

JOHN EDWARD SOUTHALL: QUAKER AND WELSHMAN

We respond to the concept of genocide – the deliberate extermination of a people with revulsion and horror. But what then of cultural and linguistic genocide? Colonialism, inherently, drives the extinction of both culture and language, perhaps not always consciously, but for speakers of the Celtic languages that extinction has been their experience over many hundreds of years.

Reading section 10.14 of *Quaker Faith and Practice* might help orientate some Friends in Britain to ask themselves – what does this say about Britain Yearly Meeting, and did Quakers contribute to the current state of our native minority languages?

At the National Eisteddfod in Newport in 1897 a prize of five pounds was shared for an essay on the subject *Y modd goreu i gadw a dysgu Cymraeg i blant rhieni Cymreig mewn cylchoedd lle y siaredir Saesneg* or *The best way of preserving and teaching Welsh to children of Welsh speaking parents in areas where English is spoken*. One winner, using the *nom de plume*, Galar Gwent (Gwent's Grief) wrote his essay in English, as was then allowed, and the following year published the essay under the title, *Preserving and teaching the Welsh Language in English speaking districts*. The author was John Edward Southall. He and his brother had established themselves as publishers in Newport in 1880 – Arthur left in 1882. His *nom de plume* reflected his concern for the fate of the Welsh language in his adopted county. According to Geraint H. Jenkins, renowned for his academic studies on the history of the Welsh language, Southall 'was one of the sharpest observers at the end of the nineteenth century on linguistic matters, at the language's vivacity in the face of very difficult circumstances.'¹

'A forthright man' said another of him. Southall was a busy publisher, a prolific author in English, and a regular correspondent in the Welsh press; he had personal connections across Wales, and as a Quaker, was stubborn in his opinions. One question that should be asked is, why did an English Quaker become such a muscular spokesman for Wales and her language?

Despite his prominence in Wales his denomination paid him little heed. On his death there was no testimony to his life by his Monthly Meeting. Searching for his name on the web under J. E. Southall directs the searcher to the artist, Joseph Edward Southall. The only remnant of him within Britain Yearly Meeting is a popular leaflet entitled *Silence* and circulated at one time by Quaker Life, which ascribes authorship to him. In a letter to *The Friend* he clarified that this was not the case – he published the original version under the title *The Power of Stillness*.²

John Edward was born in Leominster in 1855, the second of three children and the eldest son of John Tertius and Elizabeth Trusted Southall. Tertius was a wealthy draper and investor, prominent in the Liberal politics of Herefordshire, and in the public life of Leominster. He was a faithful servant to the Society with an interest in the future of Quakerism in Wales, and in Pales, that iconic meeting house in Radnorshire. His name appears on the foundation stone of Llandrindod meeting house built in 1898.

John Edward's lineage was decidedly Quaker. One of his paternal ancestors was Roger Prichard, who gave land on which another iconic meeting house, Almeley Wootton in Herefordshire, was built. According to Evelyn Whiting, Quaker historian of the Marches, the surname comes from 'picardy' following the Norman conquest, and is not a corruption of ap Rhisiart to Pritchard as some have claimed, giving him sound Welsh ancestry. A branch of the Southall family did live in Llanbadarn y Garreg, Radnorshire in the eighteenth century holding a Quaker meeting at their home.³ The Trusteds [his mother's family] came from south Herefordshire, and his grandparents lived and ran a business in Clyro, and then in Hay on Wye, but his mother was born in Somerset.

John Edward refers to several influences which aroused his interest in Wales. At the age of nine he read the 1757 poem by Thomas Grey, *The Bard*, the story of the poet's curse on Edward I, with the victory of Henry Tudor seen as the final victory to the Welsh. The family did have a nanny, originally from Whitford, Flintshire and Sarah Hanmer was a descendent of Owain Glyndwr, but much to Southall's disappointment she had no interest in her ancestor.⁴

When twelve, John Edward was sent to Bootham, where he edited the school magazine. Amongst the archives of the school

there is an essay written by him when, aged twelve, he describes a family holiday to Tywyn, Meirionethshire. He recounts:

The next day was Sunday on which for the first time in my life I heard a Welsh service. It sounded very nice... The Welsh language is getting spoken less and less every year a fact which [they] themselves are very slow in acknowledging for even within the memory of an old man in Radnorshire there were Welsh sermons delivered in a district there regularly where now no such thing is heard of, so that in times to come this language may cease to be spoken.⁵

