The Journal of the Friends' Historical Society

VOLUME 54 NUMBER 5 1980

FRIENDS' HISTORICAL SOCIETY
FRIENDS HOUSE · EUSTON ROAD · LONDON NW1 2BJ
also obtainable at Friends Book Store:
156 North 15th Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19102, U.S.A.

Contents

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Vol. 54 No. 5 1980

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Publishing Office, Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ

Communications should be addressed to the Editors at
Friends House

Editorial

This issue of the *Journal* is the fifth number of volume 54. It opens with the Presidential Address delivered by Gerald A. J. Hodgett on 2 November 1979 before an appreciative audience. In "The Shackletons of Ballitore: some aspects of eighteenth century Irish Quaker life", Gerald Hodgett has distilled for us a sympathetic account from his reading of a portion of the mass of correspondence which survives from this most lettered Irish Quaker family. The reader is given here, not so much the public, or even the schoolroom, face of the academy where Edmund Burke received his education, but rather insights into the home, the family, and Society of Friends' life as seen from the Quaker schoolmaster's household in the Irish countryside forty miles from Dublin.

"Lancashire Quakers and the Oath, 1660–1722", by Nicholas J. Morgan, is a welcome contribution to our knowledge in a largely untilled field. Nicholas Morgan is a research assistant on the Scottish Business Biography Project in the Department of Economic History at Glasgow. He is a Lancaster graduate, and is preparing a thesis, 'Lancaster Quakers and the Establishment', to be presented in that university in 1983. Nicholas Morgan offers here some of the fruits of his detailed research among manuscripts at Friends House Library (where he was for some months a temporary member of staff), in the national collections in London, and among Friends' records at Lancaster.

Dr J. D. Alsop of the School of History, University of Liverpool writes a note, based on a document in the papers of the 3rd Earl of Sunderland now in the British Library, concerning the Affirmation Act of 1722. This Act took account of the scruples of many among Friends who could not accept the form of Affirmation which had been passed into law in 1696. In elections for seats in the House of Commons, and to maintain its position in the country, the Whig government found it advantageous to secure the electoral votes and the general support of Quakers, and the passage of the Affirmation Act was one way of cementing that support. Dr Alsop shows that, in the Lords, the measure encountered stiff opposition. The subject attracted in course political pamphlets, some in verse, like *The Parson's companion, or The Clergy's conduct in their late petition against the Quakers Affirmation* (1722), and *The London clergy's petition against the Quakers Affirmation, answer'd, paragraph by paragraph* (1722), of which the opening lines give a sample:

> "A Late Petition of the Clergy,
> (Who like Preceptors love to scourge ye);
> By sundry stil'd the Churches Sons,
> Subscrib'd by One and Forty Dons"

and so on.

This issue includes also the usual features on archives, notes and queries, and recent publications.

The Shackletons of Ballitore: some aspects of eighteenth-century Irish Quaker life

FEW eighteenth and early nineteenth-century families can have written more letters than the Shackletons. What is to be known about the Shackletons of Ballitore is to be known mostly, though not entirely, from their correspondence, totalling about 6,500 extant letters. Of this large number I have read only about 750 letters.

Their contents were, at first sight, in many ways rather disappointing. With the exception of those in the Huntington Library, I have not read the whole body of any one of the collections[1] but many of the letters contain what Olive C. Goodbody in her invaluable *Guide to Irish Quaker Records 1654–1860* (1967) called "gossip and minor anecdotes" in describing the letters from Anstis Sparkes to Deborah Chandlee. Endlessly the writers record details of the state of health of members of the family, that they have been to Monthly Meeting or that a horse cast a shoe; details that have little importance for any branch of eighteenth-century history. These were letters written out of a sense of duty when as the writer frequently admits he or she has nothing to say. However, the letters remaining in Ireland, particularly those in Eustace Street, appear to me to contain more valuable information than those which I read in America. The second half of the eighteenth century was a period of striking events: the American War of Independence, the French Revolution, the '98 Rebellion affected the wider world, whilst during the years at the turn of the century the Society in Ireland was torn by controversy in the New Light Movement, yet these letters reflect amazingly little of the great political, international and religious upheavals through which the writers were living.

Abraham Shackleton, the first of the family to settle in Ireland, was born at Harden near Bingley in the West Riding of Yorkshire in 1696, the youngest son of Richard and his wife Sarah, daughter of Thomas Brigg of Keighley. He was a

[1] A list of the MS. collections appears at the end of this paper.

schoolmaster and was induced by some Irish Friends, principally by the Duckett and Cooper families of Ballitore, to cross the Irish Sea and act as tutor to their children.[2] He had taught at Skipton and there he married Margaret Wilkinson in 1725.[3] In 1726 he established a school at Ballitore, a village largely settled by Quakers.

Ballitore is in the county of Kildare, some 40 miles from Dublin, just to the west of the main road from the capital to Waterford where it runs between Kilcullen, itself south of Naas, and Carlow. It is gently undulating country about 300 feet above sea level with Ballitore hill to the east of the main road rising to about 400 feet. Through the village flows the little river Greese, a good trout stream about 20 feet wide, which drove two mills at the opposite ends of the settlement. The population today numbers about 350 and in the eighteenth century it was probably the same or a little higher. The land is well drained and fertile and although mostly pasture there is some arable devoted to the growing of barley. Several writers, principally Mary Leadbeater, expatiated in prose and verse on the beauties of Ballitore—praise which sprang from native loyalty rather than being apparent to the eye of the present-day visitor. By the early eighteenth century many Quaker families were resident in and around the village and during that century and in the first decades of the nineteenth they built for themselves substantial houses. They were obviously fairly prosperous for, in addition to a meeting house (1707), they felt the need of a school.

The school that was opened in 1726 was not an official Friends school like the later establishments at Mountmellick and Lisburn. What financial help Abraham had is not known to me but it was opened by him alone without any committee and it gradually expanded. It was a proprietary school; the

[2] Kenneth W Jones, "Soundings" (Collections of the University Library, U. of Calif., Santa Barbara), Sept. 1975, p. 33.

[3] Knaresborough Monthly Meeting records from July to November 1725 show that Abraham was already settled in Ireland before marriage, for his membership was transferred to Yorkshire from Carlow M.M. to enable his intentions to be forwarded in England without correspondence to and fro across the Irish Sea. In November, after the marriage, a removal certificate was directed to follow the newly-married couple who had already left [Carlton Hill Archives deposited at the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds: A 1, pp. 59–64; A 22, pp. 13–14. Editor].

headmasters earned their living from the fees (in 1757, £16 *per annum* and one guinea entrance fee)[4] paid by the boys' parents; a living supplemented by the profits from farming and horticulture, from letting property, from running a flour mill and, on occasion, from acting as the village postmaster.

Abraham I (as we may call him) remained headmaster from 1726 until 1756 and was succeeded by his son Richard who held the headmastership of Ballitore school from 1756 until he handed it over to his son, Abraham II, in 1779. Like his father before him, Richard enjoyed some years of retirement: dying in 1792 he had some thirteen years away from the school compared with his father's sixteen years. Abraham II's tenure of the headship was the shortest since the school closed, as a consequence of the events of 1798, about 1801 but it was re-opened by his son-in-law.[5] Abraham who died in 1818 had, therefore, nearly twenty years of retirement. The scattering of various members of the family and their travels produced the thousands of letters through which some aspects of Irish Quaker life may be discerned.

The school's reputation was established among non-Quaker parents as soon as the young Edmund Burke began to make a name for himself in literary and political circles. Burke born in 1729, entered the school in 1741 and left it to go to Trinity College Dublin in 1743. Cardinal Cullen and Napper Tandy were also pupils, but most students were from Friend families and some of these pupils came from a considerable distance. One older pupil, Svend Peter Stuberg, came from Trondheim in Norway and a young boy came from France. Some non-Friends, like Eyre and Sinclair, after leaving, fought in the American War of Independence.[6] Although various sources say that the Shackleton girls were educated at the school, there is no evidence that any other females were admitted and to what extent the daughters participated in classes is not known.

The correspondence throws some light on the organisation of a small eighteenth-century boarding school apparently run by the schoolmaster and one usher, who was an episcopalian. It is clear that the Shackleton daughters, if they did not have

[4] Huntington Library MSS., SHA 394.

[5] Michael Quane, "Ballitore School" in *Kildare Arch. Soc. J.*, vol. 14, no. 2, (1966–67), p. 201.

[6] Hunt. Lib. MSS., SHA 363.

a formal place in that organisation, showed great interest in the pupils' welfare. Numbers in the school varied between forty and sixty.[7] The boys, like the population in general, were plagued by ill-health and many of the letters chronicle the illnesses and even the deaths of pupils. In a letter of 27th 6mo. 1776 we read, "we have a lad in the house who reckons he strained his ankle about a week ago but I believe it has been worse than a strain for he has been very bad like a fever and his leg so bad that we were obliged to send for a surgeon, who found it necessary to launce it. When he will be well we know not, but the poor child seems weak, has bled much at the nose, was bled in the arm and hope he may recover." Throughout the period the therapeutic value of bleeding is still affirmed. However, six days later the child, named Dalton, had not recovered and his father, though summoned, had not come to see him: we are not told what the outcome was.

In the same year Elizabeth Shackleton writing to a friend records "one of our boarders in the smallpox in our house, (he) seems in a safe way, is treated by our new tenant Surgeon Johnson in the new way of giving him air and having him taken up". She continues "we do not apprehend that we have a great many that have not had it, but we suppose Billy Rainer and prentice Albe have not, but with the good help that we have often experienced in time of need, I hope we may get through it tolerably". In May 1782 an epidemic struck the school: one "McMellor was so bad as to have the doctor sent for at night". Whatever it was, his breathing was affected but the boy improved after the application of a blister (plaster). In 1787 John White's whooping cough was relieved by blistering, bleeding and bathing. Abraham, the headmaster, lay with him in the room lest he should need anything and the previous night the headmaster's wife and the doctor had stayed with him.

In recording the death of a pupil in June 1783, Elizabeth throws light on the age of entry of some pupils and on the organisation of the boarding side of the school. She writes ". . . the death was a shock to us . . . for little seemed to ail him till the day before he died. As his mother brought him when about six years old, he was put to lie in the nursery

[7] See Quane, *loc. cit.* pp. 174–209, for an account of the school.

with the housekeeper, and continued to lie there until the last night of his life, which last he was in another room for more quiet and two tender people with him". A boy of 7 years came from Kilkenny insisting that he wanted to be at Ballitore school because Burke had been there (35 years previously). In 1774 a French boy in school died from measles, Elizabeth thought because he would not take things like the others.[8] The boarding establishment was like an extended family with pupils having to help with the family chores and in 1784 two lads were sent to sleep in the house and so to help protect Elizabeth while Richard, the former headmaster, was away at London Yearly Meeting.[9]

The letters reveal little in detail about the curriculum. Richard Shackleton writing to William Alcock in 1761 wrote "(I) am sorry thou dost not . . . mention . . . the care and pains taken . . . respecting him (Alcock's son) but some hints of thy disapprobation. I had examined him both before his departure and since his return and I think his progress in Arithmetik (as well as his improvement in Writing and Orthography) is as much as could be expected from his Genius". He admits that his usher might have been deficient in not getting young Alcock to memorise the prayer which his father had sent but he declares the usher to be diligent "in the frequent instruction of the lads in their Catechism and we see them going to bed (i.e. at bedtime) generally on the knees, as if engaged in the great duty of prayer". The headmaster informed Mr. A. that the usher had not been able to get his son to memorise the prayer because it was too long. It was perhaps not usual for parents to make such specific demands but another parent made requests about Bible reading. She requested that her son should be allowed to read the Bible and when R.S. said it was read every day, she replied that she thought George Fox's Journal was substituted for the Bible by Friends. Apart from the three Rs and religious knowledge, it appears that Latin, Greek and Book-keeping were taught at the school and, doubtless, because of Abraham II's interest in the subject, the boys were instructed in elementary astronomy.[10]

[8] Hunt. Lib. MSS., SHA 223.
[9] *Ibid.* SHA 292.
[10] Quane, *loc. cit.* for fuller details of the school curriculum. His account is based mostly on Mary Leadbeater, *Annals of Ballitore*, being part of *The Leadbeater papers*, 2 vol., London, 1862.

