generally.'⁸⁵ Then, fifteen days later on 28th June she confessed her uneasiness at her present preoccupation with material items, stating:

I feel quite excited about the state of affairs and yet I can't help being more taken up with furniture, clothes, and linen &c. than seems right at such a serious time as regards home and foreign politics and perhaps I should also say at such a serious time as regards one's own life.⁸⁶

Clearly, Bright Clark was emotionally grappling with the 'opposing' forces of being fashionable and being Quakerly moderate and self-denying.⁸⁷ Whilst admitting excitement about her forthcoming betrothal, Bright Clark felt troubled by the emphasis placed on the purchasing of material items during the engagement. Such emotional conflict manifested itself as opposition to the responsibility, which she clearly sought to divest to other parties such as Bright McLaren. Yet the comment reveals that her opposition was contemplative and rooted in spiritual and moral, rather than practical, considerations. Bright Clark's conscientiousness meant she appears to have not shared her Priestman aunt's Evangelical Quakerism, preferring instead meetings conducted in silence. In a letter to Bright McLaren

⁸³ Helen Bright Clark to William Stephens Clark. 28th June 1866. MIL55. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁸⁴ Helen Bright Clark to Priscilla Bright McLaren. 8th June 1866. MIL59. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁸⁵ Helen Bright Clark to William Stephens Clark. 13th June 1866. MIL55. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁸⁶ Helen Bright Clark to William Stephens Clark. 28th June 1866. MIL55. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁸⁷ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 58.

on 6th December 1866, she confessed she rarely attended to Meetings for Worship in Street, finding them 'unpleasant- so much preaching.'⁸⁸

Yet despite her uneasiness regarding material culture, she was clearly a confident, liberal and forward-thinking young Quaker woman, as even a cursory glance at her involvement in national political concerns reveals. The year before her marriage in 1865, Bright Clark befriended the black abolitionist Sarah Parker Remond, who had begun a medical education, and together they heard the first practising British female doctor, Elizabeth Garrett, lecture.⁸⁹ Furthermore, once she was married, her passion for radical politics was equally shared by her husband, William Stephens Clark, and the female members of his family. Less than five months after their marriage, on 6th December 1866, Bright Clark wrote to her aunt Bright McLaren that her husband was actively encouraging her in campaigning for gender equality within the Society, noting that, 'William wants me to begin a revolution in the way of sitting in meeting. He wants me to go and sit by him- I am ready to do so if I can induce one or two more to do the same!'⁹⁰

Clearly, Bright Clark, with her husband's encouragement, was not afraid to oppose the subjugated role of women on both a local and national platform and thus she was unafraid to court the disapproval of fellow Quakers. Both male and female Quakers responded to Clark's letter, "The Position of Women in the Society of Friends" printed in *The Friend*, as discussed in Chapter 4. Whilst many supported her, others believed that, 'woman's place is subordinate to that of man, and that when she claims a right to an equal share in the management of the business of our Society, or of the nation, she is stepping out of her sphere.'⁹¹

Despite Helen actively involving herself in the national suffrage movement, her father's disdain for the campaign was outspoken. Robbins notes that John Bright wrote to fellow

⁸⁸ Helen Bright Clark to Priscilla Bright McLaren. 6th December 1866. MIL59. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁸⁹ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 133 and 138.

⁹⁰ Helen Bright Clark to Priscilla Bright McLaren. 6th December 1866. MIL59. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁹¹ A. B, "The Position of Women in the Society of Friends. III. To the Editor of The Friend," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XIII. 153 (1873): 227-228.

Liberal politician Thorold Rogers in 1873 that he had, 'little sympathy with the score or two of women who are miserable because they are not men.'⁹² Such a view is particularly noteworthy in light of the fact that both his daughter and sister were national campaigners for the cause. He even went as far as to describe the causes of suffrage and the Ladies National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act, as 'rubbish [...] and injurious.'⁹³ Yet his daughter Bright Clark's rebellious political opinions were unimpaired despite her father being 'incensed' by her involvement.⁹⁴ Thus Helen was additionally unabashed at courting the displeasure of her father. Indeed, Bright Clark's closeness to her fashionable suffrage campaigning aunt, further affirms such a sentiment, as Bright McLaren's views were in direct opposition to that of her Plain, suffrage disapproving brother, John Bright.⁹⁵

Conclusion

It is significant that despite the confident nature of Helen Priestman Bright Clark which sustained her belief in her activism for women's suffrage and increased female spiritual and disciplinarian equality in the Society, both causes which she debated on nationally recognised platforms, such a thoroughly rebellious practice did not extend to her sartorial decisions.

Even following her introduction to highly fashionable fabrics and garments and her aunt's evident attempt to educate and influence her niece into the delicacies of Paris-based seasonal fashion for the occasion of her wedding, Bright Clark admitted the following year to Bright McLaren that when her cousins delivered her a gift of 'a gorgeous frock' she was puzzled by it as, 'such things are as little in their line as mine.'⁹⁶ Clearly, Bright Clark remained wary of the subject of fashion, never sharing the relish for the subject which her Fully-Adaptive aunt, Bright McLaren, so clearly displayed.

⁹² Robbins, *John Bright*, 214.

⁹³ John Bright to Helen Bright Clark. 26th April 1872. MIL 93. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁹⁴ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 179.

⁹⁵ Robbins, *John Bright*, 219.

⁹⁶ Helen Bright Clark to Priscilla Bright McLaren. 15th August 1867. MIL59. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

This has been shown, using Pierre Bourdieu and Petr Bogatyrev's theories, to be due to the 'clash of civilisations' between fashionable urban and traditional rural tastes, as well as between Helen's simple and moderate sartorial tastes, which can clearly be classified as Semi-Adaptive, and those of her fashionable Fully-Adaptive aunt. Surviving letters have revealed Bright Clark's attempts to moderate her aunt's Fully-Adaptive sartorial recommendations, often by simply ignoring her aunt's extravagant suggestions or by agreeing to a limited number of her aunt's lengthy recommendations.

In addition, Bright Clark clearly displayed a conscientious, and traditionally Quakerly, unease at the very nature of emphasis on outward luxurious and decorative things, admitting to her husband that it did not 'seem right' to focus so extensively on 'furniture, clothes and linen &c.'⁹⁷ Such an opinion illustrates Bright Clark's sensitivity to how clothing may be read as an 'externalising of oneself' and therefore her wariness at entirely adopting a fashionable urban 'tenue' due to her desire to continue to illustrate her loyalty to her Quaker faith.⁹⁸ Whilst certain practices of her faith were vigorously and vocally challenged by Bright Clark, she remained spiritually obedient to the religion her entire life, remaining a life-long Quaker. According to Holton, in old-age Bright Clark tended to visit London (the urban site which according to Bourdieu, represents women's 'hope of emancipation') on business connected with the Society, rather than for national political involvement, and she continued to guide her children towards close affiliation with the spiritual practices of Quakerism. Holton records that Bright Clark was anxious about her daughter Margaret's university education at Newnham College in Cambridge, in part due to the 'alternative it might provide to the religious community.'⁹⁹ Yet despite her religious obedience, she was by no means a Plain Quaker woman.

Whilst Bright Clark came from a family of women who were openly concerned far more with practical causes, especially woman's emancipation, than with theological issues and associated themselves with the 'onward party' within the Society, these progressive

⁹⁷ Helen Bright Clark to William Stephens Clark. 28th June 1866. MIL55. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street.

⁹⁸ Bourdieu, "The peasant and his body," 585.

⁹⁹ Holton, *Quaker Women*, 206.

religious predilections did not manifest themselves in Bright Clark's sartorial decisions as Fully-Adaptive. Instead she sought to moderate her radical political outlook and the fashionable sartorial influences of her Fully-Adaptive aunt with her own spiritual conscientiousness and religious obedience, making her a Semi-Adaptive Quaker woman. Whilst adopting some aspects of the 'tenue' of the fashionable woman of the city, particularly evident in her fringed, bright blue and grey fashionable dress, she resisted borrowing all the fashionable 'manifest signs' of an emancipated urban woman, and thus adopted a simpler, more Quakerly, appearance for her grey moiré silk wedding dress. Whilst surviving photographs confirm that Bright Clark wore a fashionable pale mantle and bonnet to complete the ensemble and the dress itself is composed of a fashionable fabric and silhouette, it is also strikingly untrimmed and unadorned. Bright Clark did aspire to a degree of fashionability in the garments and therefore Bright McLaren's fashionable recommendations were accepted for elements of the bridal party ensemble and the wedding trousseau. Clearly therefore, the fashion guidance, which Bourdieu posits provides sartorial training to young girls, which was communicated by Bright McLaren, succeeded by helping Bright Clark to purchase some fashionable urban garments.¹⁰⁰ The wedding dress itself however, which we know from the letters that Bright Clark herself had constructed, displays a degree of simplicity and moderation which, deliberately or not, mirrored that of her mother's Plain Quaker wedding dress worn 27 years earlier.

Yet some other Semi-Adaptive Quaker women who sought 'beautiful taste', 'neatness' and 'simplicity' in their dress, whilst avoiding 'oddities', actually sought alternatives to the silhouette manipulating Paris fashions for their Semi-Adaptive sartorial influences.¹⁰¹ Some middle and upper-middle class Quaker women, in reflection of the general mores of their times, incorporated alternative fashions which were being designed in England from the 1880s, namely those affiliated with the artistic Aesthetic Movement. One of these women was the next Semi-Adaptive case study, Geraldine Cadbury.

¹⁰⁰ Bourdieu, "The peasant and his body," 590.

¹⁰¹ Pollard, "Colloquial Letters. No. 9," 443 - 444.

Chapter 8 Aesthetic Semi-Adaptive case study: Geraldine Cadbury, 1891

Introduction

Distinctive for its loose silhouette and voluminous folds of butter-colour flowing fabric, Geraldine Cadbury, née Southall's wedding dress of 1891, which survives in Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery (Fig. 8.1), was worn for her marriage to Barrow Cadbury of the chocolate manufacturing family.¹ As her biographer Janet Whitney comments, the marriage was conducted, 'according to the rites of the Friends at their Meeting House, Bull Street [...which was] filled to the utmost limit of its accommodation, between six and seven hundred being present' on the 8th September 1891.² This chapter explores and explains the reasons for Geraldine Cadbury's choice of this British-designed and made, Liberty & Co. Aesthetic wedding dress, in the context of the ideals and preferred styles of the Aesthetic and Dress Reform movements. It closely examines the ideologies which underpinned Arthur Liberty and E.W. Godwin's Historic and Artistic Costume Studio, alongside the sartorial appearance of the garments they designed and made and examines the way in which these ideologies and the design and quality of this dress matched with Geraldine Cadbury's personal, Quaker sartorial desires.

Loosely draped classical and medieval inspired dress styles, reflected in this dress, typified Aesthetic dress and the Studio designed many during the 1880s and 1890s. These styles are therefore illustrated by examining surviving Liberty & Co. Aesthetic garments from the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum London and the Metropolitan Museum of Art New York. These designs were, however, initially popularised decades previously through the paintings of the first and second generation Pre-Raphaelite artists. As such, paintings by Dante Gabrielle Rossetti, William Holman Hunt and Albert Joseph Moore provide evidence of the idealised styles of women's dress they painted from the 1850s to the 1890s. Geraldine Cadbury's cream silk, Grecian wedding dress however, was a particularly sensitive

¹ Geraldine Cadbury wedding gown 1891. 1968M68. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery Website.

<http://www.bmagic.org.uk/objects/1968M68>

² *South Birmingham News* with full report on the marriage of Barrow Cadbury and Geraldine Southall. Saturday 12th September 1891. MS 466A/169. Birmingham National Archives and Janet Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury, 1865 – 1941: A Biography* (London: George Harrap and Company Ltd, 1948) 42.



Fig. 8.1: *Grecian style Aesthetic wedding gown worn by Geraldine Cadbury. 1891. Pongée silk lined with cotton. 1968M68. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. Web. 28th October 2013. <http://www.bmagic.org.uk/objects/1968m68>*

personal choice, and was neither extreme in its classical folds nor as highly decorative as many of Liberty's designs of the early 1890s. It is not entirely sartorially typical of the Historic and Artistic Costume Studio's Aesthetic designs due to its striking simplicity. To clarify this issue, her wedding dress is compared to a far more typical embroidered Liberty & Co. red velvet dinner dress from 1895, housed in Royal Pavilion and Brighton Museums Costume and Textile collection, to provide evidence of the more typical ensembles the Studio also sold. Further comparison contrasts the loose-fitting Aesthetic designs against the mainstream Paris-based fashions of the decade which endorsed slim, structured, close-fitting, embellished clothing, the distinct and unconventional appearance of the Aesthetic style becomes obvious. Finally, through a third comparison, Cadbury's artistic dress choice is considered with respect to Quaker sartorial Advices of the late nineteenth century, to contextualise the religious environment in which her sartorial decisions were made in the early 1890s. As a consequence of this balance of choice between Aesthetic, fashionable dress, and her personal ideals of Quaker simplicity, Geraldine Cadbury becomes an excellent example on whom to base a discussion as of a second Semi-Adaptive dress case study.

Primary source material serves to reveal Cadbury's more personal motivations behind her sartorial choices. Letters written by Geraldine Cadbury to members of her family and surviving photographs of the wedding party, archived in the Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham at Birmingham Library National Archives as well as at Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, have been analysed for this chapter. The photographs have revealed the style, hang and composition of the wedding ensemble worn by Cadbury and have provided evidence that the bridesmaids wore Liberty Aesthetic dresses and hats. Surviving letters have meanwhile provided a direct link between Geraldine Cadbury and Pre-Raphaelite ideals through insights into her esteem for the writings of Pre-Raphaelite champion, John Ruskin. They also prove her loving familial relationships, particularly her closeness to her mother. Geraldine Cadbury's mother, Anna Southall, was a loyal Quaker, suffrage campaigner and dress reform advocate and was deeply influential in Geraldine Cadbury's sartorial decisions. As such, the appearance and ideologies behind the styles of reform garments which Anna Southall advocated will be examined in detail. Janet Whitney's 1948 biography, *Geraldine S. Cadbury, 1865 – 1941: A Biography* has additionally provided

contextualising detail regarding her family, childhood and later married life, much of which, as discussed in chapter 2, would be otherwise unattainable due to the passage of time.

Cadbury's artistic dress choice is compared to Quaker sartorial Advices of the late nineteenth century, and thus nineteenth century Quaker dress Advices are referred to throughout to contextualise the religious environment in which her sartorial decisions were made. Finally, the theoretical framework of a 'clash of civilisations' discussed in the previous chapter, drawn from the anthropological writings of Pierre Bourdieu and Petr Bogatyrev, once again provide a broader social contextualisation for Cadbury's sartorial decisions and her Semi-Adaptive negotiation between her preference for artistic dress and her loyalty to Quaker simplicity.³

Progressive Women's Movements and the Southall Family

Geraldine Cadbury's family exerted a powerful influence on all aspects of her life, including her dress. In the Southall family home in Beaufort Road in Birmingham, where they lived between 1867 and 1875, discussions surrounding progressive social ideas were encouraged; particularly concerning the new women's movements.⁴ Thus the society in which Geraldine Cadbury grew up cultivated her appetite for progressive knowledge. Geraldine's mother, the Irish Quaker, Mrs Anna Southall (née Strangman Grubb), was a strong advocate of women's right to vote and, as noted in chapter 4, wrote a letter to *The Friend* in January 1873 criticising London Yearly Meeting's failure to support the cause openly.⁵ As Janet Whitney notes, she also encouraged discussion on the subject in the family home:

³ Pierre Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 1962. Re-printed in *Ethnography*, 5. 4. (2004) and Petr Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*. Translated from Slovak by Richard. G. Crum, (Re-printed The Hague & Paris: Mouton, [1937] 1971).

⁴ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury, 1865 – 1941*, 15.

⁵ Anna Southall, "Woman's Suffrage," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XIII. 146 (1873): 35.

[...] conversation around their lively table was not only on family affairs, or Quaker ones. The question of women's rights, even of votes for women, was agitating the Press [...] It was the more disconcerting to Birmingham Quakers [...] that Mrs Alfred Southall was an open advocate of votes for women.⁶

Anna Southall was also practically as well as ideologically supportive of women's emancipation and moved in a busy religious and social lecturing circuit. According to Whitney she, 'gave lectures in temperance and health habits and baby care all over Birmingham at the various churches. She was a pioneer in candid health talks to girls, and started reform of girls' dress for drill and activity, bloomers, etc.'⁷ Anna Southall's advocacy of bloomers, alludes to 'wearing trousers under short frocks', originally championed in America in 1848 by Mary Crayin and Mrs. Noyes and later endorsed by Amelia Bloomer, editor of one of the first newspapers for women, *The Lily*.⁸ Unfortunately, as Stella Mary Newton notes, due to frequent and outspoken ridicule from members of the public of both sexes and on both sides of the Atlantic, the wearing of bloomers was abandoned in the 1850s.⁹ By the 1880s however, the wearing of bifurcated garments for women were revived by their advocates and were promoted by the London based, Rational Dress Society.¹⁰

Presided over by the Viscountess Harberton, The Rational Dress Society sought to promote 'a style of dress based upon considerations of health, comfort and beauty, and to deprecate constant changes of fashion, which cannot be recommended on any of these grounds.'¹¹ They did so by exhibiting examples of what they considered to be ideal dress for women, including divided skirts. The Society's members educated women on the advantages of a lighter and less constricting form of dress and promoted their objectives 'by means of Drawing-room Meetings, Advertisements, circulating Pamphlets, Leaflets, &c, also by issuing

⁶ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury. 1865 – 1941*, 28.

⁷ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury. 1865 – 1941*, 31.

⁸ Stella Mary Newton, *Health, Art and Reason: Dress Reformers of the 19th Century* (Cox & Wyman Ltd, 1974) 3.

⁹ Newton, *Health, Art and Reason*, 3.

¹⁰ A bifurcated or divided skirt, is a pair of women's trousers, usually knee-length or calf length, cut full to resemble a skirt.

¹¹ Viscountess Harberton, "Rules," *Reasons for Reform in Dress* (London: Rational Dress Society, 1885) 1. The term Rational Dress derives in a large part from the entirely female run Rational Dress Society, founded in London in 1881, presided over by the Viscountess Harberton and declared in *Reasons for Reform in Dress*, published in 1885.

patterns which meet the approval of the Committee'.¹² However, for many women the masculine appearance of these garments was an impediment. At a women-only Rational Dress Exhibition in 1886 at Westminster Town Hall in London, the garments on display were described as appropriate for 'active exercise' and included the controversial divided skirt, which was especially shocking when made up in tailored tweeds, a material traditionally associated with masculine dress. One visitor to the exhibition, 'Madge', observed that whilst some of the examples of Rational Dress being presented were 'pretty' including 'Mrs Pfeiffer's adaptation of the Greek dress to Rational principles' the majority of the garments 'were terribly deterrent'.¹³

Thus bifurcated garments whilst ideologically appealing to some women, such as Anna Southall, were for many women inconceivable wear on any occasion due to their shocking appearance by conventional standards. By February 1897, Viscountess Harberton had also launched the Western Rational Dress Club, whose objectives were to, 'promote a dress-reform whereby Ladies may enjoy out-door exercise with greater comfort' and particularly advocated divided skirts or knickerbockers for cycling.¹⁴ However, these ladies cycling in bifurcated garments, as parodied by Bernard Partridge in a *Punch* cartoon in 1895, were decried because of the masculine base of the cut of these tailored outfits.¹⁵ As such, bifurcated skirts were still considered so 'objectionable' by the 1890s that wearers were declined service in some hotels and refused admittance to some coffee shops.¹⁶ Even women cycling in *skirts* continued to have negative connotations throughout the 1880s and 1890s because of the activity's association with women's emancipation. As Phillip Mackintosh and Glen Norcliffe note, there 'existed social critics, physicians and everyday observers', who 'consciously did not own a friend who bicycled' and who 'had almost

¹² Harberton, "Rules," 1.

¹³ "The Trouser," *Southland Times*, 28th June 1886: 4.

¹⁴ Mrs. M. Buckman, *Western Rational Dress Club*, (February 1897), Qted in Nancy Bradfield, "Cycling in the 1890's," *Costume: The Journal of the Costume Society*, 6 (1972): 44.

¹⁵ See, Bernard Partridge. *The Bicycling Suit* [Young woman in a bicycle suit on the left, also has her hand in her pocket in imitation of a male stance]. 12th January 1895. Illustration. 1895.01.12.23. *Punch*. Web. 28th October 2013. <http://punch.photoshelter.com>

¹⁶ Bradfield, "Cycling in the 1890's", 45.

learned to loathe the sight and sound of a bicycle, its popularity and modern symbolism, its facilitation of 'new womanhood.'¹⁷

In the Southall family home however cycling was advocated for all nine children, including the three daughters. Janet Whitney recounts an undated episode, from between 1880 and 1900, that Geraldine's sister and the second eldest daughter:

Huldah and another girl, a chum of hers, were the first two girls in Birmingham to ride a bicycle. Tomboy Huldah rode bravely out in the conventional ankle-length skirt of the day, a net over the back wheel to prevent the skirts from catching between the spokes and her brothers rode behind her to hear and enjoy the catcalling, rude remarks, and even hissing of the passers-by. Respectable citizens of Birmingham were scandalised to the marrow. In village districts dogs were even set on her.¹⁸

Clearly, Anna Southall was unafraid of public controversy as she advocated bicycling for all of her nine children, boys and girls alike. For the suffragist, Southall, her advocacy of her daughters bicycling reflected her acknowledgment and relishing of, what Mackintosh refers to as, female cyclists' role as feminine, 'icon[s] of cultural revolution' due to the activity's freedom which allowed women to travel un-chaperoned.¹⁹ According to Mackintosh and Norcliffe, cycling was seen as socially 'widely influential' by women such as Anna Southall who were born in the 1840s, 'at a time when constructions of domestic womanhood and woman's bonds forged powerful ideologies about women's proper place and influence.'²⁰

Bourdieu's 'Clash of Civilisations' and its relation to Geraldine Cadbury's Early Years

¹⁷ Phillip G. Mackintosh and Glen Norcliffe, "Flaneurie on Bicycles: acquiescence to women in public by the 1890s," *The Canadian Geographer*, 50. 1 (2006): 25.

¹⁸ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury 1865 – 1941*, 17-18. Huldah was born 12th August 1872, and therefore is unlikely to have been any younger than 8 when this episode occurred. On 10th August 1900 she married Edwin Claude Taylor, the grandson of Elizabeth Petipher Cash from chapter 6, and the couple moved to Hampstead. Therefore this episode would have occurred between 1880 and 1900. See *The Descendants of Tobias Pim*, Web. [n.d.] <http://www.pennyghael.org.uk/Pim.pdf>

¹⁹ Mackintosh and Norcliffe, "Flaneurie on Bicycles," 26.

²⁰ Mackintosh and Norcliffe, "Flaneurie on Bicycles," 27.

Anna Southall's advocacy of progressive urban dress reform clothing would have been communicated to a youthful Geraldine Cadbury through a socially constructed female cultural training in her home which encouraged women to discuss fashion and appearance and thus perceive urban models and integrate them into their behaviour, in line with Pierre Bourdieu's 1962 theories.²¹ As described in chapter 2, 6 and 7, Bourdieu argues that the adoption of new clothing styles from the city by women in the country represents a 'clash of civilisations' between rural-traditional and urban-fashionable dress which is negotiated through a 'cultural system' of ideological filtration from woman-to-woman.²² Through these feminine relationships, knowledge regarding external appearance is disseminated. In Cadbury's case, the clash was between three differing sartorial practices and styles. Anna Southall would have taught the childhood Geraldine Southall an awareness of outward 'tenue', particularly that associated with progressive attitudes to women and their social position.²³ Crucially, this means that through Anna Southall's specifically advocated reform dress, often exhibited in London, she would have communicated such progressive and urban sartorial preferences to all her daughters, including the eldest, Geraldine.²⁴

Further conforming to Bourdieu's filtering of fashion awareness whereby, 'men, by virtue of the norms that dominate their early upbringing, are struck by a kind of cultural blindness for everything having to do with *tenue*', Geraldine Southall's father, the chemist and druggist and Fellow of the Chemical Society, Alfred Southall, maintained the habits of Quaker Plain ways his entire lifetime, unlike his wife and daughters.²⁵ He spurned the use of overcoats and refused curtains or carpet in his bedroom despite the fact he became 'exceedingly well-to-do'.²⁶ It should be carefully noted however, that the intense historical Plain Quaker preoccupation with 'how one organises one's body', as discussed by Marcia Pointon, would have paradoxically made Alfred Southall just as sensitive to the judgement of 'tenue' as his wife and daughter.²⁷ By not adopting the male sartorial norms of mid-Victorian society,

²¹ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 590.

²² Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 582 & 590.

²³ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 584-585.

²⁴ There is however no evidence that Geraldine Cadbury or her mother Anna Southall wore bloomers or divided skirts themselves.

²⁵ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 590

²⁶ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury 1865 – 1941*, 30.

²⁷ Pointon, *Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800*, 399.

Alfred Southall was in fact, according to Bourdieu, 'linked to an acute awareness of oneself and of one's body, to a consciousness fascinated by its corporeality.'²⁸ In fact following her birth in 1865, only five years after the alteration in advice to Quakers regarding Plain attire, Geraldine was, as Whitney explains, initially raised in a style of dress which conformed to modest, Quaker fashion in accordance with her father's custom and wishes.²⁹

Geraldine Cadbury's earliest recognition of the contrast between her own Quaker Plain 'tenue' to that of fashionable women, manifested itself as emotional discomfort during an usual youthful encounter, which is well explained by Bourdieu. As he notes, the assimilation of the 'hexis', or cultural patterns, is an adoptive action, acknowledging that time is needed even in the feminine sphere for learning and acquiring in order to realise these urban fashionable characteristics.³⁰ In addition, Bourdieu proposes that the wearer must undergo an exposure (or series of episodes) which stimulates them to adopt these new attributes either through their own desire or through a sense of cultural pressure. In an undated account written for the Birmingham Essay Society, entitled *A Day in my Life*, Geraldine Cadbury recollected a pre-boarding school episode in around 1878 when she was thirteen years old, whereby she was taken to see a popular public entertainment, Barnum's circus, and the presentation of the internationally famous dwarfs and music hall entertainers, Tom Thumb (real name Charles Stratton), and his wife Lavinia (Fig. 8.2). Mrs. Stratton was always famously and deliberately dressed in the height of fashion, as noted by Eric D. Lehman.³¹ For 1878, such an ensemble would have been composed of a Princess-line dress with a trained skirt that fitted closely over the hips and pushed the fullness of the bustle downwards,

²⁸ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 585

²⁹ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury 1865 – 1941*, 23.

³⁰ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 590.

³¹ Eric D. Lehman, *Becoming Tom Thumb: Charles Stratton, P. T. Barnum and the dwarf of American celebrity* (Conneticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2013) 119- 130. Tom Thumb and his wife, whose real names were Charles and Lavinia Stratton, were an internationally famous couple in P.T. Barnum's Circus in the United States between 1863 and 1883. They were both dwarfs. Lavinia Stratton was always dressed in the height of fashion, and wore the very latest frilled and bustled dresses. Under Barnum's management Charles Stratton and his wife became very wealthy and they went on to own a house in a fashionable part of New York. Their final visit to the U.K. was in 1878, and as such it is reasonable to assume that was the year in which Geraldine Cadbury met the pair, when she was thirteen years old.



Fig. 8.2: Charles DeForest Fredricks & Co. *Charles Stratton and Lavinia Stratton*. 1860s.

Albumen carte-de-visite. 3 5/8 in. x 2 1/8 in. National Portrait Gallery, London. Web. 30th

April 2015. © National Portrait Gallery, London

<http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portraitLarge/mw113445/General-Tom-Thumb-Charles-Sherwood-Stratton-Mrs-Tom-Thumb-Lavinia-Warren>

decorated with a profusion of trimmings and embellishments.³² It was during this visit that Geraldine first became aware of the distinctiveness of her Plain Quaker dress, stating:

I was exactly the same height as Tom Thumb, I was taken on the platform and stood back to back to be measured, first with him and then with his wife. She was in evening dress with rings on her fingers and she gave me their photograph, which I still have. I remember feeling my clothes besides hers were not quite right! And it is the only time I remember having thought about clothes before my boarding school days.³³

Invited up onto the stage for her child's measurements to be compared to that of Charles and Lavinia Stratton it is striking that Geraldine in her recollections emphasised not the pair's dwarfism but instead her shock at seeing Lavinia's highly fashionable and decorative dress. It would have been the sight of the frilled, bustled and deeply fashionable dress of 1878 which made Geraldine Cadbury recognise so consciously the difference to her own Plain attire. Clearly, even before attending the all female Mount School in 1883 at the age of eighteen, Geraldine Cadbury had already begun to develop a self-consciousness about her Plain Quaker 'tenue', opening up and increasing her attentiveness regarding the aesthetics of her own dress and appearance and those of the fashionable woman of the city.³⁴ The results of this perceptive self awareness from the age of thirteen are evident in her adult selection of an Aesthetic wedding dress.

Geraldine Cadbury's Wedding Dress, 1891

On 8th September 1891, the twenty-six year old Geraldine Southall married Barrow Cadbury at Bull Street Friends Meeting House, Birmingham, and their wedding party were carefully described in the *South Birmingham News* four days later:

³² Lucy Johnston, *Nineteenth-Century Fashion in Detail* (London: V&A Publications, 2005) 60 & 62.

³³ Geraldine Cadbury, *A Day in my Life*, Birmingham Essay Society. Qtd in Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury 1865 – 1941*, 33.

³⁴ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury 1865 – 1941*, 15.

All eyes naturally turned to the bride. She was dressed in a Grecian gown of white pongée silk, with tulle veil and flowers. The bridesmaids, of whom there were seven, wore Eau de Nil Crepe (for the benefit of the uninitiated, it may be added, this is of a pale green colour) trimmed with chiffon, and buff straw hats, trimmed with the same. Maréchal Niel roses were the only flowers. The two youngest bridesmaids carried baskets of very beautiful specimens of this famous rose.³⁵

Donated to Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery in 1968, the Liberty label is clear. Made of butter coloured soft silk, the interior of Geraldine Cadbury's wedding dress is heavily boned and shaped by a cotton lining despite the garment's appearance of flowing looseness (Fig. 8.3).³⁶ The gown is draped from the left shoulder down the left side of the bodice (Fig. 8.4) and cleverly fastened using concealed hooks and eyes. The draping also conceals the diagonal seams across the bust separating the cleavage. This complex cut and shaping artificially creates a seemingly loose natural fall of the outer fabrics from the shoulder, whilst retaining the conventional respectability of supportive boning. Discrete rows of handmade lace (Fig. 8.5) are layered inside the train of the dress, which falls from each shoulder at the back, trailing on the ground. Lace additionally features at the cuffs, displaying elements of decoration evident on the otherwise undecorated gown. Closer inspection however betrays additional style details. Decorative knots in the side seams of the outer tunic join the front and back of the flowing over tunic (Fig. 8.6). Geraldine Cadbury's gown is thus revealed to be skilfully constructed from more than one layer of flowing soft pongée silk.³⁷ The over tunic creates diagonal folds down the dress, and draping at the back (Fig. 8.7), with additional draping around the full length fitted sleeves, deftly sewn and cut on the bias to ensure sophistication of drape. Thus the dress is fundamentally different in cut and style from conventional fashionable wedding dresses of the 1890s which

³⁵ *South Birmingham News* with full report on the marriage of Barrow Cadbury and Geraldine Southall. Saturday 12th September 1891. MS 466A/169. Birmingham National Archives, Birmingham.

³⁶ Pongee silk wedding dress, 1891. 1968M68. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. The gown was also donated alongside Geraldine Cadbury's wedding shoes, 1891. 1968M72. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, as well as one of Geraldine Cadbury's day-skirts, dot and flower print silk skirt, 1898. 1968M64. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. See Appendix 2.1 for further details.

³⁷ Pongee silk is a fine soft and undyed type of silk.



Fig. 8.3: *Back view of wedding dress worn by Geraldine Cadbury, revealing the train. 1891. Pongée silk lined with cotton. 1968M68. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. Personal photograph by the author. 14th March 2013.*



Fig. 8.4: Detail of hook and eye fastenings on the bodice of Geraldine Cadbury wedding dress. The boning inside the bodice is also clearly visible. 1891. Pongée silk lined with cotton. 1968M68. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. Personal photograph by the author. 14th March 2013.



Fig. 8.5: *Detail of the handmade lace inside the train of Geraldine Cadbury's wedding dress.*

1891. Pongée silk lined with cotton. 1968M68. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.

Personal photograph by the author. 14th March 2013.



Fig. 8.6: Detail of the decorative knots under the arms of Geraldine Cadbury's wedding dress. 1891. Pongée silk lined with cotton. 1968M68. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. Personal photograph by the author. 14th March 2013.



Fig. 8.7: Detail of the draping down the back of Geraldine Cadbury's wedding dress. 1891. Pongée silk lined with cotton. 1968M68. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. Personal photograph by the author. 14th March 2013.

had narrow skirts with a train, tightly corseted bodices with sleeves puffed at the shoulders, often with lavish embellishment in the form of appliqué [ornamental needlework in which pieces of fabric are sewn or stuck on], beading and lace trimming, as displayed in the surviving wedding dress worn in 1890 by the future Lady Fairhaven (Fig. 8.8). Another fashionable 'Bridal dress', based on Parisian seasonal styles and made by 'Mrs. Mason, New Burlington Street, London,' featured in *The Queen* in January 1891. It was described as 'Bodice and petticoat in white Duchesse, draped with Brussels point lace. The girdle consists of silver links. Train of rich brocade, fastened on the shoulders with silver cords and tassels. The lace is arranged *en cascade* down the bodice.'³⁸

The maker's name *Liberty Costume* is embossed on the satin waist band of Geraldine Cadbury's dress, confirming the origin of the gown. This fashionable London-based department store, Liberty & Co., had opened a Costume Studio, seven years previously in 1884, which designed and made British Aesthetic garments adapted from classical and medieval designs.

Liberty's of London

The Artistic and Historic Costume Studio of Liberty & Co., Regent Street, London, was the brainchild of silk mercer and department store founder Arthur Liberty and was developed by his friend and acquaintance of some twenty years and new associate, the Arts and Crafts designer, E. W. Godwin.³⁹ As Bourdieu asserts, the city is the site from where women observe and borrow fashionable signifiers, because 'the young woman associates urban life with a type of clothes and hair-styles, manifest signs, in her eyes, of enfranchisement.'⁴⁰ Liberty's location in central London means that for the rural-based Cadbury, living first in Edgbaston and then Street, the Studio's Aesthetic style would have been associated with the

³⁸ "Wedding and Dinner Dress made by Mrs. Mason, 4, New Burlington Street, W. for Miss Ines Casberd-Boteler," *The Queen* (London: January 1891) Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester.

³⁹ Geoffrey Squire, "E.W. Godwin and the House of Liberty," *Costume*, 34, (2000): 81. This article as well as Alison Adburgham, *Liberty's, A Biography of a Shop* (London: George Allen & Unwin Limited, 1975) give a detailed outline of Arthur Liberty's department store as well as his employment and trade history.

⁴⁰ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 591.



Fig. 8.8: Fashionable wedding dress produced by Stern Brothers of New York but based on a French design by Paquin Lalanne et Cie. It was worn by Cara Leland Huttleston Rogers who became Lady Fairhaven. 1890. Silk overlaid with silk crepe and appliquéd with apricot coloured velvet embellished with beading and faux pearls. T. 276&A- 1972. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Web. 16th August 2015. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London. <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O166855/wedding-dress-and-stern-bros>

manifest signs of the liberated women of the city. Furthermore, Geraldine's choice of Aesthetic dress rather than seasonally-changing Paris based fashions, further confirms that her aspirations for a fashionable urban style were mediated by the feminine cultural training by her dress reform advocate mother, Anna Southall, as already noted.

As discussed at length by Geoffrey Squire, the Studio's designs emphasised 'authenticity' or, as E.W. Godwin and Arthur Liberty later came to term the practice, 'most reliable reproductions of ancient costumes,' which both men had previously sought decades earlier through their, individual yet parallel, work in the theatre. Arthur Liberty supplied fabrics for theatrical productions whilst E.W. Godwin began designing theatrical costumes as early as 1863. Liberty's theatrical collaborations were primarily concerned with developing garments that manifested a form of historic 'authenticity' in costume design and production which was traditionally absent from the picturesque and cobbled-together attire typical of the 1870s theatre productions.⁴¹ As Squire notes, E.W. Godwin meanwhile used his 'obsessive' detailed research into historical dress, to create and champion the use of 'historically correct design.'⁴² Godwin particularly emphasised the Grecian chiton and himation dress forms, flowing un-corseted garments, which to his eye, aided the movement and deportment of actors.⁴³ This emphasis on 'authenticity' was of such fundamental importance to each practitioner that it became contractually written into the Historic and Artistic Costume Studios pledged principles, as Squire confirms.⁴⁴ He also details a summary of the Studio's original principles, which were:

opposition to 'the automatic fiat of Paris' for biannual change for its own sake, often in disregard of grace and convenience; or when it prompts exaggeration and needless extravagance; or when accepted without regard for personal age, figure or complexion;

⁴¹ Squire, "E.W. Godwin and the House of Liberty," 83

⁴² Squire, "E.W. Godwin and the House of Liberty," 83.

