

FRIENDS AND WAR 1899-1945

I cannot begin this address without telling you how proud I am of the honour you have done me in making me your President for this year. When I think of the names of previous Presidents of our Society I feel very humble. One of my predecessors was Robert H. Marsh (1856-1942), teacher, accountant and financier whom I shall mention again later.¹ Speaking nearly a century ago Marsh uttered words which some of his successors might wish to reiterate: 'It is hard that an unfortunate president who has really nothing to say should have to say it in the absence of further items on the Agenda that might have sheltered him from his doom'.² Marsh went on to deliver a detailed lecture on a Kentish charity, founded in the seventeenth century, of which he had been steward for thirty years. His address did not fall into the category which he indicated and I hope that what follows will not either.

It is generally assumed that Quakers are and always have been pacifists. My intention is to suggest that this assumption is mistaken, at least so far as the major foreign wars of the period 1899-1945 are concerned. This is the theme which this talk seeks to address. (My guess, after a mere twenty-odd years of membership of the Religious Society of Friends, is that by no means all Friends are pacifists today, or would be if a hypothetical war involved large numbers of British armed forces). It is of particular relevance at the present time.

The Society of Friends as such has been a peace church since soon after its inception in the mid-seventeenth century. John Ormerod Greenwood in the first volume of his *Quaker Encounters* (1975) lists relief work to assist victims of war carried out by Friends from the beginning of the eighteenth century. He provides detailed accounts of this work dating from the early-nineteenth century. William Jones, a Welsh Friend who moved to the north of England, described his work for war victims in France in 1870-71 and Bulgaria in 1876-77 in his memoirs, published in 1899. But he was under no illusion that the scourge of warfare had been successfully lifted from Europe and North America. Writing as the wars of our period were about to begin, he listed 'the disastrous Crimean War' (1854-6), the war of Italian Independence (1859-60), the American Civil War (1861-65), the Austro-Prussian War (1866), the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71),

the Russo-Turkish War (1877-78), and after a lapse the Spanish-American War (1898), 'seven great and sanguinary conflicts, by which Christendom has been scourged and desolated'.³

Four reflections arise from the foregoing. The first is that only in the Crimean War was Britain a participant. (Jones ignored the many British colonial campaigns of the period). The second is that these wars, though resulting in a great deal of death and destruction, were relatively small-scale affairs - except for the American Civil War - when compared to the devastation which was to follow. The third is that they did not arouse public controversy within the Society of Friends in Britain. The Society publicly and steadfastly opposed the Crimean War, 'the only group of any size to speak out as a body against the war'.⁴ Friends who had reservations about this stance kept their thoughts to themselves, their families and personal contacts. Finally and crucially, the work which Friends carried out to ameliorate suffering was humanitarian and benevolent. War relief and resistance to war were often associated. Although pacifism was becoming an increasingly political issue,⁵ there was as yet no need or desire for individual Friends to decide whether or not to challenge publicly the actions of government.

Christopher Hill, the most respected historian of the period and subject, attributes Quaker survival in the turbulent seventeenth century to the formal organisation which George Fox and his colleagues instituted after 1660. (Let us not forget that he also said: 'Quakers have given the world more than any other seventeenth-century group'.⁶) But by the mid-nineteenth century organisation alone could no longer suffice. Elizabeth Isichei, in her authoritative history of *Victorian Quakers*, estimates that membership fell steadily from 1800 when it stood at nearly 20,000, to the first official Quaker census, 1861, when the figure for the previous year was only 13,859. In 1859 after a campaign led by the elder Joseph Rowntree of York and reinforced by parliamentary legislation the following year, a Quaker was permitted to 'marry out' of the faith providing that the ceremony took place in a meeting house and the non-member 'professed with Friends'. Thus the self-inflicted wound of disownment (expulsion) for 'marriage before the priest', previously inescapable if one partner was not a member, was alleviated and both law and practice were subsequently liberalised further.⁷ In

1860 the fourth Query in our Book of Discipline enjoining 'plainness of speech, behaviour and apparel' was made optional and the slow Quaker retreat from these features began. By the 1880s about half of Quakers who married chose their partners from non-Friends. Membership rose after a low ebb in 1864, exceeding 17,000 by 1900. The increase was proportionately lower than the growth in British population in the same period, but it rescued the Society from what may have seemed in the late 1850s irreversible decline and ultimate extinction; growth in numbers continued into the early twentieth century. It was the prospect of continual membership decline that was the principal reason for these momentous changes; between 1800 and 1855 over 4,000 members were disowned, according to one well-informed estimate, for 'marrying out'. The changes aroused the fear, however, amongst some Friends that Quakers were in danger of becoming only another Nonconformist denomination, losing their status as a Peculiar People.⁸

There was another reason for the new departure, less obvious but no less important. During the nineteenth century many leading Quakers integrated into the wider British community as bankers and business people of all kinds. They began too to play a role in the political sphere. The first Quaker MP (Protestant Dissenters were not legally entitled to be members of parliament until 1828) was Joseph Pease, elected for South Durham in 1832. The first Quaker government minister would have been W.E. Forster in 1868 had he not been disowned in 1850 for 'marrying out'. John Bright, publicly the best-known Quaker of the century, entered the Cabinet in 1868-70. By 1904, 36 Quakers had been elected to Parliament. Being able to marry as one wished and to abandon Quaker dress and speech were illustrations of the fact that the integration of Friends into British society was by this time well established - and further, that the legal barriers to the full citizenship of Friends were being abandoned.⁹ The changes at the end of the 1850s were thus perhaps as much effect as cause. In turn they encouraged further integration. The South African War and the First World War in particular were to reveal that some prosperous and influential Friends - and, it should be acknowledged, many less prominent members - had become more conventionally patriotic and more politically Liberal (though some in the political turmoil of the late nineteenth century had turned to Liberal Unionism) than traditionally Quaker in their outlook.

It should also be borne in mind that the Quaker peace testimony was born in ambiguity and lived in ambiguity throughout the nineteenth century. Thomas Kennedy, the leading authority on Quaker history in the period 1860-1920 and one of my predecessors as President, goes so far as to say that Friends in the mid-nineteenth century 'lacked any consensus as to what constituted a positive peace testimony, except positively avoiding attempts to carefully define one'. He asserts that the situation was no clearer in the mid-1880s.¹⁰

This brings me to the wars themselves. War was no longer regarded as a subject 'which should be of no interest to the respectable middle class' as the novels of Maria Edgeworth and Jane Austen in the early nineteenth century had demonstrated.¹¹ For the first time civilians were recruited to support what governments had already decided to do. Twentieth-century politicians discovered, no doubt to their joy and relief, that the civilian population would back wars presented as patriotic necessities, 'fighting for one's country'. In our own time the Falklands War in 1982 and, with qualifications, the war with Iraq in 2003 are cases in point. If a war is lengthy and indecisive - I am thinking here of Afghanistan as well as the later years in Iraq - the public grows weary and wary of new commitments but does not rebel. The return of bodies from war zones is greeted with reverence, and those who jeer or express opposition during ceremonies held on these occasions meet overwhelming public hostility. Great is nationalism!

