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EDITORIAL

The Editor apologises to contributors and readers for the delayed appearance of this issue.

2003 saw the centenary of the Friends Historical Society and a celebration meeting was held at Friends House on 20 September to mark the occasion. Two of the papers then given appear here and I hope that more material will appear in a subsequent number.

Volume 60 Number 1 begins with Douglas Gwyn's Presidential Address, a fascinating exploration of a remarkable figure, whose spiritual journey reflects the spiritual ferment released during the Civil War years.

Kenneth Carroll's Irish Friends Historical Lecture reminds us of one of Ireland's greatest Quakers in the 350th anniversary of Quakerism in Ireland.

Maris Corbin sheds light on a largely unfamiliar area of Quaker history. If Friends would like to support the effort at restoration of the Burial Ground please contact Maris Corbin, Secretary/Treasurer, Committee for the Preservation of the Quaker Burial Ground, 64 St. Silas Heights, St. James, Barbados. Phone/Fax: 246-432-9667. E-mail: corbin@caribnet.net. Cheques should be made out to Barbados National Trust for Quaker Burial Ground.

Howard M. Knight details an important Project to facilitate the study of Quaker genealogy. Such an undertaking requires much volunteer input but will be of the greatest value when complete.

W. Ross Chapman provides an exciting overview of the potential of Quaker historical research in Ireland and the further understanding it could bring.

The Editor is always pleased to receive contributions for NOTES and QUERIES. Michael S. Darby's welcome item will hopefully stimulate further research into this topic.

The next issue of the *Journal* should appear in early June 2005.

The Presidential Address for 2005 will be given at York during Britain Yearly Meeting on the evening of Tuesday 2 August. Sir Christopher Booth will speak about THE QUAKERS OF COUNTERSETT AND THEIR LEGACY.

The Editor welcomes articles or short items for consideration for inclusion in succeeding *Journals*. Contributors are advised to use the MHRA (Modern Humanities Research Association) STYLE GUIDE in the preparation of material. This is available from Subscription Department, Maney Publishing, Hudson Road, Leeds LS9 7DL (e-mail: maney@maney.co.uk) or online at the MHRA's website (www.mhra.org.uk). The Editor's decision is final as regards publication or revision.

Howard F Gregg

JOHN SALTMARSH: QUAKER FORERUNNER

It has been a goal of my studies of early Friends over the past 25 years to trace the developments in English religion and politics that led up to the emergence of early Friends, and understanding the quaker movement as a response to those developments. In other words, what were the questions to which early Quakerism was the answer? For whom was that answer so compelling? I have struggled to find answers to those questions theologically (in *Apocalypse of the Word*), politically (in *The Covenant Crucified*) and socio-spiritually (in *Seekers Found*).[1]

A variety of events, movements and key figures form the trajectory of development from radical Puritanism into early Quakerism. One figure that emerges luminously among an amazing assortment of proto-Quakers is John Saltmarsh, who died at the end of 1647 at the age of 35. The meteoric last five years of his life form a remarkable prophetic witness. The interaction of religious and political ideas in his publications is revealing. Also, his references to Seekers in the mid-1640s offer the most substantial early information and interpretation of what that loose collection of church drop-outs was about. Understanding the Seeker ferment of the 1640s and '50s provides important clues to the formation of early Quaker consciousness. It is intriguing to wonder how Saltmarsh would have interacted with early Friends, had he lived long enough. But it is worth noting that he is mentioned most often by early Friends themselves as their forerunner.[2] So a brief glimpse of Saltmarsh's prophetic career offers useful impressions of the Seeker tendency of the 1640s that prepared the way for the powerful Quaker conviction of the following decade. In his brief biography of Saltmarsh, A.L. Morton describes him as 'perhaps the most talented and influential of all the preachers of the antinomian left. Yet little is known of his antecedents or early life, and little would lead us to anticipate his later developments'.[3] Indeed, the religious and political territory Saltmarsh covered during his last years, 1642 to 1647, is startling. As late as 1640, he was apparently a conventional parish minister and devotional writer.

Early Publications

Saltmarsh was probably born in Yorkshire around 1612. We know that he graduated with a Master's degree from Magdalen College, Cambridge in 1636 and that he published a small volume of metaphysical poetry that same year. By 1639, he had become rector at Hasterton in Yorkshire (most likely his home county). He also published that year *The Practice of Policie in a Christian Life Taught by Scriptures.* Totalling over three hundred pages, this compendium contains 486 maxims for Christian life, each supported by biblical citations. Nothing outside Puritan orthodoxy appears yet.

But the events of 1642 quickly rallied Saltmarsh to the cause of religious freedom. He later recalled that he was at first a 'stickler in Yorkshire for the Parliament'.[4] But the Solemn League and Covenant in 1643 soon led him to qualify his support. That year, he hurriedly published *Examinations,* a reply to a published sermon of Thomas Fuller. Fuller had urged citizens to pray for Parliament and the Westminster Assembly of Divines as they set about to reform the English church and state. But he advised them not to meddle in this great work; reformation was the business of supreme authority alone. Moreover, people should not build up hopes for a perfect reformation or a utopian society. After all, latter-day divines did not enjoy the same level of inspiration possessed by the apostles.

Saltmarsh countered that all English people had an interest in reform and a role to play in it. He further asserted that the apostles had light for their times; the English people were presently receiving new light for new times. He concluded that, with the startling events now unfolding, 'who cannot think that we are rising to that age where God shall pour his Spirit upon all flesh?' We detect here an insistent utopian belief that God was doing something unprecedented in England, fulfulling the prophecy of Joel 2:28, re-enacting the Pentecostal origins of the early church (Acts 2). In this conviction, Saltmarsh appears already moving toward a Seeker outlook: England was on the threshold of a new revelation, a new Pentecostal beginning for the church. There was debate in Parliament regarding Saltmarsh's tract. Some found it extreme while others defended it heatedly. By this time, Saltmarsh was identified with the Independent movement in Puritanism, a coalition of clergy and political leaders opposing the Westminster Assembly's Presbyterian plans for a national church, advocating instead a more decentralised system of congregationally ordered parishes, electing their own elders and ministers. But his writing suggests that Saltmarsh was on the radical wing of the Independents.[5]

In October 1644, Saltmarsh published another short political tract, *A Peace but No Pacification*, urging Parliament not to compromise with Charles but to fight on and vanquish him. (This 'win the war' party was headed in Parliament by Oliver Cromwell, who would create the so-called New Model Army in the coming year.) Meanwhile, his own ministry continued to evolve and radicalise. That same year, he concluded that tithes were unchristian and renounced his parish post at Hasterton, even returning his past year's income. Not long after, he accepted a rectorship at Brasted, Kent, where he refused tithe support. For the first year, he accepted voluntary contributions. Thereafter, he accepted no financial support at all.[6]

The beginning of 1645 saw the release of his most advanced political statement, *Dawnings of Light*, the first to be published by Giles Calvert, the great radical publisher of the day. The tract begins with a challenging dedicatory epistle to Parliament: 'unless we be more sanctified, our enemies do not fall by any divine favor toward us, but by the provocation of their own sins...then their ruin will scarcely be our salvation, but they will only be the first to fall'.[7] What follows this prophetic warning is an intriguing meditation on the interaction of divine and human interests in reformation. Saltmarsh admits that his musings merely wander 'in the unbounded wafts of Theology', but he imagines that a 'transcendent science' can be devised, using exact and particular methods of inquiry. Generally, the interests of Christ need to be separated from those of the state. Mixing the two only darkens Christ's kingdom and subverts established government.

Saltmarsh urges orthodox Puritans to study the Scriptures anew, in order to see how much latitude they offer both in both doctrine and practice. That should discourage them from trying to impose their understandings upon others. Meanwhile, for their part, dissenting groups should be just as concerned to contribute to the common good as they are to promote their particular sectarian agendas. As in all his writings, Saltmarsh retains a generous and even-handed approach. He pleads for an inclusive sense of the body of Christ, one that allows different degrees and manners of reformation ('coming out of Babylon') to coexist. Name-calling only accentuates division and weakens the nation against its common enemy. Groups withdrawing into their own conventricles should not be labelled as schismatic or sectarian. Saltmarsh prefers the term 'suspension' to 'separation'.[8]

Seeking must be everyone's vocation at this time: 'When tidings of publique calamity are abroad, then is the season of seeking God, and enquiring after sin, and putting God in minde of covenants, and

engagements that he stands in to his people'.[9] Thus, God is not some inert object to be groped after; our very seeking stimulates God's own faithful response. *Dawnings of Light* is an intriguing treatise of Christian political philosophy, brimming with optimism and fresh, liberal intellectual currents. Its discussion of the 'interests' in reformation, and its almost 'free-market' approach to religious diversity breathe the hopeful spirit of nascent capitalism. Its advocacy of scientific methods of analysis in religious matters suggests a social-scientific outlook far ahead of the times. Saltmarsh was well on his way into uncharted regions. In these aspects of his thought, Saltmarsh sounds many themes that will be developed by the liberal Enlightenment later in the seventeenth century.

Free-Grace

At the end of 1645, Saltmarsh took a more theological tack with *Free-Grace*, subtitled *The Flowings of Christ's Blood Freely to Sinners*. Published by Calvert, this book went through eight printings by 1661. It deserves some detailed attention here, for it prompted Puritan critics to label Saltmarsh an antinomian and libertine. Such accusations were inspired by his attack upon the casuistry that had overtaken much Puritan spiritual counsel The doctrine of predestination, asserting that souls were either elect or damned from the beginning of time, implied that salvation was a status to be *inferred* rather thans sought. Thus, individuals were directed to examine themselves for signs of their election. For example, moral virtue and industry might be signs of God's grace at work. Puritan divines reassured anxious souls that even the *desire* for salvation might be a hopeful indicator. That approach worked well enough for many average parishioners. But for more introspective and morally scrupulous souls, it became a maddening hall of mirrors.

Free-Grace purports to be the experience of a soul wracked by feelings of guilt and unworthiness. Morton believes this to be Saltmarsh's own story, but the prose is so ambiguous and garbled that this is difficult to confirm. It may just as easily be someone Saltmarsh interviewed, as the text states, or a composite portrait of several persons he had known. In any case, the individual was haunted by an accusing conscience. He went to hear sermons, but with no relief. He feared not going to church; he feared going as well, since it would be an abomination for an unregenerate soul to take communion. He went to ministers for help. They generally told him that his troubled conscience was a sign of God's work in him. But rather than preaching Christ and salvation to him, they prescribed 'religious duties' (prayer, church attendance, Bible study, etc.). He

complained that he could not make himself pray. The minister answered that even the desire to pray was prayer. This didn't help: what if his desire to pray was simply for his own sake and not for God's glory? The minister responded that even *the desire to desire to pray* was a sign of grace![10]

The poor soul concluded that he was not really sorry for his sins, but simply afraid of hell. This was a legal sorrow, a merely slavish terror, not the terror of a true child of God, with brokenness and meltings of the heart. Ministers went through the Bible with him, reading the promises of salvation there, to see if they stirred some hopeful feeling in his heart. This common practice was called 'applying the promises'.[11] But he could feel only his own miserable, selfish spirit. Slowly, the individual became suicidal, attempting to take his own life at least once. But messages of God's love slowly came into his heart. He began to see that God had already pardoned his sins. *Free-Grace* concludes by advising others not to resort to Puritan regimens of religious exercise, 'lest you perish in the sparks you kindle, as I almost did'. In other words, trying to *infer* one's salvation from self-induced 'sparks' of hope is a futile exercise. Saltmarsh urges ministers to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ first and foremost, rather than prescribe legalistic 'duties'.[12] Otherwise, doubt will consume some souls

Saltmarsh summarises: God covenants with us in *Christ*, not on the basis of any human merit. We love God because God loved us first. Christ died for all. Just as all are dead in Adam, all that live are alive in Christ.[13] At times in this book, Saltmarsh still holds out for predestination, insisting that it remains a 'secret thing'. But he is willing to use the term 'general redemption' as well.[14] To the Calvinist mind, Saltmarsh had undermined God's sovereignty in human redemption. Christ's death for all, without redemption, seemed to place freedom on the side of human decision to accept or not (although Saltmarsh insisted that salvation was all God's work). Moreover, if the 'duties' of Christian piety were swept aside, then how was spiritual and moral regeneration to occur? After all, anxious self-doubt provided the fuel for a great deal of Puritan self-improvement and social betterment. Such concerns underlay the accusations against Saltmarsh of an 'antinomian' and 'libertine'. Indeed, we can see this problem in a 1652 letter of Dorothy Howgill (wife of Francis Howgill) to George Fox. She confesses that reading Saltmarsh's *Free-Grace* some years before her Quaker convincement had led her astray. She took the emphasis upon Christ's death for sinners *as* sinners to be 'liberty to walk in sin'.[15] Saltmarsh's *Free-Grace* appeared the same year as Thomas Lambe's General Baptist

manifesto, *The Fountain of Free Grace Opened*. Both works were major assaults upon Puritan theological orthodoxy and spiritual formation. But neither book simply advocated human free will in salvation. Both maintained a paradox that steadfastly resisted simple reduction of salvation to either God's election or human freedom. We find a similar paradoxical interpretation in early Quaker writings such as Edward Burrough's critique of 'Free-Willers'.[16] We also find deep turmoil over the question of election in the convincement narratives of a number of early Friends.[17]

Saltmarsh functioned as a leading figure in the Independent movement. He was part of the younger generation of Independent ministers, orthodox in their university training, but rapidly moving beyond Puritanism. Murray Tolmie finds Saltmarsh among the leaders mentioned at an Independent gathering in London, held in 1645 or 1646. The meeting debated whether Independents should continue involvement in their local parishes or join the Separatists in complete withdrawal.[18] Saltmarsh's participation in the decision against separation fits with his overall attitude of mutual toleration, despite the rapid radicalisation of his views.

The Smoke in the Temple

In January 1646, Saltmarsh returned to political pamphleteering with *The Smoke in the Temple*. The imagery of the title is from the Book of Revelation, where the cataclysms unleashed by the pouring out of the seven vials of divine wrath fill the heavenly temple with smoke for a period of time; no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues unleashed by the seven vials had ended (Rev. 15). Saltmarsh interprets this in terms of the political cataclysms of the Civil War and the spiritual upheavals it created for all. He uses this imagery to argue that it is not yet time to settle religion according to anyone's plan. Rather, the people must wait for the smoke to clear: that is, for a religious consensus to form. He argues again for a moratorium among diverse churches during this transitional time: 'We may be Friends, though not Brethren: and let us attaine to Union, though not to Unity'.

He goes on to describe the position of each faction, then to offer a critique of each based on Scripture. In his critique of the Baptists, he takes the Seeker position against their adult baptism: 'the time is not yet come for Ordinances: for as there were several seasons for the givings out of Truth before, so now'. Here he cites the steps in Acts whereby the early church was first constituted. He then summarises the Seeker position thus: because of the general apostasy, there is no

legitimate church at present. Any new founding of the church will be accompanied by miraculous works, like those described in Acts. While war and religous oppression continue, the new dispensation of the Spirit cannot begin. Moreover, he reports, many Seekers suspect corruptions and additions in the canonical text of the Bible, leading them to conclude that new tongues of the Spirit will be needed to reveal the original purity of Scripture and guide the way to true church order. We can recognise here an emerging post-Reformation position that has seen how multiple reconstructions of primitive Christian faith and practice can arise from the same Scriptures; the Spirit begins to emerge as a new primary authority that can gather believers into a new position beyond the competing mechanistic biblical constructions of Puritanism. This Seeker emphasis is clearly moving toward the early Quaker position that the Scriptures must be interpreted in the same Spirit that inspired them.

Nevertheless, Saltmarsh criticises the idealism of this position with no less than seventeen points. He suggests that even centuries of spiritual apostasy are not powerful enough to corrupt biblical texts materially. Scripture, whatever its textual corruptions, still offers a clearer revelation of faith than reason alone can attain. Even if more glorious dispensations will someday come, everyone should still follow as many of the traditional forms as they conscientiously can. In particular, he attacks the assumption that new miracles are necessary to confirm any new dispensation of the Spirit. If we need miracles to believe, he argues, then we will need them continually. The truth of a new revelation should be self-evident. Outward signs convince only the outward mind. The glory that is coming is secret, invisible, inward, spiritual. Thus, Saltmarsh maintains his Christian statesmanship, affirming the dignity of all forms sincerely professed and practiced. He dismisses biblical scepticism and censures the idealism that imagines an unmistakable faith certified by visible signs and wonders. Nevertheless, Saltmarsh also clearly shares the hope of a coming dispensation, albeit in more subtle, spiritualised terms.

One of the most interesting aspects of this small book is Saltmarsh's use of the word 'truth', a word used so ostentatiously by early Friends. He doesn't develop a distinct definition of the word, but uses it repeatedly and with a sense that approaches that of early Friends. It forms part of his overall argument in *The Smoke in the Temple:* as a religious and political consensus, truth will emerge only after the vials of divine wrath have stopped pouring down on the nation, after the smoke of civil and military strife clears. He summarises his argument in the opening epistle thus: each competing religious agenda has 'attained only so far in the Mystery

of Truth', all are short of the glory which shall be revealed in the temple or church of God. Great clouds of opinion darken the situation at present. But, he argues, as they have a common infirmity, they have a common unity. All are coming out of Babylon in various ways and travelling to the heavenly city from various directions. The gathering of the saints into the kingdom of heaven in this day of relevation is like the gathering in the last day, from the four winds or ends of the earth. Therefore, he urges all to search for the spirit of Jesus, for none is worthy to open the seals but the Lamb (Rev. 5.9). He ends the epistle with these pregnant words:

> I have only one way to reveal Truth to me which I cannot conceal, nor yet cannot *practice* yet as I would, and that is this: To see Truth by living in the power of Truth and by first obtaining Jesus Christ to live in us in the power of his suffering, death, and Resurrection; for surely Jesus Christ must do all (though more gloriously and spiritually) over again in his, which he did in himself. If Jesus Christ the Light be in us, the Light by which every outward dispensation is seen, will flow in; for where the Sun is, there will be every beam with it.