He went home with a copy of a Welsh newspaper - *Yr Herald Gymraeg* - 'a trophy' - and he marvelled at the longevity of Welsh. Much later on he talks of a journey he made two or three years later to the Quarterly Meeting at Neath, and when he heard Welsh spoken on the train he vowed to learn the language, adding,

Being of a contrary mind to a certain English tradesman of my acquaintance, who almost felt himself insulted by some people speaking Welsh at Gloucester station. Think what 'positive nuisance' it is to an Englishman to be in the company of persons whose speech he doesn't understand!⁶

It was not possible for him to learn Welsh whilst at school but this did not prevent him from writing to the Professor of Welsh at Lampeter, then an Anglican institution, asking which books he should read to expand his understanding. He was advised to read, not surprisingly, some bilingual tracts by the SPCK, also *Y Cyfaill Eglwysig*, [*The Church's Friend*] being an Anglican magazine, and *Drych y Prif Oesoedd*, [*The Mirror of the Old Ages*] by Theophilus Evans, an Anglican priest. This, written in 1716, is in effect a sombre, prejudiced and entertaining version of the early history of Wales and the antiquity of the Welsh nation, and naturally promotes the Church of England as the true form of Protestantism.

Southall began to learn Welsh in earnest after he left school, buying a grammar text book and a bilingual testament, but he said that business demands impeded progress. He did learn a poem by Ieuan Glan Geirionydd, *Cyflafan Morfa Rhuddlan* [*The Rhuddlan Salt Marsh Massacre*], although the content, he knew,

was totally contrary to Quaker ideals given its warlike and bloody descriptions.

In 1878 he wrote to the South Division Monthly Meeting asking if they would give him a duplicate copy held in Neath Meeting house library of *Annerch i'r Cymru* [*Salutations to the Britons*] and a translation of one of the works of William Penn. They agreed to this.⁷

At this time he was apprenticed to the Quaker author, publisher, innovator, lexicographer and archaeologist, John Bellows of Gloucester. Bellows was a controversial figure, independently minded, who had supported the Confederacy during the American Civil War, although he was against slavery. He was a vocal supporter of the South African wars and opposed Gladstone's home rule policy for Ireland - in essence an anti-Catholic position which can also be detected in Southall's writings. Thus, writing to *The Friend* in 1923, he blamed the economic condition of Ireland on Roman Catholicism.⁸ Bellows also adhered to the old discipline, dressed conservatively and used thee and thou, a decided influence on Southall's ideas, who also clung to thee and thou throughout his life.

By February 1880 Southall had transferred his membership to what was then known as the South Division of Wales Monthly Meeting.⁹ Between 1880 and 1884 few books came from his company since he was intent on building the business, but by 1881 his company employed seven men, seven boys and four girls. But business may not always be sweet and in 1883 he was fined for not registering and ensuring medical examinations for the young people he employed, contrary to the Factory Acts.¹⁰ By 1884 his business links meant that he could support the establishment of a Chamber of Trade in Newport.¹¹

In August 1882 he gave notice of his intention to marry Anne Berry, the daughter of a silk weaver from Sidbury, Suffolk. His mother was decidedly unhappy:

Went to Newport ... It was more uncomfortable than usual but the knowledge that he (John) had still on his mind to carry out his connection with A. Berry hung as a heavy burden on me.¹²

And she later added 'One had hoped all along that something might turn up and the marriage not really take place.'¹³ What were the reasons for her disapproval? Anne was a mere maid,

from a poor background and thus not a suitable wife for her son, even though Anne had been accepted into membership of the Society in 1879. However, by 1883 she would say this about her daughter in law:

We ought to feel very thankful that Annie is, as far as we can see, much better suited than we at first saw and there is a comfort in his having someone to take care of him.¹⁴

But the mother had other hesitations in that she did not think her son was a capable businessman, which was probably true, and his religious attitudes were a real burden.

The Southall family were affected by the growth and influence of evangelism within London Yearly Meeting. John Tertius Southall, a birthright Friend, declared he was 'converted' and 'saved' and felt he was thus 'a Friend by conviction.' Indeed, Leominster meeting proved to be an important centre for evangelical missions, being one of the first to hold general or tent meetings and extending activity into Radnorshire. Changes to Yearly Meeting discipline and strong emphasis on biblical preaching led many Friends to believe that the Society was in disarray. The plain or primitive Friends felt they were being marginalised. A reflection of this was the establishment, in 1878, of Fritchley as an independent Quaker meeting, to be shortly followed by a branch in Bournbrook, Birmingham.¹⁵

