

EDWARDIAN PEACE TESTIMONY: BRITISH QUAKERS AGAINST MILITARISM AND CONSCRIPTION, c.1902-1914

'The voice of Quakerism should ring throughout the land in its appeal against the schemes of military enthusiasts.'

The Friend, February 1906

'For Peace advocates the times are critical ... Friends cannot afford to allow their ancient testimony for Peace to remain unspoken ... we take our stand only on the Christian law of love.'

The Friend, October 1912

'The great fight that lies before us, the new Armageddon of Militarism *versus* Christ.'

Quakers and War: The National Service League, 1913

In 1661 'the Harmless and Innocent People of God, called Quakers', declared to King Charles II, 'All bloody principles and practices we ... do utterly deny; with all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end ... this is our testimony'.¹ Thereafter the Society of Friends maintained its pacifist peace testimony² "and Quakers became, Richard Cobden declared, 'the soul of the peace movement'.³ They were, as Martin Ceadel has written, 'the world's most influential pacifist sect' and, after 1815, 'the backbone of the peace movement for a century'.⁴ Yet not all Quakers were always pacifist. For example, John Bright, the most famous, if a typical, nineteenth-century Quaker, opposed the Crimean War, supported the Indian Mutiny suppression and the American Civil War, and resigned from the government over the 1882 Alexandria bombardment.⁵ Despite the Society's disapproval, some Quakers joined the early Rifle Volunteers, and later some joined the new Territorial Force⁶ Yet they were exceptions to the norm of Quaker pacifism. Edwardian *Whitaker's Almanacks* classified the Society under 'minor religious denominations'. Although relatively few - from over 17,000 to under 20,000 - Edwardian Quakers had a presence and apparently an influence disproportionate to their numbers, partly because of their wealth. Despite a minority 'in

humble life', Quakers were predominantly prosperous middle class with some, bankers and manufacturers, notably rich, and the Society of Friends probably enjoyed a higher per caput income than any other British sect or church.⁷ Quaker wealth enabled Quaker peace activity. For example Quakers - in the Edwardian period especially the Fry, Cadbury and Peckover families - largely financed the Peace Society, and in 1900 Priscilla Peckover gave £1000 to the Stop-the-War Committee.⁸ According to Halévy, the Salvation Army had 'roused the Quakers from their slumber',⁹ an interpretation not favoured by historians today. Yet there was the late nineteenth - and early twentieth-century Quaker spiritual and intellectual revival, the 'Quaker Renaissance', which included renewed commitment to the peace testimony.¹⁰ Quakers opposed the Boer War and the First World War.¹¹ Much has been written on Quakers' involvement in those wars,¹² but less on their opposition to militarism and conscription in the intervening Edwardian years.¹³ This was expressed and reported in the journals *The Friend* and *The British Friend*.¹⁴ Both founded in 1843 and both unofficial, they differed in emphasis and, to some extent, represented different strands in Quakerism. Yet on the issues of militarism they were essentially similar. The present article cannot tell the whole story of its title-subject and focuses, not on personalities and institutions but rather, in their context, on discourse and ideas, on how Quakers perceived and articulated issues and attempted to persuade, through the media of their two journals.¹⁵ These incorporated editorials, reports, correspondence, and Society of Friends announcements. Quaker anti-militarism there was within the wider spectrum of Quaker concerns, which included Bible teaching - the *Friend* published more on Bible lessons than on anti-militarism - American Friends, foreign missions, temperance, adult schools and their cricket scores, vivisection, vegetarianism, the opium trade, state-regulated prostitution, South Africa, the Congo, slave-grown cocoa, and the Armenian massacres. Moreover, Quakers were not alone in their anti-militarism. Also involved were other nonconformists, Liberals and socialists, especially the Independent Labour party (I.L.P.), and the flourishing peace movement which, while largely led and financed by Quakers, included many non-Quakers.¹⁶

Quakers perceived militarism as a hydra-headed conspiracy, antithetical to Christianity and to their historic peace testimony. They uncompromisingly envisaged a quasi-Manichaeic dichotomy. Promoting and profiting from militarism were 'militarists' military imperialists', 'the military party', 'the war party', powerful vested interests', 'reactionaries', and 'those who worship at the shrine of

Mars'. Opposing militarism were 'the friends of Peace', the forces of peace and brotherhood', 'lovers of freedom', and 'men of light'.¹⁷ The Quaker Peace Committee published anti-war pamphlets. For example, John J. Wilson's *The Devilry of War or Construction & Destruction* used Wolseley's *Soldier's Pocket Book* and Callwell's *Tactics of To-day* to assert the deceit, destruction, 'murder, waste and wantonness' of war. It denounced 'military wisdom, so earthly, so sensual, so devilish'.¹⁸ It urged, 'let our masses cease to applaud those whose claim to fame is based upon their skill in murdering their fellow men', renounce 'such a fearful system', and follow the Christian ideal of peace. The two Quaker journals reviewed and cited works by Bloch, Norman Angell, and Brailsford,¹⁹ but attempted no analysis of the 'militarists' Quakers opposed, nor did they express self-doubt or self-questioning.²⁰

