

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Seekers Found: Atonement in Early Quaker Experience by Douglas Gwyn, Wallingford. Pa: Pendle Hill, 2000, pp. 420, £15.00.

'The historical atonement of Christ witnessed in the gospel was verified to Friends in two primary ways: in their personal experience of reconciliation with God through the harrowing daily cross of Quaker convincement, and in their social practices' (Gwyn, p. 33).

'And the dreadful power of the Lord fell on me with power and terror...and then I saw the cross of Christ, and stood in it, and the new man was made... and the holy law of God was written upon my heart...' (Howgill, mid 1650s, p. 232).

Gwyn's stated aim is 'to discover the larger historical dynamic behind the seeking phenomenon as we know it today.' He opens with an overview of American seeking from the 1960's to the present time in all its diversity, suggesting that a less Eurocentric and less androcentric worldview were major formative influences. He argues that the resulting normlessness was the catalyst for a new tendency to 'shop around' most religions. Two polarities emerged: those regarding themselves as 'spiritual', rejecting exclusive truth claims; and those questioning for personal fulfillment in submission to God's will, the evangelicals. The main thesis of this book is that 'religious and moral reconstruction in America will necessarily involve some kind of atonement across present battle lines' (p. 33.).

He traces the origins of these present dynamics right back to the destabilisation of the Holy Roman Empire, from which geniuses such as Meister Eckhart blossomed (1324), and to Wycliff and others thrown up by the current hotbed of free-thinking versus bigotry. He goes on to offer a most lucid progressive panorama of the various seeking groups before, during and after the English civil war, the social, religious and political forces that shaped them, and the vicissitudes of their intense expectations and disappointments. Further, he zooms in on key figures whose beliefs and practices were fundamental to the modulations of succeeding or similar contemporary waves.

The following chapters give a fascinating insight into the thoughts of such unfettered thinkers in the context of their day, whose innovative ideas and humbling courage it is easy to take for granted. To instance but a few: Hans Denck, an Anabaptist (p. 49), preached the presence of the

Word of God in all humans in all times and places (1524); Caspar Schwenckfeld (b. 1489), initially an adherent of Luther, regarded the sacrament of the Lord's supper, like Indulgences as a passport to cheap grace. His pivotal tenet was that one must wait for the 'new work of the Spirit'. Franck held that 'Christ is equally close to every nation, even if called heathen' (1539, p. 60).

Much attention is given to the upheavals of the Reformation, the rise of the Puritans, the pendulum swings between hope and despair during the Civil War, and the proliferation of seeking groups such as the Independents, Presbyterians, Baptists and Levellers, whose hopes for social and legal reforms were inextricably mixed up with the imminent expectation of the kingdom of God and a new apostolic age of the Spirit (also expected by Schwenckfeld), to be ushered in politically. As in America of the mid 20th century (see ch1) a sort of religious market ensued, with some erstwhile free-thinking groups becoming increasingly coercive (Puritans and Presbyterians), some freer but too Bible-based for others' tastes (Baptists), followed by others who in their despair and disillusion equated good and evil (Ranters), and yet others who felt separate communes were the solution (Diggers).

From these movements emerged protagonists whose daring philosophies challenged established thought in a way hard to grasp nowadays. One must understand seeking as a 'trajectory not a defined position' (Gwyn p.97). He invites us to follow the development from one position to another as political disappointments necessitated succeeding rethinks. From the belief of Schwenckfeld that the Church must avoid all institutional structure till the revised apostolic form is revealed, we see Saltmarsh's revolutionary claim that the apostles had light for their times, but 'who cannot think that we are rising to that age where God shall pour his Spirit upon all flesh' (1642, p.99), ie. a form of progressive revelation. This was surely the ultimate writing on the wall for the long entrenched socio-economic power structures used by the Church to dominate and control the laity.

And so, after a long gestation period, to the gradual birth of the Quaker movement itself, viewed now in an environment of sincere but multifarious seeking groups. Amongst these, Fox, disillusioned with the apparent superficiality of the Church's practices, relentlessly sought for fresh vision.

'I had forsaken all the priests...for I saw there was none among them that could speak to my condition' (1647), p.217). From this maelstrom of

misery eventually bubbled up ‘groans’ of the Spirit, which God did open to me...in which Spirit is the true waiting upon God for redemption of the body and of the whole creation’ (Ro.8: 18-27). Note the change of preposition and emphasis: it no longer waiting *for* God and the physical inauguration of this Kingdom, but waiting *upon* God, in service arising from the Spirit of redemption. Gwyn holds that this internalization of hope was the main reason for the survival of the Quaker group when others became marginalised.