John Edward turned towards these plain Friends.¹⁶ There was a lively group of them based in Cardiff meeting, who proved to be a source of embarrassment to the Monthly Meeting. The story of Charles Allen Fox, Tonnes Andreasen and William Mills cannot be told here, but all three were witnesses to John Edward and Anne Berry's wedding at Cardiff meeting-house. His parents did not attend the wedding. His sister did, and his mother wrote about the wedding:

Poor John's wedding day. Now is consummated the pain and anxiety of two and a half years. Let us hope that the future may develop some as yet hidden good and pray for a greater spirit of resignation. Hannah was the only one of the family there. She describes it as a somewhat memorable sight. Four very broad brims seemed to be the only thing which displayed itself in the way of dress - no outward appearance of a wedding, the bride dressed very neat, says it was sad to see poor John

only surrounded by fanatics.¹⁷

One aspect of the life of the plain Friends of interest to the press was their refusal to take their hats off before the courts. In June 1884 the *South Wales Daily News* reported:

Just as the last case came to a close Mr John Edward Southall, printer, a member of the Society of Friends, entered the Court and remained covered. On seeing him the Judge said, 'Take off your hat sir. You are bound to take your hat off in a court of justice Quaker or no Quaker.' Mr Southall: I cannot do that. The Judge: Then leave the Court, sir - Mr Southall lost no time in complying with his Honour's request.¹⁸

In May 1910 there was a similar event, the *Cymro a'r Celt*, a Welsh language publication, reporting on a kinder judge who said, 'If the complainant prefers to wear his hat, he can do so.'¹⁹

In April 1892 John Edward applied to join Fritchley, but withdrew his application - was distance a factor? In November 1893 he made a second application and in June 1894 he was accepted into membership, his name being associated with the group at Bournbrook. In 1898 he became a trustee of the meeting house at Fritchley. From 1899 until 1902 he was Clerk to Fritchley General Meeting, and in 1901 he was registered as recorded minister amongst them.²⁰ Despite this he retained his membership with South Wales Monthly Meeting.

There appears to have been some tension between Fritchley and the group in Bournbrook, with Southall supportive of Bournbrook. Some felt Fritchley was too liberal. By 1898 Bournbrook wished to establish their own Monthly Meeting and Southall handled the correspondence. That did not transpire, and by 1909 the elders of Fritchley discussed his failure to attend their meetings, and in 1911 the Monthly Meeting minuted as follows, 'And it is the judgement of the meeting that his name be now removed from the list of our recorded ministers.'²¹

In 1924 he was disowned by Fritchley because of 'continued disaffection and opposition.' The fact that he was evangelising on the continent without a minute from the Monthly Meeting was an important factor. The Monthly Meeting does refer to a mission in the USA but there is no evidence that he crossed the Atlantic, although he did mission work in France, Germany and Denmark. There is a sense of sadness in the divorce and part of

the Fritchley minute reads:

It would have been a great satisfaction to us if John Edward Southall had seen his way in response to the labour extended to him to have made such acknowledgement as would have resulted in his restoration to unity with the meeting and to serviceableness thereto and we should rejoice if he should be brought to see where he has missed his way and become reunited in the bonds of true Christian fellowship.²²

If John Edward was a rebel in the eyes of Fritchley his relationship with South Wales Monthly Meeting was not so sweet either. In November 1890 the Meeting refused to reimburse him seven and sixpence, being the cost of replacing glass in the windows of the meeting place in Newport because he had done the work without their permission. Then in 1910 the Monthly Meeting decided to sell the old meeting house at Trosnant in Monmouthshire. One of the trustees to the property was John Edward but he would not agree to the sale. Indeed the Monthly Meeting sought the help of the Quarterly Meeting in the matter noting that perhaps the issue might have to be passed up to Yearly Meeting. The Quarterly Meeting wished to avoid any unnecessary friction and called upon the refusing trustee to sign the conveyance. 'We trust that when our Friend realized the terms under which he was appointed as Trustee he will see his way to do this.'²³ He duly signed by January 1912 on condition that the Monthly Meeting earmarked one hundred pounds from the sale for the use of Newport Friends for a period of five years. This was agreed.

