Quakerism 101

Unit E Living in the Light: Quaker Witness

February 14, 2010

Reading

Brinton Chapter 7

Margarete Hope Bacon, "Quaker Women as Abolitionists", Chapter 7 in *As the Way Opens.*

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, *Faith and Practice*, revised 1997, "Concerns, Leadings, and Testimonies" (pp. 65 – 67) and "Living in the World" (pp. 75 – 81).

Background on Readings

Margarete Hope Bacon, a member of Central Philadelphia Meeting, is a author, feminist, and former news director for the American Friends Service Committee. She wrote *The Quiet Rebels: the Story of Quakers in America. Valiant Friend,* a biography of Lucretia Mott; and several other books.

Reflection

Please reflect on the following questions as you read and once you have read the reading.

How do you make major decisions in your life? Do you agree with Howard Brinton that, "In seeking guidance regarding a proposed course of action, we find ourselves using four main tests: authority, reason, results and intuitive feeling" (p. 148), but that ultimately, "the test must be trusted" (p.149)?

What checks do Friends have on individual apprehensions of truth?

Have you ever asked a group of people to help you make a major decision? One example would be asking your Meeting to set up a "Clearness Committee" to help you gain inner clarity about whether to undertake an action, such as a career change or a major commitment to work for justice and peace.

How would you feel about asking for your Meeting's guidance in making an important decision?

What is a "concern"? Have you ever felt led to take action in response to a need that you perceived?

With which testimonies do you resonate? Are there an which make you uncomfortable? Why?

How do you understand Friend's testimony of simplicity? Why have Friends adopted this testimony? How is it expressed today? If you are a Meeting Member, how have you sought to express this testimony in your personal life?

In describing the tense relationship that existed between women abolitionists and the Religious Society of Friends as a whole, Margaret Hope Bacon points to tensions that

arise frequently between those on the “cutting edge” of social change and the bulk of the population. Why do you believe these tensions exist? Are such tensions visible in the Society of Friends today? Where?

Write a brief defense of pacifism. How do you compare the risks of a pacifist defense with those of a violent defense?

William Penn said, “A good end can not sanctify a evil means, not must we ever do evil that good may come of it.” Do you agree? Why of why not?

How do you respond to this statement in Philadelphia Yearly Meetings *Faith and Practice*: “The state has no claim to moral infallibility”? (p. 79)

Have you broken the law on grounds of conscience? If so, describe why you acted as you did?

Of a similar council Catherine Phillips notes:

> Several of their women sat in this conference who for fixed solidity appeared to me like Roman matrons.[10]

Such councils where sex equality is maintained and voting unknown indicate that the organic method is in accord with human nature as it evolved out of primitive, matriarchal conditions. The more mechanical method of voting becomes natural in a later stage of development when society has become more individualistic. But there is a still further stage when self-conscious individualization is surpassed but not eliminated, in a divine-human community so inspired by the one Spirit that it can act as a unit. The third stage resembles the first but it is higher because those who are in it have passed through the intermediary condition and become individuals. In the first stage there is unity; in the second, individuality; in the third, the synthesis of unity and individuality which makes possible participation in group life with freedom.

Notes

1. *Letters Etc. of Early Friends,* edited by Abram Rawlinson Barclay, 1841, p. 282.
2. *Letters,* p. 288.
3. *Letters,* p. 289.
4. *Letters,* p. 319.
5. Thomas Story, *Sermons,* 1785, p. 61.
6. Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World,* 1925, p. 266.
7. William Halse, Rivers, *Instinct and the Unconscious,* 1924, p. 95.
8. John Richardson, *Journal,* 1856, p. 135.
9. Thomas Chalkley, *Journal,* 1754, p. 49.
10. Catherine Phillips, *Journal,* 1798, p. 144.

CHAPTER VII

The Meeting Community

THE QUAKER MEETING with its double function of worship and business constitutes a community. If it carries out its functions successfully, it becomes a well-integrated group in which the individual is united to the whole as a cell is united to an organism. "Organism" is a figure of speech used to suggest the kind of unity which exists in a group of free self-conscious personalities. Obviously, this is different from the coherence which exists within a biological organism where individuality and freedom of the parts is nonexistent. A unity based not only on a single free choice at the beginning, but on a continued series of free choices, is an achievement which can take place most easily in a comparatively small group. Having been achieved there, it can then be carried over more readily by the same individuals into a larger group. The habits of behavior formed in the small group inevitably spread to wider associations.

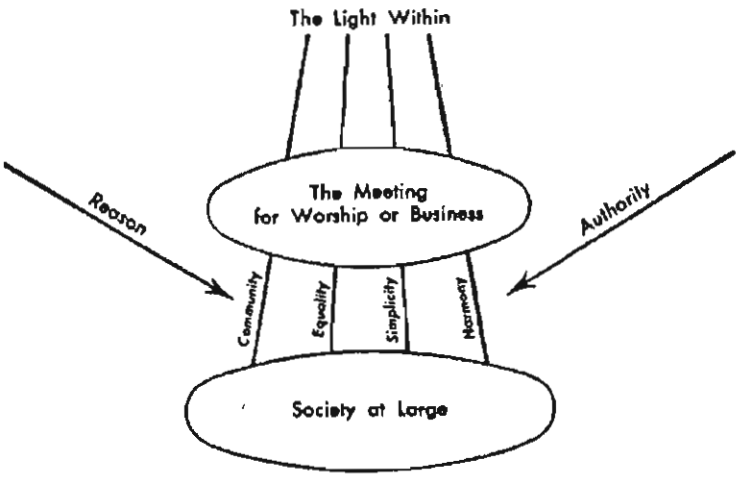
The family, for example, is a small group which can be a valuable training ground for right behavior in a larger community. The members of a normal family co-operate with one another and share equally the family resources, the weak being entitled to receive what they require on the same terms as the strong. The food placed on the table is distributed according to need, not power to seize it. This kind of behavior differs from that of the competitive world. For example, in an area where oil is discovered, everyone

seizes as much as he can regardless of other persons. Yet the difference between the code of behavior in the family and the code of behavior outside it is mitigated by the fact that the habits of cooperation and sharing found within the family frequently continue to be exercised when its members go out into the world. In similar fashion, a religious group may so conduct its affairs that the habit of behavior formed within it as a direct result of its doctrines and habits may find expression beyond its borders. The early Christian Church did not condemn slavery. But when Paul wrote to Philemon asking him to take back his escaped slave who had become a Christian, he said that master and slave were equal within the Church. This equality within the Church led Christianity eventually to condemn all slavery.

Participation in the activities of a group is the oldest and most effective form of education. It' is older than the human race. Beginning at birth, it can continue to the end. Such an education of the whole person in body, mind and spirit becomes deeply ingrained in character. By participation in group activities the members learn by living rather than by formal instruction, though instruction may prove to be an important part of life itself. Participation in life as a whole reaches down below the level of ideas to the deeper feelings which move the will. Ideas in themselves, received in the schoolroom or from books, have little motive power unless they are linked to this deeper process. They require reinforcement through activity. If the bridge between thought and action is crossed often enough, thought and action become integrated and the result is training in its most profound and enduring form.

The Origin of Social Concerns

The meaning of the group in Quaker practice can be suggested by a diagram. Light from God streams down into the waiting group. This Light, if the way is open for it, produces three results: unity,



Concerns originating in the Quaker Community as a result of the impact of the Light Within become directed toward Society at Large. Concerns may result from the impact of Authority or Reason though this is not typical of the Quaker Method.

knowledge and power. As a result we have the kind of behavior which exists as an ideal in a meeting for worship and a meeting for business. Because of the characteristics of the Light of Christ, the resulting behavior can be described in a general way by the four words Community, Harmony, Equality and Simplicity, though these are not to be taken as all-inclusive. These four types of behavior which are closely interrelated, being first generated in the intimate circle, become applied more widely as its members go out beyond its limits to the larger world. The members acquire habits in the meeting which are inevitably retained, at least to some degree, in whatever business they may engage. But because these habits can be acted upon with less opposition in the small, conge-

nial, comparatively homogeneous group than in society at large where conditions are less favorable, there will probably be a certain adjustment and compromise. Some members, more devoted than others, will attempt to avoid compromise.

In a vital and dynamic meeting a concern may arise first in a meeting for worship or for business which is at the outset thought of as applicable only to the membership. It may, however, eventually emerge as an activity to be performed outside the little group in the field of society at large. Thus a sense of responsibility for extending economic aid to fellow members who need it should become a concern to extend economic aid to all who are in need. A habit of dealing with members of the meeting in a peaceable manner should similarly become a habit of dealing with others in a peaceable manner.

A requirement may originate, not as a result of the Light Within operating upon the soul of an individual, but through the compelling power of some authority or as a result of a logical process of reasoning. This would be a process different from the usual Quaker method. Authority and reason are indispensable supplements to inward guidance. Their absence would indicate a state of ineptitude. But by themselves they are not enough. To take a specific example, if someone should refuse to be drafted into the army, this refusal might arise out of obedience to the Sermon on the Mount, or it might arise out of a philosophic or scientific theory, or a knowledge of instances of the futility of war. It might also arise out of the guidance of conscience illumined by the divine Light while waiting upon God.

The Quaker stresses the guidance of the enlightened conscience. He relies upon illumined reason and authority as checks. His position may appear, even to himself, to be contrary to reason and to respected authorities. But if the Light in his conscience gives him a clear leading, he must follow it as the primary organ for ascertaining religious and moral truth. Conscience is cogni-

tive in its field as thought is in its field. The psychologist Jung, in describing the principal mental functions which he calls Thought, Feeling, Intuition and Sensation, lists thought and feeling as cognitive. Feeling gives us our knowledge of values. This agrees with the Quaker point of view. In a Quaker meeting for worship or for business a speaker seldom remarks "I think" but generally "I feel." If he agrees with another speaker, he will probably say, "That is in accord with my feelings," or, "I would feel most comfortable [or perhaps 'most easy'] if that were done." A sense of inward tension and discomfort is frequently interpreted as a sign that something needs to be done. A feeling of inward peace is a sign that the right thing has been done. Authority and reason are transferable tests. Because of this they are essential in convincing other persons. Feelings arising out of conscientious scruples cannot be transferred from one person to another any more than aesthetic judgments can be transferred. But the conscience of another person can be appealed to on the theory that the same Light is within all men to illumine and bring all consciences into agreement. In this way the Light in one person will "answer" the Light in another, to use George Fox's figure of speech. This kind of "answering" can take place under any conditions but most effectively in a small worshiping group.

In addition to authority and reason there is also the pragmatic test. An action is judged to be good if its results are good. This test has some affinity to that of reason because the results of a proposed action must be viewed in the light of similar past actions. Reason makes the comparison and concludes that if the results were good or bad in the past, they will be good or bad in the future if the conditions are the same. The pragmatic test also has its roots in feeling, for it is by feeling that we judge whether results are really good or bad. If we used only the pragmatic test, we might fail in decision because immediate results would have to be judged in terms of their results, and these results in terms of further re-

sults, and so on without end. Since no one can foresee a final result, some test not wholly pragmatic is essential.

That Friends do not, as a rule, judge the merits of a proposed action in terms of apparent consequences may be illustrated by two examples. William Allen, highly successful both as a scientist and businessman, writes in his diary:

> I think I have been instructed not to look for great things in religious matters but to go on in the simplicity, to labor more and more to get rid of all reasonings and the apprehension of consequences.[1]

John Woolman writes in his *Journal:*

> Travelling up and down of late I have renewed evidences that to keep pace with duty and to be content with the allotments of Divine Providence, is a most necessary and useful lesson for me to be learning; looking less at the effects of my labor than at the pure motion and reality of the concern, as it arises from heavenly love.[2]

In seeking guidance regarding a proposed course of action, we find ourselves using four main tests: authority, reason, results and intuitive feeling. If the four agree, we have a secure basis for action. In using authority we appeal to the insights of persons past and present whose judgment we respect. As most of our knowledge is based, not on our own experience, but on the experience of others, this test is probably the criterion most often used. A scientist, for example, can test very little of his scientific knowledge by his own experiments. He must accept as fact what he has learned from the experiments of others. In the same way the Christian will depend on the insights of the writers of Scripture, the Church Fathers, the outstanding persons of his own religious group, and others whom he respects as being of saintly character. Important also is the test of reason which, as has been pointed

out, is the test of consistency. The pragmatic test is also helpful. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

But it can be shown that ultimately in the field of religion and morality the test of feeling must be trusted. By feeling in this field is meant our intuitive apprehension of the Light of Truth. By feeling we accept some authorities and reject others. By feeling we accept certain premises as a basis for our reasoning and reject others. By feeling we accept certain results as good and reject others as bad. When early Friends placed the Light above Scriptures, Church, Reason and short-range experience of results, they assumed a tenable position.