⁴³ Squire, "E.W. Godwin and the House of Liberty," 86.

⁴⁴ *Liberty Art Costumes, Fabrics and Personal Specialities* (London: Liberty & Co, 1887). 788/29/2. Westminster City Archives, London. 13 and Squire, "E.W. Godwin and the House of Liberty," 95.

recognition at such times that it is better to ignore the present mode and adopt [...] an alternative modification of 'some more slowly perfected earlier style' according with personal preference, while not appearing eccentric or bizarre;

to establish an Educational School of personal adornment, and to provide such textiles, colours, forms and ornament as harmonize most perfectly with the natural characteristics of individual wearers; to create [...] the most reliable reproductions of ancient costume for artists and the stage in accord with the requirements of person or character.⁴⁵

Such ideas were primarily centred on the establishment of a style of dress based on a foundation of strict design principles, valued over and above the perceived eccentricities and extravagance of seasonally-changing Parisian fashions. The Studio issued seasonal catalogues which detailed all Liberty artefacts for sale, including Liberty fabrics, and others imported from India, Japanese and Chinese dress, Kashmir shawls and Liberty's own range of dress and millinery. Alison Adburgham notes that the Artistic and Historical Costume Studio's designs were influenced by and embraced dress styles from all periods and multiple cultures, including medieval dress, Grecian, Japanese, Chinese and 'Hindoo' [sic].⁴⁶ Liberty & Co. had routinely imported textiles, clothing and accessories from Africa and Asia since the founding of the firm around 1875.⁴⁷ Examples include a 'Superior Silk Embroidered 'Canton' Hand Screen, with figure subjects, 10 inches by 10 inches', sold for 2/0, 'Chinese Straw Bathing Shoes, most comfortable for walking on shingle or for use in the bath room' for 1/6 per pair both featuring in a catalogue from 1884 and 'Ladies Moorish Leather Slippers, embroidered with gold thread and colours on Red or Yellow Morocco Leather, price 3/3 per pair' sold in 1891.⁴⁸ In the 1892 catalogue '*Liberty' Yule Tide Gifts*, an 'Embroidered Dressing Gown, made in Japan' cost 55/- whilst a whole page spread featured 'Liberty Shawls [...] some rare specimens of Indian, Chinese Japanese and Moorish shawls, among which are

⁴⁵ Squire, "E.W. Godwin and the House of Liberty," 95.

⁴⁶ Adburgham, *Liberty's, A Biography of a Shop*, 53.

⁴⁷ E.W. Godwin, described the un-packaging of a delivery to Liberty & Co. of Japanese fans in his article for *The Architect* journal in 1876. Squire, "E.W. Godwin and the House of Liberty," 82.

⁴⁸ *Miscellaneous Catalogue of Eastern Art Objects* (London: Liberty & Co, 1891) 4. xx/5 Lc6. St Peters House Library, Brighton and *Eastern and Miscellaneous Bric-a-Brac* (London: Messrs. Liberty, 1891) 29. St. Peters House Library, Brighton.

fine examples of native hand work, both in colour and design.⁴⁹ These shawls were expensively priced between 15/9 for an all white 'China Silk Scarf shawl' to £5 10s for a 'Umritzur Hand-embroidered Rampoor Chuddah Shawl in soft colours, 4 yards by 2 yards'.⁵⁰ The extension of these influences into the fully realised embroidered dresses made in the studios of Liberty & Co. after the founding of the Artistic and Historic Costume Studio was therefore an almost natural development.

Liberty & Co.'s Sartorial Identity

Liberty & Co. Historic and Artistic Costume Studio, as Judith Watt confirms, maintained a distinctive 'sartorial identity' from its conception.⁵¹ According to Watt, the studio worked in 'soft and faded colours' and 'deliberately rejected the bright aniline colours worn by the more conventional fashionable ladies of the day'.⁵² Also distinctive in each of the Liberty & Co. Historic and Artistic Costume Studio dress's catalogue descriptions, is the acknowledgement that they were adapted from a historic style, specifically produced using Liberty fabrics and the ornamentation of hand embroidery and smocking.

In the Liberty publication, *History of Feminine Costume*, 1896, several Liberty & Co. dress designs, which were available for purchase that year, feature at the back of the catalogue and all were adaptations of historic styles. Those illustrated include a 'Tea Gown or Dinner Dress, of English silken-brocade' made from Liberty Satin and embroidered at the neck and waist which was 'designed in the Liberty Studio as a fin-de-siècle adaption of XVIth century costume.' The publication also featured an 'evening dress in characteristic "Liberty" mode' made up of soft silk, with smocking at the waist and neck which was described as 'an adaptation from a picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds'.⁵³ Combinations of satin with velvet and

⁴⁹ *Liberty Yule Tide Gifts. Embroidery Department* (London: Messrs. Liberty & Co. 1892) 34. 15/27 [22]. St. Peter's House Library, Brighton.

⁵⁰ *Liberty Yule Tide Gifts*, 34.

⁵¹ Judith Watt, "Costume," *Liberty of London, Masters of Style and Decoration* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1992) 34. Squire, "E.W. Godwin and the House of Liberty," 68.

⁵² Watt, "Costume," 68.

⁵³ *History of Feminine Costume: Tracing its Evolution from the Earliest Times to the Present* (London: Liberty & Co, 1896) 33-39. Smocking refers to decoration on a garment created by gathering a section of the material into tight pleats and holding them together with parallel stitches in an ornamental pattern.

semi-transparent silk gauze, as well as silken-brocade with satin and hand embroidery and the feature of smocking, provided textural depth as well as a characteristic form of decoration. Watt notes that this characteristic use of hand embroidery by the Studio:

[...] associated dress with hand rather than machine work, and could thus be considered more 'artistic'. William Morris's colleague, the graphic artist and designer, Walter Crane's clothes for girls featured it, and the embroidered dresses sold at Liberty's often had an Oriental touch [...] It was also a relatively inexpensive way of decorating dress.⁵⁴

In fact, embroidery, both made in the Studio and imported from around the world, was seen as so characteristically associated with the Liberty & Co., that from 8th to the 13th February in 1892 they hosted a viewing at Chesham House, 142 - 150 Regent Street, of 'Some of the Valuable and Unique Specimens of Ancient and Modern Eastern and Other Art Embroideries, collected by Messrs. Liberty,' and produced an accompanying catalogue listing the exhibits.⁵⁵ The 111 items featured in the exhibition were a mixture of home furnishings and garments, including a 'Salonica Wool Patchwork or Prayer Rug [... of] XVth Century work' and a 'Japanese Maiden's Robe.'⁵⁶

It is therefore of significant importance to the arguments within this research that, excluding the discrete rows of handmade lace on the underside of the train and at the cuffs, Geraldine Cadbury's Liberty gown is particularly striking for its lack of decoration, especially the absence of the trademark shaded silk embroidery or smocking. Hand embroidery does not feature on the dress. Such rejection highlights the distinctive design of Geraldine Cadbury's gown, through its exclusion of handcrafted embroidery with which Liberty & Co. so carefully, and publically, affiliated their designs.

A comparison with another surviving Liberty & Co. dress, produced in 1895, which does feature shaded silk thread embroidery closely matching the colour of the garment's fabrics,

⁵⁴ Watt, "Costume," 34.

⁵⁵ *A Catalogue of Some of the Valuable and Unique Specimens of Ancient and Modern Eastern and Other Art Embroideries, collected by Messrs. Liberty* (London: Liberty & Co, 1892). St. Peter's House Library, Brighton.

⁵⁶ *A Catalogue of Some of the Valuable and Unique Specimens*, 38.

offers a striking contrast to the undecorated character of Geraldine Cadbury's dress. Mrs. Katherine Farebrother's Liberty & Co. dinner dress, now in Royal Pavilion and Brighton Museums Costume and Textiles collection, is comprised of a deep red velvet bodice (Fig. 8.8), skirt and belt (Fig. 8.9). Entitled, 'Flora, Afternoon Gown' the ensemble was priced at 9 1/2 Guineas.⁵⁷ The bodice of the dress features a deep square collar, with sleeves gathered to elbow with two puffs, in a style similar to the mainstream fashionable sleeves of the period. A dark pink raspberry tinted silk draped panel sits inside the front of the bodice. The dress is trimmed with white machine lace mounted on tulle and this is also used on the tight fitting elbow to cuff under-sleeves and on the centre front neck fill and standing collar. Typical Liberty shaded hand embroidery in thick silk threads of dark maroon and dark raspberry pink feature on the red velvet bodice, cuffs, collar and front as well as on the belt, depicting stylised flower and shamrock designs. Large matching tassels hang from the collar points. Whilst the bodice is Aesthetic in character, the deep red velvet skirt is entirely conventional in cut and styled to fashions of about 1895, featuring a train. Kimberly Wahl even notes that many of the 'Aesthetic' garments surviving in museum collections are in fact a mix of Aesthetic and fashionable influences.⁵⁸ Farebrother's dress therefore, represents the more conventional styles that Liberty also sold.

Geraldine Cadbury's choice of wedding dress therefore may be seen as a dress carefully selected as its design negotiated her personal adoption of a simple yet contemporary dress. She daringly chose a plain Grecian style, which means that she was confident in her choice

⁵⁷ Stella Beddoe, "Box 737-Dress-1890s-Liberty's-Farebrother Collection," C003349. *Dinner dress by Liberty information*. Royal Pavilion and Museums Costume and Textiles Collection, Brighton.

⁵⁸ Kimberly Wahl, "Picturing the Material/ Manifesting the Visual: Aesthetic dress in late-nineteenth-century British culture," *Dress History: New Directions in Theory and Practice*, ed. Charlotte Nicklas and Annabella Pollen (London: Bloomsbury, 2015) 106.



Fig. 8.8: Bodice of Katherine Farebrother's 'Flora' Dinner Dress made by Liberty & Co. c.1895. Red velvet, silk, tulle and lined with cotton. C003349. Royal Pavilion and Museums Costume and Textile Collection, Brighton. Personal photograph by the author. 19th February 2014.



Fig. 8.9: Belt of Katherine Farebrother's 'Flora' Dinner Dress made by Liberty & Co. c.1895. Red velvet with silk embroidery. C003349. Royal Pavilion and Museums Costume and Textile Collection, Brighton. Personal photograph by the author. 19th February 2014.

of an urban Aesthetic design because she did not select a more conventional Liberty style.⁵⁹ The significant absence of Liberty's decorative characteristics however, can be seen to represent Geraldine Cadbury's respect for the 1872 Women's Yearly Meeting Answers to Queries which reminded Friends to avoid 'thoughtless expenditure or needless superfluities.'⁶⁰ Thus her wedding dress outwardly represented her three way Semi-Adaptive negotiation between the fashion of the period, Liberty & Co.'s house style and her faith.

Another way in which Cadbury's choice of a Liberty & Co. dress illustrates this Semi-Adaptive negotiation, is through the emphasis the Studio placed on fabric colour. The butter colour fabric of her dress would have been chosen after careful consideration in the context of Liberty's criteria for the garment's use and it's wearer's appearance.

Liberty & Co. Colour

From its conception in 1885, the Historic and Artistic Costume Studio spurned bright and synthetic colours despite their fashionability in Paris-based designs and instead recommended muted and shaded colour tones for women's garments, as the Quaker community had done for centuries. As Anna Buruma notes, the aesthete Oscar Wilde described 'glaring' colours as 'the essence of vulgarity', whilst the bright synthetic aniline dyes of the period were also, 'not always reliably colourfast during washing. So it appears that the aesthete's distain was partly influenced by practical concerns: the new artificial dyes could be unsafe both to health and to colour fastness.'⁶¹

⁵⁹ A Grecian influence is also evident in another surviving Quaker dress, held in Norwich Castle Study Centre. The dress is a hand-sewn, late-nineteenth century ribbed black silk day dress, and is unembellished yet constructed in a typically fashionable Paris silhouette. The beige silk lining however, features a Grecian 'meander' pattern often featured in Grecian border designs. Quaker dress in ribbed black silk, c. 1862-1892. NWHCM: 1972.1.87.2. Norwich Castle Study Centre, East Anglia. See Appendix 2.1. for further details.

⁶⁰ "From the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends held in London by adjournment from the 22nd of the Fifth month to the 31st of the same, inclusive, 1872. To the Quarterly and other Meetings of Discipline of Women Friends in Great Britain and Ireland," *Women's Yearly Meeting Answers to Queries*. 1668- 1896. YM/YMWF. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London.

⁶¹ Anna Buruma, "'A clinging Liberty tea-gown instead of a magenta satin': The Colour Red in Artistic Dress by Liberty & Co," *Costume*, 41 (2007): 105 & 107.

As early as 1883, a year before the opening of the Artistic and Historic Costume Studio, *Catalogue of Liberty Art Fabrics*, emphasised the company's preference for natural dyes and finishes in their fabrics, stating:

Of equal importance with the fabric is the colour, and to colour Messrs. Liberty & Co. have given most anxious attention, taking as a basis the dyes of early Persian origin, which for beauty and softness of tone was unequalled. Lastly, as to the finish, Libertys' Art Fabrics may almost be said to be without finish, inasmuch as they are totally free from any of the usual processes resorted to in order to impart a meretricious appearance.⁶²

A decade before the opening of the Studio however, Arthur Liberty's department store's windows, Geoffrey Squire notes, overflowed with, 'supple cashmeres, delicate pongée, and matt-surfaced slubby wild-silk tussos [a coarse silk], all soft to handle [...] shown in infinitely nuanced ranges of delectable new colours. Initially imported for furnishing, these distinctive textiles incidentally made the stiff, heavy silks and positive dyes long dominant in fashionable dress seem suddenly out of date.'⁶³ As early as 1879 these Liberty & Co. fabrics were acknowledged to be the most suitable for the production of the increasingly vogue-ish, though often ridiculed, Aesthetic dress.⁶⁴

Careful selection of colour was also central to Liberty & Co. Artistic and Historic Costume Studio through director, E. W. Godwin's design recommendations. He believed colour in dress should triangulate the functional and intimate demands of each wearer rather than be solely selected by seasonal fashion. In his publication *Dress and its Relation to Health and Climate*, 1884, Godwin bemoaned the 'new sickly tones of colour or the atrocious aniline dyes' before going on to note that, 'colour should be considered, and that not merely from the artist's point of view in laying down the rules for reasonable dress.'⁶⁵ Godwin described his triangle of considerations throughout the text, offering several recommendations the wearer should note regarding colour selection. Firstly consideration of harmony between

⁶² *Catalogue of Liberty Art Fabrics* (London: Liberty & Co, 1883) 1.

⁶³ Squire, "E.W. Godwin and the House of Liberty", 91.

⁶⁴ Squire, "E.W. Godwin and the House of Liberty," 94.

⁶⁵ Godwin, *Dress and its Relation to Health and Climate*, 77 & 79.

shade of cloth and the wearer's colouring. Secondly he noted the importance of the required heat protection qualities of the chosen colour in the climate it was to be worn in and thirdly he emphasised the aesthetic beauty of the colour and that all three were imperative considerations.⁶⁶

In *Liberty Art Fabrics, Dress and Specialities* catalogue of 1887 three pages were dedicated to advising the customer on the suitable colours of their costume. Extracts from French chemist M. Chevreul's *The Laws of Contrast of Colour*, 1839, were included, which discussed the juxtaposition of colours to enhance or diminish their vibrancy. Advice such as, 'Rose-red cannot be put in contrast with even the rosiest complexions without causing them to lose some of their freshness. *Rose, red* and *light crimson* have the serious disadvantages of rendering the complexion more or less green.'⁶⁷ This text created a scientific tone regarding the nuances of clothing colour selection. Advices on the avoidance of 'objectionable' and 'enfeebling' colour choices were framed not merely as a selection governed by aesthetics, class associations and the avoidance of objectionable chemicals, but also by scientific knowledge.⁶⁸ As Marcia Pointon has described, for Quakers such as Geraldine Cadbury however, clothing colour was also historically affiliated with the wearer's spiritual state, a consideration not detailed in Liberty & Co.'s colour advice to its customers.⁶⁹

Colour and Quakerism

As already noted in chapter 3, Amelia Mott Gummere, in her 1901 study, *The Quaker: A Study in Costume*, stated that 'after the opening of the eighteenth century plain colours were universal amongst Quakers,' which was interpreted as a uniform adoption of muted or sober shades.⁷⁰ The eighteenth-century Quaker John Woolman went even further, and wore

⁶⁶ Godwin, *Dress and its Relation to Health and Climate*, 79.

⁶⁷ *Liberty Art Fabrics, Dress and Personal Specialities* (London: Liberty & Co. 1887) 14.

⁶⁸ *Liberty Art Fabrics, Dress and Personal Specialities*. 15. Chevreul's advice also appeared in woman's magazines throughout the mid-nineteenth century. For further information of Chevreul's colour recommendations see Charlotte Nicklas, "One essential thing to learn is colour: harmony, science and colour theory in mid-nineteenth-century fashion advice," *Journal of Design History* 27.3 (2013): 218- 236.

⁶⁹ Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800", 415.

⁷⁰ Amelia Mott Gummere, *The Quaker: A Study in Costume* (Philadelphia: Ferris and Leach, 1901) 31.

only a white hat and un-dyed clothes because he believed colour to be a vanity through its links with aesthetic pleasure and its ability to hide dirt. He was also disgusted by the industrial dyeing process used to create coloured cloth, because he believed, much like Gustave Jaeger a hundred years later, that the waste products derived from the process created environmental pollutants that affected every part of the body including the spirit.⁷¹ According to Marcia Pointon, such a decision reveals an understanding of the complex Quaker narrative regarding objects of material culture.⁷² The item, in this case dyed cloth, must be considered in relation to a chain of reciprocity between object, its relation to the physical form, manufacturing, and the relation to the sought after spiritual state.⁷³

Whilst Geraldine Cadbury would have initially learnt about Plain style from her religiously conservative father, Alfred Southall, many Quakers' continuing disapproval of colourful clothing was communicated through the published letters which appeared in *The Friend*. As a young woman, Geraldine was familiar with opinions circulated in the Quaker journals, as her mother read extracts from *The Friend* to her children every Sunday.⁷⁴ Therefore, Cadbury would have been made aware of what Petr Bogatyrev has described as the 'opposing group' in an environment experiencing a clash of civilisations.⁷⁵ In Cadbury's case, the 'opposing group' would have been the conservative Quakers who continued to criticise and remain resistant to women's fashionable dress, including its bright colours and styles which restricted bodily movement. T. Swann, on 1st November 1870, specifically criticised the 'absurd' and 'gaudy' colours worn by female Friends and stated that 'too much colour in dress looks like an eruption of folly.' Instead Swann advocated that Quaker women should limit the colour of their garments to, 'what is perfectly natural.' Furthermore, Swann quoted Victorian novelist Thomas Carlyle, in saying that, 'From the soberest drab to the high-flaming scarlet, spiritual idiosyncrasies unfold themselves in choice of colour: if the cut betoken intellect and talent, so does the colour betoken temper and heart.'⁷⁶ Even, as late as May 1898, one anonymous Quaker writer criticised the 'careless dressing' at London

⁷¹ Marcia Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," *Art History*, 20. 3 (1997): 415.

⁷² Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," 415.

⁷³ Pointon, "Quakerism and Visual Culture 1650 – 1800," 415.

⁷⁴ Whitney, *Geraldine Cadbury, 1865- 1941*, 24.

⁷⁵ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 58.

⁷⁶ Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Restarus* (Boston: Ginn & Company, 1836) Qted in T. Swann, "Correspondence. On Dress," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* X. 119 (1870): 275.

Yearly Meeting and specifically chided the 'confusion of colours' being worn by the attendees.⁷⁷ Clearly, conservative Quaker's pre-occupation with the suitability of certain fabric colours continued to circulate within the religious community during the decade in which Cadbury purchased her wedding dress.

Mainstream British newspapers also publicly debated the fashions for the 'subdued' colours being worn during this period, however their focus was the influence of dress designs and shades being worn in artistic settings which were, by 1882, exerting an influence on mainstream fashionable dress. "Metropolitan Gossip," in the *Belfast News*, in December 1882, noted that, 'The fashions for the season in dress are always first noted at the Galleries. New colours are displayed, ingenious designs in dresses and unapproachable bonnets are the order of the day.'⁷⁸ Clearly, evaluations and interpretations of garment colour were broadening from a religious preoccupation, the fiat of Paris and the concern of an introspective circle of Aesthetic practitioners, to a civil debate whereby a garment's colour could be related to the wearer's artistic sensitivity. The 'Lady Correspondent' goes on to specifically note the London-based Grosvenor Gallery, which exhibited Pre-Raphaelite and Aesthetic art, as a particular location where 'the pictures are not so much looked at as the visitors.'⁷⁹ As Colleen Denny has described, the fashionable Grosvenor Gallery soirées ignited a trend whereby the aesthetics of the clothes seen on the paintings' ethereal women, their draped Grecian or medieval gowns, were copied by the female adherents of the Aesthetic movement, including Geraldine Cadbury for her bridal ensemble.⁸⁰ In both their fashion and home décor this copying from painting into daily life became a comprehensive actual interpretation of the Aesthetic movement. By the 1880s fashionable colours included the deeper, darker tones seen at the Grosvenor Gallery, but often in heavy and stiffened fabric as surviving garments illustrate.⁸¹

⁷⁷ A Man Friend, "Dress At London Yearly Meeting (To the editor of The Friend)," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XXXVIII. 19 (1898): 294

⁷⁸ "Metropolitan Gossip," *Belfast News*, Saturday 9th December, 1882: 7.

⁷⁹ "Metropolitan Gossip," 7.

⁸⁰ Colleen Denney, *At the Temple of Art: The Grosvenor Gallery 1877- 1890* (London: Associated University Press, 2000) 59.

⁸¹ An example of the mainstream incorporation of darker shades during the 1880s is evident in a fashionable dark green silk velvet and dark green brocade dress worn by Marion Sambourne in 1885, by an unknown designer. *Dark green bodice and skirt worn by Marion Sambourne*. 1885. Silk velvet, silk brocade. CTMAS000111. Royal Pavilion and Museum's Costume and Textile Collection, Brighton.

The relationship between The Pre- Raphaelites, Grosvenor Gallery Paintings, Aesthetic Dress and Geraldine Cadbury's sartorial choices

Aesthetic paintings of the 1880s had their origins in the paintings of the previous decade's Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. These had included Dante Gabrielle Rossetti, William Holman Hunt and John Everatt Millais who were championed by the art critic, John Ruskin.⁸²

Geraldine Cadbury's idolisation of the art critic and Pre-Raphaelite advocate Ruskin, also informed and reflected her choice of a Historic and Artistic Costume Studio Grecian inspired wedding dress. In Cadbury's case she would also have associated Liberty Aesthetic clothing with the teachings of her idol, Ruskin. According to Janet Whitney, Cadbury idolised the works of Ruskin, who she described as one of Geraldine Cadbury's 'private gods.'⁸³ In a letter to her mother whilst on vacation in France with her husband on the 6th June 1894, Cadbury esteemed Ruskin's description of Amiens Cathedral over her own descriptive abilities, saying:

[...] an exceedingly nice man took us up the tower and all round the clerestory and outside the Cathedral. Pointing out its marvellous beauty, the wonderful frieze, the old glass window (contrasting with but greatly to the disadvantage of the modern ones) and the beautiful flying buttresses- oh it was a grand time! But as I believe Ruskin has already (and possibly better than I can) described the scene I will refer you to him.⁸⁴

Ruskin's teachings were also greatly admired by Liberty & Co. In the opening pages of their catalogue, *Evolution in Costume* of 1893, John Ruskin is quoted as sartorially recommending that, 'the fond and graceful flattery of each master does in no small measure consist in his

⁸² "Pre- Raphaelite," Tate Britain [n.d.]

⁸³ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury. 1865 – 1941*, 32.

⁸⁴ Geraldine Cadbury. *Letter to Mrs Anna Southall*. 6th June 1894. MS 466A/510/1. National Archives Birmingham.

management of frillings and trimmings, cuffs and collarettes.⁸⁵ Cadbury did indeed 'manage' the frillings and trimmings, cuffs and collarettes by restricting them to only hidden decoration inside the hem of the dress and the simple gathered falling collar on her own wedding gown. She also paid much attention to 'managing' these decorative features too within the dresses of her seven bridesmaids, as will be shown later.

The original Pre- Raphaelite members had pursued an inter-disciplinary approach to their artistic creations, and sought to re-design the dress of their female relatives as well as merely depict it in their paintings. Considering dress as a worthy area for study, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, as Elizabeth Wilson and Lou Taylor note, 'rejected the crude aniline colours of the 1860s preferring 'off' colours and half tints: salmon pink, sage green, indigo, deep amber [...] preferred simple embroidery or smocking, and sometimes touches of classical, oriental.'⁸⁶ In some cases they favoured simple dresses with modest decoration, often embroidery and smocking, in materials of soft hues and without corsets.⁸⁷ Initially designed as artistic props these dress styles were ultimately adopted by a wider circle of artistically minded women and developed into the Aesthetic style of dress. Described by *The British and Mercantile Gazette*, 1884 as, 'soft drapings [...] suited to the figure of the wearer. The everlasting and monotonous rows of frills and pleats are thus done away with, and garments substituted which have a meaning and subtlety of their own,' Aesthetic dress rejected the complex styles and heavy fabrics of 1880s mainstream fashions.⁸⁸

The adoption of dress styles re-worked from Pre-Raphaelite and Aesthetic paintings may be seen in surviving examples of Aesthetic dress. Some garments are simple dresses with modest decoration, embroidery, smocking, soft hues and corset-less silhouettes whilst others, in contrast, illustrate the influence of medieval court dress styles. One Liberty & Co. full length dress circa 1890, from The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York is made of a muted mauve silk with matching shaded embroidery around the neckline, featuring an uncorseted loose flowing silhouette, long sleeves gathered along the outer seam and a band of

⁸⁵ *Evolution in Costume: Illustrated by Past Fashion Plates and Present Adaptations of The Empire and Early Victorian Period* (London & Paris: Messrs. Liberty, 1893) 4.

⁸⁶ Elizabeth Wilson and Lou Taylor, *Through the Looking Glass: A History of Dress from 1860 to the present day* (London: BBC Books, 1989) 30-31.

⁸⁷ Wilson and Taylor, *Through the Looking Glass*, 30-31.

⁸⁸ *The British and Mercantile Gazette*, 1884. Qted in Watt, "Costume," 68.

smocking next to a band of embroidery at the neckline.⁸⁹ Another example from the Victoria and Albert Museum, London circa 1897, meanwhile owes much of its inspiration to Pre-Raphaelite depictions of medieval court clothing (Fig. 8.10). Featuring puffed long sleeves, the golden yellow silk robe is bordered by brown plush velvet along the hem, cuffs and front panel with a flared un-corseted silhouette.⁹⁰ As the Victoria and Albert Museum note, 'the puffed sleeves, wide cuffs and velvet edgings are inspired by plain, loose 16th century gowns. The sunflower and pomegranate motif on the fabric was a recurring design on objects associated with the Aesthetic Movement. The subtle gold and brown tones were popular 'artistic' colours used in both dress and furnishing fabrics during the 1890s.'⁹¹

Second-generation Pre-Raphaelites, practising throughout the 1870-1890s, fell under the banner of Aestheticism, and they particularly favoured the depiction of Grecian chiton (a long woollen tunic) and himation (a Grecian outer garment draped over the shoulder) dresses, which informed their female adherents' clothing. Artists including Albert Joseph Moore, described by Tate Britain as a 'Classical Revival artist', sought inspiration from ancient Grecian artefacts. He was, 'influenced by the Elgin Marbles and often used the ancient world as the setting for his pictures.'⁹² Women dressed in Grecian draperies feature centrally in his paintings, *The Toilette*, 1886 and *Dreamers*, 1882. Thus some artistically-minded wealthy women dressed themselves in the Grecian or medieval-inspired gowns depicted in the works of Grosvenor Gallery artists. It is no surprise therefore that the butter colour Hellenic silk dresses depicted in Moore's *Dreamers*, are remarkably similar in colour and style to that of Geraldine Cadbury's Liberty & Co. wedding gown. This indicates that both the colour and the form of the Aesthetic Grecian shape that she chose for her wedding dress were visual indications of her cultural knowledge and learning as well as reflections of her intellectual interests.

⁸⁹ *Dress*. c.1890s. Silk. Liberty & Co. London. 1986.115.5. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

⁹⁰ *Robe*. c. 1897. Silk and cotton brocade, lined with taffeta, with a silk-satin front panel and silk-plush edgings. Liberty & Co. London. T.57-1976. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

⁹¹ "Robe Summary T.57-1976," *Victoria and Albert Museum* [n.d]

⁹² "Display Caption for Albert Joseph Moore, *The Toilette*, 1886" *Tate Britain*, [n.d].



Fig. 8.10: *Sixteenth century inspired robe made by Liberty & Co. 1897. Silk and cotton brocade, lined with taffeta, with a silk-satin front panel and silk-plush edgings. T.57-1976. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Web. 28th July 2015. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London. <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O15544/robe-liberty-co-ltd/>*

Grecian Dress Styles

E. W. Godwin acknowledged that 'in the climates of transpontine Europe the old classic dress cannot be revived' but nevertheless he advocated adapting the Grecian dress designs popular with Aesthetes.⁹³ As already mentioned, the creators of Geraldine Cadbury's wedding gown, Liberty's Artistic and Historic Costume Studio, designed many of these from 1884 right through to the 1920s. One year prior to the Studio's official opening the *Catalogue of Liberty Art Fabrics*, 1883, featured an article entitled 'Costumes of Greek Ladies and Costumes of Roman Ladies' commending both the history and design features of Hellenic dress, noting its rejection of decorative embroidery:

Simplicity of attire was in Greece, as elsewhere, the mark of the age of refinement. In the earlier times the dresses of both men and women seem to have depended for their effect on their rich embroidery; whereas in the age of Phidias, and later times, the dress of the women especially depends for its beauty on the softness of the material, the graceful hanging or flow of its lines, and the way in which it drapes, but does not conceal, the form beneath it.⁹⁴

The inclusion of this educational article in this *Catalogue of Liberty Art Fabrics*, 1883 presented Hellenic dresses to Liberty & Co. clients as 'civilised' and 'refined' and of soft and draped fabric even prior to the introduction of E.W. Godwin's Aesthetic creations inspired by a 'perfected earlier style.'⁹⁵ The 1883 article offered a pre-emptive instruction and promotion to Liberty customers of Godwin's Aesthetic Grecian inspired dress designs. Furthermore, it also worked to validate the Grecian styles of Liberty & Co. that were to be available the following year. Liberty & Co. was described as 'a business which was laying itself out for artistic decoration and the manufacturer of articles and fabrics which would educate public taste.'⁹⁶ Godwin acknowledged this endeavour in his own publication. In 1884, as a response to Gustave Jaeger's *Essay's on Health Culture and the Sanitary Woollen*

⁹³ Godwin, *Dress and it's Relation to Health and Climate*, 77

⁹⁴ *Catalogue of Liberty Art Fabrics* (Messrs. Liberty & Co, 1883) 26. 788/29/1. Westminster City Archives.

⁹⁵ Squire, "E.W. Godwin and the House of Liberty," 95.

⁹⁶ Guy Bentley, *Liberty Lamp* (London: Liberty & Co, 1923) Qted by Alison Adburgham, "The Aesthetic Movement," *Liberty of London, Masters of Style and Decoration* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1992) 41.

System translated from German to English the same year, Godwin published his *Dress and its Relation to Health and Climate*, in which he stated that he believed women had begun receiving educations which would enable their emancipation from restrictive forms of dress:

The higher education of women is beginning to influence this long-enduring badge of their patient sufferance; and the increased knowledge, and thereby of necessity appreciation of old Hellenic culture may perchance, before very long, reduce the corset to the mammillare.⁹⁷

Clearly, Godwin believed that there was a new generation of well- educated women, who would come to enjoy the beauty and comfort of Hellenic dress and see that this would liberate them from the necessity of wearing conventional fashionable close fitting Victorian garments, which in the 1880s were structured around a base of boned corsets and heavy bustles.⁹⁸

E. W. Godwin's second concern was that such aesthetic pleasure should not be abandoned for the sake of the new 'sanitary' attire, or Reform dress, stating that, 'beauty without health is incomplete. Health can never be perfect so long as your eye is troubled with ugliness.' Thus, Godwin used his artistic training to metamorphosise health-guided garment principles into 'beautiful' dresses.⁹⁹

Despite the fact that Godwin died suddenly in 1886, less than three years after the opening of the Historic and Artistic Costume Studio, his principles were adhered to by the studio long after his death through subsequent designs and publications which featured 'modified' designs for gowns inspired by a variety of historical episodes.¹⁰⁰ For example, *Liberty Dresses & Fabrics, Autumn Fashions* in 1923, contained a selection of 'Costumes Never Out of Fashion.' Here an aesthetic inspired, 'Evening Gown, in Orion satin, hand-embroidered with

⁹⁷ Godwin, *Dress and its Relation to Health and Climate*, 77

⁹⁸ Godwin, *Dress and its Relation to Health and Climate*, 77

⁹⁹ Godwin, *Dress and its Relation to Health and Climate*, 80.

¹⁰⁰ Adburgham, *Liberty's, A Biography of a Shop*, 53 and Squire, "E.W. Godwin and the House of Liberty," 95.

silk', for 22 Guineas (Fig. 8.11), displayed very similar design features to an 'Artistic' gown drawn by Liberty & Co. designer Walter Crane, twenty-nine years earlier, in 1894.¹⁰¹

One year following Godwin's death in 1887, a classic Grecian style dress fashioned from Arabian cotton with a silk himation (Fig. 8.12) called 'Athene' featured in the *Art Costumes, Fabrics and Personal Specialities* catalogue. Prices ranged from '4 1/2 Guineas for Arabian Cotton with Silk Himation' to '7 1/2 guineas in Nagpore Silk with Gauze Himation'.¹⁰² This 1887 design featured decorative knots holding the sleeve seams together and diagonal crossed cords on the bodice to divide the bust and hang the dress from the shoulders. In July the same year, the women's journal *Lady's World*, illustrated two Liberty's Historic and Artistic Costume Studio tea gowns (Fig. 8.13) one of which features the soft, wrapped draping style present in both the 'Athene' design as well as Geraldine Cadbury's wedding gown.¹⁰³ Anna Buruma, current archivist at Liberty & Co., believes that Geraldine Cadbury's 1891 dress is modelled on this 1887 teagown style and directly notes this specific illustration. Both 'Athene' and the *Lady's World* illustrations indeed do bear markedly similar design hallmarks to the design features of Geraldine Cadbury's wedding dress. Despite her

¹⁰¹ *Liberty Dresses & Fabrics. Autumn Fashions* (Birmingham, London & Paris: Liberty & Co, 1923) 5 and Newton, *Health, Art and Reason*, 100.

¹⁰² *Liberty Art Costumes, Fabrics and Personal Specialities* (London: Liberty & Co, 1887) 17.

¹⁰³ "Fashions for July. Tea Gowns, Designed by Liberty & Co," *The Lady's World* (London: London: Cassell & Co., 1887) 291.



Fig. 8.11: Loose and flowing Grecian styled evening gown, in Orion satin, hand-embroidered with silk. 1923. Illustration. *Liberty Dresses & Fabrics: Autumn Fashions* (Birmingham, London & Paris: Liberty & Co. 1923) 5. Liberty's Business Archive, Westminster City Archives, London.

