

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Walking in the Way of Peace: Quaker Pacifism in the 17th Century. By Meredith Baldwin Weddle. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001 (paperback 2008). xvi + 348pp. £34 (paperback £21). ISBN 978-0-19-538363-8

This welcome reissue of a critical study of early Friends' theory and practice of pacifism is a notable addition to the growing body of Quaker historical studies by independent scholars free of denominational piety. Weddle pitches herself against what she sees as two contrasting and equally inadequate interpretations of the origins and practice of Friends' historic peace testimonies. First, the idealised assumption of even some of the best Quaker historians - William C Braithwaite, Rufus Jones, Margaret Hirst, Peter Brock - that most Friends received a kind of divine injection of pacifism from the very beginning which enabled them to stand heroically apart as their ungodly English neighbours created a new model army and their unredeemed New England neighbours massacred Indians. "Otherwise excellent historical investigations," she charges, "have thus avoided, no doubt unintentionally, the messy challenges of a subject that is distinguished by its contradictions, its fundamental changes, and its sparse evidence" (p11).

No less inadequate, says Weddle, is "the political or sociological" interpretation of Christopher Hill, Barry Reay, Alan Cole and their followers: that there was no significant Quaker pacifism before 1660, when the Peace Declaration was hurriedly drawn up in the wake of a Fifth Monarchist uprising to reassure Charles II that peace-loving Quakers had not participated, were not participating, and never would participate in violent plots or conspiracies against their lawful rulers, "the powers that be... ordained by God". In Cole's memorable summary of this viewpoint, "[p]acifism was not a characteristic of the early Quakers: it was forced upon them by the hostility of the outside world" (cited p8). Like violence itself, Weddle argues, pacifism was too complex, nuanced, messy and ambiguous to lend itself to simple interpretation, let alone consistent practice. Before 1660 only a few Friends rejected violence *in toto*, others (including Fox) put away their own weapons but expected or even required "the powers that be" to fight just and godly wars, and some served proudly in the Commonwealth army and navy where. Fox boasted in 1659, one Quaker soldier was worth seven non-Quakers. Fox could claim in 1651 that he lived in the power that took away the occasion of wars, while lambasting Cromwell in 1658 for failing to

take his army to crush an axis of evil which included the Vatican, the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, France and the Islamic east, where “the Turk in all his fatness should have smoked”. Rather oddly, Weddle comments that “such rhetoric reveals little about pacifism” (p251). It surely reveals a lot about contemporary Quaker confusions.

But the core of the book is a study of how the world’s first Quaker government, that of Rhode Island in the mid-1670s, met the challenge of violent Indian insurrection - the so-called “King Philip’s War”. In Quaker mythology, the island’s Quaker governors maintained an heroic, principled neutrality as the rest of New England got on with the extermination of those who had the audacity to resist the expropriation of their native lands. In fact, says Weddle, offering devastating chapter and verse, the Quaker-led colony “exiled Indians, supplied boats to the Plymouth and Massachusetts armies,... provisioned and provided a safe-haven for colonial troops, raised and dispatched soldiers, stored ammunition... encouraged the mobilization and training of the local militias, deployed gunboats, manned an official garrison... and, at last, tried and executed prisoners of war” (p170). Weddle does not condemn them, recognising that “Early Quakerism was an amalgam of contradictions...

Quakers were dramatically rigorous in many aspects of their spirituality and its translation into a coherent way of living. But some dimensions of belief and behaviour were incoherent; unresolved contradictions contributed to the intractable incoherence of the peace testimony” (p225), and their failures continue to “nag at the consciences of those who suspect that war does not work (p233).”

Exhaustively documented, non-judgemental but impatient of the way Friends have glossed their own history, this book makes a valuable contribution to our better understanding of a core Quaker testimony which continues to test every Friend committed to walk experimentally in the way of peace.

David Boulton

Daniel Baker - Quaker Extraordinary. By Molly Braithwaite. np: Rosemary Publications, 2010. 120pp. £5. ISBN 978-0-9530235-0-9 Available from Molly Braithwaite, 29 Lansdowne Park, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 5UW

Molly Braithwaite is to be congratulated for breaking new ground in the well-worked period of Early Quakerism. Daniel Baker (1628-c.1683) was a sea captain who served heroically in the wars of the

Commonwealth's navy until his convincement as a Friend. After a traumatic period as a Quaker missionary he returned to the sea and had his own merchant ship.

