

*The
Journal of the
Friends Historical
Society*

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FRIENDS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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EDITORIAL

At its meeting on the 22 September the Executive Committee released Patricia R Sparks from the clerkship due to ill-health. We warmly thank her for her service to both the Committee and the Society and welcome her successor, Dudley J Barlow, to the Clerkship.

Sir Christopher Booth's Presidential Address, published in this issue, was well-attended at York and proved a stimulating and enjoyable evening. (Please see *Publisher's Information* at the end of this issue).

Edward H Milligan also introduced his forthcoming BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF BRITISH QUAKERS IN COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY 1775-1920. (Please see the Special Pre-Publication Offer Form enclosed with this issue).

Friends House will celebrate its 80th anniversary next year and members are invited to contribute to the celebrations. Further details can again be found in the October 2005 FHS Newsletter.

The Quaker Tapestry would welcome more speakers to support the Tapestry's outreach to a wider public. Any member interested is asked to contact: The Office, The Quaker Tapestry Exhibition Centre, Stramongate, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 4BH (Phone & Fax 01539-722975).

Volume 60, No 3 begins with Sir Christopher Booth's fascinating exploration of one location's wide-ranging contribution to both Quaker and wider history.

Betty Hagglund's annotated document presents Robert Barclay in an unfamiliar and challenging context.

Ariel Hessayon carefully explores possible links between Jacob Boehme and early Quakers.

The Editor welcomes articles or short items for consideration in future *Journals*. He is willing to read drafts and advise where appropriate. He would like to pursue further annotated Quaker historical documents, of reasonable length i.e. not too long, from members who have the expertise and enthusiasm to prepare them.

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.

Volume 70, Number 1 should appear in the autumn of 2006 as a return is now made to one issue of the *Journal* each year.

Howard F Gregg

THE QUAKERS OF COUNTERSETT AND THEIR LECACY

Ella Pontefract, in her enchanting account of Wensleydale in North Yorkshire, describes how its river, the Ure, begins as a tumbling stream among the Pennine uplands that adjoin the Westmorland border. At first the valley follows a narrow line of cultivation, and the moor creeps down all round it: "as if it would snatch it back to itself".¹ Then, as it widens, the river winds its way through the green meadows and pastures of the upper dale. Further down the valley, it plunges tumultuously over the falls at Aysgarth and then moves on more placidly to the fertile lands of the Vale of York.

The valley has always been socially divided. The lower dale, feudal to this day, is the preserve of landowners, some noble, others wealthy gentry, whose extensive possessions are held by leasehold farmers paying rent to their landlords. The upper dale is different. There, the steep hillsides in many tributary dales do not make for easy farming. The land, much of which belonged to the Abbey of Jervaulx, was sold off after the dissolution of the monasteries and during the seventeenth century individual yeoman farmers were able to buy their own freehold. These men, descendants of the Norsemen who colonised those upper dales before the Normans came, were individualists. The names of their villages and their dialect recall to this day the old Norse speech. They have always retained a sturdy independence and they do not tip their caps to the gentry. Many of their solidly built stone farmhouses, often with a seventeenth century datestone, remain to reflect the rugged personalities of their builders.

Raydale is one of those tributary valleys that are so much a feature of upper Wensleydale. From the small but lovely lake, Semerwater, the river Bain flows down to Bainbridge where it joins the river Ure. High above the lake is the small village of Countersett, a huddle of ancient buildings that seem to hide themselves in a hollow beside the road from Bainbridge. The *sett* ending is derived from the Norse word *setr*, a shieling, indicating that the village was a summer pasture for the original Norse settlers, as were the nearby villages of Marsett at the head of Raydale and Burtersett just over the hill in Wensleydale. In the middle of the seventeenth century, Countersett Hall, the home of Richard Robinson, became effectively the Manor House of the village. Richard Robinson, not to be confused with George Fox's friend of the same name from Briggflatts, came from a

family long established in Wensleydale. Born in 1628 at Preston under Scar, he was baptised in Wensley Church but after his marriage to his wife Margaret, moved to Countersett, placing a stone above the door of the porch at his home with the initials R R M 1650. At that time he was a tenant of the City of London who owned the land. Soon afterwards, with several neighbours, he was able to purchase his own freehold. He was to live there until his death in 1693, raising a family of six sons and three daughters.²

During the Civil War and the Commonwealth that followed, there were many, dissatisfied with the Established Church, who sought the Lord in different ways. The Baptists, for example, gained many adherents around the campfires of Cromwell's army. It is not surprising that an independent-minded dalesman such as Richard Robinson should find no true satisfaction in the current teachings of priests and professors. After much heart-searching, he was drawn to Thomas Taylor, a dissenting minister from Carleton in Craven who was leading a party of separatist "Seekers" at Preston Patrick in Westmorland. At the same time, rumours of the remarkable preaching of George Fox were widespread. In May 1652, George Fox made his first journey through Wensleydale, writing in his journal that he "passt up ye dales, warning people to fear God & declaring his truth to ym And some was convinced & stands to this day..."³ But he did not stop at Countersett, nor did Richard Robinson meet him then. As is well known, George Fox went on to Sedbergh, Briggflatts and the country beyond where at Firbank Fell he gathered together a large company of "Seekers", "The Children of the Light", who were to be the first Friends. Hearing of these developments, Richard Robinson at once set off for Westmorland and it seems that it was his Friend Thomas Taylor who convinced him that George Fox's teaching opened the way to true salvation. He soon returned to Countersett where his home was to become the principal Meeting Place of Friends in the dales and a resort for travelling preachers. He himself was to travel widely, often with Richard Hubberthorne, close friend of George Fox. They were frequently abused, but at the same time met with considerable success. Both were to be immortalised among the "Valiant Sixty".⁴ Like so many others, they suffered from persistent persecution, Richard Robinson being repeatedly imprisoned for prolonged periods. It was in 1672, in prison in Richmond, that he wrote *A Blast out of the North and Echoing to the South To meet the Cry of their Oppressed Brethern*⁵, an account of the appalling sufferings of Quakers in and around the northern dales. It was published in 1680. As David Hall has pointed out, Richard

Robinson was the first Quaker in Wensleydale.⁶

George Fox did eventually make a visit to Countersett. In April 1677, travelling from Swarthmoor Hall, he and his companions passed through Garsdale to Hawes in Wensleydale and on to "Countersyde".⁷ Tradition holds that Fox slept at Richard Robinsons, in a room over the porch at Countersett Hall.

It was undoubtedly through the influence of Richard Robinson and his friends that so many became Quakers in upper Wensleydale. At the same time, Richard's extensive travels in Yorkshire and throughout the land, sometimes taking him as far as London, helped to spread George Fox's teaching far and wide. When he died in 1693, his children and close family drew up the testimonies from which the account of his life in *The First Publishers of Truth* is taken.⁸

In 1710, some years after Richard's death, a Meeting House was built at Countersett to provide for the many Quaker families who had for nearly sixty years attended Meeting at Countersett Hall. They included the Fothergills who lived at Carr End, a farmhouse at the head of Semerwater, with sweeping views across the lake. Like Countersett Hall, Carr End was used for meetings of the early Quakers in Wensleydale. The Hillarys, linked by marriage to the Robinsons, came from Birkrigg in upper Wensleydale in 1699 to live at nearby Burtersett. The Harrisons were tenants of New Close House, later the Boar Inn in Countersett, which belonged to the Robinsons. Bartholomew and Isabel Harrison put a datestone on the house in 1667, with their initials and a Latin inscription:

NUNC MEA
MOX HVIUS
SED POST EA
NESCIO CVIVS⁹

Later Harrisons were to live in Countersett Hall during the concluding years of the eighteenth century, before they moved at the beginning of the nineteenth century to Rochdale. It was they who were to become close partners of the Quaker Crosfields of Liverpool, who themselves had links with the Fothergills of Carr End. As we shall see, these families of Countersett Quakers, from a small and insignificant village in the Yorkshire Dales, made remarkable contributions to the life of their native land.

The Fothergill name is well known to Friends, particularly through the role played by Dr John Fothergill in the foundation of Ackworth School. But the family was also influential among Friends from the earliest days of the Countersett Quakers. The origins of the first Quaker Fothergill are uncertain, but in 1667 a John Fothergill placed

a datestone over a gate at his home, Carr End, which was to remain in the hands of the family for nearly two hundred years. He himself was one of that group of Friends brought together by Richard Robinson of nearby Countersett and with them he suffered imprisonment for his beliefs.¹⁰ In 1678, he was incarcerated in Richmond. He died in 1684, nine years before Richard Robinson. His son Alexander, who inherited Carr End, also suffered for his faith. Like his father, he was a close friend of Richard Robinson and his signature was among those twenty four members of the Wensleydale Meeting who signed a testimony to their "Dear and Antient Friend and Brother" when he died in 1693.¹¹ During Alexander's lifetime, travelling ministers often stayed at Carr End. He himself died in 1695 after a period of harsh imprisonment in York following a prosecution on account of his Christian testimony against tithes.¹² His eldest son, John, at the age of eighteen, now took over the farm and the care of the three younger children.

John Fothergill was to be an influential preacher and itinerant minister during the early decades of the eighteenth century. In a journal written in later life he describes how it was some little while before, on one First Day at Meeting, "a fresh strong motion or concern came upon me, and I broke forth in a few words, but scarcely durst stand upon my feet. And after the Meeting, I got quietly away..."¹³ How many other Friends have initially felt such uncertainty? But he soon became an accomplished speaker, travelling widely to visit Meetings throughout England and making a memorable visit to Scotland with other Friends in 1698. Unlike his forbears, he did not then suffer imprisonment but despite the relaxation of the laws relating to dissenters, he met with much abusive treatment, particularly in Glasgow and Edinburgh. Yet he wrote that mercifully they "were preserved from any material hurt".

John Fothergill was to play an important role among the Quakers of the American Colonies. In 1706, with his friend William Armistead, he sailed for Maryland. They visited and encouraged Friends, often in isolated settlements throughout the Colonies, meeting many who welcomed their spiritual guidance. Not unnaturally, they were particularly content in visiting Philadelphia, which they reached in time for Yearly Meeting there. It was, he wrote in his journal, "large and comfortable to us and Friends..." They finally visited Friends in Barbados and Jamaica, before sailing for home at the end of 1707.

Two years later, John Fothergill married Margaret Hough, with whom he settled at Carr End. They had eight children, Alexander in

1709, who was to inherit Carr End, Thomas, John, the future doctor in 1712, Joseph a year later, William, then Samuel, like his father a famous preacher, and Ann in 1718. The last was George, born in 1719. Sadly, Margaret died in childbirth and her last son soon afterwards.

John Fothergill was now to undertake more ministering journeys. In 1721, the Quakers in the American Colonies expressed the hope of another visit from the trusted Friend who had travelled among them a decade earlier.¹⁴ His journey again took him throughout the Colonies and he preached not only at major centres such as Boston, where Friends had suffered so much in the early years, but also at every small Meeting House and many other places. It was during this visit that he met, at Mattocks in Virginia, "Justice Washington, a friendly man, where the love of God opened my heart towards the people".¹⁵ Thus did he make the acquaintance of George Washington's grandfather. He finally reached home in 1724. He continued to travel and preach throughout the British Isles but in 1729 married his second wife, Elizabeth Buck, with whom he was to live in Knaresborough. In 1736, however, at the age of sixty, he was again moved to visit the American Colonies,¹⁶ this time for another journey which lasted two years and which again concluded in Barbados, where there were now several Quaker Meetings. He continued to travel but seems to have retained contact with his native dale. February 1739 found him attending London Morning Meeting where he presented his certificate from Knaresborough. His companion on this occasion was Amos Robinson, grandson of Richard Robinson of Countersett, whose certificate stated that he was a "Sober and Religious Man, Caefull Circumspect in his Conduct and Conversation..."¹⁷ John Fothergill died at Knaresborough in 1744; he was buried in the nearby Friends Burial Ground at Scotton.

John Fothergill's eldest son Alexander now inherited the family home. He was to be an influential figure in Wensleydale. He farmed at Carr End but at the same time he was befriended by Thomas Metcalfe of Nappa, a Justice of the Peace, from whom he obtained legal training. Although an important member of the Meeting at Countersett, he was never as devoted a Friend as his father or his brothers. A worldly man, he was involved in many of the affairs of his native dale. Among other adventures, he took it upon himself to ride over to Westmorland to witness the retreat of the Scottish rebels at the time of the '45.¹⁸ It may have been prudent but it was not entirely a Quakerly act to arm himself with a pistol on that occasion.

His major contribution to Wensleydale, however, was to oversee the construction of the turnpike road that ran from Richmond,

through Wensleydale to Lancaster.¹⁹ In 1751, Parliament passed the Turnpike Act that authorised this development, which was expected to open up the Dale's access to the outside world. Alexander Fothergill was appointed surveyor for the project. It was an ambitious undertaking. The road followed the dead straight line of an old Roman road, passing through hills and valleys, rising to two thousand feet, one of the wildest stretches of road in England. Alexander was forty-two when the road started and sixty-five before he could ride the whole length of the road. There were constant problems, which came to a head in 1774. He was now to be accused by the Trustees of dishonesty over financial affairs. A demand was made that he should put a sizeable sum of money on the table. Alexander was unable to comply and he resigned.

At the same time, his fellow Quakers in Countersett accused him of disorderly conduct. One First Day in 1774, after Friends Meeting, he was approached by two prominent members of the Society who charged him with the paternity of two bastard children in the town of Richmond "& others elsewhere".²⁰ Although he denied the charges, he was "read out of Meeting" and was not reinstated until he had made a detailed confession of his wrong doing and expressed his earnest resolve to amend his way of life.

These were not his only problems. Carr End had been heavily mortgaged for many years and he was being pressed for repayment. It was only with the considerable financial help of his brother doctor in London that the family home at Carr End was saved for at least another generation.²¹ Alexander lived on, dying at Carr End in 1788. His son William, who in 1782 had married Hannah Robinson, great granddaughter of Richard of Countersett, inherited the property. He died in 1837 and Carr End passed out of the hands of the family in 1842. Nevertheless, subsequent generations of the Fothergills have continued to regard Carr End as their family home.

Alexander's legacy is the house that he renovated in the eighteenth century, as well as his turnpike, now a green road following the straight line of the Roman Road, which climbs up between Wether Fell and Crag and over the tops to Cam and beyond. He also played an important role in the building of the bridge, which passes over the Bain as it flows out of Semerwater. Built with money from the legacy of Richard Robinson's grandson, it is known to this day as "Quaker's bridge".²²

Alexander's brother, the physician Dr John Fothergill, is the best remembered of the Fothergills.²³ He was born in 1712 at Carr End but after his mother's death he was brought up by his uncle, Thomas

Hough, at Frodsham in Cheshire. He went on to Sedbergh School and in 1728, at the age of sixteen, was apprenticed to Benjamin Bartlett, an apothecary of Bradford, a weighty ministering Friend well known to his father. Encouraged by Bartlett, he went on to the Medical School of Edinburgh University in 1734 and graduated MD two years later. It was the beginning of a distinguished medical career.

After Edinburgh, John Fothergill went to London where he received further clinical training walking the wards at St Thomas' Hospital. He was clearly ambitious. In 1738, as a student in London, he wrote to his brother Joseph: "I confess sometimes that I could not look upon an overgrown Doctor," he told him, "wealthy at the expense of his fellow citizens lives, lolling in his chariot and tacitly asking myself whether such a state would not mightily become me...."²⁴ After a journey through the Netherlands and Germany, he settled in Gracechurch Street in 1740 where he at once built up a successful practice among his fellow Quakers. Soon, he became one of the most sought after physicians in eighteenth century London. His patients were to include Clive of India, Sir Fletcher Norton (the speaker of the House of Commons), Lord Dartmouth (Secretary of State for the American Colonies and half-brother of the Prime Minister, Lord North), Benjamin Franklin, John Wesley, Fanny Burney as well as many others of the poorer classes whom he treated for no fee.

After 1750, his sister Ann came to live with him, acting as his devoted housekeeper.²⁵ At first, the new world of the successful London physician was entirely alien to Ann. It all made her feel "Cowardly and fearful: the latter I would not lose", she wrote to brother Alexander in Wensleydale, "as fear is said to preserve us ". She would not abandon her old country habits, she told him: "Singular I am and so I hope to continue in my dress; the antice folly I observe does not excite me to imitate". She also managed to retain her inward calmness of spirit, telling her brother Samuel that she even found it possible "to be in solitude in the streets of London". As the years went by she and her doctor brother became increasingly close, the doctor in later years signing his letters from "J and A Fothergill".

John Fothergill was to become an important figure among London Friends. It may have been due to his father's close relationship with American Quakers that in 1738 he was nominated as the correspondent of London Yearly Meeting with the Philadelphia Friends. He was to be Clerk to the Yearly Meeting on three occasions, in 1749, 1764 and in 1779, a year before his death, by which time he

had become one of the leading Friends in the capital. He was unquestionably a formidable figure. When Fanny Burney met him in late 1777, the comments that she confided to her diary were scarcely laudatory.²⁶ She conceded that he might be a man of great skill, but she found his manners stiff, set and unpleasant. "He is an upright, stiff, formal-looking old man....", she wrote, "he enters the room and makes his address with his hat always on and lest that mark of his sect pass unnoticed, the hat that he wears is of the most enormous size that you ever beheld". It was a gross example of the pot calling the kettle black for Fanny's own hats could be monstrous. Later, when she came to know him better, her opinion of the ageing Quaker changed and she conceded: "he is as kind as he is skilful".

