

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

*In Fox's Footsteps, a journey through three centuries.* By David and Anthea Boulton, Dales Historical Monographs, 1998.

*In Fox's Footsteps*, as the cover states, is about three journeys: George Fox's journey from Pendle Hill, Lancashire to Swarthmoor Hall, Cumbria, in 1652; the authors' attempts to retrace that journey in 1994, and an intellectual journey from 1652 to the present day in which David and Anthea Boulton interestingly discuss the relevance of George Fox's ideas for people living in the twentieth century.

The authors make clear at the outset that the book 'is not an academic treatise', nevertheless they reveal a sound understanding of recent Quaker historiography and the book would be a useful starting point for Friends wishing to know something about the Society's early history; as the authors state, 'we have made use of recent "revisionist" research into Quaker history . . . Quaker readers who have derived pleasure and inspiration from a more traditional telling of the tale may not always welcome our reinterpretations and revised emphases' (p. 1). During the re-telling of Fox's journey the authors discuss the radicalism of early Friends, not only in terms of their religious ideas but also their social and political beliefs, for example the refusal to follow social customs, denoting respect to 'superiors', and, in 1659, Fox's extreme proposals for a new order. They also lucidly explain some of the main early Quaker beliefs and how these upset prevailing ideas, for example the notion of the inner light, Quaker attitudes to the bible, and their view of 'hireling', or paid ministry.

The Boultons' own journey has several points of interest, not least the vivid descriptions of the many topographical changes and continuities since the seventeenth century. Some of the passages describing the natural environment are beautifully written and very evocative. Related to this, the photographs included in the middle of the book are very useful, especially for those who may have little knowledge of the areas described. One slight criticism of this part of the book stems from some of the more personal anecdotes related by the authors, which do not always seem terribly relevant, or of sufficient interest for the reader to warrant inclusion, one example being the description of the car (pp. 12-13). Also, the casual references to Fox, such as 'our George', though in keeping with the overall style, occasionally jar and detract from the book.

The final chapter provides a fascinating discussion of the relevance of Fox's ideas to the modern world; the authors suggest for example, that 'Fox can speak from his own condition to ours. . . because his intense and profound dissatisfaction with his own world bred the spirit of enquiry which produced the humanist Enlightenment and our culture of diversity and pluralism' (p.213). The essential change has been the move

from a world where 'truth' and authority stemmed from external agencies, such as the church and state, to one based more on subjective, individual experience, the latter of course being the central message of George Fox and early Quakerism.

*Caroline Leachman*

**David Boulton, *Gerrard Winstanley and the Republic of Heaven*. Foreword by Michael Foot. Dent: Dales Historical Monographs, 1999. £9.00.**

Specialist students of early Quakerism have plenty of material available on the contemporaries of George Fox and his companions, but it has been difficult to know what to recommend to general readers. The Aporia Press has performed an admirable service in recent years by publishing selections of the works of several of these characters, but a fair degree of background knowledge is still needed.

Gerrard Winstanley is one of the most interesting of this group, both as an early exponent of communistic principles and, to Quakers, as a contemporary of Fox with some very similar ideas. David Boulton's admirable small book performs a much needed service for Friends and others looking for an introduction to Winstanley, in that it is well-researched, well-written, and assumes a minimum of previous knowledge. Boulton gives a useful brief introduction to the revolutionary situation from which both Winstanley and Fox emerged, together with an account of what is known of Winstanley's early life. Details of Winstanley's 1648 publications are welcome, as the Aporia edition (*Gerrard Winstanley: Selected Writings* ed. Andrew Hopton. London: Aporia 1989), includes only pamphlets written at the height of the Digger movement in 1649-50.

The main part of Boulton's book consists of the history of Winstanley's Digger colony at St George's Hill near Walton-on-Thames in 1649-50, interspersed with extracts from Winstanley's writings. To Winstanley, the Parliamentary victory was but the first stage of the revolution, for the poor people were still in economic bondage. God had intended the earth to provide a livelihood for everyone, and the occupation and planting of common land at St George's Hill, backed up by Winstanley's ability as a publicist, was to be a public sign to Parliament and to the country of what still needed to be done. Most *JFHS* readers are probably familiar with the outline of these events, but the full story of Winstanley's tussles with local churchmen and gentry, and complications caused by invading Ranters, is well worth reading.

After the collapse of the colony Winstanley continued to publish his ideas for the ideal commonwealth, but the English revolution had already moved on, and his later life is obscure. Boulton has traced his return to respectability as country gentleman and churchwarden, and his

death in 1676 as a Quaker, by which time the Quakers themselves were no longer revolutionaries. The only known earlier meeting between Winstanley and Quakers occurred in 1654, when he talked with Edward Burrough and Francis Howgill in London soon after the beginning of their mission to that city but the absence of any sequel suggests that George Fox and Margaret Fell disapproved of this contact.