It was the custom for boys to stay at the school all year unless parents desired them to have holidays. Mary Curtin gave instructions that if her sons were sent for by their grandmother they could leave, but not for more than two weeks in the summer season. Her "two little fellows" had 2d. a week pocket money. Writing in late December Elizabeth stated that many boarders were away because of the season: the only indirect reference I have come across to Christmas, which word is never used. As to discipline we have no details but if we are to believe the humorous letter of a non-Quaker neighbour the headmaster administered corporal punishment from time to time. In June 1774 we hear of a boy who ran away and it was not thought that he would return.

Because most of the letters are written by Friends, much light is thrown on Quaker life in the eighteenth century. Monthly, province, quarterly and half-yearly meetings were occasions to be missed only for the most serious reasons. In Ireland Friends gathered in Dublin in May and November, both assemblies being called the National Half-Yearly Meeting until, in 1797, it was decided to call the May meeting the Yearly Meeting of Friends in Ireland and to set up a Committee to deal with matters arising between yearly meetings. The relationship with London Yearly Meeting was close since Irish Friends sent representatives to it and answered its queries, which I take it to mean accepted the discipline of London Y.M.

Both Abraham I and Richard were frequent attenders in London and from time to time other members of the family were present. The custom was, as it still is in Ireland Y.M., to accept hospitality from Friends. The Shackletons usually stayed with relatives at Tottenham. After his retirement Richard appears to have gone every year to London for the meeting in late May and often he did not return until July or August taking the opportunity of travelling among English Friends. He usually crossed to Holyhead and visited both in the north and in the Midlands particularly at Coalbrookdale.

Abraham said of his father's (last) attendance in 1792 "he loves attending that solemnity" while of himself he remarked in the same letter "I would rather attend the service of our own National Meeting; our business is not so various nor hurried over . . . as the business of Yearly Meeting—it [i.e. London Y.M.] seems like a boisterous sea which requires

stouter vessels". Earlier, in 1784, Richard had been so busy that he was up writing at 4 or 5 in the morning since there was a demand for Friends who would "do something beside talk". "A fleet (as it were) of Americans lately landed and came up there, the Yearly Meeting business goes on—some sittings have been favoured" wrote Elizabeth to a Friend.[11]

Richard was requested to intervene in London Y.M. in 1781. On 16th April writing from Norwich, John Roper complained of the Friends who had furnished the English Prime Minister with money for the prosecution of the war in America. The names of the contributors had been published in the newspapers "in which catalogue there appeared some who, in a religious sense, call us brethren". J.R. goes on "if there were a number of wealthy Friends in France and they were voluntarily to lend large sums of money . . . to that government by which it was more fully enabled to prosecute a war against England could we have unity with and esteem them as our brethren and fellow-believers in Christ the prince of peace?—surely nay. Can they be otherwise considered though they dwell in England, at least until they condemn their own contradictory conduct?". The letter continues, "I have lately been informed that some remarks were made last Yearly Meeting in the Ackworth Committee but no further notice was taken of it, hence that which is wrong undoubtedly gained strength, as sufficiently appears by the list of subscribers to the loan for this year, where the names of sundry members of Meeting for Sufferings and one or more of a yet higher station in the church, openly stand forth in that cause. Is it not then high time for the living to exert themselves and if they cannot prevent, at least that they hold up the mirror and enter their protest against conduct so manifestly repugnant to our holy Christian profession". Because of the timing of quarterly meetings none of them could take up the matter and so Richard was asked to raise it before the Half-Yearly Meeting. Whether he did so I do not know, nor have I consulted Y.M. records to ascertain what happened in the Y.M. There is, however, no reference to the incident in the Gurney papers. It is interesting to note the depth of John Roper's opposition and his feeling of frustration that he

[11] Hunt. Lib. MSS., SHA 294.

would get nowhere in Norwich "because of the open subscribers in our meeting to this bloody loan and yet more who are secretly concerned in it". One Friend had admitted, after saying that he was grateful to the government for its indulgence to Friends, that the terms of the loan were very advantageous; so destroying his specious pretensions to gratitude.

John Roper was concerned that silence would give consent and undermine the position of the Society vis-à-vis the government as a people conscientiously principled against war and he foresaw other difficulties over paying for substitutes for the militia. It is a significant episode which illustrates how outspoken some members of the Society were and the degree of intervention in their lives that Friends accepted.

The Shackletons were not plain Friends but they and some of the Friends were scandalised by the dress of Quakers in London. Hannah Pim writing to Deborah Shackleton in 1771 said that she had not met any Friends who kept to the plain language or members who could be distinguished by their dress as belonging to the Society except Sam Hoare's family who were plain in their dress but not in their speech.[12]

Many letters record at length the depth of worship in a meeting—or the lack of it. Frequently meetings are described as "dry". The Society was going through a period when it was excessively attached to outward forms, and ministry, it appears, was rare. But at the same time national wealth was increasing and Quakers were prospering. Many correspondents, especially Elizabeth Shackleton, were fearful that members of the Society were, to quote her, "hindered from seeing things in the right light because of their interest in the world". When ministering Friends travelled abroad, as they frequently did, complaints are heard that "this city and nation are much stripped of ministers". Visiting ministers, often from America, found meetings "in a poor low way as to religion" and James Gough noted a deterioration in the spiritual life as Friends kept to forms and rushed after wealth.

This excessive formalism generated a reaction at the end of the century. Abraham II played a leading part in the New Light Movement which started as a protest against the

[12] Friends' Historical Library, Eustace St., Dublin, Fennell Coll. Box Ie, 2/9/1771.

Society's forms regarding marriage but which was really about the place of the Scriptures in the Society of Friends. In 1797 in reply to the appropriate query, Carlow M.M., (the clerk of its meeting for Ministry and Oversight was Abraham Shackleton) omitted the word "Holy" before Scriptures. When asked why it had done so, the answer came "that the Spirit of Truth inwardly revealed in the heart of every man is that alone which can, and will, lead its followers into all truth; that a disposition has appeared among many of our members in the present day to lose sight of this fundamental tenet of the Society, and in place thereof, to set up the Scriptures and affix an undue value to them". After several years of growing dissension Abraham II was disowned in 1801. Such letters as I have been able to read add nothing to the history of the New Light Movement to supplement the account given by William Rathbone in his *Narrative of events that have lately taken place in Ireland among the Society called Quakers*, published in 1804; but some such may exist.

Turning from the Quaker side of the Shackletons' life to their social life, the letters have much to tell us. The Shackletons did other things beside attending perhaps 130 Quaker meetings in a year. These other pursuits, like the Quaker meetings, involved them in journeys and so considerable information is to be gleaned about travel and travelling conditions. Many journeys were undertaken to visit members of the family especially to Margaret (Peggy) and Sam Grubb at Clonmel and to Deborah (Debby) and Tommy Chandlee in Athy. The latter was only nine miles away and on occasion brother Abraham walked it, but Clonmel, being 70 miles distant, required a greater effort. Three methods were open to the travellers, to ride on horseback, to take their own vehicle, usually a chaise, or to take the stage-coach on routes where such vehicles plied. On journeys to Dublin which were frequently undertaken for religious duties, for business or for pleasure, a fourth method of transport was available. They rode or drove to Sallins, just beyond Naas, a distance of some 19 miles and there took a boat on the Grand Canal into Dublin. The trip was roughly the same distance as the road journey. This arrangement enabled them to reach the capital between midday and the evening without too much fatigue. On one occasion we read that some Friends on a visitation

travelled on horseback more than 40 miles in a day but sometimes, usually because of heavy rain, travellers could not continue and the times they returned home with a cold brought on by inclement weather are too numerous to recount. Accidents could occur as when, in November 1783, the rear wheel of the chaise went down into the ditch and another two inches, Richard thought, would have caused the death of his wife, two daughters and a servant.

Travel was undertaken outside Ireland, to Great Britain and by some of the correspondents to Europe and America. From the letters much is to be learnt of the discomfort and uncertainty of travelling in a sailing ship. It is apparent that in addition to the route to Holyhead, boats sailed regularly to Chester and to Whitehaven in Cumberland and Friends visiting in the north used the latter port frequently as did the schoolboy returning to Norway. Sometimes the passage across the Irish Sea was rapid but at other times it could take 24 hours to get from Dublin to Holyhead. The duration of the passage to and from America can be ascertained not only by passengers' accounts but also by the time it took letters to reach Ireland from Philadelphia or New York. One letter in 1754 took 3½ months, while the following year John Peters informed Elizabeth that he had a safe passage of ten weeks although his company at sea was not very agreeable and they had almost been taken by a French man-of-war that chased them for seven or eight hours. A year later a letter got through in the winter in 2 months one week. Friends were intrepid travellers and we hear of American Friends going to the West Indies and British Friends visiting in France and Germany. As well as being uncomfortable, travel could be dangerous. Late in 1781 Edith and Jo Sparrow sailed for Bristol in the packet Elizabeth which went on shore near Bridgwater and Richard wrote that his daughter Molly (Mary Leadbeater) was much aggrieved by the loss—"whether the effusions of her sorrow will appear on paper, or not," he could not say as "we hardly ever know what is forming in the womb of her imagination till she produces it to light".

The Shackletons and especially Elizabeth, Richard's second wife, were enthusiastic gardeners and bee-keepers. Perhaps the letters extend our knowledge of eighteenth-century social and economic history more in this sphere than in any other. Elizabeth herself worked in the garden, as is

seen when on 11 March 1778 she was putting the grafts in or when her husband remarked that she preferred "the weeding knife to the pen", but a full-time gardener was employed. When Owen the gardener died in 1781 Richard wrote that it was to their great loss and regret as he had been an honest, industrious and skilful man in his place.[13] Then Martin Whelan, Elizabeth's right-hand man was taken ill. Labour on occasion could be short as when it was said "they could not get their gardens done up for want of hands".

In March 1790, 40 pecks of potatoes were planted, some English Whites, and Elizabeth was making enquiries as to whether to grow Windsor beans and Marrowfat peas. Cabbages were being sown in March and spinach, cauliflowers, celery and cucumbers were also grown. In December 1782 it was reported that the season for getting onions in was late that year but that three dozen hanks had been purchased for Elizabeth Pike of Dublin at the fair at Castledermot. There was much purchasing of fruit and vegetables for friends and relatives in Dublin and in reverse of seeds in Dublin to be sent to Ballitore. A letter states "the onion seed we generally sow about the middle of eighth month (August) is called the silver skinned. We would sow them in light, rich ground, and there leave them all winter, keeping them clean from weeds. If they do not fail in the winter, they are nice scallions in the Spring, but do not arrive to the size of onions gathered in the common season: they might do in sauce, or for other kitchen use: we never take them up to dry." As well as the common vegetables, asparagus and artichokes were grown. Of the latter, Elizabeth wrote "we are in no way particular about the planting of artichokes (globe) but put them in common good mould, no dung under them, I suppose each set of them should be about 16"–18" asunder and rows about the same, about 5" or 6" deep". The folk at Ballitore sent asparagus seed to Dublin and especially the Green Dutch seed.

In 1776 on October 3rd they were gathering the apples and sending some to Dublin while Elizabeth notes that the weather was now fine enough to get the harvest in which was backward. The Shackletons looked to the Pikes to bring things that were new and the latter would have been asked to bring down a 5 or 6-year old apricot tree in 1780 if it had

[13] Hunt. Lib. MSS., SHA 323.

not been too soon in the year to plant it and if Elizabeth had not thought it too big to transport at the back of the chaise. Among other fruits William Forster sent over from Tottenham some snake melon seeds, which fruit, he said, resembled a snake in size and shape and was to be raised on a bed of horse dung. Raspberries were also grown and the Pikes were given detailed instructions as to pruning.

Elizabeth had a great love of flowers. She grew sweet peas, carnations, columbines, auriculas, tulips, polyanthus, roses, aconites and hyacinths. In August 1771 she was asking the Pikes how to manage the Pride of India (Azedarac tree) seed they had given her and when to sow it. From Clonmel Peggy sent her a Passion tree, mountain ranunculus, double violets and double blossoming sweet brier: she also had a moss rose which was said to be rare. The tulip bulbs were lifted and dried on 7th July 1790; this and several other passages show how interested in gardens and in horticultural practice Elizabeth was. This interest in gardens and in bee-keeping, it should be added, has continued in the Shackleton family through six or seven generations from the mid-eighteenth to the late twentieth century.

