"The Other Branch"

London Yearly Meeting and the Hicksites 1827 - 1912

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For my Mother

Nellie (Garretson) Bronner

1896–1973

born a Hicksite, married a Gurneyite

and a Friend to all

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PREFACE

WHEN the Great Separation came to the Society of Friends in America in 1827–1828, British Quakers realized that the evangelical wing was very similar in belief and outlook to London Yearly Meeting, while the other branch appeared different and foreign. English ministers visiting in America sided with one group of Friends and denounced the others as unsound. Thus it seemed reasonable and proper to recognize the yearly meetings called "Orthodox," and to ostracize the other branch called "Hicksite," which meant they were no longer to be thought of as Quakers. As other splits came in the United States, the British Friends chose in each situation to recognize one branch and ostracize the others. When ministers from the outlawed yearly meetings appeared in the British Isles, notices went out from Devonshire House against such persons.

A break in the policy came in 1857 when London Yearly Meeting sent out "A Salutation in the love of Christ . . . to all who bear the name of Friends." Special situations in the United States had led to the sending of these greetings, and this message was not regarded as a precedent.

Despite the official position of London Yearly Meeting, English ministers in America occasionally met Hicksites, for they came to meetings of the Orthodox to hear the overseas visitors. It was not until the end of the century, however, that English Friends began to seek out the Hicksites, so as to meet them, as well as the Orthodox, on a basis of equality.

Two changes which took place within the trans-Atlantic Society of Friends in the later part of the nineteenth century made possible a modification in the attitude of British Friends. In England there was a slow but steady move away from the orthodox, evangelical attitudes and practices of the former period. Beginning with the Manchester difficulty in the early 1870's, a new, freer spirit began to permeate the yearly meeting.

In the United States the revival movement which swept over the nation at the time of the American Civil War had an impact upon Friends, especially in the middle west. Some

Quakers began to hold revival meetings, to introduce music into worship services, and to employ revival preachers to stay on as pastors. Thus at a time when British Friends were becoming more liberal, and more akin to the Hicksites, some of the Orthodox seemed to be moving toward fundamentalism and low church protestantism.

By the turn of the century some English visitors to America were openly planning to visit all kinds of Friends forgetting the old idea that only the Orthodox were true Quakers, and Hicksite visitors were welcome in London Yearly Meeting. Efforts to persuade London Yearly Meeting to communicate with all Friends, and not just the Orthodox, began in the 1880's, and were revived from time to time until the yearly meeting was ready to take that step.

* * * *

In a paper of this sort there is no simple way to avoid using the ugly words invented for the various branches of American Quakerism. Even though it may jar the sensibilities of some readers, I see no way to avoid calling various Friends Orthodox, Hicksite, Gurneyite, Wilburite, and Conservative. I trust that my meaning is clear in each case. While I have written of the Gurneyite-Wilburite split in the Orthodox branch, after Friends settled down I reverted to the term Orthodox, rather than saying Gurneyite-Orthodox as some have done.

Biographical sketches of virtually all the persons mentioned in this paper may be found in the "Dictionary of Quaker Biography" in typescript. Compiled by persons in the Library, Friends House, London, and in the Quaker Collection of the Haverford College Library, complete copies are available in both locations. In most cases I have given birth and death dates, but no more; readers may consult a copy of the "Dictionary" for additional information.

* * * *

It is with great pleasure that I acknowledge the invaluable assistance given me by the staff of the Library of the Society of Friends, in Friends House. Edward H. Milligan has been most generous with his time and knowledge, in helping me to study this trans-Atlantic subject. I am grateful to Mary

Hoxie Jones for her assistance in examining the papers of her father, Rufus M. Jones, and for giving me permission to quote from them. The staff of the Quaker Collection of the Haverford College Library has been willing to assist me whenever asked. Henry J. Cadbury very kindly read over the manuscript and offered helpful suggestions. Research for this paper was supported by a grant from the American Philosophical Society, and by a grant Haverford College made from money provided by the Old Dominion Fund. Margaret G. Bronner and Rosemary Bunner Maxwell prepared the final typed copy for me. To my wife, Anne, I owe much for the way she assists me by listening, and by putting up with my preoccupation with research.

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Chapter 1

A DECISION TO OSTRACIZE "THE OTHER BRANCH"

It is not easy to characterize the Quakerism of London Yearly Meeting in 1828 when the first direct impact of the Great Separation in Philadelphia reached the floor in the form of an epistle from the group called Hicksites or "the other Branch."

It is clear that the 1820's were a decade of transition for British Friends, from the Quietism of the eighteenth century to the evangelical spirit which was dominant during most of the nineteenth century. Quakers on both sides of the Atlantic had largely ignored the beginnings of the evangelical movement during what was called the Great Awakening in the 1740's in the colonies. It was not until the end of the century that some Friends began to be influenced by it, and even then, it took a number of years for the new, evangelical spirit to take hold in the Society.

In the latter third of the century the evangelical patterns seemed conservative, rigid, and unlovely to the younger Friends wishing to escape into what they regarded as a new, vibrant, living Christian experience. It is difficult for us to comprehend that in the beginning the evangelical movement seemed new, vibrant and meaningful, in contrast to the Quietism of an earlier era. Unfortunately, even as the evangelical spirit was coming in London Yearly Meeting, the threat from the Great Separations in America, followed by the Beaconite controversy originating in Manchester, tended to make the new movement more rigid than it would have been if allowed to develop without these external pressures. In addition, Friends took over the evangelical spirit from others who had been moulding it and giving it form and substance for a number of years, which meant it was once more less flexible than it might have been in other circumstances.

In British Quakerism the evangelical spirit was manifest in a growing need to use orthodox terms in expressing belief. The general epistle of 1823 said in part: "To those who desire to have their hearts cleansed from the defilements of sin,—

yea, to all,—the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ continues to be freely offered." It went on to describe the "sanctifying operation of the Holy Spirit, and the propitiatory sacrifice of the Son of God."[1]

The epistle addressed to New York Yearly Meeting the previous year urged parents to instruct their children in belief in the "miraculous conception, birth, holy life, wonderful works, blessed example, meritorious death, and glorious resurrection, ascension and mediation of of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."[2] Whereas the epistles before 1820 did not stress these fundamental, orthodox terms, the statements of the 1820's were generously sprinkled with such phrases. In the new *Book of Discipline* which appeared in 1834, George Fox's epistle to the Governor of Barbados (1671) was printed, as well as the statement on Christian doctrine issued at the time of the Keithian troubles (1693).[3]

Secondly, London Yearly Meeting called for a new attitude toward, and an unquestioning acceptance of, the Scriptures. In 1815 the epistle reported that there seemed to be an increase in the daily reading of a portion of the Holy Scriptures, and two years later Friends were urged to read the Bible, along with quiet waiting on the Lord, and the study of the lives of earlier Friends.[4] The epistle for 1825 emphasized the "divine authority of the Holy Scriptures," and in 1828, "The more we become acquainted with the true nature and worth of these inspired writings," the more we esteem them. We shall find they contribute much to us "under the power of the Holy Spirit."[5] The 1834 *Book of discipline* reprinted a statement from the minutes of yearly meeting for 1829: "We feel ourselves called upon, at this time, to avow our belief in the inspiration and divine authority of the Old and New Testament."[6]

[1] *Epistles from the Yearly Meeting of Friends held in London* (London, 1858), II, 202. Hereafter, *Epistles*.

[2] This epistolary correspondence is contained in large leatherbound volumes in The Library, Friends House, London. One set is entitled "Epistles Received," and the other "Answers to Forreign and Domestick Epistles" (referred to hereafter as Epistles Sent.) Microfilms are available in the Quaker Collection, Haverford College Library. Epistles Sent, VII, 81, May 22–31, 1822.

[3] *Rules of discipline of the Religious Society of Friends* . . . (London, 1834), viii–xii. Hereafter, London YM *Book of Discipline*.

[4] *Epistles*, II, 171, 178.

[5] *Ibid.*, II, 213, 227.

[6] London YM, *Book of Discipline*, 1834, xii.

The evangelical spirit was also made manifest in a new attitude toward preaching salvation to non-Christians. This is most obvious in the changes in regard to American Indians. In an earlier day Friends respected the religion of the Indians, and seldom attempted to convert them to Christianity. By 1819, however, the London epistle to Philadelphia expressed the hope that the minds of the Indians were being prepared for the reception of "Christian principles."[1] Two years later Ohio Yearly Meeting was told to "keep constantly in view the promotion among them [the Indians] of morality, and religion as founded on the Gospel of Christ."[2] Philadelphia was urged in 1827 to acquaint Indians "with the important truths of the Gospel of Life and Salvation."[3]

British Friends had not regained the evangelical zeal to make new converts which had characterized the first generation of Quakers, but there were ministers who felt a need to preach to the world's people, in addition to the Friends' meetings they visited while travelling in the ministry.

Just at the time many American Friends were imbibing similar evangelical principles, there were other Quakers who were uncomfortable with these new tendencies, and either embraced a different body of new thought, or believed they were defending true Quakerism by rejecting evangelical ideas. It is customary to think of Elias Hicks (1748–1830) as the leader of this opposition to evangelical tendencies, and those who sided with him were called "Hicksites" by their opponents.

There were many new ideas in the air in the United States in the 1820's, and some Friends responded to them. The democratic spirit enunciated in the Declaration of Independence still had considerable appeal, and in 1828, one of the crucial years in the Great Separation, the leading democrat, Andrew Jackson, was elected President of the United States.

Philosophical ideas from the French Revolution were also attracting a good deal of interest in the young Republic. The spirit of rationalism, the concepts of deism, and a unitarian theological outlook were all being advocated, especially in

[1] Epistles Sent, VII, 16, May 19–28, 1819.
[2] *Ibid.*, VII, 68, May 23 – June 2, 1821.
[3] *Ibid.*, VII, 175, May 23–31, 1827.

New England, where a new Unitarian Church was replacing the traditional Congregationalism based upon Calvinism.

Within American Quakerism, one group was demanding acceptance of statements of belief and practice usually associated with an evangelical Christianity, while others were calling for even more freedom than was ordinarily found in a sect which has no creed, and does not spell out its theology in specific terms. One group had developed a strong attachment to the Scriptures as a basis for authority, while the other stressed individual interpretation of the "Inward Light."

Furthermore, the interchange which had taken place between British and American Quakerism since the seventeenth century had been sharply curtailed by the Napoleonic Wars and the economic panic which followed. Stephen Grellet (1773–1855), the French emigre who had settled in the United States early in the French Revolution period, was one of the few to travel outside the western hemisphere. Elias Hicks never crossed the Atlantic, although he ministered throughout American Quakerdom, and few of his followers had been overseas. John Griscom (1774–1852), scientist and educator, attended London Yearly Meeting in 1818, and expressed appreciation for the republican principles and respect for the individuals that he saw there. He was surprised by the evidence of wealth and style among some English Friends, especially those he visited in Liverpool.[1] Griscom, an important figure in education and science, became an Orthodox Friend, but was not prominent in the religious circles of the day.

Stephen Grellet visited on this side of the Atlantic a number of times during his long and dedicated life, and in 1811 and 1818 spent time in the British Isles. As early as 1808 he had begun to question the ideas advocated by Elias Hicks, claiming he "advanced sentiments repugnant to the Christian faith, tending to lessen the authority of the Holy Scriptures, to undervalue the sacred offices of our holy and blessed Redeemer, and to promote a disregard for the right observance of the first day of the week."[2] One may assume that his feelings about Hicks were made known to at least

[1] John Griscom, *A Year in Europe, . . . in 1818 and 1819* (New York, 1824), I, 30, 51, 52.

[2] Benjamin Seebohm, edit., *Memoirs of the life and gospel labours of Stephen Grellet* (London, 1860), I, 142.

some English Friends during his religious visitation and perhaps by correspondence.

A number of English Friends travelled in the ministry among the Americans in the 1820's, and all of them were critical of Hicks and his followers. They wrote back to their families and friends about their experiences and reactions to conditions, and some of them published statements which circulated in England.[1]

William Forster (1784–1854) who made his first visit to America from 1820 to 1825, wrote to his wife in 1820 that the Friends on Long Island, where Hicks lived, seemed drawn to the same ideas which caused "so much desolation among Friends in Ireland."[2] Later he wrote of the "false, unscriptural doctrines . . ." of Hicks, and said his followers tended toward "utter infidelity."[3] Writing from Baltimore he described "the spirit of infidelity which reigns and almost rages in some parts of this yearly meeting."[4] His brother, Josiah Forster (1782–1870) was clerk of London Yearly Meeting from 1820 to 1831, and could not have been unmoved by the reports coming back to the family.

Anna Braithwaite (1789–1859), mother of J. Bevan Braithwaite, visited American Friends three times during the decade, in 1823, 1825, and 1827. She engaged in a public exchange of published tracts with Hicks in which she said that "the doctrines of Elias Hicks are entirely repugnant to those held by the Society of Friends from its commence-

[1] Thomas Shillitoe told a story of two English ministers, Mary Ridgeway (1728–1804) and Jane Watson (ca. 1739–1812) who prophesied in the 1790's that Hicks would "some day or other, be a troubler in Israel." *Journal of the life, labours, and travels of Thomas Shillitoe* (London, 1839), II, 313.

[2] Benjamin Seebohm, edit., *Memoirs of William Forster* (London, 1865), I, 267. Forster was referring to the difficulties which swirled around Abraham Shackleton (1752–1818). He had raised some doubts about the Old Testament stories of God advocating war and violence, and questioned some of the orthodox beliefs held by Friends. A controversy developed, which spread over to England. Hannah Barnard (1754–1828) was caught in the middle of this difficulty during her ministry among Irish and British Friends. Job Scott (1751–1793), although he died of smallpox in Ireland before the controversy started, was claimed by the small liberal, dissenting group. See Rufus M. Jones, *The Later periods of Quakerism* (London, 1921), I, 287–307; Edward Grubb, *Separations, their causes and effects* (London, 1914), 11–14.

[3] Seebohm, *Forster*, I, 378. Entry for 1823.

[4] *Ibid.*, II, 36. Entry for 1825.

ment."[1] In another pamphlet she asserted that Hicks "believed the Bible had done more harm than any other book ever published."[2] Anna Braithwaite quoted him as saying, "Thou canst not surely be so foolish as to believe Jesus to be the son of the Virgin Mary."[3] Although her tracts were apparently not reprinted in England, the fact that she was back and forth across the Atlantic meant she had adequate opportunity to interpret the American scene as she saw it. During one report to the Meeting of Ministers and Elders of London Yearly Meeting she spoke of "her arduous engagements on the American Continent during a time of peculiar excitement from the divided state of Society there."[4]

George Withy (1763–1837) travelled among American Friends in 1821–1822, and was caught up in the "New Light" movement in New England which preceded the separations in 1827 and 1828. Friends in New England averted a schism, but their difficulties had an impact on the later troubles. When Withy left America he issued *An Affectionate farewell address to Friends in North America* which was reprinted in York and sold also in London, Bristol, and Dublin. He was concerned about those "who are soaring, with airy notions, far above the simplicity of truth as it is in Jesus." He issued a warning: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."[5]

Other visitors included George and Ann (Burgess) Jones (1765–1841, 1774–1846), from 1826 to 1830; Elizabeth S. Robson (1771–1843), 1824 to 1828; Thomas Shillitoe (1754–1836), 1826 to 1830; and Isaac Stephenson (1765–1830), 1823 to 1825. These ministers, like the ones

[1] *A Letter from A.B. to Elias Hicks on the nature of his doctrines . . .* (Philadelphia, 1825), 8.

