

*The  
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Friends' Historical  
Society*

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## EDITORIAL

John L. Nickalls, editor of the *Journal* from 1933 to 1959, died on 26 November 1986 aged 94 years. He was librarian at Friends House Library from 1927 to 1957 and president of the Friends' Historical Society in 1957. His presidential address was printed as *Some Quaker portraits, certain and uncertain* (1958) (Supplement to the *Journal*, no.29). It remains a valuable study showing how few reputed portraits of early Friends stand up to critical examination of provenance. He edited the standard *Journal of George Fox* (1952) and wrote several scholarly articles. He was a careful scholar and a thorough bibliographer who had the ability to persuade researchers to publish interesting and informative work.

The Friends' Historical Society has maintained its more active programme initiated last year. A one-day conference on "Early Friends and 'the World's people'" led by Nicholas J. Morgan and T. Adrian Davies is to be held at Reading meeting house on 11 July 1987 and Marjorie Sykes's presidential address will be delivered at Friends House on 17 October 1987.

Kenneth Carroll's article gives us the results of his further researches into Friends' links with North Africa and extends the work he did on Algeria (*J.F.H.S.* vol.54 no.7). Much more interest has recently been shown in the history of Friends in the nineteenth century. Between Elizabeth Fry and the 1890s it seemed as if Quaker history had not attracted many researchers: it is therefore gratifying that we are able to

publish in this issue two articles covering some aspects of Quaker history in this period.

The editor is most grateful for contributions to 'Reports on Archives' and 'Notes and Queries'. He will endeavour to print such material as quickly as possible after receipt although shortage of space may not always permit it to appear in the next number of the *Journal*.

Some slight changes were made in the format of volume 55 numbers 1 and 2 but in this issue we have made more substantial changes in design. We are indebted to Jeremy Greenwood for his expertise in design and for his many suggestions most of which we have adopted.

## QUAKER CAPTIVES IN MOROCCO, 1685–1701

Seventeenth century sea-faring Friends, whether going as seamen or passengers, faced many dangers: great storms, being blown off course, running low on food and water, shipwrecks, and even drowning. One of the more horrible, but less well-known, vicissitudes of sea-faring Quakers in the late 1600s was being taken at sea and ending up as captives in North Africa. George Fox and his fellow “travelers in the ministry” narrowly escaped such a fate on their 1671 voyage to America.<sup>1</sup> Others, however, were not so fortunate but experienced the terrible fate of falling into the hands of pirates and slavers from Algiers and Morocco.

A colony of Quaker slaves existed in Algiers in 1679–1686, even holding meetings for worship and drawing some “convinced” members to their group. These Friends were primarily from England, Ireland, and the West Indies. Gradually, however, they were redeemed or ransomed either by Meeting for Sufferings of London Yearly Meeting, or, in some cases, by relatives and friends.<sup>2</sup> At the very time that British Friends succeeded in bringing an end to the Quaker enslavement in Algiers, a new community of Quaker captives arose in Morocco,<sup>3</sup> where their situation and experiences were even more horrible than had been the case in Algiers. Their captivity was longer, their treatment more inhumane, and their chances of living to be redeemed much less. For many of them life was a “living hell”, and for some death came as the only release.

Very little has been written about the experiences of Quaker captives in Morocco. It is true that this subject has been touched upon in several places,<sup>4</sup> but these treatments have not done justice either to the sufferings of those Friends or to the ongoing efforts of British (and Dutch) Friends to redeem them. It is for these reasons, therefore, that the present study has been made.

The first Friend enslaved by the Sally pirates appears to have been John Bealing, who in July 1685 was reported a captive in Sally (where he had already been a prisoner for two years).<sup>5</sup> Bealing was a nephew of Anthony Sharp<sup>6</sup> of Dublin and a brother of Benjamin and Edward Bealing of London.<sup>7</sup> He possessed certificates from Southwark and Falmouth Friends, as well as from the mayor, aldermen, and inhabitants

of Lavrin in Cornwall.<sup>8</sup> John Bealing's relatives in Dublin and London offered to provide a least £35 towards the £200 which was demanded for his redemption.<sup>9</sup> About this same time, in 1685, it was learned that Joseph Wasey of Southwark was also a captive in Sally.<sup>10</sup> Shortly thereafter, in September, Friends discovered that James Ellis (a non-Friend but the son of Quaker Joseph Ellis) had been captured on May 24, 1685, and was being held for a thousand dollar ransom. Through James's letter, written to his father on July 10, London Meeting for Sufferings was informed that

[the captives] are in great misery. They work hard all day, at night are chained and beat most sadly. They have no Compassion at all, are not used as men but like beasts. He [Ellis] has been sick of a violent fever and fed with bread and water. That they are to be carried up to Machaness [Macqueness, Mequinez] to the king's palace where the slaves are treated barbarously.<sup>11</sup>

By October 1685 Theodore Eccleston,<sup>12</sup> who had been quite active in the many efforts to redeem the Algerian Quaker slaves, suggested that it might be best to attempt to ransom all three of the Sally captives at one time. George Fox had already met with the interpreter to the Moroccan Ambassador, and Meeting for Sufferings was beginning the search for "some important Englishman" who might be friends with the Moroccan ambassador.<sup>13</sup> Thus began the long, drawn-out efforts by British Friends to redeem these three individuals and other Friends who would soon join them in captivity.

Hardly had these efforts at redemption begun, when another letter was received from John Bealing, reporting that there was now a severe famine in Sally and that many individuals were dying "for want of sustenance."<sup>14</sup> Further accounts of suffering and ill-usage came from Ellis, Wasey, and Bealing in 1685 and 1686. Bealing reported that the Sally captives were under great suffering.<sup>15</sup> Ellis wrote that he "is put to hard labour, and sore blows; they will not allow them cloath[e]s, scarce any bread: [yet] they will deliver safe to them what is sent to the captives, nor take anything from them."<sup>16</sup> Wasey informed London Friends that they were given only barley, bread, and water.<sup>17</sup> Ellis reported further, to his father, that the money his father had sent had come at a most opportune time – for he had no clothes or shoes. He also noted that "they are miserably used, being allowed only 3 farthings a day for bread & water & 6<sup>d</sup> per month towards light, & are drove about by negro boys without mercy."<sup>18</sup> Wasey, in September 1686, wrote that he was "in health" among a brutish people who think nothing of the death of a captive. They require those who are sick to work. If the ill drop, the Moroccans "make sport of it" – saying that they "are now going to the Fire."<sup>19</sup>

The three original captives were soon joined by half a dozen convinced Friends, at least two of whom were actually convinced in Sally "before any Friends came thither".<sup>20</sup> These two who were convinced, even before the arrival of Bealing and Wasey, were Arthur Wastcoat [Westcott] of near Land's End and James Burgin [Burgoine, Burgon] who had been a captive about ten years.<sup>21</sup> Others who had been convinced there, in the land of their captivity, were Joseph Bigland of London (a captive about four years), Robert Finley of the "north of England" or Scotland, Abraham (or Edward) Terry of Absom [Epsom?] and Thomas Hurle [Hurrill, Harrell] also of Absom who had been a captive for five years.<sup>22</sup> A letter from Arthur Westcott and these other captives was sent to England expressing a "saluation of Love to Friends here, and some Account of their first Convincement there before any Friend came thither."<sup>23</sup> All of these convinced Friends were also "well reported of" by the original Quaker slaves.<sup>24</sup> Later in 1687 still another convincement was noted: John King, who reportedly had a wife and two children at Poole in Dorset.<sup>25</sup> King's wife must have been expecting twins at the time of his capture, for at the time of his release in early 1702 he is listed as having a wife and four children living at Poole.<sup>26</sup> The 1687 General Epistle from London Yearly Meeting also reports another Friend, Joseph Harbin, had been carried to Sally, but no other mention of Harbin is to be found.<sup>27</sup>

Acting through Meeting for Sufferings, British Friends sought to give material assistance to these captives in Morocco as soon as possible, drawing upon the "Redemption of Captives Fund" which had been established in 1678 to ransom those Quaker slaves in Algiers. Contributions to this earlier fund had come from British, Irish, West Indian, and Maryland Quakers.<sup>28</sup> After the Algerian slaves were ransomed additional amounts were received from some of those who had been redeemed out of Algiers – such as Levin Bufkin (who soon settled in Virginia), James Brain, Jr., Ephraim Gilbert, John Harris, and Splenden Randt, and there was even a legacy from Anne Gregson for this purpose.<sup>29</sup> The fund grew to £890.15.0¼ in 1688, £912.3.10 in 1690, and £1050.7.7 in 1692.<sup>30</sup>

As early as 1685 Meeting for Sufferings authorized thirty shillings each for the relief of John Bealing, James Ellis, and Joseph Wasey.<sup>31</sup> Three months later £10 was sent out for their relief, to be used forty shillings at a time.<sup>32</sup> A year later, after Meeting for Sufferings had learned of the convinced Friends also to be found at Mequinez, £60 was deposited with Richard Enys [Ennis] of Cadiz to be used for all of the Quaker captives (with Wasey and Bealing being placed in charge of the use of the money).<sup>33</sup> In mid-1687 Wasey wrote that the £8 per quarter

provided by Meeting for Sufferings was greater than required, so they actually needed only about one-half that amount.<sup>34</sup> Still other sums were sent out on their behalf in later years.<sup>35</sup>

Spiritual help was extended to the Morocco captives also. Letters were sent to them as often as possible, often through the help of Dutch Friends. These came not only from London Yearly Meeting and Meeting for Sufferings but also from such individual Friends as George Fox, John Field, and Charles Marshall.<sup>36</sup> These were usually letters of encouragement and inspiration but sometimes also contained more specific information about efforts being made on their behalf. A 1692 communication from John Bealing to his brother Benjamin reports that the captives had recently received a number of letters from "Antient" Friends and had been very much comforted by them.<sup>37</sup> In addition to letters these Quakers in Morocco also received at least one shipment of Quaker books.<sup>38</sup>

Attempts to gain freedom for the captives began in 1685, as soon as British Friends learned of their situation. Efforts were made by both the captives themselves and Meeting for Sufferings. In mid-1685 John Bealing wrote that his ransom was set at £200, while James Ellis said his redemption would cost 1,000 dollars.<sup>40</sup> Several months later Wasey and Bealing, reporting that there were now seven Friends at Sally, informed London Friends that they had sought to enter into a "treaty for a moderate sum for them all, to be redeemed, being 7 of them at 200 Dollars per man".<sup>41</sup> This action was in keeping with Theodor Eccleston's suggestion that an effort be made to redeem all the Sally captives at one time. Wasey later reported, however, that the Moroccan king was away "on war" and that nothing could be done until he returned.

London Friends worked for a time through Richard Holder, who set up an "Office for the Redemption of Captives" at Garoway's Coffee House in Sally, with hours from 1 to 3 each afternoon. Very soon, however, there arose a serious doubt concerning just how "industrious" Holder's correspondent in Sally had been in seeking the release of Bealing and Wasey.<sup>42</sup> It was therefore decided, early in 1686, to change to Samuel Nash in seeking the freedom of the captives.<sup>43</sup> By September 1686 Meeting for Sufferings learned that Nash had met with Wasey and Bealing and that he had made some progress in working for their redemption.<sup>44</sup> In 1687 Nash even removed from Cadiz to Sally for a time.<sup>45</sup>

By early 1687 it was thought that the Moroccan king might not come home for several years, thus delaying the efforts at redemption.<sup>46</sup> In 1688 London Friends realized that it was not likely that the merchants at



Sally would effect the freedom of Friends at "Macqueness in Barbary", for the king of that country announced that "he will Admitt of noe particular Redemption without a Generall Redemption". Meeting for Sufferings believed that "without the Lord doth stirr up the Heart of our [own] King to make a Generall Redemption of the English, it is probable that they may be continued [as captives] much longer; some of them having been prisoners five years and upwards already".<sup>47</sup>

As early as 1686 the Dutch had redeemed all of their captives in Sally, giving one Moor (held captive by the Dutch) and thirty muskets for each Dutch prisoner.<sup>48</sup> In June 1686 Meeting for Sufferings received a letter from Elizabeth Wasey, Joseph's wife, raising the question of the possibility of Joseph's being released among the Dutch prisoners (through the payment of muskets and money) and asking the Meeting's advice about how to proceed in this matter.<sup>49</sup> Meeting for Sufferings feared that the Quaker captives (some of whom were only shortly convinced) might be tempted by the Dutch success to take an un-Quakerly approach to securing their freedom. It, therefore, sent a "cautionary" letter to Friends at Macqueness, telling them that they must not purchase their freedom with arms. If, however, they were able to obtain their liberty from the Moroccan king, Friends would stand by them up to £60 or £70 apiece if they had no family or friends of their own to ransom them.<sup>50</sup>

No great hope of redemption existed at this time, for John Bealing reported that "their Taskmaster the King" had "grown more Tirannicall towards them than ever". He noted further that the king was now killing five or six captives in one day and wounding several others, as well as having taken away the allowance which he earlier gave to those who were ill, so that it was impossible to exist on what the king allowed them.<sup>51</sup> Joseph Wasey, who had been "close confined in a Dungeon" to keep him from escaping, asked that some security be given for him so that he might have more freedom.<sup>52</sup> The amount demanded for Wasey's redemption also increased, so that it was believed that it might take between £400 and £500 to set him free. This sum, London Friends believed, was excessive and was likely to be an ill precedent where other Quaker captives were concerned. Yet, since he already possessed about £400 (from relatives, from Barbados Friends, and money of his own), Meeting for Sufferings agreed to provide an addition of £50 or £60 for this purpose.<sup>53</sup>

In 1689-1690 three separate developments seemed to offer some fresh hope of progress in securing the freedom of the Quaker captives. One of these was Friends' use of Jewish efforts and influence in this endeavour. This approach to the Jews appears to have begun as early as

1687,<sup>54</sup> but it was not until January 1689/90 that John Bealing wrote that he hoped to obtain his freedom soon through the efforts of some Jews who were “about to clear” four or five captives.<sup>55</sup> Although these Jewish efforts were not successful at this time there were, in later years, several other attempts to employ their good offices in this service. Much of the Quaker reaching out to the Jews for assistance was done through Dutch Friends, especially in 1698 and 1699.<sup>56</sup>

Another 1689 development was the beginning of a movement to redeem all English captives from the “charity money” raised throughout Britain. If this general collection were to fall short of the amount required, Meeting for Sufferings authorized the extension of an earlier offer to pay Friends’ share.<sup>57</sup> Early in 1692 a committee of Friends was named to call on the Earl of Nottingham “on behalf and in Relation to the Suffering Friends” at Macqueness and Sally.<sup>58</sup> In January 1692/3 William Mead<sup>59</sup> reported that he had been with some members of the Council “who promised to forward the Brief [collection] for Captives by putting it in the Gazette to stirr up the Clergy thereto.”<sup>60</sup> In the next few months Mead and Eccleston met several times with the Earl of Nottingham and the “Bishops of London and Canterbury” and were able to report that the latter were now working on the matter.<sup>61</sup>

A third development which held forth some promise of success was the enlistment of Dutch efforts on behalf of English captives. As early as October 1690 the Dutch consul had been to Sally to treat with the Emperor about their release.<sup>62</sup> London Friends also asked their Dutch brethren to do what they could “to Treat with the Emperor of Morocco’s Envoy there about our Friends Captives at Macqueness”.<sup>63</sup> Dutch Friends later reported back to London that nothing could be done to bring Quaker captives out with the Dutch, but that London Friends should deal with “the Jew” to see about bringing off a “particular redemption”.<sup>64</sup>

Only one captive Friend, Joseph Wasey, was successful in obtaining his own release, probably about the end of 1690 or the very beginning of 1691.<sup>65</sup> Wasey received no redemption money from Friends, for his wife had borrowed much of the money needed. Seven years later, in 1697, Wasey reported to Meeting for Sufferings that this debt still lay heavily upon him, so that he was provided with £100 from the “Redemption of Captives Fund” with the proviso that he repay it when able to do so.<sup>66</sup>

Shortly after his freedom and his return home Joseph Wasey attended London Yearly Meeting and gave a “large account” to this meeting, pointing out the captives’

miserable hard usage in captivity; having no lodging but under arches, in deep places on the cold ground, winter and summer; only water for their drink; and no bread allowed them by the king, but of old rotten stinking barley; and no clothes, but a frock once in two years; and forced to hard labour (except three days in a year); and more especially on the sixth day of the week (which is their [Muslim] day of worship) they are compelled to carry heavy burdens on their heads, running from sun-rising to sun-setting, with brutish black boys following with whips and stripes at their pleasure. Many of the other captives perish and die, through their extreme hardships, and want of food to sustain them; as in all likelihood they [would have] if Friends and their relatives had not sent them some relief: seven pence a month, formerly allowed them by the King, being now taken from them. Their sufferings are lamentable; yet the Lord's power has wonderfully preserved, and greatly restrained the fury and cruelty of that emperor towards poor Friends there; and in whose behalf Joseph Wasey did, by an interpreter, speak to the said Emperor; giving him an account of their innocent conversation and religion; which he heard with moderation; though he often kills men in cold blood at his pleasure.

Joseph Wasey signified, that Friends' day-time being taken up with hard servitude, they are necessitated to keep their meetings in the night-season to wait on God. And that the aforesaid captive Friends were very thankful for the relief sent from hence; which was very refreshing to them.<sup>67</sup>

While the various efforts to redeem the Quaker captives were continuing, time was beginning to run out for many of them. Arthur Westcott wrote from Sally in November 1691 about the deaths of *three* Friends, reporting that both Thomas Hurrill and Richard Nevet (either captured or convinced after 1686, it would seem), had died after seven or eight weeks of violent fever. The third victim, not named in the above report, was John Bound.<sup>68</sup> Westcott also recorded that Robert Finley was very sick and that his "departure out of this life was dayly expected". James Burgin [Burgoyne], who likewise was lying very ill, had expressed a desire to see Westcott before he died.<sup>69</sup> John Harbing, perhaps a merchant, told Meeting for Sufferings in July 1692 that he had learned by letter, shortly before his departure from Sally, that one of the Friends at Morbay had been wounded by a lion and had died of his wounds.<sup>70</sup>

Conditions worsened for the captives in 1693. James Ellis, who had been "much visited of late with sickness", wrote that the captives were greatly beaten and starved. He also reported that Joseph Wasey's Negro "that was taken with him was recently killed by their task master – for only owning himself to be a Christian".<sup>71</sup> Shortly after this a letter was received from John Bealing, telling how all the captives had been turned out of the courts into an open field without any shelter (unless they paid forty shillings per person).<sup>72</sup> A short time later Bealing (who late in 1692 was still hoping to gain freedom through "the Jews")<sup>73</sup> obtained his

release only through death. John Caddy reported that Bealing had died on the 30th of 7th month, 1693, after seven days of violent fever and ten years as a captive.<sup>74</sup> Caddy himself was to die in Macqueness in 1695,<sup>75</sup> while Arthur Westcott departed his life in 1696 or 1697.<sup>76</sup>

The redemption of Wasey and the death of Bealing, Bound, Caddy, Hurrill, Nevet, Terry, and Westcott left only five Friends: Joseph Bigland, James Burgin, Robert Finley, John King, and Thomas Walkenton (as well as the two sons of Friends who were not actually Quakers themselves: James Ellis and George Palmer of Pennsylvania).<sup>77</sup> All five of these Friends had been convinced during the period of their captivity.<sup>78</sup> They, together with the deceased, had come together to “meet on Nights to waite upon God”, for they were allowed only *three* days of rest per year!<sup>79</sup> Although they appear to have kept up their meeting for worship until the time of their redemption, there is no mention of how their Barbary masters viewed their religious gatherings (unlike the accounts of favourable response by the Muslim owners of Quaker slaves in Algiers somewhat earlier).