Molly presents a vivid, readable and well researched account. She quotes copiously from original documents, taking us through the sea battles of the Commonwealth, the proceedings of Quarter Sessions, the exasperation of the English consul in Constantinople, the plight of two Quaker women imprisoned by the Inquisition in Malta (whom Daniel helped to release), his walking naked for a sign in Gibraltar, his later enslavement in Algiers and, after being ransomed, his imprisonment in Newgate at the hands of London Quaker merchants.

To make sense of the political and religious context of his life, Molly intersperses succinct outlines. From time to time helpful explanations are offered to the non-Quaker reader. For me there were pearls of information about the beginnings of Quakerism in London and a fascinating study of the inner workings of Friends' organisation in the process of securing Daniel's release both from slavery and from Newgate prison.

Molly widens the discussion of slavery to embrace the considerable numbers of Europeans, among them many Friends, enslaved by North African corsairs (including George Fox's near escape from a slaver). She also shows a less sympathetic side to George Fox in later life in his dealings with Daniel, and questions the business practices of some leading Quaker merchants.

I have just one criticism. Although she lists her sources and provides a bibliography, she does not always give precise references for some original documents. But that apart, surely at £5 plus £1 for postage and packing this fascinating study is a must!

Brian Hawkins

The London Friends' Meetings. By William Beck and T. Frederick Ball. Ed. with an introduction by Simon Dixon and Peter Daniels. London: Pronoun Press, 2009. xxxvi +462pp., 70 illustrations. £36 (£24 paperbound). ISBN 978-0-9556183-4-5 (hardback) 978-0-9556183-5-2 (paperback)

When Quakers today gather for a business meeting, it is likely that the clerk will be able to begin proceedings pretty much on time. This was not the case with the Clerkenwell Workhouse Committee, who found it necessary in 1702 to fine each member 12d. for non-attendance within an hour of the time fixed for the meeting. Perhaps

this system might have helped Croydon Monthly Meeting where a minute states "only one Friend appearing, there was no business done". Six Weeks Meeting, "the prime meeting of the citie" as George Fox described it, had similar problems, and early eighteenth century minutes include "numbers insufficient to proceed to business" and "eleven Friends met and waited till near 12 o'clock (i.e. 4 hours) but numbers being insufficient, adjourned". One imagines there must have been a degree of unquakerly language. In any event, Monthly Meetings were requested to order their members to attend the next meeting.

Amongst members of the Society of Friends today, laments are often heard about the difficulty of finding people to serve on the variety of committees - this applies also to Quakerly organisations requiring appointments. Reading Beck & Ball is to recognise how much greater were the reach and responsibilities of the Society in the period documented; approximately 200 years from the 1660's until the 1860's. Concern and energy seem to have been extended to almost all aspects of life. Initially, there was the constant threat of imprisonment and physical abuse, for example, dust being thrown in the eyes of preachers, soldiers firing their muskets so close to women Friends that their clothes were damaged and their skin burnt.

With no social security systems, care of the poor is a constant theme, not just relief, but conflicts about which Monthly Meeting was responsible for whom. and whether a person needing relief and claiming to be a Friend, really was one.

'Disorderly walkers' seem to abound in far greater numbers than they do today. Beck & Ball give details of how they are dealt with. Even the marriage procedure was abused by some; couples taking it upon themselves to just stand in an ordinary meeting and take vows. Such was the extent of the indiscipline that a special committee was appointed in 1751 to bring in a list of the 'disorderly walkers'. It then took 21 years for the London Monthly Meetings to discuss their unworthy members, all needing carefully prepared "testimonies of denial" or "papers of consideration".