Quakers continued to assert their peace testimony, and their two journals reported and commented on related issues including United States militia legislation, French conscription and prosecution of conscientious objectors, Anglo-German relations, naval increases, the burden of armaments, and international peace conferences. They criticised the army. An article 'Life on a troopship' portrayed soldiers drinking and gambling, and alleged ex-soldiers were unfit for employment: 'civilians outrace them in everything'.²¹ It quoted an Essex landowner who refused to employ them: 'one old soldier would corrupt the whole estate'. The two journals also criticised the military authorities. For example, Margaret Clark wrote in the *Friend* that 'English military authorities are easy victims to any attack since their ludicrous mistakes in the South African war'.²² Yet the main focus of the journals' anti-militarism was military training in schools, the National Service League's campaign for compulsory military training - both largely responses to the Boer War - and compulsory military training, 'boy conscription' - largely in response to the 'yellow peril' - in Australia and New Zealand.

I Military training in schools

There had been forms of military drill in some Victorian elementary schools - in 1, 343 in 1895 - and Quaker criticism of them.²³ From the Boer War on there were proposals, official and unofficial, for military training in schools. Quakers and others opposed them. Following the Boer War rejection rate of would-be recruits, publicised by Arnold White, B. Seebohm Rowntree and General J.F. Maurice,²⁴ there was interconnected concern with physical training in schools. In January 1902 *The Times* followed Kipling's 'The Islanders' with an editorial which stated, 'this is an age of conflict and competition ... World-

Empires, armed to the teeth, are ... eager to gain advantages by military and naval preponderance'.²⁵ It claimed that, though a continental-style conscript army was 'ill-suited to our needs', there should be compulsory military training in primary and secondary schools, 'an approximation to universal training'. The *Friend* responded with an editorial 'Is Conscription Possible?'²⁶ This denounced 'the permanent degradation and bondage of military domination' and 'contamination with militarism', and alleged 'barrack-life saps and enfeebles the youth'.²⁷ It denounced 'the proposal to tamper with our public schools'.

In 1902 the Unionist government's Board of Education recommended that army N.C.O.s instruct teachers in physical training and, following consultation with the War Office, issued the 'Model Course' of physical training for elementary schools.²⁸ This was military drill, and Colonel G.M. Fox, formerly inspector of army gymnasia, was appointed Board of Education inspector of physical training, to introduce the military drill using army instructors. Liberals, socialists, the National Union of Teachers and its organ the *Schoolmaster*,²⁹ and Quakers opposed this. The N.U.T. argued the impropriety of N.C.O.s instructing women teachers, the unsuitability of the drill for children, and the wrongness of the attempt 'to recruit the army in the playgrounds of the elementary schools'.³⁰ The N.U.T. spokesman in the House of Commons was the Liberal T.J. Macnamara; the *Friend* wrote that 'probably not many teachers approximate to Dr. Macnamara's Quakerly antipathy to militarism'.³¹ Himself the son of an army sergeant, Macnamara, attacking the 'Model Course', showed that it was the infantry-recruit drill manual, only slightly modified, and not originally intended for children. Under parliamentary and other pressure, the government conceded an interdepartmental committee on the 'Model Course'. Its report in 1904 condemned the course, and a new syllabus was introduced.

The Quakers' case against the 'Model Course' overlapped that of the N.U.T. They argued it was unChristian, intended to lead to conscription, unsuitable as physical training for children, and that army drill instructors were morally and educationally unsuitable to be involved with teachers, especially female. Quakers' opposition took varied forms. They protested to the government. In 1903 Meeting for Sufferings issued a memorandum to education authorities, school managers and others, stating its desire 'to protect our schools from the atmosphere of war and military training' and that the 'Model Course' had 'the ulterior purpose of fostering the military spirit'.³² It complained that the course was physically unsuitable for children, and that 'women of mature years and tender

health' had been instructed by 'men, not always refined in character and language, and usually ignorant of the limits of a woman's strength and physical powers'. Quakers also attacked it in letters to the national press and within their own two journals. For example, Sophia S. Clark wrote of an infant mistress who protested to the inspector that 'the sergeant was a man of loose character, to whom she would neither go herself nor send her young girl teachers'.³³ Albert Prust wrote that 'the children of the workers' would be 'hypnotised into a liking for militarism now while their minds are plastic', then the military imperialists would introduce conscription.³⁴ Headmasters of Quaker schools also protested. In June 1903, according to a letter in the *Friend*, the 'Model course' was '*in extremis*'.³⁵

Quakers were largely Liberals and welcomed the 1905 Liberal government and the 1906 election victory; nine Quakers were elected, all Liberals.³⁶ However, the new secretary of state for war, the Liberal imperialist R.B Haldane, wanted a 'nation in arms' with cadet training in schools.³⁷ Again radicals socialists and Quakers protested. In 1907 Yearly Meeting issued a memorandum protesting against the cadet-corps clauses of the Army Bill. In June 1907 a Quaker deputation, including Arthur Rowntree, headmaster of Bootham, and John W. Graham, principal of Dalton College, Manchester, met Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the prime minister, and Haldane at the House of Commons.³⁸ Rowntree asserted 'the essential antagonism between the aims of education and of war'. Graham stated that 'the deputation had worked hard for the return of the Government, from whose agency they had high hopes for humanity and democracy', and claimed 'a nation in arms was a nation in its infancy ... education should be forward-looking - should be fitted for the better times coming'. Campbell-Bannerman stated his agreement with their speeches. Haldane agreed to modify the bill, raising to sixteen the age below which the government would not assist cadet corps; in fact a reluctant concession to radical and labour pressure.³⁹ Nevertheless, with the rise of the National Service League military training in schools continued an issue for Quakers. For example, in 1910 Arthur Rowntree at the annual meeting of the Incorporated Association of Headmasters moved a resolution against military training in schools.⁴⁰ His resolution was rejected by 67 votes to 8.