Being now so public a figure, it was not surprising that he could be a subject of caricature. Samuel Foote, in his play "The Devil on Two Sticks", a lampoon on London doctors, portrayed Dr Fothergill as Dr Melchisedech Broadbrim, a sanctimonious physican who as the doctor himself put it, was "brought there to say nothing but what is proper but to say it and appear in a ridiculous manner".²⁷

John Fothergill maintained close links with the family at Carr End throughout his life. His correspondence with his brother Alexander has been preserved and illustrates his commitment to the family home. Often he would send greetings to the Robinson and Hillary families. In 1763, he and his sister Ann paid a visit to Carr End, attending Meeting at Countersett. Ten years later, when Alexander was facing the charge of "disorderly conduct", they arranged to meet their errant brother at Knaresborough. Alexander's diary records: "Brother and Sister manifested the highest regard.... In advising for my good... and this in the most tender and affecting manner, not obtrudingly".²⁸ They went to visit their father's grave at nearby Scotton, standing together in silent contemplation. In 1778, when it was highly likely that Carr End would have had to be forfeited because Alexander could not pay off his mortgages, by now more than a thousand pounds, it was Dr John who came to the rescue.

Dr Fothergill's medical achievements are attested by his many publications on medical subjects, among which his writings on the Malignant Sore Throat, predominantly scarlatinal but also due to diphtheria, were well received, ensuring his reputation following their first publication in 1748.²⁹ His work was recognised by his election to the Fellowship of the Royal Society in 1763. At the same time he was a distinguished botanist. He kept a garden at Upton in Essex, which was said by Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society, to be second only to Kew in the whole of Europe. His flowers

were painted by leading artists of the day, including some by the celebrated G. Ehret. The paintings were sold after the doctor's death to the Empress Catherine of Russia for, it is said, £2300. For more than two centuries they were lost to view but in 1987 they were rediscovered, all 1200 of them, by the chief curator at the Komarov Botanical Institute in St Petersburg, an artistic and botanical legacy of great importance, still to be subjected to detailed historical study.

In 1774, Linnaeus named a Pennsylvania witch-hazel after him, the *Fothergilla* of today's gardens. The doctor supported collectors in many parts of the world but particularly in America where William Bartram's *Travels through the Southern American States* were funded by Fothergill. Bartram's account of these travels is a lyrical account of the American wild that greatly influenced the English romantic poets, particularly Coleridge. The imagery of *Kubla Khan* owes much to William Bartram.³⁰

He maintained a life-long correspondence with American Quakers and became a firm friend of Benjamin Franklin during his London years. With Franklin and David Barclay he made a last desperate attempt to prevent the outbreak of hostilities with the American Colonies in 1775. He wrote to his friend and patient, the Earl of Dartmouth: "Do, my Noble, much Esteemed Friend, forget the little trifling quarrels fomented by mischievous people for the ruin of this great Empire. Give America all she asks. Was my life worth the pledging, I think I could do it safely, that she will amply repay the condescension".

He lived for most of his life in London, first in Gracechurch Street where he attended Meeting, later in Harpur Street, Bloomsbury. He also maintained a summer home at Lea Hall, near Middlewich in Cheshire, close to Warrington, where his much loved brother Samuel lived. Here he and his sister Ann would spend the summer months, away from the hustle and bustle of London and seeking, as he put it, "to recover the power of recollection".³¹

But for Friends today, his most important legacy is unquestionably Ackworth School. For many years Friends had been concerned with the provision of better education. By 1777, Yearly Meeting decided that something must be done and in that year a proposal for a Boarding School "for the education of children whose parents are not in affluence" came before the Meeting. It was referred for action to the next year. Later that year, Dr Fothergill, whilst travelling in Yorkshire, heard that a large building at Ackworth, which had been set up by the Foundling Hospital in London, was for sale. The price was to be seven thousand pounds. Action was needed at once and

soon Yearly Meeting and Fothergill and David Barclay were able to guarantee the price. The matter then came before the Yearly Meeting in 1778, when William Tuke brought in a report commenting favourably on the project.³² Raising funds did not seem to be difficult, Fothergill remarking that: "Friends seemed to vie with one another in their generous efforts". The doctor followed up with his *Letter to a Friend in the Country relative to the intended School at Ackworth*, published in January 1779³³ and the School was duly opened in October that same year. In a letter to his friend, the Unitarian scientist Dr Joseph Priestley, Fothergill wrote that the School was to build up Christian lives, "to establish young minds in Truth..."³⁴ It was a great satisfaction to the worthy doctor that he was able to visit the school, and find it flourishing just a few months before his death in December 1780. He was buried at Winchmore Hill.

Dr Fothergill's two other surviving brothers both settled in Warrington, a non-corporate town where dissenters were welcomed. Joseph became head of an iron industry large enough to provide "work and wages for 140 families". He married Hannah Kelsall and they had nine children, among them the lively Betty who went in 1769 to London to stay with her uncle and aunt in London. She left an engaging account of life in the doctor's household.³⁵

Samuel became, like his father, famous for his preaching and for his travels in the ministry. It was not always so. His early years were dissolute and he wrote later that he had drunk up iniquity as an ox might drink up water. On departing for his third visit to the American Colonies in 1736, his afflicted father told him: "Farewell! Farewell! And unless it be as a changed man, I cannot say that I wish to see thee again". On his return two years later, attending Meeting at York, he heard a powerful address from a young Friend. He asked who it was. "That", they told him, "is thy son".³⁶ It was through the influence of a Quaker preacher fifteen years his senior, Susanna Croudson, that he had reformed. He married her and they set up business in Warrington, selling tea and a wide range of commodities.

Samuel soon became an acclaimed preacher among Friends. In 1754, like his father before him, he visited Friends in the American Colonies, his journey taking him on horseback for 8765 miles.³⁷ It included a remarkable meeting at Faneuil Hall in Boston where he preached to more than two thousand. It was an arduous odyssey that finished in Philadelphia in 1756. The Seven Years War had broken out, General Braddock and his expedition to Fort Duquesne having suffered a disastrous defeat, the General and many of his officers losing their lives.

Friends were deeply concerned about what they should do at a time of war and particularly if there were Indian raids on their settlements. Samuel, as well as Friends in London, strongly urged that the Pennsylvania Quakers should not waver from their traditional Testimony for Peace. As Samuel Fothergill put it: "If the potsherds of the earth clash together, let them clash!" He held a last meeting in Philadelphia where Friends likened his warnings of two years earlier to those of Jeremiah before the fall of Jerusalem. Samuel soon returned to England, living on as a much respected ministering Friend. He died, universally lamented, in 1772, earning an affectionate obituary in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

If the legacy of the Fothergills is well appreciated by Friends today, that of their friends the Hillary family is virtually unknown. They deserve, however, to be remembered for one of them became, like John Fothergill, a Quaker physician of some note and another, nephew of the physician, founded the Royal Naval Lifeboat Institution in 1824.

The first Hillary to appear in the history of Wensleydale was a William Hillary, born in Clifton in 1632, who took as his second wife Anne, the only child of Trinian Metcalfe of Birkrigg and Rigg House, properties of some value at the upper end of Wensleydale, on the road from Hawes to Sedbergh.³⁸ William's father-in-law died in 1686 and the properties came into the hands of the Hillary family. William was not a Quaker and when he died in 1700 he was buried in Askrigg Church. His son John was born at Birkrigg in 1666 and he became a Quaker when in 1692 he married Mary Robinson, a daughter of that doyen of the Wensleydale Quakers, Richard Robinson of Countersett. The marriage took place at Semerdale House, home of Mary's brother John.³⁹

For the early years of their married life, the Hillarys lived at Birkrigg, an isolated and lonely spot, which must have been bleak in winter when snow blocked the road from Hawes. They had several children during their years at Birkrigg - Ann, born in 1693, Isaac the eldest son born the following year, two other girls who did not survive and then in 1697, William, the future physician named for his grandfather. Within two years, however, the Hillarys had moved from Birkrigg. They bought a substantial house in the village of Burtersett, known today as Hillary Hall. It was a mere two miles from Countersett over the hill in Wensleydale. There were to be four more children - Margaret in 1699, Mary in 1702 and another son, Richard in 1703. Rachel, the youngest, was born in 1705.⁴⁰

John Hillary, who had been involved with Friends in Hawes, now

transferred his allegiance to Countersett. He was often involved with local affairs. His marriage into the Robinson family greatly increased his position among Wensleydale Quakers. He was a friend of the Fothergills, and at least one letter to John Fothergill, the ministering Friend from Carr End, has been preserved.⁴¹ John Hillary died in 1721, leaving his properties to his eldest son Isaac who lived on at Burtersett until his death in 1783. By Wensleydale standards, John Hillary was relatively wealthy. His inventory amounted to £960, of which £730 was for "moneys owing".⁴² This sum would have included £300 for the mortgage that he held on Semerdale House, where he married his Robinson wife in 1692.

Meantime, his son William had become a physician.⁴³ Nothing is recorded of his schooling. It is, however, known that he initially learnt his trade from the same apothecary as Fothergill, Benjamin Bartlett of Bradford, to whom he was apprenticed in 1715. It may well have been Hillary's example that led Fothergill's father to choose Bartlett some years later. John Hillary's relative wealth was sufficient to enable him to send son William to study at Leiden under the famous Herman Boerhaave, the most distinguished teacher of medicine of the day. He graduated in 1722 with a thesis on intermittent fevers.

The next year, William Hillary settled in Ripon where he started practice. Throughout his life he was to record the changes in the weather and the epidemics that he encountered, in an attempt to correlate weather and disease. He stayed in Ripon until 1734, writing a book on smallpox and on other diseases, which came out in 1740.⁴⁴ Hearing of the death of a physician in Bath, Hillary removed to that spa town but the change in his circumstances was not a success. Although he discovered a small spa at Lincomb, which was used by the Earl of Chesterfield,⁴⁵ he did not prosper and the autumn of 1746 found him in London, where, concerned for his future, he consulted Dr John Fothergill, now established as a physician among Friends in the capital. For a while, he considered a position in Jamaica. There, however, Friends Meetings had been much reduced following the earthquake at Port-Royal, which was seen by many as a judgement upon them. Fothergill, presumably with knowledge derived from his father's visits, knew that Barbados would be a better choice. He sent information to his brother Alexander in Wensleydale, to be passed on to the Hillarys:

"At Barbados there are several meetings", he wrote, "the Island pleasant and healthy".⁴⁶

Hillary travelled to Barbados in early 1747. It was an excellent

move. He was clearly successful in his practice for when he returned to England in 1759, the *Annus Mirabilis* of the Seven Years War, he had amassed as much as six thousand pounds. He would have been in time to hear the firing of the park and Tower guns, to see the flags flying from every steeple and to witness the greatest illuminations that the city had ever known, as London celebrated the fall of Quebec.

In Barbados he made observations of the weather and diseases that were to be published in 1759 in London, in his book on the *Diseases of the West India Islands*.⁴⁷ This was to go through another edition in 1766 and it was republished in Philadelphia in 1812. It was one of the first books on tropical diseases and contains descriptions of diseases, which are still quoted today.

His patients would have included not only the local population but also those who came to enjoy the equable climate for the benefit of their health. In 1751, he attended Lawrence Washington, mortally sick from tuberculosis, brought from Virginia by his brother, George, future President of the United States. And on All Saints Day, 1755, inhabitants of the capital at Bridgetown noticed something remarkable. At two o'clock in the afternoon, the tide suddenly rose several feet above normal, then retreated leaving the foreshore completely uncovered, and this went on for most of the afternoon. Hillary thought that it might have been due to an earthquake far out at sea and it was not until several weeks later that they heard the news of the dreadful earthquake in Lisbon on that day. From knowledge of the time difference and distance between Portugal and Barbados, Hillary was able to calculate that the shock wave must have passed across the Atlantic at seven and a half miles a minute, or four hundred and fifty miles an hour, a remarkably accurate assessment. It was the first time that anyone had calculated the speed of what came to be known as a tsunami.⁴⁸

Hillary lived on for four more years, attending Peel Meeting. He occasionally saw patients, as when he asked to see Dr William Hawes, later to be founder of the Royal Humane Society. His family friend John Fothergill was also in attendance, but it was not a happy occasion for the two physicians disagreed about the appropriate treatment. This led to such a rift between them, that in 1763, when Hillary himself was dying "of a fever", he refused Fothergill's advice. He thrust his old friend's medicine from him, we are told, and probably lost his life "from his resentment".⁴⁹

An administration was granted to William's younger brother, Richard, born in Burtersett in 1703. Richard, now living in Liverpool,

had gone into partnership with his nephew John Scott, son of his sister Ann who had married into the Scott family of Bainbridge Hall. The firm of Hillary and Scott were agents for Dr Fothergill, when in 1765 he consigned goods and chattels through Liverpool to Lea Hall, his newly acquired summer home in Cheshire.⁵⁰ In addition when his brother Samuel in Warrington sent potatoes to him, they were sent by sea from Liverpool by Hillary and Scott. He once complained to his brother that they had not arrived, even though the wind had blown from all parts of the compass.⁵¹ The firm was deeply involved in trade with the West Indies and they developed property interests there, particularly in Jamaica. Richard Hillary seems to have maintained contact with his family in Burtersett, his sister Rachel recording in a letter to a cousin in 1756 that "Richd was a good while with us this summer".⁵² Alexander Fothergill of Carr End also records in his diary meeting Richard in Wensleydale that summer.⁵³ Although Liverpool Friends must have thought Richard was a confirmed bachelor, he surprised them when, in 1764, at the age of sixty-one, he married Hannah Winn, the year after brother William's death. He was to have several children, among them two sons - Richard, born in 1768 and William two years later.⁵⁴ Richard himself lived on to see his sons grow up; he died in 1789. His property now passed to his eldest son but Richard Jnr, unlike his father, was not to be blessed with old age. He died whilst visiting his properties in Jamaica in 1803, at the early age of thirty-five.

Meantime, his younger brother William had parted with Friends. It is probable, however, that his father took him to the old family home when he was a boy for in later years there were Wensleydale Friends who he remembered. His early years, about which little is known, were apparently spent as an Equerry to the Duke of Sussex, with whom he travelled widely on the continent.⁵⁵ In 1800, he married Frances Elizabeth Fytche of Danbury Place in Essex, an heiress. At the end of that year, they had twins, Augustus, to whom the Duke of Sussex stood sponsor, and Elizabeth Mary. William Hillary, now living in some style at Danbury Place, was to play an important role in the affairs of Essex in those years when Napoleon threatened invasion. In 1803, he raised the first Essex Legion of infantry and cavalry, some 1400 men, the largest force offered by any private individual for the defence of the country.

In recognition of his services, he was created Baronet in 1805, describing himself as Sir William Hillary Bart, of Danbury Place, County of Essex, and of Rigg House in the County of Yorkshire, one of the old Hillary properties in Wensleydale. His difficulty, however,

was that his wife's family did all they could to ensure that he did not squander her assets. It soon became apparent that he could in no way continue to support the great expense of maintaining his Essex Legion. Danbury Place was by now heavily mortgaged and despite selling off Hillary Hall, the family home, as well as Rigg House and other properties, he could not meet his obligations. He had inherited valuable sugar estates on the death of his brother Richard in 1803, but the plummeting price of sugar on world markets did not help him. By 1807 Sir William was no longer able to satisfy those to whom he was indebted. At the same time, and not surprisingly, his marriage broke up, to the evident relief of his wife's family. Soon, alone and without wife or family, he moved to the Isle of Man, presumably to evade his creditors. It must have been a desperate decision.

He settled at Fort Ann, near Douglas. He soon became aware of the constant and repeated shipwrecks around the island. In 1822, when the government cutter *Vigilance*, the naval brig *Racehorse* and many other smaller vessels were wrecked in a storm, Hillary was persuaded that something had to be done about saving lives at sea. In February 1823, he published *An Appeal to the British Nation on the Humanity and policy of forming a National Institution for the Preservation of Lives and Property from Shipwreck*, dedicated to the King, George IV.⁵⁶ Visiting London the following year, Sir William gained important encouragement for his proposal from George Hibbert, chairman of the West India Merchants and from Thomas Wilson, M.P. for Southwark. With their support a meeting was arranged at the London Tavern on the 8th March, 1824, under the chairmanship of the Archbishop of Canterbury; it also had the support of the King, several royal dukes and William Wilberforce. Thus was born the *Royal National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck*. It was to become the RNLI in 1853, remaining to this day the entirely voluntary organisation that has done so much for those in peril. Sir William lived on the Isle of Man, going out in lifeboats on numerous occasions. In 1827, he helped in rescuing seventeen men from the Swedish barge *Fortroindet*, and in that same year, he broke six ribs while saving the crew of the *St George*. In 1830, at the age of sixty, he led a group of fourteen volunteers, who saved sixty-two persons from drowning. He himself was washed overboard in the process. It was an episode that won him the Gold Medal of the Shipwreck Institution.

