

CHARLOTTE FELL SMITH, FRIEND, BIOGRAPHER AND EDITOR

In the later seventeenth century Quaker missionaries made many converts in north-east Essex, at Colchester, Felsted, Thaxted, Great Saling and elsewhere.¹ During the nineteenth century, after declining in the area for many years, Quakerism achieved a modest revival.² Among its local stalwarts was Joseph Smith, of Woolpits, Great Saling, farmer and landowner, J.P. and County Alderman. He married Mary, daughter of James and Charlotte Fell Christy, also Quakers, of Broomfield. Charlotte Fell Smith (1851-1937) was their daughter.³

Charlotte was educated at Friends' schools in Lewes (Sussex) and York.⁴ The school in Lewes, which has not been identified, may have been that conducted in the town from 1855 to 1874 or later by Catherine Trusted, her sister Mary, and Rachel Speciall.⁵ At York, Charlotte spent exactly one year, January to December 1866, at the well-known Mount School for girls.⁶

Charlotte never married. She was still living in the family home at Great Saling in 1904. By 1909 she had moved to 33 (later 25) Chenies Street Chambers, London, near the British Museum, between Tottenham Court Road and Gower Street. She was still there in 1918, but by 1920 had returned to Essex, living for the rest of her life at Five Corners, Felsted.⁷

The Dictionary of National Biography

Charlotte's serious writing began about 1885, drafting articles for the *Dictionary of National Biography*.⁸ The *DNB*, founded in 1882 by George Smith, of Smith, Elder & Co., appeared in 63 volumes between 1885 and 1900, under the editorship of (Sir) Leslie Stephen and later of (Sir) Sidney Lee. The editors, besides writing many articles themselves, recruited 653 outside contributors, of whom 100 were 'more or less regular and voluminous contributors.' 'The contributors were subject to strict rules and to detailed scrutiny by the editors.'⁹ Thirty-four are listed in 1900 as having written the largest number of pages in the *Dictionary*, each equivalent in total to at least half a volume.¹⁰ It seems surprising that Charlotte is not in this list, since she wrote 225 articles up to 1900, more than did nine of those who do appear in the list. The totals do, of course, depend on the length of the articles, and most of hers are short. But it is probably safe to say that Charlotte was among the 50 principal contributors to

the *DNB*, and it can certainly be added that her biographies are well up to the high standard of the series. Her first articles appeared in 1891, under the letter K.¹¹ After the completion of the original edition she contributed 20 more articles, to the *First Supplement* (1901) and the *Second Supplement* (1912), bringing her final tally to 245.

In one respect Charlotte was pre-eminent among *DNB* contributors. The editor's 'Statistical Account' states that 'numerous Quakers [have been entrusted] to Miss Fell Smith.' She actually wrote 79 articles relating to Friends, many of whom came from Quakerism's heroic age: aggressive evangelists who endured persecution and often imprisonment for proclaiming their faith. James Parnell (1637?-1656), the 'Quaker protomartyr', died in Colchester gaol. Charlotte later wrote a book about him.¹² Rebecca Travers (1609-88) was a fearless and powerful preacher in London. Several men were friends of George Fox, including Thomas Taylor (1618-82), a convert who gave up an Anglican living and suffered much for his new faith. John Perrot (d. 1671?), was imprisoned in Rome for preaching against popery, and later emigrated to the West Indies. In New England, where the Quakers were treated even more harshly than in Britain, several were executed. William Leddra (d. 1661) was the last of these. Anthony Pearson (1628-1670?), and John Pennyman (1628-1706) became Quakers in the 1650s, but apostatized after the Restoration.

Other Friends treated by Charlotte in the *DNB* include Thomas Lawson (1630-91), botanist, Anthony Purver (1707-77), translator of the Bible, Mary Roberts (1788-1864), natural historian, and William Pollard (1828-93), writer of schoolbooks and works on Quakerism. Among philanthropists are Elizabeth Hanbury (1793-1901), friend of Elizabeth Fry and opponent of slavery. Other abolitionists are William Naish (1785-1860) and Joseph Sturge (1793-1859). John Priestman (1805-66) was a cloth-manufacturer noted for his enlightened treatment of the women in his 'Lady Mills' as they came to be called. John Kendall (1726-1815) founded almshouses at Colchester.¹³ Edwin Tregelles (1806-86), railway engineer, was an evangelist at home and abroad. Sir Joseph W. Pease (1828-1903), merchant and Liberal M.P., was the first Quaker baronet.

Even more numerous than the Quakers among Charlotte's subjects in the *DNB* were 110 clergy, mostly Anglican, but including a few nonconformists and Roman Catholics. The earliest was Thomas Richards (d. 1564?), prior of Totnes in Devon, and later rector of St. George, Exeter. He was said to be 'a man of good and virtuous conversation and a good viander.' Degory Nicholls (d. 1591), though 'contentious and very disorderly', became master of Magdalene

College, Cambridge and canon of Exeter. John Nicholls (1555-1584?), originally an Anglican curate, turned Roman Catholic, later recanted, but finally returned to Rome.

Samuel Pullen (1598-1667) was archbishop of Tuam, and John Richardson (1580-1654), bishop of Ardagh, both in Ireland. Among archdeacons were John Walker (d. 1588), of Essex, Josias Shute (1588-1643), of Colchester, and Thomas Plume (1630-1704) of Rochester, founder of a library at Maldon (Essex). John Norton (1606-63) instigated the persecution of Quakers in New England. Samuel Rolle (fl. 1657-78), and Sayer Rudd (d. 1757), practised as physicians. William Tathersall (1762-1829) edited psalmodies. John Owen (1766-1822) was secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society. John Russell (1786-1863) was headmaster of Charterhouse and canon of Canterbury.