The position of the Quakers would have been more difficult in practice if they had based the test of feeling on a purely individual apprehension of truth. In appealing to the group to confirm each one's inward leading, a useful check is provided. Nevertheless, if the individual feels clearly and strongly that the group is wrong, he may be obliged to ignore its judgment.

Instances of appeals to the group, followed by disregard of all other tests but that of feeling, not infrequently appear in the Quaker *Journals.* An event in the life of Thomas Shillitoe will serve as an example. Traveling in the ministry in Europe, he came to the German city of Hamburg in 1821 and found the Sabbath observed as a time of merry-making with scant attention to religion. He had no friends in the city and did not know the language, but he resolved after a time of inward retirement to attempt to remedy the situation. He prepared an address to the people of the city and forwarded it to London for the approval or disapproval of Friends there. Finally, his address came back, translated into German, with the approval of London Friends. He himself aided in distributing the appeal throughout the city. His arrest brought about some desirable publicity for his concern and an opportunity to speak with public officials. His main objective was constantly present to his mind—that "I should be clear in the sight of my

Maker was all I was to aim at." When he was put in prison, he said, "My heart leaped for joy to feel myself once more so much of a free man." This freedom resulted from the sense that he was no longer carrying the burden of an unfulfilled requirement. Thomas Shillitoe left Hamburg with a feeling of inward peace in spite of the fact that his work apparently had no result. He had followed feeling when his reason might have told him that his mission was hopeless. He had secured the approval of his meeting and his conscience. The results could be left to God.

One more instance may suffice. In 1762 John Woolman felt "a motion of love" to visit Indians two hundred miles from Philadelphia because "some of them were measurably acquainted with that Divine Power which subjects the rough and froward will of the creature."[3] He laid the matter before his Monthly, Quarterly and General Spring Meeting and secured approval. Before starting, he learned that the Indians were on the warpath. He writes:

> My heart was turned to the Lord for his Heavenly instruction. . . . In this conflict of Spirit there were great searchings of heart and strong cries to the Lord that no motion might be in the least degree attended to but that of the pure Spirit of Truth.[4]

Proceeding on the journey he saw many signs of war with the English. Though in danger of being captured and tortured, he writes that "the Lord in great mercy gave me a resigned heart in which I found quietness." A satisfying meeting was held with the Indians. John Woolman returned home safely. It would be difficult to say just what was accomplished by such a journey, but John Woolman never for a moment doubted his leading. The evidence of right guidance was the constant inward sense of peace and resignation, not the results in more visible terms.

When John Woolman was a member of a committee to persuade Friends who held slaves to give them their freedom, his appeal had little to do with the evil results of slavery, though mention of these was not wholly omitted. The appeal was to the feelings of the slaveholder. Did he feel comfortable in holding these men and women in bondage? The slaveholder often had to admit that he did not feel comfortable about it. He could reason that he needed slaves in order to compete successfully with others who held slaves, and he could quote authorities, even scriptural authorities, in support of slaveholding, but his feelings, if he admitted the truth, did not give him inward peace.

The Quaker methods for guiding conduct were implemented by two devices: committees to visit those who fell short of the standard, and the Queries. In the early years of the eighteenth century the visiting committees were gradually replaced by overseers appointed to exercise pastoral care, especially in matters involving morals. The overseers (or special committees appointed for the purpose) usually visited every family in the meeting at least once a year. Moral offenders were lovingly and sympathetically labored with and, if brought to repentance, were asked to make an acknowledgment of their error in writing and to bring it in person to the monthly meeting. If the offender refused to make an acknowledgment, the committee continued its labors for at least a year. If no signs of change or repentance were observed and the offense was sufficiently serious, the offender was then dropped from membership by the meeting.

The overseers were guided by the Queries, which were questions answered by the lower meetings to the higher meetings at first vocally by appointed representatives and later, after 1755, in writing. Answers to the Queries were expected to reveal shortcomings in the membership. Thus the Quarterly Meeting could learn the state of the Monthly Meetings, and the Yearly Meeting could learn the state of the Quarterly Meetings and extend advice and help as might be required. The Queries were a kind of group confessional by which every individual and every meeting was able

at regular intervals of a year or less to check actual conduct against an ideal standard of behavior. The Queries covered all that was expected of the consistent Friend. They were frequently revised as new moral insights prevailed or old testimonies become obsolete.*

The following entry in the minutes of Sadsbury Monthly Meeting in 1780 will indicate the procedure:

> The committee appointed in that weighty service of reformation with respect to due and wakeful attendance at our religious meetings, plainness of speech, behavior, apparel and household furniture, with other deficiencies complained of in the Queries, report they attended to the service and find that there appears a willingness in most to endeavor to remedy deficiencies; and many things that appeared superfluous have been removed.

To be successful such committees must proceed in the right spirit. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1719 declared:

> It is the advice of this meeting that in speaking to or dealing with any, it be done in a Christian spirit of love and tenderness, laboring in meekness, by laying the evil before them, to bring such persons to a sense of it in themselves, that they may be restored if possible. And although such as transgress or lose their hold on Truth are apt to be testy, while they are in that condition, yet we ought patiently and meekly to instruct and advise them, that so we may not only have a testimony of peace within ourselves, but that it may likewise so affect the spirit of the Friend spoken to, that he may be sensible we have performed a truly Christian duty and an office of brotherly love toward him.

* A modern set of Queries appears in Appendix II.

Community

The Quaker meeting used to be, and to some extent still is, both a religious and an economic unit. The members sometimes found themselves dependent on one another for material support. This was especially important in the early days when the Quakers lost much of their property through fines and imprisonment. Some were dismissed by their employers because they became Quakers. Others found themselves engaged in businesses which had to be abandoned because of their principles: for example, employment which had to do with luxuries or equipment for war. This economic interdependence still exists to some extent in Quaker meetings and continues to be the subject of an annual Query.

In 1737 a list of persons entitled to support was drawn up by each meeting. This list constituted the first list of members and introduced the concept of a definite membership. Since the children of members would also be in need of help, their names appeared on the list. This occasioned the provision for birthright membership. Birthright membership results from the assumption that a meeting is like a large family whose members are dependent on one another, not only for material necessities, but for intellectual and spiritual well-being. Children are born into the meeting in a sense similar to that in which they are born into a family. As in the case of the family, they are free to detach themselves at the age of maturity. Since they are children of the meeting as well as children of their parents, their education is a meeting responsibility. If the parents cannot pay for the education of the children, the meeting is expected to do so, or at least to assume the responsibility. That the children are considered members of the meeting community from the start is an important factor in their education. As has already been pointed out, participation in community activities is the most potent form of education. Birth,

marriage, death, all the important events and crises of life, are concerns of the meeting and call for its care.

As membership in the meeting is membership in a community, the test of membership is compatibility with the meeting community. Members are either born into the meeting or join it because they desire to fit into the pattern of behavior peculiar to the meeting and find themselves able to do so. The test of membership is not a particular kind of religious experience, nor acceptance of any particular religious, social or economic creed. Sincere religious experience and right religious belief are both important, but they develop in the course of participation in the activities of the meeting. Anyone who can become so integrated with a meeting that he helps the whole and the whole helps him is qualified to become a member.

The following selections from early minutes are typical of many that indicate the character of the economic interdependence developed in the meeting community:

> Ordered Caleb Pusey and Walter Fawcett take care to hire a cow for the Widow Rudiman and the Quarterly Meeting is obliged to answer them 30s. [Chester, 1689]

> Information being given this meeting that W.P. is very poor and in necessity, the meeting orders A.B. to get a good pair of leather britches and a good warm coat and waist coat, one pair of stockings and shoes and make a report of the charge to the next meeting. [Falls, 1701]

> The condition of J.C. (a Friend of Bucks County) being laid before the meeting, having lost by fire to the value of 162 pounds, this meeting orders that a collection be settled in each particular First Day's meeting and two appointed to receive them. [Chester, 1691]

> The friends appointed to make Inspection concerning Mary Moot report she hath a right to our meeting and also is in real need of relief, we therefore recommend her to the Friends appointed for the care of the poor of this meeting as a proper object thereof. [Concord, 1763]

The following minute indicates the care which Friends took of those not in membership with them who suffered from the blockade of the New England coast during the Revolutionary war:

> The Friends appointed to take in subscriptions for the relief of the poor and destitute in New England reported they have taken in subscriptions in the amount of £33 14s. [Darby, 1775]

Because of its responsibilities in taking care of the poor, the meeting was alert to prevent poverty. It watched over its members to see that they were not taking undue risks in business and not spending more than they earned. "Are Friends careful to live within the bounds of their circumstances and to keep to moderation in their trade or business?" was long an annual Query. The following minute of a Yearly Meeting was issued in 1710:

> It is the advice of this meeting to the several Quarterly Meetings, that care may be taken that substantial Friends be appointed to visit every family among us where they think there is occasion to suspect they are going backward in their worldly estate.

That the meeting exercised oversight over the members as all parts of one family may be indicated by the following acknowledgments of error:

> William Williams, son of Robert, and Joan, daughter of James Pugh declared their intentions of marriage with each

other before this meeting and he acknowledged his misstep in proposing his mind to the young woman before he had her father's consent, but is allowed to proceed. [Goshen, 1723]

Whereas I was forward and hasty in making suit to a young woman after the death of my wife, having made some proceedings in that way in less than four months, which I am now sensible was wrong. [New Garden, 1740]

In the early eighteenth century business meetings were attended only by those who because of the excellence of their judgment were invited to attend so that aid to the poor, personal delinquencies and quarrels between members which ought not to be made public could be discussed within closed doors. Today, as the business meetings are open to all members and to the public as well, personal matters are considered more privately in special committees. For this reason examples of meeting action in such matters can only be found in the older minutes.

The meeting community is probably more needed today as a stabilizing element in society than ever before. The family is small and often unable to withstand the storms which sweep over it in our unstable economic system. This was less true in the days of the large, patriarchal family, which often included grandparents, aunts and uncles as well as a number of children. For the unmarried woman the Society of Friends has always had significant work of an educational, social or religious nature to claim her full attention.

Today the state is assuming the function of providing a degree of economic security. But the state is so large that its functioning is impersonal. It may provide economic maintenance, but it is not in a position to offer the psychological support which is equally necessary. The family being too small a unit and the state too large, the religious group, the meeting or church, in which all the members have a strong interest in one another's welfare, may be able to fulfill the need. Within such a group the required aid can be extended with the same warmth and understanding as within a family. More groups of this size and kind, having a certain degree of economic interdependence, are urgently needed at present to offset the increasing atomization and disintegration of our social structure. Due to the disappearance of the village form of life and of the even older types of multiple family life, modern society finds itself to be an incoherent mass of lonely individuals.

Harmony

The means of obtaining harmony within the meeting have already been discussed in connection with the Quaker method of reaching decisions in the meeting for business. By harmony is meant a pacifist technique by which unity of action is reached without the use of any form of coercion, such as the exercise of personal authority or the prevailing of a majority over a minority. The appeal to the Light Within as the source of unity does not imply the victory of a person or a party over another person or party, but the victory of Truth which is often on the side of the weak.

The Query which has been longest in continuous use by the Society of Friends is this: "Are love and unity maintained amongst you?" It dates from 1682. Any quarrels or disagreements within the group become an object of concern to the meeting and the old Query, "Where differences arise are endeavors made speedily to end them?" could usually be answered in the affirmative. It was contrary to the Discipline for any Quaker to settle his difference with another Quaker by a lawsuit. He must appeal to the meeting. A few examples will illustrate the action of the meeting in settling differences.

> Considered and agreed upon by the hearing of differences between Joseph Richards and Charles Ascham about the admeasure of land—that the said Joseph shall pay Charles for the same without any further disturbance. The same is ended between them and the money is paid in the presence of the meeting. [Concord, 1684]

> The difference between Joseph Richards and William Woodmansey offered to the meeting in order to a composure of the same. William Woodmansey acknowledges he spoke foolishly in comparing him to a London pickpocket and the like and that he was grieved and sorry for the same, which Joseph Richards did accept of, desiring and intending hereby that there be n end of strife from the beginning to this day. [Chester, 1686]

> Friends, whereas I contended with my neighbor William Shipley for what I apprehended to be my right, by endeavoring to turn a certain stream of water into its natural course, till it arose to a personal difference, in which dispute I gave way to warmth of temper so as to put my friend William into the pond, for which action of mine, being contrary to the good order of Friends, I am sorry and desire through Divine Assistance to live in unity with him for the future. From your friend Joshua Way. [Wilmington, 1751]

Sometimes the meeting did not believe the claim of Friends who had quarreled that they had composed their differences.