His Quakerism was central to his life. As an author he published many tracts, some twenty-five in all, five of them being translated into Welsh. In 1899 he produced sections from the journal of Richard Davies, *Cloddiau Cochion* under the title *Leaves from the history of Welsh Nonconformity*. It was an appeal to Welsh nonconformists, placing Quaker witness and mission alongside theirs. He did not publish anything original in Welsh about the Quakers, but there was hardly anyone amongst Quakers in Wales who could have authored such a volume except perhaps for Henry Tobit Evans, the overlooked Ceredigion Quaker, whose story is also worthy of note. But in July 1901 Southall did write an article in Welsh for the *Genninen*, a literary, theological popular

monthly, under the title *Paham yr wyf yn Grynwr* [*Why I am a Quaker*], the only original piece written in Welsh on Quakerism since the publication in America in 1727 of Ellis Pugh's *Annerch i'r Cymry* [*Salutations to the Britons*].

This article is a key to understanding aspects of Southall's world view:

I have great objection to calling Quakerism a form of religion – it is a profession, and more than that an experience ... The Spirit of Truth which we listen to is given priority (something that was not found, he added, amongst the Nonconformists. It was not words, prayers and hymns that was at the heart of worship, these were mere shadows of the spiritual things.) Worshipping in the Spirit, is through the perfect stillness of everyone gathered ... so that the breath of the Divine Spirit, which blows where it will, encompasses all.²⁴

He then goes on to explain Quaker understanding of the ministry, baptism and the eucharist. His aim without doubt was to raise questions, if not provoke those who would not have been familiar with his subject.

In October, in the same journal an article written by Dewi Môn, the bardic name of the Rev. David Rowlands, Principal of the Congregational College at Brecon, appeared under the title *Why I am not a Quaker*. Dewi Môn admired the Quakers and congratulated Southall on his excellent article, but said, of the only Quaker worship that he had ever experienced, that 'the silence was overbearing.'²⁵ In January 1902 Southall responded with another article in the same journal. He rebutted Dewi Môn's arguments but also condemned his fellow Quakers in Britain because 'as a body they were distanced from the truth, and were closer in practice to the Methodists than to their forefathers.' He insisted that the church had to rediscover 'the still small voice ... and reach out to the true worship.'²⁶

In 1902 he began publication of a journal under the title *Waymarks; A Religious and Literary Journal in Unity with the Testimony of the Early Quakers* noting that the two popular journals amongst Quakers in Britain at that time did not present Quakerism as they should. By 1903 it was clear that the venture was not a success. This was partly because of Southall's health but there were also insufficient subscribers.

In January 1880 Southall's first article in the *Friends Quarterly Examiner* appeared. The article encompasses his Quakerism and his feelings about Wales under the title *The Society of Friends and Wales*. It is a flowery article, with a hurried glance at the history of the Quakers in Wales and an appeal to his fellow Quakers to acquire a better understanding of Wales and her religion especially since there were so few of them since many 'are of English descent.' This, in his estimation, had been the weakness of the Quakers in Wales, asking the question, 'Have we realised that it is through their mother tongue that people will appreciate and hear about the wonderful works of God, as on the day of Pentecost?' He was not going to belittle the work of Friends in Wales over the years, but why were Quakers not living amongst the people, sharing their concerns, touching their passions and speaking that magnificent language, and bringing them to God? What was necessary to bring the literary Welsh to a better understanding of the teachings of the Quakers, considering the number of multiple religious and spiritual publications that were available in Welsh, why not one by the Quakers? The Quakers had not appreciated the strength of Welsh nonconformity and it was not on the success of their mission work in Radnorshire as an example - Pen y Bont, Pales, Llanyre and Llandrindod, four meetings within a radius of eight miles - that they could measure their efforts. The Welsh loved their sermons, their hymns and their religious literature, those things being overlooked by Friends. The core of his message, however, was that everything was in English and directed to the principal towns in Wales. In the article we find Southall's understanding of Welsh nationhood: 'The people of Wales - a distinct nation as they feel themselves to be.'²⁷

He published three other articles with a Welsh theme in the *Examiner*. One a translation of a poem by Moelwyn, *A Glywaist ti Cyfrinach Duw?* [*Hast thou heard the secret of God?*] adding his own verses to the original to strengthen its mystical spiritual essence. Then in 1916 a translation of the poem, *The Dewdrop*, by John Davis, known by his *nom de plume* of Ossian Gwent. Southall rendered the title as *The Wren* [in 1898 he had published a volume of Ossian Gwent's poetry]. Finally, in 1919 he wrote a piece entitled *Morgan Llwyd and his times* emphasising, not

surprisingly, the link between the poet/preacher and the Quakers.