There is evidence that there were old Quaker friends in Wensleydale who Sir William would have known as a boy and who he remembered during his years in the Isle of Man. In February 1825,

he wrote⁵⁷ from London to William Thompson of Hawes, presumably a lawyer, in response to a letter, which evidently concerned certain moneys he still owed in Wensleydale. He instructed Thompson to pass any moneys that he might have left in his hands to his "late servant", one Metcalfe. He also sent his best regards to William Fothergill and his family, at Carr End, as well as to the "widow of my grand old friend, Tho Harrison".

Sir William Hillary lived on the Isle of Man until his death in 1847, constantly occupied with good causes. He died full of public spirit to the last. Although born a Friend, he seems to have had no contact with Quakers after his childhood. Perhaps, however, we may claim that his philanthropic activities, and particularly his devotion to the saving of lives at sea, owed something to the Quaker genes that he had inherited from his great-grandfather, Richard Robinson of Countersett.

The "Tho Harrison" to whose widow Sir William sent greetings in 1825 belonged to a family who had been Quakers since the earliest days of Friends in Wensleydale. In 1662, among others prosecuted for attending a meeting were Batholomew Harrison of Countersett and Isabell his wife, "being fined either of them 12d".⁵⁸ In those years informers were pursuing Quakers in Wensleydale. William Thornaby of Richmond was one of the most active; in 1670 he listed nearly forty Quakers in Wensleydale, including Batholomew and Edward Harrison of Countersett. Bartholomew, however, was to be in trouble with Friends too, for in 1682 a testimony was drawn up "against his own disorderly wayes, being subject to take a sup (as he called it) of drink & the letting his Tongue clatter to the dishonour of God".⁵⁹

At the end of the eighteenth century, after the last Robinson had left their family home, Reuben Harrison, who had married Hannah Smith in 1752, moved into Countersett Hall.⁶⁰ Their son Reuben was married in 1794 and in 1795 Daniel Harrison, destined to be one of the founders of the firm of Harrisons and Crosfield, was born there. In later years he could always remember the garden, set with flowers, terraced borders and snowdrops. The Harrisons left Countersett in 1802, the father to the neighbouring farm of High Blean, where he died the following year. Reuben, his son, however, went to Rochdale where Marsden Monthly Meeting welcomed him and his family into membership.

Reuben Harrison seems not to have enjoyed great success.⁶¹ He first became a cotton spinner, then a labourer and when he died in 1827, at the age of fifty eight, he was a warehouseman. Nevertheless, he

had thirteen children, the eldest, Daniel, becoming a successful businessman. His youngest, Smith Harrison, was not born until 1818. Daniel was a pupil at Ackworth School from 1806 to 1807; he then became a coffee dealer at Liverpool. He worked in partnership with Octavius Waterhouse but by the end of the 1830s, as a result of a disastrous investment by his partner, the business failed and Daniel Harrison, who had been looking forward to retiring to country life, had to start all over again. He clearly inspired loyalty among his staff. One of his young clerks, John Thistlewaite, on being pressed to take another post, told him: "No thank thee, Daniel Harrison.... I Shall remain here another year until thou art fairly started again".⁶² And he wanted no salary. By 1843 Daniel Harrison was so well recovered in the tea and coffee trade that he was able to go into partnership with his youngest brother, Smith Harrison, now in his twenties. Smith Harrison was also an Ackworth scholar, attending the school from 1829 until 1832.

At this time they were approached by George Crosfield of Liverpool.⁶³ The Crosfields were originally a farming family from Westmorland. Their fortunes, however, changed when George Crosfield, born in 1751, left rural life to become first an apprentice to a grocer in Kendal. He then moved to Warrington where he seems to have joined Samuel Fothergill in his grocer's business. In due course, after Samuel's death, he took over the enterprise. Later he ran a sugar refinery. He died in Lancaster in 1820. His eldest son, George, born in 1785, was to have further connections with the Fothergill family. In 1815 he married Margaret Chorley, the daughter of Alexander Chorley and his wife Betty Fothergill, niece to the Doctor whose London home she had so engagingly described in her diary during her visit in 1770. George Crosfield had a great admiration for the Quaker ministering Friend, Samuel Fothergill, and in 1843 published an edition of his Life and Letters.⁶⁴

That same year, his son Joseph Crosfield, who had worked with the now defunct firm of Daniel Harrison and his partner Octavius Waterhouse, was thinking of setting up his own business. He was only twenty three. At his father's instigation, however, he was persuaded to go into partnership with Daniel Harrison and his brother Smith. The terms were soon agreed. George Crosfield advanced £4000 and guaranteed another £1000. The Harrisons matched Crosfields contribution with an equal amount of their own. Joseph was to have three tenths of the profits. So it was that the firm of Harrisons and Crosfield started business on the first of January 1844 as wholesale tea merchants.⁶⁵ It was at once profitable - they

made £3000 in the first year. In 1855, however, when tea clippers had turned to London as their destination, the firm moved to the capital. There too they prospered, becoming within ten years one of the three largest tea traders in the country.

Daniel Harrison moved to Beckenham in Kent, where he died in 1873 at the age of seventy eight.⁶⁶ His brother Smith was to live out his years as a member of Ratcliff and Barking Monthly Meeting. His first wife Sarah had died in childbirth in 1842, before the move to London, and in 1858 he married for the second time Jane Lister of Upton in Essex, daughter of Joseph Jackson Lister whose home was opposite John Fothergill's old garden in west Ham, now occupied by the Gurney family. It was almost a Quaker enclave. Elizabeth Fry had lived nearby. Jane's brother was Joseph Lister, the father of antiseptic surgery and a future President of the Royal Society. Although he had left Friends when he married the daughter of his Edinburgh chief, Lister retained the religious outlook that he had gained from his Quaker parents. His belief in the spiritual value of his work as a surgeon is illustrated by a letter that he wrote to his sister Jane in 1857, the year before her marriage.

I trust that I may be enabled in the treatment of patients always to act with a single eye to their good and therefore to the glory of our Heavenly Father. If a man be able to act in this spirit, and is favoured to feel something of the sustaining love of God in his work, truly the practice of surgery is a glorious occupation.⁶⁷

Jane's husband, Smith Harrison, died in 1883.⁶⁸

Joseph Crosfield lived in Reigate where he played a major role in the building of the Meeting House. He built a beautiful home, the Dingle, where his family was brought up. After the death of his wife, he was led in his last years into some form of temptation which led him to confess to the Monthly Meeting "that I have been through unwatchfulness been betrayed into sin". He was accepted back into his Meeting in 1877 but died two years later at the early age of fifty eight.⁶⁹

Harrisons and Crosfield went from strength to strength. They were to diversify from their tea and coffee interests to become one of the most important firms dealing in Malayan rubber. Timber, building material and chemicals later came to be part of their commercial concerns. By the end of the twentieth century the firm's profits were more than £80 million,⁷⁰ a far cry from the £3000 of 1844. Neither the

name nor the original business exist today. The company now trades under the name "Elementis" and it is a specialty chemical company.

The question has to be asked whether worldly matters may have inhibited the cultivation of the inner vineyard amongst Friends who became so highly successful. There was no lack of warning voices. During the nineteenth century there were Quakers such as Lydia Ann Barclay who saw "nothing but danger in shaking hands with the worldly spirit". She was deeply disturbed by the open evidence of wealth, the portraits and fine residences.⁷¹ Even the pious Dr Fothergill, always at full stretch in the duties of his profession, was warned by his brother Samuel, in a letter to his sister, Ann, that "some envious tongues are ready to say the desire of accumulating abundance is the cause of subjecting himself to so much fatigue".⁷²

All who have been brought up in their early years in Wensleydale retain an abiding affection for their native dale. So too do those whose families have their roots there. Daniel Harrison's youngest daughter, Lucy, born in 1844 at the time of the foundation of Harrisons and Crosfield, became a distinguished literary scholar who was headmistress of a London School for many years.⁷³ She decided to retire to the country and chose to build herself a home in Bainbridge - Cupples Field - in 1885. There is a datestone with her initials and the date 1886 above the main door. The house is built in the style of years gone by, the mullioned windows being modelled on those of Countersett Hall, birthplace of her father Daniel Harrison.

Duty then took her to York where she was a successful headmistress of the Mount School. She retired in 1902, moving back to her home in Bainbridge, where she lived in rural contentment until her death in 1915. She delighted in her walks to Countersett, her father's birthplace. She once wrote to her much loved friend and companion, Amy Greener, that one December evening she had reached the little bridge close to the water at Semerwater. "The sun was setting red and brilliant behind the hills, white with snow," she told her, "and the little lake looked exquisite in the light...."⁷⁴

Looking back today, one can only be amazed that a group of early Friends from so small a village as Countersett have left so significant a legacy - the spiritual contribution to early Friends in America, Ackworth School, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, the medical achievements of William Hillary and John Fothergill, those priceless paintings in St Petersburg, the development of Harrisons and Crosfield in the industrial world, not to mention the influence that Lucy Harrison had on a whole generation of scholars, And *Fothergilla* blooms in my garden, turning as "red and brilliant" in the

autumn as Lucy Harrison's sunset. Her home, Cupple's Field, is today the home of the veterinary practice of upper Wensleydale. Lucy's tombstone stands outside the door of the Meeting House in Bainbridge. Dr Fothergill's botanic garden is now West Ham Park, where trees of his planting, for example an ancient Ginkgo, flourish to this day. Countersett remains little more than a hamlet but Richard Robinson's home is much as it ever was, at least from the outside. Carr End and the Burtersett home of the Hillarys are there still, as is the old road that Alexander Fothergill surveyed, striking straight up the hillside and over to Cams Houses and beyond. Friends still meet in the old Meeting House. And perhaps before Meeting on a still First Day morning, you may have a moment to walk down to Semerwater. You will cross the Quaker's bridge to the lake shore and if it is a windless day, you will see the hills perfectly reflected on the surface of the lake, a view unchanged since Richard Robinson became the first Countersett Quaker more than three hundred and fifty years ago.

Christopher C. Booth

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SACKCLOTH AND ASHES: ROBERT BARCLAY'S 'SIGN'

One morning in 1672, Robert Barclay, writer and intellectual, woke with the strong conviction that the Lord was commanding him to walk through the streets of Aberdeen, wearing sackcloth and daubed with ashes, in order to call the people of Aberdeen to repentance. He was reluctant to do so but after prayer and discussion with other Friends, believed that this was truly the Lord's command - indeed 'the pillars of my Tabernacle were shaken, and ... my bones trembled, untill I freely gave up unto the Lords will'.

Accounts of wearing sackcloth and ashes, going naked or carrying out other prophetic signs frequently describe the unwillingness with which the writer carried out the command. Such reluctance, in fact, became a measure of the authenticity of the call, proof that the Friend was acting at God's command and not from his or her own will.

As Richard Baumann has described, 'among the major communicative tasks undertaken by the Quakers out in the world [were] identification and moral condemnation of the current sinful actions or conditions of others and prophetic warning of the consequences to follow if they did not repent, reform their ways, and come into the Quaker fold'.¹ While these warnings could be conveyed through preaching or print, they could also be communicated through 'signs', the 'public performance of shocking, dramatic actions, intended to convey, through nonverbal means, an expression of moral reproof and/or prophecy'.² Believing themselves to be filled with the same spirit that filled the Old Testament prophets, Quakers in some cases believed that, as Rosemary Moore has argued, 'this conduct ... was not merely an illustration, but was intended to act like the signs of Old Testament prophets, and bring about the thing illustrated, the fall of the godless society and the coming of God's kingdom'.³ The body of the Friend became the instrument by which God could communicate and fulfil his truth.

In England, this enactment of signs took place primarily during the first half of the 1650s, with a second wave taking place between 1658-1662,⁴ but it dropped off sharply after that and virtually died out by the end of the 1660s, although Braithwaite does list a few examples taking place as late as the eighteenth century.⁵ Such actions began to elicit official disapproval and an epistle from London Yearly Meeting in 1672 advised Friends to:

avoid all imagined, unseasonable and untimely prophesyings; which tend not only to stir up persecution, but also to the begetting airy and uncertain expectations, and to the amusing and affrighting simple people from receiving the Truth: for this practice, God's wisdom neither leads to, nor justifies.⁶

There is evidence, however, that the acting out of signs continued in Aberdeen until at least the latter half of the 1670s, with Andrew Jaffray walking naked through the market place in 1677.

In the Old Testament, the wearing of sackcloth and ashes was connected with repentance. Kenneth Carroll has usefully pointed out the additional link with Revelations 11:3: 'And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three-score days, clothed in sackcloth.'⁷ In sixteenth and seventeenth century Scottish Presbyterian churches, transgressors were frequently required to do public penance by appearing in church wearing sackcloth (a 'sackgoun') and either standing at the church door during the service or sitting on a repentance or 'cutty' stool. Barclay could therefore assume that the significance of his appearance in sackcloth would be clearly understood by his audience.

Having performed his sign, Barclay felt the need to publish a pamphlet, explaining his action and again calling on the people of Aberdeen to repent. A four page tract, entitled *A Seasonable warning, and serious Exhortation to, and Expostulation with the Inhabitants of Aberdene: concerning this present Dispensation and day of Gods loving Visitation towards them* was published, dated 1672. The first two pages of the publication describe the carrying out of the sign and exhort the people to

search and examine every one his own soul, how far this warning and voice of the Lord is applicable unto them, and how great need they have to be truely humbled in their Spirits.

The third and fourth page are devoted to a set of responses to queries sent, seemingly anonymously, by one 'who styles himself a sober Inquirer'. In these answers, Barclay argues:

- (a) That his message has not come from any Light or Illumination in him as a man, but from the immediate testimony of the Spirit of God in his heart;
- (b) That a manifestation of that Spirit is given to every man;

- (c) That God's Spirit speaks within, and that hearing an audible external voice is unnecessary;
- (d) That a message delivered from the testimony of the Spirit of God in the heart reaches to the manifestation of the same Spirit, in the hearts of those to whom it is delivered, if they wilfully do not resist and shut it out;
- (e) That those who despise the Light and manifestation of God in themselves, and who mock at the message, are worthy of condemnation, just as the Scribes and Pharisees who jeered at Christ were;
- (f) That those Friends who accompanied Barclay in his action did so because the Spirit within them led them to do so;
- (g) That only the immediate testimony of the Spirit of God can reveal false pretenders and delusions.

As Luella M. Wright has demonstrated, the printing of Friends' books and pamphlets was 'a hazardous undertaking, often entailing fines and imprisonment as well as the confiscation of both press and printed matter'.⁸ In Scotland, the absence of a Stationers' Company meant that the burgh magistrates had considerable licensing and censoring authority. During the 1670s, an anti-Quaker campaign on the part of the Aberdeen city council led to frequent seizures of printing materials, sheets and books.⁹ Printing and publishing therefore carried considerable risks and many Quaker publications appeared without the usual name of the printer and bookseller. It has been suggested that some Quaker tracts may have been printed by sympathetic apprentices or journeymen at night, using their masters' equipment without permission. Certainly many Quaker publications show evidence of rapid or inexperienced printing, and Barclay's pamphlet fits that pattern. The printing is rough and uneven and there are a number of typographical errors- upside down 'n's, for example, which appear as 'u's (and vice versa), and misspellings which appear to be straightforward mistakes - matter spelled matrrr, for example, and untill spelled with three 'I's. There is no printer's or bookseller's name.

In the annotated document that follows, the following editorial principles have been adopted. Long *f* has been silently changed to *s*. Punctuation, spelling, italicisation and capitalisation are as the original, but obvious printers' errors such as those described above have been silently corrected.

Barclay's use of the Bible on this occasion needs some explanation. Like other seventeenth-century Friends, Barclay was steeped in the language and

images of the Bible. There are few direct Biblical quotations in this pamphlet, but frequent echoes and allusions. These have been identified insofar as was possible. Italics are used by Barclay for emphasis, not to indicate quotations.

At several points, Barclay uses phrases which are close to, but not identical with, similar phrases in the *King James Bible*. Given his educational background, it seems highly possible that Barclay was using Hebrew and Greek texts, and translating as he went along.

Original page numbers are indicated in square brackets.

