A Letter from James: Essays in Quaker history

I wrote this book for Quakers and others who are interested in this small but influential church. Each chapter explores a topic from a different period of our history. They were chosen simply because a story caught my attention or a question seemed to need an answer. This has led me into a number of different fields—medicine, psychology, literary criticism, philosophy and the history of ideas. I hope that this makes for an agreeable variety, and not for confusion! Fortunately a reader can enjoy the book without having to read every chapter. But I believe that this book has an underlying theme, the importance and value of our history.

You will find here Quakers who made great journeys over land and sea in obedience to the call of God—and even more extraordinary journeys into uncharted regions of thought and spiritual experience. And you will meet others whose perception of the truth was clouded by convention or timidity. On the whole Quakers are no wiser or more saintly than others, but our particular combination of inward contemplation and outward activity for a better world has led to some remarkable stories of achievement. But I also describe some occasions when we failed to live up to our aspirations.

The Quaker past has a strong bearing on questions of Quaker identity today. Sometimes the past provides a sharp contrast to our attitudes today and challenges them. Sometimes there is a sudden recognition that we are standing in the same place. In either case our history, besides being fascinating in its own right, has many things to teach us.

John Lampen.

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The picture of James Nayler on the title page is an engraving in an anonymous pamphlet *Klachte Der Quakers Over haren Niewen Martelar James Nailor in Engelandt* (1657) in the Bibliotheca Thysiana, Leyden. It may not be an authentic likeness, but captures something of his spirit.

A letter from James

Essays in Quaker history by John Lampen

With an introduction by Roy Stephenson

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Introduction
by Roy Stephenson

For some time Quakers, like the rest of the people of Britain, have had an ambivalence about the relevance of history. It has been as if people have thought that by ignoring the past we can escape from it. Perhaps we are now starting to learn that only by attending to our past can we hope to do something about the problems it has given us: whatever the reason, in recent times we seem to have seen a shift in our appreciation of how what has gone before has helped to gift us our present, and our future. People are often ambivalent about their histories, but I think we are seeing a revival of the sense of how significant the past really is. We find we cannot totally lay aside a concern with historical movements. History is never a story of the inevitable, and our current understanding of our planetary home has made us more than previously aware of endings and changings, and that human freedom means we can do something about influencing them if we so wish.

If this is true of our culture in general and of history in general, then it is true in a Quaker context also. When I came to Quakerism in the early 1970s I was told a whole raft of stories which were intended to show me who Quakers were. I heard of the exploits and thinking of Stephen Grellet, Elizabeth Fry, Daniel Wheeler, Mary Dyer, Marmaduke Stephenson, Sarah Lynes Grubb, John Dalton, Hannah Kilham, Abraham Darby, Caroline Stephen, James Parnell, Kathleen Lonsdale, John Bright MP, Mary Hughes and many more. These were not stories for stories' sake. They were what showed me our Quaker DNA, what demonstrated our true Quaker identity, and told me the truths about ourselves from which we cannot escape. The spiritual ancestry I was claiming was expressed in what these Friends and many others had done. I was to understand that human perfection was most definitely not a requirement for a Quaker, but I was expected to work out my ideals and aim to live by them as Quakers have always done. Such ideals had a common fount in the Christian tradition out of which Quakerism had sprung, and they demonstrated to me that idealism on its own was not enough. What was important was the interplay between the Divine Force that changed our hearts - our awareness of what Love requires - and the life of action: in other words our personal testimony.

I contrast this with the current situation. Our current Book of Discipline – the first place most Quakers would turn to learn what it is to be a Friend - contains almost nothing from the 200 Quietist years of our history. Yet this is arguably the most important time in the story of Friends: from being a reviled and persecuted group of extremists we became respected, appreciated even, for our witness that endured persecution and death, and for what we brought to religious life. Quakerism itself was transformed. Though the time may not have been characterised by an emphasis on doing in the world, our being in the world was our witness and our persistence in that witness gained us the respect of the wider society.

Further, I seem to meet many modern Friends who are only dimly aware of the legacy of the great originators of our way of faith – George Fox, Margaret Fell, James Nayler, and all of the others who catapulted us into prominence in the mid-17th Century. I find myself inwardly cringing when I hear Friends ask what the significance of 1652 may be, embarrassed at our collective failure to make plain who we are to those who develop an interest in following our way.

It is as if Friends believe we have outgrown the past, or outgrown the telling of stories. Both of these beliefs I would argue to be both dangerous and untrue. To think we have outgrown the past is to suppose that the Quaker tree, the roots of which have nourished the Society for 350 years, had suddenly become an epiphyte, with no need to draw on the sources that have sustained it. If Quakerism is content to change its identity entirely, we may do this; but I cannot understand how we could claim that this was in right ordering, and consistent with all we have said about acting with integrity. Yet conversations I have had, and reports from others, suggest that many Friends feel a

sense that the past is irrelevant at best – perhaps even something we must live down. I would myself say that to be an organisation that practices integrity, we need to accept the past, celebrate its joys and strengths, and learn from our failings and weaknesses and try to change them or at least acknowledge and live with them. There is no difference in kind between denying the force and place of our history and being a holocaust-denier: there is only a difference of degree.

Are stories really just for children? Story telling can be a way to escape into fantasy, to enter a magic realm where anything can happen, or it can confront us with realities we would rather avoid. It can indeed be Disney, but it can also be Ken Loach or Ibsen, and the boundaries between them are confusing and vague. And millions of people every week watch prime-time 'soaps' on television; no-one could accuse their customary diet of family problems, poverty, loneliness, brutality, sex and power as being pure escapism. Some of the storylines they carry are highly educative and broaden the public's understanding of what it's like, for example, to face up to cancer or live with having been raped. Jesus understood the value of a good story just as much as does every good modern comedian – to disrupt our expectations, to move our thinking on, to confront what we might rather avoid, and to shock us into seeing the world differently. Stories are extended pictures that help us comprehend what the world is like, and every discipline that helps us understand the world does so by using pictures of what we already grasp to get a hold on something new. It is how science has moved onward in the last 300 or so years. Stories, and the pictures out of which they are composed, are for all of us – even Quakers.

Having said all this it will come as no surprise to the reader that I welcome this work by John Lampen with particular enthusiasm. John shows us some of the trends which have characterised the Quaker movement in its Anglo-American incarnations and illustrates who we have been with stories from our past. Some of these may be stories that cause modern readers to react with embarrassment or bafflement, yet they tell us things about ourselves which we need to heed. It has been well said that those who pay no attention to the lessons of history are compelled to repeat them; when we accept our past we can learn from it and hopefully move forward. I am struck by how the story of the Grimké sisters reminds me of the formalism to which Quakerism is always prone, and the damage it may do. Margaret Fell noted the same tendency when she railed against the 'silly poor gospel' of uniform dress. Only by remaining aware of this tendency can we hope to avoid it and stay open to the Spirit working through us.

In similar vein modern readers may be mystified by stories of a miracle-working George Fox, because this runs so counter to the image to which we have been accustomed. Yet there is much in our present-day picture of Fox which tells less than the whole truth. To concentrate on his Journal is to lose much of the humility and tenderness towards people he shows in his letters, for example. And because the Journal was edited to make it more acceptable to a rationalist age, we also lost much of the wondrous element that should by rights suffuse it. In the 1650s, and for all of Christian history before that time, being accepted as a Man of God by people meant performing wondrous acts which defied human expectation. That is still the basis of one of the criteria of sainthood in the Roman Catholic church, so it has not totally disappeared from our culture. Yet the greatest mystery of all, that love is incarnate in the world every time each of us does something selflessly for another, is something we might all affirm, and it is what lies at the heart of the stories of Fox's wonder-working as it lies at the heart of the stories of the miracles of Jesus.

There are other aspects of our past to which we may find it easier to relate. Many modern readers will find Job Scott's sense of ambiguity about his calling, his sense of being torn by it, speaks clearly to them. We are all aware of the conflicting demands life and society seem to make on us, and reconciling these with our faith becomes ever more difficult as our world becomes more obviously complex. And since Freud taught us that not everything about ourselves is immediately obvious to our conscious selves, there has been a greater understanding that we may learn much that is

important from some of our more unconscious activities and choices. Woolman's dreams may make more fruitful reading to a modern enquirer than they did to his 18th-century, rationalist contemporaries who edited his journal for publication.

The benefits of 20-20 hindsight are wonderful. It is easy for us to sympathise with Tolstoy, or the Grimké sisters, when the Quakers they encounter seem not to understand where the Spirit is leading. But all of us struggle with a sense of conflict between the workings of the Spirit and the demands of convention, and we do not always get it right. Even when we are able to approach a situation with the single-minded determination to do God's work, we do not always get it right. So we should feel enabled to avoid judging the Quakers of Philadelphia when confronted by anti-slavery radicals, or the Quakers of Britain when we read of their reaction to the characters in a book they helped encourage into being, even if it was by one of the world's great novelists. I feel sure that their discernments were as much coloured by the question 'Where is the Holy Spirit in this situation?' as by the question 'What will the neighbours think?' It is worth remembering that the Spirit does not necessarily want us always to be radical, and that my radicalism may be more than a threat to you – it may be the end of everything you hold dear. So we should expect that we will make mistakes, and John helps us learn from them by presenting these stories back to us.

We will achieve nothing of the vision to which God calls us if we do not make our actions conformable to the Spirit of Truth: and having done so, listened for the selfsame Spirit slipping through the words of those we encounter, whether the speaker recognises it or not. Nowhere is this truer than when we attempt to speak truth to power. From the earliest of times, Quakers have attempted to change the thinking of those with power in the land. Part of the reason that George Fox came to Swarthmoor Hall must have been Thomas Fell's position in the Commonwealth, and Fox's perception of his possible influence with Cromwell. But the speaking of truth is not without risk, as Fox himself knew and experienced many times. Many have been imprisoned, even killed, for following this course. That Friends have avoided this fate as well as they have must be to do with the clear and humble way they have spoken. That they did not bring threat, that they spoke as they felt God led them to speak, must have been clear to so many people of violence that it became possible for these people to separate the message from the messenger, spare the speaker and give consideration to the message. And as John shows us, the essence of the message is always to listen to the voice of Truth, rather than any specific programme of action that might to the world's perception seem to be a good idea.

If Quakers are to be a force for change in the world ever again, the first thing we must do is to put our own houses in order – to practise what we preach. The avoidance of hypocrisy is easier said than done, but it is not enough. The example of the past shows us the need for courage, openness, reliance on the Spirit. All this is part of our Quaker heritage, our spiritual genealogy. We can access these genes once more if we pay attention to who we have been. John has opened a door, and I hope we will walk through it.

Roy Stephenson

George Fox and the child

There is an entry in George Fox's Journal for 1653:

> And as I came out of Cumberland, one time, I came to Hawkshead, and lighted at a Friend's house, and there was young Margaret Fell with me and William Caton; and it being a very cold season… the servant-girl there made us a fire, her master and dame being gone to the market. And there was a boy lying in the cradle which they rocked, about eleven years old. He was grown almost double, and I cast my eye upon the boy and seeing he was dirty, I bid the lass wash his face and his hands, and get him up and bring him unto me. So she brought him to me, and I bid her take him and wash him again, for she had not washed him clean, then I was moved of the Lord God to lay my hands upon him and speak to him, and so bid the lass take him again and put on his clothes, and after we passed away.[1]

Some Friends will find this an unfamiliar picture of George Fox. He was twenty-nine at that time, young Margaret being twenty, and Will eighteen; Margaret was the daughter of Margaret Fell of Swarthmore Hall whom Fox later married. He behaved so gently and respectfully to the boy, in an age when such behaviour towards children or disabled people outside one's own family was uncommon. In one of his letters, he used proper parental care as a model for our attitude towards people with mistaken religious ideas—and what is striking is the tenderness of the simile:

> …If the child be fallen down into the dirt, [the father] doth not go and tumble him more into the dirt or into the ditch and there let him lie… but takes him out and washes him; and so doth the heavenly Father which leads his children by his hand and dandles them upon his knee. And so all that be called fathers in the Truth or mothers, their tenderness should be the same to all little children in the Truth that can hardly go without leading, that sometimes may fall into the dirt and the ditch, and slip aside and then be troubled and cry. To such there should be tenderness shown, and to wash them and help them, and love to such should be manifest…[2]

I believe that when he looked at the boy in the cradle he responded simply out of love. I was once working with a group of women in a village in Uganda. Besides the inevitable babies, there was a little girl of nearly two, shyly keeping close to her mother. I called her to me, and she came and sat on my knee. I found that both her hands were deformed, one with only one finger, the other with a thumb and single finger. Azida, now ten, has become a good friend of mine; but if I try to think back to my initial reactions to her, I remember being aware of her as a real person in her own right, who needed my respectful attention rather than my pity. I note Fox's insistence that the boy should be washed properly, and it makes me believe that his feelings were like mine. He laid his hands on the child because it felt the right thing to do.

But three years later, the story had a sequel.

> And sometime after I called at the house, and I met his mother, but did not light. "Oh, stay," she said, "and have a meeting at our house, for all the country is convinced by the great miracle that was done by thee upon my son. For we had carried him to Wells and Bath, and all doctors had given him over, for his grandfather and father feared he would have died and their name have gone out, having but that son; but presently, after you were gone," says she, "we came home and found our son, playing in the streets," therefore, said she, all the country would come to hear if I would come back again and have a meeting there. And this was about three years after[wards] that she told me of it, and he was grown to be a straight, full youth then. So the Lord have the praise.

What would you have thought if you had read both the paragraphs in sequence? Would

you feel that the miracle somehow spoilt your impression of the first encounter? Many Friends seem to be ambivalent about healing stories. There was a time when they, in company with many other Christians, would have looked for rational explanations of the miracles in the bible and religious narratives; so in the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus must have shamed the crowd into producing their hidden picnics; some sort of mass hypnosis gave the delusion of wine at Cana; and Jesus' healings were done by the power of suggestion on psychosomatic conditions. But many of us do not now believe that medical science and psychology will eventually reveal a simple and reasonable explanation for every mystery. We feel that these rationalisations do not cover every genuine case; a power which we do not understand is sometimes at work.

Of course we are uneasy at how the stories are used in a superstitious or fundamentalist way as incontrovertible evidence of God's answering prayers and intervening in the natural world. So let us look more closely at this case of George Fox. We may notice first that the trappings of the stereotypical faith-healer are wholly absent. He did not announce that he was trying to heal the boy (as other early Friends sometimes did)[3] and did not seem to expect a cure. There was no audience except the three young people. Moreover his treatment of the boy contained no mumbo-jumbo, but seems to be modelled on the behaviour of Jesus towards children on an occasion when no healing was involved: "He put his arms round them, laid his hands upon them and blessed them."[4] (In Jesus' time too, there was little general respect towards children; his own attitude was so unusual that it attracted notice). Afterwards Fox made no effort to discover whether anything followed until he learnt it by accident.

A story from 1677, much later in George Fox's life, shows the same acceptance of God's power to heal. It was printed long after his death in the journal of a little-known Friend, John Banks.

> About this time, a pain struck into my shoulder, which gradually fell down into my arm and hand, so that the use thereof I was wholly deprived of; and not only so, but my pain greatly increased both day and night; and for three months I could neither put my clothes on nor off myself and my arm and hand began to wither, so that I did seek to some physicians for cure, but no cure could I get by any of them; until at last, as I was asleep upon my bed, in the night time, I saw in a vision, that I was with dear George Fox, and I thought I said unto him, "George, my Faith is such, that if thou seest it thy way to lay thy hand upon my shoulder, my arm and hand shall be whole throughout."
>
> Which remained with me after I awaked, two days and nights (that the thing was a true vision) and that I must go to G.F until at last, through much exercise of mind, as a near and great trial of my faith, I was made willing to go to him, he being then at Swarthmore, in Lancashire, where there was a meeting of Friends, being on the rest day of the week. And some time after the meeting, I called him aside into the hall, and gave him a relation of my concern as aforesaid, showing him my arm and hand; and in a little time, we walking together silent, he turned about, and looked upon me, lifting up his hand and laying it upon my shoulder, and said, "The Lord strengthen thee both within and without." And so we parted, and I went to Thomas Lower of Marsh Grange that night, and when I was sate down to supper in his house, immediately, before I was aware, my hand was lifted up to do its office, which it could not for so long as aforesaid; which struck me into a great admiration, and my heart was broke into true tenderness before the Lord, and the next day I went home, with my hand and arm restored to its former use and strength, without any pain.
>
> And the next time that G.F. and I met, he readily said, "John, thou mended, thou mended"; I answered, "Yes, very well, in a little time". "Well," said he, "give God the glory."[5]

George Fox referred to John's visit in his own Journal, writing "Several Friends came from

London to visit me and out of Scotland and divers other parts of the nation and from beyond seas". But he did not trouble to mention the healing.[6]

The background to this is that George Fox and his friends believed that the Christian church had been untrue to its original principles and message for fifteen hundred years—and that they had been called to revive "primitive Christianity." It was natural to believe that this would be accompanied by the miraculous signs that Jesus and the early Christians had produced. "He who has faith in me will do what I am doing," said Jesus, "and he will do greater things still…"[7] Both friends and enemies demanded miracles as proofs. In his biography of Fox, Larry Ingle writes: "Although his followers were subsequently embarrassed enough by his reported prowess in performing miracles that they suppressed numerous references to them in his recollections, Fox himself believed that they confirmed the extraordinary power inherent in the movement, and he expected them to be printed."[8]

A modern definition says:

> Miraculous cures form part of "unexplained cures" today, generally described as "spontaneous remissions" and thus to be differentiated. An unexplained cure is the unexpected passage from a pathological state to a healthy state. It is a fact, a fact that is recordable and that can be analysed, especially by medical science, accepting that medicine is not an exact science because it is propounded by individuals who all have their own points of view. As well, these phenomena of spontaneous remissions have the tendency to be put to one side insofar as they are exceptions to the laws of nature, of no interest…
>
> It is the contrary for miraculous cures. Certainly, they are "spontaneous remissions", unexplained cures, by all the studies that can be carried out, which is the first indispensable requirement; but there is also another closely linked condition, the issue of the context: it leads the beneficiary and those who witness it to seek or recognise a spiritual significance to the event.[9]

But early Friends did not make any rigid distinctions between unexpected but natural processes, significant coincidences, providential escapes from danger and miracles in the narrow sense of inexplicable workings by God using a human agent. Nor did they separate physical and spiritual categories clearly; thus the healing of spiritual blindness was as much a miracle as a physical healing, because both were interventions by God.

Around the mid 1650s, Friends began to compile The Book of Miracles and The Book of Examples. Both are lost, but an index to the Book of Miracles survives which gives us a good idea of it.[10] It contains about 150 cures, not all of them by George Fox. These include the healing of mental and physical illnesses and injuries, but also some other narratives which attested the healing power of God, such as George Fox's moving response to his mother's death. He had been on the way to visit her in her last illness when he was arrested.

> …And these merciless judges had neither mercy nor justice, but sent me down again from London to Worcester [gaol]. And when I heard she was dead it struck me for I did in verity love her as ever one could a mother, for she was a good honest virtuous and a right natured woman. And when I had read the letter of her death it struck a great weight upon my spirit, and it was in a travail for a quarter of an hour, and there being people in the room saw some sudden travail upon me though they said nothing. And when my spirit had gotten through I saw her in the resurrection and the life everlastingly with me over all, and Father in the flesh also.[11]

The Book of Examples seems to have recorded cases where a Friend providentially escaped some danger. A threatening opponent might be overcome by the powers of the Lord,[12] either turning peaceful and friendly or, more rarely, coming to a nasty end.[13] In one instance a man ran at Fox with a drawn sword, and was discomfited by his saying, "Alack for thee, it's

no more to me than a straw". (This story was also included in the Book of Miracles, possibly because it immediately followed a healing.)[14] Fox recounts a "judgement of God" in Halifax in 1654: "Another of the butchers aforesaid that had sworn to kill me, that used to put his tongue out of his mouth when Friends went by, he died with his tongue so swollen out of his mouth that he could not get it into his mouth again till he died."[15]

He is sometimes accused of vindictiveness in recording such cases but I do not agree. Whenever there was any chance of a reconciliation he took it, and when there was an opportunity of revenge he refused it:

> Then fear and terror took hold of Justice Porter, that I would take advantage of the law upon him and undo him and his wife and children, for my wrong imprisonment. And indeed I was put upon by some in authority to make him and the rest examples, but I said I should leave him to the Lord; if the Lord did forgive him, I should not trouble myself with him.[16]

He was able to hold two contradictory ideas together in his mind in a way that we can admire: on the one hand the terrible character of any act of violence, and on the other a trust in the justice of God. This is what he says about the bloodbath among the Commonwealth judges when Charles II came back:

> This was sad work, destroying of people contrary to the nature of Christians who have the nature of sheep and lambs. But there was a secret hand in bringing this day upon that hypocritical generation of professors who, being got into power, grew proud, haughty and cruel beyond others, and persecuted the people of God without pity.[17]

This may make us uncomfortable but the Quakers of the time thought in very different categories. The Bible was the touchstone for their claim to have rediscovered true and original religion. It contains many records of healing, and Fox's relaxed attitude to his cures may owe something to Jesus' reticence about his own cures.[18] But they could also read of the bears who mauled the children who mocked Elisha, and the sudden deaths of Ananias and Sapphira after they cheated the Jerusalem church of money.[19] They would have been unselfconscious about recording similar instances from their own experience, as a witness to the power of God.

But Friends soon came to realize the dangers of basing their truth claims on miracles, which tend to alienate as many people as they convince. There are few miracles so certain that they cannot be challenged. And even when the fact of healing was accepted, it still laid Friends open, as Jesus had been, to charges of witchcraft.[20] After years of weary controversy, well described by Henry Cadbury,[21] Robert Barclay's Apology formulated the official Quaker view of contemporary miracles: "We need not miracles because we preach no new gospel [which would need to be proved by signs and wonders], but that which is already confirmed by the miracles of Christ and his apostles."[22] And The Books of Miracles and Examples were never printed.

There is not enough detail in the story of the child to give a clear diagnosis. But two medical friends thought that the swelling might suggest the presence of heart disease.[23] This can lead to weakness, and the child could have become largely immobile. If this were so, the maid might have put him in the cradle though he was too big for it so that she could keep him quiet by rocking him with her foot while she got on with other tasks. The child's recovery would still be still unexplained and remarkable, but not incredible, particularly if we take account of the time lapse before the story came back to Fox. We might imagine the child

getting an access of strength to drag himself to the door and watch the kind stranger as he went on his way; full mobility ("playing in the streets") might have taken several weeks to return rather than a few hours. Rufus Jones has a shrewd comment on how this can happen:

> I think the reports of healing, of sudden cures, as George Fox reported them, are substantially trustworthy. There can be no doubt that he was a dedicated lover of truth and intended to report exactly what happened. But it is an inescapable fact that every person, however honest and morally qualified he may be, tends to enhance in the reporting, in the telling, a story that has a large element of the mysterious, the seemingly miraculous about it, and especially if it carries a strong emotional tone. I have myself found it necessary to stop telling certain striking incidents, for I caught myself improving them with the repeated telling… We may allow therefore for some unconscious heightening of the miraculous in these accounts of George Fox, but I have no doubt that the healings are in the main trustworthy.[24]

What can we make of this today? There is a wide range of opinions on spiritual healing among British Friends, from those who think that there must always be a scientific explanation (though medicine may not have found it yet) to healing groups in meeting houses with prayer and laying on of hands. As a starting point, I think that there is a close connection between the idea of guidance and the idea of the healing of mental disturbance. If we claim, as books of Quaker faith and practice around the world do, that we can be guided—especially in decision making and problem solving—by some power which is beyond ourselves, then it would be irrational to say that this power does not operate in the case of emotional and spiritual distress. We recognise that George Fox's experience when he heard of his mother's death is real; the only difference between the theist and nontheist would be in the ways they explain it.

When it comes to physical cures, we acknowledge like the entire medical profession that spontaneous remissions occur, even in substantial and life-threatening physical conditions such as tumours. There is much that nobody understands about the connections between spirit, mind and body. We may find it hard to accept that physical cures might have a spiritual origin, but we cannot convincingly say that this simply does not happen. We are not obliged to bring an active God into the picture. Even believers are often reluctant to "give God the glory" remembering other people who they think "ought not to have died", if God were willing to intervene in this way.

There is no satisfactory answer to this. But things sometimes happen which challenge the limits of our beliefs. I know one Friend, generally regarded as wise and sensible, who tells me she has twice acted on a sudden conviction that she must contact someone who had not been in her thoughts for a long while. In each case, her action interrupted a suicide attempt. Such experiences do not prove the intervention of God; even Sigmund Freud, a militant atheist, acknowledged the possibility of telepathy.[25] But they certainly warn us against being dogmatic.

And life teaches us not to be too sure we know what "God ought to have done". When I belonged to Shrewsbury Meeting I visited a Friend who died a few hours later. As we arrived, her young children were leaving her hospital room, having said their last goodbye. When we went in she was immobile, connected to numerous machines, and very short of breath. I said to her, "I suppose this is the worst bit." She looked at me in surprise. Then she thought for a moment and whispered: "I suppose it looks like that from the outside. But from my side, I have never known such peace and joy as I do at the moment."

John Woolman's Dreams

When we think of John Woolman we tend to remember what we might call the romantic and singular aspects: his visit to the Native American camp, his undyed clothes, or his refusal to travel in a ship's cabin because its woodwork was carved. We may forget that these were the logical outcome of hard and consistent thinking about human affairs. We can easily overlook the fact that essentially he belonged to what is called the Age of Enlightenment or the Age of Reason. He grew up to value order and sobriety, not romantic impulses. Sterling Olmstead has shown how his mind typically moves in a balanced way between internal and external, thought and action. He[26] drew his conclusions from clear and rational argument, rather than mystical insight. There is a clear affinity between the tone of his writings on moral subjects and the Declaration of Independence; and, despite the difference between the two men, we can hear the resemblance between Woolman's thoughts on slavery and those of Thomas Jefferson:

> And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with his wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that his justice cannot sleep for ever ...The Almighty has no attributes which can take sides with us [whites] in such a contest.[27]

> Many slaves on this continent are oppressed and their cries have reached the ears of the Most High! Such are the purity and certainty of his judgements, that he cannot be partial toward any. In infinite love and goodness he hath opened our understandings from time to time respecting our duty toward this people [the slaves], and it is not a time for delay. Should we now... neglect to do our duty in firmness and constancy, still waiting for some extraordinary means to bring about their freedom, it may be that by terrible things in righteousness God will answer us in this matter.[28]

If we find it odd to link a tailor in a small colonial town with a European intellectual movement, this is because of misapprehension about Woolman's world. The remoteness was not an impenetrable barrier; Jefferson, who was one of the age's key figures, never saw a settlement of a more than a dozen houses till he went to college. And John Woolman's own experience was less isolated than Jefferson's. As a young man he belonged to a circle of young people who met in the finest houses in Burlington and Philadelphia, with extensive libraries; his friend John Smith of Burlington recalled evenings when some of them read Don Quixote together, or Chamber's Dictionary, or Thomas More's Utopia. John Woolman's modern biographer, Janet Whitney, suggests that another friend, Anthony Benezet, may have shared with him the contents of the key work of the Enlightenment, Diderot's Encyclopaedia, which appeared year by year from 1751. John Woolman's own small library contained both practical and religious volumes. Most of the latter, apart from some Quaker journals, are philosophical, ethical and devotional rather than mystical.[29]

One sign of this rationality is that John Woolman's Journal tends to suppress what is personal, emotional and irrational in his life. Because his style is so transparent, we do not notice how much is hidden. What other journal writer would fail to mention the birth of a son and his death a few months later? How much we would welcome a few words on how he related to his Negro servant, Primas! The author's silence on such personal matters, with his self-discipline and his severe logic, can make him seem rather remote. It is most unexpected when he records, on his final visit to England, "Was this day at Preston Patrick. Here I dreamed of Mother."[30] His mother, who was still alive, had not been mentioned since the first few pages of the Journal.

His dreams help us make contact with the vulnerable and often hidden side of his personality. As we shall see, they give us our only insight into a major crisis of his life—signalled by the gap in his Journal between 1770 and 1772. They show us a loveable and very human person. I think all readers of the Journal (like Woolman's own contemporaries) respond to his sweetness of character. Who would not love a friend who could write to you:

> Last night in my sleep l thought l was in a room with thee, and thou drawing thy chair near mine, did, in a friendly way tell me of Sundry particular failings thou had observed in me, and expressed some desire that I might do better. I felt inwardly thankful for thy care over me, and made little other reply than to tell thee that I took it very kind. Almost as soon as I woke I remembered it, and though I could see some things in which I had not done so well as I might, yet the particulars thou pointed out were gone from me, nor can I yet remember them.[31]

Why was this dream not included in the Journal? And why were most of those recorded in the manuscript excluded from the printed version either by John Woolman himself or his editors? To answer such questions, we must recognise how we differ from eighteenth-century Friends in our expectations of both dreams and journals.

For us part of the charm of a journal is the impression that it was not written for posterity. We expect to overhear writers communing with themselves, with spontaneous thoughts, unguarded comments, and paths which occasionally lead nowhere. A traditional Quaker journal was something very different.[32] It was a structured record of the grace of God in rescuing a sinner and leading her or him to salvation—an example of moral and spiritual development for others to ponder and follow. The decision to publish posthumously was always made by a Quaker committee, which then edited the text.

John Woolman spent much time editing the American section of his Journal. In fact he made a fair copy of the entire text, with alterations.[33] He had described five dreams in detail, but only marked three for inclusion; one more was recalled as an afterthought in his English diary. His editors had similar reservations; out of these four, they retained only the two dreams which—like those in the Bible—admitted of a clear religious interpretation The reason is surely that the others did not fit the didactic function of a published Quaker journal. Dreams which were complex and obscure—the very ones which interest us most—fell into the first two groups in George Fox's classification:

> Removing to another place, I came among a people that relied much on dreams. I told them, except they could distinguish between dream and dream, they would confound all together; for there were three sorts of dreams: multitude of business sometimes caused dreams, and there were whisperings of Satan to man in the night season; and there were speakings of God to man in dreams.[34]

In the Bible, dreams are messages from God. They may strip the veil that hides a present reality, as in Jacob's dream of the ladder between earth and heaven; or they may carry a command, like the angel's message to the Wise Men not to return to Herod. But often they foretell the future in mysterious terms which require an interpreter, such as the dreams which Joseph expounds to his brothers, his fellow prisoners and Pharaoh.

Today we would probably describe dreams in rather different terms—not as direct divine messages, but as mental processes which may help us in coming to terms with problems and uncomfortable feelings, in digesting information and resolving confusion. They can be communications from regions in our minds of which we are usually unconscious and at

times they are part of the process of making a decision. The widow of Osip Mandelstam, a poet who died in Stalin's purges, tells how she dreamed that lorries stopped outside her apartment block, and she heard her dead husband say, "Get up, they've come for you this time...I am no longer here." And in her dream she answered him, "You are no longer here, so I do not care." In the morning she found she had lost her fear of the secret police. "Now I feel totally and absolutely free and I can breathe easily (despite the lack of air). What joy it is to breathe freely just once before you die!"[35]

But are the two methods of interpretation really alternatives? For Quakers who believe that there is a spark of the divine light in us, the psychological explanation is not so different from the biblical one. Paul of Tarsus once dreamed of a man in Greek dress saying "Come over into Macedonia and help us!" (Acts 16:9). We might see this as Paul's unconscious mind wrestling with a question which he could not consciously resolve—whether to extend his mission from Asia to Europe—and coming to a decision. But he believed it was a command sent by God. The same experience can be expressed in either psychological or religious language. Jeremiah saw a pot boiling over, tilted away from the north; "And the Lord said to me, Out of the north evil shall flow over the inhabitants of this land" (Jer.1:13-14). Some Christians would say that God sent him a message by making the saucepan boil over; for some psychologists, the kitchen accident gave a shape—an image—to a fear of invasion that he had not yet put into words. At least one of John Woolman's dreams was of this type. In 1754 he dreamed of preparations for war, linked to strange appearances in the sky.

> On a sudden I saw two lights in the east resembling two suns, but of a dull and gloomy aspect... In a few minutes the air in the east appeared to be mingled with fire, and like a terrible storm coming westward the streams of fire reached the orchard where I stood, but I felt no harm. I then found one of my acquaintance standing near me, who was greatly distressed in mind at this unusual appearance. My mind felt calm and I said to my friend, "We must all once die, and if it please the Lord that our death be in this way, it is good for us to be resigned"... Then there appeared on a green plain a great multitude of men in a military posture, some of whom l knew. They came near the house, and passing on westward, some of them looking up at me, expressed themselves in a scoffing way, to which I made no reply.[36]

He even put one of his rare diagrams into his manuscript at this point to show what he saw (though he asked for it not to be printed). This was the year before war broke out, and we know that he was feeling its approach. The calm which he managed to find within himself in the dream was needed in the various trials which the war brought him.

I do not think that my way of putting it is a complete or uniquely correct explanation. It is simply one which works for many of us in the late twentieth century. Carl Jung once discussed the question of whether divine guidance (including that which comes in dreams) should be discussed as a psychological phenomenon or a factual reality. He said that its basic truth is not altered by our choosing to describe it in subjective or objective terms.

> Science employs the term "the unconscious", thereby admitting that it knows nothing about it, for it can know nothing about the substance of the psyche when the sole means of knowing anything is the psyche. Therefore the validity of such terms as mana, daimon or God can neither be disproved nor affirmed. We can however establish that the sense of strangeness connected with the experience of something objective, apparently outside the psyche, is authentic.[37]

Given this disparity between Woolman's age and our own in understanding dreams, we can count ourselves lucky that the Journal as we know it, holds so many dreams and visions. His view of them was the Biblical one. Yet he recorded some which he could not interpret—even though he subsequently crossed them out. Surely this was because they reflected his wrestling with the issues which pervaded his waking life. Sometimes they pointed to the

moment when a conflict in his mind resolved into a harmony. And I think we can go further: by looking at his two most significant dreams we gain insight into a catastrophic change in his life—one which altered the character of his ministry and led indirectly to his early death.

Sigmund Freud warned that we cannot interpret the symbols which appear in someone else's dream without knowing what ideas the dreamer associates with the symbol. But when we read a symbolist poem we feel that something has been communicated, even though we cannot fully interpret its symbols. I choose a translated poem to ensure it isn't the music of the poet's words which affects us. It was written in Stalin's Russia, in 1936 by Nadeshda Mandelstam's husband Osip.[38]

Mounds of human heads are wandering into the distance
I dwindle among them. Nobody sees me.
But in books much loved, and in children's games
I shall rise from the dead to say the sun is shining.

We don't have the key to Mandelstam's symbols; yet we feel that the poem has communicated with us. In the Biblical view of dreams the same can apply. The visions of Daniel are not explained; readers have to make what they can of the strange symbolism. Yet people believed that one day they would become clear; George Fox wrote lengthy explanations of some of the images in Daniel.[39] One of his own dreams showed people digging through earth and stones at his command to liberate a buried people. Fox commented:

> They that can read these things must have the earthy, stony nature off. them. And see how the stones and the earth came upon man since the beginning, since he fell from the image of God and righteousness and holiness. And much could I speak of these things, but I leave them to the right eye and reader to see and read.[40]

When Woolman noted down dreams which he did not understand it is likely that he believed that they held a message which he or someone else would understand one day. For example he had dreamed of coming to the north of England.[41] In a beautiful springtime image, "He saw the different states of people as clear as ever he had seen flowers in a garden; but in his going on he was suddenly stopt, though he could not see for what end, but looked towards home, and in that fell into a flood of tears, which waked him." Perhaps the early part of the dream could be explained as part of his deciding to make the journey. But it was only when he caught smallpox during his visit that he understood what the sudden stop meant.