The historian might argue that this evidence tells us nothing that is new since we know that interest in horticulture was growing rapidly in the eighteenth century. Indeed a letter to Richard from William Forster in Tottenham, dated 29 August 1781, records the sale of the late Dr Fothergill's plants.[14] It amounted to several thousand pounds with one plant selling for 50 gns., several aloes fetching from £12 to £18 each and oranges and lemons between £4 and £5. Dr. Lettsom was the largest purchaser. But the significance of the letters' evidence surely is that a somewhat isolated family in co. Kildare took such an interest in a general trend as they did in the increased interest in scientific observation.

The letters remind us forcibly of the wretched state of health which the population endured at this time and that even a middle to upper middle class family suffered complaints almost constantly. Some of the writers were not stoical about their illnesses and tended to "moan on" about trivial disorders such as colds, to cure which they often took to their beds. However, we should remember that remedies

[14] *Ibid.* SHA 54.

were not always very effective and that more pain had to be borne than would be endured today. This did make them grateful for good health which they did not automatically expect. It was always "through mercy" that they were in good health, or, to quote two frequently employed phrases, "of her best fashion" or "recruiting bravely". Most commonly mentioned ailments, apart from colds, were fevers, the chink cough (whooping cough), smallpox, measles, tooth-ache and swellings that had to be lanced. But we hear of stomach upsets, sore throats, influenza, tuberculosis, fits, colic, gout, rheumatism, paralysis, erysipelas (St. Anthony's fire), worms, pleurisy, apoplexy, palsy, asthma, gravel, hives and boils. For nearly eighteen months regular reports are given of a neighbour who died of breast cancer.

Much home medication was used. Brandy was rubbed in Richard's side when he had wrenched it. Purgative pills of brimstone, syrup of buckthorn, syrup of rhubarb, cream of tartar, aloes and saffron were made but when a doctor was shown the prescription he said that air and exercise were the best remedy. Camomile tea was much in favour for stomach upsets and pukes (emetics) were often administered. The letters mention among other homely remedies, Peruvian bark, sarsaparilla for rheumatism, tincture of asafoetida, white lead plasters, musk, hartshorn drops, hemlock pills, syrup of snails and that great stand-by, a Burgundy pitch plaster. For the gripe, boiled carraway seeds, in a rag were put into the baby's milk.

But professional help was called. Dr. Johnson lived locally and doctors were also called from Carlow, a distance of 15 miles and Dublin (38 miles). They relied much on bleeding and the application of leeches. Whether to have children vaccinated or not was a question that exercised many parents. Writing to Elizabeth Pike on 18 June 1782 Richard expressed the dilemma. Abraham II's third child, Abraham, had been vaccinated on 21 May and died on 12 June, aged six months, and the infant's grandfather wrote "Peggy (Margaret Grubb) has been much agitated about her own little ones—she had intended to have got them innoculated; but I believe this disaster will discourage her—I formerly stood neuter as to the practice but my feelings have been so painful and acute about the little infant which we have lost that I lean more to the negative side and am growing more

one with my better half".[15] However, the infant's older brother and sister aged 2½ and 1¾ years respectively came through it successfully. In addition to medical treatment there was much taking of the waters. Debby had some kind of rash on her face. The complaint is never clearly diagnosed but she went sea bathing and drinking mineral waters at Ashford near Wicklow. Whatever it was, she suffered from this skin disorder for many years. There must have been bottled waters available as German Spa water was recommended for a bowel complaint. Mary (later Leadbeater) had a stutter for which she had some remedial treatment in Dublin from a Dr. Angier who travelled from London to see patients.

Leaving aside information which the letters provide on business practice, on prices and on the curriculum at Trinity College, Dublin and Christ Church, Oxford, we must turn, before attempting a summary, to what they tell us of the life of the Shackletons in society. No Friends before the 1840s were, as far as I know, teetotallers. References are made to brewing and indeed to the re-building of a brew-house in the summer of 1772. Molly drank part of a bottle of porter with the weighty Samuel Neale who spent much time visiting among Friends. Hock and malt liquor are mentioned, the latter being taken by one of the daughters with her dinner. But the family had an insatiable demand for tea: they were frequently recording where and with whom they had taken tea. But one recorded incident shows their disapproval of over-indulgence in alcohol. Peggy Grubb writing to her sister Debby Chandlee in 1782 states this clearly. While staying with Clayton Bayly, a Friend, at Gowran, she writes "after supper Beauchamp Bagnell the knight of renowned prowess, would come in, notwithstanding the repeated messages sent by Clayton that he was not at home. He entered on crutches, is very like his sister Keatinge (Dean K.'s wife) and was followed by a brother of young Sir Nicholas Butler's who seemed to be his pupil, indeed he seemed to have made rapid progress for he was as drunk as his preceptor and not being able to take another upon, fell under the table and both retired to the great joy of the family who feared they would sit there all night. The women left the room before they did, with some difficulty for Bagnell wanted my mother especially to stay."

[15] *Ibid.* SHA 344.

This incident also clearly demonstrates that Quakers of the social status of the Shackletons mixed with the local gentry. We know that the Shackletons visited Dean Keatinge and his wife. Cadogan Keatinge, Dean of Clogher, was invited by Richard in 1785 to a Quaker meeting but he declined on the grounds that his duty called him and his family to their own place of worship. Richard Beauchamp of nearby Narraghmore frequently visited Greesebank or The Retreat and, in turn, the family dined with Beauchamp. He was something of a joker who liked to pull Richard's leg and, at least once, made ironical remarks about the latter's connection with Burke. His letters were peppered with Latin tags and French phrases and Richard apparently, at times, responded in Latin hexameters and pentameters. The old boy importunes them to go to dinner, he writes "Dinner on ye Table precisely at Four Mr Shackleton in ye Chair". After the meal lively conversation ensued with classical references thrown in but it was not, I think, of a deeply scholarly nature. "Our wit shall flow and sparkle like our wine and though we wont be as mad as Alexander at Persepolis yet we may and will be merry"—this on a February evening in 1775. There was, of course, no music in this Quaker household, but a deep interest in science as the company was entertained by Abraham II's telescope. Richard Beauchamp said that the ladies at the dinner party returned their thanks to Mr. S. for the astronomical entertainment.

The letters make it quite clear that the Shackleton females were not dressed in plain fashion; that is in the Quaker grey. However shocked they might profess to be by the dress of Friends in Dublin and even more shocked by what London Friends were wearing, they were ordering cloth in different shades of blue and even buying silks and ribbons. In 1773 Elizabeth bought $2\frac{1}{2}$ yards of camlet because she had not purchased enough when in Dublin to make a riding skirt. Nevertheless they still wore Quaker bonnets since we know of stiff paper being ordered from Dublin with which to line them. Men Friends appear to have retained the plain dress. Even in Tottenham meeting where the women wore gay dresses the men were said to be plain particularly in the manner of wearing their hats.

From time to time the Shackletons went on holiday. In 1783 some of them went to Rostrevor and a letter from Molly

says "each of us going to and from and sometimes in the sea huddled men and women so together that we grew very bold. I do not know what Sally would say if she saw us drying our hair before the men . . . or walking through the town with our shifts under our arm but remember we had our bathing dresses on and our clothes over." It all appeared very daring to Molly. During the summer months the children bathed in the river Greese. Molly wrote a vivid account of learning to ride single when she was 16, and also described her half brother's electrifying machine. She records "He has electrified us very often, I never felt it past my shoulder, it is not what I thought it would be at all but he will not give one much of it, for my part I think it a fine sport, he makes it show a great many curious tricks." She was just a month under 17 and her half brother six years older. A little later we hear of Abraham II's *camera obscura* and his "solar microscope" and that the school was entertained with his telescope—a young man in line with the Quaker interest in the natural sciences was brother Abraham. The family sat up till nearly midnight hoping that the clouds would clear to get a better look at the stars and on a visit to Dublin, Peggy Grubb complained that because of the social life she was hardly ever settled until 1 a.m. In London we are told of an interesting visit to Buckingham House which in 1775 was the Queen's Palace.[16] It was not easy to gain admittance but they succeeded. We can from these reports draw the conclusion that the family led quite an active social life—perhaps one which some Quakers would have regarded as giddy.

The Shackletons and their correspondents rarely mentioned events of national importance, but occasionally their concern for other than domestic affairs comes through. In particular, during the American War of Independence some of the writers were anxious about American Friends and what they were suffering. John Pemberton warned of the build up to war when, in a letter of May 5 1775, he mentioned the trouble in Boston and he went on "all mankind are but one family, yet the people of the same manners and customs, are naturally nearer to each other and therefore (it is) more affecting that they should prepare instruments to sheath in each others bowels".[17] The Shackletons were also tender

[16] Hist. Lib. Eustace St., Dublin, Fennell Coll. Box Ie.
[17] Hunt. Lib. MSS., SHA 133.

towards old scholars who found themselves in the armed forces.

Abraham II in letters to Elizabeth Pike in 1790 and '91 recounts some of the activities of a French Quaker, John de Marsillac. He quotes a letter from John to Robert Grubb as follows: "thou hast probably heard in thy country that the National Assembly have made several decrees respecting military service which import that all French citizens without exception shall be obliged to take arms and do military service from 18 to 60 years of age, according to our principles of loving our enemies and not returning evil nor avenging ourselves we cannot consent to take arms and still less to use them to shed the blood of our fellows". He petitioned the National Assembly that Friends should be excepted and reported that he had sent the petition to Louis Majolier in the south and also to Friends at Dunkirk to be signed by them. So the group at Ballitore was not out of touch with events in England, in the continent of Europe and in America.

Professional historians and scholars of English literature will probably wish to know whether any further Burke material is available in these letters. In such letters as I have read I have not come across direct correspondence although some letters make references to the distinguished man. A former pupil Lawrence Dowdall Curtin had apparently been given an introduction by Richard and Lawrence reported back in a letter of June 1st 1760 that he had dined about three weeks previously with Burke who was living in Wimpole Street, Cavendish Square and later in the same month he saw him again.[18] He mentioned that Burke had two sons, the elder about 3 years old "a very pretty child" and that Burke was greatly esteemed for two books a *Treatise on the Sublime & Beautiful* and a *Vindication of National Philosophy*. He also said that Burke had been dissatisfied not to have seen his old headmaster (Abraham I) when he had been in London.

The letters therefore, to come to a tentative conclusion, which may well be overturned by a researcher who in the future may read the thousands of letters which I have not seen, do not appear to me to contain much of importance to

[18] *Ibid.* SHA 39.

political history but they shed some light on the Irish Quaker scene in the quietist period. In this article I have attempted to impart only a portion of that light.

GERALD A. J. HODGETT

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Lancashire Quakers and the Oath, 1660–1722[1]

THE Quaker refusal to swear was one of the outward testimonies which frequently brought Friends into conflict with the established authorities of church and state, leading to personal and financial "sufferings". The laws which required oaths to be used were of two distinct varieties.

First, there were those directed against the post-Restoration dissenters, the majority of which laws were suspended by the Toleration Act of 1689.[2] For Friends the most important of these, in theory, was the Quaker Act of 1662, the purpose of which was to prevent any person from refusing to take an oath, and the Conventicle Act of 1664 which laid down that the refusal to take an oath in court was punishable by fines and transportation.

Secondly, Friends were open to sufferings through the operation of a variety of laws concerning matters of trade and property which demanded the sanction of an oath. Foremost in this category was the requirement of oaths in order to import and export goods, prove wills, enter copyholds and gain freedoms. Furthermore, Friends might be called upon to swear in order to serve a number of offices from alderman to constable.[3] Earlier legislation, notably 7. Jac. I. c.6., which

[1] I would like to thank Edward Milligan and Michael Mullett for reading and commenting on earlier drafts of this piece, and Craig Horle for the many insights he afforded me into the workings of the seventeenth century legal system. Spelling, punctuation and capitalisation have in general been modernised in quotations. Dates are given in Old Style.