Boulton thinks it likely that Winstanley did have some influence on Quakers in their very early stages, citing as evidence similarities in both style and content between Quaker and Digger publications, and the fact that Winstanley's works predate any Quaker publications. It is true that Fox probably did read Winstanley's pamphlets, but it is questionable whether he was seriously influenced by them. The Quaker movement had existed in the Midlands for some six or eight years before the *annus mirabilis* of 1652, and there are indications that Fox's ideas were crystallising at the same time as Winstanley's, that is, in 1647-48. The public activity of both began in 1649, Winstanley attacking landed property with his Digger colony, while Fox in Nottingham attacked the parish ministry and its teachings with such vigour that he was arrested and imprisoned. As Boulton rightly says, while the ideas of Winstanley and Fox overlapped, each had his distinctive emphases. Quakers would have no truck with the established church, but only their wilder elements inveighed against the institution of private property, and it is probable that this bias was established at the outset of Fox's preaching career, rather than, as Boulton suggests, a compromise with his well-to-do supporters.

Boulton's last chapter goes beyond the bounds of pure history and considers the lasting influence of Winstanley and others who have proclaimed the earth as a common treasury. The Diggers colony failed, but the dream survives.

*Rosemary Moore*

**The Quakers in English Society 1655-1725 by Adrian Davies. Clarendon Press, Oxford 2000. Pp.xvi,262.**

The title of this book is misleading though that should not detract from the interest of its content. Adrian Davies has based his monograph on his thesis about the Quakers in Essex 1655-1725 and this remains the dominant element in his text. While he certainly does not deal solely with Essex the bulk of the detailed evidence used is derived from that county. Numerous (eighty or so) papers and books published after the completion of his thesis have been used and are cited in the full and valuable bibliography. This demonstrates the lively continuing study of seventeenth century English dissent and the author uses comparisons

between Friends and other dissenters as well as some from minority groups in contemporary culture. The terminal date on the title is also unhelpful, any reader hoping to learn much about the first quarter of the eighteenth century, nominally over one third of the book's scope, will be disappointed. There are some references to the eighteenth century and the statistical tables about literacy rates, occupations and the urban and rural distribution of Friends, all covering Essex, do cover the whole period of the title but generally the text is far fuller on the period to 1690.

The main theme of the book is the relationship between the Quakers and wider society and it contends that Friends were less isolated from contemporary society than suggested in earlier studies. It is thus an examination of the social consequences of religious belief. Essex was chosen as the basis of the study because of the abundance of extant records and in the hope of providing new insight since the emphasis of earlier detailed studies had tended to be on the North West of England. Considerable attention is given to the challenges posed by Friends to the established church through behaviour in church, non-payment of tithe, marriage and burial and to English society in general by plain dress, behaviour and language especially the refusal to take oaths. All this covers well-known ground with illustrations from Essex records. It is useful to have the basic picture reinforced or qualified by the detailed study of such matters as wills and behaviour at the death bed. Throughout his book Adrian Davies approaches his subject imaginatively and sections such as that dealing with body language, posture and deportment benefit from modern work in other disciplines.

Davies argues that the primary aim of Friends' discipline was to restore Friends to righteous participation in the Society and not to maintain its reputation. He claims that Friends were more tolerant in Essex than elsewhere of those who had erred, readily accepting the return of contrite members. He does not see the causes of Quaker decline towards the end of his period and afterwards in the increasingly rigorous application of the discipline. In Essex as a whole Quaker population reached a peak (in the period covered by this book) in the decades 1675-84 and 1695-1704 with the final decade 1715-24 showing a marked fall in numbers. This is thought untypical and may be influenced by the considerable Quaker population in Colchester which seems to affect other aspects of Essex Quaker history. Davies sees decline as connected with the pattern of assimilation into local society and of accommodation with civic authority as the authorities on their part came to accept the sincerity of Friends.

There is a useful discussion of Quaker literature, literacy and education. Well chosen examples illustrate the fear of the Quaker publishing enterprise held by the clergy and other dissenters. The



evidence for the ownership or use of Quaker literature by individual Friends is patchy and what is produced here will help in building up a more coherent national picture. Literacy amongst Friends in Essex was high compared with that of the entire population of the country and that of Quaker women especially so. There are interesting comments on Quaker schoolteachers in Essex.

Davies is particularly interested in the antecedents of Essex Quakerism, suggesting that in some areas the growth of Quakerism was strengthened by an earlier underlying tradition of dissent. There is evidence earlier in the seventeenth century of members of congregations wearing hats in church to demonstrate disapproval of elements of the service though this cannot be directly connected with Quaker views on hat honour.