Among many Puritans were several ejected from their livings in 1662, like Thomas Mallory (fl. 1662), Nathaniel Ranew (1602?-1678) and Edward Reyner (1600-68). Royalists included Thomas Paske (d. 1662), master of Clare Hall, Cambridge. He was deprived of his benefices during the Civil War but recovered some of them at the Restoration. William Watts (1590?-1649) was chaplain to Prince Rupert, Thomas Pittis (1636-82) to Charles II, and Nathaniel Resbury (1643-1711) to William and Mary. Peter Sterry (d. 1672), was Cromwell's chaplain.

Henrick Niclaes (Henry Nicholas, fl. 1502-80) was founder of the mystical sect called 'The Family of Love'; Christopher Vitell (fl. 1555-79) was one of his followers.¹⁴ Matthew Slade (1569-1628?) became an elder of the Brownist church in Amsterdam.¹⁵ John Shaw (1559-1625) was deprived for nonconformity in 1596. Henry Whitfeld (d. 1660), once in Anglican orders, became a nonconformist and emigrated to America, where he founded Guildford, Connecticut.

Baptists include Thomas Patient (d. 1666), who served in New England and later in Ireland; William Pardoe (d. 1692), imprisoned for his faith; William Russel (d. 1702), physician; and Daniel Turner (1710-98), hymn-writer. Thomas Lord (1808-1908), Congregational minister, preached in his 101st year. Joseph Roberts, Methodist missionary in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), published Tamil translations. James Wadsworth (1572?-1623) held Anglican livings in Suffolk before converting to Rome and becoming an officer of the Spanish Inquisition.

Some 36 of Charlotte's subjects were writers, mostly scholars.¹⁶ Robert Rothe (1550-1622), Irish barrister, left in MS a 'Register of Antiquities of Kilkenny'. Henry Swinden (1716-72) wrote the *History of Great Yarmouth* (1772). Ebenezer Rhodes (1762-1839), master cutler,

published *Peak Scenery* (1818-24), a standard work on Derbyshire. William J.C. Möens (1833-1904) was kidnapped by Italian brigands and described his experiences in a best-selling book. He later helped to found the Huguenot Society of London, for which he edited several local registers. Among orientalists was James Robertson (1714-95), professor at Edinburgh, who published a Hebrew grammar. Thomas Maude (1718-98), once a ship's surgeon, wrote poems on the Yorkshire dales and contributed to Francis Grose's *Antiquities of England and Wales*. Samuel Pullen (fl. 1734-1760) published several treatises on silkworms.

Fourteen women figure among Charlotte's subjects, including six who were Quakers. Mary Rich, countess of Warwick (1625-78), later appears in one of the writer's principal books. Mariana Starke (1762?-1838), was a pioneer in publishing guide books. Emilia Boucherett (1825-1905) was an early champion of women's rights. Elizabeth Blackwell (1821-1910) was the first woman doctor of medicine.

The remaining subjects, numbering about 20, range widely in date and occupation. Robert Rich, earl of Warwick (1587-1658) helped to found Connecticut, Rhode Island and other American colonies. During the Civil War he supported Parliament and became lord high admiral. In Essex he owned a great estate at Little Leighs, and became lord-lieutenant. He was father-in-law to Mary, countess of Warwick, mentioned above. His grandson, another Robert Rich, married one of Oliver Cromwell's daughters. This *DNB* article is one of Charlotte's longest.

Another staunch Parliamentarian was Isaac Penington (1587?-1660), lord mayor of London, who was one of Charles I's judges, and died in the Tower after the Restoration. John de Reede (Johan van Reede van Renswoode) (1593-1683) came to England in 1644 as a Dutch ambassador, in an attempt to mediate between Charles I and Parliament. The king is said to have made him a baron at that time, but it is doubtful if the creation was valid.¹⁷

Explorers include Richard Rich (fl. 1609-10), whose *Newes from Virginia* probably inspired scenes in Shakespeare's *Tempest*, and Sydney Parkinson (1745-71), a draughtsman who sailed with Captain Cook to the South Seas. [Editor: see also David Sox, "Sydney Parkinson (1745-1771): Quaker Artist with Cook's *Endeavour* Voyage", *Journal of the Friends Historical Society* 59/3 (2002), 231-235.] Charles Western, baron Western (1767-1844), was an antiquary, Essex M.P., and agriculturalist. Joseph Nutt (1700-75), originally an apothecary, became surveyor of Leicestershire highways. James Wadsworth (1604-1656?) was a Spanish scholar and renegade spy.

Thirty-three of Charlotte's subjects had Essex connexions.¹⁸ Among

them, besides those previously mentioned, are Matthew Newcomen (1610?-1669), church reformer, who after ejection from his living, became pastor of the English church at Leiden in Holland; and David Ogborne (d. 1801), an artist noted for his painting of the 'Dunmow Flitch' ceremony.

Some 44 per cent of the subjects were born between 1600 and 1699, 29 per cent between 1700 and 1799, 16 per cent between 1500 and 1599, and the remaining 11 per cent between 1800 and 1899. These figures show that Charlotte, while specializing in the seventeenth century, was competent in other periods. Her topographical range was also wide, with subjects residing in or visiting places not only in Great Britain and Ireland, but in Europe, North America, the West Indies, Africa, India, Ceylon, and Australasia. Particularly notable are Ireland and Holland, which figure also in some of her later writings.

Those who have written no more than a couple of articles for the *DNB*, like the present writer, can only marvel at the number of Charlotte's contributions to the series, during twenty years when she was publishing substantial work elsewhere.