[2] 1 Will. & Mar., c. 18, provided that a dissenter taking the Oath of Allegiance, or a declaration to the same effect and a declaration of fidelity and Christian belief, would be exempt from penalties under the Conventicle Act, the Act of Uniformity and the Quaker Act.

[3] 14 Car. II, c. 1, 16 Car. II c. 4. For a general summary of the legal and civil disabilities caused by non-swearing see Arnold Lloyd, *Quaker social history*, (London, 1950), p. 80–83. For the use of oaths at the customs see E. Hoon, *The Organisation of the English Customs system 1696–1786*, (Newton Abbot, 1968), p. 243–369. For the matter of Friends proving wills see H. Forde, "Friends and authority: a consideration of attitudes and expedients with particular reference to Derbyshire", *Jnl. F.H.S.* 54 (1978), p. 115–125. Oaths were also required of Friends if they wished to qualify themselves as electors: I intend to discuss this matter elsewhere. Many of the oaths put to Friends were originally designed to force recusants to deny the power and authority of Rome. For a list of oaths directed against Catholics see Ann M. C. Forster, "The Oath tendered", *Recusant History*, Vol. 14 (1977), p. 86.

required any person over the age of eighteen to take the Oath of Allegiance when demanded by two Justices (often in practice a single Justice)' was used both before and after the implementation of the Clarendon Code. The punishment for this refusal was imprisonment and the threat of *praemunire*.[4] There was little doubt that the purpose of this restrictive net went beyond the mere discovery and punishment of dissenters, as was made clear to George Fox at the Lancaster Assizes of March 1664 when he was told by the presiding Justice that "the King was sworn, the Parliament was sworn, and he and the justices were sworn, and the law was preserved by oaths."[5]

In Lancashire as in many other counties, Friends rigorously maintained their testimony against swearing whenever it was seen to be brought into question. In 1676 Lancaster Monthly Meeting ordered that

> John Townson and Henry Wilson do go and exhort and admonish William Eccleston and see if he will condemn the evil action of swearing or making oaths, contrary to the practise of truth . . .[6]

and when some four years later Emy Hodgson, a Friend from Swarthmore Meeting, swore in front of a justice on the Act for Burying in Woollen, she was ordered to write a paper denying her actions and present the same to the court at which she had sworn.[7] In 1693, following enquiries from the Meeting for Sufferings in London as to what form of words, if any, Friends might accept from parliament in place of an oath, the Quarterly Meeting for the county decided

[4] W. C. Braithwaite, *The Second period of Quakerism*, (London, 1921), p. 14–15.

[5] George Fox, *Journal*, ed. John Nickalls (London, 1975), p. 483–484; Chief Justice John Kelying thought the refusal to swear would "subvert the Government, because without swearing we can have no justice done, no law executed, you may be robbed, your houses broken open, your goods taken away and be injured in your persons, and no justice or recompense had because the fact cannot be proved . . .", quoted in Craig Horle, "Judicial encounters with Quakers 1660–1688", *Jnl. F.H.S.* 54 (1977), p. 98.

[6] Lancaster Friends' Meeting House, (hereinafter cited as LFMH) Lancaster Monthly Meeting Minutes, Vol. 1, 18.viii.1676.

[7] Friends House Library, London, (hereinafter cited as FHL) Swarthmore Women's Monthly Meeting Minutes, Vol. 1, 11.xii.1678, 11.i.1678–79, 6.iii.1679.

that yea yea and nay nay ought to be stood by and to and that nothing more be offered or accepted to or from the Government to ease the burthen of oaths but what truly is commanded with Christ's command.[8]

This decision prepared the way for a repudiation in Lancashire of the ease which was granted to Friends over the matter of swearing in the Affirmation Act of 1696. The wording of the affirmation, which included the phrase "in the presence of Almighty God", had only been accepted as an expedient by the Friends lobbying parliament, who faced severe opposition from the supporters of the established church. However, to many Friends in both the north and south this practical and politic expedient was little more than another oath, invoking as it did the presence of God to give sanction to the words of the speaker. It was not until 1722, when a perpetual affirmation omitting reference to God was granted, that Lancashire Quarterly Meeting decided that it could accept the form of words offered in place of an oath. Thus, Friends were open to prosecution for refusing to swear or affirm in the circumstances outlined above for a period of some sixty years following the Restoration.[9] It is the purpose of the following study to examine in detail the recorded sufferings of Lancashire Quakers for refusing to swear, and to suggest some reasons for the results that emerge.

Friends constructed, with a fair degree of success, a sophisticated network for recording, verifying and transmitting all instances of conflict with the world. Written accounts, signed, initialled or marked by the individual concerned and two witnesses (usually neighbours, and not always Friends) were taken from each Particular Meeting to the clerk of the Monthly Meeting. One copy would be kept (sometimes being entered into a book) and another sent to the Quarterly Meeting for Sufferings, which would make a general report to the Quarterly Meeting. Copies of each case would be entered into a county Book of Sufferings, and the accounts would then be carried up to the Yearly Meeting in London by the county's representatives. Once in London, the year's sufferings would be checked, and totals as to the number of

[8] LFMH, Lancashire Quarterly Meeting Minutes, Vol. 1, 3.xi.1693, 1.viii.1696.

[9] 7 & 8 Will. III, c. 34, 8 Geo. II, c. 6; Lancashire Quarterly Meeting Minutes, Vol. 2, 13.ii.1722.

each type of incident, the total amount of money or property seized, and the number of Friends imprisoned would be made and entered in the Yearly Meeting Minutes. At this point bundles containing the accounts from each county were collected and left with the clerk of the Society (later described as the recording clerk) to be transcribed into the Great Book of Sufferings. These yearly volumes, containing written accounts, county by county, of all prosecutions and other instances of persecution (for example, common assault or the seizure of tithe without warrant) are extant from the later Commonwealth period to 1856, and are preserved at Friends House Library, London.

The figures shown in table A are drawn from two sources. Those in parentheses are from Joseph Besse's *Collection of the sufferings of the people called Quakers* (1753), ostensibly drawn from the same annual accounts that were used to compile the Great Book of Sufferings, and covering the period 1660–1689.

Table A

Sufferings of Lancashire Quakers for Refusing to Swear, 1660–1722

	1660–1669	1670–1679	1680–1689	1690–1699	1700–1709	1710–1719	1720–1722
Refusing the Oath of Allegiance and "For not Swearing"	252 (196)	11	1				
Refusing to Swear in Tithe Cases	13	15 (1)	12 (13)	41			
Refusing to Swear in Chancery and Exchequer		3					
Refusing to Swear for Manufactured Goods						14	
Refusing to Swear for Office	8	2	2		1		
Other			3 (2)	2			

The main set of figures, covering the period 1660–1722, come from the sections of the Great Book of Sufferings containing the returns sent to London from Lancashire. Material from the Lancashire Quarterly Meeting Book of Sufferings has not been included in the main sequence, for samplings showed it to be particularly inaccurate for the period 1660 to 1670, when little systematic recording seems to have taken place at a local level.[10]

I have divided the cases in which Friends refused to swear into six sections. In the first place, and most markedly just after the Restoration, Quakers were penalised for refusing the oaths of allegiance and supremacy. Many entries in Besse and the Great Book of Sufferings give no clear indication of the exact type of prosecution that Friends were under in this respect. This was the case, for example, with the 41 Bickerstaff Friends "sent . . . to the common jail at Lancaster" early in 1661 after Justice Nathaniel West had asked them "if any would take the oath"; their refusal led to committal, as did that of the eight Quakers taken at Thomas Patefield's and imprisoned "for refusing the oaths" before two Justices.[11] We may safely assume that in those cases the phrase "the oaths" was shorthand for the oaths of allegiance and supremacy commonly built into post-restoration discriminative measures such as the 1661 Corporation Act. So we may group these "sufferings" together with a large number of cases in which Friends' refusal to swear allegiance and supremacy was specified in the record.

A second category of non-swearing compounded the offence that Quakers committed in law when they refused to pay their tithes. Thus it was with the 33 Friends "who came to jail on the 28th day of the 2nd month last (1691) upon attachment for not answering upon oath to their adversaries Bill for tithe . . ."[12] Thirdly, I have grouped together a number of cases in which Friends felt themselves to be penalised by "great sufferings, and extreme hardships in our persons and estates, . . . being not admitted by law, to answer in the Court of Chancery and Exchequer without oath" in

[10] FHL, Great Book of Sufferings, Vol. 1–16, (herinafter cited as GBS); Joseph Besse, *Collection* (2 vols., London, 1753), Vol. 1, p. 300–330; LFMH, Lancashire Quarterly Meeting Book of Sufferings, Vol. 1, 1654–1700, *passim*.

[11] GBS, Vol. 1, p. 561, 13.xi.1660; Besse, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 309, 13.i.1661.

[12] GBS, Vol. 5, pt. 1, p. 262, 28.ii.1691.

civil suits over matters of debt and land-titles.[13] Next comes a class of sufferings stemming from Friends' refusal to comply with the government-imposed sworn attestations accompanying the manufacture or import of such goods as "candles or leather (which require the taking of an oath, or the present affirmation)"—refusals which, it was claimed in 1721, "have already ruined some, and apparently tend to the ruin of many more".[14] Fifthly, some Quakers were called upon to swear oaths when they were drafted or elected, perhaps maliciously, for local government office. Finally, there were miscellaneous actions ("other" in the table), under the Burial in Woollens Act and for refusal to swear in other cases.[15]

The table omits prosecutions under the Quaker and Conventicle Acts, when Friends were proceeded against as Quakers or religious dissenters meeting in breach of the law. In all the cases in the table, Friends fell foul of the law, for refusal of oaths, either as subjects (allegiance and supremacy), parishioners (tithe and other dues), litigants (title and debt), merchants and manufacturers (leather, etc.), or citizens (local office).

Out of a total of 380 individual sufferings recorded for refusing to swear in the Great Book of Sufferings, 322 occurred between 1660 and 1689. Nearly 70% of these were confined to the two years following the restoration of Charles II. In 1660 the number given for refusing to swear was 58, whilst 105 Friends refused the Oath of Allegiance; the following year the figures were 35 and 13 respectively. These figures, and the method in which oaths were tendered to Friends at this time, are consistent with the interpretation of persecution in these early years as representing a purge by an insecure regime of the politically suspect.[16] Friends in all parts of the county were arrested and imprisoned for refusing to swear: at Yealand "the constable of the town with several

[13] *The Case of the people commonly called Quakers, with some reasons humbly offered . . .* (London, 1696), p. 1; see also *A Brief representation of the Quakers case of not-swearing,* (London, 1694) [Wing E141], *passim.*

[14] *The Case of some thousands of the people called Quakers in Great Britain who conscientiously scruple the present affirmation,* (London, 1721).

[15] GBS, Vol. 3, pt. 2, p. 851, 6th. month 1683, p. 881, 8.viii.1684; Vol. 5, pt. 1, p. 262. 16.iv.1690; Vol. 7, pt. 1, p. 303, 6th. month 1693; Besse, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 329, 1684.

[16] For these figures see Table A. Braithwaite, *op. cit.* p. 8–14; W. W. Spurrier, "The persecution of the Quakers in England" (University of North Carolina, Ph.D. thesis, 1976), p. 119, 145–147.

soldiers with swords and pistols entered the house and seized the whole meeting", sending 26 Friends to Lancaster Castle; the following day the armed soldiers returned and took the remaining twelve to the same destination.[17] Seven days later twelve Friends were taken at Bickerstaff "by soldiers, who said they came by order of the Earl of Derby", and having refused the Oaths of Allegiance at Wigan, were taken to the county jail. The thirteen Friends who were taken at a meeting in Manchester in June 1661 were met by troops of a more nervous disposition, for

> the meeting being ended there stood armed men with halberks [halberds] and pikes threatening to slay them if they came upon them, and immediately came the men called justices and apprehended them and tendered them the oath of obedience as they called it, but Friends in the fear of the lord denied to swear . . .[18]

It is interesting to note that this highly organised operation against Friends did not always rely on their reluctance to swear in order to incarcerate them. In February 1660/61 "at Swarthmore, forty three persons were taken, some out of their houses, others from the market, and some from their labour and employments, by a party of horsemen, and without any warrant, Mittimus, or examination before a magistrate, committed to Lancaster Castle".[19]

The surprising thing about this exploitation of the Quaker refusal to swear is not its ferocity, but the fact that it ended as quickly as it did, especially as this was just at the time that national legislation, in the form of the Quaker Act, was being introduced. After 1661 the number of prosecutions for refusing to swear or take the Oath of Allegiance exceeded ten on only one occasion, in 1668. For the most part the prosecutions and sufferings that involved the taking of an oath after this initial outburst were concerned with tithe prosecutions, and at the end of the period, customs.[20] Given the sudden decline in these prosecutions, and given the fact that Friends

[17] GBS, Vol. 1, p. 561, 13.xi.1660.