In 1888 he published a volume of the evidence presented to the Royal Commission on education. In the introduction he congratulated Henry Richard, a member of the Commission, for ensuring that the commission looked at the needs of bilingual education. Henry Richard was better known amongst Friends as secretary of the Peace Society, MP for Merthyr Tydfil and congregational minister in London. Southall's comments in the introduction reflect his commitment to the language, observing that 'some of the Commissioners were evidently but poorly informed on the question, and looked at it through English spectacles,' condemning those who saw the language 'as a vexatious obstacle to the unification of the country.'²⁸ He knew full well that Welsh had to coexist alongside English, could not ignore her influence, but Wales had her own unique identity which had not been sufficiently developed in the past and had suffered because of it. That is why, in his opinion, bilingual education was so important, and that everyone should possess a certain ability in Welsh. The successful creation of The Society for the Utilisation of the Welsh Language/Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg was a hopeful encouragement to any developments. It is likely that he joined the Society when it was established at the National Eisteddfod in Aberdar in 1885. In 1904 he was elected onto the society's council. He saw that the language had educational as well as literary value, and that bilingual publications were essential, but then he was also a businessman! In the opinion of the *Cardiff Times* this volume was a labour of love by its author.²⁹

If this volume was a labour of love then it would be difficult to improve on that as he published in 1892 his *magnum opus*, *Wales and her language considered*. The drafts of the book had been read by Henry Richard and Henry Tobit Evans, the Ceredigion Quaker, both native born and Welsh speakers. The book was described by *The Times* as starting 'from the assumption that it is desirable on all grounds to preserve the Welsh language ... (and) ... squanders energy for the sake of bolstering up a sentiment and racial differences which were better destroyed.'³⁰ It was no surprise that the *Western Mail*, a Tory paper, although recognising that the book was founded on through research, said

it was 'mistakenly saturated with the ideas which are popularly associated with extreme sections of the Welsh Nationalists.'³¹ The *Cymro* was not overly kind, describing the book as worth reading but saying that it 'was slightly scattered'³²

In 1893 there was a second edition, and this time he had a quotation by Ceiriog, at that time a much loved poet, on the opening page 'Ac na boed man yn Nghymru mwy, O afon Gaer i afon Gwy, Heb siarad y ddwy - siaradwch y ddwy.' ['And let everywhere in Wales, from the Dee to the Wye speak both - speak both'] This is not the place to go into detail on the contents of the volume but the author's objective was not to explain anything to the English, but rather to awaken the Welsh nation to the condition of their language and to save her from demise as the result of a deficient educational system. One eccentric aspect of the book, reflecting its author's religious ideals, was his refusal to use the word Saint before place names -in his opinion a Papist practice - and he also expounded:

It will also be noticed, that I have abstained from calling any places built of stone and mortar *Churches*. I believe that a religion which attaches any sanctity to PLACES, is nearly nineteen hundred years out of date, at least, when as opportunity is afforded to know better.³³

In 1895 he published another volume, *The Welsh Language Census of 1891*, which he dedicated to T. E. Ellis MP, who was Chief Whip to the Liberal Government, 'In small recognition of his continuous endeavours to ensure a reasonable status for the Welsh Language in education and government.' Southall had corresponded with T. E. Ellis in 1894, hoping that he could use his influence to persuade the senate of the University of London to support a petition from the Normal College, Bangor to have Welsh as a subject of choice for entry into the university. Looking at the census he outlined the weaknesses and errors in it, but his concern was about the future of the language in light of the in-migration into Wales. What he called the 'non-naturalized foreigners' who were smothering the language, the answer to which had to be bilingual education which could also promote and enhance the concept of Welsh nationhood. It was also necessary to nourish the language in the home:

I would urge upon the middle-class English families in Wales the question of the desirability of procuring

Welsh-speaking nurses for their children. Cardiganshire and North Carmarthen should furnish plenty such for the shores of the Bristol Channel.³⁴

Overlooking the needs of the thousands in the coal mining areas with a somewhat bourgeois idealism.

In October 1898 he had another article in the *Genninen* being his response to an article entitled *A ydyw y Gymraeg yn marw?* [*Is the Welsh language dying?*] which had been published a year before by Ap Dewi Môn, the son of the Rev. David Rowlands, who had written 'I shall attempt primarily to show that the death of the Welsh language is something to be desired: and secondly, that this is busily happily happening.'³⁵

The editor of the journal was of the view that the author was writing brutally, tongue in cheek. Southall's response was direct. He felt the Welsh were sleeping, careless of their language, and that monolingual English education was killing it, but nevertheless that there were favourable signs of 'a quiet tremor spreading and deepening' and that 'this was a silent national awakening,' but perhaps not enough to undo the damage already done. Considering all the difficulties and obstructions it was a miracle that the language was alive at all, especially since it was being neglected and ignored by the authorities. He believed it was possible for the Welsh to act to save their language and that it was the colleges and schools who would take the lead. 'Let us give to Welsh fair play and proper place in the education of coming generations ... can the nation be bilingual, or unilingually English?'³⁶

