

## Some Quaker Firms of the Nineteenth Century

THE contribution of Friends to the Industrial Revolution is well known, and has been competently and sympathetically studied by Isabel Grubb and Arthur Raistrick.<sup>1</sup> Ordinary textbooks of economic history record the activities of the Darbys of Coalbrookdale, the Lloyds of Birmingham, the Peases of Darlington, and other pioneers of metallurgical industry. The prominence in banking of the Barclays, Hoares, Gurneys, Backhouses and other families is conspicuous and well appreciated. The Victorian period has been less explored, though the dominance of cocoa and chocolate manufacture by the Frys, Cadburys and Rowntrees is a commonplace. Interesting notes on various well-known firms of Quaker origin appeared in Paul Emden's *Quakers in Commerce* (1940). The following article is largely an expansion of some of these, and deals with eleven firms—Albright & Wilson, Carrs, Fox Roy, Friends' Provident Institution, Gray Dunn, Harrisons & Crosfield, Huntley & Palmer, Jacobs, Montserrat Company, Richardsons, Sturges. Of these, six are primarily manufacturers (two, chemicals and four, biscuits), three are merchants and one an insurance company. Two are Irish and one Scottish.

### ALBRIGHT & WILSON AND J. & E. STURGE

The first group comprises the two firms of Albright & Wilson and J. and E. Sturge, closely related in location and personnel as well as in type of product, and the Montserrat Company, which is linked to them by business and family ties.

John Sturge (1799-1840), younger brother of the more noted Joseph, commenced the manufacture of chemicals at Bewdley in 1822. The role of chemistry in industrial progress has until recently been less realized than that of physics;<sup>2</sup> the varied technological applications of this science were in the early nineteenth century offering opportunities for rapid

<sup>1</sup> Isabel Grubb, *Quakerism and industry before 1800* (1930); A. Raistrick, *Quakers in science and industry* (1950); *Dynasty of ironfounders: the Darbys and Coalbrookdale* (1953).

<sup>2</sup> A. and N. L. Clow, *The chemical revolution* (1952).

expansion. John was joined in 1830 by another brother, Edmund (1808-93) thus founding the firm of J. and E. Sturge.

The works were removed to Selly Oak, Birmingham, in 1833. On John's early death, his place was taken by Edmund's brother-in-law, Arthur Albright. In 1844 the making of phosphorus was undertaken and bone ash was imported from South America. The association was severed in 1855, when Albright continued this newer part of the enterprise. Edmund Sturge retained control till he retired in 1868. He shared the reforming views of his more famous brother Joseph, and was particularly interested in negro freedom and welfare. He was in later life for a decade chairman of the British Anti-Slavery Society; and showed his concern practically through the foundation of the Montserrat Company.<sup>1</sup>

The business was purchased by his cousin Charles Dickinson Sturge (1839-1915), eldest son of Charles (1801-88), who had carried on the corn merchant business of his father and uncle, and Francis C. Clayton (1843-1928). Charles Dickinson Sturge's brothers, Joseph Marshall Sturge (1828-1916) and Wilson Sturge (1834-99) also became partners. All three brothers were Friends. Probably the most active in Quaker affairs was Wilson, who was engaged in the relief mission of Friends to Finland, and lived for some years in Russia. He later organized emigration of Doukhobors from Russia, and died on a voyage from Cyprus, where he had arranged for the settlement of a party of them.

In 1887 the business was again sold, this time to Henry Lloyd Wilson (1862-1941) and his brother Alfred, sons of John Edward Wilson, the co-founder of Albright and Wilson. The personal link between the firms was thus restored and was continued by H. L. Wilson's son Anthony, who became a partner in 1921.<sup>2</sup> The firm became a private limited company in 1917. Henry Lloyd Wilson was Clerk of London Yearly Meeting from 1904 to 1910; his son left Friends for Congregationalism. Among other directors associated with the Society have been Roland B. Gibbins (1908-17) and A. Peter Wilson, son of Alfred (1922).

<sup>1</sup> J. and E. Sturge Ltd., centenary booklet (1923); *Annual monitor*, 1894; *The Friend*, 7.vii.1893.

<sup>2</sup> *The Friend*, 20.x.1899 and 2.v.1915; *The Times*, 19.i.1916; *Annual Monitor*, 1901.

Arthur Albright (1811-1900), sixth child and second son of William Albright, a grocer and merchant at Charlbury, was apprenticed to a chemist in Bristol in 1827. On the dissolution of his partnership with Edmund Sturge, he established a works at Oldbury near Birmingham, in collaboration with John Edward Wilson (1834-1907), of a well-known Friend family of Kendal, thus constituting the firm of Albright and Wilson. He had already adopted the Schroetter process for phosphorus, and entered into relations with the Lundstroms, the Swedish match manufacturers, for the supply of material for the then new "safety" matches; he had received an assurance that his product would not be used for military purposes. This remained a speciality of the business, and has resulted in close relationship with the British match industry, in which the firm of Bryant and May, also of Quaker origin, has been prominent.<sup>1</sup>

The business, which became a limited company in 1892, expanded rapidly and became an international concern, founding subsidiaries in New York (1896) and Canada (1902). In 1932 it absorbed several kindred firms. Since the first World War it has developed the line of food phosphates. It has remained largely in the hands of the two families whose name it bears.

Arthur Albright, the founder, was active in Quaker and kindred concerns. He participated in the work of the Relief Committee set up to aid victims of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71; he was Hon. Secretary of the National Freedman's Aid Union, and promoted trade union opposition to the threatened war with Russia in 1877.<sup>2</sup> His son, William Arthur Albright (1853-1942) became a partner in 1877, and was chairman till 1915, when he and Henry Lloyd Wilson, son of the co-founder, a director since 1892, retired owing to scruples about acceptance of war contracts.<sup>3</sup> John W. Wilson (1859-1932), brother of the latter, then became chairman; he was also a director of the Great Western Railway Company and of Bryant & May. He sat in Parliament from 1895 to 1922, serving as a chairman of Committees of the Commons,

<sup>1</sup> R. E. Threlfall, *The story of 100 years of phosphorus making, 1851-1951* (1952); P. H. Emden, *Quakers in commerce* (1940); 166-7; *The Times*, 15.iii.1948; *Annual monitor*, 1908.

