THE ATLANTIC COMMUNITY OF THE EARLY FRIENDS

By FREDERICK B. TOLLES, Ph.D.

INTRODUCTION BY

ISABEL ROSS

on the influence of

North-West England in

EARLY QUAKER EXPANSION

FRIENDS' HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Concerning the first Spreading of the Truth. . .

And the Truth sprang up first (to us, as to be a People to the Lord) in Leicestershire in 1644, and in Warwickshire in 1645, and in Nottinghamshire in 1646, and in Darbyshire in 1647, and in the adjacent Countries in 1648, 1649 and 1650, and in Yorkshire in 1651, and in Lancashire and Westmorland in 1652, and in Cumberland, and Bishoprick, and Northumberland in 1653, and in London, and most parts of the Nation of England, and Scotland and Ireland in 1654, &c.

And in 1655 many went beyond Seas, where Truth also sprang up.

And in 1656, Truth brake forth in America, and many other places.

And the Truth stood all the Cruelties and Sufferings, that were Inflicted upon Friends . . . And still the Lord's Truth is over all, and his Seed reigns . . .[1]

THE seed of Truth which developed into the Quaker movement was planted in the soil of England just at the time when the old medieval world had burst its bonds with the discovery of new realms of thought and endeavour, at a time of great scientific advancement and when a new world loomed up across the ocean. The achievements of the new age and the opportunities in the new lands, have provided for more than three hundred years an outlet for the abounding energies of the maritime nations of the Old World.

As we look back from this point of time, three centuries after George Fox saw his vision on Pendle Hill, we can see how Friends of the seventeenth century met the challenge of their expanding world and went forth to proclaim and live out their vision of the Truth. From knowledge of their faith, their trials, their successes (and their failures, too) we can gain strength and knowledge to apply our own sense of the Truth of God to the situation which confronts us in the world today and in the coming years.

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This 24th Supplement to the Society's *Journal*, issued on the occasion of the Tercentenary celebrations, 1952, reproduces the Presidential Address to the Society, in which Frederick B. Tolles deals with *The Atlantic Community of the*

[1] George Fox, *Epistles*, 1698, p. 2.

Early Friends, the Friends who took their faith to the New World, and the interest, correspondence and intervisitation of travelling ministers which soon sprang up from both sides of the ocean. Isabel Ross, our immediate past-President and author of *Margaret Fell, Mother of Quakerism*, contributes an introduction on the influence of North-western Friends on Quaker expansion, and the early missions to continental Europe and the further reaches of the Old World, complementing the westerly course of F. B. Tolles's survey.

Introduction

WE do well to remember that during the five years preceding George Fox's arrival in the north-west of England, he had already preached and suffered much, had made at least one pronouncement of major importance—" I live in the virtue of that life and power that taketh away the occasion of all wars,"—had won for himself and his followers the nickname of *Quaker* which has come down for three centuries, and finally had " settled " one or two meetings and had gathered to himself a few outstanding personalities. Elizabeth Hooton, James Nayler, William Dewsbury, Richard Farnsworth and others had already become his known companions in the search for Truth, in the preaching of the Inward Light of Christ leading to knowledge of God and of his will for men and women.

But when Fox came to the north-west in June, 1652, to the extreme West Riding of Yorkshire, to Lancashire, Westmorland and Cumberland, there was an immediate, indeed dramatic, upsurging of life. Among the dalesmen, the statesmen, the farmers, craftsmen and ploughmen, and some of the better-educated landowners and professional class, he met the Seekers, who at once seemed to recognize him as the man who could lead them from being seekers to becoming finders. And here he stayed in this northern England for the next two years, the longest time he had so far stayed in any one district. He travelled everywhere, gathering followers and setting up Meetings and staying with them long enough, or revisiting them, until " their eyes were fixed on Christ, their teacher, and they came to sit under their own vine, insomuch that Francis Howgill coming afterwards to visit them, found they had no need of words."[1]

Men and women who heard him at the market or fair or in the churchyard or at the village cross, went back to their homes with their souls alight, to ponder on this newly recovered interpretation of Christ's teaching. So in that first generation of Friends one finds Quakers often in isolated places—in the upper reaches of the Yorkshire dales, in the lonely country of Pardshaw in Cumberland, and on the still

[1] *Journal*, under 1653 (Bi-Centenary edition, i, 182-3).

lonelier Thwaite Fells between Eskdale and Dunnerdale, where Cumberland meets Lancashire.

But George Fox, with his experience of the Spirit of God in his own soul, and his witness to the Light of Christ to lead from sin and into the perfect relationship with God and man, could never be content to stay in only one part of the country. He waited to thrust roots down into the likely soil he found there, soil made ready by the natural independence and self-reliance of the people, and by the serene hard-working life of men and women undisturbed by crowds and noise. And then he and some of his friends, both men and women, began to spread abroad. For George Fox believed that what he had experienced was of universal application. It was, he believed, Christ's teaching in its simplest and yet deepest form. It would know no boundaries of race, colour, sex or nation. If it were accepted widely, it would lead, he believed, to changed lives. The inwardness of what he taught would show in outward goodness. He pleaded that if all people were led by Christ's Spirit, the magistrates and judges would be eased of a great deal of their work of punishing the wicked.[1]

In the growing Quaker community the great majority stayed in the places where God had already placed them. There was land to cultivate, beasts to care for, business to manage, estates to control, children to bear and rear and educate. Their poor and widows had to be looked after in their misfortunes, and the Meetings had to be held during times of persecution and of peace.

On the spiritual faithfulness and loyalty and courage of these stay-at-home Friends, the travelling Friends depended. These latter were the adventurous minority who could not and would not withstand the compelling force to travel and spread their ideas. Because they looked upon the world as their parish, they were led to go to a great many countries. Their spiritual inspiration was Christ, with George Fox their human leader and father, while at Swarthmoor Hall was Margaret Fell, their nursing mother, ever ready to welcome them and give them warm and understanding sympathy as well as her prayers when away on their travels.

Margaret Fell's convincement in June 1652 was of vital importance to the new and growing movement. While

[1] *Journal*, under 1674 (Bi-Centenary edition, ii, 226).

George Fox kept himself free to move about as the Spirit led, her home, at the invitation of her tolerant and sympathetic husband, Judge Fell, became as it were the hub from which radiated not only the " Valiant Sixty " but those many scores who took the message of Quakerism in the first half-century. There can be no doubt that in addition to suggestion and advice from George Fox, many of these travellers met at Swarthmoor Hall before going on their journeys and discussed with Margaret Fell the needs of the districts they felt concerned to visit. The letters from the travellers to George Fox and Margaret Fell, addressed usually to Swarthmoor, give ample proof of the help and inspiration they expected to get from that hospitable home, and from George Fox himself when the letters were forwarded to him on his wanderings. Margaret Fell then answered much of the correspondence, " George Fox being gone out of the country," she wrote, " Friends brought things to me, and I answered them. And I was but young in the Truth, yet I had a perfect and a pure testimony of God in my heart for God and his Truth. And I believe I could at that day have laid down my life for it. And I was very zealous in it."[1]

The Kendal Fund

Another piece of work she did was to start a fund, known as the Kendal Fund, which functioned from 1654 to 1658, and led in a few years to the foundation of similar funds in other parts of the country. These were for the purpose of helping the missionaries with some of the necessaries of life. Not always is it recorded where the travellers were bound for, but the following names mentioned show the variety of places and countries aimed at : Bishopric (Durham), Wales, Lincolnshire, Norwich, Appleby, Cheshire, London, Edinburgh, Carlisle, Ireland, New England (Joseph Nicholson in 1655), Holland (William Caton in 1655), Germany (William Cartmel and William Wilson in 1655), Venice, Scotland, Bedford, Yorkshire, the Isle of Man, Surrey, Cumberland, Banbury, Cambridge, Jamaica, Turkey, Barbados, France, Virginia, Hamburg. The gifts included clothing, relief to the prisoners, books, and money for the expenses of travel. Joseph Nicholson of Cumberland was given £2 towards his

[1] Spence MSS., iii, 135.

journey to New England, and two other Friends £2 each for their travels to Germany. Towards her expenses to Venice, Elizabeth Coward got only 10s. whereas to pass to Scotland cost sums ranging from 10s. to £1 15s.