People do have dreams which seem to foretell the future because they contain details which could not have been known in advance. There are other dreams which give shape to fears already lurking below the surface of the mind, like Woolman's dream of imminent war which I have mentioned. Thirdly a dream can be like a rehearsal of future action which may or may not be carried out. He records a dream of this type in 1764, which symbolises how possibilities can open up in a difficult situation.[42] This was the "dream of a visit to a dictator in wartime on a mission of peace" In the dream he was on a religious visit to a country overseas which was about to fight a war, so he crossed the frontier to talk to the leader of the rival country in an effort to prevent hostilities. His journey ran through woodland country, which suggests that the dream was partly inspired by his visit to the Indians two years before; but this time the weather was pleasant and the journey easy. He awoke just as he received a friendly welcome from the man he was coming to see. You might think that this dream reflects a Quaker tradition of peace missions, such as the mission to the Tsar to try to avert the Crimean war. So it is interesting to realise that when Friends began to undertake

such missions in the following century, this dream had never appeared in print.

His other dreams are not so transparent, and in this they are more like my own, cloudy and mysterious, with tangles, short cuts and circular connections. I cannot give a rational straight-line account of each dream; I must allow my own apparently random associations to play a part. The Journal describes one of his childhood dreams.[43] A small cloud descended from the sky and became a beautiful tree; but it withered and died in the noontime sun. "Then there appeared a being small of size full of strength and resolution moving swift from the north southward called a sunworm." (Woolman liked to be precise about the points of the compass when describing a dream.) At the end he writes, "Though I was a child, this dream was instructive to me," but he doesn't say how or why. Janet Whitney wondered whether the dream depicted Woolman himself as the tiny creature, so purposeful and full of energy. Other writers have suggested that the dream shows the spiritual decline of Friends and their struggle to maintain their discipline—a weighty concern, if correct, for a nine-year-old boy. These are of course not Woolman's associations, but those of the writers. My own associations lead me to William Blake's poem (though it was not written when young Woolman had the dream):

O Rose, thou are sick;
The invisible worm
That flies in the night,
In the howling storm,
Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy,
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

The image of blossoming growth cut short recalls his dream of travelling in the north of England, and I associate the sun-worm with his fatal illness. But I have no reason to suppose that my associations come close to his mind.

Some of John Woolman's dreams give us a deeper insight into his sensitivity to suffering, the taproot of the active social concern we so admire in him. He was horrified by what he saw in England—the materialism, and the cruelties arising from it. At the rational level, he characteristically traces the connections between the different kinds of oppression:

> The trade from this Island to Africa for slaves and other trades being carried on through oppressive channels and abundance of the inhabitants being employed in factories to support a trade in which there is unrighteousness, and some growing outwardly great by gain of this sort. The weight of this degeneracy hath lain so heavy upon me, the depth of this revolt been so evident, and desires in my heart been so ardent for a reformation that we may come to that right use of things, where living on a little we may inhabit that holy Mountain, in which they neither hurt nor destroy!.. Under the weight of this exercise the sight of innocent birds in the branches and sheep in the pastures, who are according to the will of their creator, hath at times tended to mitigate my trouble.[44]

But his mind also responded with a vision: "My soul is poured out to thee like water, and my bones are out of joint. I saw a vision in which I beheld the great confusion of those that depart from thee—I saw their horror and distress—I was made sensible of their misery. Then was I greatly distressed—I looked unto thee; thou wast underneath and supported me. I likewise saw the great calamity that is coming upon this disobedient nation."[45] The quotation from Psalm 22 shows John Woolman typically identifying with the suffering of the sinners. There is no note of triumph. But the sense of horror is as great as Blake's, writing some twenty years later:

In every cry of every Man	How the Chimney-sweeper's cry
In every Infant's cry of fear,	Every blackning Church appalls
In every voice; in every ban	And the hapless Soldier's sigh
The mind-forged manacles I hear	Runs in blood down palace walls.

George Fox had been afflicted with similar visions of the state of England: "In my deep misery I saw things beyond words to utter, and I saw a black coffin, but I passed over it." Fox's visions induced him to write to the King: "Do not blind your eyes. The Lord will bring swift destruction and misery upon you, surely he will do it and relieve his innocent people who have groaned for deliverance."[46] John Woolman did not respond publicly, like Fox, but in a way consistent with his own practice of quiet persuasion. He simply shared his forebodings with a few British Friends—not even with his Journal. We like to think that the religious depth of people like Fox and Woolman would confer peace of mind. Instead we sometimes find an agonised sensitivity to the sufferings of the world, as the dreams still to be discussed will show. We are fond of quoting the "first motion" of love which drew him to visit the native Americans, and his wish to instruct and be instructed. He was aware of the horrors of the Indian Wars,[47] and I have little doubt that this drove him to visit them at this time.

Between the publication of the first part of Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes in 1753 and the writing of the second part around 1761, John Woolman was at the centre of moral and political debate in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Issues of slave ownership, civil defence, war taxation and participation in government threatened to divide the Meeting, and the victory of Woolman's views is clear. The Yearly Meeting Epistle of 1754 on slavery, the Epistles of Ministers and Elders in 1755 and 1756 on war and war taxes, and the Yearly Epistle of 1758 on remaining true to Friends' spiritual heritage were all inspired and drafted by him.

Woolman was sensitive to the views of other Quakers; when he found himself in opposition to Friends he loved and respected, he needed to draw deeply on his spiritual resources.[48] I think this need sheds light on a vision which came to him in 1757. It was of a radiant circle of light in the darkness.[49] Dante saw God as three interlinked circles, and Henry Vaughan "...saw eternity the other night Like a great ring of pure and endless light All calm, as it was bright." Such images are nowadays called mandalas, though Woolman did not know the word or the concept.

Jung says that "the mandala is an archetypal image whose occurrence is attested throughout the ages. It signifies the wholeness of self."[50] This idea is very close to the Quaker concept of that of God in each one of us, the receiver and transmitter of truth; and Quakers are told not to accept this as a theory but to know it in the truth of experience. John Woolman's account of his dream continues:

> As I lay still without any surprise looking upon it, words were spoken to my inward ear which filled my whole inward man. They were not the effect of thought nor any conclusion in relation to the appearance, but as the language of the Holy One spoken in my mind. The words were Certain evidence of divine truth, and were again repeated in exactly the same manner, whereupon the light disappeared.

For Woolman this was a direct intimation of the Holy Spirit within, and a confirmation of its power to guide us into all truth. Most or all of us have had experiences very like this dream of John Woolman's, though perhaps not since we were children when our minds were more open to visions and their meaning. It would be good if we were more willing today to recognise and share them, for in the words of the King James Bible, "When there is no vision, the people perish."[Prov. 29.18]

This certainty sustained him through the years of public business . But in 1761 then was a reaction which Edwin Cady describes as a crisis.[51] In May he developed a severe illness, the herald of continuing ill-health for the rest of his life. From adolescence[52] he had interpreted illness as a sign of something unbalanced or impure in his life, so he sought in his heart for the cause. He felt that he was falling short in his personal witness against slavery by continuing to benefit from its products. "The apprehension of being singular from my beloved Friends was a strait upon me, and thus I remained in the use of some things contrary to my judgement."[53] In his illness he sought to achieve complete resignation to the will of God: "There was now no desire in me for health until the design of my correction was answered. Thus I lay in abasement and brokenness of spirit, and as I felt a sinking down into a calm resignation, so I felt, as in an instant, an inward healing in my nature and from that time forward I grew better."

We have no recorded dreams to shed light on this crisis; but the consequences are clear enough in his life. He reduced his efforts to work through traditional Quaker channels, in order to witness in a more personal and costly way. His hand is no longer evident in public Quaker documents. With embarrassment and determination he embraced "singularity" by giving up the use of dyed cloth, sugar, molasses, rum, and silver—the products of slavery. He identified himself with the victims of oppression whom he had championed for so long, visiting the native Americans at a time when they were threatened by violence and threatening retaliation, and choosing to travel on foot, despite his ill-health, when visiting the slave owners of the South. He wrote, "Though traveling on foot was wearisome to my body, yet thus travelling was agreeable to the state of my mind"[54] (recalling an elderly African-American woman during Martin Luther King's Mongomery bus boycott: "My feet is weary but my soul is rested"). I have already suggested that the 1764 dream of visiting a dictator in wartime may point to a mental rehearsing of new forms of witness.

This voluntary renunciation of influence and success brought doubts and isolation. He knew that his views were increasingly out of line with some of his closest friends. His eccentric dress offered Quakers an excuse not to listen to him: "Some Friends who knew not on what motives I wore it carried shy of me".[55] We do not understand John Woolman at all if we are not attuned to the loneliness which shows through the Journal pages at this time. There is also a new note in his writing. Woolman never turned his back on rationality the little essays written at sea five months before he died are as lucid as ever. But, as Edwin Cady put it:

> The Quaker persona of eighteenth-century Enlightenment, reasoning independently from hints of first principles sweetly apprehended within, was gone....The voice which speaks in the True Harmony is that of a serious, learned mind, so agonised in its concern for charity as to feel the need of supreme authority [from scripture] to support its solemn and ultimately rather minatory message.[56]

He planned a climax to this new ministry—a visit to Barbados and the West Indies, the centre of the slave-trade. But a second crisis intervened. At the last moment he found that "obedience required him not to go".[57] He returned home, but it did not feel like home; he was only a "sojourner" there. The agony deepened, as we can see in a terrible vision shortly after an attack of pleurisy.[58] Woolman dreamed that a hunter had caught a strange creature, part fox and part cat and a Negro slave, too old to work, had been hanged to feed it. There was a crowd watching;

> One woman spake lightly of it and signified she was sitting at the tea table when they hung him up, and though neither she nor any present said anything against their proceedings, yet she said at the sight of the old man a-dying she could not go on with tea drinking. I stood

> silent all this time and was filled with extreme sorrow at so horrible an action and now began to lament bitterly, like as some lament at the dying of a friend, at which lamentation some smiled, but none mourned with me. One man spake in justification of what was done felt matter on my mind and would have spoken to the man, but utterance was taken from me and I could not speak to him.

You may wonder whether to dismiss this as a neurotic fantasy arising from his illness, so I will quote a contemporary experience. Hector de Crevecoeur, whose Letters from an American Farmer were published in 1782, was crossing a field when he saw

> ...something resembling a cage, suspended to the limbs of a tree. all the branches of which appeared covered with large birds of prey... Horrid to think and painful to repeat, I perceived a Negro suspended in the cage and left there to expire![59]

There was a dark side to the Age of Enlightenment.

In his effort to understand this dream John Woolman anticipates Freud's technique of searching out the associations of each of the dream's symbols: "A fox is cunning;" he write in the margin, "a cat is often idle; hunting represents vain delights; tea drinking with which there is sugar points out the slavery of the Negroes, with which many are oppressed to the shortening of their days." His inability to speak in the dream may reflect the difficulty he found in speaking out to Quaker slaveholders: "...I found myself disqualified by a superficial friendship...".[60] An incident during the illness, noted by one of his friends, shows that it was partly a crisis of conscience.

> On 7th day morning about the 3rd hour. ye 13th of ye 1st mo. 1770, John Woolman having for some time lain like a man a dying, did then call for Water to wet his tongue for it was dry and he wanted to use it, and then told us then present that the forepart of the same night he had very great horrors on his mind for departing from the purity of his testimony in relation to the West India traffic.
>
> Under this anguish of soul, evident to all about him, he stood up on his feet, tho' weak, and with a lamentable voice cried mightily to God that he would have mercy on him a miserable sinner for that he had lately under extreme weakness given up the purity of his testimony against the West India trade, in partaking freely of rum and molasses; after long conflict with these horrors he appeared more easy, as believing God would be gracious to him. He now informed us he had found the mercies of God to be toward him and that he had an evidence of inward peace, and that God had excepted [accepted] of his great conflict with the power of darkness the fore part of this night.[61]

His tears in this dream and his failure to speak out in protest against the horror found a counterpart afterwards in his public life:

> After this sickness I spake not in public meetings for worship for near one year, but my mind was very often in company with the oppressed slaves as I sat in Meetings; and it was to me a time of abundance of weeping: and though I think I never felt the spring of ministry opened in me more powerfully yet not being free to speak the gift had way in my heart in contrition.[62]

This dream is closely linked with another, a few weeks before—the dream often quoted in which he saw

> a mass of matter of a dull gloomy colour between the south and the east, and was informed that this mass was human beings in as great misery as they could be and live, and that I was mixed in with them so that henceforth I might not consider myself as a distinct or separate being... I then heard a soft melodious voice...I believed it was the voice of an angel who spoke to the other angels. The words were "John Woolman is dead."[63]

The dream closed with a vision of heathen slaves oppressed by Christian masters in the mines.

After the physical illness had passed it took him months to work through what his experiences had taught him, during which time, as we have heard, he lost the ability to minister in Meeting. I call it a crisis because I suspect that there was a danger that he might not have come through—that he might have ceased his ministry, burnt his papers, and confined his interests to his family and the apple trees which, as his account-book shows, he decided to plant that year.[64] Carl Jung wrote: "The images of the unconscious place a great responsibility upon a person. Insight into them must be converted into an ethical obligation. Failure to understand them, or a shirking of ethical responsibility, deprives one of one's wholeness and imposes a painful fragmentariness on one's life."[65]

It is not surprising that the Journal (as John Woolman edited it and left it with his American friends) ends at this point. What better time to write a biography than when the subject has died? Edwin Cady has shown persuasively that the American Journal is a very conscious creation.[66] But he also notes our sense of anticlimax. Perhaps we lack Woolman's intended conclusion: the last pages of the text he prepared for publication are missing; and later his editors attached the separate journal which he made of his journey to England. Phillips Moulton suggests that the Journal may have been intended to end with the Fox-Cat dream.[67] But in view of John Woolman's suppression of so many dreams, this seems to me unlikely. Our disappointment is surely because the climax—the hero's death as he dreamed it—is missing. And it seems to me that Woolman was aware of this. He recalls the dream in full in his English travel-notes, suddenly and without excuse. At the end he writes: "It being so long since I passed through this dispensation and the matter remaining fresh and lovingly on my mind, I believe it safest for me to write it."[68]

I recently read an account by Henri Nouwen, the Catholic priest, of an accident which nearly caused his death. His conclusions shed light on what happened to John Woolman.

> We can speak about life as a long process of dying to self—in which we are asked to release many forms of clinging and to move increasingly from needing others to living for them—so that we will be able to live in the joy of God and give our lives completely to others. As I reflect on this in the light of my own encounter with death, I become aware of how unfamiliar this way of thinking is not only for the people with whom I live and work, but also for myself.
>
> It was only in the face of death that I clearly saw—and perhaps only fleetingly—what life is all about. Intellectually I had understood the concept of dying to self, but in the face of death itself it seemed as if l could now grasp its full meaning... My being sent back into life and its many struggles means, I believe, that I am being asked to proclaim the love of God in a new way. Until now I have been thinking and speaking from time into eternity, from the passing reality towards a lasting reality, from the experience of human love to the love of God. But after having touched "the other side", it seems that a new witness is called for: a witness that speaks back into the world of ambiguities from the place of unconditional love.[69]

John Woolman too had to "proclaim God's love in a new way", weeping instead of speaking in Meeting for Worship. The idea of living only for others was made concrete in the dream: he was mixed in with the mass of human beings to such an extent that, when he awoke, he asked his wife and friends who he was. He puzzled over the song of the angel until divine inspiration put a text from scripture [Galatians 2.20] into his mouth: "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; Yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me, and the life I now live in the flesh is by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Then he realised that " John Woolman is dead meant no more than the death of my own will". No more—but also no less. Carl Jung wrote of a similar turning point in his own life: "When I look back on it all today... it seems as though a message had come to me with overwhelming force. There were things in the images which concerned not only myself but many others. It was then that I ceased to belong to myself alone, ceased to have the right to do so."[70]

There were obvious reasons for John Woolman to witness in London, the financial centre of the slave-trade; his ministry at Yearly Meeting 1772, though he barely described it,[71] left its mark on the General Epistle and helped to keep slavery on the agenda in subsequent years. But the dream about his journey shows that his "drawings" were to the North, particularly Yorkshire. His previous travels in the ministry were part of a crusade rationally planned and painstakingly carried out. But this one was different; the impression he gives is that it was undertaken one day at a time in pure obedience. He did have affinities with some early Yorkshire Friends: William Dewsbury, (whose Collected Works he owned) outstanding for his sweet and saintly character, and James Naylor who like him had come through a deathlike experience to a new witness. But there was no conscious yearning to see their native hills. For John Woolman, like Henri Nouwen, it seemed that a new witness had begun: "a witness that speaks back into the world of ambiguities from the place of unconditional love".

We could see his death as tragic, because he was still vigorous in mind and body; although he had some health problems, he walked from London to Cumbria and Yorkshire. There was much he might still have accomplished.[72] But he was in a state of spiritual surrender where all human concerns had become irrelevant. His home and family, his standing among Friends, his personal appearance, his sense of mission—everything had been laid aside. He told his friends that whatever happened to him, he would be content. In his illness he gave instructions about wrapping his corpse to sixteen-year-old Sarah Tuke who was nursing him, and she burst into tears. (We shall met her again in a later chapter). He told her, "I had rather thou wouldest guard against weeping and sorrowing for me, my sister; I sorrow not, though I have had some painful conflicts; but now they seem over, and matters all settled; and I look at the face of my dear Redeemer, for sweet is his voice and his countenance comely."[73]

The witness of Job Scott

Friends House bookshop in London used to have a bookcase of second-hand books, generally the rejects of local Meeting libraries. There I saw a shy little green book, Pearls from the Deep—being Selections from the Works of that Eminent Servant of God Job Scott of Providence, R.I., U.S.A. The publisher was John Southall, a printer from Newport, Monmouthshire; and he writes apologetically, "I cannot look for any considerable interest in its publication . . . not because his style is archaic, or because any more modern writers have treated the deep and important subjects he writes on, more clearly, more forcibly or more truly, but because the number who by actual experience can fully understand his language is smaller." And later: "The present edition is brought out more for the sake of seekers after Truth outside the Society of Friends, to whom the Truths presented wear almost a new face, than for its membership, now so full of pressing engagements and interests which, alas, often do not tend to spiritual enrichment." l wondered whether that is less true now than when it was written in l911; I was intrigued by the hints of the treasure hid in a field, and the pearl of great price—now being sold off for only sixty pence.

Job Scott was born in Rhode lsland in 1751, and died of smallpox in Ireland in 1793; like John Woolman, he had known a divine leading to cross the Atlantic to visit and preach to Friends. His life was not rich in outward events, and he gave little thought to the affairs of the world, though he lived through the American War of Independence. His concern is with the Christian's relationship to God:

> My soul rejoiceth and giveth God thanks for deep probations and withdrawings of His presence, as well as for the sensible incomes of his love, and arisings of the light of his countenance upon me. I see and own it needful to my growth in the divine life, as well as in order to my complete emancipation from the servitude of sin, that he should deal thus with me.[74]

And with the life of the Meeting for Worship:

> I know of nothing more acceptable to God, nor more useful, instructive and strengthening to the souls of men, than true silent worship, and waiting on God for help immediately from his holy presence; nor of scarcely anything more formal and lifeless than that dull, unfeeling silence, which too many of our society are satisfying themselves with, the year round, and from year to year.[75]

Thus, though he hated slavery, his main concern was for the Friends involved in it: "Friends having kept such numbers of slaves did much contribute to the ruin of their posterity: for the poor negroes were put to do nearly all the work, while the children of Friends were… riding about for pleasure, living at ease and in fullness. This was productive of many evils."[76]

The War of Independence was only relevant to him in so far as it threatened the integrity of Quaker witness. At its beginning he wrote:

> I had no desire to promote the opposition to Great Britain; neither had I any desire to promote the measures or success of Great Britain. I believed it my business not to meddle with any thing from such views; but to let the potsherds of the earth alone in their smiting one against another [a reference to Isaiah 45:9]; I wished to be clear in the sight of God, and do all that he might require of me towards the more full introduction and coming of his peaceable kingdom and government on earth.[77]

But in his wish "not to meddle" he came up against the question of paying taxes and using the paper currency which financed the war. Neither of these "felt easy to my mind". The same question had come up, perhaps for the first time, in Philadelphia over twenty years

earlier in connection with the Native American wars. John Woolman had noted that "scrupling to pay a tax on account of the application [of the money raised to warfare] hath seldom been heard of before, even amongst men of integrity who have steadily borne their testimony against outward wars in their time".[78] But Pennsylvania Friends were not able to unite on the question of paying. Woolman reasoned that if Friends paid war taxes, "by small degrees there might be an approach towards that of fighting, till we came so near it as that the distinction [between Quakers and other citizens] would be little else but the name of a peaceable people."[79]

Many Friends in Job Scott's meeting did not share these scruples either, feeling grateful that they were not being pressured to take up arms. But he, like Woolman, believed that the growth of affluence among Friends was endangering their witness.[80]

> I believed a time would come when Christians would not so far contribute to the encouragement and support of war and fighting as voluntarily to pay taxes that were mainly, or even in considerable proportion, for defraying the expenses thereof; and it was also impressed on my mind [by God], that if I took and passed the money that I knew was made on purpose to uphold war, I should not bear a testimony against war that, for me as an individual, would be a faithful one… I had abundant reason to expect great censure and some suffering in consequence of my faithfulness.[81]

The end of the war finds no mention in his journal.

I have read no writer who describes Quaker worship with greater intensity, the depths as well as the heights. On one of his journeys he writes: "I believe we viewed the mansions of the dead, in some of our silent, painful sittings among Friends in this place."[82] And, at another time, "my soul was deeply distressed under a sense that some were neglecting an inward feeling after God, and were foolishly looking out for words… Scarce any thing tends more powerfully to shut up the springs of Life."[83] Time and again we are reminded of the dilemmas, the hopes and doubts, of our worshipping groups today.

> We had in this meeting nine testimonies and a prayer. The apostle says, "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the others judge". Now though I have never thought that this by any means confines a meeting to two, three or four appearances in public testimony; yet I think it is worthy of serious consideration, whether truth strictly attended to, and its leadings deeply waited for, would, after two or three lively, powerful, and moderately lengthy testimonies, often lead to many further additions ? And whether such additions are not, in general, as apt to hurt as to help the meeting?[84]

Job Scott's Journal is, above all, a record of how he became convinced that there is no worthy ministry or prayer, or even inward meditation, except as the Lord gives it. As we wait for this, and reject everything else, we offer God the service we owe—and in time it will be rewarded.

> There is not more difference between midnight darkness and the bright shining of the meridian sun, than between the state of my mind in some of these late meetings, and my present enlargement and illumination. Before all was so shut up, that none could open; but now all seems to be so open, as that no man can shut. Glory, honour and praise to Him who leadeth me in the path of this blessed experience. I can now bless His holy hand, both in His shutting and in His opening, and rejoice with joy unspeakable, that I have learned this experience and this dependence on Him alone.[85]

Elsewhere he tells how in one meeting, as he was speaking "according to clear openings", he

felt he was too profound for his hearers, and tried to shift on to more familiar ground; with the result that he dried up and sat down in embarrassment.[86]

As a well-known Recorded Minister he was generally expected by others to speak in meeting, particularly when travelling in the ministry. "Oh! the pain and deep distress which this outward expectation in the people often brings upon the deeply exercised ministers…"[87] He felt such dependence distracted the attention which should be turned to God alone; and if a minister yielded to this pressure he diminished God's glory, however apt his message. He comments in his Journal on being silent in successive meetings (once for as many as twenty); and he feels that God, in holding him back, is witnessing to the necessity of waiting on Him.

His comment on a change in his approach to business meetings is still relevant:

> I have found it my business sometimes of late to be more inward in travail, and less active in the exercise of the wholesome rules of [our] society, than once I was; and believe, when I have obeyed the call to this inward still abode . . . it has contributed much more to the right exercise of the discipline than when, through a desire for its proper administration, I have by overacting seemed to do a good deal for its execution.[88]

His faith in God and his sense of the purpose of human light are expressed in a "lesson" which came to him (not as ministry) in meeting. He naturally expresses this in the language of the King James Bible; but this should not obscure our recognition of the crowd of witnesses across space and time to this same Way; the handbooks of Hindu and Buddhist meditation, the everyday Greek of the New Testament describing Jesus in Gethsemane, the Middle-English of The Cloud of Unknowing, the words of the Spanish mystics, the message of the founders of our own Society, and down to a host of writers in our own time, both in and outside the churches. The challenge is the same, to entrust ourselves to God's guidance —whether we call it this, or speak of the Inward Light, or the Ground of our Being, or draw on the phrases of Buddhist philosophy or Jungian psychology. Today we may not allow so complete a distinction between the divine work in us and the human faculties of intellect, imagination and sympathy; but "one thing is needful", which we are often too "careful and troubled about many things" to heed. This is the emphasis Job Scott tries to restore.

> I sat long in silence; many presentations attended my mind, but as I waited for the Word of life, I saw there were many subjects on which a man might either muse or speak, divers fields of doctrine, a large scope for choice; but alas! we cannot choose aright for ourselves, anymore than we know what to pray for, without assistance. So I was made willing to reject all these false openings, however beautiful; and sinking down into the silence of all flesh, this pertinent lesson was opened to my mind: "Ever remember, when thou approachest before thy God, in order to worship Him, that of thyself thou canst do nothing; that thy business is to wait in true silence, avoiding all imaginary workings of thought, and all self-active motions, cogitations and conceivings; feeling thy relationship, thy sonship, therein crying, Abba, Father . . .
>
> Though thou mayest feel thy mind ever so empty and barren, keep in true resignation. Keep the word of His patience, and He will keep thee in the hour of temptation. Be careful for nothing . . . Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not to thine own understanding. This is the height of divine worship, the summit of devotion, and the most acceptable offering to God; for thy mind in worship ought ever to be a perfect blank, except only the feeling of thy sonship, and the cry of Abba, Father! with thy ardent desires into him for help.
>
> As thou art faithful in this charge, and upright in this exercise, I will never leave, fail, nor forsake thee. For though I seem to tarry long, I will come; and will not tarry longer than shall be for thy good, and the good of my people And when I do come, my reward is with me, and my work before me; and I will set thy work in order before thee, and enable thee to perform

> it, even to thy own admiration" (by which he means wonder) "in far other and more satisfactory manner than all thy own faculties and highest flights of imagination can ever attain to. Only be thou still, and wait my time, and my word of life and command, and I will open, and none shall shut. But when I shut, neither thou nor any else can ever open. I will be unto thee mouth and wisdom, tongue and utterance. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."[89]

Faithfulness, for Job Scott, meant obedience to the divine guidance he received; and it is at this point that we find it hardest to empathise with him, specially when obedience and happiness come into conflict. He was strictly brought up, but had a secret passion for dancing when he was fifteen. His account of this would be comical if it were not so sad:

> Sometimes when I have stood upon the floor to dance, with a partner by the hand, before all were quite ready, God has arisen in judgement and smitten me to the very heart… I felt ready to sink under the weight of condemnation and anguish; but resolutely mustering all the stoutness I was master of, I brazened it out until the music called me to the dance…[90]

It would be easy to find many signs of a punitive superego in his Journal, and even hints of bipolar disorder (previously called manic-depressive illness). But these are not insights, they merely serve to distance us from the meaning of his experiences for us. His painful path was consciously chosen:

> No spark or ray of light did I behold, no glimpse of heaven's returning favour… Oh! said I in my heart, will [God] never arise for my help and deliverance? Well, be it as it may, I will seek him till my dying day; my soul cannot live without him.[91]

He makes it clear that the only obedience which he finds essential is submission to the direct guidance of God, not to customary religious observances like plain Quaker dress and language—useful as he thought these were. He writes:

> I cannot conceive any real advantage in an exact uniformity in all outward appearance and ways of living and acting… It is clear to my mind that there are many lesser matters wherein a diversity of action and appearance may be much better.[92]

The point where modern Friends feel most critical of him, as of James Nayler and John Woolman, is when his sense of duty called him to leave his family to travel in the ministry. Job Scott married at the age of twenty-eight, and his wife died twelve years later leaving him with six children to care for. Later the same year he felt a call to visit Connecticut, but love and concern for his children held him back. But "my mind was livingly opened" in a way both encouraging and terrifying, with a presentiment of his death two years later, much further from home:

> "Thou hast very little more ever to do in the business and affairs of this life. Gather thy mind from all cumbering things, and stand singly and wholly devoted to my work, service and appointment. Regard not the world nor give thyself trouble about thy little ones; thou must be about thy Father's business… Enough of thy precious time has been already consumed in striving to do something for thy family; and my holy hand has been lifted against thy progress and success therein. It is not thy proper business… I will hold thee in my holy hand for ever; I will provide for and take care of thy motherless (and as it were in thy absence) fatherless children."[93]

We must not think it was easy, as his rare references to his family show. His wife confessed to missing him terribly.[94] Some of his last words as he lay dying in Ireland were of concern for his children.

One might expect that such obedience would confer serenity and peace. but it was not so. Time and again he confesses to doubts and emptiness: "Reduced to nothing as to having any store of religious experience or enjoyment to bear up my mind. I felt as if all I had ever known or done, and all that had ever been done for me, was of no avail to me now."[95] And, elsewhere: "I travelled through many heights and depths in my own mind, for a considerable time, and seemed to be the nearest losing all faith and hope in God, that I ever remembered to have experienced. Oh! none knows, but the Lord alone, the fulness of that bitterness of soul which I had to endure! It was beyond all trials I had ever known[96] . . ." In this we find kinship-with him across time and space and changes in the modes of thought; but in that kinship can we also aspire to his discipleship and his ecstasy? "How unspeakably consolating it is to our souls, when we are admitted within the veil, and swallowed up in the luminous presence of our God!"[97] he writes, not in hope of an afterlife, but out of direct experience. As he rode home one day he saw a vision of glorified spirits circling around him; but, "I saw that I must yet longer partake of the cup of sufferings in this house of clay if I would join the songs of those ransomed souls… to which I bowed my head and heart, saying: Lord, let not thine eye pity, nor thy hand spare, until thou hast done away all that offends in me…"[98]

In his desolation he remembers Christ's great cry of loneliness from the cross, and acknowledges his own kinship with other suffering men and with his Master—whom we too, in some sense, must either choose or reject.

> Some may call me a heretic when I confess unto them that I expect no final benefit from the death of Jesus in any other way than through fellowship with Him in His sufferings. But after the way which they call heresy, worship I the God of my fathers, truly believing in the history of Christ's life, death, resurrection, ascension and glory; and desiring more and more to "know Him and the fellowship of His sufferings", and to be made, not in part only but fully, "conformable to His death"; that I may, like Him and with Him, be put to death in the flesh, but quickened in and by the Spirit. For I quite despair of Heaven on any other terms.
>
> I read this plainly in all the works and operations of nature. I read it plainly in the law. I read it plainer in the gospel. And I read the beginnings, and a good progression thereof, plainest of all in the inward experience of my own exercised soul. In natural things, the wheat must fall into the earth and die, or it will never bring forth fruit.[99]

On his voyage to Europe in 1793 he worked on an essay expanding and explaining this view, called Salvation by Christ. One week before he died, he wrote,

> On the ocean, I wrote over about a quire of paper, which I believe is now in my trunk… respecting which, I was ever a good deal doubtful, whether some parts of it,… were not more in a way of abstruse reasoning than might be best for a Friend to publish. Be that as it may, I am very apprehensive that most of my writings are far from properly digested, and some of them I believe might be a good deal better guarded.[100]

Thirty years later, his belief was indeed attacked as heretical by Luke Howard, the business associate of William Allen, whom we shall meet in the next chapter. In the interim, the evangelical revival had taken hold of Friends in Britain and was causing a major split in the Society in America. Job Scott's mystical view of the work of Christ in the soul seemed to this new generation to deny the biblical doctrine of salvation. He had written that that the birth of Christ in our individual hearts makes each of us, metaphorically, the mother of God. (George Fox had used the same image: "the pure Babe is born in the virgin-mind".)[101]

Howard felt that this was indecent, and the bitterness of the wider controversy provoked him into an unpleasant personal attack on Scott:

> I shall strive not to make this letter the vehicle of improper thoughts by quoting expressions which could not be read, I think, in a mixed company of Friends of both sexes, without bringing confusion over some of their faces…
>
> There was certainly in the character of this dear Friend, a perceptible excess on the side of the imagination and the feelings… and such a temperament makes a minister faithful, or courageous and energetic in the discharge of duty—but in measure disqualifies him from being a competent judge of doctrine and controversies…
>
> Such are the consequences of affecting to be wise above that which is written—of making that real which is metaphorical; that figurative or mystical which is literal—of not being content to take the plain text along with the context…—in short, of rejecting, from an apprehension of our own superior attainments and greater spirituality, the doctrines deduced from scripture by Christians in all ages concerning salvation by Christ. It is greatly to be feared, that a spirit of self-righteousness may sometimes be lurking under these exalted pretensions.[102]

This provoked a vigorous riposte from Benjamin Ferris, a Friend in Philadelphia:

> It appears by the memorial of his brethren, that Job Scott's moral character was remarkably correct. …He was a man of strong mental capacities, as well as of considerable reading. But it was in the depth and consistency of his religious character, and his extraordinary qualifications as a gospel minister, that he stood most conspicuous.[103]

He gives some quotations, and adds:

> Thus we see, from authentic documents, that not only in the United States, but in Ireland, and France, and Wales, and England, Job Scott's character and labors are represented in terms of the highest approbation. Even in London, near the place of [Luke Howard's] residence, he is spoken of in "a very satisfactory manner." Can we suppose this would have been the case, if his labors and conduct had been marked by a fanatical spirit—or if thou prefer the terms, by "a perceptible excess of the imagination and the feelings"?

Of the alleged indecency he wrote, "Upon this hypothesis, almost every Scripture writer, from Moses down to the latest author of any book in the New Testament is guilty of gross indelicacy."

The evangelical revival in the early nineteenth century is credited with reinvigorating Friends, bringing them back from quietism towards the mainstream of Christianity and its new philanthropy, and urging them gently out of the more exclusive and peculiar Quaker traits. We shall see some of the fruits of this change in the next chapter. But the move into the contemporary world seemed a betrayal to some. Benjamin Ferris adds bitterly,

> …We heard that Friends, the once despised Quakers, were permitted to sit in the same room with dukes, and earls, and lords, and gentlemen—not exactly on the same side of the room, but actually within the same walls! Next we heard that some of our ministers had been invited to address the honorable assembly: on which they took the floor, made florid speeches, and were actually complimented and applauded by some of the nobles, for their eloquence!

They were debating the nature of true religion. How far is it a deeply private dialogue between God and the soul, and how far a communal experience which is valid because it can be described in an agreed language? Job Scott's critics mistrusted individualism; they urged us to depend on scripture, a public revelation in which we could all share, and so, in their view, reach an agreed truth.

