

THE NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING
OF THE
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



"I know histhry isn't thrue, Hinmissy, because it ain't like what I see ivry day in Halsted Street. If any wan comes along with a histhry iv Greece or Rome that'll show me th' people fightin', gettin' dhrunk, makin' love, gettin' married, owin' th' grocery man an' bein' without hard coal, I'll believe they was a Greece or Rome, but not befur."

— Dunne, Finley Peter,
OBSERVATIONS BY MR. DOOLEY,
New York, 1902





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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1661

Friend George Rofe, visiting the New World colonies from England, called for all the Quakers of New England to assemble for a “genrall meeting” on Aquidneck Island. This meeting would last four days and it has been said that this was the origin of the tradition of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends.¹

1. The oldest yearly meetings in America other than this one are:

Baltimore (1672)

Philadelphia (1687)

New York (1695)

North Carolina (1698)

Virginia (1702)

Ohio (1813)

Indiana (1821)

The first remaining account we have in our Yearly Meeting Record Book is in the year 1683, which is to say, after 21 years of meetings. Is it possible that these early meetings had gone unrecorded, or have the records merely been lost to the ravages of time?



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1662

In Flushing, New York, Friend John Bowne was imprisoned and fined for allowing fellow [Quakers](#) to meet in the house he had erected in the previous year.



When the prison door was left unlocked so he might escape, Friend John chose not to avail himself of the opportunity. Instead he would appeal the case to the corporate offices of the Dutch West India Company. Although Governor Peter Stuyvesant would inform the Quaker that he might get off the ship anywhere he chose, and Friend John got off the vessel in Ireland, he then traveled through England to Holland for his trial — the result being that the Directors would instruct Governor Peter Stuyvesant that in the future he should overlook such cases where they did not directly interfere with local government: “The consciences of men at least ought ever to remain free and unshackled.” This was part of the struggle which now travels under the rubric “Flushing Remonstrance,” a significant precedent for the 1st Amendment to [the US Constitution](#).



Friend William Penn would visit the Bowne home in Flushing.

In 1694 Friend John would participate in the erection of a regular meetinghouse for the Flushing Monthly Meeting. Visitors to this structure would include Friend John Woolman, plus once some gentleman stopped by who was calling himself George Washington. These walls would witness the beginnings of organization for the purpose of the elimination of American race slavery. (This structure still stands, as the oldest house of worship in the state of New York and the 2d oldest Quaker meetinghouse in America.)

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



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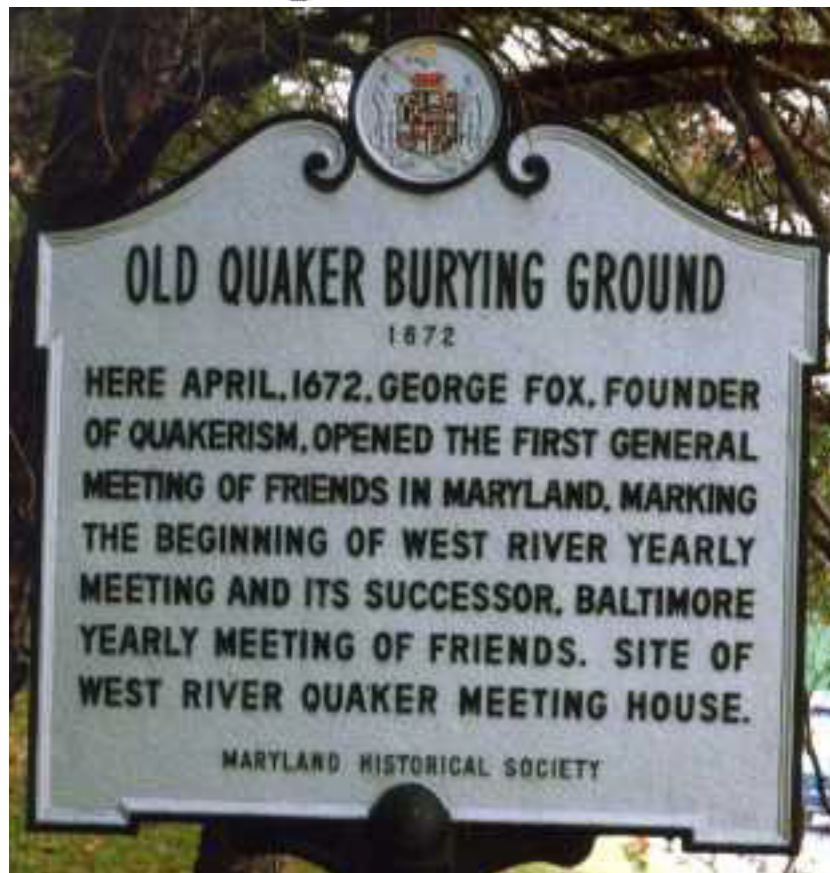
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1672

Friend [George Fox](#) rode through the colonies of the Eastern seaboard of the North American continent, especially in and around Southern [Maryland](#), sleeping out as he had done in his youth in his leathern suit in northern England (he reports, unsurprisingly, that sleeping on frozen ground makes one “very cold”), primarily to counter the influence on American [Quakers](#) that was being exercised by John Perrot of Boston, which he among others regarded as excessive; however, he displayed a special interest in obtaining conversations with Native Americans, since he presumed that these people whom he believed to be totally unfamiliar with the Gospel might be able to instruct him as to the extent to which what he knew as the “saving light of Christ” is quite universal, that is, enlightens everyone and is not necessarily mediated by the Holy Scripture of a particular culture, may be assisted by but does not require close familiarity with Gospel manifestations of the saving light, is not contingent upon any very particularly cultural heritage.

George Fox



Friend George attended several established meetings, including one called “Patuxent.” He was present at the



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General Meeting of Friends on West River, which would become the Baltimore [Yearly Meeting](#). He would write of staying at the home of James Preston, son of the Richard Preston who had died in 1669. On one occasion, returning from a trip on horseback with James Preston, the home was found to have been burned and his chest destroyed, “due to a careless wench.”

Catholic *conquistadores* of the 16th Century, wherever anything in the faith of the Aztecs or the Incas reminded them of some portion of their own rites and rituals, detected only the mocking spirit of the Devil; this Quaker missionary of the 17th Century, on the other hand, was prepared to experience in any similarity a universality of the human spiritual experience of the Divine. After all, if the light came only from Holy Scripture, then how did Father Abraham in the BIBLE get the light? The scripture that tells us about his life could not have existed during his lifetime! Abraham’s seed was blessed not because Abraham adhered to scripture but, according to Genesis 22:16, because he “obeyed my voice.” Fox had never been able to have such conversations with people in England, could not even have them with European intrusives in America, because any noticed similarities might perfectly well be explained as due to commonalities of cultural background rather than commonalities of human nature. In his journal Fox records about a dozen such encounters, some of them one-on-one conversations, others at large gatherings. While he did use these encounters as an opportunity to witness to his gospel message,² Fox also made careful essays at comparing native reports of spiritual experiences with his own.³ It was Fox’s belief, or his trust, according to the assertion in Joel 2:28 that the Holy Spirit is poured out upon **all flesh**, that even when the scriptures were not known or the gospel preached, the hold of the Holy Spirit could be detected upon the human soul. The question he kept asking his Native American informants was a simple one:

Did they know something within them which reproved them when they did wrong?

All Fox’s encounters were friendly and affirmative, but on several occasions they went beyond this and created an ongoing relationship between local Quaker groups and Native Americans. One such occasion was when Fox twice addressed a group of leaders in Maryland:

... and they heard the word of the lord and did confess to it. And what I said to the kings and emperor ... I desired them to speak to their people, that God is setting up his tabernacle of witness in their wilderness countries and setting up his glorious ensign and standard of righteousness. And they asked when we had meetings and they said they would come to them and were very loving.



2. [George Fox](#). JOURNAL, ed. John Nickalls. Cambridge, England: University Press, 1952, page 643.

3. [George Fox](#). JOURNAL, ed. John Nickalls. Cambridge, England: University Press, 1952, page 642.



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The other such occasion was when Fox addressed about a hundred natives and blacks for about two hours, on Shelter Island off Long Island:



...they said all was truth and did make a confession of it after the meeting. So I have set up a meeting among them once a fortnight, and Friend Joseph Silvester is to read the Scriptures to them, negroes and Indians.... A great desire there is and a great love and satisfaction were among the people, blessed be the Lord. His name spreads and will be great among the nations and dreadful among the heathen [Malachi 1:14].

During this year Friend [George Fox](#) also attended the [Yearly Meeting](#) of Friends in New-England at the home of Governor [William Coddington](#), who had become a Quaker. While on this visit, George Fox held a meeting in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) “in a great barn, which was thronged with people.” This was just after the yearly meeting, and in all probability was the immediate cause of the challenge that would be sent by the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) to him and [Friends](#) with him, to debate fourteen propositions which he had drawn up in relation to Friends’ doctrines.

“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION, THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY

June 13, Thursday (Old Style): Friend [George Fox](#) had returned from Long Island to [Maryland](#) shore, and then had embarked on a longer journey, arriving on this day at Rhode Island (that’s merely a moderately sized island in [Narragansett Bay](#), rather than the extensive “Providence Plantations” affiliated with it on the mainland shore which are now referred to collectively as the “State of [Rhode Island](#) and Providence Plantations”). George Bishop’s NEW ENGLAND JUDGED says the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) which he was visiting on this island had been in existence since 1661.



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After Friends were gone to their several habitations, we stayed some days upon the island; had meetings in several parts thereof, and good service for the Lord. When we were clear of the island, we returned to Oyster Bay, waiting for a wind to carry us to Rhode Island, which was computed to be about two hundred miles. As soon as the wind served, we set sail. We arrived there on the thirtieth day of the Third month, and were gladly received by Friends. We went to the house of Nicholas Easton, who at that time was governor of the island; where we rested, being very weary with travelling.

On First-day following we had a large meeting, to which came the deputy-governor and several justices, who were mightily affected with the Truth. The week following, the Yearly Meeting for all the Friends of New England and the other colonies adjacent, was held in this island; to which, besides very many Friends who lived in those parts, came John Stubbs from Barbadoes, and James Lancaster and John Cartwright from another way.

This meeting lasted six days, the first four days being general public meetings for worship, to which abundance of other people came. For they having no priest in the island, and so no restriction to any particular way of worship; and both the governor and deputy-governor, with several justices of the peace, daily frequenting the meetings; this so encouraged the people that they flocked in from all parts of the island. Very good service we had amongst them, and Truth had good reception.

I have rarely observed a people, in the state wherein they stood, to hear with more attention, diligence, and affection, than generally they did, during the four days; which was also taken notice of by other Friends. These public meetings over, the men's meeting began, which was large, precious, and weighty. The day following was the women's meeting, which also was large and very solemn.

These two meetings being for ordering the affairs of the Church, many weighty things were opened, and communicated to them, by way of advice, information, and instruction in the services relating thereunto; that all might be kept clean, sweet and savoury amongst them. In these, several men's and women's meetings for other parts were agreed and settled, to take care of the poor, and other affairs of the Church, and to see that all who profess Truth walk according to the glorious gospel of God.

** When this great general meeting was ended, it was somewhat hard for Friends to part; for the glorious power of the Lord, which was over all, and His Blessed Truth and life flowing amongst them, had so knit and united them together, that they spent two days in taking leave one of another, and of the Friends of the island; and then, being mightily filled with the presence and power of the Lord, they went away with joyful hearts to their several habitations, in the several colonies where they lived.*



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When Friends had taken their leave one of another, we, who travelled amongst them, dispersed ourselves into our several services, as the Lord ordered us. John Burnyeat, John Cartwright, and George Pattison went into the eastern parts of New England, in company with the Friends that came from thence, to visit the particular meetings there; whom John Stubbs and James Lancaster intended to follow awhile after, in the same service; but they were not yet clear of this island. Robert Kidders and I stayed longer upon this island; finding service still here for the Lord, through the great openness and the daily coming in of fresh people from other colonies, for some time after the general meeting; so that we had many large and serviceable meetings amongst them.