British Friends continued seeking the redemption of their brethren held in Morocco. They not only promised to pay the same amount which the Dutch had done but, in order to facilitate the matter, offered £150 to £200 over and above that sum. When the Sally and Macqueness Quakers learned of this effort they reported back to London that they “have desired their liberty of the Emperor and have pleaded [that] they are a people that make warr against none neither Moores nor others of which the Emperor took great notice and spoke of it publickly to his great men not positively refusing their Ransome”.<sup>80</sup>

Two months later Moroccan Friends reported once more that they had been with the king “to Intreat him to let them goe at the same Rate the Dutch goe off at” but that nothing was concluded.<sup>81</sup> By 1698 British Friends had decided to offer additional money “instead of Purchasing Six Moores to be delivered in Exchange for the Friends”, finally offering to give an additional 1,000 guilders “in Liew of Said Moores”.<sup>82</sup> British Friends were now working through their Dutch brethren, hoping that Friends might be brought out with Dutch captives. Several months later Dutch Quakers wrote that they had “come to some agreement with the Jew – in the captives business” and intended to give further account as soon as possible.<sup>83</sup> By October 1698 Meeting for Sufferings learned that Dutch Friends had bound themselves (with counter security provided by British Friends) to pay 7,895 guilders upon the redemption of the five Friends and Palmer by Moses Toledano or his friend Mommoren. They were to be paid this money when the six were redeemed and put free on board the “Olive Tree”, Joseph Vinck,

Master. The “hazard” was to belong to Friends after the captives were put on shipboard – except for the ships of Sally or the other subjects of Fez and Morocco.<sup>84</sup> Friends also were making arrangements for travelling expenses, diet, clothing, and other necessities for those being freed.<sup>85</sup>

The expected redemption of the Quaker captives still had not taken place by 1699, so that the London Yearly Meeting epistle for that year reported to Friends everywhere that

Earnest endeavours have again lately been used for the liberty of our Friends, captives in Barbary, though not as yet obtained: and their being at this time some negotiations on foot, by the tenderness and care of the government, for the redemption of all the English there; and though the persons in Barbary, employed therein by Friends, do wait some time to see the effect of that; yet we shall continue our further endeavours for their discharge; and in the meantime, have and do take care to send them supplies for food; they having little allowance, in that country, of anything to support their bodies under the great severities of labour, and undeserved stripes the captives often endure.<sup>86</sup>

By 1700 some real progress had been made toward securing the ultimate release of the captives, although some period of time would pass before the actual release would take place. The 1700 Epistle reported that

Friends' care is also continued for the redemption of our Friends that are captives in Barbary; and (as was hoped) the King has now agreed for the ransom of all the English captives there; and agents are arrived from thence, in order to receive the said ransom. And, although now, as heretofore, Friends have acquainted the government that they intend to redeem our Friends at their own charge, nevertheless Friends are so far willing to encourage a public collection for the said service, that, when the collectors shall come with the briefs to Friends' houses, we hope Friends will be inclined to extend their charity, in common with their neighbours, towards the redemption of the other English captives.<sup>87</sup>

As time dragged on, one of the captives – Joseph Bigland – broke under the strain of his sufferings and became a back-slider. Meeting for Sufferings heard from the Moroccan Friends that Bigland “has turned his back on Truth & has not been at Meeting to waite upon God among them this four months, [he] is grown envious against Friends, and [has become] an Excessive Drinker”. Eccleston, writing on behalf of Meeting for Sufferings, told the Moroccan Friends to give out a public testimony against him.<sup>88</sup>

In mid-1701 Daniel Quare, the famous Quaker clock-maker and a friend of George I, met with Captain Delavale who was about to go to

pick up the English captives. Also Friends had given security that they would pay such sums of money as might be expended as soon as they received certificates from the captives showing that they had been redeemed.<sup>89</sup> The list of Friends to be redeemed included John King, Thomas Walkenden, James Burgin, Robert Finley (all “captives upwards of 20 years”), Richard Robertson (“newly convinced”), and George Palmer (“the Friend’s son in Philadelphia”). Joseph Bigland, “disowned by Friends there”, was not to be included.<sup>90</sup> Almost immediately, however, Meeting for Sufferings had a change of heart about excluding Bigland:

and Friends considering that Jos: Bigland the person disowned by Friends there for his loose Conversation have lain a long Time in Captivity – doe in Tenderness and Compassion towards him & in hopes of his Restoration and amendment of life for the future, condescend that he shall also be Redeemed.<sup>91</sup>

Daniel Quare and Joseph Grove were appointed to write to Moroccan Friends giving the reasons for this decision and also to write to Joseph Bigland.

By early March 1701/2 the captives had been freed and were back in England. Joseph Bigland, who had broken his leg on shipboard, was in the Queen’s Hospital in Plymouth, while the others had all come to The Downes. From there Walkenden had written that those freed were “very desirous to see Friends’ faces here”, while at the same time noting that the ex-captives understood that it was the government’s intention to place those former captives who were able seamen “on Board Men of Warr”.<sup>92</sup> John Field, a prominent member of Meeting for Sufferings, was appointed to try to get a letter from the Secretary of the Admiralty Office for the Quaker captives to return to their respective homes, since they had been redeemed “at the particular Charge of Friends, and not at the Government’s Charge”.<sup>93</sup>

Five of the former captives attended Meeting for Sufferings on the 14th of 1st Month (March), 1701/2 and expressed their deep appreciation for Friends’ “love and care towards them, both for Relieving them while in Captivity and paying for their Redemption”.<sup>94</sup> Meeting for Sufferings reported that efforts were being made to protect them from “Pressing to Sea”, and to provide them with clothing and other necessities as required.<sup>95</sup>

Just two months later it was learned that John King “notwithstanding his Protection was Prest and put on Board one of the ships of Warr at Spitthead: But [was] discharged by the mayor of Pool and the Magistrates writing to the Commissioners on his behalf”.<sup>96</sup> Shortly

thereafter Robert Finley was “Prest out of Captain Puckle’s Ship a Merchant man Bound for Pennsylvania, and put on Board a Man of Warr that is a Cruiser”. Since Finley was Scottish, application was made by the correspondents for Scotland to the Secretary for Scotland to arrange his discharge.<sup>97</sup> The results of this effort are not known.

Looking back over this little-known episode in Quaker history, one is deeply moved by the scope and intensity of the sufferings of the Moroccan captives, their steadfastness to Truth (whether convinced in Morocco or having been Quakers before their capture), the concern that other Friends had for them, and the on-going efforts made on their behalf. Even Joseph Bigland’s “fall” can be understood and, to some degree, forgiven – as it was by Meeting for Sufferings, which itself seems to have grown in understanding and charity while wrestling with his case.

Kenneth L. Carroll

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> George Fox, *Journal*, edited by Norman Penney (Cambridge, 1911), II, 181–182, 215, 437.
- <sup>2</sup> Kenneth L. Carroll, “Quaker Slaves in Algiers, 1679–1688”, *Journal of Friends Historical Society*, LIV (1982), 301–312. Only one remained a slave after 1686.
- <sup>3</sup> The same general epistle from London Friends that announced that all but one of the Algerian Quakers (Roger Udy or Udey) had been released also noted that “several Friends are now captive in Sallee, for whose redemption Friends are also taking care, and hope in time to effect it”. See *Epistles from the Yearly Meeting of Friends Held in London to the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings in Great Britain, Ireland, and Elsewhere, from 1681–1857, Inclusive* (London, 1858), I, 26.
- <sup>4</sup> Cf. Margaret E. Hirst, *The Quakers in Peace and War* (London, 1923), 79–80; Samuel Tuke, *Account of Slavery of Friends in the Barbary States* (London, 1848). The latter work is largely extracts from the minutes of London Meeting for Sufferings.
- <sup>5</sup> London Meeting for Sufferings Minutes, IV (1684–1685), 91. These manuscript records are found at Friends House Library, London.
- <sup>6</sup> Anthony Sharp (1643–1707) was born in Gloucestershire, settled in Dublin in 1669, and became one of Ireland’s more prominent Friends. Although trained as a lawyer, he took up weaving and became a merchant – employing 500 people in woollen manufacturing in 1679. He was one of the proprietors of West Jersey. Cf. Olive C. Goodbody, “Anthony Sharp, Wool Merchant, 1643–1707, and the Quaker Community in Dublin”, *Journal of Friends Historical Society*, XLVIII (1956), 38–50. See also *Ibid.*, I, 82; X, 161, 163, 164; XII, 143; XXIII, 63; XLIX, 244–245.
- <sup>7</sup> Benjamin Bealing (1663?–1739) was the third Recording Clerk of London Yearly Meeting, serving from 1689 to 1737. He was the son of Edward and Alice Bealing of Penryn, Cornwall. Cf. *Journal of Friends Historical Society*, XXVII (1930), 3–7.
- <sup>8</sup> London Meeting for Sufferings minutes, IV, 91, 118. As noted in footnote 7, the Bealing family had Cornwall connections.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 91, 118. His aunt and cousin in Dublin offered £15, while his brother Edward promised £20 (and “possibly a bit more”).
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 93.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 147. James was not a Friend but Meeting for Sufferings was interested in his case because of his father’s steadfast Quaker position.
- <sup>12</sup> Theodore Eccleston, a very prominent British Friend at the end of the seventeenth century, was a member of Meeting for Sufferings and a correspondent to several of the American yearly meetings.
- <sup>13</sup> London Meeting for Sufferings minutes, IV, 158.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 177.

- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 191.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 269. He also reported that there were about 400 captive English men, women, and children as well as about 1,000 captives from other countries.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 27.
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, V (1686–1687), 176.
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 232.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, VI (1687–1688), 46.
- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 357; VI, 46. In March 1702, Burgin was described as being 50 years old, born in Kenton Parish near Exon, Devonshire, having been a captive 26 years and 3 months and having been convinced 18 years 6 months, which would have placed his conviction in 1683. Cf. *Ibid.*, XV (1700–1702), 302.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 357. It appears that Abraham Terry and Edward Terry, appearing on two early 1687 lists, are the same person.
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 46. This letter was read in Meeting for Sufferings on the 13th of the 3rd Month, 1687.
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 45.
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 139. It was reported that £65 towards King's redemption was in the hands of a "priest" (Samuel Hardy). Friends were willing to accept this money, give security to return it if King were not redeemed, and to add £35 to this sum.
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, XV, 301. King in 1702 was listed as being about 50 years old, a captive about 18 years and 5 months, and a convinced Friend about 15 years.
- <sup>27</sup> *Epistles from the Yearly Meeting of Friends Held in London*, I, 32 (1687 epistle).
- <sup>28</sup> Cf. National Stock Accounts, I (1678–1716), 1a and *passim*. These manuscript records are found at Friends House Library, London.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 38b, 44b; London Meeting for Suffering minutes, V, 279; X, 8.
- <sup>30</sup> National Stock Accounts, I, 32b.
- <sup>31</sup> London Meeting for Suffering minutes, IV, 177.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 248.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 348.
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 14.
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, 136; IX, 72; X, 205.
- <sup>36</sup> *Epistles Sent*, I (1685–1703), 79–81, 99–101, 102; George Fox, *A Collection of Many Select and Christian Epistles, Letters, and Testimonies* (London, 1698), Epistle 420 (pp.556–557), from London the 25th of 8th Month, 1690 – the last epistle in the collection. Cf. Several letters from John Claus of Amsterdam to Theodor Eccleston in the How White Mss (Bedfordshire Record Office, Bedford) reflecting the efforts of Dutch Quakers to ensure the safe passage of the letters to the captives – especially HW 85/48, 85/49, and 85/54.
- <sup>37</sup> London Meeting for Sufferings minutes, VIII, 74.
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 69, 190.
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 91.
- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 206.
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 271–272.
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 284 (February 19, 1685/6).
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 218.
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 114.
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 114.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 180.
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 163, 168.
- <sup>49</sup> Portfolio 16, item 1, Friends House Library (London).
- <sup>50</sup> London Meeting for Suffering minutes, V, 213.
- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 260.
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, VII (1688–1691), 10.
- <sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, 54. Wasey's Barbados connections are unknown.
- <sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 53.
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, 124. Bealing wanted to draw 1125 "pieces of eight" on Richard Ennis of Cadiz.
- <sup>56</sup> Cf. How White Mss, HW 85/48, HW 85/49, HW 85/50 where there are a number of references to working through the Jews to produce freedom for the Quaker captives. Among those Jews named are Saporlas and Toledano.
- <sup>57</sup> London Meeting for Sufferings minutes, VII, 72.
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, VIII (1691–1693), 29, dated 5th of 11th Month, 1691.



- <sup>59</sup> William Mead (1628–1693) was married to Sarah Fell, daughter of Thomas and Margaret Fell and George Fox's step-daughter.
- <sup>60</sup> London Meeting for Sufferings minutes, VIII, 210.
- <sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, VIII, 280.
- <sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, 180.
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, IX (1693–1694), 4.
- <sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, IX, 31.
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, 54. Wasey was at the 1691 Yearly Meeting in London and gave a report on his Sally experience.
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, XI (1696–1697), 203, 208.
- <sup>67</sup> *Epistles from the Yearly Meeting of Friends Held in London*, I, 57–58. This 1691 Epistle reported that there were nine English Friends at Mequinez and three at Morbay (about three or four days' journey distant) who had been convinced there. It also reported that Levin Buskin [Bufkin] had repaid £60 used to redeem him from Algiers some years earlier.
- <sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 67 (1692 Epistle). Hurrill is here listed as Thomas Harrell.
- <sup>69</sup> London Meeting for Sufferings minutes, VIII, 64. This letter was reported at the March 25, 1692, Meeting for Sufferings.
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, VIII, 113.
- <sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, IX, 22. Another Englishman was said to have been killed for the same reason. Ellis' letter was dated 26th of 2nd month, 1693. Slavery was not permitted in England. Was Wasey's Negro a slave in Barbados or some other colony? Was he a servant?
- <sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, IX, 37. He reports that there are now about 260 English captives (with so many having died) and that all the cruisers except one were out at sea looking for more captives.
- <sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, VIII, 150.
- <sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, IX, 72. His death was just ten days after his last letter to London.
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, X (1694–1696), 86.
- <sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, IX, 147; X, 205.
- <sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, IX, 147; XI, 219. Ellis was to be redeemed by his father, while Pennsylvania Friends sent over £67.2.6 to be used for the redemption of Palmer by the London Meeting for Sufferings.
- <sup>78</sup> London Yearly Meeting minutes, I, 167.
- <sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 263.
- <sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, London Meeting for Sufferings minutes, IX, 202 (dated 14th of 3rd Month, 1697).
- <sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, XI, 258.
- <sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, XII (1697–1698), 214, 219.
- <sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, XIII (1698–1699), 7.
- <sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, XIII, 20. Cf. pp.25, 26, where British Friends are to pay for the travelling charges, diet, clothing, etc. of the captives.
- <sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, XIII, 20, 25–26.
- <sup>86</sup> *Epistles from the Yearly Meeting of Friends held in London*, I, 94.
- <sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 97. Cf. London Meeting for Sufferings minutes, XIV (1699–1700), 192, on this subject of Quaker contributions to the general Brief (in addition to what contributions Friends had already collected to redeem their own).
- <sup>88</sup> London Meeting for Sufferings minutes, XV (1700–1702), 6.
- <sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, XV (1700–1702), 129–130.
- <sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, XV, 130. The 1701 Epistle refers to Robertson as a "young man [who] has been convinced lately" – cf. *Epistles from the Yearly Meeting of Friends held in London*, I, 102.
- <sup>91</sup> London Meeting for Sufferings minutes, XV, 134.
- <sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, XV, 292. In 1702 Walkenden, born in London and a seafaring man, was about 50 years old and had been a captive about 19 years and 6 months. He had been convinced 12 years before. Richard Robertson [Robinson], born in Leicestershire, was 33 years old and, by trade, a "leather dresser". He had been a captive 4 years and had been convinced about 14 months. Cf. *Ibid.*, XV, 301.
- <sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, XV, 292. Cf. *Epistles from the Yearly Meeting of Friends held in London*, I, 102, where Friends are told that the ransom of the captives (including George Palmer) had cost more than £480.
- <sup>94</sup> London Meeting for Sufferings minutes, XV, 300.
- <sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, XV, 301.
- <sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 341 (8th of 3rd Month, 1702).
- <sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, XVI (1702–1703), 102. The name appears as Findley here.

## THE QUAKER PRESENCE IN HERTFORD IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

**O**n September 23rd 1831 eight citizens of Hertford, three of whom were Quakers, filed information in the Court of Chancery against the town's Corporation.<sup>1</sup> Four years later, however, the relators, as those who had brought the charges were called, agreed to withdraw the case.<sup>2</sup> By that time the Corporation had incurred legal charges of £875.8s., which they were unable to pay, so they sold some of the property in dispute to meet the costs.<sup>3</sup> The case had, in true Chancery fashion, generated over 1000 pages of documents.

The lawsuit concerned three areas of meadow land (Kingsmead, Great Hartham and Little Hartham), together with land and buildings in Butcherley (now Bircherley) Green, and the waste (that is, land not originally built on) of the old manor of Hertford. All the property had been granted to Hertford Corporation in 1627 by trustees holding the land for King Charles I and the price was £100 – all parties to the 1831 lawsuit agreed on this. The Chancery case hinged on whether *all* the property, or only Kingsmead, had been bought for the benefit of the poor of the town.<sup>4</sup> The profit from the commons accrued through fees for grazing animals – householders who were entitled to the right were allowed to graze three cows, at one shilling per cow per year – and through the sale of the hay, in the years when pasturing was not allowed. Rights to Kingsmead and Hartham, but not Butcherley Green, had been the subject of earlier legal disputes in the seventeenth century, and in 1705.<sup>5</sup>

This copiously-documented lawsuit has many aspects, but will be considered here only as it concerns the Quaker informants. It took its origin in a public meeting at Hertford Town Hall on May 19th 1831. It was usual to ask the mayor to call a public meeting, but on this occasion he was by-passed – handbills were distributed inviting the townspeople to attend, and fortunately at least one has survived.<sup>6</sup> From this we learn that the sponsors of the meeting intended, as they cryptically put it, “to recover property which rightly belongs to the poor”. It seems that there was a good response – the Corporation in its evidence stated later that “many, including poor tenants of the Corporation”, were present.

Twelve men had put their names to the notice announcing the meeting. They were: Thomas Gripper, who had originally been a coal merchant and tanner, but had come to have many other business interests; William Manser, a brewer; Richard Shillitoe, a surgeon; Henry Squire, a miller; Richard Michaux Muggeridge, editor of a local newspaper, the "Hertfordshire Mercury"; John J. and Joseph Gripper, respectively eldest son and brother of Thomas Gripper, whose business associates they were; George Rew, described as "gentleman", i.e. of independent means; William Pollard and Samuel Sedgwick, both drapers; James Field, watchmaker and jeweller; and Joseph May, a chemist. Five of the signatories were Quakers (Manser, Shillitoe, Squire, Pollard and May). Thomas Gripper had been born a Quaker, and his family had been Quakers for three generations, but he himself had left the Society of Friends and joined the Church of England.<sup>7</sup> Seven of the twelve signatories were past or future mayors of Hertford.