Friends also had to have a care for the recorded ministers and travelling ministers. Accommodation was needed, and transport in the form of horses provided, - and then there was the question of stabling and feeding. The list seems to go on. London Friends today are facing a debate about the number and organisation of their Meeting Houses and may not be surprised to know that robust discourses along these lines have been held since the erection of the first Meeting House! Disagreements abound. Some worries are

expressed today about solvency, but the huge debts accumulated by eighteenth and nineteenth century Friends are largely avoided. In 1693, Six Weeks Meeting declares money is "urgently wanted" and later "there is a deficiency of £1000" and in future it was decided, funds being insufficient, that each Monthly Meeting was to pay its own taxes and for its own repairs.

The first three chapters will probably be of less interest to readers, covering an account of the religious life in London in the late 1600's, as much thorough and scholarly work has been undertaken since the book's publication in 1869. The remaining and by far the largest part of the book consists of a narrative derived from the minutes of the London Monthly Meetings and related London Quaker organisations. It is not clear whether it was Beck or Ball (later disowned) who trawled through what must have been many volumes of minutes, some stretching back (as in the case of Horsleydown in Southwark) for over 200 years.

Reading Quaker minutes is to be rewarded with occasional passages of considerable interest amongst much which is routine. Beck & Ball do us a great service - they take each Monthly Meeting in turn and present the reader with information which gives a graphic picture of the joys and tribulations of Friends during the period.

For this reason it is likely that anyone with even a small interest in the history of the Society in London will have heard of "Beck & Ball". More interested people will have read the book, but very few will have owned a copy. Thanks to Peter Daniels, it has now been republished and is readily available for the first time since 1861, and except for bibliophiles, is available in a more interesting form than the original. Peter Daniels was a librarian at the library at Friends House, and his knowledge of the unique collection held there is demonstrated in the fascinating collection of illustrations which he has put together to accompany the text. There is an informative introduction written by himself and Simon Dixon. Additionally, a splendid index has been compiled, making the book useful in answering fascinating specific questions, for example, how did overseers originate?, what was it about Peter the Great and Friends?, did any Quakers preach in a boxing ring?, what George Fox said about membership, Westminster Monthly Meeting's disputes with Six Weeks Meeting. Indeed, so thorough is the index that it occupies 40 pages. Also demonstrating Peter Daniels' skill as a librarian is a bibliography of 19 pages, which must be the most comprehensive list of books, pamphlets and articles pertinent to the subject. It is arranged by sections ranging from general London history via Quaker London to specific Area and Local Meetings.

This is a most enjoyable book, and reading it will reward not only those interested in London but all concerned to know about the development of the Society of Friends.

Rod Harper

Quakers in Medicine; 'Friends of the Truth'. By J.M.S. Pearce. York: William Sessions Ltd, 2009. xii + 115pp., 36 illustrations in text. £9.99. ISBN 978-1-85072-388-2

It would be good to be able to welcome a book on the role of Quakers in medicine, the only profession in which Friends were able to engage from the beginning. The work of Geoffrey Cantor and others has done much to explore Quaker attitudes to science and to increase our appreciation of individual Quaker scientists. However medicine has been relatively neglected in recent times and we need to know much more about the many Quakers who practised in country towns as surgeons, physicians, apothecaries and druggists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This book makes no attempt to fill that gap, rather it is a collection of some 25 biographies of major medical figures and medical scientists with some connection, often very peripheral, to the Society. The author, a retired clinical neurologist, has long experience of writing such biographies for journals of medicine and medical history and this shows in the somewhat stylised and self-contained nature of the individual pieces. To the Quaker historian the whole appears a strange and disappointing book.

First there is the issue of selection for inclusion. The book is divided into two parts, one containing 'scientists who contributed to medical practice' and the second 'medical doctors'. The first part contains, among others, biographies of John Dalton, who is included on the basis of his atomic theory, only a very indirect contribution to medical practice, but also William Alien who, as the author admits, 'was responsible for no major academic advances in science'. The second part, equally mysteriously, includes John Joseph Lister and Alan Lloyd Hodgkin, who both made contributions to medical practice, by improving the microscope and by identifying how nerve impulses work respectively, but neither of whom practised medicine. Thomas Young, a polymath if there ever was one, actually practised as a physician but he appears among the scientists in the first part! The criteria for inclusion as Quakers are similarly wayward. A number of those included are described as 'of Quaker stock' although, in the nineteenth and twentieth century, this was

no guarantee of any commitment to the Society and its testimonies. A Joseph Hodgson is included on the grounds that he was 'a well-known Quaker': the reference quoted at this point does not allude to his religious affiliation and I can find no record of his birth in Quaker records. However Dorothy Hodgkin (born Crowfoot) is remarkably included because of her marriage to Thomas Lionel Hodgkin, himself a communist and never a practising Quaker, and because she 'epitomised all the traditional Quaker values'.