During this time, a marriage was celebrated amongst Friends in this island, and we were present. It was at the house of a Friend who had formerly been governor of the island: and there were present three justices of the peace, with many others not in profession with us. Friends said they had never seen such a solemn assembly on such an occasion, or so weighty a marriage and so comely an order. Thus Truth was set over all. This might serve for an example to others; for there were some present from many other places.

** After this I had a great travail in spirit concerning the Ranters in those parts, who had been rude at a meeting at which I was not present. Wherefore I appointed a meeting amongst them, believing the Lord would give me power over them; which He did, to His praise and glory; blessed be His name for ever! There were at this meeting many Friends, and diverse other people; some of whom were justices of the peace, and officers, who were generally well affected with the Truth. One, who had been a justice twenty years, was convinced, spoke highly of the Truth, and more highly of me than is fit for me to mention or take notice of.*

Then we had a meeting at Providence, which was very large, consisting of many sorts of people. I had a great travail upon my spirit, that it might be preserved quiet, and that Truth might be brought over the people, might gain entrance, and have a place in them; for they were generally above the priest in high notions; and some of them came on purpose to dispute. But the Lord, whom we waited upon, was with us, and His power went over them all; and His blessed Seed was exalted and set above all. The disputers were silent, and the meeting was quiet and ended well; praised be the Lord! The people went away mightily satisfied, much desiring another meeting.

FOX'S JOURNAL



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Friend [George Fox](#) did not meet the Reverend [Roger Williams](#) in [Providence](#), though that local VIP had debated with Friend John Burnyeat during his visit to [Newport](#) in 1671. After Fox and his companion, Friend Nicholas Easton, had left Providence and had gone back down the Bay, and had left there as well and was sailing back toward Long Island, the Reverend Williams would row over to Newport, some 30 miles despite his advanced age — but he would miss being able to issue his challenge to a debate with the main man.

The Reverend Williams would attempted to debate instead with Friends [William Edmundson](#), John Stubbs, and John Burnyeat. The debate would not go well, as Friend Henry Nichols would sing persistently and loudly, and Friend Ann Eaton would pray loudly and persistently, attempting to drown out the Reverend Williams's voice.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1672. Roger Williams held a public disputation with three Friends or Quakers, which continued three days at Newport and one in Providence. Deputies or members of the General Assembly were for the first time required to take an oath or affirmation on commencing their official duties. This was protested against by those of Providence.

After two days of such proceedings, there had been an [eclipse](#) of the sun as the debate came to an end.

ASTRONOMY



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"Nothing was more common, in those days, than to interpret all meteoric appearances, and other natural phenomena that occurred with less regularity than the rise and set of sun and moon, as so many revelations from a supernatural source. Thus, a blazing spear, a sword of flame, a bow, or a sheaf of arrows seen in the midnight sky, prefigured Indian warfare. Pestilence was known to have been foreboded by a shower of crimson light. We doubt whether any marked event, for good or evil, ever befell New England, from its settlement down to revolutionary times, of which the inhabitants had not been previously warned by some spectacle of its nature. Not seldom, it had been seen by multitudes. Oftener, however, its credibility rested on the faith of some lonely eye-witness, who beheld the wonder through the coloured, magnifying, and distorted medium of his imagination, and shaped it more distinctly in his after-thought. It was, indeed, a majestic idea that the destiny of nations should be revealed, in these awful hieroglyphics, on the cope of heaven. A scroll so wide might not be deemed too expensive for Providence to write a people's doom upon. The belief was a favourite one with our forefathers, as betokening that their infant commonwealth was under a celestial guardianship of peculiar intimacy and strictness."



— [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#), THE SCARLET LETTER



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The Reverend would then write, and publish in Boston in 1676, what Fox elsewhere would term “Roger Williams’s ‘Book of Lyes,’” a book bearing the amusing title GEORGE FOX DIGGED OUT OF HIS BURROWS (reprinted in PUBLICATIONS OF THE NARRAGANSETT CLUB, Volume V, pages xx-xlv, Providence, 1872). When Fox and Burnyeat would reply to said “slandrous book” in a 65-page pamphlet, A NEW ENGLAND FIRE BRAND QUENCHED, Fox would seem not even to be sure exactly where the Reverend Williams, that famous “apostle of soul liberty,” was flourishing, as in this pamphlet he would refer to the Reverend as “a priest of



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New England (or some colony thereabouts).”

This place (called Providence) was about thirty miles from Rhode Island; and we went to it by water. The Governor of Rhode Island, and many others, went with me thither; and we had the meeting in a great barn, which was thronged with people, so that I was exceedingly hot, and in a great sweat; but all was well; the glorious power of the Lord shone over all; glory to the great God for ever!

After this we went to Narragansett, about twenty miles from Rhode Island; and the Governor went with us. We had a meeting at a justice's house, where Friends had never had any before. It was very large, for the country generally came in; and people came also from Connecticut, and other parts round about, amongst whom were four justices of the peace. Most of these people had never heard Friends before; but they were mightily affected with the meeting, and a great desire there is after the Truth amongst them; so that our meeting was of very good service, blessed be the Lord for ever!

The justice at whose house the meeting was, and another justice of that country, invited me to come again; but I was then clear of those parts, and going towards Shelter Island. But John Burnyeat and John Cartwright, being come out of New England into Rhode Island, before I was gone, I laid this place before them; and they felt drawings thither, and went to visit them.

*At another place, I heard some of the magistrates say among themselves that if they had money enough, they would hire me to be their minister. This was where they did not well understand us, and our principles; but when I heard of it, I said, "It is time for me to be gone; for if their eye were so much on me, or on any of us, they would not come to their own Teacher." For this thing (hiring ministers) had spoiled many, by hindering them from improving their own talents; whereas our labour is to bring every one to his own Teacher **in** himself.*

I went thence towards Shelter Island [so named because Nathaniel Sylvester, sole proprietor of this island at the eastern end of Long Island between Gardiner's Bay and Little Peconic Bay, had offered shelter to persecuted Friends from New England], having with me Robert Widders, James Lancaster, George Pattison, and John Jay, a planter of Barbadoes.

We went in a sloop; and passing by Point Juda [Judith] and Block Island, we came to Fisher's Island, where at night we went on shore; but were not able to stay for the mosquitoes which abound there, and are very troublesome. Therefore we went into our sloop again, put off for the shore, and cast anchor; and so lay in our sloop that night.

Next day we went into the Sound, but finding our sloop was not able to live in that water, we returned again, and came to anchor before Fisher's Island, where we lay in our sloop that night also. There fell abundance of rain, and our sloop being open, we were exceedingly wet.

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Next day we passed over the waters called the Two Horse Races, and then by Gardner's Island; after which we passed by the Gull's Island, and so got at length to Shelter Island. Though it was but about twenty-seven leagues from Rhode Island, yet through the difficulty of passage we were three days in reaching it.

The day after, being First-day, we had a meeting there. In the same week I had another among the Indians; at which were their king, his council, and about a hundred Indians more. They sat down like Friends, and heard very attentively while I spoke to them by an interpreter, an Indian that could speak English well. After the meeting they appeared very loving, and confessed that what was said to them was Truth.

Next First-day we had a great meeting on the island, to which came many people who had never heard Friends before. They were very well satisfied with it, and when it was over would not go away till they had spoken with me. Wherefore I went amongst them, and found they were much taken with the Truth; good desires were raised in them, and great love. Blessed be the Lord; His name spreads, and will be great among the nations, and dreadful among the heathen.

While we were in Shelter Island, William Edmundson, who had been labouring in the work of the Lord in Virginia, came to us. From thence he had travelled through the desert-country, through difficulties and many trials, till he came to Roanoke [not little Roanoke Island off the coast, but the extensive mainland adjacent to the Roanoke River], where he met with a tender people. After seven weeks' service in those parts, sailing over to Maryland, and so to New York, he came to Long Island, and so to Shelter Island; where we met with him, and were very glad to hear from him the good service he had had for the Lord, in the several places where he had travelled since he parted from us.

We stayed not long in Shelter Island, but entering our sloop again put to sea for Long Island. We had a very rough passage, for the tide ran so strong for several hours that I have not seen the like; and being against us, we could hardly get forwards, though we had a gale.

We were upon the water all that day and the night following; but found ourselves next day driven back near to Fisher's Island. For there was a great fog, and towards day it was very dark, so that we could not see what way we made. Besides, it rained much in the night, which in our open sloop made us very wet.

Next day a great storm arose, so that we were fain to go over the Sound, and got over with much difficulty. When we left Fisher's Island, we passed by Falkner Island, and came to the main, where we cast anchor till the storm was over.

Then we crossed the Sound, being all very wet; and much difficulty we had to get to land, the wind being strong against us. But blessed be the Lord God of heaven and earth, and of the seas and waters, all was well.



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ROANOKE



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Oh! how darest thou Roger Williams, publish such false lyes to the World, when thou knowest in thy Conscience, that G.F. had never any Writing, or Letter, or Proposals from thee; neither did he ever exchange a word with thee. The Lord God of Heaven knowes it, and the Deputy Governour knowes, that I received none of thy Writings or Papers or Proposals by him. Behold all sober people the foundation of this mans Attempt, the beginning of his work; and since the foundation of thy Book is a notorious lye, the building upon such a foundation of lyes is not like to be otherwise: which lyes thou hast made thy refuge; as throughout thy Book may be evidently seen. For except a man had sold himself to work falsehood, and make lyes; he could not have done more wickedly, and have uttered falser charges that though hast done. But the Lord God which knows them, and sees thy evil design in them, will sweep them away with the besom of Destruction, and clear his people from thy manifest false tongue....

But by this all may see the wickedness, that is in the Bottle of this R.W. by what does flow out of it in his Book, to wit, a malicious spirit against G.F. who was never concerned him by word or writing, much less did G.F. ever do him wrong. And yet he says, G.F. well knew, what Artillery he was furnisht with out of his own bald writings, (as he scoffingly calls them) &c. when never a word of this is true: though he presumes to present it to the King for Truth concerning G.F....

This also is an abominable falsehood, the Lord know it, a groundless untrue imagination of his own; for there was no such Agreement or Consultation. Is this man fit to write of Religion, that lyes? a vain man! What is he, and his designs, that they should require Consultations and Junctos? so let the honest Reader Judge, from whence R.W. had all these lyes, if not from his Father the Devil, who is out of Truth: but with the Truth is both his Father and he Judged.

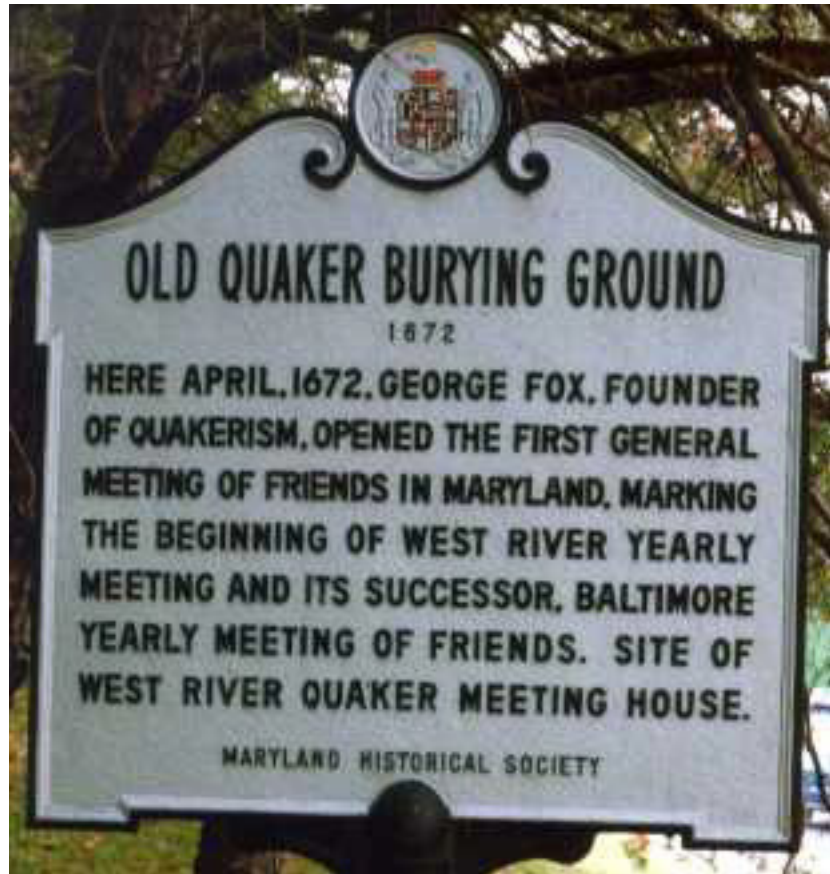


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[Quaker](#) Midyear Meeting: His work in [Maryland](#) complete, Friend [George Fox](#) got himself boated over to Long Island. He visited the Bowne house in Flushing and preached under a stand of oak trees across the street. The oaks have since gone, but the house still stands and the site of his sermon is marked with a stone memorializing the event (not shown).