At the Town Hall meeting a committee of eight, which called itself "The Committee for the Poor",<sup>8</sup> was set up, to commence proceedings in Chancery, and a subscription was opened. Thomas Gripper, Field and Shillitoe could not be members of the committee, as they were among the trustees for administering that part of the property acquired in 1627 whose profits had, at least since 1708, been used to help the poor, and they would therefore be defendants in the Chancery Court action.<sup>9</sup> (According to Turnor,<sup>10</sup> writing in the year before the lawsuit was started, it was the custom that four trustees should be Anglicans, four Quakers, and four Dissenters – an extraordinary arrangement, and one would like to know when it began). Sedgwick and May also were not on the "Committee for the Poor", perhaps because of business commitments.<sup>11</sup> Thomas Gripper, however, who had been mayor of the town in 1829–30, became the solicitor for the Committee,<sup>12</sup> though the case for the prosecution was actually brought by the Attorney-General himself. The remaining signatories were joined by Thomas Chambers, a retired linen-draper of the town,<sup>14</sup> and these eight were the relators. Chancery has jurisdiction in cases concerning trusts; presumably this is why the suit was brought in that court.

The very day after the public meeting, a letter signed by Lewis Turnor, who was a solicitor as well as the historian of Hertford, was delivered by John Gripper in person to the Town Clerk, Philip Longmore, requiring the Corporation to produce the records of the Poor's Estate, as the relators called Kingsmead, Hartham, and the rest.<sup>14</sup> The Town Clerk gave Gripper short shrift,<sup>15</sup> and the Corporation, who later complained that they had not received due notice of the public meeting (though Longmore had attended it),<sup>16</sup> denied that they were

obliged to produce the relevant documents to anyone except the Court of Chancery. They admitted that they had received large sums on account of the 1627 grant of land, but declared that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to produce the accounts, because of the time that had elapsed, and because of the way the books had been kept! In the defence document prepared for the case, the Corporation admitted that they had, with the knowledge of the trustees of the Poor's Estate, converted to their own use – one hopes they meant the use of the town generally – the profits from the land acquired in 1627, but they denied that any of the property except Kingsmead had been bought for the benefit of the poor of Hertford.<sup>17</sup>

The £100 which the land had cost was argued about at length, the relators contending that it had been paid “by or on behalf of the said poor of the town”, while the Corporation's view was that the Principal Burgesses in 1627 had paid it out of their own pockets. Four years after the case had begun, in 1835, when the relators agreed to its withdrawal, judgement had still not been given.<sup>18</sup>

One is bound to ask, who was the prime mover in bringing the charges against the Corporation, why was the suit brought, and why was it called off? Though William Manser's name comes first in nearly all the documents connected with the case, there can be little doubt that the initiative came from Thomas Gripper. Soon after he became mayor in November 1829 he, with the Town Clerk Philip Longmore in attendance, had perused the documents connected with the charities of the town to investigate how they were managed.<sup>19</sup> A Tory election Broadsheet of 1832,<sup>20</sup> a riposte to one from the Whig candidate Thomas Duncombe, sheds light on where the responsibility lay, and is worth quoting at some length. “Duncombe tells the poor of Hertford”, it asserts, “that their rights have been usurped for centuries by the Corporation. The present members of the Corporation believe strongly that this is not the case. However, if the property in question does belong to the poor, it is quite right they should have it. That will shortly be decided. BUT, what must the poor think of Duncombe's friend, Gripper? Did not Gripper say, at the Town Meeting, that he had known for three or four years, that the property did belong to the poor? Was not Gripper Mayor the year before the Meeting took place? Was not Gripper, when he was Mayor, the first who suggested to the Corporation the propriety of selling part of that property, situate in the Folly?<sup>21</sup> Knowing at the same time, according to his own account, that it belonged to the poor. Did not Gripper himself, at the same time, want to buy that property at less than half its value? And did not the Corporation refuse to let him have it at his own price? Did not Gripper

sign with his own hand the conveyance of that property? Did he not receive the money for it and did he not spend £100 of that very money upon his mayoral dinner? Oh! ye Immaculate Liberals!”

It is no surprise to find Thomas Gripper referred to in this way as the key figure in the Chancery case. He was more important in business circles in Hertford than any other of the tradesmen involved, and a newspaper obituary<sup>22</sup> describes him as “the leader and adviser” of the Whig party in the town. It also declares that he stood almost single-handed as “the advocate of the oppressed”, and refers to his “more than ordinary degree of moral courage” – the latter he would certainly need to challenge the well-entrenched Tory Corporation. He had taken the lead in the town in securing the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828,<sup>23</sup> and one would expect him to be the spokesman for the relators, for one of them referred soon after Gripper’s death to his “natural eloquence, which always came from the heart”.<sup>24</sup>

More pertinent questions were forthcoming from a Tory pamphleteer in 1835,<sup>25</sup> when the Whigs were putting forward a number of candidates for election to the new, reformed Corporation. “What is your intentions [*sic*] respecting the Grass Money [as the profit from Kingsmead was and is known] which you have deprived the poor of Brickendon of for years, and for one year withheld it from all the poor of the town?... What have you done respecting the property you undertook to recover for the poor – and what is done with the money subscribed in 1831, towards that object?” In fact, probably because such criticisms were in the air at the time, the relators had already approached the Corporation, to enquire about the possibility of a compromise, with the result that the two parties to the dispute met, recognised that the passing of the Municipal Reform Act made the Chancery case unnecessary (since an *elected* Corporation could be trusted to administer the town lands fairly), and the law-case was called off.<sup>26</sup>

Ten years afterwards, those who had brought the case came under the criticism at a meeting of Hertford Corporation.<sup>27</sup> Thomas Gripper had long been dead, but William Pollard rose to present a warm defence of himself and the other plaintiffs. They had been convinced, he said, that the former Corporation held property which belonged to the poor, and so steps had been taken to recover it. He added tartly that those who brought the case had paid all the expenses on their side out of their own pockets, and if the Corporation members had done the same, the town property disposed of in order to pay the legal costs of the suit would still be in the possession of the municipal authority. As it was, he continued, the Corporation had sold the houses, and Mr. Longmore now had them. (Philip Longmore had been Town Clerk since 1829, and it was largely

his legal expenses the Corporation had had to meet. In view of the huge number of documents the case produced, one feels his charges were not excessive.) None contradicted Pollard's account of the sale of the property, but Longmore's riposte was to make what amounts to a charge of mischief-making against those who had brought the Chancery case. The Corporation had been put to the expense of £1,200 or £1,400,<sup>28</sup> he declared, and if the relators really believed that the property belonged to the poor, why did they abandon the case? They abandoned it when the Municipal Corporations Act was passed, and each party paid their own expenses, he added. He did not point out that the mayor and Corporation did not pay the money out of their own pockets, but then we do not know how much the relators had raised by public subscription. It is on record that the Committee for the Poor paid £196.17.2, by the hand of Thomas Gripper, to the trustees of the Poor's Estate (i.e. Kingsmead, Hartham and the rest), as legal costs of the suit.<sup>29</sup> Since the Attorney-General was the prosecutor, no doubt William Manser and the other relators would be liable for lower costs than the Corporation had to meet.

Longmore continued his attack by pointing out that if the property had not been sold by the Corporation, £100 – he presumably meant per year – would have been available towards reducing the rates. Pollard was quick to vindicate the withdrawal of the suit by the relators. “We were sent for by the Corporation, and requested to discontinue the action; if we had gone on fighting, the town would have had to pay all the expenses, and no good would have resulted to anyone”. Councillor Lawrence, a Tory – Pollard was a Whig – rose to answer him. The property had been given 220 years ago, and the poor had no claim on it – he meant after the passing of so much time. The new Municipal Corporations Act, he pointed out, took the property from individual members of the Corporation, and gave it to the town. This was, as we know, the major reason why Manser, Pollard and the rest had dropped the law-suit.

Why did the dispute surface in 1831, when it had lain dormant since 1708? One's first reaction is to interpret it as an election ploy. In May 1831, when Manser and the others called the public meeting to discuss the town lands, election fever was raging – the Whig Parliamentary Reform Bill had been rejected in a Commons Committee, and a new General Election was to be held in June. Manser, Pollard and Squire were, as we shall see, actively involved in the election campaign, and so was Muggeridge, the editor of the “Hertfordshire Mercury”, who was another relator.<sup>30</sup> Thomas Duncombe, the Whig candidate, standing for the fifth time for the Hertford seat, more than once showed himself a

supporter of the case against the Corporation. Accused of not contributing to Hertford charities, he retorted in one of his broadsheets, "Who has subscribed £50 towards establishing the Poor Rights? Which question will soon be before the Lord Chancellor, it is the Corporation's plea for longer time that delays it".<sup>31</sup> Another handbill also defends Duncombe's generosity, and declares, "It is absurd enough to hear those talk of 'neglecting your charities', who have usurped your rights for centuries; which, however, the Lord Chancellor will doubtless, shortly, make them return to your hands".<sup>32</sup> But the terms of neither broadsheet give the impression that Duncombe had initiated the Chancery case, and a more serious objection to considering it an election tactic is that the Tories never made this accusation. The verbal battles between the candidates at this time were not generally fought with gentlemanly decorum, and the Tories would surely have made electoral capital out of the Chancery case if they had thought the taunt would carry conviction.

Duncombe's two references to the Lord Chancellor, however, suggest another possibility – did Manser and the rest think that there was now more chance of receiving justice because the great Lord Brougham sat upon the Woolsack? Brougham had instituted an enquiry in 1818 into charity abuses, and he had spoken with eloquent sympathy of the sufferings of farm labourers.<sup>33</sup> He had many contacts too with Quakers over slavery and other matters.<sup>34</sup>

Yet another factor which has to be considered is that the Corporation had leased or sold during the ten or twelve years before 1831 a good deal of the land in dispute in the law-case<sup>35</sup> – did this give rise to adverse comment in the town? Much of the Butcherley Green property was let by auction to the Marquis of Salisbury in 1828 on a 21 years lease, and he paid £500 for cottages and buildings in that area. He also leased for 99 years ground at the Folly on which cottages had been built. Thomas Gripper himself had leased Little Hartham in 1825, but this was grazing land – no inhabitants (i.e. voters) lived on it. Political feeling was running high in the 1820s, and it is difficult not to conclude that Salisbury was aiming at influencing elections. Why else would he buy run-down, slum property in Butcherley Green?

It may well be too that discontent with the Corporation's policy towards Kingsmead, Hartham and the rest, which goes back as far as 1631, was still simmering beneath the surface in the 1820s. It is true that the Corporation asserted they had received no requests from the poor for the profits from Hartham, Butcherley Green and the waste – they said virtuously that they had had search made in the records for this.<sup>36</sup> But Joseph Elmes, giving evidence in the Chancery case, admitted that

he had heard disputes about customary rights on Hartham and Kingsmead, “at drinking parties at election times”, though he never paid attention to them. Mr. Elmes had not reached the advanced age of 82 without knowing how to keep his head down. It would not be surprising, however, if in the heady atmosphere of the 1831 and 1832 Reform Bills, with their popular demands for justice and freedom, and citizens’ rights, a 200-year-old grievance found a voice again.

Another possible reason for the 1831 appeal to Chancery is the simple one that Pollard gave – the relators were concerned at the condition of the poor, and anxious to relieve them.<sup>37</sup> A cynic might be sceptical about this motive. The relators were solid citizens all – the Grippers were particularly solid<sup>38</sup> – and one might expect that they would neither know nor care about, the sufferings of the labouring classes. But William Pollard at least genuinely sympathised with the poor, and believed there was talent among them.<sup>39</sup> Hertford was a small town of some 5,000,<sup>40</sup> and perhaps it was not as easy as we might think today for West Street and Castle Street to insulate itself from Bircherley Green. Certainly three anonymous Quaker ladies had founded what proved to be a successful school for servant-girls-to-be in 1797.<sup>41</sup>

In fairness to the relators, Manser and the rest, we must consider briefly whether the Corporation *should* have used for the benefit of the poor all the profits accruing from the 1627 grant of royal land. Unfortunately the Corporation Minutes for 1832–5 are missing – not that the Minutes of the previous few years are models of businesslike reporting. (Hertford Quakers could have shown the Town Clerk how to keep better ones.) The relators’ case rested mainly on extracts from the Town Records, as they were not allowed to see the deeds, and their interpretation of the records was that the mayor and burgesses had bought the commons “for the benefit of the said poor of the town”. The burgesses in 1627 had actually brought along poor inhabitants of the town in person to testify to the valuable contribution Kingsmead and Hartham made to their incomes.<sup>42</sup> The mayor and burgesses had pleaded at that time that those commons were “the greatest means of relief that the poorer sort of people had”,<sup>43</sup> in order to persuade King Charles’s trustees to part with the property. In 1831 the Corporation admitted that the poor had a claim to Kingsmead – a local Commission in 1631, and another commission in 1708 had so decided – but they denied the poor’s claim to Hartham, Butcherley Green and the waste.<sup>44</sup> There is an interesting summary of the town’s accounts for 1829,<sup>45</sup> which is fairly explicit on the town’s revenue, but vague on how the town spent its money, though the treasurer did disallow one item of expenditure, £2.16.3, spent on three dozen pairs of nutcrackers, bought for the



mayor's feast! The Corporation did not deny the allegation that their predecessors' motive in buying the commons had been to benefit the poor – Thomas Gripper had presumably scrutinised the records to good effect – and since it was by no means uncommon for eighteenth and early nineteenth century town councillors to misappropriate funds intended for charitable uses, one must conclude that the Grippers and their collaborators had right on their side.

On the other hand, when the known principles of English law are taken into account, the naïveté of the relators is striking. When the Corporation was selling some of the property in dispute in 1836,<sup>46</sup> to pay the legal costs, some people questioned the Corporation's legal title to the land, and Counsel's opinion was sought. His view was that the possession of the property for upwards of two centuries conferred by itself a *prima facie* unimpeachable title. A presumption of a trust for the poor would have been banned by the lengthened acquiescence of the poor in the adverse possession by the Corporation.<sup>47</sup> Perhaps realisation of the weakness of their case was a factor in the decision of the relators to withdraw it in 1835.

The lawsuit caused later mayors financial loss. From 1812 to 1827 the mayor's salary was £150 a year, to cover the cost of the six dinners he was supposed to give. In 1827 it was reduced to £105 a year, though it was said that he had to find £100 more out of his own pocket. But as a result of the "extraordinary expenses" of the Chancery case, in 1832 and later the mayor had no salary. The case brought by the Grippers and their Quaker friends certainly made an impact on Hertford, and echoes lingered on throughout most of the century.<sup>48</sup>

Some at least of those who brought the Chancery case had been political associates for several years. In 1823 a striking figure, Thomas Slingsby Duncombe, made his first appearance on the Hertford scene, as parliamentary candidate at a by-election. An unlikely Radical if ever there was one. Duncombe was the son of a wealthy Yorkshire landowner, was well-known at Crockford's gambling club and at horse-races, as a result of which, if his enemies are to be believed, he was deeply in debt. He did not deny allegations that he was living with Mme. Vestris, a talented actress but a married woman, who, in her capacity as manager of the Olympic theatre in London, made a significant contribution to the history of the drama. Duncombe gave the Olympic financial support. He was a friend of Lord Durham, "Radical Jack", and well-acquainted with Lord Brougham. He was also handsome, possessed of a telling command of words, and dressed very stylishly.<sup>49</sup> He had the temerity in 1823 to put himself forward as candidate for the parliamentary seat vacated by Viscount Cranborne,

who had just succeeded to a peerage on the death of his father, the Marquis of Salisbury.<sup>50</sup> What prompted Duncombe's rash action – he frankly admitted that he had expected to be defeated, and he was – and more important, who put up the money for him, is not known. One would have expected that he was Earl Cowper's candidate (the earl's eldest son was only 17), but Tory broadsheets of the 1830s<sup>51</sup> assert with conviction that he faced opposition from Panshanger. Whatever the main source of his encouragement and his funds, among his supporters were the Grippers and the Quaker, William Pollard.<sup>52</sup>

In 1826 a general election took place. Duncombe, encouraged by the welcome he had received three years before, came forward again as candidate, and there can be no doubt that this time he received considerable Quaker backing. He was one of three candidates for the two seats; the others were Thomas Byron of Bayfordbury, the successful by-election candidate, and William Lamb, the future Lord Melbourne. Byron was the Salisbury family's nominee, but otherwise an undistinguished figure. Lamb had been M.P. for the county, and was stepping down by looking for a borough seat, but his father was very ill, and Lamb knew that he would soon inherit a peerage. He was the Cowper candidate – his sister, to whom he was much attached, was the earl's wife, and he was often at Panshanger. A jolly ballad<sup>53</sup> told the town where the Quakers stood;

“My name's Simon Flourish,  
A Quaker I am,  
In spirit a Lion! so I cant be a Lamb;  
It's true I cant sing like the bucks of the Town.  
But I now and then chaunt out a stave of my own:  
In Duncombe's praise  
My voice I'll raise,  
May no Golden Promise our Friends bewitch –  
If the Blind lead the Blind, they'll both fall in the ditch”.

The “Golden Promises” took the form of “vote-money”, 10 shillings to a voter for giving one of his two votes, £1 if he promised also not to use the other.<sup>54</sup> Four more verses tell out the Quaker's loyalty to Duncombe. This poetic effusion is one of several indications that Quaker support counted for something at Hertford elections.

A Tory broadsheet<sup>55</sup> tells us who were believed by the Hatfield House campaign organisers to be members of Duncombe's committee. “Tom and Jerry Gripe” were two, and we recognise the Grippers, father and son – a Tom and Jerry shop was a low beer-house, and the Grippers were, among other things, wine and spirit merchants.<sup>56</sup> “Joseph Polehead, rag merchant” is easily identified as Joseph Pollard, the

draper, “Tom Venom, Radical and demagogue”, is clearly Thomas Duncombe himself,<sup>57</sup> while “Tommy Driveller, Clerk and Sniveller”, is probably Stephen Austin, the printer.<sup>58</sup> Pollard’s son William was also involved in the election campaign. A good deal of printer’s ink was spilt during the run-up to the election on the alleged victimisation of Henry Raw, a grocer in Back Street, who declared, no doubt truly, that he had lost the contract for supplying groceries to the town gaol because he would not withhold his vote from Duncombe. Mayor John Moses Carter, a staunch Tory and supporter of Lord Salisbury, who often crossed swords with Gripper, sent for Raw, whom, if the grocer’s affidavit is to be believed, he had warned not to vote for Duncombe. Raw appeared before the mayor – but he took William Manser and William Pollard with him.<sup>59</sup>

Duncombe’s campaign committee must have been efficient – against all the odds, he won the election,<sup>60</sup> though there are allegations that from 1826 onwards any shopkeeper who had voted for Duncombe lost all his Tory customers.<sup>61</sup> All England, of course, was in a fever of excitement during the 1830–32 elections, and Hertford was no exception. Both at Simon Staughton’s, the Tory printer’s, and at Stephen Austin’s, his Whig counterpart’s, literary knives were sharpened, with Quakers among Staughton’s targets. At the 1830 election Duncombe’s two rivals were Lord Ingestre, a relation of the Marquis of Salisbury, and Henry Lytton Bulwer. Bulwer, who had been a late candidate in the 1826 election, was alleged to be, and probably was, the candidate of the Cowper family at Panshanger. He was afterwards to be a favourite of Lord Palmerston’s, and had a political and diplomatic career of some distinction. Ingestre of course was a Tory – the marquis was totally opposed to parliamentary reform – and Bulwer stood as an Independent (very much an “in-word” at the time), but in association with Ingestre. The Whigs suspected a Tory plot, that Lord Salisbury had instructed his supporters to use both their votes, instead of as usual “plumping”, i.e. using only one, and to give one vote to Ingestre and the other to Bulwer. If some of Duncombe’s supporters also voted for Bulwer, Duncombe would be defeated. On the very day before the poll was about to begin, however, Bulwer heard he had been returned for the pocket borough of Wilton (by all its 16 voters!) and he withdrew from the Hertford contest.<sup>62</sup> One broadsheet<sup>63</sup> accused Bulwer of concealing the plot, and also his decision to withdraw from the election, from even “his most respected friends”, among whom William Manser is named, so it looks as if Manser had gone over to Bulwer. Had Manser been alienated by Duncombe’s reputation as a gambler and adulterer, or, more likely, did the old connection between Hertford Quakers and the Panshanger

family, which went back to the seventeenth century, count with some Friends?