It was virtually a sine qua non to early Quakers that this internalization of the Kingdom of God and the apocalypse, formerly awaited as a political deliverance, entailed an almost visceral experience of the appropriation of the cross and the suffering of Christ. As John Crook: ‘I found by certain experiences that until man be truly crucified with Christ he cannot bear a true testimony for Christ’ (p.287, mid 1650’s); or Dewsbury: ‘The cry of my condemned soul was great, and could not be satisfied, but thirsted after Christ to save me freely through His Blood...who appeared to my soul’ (p.225, 1645). The early Quakers drew heavily from the Gospel of John in their emphasis on the concepts of light (Jn12:36), seed (Jn10:34), and truth (Jn14:6). Most would not take issue with that, nor with the internalising of the Kingdom. But the insistence on personal identification, often with audible moans and near hysteria, with Christ’s physical suffering, with all the undertones of sacrifice and propitiation, is often considered today not just unsavoury but smacking of superstition. (It is sometimes thought these themes occur only in Hebrews. But see Mk10:45 – Christ our ransom; IICor5:14 – ‘One died for all, then were all dead’; Ro8:3 – Christ as a sin-offering; ICor5:6-8 – Christ as our Passover Lamb, etc.)

First persecution caused divisions and the urgent need in more settled times for greater structure and organization. But the early Quakers’ experience of atonement was firstly with their God and then with their fellow Friends and the world. Gwyn defines Atonement in Ch1 as a two-way seeking with God. Christ ‘came to seek and to save’ (Lk19:10); ‘Seek and ye shall find’ (Lk11:9). In the final chapter he seeks a way of applying these principles to our modern multicultural society, based on an intriguing exposition of the meaning of the Hebrew word for ‘truth’ (amn). This word implies a vital continuum of ‘faithfulness’, in contra-distinction to ‘truth’ as against falsehood’. The only way to atonement and reconciliation of relationships in the spirit of early Friends is not by trying to validate or invalidate others’ particular truth claims, but by respecting their and our faithfulness through service to the inner light.

This book was an eye-opener to me. Gwyn's erudition, his historical perspective, and his honest attempt to apply our founding momentums to current circumstances in a relevant way, is a breath of fresh air.

Gill Lowther

The Light in Their Consciences: The Early Quakers in Britain 1646-1666.
By Rosemary Moore, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000,
pp. 314. £27-95.

Anyone interested in the history of Quaker origins has reason to be grateful for this carefully researched book. Not every Ph.D. dissertation provides the basis for a satisfactory and worthwhile publication, but Rosemary Moore has written an accessible and scholarly account of a period of rapid religious change. *The Light in Their Consciences* is based on a methodical theological analysis of all the surviving Quaker tracts of the period, which must have been something of an ordeal. As the author wryly comments: "Researching the Quaker pamphlet literature is sometimes a tedious occupation" (page 213). The verbal aggression, vehement threats of individual and communal judgement and "railing" to which the first generation of Quakers frequently resorted gives little hint of the peaceableness which would later become a characteristic of Friends. If modern Quakers may regret the disappearance of Quaker radicalism, few would perhaps relish the company of such co-religionists today.

Rosemary Moore is particularly helpful in tracing the Quakers to the disgrace and persecution of James Nayler, the end of the Republic, and the challenge represented by John Perrot. She shows how the shared experience of persecution under the restored monarchy encouraged Quakers to reappraise their relations to other dissenting Christians, and perhaps made their own Christian identity more explicit. Christians with a high regard for biblical theology will be puzzled by the speed with which apocalyptic vehemence derived from the New Testament was transformed into a "spiritual" religion of an almost Gnostic complexion. In the seventeenth century however it seems to have been easier to combine such apparently diverse traditions. John Everard, the Anglican divine much persecuted and imprisoned by Archbishop Laud, is an example of the same phenomenon. Did any of his London congregation eventually make their home among Quakers?