[18] GBS, Vol. 1, p. 561, 20.xi.1660, p. 563, 16.iv.1661.

[19] Besse, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 308, 24.xi.1660.

[20] The largest number of Friends who suffered for not swearing in any of the given categories in Table A on any one occasion was 33, who were imprisoned "for not answering upon oath, to their adversaries bill for tithe", GBS, Vol. 5, pt. 1, p. 262, 28.ii.1691.

did not alter their position regarding oaths at this time, it can only be concluded that the use of an oath as a political weapon was superseded by the opportunities afforded to the authorities by the Conventicle Act of 1664 and other items in the "Clarendon Code". This implies that the authorities were not primarily interested in oath-swearing but merely used oaths to show up the presence of Quakers and to prosecute them for an "offence", being Quakers and attending conventicles, which before 1662 and 1664 was not clearly illegal.

During the sixty-two years for which data has been gathered only 13 Friends are recorded as having suffered for refusing to qualify themselves for office on oath. Of these, nine were called to serve as jurymen either at local courts or the assizes at Wigan or Lancaster. Of the remaining four Friends, two are simply recorded as having been called to serve an "office", one as a constable and the last, Miles Birket

> was returned at the Court Baron held in the parish of Cartmel to serve the office of a massman, which said office he did accept of and serve, but it appearing at the next court held in the year 1709 that the said Miles had not been sworn to serve the said office, he was fined by the said court six shillings and eightpence,

eventually having goods distrained to the value of nine shillings.[21] The above incident illustrates what must have been a dilemma for many Friends, for although having no objection to holding such offices they were at least in theory prevented from doing so by the barrier of customary or statutory oaths. However, in Lancaster at least 14 Friends have been identified as having held minor offices of the corporation during this period, and a similar situation seems

[21] GBS, Vol. 11, pt. 2, p. 448, 17.xii.1709. A massman was probably a church-warden, elected annually in the local manor court or vestry. Although oaths could vary between parish and diocese, a warden would usually have to swear "you shall execute the Office of a Churchwarden in the Parish where you are chosen for this ensuing year, according to your skill and discretion in his Majesty's Laws, ecclesiastical now in force, so help you God". For the selection and duties of a churchwarden see S. A. Peyton (ed.), "*Minutes of proceedings in Quarter Sessions held for the Parts of Kesteven in the County of Lincoln* 1674–1695", (Lincoln, Lincoln Record Society, Vol. 25, 1931) p. lv–lvi; L. M. Hill "County government in Caroline England 1625–1640" in Conrad Russell (ed.) *The Origins of the English Civil War* (London, 1973), p. 76. For a variety of churchwardens' oaths see *The Book of Oaths* (1715) p. 222–224, appendix, p. 5. I owe this particular reference to Dr. J. William Frost of Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania.

to have existed in Bolton.[22] The Toleration Act of 1689 allowed Dissenters to act in office by deputy if they were elected or appointed to a post outside the scope of the 1672 Test Act, which required an oath of entry. Friends, however, continued to serve in such burdensome offices as that of constable, where the appointee was legally required to swear "so help me God" that he would perform his duties. Furthermore, there was the added danger that, as constable, a Friend might be called upon to enforce the law against his co-religionists.[23]

In tithe actions personal inclination often determined the course that a prosecution for non-payment of tithe would follow, and the method of prosecution in turn determined the likelihood of Friends being called upon to swear. Whilst the use of the Oath of Allegiance in an open court was a convenient method to combat the danger perceived in the activities of Friends, the tender of an oath in an ecclesiastical court in a case of tithe merely prolonged the waiting of a cleric or lay impropriator for the payment of the claimed amount. Out of the 80 prosecutions recorded for not-swearing in cases of tithe, 59 were clearly in suits brought in an ecclesiastical court, and of these 47 were sued by the same impropriator, Edmund Ashton of Whalley. Of these 47 Friends, 12 were involved in the same case in 1684, and 33 were sued together in 1691.[24] In the Exchequer there was more hope of taking advantage of Quaker principles in order to obtain an order of distress against Friends' goods, though the methods used, involving the process of contempt and outlawing, were both

[22] Nicholas Morgan, "The Social and political relations of the Lancaster Quaker community, 1688–1740", in M. Mullett (ed.), *Early Lancaster Friends*, (Lancaster Centre for North-West Regional Studies, Occasional Paper No. 5, 1978), p. 25: W. E. A. Axon, "The Pembertons of Aspull and Philadelphia, and some passages of the early history of Quakerism in Lancashire", *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society*, Vol. 12 (1912), p. 161.

[23] For the selection and duties of a constable see Peyton, *op. cit.*, p. xlvi–liii. A variety of constables' oaths are in *The Book of Oaths* (1715) p. 207–208, appendix p. 5–6. For the case of a Friend who as a constable carried out warrants of distraint against fellow-Quakers see LFMH, Lancaster Monthly Meeting Minutes, Vol. 1, testimonies, 28.xii.1707.

[24] Eric Evans, "Our faithful testimony", *Jnl. F.H.S.* 52 (1969), p. 121. The ecclesiastical courts could only order payment to be made, and did not have the power or ability to enforce that order by granting or obtaining an order of distraint; see A. W. Braithwaite, "Early tithe prosecutions, Friends as outlaws" *Jnl. F.H.S.* 49 (1960), p. 151; GBS, Vol. 3, pt. 2, p. 880, 17.vii.1684, Vol. 5, pt. 1, p. 262, 28.ii.1691.

circuitous and probably illegal.[25] At least five Friends from Cartmel suffered in this way at the suit of Thomas Preston of Holker, and of the remaining sixteen prosecutions, eight were in the Exchequer, whilst the method of the others is not clear. Imprisonment or distraints for refusing to answer on oath seem to have been the almost inevitable outcome of a tithe case brought in either ecclesiastical or Exchequer courts. The Act for the More Easy Recovery of Small Tithes (1696) and the Affirmation Act (1696) gave Friends at least technical relief from these sufferings by introducing a summary procedure for the recovery by the plaintiff of the tithe claimed with a set allowance for expenses. The purpose of both these statutes with regard to tithe was to lessen the problems faced by the claimant during the proceedings; in Lancashire the number of Friends suffering for non-payment of tithe nearly doubled within two years of the acts being passed.[26]

In comparison with the ecclesiastical and Exchequer courts, there are few cases of Friends suffering for refusing to swear or appear on oath in the court of Chancery. Although it is difficult to estimate the number of cases in that court which involved Friends it is clear from a variety of sources that the matters of debt and property dealt with were essential aspects in the day to day life of merchants and yeomen farmers. One only has to examine the Quaker complaints of the hardships they faced through not swearing to realise how important the proceedings of Chancery were to them.[27] In Lancashire there are only three cases of sufferings in Chancery recorded between 1660 and 1722, all of which occurred within two years of each other. The nature of the particular cases does show that the substance of Friends complaints was realistic, but there is no evidence (at least in the case of Lancashire) to support the frequency with which they claimed prosecutions took place.

[25] Friends had obtained a legal opinion that jurisdiction in matters of tithe lay only in the ecclesiastical courts. A. W. Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, p. 150, 152–155.

[26] Besse, *op. cit.* Vol., 1, p. 329; 6 Will. III, c. 6 & 34; Morgan *op. cit.* p. 27–28.

[27] *A Brief representation of the Quakers case*, (1694), p. 3–5; *The case of the people called Quakers with respect to many of their friends in South Britain, and their Friends in general in North Britain, who conscientiously scruple the taking of the present affirmation*, (London, 1720), *passim*; *The case of the people called Quakers, relating to oathes and swearing*, (London, 1673), p. 6.

Henry Ashton, a distiller of Ormskirk, was sued in Chancery by David Poole, his debtor to the tune of £19, "he having no other way to defraud the said Henry Ashton of the aforesaid debt, knowing that for conscience sake he could not swear."[28] Thomas Gee of Preston sued Hamlet Percivall in the local chancery court for an account of seven years standing,

> and the said Hamlet gave in his answer, which the said Gee with many others did believe to be true, and Gee's attorney said the bill and answer did not differ a groat, and because the said Hamlet could not for conscience sake swear, it cost him seven or eight pounds.[29]

Thomas Crosby of Ormskirk, a grocer, was sued by a merchant from Liverpool for the sum of ten pounds, which Crosby claimed he had already paid,

> and the carrier being alive did and doth affirm the payment of the said ten pounds accordingly, but to prevent him bearing evidence he was joined defendant in the suit (and) the said Thomas Crosby called to answer, and because he could not swear to it for conscience sake, it cost him ten pounds or above.[30]

Friends in trade were also likely to face difficulties with regard to the customs and excise. It was widely felt that there were so many oaths expected of both ships-masters and merchants importing and exporting goods that the sanction of swearing was being devalued. One non-Quaker authority claimed that perjuries were "but too frequently committed at the Custom-House, viz. That it is but a Custom-House Oath; as if God who is omnipresent, did not see, and was not equally offended at profaning his Name there, as at any other Place whatsoever . . .".[31] When, in 1832, many of the oaths

[28] GBS, Vol. 3, pt. 2, p. 748, 1675. The result of the case was that "the said Henry Ashton is under contempt for not answering . . . and the said David Poole has got an injunction to stop him from recovering his said debt, so that he is likely to loose his just debt, and he [is] imprisoned besides."

[29] GBS, Vol. 3, pt. 2, p. 769, 1674. This would be in the Lancashire Chancery Court at Preston. For its history and jurisdiction see Robert Somerville, "The Palatinate Courts in Lancashire", in Alan Harding (ed.) *Law making and law makers in British history*, (London, Royal Historical Society Studies in History Series No. 22, 1980), p. 58–63.

[30] GBS, *loc. cit.*

[31] Henry Crouch, *A Complete guide to the officers of His Majesty's Customs*, (London, 1732), p. 143, quoted in Hoon, *op. cit.* p. 247.

connected with commercial declarations were abolished under the Act 1 & 2 Wm IV c.4, it was explained that "From the frequent occasions on which such oaths and affirmations are required, . . . the reverence and respect which should attach to such solemn obligations have been weakened."[32] The Controller of the customs at Lancaster was warned in 1715 that there was some laxity in the procedure concerning the entry of oaths, and was reminded that "the oath be wrote on the original warrant being first signed by the merchant who makes the oath, and then yourselves or such of you before whom the same by law is to be administered . . .".[33]

How then did Friends fare in this atmosphere of oath-making and oath-breaking? It is clear from Table A that, even before the 1696 Affirmation Act, the oaths demanded at the customs were somehow avoided by Friends. In 1698 London Yearly Meeting warned Friends against using "secret and indirect ways to take up their goods without paying the customs and duties". The county Quarterly Meeting did its best to ensure that Friends made a true entry of their goods at the customs-house, and later enquired of each Monthly and Particular Meeting "how Friends were clear from being concerned in defrauding the King of his duties and excise". Furthermore, it is clear from a study of the commercial activities of William Stout and his fellow Quaker merchants in Lancaster that the official records contain numerous references to the type and quantity of goods which they were trading.[34] Given this seemingly large scale evasion of the official oaths, which must have involved some amount of complicity between customs-officers and Quakers, it is difficulty to explain the outburst of prosecutions which took place on the passing of the Leather Act of 1711. The duty, which was administered by the Tax Office as opposed to the Commissioners of Customs, was required from all merchants importing leather, who were required to make an oath as to the value of their goods at the customs. Specially appointed officers, recruited mainly from the Board

[32] Preamble to the Act; quoted in Henry Atton and Henry Holland, *The King's Customs*, (2 vols., London, 1910), Vol. 2, p. 161.

[33] PRO, CUST 81/70, p. 4.