From the journal that would be published by Friend [William Edmundson](#) in 1715, page 72: Now, when I had been some Time with Friends in Virginia, and had many sweet serviceable Meetings among them, and Things somewhat settled, I found my Spirit clear of that Service, so took Boat and went back to Maryland, where I staid several Meetings, the Lord's Power and Presence accompanying, that made hard Things easy. When I was clear there, I took Passage by Sea, and about ten Days after landed safe at New-York, where no Friends lived.



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We went with a Friend, Richard Hartshorn, brother of Hugh Hartshorn, the upholsterer, in London, who received us gladly at his house, where we refreshed ourselves; and then he carried us and our horses in his own boat over a great water, which occupied most part of the day getting over, and set us upon Long Island. We got that evening to Friends at Gravesend, with whom we tarried that night, and next day got to Flushing, and the day following reached Oyster Bay; several Friends of Gravesend and Flushing accompanied us.

The half-year's meeting began next day, which was the first day of the week, and lasted four days. The first and second days we had public meetings for worship, to which people of all sorts came; on the third day were the men's and women's meetings, wherein the affairs of the Church were taken care of. Here we met with some bad spirits, who had run out from Truth into prejudice, contention, and opposition to the order of Truth, and to Friends therein.

These had been very troublesome to Friends in their meetings there and thereabouts formerly, and likely would have been so now; but I would not suffer the service of our men's and women's meetings to be interrupted and hindered by their cavils. I let them know that if they had anything to object against the order of Truth which we were in, we would give them a meeting another day on purpose. And indeed I laboured the more, and travelled the harder to get to this meeting, where it was expected many of these contentious people would be; because I understood they had reflected much upon me, when I was far from them.

The men's and women's meetings being over, on the fourth day we had a meeting with these discontented people, to which as many of them as chose came, and as many Friends as desired were present also; and the Lord's power broke forth gloriously to the confounding of the gainsayers. Then some of those that had been chief in the mischievous work of contention and opposition against the Truth began to fawn upon me, and to cast the blame upon others; but the deceitful spirit was judged down and condemned, and the glorious Truth of God was exalted and set over all; and they were all brought down and bowed under. Which was of great service to Truth, and to the satisfaction and comfort of Friends; glory to the Lord for ever!

After Friends were gone to their several habitations, we stayed some days upon the island; had meetings in several parts thereof, and good service for the Lord....

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George Fox



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1675

June 11, Friday (Old Style): The women and children of the promontory known as [Mount Hope](#) in the bay of [Rhode Island](#) were taken across the bay for sanctuary in the [Narragansett](#) country. Braves started appearing more frequently in the neighborhood of the smaller outlying hamlets. There was a report that the [Wampanoag](#) near [Swansea](#) ([Swanzy](#)) were under arms.



The English, who were of course under arms, were of course greatly alarmed that any other than themselves would be under arms. Even Quaker adherents of the Peace Testimony were preparing for the coming race war:

THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY

In 1675, King Philip's War erupted, between native Americans and the English of the United Colonies of Massachusetts and Plymouth. A 14-month war of exceptional loss of life, much of it fought on Rhode Island soil....

It is conventional wisdom that the Quaker government participated in the war only with great reluctance and minimal measures. But contradictory evidence modifies this view. While it is clear that large-scale troop mobilisations did not occur ... the Quaker government directed military activities of both an offensive and defensive nature....

At the beginning of the war, in June 1675, the Quaker governor was John Easton, supported by five Quaker assistants and at least four Quaker deputies. All of the men were early and substantial leaders within the Rhode Island meeting. The [Newport Monthly Meetings](#), for example were held at Governor [William Coddington](#)'s house, where indeed George Fox attended [Yearly Meeting](#) in 1672.

The legislative records, noting the "dangerous hurries with the Indians,"⁴ show that the government engaged in mobilising



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councils of war in the towns, ordering ammunition, mounting "great guns" and transporting Plymouth soldiers.⁵ Quakers were specifically commissioned to oversee watches in Rhode Island, to evaluate whether to fund a garrison in Providence, to procure and manage the deployment of four boats, each with five or six men, and to patrol the waters of Narragansett Bay.⁶ The Assembly appointed a major to command the military forces of the colony, thereby centralizing the war power. Governor Coddington signed the major's commission "to use your utmost endeavor to kill, expulse, expell, take and destroy all and every the enemies of this his Majesty's Collony."⁷ [Meredith Baldwin Weddle, "Early Quaker Peace Testimony," in Mullett's NEW LIGHT ON GEORGE FOX, pages 92-93]

"KING PHILLIP'S WAR"

5. Friend [Walter Clarke](#)'s letter to the magistrates at Providence, 19th day of 9th month, 1675

6. RECORDS OF THE COLONY OF RHODE ISLAND...Volume 2, pages 531-537, passim

7. RECORDS OF THE COLONY OF RHODE ISLAND...Volume 2, page 538



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1683

Although the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) had been established in 1661, the first remaining account the [Quakers](#) have in their Yearly Meeting Record Book is in the year 1683, which is to say, we have no trace whatever of the first 21 years. The remaining record begins at the year 1683 the 11th of the 4th m^o, in the form of a minute that “the Meeting for Worship of God” would begin the 2nd 6th day (that is, the second Sunday of the month) of the then 4th now 6th M^o in every year (which is to say, June), “till friends see cause in the wisdom & Council of God to Alter it.”

There would be Yearly Meetings for Worship at “Rhode Island, Dux-bury Piscatua, Salem, & Dartmouth,” and then in 1690 a Yearly Meeting would be settled at Warwick, and in 1692 another at Providence, Rhode Island. (This was all prior to the “New England Yearly Meeting” being established as a Quaker organization.)

RHODE ISLAND RELIGION

[Friend](#) Enoch Flower was appointed by the Quaker-dominated Provincial Council of Pennsylvania to be “school master for the instruction and sober education of youth in the towne of Philadelphia.”

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

QUAKER EDUCATION

**LIFE IS LIVED FORWARD BUT UNDERSTOOD BACKWARD?
— NO, THAT’S GIVING TOO MUCH TO THE HISTORIAN’S STORIES.
LIFE ISN’T TO BE UNDERSTOOD EITHER FORWARD OR BACKWARD.**



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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The Cliffs meeting house was built upon a tract near the Chesapeake Bay in Calvert County, [Maryland](#), called “Gary’s Chance.” Among the Friends involved were the Sharpe family (Dr. Peter Sharpe was known as “the good Quaker physician of Calvert County”) and Richard Johns (whose descendents became the founders of Johns Hopkins Hospital; one of the Johns family was disowned by Baltimore [Yearly Meeting](#) on account of his selling of whiskey). Some of these early [Quakers](#) were buried in a cemetery close to Scientist’s Cliffs in Calvert County.

A hexagonal meetinghouse was constructed in Burlington, [New Jersey](#):





NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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1684

Friend [William Penn](#) said something exceedingly Thoreauvian, declaring that “Governments rather depend upon men than men upon governments. Let men be good, and government cannot be bad. If it be ill, they will cure it. But if men be bad, let the government be ever so good, they will endeavor to warp and spoil it to their tune.”

A black and white photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script, which appears to read 'Wm Penn'.

The Philadelphia [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) had asked other Friends throughout America to send delegations to this year’s meeting in Philadelphia, but the only delegations to arrive were from [Rhode Island](#) and from [Maryland](#).



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1695

The New England [Yearly Meeting](#) was established as a [Quaker](#) organization.



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1696

The 1st New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) was held in Flushing on Paumanok Long Island. (During that period the Friends' meetings on Manhattan Island, on Long Island, and in Westchester were part of Flushing Monthly Meeting.) An army captain and a justice of the peace were called before the governor of New-York because they were refusing to swear and refusing to "fight any longer." "[H]aving received the truth in the love of it," they laid down their commissions before the governor.

NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT



The brigantine *Seaflower*, which had been exporting native American [slaves](#) to the Bahamas, was brought from Africa with a cargo of 47 black slaves and stopped off in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) with 19 of them as yet unpurchased, and after being able to dispose of 14 of them locally, marched the remaining 5 overland to [Boston](#) to turn them over to the owners of the vessel.

Meanwhile, in Pennsylvania, Friends Cadwalader Morgan and William Southeby were persuading the Philadelphia [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) to advise Quakers to "be careful not to encourage the bringing in of any more negroes."

THE TRAFFIC IN MAN-BODY

"That Friends be careful not to encourage the bringing in of any more negroes." Bettle, "Notices of Negro Slavery," in [Penn. Hist. Soc. Mem.](#) (1864), I. 383.

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: One of the first American protests against the slave-trade came from certain German Friends, in 1688, at a Weekly Meeting held in Germantown, Pennsylvania. "These are the reasons," wrote "Garret henderich, derick up de graeff, Francis daniell Pastorius, and Abraham up Den graef," "why we are against the traffick of men-body, as followeth: Is

New England Yearly Meeting

"Stack of the Artist of Kouroo" Project



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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there any that would be done or handled at this manner?... Now, tho they are black, we cannot conceive there is more liberty to have them slaves, as it is to have other white ones. There is a saying, that we shall doe to all men like as we will be done ourselves; making no difference of what generation, descent or colour they are. And those who steal or robb men, and those who buy or purchase them, are they not all alike?"⁸ This little leaven helped slowly to work a revolution in the attitude of this great sect toward slavery and the slave-trade. The Yearly Meeting at first postponed the matter, "It having so General a Relation to many other Parts."⁹ Eventually, however, in 1696, the Yearly Meeting advised "That Friends be careful not to encourage the bringing in of any more Negroes."¹⁰ This advice was repeated in stronger terms for a quarter-century,¹¹ and by that time Sandiford, Benezet, Lay, and Woolman had begun their crusade. In 1754 the Friends took a step farther and made the purchase of slaves a matter of discipline.¹² Four years later the Yearly Meeting expressed itself clearly as "against every branch of this practice," and declared that if "any professing with us should persist to vindicate it, and be concerned in importing, selling or purchasing slaves, the respective Monthly Meetings to which they belong should manifest their disunion with such persons."¹³ Further, manumission was recommended, and in 1776 made compulsory.¹⁴ The effect of this attitude of the Friends was early manifested in the legislation of all the colonies where the sect was influential, and particularly in Pennsylvania.

