

## A NEW LOOK AT THE PENINGTONS

Isaac Penington is one of the most frequently quoted of all Quaker authors, with a long list of entries in *Quaker faith and practice*, and yet, if you wish to look beyond these short quotations, there are problems. His collected works are available in a new reprint or free online, but consist of four forbiddingly solid volumes.<sup>1</sup> Otherwise, there are only brief selections currently in print. Nor do the published works contain all that he wrote, for there are some half million words of unpublished manuscripts. A few years ago the Literature Committee of Britain Yearly Meeting commissioned a single volume of extracts from Penington's writings, which would be accompanied by historical and theological background information.<sup>2</sup> My share of this work has been to provide the biographical and historical background, which makes up the substance of this evening's address.

Isaac Penington is best known for his spiritual writings, and as one who suffered long imprisonments for his faith, but he was also a devoted family man, a political commentator and a surprisingly fierce controversialist. He was also a supporter, for a time, of John Perrot, the Quaker schismatic. He kept up a correspondence with a large circle of family and friends, both Quaker and otherwise, and the greater part of his correspondence has never been published. Nor is it possible to make a proper study of Isaac without considering his wife Mary. Fortunately Mary Penington's *Experiences* are well known and readily available in print, so that, as a person, she is probably better known than her husband.<sup>3</sup> She was a very practical and forthright woman, and there was something of the attraction of opposites between them.

Isaac Penington was born in 1616, the eldest son of Alderman Sir Isaac Penington, a wealthy London merchant, who was a staunch supporter of the revolutionary government of the 1640s, Lord Mayor of London and a member of the body that tried Charles I. Isaac Penington senior had six children in all. William, the second son, became a London merchant, and appears on a number of occasions in the Penington archives as a member of the Quaker fringe. The youngest of the three brothers, Arthur, became a Roman Catholic, and the parallel development with Isaac is worth noting. Arthur was another of the family who went his own road. One of the sisters makes an appearance in a quite different setting, in Samuel Pepys'

Diary as one of his woman friends. Pepys wrote that he was rather surprised at her freedom of behaviour, but, to his regret, he did not actually get her into bed. In her own way, she was like her brothers Isaac and Arthur, one who followed her own bent without regard for anyone else's opinion.<sup>4</sup>

Isaac himself had the education of an eldest son of good family, Cambridge University and the law. There is no indication that he ever took any part in his father's business, but he was evidently provided with adequate means so that he could pursue his own interests, which were mainly aspects of theology as related to the politics of the day. He was a deeply religious young man, rather withdrawn, not at ease in the world in which he found himself, with a tendency to depression from which he suffered throughout his life. He wrote of himself: 'I have been a man of sorrows and affliction from my childhood, feeling the want of the Lord... and turned in spirit towards him, almost ever since I could remember.'<sup>5</sup>

He left the Independent church in which he had been brought up, and he became one of those called Seekers. From 1648 he began to publish pamphlets on theological and political subjects. At this time he could have known nothing of Quakers, then a tiny sect confined to the East Midlands, but the seeds of the ideas that eventually drew him to the Quakers are there. But writing did not ease his personal problems; he could write about the happiness of the children of God in unity with God, but he did not know this happiness personally.

Then, in 1654 he married Mary Springett, or, to give her her title Lady Springett, who was a young widow with a small daughter. Her story is only summarised here, as it can be read in full in her *Experiences*. Mary came from a wealthy landed family, but was orphaned and brought up by relations. Even as a child she had felt ill at ease with conventional religion, to the point that she was told by her guardians that she was jeopardising her chances of making a suitable marriage. However, another young man of the household, William Springett, was of the same way of thinking, and they were married, very young, in 1643. According to Mary's account they were extremely happy, and she had a small son and another baby was on the way when her husband, now Sir William and a colonel in the Parliamentary army, died from disease while on active service.<sup>6</sup> A daughter was born soon afterwards, and named Gulielma (known as Guli) after her father, but Mary would not have her baptised, for she and her husband had decided there was no justification for this practice. Her little son died as a young child, as so often in the seventeenth century. Mary was devoted to her mother-in-law, and continued to live with her until her death in 1647. Mary was left

isolated and depressed, 'wearied in seeking and not finding', and Isaac Penington seemed to her to be another person in similar case, 'one alone and miserable in this world'.<sup>7</sup> Isaac needed looking after, Mary supplied the need.