The second disappointment of the book lies in its approach which concentrates on the medical career of each subject, listing qualifications, posts held and honours received. Every biography is headed formally with full title followed by degrees and honours and dates of birth. There are some concessions to the non-medically qualified in the use of everyday language for diseases and parts of the body but the litany of names of medical men who were collaborators and teachers of the subjects is bound to be less than interesting to the layman. Details of personal life are included, along with personal interests that sometimes serve to round out the picture but information about involvement with the Society of Friends is very limited. In some cases there is good use of selected quotations but even these tend towards the hagiographic - 'He had Leonardo's lofty human compassion, humility, patience, and profound serenity of spirit' - being a particularly egregious example.

And there is just so much missed out! George Newman, editor of the *Friends Quarterly Examiner* and a founder of the Friends Ambulance Unit, one of the most interesting of the later subjects from a Quaker point of view, has one of the shortest biographies here, its one page contrasting with the six A4 pages in the on-line *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (ODNB). In the much longer account of John Fothergill's life, there is no room for the dispute with Dr Leeds, which shows Fothergill to be a more complex character than the man with 'the most virtues and fewest failings' that his niece Betty saw. Mention is made of Thomas Hodgkin's ill-fated love for his first cousin Sarah Godlee and his subsequent fruitless campaign to change the discipline to allow first-cousin marriage. However you will not learn of his savage little pamphlet, which went through three printings in the 1840s, *On the Rule of the Society of Friends - which forbids the marriage of First-Cousins*. Sarah Godlee was of course aunt to another subject, Rickman John Godlee, and married one of her Rickman (second) cousins. Lack of familiarity with Quaker sources in the author is perhaps the reason for many of these missed opportunities.

The other aid which was clearly lacking in the making of this book

was access to a decent editor. As biographical writing these essays fail to engage and the subjects fail to come across as rounded human beings. There is too much internal repetition to make for pleasurable reading. We are more than once told a fact about a subject, to be told it again a couple of paragraphs later. Where I am able to judge, the accuracy of the text is also not impressive - Dorothy Hodgkin is credited with having 'synthesised penicillin, insulin and vitamin B12' whereas she determined their three-dimensional structures - altogether a different matter. And finally there are annoying little lacunae - in an illustrated book it is galling to be told that 'photographs show him [Joseph Jackson Lister] as a man of strikingly handsome appearance' and then to be offered no illustration. And of George Newman it is said that 'there is no doubt about his aunt's influence' without the aunt ever having been mentioned!

So no-one should completely rely on this volume though all will gain something. Those who know nothing about the involvement of Quakers in medicine will learn a little of the subject. I was glad of the opportunity to know of the two Friends - Alfred Clark and William Sturge - who do not feature in the ODNB. Those looking for medical biography will find something of interest but gain a rather watered-down idea of Friends' testimonies - peace and good works - and a mistaken impression that Friends value academic success and worldly attainment. For the Quaker historian there is the occasional anecdote and access to some medical historical sources that may be unfamiliar. However the medical equivalent of Edward H Milligan's *Biographical Dictionary of British Quakers in Commerce and Industry* still remains to be written.

Chris Skidmore

The Backhouse Quaker Family of York nurserymen including James Backhouse: 1794-1869 Botanist and Quaker Missionary. By David Rubinstein, York: Sessions Book Trust. [2009]. iv + 48pp., illustrations in text. £5. ISBN 978-1-85072-401-8

David Rubinstein's pamphlet about the Backhouse family is a very useful addition to the modern literature about nineteenth century Friends. With only 33 pages of text plus notes, a bibliography, an appendix and illustrations I would have welcomed much more from him. The bibliography and notes will be very welcome to those who wish to pursue the Backhouses further. This work is very much about the first James Backhouse of York. The author draws on a variety of sources to give a balanced picture of this "rare and

important individual" who achieved much besides his striking major journeys.

