

Norfolk Friends' Care of Their Poor, 1700-1850¹

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I

SIR FREDERICK MORTON EDEN in Volume I of *The State of the Poor*² quoted Dr. Lettsom who said of the Quakers: "the time may come, when a wise legislator may descend to inquire . . . by what polity, without emolument from Government, they have become the only people on earth free from poverty;—by what economy they have thus prevented beggary and want among any of their members, while the nation groans under taxes for the Poor."³ Eden, however, was sceptical. He commented: "The singular economy and good management which are to be found among Quakers, are highly deserving of general imitation; it may, however, be doubted whether the accounts which are usually given respecting the Poor, that are to be found among this respectable order, are altogether correct." He proceeded to show that the Quakers pay much attention to the moral conduct of their members, "and considering, with great propriety, the want of industry, frugality and economy (those instances of misconduct which most generally lead to poverty) as the least pardonable moral delinquencies, they rarely fail to check their weaker brethren in their first deviations into idleness and extravagance, by admonitions of singular earnestness

¹ Part of a thesis on *The treatment of poverty in Norfolk from 1700 to 1850, with a survey of the work of voluntary organizations*, to be presented for the Ph.D. degree at Cambridge University. The author's thanks are due to the late Arthur J. Eddington who, at a critical time in his last illness, took much trouble in selecting required volumes from the archives at Norwich Meeting House, to Doris Eddington, Samuel Peel, Thomas Copeman and Mary Alexander, to Norfolk Quarterly Meeting, and to Lynn Friends, to Alec F. Jolliffe for help with transport, to John Nickalls and Muriel Hicks, Friends' Reference Library, London, and to Miss Chrystal, Librarian, Newnham College for giving space in safes for manuscripts over a long period.

² Eden, F. M., *The State of the Poor*, 1797, I, pp. 588-89.

³ Lettsom, J. C., *Memoirs of John Fothergill*, 1786, p. 100.

and weight. If after such warning, the delinquents are incorrigible, and, continuing to be profligate, become also poor, they are then looked upon as irreclaimable offenders, unworthy of being any longer regarded as Friends ; and so, in the phraseology of the Society are *read out*, i.e. are expelled." Eden invited society at large "to emulate the policy of this prudent sect."

The advice which Eden gave is typical of that of the average writer of his time on the poor law. Yet writers on Quaker history like Auguste Jorns and William C. Braithwaite find nothing strange about his comment. Jorns states merely that Eden found specially noteworthy¹ the absence of poor Quakers supported at public expense but Braithwaite says : "The maintenance by Friends of their own poor won the admiration of Eden, the historian of the poor laws."² That Eden was not admiring is confirmed in his second volume (which apparently neither saw) where he wrote tersely : "Very few poor are to be found among the Quakers ; the reason of which seems to be (as a Quaker observed) that as soon as a member becomes idle, drunken or otherwise depraved, he is expelled from the Society."³ It is true that by the time he got to Bristol, Eden was better informed and was able (though part of the information given is incorrect) to describe in a later part of the same volume, how the Society of Friends dealt with its own poor in that city,⁴ but he did not trouble to correct the impression made in earlier pages.

The evidence presented herewith shows that Eden's statement was inadequate and misleading. It will be useful also in throwing more light on the Society's policy with regard to the poor because, hitherto, for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries at any rate, it has been viewed from the angle of the Yearly Meeting in London with an occasional glance at handy examples afforded by Quarterly or Monthly Meetings in the provinces. The story will, moreover, illuminate the course of the Society of Friends

¹ Jorns, A., *Studien über die Sozialpolitik der Quäker*, 1912. Translated and published in the United States as *The Quakers as Pioneers in Social Work*, 1931. References are to the latter edition and in the above, to p. 58.

² Braithwaite, W. C., *The Second Period of Quakerism*, 1919, p. 566.

³ Eden, *op. cit.*, II, p. 9.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

in Norfolk and incidentally, draw in something of the economic and social history of the county from 1700 to 1850.