But Manser was still a firm supporter of parliamentary reform, and so were a number of other Quakers. He, together with William Pollard, Joseph May, Henry Squire, Joseph Pollard, Richard Shillitoe, James Cole, a Quaker schoolmaster, and Thomas Gopsill, a Quaker maltster, all signed three petitions to the mayor in the 1820–32 period, demonstrating their support for the Reform Bill. Their names, however, are an insignificant proportion of the total – the third petition for example had 178 signatures.<sup>64</sup>

In the heat of the 1830 election another merry squib from the Whig side and printed by Stephen Austin coolly advised Ingestre to abandon his “fruitless attempt” to win the Hertford seat. Its interest here lies in the fact that it purported to be written by a Quaker, “Prim”, out of a friendly concern that the town should be spared the uproar and drunkenness of a contested election! Quaker phraseology is clumsily used – Prim “feels a call” upon him to address Ingestre, has had “movings of the Spirit”, and ends by referring to himself as “In all respects but politics and warfare [Ingestre was an army officer] Thy Friend, Prim”. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century Obadiah Prim was the nickname for a sanctimonious Quaker, after a character in a popular play,<sup>65</sup> and we shall see it used more than once for William Pollard, but it is difficult to divine the purpose of this lampoon, which pokes sly fun at the Quakers, though it comes from the Whig camp. It looks as though it is just a reflection of high spirits and confidence on the part of some of Duncombe’s supporters.

Nevertheless, it stung the Tories to reply that very same day, in a well-informed broadsheet<sup>67</sup> which also purported to be written by a Quaker. This writer knew well the organisation of the Society of Friends; he reminds “Friend Prim” that Yearly Meeting would be taking place in the following month, and warns him that his conduct, and that of P--d, S--e, and B--n<sup>68</sup> (obviously Pollard and Squire, and possibly Brown), might be censured by the Elders, and might lead to disownment (expulsion) from the Society of Friends. This was no idle threat. Influential Friends, and perhaps a majority of members in the Society, disapproved of Quakers who were active in politics. Yearly Meeting, the annual gathering whose pronouncements carry much weight with Quakers, had declared in 1818,<sup>69</sup> just before a general election, “We wish to caution all our members against entering into political parties”. Joseph Metford had been removed from the list of Ministers of his Meeting at Bath because of articles he had written on Roman Catholic emancipation and other political subjects, and he had

been deeply hurt by this affront.<sup>70</sup> It took considerable courage in the first three or four decades of the nineteenth century for Quakers to be prominent in national or town politics. The bribery, corruption and disorder at parliamentary elections was an important factor in Friends' distaste for politics. The Hertford Quakers were not quite unique however. Samuel Tuke paid part of William Wilberforce's expenses at the Yorkshire election in 1806, and persuaded fellow-Quakers to act as agents for the Anti-Slavery hero; Joseph Sturge of Birmingham was in 1831, like the Pollards, helping Whig candidates, and Edward Smith in Sheffield was chairing Whig election meetings. Smith's protégé would have no paid canvassers, no banners, no music, and no meetings at public houses. Unsurprisingly, he lost.<sup>71</sup>

Another transparent forgery<sup>72</sup> appeared during the 1832 election campaign, in which its readers were urged by "A Quaker" to vote for the Tory candidates, Lords Ingestre and Mahon. This time Staughton did not stop to re-phrase the appeal in Quaker language – there is no use of "thee and thou", and no reference to the "Spirit". It is hard to believe that it would deceive the most innocent of voters, but it is a Tory production, and presumably whoever wrote it thought that Quaker advice carried some weight. Another Tory lampoon<sup>73</sup> holds Duncombe's fellow-candidate in the Whig interest, John Slingsby, up to ridicule, but ends with a gibe at two Quakers. "We cant keep him [Spooney, i.e. Duncombe] from swearing, but the Quakers are liberal fellows and say, it is allowed at elections. P-d and M-y [Pollard and May] enjoy it". It is interesting that Slingsby, "Handsome Jack", another man-about-town, was Lord Brougham's step-son.<sup>74</sup>

At this 1832 election the Tories were too strong for Duncombe and Slingsby, and they were defeated. Before the Great Reform Bill took effect, Hertford was, according to Professor Gash, "one of the two most notorious pocket boroughs in the country, where power seemed most perverted, and arbitrary".<sup>75</sup> But the bribery, intimidation and violence at the 1832 election was so blatant that, as is well-known, Parliament set up a Committee of Enquiry, and this resulted in the suspension of the two successful Tory candidates, Ingestre and Mahon. A petition from the aggrieved candidates, in which William Pollard played an important part, had led Parliament to appoint the Committee, and when its members came to Hertford to investigate the election malpractices, Pollard was summoned to give evidence. Pollard's speech has a style of its own, and a few extracts from the printed report<sup>76</sup> will illustrate this. He had gone to a magistrate on the day of the worst election disorder, to obtain action to quell the rioting; he was treated as a hostile witness by Counsel for Ingestre and Mahon.

It was alleged that the Tories had brought gipsies into the town to intimidate voters, and Pollard was asked, "Will you venture to swear that there were ten gipsies?" He replied, "I will not swear" – as a Quaker, he could not take an oath, of course. Asked then to *affirm* that at least ten gipsies were in the town, he did so. Asked if he had not been constantly at the White Hart (just across the road from his shop), getting up the petition to unseat the Tory lords, he answered, "I have no wish to hide anything". "You may have been asked," pursued Counsel, "Were you in Mr. Duncombe's committee?" I did not know he had a committee". Pollard retorted, "I was a friend of his and attended". "Did you meet Mr. Duncombe and Mr. Spalding at Gripper's?" was another question, to which Pollard replied, "I may have done so".

Pollard had seen mud thrown at Ingestre and Mahon's electoral procession, and was rather maliciously asked, "You are a peaceable man, of course, as you affirm [i.e. rather than swear]; did you enjoy what was going on, the mud and the pelting?" Said Pollard, "I do not know that that is a fair question, but if I chose to answer it I should say that I do not like things of that sort". Asked if he knew if Duncombe's friends were prevented from canvassing, he replied, "Yes, I do know that; I was with Mr. Spalding on the Old Cross, and we wished to go on canvassing, but there was a great number come out from Dack's [Dack was the Tory election agent, with headquarters in an inn] and it was considered unsafe to proceed; there were two or three knocked down at the time". At one point Pollard had rushed out from his shop to save a wounded man, and the victim had told Pollard that he worked in Lord Salisbury's garden. Asked if the man had got party colours – Tory colours were blue with pink bows, the Whigs had orange and purple – Pollard's response was, "I will not say", probably because he knew the gardener would lose his job if the marquis found out that he was sporting Whig colours. Of course Pollard knew of the blue vouchers which had been given to voters who promised to vote Tory – 26 of them had been redeemed at his own shop – but he also knew the list of electors well enough to know that some of these customers of his were voters. Incidentally, one broadsheet which reproaches Duncombe for persuading voters to break their promise to vote Tory, seems to refer to Quakers – "What say you", it asks ironically, "FRIENDS AND RELIGIOUS BRETHREN, of this paragon of morality and religion?".<sup>77</sup>

Though as a result of the Parliamentary Committee's report, the two Tory members were unseated, no by-election followed, and party political feelings remained dormant until the 1835 General Election was announced. The Tories unblushingly put forward once more the two

discredited candidates of 1832, Ingestre and Mahon, and were not pleased when Salisbury's control of the two Hertford seats was challenged by another contender. This was William Cowper, second son of Earl Cowper of Panshanger, and now old enough to stand for parliament. An extraordinary diatribe in a local paper<sup>78</sup> blamed none other than the Quakers for Cowper's appearance on the political scene. The relevant passages are worth quoting almost in full.

“We stated, last week, that it was reported that the Honourable William Cowper had consented... to allow his name to be put in nomination as a candidate for the representation of the Borough of Hertford... It is true that a Requisition [invitation to stand – it was customary for a candidate modestly to announce that he was coming forward because he had been pressed to do so by respected electors] was got up by some half-dozen busy-bodies, chiefly Quakers, who wished to put the town in commotion, and we understand that it was signed by about 120 persons altogether”.

A veritable onslaught on the whole Society of Friends follows.

“We stated that the requisition was got up chiefly by the Quakers, and many were induced to sign it from the Jesuitical representations of these canting politicians. Under the cloak of modesty and humility, no sectarians have done more to undermine the foundations of true religion and of the institutions of the country than the Quakers have of late years. By means of cant and hypocrisy, they have concealed their proceedings from the eyes of the community at large, and have been left to creep on “like snakes in the grass”, until they have poisoned the minds of those who were not aware of their insidious approach. But their cant and professions will no longer serve them”.

The attack has a fine seventeenth-century flavour about it; even the association of Quakers with the Jesuits has survived the centuries. The Ware-based Whig newspaper which reprints the attack, from what it contemptuously calls “The Marquis of Salisbury's own Journal,” *The County Press*, countered the allegations by attributing Cowper's candidature to Baron Dimsdale, and to “some of the most influential gentlemen of the town”, to whom, it says, “may the Electors be thankful, for having rescued the borough from the thralldom which threatened it under a Conservative dominion”.

Another Tory squib of the very same date<sup>79</sup> was aimed at the Quaker Whigs, and their allies, the Dimsdales, and again their identities are very thinly disguised. Baron Dimsdale appears as Noodle, with a caucus of Shilly-shally the bone-setter (obviously Dr. Richard Shillitoe), Henry Squirrel the bone-grinder (Henry Squire, the miller), Poleyard the slop-seller<sup>80</sup> (William Pollard), and Mayflower, who can be none other than Joseph May, the chemist. Shilly-shally makes a speech in Quaker

phraseology, and Noodle replies, "I respect your garb very much; it is the same my poor father wore when he was apprenticed to Mr. Sugarloaf, the Grocer"<sup>81</sup>... that Garb of Humility"<sup>82</sup> and your known cunning will make persons believe your deeds are disinterested". Quaker dress was often referred to sarcastically as "the garb"; for men at this time it meant a collarless coat, sober colours and a broad-brim hat, and though not strikingly different from normal styles, it was distinctive enough to mark out Quakers. Another skit at this time<sup>83</sup> refers to Noodle-noodle, and Obadiah Prim. Shillitoe is the unmistakable target in yet another lampoon,<sup>84</sup> which satirises the leading Hertford Whigs as circus animals; one, the viper, has had his teeth cleverly extracted by "the skilful hand of a surgeon who attends the menagerie gratis – Dr. Shy-letto".

A newspaper account<sup>85</sup> of an election meeting in support of William Cowper shows us Joseph Gripper in the chair, with Baron Dimsdale on the platform, and it is interesting that on nomination day it was William Manser who proposed Cowper as the candidate; Thomas Neatby Hagger, an ex-Quaker, seconded him. The Whigs had referred to Lord Ingestre as the nominee of Lord Salisbury, to which Ingestre's proposer, his brother, made a spirited retort – Ingestre was not the nominee of Mr. Gripper, Sam Cousins or Baron Dimsdale, but of John Moses Carter and other town councillors whom he named; to be *their* nominee was an honour. Mahon, later to play an important part in English public life, and who often made shrewd points in his speeches, mentioned in passing that at the previous election Hagger's own vote had gone to Mahon. This is not surprising – not all Quakers, or ex-Quakers, voted the same way. People changed their minds too, as Baron Dimsdale frankly admitted he had done on the Great Reform Bill, and as a merry Tory squib accused two unnamed Quakers of doing in 1830.<sup>86</sup> It runs, "Lost, on Saturday last, the 24th inst., between Butchery Green and the Salisbury Arms, the consciences of two Quakers. They have since been seen roving about, having lost all sense of those fine feelings of peace, harmony and goodwill towards mankind which marks the character of that sect. Whoever will restore them to their friends so as to secure the public against their violence, shall next winter be rewarded with two bushels of the most ordinary flour the baker has". Bushels of flour – donated by the Whig millers, Hagger, Squire and others? – were distributed to the poor during the 1832 election campaign, and no doubt during the earlier ones too.

"The Panshanger circus" was strong enough to ensure that one of the two Tory candidates, Lord Ingestre, was defeated at both the 1835 and 1839 elections for the borough. It behoved Lord Salisbury and Earl



Cowper to stop incurring the enormous costs of contested elections, and from 1841 onwards for more than a decade, Hertford was represented in parliament by one Tory and one Whig, in a gentleman's agreement which saved both sides money. The "Good Old Days", however, were nostalgically remembered in 1849 by a Hertfordian with a penchant for rhyme.<sup>87</sup>

"Then, Hertford, I[ngestr]e and M[aho]n sought  
To gain thy honours, and to gain them bought;  
The Golden guineas many bullies found  
To man Rat's Castle and the war cry sound.  
O these were noble times and sad the day  
Which saw these vanish in a mist away".

The days of vote-money, refreshment tickets, shop-vouchers and assorted hats, which all survived the Great Reform Bill, had gone.

Duncombe disappeared from the Hertford political scene after his 1832 defeat – he found another parliamentary seat – though his name was still greeted with cheers at Whig political meetings. He has had a bad press from historians, but was to play a significant part later in the nation's affairs. Perhaps one would not expect to find Hertford Quakers supporting so whole-heartedly a candidate with such a life-style as Duncombe's. His 1826 manifesto provides some clues.<sup>88</sup> In it he declares his support for Free Trade and the Repeal of the Corn Laws, the latter a very popular cause with Quakers generally,<sup>89</sup> though oddly enough Hertford Quakers seem to have shown no enthusiasm for it. He would recognise the South American republics, he said, would support parliamentary reform and religious toleration, and would advocate the entire abolition of the Slave Trade. Quakers had campaigned for the abolition of slavery before Clarkson and Wilberforce took up the cause, and this was the objective which drew many Quakers, reluctantly, into politics.<sup>90</sup> "Religious toleration" is a vague term, but Quakers would read into it the end of tithes and church rates. To obtain such benefits they might be prepared to overlook Duncombe's private life, which in any case was not unusual among men of his class at the time. That his advocacy of religious toleration was sincere is borne out by his consistent opposition to church rates during the years he sat in parliament. His 1832 manifesto seems not to have survived, but we have that of John Spalding,<sup>91</sup> who was running in tandem with him, and which no doubt would be very similar. Spalding put first the abolition of slavery, by that time a band-wagon on which many were climbing, and followed this by the prohibition of flogging in the Forces, and "the reform of church abuses". Vague aspirations for improving the lot of the

poor, reducing taxation, that perennial appeal to the voter, and for extending religious and civil liberty were included. Translated into their practical terms, such a programme would appeal to Friends.

Though the lively if often scurrilous broadsheets which had accompanied parliamentary elections ceased to appear after 1835, Pollard still continued to come under attack in print. He was elected a member of the Corporation in 1837, sat on several committees, and took an active part in discussion. In 1849 the *Hertfordshire Mercury* found one council session interesting enough to re-print its report as a broadsheet.<sup>92</sup> Pollard had just topped the poll, and he began the proceedings by thanking not only his opponents, who had, he said, shown him great courtesy. He promised to support any measure which was for the good of the town, regardless of the political party, or the person, who proposed it. But the session seems to have been monopolised at that point by an elderly Tory, Councillor Kimpton. He made a glancing reference to the Grippers, who had, he said, robbed the town of estates which were sold to pay legal expenses – clearly the Chancery case still rankled in some people’s minds. Kimpton reserved most of his venom, however, for Pollard, whom he attacked for being mean to the poor of Hertford. Why had Pollard given £30 for Irish relief,<sup>93</sup> instead of helping the poor of Hertford? “I never heard of his clothing the poor”, said Kimpton, for whom charity clearly began and ended at home. Pollard, no doubt remembering the broadsheet describing his father as a slop-seller, retorted ironically, “I thought that *was* my business”. Kimpton went on to recount garrulously how his friend, Rayment, a grocer, had sent Pollard a bottle of oil for his “stiff neck”, though it is surprising that this kind of school-boy joke would be indulged in by a respectable shop-keeper. Kimpton reproached Pollard for not helping the poor during the terrible cholera epidemic earlier that year, and when Pollard appealed to him to allow others to speak the old man snapped, “I thank you, Mr. Oily-neck Quaker”. Pollard responded quietly, “I think such remarks do not redound to the credit of any man”, and Kimpton subsided. One can only speculate why the “*Mercury*”, which had Whig sympathies at this time, reprinted this exchange.

A few years later, probably in the middle fifties, there was some difficulty in choosing a mayor for the town – Benjamin Young, a prosperous brewer, credited with social ambitions, had first agreed to stand by had then withdrawn. Some people obviously thought that it was Pollard who had the power to make the choice, and two broadsheets offered him advice in far from polished rhymed couplets. After referring to the mayoral robes and the town regalia as something

Pollard, a strict Quaker, would find distasteful, the author<sup>94</sup> goes on,

“Now dont Billy act like a dog in the manger,  
 You know all the lot are nothing but shams,  
 And you might swallow the scruples as well as the drams,  
 So lay the whole lot on the shelf,  
 And take off your broad-rim<sup>95</sup> and go in yourself  
 You can attest a recruit or sign a church-rate,<sup>96</sup>  
 For punishing prigs you’d be dubb’d an Esquire,  
 And if you’ll break the ice, we would have Henry Squire”.<sup>97</sup>

The rhymester mentions “your friend Gripper”, and “your friend Stephen Austin of sanitary reknown”,<sup>98</sup> and tells Pollard that if he wants Dicker Miller to become mayor some of the good things of life, including wine, dinners and tobacco, will have to be forthcoming! The owner of Dicker Mill at this time was Edward Manser, whose father William Manser had died in 1855. Edward Manser was still at this time an active and responsible Quaker, but it sounds as though he was known to have some un-Quakerly tastes!

The other pamphleteer<sup>99</sup> also believed that Pollard would in fact choose the mayor, though he thought the two Grippers, John and Joseph, would also be influential.

“... It’s Old Obadiah they say pulls the wire,  
 All thought Billy Pollard clear-sighted and keen,  
 Would never have tried B. Young, Esq., How Green...<sup>100</sup>  
 But there were two or three others who sighed for the place,  
 Twas as clear (if not as red) as the nose in his face;  
 There’s Alderman Squire who’s at least a foot higher...<sup>101</sup>  
 John tried for St. Stephen, but Billy pushed Ben.  
 Said Billy you know our friend Stephen is not just the thing,  
 (So he screw’d up his shoulder and screw’d up his eye,  
 You know how he looks when he tried to look sly),  
 And says he, give me the man with the tin,<sup>102</sup>  
 As Billy’s whole mind is governed by tin,  
 Why not the Grocer in Fore Street<sup>103</sup> put in?”

In 1861 the Tories were chagrined by the success of four Liberals, including Pollard, at the council elections, and an unknown scribe voiced Tory disgust in 17 verses of doggerel which understandably never saw the light of day in print.<sup>104</sup>

And yet about the Corn Exchange  
 The ancient dirge they sing,  
 And at the Virgin<sup>105</sup> on the top  
 Their words of anger fling!!

The four victorious Liberals are pilloried –

“Then the Whig party four have sent  
To fight these valiant foes –  
Rayment and Palmer who are they?  
And Francis? Goodness knows!<sup>106</sup>

And Pollard too the Quaker proud  
Is urging on the throng  
With Sammy Cousins backing him  
With language rather strong.