[34] FHL, Yearly Meeting Minutes, Vol. 2, p. 229, 1698; LFMH, Lancashire Quarterly Meeting Minutes, Vol. 2, 1.viii.1719; *The Autobiography of William Stout*, (ed.) J. D. Marshall, (Manchester, 1967), Appendix A, p. 282–291.

of Excise, were required to examine stocks of hides held by leather tanners and again verify the quantity of the same on oath, "which oath any Justice of the Peace or the collectors or supervisors that shall be appointed for the said duty in their respective districts are hereby impowered to administer."[35]

The result of the new legislation was almost immediate. Roderick Forbes, a Quaker from Aberdeen wrote to his brother in February 1711 that

> a great many of our Friends are presently under suffering because they cannot verify their entries by affirmation on the late leather act, so that as I came through Cumberland many Friends' goods were distrained to the value of twelve pounds . . . although their entries were truly made and duties paid.[36]

A similar situation existed in Lancashire, where in 1711 nine Friends were "prosecuted by Edward Burghall of Wigan, head collector for the duty on hides and skins . . . though the said collector acknowledged the receipt of the Queens duty for the same". Burghall had previously acted as surveyor of the excise for the county, and as such must have had some contact with Quaker merchants and distillers who would neither swear or affirm.[37] In the north of the county five Friends were prosecuted, and in all nearly £175 was taken from the fourteen, out of a total seized from Friends in the county of £520. A letter from Swarthmore Meeting to the Meeting for Sufferings complained that "except some relief can be had from London, divers of the tanners, etc, must give up their trades", and the following year the same meeting decided to "collect the sufferings of Friends who have left their business or their trade because they did scruple the affirmation."[38]

The Quaker response in London to the effect of the Leather Act was cool, with the representatives for Lancashire

[35] 9 Anne., c. 12 [Statutes of the realm]; for the appointment of these officers see PRO, CUST 47/66, p. 35–43. The terms of the Act made no provision for affirmation in lieu of oath; this may be an indication of the harsher political climate towards the end of the reign of Queen Anne.

[36] Scottish Record Office, CH 10/3/35, 15.xii.1711–12.

[37] GBS, Vol. 14, pt. 1, p. 106, 24.iv. 1711; PRO, CUST 47/66, p. 35.

[38] FHL, Yearly Meeting Minutes, Vol. 4, p. 247; FHL, Minutes of the Meeting for Sufferings, Vol. 20, 14.x.1711, (hereinafter cited as MMS); FHL, Swarthmore Monthly Meeting Minutes, Vol. 4, 7.ix.1712.

to the Yearly Meeting of 1712 reporting that it was "not without some difficulty" and "after an exercise of some meetings" that the prosecutions were accepted as bona fide sufferings. The Meeting for Sufferings approached both the Attorney General and the Solicitor General for opinions on the situation of Friends who refused to either swear or affirm when making their declarations, concluding that they were "against the said Friends in their judgement". A further report to the meeting on the Leather Act stated that "there is no relief (by the letter of the said Act) for any that shall refuse to make such entry as is therein required".[39] A petition was forwarded to the Lord Treasurer's Office stating the case of the northern Friends, but this apparently asked only that "they may have the privilege of affirmation", something which by all accounts they had but in a form that was still unacceptable.[40] Indeed the Meeting for Sufferings was at pains to stress that the suffering Friends were refusing to act as the law required, and in order to dissociate itself from these actions, it refused in May 1712 to consent to the printing of a paper to be delivered to Parliament giving account of the prosecutions. It finally attempted in the same month to approach members of Parliament in order to obtain a clause "that Friends may be admitted to make their entries on a penalty in case of frauds" to be inserted in an Act for laying additional duties on hides; this method had been employed in the Hop Act of 1711.[41]

It seems clear that much of the apparent embarrassment of the Meeting for Sufferings at the activities of the Friends who were prosecuted for not swearing or affirming on the Leather Act was due to the fact that the Affirmation then in force was nearing the date of its expiry. A paper printed early in 1712, which publicly stated the dissatisfaction of many Friends with an affirmation that included the name of God, caused George Whitehead to write that

[39] LFMH, Lancashire Quarterly Meeting Minutes, Vol. 2, 3.v.1712; MMS, Vol. 20, 23.ix.1711, 30.ix.1711.

[40] MMS, Vol. 20, 21.x.1711; PRO, T 4/9, p. 34, 19th. December 1711.

[41] London Yearly Meeting, on "consideration of this new case being very weighty on Friends, not to reject or take no notice of the sufferers, have agreed that the said sufferings be now entered under this title, viz. for that they declare they could not verify their entries as the law directs.", FHL, Yearly Meeting Minutes, Vol. 4, p. 257, 1712; MMS, Vol. 20, 17.iii.1712, 26.iii.1712; 9 Anne., c. 13 [Statutes of the realm].

The late bustle in public solicitation against the name of God in the solemn affirmation has rendered us very little as a people very weak and inconsistent in the eyes of the government; and opened the mouths of many against Friends. It has greatly offended our friends in the government and caused our adversaries to rejoice over us.[42]

Indeed, it is even possible to see the prosecutions under the Leather Act as the outcome of a concerted attempt by the "dissatisfied" Friends to apply pressure upon both the Meeting for Sufferings, and the House of Commons, in order to obtain a modified affirmation. Certainly it is otherwise difficult to explain the prosecutions of 1711 and 1712, which, given the unwritten accommodation between the officers of the customs and excise and the Friends of Lancashire and the other northern counties which "negative" evidence shows to have existed, need never otherwise have taken place.

If, as it would appear from the foregoing, Friends were not being called upon to swear, it remains to be shown what collusive method, if any, was being used in order to avoid a breach of their testimony. It has been shown that Quakers in Derbyshire could be "relatively certain of a favourable Anglican attitude over oaths" when proving wills, and that "there was a deliberate silence on the part of both Anglicans and Friends in many areas of the county about the technical compliance with the law" and that *Jurat* was entered against Friends names in probate cases.[43] In Westmorland, as a result of the influence of Gervase Benson on the officials of the court of the Archdeaconry of Richmond, Friends had 'the privilege of proving wills and taking letters of administration without oaths.' Thomas Camm, who gave account of this state of affairs in 1709 added that it had "continued to this day."[44] When Margaret Fox wrote an epistle criticising the

[42] George Whitehead to Robert Barclay, 4th. March 1712, quoted in W. C. Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, p. 192; for an account of the proceedings of the Meeting for Sufferings in relation to renewing the affirmation see Norman Hunt, *Two early political associations*, (London, 1961), p. 50–54.

[43] Forde, *op. cit.*, p. 124–125.

[44] FHL, Portfolio 7/75, p. 9–10; this is printed in N. Penney (ed.), *The First Publishers of Truth*, (London, 1907), p. 251. Benson, a former Mayor of Kendal, Justice of the Peace and a Proctor at Civil Law was Commissary of the Archdeaconry of Richmond prior to the civil war. His own position on the oath was somewhat ambiguous, maintaining that "the calling of God to witness, or saying, *God is my witness, &c.* without adding of somewhat more, is neither Oath nor Swearing . . .", and that this "true witness-bearing, as it was before swearing was, is not received in Judicial proceedings for want of an Oath . . .". In practice, he was open "unto their [men's]

Northern Friends who refused to use the affirmation granted in 1696 she bitterly complained that "when they had occasion formerly to prove wills or put in answers, they were glad to see a clerk put in *Jurat* . . . whereas now they may go plainly before the face of all to speak their solemn declaration."[45]

A correspondence between Roger Haydock and the Meeting for Sufferings reveals more than any other source about the arrangements that Friends came to with 'the world', and it is this that will be examined in the following pages. Haydock, a Friend from Coppull, wrote to the Meeting for Sufferings in 1683, asking advice in the case of Friends who were summoned to appear in the Court of Chancery "by evil minded men, who having no right to such pretended interests as they claimed", were attempting to exploit the Quaker refusal to swear. He explained that in fact Friends' answers had been accepted without an oath, "yet such answers . . . were recorded as accepted upon oath, which to some Friends hath seemed a straight thing". The letter continued

> but a late Chancellor made a rule of court, that no answer should be taken but in the presence of the plaintiff's attorney . . . otherwise he to have 6 days notice before, of the place as well as time, where and when the Commissioners sit to receive our Friends answer; this of late time hath made answers without oath more difficult to be accepted. But thus it sometimes falls when the defendants attorney knows whom the plaintiff hath joined in the commission . . . then the Friends attorney lays out to inform himself if possible when the plaintiffs commissioner is either abroad or hath such earnest occasion elsewhere, that although 6 days notice be given him, he cannot meet the other commissioners, which if it take effect as several times it hath done, then the Friends answers is readily taken without oath, but still by the commissioners recorded as accepted upon oath . . .

Was this, Haydock wanted to know, consistent with Friends' testimony regarding swearing?[46]

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punishment (which hitherto, blessed be God, I and some others have found, not according to the rigour of the Law, but with some moderation)"; W. C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, (2nd edition, London 1955) p. 91–92; Gervase Benson, *A True testimony concerning oaths and swearing*, (London, 1669) [Wing B1902], pp. 30, 39, 47.

[45] FHL, Miller MMS Trans, 13, Margaret Fox to Friends, 19.xi.1697–98.

[46] GBS, Vol. 3, pt. 2, p. 830, Roger Haydock to the Meeting for Sufferings, 11.vi.1683.

The Meeting for Sufferings clearly found it difficult to discuss such a candid account of Friends activities, for the original minute recording the receipt and substance of Haydock's letter was scored out, only to be later prefixed, "This should stand". Eventually William Shewen was nominated to write the reply to Haydock, and the meeting's answer contained in the letter was typically cryptic.[47] It was agreed that

> Friends may have freedom in the spirit of God to offer or give their testimony in justice and truth as in the sight and presence of God, and solemnly to aver the truth of their answer in his fear, and if any court or magistrate is or shall be satisfied therewith, and account it equivalent with an oath, and record it accordingly . . . we must not shun giving testimony in our right to prevent their misinterpretation.

This phrase, a clear forerunner of the affirmation granted in 1696, was to reach "to probates of wills, executorships, freedoms in corporations, entries at customs-houses and many other things." Avoiding comment on the method of entering answers described by Haydock the letter continued

> seeing that in divers weighty cases Friends testimonies, depositions and answers have been accepted and recorded by officers in trust without an oath (under) the term *Jurat* in design only of doing them a kindness as knowing their answer would not otherwise be accepted in court. It would appear disingenuous, very imprudent and unfair . . . to make a [manuscript torn] discovery of this in court against the officer . . . thereby causing such a one to be called in question and perhaps to lose his place, and not only so, but by such open discovery of such a nice scruple, cause the courts to be more inquisitive, strict and severe upon Friends. . .

The letter concluded: "This is our present sense in the matter, if anyone otherwise minded, we may say as the Apostle did in another case, the Lord will reveal it if they truly wait upon him."[48]

[47] MMS, Vol. 3, 17.vi.1683, 21.vii.1683, 28.vii.1683; there is some suggestion that Friends wished to take advantage of this liberty in order to take action against their adversaries, which the Meeting for Sufferings advised against, "Friends desiring to follow peace with all men."

[48] FHL, Portfolio 16/32, endorsed "Wm. Shewens answer to Roger Haydock to be presented to the Meeting for Sufferings, about recording *Jurat.*", 31st 6th month 1683. Friends clearly saw a distinction between this method and that of employing a substitute to make an oath in court. When a Quaker from Kent was convicted for this offence in 1678 the Meeting for

Two main conclusions can be drawn from the letter sent by the Meeting for Sufferings to Robert Haydock. Firstly, it is clear from its tone and contents that Haydock's account of Friends having *Jurat* entered on their behalf whilst not actually swearing was by no means exceptional, the main problem being seen in those who were uneasy about this procedure (the fact that no comment was made on the method employed by Lancashire Friends may indicate a desire on the part of the Meeting for Sufferings not to be informed of such technical details). Indeed, there was a note of pride in the suggestion that a magistrate, having accepted a Friend's word, might "it may be, commend it above their common oath", something that was doubtless also true for the acceptance of Friends' word by customs and excise officers, in preference to insincere oaths. Secondly, the reply seems to have afforded the meeting with an opportunity to present to Friends in Lancashire the form of words it was seeking as an affirmation. Haydock made no mention of any required phrase being used by Friends, and given their later position the use of the phrase "in the presence of God" by them would seem unlikely. The letter from London, however, stressed on several occasions that Friends were "clear against swearing" if they had only "in the fear of God solemnly promised or assented the truth as the case required".[49] Haydock had expressed concern only over the fact that Friends' plain answers were being called oaths, but perhaps in the answer of the Meeting for Sufferings we should see some anticipation of the problem which was to shake the movement to its foundations at the turn of the century.[50]

What then can be said of the testimony of Lancashire Friends against swearing? Certainly the Quarterly, Monthly and Particular Meetings maintained a strong discipline with

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Sufferings asserted "that we do utterly detest and abominate in our very souls the thought and much more the actions of employing or permitting any man to personate us in giving in any answer on oath as if we were the very person and the act ours", and further, "that we do esteem it a far greater crime to suborn than swear . . ." FHL, Book of Cases, Vol. 1, p. 42–43.