Another controversial form of training was that provided from 1908 by the Boy Scouts. Quakers, socialists and others denounced them as militarist, though Baden-Powell insisted they were 'peace scouts'⁴¹ From May 1909, partly on the issue of militarism, there was a major secession, the British Boy Scouts.⁴² Sir Francis Vane, a quixotic

Irish baronet, Carthusian, former Guards officer, and pacifist, was Boy Scout commissioner for London. In November 1909 Baden-Powell dismissed him, and in December he became president of the British Boy Scouts. By early April 1910 the B.B.S. reportedly numbered about 50,000 boys, and they were supported by the National Peace Council, the Sunday School Union, and some Quakers. However, in August 1912 Vane was declared bankrupt and his organization rapidly declined.

From 1908 Quakers and their two journals, in editorial text and correspondence, condemned the Boy Scouts as militarist. Edward Lingford emphasised the role of army officers including Lord Roberts, and warned of 'the danger of converting the hooligans of the streets into ... the national hooliganism of war', and urged Quakers to protest against 'the new mischief'.⁴³ J.H. Lester wrote that there was much good and attractive in the movement, 'but we shall not accept the militarism at any price'.⁴⁴ Some Quakers proposed 'Peace Brigades', 'Quaker Scouts' or 'Quaker Pioneers', and some advocated the existing Boys' Life Brigades. The *British Friend* alleged scouting was 'militarising our boys', and advised 'until the friends of Peace can think of a substitute, we believe they had better keep clear of "Scouting"'.⁴⁵ In 1910 both journals published features giving Sir Francis Vane's views. He alleged Baden-Powell's scouts were 'militarism under the guise of peace scouting', intended to provide recruits for the Territorial Force. The movement should be controlled by civilian 'experts in the science of pedagogy, not by soldiers, who naturally see patriotism through the sights of a Lee-Metford rifle'.⁴⁶ The British Boy Scouts were 'an educational and not a military organization' and 'opposed to the spirit of militarism'.⁴⁷ However, some Quakers questioned whether the B.B.S. were genuine peace scouts, and the *Friend* cautioned Quakers to 'exercise their best judgement as to whether the anti-military off-shoot is really anti-military in spirit or not'.⁴⁸

II The National Service League

Eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Quakers had refused compulsory militia service. Later nineteenth-century Quakers expressed their opposition to 'conscription' as intermittently and unofficially advocated by, *inter alios*, Lord Wolseley, as did also some socialists and others; for example, delegates to the 1898 I.L.P. conference.⁴⁹ In July 1899 Lord Lansdowne, the Unionist secretary of state for war, introduced his Militia Ballot Bill to revive and tighten compulsory militia legislation.⁵⁰ He stated he did not undertake to pass the Bill that year 'or at any particular moment' and compulsion

would be used only as a last resort; 'he shared the aversion with which compulsion was regarded by the great majority of his fellow-countrymen'. Nevertheless, Meeting for Sufferings responded in February 1900 with 'A Protest against compulsory military service', alleging it would infringe liberty, cause individual hardship and 'economic evils', and would be 'an instrument of religious persecution, striking at that freedom of conscience upon which the true greatness of the British character so largely depends'.⁵¹

Opposing the Boer War some Quakers warned it would lead to demands for compulsory military training or conscription. They were right. Among those demanding compulsory military training were Samuel Smith M.P., Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Rudyard Kipling, John A. Cramb, and a Liberal imperialist barrister, George F. Shee. Shee wrote *The Briton's First Duty: the case for conscription* (1901), which led to the founding in February 1902 of the National Service League (N.S.L.).⁵² The N.S.L. was a single-issue pressure group which campaigned for compulsory military training, claiming it would ensure British defence against invasion, preserve international peace, and improve the morals, health and efficiency of the British population. From 1905 it was led by Field Marshal Earl Roberts, the iconic national and imperial hero, 'the Empire's greatest soldier'. The *Friend*, hardly biased in favour of the military, called him 'one of the most popular and unselfish of men', and wrote of 'the profound regard with which the nation at large listens to the words of Earl Roberts'.⁵³ Such was his fame and so prominent his role, that the campaign for compulsory service became to the press and public Lord Roberts' campaign and, to his admirers, Lord Roberts' crusade. With wealthy supporters - J.W. Graham claimed militarism was 'rapidly growing among the "upper" classes' - the N.S.L. was well-financed: the pacifist journal, the *Arbitrator* claimed the League paid more in salaries than the total income of all the peace societies.⁵⁴ Its membership grew to, reportedly, 96,526 in 1913. It published propaganda including its journal, the *Nation in Arms*, which featured prominent half-page advertisements for Cadbury's Cocoa.⁵⁵ According to its pacifist opponent Miss Caroline Playne, 'probably there was no other propaganda pre-war organization which permeated the social life of England to the same extent as the National Service League'.⁵⁶ As was revealed by a young Quaker pamphleteer, the socialist J.T. Walton Newbold, some prominent N.S.L. supporters had interests in the armaments industry as directors and shareholders. In *The War Trust Exposed* (1913) he named among such 'National Service "Patriots"' Beresford, Curzon, Glenconner, Brackenbury, Sir Andrew Noble (chairman of

Armstrong, Whitworth), Sir Vincent Caillard (director of Vickers), Sir Hellewell Rogers (chairman of Birmingham Small Arms), Neville Chamberlain, and the bishops of Chester and Newcastle (both Vickers shareholders).⁵⁷ However, the significance of this continues problematic.