The Essex Review

The Essex Review, 'a quarterly record of everything of permanent interest in the county,' was launched in 1892 by Edmund Durrant of Chelmsford, supported by several historians, including Edward A. Fitch and Miller Christy.¹⁹ The first two volumes, for 1892 and 1893, were edited jointly by Fitch and W.H. Dalton. Fitch then carried on alone until 1898, when Charlotte, who had from the first contributed articles and notes to the *Review*, became joint editor. In 1902, soon after Edmund Durrant's death, a few subscribers formed a Limited company to buy the journal from his widow. The directors were Thomas Stevens, bishop of Barking (chairman), W. Gurney Benham, Frederic Chancellor, Miller Christy, and Edward A. Fitch. Charlotte became secretary of the company. She may well have been drawn into work for the *Review* by Miller Christy, who was her cousin.²⁰

E.A. Fitch, who was a county councillor and six times mayor of Maldon, left most of the editorial work to Charlotte. When he died in 1912 she became officially sole editor, serving until her retirement at the end of 1933 (volume xlii). With a small circulation, the *Review* was often in financial difficulties. In 1914, at the outbreak of the First World War, it faced closure, but Charlotte secured sufficient pledges from subscribers to guarantee it against future losses.²¹ On at least one occasion she undertook editorial chores well beyond her normal

duties. This was in 1930-1 when she assembled, as supplements to volumes 39 and 40, 'The Parish of High Easter,' based on the MSS of the late Edward Gepp.

Besides editing the *Review*, Charlotte published items in most of the volumes appearing in her lifetime.²² Her first contribution, 'On a group of Essex divines,' concerns the authorship of a puritan pamphlet of 1641, and that of the royalist *Eikon Basilike*.²³ The last is a note on 'Felsted in Denmark.'²⁴ Among biographical articles are 'The Western family of Rivenhall'; 'Daniel Whittle Harvey'; and 'William Bendlowes of Great Bardfield Place.'²⁵ 'The press of Essex 1832-97,' is a useful up-to-date survey.²⁶ 'The Courtauld family and their industrial enterprise' is a pioneering study of crepe manufacture.²⁷ 'A history of corn-milling in Essex' is by Charlotte jointly with Wilson Marriage.²⁸ 'Lace-making at Great Waltham' describes the lace-club recently started by Olive Tufnell at Langleys.²⁹ It includes photographs taken by Charlotte's cousin, Miss C. Christy. 'Newport school and its founder' concerns the will (dated 1587) of Joyce Frankland.³⁰

These articles are well written and scholarly, involving much research. The shorter articles and the many brief notes also show wide reading and acquaintance with original sources, as in 'Hovelesland in Rayne,' which quotes charters of 1329 and 1344, unnoticed by Reaney in *Place Names of Essex*.³¹ Among examples of oral history is 'In harvest time,' which is based on the reminiscences of Polly Amos, wife of an Essex farm worker.³² Brought up in the country, Charlotte appreciated the skills of farm workers, 'able to plough, to drive a team, to mow, to plant, to hedge-and-ditch, to land ditch, to saw and hew timber, set hurdles, build stacks, clean wurzel, and, most delicate of operations, to drive the drill or the binder.' Such human touches, as well as the *Review's* interest in current affairs, show that Charlotte was by no means a Dryasdust. For her biographer another welcome feature of the journal is its thorough reviewing of all her books.

The Victoria County History of Essex

The Victoria History of the Counties of England, launched in 1899 by Archibald Constable & Co. as a private company, was planned on a grand scale. Each county was to have its own history, comprising general volumes on various aspects of the whole county, and topographical volumes describing each town and parish. *VCH Essex II* (1907), a general volume, includes four contributions by Charlotte.³³ Three are brief items in the section on INDUSTRIES,

edited by Miller Christy; the fourth is the complete section on SCHOOLS.

'The manufacture of "Art" pottery' (414-15) deals with the Hedingham ware made by the Bingham family in the later nineteenth century. The account is based partly on the diary of E.W. Bingham. Charlotte followed this up some years later with an *Essex Review* article.³⁴

'The silk industry' (462-9) is the joint work of Charlotte and Miller Christy. It draws upon her recent *Essex Review* article on the Courtaulds' family business.³⁵

'Lace-making' (484-7) is concerned mainly with the making of tambour-lace at Coggeshall and neighbourhood from c.1815. It concludes with a paragraph on the pillow-lace school recently started at Langleys in Great Waltham, as previously described by Charlotte in *Essex Review*.³⁶

SCHOOLS (501-64) contains some 42,000 words.³⁷ It is based on many sources, including original records at the school themselves, the Public Record Office, and the British Museum. Documents most often used at the Public Record Office were the Exchequer Certificates of Colleges and Chantries (now class E301) and the Chancery Petty Bag Charity Inquisitions (now class C205). British Museum records include Additional and Harleian MSS. The section contains histories of grammar or secondary schools (501-51) and brief details of elementary schools founded before 1800 (551-64). The oldest grammar schools were at Colchester, Chelmsford, Maldon, Saffron Walden, Walthamstow, Brentwood, and Felsted, all dating from the sixteenth century, and still flourishing.³⁸ Another sixteenth century foundation, Queen Elizabeth's Dedham, was successful in the eighteenth and earlier nineteenth century, but closed in 1893. The most useful records of the schools themselves are accounts, which occasionally provide the most extraordinary information. At Felsted, for example, the schoolmaster's duties included the distribution of herrings in Lent to the poor of Felsted, Little Leighs, and Great Waltham. This custom continued until 1851, when an Act of Parliament provided that the Lenten doles should be given in cash, clothing, fuel or medical relief (532 note 1).

The elementary schools in the section include sixteen known to have existed in the sixteenth century, and eight from the seventeenth century.³⁹ Several of these had originally been, or were intended to be, grammar schools. Leyton Technical institute (561) is wrongly included among the elementary schools.