<sup>2</sup> *The Friend*, 13.vii.1900; *Annual monitor*, 1901.

<sup>3</sup> R. E. Threlfall, *op. cit.*

and becoming a Privy Councillor in 1911.<sup>1</sup> His nephew, Kenneth H. Wilson (b. 1885) succeeded him as chairman, and held that office until 1956; he attended the Quaker Employers' Conference of 1928. William Beaumont Albright (b. 1907) grandson of the founder, became managing director in 1942.

William A. Albright, especially after his retirement from business, took an active share in the work of the Society. He served as Clerk of Warwickshire Q.M.; he was a regular attender at Meeting for Sufferings and other committees; he was for over thirty years treasurer of the Home Service Committee, and the first chairman of Friends' War Victims Relief Committee (1914-16).<sup>2</sup>

#### THE MONTSERRAT COMPANY

The Montserrat Company was a by-product of the life-long interest of Joseph Sturge (1794-1859) in the negro population of the West Indies, particularly his concern for their employment after emancipation, fully described in the account of his visit with Thomas Harvey (1836-37).<sup>3</sup> In 1857 he purchased a sugar estate in Montserrat in the Leeward Islands, which he named Elberton after his birth-place. His intention was to cultivate sugar by free labour, and to sell plots to native workers. The original plan was handicapped by his own death and that of his manager, Edward Bennett, and frustrated by the decline of the cane sugar industry.<sup>4</sup>

Already his younger brother Edmund, then in partnership with Arthur Albright, had taken a mortgage on the plantation of Woodlands in the same island (1852) from Francis Burke (1800-62), a planter who had incurred obloquy among his fellows by his opposition to slavery. Joseph had made his acquaintance during his visit, and used his services as attorney for his sugar estate. Burke contracted to plant lime trees and supply the juice for the purposes of the chemical works in Birmingham, as a substitute for the failure of the crop in Sicily. A few years after Burke's death, the estate was purchased from his family by Edmund Sturge

<sup>1</sup> *Who's Who*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Friend*, 24.vii.1942.

<sup>3</sup> J. Sturge and T. Harvey, *The West Indies in 1837* (1838); H. Richard, *Memoirs of Joseph Sturge* (1864), ch. VII, IX.

<sup>4</sup> S. H. Hobhouse, *Joseph Sturge* (1919), 47-48, 180.

(1866) and several adjacent estates were leased or bought during the 1850's and 1860's. Joseph Marshall Sturge (1828-1916), nephew of Joseph and Edmund, acted for a time as resident manager; he married a daughter of Burke, and was a member of the Montserrat Legislature. He later became semi-paralysed, and lived in retirement in England.<sup>1</sup>

In April, 1869, Sturge's Montserrat Company was incorporated with a capital of £30,000 in 600 shares, to take over the estates. John Edmund Sturge (1842-80) eldest son of Edmund, became local manager, and was Crown nominee for Montserrat on the Leeward Islands Council. His brother Francis Albright Sturge (1845-1925) was also for some time concerned in the management; he became a Congregationalist.<sup>2</sup> John H. Waterfall (1847-73) of a Bristol Quaker family was employed on the estate till his early death.<sup>3</sup>

The company was voluntarily liquidated in December, 1875, and a new one constituted under the name of the Montserrat Company, "merchants, planters, and manufacturers of lime juice". Further land was acquired by sale or lease, including (1876) the Elberton estate, which had deteriorated to a "low second class" property, owing to the slump in sugar. The directorate included several members of the Sturge family, Arthur Albright, and George Baker (1825-1910) a Birmingham blacking manufacturer, sometime mayor of that city and described as a "Ruskinian"; he was for many years chairman.<sup>4</sup>

This association has continued; William A. Albright was latterly chairman and Joseph Sturge, junior, managing director. Thomas Twyman (1879-1956), sometime chairman of the Industrial and Social Order Council, was managing director from 1926.<sup>5</sup> Roger Clark is another noted Friend who has served on the board.

It may be appropriate to treat next of a firm also associated with a section of the chemical industry.

### Fox Roy

A branch of the prolific west country family of Fox was engaged in general trade in Devon and Cornwall from about

<sup>1</sup> Montserrat Company MSS; Mary Sturge Gretton, *Recognitions* (1951), 5-6, 59-60; *The Times*, 19.i.1916.

<sup>2</sup> *The Friend*, 8.i.1926.

<sup>3</sup> *Annual monitor*, 1874, 1896.

<sup>4</sup> *The Friend*, 28.i.1910.

<sup>5</sup> *The Friend*, 18.v.1956.

1720. Charles Alfred Fox (1848-1929), a great-grandson of the founder, after some experience as an insurance broker in London, established about 1870 a business in Plymouth. He received financial aid from his brother and his father, who had transferred his interests to banking. In 1873 he took as partner David Roy (d. 1903), a Scot from Fife, and developed the import and distribution of phosphates, nitrates, potash, oilcakes, and China clay. The firm ultimately concentrated on agricultural fertilizers. A branch was opened in Bristol in 1876, under the management of William Booth Waterfall (1850-1915), afterwards of the Avon Manure Company (now merged in Fisons). A London office was also established.

Charles A. Fox (who was also chairman of the Devon and Cornwall Bank, now absorbed by Lloyds), though not taking an active part in Quaker affairs, was a consistent upholder of Friends' principles. He was known in business circles for his "integrity and fearlessness", and it was said of him that, shy and diffident by nature "he lived his religion without voicing it". He conducted family prayers regularly, and read his Bible every night before going to bed.