In his *Briton's First Duty* George Shee proposed exemption for Quakers, an 'admirable body'. He recognised the possibility of 'skulkers' attempting to take advantage of this, but claimed they would not be accepted by Quakers: 'it is certainly not easy for those who desire to become Quakers to obtain admission as Members of the Society of Friends'.⁵⁸ The N.S.L. also proposed exemption for Quakers, but for the N.S.L. it was not an issue, and seldom mentioned. Nevertheless, to Quakers compulsory military service was abhorrent and they actively opposed and repeatedly denounced the N.S.L. They campaigned against both within the Society, its institutions and publications, and in co-operation with non-Quakers, through pamphlets, newspapers - especially the 'cocoa press' and *Manchester Guardian* - 'so consistently opposed to the war party'⁵⁹ and organizations including the Peace Society and the I.L.P., whose 'peace' campaign they supported. The Quaker Peace Committee's anti-N.S.L. activities included the publication of leaflets: in 1912-13, 5,000 *Lord Roberts* and 27,300 *Conscription*.⁶⁰ Quakers distributed propaganda outside N.S.L meetings.

Initially the N.S.L. apparently had little impact on Quakers and their two journals, and as late as April 1905 a correspondent in the *Friend* wrote that 'there is at work a National Service League' (italics added). From 1905 the journals intermittently reported on and attacked the N.S.L., and reported on and urged support for opposition to it. In January 1905 a *Friend* editorial attacked Lord Roberts' demand for compulsory military training, which it alleged might lead to conscription. It asserted 'the liberty of the English people from the grinding military conscription which saps the commercial energies of Continental nations, has for generations been the cherished heritage of the Anglo Saxon race'.⁶¹ In 1913, the year Roberts held a series of mass public meetings in major cities, the *Friend* attacked the N.S.L. campaign in its editorial 'The Shadow of Conscription', stating that the campaign was now 'a serious part of our political life', and alleging compulsory military training was conscription. It argued the case against compulsory training: military, economic, moral and political. It argued the immorality of barrack life, and that 'nobody knows that better than Lord Roberts' who throughout his career tried to 'introduce the means of higher morals into soldiers' barracks'. It alleged that, most important,

conscription would 'hand over individual freedom into the hands of the military' and 'make the nation essentially military'.⁶² In the journals the varied attacks on the N.S.L. campaign repeatedly asserted that compulsory military training would not remedy poor health and physique: the need was for social reform and better housing, diet, and working conditions. Military training was 'this bogus remedy, which only drew a herring across the true path of social reform'.⁶³ Moreover, those men most in need of physical improvement would be unaffected by compulsory military training, since they would be rejected as medically unfit.

The two journals reported opposition to the N.S.L. campaign: examples included protest meetings, demonstrations and debates, all responding to N.S.L. activity. At Manchester University Union in February 1911 there was a debate on compulsory military training between Lord Ampthill, Unionist politician, Etonian, Oxonian and formerly governor of Madras, and John W. Graham, Quaker, Cantabrigian and principal of Dalton Hall, Manchester.⁶⁴ Ampthill argued that in war untrained volunteers were 'worse than useless', and that national service would improve national health, discipline and patriotism, and guarantee peace. Graham argued the impossibility of foreign invasion, that the German Social Democratic Party would prevent war, and that compulsory military service was an 'attack upon democracy and the liberties of our people' and would lead to 'police control of the whole population'. Ampthill's motion was defeated 115 to 81. In 1913 at Penrith, Cumberland, Quakers and others responded to an N.S.L. meeting with their own 'No Conscription' meeting in the market square.⁶⁵ When later in 1913 the N.S.L. held a meeting at Birmingham addressed by Lord Curzon, students and other young Quakers walked the main streets with sandwich boards proclaiming 'Far from making men of weaklings, forced military training rejects them as unfit', 'Has Conscription saved Bulgaria?' and 'Did Conscription save France in 1870?'⁶⁶ Correspondents writing to the two journals repeatedly urged Quakers to oppose 'the heavily financed campaign of the National Service League'.