A few of the items in this sub-section relate to foundations that never actually took effect. Among them is the strange case of

Tillingham, where Gregory Baker, by his will dated 1653, left considerable estates to Grace Gaywood (presumably a relative) provided that she married a man named Baker. If she did not do so, or died without heirs, the property was to go, on the same conditions, to Grace Barrett, or after her in tail to her sisters. Failing these contingencies, the property was to provide for the building of a school in Tillingham and the master's salary. Although none of the women named did marry a Baker, no school seems to have been established, and the legacy was eventually used to build almshouses in the village.

An authoritative reviewer of this volume rightly describes *SCHOOLS* as 'a most exhaustive account, enriched with details of many forgotten founders, and [which] must prove extremely valuable.'⁴⁰ Before 1907 comparatively little had been written on the history of Essex schools, so this is a notable pioneering study. Charlotte's only previous publication on the subject had been an article on the foundation of Newport grammar school.⁴¹ In her *VCH* article she had some help from Arthur F. Leach, the editor responsible for *Schools* throughout the whole series. How much this amounted to is uncertain. The Editorial Note to *Essex II* mentions Leach's 'careful revision' of the *Schools* article. Charlotte herself acknowledges his help with several schools, especially Saffron Walden grammar school (518 note 3).

This article has stood up well to a century of use. Some 30 corrigenda are recorded in the lists published in later *VCH* volumes.⁴² About a dozen of these relate to serious errors, usually of dating. Other corrections, and fuller accounts, appear in such works as R.R. Lewis, *History of Brentwood School* (1981), Michael Craze, *Felsted School* (1965), and W.J. Petchey, *Maldon Grammar School* (1958).⁴³ Many schools founded since 1907 now have histories, as do some pre-1907 schools. But within its own terms of reference, Charlotte's article is still valuable.

Separate Books⁴⁴

STEVEN CRISP AND HIS CORRESPONDENTS, 1657-1692 was published in 1892, when Charlotte was already working for the *DNB*. Steven Crisp (1628-92) was a wealthy bay-maker at Colchester. Having been converted by the preaching of James Parnell, he became a leading Quaker, devoting most of his life to evangelism throughout England and also on the Continent, particularly in Holland. He corresponded with other prominent Quakers and with the learned and pious Elizabeth, Princess of the Palatine, grand-daughter of

James I of England, and aunt of George I. She was abbess of the Lutheran convent of Herford, near Hanover in Germany, where she sheltered many religious dissenters, including Quakers.

Crisp's voluminous letters and papers were acquired by Colchester Monthly meeting of the Society of Friends. This book is a carefully annotated edition, with an introduction describing the Quaker movement and the lives of Crisp and his friends. It also contains a list of the 'Distrains and Imprisonments' of Essex Quakers, 1656-70, a copy of Crisp's will, and details of his papers at Devonshire House in London. The excellent index ranges from Amsterdam, Connecticut and Glasgow, to Ulster, Warsaw, and Zurich. It is especially rich in Essex place-names, listing over 30. Among personalities are such leading Quakers as George Fox, William Penn, Robert Barclay, John and Benjamin Furly.

In the Preface Charlotte notes that Steven Crisp's papers have recently been cleaned, mended and rebound through the generosity of Wilson Marriage, mayor of Colchester, whose knowledge of Colchester history has also helped her.⁴⁵ She thanks her cousin Miller Christy for valuable suggestions while the book was in the press, and J.J. Beuzmacher for help with the Dutch MSS.

Steven Crisp received a somewhat patronizing, unsigned review from a writer who was evidently not a Quaker nor in sympathy with 'this now somewhat-effete body.'⁴⁶ He commends the book as 'of high value and interest' to our knowledge of the early Quakers (general and local) and thinks that its best feature is the Introduction. But he considers the synopsis of Crisp's MSS is 'not very interesting.' He congratulates Charlotte 'on the literary ability displayed in her work.'

MARY RICH, COUNTESS OF WARWICK (1625-78), HER FAMILY AND FRIENDS (1901) is a substantial and valuable book.⁴⁷ Charlotte had already written a brief life of Lady Warwick for *DNB*. Mary was the thirteenth child of Richard Boyle (1566-1643), who built up a great estate at Youghal, near Cork in Ireland. He had married well, increased his fortune by copper mining and banking, and became first earl of Cork. Mary's childhood was spent at Youghal and at Stalbridge in Dorset, another of her father's manors. At the age of 15, in spite of her father's disapproval, she married Charles Rich, a younger son of the earl of Warwick. The earl was lord of Little Leighs Priory in Essex ('delicious Leez').

At the time of his marriage Charles had few expectations, but in 1659 after the deaths of his father and brother, he succeeded to the Warwick earldom. Mary spent her married life mainly at Leez, a

Tudor mansion on the site of an Augustinian priory, with occasional visits to Warwick House in London. She left a Diary and a Autobiography, which depict her family life and her friends, especially those in Essex. She was deeply and increasingly religious, with Puritan sympathies, employing domestic chaplains and entertaining many clergy at Leez, including some ejected from their livings for nonconformity. She was much concerned for her many relatives, and took care of three young nieces on their father's death.

An unsigned review of *Mary Rich* finds it 'one of the best of its kind recently published, and a really valuable addition to our knowledge of the social and domestic history of the time.'⁴⁸ The book has many pleasant illustrations, and an excellent index. There is no bibliography, but most of the sources can be traced in the text or the occasional footnotes. They include, beside Mary Rich's writings, the *Lismore papers* relating to the earl of Cork, which had recently been edited by Alexander B. Grossart.⁴⁹ In the Preface, Charlotte expresses gratitude 'to the memory' of Grossart 'for his useful hints and suggestions in the earlier stages of the book.' He had been a Presbyterian Doctor of Divinity. Like Charlotte he had contributed to *DNB*, but he had caused Leslie Stephen great difficulty and embarrassment by breaching the copyright of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* in one article, and by sending him abusive letters.⁵⁰ There is no evidence that Charlotte knew this.