His sons Charles Reginald Fox and Edward Bonville Fox (1886-1944) succeeded to the control of the business, which became a limited company in 1913. The latter remained an active member of the Society, served in the Friends' Ambulance Unit in the First War, was an elder and clerk of Quarterly Meeting. He was director of a gelatine factory in Belgium, and acted for some years as Belgian consul in Plymouth. His elder brother C. Reginald Fox joined the Church of England on his marriage; his son C. W. C. Fox is now a director and secretary of the company. Peter Bruce Fox, also a director, resigned his membership in 1939 "owing to incompatibility with the Society's views on conscientious objection [to war]". The last Quaker director, Harry Cottrell of Bristol, retired a few years ago.<sup>1</sup>

#### HARRISONS AND CROSFIELD

The reduction by William Pitt of the exorbitant duties on tea diminished smuggling and encouraged popular consumption of that beverage. The abolition of the East India Company's monopoly of the China trade in 1833 afforded

<sup>1</sup> Information from C. W. C. Fox; *The Friend*, 29.xii.1944; *The Directory of directors*.

opportunities to the private dealer, and the nascent Temperance movement perhaps stimulated Friends to embark in this as well as in the cocoa trade, whereas in earlier days brewing had been a reputable Quaker occupation (Barclays, Lucases, Millers, etc.). The Tukes and their successors the Mennells, and the Hornimans, offer well-known examples.<sup>1</sup> Here we trace the expansion of a firm from petty trade in Liverpool to world-wide commercial transactions.

Daniel Harrison (1795-1873) of Wensleydale origin, was for some years a dealer in tea and coffee in Liverpool in partnership with Octavius Waterhouse, who retired in 1840. On New Year's Day, 1844, he entered into partnership with his youngest brother Smith Harrison (1818-83)—the youngest of seventeen children—and Joseph Crosfield (1821-79), third son of a wholesale grocer in Liverpool, and a former employee, who with an advance of capital from his father, obtained a three-tenths share in the profits. Liverpool was a main importing centre for China tea, but the new firm also bought at the fortnightly auctions in Mincing Lane, London. Coffee amounted to about one-fifth of turnover; profits rose from £3,000 in the first year to £6,400 three years later. In July, 1854, a London office was opened, on the site of the present headquarters in Great Tower Street. Charles, eldest son of Daniel, entered the firm then.

The original partners were strict Friends, who used the Quaker way of speech even in their business correspondence, and emphasized the idea of service to their customers. Joseph Crosfield, whose wife was a Backhouse, was particularly active in the Society, and was engaged in relief work in the Irish famine of 1846 and again after the Franco-Prussian War; he was Clerk of Yearly Meeting from 1864 to 1869.

Tea plantations were by this time being established in India; the Assam Company, in 1839, was the earliest. From the 'sixties, India tea gradually outstripped Chinese in the British market, especially as the growing of tea was substituted for that of coffee in Ceylon. When Daniel Harrison retired in 1863, the capital of the firm amounted to £140,000, and the return averaged 6 per cent.; their annual turnover of tea was over 60,000 chests. Smith Harrison remained head

<sup>1</sup> Collin Brooks, *Something in the City* (1931), ch. XV; R. O. Mennell, *Tea* (1926); C. R. Fay, *Great Britain from Adam Smith to the present day* (1928), 35-36, 132-33.

of the firm for another twenty years until his death in 1883. Thereafter it fell into the control of the second generation of both families. Charles Harrison, who was active until he retired after 60 years' connexion in 1915, is described as "one of the handsomest and nicest natured men ever seen in Mincing Lane". John Mason Harrison, son of Smith Harrison, was a partner from 1878 till his death in 1898. James Backhouse Crosfield (1848-1928), eldest son of Joseph, was chairman when he retired in 1911; his younger brother George Theodore (1849-1927) retired a year earlier. Both were well-concerned Friends; the former was chairman of the Friends' Temperance Union.<sup>1</sup> The Harrisons did not maintain contact with the Society.

In 1894 two younger men, who had been employees for some time, were admitted to partnership—Arthur Lampard (1861-1916), and Charles Heath Clark (1860-1926) who resigned from the Society in 1914, as he "dissented from the Quaker view of non-resistance";<sup>2</sup> "he had a wonderfully even temper, level judgment and profound wisdom; he was diligent, generous, and careful to help others in such sort that they should learn to help themselves."

The capital had been reduced to less than £60,000 owing to the withdrawal of older partners, but thanks largely to the new blood, considerable expansion took place. The blending and packeting of tea (said to have been pioneered by the Hornimans) was introduced. A subsidiary, Crosfield Lampard & Co., was established in Ceylon in 1895, under the managership of an Aberdonian, George Croll (1870-1922), subsequently chairman. Export to southern Europe and South America was developed, and in 1899 the first tea estate was purchased. The "Nectar" brand of tea was publicized, but ultimately transferred to the associated firm of Twining, Crosfield & Co. (1916). Offices were opened in New York and Montreal in the first years of the twentieth century, when profits averaged £24,000.

At this period also the firm entered the novel rubber industry, which began as a plantation culture in Malaya in the 1890's. They became agents for a Rubber Estates Syndicate promoted in 1903 by Herbert W. Brett, who had business associations with them; and subscribed a small

<sup>1</sup> *The Friend*, 17 and 24.vi.1927; 18.v. and 22.vi.1928.

<sup>2</sup> *The Times*, 2.ix.1926; *The Friend*, 17.ix.1926.



portion of the capital. During the rubber boom which followed, the firm invested considerably in other estates, particularly those administered by the Anglo-Malay Rubber Company (1905) and Rubber Estates of Johore (1906); they also acquired rubber estates in Sumatra (1907) and tea plantations in South India (1907).