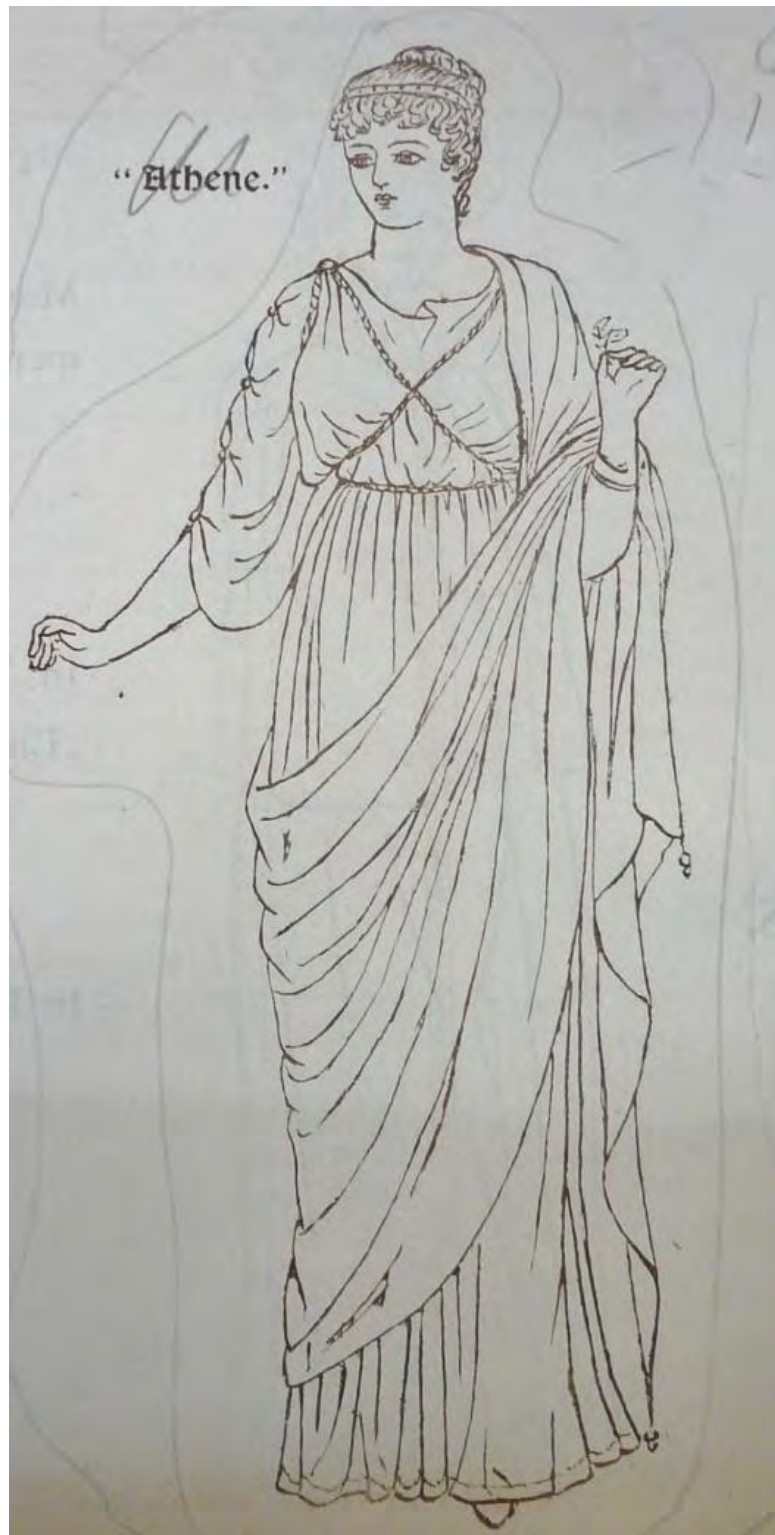


Fig. 8.12: 'Athene' Grecian chiton style dress design with knots at the sleeves. 1887.

Illustration. 788/29/2. *Liberty Art Dress, Fabrics and Personal Specialities* (London: Liberty & Co. London, 1887). Liberty's Business Archive, Westminster City Archives, London.



Fig. 8.13: *Liberty Teagowns, softly draped, but the one on the left is clearly worn with a corset.* 1887. *The Lady's World* (London: Cassell & Co., 1887). Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester.

dress being designed and worn five years after the death of Godwin, it remained faithful to the Hellenic and Aesthetic design features he favoured which were endorsed by Liberty & Co. Such longevity of the production of the Grecian silhouette confirms the lasting impact of the Historic and Artistic Costume Studio's emphasis on a historic 'authenticity' in their garments. These designs rebuff what they referred to as 'meaningless and extravagant vagaries, and too frequent vulgarisms of mid-nineteenth century 'Toilettes' and Costumes' as featured in constant seasonally changing fashions insisted on by Paris couture designers.¹⁰⁴

The Relationship between Aesthetic Dress, Rational Dress and Quaker Dress

As already noted, Geraldine Cadbury's mother, Anna Southall, was a committed dress reformer and she was probably well aware of the overlapping interests between the Aesthetic and Dress Reform movements. Whatever the subtleties of interpretation and implementation placed on these garments, the ideological motivations of Aesthetic and Rational dress were in pursuit of comparable goals. Kimberly Wahl has even recently asserted that the loose fitting styles of Aesthetic dress were 'often viewed as an artistic variant of dress reform.'¹⁰⁵ This was not the only ideologically and stylistically shared attribute between these two movements. In 1886, E. Ward proposed that many who advocated dress reform also aimed to liberate women from the, 'absurd anomalies which are displayed in such reckless profusion in the name of fashion' whilst seeking to develop a form of dress which satisfied, 'every canon of good taste.'¹⁰⁶ Thus, these dress reform advocates mirrored the principles promoted by the director of Liberty's Historic and Artistic Costume Studio, E.W. Godwin.

In 1884, Godwin wrote that he believed the late-nineteenth century to be the first period since the early seventeenth century in which fashion could successfully incorporate

¹⁰⁴ Dudley Harbron, *The Conscious Stone: The Life of Edward William Godwin* (London: Latimer House Limited, 1949) 169 and Watt, "Costume," 69.

¹⁰⁵ Wahl, "Picturing the Material/ Manifesting the Visual," 99.

¹⁰⁶ Ward, *The Dress Reform Problem*, 11.

ideologies concerning health as well as beauty into women's clothing.¹⁰⁷ Godwin's suggested desirable design attributes were detailed in his 1884 publication, *Dress and its Relation to Health and Climate* and included, 'Close, but not too tight in fit, the undermost garment, either in one or two divisions, should cover the body from neck to knee, or even to heel, with sleeves or half sleeves.' As well as the close fitting of garments without tight corseting, and their creation using materials appropriate for the climate the garment should be worn in and a natural fibre to act as a 'non-conductor of heat, and absorber and distributor of moisture.'¹⁰⁸

When these practicalities of design were recommended in 1884 however, they were by no means entirely revolutionary, having already been championed in the principles advocated by the Rational Dress Society. Likewise, the Rational Dress Society recommended Liberty & Co. fabrics for their high quality materials and absence of chemical manipulation, considering them an 'essential' material in the pursuit of healthy clothing. They even promoted Liberty & Co. fabrics to their members by awarding them a silver medal at the *Rational Dress Exhibition* of 1883.¹⁰⁹ The Rational Dress Society's ideological manifesto of healthy dress was endorsed through the Historic and Artistic Costume Studio and its production of garments that realised many of the movement's suggestions. Whilst the Rational Dress Society promoted, 'individual taste', Liberty & Co. sought 'discrimination and personal opinion in fashion.'¹¹⁰ The 'deprecation of constant changes of fashion' by the Rational Dress Society was equally promoted by Liberty & Co. to its customers through 'opposition to 'the automatic fiat of Paris' for biannual change for its own sake.'¹¹¹ Thus, both Aesthetic and Rational dress used and supported Liberty & Co. fabric, whilst Liberty & Co. and Rational Dress promoted ideologically corresponding dress design recommendations.

The popular press also recognised the sartorial and ideological similarities between Aesthetic and reform garments. In the article "Dress Reform" in the *Bath Chronicle and*

¹⁰⁷ Godwin, *Dress and its Relation to Health and Climate*, 77.

¹⁰⁸ Godwin, *Dress and its Relation to Health and Climate*, 78.

¹⁰⁹ Adburgham, "The Aesthetic Movement," 39

¹¹⁰ Harberton, "Rules," 1 and Squire, "E.W. Godwin and the House of Liberty", 95.

¹¹¹ Harberton, "Rules," 1 and Squire, "E.W. Godwin and the House of Liberty", 95.

Weekly Gazette, 1881, an anonymous male journalist openly approved of both the Aesthetic Grecian chiton and the work of dress deformer, Viscountess Harberton, as both promoted in his view, 'common-sense'.¹¹² As he noted:

The classic chiton may not suit every woman, and we could wish the modern travesty of it looked less often like a dressing-gown; but it does suit nine out of ten [...] When women can bring themselves to believe that the true outline of the female form is not that of a candle-extinguisher, or a diving-bell [...] we shall have taken an enormous stride onward to that desirable goal towards which Lady Harberton looks with a longing eye.¹¹³

As this study has shown, these reform movements were by no means the first to address these issues. Over a decade earlier however, the Quaker community had already begun to specifically decry women's fashions which 'deformed' the female silhouette, as illustrated in two letters published in the 1st November 1870 edition of *The Friend*. The Quaker, J.M. Richardson, decried the sight of women's bodies 'deformed by 'pads', and 'puffs', and 'bustles', and the graceful movements of nature crippled by 'Grecian bends.'" Instead, she advocated a form of dress which was both tasteful and liberating, as the dress reform and Historic and Artistic Costume Studio did a decade later. Richardson described this ideal dress as, 'a simple yet graceful attire, regulated by a pure and correct taste, enhanced by the native ease of unfettered movement.'¹¹⁴ Similarly, the male Quaker, T. Swann, in 1870 sought to reassure Quaker women that emancipation from restrictive fashion could still mean elegance and stated that, 'simplicity without uniformity, and neatness so well harmonised in its details as to reach the verge of elegance, may well be assumed by the female mind that disputes the bondage of fashion.'¹¹⁵ Thus, the recommendations for awareness of health and the need for ease of movement of both the Dress Reform movement and the principles of the Historic and Artistic Costume Studio were directly in accordance with those advocated by conservative Quakers.

¹¹² "Dress Reform," *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, Thursday 23rd June 1881: 8.

¹¹³ "Dress Reform," 8. .

¹¹⁴ J.M. Richardson, "An Address to Christian Women," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* X. 119 (1870): 261.

¹¹⁵ Swann, "Correspondence On Dress," 275.

Geraldine Cadbury's Grecian Aesthetic wedding dress therefore sartorially negotiated the Dress Reform movement's concerns for a lighter and less constrictive form of dress as well as the Aesthetic movement's pursuit of visually pleasing, 'civilised' and 'refined' garments with 'meaning and subtlety'.¹¹⁶ Cadbury's selection of an Aesthetically styled and unembroidered dress, specifically by Liberty & Co. whose fabrics were endorsed by the Rational Dress Society, would have been a judicious choice of wedding attire for an upper-middle class Quaker bride whose mother strongly approved of Rational Dress but who was aware that for the formal occasion of a family wedding any version of tailored, bifurcated or skirted Rational clothing with its sport and health style was not appropriate. Geraldine Cadbury's preference for Aesthetic dresses from Liberty's Artistic and Historic Costume Studio was further established through her selection of garments for the remaining female members of the bridal party.

Bridesmaid's Dresses

Janet Whitney notes that all seven bridesmaids at the wedding whose ages ranged from seven to twenty-six were attired in 'Liberty frocks and hats of pale green'.¹¹⁷ Surviving black and white photographs from the occasion (Fig. 8.14) illustrate the Southall and Cadbury sisters in gowns of draped fabric loosely restrained with sashes knotted at the waist and all with sleeves similar to that of the bride's gown which were full from shoulder to elbow and then fitted from elbow to wrist. The gowns worn by the five elder bridesmaids, Margaret Cadbury aged 13, Helen Cadbury aged 14, Huldah Southall aged 19, Edith Cadbury aged 19 and Jessie Cadbury aged 26, had hems which were three-quarter length, while the two flower girls, Beatrice Cadbury aged 7 (bottom left) and Kathleen Southall aged 8 (bottom right), had deep tucks set into the lower quarter of their skirts. All the bridesmaids dresses, as well as Geraldine Cadbury's wedding dress (Fig. 8.15), featured gathered falling collars similar in style to the collar of the aesthetic dress worn by the actress, and Aesthete, Ellen

¹¹⁶ *The British and Mercantile Gazette*, 1884. Qtd in Watt, "Costume," 69

¹¹⁷ "Facts. Geraldine Southall," *Ancestry*, [n.d.] and Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury 1865 – 1941*, 42.



Fig. 8.14: *Photograph of the wedding of Geraldine Southall and Barrow Cadbury. 8th September 1891. Black and white photograph. 1968M68(2). Birmingham Museums and Art Galleries.*



Fig. 8.15: *Detail of Barrow Cadbury and Geraldine Cadbury, as well as one of the bridesmaids on the right hand side, in their wedding photograph. 8th September 1891. Black and white photograph. 1968M68(2).Birmingham Museums and Art Galleries.*

Terry in a portrait from 1886 (Fig. 8.16). Cadbury's choice to dress her bridesmaid's in Liberty's may be read as encouraging and fostering woman-to-woman sartorial communication of aspiring to urban models, by dressing the young women in her social and familial circle in fashionable Aesthetic clothing purchased from a dressmaker located in the city.

The garments of the seated flower girls were additionally adorned with smocked yokes (the section of fabric over the shoulders and round the neck). Smocking was a key feature of Aesthetic styles for both adult women and children, as already noted, and was used to decorate Liberty's girls' clothes for many years. Amongst many smocked Liberty & Co. designs featured in *Liberty Art Costumes, Fabrics, and Personal Specialities* were the 'Nell' girls dress of 1887 (Fig. 8.17), featuring a smocked neckline and sleeves. Prices were high again, ranging from 47/6 in thin Cashmere and 105/- in Shanghai Silk. 'Smock', featuring a smocked bodice and sleeves was priced between 21/- made in 'Arabian Cotton' and 68/- in Shanghai Silk.¹¹⁸ Each of the elder bridesmaids' dresses was decorated with a large corsage of roses. The photographs show that they all wore wired scalloped edged hats perched fashionably toward the front of their heads. The May edition of *The Lady's World*, 1887 featured illustrated selection of smocked *Girl's Lawn Tennis Costumes by Liberty and Co.* (Fig. 8.18) that are similar in design to Beatrice Cadbury and Kathleen Southall's flower girl dresses.

Editions of *The Queen* throughout 1891 featured similar girls' 'tennis' dress designs identified as Kate Greenaway dresses made by Liberty & Co.¹¹⁹ A popular producer of illustrations for children's nursery books, Kate Greenaway's drawings of children dressed in Regency style clothing (Fig. 8.19) were widely emulated by manufacturers and particularly by Liberty & Co.¹²⁰ According to Alison Adburgham, Greenaway's influence upon children's clothes of the period was 'extraordinary' and she even received a 'fan letter' regarding one

¹¹⁸ *Liberty Art Costumes, Fabrics and Personal Specialities*, 24.

¹¹⁹ Christopher Breward, "Femininity and Consumption: The Problem of the Late Nineteenth Century Fashion Journal," *Journal of Design History* 7. 2 (1994): 72. *The Queen* is described by Christopher Breward as a 'traditional' middle-class journal which 'could expect a degree of prosperity and buying power amongst the readers.'

¹²⁰ Richard Cavendish, "Death of Kate Greenaway," *History Today* 51. 11. (2001).



Fig. 8.16: Frederick Hollyer. *Portrait of Ellen Terry*. 1886. Black and white photograph. 7864/1938. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Web. 28th August 2014. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London. <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O103329/ellen-terry-portraits-of-many-photograph-hollyer-frederick/>



Fig. 8.17: Nell dress design featuring smocking on the yolk and sleeves, in the Artistic Dress for Children collection. 1887. Liberty Art Fabrics, Dress and Specialities (London: Liberty & Co., 1887): 24. Liberty's Business Archive, Westminster City Archives, London.



Fig. 8.18: *Girl's lawn tennis costumes by Liberty & Co. with smocking on the yolks and cuffs and on the hipline of the youngest girl. 1887. The Lady's World (London: Cassell & Co., 1887). Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester.*



Fig. 8.19: Kate Greenaway. *Bubbles*. 1887. Wood Engraving. E.1930-1936. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Web. 28th June 2015. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O119477/bubbles-print-greenaway-kate/>

of her illustrations from Geraldine Cadbury's idol, John Ruskin.¹²¹ One fashion plate from *The Queen*, 1891 displays five numbered designs from Liberty & Co., of which numbers '3' (Fig. 8.20) and '4' (Fig. 8.21) bear strikingly similar design features to those of Geraldine Cadbury's bridesmaids dresses.¹²² Design '4' is identified in the accompanying text as directly adapted from Kate Greenaway's illustrations and is described as 'grey-green cashmere with lemon silk at the neck' confirming a connection to Whitney's description of 'pale green' as well as the *South Birmingham News*' description of 'Eau de Nil Crepe'.¹²³ The gowns of the elder bridesmaids' have round flat collars at the neck and sleeves which mirror design features of Liberty & Co. gown '4'. The flower girls' dresses, with the wide sashes loosely tied at the front left of the waist, the plain material of the gowns, the smocking on the bodices and the deep tucks set into the lower quarter of their skirts are reminiscent of Liberty & Co. gown number '3'.¹²⁴

Further confirmation that the bridesmaid's garments were designed and produced by Liberty & Co. appear in period illustrations of hats in *The Queen* of 1891. Hovering above the gown designs a headless illustration displays a hat (Fig. 8.22) which, when compared to the existing wedding photographs (Fig. 8.23), can be seen to be the exact same design as for those worn by the bridesmaids. *The Queen* confirms that this hat was designed by Liberty & Co. in the year of the wedding, and with its woven construction, upturned back brim and garnished fabric decoration, described as 'very pretty straws, with silk trimmings', it appears

¹²¹ Adburgham, *Liberty's, A Biography of a Shop*, 55.

¹²² 'No. 3- Girl's Frock in a pretty combination of rose-pink and white silks, the puffings of silk extending round the bodice impart a flower like effect. Children's dresses, sketched at Messrs Liberty, East India House, Regent Street'. *The Queen* (London: Ward, Lock and Bowden, 1891) 'No. 4- Grey-green cashmere, with lemon silk at the neck, and the second in an antique-looking figured silk in soft colouring of bronze, copper, and lemon yellow. Children's dresses, sketched at Messrs Liberty, East India House, Regent Street'. *The Queen* (London: Ward, Lock and Bowden, 1891). Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester.

¹²³ *South Birmingham News* with full report on the marriage of Barrow Cadbury and Geraldine Southall.' Saturday 12th September 1891. MS 466A/169. National Archives Birmingham.

¹²⁴ Geraldine Cadbury's wedding gown and seven bridesmaids costumes would have been made to order by the Artistic and Historic Costume Studio. Whether the family visited the store is unknown, but home visits by a Liberty & Co. dressmaker were part of the company's service as *Liberty Art Costumes, Fabrics and Personal Specialities*, (London: Liberty & Co, 1887) 23, Westminster city Archives, explains, 'An experienced Dressmaker can wait upon Ladies at their Country Residences with special selections of Materials and Sketches, for which no extra charge will be made.' This was a service that many stores provide during the period.



Fig. 8.20: No. 3- Girl's Frock in a pretty combination of rose-pink and white silks, the puffings of silk extending round the bodice impart a flower like effect. Children's dresses, sketched at Messrs Liberty, East India House, Regent Street. April 1891. *The Queen. The Lady's Newspaper and Court Chronicle* (London: Windsor House, 1891). Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester.



Fig. 8.21: No. 4 & 5 – These are adaptations from Kate Greenaway’s illustrations. The first is in grey-green cashmere, with lemon silk at the neck, and the second in an antique-looking figured silk in soft colouring of bronze, copper, and lemon yellow. Children’s dresses, sketched at Messrs Liberty, East India House, Regent Street. April 1891. *The Queen. The Lady’s Newspaper and Court Chronicle* (London: Windsor House, 1891). Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester.



Fig. 8.22: *The hats are mostly in drawn silk, with silk pompons, but they include new and very pretty straws, with silk trimmings. For examples see top of page. Children's dresses, sketched at Messrs Liberty, East India House, Regent Street. April 1891. The Queen. The Lady's Newspaper and Court Chronicle (London: Windsor House, 1891). Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester.*



Fig. 8.23: *Detail of the hats worn by Geraldine Cadbury's bridesmaids. 8th September 1891.*

Black and white photograph. 1968M68(2). Birmingham Museums and Art Galleries.

identical to those 'buff straw hats' worn by the party in photographs and described in the *South Birmingham News* on 12th September 1891.¹²⁵

Scant numbers of Geraldine Cadbury's other garments survive, none of which were produced by the Liberty & Co. Historic and Artistic Costume Studio. Her wedding dress however, was not to be her last large order from the firm. There is evidence Geraldine Cadbury's regard for the Liberty & Co. Historic and Artistic Costume Studio continued throughout her life. Cadbury became internationally renowned in her work with 'delinquent children' through the building of children's remand centres in and around Birmingham and her work with the Birmingham Children's Court from 1906 to her death in 1941.¹²⁶ Her commitment to the establishment of clean, quiet and safe Remand Homes for boys and girls lasted her entire life.

To the children she supported, according to Whitney, she bestowed, 'Christmas greetings-yes, and presents too: a handbag, a writing-case, a fountain- pen, a Swiss brooch.'¹²⁷ Every aspect of furniture, decoration and personal toilette at the five Juvenile centres the Cadburys commissioned between 1910 and 1935, were also under her care.¹²⁸ In the Girls' Hostel built in Newton Street, Birmingham in 1928, every child was supplied with a brush and comb.¹²⁹ At the newly opened Cropwood Open-Air school in 1922, 'Geraldine Cadbury herself chose and bought every article of clothing and furniture [...] and all the clothes for the fifty-two little girls who were the first pupils - green serge [strong wool] dresses and figured [brocaded and patterned] crepe frocks from Liberty's.'¹³⁰

¹²⁵ *The Queen*, (London: Ward, Lock and Bowden, 1891) Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, Manchester and *South Birmingham News* with full report on the marriage of Barrow Cadbury and Geraldine Southall.' Saturday 12th September 1891. MS 466A/169. National Archives, Birmingham.

¹²⁶ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury 1865 – 1941*, 159. In 1935 she was elected Vice-President to the International Association of Children's Court Judges and in 1937 she was made a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire for her work in this association.

¹²⁷ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury 1865 – 1941*, 123.

¹²⁸ The centres the Cadbury's commissioned during this period included: Remand Home, 218 Moseley Road. Uffculme Open-air School, Moseley. Cropwood Open-air School, Blackwell. Juvenile Court and Girls' Hostel, Birmingham. Copeley Hill Boys' Hostel, Erdington.

¹²⁹ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury 1865 – 1941*, 124.

¹³⁰ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury 1865 – 1941*, 92.

Liberty & Co. archives, in the Westminster City Archives, lacks a catalogue from that specific year but the catalogue *Liberty Frocks for Children*, of 1920, illustrates a, 'Frock in Yoru crepe with collar, cuffs and vest in a contrasting shade. Hand embroidery. 43 ins. long. £5.10.0' and a more expensive frock in, 'silk crape, with ribbon velvet sash. Hand-embroidery. 44ins. long. £11.11.0' (Fig. 8.24).¹³¹ Whilst the specifications of the school frocks bought by Geraldine Cadbury in 1922 remain unknown, both illustrations feature slim sleeves, slightly raised sash waist bands and three-quarter length hems. These may reasonably be considered features of the frock style selected for the girls at Cropwood Open Air School. Evidently no expense was spared on the garments bought for these girls, as Liberty & Co. garment prices remained comparatively high. For example, in the *Sheffield Evening Telegraph*, the same year, January 1920, T.J. Roberts advertised 'Children's serge frocks, for all ages, in New colours' for between 29/6 and 39/6, the cheapest being nearly a fifth of the price of the Liberty Frock in Yoru crepe.¹³² In the *Hartlepool Mail*, April 1920, M. Robinson & Sons, advertised, 'Girls Pretty Dresses. Alpaca, Serge, Silk. 18/11 to 70/-'.¹³³ Smith Bros. Drapers Ltd, Leeds, in *The Yorkshire Evening Post*, July 1920 advertised, 'Girls Summer Cotton Frocks in Zephyr, pretty styles for School wear in checks and stripes. Sizes 30 to 36 in. Usually 19/11. Sale Price 10/'.¹³⁴ Whilst an advert directly above for Schofields, Victoria Arcade, Leeds, advertised, 'Girls Smart Cotton Frocks made from Butcher and White or Navy and White Check. Long waisted style having self coloured collar. For girls 8 to 12 years old. Sale Price 5/11 1/2'.¹³⁵ Comparatively, therefore, in 1923, Geraldine Cadbury could have purchased 11 Smith Bros. Georgette cotton Frocks, for the price of the cheapest wool or silk Liberty & Co. frock of the same year at £5.10.0. Evidently, Cadbury's esteem for the values of the Liberty & Co. Historic and Artistic Costume Studio extended beyond her own ideological and religious principles and her own wardrobe choices, through to her professional social work activities, because she chose Liberty's garments for the children in her care instead of more competitively priced dresses.

¹³¹ *Liberty Frocks for Children* (London: Liberty & Co, 1920) Westminster City Archives.

¹³² "T.J. Roberts," *Sheffield Evening Telegraph*, 9th January 1920: 2.

¹³³ "M. Robinson & Sons," *Hartlepool Mail*, 22nd April 1920: 1.

¹³⁴ *The Yorkshire Evening Post*, Friday 29th June 1923: Front Page.

¹³⁵ *The Yorkshire Evening Post*, Friday 29th June 1923: Front Page.



Fig. 8.24: No. 14 Frock in silk crepe, with ribbon velvet sash and Hand-embroidery. 44ins. long. £11.11.0. 1920. Illustration. *Liberty Frocks for Children* (London: Liberty & Co., 1920). Liberty's Business Archive, Westminster City Archives, London.

The Cost of Liberty Aesthetic Dress

Despite providing the girls in her care with Liberty's dresses however, the cost of Liberty garments was not the most economical and always remained high. Comparisons with the price of garments produced across consumer markets during the 1890s helps to illustrate the respective cost of Geraldine Cadbury's wedding dress and which in turn, establishes her family's economic position and social place. Clearly, the Southall's were a financially comfortable Quaker family. Her father, a chemist and druggist, ran his own company, which by 1883, according to Janet Whitney, 'had become so prosperous that Alfred Southall had bought land in a pleasant suburban area, Edgbaston, and built a large house [Garrick House], where his [eight] children could each possess an individual room.'¹³⁶ By the time of Geraldine Cadbury's wedding in 1891, the family had risen to become wealthy and thus, Alfred Southall could afford to purchase his daughter's wedding dress and bridesmaid's dresses from Liberty's, whose prices were expensive for fashion retailing in Britain during the 1890s.

Perusal of newspapers from the respective period in question exposes and contextualises the reality of the high prices of the garments on sale from Liberty & Co. On the 5th March 1887 in *The Graphic*, Messrs. Jay's, Regent Street, one of London's smartest department stores, advertised 'Black Silk Costumes (Including sufficient silk for unmade bodice), 5 1/2 Guineas each.'¹³⁷ The Nagpore Silk gown 'Athene' featured in the *Art Costumes, Fabrics and Personal Specialities* catalogue, 1887 cost £2 more at 7 1/2 guineas.¹³⁸ In the same catalogue non-Grecian styles, 'Heathcote Mantle. In Umritza Cashmere' was even more expensive and cost 8 1/2 Guineas and the smocked lady's dress, 'Greta. In Umritza Cashmere' cost 8- Guineas.¹³⁹ The Grecian inspired gown 'Athene' however was one of the least expensive women's dresses in the Liberty & Co. *Art Costumes, Fabrics and Personal Specialities* catalogue, with 'Wanda. In thin Umritza Cashmere. Embroidered Drapery at

¹³⁶ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury 1865 – 1941*, 19.

¹³⁷ "Messrs. Jay's, Regent Street," *The Graphic*, March 5th, 1887: 244.

¹³⁸ *Liberty Art Costumes, Fabrics and Personal Specialities* (London: Liberty & Co, 1887) 17.

¹³⁹ *Liberty Art Costumes, Fabrics and Personal Specialities*, 18 & 19.

Sleeves and Neck, with Girdle, including Mantle. Hat Extra' costing 9 1/2 Guineas.¹⁴⁰ Such expense for one Liberty & Co. garment was far from unique for the year 1887 and prices for their items remained high. The price of Geraldine Cadbury's wedding gown is sadly unknown. The Birmingham National Archives where the Cadbury Family Archives are held, contain no such information. It is however reasonable to speculate that given that in 1895 'Flora, Afternoon Gown' was priced at 9 1/2 Guineas, the cost of Geraldine Cadbury's Grecian wedding dress would have fallen within the price range of 7 to 10 Guineas.¹⁴¹

At the far lower end of the fashion market, Kenneth Wilson & Co. Birmingham, in the *Derbyshire Courier*, in December 1891, advertised 'superior dresses for 7s 11d [...] in Habit Cloth all winter colours.'¹⁴² Far later, Allen Foster & Co., Golden Lane, London advertised in 1898, 'a magnificent range of Ladies' costume for indoor wear, also Ladies' walking suits [...] made in all the beautiful shades of the Specialite [sic] Serge- all one price, Ten {shillings} and Six Pence. Costume Complete.'¹⁴³ Such ready-to-wear ensembles, typically fashionable and mass made, therefore could cost as little as one fifteenth of the price of a gown from Liberty & Co. during the same decade. Furthermore, the cost of her bridesmaid's Liberty dresses and hats, discussed above, also fell into this costly price range of women's bespoke garments. As both Bourdieu and Bogatyrev have acknowledged, the function of clothing is to communicate 'status distinction' and the 'economic and social standing' of the wearer.¹⁴⁴ These qualities are immediately read and perceived by others who are culturally trained to observe other people's 'tenue', especially women. As such, Cadbury's choice of dresses from a Studio whose garments were expensive acted as a symbol of her family's prosperity and upper-middle class status. It is evident that Geraldine's parents, Alfred and Anna, could afford and were willing to pay for all these expensive garments, indicating both their approval of the complex and sophisticated sartorial subtleties within their daughter's choices and their upper-middle class income.

¹⁴⁰ *Liberty Art Costumes, Fabrics and Personal Specialities*, 20.

¹⁴¹ Stella Beddoe, "Box 737-Dress-1890s-Liberty's-Farebrother Collection," C003349. *Dinner dress by Liberty information*. Royal Pavilion and Museums Costume and Textiles Collection, Brighton.

¹⁴² "Shopping by post!!" *Derbyshire Courier*, 29th December 1891: 2.

¹⁴³ "Allen Foster and Co," *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 5th May 1898: 2.

¹⁴⁴ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 56 and Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 584.

Conclusion

Whether Geraldine Cadbury personally felt religiously obliged to attire herself and her wedding party in clothing sensitive to Quaker simplicity or not, Quaker clothing ideologies would have been impossible for her to ignore. Evidence offered throughout this chapter suggests she did indeed carefully consider Quaker moderation. Janet Whitney acknowledges that Geraldine Cadbury's Quaker conviction faltered at certain points in her adolescence, yet notes that Cadbury ultimately remained faithful to the religion her entire life. She actively shared her Quaker faith alongside that of her husband, with Whitney stating that Cadbury 'spoke fairly frequently in the Meeting for Worship, rising to break the rapt silence with a brief 'message' warm from her own heart, or with a sincere and earnest prayer.'¹⁴⁵ Her father's religious adherence to the Plain ways, her groom Barrow Cadbury's 'unwavering faith' and the presence of 600-700 members of the Birmingham Quaker community present at her wedding, must be acknowledged as affecting her selection of her wedding garments.¹⁴⁶ A description of the ceremony, from a half-page feature in *South Birmingham News* on 12th September 1891, reveals the diverse interpretations in clothing that Geraldine Cadbury's religious community illustrated for this very public event. The report, interestingly, apart from the briefest mention of Quaker bonnets, focused on the male members of the congregation's Quaker dress rather than that of the women:

The ideal Quaker dress was conspicuous by its absence. No one would go away and say that the ruling colours were drab or grey, or even a small plain plaid. Of the bonnets, not more than three of four reminded one of the old world Quakers. Knee breeches, buckled shoes and long tailed coats crowned with broad brimmed hats, had given way to the common-place dress of an unassuming English gentleman. Now and again, some of the living links between past and present Quakerism would pass through the crowded aisle, and, with dignified bearing, take their seats facing the congregation, without lifting their hats till they were seated. It is significant of the

¹⁴⁵ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury. 1865 – 1941*, 59.

¹⁴⁶ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury. 1865 – 1941*, 59.

prestige that still belongs to the hat that what is missing in breadth of brim is fully compensated in superiority of gloss. It is still easy to tell a Quaker by his hat.¹⁴⁷

Whilst modernisation of dress was slowly being practiced in Quaker clothing by both men and women post-1860 reform, as the quote attests, the survival of these 'living-links' who opposed fashionable dress imbued Cadbury's religious community with a sensitivity to older religious principles. As such, the 'opposing' force in the clash between urban fashionable and rural traditional identified by Bogatyrev and Bourdieu, would have continued to exert its influence on Cadbury's sartorial choices.¹⁴⁸ Geraldine Cadbury would have been conscious of the conservative opinions regarding fashionable dress of these Non-Adaptive Quakers through the published social commentary in *The Friend* and their physical presence at her wedding. The chosen artistic and social qualities which her dress choices signified however, were by no means incompatible with late nineteenth century Quaker faithfulness.

Faithful to both the Aesthetic movement and Rational Dress design features, Geraldine Cadbury's wedding dress echoed the feminine sartorial training Anna Southall bestowed on Geraldine, specifically her advocacy of the ideals of pioneering women's dress movements in the 1870s and 1880s. The creation of the bridal party gowns by Liberty & Co. Historic and Artistic Costume Studio, signified Geraldine Cadbury's preference for urban fashion, through her choice of a company located in the city of London, which represented female enfranchisement.¹⁴⁹ Furthermore it confirms her ideological approval of a company which was concerned with the liberation of women from restraining garments and a company which advocated a style of costume where freedom of movement as well as 'health and beauty had more chance of flourishing than at any other time.'¹⁵⁰ Aestheticism's foundations in the ideological edict of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood endowed the dress style with an intellectual substance, setting it apart from other seasonal fashions, based on shifting Paris-based styles, of the era. Her Aesthetic dress style would have acted as a well-informed public advertisement of Geraldine Cadbury's cultural knowledge and learning and

¹⁴⁷ "The marriage of Barrow Cadbury and Geraldine Southall," *South Birmingham News*. Saturday 12th September 1891. MS 466A/169, Birmingham National Archives.

¹⁴⁸ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 58 and Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 582.

¹⁴⁹ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 591.

¹⁵⁰ Godwin, *Dress and its Relation to Health and Climate*, 77.

as a reflection of her cultural interests, whilst at the very same time being ideologically sympathetic to a Quaker moral coding of dress. She therefore, selected with utmost care a Semi-Adaptive style which harmonised her 'tenue' with the competing ideological religious and sartorial influences in her life and yet which was not startlingly out of fashion. The beautiful butter coloured pongée-silk Liberty & Co. Historic and Artistic Costume Studio dress she was married in, was a negotiation between her artistic interests, socially educated Quaker upbringing and mindfulness to the religious duty of her Quaker faith.¹⁵¹

Other Quaker women however, made very different sartorial choices. Both surviving photographic evidence and Quaker social commentary, discussed in chapter's 4 and 5, have proven that despite scant examples of surviving dress evidence, some Quaker women did not seek simplicity or moderation in their attire. These middle and upper-middle class Quaker women instead entirely embraced the Paris based seasonal fashions of their period and they are referred to here as Fully-Adaptive. Two such Fully-Adaptive Quaker women, whose fashionable dresses have survived with proven provenances, are the following case studies, Lucretia Seebohm and Mary Ann Seebohm.

¹⁵¹ Whitney, *Geraldine S. Cadbury. 1865 – 1941*, 34.

Chapter 9 Fully-Adaptive Case Studies: Lucretia Seebohm, 1874 and Mary Ann Seebohm, c.1891

Introduction

By 1869 many Quaker women has ceased to implement Quaker simplicity or moderation in their garments, choosing instead to adopt mainstream Paris fashionable silhouettes, colours, trimmings and dress etiquette fully. William Pollard identified these women as 'the extreme reds amongst us.'¹ J.M. Richardson's 1870 words, which began this thesis, even identified these women's diverse justifications for wearing fashionable clothing. She described how Quaker women of fashion, appeared as if mannequins of fashion, as the 'dressmakers and drapers seem to use the sisterhood as pegs on which to hang in fantastic forms their wares and merchandise.'² Throughout this chapter, this type of fashionable Quaker woman is identified as Fully-Adaptive.

Due to the scarcity of fashionable Quaker garments found in dress collections, as discussed in chapter 5, sourcing and constructing evidence for a Fully-Adaptive case study proved the most challenging of my three classifications of Quaker women's interpretations of dress post 1860. In part, such scarcity is aggravated by the classification practice at many museums, which classify a garment's value for its ability to display fashionable period fabrics, style, techniques or designer names rather than offering any account of the consumer. As such, some fashionable garments within institutional collections may well have Quaker affiliations that remain unrecorded due to the lack of knowledge about such religious connections and their past ambivalence to question the provenance of garments as they entered the museum collection.

During a viewing at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London on 25th March 2010, a fashionable wedding dress, cape and collar was examined, which does have an established

¹ William Pollard, "Colloquial Letters. No. 9. My Unspoken Speeches in the late Yearly Meeting," *The Friends Quarterly Examiner. A Religious, Social & Miscellaneous Review conducted by Members of the Religious Society of Friends* XI (1869): 443 - 444.

² J.M. Richardson, "An Address to Christian Women," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* X. 119 (1870): 261.

Quaker provenance. The ensemble was worn by the Friend, Lucretia Anson Seebohm (née Crouch), during her Quaker marriage in 1874. As such, this ensemble provides tangible evidence with which to construct a Fully-Adaptive Quaker case study.

