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Editorial

This issue of the *Journal* is the fifth number of volume 54. It opens with the Presidential Address delivered by Gerald A. J. Hodgett on 2 November 1979 before an appreciative audience. In "The Shackletons of Ballitore: some aspects of eighteenth century Irish Quaker life", Gerald Hodgett has distilled for us a sympathetic account from his reading of a portion of the mass of correspondence which survives from this most lettered Irish Quaker family. The reader is given here, not so much the public, or even the schoolroom, face of the academy where Edmund Burke received his education, but rather insights into the home, the family, and Society of Friends' life as seen from the Quaker schoolmaster's household in the Irish countryside forty miles from Dublin.

"Lancashire Quakers and the Oath, 1660-1722", by Nicholas J. Morgan, is a welcome contribution to our knowledge in a largely untilled field. Nicholas Morgan is a research assistant on the Scottish Business Biography Project in the Department of Economic History at Glasgow. He is a Lancaster graduate, and is preparing a thesis, 'Lancaster Quakers and the Establishment', to be presented in that university in 1983. Nicholas Morgan offers here some of the fruits of his detailed research among manuscripts at Friends House Library (where he was for some months a temporary member of staff), in the national collections in London, and among Friends' records at Lancaster.

Dr J. D. Alsop of the School of History, University of Liverpool writes a note, based on a document in the papers of the 3rd Earl of Sunderland now in the British Library, concerning the Affirmation Act of 1722. This Act took account of the scruples of many among Friends who could not accept the form of Affirmation which had been passed into law in 1696. In elections for seats in the House of Commons, and to maintain its position in the country, the Whig government found it advantageous to secure the electoral votes and the general support of Quakers, and the passage of the Affirmation Act was one way of cementing that support. Dr Alsop shows that, in the Lords, the measure encountered stiff opposition. The subject attracted in course political pamphlets, some in verse, like *The Parson's companion, or The Clergy's conduct in their late petition against the Quakers Affirmation* (1722), and *The London clergy's petition against the Quakers Affirmation, answer'd, paragraph by paragraph* (1722), of which the opening lines give a sample:

“A Late Petition of the Clergy,
 (Who like Preceptors love to scourge ye);
 By sundry stil'd the Churches Sons,
 Subscrib'd by One and Forty Dons”

and so on.

This issue includes also the usual features on archives, notes and queries, and recent publications.