Today our sympathies lie rather with Job Scott and his insistence on "the holiness of the heart's affections"[104] than with them. Ben Pink Dandelion has recently claimed that "we can

see quietism as the common spiritual core running through most of Quaker history, still potentially visible and alive today."[105] David Cadman suggests that it is something we urgently need to recover:

> What then would it be like if we sought a way based upon some of the characteristics of this much-derided Quietism—patience, slowness, gentleness, selflessness, humility, simplicity and peacefulness? Surely these are the very qualities we need for a new economy, a new way of life that would, in contemporary terms, be sustainable and more likely to deliver well-being… For after all, as Albert Einstein is supposed to have said: "No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it.[106]

So Job Scott no longer appears as an old-fashioned figure from a dim period of our past. We have much to learn from his exploration of his inward experience, which had an intensity that we will find it hard to equal. His words still hit home. "Let the wisest in natural wisdom," he writes, "never oppose a truth because they do not know, understand or experience it themselves.[107]4

Speaking Truth to Power (1)

Several years ago, Mary McAleese, newly elected as President of Ireland, attended worship at Churchtown Meeting in Dublin. I am told that there was an unusual amount of spoken ministry. Without doubting its value and relevance, I can't help wondering whether it was partly stimulated by Mary's presence. Friends have a long tradition of speaking their truth to people in positions of responsibility, going back to George Fox's exchanges with Oliver Cromwell and his friends who confronted Charles II about the persecutions of Quakers. The most famous example is that of Mary Fisher, a servant girl who crossed the Balkans alone, probably on foot, to give a message from God to the Grand Sultan of the Ottoman Empire.[108] In those times, the approach was often confrontational; but I wonder whether that was any more successful then than in the examples of "speaking truth to power" which Adam Curle describes:

> I think that to some Friends this suggests marching into the office of the president, the local mayor, or whoever it may be, and issuing a ringing denunciation of his policies. If a relative stranger had done this to any of the presidents or prime ministers I have known, s/he might have been treated with cold courtesy or hot anger, but the message, because of the manner of delivery, would have been unheard. But the peacemaker who has won the right for his/her opinions to be heard may be able to… convey uncomfortable truths…[109]

Examples of how Friends "speak" today include the contacts of American Friends Service Committee and Britain Yearly Meeting's Quaker Peace and Social Witness with the World Bank on behalf of the farmers of Nicaragua, and the Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva with the world's ambassadors to end the use of child soldiers.[110] (Some of this work shades into mediation, but that is too large a subject to include here.) The same desire to speak the truth informs the carefully crafted letters which many of us write to government ministers. In a different mode, the sight of a thousand Quakers standing silently in a peace vigil or on a march to try to prevent a war also tells a truth which is intended to reach the powerful.

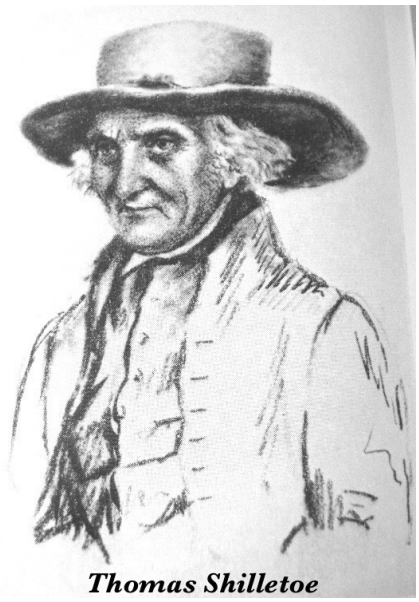
In the twentieth century, those of us who wanted to speak truth to power were encouraged to research our subject thoroughly, prepare our communications carefully and state facts accurately in order to carry conviction. When the Oxford Research Group started dialogues with the people who made the decisions about nuclear power and weapons, Scilla Elworthy and the Group often impressed their contacts by knowing more than they did.[111] Some of these contacts radically changed their views as they talked together, and a few even changed their jobs (to Scilla's regret, as she would sooner they had remained on the inside as agents of change).

Between the outspoken early Friends and recent Quaker peace work lie the missions of the Friends of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which are barely remembered now. In this chapter I want to look at some of these, and trace some of the continuities and discontinuities with the patterns of today. It will teach us something about being guided, a central Quaker concept about which many modern Friends have doubts. And it will give us the chance to meet some extraordinary forgotten Quaker heroes, and discover the strengths of a period of British Quaker history which is usually undervalued.

In 1793, Thomas Shillitoe felt a calling to speak to King George III. He was a poor

shoemaker of almost forty, a man of pathological shyness. He suffered from phobias, which made it a major problem for him to cross London Bridge.

> He proceeded to Windsor, and for about twenty minutes earnestly delivered to his sovereign a very eloquent and heart-stirring discourse, which made tears trickle down the King's cheeks. A few minutes before the address, the Quaker felt, he says, "not only like a vessel emptied of anything it ever contained to communicate of a religious nature to others, but, as it were, washed from the very dregs." But having kept silence for several minutes, whilst prayerfully looking to the Lord for aid, he commenced with "Hear, O King!" and immediately all fear left him, and he "stood like a wall of brass."[112]



Thomas Shilletoe

Typically for a Quaker of his time, he had not prepared what to say, in order to be a channel for whatever words the Holy Spirit might give him (which might be no words at all!) This time the king was so impressed that he cancelled his planned hunt and went back into the palace to tell the queen what had happened.

By the time of his death in 1836, Thomas Shillitoe had travelled through much of Europe, often on foot, working on farms, visiting and preaching in drinking dens and palaces, ships and prisons. He talked with royalty in Prussia, Denmark and Russia, and with the American President. In England he made friends with the Prince Regent (later George IV), who according to an old story said on his deathbed, "Send for that little Quaker, he is the only one who ever told me the truth."[113]

Thomas Shillitoe and other travelling Friends of the late eighteenth century, such as Mary Dudley, Sarah (Tuke) Grubb[114] and the American Job Scott (who died during his journeys in Ireland), were from the Quietist tradition. As Ormerod Greenwood explains, "No special choice of personnel, no different attitude, and certainly no training or preparation, marked those Friends who travelled 'beyond seas'. The considerations which might influence a modern committee: special interest in a country, knowledge of its language, history, customs or traditions; imagination or adaptability—all these were irrelevant. The Lord chooses his instruments in his own way, often appointing the humble and meek; and his wisdom is foolishness in the eyes of the world. Far from being 'keen' to go to a particular place, some were keen not to go—as John Pemberton wished not to go to Germany, Jane Wheeler dreaded going to Russia, [and] Hannah Kilham would not (she said) have minded Russia, but was obliged to go instead to West Africa".[115]

The aim of all these travelling ministers, including those who met royal and influential people, was "to bear the message of the Gospel". By the mid eighteenth century Friends

knew that they were not the Universal Church reborn, as the early Friends had held, but one Christian sect among many. Yet these ministers still believed that they were called to preach a message to everyone, not to proselytise for the Society of Friends, but to make their hearers aware of the divine spark within them and to help them find their own spiritual paths.

Many were quite young, but they had been recognised and recorded as ministers by their meetings. Not all recorded ministers travelled; but they were expected to respond to the call if it came, even though it meant leaving home and family and often quite small children, as well as their trade or profession. Ormerod makes a telling distinction: "To learn to recognise this inner command in all its authenticity (as distinct from impulse, or desire, or sense of duty, all of which were irrelevant) was the fundamental requirement of a minister, and the phrase often used to seal his public declaration was: 'I know it in that which does not lie'."[116] This happened to Thomas Shillitoe, who

> …was made very uneasy by the thought of leaving his shop under the care of a foreman who occasionally gave trouble by getting drunk, and who in his best state had little authority over the other men; even Mr Shillitoe felt quite afraid to leave his wife and young family under such circumstances. However one day, whilst pondering these difficulties in his shop cutting out work for the men, there came upon him a clear and impressive conviction that it was his duty to go forth on his Gospel errand, trusting on the protection of the Lord. This instruction, he declared, was communicated in language as intelligible as ever he heard words spoken to his outward ear, and there was a distinct promise with it as from the Lord, "I will be more than bolts and bars to thy outward habitation; more than a master to thy servants, for I can restrain their wandering minds; more than a husband to thy wife, and a parent to thy infant children." On receiving this message Thomas says, "the knife I was using fell out of my hand, I no longer daring to hesitate after such a confirmation."[117]

The authority of the inner command was absolute. Thomas came home from a strenuous tour in Britain and told his wife that he was feeling drawn to a new journey in the ministry across Europe. She knew better than to argue. She just said, "And how many shirts wilt thou require?" But this does not mean that the ministers travelled with an invincible confidence. They had times of self-doubt and uncertainty about what the Lord required, which could only be met by humble waiting for guidance. Language inadequacies, dishonest guides, rough and irregular transport over terrible roads, and flea-ridden accommodation all presented problems. They felt fear in difficult situations:

> In Maryland he heard of a wholesale slave merchant, notorious for ferocity and wickedness. Mr. Shillitoe did not enjoy the thought of visiting him, but duty commanded, and he obeyed. Taking a companion with him, he proceeded to the residence of the merchant, not without much alarm on account of the many savage dogs which prowled freely about it. "There was no way for me," wrote Shillitoe, "but to cast my care on Him who had so many times preserved me as from the paw of the bear and the jaws of the devourer." They arrived safely at the house, and had an interview with the owner, who, although he had recently almost killed a Quaker, throwing him down in the public streets, and violently trampling on him, for being an abolitionist, received Shillitoe with courtesy, and listened with attention to his earnest pleadings of the cause of the captives.[118]

Even their visits to Quakers could be a source of distress; Job Scott wrote: "Attended Westchester meeting. And, alas! this I think exceeded all we had been at for anguish and bitterness of soul. Oh! I believe if my distress were to continue steadily, equal to what it was in this meeting, I should ere long think death would be a welcome release. It seemed as if I could scarce find a breath of fresh air (spiritually) during the whole meeting."[119]

Whether speaking to kings, nobility or commoners, eighteenth-century Friends did not prescribe government policy; they pointed to "that of God" in their hearers to guide them.

Thomas Haddock, speaking in ministry in Gracechurch meeting in 1696, ended his message: "Now if thou wert the greatest King, Emperor or Potentate upon earth, thou art not too great to make use of the means offered by the Almighty for thy healing and restoration, if ever thou expect to enter His Kingdom, into which no unclean thing can come." It chanced that Tzar Peter the Great was among his hearers incognito, but it would probably have made no difference to the speaker if he had known this. Peter must have found the message acceptable, because he returned to meeting several times, "behaving as a private person and very social; changing seats, standing or sitting, as occasion might be to accommodate others as well as himself."[120]

It was enough to bring people to the inward Teacher; then their right course of action would be revealed to them. There is a touching example of this told of Sarah Grubb, the most loved of them all, who as a teenager had nursed the dying John Woolman. She was speaking to her much older hostess Marie Majolier in France, who was wearing expensive rings:

> Sarah Grubb talking lovingly to her and caressing her hands, drew off one after the other,—and giving them back she said—"I do not wish to deprive thee of them—perhaps the day may come, my dear, when thou wilt find them too heavy for thee." Her daughters say they think she did not put them on again, any how they never remember her wearing rings.[121]

Besides trusting to God to put the right words in his mouth, the minister expected that obstacles in his path would be smoothed. The French-American Stephen Grellet, travelling in France during the Napoleonic War, wrote in his journal: "Thus far way has been made for me in a manner extraordinary to myself; for though in several instances I have heard of threats made against me by men in power, yet to this day I have had no interruption in my religious movements."[122] Thomas Shillitoe felt called to speak to the king of Denmark. He had a rough journey and "after a fast of many hours, he arrived at a tavern, where he requested some hot milk to mix with some thick chocolate of which he had a bottle in his pocket. So faint was he, however, that he reeled against the table and smashed the bottle, spilling the contents over his dress. The woman of the house stared stupidly at her visitor, but offered no assistance. He managed to remove part of the greasy mess from his garments, but did not succeed in entirely obliterating the stains". Arriving in Copenhagen he got a list of dignitaries and was drawn to one name, so he approached the man. This turned out to be the Prime Minister, who arranged a "religious interview" with the king.

> …the count looking rather earnestly at me said, "you do not mean to appear before the king in those clothes, do you?—the breaking of the bottle of chocolate, independent of my clothes being much worn, had given them a greasy appearance. I told him I had no clothes with me…But I would do my best to smarten myself, at which he smiled.[123]

Thomas had a satisfactory meeting with the king, at which they discussed lotteries (against which Friends have a long-standing testimony) and negro slavery as well as spiritual topics; he also had "very agreeable" interviews with the queen and princesses, still in the same suit of clothes.

It is hard for us to imagine an unknown person being given access to a king, queen or prime minister and preaching to them in this way. How can we explain this access of simple people to the great? One factor was the size of the population. The 1801 census estimated the population of England and Wales to be 8.9 million, with about a million in London. In smaller countries even today, the gap between the rulers and their people is much narrower than in modern Britain or USA; in Ireland or New Zealand, with less than five million people, it is not hard for Quakers to get an interview with a government minister. The usual means was much the same then as now; to get a letter of introduction from someone you know to someone you wish to meet.

Quakers in particular had been well-known across Europe since Voltaire had published his letters from England in 1734. Voltaire was counted among Europe's most progressive thinkers and his blend of genuine respect and sardonic teasing was perfectly calculated to reassure intellectuals that they could admire this odd sect without compromising their sophistication. For example,

> Fox was seized at Derby, and being carried before a justice of peace, he did not once offer to pull off his leathern hat, upon which an officer gave him a great box of the ear, and cried to him, "Don't you know you are to appear uncovered before his worship?" Fox presented his other cheek to the officer, and begged him to give him another box for God's sake. The justice would have had him sworn before he asked him any questions. "Know, friend," says Fox to him, "that I never swear." The justice, observing he "thee'd" and "thou'd" him, sent him to the House of Correction, in Derby, with orders that he should be whipped there. Fox praised the Lord all the way he went to the House of Correction, where the justice's order was executed with the utmost severity. The men who whipped this enthusiast were greatly surprised to hear him beseech them to give him a few more lashes for the good of his soul. There was no need of entreating these people; the lashes were repeated, for which Fox thanked them very cordially, and began to preach. At first the spectators fell a-laughing, but they afterwards listened to him; and as enthusiasm is an epidemical distemper, many were persuaded, and those who scourged him became his first disciples.[124]

Voltaire's endorsement of the Quaker use of "thee" and "thou" instead of the polite "you" and their refusal to remove their hats to the nobility made those customs seem quaint instead of offensive.

Moreover William Penn's "Holy Experiment" in government in Pennsylvania had brought fame to the Quakers. Voltaire had commented:

> It was very rare and uncommon… for a Government to be without one priest in it, and for a people to be without arms, either offensive or defensive; for a body of citizens to be absolutely undistinguished but by the public employments, and for neighbours not to entertain the least jealousy one against the other. William Penn might glory in having brought down upon earth the so much boasted golden age, which in all probability never existed but in Pennsylvania.[125]

Despite the Experiment's ending in bitterness, the thinking which informed it offered an alternative both to despotism and to the horrors of the French Revolution; republicans saw it as a blueprint for governance based on their ideals, while enlightened autocrats thought it might help them devise reforms which might forestall violent revolt. Stephen Grellet, when held in quarantine in Marseilles in 1807, notes: "Curiosity to see a Quaker frequently brings persons of various ranks and conditions to see and converse with me."[126]

Quaker preaching began to change its character around the turn of the century; the evangelical movement affected their public witness and also brought an awareness of social issues. On his first visit to Britain in the booming war economy of 1813, Stephen Grellet felt a concern to preach to the underclass of prostitutes, pick-pockets and thieves.[127] Hearing of his meetings, the chief magistrate gave him access to the London prisons, and the treatment of prisoners became a passionate new interest for him. He tried to inspect prisons wherever he went, and it was he who first brought Elizabeth Fry to Newgate. The plight of prisoners became a regular part of his message when he met people with the power to introduce change. His friend William Allen, as we shall see, was a leading philanthropist and a passionate advocate of progressive education. As such expertise grew, Quaker ministry shifted towards our modern notions of speaking truth to power through our personal experience of social problems, our search for ethical solutions and our development of good practice. They still trusted in guidance, but it was now God's guiding of the informed mind,

not the open mind. On 27 February 1818 Elizabeth Fry spoke to power as the first woman to address a Select committee of the House of Commons.[128] She came to be recognised across Europe as an expert in prison reform. But for a long time many other Friends disapproved strongly of this involvement in the world's affairs, fearing that it was a departure from Quaker truth. Even the movement in Britain for the abolition of the slave trade did not command their universal support.

In 1813 Stephen Grellet was travelling in England, Scotland and Ireland. He was the son of a French nobleman who had lost all his land during the French Revolution, and had gone to America as a refugee. On his travels he had visited France during the war, and in Britain he had talked with many French prisoners and this brought a new element to his spoken ministry. At one meeting, "the cause of war was unfolded, its awful and dreadful consequences—misery, wasting and destruction. In these are deeply concerned not only those actually engaged in the field of carnage, but those also who give it countenance and are in anywise auxiliary to it, as the manufacturers of arms and engines of destruction."[129] Stephen suggested to Meeting for Sufferings that when the leaders of the countries which had defeated Napoleon should meet in London, Friends might present Addresses to them asking them not to unleash again the horrors of war.

Next year the documents were prepared; William Allen and Stephen Grellet, who was fluent in French, were members of the delegation to present them. The king of Prussia gave a formal approving reply. But while William was making arrangements with the Russian ambassador, Count Lieven, an urgent message arrived from Tzar Alexander I saying he wished to attend a Quaker Meeting, and his only opportunity was that morning. (I wonder if he had heard of his great-great-grandfather Peter the Great attending meetings in London?) In some confusion they arrived at Westminster Meeting, then as now in St Martin's Lane, but not in the same building. The Tzar and Tzarina were in plain clothes, but Count Lieven's military uniform must have been a bright splash of colour amide the Quaker grey. After fifteen minutes' silence four Friends ministered in turn; William Allen commented, "Nothing could have answered better, if it had been ever so well contrived."

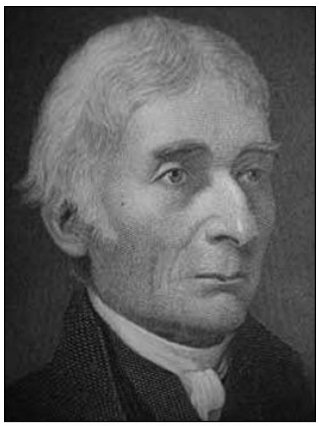
Two days later Stephen Grellet, William Allen and John Wilkinson took the Address to the Tzar. But he only wanted to talk of spiritual matters. "[He] evidently showed that he was acquainted with the operations of the Holy Spirit in the soul, and considered forms and external observances but of secondary importance. On the subject of worship he said he agreed entirely with Friends that it was an internal and spiritual thing…and though, from his peculiar situation [in relation to the Russian Orthodox church] his practice must be different, yet the religion of Christ being one and his worship spiritual, be believed that in this we might unite."[130] (This recalls to me two of our Bosnian Muslim colleagues in peace work, who joined the worship at our local meeting and said afterwards: "We are Muslims and you are Quakers, but at the level of the spirit we are one.")

On his way to his ship the Tzar noticed two Quakers by the road and visited their simple home. After his return to Russia he asked for a Quaker agriculturist to drain and cultivate his marshlands near St Petersburg, which Daniel Wheeler and his family undertook from 1818 to 1832, continuing the friendship between Quakers and Alexander. The Friends have been accused of being naïve in this, since the Tzar was an enigmatic figure, possibly implicated in the murder of his father, and with nine illegitimate children. An American

Friend sneered: "Many thought they had nearly converted this hardy warrior, just reeking from the slaughter… into a peaceable polite Quaker. But somehow or other he escaped to his native country, and soon raised an army…"[131] He was at times a repressive ruler, yet also one who attempted reforms, including moves to improve the lot of the serfs (possibly inspired by Daniel's employment policy). When he died in 1825, Daniel who knew him well, wrote that the world might regard him as a hypocrite, but there was good reason to count him among "those who have hope in their death."[132]

When Stephen Grellet had returned to America, he wrote in his diary for November 1817:

> The weight of service which the Lord calls for from me in Europe becomes heavier and heavier; my whole mind is at seasons absorbed by it. I greatly wonder that services of this kind should be laid upon me, in nations whose language I understand not, where I do not know that there is even a practicality to travel, and where numerous difficulties and great perils must necessarily attend me. Yet sometimes it seems as if I saw a plain path before me in Norway, Sweden, Russia, towards the Crimea, over the Black Sea, in Greece, Italy, &c., with a conviction that Lord can remove every difficulty… Thus my first step must be to wind up all my temporal concerns and retire from my business, which has become a prosperous one, to provide for my beloved family, and to lay up enough to pay my expenses during the extensive service before me… My beloved wife is my faithful helper; she very sweetly encourages me…[133]



Stephen Grellet

William Allen

His concern was approved around the time that Elizabeth Fry was testifying to the House of Commons, and on 17 June 1818 he left for England where, to his joy William Allen felt led to accompany him, and in August 1818 they sailed to Norway and Sweden. Their portraits give a good impression of the contrast between the two friends. Stephen Grellet was raised a Roman Catholic; as a teenage refugee he went through a time of bitter and confused atheism. Walking in the fields one day when he was twenty-two, he seemed to hear "an awful voice proclaiming the words, 'Eternity! Eternity! Eternity!' …It brought me like Saul to the ground."[134] He read No Cross, No Crown by William Penn, looking up almost every word in his dictionary, and joining Friends shortly afterwards. Despite his somewhat aloof appearance, he was described as "humble and self-possessed… a true Frenchman in politeness…" remembered for the warmth and ardour of his affections [and] his truly Christian cheerfulness."[135]

William Allen was one of our most remarkable forebears and it is sad he is not better remembered among British Friends today (though he does have a Quaker Tapestry panel to himself and a personal website).[136] He was a distinguished scientist, giving a weekly lecture on chemistry to Guy's Hospital medical students when he was not travelling. He was a successful businessman, and his firm Allen & Hanbury's survived till taken over by Glaxo in

1958. His diary shows a breathless round of committee meetings. He worked with Peter Bedford to relieve the poor in the East End of London; he recognised and supported the genius of Joseph Lancaster, the Quaker educational pioneer, and put up with his impulsive decisions and violent temper, and straightened out his chaotic finances; he was a partner in Robert Owen's New Lanark Mills, that noble experiment in good care of employees sixty years before the Rowntrees and Cadburys.[137] Sadly he clashed with the atheist Owen over religious education in the school there, but remained true to his commitment for over twenty years. He was a founder-member of the British & Foreign Bible Society. He concerned himself with prison reform, with a special concern to end capital punishment. He was very involved, as were Grellet and their friends, in the question of slavery, and was intimate with Thomas Clarkson, the hero among the British abolitionists. He saw that the ending of the trade would cause economic problems in Africa, and pioneered the concept of fair trade. Yet his private life was sad;[138] his first wife died in childbirth, his second wife also died prematurely, and his diary shows his repeated internal struggles.

Stephen and William travelled first in Norway and Sweden, where their main concern was to visit groups who were persecuted for worshipping in the Quaker way (and whose origins and links with Quakers make another fascinating story).[139] They obtained a private interview with the King of Sweden who ruled both countries, to plead for tolerance for these groups. The King told them, "I know you are a peaceable people, opposed to wars and the shedding of blood… therefore above any other people you ought to be protected, and your Society shall have the utmost of my protection." But he pointed out "…that the King's name, which implies power, is not always attended with it; on the contrary, I very often feel my impotence."[140] Stephen wrote: "We were almost two hours together; and on our parting, the King held us by the hand and embracing us seemed as if he could hardly let us go."

They crossed to Finland, a Russian dominion, and as usual visited the prisons, which greatly shocked them. The prisoners were in fetters which Stephen sketched, to use when he made a protest to the governor general and later the Tzar. They also met the Archbishop of Abo, who invited them to preach to a large group of his clergy.

In St Petersburg they were told that the Tzar was visiting other parts of his country but had ordered that they should not leave until he had returned. They worshipped with Daniel Wheeler and undertook their usual round of religious and philanthropic visits, during which William Allen urged the merits of the Lancasterian system of teaching. Each week they spent a couple of hours in conversation with the prime minister. They visited the prisons, and the military governor met them several times to hear their reports and promise reforms.

> The prison near the Admiralty is so filthy, and the air so impure, that it much affected our heads and stomachs. The prisoners by their emaciated countenances show that they also suffer by it. Ten of them were fastened two and two to a long chain, marching out to Siberia; what sufferings must these poor creatures have to endure during so long a journey, to be performed on foot, and in the severity of a winter like this. May the Lord be pleased to open our way, in due time, to plead for so many sufferers, that their distress may be relieved.[141]

Stephen describes an interview with the head of the Orthodox church, Mikhail, in full pontifical dress, who "made us sit down by him; he soon began to enquire of our religious principles, and much approved of our reasons for not conforming to the compliments, language and fashions of the world… We could not help…contrasting his rich attire with our simple one, and their pompous way of worship with the simplicity of ours."[142] William adds, "He seemed to think that the main difference between us was that we took everything in a spiritual sense, but they believed that outward ceremonies were also necessary, though

they could not alone do the work. He believes most fully in the operation of the Holy Spirit and that none can, without it, come to a knowledge of the truth."[143] Either Metropolitan Mikhail was very courteous or impressed by his two strange visitors.

When the Tzar returned they had two hours private conversation, in which he questioned them about the schools and prisons they had visited, and asked their recommendations. They showed him the drawing they made of the fetters at Abo. But much of the conversation was about religion, in particular how the Spirit guides the human heart. The Tzar said of Daniel Wheeler: "It was not the cultivation of morasses nor any outward object that led me to wish to have some of your Friends come and settle here; but a desire that, by their genuine piety and uprightness in life and conversation, an example may be set before my people for them to imitate, and your friend Wheeler sets such an example." They spend the final minutes in worship together, and when Stephen knelt in prayer, Alexander knelt beside him.[144] In a second meeting he told them that he had given orders to stop the prison cruelties they had reported, and asked them to send him further reports as they travelled to the Crimea. He then told them how he had found a personal faith for himself as a child, because his tutors were non-believers. They parted in affectionate tears, the Tzar saying that, "Through the Lord's Spirit, we may though separated one from another feel the fellowship and communion of spirit; for with the Lord there is no limitation of space."[145]

Tsar Alexander I

They left by sledge for Moscow and the Crimea, a distance of well over 1000 miles, stopping in major towns to visit schools and prisons; but now the main aim of their journey was to visit minority Christian sects (and Jews) and advise the Tzar if they found persecution. They worshipped with and approved of Lutherans, Molokans and Menonites. But Stephen was shocked by the Dukhobors, though some of their beliefs and practices were very Quakerly, because they denied the primacy of scripture—a painful reminder of the Hicksite controversy in which he had been involved, which was to split the American Quaker community. (We shall meet the Dukhobors again in a later chapter.) His fascinating description of Bakhchiserai in the Crimea is little different from what I saw there nearly two hundred years later.

They sailed from Odessa to Constantinople, their first encounter with a Muslim country, which gave Stephen an oppressive feeling, though no worse than he felt at the state of the

Greek Orthodox church as they travelled onwards, narrowly escaping from pirates on the way..[146] William Allen was sickening, and decided to go home from Corfu. Stephen believed that his way led through Italy, and his next encounter with power was in Rome. Armed with a letter from the Cardinal Prime Minister saying he was to be shown everything, he visited the Inquisition, as "the accounts given me by several persons in Rome…were very contradictory. I visited… the place where the Inquisitors sat and where tortures were inflicted on the poor sufferer; but everything bore marks that for many years these abodes of misery were not at all frequented." He was shown the Secret Library, where banned books were stored, which even priests could not enter.

> Some of [the books and manuscripts] contain very interesting matter, and evince that the writers were in many particulars learned in the school of Christ. I could have spent days in that place. There are writings in all the various ancient and modern languages, European, Asiatic, Arabic, Grecian, &c., &c., all arranged separately, in order. I carefully looked for Friends' books but found none.[147]

He was told "that there is a great outcry raised by some of the cardinals and others, at the liberty granted me to pry into their secret things."

Pope Pius VII

Pius VII was eighty years old. In 1804 he had crowned Napoleon in Paris, but was later seized and imprisoned by him, and only regained his throne in 1814. Stephen was granted a private audience; the pope listened carefully to his pleas about the vicious corporal punishment of boys and girls in the "houses of correction", and said he would order that "Christian tenderness and care be exercised."

> On the subject of the Inquisition he said he was pleased I had seen for myself what great changes had been brought about in Rome… that he has made many efforts to have similar alterations introduced into Spain and Portugal… but was far from having yet obtained his wishes. "Men," he said, "think that a Pope has a plenitude of power in his hands, but they are much mistaken; my hands are greatly tied in many things."[148]

During this remarkably frank conversation Stephen described the misbehaviour by priests and monks which he had often seen on his travels, and explained the Quaker concept of ministry, to which only Christ can appoint someone. "As I was speaking on these and other subjects connected therewith, the Pope said several times, on looking at the priest present, 'These things are true', and the priest's answer was, 'They are so'." The pope blessed him as he said goodbye.

Stephen's journey was not yet finished. His way led through North Italy, the German states, Switzerland (where he was reunited with William Allen), France (where he was arrested under suspicion of the murder of the Duc de Berri—a case of mistaken identity), and so to Britain and Ireland. In Bavaria he interceded with the King for the rights of protestants oppressed by the Roman Catholic regime; he discussed religion with the King of Wuttemberg and comforted him and his tiny children for the loss of his queen. His journey took more than a year and a half.

The impact of these two travellers on the prisons, schools, hospitals, orphanages and small-town communities which they regularly visited can never be evaluated. But a memory of the visit to Alexander (and the loyal service of Daniel Wheeler) must have smoothed the way for Quakers in 1853, when they sent a delegation to speak with his brother Nicolas I in the hope of averting the Crimean War. The address from London Yearly Meeting said that war is against Christian teaching and Friends had tried to impress this on the British government too, in "language of bold but respectful remonstrance". They offered no opinion on the political questions at issue, but now appealed to the Tzar as a humane and Christian man to "practically exhibit to the nations… the efficacy of the gospel of Christ and the universal application of his command, 'Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you'."[149] The Tzar received the delegation warmly; he courteously heard the message with tears in his eyes, and appointed a second meeting. Before this was held news arrived from England which made him cancel it. Though it was naïve of Friends to expect him to withdraw from a war with Turkey which had already begun, their appeal was a notable gesture of Christian love towards a man reviled in the British newspapers. Throughout the Crimean War Quakers had to endure the scorn and anger of press and public for their efforts for peace.

Ranting preachers have been ridiculed in every century, so there must have been a particular reason why those Quakers were given access to people in high places. From contemporary descriptions we know of the luminous quality of Thomas Shillitoe, the mystical depth of Job Scott, the passionate conviction of Stephen Grellet, the sheer goodness of William Allen and the "loving, hoping spirit" of Elizabeth Fry, whose daughter wrote, "She could always see hope for everyone; she invariably found or made some point of light".[150] It is clear that they had an extraordinary ability to communicate with everyone they met, regardless of crime, poverty, dirt, dress, status, pride or riches. To some of the powerful, their simple friendly and truthful mode of address and the clarity of the religious message must have been a welcome change from their usual official conversations.

Their official memoirs do not always give them full justice; the written accounts of what they said do not convey the aptness, sincerity and warmth with which they must have spoken to be so well accepted. Too often their humour and charm have been played down together with the stories of times when they "lost their guide"; and we are lucky that some of their private writings survive to give a glimpse of the self-doubts, struggles and agony which were a regular part of their lives of worship. They wrestled with the temptation of pride as well as despair; Elizabeth Fry wrote: "I have been tried with the applause of the world, and none know how great a trial that has been, and the deep humiliations of it; and yet I fully believe it is not nearly so dangerous as being made much of in religious society."[151]

In a later chapter I will look at some examples of speaking Truth to power in the twentieth century, to ask what has changed and what has stayed the same in our understanding of this task.

The Grimké sisters

We recently celebrated the Quaker share in the United Kingdom's abolition of the slave trade in 1807, but we must remember that our Society often fell short in its commitment to the cause, specially in the United States where slavery was not abolished until 1862. The Quakers of Germantown (Pennsylvania) had protested against slavery in 1688. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting decided to disown Quaker slave owners in 1758 under the guidance of Anthony Benezet and John Woolman. But attitudes take longer to change than regulations. Almost eighty years later Sarah Grimké was reproved for deliberately sitting on the bench which was reserved for black women in Arch Street Meeting in Philadelphia, and for commenting that one of them, Grace Douglass, who had attended for many years and wore Quaker dress was never admitted to membership. Grace's daughter Sarah Douglass, who became a lifelong friend of Sarah Grimké, once wrote a letter to the American counterpart of The Friend to say that many black people would attend Quaker meeting if they were not asked to sit on the segregated back bench, and treated with coldness. They did not publish it.

Sarah Grimké was born in South Carolina in 1792, one of fourteen children, three of whom died in infancy. The lastborn was her sister Angelina, born in 1805. Their family owned slaves and the girls had seen appalling cruelty since their childhood. In a letter to Queen Victoria dated 1838 (we do not know if they sent it), they wrote: "We are self-exiled from the hearth stone of our fathers because we could not endure the sight of that misery we were powerless to relieve."[152]

When Sarah was four years old, she accidentally witnessed the flogging of a slave woman. She ran out of the house in tears, and half an hour later her nurse found her in the docks begging a ship captain to take her away to a place where such things did not happen. When she grew older she and her sisters were encouraged to teach the slave children a weekly bible class. She asked her father, a judge, why she must not teach them to read the bible for themselves, and he showed her in the State Law of 1740 "that any person who shall teach any slave to write or to employ any slave as a scribe in writing, shall forfeit 100 pounds." She wrote in her diary:

> My great desire in this matter would not be totally suppressed, and I took an almost malicious satisfaction in teaching my little waiting-maid at night, when she was supposed to be combing and brushing my long locks. The light was put out, the keyhole screened, and flat on our stomachs before the fire with the spelling-book under our eyes, we defied the laws of South Carolina.[153]

It ended in discovery and a stern lecture for Sarah from her father, while the maid was in danger of a whipping. Sarah redeemed herself in the family's eyes by becoming godparent at the age of thirteen to baby Angelina, and taking over her care from their exhausted mother. She learned to rein back her expressions of disapproval, but she did not close her eyes. The memories the sisters contributed to the collection American Slavery as it is: Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses (1839) are unbearable to read. I will give a single example:

> A punishment dreaded more by the slaves than whipping, unless it is unusually severe, is one which was invented by a female acquaintance of mine in Charleston—I heard her say so with much satisfaction. It is standing on one foot and holding the other in the hand. Afterwards it was improved upon, and a strap was contrived to fasten round the ankle and pass round the neck; so that the least weight of the foot resting on the strap would choke the person. The pain occasioned by this unnatural position was great; and when continued, as it sometimes

> was, for an hour or more, produced intense agony. I heard this same woman say that she had the ears of her waiting maid slit for some petty theft. This she told me in the presence of the girl.[154]

Sarah never married, and it may have been because she was critical of her whole mode of upbringing:

> During the early part of my life, my lot was cast among the butterflies of the fashionable world; and of this class of women, I am constrained to say, both from experience and observation, that their education is miserably deficient; that they are taught to regard marriage as the one thing needful, the only avenue to distinction; hence to attract the notice and win the attentions of men, by their external charms, is the chief business of fashionable girls. They seldom think that men will be allured by intellectual acquirements, because they find, that where any mental superiority exists, a woman is generally shunned and regarded as stepping out of her "appropriate sphere," which, in their view, is to dress, to dance, to set out to the best possible advantage her person, to read novels…
>
> [The others outside the fashionable world] are brought up with the dangerous and absurd idea, that marriage is a kind of preferment; and that to be able to keep their husband's house, and render his situation comfortable, is the end of her being.[155]

Sarah first encountered Quakers in 1819 when she was almost thirty. She had escorted her sick father to Pennsylvania to stay in a Quaker house and receive treatment from a Quaker doctor. She nursed Judge Grimké through his painful dying there and arranged his funeral. The experience helped her find her independence, but she fell into depression. As she recovered she read John Woolman's Journal and began to correspond with the Friend who had given it to her, and to attend Charleston Meeting at home. Angelina and her brother Thomas shared her hatred of slavery, but found it hard to sympathise with her low spirits. Thomas believed that slaves should be repatriated to Africa with their consent. He scoffed at the Quaker hope of emancipation, and once told her, "Thee had better turn Quaker, Sally; thy long face would suit well their sober dress."[156] She found that she could neither change the culture of slavery around her nor endure to live in it. Eventually she heard an inward voice giving "an unmistakeable call, not to be disregarded" to go north;[157] so she moved alone to Philadelphia, which for a woman in those days inevitably exposed her to gossip. However she attended Arch Street Meeting for a year and a half and then became a Quaker in May 1823. She adopted the plain dress with "a feeling of much peace".