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FOUNDATIONS

Modern writers on the social teachings of the Protestant churches have called attention to the emphasis which leaders like Luther, Zwingli, Calvin and Oecolampadius laid upon the right development of individual character as the means to the abolition of social evils and R. H. Tawney says of Puritanism: "Nor would it be difficult to find notable representatives of the Puritan spirit, in whom the personal austerity, which was the noblest aspect of the new ideal, was combined with a profound consciousness of social solidarity, which was the noblest aspect of that which it displaced. Firmin, the philanthropist and Bellers the Quaker . . . were pioneers of Poor Law reform . . . The general climate and character of a country are not altered, however, by the fact that here and there it has peaks which rise into an ampler air. The distinctive note of Puritan teaching was different. It was individual responsibility, not social obligation. Training its pupils to the mastery of others through the mastery of self, it prized as a crown of glory the qualities which arm the spiritual athlete for his solitary contest with a hostile world and dismissed concern with the social order as the prop of weaklings and the Capua of the soul."¹ Such a generalization does not do justice to the concern which the Society of Friends had for its poor, for, from its early beginnings, it is clear that Quakers hoped by their loving care for each other, which was to find one expression in material aid to the needy, to return in spirit to the state of grace of the primitive Christian community.

Thus George Fox addressed his followers: "And in all your Meetings, lett Notice be given to the generall Meetings of all the Poore, and when you have heard that there is many more poore belongs to one Meeting than to another, and that Meeting thereby burthened and oppressed, let the Rest of the Meetings assist and helpe them, so that you may ease one another and helpe to bear one anothers burthens, and so fulfill the law of Christ, and so see that nothing be lacking, according to the Apostles words, Mark,

¹ Tawney, R. H., *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, 1926, pp. 272-73.

nothing lacking, then all is well. For the Jews outward though they were as the stars of Heaven and as the sand of the sea, yet there was not to be a Beggar amongst them, according to the Law of God. And amongst the Christians in the first Ages, there was a Mens-Meeting sett up at Jerusalem, to see that nothing was lacking . . . and this continued so long as they lived in the life, power and spirit of God . . . So there is not to be a beggar now amongst the Christians, according to the Law of Jesus."¹ The writings of Fox, "To the Protector and Parliament of England" (1658), and "To the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England" (1659), were addressed to the government on the necessity of remedying the evils of poverty, but the Society of Friends itself was to set the example by action. The earliest monthly meeting set up at Swarthmore in 1653 was established to care for the poor, and meetings at Skipton and Durham in 1659 gave the same advice as Fox.² By 1663, Richard Hubberthorne was able to say: "Neither is there a beggar amongst us who are truly of us in the obedience of truth."³

In Norfolk, an early meeting is announced by George Fox in a letter, 17 Nov. 1662. "Dear Friends, I would have you tell one another of a meeting that is to be at Samuel Pikes in Hingham, upon the next fifth day come fortnight, which will be the fourth day of the tenth month, which meeting is to be about outward things, concerning the poor widows and fatherless children and prisoners . . . all feeling each others condition as his own . . . where two of every meeting will meet you the same day about the eleventh hour when all may know how everything is . . . that nothing be wanted among you . . . and nothing being wanted then all is well, for such a meeting there is in every county, which is a grace to truth and an honour to God."⁴

¹ *Sundry Ancient Epistles*, 1662-1698, p. 5. "A General Paper concerning divers particulars" (G.F.).

² See *Epistles from the Yearly Meeting of Friends*, 1858, vol. I.

³ Hubberthorne, R., *A collection of . . . Several Books and Writings*, 1663, p. 219. Hubberthorne was one of the first Quakers to visit Norwich and was imprisoned there. See Whitehead, G., *The Christian Progress of that ancient servant and minister of Jesus Christ, George Whitehead*, 1725, p. 24.

⁴ As quoted in Eddington, A. J., *The first fifty years of Quakerism in Norwich* (Friends' Historical Society), 1932, p. 221.