Betty Hagglund

[1] *A Seasonable warning, and serious Exhortation to, and Expostulation with the Inhabitants of Aberdene: concerning this present Dispensation and day of Gods loving Visitation towards them.*

Great, unutterably great, O ye Inhabitants, is the Love of God which flowes in my heart towards you, and in bowels of unspeakable compassion,¹⁰ am I opened, am I enlarged unto you, in the sight and sense of your conditions, which the Lord hath discovered and revealed unto Me. O that your eyes were opened, that ye might see, and behold, this Day of the Lord, and that your ears were unstopped to hear his voice,¹¹ that cryeth aloud, and calleth One and All of you to Repentance; and that your hearts were softened, & enclined¹² to discern and perceive this blessed hour of His present Visitation, which is come unto you. He hath lifted up a Standard in the midst of you, and among your Brethren;¹³ He hath called already a Remnant,¹⁴ and inrolled¹⁵ them under His Banner, and he is calling All to come, he hath not left one without a witness: Blessed are they that receive Him, and hear him in this day of his appearance. He hath sent forth, and is daily sending forth his Servants and Messengers, to invite you to come and partake with Him of the Supper, of the Feast which he hath prepared; and among many others, whom at sundrie times he hath caused to sound forth His Testimony: I also have in the Name and Power and Authority of God proclaimed his everlasting Gospel among you, and preached, and held forth the glade tydings of this glorious dispensation, which is Christ manifesting and revealing himself in and by his Light and Spirit in the hearts of all men, *to lead them out of all unrighteousness and filthiness, both of Flesh and Spirit;¹⁶ unto all righteousness, truth, holyness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.¹⁷*

But because many of you have despysed¹⁸ this Day, and as ye have made mirry¹⁹ over Gods witness in your hearts, not liking there to entertaine Him in his meek, lowly, yet lovely appearance; so have ye despysed, mocked and rejected, that which testifieth to this witness without²⁰ you. Therefore was I commanded of the Lord God, to pass through your streets covered with Sack-cloath and Ashes, calling you to repentance, that ye might yet more be awakned, & alarumed²¹ to take notice of the Lords Voice unto you, and not to despuse these things which belong to your peace, while your day lasteth, least hereafter they be hid from your eyes. And the command of the Lord concerning this thing, came unto me that very morning, as I awakened, and the burden thereof was very great; Yea, seemed almost insupportible unto me, (for such a thing untill that very moment, had never entered me before, not in the most remote consideration) And some whom I called to declare to them this thing, can bear witness, how great was the agonie of my Spirit, how I besought the Lord with tears, that this Cup might pass away from me:²² Yea how the pillars of my Tabernacle were shaken, and how exceedingly my bones trembled, untill I freely gave up unto the Lords will. And this was the end and tendency of my testimony, to call you to Repentance, by this signal and singular step, which I as to my own will and inclination, was as unwilling to be [2] found in, as the worst and wickedest of you, can be averse from receiving, or laying it to heart. Let all and every one of you in whom there is yet alive the least regard to God, or his fear, consider and weigh this matter in the presence of God, and by the Spirit of Jesus Christ in your hearts, which makes all things manifest, search and examine every one his own Soul, how far this warning and voice of the Lord is applicable unto them, and how great need they have to be truely humbled in their Spirits? Returning to the Lord in their inward parts, with such true and unfeigned Repentance as answers to the outward cloathing of *Sack cloath*, and being covered with *Ashes*. And in the Fear and Name of the Lord, I charge all upon this occasion, to bewarr²³ of a slight,²⁴ froathie,²⁵ jearing, mocking spirit, for though such may be permitted to insult for a season, *yet God will turn their laughter into howling, and will laugh when their calamity cometh;*²⁶ and such are seen to be in one spirit with those who *spat in the face of the LORD JESUS, and buffeting him, bid him prophesie who smote him.*²⁷ Therefore consider. O Ye Inhabitants, and be serious, standing in fear; Where are ye who are called Christians? Among whom it is become a wonder, *A stone of stumbling,*²⁸ *or matter of mockrie, or a ground of reproach, for one in the Name of the LORD, to invite you to*

Repentance in Sackcloath and Ashes: Would not the Heathen condemne you in this thing? And will not *Niniveh*²⁹ stand up in judgement against you? How is it that ye that are called Christians, can willingly give room to every idle Mountebank,³⁰ and can suffer your minds to be drawn out to behold these sinful divertisements, which indeed divert the mind from the serious sense of Gods fear? The people can be gathered there, and neither the Magistrats complaine of tumult, nor yet Preachers nor Professors cry out against it as delusion, or madness. O my Friends consider, can there be any more strongly deluded, then³¹ for people daily to acknowledge and confess they are sinners, and sinning, in words;³² and to startle at that which did so lively represent unto them, what they owne to be their condition. Were it in good earnest, or were it from a true sense of your sins, that ye so frequently seem to acknowledge them, ye would not dispyse, nor overlook that which calleth you to repentance for it. How is it that you can so confidently array your selves in all manner of gaudy, and superflous Apparel, and exceed in lustful poudering³³ and perfumes, and yet are ashamed and amazed at *Sackcloath and Ashes*; which according to your own acknowledgement, is so sutable to your states? Is not this to glory in your shame, and to be ashamed of that which ought to be, and would be your greatest glory, to wit, true and unfeinged Repentance. I shal add that which upon this occasion I declared unto you; I was for a Sign from the Lord unto you, *I desire ye may not be among those that wonder and perish,*³⁴ *but rather repent and be saved.* And this is my *Testimony* unto you, whither you will hear or forbear, I have peace with my God in what I have done, and am satisfied that his requirings I have answered in this thing. I have not sought yours but you, I have not coveted your gold or silver, or any thing else; nor do I retaine, or entertaine, the least hatered, grude,³⁵ or evil-will towards any within or without your gates, but continue in pure and unfeinged love towards all and every one of you, even those who who do most dispise or reject me, and my *Testimony*, being ready to bless those that curse, and to do good to those that dispitfully use me,³⁶ and to be spent in the will of the Lord for your sakes, that your souls may be saved, and God over all may be glorified; for which I travel,³⁷ and cry before the Throne of Grace, as becometh.

A Servant of the Lord Jesus Christ,
ROBERT BARCLAY.

This came before Me to signifie unto you by writing,
*at Urie the 12. of the first Moneth.*³⁸ 1672.

[3] After this Paper was committed to the Press, some Queries concerning this matter were sent (to a Friend in Aberdene) by One who in the inscription styles himself a sober Inquirer,³⁹ which maske he quickly pulled off, either for want of wit, or from too much malice against the truth, by spreading these queries, at the same time among several hands, which no truly, sober Inquirer would have done, untill he had first received, or been refused satisfaction from him, to whom he particularly directed them. In order therefore to dispell such cloudie Mists, as the Enemie seeks to raise for darkning the day of Gods appearance, through his Children: These Answeres are judged fit to be here anexed.

The Premisses, and Queries following upon them, being all one on the matter, the first being positions in general, and the other the particular application of them here to, they need not different answers, both of them are herein comprehended and implyed, as any that will be at the pains to look after the Queries, and compare them, may observe.

To the first is therefore answered.

R.B.⁴⁰ Denyes his Message to have proceeded from any Light or Illumination in him as a man, but from the immediate Testimonie of the Spirit of God, in his heart a manifestation of which Spirit is given to every man to profit withal, according to the plaine testimonie of the Scriptures, I. *Cor.* 12. 7. I. *Iohn* 2. 20. 27 *Heb* 8 10. 11. 12.⁴¹ The which Spirit, and Anointing teaches all the Saints under the *New Covenant*,⁴² whereunto an audible voice is not required for this is said to be within them, and not without them, nor can it be proven that God spoke alwayes to the Prophets by an audible voice, or that such a thing is requisite to every true Revelation, receaved from the *Spirit*, els none could be truly certaine that the Scriptures came from the Spirit of God, untill they received an audible voice by the outward ear, confirming them of it, nor could any have the assurance of Salvation without the same, both which the generalitie of *Protestants* hold needful to Believers, and *Cal. Inst. lib.* I. *cap.* 7 *sect.* 4. *cap.* 8. *Sect* I. *lib.* 3. *cap.* I, *sect.* 4. *cap.* 3. *Sect.* 39.⁴³ that by the inward, secret testimonie of the Spirit, without an audible voice. Nor was *Iohn Hus* [4] his prophesie of *Luther*,⁴⁴ or *George Wisharts*⁴⁵ of the Cardinals death alleadged to have proceeded from an outward audible voice, and yet proved both true, as likewise several others of latter years, which might be mentioned.

2. A Message thus delivered from the Testimonie of the Spirit of God in the heart, reaches to the manifestation of the same Spirit, in the

hearts of those to whom it is delivered, if they wilfully do not resist and shut it out. Thus the Ninivirs⁴⁶ were reached at the call of *Jonah*, and those who heard *Peter*, were pricked in their hearts;⁴⁷ yet neither the one or the other had such an immediate call as *Jonah* and *Peter* had, but the testimonie of the Spirit through these two, touched, reached, and raised that of God in their hearts, and made it applicable unto them. Yet those that dispise this Light, and manifestation of God in themselves, may come to jeer, and mock at a message proceeding from it, through another, even as the Scribes and Pharisees did at Christ; and therefore were worthie of condemnation, and judged by the Heathen, such as *Tyre* and *Sidon*,⁴⁸ and *Ninivie*, even as it is with those of the same spirit at this day, who while they cry up the writings of the Prophets, & other Scripturs, (as did the Pharisees) are dispysing Prophesying, or the teaching, or leadings of the Spirit, which the Apostle declared to be the nature of the New Covenant dispensation; and therefore no wonder if according to the Scripture *Pro. 28. 18.* where there *is* no Vision the people perish.⁴⁹

3. The Assisters to this Action, having had the thing declaired unto them, retiering to the inward Testimonie of the same Spirit in themselves, did feell union therewith, and such as went along, did not onlie find a true liberty (which might have sufficed) but some of them a necessitie to concurr with it. And as for the carrying of the Hat and Cloak,⁵⁰ it was altogether extrinsick, being neither essential nor circumstantial to the thing, nor so looked upon by these who did it: Yet the carping thereat shewes in the proposer, a critical mind, very void of seriousness, which the Lord, as of purpose to starve, hath permitted him to build that part of the Querie in relation to A.H.⁵¹ wise upon a false report, the thing being a manifest untruth.

And in answeare to the second proposition of the premisses, its the alone immediate testimonie of the Spirit of God, that can truly discover all false pretenders and delusions, which if any can, let them deny, without overturning the Basis of all Christian Religion, and rendering the faith of the Saints in all ages uncertaine.

R.B.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

¹ Richard Baumann, *Let your words be few: symbolism of speaking and silence among seventeenth-century Quakers* (London, 1998), p 84.

² Baumann, p 84.

³ Rosemary Moore, *The Light in their Consciences: Early Quakers in Britain 1646-1666* (University Park, Pa., 2000), p 126.

⁴ Kenneth L. Carroll, 'Early Quakers and "Going Naked as a Sign"', *Quaker History*, 67 (1978), pp 84-85.

- ⁵ William C. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism* (Cambridge, 1961), pp 602-603.
- ⁶ *Letters, &c., of Early Friends; Illustrative of the History of the Society* (London, 1841), p 332.
- ⁷ Kenneth L. Carroll, 'Sackcloth and Ashes and other Signs and Wonders', *Jnl. F.H.S.*, 53 (1975), p 314.
- ⁸ Luella M. Wright, *The Literary Life of the Early Friends* (New York, 1966), p 93.
- ⁹ Alastair J. Mann, *The Scottish Book Trade, 1500-1720* (East Linton, 2000), pp 19-24.
- ¹⁰ The bowels were considered as the seat of tender and sympathetic emotions, and phrases such as 'bowels of compassion', 'bowels of mercy', etc. were common. See, for example, I John 3: 17 'But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?'
- ¹¹ Isaiah 35: 5 'Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.'
- ¹² inclined
- ¹³ Not a direct quotation but see Isaiah 59: 19; Isaiah 62:10; Jeremiah 50:2.
- ¹⁴ Joel 2: 32 '... in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.' Early Friends often spoke of themselves as a faithful remnant, a term deriving from several Old Testament texts, including Jeremiah 23: 3 and Micah 2: 12. See Rosemary Moore, *The Light in their Consciences: The Early Quakers in Britain* (University Park, Pa., 2000), pp 215-216.
- ¹⁵ enrolled
- ¹⁶ 2 Corinthians 7: 1 'Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.'
- ¹⁷ Galatians 5: 22-23 'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.'
- ¹⁸ despised
- ¹⁹ merry *Concise Scots Dictionary* (Edinburgh, 1999). Further references will be to CSD.
- ²⁰ outside. The meaning is therefore: Just as you have made merry over God's witness in your hearts, so have you mocked the testimony of that witness from outside yourselves.
- ²¹ alarmed, often with an underlying implication of warning
- ²² Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, 'Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done (Luke 22:42; similarly Mark 14: 36, Matthew 26: 39).
- ²³ beware (CSD).
- ²⁴ slight, slicht - of loose moral character (CSD).
- ²⁵ froathie, frothie, furthie - forward in disposition, bold (CSD).

- 26 Proverbs 1: 26 'I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh'.
- 27 Mark 14: 65 'And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands'.
- 28 I Peter 2:8 'And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient'. See also Isaiah 8: 14.
- 29 Jonah was sent by God to prophesy in Nineveh and in response to his preaching, the people turned from their evil ways, put on sackcloth, repented and turned to God.
- 30 An itinerant quack who from an elevated platform appealed to his audience by means of stories, tricks, juggling and the like.
- 31 'Then' and 'than' are frequently used interchangeably in seventeenth-century texts.
- 32 'We confesse, and acknowledge, here before Thy Divine Majestie, That wee are miserable Sinners; conceived, and borne, in sinne, and iniquitie.' From 'A Confession of our Sinnes, commonly used before the Sermon', *The CL Psalmes of the princelie prophet David in English metre ... With manie godly prayers ...* (Aberdeen, 1629), unpaginated.
- 33 powderings (CSD).
- 34 Acts 13: 41. 'Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.'
- 35 grudge.
- 36 Matthew 5:44 'But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.'
- 37 The words 'travel' and 'travail' are often used interchangeably at this time.
- 38 Month.
- 39 I have not been able to trace this sheet of enquiries.
- 40 Robert Barclay.
- 41 I. Cor. 12. 7 'But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.' I. John 2. 20.27 'But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things. But the anointing which you have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.' Heb 8 10. 11. 12 'For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.'

- ⁴² See Hebrews, chapters 8; 9; 10.
- ⁴³ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, tr. by Ford Lewis Battles (London, 1961). The titles of the four sections cited by Barclay are as follows: Bk 1, ch. 7, sect. 4: 'The witness of the Holy Spirit: this is stronger than all proof'. Bk 1, ch. 8, sect. 1: 'Scripture is superior to all human wisdom'. Bk 3, ch. 1, sect. 4: 'Faith as the work of the Spirit'. Bk 3, ch. 3, sect. 39. This is a typographical error - this chapter does not have a section 39. Barclay probably meant Bk 3, ch. 2, sect. 39: 'The Christian rejoices in the indwelling of the spirit'.
- ⁴⁴ 15th century Czech priest and martyr. Many of his writings prefigured those of Martin Luther and when Luther published his 95 Theses in 1517, cartoons and graffiti began to appear implying that Luther was Huss's spiritual heir. An apocryphal story arose claiming that before Huss's death in 1415, he had said to his executioners: 'You are now going to burn a goose (his name meant goose in Bohemian) but in a century you will have a swan whom you can neither roast nor boil.' This story was claimed by later writers to be a prophecy of the coming of Martin Luther. See David S. Schaff, *John Huss - his life, teachings and death - after Five Hundred Years* (London, 1915), p 258.
- ⁴⁵ 16th century Scottish Calvinist martyr. 'In the reprint of Foxe's "Actes and Monumentes," which appeared in 1570, on the margin opposite to Wishart's allusion to the bishops, are these words: "M. George Wishart prophesieth of the death of the cardinall, which followed after. Proceeding on this unwarrantable deduction, George Buchanan, in his "History of Scotland," asserts that, at the stake, Wishart did actually predict the cardinal's death.' Charles Roger, *Life of George Wishart* (Edinburgh, 1876), online, www.wishart.org/lifeofgeorgewishart.html (September 2005)
- ⁴⁶ Inhabitants of Nineveh
- ⁴⁷ Acts 2: 37 'Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?'
- ⁴⁸ Matthew 11: 21-22 'Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you'.
- ⁴⁹ This is a typographical error - the quotation is from Proverbs 29; 18.
- ⁵⁰ Friends who wished to support a Friend who was carrying out a sign would accompany them and sometimes carry their clothes as they walked through the streets. See Kenneth L. Carroll's account of Friends carrying William Simpson's clothes as he walked naked in Oxford in 1654. Kenneth L. Carroll, 'Early Quakers and "Going Naked as a Sign"', *Quaker History*, 67 (1978), p 78. Presumably friends of Barclay did the same on this occasion.
- ⁵¹ The person referred to as 'A.H.' has not been identified.

JACOB BOEHME AND THE EARLY QUAKERS

At the London Morning Meeting held at the widow Rebecca Travers's house at the sign of the 'Three Feathers' in Watling Street on 21 September 1674 an 'Epistle to the Behmenists' by Ralph Fretwell (*d.* 1686) of Barbados was presented and read. Having weighed it in the 'Fear of God' and in 'tender care of his Truth' it was decided that it should not be printed:

we know the spirit in which Jacob Behmen wrote many of his writings was not clear, but he lived in a great mixture of light & darkness, as to his understanding & sometimes the power of the one prevailed & sometimes the power of the other, now the fruit of the one is judged in the day of God, and the other comes to its own center and flows forth again more purely.