This is the key epistemological starting point early Friends will built upon the next decade. The truth of the gospel, indeed the truth for England in its moment of liberation, is known only as the faithful patiently undergo the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ within themselves through his light within them. This will be the sense in which early Friends will call themselves 'Friends of (or in) the Truth'. They are Truth's Friends only as they suffer in witness with and for the Lamb, who has broken the seven seals of the Scriptures and revealed their secret wisdom to them. Saltmarsh enunciates this hermeneutic between experience and Scripture – and indeed between political ends and means – succinctly. Yet he also admits he is not quite there yet himself.

Later in the book, he asserts that 'Gospel-Truth is one and the same', but so far, the different churches and worship have only parts of the truth. 'Every Heresie hath a Scripture Word in it. But Truth must be all one and the same, and Homogeneal; not in parts so, but all so... Nothing but Gods power and will can make a thing Truth: his power creates it'. He goes on to critique what some call 'Scripture-consequences' (more commonly known as biblical 'proof-texts' today). These are a 'new, though old designe against Truth...for under colour of consequence, what Conclusions may be produced! What may not Reason draw from scripture, and what may it not

fashion like a Truth!'. He finds this problem of competing biblical interpretations paralleled by the equally serious problem of competing interpretations of Parliamentary laws. In both cases, the overall context and greater sense of the text must be sought: 'Is it thus in Laws human and not much more in Ordinances divine? Yea there is the same onenesse, entireness, indivisibility, and essentiality of the Truth'.[19] Saltmarsh articulates a sense that true reformation – both religious and political – cannot be attained in a piecemeal, constructed fashion. It must be revealed in its true integrity. But the present is a time for discerning truth wherever it may be found, and waiting for a true integration of truth to be revealed in both religious and political ordering:

> How Christ is a King of the *Nations* and of the *Church*, and how an Head: Not only the visible body of Christ is pure, but every truth of Christ bears the image of Christ; every truth of his hath something of himself in it who is Truth itself...every beam of light is light; every truth is a sparkle of truth itself. Thus we may judge of truth, by what of Christ we see in it. They who break a crystall may see their face in every peece and parcell; so in everything of Christ there is an Image of Christ, either of his purity, or holiness, or love, or humility, or meekness, etc'.[20]

Thus, we hear Saltmarsh struggling to articulate a unified field theory of church and state, even as he maintains his position that the two should be separate. Still, within his Christian theological understanding, the truth in Christ should be discernible in either realm.

Much of the body of the book is taken up with a point-by-point rebuttal to an attack against Saltmarsh published by the Presbyterian John Ley.[21] Saltmarsh argues with Ley in a conciliatory fashion, however, asserting that truth comes in degrees, beam by beam. No one has definitive truth yet. Reproaching one another is not useful. If they both remain faithful, 'it is more likely then in the end both *you* and *I* may prove a better *friend* to the *Truth*. It is possible many this Age might have seen more, had they not cast so much dust in one anothers eyes by their strivings.'[22] Later 'Friends of the Truth' were perhaps less liberal-minded than Saltmarsh. But the betrayals of truth by the victorious forces of Parliament and the army in the next years were a major cause of the pent-up fury expressed by early Quakers in the 1650s. Even Saltmarsh became less irenic toward these powers in the final year of his life.

Up to this point in his witness, Saltmarsh maintained a balance

between agitation and mediation. He steadily attacked the Presbyterian plan to impose a new national church. But he was critical of all groups, pleading for a moratorium among them. He held many views in common with the Seekers, but still served a parish church as an Independent minister. In June 1646, however, Saltmarsh's life took a momentous turn. He left his position at Brasted and accepted an invitation to serve as a chaplain in the army. This began a year of intense activity resulting in less publication but in a quantum leap in vision. Some of the most radical preachers in the nation – William Erbury, William Dell, John Webster, Henry Denne, Jacob Bauthumley, and others – had been appointed chaplains. Other advanced spirits populated the ranks of officers and soldiers, generating intense religious energies. Saltmarsh was radicalised by this vanguard. We can also imagine that he added much from his own deep insights. Later reports of his army chaplaincy suggest that he meddled little with politics, but 'laboured to beat down sin and exalt Christ', earning great esteem among soldiers and officers alike.[23]

Sparkles of Glory

In May 1647, Saltmarsh published his definitive statement, *Sparkles of Glory*. This larger work opens with a continuing advocacy of suspension of the national church, but quickly moves on to more annunciatory realms. Spirtualist influence, which was rife in the army, becomes much more overt here, no longer tinctured by pragmatic political arguments for mutual toleration.

With a clearly post-Reformational perspective, Saltmarsh summarises the basic flaws of a state-sponsored church. First, there is no single, clear model for church order to be derived from Scripture. Any attempt to impose one reduces Christians to bondage all over again. But more than that, it amounts to a 'finer kind of idolatry' to suppose that God enters into outward forms and conveys divine power through them. Nevertheless, he allows that sacraments and other forms are useful as *parables* of spiritual things. They are not to be rejected any more than the disciple Thomas was rejected for needing to see in order to believe. But blessed are they who do not see and still believe (John 20:26ff)![24]

Most of the book is an expansion upon two fundamental principles of Spiritualism. First, there are two creations, natures, or seeds – flesh and spirit. Though the apostate church has lapsed back into the former nature, the future of Christians is in the latter. Second, the one true church consists in the one true baptism of the Spirit into one

body of Christ. Hence, the true church is an *invisible* church, although visibly gathered churches are not derogated here.

This leads to stunning assertions of the reign of Christ on earth: 'the true personal reign of Christ is spiritual'. It is a glory that defies all representation. But it manifests itself in human lives. 'Christ reigns already in everything that is put in subjection under him, but we see not all yet put under him. Jesus Christ reigns in Spirit, only his reign appears not yet, now we are sons of God, but it doth not appear what we shall be; but when he shall appear, we shall be like him'.[25] Saltmarsh speaks with a strong sense of moment, even apocalyptic moment. Christ is already starting to enter the world through human bodies. The revelation is not yet fully realised; Christ has not yet fully appeared. But there is a sense of imminent transformation. Through this humanised sense of Christ's return in the bodies of believers, we find a psychologically, socially, and historically mediated sense of apocalyptic fulfillment. The return of Christ is seen in Presence-centred terms. Saltmarsh cautions that the Bible's prophecies of Christ's return are allegories, allusions, parables that are not to be understood in terms of any political system as such.

Adapting dispensational schemes from Jacob Boehme, Saltmarsh continues that each Christian's life is intended to reenact the three ages or spheres described in Scripture: the Law, the Gospel, and the Spirit.[26] Just as Christ was born under the good dispensation of law and circumcision but had to be crucified to it, so the Christian is born under the outward Christian dispensation of baptism, bread, and wine but must be crucified to it in order to rise to the spiritual realm. There, one comes to know the true Lord's Supper, the very body and blood of Christ in Spirit. On this level, one knows Christ as the true spiritual minister, apostle, pastor:'

'Jesus Christ is the true spiritual prophet that teaches his people so as they are all taught of God, and so called in Scriptures a prophet, which the Lord God raised up, in stead of Moses' (see Dtr. 18:18).[27] The experience of Christ's Presence has become so complete here that it has obviated the need for a clergy. Christ is the true shepherd of the flock. This Christology is strongly in the Spiritualist stream of the Reformation, having been an undercurrent in England in the Family of Love (or 'Familists'), but going back to Continental Reformers such as Caspar Schwenckfeld, who taught that true communion raises the believer to the heavenly, spiritual plane, rather than Christ descending again into physical bread and wine.[28] Although early Friends rejected the progressive dispensational scheme Saltmarsh embraces here, much of the Spiritualist agenda carries over into early Quaker worship and ministry.

Saltmarsh unleashes a stream of earth-shaking theological statements. He asserts that true, spiritual 'gospel order' (good order in the church) is 'that spiritual Distinction and Variety in the Body of Christ, wherein one member differs from another in Measure of Spirit and Glory, and Power, and yet all compleat and make perfect that Body of Christ in the Spirit.[29] Thus, visible church is not abandoned, but is achieved invisibly by Christ's direct action, bestowing different gifts to various individuals to perform different services. 'True spiritual Government is Christ reigning in the Saints in Spirit, ordering them in Thought, Word, and Deed...which is a Sceptre of Righteousness against Flesh and Blood, Principalities and Powers'.[30] Covenant ordering unfolds through this intimate relationship, in which God's law is inscribed directly upon human hearts (see Jer. 31:31-34).

Therefore, 'the Christian is one, who hath the incorruptible seed in him,or the Word which liveth and and abideth for ever, which Word is the Lord Jesus Christ'.[31] The seed within functions as a key metaphor in the Spiritualist vision of advanced Seekers and Quakers. The seed represents the last hope of reformation, indeed of all utopian prospects, now completely separated out from state-sponsored reformations and even sectarian congregations. It now lies beyond the reach of all human striving, either political or individual. This seed rises within to reign only through radical surrender; the death of self and its will. Saltmarsh admits that figures such as Wycliffe, Luther, and Calvin were beginning to receive glimmerings of his revelation, but were still deep in the dark night of apostasy.

All these reformers were attempting to 'return to the Gospel-Day', the church of New Testament times. But that was not possible,for God had already 'laid it by'. Just as Christ came not to restore the priesthood again but to lead onward, true reformation must move on. There is no way back. But a period of purification from old idolatries is required. Like Israel coming out of Egypt, this is a time of the church in the wilderness (see Rev. 12:1-6). Christians must retire in Spirit into that wilderness. The emergent, spiritualised faith is a new dispensation of light. In time, it will cover the earth, swallowing up all former dispensations. Thus, Saltmarsh suggests the beginning of a new, universal revelation of God, a univeral light of Christ. Those who have come into this light, or Spirit, discern the 'same Spirit in others, as in Prayer, Preaching, Prophesying, Conference, Conformity to Christ, Spiritual Conversation, so as Christians can in a manner say...here I taste, and see something of God'.[32] Hence, beyond all definable boundaries of church

membership and doctrine, each individual in the light of Christ recognises it (or the lack of it) in the actions of others.

Saltmarsh ventures here a definition of truth more integrative and systematic than the several statements found in *The Smoke in the Temple*. It is worth quoting at length here:

> There is but one Truth, and that is Jesus Christ. I am the way, and the truth, and he is the Truth in the original or pattern, and we see nor know no more Truth than we see and know in him, this is called the truth as it is in Jesus: For Jesus Christ is the Alpha and Omega of all things, and comprehends all essence and form and life, and Spirit of things in himself; and all things of this Creation are but Shadows and Images of this Truth, and the outward forms of that glory; this Truth makes free, that is the operation of it; and therefore so much of Truth or of Christ any one knows or receives, so much freedom or liberty they receive, and so much they are delivered into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty: And therefore as Truth is in any, so is spiritual liberty, and the Spirit of bondage in them passes away, and such are disburdened of the legal terrours, fears, of the lyes, delusions, false conceptions, traditions under which they have lived as they grow up into Truth; the Spirit of Truth only teaches and reveals this Truth, and opens those treasures of wisdom and knowledge which are in Christ. Truth though it be but one, yet is shines forth in many streams of glory and opens like day; in Jesus Christ this variety of truth appears that truth, or glory, or true brightness of God, and all that truth of this creation or forms of the world; and all truth of letter, or Scripture, or outward Ordinance is in its pure Essence and Spirit in Jesus Christ; Truth gathers up men more into Christ from the flesh and loose vanity of the world; and therefore we are said to have our loyns girt with truth; the girdle of truth, as it were, binding us up, and keeping close in Spirit to the Lord; there is a fullness, settlement, and establishment in truth; and in things of this world; there is a far more solid and real enjoyment in the substance of things here, than in their shadows, counterfeits, or pictures, because there is a nature, or Spirit and life in that thing to be enjoyed, and answers the Spirit and life of him that enjoys, by communicating something [more] substantial, solid, and proportionable than images and shadows are. So it is in the truth Jesus Christ, in whom is life, and more excellent, glorious, and spiritual form, or life, exceeding the nature of things here.

This Spiritualist manifesto of truth has a Gnostic, anti-material potential. But Saltmarsh keeps his Platonic imageries grounded in this world. Similarly, in the next decade, early Friends maintained this Spiritualist epistemological commitment to the inwardness of true relevation and spiritual life. But Fox and other early Quaker leaders worked vigorously to balance that epistemology with a thoroughly grounded set of moral standards and material practices (what we today would call 'the testimonies to the truth'). This was crucial to keep such inward, mystical ways of knowing from wafting into esoteric wisdom.

Clearly, these statements issued from some profound experience that Saltmarsh found among the army ranks, even some sense of incipient church order. It now led him to conclusions startling within a military setting. Saltmarsh adds that war is the work of nations, the natural impulse to self-preservation and just retaliation. Many Christians fight alongside 'natural' men under this law. But as Christ is more fully manifested in Spirit, the Christian is taken up, out of such activity. Christian perfection is to lay oneself down 'to rest in the bosom of whatever providence God opens'. Left to its own desires, the human will leads individuals to lust, desire, and plot, even to kill one another. Peace is to be 'willing to be gathered up by God from one Way and raised up to a higher one'. God moves from one tabernacle to another. The Christian must move with God. This inner surrender leads to outer surrender, a willingness to receive the emnity and oppression of others into oneself. There, one quenches the violence, destroying it in the Spirit.[33] *Sparkles* stops short of a generalised principle of nonviolence or conscientious objection to military service. Saltmarsh was apparently still hopeful that God might yet accomplish something liberating through the army. But a clear principle of Christian withdrawal from warfare was emerging. This vision carries over strongly into early Quaker pacifism, which was less a philosophically reflected moral position than a sense that Friends had passed, through radical surrender, into a new spiritual reality that they could not expect the nations to share yet.

Sparkles places greatest emphasis upon the work of Christ at large among the people 'The Lord Jesus hath a day and time to be revealed in, in which is his coming in the Saints when he will judge the World, and then shall Antichrist be consumed' (see Rev. 20:1-10).[34] God's indulgence of false worships will end and worship in Spirit and truth will replace them. But this comes only through what Saltmarsh calls the 'Fiery Tryall'.[35] Unfortunately, we do not pass on easily to higher revelations of God. The old vision of God must die: 'the fiery tryant is the Spirit of God burning up or destroying' the old truth. What was

good and righteous before must be consumed and crucified. He notes that these trials are 'Prophecy of the last judgement' experienced in the Spirit here and now. Thus, Saltmarsh witnesses an aopcalyptic sense of personal transformation, in which the believer experiences *now* what the world at large will experience later. In that process, one is so changed as to become a *new creation* in Christ. That sense of an inner conflagration carries over into early Quaker convincement narratives. In his *Journal*, George Fox writes that in 1647 he witnessed 'the mountains burning up, and the rubbish, and the crooked ways and places made smooth and plain that the Lord might come into his tabernacle. These things are to be found in a man's heart.'[36] Such apocalyptic transformation was the inward beginning of the more outward conflict early Friends called 'the Lamb's War'.

Saltmarsh clarifies that this transformation does not imply that one's earlier faithfulness was bad. Christ's life embodied the best of the law's righteousness. Still, that body was crucified in order to be raised up to a new sphere. 'So every Christian is to take up his crosse, and to bring his highest and choicest...to this crosse, and to have them all crucified to higher discoveries of God, that is the knowledge of Christ Crucified, or self-denial'.[37] Christians often mistake this experience for God's absence. It is rather God's presence, making the old wither in order to bring in a fuller glory. A similar line of interpretation of spiritual experience is also found in another book issuing from the army the following year. *The Saint's Travel to the Land of Caanan*, by R. Wilkinson (1648).[38]

Sparkles concludes with Saltmarsh's classic description of Seekers. In view of the apostasy and confusion of the churches, Seekers wait in the spiritual wilderness for the coming of the Spirit with power. In the meantime, they worship

> onely in Prayers and Conference [religious discussion], pretending to no certain determination of things, nor any infallible...interpretations of Scriptures. They wait for a restauration of things, and a setting up of all Gospell-Officers, Churches, Ordinances, according to the pattern of the New Testament. They wait for a Apostle or Angel, that is, some[one] with a visible glory and power...to give visible demonstration of their sending, as to the world... This is the highest of their Attainment.[39]

'But', he adds, 'some speak of a further discovery, and more spiritual than this of the Seekers'. He now articulates the new Spiritualist sense that must have been emerging at that time.

According to that view, the New Testament church was only a transitional form. Apostasy aside, it was intended to pass away in any case. All dispensations are but for a season, and they are never restored. Therefore, to wait the restoration of New Testament church order is antichristian. There is nothing in Scripture to warrant it. The truth is that Christ, the eternal seed, is already in all true Christians. All true reformation, growth, and improvement of the church can only take place only by Christ himself working through his people. The world will see Christ come in the saints, but it will be 'in a day of conviction and spiritual judgement upon themselves'. Far from being a day of signs, wonders and glory, the day of the Lord will be perceived by most people as a day of consternation. This point has much in common with the prophecy of Amos 5:18: 'Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord! Why would you have the day of the Lord? It is darkness and not light'.

So Saltmarsh sees two key groups on the edge of some imminent breakthrough. The Seekers are looking in the wrong direction: outwards and backwards. The second group (probably the worship groups he had encountered in the army) he does not consider to be Seekers anymore. They have moved on to 'a further discovery, and more spiritual'. He prefers to leave this new position unnamed (it may be represented in the 1650s by some groups called 'Waiters', which Burrough catagorised alongside Seekers in 1656[40]). But Saltmarsh has already sketched many important points that we will see defined more fully in the Quaker movement. Clearly, developments in the army and elsewhere by 1647 had given Saltmarsh much reason to hope for momentous things to come.