> It is our opinion that Concord Friends have been put by their proper business in the case of John Larkin and Robert Pyle by giving way to their outward appearance of love and friendship being restored between them, when their hearts have been evilly affected toward each other. And, as we fear the testimony of Truth has suffered by too much delay, we think that unless something more of love appears between them than has hitherto done, Friends should testify against them.

This report was signed by a committee of twelve of Concord Monthly Meeting in 1769 after laboring with the offenders for two years. Both were in consequence disowned from membership.

Equality

Equality was the earliest Quaker social testimony. Even before the Quakers became pacifists Quaker soldiers were dismissed from the army because they refused to treat their officers as superiors. This testimony may have been in part an inheritance from the Levellers and Diggers, pre-Quaker groups with strong equalitarian leanings. Lilburne, the leader of the Levellers, became a Quaker, but Winstanley, leader of the Diggers, did not. Except for his communism, Winstanley's opinions coincided with those of George Fox.

The Quaker doctrine of equality does not mean equality of ability, economic resources or social status. It means equality of respect and the resulting absence of all words and behavior based on class, racial or social distinctions. It did not, for example, place on an economic equality employer and employee or master and servant. The Quakers agreed with the Puritans that each person must follow his vocation, a religious word indicating God's call to a particular kind of occupation appropriate to one's ability and interest. The doctrine of equality tended to eliminate the sense of superiority or inferiority attaching to different callings.

Advices concerning the treatment of servants appear as early as 1656 in statements on church discipline. Dewsbury writes in a letter that "now mistress and maid are to be hail fellows well met."

Some of the greatest of the early Quaker women ministers were maidservants. One such was Mary Fisher who addressed the Sultan of Turkey and his Court, and Dorothy Waugh who was jailed by Peter Stuyvesant for preaching in the streets of New York. Servant and master addressed each other by their given names and servants often ate at the family table.

Within the meeting equality appears in the equal opportunity for all to take part, regardless of age, sex or ability. No persons enjoy special privilege, though some, because of unusual gifts, have more weight than others in the meeting's deliberations.

Outside the meeting this doctrine brought the Quakers of an earlier time into serious disrepute, many of the prevailing customs having as their base the highly stratified condition of English society. Friends were compelled to disregard these modes of behavior and in consequence they often appeared rude or ill-mannered.

Friends refused the use of titles of honor and salutations which implied that one person was superior to another. There were three reasons for this. First, the Quakers wished to remove all recognition of social distinctions based on class or race. Secondly, they were opposed to any form of flattery which tended to puff up self-esteem. And, thirdly, most titles were out of harmony with the truth. Addressing a superior by the plural "you" instead of "thou"* which was customary practice in the seventeenth century was given up for these reasons. Barclay writes of the prevailing custom of saying "you" to one person:

> This way of speaking proceeds from a high and proud mind . . . because that men commonly use the singular to beggars and to their servants; yea and in their prayers to God—so hath the pride of men placed God and the beggar in the same category.[5]

* In America "thou" has become "thee." It is not unusual in the development of language for the accusative to replace the nominative, as, for example, "you" an accusative has replaced "ye" a nominative.

Friends might have avoided this distinction by using "you" to everyone, but that would, with the then current norms of speech, have been considered as flattery. Also "you," being a plural, would have been considered untruthful. For similar reasons "Mister" and "Mistress" were avoided as no one used these titles to persons rated as inferior. Titles such as "Your Grace," "Your Highness," "Sir," "Your Honor," "Your Humble Servant," "The Reverend," "Your Majesty," "Your Obedient Servant," were ruled out not only as flattery, but because they were false descriptions of the person addressed. The prefix "Saint" was omitted even in place names.

> Who are they that are honorable indeed? Is it not the righteous man? Is it not the holy man? Is it not the humble hearted man, the meek spirited man? . . . Now of these may there not be poor men, laborers, silly fishermen?[6]

The "plain language" included also the designation of the names of the months, and the days of the week by numerals rather than by their usual names which were derived in most cases from heathen deities (Ex. 23:13). At one time the adoption of the "plain language" like the adoption of the "plain dress" followed a spiritual crisis and was a symbol of the new way of life and the "taking up of the cross." Today the plain language, including the use of the accusative "thee" as a nominative, in America has become a sign of family intimacy and religious fellowship rather than a testimony.

The Quakers were often hailed into court for one reason or another. On such occasions their refusal to doff their hats as a mark of respect to the judge aroused anger and resulted in harsh treatment. Though they never removed their hats to any human being, in worship the head was uncovered during vocal prayer in

reverence to God. Young converts appearing before their parents wearing their hats suffered stern rebuke and sometimes violence. This happened to young Thomas Ellwood who lost three hats in rapid succession. Sometimes the hat was quietly and deftly removed by a servant or official deputed for this act, as was the case when Stephen Grellet had an audience with the Pope. Advices issued by Yearly Meetings condemn all "bowings and scrapings" and every form of subservience whatsoever.

Before the Friends freed their slaves they treated them with respect. Slaves were taken to meeting, which was against the law in the West Indies, and often their children were sent to Quaker schools along with the white children. It took Friends some time to realize that slavery was not a "calling," like that of a servant.

In general, except for a few notable exceptions, such as John Bellers who in 1695 proposed a communistic form of community life, and William Allen who was associated with Robert Owen in the ownership of the colony in New Lanark,[7] Friends were not interested in radically altering the social order. "Any form is good if administered by good men," writes William Penn. Perhaps Friends came the nearest to being social radicals when, like John Woolman in his "Word of Remembrance to the Rich," they found the seeds of war in the love of possessions.

A recent Query is a sign of modern interest in the reform of the social order.* There are a number of examples of Quaker businessmen who have introduced a considerable degree of labor participation in the management of their factories, but this has not been sufficiently extensive to merit particular attention.[8] Quaker relief workers frequently try to put themselves on an equality with those among whom they labor. This is particularly true of the work camps of the American Friends Service Committee. Racial equality is being slowly realized in Friends schools today, but not in all.

* See Appendix I, Query 7.

Many Quakers have an active concern against all forms of racial discrimination. They maintain committees to seek solutions to this pressing problem. There is a growing endeavor to eliminate what Joseph John Gurney called "the aristocracy of the skin."[9]

Simplicity

Simplicity, the fourth aspect of the Quaker code of behavior, finds primary expression within the meeting for worship in the simple manner of waiting upon the Lord in surroundings unadorned in respect of furnishings and architecture. In the eighteenth century simplicity was insisted upon. The meeting houses of that period exhibit not only plainness but fitness, beauty and proportion. In the nineteenth century this good norm was departed from, but recent structures show a return to functional simplicity. While the concern for simplicity was fresh and living, its expression showed good taste, but when it became largely traditional, Quaker meeting houses as well as Quaker homes and furniture degenerated in form and style.

Friends have had no testimony against excellence of quality. Their testimony was against superfluity in "dress, speech and behavior."

In general, Friends are not ascetics who find virtue in a mortification of the flesh. They condemned pleasure when it existed as a superfluity, interfering with more serious undertakings. The following passage from Clarkson's *Portraiture of Quakerism* illustrates this attitude:

> Music, if it were encouraged by the Society, would be considered as depriving those of maturer years of hours of comfort which they now frequently enjoy in the service of religion. Retirement is considered by the Quakers as a Christian duty. The members, therefore, of this Society are

expected to wait in silence, not only in their places of worship, but occasionally in their families, or in their private chambers, in the intervals of their daily occupations, that, in stillness of heart, and in freedom from the active contrivance of their own wills, they may acquire both directions and strength for the performance of the duties of life. The Quakers, therefore, are of the opinion that, if instrumental music were admitted as a gratification in leisure hours, it would take the place of many of these serious retirements and become very injurious to their interests and their character as Christians.[10]

The same used to be true of the arts in general. Simplicity meant the absence of all that was unnecessary, such as ornamentation in dress, speech, manners, architecture, house furnishings. Dispensing with that which was qualitatively and functionally good was not advocated.

There was also an economic reason for simplicity. William Penn says that "the very trimming of the vain world would clothe all the naked one."[11] John Woolman writes:

As He is the perfection of power, of wisdom and of goodness, so I believe He hath provided that so much labor shall be necessary for men's support in this world as would, being rightly divided, be a suitable employment of their tune; and that we cannot go into superfluities nor grasp after wealth in a way contrary to His wisdom, with out having connection with some degree of oppression and with that spirit which leads to self-exaltatiou and strife, and which frequently brings calamities on countries by parties contending about their claims.[12]

Luxuries and superfluities cause an increase in the amount of labor required of men. They therefore, contribute to oppression

in exacting this labor, and oppression leads to self-exaltation and war. John Woolman would have had small sympathy with the modern argument that in buying luxuries people aid the poor by providing employment. He firmly believed that luxuries are a source of vanity, oppression and ultimately war. If men would remain humble and coufine their desires to real needs, overwork, oppression and strife would disappear and there would be enough of the necessities of life to go around.

In his *Conversations on the True Harmony of Mankind,* John Woolman expresses the intimate connection between his religion and simplicity:

If I put forth my strength in any employ which I know is to support pride, I feel that it has a tendency to weaken those bands which . . . I have felt at times to bind and unite my soul in a holy fellowship with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

From the Quaker dress all the ornamentation, so characteristic of the age of the Stuart kings, was removed. Sober-minded Puritans bore a similar testimony. Later the Quakers continued to dress in the fashion of an earlier time. Eventually this became standardized and was adhered to on the theory that submission to changes in fashion which compelled people to buy new clothes when they did not need them was a useless concession to worldly ways. There is nothing in Quaker theory to support the avoidance of bright colors except, perhaps, their tendency to increase self-esteem. Margaret Fox condemned what she saw to be a growing insistence on drab in the early eighteenth century.

The uniform costume which became habitual was a quick and effective way of telling the world where one stood, and some Quakers claimed that it kept them out of places where they should not go. Once having assumed the Quaker dress they felt compelled to live up to it. Eventually many came to recognize it as an empty

form, modern dress being for the most part plain and functional.

Simplicity in speech was also a distinguisbing mark of the consistent Friend. Ornamental and superfluous words were omitted in speaking and writing. This gave the Quakers a reputation for bluntness. In speaking in meeting or elsewhere oratorical flourishes were discouraged. Attempts at fine writing are seldom found in Quaker books. Reverent restraint is always shown in speaking of the deepest religious experiences. William Penn in listing twelve characteristics of Friends gives as number eight, "They recommend silence by their example, having very few words upon all occasions."

The doctrine of simplicity or absence of superfluity is applicable to all aspects of life. Committees are appointed to see to it that plainness is observed at weddings and funerals. For more than a century tombstones were testified against as superfluous. When they came to be used as markers, they were small and inconspicuous. In the testimony for simplicity in house furnishings the most modern usage has now come around for aesthetic reasons to the early Quaker point of view. Friends objected to the arts not only because they seemed useless but also because they were representations of life, which tended to take the place of life itself. The actor in a theater, for example, expresses feelings which he does not genuinely feel, and the writer of a novel gives an account of events which never took place. Music arouses feelings which find no outlet in action and hence may be harmful. For similar reasons St. Augustine calls singing "this contentment of the flesh, to which the soul must not be given over to be enervated."[13] The arts were thought to cultivate an untrue and misleading picture of reality inclining those who follow them to live in an imaginary, unreal world. The modern motion picture is an example of an art which may have the effect of causing its viewers to live in a realm of dreams.

The early Quakers were certainly mistaken regarding the true nature of the world of imagination. Art has a reality of its own and

a language of its own which can convey meanings beyond the reach of ordinary action or speech. Modern Friends do not hesitate to give to the arts their appropriate place, though long disinclination to appreciate some forms of beauty has left the Society of Friends somewhat dormant aesthetically.

Since Friends condemned superfluities, Quaker businessmen could not sell them and this often limited their business severely. Tailors, hatters, booksellers, funeral directors, printers, silversmiths and merchants were affected by this tenet. John Hall (1637-1719), a Quaker tailor, "was willing to lose all rather than his peace with the Lord."

But business itself could become a waste of time and a superfluity if overindulged in. When its claims became too absorbing the Friend found that he could no longer attend to his religious duties. If religion was his primary interest, he reduced his business. That was most frequently true in the case of traveling ministers. Almost all the Quaker *Journals* contain examples of curtailment of business when it had become so engrossing as to require time that properly belonged to religion.