[49] *Ibid.*; the first bill for an affirmation presented to Parliament in 1690 used the phrase, "I call God to witness, and appeal to him as judge of the truth of what I shall say", W. C. Braithwaite, *Second period*, p. 181–183.

[50] The best account of a dispute that has in general been under-estimated by Quaker historians is to be found in Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, p. 181–204.

regard to all the outward aspects of Quaker life, exhorting and sometimes bullying Friends in order to prevent "disorderly walking". Refusal to swear was seen as a basic testimony, and thus when it was brought into question, either on the rare occasions that a Friend was discovered to have sworn or when the introduction of the affirmation in 1696 seemed to compromise Friends' testimony, the meetings acted with all their strength and unity to re-assert their position in the eyes of the world. Friends were inevitably drawn into contact with their Anglican or dissenting neighbours through their business and trade, and as sober and responsible citizens they were often called upon to serve the community in which they lived. In general the Meeting for Sufferings advised Friends to take advantage of a clause in the Toleration Act of 1689 which allowed dissenters who could not swear to act in office by deputy, but for the most part Lancashire Quakers and their fellow citizens were prepared to see the problem of oaths of entry overcome by accommodation in order to allow them to play their natural role in society.[51] Similarly, officers of court and customs saw little reason why these honest improvers of trade should have their right to property and profit threatened either by unscrupulous suits or strongly held scruples. Indeed, the length to which Friends' attorneys went in order to see an answer entered is some indication of the light in which Quakers were seen. It is interesting to note that only in the case of tithes, when Friends were considered to be threatening another's property rights, and the Leather Act, when a concerned group wanted to pressurise the Meeting for Sufferings, was there no obvious collusion in order to avoid the problem of swearing.

If the preceding picture of relations between Quakers and 'the world' suggests a surprising degree of harmony as opposed to hostility, it is perhaps because historians have generally followed the path of the earliest Quaker propagandists and anti-Quaker polemicists in stressing the exceptional as opposed to the everyday. It is undeniable that Friends encountered considerable hostility, often manifesting itself in

[51] M. Mullett, "The Assembly of the people of God: The social organisation of Lancashire Friends", in Mullett (ed.), *Early Lancaster Friends* (1978); MMS, Vol. 21, 10.v.1713.

violence, in the Commonwealth and immediate post-Restoration period, and that a residue of this persisted into the early eighteenth century. Co-existence, however, overcame conflict. Friends found support and succour (often unwanted) from their local communities even in matters relating to tithe, where they continued to challenge and defy property-holders and law enforcers, often neighbours in town or village.[52] In the case of oaths people managed, generally, to avoid conflict with even the most unbending Quaker's principles.

NICHOLAS J. MORGAN

[52] For a recent work on hostility to Friends see Barry Reay, "Popular hostility towards Quakers in mid-seventeenth century England", *Social History*, Vol. 5. (1980), No. 3, p. 387–407. On tithes see Morgan, *op. cit.*, p. 30–31; Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 108–109, also *The Contentious tithe*, (London, 1976), p. 60.

Manuscript Evidence on the Quakers Bill of 1722

SEVERAL documents relating to the issue of affirmation by Friends in the early eighteenth century are contained in the papers of the Whig politician Charles Spencer, third Earl of Sunderland.[1] A leading member of the ministry before his death in April 1722, Sunderland continued the close relationship with William Penn begun by his father the second earl.[2] He was also aware of the potential for political support from the Friends available to the Whigs as the party of nonconformity and toleration.[3] The evidence within Sunderland's papers for his parliamentary support of Quakerism in the months preceding his death is not great, but it does demonstrate a continuing interest in favour of the cause of this minority.

Late in 1721 legislation was introduced into Parliament entitled "An Act for granting the People called Quakers, such Forms of Affirmation or Declaration, as may remove the Difficulties which many of them lye under". The difficulty for Friends was that the declaration allowed by the statute

[1] This collection has been acquired by the British Library from Blenheim Palace. The following evidence was dispersed among the original files (in particular C 1/56 and D 1/38) but in the course of the re-arrangement of the archive by the British Library the author was able to assemble the relevant documents within Sunderland's parliamentary papers, now Additional Ms. 61,496. Quotations appear with the permission of the British Library.

[2] See the letter of 27 March 1718 from Hannah Penn to Sunderland, mentioning the latter's long friendship with her husband: B. L., Add. Ms. 61,647, fos. 211-v. For the second earl see: J. P. Kenyon, *Robert Spencer, Earl of Sunderland 1641–1702* (London, 1958), pp. 6–7, 186–7.

[3] Friends are mentioned in several places in the Sunderland correspondence relating to the spring 1722 general election. George Lucy, a Whig parliamentary candidate in Warwickshire, produced several reports for Sunderland and the latter's agent Sute at Lincoln's Inn: B.L., Add. Ms. 61,496, fos. 84–7. To Sute he wrote:

> The Quakers in this County seem a little doubtfull in concerning them selves in Elections, your mentioning something that was lately writt to encourage them to intereste them selves, if there be any such thing be pleased to communicate it to me & what places the Quakers have voted at in Elections. I suppose Buckingham shire, there are many of that sort in Warwickshire.

Tobias Jenkyns, Whig alderman of York, mayor in 1720, and member of Parliament for the city, was at this time more confident of support from the same quarter. His success depended, he wrote, upon the "old Interest of the grave People, that are very steady, of the Quakers which I believe I have to a man, and the freemen I made at the last Election": B.L., Add. Ms. 61,496.

of William III's reign was considered to be too close to an oath for their consciences to sanction. Prominent members of the Society of Friends sought the support of the government for the alteration of the affirmation, including Thomas Story who had an apparently successful meeting with Sunderland at this time.[4] This may well explain how Sunderland came to acquire a document relating to the issue. It is an undated slip of paper without heading or signature which rehearsed the fact that a conscientious scruple remained in the minds of thousands of Quakers concerning the form of the affirmation as it then stood. A simpler declaration in the style, "I A.B. do Sincerely declare & affirm, That the Evidence I Shall give Shall be the Truth etc. Or, that I will true answer make to Such questions as the Court Shall demand of me etc." was requested.[5]

The legislation passed through the House of Commons quickly, but problems arose in January 1722 when high church elements in the upper house exerted pressure against the alteration. One important dispute arose over a petition to the Lords presented by the London clergy against the new bill. This petition was debated on 17 January and rejected.[6] However, a minority of peers—twenty in all, both spiritual and temporal—recorded their dissenting view in a signed protest.[7] Sunderland had been present in the House of Lords on 17 January for the vote on the clergy's petition.[8] After its defeat he apparently considered the matter important enough to press for a committee of inquiry into its libellous authors and promoters.[9] He was probably also instrumental in securing the vote of the House on 5 March to expunge from its records the entire protest of the twenty members.[10] This

[4] For Story's imprisonment over the year and a half up to August 1721 for not taking the affirmation, and his account of the interview with Sunderland, see his *A journal of the life of Thomas Story* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1747), pp. 634, 753–7. This and other aspects of the passage of the 1722 act are discussed in: John Gough, *A History of the people called Quakers*, 4 vols. (Dublin, 1789–90), IV, 180–91; Herbert S. Skeats and C. S. Miall, *History of the Free Churches of England, 1688–1891* (London, 1891), p. 252; William C. Braithwaite, *The Second period of Quakerism* (London, 1919), 201–3.

[5] B.L., Add. Ms. 61,496, fo. 61.

[6] *Journals of the House of Lords*, XXI, 651–2.

[7] *Ibid.*, 652.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] Skeats, p. 253.

[10] *Ibid.*; *Journals*, XXI, 713.

portion of the Lords' Journal, running to over three pages, is now obliterated.[11] Not to be outdone, the opponents of Friends proceeded to have this protest, along with the original petition of the clergy and another protest of 19 January, privately printed for wider distribution.[12] In the absence of the official transcript on the obliterated journal, the content of the 17 January protest has been generally accessible only from this partisan source. It is of some interest for its precise statement, under six points, of the reasons why the London clergy should be assisted in their criticism of Friends. The text demonstrates that an important consideration to the twenty peers was their own dislike and distrust of Quakerism, a "sect" viewed to be "already too numerous". It is worth while to note that Sunderland acquired a manuscript copy of this protest from the Lords' Journal before it was expunged.[13] The document is a fair six page transcript of the entire proceedings including copies of the signatures. With the exceptions of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization it is exactly the same as the printed version.[14] It therefore provides independent verification of the privately published text from a reliable and favourable quarter, as well as serving to demonstrate the seriousness with which Sunderland viewed the entire issue.

The bill for the form of affirmation passed in the Lords with the support of the administration to be enacted in law.[15] But with Sunderland's death in April Friends lost a valuable political ally. His interest in and support for Quakerism at this time is little more than hinted at in his surviving correspondence and papers, but even these help to fill in some of the background to the passage of the 1722 act.

J. D. ALSOP

[11] *Journals*, XXI, 652.

[12] *I. The Petition of the London-Clergy to the House of Lords, against the Quakers Bill. II. The Lords Protest on rejecting the said Petition. III. The Lords Protest against the Quakers Bill.* The copy of this contemporary four page publication, without place or date, in the British Library has been used in this study. See also Joshua Freeman, *A letter to R. Moss, T. Gooch, and the rest of the ministers who, in a late petition to the House of Lords, stiled themselves the Clergy in and about London. To which is added the copy of a paper, intitl'd: I. The petition of the London Clergy to the House of Lords, against the Quakers Bill. II. The Lords' protest on rejecting the said petition. III. The Lords protest against the Quakers Bill.* (London, 1722).

[13] B L., Add. Ms. 61,496, fos. 52–5.

[14] One exception is the reversal of the positions occupied by the names of two of the signatories, Mountjoy and Trevor.

[15] 8 George I. c. 6.

Recent Publications

The Papers of William Penn. Volume 1: 1644–1679. Editors: Mary Maples Dunn, Richard S. Dunn. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981. $22.50.

The volume under review is the first in a major undertaking which is planned to fill four volumes with correspondence, journals, religious and political papers, and business records which survive to throw light on the life and career of the Founder of Pennsylvania. This volume brings Penn from birth (the baptismal entry is printed) up to the eve of the founding of Pennsylvania. The next volume is planned to cover the years 1680–84—the founding of the colony—and we look forward to that with eager anticipation.

Apart from the four volumes of papers, a companion volume containing an annotated bibliography is promised, as well as an edition of the chief religious tracts.

The Introduction traces the history of the Penn archive. This is now dispersed, alas, through the ravages of time, destruction, and by sale. Portions of the papers are preserved in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (a sponsor of this edition), in the Public Record Office, and at Friends House Library, London, and smaller numbers in various institutions elsewhere.

Editorial aim and method is carefully explained. The editors have set out to publish Penn's most interesting and representative letters and papers (about one-quarter of those now extant) selected in the main from documents in the microfilm master file of Penn's papers issued in 1975 by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Clear light is shed on the problems posed by the manuscripts in an undertaking of such magnitude, and it is no reflection on the work presented to say that not all difficulties have been overcome.