His Final Months

One reason for optimism was the army's defeat and capture of Charles. Parliament quickly moved to disband the army, fearing the latter as a threat to the Presbyterian settlement and even Parliamentary sovereignty itself. But the army refused to disband, causing still greater concern in Parliament. In June 1647, *A Letter from the Army* appeared, Saltmarsh's last publication. He reported on the mood among the ranks, seeking to allay fears of an army takeover of the government. In various counties where army regiments had moved or been stationed, people appealed to them to act as mediators between themselves and Parliament. Though Saltmarsh did not state it explictly, everyone knew that the existing Parliament would enact only modest political reforms, was still determined to impose Presbyterianism on the nation, and might even return

Charles to the throne.

So the army sought to satisfy some 'just grievances' before disbanding, to ensure that members would be 'estated in a free and clear capacity' both as soldiers and as citizens.[41] This probably meant two things. First, that no one would be prosecuted for acts of war, whatever the ensuing settlement might be. This was an important point, especially if Charles regained the throne. But more broadly, it also meant that the army intended to coerce from Parliament political freedoms that would 'flow down' to all fellow subjects. Once their civil rights were established, he was confident the army would do whatever Parliament commanded.

Saltmarsh witnessed 'a mighty spirit for Justice and Righteousness raised up in the Army'.[42] He assured Parliament that the army did not wish to impose an Independent church settlement on the nation, or challenge the rule of law. 'I know no designe here appearing, but Peace to the Kingdom'.[43] Saltmarsh may have been innocent at that point of more revolutionary designs moving among the regiments. Some were by this time plotting actions that would have overruled by force not only Parliament but the generals as well.

The army formulated its position in a 'Solemn Engagement', adopted earlier in June, formally stating its refusal to disband. Instead, an Army Council was organised, including not only the generals but representatives elected from the regiments, possessing full voting rights. Here was a democratic organ of self-government for the army also aimed to influence the direction of civil government in England. Saltmarsh's letter thus came at the moment of great resolve within the army. That was also near the time he left, probably for reasons of health.

Unfortunately, this unity did not last long.[44] Parliament rescinded its demand that the army disband, and Cromwell and other generals sought a compromise between the two rival powers. The generals, lacking sympathy with the more far-reaching political demands coming from the ranks, soon abandoned the democratic processes established by the Solemn Engagement. Both within the army and in London a new faction had emerged to press a republican agenda for reform in England. This party, nicknamed the 'Levellers', was led by Lieutenant Colonel John Lilburne, Richard Overton, and William Walwyn. They formulated their proposals in *An Agreement of the Free People of England* in October 1647. On October 28th, this provisional constitution was debated by the Army Council at Putney. The debates were inconclusive. The generals, fearing that they were losing control of the army, arrested Leveller leaders and quelled demonstrations among the ranks. In failing heath at home in Ilford,

Essex, Saltmarsh followed these events with alarm. He wrote three letters – to General Fairfax, Oliver Cromwell, and to the Army Council as a whole – deploring their actions, and calling upon them to return to the promises made in June.[46] But Leveller leaders remained in detention.

On December 4th, Saltmarsh got out of bed and told his wife that he had been in a trance, seen a vision, and received the command to go to the army and speak God's Word to them. He left that evening for London.[46] Mid-morning on the 6th, he reached Windsor, where the Council sat. He entered the session and told them that, although God had worked with and for them previously, divine favour had left them. They had betrayed God's cause in imprisoning God's innocent servants. His eyes fixed in an otherwordly countenance, he confronted General Fairfax without removing his hat, telling him that he would not honour him; he had honoured him too much in the past. In the hallway, he rebuked Cromwell for imprisoning the Levellers and abandoning positions affirmed as late as June. This apostasy would lead to division and ruin. With his usual candour, Cromwell admitted that things were not going well and that he had received similar criticism from others.

Saltmarsh returned the next day with further oracles of judgment. He was asked if he would advise faithful members of the army to leave. He replied that he would not; God still had a great work to be done, making use of *members* of the army.[47] Evidently, he believed that some remnant in the army might still prove useful to God's cause – perhaps the Leveller faction or those worship groups that met to 'wait upon the Lord'. He took leave of the officers, telling them he had finished God's errand and would never see them again.

He reached home on the evening of the 9th, apparently cheerful and well, reporting his activity to his wife. The next day, telling her he had finished his course, he took to his bed. He died peacefully the afternoon of the 11th. These remarkable last days were reported by an anonymous author in a small tract entitled *Wonderful Predictions* (1648). The details of the story had been confirmed by the Council itself. It is testimony to Saltmarsh's reputation in the army that the Council was willing to receive his bizarre visitation. In fact, ten days after that confrontation, the Council released the Leveller leaders in a momentary relaxation of the conflict.

Final Reflections

Thus ends an amazing life and prophetic vocation. The brilliance of Saltmarsh's witness and the utter lack of self-righteousness or

resentment in it make him perhaps the most impressive figure from the radical scene of the 1640s. It is hard to say where he might have progressed from *Sparkles of Glory* and from the army if had lived longer. But his influence was great, both before and after his death. Richard Baxter was disturbed by his influence. Writing in criticism of *Free-Grace*, Baxter commented, 'I saw how greedily multitudes of poor souls did take the bait, and how exceedingly the writings and preachings of Saltmarsh and many of his fellows did take with them'.[48] Thomas Gataker, another member of the Westminster Assembly who attacked Saltmarsh more than once, complained in 1646 that the latter had 'become the Architect for a new Sect, that wants as yet a peculiar distinguishing name.'[49] The fecund matrix of theological and spiritual development in which Saltmarsh participated continued to grow after his death, finding its most stable and lasting expression in the Quaker movement of the 1650s.

It is difficult to ascertain to what extent Saltmarsh was refining and reporting developments he heard taking place during the Civil War years (particularly in the hot-bed of Fairfax's regiment in 1646-47) and to what extent he was creating these fresh formulations himself. What did he study at Cambridge? He was a contemporary of Isaac Penington's there. Both of them seemed well grounded in the Spiritualist stream of the Reformation. Ideas that he is first to publish suddenly proliferate in print the following year (1648) in the writings of R. Wilkinson and Joseph Salmon of the army, and Gerrard Winstanley, the future Digger. His Spiritualist framing for an emerging 'truth' appears to be a strong precedent to early Quaker understanding. The prophetic Christology of Christ as the saints' inward teacher, combined with an apocalyptic sense of Christ's return known through the Spirit strongly anticipates the core of Fox's seismic preaching in 1652.

It may be, however, that the crushing disappointments for radicals coming at the conclusion to the Civil War were a further preparation required to wean their attention from outward events and their expectation from political deliverers. By 1652, radical spirits knew not to expect anything earthshaking from the army or from Paraliament. The inward revelation of Christ as an apocalyptic force and new sovereign power speaking and acting through the consciences of common people was the resurrection of radical hope in the 1650s, the seed raised up from the faded flower of the previous decade's callow hopes. The smoke cleared from the temple when people heard Fox's preaching and following his penetrating spiritual counsel, which showed them how to 'stand still in the light'. This perfected spiritual practice may well be what Saltmarsh had earlier

described as the 'one way to reveal Truth to me which I cannot conceal, nor yet cannot *practice* yet as I would, and that is this: To see Truth by living in the power of Truth and by first obtaining Jesus Christ to live in us in the power of his suffering, death, and Resurrection'.

Douglas Gwyn
Presidential Address given during Britain Yearly Meeting in London, 4 May 2003

NOTES

1 Douglas Gwyn, *Apocalypse of the Word: the Life and Message of George Fox* (Richmond, Ind.: Friends United Press, 1986); *The Covenant Crucified: Quakers and the Rise of Capitalism* (Wallington, Pa.: Pendle Hill,1995); *Seekers Found: Atonement in Early Quaker Experience* (Wallingford, Pa.: Pendle Hill, 2000).

2 For Saltmarsh's influence on Richard Farnworth, see Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), 89. William Bittle, in *James Nayler: the Quaker Indicted by Parliament* (Richmond, Ind.: Friends United Press, 1986), 27 notes that Saltmarsh was a chaplain in Fairfax's regiment (1646-47) while Nayler was serving there, concluding that some degree of influence is beyond doubt. In a 1693 letter, William Penn describes Saltmarsh, along with William Erbury and John Webster as 'forrunning Friends appearance', quoted by Geoffrey Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1946), 13. The Quaker schismatic Robert Rich listed the same three among those who 'longed to see this day of the Son of Man; but could not, he vanishing out of their sight' (see Nuttall, *Holy Spirit*, 184). An October 5, 1685 entry in John Locke's diary mentions a conversation with the Quaker Benjamin Furley, who believed that Saltmarsh was the first to refuse to remove his hat to social superiors and to use the plain language toward them. Again, see Nuttall, *Holy Spirit* 83.

3 A.L. Morton, *The World of the Ranters: Religious Radicalism in the English Revolution* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1970), 45.

4 John Saltmarsh, *A Letter from the Army* (1647), which we will review later.

5 Saltmarsh actually denied being an Independent in *The Smoke in the Temple* (London: Calvert, 1646), 1-2, arguing that he could not ascribe to any singular notion of church at that time and found such labelling of positions unhelpful. Later in the same tract (p. 68) he defined Independency as a kind of separatism, comparing it to Israel's separation from the nations. They cannot mingle or embody with those in a way not of the truth. This separation is not from men but from manners, not from believers but from their practices and corruptions.

6 Saltmarsh described these developments later, in *An End of One Controversie* (1646), when he was attacked with false accusations regarding his past forms of income. His accuser, John Ley (1583-1662), a member of the Westminster Assembly, characterised Saltmarsh as unstable. The latter replied that if putting off the old man, coming out of Babylon, and growing in the stature of Christ amount to instability, so be it.

7 John Saltmarsh, dedicatory preface to *Dawings of Light* (1644).
8 Saltmarsh, *Dawnings*, 33.
9 Saltmarsh, *Dawnings*, 68-69
10 John Saltmarsh, *Free-Grace: Or, the Flowering of Christ's Blood Freely to Sinners* (Tenth Edition, 1700), 23.
11 Saltmarsh, *Free-Grace*, 25.
12 Saltmarsh, *Free-Grace*, 37-45.
13 Saltmarsh, *Free-Grace*, 106.
14 Saltmarsh, *Free-Grace*, 106.
15 Letter of Dorothy Howgill to George Fox, A. R. Barclay Mss. 32, Library of the Society of Friends, London.
16 Edward Burrough, *The Trumpet of the Lord Sounded Forth out of Sion* (1656), in his *Works* (1672), 107.
17 For a sampling of these, see Chapter 8 of Gwyn, *Seekers Found*. For a detailed analysis, see Larry Kuenning, ' "Miserable Comforters": Their Effect on Early Quaker Thought and Experience', *Quaker Religious Thought*#76 (October 1991): 45-59.
18 Murray Tolmie, *The Triumph of the Saints: Separate Churches of London 1616-1649* (Cambridge: University Press, 1977), 123-24.
19 Saltmarsh, *Smoke*, 59-61.
20 Saltmarsh, *Smoke*, 65.
21 John Ley, *The New Quere and Determination upon it, by Master Saltmarsh...Examined* (1646).
22 Saltmarsh, *Smoke*, 3.
23 From the 'Preamble' to the anonymously authored *Wonderful Predictions* (1648), which we will review a little later.
24 John Saltmarsh, *Sparkes of Glory: Or, Some Beams of the Morning-Star* (1647), Epistle to the Reader.
25 Saltmarsh, *Sparkles*, 18.
26 Saltmarsh, *Sparkles*, 52-53.
27 Saltmarsh, *Sparkles*, 66. I had long thought that George Fox was first to crystallise this prophetic Christology in such experientialist terms. But this is a very clear statement in 1647.
28 Indeed, in *A Survey of the Spiritual Antichrist* (1648), the Presbyterian Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661) wrote partly in response to *Sparkles of Glory*, finding in Saltmarsh's thought a combination of Schwenckfeld, Henry Nicholas, and Familism. See Jean Dietz Moss, *'Godded with God': Hendrick Niclaes and His Family of Love* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1981), 58-63.
29 Saltmarsh, *Sparkles*, 68.
30 Saltmarsh, *Sparkles*, 68.
31 Saltmarsh, *Sparkles*, 78.
32 Saltmarsh, *Sparkles*, 108.
33 Saltmarsh, *Sparkles*, 112-15.
34 Saltmarsh, *Sparkles*, 185-86.
35 Saltmarsh, *Sparkles*, 189-93.
36 George Fox, *Journal*, John L. Nickalls, ed. (Cambridge University Press, 1952), 16.
37 Saltmarsh, *Sparkles*, 193.

38 Wilkinson's book is reviewed in Gwyn, *Seekers Found*, 114-15.

39 Saltmarsh, *Sparkles*, 114-15.

40 See Edward Burrough, *The Trumpet of the Lord Sounded out of Sion* (1656) in *Works* (1672), 109.

41 Saltmarsh, *A Letter from the Army* (1647), 1.

42 Saltmarsh, *Army*, 2.

43 Saltmarsh, *Army*, 3.

44 I am largely dependent on Morton's account of these next stages of development in the army during the second half of 1647. See *Ranters*, 63-66.

45 These were published after his death under the title *England's Friend Raised from the Grave* (1649).

46 Reported by Anon., *Wonderful Predictions, Declared in a Messages as from the Lord...by John Saltmarsh...* (published hurriedly, before the end of December 1647), I.

47 Anon., *Wonderful Predictions*, 6.

48 Richard Baxter, *Richard Baxter's Penitent Confession, And His Necessary Vindication* (1691), Preface. Baxter was also a chaplain in Parliament's regiments towards the end of the Civil War. He found himself losing ground among the soldiers as he sought to counter Saltmarsh's 'antimonian' preaching with more orthodox Puritan doctrine. His own failing health caused him to leave the army in February 1647.

49 Thomas Gataker, *Shadows Without Substance, Or, Pretended New Lights...a Rejoynder to Mr. John Saltmarsh* (1646), 105.

WILLIAM EDMUNDSON: IRELAND'S FIRST QUAKER

It was with great pleasure that I received the invitation to give your 2004 Historical Lecture, as a part of Ireland Yearly Meeting's commemoration of the 350th anniversary of the coming of Quakerism to Ireland. And I am especially happy to have this opportunity of sharing with you some of my thoughts on the life, work, and significance of William Edmundson, "Ireland's First Quaker." At the same time I am feeling a bit of sadness that I am now giving my last lecture here at Swanbrook House, for soon you will be moving everything to your new centre on Stocking Lane.

First of all I would like to give a little of Edmundson's pre-Quaker background. William Edmundson was born in 1627, the youngest of six children of John and Grace Edmundson. He was orphaned quite early, his mother dying when he was about four years old and his father when he was about eight. He and his brothers and sisters were left in the care of his mother's brother. The uncle made hard use of the children and seemed to have helped himself to the father's estate. Later on, when his oldest brother reached the age of 21, that brother and the husband of the oldest sister brought suit to recover the children's portion. They spent much money in this effort.[1]

Years ago, when I first began my studies on William Edmundson, I visited Little Musgrave (then in Westmorland) to see what his home area was like. Houses there at the time of his youth were mostly mud and wattle, so that nothing from his period seems to remain. Nearby is the much more impressive Great Musgrave, with a number of old stone houses – with some of them probably dating from the early seventeenth century. I located the local historian, a wonderful elderly man, who told me that I was the second person who had recently asked him about William Edmundson. When I told him about the family's attempt to recover the property from his uncle, the historian said "they must have been people of note" for such a suit to have taken place. After hearing that I then spent untold hours in the Public Records Office (then on Chancery Lane in London) trying to find records of his law suit but to no avail. Such cases were indexed under the name of the plaintiff or of the one bringing the suit. I was never able to discover the maiden name of Edmundson's mother (and therefore the uncle's surname). Also, I was not successful in discovering the name of the sister's husband, who probably took the initiative in bringing the suit.

William Edmundson remained with his uncle several years and was then apprenticed as a carpenter and joiner in York, where he lived for several years. During this time England was experiencing great religious, social, and political turmoil. Edmundson was beginning his own religious searching and questioning at this time. Then he entered the Parliament Army at the time of the English Civil War, and in 1650 he went into Scotland with Oliver Cromwell. During this period his religious wrestling intensified, especially after several narrow escapes from danger. Coming back into England in 1651 and 1652, he began to hear about Quakers – for he said that all sorts of people had this as their one main topic of conversation. Finally Edmundson left the army, and his brother John persuaded him to go to Ireland. When William and his wife reached Dublin, they discovered that his brother had been transferred to the north of Ireland and they were soon persuaded to go north also.[2]

Shortly after settling in the north Edmundson sold all his goods that he had brought from England and decided, therefore, to return to England for more. At that very time George Fox and James Nayler were active in the north of England. While visiting his kinsmen, William learned that Nayler was only three miles away, so that he, his brother, Thomas, and another relative went to hear Nayler. They were all three convinced at this point (1653).[3] William Edmundson reports that he was fully convinced at that time, no longer swearing an oath but still unable to adopt the self-denial (the "cross of Christ") that was demanded of him. A period of intense searching and discovery soon led him into deeper understanding and dedication. In 1654, after he had returned to Ireland, William Edmundson, his wife and his brother (who were both soon convinced) began meeting twice a week in the Edmundson house. Soon four others were drawn to join them, giving rise to the first Quaker meeting in Ireland – meeting "together to wait upon God, and to worship him in Spirit and Truth." This earliest Irish Quaker meeting was in Lurgan, in County Armagh.[4]

Edmundson's public ministry seems to have started in 1655, when he began to travel with John Tiffin, who was on the first of his visits to Ireland. The ground in that area was not fertile, with many of the people there deeply rooted in Calvinism. Frequently the two of them met with resistance and rejection – so different from the reception met by Edward Burrough and Francis Howgill in the south in that same year of 1655. Nowhere else in Quaker history have I found anything as dramatic as that episode where an army officer heard Howgill proclaim the Quaker message and was no moved that he persuaded Howgill to accompany him from army camp to army

camp and had the drums beaten, so that the soldiers would gather to hear Howgill's presentation of Quakerism.