Angelina (known to her family as Nina) was more naïve, optimistic and outgoing. At the age of thirteen she was due to be confirmed in the Anglican church, but after reading the pledge she must give, she said she could not agree to it, and nothing would change her mind. Later she became a Presbyterian and was soon teaching a Sunday school of 150 children and organising an inter-church women's prayer group. She also led the family slaves in daily prayers; years later some of them wrote or dictated letters to thank her for the first instruction in religion (and everything else) which they had been given.[158]

She was deeply opposed to slavery but, unlike Sarah, she was sure that that she could bring change. Surely everyone would see that it was wrong when things were explained properly to them! She did everything she could to get her brothers and sisters to treat the family slaves well, sometimes provoking painful arguments. She asked for a meeting with the elders of her Presbyterian church, all slave-owners, and naively suggested that they should denounce slavery. They tenderly counselled her, telling her that she would "grow out of it" and come to see they were right. So she spoke to each of them privately; some of them agreed that slavery was cruel and unjust, but not one of them would take a public position.

Around this time Sarah paid a visit home, and Angelina began to understand her and her

Quakerism for the first time. She was attracted by her sister's simple dress and began to give up her lace and smart bonnets. She wrote a letter to her students and fellow-teachers, explaining why she was leaving the Presbyterian church, which she hoped would be read aloud to the congregation. (It was not even mentioned.) That Sunday she let her mother and sisters drive to church while she walked to the Quaker meeting. Her family argued with her, her minister came to assure her that "Your church still loves you; but it pities you for your delusion." She responded, "They may love me with a feeling of pity, but all respect for and confidence in me is destroyed. Such love is calculated to humble rather than gratify me."[159] She was finally expelled from the church and after a stay with Sarah in Philadelphia decided that she too must say farewell to the South. She wrote in her diary:

> Much as I have suffered here, yet I find the very idea of leaving poor Mother extremely painful. I think I can truly say it is so painful as to counter-balance the satisfaction felt at the prospect of leaving the land of Slavery. The only thing which seems to turn the balance in favour of my going is the consideration that if there is a human being to whose happiness I may contribute, it is my beloved sister & when I remember all she has done for me since childhood, and look at the deep trials thro' which she has been passing, & the comfort I believe (under the divine blessing) I might be to her, it seems as tho' I had no right to refuse to walk in that path which has been so evidently set out before me.[160]

She loved the new freedoms in her life, enjoying cultural events, buying her own food, and the milder climate. She liked the peacefulness of living in a Quaker home after the increasing quarrels of her family life. In 1831 she applied for membership of the Society of Friends. She was taken aback when the elders expressed doubts as to whether her action in leaving her home and her mother expressed the duty of a child to her parents; maybe it would be better for her not to become a Quaker yet? With her usual directness she replied, "I believe the circumstances must be very peculiar which would render it binding on anyone who had embraced the principles of Friends to live in a slave-country…"[161] She pointed out too that her mother was in good health with other daughters at home, and had consented to her move.[162] The visitors were impressed enough to agree to her membership, but it was a first hint of the storms ahead.

Angelina was happy at first to be among people who professed to share many of her values. But Philadelphian Quakers were no longer in the forefront of the anti-slavery movement. This was partly because new abolitionist leaders were emerging. These adopted an increasingly belligerent tone which was making Friends uncomfortable, reinforcing the prejudices of those who had always felt that this cause was one which Quakers should approve but not take part in. The tradition of Anthony Benezet and John Woolman was not completely dead, as the work of Lucretia Mott proves; but it was mostly maintained with an excessive caution. Later both Joseph John Gurney and Elias Hicks, the main spokesmen on each side of the impending Quaker split, would publish pamphlets recalling American Friends to their witness against slavery,[163] but many American Friends were hostile to any Quaker action which might seem to align the Society with the more radical voices. They disciplined or even disowned Friends who stepped out of line. When Nina had asked an elderly Friend what Quakers thought about slavery, he told her that such questions were very properly reserved for the Meeting for Sufferings; individuals should not concern themselves with them.

The American Anti-Slavery Society was formed in Philadelphia in 1833. It was strongly opposed not only to slavery but also to racism, professedly inviting Negroes into the movement as equals and not as objects of benevolence. Initially the sisters shared their meeting's distrust of it. In Philadelphia Quakers, specially Quaker women, were not supposed to involve themselves in politics or join movements organised by non-Friends. (In

more northern states many Friends were supporters, as the sisters found when they went to the Yearly Meeting in Rhode Island.)

Angelina decided instead to study at Catherine Beecher's Female Seminary in Connecticut to become a teacher, but her meeting refused permission to go. Not long afterwards the Quaker she hoped to marry died of cholera, and his parents, who disapproved of the relationship, told her not to come to the funeral. "I must be kindly, affectionate, tender-hearted, forgiving, while my sad heart is a stranger to good," she wrote.[164] They were cheered to learn their brother Thomas was changing his views on abolition; he asked his sisters to buy him all the books they could find on the subject. But before they could deliver them, he too died. As they mourned him, a Friend whose offers of marriage Sarah had twice refused ended their friendship.

Sarah was now forty three, Nina thirty. Gerda Lerner writes in her biography:

> Through Thomas' death their last contact with the wider social concerns seemed cut off. Their religion sustained them in resignation and grief, but it seemed now that their search for a purpose had ended in failure. They had come north and found freedom from slavery, but no freedom for themselves. Their feelings were dead, their intellects stifled. It was a familiar story and it should have ended here. They had reached the limit of freedom their age permitted to women… by the standard of the day their lives were over.[165]

But instead this was a turning point which led to liberation for both of them. For years they had felt increasingly constrained by Quaker expectations; now there came a sense that they had nothing to lose. Early in 1835, Sarah admitted in her diary to a change of feeling: "Now everything looks and feels different…the servitude I have been in for years is no longer felt."[166] She cultivated her friendship with Grace and Sarah Douglass, the black attenders at their meeting. A year later she rose to speak during worship, but one of the elders interrupted her prayer and ordered her to sit down. It had an effect he had surely not intended. "I never felt more peaceful, and the conviction then arose that my bonds were broken. The act on the part of this Elder was entirely unprecedented and unsanctioned by our Discipline, but his power is undisputed. I cannot give thee any idea of the spiritual bondage I have been in… but that has passed."[167]

The sisters now began reading the abolitionist papers *The Emancipator* and *The Liberator,* and found (to their surprise) no basis for the Quaker disapproval of abolitionism. At the same time public feelings were rising; riots in Philadelphia killed a negro, injured many more, and destroyed forty-five of their homes. Angelina started attending public anti-slavery meetings. The more cautious Sarah was alarmed because it was not a safe time for a woman to become involved, but it was always impossible to hold Angelina back. She crystallised her ideas into a private letter to the leading abolitionist Thomas Lloyd Garrison, praising the stand he was taking in *The Liberator*; "The ground upon which you stand is holy ground: never—never surrender it. If you surrender it, the hope of the slave is extinguished."[168] She referred to the attacks and expressed her own willingness to face them:

> O! how earnestly have I desired, not that we may escape suffering, but that we may be willing to endure unto the end. If we call upon the slaveholder to suffer the loss of what he calls property, then let us show him we make this demand from a deep sense of duty, by being ourselves willing to suffer the loss of character, property—yea, and life itself, in what we believe to be the cause of bleeding humanity.

This was not mere rhetoric; the Quaker poet John Greenleaf Whittier had been stoned in Massachusetts, and a schoolteacher called Prudence Crandall, another forgotten Quaker heroine, was abused, attacked and put in jail for opening a school for coloured girls in Connecticut. Lloyd Garrison published Nina's letter in his magazine without her permission, writing "We cannot, we dare not suppress it, nor the name of her who indited it." Members of her Meeting were outraged and told her to retract it. She noted in her diary that the episode "seemed like bringing disgrace on my family, not myself alone… I cannot describe the anguish of my soul. Nevertheless I could not blame the publication of the letter, nor would I have recalled it if I could."[169]

She went on to write a unique and beautiful pamphlet, Appeal to the Christian Women of the Southern States.[170] She starts by saying "…It is true, I am going to tell you unwelcome truths, but I mean to speak those truths in love, and remember Solomon says, 'Faithful are the wounds of a friend'. I do not believe the time has yet come when Christian women 'will not endure sound doctrine' even on the subject of slavery, if it is spoken to them in tenderness and love, therefore I now address you." And she writes of their special power as women: "Let the Christian women there arise, as the Christian women of Great Britain did [a reference to the campaign against the slave trade], in the majesty of moral power… entreating their husbands, fathers, brothers and sons to abolish the institution of slavery; no longer to subject woman to the scourge and the chain, to mental darkness and moral degradation; no longer to tear husbands from their wives and women from their parents… no longer to barter the image of God in human shambles for corruptible things such as gold and silver."

The pamphlet was publicly burned in her home town and the mayor told her mother she would never be allowed to set foot there again. She was tempted to challenge this, standing by her rights as an American citizen, but decided against in case her family was harmed. But she corresponded with her mother about the family slaves, offering advice and money to obtain better care for them, and hopefully freedom. Mrs Grimké began to feel a change of heart—she wondered if it was possible that God had given her Nina and Sarah, to instruct her and not to trouble her? Nina was deeply sympathetic to the plight of the African Americans. She was particularly concerned for the plight of the slaves owned by her own family, offering her mother advice and money to help and free them. But she had an equal concern for the spiritual welfare of slave-owners, and constantly tried to convince them that the institution was a danger to their own souls.

Angelina's pamphlet was published by the American Anti-slavery Society, and she was invited to come and speak to women in New York. She applied to her meeting for a Certificate to travel in public ministry. This was refused, and even Sarah tried to dissuade her, fearing the inevitable criticism, gossip and possible violence. But when Angelina decided she must go, Sarah travelled with her to protect her. They arrived in 1836 in time for the American Anti-Slavery Society's Convention, at which forty-two agents were being trained to advocate the cause. All of them except the two sisters were men. The course of lectures and development was led by Theodore Weld, an abolitionist with the rare advantage of having lived in a black community and knowing negroes well. He and Nina admired each other at once. "At first sight," she confided later, "there was nothing remarkable to me in his appearance, and I wondered if he was really as great as I had heard. But as soon as his countenance became animated by speaking, I found it was one which portrayed the noblest qualities of heart and head, beaming with intelligence, benevolence and frankness."[171]

The sisters were soon asked to give women's "parlour talks", but the demand to hear them

was very great, and a Presbyterian minister offered his church. Reports appeared in the papers, some viciously attacking them, but still people flocked to hear them. Sarah wrote to her African-American friend Sarah Douglass after they had spoken in a black people's church, "My feelings were so overcome at this meeting that I sat down and wept. I feel as if I had taken my stand by the side of the colored American, willing to share with him in the odium of his darker skin."[172]

Returning to Philadelphia, the sisters renewed their friendship with Sarah and her mother, and decided to sit at meeting in the benches used by the "coloured" attenders. They were confronted by the elders of their meeting, and told that they had offended against Quaker principles by behaving immodestly, involving themselves in politics, and addressing public meetings—worst of all, sometimes in other churches. The elders suggested that they should resign their memberships to avoid being disowned. They refused, saying that they held so strongly to the principles they had found in Quakerism that they could not voluntarily leave it. The threat of disownment was not carried out. Sarah noted wryly: "Friends were aware they would be in an awkward position for disowning us for an activity in which they themselves had been engaged and which was interwoven with their principles."[173]

There were several reasons why the anti-slavery movement in New York and New England were so happy to welcome the sisters. Female Anti-slavery Societies were being formed which wanted women as speakers. Angelina and Sarah were among the few available. They carried a special authority too because of their childhood experiences and self-exile from the American South. They were powerful and persuasive orators, Nina concentrating on practical politics and Sarah exploring the moral and theological issues. Nina was even invited to speak to the Massachusetts State Legislature, the first woman ever to address a law-making body in the United States. One of her main points was that Northerners were complicit in slavery because they had commercial dealings with the Southern slave-owners and bought slave-made products.

Theodore Weld

At last they were among people who shared their ideas and recognised their calling. Theodore Weld introduced them to new information and current debates; he passionately supported them, even though he did not entirely approve of their public appearances, possibly fearing for their reputation and safety. They were not immune to attack. Besides the regular threat of racist violence, they faced a deep-rooted objection to women's public speaking which cited I Timothy 2:12 ("I suffer not a woman to teach."). Sarah resisted strongly:

> We are told, "the power of woman is in her dependence, flowing from a consciousness of that weakness which God has given her for her protection." If physical weakness is alluded to, I cheerfully concede the superiority; if brute force is what my brethren are claiming, I am willing to let them have all the honor they desire; but if they mean to intimate, that mental or moral weakness belongs to woman, more than to men, I utterly disclaim the charge. Our powers of mind have been crushed, as far as man could do it, our sense of morality has been impaired by his interpretation of our duties; but no where does God say that he made any distinction between us, as moral and intelligent beings.[174]

They were the targets of nasty gibes too. "Why are all the old hens abolitionists?" asked the Boston Morning Post; "Because not being able to obtain husbands they think they may stand some chance for a negro, if they can only make amalgamation fashionable."[175] The sisters left Philadelphia to live in New Jersey where Nina married Theodore Weld in 1838. The wedding was famous (or notorious) for the number of people of colour who were among the guests. After the wedding the sisters withdrew from the limelight. Sarah made her home with the wedded couple.

The records are not so clear, but this withdrawal must surely have brought another painful reappraisal. The sisters had been recognised as powerful leaders and speakers, with a unique witness to the horrors which the campaign was trying to oppose. There was also the spice of danger, which Nina at least enjoyed. Her public appearances had come to a dramatic climax. During the opening week of Pennsylvania Hall (built by the Anti-slavery Society in 1838), she gave a powerful speech while an angry crown outside was storming the building. She said:

> As a Southerner I feel that it is my duty to stand up here to-night and bear testimony against slavery. I have seen it—I have seen it. I know it has horrors that can never be described. I was brought up under its wing: I witnessed for many years its demoralizing influences, and its destructiveness to human happiness. It is admitted by some that the slave is not happy under the worst forms of slavery. But I have never seen a happy slave, I have seen him dance in his chains, it is true; but he was not happy. There is a wide difference between happiness and mirth. Man cannot enjoy the former while his manhood is destroyed, and that part of the being which is necessary to the making, and to the enjoyment of happiness, is completely blotted out. The slaves, however, may be, and sometimes are, mirthful. When hope is extinguished, they say, "let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die".

At that point the noise outside increased and stones hit the windows. She kept her presence of mind, saying:

> What would the breaking of every window be? What would the levelling of this Hall be? Any evidence that we are wrong, or that slavery is a good and wholesome institution? What if the mob should now burst in upon us, break up our meeting and commit violence upon our persons—would this be anything compared with what the slaves endure? …I thank the Lord that there is yet life left enough [in those outside] to feel the truth, even though it rages at it—that conscience is not so completely seared as to be unmoved by the truth of the living God.[176]

Despite the turmoil, she spoke for a full hour. Then the audience of black and white people left the gathering arm in arm for mutual protection, while the crowd outside mocked and

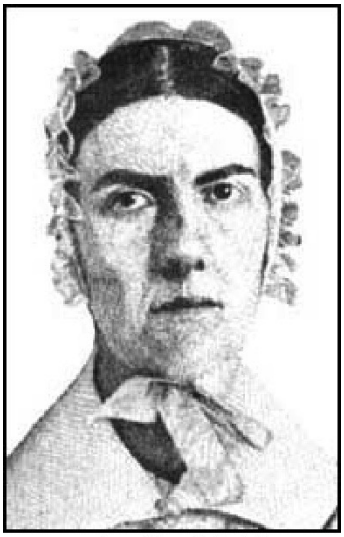
stoned them.

Now they were obliged to take a humbler role, supporting the men rather than standing shoulder to shoulder with them. Nina seems to have accepted this, possibly because had some health problems, though she produced two children, and later opened a school with her husband. She continued in writing to condemn the slave-owners and those Northerners who benefited by trading with them. But she also identified and passionately opposed the colour prejudice which she observed within the Ladies' Anti-slavery Society. She wrote to a close friend: "It is utterly inefficient and must continue so until our sisters here are willing to give up sinful prejudice. It is a canker worm among them & paralyses every effort. They are doing literaly nothing as a S[ociet]y for the colored people… No colored Sister has ever been in the board, & they have hardly any colored members even and will not admit any such in the working Society. What we said to them was from a sense of duty in love & tears but it was hard work… But some were reached, I do believe…"[177]

Sarah was more conscious of the male pressures on her to take a "womanly" role. More introverted than her sister, she also turned to writing. She now concentrated on the oppression of women, despite Theodore's advice, "Don't push your women's rights until human rights have gone ahead." She was one of the first feminist writers in the United States, and her Letters on the Equality of the Sexes[178] appeared ten years before the work of other Quakers like Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. Because women's oppression was usually "justified" by scripture, she boldly met the religious experts on their own ground.

> Woman has been placed by John Quincy Adams, side by side with the slave… I thank him for ranking us with the oppressed; for I shall not find it difficult to show, that in all ages and countries, not even excepting enlightened republican America, woman has more or less been made a means to promote the welfare of man, without due regard to her own happiness, and the glory of God as the end of her creation…
>
> The cupidity of man soon led him to regard woman as property, and hence we find them sold to those, who wished to marry them, as far as appears, without any regard to those sacred rights which belong to woman, as well as to man in the choice of a companion. That women were a profitable kind of property, we may gather from the description of a virtuous woman in the last chapter of Proverbs (Proverbs 31:10-31).[179]

Sarah defined the difference between sex ("man and woman") and gender ("male and female") more clearly than any other writer I know before the twentieth century: "Intellect is not sexed… strength of mind is not sexed; and… our views about the duties of men and the duties of women, the sphere of man and the sphere of women, are mere arbitrary opinions, differing in different ages and countries, and dependent solely on the will and judgement of erring mortals."[180]

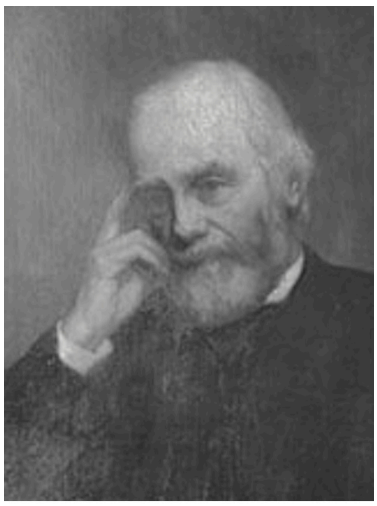


Angelina Grimké

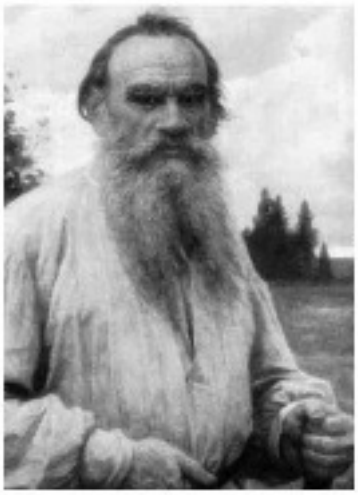
Sarah Grimké

During the Civil War, both sisters wrote and lectured in support of Abraham Lincoln. They later continued to campaign for civil rights and woman's suffrage. Sarah died on 23rd December, 1873, and Nina on 26th October, 1879.

We can be proud that these two noble women found enough sympathy with Quakers to find a place among us. They refused to renounce their faith in the face of disillusion and rejection by some Friends. To stand beside the oppressed demands perception and courage, which they had in abundance. They overcame the three obstacles of being women, southerners, and passionate campaigners; and in doing so they witnessed magnificently to our testimony to equality. But can we be sure that we would have stood with them, and not with those Friends who stood for formalism, caution and quietism, the Friends who continually tried to stop them following their concern?



John Bellows



Lev Tolstoy

Tolstoy's last novel

In October 1892 London Yearly Meeting sent John Bellows and Joseph Neave on a six months' journey to Russia to enquire about sects suffering persecution from the Orthodox regime. Passing through Moscow on their way to the Caucasus, they visited Leo Tolstoy with their interpreter, whose name was Fast.

Tolstoy got into an argument with Fast whose beliefs were strongly scriptural; and he was astonished and delighted to hear about the Quaker belief in "the Universal and Saving Light". He said to Fast, "God teaches us all, though we do not all see things from the same stand-point. You who stand there see that table and say 'It is long'; and I who view it from here say, 'No, it is broad'. But if I strive to obey God and to follow him with the light I now have, do you believe if I die now that He will save my soul?" John Bellows wrote afterwards, "I never looked on anything more touching. The big tears filled his eyes as he turned his sorrow-stricken face full upon Fast. Fast's lips quivered as he answered, 'Yes—I do believe He will!' It was a memorable moment for each of us."[181]

John Bellows saw Tolstoy again on their journey home, and felt "bound up in him more than I can express. There are some things in which we see eye to eye; and others that I know to a certainty he is mistaken in, and which I would do much to open his eyes to."[182] Later he wrote to a friend: "In Russia, a body of people quite unconnected with Friends have lately refused to bear arms; but along with the belief that it is wrong to kill one another, they have adopted Count Tolstoy's teaching that all government is abhorrent to the spirit of Christianity. [These were the "Spirit-wrestlers" or Dukhobors, one of the sects he had visited in the Caucasus.] I had some little talk, when at Moscow, with Count T on this point; but could find no common basis to argue from. He has an idea that civilization, which admits of so many existing evils, is itself the cause of evil, and so would do away with it. Of course he is inconsistent; just as a man would necessarily be who tried to do away with gravitation."[183]

But his love for Tolstoy overcame differences of viewpoint and belief. He made a second visit to St Petersburg in December 1899 to petition the Tzar (unsuccessfully) to allow one hundred and ten leading Dukhobors who had been exiled to Siberia to join the emigration of their fellows to Canada. He revisited Tolstoy, and reported to a friend: "I have been unable to approve some of Tolstoy's views, or things he has written; and yet in sitting down by his side I felt the same deep and precious unity of spirit with him which I experienced at our

last visit. Grasping both my hands, he said with emotion, 'I have great love for you', and he afterwards adverted to that broadness of mind which enables us to recognize the love of the truth in those who may not be of the same mould of thought as ourselves."[184]

Tolstoy and the Quakers shared a deep interest in the Dukhobors, who had a tradition that one of their founders at the beginning of the eighteenth century was a Prussian army officer who had turned Quaker (though John Bellows was sceptical of this). British Friends had first heard of them through the British and Foreign Bible Society, and two well-known Friends, William Allen and Stephen Grellet, had visited them on two occasions in 1819.[185] They also met Tsar Alexander I, who received them privately, "like old friends" and knelt in silent worship with them.[186] It is possible that this royal acceptance helped smooth the path for the Quaker interventions long afterwards on behalf of the Russian famine of 1891-3 and the persecution of the Dukhobors.

Friends were always interested to hear of religious groups in other places (such as the prophètes or trembleurs around Congénies in France in the 1780s)[187] whose beliefs, testimonies or practices resembled those of Friends; it seemed to show that Quakers were witnessing to universal truths which had also been revealed to others. This persecuted Russian sect renounced oaths, military service and an organised priesthood. But the Dukhobors did not accept the authority of the scriptures nor the divinity of Christ; and like the prophètes, their worship had what we would call charismatic features which did not sit well with the British Quakerism of the time. Indeed Stephen Grellet was very disturbed by his stay with them.

The Dukhobors never forgot the interest the Quakers had shown in them, though there was little further contact until Tolstoy wrote to The Times in London on 23 October 1895 on "The Persecution of Christians in Russia". He told how their leaders had been imprisoned without trial and exiled to Siberia. They responded by reviving their original testimonies, some of which had lapsed; they decided to hold their property in common, renounce the use of tobacco, alcohol and meat, and make bonfires of all the weapons they possessed. In reprisal the local governor eventually sent in the Cossacks to destroy their settlements with the utmost cruelty, and Tolstoy heard of it.

At first London Yearly Meeting declined to help, regretting that the Dukhobors had been led into "an unwise rejection of lawfully constituted authority which we cannot approve or support." John Bellows sent them some money privately; two other British Friends, with one from Ireland, journeyed to Moscow in 1896 to plead with Tsar Nicholas II, whose wife (a granddaughter of Queen Victoria) they had met before. The Tsar was cautiously helpful; he sent a Commission to enquire into their conduct and the reprisals, and eventually agreed that the entire community of perhaps twelve thousand people could emigrate. In Friends and Relief, Ormerod Greenwood tells the story of how the Quakers became involved in an ill-advised emigration plan for the first eleven hundred to go to Cyprus. The British Colonial Secretary, alarmed at the size of the migration, asked Friends to guarantee the estimated costs of £22,000, later reduced to £16,500 which John Bellows managed to raise miraculously in a few days. But a large number of Dukhobors remained in the Caucasus, and Tolstoy decided to take responsibility for sending them to Canada, where many Russian Mennonites had settled successfully. The pioneer group in Cyprus could not adapt to life there and were decimated by illness. So they too were finally sent to Canada; but their tireless friend, advisor and organiser, the Quaker representative Wilson Sturge, caught their sickness and died on his way home.[188]

Tolstoy's son Sergei came to London to tell the Quaker Dukhobor Committee of the new plan. They responded with a further £2,500, but much more was needed. Tolstoy thought of

an unfinished story which had caused him difficulty for years, and which he abandoned when he vowed that he would write no more novels. To raise the money needed, he finished it at whirlwind speed and Sergei brought the manuscript to London for translation, publication and serialization.

It was well known that Tolstoy had renounced fiction, so the news that he had written a new novel was a literary sensation. But the Russian censor would not allow anything he now wrote to be published there, so it was published by a group of Tolstoyan émigrés in Surrey. The Quaker Committee was not directly involved in this, though the book was printed by the Quaker firm of Headley Bros, the current printers of The Friend. Cases of Cyrillic type were found and an aged compositor who could set it. In 1899 the book Resurrection appeared in Russian, and the English translation followed. Tolstoy made a gift of £150 to the Quaker Dukhobor Fund out of the first royalties. Then the blow fell. The English translation was immediately banned by Smith's and Mudie's circulating libraries for its immoral content, a decision which contributed vastly to its sales! Meeting for Sufferings resounded with shame and outrage that Friends had been associated with it. John Bellows, who was clerk of the Quaker Dukhobor Committee, paid back out of his own pocket the money which Tolstoy had given them (and the Committee then upstaged Bellows by deciding to reimburse him).

What had caused the fuss? Resurrection begins when a nobleman, Prince Dmitri Nekhlyudov, serves on the jury of a murder case. He recognises one of the defendants, a prostitute called Katerina Maslova as the girl Katusha whom he had seduced when she was a servant on his aunt's estate. The discovery creates a crisis in his life. He breaks off his engagement, makes arrangements to give the ownership of his large estates to the peasants who work on them, accompanies Katerina to Siberia, and offers to marry her. With insight and humour Tolstoy describes her reactions: total misunderstanding at first, and then anger that he should try to use her to deal with his own guilt. Finally she comes to respect and understand him, and—in a way—to love him. But she sensibly decides to marry a fellow-convict. This precipitates a second crisis for Nekhlyudov, which brings him (perhaps) to the threshold of wisdom.

Critical opinion is still divided on the merits of Resurrection. It shows many signs that it was written in a hurry, with little revision. The drama of Katerina's trial, the verdict, and Nekhlyudov's efforts to get it rescinded, is over by the end of Part One. Tension drops away as the book follows his attempts to reorganise his inherited lands (with dubious success) and the journey which he and Katerina make together to the penal colony in Siberia. There are many vignettes describing the prisoners who travel with them, and the cruelty of the escorting guards. Tolstoy uses the story to expose and criticise his society and propagate his own views far more explicitly than in his other great novels and short stories. For some readers this spoils the book but not for me, since the point is to show that Nekhlyudov can only achieve redemption by seeing the truth of how things are and rejecting the physical and structural violence implicit in them.

He goes to see Katerina after the faulty verdict of Guilty, to tell her he will get an advocate to lodge an appeal, and to offer to marry her. She shocks him by throwing him seductive glances and asking for money.

> "This woman is dead," Nekhlyudov thought, looking at the once sweet face, now defiled and puffy, and lit by an evil glitter in the black squinting eyes, which were now glancing at the

> hand in which he held the [bank]note, now following the [prison] inspector's movements; and for a moment he hesitated…
>
> "You can do nothing with this woman," said the voice [of the tempter]; " you will only tie a stone round your neck which will drown you and prevent you from being useful to others. Is it not better to give her all the money you have here, say goodbye, and finish with her for ever?" whispered the voice.
>
> And yet he felt that now, at this very moment, something most important was taking place in his soul—that his inner life was, as it were, wavering in the balance, so that the slightest effort would sink it to one side or the other.

At their next meeting he pours out his guilty feelings and makes his offer of marriage. She is furious. "You want to save yourself through me… You've got pleasure out of me in this life, and want to save yourself through me in the world to come. You are disgusting to me—your spectacles and the whole of your fat dirty mug. Go, go!" And Tolstoy tells us that this showed how she was waking "from the trance in which she had been living."[189] This bitter exchange is the start of the spiritual journeys which lead each of them to a kind of resurrection, a redemption gained by means of a loving forgiveness.

Nekhlyudov has to travel three separate paths. His efforts to free Katerina take him through the ranks of prison officials, civil servants, lawyers and influential aristocrats, some of whom had been his friends. He discovers how rotten, unfair and arbitrary the whole system is. Then comes his visit to the country estates on which his income depends; here he realises for the first time the depths of misery which his lifestyle entails for the peasants and how hard it will be to change their situation—a lesson Tolstoy himself had learnt when he gave away his lands. And his third education comes from the criminals and political prisoners with whom he goes to Siberia. As he tries to mitigate their unjust suffering, for the first time he forgets himself and acts out of pure concern for others. Listening to the visionaries among the convicts he learns that there is a hope of resurrection for his country too, if only it can listen to their voices instead of persecuting them. Katerina too is brought back to hope and innocence as she learns to understand and love her fellow prisoners; and through this change she becomes reconciled to Nekhlyudov. As Tolstoy describes these processes I feel that he is also exploring his own convictions and the causes he espouses, and trying to move beyond them into something new.

"Everything is emptiness and everything is compassion" wrote Thomas Merton towards the end of his life.[190] In Resurrection's final chapter, Nekhlyudov realises that he has stripped himself of all that once seemed important. He has left behind his familiar society, his friends, his fiancée, his lands. "His business with Katusha was at an end. He was not wanted, and this made him sad and ashamed. His other business was not only unfinished but troubled him more than ever, and demanded his activity"—namely the issues which he has promised to take up for various prisoners. Then he starts reading part of Matthew's Gospel.

> As happens to many and many a man who reads the Gospels, he understood for the first time the full meaning of words read often before but passed by unnoticed. He drank in all these necessary, important and joyful revelations as a sponge soaks up water. And all he read seemed quite familiar, and seemed to bring to consciousness and confirm what he had long known but had never fully realised and never quite believed. Now he realised and believed it.[191]

Rosemary Edmonds[192] points out that this is not the first time in his life that he has had a change of heart. She expresses a doubt as to whether the "perfectly new life" which "dawned that night" has a better chance of persisting then the others. Tolstoy gives her

view some support with his final sentence: "How this new period of his life will end, time alone will prove."

But I remember Rommel Roberts, the Quaker peace worker in Cape Town during the apartheid years, telling me about his imprisonment. He said that it challenged him to make a choice about how to survive: "I could try to rely on the rightness of my political convictions, my past actions, my life's experiences, the moral support of my fellow-workers. Or I could depend on God and his light in me—but if I chose that, I must choose that alone and let all the rest go. And it was that choice which brought me through intact." This is what Nekhlyudov chooses too, and it is the same choice which we saw John Woolman make.

To understand the Quaker reaction to Resurrection, we need to realize that very few if any of them would have read it. "Weighty" Friends did not read novels.[193] In 1764 Yearly Meeting added the following advice to their book of Christian Doctrine, Practice and Discipline, where it remained up to the 1871 edition:

> This meeting being sorrowfully affected under a consideration of the hurtful tendency of reading plays, romances, novels and other pernicious books, earnestly recommends to every member of our Society to discourage and suppress the same, and particularly to acquaint all booksellers under our name with the painful anxiety occasioned to this meeting by a report of some instances of selling or lending such books, entreating them to avoid such a practice.

The issues which underpinned this attitude are still relevant today, though our responses are very different from theirs. Roy Stephenson has pointed out the close connection they made between the testimony to truth and that to simplicity:[194]

> One called people by their names without using titles or other "fancy" language because it was truthful—this is who one is. Simplicity of garb was about using clothing only for its basic purposes—to preserve modesty and give an appropriate degree of warmth. This was both truthful and simple—to indulge in fashion was to make oneself attractive by distracting the eye and heart from a person's true nature… Fashionable media such as novels, opera and drama would have been condemned by Friends in the eighteenth century because they were not simple, not truthful, distracting from the true purposes of life, and a waste of resources.

They would have argued that we can only devote a certain amount of time to reading, and most of us do not give as much attention as we should to the claims of the Bible and books of religious inspiration (in which many of them included poetry such as Wordsworth's). Even if there were no harm in fiction, we should surely not give it time at the expense of books which were so much more beneficial. They would not have understood the modern view that it refreshes the spirit to relax and do something unserious! But rather than let myself feel superior to them, it might be salutary for me to consider the ways that I use books, magazines, radio and television and ask myself how much of it is a worthwhile use of time.

The question of "pernicious books" is still with us, with fierce discussion about the effects on our minds of violent films, pornography and prurient gossip about people in the public eye. I doubt if many Friends believe that censorship is intrinsically wrong—our problem is deciding where to draw the line. Is it the subject matter of a book which corrupts, or the way it is treated? This was the core of the public debate in 1960 when Penguin Books were indicted for publishing Lady Chatterley's Lover. By excluding all plays and novels—and by implication films—our predecessors tried to draw that line very clearly, even at the cost of

excluding great literature. That is where we find it hardest to understand their viewpoint: for us, Elizabeth Gaskell's attempts to enter the mind of a murderer in Mary Barton and a "fallen woman" in Ruth, enlarge our understanding and compassion; for nineteenth-century Friends, such insights into evil tended to corrupt the reader. Following a production of Romeo and Juliet at a Quaker school in 1936, a letter appeared in The Friend:[195]

> What do we find in Romeo and Juliet? …Senseless quarrels, murder, uncontrolled juvenile passion, deceit, suicide, and a spice of the vulgarity of the coarse Elizabethan age. Are these the things on which our children's lives should be moulded? …I know I am taking the unpopular side, but I would entreat parents and teachers to give the young minds something more wholesome to dwell on than the utterly unreal and disgusting story of Romeo and Juliet.