Between June 1654 and September 1657, £270 was collected and disbursed, chiefly contributed by Friends in Westmorland, Cumberland, North Lancashire and the Sedbergh district, though sums also came in from Yorkshire (£55), and from Durham (£51 13s. 7d.). From time to time, appeals were made by Margaret Fell, or by the two Kendal treasurers, that Friends should give liberally to help those who were sacrificing so much to carry the Truth all over the country and overseas.

In 1656, for example, Margaret Fell wrote to the Meetings in the north-west and told them that the collections were needed to provide necessities for those Friends called "into several nations, as Holland, Barbados, Ireland, Scotland and Flanders, Denmark and Germany, all these within this month, and a great part of them north country Friends. So the Lord God of peace open your hearts. . . . So let [every man] give, not grudgingly nor of necessity, for the Lord loves a cheerful giver."[1]

From March 1657 to March 1658 the receipts recorded on a separate sheet among the Swarthmore MSS. amount to £443 3s. 5d. and the disbursements to £490 12s. 5d. By this time, the south was contributing three times as much as the north, which had up till then borne "the heat of the day." Among the disbursements are some considerable sums for Friends going overseas. For example, £12 for "Friends' diet returning from New England," £4 13s. to John Stubbs to Holland, and an extra £5 7s. 9d. for his clothes and other things, and £3 10s. 2d. "to take with him." In addition, £19 8s. was paid in Holland for him and other Friends there. Friends going to New England had £29 10s. for provision for their voyage, £30 was paid to the master for part of his freight ; bedding and the like came to £12 8s. and they had £35 4s. 4d. in cash. The cost of Friends going to Turkey amounted to £177 5s. 7d. and the Friends who went to Venice had from the fund £47 1s.

It is not my intention to appraise the work of the numbers of Friends who first visited the North American colonies.

[1] Miller MSS. 65 (now destroyed).

That appraisal is admirably done by Frederick B. Tolles, who is so well fitted to tell that story by wide study of American Quakerism. I would like, however, to bring to your notice something of those north country Friends whose call led them rather eastward and southward than westward. Their journeyings, though frequently most adventurous, had to man's eye, no such spectacular results as had the work of Friends in Great Britain and North America, but who are we to query the leading of the Divine Spirit and to attempt to judge " results " ? Results too in Time, which is all we can see at present, whereas the working of the Spirit is in Eternity.

Let us look at a few of these courageous missionaries who often with no language but their own, took the message of Truth to Jews, Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists and Moslems.

William Caton

William Caton had first come to Swarthmoor Hall as the boy companion to the only son, George Fell. They shared the same tutor and attended for a time the same school at Hawkshead. He was about fifteen years old at George Fox's first visit to the Hall in June 1652.

In January 1655 this 18-year old boy left the beloved home on his missionary travels. Of his life there, he recorded, " I was frequently with dear George Fox, who, as a tender-hearted father . . . sought to nurture me up in all wisdom, faithfulness and righteousness, . . . and on the other hand was I cherished, and encouraged in the way of life, by my entirely beloved friend Margaret Fell, who as a tender-hearted nursing mother cared for me, and was as tender of me, as if I had been one of her own children : Oh ! the kindness, the respect, and friendship, which she showed me, ought never to be forgotten by me."[1]

Caton went first to the south and east of England, frequently travelling with John Stubbs (of Lancaster and later of Ulverston), a scholar like young Caton. One of their converts in Kent was Samuel Fisher, a Baptist minister and M.A. of Oxford. During his travels in Kent, Caton met with Dutch people for the first time, and in June 1655 he paid a short visit to Calais, a year after France had been visited

[1] Life of William Caton (in Barclay's *Select series*, vol. 6, 1839), pp. 9-10.

for the first time by a north country Friend, Christopher Atkinson of Kendal. In September Caton and Stubbs sailed from England to Holland, mixing, however, not so much with the Dutch, whose language they did not know, as with the English and Scottish people then living in that country. They visited Flushing, Middleburgh and Rotterdam, but suffered much from the intolerance of the priests, and the inefficiency of the interpreters.

The Continental Missions

But an entrance had been made into Holland, where (at any rate in Amsterdam) there was considerable religious toleration. In 1665, Caton could write: "Methinks it is very commendable for to see, as I have often seen in this city [Amsterdam], how that Calvinists, Lutherans, Papists, Baptists of divers sorts, Jews, Friends, Arminians, &c. go in peace, and return in peace, and enjoy their meetings in peace, and are all kept in peace in the city, and that without any trouble to the rulers of the city; who I think have it manifold better, and are much more at peace and quietness than the magistrates in England, who first are troubled with making of laws to take away liberty of conscience, and then more than a little with executing those laws."[1]

John Stubbs was joined in 1656 by William Ames when Caton returned to England and Scotland, but in September of that year Caton went back again to Holland, and there for the first time made contact with the Jews. These three men, together with Samuel Fisher, all good linguists, were the chief Quakers working both in Holland and amongst the Jews. George Fox, Margaret Fell, and later, Isaac Penington and John Perrot, all wrote books for the conversion of the Jews. Several of Margaret Fell's were translated into Hebrew or Dutch. It is very probable that the great philosopher Spinoza was the translator of two of her books for the Jews.[2]

In spite of much interest in Quakerism and its central theme of the Light within, there is no record of the conversion of a Jew to early Quakerism, though a number of them were friendly and interested. The four Friends had much service

[1] Life of William Caton, p. 139.

[2] See Isabel Ross: *Margaret Fell*, p. 93, and H. G. Crosfield: *Margaret Fox of Swarthmoor Hall*, p. 50n.

among the Mennonites. Caton frequently revisited England and Scotland where he continued to preach widely, but Holland was the place of his special work, and many Meetings were settled.[1]

In the 1660's William Caton and William Ames went beyond Holland into Germany, where they met toleration and indeed friendship and protection from some of the leading rulers and people, particularly the Elector Palatine and Princess Elizabeth of the Palatinate, grand-daughter of King James I, who later became the Protestant Abbess at Herford in Westphalia. In later years, great hope was felt by George Fox and other leading Friends that Princess Elizabeth would become a Friend. She did not, in spite of the sympathy and fellowship she felt with them.

The travels in Germany, beginning as early as 1656, led to the establishment of several groups of Friends. Some of the missionaries were from the north country—William Caton and Henry Fell, both of Swarthmoor, Richard Roper of Height Meeting in Cartmel, and John Stubbs of Ulverston, but William Ames was the chief missionary, and he went on also to Hamburg and eastward into Bohemia, Poland and as far as Danzig. Here Ames was travelling in Roman Catholic countries, among people impoverished by war and the severity of the feudal system. Ames and the others with him could get no permanent entrance here, though George Fox had seen a "seed" in these countries, and a few individuals were convinced. In Germany, however, a number of Meetings were settled, but in 1686 the Friends of Crefeld on the Rhine and Griesheim in the Palatinate emigrated as a body, and founded Germantown near Philadelphia, and became pioneers in the protest against negro slavery.

Eastern Europe and Beyond

The visit of Friends in 1657-8 to Turkey, for which £177 was paid out of the Kendal fund, caused much suffering for the six Friends who set out. Of the six, only one could be described as having attained her object, Mary Fisher of Yorkshire, who in May or June 1658 accomplished her amazing visit to the Sultan Mohammed IV in his camp near

[1] A list of fourteen is given by Henry J. Cadbury in *Journal F.H.S.*, xliv (1952), pp. 11, 12.

Adrianople. There she was treated with the greatest respect and friendliness, allowed to give her message from God, which the Sultan agreed to be the truth. She travelled on to Constantinople, declining the services of a guard, and reached the city " without the least hurt or scoff." The behaviour of the Moslem Turks was far superior to that of the undergraduates of Cambridge or the Puritans of New England, from whom Mary Fisher had suffered already.

Following on George Fox's Epistles to the King of Spain, the Emperor and the House of Austria, the King of France, the Pope, the Magistrates of Malta, the Emperor of China, Prester John, and " all the nations under the whole Heavens," a second mission to the East was dispatched in 1660-61. John Stubbs, Henry Fell (Judge Fell's clerk) and Richard Scosthrop of Yorkshire were concerned to go to China and Prester John's country in central Asia. No sea captain would take them, and Stubbs and Fell only reached Alexandria, where they distributed leaflets in Hebrew, Arabic and Latin. They were sent back to Leghorn, and so to Germany and England.[1]

Unlike the travels of early Friends in the American colonies, these continental and eastern efforts had far smaller lasting effect, except in the memory among us of a wonderful faith and courage. In most of these countries early Quakerism grew no roots. The seed fell on stony ground.