QUARTERLY MEETING RESPONSIBILITY

Right up to 1850, when the Norfolk and Norwich Quarterly Meeting was united with the Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire Quarterly Meetings, it was customary in Norfolk, as elsewhere, for the county's quarterly meeting to supervise the monthly and particular meetings in the matter of relieving the poor and to return satisfactory answer to the Yearly Meeting which sent from London an annual query. The monthly meeting kept watch on its particular meetings and replied to the periodic query sent from quarterly meeting; it also noted and reported on the collections made and used by the particular meetings and carried the surplus, if any, to the quarterly meeting, or, when a particular meeting was in need, supplied it from the other meetings.¹ Very early, as will be seen, the disbursements of Quarterly Meeting exceeded its receipts and repeated requests were made to monthly meetings for additional collections.

The work in Norfolk of relieving the poor was extensive. The greater part of the business of each monthly meeting² and a very large part of that of Quarterly Meeting were taken up with the concern, and some fifty manuscript volumes preserved in the Norwich Meeting House bear witness to it.

RESOURCES : I. COLLECTIONS

It is not possible to give a precise account of the financial transactions of each meeting because vital changes made necessary by the decay of meetings, were brought about in the areas of the monthly meetings and their constituent meetings. Thus, whereas in 1719, seven monthly meetings representing eighteen particular meetings, reported to Quarterly Meeting, by 1839, only one remained, namely, Norwich which had the other monthly meetings joined to it with their constituents where they existed. The change

¹ The method was described for the benefit of the monthly meetings in a minute of Quarterly Meeting, 23.iv.1719. All references to Quarterly Meeting will be to Norfolk.

² The minutes of each monthly meeting were usually headed with some such statement as the following, taken from early meetings of Norwich: "At the Monthly Meeting in Norwich . . . met to consider of the poore etc."

was effected as follows. In 1719, meetings which had, hitherto, for Quarterly Meeting purposes been listed separately, were grouped in divisions (each division making a monthly meeting area): (1) Lammas, North Walsham and Banningham; (2) Mattishall, Wymondham, Ellingham (Hingham) and Thetford; (3) Upwell, Lynn and Stoke; (4) Tasburgh, Tivetshall and Diss; (5) Holt, Wells and Fakenham; (6) Yarmouth; (7) Norwich. From 1708, Norwich sent in merely an account of its collections. In 1728, Yarmouth was joined to Norwich and from 1748, both Norwich and Yarmouth made no report at all for some years. In 1762, Yarmouth became part of the Lammas and North Walsham group and in 1791, the meetings were presented simply as (1) Lynn; (2) Wymondham; (3) Tivetshall; (4) Holt; (5) Lammas. In 1801, Lammas (with North Walsham) joined Norwich which re-appeared in the accounts to receive payments on their behalf and Yarmouth became a separate group with Beccles and Pakefield joined to it. Lynn and Holt were joined in 1804 and Wymondham and Tivetshall in 1813. In 1818, Norwich appeared in the list, recording its own collections and disbursements. In 1828, Wymondham was joined to Norwich and Yarmouth followed in 1839 and from 1840, no record of any disbursements was made for any meeting but Norwich.

A general picture of the financial position can, however, be drawn, for each Quarterly Meeting recorded the collections of the monthly meetings and their additional collections, the amounts they brought in and its own disbursements. The monthly meeting accounts are more detailed, covering not only money collected and spent but names of contributors and pensioners, forms of relief and other allied matters.

Leaving Norwich out of consideration because for years that city sent in to Quarterly Meeting merely an account of its collections, the monthly meetings collected on an average in the first half of the eighteenth century, £56 a year and took into Quarterly Meeting about £7 a year. Quarterly Meeting disbursements averaged £17 a year, to meet which additional collections were made. For the next fifty years, collections made £80 a year, the amounts taken in to Quarterly Meeting remained the same but Quarterly

Meeting spent over £100 a year and additional collections increased in number and amount. In the early years of the nineteenth century, before Norwich came into the accounts, the meetings collected about £100 a year but brought in only small sums to Quarterly Meeting until 1813 when they stopped the practice altogether and the disbursements of Quarterly Meeting increased to between £200 and £250 a year. Additional collections could not meet the increased expenditure which was increasingly made up by income from legacies. From the late 1820's, the meetings usually made no collections and Quarterly Meeting expenditure of £30 to £60 a year was made from interest on legacies.