Backhouses's nine years of travel on religious service from 1832-40 contributed encouragement to the beginnings of Australian Quakerism and demonstrated his interest in prison conditions and a constructive humane attitude to native populations. He produced two very substantial books about these years spent visiting the Australian colonies, Mauritius and South Africa, amounting to 1,400 pages of text. The Mauritius and South Africa book has rather less about religious service and more topography, natural history and observations of people than the Australian volume. When Backhouse returned to England and the nursery run by his brother Thomas (1792-1845) he resumed extensive visiting of meetings in Britain and Ireland and made extended visits to Norway. In all he published 29 works, not all listed here. They included biographical works about his family and tracts and essays on his Quaker concerns. Some were printed in Australia or South Africa, a few were not in English. Some of these shorter works were reprinted in the two major volumes. Surprisingly he published nothing separately on his botanical interests.

David J. Hall

Discovering New Earswick by Elisabeth Alley, subtitled *Essays from the New Earswick Bulletin 2000-2007*, published by William Sessions Ltd, 2009. ISBN 978-1-85072-393-6. Available by mail order (£6.50 + £2.50 p&p) from Sessions Books, Huntington Road, York YO31 9HS tel 01904 697855.

This book superbly illustrates the way in which local history is now being written. Instead of dry-as-dust documentation, graphs and tables of statistics, we have the voices of those who lived, and live, their daily lives in an actual neighbourhood.

This neighbourhood is New Earswick. Its history is a part of twentieth-century Quaker history. Like Bournville, a pioneering housing project built by George Cadbury and funded by money from his hugely successful Quaker chocolate manufacturing business, New Earswick sprang from the practical idealism of Joseph Rowntree "to alleviate the condition of the working classes by provision of improved dwellings and organisation of village communities".

And how has that village community prospered since? The inspiration of Elisabeth Alley's book is to assess life in New Earswick,

about 100 years after its inception, by giving voice to its recent and present inhabitants.

Elisabeth Alley and her husband Ray moved to New Earswick in 2000. They now live in Hartrigg Oaks (continuing-care housing for the elderly) which is yet another product of Joseph Rowntree's original vision. Elisabeth, and Ray (whose photos grace Elisabeth's book), quickly became involved in the village community. The core of Elisabeth's book is a selection from the articles she regularly wrote for "The New Earswick Bulletin", essays which show her skill as a historian and chronicler of village life. To these she adds a wide range of articles by others who live in New Earswick. Too many to quote here - but the result is that we hear a village speaking, telling a contemporary tale of how it was (and is) to live in this village community. Living history!

New Earswick (and Bournville) are part of a major Quaker contribution to Britain's thinking about a range of housing and community issues, a contribution still influential today. This is a lively and humorous book: well worth reading, to be savoured at leisure... and well worth adding to any library that charts our Quaker history.

David B Gray

A biographical dictionary of Irish Quakers. By Richard S. Harrison. 2nd. edn. Dublin: Four Courts Press. 2008. 260pp. £45. ISBN 978-1-84682-100-4

Eleven years after Richard Harrison's initial *Biographical dictionary of Irish Quakers* there comes this second edition, with more than twice the number of entries (over 650 as against just under 300 in the first edition). In a lot of ways, I suppose, the first edition was an experiment, a testing of the ground, a plea for reactions. Thus, for example, Richard Harrison expresses gratitude to Ross Chapman and his brother Arthur for helping to ensure that Ulster Friends are now more fully represented (seven Sintons, for example, as against none in the first edition).

What do we mean by the term 'Irish Quakers'? Who do we hope to find? I see four categories. There are those whose whole lives (or nearly their whole lives) have been spent in Ireland, and who are national figures, having made a significant contribution to Irish life, whether politically, culturally, or in industry or commerce. Then there are those who, while not candidates for a *Dictionary of Irish biography*, are essential figures in the life and witness of Irish

Quakerism (this includes many whose sphere of service was largely on the mission field). Thirdly, there are some of other nationalities, mainly British, who spent a sufficient time in Ireland (say, a decade or more) to make a significant impact on Irish Quaker life, or on that of the country in general. And finally, there are those, born in Ireland and of Irish Quaker dynastic families, who left their native land for a significant life's work in Britain, America or elsewhere.