In England the persecuting spirit which arose soon after the Restoration of Charles II, and which impeded so much the further growth of Quakerism in England, partly by destroying many leaders, and impoverishing many individuals, affected also the ability to carry the message to countries overseas where, especially in the Roman Catholic countries, persecution was even more severe.

The factors then present everywhere except in Great Britain and some of its American colonies made too unfavourable a combination for Quakerism to thrive, though Holland was a partial exception.

Not until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have we seen Quakerism again take root and grow in the countries of northern and western Europe, and here and there in the East.

[1] For a summary of continental journeys, with source references, see *Quaker Missions to Europe and the Near East*, 1655-1665, by Bettina Laycock, typescript, 76 pp. 1950. Copy in Friends House Library.

The Atlantic Community of the Early Friends

IN the spring of 1652, George Fox climbed to the top of Pendle Hill and caught a prophetic vision of "a *Great People* to be gathered." That night, at a nearby inn, he seems to have had a second vision. "Here," says the *Journal*, "the *Lord* opened unto me, and let me *see* a *Great People in white Raiment by a Riverside, coming to the Lord.*" The geography of the second vision was more specific: "the Place that I saw them in was about *Wentzerdale* [Wensley-dale] and *Sedbergh*."[1]

This is, of course, one of the most familiar passages in all Quaker literature. It is doubly significant to us this year, as we commemorate the three-hundredth anniversary of Fox's first visit to this region and his finding here, at Sedbergh and Kendal, Swarthmoor and Preston Patrick, those waiting communities of Seekers who, under his ministry, became the nucleus of a religious society of Friends. Surely those North-Country Seekers were the "People in white Raiment" of Fox's second vision. Unquestionably, the crowded month which Fox spent in North Lancashire, Westmorland, and the West Riding of Yorkshire was "the creative moment in the history of Quakerism."[2] And assuredly we are right, in 1952, to look back upon that moment as the birth-date of the Society of Friends.

Having said this, I wonder if you will indulge me in a brief flight of the historical fancy. I should like to suggest another interpretation of that familiar passage, at least of the first part of it, the part in which Fox describes his vision from Pendle Hill. "When I was come to the top," Fox says, "I saw the *Sea* bordering upon *Lancashire*."[3] In other

[1] *Journal* (London, 1694), p. 72.

[2] W. C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* (London, 1912), p. 86.

[3] The Spence MSS, whose text is closer to Fox's own words, read: "I saw Lancasheere sea . . . & ye Lorde lett mee see a toppe of ye hill In what places hee had a great people." *Journal*, ed. Norman Penney (Cambridge, 1911), I, 40.

It is quite possible, of course, that there were not two visions but only one. John L. Nickalls assures me that it is not unknown for Fox to refer back to a previous context without specifically saying so. Still, on its face, the text seems to suggest two successive visions, especially in the Spence MSS, where, after speaking of coming to the inn, Fox says: "And ye Lord opned to mee at yt place . . ." *Ibid.*

words, he faced westward, towards the open ocean and the setting sun. It is a tenuous clue, an insubstantial peg on which to hang an historical thesis, and I do not wish to be taken more than half seriously. Still, I wonder whether in that earlier vision, the one from the top of Pendle Hill, Fox could have foreseen another harvest of souls, farther in the future, in fields remote from northern England, but just as dramatic, just as fateful, and, in the end, vastly more extensive. Could it have been beyond the sea, beyond the Atlantic, in the half-known lands to the west and southwest, that Fox saw " a Great People to be gathered " ?

It is a mere speculation, a highly problematic one at best.[1] But whether or not Fox, standing on Pendle Hill that spring day, glimpsed the transatlantic world in his mind's eye, it is a fact, and a momentous one, that hardly three years were to pass before adventurous " publishers of Truth " were going over to possess that land. By the time of Fox's death, forty years later, there would be Quaker communities in every part of the British colonies in America. In numbers the transatlantic Friends would nearly equal those in Great Britain. Let another half-century pass, and the Quaker population of the New World would have outstripped that of the home island. "Westward the course of empire takes its way." Westward too the main current of Quaker expansion, a current destined to carry George Fox's message across the broad Atlantic, across a vast continent, to the rim of another sea, the far-off Pacific.

It is not with that mighty expansive surge, however, that I am primarily concerned. It is rather with the process by which Friends on both sides of the Atlantic came to feel that they were members of a single community, an Atlantic community of Friends.

I

If the man who stood on Pendle Hill in 1652 was looking westward, he was one of the few Englishmen at that moment who were doing so. Most English eyes just then were turned anxiously towards the continent or towards Whitehall and

[1] Henry J. Cadbury has called my attention, however, to the interesting fact that Fox had already foreseen the rise of Quakerism overseas—though to the eastward rather than in the west. In 1676 he wrote to Holland : " The Lord hath a great people to come out of those parts, *which I saw in 1651*." Epistle 337 (italics mine).

Westminster. In the Narrow Seas war was raging with the Dutch. At home trouble was brewing between the Rump Parliament and the Army. The end of the Commonwealth was in sight, with Cromwell's Protectorate over the horizon. Englishmen were giving little thought to the New World in 1652.[1]

The half-century just closed had witnessed a vigorous burst of British colonizing activity. It had seen the occupation of New England, of the Chesapeake Bay region, of the outer rim of Caribbean islands. The half-century to come would be another period of strenuous colonizing effort. It would see the conquest of Jamaica from the Spanish, of the Hudson River region from the Dutch, the peaceful settlement of the Carolinas, the Jerseys, of Pennsylvania. But meanwhile there was a pause, and Englishmen concentrated on urgent home problems.

A distinguished American historian has observed that this pause marked the beginning of a profound alteration in English intellectual and spiritual life, the final casting-off of the medieval outlook and the assumption of the modern. " The heroic age of Puritanism had passed," says Charles M. Andrews. Englishmen now began to " emancipate " themselves from the religious preoccupations of the past. They began to look about them with new eyes, in a scientific and commercial spirit, *this* world, not the next, the focus of their attention.[2] When the English nation resumed its colonizing work, Andrews says, it would do so in a new and different mental " climate," the secular, scientific, materialistic atmosphere of the world we know.

As such historical generalizations go, this observation is probably sound. But the Quaker historian must add a qualification with his endorsement. The heroic age of Quakerism was just beginning. The " Children of the Light," who would presently swarm from the north country into every corner of the British Isles and out to the uttermost parts of the sea, combined something of the old outlook with something of the new. They had all the burning religious zeal, all the passion for righteousness, of the earlier Puritans,

[1] This generalization must be qualified in one respect. Already, Cromwell was meditating his " Western Design "—the scheme which was to send Admiral Sir William Penn against the Spanish in the West Indies.

[2] *The Colonial Period of American History* (New Haven, Conn., 1937), III, ix-xiii.

but at the same time their outlook was remarkably congenial to the commercial and scientific spirit of the new age.[1] The Friends of the 1650's were peculiarly equipped to bridge the gap between two periods of British colonization.

But this is to look at history with the perspective of the present. We need to know how the New World appeared to George Fox and his contemporaries in 1652.

If they had but little accurate information about the western world, the fact is hardly surprising. Few Englishmen of their time had more than a hazy conception of the continent across the Atlantic. " The first adequate geographical treatise written in English, entirely devoted to describing the American lands "[2] appeared in 1651, the year before George Fox climbed Pendle Hill. It is doubtful whether Fox or any of the early Friends read George Gardyner's *Description of the New World.* Still, we may turn to it for a picture of the American world as it appeared to English eyes in the 1650's.

First landfall to the westward was the island of Newfoundland, eternally wrapped in fogs, its lofty beetling cliffs a forbidding sight to the Atlantic voyager. There was little about the island, said Gardyner, " to invite a Plantation, it is so Rockie and barren."[3] At most a few hundred fisherfolk eked out a scanty living there. Newfoundland stood guard over the mouth of the St. Lawrence River. Far up that majestic estuary one might come upon a few French fur traders, exchanging guns, blankets, and gewgaws with the Indians for beaver skins.