In May, 1908, the firm was transformed into a limited company with a working capital of £300,000, James Crosfield becoming chairman. The third generation was represented by Hugh Crosfield (1883-1944), son of G. Theodore Crosfield. He was a director of the parent company, and afterwards a managing director of Twining Crosfield. He was a director of the Friends' Provident Institution, and served the Society and particularly Croydon Meeting in many capacities, including that of Monthly Meeting clerk, and a governor of Leighton Park School.<sup>1</sup>

Harrisons and Crosfield is now world-wide in scope, with agencies and subsidiaries in all the continents, and was headed for many years by Sir Eric Miller (1882-1958). The capital is now two and a half million pounds. Tea and rubber remain the chief interests. With the death of Hugh Crosfield in 1944, the original family and Quaker connexion ended.<sup>2</sup>

#### FRIENDS' PROVIDENT INSTITUTION

Hugh Crosfield provides one of many personal links between Quaker firms and the unique undertaking which is our next topic.

The Friends' Provident Institution was of Yorkshire origin. The prime mover was Samuel Tuke (1784-1857),<sup>3</sup> who became the first chairman. He was a member of the York family of tea merchants, and grandson of the founder of "The Retreat". He inherited the Quaker and humanitarian interests of his forbears. Actively associated with him in this venture were John Hustler (1768-1842), third of the name, a "woolstapler" in Bradford;<sup>4</sup> James Ellis and his brother-in-law, John Priestman (1805-66), also both of Bradford, who had abandoned malting for worsted;<sup>5</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, 15.xi.1944; *The Friend*, 24.xi.1944.

<sup>2</sup> *100 years as East India merchants* (Harrisons & Crosfield, 1944).

<sup>3</sup> C. Tylor (ed). *Samuel Tuke* (1900); *D.N.B.*, lvii, 301.

<sup>4</sup> H. R. Hodgson, *The Society of Friends in Bradford*, (1926).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*; *D.N.B.*, xlvi, 377; *Friends' Quarterly Examiner*, 1867, pp. 344-56.

Samuel Gurney (1786-1856) of Overend Gurney & Co., the bill brokers.<sup>1</sup>

Tuke was impressed by the need for annuities for teachers in particular, and his project was guided by the advice of a Mr. Newman, of the Yorkshire Fire and Life Assurance Co. The scheme was inaugurated at a General Meeting held at Ackworth School on 29th September, 1831, when a committee was appointed to prepare rules. Thus the Friends' Provident Institution was launched, and was registered under the Friendly Societies Act of 1830. The original prospectus emphasized the duty of Friends "to sacrifice a portion of present income to secure the future", and refuted the view that this implied disregard of divine providence. It also noted the frequently observed longevity common among Friends. No capital was initially subscribed; "solvency was guaranteed by a bond entered into by several trustees" chiefly of noted Friend families, some of whom retained connexion for generations. Insurance was for about eighty years confined to members of the Society or those closely associated with it; these were at first classified as Honorary and Ordinary members of the Institution, the former subscribing at least £50. Its purpose was later defined as that of a "mutual life assurance association for the Society of Friends and those connected therewith by marriage, descent, religious profession or partnership in business".

The first policies were issued on 7th November, 1832; of the first 100, 56 were whole life policies. Funds were invested in the National Debt. The directors, originally numbering twenty, were unremunerated until 1853, when £500 was divided among them. Benjamin Ecroyd, a Bradford conveyancer, was appointed Secretary, at £300 per annum, and business was at first carried on from his office. Premises were acquired in Darley Street in 1862, and rebuilt in 1874-76; the head office was there until 1919. On Ecroyd's death in 1857 he was succeeded by Joseph J. Dymond, who also served as actuary from 1869 until he retired in 1904; he was from the 'eighties associated with John Bell Tennant (1840-1904). Agents were appointed; a Book of Instructions issued in 1863 specifies their duties in obtaining proposals, collecting premiums, and paying annuities. Frederic Seebohm, the

<sup>1</sup> *D.N.B.*, xxiii, 366.

historian, son of a founder, was for a year employed as a book-keeper.

The annual meeting was held at Ackworth until the 'eighties; thereafter usually in London. That of 1879 was described as consisting of "a somewhat elderly staid-looking set of men, evidently full of facts; assuredly a conservative body".<sup>1</sup> Funds then amounted to nearly £1½ million, and over 5,000 policies were operative.

Limitations on policy holders were removed in 1915, and the Institution was incorporated by special Act of Parliament. Henry J. Tapscott, who had marriage connexions with Friends, was appointed manager, and under his direction the Institution "developed from being a small specialist mutual life office to a large composite insurance group with world-wide connexions". By 1918 accumulated funds were about £3 millions, and annual income over £300,000. In this year, an amalgamation was arranged with the Century Insurance Co. of Edinburgh, founded in 1885; and the name was changed in 1920 to Friends Provident and Century Life Office. The head office was removed to London, and since 1928 has been at 7 Leadenhall Street. In May, 1958, a new office housing several departments was opened at Dorking at the time of the 125th annual meeting. Branches have been established throughout the British Isles, and agencies overseas. Several subsidiaries have been acquired.<sup>2</sup>

Friends have throughout been strongly represented on the directorate, among them scions of the founding families. Among chairmen have been three of the Priestman family—John (1828-1906), Frederick (1836-1934) and Henry Brady (1853-1920); Harold J. Morland (1869-1939) Clerk of London Yearly Meeting, 1928-33; Hugh E. Seebohm (1867-1946) (son of Frederic); and Herbert G. Tanner of Bristol, whose son-in-law, Sir Oliver Franks, is the present chairman. Frederick Priestman, who became almost a centenarian, was mayor of Bradford 1882-83, and a member of the council for twenty-four years. He received the freedom of the city in his ninetieth year and was specially concerned with the welfare of the blind.<sup>3</sup> His cousin Henry was also active in

<sup>1</sup> *A narrative of the proceedings at the Centenary of Ackworth, 1879.*

<sup>2</sup> Archives at 7 Leadenhall St.; A. Rowntree, *100 years of the Friends' Provident*; Stock Exchange Year Book, 1900; *Friends' Quarterly Examiner*, 4th Mo., 1895; *Friends' Provident & Century Insurance Offices, 1832-1957.*

<sup>3</sup> Information from R. M. Priestman; *The Friend*, 11.1.1907.