Charlotte also thanks 'my friends Mr Miller Christy and Thomas Seccombe, as well as Mr E. Irving Carlyle' for 'invaluable assistance in correcting the proofs, and for much excellent and learned advice throughout.' Seccombe and Carlyle had both been assistant editors of *DNB*. Seccombe (1866-1923) had been educated in Essex, at Felsted.⁵¹ He and Carlyle (1871-1952) both went on to academic posts after the completion of *DNB*.⁵²

JAMES PARNELL (1906, 2nd edn. 1907) is a little book marking the 250th anniversary of the death of the first Quaker martyr. Parnell (1637-56) had already figured in an article by Charlotte in *DNB* and in her *Steven Crisp*.⁵³ Born at Retford (Notts), he began to proclaim his faith after visiting George Fox in prison at Carlisle. In 1655 he arrived in Essex, visiting Stebbing, Halstead, Witham, Colchester, and then Coggeshall, where he was arrested for preaching. After trial at Chelmsford assizes he was imprisoned in the county gaol in Colchester castle. There he was cruelly treated in appalling conditions, and after nine months wasted away and died.

An Introduction to *James Parnell* is contributed by Wilson Marriage, who had previously helped Charlotte with *Steven Crisp*. Marriage

(c.1842-1932), a Colchester miller and four times mayor of the borough, was himself a Quaker.⁵⁴

Besides being a powerful preacher, Parnell wrote pugnacious and popular tracts with such titles as 'The trumpet of the Lord blown' and 'Goliath's head cut off.' The final chapter of the book deals with the later history of 'The Friends in Essex,' mainly in the later seventeenth century.

A review of *James Parnell* mentions a 250th anniversary rally of Friends held at Colchester castle in June 1906, and addressed by Thomas Hodgkin, historian and active Quaker.⁵⁵

MEMORIALS OF OLD ESSEX (1908) is a symposium by 12 writers under the editorship of A. Clifton Kelway, rector of Corringham.⁵⁶ It was a part of a series called *Memorials of the Counties of England*.⁵⁷ This aimed 'to gather together the principal episodes of a county's history and afford prominence to some of its outstanding characteristics and features.'

The most notable article in the book is 'The Monumental Brasses of Essex', by Miller Christy, W.W. Porteous and E. Bertram Smith. Among other contributors are the editor and Guy Maynard, each with two articles. Charlotte also wrote two: 'Historic Houses' (184-208) and 'Essex Worthies' (226-46). Both are useful surveys, in a readable, breezy style. The houses in the first article are mostly well-chosen, although excessive space is devoted to one or two buildings about which little is known, for example Pleshey Castle; and legend is sometimes quoted as fact, as with Edward the Confessor at Havering.⁵⁸ There are three photographs of great mansions: Audley End, Layer Marney Hall, and Spains Hall. A fourth illustrates some of the window-glass roundels at Colville Hall, White Roding, which represent rural occupations in each month of the year. These had previously been described and depicted by Miller Christy.⁵⁹

'Essex Worthies' is somewhat lacking in balance and scope. More than half of its twenty pages are devoted to the naturalist John Ray (1627-1705) and the poet Francis Quarles (1592-1644). There is no mention of such towering figures as Hubert de Burgh, chief justiciar and earl of Kent (d. 1243), Robert Fitzwalter (d. 1235), Baronial leader, William Byrd (d. 1623), musician, Thomas Fuller (d. 1661), historian, nor Elizabeth Fry (d. 1845) prison reformer. William Harvey (d. 1657), who discovered the circulation of the blood, finds only a passing (and incorrect) reference in a paragraph devoted to Dick Turpin (d. 1739) the highwayman.⁶⁰

A review of *Memorials of Old Essex* praises 'Historic Houses', but is less complimentary about 'Essex Worthies.'⁶¹

JOHN DEE (1909) is an impressive revisionist study. Charlotte claims that 'no learned author in history ... has been so persistently misjudged,' and re-examines him 'in the light of reason and science' (p. 1). She challenges previous writers who have dismissed Dee as fraudulent or even insane because of his experiments with occultism, without crediting him with considerable achievements as scientist, geographer and adviser to Elizabeth I.

John Dee (1527-1608), a Welshman by descent, was born in London, where his father Rowland was a gentleman server to Henry VIII. At an early age he was sent to the chantry grammar school at Chelmsford kept by Peter Wyleigh.⁶² After a brilliant career at St. John's College, Cambridge, and while still under twenty, he became one of the original fellows of Trinity College, Henry VIII's new foundation, and reader in Greek. Turning to mathematics, geography, astrology and geology, he spent two years at Louvain university in Belgium. Travelling next to Paris, he delivered a successful course of public lectures on mathematics, physics, and Pythagorean philosophy. This, he claimed, had never before been done in any Christian university.