Southwestward lay New England, a collection of communities hugging a rocky shoreline and boasting after three decades of settlement perhaps fifty thousand souls.[4] Gardyner knew of only three political divisions within New

[1] This latter point I have discussed at some length in *Meeting House and Counting House : The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia* (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1948), pp. 51-62 (" The Quaker Economic Ethic "), 205-213 (" Quakerism and the ' New Philosophy ' ").

[2] Fulmer Mood, " The English Geographers and the Anglo-American Frontier in the Seventeenth Century," *University of California Publications in Geography,* VI (1944), 373.

[3] *A Description of the New World : Or, America, Islands and Continent* (London, 1651), p. 45.

[4] Estimates of population here and elsewhere are based on contemporary guesses as collected in Evarts B. Greene and Virginia D. Harrington, *American Population before the Federal Census of* 1790 (New York, 1932).

England—a string of tiny fishing communities called Maine, the flourishing Puritan colony of Boston or Massachusetts Bay, and the little Separatist colony of New Plymouth, whose heroic days now lay behind it. It was typical of the prevailing ignorance about the New World that even a well-informed geographer like Gardyner knew nothing of New Hampshire's fifteen-mile strip of coast with its mountainous back-country, of the Providence Plantations, where Roger Williams had created a haven of religious toleration, of the two Puritan outposts of Connecticut and New Haven. Gardyner, it is clear, was not much taken with New England: "generally barren and rocky," he had found it, a place, moreover, where the people "punish sin as severely as the *Jews* did in old time, but not with so good a warrant."[1]

New Holland, the Dutch trading colony on the Hudson, comprised a few "plantations" and "but one Village"—the hamlet which would one day be New York. Adjacent Long Island was Dutch at one end, English at the other; both governments claimed it, "but at present," Gardyner said drily, "the Inhabitants live without duty to either."[2] Below the Dutch settlement stretched a broad expanse of primeval forest, untenanted save for a handful of Swedes and Finns along Delaware Bay and the remnants of a once-powerful Indian people, the Lenni Lenape. New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, were still undreamed of.

Maryland was a province with a future, but very little to show in the present—a few thousand Englishmen scattered along the upper reaches of Chesapeake Bay. But its Roman Catholic Proprietor had decreed toleration there, and Gardyner's opinion was that "it is likely to be a flourishing Countrey."[3] Virginia was a cluster of tobacco plantations along lower Chesapeake Bay and the "divers Rivers" which emptied into it. But the climate was unwholesome, the swamps infested with rattlesnakes "whose bitings are present death." Nor was there much to be said, in Gardyner's view for the inhabitants, who numbered perhaps twenty thousand: "I think," he said, "they are the farthest from conscience and morall honesty, of any such number together in the world."[4] Passing southward from

[1] *Description*, p. 92.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 49, 93.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 103.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 96, 100, 101.

Virginia, one came into a region which the geographer pronounced "farre beyond" any other land on the main for climate and natural resources. Unhappily, this land of Eden was inaccessible and all but uninhabited because of its rocky capes and the "shelvy ground" along the coast.[1]

There, in the silent forests of what was to be North Carolina the British mainland empire ended. Miles to the south, in Florida, stood a few outposts of the Spanish King. Across the Gulf of Mexico lay the "kingdoms" of New Spain, a vast realm extending all the way to the remote Straits of Magellan, a region which the average Englishman, if he was conscious of it at all, regarded as mysterious and hostile, fabulously wealthy, but sunk in Popery, barbarism, and slavery.

The real heart of the British empire lay offshore. Bermuda or the Somers Islands, despite the "blustring winds, which often haunteth their coasts," wrote Gardyner, was "a most wholsome place to live in, and wel replenished with our Nation."[2] Tiny British islands—the Bahamas, the Leeward Islands, Barbados—defined the outer rim of the warm Caribbean. Barbados, chief of the sugar islands, was Britain's richest colony: "it flourisheth so much," said Gardyner, "that it hath more people and Commerce then all the Ilands of the *Indies*."[3] Directly south, on the coast of South America, was Surinam or Guiana. Its aboriginal people, our geographer proudly reported, "love our Nation above any other."[4] Even as Gardyner's book was in press, Englishmen were planting a tiny settlement there.

This was the western rim of the North Atlantic world in 1652, when George Fox stood atop Pendle Hill—a broken string of settlements stretching from Newfoundland in the north to Surinam in the south and containing perhaps two hundred thousand English-speaking inhabitants. This was the New World into which Quaker missionaries were about to venture. This was the region in which, George Fox tells us, "truth broake foorth" in 1656.[5]

[1] *Description*, p. 104.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 51.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 77.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 160.
[5] Camb. *Jnl.*, II, 338.

II

The story of the Quaker pioneers in America has often been told. It is an epic of ordinary men and women, who had only their courage, their devotion, their calm faith to pit against all the obstacles that nature and man's inhumanity could raise against them. It is a story that deserves to be told again and again. But it is not my story. I must be content to extract from it two or three observations which have a direct bearing on my theme.

The first phase of Quaker activity in the New World lasted from 1655 to 1662. The number of Friends who crossed the Atlantic in that eight-year period is so large as to suggest that the publishing of Truth in America was a major enterprise of the infant Society of Friends. No less than sixty men and women—another " valiant sixty "—carried the Quaker message to the New World in that brief span of years. Into every British colony they carried it, from cold, foggy Newfoundland, where Hester Biddle touched shore in 1656, to the steaming jungles of Surinam, which John Bowron penetrated a year later.[1] That such a large-scale missionary operation could have been initiated and carried on by a society so recently founded is an extraordinary testimony to the power of religious faith in the lives of the first Quakers.

It was a spontaneous effort, this movement out across the waters. No executive body planned it, no consultative committee co-ordinated it, for the Children of the Light had no such central organs. If there was any planning and guidance, it came from Swarthmoor Hall and later the General Meetings in the northern counties, which gave spiritual support and some financial aid.[2] The concern to carry the Quaker message beyond seas was an inevitable extension of the impulse which had sent the first " publishers of Truth " out of the north country in the spring of 1654 to scatter their seed broadcast over the nation.

The amazing thing is how quickly the overseas work began. The first Quaker ministers had been in Bristol barely a year before one of them was writing back in 1655 to

[1] See Appendix for the names of these first " publishers of Truth " in America.

[2] Braithwaite, *Beginnings*, p. 319n ; *Letters, &c., of Early Friends* (London, 1841), pp. 286-287n, 292-293n ; Isabel Ross, *Margaret Fell : Mother of Quakerism* (London, 1949), chap. V.

Swarthmoor Hall that " Many are raised up and moved for several parts ; here are four from hereway moved to go for New England, two men and two women ; some are gone for France, and some for Holland."[1]

The references to France and Holland remind us that these " publishers of Truth " did not confine their overseas work to North America alone. The Inner Light was universal and the evangelical drive of early Quakerism was worldwide in scope.[2] " Let all nations hear the sound by word or writing," George Fox urged. " Be patterns, be examples, in all countries, places, islands, nations . . . then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one."[3] The same impulse which sent sixty Friends westward to the New World, sent others—a smaller number—to the eastward, into the Low Countries and on into northern Germany, north into Scandinavia, south into France and Italy and on to the eastern Mediterranean.

Everyone knows the romantic stories of Mary Fisher before the Sultan, of poor John Love before the Pope, of George Robinson's exciting adventures on the road to Jerusalem, of George Fox's letters to the Emperor of Muscovy, the Great Turk, the Emperor of China, the Grand Cham of Tartary, and Prester John, the fabulous ruler of the East. There is great charm in these stories, and undeniable symbolic value. Yet no one would argue that their historical significance is great.

The fact is that though the first Friends sowed their seed broadcast, they did not reap a harvest everywhere. Beyond the area peopled by Europeans the seed fell by the wayside, and was trodden down or devoured. In the countries of southern Europe it fell among thorns, and was choked out by an authoritarian Church and an alien habit of religious thinking. Even in northern Europe the Quaker seed fell in stony places ; a few meetings quickly sprang up—in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Friedrichstadt, Danzig—but " they had

[1] John Audland to Margaret Fell, *undated* [1655], James Bowden, *The History of the Society of Friends in America* (London, 1850), I, 42n ; Caton MSS, III, p. 427.

[2] See Henry J. Cadbury, " Answering That of God ", *Journal F.H.S.*, xxxix (1947), 9-14.