Distance from these shores is doubtless a main cause why the editors have not been able to identify all characters who make a transitory appearance in these pages. That reason also may account for the presence of non-standard forms of personal and place names in editorial matter (and in the Index). Other points perhaps could not so easily have been spotted by the editors, who (p. 292, note 1) have not recognised the ancient claims of Worcestershire to Shipston (in a portion detached from the rest of the shire). Bristol (p. 373, 374, 531 notes) at this time was a Two-weeks, not a Monthly, Meeting. The editors have not drawn attention to a difficulty posed by the Irish Journal (p. 103) which states that on 21 September 1669 Penn and his companions stayed the night at "Mals-berry". They follow Isabel Grubb's edition in identifying this place as Malmesbury, but do not say (and Penn does not either) why he should thus go miles out of his way. The direct road to Bristol (the A 4) was Reading, Newbury to Marlborough, and this seems a more likely route. West

of Marlborough it seems clear that Penn and Ford followed that road through Calne to Chippenham, and there took the Marshfield road (A 420) down Tog Hill to Bristol. John Penington may have taken the Devizes road at Beckhampton and reached Bath that way, since Penn's note seems to imply that he did not go through Chippenham.

Friends interested in early Quaker history will welcome this handsomely produced volume. We can more clearly descry some of the developments in William Penn's thought through the alterations in drafts in some of the papers which are now for the first time brought to general notice.

Benjamin Franklin, "Printer" of Philadelphia and a father of American Independence, has more than a score of volumes of his *Papers* now published, and it is fitting that Philadelphia's founding father should receive similar attention, although librarians with restricted budgets will be glad for the moment that the number of volumes will not rise to more than a handful.

R.S.M.

Friends in the Delaware Valley: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting 1681–1981. Edited by John M. Moore. (Friends Historical Association, Haverford, Pennsylvania, 1981.) $8.95 (paperback $4.95).

This volume of essays, published to mark the 300th anniversary of the establishment of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, brings together a galaxy of talent on which the Friends Historical Association is congratulated on being able to call.

Four papers in the first half of the book are broadly chronological in scope:

The founding years, 1681–1789—Arthur J. Mekeel;
Years of crisis and separation: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting 1790–1860—J. William Frost.
A time of change, 1861–1914—Edwin B. Bronner.
Diminishing separation: Philadelphia Yearly Meetings reunite, 1915–1955—Herbert M. Hadley.

The second half consists of four further essays dealing with the place of women Friends in the Yearly Meeting, and the work undertaken with American Indians, work by Friends in Japan, and work through the American Friends Service Committee. The introduction by the editor draws together the various strands and indicates major topics which have not found appropriate treatment in any of the particular essays.

True, the definitive history has not yet been written, but this substantial volume covers a wide range of the activities of Friends in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting over three centuries.

R.S.M.

Quaker History (Friends Historical Association) includes the following in recent issues:

(Spring 1981) "American Quakers and their London lobby", by Kenneth L. Carroll.

(Fall 1981) Papers on John Camm (by Craig Horle), William Penn and oaths (T. Noel Stern), the Slave trade, and the Hicksite controversy. Craig Horle's "John Camm, profile of a Quaker minister" may need a date correcting on p. 80, where his first "next day" implies 11 September 1654 (a Monday) for the meeting at Bishport—a meeting which William Charles Braithwaite (*Beginnings*, p. 167) correctly dates on the Tuesday.

* * *

Attention is drawn to the following:

Quakers of Fritchley, 1863–1980, by Walter Lowndes (the author, 30 Horsley Road, Kilburn, Derby DE5 2RE) 1981. £5.50.

"The Quakers, the Brethren and the Religious Census in Cumbria", by John Burgess (*Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, vol. 80, 1980, pp. 103–111).

"British humanitarians and American cotton, 1840–1860", by Louis Billington. (*Journal of American studies*, vol. 11, pp. 313–34, 1977)

"Frederick William III, the Quakers and the problem of conscientious objection in Prussia", by Lawrence J. Baack. (*Journal of church and state*, vol. 20, pp. 305–13, 1978)

"A journey to Yenan, 1946" [Friends Ambulance Unit], by W. A. Reynolds (*Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 17, pp. 43–54, 1977)

"Llanwyddyn Quakers", by E. R. Morris (*Montgomeryshire collections*, vol. 66); "The Quaker tradition in Neath: a study in religious, social and commercial attitudes", by George Eaton (*Neath Antiquarian Society transactions*, 1978) [noted in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, vol. 128, 1979]

"Quaker opposition to tithes, 1652–1660", by Barry Reay. (*Past & Present*, no. 86, pp. 98–118, 1980)

"Saints and sisters: Congregational and Quaker women in the early colonial period", by Mary Marples Dunn (Bryn Mawr College). (*American quarterly*, vol. 30, no. 5, pp. 582–601, 1978)

"William Penn: model of Protestant liberalism", by H. Barbour. *Church history*, vol. 48, pp. 156–73, 1979)

Reports on Archives

The Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts *Accessions to repositories and Reports added to the National Register of Archives, 1980* (London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1981. £4.90), reports the following additions to the manuscript collections in various institutions which may interest workers on Quaker history:

Dublin University Trinity College Library, College Street, Dublin 2
Arnold Marsh (1890–1977), Quaker headmaster, author and political economist: papers.

Manchester University John Rylands University Library of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PP
John Dalton (1766–1844), chemist: corresp and papers.

Oxfordshire County Record Office, County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND
Society of Friends: Berkshire and Oxfordshire quarterly meeting records 1660–1971.

Among the Reports listed are:

23590 Oxfordshire Society of Friends. 249pp. *Oxon RO.*
24239 Pease family of Darlington: railway papers. 25pp. *Durham RO.*

* * *

Clifford Street (*York*) *Archives*. The records of Yorkshire General Meeting, York Monthly Meeting and the former Thirsk Monthly Meeting [dissolved 1827], together with the majority of the records of the Preparative meetings within York Monthly Meeting are now on deposit in the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT. They are preserved in the Special Collections department alongside the Carlton Hill Archives [see *Jnl. F.H.S.*, 54 (1979), p. 207]. Included in the collection is a shelf of committee minutes and accounts of the Friends' school, Rawdon, Leeds, 1831–1921.

Notes and Queries

Apothecaries

"The firm of Corbyn and Stacey", by T. D. Whittet and Juanita G. L. Burnaby (*Pharmaceutical journal*, 9 Jan. 1982, pp. 42–48) gives some detailed biographical information concerning the Clutton, Corbyn, Messer, Morris and Stacey families, members of which were concerned in the long-running pharmaceutical firm which was finally wound up in 1927.

Bessbrook, Co. Armagh

Views of houses and spinning mill at Bessbrook, planned largely by John Grubb Richardson between 1845 and 1870, appear, together with illustrated summary descriptions of manufacturing processes, in the chapter on "Flax and linen" in W. A. McCutcheon's monumental *The industrial archaeology of Northern Ireland* (Belfast, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1980).

Bristol Yearly Meeting, 1738

Quoting from *The Political State of Great Britain*, Aug. 1738, Hillel Schwartz (*The French Prophets*, University of California Press, 1980, p. 202) recalls how two women prophets, staying with Thomas Whitehead (merchant and Friend, d.1748), attended one of the sessions of Bristol Yearly Meeting in the spring of 1738 and sat in the gallery at the Friars Meeting House. At the close, one of the women stood up, and "Removing her outer clothing, she appeared in a sackcloth gown, strewing ashes on her head, and began such a Raving, with Postures so Frightful, that the Meeting broke up immediately. Thrust from the building, Whitehead and the prophets were mobbed and stoned."

Female Mortality

Martha Vicinus, *A widening-sphere: changing roles of Victorian women* (Indiana University Press, 1977) includes an article by Sheila Ryan Johansson which quotes from Joseph Fox's paper "On the vital statistics of the Society of Friends" (*Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, vol. 22, June 1859, p. 220). Fox showed that female mortality among Friends was consistently higher than that for Quaker men between the ages of five and sixty, yet it was also true that Quaker female expectation of life was consistently higher than that for females in the general population at all ages up to 75 years.

E. D. Morel

Catherine Ann Cline's *E. D. Morel, 1873–1924: the strategies of protest* (Blackstaff Press, 1980) traces Morel's "hereditary instincts" from the de Horne family (for two centuries Quakers) identifying himself with the ethos of his forefathers. The part played by William Cadbury in supporting Morel's movements in Congo reform and the Union of Democratic Control is usefully and succinctly brought out.

Supplements to the Journal of Friends' Historical Society

3, 5. FIRST PUBLISHERS OF TRUTH. Ed. N. Penney. 1907. Copies of these two parts only available, at £2.00 each part.

12. ELIZABETH HOOTON, First Quaker woman preacher (1600–1672). By Emily Manners. 1914. 95 pp., £3.00.

16–17. PEN PICTURES OF LONDON YEARLY MEETING, 1789–1833. Ed. Norman Penney. 1930. 227 pp., £7.00.

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

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

23. SLAVERY AND "THE WOMAN QUESTION". Lucretia Mott's Diary. 1840. By F. B. Tolles. 1952. £2.00, cloth £3.00.

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

27. THOMAS RUDYARD, EARLY FRIENDS' "ORACLE OF LAW". By Alfred W. Braithwaite. 1956. £1.00.

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

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

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

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

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

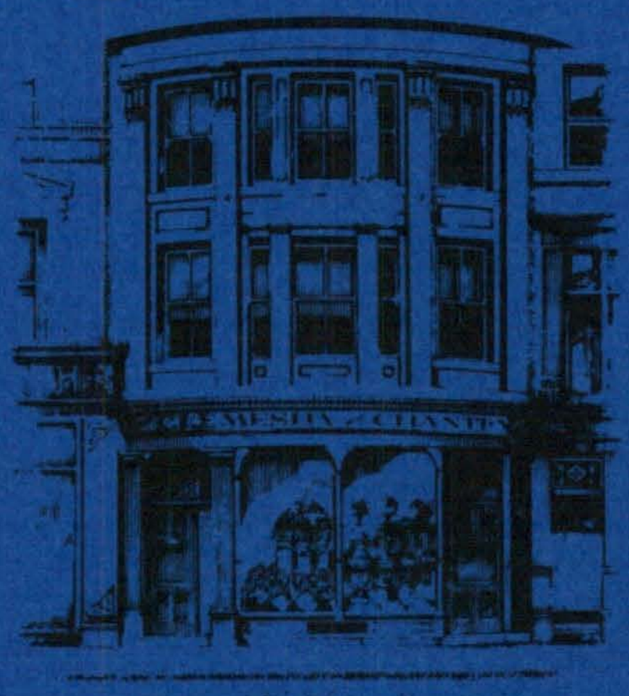
35. ALEXANDER COWAN WILSON, 1866–1955. By Stephen Wilson. 1974. £1.00.

Back issues of the *Journal* may be obtained: price £2.00 each issue.

Journals and Supplements Wanted

F.H.S. would be glad to receive unwanted copies of back issues of the *Journal* and of the Supplements. Address to F.H.S., c/o The Library, Friends House, London NW1 2BJ.

Thank you Samuel Tuke and Joseph Rowntree.



In 1829 at the annual gathering at Ackworth School, the former scholars were greatly affected by the news of the tragic death of a young teacher and the subsequent plight of his family.

This lead to a proposal by Samuel Tuke and Joseph Rowntree that a provident institution should be formed to provide "mutual benefit, relief and maintenance" of members and their families.

A committee was appointed in 1831 "for the purpose of proposing a set of rules, and making the needful enquiries for the formation of a table of rates, and also to print and circulate the prospectus amongst Friends".

A sum of £42 was contributed for the "Outfit of the Establishment", a single room office over a confectioner's shop in Market Street, Bradford, which was to serve as the first home of the new Friends' Provident Institution, and where the Secretary, Benjamin Ecroyd, for six years was to be employed as the sole member of staff. It was from here that the first policy was issued in November 1832 to Thomas Backhouse for the benefit of his daughter, Mary.

Today, Friends' Provident is an international organisation serving over half a million policyholders. With aggregate funds in excess of £1,200 millions, the modern Friends' Provident continues to provide a "mutual benefit, relief and maintenance" to policyholders that was the aim of its original founders in 1832.

1832-1982

Friends' Provident

A member of the Life Offices Association

Records and documents covering the 150 years history of the office are held in the museum of Friends' Provident Life Office in Dorking.

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