We find him writing to the press about the state of the language in the schools, and in 1905 he published a personal tract on *An Educational Need in Monmouthshire* drawing on the experience of the success in using Welsh at the local school in Llanofer. He felt strongly that Monmouthshire was inextricably Welsh, and one of its thirteen counties, and that the language was essential for the county's identity:

One of the most powerful natural bonds of unity is the native language, whose power of expression in certain directions English cannot rival, and of which the educational value, apart from sentiment, is hardly fully realised.³⁷

His last public act relating to the language was the

presentation of evidence on behalf of those publishers who published in Welsh to the Departmental Committee established by the Board of Education on the place of the Welsh language in the educational system in Wales in March 1925. The concern of the publishers before the committee was the absence of school books in Welsh and authors to write them. He stood alongside six other notable figures in Welsh national and literary life. One was Ifan ab Owen Edwards, whose father Southall would probably have met through Welsh Language Society. This was Owen M. Edwards, the Chief Inspector of Education in Wales and former MP for Merionethshire. A prolific writer, historian and publisher, Southall had reviewed his works, but wished Edwards had given more attention to the history and influence of early Quakers in Wales, and was critical of his sympathy towards Roman Catholicism.

As a publisher, there was a wide breadth to his publications, with emphasis on school books, many of them bilingual. This is not the place to examine this aspect in detail, but in 1910 he corresponds with T. Gwynn Jones, whom he had met at Abaty Cwm Hir, acknowledged to be one of Wales' most prominent poets and academics, asking if he would translate from the German and Italian the works of two women poets. The poet responded, but it does not look as though Southall published. He actually corresponded again with him, this time in Welsh in 1921, again asking for translations. Two others with whom he corresponded were D. Rhys Phillips, Swansea's Librarian and J. Glyn Davies of Liverpool University, the brother of George M. Ll. Davies, the Welsh pacifist who had deep links with Quakers, but that is another story.

Southall was not blind to social problems, although it was religious and denominational viewpoints that inspired him. He was sympathetic to the conditions of the miners during the strike of 1905, noting that their wages were low and trade and use of capital was to be criticised. He was liberal by stance, and not a socialist. We find him in court for refusing to pay his rates during the great Welsh Revolt against the 1902 Education Act, and appearing before the court without his hat, the *Weekly Mail* commenting 'he had forgetfully taken it off [and] fear began to steal over the habitués that he had joined the hatless brigade.'³⁸

Towards the end of his life he was possibly less dogmatic.

There is a suggestion that with other Quakers he was at the ecumenical conference COPEC [Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship] in Birmingham in 1924, supporting the objectives of that conference. It is clear that he had connections with other denominations in Wales. When in 1912 a group of Quakers were sent to South Wales by the Yearly Meeting to enquire into the fate of what were known as the Children of the Revival, it was Southall who arranged for the group to meet Dan Roberts, the brother of the revivalist Evan Roberts, as well as other churchmen. The Children of the Revival were those who had left the traditional churches in the shadow of the 1904 Revival. They would become the seed from which the Pentecostal movement in Britain grew.

Southall also attended the Keswick Holiness Convention, at least in 1911. In terms of the 1904 to 1905 revival he did not agree that it was Quakerism re-born. In a letter in *The Friend* of December 1904 with a *nom de plume* Siluriad – Southall without doubt – he complimented certain aspects of the revival that reflected Quaker discipline – these were the secondary role given to ministers, no set form, expression of personal spiritual experience and the freedom for women to minister. In 1905 in *The British Friend* he had another letter where he is far more critical. Evans Roberts was not one of the old giants, he was far too slight. In time perhaps value would be placed on how silent waiting was used in the meetings, and eventually the Welsh would relinquish their traditional forms in worship including community singing.³⁹ He could not of course condone singing in worship, which was a form of idolatry alienating the worshipper from true spirituality.⁴⁰

In 1912 and again in 1915 he was evangelising on the continent. We can be certain that he could communicate in French and German. There are no indications that he said anything about the First World War. Yet when Samuel Broomfield – one of the few Quakers in Wales to be imprisoned as an absolutist – refused to take off his hat before the military tribunal it was undoubtedly because of Southall's influence, since Broomfield was a Quaker by conviction who lived and worked in Newport. Indeed, in 1914 Southall and Broomfield were joint secretaries of the town's committee to support aliens in distress.