Fretwell, formerly one of the chief judges of the Court of Common Pleas on the island, had once received 'Light and power' from 'Infants Baptism', 'Bread, & wine' and the 'Pater Noster'. As Quakers denied the validity of the sacraments', of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as well as the Lord's Prayer, it was deemed that the epistle gave too much encouragement to the 'Foxes' among the Behmenists, who would continue with the 'dryness & Barrenness' of their ways rather than accepting the 'seed that opens the Mysteries of Gods Kingdom in themselves'.¹ Accordingly, following a request that a copy of Fretwell's book be sent to George Fox, the epistle was minuted in 1675 as 'not to be published', 'not suitable', 'not safe' and two Quaker printers warned against infringing these restrictions.²

Jacob Boehme (1575-1624) came from Alt-Seidenberg, a village near Görlitz, a city of about 10 000 inhabitants in Upper Lusatia. The son of devout Lutheran peasants, he progressed from shoemaker's apprentice to journeyman, later purchasing a cobbler's shop. About 1600 he was possessed with a '*Divine Light*' and going out into an open field beheld 'the *Wonder-workes* of the Creator in the Signatures of all created things, very cleerly and manifestly laid open'.³ Between January and June 1612 Boehme made a fair copy of his celebrated '*Morgenröthe im Aufgang*' or '*Aurora*' (literally 'Morning Glow, Ascending'), a long unfinished work that had been at least twelve years in the making. Following the circulation of the manuscript and

the transcription of additional copies he was denounced by the city magistrates of Görlitz and then from the pulpit. Thereafter Boehme sold his cobbler's bench and began to engage in small-scale commerce, trading in yarns and woollen gloves. After an interval of some years he was said to have been stirred up by the Holy Spirit and, encouraged by the entreaties of certain people, took up his pen. He boasted that his writings were known to 'nearly all of Silesia', as well as in many places in Saxony and Meissen. Nonetheless, they remained unpublished until the printing of *Der Weg zu Christo* (Görlitz, c. 1624).⁴ Boehme's death served only to increase the aura surrounding his life and teachings. A legend began to take shape of a simple, pious barely literate artisan who was given the gift of 'Universall knowledge' and shown:

the Centre of all Beings; *how all things arise from God Originally: consist in God, and againe returne.*⁵

The Silesian nobleman Abraham von Franckenberg (1593-1652) praise his '*profound*' and '*deep-grounded*' writings, believing that they hinted at the great wonders God would perform in future generations. Indeed, in his last years some of Boehme's followers began calling him 'Teutonicus Philosophus', regarding him as a prophet of the Thirty Years' War.⁶

Between 1645 and 1662 most of Boehme's treatises and the majority of his letters were printed in English translation at London. The question of their influence on the early Quakers and the reasons why many Friends eventually repudiated them has been long debated. In a paper on the origin of the Muggletonians published in 1869 Alexander Gordon claimed not only that the first Quakers 'pondered and cherished' Boehme's writings, but even that 'the Quaker spirit and the spirit of Behmen were one'. In the same vein, Christopher Walton compared an obscure passage in Fox's *Journal* with Boehme's stated spiritual experiences to show that Fox was conversant with them.⁷ Yet it was in *The Life of John Milton* (1859-94) that David Masson first maintained that the Quakers 'shared substantially' with the Behmenists and other continental mystics their doctrines of the 'universality of the gift of the Spirit, and of the constant inner light, and motion, and teaching of the Spirit in the soul of each individual believer'. Eduard Bernstein reiterated the point: the 'cult of the inward light, down to the very name "Children of Light"', forms a connecting-link between the Quakers and many

German Anabaptists, as also the German mystics'.⁸ William Braithwaite also supposed that the influence of Boehme's writing was probably considerable, observing that the resemblance between his teachings and those of Friends did not escape contemporary commentators. In *Spiritual Reformers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1914) Rufus Jones explored the issue in greater depth than his predecessors, asserting that there could be no question that Boehme's works were read by the 'serious Seekers in the period of the Commonwealth'. Indeed, he felt that there were 'so many' marks of the Teutonic Philosopher's influence apparent in Fox's *Journal* that no careful students of the two could doubt that there was 'some sort of influence, direct or indirect, conscious or unconscious'.⁹ Similarly, Margaret Bailey argued that 'a persistent stream of mystical opinion and literature' emanating from the 'nurseries of freedom' in Holland was the source of the 'animating ideas of Anabaptists, Familists, Seekers, Quakers, and many other sects'. She suggested, moreover, that the 'final merging' of the Behmenists, as well as of the Familists and the Seekers, with the Quakers, was brought about by the 'dominating personality and constructive genius' of George Fox.¹⁰

That some Quakers had undoubtedly been attracted by Behmenism was subsequently reaffirmed, though with the caveat that while some Behmenists were ultimately absorbed into the Quaker movement not all Quakers were attracted by the German mystic.¹¹ Reginald Maxse's unpublished dissertation 'The reception of Jacob Boehme in England in the XVII and XVIII centuries (Oxford B. Litt., 1934) also suggested that there were important points of contact between Quakers and Behmenists, such as 'the dominating conception of Christ as the Inner Light and the necessity for the Christian to attain by penitence a new birth of the Divine "seed", that state in which Adam was before the Fall'.¹² There followed Wilhelm Struck's *Der Einfluss Jakob Böhmes auf die englische Literatur des 17 Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1936), which remains the fullest treatment of the subject.¹³ Struck, however, was criticized by Stephen Hobhouse for producing almost no new evidence and citing passages by Quaker authors that sounded like Boehme. In addition, he noted that 'natural mystical metaphors, such as those of the inner light, the living seed, the holy birth, the divine pearl, have clearly a much older and wider history'. Thus Hobhouse explained their occurrence in different writers 'simply through the independent study by kindred minds of texts of the Bible'.¹⁴ Equally cautious was Winthrop Hudson, who insisted that many of the parallels between Boehme and Fox adduced

by Rufus Jones seemed rather 'exaggerated and overdrawn'. Instead he emphasized the importance of English interpreters of the Spiritualist reformer Sebastian Franck (1499-1542).¹⁵ This trend in minimizing Boehme's significance reached its apogee with Geoffrey Nuttall's *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience* (1947). Nuttall contended that Quakerism grew out of 'the soul and climate of the time' and that while much in radical Puritanism was in sympathy with Quaker practice, there was something in Quakerism contrary even to the Puritans' beliefs.¹⁶ Furthermore, by stressing that the passage of individuals 'through the whole gamut' of Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists and Quakers was 'over and over again' in the one direction and almost never the other, he could suggest that early Quakerism indicated (rightly or wrongly) the direction of the Puritan movement as a whole. Quakerism was therefore explained as the product of English contexts - a 'spiritual climate', and studies of Quaker origins against a largely continental background of Anabaptism, spiritualism and mysticism dismissed as primarily of academic interest.¹⁷

Consequently, within the framework of this greater debate Boehme's influence upon the Quakers was declared 'specious'. Yet as Jackson Cope noticed, Nuttall rejected the influence of Boehme 'more sweepingly' than his evidence seemed to justify.¹⁸ Indeed, Henry Cadbury's work on early Quakerism and uncanonical lore increased awareness of the scope of Quaker reading and the range of possible influences. Perhaps Nuttall recognized this when in a fresh approach to James Nayler he explored the struggle between Familism and Apostolic Christianity that took place 'in the soul of infant Quakerism'. Firmly within this 'Familist' milieu were the Behmenists.¹⁹ In his study on *Enthusiasm* (Oxford, 1950), Ronald Knox again took up the question of Quaker origins, suggesting that aspects of Anabaptism clung to the 'atmosphere' of the early Friends while denying the possibility that Fox was drawn to Behmenism. Hugh Barbour added that many men were called Behmenists because their ideas resembled Boehme's though they had not studied his teachings.²⁰ In contrast, Christopher Hill stressed Fox's association with Durand Hotham, a Justice of the Peace who wrote a life of Boehme, as well as citing Richard Baxter and Lodowick Muggleton to illustrate his claim that Boehme had 'especially influenced the Quakers'.²¹ Attempting to resolve this apparent impasse, Barry Reay argued in *The Quakers and the English Revolution* (Hounslow, 1985) that historians had spilt 'unnecessary ink discussing the relative influences of radical Puritanism and

continental mysticism' upon early Quakerism. In his opinion the Quakers 'seem to have drawn on both traditions'.²² A different approach was taken by Hugh Ormsby-Lennon, who compared Quaker plain style with Boehme's vision of the language of nature: the signature of all things, wherein man may learn to know himself and the hidden spirit of all creatures.²³ Brian Gibbons also pointed out that 'the radicals most widely associated with Behmenism in the seventeenth century were the Quakers'. While admitting that none of his evidence was new, he nonetheless remarked that almost all of it spoke of Quaker hostility to Boehme rather than admiration:

Quakers generally remember an interest in Boehme's works as a folly of their youth, or they cite him as a dangerous advocate of sacraments. This hostility was reciprocated by the Behmenists, who attacked the quakers for their affectations and for the formalism of their rejection of religious forms²⁴

As all researchers are only too well aware, there is a real problem of what evidence does and does not say - and how far one can push it to make a point. In re-examining the early Quakers' attitude towards Boehme this article uses sources in manuscript and print ranging from antagonistic witnesses such as Baxter and Muggleton to the testimony of Friends like Hilary Prache. It demonstrates how polemicists provided Quakers with a genealogy linking them to Paracelsians, Behmenists and Familists and then outlines the manner in which Boehme's Quaker readers responded. The suggestion is that both their engagement with his writings and their association in contemporaries' minds with his teachings was more extensive than has hitherto usually been acknowledged. Moreover, this study will reopen the larger debate on the origins of Quakerism as well as reassessing the extent to which several Quaker leaders were able to transform their followers into an organized, disciplined, doctrinally coherent group. Indeed, as with problematic sectarian labels such as 'Seeker' and 'Ranter', it illustrates the initial lack of consensus - whether through ignorance, confusion, misinformation or deliberate distortion - as to what was understood by the pejorative name 'Quaker' beyond the notion that adherents trembled before the presence of God. The early Quakers' relationship with Boehme's writings is therefore a crucial aspect in understanding the formation of their individual identities and that of the movement as a whole.

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According to a lampoon entitled *The character of a Quaker in his true and proper colours* (1671), some traced the 'obscure' origins of the

Quakers to '*Behmen* the canting Philosophaster of Germany'.²⁵ These genealogies emphasized correspondences between Boehme's neologisms and Quaker speech, as well as perceived similarities in doctrine. Thus Ralph Farmer of Bristol accused Quakers of taking their 'canting language' from Boehme, quoting '*the straying of Eves minde and lust into the visibles*' and '*being redeemed out of the perishing nature*' as examples.²⁶ Likewise, the nonconformist minister John Faldo cited several 'newcoyn'd' Quaker phrases of a 'peculiar Mintage' such as '*Miracles in Spirit*' and '*The Seed in captivity*', which he claimed derived from Boehme.²⁷ In the same vein, Thomas Comber a future dean of Durham hinted that Quakers daily repaired to '*Jacob Behmen's Theosophick School of Pentecost*', remarking that Boehme's notion of the '*Signature opened by the Spirit*' resembled the Quakers' '*Seed or Birth* which is the Susceptive Principle, conveying Inspiration from God into the Soul'.²⁸ John Brown, moreover, an exiled Scottish minister living in Rotterdam tried to show in *Quakerisme the path-way to paganisme* (Edinburgh, 1678) how they 'joine with *Iacob Behme*', who '*slighted the inputed righteousness from without, and magnified the little spark within, whereby the Father draweth them all to Christ, and teacheth all within them*'.²⁹ This linkage proved difficult to break for in a letter of 1748 addressed to a recent Quaker convert John Wesley (1703-1791) noted that the uncommon expression, "'This holy birth brought forth'" was taken from Boehme, as indeed were 'many other' expressions used by the Quakers. Wesley also suggested that Robert Barclay's unusual phrases "'Ceasing from all outwards, in the natural will and comprehension, and feeling after the inward seed of life'" were borrowed from Boehme.³⁰

Among the first known authors to explicitly associate the Quakers with Boehme was the Presbyterian minister Richard Baxter (1615-1691), who insisted that Boehme took his doctrine neither from Scripture nor from angels, but from the Spiritualist reformer Valentin Weigel (1533-1588) and especially that 'drunken conjurer' and physician Paracelsus (1493-1541). Baxter thought that Boehme largely wrote nonsense fit for pudding brains. Indeed, he asserted that Boehme maintained a 'multitude' of 'vile' falsehoods contrary to the Spirit of God.³¹ Baxter developed these opinions in *The Vnreasonableness of Infidelity* (1655), where he condemned Boehme's admirers for being duped by the 'cloudy nonsense' and 'wilful obscurity' of his 'enigmatical expressions'. Furthermore, by likening Boehme's 'ridiculous' language to the 'hideous bombardical' words

used by Basilides (*fl.*135) and Valentinus (c.100-175), Baxter reaffirmed the message of 'Theophrastia Valentiniana' (1637) by Abraham von Franckenberg, which emphasized correspondences between the teachings of the ancient Gnostics and the heirs of Paracelsus.³² In the same way Baxter linked the Quakers to their 'German Brethren' the Paracelsians and Behmenists, believing that with their forerunners - 'Seekers, Ranters, and Anabaptists' - they were part of a Popish confederacy let loose by the Devil.³³ Hence in *The Quakers Catchism* (1655) he recounted the 'abundance' of Popery that the Quakers and Behmenists maintained:

As that the Pope is not Antichrist ... and the disgracing and secret undermining the sufficiency of the Scripture, the decrying of the Ministry, the unchurcing of our Churches the slighting of Justification by Imputed Righteousnesse, and drawing men to the admiration of their inherent righteousnesse, and of their works, the crying up the light within us, and the sufficiency of common revelation, the setting up the strength of mans free-will, the asserting the necessity of a Judge of Controversie above Scripture ... the extolling of a Monasticall Community and Virginitie, and alienation from worldly employments, the doctrine of Perfection without sinne in this life, with many more of the like nature.³⁴

Writing to Morgan Llwyd (1619-1659) of Gwynedd on 10 July 1656, Baxter explained privately why he condemned the Quakers; they seemed to deny much of the Scriptures, attempted to destroy the ministry and came in a spirit of 'malice & revilinge'. In addition, he replied to Llwyd's contention that none knew the 'first and second' will of God before the 'revealed essence':

For ye hints you give of ye (revealed im[m]anent essence & ye two wills of God & c.) I must confess to you I can[n]ot understand your meaninge without more words or light. Sr I'll deale plainly with you! I have met with one learned man y^t said somewhat towards a change upon my mind, & I have lately read Sr Hen[ry] Vanes booke, & lookt into some of Behmens; but they all deny satisfaction to my Understandinge, by two miscarriges w^{ch} they are com[m]only guilty of: The first is y^t they purposely & willfully hide their minds, deliveringe most things in Allegoryes (even when they speak in Scripture phrase) & avoydinge plaine & p[ro]p[er] terms. No man is so great an enemy to truth as he y^t obscureth it ... The 2^d Err[ou]r is

y^t they will not open to me y^e whole fabricke & systeme or body of truths w^{ch} they p[ro]fess to have attained: but will only drop here one & there one, that I may receive y^m by degrees.³⁵

In the tradition of anti-heretical writing going back to Epiphanius of Salamis (c.315-403), Baxter set about identifying and categorizing perceived errors, lumping together adherents of various individuals' teachings into distinct sects. He imagined that a grand Popish design had been undertaken by a sort of 'Juglers', who in the 'dark' and with 'wonderful' secrecy had concealed the principal part of their opinions by assuming several outward 'shapes and names'. Baxter termed them '*Hiders*' and categorized them accordingly: the '*Vani*' (followers of Sir Henry Vane); '*Paracelsians*, *Weigelians*, and *Behmenists*' - who took their mask from Jacob Boehme; and '*Seekers*'.³⁶ When he came to write a narrative of the most memorable events during his own lifetime Baxter identified at least five sects that had sprung up since the Presbyterians had been purged from Parliament and religious toleration given free rein. Though their doctrines were 'almost the same' they fell into several 'Shapes and Names':

1. The *Vanists*: 2. The *Seekers*: 3. The *Ranters*: 4. The *Quakers*: 5. The *Behmenists*.³⁷

Baxter represented the Quakers as but the '*Ranters* turned from horrid Prophaneness and Blasphemy' to a life of extreme strictness, whose 'horrible Delusions' had most likely been fomented by the many Franciscan friars and other Papists who had infiltrated their meetings. The Behmenists' opinions he considered to go much towards the way of the Quakers, 'for the Sufficiency of the Light of Nature, the Salvation of Heathens as well as Christians, and a dependence on Revelations, & c.'. Yet he conceded that they were fewer in number and seemed to have attained to 'greater Meekness and conquest of Passions' than any of the other sects.³⁸ Elsewhere, Baxter continued to couple Behmenists with Quakers, depicting them as people who lived in great austerity and were against war.³⁹

The characterization of Boehme as a reincarnated Gnostic heretic whose fanciful mysticism had, through Jesuitical cunning, spawned a hidden sect that helped prepare the way for the Quaker movement was adopted, at least in part, by several hostile commentators. Thus Claudius Gilbert, minister of the garrison at Limerick, cited Baxter in *The Libertine School's, or a vindication of the Magistrates Power in*