Bradford municipal life and served as Clerk of Yearly Meeting.<sup>1</sup> Another example of longevity was given by Henry W. Crossley (1809-99) also of Bradford, who was a director for 64 years;<sup>2</sup> and for a time deputy chairman. He was a tea merchant and later manager of a foundry. Henry Tuke Mennell (1835-1923) tea merchant, a grandson of the founder, was for some years deputy chairman.<sup>3</sup>

#### RICHARDSONS OF BESSBROOK

An example of a more familiar type of Quaker business which has remained largely a family concern in Quaker hands for generations is given by Richardsons of Bessbrook. Linen was almost the only flourishing industry of eighteenth century Ireland, being tolerated as non-competitive with English manufacture. It tended to become concentrated in Ulster.<sup>4</sup>

John Richardson (1719-59) opened a bleaching green at Hilden, co. Armagh. in the mid-eighteenth century, and founded the firm of J. & J. Richardson. He was descended from a Warwickshire man who migrated to Northern Ireland in the early seventeenth century, and whose son Jonathan was a convert to Quakerism. There were family connexions with the Christys, Aberdeenshire Quakers, who were pioneers of bleaching in Ireland and Scotland. Another Jonathan (b. 1756), son of the founder, established the Glenmore Bleachworks, Lisburn, in 1800. The bleachers of Ulster were at this period acquiring a position enabling them "to dominate the whole linen industry",<sup>5</sup> acting as well as middlemen and exporters; "the existing trade fell rapidly into the hands of a few great firms",<sup>6</sup> of whom Richardsons was one. They had a large trade with England, America and the West Indies, and were assisted in financing it through the rise of private banks in Belfast. They absorbed the neighbouring bleach greens of R. & A. Williamson, established a finishing station at Lisburn, and employed over 400 handloom weavers.<sup>7</sup>

On the Charlemont estate, near Newry, co. Armagh, John

<sup>1</sup> *The Friend*, 3.xii.1920.

<sup>2</sup> *The British Friend*, 2nd Mo. 1899.

<sup>3</sup> *The Times*, 12.xii.1933; *The Friend*, 21.xii.1933; R. O. Mennell, *Tea*.

<sup>4</sup> C. Gill, *Irish linen industry*; E. R. R. Green, *Lagan Valley*, passim.

<sup>5</sup> Green, *op. cit.*, 70.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 246.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 71-75.

Pollock had in 1761 established a bleachfield and spinning mill; the property acquired the name of Bessbrook. James Nicholson Richardson (1782-1847), son of Jonathan, with his seven sons and John Owden, a non-Friend of Huguenot descent who became a partner in 1825, constituted the firm of Richardson, Sons & Owden. He was also a founder of the Inman Steamship Line, Liverpool. Shortly before his death, the firm, desiring to develop the manufacturing side of the industry, which was now becoming mechanized, purchased the Bessbrook estate.

A spinning mill was erected in 1846 and power looms were introduced in the next decade. The "Bessbrook" loom for damask weaving, an invention of Henry Barcroft, a relation by marriage, was adopted in 1869. The Craigmore weaving factory was acquired in 1868. Communications with Belfast and Dublin were improved through the building of the Craigmore viaduct by the Junction Railway Company (1849-52), and an electric tramway constructed between Bessbrook and Newry by a company promoted by the Bessbrook directors (1884-85). Flax was imported from Belgium.

John Grubb Richardson (1815-90) the second brother, was the chief promoter of the model village of Bessbrook which inspired the later creation of Bournville. New Lanark was not the only example of benevolent patriarchalism in the Industrial Revolution. There had been abortive experiments in Ireland also.<sup>1</sup> In 1863, John Grubb Richardson became sole owner of the entire business works and village of Bessbrook; and in 1878 the manufacturing part of the firm was constituted a limited company as the Bessbrook Spinning Company, of which he was chairman till his death. The formula of the village was: "No Public House, Pawnshop or Police". The plan included houses, pleasure garden, allotments, schools, and later an Institute.

James Nicholson Richardson III (1846-1921) succeeded his father as chairman. He was Member of Parliament for the county, 1880-85, and advocated tenant right and land purchase. He was author of *Friends in Ulster* (1911). His brother-in-law, Richard Henry Stephens Richardson (1869-1957), a descendant of the first John, became chairman of both the Richardson and Bessbrook companies, and his son

<sup>1</sup> G. Camblin, *The town in Ulster*, esp. ch. x.

John is now a managing director. The family and Quaker tradition has thus been maintained. They have for generations been associated with Moyallon, co. Down, where a meeting house was established by the Christys in 1723. It has long been a centre of Evangelical activities.<sup>1</sup>

#### CARRS OF CARLISLE

The last group consists of four firms of biscuit manufacturers, all still familiar names in that industry. First in chronological order is the firm of Carrs of Carlisle. It was founded in March, 1831, by Jonathan Dodgson Carr (1807-88) son of a Kendal grocer. Thanks partly to his inventiveness in installing the first doughmaking and biscuit-cutting machinery (according to some accounts, also the packing of biscuits in tins), the business flourished rapidly, and in 1841 received a royal patent. It is noted that on his last fatal journey in the East (1862), H. T. Buckle, the historian of civilization, and his party "at eleven refreshed themselves with Carr's biscuits".<sup>2</sup>

J. D. Carr established four flour mills, partly to supply his factory, and owned bread bakeries, a small fleet of coasting vessels, and a number of depots serving N.W. England and S.W. Scotland. He set up a joint committee of managers and workmen, organized works excursions, and provided free hot baths near the factory. A school, reading room and library were attached.