Quakerism had a tremendous growth among the members of the Cromwellian army in Ireland, both among the officers and the regular soldiers. One clergyman in Galway wrote to Henry Cromwell that over a hundred soldiers were to be found at the Galway Quaker meeting each week. Cromwell, the Governor General of Ireland, had once feared that the Baptists might seize control of Ireland. Now the Quakers, who had convinced many of the Baptists to become Quakers, were the ones he feared, seeing them as the potential enemy. He therefore cashiered many of the officers and had many of the ordinary soldiers whipped (when they showed signs of Quaker acceptance or leanings). Edmundson did not make such a great number of early Quaker converts among soldiers as Howgill had, but his *Journal* shows some (including his brother John whom he had joined in Ireland).[5]

As I have read and reread Edmundson's *Journal*, I have been struck by a number of things concerning Edmundson's pioneer work in Ireland. First of all, it lasted a lifetime rather than just a brief interval – unlike the short time spans spent by Edward Burrough, Francis Howgill, and the many others who came from England bearing the Quaker message. Over the years I have been able to gather the names of more than sixty such "Publishers of Truth" (as they were later called) who visited Ireland between 1655 and 1660. Most of these spent only a brief time in Ireland before being expelled by Henry Cromwell and other officials. It is true that several of them made return visits, with John Tiffin and Thomas Loe[6] making half a dozen or more periods of service in Ireland. Loe, who converted William Penn, spent so much time in Ireland that he even earned the nickname "Apostle to Ireland." William Edmundson, except when he was on religious service abroad, spent the rest of his life among Irish Quakers – strengthening existing meetings, helping to start new meetings, and almost to the very end of his life going into areas of Ireland where Quakerism was unknown (such as sections of Connaught).

A second thing which impressed me deeply was Edmundson's great energy and dedication. Age, arthritis, and the "ague" might have slowed him down as the years went by, but not even being badly injured when thrown by his horse kept him from taking "meetings in course" (that is, the regular round of preparative, monthly, provincial, and Yearly meetings as they fell due). Down toward the end of his life he still found it possible to attend London Yearly Meeting and visit other English Meetings along the way. Like

the Energiser Bunny I sometimes see in TV commercials, Edmundson just kept on running.

A third thing about Edmundson's public ministry which really struck me was that he did not forsake Ireland as his main field of service. Even though he made three trips to America (the last one only to the West Indies) and also occasional religious journeys to England, the needs of Irish Friends always called him home. He differed radically from such other early Irish Quaker converts as John Perrot, John Luffe, and Robert and Mary Maylin.

John Perrot of Waterford soon left for England and then became the main figure in a group of six Friends who were drawn to the eastern end of the Mediterranean – going to Italy, Greece, and Turkey – ultimately going back to Italy, where he was imprisoned by the Inquisition in Rome. After several years of torture, inner turmoil, and various temptations, he was released and returned to England where he created great problems for English Quakers, even causing some separations.[7] From there he went to the West Indies and the mainland American Colonies, where he continued to create strife and separations. Edmundson's journeys to America were much more positive than Perrot's, and his work there was much more healing, especially in those areas where Perrot had done such great damage.

John Luffe (of Limerick) may have travelled to America before joining Perrot and others on their Mediterranean gambit (as is reported in one of the documents from the Inquisition). He too suffered imprisonment in Rome at the hands of the Inquisition, dying there while Perrot was still a prisoner. Perrot says that Luffe was hanged by the Inquisition, but authorities there claimed that he starved himself to death while on a fast.

The Maylins of Bandon undertook religious journeys to the West Indies. Eventually they fell under the influence of John Perrot, rejected all restraint, and died out of unity with Friends. Edward Cooke and his wife removed to England, where they remained quite serviceable among Friends.

Still a fourth thing that grabbed my attention as I read and reread Edmondson's *Journal* was Edmundson's courage – so clear and strong on many occasions – even when his liberty and his life were threatened. In 1690 the Rapparees set Edmundson's house on fire, even while he and his family were still inside. When the family emerged, Edmundson and his two sons were taken off to the woods where the Rapparees (led by members of the Dunn family) were going to hang them. The two sons were hooded before they were to be hanged, but it was decided that William Edmundson was "too stout" so that they would shoot him. As they started to put the hood

over his eyes, William told them not to do so – so that he could look them in the face, telling them that he was not afraid to die.[8] On other occasions he did not shrink from suffering or imprisonment.This same courage led him to tackle various officials – either in debate, dialogue, or demands. On one occasion when Edmundson was finally released from a long and painful period in the stocks, he demanded that the person who had put him there come and lift his leg out. An interesting footnote to the story of Edmundson's sufferings is found in the minutes of London Meeting for Sufferings. When the 1690 "troubles" in Ireland were over, a number of the rebels against the king were taken prisoner to England. One of these was a member of the Dunn family, who was imprisoned at the Savoy in London. Soon he claimed that it was all a mistake – that he was not a rebel but was actually an Irish Quaker from Mountmellick. Eventually London Quakers heard of this and appointed a committee to check into his story. He knew enough Quakers terminology and Quaker names to lead the committee to believe that it should inquire more fully. Mountmellick Friends, upon receiving the query about Dunn's possible membership in their meeting, reported back that he was not only not a member but that he had been one of the great persecutors of Edmundson and other Friends in that area. When the committee returned to see Dunn and told him that they had discovered the truth about him, it was reported back to Meeting for Sufferings that "he was truly wrought"!

Still another thing which impressed me was the hardship which he so often experienced while travelling to proclaim Quakerism. In Ireland there were places where he was refused food or lodging. In America when he travelled in uninhabited places (in 1672-1673 and 1675-1676) there were times when he slept on the wet ground, felt the extreme cold, crossed wild and wide rivers, experienced great storms, and even faced angry officials.

The tragic events connected with James Nayler's "fall" touched Edmundson deeply. Edmundson had been convinced by the preaching of Nayler, that charismatic co-worker of George Fox. Nayler,who had been in prison quite a while, was finally released and was soon caught up in what Edmundson calls Nayler's "miscarriage." Nayler, falling under the influence of some of his followers such as Martha Simmonds, re-enacted Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem by allowing himself to be led on the back of an ass into Bristol – accompanied by a cheering crowd of supporters, with the women going before singing "hosanna" and celebrating his coming. Many people believe that he actually believed that the second coming of Christ was taking place in him. Others believed that this was

"really a sign and a wonder" – just like the Old Testament prophets such as Isaiah and Jeremiah had done, believing that Nayler was acting out his message that Christ had come to teach his people. Given Nayler's troubled state of mind at the time, we may never know just what was in his mind.[9]

It is clear, however, that Edmundson was deeply affected by this dramatic act. In his *Journal* he writes that the news of this episode "came very near me, and brought me under great trouble of mind, so that I said in my heart, how shall I be able to stand through so many temptations and trials which attend me daily, since such a one as he is fallen under temptations?"[10]

It is my belief that Edmundson's deep spiritual wresting with Nayler's "fall" (which took place while Edmundson himself was suffering fourteen weeks imprisonment) seriously influenced Edmundson in several ways:

a) He became increasingly closer to George Fox, who seemed to be a real "rock" in whom he could trust.

b) He had to follow his own individual leading, as the Lord said unto him "Truth is Truth, though all men forsake it."

c) Increasingly he came to see the importance of testing one's individual leading by the guidance of the larger body of Friends. This is, I believe, why he gave so much time and efforts to organizing Irish Friends, joining Fox who came to Ireland for that purpose in 1669.[11]

d) In connection with this growing understanding of the importance of testing the individual's leading, I believe, came hand in hand his opposition to "Separates" – those who separated from Friends and set up their own movements and leaders. Wiilliam Edmundson strongly opposed the Wilkinson-Story separation which affected many meetings in the north of England.[12]

Toward the close of the seventeenth century Edmundson became increasingly concerned with what seemed to him to be a decided falling away from Quaker simplicity. Edmundson called upon Friends not to be drawn into seeking more elaborate clothing, houses, furniture, etc. He believed that such a path would bring about a growing weakness or failure in following God's will – leading Friends more and more to live their lives in the eyes of their fellow men rather than in the eyes of God.

Soon he and others spearheaded a movement to revitalize the old Quaker attitudes and practices based on simplicity, so that quite a

reform movement took place – with committees set up in the various levels of Irish meetings (local, monthly, provincial) to visit Friends in their families to enquire into this. Sometimes Edmundson and his fellow reformers seem to have anticipated John Woolman when they became concerned with the pitfalls that come with great business and wealth, raising the question of whether or not your business, your occupation, and your possessions are ruling you or controlling you to such a degree that you are not free to serve the meeting, your family, etc. One of the most interesting cases I ran across was that of a farmer in County Wexford who realized that his land holdings were so large that he was really a prisoner of his own holdings – so that he gave some of his land to a poor Quaker who had none. Edmundson and the reformers felt strongly that too great a business was a possible source of trouble. How could one know the needs and problems of all his workers and deal justly with them? The reports on these visits which came back to the various meetings make very interesting reading.

Over the years I have wrestled with the question of what sort of person William Edmundson was. In the back of my mind there was always the question of his relationship with his children. Why would he name a son "Tryal" and a daughter "Hindrance"? Why were some of his children a disappointment to him, and he to them it would seem? Only three of his seven children signed the Testimony to him which is included at the front of his *Journal*.[13] His Will speaks of his "unhappy son" William, his "unruly son" Samuel, his "foolish and disobedient daughter" Hindrance Seale, and his "rebellious daughter" Anne Moore.[14] Was he too demanding and overbearing as a parent? Was his relationship with these children a reflection of a larger problem? His *Journal* speaks of the opposition he sometimes encountered from Friends, and even one of the Testimonies printed with his *Journal* hints at that situation.

The biggest question raised in my mind concerns the relationship of William Edmundson and Anthony Sharp. Sharp came to Dublin about 1669 and soon became quite prosperous, having many people work for him. With some legal training, his wealth, and his status as a recognized Friends Minister, he soon reached the position of prominence in the Dublin Meeting as well as in the broader community of the area.[15]

William Edmundson was Ireland's first Quaker in length of service, the most widely travelled in Ireland and abroad, able to approach Government officials and be received with respect – as well as being a friend of George Fox. The relationship of these two is somewhat clouded. First of all, Edmundson's *Journal* was constantly being

edited by Edmundson almost up to the time he died. Any references to difficulties which might have been there were removed. The same is not true of Anthony Sharp's *Papers*, which were edited by John Crabb. Crabb removed a lot of references to this unhappy relationship, but he removed some of the material – judging it as showing "Ye frailty of poor human beings."[16]

Anthony Sharp notified Dublin Monthly Meeting and the Provincial Meeting that Edmundson had many times given forth "his personal reflections on honest Friends in publique Meetings." Although warned to forebear, he had continued. Edmundson then brought it before the 1697 General Meeting at Dublin. Ministers and Elders heard the case and did not clear Edmundson. Some of them then called upon Edmundson to consider the effects of these "reflections" which tended not to edify the Church but only to harden Edmundson himself. It was then reported that Edmundson went out of the meeting "without showing the least desire to have any unity or reconciliation with Anthony Sharp" in spite of the fact that Anthony Sharp "forgave him in his heart and Anthony Sharp called to Friends to take notice of it." Edmundson had opposed granting Sharp a certificate when Sharp was to travel to Holland. He also left the Provincial Meeting when Sharp stood up to speak. Also, when Sharp spoke in Mountmellick Meeting, Edmundson sought to hinder him by "standing in part and sitting in part, and now and then (saying) a word." Edmundson was guilty of acting "contrary to the good order of Friends" which required that "Ministers of their own Meetings should give way for strangers that come to Visit them."[17]

We are left to wonder what caused this rift between these two worthy and weighty Friends. Was it Sharp's wealth, great business, and large number of employees? Was it the growing simplicity in Sharp's life and house? Or Sharp's growing importance both within Quakerism and with the political powers that be? Was it Sharp's sympathy with Story and Wilkinson (whom he had known before removing to Dublin)?[18] Did Edmundson feel his position as "Mr. Quaker" was threatened by Sharps' rising power? Did jealousy and envy enter into it? Did it stem in part from Edmundson's approval of John Crabb's 1682 marriage to Elizabeth Hathorne over the objection of Anthony Sharp? With Edmundson's total silence on this subject and Crabb's omitting much related material as he edited Sharp's papers for possible publication (which never happened) we are left guessing at the cause/causes that led to this unfortunate blot on Edmundson's life.

I have chosen to close this talk on William Edmundson by looking at Edmundson's position on the question of Quakers and African

slavery. This is one of the many places where I would really like to have had Edmundson available for questioning – for he made one of his greatest contributions at this point. Just when did his concern for the spiritual and material welfare of enslaved Africans arise? How and why did it arise? How and where was first expressed?

As far as we can tell, Edmundson showed little or no concern for slaves during his first journey to America (1671-1673). George Fox alone, among that large contingent of Quaker missionaries to the West Indies and then to the mainland American colonies, expressed a deep interest in the spiritual welfare of the Blacks – seeing them as beings possessing souls – as people for whom Christ died. He established the practice of holding special religious services for them among the slaves on Quaker-owned plantations. Two other Friends (John Stubbs and Solomon Eccles) later helped him in this work.[19] Fox also called for a humane treatment of the slaves – providing proper clothing, food, etc. He even called for granting them freedom after a lengthy period of service.[20]

Edmundson remained in touch with Fox after their return to their homes following that 1671-1673 journey to America. When Edmundson decided to return to America in 1675, on a second period of religious service, George Fox asked him to make certain that the religious meetings among the Blacks continued to be held. As soon as he reached Barbados, Edmundson laid this concern to Friends, both at the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings. He was able to report to Fox that real progress was being made in this matter. Edmundson's *Journal* shows his own embracing of this work: "I had very good service. . . [in] Negro meetings in Families."[21] In that same year he wrote to Friends back in Ireland that "Many of the Blacks are convinced, and several of them confess the Truth."[22] As far as I know, this is the earliest reference to Black convincement, which at this time (before official membership was recorded) would have made them Friends.

Edmundson's activity among the Blacks brought him under attack, especially from a renegade priest called Ramsey who claimed that Edmundson was really a Jesuit from Ireland who pretended to be a Quaker and who, under the guise of converting Blacks to Christianity, was really making them rebels who would rise up and cut the throats of the whites on the island. Finally Edmunson faced both these charges and Ramsay, so that in an appearance before the Governor and Council he cleared himself of these charges – saying that making them Christians would keep them from rebelling and cutting throats, whereas continuing to keep them in ignorance and under oppression was bound to produce such violent results.[23]

Finally, from the West Indies, Edmundson travelled to the mainland American Colonies, starting in New England and then heading southward. His *Journal* sheds no further light on this matter of slavery, but we do possess copies of two of his letters to American Friends – one from Rhode Island and the other from Maryland, written during his 1675-1676 visit. In both of these he calls upon Quakers to free their slaves – the first Quaker to do so, and, I think, the first person in America to issue such a call. Thomas Drake proclaims that "Edmundson stands first in the British Empire to proclaim Negro slavery a sin."[24]

Kenneth L. Carroll
This lecture was given at Swanbrook, Dublin, on 24 June, 2004.

NOTES

1 William Edmundson, *A Journal of the Life, Travels, Sufferings and Labour of Love in the Work of the Ministry, of that Worthy Elder and faithful Servant of Jesus Christ, William Edmundson*, Second Edition (London: Mary Hinde, 1774), pp. 1-2. I searched many parish registers (and also the International Genealogical Index) but was unable to find marriage records which would have given me the names needed.

2 Edmundson, *Journal*, pp. 3-7.

3 Edmundson, *Journal*, pp. 7-8

4 Edmundson, *Journal*, p. 15.

5 In addition to his brother John, others were convinced: a Corporal at Mullingar (p. 31), Captain William Morris (p. 35). Cf. Kenneth L. Carroll, "Quakerism and the Cromwellian Army in Ireland," *Journal of Friends Historical Society*, LIV (1978), 135-54.

6 Cf. Kenneth L. Carroll, "Thomas Loe, Friend of William Penn and Apostle to Ireland," in J. William Frost and John H. Moore (eds.) *Seeking the Light: Essays in Quaker History in Honor of Edwin B. Bronner* (Wallingford and Haverford, Pa., Pendle Hill Publications and Friends Historical Association, 1986), pp. 61-70.

7 Concerning John Perrot and John Luffe, cf. Kenneth L. Carroll, *John Perrot: Early Quaker Schismatic* (London: Friends Historical Society, 1970) and "Quakers in Venice, 1657-1658," *Quaker History*, 92 (2003), pp. 22-33.

8 Edmundson, *Journal*, pp. 145ff.

9 Concerning this episode, see William C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, Second Edition Prepared by Henry J. Cadbury (Cambridge: The University Press, 1955) pp. 244-273, and Kenneth L. Carroll, "Martha Simmonds, Early Quaker Enigma," *Journal of Friends Historical Society*, LIII (1972), 31-52.

10 Edmundson, *Journal*, p. 38.

[11] Edmundson, *Journal*, pp. 44-45; George Fox, *The Journal of George Fox*, Revised Edition by John Nickalls (Cambridge: The University Press, 1952), pp. 536-50 deal with Fox's 1669 visit to Ireland. Organizing and setting up business meetings (Monthly, Quarterly, etc.) was also one of Fox's main concerns when he visited the West Indies and North America in 1671-1673.