And now behold this mighty man  
Appearing from “The Wash”  
It ought to keep his conscience clear  
But echo answers “Bosh”.

Pollard – !!! – Let’s pause – to see from where  
Was this illustrious name.  
Some say ’tis ‘pig’s wash’ but I think  
From other sources came.

For “Greasy Poll” from Poll and lard  
The derivation’s sweet  
The latter part you’d better buy  
At Rayment’s in Fore Street.”

It is only fair to say that no other Hertford rhymester sank as low as this, as far as is known.

In the following year an audacious squib directed its fire not only at Pollard, but at Edward Manser and Henry Squire, whose identities are clear. So is their membership of the Society of Friends – the heading is “A Friendly Dialogue”,<sup>107</sup> and some Quaker terms, including the use of “thee” instead of “you”, are rather clumsily dragged in. The characters are Obadiah Wash, a retired Ragman (Pollard had retired the year before, and instead of living in the rooms behind his shop in the market-place, had moved to a house in the Wash<sup>108</sup> in Hertford), Jeremiah Dicker (the Miller Edward Manser), and Squire Long, a retired oilman (easily identified as the tall Henry Squire), who had been a previous owner of Dicker Mill. Obadiah brings news that all three are to be honoured; he and Squire are to be county magistrates, and Manser is to be mayor, which meant that for his mayoral year and the following one he too would be a “beak”, or J.P. Jerry swears (a modest ‘damn’ and ‘devil’ only), and is rebuked by Obadiah, but brags that they will “make people tremble”, and that “they shall all be Quakers”. Squire counsels Jerry to be meek, and in an obscure passage Obadiah tells Jerry to remember who took him out of the mill to make him “ruler” (i.e. mayor)<sup>109</sup> – it is not clear whether some local “big-wig”, perhaps Lord Townshend of Balls Park is meant, or the Almighty himself, though in

the context the latter identification is unlikely. Jerry suggests Obadiah himself should become mayor – “How about going to church and wearing the mayoral gown?”, to which Obadiah succinctly replies, “Drat the church, and drat the gown”. According to the obituary notice of Pollard,<sup>110</sup> he was often asked to be mayor, but rejected the offer, because he would not take the oath that was necessary, and he refused to become a magistrate for the same reason. In fact the situation for Quakers was more complicated than that. The Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 allowed an affirmation instead of an oath, but the terms of the affirmation were not acceptable to Friends, and when amended in 1837, the mayor was still required to promise not to disturb the Anglican clergy in any right or privilege they enjoyed.<sup>111</sup> Since Friends objected to paying tithes or church rates, Yearly Meeting in 1838 advised Quakers to refuse municipal office.<sup>112</sup> Joseph Rowntree at York and Joseph Sturge in Birmingham both became aldermen, but refused the mayoralty,<sup>113</sup> and probably Pollard was taking the same line. No doubt the anonymous pamphleteer was right, however, in thinking that Pollard found the pomp and ceremony of the mayoralty distasteful. He did though eventually take his seat on the Bench.<sup>114</sup>

Sometime in the 1860s the Corporation’s Watch Committee, of which Pollard was a member, decided to take steps to restrict Sunday trading, a move not universally popular in Hertford. Quakers hold that all the days God gives are holy, and they are therefore not Sabbatarians, but there are other reasons for opposing Sunday trading, and Pollard, if one broadsheet<sup>115</sup> is to be believed, supported the Watch Committee’s decision. Under the headline, “A Rare Opportunity for a Busy-Body – Wanted, some Spies for the Watch Committee”,<sup>116</sup> the scribe sarcastically suggests, “The Quaker would do. Only he is obliged to attend Meeting on a Sunday, but he will do his part, he will stand at the window from seven until he goes to Meeting. Set a -- to catch a -- applies in the Quaker case, as he used to open his shop on a Sunday to serve poor people with clothes, but now having made enough money to retire, has turned religious(?) and charitably says, ‘Verily hath I got as much as I wanted, and hath no wish that others should profit by my experience’”. When many people were working a six-day week – the 1851 Saturday half-holiday Act applied only to factory workers – the opening of a shop on Sunday might well have been welcomed by the poor of the town. No supporting evidence has been found of any such practice by Pollard, but it is not inherently impossible. He was very aware of the needs of the poor; his name appears for instance on a list of those who petitioned the mayor to call a meeting on a bill to improve conditions for children in the cotton factories.<sup>117</sup>

It is obvious that for Pollard to be credited with such influence at a mayoral election, his party, the Whig/Liberals,<sup>118</sup> must have been in power on Hertford's borough council, and in fact from November 1856 to November 1863 the 15 councillors were nearly all from that party.<sup>119</sup> From November 1863 the council was more divided politically, and Liberal representation continued to decline, so much so that at the November election in 1874 only one Liberal was returned. Even worse was to come for the Liberals – from 1878 to 1884 every single Hertford councillor was a Tory.<sup>120</sup> In 1884, however, the Liberals achieved a striking victory at the council elections; in this some Quakers, and one ex-Quaker, played an important part.

Of the five Quaker signatories to the poster which had touched off the 1831 case, four, Manser, Pollard, Shillitoe and Squire were dead by this time,<sup>121</sup> and Joseph May had emigrated in 1839 to Australia, to spread the Christian faith there.<sup>122</sup> William Manser's eldest son Edward (Dicker Miller), had stepped into his father's shoes as a valued and conscientious Friend, who during the '50s and '60s had represented Hertford Friends at Quarterly Meetings, and had shouldered financial responsibilities for them.<sup>123</sup> In the later '60s, however, he was no longer seen at Quaker Meetings for Worship, and when Friends were sent to visit him, he explained that he and his wife were attending Anglican services. Nevertheless, he said, they "retained so much attachment to Friends that they did not intend voluntarily to relinquish their membership in the Society". At the present time there are Quakers who are also members of the Church of England, but this did not happen in the nineteenth century, and the Mansers' membership of the Society of Friends was discontinued.<sup>124</sup> (It appears to be the only example in Hertford's Quaker records of disownment solely for non-attendance at Meetings for Worship.) In the nineteenth century, however, as now, there was a "Quaker fringe", people who were loosely attached to the Society, and in Victorian times these were often ex-Quakers,<sup>125</sup> so Manser may well have retained his Quaker contacts, particularly since many of his relations still belonged to the Society.

The mantle of William Pollard had fallen on the Graveson family. On the retirement of William Pollard, Samuel Watson Ward Graveson, once Pollard's apprentice, had become part-owner of the draper shop, and all three of his sons became pillars of Hertford's Quaker Meeting. In 1884 his son William was secretary of the local Liberal party,<sup>126</sup> and the chairman was Edward Manser.

It was at a Liberal party meeting in October 1884, that the bold decision was taken to challenge the Tory party's control of Hertford Council, and to put forward Liberal candidates for all four seats. From

1875 to 1884 not a single Liberal had been nominated, so low had the local party's confidence sunk. Edward Manser declared at the meeting that Hertford had been governed for sixteen or seventeen years by a Tory caucus, and he referred scathingly to the Tory use of money and free beer. The *Mercury* reporter's own comment was that the Conservative Working Men's Association had had the government of the town in its hands for many years, with most undesirable results.<sup>127</sup> One would like to know who was behind this belated Liberal renaissance – belated in two ways, for October was late to start campaigning for a November election. Had Manser inspired it, or young William Graveson, then 22 years old? A Tory poster<sup>128</sup> put forward another explanation. "Remember that this sudden movement of the Radical Party" – clearly the Tories did not welcome the Liberal revival – "had its origin in the recent spasmodic attempts from Balls Park,<sup>129</sup> from which the people of Hertford are now shut out; and do not let this Municipal Election be a pretext for opposition to Hertford's great friend, Baron Dimsdale,<sup>130</sup> at the next General Election". This author evidently suspected that Lord Townshend of Balls Park was involved in the new Liberal offensive. The Liberals' poster appeal was a simple one – "Burgesses of Hertford, the Conservative Party has had full control for many years. Give the Liberals a chance!"<sup>131</sup> The voters responded well – all four Liberal candidates were returned with thumping majorities. Among the four was Isaac Robinson.<sup>132</sup>

Robinson was a birthright Quaker, who had come to Hertford as a boy of 14 to be an apprentice to William Pollard, and when Pollard retired he and Samuel Watson Ward Graveson became joint owners of the drapery shop. By 1884 Robinson was well-known in the town. He was a staunch supporter of many "good causes" – treasurer of the Town Mission, which used the same premises as the Ragged School, and of the Temperance Club,<sup>133</sup> chairman of the British (that is Nonconformist) School in Cowbridge, treasurer of the Grass Money charity,<sup>134</sup> which distributed the profits from Kingsmead. For several years he was one of the two elected assessors for the town,<sup>135</sup> who had the task of scrutinising disputed claims to the right to vote. After five years as a town councillor he was nominated mayor by another Liberal, A.P. McMullen, who said that Hertford needed "men who dared to do right, whatever may come or go". Even the other William Pollard the Tory printer, supported his nomination, and Robinson was elected.<sup>136</sup> In some way, however, he lost support in the town while he was mayor, and at the end of his office, in 1890, he lost his seat on the council. He was returned again in 1893, but he had never enjoyed robust health, and he did not complete his three-year term as councillor, dying in 1895.<sup>137</sup>

Not only Robinson, but a number of the other Hertford Quakers made a useful contribution to the civic life of the town. William Manser, Pollard and Squire were all managers of the Hertford Savings Bank, which necessitated attendance on Wednesdays, the day on which the bank was open, on a rota basis. Pollard was its chairman for a period.<sup>138</sup> Manser was an auditor of the town's finances for ten years, and carried out the same duty for the Hertford Infirmary. He was also a Poor Law Guardian, an office held by many Quakers in other parts of the country, but not by Pollard or Squire – did they feel, like Joseph Metford of Bath,<sup>139</sup> that the Guardians were “guardians of the estates of the rich?” Pollard, however, was chairman of the Town Mission, the Ragged School, and the British School in Cowbridge. He, Squire and Shillitoe all held office in the Hertford Literary and Scientific Institution. This list is not exhaustive, and takes no account of their financial contributions to local charities, such as the Coal Fund, the Browncoat School and the Lying-in Institution.<sup>140</sup>

So far nothing has been said of the Quaker women. There is in fact very little information about them. The more affluent contributed to local charities,<sup>141</sup> those who took part in the Friends' Women's Meeting distributed help to the Quaker poor, and they made enquiries about Quaker marriages. But these were Quaker domestic concerns, and for the most part the women Mansers, Pollards and Squires were, as so often, “invisible women”. They were evidently thought to conform to a type: in his evidence to the Commons Committee set up to suggest how elections at Hertford could be freed from the bribery and corruption which had marked the 1832 contest, Sam Cousins stated that there were a great many houses in the new borough [roughly speaking West Street and the adjacent area] occupied by “such people as Quaker ladies”.<sup>142</sup> Unfortunately he does not elucidate this statement. There was little scope for women in public life at this time, but one “Quaker lady” in West Street did hold a responsible position in a Hertford charity for a time, and as far as is known was the only woman to do so. Sarah Matilda Jenkins was treasurer of the Ragged School,<sup>143</sup> probably for five years or so. Of course, only a small sum was involved, and she was the daughter of a stockbroker!<sup>144</sup>

Whatever impact the Hertford Victorian Quakers made on their town was not due to numbers; even at the beginning of the century they were a small minority of the local population, and by its end they were a mere handful. On a list of members drawn up in 1800 128 names are recorded;<sup>145</sup> Hertford's population then would be about four and a half thousand. By 1870, when William Pollard made the list,<sup>146</sup> he counted 57 members of the Society in or near Hertford, and by 1875 there were



only 29.<sup>147</sup> Quaker numbers declined catastrophically in the first half of the nineteenth century all over England, and Hertford was no exception.

But though the size of the Friends' Meeting declined, it was given unstinting service by some of its members, and undoubtedly it was this which enabled Quakerism in Hertford to survive. Among those who gave generously of their time and energy to Quaker affairs were men whom we have seen undertaking civic and Party duties also. William Manser was Clerk of the Monthly Meeting and much involved with Meeting House property. William Pollard was a later Clerk of Monthly Meeting, drew up lists of members, had the care of legal papers, and measured gravestones – when Quakers at last allowed these in 1850. He often represented Friends at the May Yearly Meeting in London. Henry Squire collected subscriptions, was a trustee of Quaker charities, and frequently represented Hertford Quakers at the Quarterly Meeting. Isaac Robinson represented Friends on other bodies, had also been Clerk of Monthly Meeting, and at the time of his death was Clerk of the Quarterly Meeting.<sup>148</sup> This list is not a comprehensive one, and, considering their business and political responsibilities, these weighty Friends must have led very busy lives.

If the *Hertfordshire Mercury* (which of course was Whig/Liberal) is to be believed, the leading “political Quakers” were also likeable people. Space does not allow of long quotations from their obituaries, but perhaps a few lines may be permitted. William Manser was described as “courteous, amiable, just, truthful and generous”, and “an affectionate friend”.<sup>149</sup> Pollard was “a man of large-hearted benevolence”, “firm, but not discourteous”, and in a tribute in verse from an unknown hand, “The friend of the friendless, the friend of the poor”.<sup>150</sup> Henry Squire was “one of the most respected inhabitants of the town” – and, incidentally, a good cricketer! He and Pollard were close friends.<sup>151</sup> One must mention here also Dr. Richard Shillitoe, to whom the *Mercury* devoted several column inches, giving a delightful portrait of this genial man, who walked miles to the villages to see his patients, because he believed in exercise, working devotedly night and day during the cholera epidemic of 1849, and who was, even in his declining years, “the blythest man in town”.<sup>152</sup> Isaac Robinson is described as a of a quiet and unassuming manner, but painstaking and earnest in all he did. Like many Quakers of his period, he was very interested in Nature, and made much use of his microscope. Flowers from his garden<sup>153</sup> were laid on his coffin. He had distinguished Quaker friends, and one of these spoke movingly at Robinson's funeral of the love and grief which he felt.<sup>154</sup>

It is well known that Nonconformists were the backbone of the Liberal Party in the nineteenth century – to paraphrase a familiar saying the Nonconformist churches were the Liberal Party at prayer. It would be interesting to know how many Dissenters, other than Quakers, were involved in politics in Hertford. One or two, James Field and Charles Maslin, have already been mentioned. But the other Nonconformists certainly did not attract the number of squibs and lampoons that the Quakers did. It is surprising to find that Friends in Hertford had such a high profile – a number of people connected with the local Press were aware of Quaker beliefs, and some even knew how the society of Friends was organised. The *Mercury* had an interesting passage in 1845.<sup>155</sup> It was at the time of the Corn Laws crisis, and a Conservative candidate at the county election was reported as finding it “as difficult to answer searching questions about Corn, as it would be to convince a sturdy Quaker that the best securities for freedom of conscience were Church Rates and the 39 Articles”. The paper clearly assumed that its readers would know what the Quaker stance was.

By the end of the century the Society of Friends was, as a body, encouraging its members to take part in public life, and it was common for Quakers to be councillors, mayors and J.P.s. At the beginning of the century it was a different story – when Joseph Pease, in Quaker dress, sat as M.P. for Darlington in 1832–3, he had faced opposition from both his family and his Quaker Meeting.<sup>156</sup> One researcher concluded that in the first half of the nineteenth century, “great courage and initiative were required to break the bounds of non-involvement set by the official organs of the Society of Friends”.<sup>157</sup> Incidentally, when Friends *were* elected to parliament or to municipal office, there was a tendency for them to reject rigid party discipline, and this was true of both William Pollard and Isaac Robinson.<sup>158</sup>

Although there were individual Quakers in other towns who were deeply involved in politics, Hertford was one of the very few places where one can see a group of Friends acting together in such matters. At Birmingham also, where there was a bitter struggle in the 1830s to obtain an elected council for the city, instead of the antiquated vestry, a number of Quakers were active.<sup>159</sup> But at Norwich only the Gurneys and one or two other Quakers took part in politics, though three broadsheets attacking individual Friends there have survived.<sup>160</sup> It is surprising that Hertford, such a comparatively small town, should have produced such a committed group of local politicians, including three Quaker mayors.

Were other Quaker Whigs as radical as the Hertford ones, who gave Thomas Duncombe his first political opportunity? One of the Norwich

Quakers was certainly lampooned as a radical.<sup>161</sup>

“But a Quaker sure with politics  
It doesn't beseem to meddle,  
With brawling radicals to mix,  
With Whigs' unmeaning twaddle”.

But “radical” is an elastic term, always used in a derogatory sense, but with no precise meaning. The Tories certainly taunted Duncombe as a radical in the 1820s, but there is no evidence that he was supporting manhood suffrage – as already noted here, people's opinions change. In general, however, the radicals and Quakers had much common ground, as Martineau pointed out<sup>162</sup> – they shared an objection to the privileges of the Established Church, including religious tests for holding civic office or attending universities, both Quakers and radicals advocated education, and education free from Anglican control, and both groups opposed capital punishment. They had a common objection to what we now call Defence expenditure, which radicals criticised for providing sinecures for the aristocracy, and Friends because of their objection to war. All in all, it is not surprising that Hertford's Quakers supported Duncombe.

Local newspaper sources, together with the town's voluminous official records, provide an insight into the lives of Hertford's Victorian Quakers, but we should have missed much of the spice of political controversy in the town if Councillors Gilbertson, Hudson and others had not so diligently collected hundreds of contemporary broadsheets. We have photographs too<sup>163</sup> of some of the Friends mentioned here, though it looks as though others held to the traditional Quaker view that Friends should not allow portraits to be made of themselves. Little or no account has been given here of the Quaker contribution to the religious life of the town – not that this is unimportant, but routine attention to business matters is rarely interesting, and in the case of what in other churches would be called “sermons” there is simply no information available. It should be noted that though the Squire and Gripper families were Quakers early in the eighteenth century, most of the Quakers mentioned here, the Pollards, Mansers and Robinsons for instance, had come into the area of Hertford in the 1790s or later. There is no mention of the old seventeenth-century names, Stouts, Rudds or Fairmans, unless one counts the Dimsdales here. Quaker children, like other children, were often apprenticed to masters far away from their family (with all the heartache that entails), and this probably accounts for the inflow and outflow of names.

The decline in Quaker numbers was accounted for by several factors,

among them the “disownment” – a very wounding process – for financial failure, at a time when such failures were common, and often not the fault of the business man himself. Rich Quakers too found their exclusion from local power frustrating, and resented the restrictions imposed by the Society of Friends, in the name of simplicity – novels, pictures, theatres and secular music were all discouraged among Quakers.

It should be noted that it was no new thing for Hertford Quakers to involve themselves in politics. All the indications are that their predecessors in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries also did not disdain political activity. This is certainly true of the Stouts and some of their contemporaries – one modern history of Parliament goes so far as to describe Henry Stout as Earl Cowper’s election agent in the 1690s and Thomas Gripper’s father worked hard for the Whig candidate in 1780. And the Pollards, Mansers, Henry Squire and their colleagues were not unworthy successors of their radical seventeenth-century forbears; by their support for parliamentary reform and other much-needed changes in the country’s policy, and by resisting the Marquis of Salisbury’s attempts to impose his influence on the borough, they too deserve recognition for their contribution to civic and religious freedom.