At Quarterly Meeting 29.iii.1720, it was agreed that Friends should collect for the relief of the poor by subscription and lists of subscribers were several times inspected until in 1818, it was agreed that there should be an annual inspection. Quarterly Meeting frequently exhorted monthly meetings, as on 26.xii.1764, "to stir up such of their Members as are capable to a more liberal collection," but from the beginning of the eighteenth century, monthly meetings were turning to Quarterly Meeting for help. The need of some persisted over a long period. Thus, Lynn remained in difficulties from 1735 to 1765, when its debt was paid off by a contribution from a legacy. From 1745 to 1772, Wymondham made increasing appeals for help and likewise, Tivetshall from 1765. From 1779, Lammas and Holt depended on the Quarterly Meeting and in 1801, Yarmouth sent in requests for special support.

On occasion, Norwich Monthly Meeting, though it did not contribute to the Quarterly Meeting, made application to it for assistance and received special contributions for the first twenty years of the eighteenth century. Thereafter, Norwich remained independent until 1818. From 1720 to 1750, its expenditure averaged £55 a year. From 1750, repeated appeals were made within the Monthly Meeting for increased subscriptions but arrears increased and persisted to the end of the century. Additional subscriptions were raised, and interest on legacies helped to meet expenditure which increased from £188 for 1799 to 1800 to £207 for 1801 to 1802. After 1818, Norwich received help from the Quarterly Meeting and for some years,

its disbursements were over £100 a year. From 1832, there is no record of collections and, on an average, £60 a year was disbursed which was met from Quarterly Meeting.

RESOURCES : 2. ENDOWMENTS

Particularly in the latter half of the eighteenth century, legacies were an important source of revenue, both for Quarterly and Monthly Meetings.

An estate which was of particular service was that of Thomas Buckingham, first mention of which was made in Lynn Monthly Meeting in 1712, when trustees were appointed to treat with his widow to give her security for the rents thereof during her life. Afterwards, the profits from the estate which consisted of lands in Lynn and neighbourhood were to be distributed to poor Friends of Lynn, Stoke, Upwell, Downham, Hilgay and Wells and the surplus was to be brought to Quarterly Meeting, which for some years from 1716, benefited by amounts varying from £7 to £25 a year which were distributed to meetings which had not already benefited. In 1735, Quarterly Meeting reported that "the charge of the poor of several of the meetings Intitled to that charity are so much increased that there is no possibility at present for any of the produce of the estate to be sent . . . as usual." In 1754, Lynn Monthly Meeting reported that the estate was in debt and one of the persons whose relief had been met from it, was paid 2s. a week from the common collection. In 1764, an enquiry was ordered and two years later, Quarterly Meeting issued a report which noted several deficiencies. It stated that land at Downham which was let for £3 a year for 3 acres at the time of the devise, now let for £2 and was called 2 acres and 2 roods. It observed further: "On this land, there are many good timbers, both Oak and Ash which do not appear to have been abused; but we think an account should be kept of their number and that Friends land should be dool'd out which cannot now be exactly ascertained. The estate at Islington in Marshland is a pretty little Farm but not well managed; the present tenant has no lease; he is an old man having lived there about 50 years at the present rent of £29 a year, but we think it would be best to let him

continue the rest of his time at the old rent but afterwards to lett it with proper covenants at £35 a year or more which it very well deserves . . . The 14 acres in St. Mary's in Marshland is very fine Pasture land and now for the first time let at £12 a year, but it well deserves 20s. an acre or more, which we apprehend the lands round about are lett for ; we are of opinion that it would be best to lett the same on lease and to restrict the tenant to spend the hay on the premises ; of which it has this year and probably often been defrauded." The rest of the report noted 9 acres near Lynn South Gates let at 30s. an acre on which much had been spent, 18 acres let at £14 6s. a year for which the rent could be raised, and houses in South Lynn which were capable of improvement at a cost of £30 to £40.