[12] Edmundson was one of 66 Quakers who signed a paper condemning the Wilkinson-Story separation. Cf. *A Testimony Against the 66 Judges call'd Quakers, who writ an Epistle (as some call it) against John Story and John Wilkinson*, (n.p., n.d.), p. 7. See also William C. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism*, second edition prepared by Henry J. Cadbury (Cambridge: The University Press, 1961), pp. 280-323, 360-366, 468-482, and *passim*.

[13] Edmundson, *Journal*, pp. xlviii-xlxi.

[14] Olive C. Goodbody, *Guide to Irish Quaker Records 1654-1860* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1967), item 173.

[15] Cf. Richard L. Greaves, *Dublin's Merchant Quaker, Anthony Sharp and the Community of Friends, 1643-1707* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), which provides a thorough study of Sharp's life, work, and influence.

[16] Anthony Sharp Papers, copied by John Crabb, found in the Friends Historical Library, Dublin. See S.2, p. 36, for this judgment.

[17] Sharp Papers, S.2, pp. 28-31.

[18] Sharp's father-in-law Thomas Crabb was a strong supporter of Wilkinson and Story.

[19] Fox, *Journal*, pp. 601-2.

[20] Cf. Kenneth L. Carroll, "George Fox and Slavery," *Quaker History*, 86 (1997), pp. 16-25 for a fuller discussion of Fox's views.

[21] Edmundson, *Journal*, pp. 31

[22] Edmundson, *Journal*, p. 329.

[23] Edmundson, *Journal*, pp. 82-87.

[24] Thomas E. Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950), pp. 9-10. Edmundson's September 19, 1676, letter was written at Newport in Rhode Island. His second letter was written in Maryland on January 5, 1677, and was directed to "Friends in Maryland and Virginia and other parts in America." His Maryland host was William Southeby who became an early antislavery writer after moving to Pennsylvania. Cf. Kenneth L. Carroll, "William Southeby, Early Quaker Antislavery Writer," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, LXXXIX (1965), pp. 416-27, and "Maryland Quakers and Slavery," *Quaker History*, 72 (1983), 27-42.

AN OLD QUAKER BURIAL GROUND IN BARBADOS

During the second half of the seventeenth century and early part of the eighteenth there was a sizable Quaker community in Barbados, some of whom were converted by missionaries to the island, others being convinced by their neighbours or being already Quakers when they came. Ann Austin and Mary Fisher were the first missionaries in 1655; later visitors to the island included George Fox, William Edmundson, and Thomas Story.

The Quakers in Barbados included several plantation owners, such as Thomas Pilgrim whose house eventually became the residence of the Governors of Barbados, and the Rous family, one of whom married Margaret Fell's daughter. Also prominent were such families as Weekes, Gittens, Morris, and Fretwell. However, the refusal of Quakers to take oaths meant that they were excluded from official positions in government. It was not until 1723, when relatively few Quakers remained, that an act was passed permitting affirmation instead of taking the oath.

Quakers were mistrusted by the Governors and by the Anglican clergy and the plantocracy, who saw them as a threat to the established order, and laws were passed in an effort to suppress them. Although Friends owned slaves, who were considered vital for the running of plantations, they felt that slaves should be educated and should be able to attend Meetings for Worship.

A law was passed in 1676 titled "An Act to Prevent the People called Quakers from bringing Negroes to their Meeting".[1] It stated that any slaves brought to meetings would be forfeited by their owners; half of their value would be awarded to the informer and half to the government. In an attempt to prevent the education of slaves the act specified that school teachers had to take an oath of allegiance; the penalty for contravention being three months imprisonment and the forfeit of 3,000 pounds of sugar.

Members of the establishment accused the Quakers of teaching the slaves to rebel, and this was strongly refuted in a "Letter to the Governor of Barbados" of 1671, attributed to George Fox and others. The letter stated, "This wicked slander (of our endeavouring to make the Negroes rebel) our adversaries took occasion to raise, from our having some meetings amongst the Negroes; for we had several meetings with them in divers plantations, wherein we exhorted them

to justice, sobriety, temperance, chastity, and piety, and to be subject to their masters and governors".[2]

Another contentious issue was the militia. A strong militia had been established for defence of the island and to prevent slave insurrections, and the pacifist convictions of Friends meant that many of them were unwilling to serve in the militia or to pay taxes which were used for that purpose.

A number of Militia Acts were passed, under which Quakers who refused to comply were heavily fined. Joseph Besse in "Sufferings of the People Called Quakers" gives lists of some of the fines imposed on Quakers, rich and poor alike, not only for refusal to serve in the militia and to support the maintenance of forts, but also for refusal to pay taxes in support of the Anglican church and for contravening the Sunday and holiday closing laws. In one particularly onerous period between 1674 and 1680, the fines imposed on Quakers amounted to 611,341 pounds of sugar.[3]

In spite of antipathy over education and treatment of slaves, and over service in the militia, there were still circumstances in which Friends were able to live peaceably and to a certain extent to prosper.

There were six established Meetings, the approximate site of some of which is still known. All of the Meeting Houses eventually fell into disrepair or were finally destroyed by the hurricane of 1780. A burial ground was associated with at least one of the Meeting Houses, which was near Speightstown on the west coast. Friends also met in each other's houses, and were often buried near their homes.

By the mid-eighteenth century there were few Quakers remaining; some had emigrated because of the primitive conditions, some had succumbed to epidemics, and the descendants of the remainder gradually ceased membership. In 1846 the burial ground near Speightstown was deeded by heirs of the Quakers to the Anglican Church and is now part of St. Peter's Parish cemetery. A Quaker burial ground in the Parish of St. Michael near the Governor's residence is recorded with a stone marker and a plaque.

The third known burial ground, possibly on land owned by the Rous family, was described in 1785 by James Cresson and John Parish, Quaker visitors to Barbados, as follows:

> "Close to St. Philip's Church is a large burying-place formerly kept in good order, but now in a very ruinous condition. Here are a number of vaults dug out of the solid stone belonging to the Weeks and other families that formerly were Friends which are very curious and worth going to see."[4]

There was a further description in 1927 by a Barbadian, Eustace M. Shilstone:

> "On reaching the top of the hill which leads to St. Philip's Church, if you turn away to your left and follow the foot-path through the little village, you will soon find yourself standing near the edge of a cliff in the old Quaker burial ground. On one side you will see a stonewall enclosure with an iron gate, through which you may pass by half a dozen steps to the floor of the enclosure several feet below the level of the surrounding ground.
>
> In this graveyard are nine tombs hewn out of the rock, the apertures being closed by stone slabs. One of these slabs bears the letters R.W., another the letter G. These are respectively the family burial places of Ralph Weekes and John Gittens. The other tombs are not marked in any way, but one is usually pointed out as that of the Pilgrim family. Without this graveyard a few broken tombstones lie half buried, and where the cliff has been washed away in places by heavy rains the remains of a few leaden coffins can be seen."[5]

The burial ground was originally proposed in the Will of Richard Settle in 1670. He left a legacy of sugar towards buying "a piece of land for a burying ground for friends upon the Cliff".[6] His step-son, Robert Taylor, mentioned the burial ground as follows: "I also desire that the vault which we have begun in friend's burial place on the Cliff may be finished quickly wherein I desire my father and mother and my former wife's bones with mine own may be decently put as soon as may be and that it will be a burial place for my family as we formerly intended it."[7]

The tradition among current members of both the Weekes and the Gittens families in Barbados is that they are directly descended from the early Quakers, but unfortunately in each case there is a gap in the records, now held at the Barbados National Archives, and they cannot be sure.

The seventeenth century Ralph Weekes, who was described as a surgeon, owned Mangrove Plantation in St. Philip, and was a leading member of Thicketts Meeting. His name appears several times in the records as paying large fines. His son, Ralph Jr., married a non-Quaker and was baptised as an Anglican but continued an association with the Meeting.

John Gittens, who also suffered many fines, had a large family, and he and at least two of his sons owned plantations in St. Philip. In the eighteenth century some members of the family moved to Philadelphia, and the American descendents are well-documented.

The Pilgrims, on the other hand, are able to trace their ancestry back to the seventeenth century brothers Thomas and John. There are now Pilgrims living in Barbados, in England, and in the United States.

Thomas Pilgrim, who came from England and who returned there before his death, was a leading member of the Quakers in Barbados. He was a signatory to several "Addresses to the Governor" which set out the sufferings experienced by the Quakers, and he had to pay large fines on a number of occasions. Besse's *Sufferings* lists one of these fines in detail, with an interesting comment at the end.

> "*Thomas Pilgrim*, for not appearing and not sending Men in Arms, *80 l. 5s. 9d.* for opening shop on the Day called *Christmas-day 20 1. 5s.* and for Church-claims and Priests Wages, *29 l. 13s. 1d.* In all *130 l. 3s. 10d.*
> Among these Distresses the Spoilers seized the principal Negro Woman he had in his family, carrying her away from her Husband, Children and Grand-Children; though her Master would not have separated her so from them for any Money whatsoever."[8]

The Pilgrims in Barbados are descended from Thomas's brother John. According to them, John decided to take the oath, and become a government official so he did not officially join the Quakers, but participated in both Quaker and Anglican services.

The will of Robert Pilgrim, dated 1761, states "It is my desire and I shall be thankfull to my executrix hereinafter mentioned to deposit my body with decent burial in the Family Vault in Quakers Yard near Saint Phillips Church with my brothers and sisters."[9] His wife Elizabeth was his executrix, and one of the witnesses to the will was Ralph Weekes, probably grandson of the first Ralph Weekes. The burial ground was therefore definitely still in use in 1761.

The burial ground is still identifiable today, although there are houses beside it and it has been filled by soil, rubbish, and stones from the boundary wall which have fallen in. Initial clearing work has revealed four of the vaults including the one with the initials of Ralph Weekes who died in 1700.

The present owner of the property is very receptive to having the site restored and to having visitors come to see it.

A committee has been formed to raise money for clearing out the site, restoring the vaults, and rebuilding the entrance gate and surrounding wall.

Maris Corbin

This is an expanded version of an article which appeared in the American publication, *Quaker Life*, September 2004

NOTES

1 Richard Hall, *Acts Passed in the Island of Barbados, from 1643 to 1762.* (London, Printed for Richard Hall, 1764),97.

2 *The Journal of George Fox*, ed. George Nickalls, "To the Governor and Assembly at Barbados, 1671" (London, Cambridge University Press, 1952), pp. 602-606.

3 Joseph Besse, *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers.* Facsimile of part of the 1753 edition (York, Sessions Book Trust, 2001), Vol. 3., pp. 278-351.

4 Quaker File, Barbados Museum Library, typescript of an article from *The Friends Quarterly Examiner* No. CIV (October) 1892.

5 Eustace M. Shilstone, "Some Early Records of the Friends in Barbados", *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society* Vol. XXXIV, No. 1 (May 1971), p. 43.

6 James C. Brandow, *Genealogies of Barbados Familes* (Baltimore, MD, Genealogical Publishing Services, 1983), 501.

7 Brandow, *Genealogies of Barbados Families*, 503.

8 Besse, *Sufferings*, 338.

9 Barbados National Archives, Last Will and Testament of Robert Pilgrim dated 5 July 1761, RB6/17 p. 157.

THE QUAKER FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY DIGEST INDEXING PROJECT

The Quaker Family History Society (QFHS) and the Friends Historical Society (FHS) have two things in common:

- they are both celebrating anniversaries, though in your case it is much more important at 100 years than ours at 10 years
- they both cater for Friends and non-Friends

The QFHS

It started 10 years ago with members joining from autumn 1993, the Society's existence becoming formal on 1 January 1994, when it gained membership of the Federation of Family History Societies, and the founding AGM in June 1994.

The objects of the society include the promotion and encouragement of the study of British and Irish Quaker family history and genealogy. A magazine, "Quaker Connections" is published three times a year and a web-site is maintained (www.qfhs.co.uk), from which there are links to the Friends House Library and Britain Yearly Meeting web-sites among others.

In the ten years of its existence the QFHS has had about 500 members of whom about 200 are current.

The Digest Indexing Project

At a one-day conference at Reading in October 1997 Ted Milligan, Robert Clayton and Harold Greenwood outlined ideas for indexing the Digests of Births, Marriages and Burials. Harold had already, single-handed, transcribed the digests for Essex Quarterly Meeting; they were printed out in strict order of surname, forenames and date, unlike the digests in which the sequence is apt to be confusing. Thus there came into existence genuine indexes, although they contain all the data from the digest entries. They have not been checked against the digests, however.

The QFHS was so impressed with what one person had achieved that it was resolved to adopt Harold's work and, with many willing volunteer hands, complete the coverage of England and Wales as

soon as possible. This clearly needed funding that the society could ill afford, but it received, through Ted Milligan's good offices, a magnificent grant from the Edith M. Ellis grant.

The planned process

1. Photocopy digest pages from the microfilm in Friends House Library (Harold had worked direct from a copy of the microfilm on short-term loan from the Society of Genealogists)
2. Transcribe the entries at the volunteer's home into computer
3. Print out the result
4. Check the print-out against the photocopies
5. Resolve queries and make corrections
6. Publish

The actual process

1. The copying was started by Malcolm Thomas but was complicated by the replacement of the microfilm printer at Friends House Library by computerised equipment which took some mastering. Malcolm's retirement came before he had completed copying the Suffolk digests (I believe he was doing this in his spare time) and also before any QFHS volunteer had learned how to use the equipment. However, with Josef Keith's invaluable help, we now have two volunteers who have been successful in making satisfactory copies, one of whom (our honorary secretary) lives within easy reach of the library and is doing a wonderful job.
2. The transcript is a laborious task and it can take half-an-hour to input one page of digest. The data is entered much as found, the names and dates exactly so, but with some abbreviation in the residence and description columns in order to save space.
3. Printing out the data is not as simple as one might expect – it has to fit on to A4-sized paper, using type that is not too much of a strain on the eyes of the checker. It must be borne in mind that most of the digest pages are twice the size of A4, and the digest clerks used quite small handwriting.
4. The checking is a tedious job but one for which it has been easier to find volunteers than for data entry. It is also the one task which has turned out to be very much as expected.

5. Queries have been resolved by reference to the microfilm if possible. In some details that is not sufficient, particularly the book and page numbers which provide a link to the original registers in the National Archives, as they were sometimes hidden from the camera in the binding of the digest book. The Librarian at FHL has kindly allowed us to refer in such cases to the actual book; this is also necessary where the ink has faded and the legibility of the microfilm is inadequate. Researchers are always advised to get back to primary sources. The registers are as near as we can get to primary, although some of the entries were copies or made retrospectively; the digests can be considered to be secondary and our indexes must be considered tertiary – any user ought to verify important information against a better source.
6. Publication has also presented problems. Harold's Essex indexes are an inch thick and they weigh almost three pounds – and that is for only a medium-sized digest. So publication on paper seemed too unwieldy and also too expensive in terms of postage. Microfiche seemed the obvious choice instead, but there are several drawbacks; few members have microfiche viewers, many people find consulting microfiche tricky, they have to be produced by professional, expensive, bureaux and quantities have to be ordered and stocked before sale. As more and more people have home computers, which now always have devices for reading CD-ROMs, this method of publication emerged as the best option. The size and weight of the Suffolk CD are negligible – much bigger digests could be accommodated on the same sized disk. The disks can be created by us and when required, so no stocks need to be kept. If the need arises a revised version of one already published can easily be produced. The drawback of course is that a computer is needed to use the CD, but they are readily available in public libraries nowadays.

The prospects for completion of the project

It seems that if we produce indexes to two Quarterly Meetings a year we shall be doing quite well. There are 26 QMs to be done. Then we can produce a consolidated index, which is the ultimate objective. After that there are the entries for 1837 onwards. We are not short of work!

The registers and digests – some thoughts arising from coordinating the project

After producing guidance for our volunteers I wonder:

- what guidance was given, and by whom, to those responsible for making the original register entries; how often did it change (there are periods when much effort was expended on recording the parish in which the event took place, others when causes of death were given). Perhaps delving into minute books would provide some answers.
- who designed the digests? the person who oversaw the compilation is known – did he also design them?
- what guidance was given to the digest clerks?
- how on earth did they manage to do it, even if their attempts to bring together in sequence the entries from several Monthly Meetings were attended with varying success?

Discoveries in the digests

- there are errors in the digests, some simple but others not, such as a marriage entry which gives the wrong person as the spouse; there must surely also be omissions (as there are known to be in the registers)
- there are duplications – more than one entry identical in every detail – which we shall omit from the indexes
- there are entries made in the wrong digest, such as birth among the burials, or under the wrong initial letter of the surname – which we shall also omit from the indexes
- there are puzzling comments added by the digest clerk, such as "a true copy of the original" (perhaps a detail was seen to be impossible or inconsistent with another) or "crossed in the original" (perhaps reference to the register would explain these)
- there are curious forenames, such as "Freezer" (surnames, of course, were often pressed into service but that does not look like one) and Appalinas (which does not sound like a classical or biblical name to me)
- there are some odd causes of death, perhaps the oddest so far being "died by a fall out of a door of a chamber" – I keep wondering what happened.

Volunteers

The whole project depends on volunteers. They are vital and without plenty of them the work will take a very long time to finish. More of them are always welcome. They are the salt of the earth – unlike the dietary sort, we cannot have too much of it.

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Paper given at Friends House, London, on Saturday 20 September 2003, to celebrate the centenary of the Friends Historical Society.

EDITOR: Howard M Knight informs me that two CDs have been published. That for Suffolk has been available since 2003 and that for Norfolk can now be ordered. It is expected that Essex will follow in 2005 but, as at January 2005, 24 Quarterly Meetings remain to be completed. The need for volunteers remains essential for the Project to make good progress. Please contact Howard M. Knight at the above address.