This was an outdated view among Friends at the time, but it echoes Tolstoy's own position after rereading the whole of Shakespeare when he was seventy-five:

> The unquestioned glory of a great genius which Shakespeare enjoys and which compels writers of our time to imitate him and readers and spectators to discover in him non-existent merits—thereby distorting their aesthetic and ethical understanding—is a great evil, as is every untruth.[196]

And behind this lies something deeper, which is best explained by considering earlier Friends' attitudes to worship, which is an attempt to commune with God. They came to feel that the customary means of worship, such as words, art and music, can become ends in themselves which actually impede the worshippers in their search. When George Fox wrote: "I was to bring [people] off from all the world's fellowships and prayings and singings, which stood in forms without power… that they might pray in the Holy Ghost and sing in the Spirit and with the grace that comes by Jesus; making melody in their hearts to the Lord…"[197] he was not expressing a hatred of music. He knew nothing of the inspiration we may get from Bach, Mozart or Beethoven; the music he knew was jigs, drinking songs, street ballads and hymns. But he still saw that music reaches towards the sublime, but too often fails to express it. The idea that all fictive art is intrinsically unsound as a vehicle for truth (because what it shows is illusory) goes back to Plato, who regretfully showed the poets the door in his Republic.[198]

The trouble with this view, as we can see more easily than them, is that it became a set of rules which stifled the imagination instead of attempting to reach beyond all partial truths to a higher reality. This is a recurring danger in all religion. After comparing the kingdom of God to yeast working silently in the dough, Jesus warned his disciples, "Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees!"[199] Paul wrote, "The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life!"[200] There was undoubtedly a strong puritan flavour in the rules of nineteenth-century Friends, against which Elizabeth Fry remonstrated:

> My observation of human nature and the different things that affect it frequently leads me to regret that we as a Society so wholly give up delighting the ear by sound. Surely He who formed the ear and the heart would not have given these tastes and powers without some purpose for them.[201]

The puritan view should not be mocked. At its best its aims were noble, but sadly their expression was often stifling and sometimes cruel. Tolstoy came to reject the art of fiction for the same reasons as the Quakers gave. But he had experienced a tragic and terrible personal struggle which he documented in A Confession:

> "Art, poetry?"...Under the influence of success and the praise of men, I had long assured myself that this was a thing one could do though death was drawing near—death which destroys all things, including my work and its remembrance; but soon I saw that that too was

> a fraud. It was plain to me that art is an adornment of life, an allurement to life. But life had lost its attraction for me, so how could I attract others? As long as I was not living my own life but was borne on the waves of some other life—as long as I believed that life had a meaning, though one I could not express—the reflection of life in poetry and art of all kinds afforded me pleasure: it was pleasant to look at life in the mirror of art. But when I began to seek the meaning of life and felt the necessity of living my own life, that mirror became for me unnecessary, superfluous, ridiculous, or painful. I could no longer soothe myself with what I now saw in the mirror, namely, that my position was stupid and desperate.[202]

So the Friends of 1899, including men as broadminded and thoughtful as Thomas Hodgkin, had been conditioned to be suspicious of fiction;[203] most of them readily accepted the view that Resurrection was an immoral book. This was sad because for us the message of Resurrection chimes so well with the early Quaker message they were recovering after the Manchester Conference of 1895: Isaac Penington's account of the Seed at work in our hearts, James Nayler's non-resistance to evil, George Fox's challenges to institutional power, William Penn's interest in new forms of government and John Woolman's critique of the property system. But they were not alone in their view; Tolstoy's wife Sofia, who prepared the text for publication, found it disgusting and salacious. (She was also furious that he had given away the royalties to the Dukhobors while she was struggling with difficult household finances). Probably John Bellows was the only Dukhobor Committee member who read any of it, and not till after the scandal broke; moreover he read only the chapters complained of—not the best way to judge a book.

The outrage was over the brothel scene where the murder occurs, and even more over the haunting pages where the prince first loves and later assaults the teenage Katusha. (Tolstoy drew on his own youthful memories of seducing a servant girl, though this was not known at the time.) The moralists ignored the context in which Tolstoy carefully and movingly sets it. The night before the seduction, Nekhlyudov and Katusha attend the all-night Easter service and experience a spiritual intimacy as they exchange the traditional kisses:[204]

> In the love between a man and a woman there always comes a moment when this love has reached its zenith—a moment when it is unconscious, unreasoning and with nothing sensual about it. Such a moment had come for Nekhlyudov on that Easter night… Her whole being [was] stamped with those two marked characteristics, purity and chaste love—love not only for him (he knew that) but for everybody and everything, not for the good alone but for all that is in the world, even for that beggar whom she had kissed.
>
> He knew she had that love in her, because that night and morning he was conscious of it in himself, and conscious that in this love he became one with her.

The next day, after reflecting on what his brother-officers would expect of him given such an opportunity, he kisses her again, on the neck this time, "a dreadful kiss… as if he had irreparably broken something of priceless value." That evening he enters a room where she is making the bed:

> She turned round and smiled, not a happy, joyful smile as before, but in a frightened, piteous way. The smile seemed to tell him that what he was doing was wrong. He stopped for a moment. There was still the possibility of a struggle. Though feebly, the voice of his real love for her was still speaking of her, her feelings, her life. Another voice was saying, "Take care! Don't let the opportunity for your own happiness, your own enjoyment, slip by!" And this second voice completely stifled the first. He went up to her determinedly, and a terrible,

ungovernable animal passion took possession of him.

After the assault he asks himself, "Is it a great joy or a great misfortune that has befallen me?" But he concludes, "It happens to everyone—everyone does it" and goes to sleep. Tolstoy's achievement is to reveal to him and us the consequences of that night with devastating thoroughness. A corrupting book?

This tale raises one more question for us. Were the respectable and usually wealthy Quakers on Meeting for Sufferings, with their considerable public influence, aware of Resurrection's fierce and sometimes tendentious attack on the institutions of society—the organised church, the legal system, politics, wealth and class? The beautiful evocation of the village Easter ritual is in sharp contrast with a later service in the prison church,[205] which the author describes as it might appear to a visitor from another world (like Natasha's famous visit to the opera in War and Peace).[206] The passage resulted in his excommunication by the Russian Orthodox Church. By their reaction British Friends put themselves firmly among those whom Tolstoy attacks for their blindness to the hidden workings of society. John Bellows compared Tolstoy's critique of civilisation to a man attempting to deny the law of gravity. Were Quakers frightened for their own security? And was our Yearly Meeting's failure, a few years ago, to unite in a testimony against punishment based on similar fears of creating chaos?

John Bellows wrote to Tolstoy to complain about the "pernicious influence of the book". The proud and difficult old man responded with remarkable charm and humility. "Dear Friend…" he wrote, "You may be right, but not for everyone who will read the book. It may have a bad influence on people who do not read the whole book and do not take in the sense of it. But it can also—as was intended—have quite the opposite influence… And I can say that when I wrote the book I abhorred the lust with all my heart, and one of the chief aims of the book was to express that abhorrence. If I failed in it I am very sorry; and I plead guilty if I was so inconsiderate in the scene of which you write that I could produce such a bad impression on your mind."[207]

Schooling and the Quaker Peace Testimony

Quaker interest in education goes back to our origins, and continues to the present day. George Fox set up one school, encouraged the founding of several more, and left some land to the city of Philadelphia "to build… a schoolhouse… and enclose another part for a garden, and to plant it with all sorts of physical [i.e. medicinal] plants for lads and lasses to learn simples there, and the uses to convert them to: distilled waters, oils, ointments, &c." His interest in science education was very progressive for the time, as was his encouragement of girls' education. He was also part-author of several schoolbooks—or at least lent his name to them.[208]

The British schools we think of as "Quaker Schools" were founded around a hundred years after Fox's death, to maintain a Society whose numbers were dwindling. Their value did not lie in innovation. John Reader, the Head of Great Ayton, wrote in his 1979 Swarthmore Lecture:

> The history of Quaker education is, for the most part, one of cautious adoption of new ideas that have already appeared elsewhere. There are exceptions of course, such as the fact that Quakers broadened the curriculum of some of their schools, particularly in literary and scientific directions in the nineteenth century long before others had done so. But, speaking of the work of the Society, as opposed to that of individual Friends acting largely on their own, it is not noticeable for a philosophy of education that is particularly distinctive… Friends must therefore divest themselves of the flattering notion that, as a body, they have been pioneers in education. This idea has often led them to be too self-satisfied…[209]

George Fox and his friends believed "that of God" in every person in a different sense from us. Today we tend to interpret it as meaning that we are all basically good. They did not; and they felt that children must have the support of rigid external discipline (imposed, of course, by adults) until they had the willpower and experience to resist temptation for themselves. Fox approved of corporal punishment: "Withhold not correction from thy child, for if thou beatest him with the rod he shall not die."[210]

So, although Quakers were among the first people in Britain to formulate the concept of nonviolence and non-resistance to evil, they failed to see how this covered violence to children. Far from the insights of James Nayler, they witnessed to peace only through their opposition to war, slavery and the death penalty. In their schools corporal punishment had an ideological justification, as the historian Campbell Stewart explains.

> If adults had to regulate their lives to the Quaker pattern, how much more severe was the control of children who were susceptible, as Friends thought, to all the wayward gusts of evil. They were placed in a "guarded" community and taught subjection of own-will. One of the results was a record of punishment during the first half-century which is at times astonishing in a body which was responsible for so many humanitarian reforms.[211]

Between 1800 and 1850 thrashing and caning were common (with the honourable exceptions of Bootham and The Mount). It was often done in public.[212] There was also solitary confinement in specially-built cells; there is a horrifying description of the "Light and Airy Rooms" in the official history of Ackworth School, where girls as well as boys could be shut up for several days to do dismal tasks on a diet of gruel.[213] Humiliation in front of all the pupils was another frequent practice. Yet the same Society of Friends commended Elizabeth Fry for saying to a House of Commons committee in 1818, "I think I may say we have full power among [the women prisoners], though we use nothing but kindness. I have never proposed a punishment…"[214]

The dramatic end of physical assault by teachers at Sidcot in 1859 deserves mention. Following growing complaints by the boys about the behaviour of harsh and unsympathetic teachers, every boy in the school agreed to take part in a strike. They barricaded themselves in a room with scraps of food, and the teachers attacked it unsuccessfully. The boys came out after the senior master promised no reprisals, and according to the official history, "Not one of the teachers ever again laid hands upon a scholar."[215] The promise of no reprisals was not kept, but they were mild.

As to equality, in principle the Quaker business method respected the insights of everyone present and looked to the whole meeting to agree the decisions. But this was not applied to children. Up to the late nineteenth century when a few Quaker Schools appointed prefects, nobody proposed that the young people should have any say in the running of the school. Quaker-style decision making was confined to the school Committees, which had great power over the scholastic, social, disciplinary, material, moral and religious life of the school. They were formed of older men usually from the business world, anxious for the well-being of the Society and extremely cautious.[216] For instance the "Country" Committee at Ackworth in 1845 considered the question of children going home for holidays; they somewhat reluctantly decided that a child could be eligible for a holiday after eighteen continuous months at school instead of the previous two-year requirement. (Only fifty-two children out of over three hundred had visited home the previous year.) No woman was appointed to a Quaker school committee until 1878.

The Quaker schools of today, both British and Irish, are very different, not least in their understanding of peace. There are strongly opposed views about the place of privileged schools in a Society which witnesses to equality, but that debate is not the theme of this chapter. Instead I want to show that the true twentieth century Quaker contribution to education has been happening, little noticed, somewhere else.

A new approach to schooling

In his 1979 Swarthmore Lecture Of Schools and Schoolmasters, John Reader looked back over his long experience of Friends' schools as pupil, teacher and head. Recognising that Friends had never developed "a coherent philosophy of education", he asked what (if anything) their contribution ought to be in future. He answered in two words, community and compassion.[217] He relates "community" to the way that the Quaker business method seeks to get a general agreement to each decision; "compassion" is connected to Friends' faith in "that of God" in each person. The two together help to integrate a school's discipline system with the Quaker peace testimony. It is disappointing that he does not refer directly to a long-standing movement, already nearly fifty years old, to put these ideals into practice in schools.

It was in 1935 that called in The Friend for a new approach to the treatment of problem children. This came to the attention of Dr Marjorie Franklin,[218] who had brought together a small group called the Q Camps Committee ("Q" for Query or Quest) with the same objective, though they planned to work with young men of 17 to 23, not children. Writing to David, she described herself: "Although not a Friend I have always been in contact with them. I was for a short time with the Friends War Victims' relief party in France. My brother, Geoffrey Franklin, who died in 1930, was with them throughout the war and had previously been a student at Woodbrooke."

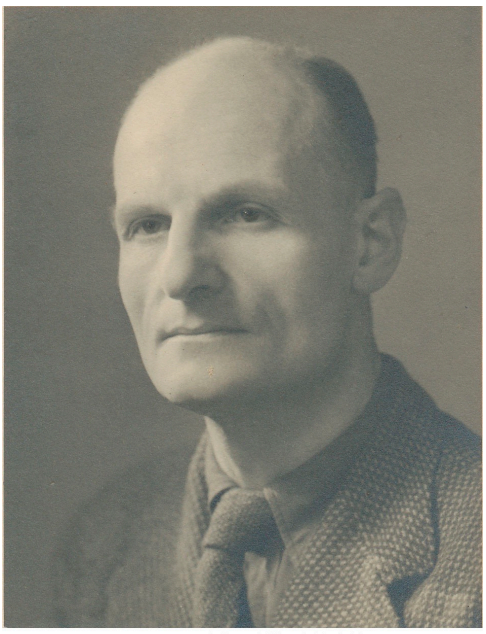
David had originally worked at a Farm Training colony in 1922. He was nineteen, unskilled and scared,

> I began by saying that I would report any boy who broke the rule forbidding the wearing of boots in the dormitory. Fifteen boys were fined the routine twopence from their few coppers pocket money. The pasteboard slips that appeared in their pay envelopes explaining the absence of 2d. I found stuck on my cubicle door. These I collected with care, and duly returned each to its owner. The procedure was to say politely, "Yours, I believe?" and as the victim took the card from my right hand I delivered a vicious blow to the side of his head with my left…[219]

Reacting to this milieu he won a Willard Straight Fellowship to the New York School of Social Work where he trained as a psychiatric social worker (the first Briton to do so), and then worked in The Children's Village in New York State. Returning to Britain he took up the post of warden of the Oxford Settlement in Risca in Wales, one of the Educational Settlements set up by the Friends Coalfield Distress Committee. It was at this point that he joined the Society of Friends.

David later described himself in The Barns Experiment:

> I have most of the commonly recognised disqualifications for dealing with young people, or, for that matter, with any people. I am reserved in manner and not very approachable, and I find it very difficult to make contact with other people, especially with children. I find that in talking to them I am inclined to be either fatuously facetious or ponderously pompous—I can hardly ever talk to them casually and naturally. I am quick-tempered and … I have that worst possible of vices —I am addicted to sarcasm. …I have my good points too, of course—this is not a masochistic orgy. But if you add to this formidable list of failings all the virtues you can possibly think of, have you then the picture of a man ideally suited to working with difficult children? You have not.[220]



David Wills (1946)

Nonetheless in 1936 he accepted an offer from the Q Camps Committee to become Camp Chief at Hawkspur Camp. He served briefly as a Borstal Officer specifically to gain some experience before going there. The Camp served as a tough testing-ground for his ideas, but the onset of war and the lack of official support and recognition brought it to an end in 1940. Wartime brought an increased need for therapeutic education as there were a considerable number of children who were reacting badly to separation (by bereavement or evacuation) from their families. Friends were concerned about the traumatic wartime experiences of such children. They were able to set up institutions and liberate gifted and visionary people,

who were not all Quakers though usually conscientious objectors, to run them. Such schools were not always specifically therapeutic establishments, for example Kenneth Barnes' private school at Wennington. Friends saw this as a way to express their peace testimony and relieve the suffering caused by war. The war united the nation as a society; but spiritual values, independent critical thinking, nonviolent conflict resolution, and preparing young people for a peaceful future were not likely to be nurtured. The Quaker network across the country and the availability of Quaker money helped in this task.

For example, a group of Friends founded an evacuation hostel at Chaigeley Manor in Lancashire, and appointed as warden Edward Seel, who had been educated in Quaker schools, and his wife Margaret. The hostel became a school in 1942 because many of the children proved too disturbed for the village school to cope with them. Friends Relief Service bore the costs until 1944 when it was recognised by the Board of Education as a school for maladjusted children and an independent board with Quaker representatives was set up. About that time it moved to Cheshire, where it still operates. Dunmow Hall School (now Breckenborough School), which was founded in 1935 also owes its survival and much of its philosophy to its work with evacuated children and the support of Yorkshire Quakers, who are still represented on its board.

In 1940 David Wills accepted a post with Peebleshire County Council as Warden of the Barns Evacuation Hostel for disturbed and unbilletable evacuee children. Again the management committee was composed mainly of Quakers who believed in him, and the Friends War Victims Relief Committee took an interest. It was here that David forged his methods and crystallized his philosophy, which later came to be called "planned environmental therapy". This was based on the belief that psychological healing did not have to come through special techniques of talk or play; it could happen in a setting where every part of life was designed to assist the healing process. The foundations were community and active compassion. Planned environmental therapy had four major elements:

1. A regime based on love; this was the most Quakerly component. David quotes I John 4:20, "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" But he comments, "We may not be able to see God, but neither can we smell him, and we can smell our brother. He stinks, because he soils his pants. What is more, his nose runs, he stuffs food into his mouth with the filthy fingers with which he has just wiped it, he kicks us in the shins and repays any kindness with abuse. How can one love such a creature? It is quite simple if the will is there; not easy—simple."[221]

2. Shared responsibility between children and staff for the school community and its life. This component came from Homer Lane, whose work in the United States and the Little Commonwealth, founded in Dorset in 1913, pioneered the idea of self-government by young people.[222] Its structure had economic, legislative, judicial and political features. In a lecture given in 1918, Lane said:

> All those who are fourteen years or over are citizens having joint responsibility for the regulation of their lives by the laws and judicial machinery organised and developed by themselves. The adult element studiously avoid any assumption of authority in the community except in connection with their respective departmental duties as teachers or as supervisors of labour within the economic scheme.[223]

Lane was later described by David as a "simple, perplexing, humble, vain, wise, foolish, tarnished, innocent, happy and tragic man."[224] The Commonwealth closed in 1918, following allegations against Lane by two of the girls, but its influence was long-lasting. Though its immediate origins were not Quaker, we shall see how this element was reinforced by Quaker values in governance and meeting for business.

3. An understanding of the children illuminated by psychoanalytical thought. The most direct influence was that of Marjorie Franklin, but the belief that this was an important component of the treatment of "wayward youth" goes back to August Aichhorn, a friend and disciple of Sigmund and Anna Freud.[225] All the British pioneers were profundly influenced by this. David wrote that the children in his care "must be loved in order that they may learn how to love. That is not only Christian teaching; it is sound modern psychology."[226]

4. Avoidance of punishment. David's fundamental position on this was that it was in his view unChristian; but "as even Christians do not agree on this point" he sets out five practical reasons for it in The Barns Experiment:

(i) It establishes a base motive for conduct.
(ii) It has been tried and failed; or alternatively it has been so mis-used in the past as to destroy its usefulness now.
(iii) It militates against the establishment of the relationship which we consider necessary between staff and children—a relationship within which the child must feel himself to be loved.
(iv) Many delinquent children (and adults) are seeking punishment as a way of assuaging their guilt feelings.
(v) When the offender has "paid for" his crime, he can "buy" another with an easy conscience.[227]

In its place he created a system of restitution for wrong-doing. This was offered, discussed and accepted between those involved in an incident; it was generally witnessed by the daily meeting of all the children and staff, though he experimented (and allowed the children to experiment) with different structures during his long career. It was a way to implement "shared responsibility" because he believed that discipline and justice were too important a part of community life for the children to be excluded from these decisions (a very Quakerly insight). He did not much favour the creation of a formal Court system, linked to a token economy, which Lane had used. The practice of restitution, today often called "restorative justice", was a common feature of the other new schools for difficult young people which developed at the time and later.[228] Kenneth Barnes experimented with it at Wennington.

I can illustrate how this works in practice from my own experience at one such school, Shotton Hall.

> In the daily meeting Peter complained that he had received a kick and a sharp push from Jim as he was going downstairs; he added he had done nothing to provoke this. The boy in charge of the meeting (a responsibility which rotated day by day) asked Jim if it were true. Jim admitted it but tried to minimise it. Several other witnesses disagreed, saying that Peter might well have fallen down the stairs. The chairman asked Jim if he was willing to make amends in some way. He replied, "What would he like me to do?" Peter said nothing; he may have worried that Jim would react badly if he suggested something. Another boy said, "Jim's name is coming up too often in these meetings. He should do something serious, like taking Peter to a film in town on Saturday." The chairman asked Jim, "Would you be willing to do that?" Jim said, "I've got no money." A teacher said he was planning to clear out a storeroom that afternoon and would pay Jim if he was willing to help him. Jim, who rather liked this teacher agreed; and in their time together the teacher was able to ask why he kept getting into trouble attacking other boys, and whether he wanted to stop. Both boys enjoyed the film and came back from town much better friends.

The idea that if one does wrong, it is one's responsibility to put the matter right, out of justice to the person wronged and also to relieve one's own guilty feelings and regain the respect of the community, has an obvious relationship to Quaker thinking.[229] In his lecture,

John Reader discussed traditional attitudes to punishment in our Quaker schools, wondering how far they were consonant with our peace testimony; he cites there the ideas of a Friend (probably David) about restorative justice as a novelty which might be tried.[230] David believed strongly that the Society of Friends should develop a testimony against punishment, a view which he and other Friends advocated in their booklet Six Quakers look at crime and punishment.[231]

David had an enormous influence on the therapeutic community schools through his very readable books and the Association of Workers with Maladjusted Children which he helped to found in 1952, with its Journal. But in the public mind the approach was often confused with the complete laissez-faire which the well-known A.S.Neill offered the children at his school, Summerhill. This hindered its wider acceptance. David said, "I am proud to count Neill as my friend, but angry when it is assumed that I share that attitude."[232] Eventually, in The Underwood Report[233] the values advocated by the Association permeated into government thinking about institutions for disturbed children and gradually spread into the wider field of residential child care.

At Chaigely the Seels were in regular contact with David and adopted many of his methods. Towards the end of their tenure, Howard Jones researched the methods and successes of the school.[234] His findings emphasise the crucial importance of the school community as an instrument of therapy and learning.

> The group, whether it is the general meeting, watch committee, court or psychodrama session, becomes not merely the basic means of government and organisation but, under the control of insightful adults, the basic means of treatment. The apparently endless inter-analysis of personal and social problems, the "transference" of attitude to the institutions, the group and the individual, the inevitable "abreaction", constitute the basis for a living therapy which, if Jones' conclusions are valid, is particularly appropriate… for maladjusted children with their powerful urge to "belong" and feel accepted by others…[235]

David Wills' prominence was well-deserved; but there were other Quaker school heads working in a similar way, such as Lisa and Alfred Gobell at Hengrove School, and later John Cross at New Barns and myself at Shotton Hall. I have not given space to Kenneth Barnes' work at Wennington because we have his own lively account.[236] (Of course there were also pioneering non-Quaker heads with similar philosophies, including my own first employer Fred Lennhoff at Shotton Hall).[237] One important later experiment was the Friends Therapeutic Community, founded near Cambridge in 1969, which came to focus on the rehabilitation of young men who had been sexually abused and were now at risk of becoming abusers.

Planned environmental therapy developed intuitively, and the pioneers were more interested in experiment and discovery than in theorising about it (which is perhaps analogous to Quaker attitudes to theology). Yet it proved essential to adopt a coherent professional approach. The absence of this led to the collapse of the first Quaker-led experiment in this field, Sysonby (1914).[238] The interaction of professionals in an experimental field with lay managing committees can sometimes be difficult. In my own experience as headmaster, there were times when I was extremely dependent on and thankful for the support and faith of the school's committee and its chairperson. There were other times when I was very frustrated at their insistence on intervening in situations of which they had no direct experience. My ambivalence will be familiar to anyone who has led a pioneering and difficult venture under the auspices of a committee.

So what difference did it make when the committee had a large Quaker element? There were both advantages and problems. David Wills described the nature of his relationship to

the Quaker management at Barns:

> Technically, I am their employee, doing a piece of work on their behalf; in practice our relationship, perhaps to the outsider a curious one, but common enough in the Society of Friends is that of a Committee "liberating" a man to do a piece of work for which he is "under concern." Their support and encouragement have been constant and unfailing.[239]

(In contrast, he resigned from his last school Bodenham Manor because of difficulties with a non-Quaker committee.) Among the Quaker positives there is the tendency to trust, to hope, to encourage, to look for and believe in the good in people—in the head, the staff and the children. On the other hand there can be a negative Quaker silence, a reluctance to grasp the nettle when conflict is imminent. Friends do not always apply those principles of good conflict handling which our Society has done so much to develop.[240] This was seen at times in the life of Friends Therapeutic Community. A lot was at stake in an institution whose very name emphasised the Quaker connection.

> Perhaps the most significant conflict between the first Warden and the Managing Committee and Trustees was, unfortunately, around the very question of how to handle conflict. Many Trustees and members of the Managing Committee were appalled by the destruction caused by some of the residents to the property when they were 'acting out', and lack of authority shown by the Warden was perceived as the problem. Had the Trustees and Management Committee been more widely informed on the topic of therapeutic environments for children and young people, and aware of the high levels of destruction and disorder which had been tolerated in the past, and to a larger extent contained and managed in some therapeutic environments, such as the periods of physical destruction at Chaigeley and Hawkspur, they would perhaps not have been so alarmed. They would also have been better able to support the Warden, and to clarify their viewpoints on therapeutic community methods, if they had also been aware of how those other therapeutic environments had considered conflict and disorder as potentially therapeutic situations, giving the children and young people an opportunity to recognise the effects of disorder and destruction and resolve them for themselves, or to resolve difficulties they had in responding to traumatic events in the past.[241]

There were recurring conflicts between staff, successive wardens and management in the 1970s and 1980s. Eventually the Quaker committee members decided to apply the same methods of handling disagreement, conflict and decision making which had evolved in the therapeutic community movement and were in daily use in the life of the community; they began to see that these could also be a resource for managing and resolving their conflicts with the head and staff. This could only happen because these methods are profoundly compatible with Quaker principles. They are one way to express the practice of the Quaker meeting for business, though this may not be obvious at first. (for instance, as David Wills observed, "Shared responsibility [in a school] satisfies the need that all children have to feel that their side of the question is being heard".)[242] Elaine Boyling has written in an article on Quaker involvement in residential therapy:

> Quaker business endeavours were undertaken with the aim of revealing God's work, mediated through the inner light, in the world. This attitude of having well-established criteria for considering business meant that the Quaker attitude to organising resources was successful because it was able to include not only material resources, but also an understanding of personal and spiritual resources, such as trust… These types of Quaker attitudes have been highly compatible with therapeutic environment methods that can recognise a diverse range of resources, including "not-saying", silence, and listening. The practicality and "reality confrontation" of Quakers and therapeutic environments also explains why they often take a work therapy approach to resolving some of the problems of delinquent young people, or other people who have become socially disenfranchised in some way.

A passage from Kenneth Barnes clarifies this, explaining why formal religion occupied a small place in his work with young people:

> The growth in the school of a religious consciousness, then, is a growth in emotional maturity, in perception and discrimination, learnt through daily experiences. It is a growth in love, of people and of the world, in the power to direct action away from dead ends, away from what is unrewarding and inhuman, to what will open up life as "a vast bundle of opportunities". It is also a growth in awareness of the reality of evil, overt or latent in all communities, a recognition that we are all corruptible… All this can be evident, in miniature, in the crises of school life.[243]

Leila Rendel was the charismatic head of one of the first institutions, the Caldecott Community founded in 1911. She became a Quaker; and I have heard but not been able to verify that she joined the Society of Friends because she found it the only Christian church whose values were consonant with what she had learnt through her work. They begin with the acceptance of "that of God in everyone", so that no one is rejected as being beyond help. The belief in human equality leads to forms of governance in which everyone can have a say. Another shared value is the insistence that truth is seen in people's actions, not their words. David wrote, "It seems presumptuous and very far from humble in us to claim that what we are trying to do is to show forth God not only with our lips but in our lives; and He knows how miserably we fail. But that is what we have got to try to do, just because it has so rarely been done in the case of the children in our care."[244]

One of the results was to educate the pupils in practising peace. The school meetings and children's courts developed principles of conflict resolution which were needed to handle "the crises of school life". I was working at Shotton Hall, which had no Quaker tradition when I first encountered Quakers. I found nothing strange about the peace testimony because it taught the same principles which I was already trying to practise every day.

I have explained that this movement was not exclusively Quaker. But Friends had an important influence in founding, financing, managing or supporting a large number of schools and hostels (more than I have had space to mention) to which they brought Quaker values. Elaine Boyling comments:[245]

> The huge variety of beliefs and cultures that have contributed to therapeutic environments, and their capacity to include and tolerate such a wide range of people and attitudes, makes it more or less irrelevant, in practice, to say that any particular method is "Quaker". Many of the attitudes shown by Quakers in therapeutic environments can easily be translated into the language of any of the other faiths and belief systems that have inspired people living and working in therapeutic environments. However, the significance of Quakerism as a motivation and resource for groups and individuals can illuminate understanding of the organisation and attitudes in some therapeutic environments.

Learning the skills of peace

In the late 1960s the Quaker Project on Community Conflict began in New York. They soon realised that patterns of conflict behaviour were established in early childhood and reinforced by the experience of school life. So they began to develop resources to use with schoolchildren, the Children's Creative Response to Conflict Programme (CCRCP).

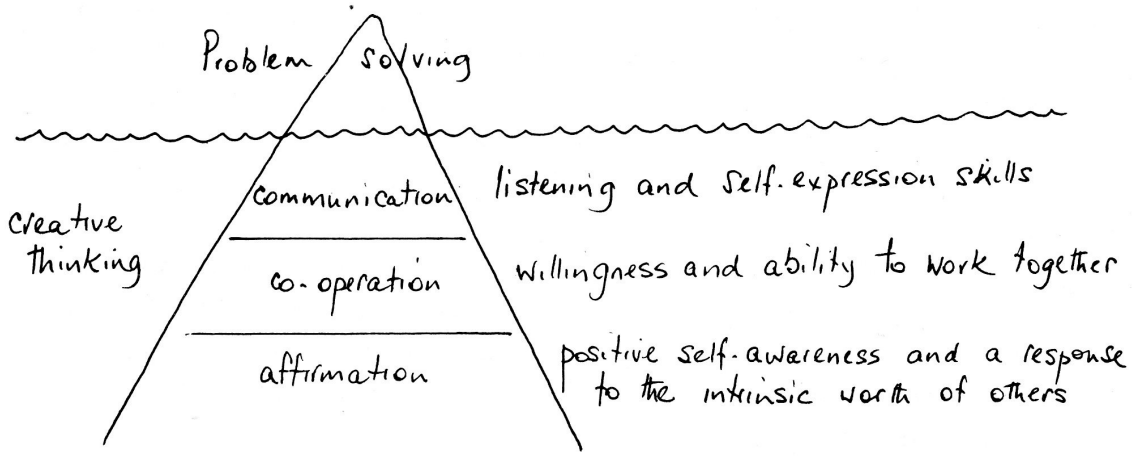
Violence in our society is pervasive. In the schools, where tension builds up and conflicts go unresolved, assaults on children, teachers and property are commonplace. Educational institutions, which should provide a positive environment for resisting the drift towards violence, are seldom effective in dealing with the causes of antisocial behaviour. They often

retreat to measures of security or take hostile actions against the offenders.

Yet the very attempt to stamp out violence by methods which are themselves violent towards children in conflict only confirms the notion that violence is an acceptable, if not preferable, method of solving problems… Our experience shows that children—especially young children—will learn far more from the ways we respond to aggression and conflict than they will learn from our words.[246]

In 1975, in response to an invitation from a group of prisoners, the same Quaker Project on Community Conflict set up the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) primarily working with prisoners. Its manual puts the same emphasis on the ideal of community which we have seen in the British schools for emotionally troubled children, avoiding hierarchy and insisting that everyone has a part to play.

> In order to grow and develop, people need community for a sense of belonging and they need to know that the community is safe for them, so they will be free to take the risks of change. So that the community will be safe for all, it needs to require co-operation, respect and caring from all its members, for it and for each other. It needs its members to plan and work together, and it needs nonviolent ways of challenging and turning round those who would abuse it.[247]



The Iceberg Principle from "Ways and Means" (original version, 1988) p. 6

AVP uses group games and exercises to bring to life its belief in "a power that is able to transform violent and destructive situations and behaviour into liberating and constructive experiences and cooperative behaviour".[248] It has become a world-wide network.

A separate group of Friends concerned about the same issues set up the Nonviolence & Children Program in 1969 in Philadelphia.[249] They too felt that an important way of building a peaceful world would be to develop a program for young children to help them and their caregivers develop non-violent attitudes and skills. These organisations produced influential manuals, full of co-operative games, exercises in peacemaking skills, and advice on the peaceful management of groups, whether of prisoners or young children. They formulated the principle that conflict resolution is like an iceberg: solving the conflict can be seen and heard, but hidden in the depths are the communication, cooperation and respect for opponents on which it must be based. (When I work in Uganda, this becomes the "hippopotamus principle").

CCRCP found that the learning must be practical, and the school must encourage its pupils to apply it to their everyday problems:

> The carryover of positive attitudes and skills from the classroom into real-life situations was

> not apparent in our earliest work with children. Because we did not fully sense the depth or complexity of our task—how to nurture in children the seeds of compassion rather than violence—we attempted to teach conflict resolution skills without proper concern for a supportive classroom atmosphere… We came to understand through our work in the classroom that children learn most effectively through experience.[250]

So, basing their work on the iceberg principle, they fostered peaceful attitudes and behaviour through learning and practising good communication, cooperation and the affirmation of other people. A programme session in a school will contain exercises which are fun to do and often challenging too.[251] Many of them are designed in such a way that success is impeded by selfish and competitive behaviour.

A typical affirmation exercise in a junior school is to ask each child to write their name on a name tag, using their favourite colour, and to add one thing they like about themselves. Then they all sit in a circle, and each child tells what their tag says, while the others listen quietly and respectfully.

In one communication exercise the children sit in pairs and each chooses a favourite topic to present to the other. First they are told to speak both at the same time. Then they are asked how that made them feel: "I was frustrated", "I couldn't think what I was saying", "She began shouting". Then one of each pair speaks and the other is told to do anything they like to show they are not interested (except to speak or move away). They exchange roles, so that everyone can experience the frustration of being ignored in this way. Again they give feedback. Lastly they are asked to listen to each other with good attention, and then comment on the difference they felt when they were really heard.

The next exercise may be a simple active game which shows that co-operation gives people a sense of happiness and achievement. Now the workshop can move on to explore working together to solve a problem. One way of doing this is by asking some children to arm-wrestle in pairs for tokens for ten seconds. The use of a normally forceful and competitive game is deliberate. It soon emerges that when they are evenly matched they expend a great deal of effort but win no tokens (a "lose/lose" outcome). Where one child is stronger, the other will be sad or frustrated to get nothing ("lose/win"). The children are then asked how they can maximise the rewards, and they soon find that by co-operating and allowing each other to score points, instead of competing, they can both get far more tokens ("win/win").