[3] *The Journal of George Fox*, Bi-centenary edition (London, 1891), I, 315-316.

not much earth," and sooner or later (though some of them lasted for a century or more) they withered away.

It was chiefly in North America that the seed was to bring forth abundant and lasting fruit. Why in North America? Because there, I suggest, the ground was prepared in a special, an essential way. Quakerism in England had flowered out of Puritan soil. Geoffrey Nuttall has shown us that it was not a revolt against Puritanism, as we used to think, not a rejection of the ultra-Protestant religious ethos, but a special development, a distinctive emphasis within the Puritan tradition, and in a real sense the fulfilment of it.[1]

Now British North America was a nursery of Puritanism, a hot-bed in which it flourished in all its profusion of varieties and sub-varieties. Everyone knows that New England was Puritan to the core. But there were little colonies of emigrant New Englanders everywhere—on Long Island, in northern New Jersey, in Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. And even those Americans who were not transplanted New Englanders were likely to be Puritans in the broader sense. The majority of settlers in Maryland, for instance, were not Roman Catholics like their Proprietors but Protestants of Puritan tendencies. The Establishment in Virginia was distinctly "low-church" in nature, more Protestant than Catholic, more Puritan than Anglican.[2] And even the Dutch burghers of New Amsterdam were Calvinists, close in spirit to the English Puritans.

All over North America, then, Puritanism acted as a conditioning agent, preparing the ground, providing that fertilizing, life-sustaining element that was apparently needed to make the Quaker seed germinate.[3] In this Puritan soil

[1] *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience* (Oxford, 1946), especially pp. 12-14.

[2] Since this view of the religious character of the early Virginians is at variance with the conventional "Cavalier" picture, let me cite the observation of the leading student of American Puritanism: "However much Virginia and New England differed in ecclesiastical polities, they were recruited from the same type of Englishmen, pious, hard-working, middle-class, accepting literally and solemnly the tenets of Puritanism . . ." Perry Miller, "The Religious Impulse in the Founding of Virginia," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., v (1948), 501.

[3] I am not forgetting that the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay persecuted Friends to the death. But it is an old and true saying that the heretic is more feared than the infidel, the dissident Christian than the atheist or Turk. Compare the attitude—if I may shift my point of reference from *odium theologicum* to *odium politicum*—of the old-line Marxian Socialist towards the Communist, of the orthodox Stalinist towards any sort of "deviationist,"

grew all or nearly all of the varieties of religious experience which made Commonwealth England such a fantastic and fascinating garden of spiritual blooms. There were Congregationalists and Separatists, Anabaptists and Antinomians, Seekers and Ranters. There were some sects—Gortonites, Rogerenes—which had no precise counterpart in England but represented the same reaching towards the freedom of the Spirit that marked left-wing Puritanism there. Quakerism, then, was as natural, as inevitable a growth across the Atlantic as it was in England. No wonder that the sixty first " publishers of Truth " in North America found such a receptive seedbed for their message.[1]

The eight years of expansion were followed by eight years of sore persecution at home, persecution so bitter that the Society of Friends needed all its strength merely to survive. During this dark and troublous period, the stream of Quaker visitors to America dwindled to a bare trickle.[2]

By 1671, however, " persecution began to cease."[3] Rumours were afloat that dissenters might soon have freedom of worship, that proposals for a limited toleration were being discussed in high places.[4] The storm appeared to be lifting, though the respite was only temporary. Now to George Fox came the word of the Lord that he should " goe beyonde ye seas Into America & Barbadoes & those countryes."[5] It was one of the most momentous " openings " in Fox's career. It began a new chapter in Anglo-American Quakerism.

[1] If my analysis is correct, two corollaries suggest themselves : (1) that Quaker meetings survived longer in Holland than elsewhere on the continent because of the quasi-Puritan character of Dutch Protestantism, and (2) that the meetings in the West Indies presently languished and decayed because of the weakness of Puritan influences there. I am aware that other explanations can be offered for the decay of continental Quakerism prior to its twentieth-century revival. These explanations tend to revolve around the more authoritarian pattern of church-state relationships on the continent, and especially the incidence of military conscription. There is no space here to go into this difficult and complicated subject. I would merely suggest that there may be an underlying relationship between Puritanism, or the lack of it, and these political factors. See on this subject, Ralph Barton Perry, *Puritanism and Democracy* (New York, 1944), pp. 349-362, and A. S. P. Woodhouse, *Puritanism and Liberty* (London, 1938), Introduction.

[2] I have found record of only seven transatlantic visitors between 1663 and 1671.

[3] Camb. *Jnl.*, II, p. 168.

[4] Frank Bate, *The Declaration of Indulgence*, 1672 (London, 1908), p. 74.

[5] Camb. *Jnl.*, II, pp. 169-170.

Fox and his twelve companions—the number was surely not accidental—landed at Barbados early in October, 1671.[1] Separating into groups, they set about to visit every part of the British Empire in America. Their primary objective was to extend over the New World the system of Monthly Meetings which Fox had been diligently settling throughout England during the preceding four years. But they were still "publishers of Truth," and their purpose was also evangelistic. With evident satisfaction Fox writes of the crowds of people, including many great figures in the "world," who flocked to hear them. In some regions, like North Carolina, where settlement was just beginning, Fox and his companions were, in the strict sense, religious pioneers, the first bearers of the Christian gospel.[2]

The temptation is strong to state categorically that Fox had a third object—to explore the vacant expanse between New York and Maryland with a view to a Quaker colonizing venture. Unfortunately, evidence for such a statement is only circumstantial. Still, the events which followed his return to England seem too closely linked to have been mere coincidence. Within a few years Friends were negotiating for the purchase of West New Jersey. Presently William Penn was drawn into the West Jersey enterprise. Friends by the hundreds set sail for the new land. Then came the purchase of East Jersey, followed closely by the grant of Pennsylvania and Delaware. Within eight years the wilderness which Fox had twice traversed, the great middle region stretching from the mouth of the Hudson to the mouth

[1] In the minds of seventeenth-century Friends, the rich sugar colony of Barbados was the principal "nursery of Truth" in the New World (the phrase is George Rofe's in a letter to Steven Crisp, 16th November, 1661, Charlotte F. Smith, *Steven Crisp and His Correspondents* [London, 1892], p. 30). The island of Jamaica likewise promised to be an important Quaker stronghold. Fox spent three months in Barbados and nearly two in Jamaica—longer periods, it may be noted, than he devoted to any of the mainland colonies (though the length of his stay in Barbados was partly owing to ill-health). The early minutes of the London Meeting for Sufferings contain more references to West Indian meetings than to those in the continental "plantations." It is unfortunate that most of the records of these meetings followed the meetings themselves into oblivion in the next century, so that our knowledge of this interesting chapter in Quaker history is necessarily scanty.

[2] William Edmundson, one of the group, preached the first sermon ever heard in North Carolina—to a people "who had little or no Religion, for they came and sat down in the Meeting smoking their pipes." *A Journal of . . . William Edmundson* (Dublin, 1715), p. 59. *Cf.* Guion G. Johnson, *Ante-Bellum North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1937), pp. 353-354.

of the Delaware, was in Quaker hands. Meanwhile, Rhode Island to the northeastward and North Carolina to the south had become, to all intents and purposes, Quaker colonies.[1]

All this is familiar enough. I mention it only to drive home a point: that from 1670 on, the eyes of English Friends were pretty steadily turned westward. The great men of the Society were concerned with overseas affairs. The Meeting for Sufferings, established at London in 1676, devoted much of its time to problems relating to the western "plantations."[2] The flow of ministering Friends across the Atlantic revived: hardly a year went by that did not find from two to six "public Friends" on the high seas, travelling to or from America. And every year from the north of England, from London and Bristol, from the west country, from Wales, from Ireland and from Holland, scores and hundreds of Friends were migrating to the Delaware Bay region, to participate in the "holy experiment," aware, as Fox constantly reminded them, that there they would be as a city set on a hill.[3] Letters from emigrant friends and relations, reports from returned travellers, epistles from colonial Yearly Meetings, all served to keep America in the consciousness of those who stayed behind.