CURRENT AND FUTURE QUAKER HISTORICAL RESEARCH IN IRELAND

All history is contemporary history
or
Today's news is tomorrow's history
or
Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose

Introduction

I take it as an honour bestowed on Friends in Ireland, past and present, for me to be invited as a speaker today. The Friends Historical Society deserves to have more Irish members; they can, I believe, be counted in single figures at present. We must recruit a few more.

The FHS during its 100 years has been of value to Irish Friends chiefly through the *Journal*. This has been vehicle for topics of Irish interest but more than that, the *Journal* has given us a broad picture of the earlier writings and activities of Friends, not just in Britain and Ireland but in Europe, America and world-wide. I treasure my complete collection of the *Journals* and supplements.

For myself, I have no background in historical matters. My training and career was as a veterinary surgeon which profession claims to be an art as well as a science, an appealing combination. Having inherited my father's Quaker books, I was stimulated and inspired by the message within them. They have led me to delve into Irish Quaker history.

You may disagree with what I have to say. Certainly, some Irish Friends would not express themselves as I do. So, please be prepared to disagree with me as we engage in our study of history, our search for the truth, our search for Truth.

Irish Friends

A plane is preparing to land at Belfast International Airport. The message to passengers comes over the loudspeaker:

'Please fasten your safety belts and put back your time-pieces three hundred years'.

All over Ireland there is a tendency to live in the past, to revel in it or to revile it. Friends also have the same interest in bygones. The details of 1641, 1690, 1798, 1846, 1916 etc. are continually being analysed and re-evaluated in the public media. I doubt very much if the people of Great Britain are anything like as interested in their past.

The original Friends in Ireland were exclusively settlers, recently arrived from England or Scotland to take up opportunities in a devastated land from which the Gaelic residents had been forcibly displaced. Those early Friends in Ireland were aliens in an often hostile environment. This was a total contrast from the position in England where Friends, despite persecution, had the comfort of living in a village or town where their roots were deep. Probably, most of them had families stretching back hundreds of years in that place.

In 1903 Ireland was in the United Kingdom; King Edward VII was sovereign. Friends in Ireland looked to the Society in Britain for inspiration and guidance. Many of the wealthier Quaker families went for education to Bootham or The Mount. Literature from London Yearly Meeting influenced the thinking of Irish Friends, and though not subordinate, we were largely under the wing of London Yearly Meeting.

For most of the 20th century there has been a growing determination among Irish Friends to assert their Irishness, to define Quakerism with an Irish slant and to recall those characters and events in Irish Quaker history which exemplify that distinctiveness. The fraternal links with Friends in Britain remain strong, but parallel with self-government at a political level there has been Irish Quaker self-assertiveness, in the best sense of that word, I hope.

Recent and current research

Some areas of research which have recently been studied by visitors to the archives at Dublin or Lisburn are as follows:

The place of women in Irish society
Schooling and education
Famine 1845-48
1798 rebellion
Temperance movement
Anti-slavery
Samplers
Business and commercial life
Shipbuilding and railways

Milling industry
Refugees and relief in World War II
Biographical studies on many, for example, Bulmer Hobson, Thomas & Anna Maria Haslam, Mary Leadbeater

Of these subjects, Irish women's studies has been the one most frequently recurring. With the development of equal rights and opportunities for women there has been considerable interest in Friends archives and library. Women's business meetings' minute books and the writings and records on Irish Quaker women have been useful resources for students, graduate and post-graduate.

All over Ireland there are local history societies whose members, as untrained enthusiasts, piece together what facts they can about their neighbourhoods. If that locality had a one-time Quaker meeting then someone is likely to have written a magazine article, a pamphlet or even a doctoral thesis on the Quaker activities and legacy in the area. I could name men and women in at least fifteen villages or towns who, although not Friends, have used our records and writings to prepare informative articles. These are all the more telling as they are written by those on the outside looking in. May I name a couple of them?

I think of Patrick Cassidy of Cootehill, where the meeting folded up about 1900. His parents bought a farm previously occupied by the Whitfield family, members of the meeting. Young Patrick heard talk of those Quakers and determined to learn more about their ways and their impact on the district. His writings and lectures have added a new dimension to our knowledge of Cootehill Quakers.

Muriel Bell of south Co. Derry provided a home for an aunt who retired back to Ulster after a lifetime in Sheffield where she had joined Friends. Muriel, as a local historian, became interested in the long-defunct meetings of Counties Antrim and Derry. Her local knowledge along with her researches in public archives has resulted in several articles on these previously neglected areas.

If current and recent research was only being done by Friends then there would be little for me to report. But the word 'Quaker' in many parts of Ireland is like open sesame. It conjures up a picture of charitable generosity free of religious stipulations, dating from an earlier age. So, research on Quakers has an appealing ring about it. It is embarrassing to realise that we are sometimes assumed to be extinct, and that our name is unjustifiably sanctified. A better sense of proportion is found in the perceptive comments by some researchers from outside the Society, such as:

Sister Phil Kilroy who pulls no punches in her comments on Irish Quaker women ministers in the 1680-1740 period, and the tension between their calling to travel under concern and their husbands' wishes.

Heather Crawford has opened up a whole world in her study of Quaker samplers. She shows how colour and design were artistically used at a time when Friends officially discouraged these gifts as vanity.

Sister Carmel Bourke wrote inspirationally on the sweet influences of a Quaker foster-mother on young Catherine McAuley who becames the foundress of the Order of the Sisters of Mercy in Dublin in 1831. The writer suggests that several characteristics of the Order stem from Quaker principles.

Margaret O'Hare puzzles over the rise and collapse of Quaker meetings in Kildare and Carlow in the 18th and 19th centuries. She contends that being strongly conscious of their English origins, Friends failed to shake off the shackles of that inheritance. Their demise was as a result of their failure to embrace the Irish culture.

I must, however, impress on you that there are half a dozen or so Irish Friends engaged in recent or current research. Ken Carroll from the USA has been visiting Ireland each summer for umpteen years. He is a prime researcher, writer, lecturer and happy historian. He has unearthed some lesser-known aspects of our history and his example has encouraged us in our own fields of study.

Richard Harrison has been the most prolific of writers on Irish Quaker matters in recent years. His interests have been mostly on the business and commercial activities of Friends in Cork and Dublin. His *Biographical Dictionary of Irish Quakers* (1997) gives short paragraphs on 300 men and women over three centuries. Publication of a further book on biographies by him is imminent and awaited with interest.

Research is necessary prior to any worthwhile publication, three of which I want to name. The first is the *Friendly Guide to Quakerism* (2003), written by four young Irish Friends and intended for the youth market. It is to be circulated to all secondary schools in Ireland, north and south, and entailed careful study. Secondly, the drafting of a revised book of *Christian Experience for Ireland Yearly Meeting* since 1999 has caused the committee of twelve to trawl through writings of Irish Friends, ancient and modern, to find useful quotations. A third publication is David Butler's volume on *Quaker Meeting Houses in Ireland* which is to be available in 2004. Patient work has been done in Irish Quaker archives and in public repositories by him and his local

volunteers. This will provide an authoritative text on a subject previously unaddressed.

The major use to which Irish Friends archives are put remains the last for me to name. I refer to genealogy. Surely we Friends have not kept careful records since the 1670's so that pedigrees can be constructed? Is it right that the precious time of volunteer staff be spent on the self-indulgence of a family tree? Should we direct all such enquiries to professional genealogists who work on a commercial basis? Do the members of our meetings who have no Quaker pedigree feel demeaned by our encouragement of genealogy? I do not mean to be hurtful to the Quaker Family History Society. I myself know what it is to be smitten by the urge to discover ancestors and how time-consuming it can be.

Recent practical assistance towards research

At the Historical Library in Dublin funding was found to get the index card information put on computer in 2000. This provides cross-referencing of subject headings to make searches easier. Also at the Library over the past few years all available Certificates of Removal have been put on computer. This has amounted to over 14,000 entries. Work is now proceeding on a similar database of disownments. As yet these computerised lists have not been made available to other libraries but in time they may be offered for sale as a CD-Rom. In Ulster a Friend has worked to create an index of names from the birth, marriage and burial registers of the Province. Also, by sifting through early minute books he has extracted names which have been indexed for easy reference.

THE FUTURE

Assistance for researchers

Facilities which are scheduled to become available soon or which it is hoped might be achieved:

1. A new premises in Dublin for Yearly Meeting offices and the Historical Library has been built on a site shared with the new Bloomfield hospital. It is situated six miles south of the city centre at Stocking Lane, Dublin 14, convenient to the M50 ring road. The new Library will include reading room with computer facilities for visitors, office for curator and staff, enlarged strong room for archive material and a store room. This purpose-built suite of rooms promises splendid long-term prospects for

improving facilities for visitors and enquirers. The new Library is expected to be ready by March 2005. As the staff are volunteers, the hours of opening are likely to be limited to Thursdays only.

2. A List to be made of items held at various sites other than Dublin or Lisburn Quaker archives. In Ireland, quite different from Britain, all Friends minute books and registers are held in archives owned and managed by the Society. However, much important material is held in public or private archives throughout Ireland and in Great Britain.
3. Continuation of computerisation of disownments at the Historical Library in Dublin.
4. Microfilming of minute books and registers held in the Historical Library in Dublin so that researchers do not need to visit the LIbrary and handle fragile original manuscripts.
5. Transcription of minute books. Visitors from Britain are surprised to find that not one minute book of Irish Friends has been transcribed. This painstaking work would allow researchers to read the document without the fun and frustration of deciphering the handwriting. It would also allow an index to be provided for the minute book and would reduce the amount of handling of fragile manuscript volumes.
   The suggestions by Ted Milligan of a Quaker Record Society might address the present zero position regarding Irish minute books. As a start, there is a likelihood of a Friend transcribing the first Ulster Province minute book, 1675-1693.

Future Topics

My personal ideas on what might usefully be researched by Friends and the general public are limited by subjective vision. Who knows what will be the flavour of the year in 2008?

One of the best-known characteristics of Friends is our attempt to be a peaceable people. Many of the public, while longing for peace, cannot figure out how an unarmed lifestyle can be practised consistently. So, a critical study of Irish Quakers life and witness in our disputed and ravaged land should be made.

The situations that Friends have lived through in Ireland since 1654 have more parallels in America than in Britain. The recurring

outbreaks of civil war and unrest give ample scope for investigating the penalties suffered and the compromises made by Irish Friends. It is too simplistic to quote the 1660 Declaration to Charles II and to assert that Friends in every generation since have adhered to it unswervingly. They have not. Honesty demands that the hard questions are faced.

In 1688-90 William Edmundson asked for government intervention and protection.

In 1739 after the malicious burning of Timahoe meeting-house, Friends sought redress through a government proclamation.

After the 1798 rebellion Friends listed their losses but were careful not to accept government compensation, only to rely on collections by Friends. Their position of integrity caused them to reason that, as they had not taken up arms, they could not accept government money.

However, in the recent 1969-93 troubles Friends had no compunction about calling the police when in danger or taking state money as compensation for damage to their property.

In World War I quite a few young men from prominent Quaker families joined up voluntarily, there being no conscription in Ireland. Why did they do so? Rupert Bell of Waterford, whose parents were elders in the meeting, joined the British army to the regret of his mother. As he left for the front her prayer for him was that he would not have to kill anyone. Her prayer was answered in a poignant way when he was shot on his first days in the trenches.

Other assumptions about Irish Quakers to be investigated and challenged are firstly, the myth of the philanthropic Friend who went about doing good in an altruistic way. Secondly there is the myth of the mild tolerant Quaker who would not criticize any Roman Catholic practices. George Fox and Thomas Story wrote strongly of their feelings about superstition and idolatry when visiting Ireland. Friends in Co. Wexford experienced intimidation in that undisciplined Catholic area in 1798. Until the 1960's Friends in many parts of rural Ireland had to conform to some extent within the prevailing Catholic culture. Since then overwhelming change has taken place. Maybe someone will work on the ongoing story of Friends, first living among an oppressed and down-trodden Catholic population, and then adjusting to the stage of Catholic dominance and now to the present position when secularism rules.

In 1851 a young Quaker woman was so incensed at the inner rottenness of many Irish Friends lives that she wrote a book, *Quakerism: the story of my life.* Sarah Greer was her name and her

stories are a terrible indictment of the Society of that time. Now, after 150 years, her book deserves to be critically analysed.

Were her allegations true? How true were they? How effective was the book in purifying the Society of its hypocrisy and hambug? Was it just coincidence that within 15 years of its publication the rigid reasons for disownment were being removed. New blood was joining the Society and the schools were being opened to others than Friends. Could this book be a subject for study? Has it any significance for us today?

The curator of the Historical Library in Dublin has recently told me that in the last 20 years there has scarcely been one enquirer wishing to study the spiritual basis of Quaker activities. Although some Irish Friends such as Maurice Wigham and Richard Harrison have addressed that subject in their books and pamphlets, I believe that there would be a warm welcome for someone outside the Society to critically investigate the basis of our faith over the 350 years.

At the same time I am not sure that this can be done. Here is what my headmaster and mentor, John M. Douglas said in his presidential address to the FHS in 1956:

> 'whoever attempts the history of a religious group faces a perennial difficulty... The words, expressions, books, all these can be studied; also the effects of their worship upon their social and economic culture, and their relations with other religous groups, and with the state. But the essential thing in Quakerism, the group of Friends waiting humbly together in silence on the presence of the Eternal Living Christ, offers no scope for historical writing.'

Our Meetings for worship are thankfully not being recorded yet, though I have sat through one which was taped on video. We depend on the Holy Spirit, we receive a message and absorb what we can of it.

I believe that we are sustained by a continuous thread reaching back to the first Friends in the 1650s, back beyond them through the puritans, the monks of the mediaeval church, the intrepid men and women who carried the good news in their hearts and on their lips, back to Christ himself who never wrote a book.

Historians are right to revere the written word and demand a reference for every statement but if all history is contemporary, that includes what is passed on by word of mouth.

Can we acknowledge the oral tradition and affirm that anecdotal evidence has real value? What is more engaging then an old Friend

round the fire on a wintry night, relating the stories that his Granny told him when he was young, the yarns that are too personal to write down or speak into a microphone? The atmosphere must be right for those gems to be shared.

I know a man who at bedtime would tell his children stories. Often the children would ask him,

'Daddy, is that a true story?'

His reply was,

'Well, there's a lot of truth in it'.

W. Ross Chapman

Paper given at Friends House, London on Saturday 20 September 2003, to celebrate the centenary of the Friends Historical Society

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Seekers Found: Atonement in Early Quaker Experience by Douglas Gwyn, Wallingford. Pa: Pendle Hill, 2000, pp. 420, £15.00.

'The historical atonement of Christ witnessed in the gospel was verified to Friends in two primary ways: in their personal experience of reconciliation with God through the harrowing daily cross of Quaker convincement, and in their social practices' (Gwyn, p. 33).

'And the dreadful power of the Lord fell on me with power and terror...and then I saw the cross of Christ, and stood in it, and the new man was made... and the holy law of God was written upon my heart...' (Howgill, mid 1650s, p. 232).

Gwyn's stated aim is 'to discover the larger historical dynamic behind the seeking phenomon as we know it today.' He opens with an overview of American seeking from the 1960's to the present time in all its diversity, suggesting that a less Eurocentric and less androcentric worldview were major formative influences. He argues that the resulting normlessness was the catalyst for a new tendency to 'shop around' most religions. Two polarities emerged: those regarding themselves as 'spiritual', rejecting exclusive truth claims; and those questioning for personal fulfillment in submission to God's will, the evangelicals. The main thesis of this book is that 'religious and moral reconstruction in America will necessarily involve some kind of atonement across present battle lines' (p. 33.).

He traces the origins of these present dynamics right back to the destabilisation of the Holy Roman Empire, from which geniuses such as Meister Eckhart blossomed (1324), and to Wycliff and others thrown up by the current hotbed of free-thinking versus bigotry. He goes on to offer a most lucid progressive panorama of the various seeking groups before, during and after the English civil war, the social, religious and political forces that shaped them, and the vicissitudes of their intense expectations and disappointments. Further, he zooms in on key figures whose beliefs and practices were fundamental to the modulations of succeeding or similar contemporary waves.

The following chapters give a fascinating insight into the thoughts of such unfettered thinkers in the context of their day, whose innovative ideas and humbling courage it is easy to take for granted. To instance but a few: Hans Denck, an Anabaptist (p. 49), preached the presence of the

Word of God in all humans in all times and places (1524); Caspar Schwenckfeld (b. 1489), initially an adherent of Luther, regarded the sacrament of the Lord's supper, like Indulgences as a passport to cheap grace. His pivotal tenet was that one must wait for the 'new work of the Spirit'. Franck held that 'Christ is equally close to every nation, even if called heathen' (1539, p. 60).

Much attention is given to the upheavals of the Reformation, the rise of the Puritans, the pendulum swings between hope and despair during the Civil War, and the proliferation of seeking groups such as the Independents, Presbyterians, Baptists and Levellers, whose hopes for social and legal reforms were inextricably mixed up with the imminent expectation of the kingdom of God and a new apostolic age of the Spirit (also expected by Schwenckfeld), to be ushered in politically. As in America of the mid 20th century (see ch1) a sort of religious market ensued, with some erstwhile free-thinking groups becoming increasingly coercive (Puritans and Presbyterians), some freer but too Bible-based for others' tastes (Baptists), followed by others who in their despair and disillusion equated good and evil (Ranters), and yet others who felt separate communes were the solution (Diggers).