In conclusion the author argues for a later start 'to the second period of Quakerism' than others had previously suggested, choosing the 1670s rather than 1660 or 1667. This is followed in his view by a fifty year period of adjustment to society and integration within it, providing the underlying circumstances for continuing decline in membership. Some quoted evidence from York supports him in this. Here he takes issue with Richard Vann's *The Social Development of English Quakerism. 1655-1755* (Cambridge, Mass. 1969) where the picture is of a developing and greater separation from broader society because of standardisation in behaviour and a drive for uniformity amongst Friends. This leads Davies to begin to question some of the general assumptions of recent historians about the evolution of religious sects. Davies's study in depth of primary Essex Friends after their initial heady years is of great interest and points to the need for more local studies to support a new consideration of the development and survival of English Quakerism. Without them it is difficult to say just how exceptional Essex was and how much our earlier conclusions must be qualified by Adrian Davies's work here.

*David J. Hall*

### **Hidden in plain sight Quaker Women's Writings 1650-1700**

A volume on Quaker women's writings from the second half of the seventeenth century. These women and their writings have been unknown to contemporary Quakers. However, Friends House Library was extremely helpful to the researcher (Rosemary Radford Ruether) when she spent the spring of 1986 on sabbatical leave in London researching these religious writings.

The book is a Pendle Hill Publication and the four editors: Mary Garman, Judith Applegate, Margaret Benefield and Dortha Meredith - all American.

The time at which these writings came to birth was a time when sub-cultures could emerge - the first movement of Feminist Theology, and of course, the area about which we are particularly interested, the Society of Friends; particularly formed by the part women had to play. The first prophetic mode was that of the Baptists but it is said a more disciplined order from the 1660s, the Religious Society of Friends.

The 'prophets' were aristocratic, middle- and working-class, cultivated, dissenting, religious groups. (I shall never, ever forget Jonathan Dales's Swarthmore Lecture about our call to 'dissent', for I went to Manchester afterwards to talk to him about it).

These Quaker women, our forebears, were known and thought of themselves as 'prophets'. As according to their times, their inspirations came from the Bible. They preached a God of wrath, although convinced war was wrong. Their ideas about God were according to their age - going often to prison for their faithfulness to what they believed. 'Judgement' was part of their concept of God. (I might add, not mine).

The paradox - which also I find - the choice to 'belong' and be encompassed in God's love and compassion, bringing a good life and comfort, does not remain so. Maybe because one is involved in the struggles to bring others to a better life, but also because one is human and suffers the 'slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' in many ways, and like these women we now consider, constantly need to renew ourselves and turn to the Light. Their lives were far from easy, and I wonder how I would survive under such conditions. However, I don't think our times are easy either and our circumstances quite different.

The women, whose writings are given in this volume, might have been THE FORGOTTEN WOMEN but the researchers make a plea for them to be read, brought forward and recognised.

A large portion of *'Hidden in Plain Sight'* is given to long testimonies and makes very challenging reading. For example there are writings by Sarah Jones, Mary Penington, Margaret Fell, Esther Biddle and Rebecca Travers. In the former parts of the book space is given to words about more recent writers - but they are paying tribute to early Quaker women and it may encourage the reader to know something of this.

In 1689 Quaker Women sent to Parliament '7,000 names of the Handmaids and Daughters of the Lord'. The author of the introduction to those collected petitions was MARY FORSTER.

This book, *Hidden in Plain Sight*, stresses that there are strong links with the Feminist Movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Rosemary Redford Ruether argues for links with humanist scholars and early Quaker women, who might be seen as the forerunners of early modern feminism.

Our early Quaker forebears were prominent because they showed leadership that other traditions had not enjoyed. One invincible truth which all of them may have found hard to say, because they paid so

much attention to the Scriptures, is that of George Fox, 'If there were no scriptures, Christ is sufficient'. Perhaps their times in prison helped them to affirm that truth.

Anne Ord

**The Murrays of Murray Hill by Charles Monaghan (Brooklyn, N.Y., Urban History Press, 1998;166 pages; \$25.).**

Until they were discarded, among the most highly favoured- and socially acceptable- telephone prefixes for Manhattan was Murray Hill. Murray Hill-the area south of Grand Central Station from Madison Avenue over to Park Avenue-included some of New York's 'best' addresses. Very few would know that Murray Hill owes its origins to a Quaker merchant family, the Murrays whose house, Inclenberg, was there.

Charles Monaghan says that he intended 'to rescue from historical obscurity a merchant family that played an important role in New York City in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.' But more particularly Monaghan wanted to focus our attention on the life of the family's eldest child, Lindley Murray, who became the largest-selling author in the world during the first four decades of the nineteenth century.

In *Chambers Biographical Dictionary* we read in a small entry that Murray was 'an American grammarian, born in 1745 at Swatara Creek, Pennsylvania. He practiced law, made a fortune in New York during the War of Independence and then, *for health reasons* (my emphasis) retired to England and bought an estate near York. . . .' For long, due to Murray's own *Memoirs* my underlining was assumed to be the reason that Murray spent the last half of his life in Yorkshire. But as any Yorkshire man knows, you do not choose the county as a place of retirement for health reasons! The truth which Monaghan established-and the most interesting element of his book-is revelatory.