*Violet A. Rowe*

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> Hertford Corporation Records (henceforward *HC.*) 45/1 p.1. Hertfordshire CRO.
- <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 33/433.
- <sup>3</sup> *Hertfordshire Mercury* (henceforward *HM.*) 8 Nov. 1845.
- <sup>4</sup> Two large volumes in the Corporation’s records, vols.44 and 45, are devoted to the case. Probably the simplest account of the issues is *HC.45/1*.
- <sup>5</sup> L. Turnor, *History of Hertford* (1830), 352–355.
- <sup>6</sup> “To the Inhabitants of the Borough of Hertford”, 16–5–1831. Old Election Papers (henceforward *EL.*) at Hertford Museum.
- <sup>7</sup> Gripper’s obituary, *Hertford and Ware Patriot*, nos.LVI and LVII, Sept. 1834.
- <sup>8</sup> Its name is given in the Town Clerk’s accounts. *HC.54/21*.
- <sup>9</sup> *HC.33/419*.
- <sup>10</sup> Turnor, *op.cit.* 355.
- <sup>11</sup> Sedgwick had two shops, one in Hertford and one in Ware. Pigot, *Commercial Directory for 1826–7* (henceforward *Pigot*) 566, 585. May, whose chemist’s shop was almost next door to Pollard’s premises, would have needed a competent assistant to leave in charge in his absence. He had business worries in the later 1830s.

- <sup>12</sup> *Pigot, 1834*, gives Turnor and Gripper as Attorneys in Fore Street; if this is Thomas Gripper, he had diversified his interests even more.
- <sup>13</sup> *Pigot, 1822 and 1826*. He is described as “a much-respected inhabitant of Hertford” in the obituary of his brilliant son, Sir Thomas, later a Whig M.P. for the town. HM.2-1-1872.
- <sup>14</sup> HC.45/1 f.50.
- <sup>15</sup> His bill for 6s.8d. for “attending Gripper junior upon his serving us with a notice... and declining to take any notice of the application and advising thereon” is in HC.54/21.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>17</sup> HC.45/1 f.48.
- <sup>18</sup> HC.33/419.
- <sup>19</sup> HC.54/5.
- <sup>20</sup> “Electors of Hertford!” Subscribed, “A Rod for the Fool’s Back”. n.d.
- <sup>21</sup> An area of housing by the river Lea, and still known by that name. It was sometimes referred to as “Rat’s Castle”.
- <sup>22</sup> *Hertford and Ware Patriot, op.cit.*
- <sup>23</sup> HM.16-2-1828.
- <sup>24</sup> *The Reformer*. 23-12-1834. The speaker was George Rew, at an election meeting in support of William Cowper. Joseph Gripper was in the chair. *EL*
- <sup>25</sup> “Questions to the Proposed LIBERAL TOWN COUNCIL”. 22-12-1835. *EL*
- <sup>26</sup> HC.21/886, 890. Quoted in A. Baker and W.D. Fenning, History of Hertford Corporation, typescript, Hertford Museum.
- <sup>27</sup> HM. 8-11-1845.
- <sup>28</sup> The discrepancy between this figure and that given to the Treasury by the Corporation when it wished to sell some of the property (see f.n.1), is considerable. Perhaps there were incidental, non-legal fees, or perhaps Longmore’s memory had betrayed him.
- <sup>29</sup> Rent Roll of the Trustees of the Poor, 1834, Hertford Museum. The money was paid in two instalments.
- <sup>30</sup> In a broadsheet of 22 April 1831 Muggerridge promised the electors that Duncombe be joined by another Reform candidate, and his is the only name on the handbill. *EL*
- <sup>31</sup> “A Reply to the Falsehoods of an Elector”. *EL* 8 Dec. 1832.
- <sup>32</sup> “Electors of Hertford, do not be deceived...” *EL* n.d. but clearly 1832.
- <sup>33</sup> *DNB*. Art. *sub.* Brougham.
- <sup>34</sup> Anon., *Life of William Allen* (1846), 1, 179.
- <sup>35</sup> There is a clear schedule of property sold in HC.33/475-9.
- <sup>36</sup> HC.45/1 p.48.
- <sup>37</sup> See f.n. 27.
- <sup>38</sup> Coal merchants and maltsters in 1826, by the early ’30s they were also tanners and wine and spirit merchants. *Pigot, 1827 and 1831*.
- <sup>39</sup> See the article by the author, “William Pollard and the Hertford Ragged School”, *Hertfordshire’s Past*, no.19, 1985.
- <sup>40</sup> In 1831 the population was 5,247, of whom 700 were electors. McCalmont, *Parliamentary Poll Book... 1832-1918*, 139.
- <sup>41</sup> Turnor, *op.cit.*, 347.
- <sup>42</sup> HC.45/1 p.8.
- <sup>43</sup> HC.33/421.
- <sup>44</sup> HC.45/1 p.35. In 1708 the Corporation were ordered to repay over £2,000 wrongfully detained from the poor over the years.
- <sup>45</sup> HC.33/346.
- <sup>46</sup> The property sold is set out in HC.53/450, 454, 457, 467-8. It was, briefly, the Butchery market, 14 cottages in Bircherley Green, the land and house at the Town Mill, other land in Butcherley Green, and a number of quit-rents.
- <sup>47</sup> HC.33/510-511. Unfortunately for the poor, they were not mentioned in the 1627 charter, though it is clear some did appear in person to testify.
- <sup>48</sup> HC.54/186.
- <sup>49</sup> T. Duncombe, *Life and Correspondence of Thomas Slingsby Duncombe* (1868), *passim*; broadsheets in Hertford Museum, mentioned below; information about Mme. Vestris from Mr. Derek Forbes.
- <sup>50</sup> The by-election was rushed. The marquis died on 13 June, and Byron was elected on the 27th.

- <sup>51</sup> "To the Poor Cottagers of Hertford", 26-4-1831, *EL*, has, "Who returned Mr. Duncombe to Parliament, against the powerful influence of Panshanger, etc. which was used at his first election?". "Thomas Slingsby Duncombe, gifted with prophecy..." n.d. *EL*. denies that the 1826 election was between Duncombe and Hatfield House, and states that Duncombe was then opposed by Panshanger, though Earl Cowper's steward in 1831 (to which year this handbill obviously belongs), had been canvassing for Duncombe.
- <sup>52</sup> "Twenty Guineas Reward", 28-1-1826, *EL*, instructs anyone who has evidence about an assault on Duncombe's election agent, to apply to Gripper. Pollard, who always weighed his words, stated in his evidence to the parliamentary commission of 1833 (see below) that he had supported Duncombe at *all* his elections. *P.P.* ix, 1833, 143.
- <sup>53</sup> "A New Song" broadsheet, in "Election Posters, 1825", Local Studies Collection, Hertfordshire County Library.
- <sup>54</sup> F.A. Taunton, "Hertfordshire Politics, from 1826 to 1832", Birmingham University B.A. dissertation, 1957, 51. The author of this excellent short account was not aware of the Quaker involvement.
- <sup>55</sup> "One Thousand Guineas Reward", 1-2-1826. *EL*.
- <sup>56</sup> They are also described as "Diamond merchants" in this squib - the Grippers were alleged to give coal, *alias* black diamonds, as bribes to voters.
- <sup>57</sup> He is also referred to as "Last-seller", a description I am unable to elucidate.
- <sup>58</sup> The other committee members are: "Charles Cantwell" and "James Fleece", "Chaplains to the Committee, and Keepers of the consciences of all Gamblers and Fornicators", "Frank Snarle" and "Jacob Cunning". Cantwell must be Charles Maslin the Independent Minister in Hertford, who with Thomas Gripper later this very year founded the Constitutional Club in Hertford (Taunton, *op.cit.* 39). Fleece is James Field, watchmaker and jeweller, whom we have met before signing the invitation to the Town Hall meeting which led to the Chancery case. He was a Dissenter too. Snarle is Frank Searle, a tallow-chandler, and Cunning is Jacob Canning, tailor and draper. These two had shops in the market-place, near Pollard's and both had nominated Duncombe at the 1823 election. (T. Gripper's obituary, *op. cit.*). The nicknames given to the Quakers and their collaborators were usually either variants of their own surnames, or were the names of characters in plays - Charles Cantwell, like Obadiah Prim and Jerry Sneak (see below), is an example of the latter.
- <sup>59</sup> "Hertford Election! Affidavit versus Assertion". 27-1-1826, and four following pamphlets. *EL*.
- <sup>60</sup> Lamb, who disliked the rough and tumble of an election, and knew he would shortly have a seat in the Upper House, withdrew. This would have left the field to Byron and Duncombe, but Henry Lytton Bulwer came forward. It was now early May, however, late to start canvassing for a mid-June election, and though he made a good showing, he was defeated.
- <sup>61</sup> "The County Press and the Hertford Election". 12-1-1835. *EL*.
- <sup>62</sup> He feared defeat. See his explanation, "To the Independent Electors of the Borough of Hertford". 9-8-1830. *EL*.
- <sup>63</sup> "To the Independent Electors..." 3-8-1830. *EL*.
- <sup>64</sup> "To the Worshipful the mayor of Hertford..." n.d. *EL*.
- <sup>65</sup> "Friend Ingestre..." 3-8-1830. *EL*.
- <sup>66</sup> Susan Centlivre's "A Bold Stroke for a Wife", 1718. I have to thank Mr. Derek Forbes for information and references on this.
- <sup>67</sup> "Friend Prim". "27th of the 4th month 1831" - note the Quaker dating. *EL*.
- <sup>68</sup> I cannot identify "B--n" with any certainty. There was a Quaker family of Browns, who were farmers, at Amwell Bury (Q 97, 119B, 121/1, HCRO), and Susannah Lucas, one of the Quaker ladies of West Street, mentions her cousins the Browns in her will at Somerset House.
- <sup>69</sup> *Yearly Meeting epistle*, 1818.
- <sup>70</sup> *Journal of Friends' Historical Society*, vol.45 (1928).
- <sup>71</sup> "Quakerism and Public Service chiefly between 1832 and 1867", E. Martineau, Oxford B.Litt. thesis, 1938, 41, 43, 44. For J.J. Gurney's involvement in Norwich politics, 1818-37, see D.E. Swift *Joseph John Gurney* (1862), *passim*.
- <sup>72</sup> "Brave Men of Hertford, vote for Ingestre and Mahon"... n.d. *EL*.
- <sup>73</sup> "Letter from Slingsby", n.d. *EL*.
- <sup>74</sup> T. Duncombe, *op.cit.* 1, 103; Burke's *Landed Gentry*, *art., sub.* Slingsby. Note the neat play on the double meaning of "swearing".
- <sup>75</sup> *Aristocracy and People* (1979), 206.
- <sup>76</sup> *P.P.* ix, 1833 (449), 143 *et seq.*

- <sup>77</sup> "T.S.D. and his friends at their dirty work again". 5-12-1832. *EL*
- <sup>78</sup> Reprinted in the *Whig Radical Reformer*, no.69. Dec. 1834. Mr. A.G. Davies kindly called this publication to my notice.
- <sup>79</sup> "The Reformer..." 4-12-1834. *EL*
- <sup>80</sup> Slops were "workmen's loose outer clothes; ready-made or cheap clothing". (Concise Oxford Dictionary).
- <sup>81</sup> The third baron Dimsdale was the fourth son of the famous doctor; he would not have expected to inherit the title and the property, and probably apprenticed his son, as the gentry often did. If the son was apprenticed to a Quaker, he would have been expected to attend Quaker Meetings for Worship, and as usual under the apprenticeship system, the master would provide the boy's clothes - i.e. Quaker dress.
- <sup>82</sup> The writer calls the committee the "Garb of Humility Committee".
- <sup>83</sup> "Benjamin Crow". n.d. *EL*. Prim must be William Pollard, and Jerry Sneak, who also figures in the broadsheet, may be either R.M. Muggeridge, whose paper, the "Mercury", had ceased to be published in 1833, or its printer, Stephen Austin. I have been unable to identify Sawney Gossip, though I suspect he was Sam Cousins, who was out and about in the town a lot.
- <sup>84</sup> "Under the Special protection of the Mayor and Corporation". n.d. *EL*. The Great Baboon, caught in the Park of Panshanger, is probably Earl Cowper himself, the Howling Hyaena is no doubt the candidate, William Cowper, and the Largest Ass in the World, Simple Sam, is Sam Cousins. But who were the Viper, and Toad-in-the-Hole?
- <sup>85</sup> *The Reformer*, 23-12-1834.
- <sup>86</sup> 27-7-1830. (No title). *EL*. There were always Quakers who were poor, though this is often forgotten, but there were two or three £10 householders in the Butchery Green area, according to Sam Cousins. But most, according to the same source, were £3 or £5 householders living in "those huts", as Cousins contemptuously described them, called the Bee-hive and Rabbit Warren". Many Hertfordians will remember the public house, the "Warren House", recently demolished, in Bircherley Green. Cousins says the flour was distributed to the poor by the Grippers, among others, regardless of whether the recipients were Duncombe supporters or not. *Report of the Select Committee... 27 June, P.P. 1833 (152) ix.*
- <sup>87</sup> "Peter Picklestaff", *Hertford and the Hertfordians* (1849). Hertford Museum.
- <sup>88</sup> "To the Independent Electors..." 12-5-1826. "Election Posters, 1825", in Local Studies Collection, Herts. County Library.
- <sup>89</sup> Martineau, *op.cit.* 156 *seq.*
- <sup>90</sup> *Ibid.* 237.
- <sup>91</sup> "To the Electors of the Borough of Hertford". 20-8-1832. *EL*
- <sup>92</sup> "Election of town councillors, 1849". *EL*. Council elections took place in November.
- <sup>93</sup> Pollard was one of 43 signatories to an appeal to the mayor for a public meeting to be held, to discuss assistance to the Irish suffering from the 1845 potato famine. Richard Shillitoe, and Joseph Sterry, a wealthy Quaker living in that Quaker enclave, West Street, also signed. HC.34/197.
- <sup>94</sup> "Advice Gratis". n.d. *EL*
- <sup>95</sup> Strict Quakers would not wear a "cocked" hat, i.e. one with up-turned, or pinched, brim. Alderman William Graveson in the 1930s remembered Pollard's "tall figure and plain dress". (News-cutting at Hertford Museum).
- <sup>96</sup> A reference to Quaker pacifism and the Society's opposition to tithes and church rates.
- <sup>97</sup> Squire was elected mayor in Nov. 1858.
- <sup>98</sup> Austin, like Pollard, supported the adoption of the Health of Towns Act in Hertford. *HM.* 13-7-1850. Pollard had at first opposed it.
- <sup>99</sup> "Benjamin's Return". n.d. *EL*
- <sup>100</sup> Young had bought an estate at Howe Green allegedly to further his entering aristocratic circles in Hertfordshire.
- <sup>101</sup> Squire was a tall man, as his photograph (at Hertford Castle) shows.
- <sup>102</sup> "Tin" - slang for money. An interesting reference - Pollard died a very wealthy man.
- <sup>103</sup> James Gilbertson.
- <sup>104</sup> "Lay of Ancient Hertford by a Burgess". n.d. MS at Hertford Museum.
- <sup>105</sup> Ceres, who met an untimely death in World War II through enemy action. (*Ex inf.* Mr. A.G. Davies).
- <sup>106</sup> In fact they were all local tradesmen - grocer, maltster and nursery-man, respectively.
- <sup>107</sup> *EL*

- <sup>108</sup> Poll Books, 1857, 1859. Hertford Museum. The shop has been known since 1895 as "Graveson's".
- <sup>109</sup> Edward Manser became mayor in Nov. 1862.
- <sup>110</sup> *HM.* 4-2-1871.
- <sup>111</sup> J. Davies, *Digest of Legislative Enactments relating to the Society of Friends* (1849), 53.
- <sup>112</sup> E. Isichei, *Victorian Quakers* (1970), 194.
- <sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 195.
- <sup>114</sup> *Hertfordshire Almanac*, 1863, 867.
- <sup>115</sup> "A Rare Opportunity for a Busy-Body" . n.d. *EL*
- <sup>116</sup> n.d. *EL*
- <sup>117</sup> *EL* 28-2-1833. The 41 other signatories included Manser, Shillitoe, James Cole, and some Tories.
- <sup>118</sup> Peelite Tories and some Whigs joined to form the Liberal Party in 1859.
- <sup>119</sup> *Hertfordshire Almanac*, 1857-63, *passim*. Mr. A.G. Davies very kindly analysed the lists of councillors for me.
- <sup>120</sup> *Ibid.* 1864-84.
- <sup>121</sup> "Hertfordshire People", no.25, Summer 1985, 10, *seq.*
- <sup>122</sup> W.N. Oats, *A Question of Survival* (1985), 58, 214-5 (with photograph of May). May took his family of 14 persons with him, and they brought to Mount Barker "the language, manners and principles, and to some extent the dress, of the early Friends". They maintained contact with Hertford Friends for some years. Q 124/1-13, Herts. CRO.
- <sup>123</sup> Q 94, *passim*. Herts CRO.
- <sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-6-1870; 20-10-1870.
- <sup>125</sup> Isichei, *op.cit.*, 202.
- <sup>126</sup> *HM.* 18-10-1884.
- <sup>127</sup> *Ibid.* Did Disraeli's great programme of social reforms, 1874-80, owe something to the existence of these working men's associations?
- <sup>128</sup> "To the Burgesses of Hertford". n.d. but clearly 1884.
- <sup>129</sup> It sounds as though Balls Park's grounds had recently been closed to the public.
- <sup>130</sup> The fourth Baron Dimsdale had changed his party allegiance to support the Whig Great Reform Bill of the early 1830s, but the sixth baron was a Conservative.
- <sup>131</sup> "Hertford Municipal Election. A great Meeting..." n.d. *EL*
- <sup>132</sup> *HM.* 8-11-1884.
- <sup>133</sup> Town Missions made valiant efforts to wean working people from their addiction to drink - they went into the homes of the poor, and saw the effects.
- <sup>134</sup> *HM.* 18-5-1895. Obituary of Isaac Robinson. As late as 1886 there is a reference at a local Liberal party meeting to the Conservatives' not wanting the poor to have the Grass Money - a memory of the 1831 case. *HM.* 30-10-1886.
- <sup>135</sup> *Herts. Almanac*, 1871-77.
- <sup>136</sup> *HM.* 16-11-1889.
- <sup>137</sup> *Ibid.* 18-5-1895.
- <sup>138</sup> Joseph Hooper Squire, a brother of Henry Squire, a member of Ware Friends' Meeting, and James Cole, also undertook the Wednesday duty. But James Cole was later "disowned" by Friends for bankruptcy and dishonesty.
- <sup>139</sup> Martineau, *op.cit.*, 89.
- <sup>140</sup> The above activities can be followed in *HM. passim*, and *Herts. Almanac, passim*.
- <sup>141</sup> Balance sheets and appeals of these charities, *EL*
- <sup>142</sup> "The Evidence of Sam Cousins". 10 June 1833. *EL*. A Tory reprint of part of P.P. 1833 (591), ix, i.
- <sup>143</sup> *Herts. Almanac*, 1867, 1871. The *Almanac* does not consistently list the officers of local organisations.
- <sup>144</sup> She had come back from Philadelphia to live near her sister and her maternal grandparents, the Botts, Quakers, who were farmers at Amwell Place, near Hertford Heath. Q 119B, Herts. CRO.
- <sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>146</sup> Q 120 (inside cover).
- <sup>147</sup> Q 94. 16-12-1875.
- <sup>148</sup> Hertford and Hitchin Monthly Meeting Minutes, Q 93 and 94, *passim*. Herts. CRO.
- <sup>149</sup> *HM.* 24-9-1853.
- <sup>150</sup> *Ibid.* 28-1-1871.



<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.* 18-9-1875.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.* 15-11-1851.

<sup>153</sup> At "Beninghoe", Bengo, now Holy Trinity Rectory.

<sup>154</sup> This was Theodore Harris; Prof. Rendel Harris was also there. *HM.* 18-5-1895; 25-5-1895.

<sup>155</sup> *HM.* 6-12-1845.

<sup>156</sup> *Isichei, op.cit.* 100.