A few examples taken from the *Journals* will indicate the reasons for this limitation of business. Daniel Wheeler found his business as a seed merchant so prosperous that it interfered with his career as a Friend:

> As I have from time to time endeavoured to dwell near and abide in and under the calming influence of His power, I have been led to believe that something sooner or later would be required as a sacrifice on my part. . . . I therefore fully believe that it will be most conducive to my present peace, as well as future well being, entirely to give up the trade I am at present engaged in, and retire with my family into a small compass."

William Evans (1787-1867), when offered a partnership in a large dry goods business, refused it:

> My present business, being small and one that I understood, was managed with ease. It required little capital and involved me in no engagements that I did not hold the means to meet; so that I was free from anxiety on that account, and at liberty to attend, unincumbered, appointments of the Society or any impression of duty to go to a meeting that I might have. . . . It seemed that if I pursued the prospect of adopting the proposed change of business, that I should be lost to religious society and to the work of religion in my own heart. . . . I looked forward with renewed peace and satisfaction at the path and the business before me, though small, remembering that the earth is the Lord's and the cattle on a thousand hills.[15]

Thomas Shillitoe (1756-1836) speaks of an

> apprehension which at times presented to my mind that the time was fast approaching when I must be willing to relinquish a good business and set myself more at liberty to attend to my religious duties from home. The language which my Divine Master renewedly proclaimed in the ear of my soul, was "Gather up thy wares into thy house for I have need of the residue of thy days."[16]

Thomas Shillitoe had five children to settle in life, but he left that "to the same Almighty Power who had so abundantly cared for us." Nevertheless he writes, "The prospect of relinquishing a good business was at times a close trial to my soul."

Martha Routh whose school was too large for its quarters describes how she went out to look at a larger house:

> As I passed from room to room I was attended by a secret but clear intimation that I was not to entangle myself with a greater number of scholars than the house we already had would accommodate, so I entirely gave up the thought and found peace.[17]

Sometimes Quaker scholars found it necessary to reduce their studies in order to give more time to religion. William Allen, a notable scientist, writes in his *Journal:*

> Rather comforted this morning, it seemed to open on my view with respect to my great attraction to natural science that when I felt it strong and likely to get the ascendency, it would be my duty to indulge less in it, abridge the time devoted to it and fast from it.[18]

John Rutty, Irish physician and author of important medical books, prays:

> Lord deliver from living to eat, drink, sleep, smoke and study.[19]

Simplicity not only meant absence of superfluity in speech. It also meant genuineness and sincerity. Quakers leaned over backwards and sometimes made themselves objects of ridicule in their efforts to tell the exact truth. Fearing overstatement they resorted to understatement. Phrases like "As far as we know," "Nothing appears," were used in answering the Queries. A Friend would not say, "I object," but more probably, "I cannot see my way clear to unite."

One by-product of truth-telling was the initiation of the one price system in business. It was the custom in the seventeenth century for merchants to ask more than they expected to receive and for the customer to offer less than he expected to give. By a process of bargaining a price was agreed on. The Quaker stated at the outset the price which he was prepared to accept. As a result Quaker business flourished. A child could be sent to make a purchase from a Quaker merchant.

The search for an understanding of the creation and insight into its beauty, sincerity and genuineness led many Quakers to scientific pursuits, particularly botany and ornithology. Some became professional scientists. Science seemed closer to reality than did art. With the exclusion of many forms of amusement, it also afforded delight. Superfluities in education were eliminated as completely as other nonessentials. Jonathan Dymond, the Quaker moralist, writes in 1825:

> Science is preferable to literature, the knowledge of things to the knowledge of words.[20]

Verbalism and formalism were opposed in education as they were in religion. Knowledge of nature as God's creation was thought to bring man nearer to the divine than a knowledge of man's works. To quote Dymond again:

> It is of less consequence to man to know what Horace wrote or to be able to criticise the Greek anthology than to know by what laws the Deity regulates the operations of nature and to know by what means those operations are made subservient to the purposes of life.[21]

As a consequence of this scientific interest, which was a direct result of the effort to come closer to sincerity and reality, the list of Quaker scientists is a long one. A. Ruth Fry observes in *Quaker Ways* that between 1851 and 1900 in England a Quaker "had forty-six times more chance of election as a Fellow of the Royal Society than his fellow countrymen."

No testimony resulted in more suffering than the Quaker stand against judicial oaths. Many Friends spent long years in foul prisons and some died there in support of this testimony. The Quaker refused to swear for at least two reasons: (1) swearing was contrary to the command of Christ—"Swear not at all." (Matt. 5:34)—and of James—"But above all things, my brethren, swear not" (James 5:12); (2) it also set up a double standard of truth, one in the courtroom and one outside it, with the implication that untruth would be uttered in the absence of an oath. When Quakers were brought to trial and the evidence against them was faulty or lacking, they could be tendered the oath of allegiance and imprisoned for refusing to take it. By refusing to take an oath, Friends were also disqualified from conforming to customs regulations, from suing for debts, from giving evidence in court, from defending titles to property, and from holding office. Penn's epigram, "People swear to the end they may speak truth; Christ would have them speak truth to the end they might not swear"[22] summed up the Quaker case. Penn points out how futile oaths had been in the past hundred years in England when each ruler required an oath for the support of a particular form of religion which was quickly renounced by many of the clergy when an oath to support another form of religion was required by the next ruler. Finally, after a long struggle, an act was passed by Parliament in 1696 permitting affirmation. But a minority of Friends felt that they could not use the new formula because it contained the word "solemnly," a religious word. For twenty-five years London Yearly Meeting struggled to agree on a form of words which would satisfy everybody. This was an example of the extremely patient efforts made by a majority to satisfy a minority. Finally, in 1722 a formula was agreed upon and its enactment into law was secured.

In Pennsylvania, Penn's Charter allowed affirmation, but it was not until 1725 that a special act of the Colonial Assembly was ratified by the King in Council permitting a form of affirmation which satisfied all Friends. Quaker magistrates who administered oaths were disowned in the early period.

> Joseph Thornton so far condemns his having administered an oath, as to declare himself determined not to accept of any office for the future which may subject him to the ne-

cessity of doing it, and that he now sees the practice inconsistent, both with the rules of the Society and the convictions of his own mind, which this Meeting agrees to accept of as satisfaction for what is past. [Middletown Monthly Meeting, 1762]

After the Revolutionary War laws were enacted imposing a test oath or affirmation abjuring the King and declaring allegiance to the new government. Many Friends suffered for refusing to take this oath, with the result that enforcement of the law was soon given up. Although affirmation was permitted, the Yearly Meeting declared, "We cannot be instrumental in setting up or pulling down any government."

In America the meeting community, acting according to a well-defined code of behavior, reached its highest development in colonial times when the number of competing interests was small and when the meetings were surrounded by a population largely Quaker. The minutes of this period contain many references to the care taken for implementing the testimony for simplicity. A few typical examples follow:

Our Women's Meeting enters a complaint against Elizabeth Bennell for much deviating from plainness in dress and address and frequenting places of musick and dancing. John Milhouse and Liba Ferriss are appointed to joyn women Friends in treating with her and report her disposition at next meeting. [Wilmington, 1778]

N. H. hath given in a paper condemning himself for his playing at cards, which paper the meeting receives, and orders him to read the said paper in the place where he was playing, in the presence of Benjamin Fredd and William Halliday and he is desired to forebear coming to meetings of business until Friends are better satisfied with him as to conversation and sincerity to Truth. [New Garden, 1725]

A Concern having taken hould of this Meeting to suppress pride and it seems to appeare somewhat in women in wearing of hoopes pettecouts which is a grate truble to many friends minds and it is the unanimous sense of this Meeting that none amongst us be in the practis thereof that all our Overseers and other solled friends do inspect into their members and where any appeare to be guilty do deal with them and discharg them either in that of hoops or other indecent dresses. [Concord, 1739]

On two occasions, 1695 and 1723, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting issued warnings to its members to keep clear of all astrologers, sorcerers or anyone professing to practice the black arts. Acknowledgments of error were required of all who had recourse to such persons. Joseph Walter offered an acknowledgment "for going to a man to be informed concerning my horse. I can truly say I had no desire he should make use of any bad art in that affair" (Concord, 1738).

From the earliest days the Quaker meetings were swift to deal with members who used intoxicating beverages to excess or who were engaged in manufacturing or selling them. The following Query was answered beginning in 1755:

Are Friends careful to avoid the excessive use of spirituous liquors, the unnecessary frequenting of taverns and places of diversion and to keep to true moderation and temperance on account of births, marriages, burials and other occasions?

This Query was gradually modified in the direction of greater strictness. "Spirituous liquors" was changed to *all* liquors. The inclusion of *all* liquors in the Query was brought about in Phila-

delphia by a revolt in 1874 of the young men against the older men on the facing benches of the meeting. Joshua L. Baily, writing of this, says: "It was like the House of Commons against the House of Lords and the Commons prevailed."[23] Finally, but not until near the beginning of the twentieth century, was the Query applied to total abstinence.

The ancient doctrine of simplicity might be applied today to diminish the superfluous activities which prevent leisure and relaxation. The multiplication of time-saving gadgets seems, paradoxically, to increase the general busyness and complexity of life. The baton of some invisible conductor seems to be gradually increasing the tempo of life. The solution, as the sages and seers of all the great religions have pointed out, is not to increase our attainments but to decrease our desires; in other words, to follow the path of simplicity.

Notes

1. William Allen, *Life*, London, 1846, I, 41.
2. John Woolman, *Journal*, edited by Janet Whitney, 1950, p. 61.
3. Woolman, *Journal*, p. 118.
4. Woolman, *Journal*, p. 120.
5. Robert Barclay, *Apology*, p. 528.
6. Barclay, *Apology*, p. 523.
7. See William Allen, *Colonies at Home*, 1832.
8. Thomas Carlyle considers the Quaker an ideal type of employer in his *Past and Present*, 1918.
9. John Joseph Gurney, *Chalmeriana*, or Colloquies with Dr. Chalmers, 1853, p. 64.

10. Thomas Clarkson, *Portraiture of Quakerism*, 1808, I, 34.
11. William Penn, *Reflections and Maxims*, 1850, No. 73.
12. Woolman, *Journal*, p. 114.
13. Augustine, *Confessions*, Chap. X, sec. xxxiii.
14. Daniel Wheeler, *Memoirs*, London, 1842, p. 44.
15. William Evans, *Journal*, 1870, pp. 30-31.
16. Thomas Shillitoe, *Journal*, in *Friends Library*, III, 93.
17. Martha Routh, *Journal*, in *Friends Library*, XII, 419.
18. William Allen, *Life*, London, 1846, I, 32.
19. John Rutty, extracts from *The Spiritual Diary*, 1840, p. 9.
20. Jonathan Dymond, *Essays on the Principles of Morality*, 1830, Essay II, Chap. XI.
21. Rutty, *Spiritual Diary*, p. 9.
22. William Penn, *A Treatise on Oaths*, sec. ix.
23. Joshua L. Baily, *The Friend*, Jan. 7, 1915.

EARLY QUAKER TESTIMONIES

EQUALITY

	Religious Background	Regional Background	Troth Claim	Assault on Pride	Loyalty Badge
No Titles	All equal before God	Use of first names more common in north of England	Status doesn't make a person deserve honor	Strong element	First and last name; no "Mr." or "Ms."
No Hat Honor	All equal before God	Because of cold, hats probably kept on more in north of England	Status doesn't make a person deserve honor	Legal problem only when hat kept on in court; anger of parents, etc.	
Leadership, Ministry by All	More democratic than Episcopalians, Puritans; Acts 2: Spirit poured out on women and servants	In Massachussetts., especially high proportion of Quaker ministers were women	Women, servants, youth showed gifts of ministry, leadership	Nobody formally and permanently designated as minister; Fox had no formal status	

HONESTY

	Religious Backgrouud	Regional Background	Troth Claim	Assault on Pride	Loyalty Badge
Oaths Refused	Mt. 5 - "Let your yea be yea ... " Anabaptists, Puritans	In north of England greater stoek in loyalty oaths	Implication that one only tells truth under oath rejected	Quakers could be jailed for refusal to take oath	"Affirmation," not oaths
Single Price = Just Price	Church - idea there was *one* right price				Made some Friends rich
Names of weekday, months	Didn't want them named after Norse, Roman gods; bothered Puritans first			Necessary in order to be Friend	
"Thee," Thou" to individuals		In north and west of England, "thee" was custom; in London, "you" used	Distinction between singular, plural should be maintained despite politesse	Shock – usually "thee" only to servants and children	

SIMPLICITY

	Religious Background	**Regional Background**	**Truth Claim**	**Assault on Pride**	**Loyalty Badge**
Costume	From Puritans	Quakers' farm background; working class	Shouldn't waste money on selves	Friends looked different	Still often simpler than average
Luxury, Games	Puritan self-denial		Shouldn't waste money on selves	Had to exclude selves from some activities	
Art, Music, Drama	Extension of Protestant Reformation	Little local art in north and west of England; Friends objected to bawdy comedy			

Concerns, Leadings, & Testimonies

Friends are sometimes called "practical mystics" because Quaker worship has been the wellspring for service in the community and world. An old story relates the whispered question asked by someone attending meeting for worship for the first time and puzzled by the absence of overt activity: "When does the service begin?" The response: "When the meeting for worship ends."