The income from the estate gradually moved upwards and Quarterly Meeting reported in 1839 that rents which originally amounted to £93 11s. had risen to £233 6s. 6d. a year.

Other estates of use to Quarterly Meeting and valued in 1839 were as follows : (1) an estate at Thursford (1720) left for " the clothing and putting out poor children of Quakers " brought in £10 a year ; (2) an estate at Roydon left by Richard Wainforth (1740) for " Honest, Industrious poor people called Quakers " produced £24 a year ; (3) an estate at Alburgh left by Jonathan Corbyn (1759) for " the relief of poor, aged, impotent Friends and prisoners suffering on account of the Truth " realized £12 a year ; (4) a legacy made by John Jackson (1822) for apprenticing brought in about £11 a year (and Quarterly Meeting's funds for this purpose were on occasion added to by collections and money from gifts, as had been advised by George Fox).¹

Monthly Meetings also enjoyed income from legacies and gifts made at different times. Thus Norwich benefited by a request made in 1719 by Samuel Robbins, the money from which could be applied to the general purposes of the Meeting on condition of " their putting out to prentice a Friends boy or girl every year and to give with the said apprentice £8." In 1839, the income amounted to £60 a

¹ Dates in brackets refer to the year when the bequest was first referred to in the Quarterly Meeting Minutes and not necessarily to the date when the bequest was made. The latter cannot be accurately stated without further information.

year. In 1749, Elizabeth Langwade left over £500 for the use of poor Friends and the income was applied accordingly until 1828 when the bonds were sold to pay the meeting's debts. Empson's estate (left apparently about 1700) for poor Friends yielded £14 a year in 1839, and John Wagstaffe's estate used from 1809 for the same purpose produced about £9 a year. Small legacies for the poor were left under the wills of members of the Gurney family and other Friends and these were not invested but immediately distributed. Wymondham possessed an estate left by John Verdon (and first mentioned in the minutes of 1783) which was worth £3 5s. a year in 1839 and the Meeting also had a legacy left by John Jackson which produced £7 10s. a year at the same date. Both of these were for poor Friends. In 1844, Rosamund Lane left £100 invested in 3% Consols for the benefit of poor people attending Wymondham Meeting.

Though a committee was appointed by Quarterly Meeting in 1719 to inspect the estates, for some years there was no proper account of them and when in 1786, Meeting for Sufferings called on Norfolk to report on the charitable donations belonging to the Society so that it might "lay a state thereof before the Persons appointed by Act of Parliament to receive the same," Quarterly Meeting was not able to do so and commented that "the time limited by Act of Parliament was so near elapsed that it was not practicable to proceed further had it even been deemed necessary." It is of interest to note that the work *An account of the different charities belonging to the poor of Norfolk, abridged from the returns under Gilbert's Act to the House of Commons 1786; and from the Terriers in the office of the lord Bishop of Norwich*, published in 1811 from the pen of Zachary Clark, who was a representative from Lynn Monthly Meeting to the Quarterly Meeting from 1784 (but not in 1786) does not contain any account of Quaker charities. Nor are they described in the Charity Commissioners' Reports for Norfolk of 1833, 1834 and 1835. From 1786, Monthly Meetings were asked to present them for audit by a committee of Quarterly Meeting, but evidently it was not faithfully done, for again in 1823, it was proposed that a committee should be set up to examine the estates left by Friends and accounts were more scrupulously kept, and in 1839 a valuation was made.