In the first category are expected figures, ranging from Jonathan Pim *via* James N. Richardson III and James Douglas to Theo (Theodore) Moody. The second category includes two of the three Sarah Grubbs (Sarah Pim Grubb could belong to category 1), John Conran (he who, at the time of the 1798-1800 disruption, remained the sole recorded minister within Ulster Quarterly Meeting) and Thomas Henry Webb (to whom we owe that magnificent series of pedigrees). Then, for the third category, are such figures as James Ellis (whose decade at Letterfrack in the wake of the Famine demonstrated the possibilities of a mixed agricultural economy) or Will Warren (whose quiet presence in Derry during the Troubles counted for more than can ever be measured) or Joseph Radley (whose headship of Lisburn School brought to Ulster new thinking about the nature of education).

The fourth category is more problematic. For the seventeenth century we have William Penn ('convinced' in Ireland, though not born there), and for the twentieth J. Doyle Penrose (of Irish birth, but an English painter). And, of course, a fair number inbetween. There is inevitably a question of how much is appropriately said of their lives after they left Ireland - sufficient to make clear that they were significant figures in the land or lands of their adoption, but not too much detail lest their lives occupy too much space in a volume whose governing word is 'Irish'.

Nevertheless, the concept of 'categories', while useful up to a point, can also be dangerous. *The Oxford dictionary of national biography* (2004) interprets the words 'national life' far more broadly than the nineteenth century *DNB* or its twentieth century *Supplements*. Moreover, it must be remembered that until 1922 all Irish entries are within the scope of Oxford *DNB*, so that (doubtless among others) William Edmundson, Abraham Schackleton I and II, Mary Leadbeater, the three Sarah Grubbs, Jonathan Pim and James N. Richardson III are to be found there. And, further, since *Oxford DNB* reckons to include Commonwealth personalities who can be claimed as widely known in Britain, Irish entries include those thus known up to 1949 (brought to an end by the creation of the Republic and departure from the Commonwealth). Friends in Northern Ireland

are of course still eligible for inclusion in future *Supplements*. Though cross-checking could be tedious, *Oxford DNB* citations among the sources could enhance the third edition of Richard Harrison's work. There must be a third edition one day.

William Beale Jacob will be in the first *Oxford DNB Supplement* and is probably already available on line (the *Supplements*, unlike those for the old DNB will include not only those who died during the relevant decade, but also those inadvertently missed in the original edition). While not in Richard Harrison's book, he is within its scope, the preface making clear that an entry in his *Dictionary* 'does not guarantee that a particular person was at all times in membership of the Religious Society of Friends, or even, that he or she was in membership at all'. There are, of course, those who became Friends in their mature years; there are also those (like W.B. Jacob) who resigned their membership, or who were disunited for one reason or another (often quite respectable reasons, such as marriage before the priest). Many former members, in their life's work, gave expression, albeit perhaps unconsciously, to the values of their upbringing.

One noteworthy (some would say notorious) Friend who was disunited was Joshua Jacob, founder of the White Quakers of the 1830s and 1840s. It is the only entry in Richard Harrison's *Dictionary* which has disappointed me. I recognise that I have only myself to blame. The article is, almost word for word, identical with that of the first edition. Richard Harrison very properly says in his preface, however, that 'I am still only as good as my sources', and his sole source is Alfred Webb's *Compendium of Irish biography* (1877), an understandably one-sided delineation by a man who, born in 1834, had lived through the disturbances caused by the inflammatory White Quaker broadsides hawked about the Dublin streets. I could and should have told Richard that *Oxford DNB* has (as the lawyers say) 'fuller and better particulars' of that extremely tiresome but also important and significant man. Isabel Grubb and Maurice Wigham in their histories are also useful in getting the whole movement into context. Before we even begin to understand the White Quakers, however, some devoted soul is going to have to plough through those tedious volumes of *Some account of the truth as it is in Jesus* (with all that ecstatic prose). But that's another story.