The South African War was enthusiastically if intermittently supported by the public. Metford Robson has described in detail in our *Journal* the riot mounted against Samuel Cronwright-Schreiner, a British South African who had been invited by the Rowntree family to Scarborough to speak on proposals for peace in March 1900.¹² The relief of Mafeking the following May was hailed by scenes of hysterical joy. In December 1901 the 'pro-Boer' Lloyd George had to escape dressed as a policeman from an angry crowd at a Birmingham meeting. The nation was unprepared for war in 1914 and recent historians have stressed that war had little public, press or political support in Britain almost until it was declared. However, once it had begun there was little opposition and much distress and fury about the German invasion of Belgium; even in the later, apparently interminable stages. Conscientious objectors and pacifists had a thin

time at the hands of officialdom and pro-war crowds. It is admittedly easy to mistake such crowds for the public at large. It is easy too to mistake resigned acceptance for enthusiasm. It is, on the other hand, difficult to separate public sentiment from the views of the pro-war press, but these were the newspapers with the largest circulations; the public was not compelled to purchase or read them. In 1939 the British public dreaded war and its likely consequences, but once it was declared they accepted it with varying degrees of resignation or enthusiasm and, in the words of a later famous or infamous slogan, acknowledged implicitly that 'we are all in this together'. The claims of social solidarity in the years 1939-1945 made in past years have been fairly comprehensively debunked by historians, limited as 'solidarity' often was to intellectuals or sections of the upper-middle class, but there was no public groundswell against the war while it lasted.

The South African War was the least bloody of the three conflicts but in terms of public attitude it was perhaps the most significant. For although it took place far away and was not fought to prevent another power from dominating Europe or invading this country, though it was not a war threatening Britain's vital interests (supposed or real) like the later two world wars, support for it was vocal. Opposition to the war by Quakers was belated and in many cases half-hearted, although according to the researches of Richard Rempel it was stronger than that of any other religious denomination.¹³ Certain prominent Friends were strong advocates of what was advertised as the patriotic cause. Hope Hay Hewison, another former President and the meticulous author of Quaker reactions to this conflict, points out that 'there were eloquent [Quaker] apologists for Government policy even in aspects difficult to reconcile with Quakerism and who could still stereotype the Calvinistic, God-fearing Boer as a desperately cruel and corrupt foe'.¹⁴

Certainly opinion was divided amongst Friends. John Bellows, a printer and pugnacious Friend who had previously undertaken relief work in war-torn and necessitous areas, championed the British side in the war and wrote a widely distributed pamphlet (translated into French and German) in its support which secured a good deal of publicity as the work of a member of the nominally pacifist Society of Friends. A revealing passage read: 'Not every advocacy of peace

is true or honest ... It is as natural and right for me to love my own country better than any other, as it is that I should care for my own family before all other families'.¹⁵

Caroline Stephen, the well-known sister of the writer Leslie Stephen, was another Friend who supported the war. Thomas Kennedy quotes a private letter from J. Rendel Harris, a leading Friend, to Margaret Clark, a member of the prominent Somerset Quaker family; 'It was very sad to have our cause given away, as it was by Caroline Stephen and John Bellows ... There is no doubt in my mind that we are betrayed in the citadel itself'.¹⁶ Other Friends were less strident but unwilling to express public opposition to the war. Theodore Stacy Wilson, speaking at Yearly Meeting in 1900, said that to oppose all war meant that British colonies and trade could not legitimately be defended and Joseph Storrs Fry expressed the hope that any official appeal on behalf of Friends to the government 'would not go into matters on which the society was divided'.¹⁷ Hope Hewison comments that the society was 'painfully conscious of its own formidably patriarchal and articulate right wing'.¹⁸ The result was that it blew an uncertain trumpet, expressing opposition to war in general easily interpreted as an expression of 'pious opinions only' which did not commit Friends to any particular course of action.¹⁹

Friends who opposed the war also made their opinions plain though their views were usually expressed in Quaker publications and hence secured much less publicity than Bellows had done. John Stephenson Rowntree pointed out in the anti-war *British Friend* that the issue at stake was not the often repugnant behaviour of Paul Kruger, President of the Transvaal, the Boer republic: 'The question at issue is whether a mighty nation like Britain, a nation of loud religious profession, is justified in crushing a people, far fewer all told than the population of Manchester, desolating their land, burning their farms, driving out their women and children from their homes to perish by starvation'. Relatively few Friends were willing to go so far in public and it required courage to do so. A few months earlier Joseph Marshall Sturge, another opponent of the war, had told Yearly Meeting: 'If one stated in public that one did not think a fervent desire to bayonet a Boer, personally or by deputy, was in accordance with nineteenth-century civilisation, one was actually in

danger in property or person'.²⁰ It was not until the later phase of the war that the Quaker press and many members publicly championed Emily Hobhouse and her exposure of appalling conditions in the concentration camps which British forces had established in South Africa.

To appeal to the public at large to support the war by the end of the nineteenth century politicians had to find a moral or emotional issue in justification. In the case of South Africa it was the alleged mistreatment in the Transvaal of the non-Boer European 'Uitlanders', most of them British. Sir Alfred Milner, the British high commissioner for South Africa, claimed in a dispatch in 1899 that the Uitlanders were treated like 'helots'. In August 1914 emotions were stirred by the German invasion of Belgium, which lay on its route to Paris and, it was hoped in Berlin, swift victory. Beatrice Webb, a close observer of the contemporary scene, told her diary: 'If this little race had not been attacked the war would have been positively unpopular - it could hardly have taken place'.²¹ The fact that fixed British policy insisted that the Low Countries opposite the British coast should remain in the hands of nations devoid of real power received much less attention. Moreover, it was too seldom realised that Britain alone among the European powers had no quarrel with the contemporary imperial division of much of the world and too often assumed without dispute that its empire alone was benevolent, just and normal.²² Willing participation by the general public as military personnel and industrial workers was essential if this war, like its successor, was to be successively prosecuted. Hence the crucial importance of 'poor little Belgium'.²³

The fact that the Germans defied a treaty obligation²⁴ to invade Belgium was much used to arouse support for the war. So too was the nature of warfare in the early twentieth-century. The Revd. Canon John Watson, sub-dean of York, conjured up emotively but not accurately in a sermon in York Minster early in the war, 'a trail of ruined villages and homesteads, a countryside ravaged by fire and sword, ripened cornfields strewn with valiant dead'. He continued in a fashion which seems a century later excessively partisan for a clergyman: 'The welfare of every man, woman, and child in the Kingdom are [sic] staked upon the issue'.²⁵ The deployment of unprecedented numbers of men and hugely destructive types of

weaponry, embellished with exaggerated allegations of German atrocities, was used to increase support for the war. Perhaps even more important was the nature of Edwardian society, a society of deference in which the great mass of the population was accustomed to doing what it was told by its social superiors and in which educational levels were low. 'Cheerful acceptance of fate came from a relatively static, tradition-oriented people.'²⁶