At the time of their marriage, Mary and Isaac were living in London.<sup>8</sup> They soon had a son, John, followed by a second son Isaac and a daughter Mary. Presently they moved to a considerable property called The Grange, near the two Chalfonts in Buckinghamshire, which presumably had been made over to Isaac by his father as part of the marriage settlement.

Around this time Quakers were spreading over the country, and Isaac and Mary were not favourably impressed.<sup>9</sup> Isaac wrote: 'They were for the most part mean, as to the outward; young country lads, of no deep understanding or ready expression... How far did they seem from being acquainted with the mysteries and depths of religion'.<sup>10</sup>

However, casual contacts led to closer acquaintance, and presently Isaac and Mary began to attend meetings.<sup>11</sup> Then we hear that in January 1658 a large meeting of Quakers was held in Bedfordshire at the house of John Crook, who was one of the few Quaker converts from the class of landed gentry. Some people 'great in the outward' were there, among them the Peningtons, who, it was reported, 'grows sensible into the knowledge of the truth'.<sup>12</sup> Quakers, whatever their theoretical views on the equality of all, were not immune to excitement when the rich and powerful attended their meetings and, even better, actually joined with them.

During the next few months Isaac and Mary made up their minds to follow the Quaker way, and a meeting with George Fox at the end of May 1658 clinched it.<sup>13</sup> 'I felt the presence and power of the most high among them', wrote Isaac. '...I have met with the Seed. I have met with my God; I have met with my Saviour.'<sup>14</sup> But now there was the process of adjustment to go through.<sup>15</sup> Mary recorded that it took her much heart-searching over a period of months before she was ready to be counted as a Quaker, not for their doctrine, but because she was 'exercised against taking up the cross to the language, fashions, customs, titles, honour and esteem in the world'. Isaac wrote that he met with 'the very strength of hell'.<sup>16</sup> Both Isaac and Mary had difficulties with their families. Mary wrote that her relations 'made the cross heavy', and several letters from Isaac to his father show that relations between them were in a very poor state.<sup>17</sup> Isaac must always have been a disappointment to his father, and this was the last straw. Isaac was accused of taking part in ceremonies that would drive away his friends, as having 'ever been full of

fancies', and of 'cross carriage' [perverse behaviour].

Some old friends of the Peningtons noticed the difference when they paid the Peningtons a visit. These were the Ellwoods, whose son Thomas became a weighty Friend and first editor of Fox's *Journal*. Thomas Ellwood wrote, 'we found so great a change, from a free, debonair and courtly sort of behaviour...to so strict a gravity as they now received us with.' He escaped into the garden to talk to Guli, but found her also changed, 'the gravity of her look and behaviour struck awe upon me', so he excused himself and left in confusion. 'We stayed dinner', he wrote, 'which was very handsome, and lacked nothing to recommend it, but the lack of mirth and pleasant discourse.'<sup>18</sup> The Ellwoods found it very odd and uncomfortable.

Very soon the Peningtons became valuable assets to the Quaker movement.<sup>19</sup> Their house was used as a staging post for the distribution of Quaker books and correspondence, and Isaac began his long career as a Quaker apologist. His first Quaker book, a theological work called *The Way of Life and Death*, included two short pieces by George Fox and Edward Burrough. The Quaker leaders did not lose the opportunity of displaying their most notable convert to date. Mary also used her contacts to further the Quaker cause, writing to a kinswoman of hers who was married to Cromwell's son Henry, the governor of Ireland, asking her to use her influence to help Quakers.<sup>20</sup>

April 1659 brought the end of the Protectorate and political upheaval. The country rapidly descended into anarchy, and many people, including Isaac, wrote pamphlets offering their advice to the government of the moment. The restoration of the monarchy in May 1660 came as a shock, and Penington's pamphlets from the latter part of 1660 and from 1661 show attempts to grapple with the situation, appeals to the new government, and explanations of the Quaker faith which were designed to show that Quakers posed no threat to the new order. Like many other people at the time, Isaac and Mary both wrote directly to the new king. The Lord had effected the change of government, and his will must be respected, but it was the Lord who had brought in the King, and he could change the Government again if the King did not do right.<sup>21</sup>