By the time Dee returned to England in 1551 he could number among his friends many of the leading scholars of the day. He also found favour in the royal court, and after dedicating two books to Edward VI, was granted an annual pension. When Mary became queen in 1553, Dee was invited to cast her horoscope, and he did the same for princess Elizabeth. But his fame was beginning to attract enemies. In 1555 he was arrested on the complaint of a man who alleged that Dee's 'magic' had blinded one of his children, killed another, and was threatening the queen's life. Dee was eventually acquitted of treason, but was then delivered to the bishop of London, Edmund Bonner, for examination on his religious beliefs. He must have satisfied Bonner, for later in the year the bishop seems to have employed him to question John Philpot, who soon after was burnt as a heretic.⁶³

Elizabeth I employed Dee throughout her reign as a consultant astrologer, gave him occasional doles, and at last, in 1596, granted him the wardenship of Christ's College, Manchester. Although the college brought with it serious problems, and less profit than expected, Dee could at least depend on the queen's protection while she lived. But his situation changed with the accession of James I, whose first Parliament passed a stringent Act against witchcraft. This terrified Dee, who sent frantic petitions to the king in an attempt to clear his name.

Much of this book is devoted to Dee's experiments with occultism,

including clairvoyance, clairaudience, and alchemy. In these topics, described in Dee's diaries, Charlotte finds 'passages of extraordinary beauty' and 'here and there a gem of loftiest religious thought.' She points out that psychical research similar to Dee's has been in progress in this country since the mid nineteenth century, and she lists some of its literature in her bibliography. She discusses at length Dee's close association in such research with the fraudulent Edward Kelley, which distracted him from more useful work.

Dee's patriotism appears in his concern for the supremacy of the English navy, and his plan for the formulation of a national library. He was a pioneer in the reformation of the calendar. His cartographical studies, his links with navigators such as Frobisher and Hawkins, and his interest in the north-east passage to 'Cathay' (China), are mentioned, but receive much less attention than his 'magic'. It would, however, be unfair to blame Charlotte too harshly for this, since Dee's importance as a geographer was not fully revealed until 1930, when professor Eva G.R. Taylor published *Tudor Geography, 1485-1583*.⁶⁴ John Dee is a central figure in that book, which devotes three of its eight chapters to him, and lists his geographical works in an Appendix. The terminal date of 1583 was chosen because it was the year when Dee 'the man behind the scenes of overseas enterprise' abandoned his geographical activities after meeting Kelley. Eva Taylor states emphatically that 'a close examination of the evidence leaves no doubt of [Dee's] intellectual honesty and genuine patriotism.' That was certainly Charlotte's view.

John Dee was written at the suggestion of professor Silvanus P. Thompson, a distinguished scientist, and like Charlotte, a Quaker.⁶⁵ It received a long, learned and complimentary review by Charles E. Benham, editor of the *Essex County Standard*, who shared with Charlotte and Eva Taylor the view that John Dee was 'an earnest seeker after truth.'⁶⁶ Charlotte's book is still the fullest biography of John Dee.⁶⁷

AN ANTHOLOGY OF ESSEX (1911), is edited by Charlotte 'with additions and a Biographical Index'. She was persuaded to undertake it by her 'untiring friend' Henry W. Lewer, who also arranged that it should be based on material collected by Isabel and Beatrice Gould, from the library of their late uncle, Isaac Chalkley Gould.⁶⁸ Charlotte may have been anxious that her work as editor should receive proper recognition, for a publicity leaflet and the title-page of the book both print her name in larger type than those of the Goulds. *The Essex Review*, in her obituary, lists the *Anthology* among her publications,

without mentioning the Goulds, but in a later issue prints a Correction saying that the book was 'wrongly attributed' to Charlotte, and was compiled by Isabel and Mary Gould.⁶⁹ This incident suggests that the Goulds felt that they had received insufficient credit for their part in the book.

This is a pleasant and well-knit book that deserves to be better known. There are ten subject headings with titles such as 'Love for our County', 'Our farms, villages and flora', 'Our forest', 'Our poets on love, friendship, and the virtues', and 'Ballads, songs and rhymes.' The Biographical Index contains some 150 names, mostly of authors, but also of persons mentioned in the text. Some of the extracts do not relate specifically to Essex, having been chosen because their writers had connexions with the county, like Sydney Smith, whose epigrams are quoted.⁷⁰ But there are many topographical items. Among the earliest is William Harrison's account of the elms of Dovercourt, from his *Description of England* (1587).⁷¹ Arthur Young, in his *Tour through the Southern Counties* (1757) mentions the chalk wagons on the narrow and rutted road between Billericay and Tilbury.⁷² William Morris recalls from childhood the rural scene at Walthamstow, and the hornbeams in Epping forest.⁷³ Anthony Trollope gives a light-hearted account of his experiences with the Essex Hunt.⁷⁴ Charles Haddon Spurgeon depicts the grass walk at Stambourne parsonage, along which his grandfather used to pace when preparing his sermons. This walk, said a local farmer 'ud grow a many taters if it wor plowed up.'⁷⁵ Arthur Morrison writes of Cunning Murrell, the Essex wizard.⁷⁶

The *Anthology* includes items by (Sir) Gurney Benham, Miller Christy, and Edward A Fitch, all friends of the editor. There are four contributions by Charlotte herself. The most appealing is 'The Farm Labourer.'⁷⁷

An unsigned reviewer of the *Anthology* prefers the literary items to those of 'the mere topographer,' and suggests several authors who might have been included, but thinks that the book is 'a worthy memorial of past greatness [and] a reminder of modern development and possibilities.'

JAMES NICHOLSON RICHARDSON OF BESSBROOK (1925), the subject of this book, was an Irish manufacturer, Member of Parliament, and devout Quaker.⁷⁸ His family was engaged in the Ulster linen business for 150 years. John G. Richardson, James's father, built a model village for his workers at Bessbrook, near Newry (co. Armagh). This was developed by James himself, as chairman of the company, and influenced labour reformers at home and abroad.