CONCERNS AND LEADINGS

The impetus for service is often a concern, which, as Friends use the word, is a quickening sense of the need to do something or to demonstrate sympathetic interest in an individual or group, as a result of what is felt to be a direct intimation of God's will. A concern as an impetus to action arises out of Friends' belief that the realm of God can be realized here and now, not just in another place or time. A concern may emerge as an unexpected insight from prayerful study of a problem or situation, such as a concern to support national policies which promote international peace. It may also grow from an anxious interest in the welfare of a person or group that may result in inquiries or practical support.

When it initially arises, a concern may not yet be linked to a proposed course of action, but may simply be a troubled sense that something is awry. Action, when it follows, is often the result of a leading, a sense of being drawn or called by God in a particular direction or toward a particular course of action. Friends speak of "feeling led" or "being called." The leading may be short-term and specific in its fulfillment, or it may involve transformation of one's life and the life of the Meeting.

Friends have long believed it important that leadings be tested before action is taken. The process of testing is a form of spiritual discipline for Friends. A Friend's concern and consequent leading may be an individual matter—something which one person is called to attend to without requiring assistance. In many cases, however, a Friend may receive guidance, aid, and encouragement from other members of the Meeting. Therefore it has long been the practice of Friends to inform their Meeting when they feel major concerns laid upon them.

Meeting Response

The Meeting should give serious consideration to requests from those seeking unity for a proposed course of action—and may not always approve. It may appoint a clearness committee (see p. 29) to help such persons gain clarity on seeking release to act upon a concern. Such a committee may also provide longer-term support, including ongoing testing and re-evaluation. In cases where Meeting approval is given to a proposed course of action, which may result in allowing Friends to be released to follow such leadings, the Meeting often takes responsibility for providing financial assistance and family support, and continues to give oversight until the leading is fulfilled or laid down.

When a Meeting fails to unite with a member's concern, the member generally reconsiders it very carefully. Sometimes the individual and Meeting agree that the concern should be dropped, and the member feels released from responsibility for action since the concern has been laid on the Meeting. At other times a person may continue to feel led to pursue the matter. Where action by the Meeting is not required, the Meeting may be able to encourage the member to go forward even when the Meeting is unable to reach unity.

Where the concern cannot be furthered without Meeting unity, and a member does not feel right about dropping it, the process of discernment continues. Often this process involves the formation of a small group, which includes Friends who have expressed a diversity of perspectives. The concern, generally with a modified proposal for action, may be brought to the Meeting many times before either unity is reached in support of the concern or a decision is made to lay it down.

Submitting the concern to the judgment of the Meeting is of value. The Meeting may be enlightened by the insights of those who bring concerns, and these Friends may be helped, through the sympathetic consideration of the Meeting, to clarify their leadings. The Meeting's care for its members should cause it to take interest in all concerns felt by its members, even when it cannot unite with them or may feel obliged to admonish members against "running ahead of their Guide."

Depending on the nature and scope of the concern, the monthly meeting may wish to lay it before the regional gathering or quarterly meeting by minute accompanied by personal presentation where possible. In like manner, the regional gathering may lay the concern before Interim Meeting or the yearly meeting. A Meeting may also request that a concern,

brought by a member and judged significant by the Meeting, be considered at a threshing session during annual sessions of the yearly meeting.

Individuals also frequently bring concerns to yearly meeting committees. After testing such a concern, a committee may or may not include such concerns in its reports to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, either through Interim Meeting or at yearly meeting sessions.

When a concern is thus presented, the yearly meeting may reach a decision or may provide for further consideration of the matter. Deep sensitivity to divine leading and to the insights of others is required on the part of both individuals and Meetings when controversial concerns are considered. Concerns involving intensely personal witness or public policy demand a special degree of forbearance, and unity may not always be reached.

TESTIMONIES

For more than three hundred years, Friends have acted upon shared concerns through practices which historically have been distinctive and definitive. While the specifics of Friends' practice have varied as times have changed, Friends today continue to have concerns and underlying beliefs similar to those of past generations. The word testimonies is used to refer to this common set of deeply held, historically rooted attitudes and modes of living in the world.

Testimonies bear witness to the truth as Friends in community perceive it—truth known through relationship with God. The testimonies are expressions of lives turned toward the Light, outward expressions reflective of the inward experience of divine leading, differently described by various Friends and in changing eras. Often in the past they were defined specifically, such as the testimony against taking oaths; recently it has become customary to speak of them more generally, as in the testimony of simplicity. Through the testimonies, with that measure of the Light that is granted, Friends strive for unity and integrity of inner and outer life, both in living with ourselves and others and in living in the world.

The advices that follow concerning how we live our lives seek to avoid rigid definitions of these evolving testimonies. Rather, these testimonies are presented within the areas of our lives where they are likely to emerge, as a reference to actions Friends may be called to take. It is just as likely, however, that we will be challenged in different ways to live out such key Quaker testimonies as equality, peace, simplicity, stewardship, and integrity.

Living with Ourselves and Others: Personal Relationships

OUR MEETING COMMUNITY

Meeting communities are enhanced and enlivened by sharing with those closest to us our relationships and spiritual journeys. Here we have the opportunity to demonstrate our personal commitment to our testimonies. Our private lives and personal relationships can be nurtured and enriched by a shared experience of reliance upon God. Such relationships, both positive and negative, are often intense, and we may have difficulty in finding the way forward as individuals and as a community.

Personal relationships are nurtured through our involvement in meetings for worship and business, worship sharing, retreats, workshops, study groups, reading groups, and social and recreational gatherings. Within most Meetings there are gifted individuals and established procedures that can offer discreet, confidential, loving support to those who may need it. When difficulties arise, shared, prayerful, and determined efforts to seek God's will can help us to gain better understanding. It is important for the Meeting to recognize its limitations and to decide when it is appropriate to seek help and support elsewhere.

It is not easy to live as Friends in today's world—to remain true to our heritage and still be sensitive to new situations. It has never been so. Each generation of Friends has been faced with challenges to our ideas about marriage, family life, the education and discipline of children, and social practices. Living our testimonies helps us confront these challenges.

MARRIAGE

From the beginning, Friends have emphasized the equality of marriage partners. George Fox admonished that Friends should be married "as though they were not, both husband and wife free to do God's work and not possessive of one another." Later, Lucretia Mott wrote that "in the marriage union, the independence of the husband and wife will be equal, their dependence mutual,and their obligations reciprocal." Many modern Friends would add, "and some of their roles interchangeable."

Formal declaration of commitment in the presence of God and Friends under the care of the Meeting sets a foundation for a shared life of spiritual wholeness. Such a religious commitment liberates rather than constricts the couple's natural impulses toward passion and spontaneity

and becomes a source of joy, not only for the couple but also for the Meeting and all others in the couple's life. A Meeting's commitment to nurture a marriage continues whether or not that marriage began under its care.

Relationships which were clearly entered into under the covering of the Spirit may nevertheless experience severe strains and difficulties. The Meeting needs to recognize such situations early and be prepared to help with tender understanding and sensitivity. The offering of the services of a clearness committee (see p. 29), which may include members of the couple's own choosing, may be helpful. The Meeting may also help by assisting the couple in finding and paying for professional counseling services such as those associated with the yearly meeting. The couple and those counseling with them may wish to consider together such questions as:

- Have you sought divine guidance for the situation in which you now find yourselves?
- Do commitments to equality, peace, and integrity continue to guide your relationship?
- Have you found it possible to acknowledge that of God in each other as you work through this difficulty?

The Meeting community may not be able to help a couple ameliorate their difficulties. The relationship may have deteriorated beyond the point of reconciliation. Strong feelings may challenge the Meeting community, but should not prevent it from continuing to offer prayerful,sensitive support to all concerned, especially the children, helping them to feel not so much failure as a change in their situation. Among other responses, the Meeting could again offer the services of a clearness committee, to help the couple consider the questions just noted and also such additional ones as:

- Have you been able to make careful and loving efforts to help your children understand what brought about this situation?
- How will you continue to relate with your children to show them that you love them?
- Have you carefully considered equitable ways of handling property and financial matters?

Divorce or the dissolution of any committed relationship is an intimate matter accompanied by strong feelings. The Meeting role is difficult; it should not become intrusive. The need is to be careful and even-handed, keeping in contact with all family members and all parties to the divorce. All concerned need to be encouraged to continue their lives as Friends.

FAMILY LIFE AND THE HOME

Home and family are both a refuge from the hazards of the world and a path to a better world. In the loving home and family, young and old learn about equality and its limitations, simple forms of stewardship, integrity in its many guises,simplicity in all its complexities, and how hard but how satisfying it is to be peaceable. Family members learn that an enduring spirit of equality underlies apparent differences.

Traditional families once constituted the great majority of a Meeting community. Today's membership reflects societal changes resulting in nontraditional families: single parent households, same gender commitments, blended families. Not all Meetings have accepted new family forms, yet they continue to seek understanding of these situations, extending welcome and loving care to all members. Families remain an inspiring and vital ingredient of our Meeting communities.

As a participant in a Quaker family, a child first becomes aware of the presence of God in our lives. Friends are encouraged to worship as a family. Silent grace at meals, and family and bedtime prayers help children develop a sense of God's presence.

A Quaker home seeks to bind its family members together. Such a home cultivates recognition of authority while at the same time allowing each member appropriate freedom to develop fully. Conflict in a family is natural; when lovingly and constructively dealt with, it is an opportunity for growth and sometimes also an affirmation of individual leadings. The natural give-and-take with one's peers begins at home. Learning to handle disagreements in a calm and fair manner prepares the way for solving differences in school, the neighborhood, and the larger society.

It is within the family that we initially seek to live our testimonies. Two of these, simplicity and stewardship, are especially important. A family that strives to practice simplicity will exercise stewardship in the use of its social and material resources. Considerations of stewardship should include decisions regarding the family's financial commitments to its monthly and quarterly or regional meetings and to the yearly meeting. The importance of other questions such as family witness, service to others, the many ramifications of the peace testimony and equality also need to be recognized. Participation of all family members in discussions and decisions regarding joint family possessions and activities helps children develop judgment not only in their personal decisions and the decision-making process, but also with respect to time values and the worth of the activities themselves. These decisions can be the beginning of

one's realization of just how, as a Quaker, one chooses to live out one's life.

Family recreation should promote restoration, solidarity, and spiritual well-being; it should bring balance into life and contribute to wholeness of personality. Such recreation includes reading aloud, gardening, music, and arts and crafts as well as games and sports. All such activities develop fellowship within the family. Both competitive and non-competitive games can teach lessons of fairness, sportsmanship, and self-esteem. Recreational activities should stress cooperation and inclusiveness, and should resist the materialism of our culture.

Fair, loving, and just discipline practiced among all family members brings a sense of security to the children and a sense of order to the adults. The best discipline parents can offer is their own example of conscientious, consistent, Spirit-led conduct day in and day out. Parents have an obligation to be guided by the Inward Teacher in the exercise of their authority. Ideally, the family will unite in seeking such guidance. Assistance in helping each child develop self-discipline is one of a parent's most valuable gifts to children.

The relationship between inward discipline and rules of behavior needs to be continually reviewed with children. Children need to understand that rules are not for them only but that parents too are committed to a disciplined life consistent with the life of the Spirit. Open discussion and the creation of a loving, patient atmosphere in developing rules of behavior is basic to building a Quaker family. If a family has continual problems with rules, a family meeting for clearness may help resolve difficulties. A family should never be embarrassed to seek help from outside the family unit.

SEX AND SEXUALITY

In our personal lives, Friends seek to acknowledge and nurture sexuality as a gift from God for celebrating human love with joy and intimacy. In defining healthy sexuality, Friends are led in part by our testimonies: that sexual relations be equal, not exploitative; that sexual behavior be marked by integrity; and that sex be an act of love, not of aggression. Sexuality is at once an integral and an intricate part of personality. Our understanding of our own sexuality is an essential aspect of our journey toward wholeness. Learning to incorporate sexuality in our lives responsibly, joyfully, and with integrity should be a lifelong process beginning in childhood.