ADMINISTRATION

Weekly Allowances

In administering to the relief of the poor, meetings depended on overseers specially appointed and this was the case with women's meetings also, for these were, in the view of George Fox, particularly called upon "to see and enquire into the necessity of all poor Friends."¹ On occasion, a Monthly Meeting handed over a special case to women Friends, e.g. Norwich 21.i.1758: "This meeting being acquainted that Rose Hill requires still further assistance; and the men Friends not being so proper Judges what may be necessary in her deplorable circumstances, our women Friends are requested to administer whatever further may be wanting and this meeting will order the expense thereby incurred to be repaid them."

The disbursements of Quarterly Meeting were usually made in lump sums paid to the Monthly Meetings, but sometimes the name of the person to be relieved appears. Thus, in 1718, 5 guineas were sent to Thetford "for the relief of Daniel Woolnos case who hath a child that was cut of the stone" and in 1723, after his death, an appeal was circularized on behalf of his invalid children. From 1736 until 1740 when he died, Samuel Derry of Wymondham, confined in Bethel in Norwich was the charge of Quarterly Meeting since it was too great for his own meeting, and such cases as these were taken care of there or in the Norwich Hospital until the Retreat at York was founded at the end of the eighteenth century when they were transferred there at lower cost.

Monthly meeting accounts habitually give the names of recipients of poor relief and other details.

In each meeting it was usual to pay needy Friends a weekly allowance similar to parish relief. Thus, North Walsham 13.ix.1779 recorded disbursements for the quarter to Widow Ramsdale, Widow Boulton, Widow Bateman, Wm. Barber. From 1799 to 1800, Norwich had 15 pensioners to whom sums were paid weekly varying from 3s. to 7s.

¹ See Fox, G., *A Collection of many Select and Christian Epistles*, 1698, p. 6.

Fuel

Fuel was frequently provided, e.g. Lynn recorded 7.v.1701: "Paid Thos Buckingham ten shillings that was due to him for coals and carriage for old Mary at Downham," and 4.viii.1703 "Thos Gill and John Brown are desired by this meeting to procure the Widow Hunter a new supply of Turfs for her firing for the ensuing year."

Burial

The cost of burying poor Friends and the care of the sick were a constant burden. Norwich 25.vi.1757 ordered "that the overseers of the poor do in future, allow 12s. for a coffin and 6s. for a shroud in which any poor Friend shall be buried." References to smallpox are frequent. North Walsham 3.xii.1713 reported: "Given to John Ames several times to support him after he recovered of the small pox 10s." The same meeting, 13.ix.1779, allowed a sum of £3 1s. 8d. to Wm. Crotch for "maidservant in time of illness and funeral charges."

Physic

Norwich Monthly Meeting was very cautious over bills and noted 4.x.1727: "Wm Massey brought to this meeting 2 bills from Eliz Snell, one for Physic and attendance during Eliz Southgates illness and the other for Physic and attendance upon Alice Fincham and her daughter and the said bills were considered of in this meeting and it is ordered that the overseers pay her £2 5s. 6d. being the amount of her bill for Eliz Southgate, it appearing that this meeting gave her order to take care of her, but to inform her that we will not pay the other bill, nor no bills which she may have on account of our poor Friends unless she has particular order from this meeting." Again, 24.xi.1769: "The overseers report that they visited Mary Bateman and find that she has contracted with a person to learn to make Mantuas and that through illness and some casualties is unable to support herself; the case is referred to . . . our Women Friends and what may be necessary to provide for her this meeting will supply under their direction during the continuance of her contract; but recommend that none under the notice of this meeting do presume to enter into engagements which they are not capable to satisfy,

without the consent and approbation of Friends." Presumably, consent was obtained for the following case, 6.x.1772: "The overseers are desired to pay John Gurney £1 8s. disburst by him for Board of John Golder at Yarmouth, whilst he bathed in the sea by the advice of the Doctors consulted for the complaint in his neck."

Loans

Sometimes, money was lent to Friends. Norwich noted 8.vi.1713: "Joseph Brown returned the 20s. borrowed of this meeting 14.xi.1709 of which this meeting returned him 5s. by John Parker."