The annual output reached 400 to 500 tons by 1845. It was at this time described as "one of the largest baking establishments in the world", and commended as an example of co-ordination and economy of effort. There were then less than a hundred employees; work started at 5.15 a.m. and ended at 6 p.m., with meal intervals constituting an 11-hour day. The weekly adult male wage was 17s.<sup>3</sup>

For some years his younger brother John was his partner, but left in 1858 to join Peek Freans' biscuit works, Bermondsey, London. Since then his descendants have been connected with the latter firm to the fourth generation. It is now, in conjunction with Huntley and Palmers, controlled

<sup>1</sup> *Bessbrook* (Centenary Booklet, 1945); Charlotte Fell Smith, *J. N. Richardson* (1925); *The Friend*, 28.x.1921.

<sup>2</sup> G. St. Aubyn, *Victorian Eminence*, 90.

<sup>3</sup> *Chambers's Journal*, Aug. 1, 1846.

by Associated Biscuit Manufacturers.<sup>1</sup> Philip Carr (b. 1884) was chairman of both until 1957.

Jonathan Carr was "a strict Quaker". In his three sons, James Nicholson (1838-1901), George Thompson (1837-1902) and Thomas William (1840-95), "the smooth quiet stream of Quakerism changed into the rushing torrent of the mid-Victorian Evangelical movement. . . . They were great men, but not great business men, and their religious activities caused them to neglect the very rapid developments in industry towards the end of the nineteenth century"—particularly the introduction of roller milling which revolutionized flour production.<sup>2</sup> James conducted revivalist meetings; George later devoted his attention to stock breeding, in which he had been a pupil of the famous Aberdeenshire Friend and cattle rearer, Amos Cruickshank.<sup>3</sup>

"The crisis produced the man" in William Theodore Carr (1866-1931), grandson of the founder. He had technological gifts as well as business acumen. He secured the necessary capital from friends, disposed of three of the now old-fashioned mills, completely re-equipped one at Silloth (1905) and established a separate company, Carr's Flour Mills Ltd., in January, 1908, remaining chairman of both companies until his death. He was M.P. for Carlisle, 1918-22.<sup>4</sup>

Carr & Co. became a private limited company in 1894, and a public one in 1927. Most of the present directors of both companies are descendants of the founder, but are not now connected with the Society. Other Friends connected with the business include Richard Bowman Brockbank (1824-1912) known both as a cattle breeder and an itinerant "minister";<sup>5</sup> and Ernest Hutchinson, who came as a buyer in 1885, and was responsible for the introduction of a printing department in the works, having been apprenticed to that trade under John Bellows of Gloucester. Ernest Hutchinson also introduced the use of margarine in the factory early this century; he eventually became a director, retiring in 1933. His son Maurice, active in Carlisle Meeting, retired from the directorate in 1957 after 47 years' association with the company.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stock Exchange Year Book; Emden, *op. cit.*, 181.

<sup>2</sup> "Carrs of Carlisle" (typescript, 1951).

<sup>3</sup> *The Friend*, 11.iv.1902; *Annual monitor*, 1903.

<sup>4</sup> *Who's Who*; *The Times*, 3.ii.1931; *Glasgow Herald*, 22.vi.1908.

<sup>5</sup> *The British Friend*, 2nd Mo. 1912.

<sup>6</sup> Information from Maurice Hutchinson and R. Allen Carr.

## HUNTLEY AND PALMERS

Thomas Huntley, a Friend, established a confectionery business in Reading in 1826. He was joined in 1841 by George Palmer (1818-97), who shared a common ancestry with the Clarks of Street, and had experience as a miller and baker. The manufacture of biscuits was commenced; it is said that almost the only biscuits then known were "firm as adamant, and very dear"—at a penny each.<sup>1</sup> Some 400 varieties were eventually introduced, including the "Breakfast Biscuit", wheatmeal, Abernethy, lunch, etc. Employees increased from an original 50 to some 5,000 by the end of the century. Thanks to Palmer's knowledge of mechanical engineering, machinery was introduced to the works, and has continued to be manufactured for its own use by the firm.<sup>2</sup>

On the death of Huntley in 1857, Palmer's brothers, William Isaac (1824-93) and Samuel (1820-1903) became partners. In 1866 the biscuit department of Reckitt & Sons, the Quaker starch firm of Hull, was acquired.

The three brothers, all active members of the Society, took a prominent part in public life. George was mayor of Reading in 1857, and represented the borough in Parliament from 1878 to 1885.<sup>3</sup> William was chairman of the National Temperance League, and President of the University Extension College, which thanks partly to the benefactions of the firm has now developed into the University of Reading.<sup>4</sup> Samuel left about £1 million.

George William (1851-1913) eldest son of the founder, was like his father mayor and M.P., and became a Privy Councillor in 1906; he resigned from the Society in 1898.<sup>5</sup> His younger brother (Sir) Alfred (1852-1936) joined the Church of England in early life, but is said to have retained many Quaker characteristics;<sup>6</sup> he was also a benefactor of the University College, now Reading University. Samuel's son of the same name was raised to the peerage in 1933, chiefly in recognition of his munificence to the Royal College of Music.<sup>7</sup> Eustace Exall Palmer (1878-1931) eldest son of

<sup>1</sup> Huntley & Palmer Souvenir (? 1895).

<sup>2</sup> Emden, *op. cit.*, 180-81.

<sup>3</sup> *D.N.B. Suppl.*—I, iii, 245; *The Friend*, 27.viii. 1897.