What then of Quakers? Friends were not immune to the emotional response to the outbreak of European war in August 1914. Indeed they were members of a religious society which thought of itself as putting the claims of morality before expediency more than did other denominations. As such, Quakers were as or more susceptible than others to the case which was laid by politicians, press (more often concerned to preserve the morale of the public and continuing to prosecute the war than with publishing the gloomy truth) and much of the clergy before the nation. At the start of the war Quakers seemed to be in danger of being swept away by the tide of public sentiment. Early in September 1914 *The Friend* echoed government propaganda by commenting editorially that British participation in the war was 'in some senses a defence of our very existence as a nation and as an Empire'. Edward Grubb, a leading Friend who was later to oppose conscription²⁷ and work for peace with great courage and resolution, wrote in the same issue: 'Theoretically we agree wholly that war is wrong; practically it seems that *this* war has been forced on us by circumstances; and we do not see how our country's share in it could have been avoided except by refusal to fulfil her obligations of honour, and to stand up against an unjust attack on a weaker nation'. In so writing Grubb echoed a statement of Meeting for Sufferings, published in *The Friend* in mid-August 1914. Its second paragraph included the words: 'We recognise that our Government ... has entered into the war under a grave sense of duty to a smaller State towards which we had moral and treaty obligations ... We hold that the present moment is not one for criticism, but for devoted service to our nation ...' The statement also referred to the war as 'gigantic folly' and urged that 'it should not be carried on in any vindictive spirit'²⁸, but the earlier passage provided ample justification for Friends who wished to fight. Responding to what Grubb called the obligations of honour was to cost an estimated 40,000 Belgian and 750,000 British lives.

The appeal to moral principle made in the wake of the German invasion of Belgium was both strong and enduring. But it would have been less powerful had many Friends not been willing to follow the lead of their government with little demur. By 1914 the process of integration of large numbers of Friends into conventional society had gone so far and their interpretation of the Quaker peace testimony was so flexible that it was not difficult to accept the case for what seemed to so many to be a justified war.

Historians are not unanimous in concluding which groups of Friends supported or opposed the war in its early phase or later became conscientious objectors to conscription. The general view, held both by contemporaries and historians at least until recently, is that birthright Quakers were often likely to be no more than nominal members and that it was largely Friends by conviction who played an active role in opposing the war. A letter in *The Friend* in January 1915 from Roderic Clark typified this view: 'It would be idle to ignore the fact that the great majority of those who have enlisted have never been conspicuous for their keenness as Friends'. Similarly, Elizabeth Fox Howard, in a Quaker publication which appeared in 1920, wrote that the massive initial support for the war 'proved too much for any whose Quaker principles were not rooted in something far deeper than mere tradition or inherited beliefs'. Thomas Kennedy disagrees. He cites evidence drawn largely from East Anglia which suggested that many of those who volunteered to fight were active young Friends.²⁹

By summer 1914 the peace testimony was rusty from disuse so far as many Friends were concerned. Martin Ceadel's formulation is that some Friends were unwilling either to act upon the peace testimony or to repudiate it. In any case, he contends, the 'mainstream' view among Friends was to alleviate the suffering caused by war rather than to oppose it.³⁰ It had certainly never been Quaker practice to defy systematically the power structure of the country. There were sharply contrasting views among Friends, a division which was now put rudely to the test. E.H. Gilpin, a member of a well-known Quaker family and a London manufacturer, gathered the signatures of over 2,000 members of the Society in May 1915 to a collective letter. It was addressed to those young men who had enlisted, 'a warm message of friendship'. The letter was careful to state: 'Not all who

sign this letter would have seen fit to do as you have done', but it was correctly seen as the manifesto of the pro-war Friends. Together with the printed list of signatories was a letter to Gilpin from Joseph A. Pease MP, later Lord Gainford, the grandson of the first Quaker MP and by 1915 a government minister of some years' standing. Pease's letter unsurprisingly contained everything which advocates of war could have wished. Those 'who know the facts, realise how every possible step was taken to avoid the present war, for which Germany has long made definite preparation. She intended to *force* her own military domination on the world ... I associate myself with those who are now in khaki; they are fighting for what they believe to be right, having sought for Divine Guidance in the course they have taken'.³¹ (Three government ministers resigned when Britain declared war on Germany; Pease was not amongst them).

Letters in *The Friend* argued that the peace testimony as originally laid down did not ban the legitimate function of self-defence. In any case British participation in the war was justified. John Wilson wrote in October 1914: 'This war is a war for freedom, humanity, and - paradoxical as it may seem - Peace'. A.J. Southall wrote in February 1915: 'Peace at any price spells a free hand for bullies and tyrants'. The following month John S. Elder asked: 'Are Friends who insist that *all* war is wrong willing to adopt the policy of our becoming a subject state, denuded of all liberty and of everything we possess?'³² My calculation is that 45 per cent of the 116 published letters which discussed the war in its first year were favourable to it or to Quaker volunteers; some of the rest were neutral or indecisive. An editorial note published on 2 April 1915 insisted that the letters printed were 'a fair representation of the correspondence received'.³³

It must also be emphasised that the Religious Society of Friends was (and is) not a secular peace society but a religious denomination whose most important principle was (and is) the Inner (or Inward) Light. Friends today sometimes think of their religion 'as a third force distinct from both Protestantism and Catholicism'³⁴, especially, in this country, in the context of Northern Ireland. The assertion demonstrates how religions can diverge from their origins and does credit to the desire to promote peace rather than religious division. It should be remembered, however, that Quakerism began as an extreme manifestation of the Protestant conscience

and that members do not subscribe to a church hierarchy. They respect or reverence the Bible, but believe above all in the light of God as understood by the individual worshipper, 'the consciences of ordinary men and women'. It was from the start and remains this understanding which should determine behaviour. An early expression of the belief was formulated by Isaac Penington (1617-79) in the seventeenth century: 'The main thing in religion is to keep the conscience pure to the Lord, to know the guide, to follow the guide, to receive from him the light whereby I am to walk; and not to take things for truths because others see them to be truths, but to wait till the spirit make them manifest to me'. The position of Caroline Stephen over two hundred years later was recognisably similar: 'Nothing ... can really teach us the nature and meaning of inspiration but personal experience of it. That we may all have such experience if we will but attend to the Divine influence in our own hearts, is the cardinal doctrine of Quakerism'.³⁵ As we have seen, she was to be a champion of the British side in the South African war.