Isaac had personal reasons for concern at the change of regime. His father was arrested because of his involvement in the trial of Charles I, and though he escaped a traitor's death, as he had not actually signed the death warrant, he was imprisoned for life and died in the Tower in October 1661. His property was forfeited, and it seems that this affected Isaac junior's title to his own estate. According to Mary,

their relations took legal action against them, and since as Quakers they could not swear to the facts of the matter, they lost all Isaac's estate and a part of hers.<sup>22</sup>

Then, in January 1661, there was a revolt in London organised by the revolutionary Fifth Monarchist group, and Quakers were suspected of being implicated. Many were arrested, including Isaac Penington and Thomas Ellwood, who had now declared himself a Quaker. The judge proposed that Isaac should give a bond of £200 for good behaviour, but Isaac said that he had no estate left. The other Quaker prisoners were soon set free, but Isaac, because he was his father's son, was held for seventeen weeks until all political prisoners were released by royal proclamation. The judge ordered that Isaac should have good accommodation and some liberty, but the local justices had other ideas, and Isaac was held during cold winter weather in 'in a very inconvenient room, a low room next the street door, without a chimney, over the cellar, with great holes in the boards under the bed and very noisome by reason of its joining to the common gaol. This very bad room procured him a very sore distemper', so that for several weeks after, he was not able to turn himself in bed. This account comes from a small notebook that somehow has survived, and its tone suggests that it was written by Mary.<sup>23</sup> Judging from correspondence with his friend Morgan Watkins, Isaac also suffered a severe bout of depression.<sup>24</sup>

Despite these troubles, 1661 was another productive year for Isaac, and he managed to publish more books. The financial threat turned out to be not immediate, and the Peningtons were able to stay at The Grange for several more years, while Thomas Ellwood joined the household as tutor to the children. It was at this time that the Peningtons became involved in the major Quaker controversy of the early 1660s, the Perrot affair.

John Perrot was a talented Quaker preacher who challenged the Quaker leadership on the practice, which was common to all churches, that men should remove their hats when prayer was offered during public worship. Perrot thought that this practice had no more justification than any of the other formalities that Friends had given up, and he expressed his views vehemently, without asking George Fox and other leading Quakers for their opinions. These leaders thought that to encourage diversity of practice, without proper consultation, was a sure road to disunity in the movement and hence to weakness at the time of persecution.<sup>25</sup>

Among the people attracted by Perrot were William Penington and his friend John Pennyman, and they introduced him to Isaac. Perrot visited Isaac and Mary Penington at their home, and Isaac, like many

others, was deeply impressed, and some time later he published a pamphlet giving his thoughts on the matter, which were, that the Quaker leaders, by their treatment of Perrot, were in danger of arrogating to themselves the power of judgement that belonged to God. Then he put three questions, the first, how a man whom the Lord had exalted (George Fox), could be prevented by falling, the second, if such a thing happened, how could the little ones (the ordinary Quakers) be kept safe, and the third, was it possible for such a fallen leader to be recovered.<sup>26</sup> Besides this printed pamphlet, Penington also circulated several manuscripts indicating his support for Perrot.<sup>27</sup> All this must have been as a red rag to a bull to George Fox and the rest of the Quaker leadership. However, Isaac Penington could not be summoned to a meeting to account for himself. He needed more careful handling.