[2] *Letters and observations relating to the controversy respecting the doctrines of Elias Hicks* (n.p., 1824), 6.

[3] *A Letter from A.B.*, 6.

[4] London Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders, Minutes, VI (1802–1840), May 18, 1830. The Library, Friends House. Hereafter, FH Lib.

Anna Braithwaite later supported Isaac Crewdson (1780–1844) who formed the Beaconite group which split off from British Friends. See chapter 5 in Grubb, *Separations*, "The 'Beacon' Movement in England;" and J. Bevan Braithwaite, *Memoirs of Anna Braithwaite . . .* (London, 1905).

[5] 4, 17. For the "New Light" movement, see Grubb, *Separation*, 14, 15; Frederick B. Tolles, "The New-Light Quakers of Lynn and New Bedford" *New England Quarterly*, XXXII (1959), 291-319.

mentioned above, reported trials and tribulations during their service. George and Ann Jones spoke of their "very arduous engagements in a season of peculiar trial and difficulty."[1] Thomas Shillitoe's *Journal* contained more than 250 pages about his experiences in America, and, since it was published in 1839, had an influence among British Friends in this period. Elizabeth Robson kept a very full journal which was not published, although she maintained an active correspondence with her family. She reported in one letter that a Baptist preacher, in commenting on the Separation, quoted Hicks as having said, "That there was no more virtue in the Blood of Christ than there was in the death of a chicken."[2]

It is customary to say that the English ministers contributed to the American Separation, and the Hicksites were often quoted as saying that the visiting ministers were at fault.[3] The point I have been making is that the English ministers made a powerful impact upon London Yearly Meeting during these years. They depicted the followers of Hicks as evil, dangerous persons who could not be regarded as true Friends. If there had been any tendency to overlook the statements of the Orthodox Friends, to ascribe their statements to partisan feelings, such doubts were overshadowed by the vigorous corroboration from the English observers.

The Friends called Orthodox wrote with warmth and vigour about the events of 1827 and 1828 to their fellow evangelicals in England. New York Friends reported a "spirit of Antichrist" which permeated those carried away by "the vanity of their minds." They told of being driven out of the meetinghouses and forced to gather in a medical college building.[4] Ohio described the way the followers of Hicks "assailed the clerks and took forcible possession of the [Clerk's] Table and [meeting] House, not without personal injury and abuse to many ancient Friends."[5]

1 London Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders, VI (1802-1840), May 17, 1831.

2 Oct. 29, 1827. Elizabeth Robson's Letters, VI. Robson Journals. MS Vols. 134 FH Lib. Her journals for the four years of ministry and travel are very illuminating and should be made available to a broader audience, perhaps through an extended article. She returned to America in 1838, accompanied by her husband Thomas.

3 Bliss Forbush, *Elias Hicks, Quaker liberal* (New York, 1956) amply expresses this view in his chapter, "The Evangelical Invasion."

4 Epistles Received, VI, 431, 432, May 26 – June 2, 1828.

5 *Ibid.*, VI, 440, Sept. 8–16, 1828.

While Indiana Orthodox Friends had a large majority and did not lose their property, they were concerned because the separatists sought to destroy "the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures, the Divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, his miraculous conception and propitiatory Sacrifice for the sins of the world."[1] Philadelphia not only reported on events in its own area, but attempted to summarize what was happening elsewhere. In 1829 Philadelphia provided a list of the Orthodox clerks of each yearly meeting where a schism had taken place, to assist British Friends in responding to the confusing circumstances.[2]

When London Yearly Meeting received an epistle from the separated group in Philadelphia, forwarded from the 1828 session of the new yearly meeting, British Friends decided to reject the epistle, and to refuse to correspond with such bodies. The Minute passed on that occasion said: "This Meeting thinks it right at this time to declare, that it does not correspond with any body of individuals convened under the name of *Friends* on the Continent of America, which is not established in accordance with the regular and long settled order of our religious Society, or which is not in fellowship with us as a Christian Community."[3]

Writing to Baltimore Yearly Meeting at the same session, London attempted to spell out the difference between charity and unity. The British Friends said they had charity for all, but they had unity only with those who have been "baptized by one spirit . . . and who experience redemption through Him, whose precious blood was shed . . . for the sins of all men."[4]

In 1829, upon receiving reports of "antichristian doctrines"

[1] *Ibid.*, VI, 447, Oct. 6–13, 1828.

[2] Letters to and from Philadelphia (between the Meetings for Sufferings of the two yearly meetings), II, March 20, 1829. FH Lib.

They listed the following clerks:

New York	Samuel Parsons	Anne Mott
Baltimore	Hugh Balderston	Elizabeth Gillingham
Ohio	Elisha Bates	Esther French
Indiana	Elijah Coffin	Rebecca Garretson

New England, North Carolina, and Virginia Yearly Meetings did not suffer a schism.

[3] London Yearly Meeting Minutes, May 27, 1828. FH Lib. Microfilms available in the Quaker Collection, Haverford College Library. Hereafter, Q.C., Hav.

[4] Epistles Sent, VII, 196, May 21–31, 1828.

being spread by the Hicksites, London Yearly Meeting recorded this minute: "We consider it to be a duty to disclaim, and we hereby do disclaim all connexion as a religious Society with any Meetings for the purpose of Worship or Discipline which have been established, or which are uphelp by those who have embraced such antichristian doctrines."[1]

Unable to gain official recognition, the Hicksite Friends of Philadelphia and New York Yearly Meetings arranged for Thomas I. White, a Dublin printer patronized by the Irish Friends, to print a fourteen page tract entitled: *Epistle from the Yearly Meeting of Friends, Held in Philadelphia, to the Yearly Meeting of Friends, Held in London, . . .*

In this epistle, the Hicksites made a sincere, friendly effort to reach London Yearly Meeting. They wrote, "We would affectionately request you to review the course you have adopted . . ." They pointed out that far from being "infidels and deists" as the Orthodox claimed, they had not departed from the Christian faith. Specifically, they had not abandoned "the principles laid down by our blessed Lord; the history of the birth, life, acts, death, and ressurection of the holy Jesus, as in the volume of the book it is written of him, we reverently believe: we are not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, . . . neither do we hesitate to acknowledge the divinity of its author."[2]

They went on to add that as far as they knew, they were faithful to the teachings of early Friends and to the peculiar testimonies of the Society. They added that the divisions had been caused by the desire of some "to exercise an oppressive authority in the church." The usurpation of power by the few had disrupted the peace and harmony of the Society, but now, after the separation, "harmony and brotherly love abounds amongst us." They asked London to consider seriously the fact that 18,000 Friends in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting had been rejected by London.[3] After British Friends failed to reply to messages sent in 1828 and 1829, the Hicksites abandoned any effort to communicate with London

[1] London Yearly Meeting Minutes, May 28, 1829.

[2] (Dublin, 1831). The copy used is from FH Lib. tract vol. 347/11. Xerox copy available, Q.C. Hav.

[3] In notes appended at the end, it was pointed out that in Baltimore only 300 were in the Orthodox body, and more than 10,000 in the Hicksite group; while among the New York Quakers, 6,000 were Orthodox, and 13,000 Hicksite.

Yearly Meeting. While individuals reached out toward England from time to time, especially in connection with the "Salutation of 1857," it was many decades before any of the separated yearly meetings attempted to renew formal communication.

It is not possible here to deal with the discrepancy between what the Orthodox said the Hicksites believed, and what the Hicksites of Philadelphia stated were their beliefs. It might be noted that most of the accusations of the evangelicals were levied at Hicks, while the statement quoted above reflects consideration by a substantial yearly meeting. In the context of this paper the important thing is what the British Friends believed about Hicksites, and it seems apparent that, at least officially, they believed the worst. For years to come the 1829 statement of London was used as a buffer to prevent consideration of epistles or other efforts at communication from unrecognized Quaker bodies in the United States.

There is one other question which remains unanswered; how universal was the feeling that "the other Branch" must be ostracized for heretical beliefs? There is nothing in the Minutes to indicate anything but unity on London's 1829 statement, but there are few places where minority feelings might be expressed. There was no Quaker periodical to which letters might be written by those who did not accept the decision. It was not easy for a minority to voice an opinion different from the "sense of the meeting." To be sure, the notes of Richard Cockin (1753–1845) do not indicate any opposition, but one may still reflect on the question, knowing there is no answer.[1]

[1] Norman Penney, edit., *Pen pictures of London Yearly Meeting, 1789–1833* (London, 1930), 190–192. There is no indication of a dissident voice in the essay by Edward Grubb, "Third Period, 1825 to 1918," in *London Yearly Meeting during 250 years* (London, 1919), 69–73.

CHAPTER 2

THE POLICY IN ACTION, 1829 TO 1870

London Yearly Meeting was careful to prevent Hicksites from coming to England to travel among the local meetings. In 1829 a minute was adopted requiring any minister coming from America to produce minutes from his home body, which were to be examined by the Meeting for Sufferings before he was to be free to travel and preach, making a formal requirement out of what had been customary before.[1] Correspondents were to be named to maintain a relationship between London and each Orthodox yearly meeting, and an American correspondent was expected to notify his English counterpart when a ministering Friend was coming. Ordinary members of American yearly meetings were also asked to produce minutes respecting membership.

One of the first Hicksites to challenge this position was the indefatigable Isaac T. Hopper (1771–1852). An active partisan of Negroes, interested in books and printing, and deeply concerned about prisoners, Hopper came over to Ireland in 1830 armed with minutes from his meeting in New York Yearly Meeting. Irish Friends had taken the same position regarding Hicksites as the British Quakers, and were greatly dismayed by his presence, although his charm won him some friendly responses. He also visited England and went to Jordans, but apparently did not cross swords with London Yearly Meeting Friends.[2]

Five years later Elisha Dawson (1766–1837), a Hicksite from Maryland came to visit in England. He found some Friends who agreed with him, and others who were frightened of him. He was given some unofficial letters by British Friends to introduce him to other persons, and felt he was kindly received on the Isle of Guernsey. He found few places where he was welcomed in public gatherings by Friends.[3]

The most famous Hicksite minister to visit England was

[1] London Yearly Meeting Minutes, May 28, 1829.

[2] Margaret H. Bacon, *Lamb's warrior, The Life of Isaac T. Hopper* (New York, 1970), 95–98.

[3] *Friends Intelligencer*, XII (1855), 455, 456.

Lucretia Mott (1793–1880), stalwart leader of both anti-slavery and women's rights movements. She was one of the delegates to the World's Anti-Slavery Convention of 1840, and while in England saw many Quakers who were in the movement. She attended meeting a number of times but did not speak, although, apparently, she did minister while visiting in Ireland. British Friends found her an embarassment, for they responded to her as a person, but refused to recognize her as a Quaker, although she wore the garb of a Friend.

Anna Braithwaite and her husband Isaac entertained James and Lucretia Mott at dinner, and William Forster greeted her kindly.[1] On the other hand, Josiah Forster attempted to explain to a gathering of 400 who had been listening to Lucretia Mott that she was not a Quaker, only to be shouted down by the audience.[2] Jonathan Backhouse invited Orthodox Friends to the home of Samuel Gurney on Sunday, but explained that he could not invite the Hicksites for, in Lucretia Mott's words, "where there were young people they were afraid of our principles."[3] Lucretia Mott was nettled by this attitude, and recorded in her journal that she found the British Friends "ignorant & bigoted, but kind in feeling after disclaiming religious fellowship."[4]

Later the Meeting for Sufferings began to issue warnings to Friends concerning persons travelling in the country, preaching and visiting among local meetings. Two examples come readily to light, but there may have been others. When Rachel W. Moore, a Friend from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Hicksite) attempted to travel among British Quakers in 1860, a printed statement was issued warning meetings that she was travelling in the character of "a Minister of the Religious Society of Friends." The notice went on to refer to the "Anti-Christian views of the Body" to which she

[1] Frederick B. Tolles, edit., *Slavery and "The Woman question": Lucretia Mott's diary of her visit To Great Britain . . . 1840* (London and Haverford, Pa., 1952), 29, 38, 40.

[2] *Ibid.*, 47.

[3] *Ibid.*, 32.

[4] *Ibid.*, 25. Lucretia Mott saw some of the former Quakers, such as William Rathbone (1787–1868), who, because of their liberalism, left Friends and joined Unitarians.

belonged. The London *Friend* carried an editorial about her pretensions as a Quaker minister.[1]

A dozen years later the Meeting for Sufferings issued a similar warning concerning Hannah Hall. British Friends seemed a bit uncertain about her, for the clerk wrote, "We understand also that she is not in membership with us."[2] Hannah Hall returned in 1874, this time accompanied by Hannah Cope, to visit with Friends and with others.[3] In 1878 a new communication was issued about visits of American Friends, stating once more that American correspondents must countersign minutes of visitors, and requesting visitors to communicate with the Recording Clerk.[4]

British Friends found it difficult to ignore the Hicksites indefinitely, and undoubtedly wondered what they should do. In the past, schismatic groups had not lasted long, and thus the single Society of Friends could maintain its identity. The Story-Wilkinson group had not lasted, and the Keithian Quakers had either rejoined Friends or become Baptists in a few years. The so-called "Free Quakers" in the United States, who had fought on the colonial side in the American War for Independence, had eventually died out. The Beaconite group in England had not maintained itself as a Quaker body for long.[5]

The Hicksites were different. They insisted they were the Friends in New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore where their yearly meetings were larger than the Orthodox ones. As they also had yearly meetings in Ohio, Indiana, Canada, and after 1875 in Illinois, their claim to recognition as a living, active body was understandable.

When Joseph Smith compiled his monumental *Descriptive catalogue of Friends' books, or books written by members of the*

[1] This notice is located in tract vol. F/145, FH Lib. There is a copy in Q.C., Hav. The *Friend* (London), XVIII (1860), 190.

[2] Dated Aug. 2, 1872. Tract vol. G/224, FH Lib. Hannah Hall was a member of Ohio Yearly Meeting (Wilburite) who travelled widely in the 1870's, as far as Australia.

[3] *British Friend*, XXXII (1874), 352. She returned in 1878. *Ibid.*, XXXVI (1878), 45, 46, 70, 90–92.

[4] Tract vol. F/189a, FH Lib.

[5] The early separations are described in William Charles Braithwaite, *The Second period of Quakerism* (Cambridge, 1961); for the Free Quakers, see, Charles Wetherill, *History of the religious Society of Friends, called by some the Free Quakers* . . . ([Philadelphia], 1894); for the Beaconites, see Grubb, *Separations*, and Jones, *Later periods*.

Society of Friends . . . he included the Hicksites, and once there were Wilburites he also included them, labelling each organization to keep them separate.[1]

When Samuel M. Janney (1801–1880), the Virginia Quaker historian published his excellent biography of William Penn in 1851, both the *Friend* and the *British Friend* reviewed it favourably, and the *Friend* later quoted from it extensively. However, neither paper mentioned that Janney was a member of the Hicksite Baltimore Yearly Meeting, or suggested that he was a Friend.[2] When Janney published a *Life of George Fox* in 1853 both papers published a letter from John Allen (1790–1859) warning Friends against "this and other attractive publications by Hicksite authors." He added that the "unsoundness of some of the doctrinal views" are not obvious on a first reading.[3] Later writings by Janney seem to have been ignored by the Quaker press in England.