Lucretia was born on 28th April 1841 in Cornwall, the seventh of nine daughters of the established Quakers, Edward Anson Crouch of Falmouth and Mary Fox of Parr.³ Her father was a flour merchant and later a tin mine agent and commissioner in Penzance, and Lucretia was a daughter of his second marriage, his first wife Lydia Seekings having died in 1832.⁴ Whilst scant details have materialised regarding Lucretia's personal life, textual sources have provided insights into her family history, her affiliation with fellow Quaker dynasties and her allegiance to the Religious Society of Friends. As Lucretia married into the wealthy upper-middle class Seebohm family of bankers, details regarding her husband's career, the children born of the marriage and the genealogical context of the Seebohm heritage have been deduced from *Five Generations of Quaker Seebohms: 1790-1990* by Richard Seebohm and the *Private Memoirs of B and E Seebohm*. Once again, the *Dictionary of Quaker Biography* provides factual data concerning the dates of her parent's lives, details of her siblings, her birth and marriage. Crucially, however, whilst records for her mother and father exist in this compendium, Lucretia herself is unlisted. In addition, her obituary is absent from the *Annual Monitor or Obituary of the Members of the Society of Friends in Great Britain and Ireland*. Yet whilst such exemption within the Religious Society of Friends records initially seemed frustrating and perplexing, the absence was ultimately explained by her fracture with the Society, its beliefs and practices, as this chapter will reveal.

Due to the deficiency of Quaker biographical material specific to Lucretia Seebohm, the primary source of the garments themselves, alongside religious documentation, are relied upon heavily throughout this chapter. Religious certification regarding Lucretia's marriage to Benjamin Seebohm Junior in Clevedon and her registration as a member of the Luton and Leighton Monthly Meeting exist at Bedford and Luton Archives. Such documentation provides insight into the workings and opinions of the local Quaker community and the

³ 'Edward Anson Crouch,' *Dictionary of Quaker Biography*, DBQ CROSG - CROZ (London: Religious Society of Friends Library).

⁴ 'Edward Anson Crouch,' *Dictionary of Quaker Biography*, DBQ CROSG - CROZ (London: Religious Society of Friends Library) and "Pigot's Directory of Cornwall- 1844: Penzance (1)", *West Penwith Resources*. [n.d.].

Seebohm family. In addition, the North Hertfordshire District Museum and their six volumes of local history 'Lawson Thompson Scrapbooks' have provided a small but vital selection of family photographs of the Seebohms and therefore, evidence of the fashionable sartorial preferences of fellow female family members between 1860 and 1914. In addition the collection houses a midnight-blue, brocaded silk bodice and skirt worn by Lucretia's sister-in-law, Mary Ann Seebohm, around 1891.

Using these sources at the North Hertfordshire District Museum, this chapter will draw comparisons between Lucretia's sartorial choices and those of her sister-in-law, Mary Ann. Frustratingly, no photographs of Lucretia herself have materialised in the three archives consulted that contain family records, not even from the celebration of her wedding.⁵ Therefore a detailed appraisal of her surviving wedding attire has been crucial in the assessment of her fashionability. As in the previous case studies, the theoretical frameworks outlined by Pierre Bourdieu and Petr Bogatyrev are employed to analyse why these Seebohm women, unlike the Quaker women considered in the previous chapters, both 'betrayed' the traditional design features of Quaker Plain dress discussed in chapters 3 and 6, and instead entirely adopted urban fashionability.⁶

Lucretia Seebohm's Fashionable Wedding Ensemble

For her marriage to Benjamin Seebohm Jr. on 10th September 1874, at Friends' Meeting House Clevedon in Somerset, Lucretia Anson Crouch wore a fashionable ensemble consisting of a bodice, bustle-backed skirt, sash, collar and cape (Fig. 9.1).⁷ The bodice, skirt and matching cape are made of ivory-coloured silk gauze with an opaque silk stripe and trimmed with silk blonde-colour net lace and blonde-colour silk satin rouleaux [roll of ribbon used as a trimming] and bows. The collar is made of plain cream gauze, edged with silk satin

⁵ The three archives consulted have been: Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London; North Hertfordshire District Museum and Bedford and Luton Archives.

⁶ Petr Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, Translated from Slovak by Richard. G. Crum, (Re-printed The Hague & Paris: Mouton, [1937] 1971) and Pierre Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 1962, Re-printed in *Ethnography*, 5. 4. (2004): 579-600.

⁷ *Dress*. 1874. Silk gauze, trimmed with embroidered net lace, silk satin, lined with silk. T.68 to E-1962. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 9.1: Fashionable wedding dress worn by the Quaker Lucretia Seebom (née Anson Crouch). 1874. Silk gauze, trimmed with silk embroidered net lace, silk satin, lined with silk. T.68 to E-1962. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Web. 12th August 2015. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London. <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O249340/wedding-dress-unknown>

and is the plainest item of the ensemble, absent of the embellishments of lace or bows. The silhouette of the dress is typically fashionable for the year it was worn. The draped polonaise [a matching overskirt looped up to show the underskirt] creates fullness at the back of the skirt and the underskirt features three flounces, edged with blonde-coloured net lace and a slight train (Fig. 9.2). The three-quarter length V-neck bodice fastens with concealed hooks and eyes down the centre front and is entirely edged with the same blonde lace and further embellished with a buff silk satin bow at the bust (Fig. 9.3). The sleeves of the bodice are subtly flared, edged at the cuffs with buff lace and buff silk satin bows (Fig. 9.4). The cinched-in waist is accentuated by a slim buff silk-satin sash with a front fastening concealed by another bow which exaggerates the voluminous bustled skirt. Most strikingly, at the centre-back of the bodice attached to the belt, is a very large silk gauze bow entirely edged with the buff lace, which is supported using a 'stiff cotton gauze interlining'.¹⁸

In fact, such bows were illustrated in *The Young Englishwoman. A Volume of Pure Literature, New Fashions and Pretty Needlework Designs* as an element of fashionable attire as early as 1872. Whilst these 'Toile de Laine' examples, called basques, were produced using 'plain grey' and 'white and grey striped' wool and silk, the similarity between the bow used in Seebohm's wedding ensemble is clear.⁹ Both are composed of a front-fastening waist band or sash with a small bow to conceal the clasp and a large, voluminous and stiffly mounted folded fabric design at the back. Evidently, Seebohm enjoyed adopting a fashionable Paris silhouette and the accompanying decorative and bustled skirt, both aspects of fashionable female dress that had been perennially shunned by Plain Quakers.

Seebohm's dress also featured a short draped polonaise overskirt entirely edged with the blonde lace with silk threads in a leaf motif. This trimming here served to exaggerate further the volume of the back of the skirt and was in keeping with the bustled silhouettes gaining popularity during the early 1870s as well as the decade's penchant for a 'profusion of

⁸ "Wedding dress Summary, T.68 to E-1962." *Victoria and Albert Museum* [n.d] and *Beeton's The Young Englishwoman. A Volume of Pure Literature, New Fashions and Pretty Needlework Designs* III (London: Ward, Lock & Tyler, 1872) 341.

⁹ *Beeton's The Young Englishwoman. A Volume of Pure Literature, New Fashions and Pretty Needlework Designs*. III (London: Ward, Lock & Tyler, 1872) 346. PP.19.D.



Fig. 9.2: Back view of the fashionable wedding dress worn by the Quaker Lucretia Seebohm (née Anson Crouch). 1874. Silk gauze, trimmed with silk embroidered net lace, silk satin, lined with silk. T.68 to E-1962. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Web. 12th August 2015. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O249340/wedding-dress-unknown>



Fig. 9.3: Detail of the bodice of the fashionable wedding dress worn by the Quaker Lucretia Seebohm (née Anson Crouch). 1874. Silk gauze, trimmed with silk embroidered net lace, silk satin, lined with silk. T.68 to E-1962. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Web. 12th August 2015. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O249340/wedding-dress-unknown>



Fig. 9.4: Detail of the right-hand cuff of the fashionable wedding dress worn by the Quaker Lucretia Seebohm (née Anson Crouch). 1874. Silk gauze, trimmed with silk embroidered net lace, silk satin, lined with silk. T.68 to E-1962. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Web. 12th August 2015. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O249340/wedding-dress-unknown>

trimmings and lace.¹⁰ "The Newest French Fashions" in a summer 1873 edition of *The Young Englishwoman*, described one 'Mauve Alpaca Costume' which also featured similar skirt flounces, trimmed polonaise and basque bow as on Seebohm's dress:

[...] made with three flounces, headed by a wide bouillonée, with fluted edges. Corsage plain and plain coat-sleeves. White polonaise of spotted muslin, trimmed with muslin fluting, and faille bow and sash ends.¹¹

Even Seebohm's choice of a gauze fabric, and particularly a striped gauze, was especially fashionable for this period, with several toilettes constructed of striped fabric appearing on the pages of *The Young Englishwoman* between 1872 and 1874. In "The July Fashions" *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* of 1872 specifically described gauze as 'among the favourite fabrics of the moment.'¹² By 1874 "Fashions for September" in *The Young Englishwoman*, noted striped gauzes were particularly elegant and fashionable, describing the most stylish ensembles as:

[...] composed of tunics of striped gauze over a silk slip. The gauze is a fabric consisting of clear white gauze and coloured satin, and the skirt is of plain silk of the colour of the satin stripe. One toilette of this description which is particularly admired, was of white gauze, striped with rose coloured satin over a skirt of plain rose coloured faille. It was trimmed with a wide slip of insertion and border of white guipure, and caught up at the top into a puff under the pleated basque of the bodice, which was trimmed in the same manner.¹³

In addition, exclusively white fabrics and trimmings were depicted for every wedding ensemble in both *The Young Englishwoman* and *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* from 1872 until 1874. Such exclusivity of colour was unsurprising however as white had been

¹⁰ Lucy Johnston, *Nineteenth-Century Fashion in Detail* (London: V&A Publications, 2005) 60.

¹¹ "Description of Our Coloured Fashion Plate." *The Young Englishwoman. A Volume of Pure Literature, New Fashions and Pretty Needlework Designs* IV (London: Ward, Lock and Tyler, 1873) 338.

¹² "The July Fashions." *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine An Illustrated Journal combining Practical Information, Instruction and Amusement* XIII- XIV ((London: Ward, Lock and Tyler, 1872-1873) 32.

¹³ "Fashions for September." *The Young Englishwoman. A Volume of Pure Literature, New Fashions and Pretty Needlework Designs* (London: Ward, Lock and Tyler, September 1874) 514.

generally accepted as the customary bridal colour since the eighteenth century, making Seebohm's selection of blonde and ivory entirely *de rigueur* for a wedding ensemble of the period.¹⁴ Clearly, the rural-living Lucretia, based in Clevedon in Somerset and later Luton in Bedfordshire, closely observed the latest urban fashions and probably did so through fashionable magazines. As Pierre Bourdieu's theory suggests, she learnt about the indicators that signified urbanity and integrated them into her wardrobe because of her feminine cultural training.¹⁵ Whilst very little is known about her mother or her childhood, her adoption of the most fashionable of wedding garments also suggests that the environment of her youth would have prepared her to incorporate urban fashionable clothing into her wardrobe, because she chose garment styles and fabrics, such as the striped gauze, which were appropriately fashionable in mainstream society for the period and event, suggesting her knowledge about and comfort with the practice of fashionable dressing.

Quaker Advices regarding Friends marriage ceremony garments during the late nineteenth century illustrate that the Society continued to encourage simplicity in wedding attire. Even after the relaxation of the Quaker Advice concerning plainness of speech, behaviour and apparel, the 1861 edition of *Extracts from the Minutes and Epistles of The Yearly Meeting [...] Relating to Christian Doctrine, Practice and Discipline*, re-published guidance on marriage ceremonies, and the presentation of the parties present, from 1857.¹⁶ The extracts emphasised marriage as a solemn religious act of 'Divine ordinance' and reminded all Friends that its purpose lay in influencing the 'temporal and the spiritual condition of man' and not for 'exterior advantages'.¹⁷ More specifically, the extracts urged that during the service, the bride, groom and attendees should display sobriety and restraint in their dress, stating:

¹⁴ Edwina Ehrman, *The Wedding Dress: 300 Years of Bridal Fashions* (London: V&A, 2011) 65 and Madeleine Ginsbury, *Wedding Dress, 1740-1970*. (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1981) 1-2.

¹⁵ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 590.

¹⁶ *Extracts from the Minutes and Epistles of The Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends held in London from its First Institution to the Present Time Relating to Christian Doctrine, Practice and Discipline* (London: Friends' Book Depository, 1861) 91-92.

¹⁷ *Extracts from the Minutes and Epistles*, 92.

On these deeply interesting occasions, let there be not in the attire of the parties themselves, or in that of their relatives and friends attending any display unbecoming an assembly of Christian worshippers; [...] never pass the boundary line of Christian simplicity, moderation and self-restraint.¹⁸

Thus whilst official Advices regarding day-to-day Plainness had been relaxed, the Society's recommendations regarding marriage ceremony attire thus remained austere. In fact, these Advices were considered so imperative to the Friends ceremony that they were further re-published, unamended, in 'Counsel as to Marriage' in the 1911 edition of *Christian Discipline of the Religious Society of Friends*.¹⁹ Seebohm's choice therefore, of a deeply fashionable, bustled and Fully-Adaptive wedding ensemble for her nuptials was in direct and very public opposition to continuing Quaker religious guidance which emphasised simplicity, restraint and moderation for wedding attire. Seebohm herself may have viewed her choice of ensemble as simple and moderate, in comparison to some other wedding dresses of her day, such as the wedding gowns designed and made by the British couturier based in Paris, Charles Frederick Worth. One of his wedding dresses of 1878, was made of ivory and gold satin damask and trimmed with pearls, ivory silk, satin and chiffon.²⁰ However, Seebohm's dress would have been seen as strikingly fashionable to fellow Quakers. This was particularly true when as other middle-class Quakers (such as Helen Bright Clark and Geraldine Cadbury, already discussed), who could equally afford expensive and fashionably styled garments, chose to remain moderate and Semi-Adaptive in their wedding attire both before and after the 1870s, respectively. Seebohm's decision to disregard Quaker Advices on simple wedding attire is especially striking on consideration of her Plain Quaker paternal heritage, through the Crouch family, as well as that of the Seebohm family she was marrying into.

¹⁸ *Extracts from the Minutes and Epistles*, 92.

¹⁹ *Christian Discipline of the Religious Society of Friends of London Yearly Meeting. Part II* (London: Headley Brothers, 1911) 56-60.

²⁰ Wedding dress. 1878. Ivory and gold damask, cream net, cream satin, pearls, ivory silk fringe and tan chiffon. 32.249A-B. Museum City of New York [n.d].

The Crouch and Seebohm Families' Quaker heritage

Lucretia's father, Edward Anson Crouch was paternally descended from an original Quaker convert, William Crouch who was born in 1628 and was converted by two Quaker ministers, Francis Howgill and Edward Burrough whilst working in London in 1656 as an upholsterer.²¹ He attended Quaker Meetings at the first Quaker Meeting place, the Bull and Mouth in Cheapside, and was repeatedly persecuted for his beliefs throughout his lifetime, being imprisoned several times in the small City of London prison Poultry Compter for attending Quaker Meetings and refusing to pay Church tithes, as chronicled in the *Memoirs of William Crouch*.²² Lucretia Anson Seebohm therefore, was descended from a Quaker who held loyal to Quakerism, and its beliefs and practices, despite physical abuse, imprisonment and social ostracisation, and whose teaching informed and convinced the following generations in their own religious sentiments and practices. Ehrman has commented however, that Seebohm's wedding dress illustrates her 'deliberate desire [...] to appear well-dressed but unobtrusive.'²³ Thus, whilst Advices regarding Plainness had relaxed, Lucretia Anson Seebohm's fashionable, Fully-Adaptive wedding ensemble conflicted with the strict loyalty and obedience, to the point of persecution, practised by her ancestors.

Lucretia's father was a flour merchant and later a tin-mine agent, born and raised in Cornwall, who died in October 1860, when Lucretia was nineteen years old- a full fourteen years before her marriage into the Seebohm family. Furthermore, her Quaker mother, Mary Fox, was also deceased by the time of the marriage, as she had died only three years after her husband, in 1863, when Lucretia was twenty-two.²⁴ Therefore, neither of Lucretia's parents was alive during her courtship or marriage to Benjamin Seebohm. Whilst nothing is known of her parents' attitudes towards dress, the sartorial Quaker, feminine and cultural training they bestowed on their young daughter during her formative years would have been their sole source of authority, because neither parent was present to influence Lucretia's wedding dress choice.

²¹ William Crouch, "Memoirs of William Crouch," *The Friends Library: Comprising Journals, Doctrinal Treaties, and other Writings of Members of the Religious Society of Friends* (Philadelphia: Joseph Rakestraw, 1847) 297.

²² Crouch, "Memoirs of William Crouch." 301.

²³ Ehrman, *The Wedding Dress*, 82.

²⁴ "Descendents of Henrie Fox", penny gael [n.d.]

As Petr Bogatyrev has asserted regarding his analysis of Moravian Slovak clothing, however, 'the dominant functions of costume are that of status distinction and the nationalistic function.'²⁵ Lucretia's marriage to the banker, Benjamin Seebohm, would have indicated an alteration in her status as a bride and future wife, newly marrying into a wealthy family. In anticipation of her new status as an affluent wife, Lucretia may well have felt that fashionable Fully-Adaptive dress most appropriately reflected her new status. Furthermore, Bogatyrev acknowledges that 'when two [...] different peoples or two social groups within the same people meet [...] the strength of the aggressor group [in this case conservative Non-Adaptive Quakers] must be weighed when considering the outcome.'²⁶ In 1874, Lucretia's adoption of a Fully-Adaptive wedding ensemble may have been welcomed by her fiancé's family, because, as will be proven, the second generation of the Seebohm family were Fully-Adaptive Quakers, or followers of other Christian denominations, themselves. Meanwhile, whilst the conservative Plain Quaker influence was still present as discussed in chapters 4 and 5, it was diminished after 1860. The absence of a Quaker discipline to support their stance, would have reduced their weight of influence on Quakers determined to adopt fashionable dress such as Lucretia.

No portraits have been found of Lucretia Seebohm's paternal grandparents, William Crouch an accountant, and Lucretia Anson who married on 25th September 1799 at Falmouth, nor of her parents, Edward Anson Crouch and Mary Fox. One *carte de visite* has survived however, of her paternal aunt, also named Lucretia Anson Crouch, who resided in the Somerset city of Bath twenty miles from her niece's place of residence in Clevedon (Fig. 9.5).²⁷ Whilst the small image lacks clarity due to the limitations of photographic techniques of the period, it reveals Lucretia Anson Seebohm's aunt, Lucretia Anson Crouch and fellow Quaker Sarah Baker, both Plainly attired in lustrous dark silk dresses, Plain cotton or muslin caps, large enveloping dark shawls and cotton fichus. The only evidence of

²⁵ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 56.

²⁶ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 58.

²⁷ 'William Crouch,' *Dictionary of Quaker Biography* DBQ CROSG - CROZ. (London: Religious Society of Friends Library). In the Anson-Crouch ancestry, the name Lucretia Anson Crouch was shared by the future Mrs Seebohm, her paternal Aunt and Grandmother, further complicating genealogical tracing. There is also no evidence that Mary Fox was a direct descendant of the religion's founder George Fox, see "The Descendants of Sir John Croker," Kinoch Hotel © 1 August 2013.



Fig. 9.5: Portrait of Lucretia Anson Crouch, seated on the left, with the fellow Quaker, Sarah Baker, on the right. c.1860-1885. Carte de Visite. NSA 13 Shelf 4. C-F Friends' Institute Album. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London.

ornamentation or fashionability resides in the dark silk bow at their collars. As such Lucretia Seebohm's paternal aunt was Non-Adaptive and certainly did not entertain the Fully-Adaptive ensembles favoured by her niece. Their clothes are very similar to those already discussed in chapter 6, and provide evidence of Joan Severa and Miles Lambert's assertions that photographs provide evidence of not only the compositions of outfits worn during certain periods but also display examples of how fashions are not a clean linear progression.²⁸ Their Plain Quaker dressing dates the photograph to around 1865. Lucretia Anson Crouch's appearance is not only pertinent to contextualise the familial sartorial influences on Lucretia Seebohm, but it also illustrates the sartorial preferences of some fellow Quakers who may have attended her wedding. Lucretia Anson Crouch died 11th November 1885, eleven years after Lucretia Seebohm's marriage, and as such, would have been alive during, and probably attended, the wedding of her fashionably dressed niece. Unlike the aunt of Helen Priestman Bright Clark, Priscilla Bright McLaren however, it appears unlikely that Lucretia Seebohm's aunt had any weighty influence on her niece's sartorial choices.

The Seebohm genealogy illustrates similarly pious ancestry. Her husband Benjamin's father, Benjamin Seebohm Senior, was born 20th February 1798 in Pymont Germany to a Quaker family, and later brought to Bradford, England by the Quaker Sarah Hustler who introduced him into London Yearly Meeting society and apprenticed him into the wool trade.²⁹ By the age of 25, Benjamin was a travelling Quaker minister, integrating himself into local and national Quakerism. In 1831 he married fellow Quaker Esther Wheeler and the couple had four surviving children, Henry, Frederic, Benjamin Junior and Julia. Benjamin Senior ministered internationally his entire life, spending five years in America, wrote numerous published Quaker biographies and edited the Quaker obituary publication, the *Annual Monitor*.³⁰

²⁸ Joan Severa. *Dressed for the Photographer. Ordinary Americans and Fashion, 1840-1900*. (Ohio: Kent State University Press. 1995): 152 and Miles Lambert, *Fashion in Photographs, 1860-1880* (London: Batsford, 1991) 191.

²⁹ Richard Seebohm, "Five Generations of Quaker Seebohms: 1790-1900." *A History of Preston and Hertfordshire*, Hertfordshire County Council. [n.d]

³⁰ Seebohm, "Five Generations of Quaker Seebohms: 1790-1900", 7.

Benjamin and Esther Seebohm's published letters reveal the religious guidance these pious Quakers conscientiously extended to their four children. In one letter to his daughter Julia, on 24th March 1856, Benjamin Senior expressed his joy at hearing of her increasing belief in Quakerism, reminding her of the importance of prayer, stating:

[...] that thou art able to believe in him as thy Saviour and thy God, even thy own, is indeed cause for humble thankfulness to a father's heart [...] may thy reliance be continually upon Him, more than upon thy fellow-creatures, and be encouraged frequently to lift up thy heart in prayer to Him for His Good Spirit to guide thee into all truth, so will He bless thee more and more.³¹

In addition to his religiously-guided activities, Benjamin Senior began the family's financial services involvement, through his role as Secretary, Trustee and founding guarantor of the local life assurance company, Friends Provident Institution in 1832. It was run by and exclusively for the benefit of Quakers until 1915.³²

Yet the piety of the Seebohm parents' did not significantly influence all of their children's religious and practical lives.³³ In opposition to his parents' religious sentiments their eldest son Henry was never a practising Quaker. He spurned the practice of the religion his entire adult life and ultimately married a Non-Friend, Maria Healey, in 1859 in a Manchester church, with disapproval from his family.³⁴ As such, there was a precedent of rebellion and religious disunity in the Seebohm family as early as the 1850s.

Quaker religious guidance did however, influence the other three children, Frederic, Benjamin Junior and Julia. It is unclear to what extent Benjamin Senior encouraged his children into the financial services, but his sons Frederic and Benjamin both pursued careers in banking. Frederic (Fig. 9.6), the second eldest, begun work at Friends Provident

³¹ Benjamin Seebohm Senior, *Private Memoirs of B. and E. Seebohm* (London: Provost & Co, 1873) 387.

³² Seebohm, "Five Generations of Quaker Seebohms: 1790-1900," 5.

³³ Seebohm, "Five Generations of Quaker Seebohms: 1790-1900," 8. Their eldest son Henry became a success in the steelmaking industry from 1865 yet by 1883 he was a respected ornithologist leaving the steel industry and writing the highly respected publication *The Birds of Siberia*. He became Honorary Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society.

³⁴ Seebohm, "Five Generations of Quaker Seebohms: 1790-1900," 8.



Fig. 9.6: Frederick Seebohm, brother-in-law of Lucretia Seebohm, and husband of Mary Ann Seebohm, as a young man. c.1860s. Lawson Thompson Scrapbook, 50. Vol. 1A. © North Hertfordshire District Museum.

Institution and, whilst studying for the Bar, began working at the Hitchin bank Sharples Exton and Lucas. In 1856 he became engaged to the Quaker, Mary Ann Exton, discussed later in this chapter, whose Quaker father was a founder of the bank. By 1859, Frederic had successfully climbed to the role of partner, culminating in the bank's renaming as Sharples, Tuke, Lucas and Seebohm.³⁵

Similarly to his father, Frederic pursued literature alongside his financial career. He published economic history texts and following his father's pursuits, he also published the religious history and contemplative texts *The Oxford Reformers of 1498* in 1867 and *The Era of the Protestant Revolution* in 1874, which reveal his Quaker piety.³⁶ In fact, Frederic was so devoted to the religion, he even had his Non-Quaker brother, Henry, buried in Friends Burial Ground, Hitchin in 1895 in an 'as simple as possible' Quaker ceremony.³⁷

Frederic's career and continued involvement with the Society, in many ways mirror that of Lucretia's future husband, Benjamin Junior. Born in 1839 he was educated at the Quaker boarding school, Bootham School, in York. Scant information regarding Benjamin Jr. exists within public records and details regarding his religious sentiment are wholly absent. Similarly to his elder brother Frederick, he followed his father into the financial services industry. Beginning work at the Luton branch of his brother's bank, Sharples, Tuke, Lucas and Seebohm in 1866 he swiftly rose to manager within the first two years of his employment. Prior to this, he had married his first wife, the Quaker Emma Mary Brown, of Farley Hill, Luton, on 7th December 1864 at the Friends Meeting House. She was the daughter of Frederick Brown who established the iron-founding firm Brown and Green in Luton. Their courtship and marriage was conducted under the watchful guidance of the local

³⁵ Seebohm, "Five Generations of Quaker Seebohms: 1790-1900," 8-10. Beside these financial pursuits, Frederic was deeply involved in the local Hitchin community. He was a member of the Hitchin Natural History Club, and gave substantial sums of money to local causes including The Grammar School, a retirement collection for the local station master and Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor; see *Lawson Thompson Scrapbook* Vol. II- III. North Hertfordshire District Museum.

³⁶ Frederic Seebohm, *The English Village Community examined in its relations to the manorial and tribal systems ... An essay in economic history* (London: Longmans & Co, 1883). Frederic Seebohm, *The tribal system in Wales: being part of an inquiry into the structure and methods of tribal society* (London: Longmans & Co, 1904). Frederic Seebohm, *The Oxford Reformers of 1498* (London: Longmans Green, 1867) and Frederic Seebohm, *The era of Protestant Revolution* (London: Longmans Green, 1874)

³⁷ "Death of My Henry Seebohm," November 1895. *Lawson Thompson Scrapbook* Vol. IIb. North Hertfordshire District Museum. 188.

Quaker community, and St. Albans Monthly Meeting reported that their marriage ceremony, 'was conducted in a very orderly manner.'³⁸ The couple had one daughter, Esther Mary, but on 29th November 1871 Mary Emma died aged 29 of an undisclosed cause and was buried in Luton Friends Burial Ground on 2nd December (Fig. 9.7).

Whilst no images of Mary Emma have materialised, one image reportedly depicts the bridesmaids present at the couple's 1864 wedding ceremony (Fig. 9.8). Published as the frontispiece to Joyce Godber's 1975 book *Friends in Bedfordshire and West Hertfordshire*, the image is merely captioned as 'bridesmaids at a Brown-Seebohm wedding in the 1860s.'³⁹ Depicting four women, two seated and two standing, they are attired in matching fashionable pale ensembles. Their wide skirts are supported by crinolines and their bodices covered by fashionably expansive shawls, whilst their bonnets are mounted low on the crown and feature frills at the brim and wide ribbons. Clearly, despite the absence of any images of Mary Emma, Benjamin Seebohm Jr.'s first wife did incorporate a clear element of fashionability in the wedding garments chosen for the occasion, as his second wife Lucretia would fourteen years later. It is also pertinent, that despite the Brown-Seebohm wedding taking place only four years following the Society amending the disciplines regarding Plainness, aspirations to fashionability were already being practiced in the Seebohm family circle.

In 1874, three years after the death of Mary Emma, Benjamin Jr. married the 33-year-old Lucretia at the bride's local Friends Meeting House in Clevedon. Once again however, the deficiency of accessible documents regarding Benjamin Seebohm Jr. in the public realm means that details concerning the couple's meeting and courtship are absent. Once the marriage had been solemnised however, Benjamin Jr.'s local Monthly Meeting was informed of the union and Lucretia was welcomed as a member of Luton and Leighton Monthly Meeting, the clerk recording:

³⁸ *Minutes for Albans Women's Monthly Meeting, 1853 - 1865*. 14th December 1864. FR 2/2/2/8. Bedford and Luton Archives.

³⁹ Joyce Godber, *Friends in Bedfordshire and West Hertfordshire* (Bedford: Bedford Mill Lane Cottage, 1975) 4. No other weddings took place in the 1860s between the Brown and Seebohm families within the area and therefore the caption definitely relates to Mary Emma Brown and Benjamin Jr. Seebohm's wedding.

No. 13 **Burial Note.**

THIS is to certify that the body of Mary Emma Seebohm
of Luton in the Parish of Luton
in the County of Bedford (a) wife
of Benjamin Seebohm of Luton
who died the Twenty Ninth Day of the Twelfth ¹⁸⁷¹ ~~1872~~
Month, one thousand eight hundred and Seventy One aged
about Twenty Nine years and whose death was registered at the Public
Registry Office for the District of Luton
on the first Day of the Twelfth Month, 1871
was buried in the (b) Friends' Burial ground in the Parish of
Luton in the County of Bedford
on the 2nd Day of the 12th Month, 1871
Witness (c) Edw^d Taylor, undertaker

Read and entered at Luton & Leighton Monthly
Meeting of the Society of Friends, held the 12th of 1st mo. 1872
Richard Brown Clerk.

(a) Here insert description, including, in the case of a wife, widow, or child, the name or names of the husband or parents.
(b) "Friends' burial-ground" or "Cemetery," as the case may be.
(c) To be signed here by the Undertaker, Grave-maker, or Superintendent of Cemetery, stating which of these capacities the person signing fills.

Fig. 9.7: Mary Emma Seebohm's 'Burial Note' as recorded by the Quaker meeting in Luton. 1871. Burial Notes for Luton Monthly Meeting, 1862- 1876. FR2/9/10/4. Bedfordshire Archives. Personal photograph by the author. 11th March 2015.



Fig. 9.8: Bridesmaids, fashionably dressed in skirts supported by crinolines, bonnets worn at the back of the head and large shawls, at the wedding of Emma Brown and Benjamin Seebohm. 1864. Joyce Godber, *Friends in Bedfordshire and West Hertfordshire* (Bedford: Bedford Mill Lane Cottage, 1975) Front cover.

Certificate of the marriage of Benjamin Seebohm and Lucretia Anson Crouch, have been read, which marriage was solemnised at Clevedon on the 10th of 9th month, 1874. The clerk is requested to add the name of L.A. Seebohm to the list of members.⁴⁰

Once moved across the country to Benjamin's residence in St. Albans, Lucretia's social circle would have included his Seebohm siblings in Hitchin, twenty miles away. As both Benjamin's younger sister, Julia, and his mother, Esther had died in 1863 and 1864 respectively, his elder brother Frederick Seebohm's wife, 41-year-old Mary Ann (née Exton) would have been one of Lucretia's few female Seebohm relatives. Therefore, Mary Ann would have been the woman with whom Lucretia could have discussed fashion and perhaps even visited the site of fashionable knowledge, the city, with on shopping expeditions.⁴¹ During her years in St. Alban's, Lucretia gave birth to three healthy children, Gertrud, Rudolf and Mabel. Similarly, Mary Ann had six children. Clearly, their relationship blossomed, as upon the death of Mary Ann in February 1904, the grieving Lucretia Seebohm laid a wreath on her grave which read, 'In most loving remembrance.'⁴² In addition, the women also shared sartorial preferences, as surviving garments and photographic evidence prove that Mary Ann Seebohm's sartorial choices were also those of a Fully-Adaptive Quaker woman.

Mary Ann Seebohm's Bodice and Skirt, c. 1890-1900

The matching bodice and skirt belonging to Lucretia Seebohm's sister-in-law, Mary Ann, and housed in the dress collection at North Hertfordshire District Museum, are striking for the decorative embellishment and colourful fabric.⁴³ Produced in the fashionable silhouette for the early 1890s (although the museum has wrongly estimated the date of the dress to be

⁴⁰ *Minute Book of Luton & Leighton Monthly Meeting*. 1874. FR2/1/1/9. Bedford and Luton archives.

⁴¹ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 590.

⁴² "Funeral of Mrs. Seebohm," 18th February 1904. *Lawson Thompson Scrapbook* Vol. IIIa. North Hertfordshire District Museum. 19.

⁴³ *Bodice and Skirt*. c.1891. Brocaded silk, beads and lace. 67846. North Hertfordshire District Museum.

the 1870s), with a matching skirt and heavily boned and beaded bodice, of heavy deep blue brocaded silk, high frilled collar, and slightly slimmer skirt than in previous decades with a train. The skirt is decorated with three horizontal, plain, midnight-blue wave-like panels of silk which are cut to turn vertically up the front width of the garment, so mimicking the skirt's shape (Fig. 9.9). The matching bodice which opens up the front with concealed hook and eye fastenings is heavily boned and features a cream net-lace frill at the high-collar and cuffs (Fig. 9.10). The front of the bodice is v-shaped and filled with a midnight-blue pleated silk (Fig. 9.11). The front of the bodice is heavily embellished at the high-collar and in vertical panels on the centre front with decorative appliqué, embroidered with a vine and flower design, with gilt thread cording, sequins, small petrol-colour glass beads, and jet beads (Fig. 9.12). At the bust, the petrol-colour glass beads are fringed. Equally decorative is the silk brocade material used for the majority of the ensemble (Fig. 9.13). Woven in an abstract wave and floral motif, reminiscent of Art Nouveau patterned textiles, the shot-silk fabric was produced using midnight-blue, alongside luminous orange and green silks. The decoration of the garment is composed not merely of trimmings and embellishments, but is woven into the very fashionable fabric of the ensemble.

Brocaded silks featuring profuse embellishment were highly fashionable throughout the 1890s. On 4th December 1891, the *Sussex Agricultural Express* reprinted an article from *The Ladies' Gazette of Fashion*, which recommended brocades with luminous threads featuring patterns of flowers and waving lines, similar to that depicted on Mary Ann's gown, stating:

In brocades used for dinner and reception gowns the colours are exquisite, the greatest novelty being those with satin grounds woven with luminous threads [...] those with shells and baskets overflowing with flowers are preferred to bows [...] A charming design in a striped brocade silk has a ground of dove colour with a design of waving lines in heliotrope [purple...] and the brocaded velvets on silk and satin grounds are mostly geometric designs or waved lines.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ "Winter Fashions (From the Ladies Gazette of Fashion," *Sussex Agricultural Express*, 4th December 1891: 6.

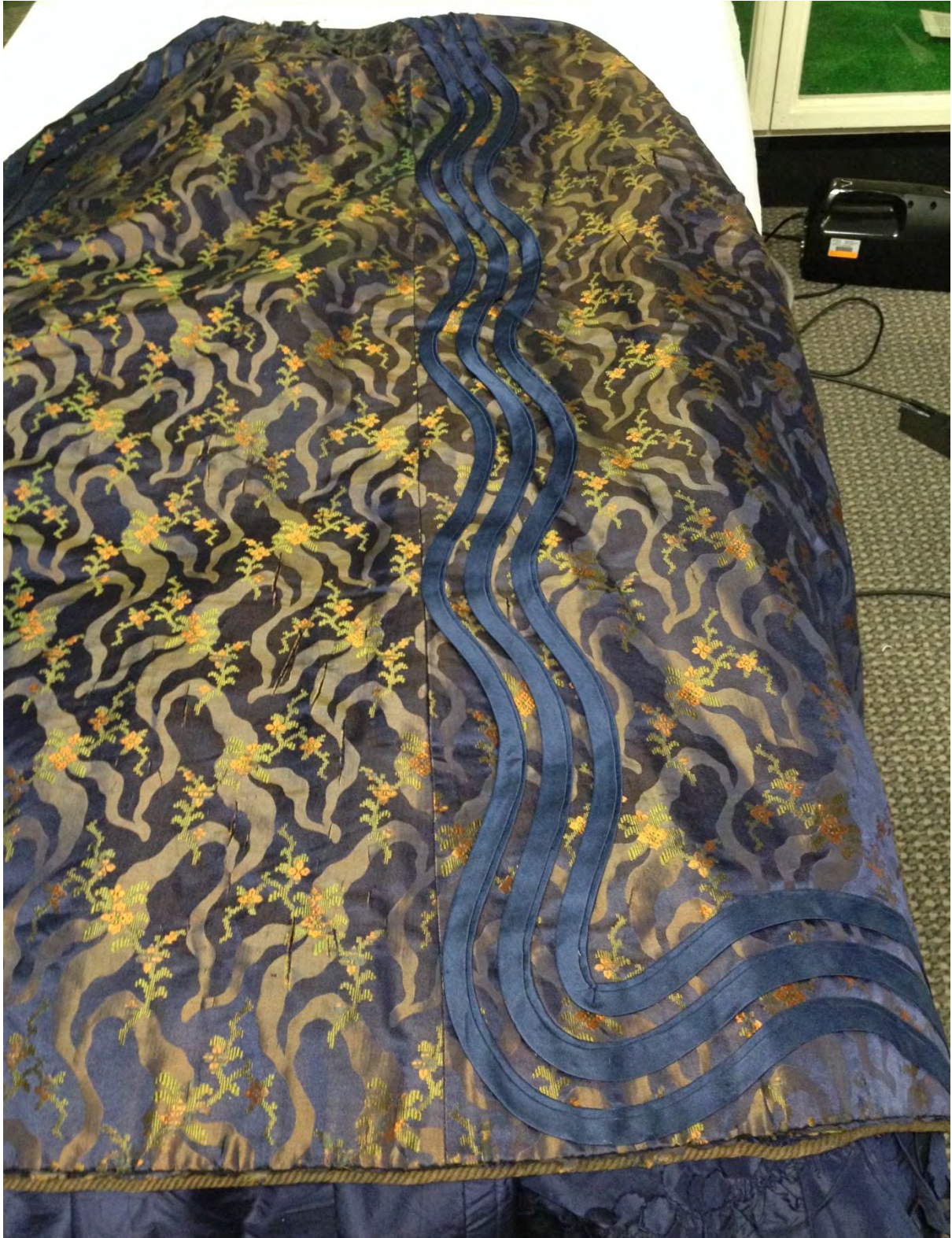


Fig. 9.9: Detail of the silk wave on the front of the skirt of the brocaded dress worn Mary Ann Seebohm. c.1891. Brocaded silk, plain silk, lace and beading appliqué. 67846. North Hertfordshire District Museum. Personal photograph by the author. 12th June 2015.