Religious Matters (1657). Fearful of the dangers posed by those 'notorious Impostors' the Quakers who were carrying on the work of 'Seekers, Levellers, Arminians and Ranters' he warned that what Paracelsus, Boehme and others had attempted in Germany 'these expect now to perfect among us'. A 'pretended' Christ and light within would serve their turn to 'disgrace and destroy' Christ and light above, while Boehme's books so 'mysteriously monstrous' must be 'Englished for the Vulgar',⁴⁰ Similarly, in *Hell broke loose* (1659) the Presbyterian stationer Thomas Underhill repeated Baxter's allegation that the 'soberer sort' of Quakers were possessed with the 'fancies of Jacob Bemon the German Paracelsian Prophet'.⁴¹ Likewise, the Presbyterian minister John Flavell reiterated Baxter's denunciation of Boehme's cloudy Nonsense, ænigmatical Expressions, and wilful Obscurity'.⁴² Though Thomas Pierce a future dean of Salisbury challenged Baxter's inclusion of Sir Henry Vane among promoters of the 'Popish design', he too appears to have accepted that the Papists drew their strength in England from 'Seekers', 'Infidels', 'Quakers' and 'Behmenists'.⁴³ White Kennet, Bishop of Peterborough, also copied parts of Baxter's *A Word in Season. Or, The Great Plot For Restoring Popert* (1663), adopting his term 'Hiders' and counting Paracelsians, Weigelians, Behmenists and 'impudent' Quakers in the category.⁴⁴

While Baxter linked the Quakers to their 'German Brethren' the Paracelsians and Behmenists, the Cambridge Platonist Henry More (1614-1687) looked to Holland. In a letter dated 15 September 1670 to Anne, Viscountess Conway (1631-1679) at her country seat of Ragley Hall, Warwickshire he wrote that it would take too long to explain why the Quakers were 'descended' from Hendrik Niclaes (1502-c.1580), a merchant active in Amsterdam and Emden who in the 1540s had founded a hierarchical organization known as the Family of Love. Polemicists represented them as a mystical sect who allegorized the Scriptures and stressed the immanence of Christ. Moreover, they were rebeked for seeking to attain perfectibility on earth, that is the process of spiritual regeneration whereby the believer returned to a prelapsarian state of oneness with God - or as it was known, of being 'Godded with God'. More believed that Familists had entered England through the wiles of Popish priests and their emissaries, for 'there will not be wanting illuminated elders of that Family in the Roman Church, pretended ones at least'.⁴⁵ In November 1675 Lady Conway was visited at Ragley by More's acquaintance, the Scottish Quaker George Keith (1638?--1716). Through conversation and reading their books she became less

prejudiced towards the Quakers, and on Keith's departure wrote to More:

I hope we may believe the account they give of themselves, that they never were infect'd with what you call Familisme, though perhaps some people amongst them may have expressed themselves in suspected termes out of ignorance.⁴⁶

Though he could not pronounce upon the 'generality of their Sect', More responded that Lady Conway was overconfident that from the beginning the Quakers had 'nothing to do with Familisme'. He cited the example of James Nayler as a 'demonstration' of how many Quakers had been 'tinctured with Familisme'. Furthermore, he had been informed in London by a purported associate of about twenty 'Familists' that they were 'downright' Quakers. Indeed, More confessed that he had always regarded Quakers as 'Familists onely armed with rudenesse and an obstinate Activity'. That the Quakers had 'emerged into a greater nearnesse to the true Apostolick Christianity' was a cause for good Christians to rejoice:

But that they are hardly come from all points of Familisme, is plaine or that they stick so much at the externall Mediation of our Savior and would have this Mediation of his performed within onely.⁴⁷

Lady Conway eventually converted to Quakerism in 1677. Significantly, when More had visited Ragley some years before he was said to have had his 'ears full of Behmenism'.⁴⁸

More acknowledged that though Boehme was a '*pious*' and '*well-meaning*' writer who had engendered sentiments of '*sincere Piety*' in others, he remained an 'Enthusiast'. As one of his characters in *The Two Last Dialogues* (1668) explained, the 'invincible Obscurity' of the Teutonic Philosopher's writings would prevent him being 'over-popular', while his 'mistakes in his pretended Inspirations in matters of Philosophy ruine his Authority amongst the more knowing and sagacious sort of persons'. Furthermore, this speaker supposed that Boehme had been influenced by both Paracelsus and Niclaes's writings, 'which being Enthusiasticall Authors fired his Melancholy into the like Enthusiastick elevations of spirit, and produced a Philosophy in which we all-over discover the foot-steps of *Paracelsianism* and *Familism*'.⁴⁹ Writing in June 1669 to Mrs. Elizabeth Foxcroft (1600-1679), Lady Conway's amanuensis and companion at

Ragley, More continued this comparison of Niclaes with Boehme. Niclaes he judged 'an Infidell or Pagan canting in Scripture phrases' who threatened to undermine the 'ancient Apostolick truth' of Christian religion. Boehme on the other hand, he considered to be 'farr the better person and to have more of God in him'.⁵⁰ More repeated his judgment in correspondence with Lady Conway. Niclaes he dismissed as 'a meer Mock-Prophet' and not divinely inspired, while 'Honest Jacob is wholesome at the bottome though a philosopher but at randome'.⁵¹ About 1670, probably at Foxcroft's or perhaps Lady Conway's behest, More wrote a lengthy private epistle, afterwards published in Latin translation as *Philosophiæ teutonicæ censura* (1679), in which he discussed questions such as whether Boehme was inspired, whether he was mad and what his chief errors were. In addition, he touched on the connection between Familists and Quakers.⁵² Henry Hallywell's *An Account of Familism As it is Revived and Propagated by the Quakers* (1673) developed this argument, which was refuted by William Penn.

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The heresiarch Lodowick Muggleton (1609-1698) supposed that 'Jacob Behmont's Books were the chief Books that the Quakers bought', maintaining that the 'Principle or Foundations of their Religion' was to be found there.⁵³ The first mention of Boehme in his writings comes in a letter dated 29 March 1660 to Edward Fewterell, surgeon of Chesterfield. Challenging Fewterell's belief that man can resign his will to God, Muggleton asserted that Boehme had no personal God at all, not to resign his Will unto; but his God was an infinite, incomprehensible formless Spirit'.⁵⁴ Again, in a letter of 28 November 1661 to Ellen Sudbury of Nottingham, he claimed that Boehme was 'utterly ignorant' of the doctrine of the six principles, knowing nothing of the person and nature' of God, the Devil and angels. Yet Muggleton conceded that Boehme's 'philosophical light was above all Men that doth profess religion, until this Commission of the Spirit came forth'.⁵⁵ At Sudbury's request - and at the expense of her 'Society' of Beamonists mix'd with the Quakers' - Muggleton came to Nottingham in the summer of 1663 where, by his own account, several of the 'Beamonists People' disputed with him only for four to have the 'Sentence of Damnation to eternity upon them'.⁵⁶ Muggleton recalled that Sudbury's husband, Richard, was then 'wrapped up and entangled with Jacob Bemon's principles and disciples with a little smatch of the Quakers'. But to his 'everlasting peace' he would come to know the difference between Boehme's doctrine and that of the 'commission of the spirit'.⁵⁷ It seems that Ellen and Richard Sudbury had belonged to the so-called 'Proud Quakers' of

Nottingham, whose leader was Rice Jones (*fl.* 1650-1663). A former Baptist and army Captain, Jones had disputed with George Fox in the gaol at Derby and at Nottingham Castle. In her discussions with More on the supposed Familist antecedents of Quakerism, Lady Conway revealingly insisted that while Fox had known Jones 'he never was of his congregation nor agreed in opinion with him'.⁵⁸ While the possibility that Jones was influenced by Nicolaes's teachings must remain open to question because none of his writings are known to have survived, it is noteworthy that in an undated letter to Jones, Muggleton claimed that during their controversy at Nottingham he had understood the principles of Jones's religion. According to Muggleton, these principles were founded upon Boehme's philosophy, 'which is to believe that God is an infinite Spirit without a Body'. He added that:

there is very little Difference betwixt the Bemonists and the Quakers, only the Quakers are a little more precise in their outward Lives, but for your Doctrine and theirs it is all one.⁵⁹

These statements accord with opinions expressed elsewhere by Muggleton, that the conception of God as an immortal, eternal being dwelling in spiritual form exercised a definitive influence in the formation of Quaker thought.⁶⁰ Though Muggleton's abhorrence of formless 'Spirits without Bodies', whether divine or angelic, impaired his ability to observe subtle doctrinal distinctions, he was right nonetheless to emphasize Boehme's Quaker readership.⁶¹

Between 1649 and 1662 Giles Calvert (1612-1663), publisher and bookseller at the sign of 'The Black-spread-Eagle' at the west end of St. Paul's cathedral in the parish of St. Gregory by St. Pauls's issued five titles by Boehme: *The epistles of Jacob Bohmen* (1649), *Signatura rerum* (1651), *Concerning the election of grace* (1655), *Aurora* (1656) and *The remainder of the books written by Jacob Behme* (1662). From 1653 Calvert began publishing Quaker writings. Soon Quakers entrusted him with forwarding their letters and this trust was reciprocated by loans that Calvert gave Quakers newly arrived in London. He attended a Quaker 'General Meeting' at Swannington, Leicestershire and accompanied George Fox to a London Quaker meeting. Afterwards Alexander Parker and James Nayler found him 'exceeding tender and loving towards us'. Calvert remained a 'Loving friend' of the Quakers throughout 1655, continuing to publish their writings, forward their letters and supply them with credit and printed books. In December 1656 he signed a petition for remitting the remaining part of Nayler's punishment and it should be

remembered that one of Nayler's followers was Calvert's sister, Martha A Simmonds (1624-1665), whose husband Thomas was to replace Calvert as the leading Quaker publisher.⁶² It is thus possible that Quakers wishing to read Boehme may have borrowed or purchased his books from Calvert.

Titles by Boehme are recorded in a number of libraries among them that of Benjamin Furly (1636-1714), Quaker merchant of Rotterdam, author, translator and friend of John Locke. Furly's library contained more than 4400 books including writings by Boehme in their original German as well a Dutch, English and French versions. The collection was sold at auction in October 1714 for 7638*l.* 19*s.*, with Boehme's works fetching over 35*l.*⁶³

Boehme's Quaker readers responded sometimes with ambivalence, sometimes with enthusiasm and sometimes with hostility. William Bayly (*d.*1675), a former soldier, Baptist teacher and shipmaster of Poole, recalled that before becoming convinced by Fox in 1655 he heard of Boehme's books and began to read much in them, imagining he comprehended something. Yet this would not put his immortal soul at rest, 'which still lay in death and bondage by reason of transgression and sin'.⁶⁴ Thomas Taylor (*c.*1617-1682), an Oxford-educated licensed preacher and once curate of the chapel at Preston Patrick near Kendal, rebuked a Justice of the Peace in February 1660 for warning him of the 'confused Notions and great words' found in Boehme and such like 'frothy Scriblers'. He believed that those whose eyes were opened would apprehend in Boehme's writings 'a sweet unfolding of the Mystery of God, and of Christ'. Hence it may be significant that his brother Christopher Taylor (*c.*1614-1686) was described as an antinomian and has been linked with a Grindletonian community in Bingley, West Yorkshire.⁶⁵

For John Perrot (*d.*1665) an Irish Baptist who was convinced by Edward Burrough, imprisoned by the Inquisition in Rome and became a Quaker schismatic, the light of God became manifest at the Reformation and shone brightly through Boehme, but this was only the beginning of the divine work now reaching fruition with the impending day of judgement.⁶⁶ Francis Ellington (*fl.* 1640-1665) also looked forward to what would come to pass in these 'Northern Islands' in the year believed foretold by the 'Number of the Beast', 1666.⁶⁷ Convinced by William Dewsbury in 1654, Ellington had for more than fifteen years employed the poor of Wellingborough, Northampton and the surrounding area in carding, spinning, dyeing and weaving wool.⁶⁸ He was at Wellingborough when the Diggers

established a colony to farm the waste ground there and may have been one of the local landholders who gave them help.⁶⁹ Ellington interpreted Jeremiah's prediction that the Lord would bring the seed of Israel out of the north country as a prophecy of the coming of the Quakers (Jeremiah 23:8).⁷⁰ Remarkably for a Quaker, he also cited verses from the Apocrypha foretelling the suffering of the Lord's chosen people who '*shall be tryed as the Gold in the fire*' (2 Esdras 16:70-76).⁷¹ He referred, moreover, to the astrologer William Lilly's *Monarchy or no Monarchy in England* (1651), interpreting it as foreseeing 'the Lord's People that should arise in this Nation'.⁷² In *Christian Information Concerning these Last times* (1664) Ellington gathered some 'prophetical Passages' out of *Mercurius Teutonicus, or A Christian information concerning the last Times* (1649) by that 'Faithful Servant' Jacob Boehme. He quoted from a political commentary on the progress of the Thirty Years' War written as a postscript to a letter adressed to Abraham von Franckenberg. This was an allegory which combined elements from prophecies ascribed to Merlin Ambrose and a Franciscan friar:

*An Eagle (viz. the Emperor of Germany) hath hatched young Lyons in his Nest, and brought them Prey, till they have grown great, hoping that they would agin bring their Prey to him; but they have forgotten that, and taken the Eagles nest, and pluck off his Feathers, and in unfaithfulness bit of his Claws, so he can fetch no more Prey, though he should starve for hunger.*⁷³

Having cited a prophecy derived from Ezekiel predicting the 'great overthrow of the Children of Babilon' at the hands of the Ottoman Empire, Ellington turned to an epistle at the end of Boehme's *The Way to Christ Discovered* (1648):

*A Lilly blossometh to you ye Northern Countries, if you destroy it not with the Sectarian contention of the Learned, then it will become a great Tree among you; but if you shall rather contend then to know the True God, then the Ray passeth by, and hiteth only some; and then afterwards you shall be forced to draw water for the thirst of your Souls, among strange Nations.*⁷⁴

Here the lily, a common motif in prophecies and which elsewhere in Boehme's writings was used as a metaphor in a reworking of the Song of Solomon, is identified with the Quakers who have become 'a great Tree' in England.⁷⁵

Robert Rich (*d.*1679) counted Boehme as one of many whose spirit should be remembered as 'Friends to the Bridegroom, who longed to see this day of the Son in Man'. A wealthy London merchant, follower of Nayler and opponent of Fox who emigrated to Barbados, Rich by his own account had read pieces tending to a 'Holy Life'. These included Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*, Benet of Canfield's *The rule of perfection* and Nicholas of Cusa's *The Idiot* (1650), as well as many 'Divine Works' by Niclaes, Boehme and others that were 'inspired of God, and spake of the second Coming of Christ in the Sanctified, and of that blessed Day which should attend his Appearance'.⁷⁶ William Smith (*d.*1673) of Besthorpe, Nottinghamshire was another apparently familiar with Boehme's writings. He was the author of *The Day-Spring from on high visiting the World* (1659), a work whose title was taken from Luke 1:78 and which echoed Boehme's *Aurora, That is, the Day-Spring, or dawning of the day in the Orient* (1656). Smith was also a correspondent of Muggleton, who claimed his knowledge of Boehme far exceeded that of George Fox.⁷⁷

About December 1651 Fox visited Durand Hotham (*c.* 1617-1691), a Justice of the Peace living at Hutton Cranswick in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Escorted by Captain Richard Pursglove, he went to 'Justice Hothams: a pretty tender man y^t had had some experiences of Gods workeinge in his hearte'. According to Fox's account they discoursed of 'ye thinges of God', Hotham saying privately that he had known the principle' of inner light for ten years and was glad that 'ye Lord did now publish it abroad to people'. The following Sunday evening, having preached after divine service at Cranswick in the morning and disrupted a sermon at a neighbouring parish in the afternoon, Fox came to Hotham's house again:

& hee tooke mee in his armes & saide his house was my house: & hee was exceedinge glad att ye worke of ye Lorde & his power.⁷⁸

Afterwards Fox submitted twenty queries to Hotham, the first of which was whether 'ye seed of God was ever to bow downe to any Law butt that from God only'. Loath to enter into a dispute with 'any of men y^t pretend religion, and a Command and Notion aboue y^e reach of mans naturall frame to comprehend', Hotham eventually responded with a lengthy letter to Fox.⁷⁹ About this time Hotham began gaining a reputation as one of two Justices of the Peace in the East Riding sympathetic to the Quakers, later meeting with James Nayler as well.⁸⁰ Indeed, Fox reported that Hotham was glad that 'ye

Lords power & truth was spreade & soe many had received it', attributing to him the remark:

if God had not raised uppe this principle light & life: ye nation had been overspread with rantisme & all ye Justices in ye nation coulde not stoppe it with all there lawes.⁸¹

It is noteworthy that Hotham had translated his elder brother Charles Hotham's *Ad Philosophiam Teutonicam Manuductio* (1648) as *An Introduction to the Tevtonick Philosophie* (1650). Dedicated to the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, this book sought to make Boehme's *abstruse Notions*' more accessible by 'taking off the dark style' of his 'magick language'.⁸² On 7 November 1653 Hotham completed *The Life of Jacob Behmen* (1654), a work largely derived from Abraham von Franckenberg's brief biography. Addressing the reader he conceded finding many 'obscure' things as well as 'highly honest, pious' and 'just' sentiments in Boehme's writings. Yet he trusted that this short relation would stir up more 'searching Spirits' to thoroughly weigh his publications.⁸³ Hotham's literary activities thus indicate that he may have discussed Boehme's ideas with Fox.