Rent

Often the rent of houses was paid or poor Friends were allowed to occupy part of a meeting house. Lynn Monthly Meeting, having noted 4.v.1698 "a complaint made against Wm Richardson (of Hilgay) and his wife for disorderly walking," advised their lodger, the widow Jacques, 7.v.1701, to remove to Friends' house at Downham, where she might live rent free "but to be serviceable to Friends there as her capacity will enable and permit her." Again, 11.ii.1735: "This meeting agrees that Thos Borinskell go into the tenement belonging to the meeting house at Upwell to save the charge of his rent in another house" and in 1758, Susan Inglin's rent at Downham was paid for half a year as she was unwell.

Houses

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Norwich meeting provided houses to accommodate four poor Friends and recorded 8.xi.1703: "Isaac Sewell did then bring in an account of £29 16s. 6d. collected towards defraying the charge of the building of the poor houses and yet wants £5 11s. 9d. more to make up the deficiency." Norwich was very cautious on the subject of rents and minuted 10.i.1715: "Ordered that the overseers from time to time take care to get of poor Friends for whom this meeting pays rent, the receipts that such Friends take of the owners of their houses, in order that . . . the Monthly Meeting may know their money is appropriated to the same use for which it is given" and, 3.vii.1728, asked the overseers "to visit Nath Cornish and to advise him to get a less house, for it is

the opinion of this meeting that one of a less rent may answer their necessities." Sometimes, poor Friends agreed to assign the house they possessed to the meeting in return for help, as did Isaac Reynolds who gave his house to Norwich meeting and received an income of 3s. a week from 1774.

Occasionally, particular purchases are noted. North Walsham minuted 3.xii.1713: "Paid to Nick House for a pair of brichis for Francis Kirk 3s. 6d." 5.iii.1717: "Given to Eliz Mason towards shiften for four chaldron 5s." 22.ix.1736: "Given to Mary Bransby towards buying her a horse 8s." Norwich, 11.vii.1805 agreed that "if the twistering mill Thomas Lucas hath looked upon, be thought a pennyworth, with its appurtenances at £6, Friends are willing to give him £3 10s. towards the buying of it . . . Edmund Cobb and Peregrine Tizack are desired to assist him in the matter." Sometimes goods were lent, as in the case of Sarah Hitchin, for whom Norwich purchased household goods in 1754 as follows:

" 1. A bed and all belonging to it	£4 10 0
2. Iron-pot, washing-keller, bellows, firepan and tongs, frying-pan, saucepan, 2 chairs and a candelstick	' 10 0
3. A pair of drawers, warming pan and table	10 6
4. Iron stove 5s. Fender and poker 1s. 10d.	6 10
5. Trundles, swifts and blacks	5 3
6. A pail 2s. 2d., lamp and 2 stools 2s.	4 2
7. Earthen ware 3s., wooden cup etc. 6d.	3 6
8. Setting up the stove	2 6
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the said goods to remain with her at the discretion of this meeting."

But for exercising great care, the Society would at times have been defrauded. Norwich reported 1.ii.1774: "It being represented that Joshua Smith and Charlotta Smith, children of Thos Smith, late a member of the Peel Monthly Meeting in London are now in this city and in great danger of ruin; John Gurney, John Bonsell and Samuel Williams

are desired to take the needful care for them," and 12.iii.1774: "The Friends appointed . . . concerning Joshua and Charlotta Smith report, that they had procured her a proper service amongst Friends and provided her with such clothing as appeared requisite; but since, finding that her conduct hath been very disorderly and that she hath associated with evil company; and being acquainted also, that she had formed a design to take away the clothes provided for her and go suddenly off to London in a clandestine manner; the Friends therefore took the precaution to secure the major part of the said clothing, and at the same time expostulated with her and administered advice suitable to her situation." She escaped to London, however, and Peel Meeting was asked to deal with her and the clothes "as reserved by the Friends" were put into the hands of the Women's Meeting.

To be concluded