Richard Harrison is to be congratulated on a terrific achievement. Of course we shall have folk whom we miss. I would have liked to find Edward Bell there, if for no other reason than his part in the deputation to offer sympathy and support to William Edward Forster on his appointment in 1880 as Chief Secretary for Ireland. Other members of the deputation, awed perhaps by the atmosphere

of Dublin Castle, had become tongue-tied, but not so Edward Bell, who spoke fluently and movingly to the Chief Secretary for fifteen minutes 'with as much ease as though he were denouncing music in Lisburn Monthly Meeting'. Others will regret other omissions. There is a strong case for a third edition in another decade or so. There is also a case for a quite different work of larger scope (three thousand entries perhaps) and more systematic content - names and dates of parents, names of spouses and names and dates of spouses' parents, numbers of children, and so on. That is for someone else or for a group to work at. It is certainly desirable, but it couldn't in the nature of it replace what Richard Harrison has given us. His glory is that he has introduced us to his personal friends (well, *most* of them have become his personal friends). The first edition has been a bedside book of mine for a decade; this edition has now replaced it. The third edition must not become so large that it ceases to be there at our bedsides, enabling us to meet a few more Irish Friends before closing our eyes. James Green should be read regularly at least once in each year.

Edward H. Milligan

Coming From the silence; Quaker Peacebuilding Initiatives in Northern Ireland 1969-2007. Ed. by Ann Le Mare and Felicity McCartney. York: William Sessions Ltd. 2009. xiv + 185pp. + 24 plates. £8.99. ISBN 978-1-85072-402-5

A few years ago Irish Friends celebrated 350 years of Quakerism in Ireland. Today, fewer than 800 Friends continue to meet in Ulster. Nevertheless, as this welcome and useful record of the past forty years shows, their presence and contribution to peace-building in Northern Ireland has been impressive in terms of commitment, innovation and relevance. As an averagely ignorant English 'blow-in' in the 1990s, I struggled to understand the various strands and complexities of Irish history which provided the backdrop to the Troubles. As a British Quaker, I was conscious of a similar ignorance of the contribution made by Irish Quakers during that time, though I soon appreciated the folk memory which seemed to exist of a positive and impartial historic Quaker presence, for example during the Irish famine. Although I was generally aware of the projects and initiatives mentioned in this book, I had an often sketchy knowledge of their origins and motivations. This book enables many pieces of the jigsaw to fit into place.

The timing of the book is apposite. Since its publication, the

decision has been taken to close Quaker House Belfast. The book indicates, sadly, that some key players in the story have died; there was no doubt some urgency in making sure that first hand recollections could be recorded. It is clear from the writers' comments and from their bibliographies that they have valued the good Quaker standards of record-keeping in researching the book. I would occasionally have welcomed a little more cross-referencing between chapters, where the work overlapped. There are, for example, several references in Chapter 5 on Quaker House to the valuable connections from its early days with prisoners and with the prison services. There is, however, only one general reference to Quaker House in Chapter 3 on Ulster Quaker Service and this does not indicate the continuing overlap of interests in the prison work. The provision of a general index might have been useful. One or two inaccuracies should perhaps be mentioned: inconsistency in the spelling of names (Dennis Barritt and Jerry Tyrrell) and a misdating of events in a couple of places.

There is an illuminating chapter on small and individual Quaker initiatives during the past forty years; these initiatives have provided a basis for the development of the four major projects described later in the book. Chapter 2 gives a picture of Northern Irish Quakers living out their faith in their daily lives, 'Coming from the Silence' of meeting for worship. How many of us outside Ulster have been aware of those Friends who were killed or injured by bombs; whose businesses were threatened by paramilitary demands; or who removed live bombs from situations where family members were in danger? There is a description of public prayer meetings, held since 1996 at Portadown Meeting House, which started as a response to the Drumcree parade controversy. Having attended these on several occasions in the early days, I was aware of the positive reaction from both sides of the community and was moved to know that the meetings are still happening.