From these movements emerged protagonists whose daring philosophies challenged established thought in a way hard to grasp nowadays. One must understand seeking as a 'trajectory not a defined position' (Gwyn p.97). He invites us to follow the development from one position to another as political disappointments necessitated succeeding rethinks. From the belief of Schwenckfeld that the Church must avoid all institutional structure till the revised apostolic form is revealed, we see Saltmarsh's revolutionary claim that the apostles had light for their times, but 'who cannot think that we are rising to that age where God shall pour his Spirit upon all flesh' (1642, p.99), ie. a form of progressive revelation. This was surely the ultimate writing on the wall for the long entrenched socio-economic power structures used by the Church to dominate and control the laity.

And so, after a long gestation period, to the gradual birth of the Quaker movement itself, viewed now in an environment of sincere but multifarious seeking groups. Amongst these, Fox, disallusioned with the apparent superficiality of the Church's practices, relentlessly sought for fresh vision.

'I had forsaken all the priests...for I saw there was none among them that could speak to my condition' (1647), p.217). From this maelstrom of

misery eventually bubbled up 'groans' of the Spirit, which God did open to me...in which Spirit is the true waiting upon God for redemption of the body and of the whole creation' (Ro.8: 18-27). Note the change of preposition and emphasis: it no longer waiting *for* God and the physical inauguration of this Kingdom, but waiting *upon* God, in service arising from the Spirit of redemption. Gwyn holds that this internalization of hope was the main reason for the survival of the Quaker group when others became marginalised.

It was virtually a sine qua non to early Quakers that this internalization of the Kingdom of God and the apocalypse, formerly awaited as a political deliverance, entailed an almost visceral experience of the appropriation of the cross and the suffering of Christ. As John Crook: 'I found by certain experiences that until man be truly crucified with Christ he cannot bear a true testimony for Christ' (p.287, mid 1650's); or Dewsbury: 'The cry of my condemned soul was great, and could not be satisfied, but thirsted after Christ to save me freely through His Blood...who appeared to my soul' (p.225, 1645). The early Quakers drew heavily from the Gospel of John in their emphasis on the concepts of light (Jn12:36), seed (Jn10:34), and truth (Jn14:6). Most would not take issue with that, nor with the internalising of the Kingdom. But the insistence on personal identification, often with audible moans and near hysteria, with Christ's physical suffering, with all the undertones of sacrifice and propitiation, is often considered today not just unsavoury but smacking of superstition. (It is sometimes thought these themes occur only in Hebrews. But see Mk10:45 – Christ our ransom; IICor5:14 – 'One died for all, then were all dead'; Ro8:3 – Christ as a sin-offering; ICor5:6-8 – Christ as our Passover Lamb, etc.)

First persecution caused divisions and the the urgent need in more settled times for greater structure and organization. But the early Quakers' experience of atonement was firstly with their God and then with their fellow Friends and the world. Gwyn defines Atonement in Ch1 as a two-way seeking with God. Christ 'came to seek and to save' (Lk19:10); 'Seek and ye shall find' (Lk11:9). In the final chapter he seeks a way of applying these principles to our modern multicultural society, based on an intriguing exposition of the meaning of the Hebrew word for 'truth' (amn). This word implies a vital continuum of 'faithfulness', in contra-distinction to 'truth' as against falshood'. The only way to atonement and reconciliation of relationships in the spirit of early Friends is not by trying to validate or invalidate others' particular truth claims, but by respecting their and our faithfulness through service to the inner light.

This book was an eye-opener to me. Gwyn's erudition, his historical perspective, and his honest attempt to apply our founding momentums to current circumstances in a relevant way, is a breath of fresh air.

Gill Lowther

***The Light in Their Consciences: The Early Quakers in Britain 1646-1666.* By Rosemary Moore, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000, pp. 314. £27-95.**

Anyone interested in the history of Quaker origins has reason to be grateful for this carefully researched book. Not every Ph.D. dissertation provides the basis for a satisfactory and worthwhile publication, but Rosemary Moore has written an accessible and scholarly account of a period of rapid religious change. *The Light in Their Consciences* is based on a methodical theological analysis of all the surviving Quaker tracts of the period, which must have been something of an ordeal. As the author wryly comments: "Researching the Quaker pamphlet literature is sometimes a tedious occupation" (page 213). The verbal aggression, vehement threats of individual and communal judgement and "railing" to which the first generation of Quakers frequently resorted gives little hint of the peaceableness which would later become a characteristic of Friends. If modern Quakers may regret the disappearance of Quaker radicalism, few would perhaps relish the company of such co-religionists today.

Rosemary Moore is particularly helpful in tracing the Quakers to the disgrace and persecution of James Nayler, the end of the Republic, and the challenge represented by John Perrot. She shows how the shared experience of persecution under the restored monarchy encouraged Quakers to reappraise their relations to other dissenting Christians, and perhaps made their own Christian identity more explicit. Christians with a high regard for biblical theology will be puzzled by the speed with which apocalyptic vehemence derived from the New Testament was transformed into a "spiritual" religion of an almost Gnostic complexion. In the seventeenth century however it seems to have been easier to combine such apparently diverse traditions. John Everard, the Anglican divine much persecuted and imprisoned by Archbishop Laud, is an example of the same phenomenon. Did any of his London congregation eventually make their home among Quakers?

Such a question points to the most serious weakness of Rosemary Moore's presentation. Her decision to separate the history of the early

Quaker network from the theological analysis has one unfortunate consequence. Far from the Truth arriving as news from nowhere, it seems to have been already familiar in several of the areas where it is first recorded. Often the Quaker missionaries were preaching to the convinced, who recognised their own beliefs in the words of strangers. This means that the local origin of particular Quaker documents is of crucial importance in understanding the development of this religious movement. Because the theological analysis is conducted in terms of a Quakerism, which is undifferentiated in its local origins, it is very difficult to judge the event to which the religion of the East Midlands and the Lake District was identical to that of Bristol and London. The permeability of Quaker Meetings must always been one of their most distinctive features. While most preachers doubtless attract congregations of the like minded, the Quaker missionaries had to listen and occasionally to endure the ministry of their audience. It is the merit of Rosemary Moore's splendid book, that she enables us to overhear them.

Graham Shaw

***The Beginnings of Quakerism in 17th Century Ireland* by John M. Douglas. Published by the Historical Committee of the Religious Society of Friends (Dublin, 2004). No price given).**

The original address given by John M. Douglas (1889-1966) during the Tercentenary Conference at Friends' School Lisburn in 1954, was not originally designed for printing. It has, however, been transcribed here by Glynn Douglas and his wife Shirley Douglas, from a tape. Something of the rationale for its printing is revealed in Christopher Moriarty's note at the beginning of this twenty page booklet. It is seen as being an appropriate contribution to 'the 350th anniversary of the establishment of Friends in Ireland' and 'to the fact that John M. Douglas was a person who exemplified many of the core values of Quakerism.'

On one perspective the paper is valuable as a historical curiosity, and does not embody what might be appropriate in a longer, more formal scientific study. But, the simple, innocuous presentation should not mislead. The address holds its worth. It was given in interaction with an audience, and it could not be expected that the subtleties of communication in such a unique situation would reproduce in the bald printed text. What remains, however, shows a depth of thought behind the original presentation. It is clearly a distillation of John M. Douglas's

preoccupations, and its themes closely parallel his 1955 presentation to the Friend's Historical Society, when he served as its president.

If John M. Douglas's brother James G. Douglas (1887-1954), took up a form of service to Ireland as a Senator, he himself, no less, served his country through teaching. This emerges in this address and its themes are filtered through his own personality. He has a natural suspicion of ideological nationalism, an engagement with the issues of peace and a desire to transmit a sense of connection with the wide human race. Nevertheless, he sought to understand how similar or different Irish and English themes emerged in the Quaker history of the two islands. He notes the changing ideas of nationality and that they continue to change.

Having taught in places as far apart as Hoshangabad in India, and Friends School in Waterford and Lisburn, John M. Douglas was a well-known and respected teacher. His pedagogical interests are noticeable in this address where he is speaking with clarity, anxious to be understood, but not talking down to his hearers in any patronizing manner. Discussing forms of the church that might have occurred to a thoughtful seventeenth-century searcher he prompts us to a response about the question of salvation.

The opportunities for service that John M. Douglas had, show also in his concern to fit Ireland's piece into the jigsaw of Europe. Such an idea might have seemed novel to some during the 1950's. His own experience in the Friends Ambulance Unit implies a personality-tested concern with the Peace Testimony. With an understated depth of meaning he shows how Friends in seventeenth and eighteenth century Ireland – to say nothing of more recent times – had personally and painfully experienced that Testimony in a way which few English Friends had. He had assembled much material towards a study of 1798, which was used by Glynn Douglas towards *'Friends in 1798'* (Dublin, 1998).

People generally – and many Friends in particular, speak blandly and even dismissively of 'history' but rarely enquire what it is. John M. Douglas however, clearly sought to understand what history is and why it is important to everyone whether consciously or otherwise. His interest in historiography emerges on several occasions as it does particularly in his Presidential Address – and certainly, there, he raises some very pertinent questions not only about the function of history but about the specifically Irish aspects of history. He starts by suggesting a conventional classification of history as 'dead' and contrasting it with 'religion' seen as offering empowerment for the present and the future. There is the common proposition, also, to history as useful for providing

the material for exemplars. This address is an encouragement to consider why anyone should be concerned with history, and leaves a way open for the hearer to respond.

Richard S. Harrison

This review has previously appeared in the December - January 2005 issue of the Irish Quaker journal, *The Friendly Word*, Volume 21 Issue 6, p13.

***Seekers and Finders (Quakers in High Wycombe, 1650 to 2000).* A Brief History by Hugh and Joyce Mellor. William Sessions Ltd., York. £8.00.**

The sun streams through my study window. I sit alert at my computer writing this review. The phone rings and a friend checks that all is well for our Friday meeting. I insert 10 a.m. in my diary. I am alive. Life is happening all around me, now, vividly.

This particular moment will not be worth recounting in 300 years' time. But there are many moments happening in the fullness of life today that will be worth remembering. And the hallmark of a good history book is one that recalls the action of past years with the intensity with which it was lived. Hugh and Joyce Mellor have done just that. And that is why 'Seekers and Finders' is such a well written, enjoyable read.

Two years of intense sifting of historical documents by the authors have resulted in a well crafted, lively image of real people living their daily lives through three and a half centuries. All the dates and Acts of Parliament and major happenings are here but, more importantly, so are the people.

From the flourishing local trader market days and post civil war days of 1650 the reader is introduced to the mixed fortunes of Anthony Spire (taylor), Nicholas Noy (bodice maker), Jeremy Steevens (maltster), John Raunce (physician), Frances Raunce (wife of John) and others as they fall under the influence of the 'Valiant Sixty' and declare themselves 'convinced' or having 'received the truth.' And we wonder at their suffering of harassment, imprisonment and distraint of personal belongings in order to pursue their faith as Quakerism is increasingly viewed with a mixture of alarm and hostility.

The authors cleverly meld the local with the national scene creating a riveting history of the affairs of Quaker men and women whose hearts beat just as ours do today; people with names just as we know each other today by our names.

Thomas Ellwood slips quietly in and out of a meeting at John Raunce's house after which he writes, 'This meeting was like the Clinching of a Nail.' Poor Thomas Dell, a coffin bearer, is set upon by a rabble, orchestrated by the Justice and constables, who throw the coffin to the ground and arrest those taking part in the funeral.

From the need to reprimand their own Hellen Hawks who 'had run out extravagantly in her shop trade' to the tragic schism that sets John Raunce and Thomas Ellwood apart, this book is alive with anecdotes to which the reader can relate.

We learn of Richard Aris (a broken ironmonger) who discovers a profitable side line in infiltrating meetings to inform on those present. And even when he informs on the presence of one Thomas Zachery and his wife at Jordans Meeting and it is provided that on the day in question the two were in London, it does not prevent the Justice from imposing a fine of £30 and sending him to prison. It warms the reader's heart to note that Monthly Meeting committed the management of his appeal to Thomas Ellwood, who 'threw himself into it with enthusiasm and success, and the prosecution was paid for by the Meeting.' And it raises the reader's hackles to discover that in 1683 Quakers could be found Guilty of Riot for sitting peaceably together without Word or Action!

Perseverance in seeking the truth can pay as, in 1686, High Wycombe provides the first locally elected MP to Parliament. However, as John Archdale refuses to swear the oath of allegiance he is not permitted to sit.

The eighteenth century market town of High Wycombe in the Chilterns is described as 'an attractive place, beautifully situated: busy, prosperous and privileged; its appearance praised by every topographer.' But while, for many, plentiful food and improving medicine means a better life, the poor are harshly treated and relief is denied to any who refuse the workhouses which were established in the middle of this century.

One of the authors' ascribed quotes informs us 'In spite of the difficulties, dangers, and slowness of travel, Friends moved about freely sometimes by coach or canal boat, if able to afford it, by chaise or on horseback. Poorest Friends went on foot. Sometimes men and women rode single, sometimes the woman would ride pillion either behind a man Friend or the servant who went to bring back the horses. A swift horse might be the means of saving its master from robbery or even death, for the roads were the haunt of highwaymen especially in lonely parts.'

This is just one of the selected sketched backgrounds against which Quaker life in the eighteenth century is described. By the mid eighteenth century the overwhelming majority of Friends are birthright members and in the latter part of that century a great deal of time in the local MM is spent in considering and responding to reports of friends acting in ways offensive to Friends' principles.

From 1762-1785, 15 members are disowned for misconduct; drunkenness and debt being the greatest scourge. Consider poor Joseph Green, who moves to High Wycombe in 1779. Joseph, the authors quote, 'inherited a modest fortune from both his parents, but his financial resources were not equal to the demands he made on them.'! A delightful turn of phrase with a perfection of nuance that surely cannot be bettered.

And so we move seamlessly into the nineteenth century. Again the authors pick up the living threads of named local Friends, many of whom are quite well-to-do and influential; papermakers, brewers, mealmen and others.

For many reasons the number of Friends decline and, although many of those that remain are most active, nevertheless the fortunes of High Wycombe meeting depended on the actions and decisions of the Williams, the Sarahs, the Richards, the Thomas's, the James's. People like you and me.

In 1851 there are only 8 members. Does the predominance of attractive young women Friends who 'marry out' and move away account for the decline that leads to Wycombe meeting closing in the 1860's?

But of course that is not the end. By 1951 the population of High Wycombe is 40,000 and Friends number 50. From 1913 and encompassing two World Wars the authors lead us through a maze of activities that are as vivid and alive as their reader. Is that why I discover that my review is couched mainly in the present tense?

Seekers and Finders gently provides us with touches of humour, sadness and much thought provoking through the stages in the faith and practice of a local Quaker meeting bringing us right up to the present day. The book is packed with well researched information gathered by two authors who are deeply sympathetic to their subject matter and the reader is swept on a tide of chronicled incidents crafted in well written narrative.

This lively, instructive picture of Quaker life in the Chilterns, set against the changing religious, political and economic background of the last 350 years offers an absorbing read for Quakers and non-Quakers alike. It is a must for library and personal book shelves.

Keith Chatfield

***Quaker Plant Hunters* by David Sox, Sessions Book Trust, York, £15.00.**

It is the Author's stated intent, "to enthuse readers with an awareness of, and an admiration for, these exceptional men". He writes of three Quakers, each man a product of the "Enlightenment", who combined, as a means of earning a competent living, his artistic and literary gifts and his botanical knowledge with the work ethic which was the heritage of a Quaker life. We meet John and William Bartram, father and son, residents of Philadelphia, and Sydney Parkinson, a young Scotsman then living in London. These three lives shared a common "thread" which crossed the Atlantic in the case of the Bartrams, and which joined their lives as Plant Hunters and Illustrators to two of the Century's most eminent Plant Collectors, also Quakers, living in London, Peter Collinson and John Fothergill.

David Sox writes in a clear, conversational, non-scientific style, that of an enthusiast, for the natural world, which he is. He produces excellent notes and a full introduction for the reader entering the eighteenth century business-world of plant collecting. A comprehensive index follows the text for furthering the needs of scholarship.

The Bartrams lived on the family farm and garden at Kingsessing three miles from Philadelphia. John had fathered eleven children from his two marriages; nine survived into adulthood. It was therefore, not surprising that he spent his adult life, until his fortieth year, providing for them. He was a man of substance by the time he began his life's true work as a botanist and a professional collector of plants for the lucrative, English market which supplied American plants for wealthy men's gardens. However, he had made the time to learn Latin, enabling him to use Linneaus Classification for the naming of plants, and he was always an active member of Philadelphia Quaker Meeting.

At first John collected his plants locally. Later he was to travel further afield, at times combining Plant Hunting with civic duties. He had been recommended, for his diligence and the quality of his work, to Collinson, who supplied plants to rich, often aristocratic clients, and for thirty four

years the two men enjoyed a friendship, by means of correspondence and the exchange of botanical gifts which included bulbs and apples for the gardens at Kingsessing. John published a *Journal;* he was an innovative expert at packaging and sending plants abroad; he discovered a species of American Ginseng, and he was honoured by being appointed King's Botanist to George III in 1765. The face of John Bartram smiling from the front cover of the book, is that of a just, knowledgeable man who, in the main, led a fulfilled and happy life.

However John Bartram was not immune from parental problems. "Billy" his son inherited his fathers love of Botany, but not his business skills. Fortunately, Billy was happy living a solitary life-style. He had undergone a five year business apprenticeship, arranged for by his father, but despite this he failed in the various enterprises he undertook.

Williams's gifts as a botanist differed from those of his father. He was a botanical artist of the first order – the accuracy of an artist's drawing remains scientifically very important even in the days of photography. His writings demonstrate the "mindset" of an environmentalist and a humanitarian. William's Journal, because of its lengthy title, is known as his *Travels* (1791). He influenced Wordsworth and Coleridge in the *Lyrical Ballads* (1796), and his *Travels* were translated into Dutch, French and German before 1800, such was their influence.