Fig. 9.10: Detail of scalloped lace at the high-collar on the brocaded dress worn Mary Ann Seebohm. c.1891. Brocaded silk, plain silk, lace and beading appliqué. 67846. North Hertfordshire District Museum. Personal photograph by the author. 12th June 2015.



Fig. 9.11: Detail of the midnight-blue pleated silk on the front of the bodice of the brocaded dress worn Mary Ann Seebohm. c.1891. Brocaded silk, plain silk, lace and beading appliqué. 67846. North Hertfordshire District Museum. Personal photograph by the author. 12th June 2015.



Fig. 9.12: Detail of the beading and appliqué on the front of the bodice, collar and shoulders of the brocaded dress worn Mary Ann Seebohm. c.1891. Brocaded silk, plain silk, lace and beading appliqué. 67846. North Hertfordshire District Museum. Personal photograph by the author. 12th June 2015.



Fig. 9.13: Detail of the brocade pattern featuring waves and flowers on the brocaded dress worn Mary Ann Seebohm. c.1891. Brocaded silk, plain silk, lace and beading appliqué. 67846. North Hertfordshire District Museum. Personal photograph by the author. 12th June 2015.

Earlier that year, the *Dorking and Leatherhead Advertiser*, on 25th April 1891, re-printed advice from the fashionable women's magazine *The Lady*, which commented on the most fashionable women's bodices in which, 'the shapes vary, but there is always some yoke or plastron [an ornamental front of a woman's bodice] arrangement liberally adorned with beads or a yoke of light colour covered with appliqué designs, which give a very handsome appearance.'⁴⁵ Such description of appliqué and beads characterises Mary Ann Seebohm's bodice. Clearly she embraced the most fashionable fabrics and trimmings recommended during the early 1890s.

Similarly, other surviving garments of the period validate the early 1890 dating of the garment and prove that the styling, fabric and trimmings of the dress were highly fashionable for the period. The Musée des Arts décoratifs in Paris houses an 1888-1890 brocaded silk bodice and skirt, featuring a high collar, stiffly-boned bodice with tulle at the collar and cuffs.⁴⁶ The fabric of the dress features a brown silk ground with a green and brown silk woven abstract pattern. Petrol-colour beading, green sequins and net appliqué designs trim the front and shoulders of the bodice whilst the skirt is gored at the back with a train. In each detail of the brocaded fabric, cut, and beaded and appliqué embellishment, the fashionable garment, worn by a Mme. Chantin and designed and made in Paris, is identical to that worn by Mary Ann Seebohm.

Furthermore, such designs were fashionable in Britain during the same period, as Mrs. Jameson's mother-of-the-groom gown from July 1891 attests.⁴⁷ Made of an ivory silk brocade, with a matching bottle-green velvet jacket embellished with beading, the gown was produced by the internationally renowned Hull-based dressmaker, Mrs. Emily Clapham, for a wedding that year.⁴⁸ Mrs. Clapham produced dresses for clients being presented at court and closely aligned her designs with those presented by Parisian couturiers, even

⁴⁵ "Dress of the Day," *Dorking and Leatherhead Advertiser*, 25th April 1891: 7.

⁴⁶ "Robe en deux parties, Mme Chantin, Paris, 1888-1890 Satin changeant liseré, application broderie de perles et paillettes sur tulle." Brocaded silk dress, 1888-1900. Brocaded silk, beading, sequins, tulle. Inv.58.53. Musée Les Arts Decoratif, Paris.

⁴⁷ Mrs. Jameson was the wife of the Mayor of Hull, Mr Robert Jameson. He was Mayor between 1870 and 1873. The dress was worn by Mrs. Jameson at her son's wedding on 9th July 1891. See "A Passion for Fashion: Madame Clapham Revisited" *Hands on History Museum Hull MyLearning Free learning resources from arts, cultural and heritage organisations* [n.d.]

⁴⁸ Mrs. Jameson's mother-of-the-groom dress. 1891. Ivory silk brocade, velvet, beading. Hull Museums.

using French in her labelling and advertising her services as, 'Robes et Modes.'⁴⁹ Once again, the gown features a heavily boned bodice, high collar and beading appliqué, a skirt gored at the back with a train. The dress is made of a highly fashionable ivory silk brocade depicting a conventional floral design. Examination of the construction of the jacket bodice, in comparison to the bodice of Mary Ann Seebohm's dress, reveals that the boned construction of the garments is almost identical (Fig. 9.14). Whilst the designer and maker of Mary Ann Seebohm's ensemble is unknown, she clearly purchased garments in the most fashionable designs being shown by couturiers in Paris and England.

Brocades were especially fashionable during 1891, as an exhibition that opened at Chesham House, Regent Street of that year attested. 'The Exhibition of Silk Brocades', displayed fine examples of silk brocades produced by British manufacturers. The examples included Scottish fabrics intended for curtains and hangings, as well as 'good specimens of Spitalfields weaving' which featured the 'Sappho' design which was an 'elaborate design of flowers arranged in bouquets [...] a very large number of colours are necessary.' It was extremely highly priced however, at £10 per yard. The 'Elsenheim' satin brocade design, depicted 'a design of growing water flowers, with large flat leaves, resting upon and seen through the lines that represent the water.'⁵⁰ Similarly, the abstract pattern brocade on Mary Ann Seebohm's gown depicts a design that could be interpreted as flowers and water. Mary Ann's choice of a particularly fashionable and expensive fabric for her dress however, would not have been particularly unusual in her Quaker community, because as described in chapter 3, the high quality of materials used within even *Plain* Quaker women's garments was a historical characteristic of Quaker dress which was widely acknowledged, even within the popular press. Women's Yearly Meeting continued to recommend in the late nineteenth century that Quaker women dress moderately, specifically urging in their 1872 Epistle 'self-denial in dress.'⁵¹ However, the exhibition article commented that in comparing the British made silk brocades to their French-made counterparts, 'there is no self-denial

⁴⁹ "Mrs. Clapham: Hull's Celebrated Dressmaker," *Hull Museum's Collection, Hull Culture and Leisure* [n.d]

⁵⁰ "Exhibition of silk brocades," *London Daily News*, 20th April 1891: 3.

⁵¹ 'From the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends held in London by adjournment from the 22nd of the Fifth month to the 31st of the same, inclusive, 1872. To the Quarterly and other Meetings of Discipline of Women Friends in Great Britain and Ireland.' *Women's Yearly Meeting Answers to Queries*. 1668- 1896. YM/YMWF.Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London.



Fig. 9.14: Detail of the interior boning inside the bodice of the brocaded dress worn Mary Ann Seebohm. Unfortunately, the large blue shiny squares are much later repairs probably by the museum, but the structure of the boning and the waist band are still clearly visible. c.1891. Brocaded silk, plain silk, lace and beading appliqué. 67846. North Hertfordshire District Museum. Personal photograph by the author. 12th June 2015.

involved in buying these beautiful silks, for their excellence is indisputable.⁵² There was also however, no denying the seasonal fashionability of Mary Ann's midnight blue shot-silk brocade.

Two surviving photographs of Mary Ann Seebohm also depict her similarly fashionably attired during the 1890s. The first, taken on 12th February 1891, features Mary Ann amongst the bridal party for the marriage of her daughter, Juliet Mary Seebohm, to the fellow Quaker, the surgeon Rickman John Godlee (Fig. 9.15). Seated to the left of the groom, she wears a dark jacket lavishly trimmed at the collar, cuffs and opening with dark fur; a small dark hat, decorated with plumage or fur; paler leather gloves and a long skirt made of a brocaded silk, like the surviving dress in North Hertfordshire District Museum.⁵³ Clearly, Mary Ann favoured brocaded silk gowns during that year, further confirming the estimated date of the ensemble. Furthermore, Mary Ann's surviving gown may even be the same gown worn for her daughter's wedding, but such design detail is indistinguishable in the period wedding photograph. Whilst the fabric and silhouette of the brocaded gown is obscured, the cut of the jacket is fashionable, featuring the moderately puffed shoulders typical of the early 1890s (Fig. 9.16). This photograph of Juliet Mary Seebohm's wedding is particularly revealing of the familial context of Mary Ann and Lucretia Seebohm's sartorial choices as Fully-Adaptive Quaker women, as all members of the bridal party, the bride, bridesmaids and guests from the Seebohm and Godlee families, are fashionably attired for the occasion. The mainstream fashionability of their attire is particularly noticeable when compared to the garments chosen by the previous Aesthetic Semi-Adaptive case study, Geraldine Cadbury, for her wedding the very same year.

For Bourdieu, public events, such as weddings, are scenes where the 'tenue' of the attendees and the observation of their 'hexis' [their disposition] are most evident. During

⁵² "Exhibition of silk brocades," *London Daily News*, 20th April 1891: 3.

⁵³ Another similarly fashionable fur garment from this period, worn by the Quaker governess of Helen Priestman Bright Clark's children, Isabella Pasley, survives in the Alfred Gillett Trust, Clark's Archive, Street. The cape is made from brown wool and is edged at the collar and cuffs with black fur, and lined with pale fur. The label reads: "Nurse Manufacturing Furriers, Oxford". Ladies Cloak, 1890-1900. COST 3/1. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street. Also see Lady's lace cape, c. 1890s. COST Box 27/1. Alfred Gillett Trust, Clarks Archive, Street, for another example of a fashionable coat worn by a Quaker during this decade. See Appendix 2.1 for further details.



Fig. 9.15: Bridal party portrait of the marriage between Juliet Seebohm and Sir Rickman Godlee. Mary Ann Seebohm, her mother, is fashionably dressed in a jacket trimmed with fur and is seated on the middle row next to the groom. 12th February 1891. Lawson Thompson Scrapbook Vol. IIb., 198. © North Hertfordshire District Museum.



Fig. 9.16: Detail of Mary Ann Seebohm at the wedding of Juliet Seebohm. She is wearing a fashionable dark jacket trimmed with fur, leather gloves and a dark brocaded patterned skirt. 12th February 1891. Lawson Thompson Scrapbook Vol. IIb., 198. © North Hertfordshire District Museum.

these events the 'whole world of the city, with its cultural models [...] its techniques of the body bursts into [...] life.'⁵⁴ Within such an environment, the critical observation of those who are familiar with urban modernity and fashionability are quick to spot those more attuned to life in the country. Thus, they read the deportment and presentation of the body as the communicator of one's class and cultural and sartorial sophistication, and they associate the pinnacle of this with the appearance of the person of the city.⁵⁵ Therefore, for these fashionable brides (Lucretia Seebohm and Juliet Seebohm), their adoption of fashionable clothing would have represented their adoption of the appearance of the women of the city, whom they had been taught to admire from a young age through their feminine cultural training. In the case of Juliet Seebohm, it is clear that this feminine aspiration to urban fashionability would have been communicated by her Fully-Adaptive Quaker mother.

Clearly no expense was spared for the Seebohm-Godlee wedding in 1891. A press cutting in the 'Lawson Thompson Scrapbook' from February 1891, "Marriage of Miss Seebohm" listed the wedding gifts the Quaker couple received which included, 'a Bechstein grand piano, Mr and Mrs. F. Seebohm; a Japanese gong, the Misses Fowler; diamond brooch, Mr. Gurney Barclay [... and] silver plated tea kettle and Venetian glass vases, Mr and Mrs. B. Seebohm.' In addition the article confirms that 'the wedding guests included the following:- [...] Mr. and Mrs. B. Seebohm and family.'⁵⁶ As such, we know that Benjamin and Lucretia Seebohm attended Juliet Mary Seebohm's wedding and would have socialised with fashionably attired Quaker guests for the occasion. Clearly, the event did not take heed of the Quaker marriage Advices to 'never pass the boundary line of Christian simplicity, moderation and self-restraint.'⁵⁷

Another photograph of Mary Ann Seebohm is featured in the biography of her daughter, Wilhelmina, the 1969 publication *A Suppressed Cry: Life and Death of a Quaker Daughter*.⁵⁸ Taken in the mid-1890s, the image depicts Mary Ann seated in the lounge of their home,

⁵⁴ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 582.

⁵⁵ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 582 & 590.

⁵⁶ "Marriage of Miss Seebohm," *Lawson Thompson Scrapbook* Vol. IIb. North Hertfordshire District Museum. 198.

⁵⁷ *Extracts from the Minutes and Epistles*, 92.

⁵⁸ Victoria Glendinning, *A Suppressed Cry: Life and Death of a Quaker Daughter* (London: Routledge, 1969) 20.

The Hermitage in Hitchin, wearing a fashionable lustrous plain-silk dress with a slim bodiced waist, slim skirt, a high collar and the most fashionable feature of the day- voluminous fashionable puffed leg-of-mutton sleeves (Fig. 9. 16). The bodice is trimmed at the cuffs, waist, collar and shoulders with black lace. In addition she wears a small indoor cap of white cotton with dark silk trimming. Whilst the previous picture illustrates Mary Ann Seebohm's chosen attire for a public engagement, this image depicts her in a domestic setting away from fellow family or friends. As such, her choice of fashionable attire for this portrait and its composition were selected with a mindfulness of its ability to portray education (she is surrounded by books, reading) and domestic tranquillity as well as wealth and status. Any indication of Quaker piety is absent in both the setting or within her clothing, which lacks any traditional signifiers of Quaker Plainness or more contemporary Quaker simplicity. Clearly, Mary Ann did not accept the traditional Quaker claim that attire reflected the wearer's spiritual sensibilities, a concept which was heavily contested by many throughout the nineteenth century, as has already been discussed throughout this thesis. Mary Ann's attitude was not unique to the 1890s however, or even to the earlier nineteenth century, as dissent regarding clothing's suitability as a mode of reflecting religious affiliation and expression was actually challenged by pious Quakers as early as the seventeenth century.

Historic religious texts condoning fashionable attire amongst Quakers

As early as 1670, less than two decades since the organisation of the Religious Society of Friends, Margaret Fell the wife of George Fox, is recorded by American Quaker historian, Isabel Ross, as already being mindful of the 'danger of that emphasis on outward things.'⁵⁹ As Ross chronicles, Fox was disturbed by the Society's increasing focus on 'unessentials' especially the 'outward ceremonies' of women wearing grey-coloured clothing. Whilst, according to Ross, the Quaker's focus on clothing practices had originally sprung from the 'not unnatural' protests to the extravagant luxury worn by the court of Charles II, it increasingly and quickly became a 'grey costume of women Friends.' Fell was vehemently outspoken against the new garb, and even disapproved of its function of 'separating oneself

⁵⁹ Isabel Ross, *Margaret Fell. Mother of Quakerism* (London: Longmans, Green and co., 1949) 298.

from the rest of mankind.' In 1698, she wrote two Epistles decrying the use of a uniform by female Friends, and citing New Testament texts that condemned the Jewish use of 'outward ceremonies.' Fell wrote to her fellow female followers:

It's a dangerous thing to lead Friends much into observation of outward things, for that will be easily done, for they can soon get into an outward garb, to be all alike outwardly. But this will not make them true Christians: it's the spirit that gives life.⁶⁰

It is intriguingly to note that despite the 1698 date of this Epistle, the arguments raised by Fell against the use of Plain attire, are identical to those presented by Friends two centuries later. Yet Fell's plea had little effect. In April 1700, she once again pleaded for her fellow members of the Society to 'not be entangled again into bondage, in observing proscriptions in outward things.' Throughout the Epistle, she warned Friends that all men are made equal in the eyes of God with no one person holier than another, because every man had the opportunity of spiritual redemption, warning:

Let us beware of this, of separating or looking upon ourselves to be more holy, than in deed and in truth we are [...] Away with these whimsical narrow imaginations, and let the spirit of God which he hath given us, lead us and guide us; [...] Jesus Christ saith that we must take no thought what we shall eat, or what we shall drink, or what we shall put on [...] But contrary to this they say we must look at no colours, nor make anything that is changeable colours as the hills are, nor sell them nor wear them. But we must be all in one dress and one colour. This is a silly poor Gospel.⁶¹

Within this passage Fell made clear her disagreement with the principles the Society was enacting, believing them extraneous to the inward spiritual religion the original Quaker message had spread. She even enacted her beliefs, in the same way as Lucretia and Mary Ann Seebomh two centuries later, by continuing to wear mainstream fashions in colourful fabrics until her death in April 1702. In 1683, her daughter Sarah sent her 'silk, both sewing

⁶⁰ Margaret Fell, Epistle, June 1698. Qted in Ross, *Margaret Fell*, 379.

⁶¹ Margaret Fell, Epistle, April 1700. Qted in Ross, *Margaret Fell*, 379.

and stitching, gallowne ribbon and laces.⁶² Yet despite her vocal criticisms, Fell's warnings went unheeded for two centuries as the Quaker community continued officially to promote Advices restricting the forms and styles of dress worn by its members.⁶³

As discussed in chapter 3 however, Fell's appeal for a broader freedom for the Society's members in their attire, was also vocalised by other Quakers. In the eighteenth century, the Scottish Quaker, Robert Barclay, stated in his 1780 publication, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, that distinctions of rank should be maintained within the Society and that as such, each level should be at liberty to enjoy the fruits of their wealth, including distinctions in dress, stating:

I would not have any judge that hereby we intend to destroy the mutual relation that either is betwixt prince and people, master and servants, parents and children; nay, not at all: we shall evidence, that our principle in these things hath no such tendency, and that these natural relations are rather better established, than any ways hurt by it. Next, let not any judge, that from our opinion in these things, any necessity of levelling will follow, or that all men must have things in common. Our principle leaves every man to enjoy that peaceably which, either his own industry or his parents, have purchased him [...] for we know that as it hath pleased God to dispense it diversely, giving to some more, and some less, so they may use it accordingly.⁶⁴

By 1836, as already noted in chapter 3, an anonymous Quaker writer published the tract *Observations of the Quaker-Peculiarities of Dress and Language*, and complained that Plainness in dress and speech had actually become 'preposterous' and 'some strange infatuation' amongst members of the society.⁶⁵ The writer asserted that the Quaker 'uniform', described as a 'the national costume of the seventeenth century', did not protect

⁶² Sarah Mead Letter, 19th October 1683. Qted in Ross, *Margaret Fell*, 349.

⁶³ Contemporarily however, an abbreviated version of this passage by Fox is re-printed in every *Quaker Faith and Practice*.

⁶⁴ Robert Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity: Being an Explanation and Vindication of the Principles and Doctrines of the People called Quakers* (Dublin: L. Flin, 1780) 516.

⁶⁵ *Observations of the Quaker-Peculiarities of Dress and Language* (London: Effingham Wilson, Royal Exchange, 1836) 6-7.

Friends from the world's temptations and therefore gave them a false sense of security.⁶⁶ The writer cited the Quaker, J.J. Gurney, as agreeing with the criticisms, and noted that many fellow Friends were equally unconvinced at the practice's merits.

As such, Quakers throughout the history of the religion had publically undermined the Quaker Advices concerning Plainness of apparel through published tracts. In consequence, a precedent of adaption in dress, and of incorporating fashionable mainstream attire in the wardrobe of Quakers, had actually existed since the conception of the religion in the seventeenth century. Furthermore, the large number of men at London Yearly Meeting in 1859 who supported the amendment to the Query on Plainness also reveals the extent to which the practice was viewed by many male Quakers by the mid-nineteenth century as 'absurd' and 'objectionable' because it 'failed to attain its object.'⁶⁷ In a sense therefore, Fully-Adaptive Quaker women, including Lucretia and Mary Ann Seebohm, may be seen as continuing and enacting the principles of Quakers such as Margaret Fell and Robert Barclay, as well as many nineteenth century Quakers, who argued that the diverse, colourful and status suitable outward clothing of each individual did not serve to reflect the inward spiritual enlightenment of the wearer and was therefore entirely appropriate even for a religiously devout Quaker woman.

Fully -Adaptive Quaker women's religious loyalty to the Society

Lucretia and Benjamin Seebohm however, resigned from the Religious Society of Friends only five years after their marriage, despite her and her husband being members of the local Luton and Leighton Monthly Meeting, and registering the births of her three children with the Society. On the 8th November 1879, the Luton and Leighton Monthly Meeting minutes recorded clear disappointment about the couple's decision to withdraw from the religious community, stating:

⁶⁶ *Observations of the Quaker-Peculiarities of Dress and Language*, 5.

⁶⁷ John Stephenson Rowntree, *Personal Written Accounts of Men's Yearly Meeting*, 1859. YM/Mss/Vol S. Archive of the Religious Society of Friends, London.

A letter of resignation of membership in our Society has now been received from Benjamin and Lucretia A. Seebohm. This meeting sincerely regrets that our Friends should have arrived at the conclusion they have done, but under the circumstances stated it feels that it has no alternative but to accept the resignation.⁶⁸

Whilst the original letter sent by the Seebohm's has not materialised, and therefore the 'circumstances stated' remain unknown, their reasons may have reflected the justifications put forward by other resigning members in the same district. Elizabeth Coles Knight, in April 1862, stated that she was resigning in order to 'attend Divine Worship at the established church with my mother and other branches of our family.'⁶⁹ Ann Jackson, far earlier in October 1836, resigned as she 'was not by attending Meeting for silent Worship, acting from conscientious motives.'⁷⁰ Both *Five Generations of Quaker Seebohms: 1790-1900*, and *The Descendants of William Tuke* genealogical profile, acknowledge that Benjamin and Lucretia Seebohm became members of the Church of England.⁷¹ As such, clearly their reasoning for breaking with the Society had spiritual as well as practical motivations, to the extent that it was not within their consciences to remain members of the Society.

In researching Benjamin and Lucretia Seebohm, their absence from Quaker records held at the Archive of the Religious Society of Friends was striking, considering the wealth and social status of the Quaker family of Seebohms. Mention of the couple is absent in the *Annual Monitor*, *Dictionary of Quaker Biography* as well as from *The Friend* or *Friends Quarterly Examiner*. In addition, no portraits are held of the couple at any of the three archives used. Such an absence is particularly conspicuous considering that the Society so obsessively recorded all aspects of the lives of their members for posterity. Benjamin and Lucretia A. Seebohm simply disappear from the Society's records. Clearly, their fracture with the religion was swift and total after 1879.

⁶⁸ *Minute Book of Luton & Leighton Monthly Meeting*. 14th November 1879. FR2/1/1/9. Bedford and Luton Archives.

⁶⁹ Elizabeth Coles Knight, *Resignation*, 14th April 1862. Resignations, 1814- 1871. FR2/7/3/7. Bedford and Luton Archives.

⁷⁰ Ann Jackson, *Resignation*, 2nd October 1836. Resignations, 1814- 1871. FR2/7/3/2. Bedford and Luton Archives.

⁷¹ Seebohm, "Five Generations of Quaker Seebohms: 1790-1900," and *The Descendants of William Tuke*. © 2013 Charles E. G. Pease - kinlochhotel@btinternet.com on 2 Aug 2013.

Upon the death of Benjamin Seebohm Jr. in February 1907 however, a brief article in the local press, preserved in the Lawson Thompson scrapbooks, acknowledges that he was 'treasurer of the Luton Corporation, Board of Guardians and the Bute Hospital, Chairman of the Water Company and a director of the Harpenden Water Company.'⁷² Clearly, despite fracturing from the Society, Benjamin Seebohm Jr. continued to involve himself openly in the businesses and workings of his local community, he did not simply disappear as the religious documentation implies. Indeed, Benjamin's social standing as a man involved in activities at a managerial level within the community at large, may well have informed Lucretia's Fully-Adaptive sartorial choices. She may well have felt it most appropriate for their social standing to adopt attire which allowed her to seamlessly fit in with the community at large and to not distinguish her from other denominations.

Despite being a non-Friend at his death, Benjamin Seebohm Jr. was buried in the Friends Burial Ground at Hitchin. As Frederick survived his brother by four years, until November 1911, it is entirely probable that the pious Frederick commandeered the organisation of this internment, as he had done in 1895 for their fellow Non-Quaker brother, Henry Seebohm.

Yet despite Lucretia and her husband's fracture from the Religious Society of Friends, such a concise breach of religious affiliation is not typical for Fully-Adaptive Quaker women, as the case of her sister-in-law Mary Ann illustrates. Her fashionable sartorial choices characterised by her Fully-Adaptive wedding attire of 1874 (five years before she resigned from her Quaker community), cannot be automatically read as evidence of her forthcoming separation from the Society. Most other Quaker women who chose to attire themselves in Fully-Adaptive fashionable garments remained loyal to the religion their entire lives. In fact, their continued affiliation with the Society is crucial to their categorisation as Fully-Adaptive, otherwise they are simply fashionable Protestant women, not Fully-Adaptive Quaker women. Women such as Priscilla Bright McLaren, discussed in chapter 7, who despite her dismissal from the Society for marrying a Non-Friend and her Fully-Adaptive dress, continued to attend Meetings for Worship and always considered herself to be a Quaker.

⁷² "Death of Mr. B. Seebohm," 17th February 1907. *Lawson Thompson Scrapbook* Vol. IIIa. North Hertfordshire District Museum. 19.

Mary Ann Seebohm also typifies this categorisation, as despite her Fully-Adaptive sartorial decisions she was a practising Quaker her entire life. As a devoted Quaker mother to her six children she encouraged them in Scriptural reading from a very young age. With her first daughter Juliet Mary she read Biblical passage to from the age of two, and was revered by family acquaintances as having never spoken 'an unkind word about a neighbour.'⁷³

Conclusion

Lucretia Seebohm's 1874 wedding dress exemplifies the extent of the fashionability adopted by Fully-Adaptive Quaker women. Seebohm's wedding dress was fashionable with its bustled silhouette, construction from a fashionable ivory silk gauze and trimming with lace and silk bows. However other far more lavish Parisian designed wedding dresses from the 1870s do survive. All the same, it would have been a fashionable ensemble for even a mainstream middle-class woman. Lucretia negotiated incorporating fashion into her appearance, in the ways that Bourdieu and Bogatyrev have theorised. Lucretia was evidently prepared through her feminine cultural training to adopt 'the external signs of urbanity' into her wardrobe.⁷⁴ Her adoption of a fashionable garment indicates that she was familiar with the typical sources through which to acquire fashionable knowledge, which Bourdieu identifies as women's magazines, serials, songs, and visits to the city, despite (or perhaps because of) residing in the country. Furthermore, she evidently appreciated that as, Bourdieu asserts, public events such as weddings were an environment in which her sartorial choices would be observed and interpreted by guests as indicative of her 'economic and social standing.'⁷⁵

By the time of her marriage in 1874 both her Quaker parents were deceased and therefore their sartorial influence on her wedding ensemble choice would have only been interpreted by Lucretia if she felt emotionally loyal to their religious legacy. Furthermore, the second generation of the Seebohm family have been proven to have already embraced

⁷³ Glendinning, *A Suppressed Cry*, 14.

⁷⁴ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 590.

⁷⁵ Bourdieu, "The peasant and his body,"

fashionability rather than remained loyal to their parents pious Quakerism. Whilst the conservative Non-Adaptive Quaker women would still have been present in Lucretia's Quaker community, and their opinions disseminated through published platforms, they clearly had little influence on Lucretia's decision to incorporate fashionable clothing into her wardrobe. In line with Bogatyrev's assertion that the strength of the opposing force must be weighed when considering a clash of civilisations, it is reasonable to assert that due to her receiving little opposition from her husband's family, none from her parents, and no threat of disciplinary proceedings for wearing fashionable dress, she would have experienced little resistance to her Fully- Adaptive preferences.⁷⁶

Her later break with the Society of Friends and conversion to mainstream Protestantism was atypical for Fully-Adaptive Quaker women however. Fellow Fully-Adaptive Quaker women, such as her sister-in-law, Mary Ann Seebohm, illustrate that other middle-class Quaker women who adopted fashionable dress did not view the garments as incompatible with their Quaker beliefs.

In fact, the comparison between the two women is particularly useful due to their identical class, wealth and status, and their similar adoptions of fashionable attire. As such, these two women provide evidence that the fashionability of garments alone did not illustrate the extent of the piety of its wearer. Many Fully-Adaptive Quaker women may be seen therefore as enacting the principles of Quakers such as Margaret Fell, Robert Barclay and J.J. Gurney, who argued that the diverse, colourful and status suitable outward clothing of each individual did not serve to reflect the inward spiritual enlightenment of the wearer. In the case of Lucretia Seebohm, therefore, her adoption of fashionable dress must not be read as an indication of her waning affiliation to the Quaker religion, despite that ultimately being the case.

The published social commentary on dress in Quaker journals additionally supports this sentiment. Whilst conservative Quakers decried the increasing incorporation of fashionable Paris fashions into the attire of Quaker women, the fact of these women's presence in the

⁷⁶ Bogatyrev, *The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia*, 58.

community illustrates that many Quaker women felt that fashionability and Quaker spirituality were not incompatible. Should such a sentiment have been the case, the Society would have dwindled with the increasing fashionability of its female members, when in fact its membership grew (see Fig. 3.12).

In fact, despite the survival of Non-Adaptive Quaker women into the twentieth century, by 1901 Quaker Plain dress was considered by many to be a historical peculiarity of the Quaker religion. That year Amelia Mott Gummere's publication, *The Quaker. A Study in Costume*, was published and the following year was reviewed by the Quaker, Mathilda Sturge, in *The Friend*. Sturge admitted she felt dress 'a curious subject for a book.' Whilst her article was as much a contemplative consideration of the role of dress in religion, she ultimately acknowledged, that whilst fashion, 'can be defied for a time or followed only at a distance, it cannot be wholly suppressed.'⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Mathilda Sturge, "Quaker Costume," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* XLII. 8 (1902): 117

Chapter 10 Debate and Discussion of Findings

Introduction

I am far from being one of those who think all the changes which have been made in our Society are innovations to be mourned over, believing many of them are improvements, and calculated to promote health in the body. But many seem to suppose that because the allusion to plainness of dress, &c., is not now in our queries, that advice respecting simplicity of behaviour and attire is no longer required; and even some of the overseers themselves appear to question whether they would not be out of place in offering such advice.¹

As this letter, written by an anonymous Quaker woman to *The Friend* on 5th January 1866, illustrates, differing and conflicting sartorial interpretations existed amongst female members of the Quaker community after 1860. After the advice respecting Plainness became optional, many Quakers used the platform of published social commentary to voice their concerns at the three distinct stances Quaker women were adopting in their clothing, classified throughout this study as Non-Adaptive, Semi-Adaptive and Fully-Adaptive, the distinctions between which are illustrated through four case studies.

This final chapter consolidates the debates and findings discussed throughout this thesis, and demonstrates the success of this thesis in accomplishing its aims. Whilst acknowledging this research's boundaries, this conclusion serves to affirm the motivations behind such parameters which have focused the narrative of this study on hitherto over-looked areas of analysis of British Quaker women's dress, 1860 to 1914. In addition, this conclusion illustrates that the research undertaken offers new contributions to knowledge and serves inspiration for future studies on Quaker women's dress, whilst proposing the first methodology for future research in this field.

¹ A female member, "On Christian Simplicity," *The Friend. A Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* VI. 65 (5th January 1866): 99

Accomplishment of the aims of this thesis and a summary of findings

As outlined in the introduction of this thesis, the key focus of this research has been to discuss how British Quaker women negotiated relinquishing their religiously-prescribed Plain dress and incorporating fashionable attire into their appearance between 1860 to 1914. This study explored whether Quaker women had relinquished Plain dress totally or partially, quickly or slowly and in manners which incorporated fashionable garments fluidly or incongruously. On making the first close examination of surviving garments in British dress collections, as discussed in chapter 1, it became clear from this material culture source alone that Quaker women between these chosen dates were negotiating their clothing choices according to their individual Quaker beliefs and using three distinct interpretations. These three classifications were then categorised as Non-Adaptive, Semi-Adaptive and Fully-Adaptive, in order to communicate their differing complex style adaptations between Plain and fashionable dress. This finding in turn justified and validated my use of surviving British Quaker women's clothing as the primary research source for this investigation from the start, because of its success in identifying a classification system from the garment evidence alone. The aim of investigating how Quaker women negotiated the display of their religious affiliation alongside fashionability in their dress between 1860 and 1914 has thus been successfully achieved through the identification and classifications of these three (also termed here as *ternary*) sartorial stances which have never been before identified in published research and are thus, my key contribution to new knowledge. The three dress stances have been articulated throughout as:

1. Non-Adaptive: These Quaker women disregarded changes taking place in fashionable attire and remained ascetic by continuing to wear Plain attire, especially Plain Quaker bonnets, skirts without crinolines and bustles, and Plain shawls even after the amendment of the Queries in 1860 which permitted their use. These women displayed a deliberate disregard, and even relishing, of the unfashionability of their attire. Their interpretation however cannot be viewed as a deliberate or hostile opposition to the alteration in religious Advices. The Plain custom had become *optional*, not formally abandoned and therefore Non-Adaptive Quaker women were exercising their liberty by opting to remain Plain, an

action which still represented obedience to the amended Query and was a very public demonstration of their faith, as displayed in chapter 6.

2. Semi-Adaptive: These Quaker women aspired to, and did adopt, a moderate amount of attention to fashion in their garments yet were restrained, often in their adaptations to the fashionable silhouettes as well as in their frugal use of trimming or colour choices. Often the incorporation of such simplicity *was* motivated by religious sentiment. These women also mindfully used their dress as an expression of artistic pursuits and political leanings and as a reflection of a knowing stance against seasonal fashion. Their decisions were moderated by their Quaker upbringing and their mindfulness to the religious duty of their Quaker faith, as noted in chapter 7 and 8.

3. Fully-Adaptive: These Quaker women chose to ignore continuing Quaker pressures and guidelines which encouraged self-denial in dress and disregarded those of the conservative Quaker community who decried fashion, because it 'was still deemed wrong, as it came from a spirit of vanity.'² These women incorporated all design aspects of Paris and London fashions into their clothing, including bright colours, lavish trimmings and accessories and crinolined and bustled silhouettes, as displayed in chapter 9. In fact, the garments of these women can only be associated with Quakerism though the recording of a Quaker provenance in museum records, as their wearers used their clothing to assimilate seamlessly into their peer group communities in order not to appear 'peculiar' socially and in business circles. Fully-Adaptive Quaker women may however, be seen as simply enacting the principles of Quakers such as those of Margaret Fell and Robert Barclay who argued that diverse, colourful and status giving clothes offered suitable outward attire for each individual because clothing did not serve to reflect the inward spiritual enlightenment of the wearer. These women therefore believed their fashionable clothing was entirely appropriate even for religiously devout Quaker women.

These classifications were initially based solely on the appearance of the surviving and provenanced garment evidence at Platt Hall, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Killerton House National Trust, Alfred Gillett Trust Clarks Archive and North Hertfordshire District Museum, and the diverse styles of their archived Quaker clothing. The material culture

² J. William Frost, "Changing Quaker Ideals for Material Culture," *Quaker Aesthetics. Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003) 33.

methodologies proposed in chapter 1 by Alexandra Palmer, Jules Prown, Valerie Steele, Susanne Küchler, Valerie Cumming and Sophie Woodward, have been essential in illustrating to the reader the sartorial details of these three classifications from the garment evidence. Describing the appearances of the silhouette, style, fabric, trimming, colour and embellishment of Elizabeth Petipher Cash, Helen Priestman Bright Clark, Geraldine Cadbury and Lucretia Seebom's garments, unites such detailed assessment leading to deduction and speculation on the cultural values attached to this clothing.