Perception of Germany was crucial to the debate on compulsory military training.⁶⁷ The 'German peril' was from 1905 largely the *raison d'être* of the N.S.L., which repeatedly warned against German aggression: in October 1912 in an 'alarmist speech' at Manchester, Roberts declared, 'Germany strikes when Germany's hour has struck'.⁶⁸ Quakers, however, denounced 'the deplorable and intensely wicked endeavour to stir up strife between Germany and England'.⁶⁹ Quakers, if arguably too optimistic about Wilhelmine

Germany, were aware of German Anglophobia: for example in January 1912 the *British Friend* stated 'the intense hostility against England, which appears to have permeated almost all classes'.⁷⁰ Complementing their opposition to the N.S.L. were the efforts by Quakers and others - notably the 'radical plutocrat' Sir John Brunner and like-minded radicals - to improve Anglo-German relations, through organizations, meeting and visits.⁷¹ Quakers reported and encouraged these in their two journals. They reported, for example, the 1908 visit to Britain of some 130 German pastors, and the 1909 visit to Germany of British representatives, including Edward Grubb, editor of the *British Friend*, who were taken to Germany on the Kaiser's steam-yacht *Hohenzollern* and met the Kaiser, Kaiserin, Tripitz and other notables.⁷²

III' Boy conscription' in Australasia

Overlapping the issues of school military training and the National Service League was that of compulsory military training, 'boy conscription', in Australia and New Zealand, operative from 1911. This involved both sides in the British compulsory-training controversy. The National Service League, the 'parent league' and exemplar, supported the compulsionist National Defence league in Australia and New Zealand. British Quakers and other British anti-compulsionists supported the Australian Freedom League and the New Zealand Freedom League and Passive Resisters Union. Australian and New Zealand Quakers were few, and under London Yearly Meeting,⁷³ which in 1911 appointed an Australasian Defence Acts Committee, and subsequently sent money - the defence acts committee in 1913-14 raised £2,663 13s 3d⁷⁴ - 'well-concerned' activists, and propaganda. The activists included Alfred H. Brown, an elder and minister, who helped organise the Australian Freedom League, but whose advocacy of Japanese immigration into Australia was profoundly unpopular there. Publication in Australia of John F. Hills' widely-circulated pamphlet *Child Conscription: our country's shame* (1912) was financed by funds from England, and Charles Howie of the Australian Freedom League wrote, 'without your help from England we should be almost powerless'.⁷⁵ The defence acts committee campaigned in Britain. Its secretary Herbert Corder, a minister and prominent Quaker who went to Australia and New Zealand to support the anti-compulsionists, gave over a hundred talks in 1913-14. The committee also issued press releases, and published leaflets, including Corder's *Compulsory Military Training in Australia and New Zealand* and 'Colonial Observer's', *A Blot on the Empire: Conscription in New Zealand*. The latter alleged that the New

Zealand system was 'the forcing of consciences and the torture of innocent boys'.⁷⁶ Yearly Meeting condemned the compulsory training as 'a stain upon the history of the British race', and praised youths' who resisted it.⁷⁷ The Peace Committee claimed that 'the military party in Great Britain is closely watching how this attempt at compulsory service is being received in the Colonies', and that 'information as to what Compulsory Military Training means in the Colonies will do more than anything else successfully to combat proposals for the introduction of similar laws into this country', and would counteract 'the activities of Military Leagues'.⁷⁸ Both British Quaker journals - which continued to call Australia and New Zealand colonies - published much on the issue: the *Friend* stated that it received far more than it could publish. However, since 'boy conscription', and opposition to it have already been covered in this Journal and elsewhere,⁷⁹ it is here only selectively considered.

The Quakers case against 'boy conscription', as stated in their two journals, was both general - their objections to war-preparation and compulsory military service - and specific to the Australian situation. They alleged it was military indoctrination of boys, un-British, contrary to traditional English liberty, and violated 'the sacred rights of parental control'.⁸⁰ It was uneducational and morally dangerous. They warned it was moving towards the 'Continental barracks system' and denounced 'the moral danger of the congregation of numbers of youths, unrestrained ...by any proper and competent authority'.⁸¹ They reported the prosecutions and punishments of fathers and boys. Moreover, they insisted that the struggle in Australasia mattered to Britain also, and was a crucial part of a wider conflict over compulsion: 'for our generation the decisive struggle ... is being waged there' and 'our own liberties depend on the result'.⁸² At Meeting for Sufferings in 1912 John Morland declared, 'they were fighting now at the outposts, but they would soon have to fight at home'.⁸³ Herbert Corder wrote in the *Friend*, 'It is no mere local struggle ...New Zealanders and Australians are struggling, not for themselves alone, but for us and for the whole human race'.⁸⁴

Conclusion

In August 1914 the Great War began. It abruptly suspended, transformed or ended Edwardian controversies. In Britain, largely in response to the Boer War, and in Australasia, largely in response to the 'yellow peril', there had been initiatives to improve defence, which Quakers perceived as militarism and so opposed. In this they were never alone, always part of *de facto* alliances. Although the Quakers' contributions cannot now be isolated or quantified, they

were apparently significant but not decisive. Quakers were on the winning side against the 'Model Course', elementary school military training and the National Service League, but failed against the Boy Scouts and, in Australasia, against 'boy conscription'. Through all these issues Quakers remained true to their peace testimony. Moreover, possibly the most important result of their prewar anti-militarism was in motivating Quakers themselves to conscientious objection during the Great War;⁸⁵ but the War is another story.