The principle is one which united Quakers and remains central to Quaker belief, though many Friends would now use an amended phraseology. It was not difficult for Friends in 1914 to find in the Inner Light reason to justify their support for war. David Boulton reminds us in the foreword to the new edition of his *Objection Overruled* that the two Quaker Conservative MPs, Alfred Bigland and F. Leverton Harris, acted as 'unofficial Quaker recruiting sergeants' and they were not the only Friends to act in this capacity.³⁶ Harold Capper Hunt, an administrator at the Retreat Hospital in York, put the matter in a succinct (if oversimplified) manner early in 1915: 'If the Society stands for one thing more than another it is for liberty of conscience, and I am glad to say that in this crisis many members are at one with the British cause'.³⁷ This conviction, although seen by many Friends as inconsistent with the Quaker peace testimony, drew support, to repeat, from belief in the Inner Light. When this factor is considered together with the secular considerations discussed earlier, it should not be surprising that there was widespread support in the Society for what Hunt called 'the British cause'. Indeed it may be argued that differing opinions on war and peace were a vindication, not a condemnation, of Quakerism. The Religious Society of Friends consisted of sentient individuals, not sheep. 'If *all* had refused to fight, it would almost certainly have meant that they were blindly

following a tradition instead of thinking for themselves and then being obedient to the light that was given them', Elizabeth Braithwaite Emmott insisted after the war.³⁸

If large numbers of older Friends were disinclined to quarrel with the political and social power structure of the country, younger Friends had a somewhat different motivation. Many of them, unsurprisingly, responded to the prevailing excitement and the lure of glory. They were easily 'stimulated by the sight of uniforms, by the flaming pens of journalists, by the gleam from women's eyes, by elderly approval', in the words of John William Graham, a prominent contemporary Manchester Friend.³⁹ Ninety years later the American historian Adam Hochschild wrote: 'When the guns were firing and the pressure from friends and family to support the war effort was overwhelming, it took rare courage to resist'.⁴⁰

The case of Lawrence Rowntree is one to stand for many. He was the son of John Wilhelm Rowntree, a convinced pacifist, one of the most influential of Friends before (and after) his early death in 1905 and the hero of Thomas Kennedy's book *British Quakerism 1860-1920*. His sister Jean provided Kennedy with a memoir which Laurie wrote before his death in combat on the Western Front in 1917 and which contained these words: 'The excitement of it, even the fear is enticing; the glorious feeling when you overcome difficulties ... and the jolly companionship ... you get in the face of common danger ...' Jean Rowntree wrote to the York historian A.J. Peacock about her brother in July 1988: 'He was certainly never a pacifist as the word is understood today; after all, he was only 19 in 1914, and had no more clear-cut religious beliefs than most young people of his age'. She insisted further that his decision to fight was not made because of outside pressure; 'Laurie always made his decisions for himself'.⁴¹ The army volunteer was widely regarded as a hero. What was the reward of the opponent of war? A lonely life of self-conscious rectitude, perhaps loss of employment, public obloquy and a collection of white feathers?

In compiling the number of Friends who served in the armed forces or refused to fight in the Great War, Quaker administrators were less than their usual meticulous selves. Figures are woefully incomplete and unreliable. Nonetheless, it is generally accepted

that the contemporary estimate was approximately correct; about a third of male Friends in the relevant age group, nearly a thousand in number, shouldered arms⁴². John Rae gives the number of Quaker conscientious objectors to conscription as 750,⁴³ a figure apparently drawn from the only official – though grossly incomplete – Quaker survey in the period, compiled late in 1917.⁴⁴ A sizeable number of Friends were granted exemptions on other grounds than conscientious objection. Hundreds of young Friends – but a minority of those were liable to conscription – applied for recognition as conscientious objectors. Fewer than three hundred of them were among the 6,000 or more objectors who spent time in prison.⁴⁵ Quaker conscientious objectors, though relatively numerous given the size of the Society, were a small proportion of the total number of COs in this war, estimated by J.W. Graham at 16,100 and more recently (and probably more accurately) at over 20,000.⁴⁶ But even if the numbers are accurate, to cite them is not to compare like with like. The greatest rush to the colours in Britain was in the first six months of the war and Friends probably joined in the largest numbers in the same period. Yearly Meeting was told in May 1915 that replies from 58 out of 68 Monthly Meetings indicated that ‘about 215 young men Friends had joined the army or navy’.⁴⁷ Conscription, however, was not introduced until the beginning of 1916, nearly eighteen months after Britain entered the war. This disparity of dates results in distortions of various kinds. In any case to cite the above figures is to suggest that they were comprehensive when they were not comprehensive or that there was clarity where there was little clarity. The safest assertion is that while many young Friends went to war probably at least as many refused publicly to do so and many others were given exemptions for various reasons; as a result, ‘military Friends’ were a minority of the age group. It defies our testimony to truth to ignore the fact that large numbers of Friends enthusiastically or reluctantly did all they could to support the war effort. To ignore this fact also fails to acknowledge that many members today are the descendants of those who fought and sometimes died, just as others look back to family members who served in the Friends Ambulance Unit. Our revulsion against war and in particular to this war should not lead us to distort facts.

The 20,000 conscientious objectors in this war, however, should not be forgotten and it is the right and duty of Friends to remember them.

Probably between 250 and 300 times as many young British men joined the army as pleaded conscientious objection. Among young Quakers those who fought were probably no more numerous than those who refused to do so. In the context of the time this is a proud record. It should also be pointed out that it was young Friends who had the hardest decision to make. It was easier for older Friends to take their stand with traditional Quaker opposition to war, though there were many bellicose voices in the older generation.

The statistical half-light is darkened (and irretrievably) by the anomalous position of the Friends Ambulance Unit, an unofficial body concerned to relieve the suffering caused by war.⁴⁸ Many of its early members were not Quakers. Many Friends believed then and many believe now that the FAU was a refuge for pacifist Friends and that their work was pacifist. I respect their view and agree with it but not without reservations. The FAU was an organisation whose leaders worked closely with the military authorities and were given commissions. They accepted military decorations from the allied governments; one recipient was Philip (Noel-)Baker, whose letter in *The Friend* in August 1914 launched the unit and who went on to become a prominent Labour politician. (There were objections to Baker's initial proposal to form such a unit as 'scarcely consistent with ... the views and principles of Friends', as letters in *The Friend* demonstrated).⁴⁹ The unit's co-operation with the army was particularly notable after conscription was introduced in early 1916. Its historians point out: 'Its leaders were responsible to the Army for the maintenance of discipline and efficiency, and for the rudiments of military etiquette. It had to retain its independent character, and yet it was dependent for its very existence on its requirement and its readiness to submit to military requirements'.⁵⁰

Such a position was understandable, probably inevitable if the FAU was to survive. It did not suit the absolutist pacifists amongst Friends. Corder Catchpool was the best known of about two dozen FAU members who refused to accept what they regarded as being part of the war machine, as they felt that they had become increasingly after the introduction of conscription. They returned to Britain, refused to join the armed forces and went to prison in consequence.⁵¹ More typical of the FAU membership was the philosopher and writer Olaf Stapledon, a non-Friend who professed 'a deep respect for

[the Society's] tradition of pacifism and social service'. Stapledon felt that he could not ignore the suffering involved in the war but refused to be a soldier. 'I had not the heart to stand aside any longer, and yet I had not the conviction to be a soldier ... Somehow I *must* bear my share of the great common agony.'⁵² Many young Quakers held the same view.

There is certainly room to interpret the FAU either as part of the war machine or as a pacifist alternative to war. It is far from my purpose to denigrate those Friends and others who at great personal risk took no part in military action and sought to bring succour to those wounded on the battlefield or in hospital. Twenty-one members of the unit died while on service.