My wife and I introduced some of these exercises to psychology students at Zaporozhzha University in 1999. I returned there five years later when I was evaluating our many visits to Ukraine. The Assistant Professor Lusia Romanenkova told me:

> When you first made our students do those exercises, I was puzzled. They seemed so childish, so far from the theoretical knowledge we taught. But as I thought about them I began to realise how extraordinarily rich they are, so I began using them in my work. I can't tell you all the ways we have benefited from them: with our students when they go into schools for work experience, in sessions with city councillors and trades unionists, in the family resource centres which we set up, in work we have done in hospitals with cancer patients from Chernobyl, in prison rehabilitation, in working with groups on gender issues—the list goes on and on.[252]

The first British project to adopt the American approach was the Quaker Peace Action Caravan (Q-PAC). It was founded in 1979 and took to the road the following year, working with local Friends to reach the general public. The three specific areas of concern were individual responsibility for peacemaking at the personal level, political issues such as disarmament and human rights, and strengthening the peace witness of the Society of Friends. Two of the original team wrote later: "There was from the early stages of our

discussion a strong sense of the "rightness" of what we were talking about. The ideas flowed freely, and although we were not conscious of it at the time, we would say now that we were clearly working under guidance."[253]

It was on the road (when invited) until the end of 1985. They always worked in partnership with a local Quaker meeting, which chose the type of presentation, for example a sixth-form conference, a peace group meeting, an event open to the public, a visit to a school, or a performance on the streets. They focussed on violence and conflict at all levels from personal quarrels at one end of the scale to nuclear war at the other. If local Friends arranged for them to visit a school, in schools, war might be a sensitive issue, because around that time anti-nuclear campaigners had sought access to schools to counter government propaganda in support of the British nuclear deterrent and to set out the consequences of detonating a hydrogen bomb. Keith Joseph, Secretary for Education under Margaret Thatcher, had written to schools to warn them of the "danger" of allowing this kind of peace education into classrooms. Q-PAC explained to schools that they would not raise the question of war, but they would answer honestly if the students did. Jill and Barry Wilsher recalled:

> The attitude in schools was mixed. Some were very hostile (notably where there was an active army cadet force unit) and others very sympathetic. We used a method of enabling them to ask questions frankly and anonymously which worked well—although there were one or two notorious exceptions! We asked them to huddle in groups and discuss what they'd like to ask/say to us. They then asked for paper on which to write their questions. These came to us anonymously and we guaranteed to read out every one of them (rude words and all!) often with some interesting results… We think what made us acceptable was our approach, style and the language we used.[254]

The Q-PAC team consisted of five or six people, with some changes over the years. Some of them had a background in theatre work, which influenced their style. They wrote that they "strove at all times to present an image that was dynamic and professional. We had all experienced the effects of a lack of professionalism in the peace movement, and the resultant criticism from those who considered themselves our opponents. Too many people in the peace movement accepted as unavoidable meetings that didn't start on time, inadequate resources and poor preparation. Q-PAC thought otherwise."[255]

The work continued until the end of 1985 and was written up as five manuals covering the main activities. The titles give an idea of the range offered: Exploring Nonviolence and Conflict Resolution; Sharing Skills with Peace Activists; Street Campaigning; Presentations and Workshops in Schools; Facilitating Meetings and Workshops.[256] Q-PAC deliberately combined three areas which are usually the concern of separate bodies, namely the principles of peaceful behaviour, which can be applied at a personal level; facilitation and training skills; and debates on current political issues such as the nuclear arms race. Their work in schools is presented in the fourth manual, where they list the themes they focused on:

1 Conflict is often unavoidable, and can be useful.

2 Using violence—damaging people—to try to resolve conflict is neither effective nor inevitable.

3 Violence is not just bombs and punches, but is also words, attitudes and structures.

4 There are always more than the two most obvious options of winning or giving in.

5 Peacemaking is tough and dynamic, and can be dangerous.

But, as Friends acknowledged, "The recent development of the teaching skills for conflict

resolution was a response to the deteriorating situation in social and international relations and the recognition of the possibility of nuclear war. But immediately these skills were recognised as a powerful tool in many other situations. Friends who began being active in campaigning against nuclear weapons have often moved on into a wide variety of other areas where these same skills are vital and desperately needed."[257]

A Q-PAC visit to Kingston-on-Thames inspired the Kingston Friends Workshop Group.[258] They devised a workshop programme on "Problem Solving in Personal Relationships" which was taken up by teachers, social workers and managers in business and the community. The local school inspectorate welcomed it, but some members of the Local Government Education Committee opposed it as "peace education" for the political reasons I have described.[259] The Kingston Friends' work gradually won acceptance and was the model for a number of Quaker projects, such as the West Midlands Quaker Peace Education Project, the Conflict Resolution in Schools Programme in Darlington and Middlesbrough,[260] and the Ulster Quaker Peace Education Project in Londonderry.[261] Quaker Peace and Service set up its own support programme. LEAP Confronting Conflict was a spin-off from the Leaveners (the British Quaker theatre and music project); it specialised in youth work in a tough part of London and produced a brilliant and widely-used handbook on aggression called Playing with Fire.[262] Each of the projects developed its own interests and expertise, and I do not have space to tell the whole story, which deserves a book to itself.

The Ulster Quaker Peace Education Project, led by Jerry Tyrrell, is of particular interest because it operated in a society locked in a protracted and violent conflict. It ran programmes in individual schools on conflict handling, but also brought groups of Catholic and Protestant pupils to work together. When an official from the Ministry of Education visited the project, he was so impressed that what was termed "education for mutual understanding" became a statutory part of the Northern Ireland school curriculum. There was one aspect of the Project's work which we think was unique. Because we operated in a city of only a hundred thousand people, we were able to hold an annual conference to which each of the thirty primary schools sent two unaccompanied delegates. There was a different theme each year: "Our city in the year 2000"; gender issues in school; imagining a world without weapons; an introduction to peer mediation; and a conference on Northern Irish politics called "We want to be heard". In this last one, mixed groups of children prepared presentations, and four eminent people were invited to listen to them and make very brief responses. Ulster Television showed parts of the conference on the evening news, and for days afterwards strangers were stopping me in the streets to say, "I saw those weans on TV, and they were making a lot more sense than the politicians!"

Peace education is validated by the welcome it received there and in other societies recovering from war or facing major social and political change, particularly in Eastern Europe, Central America and South Africa. The Quaker Peace Centre in Cape Town used these methods with young black and mixed-race people in the townships during the restless years before and after the end of apartheid. They saw a clear and essential role for peace education in transforming their country. In their 1994 manual, they wrote:

> Our lives in South Africa are surrounded by violence of thought, word and deed… It is made worse by the fact that South African society has tended for many years to be bureaucratic, discriminatory and even militaristic. Conflicts have been solved by force rather than through dialogue. Education systems in particular have been caught up in this situation and have contributed to it. The acceptance of violence and war as legitimate and inevitable is an attitude that has become deeply engrained in present-day cultures—indeed, many children believe that "violence is natural".[263]

In 1989 I came from Northern Ireland and Sue Bowers from the Kingston Group as members of a Quaker Peace and Service delegation which met with the Soviet Peace Committee in Moscow.[264] The end of the Soviet Union was looming, and unrest was breaking out in many of the republics, often savagely put down by Soviet forces. When we talked (among other things) about work with children, the Soviet team were incredulous: "Every one knows that political problems need political solutions! How can you talk about peace work with children?" But when they sent a delegation to Northern Ireland to study its peacebuilding efforts, the Ulster Project showed them a workshop involving children from a Catholic and a Protestant school who had never met before. At the close of their visit, their first request was for someone to come and introduce this work in their troubled regions. Soon afterwards Quaker Peace & Service sent Roswitha Jarman and me to run a demonstration seminar in the Northern Caucasus, the first of its kind in the USSR. Following that, Tom Leimdorfer, then Quaker Peace Education Adviser, and Sue Bowers made two further visits to run workshops. Initially planned for 'educators' they found on arrival that besides teachers, those attending included psychologists, academic and media people, and two managers of nuclear power installations. Initially sceptical, there was a profound change throughout the workshops, with moving testimonies to the life-changing insights they had learnt. They returned later with Mary Lou Leavitt and Gill Fell to enable more people to be involved.

Roswitha continued to work in the Caucasus. For me it led to annual training visits to Belarus and Ukraine for ten years, usually with Diana, working with the Belarussian Association of UNESCO Clubs and the Ukrainian Teachers for Peace and Mutual Understanding. We worked in every major city in Belarus except for Mogilev and many small towns, enthusiastically welcomed and witnessing the impact of Chernobyl on the entire child population. In the larger Ukraine, we worked in half of the major districts (oblasts), as well as taking part in national conferences and a teachers' summer school. The Deputy Minister for Education met us and was involved in the planning. When we asked teachers why they valued this work so much, they told us,

> We lost faith in communist ideology years ago. But we knew no other method of teaching except the communist one in which we were trained. We had been told that every question had been solved and the answer could be found in the works of Marx or Lenin; there was no place for initiative and creative thinking. This attitude is plainly of little use in these times of drastic change. When we watched you setting the children problems to solve and telling them that the right answer was whatever they could agree on, as long as it met everyone's needs, we realised this is the education our country needs today.[265]

In the years when Yugoslavia was beginning to fragment, the Quaker Council for European Affairs became interested in the practice of peace education; with the Council of Europe it commissioned a study from Jaimie Walker. Her research took her to twelve Western European countries, notably Britain and Northern Ireland. After the publication of her project report in 1989 she and several colleagues founded the European Network for Conflict Resolution in Education (ENCORE). Subsequently Jaimie moved to Berlin where she is still working in the field.[266] Around the same time Tom Leimdorfer of Quaker Peace and Service and Pamela Williams supported the development of a peace education network in Hungary. (Pamela was a Birmingham Friend, who later devised peace education materials for nursery school children.) In 1997 Diana and I responded to a call from Sezam, a project working with war-traumatised children in Bosnia and Herzegovina. After several years they found that

> Working with the children and their traumas, our team began to feel we were all prisoners of these war memories. We felt exhausted—and perhaps the children did too. We wanted to

> change this. We wanted to find the strength to look forwards, for ourselves and for the children. In the general collapse and loss of values, we decided that the children are our future. We wanted to give them so much strength that we could believe in them as the real future of our country. In fact we wanted to change the future to one of peace.[267]

They asked us to help them develop appropriate programmes in peace education, and we ran occasional training events in Croatia and Macedonia too. Also in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the UNESCO Centre at the University of Ulster established a teachers' centre in Brcko to propagate peace education. The leader of this project was Brendan Hartop, who got his first experience of these methods with the Ulster Quaker Project and its successor.

The early work had been largely built on the iceberg principle, but it soon became apparent that specific conflict resolution processes were also needed. The chief development was in "peer mediation". The Ulster and West Midlands Projects developed formal processes which children could learn to empower them to handle conflict in the life of their schools, at primary or secondary level. Some neighbourhood mediation programmes also decided to set up schools projects, often those where there was a Quaker influence such as Bristol Mediation,[268] Mediation Dorset and Newham Conflict and Change. Just as in the independent special schools, the young mediators realised that behaviour management is everyone's responsibility and not a device used by adults to enforce their power. Mediation UK, the national umbrella body, endorsed the work by publishing its own conflict resolution and peer mediation manual for secondary schools, Mediation Works! (1998). Five of its six authors were Quakers.[269] Much of this work has been well documented and evaluated.[270]

Mediation is usually seen as suitable for situations where two equal parties are in dispute, rather than those where one has seriously wronged the other. But there is an approach, "restorative justice", which brings wrongdoing and crime within its sphere. I already gave a picture of this when I described its common use in the independent special schools. My pupils often said to me, "This method shouldn't just be for us; everyone needs the chance to put things right."

Marion Liebmann offers a definition: "Restorative Justice aims to restore the well-being of victims, offenders and communities damaged by crime, and to prevent further offending."[271] She offers five "hallmarks".

1 Victim support and healing is a priority.

2 Offenders take responsibility for what they have done.

3 There is dialogue to achieve understanding.

4 There is an attempt to put right the harm done.

5 Offenders look at how to avoid future offending.

6 The community helps to reintegrate both victim and offender.

She notes in her book, "Many of the first people to become involved in this field did so for religious reasons (e.g. Mennonites, Quakers and others) because the concepts of reconciliation, redemption and forgiveness found a practical expression."[272] It has been strongly promoted in British schools by an organisation called Transforming Conflict.[273] In the words of the Quaker founder Belinda Hopkins,

> Practice developed as educationalists realised the potential of the restorative approach for less serious, day-to-day issues, such as classroom management and conflicts between staff and with parents. Soon staff using restorative responses also recognised that the skills they were using, and the skills needed to engage most effectively in restorative meetings, were life skills that all young people would benefit from learning, even before things went wrong. Indeed there was a growing realisation that when young people learn to manage relationships and

> "difficult conversations" better, and when staff learn to manage these better themselves and can act as role models, there are fewer conflicts and challenges in the first place.[274]

In my own experience,

> Provided we [the staff] could ensure that it worked effectively, those who had been hurt were satisfied; it was outsiders, not directly involved, who became angry and told me that this was a sentimental option which did not face the realities of injustice. They were afraid of pain, hurt, violence and the breakdown of order; and their fear made them violent. Those who had already experienced this breakdown recognised that restitution offered them a way out.[275]

I believe planned environmental therapy and peace education, so closely linked in their philosophy, can claim to be the great Quaker contribution to education not only in the 20th century but altogether. (But I do not intend to devalue the many non-Quaker contributions to its development.) It is sad Friends know so little about it, and sometimes undervalue it.[276] One Friend, noted for her peace campaigning, said to Diana, "There are things that need our attention a good deal more than teaching children not to bash each other in the playground!" But we give more credence to a conversation we had with Giandomenico Picco, the UN Assistant General Secretary who brought the Iran-Iraq War to an end and (at considerable personal risk) negotiated the liberation of the hostages in Lebanon. He told us, "In the world as it is today, I can think of nothing more important than teaching the skills of peace to children."

Speaking Truth to Power (2)

The most obvious contrast between the nineteenth century travelling ministers and the peacemaking Friends of the 20th century is the virtual disappearance of explicit religious content in the message. But this may not be quite what it seems. Whoever Friends addressed, they did so in the spirit of John Woolman: "Love was the first motion, and then a Concern arose to spend some time with the Indians, that I might feel and understand their way of life, and the spirit they live in, if haply I might receive some Instruction from them, or they be any degree helped forward by my following the leadings of truth amongst them."[277] Notice how he holds a balance of giving and receiving in his expression of purpose, knowing that "the leadings of Truth" are the true source and point of our spiritual travels, not Woolman himself.

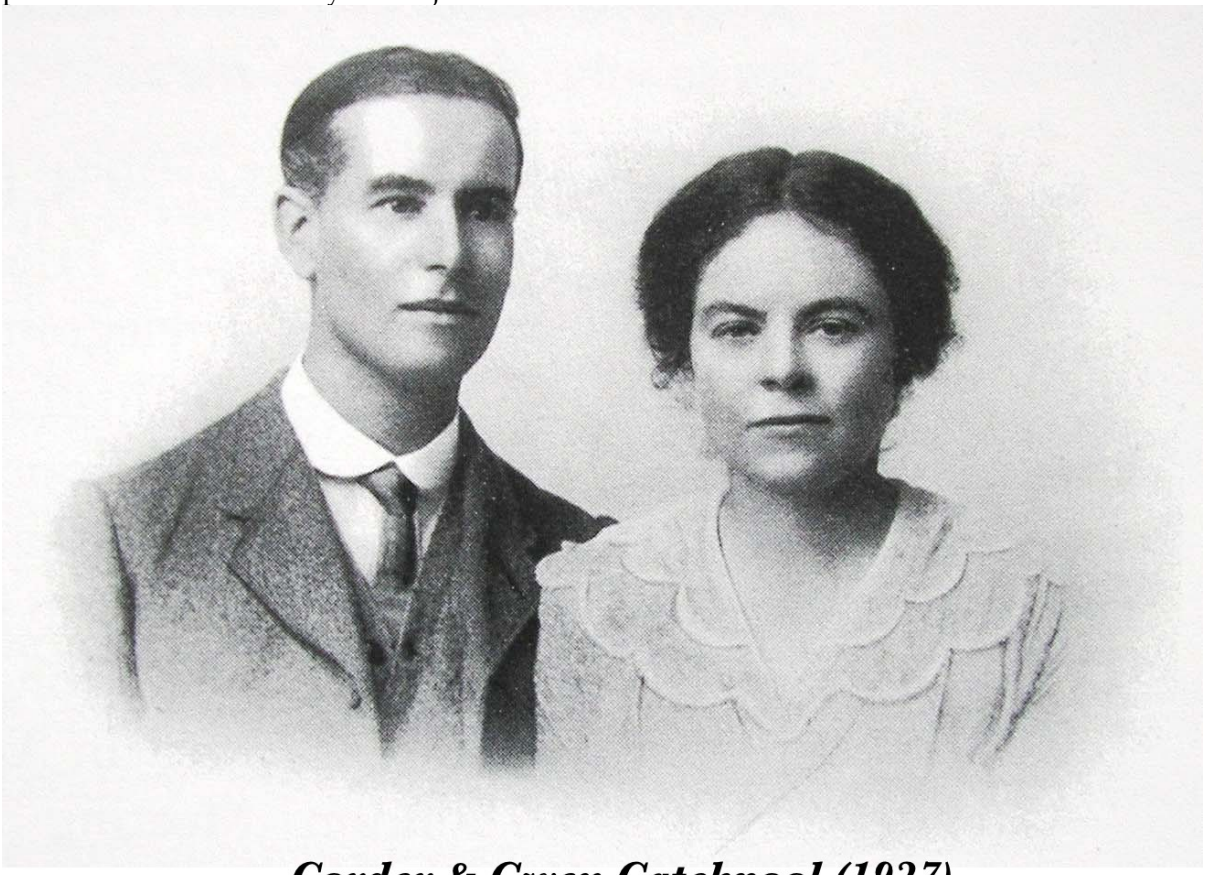
The religious element is not absent in modern times, though it may have "gone underground" so to speak. Adam Curle has written:

> …Peace makers should learn to listen as attentively as possible. They not only discover what may be vital to know, but they reach the part of the other person that is really able to make peace, both inwardly and outwardly.
>
> I recall one dramatic incident. I had to visit the headquarters of a guerrilla leader in circumstances that were potentially dangerous. I was apprehensive, realising that if I was unable to establish rapport with him, he would probably suspect me and become hostile. I knew I must prepare myself well and, when I arrived, to listen intently. At first he was cold and watchful. Suddenly he smiled, ordered refreshment and said, "People don't usually come to see me looking happy and relaxed." We became friends and were able to explore ways of finding humane rather than violent solutions to the situations he was involved in.
>
> …Nothing is more important than to keep in the forefront of awareness the real being, the Living Light of Christ, in each of us. On this basis we can assure our friends of their strength, wisdom, courage and goodness—for these are the qualities of God in which we share.[278]

Two things strike me about this story. The first is that Adam's personality had the same effect on that leader as Thomas Shillitoe's or Sarah Grubb's did on the people they met. (Those of us who knew him will not be surprised at this.) The second is that Adam has not simply replaced the earlier Friends' faith in a doctrine with faith in his own expertise. Discussing non-violent tactics was not his fundamental aim, which was rather to affirm the divine potential in the other, in the same way as the address to the Tzar in 1853 did.

There was a major shift in Quaker witness after the First World War, inspired by Carl Heath, with his vision of "Quaker embassies" which would plead for peaceful policies in the centres of power in Europe, drawing credibility from the extensive Quaker relief work undertaken at the end of the war.[279] He provided the pattern for much subsequent British and American Quaker peace work, including our continuing presence at the United Nations. Other recent examples include the Quaker Houses in Belfast and Moscow. Mike Yarrow has summarised his approach: "For Heath, Christ and his teaching were central, but he thought in terms of a new kind of evangelism which would not be trying to make Christians or bring members into the Society of Friends, but would be spreading Quaker ideas and ways of dealing with situations of conflict."[280] In the 1920s he helped to set up Quaker International

Centres in Paris, Warsaw, Vienna and Nuremburg, but the one which soon faced the most severe difficulties was in Berlin. For the first time since the early years of persecution Quakers had to face the challenge of speaking truth to an élite which was totally out of sympathy with Quaker views, hostile, suspicious, dangerous to its critics, and engaged in policies of extreme cruelty and injustice.



Corder & Gwen Catchpool (1927)

The Representatives from 1931 to 1936 were Gwen and Corder Catchpool, and their work is well described in William Hughes' biography.[281] I will pick up just one strand. The people who came to the Quaker Centre for help after Hitler took power included political suspects, militant pacifists, people released from prison but still under suspicion, those troubled by an uneasy religious conscience, and racial outcasts, especially Jews. These people described to the Catchpools the early atrocities of the regime. Corder was arrested on 3 April 1933 by the Gestapo and questioned for thirty-six hours about his friends and visitors. In a prison cell overnight he "realised that he had been avoiding contacts with Nazi circles out of dislike for their doctrines and actions, and insofar as he had been doing this he had been false to his role of ambassador, to his Quaker belief in a 'hidden man of the heart' to be found in each enemy or sinner, and to absolute honesty in the search for truth."[282]

From then onwards he tried to cultivate relationships with Nazis and their families, and wrote some articles for English readers trying to explain their beliefs and attitudes, and how the Allies had actually helped to form these. This made a great deal of trouble for the Catchpools both with their liberal German friends and with many Britons who sympathised with the victims (but were doing much less than Gwen and Corder to help them). But through it he obtained leave from the Gestapo to do humanitarian work with the families of those arrested, and even to make visits of inspection to the camps (not yet as dreadful as they later became). He used what he learnt through his sources to make quiet firm protests

to the Nazi authorities, even to Hitler's Chancellery; there he got on good and honest terms with Hans Thomsen, a Chief Secretary who passed the gist of what he said to Hitler. William Hughes, who worked with Corder, wrote:

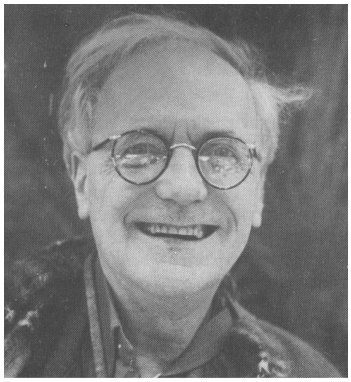
It gradually became fairly clear that although agitation abroad on behalf of certain well-known prisoners was of no advantage to them, the sort of private appeals which Corder made were sometimes effectual… Every now and then, when a prisoner was released, to the usual warning that if he talked he would come back "for good" was added an indication that he had the Quakers to thank for his release.[283]

Corder knew that moral indignation was natural and right in the face of cruelty and wrong. But "if you allow yourself to remain in it, it is a sort of selfish luxury. You may come to rejoice in hearing more evil of the wrong-doer. You may get into a habit of outbursts, and then one day a moment of self-satisfaction may cost you a lifetime of possible service—and what good done? It destroys contacts, whereas quiet talk does have effect."[284]

Carl Heath and Corder Catchpool, together with Rufus Jones (who also spoke with the Nazi authorities), Horace Alexander and others, were the forerunners of the spiritually-based peacemaking of Duncan Wood,[285] Sydney Bailey,[286] Adam Curle,[287] Walter Martin, Will Warren,[288] Scilla Elworthy,[289] Diana Francis,[290] Sue and Steve Williams[291] and their colleagues in more recent times. We can contrast their undogmatic approach with the certainties which Stephen Grellet preached to the Pope. "I would never presume to criticise people caught up in a situation I do not share with them for the way in which they are responding…" wrote Adam.[292] Sydney, almost echoing Elizabeth Fry, wrote: "One danger of all Quaker peacemaking is spiritual arrogance. We are motivated by deeply-held concern, but concern sometimes slides into conceit… We must avoid attitudes of superiority towards those we wish to help."[293]

The work often demands a lot of time to build up relationships of confidence before what needs to be said can be heard by the powerful. Sometimes, to maintain trust, the full story cannot be told for a long time. The journalist Robert Fisk reported from Northern Ireland in 1974,

> The Provisional IRA and Protestant UDA in Londonderry have agreed to a secret truce that neither side will engage again in sectarian murders. The agreement, almost unprecedented in Northern Ireland, was worked out after the Provisionals—who shot dead two Protestants… earlier this month—sent an intermediary to a "loyalist" politician who represents the city in the Ulster Assembly. No one is prepared publicly to disclose the name of the IRA and UDA intermediary, although it is believed he was an outsider and belongs to neither community in the city



Will Warren

This was Will Warren, an English Quaker who went to live there and do what he could for peace.[294] The agreement which he persuaded the paramilitary organizations to make was

not broken until a murder in 1987. It is a sign of the durability of what he had achieved that I was able, in a short round of visits to the leaders, to put it back in place, and it was not broken again in the city before the ceasefires of 1994 despite many sectarian attacks in other parts of Ulster.[295] (The friendships which Will and others have developed with people with blood on their hands raise serious moral questions which I have discussed elsewhere.)[296]

I will pick one more story from the many examples of modern Quakers speaking truth to power. In 1982 Scilla Elworthy, concerned about nuclear weapons, "had the idea of groups of citizens talking to decision-makers… discussing the issues quietly and soberly from a background of real knowledge… First I had to find out who the decision-makers were… Clearly in any complex process there will be apparently important people who nobody ever takes any notice of, and people with insignificant official positions who wield great power."[297] This was how the Oxford Research Group began, on her kitchen table. She found that it was surprisingly easy to get many of the names—military, scientific, technical and administrative—of those who took decisions for the five nuclear powers of the time. Quaker and many other groups were recruited to inform themselves in depth and then try to get into dialogue with each of them. Group members found themselves shedding feelings of despair about the world situation and recognising their power. The Group published unexpected insights into failings of government responsibility and accountability in this life-or-death issue. But was it successful? "While there is no hard evidence," said Scilla, "there are indications that the dialogue made some impact on some decision-makers. There is some evidence too that the project hastened an acceptance among those closely involved with defence policy of the desirability of substantial reductions in the numbers of nuclear weapons."[298] She recounts a significant experience during her own efforts:

> At the Department of Trade and Industry, I asked the most senior official in charge of granting licences for weapons exports whether he had any clash of interests, as a person, between working for a department whose job is to promote trade, and seeing in the news that weapons he had licensed had killed thousands of people. He laughed suddenly and loudly, so loudly that I sat up. When the nervous laughter had subsided, he said:
>
> "Well you couldn't really work for this department if you had moral scruples in that way. But you just don't think about it, you can't, you're too busy. If you did you'd be like the salesgirl in Woolworths who sells someone a length of flex on the assumption they want to fix a light with it, and they go off and strangle people."
>
> I was so taken unawares by the irrelevance of this analogy that I wasn't quick enough to point out that weapons are designed and made for killing, electric flex is not.[299]

The differences between present-day Quakers who speak to the powerful and those in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century are obvious, but has anything remained the same? It seems to me that there are some continuities. There is the element of self-sacrifice. Quaker peacemakers have to face interrupted family relationships and the loss of time and money; they have to be prepared for uncomfortable journeys, stress and uncertainty, hostility and misunderstanding, and the threat of disease, imprisonment or murder. They also share with their predecessors the certainty of what Adam called "the real being, the Living Light of Christ, in each of us", a Light in us which can reach out to the same Light in the other "in that which does not lie".[300] Lastly comes the certainty that when fears, practical difficulties and personal ambitions are set aside and the "inner command" is clearly heard, we will be guided from step to step. Adam says, "The more we recognise and acknowledge that of God within ourselves, thus enjoying that communion which is the essence of prayer, the greater will be our access to the knowledge that will show us what to do."[301] In the India-Pakistan War of 1965, Joseph Elder, in a Quaker conciliation team, described their

preparation for a crucial meeting with President Ayub Khan:

> We decided we would have a three-person silent meeting for worship to prepare ourselves for whatever we would encounter. The meeting was one of the most moving I have ever participated in—in Leslie [Cross]'s room, I recall, with each of us sharing our own sense of inadequacy at what we were trying to do, and yet each of us sensing something like a "Quaker legacy" that we had been drawing on throughout the trip that provided a power well beyond what any of us individually possessed.[302]

Yes, expertise and research are important, but speaking truth to power is a challenge first and foremost to our own spiritual preparation. Do we have a "sense of the condition" of the person in front of us? Can we listen and speak in a way which connects that of God in us with that of God in them? I can illustrate this from personal experience. When my wife and I spent three months in apartheid South Africa in 1983, many of our encounters were in the black and "coloured" communities, or with white people who were part of the struggle against the regime. But we had two encounters with leading Afrikaners in the dominant white branch of the Dutch Reformed Church. The first one came shortly after a series of experiences in the "homelands" and townships which brought home to us the weight of oppression under which most black people lived. We were full of disgust and anger, and used our meeting with the Moderator of the Church as an opportunity to express our feelings and make our protest. We contradicted the justifications he glibly offered, and argued with him about everything from social consequences to bible interpretation. Coming away we felt sure that our words had had no lasting effect at all.

Our second meeting, weeks later, was with the Chairman of the Broederbond, Professor Karel Boshoff. The Afrikaner Broederbond was a secret society which had been formed to advance their supremacy over all the other peoples of the country; all of their leading politicians, churchmen and businessmen belonged to it. We had met many more Afrikaners in the mean time, and had begun to understand that they too had their story, their aspirations, their fears and despair. We asked questions rather than making statements, and listened more than we spoke. The encounter was very different. He had offered us forty-five minutes, but kept us at least twice that time. At one point, with tears in his eyes, he confessed to us, "We have done too little, too late, for the black and 'coloured' peoples". When we gave our own views, in answer to his questions to us, we tried to express our compassion for everyone caught up in the tangled situation. At the end, knowing well where our own hopes and sympathies lay, he could still say, "Pray for us." We cannot claim that we played any part in changing his views. But by listening we somehow enabled him to speak from his own heart and it brought us to a shared understanding. What practical difference this meeting might have made we never knew, perhaps none; but we felt we had been used as a channel for truth.

A Letter from James Nayler

James Nayler (or Naylor, or even Nailor) is still remembered by Quakers as a picturesque figure from their early history, who gave us some memorable "dying words". He has been the subject of several historical studies in recent years, and even two cycles of poems.[303] But he is not widely acknowledged as one of our Quaker teachers, though to my mind he has left to us deeper insights into the spiritual basis of our peace testimony than any other Friend. Their authenticity is drawn from harsh life experience: military service in a bloody war; a call from God so pressing that he left home without a word of goodbye to his family; physical torture and imprisonment; and, most hurtfully (he says), the guilt of having brought the young Quaker movement into grave danger, and the pain of rejection by most of its members.

If you are familiar with the facts of his life, you may want to skip the rest of this section.[304] He was born into a farming family in 1618, not far from Wakefield in Yorkshire. In 1639 he married Anne, who bore three daughters in the next four years. Before the youngest was one year old, Nayler joined the Parliamentary Army and served seven years as a foot soldier in some of the fiercest battles of the Civil War, then becoming Quartermaster (in charge of supplies) in General Lambert's Regiment of Horse. The General said later, "He was a very useful person—we parted from him with great regret." After the final battle at Worcester in 1651, where his regiment bore the brunt, he left the army with serious health problems to settle down with his family on his father's farm.

But it was not to be. In the same winter George Fox, six years younger than him, came to Wakefield. Nayler met him and was immediately convinced of the truth of Fox's message. Some time later, after a second meeting with Fox, he told how, "I was at the Plow, meditating on the things of God, and suddainly I heard a Voice saying unto me, Get thee out from thy Kindred and from thy Father's House."[305] It is not surprising that he found it hard to obey, so soon after a nine years' absence from his family. He delayed and became severely ill, but as soon as he was "made willing" he recovered, and packed a bag. "But shortly afterward… having on an Old Suit, without any Money, having neither taken Leave of Wife or Children, I was commanded to go into the West, not Knowing whither I should go nor what I was to do there…"

This journey brought him to Swarthmore Hall where he joined Fox in that memorable encounter which convinced Margaret Fell and established a base for the Quaker movement. The following four years were a time of travelling, teaching, debating with opponents, appearances in courts and imprisonment, writing, and (I'm glad to say) occasional visits to his home.

The message spread fast and widely, apparently without any strategic plan. The early Quaker evangelists travelled as they felt led by the Spirit. They corresponded to encourage one another, not to command. In January 1656, George Fox was imprisoned in Launceston, Cornwall; and many of the other missionaries were also in prison, or back in the north and midlands, or in Ireland. But James Nayler, now considered by many contemporaries to be their most notable preacher, was in London, under great pressure from would-be followers and with little solid support. An over-enthusiastic atmosphere developed in which he was paid exaggerated honours; one man was to write to him, "Thy name shall be no more James Nayler, but Jesus". He said later that fear struck him when he received this letter, and he put it in his pocket, intending no one to see it, as he could not own to the contents. However he did not reprove the sender. A woman claimed that he had raised her from the dead. Over the

distance that separated them, tensions arose between Nayler, strained to the point of exhaustion, and Fox, isolated and ill-treated in prison. Each misjudged the other. Other Friends were urging Fox to publish a statement condemning Nayler, afraid he had already hesitated too long. When they did meet, they quarrelled; and when Nayler would have kissed Fox, Fox offered him his foot to kiss.

The issue caused passionate debate at the time, which has been revived in our own day. Beneath the personal conflict lay a fundamental issue: was the inner guidance claimed by the individual infallible? Fox could see in Nayler (more clearly perhaps than in himself) the possibility of unchecked individuality diverging from the divine illumination in which they both believed. Other Friends expected him to settle the issue by his personal authority. Up to now, in the unity so often felt at the start of a great venture, Friends had not needed to discover ways of reconciling different perceptions of the Truth.

Nayler's excitable women followers were openly and bitterly critical of Fox, yet Nayler refused to restrain them at Fox's request. He did not do so, he said later, because he could not quench whatever was "of God" in what they said and did. It has been suggested that at the time he did not have the emotional strength to withstand their influence, and this is borne out by contemporary descriptions of his passive, exhausted demeanour. Yet he still justified his behaviour by appealing to divine guidance, and so implicitly challenged Fox's spiritual insight. Fox did repudiate some of Nayler's followers: "Martha Simmonds and Stranger and his wife is denied for their lies and slanders & so judged out with the Truth."[306] Whether he would eventually have done the same to Nayler, or whether the Spirit would have shown a way of reconciliation was never known; events now took an unexpected direction.

On 24th October, 1656, James Nayler rode into Bristol in pouring rain, and his tiny group of followers strewed garments in his way and sang "Holy, holy, holy", as a symbol of the second coming of Christ, which many looked for in those days, and which Quakers believed had taken place (spiritually) in them. The city authorities at once arrested him. The letter paying him divine honours was found in his pocket. This gave Parliament the opportunity to discredit Quakers by arraigning him for blasphemy. It is a measure of the importance they attached to this matter that the debate lasted three weeks. Nayler's defence to the House of Commons was to claim that God had guided him.

> I do abhor that any honour due to God should be given to me as I am a creature. But it pleased the Lord to set me up as a sign of the coming of the Righteous One. And what has been done as I passed through the towns, I was commanded by the Lord to suffer such things to be done by me, as to the outward, as a sign, not as I am a creature that is, usurping the honour due to the Creator.[307]

Parliament illegally sentenced him to be whipped, branded, bored through the tongue, humiliated and imprisoned. He underwent these punishments with heroic patience, after embracing the executioner. His name and the word "Quaker" were suddenly notorious through Europe.