Francis Howgill undertook the task, writing a long letter in which he clearly found it difficult to handle Isaac Penington on a matter of discipline, and taking a long time to come to the point. The nub of this letter was that Quakers did not write manifestos one against another, or do anything that might lead to division... 'Dear Isaac, I do not deal with thee as an enemy...as I hope thou wilt not look upon me for speaking plainly unto thee. I would have thee stop writings and papers of this nature, and send them not abroad, but be quiet and still and banish evil thoughts and surmises...against any whom God hath made serviceable in this work...'<sup>28</sup>

Other people offered similar advice. The Peningtons presumably thought things over, and there are letters that indicate that they were reconciled with the main Quaker body by the end of the following year, or possibly earlier.<sup>29</sup> This episode was unquestionably important in the life of both Peningtons, and was a factor during later depressive episodes when Isaac could not forgive himself for his backsliding. It also, perhaps, accounts for the very strong support that the Peningtons thereafter gave to Fox and the mainstream leadership. Isaac gave Friends his considered thoughts on the Perrot affair in an epistle which ends: 'The seed is meek, humble, tender, lowly, sensible of its own state and weakness, and subject to the exaltation, domination and pure authority of life in others where the Lord hath so exalted it.'<sup>30</sup> This is not unique in Penington's writings, and in keeping with the way the Quaker movement was developing, with power being concentrated, first in the hands of the current leaders and then in the administrative system that was being built up.

The Peningtons had been left in peace by the authorities since Isaac's release in 1661, but from the autumn of 1664 he spent the best

part of three years in Aylesbury gaol, much of the time, again, in bad conditions. Twice he was released, but he was re-arrested, and ordered to be imprisoned during the pleasure of the Earl of Bridgewater, the Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire. There was a personal grudge here, for Isaac had annoyed this magnate by refusing to address him with conventional respect, and the Earl had said that Isaac 'should never be released until he had made him bow to him in giving him his titles'.<sup>31</sup>

To add to their troubles, the family were forced to leave the Grange.<sup>32</sup> Probably, it had taken several years for the whole legal process to go through, and bad will on the part of the local civil authority may have brought things to a head. Many letters written to Isaac around this time show that he was in a state of deep depression regarding his backsliding in respect to Perrot. In particular, there is a long series of letters from Morgan Watkins, a Quaker from the Welsh border. Watkins knew the Peningtons well, but he came from a different social background, and his temperament was entirely different from Isaac's, so that at times he found his friend difficult to understand.<sup>33</sup> He wrote that as Isaac could not see things clearly himself, he should listen to his friends and thereby save himself much sorrow. Isaac should not be worried at the loss of his property, for God would help him. But Isaac's depression did not improve, and Watkins wrote again: 'Oh my Dear Brother, receive a little strength from me, at this time, as a token of his love through me to thee...feel that which did not leave thee in thy distress.'<sup>34</sup>

Despite Isaac's ill-health and depression, this long imprisonment was a most productive period for the writing of personal letters and epistles to meetings. At this time we meet a particular friend of the Peningtons, Elizabeth Walmsley, who had become a Quaker after attending early meetings at the Peningtons' house.<sup>35</sup> Elizabeth was entrusted with Isaac's epistles to Chalfont Meeting: 'I think it will fall again to thy lot to read this enclosed... If the Lord make thy heart willing, and be with thee in it, it will be an acceptable service from thee to him, though it be outwardly hard.'<sup>36</sup>

It is sometimes said of Isaac Penington that he accepted imprisonment as the Lord's will, making no moves to obtain release. This view depends on one letter written to Mary at the time of his first imprisonment.<sup>37</sup> In fact, his attitude was like that of other Quakers. Suffering was to be expected, but not accepted without protest to the authorities. There are in the archive several letters from Isaac to various civil authorities, and his connections were active on his behalf. On one occasion he was set free by the intervention of the Earl of Ancram, and his final release in 1667 came about from an

application for Habeus Corpus organised by a kinsman of Mary's.<sup>38</sup>

All this time, the family was still in temporary accommodation. The elder children were sent to school at Waltham Cross with Christopher Tayler.<sup>39</sup> They could not find a suitable house near their old home, and eventually moved to Amersham, to the sorrow of Chalfont Friends. Elizabeth Walmsley wrote to Isaac: 'This outward distance, this long outward imprisonment, and separation from us hath lain much on my heart...and now the removal of thy family also, thus separating our friends from us.'<sup>40</sup>