Such a question points to the most serious weakness of Rosemary Moore's presentation. Her decision to separate the history of the early

Quaker network from the theological analysis has one unfortunate consequence. Far from the Truth arriving as news from nowhere, it seems to have been already familiar in several of the areas where it is first recorded. Often the Quaker missionaries were preaching to the convinced, who recognised their own beliefs in the words of strangers. This means that the local origin of particular Quaker documents is of crucial importance in understanding the development of this religious movement. Because the theological analysis is conducted in terms of a Quakerism, which is undifferentiated in its local origins, it is very difficult to judge the event to which the religion of the East Midlands and the Lake District was identical to that of Bristol and London. The permeability of Quaker Meetings must always been one of their most distinctive features. While most preachers doubtless attract congregations of the like minded, the Quaker missionaries had to listen and occasionally to endure the ministry of their audience. It is the merit of Rosemary Moore's splendid book, that she enables us to overhear them.

Graham Shaw

The Beginnings of Quakerism in 17th Century Ireland by John M. Douglas. Published by the Historical Committee of the Religious Society of Friends (Dublin, 2004). No price given).

The original address given by John M. Douglas (1889-1966) during the Tercentenary Conference at Friends' School Lisburn in 1954, was not originally designed for printing. It has, however, been transcribed here by Glynn Douglas and his wife Shirley Douglas, from a tape. Something of the rationale for its printing is revealed in Christopher Moriarty's note at the beginning of this twenty page booklet. It is seen as being an appropriate contribution to 'the 350th anniversary of the establishment of Friends in Ireland' and 'to the fact that John M. Douglas was a person who exemplified many of the core values of Quakerism.'

On one perspective the paper is valuable as a historical curiosity, and does not embody what might be appropriate in a longer, more formal scientific study. But, the simple, innocuous presentation should not mislead. The address holds its worth. It was given in interaction with an audience, and it could not be expected that the subtleties of communication in such a unique situation would reproduce in the bald printed text. What remains, however, shows a depth of thought behind the original presentation. It is clearly a distillation of John M. Douglas's

preoccupations, and its themes closely parallel his 1955 presentation to the Friend's Historical Society, when he served as its president.

If John M. Douglas's brother James G. Douglas (1887-1954), took up a form of service to Ireland as a Senator, he himself, no less, served his country through teaching. This emerges in this address and its themes are filtered through his own personality. He has a natural suspicion of ideological nationalism, an engagement with the issues of peace and a desire to transmit a sense of connection with the wide human race. Nevertheless, he sought to understand how similar or different Irish and English themes emerged in the Quaker history of the two islands. He notes the changing ideas of nationality and that they continue to change.

Having taught in places as far apart as Hoshangabad in India, and Friends School in Waterford and Lisburn, John M. Douglas was a well-known and respected teacher. His pedagogical interests are noticeable in this address where he is speaking with clarity, anxious to be understood, but not talking down to his hearers in any patronizing manner. Discussing forms of the church that might have occurred to a thoughtful seventeenth-century searcher he prompts us to a response about the question of salvation.

The opportunities for service that John M. Douglas had, show also in his concern to fit Ireland's piece into the jigsaw of Europe. Such an idea might have seemed novel to some during the 1950's. His own experience in the Friends Ambulance Unit implies a personality-tested concern with the Peace Testimony. With an understated depth of meaning he shows how Friends in seventeenth and eighteenth century Ireland – to say nothing of more recent times – had personally and painfully experienced that Testimony in a way which few English Friends had. He had assembled much material towards a study of 1798, which was used by Glynn Douglas towards '*Friends in 1798*' (Dublin, 1998).

People generally – and many Friends in particular, speak blandly and even dismissively of 'history' but rarely enquire what it is. John M. Douglas however, clearly sought to understand what history is and why it is important to everyone whether consciously or otherwise. His interest in historiography emerges on several occasions as it does particularly in his Presidential Address – and certainly, there, he raises some very pertinent questions not only about the function of history but about the specifically Irish aspects of history. He starts by suggesting a conventional classification of history as 'dead' and contrasting it with 'religion' seen as offering empowerment for the present and the future. There is the common proposition, also, to history as useful for providing

the material for exemplars. This address is an encouragement to consider why anyone should be concerned with history, and leaves a way open for the hearer to respond.

Richard S. Harrison

This review has previously appeared in the December - January 2005 issue of the Irish Quaker journal, *The Friendly Word*, Volume 21 Issue 6, p13.

Seekers and Finders (Quakers in High Wycombe, 1650 to 2000). A Brief History by Hugh and Joyce Mellor. William Sessions Ltd., York. £8.00.

The sun streams through my study window. I sit alert at my computer writing this review. The phone rings and a friend checks that all is well for our Friday meeting. I insert 10 a.m. in my diary. I am alive. Life is happening all around me, now, vividly.