When Lydia Maria Child's biography of Isaac Hopper appeared in 1853 British Friends could not resist reviewing it and informing Friends about it. At the same time there were pious reminders that he was a Hicksite who suffered from "imperfect and incorrect views of most important parts of scripture truth." The reviewer in the *British Friend* pointed out that he had been disowned for his strong anti-slavery beliefs, and asked, does this "ipso facto, replace him in unity with us?" An editorial in the same journal said, we would not wish "to give the smallest countenance to Hicksite opinions." The editor went on to remind his readers that Hicksites denied the divinity of Christ. He added that Hicksites deny that they deny the divinity of Christ, but brushed aside such protestations.[4] Despite the enthusiasm for the volume, the committee in charge of the Library and Reading Room at Gracechurch Street decided not to place the book on the shelves.[5]

British Friends continued to hold to the position

[1] (London, 1867).

[2] The *Friend* (London), x (1852), 116, 117; *British Friend*, xi (1853), 105.

[3] The *Friend* (London), xii (1854), 32; *British Friend*, xii (1854), 46, 47, 50. Allen had written a number of books and tracts on peace, taxation, baptism and doctrine.

[4] The *Friend* (London), xi (1853), 189 ff; *British Friend*, xi (1853), 315, 316; xii (1854), 41, 42.

[5] The *Friend* (London), (1854), 13.

regarding the Hicksites which they had taken in 1829, and had no intention of changing. Thomas Pumphrey issued a lithographed copy of a handwritten paper entitled "Historical Sketch of the Hicksite Secession in America . . ." in which he described the "monstrous distortions" of true Quaker principles by Hicks and his followers.[1]

There were other separations in America in the years after 1828 which must be largely ignored in this paper, although it is impossible to omit them completely. Following the extended visitation of Joseph John Gurney (1788–1847) in America from 1837 to 1840, a small separation took place in New England Yearly Meeting where followers of John Wilbur (1774–1856) split away. The Wilburite Friends, as they were called, felt it necessary to preserve true Quakerism from the evangelical innovations of Gurney and his followers, while remaining completely orthodox in their theology. In 1854 Ohio Yearly Meeting was split in half over the question of supporting Wilbur or Gurney.[2] London Yearly Meeting agonized over the question of recognition, and finally chose to continue fellowship with the Gurneyite body.

The yearly meeting remained consistent with its actions of the past in reaching this decision. When Wilbur made a last journey to England in 1853, the Meeting for Sufferings warned British Friends against him, and Friends were asked to prevent him from entering meetings for worship, or visiting families "in the character of a Minister."[3] On the other hand, when Wilbur's Journal appeared in 1859, the *British Friend* reviewed it, noting that Wilbur was approved by "many in this country . . ." Pointing out that Wilbur sought to preserve the doctrines and practices of Friends, the reviewer urged all to read the new book.[4] It was not reviewed in the London *Friend*.

The Orthodox yearly meeting in Philadelphia was virtually paralyzed by the responsibility, forced upon it by

[1] Thomas Pumphrey (1802–1862) was a very balanced Friend, not excitable, and with a good mind, according to Edward H. Milligan. Yet he wrote of "the memorable epoch in which the Churches of America were rent asunder by that fearful and fatal heresy, long known amongst us by the name of Hicksism." This paper is thought to have been written ca. 1860.

[2] See chapters VIII and IX in Grubb, *Separations*, and Jones, *Later periods*, ch XIII, "The Second Tragedy of Separation."

[3] Tract vol. G/105, FH Lib.

[4] *British Friend* XVII (1859), 271, 272.

the Wilburite-Gurneyite schism in Ohio in 1854, of choosing to recognize one body and ostracizing the other. Within Philadelphia Yearly Meeting there were strong partisans of each group, and it was impossible to reach unity. A majority wished to associate with the Wilbur faction, but this would have meant estrangement from London, Dublin, and all the other Orthodox yearly meetings in the United States. On the other hand, the conservative faction found it impossible to turn its back upon the followers of Wilbur in Ohio and New England. Over a period of time Philadelphia concluded it could only maintain unity by ending the exchange of epistles with all other yearly meetings. Philadelphia and London continued to name Correspondents to serve as official agents, but Philadelphia stopped sending an annual epistle to the mother yearly meeting.[1]

Another schism took place in the United States in 1842 and 1843, with the creation of the Indiana Yearly Meeting of Anti-Slavery Friends. Deeply disturbed by the conservatism of their fellow Quakers in Indiana, and led by such men as Charles Osborn (1775–1850) and Levi Coffin (1798–1877), some 2,000 mid-western Friends withdrew from Indiana Yearly Meeting. British Friends were sympathetic with the views of the separated Friends for they felt that American Quakers generally were too conservative on the slavery issue. Several efforts were made to re-unite the two bodies, and a delegation was sent to attempt a reconciliation.[2] When a letter arrived from this body in 1854, even though Friends agreed that it could not be officially accepted, three persons were asked to "write to the seceding Friends of Indiana in a brotherly and sympathetic spirit."[3] As the Orthodox yearly meetings became more militant on the slave issue in the 1850's, some anti-slavery Friends returned to the larger body, and with the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 the separate organization disappeared.

Growing out of a concern for estranged Friends in the Wilburite bodies, the Anti-Slavery group, and the isolated

[1] Grubb, *Separations*, 96–100; Allen C. Thomas and Richard H. Thomas, *A History of Friends in America* (Philadelphia, 1905), 153, 154.

[2] Grubb, *Separations*, Ch. VI; Thomas E. Drake, *Quakers and slavery in America* (New Haven, Conn., 1950), 165 ff; Walter Edgerton, *A History of the separation in Indiana Yearly Meeting . . .* (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1856).

[3] The *Friend* (London), XII (1854), 108.

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Meeting for Sufferings proposed to the 1857 session of London Yearly Meeting that it send out a Salutation "in Gospel love to the members of our religious Society, and also to those who bear the name of Friends, wherever resident." This was a new idea to many Friends, and there was an extended consideration of the proposal before action was taken. It was understood that the message would go to Hicksites as well as those who had left Friends since 1828, and some believed it would harm London to communicate with those who had departed so far from Friends' ways. Others believed that those who had departed were in need of a Salutation which would be "illustrative of the religious principles of our Society."[1]

The Salutation began with Quaker history, and remarked upon the "marks of Divine condescension" which had been granted to Friends. The principle of the priesthood of each man was declared once more, and it was admitted that those who practice the "habits of strict sobriety, industry and economy, have gradually become at once rich and worldly," or at least left riches which have beguiled their children "from the simplicity which is in Christ."

The Salutation lamented the "mournful divisions and separations that have taken place amongst us," and regretted the fact that some had been led "step by step, to the rejection of fundamental Christian truth." It was deplorable that some "have allowed themselves to be drawn away from that fellowship and harmony with their brethren which they once enjoyed."

In conclusion, the Salutation reminded Friends of the need for the Grace of Jesus Christ in order that a true restoration may "be brought about wherever divisions or differences have existed; and, through its effectual working, in the Lord's good pleasure, may all who bear the name of Friends be once more joined together in the bonds of outward religious fellowship in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God."[2]

The Meeting for Sufferings reported at the 1858 yearly

[1] *Extracts from the minutes and proceedings of the Yearly Meeting of Friends, Held in London*, 1857, 10. Hereafter, LYM *Proc.* (These were the first printed Minutes). Also, The *Friend* (London), XV (1857), 100, 101; and *British Friend*, XV (1857), 149, 150.

[2] LYM *Proc.*, 1857, 11–18.

meeting sessions that 3,000 copies of the Salutation of 1857 had been distributed in America. It stated that "in many places the same has been kindly received, and the concern of our Yearly Meeting cordially appreciated, whilst in others though respectfully acknowledged, the circulation of it has been declined on the ground of our Yearly Meeting not being in correspondence with them."[1]

One reply came from individuals in the Hicksite yearly meeting in Baltimore, asking for restoration of a "channel of communication between brethren." They added that they feared London Friends were misinformed about the beliefs of "the other Branch."[2] When this letter was printed in the London *Friend* it started a flood of correspondence. The *British Friend* reprinted an article from the *Friends Intelligencer*, Hicksite journal in Philadelphia, which called for uniting on essentials and overlooking minor differences. A letter from a Hicksite in Waynesville, Ohio, quoted from their *Books of Discipline* to prove that they held conventional Christian beliefs. Altogether, the Salutation of 1857, and the exchange of letters and ideas which followed, opened up channels of communication which had been closed for three decades.[3]

[1] *Ibid.*, 1858, 44.

[2] The *Friend* (London), XVI (1858), 118, 119. This letter, also published in the *British Friend*, was signed by Samuel M. Janney, Benjamin Hallowell, and others.

[3] *British Friend*, XVI (1858), 280, 281; The *Friend* (London), XVI (1858), 146–148, 204, 205.

CHAPTER 3

SEEING THE HICKSITES IN AMERICA, 1837 TO 1877

At the same time London Yearly Meeting was making it clear that Hicksites were not welcome in England, and insisted on maintaining a strict policy of non-recognition, the ministers going over from Europe to America often fell in with Hicksites in personal relationships and felt free to exchange beliefs and opinions with them. A study of the journals, letters, and reports, in addition to reading the published material, turns up a surprising amount of contact with Hicksite Friends.

Although there is virtually no mention of associating with Hicksites in the published reports of Joseph John Gurney's visitation in America, it is clear from the manuscript records that Gurney felt a special call to minister to the separated Friends.

British Friends had said in 1829, "we are tenderly solicitous for the return of those whom the enemy of souls, under the appearance of an Angel of light, may have deceived and led astray."[1] Completely sure of his own position, confident of his spiritual and intellectual powers, Gurney made a valiant effort to woo Hicksites back into the true church. In order to be effective, he mixed socially with them, allowed them to entertain him, exchanged ideas and convictions with them, and makes it apparent that he had a real concern for them.

Gurney was in America from 1837 until 1840, and during that time his interest in reaching out to the Hicksites increased steadily. There are only occasional references to the separated Friends at first. In 1837 he wrote of "an oily old gentlemen" who had come to call upon him in Ohio, and expresses the belief "that there are various grades of heresy amongst them." His concern was already apparent in these words: ' I greatly hope that many of them are recoverable; & my mind is brought into great exercise from place to place in their account."[2]

[1] Epistles Sent, VII, 209, to New York Yearly Meeting, May 20–29, 1829.

[2] Joseph John Gurney to Rachel Fowler, Sept. 16, 1837. Gurney MSS. 3/626. FH Lib.

Gurney was an impressive visitor in the United States, and the people flocked to meet and hear him. He was welcomed by the President, he dedicated one book to the great Senator Henry Clay, and it is not surprising that the Philadelphia Hicksites invited him to visit them in the "Care of the Gospel." He knew that his service to the Orthodox would be ruined if he accepted such an invitation, and he prayed that he would "be preserved from the snares of Satan."[1]

When preaching in southern Pennsylvania, Hicksites came to hear him, and one said afterwards, "'I quite agree with thee, & unite with every word of thy sermon.' Such acknowledgements do I now pretty frequently receive from some of their members, which leads me to entertain some bright hopes, that the mission will not be in vain—even among these deluded ones."[2]

Sometimes Gurney began to wonder whether the Hicksites were really completely in the wrong. "I am at a loss to know whether they really have the influence of the Spirit, in which they do loudly profess to believe—applying to it, without reserve, the names and attributes of Christ." He added, "some whose sin is chiefly that of ignorance, are tender and impressible. On the whole however, it is a fearful, obstinate, inveterate, heresy."[3]

Recovering from an illness, he took daily rides in a carriage provided by Thomas H. Leggatt, a Hicksite. "These people could not be much more civil, if I were the most notorious of heretics, or even Elias Hicks himself . . .. O the profusion of custard & currant jelly that one of their Ladies sent me yesterday . . ."[4]

After another public meeting in which they were present, he wrote, "Poor dears I speak as plainly to them as it is possible for a man to do, & they receive me with great kindness."[5] He could not let himself entertain the idea that the Hicksites might, in fact, be sound Friends, and went on to say that their disease was very hard to get rid of, like leprosy.

Gurney's main concern was with the Orthodox, and his

[1] J.J.G. to his children, Feb. 15, 1838. Gurney MSS 3/647.
[2] *Ibid.*, Nov. 27, 1838 (3/689).
[3] *Ibid.*, Dec. 31, 1838 (3/692).
[4] *Ibid.*, Jan. 24, 1839 (3/696).
[5] *Ibid.*, March 11, 1839 (3/703).

interest in reaching the Hicksites was actually only a side issue. While these few examples of his feelings about the separated Friends represent only a tiny fraction of what he wrote about them, one must keep in mind that he had gone to America to minister to sound Friends. Perhaps he published his vigorous statement entitled, *A Letter to the followers of Elias Hicks*, . . ., which initiated an exchange between the two branches, in order to make it absolutely clear that he condemned the beliefs of these people who obviously attracted him.[1]

Two other prominent ministers were travelling in America at the same time Gurney was there, Daniel Wheeler and Elizabeth Robson. Daniel Wheeler (1771–1840) near the end of a long and useful life, died in New York in June, 1840. Wheeler accepted the usual statements about Hicksites, but, like Gurney, sometimes found his own experience produced contradictory evidence. He wrote of an occasion in Philadelphia where a Hicksite minister spoke: "He stood for a considerable time and spoke fluently—his doctrine was so guarded that it was scarcely possible to find a hole to pick at . . ."

Wheeler reported on a conversation with Joseph Bancroft (1803–1874), formerly of Manchester, England, who had joined the Hicksites in America. Bancroft said the English ministers of the 1820's had introduced doctrine he could not unite with, but agreed that he found nothing objectionable in the preaching of Wheeler. After a long discussion in which some of the usual topics, such as the atonement and the divinity of Christ were discussed, "We parted apparently in a friendly manner."[2]

Elizabeth Robson, one of the ministers who supposedly introduced false doctrine, according to Bancroft, returned in 1838, accompanied by her husband Thomas. They often found themselves associating with Hicksites, and Elizabeth Robson seemed to write in a more relaxed manner about them than she had a decade earlier.

[1] (Baltimore, 1839); the reply: *A defence of the Religious Society of Friends, who constitute the Yearly Meeting of Baltimore, against certain charges circulated by Joseph John Gurney* (Baltimore, 1839).

[2] *Memoirs of the life and gospel labours of the late Daniel Wheeler* . . . (London, 1842). The quotations are from a manuscript of the journal, March 17, May 8, 1839. FH Lib.