In the spring of the next year, 1668, Mary visited London with Guli and stayed with her brother-in-law William. She was not well, perhaps as a result of the birth of her last baby, Edward, in the previous autumn when she was forty-two, and she apparently intended to consult doctors. (In parenthesis, it is to be noted that despite bad conditions in Aylesbury, the Peningtons had been able to conceive a child). A letter that Isaac wrote to Mary during this visit, one of the few holographs, has survived. He found it hard that he had not had a letter from her, but Thomas Ellwood had had one from William Penn, with good news of her. The baby, Ned, was looking very well. The other children were well, and Bill, the three year old, wanted her to come home. Isaac suggested that Bill wrote to her, but no, Bill would sooner go to London himself. He had been exceedingly loving to his father that morning in bed. Isaac sent his love to her and Guli, and to his dear brother, and messages to various Friends, ending, 'Thine in all dearness and truth and love, IP'.<sup>41</sup>

Note the mention of William Penn in this letter. He had recently joined with Friends, and, perhaps during this visit, became acquainted with Guli. They married in 1672. Thomas Ellwood had probably been somewhat in love with Guli, but it seems that he now realised that he was not going to succeed in winning her, and he married an older woman, Mary Ellis, who may have been Elizabeth Walmsley's sister referred to in her Testimony as M.E., and left the Penington household.

Meanwhile, the elder children were growing up. We have no definite information about John at this time, though he may have visited Pennsylvania with William Penn.<sup>42</sup> He was the one who later on sorted and copied his parents' papers, and he became a solid Friend, though without his parents' sparkle. We know that Mary junior spent some time with Elizabeth Walmsley during the spring of 1670, for Isaac wrote, 'I am sensible of thy great love to us, expressed in thy care and tenderness of our child...I hope she is no burden to thee'.<sup>43</sup> Isaac, the second son, was sent on a voyage to gain experience for a career as a merchant, but this led to tragedy, for on



the return journey he was lost overboard.<sup>44</sup>

In 1670 the gaols were again filled with Quakers after the passing of the Second Conventicle Act, and Isaac was arrested in Reading and imprisoned for twenty-one months.<sup>45</sup> Like many Quakers at the time, he was required to take the Oath of Allegiance, and, on refusing, incurred the penalty known as *praemunire*, by which the guilty person forfeited his estate to the crown, and was outlawed and imprisoned for life. This penalty was only truly effective against people of property, and Isaac's estate had already been lost. However, Mary, who was very acute, became aware that the court's intention was that the *praemunire* was going to be used as a weapon against her own estate, which could not be forfeited but could be frozen during Isaac's lifetime and the income confiscated. She therefore arranged for this income to be made over to a friend for the use of herself and her children.<sup>46</sup> Isaac was released following Charles II's Declaration of Indulgence of March 1672.

The Peningtons still did not have their own home. Mary's estates, now their sole source of income, were in Kent, but Isaac did not wish to live in Kent. They finally decided, or rather Mary took the initiative, to purchase a property called Woodside, near Amersham. The house was in a ruinous condition and had to be extensively rebuilt. Probably Isaac's health was failing after his long imprisonments, and Mary handled the household affairs and sheltered her husband from bother as much as possible. She was a practical woman, and reckoned that she could manage very well so long as he did not interfere!<sup>47</sup>

Isaac was still keeping up his correspondence, though at a somewhat slower rate. Much of it was to Friends within the local monthly meeting.<sup>48</sup> He had great pastoral gifts, and Elizabeth Walmsley wrote of him: 'He having travelled through the great deeps and close exercises, the power of the Lord upholding him, he was enabled to speak a word in season to the weary traveller, that hungered and thirsted after the living God.'<sup>49</sup> There was Nicholas Bond, who got advice on the tactful handling of his wife Sarah. There was Bridget Atley from the village of Horton which was a hive of dissident Quakers who caused her much distress. There were the dissidents themselves, who got some of Isaac's strongest letters, and he could be fierce! There was Widow Hemmings, recipient of seventeen letters with more to her daughters and son-in-law, many of them seriously theological and some with further theological papers attached. There was an un-named Friend, who refused to attend meetings at a certain other Friend's house, and was gently rebuked for it. There was Sarah Elgar, comforted after losing a child.