Perhaps we might reach agreement on two points. First, that the FAU itself served two distinct purposes. Members wanted at the same time, as Stapledon said, 'to go to war and be a pacifist ... [We had] the will to share in the common ordeal and the will to make some kind of protest against the common folly.' Whatever their intentions (and not all members were pacifists) they worked in conjunction with the armed forces, an ambiguous situation. 'Never before had such a strange hybrid of pacifism and militarism existed.'⁵³ Second, it should be remembered that during the Great War there was enormous pressure on the young to contribute to the war effort. Today Friends in general oppose war and suppose that their predecessors did also. The general public too is more sceptical now about justifying the war than were their predecessors. It is natural to think that the FAU volunteers were pacifists in intent and practice as many of them in fact were – and heroes as many of them also were.

I have examined in an article in our *Journal* the crucial Yearly Meeting held in May 1915.⁵⁴ This was the time when Friends who felt that British participation in the war was justified and their opponents faced each other and did not hesitate to express their contrasting convictions in strong terms. The discussions were agonisingly emotional though not personally abusive. Yearly Meeting, from which those young men who had joined the armed forces were necessarily absent, was in the majority anti-war. (Whether the membership as a whole of what was then London

Yearly Meeting was of like mind is another matter). However, it took no firm decision, which in the perspective of a century seems a sensible, even a creditable, course of action. In any event it would have been formally the prerogative of Monthly Meetings to decide on disownment of 'military Friends'. Yearly Meeting had a role only in cases of appeal.

There were two principal reasons for inaction. The first is that the number of Friends who supported British participation in the war was too large to discipline. Survival was rightly the first law. It was far better to continue to exist than to take a decision which one side would have considered morally right at the cost of an irrevocable split in the Society. Even if the reasoning was inarticulate, as in many cases it was, it displayed a realism for which we, their spiritual descendants, should be grateful. The second reason, also to the credit of the Society in my view, was that there was relatively little appetite for disowning large numbers of members who had acted in accordance with their own Inner Light, no matter how central the peace testimony might be to Quaker beliefs. Louis Dell, speaking at Yearly Meeting on behalf of his two soldier sons and, he said, forty other relatives in the army, said that 'these young men who had enlisted had followed, with great searchings of heart, what they had felt to be their duty ... what they believed to be the leadings of the Spirit'.⁵⁵ (I should add that Robert H. Marsh, who was to be President in 1916-17, told the same Yearly Meeting that it was the existence of strong military forces which enabled Friends to 'hold and practise their principles').⁵⁶ The majority of Yearly Meeting believed in effect that inaction was preferable to mass disownments.

Here I would interject the speculation, unwelcome as it may be to some of us, that those Friends who took the 'patriotic' line may have saved our Society from slow extinction. A united body of about 20,000 Friends, all of them taking a line diametrically in opposition to vehemently expressed political and press opinion on the war, might well have struggled to survive or at least to survive as influential members of the wider British society. It is legitimate to wonder if by accepting, as so many Friends did, that Britain was justified in taking part in the war, they preserved the Society to play an active role in later years.

Continued if somewhat shaky unity was certainly encouraged by the fact that Yearly Meeting in 1915 decided against making a formal pronouncement of principle on Quaker participation in the war effort. Despite this decision voices were still heard within the Society suggesting that significant membership loss or a formal split was inevitable. Strife had to be avoided by a variety of means. To take one example: when a pro-war pamphlet by George Holden Braithwaite of Horsforth, near Leeds, was noted in our *Journal* in 1917 the sniffy comment was added editorially that 'his views on various subjects are not those usually held in the Society'. Protests followed and the next issue carried a craven apology for the terms of the comment, acknowledging that Braithwaite's views on the war were 'those held by a number of Friends at the present time' and regretting the 'pain and annoyance' which the comment had caused.⁵⁷

The crucial development which prevented irrevocable division came from outside. Conscription, as previously mentioned, was introduced in two stages, the first following legislation passed in January 1916. From the perspective of a century later it might seem that it was participation in or opposition to the war itself which was the essential decision for Friends. But as previously pointed out, whether to join the armed forces or otherwise assist the war effort was, with the qualifications discussed earlier, an individual decision guided by the Inner Light. Conscription was by its nature not an individual decision. A special Yearly Meeting, held at the end of January 1916 issued a forthright condemnation of conscription, whose 'central conception' it declared, 'imperil[led] the liberty of the individual conscience - which is the main hope of human progress'.⁵⁸ The large majority of Friends, though not all, opposed conscription and its introduction created a new situation for the Society. Members could henceforward adhere to a fundamental Quaker principle without necessarily condemning British participation in the war itself. Membership in 1914 stood just below 20,000; in 1918, just above. For every member who had resigned during the war years (fifty by the time of Yearly Meeting, 1915), someone else joined. The Society of Friends had survived - but at the cost of agony and division.

Nearly a century has passed since the end of the Great War. Our

religious Society has inevitably witnessed major changes in that century, not uniformly beneficial. One change is that the number and influence of those Friends who can trace their family membership back for a prolonged period, some to the seventeenth century, is much lower than in the past. Convincement, not birth, is now the dominant factor which attracts new members. Indeed, birth right membership was abolished in 1959. Contemporary Friends would be astonished by an assertion like Seebohm Rowntree's made in 1909 that many members had 'hardly any personal friends outside the Society'.⁵⁹ Many more Friends are now members of intellectual or caring professions; fewer are engaged in business or commerce. With a few minor exceptions national membership has, alas, declined on an annual basis for the past forty years. (The same trend has been as or more important in other churches). Working-class membership, once important, has fallen away.

These changes were not immediately apparent at the end of the war in November 1918. History does not work like that. But most could be observed at least in their initial stages when European war broke out in September 1939. One early straw in the wind was the ending of the system of recorded ministers, which had in practice acknowledged the superior position of some Friends over others. The practice was ended in 1924.

As the wider society was politically radicalised for a relatively short period after 1914 a new social consciousness was apparent within Quaker ranks as well. An important expression of such views was the national Quaker statement *War and the Social Order*, a document expressing political views, some of which might well seem 'advanced' even today. Quakers imprisoned for absolutist conscientious objection during the war encountered other prisoners of radical or socialist views. One result of such contact was the publication of the massive book *English Prisons To-day* (1922), edited and largely written by the Quaker Stephen Hobhouse and the non-Quaker socialist Fenner Brockway. A little later Quakers were instrumental in assisting the families of coal miners in the 1926 strike-cum-lock-out and in undertaking relief work in South Wales and elsewhere. The educational settlement of Maes-yr-haf started by Quakers in South Wales was described in the 1930s as the 'spiritual power-house' for the Welsh valleys with many kinds of training,

educational and physical, and also recreational facilities.

Relief work, in which Quakers engaged vigorously after the ends of both wars, particularly in countries still regarded by many in Britain as enemies, rightly made the Society more prominent than its small numbers would have warranted. J.O. Greenwood has written comprehensively about the impressive Quaker efforts to preserve peace and assist the victims of totalitarianism, and many other writers have written about particular aspects of these efforts.⁶⁰ The heroism displayed by many Friends in rescuing or caring for victims of the Nazis built on the older practice of relief work but went a stage further in commitment and courage. Assistance to refugees had an unexpected reward for the Society in the subsequent adhesion of a number of talented and valued members drawn from the refugees of those years and their children. It should also be noted that Friends were assiduous visitors (and hosts and in some cases wives) to German and Italian prisoners of war after the end of the Second World War in 1945 and this work also led to a (smaller) number of new members.