She felt a concern to visit children of Hicksites, who, because of birthright membership were regarded as still in the Orthodox meetings. A number of these visits were quite satisfactory, and the parents sometimes appeared to be quite open to the message offered. Elizabeth Robson added, "I have no doubt but that many of them [Hicksites] would be glad to be placed amongst Friends again, if they could be so without the humiliation of coming back by making an acknowledgement."[1]

Thomas Robson (1768–1852) wrote of a gathering in Plainfield, New Jersey, where a meeting was held in the old meetinghouse occupied by the separated Friends. Many of them were present "and their pernicious views were exposed [by his wife] openly and plainly, which they appeared to bear patiently, and I hope some may be benefitted by the meeting."[2] Robson bought the twelve volumes of *Friends' Miscellany*, edited by John and Isaac Comly, and expressed appreciation for the effort which had gone into the project. The Robsons tried to visit John Comly, who had led the opposition in Philadelphia in 1827, but he was not at home when they called. Robson also described a visit with Jesse Kersey (1768–1845), a prominent minister who had been in England in 1804, and joined the Separation.[3]

Joseph Sturge (1793–1859) made a visit to America in 1841 to study the slavery question, and saw many Friends while there. He did not travel in the ministry, but had a minute from his own monthly meeting, and visited New England, New York and Philadelphia yearly meetings in session. He found more friends of emancipation among the separated Friends than he did among the sound ones.[4]

Robert and Sarah Lindsey (1801–1863, 1804–1876), who spent many years travelling in America in the 1850's often met with Hicksites during their visits with isolated Quakers in the south, the middle west and the far west. In California they found many called Friends, "but mostly such as had been associated with the Hicksites." They sometimes held

[1] Elizabeth Robson to Isaac and Sarah Robson, March 12, 1839. Thomas and Elizabeth Robson, Robson Journals, MS vol. S. 35, pp. 35, 55, 56. FH Lib.

[2] Thomas Robson, June 1, 1839. *Ibid.*, 114, 115.

[3] Thomas Robson, April 2, 1839. *Ibid* 73.

[4] Joseph Sturge, *A Visit to the United States in 1841* (London, 1842).

their meetings in a Hicksite meetinghouse when sound Friends had no meeting place. It is significant that these occasions of fraternizing with the separatists were reported in the printed *Proceedings* of London Yearly Meeting.[1]

A lively description of American Quakerism appeared early in 1861 in London, *Friendly sketches in America*, by William Tallack. As the title suggests, William Tallack (1831–1908) was not travelling in the ministry when he collected the material for this volume. Less than thirty years old, not overly impressed by much that he saw, and perhaps not unwilling to shock English Quakers, he created quite a stir. The reviewers in both the London *Friend* and the *British Friend* felt it necessary to point out errors in his descriptions of Orthodox Friends, and dismay at his apparent approval of Hicksites.[2]

This was probably the first time English Friends had seen anything like a sympathetic description of the Hicksites except for the brief letters in the Quaker journals in 1858 after the Salutation. While Tallack pointed out some errors in Hicksite beliefs, he tended to be more positive than negative. He wrote of their desire to end slavery and their support of the Free Produce scheme; he described their deep concern for the peace testimony; and added: "The Hicksites now profess that they are not different in their sentiments from the Early Friends, and that they are also substantially in union with the views of Orthodox Friends of the present day."[3]

The contrast between his sharp criticism of the narrowness of the Arch Street Friends, and the tolerance and generosity of the Hicksites was dramatic. In a brief section in the Appendix entitled "Hicksite Friends," he wrote, "It has been my wish to show that the chief errors of Hicksism consist in depreciating, or insufficiently estimating the authority and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures and the perfect Deity of Christ."[4]

He went on to point out that many mistakenly believe

[1] LYM *Proc.*, 1858, 52–57; 1859, 38–43; 1860, 64–77. The Lindsey journals are in FH Lib. A manuscript copy is in Q.C. Hav.

[2] The *Friend* (London), N.S. I (1861), 96, 97; *British Friend*, XIX (1861), 66–69. I did not find reviews in any of the three American papers, *Friends Review Friends Intelligencer*, or the Philadelphia *Friend*.

[3] Tallack, *Friendly sketches*, 155.

[4] *Ibid.*, 254.

that Hicksites are in error in giving prominence to the "doctrine of the inward manifestation of Christ to every man." He added, "this doctrine is the soul of Quakerism," and urged his readers to hold fast to this doctrine, and not allow it to be lost. He reminded his readers of the motto of the London *Friend*, "In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity," and called for more charity toward Hicksite Friends, as he called them.[1]

When the American Civil War ended in 1865, a number of English ministers went to travel among Friends, some, such as Joseph J. Neave, making a special effort to visit those in the southern states. Neave (1836–1913) actually arrived before the war ended, and suffered severe hardships in his journeys through the south.[2]

Joseph Crosfield (1821–1879) who had visited in 1845, paid another visit in August, 1865. He reported on the agreement in Baltimore in which the Hicksites offered to reimburse the Orthodox for their share of the property taken in 1828, which contributed to a better feeling between the two groups.[3] Speaking in Winchester, Virginia, he felt strongly led to preach about the atonement, and "found afterwards that most of those who were present were Hicksites." He added, "they seem to be very kind and amiable people, and in talking with them, and hearing them speak as we do it seems hard to realize that they do not belong to us."[4]

J. Bevan Braithwaite (1818–1905) undertook his first journey to America in 1865. He had considered joining the Beaconites as a young man, but chose to stay with Friends, and for many decades seemed to be the prime symbol of soundness in doctrine in London Yearly Meeting.

Although Bevan Braithwaite always defended the 1829 statement of the yearly meeting against Hicksites, he seemed to see something of them on this first American journey. During the crossing he conversed with a Hicksite from Wilmington, Delaware, who had been reading recent epistles of London Yearly Meeting, and "quite united with them."[5]

[1] *Ibid.*, 243.

[2] *Leaves from the Journal of Joseph James Neave* (London, 1910).

[3] Oct. 25, 1865. Letters Written during Joseph Crosfield's second journey in America. Typed copy, FH Lib. (MS Box P).

[4] Jan. 1, 1866. *Ibid.*

[5] *J. Bevan Braithwaite, a Friend of the nineteenth century.* By his Children (London, 1909), 151.

He noted that there were several from "the other Branch" in the audience in New York City when he spoke, and when he was in Baltimore, the Hicksites, "our friends in Lombard Street," he called them, were invited to hear him preach.[1] He and Crosfield were travelling together, and the latter noted the presence of such persons at a meeting in Wilmington.[2] It is worth noting that there was no mention of meeting Hicksites or speaking when they were present in the descriptions of his later visits in the 1870's and 1880's.

Few visiting ministers spent as much time travelling among American Friends as Stanley Pumphrey (1837–1881) whose life was cut short by typhoid fever when only 43 years old. He said that he had visited 440 Orthodox meetings (out of 644), a few Wilburite gatherings, and "a good many with the Hicksites."[3]

He wrote, "The Hicksites retain so many of the characteristics of our Society that they are often very much confounded with us in the popular mind. Indeed I have heard Friends from England say, that after going to their meetings, they could see but little difference. I wish I could agree with them." He went on to describe the friendly relations he had enjoyed with them, but added that there were radical doctrinal differences between Hicksites and Orthodox Friends. He gave an example of a leader who stated clearly that he did not accept the divinity of Christ or the atonement, but added that he did not believe "a statement like this would be generally made or approved." Pumphrey added the further observation, that for a man with such beliefs to be "recorded and travel as a minister in unity" was of great significance to him.[4]

There were other English Friends who visited in America during these years, some as ministers and others as individuals. Francis S. Davis (1821–1902) visited Friends of both branches in 1873.[5] George Pitt and his wife visited Wilburite, Hicksite and Orthodox Friends in the mid-1870's.[6]

[1] *Ibid.*, 155, 168, 169.
[2] Aug. 19, 1865. Crosfield's Letters.
[3] Henry Stanley Newman, *Memories of Stanley Pumphrey* (London, 1883), 293, 294.
[4] *Ibid.*, 119, 120.
[5] *Annual Monitor*, 1903, 29 ff.
[6] George Pitt (c. 1831–1908), *Sundry observations on America during a recent visit* (Glasgow, 1882).

Walter Robson (1842–1929), during an extensive visit among Orthodox yearly meetings in 1877, made no effort to see separated Friends. He was a young, popular minister, and the Hicksites came to hear him several times. On such occasions he felt divinely led to preach to what he believed to be their weak points, such as the significance of Christ's blood sacrifice on the cross, and did not engage in personal conversations with them.[1] He was one of the last of the English ministers to lash out at Friends who were not in correspondence with London Yearly Meeting.

[1] Edwin B. Bronner, edit., *An English view of American Quakerism; the journal of Walter Robson, 1877* (Philadelphia, 1970).

CHAPTER 4

BEGINNINGS OF A CHANGE IN ATTITUDE

Although London Yearly Meeting in the 1870's was not remotely interested in reconsidering its policy toward Hicksites, it seems apparent from what has been discussed thus far, that the rigid position of 1829 had been slightly modified.

The most significant step was the Salutation of 1857 which served as an opening wedge, even though it did not constitute any kind of formal recognition. Both the London *Friend* and the *British Friend* had published material from the Hicksites, and about them. The circulation of Tallack's *Friendly sketches in America*, published by A. W. Bennett, who printed the *Friend* and other material circulated by London Quakers, also must have had an impact. Human nature being what it is, the unfavourable reviews in the two Quaker journals may well have aroused considerable interest. It is difficult to assess the influence of the reports of ministers returning from America after associating with Hicksites. They were expected to give unfavourable reports, and undoubtedly did, but one wonders whether some of the doubts expressed in their journals were voiced in conversation.

In 1863 London Yearly Meeting sent a special epistle to Friends in North America regarding the American Civil War, urging them to be faithful to the peace testimony. Referring to separated Friends, the epistle said, "We trust we shall not be out of our place in here acknowledging the satisfaction with which we have heard of many under the general name of "Friends," though not in correspondence with this Yearly Meeting, who have displayed much firmness in upholding the peaceable spirit of the Gospel, even when exposed to great difficulty and trial."[1]

The realization that separated Friends were faithful to the peace testimony had a subtle impact on Quakers, as did the report in the *British Friend* that the Hicksite yearly meeting in Philadelphia had a larger membership than London Yearly Meeting.[2] This was a vivid reminder that the Hicksites had

[1] LYM *Proc.*, 1863, 19–21.
[2] XXIII (1865), 225.

not ceased to exist, as the anti-slavery body in Indiana had done, or the schismatic groups of an earlier period.

London Yearly Meeting was dismayed to learn in 1877 that yet another schism had taken place in America. In both Iowa Yearly Meeting and Western Yearly Meeting in Indiana, small groups broke away from the larger bodies, declaring that only in this way could they preserve true Quaker beliefs and practices.

English Quakers had been hearing rumours of various innovations which were creeping into midwestern Quakerism. The *British Friend* had reprinted an article about a "General Meeting" in Farmington, New York, found in the *Christian Worker* for September 15, 1871. This description of what was often called a revival meeting, with singing, altar calls, and high emotion, had concerned Friends.[1] In the following year the *British Friend* discussed the report that some Quaker ministers in America were engaging in water baptism.[2]

The ministers who returned from America after a period of service reported on the new practices which were accepted in many places. Walter Robson in a letter home described a session at Ohio Yearly Meeting 1877 when David Updegraff (1830–1894) called upon Friends to give testimony in a devotional meeting. "Now Friends, there is not much time, so just begin straight away, 100 of you." "I've got perfect peace—amen bless the Lord"! "I've got my attraction of gravitation reversed." "Praise the Lord for that, help-help-help." "I knew the time when Jesus did not love me." "What's that thee's saying brother"? "No, I mean I remember the time I didn't love Him." "I'm safe in the arms of Jesus" & we sang a verse of it, right off. "He leadeth beside the green pastures, because he has not any that aint green." "I give myself up to Him"—Amen. "I love Him & wish you all, dear friends." "Stop brother! thee must not exhort, only give thy own experience" &c. These meetings are very exercising to me—I almost dread them, & I think you had need pray that I may overcome my too keen sense of the ludicrous."[3]

[1] XXIX (1871), 292.
[2] XXX (1872), 249, 250.
[3] Bronner, *An English view of American Quakerism*, 43. This description was incorporated in letters home, and in a full report to the Yearly Meeting on Ministry and Oversight.

Robson also described an Altar Call at the end of a Sunday evening service in Richmond, Indiana. "Friends old & young, smart & very plain, kneeling in rows, sometimes quite still, often ejaculating short earnest prayer for a baptism of the Holy Ghost, some praising God with a loud voice that their prayers were answered."[1] He discussed the plan to hire ministers to preach and provide pastoral care in Friends meetings, and reported on the singing of revival songs in meeting for worship.

American ministers who came to travel among English Friends were also attempting to introduce their practices in England. Dougan Clark, Jr., (1828–1896) one of the leaders of the new movement, was here in 1877, and Rufus P. King (1843–1923) had just returned to America. John Henry Douglas (1832–1919), a leading revivalist, had spent some time earlier. Thus it was not surprising that an anonymous correspondent in the *British Friend* wrote, "From certain recent examples of advanced Western views and practices, made manifest even on this side of the Atlantic by American visitors, many English Friends will have been prepared, in considerable degree, to sympathize with the minority in their earnest desire for peace, for rest, and for spiritual worship."[2]

London Yearly Meeting was faced with two epistles from two separate bodies, each calling itself Western Yearly Meeting, and it was not easy to make a choice between them. There was considerable sympathy for the smaller, conservative body, although it was recognized that the larger, more liberal yearly meeting was the official one in correspondence with London. Robson proposed that a deputation be sent to America to attempt to heal the schism in Western Yearly Meeting and in Iowa, and this action was adopted.[3] While the effort to bring the two groups together was not successful, the service of the deputation was appreciated, and in the case of other small schisms of this sort in the next few years, similar deputations were named. London Yearly Meeting made it clear that these men went not

[1] *Ibid.*, 90.

[2] XXXVI (1878), 113. See also: Grubb, *Separations*, Ch. X, "The Rise and Spread of Pastoralism."

[3] LYM *Proc.*, 1878, 22, 23. *British Friend*, (1878), 129. The men chosen to visit in America were: J. Bevan Braithwaite, Joseph John Dymond (1825–1907), Richard Littleboy (1819–1895), and George Tatham (1815–1892).

as superiors, but as representatives of one co-ordinate Church to another equally independent, in which the only authority was love.[1]

If London had assumed a position of superiority in the Religious Society of Friends in the past, the position it took in 1878 made it clear that it no longer made any such claim. While London had chosen between two bodies, it had been a very difficult choice to make, and pointed up the dilemma the yearly meeting faced in continuing its policy of recognition and non-recognition. Furthermore, some in London began to have increasing doubts about the nature of the Quakerism with which it had fellowship in America.

In her Presidential Address to the Friends Historical Society in 1959, Richenda Scott mentioned three strands within London Yearly Meeting in the 1860's and 1870's. The main element had "become an authoritarian faith, demanding an unquestioning obedience to the outward mandate of the Bible," she said, continuing, "The Ministers, Elders and Overseers of the Society exercised a rigid control of the Meetings for worship and for discipline, to maintain this doctrine, overriding if need be the judgment of the body of Friends as a whole in the Monthly Meeting."[2]

Richenda Scott added that there were a few conservative Friends, clinging to the quietist mysticism of the eighteenth century, revering the writings of Fox and Barclay, and quietly attempting to resist the evangelical emphasis of the majority. The little Fritchley group which had broken away in 1869 was an obvious expression of this element, but not all persons of this persuasion had separated.[3]

She then went on to describe a third group which came into being in Manchester in the early 1870's, gathered around David Duncan (1839–1872) at the Friends Institute. She reminds us of the fact that John Wilhelm Rowntree, in outlining his projected history of Quakerism, planned a chapter to be entitled, "The Rise of 'Modern Thought'—The Lancashire trouble."