<sup>4</sup> *The Friend*, 13.i.1893.

<sup>5</sup> *Who's Who*; *The Times*, 9.x.1913; *The British Friend*, 9th Mo. 1898.

<sup>6</sup> *Who's Who*; *The Times*, 21.v.1936.

<sup>7</sup> *The Times*, 10.xii. 1948.



Alfred, was chairman of the company, which became a subsidiary of the holding company, Associated Biscuit Manufacturers, on its formation in 1921, with a capital of £2½ millions.<sup>1</sup> Control is still largely held by members of the Palmer family, but there is apparently now no Quaker connexion.

#### GRAY DUNN

John Gray (1811-54) belonged to an old Quaker family in Aberdeenshire, who for generations had farmed near Inverurie. He came to Glasgow in early life, and became the local agent of Huntley and Palmers. He made the acquaintance of the partners of a flour milling firm, and eventually they decided to embark on biscuit making, partly as an outlet for their flour. One of these, Peter Dunn, joined in 1853 with John Gray in founding the present firm at Kingston, Glasgow, producing at first mainly hand-cut biscuits.

John Gray died within a year (August, 1854) a victim to the cholera epidemic of 1854. His younger brother William (1812-80), who had meantime found occupation in London as agent for Morlands, the Quaker sheepskin firm, took over his part in the business, which despite limitations of capital, expanded and had an assured position by the time of Peter Dunn's death in 1865. The bakery was transferred in 1862 to Kinning Park. After a fire the present factory at Stanley Street was built in 1875.

Dunn's death involved the paying out of his capital to his trustees. A substitute was found in James Thompson of Kendal, a quarry owner, who arranged for his brother John (1808-98) to represent him; the latter became a partner in 1875, along with James Henry (1853-1901) William's eldest son, and for the next fifteen years the firm was for the only time entirely in Quaker hands. All were active in the Society. William was Clerk of General Meeting for Scotland 1864-80, and was engaged in public life as a Police Commissioner for Pollokshields, and known as an advocate of peace and temperance.<sup>2</sup> John Thompson was Provost of Govan, 1880-83<sup>3</sup>.

During the 'eighties, the firm suffered from growing

<sup>1</sup> Stock Exchange Year Book; W. H. Beable, *Romance of Great Businesses*, I, 183-187.

<sup>2</sup> *Glasgow Herald*, 2.ii.1880; Minutes of Scotland General Meeting.

<sup>3</sup> *Glasgow Herald*, 19.i.1898; *Glasgow and Lanarkshire* (1903) 26; T. C. F. Brotchie, *History of Govan*, 193.

competition in the baking trade and profits were reduced. Consequently in 1890 a new partnership was made, on the retirement of the Thompsons, with the brothers Bilsland, who owned a prosperous Glasgow bakery. The family is now represented by the leading Scottish industrialist, Lord Bilsland. Considerable additions to machinery and warehouses were made, and new lines of products added; the firm received a royal warrant in 1891, and was registered as a private company in 1894.

James H. Gray, who had recently become an elder in the Society, died prematurely in 1901. His younger brother, William Gray II (1860-1940) became chairman. He was Provost of Kinning Park and chairman of the Victoria Infirmary,<sup>1</sup> and was the only Quaker director until his nephew William Gray III joined the board in 1913. Although there are members of the fourth generation of the Gray family still in the management, none is a member of the Society. The company in 1925 became associated with Rowntrees of York, and the late Arnold Rowntree was for a time a director. William Gray III (1882-1958) retired in 1947. Donald Gray, sometime headmaster of Bootham, was a grandson of William I.<sup>2</sup> Arthur Harriss Catford (1865-1935) of a well-known London Quaker family, was in the London depot of the firm before coming to Glasgow in 1890. He became secretary of the company and served for a time as clerk of Glasgow P.M.<sup>3</sup>

#### W. & R. JACOB

Our final example is Irish. William Beale Jacob (1825-1902) of a well-known Quaker family associated with flour milling and brewing in Waterford, commenced the manufacture of biscuits in that town in 1851, but removed to Dublin two years later. He took into partnership his brother Robert and later G. J. Newsom, a connexion by marriage, and William F. Bewley (1847-1922). The firm pioneered technical improvements; "it led the way in the use of gas for heating" and of "travelling ovens". Internal tram lines were laid down in the factory, and biscuits packed in "skips".

W. B. Jacob ruled as a benevolent autocrat, hence much criticism by trade unionists, notably Louie Bennett, the

<sup>1</sup> *Glasgow Herald*, 1.v.1940.

<sup>2</sup> V. W. Alexander, *Donald Gray*.

<sup>3</sup> Information from Wm. Gray; *Weekly Scotsman*, 14.6.1958; E. Vipont, *Arnold Rowntree*.

pioneer of women's organization in Ireland.<sup>1</sup> He promoted welfare schemes, a refectory, rest room, swimming bath, technical training and vocational selection, ambulance and medical services, and a choral society. Ultimately works committees were set up to administer social activities.

Cream crackers, puff cracknel, wafers and chocolate biscuits were among the specialities introduced; fruit cakes were also baked. About 1,000 male and 1,800 female workers were employed. A considerable export trade to Great Britain and overseas was built up. Depots were established in London and Liverpool, and eventually a factory was built at Fazakerley in the latter city, giving employment to some 2,000. This was long managed by Albert Edward Jacob (1858-1929), third son of the founder, who became a city councillor and M.P.<sup>2</sup> A separate company was constituted after the creation of the Irish Free State.