Later in the research process, the journals *The Friend* and *Friends Quarterly Examiner* were found to support these classifications. The Quaker William Pollard's letter, "Colloquial Letters. No. 9. My Unspoken Speeches in the late Yearly Meeting" published in June 1869 in *The Friends Quarterly Examiner*, confirmed and strengthened my three classifications.³ Pollard's ternary classifications were 'ascetic', 'moderates' and 'reds', and his description of these interpretations entirely aligned with my own established findings:

The problem has been thoroughly solved (and there were abundant instances of its solution at this Yearly Meeting;) how to dress with beautiful taste and neatness and simplicity combined; how to avoid singularities and oddities, and to be attired both with grace and Christian moderation. We must hope that the moderates with their quiet attire are the rising section, and that the extreme reds among us will soon, even for the sake of appearance, if for no higher motive, be all converted to their view. The sensible, and shall I say Christian, style of dress is that which, while neat and becoming, claims but little thought in the wearer, and attracts but little notice from sensible people.⁴

My analysis of Pollard's letter is also a contribution to new knowledge because it has, for the first time in any dress history or Quaker academic research confirmed that the nineteenth century British Quaker community was aware that Quaker women were interpreting the incorporation of fashionable dress into their ensembles in diverse manners. It has also

³ William Pollard, "Colloquial Letters. No. 9. My Unspoken Speeches in the late Yearly Meeting," *The Friends Quarterly Examiner. A Religious, Social & Miscellaneous Review conducted by Members of the Religious Society of Friends XI* (July 1869): 443 - 444.

⁴ Pollard, "Colloquial Letters. No. 9," 444.

proven that there already existed three classifications distinct enough to be visually identifiable by Quakers in the late 1860s. This discovery vindicated the research methodology of this thesis proposed in chapter 1 by Jennifer Adams, Lynn Bloom, Julia Swindells and Marcia Poynton and affirmed that written primary sources, including the letters, diaries, published correspondence and religious documentation, significantly supported my material culture based theory.

Textual evidence in Friends' journals alongside Quaker Epistles have proven crucial in evaluating the extent to which Quaker Advices regarding dress continued to play a role in Quaker women's attire even after their relaxation in 1860. Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9, have proved that traditional Plain practices and conservative Quaker dress Advices intruded into the sartorial decisions of each Quaker woman discussed, because as Pollard's letter has illustrated and the Quaker scholars Thomas C. Kennedy and Emma Jones Lapsansky have noted, Quaker dialogue between past and present Advices regarding dress remained dynamic.⁵ This thesis has proven that whilst Plainness of apparel ceased to be a matter of discipline after 1861, conservative members of the Quaker community and Non-Adaptive Plain Quakers made sure, through letters to *The Friend*, *British Friend* and *Friends Quarterly Examiner* as well as personal correspondence and self-presentation, that both younger members of the Society and those who sought to adopt fashionable dress were often reminded of traditional sentiments, Epistles and Scriptural teachings decrying fashion. At least thirty-two letters published in *The Friend* and *The Friends Quarterly Examiner* between 1860 and 1902, debated Quaker women's wearing of fashionable garments with the majority decrying the 'tyranny of ever-changing Fashion.'⁶ Therefore, despite dress being a matter for individual freedom of choice after 1860, social commentary in Friends' journals has revealed that Quaker women were continually criticised for their fashionable attire and 'perpetually exposed to the critical eye of one's peers.'⁷

⁵ Elizabeth Isichei, *Victorian Quakers* (Oxford: University Press, 1970) 159 and Thomas C Kennedy, *British Quakerism, 1860-1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) 216.

⁶ Anonymous, "Plainness of Apparel," *British Friend: A Monthly Journal chiefly devoted to the interests of the Society of Friends* (8th Month 1867): 189

⁷ Peter Collins, "Ethical Consumption as Religious Testimony: The Quaker Case," *Ethical Consumption. Social Value and Economic Practice*. ed. James G Carrier and Peter G Luetchford (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012) 191.

As discussed in chapters 4 and 5, censorious letters were not merely general but singled out the specific offending fashionable garments, of Parisian bonnets, plumage and mourning dress, for criticism. Detailed examination of how these criticised fashions were worn and adopted to convey information about social role, class and character by mainstream society are discussed in chapter 5 through the dress history writings of Anne Buck, Diana Crane, Charlotte Nicklas, Lucy Johnston, Valerie Mendes and Amy de la Haye as well as surviving etiquette guides.⁸ This chapter has revealed the notions of respectability, polite etiquette and modernity associated with seasonally changing fashions which Quaker women who sought to adopt fashionable dress were negotiating. Textual evidence of the published correspondence and the late nineteenth century Quaker Epistles studied in this thesis also provide additional detailed evidence that Quaker Advices continued to inform Quaker women's dress, due to their persistent admonishment of fashion coupled with the criticisms written by conservative Quakers within the community itself.

The use of life writing and photographic evidence have also proven that the familial authority and preferences of fellow female Quaker family members were an equally influential factor in the sartorial choices of the Quaker women under examination, specifically in the case of their incorporation of fashionable and adaptive dress styles into their wardrobes. Ancestral relations, especially through their piety and Plainness or fashionability, influenced the sartorial selection process of these women. For example, the Fully-Adaptive Lucretia Seebohm in chapter 9 was joined in her sartorial fashionable choices by her sister-in-law, whilst Helen Priestman Bright Clark's degree of fashionability was nurtured by her Fully-Adaptive aunt in chapter 7. Applying Pierre Bourdieu's theory that girls are taught to discuss and evaluate clothing and appearance from a young age by other women, has illustrated that Quaker women's filtering of behaviour from woman to woman, was reflective of broader social and sartorial mechanisms which disseminate judgements of taste.⁹ Sartorial choices were principally disseminated from and nurtured by their Quaker

⁸ Anne Buck, *Victorian Costume and Costume Accessories* (London: Herbert Jenkins, [1961] 1984). Diana Crane, 'Clothing behaviour as non-verbal resistance,' *The Fashion History Reader: Global Perspectives*, ed. Giorgio Rielleo and Peter McNeil (London: Routledge, 2010). Charlotte Nicklas, *Splendid Hues: Colour, Dyes, everyday science and women's fashion, 1840-1875*, University of Brighton PhD (2009). Lucy Johnston, *Nineteenth-Century Fashion in Detail* (London: V&A Publications, 2005). Valerie Mendes and Amy de la Haye, *20th Century Fashion* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999).

⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," *Ethnography*, 5.4 (December [1962] 2004): 590.

schooling, in Elizabeth Petipher Cash's case; by the lifestyle and opinions of their mothers and female relatives, in Geraldine Cadbury and Helen Priestman Bright Clark's cases; and female friends, in the case of Lucretia Seebohm. Furthermore, these have been supported by Bourdieu and Bogatyrev's anthropological studies into the processes through which communities undergo- the 'clash' of modern cultural influences- albeit that their communities of study were rural, one in Moravia in the 1930s and the other in France in the 1960s. The 'clash of cultures' here, rather, as shown in chapter 5- 9, has clearly been shown to have been enacted between devout Plain Quaker women and their retention of early 19th dress practices, and Fully Adaptive Quaker women in their fashionable dress. These, as proven, were equally devout, but chose to fully embrace the public, feminine, middle class, urban cultural practice of wearing changing, decorative fashionable clothes and accessories, a practice, as this study has shown, learned from their mothers, their friends and their community. According to Bourdieu, 'women are much more apt to perceive urban models and integrate them into their behaviour, whether it be clothing or techniques of the body [...she] speaks the language of urban fashion well because she hears it well.'¹⁰

Material culture, texts and photographs however, have proven that the Quaker attitude towards, and adoption of, fashion was not a smoothly graduated and linear progression between 1860 and 1914, whereby Plain dress was increasingly abandoned and fashionable clothing increasingly adopted. Such a simplification would be both untrue and disingenuous and the four case studies here, from between 1866 and 1891, have served to illustrate the fallacy of this assumption. For example, Elizabeth Petipher Cash in chapter 6 stoically desisted adaptation until her death in 1894, whereas far earlier, Helen Priestman Bright Clark in chapter 7, aspired to incorporate fashionable garments into her wardrobe in 1866, only six years after the relaxation of Plainness Advices. This study has therefore shown, that it took several decades for fashionable dress to be incorporated throughout the female Quaker community, because interpretations were consistently dynamic and entirely personal throughout the period under question.

¹⁰ Bourdieu, "The Peasant and his Body," 590.

In summarising the debates and findings discussed throughout this thesis, and evaluating the extent to which this thesis has succeeded in accomplishing its aims it is evident that the findings justify and confirm the validity of both the selection of primary research sources of garments, period photographs, life writing and archive textual material as well as the key fundamental critical approaches employed. The following section will now outline methodological guidelines for the future research of Quaker women's dress, 1860 - 1914, by drawing on the successful methods employed within this body of work.

Best practice methodology for approaching the examination of Quaker women's dress, 1860 to 1914

In order to avoid over-dependency on widespread popular representations and expected and assumed symbols associated with Quaker clothing, the application of a best practice multi-disciplinary methodology for approaching the examination of Quaker women's dress from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which may also be used for later and earlier periods, as outlined here, is imperative. The recommended approaches encompass material culture, dress history, social history and religious studies. Seven basic research sources have been identified, explained, mobilised and justified here. These are the use of surviving garments, textual sources including letters and diaries, religious documentation, biographies, photographs, genealogical sources and local and national archives.

Initially, the researcher must assess surviving garments as the essential primary source. Dress collection visits must be carried out and comprehensive cataloguing of the garments found, undertaken. Through this, the reality of the silhouettes, style, fabrics, colours, trimmings and accessories adopted by Quaker women can be presented, discussed and critically analysed. Initially, a basic material culture descriptive, deductive and speculative approach, proposed by Jules Prown, E. McClung Fleming and Valerie Steele, and discussed in chapter 1.1, is vital in order that properly verified conclusions may be reached, through

evidence, rather than relying on assumptions.¹¹ As such, the use of an object analysis template as a technical tool, helps not only to register the appearance of the garment and the factual details of its dimensions, date and display, but also emphasises the tangible and tactile qualities of the garments noted during their handling, qualities which are unobtainable from museum accession records and through on-line digital images. Photographs of the garment also serve as corroborative illustrations for representation of the data to the academic community, and act as prompts after the event. During garment viewings the presence of knowledgeable dress curators and their advice must never be underestimated, as a source for obtaining, what Alexandra Palmer describes as the 'personal biographies embedded in the clothes.'¹² Equally however, as in the case of North Hertfordshire Museum's brocaded silk dress, discussed in chapter 9, curator's dating also needs to be corroborated through comparative surviving garments and period published fashion advice and advertisements. Oral history of the garment's original usage, donation, display, and possible alteration whilst often unrecorded in museum records may be present in the memories of curators and may have future ramifications for the interpretation of the object, as with the case of Elizabeth Petipher Cash's Plain Quaker bonnets in chapter 6. Even during this early phase of the object analysis, it soon becomes clear how the garment under discussion conforms to each Adaptive classification. It is imperative that such classification is considered at this stage, due to the need to then find further textual or visual sources to confirm this initial reading of the garment. Such a reading does not dismiss the prospect of an alteration in classification as more evidence comes to light. It does however emphasise that the reading of Quaker dress must begin with the tangible reality of the garment itself.

The researcher should then consult textual sources, particularly life writing of letters and diaries, as these have proven crucial in the analysis of the sartorial choices made by Quaker women between 1860 and 1914. It is also of fundamental importance that the religious context must be thoroughly examined and therefore Quaker Meeting minutes and Quaker social commentary from periodicals of the era in question must be exhaustively read and

¹¹ Valerie Steele, "A Museum of Fashion is More Than a Clothes Bag," *Fashion Theory*, 2.4. (1998): 327 - 336. E. McClung Fleming, "Artifact Study: A Proposed Model," *Winterthur Portfolio* 9 (1973). Jules David Prown, "Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method," *Winterthur Portfolio* 17.1. (1982): 1-19.

¹² Alexandra Palmer, "New Directions: Fashion History Studies and Research in North America and England," *Fashion Theory*, 1.3 (1993): 302.

interpreted, in order to contextualise the religious environment in which these sartorial decisions were being made.

Next, genealogical research forms an important part of this methodology. Where biographical publications exist on the individual case, initial consultation of these sources can shed light on the attitudes, tastes, manners, education, religion and prejudices of individual characters and the actions of their ancestors and historical figures. As such, they provide a source from which the researcher may focus further research in relevant dates, locations or friends and family who may have been particularly influential. It is imperative to remember however, that feminist biography not only uses but celebrates the use of subjectivity in their biographical accounts, as noted by Charles Middleton, Barbara Caine, Nigel Hamilton and Catherine Neal Parke and discussed in chapter 1.5.¹³ Biographical works as a method of research therefore, are useful not as definitive accounts of Quaker women's lives, but as single sources to illuminate and chronicle the actions, attitudes, tastes, manners, education, religion and prejudices of individual characters, whilst being read with an awareness of the subjectivity of their authors.

Further biographical information needs to be drawn from local and national Quaker record depositories which hold multiple sources recording the details of the member's lives, including their date and place of birth, parents, date and place of marriage, spouse details, children and date and place of death. These details provide contextualisation of the religious affiliation of ancestors and marriage partners, and therefore often reveal the piety of the family environment. During the process of archival research, however, it is important to remain aware of the limitations of religious archives, as discussed in chapter 1.3 by Harriet Bradley, August Suelflow and Rosemary Raughter. As Bradley stresses, the nature of the archive controls what is included and excluded, and what is accessible and inaccessible, in order to create a collective (and selective) memory. The voices of the past have been pre-selected and the archive can often only be approached by the application of an established system, such as at Westminster City Archives which uses a closed archival system where

¹³ Charles R. Middleton, "Biography as History: The Humanistic Tradition in Historical Scholarship," *The Historian* 36.3. (1974): 524-532. Barbara Caine, *Biography and History* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). Nigel Hamilton, *Biography: A Brief History* (London: Harvard University Press, 2007). Catherine Neal Parke, *Biography: Writing Lives* (London: Routledge, 2002) 94.

items must be called up through a request slip.¹⁴ In certain cases, as discussed in chapter 1.3, archival information can also only be located and approached at the archivist's discretion, as August Suelflow acknowledges.¹⁵ As such, whilst an archive may provide certain textual data, collection and viewing policies may make the consultation of multiple archives a necessity in order to uncover relevant information.

National familial archives then need to be consulted by the researcher so that relevant personal letters and diaries may be sourced. These may further illuminate the interests and concerns of the specific Quaker women, as chapter 1.4 outlines. Particular attention should be paid to any discussions concerning fashion, appearance, consumption and religious faith. As Jennifer Adams and Jonanne E. Cooper acknowledge, letters are particularly revealing as they illuminate the personal writing style and sentiments of the author, but also the relationship between the sender and receiver. A clear example here has been found in the letters of Helen Priestman Bright Clark and her aunt Priscilla Bright McLaren in chapter 7, which reveal the intimate relationships she shared with three of her aunts and the consultation processes concerning the bridal wear she chose for her marriage in 1866. Yet due to the presence of a receiver, it is once again imperative to acknowledge, as Jennifer Adams does, that such writing is audience-aware.¹⁶ Each textual source discussed and employed in this method of research therefore has credibility as a historical source not as an exclusively stand alone document, but as an individual aid of insight which creates a multi-layered picture of the case study- the fundamental approach taken throughout this thesis.

As examined in chapter 1.2, surviving photographs display evidence of historically assembled garments and accessories worn by the sitter and the compositional elements of the outfits, their silhouettes and drape. Imperatively however, as Annette Kuhn, Allan Sekula and Joan Severa advise, and this thesis confirms, photographic portraiture must be handled as evidence of a public event or spectacle. Photographs therefore represent the sitter in their best light and almost certainly their best clothes, not as they may have

¹⁴ Harriet Bradley, "Seduction of the Archive: Voices Lost and Found," *History of the Human Sciences* 12.2. (1999): 113.

¹⁵ August R. Suelflow, *Religious Archives: An Introduction* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1980) 29.

¹⁶ Jennifer Adams, "Recovering a Trashed Communication Genre: Letters as Memory, Art and Collectible," *Residual Media*. ed. Charles R. Acland (Minnesota: University Press, 2007) 190.

appeared day-to-day.¹⁷ Such images are therefore the product of a construct by the photographer and sitter, Joan Severa and Miles Lambert emphasise. For example, in Elizabeth Petipher Cash's 1873 portrait, Cash clearly chose her smartest and neatest garments, and particularly those which would 'reinforce [her] self- representation' as an elderly lifelong Quaker.¹⁸ As such, whilst these images may represent a far neater version of the garments which Cash would have chosen to wear on a day-to-day basis, they do present to us the Plain Quaker self-image which Cash constructed for the camera and chose to present to the viewer.

Each method of approach, including garment analysis, textual sources, genealogical research, biography, local and national archives and religious documentation, has served to reveal the limitations intrinsic in each as a stand-alone source. Accumulatively however, they provide the inter-disciplinary methodology advocated by this thesis from the outset, through which to investigate how Quaker women negotiated displaying religious affiliation alongside fashionability in their dress in the 1860 - 1914 period.

Parameters of this study

The parameters for this study, circumscribed by female gender, British nationality and date range between 1860 and 1914, have meant that women from differing Quaker colonies and continents, as well as male Friends and early nineteenth century Quakers, have been excluded from the debates of this research. Such exclusions were essential for four reasons.

Firstly, this thesis discusses how British Quaker women negotiated relinquishing their religiously prescribed Plain dress after Plain or 'peculiar' dress was made optional by the Religious Society of Friends in 1860 which obviously therefore, became the natural starting date for this thesis. Its conclusion just before the start of the First World War however, was

¹⁷ Annette Kuhn, *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination* (London: Verso, 1995): 17. Allan Sekula, "Reading an Archive: Photography between labour and capital," *The Photography Reader* (London: Routledge, 2003): 448. Joan Severa, *Dressed for the Photographer: Ordinary Americans and Fashion, 1840-1900* (Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1995): xii.

¹⁸ Miles Lambert, *Fashion in Photographs, 1860-1880* (London: Batsford, 1991) 12 and Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (London: Reaktion, 2001) 26.

reached because of the overwhelming influence the event had on the every aspect of British women's lives, specifically on the societal role and sartorial decisions of British Quaker women. The First World War marked a social and sartorial turning point beyond the scope of this body of research and thus, 1914 became the natural date of conclusion for this thesis's subject. This date range, whilst adopted due to the religious, social and political episodes which boundary the period, has actually served to illuminate the diverse pace with which fashion was incorporated and continually rejected by Quaker women during the mid/late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Secondly, members of the Quaker religion have always recorded their shared beliefs and customs, minutes of their meetings and principles advocated to the members of the religious community. As such, the large physical volume of the textual records to be consulted had to be limited by using criteria, specific to gender and nationality, in order to provide feasible parameters.

Thirdly, male and female Quakers historically experienced differing social, and therefore religious, experiences due to their oppositional place within the hierarchical structure of British society in general. Many of the Society's 'provocative' and 'subversive' religious ideas, which were fundamentally in conflict with the doctrines and practices of the established (Protestant) church of England, were deeply radical because of their spiritually gender equalising nature. As shown within Chapter 3, even women's experiences of religious suffering were commonly described after the event, second-hand, by a male author (or authors).¹⁹ As such, Quaker men both within the religious discipline and society in general were historically in authoritarian and decision-making roles.²⁰ This thesis therefore, has used gender as a parameter in order to raise the female presence in accounts of Quaker religious and social experience during the latter half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in order to re-balance the restricted female presence which has historically existed in Quaker academic and religious texts.

¹⁹ Catie Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community. A Literary Study of Political Identities, 1650-1700* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2005) 42 & 53.

²⁰ Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community*, 70.

Fourthly, the decision to focus exclusively on Quaker women of British nationality was both practically established as well as a consideration of environmentally disparate factors which effected spiritual and religious experience. As the surviving clothing located in dress collections functioned as the guiding material, consideration of Quaker women in overseas communities, such as U.S.A., Canada and Australia, would have meant foreign travel and visitations. Such travel, even with the lure of new sources in foreign dress collections, would have once again expanded the physical volume of material under consideration, as well as the historic and cultural contexts, beyond the scope of this thesis. In addition, as Emma Lapsansky has acknowledged that, 'Friends' struggle to understand and interpret plainness often took its contours from the social, economic, or political events of their times', such influencing factors needed to be site specific.²¹ Therefore, these factors would have overwhelmingly influenced the societal role and sartorial decisions of American or Australian Quaker's negotiation of their Plainness. As such, the influencing factors for their sartorial choices may have been incompatible with those of the British female Quakers of the study.

Beyond these self enforced restrictive guidelines however, further practical constraints have influenced the direction and outcome of the thesis. As mentioned throughout, a key factor which cemented my decision to pursue this theme for doctoral investigation was the scarcity of known and researched garments with acknowledged British Quaker derivations in dress collections and on display in British museums and galleries. This lack of easily accessible relevant examples of Quaker garments and the absence of institutional acknowledgement of their Quaker provenance has been a challenge throughout this research but it has at least limited the accessible dress material available for study. Methodologically nonetheless, the garments found provided the starting and finishing source for the investigation of the theme of dress for this study. Twelve positively responsive dress collections with Quaker garments with acknowledged provenances were visited as noted in chapter 1.1, the quality and quantity of articles within each of these collections provided further limitations. Some of the garments were undated and poorly accessioned, whilst others were classified as Quaker by the institution but were

²¹ Emma Jones Lapsansky et al. *Quaker Aesthetics. Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003) 13.

unprovenanced. Many of these limitations however, are endemic to the study of nineteenth century object based dress history and are therefore not necessarily unique to my research.

Once garments were identified with confirmable Quaker derivations however, the bias of types of Quaker articles housed by dress collections was strikingly evident. As discussed in chapter 5 twenty-four Quaker bonnets were viewed at the twelve dress collection viewings, a far higher number than any other garment. Quaker historians have historically acknowledged the fetishised public appeal of the Quaker bonnet, as a short-hand symbol of Quaker women's piety and modesty. American Quaker historian Jennifer Connerley, noted that 'nothing so visibly marked a Quaker woman of the mid-nineteenth century as the deep shade cast by her unadorned bonnet.'²² Indeed, she also mentions that for many observers, the Plain bonnet became compelling and instantly recognisable for its unadorned simplicity, to the extent that it was transformed into an enduring icon of Quakerism long past its actual use by female members of the religion.²³ Clearly, both English dress collections and the families who preserved these articles for posterity were both aware of, and influenced by, this traditional symbol of Quakerly femininity, hence the survival of so many Quaker bonnets.

However, the privilege awarded by dress collections to the preservation of 'typical' traditional Quaker garments, such as the Plain Quaker bonnet, have at the same time served to obscure the reality of the diverse dress practices undertaken by nineteenth century Quaker women, which are clarified here for the first time. Instead such museum practices serve to emphasise the static and righteous traits of Quaker women through the symbol of the Plain bonnet over and above the complex reality of the religious, political and sartorial behaviours of Quaker women, as presented in this study. Connerley has described this practice as 'muting the potential spiritual and political virtuosity of the Quaker woman.'²⁴ As such, this thesis has contributed to new knowledge, especially in nineteenth and twentieth century dress history, through its retrieval of Quaker women from the shadows of history,

²² Jennifer I. Connerley, "Quaker Bonnets and the Erotic Feminine in American Popular Culture," *Material Religion* 2, 2.2 (2nd July 2006): 174.

²³ Connerley, "Quaker Bonnets and the Erotic Feminine in American Popular Culture," 176.

²⁴ Connerley, "Quaker Bonnets and the Erotic Feminine in American Popular Culture," 176.

and by presenting the subtleties and actualities of their sartorial negotiations during the latter half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century in the context of the Quaker faith, feminine identity and their consumption habits.

The implications of this work for suggested areas of further research

As the positive consequence of the parameters imposed upon this research and in consequence of its findings the prospect of many other areas where research could be further developed has emerged. For example, due to this study's focus on female Quaker sartorial negotiations, we do not yet have studies of male Quaker sartorial negotiations during this same period and on whether male members of the religious community were similarly negotiating fashion through the same ternary stances between 1860 and 1914, and whether these stances are visible in their surviving garments.

Nor do we have studies regarding the extent to which the restrictions of Plain attire influenced Friends' decisions to resign altogether from the religious community. Whilst Elizabeth Isichei's *Membership of London Yearly Meeting, 1800-1900* (Fig. 3.12) discussed in chapter 3 illustrated the decimation of the Friends' membership numbers between 1800 and 1860, it would be fascinating to investigate to what extent the restrictions placed on sartorial Quaker expression before 1860 played a part in Quaker resignations and disownments in the 1800-1860 period. Moreover, there is great scope for specific object analysis studies to be undertaken on specific types of garments and any subtle style alterations of the Plain Quaker design between 1800- 1860. For example, plotting the gradual alterations in Quaker Plain bonnets, and whether brim depth, crown height and colour were in fact guided by regional or period preferences.

It is clear that such sartorial themes are not unique to Britain. North American and colonial female and male Quakers similarly struggled to negotiate their outward trappings throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as has been noted in publications focused on Quaker's historical attitude to material culture in the United States, including

Quaker Aesthetics.²⁵ An investigation into the differences between sartorial negotiations within the United States and Britain during these five decades, would reveal the extent to which Quaker women's negotiations of fashionable clothes were linked to their own national identity as well as to other considerations as discussed throughout this thesis of fashionability and the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Advices.

Several American Quaker dress collections and archives exist in which post Doctoral scholarly studies could be feasibly undertaken to test the extent to which the discoveries of this thesis parallel the sartorial negotiations being undertaken by American Quaker women in the United States during the late nineteenth century. American institutions where such parallel research can plausibly be based include Quaker and Special Collections, Haverford college, Pennsylvania; the Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College, Philadelphia and The Arthur and Kathleen Postle Archives and Friends Collection, Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana, all of which house extensive Quaker textual archives housing life writing and religious meeting minutes dating back to the seventeenth century, as well as pictorial and photographic collections. Surviving Quaker garments may be found in Chester County Historical Society, Pennsylvania's Costume and Textile collection and Winterthur Museum, Delaware which both house substantial collections of eighteenth and nineteenth century clothing and textiles with Quaker provenances. Other American institutions which house articles of Quaker dress include the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Westtown School, Esther Duke Archives, Pennsylvania; Newport Historical Society, Rhode Island and The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco. Clearly, a large body of material culture exists in the United States through which to test sartorial parallels from across the Atlantic.

Conclusion

²⁵ Emma Jones Lapsansky, "Past Plainness to Present Simplicity: A Search for Quaker Identity," *Quaker Aesthetics. Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003) 1.

What has become clear, is the extreme neglect of representation Quaker clothing from this period has suffered in British museums, which ought to be remedied if they are to reflect properly on British social religious and sartorial history. Such displays of Quaker objects would need to illustrate the rational, social and political environmental factors which manipulated Quaker sartorial decision making alongside the non-rational threads of spirituality and religious sentiment.²⁶ Clearly, representation and display of women's Quaker clothing in British museums has suffered from the enduring simplified stereotype communicated by the Plain Quaker bonnet. As contemporary Quaker academics, such as Margaret Benefiel, Sandra Stanley Holton, Catie Gill and Gil Skidmore, seek to retrieve the role of Quaker women from the fog of history, so too this thesis frees Quaker dress from the singular fetishisation of the icon of the Plain Quaker bonnet.²⁷ Instead museums must present Friends as negotiating the ideas and fashions of broader British society, and the success of this thesis lies in the possibilities it offers for inspiring a new outlook on Quaker sartorial practices and therefore further Quaker dress scholarship.

²⁶ Chris Arthur, "Exhibiting the Sacred," *Godly Things: Museums, Objects and Religion*, ed. Crispin Paine. (London: Leicester University Press, 2000) 6.

²⁷ Margaret Benefiel, "Weaving the Web of Community Letters and Epistles," *Hidden in Plain Sight: Quaker Women's Writings 1650-1700*. ed. Mary Garman. Judith Applegate. Dortha Meredith (Pennsylvania: Pendle Hill, 1996). Sandra Stanley Holton, *Quaker Women: Personal Life, Memory and Radicalism in the Lives of Women Friends, 1780 - 1930* (London: Routledge, 2007). Catie Gill, *Women in the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Community. A Literary Study of Political Identities, 1650-1700* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2005). Gil Skidmore, *Strength in Weakness: Writings of Eighteenth Century Quaker Women* (Oxford: Altamira Press, 2003).

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Appendix 1.1: Spreadsheet of Museum Contacts and Visits

Appendix 1.2: Interviews conducted during Dress Collection Visits.

Tunbridge Wells Museum Interview, transcribed

1st October 2012. (Length: 24:04).

Interviewer: Hannah Rumball

Interviewee: Abbi Bradford

Abbi: I'll have a check on the database, whilst you have a look at the costume

Hannah: Yes, thank you that would be perfect, thank you. I don't know why they're not working (*referring to the spreadsheet information Abbi emailed through*), I'm not very um, computer savvy so I don't know how to change the programme and things.

Abbi: Well...it's a bit funny, I think it's a very old format

Me: Ah, ok

Abbi: 'Cos I just tried to open it...um....on my desktop and it didn't work (*something inaudible*)....So...we've actually tried to kind of, transfer all the information from it onto Mode, which is the system that we use to catalogue everything. And it's bit more detailed, and it's kind of a nice size that you can email out....

Me: Yeah

Abbi: I think this is a little bit too old to do that with anymore...Um, does it matter what you see first?

Me: Not at all, no, anything is fine

Abbi: Oh, um, with photography, no flash, is that ok?

Me: Yep

Abbi: I'll turn on the light, so that the light's better

Me: Brilliant

Abbi: You'll probably get a better photo that way anyway. So,.....this is one of the bonnets....(*rustling and banging as bonnet is put onto table*)...

Me: Oh is that the person who owned it?

Abbi: I think so....this is (*something inaudible*) the accession on it's 1990 so.....is that a bug?!

Hannah: I think so yes

Abbi: (*Inspecting the bonnet more closely*) I think there's a little bug on it. It looks like it's jumping

Hannah: It is jumping, yeah

Hannah: Is it kept in the original box it was bought in...or...?

Abbi: We do have the box.....I'm just trying to get that little bug out of here.....yep. I've never seen a box like this actually

Hannah: No, neither have I

Abbi: Great shape isn't it

(*Rustling as bonnet is removed from box*)

Abbi: Oh! It's in nice condition

Hannah: It is, wow

Abbi: I don't know how old it is though, it doesn't say on here... I'll have a look for you.

(*Pause as she goes to check on the database*). So what's your PhD about again?

Hannah: Um, it's about, er, the period when the Quakers decided to abandon Plain dress...

Abbi: Oh! Ok!

Hannah:and it's female Quakers I'm looking at. So, at the moment my dates are 1860 to the beginning of the first world war, but they are quite vague at the moment.....it depends what times come up...

Abbi: Yeah, oh interesting.....(*Coming back over to bonnet*) Well that's fairly robust, so I'll leave you to turn it over

Hannah: Ok Brilliant

Abbi: So you can get the best photo, then when you're finished with it give me a shout and I'll come and re-pack it away and put the bonnet (*inaudible*)...ok?

Hannah: Yeah

(*Loud footsteps as Abbi goes back to her desk. Long period of quiet as the items Bonnet 90/162, Babies Bonnet 67/23(2), Gaiters 1975/13 and Dolls House Doll 70/94 are photographed and notes written on the items by Hannah. Discussion audible in background, as Abbi discusses capture of the bug with a colleague. Footsteps as Abbi comes back over to the viewing table to collect the bug*)

Abbi: Sorry if I'm in your way

Hannah: Not at all your fine

(Long period of quiet. Footsteps as Abbi comes back over to the viewing table)

Abbi: Is there anything else you need?

Hannah: Er, I don't think so

Abbi: We've got a fan heater down here somewhere, I'm just going to pop that on

(Abbi turns on a loud, electric heater and the much of the discussion becomes nearly inaudible. Footsteps as Abbi comes back over to the viewing table)

Hannah: Never...(inaudible) this before

Abbi: Oh! Haven't you? Are you from Brighton?

Hannah: Um no, well I'm from....I'm living in London at the moment

Abbi: Oh are you

Hannah: I'm originally from, er, from Bournemouth....*(rustling as the doll is unwrapped)*...Oh! It's lovely

Abbi: I've never seen her before. *(Pause)* So I'll leave you to do one side then I'll move her, yep?

(Loud footsteps as Abbi goes back to her desk. Long period of quiet.)

Hannah: Could you turn this one over?

Abbi: Yeah sure

Hannah: Do you have any information about it's donation?

Abbi: Yeah. I'll have a look on the database *(something inaudible)*. I can't print the whole thing...but...

Hannah: Perfect, that's great thank you

(Long period of quiet. Noise of electric heater and keys tapping)

Abbi: I don't want to print the whole thing because it's...*(inaudible)*

Hannah: Ok

Abbi: But basically the hat, was donated in 1990... if I have a look in the paper files it might say whether, you know, who wore it... I don't have any background information here, do you know what it's made from? You know your costume, do I need to tell you these things?

Hannah: Well, it would be good just to make sure I don't...

Abbi: Ok, yep, Ok. Well, it's black silk, I don't know how you say this, grosgrain?

Hannah: Yep

Abbi: With long Petersham ribbons down the side, the brim is lined with cream silk. And the box is dark red glazed paper and card.

Hannah: Perfect

Abbi: The size of the hat is 7.5.

Hannah: Yep. Perfect

Abbi: I'll keep chipping in as and when I find things...

(Long period of noise of electric heater and keys tapping as Hannah continues to inspect and photograph the items)

Abbi: *(Begins inaudibly talking about the Black bonnet)* I don't have any background information on who gave it to us

Hannah: And is, do you know, can you tell me is there a definite Quaker link?

Abbi: Er, no..... It just say women's Quaker bonnet.....

(Noise of fan as Abbi searches the records)

Hannah: Brilliant

(Loud footsteps as Abbi crosses the office and back to her desk)

Abbi: Now, this one, the doll we do have some information.....the doll is dated 1850-1860.....

Hannah: Yep (audible writing)

Abbi: We've actually got it as a dolls house doll.....

Hannah: OK

Abbi: Stoneware shoulders and head

Hannah: Yep

Abbi: Painted features and with a light brown wig. I may be just stating the obvious but I'll tell you anyway *(chuckles)*. Um, she's got a stuffed, jointed body...

Hannah: Oh! She's jointed

Abbi: Stoneware lower limbs...

Hannah: OK

Abbi: Moulded black boots... The legs are still stitched together....don't know what... whether lots of people sort of, made the doll up somehow... *(trails off)*.

Hannah: Er, ok

Abbi: The doll is dressed as a Quaker. She's in a grey dress, white shawl, grey bonnet. Red flannel petticoat and a white petticoat. Made in Germany.

Hannah: Oh! That's interesting

Abbi: Don't know the maker.....Um.....We don't have a date on here, but she was acquired in 1970, she was a gift from somebody who lived in Crowborough.....I'll have a little look in there....

(Long pause as she looks through the paper records)

Abbi: Just a letter saying thank you for it, you know

Hannah: Ok

Abbi: Are Surname's going to help you?

Hannah: Ummmm...yes. To an extent. Because if it's a Quaker family then I can track them down and find out about their history, at the Euston centre, they keep records of Quaker families there...

Abbi: I'll give you that then. Haughton, H-A-U-G-H-T-O-N

Hannah: Ok. Is that the name of the lady that, er, donated it?

Abbi: Yes. And the hat... that one... Abbott

Hannah: Abbott. *(Sound of writing.)* Brilliant. Well, I'm finished with the doll, so...

Abbi: Right!

(Abbi commences putting away the items whilst talking to another member of staff)

Abbi:

Hannah:

Bakewell Old House Museum dialogue, transcribed

5th March 2013, 10am

Interviewer: Hannah Rumball

Interviewees: Marian, Jane and Jan

Jane: Marian might be able to help with that [distortion on recording...] you know, he looks up and studies gravestones and looks up the history of Bakewell, specifically [stressed]

[little while later]

Marian: the lady, er, Hannah, just has a couple of questions...[trails off]

Hannah: I don't suppose you know whether anything else was donated with the wedding dress do you?

Jane: I don't think anything else was, it would be on the card, yeah [nodding]

Hannah: And when it was displayed in the wedding dress exhibition, was it displayed with other things? Did you put, er, I don't know, er, did you puff it out with a bustle? Did you put a collar with it? Or...gloves, or....

Jane: [sighs, thinking]

Jan: We've got a nasty little model upstairs, it's it's black plastic with er...Heath Robinson with a mixture, which er, he made [Hannah laughs], if you'd look at it you'd think it was horrendous, he, but I mean but you see there's no model that'll fit that waist....

Jane: [interrupting] we probably put er, like a bum roll or something at the back

Hannah: Yep

Jane: um, and an underskirt but just out of our cupboard it wouldn't have come with it

Jan: and it was on a headless model

Jane: so it wouldn't have had a bonnet, there aren't you see, there's no arms you see, so, and we didn't put any gloves, it was just as it is. I think we did a leaflet, er

Jan: I can't think where it is, we had a leaflet, we've got a leaflet on it somewhere, um, you know the whole um, hundred years of wedding dresses we have, that we soldnot quite sure to be honest where it is

Hannah : ok

Jan: We can always send it to you...[trails off, in an unconvinced tone of voice]

Hannah: that would be brilliant [enthusiastically]

Jan: But we have photographs of all the wedding dress [sic], you know um, from the earliest up until the 1940's [questioning tone]

Jane: [interrupting] until the war time wedding dress

Jan: the most popular thing that, well that, well you know they were so pretty I think

Hannah: yeah, exactly, wedding dresses always appeal don't they?