The Friends Institute had been founded in Manchester in

[1] Bronner, *An English view of American Quakerism*, 16.

[2] "Authority or Experience, John Wilhelm Rowntree and the Dilemma of 19th Century British Quakerism," *Journal*, Friends Historical Society, XLIX (Spring, 1960), 76.

[3] Grubb, *Separations*, 123.

1858 as a meeting place for young Quaker men, and they gathered there to hear lectures and to engage in discussions. David Duncan, a convinced Friend, was a strong advocate of social reform, republican in his political views, and liberal in his religious ideas. Fearless in his statements, he made a frontal attack on the evangelical Friends of the day, declaring their position to be "fatal to all spiritual life, and all faith in God and truth; it reduces men to slavery of mind and spirit."[1]

Others joined Duncan in challenging old ideas, in attacking evangelical views, and in advocating new religious concepts which were advanced within the Church of England and elsewhere. The evangelical Friends of the Mount Street meeting in Manchester became alarmed, and began to resist the activities of the young people in the Friends Institute. When local efforts to work out a sensible solution failed, a yearly meeting committee was named to help restore unity. Eventually Duncan was disowned, following which eleven members resigned, joined later by two others.[2] Forty Friends who remained in membership signed a statement protesting the disownment of Duncan, indicating a wider support of his position.[3]

David Duncan died in 1872, but his supporters carried on, under the name of the "Memorial Hall Friends." They published a journal, called the *Manchester Friend*, edited by Joseph B. Forster (1831–1883). Members of London Yearly Meeting were dismayed that they dared to call themselves Friends, but the Manchester group replied, "We think that our little movement in the nineteenth century, is identical *in aim*, with that of Fox, Barclay, and Penn, in the seventeenth; but we do not regard either the one or the other as finalities."[4]

The Memorial Hall Friends felt a kinship with the Hicksites in America and published their writings. Printing selections from Samuel M. Janney's *Summary of Christian doctrines as held by the Religious Society of Friends* (Philadelphia, 1869), in the second issue of the *Manchester Friend*, they commented, the theology of the Hicksites is

[1] Scott, "Authority or Experience," 79.
[2] *Ibid.*, 80.
[3] *British Friend*, XXIX (1871), 253.
[4] *Manchester Friend*, I (1872), 18. Also quoted in Richenda Scott's paper. The editors said in the same essay that 90% of their readers were members of London Yearly Meeting.

"simply that of the early Quakers."[1] The *Manchester Friend* also printed an extended article entitled, "The Society of Friends," by Thomas H. Speakman (1820–1904), which had appeared earlier in the *Friends Intelligencer*.[2] The Manchester journal also reported that Speakman had described the Memorial Hall Friends to the Hicksite yearly meeting in Philadelphia in 1872, but no formal action was taken by that body in response to the report.[3]

The Manchester group was not satisfied, however, with equating itself with the Hicksites in the United States: it went beyond to the Progressive Friends of Longwood. Radical Hicksites who felt that their yearly meeting was not as forthright as it should be in opposing slavery, organized the Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting of Progressive Friends in 1853 at Longwood, Pennsylvania. This group advanced radical views on both social and religious topics, and was far to the left of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Hicksite). Nevertheless, the *Manchester Friend* noted the "resemblance there is between their ideas and those of Friends who meet at the Memorial Hall, Manchester."[4]

The Memorial Hall Friends did not last long, but they left their mark on London Yearly Meeting, and the Friends of Lancashire and Cheshire Quarterly Meeting were to be heard from frequently as the yearly meeting became more open to a new interpretation of Quakerism.

In 1884 a slender volume entitled *A Reasonable faith* appeared in London, published by Macmillan and Co. The sub-title was "Short Religious Essays for the Times, by Three 'Friends.'" The authors, responding to what they believed to be a profound dissatisfaction with the current practices of religion, were proposing a new examination of Christian Faith.

They said in the Introduction: "every article of Religious faith must be in harmony with sound reason and common

[1] *Ibid.*, 29–31.

[2] Beginning in Vol. I, *Manchester Friend*, 171; and extending into Vol. II.

[3] *Ibid.*, I, 102.

[4] *Ibid.*, 43–46. For more about the Progressive Friends see: Albert J. Wahl "The Progressive Friends of Longwood," *Bulletin*, Friends Historical Association (U.S.A.), XLII (1953), 13–32; and Albert J. Wahl, "The Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting of Progressive Friends," *Pennsylvania History*, XXV (1958), 122–136.

sense; otherwise it becomes a mere Superstition. The teachings of True Religion never *contradict* the best exercise of the intellectual faculty, however much they may transcend, or supplement, its intuitions."[1]

While we find it difficult to understand why such a sensible point needed to be made, if one considers these ideas in the context of 1884, it is possible to understand the controversy the volume created. The copy of this book I used at Haverford had been bound together with a reply entitled: *"A Reasonable faith," by Three "Friends," REFUTED*, by George H. Braithwaite.[2] There were other outcries against the book, but it had a profound impact on British Friends. One of the authors, William Edward Turner wrote to Rufus M. Jones in 1901, that though he had been considered "heretical" since 1870, and *A Reasonable faith* had created a furore, by now it is "behind the advanced thought of the best minds in this land."[3] Is it only coincidence that two of the three authors, Turner and William Pollard, were members of Lancashire and Cheshire Quarterly Meeting?

A second volume appeared in 1886, Edward Worsdell's *The gospel of divine help*, which attempted once more to point up the importance of using one's intellect in order that "the Gospel should be disentangled from any untenable beliefs that tradition may have associated with it."[4] He added, however, that he did not wish to be interpreted as placing undue emphasis upon the intellect. He wrote, "the Revelation of God, which has been made to man in Christ, is adapted to two essential elements of human nature, Conscience, and Reason."[5] This book also aroused considerable excitement and criticism, and Worsdell was denied a teaching

[1] "Introductory Essay," 7. The three "Friends" were William Edward Turner (1836–1911), later editor of the *British Friend;* Francis Frith (1822–1898), a minister of Reigate; and William Pollard (1828–1893), long associated with the Peace Society. Jones, *Later periods,* discussed the impact of this: volume, II, 963–967.

[2] (London, 1885).

[3] Sept. 5, 1901. Rufus M. Jones Collection. Haverford College Library Hereafter, Jones Coll.

[4] Preface, iv. Younger than the other authors discussed here, Edward Worsdell (1852–1908) held a degree from the University of London, and was a teacher.

[5] Worsdell, *Gospel of divine help,* 7.

post at the Friends' school in Lancaster on the grounds that he was unsound on the doctrine of the atonement.[1]

The first printing sold out, however, and John Greenleaf Whittier (1807–1892) wrote a preface to the second edition, praising the volume for the help it would give to those "who find it impossible to accept much which seems to them irreverent and dishonouring to God in creeds founded on an arbitrary arrangement of isolated and often irrelevant texts—the letter that killeth the Spirit, which alone gives life."[2]

A third volume is often cited as contributing to the change which came over London Yearly Meeting as the nineteenth century was drawing to a close, Caroline Stephen's *Quaker strongholds*.[3] A convinced Friend whose father had been a professor at Cambridge, she felt called to write about her own experience in joining Friends in the hope that it would help others. She embraced the mystical side of Quakerism, and in her emphasis upon direct revelation, stressed once more the need to escape from creeds and formal statements, and to rely instead upon religious experience.

While these three books did not revolutionize British Friends, they had an impact upon the way members of London Yearly Meeting regarded authority and the acceptance of tradition for its own sake. There were other signs of change in the 1880's, culminating in the decision not to accept the Richmond Declaration of Faith.

The *British Friend* seemed more open to communications from and about Hicksites than the London *Friend*. In 1885 an article by Howard M. Jenkins, from the *Friends Journal*, discussing the number of Friends in the United States, was quoted. Jenkins took the position that the various branches were all Friends, and so he gave figures on all groups.[4]

[1] Scott, "Authority or Experience," 81. She also discussed *A Reasonable faith*, but Jones omitted any reference to the Worsdell volume in *Later periods*.

[2] Worsdell, *Gospel of divine help*, 2nd edit. (1888), iii.

[3] (London, 1890). Caroline E. Stephen (1834–1909) is discussed by Jones, *Later periods*, II, 967–970. Her book went through several editions, and was abbreviated for a Pendle Hill Pamphlet in 1951.

All three of these books were on a list compiled by Howard M. Jenkins, editor of the *Friends Intelligencer*, of books influencing Friends in the 1890's. *Friends Intelligencer*, LVI (1899), 785, 786.

[4] *British Friend* XLIII (1885), 56, 57. *Friends Intelligencer* was also sometimes called the *Friends Journal*.

The next year the *British Friend* published a statement from Charles Thompson (1819–1903), one of the signers of the petition supporting David Duncan in 1871, in which he advocated corresponding with the Hicksites. He said the Hicksites had never issued a line of "doctrine, practice, or discipline which had not or might not have been authorized by London Yearly Meeting." He added that there are "not a few Friends" who would favour the separatists of 1827 over some "of the American Yearly Meetings with whom at present we correspond."[1]

Strangely enough, another voice calling for recognition of the Hicksites was that of Elizabeth Comstock (1815–1891), an English-born minister who had lived in America for many years, and was one of the stalwarts in the evangelical wing there. She said, "I have attended many of their meetings, and am personally and very pleasantly acquainted with some of their leading members. I think that fully half of them are as orthodox as we are . . . We look into their libraries, and see all of our standard works. They bear as faithful a testimony as we do, to the spirituality of the New Dispensation, the freedom of the Gospel ministry, against slavery, war, oaths, conformity to the world, the sacraments, ordinances, and ceremonies." She knew from experience that when a stray copy of the London epistle fell into the hands of Hicksites, it was read with great appreciation.[2]

William Jones (1826–1899), who went to America to share in peace conferences in 1887, reported at the next yearly meeting that he had visited in the homes of a number of Hicksites. He also spoke at Swarthmore College, the co-educational college supported by all the yearly meetings of that branch.[3] Charles Brady (1832–1907), one of the English participants in the Richmond Conference of 1887, described the occasions when he had sat in the gallery of Hicksite meetings, and said he was welcomed and given freedom to speak. His messages stressed the peace issue, and he thought that the peace question might eventually bring Friends back

[1] XLIV (1886), 283, 284. The next year he pressed the same point, and someone signing himself "J.A." supported his position. XLV (1887), 93, 94.

[2] Caroline Hare, edit., *Life and letters of Elizabeth Comstock* (London, 1895), 469, 470. These comments were contained in a letter dated Feb. 22, 1886, to Caroline Hare.

[3] *British Friend*, XLVI (1888), 154; *Friends Intelligencer*, LVI (1899), 463.

together.[1] The physicist Silvanus P. Thompson (1851–1916) participated in scientific gatherings in America several times, beginning in 1884, and made a point of visiting Hicksites while there.[2]

Jones had corresponded with Whittier before going over, and reported in his book, *Quaker campaigns in peace and war* that Whittier said, "Friends of all shades of thought, whether 'Hicksite' or 'Orthodox,' would gladly receive me and help me in my work. They were all lovers of Peace alike." He quoted Whittier further, "It will help to break down the present stand-off attitude towards each other, and by causing them to work together shoulder to shoulder, they will learn to appreciate and love the good that is in all."[3]

Henry Stanley Newman (1837–1912), secretary of the Friends Foreign Mission Association, was in America at the end of the 1880's, and visited freely with both the Hicksites and Orthodox. He said he spoke clearly about Christ at Swarthmore College, with no oppostion. He also described the "beautiful" work being done by both branches among the Indians in the west.[4]

Perhaps the most significant event of the 1880's was the discussion of the Richmond Declaration of Faith. This statement of belief came from the conference called at Richmond, Indiana, in 1887, to consider the state of Society among Orthodox Friends. Delegates from all the so-called Gurneyite-Orthodox yearly meetings participated, and they were joined by persons from the isolated Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Orthodox), and by Friends from London and Dublin.

The practice of water baptism and outward communion by a few Friends was regarded as an important issue by some. However, instead of discussing this question, the conference reaffirmed the traditional Quaker position against outward observances of the sacraments. Friends did feel it would be helpful to adopt one declaration of Christian doctrine, and a committee was named to prepare such a statement. J. Bevan Braithwaite is given major credit for the document which was

[1] *British Friend* XLVI (1888), 159.
[2] Manuscript biography of T. Edmund Harvey, by Edward H. Milligan.
[3] (London, 1899), 281, 282.
[4] Newman to Mary S. Kimber, Sept. 14, 1909. Q.C., Hav. *British Friend*, XLVII (1889), 202.

presented to the conference. Accepted by the delegates, the Richmond Declaration of Faith was fowarded to the various yearly meetings for ratification.

Rufus Jones has called the Declaration "a relic of the past . . . It made no effort to interpret Christianity to this age . . . It reflected no sign of the prevailing intellectual difficulties over questions of science and history."[1]

When London Yearly Meeting began to consider whether it would ratify the Richmond Declaration of Faith, a lively debate ensued. Friends who had been feeling uncomfortable under the yoke of traditional, evangelical Quakerism, felt the Richmond Declaration would only make matters worse. They wished to overthrow the authority of the old leaders and give new ideas and new leaders an opportunity to develop.[2]

Opposition to the pastoral system, to the few in America who were taking the sacraments, and to the narrow, fundamentalist beliefs of some western Friends was also voiced in the *British Friend* and elsewhere.[3] Some of the letters opposing the adoption of the Richmond Declaration mentioned the fact that the Hicksites had not been a part of the deliberations in America, or called for a "Church which might embrace within its ample bosom various phases of thought."[4]

J. Bevan Braithwaite recorded in his private journal, "there were some to me very *painful* exhibitions, from Wm S. [William Scarnell] Lean, John W. Graham, Edward Grubb & some others, yet we were helped through better than might have been expected. The prejudice had been stimulated in a high degree against a 'creed;'" . . . printed in the Minutes, "but no judgment is expressed upon it."[5]

Eventually London Yearly Meeting decided not to ratify the Richmond Declaration of Faith, but it did reaffirm "our

[1] *Later periods*, II, 931. Errol T. Elliott has written more recently about the Conference and the Declaration, in *Quakers on the American Frontier* (Richmond, Ind., 1969), 272, 273.

[2] LYM *Proc.*, 1888, 27–48.

[3] *British Friend*, XLV (1887), 295, 296; XLVI (1888), 259, 283.

[4] *British Friend*, XLVI (1888), 70, 116, 117, 156. Signers of these letters included Charles Thompson, William Pollard, and Edward Grubb (1854–1939).