It is not known if Fox possessed works by Boehme. An inventory of his library in 1695 recorded 355 items. Numbers 1 to 108 have titles, the remainder do not. Of the known titles several are collections of bound tracts with only the first work indicated. Fox owned an edition of Hendrik Niclaes's *Den Spiegel der Gerechtigheit* and Sebastian Franck's *The Forbidden Fruit: or, a Treatise Of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evill*.⁸⁴ It is thus possible that he also had some of Boehme's writings. This is significant because the extent of Boehme's influence upon Fox has been the subject of much debate. At issue are affinities of thought and expression, notably in Fox's vivid recollection of the power and light of Christ:

Now was I come up in spirit through the flaming sword into the paradise of God. All things were new, and all the creation gave another smell unto me than before, beyond what words can utter. I knew nothing but pureness, and innocency, and righteousness, being renewed up into the image of God by Christ Jesus, so that I say I was come up to the state of Adam which he was in before he fell. The creation was opened to me, and it was showed me how all things had their names given them according to their nature and virtue. And I was at a stand in my mind whether I should practise physic for the good of mankind, seeing the

nature and virtues of the creatures were so opened to me by the Lord...the admirable works of the creation and the virtues thereof, may be known, through the openings of that divine Word of wisdom and power by which they were made.⁸⁵

Probably dictated in 1675 and edited by Thomas Ellwood about 1692, this extract from Fox's Journal is dated '1648' - more than three years before he met Durand Hotham. It has been compared to the preface of Boehme's *XL. Questions Concerning the Soule* (1647) and a passage in *A Description Of Three Principles of the Divine Essence* (1648), which describes the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise watched over by the 'Cherubine with a naked [Or, warning flaming...] two edged Sword before it'.⁸⁶ The flaming sword (Genesis 3:24) was an important symbol for Fox; he used it as a device on one of his three seals.⁸⁷ This contrasts with iconography denoting the 'Conquest of the sword of the Cherubin in Babel', depicted as a sword with the point downward in *Mercurius Teutonicus*.⁸⁸

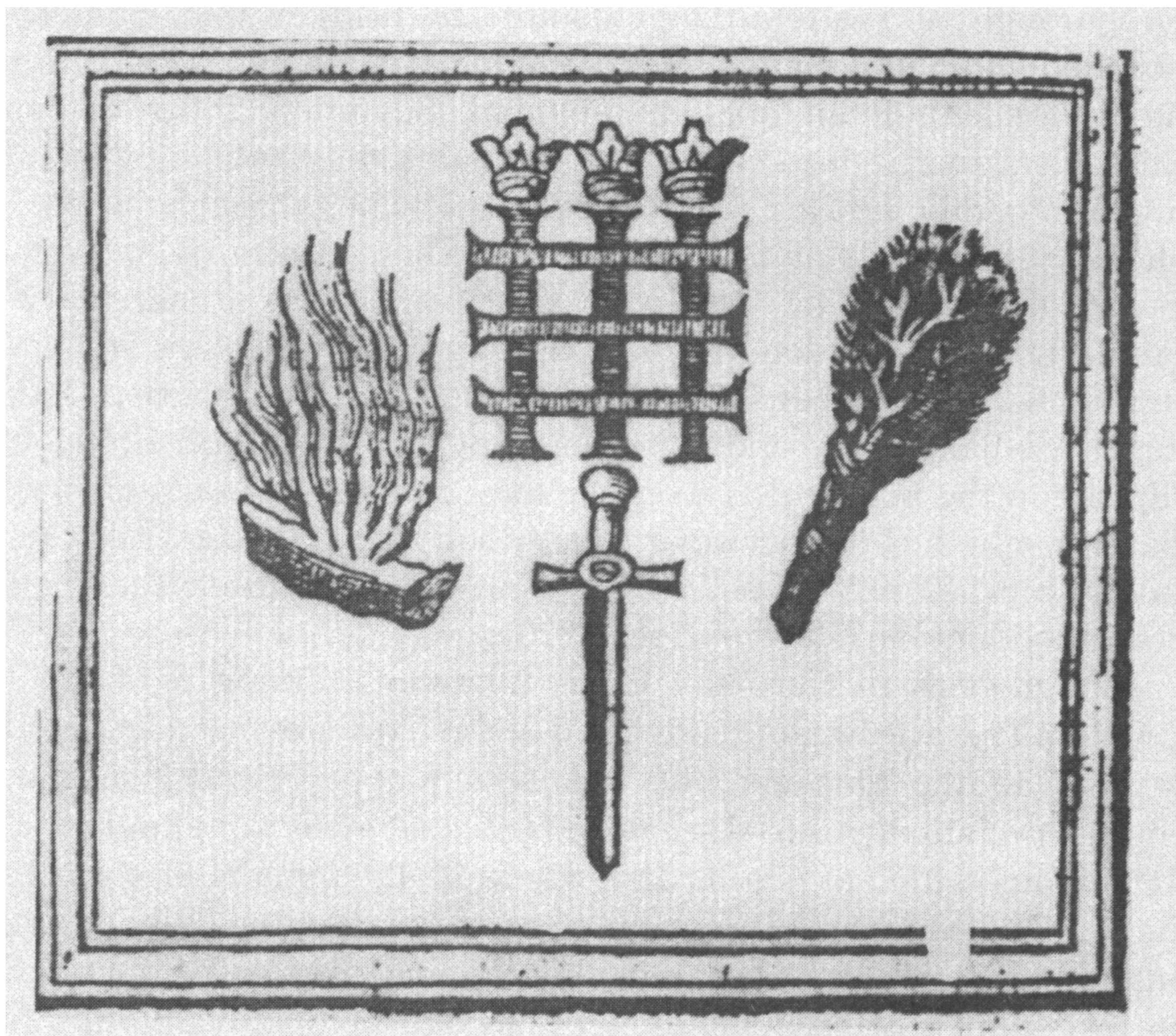


Figure 1. Detail from the title-page of Jacob Boehme's *Mercurius Teutonicus* (1649), by permission of the British Library.

Moreover, although 'the creation was opened to me' echoes Boehme's 'the Gate was opened unto me', it also resembles a phrase in John Everard's translation of *The Divine Pymander of Hermes Mercurius Trismegistus* (1649) when 'all things were opened unto me'.⁸⁹ In short, while it appears that Fox was acquainted with Boehme's writings and that they shared a 'Seraphick' style, he does not seem to have privileged the Teutonic Philosopher over other sources.⁹⁰

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Boehme accepted the validity of two sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The minister baptized the 'outward Body' with outward water, the Holy Ghost baptized the Soul with with 'inward' water of eternal life. At the Last Supper Christ's disciples had partaken of his immortal holy flesh and blood which passed into the 'Tincture' of their souls.⁹¹ These teachings aroused controversy among Quakers who could not reconcile them to their beliefs. In *One Blow at Babel In those of the People called Behmenites* (1662) John Anderdon (d.1685), former secretary to Major-General John Desborough and afterwards goldsmith of Bridgewater, Somerset acknowledged that there sometimes appeared 'an excellent spirit in *Jacob Behmen*'. Even so, he censured Boehme's followers for misunderstanding his expressions, accepting the baptism of infants and ignorantly feeding upon bread and wine, which was but a shadow of the body and blood of Christ. These 'Mediums' of 'Water, Bread and Wine', he declared, were carnal and unnecessary.⁹² Similarly, at the London Morning Meeting held at Rebecca Travers's house on 21 September 1674 it was decided by Stephen Crisp (1628-1692), William Bayly and six others not to print Ralph Fretwell's 'Epistle to the Behmenists' because they retained the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.⁹³ Bayly had read Boehme while Crisp knew him if not directly then through his interpreter and correspondent Jan Claus (fl. 1665-1720).

Though born in Germany Claus migrated, coming to dwell in London. There he became convinced of the 'Truth revealed and made known' to the Quakers but was seized at a Friends' meeting, imprisoned and at his trial sentenced to banishment from England. In 1665 Claus settled at Amsterdam where for the remainder of his life he was a leading Quaker.⁹⁴ Having accompanied Crisp as his interpreter on his travels through the United Provinces into Germany in the summer of 1669, Claus wrote to him in 1672 recounting his study of the writings of Johannes Tauler (c. 1300-1361), Franck, Weigel and Boehme.⁹⁵ Claus also translated James Nayler's *Milk for*

Babes: and Meat for Strong Men into Dutch and had an extensive network of correspondents including Hilary Prache (1614-1679), some of whose letters he copied and forwarded to Crisp.⁹⁶ The son of Michael Prache, pastor at Teutschel near Liegnitz in Silesia, Hilary taught in noble families for several years before ordained at Breslau in 1651. Having been appointed pastor at Diersdorf he wrote to Abraham von Franckenberg concerning the explication of the seventy-two divine names of God. Prache, moreover, was an expert in Oriental languages and translated *Bakkascha = The Enquiry* by the Catalan Rabbi Jedaja Happenini (c. 1270-1340) into Latin. This was published at Leipzig in 1662 with a dedication to the rector of the University and was followed by a new edition of von Frankenberg's *Notæ Mysticæ & Mnemonicæ ad Bechinas Olam sive examen mundi R. Jedaja Happenini* ([Auerstadt?], 1673), to which Prache added a preface.⁹⁷ In May 1673 he wrote to Claus at Amsterdam from Goldberg, where he was now pastor and preacher, relating the activities of a group living close by who believed in infant baptism but attended neither Lutheran nor Catholic services, remaining still when others bowed, sang and read hymns. He described them as followers of Caspar Schwenckfeld (1489-1561) and had spoken with them in his house. Prache had heard William Ames preach at Breslau and added that among the few English books he possessed were two by George Fox, though he had owned works by George Keith.⁹⁸ On 4 June 1674 Prache departed Goldberg with his family, belongings and son-in-law Johann Georg Matern (c. 1640-1680). Assisted by the Schwenckfeldians they went to Hamburg thence probably by ship to Amsterdam and from there to England, where they joined the Quakers. Prache was soon employed at the Friends' printing house making hornbooks for children and occasionally rendering Dutch works into German. His wife and daughter were engaged in silk-weaving while Matern, previously teacher at the gymnasium in Goldberg and a candidate for the ministry, instructed Quaker children in languages and other 'necessary Sciences' at Waltham Abbey.⁹⁹

On 18 April 1676 Martin John, a notorious Schwenckfeldian physician and author of books under the name Matthæus Israel, wrote to Matern from Laubgrund in Silesia regarding the activities of the Quaker missionary Roger Longworth (c.1630-1687), who had been permitted to hold several silent meetings. Unprecedented, these attracted only a few curious people; John himself felt nothing. Furthermore, John detected disagreement among the Quakers for Matern had informed him that they loved Boehme's books, as he did

too. But when John asked Longworth if he liked them he answered that Boehme was 'a mighty hunter before the Lord, in y^e beginning was ye candel lighted in him, but he hunted before the Lord'. This was too much for John, as was the remark that 'they which had Jacob Behmens books were puffed up in their knowledge' and called 'Behmists'. Nonetheless, he was glad that Longworth had returned safely home.¹⁰⁰ After Matern had responded to another letter from John, Prache wrote to John from London on 9 October 1676 informing him that he had recently translated Sebastian Franck's *The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil* from German into English so 'Friends might have it to read, because it agrees with their position'. The summer before he had given the Amsterdam publisher Hendrick Beets (1625?-1708) his *double Extract from the writings of Jacob Boehmen, - Adam prior to the Fall, and Adam in and after the Fall -* with the expectation that he would get it printed. Moreover, Prache reported that rumour of a division among Quakers on account of Boehme's writings was a fearful falsehood:

I do not know in the whole of London any single one among the Friends, of whom there are several thousand, who holds to the writings of Jacob Boehmen in preference to the writings of Friends, for which reason he might be named a Boehmist. The position is this. Very many Friends had read the writings of Jacob Boehmen and were fond of them while they still belonged to the other sects ... All such still acknowledge the gift of the Spirit in the writings of Jacob Boehmen, and hold him to be a divinely illumined man who prophesied in particular about a people which was to come from the North, but they no longer turned to his writings, nor did they ever point them out to anyone else, for they know from daily experience that a single Quaker Meeting, of the kind that is held as it should be, makes greater demands, and is of more use, than the reading for many years of writings which talk so much of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil can ever prove to be. How then can they give the occasion for anyone to call them Boehmists? Certainly he is not a Quaker who is a Boehmist. A Boehmist makes much of the outward water-baptism of infants and of the outward bread and wine as very essential means of salvation, but let anyone name a single individual Quaker in the whole of London who holds such things, and is not aware of something better with regard to both these points. In this respect the Boehmists are to be sought among the Papists who in a like fashion lay much stress on these

shadowy things. There is none such to be found among the Quakers.¹⁰¹

Prache also declared that he would have become a Quaker sooner had he never seen Boehme's writings because the 'high knowledge' contained in them had diverted him from the 'true and only' way he had discovered in his youth through reading Weigel. He added that the 'learned' poet and future martyr Quirinus Kuhlmann (1651-1689) of Breslau was in London and had recently defended 'Jacob Boehmen against the Academicos (regarding philosophy) in published writings'.¹⁰²

In February 1677 Stephen Crisp completed his translation from the Dutch of a short treatise spuriously attributed to Abraham von Franckenberg. Originally written in Latin, this '*Fruit of that pure living Tree of Righteousness*' by '*a Man of Honour and Repute*' was published as *A warning against the deceit of setting up Man's reason as Judge in Spiritual Matters* (1677). Benjamin Furly had probably sent him the now untraced Dutch edition printed at Rotterdam in 1674.¹⁰³ From 1675 genuine reprints of German works by von Franckenberg were also issued by Hendrick Beets who, in partnership with Benjamin Clark of London, Isaac Naeran of Rotterdam and the Quaker Jacob Claus (c. 1644-fl. 1720) of Amsterdam, brought out Robert Barclay's *Theologiae Verè Christianæ Apologia* (1676).¹⁰⁴ Jacob Claus published books in German by Stephen Crisp and in Dutch by his brother Jan and William Penn. Between 1687 and 1690 he issued German translations of the complete works of Hendrick Jansen van Barrefelt (d. 1594?), a prominent member of the Family of Love who broke from Nicolaes in 1573 and used the name Hiël (the 'Life of God').¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, Claus published Jacob Boehme's *Het Mystierium Magnum Ote een Verklaaring over Het Eeste Boek Mosis* (Amsterdam, 1700). At the auction of Furly's library in October 1714 he brought a number of books among them *The Epsitles of Jacob Behmen* (1649) for 10s. and Boehme's *Weg tot Christus* (Amsterdam, 1685). Claus sold some of this stock including the complete works of Thomas à Kempis but not the items by Boehme to the Quaker Thomas Story (1670?-1742) for 171l. 16s. A great part of these, however, were lost at sea.¹⁰⁶

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In December 1681 the Dublin Men's Meeting sent several members to visit Thomas Smith, John Beckett and Christopher Marshall, who owned copies of Boehme's books and were advocating his principles, notably that God's wrath and the Devil's actions are one 'in nature and property'. Yet the three remained steadfast. Then a letter was addressed to John Crabb, who had also 'been something Levened

with that spirit of theirs'. On 28 March 1682 the Men's Meeting commissioned a paper condemning those who 'Runn into faulse Liberty under any pretences whatsoever & Runs from Truth into Errors'. Signed and read publicly, it denounced the 'blasphemous principles & disorderly practices' of Boehme's adherents. who had been beguiled by 'Confused, antichristian, Antiscriptural, Imaginatory and Blasphemous dark principles', Crabb was subsequently examined and admitted loaning Beckett's books. But he refused to recant and in June was required to remain silent in meetings.¹⁰⁷ Yet Crabb would not be silenced. He issued an epitome of a book he had written as *A Testimony concerning the works of The Living God* (1682). Influenced by Boehme's notions concerning the 'Wrath of God' and the 'State of Man in the Fall' which resembled the 'Beast that perisheth', Crabb quoted from Boehme's testimony concerning 'True Faith' contained in *The Tree of Christian Faith* (1654):

Faith is not an historical knowledge, for a Man to make Articles of it, and to depend only on them, and to force his Mind into works of his Reason; but Faith is * One Spirit with God [* Or a Spirit One with, or in God]: for the holy Spirit moveth in the Spirit of Faith. True Faith is the Might of God, One Spirit with God; it worketh in God, and with God ... For as God is free from all Inclination or Deviation, so that he doth what he will, and need give no account for it, so also is the True Faith free in the Spirit of God, it hath no more But one Inclination, *viz.* into the Love and Mercy of God, *viz.* that it casts its willing unto Gods willing; and to go out from the Syderial and Elementary reason.¹⁰⁸

As in Dublin, so in Philadelphia there was dissent among Friends. In 1685 after '*great Charge and Trouble*' William Bradford (1663-1752) arrived in Pennsylvania with a letter from George Fox recommending that he act as printer for Quakers there. Bradford's first production was Samuel Atkin's almanac *Kalendarium Pennsilvaniense* (Philadelphia, 1685), which advertised a variety of medicines. Soon Bradford was also selling books by Quaker authors. After printing espistles on the Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting's instructions he printed an almanac for 1687 by Daniel Leeds (1652-1720), a Quaker student of agriculture and astrology. In October 1687, however, the Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting condemned Leed's almanac, ordering Bradford to deliver his unsold stock to the house of a leading Friend, for which he would be reimbursed, and to

recover copies that had already been dispersed. Perhaps this was Leed's almanac for 1688 as no copies are extant.¹⁰⁹ The next year Bradford printed and sold the first American edition of Boehme's writings *The Temple of Wisdom for the Little World* (Philadelphia, 1688). This 'contracted' collection was published by Leeds following 'many years acquaintance' with the works of this 'divine Philosopher'.¹¹⁰ Bradford later became involved in the Keithian schism, was indicted for libel, imprisoned for four months and subsequently moved to New York in 1693. There he abandoned Quakerism but continued printing and selling Leed's almanacs for most years until 1713. Leeds likewise became embroiled in the Keithian controversy, warning against the 'Hetrodox' doctrines and 'Hypocritical' conduct of his former friends.¹¹¹