Jan: everyone was, you know,

Hannah: and you said it's not from the Bowman family, so [pauses] you don't know who would have worn it at all [questioning tone, trails off]...

Jane: No. Your only hope is to track down that Orme lady

Hannah: and you said that Miriam might know more?

Jane: er....Marian. Just because she's good at local

Hannah: Ok I'll go down and...

Jane: she might know something about the Ormes. You're not from Bakewell [directed at Jan], I'm not from Bakewell we're all.....well I suppose neither's Marian [jovial tone] but both her and her husband are very keen, um, on, Bakewell itself. Research and stuff...

Jan: Do we know where it came from, um, what um, which village or nothing like

Jane: Yes it said...Parwich

Jan: oh, Parwich

Hannah: Parwich [handing over the cataloguing card to Jane], its near Ashbourne

Jan: oh right! [surprised tone]

Jane: 1987...oh she's probably long gone...but you might er...

Jan: [taking the card and turning it over to look at the back] '08 when we did that, gosh, six years ago [quiet far away tone] {referring to wedding dress exhibition the item was featured in} [long pause] on the other hand you could always look Mrs Orme up in Parwich....

Hannah: yeah, I will do

Jan: it's certainly a Bakewell family, that had a big store down there, you know

Hannah: or even if I can just trace back to the marriages that were going on in the family in that period, then I might be able to track it down from there...

Jan: ummm, ummm [agreeing]

Jane: You'll have to let us know if you do it

Hannah: I will do, yeah, yeah

Jane: if you could follow up that would be great

Hannah: well I'm going to go down and talk to Marian, but I'm finished with the dress itself

Jane: and have you looked at the print outs in the other room [referring to wall labels regarding Quaker marriages]

Hannah: Yes, could i get a copy of those, um, those print outs?

{Both Jane and myself walk to the other room where the laminate print outs are displayed}

Jane: oh...[long pause as she pulls as the laminate print outs on the wall] they're stuck in place, she might have a copy on her computer

Hannah: ah, great, thank you very much....[walks down stairs into office] [addressed at Brown haired lady cleaning the kitchen] do you know where Marian is?

Lady: hmmm?

Hannah: Do you know where Marian is?

Lady: Marian's gone now.

Hannah: oh no! [surprised and disappointed tone]

Lady: yup, she'd only come in to do some things this morning

Hannah: ahhh, ok

Lady: she wasn't stayin' around

Hannah: can I email her?

Lady: um, er, you'd have, er, the best person to ask would be Jane. She'll probably know the office email address as I don't

Hannah: mmm, ok, brilliant, thank you

End of Interview

Hull Museums (Ferens Art Gallery) dialogue, transcribed**6th March 2014****Interviewer: Hannah Rumball****Interviewee: Kirsten Simister**

Kirsten: Do you want me to hold it?

Hannah: Oh, if you could that would be wonderful.

Kirsten: I could try and lay it on the end of the desk if it's, a wee bit unstable?

Hannah: Yeah. (*Waits for painting to be moved*) Yeah that's fine, absolutely fine.

Kirsten: That better?

Hannah: Yep, perfect. That's really good thank you very much.

Kirsten: Not at all

Hannah: So, um. Sir Walter West

Kirsten: What I could do is scan the right page there, from the catalogue

Hannah: Yeah, that would be really, really helpful.

Kirsten: That's what I was talking about. So that's come from the gallery catalogue from 2009, so that's just a bit about Joseph Walter West and then the various works that are at the gallery.

Hannah: That would be really helpful. Do you mind if I take a photograph of these?

Kirsten: (*hesitating*) Ummmmm.....yeah

(*Pause whilst photographs taken*)

Kirsten: Is Joseph Walter West an artist that you're aware of?

Hannah: No, not at all actually!

Kirsten: Ok...the label's quite interesting as well...He was born to a Quaker family

Hannah: Ah! That's good

Kirsten: (*reads*) Born at ? in ? Joseph Walter West was educated at Booth School in York where he studied art, under Edwin Moore. Following seven working as a cashier at engineering works in Hull, he went to London in 1883 and studied in the Royal Academy Schools, where he won a silver medal in 1887. As Vice President of the Royal Watercolour Society, West was a regular exhibitor there and at the Royal Academy. He was patronised by T.R. Ferens, principle benefactor of the gallery. *The Sermon* shows a family attending a

Quaker service, and is a typical example of a genre painting of Quaker life, this was a favourite subject matter for the artist, reflecting the importance of the religion in his own life. According to Mr Scott, grandson of the artist, the figure of the old lady is Joseph Walter West's mother. She is sitting on the back row, next to the standing woman. The two young girls and the mother sitting beside them, is possibly Walter West's wife and daughters. The artist regularly used his family as models in his works.

Hannah: How did he.....how was the....oh, he sold it directly to Feren's art gallery?

Kirsten: Yes.....(*Pointing to figures in painting*) So that's Walter West's mother on the back row

Hannah: That is brilliant

Kirsten: And the two young girls and the mother, are possibly Walter West's wife and daughter

Hannah: So the old lady in the beige bonnet

Kirsten: And then these, (*pointing at painting*) the two young girls....

Hannah: Walter West's wife and daughters....very nice.....So, is he locally from Hull?

Kirsten: He is.

Hannah: So they would have gone to a Hull meeting house...

Kirsten: Do you want to come upstairs to have a look through the file?

Hannah: I would love to you,

Kirsten: Well, that's what we should do

(*We go upstairs to the office. File contains no further relevant information*)

End of Interview

Whitby Museum dialogue, transcribed**7th March 2013, 10am****Interviewer: Hannah Rumball****Volunteer: Ann Petty**

Hannah: {*recording begins mid sentence*}...it's really lovely, and there are, er, there are a few things here, there's 5 records here, so I don't know whether every single one of them's in the box, I haven't touched anything yet as I wasn't sure whether you use gloves

Ann: Well let's, let's have a look see then. You've got your camera as well haven't you?

Hannah: Yes

Ann: We have a head if you wanted to put this on {*referring to black bonnet*}

Hannah: Oh that'd be fabulous

Ann: Yeah, I'll get the, er, you've got, you're ok for time though?

Hannah: Yeah, I'm fine

Ann: oh right then. So there's that, and that one has a number on, and that will be... er, GGB123

Hannah: GGB, so that's that one there, that one

Ann: Yea. See what you think, but you can do that one on the head.

Hannah: Ah that's the, looks like the babies {*pause*} bib

Ann: Yea. There's no sign of a tag

Hannah: It says, broderie anglais, with a button, babies bib with ties at the neck and waist

Ann: What's the number?

Hannah: Um, 105

Ann: It's gone {*referring to its ID tag*}, er, it might have had that tag on, so that's that

Hannah: ok

Ann: So we've got that

Hannah: Yep

Ann: it's pretty isn't it, beautiful

Hannah: Yeah

Ann: And this looks lovely

Hannah: It does

Ann: Ooo, see that might be the babies tag, what number did you say it was?

Hannah: It was, 105

Ann: Oh, it just says Whitby

[Both laugh]

Hannah: Net pinafore sown onto black silk

Ann: Yep, yep. And that is GBB107

Hannah: Yep. Beautiful

Ann: So that's that. There was a Quaker Meeting house you know but it's, it's a restaurant now, do you know where it is?

Hannah: No

Ann: Well you could have a, it's a really classical, er, what, 17th century building, or 18th century, um, um, I'll tell you where it is

Hannah: Thank you

Ann: [inaudible]

Hannah: Yep, long white Quaker apron

Ann: [inaudible]

Hannah: And it's 101

Ann: Yeah 101, i think that is it

Hannah: Yeah looks like it, doesn't it. There's one more piece of paper in here but I wonder if that's

Ann: Yeah, it'll be on the catalogue but where they are now I don't know

Hannah: There's this one as well, but it sounds similar to this one, it's 154

Ann: Apron. [mumbling] It might be a copy {referring to the piece of paper}. I think it sounds about the same doesn't it?

Hannah: Mmm [tentatively agreeing]

Ann: [Reading] slightly gathered, cotton, very plain

Hannah: These ones are the ones that we've just found, so they're all accounted for

Ann: Oh right. So that's it then

Hannah: Yeah

Ann: Ok, right. I don't think, I think it's obviously been repacked, and er, a great, er, now then we used to have a head in the corner, but I don't know where they are

Hannah: [laughs]

{Long pause as Ann goes off to find the head and Hannah begins to look at the garments}

Ann: Oooo, this head belongs to a very heavy body, but it fits, otherwise I'll have to bring the whole thing in. Other heads are on models. Are you doing a research project or is it an MA, a masters?

Hannah: I'm doing a PhD

Ann: Ah, oh right, and is it into costume or Quakers as such?

Hannah: Er, into Quaker costume

Ann: Just Quaker costume, right, ah that's really limited isn't it?

Hannah: Yeah [laughs]

Ann: Ooo dear, there's a wooden body but it's so heavy

Hannah: Yeah

Ann: Can you, perhaps you can prop it up if you take the stuffing out. *{Rustling of stuffing}*

Your Blackberry's flashing

Hannah: That's alright

Ann: Unfortunately we haven't got provenance, dates or anything

Hannah: Right

Ann: Can't remember who donated it. Now, there was a teacher in Whitby from a Quaker family, called, er, Sewell.

Hannah: I think it was donated by her

Ann: She was...

Hannah: There, Miss Sewell

Ann: That's it, yes. She certainly was a Quaker and I think her mother and forebears were Quaker but, the, as I say, the er, the Meeting House was sold a while ago, and I don't know how active, you know, the er, the Quakers were [trails off and becomes inaudible]

Hannah: Yes it does

Ann: It's like the er, the Amish people in America, they wear bonnets like this. It's not going to work is it? Unless somebody holds it, if I held it and you photographed it would that, would that help?

Hannah: Yeah. I'll probably take some photographs of it, um, off of the model as well

Ann: I think so, I think it's. You don't want me in it. How do you want it? Side or front or?

Hannah: I'll take it kind of every which way

Ann: Yes. There's some interesting details at the back actually.

{Long pause as Hannah photographs bonnet}

Ann: When do you think this would've been worn? Just to a church service do you think?

Hannah: They tended to wear them all the time, they had caps in the house but whenever they went out they tended to wear a bonnet

Ann: But we're talking about sort of 17th, 18th century?

Hannah: No, er, probably, this one looks nineteenth century but I'd say it was fairly early nineteenth century, I'd think it looks probably about 1830, 1840

Ann: I mean ordinary fashion at that time, is probably a bit like this isn't it, you know with the caps in the house, this is so restricting that you don't, er, you know, modest

Hannah: Exactly, that was the whole idea, they didn't want their faces, we well, you weren't meant to have an uncovered countenance, um, to be really religiously minded. Bonnets were very fashionable in the beginning of the nineteenth century, um, 1800 to 1830, 40, and then fashionable bonnets became, you know, further away from the face, they tilted up, they had more decoration, um and then as the nineteenth century progressed they turned into hats, so, but the Quakers carried on using the bonnet, well some of them until kind of 1900 but that will have been the, er, much older generation really, the young women....I think this is a relatively early in the nineteenth century one

Ann: It is quite, well apart from the silk lining, but I mean silk was, but I mean the outside, it is a silk, oh, well, it's like what do you call the fabric? A sort of Petersham type

Hannah: Like, er, like a grosgrain

Ann: That's right. I don't know whether they're new or added, they might have been added

Hannah: Yeah they look like a later addition, I mean partly just because of the different black, you know, if you get your hat from a milliner then they'll've been more careful about it

Ann: there were a lot of Milliners in Whitby, I mean, quite a thriving, because it was an isolated spot. But I don't know much about the Quaker clothing communities in Whitby, I mean they

Hannah: Well, er, left of here and further North, is where they kind of started so

Ann: Yes. George Fox was it?

Hannah: Yeah

Ann: Gosh, my memory goes back a long way [laughs]. But in this area, the fishing villages, there's a fishing village North of here, called Staithes, have you been to Staithes?

Hannah: No, I think I drove through it actually

Ann: Well you drive through a part of it but the actual old village is down [becomes inaudible] and the women when I first came here in the '70's still wore bonnets

Hannah: Oh! That's interesting

Ann: Pretty bonnets, yea, and you can actually buy copies of them down in the village in Staithes, and they've got, you know, the traditional bit round here, and ...they were tied under, they were different colours, we somewhere, we have some some, we have a collection of bonnets, Staithes bonnets

Hannah: Why, why did they, why did they all wear them for so long?

Ann: I don't know, it, I mean, I think it goes from when women did wear bonnets, you know, to keep their heads and face covered, but they carried on, and I think some of them, er, were, er if they were carrying things, in baskets on their head, you know? or stuff like that, they'd have to have a bonnet to kind of protect themselves

Hannah: Yeah that makes sense. It's amazing to hear things like that going on like that so late though

Ann: Oh yes, I mean I remember it in the '70's the old ladies were wearing them down on the coast down there, they sell patterns so you can make your own

Hannah: Oh that's amazing! Fascinating! I'll take some photos of it off the um, off the, er

Ann: Do you want a white background?

Hannah: If you have one that would be fantastic thank you

Ann: We been taking photo's of all the costumes and we had a big bit of fabric on here but it's gone

Hannah: Yea

Ann: I'll look for a piece for you

Hannah: Ok, thank you

{Silence as Ann goes to look for fabric and Hannah continues photographing the bonnet}

Hannah: Ah, brilliant

Ann: Do you want this box down?

Hannah: Yeah

Ann: Right, oh it's lovely isn't it? Very detailed as well.

Hannah: It's quite surprising really. It must be a fair bit later than the bonnet I think because, um, Quaker dress tended to be very Plain up until the um, mid nineteenth century

Ann: Did they have skirts and tops?

Hannah: Er, yes. They had long skirts, dresses normally, quite high necks, buttons but they tended to shy away from anything that was decorated up until the advice changed in about the mid nineteenth century, so I'd imagine that was probably after that.

Ann: We have a library here but I don't know whether there's anything about them which, er, which again has been re-organised, er, anything about Quakers in Whitby. Ummmm

Hannah: If I email Dee would she, she

Ann: She would, but you really want to speak to the librarian, actually, that we have

Hannah: Oh, yeah

Ann: Ummm, apparently the phone here is disconnected. Ooooh, dear

{Long pause as Ann tries to look for a phone which works and then begins moving a desk.

Hannah continues photographing lace apron}

Hannah: Do you want a hand?

Ann: Oh no, don't worry. I'm looking for a socket for the phone, she said it's been disconnected but er, I can't quite see where, um

{Continued long pause and rustling as Ann connects the telephone}

Ann: [talking on telephone] Hello Christiane, it's Ann Petty speaking...Hello, I'm up in the costume store and um, ah, yes, and I've been away for about three weeks and there's a lady here who's come to look at a few Quaker items that we've got, not, not very much, and I was wondering if, whilst she's here, you have anything about the Quakers in Whitby in the library that's reasonably accessible?.....Oh right...yes, yes she is.....oh right.....uh huh, she has been to Hull actually, yeah.....she's here now, and we eventually found the, er, the box, but I told her the Quaker Meeting House is still, still all sort of, it's worth having a look at, from the outside, although it's not a Meeting House now, it's a restaurant isn't it?

Mmmm.....did they? Ah.....right, right ok then. That's, that's fine thanks Christiane, bye!

{Puts phone down} She said, er, the papers from, the, er, Quaker Meeting House either went to London or Hull, we didn't get them here

Hannah: Ah, ok

Ann: And, er, apparently she has replied to you saying go to Hull

Hannah: Yes, it's probably her that sent me that way

Ann: Yeah, so that's fine. But it's worth seeing the er, the Quaker Meeting House itself, um, have you got a map of Whitby?

Hannah: Actually, no I haven't

Ann: Ahhh, right. So how did you get here then? Sat Nav?

Hannah: Yeah

Ann: I think possibly from here, er, where have you parked, outside the Museum?

Hannah: Yeah, just on the road outside

Ann: It might be easier to walk, because Whitby itself is very narrow and restricted streets, and it'll give you a chance to see, you know, the town

Hannah: Exactly, I want to go for a walk anyway

Ann: I'll do you a little, a little sketch map

Hannah: Thank you very much

{Long pause as Ann draws map and Hannah continues photographing items}

Ann: Is there a deadline for you PhD, or is it open ended?

Hannah: I've only just started really but, it's er, a three year course

Ann: Ah, it's a course as well is it? A tutored course?

Hannah: Yeah, I study with University of Brighton, I'm a research student there, so, um, you apply and

Ann: Do you do fashion or costume?

Hannah: It's kind of under the umbrella of dress history

Ann: Right, because my daughter in law did a course at Brighton quite a while ago, fashion and all that sort of thing, and design, er, and she went to work for Jaeger, ummm, and then a few others and then she got married to my son, and um, had her first child, and the company she was working for, um, wouldn't have her back on the same terms, she became a senior buyer, so she said blow it and now she's training to be a teacher

Hannah: Ah, fascinating

Ann: [chuckles] She lived in Scotland and she couldn't have gone further away for the course

Hannah: Brighton's really really good actually

Ann: She said that, it's the best course, of course her parents wanted her near them, but oh no, no, she had to go far away

{Long pause as Hannah continues photographing items}

Ann: Did you get a lot in Hull? Was it worthwhile there?

Hannah: Er, yes it was actually, um, they had, yeah they didn't have a bad lot actually. The main reason that, um, it is a good area is because they hold a lot of archives, a lot of written archives about Quakers, and, um, from some quite wealthy Quaker families. Which I'm actually going to do on a separate day, because they said there's so much I might actually need a couple of days to go through it

Ann: Oh gosh, right, it's not an easy place for you to get to

Hannah: No, I know. It could get tricky but I'll have to sort it out on another day

Ann: Yes, er, Wilberforce, was he Quaker as well?

Hannah: Yeah, er, I don't think he was. Because, er, Wilberforce House was one of the places I er, went. I went to Ferens Art Gallery to look at some paintings, of Quaker meetings by Quakers. Which was really interesting. And then I went to Wilberforce House because they have some um, apparently it's split in two now and part of it's called the Georgian House, and they have some, um,

Ann: I haven't been for years

Hannah: So they keep some of the archives in Georgian House and then I walked across to Hands on History and they have more clothing there. Yeah it was good. Where else did I go? Er, Bakewell..

Ann: Oh in Darbyshire

Hannah: Yeah, that's right. It's quite a lot like this place actually, but it's in an old Jacobean House, er, it's quite amazing really. And they had quite a lot of stuff, and it's quite interesting because they had some quite important Quaker families there, and um, passed on stuff to the Museum so they had a bit of background information there

Ann: The only reason I know it, is Sewell, because she was a teacher, she taught some of my children, at the primary school, and she was a maiden lady, and er, her mother lived to about a hundred, but they originally had a confectionary business in Whitby, which goes

back, to people, to sort of Quakers,because in York there were Quaker families there. Rowntree's, Terry's,

Hannah: Yeah there is, but the big, I can't remember what it's called, the big, kind of um, kind of Costume and Textiles collection there is closed to visitors and research people because they are doing some big move, or er,

Ann: We call it the ... Museum

Hannah: Yeah that's right. Because I contacted them, because I thought they're bound to have stuff, but they said, er, contact us in a year

Ann: Right, oh. There must be archives in

Hannah: yeah, Well they're not, all of them, well there's probably some archive somewhere on the Sewell family if they had a shop as well then

Ann: Well, I don't know if they had a shop, they definitely had a factory, in the '20's in Whitby

Hannah: Oh! Wow! Even better!

Ann: But I mean.....

Hannah: I'll definitely do some research about that because if this was donated by a Sewell and they were a known Quaker family, then you'd imagine this was the mother's or the grandmother's

Ann: I would think probably it came from the Miss Sewell. I don't know whether she's alive still, she certainly was. She was a reception teacher, my son is forty odd now, [laughs], so that was a while ago, uuuumm. I knew where she lived and I knew where her mother lived. She was a really little old lady with a bun, and, um, er, ugh [pauses]. If there were any other relatives I really don't know. Certainly with the Meeting House going, um, er, as Chritiana in the Library said, all the papers went either to London or to er, Hull. So anything connected with that property..

Hannah: I go to the archives, er the Quaker archives, in London quite regularly, so that would be nice

Ann: So you might find them

Hannah: That's the first port of call. Then if they don't have them then I guess I'll know fairly certainly that they are in York

Ann: mmmmm.....because er, Cadbury's they were, they were, oh of course

Hannah: Yep

Ann: and in York they built the new, er, ah, village, that was based on Quaker principles

Hannah: Yeah

Ann: And the gardens.....they were based on that weren't they? And Bourneville [trails off].

You've got a lot to know, haven't you?! [both laugh]

Hannah: I know! I'm glad I've got three years but when you start thinking about it it's actually not very long [laughs]

Ann: Well, I know

{Long pause on the tape as Hannah continues to inspect and photograph the garments}

Hannah: Do you know how they would've worn this apron? I mean I assume this bit went round the waist but I can't see any way that they could've attached it

{Ann comes over from the desk to have a closer look}

Ann: Could it have been pinned?

Hannah: Oh, that's a possibility. Yeah I didn't even consider that. Yes, there are lots of little, they might be, oh, no, no

Ann: I can't see anything, I mean, the earlier things were hooks and eye and then buttons

Hannah: Yeah that's right. You're probably right actually

Ann: Is it a waist apron or is that a bib bit?

Hannah: Ahhh, oh you're probably right!

Ann: *{holding the top of the apron at bust level}* Could that be it?

Hannah: Ah, yes!

Ann: And this would cover over the bosom, yes

Hannah: [laughs] Maybe

{Both laugh}

Hannah: Maybe

Ann: I don't know

Hannah: I think you're probably right. Because otherwise it would come down really low.

Ann: Oh it would. I, I, I'm sure it's like that

Hannah: Yeah

Ann: And it's an ornate thing, it's not a practical thing, it's part of, you know, a dress

Hannah: Yeah, it's very pretty

Ann: Yeah

Hannah: It's quite suggestive

Ann: I wonder if it would tucked in anywhere. Whether there's another bit of clothing and this is part of it I don't know. Does it say on the paper at all?

{Hannah grabs all the pieces of paper relating to the garments}

Ann: Mind you, we've got so little description of the things that we've got

{Rifling through each paper at a time}

Hannah: Not that one. Ah here we go.

Ann: *{Reads off the museum information sheet}*. Hmm. Well they didn't have Velcro in those days did they?! *{Joking}*

Hannah: No!

Ann: And looking at that it came from a Sewell [pause, reading] 2007

Hannah: Would it be possible for you to photocopy these for me?

Ann: Yeah if I can have access to a photocopier

Hannah: Brilliant. Fabulous. Thank you very much. *{Continues looking at garment}*. What do you think these stains are? Do you know?

Ann: I don't know. It could be a simple thing like tea.

Hannah: Yeah

Ann: I really don't know. It could be coffee or tea, I mean it could be an old stain.

{Long pause on recording as Hannah continues inspecting and photographing the garments. Loud hum in background as air conditioning starts up}

Ann: Right there's a little thing *{hands Hannah a drawn map of the area}*

Hannah: Oh, thank you very much

Ann: Right when you go out, turn right, walk straight down the hill until you can't go any further, there's a Woolworths on your right. Turn right until you come to the actual Harbour, the river, then you go across the bridge, and Church Street, sort of goes, up there and it also comes round here, and on that side there, not right in the corner, but it's just round the corner, *{becomes intelligible}*

Hannah: Right, mmm

Ann: You're not a Quaker yourself are you?

Hannah: No I'm not, actually

Ann: Have you ever been to a Meeting or anything?

Hannah: Er, not yet no, people keep telling me to go, but, I don't know I feel a little bit like I'm intruding

Ann: Well they don't say anything do they?

Hannah: No

Ann: I'll see if I can get these photocopied

Hannah: Thank you

{Loud creek of the door as Ann goes out. Long pause as Hannah waits for Ann. Later, another loud creek as Ann returns}

Hannah: Thank you very much. Well I think I'm finished. I've certainly finished taking all the photographs

Ann: Right ok. If there's anything else you think of you need to do, you'll have to contact us. I'm so glad we found them

Hannah: I know, so am I. I just saw them suddenly and though 'ooo!'

Ann: Great. Were they actually wrapped when you got them, where was the bonnet?

Hannah: That one was on the bottom, no, that one and then that one and then the babies

Ann: Yes we'll wrap them individually

{Rustling as they re-package the items}

Ann: It seems like they've added another ribbon to that

Hannah: Yes, it seems like someone just thought oh, I could really do with another ribbon for tying that

Ann: Maybe they kept the ribbon. It's an addition isn't it?

Hannah: Yes, it is. I think the body of the bib itself is obviously machine made, so they probably went and bought that somewhere, and then they've just added the ribbons themselves

Ann: Maybe that was a bit of padding, to absorb milk, you know baby milk. Isn't it pretty

Hannah: It is pretty

Ann: you must have seen some nice stuff already?!

Hannah: I have yeah, I've been very lucky. They have a beautiful Quaker wedding dress as Bakewell.

Ann: Have they?! Oh gosh. Is it white?

Hannah: No it's blue.

Ann: Oooh. Because we've got a black wedding dress.

Hannah: Oh, amazing

Ann: It was worn by a lady whose father died before she was due to get married, and she did get married, but it's black. It's beautiful, you know. It comes out a lot. For all these goth festivals and things you know.

Hannah: And I suppose it's a bit of a novelty as well

Ann: Oh it is. And it is beautiful.

{Rustling as they continue to pack away items}

Ann: This is the one.....where did that come from? Is that it?

Hannah: No I don't think so

Ann: Ornaments

Hannah: Oh it has my map on the back

[Both laugh]

{Loud clattering as they load items onto the shelves and creek as they go out the door}

Hannah: Um, do you remember the sweet factory?

Ann: I know where it was, whether it's, well I think it was located, in, um, what is now a carpet warehouse, but I think it was a warehouse rather than um, a, them making sweets there, but I don't know where they made sweets, and, um. There's a firm called Beeverd(?) and they make um, well they make furniture, and they also make beds and things like that, and they've got the old building, which is under what was the railway line, and, um, it just looks like a bit sort of old mill type thing. But I'm pretty sure that at one stage the Sewell's had a confectionary business there. Now, whether they made sweets there or not, I don't know. It's worth probably looking into. Probably someone will know about it but I don't.

Hannah: Yeah. Can you remember when it closed?

Ann: [Big sigh, thinking] I don't know, I don't know, I think that they stored sweets and helped with the wholesale as well, to supply shops, but, um, the chap who was a keeper here he had a sweet shop in Whitby so I'm sure he would be able to tell you! [laughs]. I mean if you've got an email I could probably, um, probably

Hannah: Yes, shall I write it down for you?

Ann: Yes

{Hannah leaves her email address and then the conversation continues about the sights of Whitby including The Abbey, The Magpie fish and chip shop and The Catch wet fish shop}

Hannah: Just one last question I don't suppose you remember the name of Miss Sewell?

Ann: Her Christian name?

Hannah: Yeah

Ann: Is it on the piece of paper?

Hannah: No it just says Miss Sewell

Ann: Was there an initial? I think it begins with E, Ethel or Elsie? No. It's down in the recesses of my brain. And I don't know her mother's name either, or her fathers. There was certainly was a nephew who carried on the business at some point but beyond that. You know when you live somewhere you're not interested. I don't know what other sort of sources, there's the Gazette

Hannah: Ah, that's a good point actually

Ann: It's quite an old newspaper, and it's owned by the Johnson Press now, but um, I don't if they've er, got a connection, you know,

{Recording becomes intelligible from some sort of interference}

Hannah: Well, thank you very much for all your help

Ann: I'm so glad you could find it, come all this way

Hannah: I know

Ann: Where are you staying?

Hannah: In York

Ann: As you came down I don't suppose you got the view of the Abbey and the sea?

Hannah: No it was all shrouded in mist. It might be better on the way back.

Ann: It might. It might have cleared actually

Hannah: Yeah the sun was coming out. Yes, well brilliant. Thank you so much.

Ann: Well I'm glad. Hopefully you'll come again, when it's not so much of a state.

Hannah: well, thank you very much

Ann: You're very welcome

End of Interview

Norwich Castle Study Centre dialogue, transcribed**7th October 2014, 11am****Interviewer: Hannah Rumball****Curator: Lisa Little****(Recording file SP S 6 29. 001)**

Lisa: It sort of looks old fashioned, but you, at least it works!

Hannah: This is a fantastic space!

Lisa: It is, our new study. So, er, yeah. It's mostly Elizabeth Fry

Hannah: Perfect, Lovely

{Clattering as the tables are moved}

Lisa: We have recently remounted all of this, though I wonder if... I wonder if that extra object I'm looking for in this box, if that box isn't there anymore because I've managed to *{inaudible}* some of the others. Ok. I'd see on the computer, but I can't get on to check

Hannah: Yeah

Lisa: I hope so. I hope so, otherwise I'll have to go and scratch my head in storage

Hannah: *{Laughs}*

Lisa: Ah, dear. You know it would really be nice if, er, you had a look at our, er, *{inaudible}*, one of our top ten objects.

Hannah: Oh!

Lisa: So we mounted up Elizabeth Fry....Yeah we mounted her up and, um, she's much taller than you'd expect

Hannah: Yeah

Lisa: Especially with her bonnet and everything on. It was very, she was very imposing.

Quite, quite tall. I wasn't expecting it. So, um do you want it in any particular order then?

Hannah: No, no.

{Clattering as boxes are moved. One of her colleagues enters the room}

Lisa: *{to her colleague}* It's very um, infuriating, I was trying to print it out on the main thing and make it look lovely, but....*{signs heavily}*

Hannah: Yeah

Lisa: Yeah, well, Yeah. I'm just resigned to the fact that, well it was working, and then....thankfully you were here... It is infuriating actually. So, 30.91.1972. Well, 1972.

Hannah: So, is that everything that's in this box? *{referring to the listings sheet contained in the box}*

Lisa: Yeah.

Hannah: Do you mind if I write it all down?

Lisa: No! Of course, of course. Yeah because I can't email you them

Hannah: No, no, that's fine.

Lisa: So do you think it might be useful for you to see the other things that are in here, or?

Hannah: Yep

Lisa: I'll just get them out and then, then you can spend a bit of time with them

Hannah: Perfect. Thank you.

Lisa: And then you can discard the one's that you're not, you're not interested in

Hannah: Yep

{Long Alarm beep noise in the background}

Lisa: Oh gosh. Is that coming from outside?

Hannah: I don't know. That's odd

{Loud rustling as garments are unpacked from their tissue paper}

Lisa: That's really strange, some sort of alarm

Hannah: *{Reading from the listings sheet}* The Faithful Companions of Jesus?

Lisa: Yeah, The Faithful Companions of Jesus

Hannah: I've never heard of them

Lisa: Me neither

Hannah: Lovely. Thank you

{Long pause and banging as Lisa rearranges tables and puts out the garments until 4:38}

Lisa: *{inaudible}* had yesterday off and Friday off

Hannah: Oh, that's nice

Lisa: It is really nice! *{Laughs}* Yes. You just have to hit the ground running, because we have an event and a nine am start and *{trails off}*

Hannah: Oh dear. mmmmm

{Long pause as Hannah inspects that garments, until 5:50}

Lisa: Say if it gets too warm because it gets quite warm in here sometimes

Hannah: Ok

Lisa: Because they've helpfully painted the windows shut

Hannah: Oh yeah! We have that at our Uni as well

{Pause as they unload the garments}

Lisa: If I put that one there....The one's I think you actually wanted should all be there...I'll separate them out

Hannah: Yes, thank you

Lisa: There's these tiny bits of *{trails off}*

Hannah: Yes. There's meant to be some remnants in there

Lisa: Yeah. *{Lisa quietly talking as she continues to put the garments out}*. I thought there was a hat or something in here. That's a terrible size shaped box to put this in.

Hannah: *{Laughs}* Yeah the box seems very full

Lisa: Yeah, completely mad. It's a hat box, I don't know what's going on with that.

{Pause as they continue to unload the garments until 7:34}

Lisa: One, Two, Three. And then that's the shawl. So that's this box empty for you

Hannah: Great. Thank you. I think I might start with taking some photographs

Lisa: If you want to get up high we've got some wheels

Hannah: Oh yeah!

Lisa: I'll go and get them

{Long pause as she goes to retrieve the platform on wheels, then clattering and general background discussion between Lisa and one of her colleagues until 10:29}

Lisa: Take as long as you want, you don't have to be dictated by..by *{trails off}*

Hannah: Thank you

Lisa: Shall I pull you up a chair, do you want a chair?

Hannah: Yeah...I'm going back and forth a bit at the moment so, I don't think it's worth sitting down at the moment. So do we know anything about who owned these ones?

Lisa: Not without looking on the database. Which is infuriating

Hannah: Ok

Lisa: Um, all I know is that some of the ones that you've suggested, they might possibly have a link to Elizabeth Fry

Hannah: Ok

Lisa: I mean, the one's we definitely know, they are there in that box, and I think there might be a shawl in some of the other ones, in that box, but the rest are generally Quaker

Hannah: Ok

Lisa: But no, they're...they're not the great and the good, I don't know if you're only interested in the famous

Hannah: I'm not no! I'm interested in... even if you have just sort of...um...

Lisa: Just sort of local...

Hannah: Just with a name, it doesn't matter because I um, I spend quite a lot of time at the er, Quaker Headquarters, in London and they have all the records

Lisa: Aaaahhhhh!

Hannah: Of basically all the Quakers

Lisa: Great

Hannah: So I can look them up from there

Lisa: So, well, what we'll do is we'll get the other box out, and I'll pop up and I'll look up whether we have anything in the database or on file attached to these

Hannah: Fantastic

Lisa: I'll see whether the database is...is actually working, because I spent an hour and a half this morning just waiting for it to load

Hannah: Yeah, don't worry

Lisa: So what I can do is um...if there, if there are notes, anything attached to it is going to come up on the record, it should come up, that sort of public stuff. It should be there. It doesn't necessarily mean it is there!

Hannah: Of course!

Lisa: I don't think these are particularly... these are sort of generic aren't they?

Hannah: Yeah, yeah, so yeah

Lisa: Shall I leave these up and put those away?

Hannah: Ummmmm, yes

{Clattering as the platform on wheels is moved. Discussion in background between Lisa and a colleague about a broken clock}

Hannah: Yeah that's fine the rest of these can go on these then

Lisa: And I'll just leave you with that one

Hannah: Yes

Lisa: So it's definitely that one. They're quite {boring?} and they kind of much more, choir boys...{trails off}

{Rustling as garments unwrapped from tissue. Scratching on pencil on paper as Hannah makes notes until 13:37}

Lisa: {referring to the platform} It feels a bit weird but it's just locked down and then you

Hannah: Ok

[Very loud bang as she shows Hannah how to unlock and move the platform. Pause except for the rustling of tissue paper for several minutes]

Lisa: That's really nice

Hannah: Mmm, it is

Lisa: I'll let you have a good look in and out a second time with that

Hannah: Brilliant, thank you

Lisa: Have I got time just to go and check the [something] files?

Hannah: Of course, yes. Um...yep. Thank you

*****End of recording file SP.S.6 29. 001*****

(Recording file SP S 6 29. 002)

Lisa: We do appear to have a letter

Hannah: Oh! Fantastic!

Lisa: Um, from the previous curator to Mrs. Eddington

Hannah: Ok

Lisa: Regarding [inaudible] Elizabeth Fry

Hannah: Ok

Lisa: And then that, well, our impression is that there's quite [inaudible] it's got things in it...so...so [trails off] Dolls...So these are the things that came...we have got that [referring to NWHCM:1987.268.1, triangular brown silk and fur lined shawl]...actually, we've actually, we may have said that at the time, but actually we think it might be rabbit because that would be much more likely, than ermin. And ermin's got those little black dots on the ends of their tale, and we haven't got that, so.

Hannah: Right

Lisa: So this is from the Eddingtons, and this is all part of the same thing.

Hannah: Mmmm

Lisa: Elizabeth Gurney, Joseph Fry, so she's writing down the family tree. But God knows why!

Hannah: Well, because they were all Quakers.

Lisa: Oh yeah of course they are

Hannah: Hi

Assistant: Hello. Oooh. ...It's in the Bedfordshire style

Lisa: Do you think it's home made?

Assistant: Yes

Lisa: That would be logical then

Assistant: Midlands.... lace, bobbin lace. And this edging is called a nine-pin edging, because it takes...well, it doesn't always take nine. Sometimes it takes eleven, sometimes it takes seven. But they call it a 'nine-pin' edging.

Hannah: Ok

Assistant: This'd be called, like, a running-river pattern. With um, a plaited and picot ground. Picot, P-I-C-O-T. Hard to say where it was made really, because although we made a lot of it in this country, they made a lot of it in Germany and Scandinavia and things as well. So, I wouldn't like to say where it was made. Bit of a, a difficult one that. European. How about that? {Laughs}.

Hannah: Perfect.

Assistant: Is most of her stuff made here?

Lisa: Mmmm, yeah

Assistant: Well, probably it is the Midlands then. I'll go have a look and see. I've got a book of Midlands lace patterns. But it looks a bit open. It just doesn't smack to me of being, a, an English.

Lisa: It's not that fancy is it?