However, there is a basic problem with this book which more clearly focusing on the most interesting element, the life of Lindley Murray, would have avoided. As it stands, there is far too much repetition as the author goes back and forth to other members of the family. The organisation therefore becomes clumsy and disjointed. Perhaps this was the fault of the publisher who wished that the book fit the category of New York family history.

This a pity as Lindley Murray's story is the one thread which holds it together and attracts our attention. Here is both a remarkably achieving and almost tragic tale at the same time: a life sacrificed for his family; more specifically for his father, Robert. Robert Murray rose from an

immigrant miller in the second half of the eighteenth century to become one of New York's leading merchants. For Quakers it is a familiar story, but this time the setting is not Philadelphia but New York. As with the better known Philadelphia Quaker merchant-aristocrats, there is the conflict between money and morals, a matter Monaghan could have more fully developed.

Robert Murray was raised a Presbyterian, but when he married the Quaker Mary Lindley he abandoned his Scots-Irish heritage and joined the Society of Friends. After a short time in North Carolina (with Quaker Lindley links) the family settled in New York. As Monaghan writes: 'It was a shrewd choice. New York was on the verge of taking its place as one of the premier cities of the British Empire.' From 1754 to 1759 the custom value of English manufactures rose from £87,499 to £483,952, and Robert Murray took advantage of the situation. Among his businesses was a substantial shipping tonnage; by 1764, four vessels and a strategically located wharf.

Young Lindley was raised into a sophisticated household which was accustomed to international travellers. Though Robert was a member of the New York Meeting for Sufferings, he sent his son not as expected to the William Penn Charter School in Philadelphia but a newer establishment founded by Benjamin Franklin where Lindley was exposed to the fashionable Enlightenment ideas of the eighteenth century. The drudgery of the counting house never appealed to him and against his father's wishes 'the budding intellectual was striving to become a man of his age, a man of the Enlightenment.' In 1767, Lindley began a legal practice in New York and married Hannah Dobson, a Friend from Flushing, Long Island.

The couple moved briefly to England but returned in 1771 as events gathered momentum toward the approaching break of the colonies from England. A year before the fateful 1776 an episode occurred which affected the future cause of Lindley's life. One of his father's ships, the *Beulah* (named for Lindley's sister), tried to break the American blockade of goods from the mother country. The affair was worsened by a cover-up which was later exposed and gave a clear impression that the Murrays were against the patriot cause. The *Beulah* was ordered out of the New York harbour; under cover of darkness the ship's two tons of goods were unloaded off Staten Island.

Monaghan makes a good case for the Murrays' political neutrality. Quaker resistance to involvement in war was coupled with Whiggish sentiments. Though by all rights it should have been his father who was forced to leave New York, it was Lindley who became the sacrificial lamb to bear the brunt of public anger over his father's actions.

Lindley's exile from New York first meant that he decided to settle in



Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. A logical choice as the Moravians who founded Bethlehem like the Quakers were pacifists, and due to their convictions were also suspected as loyalists. Lindley and his family were extremely happy there, but pressure continued against those who were suspected of having supplied the British war effort. Many loyalists saw their businesses and lands confiscated by the new regime.

To protect his family an arrangement was made with the political authorities that Lindley would be sent into exile abroad. And so on 1st December 1784 on a Murray ship, the *Betsy*, Lindley left America forever and settled in York. Why York? Aside from its Quaker connections, Lindley wanted to avoid the squabbling and recriminating life of American loyalist exiles in London who spent much of their time trying to obtain compensation from the British government for property they had lost in America. To his credit, Lindley Murray never applied for relief.

Recording these events in their correct manner is the chief strength of Monaghan's volume. Murray's own *Memoirs* were not written until 1806-1809, three decades after 1776. As Monaghan says: 'His refusal to discuss the American Revolution is the central absurdity of his *Memoirs*.' But it is understandable why. By this time Lindley had become a very important writer of the textbooks which came to affect tens of millions of pupils, many of them in America. Not only did he want to protect his family's reputation in America, but also his own as a mentor for American youth.

At age 41, driven from his homeland, Lindley Murray's most important years were at a comfortable home in Holdgate, just outside York. Like his father and his brother John, Lindley became a force in moves to abolish slavery. His books were many: numerous grammar and exercise texts which, until the advent of Noah Webster, were the most widely used in America. But it was his anthology, the *English Reader*, which was his most successful production. More than 5,000,000 copies were sold in America before the Civil War. Importantly as Monaghan states. Through its selections, the book helped create an intellectual climate that led to wide acceptance in the North of anti-slavery ideas.' Abraham Lincoln certainly thought so. He said that the *English Reader* was 'the best school book ever put in the hands of the American youth.' Ironically, this is despite the fact that the text does not contain a single selection by an American author!