However, there was never much success for Quakers in that

town. The meeting was established there around 1885, five years after Southall arrived in the town, and by 1896 it had fourteen members. In 1896 the Home Mission Committee placed a worker there - Jasper Sayce - who stayed until 1904. The meeting closed in 1905. Sayce was a fervent biblical evangelist and it is difficult to see how he and Southall could have worked harmoniously together. In any case Southall's attentions would have been focused on Bournbrook. The meeting reopened in Newport in 1915 but was again closed by 1923. Southall seems not to have been that visible a Quaker in his adopted home town, although without doubt his denominational attachment would have been known.

In February 1927 his life was deeply shattered when he found his wife dead in bed, asphyxiated by coal gas fumes which had seeped in to the bedroom. True to his beliefs, he did not take the oath but the affirmation also caused him difficulty since, he could not, he said, arrive at the whole truth. The coroner suggested to him that he could perhaps add the words to the declaration 'the whole truth so far as I comprehend it.' This he did but also added the words 'to the extent that I remember them.'⁴¹ Within very little time he retired to Leominster to live with his brother, and in November 1928 he was buried at the Quaker burial ground in the town. His wife was to be buried at Christchurch cemetery, Newport. There is a note in his sister's personal papers to the effect that by the beginning of 1928 Southall's memory was failing.

It is difficult to measure Southall's success, but he would probably have been saddened to see the state of the Welsh language across Wales today, though he would have been delighted by the fact that an education through the medium of Welsh is now possible and that instruction in Welsh carries no opprobrium. He would undoubtedly have been supportive of the passage of the Language Acts, and possibly supportive of the agitation of the late 60s, early 70s in defence and promotion of the language. It would be gratifying to think of him with his broad brimmed hat joining in the public demonstrations, as he had been willing to do regarding the 1902 Education Act. His voice was familiar across Wales and he was much admired for his efforts. The fact that he was an Englishman who had learnt Welsh, and was enthusiastic for the language, was much respected. He was

well embedded in the life of his monthly meeting, but probably not a thriving business man. His mother in her diary in 1884 noted that her son was a poor businessman and that his father had found his accounts to be in an unsatisfactory state. This was also what his sister discovered in 1927 - a tenant of her brother who lived in a house he owned in Chepstow had not paid his rent for twelve months.

Perhaps in 1923 he had been disappointed. In that year there was a competition at the National Eisteddfod at Yr Wyddgrug [Mold] for an essay, on the history of Quakers in Wales and their emigration to Pennsylvania. There was a prize of forty pounds, the gift of John Henry Lloyd, Birmingham, one of the descendants of the Lloyds of Dolobran, the Montgomeryshire Quakers. Eight had competed and Southall was amongst them. In a letter of May 1923 to a worker at the library in Devonshire House he commented, 'I note that I did not include in my submission to the Eisteddfod reference to the history of Quakers in Wales in the nineteenth century.'⁴² Sadly there is no trace of his submission.

This report from the *Cardiff Times* from August 1905 is a fine description of Southall, a piece written in relation to a summer school in Welsh held that summer:

A picturesque student is Mr John Edward Southall of Newport. Mr Southall is a Quaker even to using of thee and thou in colloquial conversation, he is a good hater of prefixes and suffixes to personal names. In costume he follows the quaint Quaker costumes we see in picture books, but he is not a sober face, unless he is attacking Welshmen for neglecting their native tongue. Then, indeed, he looks lightning, and speaks with a voice of thunder, and his tongue becomes as a double-edged sword. His acquaintance with everything that is favourable to the preservation of the Welsh language is unlimited, and so insinuating is his personality that it is only necessary to know him, and a new friend is made on the spot. Hir oes iddo! [Long life to him]⁴³

The poet and writer Meic Stephens has a poem written especially for the National Eisteddfod in Newport in 2004, a tribute to the man from Leominster. It is the only piece of poetry in Welsh written in memory of a Quaker, apart from pieces written about Waldo Williams:

*Sais o Lanllieni oeddwn i, a Chymru oedd fy mhopeth: Cerais
y wlad fach hon fel be baem yn gwneud iawn am ormes y
canrifoedd*

Trwy goleddu'i hiaith a mawrygu ei thraddodiadau.