One of the first duty acts (1710) laid a restrictive duty of 40s. on slaves, and was eventually disallowed.¹⁵ In 1712 William Southeby petitioned the Assembly totally to abolish slavery. This the Assembly naturally refused to attempt; but the same year, in response to another petition "signed by many hands," they passed an "Act to prevent the Importation of Negroes and Indians,"¹⁶ — the first enactment of its kind in America. This act was inspired largely by the general fear of insurrection which succeeded the "Negro-plot" of 1712 in New York. It declared: "Whereas, divers Plots and Insurrections have frequently happened, not only in the Islands but on the Main Land of *America*, by Negroes, which have been carried on so far that several of the inhabitants have been barbarously Murthered, an Instance whereof we have lately had in our Neighboring Colony of *New York*,"¹⁷ etc. It then proceeded to lay a prohibitive duty of £20 on all slaves imported. These acts were quickly disposed

8. From fac-simile copy, published at Germantown in 1880. Cf. Whittier's poem, "Pennsylvania Hall" (POETICAL WORKS, Riverside ed., III. 62); and Proud, HISTORY OF PENNSYLVANIA (1797), I. 219.

9. From fac-simile copy, published at Germantown in 1880.

10. Bettle, NOTICES OF NEGRO SLAVERY, in PENN. HIST. SOC. MEM. (1864), I. 383.

11. Cf. Bettle, NOTICES OF NEGRO SLAVERY, PASSIM.

12. Janney, HISTORY OF THE FRIENDS, III. 315-7.

13. HISTORY OF THE FRIENDS, III. 317.

14. Bettle, in PENN. HIST. SOC. MEM., I. 395.

15. PENN. COL. REC. (1852), II. 530; Bettle, in PENN. HIST. SOC. MEM., I. 415.

16. LAWS OF PENNSYLVANIA, COLLECTED, etc., 1714, page 165; Bettle, in PENN. HIST. SOC. MEM., I. 387.

17. See preamble of the act.



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of in England. Three duty acts affecting Negroes, including the prohibitory act, were in 1713 disallowed, and it was directed that "the Dep^{ty} Gov^r Council and Assembly of Pensilvania, be & they are hereby Strictly Enjoyned & required not to permit the said Laws ... to be from henceforward put in Execution."¹⁸ The Assembly repealed these laws, but in 1715 passed another laying a duty of £5, which was also eventually disallowed.¹⁹ Other acts, the provisions of which are not clear, were passed in 1720 and 1722,²⁰ and in 1725-1726 the duty on Negroes was raised to the restrictive figure of £10.²¹ This duty, for some reason not apparent, was lowered to £2 in 1729,²² but restored again in 1761.²³ A struggle occurred over this last measure, the Friends petitioning for it, and the Philadelphia merchants against it, declaring that "We, the subscribers, ever desirous to extend the Trade of this Province, have seen, for some time past, the many inconveniencys the Inhabitants have suffer'd for want of Labourers and artificers, ... have for some time encouraged the importation of Negroes;" they prayed therefore at least for a delay in passing the measure.²⁴ The law, nevertheless, after much debate and altercation with the governor, finally passed. These repeated acts nearly stopped the trade, and the manumission or sale of Negroes by the Friends decreased the number of slaves in the province. The rising spirit of independence enabled the colony, in 1773, to restore the prohibitive duty of £20 and make it perpetual.²⁵ After the Revolution unpaid duties on slaves were collected and the slaves registered,²⁶ and in 1780 an "Act for the gradual Abolition of Slavery" was passed.²⁷ As there were probably at no time before the war more than 11,000 slaves in Pennsylvania,²⁸ the task thus accomplished was not so formidable as in many other States. As it was, participation in the slave-trade outside the colony was not prohibited until 1788.²⁹ It seems probable that in the original Swedish settlements along

18. The Pennsylvanians did not allow their laws to reach England until long after they were passed: PENN. ARCHIVES, I. 161-2; COL. REC., II. 572-3. These acts were disallowed Feb. 20, 1713. Another duty act was passed in 1712, supplementary to the Act of 1710 (COL. REC., II. 553). The contents are unknown.

19. ACTS AND LAWS OF PENNSYLVANIA, 1715, page 270; Chalmers, OPINIONS, II. 118. Before the disallowance was known, the act had been continued by the Act of 1718: Carey and Bioren, LAWS OF PENNSYLVANIA, 1700-1802, I. 118; PENN. COL. REC., III. 38.

20. Carey and Bioren, LAWS, I. 165; PENN. COL. REC., III. 171; Bettie, in PENN. HIST. SOC. MEM., I. 389, note.

21. Carey and Bioren, LAWS, I. 214; Bettie, in PENN. HIST. SOC. MEM., I. 388. Possibly there were two acts this year.

22. LAWS OF PENNSYLVANIA (ed. 1742), page 354, ch. 287. Possibly some change in the currency made this change appear greater than it was.

23. Carey and Bioren, LAWS, I. 371; ACTS OF ASSEMBLY (ed. 1782), page 149; Dallas, LAWS, I. 406, ch. 379. This act was renewed in 1768: Carey and Bioren, LAWS, I. 451; PENN. COL. REC., IX. 472, 637, 641.

24. PENN. COL. REC., VIII. 576.

25. A large petition called for this bill. Much altercation ensued with the governor: Dallas, LAWS, I. 671, ch. 692; PENN. COL. REC., X. 77; Bettie, in PENN. HIST. SOC. MEM., I. 388-9.

26. Dallas, LAWS, I. 782, ch. 810.

27. LAWS, I. 838, ch. 881.

28. There exist but few estimates of the number of slaves in this colony: — In 1721, 2,500-5,000. DOC. REL. COL. HIST. NEW YORK, V. 604.

In 1754, 11,000. Bancroft, HIST. OF UNITED STATES (1883), II. 391.

In 1760, very few. Burnaby, TRAVELS THROUGH N. AMER. (2d ed.), page 81.

In 1775, 2,000. PENN. ARCHIVES, IV 597.

29. Dallas, LAWS, II. 586.



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the Delaware slavery was prohibited.³⁰ This measure had, however, little practical effect; for as soon as the Dutch got control the slave-trade was opened, although, as it appears, to no large extent. After the fall of the Dutch Delaware came into English hands. Not until 1775 do we find any legislation on the slave-trade. In that year the colony attempted to prohibit the importation of slaves, but the governor vetoed the bill.³¹ Finally, in 1776 by the Constitution, and in 1787 by law, importation and exportation were both prohibited.³²

30. Cf. ARGONAUTICA GUSTAVIANA, pages 21-3; DEL. HIST. SOC. PAPERS, III. 10; HAZARD'S REGISTER, IV. 221, §§ 23, 24; HAZARD'S ANNALS, page 372; Armstrong, RECORD OF UPLAND COURT, pages 29-30, and notes.

31. Force, AMERICAN ARCHIVES, 4th Ser., II. 128-9.

32. AMERICAN ARCHIVES, 5th Ser., I. 1178; LAWS OF DELAWARE, 1797 (Newcastle ed.), page 884, ch. 145 b.



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1698

[George Keith](#)'s A THIRD NARRATIVE OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT TURNERS-HALL, APRIL 21, 1698.

A [Quaker](#) meetinghouse was erected on the south-west corner at the intersection of Second and High (Market) Streets in Philadelphia.³³



Robert Pyle of the Concord (near Philadelphia) Friends monthly meeting proposed, at [Yearly Meeting](#), that a time schedule should be set up, within which [Quaker](#) households were to [manumit](#) their [slaves](#).³⁴

33. This structure would be pulled down in 1755 and another erected — which would itself be, in 1808, demolished.

34. In subsequent yearly meetings for a number of years (until 1711, in fact) there would be silence on this proposal, and the primary propagator of this doctrine, [George Keith](#), would be forced out of [Quakerism](#).



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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We see material relevant to this dispute in that colonial treatise printed in this year in London and titled “AN HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVINCE OF PENNSYLVANIA...”:

... Jealousie among men is here very rare, nor are old maids to be met with; for all commonly marry before they are twenty years of age. The way of worship the Swedes use in this countrey, is the Lutheran; the English have four sorts of religious meetings here; the Church of England, who built a very fine church in this city in the year 1695; the Anabaptists; the Presbyterians; and two sorts of Quaker, (of all the most numerous by much) one party held with George Keith; but whether both parties will joyn together again in one I cannot tell. He gave strict charge concerning plain language and plain habit, and that they should not be concerned in the compelling part of the worldly government; that they should set their negroes at liberty after some reasonable time of service; and that they should not take advantage of the law against one another, as to procure them any corporal punishment. These instructions were given forth, in the year 1693, by the meeting held by George Keith, at P. James’s house in Philadelphia. He shortly after went to England, where he now, in this year 1697, keeps a meeting, at Turners-hall, London, on Sundays in the afternoon....



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1699

26, 4th mo.: The New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the Religious Society of [Friends](#) dissociated itself from the wealthy [Quaker](#) of Salem, Friend Thomas Maule, who had in 1695 issued a pamphlet TRUTH HELD FORTH in which he had suggested that God was so displeased at the Puritan persecution of his people the Quakers that He was unleashing [witches](#) and Indians to punish New England.

The New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the Religious Society of [Friends](#) established a [Rhode Island](#) Quarterly Meeting, headquartered in [East Greenwich](#) and consisting of three Monthly Meetings:

- Dartmouth Monthly Meeting.
- [Rhode Island](#) Monthly Meeting.
- Narragansett (which became [Greenwich](#)), held for a time at Kingston and hence sometimes referred to as “Kingston Meeting,” but in 1700 relocated to “the New Meeting in East Greenwich,” where it remained until in 1707 the Quarterly Meeting directed that it should be held at [Providence](#), Greenwich, [Kingstown](#), and East Greenwich alternately, which was the case until in the 4th mo. of 1718 Providence Monthly Meeting was set off and established by Quarterly Meeting. In 3d. mo. 1743 it was again divided, and the new grouping was named “Kingston Monthly Meeting” — this became South Kingstown Monthly Meeting, headquartered at Hopkinton.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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1701

Friend William Penn granted a charter to the city of Philadelphia, and provided for the incorporation of the schools that had been founded there by the Friends. Penn granted Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends control over the appointment of the overseers of the educational system.

QUAKER EDUCATION

THE FUTURE IS MOST READILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT





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1708

[Friend William Penn](#) granted a new charter to the city of Philadelphia, by which the power of the overseers of the school system was expanded. In the future, the Pennsylvania proprietor would appoint a board of fifteen overseers. They, not the Philadelphia [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), would have the power to appoint their successors. The overseers, however, would need to be [Quakers](#).

QUAKER EDUCATION



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1717

To accommodate the annual New England [Yearly Meeting](#), the Friends meetinghouse in Flushing on Paumanok Long Island needed to be enlarged — there was attendance by more than 1,000 [Quakers](#).