This is the soil which has nurtured the development of the larger projects described in Chapters 3-7: the Ulster Quaker Service Committee, with its family support service involving prison work and work at Quaker Cottage; the Centre for Neighbourhood Development, a Belfast based community development agency; Quaker House Belfast, focusing on conciliation with political and community aspects; and the Quaker Peace Education Project (QPEP), working in Deny with children, young people and teachers. These chapters are comprehensive in describing the developing work from its early beginnings. We read of Friends being faced with situations of injustice or conflict and then coming together to discover what

action they are being called to undertake. There is an underlying thread of concern, in the true Quaker sense, running through this story, which is acknowledged in the introductory chapter and elsewhere. I was struck by the importance attached to the Quaker approach to business and to decision-making, which is reflected in all the major projects, and by the commitment of most of the workers, whether Quakers or not, to the Quaker ethos. There is a sense in all these projects of an open-ended and innovative approach.

The reflective and evaluative chapters of the book (Chapters 1, 7 and 8) provide a useful analysis of the Quaker approach. They enable the work to be seen in the context of professional developments and highlight the importance of regular evaluation, both independent and internal, which has been a feature of these projects. They point to a willingness to work co-operatively with other groups and agencies, making a significant contribution to the development of thinking and practice in the broader context of prisons, of education and of community development. None of the writers claims that these Quaker initiatives are more than a small contribution to the process of peace-building in Northern Ireland, but we are left with a clearer understanding of the importance of small steps being made, which enable bigger steps to be taken in the future. In this sense the book has a hopeful and positive message for us all.

Janet Quilley

[Alan and Janet Quilley served as Quaker Representatives at Quaker House Belfast from 1993-9]

OTHER RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The Beautiful Soul of John Woolman, Apostle of Abolition. By Thomas P. Slaughter. New York: Hill and Wang. 2008. [viii] +449 pp.

This relatively long biography of Woolman, described by the author as the first full-scale biography in half a century, gives space for very ample scene setting of Woolman's life in its historical context. There is extensive discussion of apparent influences on him and of the relevance of his dreams with sometimes unexpected detail such as his sewing technique also explored. The book is the result of a longterm project studying original sources and bringing together material and ideas from the relevant research of many others, all duly acknowledged. Slaughter has paid careful attention to Woolman's manuscripts and to changes in the versions of the

Journal. He refers to Woolman as 'an elusive biographical subject' and 'despite his thorough approach to context Woolman's inner life does remain elusive.

David J. Hall

Quaker Constitutionalism and the Political Thought of John Dickinson. By Jane E. Calvert. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2009. xiv + 332 pp.

This is a study of the Quaker contribution, particularly that of Dickinson, to the evolution of American Constitutionalism. It begins with a study of Quaker constitutional theory and practice in England and Pennsylvania from 1652 to the mid-eighteenth century period of Quaker rule in the latter then considers Dickinson's involvement in the period around the American Revolution. It ends with an epilogue coming up to Quaker influence on Martin Luther King Jr.

David J. Hall

Quaker Geologists

The Making of the Geological Society of London ed. C.LE. Lewis and S.J. Knell (2009, the Geological Society. London) contains a chapter by H.S-Torrens 'Dissenting science:the Quakers among the Fathers'. Three of the thirteen founding members were Friends: William Alien, Richard Phillips and William Phillips.

David J. Hall

A Social History of Quakers in Scotland 1800-2000. By Paul F. Burton. Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press. 2007. vii+370 pp. 6 coloured plates.

This study 'provides a detailed analysis of the Scottish Society during the last two centuries, and can also be seen as a description of the Society as it marked its 350th anniversary at the advent of the twenty first century'. Three chapters deal with background and context, to Quakerism generally, in Britain and then in Scotland; three chapters deal with Scottish Friends at the beginning of this century. There are numerous figures and tables in the text.

David J. Hall

Swiss Quaker Life, Belief and Thought. Ed. by Erica Royston and David Hay-Edie. Geneva: Switzerland Yearly Meeting. 2009. vi +88 pp. £8.99. Distributed by Sessions Books, Huntington Road, York, YO31 9HS, tel. 01904 697855.

This is an anthology of passages in German, French and English (without translations) drawn from the writings of individuals and statements by Swiss Quaker groups with some illustrations by Swiss Friends. It demonstrates major themes in Swiss Quaker life under the headings "Inspiration", "Our practice" and "Our life and witness". A very short introduction and a brief history of Quakerism in Switzerland are provided in each of the three languages.

David J. Hall