[5] June 21, 1888. MS vol. S. 295, p.289. FH Lib. William Scarnell Lean (1833–1908) was for many years principal of Flounders Institute. John William Graham (1859–1932), a Manchester Friend, was also in education. Grubb later became editor of the *British Friend*.

adherence to the fundamental scriptural doctrines always held by us."[1] Dublin Yearly Meeting, not knowing what London was likely to do, received the Richmond Declaration, and commended it to Friends, but did not adopt it.[2]

Looking back, it is clear that London Yearly Meeting's decision in this matter was a very important one for the yearly meeting. It gave younger members more freedom to urge changes in the practices and statements of belief, and paved the way for the Manchester Conference of 1895. J. Bevan Braithwaite knew that changes were taking place, and felt he was fighting a losing battle. He wrote in his journal: "I often feel my solitariness; the absence of Josiah Forster, John Hodgkin, Benj. Seebohm, G. S. Gibson and many others with whom I used to take sweet counsel."[3]

[1] LYM *Proc.*, 1888, 48.

[2] *British Friend* XLVI, 1888, 127–130.

[3] This note was written at the time of the 1890 yearly meeting, but was undated otherwise. J. B. Braithwaite, Private memorandum (MS vol. S. 296, p.11, FH Lib.)

CHAPTER 5

THE CHANGE BECOMES A REALITY

The new spirit within London Yearly Meeting which had first been evident in the 1870's, and was more obvious in the 1880's, came into full flower in the 1890's, especially as a result of the Manchester Conference of 1895.

Following the furore created by the issue of the Richmond Declaration of Faith in 1888, London Yearly Meeting heard more and more from the liberal wing of the Society that wished to bring about changes. There seems to be general agreement that the catalyst which brought about the great changes was John Wilhelm Rowntree (1868–1905) of York.[1]

After completing his schooling at Bootham, Rowntree went to work in the family cocoa works, and at the same time turned a part of his energy to the Adult School movement. In his religious development he went through a time of searching, a period when he rejected the old patterns, but had not discovered new ones for himself, until he came under the influence of the Baltimore Friend, Dr. Richard H. Thomas.[2]

Guided by new insights, and eager to carry them into practice, he now added some religious work and an exploration of the Quaker faith and belief to his other activities. He first appeared on the public scene in a prominent role at London Yearly Meeting in 1893, when he and William Charles Braithwaite worked together. They made a persuasive appeal to the yearly meeting to re-examine some of the old practices and patterns, and to become receptive to some new ideas. Rowntree wrote: "we have been heard with wonderful charity and sympathy."[3]

[1] Scott, "Authority or Experience;" A. Neave Brayshaw, *The Quakers: their story and message* (London, 1953) (1st edit., 1921), Ch. XVIII, "The New Thought: the Manchester Conference: the Work of John Wilhelm Rowntree: The Service of the Community;" Jones, *Later periods*, II, 971 ff. Brayshaw calls attention to a letter in the London *Friend*, N.S. LXVII (1927), 643, by John William Graham, suggesting that the new liberal movement was well on its way before Rowntree came along.

[2] A physician and recorded minister, Dr. Thomas (1854–1904) was the son-in-law of J. Bevan Braithwaite and the husband of Anna Lloyd Braithwaite.

[3] Brayshaw, *The Quakers*, 314. William Charles Braithwaite (1862–1922) was a brother of Anna Lloyd Braithwaite Thomas.

Growing out of the spirit of the 1893 yearly meeting, the Home Mission Committee sponsored the Manchester Conference which met in November, 1895, with some 1,300 men and women in attendance. They met for four days, heard more than thirty-five papers, and engaged in discussions of a large range of topics.[1]

Much has been written about this Conference as a milestone in the creation of a new London Yearly Meeting. There seems to be agreement that liberal Friends discovered one another during the week, and knew they could strengthen one another in the years ahead. The narrow, evangelical interpretation of Quakerism which had prevailed throughout the century was strongly attacked, and a vision of a new Quakerism, compatible with the intellectual and religious ideas of the twentieth century was opened up before Friends. A strong sense of social concern for correcting the evils in society was an integral part of the whole.

Recognizing the need for study and for learning about the new ideas discussed at Manchester, Friends began to hold extended summer schools, the first meeting at Scarborough in 1897. Bible study, discussions of social issues and how to deal with them, and Quaker history were the main topics, as some 700 persons participated.[2] Other summer schools followed, and then, in 1903, Woodbrooke was founded as a permanent school for adult study.

In the summer of 1897 John Wilhelm Rowntree was on a walking tour in Switzerland, and one week-end was spent at Mürren where the York group of Quakers was joined by J.

[1] See: *Report of the proceedings of the conference . . . in Manchester* (London, 1896).

Henry Stanley Newman, editor of The *Friend* (London), wrote to Rufus Jones that London Yearly Meeting was admitting a number of new working class members, but losing educated sons and daughters of old Quaker families, and he regarded the conference, at least in part, as an effort to bring the new Friends up to date with the intellectual atmosphere of the day. Nov. 25, 1895. Jones Coll.

John William Graham, writing to Jones on the same matter, stressed the impact on the existing yearly meeting, saying, "Our recent Conference here has moved the Society in England in an unexampled manner—and all for good." Dec. 19, 1895. *Ibid.*

See also: Warren Sylvester Smith, "London Quakers at the Turn of the Century," *Quaker History*, LIII (1964), 94–108.

[2] See: *Echoes From Scarborough . . . Summer School, 1897* (London, 1898).

Rendel Harris and an American named Rufus Jones.[1] John Wilhelm Rowntree and Rufus Jones discovered that they shared a profound interest in mysticism and early Quakerism; they also developed a deep friendship which was very important to both of them during the remaining years of Rowntree's life. The two of them quickly decided to collaborate on a multi-volumed scholarly history of Friends, beginning with the mystics and spiritual reformers who preceded George Fox.

John Wilhelm Rowntree, at the same time, was working with a number of English Friends on modernizing London Yearly Meeting, and making Quakerism relevant to the needs of the coming twentieth century. Men like Edward Grubb, John William Graham, and William Charles Braithwaite have been mentioned already. Others included Joan Mary Fry (1862–1955), T. Edmund Harvey (1875–1955), and E. Vipont Brown (1863–1955).[2] This small group of outstanding persons, aided by a number of others, provided London Yearly Meeting with much-needed leadership. Unfortunately John Wilhelm Rowntree had been suffering from a serious disease, and died in America in 1905 in the midst of the various important tasks he had started.[3]

The new spirit in London Yearly Meeting has a direct bearing upon the subject of this paper. When London began to move away from the evangelical positions of the nineteenth century, ties to the evangelical yearly meetings in America were weakened. While some of the Friends in the Orthodox yearly meetings in America kept abreast of the developments in England, the majority did not. Secondly, as British Friends became more liberal in their outlook, the differences between Hicksites and London Yearly Meeting narrowed considerably. In addition, the new liberal tendencies of

[1] Rufus M. Jones (1863–1948) was editor of the *American Friend* and teaching at Haverford College at this time. J. Rendel Harris (1852–1941), a fellow of Clare College, Cambridge, had formerly been a professor at Haverford.

[2] This impressive collection of Quaker leaders has been discussed at various times. See: Scott, "Authority or Experience," 88, and biographies of many of them.

[3] There is no full biography. Joshua Rowntree, edit., *John Wilhelm Rowntree, Essays and addresses* (London, 1905), includes some material. Two other essays should be mentioned: Rufus Jones, *John Wilhelm Rowntree* (Philadelphia, 1942); and "The Significance of John Wilhelm Rowntree," by Maurice A. Creasey, in *The next 50 years* (London, 1956).

London included a tolerance of varieties of religious belief which had not been a part of the earlier evangelical position.

The changes in attitude came slowly for the whole yearly meeting, and much more rapidly for individuals. Nearly twenty-five years elapsed between the controversy over the Richmond Declaration and the time when London was able to agree to send an epistle to all who bore the name of Friends.

Members of London Yearly Meeting were dismayed by some of the doctrines enunciated by western Friends. They had been shocked by Ohio Yearly Meeting's flat repudiation of the doctrine of the "Inward Light" in 1878, even though Gurneyite influences in Britain had tended to play down that belief.[1] With the new emphasis on mysticism and renewed study of early Quakerism, the concept of the "Inward Light" began to take a prominent place in British Quakerism.

The theory of "entire sanctification, instantaneously obtained by one act of faith alone," advocated by men like John Henry Douglas, Dougan Clark and David B. Updegraff, was also upsetting to British Friends.[2] At a time when reason was emphasized along with faith, when science and religion were seen as working hand and hand together, this doctrine of "instant conversion and sanctification" seemed bizarre and unacceptable.

Most English Friends were unalterably opposed to what they called the "pastoral system" found in many Orthodox yearly meetings.[3] They were never able to comprehend the conditions which led western Friends to bring in paid ministers, and categorically decided this practice was unquakerly. The fact that Philadelphia Yearly Meeting as well as most meetings in Baltimore Yearly Meeting rejected

[1] This statement was not included in the *Minutes* of Ohio Yearly Meeting for 1878, and according to The *Friend* (Philadelphia), LII (1879), 286, the statement was minuted by the Select Meeting. The words are included in the 1906 edition of the *Discipline* of Ohio Yearly Meeting (Damascus, Ohio, 1906), 12.

[2] David C. Le Shana, *Quakers in California* . . . (Newberg, Ore., 1969), 57.

[3] Henry Stanley Newman made an effort to look at the pastoral system objectively, and asked British Friends to do the same. He felt that some of the pastors were forming real Quaker communities around them. To Thomas Hodgkin, Nov. 27, 1893. FH Lib., copy in Jones Coll.

While John Wilhelm Rowntree did not approve of the pastoral system, he did feel the need to avoid stirring up animosity. Writing of his paper on the Free Ministry in the Society of Friends, to be used at the Haverford Summer School in 1900, he said it "will indirectly raise the question of the Past[oral] System, though not I believe in a way to do harm or to alarm them in any way". To Rufus Jones, May 19, 1900. Jones Coll.

it, strengthened British antipathy toward the practice.[1] (Neither the Hicksites nor the Conservatives ever hired ministers.)

However, it was an instance of what seemed to be persecution of dedicated Friends, what appeared to be a cruel, heartless attack on persons known and loved in England, that brought feelings to a climax. When Friends of Iowa Yearly Meeting deposed Joel and Hannah Bean as ministers, and later disowned them as Friends, this seemed to be the last straw.

Joel and Hannah (Shipley) Bean (1825–1914, 1830–1909), were Friends ministers who had travelled widely in the Society, and were beloved by many. Joel was born in New Hampshire and Hannah in Philadelphia. They met in Iowa, and spent many years there. In 1872 they travelled widely in London Yearly Meeting, and kept up a correspondence with their friends in the following years. Joel Bean contributed an occasional article to the *British Friend*, and the couple entertained many English ministers in their home over the years.[2]

By 1880 Joel Bean knew his interpretation of Quakerism was far different from what was accepted by many in Iowa Yearly Meeting where he had served as clerk. He objected to some aspects of the revival movement, he opposed hiring paid ministers, he rejected some of the doctrinal innovations of men like David B. Updegraff, and he continued to advocate the traditional Quaker belief in the "Inward Light."

In 1882, believing it impossible to live in peace among Friends in Iowa, Joel and Hannah Bean moved 2,000 miles westward, and settled in San Jose, California. They joined in the work of the local Quaker congregation, San Jose Monthly Meeting, which had been recognized in 1873 as a part of Honey Creek Quarterly Meeting, in Iowa Yearly Meeting.

Eventually the Friends in San Jose separated into two worship groups, one with a pastor, and the other an unprogrammed meeting, but all still in the San Jose meeting. When the unprogrammed group asked to be recognized as a separate monthly meeting, Honey Creek Quarterly Meeting stepped in and dissolved the San Jose group, transferring all the memberships to Honey Creek Monthly Meeting. Later the

[1] Dr. Richard H. Thomas had published a pamphlet in 1890, *The pastoral movement among Friends* (n.p.). Presumably this attack upon the pastoral system by a prominent Baltimore Friend circulated in England.

[2] Le Shana, *Quakers in California*, Ch. 4, "Joel and Hannah Bean."

membership of these Friends was moved to New Providence Monthly Meeting in the same quarterly meeting.

It was New Providence which deposed Joel and Hannah Bean as ministers in July, 1893, for holding doctrines "contrary to the fundamental principles held by our church, as expressed in our Declaration of Faith."[1]

David Le Shana's volume, *Quakers in California* (1969) summarizes the reaction in Britain to the Bean episode.[2] A western evangelical Friend, he is able to see the situation as a tragedy for western Friends as well as for the Beans. In the 1890's, however, scarcely a voice was raised among British Friends in defence of western Quakers; more than 400 signed a strong statement of love and sympathy for Joel and Hannah Bean, and two British quarterly meetings sent minutes to the yearly meeting expressing support for them.

Extravagant statements were made about western Friends by some of the defenders of the Beans. William Tallack said flatly that these persons "are *not* 'Friends' in our sense of the word."[3] William Edward Turner, editor of the *British Friend*, was outspoken both in public and private. He referred to the "pseudo-Quakerism in the West" in one letter.[4] In a letter to Rufus Jones, John Henry Douglas struck back, calling the *British Friend* a Hicksite paper which "always pleads for fellowship with all kinds of Friends except the straight Evangelical . . . and it would be very glad to exchange us for the Hicksites and Wilburites."[5]

Hicksite Friends had long been interested in British Friends even when this interest was not reciprocated. We have seen how Hicksites went to hear British Friends speak who were travelling in the ministry in America. The *Friends Intelligencer* would occasionally print anonymous reports of quiet, almost surreptitious visits in England, or re-print material from the British Quaker journals.[6]

[1] *Ibid.*, 90–104. The Beans were dropped from membership in New Providence Monthly Meeting in January, 1898.

[2] *Ibid.*, 100–103.

[3] To Thomas Hodgkin. Nov. 7 (no year). Tallack blamed J. Bevan Braithwaite for much of this, claiming he had been a "revolutionary element in the Society" by encouraging innovations by evangelical western Friends. MS Box U. FH Lib.

[4] To Rufus Jones. Jan. 10, 1899. Jones coll.

[5] Nov. 17, 1898. *Ibid.*

[6] For example, articles in Vol. XII (1855), 553, 554, 565, 566; XIII (1856), 121; XIX (1862), 710–712.

In the 1890's British Friends began to welcome Hicksites in England in a variety of ways. They were welcomed in local meetings and homes, at conferences, in the pages of Quaker publications, and even at yearly meeting sessions. One of the early visitors was Charles F. Jenkins (1865–1951), who was delighted to find Isaac Hopper's picture on exhibit in Devonshire House in 1895.[1] The first important visitation took place at the Scarborough Summer School in 1897 when nearly a dozen persons from Swarthmore College, led by Dean Elizabeth M. Bond (1841–1926) were welcomed as participants.[2]

Another dozen Hicksite Friends appeared in 1899, prominent figures such as Howard M. Jenkins, editor of the *Friends Intelligencer*, or Dr. William I. Hull from Swarthmore, and some merely students on a cycling tour of England.[3] In 1900 Sarah Bancroft, a Hicksite and the daughter of William Bancroft of Wilmington, Delaware, married Roger Clark of Street. Sarah Bancroft had been engaged in graduate study at Cambridge where she attended the Friends Meeting. They were married in Wilmington, and Stanley Yarnall (1871–1964) an Orthodox Friend from Germantown was in the wedding party.[4] John Wilhelm

[1] *Ibid.*, LII (1895), 511, 512.