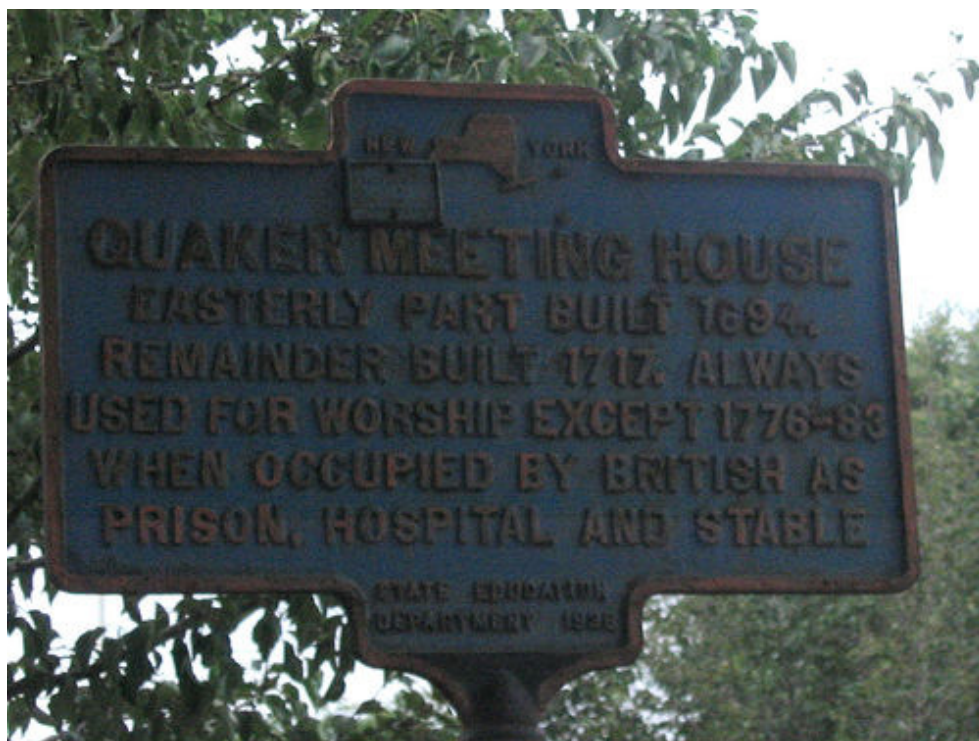




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1724

4th mo.: The [Quaker Yearly Meeting](#) held in June 1724 determined that:

The quarterly meeting of [Rhode-Island](#) having represented to this meeting, that it is most likely for the advancement of truth, to build a meeting-house in the town of [Providence](#), which proposal is approved of, and for the present that the work may be going forward, do agree to raise the sum of one hundred pounds, of which it is desired that the quarterly meeting of Rhode-Island do collect the sum of eighty pounds; and also desires the quarterly meetings of Sandwich and [Scituate](#) to collect the sum of twenty pounds, and to send the same up to Samuel Aldrich, Thomas Arnold, and Benjamin Smith, of Providence.



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1743

Edmund Packover asserted that more than 5,000 [Friends](#) were present at this year's New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#).

The [South Kingstown, Rhode Island](#) Monthly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) was in this year set off from the [Greenwich RI](#) Monthly Meeting (meetings for worship had been being held in South Kingston since 1701). This new monthly meeting would sometimes be referred to as Narragansett Monthly Meeting.



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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1744

The New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) advised against the further importing of [slaves](#).³⁵



INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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1746

Philadelphia [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) urged the various out-of-town meetings in Bucks, Chester, and Old Philadelphia (now Montgomery) counties to assist each other in establishing schools for their children, employing “such masters and mistresses as are concerned not only to instruct your children in their learning but are likewise to bring them to a knowledge of God and one another.”

[QUAKER EDUCATION](#)

35. Below appears the rotting hulk of the slave ship *Jem*, as of the Year of Our Lord 1891 at Fort Adams near [Newport](#) on [Aquidneck Island](#):





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NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1755

Samuel Fothergill asserted that the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) this year had the largest attendance of any such meeting in the world.

During the early years of this decade, the farmer [Joseph Nichols](#) had begun to minister, traveling in Delaware, on both shores of [Maryland](#), and into the southeastern part of Pennsylvania. He would attend meetings for worship and on occasion speak. This would go on for about a decade.



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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1757

According to the Philadelphia [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#)'s book of discipline for this year:

PRIESTS' WAGES; OR HIRELING MINISTRY

LET us keep in remembrance, that it is under the immediate teaching and influence of the holy Spirit that all acceptable worship is performed, and all true gospel ministry supplied; that this pure and powerful influence, in vessels sanctified and prepared by the divine hand, is the essential qualification to that work; and that as the gift is divine, the service is freely and faithfully to be discharged, without any view to reward from man.

And it is advised that where any of our members are so regardless of this testimony as to contribute to the support of an hireling ministry, and vindicate such conduct, that they be tenderly laboured with to convince them of their error, but if this prove ineffectual, and they persist in their unfaithfulness, the monthly meetings to which they belong should proceed to declare our disunity with them, such conduct being opposed to our testimony for the free ministry of the gospel, which is "without money and without price."

Friend [John Woolman](#) began a journal, retrojecting back to his birth and youth and carrying the story forward into his current activities.

I have often felt a motion of love to leave some hints in writing of my experience of the goodness of God, and now, in the thirty-sixth year of my age, I begin this work.



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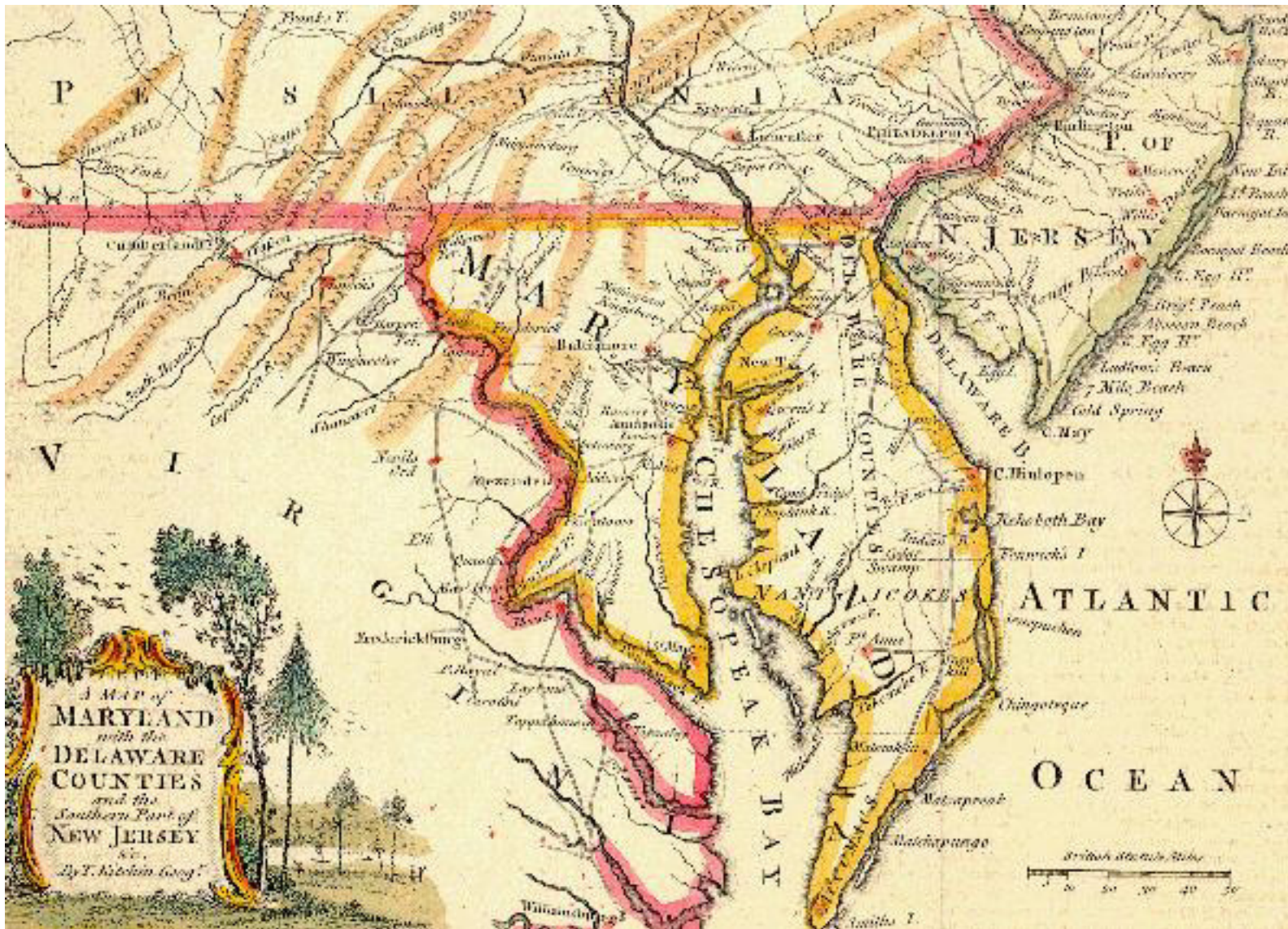
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During this year and the following one, he would be visiting the families of the [Quakers](#) of Burlington, and then traveling in Pennsylvania, [Maryland](#), Virginia, and [North Carolina](#).



[RACE SLAVERY](#)

He would write to the [Quakers](#) of New Garden and of Crane Creek. He would attend Friends [Yearly Meeting](#) at Philadelphia particularly in regard to the issue of those who keep slaves, and, in the company of Benjamin Jones, would visit Friends in Pennsylvania. He would make notes on Thomas à Kempis and on John Huss. On the basis of his observations and conversations, he would become concerned over the absence of religious instruction in the education of young black slaves. He would become concerned over the drafting of the New Jersey militia for service in the Army. During this year and the following one, he was finding that he could not



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

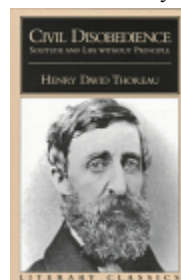
NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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in good conscience pay taxes part of which would be used to finance the “French and Indian” war:³⁶



36. In a commentary on this, on pages 58-9 of a Quaker-inspired collection of documents pertaining to conscientious objection in America from 1757 to 1967 titled *CONSCIENCE IN AMERICA* (NY: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1968), the editor, Lillian Schlissel, pointed out that “Whereas the Quaker [John Woolman](#) refused to pay taxes out of a desire to keep [Quakers](#) separate from the worldly and warlike affairs of government, [Henry Thoreau](#), on the contrary, saw his refusal to pay taxes as the beginning of a discourse with the government. He affirmed, by his action, the efficacy of saying ‘No.’ Out of a simple act, and a single night in a Concord jailhouse, Thoreau evolved a new morality in which a citizen, moved by ethical compulsion, acts to turn his society from its given course. Quaker pacifism had been inward and socially quietist, and the nonresistance of the peace societies had been largely hortatory, but Thoreau wrote of a conscientious objection committed to social change. Confronted with slavery and with war, a man of conscientious principle must do more than stand aside. Thoreau meant to affect his society, and he was willing to break its laws and go to prison.... Conscience and revolution were inseparable principles.... After the Constitution, Thoreau’s ‘Essay on Civil Disobedience’ is the most uniquely radical document in American history.... Thoreau at the end accepted the principle of violence.”





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As scrupling to pay a tax on account of the application hath seldom been heard of heretofore, even amongst men of integrity, who have steadily borne their testimony against outward wars in their time, I may therefore note some things which have occurred to my mind, as I have been inwardly exercised on that account. From the steady opposition which faithful Friends in early times made to wrong things then approved, they were hated and persecuted by men living in the spirit of this world, and, suffering with firmness, they were made a blessing to the church, and the work prospered. It equally concerns men in every age to take heed to their own spirits; and in comparing their situation with ours, to me it appears that there was less danger of their being infected with the spirit of this world, in paying such taxes, than is the case with us now. They had little or no share in civil government, and many of them declared that they were, through the power of God, separated from the spirit in which wars were, and being afflicted by the rulers on account of their testimony, there was less likelihood of their uniting in spirit with them in things inconsistent with the purity of truth. We, from the first settlement of this land, have known little or no troubles of that sort. The profession of our predecessors was for a time accounted reproachful, but at length their uprightness being understood by the rulers, and their innocent sufferings moving them, our way of worship was tolerated, and many of our members in these colonies became active in civil government. Being thus tried with favor and prosperity, this world appeared inviting; our minds have been turned to the improvement of our country, to merchandise and the sciences, amongst which are many things useful, if followed in pure wisdom; but in our present condition I believe it will not be denied that a carnal mind is gaining upon us. Some of our members, who are officers in civil government, are, in one case or other, called upon in their respective stations to assist in things relative to the wars; but being in doubt whether to act or to crave to be excused from their office, if they see their brethren united in the payment of a tax to carry on the said wars, may think their case not much different, and so might quench the tender movings of the Holy Spirit in their minds. Thus, by small degrees, we might approach so near to fighting that the distinction would be little else than the name of a peaceable people.



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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1757, 1758

Visit to the Families of Friends at Burlington – Journey to Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina – Considerations on the State of Friends there, and the Exercise he was under in Travelling among those so generally concerned in keeping Slaves, with some Observations on this Subject – Epistle to Friends at New Garden and Crane Creek – Thoughts on the Neglect of a religious care in the Education of the Negroes.