Friends are wary of a preset moral code to govern sexual activity. The unity of the sacred and the secular implies that the sacramental quality of a sexual relationship depends upon the Spirit as well as the intentions of the persons concerned. Our faith can help us to examine relationships honestly, with the strength to reconcile the often conflicting demands of the body, heart, and spirit. Even with its respect for individual leadings, Quakerism does not sanction license in sexual behavior. Precisely because our sexuality is so powerful,seeking the divine will becomes all important. The obedience thus called for is more personal, perhaps more difficult than adherence to an external code. For many Friends, "celibate in singleness,faithful in marriage" has proven consonant with the divine will. Sexual activity, whether or not it includes intercourse, is never without consequence.

Current global population trends and concern for the equitable distribution of resources require us to ask what good stewardship of the earth entails for our decisions about sex and childbearing. Friends approve the concept of family planning and endorse efforts to make pertinent education and services widely available. We are in unity about the value of human life, but not about abortion. We are urged to seek the guidance of the Spirit, to support one another regarding how to end the situations contributing to abortion, and to discern how to act as individuals, family members, and Meetings.

SEX EDUCATION

A Quaker home demands an atmosphere where openness and honesty prevail. It is within the intimate family circle that children establish their identities as persons; an atmosphere which supports their feelings of confidence encourages this development. Children at a very early age develop a sense of their own gender identity and are curious about gender differences. Within a loving and secure family, young children are enabled to ask questions about gender and sex, and parents acquire the confidence to answer these questions.

Sex education needs to begin early with the use of appropriate terms that children understand. The level of understanding is not uniform, and wise parents will judge each child's capacity to absorb answers to questions. Simple, direct answers need be no threat to a child's innocence, and parents do the child no favors by surrounding the subject with fables and mystery. Undramatic introduction of the basic physiological facts of human sexuality is the best preparation for the more sophisticated

education needed during the years of puberty and adolescence.

Sex education for children who have come of age sexually should be provided with sympathy and patience. Such education should include clear, direct information regarding sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS. Parents need to remember their own reactions during this confusing and volatile age. Whatever the sexual mores of the time may be, and whatever adolescent peers may do or say, it is important for parents to help their children look past peer pressure toward what contributes to loving, responsible relationships.

In this, as in all facets of education, adults need to remain teachable. Sex education is not necessarily a one-way street. Parents may learn from their children about societal problems of which they have never been aware. Sensitive listening between parents and children will go a long way in establishing mutual understanding.

ADDICTIVE BEHAVIORS: DRUGS, ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND GAMBLING

George Fox and other early Friends contended that drunkenness was incompatible with a life in the Spirit. William Penn wrote in 1678:

> Drunkenness, or excess in drinking, is not only a violation of God's law, but of our own natures... it fits men for that which they would abhor, if sober.... It renders men unfit for trust or business, it tells secrets, betrays friendship, disposes men to be tricked and cheated; finally it spoils health, weakens the human race, and above all provokes the just God to anger.
>
> William Penn, Address to Protestants

Many other mind-affecting drugs have come to be widely used. Like alcohol, they separate the user from God, family, and friends. Drugs and alcohol easily become the controlling factor of the user's life. Individuals and families are shattered. With the proliferation of some drugs, whole communities have broken down.

The use of tobacco can cause serious illness in both the user and those regularly exposed to second-hand smoke. Smoking deadens the senses; it can come between the user and the Spirit.

Gambling, even in the forms of sweepstakes and lotteries, poses dangers to the individual and the community. It often becomes addictive, bringing ruin to the gambler's family. Gambling harms the community by

fostering a get-rich-quick and something-for-nothing attitude that contributes to an unwholesome materialism. Habitual gambling makes undue demands on the gambler's time and attention, leading to a life inconsistent with our testimonies on simplicity and integrity.

Friends should be clear about the negative personal and social effects of gambling, alcohol, drugs, and tobacco. We should also seek to ensure that the children in our meetings and schools are taught about these effects and the relationship of addictive behavior to issues of social justice such as: the marketing of addictive substances; the violence associated with drugs and alcohol; the root causes of some homelessness; and the negative repercussions of gambling and state supported lotteries.

Addictive behavior, whether manifested in gambling or in the use of drugs, tobacco or alcohol, is a symptom of a disease which cannot be controlled by reason or an act of will. It is a terrible, life-destroying trap from which the addict is not easily extricated. Friends urge their members to manifest intelligent compassion toward victims of addiction, to aid and encourage them in seeking appropriate treatment.

Contemporary Friends acknowledge the wisdom of the Advices of our forebears, to:

> Shun the use of mind-changing drugs and intoxicants, of gambling, and of other detrimental practices that interpose themselves against the Inward Light. It is the experience of Friends that these drugs, intoxicants, and practices lead to a personal willfulness and inability to listen for the will of God.... Keep your recreations from becoming occasions for self-intoxication and avoid those conventional amusements which debase the emotions ....

Advices, see p. 83

Living in the world

Throughout our history Friends have testified that our lives are not meant to conform to the ways of the world, but that we are meant to live in obedience to the Light of Truth within, and through this witness to contribute to the transformation of the world through the Light of Truth.

> Let all nations hear the sound by word or writing. Spare no place, spare no tongue nor pen, but be obedient to the Lord God; go through the world and be valiant for the truth upon earth; tread and trample

> all that is contrary under.... Be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come, that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them. Then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone; whereby in them you may be a blessing, and make the witness of God in them to bless you.
>
> George Fox, 1656

Our testimonies are our guides as we seek to apply George Fox's advice in a world that is beyond his imagining, yet offers myriad opportunities to be valiant for the truth.

Equality

We believe there is that of God in every person, and thus we believe in human equality before God. Friends pioneered in recognizing the gifts and rights of women. Women were ministers and leaders of the early meetings. Friends came more slowly to recognize the evil of slavery and of discrimination in general, and have often been guilty of sharing the prejudices of the broader society. In recent years, Friends have discovered and taken stands against other forms of discrimination and oppression to which they had earlier been insensitive. An element of that insensitivity for some has been a failure to recognize the privileged status many American Friends enjoy. As we continue to seek the Light, ingrained habits and attitudes are subject to searching reexamination.

Social Justice

Enunciation of the principle of equality among human beings in the sight of God is important and necessary, but it is not sufficient. Realization of equality involves such matters as independence and control of one's own life. Therefore Friends aid the nonviolent efforts of the exploited to attain self-determination and social, political, and economic justice, and to change attitudes and practices formerly taken for granted. Friends seek to bring to light structures, institutions, language, and thought processes which subtly support discrimination and exploitation. Beyond their own Society, Friends promote Spirit-led,sense of the meeting decision-making as an instrument of equality. And Friends continue to examine their own attitudes and practices to test whether they contribute as much as they might to social, political, and economic justice.

Friends work with groups that have been victimized by prejudice and exploitation. Too often this work has been difficult because of resistance by the prejudiced and by the exploiters, even within the membership of the Religious Society of Friends. The problem of prejudice is complicated by advantages that have come to some at the expense of others. Exploitation impairs the human quality of the exploiter as well as of the exploited.

Criminal Justice

Many early Friends were victims of an arbitrary and unreasonable criminal justice system. Knowledge of that experience has opened many later Friends to that of God in convicted persons. Friends continue to undertake work in prisons, ministering to the spiritual and material needs of inmates. Believing that the penal system often reflects structural and systemic injustice in our society, Friends seek alternatives. Friends have acted out of the conviction that redemption and restorative justice, not retribution, are the right tasks of the criminal justice system. We strongly oppose capital punishment.

Seeking to heal the wounds of criminal actions, Friends are called to many different kinds of service in the criminal justice system. Prison visiting, victim support services, conflict resolution training for staff of correctional institutions and offenders, and work to abolish the penalty of death are typical of these services. Such service is undertaken in order to restore the victim, the offender, and the community to the greatest extent possible. The healing love, and the trust in divine leading that such disciplined service requires, can greatly assist the rebuilding of broken lives.

Peace

Since all human beings are children of God, Friends are called to love and respect all persons and to overcome evil with good. Friends' peace testimony arises from the power of Christ working in our hearts. Our words and lives should testify to this power and should stand as a positive witness in a world still torn by strife and violence.

The Society of Friends has consistently held that war is contrary to the Spirit of Christ. It stated its position clearly in the Declaration to Charles II in 1660:

> We utterly deny all outward wars and strife, and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatsoever; this is our testimony to the whole world.... The Spirit of Christ, by which we

are guided, is not changeable, so as once to command us from a thing as evil, and again to move us unto it; and we certainly know, and testify to the world, that the Spirit of Christ, which leads us into all truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the Kingdom of Christ nor for the Kingdoms of this world.... Therefore, we cannot learn war any more."

Our historic peace testimony must be also a living testimony, as we work to give concrete expression to our ideals, often in opposition to prevailing opinion. We recognize that the peace testimony requires us to honor that of God in every person, and therefore to avoid not only physical violence but also more subtle forms—psychological, economic, or systemic.

In explaining his unwillingness to serve in the army, George Fox records that "I told them...that I lived in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars." When we find that life and power within ourselves, we are strengthened to be valiant for God's truth, to endure the suffering that may befall our lot.

The Individual and the Peace Testimony

In our individual lives,the peace testimony leads us to accept conflict as an opportunity for loving engagement with those with whom we disagree. That love can often be expressed in creative, nonviolent resolution of the disagreement. When we encounter people of sincere religious conviction whose views are profoundly different from our own, that love can also be manifested by acknowledging the sincerity of the other, while forthrightly expressing our own convictions.

The peace testimony also leads us as individuals to consider seriously our employment, our investments, our purchases, our payment of taxes, and our manner of living as they relate to violence. We must become sensitive to the covert as well as the overt violence inherent in some of our long-established social practices and institutions. We need to avoid, for example, benefiting not only from the manufacture of arms, but also from company practices that do violence to employees, consumers, or the natural world.

Friends and Military Activity

We support those who resist cooperation with conscription and those who oppose war by performing work as conscientious objectors. While

counseling against military service, we hold in love our members who feel they must undertake it.

We work as we are able to alleviate the suffering caused by war. We acknowledge the contribution that military forces have in some situations made to the relief of suffering, but we are troubled by the use of agents of destruction for such purposes,and by the failure of nations to support the creation of nonviolent legions to undertake humanitarian missions.

Alternatives to War

The almost unimaginable devastation that results from modern war makes ever more urgent its total elimination. We would refrain from participating in all forms of violence and repression. We would make strenuous efforts to secure international agreements for the elimination of armaments and to remove the domination of militarism in our society. We would work for greater understanding at all levels, from the kindergarten to the United Nations, of proven techniques for the nonviolent resolution of conflict. And we would promote and assist programs of conversion to peaceful uses of facilities built for war.

World Order

Friends since William Penn have sought to promote institutions of peace. In this era we promote a vision of a new world order that recognizes the essential unity of a human family sharing a fragile planet.

We prefer governing institutions that work face-to-face, within small communities. But we acknowledge the need for governing institutions at all levels, both as supportive, coordinating bodies, and as courts of appeal from the arbitrary actions of lesser jurisdictions.

We are deeply distressed by a world order dominated by heavily armed nation-states. We apply our gifts—of spirit, of intellect, of time and energy—to work for a new international order under God, within which our communities will be able to redirect their resources from overdependence on the manufacture of arms to human needs and the preservation of the earth.

The Individual and the State

The State, Supportive and Coercive

The attitude of Friends toward the state is conditioned by the fact that the state has many facets. As a necessary instrument for meeting human needs and for maintaining an orderly society with justice under law for all, the

state commands respect and cooperation. But when the state acts as a coercive agency resorting to violence,it acts contrary to Quaker principles.

Friends are not opposed to all forms of physical constraint. It is sometimes necessary and proper for peace officers to use minimal forms of physical constraints in dealing with persons who do injury to others or who will not cooperate with just law. But Friends must be watchful for the use of either physical or psychological violence in maintaining public order.

Civic Duties

As a part of their witness to what society may become, Friends are called to participate in public life as voters, public officials, or participants in community groups or professional societies.

As private citizens in the public arena, Friends bear witness by demonstrating respect for others, flexibility, reconciliation, and forgiveness in difficulties, as well as faithful persistence in pursuit of their leadings.

In public office, Friends have an opportunity to bear witness to the power which integrity, courage, respect for others,and careful attention to different points of view can exert in creating a just community. Where there is a conflict between loyalty to God and a seeming necessity for action as a public official, a prayerful search for divine guidance may lead to a suitable resolution of the conflict or to a decision to resign.

Civil Disobedience

From their earliest days Friends have counseled obedience to the state except when the law or ruling involved has appeared to be contrary to divine leading. The state has no claim to moral infallibility. Primary allegiance is to God.