This incessant travelling back and forth across the Atlantic, this Quaker folk-migration, this steady concern with the "progress of Truth" beyond seas had its repercussions in English Quakerism. No such drastic redistribution of population could occur without dislocation, unsettlement, and confusion. The basic question of whether Truth was advanced by emigration gave rise to sharp controversy among Friends.[4] And indeed the immediate results of emigration were sometimes crippling or debilitating to the Society at home. What Welsh Friends called "runnings to Pennsylvania" seriously weakened the meetings in Wales, and the exodus of the younger, more vigorous Friends had a similar effect on meetings elsewhere. Indeed, in W. C. Braithwaite's opinion, this steady drain on the strength of

[1] Rufus M. Jones, *et al.*, *The Quakers in the American Colonies* (London, 1911), pp. 171-200; Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

[2] See MS. Minutes, I, 1, 2, 3, 5, *et passim.*

[3] See Fox's epistles to Friends in West New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and other colonies, *Epistles*, Nos. 340, 364, 367, 371, 376.

[4] See [William Loddington], *Plantation Work the Work of This Generation* (London, 1682).

British meetings was one cause of the lapse into Quietism that presently took place.[1]

But if Friends found themselves spread more thinly over a wider area, they compensated for the loss of compact strength by forging bonds which held them tightly together over that vast area. If George Fox's greatest achievement was " the knitting together of Friends into a great religious society,"[2] then the consummation of that achievement was the successful extension of the society across the Atlantic, making Friends wherever they found themselves—in Antigua, Jamaica, New Jersey, Maryland, Rhode Island, in London, Bristol, Yorkshire, Ireland, Holland—feel that they were all members of the same society, " *one* people," as Rufus M. Jones put it, with " no *bond* but love and fellowship . . . no visible head . . . no official creed, no ecclesiastical body which held sway and authority," but still one people, not " an aggregation of separated units " but " in an extraordinary measure *a living group*."[3]

III

It remained for our time to coin the phrase " Atlantic community "—and we have given it overtones that are alien to the spirit of Quakerism and its peace testimony. But the early Friends knew the reality of an Atlantic community, a community held together by the intangible yet powerful bonds of love, fellowship, and a common faith.

More than anything else it was the travelling ministry which welded Friends around the Atlantic rim into one people.[4] I have already spoken of the ministers' activity in " publishing the Truth " throughout the colonial world. That was a missionary service. But they had also a pastoral function—to tend the widely-scattered flock, to nourish the meetings, keep them alive and healthy, to infuse new strength when needed. It was a life-sustaining function, akin to that of the bloodstream in the human organism, and their constant circulation even to the remotest extremities of the Atlantic world gives point to the simile.

[1] *The Second Period of Quakerism* (London, 1919), pp. 408-409.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 401-402.
[3] R. M. Jones, *Quakers in the American Colonies*, pp. 314-315.
[4] This whole subject is treated at somewhat greater length in my article " The Transatlantic Quaker Community in the Seventeenth Century," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, xiv (1951), 239-258.

More than a hundred and fifty men and women—almost as many women as men—braved the Atlantic in the half-century after 1652 to spend a year, two years, sometimes three or four years visiting the American meetings. Their way lay now through pathless forests, now over swollen streams, now across unpeopled wastes, now through regions inhabited by aborigines or—what was often more dangerous —" professors " of other religious views. And, as Henry J. Cadbury reminds us, they did not merely pay a flying visit to some annual conference, these seventeenth-century Quaker ministers. " They stayed weeks in each place visiting as it came along each of the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings and often spending months in household visits to the majority of the Quaker families before they returned home or went on into the next field of labor."[1]

Roger Longworth, a Lancashire man born at Longworth, near Bolton, was one of the most tireless of these far travellers. In the dozen years between 1675 and 1687 he covered nearly 40,000 miles by land and water. His parish was the entire North Atlantic world: he visited the Quaker outposts in northern Europe as well as the meetings in America. " Six times," it is recorded, " he passed through Holland, and some others of those provinces; also part of Germany and thereabout, several times as far as Dantzick . . . Five times he passed through Ireland, visiting Friends . . . Once he passed through part of Scotland, twice at Barbados, once through New England and Virginia, twice in Maryland and the Jerseys, and twice at Pennsylvania." His memorialists add that " though he was often in storms and tempests at sea, perils by land, and met with bad spirits and exercises of divers kinds, yet the Lord stood by him and made him a successful instrument in his hand."[2]

Roger Longworth left us no first-hand account of his peregrinations. But others recounted theirs, and among the personal records of these Atlantic travellers none is more affecting, none more revealing than that of Joan Vokins.

[1] " Intercolonial Solidarity of American Quakerism," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, lx (1936), 362-374.

[2] " William Yardley and Phineas Pemberton's Testimony concerning Roger Longworth," *A Collection of Memorials concerning Divers Deceased Ministers and Others* (Philadelphia, 1787), pp. 4-5. For a longer biographical sketch of Longworth see William I. Hull, *William Penn and the Dutch Quaker Migration to Pennsylvania* (Swarthmore, Penna., 1935), pp. 345-380.

Her brief journal lacks the sustained exaltation and historical importance of Fox's, the blunt power of Edmundson's, the narrative skill of Ellwood's, the learning and rich detail of Story's. But it has its own naive and poignant charm, and if we want to know how the Atlantic Quaker community was sustained and strengthened year by year, we shall learn more perhaps from the experiences of a simple " handmaid of the Lord " like Joan Vokins than from those of the more famous Friends.

The mother of seven children, frail and sickly in body, well advanced in years, this Berkshire Friend, from West Challow, felt an unmistakable call towards the end of the 1670's to cross the sea " in the love of the Gospel." She struggled against the unwelcome summons, but she found " the Hand of the All-wise God " so heavy upon her that she " could no longer stay at home, although both sick and lame, and much to undergo both inwardly and outwardly." It was wintertime and she was but a fragile old woman, yet she " did not dare to plead with the Lord any longer, or to make any Excuse." So she took ship and set off across the wild Atlantic.

It was May, 1680, when she landed at New York, exhausted by the long voyage. She found Friends on Long Island in a turmoil. Ranters, she discovered, " were very abusive in those remote Islands," disturbing meetings with their " antick tricks." Weak as she was, and " near unto death," she mustered enough strength to go to the General Meeting, leaning on the arms of two women Friends. Once in the meeting house, she felt herself so filled with the Lord's power that she was able to stand up and put the mischievous Ranters to silence and to shame.

From Long Island she travelled to Providence for four crowded days of Rhode Island General Meeting. Thence by sea to Boston, where the meetings were unexpectedly peaceable. One of her hearers there was " a *Lawyer* that had a hand in the suffering of our *Friends* that were put to Death." But those grim days were twenty years behind, and the persecutor had apparently repented, for she found him " very solid."

Back now through Rhode Island to Long Island. There she took shipping for East Jersey, on whose treacherous shoals her vessel was almost wrecked. She passed from

meeting to meeting in East and West Jersey, then crossed the Delaware to Pennsylvania—" but it had not that Name then "—and helped organize the meetings which William Penn was to find already functioning when he landed in his province.

Now at last she was " clear," her religious duty discharged —or so she thought. She started back to New York to take passage for England, pleased at the prospect of seeing her children and her Berkshire home again. But suddenly the Lord revealed that He had further work for her. He laid it upon her to go to Barbados, which, she confesses, " was no little Cross to my Mind." But it was the Lord's will and she was His faithful handmaid. So off to Barbados she sailed.

While she was on the high seas, her sailing directions were changed: she must visit Friends in the Leeward Islands. Again it was the Lord's will—" so he carried the Vessel, let them that sail'd do what they could: and they could not steer their Course *Barbadoes-Road*, altho they endeavoured it with all their might." The ship lay to at Antigua for a week before the annoyed owner, "a hypocritical Professor," would let her go ashore. When at length he relented, she had " a precious time " with the " little handful of plain-hearted Friends " on the island.

Now that her service was completed at Antigua, the master could turn his vessel's prow again towards Barbados. But lo, it came into Joan's heart to visit Friends at Nevis, and willy-nilly the owner saw his bark carried thither. By now he was thoroughly exasperated. He refused to drop anchor, but insisted on heading once more for Barbados. For three weeks he sought to weather the point of the island, but he could make no headway against the winds, " for the Hand of the Lord was against him."