This particular moment will not be worth recounting in 300 years' time. But there are many moments happening in the fullness of life today that will be worth remembering. And the hallmark of a good history book is one that recalls the action of past years with the intensity with which it was lived. Hugh and Joyce Mellor have done just that. And that is why 'Seekers and Finders' is such a well written, enjoyable read.

Two years of intense sifting of historical documents by the authors have resulted in a well crafted, lively image of real people living their daily lives through three and a half centuries. All the dates and Acts of Parliament and major happenings are here but, more importantly, so are the people.

From the flourishing local trader market days and post civil war days of 1650 the reader is introduced to the mixed fortunes of Anthony Spire (taylor), Nicholas Noy (bodice maker), Jeremy Steevens (maltster), John Raunce (physician), Frances Raunce (wife of John) and others as they fall under the influence of the 'Valiant Sixty' and declare themselves 'convinced' or having 'received the truth.' And we wonder at their suffering of harassment, imprisonment and distraint of personal belongings in order to pursue their faith as Quakerism is increasingly viewed with a mixture of alarm and hostility.

The authors cleverly meld the local with the national scene creating a riveting history of the affairs of Quaker men and women whose hearts beat just as ours do today; people with names just as we know each other today by our names.

Thomas Ellwood slips quietly in and out of a meeting at John Raunce's house after which he writes, 'This meeting was like the Clinching of a Nail.' Poor Thomas Dell, a coffin bearer, is set upon by a rabble, orchestrated by the Justice and constables, who throw the coffin to the ground and arrest those taking part in the funeral.

From the need to reprimand their own Hellen Hawks who 'had run out extravagantly in her shop trade' to the tragic schism that sets John Raunce and Thomas Ellwood apart, this book is alive with anecdotes to which the reader can relate.

We learn of Richard Aris (a broken ironmonger) who discovers a profitable side line in infiltrating meetings to inform on those present. And even when he informs on the presence of one Thomas Zachery and his wife at Jordans Meeting and it is provided that on the day in question the two were in London, it does not prevent the Justice from imposing a fine of £30 and sending him to prison. It warms the reader's heart to note that Monthly Meeting committed the management of his appeal to Thomas Ellwood, who 'threw himself into it with enthusiasm and success, and the prosecution was paid for by the Meeting.' And it raises the reader's hackles to discover that in 1683 Quakers could be found Guilty of Riot for sitting peaceably together without Word or Action!

Perseverance in seeking the truth can pay as, in 1686, High Wycombe provides the first locally elected MP to Parliament. However, as John Archdale refuses to swear the oath of allegiance he is not permitted to sit.

The eighteenth century market town of High Wycombe in the Chilterns is described as 'an attractive place, beautifully situated: busy, prosperous and privileged; its appearance praised by every topographer.' But while, for many, plentiful food and improving medicine means a better life, the poor are harshly treated and relief is denied to any who refuse the workhouses which were established in the middle of this century.

One of the authors' ascribed quotes informs us 'In spite of the difficulties, dangers, and slowness of travel, Friends moved about freely sometimes by coach or canal boat, if able to afford it, by chaise or on horseback. Poorest Friends went on foot. Sometimes men and women rode single, sometimes the woman would ride pillion either behind a man Friend or the servant who went to bring back the horses. A swift horse might be the means of saving its master from robbery or even death, for the roads were the haunt of highwaymen especially in lonely parts.'

This is just one of the selected sketched backgrounds against which Quaker life in the eighteenth century is described. By the mid eighteenth century the overwhelming majority of Friends are birthright members and in the latter part of that century a great deal of time in the local MM is spent in considering and responding to reports of friends acting in ways offensive to Friends' principles.

From 1762-1785, 15 members are disowned for misconduct; drunkenness and debt being the greatest scourge. Consider poor Joseph Green, who moves to High Wycombe in 1779. Joseph, the authors quote, 'inherited a modest fortune from both his parents, but his financial resources were not equal to the demands he made on them.'! A delightful turn of phrase with a perfection of nuance that surely cannot be bettered.

And so we move seamlessly into the nineteenth century. Again the authors pick up the living threads of named local Friends, many of whom are quite well-to-do and influential; papermakers, brewers, mealmen and others.

For many reasons the number of Friends decline and, although many of those that remain are most active, nevertheless the fortunes of High Wycombe meeting depended on the actions and decisions of the Williams, the Sarahs, the Richards, the Thomas's, the James's. People like you and me.