If the state's commands appear to be contrary to divine leading, Friends take prayerful counsel before responding. This usually involves testing one's proposed action by the judgment of the Meeting. When the decision is to refuse obedience to the law or order of the state, in accordance with the dictates of conscience, it is proper for Friends to act openly and to make clear the grounds of their action.

If the decision involves incurring legal penalties, Friends generally have suffered willingly for the sake of their convictions. Friends not personally involved in such actions can strengthen the Meeting community by supporting their fellow members with spiritual encouragement and, when necessary, with material aid.

expenditures are essential and what are discretionary, and about the values that will underlie discretionary expenditures.

Walking Gently on the Earth

We recognize that the well-being of the earth is a fundamental spiritual concern. From the beginning, it was through the wonders of nature that people saw God. How we treat the earth and its creatures is a basic part of our relationship with God. Our planet as a whole, not just the small parts of it in our immediate custody, requires our responsible attention.

As Friends become aware of the interconnectedness of all life on this planet and the devastation caused by neglect of any part of it, we have become more willing to extend our sense of community to encompass all living things. We must now consider whether we should lay aside the belief that we humans are acting as stewards of the natural world, and instead view human actions as the major threat to the ecosystem.

Friends are indeed called to walk gently on the earth. Wasteful and extravagant consumption is a major cause of destruction of the environment. The right sharing of the world's remaining resources requires that developed nations reduce their present levels of consumption so that people in underdeveloped nations can have more, and the earth's life-sustaining systems can be restored. The world cannot tolerate indefinitely the present rate of consumption by technologically developed nations.

Friends are called to become models and patterns of simple living and concern for the earth. Some may find it difficult to change their accustomed lifestyle; others recognize the need and have begun to adopt ways of life which put the least strain on the world's resources of clean air, water, soil, and energy.

A serious threat to the planet is the population explosion and consequent famine, war and devastation. Called on to make decisions to simplify our lives, we may find that the most difficult to accept will be limiting the number of children we have.

Voluntary simplicity in living and restraint in procreation hold the promise of ecological redemption and spiritual renewal.

Stewardship

Stewardship of Economic Resources

All that we have, in our selves and our possessions, are gifts from God, entrusted to us for our responsible use. Jesus reminds us that we must not lay up earthly treasures for ourselves, for where our treasures are,there will our hearts be also. We cannot serve both God and Mammon.

Stewardship is a coming together of our major testimonies. To be good stewards in God's world calls on us to examine and consider the ways in which our testimonies for peace, equality, and simplicity interact to guide our relationships with all life.

> O that we who declare against wars, and acknowledge our trust to be in God only, may walk in the light, and thereby examine our foundation and motives in holding great estates! May we look upon our treasures, the furniture of our houses, and our garments, and try whether the seeds of war have nourishment in these our possessions.
>
> John Woolman, c. 1770

In a world of economic interactions far more complex than John Woolman could have imagined, Friends need to examine their decisions about obtaining, holding, and using money and other assets, to see whether they find in them the seeds, not only of war, but also of self-indulgence, injustice, and ecological disaster. Good stewardship of economic resources consists both in avoidance of those evils and in actions that advance peace, simple living, justice, and a healthy ecosystem. Good stewardship also requires attention to the economic needs of Quaker and other organizations that advance Friends' testimonies.

Right Sharing

Friends worldwide have accepted the idea that the testimony of equality in the economic realm implies a commitment to the right sharing of the world's resources. Friends in comfortable circumstances need to find practical expression of the testimony of simplicity in their earning and spending. They must consider the meaning for their own lives of economic equality and simplicity, and what level of income is consonant with their conclusions. They should consider likewise what portion of that income should be shared beyond the immediate family. That decision entails balancing the social value of self-sufficiency against the social value of greater help for those more needy. It also requires judgments about what

Advices

The principal purpose of a book of discipline is to promote discipleship by giving advice on a broad range of aspects of the life of the Society of Friends. In that sense the entire volume, save the quotations from the writings of Friends, is advices, addressed by the yearly meeting to its many individual members and its many constituent bodies.

With that in mind, we have chosen to abandon the practice of recasting to suit our times a set of highly compact advices received from the earlier generations. But rather than drop the compact version entirely, we have, in support of those who cherish them, reprinted the 1972 version. We trust that doing so will not encourage Friends to rely unduly on the compact advices to the neglect of the volume as a whole.

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These advices were paraphrased from materials contained in the Epistles of the Yearly Meeting of Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, 1694 and 1695.

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Friends are reminded that our Religious Society took form in times of disturbance, and that its continuing testimony has been the power of God to lead men and women out of the confusions of outward violence, inward sickness, and all other forms of self-will, however upheld by social convention. As death comes to our willfulness, a new life is formed in us, so that we are liberated from distractions and frustrations, from fears, angers, and guilts. Thus we are enabled to sense the Inward Light and to follow its leadings. Friends are advised to place God, not themselves, in the center of the universe and, in all aspects of inward life and outward activity, to keep themselves open to the healing power of the Spirit of Christ.

Take heed, dear Friends, to the promptings of love and truth in your hearts. Seek to live in affection as true Friends in your Meetings, in your families, in all your dealings with others, and in your relationship with outward society. The power of God is not used to compel us to Truth; therefore, let us renounce for ourselves the power of any person over any

other and, compelling no one, seek to lead others to Truth through love. Let us teach by being ourselves teachable.

Keep to the simplicity of Truth. Seek for its manifestations in prayer, in reading matter, in the arts, and in all experiences of daily life. Shun the use of mind-changing drugs and intoxicants, of gambling, and of other detrimental practices that interpose themselves against the Inward Light. It is the experience of Friends that these drugs, intoxicants, and practices lead to a personal willfulness and inability to listen for the will of God. Avoid in daily work those involvements and entanglements that separate us from each other and from God. Keep your recreations from becoming occasions for self-intoxication and avoid those conventional amusements which debase the emotions by playing upon them. These, too, lead to self-absorption and to forgetfulness that each person's humanity is shared by all persons. Live and work in the plainness and simplicity of a true follower of Christ.

11

Our Religious Society endures as a community of friends who take thought for outward society by first taking care of one another. Friends are advised to maintain love and unity, to avoid tale-bearing and detraction, and to settle differences promptly and in a manner free from resentment and all forms of inward violence. Live affectionately as friends, entering with sympathy into the joys and sorrows of one another's daily lives. Visit one another. Be alert to give help and ready to receive it. Bear the burdens of one another's failings; share the buoyancy of one another's strengths.

Remember that to everyone is given a share of responsibility for the meeting for worship, whether through silence or through the spoken word. Be diligent in attendance at meetings and in inward preparation for them. Be ready to speak under the leadings of the Light. Receive the ministry of others in a tender spirit and avoid hurtful criticism. In meetings for business, and in all duties connected with them, seek again the leadings of the Light, keeping from obstinacy and from harshness of tone or manner; admit the possibility of being in error. In all the affairs of the Meeting community, proceed in the peaceable spirit of Pure Wisdom, with forbearance and warm affection for each other.

Use your capabilities and your possessions not as ends in themselves but as God's gifts entrusted to you. Share them with others; use them with humility, courtesy and affection. Guard against contentiousness and love of power; be alert to the personalities and the needs of others. Show

loving consideration for all creatures, and cherish the beauty and wonder of God's creation. Attend to Pure Wisdom and be teachable.

III

Friends are reminded that it is the experience and testimony of our Society that there is one teacher, namely Christ; and that in that Spirit there are no distinctions between persons, nor any reason of age, sex, or race that elects some to domination. Live in love and learn from one another. Combativeness in family life, whereby one strives to assert a supremacy of will over another, is not compatible with the conviction that there is that of God in everyone. Amid the growing distempers of social existence, Friends are urged to maintain our witness of Truth, simplicity, and nonviolence, and to test our personal lives by them.

The union of two in marriage having a religious basis, any who contemplate it should seek divine guidance, and any who enter into marriage should seek this guidance without ceasing. Within the family, adults and youth, whether formally in membership or not, should instruct one another by example in the way of life which our Religious Society has professed, seeking in all things the Inward Light as the only certain alternative to an unfriendly struggle of wills. Friends are advised to maintain closeness in their family life and, avoiding distractions and contentions, to make their homes places of peace.

The Spirit of Christ can lead parents to wise counsel for their children in education, reading, recreation, and social relationships, while it can also lead children to wise counsel for their parents in these and other aspects of life. If counsel is unwelcome and if difficulties arise, persevere both in prayer and in a sense of humor. Friends are advised in all things to trust in the Light and to witness to it in daily living.

Accept with serenity the approach of each new stage of life. Welcome the approach of old age, both for oneself and for others, as an opportunity for wisdom, for detachment from turmoils, and for greater attachment to the Light. Make provisions for the settlement of all outward affairs while in health, so that others may not be burdened and so that one may be freed to live more fully in the Truth that shall stand against all the entanglements, distractions, and confusions of our times.

IV

Bring the whole of your life under the healing and ordering of the Holy Spirit, remembering that there is no time but this present. Friends are

reminded that we are called, as followers of Christ, to help establish the Kingdom of God on earth. In witnessing to the Inward Light, guard against religious intolerance. Strengthen a sense of kinship with everyone and make service, not self-promotion, the chief aim of our outward lives as Friends, as employees or as supervisors, and as citizens.

Let the sense of kinship inspire us to unceasing efforts toward a social order free of violence and oppression, in which no one's development is hindered by meager income, insufficient education, or too little freedom in directing his or her own affairs. Friends are advised not only to minister to those in need, but also to seek to know the facts of social and economic ills so as to work for the removal of those ills. Let the Friendly testimony that there is that of God in everyone lead us to cherish every human being regardless of race or class, and to encourage efforts to overcome prejudices and antagonisms. Friends are advised to cleanse themselves of all prejudice.

Be faithful in maintaining our testimony against all war as contrary to the spirit and teaching of Christ. Every human being is a child of God with a measure of God's Light. War and other instruments of violence and oppression ignore this reality and violate our relation with God. Keep primary our Friends' concern for the elimination of combat in the outward world as in our personal lives. Friends are advised to live in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars. Friends are further advised to aid in all ways possible the development of international order and understanding.

> *Dear Friends, keep all your meetings in the authority, wisdom and power of Truth and the unity of the blessed Spirit. Let your conduct and conversation be such as become the Gospel of Christ. Exercise yourselves to have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward all people. Be steadfast and faithful in your allegiance and service to your Lord, and the God of peace be with you.*
>
> *Elders of Balby, Yorkshire,* 1656

From: Margaret Hope Bacon, *As The Way Opens.* Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, © 1980 (OP)

Chapter 7

QUAKER WOMEN AS ABOLITIONISTS

Opposition to slavery was a deep and abiding aspect of Quaker belief from earliest days. George Fox did not go so far as to advocate the freeing of the slaves, but he was concerned about Quaker slaveholding in Barbados, and he urged masters to provide educational and spiritual nourishment to their black servants. In 1688, the Germantown Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (a group composed about equally of Quakers and Mennonites) wrote the first declaration against slavery in the New World:

There is a liberty of conscience here which is right and reasonable and there ought to be likewise a liberty of the body, except for evil doers, which is another case. But to bring men hither or to rob and sell them against their will, we stand against.

By 1776, the Quakers had made it obligatory for persons who wanted to remain members of the Society of Friends to give up their slaves, and, by 1780, they had persuaded the state of Pennsylvania to outlaw slavery. Many Quakers were instrumental in forming the *Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery, the Relief of Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage; and for Improving the Condition of the African Race,* the first abolition society in the world, which lobbied in the newly created U.S. Congress against the foreign slave trade and helped to bring about the abolition of slavery in most of the northern states. Many branches were also formed in the south. Southern Quakers were as opposed to slavery as those in the North and fought bravely against it.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was becoming apparent that the gradualist methods of abolishing slavery were not going to work. With the invention of the cotton gin, the economy of the deep South began to revolve heavily around slave labor, while states such as Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina became slave-breeding states to serve the need in the deeper southern states. Horror stories began to find their way North of black families separated for breeding purposes, of men and women sold South, of women used by their masters for sexual gratification. Whether these incidents were the exception or the rule, it was shocking that they occurred at all. Quaker women in particular were deeply upset by these stories and began to cast about for some method to register their position on slavery and to hasten its end.

Two schemes in which many Quaker women were involved in the early part of the nineteenth century were the boycotting of slave products and the colonization movement. The Free Produce Society urged its members to abstain from the use of cotton and of sugar and even paper made from cotton fabric. Free produce stores sold substitute products and several abolitionists devoted themselves to improving the process 'of making sugar from beets. The Colonization Society urged the return of free blacks to Africa, where they could not only establish a beachhead for their slave brothers and sisters but also bring the supposed benefits of a Christian civilization to a pagan land. Benjamin Lundy, editor of a newspaper called *The Genius of Universal Emancipation,* was one of the chief promoters of this idea.