Frustrated, baffled, enraged, the captain put Joan ashore on the rocky isle of Montserrat. The little Quaker community on the island had been uprooted and scattered; the people now, she discovered, " were generally *Irish* Papists." No matter: the indomitable Quakeress " published Truth in the Streets " of Montserrat, and then took passage on a " leaking Vessell " for Antigua. From Antigua she finally made her way to Nevis and " had many good and powerful Meetings."

The end of her long arduous journey was in sight. It was

early in 1681 when she finally reached Barbados. She visited all the meetings on that island, finding special service among the Negro slaves. Now at last she was "clear." Now she could return to her Berkshire home, to her children, her own meeting. When she landed in England after all these extraordinary adventures, the frail old Quakeress had been gone nearly a year and a half.[1]

The heroism, the fortitude, the persistence, the unfailing devotion of men and women like Roger Longworth and Joan Vokins held the Atlantic Quaker community together. To remote clearings in Carolina pine forests, to tiny Caribbean islands swept by trade winds, to raw, new settlements on the banks of the Delaware they came, bringing a fresh ministry, bringing word of the "progress of Truth" in other parts, bringing news from "home," welcome news of friends and kinsfolk, giving Quakers in every corner of the Atlantic world a sense of belonging to a single body, of being members one of another.

Other influences carried on and supplemented the work of the travelling ministers. As the epistles of Paul and James, Peter and John had shaped and nourished the early Christian community of the Mediterranean, so the epistles of George Fox, Margaret Fell, Josiah Coale, John Burnyeat, William Edmundson gave spiritual sustenance and practical advice to the far-flung Quaker community of the Atlantic.[2] As soon as there were Yearly Meetings in existence on both sides of the ocean, there began that regular interchange of epistles that has continued down to the present.[3] It was a day when the average person, especially in the colonies, saw the written or printed word but seldom. The impact of these epistles was therefore vastly greater than it could possibly be in our day, when printed matter threatens to overwhelm us. We cannot gauge that impact either by

[1] *God's Mighty Power Magnified: As Manifested and Revealed in His Faithful Handmaid Joan Vokins* (London, 1691), pp. 31-43.

[2] Fox wrote at least eighty-eight epistles to Quaker groups in America, not to mention his general epistles "to Friends everywhere" or letters addressed to individuals but clearly intended to be shared with the recipient's meeting. See my "Transatlantic Quaker Community," pp. 253-254.

[3] In 1676 the Meeting for Sufferings in London wrote to Barbados for information about isolated Quaker groups with a view to establishing "a Correspondency in all the American Islands and Plantations to which there is no Correspondency already settled." MS. Minutes, I, 11.

reference to our own response to the epistles which we hear read in meeting today or by our reaction to the alien and repetitious language of the early epistles themselves.

In 1684 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting wrote to London : " we dearly love and embrace you though at this outward distance. Yea, oftentimes we confer with you and meet with you in our spirits and have heavenly union with you in Christ Jesus to our great comfort, joy, and refreshment."[1] Consider the circumstances—Pennsylvania colony barely settled, hundreds of Friends nostalgically thinking of home, a new Yearly Meeting facing the difficult problems of rightly ordering its religious and social life in the wilderness. Of one thing we can be sure : authors of epistles did not have to search for " something to say " and the language they used was neither perfunctory nor forced. One still catches in these ancient epistles a sense of that emotional identification with the larger Society of Friends which was the cement of the Quaker Atlantic community.

A seventeenth-century Friend in Maryland, Rhode Island, or Barbados saw few books. But the books which he did read were the same ones that his brethren in England were reading. As early as 1658 Friends in the North of England were sending books to Virginia. After George Fox's return from America, he set up regular channels for supplying American Friends with reading matter.[2] The books that went across the Atlantic—the writings of Fox himself, of Burrough, Penington, Howgill, and the other doughty penmen of early Quakerism—tended to foster a common intellectual life, a common universe of discourse, among Friends wherever they were.

Always too there was that sense of intimate and purposeful fellowship that comes from mutual aid, from sharing one's material goods with those in need. At first, quite naturally, financial contributions flowed westward. In 1656 Margaret Fell was stirring up North Country Friends to contribute to the Kendal fund " for the service of Truth." It was the " stock " raised in this region that helped send the first

[1] MS. Minutes of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Department of Records, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Philadelphia, Penna., I, 6.

[2] Bowden, I, 60n ; Kirk Brown, " Friends' Libraries in Maryland," *Journal F.H.S.*, ii (1905), 130-131. For the reading of the early Philadelphia Quakers see *Meeting House and Counting House*, pp. 157-160.

"publishers of Truth" across the sea.[1] In 1672, when interest in transatlantic Quakerism was reviving, during a lull in the storm of persecution, the General Meeting held in London called upon all Friends to contribute towards " the management of Truth's affairs; particularly for Friends' supply who are called into the service of the Lord beyond sea."[2] Later in the century, when Quakerism was firmly established on New-World soil, American Friends were called upon to share in the common burdens—the ransoming of Quakers held captive by Barbary pirates, the relief of suffering in war-torn Ireland.[3]

In 1691 George Fox lay on his deathbed. Nearly forty years had passed since his vision on Pendle Hill. The Atlantic community of Friends which he, more than anyone else, had shaped and nurtured, was much on his mind. Even in his last hours, William Penn tells us, he was " Recommending . . . the *Dispatch* and *Dispersion* of an *Epistle* just before Written to the *Churches of Christ*, throughout the World . . . but above all, *Friends*, and of all *Friends*, those in *Ireland* and *America*, twice over saying ' Mind poor *Friends* in *Ireland* and *America*.' "[4]

IV

More than two and a half centuries have passed since George Fox died with a concern for the transatlantic Quaker community on his heart. That community has survived in spite of many vicissitudes—theological tensions and divisions within, political tensions and divisions without.

The eighteenth century saw the maturing of American Quakerism, saw its achievement of something like equal partnership in the Atlantic Quaker community. The centre of population shifted decisively to the west, though the centre of gravity—in the Quaker sense of " weight "—remained in

[1] Braithwaite, *Beginnings*, 319 and note.

[2] *Letters &c. of Early Friends*, p. 327.

[3] MS. Minutes of Meeting for Sufferings, I, 65, 71, 73, 74; " Quakers in Barbados," *Journal F.H.S.*, v (1908), 43.

[4] Preface to 1694 *Journal*, sig. I2. (I have made slight alterations in the punctuation of the last sentence in the interests of clarity.) Henry Gouldney, in whose house Fox died, confirms Penn's statement. The dying leader, he records, " had a Concerne . . . for the universall good of Friends in all parts and Countreys." Gouldney to Sir John Rodes, 15th January, 1691, *A Quaker Post-Bag*, ed. Mrs. Godfrey Locker-Lampson (London, 1910), p. 52.

England. What a Rhode Island Friend told an English minister early in the century could have been said as well at the end—even after the Declaration of Independence: "They in that Country looked upon themselves but as the Daughters, and Friends here in Old England as their Mother."[1] The travelling ministry—most potent force for cohesion—became a reciprocal force. Americans like John Churchman, Samuel Emlen and Job Scott came to be as well-known in English meetings as Samuel Bownas, Catherine Payton Phillips, and Samuel Fothergill were among American Friends. As Quaker merchants established themselves in Philadelphia, New York, and Newport, they entered into business relations with their opposite numbers in London, Bristol, Plymouth, and Cork, and the powerful cement of trade was added to the other, less tangible forces that held the Quaker community together.

Of the nineteenth century it is more difficult to speak, for it has been neglected by our historians. Superficially, the North Atlantic Quaker community was still one. Ministers crossed the ocean in both directions. Yearly Meetings exchanged epistles regularly. Humanitarian causes—the relief of famine in Ireland, the abolition of Negro slavery—enlisted the efforts of concerned Friends everywhere. But there were obvious fissures in the integrity, the unity of the Society of Friends. American Quakerism was fragmented, shattered. There was no longer *one* Society, and this sad fact set sharp limits to the effectiveness of the old cohesive forces.[2]

Transatlantic Quakerism had survived the political convulsions of the American Revolution almost unimpaired. But it could not avoid the impact of the nineteenth century's

[1] *An Account of the Life of that Ancient Servant of Jesus Christ John Richardson* (London, 1774), pp. 130-131. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, for example, regularly consulted London on such important matters as participation in the slave trade or in provincial politics. See Thomas E. Drake, *American Quakers and Slavery* (New Haven, Conn., 1950), pp. 25-26; Isaac Sharpless, *A Quaker Experiment in Government* (Philadelphia, 1898), pp. 232-260. On transatlantic Quaker contacts in the eighteenth century see Michael Kraus, *The Atlantic Civilization: Eighteenth Century Origins* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1949), especially chaps. iii and vi.