There were many episodes to meetings, mostly local, but some sent further afield. During the Quaker internal disputes of the 1670s there were letters from both Isaac and Mary to their friends Ann and Thomas Curtis in Reading, who sided with the dissidents. There was John Pennyman, friend of brother William, who had a long-running love-hate relationship with Quakers. He was also a compulsive letter-writer, and Isaac corresponded with him for years.

Some correspondents were theologically minded people in good society, notably Lady Conway, very learned in metaphysics and theology who accepted Quakerism in later years. Could Francis Fines be Frances Fiennes, a member of the noted republican family of that name? Ann Fleetwood, another correspondent, was probably connected with the Fleet wood living at the Vache near the Chalfonts, who had lost his estates as a regicide.

Also there are family letters. Isaac corresponded frequently with his brother William, often concerning William's predilection for John Perrot. When the younger brother Arthur became a Catholic, and was described as an Arch-Papist, someone very enthusiastic, Isaac wrote to a mutual friend that this conversion did not dampen his affection for his brother. If Arthur was to be a papist, Isaac would sooner have him a serious than a loose Papist. There are two letters to sister Judith, probably the Madame Penington who was involved with Samuel Pepys. Now, thirteen years later, Isaac remembered her early sensitivity to faith, and hoped that it might return.

It is a pity that more of Mary's letters were not preserved. One was to a local Monthly Meeting Friend called Henry Ball, who had apparently kept Friends out of his house on an occasion when he should have hosted a meeting, so they had to meet under a tree. Mary was very firm with him, at considerable length!<sup>50</sup>

By the middle 1670s Isaac was aging, probably from the effects of his imprisonments. During the summer of 1678 the Peningtons visited a spa, Astrop Wells near Banbury, presumably so that Isaac could take the waters, and while in that part of the country, they took the opportunity to visit local meetings.<sup>51</sup> Isaac and Mary both sent advice to the newly appointed women's meeting at Armscote, just over the Worcestershire border, Isaac's being very spiritual, Mary's very practical.<sup>52</sup>

The following year Isaac became ill while the Peningtons were visiting Mary's estates in Kent, and early in October he died. Mary survived her husband by less than three years, during which time she completed the manuscripts known as her 'Experiences'. She had a serious illness, and Elizabeth Walmsley wrote to her, referring to Mary's 'great exercises and trials', and that the Lord would 'bring

thee forth yet as a mother in Israel.<sup>53</sup> But it was not to be, and Mary died in 1682. Isaac and Mary are buried in the Quaker cemetery at Jordans.

Among the people who wrote testimonies to Isaac Penington was Elizabeth Walmsley, who has already been quoted.<sup>54</sup> This is how she commemorated Isaac:

In his weighty work and service of the Lord's truth and people, dear Isaac Penington was called forth by the Lord...the Light of God shined through his earthen vessel and reached the seed of life, which lay deep in many... He faithfully declared the everlasting gospel, and what he had testified, felt and handled of the eternal word he freely communicated to others... And now dear Isaac Penington hath finished his travell, the work and service of his day, and having kept the faith, he is gone to rest in everlasting peace with the Lord, and a crown of glory rests on him... Though he is taken hence, his life yet speaks... The truth of our God abides for ever.

*Rosemary Moore*

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NOTES – All manuscripts cited in the following notes are held in the library of Friends House, London.

- 1 *The Works of Isaac Penington* (Glenside, PA: Quaker Heritage Press, 4 vols., 1994-1997). For on-line version see [www.qhpress.org/texts/penington/index.html](http://www.qhpress.org/texts/penington/index.html).
- 2 R. Melvin Keiser, Rosemary Moore and Diana Morrison Smith, eds., provisional title *Isaac Penington in Context*, (London: Quaker Life, forthcoming late 2002 or early 2003).
- 3 Gil Skidmore, ed., *Experiences in the Life of Mary Penington* (London: Friends Historical Society, 1992), a reprint with new introduction and additional notes of the 1911 edition edited by Norman Penney.
- 4 The references in Pepys' Diary are between October and December 1665.
- 5 Paper dated 1667, reproduced in Thomas Ellwood's testimony to Isaac Penington in Penington's *Works*.
- 6 See Mary's letter to her grandson Springett Penn, *Experiences*, 86-95.
- 7 *Experiences*, 38.