In 1831, two events occurred that gave the abolitionist movement a more radical turn. One was the slave uprising led by Nat Turner in Virginia. The other was the founding by William Lloyd Garrison of a new publication, *The Liberator,* criticizing the colonization scheme and calling for immediate emancipation. The slave uprising heightened Southern opposition to

abolitionists at the very time that Garrison began to lead a fiery crusade. The result was a polarization of the nation on the subject of slavery which continued through the next three decades.

Women's roles in the new movement were at first subordinate. When leading abolitionists met in Philadelphia in 1833 to found the American Anti-Slavery Society, they permitted women to attend the meeting and even to speak from the floor, but they did not invite them to become members. Instead, under the leadership of Lucretia Mott, the women formed the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society. Similar groups were formed elsewhere. In 1837, the first National Convention of Anti-Slavery Women met in New York City and pledged itself to circulate a petition and collect one million signatures opposing slavery in the District of Columbia and its extension to new territories.

Many Quaker women were members of this group. Two of these, Angelina and Sarah Grimke, were destined to stir up a national cauldron of controversy within the next year. Daughters of a wealthy slaveholding South Carolina family, the Grimke sisters had always been revolted by slavery and had fled to Philadelphia to escape it. They joined the Society of Friends and began to speak and write against the peculiar institution. Their speeches were first billed for women only, but so great was the reputation of Angelina for eloquence that men began to slip into the backs of the halls to hear them. By the summer of 1837, they were actually speaking to mixed audiences ("promiscuous audiences" was the quaint term used in that day), and they . became the object of consternation among the vast majority of clergymen still obedient to Saint Paul's stricture against women speaking in public. The Council of Congregational Ministers of Massachusetts issued a pastoral letter warning ministers and their congregations against the danger inherent in "itinerant female lecturers." Mobs began to collect where the sisters spoke to riot and throw stones.

In response, Sarah Grimke wrote a series of articles, published as a pamphlet entitled *The Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Women,* which were in many ways the clarion call to the coming struggle:

I ask no favors of my sex. I surrender not our claim to equality. All I ask of our brethren is that they will take their feet from off our necks, and permit us to stand upright on the ground which God has designed for us to occupy.

Many women responded to the courage of the Grimkes, but some of the men within the abolitionist cause feared that introducing the "women issue" along with the slavery issue would cause the whole movement to collapse. Among critics of the Grimke sisters were John Greenleaf Whittier and Theodore Weld, a Presbyterian minister turned abolitionist, who was engaged to marry Angelina Grimke. Not surprisingly, Angelina found his opposition hard to bear, and shortly after her marriage to him in May of 1838, ill health compelled her to retire from the speaker's platform.

There was, however, another woman to take her place. Abby Kelley, a fiery young Quaker of Irish background, began her public speaking career just as Angelina ended hers. She began, almost literally, in flames. The night after she spoke, an angry mob burned down Pennsylvania Hall, built by Philadelphia abolitionists as a place to hold meetings. From that day on she was a symbol of militant advocacy of woman's right to speak for her slave sisters. Trouble grew within the American Anti-Slavery Society when she dared to assert her right to membership in that body. In 1840, when she was placed on a committee, it caused a split between the Garrisonians, who supported her, and the more clerical-minded, who opposed her. For the next few years, Abby was followed by angry mobs wherever she went, and she never lived down the epithet of "Jezebel," hurled at her by an angry minister in Connecticut.

Later in the summer of 1840, a World's Anti-Slavery Convention was held in London. Thanks to the pioneering of the Grimke sisters and Abby Kelley, the American delegation included a number of women: Lucretia Mott and Sarah Pugh, both Quakers, Mary Grew, Abby Kimber, and Ann Phillips. The British abolitionists, however, were not prepared to seat the women as delegates but relegated them to a balcony. Here William Lloyd Garrison joined them in protest. A young bride attending the conference with her husband found herself also on the balcony. She sought out Lucretia Mott who told her that women had the same right to speak in public as men. From that day on the bride, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, began to devote her thoughts to the need to do something for women's rights as an indispensable aspect of human rights.

The Society of Friends as a whole was not very supportive of these courageous women. In the depths of a period of quietism, and still reeling from the effects of the Hicksite separation, the Quakers distrusted the various antislavery societies where their members were bound to mingle with "the world's people." The inflammatory rhetoric of the Garrisonians and the confrontation tactics, toward which the more radical abolitionists were beginning to move, also upset the Friends. They feared the resulting polarization would lead to bloodshed, as, in fact, it did. Their opposition to the Garrisonians sprang also, it must be confessed, from the somewhat conservative position they had come to occupy in the business establishments of such cities as New York and Philadelphia. Most Northern businessmen were opposed to the antislavery agitation, since they did business with the South and the Quaker business men were influenced by their colleagues.

The abolitionists in turn were not very happy with the Religious Society of Friends, its current lukewarm attitude toward antislavery, and its ambivalence toward those blacks who wanted to join Meeting. In both Philadelphia and New York, special benches were set aside in Quaker Meetinghouses for black worshippers, and several of the blacks who applied for membership were given a cold reception.

As a result, many of the Quaker pioneers in the antislavery movement were either disowned from membership in the Society or withdrew themselves. Angelina Grimke was disowned for marrying "out of Meeting" when she married Presbyterian Theodore Weld, but she had intended to renounce the Society anyway. Isaac T. Hopper, a New York Quaker, was disowned and his daughter Abby Hopper Gibbons withdrew. Abby Kelley and Elizabeth Buffum Chace both withdrew, Abby in the process of being disowned. Lucretia Mott managed to retain her membership in the Society but often had to walk a fine line.

By far, the most influential of the Quaker women abolitionists, Lucretia Mott, was often called the Black Man's Goddess for her prominence in the abolition movement. Born on Nantucket of pioneering stock, she attended Nine Partners School in Poughkeepsie, New York, served briefly as a teacher and married a teacher on the boys' side, James Mott. The couple lived in Philadelphia from 1811 on and both were active in abolitionist and Quaker circles. Lucretia was an eloquent preacher and an ardent reformer of great vision. She supported Irish handloom weavers when they struck, established workshops for poor women, befriended the Seneca Indians, and helped with the establishment of the Female Medical College, as well as the Female College of Design. She and James together served on the committee that urged the creation of Swarthmore College, and both were active in the Pennsylvania Peace Society.

The mother of five children, Lucretia was famous as a fine housewife and gracious hostess as well as for her many reform activities. Visiting abolitionists, black or white, were always welcome to a place at her dining table and a bed in one of her upstairs chambers. She practiced social integration years before it was acceptable and led a campaign to integrate seating on a Philadelphia trolley line. A religious liberal, she believed that there was good to be found in all of

the world's religions and that men and women must free themselves from the narrow bonds of sectarianism. Her influence gave the early women's rights movement a strong Quaker orientation.

A source of inspiration to her sister Quakers and abolitionists was Sarah Mapps Douglass, a black Quaker school teacher, an active member of the Female Anti-Slavery Society, and a skilled antislavery orator. Despite continuing snubs, she attended Quaker Meeting regularly and worked with those Quakers who were attempting to change the Society's attitude toward antislavery agitation and black membership. Once when she attended a Friends Meeting in New York City, no one spoke to her except one matron who asked, "Friend, does thee go out to housecleaning?" Abolitionists, on the other hand, supported her warmly, took over the financial backing of her school for black children, and helped her get an appointment as head of the primary girls department at the Institute for Colored Youth, a Quaker supported school, at the time, which is now Cheyney State College.

The antislavery movement depended heavily on the impact of its women orators. Abby Kelley continued to barnstorm for the cause, covering New York State, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. In 1845, she married Stephen S. Foster, a radical abolitionist as fiery as herself and a courageous nonresistant. Together they devoted their lives to antislavery agitation until emancipation was finally proclaimed; then they began to lobby for land for the freed slaves.

Abby had the knack of inspiring other young women to "take the field" as antislavery lecturers. Among her proteges were Lucy Stone, Sallie Holley, and Susan B. Anthony. In 1845, she invited a young woman, Jane Elizabeth Hitchcock to travel with her as companion and to learn to be an antislavery lecturer. A young Quaker, Benjamin Jones, accompanied the two women when they went to Ohio, and eventually Lizzie and Benjie were married. Abby undertook to raise money for the support of the *Anti-Slavery Bugle,* a new antislavery publication covering eastern Ohio and central New York, and put the young couple in charge as co-editors. After this experience, Jane (Lizzie) found her ability as a writer and published a book, the *Young Abolitionists,* illustrating antislavery ideas for children. She later became well known as a lecturer on abolition and on women's rights. Her championship of a property law for married women in Ohio at the eve of the Civil War was a lasting contribution to women's rights.

A much younger woman to make her name as an antislavery lecturer was Anna Elizabeth Dickinson. Daughter of orthodox Quakers, she grew up in Philadelphia, attended Friends Select School and Westtown Boarding School, and at the age of eighteen began to speak out against slavery. Her beauty, earnestness, and extreme youth made her an immediate success, and for the next four years she spoke to packed houses and was called the Joan of Arc of the Union cause. She campaigned for the Republicans but was critical of Lincoln for his vacillation over emancipation. So important was she as a vote-getter at the age of twenty-one that Lincoln sought and obtained a personal interview with her in order to try to persuade her to change her mind.

Unfortunately, Anna's subsequent career never came up to the high level of her first years. She tried more lecturing, writing, and acting, and eventually wrote several plays that were produced on Broadway. She was never again a success, however, and died a bitter and disappointed woman.

The Civil War was a time of great troubles for American Quakers in general, and the Quaker women abolitionists in particular. However half-hearted the President seemed about emancipation, it remained one of the war goals of the Union side. But for Quakers to support the war meant turning their backs on pacifism. Some women, like Lucretia Mott and Sarah Pugh, remained true to nonresistance and kept aloof during the war. Others, including Anna Dickinson, Abby Hopper Gibbons, and Cornelia Hancock, threw themselves into support of the struggle,

raised money for the Union cause, and in some cases became battlefield nurses. Still others, like Susan B. Anthony, tried to steer a middle course.

Elizabeth Comstock, whom we have met before, was also prominent as an abolitionist. Elizabeth spent most of her time during the war years visiting army hospitals and the camps for the contraband, or refugee slaves. After the war, she threw herself into a concern for the freedmen, helping to organize and to raise money for freedmen relief efforts, traveling as far as England in her fundraising efforts. When large numbers of Southern blacks migrated to Kansas in 1879, Elizabeth Comstock went to that state to administer relief and was for two years secretary to the Kansas Freedmen's Association. She visited President James Garfield to urge his help for the blacks in Kansas and continued to speak and write on their behalf until failing health intervened.

Another Michigan Friend active in abolition was Laura Haviland. Like some of her sisters, Laura withdrew from the Religious Society of Friends over the issue of opposition to antislavery agitation and did not rejoin it until 1872. With her husband, she helped to organize the first antislavery society in Michigan and to play an active role in the Underground Railroad. After her husband's death in 1845, she began to travel widely to speak against slavery. During the Civil War, she also visited the army camps and refugee slave communities and afterwards became a paid agent for the Michigan Freedmen's Aid Commission. With Elizabeth Comstock, she went to Kansas in 1879 to aid the large black population that had moved there. Later she turned her attention to such other reform issues as temperance, suffrage, and the founding of a home for wayward girls.

Supporting such women as Hancock, Comstock and Haviland were parent freedmen associations in such major cities as Philadelphia and New York. Sarah Pugh, who was president of the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society for many years and accompanied Lucretia Mott to the London Conference in 1840 and lectured against slavery in the 1850's, was one of those active in the support organizations. She was, at the same time, increasingly drawn to the women's rights issue and often accompanied the aging Lucretia Mott on her many trips, making the path smooth for her. Encouragement of women such as Sarah Pugh made the active work for the freedmen throughout the South and the Midwest possible.

Most of the Quaker women abolitionists, like Sarah, moved from a burning concern for the rights of the blacks to a concern for the rights of women. Denied an opportunity to follow what they believed to be a Divine leading to work against slavery, they became aware of the fetters which society's attitude toward women placed on all members of their sex. Human liberation, they saw, would never be possible while women occupied a subordinate position. The rights of all were bound up together. The full consequences of the concept of "that of God in everyone" were at last coming into sight. Like prophets everywhere, these women were not fully appreciated by the majority of Quakers, nor the majority of women yet they forged ahead against a storm of criticism and abuse, aware that they were obedient to the Light within. It remained only for another generation of Quaker women to bring to national attention the implications of their courageous stand.