Assistant: No, no. Quite common type of lace.

Lisa: They just gathered it in the corners.

Assistant: So the French, er, did er, what was called a Beds Clooney, a Bedfordshire Clooney, or Clooney Beds. So the French were doing the same. The English were doing the same.

Hannah: Ah!

Assistant: And they were copying each other's patterns.

Hannah: Oh! That's interesting.

Assistant: So it's hard to know whether it may even be a Clooney style Bedfordshire lace. But it depends...Have you got a date for most of her stuff?

Lisa: It seems to be around the 186...8, I think it is?

Assistant: Well, if this is about the same sort of time then we ought to be able to know whether it was Clooney or Beds.

Lisa: So between 1862, I think these were, it seems that this one came as part of a, er, a group of items that were...

Assistant: If it's...

Lisa: ...you see widowed in 1862, so whether she had it before or after it's a bit difficult..

{trails off}

Assistant: Right, I could go get a couple of books and have a closer look at the work and then be able to say if it is Clooney or Beds. If that'd be any help to you?

Lisa: Do you want it specific or generic?

Hannah: Um... don't, kind of, go out of your way for it.

Lisa: That's probably enough

Hannah: Yeah, I'd say that's enough, thank you

Assistant: Ok then

Hannah: Thank you so much

Assistant: You're welcome

Rex Gibson, Descendent of Greta Sewell, Email Correspondence

2nd June 2013

Interviewer: Hannah Rumball

Interviewee: Rex Gibson

Hannah: Thank you so much for kindly agreeing to answer some of my questions.

I am currently approaching institutions and documenting women's Quaker clothing from the late nineteenth century, and this is how I came across the items donated by your family to the museum in Whitby.

I found the items fascinating however the museum knew almost nothing about them and so I am hoping you may be able to shed a little light on them or the ladies in your family who may have worn them.

I'm aware I'm asking lots of questions below but ANY information you might be able to offer would be of great help to me.

I was wondering:

- Do you recognise the attached garments at all? A cream babies bib, a black bonnet and a black and white lace apron. And if so, do you remember who they belonged to/who may have worn them?
- Do you have any photographs of the women of the family that you might be willing to email to me? These will be used exclusively for my own research. I am interested in images of Miss Stella Sewell, your aunt, as I believe she was responsible for the donation of the items to the museum, as well as photographs from the late 19th century between 1850 and 1914 specifically.
- Do you possess any old letters or journals written by the women of the family, which may shed light on their religious or political attitudes? And if so is there any possibility of me seeing them?
- Are you aware whether any of the women of the family were supportive of the women's movements during the late nineteenth/early twentieth century including women's right to vote?

- I was told by a lady at the Whitby Museum that your family ran a sweet factory or sweet warehouse in the area. Is this correct and could you give me some more details of the business? Dates, who ran it, what exactly it did and its aims etc

Rex: Your topic sounds very specific and I fear that any light I can shed will be of limited relevance.

Anyway, here goes!

I have contacted my uncle Dell (Edward) Sewell who is an older brother of Stella who donated the items of clothing to the Whitby museum. Dell was born in 1921 and is the last remaining member of that Sewell generation. He still lives in Whitby (and remains sprightly with a lively mind!) This was his recollection of the Quaker clothing:

"I always recall them as being in mother's (Olive's) possession and were even worn for fun on occasion when being checked for moth etc. As far as I know they were all sent to the Whitby Lit & Phil who run the museum. I think that they would have come down from the female side of the family and were probably worn by her parents, but that is pure supposition."

Olive was born in Staffordshire in 1894. She was married in London in 1916 to Joseph King Sewell - then moved to Whitby. Her parents William Brown and Ellen Dell were born in 1859 and 1860 respectively. They originated from Essex and Middlesex. A common theme which runs through the family relationships across the generations is attendance at the Quaker school at Ackworth near Pontefract.

We have a family photo of Ellen together with 3 of her daughters Ellen, Lilian, and Olive. From their ages we assume this was taken in about 1910.

Another, taken a year or two later, shows all 4 daughters and 2 sons.

There is also a family photo of an older lady who I cannot reliably identify. I assume that it was taken in 1890s or 1900s. It may well be from the Sewell side of the family. It does demonstrate a different style of dress.

All 3 photos are attached - along with one of Stella Sewell at a family wedding in the mid 1970s.

The only other aspect I can respond to is your question concerning the family business in Whitby. This is the summary provided by my uncle Dell (who ran the confectionery wholesaling business until the 1980s):

“Edward Fuller Sewell [Dell and Stella’s great grandfather] was part of the successful grocery business in Malton but with a wife and growing family needed to have his own business. The local area Meeting of Quakers planned to sell off the no longer used Quaker Meeting House in Whitby. EFS decided to kill two birds with one stone. In 1865 he went into partnership with a local wholesale/retail grocer and got the Quakers to delay any sale and he would endeavour to re-activate the Meeting. Within a year the partnership was dissolved and the firm re-named E.F.Sewell & Son.

The family lived above the shop for some years - my father [Joseph King Sewell] used to speak of happy days playing around the warehouse. Eventually most of the living space was either let out or incorporated into the warehouse, the family moving to a large house, Arran, in Bagdale.

The confectionery company was bought to pay for me to go to Ackworth [1930s] but the manager embezzled the profits and fled the country! The sweet side was incorporated into the grocery business as a side line which remained the state of things until the business became too costly to compete and was closed down.”

It was a wholesale grocery business distributing to grocery shops in Whitby and surrounding villages. The grocery business operated from premises at 10 St Ann's Staith. The main business closed in the late 1960s – though the confectionery wholesaling activity continued from separate premises. The Sewell family was active and well known in the Whitby community, organising the Quaker meeting, contributing learned papers to the Literary & Philosophical Society, acting as JPs and so on.

Birmingham Library, National Archive, Email Correspondence**4th November 2014****Interviewer: Hannah Rumball****Archivist of the Photographic Collection: Jim Ranahan****Hannah:** Dear Sir/Madam,

Last year on 14th and 15th November 2013, I visited the National Archives to view several items from the Cadbury Family Archives for my PhD. I viewed several photographs relating to the wedding of Geraldine and Barrow Cadbury on 8th September 1891. These photographs were: Barrow and Geraldine Southall Cadbury. Wedding photographs, with Key. MS 466A/602-604 1891

I am trying to find out whether you know who took the photographs: was it a professional photographer or was it an amateur? Is there any photographers stamp on the back of the photographs? Also, one of these wedding photographs is quite clearly blurred (I remember this at the time I viewed it and the subsequent photographs I took display this). Could I ask why you chose to accept it into the collection despite it being blurred? Did you accept the objects as one large donation? Or were they culled in anyway?

Many thanks for any assistance you might be able to offer me.

Jim: Thank you for your enquiry, which has been passed to me.

Reference MS 466A/602-604 refers to the following items:

/602 Geraldine Southall & Barrow Cadbury 1891 – Unfortunately, this print has been stuck to an annotated sheet of paper at an unspecified time in the past. I cannot see if any marks are on the back of the print. The quality of the print is good, but I cannot determine if the print is by a professional photographer or by a skilled amateur.

/603 Wedding Group, Barrow Cadbury & Geraldine Southall 08/09/1891 – This is a cabinet card, produced by a commercial photographer. Unfortunately, the card has also been stuck to the same sheet of paper as at /602. I cannot determine any details which may be on the reverse as this could damage the card. I have checked other cabinet cards in this series, but unfortunately, none of the card mounts are stylistically similar to /603, so I cannot make an identification from that source.

/604a – Untitled, showing a larger group of the same wedding party as at /603 – This appears to be a copy of a formal photograph and my feeling is that it is by the same photographer as /603. I have checked through the sequence and this is the only one that I would categorise as lacking clarity (possibly from the copying process), but I would not regard it as being blurred. You mention that you have a copy of the blurred image – could you send it to me please?

/604b is a traced key to the people in /604a.

You also raised a query about our approach to accepting blurred prints. I cannot comment on this particular collection, as I was not involved in the original accession. In general however, when a large collection is appraised we would not normally expect to study individual records or photographs, so occasional poor quality items may enter the collection. A further point in an archive context (as opposed to a gallery or museum context) is that the evidential value of the item may carry greater weight than its informational value. There may be important reasons to retain a blurred image if the print offers other contextual data or if the print is the only accessible version.

I hope this has been of some use. I am sorry that I have not been able to assist you more directly on this occasion.

10th April 2015

Interviewer: Hannah Rumball

Archivist: Sarah Pymer

Hannah: I am trying to track down any information regarding a Quaker lady named Elizabeth Petipher Cash (1796-1894). She was the maternal grandmother of Elizabeth Mary Cadbury. I know Mrs Cash kept diaries from 1819 until 1885, which I am particularly keen to track down. I also know that Elizabeth Mary Cadbury compiled a published book named 'A Dear Memory' and in it were several letters from Elizabeth Petipher Cash.

Do you hold any photographs, letters, records of any sort pertaining to Elizabeth Petipher Cash?

I have tried several other archives already, with no luck, so I am hoping that some of her effects ended up in the Papers of the Cadbury Family of Birmingham?

Sarah: Thank you for your email. Part of the catalogue for MS 466, Cadbury family papers, is available online

here: <http://calmview.birmingham.gov.uk/calmview/TreeBrowse.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&field=RefNo&key=MS%20466>, and it contains a number of letters between Elizabeth Petipher (or Pettifer) Cash and her daughter and granddaughter, and one photograph of Elizabeth Cash. I would suggest searching through the catalogue to see if any of the items are of interest to you.

I am afraid I have not found any reference to Elizabeth Cash's diaries within our collections.

If you would like to see any of the material within this collection please let us know when you would like to visit, giving a week's notice if possible, and we can book you an appointment in the Wolfson Centre, our secure searchroom. Please would you let us have the references for the items you'd like to see at the time of booking as we retrieve all material in advance.

I hope this is helpful. If you have any further queries please get in touch.

Religious Society of Friends Library, Euston, Email Correspondence

6th January 2015

Interviewer: Hannah Rumball

Senior Librarian: Jennifer Milligan

Hannah: I am looking into the life of Lucretia Anson Crouch who married Benjamin Seebohm (the younger) in 1874. I know that in "In 1880 Luton Monthly Meeting accepted their resignations, recording that "under the circumstances stated it feels that it has no alternative." They were not, however, permitted to remove their children from membership."

I am trying to find out **why** they decided the part ways with the society. Does the library have any records regarding this? or more generally about Lucretia?

Jennifer: There is no entry in the *Dictionary of Quaker Biography* for Lucretia Seebohm. I have consulted some other biographical sources and the only other relevant material I could find was an obituary for Benjamin Seebohm (her husband) at the age of 67 in *The Friend* from 1907. It notes he left a widow, a son and three daughters. No mention is made of his resignation but it notes he was more resident in Hitchin.

It may be worth looking at the records for Luton and Leighton Monthly Meeting (now area meeting) and Hereford and Hitchin Monthly Meeting (now Area Meeting). I attach details.

The records of Luton and Leighton Monthly Meeting are held at Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and Record Service

Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and Records Service

Riverside Building

Borough Hall

Bedford

MK42 9AP

Email: archive@bedford.gov.uk

The records of Herford and Hitchin Monthly Meeting are held at Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies

hertsdirect@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Address: Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, Register Office Block, CHR 002 County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8EJ

9th February 2015

Interviewer: Hannah Rumball

Senior Librarian: Jennifer Milligan

Hannah: I am trying to find out whether a family living in an area called Crowborough during the 1970s were Quakers. The family name is Haughton (I have no first names) and they donated some Quaker items to Tunbridge Wells Museum. Do you know how I might find this information out?

Jennifer: Thank you for your email. I have consulted the lists of members of Sussex and Surrey General Meeting for the 1970's and not been able to locate a Haughton family. I have also not found a Haughton family in the Crowborough area in the Dictionary of Quaker Biography. I am sorry to not be of more assistance.

9th April 2015

Interviewer: Hannah Rumball

Senior Librarian: Jennifer Milligan

Visual Resources Development Officer: Melissa Atkinson

Hannah: I am currently writing up a case study of a Quaker named Elizabeth Petipher Cash (1796-1894) and I have come across reference to some resources I'm hoping may be housed at the Quaker Library.

I have read her entry in the Annual Monitor for the year she died, and I've seen the two photographs that you have of her at the library and these have been very helpful. I also went to Killerton where some of her clothes are housed and seen this, and these are mainly what I am writing about.

I am trying to get lots of personal information about her now, to support my theories. All the information I require is PRE 1900.

In the Annual Monitor, they mention several things about her which I am trying to follow up. As she was a London Quaker (Tottenham then Peckham Rye until 1871), I'm hoping you may have some details on these. These include:

1. - Apparently she kept diaries from 1819 until 1885 (!). Unfortunately, in the the Annual Monitor it doesn't say where these are kept. Do you have any of them at the library and if not, do you know where they may be kept??
2. - She was a member of the 'Total Abstinence Cause'. Do you have any details regarding this organisation? Apparently William Cash presided at Meetings for the cause.
3. - She was on the committee for Friends School, Croydon. (don't know what dates) Any papers relating to this committee?
4. - She was a Clerk to London and Middlesex Quarterly Meeting, (again, don't know what dates). I will be coming to the library tomorrow to read some of the minutes from this.
5. - She was an advocate of Animal Rights and against cruelty to animals. Would you have any details regarding Quaker organisations focused on this cause (which existed BEFORE 1900) which she may have been a part of? (I'm happy to search through these for any mention of her myself as long as I am pointed in the right direction.)

6. - Finally do you have any portraits (silhouettes, paintings etc) of her Husband, William Cash (1792-1849)? Or any photographs of her sons or daughters? (including Richard Cash, Selina Reed, Elizabeth Taylor, Mary Jane Taylor, Caroline Barrow??)

Phew. Sorry, I know it's a lot.

I'm going to visit the library tomorrow, so I shall be there in person so I can talk to you about my requests. I understand it may take a little while to get together all the bits.

Jennifer: Thank you for your email. I hope the information below will be useful.

1. I have consulted our online and card catalogue of manuscripts and not been able to locate Elizabeth Petipher Cash's diaries.

2. I attach a copy of our guide to Friends and the Temperance movement which I hope may be of assistance. I am not aware of the 'Total Temperance Cause'. It could be the Friends Temperance Unit. The guide contains details of the records of this organisation which are held here. I am happy to order up anything that looks of interest.

3. The Friends School, Croydon is now Friends School, Saffron Walden. It was located at Croydon between 1826-1879 and in 1879 was moved to Saffron Walden. According to our guide to Friends Schools in Great Britain and Ireland (which I attach a copy of) the records of the school are held at Essex Record Office, Chelmsford.

4. We hold the records of London and Middlesex Quarterly Meeting. I attach details of its records. We also hold the records of Six Weeks Meeting. If there are specific dates you wish to have the minutes of London and Middlesex Quarterly Meeting, do let me know and I will order for you for tomorrow.

5. There was the Friends Anti-Vivisection Association (1891-1952) which Elizabeth Petipher Cash may have been involved in. We hold annual reports for this organization. I have found

details of the records of its successor organization Quaker Concern for Animals which I am forwarding to you. There appears to be no records for the period you are interested in however. I have ordered the annual reports for the 1890's for you
Melissa Atkinson will be able to assist with your final enquiry
Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.
Best wishes

Melissa: Further to Jennifer's email, I have found the following:

- Elizabeth Petipher Cash (1796-1894) – 2 portraits
- William Cash (1792-1849) – 1 portrait
- Richard Cash - no
- Selina Reed - no
- Elizabeth Taylor - no
- Mary Jane Taylor - no
- Caroline Barrow - no

These 3 photographs have been put to one side for you and will be behind the reading room desk.

Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall Manchester, Email Correspondence

27th February 2015

Interviewer: Hannah Rumball

Curator: Miles Lambert

Hannah: You may remember way back in May 2013 I came and viewed the Quaker garments housed at Platt Hall, as part of my PhD research. One of the dresses I viewed was Helen Bright Clark's Moire Silk wedding dress from 1866, 1960.224. I have since done research on her and recently, in a biography regarding John Bright (her father) by Keith Robbins written in the 1970s, I discovered a passage which states: "The size of the bill from Marshall and Snelgrove, £48, for his daughter Helen's wedding dress, was also disturbing, though the wedding gave him great please." As seems fairly usual with these old biographies there is absolutely no reference to where he garnered this information from and this is the only line in the entire book which mentions her marriage at all.

I just wanted to pick your brain about this quotation in reference to the dress. This seems a truly absurd amount of money for 1866 when the garment was made. Do you think there is any chance the dress *was* that expensive? Also is there any evidence on the garment that it was in fact purchased/made by Marshall and Snelgrove as Robbins states?? I can't say I noticed any kind of tag when I viewed it: or did they not tag their garments?

Miles: That is a very interesting quote, Hannah, and I will attach the info to the catalogue reference. I think that £48 for the SILK would be a lot but not uncommon - maybe 14 yards? Wealthy Quaker women were criticised, as you will know, for spending as much as possible on a plain grey/silver fabric so flouting moderation. Marshall and Snelgrove probably only provided the fabric, not the dress, and Helen would have used her own dressmaker to make up the gown. Dress maker/retail labelling only really came in from the 1870s anyway.

Killerton House, National Trust, Email Correspondence

13th April 2015

Interviewer: Hannah Rumball

Curator: Shelley Tobin

Hannah: When I came and had a look at the Quaker garments in the collection WAY back in November 2015, I viewed a couple of bonnets belonging to Elizabeth Petipher Cash.

These were: KIL/W/04478 and KIL/W/04479. These bonnets, weirdly, had colourful ostrich feathers stuck to them, and I discovered that the feathers had different accession numbers and had been donated by a completely different person in a different year.

As Charlotte (Eddington?) was there at the time, she suggested that the feathers could have been attached to the bonnets by a previous curator? ... Do you think this is correct? Was it a common occurrence for the curator to alter the appearance of items?

Shelley: Thanks for your message which I think went to my RAMM address, E-J asked me anyway and had probably already contacted you but the short answer is yes, I suspect they were cobbled together by Atherton Harrison. She was not a curator as such, but styled herself as costume consultant and virtually came as part of the Paulise de Bush collection, in fact it probably wouldn't have got to Killerton without her so it is as much Atherton's legacy as Paulise's. Let me know if you would like more info about Atherton.

I was brought in as the first professional curator in order to encourage Atherton to retire. She eventually decided on that at the tender age of 79, two years after I started. I had to look the other way while she did some horrendous things with the collection. She used to come down twice a year to put the displays together, no-one was allowed to intervene or to know what was going to be on display, it was all kept as a 'surprise' which made it pretty impossible to publicise in advance. I was trusted to dress some of the hideous mannequins we had but most of the time Atherton dressed the motley crew and I was the gofer. I took over the responsibility for mounting the exhibitions until we were able to employ someone who was trained up as a mount maker, and of course we never intervene with any of the objects.

You might be amused to know that at one time Atherton had a group of 'Thursday ladies' (thankfully I never met them) she always described them as excellent needlewomen who would meet to do repairs and probably sewed feathers on bonnets too. It makes us cringe these days, but professional textile conservators were also commissioned to work on objects, and in spite of what we think of Atherton's displays now the collection would not have been around without her efforts.

What was she thinking of when she had those feathers added to the bonnets? Knowing how she worked she treated the mannequins and objects as her actors and if she didn't have something she particularly wanted she would make it work somehow. The oddest things were displayed together to make outfits.

I hope that helps to answer your question In a little more detail.

Appendix 2.1: Quaker garment spreadsheet

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
Museum	Object Name	Number	M / F	Production Place	Date	Fabric	Summary	Dimension	Note	Owner	Acquired From	Date	Producer
1	Whitby Museum	WHITM/GBB105	C	Unknown	c. 19th	Cotton, broderie anglais, silk	Babies bib with thin and short silk ties at the neck and wide and long silk ties at the waist. Broderie anglais floral and clover pattern over piece and quilted cotton under piece, 1 small button fastening at neck, Quaker family.	Unrecorded	Gifted with several other Quaker items. The silk ties have clearly been added later, hand sewn onto the cotton and broderie anglais bib. Cotton and broderie anglais section bib appears professionally made.	Child in the Sewell family	Bequeathed by: Miss Stella Adelaide Sewell	28th April 1993	Unknown, partly home made
13	Bakewell Old House Museum	6311	F	UK	1875	Silk, grosgrain	Fitted boned bodice with long sleeves. Button up front of bodice. Wide skirt to floor, with a train.	Unrecorded	Listed as Quaker wedding outfit	Unknown	Bequeathed by: Mrs. A.P. Orme, Darwich.		Unknown
14	Haslemere Museum	850-6-1/10/87	N/A	UK	1888	Paper, Leather	Leather bound book, with photographs stuck in. Handwritten notes on each page, recounting the names (often only in initial form) of the people in the photographs.	Unrecorded	Note in front of album reads: "Uncle J's sisters. Aunt Debbie never married. Lilly married my father's youngest brother but did not live long. Frank married my father's sister Sarah Woods, they had several children, about the 1880's he and the family went out to New Zealand and did very well to sheep farming." Writer first went to	Hutchinson family	Bequeathed by: Hutchinson Family		Nephew of John Hutchinson
15	Haslemere Museum	TC.6.299	F	UK	Unknown	Silk	Black silk bonnet, with cream silk lining. Bavolet at rear, with black cord. Black wide, silk ribbons. Good condition. Black silk ribbons appear the original ribbons to the bonnet as they match the bonnet outer fabric perfectly. Tiny amount of fraying at ends of ribbons and the black silk has deteriorated and parted from the card interior on the right hand brim	Unrecorded	Hand written note reads: "Quaker bonnet one of the last to be worn in the north of England". The museum holds no records of when the bonnet was bequeathed nor when the bonnet actually dates from.	Possibly Miss Brewer.	Bequeathed by: Miss Brewer of Grayshott		Unknown
16	Platt Hall, Manchester	1936.94	F	UK	Late 19thc, c. 1870-1900	blue corded taffeta and cream silk	Milliner's model. Silver grey-blue ribbed taffeta covering. Listed as possibly Quaker.	Height: 8.3cm	Very well made therefore probably not for a doll. Probably a prototype.	N/A	Unknown		Unknown
17	Platt Hall, Manchester	1973.127	F	UK	c. 1880-1900	Black corded silk, cream silk. Canvas.	In metal canister. Black corded silk lined with cream plain weave silk. Wired round edge. Gathered curtain (bavolet). Crown interlined with buckram, side lined with silk. Separate bonnet lining: Large section of canvas gathered round face and pleated into ribbon at back of neck edge.	Height: 19cm	Inmaculate condition. No decay, no discolouration except a tiny amount on the ribbons. Ribbons appear to be the originals as they are so delicately attached. Big brim to crown ratio, crown appears very small.	Frances Thompson	Bequeathed by: wearer's niece, Ms Thompson		Unknown

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
	Museum	Object Name	Number	M / F	Production Place	Date	Fabric	Summary	Dimension	Note	Owner	Acquired From	Data	Producer
1	Platt Hall, Manchester	Black corded silk bonnet	1979.3/3	F	UK	c.1870	Silk, wire, muslin, paper, cotton	Black corded silk. Close bonnet is typical 19th century plain Quaker style. Brim is very deep and straight, cut in a curve over the cheek and closely framing the face (1840s style). Crown is fairly stiff. Crown has a black silk draw cord. Brim is wired. Brim is lined with white silk. Crown is stiffened with paper and very starched back muslin.	Length: 20cm Depth: 23cm	Big brim to crown ratio. Crown looks really very small. Appears to be made for a small head, perhaps belonging to Annie Neave when she was a younger woman? Poor condition. Deterioration to the brim. Small pin marks on the brim where ribbons should be. Ribbons missing. Some mould on interior crease	Annie Neave	Bequeathed by: Mrs Kurc		Unknown
19	Platt Hall, Manchester	Bodice and Two skirts	1979.3/1	F	UK	1873-77	Silk	Jacket bodice of grey silk. CF fastening with thirteen sage green silk covered buttons. Bodice has waist and basques down curving in front, cuirass style. Back tail of basque cut square. Curving, tapering big sleeves. Plain round neckline has an applied standing collar band of green/grey silk bound on the lower edge with grey, and with the front points stitched down to reveal grey lining. Lined with fawn silesia. Skirt 1: Sage green silk. Silesia waistband free from side-waist, buttons CB without supporting weight of skirt back. Five back panels can be pulled in by drawstring from waistband, to form a very voluminous back puff. Deep pocket of muslin on right. Skirt lined with fawn silesia. Hem has brown woollen braid. Skirt 2: Grey silk. Top of back panels is turned over to form channel for a drawstring, which gathers back into a voluminous bustle puff. No original fastenings on the waistband. No lining.	Bodice height: 53cm Bust: 81.5cm Waist: 71cm Skirt 1 length: 104cm Skirt 2 length: 94cm	The cut of the two skirts is the same, and the method of drawing up the bustle puff is most unusual.	Annie Neave	Bequeathed by: Mrs Kurc		Unknown
20	Platt Hall, Manchester	Grey/blue corded silk bonnet	1979.3/4	F	UK	c.1879	Grey/blue corded silk	Grey corded silk. Close bonnet in typical mid-19th century Quaker style. Brim is very deep. Fairly stiff crown. Deep curtain which is pressed up in a curved frill on the brim. Brim is stiffened with card and wired into shape, and lined with ivory silk.	Length: 22.5cm Depth: 20.5cm	Ribbons decaying slightly, however the do appear to be the original ribbons. Low at both sides of the brim.	Annie Neave	Bequeathed by: Mrs Kurc		Unknown
21	Platt Hall, Manchester	Quaker Wedding Dress	1960.224	F		1866	Grey Watered Silk	Bodice lined with white linen. Fastening to high neck with hooks and eyes under buttons. Narrow neckband. Boned side seams, darts. Long sleeves. Waistband fastening to left front. Pocket in right front seam and hem facing of stiff muslin. Hem edged with silk cord. Belt lined with stiff muslin, edged with piping.	Front: 114.8cm Back: 157.5cm Waist: 63.5cm	Small amount of discolouration under the right arm pit.	Helen Bright Clark (nee Priestman Bright)	Bequeathed by: Mrs Anne Gillett (Daughter of Helen Bright Clark)	1960s	Unknown

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
Museum	Object Name	Number	M / F	Production Place	Date	Fabric	Summary	Dimension	Note	Owner	Acquired From	Date	Producer
1	Killerton, Devon Silk Fichu	1362113 KIL/W/04493	F	Unknown	19th century	Oyster silk	Oyster silk triangular fichu with large deep hem on two sides and tiny hem at the top. Very pale pink colour, made of a slightly ribbed silk. Completely plain-unpatterned. No embroidery or ornamentation. Un-lined.	69 inches / 730cm along top. 4.5 inches / 115cm along the other two sides.	Some rust discolouration in stripes across the centre of the shawl.	Elizabeth Pettiphper Cash	Bequeathed by: Mrs Millor Braithwaite	28th June 1982	Hand made
33	Killerton, Devon Black Bonnet with pink and two dyed ostrich feathers	1352199 KIL/W/04479	F	Unknown, probably British	c. 1850	Black plain satin, orange ostrich feather, black silk ribbons.	Black satin bonnet, deep brim lined with cream silk. Pleated crown lined with Buckram. Black ribbons. Coal scuttle shape. Donated with and almost identical to (excluding the colour and material) KIL/W/04478. In excellent condition, some discolouration on the cream silk lining on the inside of the brim. Ribbons again in excellent condition- they do not appear to be original to the bonnet. Two ostrich feathers attached to the brim of the bonnet, overlapping, one from either side. Clearly they are a later addition. Bevolet cord missing.	Ribbons: 20 1/2 inches/ 52 cm long. 2.5 inches/ 6 1/2 cm wide. Bonnet: 9 inches/ 23cm deep. 10 1/2 inches high.	The ribbons are black raw silk (different material to bonnet) and cut at their ends, but very roughly- they are fraying. Also, they have been very crudely attached to the brim of the bonnet with black cotton thread. The bonnet outer is coming away from the lining at the rear nape. Clearly the bonnet was made in an original plain Quaker style and the ostrich feathers were attached later (why?). The feathers have been attached to the bonnet fairly disgreedly and neatly. Note in the original catalogue book says: 'Display 1986 in Efford'.	Elizabeth Pettiphper Cash	Bequeathed by: Mrs Millor Braithwaite	28th June 1982	Professionally made. Ostrich feather hand-attached.
34	Killerton, Devon Brown Ostrich feather	KIL/W/03843	N/A	Unknown	1900s	Ostrich feather	Ostrich feather. Un-dyed. Ascension number scratched into the quill.		This is Ostrich feather which features on the KIL/W/04478 (below) Dark blue bonnet belonging to EPC. The feather however, has a separate and different ascension number. Original museum records confirm the feather was infact donated by a Mrs Du Pontet and therefore the feather was added to the bonnet by the museum not by a maker, owner or wearer. Perhaps for the 'Display 1986 in Efford' which both bonnets were used in.	Unknown	Bequeathed by: Mrs Phoebe Du Pontet	1981	N/A

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
Museum	Object Name	Number	M/ F	Production Place	Date	Fabric	Summary	Dimension	Note	Owner	Acquired From	Date	Producer
39	Killerton, Devon Mittens	1362203 KIL/W/04483/1/ Z	F	Unknown	c.1850	Net and lace	Black net with chemical lace inserts and trim. Fingerless mittens. Separate opening for thumb. Flower, ball and teardrop pattern of lace. In black cotton(?). Very good condition. Handmade from section of net material, as some of the designs are cut off or overlapping at the seams. Lace trim on the arm hem all round and the thumb, as well as over the knuckles on the top of the glove but not on the inside. One area of has ripped open on the left hand glove and been repaired with different net (possibly by the museum).	13 1/2 inches/34 1/2cm long and 4 1/2 inches/ 11cm wide. The teardrop decorations are 2cm wide x 3cm long.	These gloves seem quite fancy and decorative. They do not seem to conform to the notion of plain attire. Does this mean that despite her apparently generally plain attire EPC did also own items of clothing which were ornamental? Or are these an anomaly which have crept into her wardrobe for some particular occasion or purpose? Could they have been	Elizabeth Pettipiper Cash	Bequeathed by: Mrs Millior Braithwaite	28th June 1982	Machine made and hand made
40	Killerton, Devon Fichu	KIL/W/04484	F	Unknown	19th c	Organdie	Organdie fichu.			Elizabeth Pettipiper Cash	Bequeathed by: Mrs Millior Braithwaite	28th June 1982	Unknown
41	Killerton, Devon Fichu	KIL/W/04485	F	Unknown	c.1860s	Organdie	Organdie fichu. Notes in original catalogue says 'hockstitch sewn'.			Elizabeth Pettipiper Cash	Bequeathed by: Mrs Millior Braithwaite	28th June 1982	Unknown
42	Killerton, Devon Fichu	KIL/W/04486	F	Unknown	c.1860s	Muslin	Large white stiff muslin fichu, ties at back.			Elizabeth Pettipiper Cash	Bequeathed by: Mrs Millior Braithwaite	28th June 1982	Unknown
43	Killerton, Devon Drab silk day dress	KIL/W/05274	F	UK	c.1810	Browny-green (drab) Silk	Brown/Green silk dress, featuring empire line waist. Corded silk decoration at the cuffs, neckline and waistband. Bodice lined with white cotton, skirt unlined. Some sailing on the skirt hem. No evidence of being let out. Pleats at the rear from the waistband. V-neck. Traditional Regency cut just undecorated and very plain. Puffed sleeves (pleated at the shoulders).	Unrecorded	Featured in Nancy Bradfield's "Costume in Detail", 1973.	Miss Foyle	Bequeathed by: Lady Corfield to Nancy Bradfield then to the Museum.	11th Sept 1986.	Hand made.
44	Hull Museums Bonnet	KINCM:1965.171 .3	F	Unknown	c.1850s	Silk	Typical black silk Quaker bonnet, in coal scuttle style. Featuring bayonet and cord. Cream silk lining. Cream silk ribbons still in place. Probably not original ribbons as they appear poorly attached to the brim. Bonnet in excellent condition.	Unrecorded	Bequeathed as part of a large batch of objects (non-Quaker) including bonnets, shawls, parasols and shoes. The collectors were, according to the acquisition notes, not selective about what they collected and this bonnet just happened to be amongst the items. No known Quaker derivation, though clearly a Quaker bonnet.	Unknown	Bequeathed by: Unknown	Sept 1965	Unknown

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
	Museum	Object Name	Number	M / F	Production Place	Date	Fabric	Summary	Dimension	Note	Owner	Acquired From	Date	Producer
1	Alfred Gillet Trust, Clarks Archive	Ladies Smock	COST 23/4	F	Unknown	19th Century	White cotton (fine)	Adult ladies' white smock. High necked. Short-sleeved, full at the sleeve edging. The garment is identical on both sides.	Length: 47 inches. Hem width: 35 inches. Sleeves length: 7 inches.	On the back of the garment 'E. Priestman 12 is written'. Does this mean 1812, perhaps? It would be worth checking her birth date to see whether this is probable. For an adult woman or a tall child considering the length. Once again, excellent condition. Some darning on the shoulder openings.	E. Priestman			Unknown. Professional. I'd like the very fine high quality stitching.
81	Alfred Gillet Trust, Clarks Archive	Ladies Cloak	COST 3/1	F	Oxford	1890-1900	Brown wool, black fur, natural fur and brown silk, leather stitching, metal hooks and eyes.	A short cape worn by Helen Bright Clark's children's governess Miss Isabella Pasley between 1890 and 1900. Outer is made of brown wool, and the front edge and collar are made of black fur. The inner rear is lined with brown silk and also lined with an undyed fur. Leather stitching can be seen in some places where the fur has been attached.		Original makers label still in place. Cloak in excellent condition. No evidence of the fur having been eaten away or decayed. Clearly a pricy article.	Isabella Pasley, governess at Millfield for Helen Priestman Bright Clark's children.	From Whitefields House, upon the death of Sarah Bancroft Clark.	1973	Professional Nurse Manufacture ring Furriers, Oxford.
82	Alfred Gillet Trust, Clarks Archive	Ladies Bodice and Skirt	COST 34/1	F	Unknown	1870s	Drab green silk, crocheted buttons.	Fashionably silhouetted 1870s skirt and bodice dress. The skirt is shaped for a bustle, features a train, has a concealed pocket on the right hand side and a leather watch pouch hangs from the waist band. Concealed hook and eye fastening on the waist band for opening on the left side. Unlined. Corded, unweighted hem. Six pleats at the rear to provide fullness and shape for a bustle. Very shaped bodice. Long sleeves, tight. Two frills at cuffs and strap with embroidered button. No collar. Bodice button down front, with brown embroidered buttons.	Skirt front length: 42 inches. Skirt back length: 61 inches. Waist: 20 inches diameter. Bodice: 25 inches long.	Drab green colour, however entirely fashionable silhouette.	Mrs R Clark, i.e. Helen Sophie Horn Clark.			Probably profession although it has undergone a lot of quite rough repair work on the skirt. The hook and eye fastening has been replaced at some point: it looks new.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
Museum	Object Name	Number	M / F	Production Place	Date	Fabric	Summary	Dimension	Note	Owner	Acquired From	Date	Producer
North Hertfordshire District Museum	Bodice and Skirt	67846	F	Unknown		Brocaded silk, silk brocade with woven floral design which shines orange in some lights. This dress was worn by Mary Ann Seebohm who lived at the Hermitage in Bancroft, Hitchin.	Woman's dress consisting of bodice and skirt in blue silk brocade with woven floral design which shines orange in some lights. This dress was worn by Mary Ann Seebohm who lived at the Hermitage in Bancroft, Hitchin.		Excellent condition. An enormous amount of fabric. The decorative beading on the bodice is particularly striking, very ornate.	Mary Ann Seebohm			Unknown, Professional

Appendix 2.2: Object Analysis Template

Museum object description:

Reference:

Date of object:

Owner/ User(??):

Maker(?):

Measurements:

Fabric(s):

Male/Female/Unisex object:

Produced for an Adult or a Child:

General first appearances and description:

Drawing (done by myself):

Suspected use:

Components of the object:

If clothing:

Buttons/Hooks and eyes/Toggles:

Decorative edging:

Stitching (Fine/heavy/neat/untidy/visibly hand or machine sowed):

Wear and Tear:

Significant damage:

Any visible alterations or re-construction to the object taken place:

Any repairs:

Details of appearance of construction, if any (quality of pattern and material/symmetry/security of components):

Date bequeathed to collection:

Bequeathed by:

Why did they hand the object over to the museum?:

Was the object being used up until its bequest?:

Was it given alone or with other objects?:

Did the museum have to buy the item, 'save it', or was it donated?

Has this object ever been on display in the Museum?

If so:

Was it displayed in a permanent collection?

Was it displayed in a temporary exhibition? (Give Details)

How was the object positioned?

On a realistic life like mannequin

On a dress horse

Laying flat

On a plinth or pedestal or shelf

In a glass case

Open to the air

Why was it displayed in this manner?

What kind of lighting was used?

Was it placed in a 'set'?

Were props used in its display?

Was it displayed alone or in a set or case with multiple objects?

What other objects was it displayed with?

If so, why was it displayed with other objects?

If not, why not?

Under what conditions is this garment stored in the Archives?