

THE JOURNAL OF THE FRIENDS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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EDITORIAL

Friends Historical Society has lost two more of its Presidents during the past year. Sadly I never met William N. Oats who played a major role in the exploration of Australia's Quaker history. *A Question of Survival: Quakers in Australia in the Nineteenth Century* and *Backhouse and Walker* were two of his ground-breaking studies. His Presidential Address of 1986: 'The Campaign Against Conscription in Australia – 1911-1914' can be read in J.F.H.S., 55, No 7 (1989).

William R. Aitkin, at London Yearly Meeting at Aberdeen in 1989, posed the question 'Stands Scotland Where It did?' prompting 'Some Thoughts on Quakers in Scotland during the last Half Century'. Drawing on Scottish literature as well as personal memories, he gave an affectionate account of a small but dynamic community within the broader religious life of Scotland. See J.F.H.S., 56, No 1 (1990). The Society remembers both with gratitude.

This issue contains a rich and varied tapestry of Quaker history.

David M. Butler's Presidential Address is a fascinating exploration of a neglected yet highly significant aspect of early Quaker history. He has taken the subject further in his monumental two volume study *The Quaker Meeting Houses of Britain*, published earlier this year. Friends Historical Society co-hosted a celebration with the Chapels Society, held at Dr Williams's library on 7 September. A stimulating address was given by Peter Burman, Director, Centre for

Conservation in the Department of Archaeology at the University of York. A review article by Peter Burman will appear in next year's issue of J.F.H.S.

David Farr's closely argued exploration of an individual's career in the Civil War and the Commonwealth raises some important historical questions for the early years of Quakerism. It is hoped that David Farr will speak to the Society in a future programme.

Max L. Carter's fascinating exploration of Alchemy and early Friends' spiritual foundations yield some intriguing insights.

William Evans shows what can be developed from fragmentary primary sources when Quaker and other contemporary records and modern scholarship can be utilised to "flesh out the bones".

Geoffrey A. Storey presents a succinct account of a Quaker physician and his notable achievements in mid-Victorian medicine and his part, with other Quakers, in the foundation of the City of London Chest Hospital.

Barry Dackombe gives a vivid and detailed account of Quaker famine relief in Russia in the early 1890s, using Quaker records and other contemporary records with modern scholarly perspectives.

The Editor welcomes articles and short items for consideration for inclusion in the *Journal* but advises contributors to contact him first to confirm the presentation of references and footnotes. The Editor's decision is final as regards publication or revision.

Howard F. Gregg