Though he was plagued by ill health for much of his life (and something of a hypochondriac) Lindley Murray died in York at age 81. He was buried at Friend's burial ground at Bishophill in York as was John Woolman (who also wrote children's primers). I can not resist two small corrections: Monaghan calls Woolman 'the famed American Quaker missionary. . .' Missionary is a highly inappropriate appellation

for Woolman. On page 96 Monaghan mentions 'Newbern, North Carolina, a Quaker stronghold.' The spelling is New Bern and it was never known for many-if any-Quakers. He must be thinking of New Garden (Greensboro) which always has had a sizeable Quaker population.

Despite the previously noted difficulties with its format, *The Murrays of Murray Hill*, especially with its story of the remarkable Lindley Murray, makes fascinating reading.

*David Sox*

### **QUAKERS AND THE ARTS 'Plain and Fancy'**

**David Sox**

**Sessions Book Trust, York, England in association with Friends United Press, Richmond, Indiana, U.S.A. £12.00**

Although this is an 'Anglo-American' perspective, to the English reader it will appear as a definitely American book. None-the-less it extends the knowledge of Quakers and the Arts, albeit perhaps focused more on the written word and painting than on music and drama, and the painters are mainly American, as also are the poets. It is interesting to observe that whilst the early American artists had generally distanced themselves from Quakers before achieving fame, those from modern times (particularly from the theatre) have embraced the Society with little or no close experience of Quakers except, perhaps, having attended a Quaker School.

A problem with the early American artists as recorded in this book is the plethora of names. They have to be sorted: take Benjamin West, who succeeded Joshua Reynolds as President of the Royal Academy; there are lots of other Wests (not artistic in any particular way). Later on, to name but a few, lots of Pearsalls and Logans and Frys (Roger Fry was one of the 37 nieces and nephews to benefit under the will of the well known chocolateer). It is also surprising how many American placenames (well, perhaps not so surprising) echo English ones, at times necessitating checking back to see which country one is in. This helter skelter of names and places give an impression that the book might have been written in an enthusiastic hurry.

Benjamin West, Edward Hicks, James Fenimore Cooper, Walt Whitman and John Greenleaf Whittier have biographical chapters to themselves. The Leaveners, the Quaker Festival Choir and Orchestra, the *Gates of Greenham*, the Tapestry and the Quaker Fellowship of the Arts receive mention, as do Joan Baez, Judi Dench, Sheila Hancock, Paul Eddington, Ben Kingsley and Henry Scott Tuke (this is when the English start coming in). This encourages further exploration of the book's subjects.

There had been 'intimations of art' since the early days, although, presumably, not recognised as such. Margaret Fell herself penned an elegy in 1669 - *A Few Lines concerning Josiah Coale*, who had been martyred the year before for preaching the radical religion, and George Fox himself recalls singing for joy, and singing did occur in some Meetings for Worship, although, surely, it could not be recognised as Art.

We are reminded of Elizabeth Fry's hesitation about the traditional policy of the Society of Friends toward Music: "My observation of human nature and the different things that affect it frequently leads me to regret that we as a Society so wholly give up delighting the ear by sound. Surely He who formed the ear and the heart would not have given these tastes and powers without some purpose for them." - perhaps a nostalgic backward glance at her own liberal childhood at Earlham Hall.

Wordsworth in his preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* writes "Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: its takes its origin from emotion reflected in tranquillity" To poetry, add the other Arts. The awakening drifted into Quaker life during the latter part of the eighteenth century, at a time when the only pictures, if indeed any, gracing the walls of the Quaker home were Benjamin West's "Penn's Treaty with the Indians", the terrible plan of the slave ship developed by Thomas Clarkson, and, curiously, the plan for Ackworth School in Yorkshire, England. Although not recording that 'The Peacable Kingdom of the Branch' might also have been found in some houses, David Sox intrigues us with the story of the many versions of the original picture by Richard Westall painted by Edward Hicks (with the original grapevine replaced by a watery one, see p35 for the explanation).

In 113 pages of text the author provides a wealth of pleasant and informative reading. But there is a puzzling version of Whittier's lovely verses from the *Brewing of Soma*, 'Dear Lord and Father of Mankind' in the form of a hymn quoted from the Hymnal of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A., Greenwich, Conn.1940, no.435, which is a mishmash of at least two poems.

The footnotes are listed at the end of the book, which is a great aid to uninterrupted reading. The index is inadequate, merely showing the names of those mentioned in the book. A compensation is the many illustrations featured throughout.

*Patricia R.Sparks*

**Memoirs of SENATOR JAMES G. DOUGLAS**  
**Concerned Citizen, Edited by J. Anthony Gaughan**  
**University College Dublin Press. £24.99**

James G. Douglas (1887-1954) was a committed Irish nationalist and a committed Quaker. His *Memoirs* are fairly short and do not go much further than 1923 but shed intriguing light on the vital years of 1916-1923 since he was a "man close to the centre of much that was going on; a secondary, but strategically placed, actor in the delicate, dramatic and dangerous infancy of Irish independence." (Brian Farrell, Foreward) In his carefully researched and sympathetic 45 pages long Introduction the Editor J. Anthony Gaughan (priest of the archdiocese of Dublin) gives us an insight into Douglas' later years also.