Roger T. Stearn

NOTES

I wish to thank the staff of the Library of the Religious Society of Friends, Institute of Historical Research, Bodleian Library, Cambridge University Library, and especially my wife, and to acknowledge my indebtedness to the authors of the books, articles, theses, and websites I have used. This article is part of a wider project on the Edwardian campaign for compulsory military service and opposition to it, and I welcome corrections and suggestions. On persons named in the article see the *Dictionary of Quaker Biography* (Library of the Religious Society of Friends, Friends House), *Who Was Who*, and the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Some books are hereafter cited without their subtitles. The following abbreviations are used: *BF* for *The British Friend*, *E* for *Extracts from the Minutes and Proceedings of London Yearly Meeting of Friends*, and *F* for *The Friend*.

1. Licia Kuenning, ed., *Historical Writings of Quakers against War* (Glenside PA: Quaker Heritage Press, 2002) p.181.
2. Historians have differed on the reality of the pre-1914 Quaker peace commitment: for example, Thomas C. Kennedy has alleged it was 'dormant for nearly a century', and Martin Ceadel that it 'continued to lose its authority'. For relatively recent interpretations see Thomas C. Kennedy, 'The Quaker Renaissance and the origins of the British peace movement, 1895-1920', *Albion* 16, 3 (Fall 1984); Brian D. Phillips, 'Friendly Patriotism: British Quakerism and the Imperial Nation, 1890-1910' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Cambridge University, King's College, 1989); Thomas C. Kennedy, *British Quakerism 1860-1920* (Oxford University Press, 2001); Martin Ceadel, *Semi-Detached Idealists: the British peace movement and international relations, 1854-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); idem, 'The Quaker peace testimony and its contribution to the British peace movement: an overview', *Quaker Studies* 7 (September 2002) p29; Paul Laity, *The British Peace Movement*

1870-1914 (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2001). For examples of relatively radical Quakers apparently *not* active in the peace movement see Sandra Stanley Holton, *Quaker Women: personal life, memory and radicalism in the lives of women Friends, 1780-1930* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007).

3. Peter Brock, *Varieties of Pacifism* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1998) p.52. Cobden was Anglican.
4. Ceadel, *Semi-Detached*, p.19; *idem*, 'Quaker peace testimony', p.29.
5. For relatively recent interpretations of Bright, Quakerism and pacifism see Martin Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention; the British peace movement and international relations, 1730-1854* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) pp.110, 350; and Sandra Holton, 'John Bright, radical politics, and the ethos of Quakerism', *Albion* 34, 4 (Spring 2003).
6. Ian F. Beckett, *Riflemen Form: A Study of the Rifle Volunteer Movement 1859-1908* (Aldershot: Ogilby Trusts, 1982) p.29; *F* 16 June 1911, p.413; Margaret E. Hirst, *The Quakers in Peace and War* (London: Swarthmore Press, 1923) p.486.
7. Elizabeth Isichei, *Victorian Quakers* (Oxford University Press, 1970) chapter VI; W.D. Rubinstein, *Men of Property: the very wealthy in Britain since the industrial revolution* (London: Social Affairs Unit, 2006) pp.188-91.
8. Laity, pp.194, 164. On Miss Peckover, 'the dominant figure in the women's movement' and 'the international peace celebrity among British Quakers', see also Phillips, pp.184., 190, 310; Laity, pp.117-8; Heloise Brown, *'The Truest Form of Patriotism': pacifist feminism in Britain, 1870-1902* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), chapter 5.
9. Elie Halévy, *Imperialism and the Rise of Labour* (London: Ernest Benn, 1961), p.173.
10. Keith Robbins, *The Abolition of War: The 'Peace Movement' in Britain, 1914-1919* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1976) p.19; Kennedy, 'Quaker Renaissance', pp.243-52; *idem*, *British Quakerism*, pp.8-9, 310.
11. Quakers were divided on both wars, and the Society's response to the Boer War was 'timid', without immediate protest, Ceadel, *Semi-Detached*, p.163; Laity, p.162.
12. John W. Graham, *Conscription and Conscience* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1922); Hirst, *op.cit.*; John Ormerod Greenwood, *Quaker Encounters Vol. 1. Friends and Relief* (York: William Sessions, 1975); Hope H. Hewison, *Hedge of Wild Almonds: South Africa, the Pro-Boers & the Quaker conscience 1890-1910* (London: James Currey, 1989); Kennedy, *British Quakerism*.