The war which so many people had strenuously worked to avert and which many others had dreaded for so long broke out in September 1939. It seemed to be a war different from others because it was fought by the western powers against an enemy which appeared so obviously to epitomise evil. Certainly Hitler and the Nazis were widely regarded as belonging to a different category from the German autocracy before 1914. Participation in the war is also often regarded as justified because what it was followed by was the renunciation of armed conflict in Western Europe and the institution of a new democratic Germany. Yet the war was fought in reality between 1939 and 1945 for the same purpose as the earlier conflict, to prevent Germany dominating the continent of Europe by force of arms.

Wars have been fought by British forces because of the vanity of politicians or their estimation of the importance of the issues at stake. They have not been fought, fortunately in my view, because the 'other side' was regarded as wicked, though in recent years more than one British prime minister has suggested this criterion as a legitimate motive for armed conflict. If politicians had followed such

a route, even assuming that a distinction could be made between *raison d'etat* and morality, the incidence of wars and violent deaths would have been even greater than it has been. Whether the Second World War was worth the millions of deaths and the immense physical damage which it caused so that Germany's domination of Europe would be peaceful rather than military – this consideration is not my present theme.

It is important to remember the difference in public opinion to the onset of the two world wars. There was massive support for war in 1914, at least after it had started, and huge pressure on young men to volunteer for the armed forces. Rupert Brooke urged his generation to their deaths by invoking 'swimmers into cleanness leaping'. Women handed out white feathers, 'a powerful, sometimes tragic ... recruiting weapon', to young men they saw in civilian dress.⁶¹ The situation in 1939-45, despite the fact that the danger of an enemy invasion in the early stages of the war was far more real than in 1914, was wholly different. Only in the fraught summer of 1940 were COs subject to widespread hostility. Angus Calder pointed out in *The People's War*: 'All commentators marvelled at the contrast between the hysteria of August 1914 and the absence of hatred and high spirits now'.⁶² There were perhaps three times as many conscientious objectors (nearly 60,000) in the second war as the first.⁶³

In the changed circumstances one would not expect as high a proportion of young Quakers to join the armed forces as in the first war. It should also be noted that conscription began before the start of the war, rather than eighteen months after it had begun. From the end of 1941 young women were included, though with generous exemptions. Nonetheless individual decisions had to be made, decisions which later generations have thankfully been spared. Quakers took opposing positions on the merits of the war but the editor of *The Friend*, Hubert Peet, himself an imprisoned conscientious objector in the earlier war, was unwilling to allow the paper to be used to bring the Society to the brink of disaster as in 1914-15.⁶⁴ Hence he did not publish as many strongly opposing expressions of opinion as in the earlier war and hence our knowledge of Quaker attitudes in 1939-45 is less comprehensive than for the earlier war. In any case emotions were generally not so impassioned as in 1914-15.

Again the details of who did what are unsatisfactory, but it seems that about one in six young Quaker men, about 700 in number, served in the armed forces or the Home Guard. About half were allowed to continue in their existing employment or deferred. Relatively few Quakers went to prison. One who did was the subsequently celebrated crystallographer Kathleen Lonsdale, who served a month for refusal to register for civil defence duties. Another, less celebrated, was Arthur Rosewarne of York. He refused to take a medical examination or to pay a fine in 1944 and told his tribunal: 'I refuse [to pay the fine] on conscientious grounds. I object to war and all preparations for war.' Told by the chair of York magistrates: 'It looks as though you are going to spend the rest of your life in prison', he replied: 'I am sorry, but I cannot pay the fine'.⁶⁵ Those of us who come after can only marvel at the resolution of a youth of 22. Imprisonment of COs was much less common in 1939-45 than in 1916-18 and sentences were shorter, but they were by no means non-existent. It was calculated that about one hundred Quaker men and ten women experienced 115 terms in prison, 39 of them for more than three but not exceeding twelve months.⁶⁶ Such global figures would have done little to comfort unfortunate individuals. Arthur Rosewarne suffered four incarcerations, inhuman conditions in gaol and near death from hypothermia.

Richard Whiting, then of Leeds, took a different view. (He was a much-cherished friend of mine, greatly missed by those who knew him). He was born in 1920 and could trace his Quaker ancestry back to the late-seventeenth century. 'It was very difficult to be faced with such an important decision so early in life but, when my turn came in September 1940, I decided that I could not take part in the pacifist position ... I think [my decision] was based on the realisation that the Nazi regime was a tyranny of a truly terrible kind ... I felt that such a monster as Hitler could only be stopped by force.'⁶⁷ I should add that such evidence as I have been able to gather suggests that when Quaker members of the armed services attended meeting for worship during this war, even in uniform, they generally met neither coldness nor hostility from fellow worshippers.

One should not forget the impressive amount of relief work at home and abroad undertaken by Quakers during and after the Second World War, as indeed during and after the first. Some of this activity

was carried out by the resuscitated Friends Ambulance Unit, both at home (where 'work was unglamorous but invaluable') as well as abroad, some by other Quaker organisations or individuals. Felicity Goodall, whom I have just quoted, includes a moving chapter on the work of Friends, much of it told in the words of participants themselves, in her book *We Will Not Go to War*. One FAU worker was Michael Rendel Harris, a member of a well-known Quaker family, who returned from gruelling experiences in wartime Finland and Norway to a hospital in Gloucester. 'It was just at the time of the fall of Dunkirk, and so it was very full. And one worked very hard and very long hours, emptying bedpans, bathing people ... There were quite a lot of deaths.' Another was Stephen Peet, son of Hubert Peet, who worked as a medical orderly in hospitals and air raid shelters. For several months his employment was in a hospital in East London. 'I was working in a geriatric ward ... looking after aged old men, in an operating theatre some of the time.' On other occasions he was a hard-pressed hospital manual worker, 'emptying the pig buckets of unwanted food, stoking the boilers and all sorts of things.'⁶⁸

A third Quaker relief worker was the indefatigable Mary Hughes of York. The month before war and its declaration in September 1939 were an excruciatingly difficult period for many Quakers. Writing to her daughter Barbara at the beginning of the war Mary Hughes expressed the despair and hope of the time: 'The situation may get so desperate and frantic before we finish that we may be ... working anti-aircraft guns. God only knows! But I somehow feel, and certainly hope, that we shall be enabled to stand true to our principles and maintain the Kingdom of God in a world at war.'⁶⁹

These were not empty words. I have been privileged to receive an account by her son David (aged 94 when he compiled it) of Mary Hughes's relief work, consisting of her diaries and letters. She, and other family members, including David, had before the start of the war already thrown herself into work for German, Austrian and Czech refugees, though she was, David writes, 'a naturally shy and timid person'. Mary Hughes was a key figure in the refugee committee in York, and practised what she preached; she took two Austrian Jewish refugee children into her and her husband John's home in early 1939 where the boy remained until the end of the war.⁷⁰ In January 1939 she wrote to Barbara: 'I have sad cases coming to me

almost daily now [which I] just can't find hospitality for. Oh! That people would open their doors! I feel every Quaker home should be ashamed if it hasn't one refugee at least - but will they come forward! No! Some of course we can always rely on.'⁷¹ (The words come unbidden to one's mind and lips: 'What canst *thou* say'?)