James Richardson represented Armagh County as a Liberal during

Gladstone's second government, 1880-85, but he never sought re-election.⁷⁹ *Who was Who* describes him as having been a Liberal Unionist M.P. That is technically an anachronism, but it seems to indicate his position after 1885. He later sold 5,000 acres to tenants under the Irish Land Purchase Act, 1903, sponsored by George Wyndham in Balfour's Conservative government.⁸⁰

James Nicholson Richardson is reviewed by Guy J. Hornsby-Wright, then a master at Felsted School, and later fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge.⁸¹ He analyses the book clearly and sympathetically, noting Richardson's visit to Palestine, recorded in a diary which is 'the most interesting part of the book full of observation, fun, and literary instinct.' Richardson wrote books and poems, and painted in water colours. Above all, he was a strong man, 'whose life was ruled by God.'

Miscellaneous Papers

A few items are listed below in the Bibliography, which also names some of the periodicals to which Charlotte is known to have contributed.

Summary and Conclusions

Little is known of Charlotte Fell Smith's personal life. She joined the Essex Archaeological Society in 1899, on the nomination of the honorary secretary, George F. Beaumont, who as a Braintree solicitor would have known her family.⁸² She never contributed to the *EAS Transactions*, nor served on Council. But she gave the Society a number of books and documents, transcribed a register for its 'Index of Marriages', and prepared the General Index to the first ten volumes of the *Transactions* (1858-95), published in 1900.⁸³

Charlotte was always a loyal Quaker. For most of her life, while living in Essex, she belonged to Thaxted Monthly Meeting. During her London years she was a member of Westminster and Longford Monthly Meeting.⁸⁴ On various occasions, between 1906 and 1915, she worked on Quaker records in the library of Friends House, Euston Road. Her transcriptions of the A.R. Barclay MSS are in the library.⁸⁵

Charlotte gained a place in *Who's Who*, where she figures as editor of *Essex Review* and gives her recreations as 'reading and travel.'⁸⁶ In retirement, aged eighty-four, she made an extensive tour of the Mediterranean and Greece.⁸⁷ Her photograph, taken in later life, shows a strong face with a direct, challenging look.⁸⁸ She was a fine editor and a good writer, with great determination and stamina.

While serious minded, she was not lacking in imagination. In writing *John Dee*, for example, she offers:

a word of apology to serious historical readers for the incorrigibly romantic tendency of much of the narrative, which, in spite of the stern sentinel of a literary conscience, would continually assert itself.⁸⁹

W. Raymond Powell

Acknowledgements

This paper has been made possible by the kindness of several people. I am grateful to Howard Gregg for including it in the *Journal*. David Leonard, honorary archivist of the Mount School, York, and Heather Rowland, librarian of Friends House, have provided information from the records in their charge. Heather also arranged for the loan of one of Charlotte Fell Smith's books. The list of Charlotte's contributions to the *DNB*, here published for the first time, was supplied by Debbie Simpson of the *New DNB*. Helen Coghill typed the article with her usual skill and patience. My wife Avril has read the text in draft and in proof. As always I am indebted to her for support and encouragement as well as her editorial experience. This paper was written before the publication of Rosemary Mitchell's article on CFS in *Oxford DNB*

NOTES AND REFERENCES

For abbreviations see below under Bibliography.

- 1 C. Fell Smith, *James Parnell* (1907), 91-107; and her *Steven Crisp and his correspondents* (1892), *passim*.
- 2 As at Colchester: *VCH Essex*, X. 343.
- 3 *Who was Who*, iii (1929-40), 437 (Charlotte Fell Smith). In this paper she is sometimes cited as CFS.
- 4 *Ibid.*; obit, in *ER* xlvi (1937), 135.
- 5 Inf. supplied by the Librarian, Friends House, London, from advertisements in *The Friend* journal
- 6 *Register of Old Scholars of the Mount School, 1931-2*; inf. From the Archivist, Mount School, and the Librarian, Friends House, London.
- 7 For her addresses: *ER* vii (1898) and later vols.
- 8 For a Bibliography of CFS's publications see below.
- 9 *DNB* vol. 63, preface, *Statistical Account*: reprinted as Appendix to microprint edn. Vol. 2 (1975); F.W. Maitland, *Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen* (1906), 365-404; 454-7.
- 10 *Statistical Account*, as above.
- 11 Kendal, Jn. (1726-1815); Kilham, Hannah (1774-1832); Knowles, Mary (1733-1807).

- 12 See below.
- 13 Cf. *VCH Essex IX*, 368.
- 14 For the 'Family of Love': J.R.H. Moorman, *Hist. Church in England*, 247.
- 15 For the Brownists: *ibid.* 211.
- 16 The total figures for the different classes of occupation, quoted here and in the following paragraphs, are rough estimates only, since a particular person may be difficult to classify, or may fall into more than one class. And they do not include the occupations of Quakers.
- 17 Cf. *Complete Peerage x* (1945), 763.
- 18 Cf. *VCH Essex Bibliography* (1959), which lists them, though without the author's name. That list omits Thomas Pakeman (c. 1614-91), a dissenting minister at Stratford in West Ham, for whom see *VCH Essex VI*. 128.
- 19 'The Essex Review, our origin and progress,' in *ER xvi* (1908), 36-7; 'Our fiftieth volume,' *ER 1* (1941), 1-3.
- 20 C. Fell Smith, *Steven Crisp and his correspondents* (1892), Preface: ref. to Miller Christy as CFS's cousin.
- 21 *ER xxiii*. 221. In 1913 CFS was already urging greater support for *ER*, which had never yet reached 500 subscribers, and complaining of the lack of interest in it shown by Essex newspapers: *ibid.* xxii. 1.
- 22 See below, Bibliography.
- 23 *ER i* (1892), 107-11.
- 24 *ER xlv* (1936), 61.
- 25 *ER x* (1901), 1-22, 65-80; xxiv (1915), 24-30, 63-70, 132-8; xxvii (1918), 113-22.
- 26 *ER vi* (1897), 149-65.
- 27 *ER xii* (1903), 17-29.
- 28 *ER xvi* (1907), 184-95. For Marriage, Colchester miller, mayor and Quaker: *ER xli* (1932), 211-12.
- 29 *ER xiv* (1905), 208-13.
- 30 *ER xv* (1906), 73-82.
- 31 *ER xiv* (1905), 191-2.
- 32 *ER xii* (1903), 242-8. Reprinted from *The Land Magazine*, Aug. 1898 (no. 5).
- 33 See below, Bibliography; and W.R. Powell, 'The Victoria County History of Essex,' *Essex Journal*, 38 (2003), 43.
- 34 *ER xxxvii* (1928), 113-117.
- 35 *ER xii* (1903), 17-29.
- 36 *ER xiv* (1905), 208-13: and see above.
- 37 See below, Bibliography.
- 38 At Colchester, Maldon and Saffron Walden there is also evidence of medieval schools.
- 39 See below, Bibliography.
- 40 *ER xvi* (1907), 105.
- 41 *ER xv* (1906), 73-82.
- 42 *VCH Essex III, VI, X, and Bibliography Supplement*.
- 43 See also, e.g. *VCH Essex IX*, 353: Colchester Royal Grammar school.
- 44 See below, Bibliography.
- 45 For Wilson Marriage see also below s.v. JAMES PARNELL.
- 46 *ER i* (1892), 247-9. The reviewer may well have been the editor, E.A. Fitch.