<sup>157</sup> *Martineau, op.cit.* 39.

<sup>158</sup> *HM.* 31-10-1868; 16-11-1889.

<sup>159</sup> *Martineau, op.cit.* 104.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.* 136 *seq.*

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.* 139.

<sup>162</sup> *Martineau, op.cit.* 53.

<sup>163</sup> At Hertford Castle and Hertford Museum.

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## TOWARDS A BIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM POLLARD

William Pollard is known to us today chiefly as one of the three originally anonymous co-authors of *A reasonable faith*. This book, first published in 1884 and going through six editions, was written collaboratively by Francis Frith, William Pollard and William Edward Turner. It was an attack on evangelicalism and represents a crucial stage in the progress of British Quakerism towards the acceptance of liberal theology, which is marked by the Manchester Conference of 1895.

I have already attempted to reconstruct the mind and spirit of William Pollard as one of the co-authors of *A reasonable faith*, basing myself largely on his other writings.<sup>1</sup> He wrote some 18 articles for the *Friends' quarterly examiner* over the period 1867–1890. These mainly cover matters raised in Yearly Meeting and other aspects of current Quaker practice, but the last article is concerned with the Irish Home Rule question, which Pollard, unlike the overwhelming majority of Irish Friends, argued for. His other writings include a couple of early tracts – *Primitive Christianity revived* and *Congregational worship* – published by Alfred W. Bennett in the 'Old Banner' series c.1864–6, and a book entitled *Old-fashioned Quakerism: its origin, results, and future* (1887), which is a distillation of his mature thought. These writings all fit together nicely and do not reveal any striking period of change; they develop easily out of each other. *A reasonable faith* appears entirely in place amongst them.

This was not anything like the whole of William Pollard's contribution to Victorian Quakerism. Born on 10 June 1828, his boyhood was spent at Horsham, Sussex, his education at Friends' School, Croydon, where he remained as a junior teacher. In 1849 he went to train at the Flounders Institute, Ackworth, which had just been founded in 1848, and from 1851 to 1865 he was a teacher at Ackworth. Ill-health forced him to abandon teaching, and he returned south to Reigate, where he took a job as clerk and agent for Francis Frith in his flourishing photographic business, staying there until 1872. The final period of William Pollard's life, from 1872 to 1893, was spent in the Manchester area, where he was secretary and lecturer of the Lancashire & Cheshire International Arbitration Association, a branch of the Peace

Society. The Ackworth period is marked by the publication of *The Ackworth reading book* (1865), an anthology that included a good handful of Quaker extracts, while during the Manchester period there appeared a small number of pamphlets or letters dealing with various aspects of the peace question.

Such is the broad outline of William Pollard's life. It encompasses a considerable amount of different kinds of experience, at both local and national levels. He was an assiduous participant in and commentator on Yearly Meeting from year to year as well as throwing himself into the life of Friends in the diverse regions where he resided at different stages of his mortal pilgrimage. It would be interesting to fill this out in more detail, not because he is likely then to emerge as one of the great figures of Victorian Quakerism, but rather because he might stand as a representative active personality through whom various typical aspects of 19th century Quaker life could be discerned. He was brought up in a Quaker farming family, was educated at his nearest Quaker boarding school and taught there himself before going on to Ackworth. He was recorded a minister by Pontefract MM in 1866 and later occupied posts in Reigate and Manchester which enabled him to exercise his gifts of ministry and exposition to considerable effect.

What sources can be investigated for further information on these matters? There do not appear to be any extant journals or diaries that William Pollard himself kept. For the latter period of his life the columns of *The Friend* provide occasional pieces of information in the form of summaries of the contributions of leading Friends to the sessions of Yearly Meeting, as well as notices of other, local events in which Pollard took part. *The British Friend* may furnish similar material. Then there are the records of preparative, monthly and quarterly meetings. In the cases of Hardshaw East MM and Manchester and Eccles PMs the minutes of those respective meetings mention William Pollard by name in a variety of connexions, e.g. being appointed to visit applicants for membership or those wishing to resign their membership or others who had infringed Quaker practice in some way or other. A diligent sifting of the whole range of these minutes would yield information on the general pattern of Pollard's commitment, though it probably would not give much individual detail.

The printed list of members of Lancashire & Cheshire QM reveals that in 1880 the Pollard family resided at Homefield, Hope Road, Sale, which was convenient for Sale railway station and Ashton-on-Mersey meeting house, built in 1856 primarily to serve the new burial ground. The 1882 list gives a new address: Holmefield House, Clarendon Crescent, Eccles, which was close to the new meeting house in Half

Edge Lane and, again, to Eccles railway station. William Pollard's business address is given as 12 King Street, Manchester, where he worked for the International Arbitration Association. That is some five minutes' walk from Mount Street, where Pollard would have attended monthly meeting (men only), held at 10 a.m. on the appropriate day. Earlier, in 1873 at least, the Association's address had been at 6 St Ann's Square, only a stone's throw from King Street.

It is likely that the records of Ackworth School and the minutes of Ackworth PM and Pontefract MM would provide some information, likewise those of Reigate PM and Dorking, Horsham and Guildford MM, for earlier periods of William Pollard's life. If the records of the Lancashire & Cheshire International Arbitration Association are extant and those of the London-based Peace Society were available, they too would doubtless contain further valuable material on Pollard's employment and long-standing concern for peace.

Whilst I was pursuing some of these avenues into William Pollard's life, I had the good fortune, through the kindness of the late Margaret Dale, daughter of Francis Edward Pollard and granddaughter of William, to gain access to a small quantity of family papers, which shed light on a considerable number of points in William Pollard's life and activities. These documents comprise the following items:

- 1 letter from Susanna Pollard, his mother, to him when he was at school in Croydon, dated 11mo. 2. 1842;
- 3 letters from James Pollard, his father, again to him at Croydon, dated between January and September 1843;
- the sale catalogue for the second and third days' auction of Park Farm, near Horsham, ordered by the executors of the late Mr. James Pollard, 29 September–1 October 1851;
- 6 letters and 2 fragments of letters from Peter Bedford to William Pollard, dated between 1849 and 1859;
- 1 letter from the pupils of the ninth class at Ackworth following Pollard's retirement through ill-health, dated 4mo. 23. [1866];
- 5 letters from John Bright to William Pollard, dated between 1864 and 1876;
- 1 letter from William Pollard to his son William Henry Pollard, dated 30.VIII.1874;
- the notice of the presentation by the Peace Society of the fund subscribed for William Pollard's retirement, dated 21 June 1893, with a handwritten note on the back;
- a photograph of William Pollard with his form at Ackworth, date uncertain.<sup>2</sup>

These documents are chiefly of sentimental interest for the family, marking significant changes in William Pollard's and his family's circumstances. They are not concerned with major issues in Quakerism

or peace work, but represent the more ordinary texture of Quaker family life. The letters from John Bright are insignificant in regard to the life of the Quaker statesman, but they shed light on the sorts of things that William Pollard was interested in and the connexions that he had. What, then, can we fill in to the sketch of Pollard's life as present known?

Let us begin with his younger days. James Pollard, William's father (1789–1851), shows himself in his letters to be a caring and affectionate father, correcting his son's errors in writing letters home from school, but anxious not to discourage, but rather encourage William to take pains and do better (letter of 26 January 1843). Both he and Susanna Pollard, William's mother, give news of day-to-day events on the farm, which was called Park Farm and was not quite two miles from Horsham. The sale catalogue leads one to suppose it was an average-sized farm: the house sale lists the content of four bedrooms, parlour, kitchen, pantry, store room, two cellars, wash-house, as well as daily utensils, Stafford-ware and glass, linen and various items labelled 'out doors'. The west bedroom was the parents' with a 5 ft. bed, the south bedroom had two beds, one 4 ft. 9 in. and the other 4 ft. 4 in., while the middle back bedroom had a 2 ft. 10 in. French bedstead and a stump bedstead, and the men's bedroom had three stump bedsteads. The house also contained three bookcases, two in the parlour and one in the kitchen, so although both James and Susanna admit to finding letter-writing something of a task (letters of 2 November 1842 and 26 September 1843) they clearly possessed a fair number of books. What kind they were, however, we do not know, but some of James's remarks make one surmise that they would be serious, probably religious works.

James's two letters of September 1843 are a response to William's apparent discontent with his situation at Croydon Friends' School, where he was beginning as a apprentice teacher, but wanting to quit. James was prepared to see objections to William's situation at Croydon, since nothing anywhere was perfect, but his chief worry was with the decline in the testimony to plainness in speech, behaviour and dress. He is strong and emphatic on this point:

...the greatest [objection] that I can see in this is the encouragement the Institution give to the Pride of Dress which I consider to be a very great evil for I find When there is the least encouragement given at School the Children genneraly take more advantage When at Home and I would sooner follow my Children to the Grave than to see them follow the Pride of the Fashion either in Plainness of Speech behaviour or Apparel of Which I see too much in my Family but I do most sincerely hope the Almighty will be Pleased to Open the Eyes of all such that are Willing to be led by the Enemy

in any shape that they may see the error of it before it is to (*sic*) late for it is this that frequently leads into greater Sins (letter of 9 September 1843).

It seems natural enough that James Pollard should have been conservative with regard to the testimony on plainness – he was after all in his mid 50s when he was writing to the 14-year-old William – but his views testify to the struggle that Quakers were going through at this period. It was not until the Yearly Meeting of 1860 that the query on plainness of speech, behaviour and apparel was discontinued and the subordinate meetings were thus freed from the need to report the growing number of exceptions.

James's two letters to William do their utmost to persuade him to stay at Croydon. In the first (9 September 1843) he declares: 'I believe it only wants resignation to the will of thy Parents instead of thy own & then I believe thee will be favoured with ability to do thy best & remain where thee are'. In his second letter (26 September 1843) he quotes the opinion of J. Sharp, the superintendent of the Croydon School: 'William was becoming increasingly useful as a teacher & I still think that if he could give his mind fully & cheerfully to his duties & feel satisfied to remain here there is a fair prospect of his becoming an efficient & valuable Teacher'. James points out that he has no work on the farm to which William could be put, if he were to leave Croydon, 'as thee know thee are not so able to Drive Plough or fill a Dung Cart as thee are to teach a School wherein thee will be gaining some real wisdom thyself' (9 September 1843). The only possibility would be to put his name down on the list for an apprenticeship with William Manley; James gives no indication of the trade that this would be in, but Manley was a grocer at Leighton Buzzard. In the second letter James mentions that the premium required for getting William into a situation (presumably not the same as an apprenticeship) would be more than he could afford. The result of this pressure was that William remained at Croydon, where he was an apprentice and taught for a period of seven years (letter from Peter Bedford, 10 April 1851).

The chief thing that we know about the Croydon period is that during it William formed a strong attachment to the philanthropist Peter Bedford (1780–1864), who, following his retirement from Spitalfields to Croydon, took a lively interest in the welfare of the Friends' School. Peter Bedford was some nine years older than William's father, James, and nearly fifty years older than William himself. Twice in his letters (31 January 1854 and 4 December 1854) Bedford refers to an incident in which as a little boy William had run after him in the streets of Horsham and taken him to breakfast at his

father's table, mentioning in each case how much has changed in the meantime and what difficulties he has been through. The letters from Peter Bedford virtually all mark important changes in William's life, and it is clear that the latter kept him informed of what he was doing and regarded him as his mentor. Bedford is constant in his assurance of the sincere regard with which he holds the younger man, and he is always full of encouragement, enquiring about William's spiritual progress and reminding him that, amidst all the blows of life, he remains in the care of a gracious, merciful heavenly Father.

The letters permit glimpses of the stages through which William went in his religious development, from uncertainty as to his vocation at the beginning to a realization of his call to be a minister at the end. Bedford's first letter (15 December 1849) refers with admiration to William's quotation from Milton respecting his own position – 'that they also serve who only stand & wait' – but he goes on to say: 'but when the Master utters the command to go forward, if those who wait obey him not they will not receive wages'. One of the last letters (5 February 1859) is filled with words of encouragement for William's work in the Quaker ministry:

... I am free to acknowledge my belief, that, He who is the great Minister of the true tabernacle; has called thee to become a Minister of the Gospel of Christ; it is indeed a high & holy calling, & nothing short of the Divine guidance, can qualify rightly to fulfill it... I must say to thee my endeared young friend, *Mind thy calling*, be very watchful & very faithful, least that measure of the Ministry of the Gospel of Christ, entrusted to thee, should in any way become weakened, or diluted with the wisdom which is *not* from above.

This letter actually begins with a reference to a specific undertaking of William Pollard's, namely, a reading meeting with some of the poor people in Ackworth, 'poor', as Bedford says, 'in regard to the things of the World; amongst whom I would hope, thou wilt find some rich in faith, who may become heirs of that Kingdom, which shall forever abide & where no sorrow shall be known'.

William Pollard spent 16 years of his life at Ackworth, beginning with two years at the Flounders Institute training as a teacher. When he became a master at the School in 1851, his salary was £60 p.a., which Peter Bedford did not consider too high a salary after seven years serving at Croydon and the two years at the Flounders (letter of 10 April 1851). During the greater part of William Pollard's time at Ackworth the superintendent was Thomas Pumphrey (1802–62), who occupied that position for 27 years (December 1834 to early 1862). Pumphrey was not himself trained as a teacher, but he clearly had great administrative,

pastoral and ministerial gifts. Because the *Memoir of Thomas Pumphrey*, edited by John Ford, consists largely of personal letters from Pumphrey to members of his immediate family, it is difficult to gain a full picture of the impression that others had of him. These affectionate letters are full of his serious concern for the spiritual welfare of his children and continually express thanks to God, even in times of adversity; only occasionally do they reveal the lighter side of his personality. The concluding chapter of the *Memoir*, written by the editor, does admit that one at least of the Ackworth schoolboys had felt him then to be stern in character and that his sentiments towards Pumphrey 'partook more of fear than love', though as an adult his 'recent recollections of him are most delightful; he seemed to live with Christ'.<sup>3</sup> Thomas Pumphrey was a valued friend of Peter Bedford's (see letter of 4 December 1854), and indeed Bedford's letters to Pollard usually end with a request to be remembered to various dear friends. Such details bear witness to the close-knit nature of the Society of Friends at that time. Bedford and Pollard constantly exchanged information about what was happening in the two schools, and sometimes others, with which they were involved.

A few more details about Ackworth can be gleaned from other sources. For example, an anecdote is told about Pollard and Frederick Andrews, who became superintendent and headmaster of Ackworth from 1877 to 1920. Andrews was a pupil in Pollard's class, the ninth or next to the top class, and was 'already tall and well-built. Pollard was short in stature and evidently thought on one occasion that "F.A." needed a rebuke. He reminded him that tall men are apt to be like tall houses, badly furnished in the upper storeys'.<sup>4</sup> This must have occurred about 1863. Joseph Spence Hodgson, using his school diary, notes:

In 1852 [William Pollard] joined Josiah Evans in reviving the old 'Association for the Improvement of the Mind' (begun in 1821, discontinued in 1848), under the title of the 'Ackworth Literary & Scientific Association'. The members were allowed the new & special privilege of staying up an hour later than usual, till nine o'clock. Hard questions were exchanged with the Croydon School Association.<sup>5</sup>

He also notes:

W. Pollard excelled in the art of reading. His voice was round and clear, though not altogether free from intonation; but his style inspired his hearers with an increased interest in the subject-matter, and his turn to read aloud was always welcomed.<sup>6</sup>

The reference to 'intonation' probably has to do with the sing-song voice in which vocal ministry was traditionally offered.



This comment on reading is of particular interest, as William Pollard, towards the end of his period at Ackworth, set about compiling a reader, which was published in 1865 as *The Ackworth reading book*. The contents include 'Descriptive and narrative pieces' (34 items), 'Historical and biographical' (25), 'Abstract and argumentative pieces' (24), 'Conversational pieces' (12), 'Public speeches' (16). There was also a separate poetry section, including passages from Shakespeare, Cowper, Young, Pope, Goldsmith, Coleridge, Mrs Hemans, Longfellow, Wordsworth, Whittier and Byron. Amongst the prose there are four pieces with specific Quaker content or authorship. In the course of making this anthology Pollard had written to John Bright for his advice regarding public speeches that might be selected. Bright wrote a very helpful reply (letter of 7 May 1864), mentioning Gladstone, Cobden, George Thompson and H.W. Beecher of New York with approbation. Lord Derby is also mentioned as having made some great speeches, 'but generally on what we should term the wrong side in politics & opinion'. Bright indicated various of his own speeches that might provide material and offered to lend Pollard some of them 'just for examination'. *The Ackworth reading book* in fact includes Bright's 'Speech after the declaration of war, House of Commons, March 1854', relating of course to the Crimean War.

While Pollard was at Ackworth he got married. We may guess that it was through the great social gatherings afforded by Ackworth General Meeting that he met Lucy Binns of Bishopwearmouth, whom he married on 12 January 1854 at Sunderland. Within the year, on 26 November 1854, they rejoiced at the birth of a daughter, Mary Sophia. Both the marriage and the birth were the occasions of letters from Peter Bedford, while his next letter of 15 January 1859 refers to the fact that the young couple now have 'a little boy & some dear little girls'. Two more daughters had been born in the interim – Lucy on 22 January 1856 and Ellen on 14 August 1857, the latter dying in early infancy on 14 March 1858. The Pollards' first son was born on 28 December 1858 and he was named Bedford, a clear indication of the high place that Peter Bedford occupied in William Pollard's affections. Two further sons were born at Ackworth – Albert on 29 November 1860 and William Henry on 3 November 1862.

In 1865 Pollard was forced to leave his post at Ackworth because of ill-health. None of the sources give any specific details of this illness. The family moved back south to Reigate, Surrey, where Pollard subsequently gained employment as a clerk and agent in Francis Frith's photographic business. An unsigned letter, dated 23 April, but without any year, accompanied the gift of an inkstand from 'thy affectionate

pupils of the ninth class', conveyed to Pollard via a couple of Friends travelling south.

The Reigate period (1866–72) is the most sparsely documented in William Pollard's life, at least as far as personal papers are concerned. It was, however, the time during which he began his long association with the *Friends' quarterly examiner*, a contribution from him appearing in the first volume of 1867 as the first of a series of 'Colloquial letters on various subjects'. His article on 'The peace question' (FQE 5 (1871) pp.443–9) was reprinted with additions as a pamphlet entitled *Considerations addressed to the Society of Friends on the peace question* (London: R. Barrett and Sons, 1871). It represents a pointer to the final stage of Pollard's life when he moved to Manchester to be the secretary and lecturer of the Lancashire & Cheshire International Arbitration Association, a position he occupied from 1872 until 1892, shortly before his death.

The letters from the Manchester period provide evidence of a continuing link with John Bright. One is simply an acceptance by Bright of the invitation to become one of the Vice-Presidents of the Arbitration Association (letter of 2 May 1873 from the House of Commons, not in Bright's handwriting). A second (4 July 1874), written from Aulnaharra, Sutherland) responds to Pollard's questions about sources for a possible lecture on Cobden, which Bright thinks a 'good' and 'attractive' subject. As with his earlier advice on materials for *The Ackworth reading book*, Bright offers to lend Pollard a book, which he will ask his son Albert to find and take to the Friends' Institute at Mount Street.

The remaining two letters from Bright (21 June 1873 and 6 June 1876) are both marked 'private' and are concerned with contemporary political events. The earlier one gives no precise indication of subject, saying simply:

The Gov<sup>t</sup>. are as anxious to avoid war, & cost of money & life as we are – I can only hope the officer sent out may be trustworthy & indisposed for war – if he is so, then the affair may soon end – and if not, I fear there may be trouble. His instructions are, I believe, strongly pacific.