The children grew up as children do; the girl, older than her brother, married and eventually emigrated to the United States. The boy attended Archbishop Holgate's School in York and then Bootham School on a full scholarship, ending up in London. In 2001, aged 73, he wrote to David Hughes: 'No words can express the enormous debt of gratitude I owe you, [your siblings] and your late, truly sainted parents ... It's really an extraordinary story, not only in terms of your and your entire family's great kindness and generosity, but of the tremendous amount of thoughtful patience, consideration and energy which must have fuelled the whole enterprise.'⁷²

So what conclusions can be drawn from the foregoing? Two, which have already been stated, can be repeated briefly. The first is that previous generations of Friends - in many cases known personally to older members of our Society - had to make decisions, influenced both by propaganda and the realities of war which have, thankfully, been unknown to Quakers since 1945. Whether as a result the cutting edge of our religious convictions has been blunted is a question whose answer I leave to you. The second is that Quakers were moved to act in diverse ways in the three conflicts here reviewed. Our diversity is inherent in the nature of our religion. So long as there are Friends - and I do not disguise my disquiet at the continuing decline in our numbers⁷³ - there will be differences of opinion on both major and minor matters of belief. The price of being a Quaker is the willingness to accept that we shall continue to disagree among ourselves, even about subjects so central to our beliefs as war and peace.

David Rubinstein
Presidential address given at the University of Bath
during Britain Yearly Meeting Gathering, 4 August 2014

END NOTES

1. I am indebted to Josef Keith of the Friends House Library for information about Marsh.
2. *The Journal of the Friends Historical Society*, vol. 14/4, (1917), p.146. 'He loved all history, but especially Quaker history', notes the *Dictionary of Quaker Biography*.
3. William Jones, *Quaker Campaigns in Peace and War* (London, 1899), p. 403.
4. Stephen Frick, 'The Christian Appeal of 1855: Friends' Public Response to the Crimean War', *JFHS*, vol. 53/3, (1970), p. 206.
5. Peter Brock, *The Quaker Peace Testimony 1660 to 1914* (York, 1990), p. 275: cited in Thomas Kennedy, *British Quakerism 1860-1920* (Oxford, 2001), p. 244 n. 26.
6. Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down* (1972; Harmondsworth, 1975), pp. 257, 377; *idem*, 'Quakers and the English Revolution', *JFHS*, vol. 56/3, (1992), pp. 176, 179 (quotation).
7. See Edward H. Milligan, *Quaker Marriage* (Kendal, 1994), pp. 18-20.
8. Elizabeth Isichei, *Victorian Quakers* (London, Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 111-13, 158-65; A. Neave Brayshaw, *The Quakers*, (1921; London, 1969), pp. 293-7.
9. The Quaker writer Ben Pink Dandelion comments: 'It seemed the more the state tolerated Quakerism, the more Quakers accepted the state' (Pink Dandelion, *The Quakers: a very short introduction*, (Oxford, 2008), p.35.
10. Kennedy, *op.cit.*, pp. 237-247.
11. E.J. Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire* (London, 1968), p. 98n.
12. Metford Robson, 'The Rowntree Family and the Schreiner Riots', *JFHS*, vol. 59/1, (2000), pp. 67-82. For disturbances at other Cronwright-Schreiner meetings see Richard Rempel, 'British Quakers and the South African War', *Quaker History*, vol. 64/2 (1975), pp. 83-4.
13. Rempel, *ibid*, pp. 76, 94.
14. Hope Hay Hewison, 'God at London Yearly Meeting 1900' in David Blamires, Jeremy Greenwood, Alex Kerr. (eds), *A Quaker Miscellany for Edward H. Milligan* (1985), p. 108. (Ashford, Kent, Headley Brothers, 1985)
15. Quoted in Kate Charity, *A Many-Sided Man: John Bellows of Gloucester 1831 to 1902* (York, 1993), p. 95.
16. Quoted in Kennedy. *op.cit.*, p. 257.
17. *British Friend*, 6th Month 8th, 1900, p. 157. See also Hope Hay

- Hewison, *Hedge of Wild Almonds* (Portsmouth New Hampshire, Cape Town, London, 1989), pp. 118-20, 138-9, 182-3.
18. Hewison, *ibid*, p.110. 'There is much evidence to show that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Friends were coming to accept the values of their environment, and respect for worldly rank and title was often mentioned as one of their characteristics', Elizabeth Isichei writes ('From Sect to Denomination among English Quakers', in Bryan R. Wilson (ed.) *Patterns of Sectarianism*, London, 1967, p. 162). Accepting or at least compromising with 'the values of their environment' appears to be a condition for the long-term survival of religious sects.
 19. *British Friend*, 12th Month, 1900. see also Kennedy, *op.cit.*, p. 261.
 20. *British Friend*, 10th Month 1900 p. 264; (for John Stephenson Rowntree); *The Friend*, 1 June 1900, p. 337, quoted in Hewison, *op.cit.*, p.138.
 21. *The Diary of Beatrice Webb, vol. 3, 1905-24* edited by Norman and Jeanne Mackenzie (London, 1984), p. 214.
 22. The historian Christopher Clark has recently characterised a famous memorandum (1907) by the Foreign Office official Eyre Crowe as 'almost comical' in its 'tendency to view the wars, protectorates, occupations and annexations of imperial Britain as a natural and desirable state of affairs and the comparatively ineffectual manoeuvres of the Germans as gratuitous and outrageous breaches of the peace' (*The Sleepwalkers: how Europe went to war in 1914*, 2012; London, 2013, p. 163).
 23. Fifty-five years later the historian Angus Calder observed almost in passing that the 1914 war was 'manifestly a struggle between rival imperialist powers' (*The People's War: Britain 1939-45*, London, 1969, p. 494). Only a small minority took this view in 1914.
 24. Signed by Prussia in 1839 before the creation of the modern German state - renewed 1870.
 25. *Yorkshire Herald*, 24 August 1914.
 26. Denis Winter, *Death's Men* (1978, Harmondsworth, 1979), pp.229-34.
 27. Fenner Brockway, a prominent socialist, war resister and non-Quaker, later wrote of Grubb's work in opposing conscription: 'We came to regard him as the father of the movement ... few men can have been more loved and respected' Brockway, *Inside the Left: thirty years of platform, press, prison and parliament*, (London, 1942), p. 67 & n.
 28. *The Friend*, 14 August, 4 September 1914, pp. 599, 644, 646-7.