We can trace in pamphlets and private letters how the other leading Friends tried to dissociate themselves from his actions and the taint of blasphemy, though several of them visited him in prison. William Dewsbury, one of the wisest and most loveable of them, encouraged him to write letters expressing his sorrow that he had brought shame and suffering on Friends, and condemning the spirit of enmity which his actions had encouraged. Nayler now disclaimed the divine Leading by which he had justified himself earlier; he wrote of "this Time of my Darkness and Night of great Temptation (which Darkness I had let up over my Head, and my Judgement being much lost)"[308] This

distanced him from adherents who might be dividing the Quaker movement in his name, and reaffirmed the unity of the Spirit by which Quakers claimed to be led. It also answered the propaganda of their enemies: "J.N. and G.F. at Daggers drawn one against another, which is a sufficient Discovery of that Cheat of theirs, that they were all led by that one, true, and unerring, infallible Spirit."[309]

When he was released from prison in 1658, he went to see George Fox. Fox was suffering from a bout of mental illness at the time, and either he or his nurses rebuffed Nayler. He responded very gently, "My spirit was quieted, in that simplicity in which I went, in that to return…and so His will is my peace".[310] He took up his Quaker ministry in London with a new sweetness and modesty, though as before he drew large crowds. His most profound writings, What the Possession of the Living Faith is and Milk for Babes and Meat for Strong Men, written in prison, now appeared in print. It was not till 1660 that William Dewsbury brought Nayler and Fox together, only a few months before Nayler's death. "Mighty was the Lord's majesty," writes Dewsbury, "amongst his people in the day he healed up the breach which had been so long to the sadness of the hearts of many. The Lord clothed my dear brethren Geo.Fox, Edward Burrough, Fras. Howgill, with a precious wisdom. A healing Spirit did abound within them with the rest of the Lord's people there that day . . . and dear James Nayler, the Lord was with him."[311] Shortly after the reconciliation, Nayler set out for his home, following a suggestion of Fox's that he should renew his ministry in the North. But he was mugged on the road, and died at a Friend's house in Huntingdonshire.

It is a disappointment that Fox does not describe this reconciliation in his Journal, and indeed there is some doubt whether he or Margaret Fell ever fully forgave Nayler for bringing the whole movement into such danger, and setting "that bad example among Friends" as Fox says of him when blaming a later controversy on his influence.

The key event of James Nayler's life, his ride into Bristol, has been judged in different ways. To most of his contemporaries it was blasphemy, and as part of his punishment a B was branded on his forehead. To many Friends it was a surrender to temptation (from evil companions) which led him out of his right way. Hs friend George Whitehead, citing Daniel 11, 34-35, wrote: "He was a Man of Understanding, yet had a Fall: Flatterers did cleave unto him…"[312] This seems to be the conclusion of Nayler's first modern biographer.[313] The accounts spoke of his "clouded condition" and another modern writer suggests that he suffered from a passing mental illness arising from physical illness and exhaustion— perhaps depression brought on by the way Fox had treated him.

But there are other ways to look at it. Nayler did not repudiate the action of riding into Bristol, which he called "a sign of the coming of the Righteous One".[314] Another biographer suggests it was possible "that he had consented to a "miracle play" of this kind, a "sign of repentance" that Christ was not to enter with arms or worldly power.[315] (The quotation from Zechariah [9:9] which is linked to Jesus' ride into Jerusalem refers to a king who renounces the weapons of war.) Ormerod Greenwood who worked in drama used to call the Bristol ride "a piece of street theatre". Only twelve months earlier Cromwell had ordered his soldiers to pull down Bristol Fort, and in September he had purged some members of the newly elected Parliament because they were likely to challenge his own authority, a trend which disturbed other ex-members of the fiercely egalitarian New Model Army besides Nayler.[316] So the action was appropriate to the time and the place, and less extreme than several prophetic signs staged by other Quakers, except insofar as Christ was

impersonated.

For me these issues are less important than the lessons James Nayler was to draw from his experience. What occupied his mind during those lonely three years in prison? At first we may picture him turning over and over the events of the last few months, remembering the arguments, the misunderstandings, the warnings, his sense of foreboding when he came to London, the bewilderment and sufferings of his fellow Quakers: "God knows, I lie not; for there is nothing of all my hardships that hath lain and doth lie upon me like this, that any of the flock of God should be offended or suffer through me."[317] But there was also the struggle with the meaning of these experiences; and this is where James Nayler ceases to be for us a tragic or pathetic historical figure, and becomes intensely relevant. Most of us, it seems, have pushed aside the language of God's judgement and punishment, and even of sin, as barbarous and scarcely intelligible. Nayler had been educated to think in these terms; and he had endured experiences which might well have led him to look for God's vengeance on those who had persecuted him, and even on those Friends who could not forgive him. But out of his suffering he forged new insights into the spiritual and psychological realities behind those terms, which can speak to us with an authentic voice.

Early Friends believed that the Light of Christ guided each man who is willing to receive him. The nativity, teaching, passion, resurrection, second coming, judgement, and final triumph of Christ are not only historical events, but also stages in each individual's experience of him. Nayler, like Fox and the others, was convinced he had known Christ living and teaching within himself; this was the strong original belief which we recall in our well-used phrases "the inner light", and "that of God in every man". Believing that he had known Christ as the Way and the Truth, he now had to retrace in his mind the steps which had led him off the Way. Yet he had felt so identified with Christ—even to the point of dressing his hair and beard as he believed Christ had done. And in Christ's power he was said to have recalled a woman from the dead.[318] He had fasted, he had given himself unstintingly, he had borne the burden of Quaker ministry in London almost single-handed for months, writing to urge the others to come and join him.

But he now began to see that, under this strain, "not minding in all things to stand single and low to the Motions of that Endless Life, by it to be led in all things, both within and without; but giving way to the Reasoning Part [of me], as to some things which in themselves had no seeming Evil, by little and little drew my mind after Trifles, Vanities and Persons..."[319] He does not identify the exact point where he went astray; perhaps that would be impossible, for the gentle warnings of the Spirit are known long before anyone or anything else can show that we are out of our way: "for though the letter [of the Law] or something without may shew what is sin by its fruits when it is brought forth, yet it is the work of the Spirit to discover spiritual wickedness in its first motion, which is the only place to kill it ere it become sin."[320] He had felt these warnings, but he now admitted he had hardened his heart against them. "But when I reasoned against [Christ's] tender reproof . . . his pure Spirit was grieved and he ceased to reprove, and he gave me up and his Light he withdrew and his judgement took away, and so the body of death and sin revived again."[321]

Perhaps this was how it had felt, as he floundered in confusion before the Bristol ride, detesting but not condemning the fanatical adherence of his immediate followers, sensing the growing estrangement of the Friends he respected most. But this could not be an adequate account of how the indwelling Spirit of God meets opposition and adversity. With almost superhuman intensity he uses the gospel account of Jesus' last days to analyse his own experiences and the Spirit which led him to embrace his executioner and endure his terrible punishments with heroic patience. The Inward Christ could not act in a different

way from the one which he had demonstrated on the cross: the constancy, the unconditional forgiveness, the refusal to respond to evil with its own cruel weapons. In a startling insight he sees that this is a demonstration, not an abrogation, of God's power, "Which doth in no way take from his Power, who is equal with the Father, but doth manifest his Power to be unlimited, in that he beareth all things."[322]

At first his torture and imprisonment seemed like God's punishment. He writes, "This is the Evil in [God's] Sight, and that which provokes his Pure Spirit, That vain Man… should be exalted in himself, because of [God's] Gifts, and Glory in his Strength and Wisdom, and so grow wanton against the Life from whence he hath it… Here Man forgets his God, and so withers at the Root, and be the Tree never so great it will fall in the End, and great will be the Fall thereof."[323] But he began to realise that what he was experiencing in his sufferings was not the vengeance of God but his loving and supportive companionship:

> Let me never forget thee, what thou hast been to me in the Night, in the Day of Tryal, when I was beset in Darkness, when I was cast out as a Wandering Bird, when I was assaulted with strong Temptations, then thy Presence in secret did preserve me; and in a low Estate I felt thee near me, when the Floods sought to sweep me away.[324]

The gospels claim that Christ is the judge of all men.[325] Quakers had from the start interpreted this as meaning that the Light of Christ in the heart continually judges all that is contrary to it: "If there be a dwelling in the Light, this Judgement ceaseth not till the Throne of Christ be established in the Heart in Peace; for this is his Judgement, and is upon all that stands up against his Kingdom."[326] Quakers today still acknowledge this power of discernment, though we might describe it in other words; and we would agree that it is easy to let it become confused with rational considerations and emotional pressures.

But the first Friends also held that "all shall arise to give an Account and receive at the last Day according to their Works, whether Good or Evil".[327] In The Lamb's War (printed in 1657) Nayler still oscillates between God's mercy and the bible teaching that God's patience must finally give out: "He preaches to the Spirits in Prison, with much long suffering towards the World, a Nation or a particular Person, before he gives them up and Numbers them for Destruction."[328] But he finds himself in a contradiction, because this implies that Christ's love and mercy will finally be overtaken by a revenge that is inconsistent with them. "Doth he now come with Haling and Beating, Whips and Prisons and cruel Tortures to take the Kingdom of Peace, who hath suffered such things formerly from the World himself…? Sure the Vail is thick over that Heart who sees not that this is not his Kingdom, Power nor Glory, nor his Image who is the same yesterday, today and for ever."[329]

So James Nayler looks into his own experience to see how Jesus' justice can be consistent and concurrent with his love. "I have come to set a fire on the earth," said Jesus,[330] and Nayler had experienced this fire. "When my Work was in the Furnace," he writes, "and as I passed through the Fire, by thee I was not consumed, though the Flames ascended above my Head."[331] At last the experience makes sense; the love, the judgement and the punishment are one single fire, and that fire is Christ. If we willingly endure it, we find that it burns away our corruption and unworthiness. If the unregenerate man does not feel it as pain, this is because God in his mercy and patience first gives gentler warnings. "Doth he who hath the Sword of Judgement, and faithfully uses it to part you and the World…to bring you out into Sons' Freedom, doth he hate you, or is he your Enemy?"[332]

God will never leave us. He must be encountered; and the fire of his love is only hurtful to the part in each of us which clings to evil. "He that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, and God in him . . . there is no Fear in this Love, no Torment in Judgement . . . Such [men] love Judgement and are able to stand therein, and to dwell with Everlasting Burning, that which

condemns the Wicked, the World and the Spirit thereof; such love, who love God, who love his Appearance in Jesus Christ, who is a consuming Fire…"[333] (Nayler's italics). Thus Nayler's inner experience brings him to Dostoyevsky's concept of punishment imposed, accepted and carried through within ourselves, with the power to redeem our futures. It is as though there were no hell, only heaven and purgatory. As so often in early Quaker writing, this understanding of Christ within is linked with the historical Jesus; so judgement is "committed to him that can lay down his life for his enemies"—another reconciling insight.

How does this judgement happen? Nayler takes Paul's statement "We war not against flesh and blood but…against spiritual wickedness"[334] and expands it by saying that if Christ ("the Lamb") were making war on human beings he would use physical weapons to destroy us. But as he struggles only with the spiritual evil within his creatures, his methods must be consistent with his merciful purposes.

> …For with the Spirit of Judgement and with the Spirit of Burning will he plead with his enemies; and having kindled the Fire, and awakened the Creature, and broken their Peace and Rest in Sin, he waits in patience to prevail to recover the Creature and slay the Enmity, by suffering all the Rage, and Envy, and evil Entreatings that the Evil Spirit that rules in the Creature can cast upon him, and he receives it all with Meekness, and Pity to the Creature, returning Love for Hatred…if by any Means he may overcome Evil with Good…[335]

Christ told us not to judge one another;[336] and, in so far as Christ is in us, we shall only judge others in this spirit of self-sacrifice and burning charity. Nayler, if any one, might have remained a Christian and yet have looked for God's day of vengeance on those who illegally judged, sentenced and punished him, or the Friends who forsook and condemned him. Indeed he wrote: "Truly for the Hardness and Unreconcileableness which is in some I am astonished and shaken lest the Spirit of Christ Jesus be grieved and depart."[337] But his own experience confirms his new vision of that Spirit, a vision which is like a jewel transfiguring the pain in which it is set. "But against him that sought my Life in that Day and rejoiced at that Occasion have I requited no Evil in my Heart, neither have I [prayed] before the Lord, That the Evil Day should haste [of him] who rejoiced at my Fall."[338] He had discovered that he could bear his sufferings to the utmost, or rather Christ within him could do so. This showed him the meaning of his own life because it is the meaning of the crucifixion—to endure evil and violence to the end with no wish for retaliation, and so to conquer them.

Today when we wish to confront oppression without using its own methods, there is a choice to be made between "active nonviolence" and "non-resistance to evil". The former takes a tactical view of nonviolent methods; they are, says the acknowledged expert Gene Sharp, "a technique used to control, combat and destroy the opponent's power by nonviolent means of wielding power."[339]

In contrast, non-resistance to evil simply refuses to become involved in the conflict, believing that evil carries the seeds of its own destruction. This was the conclusion of Nadezhda Mandelstam, whose husband was killed in Stalin's purges. She wrote:

> Like nearly all women in my situation, I had a vision one night that phantom protectors had come to avenge me… But immediately, almost in the same second, I brushed it aside, deciding I did not want my own fascists. Better that all these monsters die off in their country villas, enjoying their retirement on pensions worthy of executioners. I would not want any band of killers to take vengeance on them for me. The last thing I wish is to resemble them… I fear that what I am saying may qualify as "non-resistance to evil" [Tolstoy's phrase], and if so I must accept that I am a "non-resister" —though I wish there were some other phrase for it.[340]

In The Brothers Karamazov Dostoevsky shows Jesus under arrest by the Spanish Inquisition. Jesus makes no answer to the accusations, bluster, arguments, justifications and threats of the Grand Inquisitor; he listens patiently without making an answer, then simply kisses him and walks out into the night.[341] It is rare to find this response expressed outside a religious context; but lovers of Wuthering Heights will recall how young Cathy, Hareton, and Nellie Dean simply endure Heathcliff's malevolence till it crumbles into impotence against them. This does not only happen in fiction; I knew many people in Northern Ireland who trusted and waited for a day when violet passions would burn themselves out.

James Nayler believed that the heart of our peace testimony (only beginning to take its shape at that time) should be to show the loving response of the Inward Christ, whose gentleness and patience reveals his invincible strength. Nayler had served in a victorious army which attributed its successes to God, but he could no longer believe that violence is a divine tool: "What a glory it is to see Peace shine in the midst of War, Love in the midst of Hatred, Meekness in the Midst of Strife, righteous Judgement in the midst of Wickedness, Innocency in the Midst of Violence and Oppression; as a Lilly amongst Thorns, so is that of God amongst the Men of the World."[342]

He would want our peace witness to be the expression of an immense tenderness in us. This may seem a surprising statement. We are more used to thinking of our peace testimony in action—relieving suffering, mediating, removing the causes of war, building the skills of peace in shattered communities or among children, analysis, protests, dialogue. (Nayler did not despise these things; he himself wrote letters of advice and warning to the Commonwealth Parliament, and later to Charles II.) But we know that all these actions can be inspired by fear (of nuclear destruction, for example), or ambition, the wish to look good or feel good about ourselves, or to deal with our guilt for the suffering of the world. Even when our initial impulse is compassion, other motives can stealthily take over. Nayler explained his own disaster by saying that he was "not minding in all things to stand single and low to the Motions of that endless Life… but giving way to…some things which in themselves had no seeming Evil..."[343]

James Nayler had no interest in political action except as the expression of a deep spiritual awareness. He does not prescribe what kinds of peace work we should or should not do. Instead he speaks of the source from which such work must flow, which he describes as "the Motions of that endless Life". When he says "the Motions" he does not mean our own reactions but the promptings of God in our hearts; "that endless Life" recalls Paul's words, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."[344] He felt that Christ had not only endured the same evil which fell on him but also showed him the way through it to peace. It is not clear what part he thought our intelligence should play in this journey, but he certainly believed that we have access to a wisdom infinitely greater than our own, which he calls "the Peace-maker."

In one controversy he wrote, "The best Expedient for the preserving of the Nation is for all the people of the Nation to turn to God, that by his Light you may be led to Repentance and Newness of Life."[345] This may seem a forlorn hope. But do the alternatives promise better? Gandhi, who was so practical and engaged, shared this belief that spiritual change could transform the everyday world: "I do not believe that the spiritual law works on a field of its own. On the contrary, it expresses itself only through the ordinary activities of life. It thus affects the economic, the social and the political fields."[346] James Nayler's belief in the power of powerlessness does have modern resonances—Nelson Mandela in prison, the nonviolent overthrow of Ferdinand Marcos, the martyrdom of Oscar Romero, the unarmed people of Eastern Europe rejecting totalitarian rule.

We have many stories of people in dangerous situations who trusted to this wisdom. Both my wife and I can testify that it can prevail when cleverness or aggression on our part would only have made the situation worse. When we drew on it, fear disappeared and instead we were given compassion for those who were threatening us. More than once we found that this disarmed them; but it would still have been the right response if "the worst" had happened. Martin Luther King believed this; he advised his followers to tell their opponents, "Bomb our homes and threaten our children and, difficult as it is, we will still love you… But be assured that we'll wear you down by our capacity to suffer and one day we'll win our freedom. We will not only win freedom for ourselves; we will so appeal to your heart and conscience that we will win you in the process, and our victory will be a double victory."[347]

The challenge is to live in the same spirit in the ordinary business of our lives. Peace needs to be made day by day, and I think Nayler would have agreed with the Dalai Lama's words: "Love and compassion, patience, tolerance and forgiveness are essential qualities. When they are present in our lives, everything we do becomes an instrument to benefit the whole human family. Even in terms of our daily occupation —whether this is looking after children in the home, working in a factory, or serving the community as a doctor, lawyer, business person or teacher—our actions contribute towards the well-being of all."[348]

The comments by Gandhi, the Dalai Lama and King show us that we can learn from James Nayler's teaching on the encounter with evil even if we do not share his entire theology. Nayler saw Jesus as the Lamb of the Book of Revelation; but if Jesus were no more than a wise and good man guideded by a holy Spirit to which each of us has access, his way of overcoming evil without using its methods and tools can still inspire us.

Where we might part company with Nayler is in the emphasis he places on enduring suffering. But we have to make some allowance here for his particular experiences. Not all of us will be called to face the extremes of what evil can do to us as he was. But as the Buddha preached in the First Noble Truth, "Stuff happens". We cannot be sure what lies ahead for us, and by living in that Life we will be prepared. You may remember Gordon Wilson, the man who prayed for the IRA on the day they had killed his daughter and many of his friends in Enniskillen, besides injuring him. A mutual friend said to us, "If you had known him before, you would not be surprised. That is the man he has always been."

This attitude to evil is summarised in James Nayler's Last Testimony (usually referred to as his "dying words").[349] This is probably the best-loved and most quoted Quaker passage which has come down to us from the seventeenth century. The evidence that it was in circulation within a few weeks of his death is set out in an article by Ormerod Greenwood.[350] But it is not seen as central by most of the modern scholars who have greatly enriched our understanding of James Nayler's background, life and thought in other ways. William Bittle says that it "perhaps affords the greatest insight into Nayler's character", but he does not comment on what it says.[351] Leo Damrosch quotes it in full, but is a little sceptical about its originality; "…the cadences do not sound much like his and seem too artfully rhetorical for a dying man; if he did indeed express some version of these remarks, somebody else must have edited them afterwards."[352] But he concedes that "the statement is certainly consistent with the views Nayler had been expressing in his final writing." His final comment is dismissive: "Whether or not this text accurately reproduces Nayler's last words, it certainly crystallizes what the Quaker movement needed to make of him if it was not to

erase him from its collective memory." Stephen Sayer goes still further, calling it, "Ironically, a testimony that was probably not his at all", though he gives no evidence for this claim.[353] David Neelon calls it "a beautiful and lyrical text", and accepts it as Nayler's, while doubting if it was written or spoken on his deathbed.[354] But he thinks it a sad commentary on modern Quakerism that this is the only part of Nayler's writings that is widely known, "for the genius of his life's work is elsewhere."

The crucial question is not whether the words were spoken in James Nayler's last few hours, but how deeply we have understood it. I find it a key Quaker document because of the way it links the spiritual path of the "imitation of Christ" with a love for other people which refuses to blame, resent or revenge. I am convinced that it comes from James Nayler because his sufferings (as he explains in his other late writings) had taught him that patience and forgiveness were crucial elements in the example which Jesus gives us. This view is supported by another document which has been largely neglected. This is Epistle XI, subtitled "Not to strive, but overcome by Suffering". It was probably written in Bridewell Prison in 1658 and is reprinted in the Collected Works of 1716.[355] There Nayler argues that non-violence, non-resistance to evil and forgiveness are the outward aspects of an inward submission to the will and guidance of God. I have included the text with a modern English paraphrase and some comments in the appendix. In it he finds words of burning beauty to record how, paradoxically, it is only in the endurance of strife and pain, and the crucifixion of his own will, that he attains freedom and peace. And in this peace he can see an ultimate reconciliation of all things to God.

James Nayler's profound understanding through experience of the reconciling effect of suffering and the loving nature of God's judgement is one of the deepest insights of any early Friend. William Braithwaite wrote: "Not in that pitiful procession through the rain at Bristol, but in the spirit of forgiveness and uncomplaining acceptance of suffering which he afterwards showed, was he set before the Puritan England of his day as a sure sign that Christ was indeed come."[356] And Nayler himself says: "So they sentenced me, but could not see their Sign…"[357] It is the sign, literally, of the cross; and, now as then, we can only make it our own through experience.

And what there is to conquer
By strength or submission, has already been discovered
Once or twice, or several times, by men whom one cannot hope
To emulate—but there is no competition—
There is only the fight to recover what has been lost
And found and lost again and again; and now under conditions
That seem unpropitious. (T. S. Eliot, East Coker)

Jesus Christ, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross.[358] James Nayler's message too is a gospel not of suffering but of joy. This comes across in the Last Testimony. The spirit which he feels, even after a murderous attack, "delights to do no Evil, nor to revenge any Wrong, but delights to endure all things, in hope to enjoy its own in the End." In its deepest form, the Quaker witness to peace is not a project to alter the world, but a changed relationship with Reality. "Its hope is to outlive all Wrath and Contention, and to weary out…whatever is of a Nature contrary to itself."

"NOT TO STRIVE, BUT OVERCOME BY SUFFERING"

James Nayler: *Epistle XI*	***A free paraphrase***
CHILDREN of God, seek a Kingdom in you, that flesh and blood strive not for, nor cannot enter therein, a Kingdom undefiled, and that fadeth not away, hid from that which feeds on earthly things, a Heavenly Kingdom, bearing Heavenly fruits, and where heavenly things abound; wherein the Heavenly Spirit rules, guides, and brings forth fruits of it self, Heavenly Fruits, the Fruits of Grace and Meekness, and of a lowly Mind, the Fruits of Peace and Gentleness, and Forbearance among your Selves. These are Heavenly Fruits and the Virtues of the Tree of Life,	*Children of God, look for a Kingdom within yourselves, one which human nature does not struggle for and could not enter. It is pure and unfading, untroubled by material desires. It is a spiritual Kingdom and its abundant rewards are spiritual not material. This is because there the Spirit of God rules and guides you, and produces its own fruits in you: fruits of grace, meekness, modesty, peace, gentleness and mutual tolerance. These virtues are the fruit of the Tree of Life.*

James Nayler, like other Friends of the 1650s, makes a stark contrast between two states of being, which he describes as two kingdoms, one of which is governed by ordinary human standards, while the other is guided by the Spirit of Christ in the heart. The first is like a tree tall and imposing but barren; the other is low, tender and rich with fruit. Many Friends today would say the contrast is invalid, that we can live a useful life in the world without rejecting all the world's values.

But it is interesting to note that Nayler does not here describe "the world" as wicked. Instead he tries to convince us that it is unfruitful; the satisfactions it holds out to us are not worth having, because they cannot give us the peace of mind which we all deeply want. His teaching is Buddhist in the sense that he believes that the things we desire give only illusory rewards. Only when we have seen this can we turn to what really sustains and nourishes us. But Nayler's view of suffering is not a Buddhist one. The Buddha taught that we can avoid suffering by following the right path. Nayler thought that suffering is inevitable and must be endured.

…and that which the Loftiness of Flesh and Blood looks not for, nor does esteem, which loves the Praise of Men, and to be known in that which this World can see into with the outward Understanding: But wait with Patience to feel that quickened, which is sown in tears and springs up with Joy, out of the Sight of the Natural Understanding, that that alone may bear you, and therein all your Fruit may be found, and so come to the knowledge of the Tree by its Fruits;	*Human pride isn't interested in such things. You will get nothing from them if you prefer people's praise and want to be valued for what this world counts sensible. But hidden from that kind of understanding there is something which "is sown in tears and springs up in joy" (Psalm 125). That is your only true support, and there you will find these fruits. And by knowing the fruit you will come to know the Tree.*

Nayler uses "this world" to mean "human activity which is not guided by God" just as John's Gospel does. Of modern Friends, Thomas Kelly comes closest to Nayler's sharp contrast, when he writes of "living from the Divine Center": "Positions of prominence, eminences of social recognition that we once meant to obtain—how puny and trifling they become! Our old ambitions and heroic dreams—what years we have wasted in feeding our own insatiable self-pride, when only His will truly matters! …Unless the willingness is present to be stripped of our last earthly dignity and hope, and yet still praise Him, we have no message in this our day of refugees, bodily and spiritual."[359]

…and let the Life open the Understanding (and not the Notion, or a Sight) That is the Heavenly Learning of Christ Jesus the Righteous, full of Grace and Truth; but striving to get up to the Knowledge of Heavenly Things in Notion and Form, before the Thing it self be born and brought forth, This is the wrong way to learn Christ, and the Way of the World, that vails the Life; for this Knowledge stands in the sensual Part, to exalt and puff up the Mind above the Meekness and Lowliness that is in the Spirit of Christ Jesus, and beguiles the Soul of the Simplicity in which it should feed;	*Then the spiritual teaching of Jesus Christ, the righteous, will open your understanding in a living way, very different from speculating or judging by appearances. For if you try to use logic and analysis to understand spiritual things before the Spirit itself comes to live in you, you have chosen the wrong way to learn from Christ. It's the world's way, but it hides the true Life. That kind of knowledge is based on the part of us which likes to puff itself up with self-satisfaction and despises the gentle modesty typical of Jesus. So the soul is cheated of its simple nourishment.*

The Inward Christ of early Friends was not simply an equivalent for what we sometimes call the Inner Light. Nayler once said, "If I cannot witness Christ nearer than Jerusalem, I shall have no benefits by him; but I own no other Christ but that who witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate, which Christ I witness in me now."[360]

Kathleen Lonsdale, a sceptical Quaker Scientist, wrote of how she was inwardly taught by Jesus: " I cannot be told… that I must believe this or that about Jesus before I can call myself a Christian. What attracts me to Jesus is his life, the loving spirit that he showed in giving some of his deepest teaching to the woman of Samaria who was despised on three counts, that she was a woman, that she was a Samaritan and that she was living an immoral life: his tolerance in taking a Samaritan as the hero of his good neighbour story: the sympathy and understanding that made him choose to dine with a despised and hated tax-gatherer; that made him give a word of highest approval to a Roman centurion, who was the symbol of the foreign occupation of the country in which he lived; that led him to include among his closest friends a prostitute and a man who was afterwards to betray him; and the courage he showed in going to a cruel death when he realised that that was where his public teaching, if he continued it, would take him."[361]

…and so a Tree may grow high, and hard, and strong, yet Fruitless and out of the Power, got above the Poor, above the Innocent, out of the Feeling of the Sufferer and Man of sorrows where he is; and the End of this Growth is not in the pure Rest, for the higher any one grows here, the more doth that wither and die in them, which is soft, and tender and melting,	*In the same way that a tree may grow high and tough and strong, but barren of fruit, so you can grow too lofty for your poor and innocent brothers and sisters, and for Christ, the man of sorrows, who is suffering among them. That sort of growth doesn't bring you to purity and peace; the higher anyone grows in worldly terms, the more something withers and dies in them which was soft, tender and compassionate.*

"All of us have our moments of absolute honesty within ourselves when we know that these customary securities and goals for which we seem to be living are not our final and real destiny… What direction shall we run, if we would run away to God? Some of you may say, 'I shall go into the city slums, into the war-stricken areas, into work with the sharecroppers and dispossessed miners. And in the world's sufferings I shall find God.' And I would reply, Yes, many have found Him in these settings and scenes of squalor and tragedy. But He whom you seek is already there in the midst of the suffering, bearing its load, before you ever became a bearer of the world's suffering. It is because He was already speaking within you that you went to share this burden." [Thomas Kelly][362] APPENDIX: *James Nayler's* Epistle XI

…which makes one, and is the true Fold for Lambs, where the Lyons must lie down in the End, if they come to rest, and that Eye put out which looks to be great among Men, that comes not into the Rest, but hath Strife in the Mind, Strife in Words and secret Smitings, which defile the Rest, and lead into Division and Separation; but the little Child leads into the Rest, and that which is lowly gives the Entrance.	*But it is that pure and peaceful thing which is the true fold for God's lambs. Even the lions must lie down there in the end if they are to have any rest. But first the desire to be popular and important must be eradic-ated; it can't enter this peaceful place. It disturbs the mind, argues and hits out, destroying peace and causing disagreement and separation. What leads us into peace is like a little child, and the doorway is low.*
Many who become involved in caring for the needs of their fellows "burn out" after a while. The Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh believes that this happens when the worker has not based his or her work on a true inward peace: "Many people are aware of the world's suffering; their hearts are filled with compassion. They know what needs to be done, and they engage in political, social and environmental work to try to change things. But after a period of intense involve- ment they may become discouraged if they lack the strength needed to sustain a life of action. Real strength is not in power, money or weapons, but in deep inner peace."[363]	
So feel that which is lowly and meek to arise above self, that which stills all Strife at home in your Minds, and gives Peace in Temptation and Tribulation; that's a soft and tender thing in you, that is the Peace-maker, that's blest of God.	*So have a sense of this thing so humble and gentle rising over your selfish part. Let it still any conflict in your minds and calm you both in temptation and troubles. It's soft and tender, and it's yours—the Peacemaker inside you which God has given you.*
The gentleness of the inward Peace-maker should never be mistaken for inaction or passivity. It is expressed in the choice of peaceful means to get peaceful results. When a sick man asked John Woolman to write his will, he said, "I wrote [it] save only that part concerning his slave…then told him in a friendly way I could not write any instruments by which my fellow creatures were made slaves without bringing trouble on my own mind. I let him know that I charged nothing for what I had done, and desired to be excused from doing the other part in the way he proposed. Then we had a serious conference on the subject and at length, he agreeing to set her free, I finished his will."[364]	
And this is first felt under the World, under the Strife, suffering by the Strife in Patience, to bring to the End of the Strife and the World, and in the End of it, and of all Exaltation, he comes to arise over the World and the Enmity, who is not of a striving Nature, but lives by Hope, and believes to see to the End of all things under which he suffers, and to out-live every Temptation by suffering And so by an everlasting Life comes over the World, and to reign over all things that are not of that Eternal Nature; but not to join with the Evil.	*You will first feel it when the world is pressing you down and conflict surrounds you. It endures the struggle in patience, to bring you beyond the powers of conflict and human society. As power and pride collapse, Christ rises in you towering over the world and its troubles. His nature is not to fight back but to live by hope, because he believes he will see the end of whatever makes him (and you) suffer, and outlive every trial by suffering it. This is the only way the everlasting life can overcome the life of the world. It has power over everything which does not share its nature, but never uses means which are evil.*

Thomas Kelly wrestled with these questions of the world's hurts and our own. He wrote: "There is nothing automatic about suffering so that suffering infallibly produces great souls… But if we dare to take this awakened seed of Christ into the midst of the world's suffering, it will grow… Take a young man or woman in whom Christ is only dimly formed, but one in whom the seed of Christ is alive. Put him into a distressed area, into a refugee camp, into a poverty region. Let him go into the world's suffering bearing this seed with him, and in suffering it will grow and Christ will be more and more fully formed in him."[365]

The hope mentioned by Nayler is not the wishful hopefulness of our human nature, but God's own vision of a life beyond all that the world can do to us. This belief in the power of powerlessness is paradoxical but not unique to Nayler. Gandhi's concept of satyagraha (Soul-force) is a modern statement of the idea. Martin Luther King said, "We will match your capacity to inflict suffering by our capacity to endure suffering."[366] James Douglass points out: "For those liberated from the fear of death, the law of violence is powerless. Violence can only impose its will to the extent that its companion, death, is feared. The law of violence can only continue to rule if it is met by another form of itself—by a counter-threat of death or by a surrender to the fear of suffering and death. Nonviolence is neither of these."[367]

And he that in the Particular is born of this, hath overcome the World in himself, and knows how to walk towards his Brother in that which hath power over the World and out-lives all, whereby he can suffer therein, and brings forth its own undefiled into one to rest, ever aiming in all Ministrations at the Kingdom of Truth, Peace and Holiness,	*When people know that Christ is been born in this way within themselves, the worldly parts of their nature are vanquished. They can encounter their brothers and sisters in a spirit stronger than the world and can outlive whatever the world makes them suffer. That spirit keeps them undefiled and brings them to peace of mind because—in everything it does—it is creating a realm of truth, peace and holiness.*

By the "worldly parts of our nature" Nayler does not only mean what we know to be evil, but other things in which we put an insecure trust. He would agree with what Thich Nhat Hanh says about hope: "We use hope to believe something better will happen in the future, that we will arrive at peace, or the Kingdom of God. Hope becomes a kind of obstacle. If you can refrain entirely from hoping, you can bring yourself entirely into the present moment and discover the joy that is already here. Enlightenment, peace and joy will not be granted by someone else. The well is within us, and if we dig deeply in the present moment the water will spring forth."[368]

…which is the End of all Gifts and Callings amongst the Brethren, and is only obtained as that arises in all which suffers by the World, but is not of the World, which he that is Christ's Minister comes to turn Men unto.	*This is the goal of all the gifts and leadings we have been given as a holy community. It is only attained when something arises within us which is not part of the world but suffers from it. Anyone who is a true minister of Christ points people towards this truth.*

Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I among them" (*Mt 18,20*). James Nayler believes that this is what defines the Quaker community. Compare Thomas Kelly: "It was a tragic day when the fellowship of the early church groups faded out into church membership. And it was a tragic day when the fellowship of the early Children of Light gave way to membership in a Society of Friends. From fellowship to membership is to cross a great and tragic divide. Now, when you meet a member of the Society of Friends,you don't know if you can find fellowship with him at the deepest level within the Life-center in the Divine seed, or whether you can only pass the time of day with him."[369]

And this Seed all should know, which is beloved of the Father and Heir of the Everlasting Kingdom, who strives not by Violence, but entreats; who seeks not Revenge, but endures all Contradictions from all against himself, to the end he may obtain Mercy for all from the Father. And this is the Seed of eternal Peace, and the Eternal Peace-maker, which was fore-ordained of the Father, and hath Power to endure all Things, and subdue all Things by overcoming.	*This is the Seed that all should find in themselves, so dear to the Father and his Heir. The Son doesn't try to change his enemies by violence, but by appealing to them; he does not want revenge, but endures everyone's opposition to himself so that finally he may win the Father's forgiveness for them all. The Seed in you is the foundation of peace through the universe, and actively builds it; it's part of God's original plan with the power to bear everything and bring it all into its peaceful power.*

Nayler sees not taking revenge as one of the characteristics of the pure life which the world cannot understand nor practice. This was also Tolstoy's view: "People who profited by violence and did not wish to give up their advantages took on themselves a monopoly of Christian teaching and declared that, as cases can be found in which nonresistance causes more harm that the use of violence (the imaginary criminal killing the imaginary child) therefore Christ's doctrine of nonresistance need not always be followed; and that one may deviate from his teaching to defend one's life or the life of others… It was just this sophisticated justification of violence that Christ denounced."[370]

So this seek in your selves and in all Men, and in it seek one another as Brethren. This is that which is perfect, and is never to be done away, neither can it be overcome of the World; Wrath cannot enter it; Pride cannot enter it; it strives for nothing but to live its own Life, which the World strives not for; nor can any that are of it strive with it;	*Search for this Seed in yourselves and in everyone else; it's what makes us all brothers and sisters. It alone is perfect and indestructible. The world cannot conquer it, anger cannot corrupt it and pride cannot invade it. Its only ambition is to live its own life, which the world thinks so ineffectual. Yet those to whom it belongs have no difficulty with it.*

"The Seed" was Isaac Penington's favourite metaphor for his experience of Christ in his heart: "But some may desire to know what I have at last met with. I answer, 'I have met with the Seed.' Understand that word and thou wilt be satisfied and inquire no further."[371] The reader who is uncomfortable with early Friends' duality of "human nature" and "the Inward Christ" may be helped by some remarks of Jung: "Our basis is ego-consciousness [and] from that point we look out upon an enigmatic world of obscurity, never knowing to what extent the shadowy forms we see are caused by our own consciousness or possess a reality of their own. The superficial observer is content with the first assumption. But closer study shows that as a rule the images of the unconscious…have a reality and spontaneity of their own… Only if we know that the thing which truly matters is the infinite can we avoid fixing our interests upon futilities and upon all kinds of goals which are not of real importance."[372]

the worldly Spirit seeks not that Crown, whose Life is to suffer all things, to be meek, and low, and poor, and rejected; reviled, contemned of all the World, bearing the Reproach of all that's above that of God in all. And little striving in the Will of Man is there for this Kingdom, or the Cross that belongs thereto, which no exalted Mind can bear nor glory in.	*But ordinary human nature has no interest in a life which undergoes everything in meekness, humility, poverty and rejection; a life which is cursed and scorned by the whole world. Everything which tries to be loftier than "that of God" in us all condemns it. It's not a Kingdom which human ambition would reach out to, because the Cross is there, a fate which pride cannot tolerate, let alone see its wonder.*

Perhaps Friends misunderstand the idea of pride and tend to think it is not one of our vices; we are more likely to accuse ourselves of excessive humility. But John Punshon writes: "The barrier we erect to defend ourselves from conscience is a sense of our own self-importance, or pride… Pride is a form of personal untruthfulness, a way of avoiding the need to recognise the person we really are and what we stand in need of. It is a device for dealing with fear, but usually only increases it."[373] Nayler believes that when we are willing to enter the life whose "doorway is low" this untruthfulness becomes impossible.