13. The terms militarism, militarist, and conscription are in the article used, usually without inverted commas, as by Edwardian Quakers. The National Service League denied they were militarist and advocated militarism, and that their proposed compulsory military training was conscription. They considered militarism foreign, especially German, and cited Koepenick and Zabern, both the scenes of notorious examples of German militarism, in 1906 and 1913. According to Martin Ceadel, Britain had 'militarised defencism' rather than 'authentic militarism' as in Germany, Ceadel, *Semi-Detached*, p.165.
14. *The British Friend*, monthly, price 6d, was edited from 1901 by Edward Grubb, and ceased publication in 1913. *The Friend*, weekly, price 1d, was edited from 1892 to 1912 by Henry S. Newman. Its circulation was about 5000 weekly, the *British Friend's* is unknown but reportedly 'had never been large'; probably most Quakers had access to the *Friend*, James Dudley, *The Life of Edward Grubb 1854-1939* (London: James Clarke & Co., 1946), p.100; Phillips, pp.350-1. Previous historians have looked at them, but not used them as in this article. While that Quakers opposed militarism is of course well known, the specific arguments, discourse and language have not been so considered. Brian Phillips' thesis covers approximately the same period as this article, but focuses on different aspects.
15. Historians of modern British politics have in recent years been more concerned with public debate, language and discourse, and so with published sources, Paul Readman, *Land and Nation in England: patriotism, national identity, and the politics of land, 1880-1914* (London: Royal Historical Society, 2008), p.208. Brian Phillips has contrasted the 'remarkable published records' with the 'curious lack of pertinent sources' on the 'Quaker Renaissance', Phillips, p.348.
16. Laity, chapters 6 and 7.
17. Less emotive terminology was available; 'paxist' (Ceadel, *Semi-Detached*, pp.147, 158, but not yet in *Oxford English Dictionary*) from the 1890s and 'pacifist', according to *OED*, from 1906.
18. John Wilson, *The Devilry of War or Construction & Destruction* (London: Friends' Peace Committee, 1913) p.16. The Peace Committee had started in 1888.
19. The Quaker Peace Committee in 1911-12 bought 20,000 copies of a condensed edition of Angell's *Great Illusion*; E (1912) p.109. On Quakers and Angell see also Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, pp.302-4. Compulsionists were interested in such works. *The Nation in Arms* reviewed and criticised *The Great Illusion*; *Nation in Arms*

- February 1911, pp.109-10; Easter 1912, pp.15-19.
20. To what extent 'weighty Friends' and the Quaker media expressed the views of other Quakers is problematic.
 21. *F* 4 April 1902, pp.12-13. However, George Shee, N.S.L. and T.F. advocates claimed military training made better workers; George F. Shee, *The Briton's First Duty* (London: Grant Richards, 1901) pp.217, 251; K.W. Mitchinson, *England's Last Hope: The Territorial Force, 1908-14* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2008) p.55.
 22. *F* 17 January 1902, p.38.
 23. G.A.N. Lowndes, *The Silent Social Revolution* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), p.33; Kennedy, *British Quakerism*, p.247.
 24. Arnold White, *Efficiency and Empire* (London: Methuen, 1901) pp.102-3; Bentley B. Gilbert, *The Evolution of National Insurance in Great Britain* (London: Michael Joseph, 1966) pp.83-7.
 25. *Times* 4 January 1902, p.9.
 26. *F* 17 January 1902, pp.33-4.
 27. There had long been popular hostility to barracks, which were associated with repression and with immorality; so the National Service League proposed training under canvas, not in barracks. George Shee told the Norfolk Commission (1903) barrack training 'seems to present a formidable obstacle in the minds of the British public ... the prejudice against barracks is very strong', qq 6836, 6944, *Report of the Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers: Minutes of Evidence I Cd.2062* (1904).
 28. On the 'Model Course', N.U.T. and Macnamara largely from Alan Penn, *Targeting Schools: drill, militarism and imperialism* (London: Routledge, 1999) pp.102-111, and Robin Betts, *Dr Macnamara 1861-1931* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999) pp.204-6.
 29. There was an undeclared status issue: for elementary school teachers to be bossed by lower-class common soldiers was an unacceptable indignity.
 30. *Schoolmaster*, quoted *F* 3 April 1903, p.218.
 31. *F* 3 April 1903, p.224. Macnamara, like most elementary school teachers, had not attended a university and was not a graduate, but in 1898 he was given an Hon. LL.D by St Andrews and thereafter, unlike most recipients of honorary doctorates, styled himself 'Dr'.
 32. *F* 17 April 1903, p.250.
 33. *F* 9 January 1903, p.21. This had particular resonance for some readers: the theme of licentious soldiery recurred in pacifist propaganda, and that of male depravity in moral-reform and

feminist propaganda: for example, a decade later, Christabel Pankhurst's *The Great Scourge*. Moreover 'young girl teachers', whether pupil teachers or after teacher-training college, were younger than their counterparts today.

34. *F* 23 January 1903, p.61.
35. *F* 19 June 1903, p.421.
36. Emlyn Warren, *Quaker Members of Parliament c1650-1970* (c1970) p.25, Library, Friends House. See also Isichei, pp.200-208.
37. Edward M. Spiers, *Haldane: an army reformer* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1980) pp. 96-8; *idem*, *The Army and Society 1815-1914* (London: Longman, 1980) pp.275-8; Ian F.W. Beckett, *The amateur military tradition 1558-1945* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991) p.213.
38. *BF* June 1907, p.164.
39. Spiers (1980) pp.112-113; Beckett (1991) p.215.
40. *F* 21 January 1910, p40.
41. Robbins, p.14; Laity, p.202; Robert Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) pp.13-14, 299-301.
42. On Boy Scouts and Vane largely from Tim Jeal, *Baden-Powell* (London: Pimlico, 1991) pp.403-8.
43. *F* 12 June 1908, p.404.
44. *F* 3 July 1908, p.455.
45. *BF* February 1910, pp.36-7.
46. *BF* March 1910, p.78.
47. *F* 1 April 1910, p.200.
48. *F* 13 April 1910, p.241.
49. David Howell, *British Workers and the Independent Labour Party 1888-1906* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984) p.345.
50. *Times* 8 July 1899, p.11.
51. *E* (1900) pp.171-3.
52. On the N.S.L. see R.T Stearn, 'National Service League', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* online; *idem*, 'The Case for Conscription', *History Today*, April 2008; and works there cited especially M.J. Allison, 'The national service issue, 1899-1914' (unpublished doctoral thesis, London University, King's College, 1975), and R.J.Q. Adams and Philip P. Poirier, *The Conscription Controversy in Great Britain, 1900-18* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1987). Although in *The Times* and *Haydn's Dictionary of Dates*, the founding of the N.S.L. was later misdated by Elie Halévy, Max Beloff and Martin Ceadel.
53. *F* 28 March 1913, p.198; *F* 13 January 1905, p.26. Some Quakers may have been relatively favourable to Roberts because he had