Albert Jacob's brothers, George N. and Charles Edwin (1859-1941) remained in control in Dublin. The latter was active in the Society, becoming chairman of Friends' Foreign Mission Association and serving as an elder and as clerk at Leinster Q.M. Albert Maitland Jacob, grandson of William, is now chairman; Samuel Pim, son-in-law of Charles, a director; and Edward and William Bewley, grandsons of William F., are associated with the company, which became a private limited one in 1883, and public in 1928. It now employs about 10,000 and the annual value of the output exceeds £3 millions.<sup>3</sup>

## CONCLUSION

It is hoped to pursue the subject further as opportunity may be afforded. Meantime, although the range of evidence is too slender to permit of conclusive generalizations, a few suggestions may be hazarded.

One is that of the special attraction to Quaker entrepreneurs of the manufacture and sale of pure and wholesome beverages and foodstuffs, in days when adulteration and unhygienic conditions, almost unchecked by law, were

<sup>1</sup> R. M. Fox, *Louie Bennett*, 26-27.

<sup>2</sup> *The Times*, 27.ii.1929.

<sup>3</sup> *Jacobs* (brochure, 1958); *Leaves from the Biscuit Plant* (c. 1931); *Welfare Work* (1913), and other publications of W. & R. Jacob & Co.; information from Helen Jones and Wm. E. Jacob; *The Friend*, 29.xii.1922 and 24.x.1941.

rampant.<sup>1</sup> A second is the recurrence of pioneering efforts in welfare work, both for employees and for citizens generally, associated with a thrift and abstinence in way of life, an avoidance of "conspicuous waste and ostentatious leisure". A third feature, of less happy omen, is the tendency for succeeding generations to be alienated from the Society, even when they retain pride in the original connexion. It is often deplored that Quakerism fails to appeal to the proletariat; it would seem that it also fails to hold the capitalist.

The historian cannot give the explanation; he can only surmise that, whether as cause or effect or interaction, the increasingly large-scale depersonalized character of modern business is not so easily reconciled with the Quaker temperament as one in which personal relationships can readily be maintained. In a recent estimate of the Quaker role in eighteenth-century economic development, it is suggested that "though economic success was no part of their creed, it did in many cases prove to be the by-product of their conscience . . . the Quaker insistence on the most careful and exact performance of personal obligations and responsibilities made the matter of keeping careful accounts almost a religious duty. . . . A Quaker setting up in business could be sure of the help and advice of the brethren. . . . Quaker enterprises tended to be joined together by family ramifications. The result was to impart a certain toughness and coherence to the Quaker business world. . . . Where Quaker employed Quaker, a common attitude towards life and work knit together the employer and the workman, the one avoiding exploitation and the other giving of his best".<sup>2</sup>

This statement is probably still true of some surviving "family" firms; but the conditions postulated have largely disappeared in modern industry and commerce. Hence perhaps the frequently noted likelihood for the modern Friend to be typically not a business man, but rather a professional worker, a sphere in which personal relationships still have a paramount place.

It may be noted in conclusion that some of the critics of the Victorian industrial order were of Quaker origin. William Farrer Ecroyd (1827-1915) of an old Quaker worsted spinning firm, and Robert Bird, a Glasgow solicitor, were opponents

<sup>1</sup> J. C. Drummond and A. Wilbraham, *The Englishman's food*.

<sup>2</sup> D. Marshall, *English people in the 18th century*, 225-27.

of *laissez faire* and early champions of the return to Protection.<sup>1</sup> Arthur Priestman (1856-1918), a founder of the I.L.P.,<sup>2</sup> Edward Pease, long secretary of the Fabian Society, and S. G. Hobson, spokesman of National Guilds,<sup>3</sup> expressed diverse forms of the socialist alternative, which was taken up by the Socialist Quaker Society (founded c. 1898) early in the present century,<sup>4</sup> and contributed to the formation of the Industrial and Social Order Council after the First World War.

WILLIAM H. MARWICK

(I am much indebted to the following for information and for loan of material: Mary F. Smith, Edinburgh; Anthony L. Wilson, Birmingham; C. W. C. Fox (Fox, Roy & Co.); W. Moffat Palmer, Deputy General Manager, Friends' Provident and Century Life Office; Ronald M. Priestman, Ilkley; John S. W. Richardson, Bessbrook; R. Allen Carr (Carr & Co.); Maurice Hutchinson, Carlisle; William Gray, Glasgow; William E. Jacob, Waterford; Helen Jones, Recording Clerk, Ireland Y.M.; and to the firms of Harrisons & Crosfield, Ltd. and W. & R. Jacob & Co. Ltd. I have also to acknowledge gratefully the advice and help of John L. Nickalls and Muriel Hicks at Friends House Library.)

<sup>1</sup> B. H. Brown, *Tariff reform movement in Great Britain; Who's Who in Glasgow* (1909); *The Times*, 10.xi.1915.

<sup>2</sup> F. Brockway, *Socialism over 60 Years; Life of F. W. Jowett*, 60; *The Friend*, 8.ii.1918.

<sup>3</sup> S. G. Hobson, *Pilgrim to the Left*.

<sup>4</sup> *The British Friend*, 7th Mo. 1902 *et seq.*

Accounts for the year 1957 and *Journal*, vol. 48, Nos. 3 and 4

EXPENDITURE				INCOME			
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
<i>Journal of Friends' Historical Society</i> , vol. 48, parts 3 and 4..	208	6	1	Balance brought forward	83	10	2
Stationery .. ..	12	16	4	Subscriptions .. ..	190	9	11
Expenses including postage .. ..	15	4	2	Donations .. ..	104	3	0
Reserve Fund .. ..	20	0	0	Sales .. ..	22	17	8
Balance carried forward to 1958 .. ..	146	10	2	Advertisement .. ..	1	16	0
	<hr/>				<hr/>		
	£402	16	9		£402	16	9
	<hr/>				<hr/>		

There is a Reserve Fund in the Post Office Savings Bank of £351 18s. 1d., representing Life Membership subscriptions £317, and interest accrued (1950-1957) £34 18s. 1d.

Examined with the books of the Society and found correct.  
5.viii.58.

BASIL G. BURTON.