THIRTEENTH Fifth Month, 1757. – Being in good health, and abroad with Friends visiting families, I lodged at a Friend's house in Burlington. Going to bed about the time usual with me, I awoke in the night, and my meditations, as I lay, were on the goodness and mercy of the Lord, in a sense whereof my heart was contrited. After this I went to sleep again; in a short time I awoke; it was yet dark, and no appearance of day or moonshine, and as I opened mine eyes I saw a light in my chamber, at the apparent distance of five feet, about nine inches in diameter, of a clear, easy brightness, and near its centre the most radiant. As I lay still looking upon it without any surprise, words were spoken to my inward ear, which filled my whole inward man. They were not the effect of thought, nor any conclusion in relation to the appearance, but as the language of the Holy One spoken in my mind. The words were, CERTAIN EVIDENCE OF DIVINE TRUTH. They were again repeated exactly in the same manner, and then the light disappeared.

Feeling the exercise in relation to a visit to the Southern Provinces to increase upon me, I acquainted our Monthly Meeting therewith, and obtained their certificate. Expecting to go alone, one of my brothers who lived in Philadelphia, having some business in North Carolina, proposed going with me part of the way; but as he had a view of some outward affairs, to accept of him as a companion was some difficulty with me, whereupon I had conversation with him at sundry times. At length feeling easy in my mind, I had conversation with several elderly Friends of Philadelphia on the subject, and he obtaining a certificate suitable to the occasion, we set off in the Fifth Month, 1757. Coming to Nottingham week-day meeting, we lodged at John Churchman's, where I met with our friend, Benjamin Buffington, from New England, who was returning from a visit to the Southern Provinces. Thence we crossed the river Susquehanna, and lodged at William Cox's in Maryland.

Soon after I entered this province, a deep and painful exercise came upon me, which I often had some feeling of since my mind was drawn toward these parts, and with which I had acquainted my brother before we agreed to join as companions. As the people in this and the Southern Provinces live much on the labour of slaves, many of whom are used hardly, my concern was that I might attend with singleness of heart to the voice of the true Shepherd, and be so supported as to remain unmoved at the faces of men.

As it is common for Friends on such a visit to have entertainment free of cost, a difficulty arose in my mind with respect to saving my money by kindness received from what appeared to me



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to be the gain of oppression. Receiving a gift, considered as a gift, brings the receiver under obligations to the benefactor, and has a natural tendency to draw the obliged into a party with the giver. To prevent difficulties of this kind, and to preserve the minds of judges from any bias, was that divine prohibition: "Thou shalt not receive any gift; for a gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous" (EXODUS 23:8). As the disciples were sent forth without any provision for their journey, and our Lord said the workman is worthy of his meat, their labour in the gospel was considered as a reward for their entertainment, and therefore not received as a gift; yet, in regard to my present journey, I could not see my way clear in that respect. The difference appeared thus: the entertainment the disciples met with was from them whose hearts God had opened to receive them, from a love to them and the truth they published; but we, considered as members of the same religious society, look upon it as a piece of civility to receive each other in such visits; and such receptions, at times, is partly in regard to reputation, and not from an inward unity of heart and spirit. Conduct is more convincing than language, and where people, by their actions, manifest that the slave-trade is not so disagreeable to their principles but that it may be encouraged, there is not a sound uniting with some Friends who visit them.

The prospect of so weighty a work, and of being so distinguished from many whom I esteemed before myself, brought me very low, and such were the conflicts of my soul that I had a near sympathy with the prophet, in the time of his weakness, when he said: "If thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thy sight" (NUMBERS 11:15). But I soon saw that this proceeded from the want of a full resignation to the divine will. Many were the afflictions which attended me, and in great abasement, with many tears, my cries were to the Almighty for His gracious and Fatherly assistance, and after a time of deep trial I was favoured to understand the state mentioned by the Psalmist more clearly than ever I had done before; to wit: "My soul is even as a weaned child" (PSALMS 131:2).

Being thus helped to sink down into resignation, I felt a deliverance from that tempest in which I had been sorely exercised, and in calmness of mind went forward, trusting that the Lord Jesus Christ, as I faithfully attended to Him, would be a counsellor to me in all difficulties, and that by His strength I should be enabled even to leave money with the members of society where I had entertainment, when I found that omitting it would obstruct that work to which I believed He had called me. As I copy this after my return, I may here add that oftentimes I did so under a sense of duty. The way in which I did it was thus: When I expected soon to leave a Friend's house where I had entertainment, if I believed that I should not keep clear from the gain of oppression without leaving money, I spoke to one of the heads of the family privately, and desired them to accept of those pieces of silver, and give them to such of



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their negroes as they believed would make the best use of them; and at other times I gave them to the negroes myself, as the way looked clearest to me. Before I came out, I had provided a large number of small pieces for this purpose, and thus offering them to some who appeared to be wealthy people was a trial both to me and them. But the fear of the Lord so covered me at times that my way was made easier than I expected; and few, if any, manifested any resentment at the offer, and most of them, after some conversation, accepted of them.

Ninth of Fifth Month. — A Friend at whose house we breakfasted setting us a little on our way, I had conversation with him, in the fear of the Lord, concerning his slaves, in which my heart was tender; I used much plainness of speech with him, and he appeared to take it kindly. We pursued our journey without appointing meetings, being pressed in my mind to be at the Yearly Meeting in Virginia. In my travelling on the road, I often felt a cry rise from the centre of my mind, thus: "O Lord, I am a stranger on the earth, hide not thy face from me."

On the 11th, we crossed the rivers Patowmack and Rapahannock, and lodged at Port Royal. On the way we had the company of a colonel of the militia, who appeared to be a thoughtful man. I took occasion to remark on the difference in general betwixt a people used to labour moderately for their living, training up their children in frugality and business, and those who live on the labour of slaves; the former, in my view, being the most happy life. He concurred in the remark, and mentioned the trouble arising from the untoward, slothful disposition of the negroes, adding that one of our labourers would do as much in a day as two of their slaves. I replied that free men, whose minds were properly on their business, found a satisfaction in improving, cultivating, and providing for their families; but negroes, labouring to support others who claim them as their property, and expecting nothing but slavery during life, had not the like inducement to be industrious.

After some further conversation I said, that men having power too often misapplied it; that though we made slaves of the negroes, and the Turks made slaves of the Christians, I believed that liberty was the natural right of all men equally. This he did not deny, but said the lives of the negroes were so wretched in their own country that many of them lived better here than there. I replied, "There is great odds in regard to us on what principle we act"; and so the conversation on that subject ended. I may here add that another person, some time afterwards, mentioned the wretchedness of the negroes, occasioned by their intestine wars, as an argument in favour of our fetching them away for slaves. To which I replied, if compassion for the Africans, on account of their domestic troubles, was the real motive of our purchasing them, that spirit of tenderness being attended to, would incite us to use them kindly, that, as strangers brought out of affliction, their lives might be happy among us. And as they are human creatures, whose souls are as precious as ours, and who may receive the same help and comfort



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from the Holy Scriptures as we do, we could not omit suitable endeavours to instruct them therein; but that while we manifest by our conduct that our views in purchasing them are to advance ourselves, and while our buying captives taken in war animates those parties to push on the war and increase desolation amongst them, to say they live unhappily in Africa is far from being an argument in our favour.

I further said, the present circumstances of these provinces to me appear difficult; the slaves look like a burdensome stone to such as burden themselves with them; and that, if the white people retain a resolution to prefer their outward prospects of gain to all other considerations, and do not act conscientiously toward them as fellow-creatures, I believe that burden will grow heavier and heavier, until times change in a way disagreeable to us. The person appeared very serious, and owned that in considering their condition and the manner of their treatment in these provinces he had sometimes thought it might be just in the Almighty so to order it.

Having travelled through Maryland, we came amongst Friends at Cedar Creek in Virginia, on the 12th; and the next day rode, in company with several of them, a day's journey to Camp Creek. As I was riding along in the morning, my mind was deeply affected in a sense I had of the need of divine aid to support me in the various difficulties which attended me, and in uncommon distress of mind I cried in secret to the Most High, "O Lord, be merciful, I beseech Thee, to Thy poor afflicted creature!" After some time I felt inward relief, and soon after a Friend in company began to talk in support of the slave-trade, and said the negroes were understood to be the offspring of Cain, their blackness being the mark which God set upon him after he murdered Abel, his brother; that it was the design of Providence they should be slaves, as a condition proper to the race of so wicked a man as Cain was. Then another spake in support of what had been said. To all which I replied in substance as follows: that Noah and his family were all who survived the flood, according to Scripture; and as Noah was of Seth's race, the family of Cain was wholly destroyed. One of them said that after the flood Ham went to the land of Nod and took a wife; that Nod was a land far distant, inhabited by Cain's race, and that the flood did not reach it; and as Ham was sentenced to be a servant of servants to his brethren, these two families, being thus joined, were undoubtedly fit only for slaves. I replied, the flood was a judgment upon the world for their abominations, and it was granted that Cain's stock was the most wicked, and therefore unreasonable to suppose that they were spared. As to Ham's going to the land of Nod for a wife, no time being fixed, Nod might be inhabited by some of Noah's family before Ham married a second time; moreover the text saith "That all flesh died that moved upon the earth" (GENESIS 7:21). I further reminded them how the prophets repeatedly declare "that the son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, but every one be answerable for his own sins."



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I was troubled to perceive the darkness of their imaginations, and in some pressure of spirit said, "The love of ease and gain are the motives in general of keeping slaves, and men are wont to take hold of weak arguments to support a cause which is unreasonable. I have no interest on either side, save only the interest which I desire to have in the truth. I believe liberty is their right, and as I see they are not only deprived of it, but treated in other respects with inhumanity in many places, I believe He who is a refuge for the oppressed will, in His own time, plead their cause, and happy will it be for such as walk in uprightness before Him." And thus our conversation ended.

Fourteenth of Fifth Month. – I was this day at Camp Creek Monthly Meeting, and then rode to the mountains up James River, and had a meeting at a Friend's house, in both which I felt sorrow of heart, and my tears were poured out before the Lord, who was pleased to afford a degree of strength by which way was opened to clear my mind amongst Friends in those places. From thence I went to Ford Creek, and so to Cedar Creek again, at which place I now had a meeting. Here I found a tender seed, and as I was preserved in the ministry to keep low with the truth, the same truth in their hearts answered it, that it was a time of mutual refreshment from the presence of the Lord. I lodged at James Standley's, father of William Standley, one of the young men who suffered imprisonment at Winchester last summer on account of their testimony against fighting, and I had some satisfactory conversation with him concerning it. Hence I went to the Swamp Meeting, and to Wayanoke Meeting, and then crossed James River, and lodged near Burleigh. From the time of my entering Maryland I have been much under sorrow, which of late so increased upon me that my mind was almost overwhelmed, and I may say with the Psalmist, "In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God," who, in infinite goodness, looked upon my affliction, and in my private retirement sent the Comforter for my relief, for which I humbly bless His holy name.

The sense I had of the state of the churches brought a weight of distress upon me. The gold to me appeared dim, and the fine gold changed, and though this is the case too generally, yet the sense of it in these parts hath in a particular manner borne heavy upon me. It appeared to me that, through the prevailing of the spirit of this world, the minds of many were brought to an inward desolation, and instead of the spirit of meekness, gentleness, and heavenly wisdom, which are the necessary companions of the true sheep of Christ, a spirit of fierceness and the love of dominion too generally prevailed. From small beginnings in error great buildings by degrees are raised, and from one age to another are more and more strengthened by the general concurrence of the people; and as men obtain reputation by their profession of the truth, their virtues are mentioned as arguments in favour of general error; and those of less note, to justify themselves, say, such and such good men did the like. By what other steps could the people of Judah arise to that height in wickedness as to give just ground for the Prophet



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Isaiah to declare, in the name of the Lord, "that none calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth" (ISAIAH 59:4), or for the Almighty to call upon the great city of Jerusalem just before the Babylonish captivity, "If ye can find a man, if there be any who executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it" (JEREMIAH 5:1)?