- 8 The entry on Penington on Greaves and Zaller, *Biographical Dictionary of English Radicals* (Brighton: Harvester, 1982) gives the place and date of marriage as 13th May 1654 at St Margaret's, Westminster.
- 9 A note in the second edition of W.C. Braithwaite, *Beginnings of Quakerism*, ed. Henry J. Cadbury (Cambridge: University Press, 1955), page 582, suggests that the Penington's home was already known as a Quaker centre in 1655. This depends on the year dating of a letter from Hubberthorne (Swarthmore Mss 1.106) to Margaret Fell and other Friends, addressed to Gerrard Robert's house, and written on the 5<sup>th</sup> October, which from Hubberthorne's references to other days of the week appears to have been a Friday or possibly a Saturday, and in which he stated that their route to London would take them 12 miles from Isaac Penington's house. Geoffrey Nuttall, in 'Early Quaker Letters' (typescript 1952) gives the year date as 1655; however, 5<sup>th</sup> October was also a Friday in 1660, and Saturday in 1661. 1660 seems the most likely date. Margaret Fell was in London during 1660, but not in 1655.
- 10 Isaac Penington, *Many deep considerations have been upon my heart concerning the State of Israel* [1663], 3.
- 11 *Experiences*, 40-44. See also the testimonies in *Works* by William Penn, Alexander Parker and Thomas Ellwood for information on this period.
- 12 Caton 3.111, Richard Hubberthorne to Margaret Fell, 2nd Feb. 1658.
- 13 *The Journal of George Fox*, ed. Norman Penney (Cambridge: University Press, 1911, 2 vols.), i.317. Alexander Parker, in his testimony to Penington in the *Works*, says that Isaac was finally convinced at this meeting, but since this was a major gathering of Quaker ministers, it is unlikely that Penington would have been invited if his conviction was not considered virtually a *fait accompli*. The introduction to Fox was however clearly very important to Penington.
- 14 1667 paper in Ellwood's testimony, previously cited.
- 15 *Experiences*, 44.
- 16 1667 paper in Ellwood's testimony, previously cited.
- 17 The letters to Isaac Penington senior are in the John Penington mss (cited as JP) 1.120-122.2. One is dated February 14 1659, and probably the rest were written around this period. Isaac senior's letters were not preserved, but something of their content can be deduced from Isaac junior's replies.
- 18 *History of the Life of Thomas Ellwood*. (First published 1714 with many reprints, the last 1927).
- 19 See Portfolio 36, 46, a letter from Alexander Parker, sent from Chester prison 13th October 1660, the original or early copy of JP 4.104. There is a note at the end: 'Let this be sent into Sussex to be read amongst Friends there at their meetings. Let a copie be sent to Isaac Penington to be read amongst friends in Buckinghamshire, as the Lord makes way, and moves any thereunto.' The collection of Friends' papers in the John Penington mss vol. 4, which includes