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The lawyer Peter Pett (1630-1699) was confident that Quakers would be cured of their 'melancholy and errors' by hard and diligent labour, for any 'Enthusiast' exhausted by 'Mechanicall Trade' during the day would undoubtedly find 'little gusto in reading *Jacob Behmon's* works at night'.¹¹² Such measures to enforce conformity- whether earnest or facetious - were unnecessary, as the Quaker leadership in London, Dublin and Philadelphia demonstrated through their ability to use institutional mechanisms such as the morning, monthly, six weeks, quarterly and yearly meetings to impose doctrinal uniformity. Significantly, several of Boehme's Quakers readers became schismatics: Rice Jones, John Perrot, Robert Rich, William Bradford, Daniel Leeds. Some were active outside England: Ralph Fretwell, Benjamin Furly, John Crabb. Others were foreigners: Jan Claus, Jacob Claus, Hilary Prache, Johann Georg Matern. Furthermore, though enemies such as Farmer, Faldo, Comber, Baxter and Muggleton conflated aspects of Quakerism with Behmenism, while More and Hallywell emphasized similarities with Familism, religious controversy and persecution were important elements in the formation of Quaker identities. Thus John Pordage's undated treatises *From certain false intended perfections* and *Christ within us* which included sections written against the errors of the Quakers, accentuated the differences between Friends and Behmenists.¹¹³ Likewise, the Philadelphian Society, a theosophical group established by Pordage's successors Jane Lead (1624-1704) and her son-in-law Francis Lee (1661-1719), published *The state of the Philadelphian Society* (1697) partly to distinguish themselves from Quakers: 'they were not so silly as to place Religion in *Thouing* and *Theeing*, in keeping on their Hats, or in a *sad Countenance*', even if they

agreed with the Quakers as to the '*Internal Principle of a Light within*'.¹¹⁴ As a Huguenot traveller observed, the 'common Opinion ranges these People under the Class of Quakers, and not without Reason, tho' by the Writings they have lately publish'd, one would think a different Judgment ought to be made of them'.¹¹⁵

Doctrinal uniformity, silent meetings and a preference for Friends' plan style over Boehme's abstruse notions may account for why many who first became convinced of Quakerism turned away from the Teutonic Philosopher - as they did from other authors also. Yet even in the eighteenth century some Friends continued reading Boehme. In 1717 Richard Hutton, steward of the Quaker workhouse at Clerkenwell, recorded lending Boehme's works to Edward Durston and Stephen Crisp's sermons to Joseph Clutton (*d.* 1743), an apprentice apothecary.¹¹⁶ Clutton became a famous Quaker chemist and 'great admirer of Jac. Behmen', and in July 1739 loaned a manuscript about him by the German draughtsman Dionysius Andreas Freher (1649-1728) to the poet Byrom (1692-1763).¹¹⁷ Interestingly, in April 1735 Byrom had dined with his Quaker acquaintances William Vigor and William Penn at the 'Three Tuns', where they 'talked about Jacob Behmen'.¹¹⁸ Moreover, on 1 April 1788 the Quaker minister John Thorp (1742-1817) wrote to Francis Dodshon (1714-1793) from Manchester:

'It is a great sin' says Jacob Bhemmen 'to despair of the Mercy of God; despair is the most powerfull Talon of the Enemy' and in another place he writes thus 'let no man despair and say there is a fast door upon me, I can not be saved for such thoughts the Devils have, and the damned in Hell; If I knew there were but seven men elected in our city, or scarce two I would not despair but believe that I were one of them'.¹¹⁹

At Byrom's request William Law (1686-1761), nonjuror, devotional writer and reader of Boehme, had written to Dodshon, née Henshaw in 1736 vainly seeking to dissuade her from leaving the established Church to join the Quakers. The title of her tract *A Serious Call, In tender Compassion to the Sinners in Sion* (Macclesfield, 1744) echoed Law's *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* (1729). An itinerant minister active in Kendal, Leek and Bristol, she was friends with Samuel Dyer, who owned a copy of *A Compendious View of Christianity* (Bristol, 1799). This book, which contained extracts from Law's letters to enquirers, was printed and sold by J.Mills of Castle

Street, son of Bristol publisher and bookseller Thomas Mills (c. 1735-1820).¹²⁰ While preaching 'in the Methodist way' Thomas Mills issued Madame Guyon's *The Worship of God, in Spirit and in Truth* (Bristol, 1774), as well as Boehme's *The Way to Christ Discovered* (Bath, 1775). In 1778 he became a Quaker, but was disowned in 1789. His daughter Selina was mother of the historian and essayist Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-1859); Mills's grandchildren remembered him as 'an old man of imposing appearance, with long white hair, talking incessantly of Jacob Boehmen'.¹²¹ Another Quaker influenced by Boehme was Isaac Blackbeard (1712-1788), barber of Whitby. His treatise *Man's Own Book of Three Leaves* (Whitby, 1783) is divided into sections on the dark world, the light world and the outward, visible world. A note on the title-page claims it was written 'not with approbation of Friends, by a simple, perhaps well-meaning Behmenite, though under the name of a Quaker'.¹²²

Though there are fewer examples of Boehme's eighteenth-century North American Quaker readership it is noteworthy that the anti-slavery campaigner John Woolman (1720-1772) studied Thomas à Kempis and owned a copy of Edward Taylor's *Jacob Behmen's Theosophick Philosophy Unfolded* (1691).¹²³ Woolman's *Journal* was edited by the Quaker poet and abolitionist John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892), who was familiar with Plato and Boehme. Significantly, Whittier's 'The Pennsylvania Pilgrim' (1872) commemorated the mystic and communitarian leader Johannes Kelpuis (1673-1708):

Or painful Kelpuis from his hermit den
 Wissahickon, maddest of good men,
 Dreamed o'ver the Chiliast dreams of Petersen
 Deep in the woods, where the small river slid
 Snake-like in shade, the Helmstadt Mystic hid
 Weird as a wizard, over arts forbid
 Reading the books of Daniel and of John,
 And Behmen's Morning-Redness, through the Stone
 Of Wisdom, vouchsafed to his eyes alone.¹²⁴

By the early 1660s there were perhaps 40 000 Quakers and their numbers continued to grow until the 1680s. Though the thoughts of most are unrecorded, between 1652 and 1656 a little over one hundred Quaker authors contributed to the publication of about 300 tracts.¹²⁵ While this study cannot be comprehensive it is clear that only a minority of early Quaker printed texts and extant manuscripts show familiarity with Boehme's terms or doctrines. Nonetheless, among those that were influenced by Boehme were several important

figures in the British Isles, Europe, West Indies and North America at a time when Quakerism was taking shape. There may indeed be no definitive answer to the question of Quaker origins, but the extent of Boehme's Quaker readership and the ways in which they engaged with his writings forms a crucial part of the solution. So too does the Quaker reception of works by Sebastian Franck, Hendrik Niclaes and Hiël; kindred subjects needing more detailed examination.¹²⁶

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Keith R Maddock (2005), *Living Truth - A Spiritual Portrait of Pierre Ceresole*, Pendle Hill Pamphlet 379, 35 pp with an comprehensive bibliography, ISBN 0-87575-379-X.

In 1920 Pierre Ceresole with Hubert Parris, then the Assistant Secretary of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, initiated what became Service Civil International, SCI, through running an international work camp at Esnes-Verdun to help heal the ravages of the First World War. In 2005 SCI is running about 700 projects in 40 countries with thousands of volunteers. Its vision is that of Ceresole's born in Lausanne 1879, died in Geneva 1945: *a world of peace, social justice and sustainable development, where all people live together with mutual respect and without recourse to any form of violence to solve conflict. Its mission is to promote peace and intercultural understanding through volunteering and international voluntary projects.*

Keith Maddock is a Canadian Friend who finds that his spiritual journey is akin to that of Ceresole, emphasising that the divine voice speaks to us directly and that physical labour can be a healing corporate spiritual activity. His brief account of Ceresole's life and witness is drawn from manuscripts held in the Peace Collection within the library of Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania, a Collection with an excellent website (swarthmore.edu/library/peace).

Like the UN's first General Secretary Dag Hammarskjöld's vignettes in his posthumous *Markings*,¹ Ceresole mainly left only jottings in notebooks kept in his back pocket. These were published in Neuchatel by the Swiss publisher *La Baconniere* in 1950 with the title of *Vivre sa Vérité: Camets de Route*. An English translation of some of these jottings was made by John W Harvey, when he was Professor of Philosophy at Leeds University and President of SCI, and Christina Yates that was published in 1954 by The Bannisdale Press with the title *For Peace and Truth: from the Notebooks of Pierre Ceresole*. Maddock uses a liberal set of quotations from this book as brush strokes for his spiritual portrait of Ceresole.

Ceresole like Daniel Berrigan in our times was an ardent resistor against militarism and the organs of state power that supported it. As Berrigan points out in his commentary on Daniel,² state power like

King Nebuchadnezzar is ordained with gold at its head but its feet are merely a mixture of clay and iron. Without the power of truth at its feet the state will fall, and that power is best wielded by an international group of civilians professing nonviolence. Such resistance to militarism led both Ceresole and Berrigan to prison in which their spirits flourished. Maddock opens his narrative with a lyrical passage of Ceresole's about his envy of the liberty, courage and defiance of swallows that he spied from his prison window.

I was briefly a member of Swiss Yearly Meeting in the early 1960's and found that Ceresole was a legend amongst its elder members: some like Edmund Privat and Madelaine Jéquier knew him personally, and had been long term volunteers in war stricken regions. At the first Swiss Yearly Meeting in Bern in 1934 twenty two of the fifty present had served in SCI projects and nine of the men had been CO's.

Ceresole spent many years studying mechanical engineering and philosophy but soon gave up teaching in order to travel the world taking up diverse labouring jobs to become better acquainted with the human condition. Returning to Switzerland from Japan as the First World War broke out, he was appalled by the hypocrisy of the Churches in their patriotic support of violence and their indifference to the sufferings inflicted on the enemy.

Maddock succeeds in describing the essence of a life's journey in as short a publication as a Pendle Hill pamphlet. He kindles the reader's interest in a person as dedicated to nonviolence and alternatives to militarism as Ceresole.

Ceresole's consistent endeavour was to transform the enemy into friend: this led him to make several clandestine journeys across the Swiss-German border particularly during the Nazi period against the wish of both governments in an attempt to form an international civil society against war. For this he was imprisoned by both governments as he was by the Swiss when he supported a Swiss soldier who discharged himself from the army in 1915 on becoming a CO. In 1961 when I asked to visit a Swiss CO who had been thrown into jail in Geneva, I was told that if I persisted I would be thrown out of Switzerland. Patriotism was still then equated with military duty. There was not then as there is now provision for an alternative civilian duty so strongly advocated by Ceresole. He was continually

punished for refusing to pay a Swiss military exemption tax, and like William Penn his renunciation of the military estranged him from his father who not only was a colonel in this Swiss army but also served for some time as President of the Swiss Confederation. However Ceresole's brother, although he also was an army colonel, assisted him later in some of his work camps.

The author has made good use of the Ceresole manuscripts in Swarthmore's library but he was probably not acquainted with the conservatism of Swiss society that made it harder for Ceresole to oppose its patriotism and militarism than it would have been in Canada. I feel also that he laces his narrative too much with one of Quakers' most hackneyed phrases: speaking truth to power, one that Ceresole probably would have eschewed.

Maddock perceives his pamphlet as a spiritual portrait in three senses. He resonates with the spirit and energy of Ceresole's jottings. Through them he paints a holistic perspective of what in some of them seemed complex and enigmatic. Thirdly Maddock saw himself as a portrait painter revealing Ceresole's affirmation of the eternal in everyday experience whether of truth and power, or of the majesty of mountains and the wonder of birds that Ceresole so much admired.

Maddock's engaging but tantalising brief view of Ceresole's commitment to alternatives to all violence and his idiosyncratic theology spurred in me to delve again into those jottings from his notebooks published by The Bannisdale Press in London in 1964. I brought my copy in Australia in 1968. May they soon be republished.

¹ Dag Hammarskjöld (1964), *Markings*, Faber & Faber.

² Daniel Berrigan (1998), *Daniel - Under the Siege of the Divine*, Plough Publishing House.

Peter Jarman

NOTES AND QUERIES

ARTHUR RAISTRICK

Hugh S Torrens has drawn attention to: J.E.A. Marshall, *Arthur Raistrick: Britain's premier palynologist* published in HISTORY OF PALAEOBOTANY: SELECTED ESSAYS edited by A.J. Bowden, C.V. Burek and R. Wilding, pp. 161-179. The Essays are published by the Geological Society, London - Geological Society Special Publication No. 241 (2005). The essay contains a valuable biographical account of Arthur Raisrick as well as the specific area of concern in the title.

David Sox: THE ROYAL STUART SOCIETY EVENT.

Unusual invitations sometimes come to the Religious Society of Friends and the Friends Historical Society. I was involved with a rather odd event on the 14th October 2005.

Our Recording Clerk was asked by the Royal Stuart Society to have representation at a ceremony at the statue of James II outside the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square at 11.00 on the 14th to commemorate the birthday of James II.

The invitation was passed on to FHS, and always enjoying the atypical I attended. As Friends know William Penn received land grants in America in lieu of a cash payment covering crown debts owed his father, Admiral Penn who died 1670.

As Frederick Tolles put it: 'As the Admiral's heir, William Penn decided for reasons not clearly specified to ask for territory in America in lieu of a cash payment.' It turned out to be a very wise move for the future of Quakerism as well as religious toleration in the colonies.

The grant was made in 1681 by Charles II and became the Pennsylvania we know. Both Charles II and the Duke of York, his brother (the future James II) favoured Penn's request. As a personal friend of the Duke of York who became king in 1685, Penn helped draw up the two Declarations of Indulgence which gave religious toleration to Catholics Quakers and Jews as well as other Dissenters outside an Anglican state established Church.

Penn remained loyal to James II after the Glorious Revolution, but eventually abandoned the Jacobite cause. Interestingly with the accession of Protestant William and Mary there was no general

religious toleration: in a sense it was a step backward from Penn and James II's ideals.

Of course, James II has always had a 'bad press', and as Eric Delderfield has strongly said: 'James committed every stupid error that was possible and for his intrigue with the French King, his packing of Parliament with his supporters, he became hated.'

But on the 14th October we celebrated James II's attempt at a fuller religious toleration; something worth remembering. The speakers at the birthday event stressed this. Father Nicholas Scofield, archivist for the Archdiocese of Westminster spoke to this point eloquently, and reminded the audience that though Catholics and Quakers differ considerably in doctrine, both groups in Britain need to be reminded of early efforts to bring us to a better understanding of each other.

After all this I was asked to say a few words as a Quaker. I concluded: 'In the spirit of religious freedom and toleration so necessary in our own day, Quakers can honour this occasion as one step in bringing about one of the cornerstones of what it means to be British.'

David Sox

PUBLISHER'S INFORMATION

During the course of his Presidential Address Sir Christopher Booth made reference to "David Hall's splendid book". About forty copies have been found in Sessions' stock at the Ebor Press and are available on a "first come" basis at £5 + p&p £1.

David S Hall: *Richard Robinson of Countersett 1628-1693 and the Quakers of Wensleydale* can be obtained by contacting Bob Jarrett, The Ebor Press Division, Sessions of York, Huntington Road, York YO31 9HS, Tel: 01904-659224, e-mail ebor.info@sessionsofyork.co.uk.

Please also find enclosed a Special Pre-Publication Offer form for Edward H Milligan's *BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF BRITISH QUAKERS IN COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY 1775-1920*.

Editor: Owing to the late despatch of this issue, and with the agreement of William K. Sessions, the Special Pre-Publication Offer is extended to *31 January 2006*.

BIOGRAPHIES

CHRISTOPHER BOOTH

Christopher Booth is President of the Friends Historical Society for 2005. He is a retired physician who works at the Wellcome Centre for the History of Medicine at University College London, where he is an Honorary Professor. His publications include *Betsy Copping Corner* and Christopher C. Booth, *Chain of Friendship: Selected Letters of Dr John Fothergill of London, 1735-1780*, (1971).

BETTY HAGGLUND

Betty Hagglund is a lecturer in History and English at the University of Birmingham, the Open University and the Centre for Postgraduate Quaker Studies at Woodbrooke. She has a particular interest in seventeenth-century Scottish Quaker history and is currently editing the works of Lilius Skene (1626-1697), an early Aberdeen Friend who wrote and published poetry, prophecy and theology.

ARIEL HESSAYON

Dr. Ariel Hessayon is Lecturer in History at Goldsmiths College, University of London. He is the author of *'Gold tried in the fire': the prophet Theaurau John Tany and the English Revolution* (Ashgate, 2006) and joint editor of *Scripture and Scholarship in Early Modern England* (Ashgate, 2006). He has written articles on early modern intellectual and religious history, and contributed entries for the new Dictionary of National Biography.

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