Father and son were close; they frequently travelled together; as time passed William took to travelling alone on longer journeys, illustrating and collecting fearlessly. Together in Western Florida, they saved the "Camelia like Franklinia Altamaha" from extinction. William's work reflects the Quaker belief that reverence is due to all life. He lived to a grand old age, gardening, simply clothed, and still at the family house. He outlived his friend and benefactor, John Fothergill, by more than forty years.

John Fothergill links us to the final Quaker Plant Hunter. Sydney Parkinson the "scientific draughtsman" who sailed on Cook's First Voyage, aboard the *Endeavour* to Tahiti (1768-1771), to study the "transit of Venus", and then onwards to search for the "Great Southern Continent". Sydney, like Fothergill, was a Member of Westminster Quaker Meeting.

In this section David Sox delights in describing the victualling of the ship, its measurements, (three double decker London buses end-to-end in length, and one bus-length wide) and the crew, who were for the most

part very young. Cook at forty was older than most. Here I felt that I had entered the world of R.L. Stevenson. The modest, talented and totally dedicated Parkinson produced almost a thousand drawings executed to the highest standard. He also kept a *Journal* until his sad death aged twenty six en route home in January 1771. Unfortunately, Sydney's work was the subject of confusion after his death. This involved problems of ownership between Sydney's larger-than-life employer Joseph Banks, just one year his senior, and his brother Stanfield Parkinson's lack of understanding the duties of a Trustee. John Fothergill mediated as circumstances would allow, but Sydney's extant work is incomplete. There is an excellent Epilogue which examines this difficult subject in some detail.

The Author writes with total engagement about the three Quaker Botanists working at the time we now think of as the beginning of the modern age. The book is peopled with other amazing characters, who, like the Botanists, are an integral part of the history of readers on both sides of the Atlantic.

I hope I have given the impression that I enjoyed this book. I did, immensely. It is neither a scientifice treatise nor a socialogical or theological study – it is simply a glimpse into the lives of three men who shared an interest and a curiosity about nature, the belief that man is its custodian, and that for Quakers there is no dividing line between belief and right conduct.

I return to David Sox's stated intent, and I ask myself whether this book fulfills it. I find "Quaker Plant Hunters" to be a work of sound scholarship, meticulously researched, pleasing to the hand and to the eye. It is a tribute to the three Plant Hunters who did indeed live their lives adventurously, and also to their companions whose individuality adds colour and verve to the telling of the story. It cannot but "enthuse readers" is my considered opinion.

Joan Silvester

***Friends of Religious Equality: Nonconformist Politics in Mid-Victorian England* by Timothy Larsen. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge 1999; pp. 300. £40.00.**

By the 1840s Dissenters had drawn up a list of grievances which made them feel "Second-Class Citizens" vis-à-vis members of the Church of England. Their true aim was the disestablishent of the state church, an

aim they did not achieve, and so they concentrated their endeavours on seeking to change the law regulating church rates, tithes, fees for burial in churchyards, dissenters' exclusion from the universities of Oxford and Cambridge and legal restrictions.

The author stresses that mid-Victorian dissenters were not the moralising hypocrites that some became in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. Inspired by ideals of equality many of them were prepared to stand for equal rights for Jews and Roman Catholics as well as for Dissenters and the author poses the question as to whether this stand derived from their civic world view or from their own theological framework. In the 1850s protests against the Crimean War (1854-1856) and the question of controlling the liquor trade were added to the protests against the unequal standing of Nonconformists. Having traced the major branches of Dissent from the seventeenth century the author demonstrates that the degree of protest varied from one church to another: in general, Wesleyans were least likely to object to the privileges of the state church and least likely to take a pacifist stand, Baptists were often leaders.

Friends figure prominently in this movement, although in many aspects they held a privileged position in law. At the beginning of this movement Friends held aloof: the Yearly Meeting epistle of 1843 said 'We desire ever to be found of those who are quiet in the land'. This attitude was a combination of the quietism of the eighteenth century and the growing strength of evangelicalism which was being felt from the 1830s. But as ever, Friends were divided: John Bright (M.P. 1843-1889) said that he did not think of himself as a leader of Dissenting politics but in a sense he was. Joseph Sturge of Birmingham was also prominent in the movement.

Both John Bright and Joseph Sturge refused to accept that their activities were incompatible with their religious convictions (a view advanced by some evangelical Friends) for Friends had been involved in movements for free trade, franchise reform and prohibition, all of which were political issues, to say nothing of the political manoeuvres of Friends in 1659. The issue of prohibition which came to the fore in the 1850s was one over which the Friends disagreed. In 1851 *The Friend* wrote that the 'adoption of total abstinence by Yearly Meeting as a rule or even a strong advice is far from being desirable'. Nevertheless from the 1840s avoidance of alcohol was growing among Friends: in 1943 a Friends school (Lisburn N. Ireland) commemorated the rolling out of the last beer barrel a hundred years previously. Control of the liquor trade was not

achieved by the Dissenters for it was not introduced until Lloyd George imposed restrictions upon licensing hours during the 1914-18 war.

This well written and informative book contains much of interest to Friends.

G.A.J. Hodgett

***Josiah the Great: The True Story of the Man Who Would be King*, by Ben Macintyre, Harper Collins, 2004, 350pp, £20.00**

Quakers who have shed the peace testimony and become war-like mercifully are few but notable: Richard Nixon and Daniel Boone are the best known. Then there were those other Americans, the 'Fighting Quakers' who took up arms in the American War of Independence.

But the most unusual example of this phenomenon has to be Josiah Harlan (1799-1871) from Chester County, Pennsylvania. Jan Morris's *Observer* 13 June 2004 review of *Josiah the Great* was entitled 'The Quaker Who Went on the Warpath'. Harlan became not only a soldier, he was a spy, doctor, naturalist, traveller as well as a writer.

A near-contemporary of the peace-loving Philadelphia naturalist, William Bartram, instead of exploring America Harlan set his sights on the wilds of Central Asia. After learning of a broken engagement, Harlan began a 20-year odyssey which first included acting as a surgeon in the East India Company's army. This was despite not having had any proper medical training.

As a boy Harlan was obsessed with Alexander the Great. This infatuation continued throughout his life and he could recite long passages from Plutarch's *The Age of Alexander*. He also carried with him in his travels Quintus Cartius Rufus's history of the great conqueror. Hardly the expected role-model for a Quaker boy.

Following his time with the East India Company, Harlan joined the court of the deposed Afgan king, Shah Shujah al-Moolk whom he would later come to view as possessing 'unparalled debauchery'. But first Harlan furthered the exiled monarch's attempts to regain his throne and entered Kabul disguised as a Muslim dervish. Harlan wore a flowing robe and a large white turban. He said: 'I was now to personate the character of a Saheb Zader, returning home from a pilgrimage to Mecca. A Saheb Zader is a holy man to whom is ascribed supernatural power and revered as instructive in religion.' Harlan was nervous with the

disguise as his knowledge of the Koran was as limited as his medical expertise. If he were to be grilled on the fine points of the holy book and failed to respond correctly he might be murdered.

As his travels increased, Harlan attracted an assortment of companions and hangers-on; among them two deserters from the British army. James Lewis and Richard Potter had changed their identities as Charles Masson, and not very imaginatively, John Brown. Masson was highly educated and able but later would become Harlan's enemy. Brown, however, remained a loyal friend through thick and thin.

But there was one even more faithful than Brown. Of him, Harlan wrote: 'Amongst my followers there was one of low degree who held an elevated position in my regard and was certainly the most faithful, disinterested and by no means the least useful of the cortege.' That was Harlan's beloved dog, Dash, whose 'instinctive attachment' surpassed the many hangers-on who had often to be bribed with gold.

Harlan was very fond of animals: camels and a beautiful horse were often life-savers on his journeys. He also was ecstatic over the plants he encountered. In these two respects he resembles William Bartram in his explorations. The two also shared a distaste for slavery, and Harlan took on slavers with Quaker righteous indignation. But there the similarities radically diverge.

Harlan was vividly involved in conflict and there is much of that in *Josiah the Great*. He played one potentate against another and often was embroiled in labyrinthine intrigues. As commander-in-chief of the Afgan army, Harlan was the first general since Alexander the Great to lead an army across the Hindu Kush, and, in time, he fulfilled a childhood dream of becoming a princeling: the titular prince of the province of Ghor in northern Afganistan. But soon he would never see his principality again.

The British intervened in Afganistan and the days of this odd American Quaker king-maker were numbered. Harlan was forced to return to America where he became unsuccessful in a number of pursuits: a failed landlord, an attempt to bring camel transport to his natal land as well as Afgan vines to California. Harlan's greatest disappointment was in joining the Union cause in the Civil War where he thought his military expertise would be most appreciated.

Harlan went west – as far as you could go – to San Francisco where yet again he tried to establish himself as a medical practitioner. Soon after he

died of tuberculosis; dying on the corner of West Avenue and 22nd Street. There were no mourners at his funeral, and his odd legacy died with him.

Despite the fact that his meeting in Chester County had long ago said that because of his violation against the peace testimony he could no longer consider himself to be a member of the Society, Harlan spoke of himself as a Quaker to the end.

Ben Macintyre is brilliant, presenting Josiah Harlan as a fascinating character, one who supposedly was the model for Kipling's 'The Man Who Would Be King'. However, the endless plots and intrigues as Macintyre presents them are rather confusing, and often I had to go to the Index to discover who was who. The general narrative bogs down decidedly once Harlan leaves Afganistan and Macintyre has exhausted Harlan's memoirs.

Macintyre discovered those memoirs in a tiny museum in Chester County, Pennsylvania: 'the missing autobiography, unnoticed and unread since his death.' Anyone who writes lives for those moments, and Macintyre made good use of his discovery.

David Sox

***Whirlwind of Life: The Story of Emilia Fogelklou (1878-1972)* by Malin Bergman Andrews, 2004, pp.208, illustrated, £9.50**

Emilia Fogelklou was one of the founders of Swedish Quakerism and this book is not just the story of her life, it is also her spiritual biography. Emilia was a very sensitive child – over-sensitive perhaps – but this sensitivity enabled her to be open to new ideas from a very early age. It also meant that she was easily hurt by, for example, the arrival of a new baby sister who received all the attention previously hers; by criticism at school; or by the death of a favourite grandmother. Later in life the memory of these and other incidents helped her to empathise with others who were experiencing difficulties, but at the time they were devastating. We are at first given an idyllic picture of rural life as seen through the eyes of a child, and then sense the shock to Emilia of moving into a town. However, it was at that town school, in a Scripture lesson about religious movements in seventeenth century England, that she first heard about Quakers. She was taught that Quakers were under the delusion that they could be guided by 'an inner light' and burst out 'I have that delusion'. The idea stayed with her, though it was to be many years before she met

her first live Quaker. After Training College, she was employed to teach religious education at an experimental school in Gothenburg and it was at that school that she had a mystical experience that she called her 'Revelation of Reality'. She believed that this was the most decisive experience of her whole life. She later wrote about it that, without sight or sound of speech or human touch, she 'experienced in a state of exceptionally clear consciousness the great releasing inner wonder.'

Darwin's theories were then starting to challenge traditional Biblical teaching and she wrote, in words that Friends would find familiar, 'If the letter no longer may kill anything, but the Spirit maketh everything live, then Faith and Knowledge can never come into opposition to each other, but it will rather be that Faith gives all Knowledge purpose and meaning, and all Knowledge can only confirm our Faith.'

In 1906 Emilia studied at Uppsala University where she became Sweden's first woman to obtain a degree in theology. With her radical views, her feminism, and her lack of finance, she did not find her time in Uppsala easy, but she made many good friends, some of whom later also became members of the Society of Friends. Soon after qualifying she obtained a bursary that enabled her to travel widely – and in London she met Quakers for the first time. In 1915 Emilia attended the Women's Peace Conference in the Hague and though she was disappointed that it seemed to have no effect, it was at that meeting that the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom was founded. After the war she taught at Birkagarden – the Swedish equivalent of Toynbee Hall – and enjoyed finding new ways of making religious studies real to people who had had very little education. Reading in preparation for her course, she discovered James Nayler, spent some time researching him in Friends House library, and wrote sympathetically abut this controversial Friend. She eventually applied for membership of London Yearly Meeting in 1931 and, after meeting together regularly in Stockholm, the small group applied for state recognition which was granted in 1935. She spent a year at Woodbrooke in 1931 and a term at Pendle Hill in 1939 where she was much influenced by Douglas Steere. During the second world war she assisted escaping refugees – working from the Quaker office in Berlin, and afterwards joined an international work camp carrying out reconstruction work in Hamburg. She was then part of the group who tried to turn their vision of a true international christian community (such as they had found working together on relief work) into a reality by establishing Viitakivi, the Finnish International High School. In spite of all this practical work, Emilia found time to write numerous books and articles – about her own spiritual experiences,

about new ways of looking at the history of religion, on sociology, education and psychology, as well as a number of biographies.

I did not find this an easy book to read. At times it seemed stilted – probably because it has been translated from the Swedish – and I did not feel the flow of the narrative was helped by the numerous short chapter subsections, each of which is headed by a quotation. But it was certainly worth persevering with so that I could learn the story of this remarkable woman, with ideas way ahead of her time, who helped to found Swedish Quakerism.

Susan V. Hartshorne

NOTES AND QUERIES

Transactions of the Newcomen Society
Vol. 73 no. 1, 2001/2002

"Sir Clement Clerke and Coal in Metallurgy"

P.W. King

Dr. Peter King has found evidence (see pages 40 and 41) that coke smelting began at Coalbrookdale in 1695 when Shadrach Fox leased the furnace. A minute of the Board of Ordnance of 30 November 1695 refers to ... 'running iron with pitcoal...'

If Dr. King is correct and Shadrach Fox succeeded to smelt iron with coke in 1695, it answers and raises a number of very interesting points:

1) Is that why A. Darby I. went to Coalbrookdale from Bristol and not to nearer iron-works?
2) Was the information given him by Broseley Friends?
3) Is this why he started smelting with coke straightaway in 1709 and not starting with the known technology?
4) Is this why, having a 1707 patent for cooking pots, he did not patent coke smelting, a much more important breakthrough?
5) Did Shadrach Fox lose money by smelting with coke and A. Darby I. succeed because the latter was making thin sectioned cooking pots?

There is much work to be done on both the Quaker and metallurgical aspects.

Michael S.Darby

BIOGRAPHIES

DOUGLAS GWYN

Douglas Gwyn is an American Friend and author of three books on early Friends: *Apocalypse of the Word: the life and message of George Fox* (1987); *The Covenant Crucified: Quakers and the rise of capitalism* (1995); and *Seekers Found: atonement in early Quaker experience* (2000). He has been a teacher at the Pendle Hill Quaker study centre outside Philadelphia (1989-91) and Quaker Studies Tutor at Woodbrooke (2000-2003). He currently serves as pastoral minister at First Friends Meeting, Richmond, Indiana.

KENNETH L. CARROLL

Kenneth Carroll is Professor Emeritus of Religious Studies at Southern Methodist University. He is President of the Friends Historical Association (USA) and a Past President of the Friends Historical Society (UK). He began publishing in Quaker Studies – British, American and Irish – in 1950. A Bibliography of his work can be found in Pendle Hill Pamphlet 338, *Touched by God in Quaker Meeting,* (1998).

MARRIS CORBIN

Maris Corbin is a retired librarian, who was brought up as a Quaker (Harrogate Meeting, then Carperby Meeting in the Yorkshire Dales). She and her Barbadian-American husband have worked in a number of American Friends Service Committee projects.

HOWARD M. KNIGHT

He is a birthright member of the Society. Following education at Sidcot and Leighton Park schools he undertook hospital work as a conscientious objector during his National Service. He was concerned with data processing whilst with Friends Provident. He began using the Digests about 1980 for his own research into his Knight family and his mother's Marriage family.

W. ROSS CHAPMAN

He is a retired veterinary surgeon and life-long Friend living in Newry and recently Clerk of the Historical Committee of Ireland Yearly Meeting. It gave him pleasure to have been one of David Butler's research assistants for the book *Quaker Meeting Houses in Ireland,* thereby realising something of the broad geographical spread of early Friends throughout Ireland. At present he is transcribing the first Ulster Province minute book (1674-1693).

Supplements to the Journal of Friends Historical Society

21. AN ORATOR'S LIBRARY. John Bright's books. Presidential address 1936 by J. Travis Mills. 1946. 24pp., 50p

22. LETTERS TO WILLIAM DEWSBURY AND OTHERS. Edited by Henry J. Cadbury. 1948. 68pp. £3.00

24. THE ATLANTIC COMMUNITY OF EARLY FRIENDS, Presidential address by Frederick B. Tolles, 1952. £1.00

28. PATTERNS OF INFLUENCE IN ANGLO-AMERICAN QUAKERISM. By Thomas E. Drake. 1958. £1.00

29. SOME QUAKER PORTRAITS, CERTAIN AND UNCERTAIN. By John Nickalls. 1958. Illustrated. £1.00

32. JOHN WOOLMAN IN ENGLAND, 1772. By Henry J. Cadbury. 1971. £2.00

33. JOHN PERROT. By Kenneth L. Carroll. 1971. £2.00

34. "THE OTHER BRANCH": LONDON Y.M. AND THE HICKSITES, 1827-1912. By Edwin B. Bronner. 1975. £1.25

35. ALEXANDER COWAN WILSON, 1866-1955. By Stephen Wilson. 1974. £1.00

FHS, Occasional Series No. 1 MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER AND MANCHESTER AGAIN: from 'SOUND DOCTRINE' to 'A FREE MINISTRY'. By Roger C. Wilson. 1990. Members £2.00, Non-Members £3.00.

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