The prospect of a way being open to the same degeneracy, in some parts of this newly settled land of America, in respect to our conduct towards the negroes, hath deeply bowed my mind in this journey, and though briefly to relate how these people are treated is no agreeable work, yet, after often reading over the notes I made as I travelled, I find my mind engaged to preserve them. Many of the white people in those provinces take little or no care of negro marriages; and when negroes marry after their own way, some make so little account of those marriages, that with views of outward interest they often part men from their wives by selling them far asunder, which is common when estates are sold by executors at vendue. Many whose labour is heavy being followed at their business in the field by a man with a whip, hired for that purpose, have in common little else allowed but one peck of Indian corn and some salt, for one week, with a few potatoes; the potatoes they commonly raise by their labour on the first day of the week. The correction ensuing on their disobedience to overseers, or slothfulness in business, is often very severe and sometimes desperate.

Men and women have many times scarcely clothes sufficient to hide their nakedness, and boys and girls ten and twelve years old are often quite naked amongst their master's children. Some of our Society, and some of the society called Newlights, use some endeavours to instruct those they have in reading; but in common this is not only neglected, but disapproved. These are the people by whose labour the other inhabitants are in a great measure supported, and many of them in the luxuries of life. These are the people who have made no agreement to serve us, and who have not forfeited their liberty that we know of. These are the souls for whom Christ died, and for our conduct towards them we must answer before Him who is no respecter of persons. They who know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent, and are thus acquainted with the merciful, benevolent, gospel spirit, will therein perceive that the indignation of God is kindled against oppression and cruelty, and in beholding the great distress of so numerous a people will find cause for mourning.

From my lodgings I went to Burleigh Meeting, where I felt my mind drawn in a quiet, resigned state. After a long silence I felt an engagement to stand up, and through the powerful operation of divine love we were favoured with an edifying meeting. The next meeting we had was at Blackwater, and from thence went to the Yearly Meeting at the Western Branch. When business began, some queries were introduced by some of their members for consideration, and, if approved, they were to be answered hereafter by their respective Monthly Meetings. They



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were the Pennsylvania queries, which had been examined by a committee of Virginia Yearly Meeting appointed the last year, who made some alterations in them, one of which alterations was made in favour of a custom which troubled me.

The query was, "Are there any concerned in the importation of negroes, or in buying them after imported?" which was thus altered, "Are there any concerned in the importation of negroes, or buying them to trade in?" As one query admitted with unanimity was, "Are any concerned in buying or vending goods unlawfully imported, or prize goods?" I found my mind engaged to say that, as we profess the truth, and were there assembled to support the testimony of it, it was necessary for us to dwell deep and act in that wisdom which is pure, or otherwise we could not prosper. I then mentioned their alteration, and, referring to the last-mentioned query, added, that as purchasing any merchandise taken by the sword was always allowed to be inconsistent with our principles, so negroes being captives of war or taken by stealth, it was inconsistent with our testimony to buy them; and their being our fellow-creatures, and sold as slaves, added greatly to the iniquity. Friends appeared attentive to what was said; some expressed a care and concern about their negroes; none made any objection by way of reply to what I said, but the query was admitted as they had altered it.

As some of their members have heretofore traded in negroes, as in other merchandise, this query being admitted will be one step further than they have hitherto gone, and I did not see it my duty to press for an alteration, but felt easy to leave it all to Him who alone is able to turn the hearts of the mighty, and make way for the spreading of truth on the earth, by means agreeable to his infinite wisdom. In regard to those they already had, I felt my mind engaged to labour with them, and said that, as we believe the Scriptures were given forth by holy men, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and many of us know by experience that they are often helpful and comfortable, and believe ourselves bound in duty to teach our children to read them; I believed that if we were divested of all selfish views, the same good Spirit that gave them forth would engage us to teach the negroes to read, that they might have the benefit of them. Some present manifested a concern to take more care in the education of their negroes.

Twenty-ninth Fifth Month. — At the house where I lodged was a meeting of ministers and elders. I found an engagement to speak freely and plainly to them concerning their slaves; mentioning how they as the first rank in the society, whose conduct in that case was much noticed by others, were under the stronger obligations to look carefully to themselves — expressing how needful it was for them in that situation to be thoroughly divested of all selfish views; that, living in the pure truth, and acting conscientiously towards those people in their education and otherwise, they might be instrumental in helping forward a work so exceedingly necessary, and so much neglected amongst them. At the twelfth hour the meeting of worship began,



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which was a solid meeting.

The next day, about the tenth hour, Friends met to finish their business, and then the meeting for worship ensued, which to me was a labourious time; but through the goodness of the Lord, truth, I believed, gained some ground, and it was a strengthening opportunity to the honest-hearted.

About this time I wrote an epistle to Friends in the back settlements of North Carolina, as follows: -

TO FRIENDS AT THEIR MONTHLY MEETING AT NEW GARDEN AND CANE CREEK, IN NORTH CAROLINA: -

DEAR FRIENDS, - It having pleased the Lord to draw me forth on a visit to some parts of Virginia and Carolina, you have often been in my mind; and though my way is not clear to come in person to visit you, yet I feel it in my heart to communicate a few things, as they arise in the love of truth. First, my dear friends, dwell in humility; and take heed that no views of outward gain get too deep hold of you, that so, your eyes being single to the Lord, you may be preserved in the way of safety. Where people let loose their minds after the love of outward things, and are more engaged in pursuing the profits and seeking the friendships of this world, than to be inwardly acquainted with the way of true peace, they walk in a vain shadow, while the true comfort of life is wanting. Their examples are often hurtful to others; and their treasures thus collected do many times prove dangerous snares to their children. But where people are sincerely devoted to follow Christ, and dwell under the influence of His Holy Spirit, their stability and firmness, through a divine blessing, is at times like dew on the tender plants round about them, and the weightiness of their spirits secretly works on the minds of others. In this condition, through the spreading influence of divine love, they feel a care over the flock, and way is opened for maintaining good order in the Society. And though we may meet with opposition from another spirit, yet, as there is a dwelling in meekness, feeling our spirits subject, and moving only in the gentle, peaceable wisdom, the inward reward of quietness will be greater than all our difficulties. Where the pure life is kept to, and meetings of discipline are held in the authority of it, we find by experience that they are comfortable, and tend to the health of the body.

While I write, the youth come fresh in my way. Dear young people, choose God for your portion; love His truth, and be not ashamed of it; choose for your company such as serve him in uprightness; and shun as most dangerous the conversation of those whose lives are of an ill savour; for by frequenting such company some hopeful young people have come to great loss, and been drawn from less evils to greater, to their utter ruin.



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In the bloom of youth no ornament is so lovely as that of virtue, nor any enjoyments equal to those which we partake of in fully resigning ourselves to the divine will. These enjoyments add sweetness to all other comforts, and give true satisfaction in company and conversation, where people are mutually acquainted with it; and as your minds are thus seasoned with the truth, you will find strength to abide steadfast to the testimony of it, and be prepared for services in the church.

And now, dear friends and brethren, as you are improving a wilderness, and may be numbered amongst the first planters in one part of a province, I beseech you, in the love of Jesus Christ, wisely to consider the force of your examples, and think how much your successors may be thereby affected. It is a help in a country, yea, and a great favour and blessing, when customs first settled are agreeable to sound wisdom; but when they are otherwise the effect of them is grievous; and children feel themselves encompassed with difficulties prepared for them by their predecessors.

As moderate care and exercise, under the direction of true wisdom, are useful both to mind and body, so by these means in general the real wants of life are easily supplied, our gracious Father having so proportioned one to the other that keeping in the medium we may pass on quietly. Where slaves are purchased to do our labour, numerous difficulties attend it. To rational creatures bondage is uneasy, and frequently occasions sourness and discontent in them; which affects the family and such as claim the mastery over them. Thus people and their children are many times encompassed with vexations, which arise from their applying to wrong methods to get a living.

I have been informed that there is a large number of Friends in your parts who have no slaves; and in tender and most affectionate love I beseech you to keep clear from purchasing any. Look, my dear friends, to divine Providence, and follow in simplicity that exercise of body, that plainness and frugality, which true wisdom leads to; so may you be preserved from those dangers which attend such as are aiming at outward ease and greatness.

Treasures, though small, attained on a true principle of virtue, are sweet; and while we walk in the light of the Lord there is true comfort and satisfaction in the possession; neither the murmurs of an oppressed people, nor a throbbing uneasy conscience, nor anxious thoughts about the events of things, hinder the enjoyment of them.

When we look towards the end of life, and think on the division of our substance among our successors, if we



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know that it was collected in the fear of the Lord, in honesty, in equity, and in uprightness of heart before Him, we may consider it as His gift to us, and, with a single eye to His blessing, bestow it on those we leave behind us. Such is the happiness of the plain ways of true virtue. "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever" (ISAIAH 32:17).

Dwell here, my dear friends; and then in remote and solitary deserts you may find true peace and satisfaction. If the Lord be God, in truth and reality, there is safety for us: for He is a stronghold in the day of trouble, and knoweth them that trust in Him.

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY, in VIRGINIA, 20th of the 5th Month, 1757.

From the Yearly Meeting in Virginia I went to Carolina, and on the 1st of Sixth Month was at Wells Monthly Meeting, where the spring of the gospel ministry was opened, and the love of Jesus Christ experienced among us; to His name be the praise.

Here my brother joined with some Friends from New Garden who were going homeward; and I went next to Simons Creek Monthly Meeting, where I was silent during the meeting for worship. When business came on, my mind was exercised concerning the poor slaves, but I did not feel my way clear to speak. In this condition I was bowed in spirit before the Lord, and with tears and inward supplication besought Him so to open my understanding that I might know His will concerning me; and at length my mind was settled in silence. Near the end of their business a member of their meeting expressed a concern that had some time lain upon him, on account of Friends so much neglecting their duty in the education of their slaves, and proposed having meetings sometimes appointed for them on a week-day, to be attended only by some Friends to be named in their Monthly Meetings.

Many present appeared to unite with the proposal. One said he had often wondered that they, being our fellow-creatures, and capable of religious understanding, had been so exceedingly neglected; another expressed the like concern, and appeared zealous that in future it might be more closely considered. At length a minute was made, and the further consideration of it referred to their next Monthly Meeting. The Friend who made this proposal hath negroes; he told me that he was at New Garden, about two hundred and fifty miles from home, and came back alone; that in this solitary journey this exercise, in regard to the education of their negroes, was from time to time renewed in his mind. A Friend of some note in Virginia, who hath slaves, told me that he being far from home on a lonesome journey, had many serious thoughts about them: and his mind was so impressed therewith that he believed he saw a time coming when divine Providence would alter the circumstance of these people, respecting their condition as slaves.

From hence I went to a meeting at Newbegun Creek, and sat a considerable time in much weakness; then I felt truth open the



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way to speak a little in much plainness and simplicity, till at length, through the increase of divine love amongst us, we had a seasoning opportunity. This was also the case at the head of Little River, where we had a crowded meeting on a First-day. I went thence to the Old Neck, where I was led into a careful searching out of the secret workings of the mystery of iniquity, which, under a cover of religion, exalts itself against that pure spirit which leads in the way of meekness and self-denial. Pineywoods was the last meeting I was at in Carolina; it was large, and my heart being deeply engaged, I was drawn forth into a fervent labour amongst them.