James Douglas was born in Dublin into a "fairly strict" Quaker business-family and was "imbued by the Quaker ethic of honesty, service and hard work." (Ed.) He too became a, successful, businessman but his deepest interest always veered towards Anglo-Irish politics. In his youth he was a Home Ruler but the experience of the Easter Rising convinced him that "Home Rule could never satisfy Irish national aspirations." Being "by training and conviction a pacifist" he believed the Rising "to be an act of folly." However the execution of the nationalist leaders changed his disapproval into sympathy: "Before long I became a convert to the ideals of Sinn Fein but still opposed to a policy of the further use of force." In 1917 he became involved in an attempt to reconcile Sinn Fein and the Irish Parliamentary Party and in the preparation for an Irish Convention. However the information came "that the Ulster unionists were determined to prevent any settlement other than on their own terms and that consequently the Convention was largely a waste of time." The American committee for Relief in Ireland was formed in 1921 with strong Quaker representation. Acting under the name of the Irish White Cross it supplied very considerable but strictly non-political, non-sectarian aid with Douglas as its honorary treasurer and honorary organising secretary. "In that work he not only displayed moral and physical courage, but his knowledge of business and his resourceful mind helped to add to the fund and ensured that the moneys were put to the best practical use." (Tribute to Senator J.G.D.1954) This work brought him into contact with Michael Collins and the two men formed a working relationship based on mutual respect and trust. Collins wanted him to be the chairman of the committee which prepared drafts of the first Irish constitution but Douglas, feeling unqualified, decided to be a member only. At one stage of their relevant discussions "both agreed, albeit for different reasons, that the proposed constitution should not authorise capital punishment" (Ed.) The *Memoirs* gives us a short but convincing glance of how, by the power of his personality and by the



power of silence, Collins dominated the negotiation with the British government. He briefly stated his case and then completely refused to be drawn into argument. "By 1922 Douglas clearly enjoyed the Irish leader's fullest confidence" and Collins' assassination touched him very deeply. Part of his "Encomium" reads: "I have rarely met a man who made you love and respect him, almost whether you wanted to or not, like Michael Collins - his enthusiasm and energy were contagious - you felt you wanted to work for Ireland, and in the way he wanted you to work."

Douglas was elected Senator in 1922 and he acted with "characteristic dedication to duty and considerable expertise." (Ed.) Towards the end of the civil war, in April 1923, de Valera from his hiding-place sent for Douglas, - a pro-Treaty Senator! to discuss a possible settlement with the Cosgrave government. In spite of the obvious dangers, Douglas went without hesitation and, on de Valera's request, had several, - unfruitful, - encounters with Cosgrave. The last pages of the *Memoirs* are taken up with Douglas' concern about the partition and with its resulting economic problems. He organised a meeting with Belfast-businessmen and "it was quite obvious that most, if not all, would like to see some arrangement which would allow free trade over the whole of Ireland." However, in no time, the *Belfast Newsletter* attacked the men who came to the meeting and threatened to name them all if any further meetings were held. Everyone saw that "it would be useless" to continue and so the *Memoirs* end.

Brian Farrell remembers James Douglas as "Well known in the early stages of the State, he faded in the collective memory". It is timely therefore that Anthony Gaughan in his outstanding work re-establishes the measure of the man who made a lasting contribution to the foundation of the Irish State.

*Marie Andreanszky*

**"Two Weeks in May 1945" by Clifford Barnard. Sandbostel Concentration Camp and the Friends Ambulance Unit. Quaker Home Service. £10. Pages 132.**

The Friends Ambulance Unit will be known to readers of these pages from recent reviews of *"Pacifists in Action"*, the world-wide experiences of FAU members in the Second World War, and Grigor McClelland's *"Embers of War"*, letters from a Quaker Relief Worker in war-torn Germany. Fifty-five years on, time is necessarily running out for the approximately 1300 young men and women conscientious objectors (there were never many more than 800 at any time in the Unit) who found the FAU was the right place for them as pacifists in a world at total war, so first hand accounts of their experiences must be drawing to a close.

Clifford Barnard was eighteen when he joined the FAU in 1943 and after training was one of fifty-five members who came to Europe in December 1944 to do Relief Work under the auspices of the British Red Cross and the Civil Affairs Branch of the Army, later to become Military Government. On 2nd May 1945, hot on the heels of the uncovering of Sandbostel Concentration Camp by the advancing Army, which was still being resisted by the German Army, he entered the Camp as part of the small Number 2 FAU Section. They were confronted with a scene which would have taxed Danté or Hieronymus Bosch to describe. The Camp was not an extermination camp, in that it had no gas ovens, but eight thousand largely civilian prisoners of many nationalities were confined in conditions which gave them little chance of survival if liberation had not arrived. Typhus, typhoid and tuberculosis were widespread, the barely living were mixed with the dead and initially deaths continued at probably one hundred and fifty a day.