- 47 See below, Bibliography.
- 48 ER xi (1901), 49-54.
- 49 A.B. Grossart, *Lismore Papers*, 10 vols. 1886-8. See *Bibliog. British History, 1603-1714*. 2nd edn. (1970), no. 4206.
- 50 Noel Annan, *Leslie Stephen* (1984), 85.
- 51 See *DNB; Who was Who*.
- 52 *Who was Who*.
- 53 See below, Bibliography
- 54 ER xli (1932), 211-2 (obit.).
- 55 ER xv (1906), 162-3. For Thomas Hodgkin (1813-1913) see *DNB*.
- 56 See below, Bibliography.
- 57 The general editor of the series was Peter H. Ditchfield (1854-1930), for whom see *Who was Who*. He was a prolific topographer who also edited *VCH Berkshire*.
- 58 For the Havering legends: *VCH Essex*. VII. 9.
- 59 ER xii (1903), 137-42.
- 60 William Harvey was buried at Hempstead, and not, as CFS states, born there.
- 61 ER xviii (1909), 61-2. For Essex worthies see *VCH Essex Bibliography* and its *First and Second Supplements*.
- 62 For this school: J.H. Johnson, *Chelmsford Grammar School* (1946, repr. From ER liv (1945) and lv (1946), which expands CFS's account in *VCH Essex* II.
- 63 For John Philpot (1516-55): *DNB*.
- 64 For Eva G.R. Taylor (1879-1966): *DNB*.
- 65 For Silvanus P. Thompson (1851-1916): *DNB*.
- 66 ER xviii (1909), 209-15. For C.E. Benham (1860-1929): ER xxxviii (1929), 94 (obit.).
- 67 Cf. *Bibliog. British Hist. 1485-1603*, ed. Conyers Read, no. 3974.
- 68 H.W. Lewer (1859-1949): Obit. *EAT* ns.xxv (1955-60), 120. I Chalkley Gould (1845-1907): Obit. *EAT* ns x (1909), 260. Both were prominent Essex antiquaries.
- 69 ER xlvi (1937), 134, 222.
- 70 For Sydney Smith (1771-1845): *DNB* and ER vi (1897), 137. He was born at Woodford.
- 71 For William Harrison (1534-93), rector of Radwinter: *DNB*.
- 72 For Arthur Young (1741-1820): *DNB*; ER lviii (1949), 144.
- 73 For William Morris (1834-96) writer and craftsman: *DNB*; E.P. Thompson, *William Morris* (1955, rev. 1977).
- 74 For Anthony Trollope (1815-82), novelist and Post Office official: *DNB*. For his Essex connexion: ER vi (1897), 232; xxxviii (1929), 185.
- 75 For Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-92), Baptist preacher: *DNB*.
- 76 For Arthur Morrison (1863-1945), novelist: *Oxford Chronology of English Literature* (2002), ii. 130.
- 77 See above under ER and reference 32.
- 78 For James N. Richardson (1846-1921) see also *Who was Who*. [Editor: see also W. Ross Chapman. "James Nicholson Richardson, 1846-1921", *Journal of the Friends Historical Society* 58/1 (1997), 59-77.]
- 79 Cf. McCalmont's *Parliamentary Poll Book ... 1832-1918*, p. 7.
- 80 For this Act: R.C.K. Ensor, *England 1870-1914*, 358.

- 81 *ER* xxxv (1926), 52-6. For G.J. Hornsby-Wright (1872-1914): *Who was Who*.
- 82 *EAT* ns vii (1900), 347.
- 83 *EAT* ns xviii (1928), 166; xix (1930), 366; xx (1933), 146; xxi (1937), 186. I am grateful to Michael Leach for drawing my attention to CFS's preparation of the General Index to the *Transactions*.
- 84 Inf. from records of: Essex and Suffolk Quarterly Meeting, 1870-91 and 1921-37; London and Middlesex General Meeting, 1908-19. These references were kindly provided by Heather Rowland, librarian of Friends House, London.
- 85 Inf. from Heather Rowland, librarian of Friends House.
- 86 *Who was Who*, iii. 437.
- 87 *ER* xlvi (1937), 135.
- 88 *Ibid.* 134.
- 89 *John Dee*, 5.