*....O Gymry, blant y Goleuni, ... Garu eich iaith fel y'i cerais, a
bod yn deilwng o'ch cenedl, un o deuluoedd Duw.⁴⁴*

*[I was an Englishman from Leominster, but Wales was my
everything*

*I loved this small country as though I wished to make up for the
oppression of the centuries*

By loving her language and upholding her traditions

*... Welsh, children of the Light ... Love your language as I
loved it, and be proud of your nation, one of the families of
God.]*

Gethin Evans

*This lecture was first given in Welsh, under the auspices of
Meeting of Friends in Wales, at the National Eisteddfod at
Abergafenni in 2016.*

END NOTES

1. Geraint H. Jenkins, 'Cymru, Cymry a'r Gymraeg: Rhagymadrodd', in *Gwne wch Bopeth yn Gymraeg*, ed. by Geraint H. Jenkins (Caerdydd, Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1999), p. 32.
2. *The Friend*, 18.8.1911.
3. Trevor Macpherson, A 'Measure of Grace: Quakers in Radnorshire', in *Transactions of the Radnorshire Society*, Vol LXIV, 1999, pp. 8-33.
4. John Edward Southall, *Wales and Her Language considered from a historical, educational and social standpoint with remarks on modern Welsh Literature and a linguistic map of the country* (Newport: J. E. Southall, 1892), p. 251.
5. 'A Tour in North Wales' by J. E. Southall, Bootham School Archives.
6. Southall, 1892, p. 253.
7. Glamorgan Record Office (GRO), South Wales Monthly Meeting (SWMM) minutes, m12, 11.7.1878.
8. *The Friend*, 1.6.1923, p. 407.
9. GRO, SWMM minutes, m9, 12.2.1880.
10. *Cardiff Times* 4.8.1883.
11. *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 25.1.1884.
12. Herefordshire Archives, BG 99/2/140, Diary Elizabeth R Southall (ERS), 6.8.1880.
13. *ibid* 19.8.1882.
14. *ibid* 3.2.1883.
15. See W. Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley* (Fritchley: Friends Meeting House, 1980).
16. In 1881 he published a pamphlet challenging the Quaker orthodoxy of the day entitled *A Faithful Warning to those Calling Themselves Friends, more particularly in Western Quarterly Meeting, England*.
17. ERS, 18.9.1882.
18. *South Wales Daily Post*, 2.5.1884
19. *Cymro a'r Celt Llundain*, 28.5.1910.
20. Fritchley Meeting minute books, 1878-1921 at Fritchley meeting house.
21. *ibid*, m5, 4.11.1911.
22. *ibid*, m3, 18.6.1924.

23. SWMM, m 3, 13.7.1910.
24. *Y Genninen*, No 3, xix, July 1901, pp. 173-176.
25. *Y Genninen*, No 4, xix, October 1901, pp. 281-285
26. *Y Genninen*, No 1, xx, January 1902, pp. 77-79.
27. J. E. Southall, 'The Society of Friends and Wales', *Friends Quarterly Examiner*, 1st Month 1880, pp. 86-97.
28. J. E. Southall, *Bilingual teaching in Welsh Elementary Schools or minutes of evidence of Welsh witnesses before the Royal Commission on Education in 1886-7 with introductory remarks* (Newport: John E Southall, 1888), p. i.
29. *Cardiff Times*, 27.10.1888.
30. *The Times*, 28.7.1892.
31. *The Western Mail*, 7.9.1892.
32. *Y Cymro*, 22.9.1892.
33. Southall, *Wales and Her Language*, London, 1893 ed, p. vi.
34. J. E. Southall, *The Welsh Language Census of 1891* (Newport: Southall, 1895), p. 35.
35. Ap Dewi Mon, 'A Ydyw y Gymraeg yn Marw?' *Y Genninen*, 4, xv, October 1897, pp. 265-267.
36. J. E. Southall, 'A Ydyw y Gymraeg yn Marw?' *Y Genninen*, 4, xvi, October 1898, pp. 243-247.
37. J. E. Southall, *An educational need in Monmouthshire: Welsh Teaching - Testimony of Headmaster at Llanofor, a new life in school*, (Newport: Southall, 1905).
38. *Weekly Mail*, 1.9.1906.
39. *The British Friend*, January 1905, p. 19.
40. J. E. Southall, *Music in Worship and Frances R. Havergal's Dream* (Newport: J. E. Southall, 1895).
41. *South Wales Daily News*, 4.2.1927.
42. Friends House Library, Portfolio 39, letter to Ethel Crawshaw, 29.5.1923.
43. *Cardiff Times*, 12.8.1905.
44. Meic Stephens, *Hunangofiant Meic Stephens: Cofnodion* (Talybont: Y Lolfa, 2012), p. 211.