Such appalling scenes became familiar to a shocked world from the news films of the time and have also been thoroughly documented. This book relies on contemporary letters, diaries, memoirs, articles and reports including extracts from the HMSO publication *"The Medical History of the Second World War"* and *"Report on Sandbostel"* from *"One Young Man and Total War from Normandy to Concentration Camp: a Doctor's letters home"* by Captain Robert Barer M.C.,R.A.M.C." There is also a German History of the Camp.

The main response to a catastrophe of this magnitude had, in the circumstances of the time to come from the Army, who were on the spot in the numbers and with access to the resources needed. These were enormous and some are carefully documented in this book.

Against this background the life saving work of the handful of FAU men was dedicated to the point of exhaustion, and sometimes dangerous (although the author writes with expected modesty), but necessarily small in relation to the whole. However, the book is a further contribution to the honourable history of Quaker war relief work and the recent David Irving libel trial has been a reminder that these horrors cannot be too well recorded while living witnesses survive.

A unique feature of the book is correspondence from German women who as girls were drafted in to help in the Camp and responded to a newspaper advertisement by the author in 1997. They confirm in detail the appalling conditions and give their reactions to the traumatic experience. Traumatic it was for all involved and the author records how he, horrified, stunned and angry, momentarily contemplated leaving the FAU to join the Army, in spite of his beliefs firmly rooted in a Christian, Quaker, pacifist upbringing. Even after all these years perhaps, as the author hints, writing this book has been a necessary catharsis for him.

*Duncan Jones*

***Living Threads. Making the Quaker Tapestry.* By Jennie Levin  
Quaker Tapestry at Kendal 1998. Pp.64. £7.99.**

Stitchwork to illustrate scenes from Quaker history was a novel idea in 1981. Ann Wynn-Wilson had the vision to develop and drive it forward, willing the Quaker Tapestry into vibrant and compelling life. Its 77 crewel-embroidered panels celebrate the insights and experience of Friends from their starting point in 1652. The evolution of this unique community project has been well-researched by Jennie Levin for her aptly-titled and absorbing "Living Threads". She charts the Tapestry's progress through its first fifteen years and acclaims the far-sighted volunteers who saw it through in faith,

The scheme's potential for promoting fellowship among its helpers was perceived by Quaker Home Service, alert to the spiritual health of Friends. Their grant of £1,000 enabled Ann Wynn-Wilson to have suitable fabric woven, choose 120 rich colours for the embroidery and present a finished panel to Friends' Yearly Meeting at Warwick in 1982. Here a committee and secretary came forward, and the Quaker Tapestry Newsletter was set in motion. By the following year 404 suggestions for the panels had been received as interest grew at home and overseas.

Research had to be accurate. A broken tower of Lichfield Cathedral, as known in the seventeenth century, and a ship's rigging from the same period are among countless details scrupulously checked before cartoons went forward. Unity of design was essential: 14 artists contributed. Panels were divided into three, title above, main thrust in the centre and additional detail below, this sometimes adapted from children's drawings. Lettering followed agreed spacing. The title panel and the last were linked by spiral designs to suggest the spiritual energy of Friends in their worldwide organisation. Local themes were covered, too. For a book dedicated to Ann Wynn-Wilson it is fitting that, of her many designs, one that she also embroidered and found spiritually helpful should be selected for the cover.

Simple stitches were ordained to meet beginners' needs and yet allow the skilled to be creative. Unpicking did not mar the sturdy cloth. The "Quaker stitch" devised for the lettering was new even to the Royal College of Needlework. Over time embroidery groups were set up and experts emerged, self-financing workshops were held and there were several Tapestry holidays at home and abroad. The text gives details, dates and venues and notes a growing community spirit.

The Tapestry reached exhibition standard. Copyright over the panels' reproduction for money-making cards and calendars had to be secured. Charity status achieved this by 1986 and allowed for exhibitions to be held in any part of the world, "extending knowledge of Quakerism within and beyond the Religious Society of Friends". The first showing of

all the panels was in Aberdeen during the Yearly Meeting there in 1989. In 1990 they were seen at London's Festival Hall and in Bayeux, and there was the first performance of "Talking Threads", reflecting the work in drama. Panels graced the House of Commons and went all over Britain and Ireland and to Quaker colleges in the United States in 100 exhibitions. Catalogues, guides and a Tapestry book were published. Outreach was exceeding expectation. It was time for the Quaker Tapestry Collection to have a permanent centre, and this was opened at Kendal in 1994.

*"Living Threads"* served "Kendal's treasure" well, a rewarding and rounded account, rich in anecdote and detail, straightforwardly relaxed in style. There are close-ups of stitches and design and photographs of Tapestry devotees, whose stories speak for all involved in its production and display. Their combined skills are hugely impressive - fundraising, publishing and tapestry-conservation to list a few. 4,000 Friends in 15 countries helped to create a meaningful representation of the Quaker heritage. The author is discerning of its impact on their lives. In the telling words of J.R. Wilkes, "It is in the act of remembering that people establish their identity and find their meaning". \*

Jennie Levin writes from the heart to give *"Living Threads"* its immediate and wide appeal and the Quaker Tapestry her warm and moving tribute.