In 1851 there are only 8 members. Does the predominance of attractive young women Friends who 'marry out' and move away account for the decline that leads to Wycombe meeting closing in the 1860's?

But of course that is not the end. By 1951 the population of High Wycombe is 40,000 and Friends number 50. From 1913 and encompassing two World Wars the authors lead us through a maze of activities that are as vivid and alive as their reader. Is that why I discover that my review is couched mainly in the present tense?

Seekers and Finders gently provides us with touches of humour, sadness and much thought provoking through the stages in the faith and practice of a local Quaker meeting bringing us right up to the present day. The book is packed with well researched information gathered by two authors who are deeply sympathetic to their subject matter and the reader is swept on a tide of chronicled incidents crafted in well written narrative.

This lively, instructive picture of Quaker life in the Chilterns, set against the changing religious, political and economic background of the last 350 years offers an absorbing read for Quakers and non-Quakers alike. It is a must for library and personal book shelves.

Keith Chatfield

***Quaker Plant Hunters* by David Sox, Sessions Book Trust, York, £15.00.**

It is the Author's stated intent, "to enthuse readers with an awareness of, and an admiration for, these exceptional men". He writes of three Quakers, each man a product of the "Enlightenment", who combined, as a means of earning a competent living, his artistic and literary gifts and his botanical knowledge with the work ethic which was the heritage of a Quaker life. We meet John and William Bartram, father and son, residents of Philadelphia, and Sydney Parkinson, a young Scotsman then living in London. These three lives shared a common "thread" which crossed the Atlantic in the case of the Bartrams, and which joined their lives as Plant Hunters and Illustrators to two of the Century's most eminent Plant Collectors, also Quakers, living in London, Peter Collinson and John Fothergill.

David Sox writes in a clear, conversational, non-scientific style, that of an enthusiast, for the natural world, which he is. He produces excellent notes and a full introduction for the reader entering the eighteenth century business-world of plant collecting. A comprehensive index follows the text for furthering the needs of scholarship.

The Bartrams lived on the family farm and garden at Kingsessing three miles from Philadelphia. John had fathered eleven children from his two marriages; nine survived into adulthood. It was therefore, not surprising that he spent his adult life, until his fortieth year, providing for them. He was a man of substance by the time he began his life's true work as a botanist and a professional collector of plants for the lucrative, English market which supplied American plants for wealthy men's gardens. However, he had made the time to learn Latin, enabling him to use Linneaus Classification for the naming of plants, and he was always an active member of Philadelphia Quaker Meeting.

At first John collected his plants locally. Later he was to travel further afield, at times combining Plant Hunting with civic duties. He had been recommended, for his diligence and the quality of his work, to Collinson, who supplied plants to rich, often aristocratic clients, and for thirty four

years the two men enjoyed a friendship, by means of correspondence and the exchange of botanical gifts which included bulbs and apples for the gardens at Kingsessing. John published a *Journal*; he was an innovative expert at packaging and sending plants abroad; he discovered a species of American Ginseng, and he was honoured by being appointed King's Botanist to George III in 1765. The face of John Bartram smiling from the front cover of the book, is that of a just, knowledgeable man who, in the main, led a fulfilled and happy life.

However John Bartram was not immune from parental problems. "Billy" his son inherited his fathers love of Botany, but not his business skills. Fortunately, Billy was happy living a solitary life-style. He had undergone a five year business apprenticeship, arranged for by his father, but despite this he failed in the various enterprises he undertook.

Williams's gifts as a botanist differed from those of his father. He was a botanical artist of the first order – the accuracy of an artist's drawing remains scientifically very important even in the days of photography. His writings demonstrate the "mindset" of an environmentalist and a humanitarian. William's *Journal*, because of its lengthy title, is known as his *Travels* (1791). He influenced Wordsworth and Coleridge in the *Lyrical Ballads* (1796), and his *Travels* were translated into Dutch, French and German before 1800, such was their influence.

Father and son were close; they frequently travelled together; as time passed William took to travelling alone on longer journeys, illustrating and collecting fearlessly. Together in Western Florida, they saved the "Camelia like Franklinia Altamaha" from extinction. William's work reflects the Quaker belief that reverence is due to all life. He lived to a grand old age, gardening, simply clothed, and still at the family house. He outlived his friend and benefactor, John Fothergill, by more than forty years.