Bright then goes on to say that as the facts are few and confused he does not see what the Peace Society could do. The later letter deals with the unrest in the Balkans and advises that

If meetings [presumably public meetings organized by the Peace Society] are held, they should declare generally their sympathy with the Christian or Non-Musselman population & their condemnation of any attempt to sustain the Turkish power in Europe.

Bright declines to give any direction as to what a particular district should do with regard to a question Pollard has asked, but says: 'the sentiments of a district must decide what a district should do'.

Bright's letters are written as one Friend to another, using plain language and, in the last three letters, addressing Pollard as 'My dear Friend William Pollard'. They are invariably helpful and friendly, but strictly to the point and without any superfluous touches that might give evidence of a particularly close Quakerly relationship. From the first of Bright's letters (7 May 1864) it appears that Pollard had sent him three tracts, probably from the 'Old Banner' series, which included two of his own, and Bright concludes his letter by saying that he has read them 'with much interest, & think them good'. The tone of the letters is always courteous, but never that of Quaker intimates.

The last private letter to be considered from the family collection takes us back into the family circle. It is, moreover, the only letter written by William Pollard himself, and it is addressed to his son, William Henry Pollard, the last of the Pollard children to be born at Ackworth. Four more children were born after him – Eliza on 15 July 1866, Constance on 5 December 1867, Arthur Binns on 2 June 1870 and Francis Edward on 12 September 1872. Constance died in infancy on 13 June 1871, the second of the Pollards' ten children so to do. Francis Edward would appear to be named after Francis Frith, whose employment William left to go to Manchester and with whom he clearly enjoyed a close friendship.

William Pollard's letter was written on the occasion of William Henry's departure to school at Ackworth (30 July 1874) and contains a mixture of family news and fatherly advice. It makes a nice counterpart to the letters that James Pollard sent the young William at Croydon. William Pollard writes encouragingly to his son, picturing the strangeness and difficulties of his new life and assuring him of his parents' concern and prayer for him. The language he uses is similar to that employed by Peter Bedford in his appeals to the trainee teacher William: 'Remember thou hast had lately a gracious Visitation of Heavenly love to thy soul, & be very careful to cherish it & obey the light that has been granted, & then more will be given'. He exhorts William Henry to keep a tender conscience and do what is right without having to be told. Above all he should keep to a regular plan of prayer. He should be cheerful, avoid grumbling, be gentle and courteous in speech, try to overcome his shyness and be punctual. He should not talk or think anything he would be ashamed for his parents to know. The letter concludes with the encouraging remark: 'I have no doubt thou wilt succeed if thou keeps a good heart'.

To a modern reader this letter may seem rather heavy. It is certainly marked by high moral and religious seriousness. But it is interesting to note that in all the letters that cross the gap of generations – James Pollard's and Peter Bedford's to William, and William Pollard's to William Henry – there is a very clear recognition that even where there is a need from time to time to chide or admonish there is an overriding need to provide encouragement of a very positive kind.

William Pollard was forced to retire from his post with the Arbitration Association late in 1892, and this was noted with regret in *The Friend* (4 November 1892, pp.727–8). The Peace Society organized a subscription fund to mark his retirement, and a presentation was made on 27 June 1893 at the Reform Club in King Street, Manchester. His health was deteriorating and he died three months later on 26 September, following a stroke 16 days before. In his last ministry at meeting for worship he quoted from the same sonnet of Milton's – 'On his blindness' – that he has used in his early correspondence with Peter Bedford, but this time the words quoted were 'who best/Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best' and not 'They also serve who only stand and wait'.

The letters and papers that have come into my hands from William Pollard's descendants provide an instructive amplification of his biography as furnished in outline by the *Annual monitor*, the Hardshaw East MM testimony and his own published writings. Like most such papers they provoke further questions over details and context. Further investigation might well contribute towards a social history of Victorian Quakerism, using William Pollard as a focus. It could explore aspects of Quaker education through the experience of Croydon and Ackworth, including the education of William's own children. It could trace the changes in Quaker practice and theology from the conservatism of James Pollard through to the eve of the Manchester Conference of 1895. It could look at the importance of the peace issue among friends and others in the second half of the 19th century. Finally, it could examine the role of what was probably a more than usually active recorded minister in the life of Manchester PM at a crucial time in that large meeting's history. These seem to me to be the main issues, but research might well throw up further questions to be explored.<sup>7</sup>

*David M. Blamires*

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> David Blamires, 'William Pollard (1828-1893)', *Friends quarterly*, vol.23, no.8 (October 1984), 376-81 and inside back cover. This number of the *Friends' quarterly* contains seven articles written to mark the centenary of the publication of *A reasonable faith*, including one each on Francis Frith and William Edward Turner.
- <sup>2</sup> Typewritten transcripts of the letters and the Peace Society presentation notice are deposited in Friends House Library.
- <sup>3</sup> *Memoir of Thomas Pumphrey*, ed. John Ford (London: A.W. Bennett; York: Thomas Brady, 1864), 311.
- <sup>4</sup> Beryl Williams, *Quakers in Reigate 1655-1955* (1980), 84.
- <sup>5</sup> Joseph Spence Hodgson, *Superintendents, teachers, & principal officers of Ackworth School, from 1779 to 1894* (Ackworth Old Scholars' Association, 1895), 17.
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.
- <sup>7</sup> I am grateful to Edward H. Milligan for his help with some details of information in this paper. Further information on many other members of the Pollard family is to be found in Benjamin S. Beck, *Francis and Mary Pollard and their ancestors* (1986), which consists of excerpts from the same author's *The ancestors of Sidney and Ruth Beck* (1985), of which a copy is lodged in Friends House Library.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

*Thomas Lawson, North Country Botanist, Quaker and Schoolmaster.* By E. Jean Whittaker. W. Sessions, York, 1986. pp.xiv + 258. £9.00.

This is a very well-researched book. Dr Whittaker's main interest is the development of the study of native British plants during the seventeenth century, a process in which Thomas Lawson played a part, but she has also searched extensively for information about other aspects of his life both in public Record Offices and also at Friends House, adding references to a wide range of published works. Lawson's botanical activity is thus placed in the context of his life as a Quaker in the troubled period of the Commonwealth and Restoration.

In July 1652 he was 21 years of age, recently returned from an uncompleted period of study at Cambridge and "priest" in charge of the chapel at Rampside in Cumbria when George Fox reached his neighbourhood (Fox was then 28). Lawson asked his congregation to hear what Fox had to say and as a result was himself convinced and became associated with the organization centred on Swarthmoor, preaching the Quaker message first in the North and later in Sussex (1654-55), suffering fines and imprisonment like other Friends. He was associated with others in the production of pamphlets against the established church and also against other dissenters (*An untaught teacher witnessed against*, refuting the Baptist Matthew Caffyn). It is not clear how he passed the next few years.

In May 1659 Lawson married Frances Wilkinson of Great Strickland and went to live with her family, occupying himself as a small farmer and also opening a school, but from time to time action was taken against him as a non-churchgoing schoolmaster; finally in 1673 he was fined and possibly imprisoned and was obliged to cease teaching for a time. He had contact with George Fox who was at Swarthmoor from 1675 to 1677, and apparently Fox influenced him in planning a tour to the south of England and back, visiting Friends, which he undertook in 1677. He had recently developed an interest in native British plants and had available books about them, so before starting his travel he opened a botanical notebook (now in the archives of the Linnean Society) in which he noted the plants he might expect to see. During the tour he marked plants seen; he also widened his acquaintance among botanists by calling at the Oxford Botanic Garden (where he met Jacob Bobart and Professor Robert Morison) and at other gardens near London. Jean Whittaker records in detail the plants which he found during this travel and later, with comments on their significance. At that time the British flora was incompletely known, and the Linnean system of binomial nomenclature had not been invented so that Lawson listed his finds under short Latin phrase-names which have to be interpreted.

Lawson also used London contacts to help him develop ideas for books which would present Quaker principles; a book on baptism had already been completed and was submitted to the Second Day Morning Meeting which passed it for publication. After returning to Great Strickland he completed three more books which were published in 1679-80 after the lapse in 1679 of the censorship law. These books contained criticism of the current university teaching, based still on classical works in Latin and Greek, and include some forward-looking ideas on teaching to prepare children for living in the current world. The four books were reprinted by Friends after his death but have not proved of lasting value.

Next comes a chapter about family troubles at this time. His son died in 1684 and

in 1687 his daughter Ruth married a curate who had been a pupil; Lawson incurred criticism through not disowning his daughter.

In the years after 1677 Lawson devoted much time to a field study of plants in Cumbria, and in the early 1680s he sent plant specimens and information about them to John Ray, then the foremost British naturalist; a major list sent in 1688 included information new to Ray which he recorded in his next book. In the late 1680s Lawson made contact with Archdeacon William Nicolson of Carlisle who was becoming interested in local plants, and they botanised together after the Revolution of 1688. Nicolson completed a considerable work on the plants of Cumbria, with acknowledgement to Lawson (who died in 1691); this was edited for a new publication by Dr Whittaker in 1981. The book concludes with an index of plants recorded as having been collected by Lawson, alphabetically under modern binomials with citation of his Latin phrase-names, also English names, with references to the pages in the book where they are mentioned.

R. ERIC HOLTUM

*Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting-Houses in Central England.* By Christopher Stell. pp.xviii + 276 + 527 figs (approx.) + col. frontispiece + col. illustrated wrapper, London, H.M.S.O. 1986. £45.00.

This is a book which has been long awaited and one which should be the first instalment of a country-wide study of a subject thoroughly and most unjustly neglected. The title page, by some unexplained choice of editorial policy, omits the author's name, which only appears at the end of the preface. Such anonymity does not appear to be a consistent policy of the Stationery Office as is evident by other studies of individual building types, nor is it maintained in their current advertising of the book. It needs, perhaps, therefore to be emphasised that in its own field this study is as authoritative as H.M.S.O. studies of English Vernacular Houses or the Welsh House by named authors. The author is well known as the authority on his subject.

This volume is an "Inventory of Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting houses in Central England" and covers the Midland counties of Shropshire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Northamptonshire, Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire.

As to range it covers all Protestant nonconformist groups, excluding therefore the buildings of the Church of England, Roman Catholics and Jews. All examples prior to 1800 are treated with the Royal Commission's customary detail, the usual terminal date of 1850 is extended as far as 1914 selectively, and the volume also describes the more important examples which have been demolished since about 1940. This last inclusion begins to show one great value of the work: as a record. From a recent report drafted in Staffordshire County Planning Office it appears that in Stoke-on-Trent the various Methodist sects alone had 100 chapels at the beginning of this century. By 1959 these were down to 76 and today less than 60 survive, many of those precariously. The problems caused by decline in membership, movement of population and redevelopment of towns are common to the established church and to nonconformists alike. For Friends these began early; it has been said that our eighteenth-century history echoed with the closing of meeting houses. Distinctively also in our history has been the rise of new meetings in towns where ancient premises were sold, sometimes only a generation ago, which with more faith (and a willingness to pay for the upkeep!) could well have served the renewed life.

Of the 60 buildings selected by the Commission for recommendation as "most worthy of preservation", Friends have 15, including such well known delights as Amersham, Jordans and Ettington. The several branches of Methodism achieve only six. The Unitarians, as heirs of many early and fine Presbyterian buildings, make the most outstanding group.

The whole volume shows the immense range and richness of Nonconformist building and architecture. Here are village chapels as simple as any Quaker meeting house. Here also is a reminder that the term 'Meeting house' is not our own exclusive possession. Other bodies share George Fox's certainty that "the church is the people and not an old house made up of lime, stones and wood". Here also are the large town chapels, seating 1,000 and more on ground floor and galleries and never filled in these days. Their counterparts in Quaker meeting houses have been sold or subdivided. Here also are the grand, the fantastic and even the eccentric – Nottingham's High Pavement Unitarian Chapel or the Baptist "Church of the Redeemer" in Birmingham which would each pass for an Anglican parish church and Leicester's "Pork Pie Chapel" (so called from its shape). Lewin's Mead Unitarian Meeting house in Bristol has for years been a problem case – one of the finest buildings of its class and without a congregation. The Countess of Huntingdon's Chapel in Worcester, which provides a coloured illustration on the jacket, shows the building as it once was. Since then it has been through the cycle of redundancy, decay, precarious survival and, shortly, ultimate rescue for a different purpose. The stately pulpit and pair of eagle lecterns will adorn a most unusual concert hall.

There is a case for extending the provisions of the Redundant Churches Fund to cover Nonconformist buildings. The "Friends of Friendless Churches", not being a statutory body, are moving in that direction.

Quakers could perhaps be persuaded, on architectural grounds, to look at traditions outside their own. There are more compelling reasons for an ecumenical attitude but this is not to be despised. Our Society's buildings are not the only ones to express and embody attitudes and principles, faith and practice.

The preface promises in future volumes a considered account of the architectural quality and planning of chapels, of the differences between their fittings and plans appropriate to the various denominations and a discussion of the growth of and the differences between the denominations. This promise must be kept. This volume is a fine first instalment of an essential study of a part of our national heritage which is altogether undervalued.

H. GODWIN ARNOLD

*The Dragon's Backbone: Portraits of Chengdu People in the 1920s.* By William G. Sewell; Drawings by Yu Zidan. W. Sessions, York, 1985. £7.50.

This is a fascinating book to dip into, and much more, it will be an abiding joy. Those who know William Sewell's writings will find here the expected succinct paragraphs bringing to life the 90 drawings of people, work and play in that area of China (Chengdu) which he knew so well. The brief paragraphs of text help an active imaginative participation in the pictures, and to inform that art of History which is the sharing of experiences. The drawings by a Chinese teacher, encompassing both the work and the leisure activities of one part of China at the beginning of this century, offer one a base line of social structure from which the very different society in China today has developed. If one seeks to know and



understand the inherent character of a nation which is due to be a dominating influence in the world, much of the material needed is here.

Of course the China which is displayed here is peculiar to one part of the country and that at a specific period in history. This is what helps the thoughtful reader to appreciate the basic material which is fundamentally characteristic of a nation that has achieved so much change in so little time.

I would also recommend this collection of drawings, with their accompanying text, to a more casual reader who simply wants a book for the passing pleasure of looking at delightful pictures in a typical Chinese style.

R. STANLEY H.G. THOMPSON

*Deliver us from evil: The radical underground in Britain, 1660–1663.* By Richard L. Greaves. New York, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1986.

This is a study of radical opposition movements against the restored monarchy in the period before the first Conventicle Act, 1664, with ample and detailed references to state papers, newsbooks and contemporary pamphlets.

The basic point about religious persecution at the time is well appreciated: "the persecution of Nonconformists was undertaken primarily for reasons of state, not theology" (p.106).

Further research is needed to amplify the part played by some Friends in political activity at this period, and how far it spilled over into subversion. The author concludes that "the evidence for the 1660s indicates that some Quakers did not follow their leaders in adopting pacifism" (p.99). He notes Quaker interest in the 1663 plot, supporting Captain Robert Atkinson at Kirkby Stephen (pp.177, 190), and gives the names of Faucett of Orton, Thomas Randall, Thomas Wharton (Orton) and Thomas Wright (Castlethwaite). Quakers are stated to have been in contact with Sydrach Lester the illicit arms trader, master of the *Magdalen* based in Poole; and "Joseph Helling (or Hiller), a Quaker known... for his 'ill designs'" is reported in collusion with Dr Edward Richardson (minister at Ripon during the interregnum, practising medicine at Harrogate Spa at this time, and later minister to a congregation in the Netherlands; died at Amsterdam) (pp.182, 201).

All this contrasts sharply with the great difference which is to be seen 20 years later, when Friends in London and in the country districts affected made strenuous (and largely successful) efforts to distance themselves from any complicity in the events surrounding the Monmouth rebellion in the west. By 1685 Quaker organisation had grown up.

At some points in the book sources are quoted without a note that some stark impressions given need qualification after reference to the actual source. For instance, one may well question whether in *January* 1661, "Throughout the West Riding Quakers went naked through the principal towns crying 'woe to Yorkshire'" (p.55).

RUSSELL S. MORTIMER

## NOTES & QUERIES

### ENGLISH WOMEN

*Women in English Society, 1500–1800*, ed. Mary Prior, Methuen, London and New York, 1985.

Appendix I. Provisional checklist of women's published writings, 1600–1700 by Patricia Crawford (U. of Western Australia). A considerable proportion of these Quaker works (more than a score by Margaret Fell), and the compiler acknowledges particularly help given by Malcolm Thomas at Friends House Library.

### EDWARD FITZGERALD

*With Friends Possessed: a Life of Edward Fitzgerald*, Robert Bernard Martin, Faber & Faber, London and Boston, 1985.

Bernard Barton 'the Quaker poet' was one of a small group of Edward Fitzgerald's "Suffolk cronies" in the 1840s. The author gives a brief account of Fitzgerald's unsuccessful marriage to Barton's daughter Lucy in 1856, which ended in separation the following year.

### FRIENDS IN DEVON

*In Recovery and Restoration in an English County: Devon Local Administration 1646–1670*, Stephen K. Roberts, U. of Exeter, 1985.

Friends such as James Nayler and Thomas Salthouse make a fleeting appearance in relations and confrontations with local authorities.

### FRY TYPE FOUNDRY

*British Type Specimens before 1831: a Hand-list*, James Mosley (Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1984) contains a list of the Fry type foundry, totalling 36 out of a catalogue of 220 and illustrating the importance of the foundry from 1778.

### MARLBOROUGH FRIENDS

*Victoria County History: Wiltshire*, vol.12, ed. D.A. Crowley, Oxford U.P., 1983.

Marlborough Friends (see pp.225–6); shows growth and decline from 1656 through to the end of the eighteenth century.

### RESTORATION

*The Restoration, A Political and Religious History of England and Wales 1658–1667*, Ronald Hutton, 1985 contains numerous references to Friends and is a valuable synthesis of much recent research on the period. The book should be required reading for all interested in Quakerism in this period for its detailed setting of the context of Friends' activities and its explanations of the attitudes held towards them.

### SESSIONS OF YORK

*Sessions of York and their Printing Forbears*, William Sessions Ltd., The Ebor Press, York, 1985, x, 69pp. illus., traces development of the establishment from William Alexander to William Sessions IV.

## Supplements to the Journal of Friends' Historical Society

12. ELIZABETH HOOTON, First Quaker woman preacher (1600–1672). By Emily Manners. 1914. 95pp., £3.00.
20. SWARTHMORE DOCUMENTS IN AMERICA. Ed. Henry J. Cadbury. 1940. £1.50.
21. AN ORATOR'S LIBRARY. John Bright's books. Presidential address 1936 by J. Travis Mills. 1946. 24pp., 50p.
22. LETTERS TO WILLIAM DEWSBURY AND OTHERS. Edited by Henry J. Cadbury. 1948. 68pp., £3.00.
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 EARLY FRIENDS. Presidential address by Frederick B. Tolles, 1952. £1.00.
28. PATTERNS OF INFLUENCE IN ANGLO-AMERICAN QUAKERISM. By Thomas E. Drake. 1958. £1.00.
29. SOME QUAKER PORTRAITS, CERTAIN AND UNCERTAIN. By John Nickalls. 1958. Illustrated. £1.00.
32. JOHN WOOLMAN IN ENGLAND, 1772. By Henry J. Cadbury. 1971. £2.00.
33. JOHN PERROT. By Kenneth L. Carroll. 1971. £2.00.
34. "THE OTHER BRANCH": LONDON Y.M. AND THE HICKSITES, 1827–1912. By Edwin B. Bronner. 1975. £1.25.
35. ALEXANDER COWAN WILSON, 1866–1955. By Stephen Wilson. 1974. £1.00.

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