[2] Emily Cooper Johnson, *Dean Bond of Swarthmore, A Quaker humanist* (Philadelphia, [1927]), 175. The previous year, Dean Bond's brother, Aaron Powell (1832–1899), who was active in temperance and Negro rights efforts, had been entertained along with other Hicksite Friends by William Tallack. Tallack to Rufus Jones, Oct. 5, 1896. Jones Coll.

[3] These visitors are all mentioned in the *Friends Intelligencer* for 1899. Howard M. Jenkins (1842–1902) was warmly received by Friends at the Birmingham Conference and elsewhere. William I. Hull (1868–1939) was highly regarded as a peace advocate and later as an authority on William Penn.

[4] I had a very interesting conversation with Sarah Bancroft Clark on July 31, 1969, in Street, where she had lived since she and Roger Clark (1871–1961) settled after their marriage. Eight years later, her sister Lucy Bancroft Gillett (1880–1969) married Henry T. Gillett. Sarah Bancroft Clark remembered no sign of unfriendliness because she was a Hicksite Friend, either during her student days at Cambridge, or after her marriage. She remembered that her letter of membership from Wilmington was accepted at Street, and two Friends came to welcome her. She said they had many Hicksite visitors, but did not believe any ministers made an effort to travel in the ministry. Roger Clark wrote in 1899 that he and Sarah Bancroft "... had been brought up so much in the same way, with the same standards, ideals, ways of life and thought ... [that] there was no crust to get through ,no ice to break ..." when they met. This is further indication of the way in which at least some British Friends and American Hicksites were growing closer together. Percy Lovell, *Quaker inheritance 1871–1961, a portrait of Roger Clark* ... (London, 1970), p. 107. Sarah Bancroft Clark (1877-1973) died in April 1973.

Rowntree, in America at the time, attended the wedding.[1]

Howard M. Jenkins had an article published in the *Friends Quarterly Examiner* in 1898, and articles by other Hicksite authors followed.[2] The first Hicksite to be admitted to attend London Yearly Meeting was an unnamed person from Illinois in 1899. Three years earlier, Archibald Crosbie (1830–1912), a Conservative Friend from Iowa had been given permission to attend, though a member of an "American Yearly Meeting with which we did not correspond." In 1901 Edward Magill (1825–1907), president of Swarthmore College, was admitted, and there seemed to be visitors from non-recognized yearly meetings from that time on.[3]

An editorial in the *Friends Intelligencer* commented on the suggestion that John William Graham was attempting to present "our case" to London Friends. "We have no case to present, or appeal to make. We regard London Yearly Meeting simply as one of the several representative bodies known as Friends. With it, of course, we would wish to have a kindly and Christian relation." The writer added that American Hicksites read the publications of British Friends and felt that London shared a belief in the right to freedom of thought and opinions. He hoped the two could be "united in spirit," and quoted the words of Jesus, "He that hath my commandments *and keepeth them,* he it is that loveth me; Ye are my friends if ye *do* the things which I command you."[4]

When Woodbrooke opened in 1903, it was hoped that Americans would enroll as well as members of London Yearly Meeting, and it was understood that members of the different branches would be welcome. John Wilhelm Rowntree wrote to Rufus Jones that John William Graham was recruiting young Hicksites for Woodbrooke, and he would appreciate it if he could find some Philadelphia (Arch) candidates as well as pastoral Friends. He wished to see all kinds of Quakers in

[1] To Rufus Jones. May 19, 1900. Jones Coll.

[2] "The Schwenkfelders," *Friends Quart. Exam.*, XXXII (1898), 47–58.

[3] The *Friend* (London), N.S. XXXVI (1896), 341; XXXIX (1899), 346; XLII (1902), 340; XLIII (1903), 375; and Edward Hicks Magill, *Sixty-five years in the life of a teacher* (Boston, 1907), 305.

[4] LIV (1897), 440.

the school. "I am most anxious that the Settlement should not get the stamp of Hicksism upon it."[1]

Members of "the other Branch" were enthusiastic about Woodbrooke and several were in attendance each year. Dean Bond of Swarthmore was in England during the first term of the new school and gave a lecture on Emerson.[2] American Quakers from the various branches met for the first time at Woodbrooke, and their experiences contributed to the healing of the schisms in the years that followed.

It would be possible to add further details about the welcome extended to Hicksites in England, but once the fact has been established, additional illustrations are not necessary. When the new biography of Elias Hicks appeared in 1910, written by Henry W. Wilbur (1851–1914), the book was reviewed, and other essays about Hicks appeared as a result.[3] The old antipathies were fading into the past.

We have seen that London Yearly Meeting was changing during this period, but have not asked whether the Hicksite Friends had also changed, nor have we attempted to discover what they were like at the beginning of the twentieth century. Actually, there is not time to go into this subject, but a few observations might be helpful.

Sociological studies tell us that the Hicksites were largely rural people, not very interested in education, at the time of the separation, and there were still a number of rural Friends in 1900. There were many, however, who had a deep interest in education, and since the 1860's large numbers had either attended their own Swarthmore College, or studied elsewhere.

The Friends of "the other Branch" had been holding conferences since 1868, in order to improve themselves and the work they were doing. The First Day School Conference was organized first, but gatherings to study the social order, called the Friends Union for Philanthropic Labor, followed.

[1] Oct. 24, 1904. Jones Coll. He had written in a similar vein on July 27. William Littleboy (1853–1936), warden at Woodbrooke, wrote to Rufus Jones expressing the hope that Woodbrooke would help "to draw together the divergent elements amongst American Friends." July 24, 1904. *Ibid.*

[2] Johnson, *Dean Bond*, 178, 179. Littleboy wrote to Jones on Oct. 21, 1907, that six of the eight Americans at Woodbrooke that term were Hicksites. Jones Coll.

[3] *Life and labors of Elias Hicks* (Philadelphia, 1910). Joan Mary Fry (1862–1955) wrote to Rufus Jones that she had been asked to review it for the London *Friend*. She felt it would be "a difficult bit of work . . . tho' it w[oul]d not be uninteresting." Jan. 20, 1911. Jones Coll.

At the time of the Chicago Worlds Fair in 1893, the Friends Religious Conference was created, to be joined by one on education. Late in the century these four different conferences were meeting at approximately the same time, but as distinct entities. In 1902 the Friends General Conference came into existence.[1]

At these gatherings, with some 2,000 persons present, a substantial amount of time was spent discussing the social issues of the day, and in hearing reports of the activities their members were undertaking. The whole gamut of social problems, from tobacco and purity in literature, to race problems and the peace question, were being pursued by Hicksite Friends. In 1900 they heard a paper challenging them to apply religion in the world, and a decade later the socialist Scott Nearing talked about "Social Religion:" how religion and social reform were related.

At a time when London Yearly Meeting was becoming increasingly concerned about social issues, while continuing to carry on mission work both at home and abroad, the programme of the Friends General Conference seemed more relevant than the outreach of western evangelical Quakers, which was largely limited to overseas missionary efforts.[2]

John William Graham, a great admirer of Hicksite Friends, felt that there were great differences among them, just as there were in London Yearly Meeting, or in the other American branches. He believed the young were having difficulty in gaining the freedom to embrace new ideas and concerns, just as in other Quaker groups. He was concerned to discover that they did not know the Bible as well as they should. On one occasion he wrote that the Hicksites were like the English country Quakers at the beginning of the nineteenth century, while the Arch Street Friends were similar to

[1] Lawrence McK. Miller, "Friends General Conference," in *American Quakers today* (Philadelphia, 1966), 43, 44. He gives the date 1900 for the organization of the Friends General Conference, and the evidence does seem confusing, but 1902 appears to be more accurate. *Proceedings of the Friends' General Conference, 1904* (Philadelphia, 1904), iii.

[2] The program, and many of the papers, may be found in volumes issued biennially in even years, usually under the title *Proceedings of the Friends General Conference* for the correct year. Beginning in 1906, the report was issued as a Supplement to the *Friends Intelligencer*.

city Friends of the same time, all before the evangelical movement came to London Yearly Meeting.[1]

British Friends who went to America and travelled among local meetings visiting in homes, had an opportunity to gain a more representative view than those who met the leaders coming to England at this time. Hicksite Friends were self-conscious in the 1890's, and there were three small publications in circulation, each endeavouring to explain who they were and what they believed.[2] Beyond all of these issues was the feeling described by Elizabeth Fox Howard in these words: "Everywhere there is the sense of hunger for the fellowship spirit, & the same appreciation of the best type of meeting for worship held in the *group* spirit."[3]

Some British Friends who travelled in the ministry in America limited their service to the Orthodox, but more, especially from the 1890's onward, made a point of visiting among all branches of Quakers.[4] In fact, a number of these visitors had a concern to bring the various groups together through their presence and service.

In the 1890's two men made a special impact in America as visitors, John William Graham and John Wilhelm Rowntree. These men were deeply concerned about the Society, on both sides of the Atlantic, and were making every effort to bring about the changes they regarded as essential to the future of Friends. Rowntree leaned toward the Orthodox, but carried a concern for all, even pastoral Friends in the west. Graham leaned toward the Hicksites, and responded to the other Friends who worshipped in unprogrammed

[1] These comments are based upon his letters during his first visit to America in 1896. Quoted in Michael Graham, "Spokesman Ever," Typescript, FH Lib.

An outside observer wrote of the Hicksites in 1897, that a new movement, "more fully in line with the requirements of modern thought and action" was taking shape among them. James M. De Garmo, *The Hicksite Quakers and their doctrines* (New York, 1897), 135.

[2] Howard M. Jenkins, *Religious views of the Society of Friends* (Philadelphia, 1893); Samuel M. Janney, *Summary of Christian doctrines as held by the Religious Society of Friends*, 8th edit. (Philadelphia, 1893); and John J. Cornell (1826–1909), *The Principles of the Religious Society of Friends* (Baltimore, 1896). There was little indication of changes in doctrine from an earlier period, in these brief summaries of belief.

[3] Letters from America, 1912. Temp. MS Box 83/8, FH Lib.

[4] Examples of those who saw little of the Hicksites are: Albert J. and Gulielma Crosfield (1852–1931, 1851–1945); Maurice Gregory (1859–1932); Harriet Green (1844–1903); and William Hobson (1837–1912).

meetings, but did not have much sympathy for, or understanding of, pastoral Friends.

Rowntree went over in 1899 to make a thorough study of the ministry, with the hope that he would discover something useful to incorporate into British Quakerism to strengthen the ministry here. He planned to visit pastoral and non-pastoral, extreme and moderate, all types of Friends. He also hoped to visit the schools of all branches, from the Bible Training School in Cleveland, Ohio, to Swarthmore and secondary schools of the Hicksites. During the visit he participated in the Educational Conference of the Orthodox Friends, and attended Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Hicksite), accompanied by A. Neave Brayshaw (1861–1940).[1] John Wilhelm Rowntree made other visits to America between this year and his death, which came just after arriving in New York in March, 1905.[2]

Graham visited in New England, New York, and down along the coast as far as Washington D. C., in 1896. He was warmly welcomed by both branches and Friends were pleased to hear him lecture on the Bible, social issues, and such topics as "The Atonement." He was amazed to discover evangelical Friends among the Hicksites. Of two ministers in one meeting he wrote, they were not only orthodox, "but repulsively extreme in that direction . . . against righteousness without conversion . . . attacked the intellect with ferocity." His lectures at the Swarthmore Conference were a huge success, and 500 persons came down to the railway station to see him off when he began his journey homeward.[3] John William Graham returned to America several times in the next dozen years, carrying a special concern for fellowship with "the other Branch," and for reuniting eastern Friends.

In the years after 1900 many other British Friends went to America to participate in Friends General Conference sessions, or to share in other Quaker gatherings. Some went on business, and managed to see Friends while there, and in

[1] To Rufus Jones, Jan. 11, and Feb. 25, 1899. Jones Coll. *Friends Intelligencer*, LVI (1899), 381.

[2] Many Hicksite Friends attended the memorial service at Haverford, and Charles F. Jenkins was one of the pallbearers. Arnold Rowntree (1872–1951), in a letter dated March 17–29, 1905, and addressed "Dear Friends," detailed what happened during his quick crossing of the Atlantic at the time. FH Lib., copy in Jones Coll.

[3] Michael Graham, "Spokesman Ever".

1912 a group of young Friends went over to participate in conferences of Young Friends in which members of all branches were invited.

John S. Hoyland (1887–1957) had gone the previous year to study at Hartford Theological Seminary, and he was the leading spirit in the plans to use English young Friends as a catalyst to help Americans of the various branches get together. The response was most positive, and similar exchanges followed until World War I cut them short.[1]

Unfortunately, one result of the increased fellowship among British, Hicksite and eastern Orthodox Quakers was that it caused further estrangement between western evangelical Friends and the others.[2]

[1] It would take a separate study to trace the history of the movement of American Friends toward eventual reunion. Most of the initial steps were taken by Hicksite Friends; one of the first to urge reunion was Edward Hicks (1770–1849), the Pennsylvania minister and artist who was a cousin of Elias Hicks. See, *A Word of exhortation to Young Friends . . .* (Philadelphia, 1845); Eleanore Price Mather, *Edward Hicks, primitive Quaker* (Wallingford, Pa., 1970), 27. Baltimore Friends began to associate with one another before Philadelphia Quakers, but it is interesting to note that the Friends Historical Association was founded in Philadelphia in 1873 by four Hicksites and five Orthodox. *Bulletin*, Friends Historical Association, XIII (1924), 4.

[2] Rufus Jones was caught squarely in the middle of this difficulty. From William P. Bancroft came the discreet suggestion that British, Hicksite and eastern Orthodox Friends pull themselves away from the western evangelical groups. Sept. 2, 1903. Jones Coll. John Henry Douglas wrote in 1912 that western Friends felt threatened by the efforts to join Hicksites and Orthodox together. He added, "English Friends stand everything [,] but American Friends are not made that way as our history shows." May 25, 1912. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 6

A "NEW" YEARLY MEETING CREATES A NEW POLICY

There is often an interval between the time that a proposal is made, and the final adoption of an idea. In the matter of recognizing and communicating with yearly meetings not on the official list of Orthodox groups, it took a very long time to change.

Beginning with the difficulties over choosing between Gurneyite and Wilburite yearly meetings in the 1850's, which led to sending out the Salutation of 1857, some members of London Yearly Meeting had been uncomfortable about ostracizing the Wilburite and Conservative bodies. In the 1880's a few voices were heard calling for recognition of the Hicksites as well. As British Friends became uneasy with the western evangelicals, they became more open to recognition of the other branches, especially after they had seen and heard separated Friends who visited in England.

Nevertheless, it was not until 1923 that London Yearly Meeting abandoned its old policy, and agreed that it would "extend the spirit of love and fellowship to all bodies of Friends, whether or not it is in complete agreement with their views or practices."[1] To be sure, beginning in 1912, an epistle went out to all Friends nearly every year, but in each case such an epistle was regarded as a special case, and not a precedent.

It will be useful to trace the history of the issue before 1912, for it was then that Friends struggled with what seemed at the time to be momentous problems. The yearly meeting really began to come to grips with the issue in 1885, after the unsuccessful effort to heal the Gurneyite-Conservative schism in Canada the year before. The quarterly meetings were asked to appoint representatives, to gather with Meeting for Sufferings, for a conference on "epistolary correspondence."[2]

[1] LYM *Proc.*, 1923, 25.
[2] *Ibid.*, 1885, 3.