John Fothergill links us to the final Quaker Plant Hunter. Sydney Parkinson the "scientific draughtsman" who sailed on Cook's First Voyage, aboard the *Endeavour* to Tahiti (1768-1771), to study the "transit of Venus", and then onwards to search for the "Great Southern Continent". Sydney, like Fothergill, was a Member of Westminster Quaker Meeting.

In this section David Sox delights in describing the victualling of the ship, its measurements, (three double decker London buses end-to-end in length, and one bus-length wide) and the crew, who were for the most

part very young. Cook at forty was older than most. Here I felt that I had entered the world of R.L. Stevenson. The modest, talented and totally dedicated Parkinson produced almost a thousand drawings executed to the highest standard. He also kept a *Journal* until his sad death aged twenty six en route home in January 1771. Unfortunately, Sydney's work was the subject of confusion after his death. This involved problems of ownership between Sydney's larger-than-life employer Joseph Banks, just one year his senior, and his brother Stanfield Parkinson's lack of understanding the duties of a Trustee. John Fothergill mediated as circumstances would allow, but Sydney's extant work is incomplete. There is an excellent Epilogue which examines this difficult subject in some detail.

The Author writes with total engagement about the three Quaker Botanists working at the time we now think of as the beginning of the modern age. The book is peopled with other amazing characters, who, like the Botanists, are an integral part of the history of readers on both sides of the Atlantic.

I hope I have given the impression that I enjoyed this book. I did, immensely. It is neither a scientific treatise nor a sociological or theological study – it is simply a glimpse into the lives of three men who shared an interest and a curiosity about nature, the belief that man is its custodian, and that for Quakers there is no dividing line between belief and right conduct.

I return to David Sox's stated intent, and I ask myself whether this book fulfills it. I find "Quaker Plant Hunters" to be a work of sound scholarship, meticulously researched, pleasing to the hand and to the eye. It is a tribute to the three Plant Hunters who did indeed live their lives adventurously, and also to their companions whose individuality adds colour and verve to the telling of the story. It cannot but "enthuse readers" is my considered opinion.

Joan Silvester

Friends of Religious Equality: Nonconformist Politics in Mid-Victorian England by Timothy Larsen. The Boydell Press, Woodbridge 1999; pp. 300. £40.00.

By the 1840s Dissenters had drawn up a list of grievances which made them feel "Second-Class Citizens" vis-à-vis members of the Church of England. Their true aim was the disestablishment of the state church, an

aim they did not achieve, and so they concentrated their endeavours on seeking to change the law regulating church rates, tithes, fees for burial in churchyards, dissenters' exclusion from the universities of Oxford and Cambridge and legal restrictions.

The author stresses that mid-Victorian dissenters were not the moralising hypocrites that some became in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. Inspired by ideals of equality many of them were prepared to stand for equal rights for Jews and Roman Catholics as well as for Dissenters and the author poses the question as to whether this stand derived from their civic world view or from their own theological framework. In the 1850s protests against the Crimean War (1854-1856) and the question of controlling the liquor trade were added to the protests against the unequal standing of Nonconformists. Having traced the major branches of Dissent from the seventeenth century the author demonstrates that the degree of protest varied from one church to another: in general, Wesleyans were least likely to object to the privileges of the state church and least likely to take a pacifist stand, Baptists were often leaders.

Friends figure prominently in this movement, although in many aspects they held a privileged position in law. At the beginning of this movement Friends held aloof: the Yearly Meeting epistle of 1843 said 'We desire ever to be found of those who are quiet in the land'. This attitude was a combination of the quietism of the eighteenth century and the growing strength of evangelicalism which was being felt from the 1830s. But as ever, Friends were divided: John Bright (M.P. 1843-1889) said that he did not think of himself as a leader of Dissenting politics but in a sense he was. Joseph Sturge of Birmingham was also prominent in the movement.

Both John Bright and Joseph Sturge refused to accept that their activities were incompatible with their religious convictions (a view advanced by some evangelical Friends) for Friends had been involved in movements for free trade, franchise reform and prohibition, all of which were political issues, to say nothing of the political manoeuvres of Friends in 1659. The issue of prohibition which came to the fore in the 1850s was one over which the Friends disagreed. In 1851 *The Friend* wrote that the 'adoption of total abstinence by Yearly Meeting as a rule or even a strong advice is far from being desirable'. Nevertheless from the 1840s avoidance of alcohol was growing among Friends: in 1943 a Friends school (Lisburn N. Ireland) commemorated the rolling out of the last beer barrel a hundred years previously. Control of the liquor trade was not

achieved by the Dissenters for it was not introduced until Lloyd George imposed restrictions upon licensing hours during the 1914-18 war.