- 80 epistles by George Fox, is probably made up of papers originally sent to the Peningtons for copying and distribution.
- 20 JP 4.181.
- 21 JP 2.245, 2.249.
- 22 *Experiences*, 53. Perhaps, given the confiscation of Isaac senior's property, some members of the family thought it might be possible to find a flaw in Isaac junior's title, since he would not swear to it, and thereby recoup their lost inheritance from Isaac senior. But which members of the family? Isaac remained on good terms with several of them, though not with his father. Perhaps his brother-in-law? On another occasion Mary said that Isaac had lost his estate 'upon his Father's account' (*John Penington's Complaint against William Rogers*, Benjamin Clark, 1881), 10-13. Either way, it appears that Isaac's title to the estate was not secure.
- 23 Gibson Mss 2.45. The date of Isaac's release is not certain, but it was after 12 May, as a letter of that date, JP 2.313, was written from the prison. A release shortly after that would fit in well with the estimate of seventeen weeks, given in Gibson 2.45 and used in Ellwood's Testimony. The anti-Quaker proclamation was issued on January 10th, and the wholesale arrests began the next day.
- 24 JP 4.9.3, letter from Morgan Watkins to Isaac Penington dated 20 Feb 1661.
- 25 The standard account of the Perrot affair is Kenneth L. Carroll, *John Perrot, early Quaker schismatic* (London: Friends Historical Society, 1971).
- 26 Penington, *Many Deep Considerations have been upon my heart concerning the State of Israel* P1178, Wing [1664], should be dated 1663, as it is mentioned in Francis Howgill's letter to Penington, JP 4.3 dated 20th June 1663.
- 27 Crosse Ms (Ms vol. 292) pp 4 and 6, and T. Edmund Harvey's collection (Ms vol. 214), 13 pp 2, 3, 5.
- 28 JP 4.3.
- 29 Morgan Watkins JP 4.12 27 Feb 64 could be ambiguous, but not 4.12.2, 30 Oct 64. See also JP 4.5 from Parker 30 Oct 1664 suggesting that relations were back to normal.
- 30 Penington, *To Friends in England* (1666) P1211, 3, 4, 9. He gave a second explanation in Penn, *Judas and the Jews*, 68-70, which concerned a later episode in the Hat controversy.
- 31 Gibson Ms 2.45.
- 32 Probably dates from Ellwood's *History*.
- 33 Note Ellwood's rather snide remark about Watkins in his *History*, when they were imprisoned together, to the effect that Watkins was not his chosen company.
- 34 JP 4.14.2, 23 May 66, and 4.15, 22 June 66.
- 35 Elizabeth Walmsley's *Testimony*, JP 4.114.
- 36 JP 1.89.2 and 4.8.

- 37 Cash collection Mss (Temp. Ms. 747/3A).
- 38 Information from Ellwood's Testimony and *History*.
- 39 Fox's Journal suggests 1668 as the date of the founding of his school, but Penington's evidence suggests that it was in operation earlier.
- 40 JP 4.8.2, 16 November 1666.
- 41 1668 March 19, Gibson Mss 2.45.1.
- 42 Introduction to *Experiences*, 14.
- 43 JP 3.435.
44. Ellwood's *History*.
- 45 Ellwood states that Penington remained in prison for 21 months. There are letters with the address of Reading Gaol from July 1670 to November 1672, but the letter dated from Reading Gaol is probably incorrectly dated. Isaac was apparently at liberty in December 1670, if a letter sent from Catsgrove (location unknown to me present) has the correct date. Charles II issued a declaration freeing all prisoners in March 1672.
- 46 *John Penington's Complaint against William Rogers* (1681), 10-13. Rogers had implied that Mary should have suffered the loss of her estate, as other Friends did. Mary was incensed at this innuendo, saying that she herself had been charged with nothing, and that her estate was being used as a weapon against Isaac. See also JP 4.162, from Mary, taking Rogers to task.
- 47 Maria Webb, *The Penns and the Peningtons of the Seventeenth Century* (London: 1867) 214, considered that rebuilding probably began in 1669 and that the family moved in during 1673, but the evidence of the JP Mss shows this to be unlikely. In addition, Mary, *Experiences* 58, says that when considering the purchase they went to view the property in 'my son Penns coach', which suggests a time after Penn's marriage to Guli in 1672.
- 48 Most of the quotations from Penington's writings in *Quaker faith and practice* come from the selection of his letters that was first published in 1828, edited by John Barclay.
- 49 Walmsley's Testimony, JP 4.112.
- 50 The list of manuscript references to this and the preceding paragraph is too lengthy to give. Most of these letters will be published, or at least referred to, in the forthcoming selected edition of Penington's writings, and some are available in the collected edition of his *Works*, though the texts of these are somewhat inferior, being taken from selections published in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.
- 51 JP 1.156 and 1.157 were written from Radway, and JP 3.390.2 from Oxford. Several others refer to the stay at Astrop Wells, and to other local happenings.
- 52 JP 4.155 and 4.159.2 both dated 7 Sept. 1678.
- 53 JP 4.180.3, undated but around this time from the context.
- 54 JP 4.112, to be published in a forthcoming issue of the *Journal of the Friends Historical Society*, edited by Diana Morrison-Smith.