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FRIENDS' HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Tercentenary Commemoration Notes

Presidential Address at Lancaster

FREDERICK B. TOLLES gave his Presidential address on *The Atlantic Community of the Early Friends* at Lancaster Meeting House on the evening of Wednesday, 13th August. Many visitors to the Tercentenary commemorations were present, and two smaller audiences in adjacent rooms heard the address relayed. The auditors numbered over 400, probably the largest meeting ever held by Friends' Historical Society. Isabel Ross took the chair (as our new president is a transatlantic visitor) and mentioned that Frederick Tolles is the seventh American president of the society in its 49 years.

The address, which was closely followed by the audience, is separately published, with an 8 page introduction by Isabel Ross on the *Influence of North-West England on Early Quaker expansion*, as Supplement 24 to this *Journal*; and it has been circulated to members. Further copies are obtainable, price 2s. 6d., post 1½d. A digest of the address appears in *The Friend* (London) for 22nd August, 1952.

At the meeting the County Archivist of Lancashire, Mr. R. Sharpe France, produced for examination and described two of the documents in the County Archives which concern early Friends.

One document, the Allegations against George Fox by ministers in north Lancashire, October 1652, was printed and described in *Journal F.H.S.* 1947, vol. 39, pp. 15-17, from a transcript furnished by Mr. Sharpe France. The other document, Margaret Fox's petition to the justices at the sessions at Lancaster, January, 1684

(Lancashire Record Office, QSP 576-4) has been printed in B. Nightingale: *Early Stages of the Quaker Movement in Lancashire*, pp. 155-156. It contains a spirited protest against the "Abuse & wrong that is done" by calling her a widow—whereas in fact:

"I have been Married to my Husband this fourteen Years & the King & his Counsell have allowed our Mariage as I have it to shew in his pardon under the Broad Seal."

The occasion of the protest was the fine of £20 for holding meetings—as Besse records (*Sufferings*, 1753, I 326, *sub anno* 1683) "Margaret Fox, for suffering Meetings at her House in Swarthmore, was fined by the Name of Margaret Fell, Widow, and had taken from her, at one Time, Cattle worth £30." The Act under which these fines were levied provided that no married woman should be fined more than 10s. (See Isabel Ross, *Margaret Fell*, 320.)

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EXHIBITIONS. Many local meetings exhibited historical documents and these added to Friends' enjoyment of the visits to the meeting houses. Subject to considerations of safety, local Friends with historical records in their care might well be watchful to seize opportunities to co-operate in local exhibitions, to bring Friends and their historic testimonies to the notice of a new public.

BRIGFLATTS has a library which contains a substantial proportion of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century books. Perhaps the earliest of these—Hanmer's translation of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* (London, R. Field, 1619), with Hanmer's *Chronographie*, was displayed. Old prints, and a portion of the yew tree from Sedbergh market place where George Fox preached, were also on view. Sedbergh market cross was blown down late last century, and a part is preserved at Brigflatts.

COLTHOUSE Friends displayed George Fox's *Journal* (1694), Margaret Fox's *Works* (1710) and some papers from the old Swarthmore collection now in the possession of Isabel Ross. The papers, now bound up, include a contemporary copy of a paper by Margaret Fell on marriages, addressed to "Friends in the Truth" (1656); and a portion of George Fox's notes for a Hebrew vocabulary.

KENDAL Friends exhibited some of their MSS, including a volume recording early Sufferings, answers to queries, and the important Kendal Early Record Book. This volume contains contemporary copies of George Fox's epistles, minutes of the general meeting for the North at Skipton (Scalehouse, 1658), and later general meetings, as well as papers by William Penn, George Fox and London Friends dealing with the Wilkinson-Story dispute.

At LANCASTER Friends provided an exhibition of some interesting items. The first Monthly Meeting minute book was open at a date in 1699, recording the issue of certificates of removal to Pennsylvania—about half the emigrants are supposed to have died on the voyage. Daniel Eccleston's medal in honour of George Washington (1805)—the reverse inscribed "Millions now unborn will venerate the memory of him who gained their country's freedom"; the

printed announcement of the opening of York Retreat signed by Henry Tuke ; an account of distraints for tithes in Lancaster M.M., 1789 ; a deed of 1596 concerning Robert Withers' estate at Kellet ; these were among the other items.

In YEALAND there was an exhibition of costumes, needlework handicrafts and documents in the schoolroom. The printed books displayed included the folios of Besse's *Sufferings*, George Fox's *Journal* and *Doctrinals*, and Thomas Story's *Journal*. There were documents in the handwriting of Thomas Ellwood ; Yearly Meeting minutes and Women's Yearly Meeting epistles ; a marriage certificate of 1690 ; indentures of apprenticeship, 1770 and many registers and books from the school at Yealand. At Yealand Manor, could be seen a record of sufferings, 1720-1722 ; a small quarto pamphlet *An Account of Severall Things that passed between His Sacred Majesty and Richard Hubberthorne, Quaker*, 1660 ; and the Yealand Preparative Meeting minutes, open at the record of the fire which badly damaged the Meeting House in 1737.

Exhibitions of records of Quaker historical interest have been held this year at the following places, most of them initiated at the suggestion of the Friends' Historical Society : Birmingham, Bristol, Folkestone, Halifax, Hertford, Lurgan (Northern Ireland), Manchester, Southampton.

An Appeal to Readers

If any reader has a copy of our previous issue, *Journal* Vol. 44, No. 1 (1952), which is no longer required and can be sent to the Secretary at The Library, Friends House, London, N.W.1, it will be gratefully accepted, the available stock having been exhausted.