This well written and informative book contains much of interest to Friends.

G.A.J. Hodgett

Josiah the Great: The True Story of the Man Who Would be King, by Ben Macintyre, Harper Collins, 2004, 350pp, £20.00

Quakers who have shed the peace testimony and become war-like mercifully are few but notable: Richard Nixon and Daniel Boone are the best known. Then there were those other Americans, the 'Fighting Quakers' who took up arms in the American War of Independence.

But the most unusual example of this phenomenon has to be Josiah Harlan (1799-1871) from Chester County, Pennsylvania. Jan Morris's *Observer* 13 June 2004 review of *Josiah the Great* was entitled 'The Quaker Who Went on the Warpath'. Harlan became not only a soldier, he was a spy, doctor, naturalist, traveller as well as a writer.

A near-contemporary of the peace-loving Philadelphia naturalist, William Bartram, instead of exploring America Harlan set his sights on the wilds of Central Asia. After learning of a broken engagement, Harlan began a 20-year odyssey which first included acting as a surgeon in the East India Company's army. This was despite not having had any proper medical training.

As a boy Harlan was obsessed with Alexander the Great. This infatuation continued throughout his life and he could recite long passages from Plutarch's *The Age of Alexander*. He also carried with him in his travels Quintus Cartius Rufus's history of the great conqueror. Hardly the expected role-model for a Quaker boy.

Following his time with the East India Company, Harlan joined the court of the deposed Afgan king, Shah Shujah al-Mookl whom he would later come to view as possessing 'unparalleled debauchery'. But first Harlan furthered the exiled monarch's attempts to regain his throne and entered Kabul disguised as a Muslim dervish. Harlan wore a flowing robe and a large white turban. He said: 'I was now to personate the character of a Saheb Zader, returning home from a pilgrimage to Mecca. A Saheb Zader is a holy man to whom is ascribed supernatural power and revered as instructive in religion.' Harlan was nervous with the

disguise as his knowledge of the Koran was as limited as his medical expertise. If he were to be grilled on the fine points of the holy book and failed to respond correctly he might be murdered.

As his travels increased, Harlan attracted an assortment of companions and hangers-on; among them two deserters from the British army. James Lewis and Richard Potter had changed their identities as Charles Masson, and not very imaginatively, John Brown. Masson was highly educated and able but later would become Harlan's enemy. Brown, however, remained a loyal friend through thick and thin.

But there was one even more faithful than Brown. Of him, Harlan wrote: 'Amongst my followers there was one of low degree who held an elevated position in my regard and was certainly the most faithful, disinterested and by no means the least useful of the cortege.' That was Harlan's beloved dog, Dash, whose 'instinctive attachment' surpassed the many hangers-on who had often to be bribed with gold.

Harlan was very fond of animals: camels and a beautiful horse were often life-savers on his journeys. He also was ecstatic over the plants he encountered. In these two respects he resembles William Bartram in his explorations. The two also shared a distaste for slavery, and Harlan took on slavers with Quaker righteous indignation. But there the similarities radically diverge.

Harlan was vividly involved in conflict and there is much of that in *Josiah the Great*. He played one potentate against another and often was embroiled in labyrinthine intrigues. As commander-in-chief of the Afgan army, Harlan was the first general since Alexander the Great to lead an army across the Hindu Kush, and, in time, he fulfilled a childhood dream of becoming a princeling: the titular prince of the province of Ghor in northern Afghanistan. But soon he would never see his principality again.

The British intervened in Afghanistan and the days of this odd American Quaker king-maker were numbered. Harlan was forced to return to America where he became unsuccessful in a number of pursuits: a failed landlord, an attempt to bring camel transport to his natal land as well as Afgan vines to California. Harlan's greatest disappointment was in joining the Union cause in the Civil War where he thought his military expertise would be most appreciated.

Harlan went west – as far as you could go – to San Francisco where yet again he tried to establish himself as a medical practitioner. Soon after he

died of tuberculosis; dying on the corner of West Avenue and 22nd Street. There were no mourners at his funeral, and his odd legacy died with him.