*Stella Luce*

\*From *"The Friends' Quarterly"* of 1982 and quoted by Margaret H. Simpson in *"The Quaker Tapestry"*, an article appearing in *"The Friends' Quarterly"* of April, 1986.

**Faith in Action**  
**Quaker Social Testimony**  
 by Jonathan Dale and others  
 QHS, April 2000 £10  
 ISBN 0 85245 320 5

This book is in two parts. The first is an extended essay by Jonathan Dale building on his 1996 Swarthmore Lecture in which he explores the Quaker understanding of testimony. The second half is a collection of recent Quaker writings suggesting that Quakers as a whole support the arguments presented.

Jonathan attempts to define a testimony. It would have helped if he had been more explicit in doing so. The book tries not to offend but as a result it is necessary to struggle to find its conclusions. So, Jonathan does not explicitly reject the view that a testimony must have withstood the



test of time and seasoned use before it can be recognised as such, but he does so in practice. However, this is only apparent because he accepts that Quakers have an, as yet unnamed, testimony to the Earth as creation that is now in the course of development.

This is welcome and puts testimony in the context of our history. Early Friends bore testimony, but did not have the experience of history. Eventually the best suggestion as to the nature of testimony I could find is that it "describes a witness to the living truth within the human heart as it is acted out in everyday life".

The trouble with this is that the key element of this definition, the faith that gives rise to the action, is given scant attention in this book. Social testimony, it is argued, is demonstrative, political, affirmative, dissenting, and evolutionary. However Jonathan is unable to differentiate social testimony, which he sees as faith in action, from testimony which by corollary he would seem to see as faith. So all our testimonies appear to be social, whether they be on peace, truth, simplicity, equality, community, creation or economic values (the last two definitely not appearing in all lexicons yet). Further, he considers all require action. Jonathan explicitly states that being is not enough, doing is all. He continues with a quite explicit rejection that spirituality is paramount.

Here the view presented appears to be quite at odds with Quaker history. Early Quakers were driven by faith. They did live their testimony. Our first generation are perhaps the only Quakers of whom we can be sure of this. Equally we can be sure that those who sat through many hours in meeting, waiting on the Light did not put their spirituality second, it was the motivation and purpose of their lives. Is restoration of our testimonies to be at the price of this aspect of Quaker life?

Clearly many in the Society today would not agree. Rex Ambler, who is much quoted in the book for his writings on theology and ecology, has since 1996 been responsible for the Experiment with Light, which marks a definite return to our early spiritual roots. Alastair Heron has questioned over the last few years whether we are a religious society or a friendly society. Most would still argue the former, and those who do not (as it seems Jonathan Dale might) must justify in that case what distinct contribution the Quaker aspect of their work adds over that of any political pressure group, an issue this book fails to address, let alone resolve.

Why ultimately was I so disappointed by this book, when at its core it presented so much with which I wanted to agree? I think there are two reasons. Whilst much of the book is argued with obvious passion some aspects lack true conviction. It is easier to live in a council estate, without a fridge and car and to wear clothes until worn out when this is a choice.

Secondly, this is ultimately a depressingly materialistic book. If our faith is to be defined by our abstinence, as this book would appear to argue, then it is a secular not a spiritual pursuit.

This book reflects the spirit of current Quaker dilemmas. Some argue our task is to rediscover our faith. Others our action. But we live in our present and can only change our future. Maybe we need to discover that. Then we can live in faith, which is action in itself.

*Richard Murphy*

## NOTES AND QUERIES

**Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society**

**Gloucestershire Record Series, Volume 13**

**Bishop Benson's Survey of the Diocese of Gloucester 1735-1750**

**Edited by John Fendley.2000, pp.xx, 204**

"The edited text presents the content of all the six manuscripts of Benson's survey that are known to have survived. Letters in bold-face indicate those manuscripts.

- A G.D.R. 285B(1), dating from 1735
- B G.D.R. 285B(3), dating from 1735-8
- C G.D.R. 397, dating from 1743 and later
- D G.D.R. 381A, dating from 1750
- E Gloucester Cathedral Library MS.52, dating from 1751
- F G.D.R. 393, dating from 1751.

The edited text is based on D, and shows the significant variants in the other alternations made to them and to D."

## GLOUCESTERSHIRE MEETINGS 1735-50

This survey would have been from the reports of parish officers in response to questions from Thomas Benson (1689-1752) bishop of Gloucester from 1735.

Friends' meetings seem to have been picked up in reports of the following parishes:

- p.26 Didmarton & Oldbury
- 32 Pucklechurch
- 35 Chipping Sodbury
- 49 Thornbury (and a school)
- 58 Horsley [this parish is about a mile south of Nailsworth]
- Minchinhampton
- 60 Painswick
- 67 Tetbury