- supported their project to return Boer Bibles taken during the war: Hirst, p.485; Hewison, pp.250-1.
54. Laity, p.203. The N.S.L.'s income was much less than that of the Suffragette Women's Social and Political Union, Martin Pugh, *The March of the Women* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) p.218. See also Holton, *Quaker Women*, p.214.
 55. Prominent Cadburys have been variously interpreted. On Cadbury Brothers and slave-grown cacao see Kevin Grant, *A Civilised Savagery: Britain and the new slaveries in Africa, 1884-1926* (London: Routledge, 2005) chapter 4.
 56. Caroline E. Playne, *The Pre-War Mind in Britain* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1928) p.147. Miss Playne was Anglican.
 57. J.T. Walton Newbold, *The War Trust Exposed* (London: National Labour Press, 1913) pp.14-16. Armaments manufacture was contrary to Quaker tenets and in the eighteenth century some had been disowned for it.
 58. Shee, *Briton's First Duty*, p.233.
 59. F 9 February 1906, p.93.
 60. E (1913) p.102.
 61. F 13 January 1905, p.26.
 62. F 28 March 1913, p.198.
 63. F 9 February 1906, p.87.
 64. F 24 February 1911, pp.124-6.
 65. F 3 October 1913, p.647.
 66. F 5 December 1913, p.798.
 67. On Anglo-German relations see Paul Kennedy, *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism 1860-1914* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1980); A.J.A. Morris, *The Scaremongers; the advocacy of the war and rearmament 1896-1914* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984); and John Ramsden, *Don't mention the war: the British and the Germans since 1890* (London: Little, Brown, 2006).
 68. David James, *Lord Roberts* (London: Hollis & Carter, 1954) p.457.
 69. F 30 July 1909, p.517.
 70. BF January 1912, p.1
 71. Stephen E. Koss, *Sir John Brunner: Radical Plutocrat 1842-1919* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970) p.223; A.J.A. Morris, *Radicalism Against War, 1906-1914* (London: Longman, 1972) pp.198-201. For a critical view of the Quakers' role, alleging their obsequiousness, gullibility, hubris, and 'courting' the Kaiser, see Phillips, section 3, 'British Quakerism and the Anglo-German friendship industry'.
 72. Dudley, p.95.
 73. There were 664 Quakers in Australia and 143 in New Zealand;

- Hirst, p488. Australia and new Zealand did not have autonomous Yearly Meetings until 1964.
74. *E* (1914) p.122. British Quakers also sent other sums to Australia and New Zealand.
 75. William N. Oats, 'The Campaign against Conscription in Australia - 1911 to 1914', *Journal of the Friends Historical Society* vol. 55 no. 7 (1989) p.214.
 76. Colonial Observer', *A Blot on the Empire: Conscription in New Zealand* (London: Friends' Peace Committee, nd, 1913) p.16
 77. *E* (1912) pp.167, 162.
 78. *E* (1911) p.114, (1914) p.112, (1913) p.101.
 79. Lesley C. Jauncey, *The Story of Conscription in Australia* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1936); John Barrett, *Falling In; Australians and 'Boy Conscription', 1911-1915* (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1979); Thomas Tanner, *Compulsory Citizen Soldiers* (Sydney: Alternative Publishing Co-operative, 1980); Oats, op.cit.; Laity, chapter 7; Peter Brock, *The Quaker Peace Testimony 1660 to 1914* (York: Sessions, 1990) chapter XXIV; Kennedy (2001) chapter 8; Peter Brock, *Against the Draft: essays on conscientious objection from the radical reformation to the Second World War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006) chapter 14; Jeffrey Grey, *A Military History of Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) chapter 4.
 80. *F* 24 February 1911, p.124. Quaker use of patriotic discourse was presumably indicative of the pervasiveness of patriotism through much of the political spectrum, as shown by recent historians; see Paul Ward, *Red Flag and Union Jack: Englishness, patriotism and the British left, 1881-1924* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1998) and Readman. It might be interpreted as supporting Brian Phillips' view of Friendly patriot' accommodation with the establishment.
 81. *F* 27 March 1914, p.217. See also note 27.
 82. *F* 24 February 1911, p.123; *BF* September 1913, p.258.
 83. *F* 11 October 1912, p.653.
 84. *Ibid.* p.662.
 85. Kennedy, 'Quaker Renaissance', pp.252, 272; *idem*, *British Quakerism*, p.9. According to incomplete statistics, 45 percent of Quakers were conscientious objectors, Hirst, p.538.