29. *Ibid*, 29 January 1915, p. 91; Elizabeth Fox Howard, *Friends' Service in War-time* (London (1920)), p. 11 (see also Keith Robbins, *The Abolition of War 1914-1919*, (Cardiff, 1976), p. 32; Kennedy, *op.cit.*, p. 313.
30. Martin Ceadel, *Semi-Detached Idealists: the British Peace Movement and International Relations 1914-1945* (Oxford, 2000), p. 192; *idem*, 'The Quaker Peace Testimony and its Contribution to the British Peace Movement, an Overview', *Quaker Studies*, 7/1, September 2002, p. 23.
31. Untitled manifesto, Friends House Library, tract box 239, reproduced by permission.
32. *The Friend*, 16 October 1914, p. 770; 19 February, 12 March 1915, pp. 149, 208. Emphasis in original.
33. *Ibid.*, 2 April 1915, p. 250. More letters were received than the paper had room to print.
34. This passage comes from *Faith and Practice* (1993, p. 12) of the North Pacific Yearly Meeting and is quoted in Pink Dandelion, *The Quakers*, p. 69; it speaks also for some British Friends.
35. Hill, J.F.H.S Vol. 56/3, p. 179; *The Inward Journey of Isaac Penington*, first published 1681, reprinted in *Quaker Classics in Brief* (Pendle Hill, 1978), p. 139, quoted in *The Friend*, 19 April 2013, p. 3; Caroline Stephen, *Quaker Strongholds* (1890; London, 1939), p. 24. Stephen made her own reservations about opposition to all war clear in the first edition of this book (see Kennedy, pp. 256-7).
36. Ten Liberal MPs were Quakers, including consistent advocates of a negotiated peace and supporters of conscientious objectors. A further four MPs, three of them Liberals, were classified as former Quakers (Friends House Library record).
37. *Yorkshire Herald*, 18 January 1915. Note John Rae: 'The Quaker objector [to conscription] was inspired by his belief in the authority of the Inner Light, not by his adherence to a pacifist tenet' (*Conscience and Politics*, London, 1970), p. 73.
38. Elizabeth Braithwaite Emmott, *The Story of Quakerism* (1908; London, 1929), p. 73.
39. John W. Graham, *Conscription and Conscience 1916-1919* (London, 1922), pp. 32-3.
40. Adam Hochschild, *To End All Wars: a story of protest and patriotism in the First World War* (2011; London 2012), p. 188.
41. Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 313n; printed letter from Jean Rowntree inserted in *Gunfire*, no. 10, (Jean Rowntree's letter is dated; *Gunfire* is not).
42. *The Friend*, 10 November 1922, p. 762; Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p.33.

43. John Rae, *op. cit.*, p.77
44. Writing in 1929 Elizabeth Braithwaite Emmott said that 1,106 Friends or regular attenders were conscientious objectors, *op. cit.*, p. 258.
45. According to *The Friend* (9 January 1920, p. 15), at least 279 Quaker COs were imprisoned.
46. 16,100: Graham, *op.cit.*, p. 349; 'more recently': Cyril Pearce, *Comrades in Conscience; the story of an English community's opposition to the Great War* (London, 2001), pp. 168-9. Nearly six million British men joined the armed forces between 1914 and 1918. Pacifists were a small group, 'insignificant' in the recollection of the philosopher Bertrand Russell, an heroic anti-conscription activist.
47. *The Friend*, 28 May 1915, pp. 408-09.
48. Having been savaged - in gentle Quaker fashion - by outraged Friends I approach this subject with some trepidation.
49. Two such letters, one quoted here, were reproduced in *The Friend* on 8 August 1914.
50. Meaburn Tatham and James E. Miles, *The Friends' Ambulance Unit 1914-1919: a record* (London 1920), p. 188.
51. Corder Catchpool, *On Two Fronts: letters of a conscientious objector* (London, 1918), p. 95; William R. Hughes, *Indomitable Friend: Corder Catchpool 1883-1952* (1956; London, 1964), p. 33; David Boulton, *Objection Overruled* (London, 1967), pp. 55-6.
52. Olaf Stapledon, 'Experiences in the Friends' Ambulance Unit', in *We Did Not Fight: 1914-18 experiences of war resisters*, led by Julian Bell, (London, 1935), p. 360.
53. *Ibid.*, pp. 362-3; partly quoted in Will Ellsworth-Jones, *We will Not Fight: the untold story of the First World War's conscientious objectors* (London, 2007), p. 128.
54. 'Friends and War, 1914-15', *JFHS*, vol. 62/1, 2010, pp. 67-86.
55. *The Friend*, 28 May 1915, p. 412.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 403. 'It was characteristic of him that ... he defended against any suggestion of disciplinary action young Friends who had joined the Army, whilst at the same time giving help and succour to those who went to prison for conscience sake' wrote his friend E.H. Gilpin after Marsh's death (*Friends' Quarterly Examiner* no. 304, Tenth Month 1942, p. 294).
57. *JFHS*, vol. 14/3 and 4, 1917, pp. 129, 174.
58. *The Friend*, 4 February 1916, p. 53; quoted in Graham, *op.cit.*, p. 162.
59. *The Friend*, 28 May 1909, p. 361.

60. Three examples which come to mind are Roger Carter, 'The Quaker International Centre in Berlin, 1920-1942', *JFHS* vol. 56/1, 1990, pp. 15-31; Brenda Bailey, *A Quaker Couple in Nazi Germany* (York, 1994) and, more recently, Rosemary Bailey, *Love and War in the Pyrenees 1939-1944* (London, 2008).
61. Brooke's sonnet 'Peace' was written in 1914; Ellsworth-Jones, *op.cit.*, p. 46.
62. Angus Calder, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
63. During two years in the Second World War, 9 per cent of 3,350 conscientious objectors before the South-Western Tribunal were Quakers (Constance Braithwaite, 'Legal Problems of Conscientious Objection to Various Compulsions under British Law', *JFHS*, vol. 52/1, 1968, p. 12).
64. *The Friend*, 7 June 1940, p. 559.
65. *Yorkshire Evening Press*, 26 May 1944.
66. Quaker Conscription Enquiry, 1944-45, file 1, Friends House Library; *The Friend*, 18 May 1945, pp. 309-11.
67. *Altered Paths 1939-45*, led by Pauline Buchanan, (York, 1995), pp. 6-7.
68. Felicity Goodall, *We Will Not Go to War: conscientious objection during the world wars*, new edition (1997; Stroud, Gloucestershire, 2010), pp. 204-06. (The original 1997 edition was titled *A Question of Conscience*).
69. Mary Hughes, edited diaries and family letters, York City Archives.
70. The children's mother was also taken into the Hughes home for an unspecified period. John Hughes had been an Anglican clergyman and Great War chaplain. He joined the Society of Friends in the late 1920s and became the Quaker warden of the York Educational Settlement. He delivered the Swarthmore Lecture on 21 May 1940, 'The Light of Christ in a Pagan World': 'Who then shall answer the fires that have broken out in Europe and the world to-day? Be sure that it will not be the lukewarm or the half-hearted, but only those in whom there is this moral energy which has been at the back of all great endeavour' (p. 19).
71. Ed. by David Hughes, 'Memories of refugees in York'. September 2013.
72. *Ibid.*
73. Adult membership of the society stood at 17,765 in 1990. In 2013, after twenty-three years of unbroken decline it was 13,690, a drop of nearly 23 per cent to below the figure for 1860.