Despite the fact that his meeting in Chester County had long ago said that because of his violation against the peace testimony he could no longer consider himself to be a member of the Society, Harlan spoke of himself as a Quaker to the end.

Ben Macintyre is brilliant, presenting Josiah Harlan as a fascinating character, one who supposedly was the model for Kipling's 'The Man Who Would Be King'. However, the endless plots and intrigues as Macintyre presents them are rather confusing, and often I had to go to the Index to discover who was who. The general narrative bogs down decidedly once Harlan leaves Afganistan and Macintyre has exhausted Harlan's memoirs.

Macintyre discovered those memoirs in a tiny museum in Chester County, Pennsylvania: 'the missing autobiography, unnoticed and unread since his death.' Anyone who writes lives for those moments, and Macintyre made good use of his discovery.

David Sox

Whirlwind of Life: The Story of Emilia Fogelklou (1878-1972) by Malin Bergman Andrews, 2004, pp.208, illustrated, £9.50

Emilia Fogelklou was one of the founders of Swedish Quakerism and this book is not just the story of her life, it is also her spiritual biography. Emilia was a very sensitive child – over-sensitive perhaps – but this sensitivity enabled her to be open to new ideas from a very early age. It also meant that she was easily hurt by, for example, the arrival of a new baby sister who received all the attention previously hers; by criticism at school; or by the death of a favourite grandmother. Later in life the memory of these and other incidents helped her to empathise with others who were experiencing difficulties, but at the time they were devastating. We are at first given an idyllic picture of rural life as seen through the eyes of a child, and then sense the shock to Emilia of moving into a town. However, it was at that town school, in a Scripture lesson about religious movements in seventeenth century England, that she first heard about Quakers. She was taught that Quakers were under the delusion that they could be guided by 'an inner light' and burst out 'I have that delusion'. The idea stayed with her, though it was to be many years before she met

her first live Quaker. After Training College, she was employed to teach religious education at an experimental school in Gothenburg and it was at that school that she had a mystical experience that she called her 'Revelation of Reality'. She believed that this was the most decisive experience of her whole life. She later wrote about it that, without sight or sound of speech or human touch, she 'experienced in a state of exceptionally clear consciousness the great releasing inner wonder.'

Darwin's theories were then starting to challenge traditional Biblical teaching and she wrote, in words that Friends would find familiar, 'If the letter no longer may kill anything, but the Spirit maketh everything live, then Faith and Knowledge can never come into opposition to each other, but it will rather be that Faith gives all Knowledge purpose and meaning, and all Knowledge can only confirm our Faith.'

In 1906 Emilia studied at Uppsala University where she became Sweden's first woman to obtain a degree in theology. With her radical views, her feminism, and her lack of finance, she did not find her time in Uppsala easy, but she made many good friends, some of whom later also became members of the Society of Friends. Soon after qualifying she obtained a bursary that enabled her to travel widely – and in London she met Quakers for the first time. In 1915 Emilia attended the Women's Peace Conference in the Hague and though she was disappointed that it seemed to have no effect, it was at that meeting that the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom was founded. After the war she taught at Birkagarden – the Swedish equivalent of Toynbee Hall – and enjoyed finding new ways of making religious studies real to people who had had very little education. Reading in preparation for her course, she discovered James Nayler, spent some time researching him in Friends House library, and wrote sympathetically about this controversial Friend. She eventually applied for membership of London Yearly Meeting in 1931 and, after meeting together regularly in Stockholm, the small group applied for state recognition which was granted in 1935. She spent a year at Woodbrooke in 1931 and a term at Pendle Hill in 1939 where she was much influenced by Douglas Steere. During the second world war she assisted escaping refugees – working from the Quaker office in Berlin, and afterwards joined an international work camp carrying out reconstruction work in Hamburg. She was then part of the group who tried to turn their vision of a true international christian community (such as they had found working together on relief work) into a reality by establishing Viitakivi, the Finnish International High School. In spite of all this practical work, Emilia found time to write numerous books and articles – about her own spiritual experiences,

about new ways of looking at the history of religion, on sociology, education and psychology, as well as a number of biographies.

I did not find this an easy book to read. At times it seemed stilted – probably because it has been translated from the Swedish – and I did not feel the flow of the narrative was helped by the numerous short chapter subsections, each of which is headed by a quotation. But it was certainly worth persevering with so that I could learn the story of this remarkable woman, with ideas way ahead of her time, who helped to found Swedish Quakerism.

Susan V. Hartshorne