[2] The effects of the fragmentation of American Quakerism on transatlantic Quaker relations can be studied in the experience of James and Lucretia Mott, who visited England in 1840 on an anti-slavery mission. See *Slavery and "the Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary, 1840*, ed. F. B. Tolles, *Journal F.H.S.* Supplement No. 23 (1952).

pervasive nationalism. Moreover, American Quakers, like most of their countrymen, were looking westward, not eastward. They were *moving* westward, as they had been doing steadily since the seventeenth century, absorbed in the great enterprise of peopling a continent. It was, perhaps, natural that the old Atlantic community, the traditional ties with London Yearly Meeting, should fade from consciousness, displaced for the moment by more urgent interests. How it was with British Friends, how real the old Atlantic community seemed in the age of the new industrialism at home and the new Empire in the East, I shall not venture to say. But certainly Friends on this island were looking eastward, as the process of English colonization carried Quakerism to Australasia and South Africa, as new Quaker communities came into being in Scandinavia, France, Switzerland, Germany, and Holland. Indeed, all this was in some degree a revival of the eastward expansive impulse of the earliest Friends.

The first half of the twentieth century has seen, I think, something of a revival, a renewal of the Atlantic community in the Society of Friends. I need not mention the circumstances in the world at large which have fostered this development. I shall merely remind you of the steady co-operation among British, American and continental Friends in relief work, of the recent activity of international Quaker " teams " at United Nations meetings, of the three great conferences—London in 1920, Swarthmore in 1937, Oxford in 1952—which have brought us face to face:

Prophecy is hazardous. The wise historian avoids it, confines himself to the past, where documentary evidence checks, if it cannot quite control his hopes, his fears, his preferences, his prejudices, where new evidence only occasionally rises up to confute everything he has said. But I will rashly venture the forecast that international Quaker co-operation will increase in the coming years, that this mutual interaction will strengthen Quakerism on both sides of the Atlantic, and will enable the Society of Friends to become a more effective force in the world. There is a new role, an important role waiting to be filled by a revived Atlantic community of Friends.

In the world at large the Atlantic community is becoming a reality again in our time. Partly this is a natural growth,

the product of ineluctable forces which have reduced the size of our planet and made us all neighbours. But partly it is a forced growth. It stems from political circumstances which have divided our world in two. It is cultivated for political and strategic purposes with which Friends can have little sympathy. Within the somewhat arbitrary and externally-imposed framework of this new Atlantic community, a voluntary, organic, functional Quaker community can keep alive a different ideal, can demonstrate another pattern of international co-operation, one that is motivated by love, not fear, one that is not exclusive, not directed *against* anyone or anything, any nation or any group of nations.

In our effort to recover and renew the Atlantic community of Friends, the historians can help us. They can restudy the Quaker past in a new light. Forgetting arbitrary boundaries, boundaries that did not exist during the first century and a quarter of Quakerism and had no real meaning to Friends for years after that, they can give us a view of the Society of Friends as it actually appeared to George Fox and his successors—a single religious community co-extensive with the greater world.

Appendix

"FIRST PUBLISHERS OF TRUTH" IN AMERICA 1656-1663

THIS list of the Friends who visited America between 1656 and 1663 is probably not definitive. Compiled, in the first instance, from James Bowden's *History of the Society of Friends in America*, it has been checked against other available lists and supplemented from other sources; but further research will undoubtedly add more names.

Data on places of origin have been supplied chiefly from Bowden, the notes to the Cambridge *Journal*, and Besse's *Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers.* Four-fifths of these "first Publishers" have been given a local habitation as well as a name. Approximately one-third came from the north of England, where the Quaker movement began, one-third from the great cities of London and Bristol, and one-third from other parts of the British Isles. It is worth remarking that nearly half were women.

The date given is ordinarily the year of first arrival in America, though this is often difficult to determine. Often, of course, the visit lasted for several years.

ABBREVIATIONS

B=James Bowden, *The History of the Society of Friends in America* (London, 1850), Vol. I.

CJ=Cambridge *Journal of George Fox* (ed. N. Penney. 1911. 2 vols.).

FI=*Friends Intelligencer.*

JFHS=*Journal of the Friends' Historical Society* (London).

Name and Home	Date of Visit	Authority
Ambrose, Alice Lancashire (?)	1662	B, 251
Austin, Anne London	1655	B, 30-31
Biddle, Hester London	1656	CJ, II, 334
Bowron, John Cotherstone, Durham	1657	*Piety Promoted,* III (1721), 248
Brend, William London	1657	B, 43

Name and Home	Date of Visit	Authority
Brocksoppe, Joan Little Normanton, Derby	1661	B, 255
Burden, Ann Bristol	1657	B, 52-3
Burstow, John London	1661	B, 268
Chapman, Thomas	1659	FI, V. 305
Chattam, Katherine London	1661	B, 262
Clark, Mary London	1657	B, 62
Clayton, Ann Swarthmoor Hall, N. Lancs.	1657, 1659	CJ, II, 474
Coale, Josiah Winterbourne, Glos.	1658	B, 122
Coleman, Ann Dorset(?)	1662	B, 251
Copeland, John Holderness, Yorks.	1657	B, 43
Cowsnooke, Peter Isle of Man	1658	B, 125-6
Doudney, Richard	1657	B, 43
Eades, Edward Warwick	1658	B, 125-6
Evans, Peter	1658	Swarthmore MSS., III, 110
Fell, Henry Swarthmoor Hall, N. Lancs.	1656	B, 36
Fisher, Mary Selby, Yorks.	1656, 1658	B, 30-31
Gibbons, Sarah Bristol	1657	B, 43
Gore, Jane Kent(?)	1656	FI, V, 305
Harris, Elizabeth London	1656	B, 339
Head, Peter Cumberland(?)	1656	B, 36
Heritage, Oswell	1662	JFHS, X, 118
Hodgson, Robert Durham	1657	B, 62
Holder, Christopher Winterbourne, Glos.	1657	B, 43
Hooton, Elizabeth Skegby, Notts.	1661	B, 255

Name and Home	Date of Visit	Authority
Liddal, John Cumberland	1662	B, 263
Love, John Limerick(?)	1656	CJ, I, 429
Mallins (Maylin ?), Mary Bandon, Co. Cork, Ireland	1661	B, 268
Maylin, Robert Bandon, Co. Cork, Ireland	1659	H. J. Cadbury, *Swarthmore Documents in America*, 59n
Millard, Jane	1662	B, 263
Nicholson, Jane Cumberland	1660	B, 263
Nicholson, Joseph Cumberland	1660	B, 263
Norton, Humphrey London	1657	B, 43
Oades, Lydia London(?)	1662	JFHS, X, 118
Pearson, Peter Greysouthen, Cumberland	1659	B, 167
Perrot, John near Waterford, Ireland	1663	B, 348
Pinder, Richard Ravenstonedale, Westmorland	1660	CJ, II, 431
Preston, George York	1661	B, 268
Prince, Mary Bristol	1657	B, 43
Rich, Robert London	1659	CJ, II, 467
Robinson, Ann	1662	JFHS, X, 118
Robinson, William London	1657	B, 43
Rofe, George Halstead, Essex	1661	B, 229
Rose, Philip Warwick	1658	B, 125-6
Standley, Martha	1660	B, 207
Stephenson, Marmaduke Shipton, Yorks.	1659	B, 167
Stoake, Robert	1659	FI, V, 305
Stokes, Jane	1663	CJ, II, 434

Name and Home	Date of Visit	Authority
Taylor, John Hunts.	1659, 1662	CJ, II, 496
Thurston, Thomas Glos.	1656, 1657	CJ, II, 444
Tompkins, Mary	1662	B, 251
Trott, Elizabeth London	1662	Swarthmore MSS., III, 120
Waugh, Dorothy Preston Patrick, Westmorland	1657	B, 43
Weatherhead, Mary Bristol	1657	B, 43
Wilson, George Cumberland	1661	B, 344

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GARDYNER, George, *Description of the New World*, 16-18
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