The report to the next yearly meeting seemed unsatisfactory, and a second conference met late in 1886.[1]

The Conference on Epistolary Correspondence held five sessions, and brought in some recommendations to the next yearly meeting. The practice of naming Correspondents for each of the yearly meetings recognized by London was approved, but it was proposed that these Correspondents should collectively be called "The American Committee," to be a sub-committee of Meeting for Sufferings. This slight change was approved and put into effect. A suggestion that a Minute or Address be sent to all Friends bodies in America was not accepted, nor was the proposal that an epistle be sent to the Orthodox yearly meeting in Philadelphia. The Minutes make it clear, however, that there was considerable support for the last two proposals, even though unity could not be reached.[2]

In view of the large number of American yearly meetings, and the work needed to prepare a separate epistle for each one, it was suggested in 1892 that a single epistle might be sent to the American Orthodox bodies. While this proposal was not immediately accepted, two years later the yearly meeting agreed to send a single American epistle to the bodies with which it usually corresponded. For that year a copy was also sent to Philadelphia.[3]

The Minute from Lancashire and Cheshire Quarterly Meeting regarding correspondence, which raised the matter of a single epistle, went on to express dissatisfaction with the practice of recognizing some yearly meetings and excluding others. It proposed instead that "a general Epistle of brotherly greeting" be sent to all yearly meetings "bearing our name, which are willing to receive it." The statement reminded the yearly meeting that such a correspondence need not include approval of the recipient, nor would it necessitate receiving ministers or members from every body receiving the

[1] *Ibid.*, 1886, 3. The conference could reach no consensus on any change. It seriously considered whether the yearly meeting should send "an expression of Christian love and interest" to the various Friends bodies in America "not at present in correspondence with" London, but made no decision.

[2] *Ibid.*, 1887, 3–5. Much livelier reports may be found in the *British Friend* and the London *Friend.*

[3] LYM *Proc.*, 1892, 41; 1894, 48, 118–120. The recipients were assured that one epistle in place of individual ones to each body did not "imply any diminution of interest in [their] welfare."

epistle.[1] During the discussion of this proposal, which was not accepted, J. Bevan Braithwaite said it would be impossible to respond favourably in view of the 1829 Minute. Vipont Brown, expressing some of the vexation of members of his quarterly meeting, said that George Fox would surely denounce pastoral Friends, not the Hicksites.[2]

The American Committee presented a long report on correspondence to the 1895 session of yearly meeting. The report clearly stated that the sending and receiving of epistles did not, in itself, constitute recognition and establishment of fraternal relations with a yearly meeting. It went on to say that formal recognition is based upon the mutual appointment of correspondents who are authorized to receive certificates of removal and minutes of ministers.[3]

The document also summarized the results of a letter of inquiry sent to six yearly meetings which had separated from the Orthodox since 1830. After discussing the report, the yearly meeting decided to send an epistle to these Wilburite-Conservative meetings, and to include a copy of the *Proceedings* for that year, which contained the report of the American Committee. The epistle said that while London deplored the separations, "our hearts go forth to you in love as we dwell on the unity of our common faith."[4]

At the yearly meeting in 1897, John William Graham described his American experiences of the previous summer, and urged Friends to reverse the past policy and begin to exchange greetings with the Hicksites. J. Bevan Braithwaite

[1] LYM *Proc.*, 1894, 48, 49. Cumberland Quarterly Meeting also raised the question of correspondence. Lancashire and Cheshire Q.M., in addition, requested the yearly meeting to send a Minute to Joel and Hannah Bean, expressing sympathy and esteem.

[2] Manuscript biography of T. Edmund Harvey, by Edward H. Milligan.

[3] The committee summarizing the history of Correspondents in 1923, made this point in these words: ". . . technically 'correspondence' means, not the interchange of Epistles, but the appointment of Correspondents." LYM *Proc.*, 1923, 23. The 1895 report is found on pages 30–36, in the *Proceedings* of that year.

[4] LYM *Proc.*, 1895, 63. "We would tenderly advise you to exercise a wise care lest practices should grow up amongst you in connexion with your evangelistic and pastoral work which will in no wise further the advancement of the kingdom, and which may seriously impair the testimony we are called to bear to the Priesthood of all Believers, the Headship of Christ in His Church, and the call to all who are His, to individual faithfulness in our Meetings for Worship" [sent to Ohio, Indiana, Western, Iowa, Kansas, Wilmington, Oregon]. Epistles Sent, IX, 397, May 22–30, 1895. The General Epistle was also sent.

was supported by several others in opposing this suggestion, and it was dropped without getting into the Minutes.[1] The next year the issue was raised again, this time by Samuel H. Adams. During the discussion, Dr. Thomas Hodgkin proposed that an epistle on the peace question be sent to all Friends, especially in view of the gathering war clouds between Spain and the United States. This proposal received a positive response, but the actual message was addressed to a much broader audience.[2] Proponents of establishing communication with Hicksite Friends seemed to accept the fact that they could not obtain unity for their proposal, and did not bring the matter up again for a few years.

In the meantime, the yearly meeting took a second step in relation to the epistles received from American yearly meetings, by asking the Meeting for Sufferings to prepare a summary of the epistles which would be read instead of hearing each epistle separately. In 1906 this new summary was heard for the first time, to the satisfaction of Friends. A map showing the location of the American yearly meetings was included in the Minutes of the same year.[3] All of the epistles received were printed in the *Proceedings* for 1908, and after that year the yearly meeting heard a summary which was no longer printed in the Minutes.[4]

London Yearly Meeting was somewhat surprised to receive a Minute of greeting from Illinois Yearly Meeting (Hicksite) during the 1906 sessions. A number of Friends expressed pleasure at receiving the missive, and the Recording Clerk was requested to send a suitable and cordial reply.[5]

The exchange of epistles with Philadelphia (Arch) remained much the same as before. In 1896, London had sent

[1] *British Friend*, N.S. VI (1897), 130, 131.

[2] *Ibid.*, N.S. VII (1898), 129–131. J. Bevan Braithwaite wrote in his journal, "It was *very unitedly* decided to make no change in our practice since 1829 when it was solemnly decided to 'disclaim all connexion as a relgs. [religious] Society with any meetings . . . who have Embraced such anti Christian doctrines.'" He had not been present, but the "decision was a very *great relief to me.*" Dated June 6, 1898. J. B. Braithwaite, Private memorandum (MS vol S 296 pp 218-9, FH Lib). The peace epistle is referred to on page 53 of LYM *Proc.*, 1898.

[3] LYM *Proc.*, 1905, 11; 1906, 8–15, 110.

[4] *Ibid.*, 1909, 18, 19.

[5] *Ibid.*, 1906, 40. *British Friend*, N.S. XV (1906), 164. Apparently a cable came from Hicksite Friends in New York in 1905, and greetings were returned by John Ashworth. *Ibid.*, N.S. XIV (1905), 201.

an epistle to Philadelphia; instead of replying directly, the Americans circulated an epistle "to all Meetings bearing the name of Friends and the members composing them." In 1906 the British Friends tried once more, and received a reply signed by the clerk of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, reporting there had been "a hearty expression of appreciation from many of their members."[1]

At the yearly meeting held in Birmingham in 1908, Lancashire and Cheshire Quarterly Meeting, as well as the Quarterly Meeting for London and Middlesex, proposed to the yearly meeting that a short message of love be sent to "all who bear the name of Friends in the United States and Canada." A similar proposal had been incorporated in a Minute from the northern quarterly meeting fourteen years earlier, and it had been ignored. This time was different, for Hicksite Friends had been visiting in Britain for a decade, and London Yearly Meeting had changed considerably in that time. Furthermore, J. Bevan Braithwaite, who had been a stalwart defender of the 1829 decision was gone, for he died in November, 1905.

Edward Grubb, just returned from his second visit across the Atlantic, was the leading voice in support of the proposal. However, he was joined by such persons as William Littleboy, William E. Turner, and John William Graham.

There were still vigorous voices in support of the earlier decision, however, and they spoke in opposition to the proposal. Howard Nicholson (1843–1933), who had spent some years in Canada, rejected the idea that Hicksites were Friends. Richard Reynolds Fox (1840–1915), of Plymouth, was sure they were not Christians, and thus London could not send them a message of Christian brotherhood.

Arnold S. Rowntree had not been sure this was the opportune time to raise the issue, but since it had been raised, he felt it would be disastrous if nothing came of it. He asked that a committee attempt to work out an agreement which could be accepted by all. T. Edmund Harvey was chairman of the small group which attempted to come forth with a solution.

Harvey reported back to the yearly meeting, "that if they might so enlarge their thoughts so as to take in all those in the whole world who bore the name of Friends, any other

[1] LYM *Proc.*, 1896, 8, 59; 1897, 9; 1906, 90; and 1907, 18, 19.

difficulties might be got over." If the words "in America" were omitted, perhaps Friends could unite on a simple message. The yearly meeting accepted this proposal with gratitude, and the greetings were sent.[1]

The message went to sixty-one bodies in all, and the replies were indicative of how much this friendly gesture was appreciated. Letters came from China and East Africa, from the College Park Association, groups of primitive Friends, four Hicksite yearly meetings, and three Conservative groups. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Arch) reported that for the first time in fifty years, an epistle from another body had been read in their sessions.[2]

A joint epistle from the two New York yearly meetings was received the same year, inviting Friends to join in forming a world committee on peace, looking toward the International Conference at The Hague in 1915. The yearly meeting asked Meeting for Sufferings to take proper steps to join this effort, which must surely have been the first time British Friends agreed to work with Hicksite Friends.[3]

There seemed to be a willingness to move slowly on this issue after the difficulty in 1908. It was not until the yearly meeting met outside London again four years later, at Manchester, that a proposal to correspond with "the other branches" came before Friends once more.

At the conclusion of Albert J. Crosfield's summary of American epistles received during the year past, Silvanus P. Thompson rose to comment on the report. While grateful for the able summary of epistles received, he expressed regret that London was not hearing from all the different groups of Friends in America.[4] He asked whether the yearly meeting

[1] I am indebted to Edward H. Milligan for sharing with me his description of this confrontation between the evangelical and liberal Friends, from his unpublished biography of T. Edmund Harvey. See also: LYM *Proc.*, 1908, 49, 50; *British Friend*, N.S. XVII (1908), 167, 168; The *Friend* (London), N.S. XLVIII (1908), 357–359.

[2] LYM *Proc.*, 1909, 19, 73–75, 230, 231. *British Friend*, N.S. XVIII (1909), 162, 163. The Beans helped to create the College Park Association.

[3] LYM *Proc.*, 1909, 89, 90.

[4] Silvanus Thompson got off to a bad start by claiming there were more Friends in "the other branches" than there were in the so-called Gurneyite yearly meetings. The actual figures were: Gurneyites, 95,000; Hicksites, 20,000; Wilburites, 4,000; Philadelphia (Arch), 4,400. *British Friend*, N.S. XXI (1912), 166n. The term "Gurneyite" as used here is the same as the term "Orthodox" I have been using, except that Philadelphia (Arch) was also Orthodox. The younger Conservative yearly meetings have been counted with the Wilburites.

would think it right to initiate communication, by sending a message of Christian love to all calling themselves Friends, as had been done at Birmingham.

Norman Penney, recently returned from visits with various groups to talk about Quaker history, described the way in which some American bodies were drawing together. Another Friend reported he wandered into a Hicksite Meeting by mistake, and did not know the difference, until Friends told him where he was after meeting was over. M. Catharine Albright (1859–1945) supported the proposal, as did many others.

Some Friends seemed to be suggesting that London broaden its correspondence by sending one epistle to all who were called Friends in America, but it was clear that the yearly meeting could not reach unity for that step. However, even those who had opposed sending a simple greeting from Birmingham were now willing for such a message to go. Howard Nicholson felt, however, that the new epistle should only be forwarded to those who had replied to the 1908 message. Alice Mary Hodgkin (1860–1955), one of the editors of the evangelical *Friends' Witness*, appeared to be alone in opposing any message at this time.

T. Edmund Harvey, responding to her hesitations, called upon Friends not to lose "the unity and love of the present moment by going back and reviving the unhappy problems of years ago." He urged the sending of a loving message to all, without changing the current policy of sending full epistles to those with whom correspondence was already established, and this is what the yearly meeting agreed to do.[1]

The message was a brief one, and is repeated here in full:

> Dear Friends,—It is in all our hearts to send you, in our Master's name, a loving message of comradeship and hope.
>
> Christian men and women throughout the world are learning to know one another better as they unite in study and worship, and spend together their lives for others, in the world for which Christ died. Shall not we, who call ourselves Friends, be amongst those who are thus learning and following? Our thoughts and methods may differ, but

[1] This description of the consideration of the issue is from the *British Friend*, *loc. cit.* the *Friend* (London), N.S. LII (1912), 349–351, and LYM *Proc.*, 1912, 17, 46, 47.

this should only make us more earnest to draw closer to Christ Jesus our Elder Brother, and to realize more fully in word and deed our Lord's desire for us, that we might become His family of love.

Signed in and on behalf of the Meeting,
Henry Brady Priestman, Clerk.

The Recording Clerk mailed out a few copies with a covering letter in July, and eventually some 1,000 copies were distributed. Replies came from yearly meetings, quarterly meetings, monthly meetings and individuals. Providence Monthly Meeting, in Rhode Island, replied, "The more closely all who bear the name of Friends are drawn together in Christian love and fellowship, the more effectively can we urge upon those about us those great fundamental truths upon which we are all united."[1]

During the decade after 1912, while the American epistle went out as before, after 1916 the General Epistle was sent to Friends the world over. In the same year London Yearly Meeting approved a proposal to call a conference "of all those who bear the name of Friend" after the war ended.[2]

The All Friends Conference, which met in August, 1920, brought Friends from the various branches of American Quakerism together. There were a half-dozen Hicksite Friends on the Planning Committee; William I. Hull, George A. Walton (1883–1969), and Jesse H. Holmes (1864–1942) participated in the programme, held in Devonshire House; and there was a free mingling of Quakers of all persuasions during the Conference.[3]

In 1923 the yearly meeting abandoned the American epistle, dropped the practice of naming correspondents, and agreed to send the General Epistle each year to all bodies calling themselves Friends. The committee recommending this action closed its report with these words: "If the Yearly Meeting adopts the proposed changes, we trust it may be possible for us all, in growing loyalty to the living Spirit of

[1] *Ibid.*, 1913, 33–35. MSBox E2/5, "Replies from America to Message . . . 1912." FH Lib.

[2] LYM *Proc.*, 1916, 132.

[3] *Conference of All Friends, Held in London, August 12 to 20, 1920* (London, [1920]), 4–8; *All Friends Conference . . . 1920, A Guide and Souvenir* (London, [1920]), 10–16.

Jesus Christ our Lord and Master, to draw closer together as members of one family, guided by His presence, and bound together by His love."[1]

[1] LYM *Proc.*, 1923, 22–26. The report of the committee was signed by Edward Grubb and T. Edmund Harvey.

London Yearly Meeting carried on an extensive correspondence with Friends of all branches in the United States and Canada, before taking this step. Responses varied from warm approval of the change, to dire reports that other yearly meetings would cut off correspondence if the Hicksites were accepted equally with others. Meeting for Sufferings Committee on Official Correspondence. FH Lib.

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