And this is the Righteousness that exceeds the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and Professors, and that wherein they cannot enter; nor can any reign in this Kingdom, but who can bear the Cross which leads to the Crown, and hath a habitation in that which cannot be moved with Change nor kindled with Wrath.

Yet this is "the righteousness which exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees" (Mt 5,20) which means those who profess what they don't perform. It is closed to all except those who can bear the suffering which leads to the reward. Only they live in a state which is not destroyed by outward changes and cannot be fired to anger.

During a visit to apartheid South Africa, the theologian Walter Wink asked himself what would be the consequences if we are truly concerned, but are not prepared to suffer. He answered himself: "The Cross means that death is not the greatest evil one can suffer. It means that I am free to act faithfully without undue regard for the outcome. God can bring out of voluntarily assumed suffering the precious seeds of a new reality. I cannot really be open to the call of God in a situation of oppression if the one thing I have excluded as an option is the possibility of my own suffering and death."[374]

This is the Heritage of the Meek and the Kingdom which only belongs to the Poor in Spirit and Pure in Heart, where the Hardness of Heart is broken, and melted, and Self dead, many Spirits desire to look into it; but few to live the Life of it. It's only for the Heirs who are born with Sorrow, and slain with Ease; to whom Flesh and Blood is an Enemy, and with the Eye that looks out lightly esteemed amongst Men.

This is the Kingdom which the meek inherit; it belongs to the poor in spirit and pure in heart (Mt 5,2-5). Hardness of heart is broken and melted there, and pride of self is dead. Many are curious about it, but few are willing to live its life. It's only for those who are born in sorrow and would be killed by comfort; those who are at war with their baser natures; those whose vision is rejected by all around them.

In conclusion

Not long ago I read *Jilted Generation*, a book about the pressures on young British people today.[375] The authors show how each generation since the 1945 election felt an obligation to give its successors a legacy in the form of educational provision, training for work, accessible housing and pensions, rather than keeping for itself all the benefits of its wealth. It followed the biblical maxim, "Freely ye have received, freely give."[376] This attitude changed about 1980; and since then British governments of both persuasions have adopted a philosophy of the market which claims that if we each pursue our personal interests, market forces will ensure that this will promote the well-being of everyone. Margaret Thatcher famously said, "There is no such thing as society." One typical consequence is that a generation which itself had benefited from free university tuition (with subsidised maintenance) deprived its children of these advantages and sentenced them to enter working life in debt for the massive cost of their third-level education.

Looking at the gloomy prospects faced by those between fifteen and thirty today in key areas of life, the authors suggest that this policy has been a disaster because social wellbeing depends on each generation taking responsibility for the welfare of the next, and sacrificing some of its own immediate interests for the sake of those coming after. Whatever disagreement there might be over the details, I suspect that most British Friends would accept the general principle.

But as I worked on the stories in this book, I began to wonder how far we apply this principle to our own Society. Do we pay enough attention to the legacy we should be giving the Quakers of the future? What are we contributing to our Yearly Meeting's future spiritual maintenance? Do we see a clear and necessary role for ourselves in this? Or alternatively are we weakening our sense of corporate identity and undervaluing the importance of our society's past? Respected Friends such as Alistair Heron and Christine Trevett have asked these questions. Christine bluntly raised the question of dishonest thinking:

> Are we personally or corporately at one with God or losing sight of God? Are we, individually or corporately, trying to avoid the "God" business altogether, refusing even to use the word? Are we ceasing to think corporately at all? Are we creating metaphorical fig leaves to disguise the fact that we have been stripped of much that we had in the past and in this age of "isms" are still not sure whose clothes we should be wearing?[377]

And Alistair, after careful research in a large General Meeting, expressed deep anxieties about our changing identity:

> [Our] spiritual problems are the direct result of changes that began at least thirty years ago, and if nothing effective is initiated soon, in thirty years' time the membership of our Society will need to be described by terms such as ethical, humanist, secular. By then only a minority will affirm personal experience of the living power of the Spirit of God in their lives.[378]

We have inherited much more than intellectual formulations, which are the part of our legacy most easily jettisoned. Looking back at my own life I know what a large part my childhood homes, my grandparents and other relatives, the stories about our family past, my father's career in Africa, my wartime experiences and my schoolday memories have played in establishing my sense of identity. History and group memory play the same part

in forming the identity of a group.

Christine Davis tells in her 2008 Swarthmore lecture how a young atheist, her communist guide in Moscow years ago, asked if she belonged to a church and she told him she was a Quaker.

> He went silent. Eventually he blurted out, "I wouldn't be here if Quakers hadn't fed my parents in the Volga provinces." I have never forgotten that experience, for I was brought into sharp contact with the heritage which I had taken on in becoming a member of this Religious Society. The encounter was for me effectively a challenge, to live up to that inheritance. It taught me that good stewardship sets standards, and that we in the next and following generations have to measure up, as best we can…
>
> We are inheritors, whether we like it or not. There is a tradition attached to us. We have given testimony in the past to our insights, and that forms part of the base of our testimony today. What we do today will form part of the inheritance of tomorrow's Friends. We must not be limited by our inheritance, but in identifying ourselves as Friends we have accepted the responsibility of being true to it.[379]

My experience of coming to Quakers in the 1960s was like that of Roy Stephenson, who says in his Introduction that, when he joined the Society of Friends, he was introduced to a host of historical figures who showed him "our Quaker DNA". Their stories were familiar to the Friends who welcomed us, and the children learnt them in children's meeting.[380] This was how we were shown what it means to be a Quaker and how our faith can be put into action. I think this was the common experience of those who took up membership in Britain Yearly Meeting up to the 1980s. Many of the Friends we knew were progressive and unconventional, and they often challenged parts of the legacy from the Quaker past—but first they knew it and understood it. Writers could assume a shared background which did not need to be explained, let alone justified. As an example of these certainties I quote Peter Fishpool, writing in 1988:

> We have to start from where we are, in particular with our relationship with God. Of course we Quakers have no credal statement defining that relationship. Yet, when asked, many of us would make first reference to the Holy Spirit. Our special style of worship encourages us to be at one with the Spirit of God. The Religious Society of Friends makes a particular purpose of trying to work as an instrument of the Holy Spirit.[381]

This legacy was not only made up of heroic stories. It also told of mistakes and lessons painfully learnt. Writing this book, I realised how abstract and intellectual we have become as we try to explain what we stand for. But the great writers show us that stories too embody truth, and in a more dynamic and persuasive way than conceptual thinking. Our history expresses a shared belief in the reality of the spiritual, the ever-changing witness to our testimonies, and a common understanding of the practice and aim of Quaker worship. This gave us our way of testing concerns and our conviction that the Spirit could speak to us in our meetings for business if we laid our personal preferences and prejudices aside.

In 1983 I went to live in Ireland and joined its more traditional Yearly Meeting. When I returned in 1994, Britain Yearly Meeting seemed very different from the one I had joined. I was struck by the extent to which the legacy of the past seemed to have been forgotten. One symptom of this was the new *Quaker Faith & Practice* which appeared in 1995. Its predecessor, called *Christian Faith & Practice* (1960), gave a clear overview of our history, and quoted extracts reflecting the different phases through which Friends had moved since 1650. The new book paid scant tribute to our history, apart from our earliest years. In the chapters of personal quotations, three quarters came from the twentieth century, and two

thirds of these were from the most recent forty years.[382]

A beautiful passage from Philip Rack illustrates the new primacy given to immediate personal experience:

> Please be patient, those of you who have found a rock to stand on, with those of us who haven't and with those of us *who are not even looking for one.* We live on the wave's edge, where sea, sand and sky are all mixed up together: we are tossed head over heels in the surf, catching only occasional glimpses of any fixed horizon. Some of us stay there from choice because it is exciting and it *feels like the right place to be.* [Author's italics][383]

I can resonate with these words, but they point to a big change in Friends' thinking about the individual viewpoint. When George Fox asked the congregation at Ulverston, "What canst thou say?" he was not asking what they *thought*, but what they knew from their *experience* of the divine. His question continued: "Art thou a child of the Light, and hast walked in the Light, and what thou speakest, is it inwardly from God?"[384] But his question is used nowadays to imply that anyone's beliefs contain as much truth as anyone else's. Friends can get embarrassed if they are asked what we as a Society can say. They find it even harder to explain what it is that we have been saying for three hundred and fifty years.

Respect for the past does not imply a stubborn refusal to change. If that were so, we would still be addressing one another as "thou" and refusing to read novels. As I worked on this book, I realised that many of its stories were about times when new insights were challenging Friends' accepted ideas. Some of them now seem obvious to us, like the abolition of slavery. Others have not yet been grasped, like James Nayler's spiritual analysis of non-violence and David Wills' plea for a Quaker testimony against punishment. My explorations showed me something about our tradition of challenging tradition. They brought me to a new understanding of a passage from the theologian Paul Tillich which I had quoted in the past; and I had to wonder if the sentences I have put into italics might sometimes apply to us today.

> The decisive step to maturity is risking the break away from spiritual infancy with its protective traditions and guiding authorities. Without "no" to authority, there can be no maturity. *This "no" need not be rebellious, arrogant or destructive. As long as it is so, it indicates immaturity by this very attitude.* The "no" that leads to maturity can be, and basically always is, experienced in anxiety, in discouragement, in guilt feelings and despairing inner struggles… Much must be left behind: early dreams, poetic imaginations, cherished legends, favoured doctrines, accustomed laws and ritual traditions. Some of them must be restored on a deeper level, some of them must be given up. Despite this price, maturity can be gained—a manly, self-critical, convincing faith, not produced by reasoning but reasonable, and at the same time rooted in the message of the divine foolishness, the ultimate source of wisdom.[385]

Paul Tillich here describes the path of spiritual growth and renewal not just for individuals but (through them) for the whole religious group. In many of the Quakers in this book I recognised the anxiety, discouragement and despair to which he refers. I was struck by the loneliness of the pioneers: James Nayler in prison after almost destroying the Quaker movement, Thomas Shillitoe with his crippling shyness, William Allen and Stephen Grellet crossing the vast distances of Russia, Job Scott saying goodbye to his young and motherless children before departing to his death in Ireland. John Woolman followed his leading into forms of witness which his friends could not understand. The Grimké sisters found their callings repeatedly blocked by their own Meeting. Gwen and Corder Catchpool were misunderstood and criticised from a safe distance by some of the Friends who had sent them

to Nazi Berlin. We can now see more clearly that they were not assailing Quaker values but interpreting and adding to them; and they did so in keen awareness of their legacy from the past. They accepted the pain which came with the task of putting Quaker insights into action in unprecedented situations.

These stories have caught my attention at different times over the past forty years, so I did not expect a common theme to emerge. I wanted to bring them to life by retelling them, and I hoped to avoid turning their leading actors into "Quaker saints" which is one of the traps of Quaker historical writing. I probably haven't quite succeeded, because I found so many of them inspiring. However I think I have also shown enough shortsightedness and unkindness from Friends to keep us humble and warn us of possible dangers. Knowing our failures may help us not to repeat them. And I am glad Roy Stephenson reminds us not to feel superior to those timid and conventional Friends when he writes, "It is worth remembering that the Spirit does not necessarily want us always to be radical, and that my radicalism may be more than a threat to you—it may be the end of everything you hold dear. So we should expect that we will make mistakes."[386]

I hope this book has shown you some new things about being a Quaker. It tells of the adventures, courage, vision, tragedies and hope which (unless we jettison them) are part of our identity.

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[156] Catherine Birney; *The Grimké Sisters* (Lee & Sheppard, 18585) p.30

[157] Birney, p.32

[158] Lerner, p.70

[159] From Angelina's diary, quoted in Lerner, p.73 (Lerner does not give dates for quotations from the diaries.)

[160] From Angelina's diary, quoted in Larry Ceplair: (1989). *The Public Years of Sarah and Angelina Grimke: Selected Writings.* (Columbia University Press, 1989) p.18. Entry for 11.9.1829

[161] From Angelina's diary, quoted in Ceplair, p.19. Entry for 20.7.1830

[162] From Angelina's diary, quoted in Lerner, p.90

[163] Elias Hicks: *Observations on the Slavery of the Africans and their Descendants* (New York, 1811); J.J.Gurney: *Free and Friendly Remarks…on the subject of the Abolition of North American Slavery* (New York, 1839)

[164] From Angelina's diary, quoted in Lerner, p.108

[165] Lerner, pp. 110-1

[166] From Sarah's diary, quoted in Lerner, p.112

[167] G.H.Barnes & D.W.Dumond: *Letters of Theodore Weld, Angelina Grimké Weld and Sarah Grimké* Appleton-Century, 1934) vol.I, p.411-2

[168] *The Liberator,* 19.9.1835, p.150ff

[169] From Angelina's diary, quoted in Birney pp.129-131

[170] A. Grimké: *appeal to the Christian Women…* < www.iath.virginia.edu/utc/abolitn/abesaegat.html>

[171] Lerner, p.157

[172] Barnes & Dumond, vol. I, p.273

[173] Lerner, pp.143-5

[174] S.Grimké, Letter III

[175] Morning Post (Boston), 15.8.1837.

[176] A. Grimké: *Address at Pennsylvania Hall* <womenshistory.about.com/cs/racialjustice/a/agrimke1838_3.htm>

[177] Ceplair, pp. 125-26 Letter from Angelina Grimké to Jane Smith, 22.3. 1837.

[178] see ref. 4

[179] S. Grimké, Letter II

[180] Lerner p.151

[181] *John Bellows, Letters and Memoir* (London: Kegan Paul, 1905) pp.119f

[182] *Bellows* p.233

[183] *Bellows* p 264

[184] *Bellows* p.334

[185] See the whole story of Friends and Russia in the 19th century in J. Ormerod Greenwood: *Friends and Relief* (York: Sessions, 1975) ch.viii. For Stephen Grellet's impressions, see *Memoirs… of Stephen Grellet* (London: A.W.Bennett, 1860) pp.455-7

[186] For Stephen Grellet's meeting with the Tsar, see *Memoirs… of Stephen Grellet* pp.409-418 For his impressions of the Dukhobors, pp.455-7

[187] J. Ormerod Greenwood: *Quaker Encounters vol. II* (York: Sessions, 1977) pp.64 ff

[188] His character was beautifully caught in his obituary in the *Annual Monitor* (Headley, 1900)

[189] Leo Tolstoy: *Resurrection* (Oxford U.P., 1999. Translated by Louise Maude) I, ch. 48

[190] Thomas Merton: *The Other Side of the Mountain (Journals, v.7)* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1998) p. 323

[191] *Resurrection* III, ch.28

[192] Rosemary Edmonds: Introduction to Leo Tolstoy: *Resurrection* (Penguin Classics, 2004)

[193] This statement needs some qualification. See E.B.Castle: *Friends and Education* Epworth, 1953) pp.117-9

[194] Personal communication.

[195] *The Friend 13.11.1936*, quoted in Ormerod Greenwood: *Signs of Life* (FHSC, 1978)

[196] quoted in George Orwell: "Lear, Tolstoy and the Fool" in *Essays* (Everyman, 2002) p.401. "Unquestionable" seems to be a mistranslation.

[197] George Fox: *Journal* (ed John Nickalls: London Yearly Meeting, 19??) p.35 *Entry for 1648*

[198] Plato: *Republic* III:398 (trans H.D.P.Lee; Penguin Books, 1955) p.137

[199] *Matthew* 13:20 and 14:11-12

[200] *II Corinthians* 3:6

[201] Elzabeth Fry, letter to John Joseph Gurney, 27.2.1833 (*Quaker Faith & Practice* 21.30)

[202] Leo Tolstoy: *A Confession* [1882] (Tolstoy Library On-line. Translation by Louise and Aylmer Maude) §IV.

[203] See *Signs of Life* pp. 18-21 for Thomas Hodgkin's remarks on art at the Manchester Conference of 1895.

[204] *Resurrection* I, ch. 15–17

[205] *Resurrection* I, ch. 39

[206] Leo Tolstoy: *War and Peace* II:5 §9

[207] *Bellows*: p.361

[208] See Campbell Stewart: *Quakers and Education* (Epworth, 1953) p.284

[209] John Reader: *Of Schools and Schoolmasters* (Quaker Home Service, 1979) pp. 52-3

[210] George Fox and Ellis Hookes: *A Primer and Catechisme for Children* (London, 1670) p.91

[211] Campbell Stewart, p.197

[212] Campbell Stewart, ch.11

[213] Henry Thompson: *A History of Ackworth School during its first hundred years* (London, 1879) pp. 141-3

[214] Elizabeth Fry, evidence to a House of Commons Select Committee on the State of the Prisons 27.2.1818

[215] F.A.Knight: *A History of Sidcot School 1808-1908* (Dent, 1908) p.164

[216] Campbell Stewart, pp.174-182

[217] John Reader, § VII.

[218] W David Wills, 'An appreciation of Marjorie E Franklin', *Studies in environment therapy*, 1968, 1:5-6

[219] David Wills: *Throw Away thy Rod* (Gollancz, 1960) p. 18. A similar description of the same establishment is given by the Quaker Gandhian Reginald Reynolds in *My Life and Crimes* (Jarrolds, 1956) ch. vi

[220] *The Barns Experiment* p. 141

[221] *Throw Away thy Rod* p.45

[222] see E.T.Bazeley: *Homer Lane and the Little Commonwealth* (Allen & Unwin, 1928)

[223] cited in Maurice Bridgeland: *Pioneer Work with Maladjusted Children* (Staples, 1971) p. 107.

[224] David Wills: *Homer Lane, a biography* (Allen & Unwin, 1964) p. 19

[225] August Aichhorn: *Wayward Youth* (Imago, 1925)

[226] David Wills: *The Barns Experiment* (Allen & Unwin, 1945) p. 81

[227] *ibid.* pp.22-3

[228] Marion Liebmann: *Restorative Justice* (Jessica Kingsley, 2007) p.39; John Lampen: *Mending Hurts* (QHS, 1987) p.

[229] John Lampen: *Mending Hurts* (Quaker Home Service, 1987) pp.55ff.

[230] John Reader, p. 68.

[231] published by QRSE, 1985

[232] *Throw Away thy Rod* p. 64

[233] *Report of the Committee on Maladjusted Children (the Underwood Report)* (H.M.S.O., 1955)

[234] Howard Jones: *Reluctant Rebels* (Tavistock, 1960)

[235] Bridgeland, p.244

[236] Kenneth Barnes: *Energy Unbound: the story of Wennington School* (Sessions, 1980)

[237] F.G.Lennhoff: *Exceptional Children* (Allen & Unwin, 1961)

[238] *Pioneer Work with Maladjusted Children,* p. 89ff.

[239] *The Barns Experiment* p. 13

[240] Susan Robson, *An Exploration of Conflict Handling Among Quakers* (University of Huddersfield. Ph.D. thesis,

2005)

[241] Elaine Boyling; from a Ph.D. thesis in preparation, chapter 6. In her research she referred to the community as "McGregor Hall" but she tells me it is no longer necessary to use this pseudonym.

[242] *Throw Away thy Rod* p. 77

[243] *Energy Unbound* p. 138.

[244] *The Barns Experiment* p. 81

[245] Elaine Boyling: "Therapeutic Environments and the Religious Society of Friends" in *Theraputic Education* (forthcoming, 2011)

[246] Children's Creative Response to Conflict: *The Friendly Classroom for a Small Planet* (New Society, 1988) p. 1

[247] Alternatives to Violence Project Inc: *Manual: Basic Course* (New York, 1986) p. C-2

[248] *AVP Manual: Basic Course* p. B-1

[249] Stephanie Judson, *Manual on Nonviolence and Children* (New Society, 1984)

[250] *The Friendly Classroom for a Small Planet* p.3

[251] Many of these exercises have been shared for many years among practitioners who often modify them and pass them on, so I have not attempted to attempted to identify who created each of my examples.

[252] From my unpublished notes, 2004

[253] Barry & Jill Wilsher, quoted in *Quaker Faith & Practice*, § 13.03

[254] Barry & Jill Wilsher, personal communication.

[255] Q-PAC: *Speaking our Peace: facilitating meetings and workshops* (QPS, 1988) p. 6

[256] All published by QPS under the general title *Speaking Our Peace* (1988-9)

[257] Sue Bowers, Gil Fell, Janet Galbraith & Tom Leimdorfer: "Creative Responses to Conflict" in *Affirmation, Communication and Co-operation* (QSRE Conference on Education papers, 1988) p.46

[258] *Ways and Means; an approach to problem-solving* (Kingston Friends Workshop Group, 1989); revised as *Ways and Means Today* (1996)

[259] *Ways and Means Today* p. 15

[260] Kathleen Rodham in *The Peace Papers* (Northern Friends Peace Board, 2000 §A-2

[261] Jerry Tyrell & Seamus Farrell: *Peer Mediation in primary schools* (University of Ulster, 1995)

[262] Nic Fine & Fiona Macbeth: *Playing with Fire* (Youth Work Press, 1992)

[263] *The South African Handbook of Education for Peace* (Quaker Peace Centre, Cape Town, 1994) compiled by Petronella Clark, Sarah Bennett, Conor Jerram and Luyanda ka Msumza. p. 5

[264] This will be described in a forthcoming book by Peter Jarman provisionally titled *Discernment and Encounter.*

[265] From my unpublished notes, 2004

[266] See < http://jamiewalker.net/index/networks.php>

[267] Sezam: "Teaching Peace in a violent context" in John Lampen (ed.) *No Alternative? Nonviolent responses to repressive regimes* (Sessions, 2000) pp. 95-96

[268] Vicki Smith, Val Major & Nadine Mnatzaganian: *Peer Mediation Scheme* (Bristol Mediation, 1995) Marian Liebmann in *The Peace Papers* §A-11.iii

[269] Christiana Bentley, Marigold Bentley, John Conchie (not a Quaker, but working with the West Midlands Quaker Project), Marion Liebmann, Ruth Musgrave and Pamela Williams.

[270] For example, Hilary (Stacey) Cremin: *Peer Mediation: Citizenship and social inclusion revisited*, (Open University Press, 2007); Edward Sellman: *The Processes & Outcomes of Implementing Peer Mediation Services in Schools* (PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, 2003)

[271] Marion Liebmann: *Restorative Justice* (Jessica Kingsley, 2007) pp. 25-26

[272] *Restorative Justice p. 34*

[273] <www.transformingconflict.org>

[274] <www.quakersintheworld.org/index.php?mact=QuakersInTheWorld,cntnt01,de>

[275] John Lampen: *Mending Hurts* (QHS, 1987) p. 63

[276] There are three specific references to peace education in *Quaker Faith & Practice*, §13.03, 23.85, and 24.54. There is no quotation from David Wills.

[277] John Woolman: *Journal* (Philadelphia, 1774) Entry for 12.6.1763 Cited in *Quaker Faith & Practice*, §27.02

[278] Adam Curle: *True Justice* (Swarthmore Lecture. Quaker Home Service, 1981) pp.61-62. Author's italics.

[279] For this relief work, see Ruth Fry: *A Quaker Adventure* (Nisbet, 1926) . For Carl Heath's vision, see Carl Heath: *Quaker Embassies* (privately printed, 1920) Quaker Tapestry panel F16

[280] Mike Yarrow: *Quaker Experiences in International Conciliation* (Yale U.P., 1978) pp. 23-27

[281] William Hughes: *Indomitable Friend* (Allen & Unwin, 1956) ch. 6 and 7

[282] *Indomitable Friend* p. 91

[283] *Indomitable Friend* p. 101

[284] *Indomitable Friend* p. 95

[285] Duncan Wood: *Building the Institutions of Peace* (Swarthmore Lecture. Allen & Unwin, 1962)

[286] Sydney Bailey: *Peace is a Process* (Swarthmore Lecture. Quaker Home Service, 1993)

[287] *True Justice*

[288] John Lampen: *Will Warren: a scrapbook* (Quaker Home Service, 1983)

[289] Scilla Elworthy: *Power and Sex* (Element, 1996)

[290] Diana Francis: *People, Peace and Power* (Pluto, 2002) Part II

[291] Sue & Steve Williams: *Being in the Middle by Being on the Edge* (Sessions, 1994)

[292] *True Justice* p.91

[293] *Peace is a Process* p. 149

[294] Robert Fisk in *The Times*, 29.11.1974. Will Warren: "An experiment in nonviolence", *International Fellowship of Reconciliation Report*, September 1979; some of this talk is reproduced in Leonard Kenworthy: *Living in the Light* (FGC, 1985) Vol.II, pp. 247-8

[295] John Lampen: *Instruments of Peace* M.Phil. thesis, University of London, pp. 113-119

[296] John Lampen: *Answering the Violence; encounters with perpetrators* (Pendle Hill, 2011)

[297] *Power and Sex* pp. 215-6

[298] *Power and Sex*, p. 218

[299] *Power and Sex* p. 68

[300] see references 24 and 9.

[301] *True Justice* p. 31

[302] *Quaker Experiences in International Conciliation*, p. 169

[303] William Bittle: *James Nayler, the Quaker Indicted by Parliament* (Sessions 1986); Leo Damrosch *The Sorrows of the Quaker Jesus* (Harvard UP, 1996); David Neelon: *James Nayler: revolutionary to prophet* (Leadings Press, 2009). The poems are Kenneth Boulding: *There is a Spirit* (Pendle Hill, 1998); Dorothy Nimmo: *A Testimony to the Grace of God as shown in the Life of James Nayler* (Sessions, 1993)

[304] These are mostly taken from my book *Wait in the Light* (London: QHS, 1981)

[305] James Nayler: *A Collection of Sundry Books, Papers & Epistles…* (London, 1716) p.12 (in future, referred to as *Works*)

[306] from a letter (September 1656) reprinted in H.Barbour & A.Roberts: *Early Quaker Writings* (USA: Norfolk Press, 1973) p.480

[307] Wm. Cobbett: *State Trials* (London 1816, 5:802)

[308] *Works* p.xliii

[309] Ralph Farmer: *Satan Enthron'd in his Chair of Pestilence* (1657) intro.

[310] John Barclay (ed); *Letters of Early Friends* (London 1841) p.58

[311] Letter to Margaret Fell, quoted in J.B.Braithwaite: *The Beginnings of Quakerism* (London: Macmillan, 1912) p. 274.

[312] In *Works*, p.xv

[313] Mabel Brailsford: *a Quaker from Cromwell's Army* (Swarthmore Press 1927, p.100

[314] *State Trials* (5:802)

[315] Emilia Fogelklou: *James Nayler, the Rebel Saint* (Ernest Benn 1931, p.176). Her view is endorsed by Bittle, p.106 and fully discussed by Leo Damrosch, p.163ff.

[316] Bittle, pp. 113ff

[317] *Works*, p. xxviii

[318] *Works*, p .liv.

[319] *Works*, p . xli

[320] *Works*, p . 363

[321] *Works*, p . xlii

[322] *Works*, p . 381

[323] *Works* p.xlv

[324] *Works* p.xlix

[325] eg *Matthew 25,32: Luke 17,22; John 9.39*

[326] *Works*, p . 290

[327] *Works*, p. 22

[328] *Works*, p . 380

[329] *Works*, p . 467 Nayler's imagery comes from the Bible and perhaps an experience of his friend Richard Hubberthorne in 1652; see Barbour & Roberts *Early Quaker Writings 1650-1700* (Eerdmans, 1973) p. 157-8

[330] *Luke 12.49*

[331] *Works*, p . l

[332] *Works* p.718

[333] *Works*, p. 715

[334] *Ephesians 6,12*

[335] *Works* p.*379*

[336] *Matthew* 7:1

[337] Letter in *Friends House Library*, *Swarthmore collection iii.84*

[338] *Works*, p .xlvi

[339] Gene Sharp: *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (Porter Sargent, 1973) vol. 1, p.4

[340] Nadeshda Mandelstam: *Hope Abandoned* (Penguin 1976) p.689

[341] Fyodor Dostoevsky: *The Brothers Karamazov* Book 5, ch. 5

[342] *Works* p.370

[343] *Works*, p . xli

[344] *Galatians 2.20*

[345] *Works* p.564

[346] *Young India* 3.9.1925

[347] Coretta Scott King: *The Words of Martin Luther King* (Robson 1984, p.72)

[348] The Dalai Lama: *Ancient Wisdom, Modern World* (Abacus 1979)

[349] Britain Yearly Meeting: *Quaker Faith & Practice* §

[350] Ormerod Greenwood: "James Nayler's 'last words'" *Jnl. Friends Historical Society, vol. 48 nº 5, 1958*, p. 199

[351] Bittle: p.174

[352] Damrosch: p.267

[353] Stephen Sayer: "James Nayler: a pearl of great price" *Woodbrooke Journal nº 19, 2006,* p. 2

The *Last Testimony* appeared at a time of intense political activity for the Quaker leaders, anxious to position themselves in relation to the new and hopefully more tolerant regime of Charles II, at a time of conspiracy theories and continuing imprisonments. Gorge Fox himself was in prison from July till late October. At such a critical time did these leading Friends turn aside to create "an artifice written shortly after his death by those who had an interest in exorcising Nayler's ghost from the Quaker movement", as Stephen Sayer puts it, giving us as a mere by-product the most beautiful and inspiring of all Quaker writings? I find this as unconvincing as Ignatius Donnelly's theory that Francis Bacon wrote *Hamlet* mainly in order to conceal his encrypted history of the Elizabethan age. (William & Elizebeth Friedman: *The Shakepearean Ciphers Examined* C.U.P, 1957) ch.3)

[354] Neelon, p.178

[355] On stylistic grounds, Geoffrey Nuttall assigns it to 1658 ("The letters of James Nayler" in *The Lamb's War: Quaker Essays in Honor of Hugh Barbour*, Earlham College Press 1992, p.70).

[356] William C. Braithwaite: *The Beginnings of Quakerism* 2nd edition, 1955, p.276

[357] *Works*, p. lxiii

[358] *Hebrews 12, 2*

[359] Thomas Kelly: *A Testament of Devotion*, HarperSanFrancisco, 1992, p.19)

[360] George Fox & James Nayler: "Saul's Errand to Damascus"(1654) in Nayler: *Works*, p. 14

[361] Kathleen Lonsdale: *The Christian Life Lived Experimentally* (FHSC 1976) p.23

[362] Thomas Kelly: *The Eternal Promise* (Friends United Press 1988) pp.116, 120-1

[363] Thich Nhat Hanh: *Peace is Every Step* (Bantam 1991) p.99

[364] Phillips Moulton (ed.): *The Journal & Major Essays of John Woolman* (Friends United Press, 1998) p.51

[365] Thomas Kelly: *The Eternal Promise*, (Friends United Press, 1988) p.54-5

[366] Coretta Scott King: *The Words of Martin Luther King* (Robson 1984, p.72)

[367] James Douglass: *The Non-Violent Coming of God*, (Orbis 1991) p.22

[368] Thich Nhat Hanh, p.41

[369] Kelly, p.136-7

[370] Quoted in John Yoder: *What Would You Do?* (Herald Press 1983) p.49

[371] Isaac Penington: (*Works*, 1681) vol. 1, p. 10

[372] Carl Jung: *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (Collins 1967) p.356-7

[373] John Punshon: *Encounter with Silence* (QHS 1987) p.48

[374] Walter Wink: *Jesus' Third Way* (South African Council of Churches 1987) p.69

[375] Ed Howker & Shiv Malik: *Jilted Generation: How Britain Has Bankrupted Its Youth* (Icon, 2010)

[376] *Matthew* 10:8

[377] Christine Trevett: *Previous Convictions* (Quaker Books, 1997) pp.13-14

[378] Alistair Heron: *Our Quaker Identity* (Curlew, 1999) p.1

[379] Christine Davis: *Minding the Future* (Quaker Books, 2008|) pp. 27-28

[380] I am delighted that *Journeys in the Spirit*, Quaker Life's present resource for children's meetings, is retelling many stories from our history.

[381] Peter Fishpool: "Religious Education in the Society of Friends" in Elizabeth Perkins [ed.]: *Affirmation, Communication and Co-operation* (Quaker Home Service, 1988) p. 95

[382] 45% of the quotations in chapters 2, 10, and 18-29 of *Quaker Faith & Practice* are more recent that 1975, and a further 15% are from between 1950 and 1975. 1648 to 1700 gives us roughly 15%, 1900 to 1950 also 15%, and the 18th and 19th centuries almost nothing if John Woolman and Elizabeth Fry are removed. (Statistics from Angus Winchester)

[383] Philip Rack, letter to *The Friend* vol. 137 (1979) p. 863. Cited in *QF&P* §20.06

[384] "The testimony of Margaret Fox concerning her late husband" in George Fox: *Journal* (1694). Cited in *QF&P* 19.07

[385] Paul Tillich: *The Boundaries of our Being* (Fontana, 1973) p.127

[386] in the Introduction to this book.