When I was at Newbegun Creek a Friend was there who laboured for his living, having no negroes, and who had been a minister many years. He came to me the next day, and as we rode together he signified that he wanted to talk with me concerning a difficulty he had been under, which he related nearly as follows: – That as moneys had of late years been raised by a tax to carry on the wars, he had a scruple in his mind in regard to paying it, and chose rather to suffer restraint of his goods; but as he was the only person who refused it in those parts, and knew not that any one else was in the like circumstances, he signified that it had been a heavy trial to him, especially as some of his brethren had been uneasy with his conduct in that case. He added that, from a sympathy he felt with me yesterday in meeting, he found freedom thus to open the matter in the way of querying concerning Friends in our parts; I told him the state of Friends amongst us as well as I was able, and also that I had for some time been under the like scruple. I believed him to be one who was concerned to walk uprightly before the Lord, and esteemed it my duty to preserve this note concerning him, Samuel Newby.

From hence I went back into Virginia, and had a meeting near James Cowpland's; it was a time of inward suffering, but through the goodness of the Lord I was made content; at another meeting, through the renewings of pure love, we had a very comfortable season.

Travelling up and down of late, I have had renewed evidences that to be faithful to the Lord, and content with His will concerning me, is a most necessary and useful lesson for me to be learning; looking less at the effects of my labour than at the pure motion and reality of the concern, as it arises from heavenly love. In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength; and as the mind, by humble resignation, is united to Him, and we utter words from an inward knowledge that they arise from the heavenly spring, though our way may be difficult, and it may require close attention to keep in it, and though the matter in which we may be led may tend to our own abasement; yet, if we continue in patience and meekness, heavenly peace will be the reward of our labours.

I attended Curles Meeting, which, though small, was reviving to the honest-hearted. Afterwards I went to Black Creek and Caroline Meetings, from whence, accompanied by William Standley before mentioned, I rode to Goose Creek, being much through the



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woods, and about one hundred miles. We lodged the first night at a public-house; the second in the woods; and the next day we reached a Friend's house at Goose Creek. In the woods we were under some disadvantage, having no fire-works nor bells for our horses, but we stopped a little before night and let them feed on the wild grass, which was plentiful, in the mean time cutting with our knives a store against night. We then secured our horses, and gathering some bushes under an oak we lay down; but the mosquitoes being numerous and the ground damp I slept but little.

Thus lying in the wilderness, and looking at the stars, I was led to contemplate on the condition of our first parents when they were sent forth from the garden; how the Almighty, though they had been disobedient, continued to be a Father to them, and showed them what tended to their felicity as intelligent creatures, and was acceptable to Him. To provide things relative to our outward living, in the way of true wisdom, is good, and the gift of improving in things useful is a good gift, and comes from the Father of Lights. Many have had this gift; and from age to age there have been improvements of this kind made in the world. But some, not keeping to the pure gift, have in the creaturely cunning and self-exaltation sought out many inventions. As the first motive to these inventions of men, as distinct from that uprightness in which man was created, was evil, so the effects have been and are evil. It is, therefore, as necessary for us at this day constantly to attend on the heavenly gift, to be qualified to use rightly the good things in this life amidst great improvements, as it was for our first parents when they were without any improvements, without any friend or father but God only.

I was at a meeting at Goose Creek, and next at a Monthly Meeting at Fairfax, where, through the gracious dealing of the Almighty with us, His power prevailed over many hearts. From thence I went to Monoquacy and Pipe Creek in Maryland; at both places I had cause humbly to adore Him who had supported me through many exercises, and by whose help I was enabled to reach the true witness in the hearts of others. There were some hopeful young people in those parts. I had meetings afterwards at John Everit's in Monalen, and at Huntingdon, and I was made humbly thankful to the Lord, who opened my heart amongst the people in these new settlements, so that it was a time of encouragement to the honest-minded.

At Monalen a Friend gave me some account of a religious society among the Dutch, called Mennonists, and amongst other things related a passage in substance as follows: One of the Mennonists having acquaintance with a man of another society at a considerable distance, and being with his waggon on business near the house of his said acquaintance and night coming on, he had thoughts of putting up with him, but passing by his fields, and observing the distressed appearance of his slaves, he kindled a fire in the woods hard by, and lay there that night. His said acquaintance hearing where he lodged, and afterward



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meeting the Mennonist, told him of it, adding he should have been heartily welcome at his house, and from their acquaintance in former time wondered at his conduct in that case. The Mennonist replied, "Ever since I lodged by thy field I have wanted an opportunity to speak with thee. I had intended to come to thy house for entertainment, but seeing thy slaves at their work, and observing the manner of their dress, I had no liking to come to partake with thee." He then admonished him to use them with more humanity, and added, "As I lay by the fire that night, I thought that as I was a man of substance thou wouldst have received me freely; but if I had been as poor as one of thy slaves, and had no power to help myself, I should have received from thy hand no kinder usage than they."

In this journey I was out about two months, and travelled about eleven hundred and fifty miles. I returned home under an humbling sense of the gracious dealings of the Lord with me, in preserving me through many trials and afflictions.





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1758

Philadelphia [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) required all members of their society to cease and desist from purchasing [slaves](#), resign from all public offices, and cease all participation in the political affairs of the colony.³⁷



Costumes of Philadelphia Quakers

This is what was going on for Friend [John Woolman](#):



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37. [JOHN WOOLMAN](#)'S JOURNAL, Chapter VI 1758, 1759 Visit to the Quarterly Meetings in Chester County. Joins Daniel Stanton and John Scarborough in a Visit to such as kept Slaves there. Some Observations on the Conduct which those should maintain who speak in Meetings for Discipline. More Visits to such as kept Slaves, and to Friends near Salem. Account of the Yearly Meeting in the Year 1759, and of the increasing Concern in Divers Provinces to labour against Buying and Keeping Slaves. The Yearly Meeting Epistle. Thoughts on the Smallpox spreading, and on Inoculation.





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1757, 1758

Considerations on the Payment of a Tax laid for Carrying on the War against the Indians – Meetings of the Committee of the Yearly Meeting at Philadelphia – Some Notes on Thomas a Kempis and John Huss – The present Circumstances of Friends in Pennsylvania and New Jersey very Different from those of our Predecessors – The Drafting of the Militia in New Jersey to serve in the Army, with some Observations on the State of the Members of our Society at that time – Visit to Friends in Pennsylvania, accompanied by Benjamin Jones – Proceedings at the Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meetings in Philadelphia, respecting those who keep Slaves.

A FEW years past, money being made current in our province for carrying on wars, and to be called in again by taxes laid on the inhabitants, my mind was often affected with the thoughts of paying such taxes; and I believe it right for me to preserve a memorandum concerning it. I was told that Friends in England frequently paid taxes, when the money was applied to such purposes. I had conversation with several noted Friends on the subject, who all favoured the payment of such taxes; some of them I preferred before myself, and this made me easier for a



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time; yet there was in the depth of my mind a scruple which I never could get over; and at certain times I was greatly distressed on that account.

I believed that there were some upright-hearted men who paid such taxes, yet could not see that their example was a sufficient reason for me to do so, while I believe that the Spirit of truth required of me, as an individual, to suffer patiently the distress of goods, rather than pay actively.

To refuse the active payment of a tax which our Society generally paid was exceedingly disagreeable; but to do a thing contrary to my conscience appeared yet more dreadful. When this exercise came upon me, I knew of none under the like difficulty; and in my distress I besought the Lord to enable me to give up all, that so I might follow Him wheresoever He was pleased to lead me. Under this exercise I went to our Yearly Meeting at Philadelphia in the year 1755; at which a committee was appointed of some from each Quarterly Meeting, to correspond with the meeting for sufferers in London; and another to visit our Monthly and Quarterly Meetings. After their appointment, before the last adjournment of the meeting, it was agreed that these two committees should meet together in Friends' school-house in the city, to consider some things in which the cause of truth was concerned. They accordingly had a weighty conference in the fear of the Lord; at which time I perceived there were many Friends under a scruple like that before mentioned.³⁸

As scrupling to pay a tax on account of the application hath seldom been heard of heretofore, even amongst men of integrity, who have steadily borne their testimony against outward wars in their time, I may therefore note some things which have occurred to my mind, as I have been inwardly exercised on that account. From the steady opposition which faithful Friends in early times made to wrong things then approved, they were hated and persecuted by men living in the spirit of this world, and suffering with firmness, they were made a blessing to the Church, and the work prospered. It equally concerns men in every age to take heed to their own spirits; and in comparing their situation with ours, to me it appears that there was less danger of their being infected with the spirit of this world, in paying such taxes, than is the case with us now. They had little or no share in civil government, and many of them declared that they were, through the power of God, separated from the spirit in which wars were, and being afflicted by the rulers on account of their testimony, there was less likelihood of their uniting in spirit with them in things inconsistent with the purity of truth.

We, from the first settlement of this land, have known little or no troubles of that sort. The profession of our predecessors was for a time accounted reproachful, but at length, their uprightness being understood by the rulers, and their innocent sufferings moving them, our way of worship was tolerated, and

38. Christians refused to pay taxes to support heathen temples. See Cave's PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY, Part III. page 327.



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many of our members in these colonies became active in civil government. Being thus tried with favour and prosperity, this world appeared inviting; our minds have been turned to the improvement of our country, to merchandise and the sciences, amongst which are many things useful, if followed in pure wisdom; but in our present condition I believe it will not be denied that a carnal mind is gaining upon us. Some of our members, who are officers in civil government, are, in one case or other, called upon in their respective stations to assist in things relative to the wars; but being in doubt whether to act or to crave to be excused from their office, if they see their brethren united in the payment of a tax to carry on the said wars, may think their case not much different, and so might quench the tender movings of the Holy Spirit in their minds. Thus, by small degrees, we might approach so near to fighting that the distinction would be little else than the name of a peaceable people.

It requires great self-denial and resignation of ourselves to God, to attain that state wherein we can freely cease from fighting when wrongfully invaded, if, by our fighting, there were a probability of overcoming the invaders. Whoever rightly attains to it does in some degree feel that spirit in which our Redeemer gave His life for us; and through divine goodness many of our predecessors, and many now living, have learned this blessed lesson; but many others, having their religion chiefly by education, and not being enough acquainted with that cross which crucifies to the world, do manifest a temper distinguishable from that of an entire trust in God. In calmly considering these things, it hath not appeared strange to me that an exercise hath now fallen upon some, which, with respect to the outward means, is different from what was known to many of those who went before us.

Some time after the Yearly Meeting, the said committees met at Philadelphia, and, by adjournments, continued sitting several days. The calamities of war were now increasing; the frontier inhabitants of Pennsylvania were frequently surprised, some were slain, and many taken captive by the Indians; and while these committees sat, the corpse of one so slain was brought in a waggon, and taken through the streets of the city in his bloody garments, to alarm the people and rouse them to war.

Friends thus met were not all of one mind in relation to the tax, which, to those who scrupled it, made the way more difficult. To refuse an active payment at such a time might be construed into an act of disloyalty, and appeared likely to displease the rulers not only here but in England; still there was a scruple so fixed on the minds of many Friends that nothing moved it. It was a conference the most weighty that ever I was at, and the hearts of many were bowed in reverence before the Most High. Some Friends of the said committees who appeared easy to pay the tax, after several adjournments, withdrew; others of them continued till the last. At length an epistle of tender love and caution to Friends in Pennsylvania was drawn up, and



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being read several times and corrected, was signed by such as were free to sign it, and afterward sent to the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings.

Ninth of Eighth Month, 1757. – Orders came at night to the military officers in our county (Burlington), directing them to draft the militia, and prepare a number of men to go off as soldiers, to the relief of the English at Fort William Henry, in New York government; a few days after which there was a general review of the militia at Mount Holly, and a number of men were chosen and sent off under some officers. Shortly after, there came orders to draft three times as many, who were to hold themselves in readiness to march when fresh orders came. On the 17th there was a meeting of the military officers at Mount Holly, who agreed on draft; orders were sent to the men so chosen to meet their respective captains at set times and places, those in our township to meet at Mount Holly, amongst whom were a considerable number of our Society. My mind being affected herewith, I had fresh opportunity to see and consider the advantage of living in the real substance of religion, where practice doth harmonize with principle. Amongst the officers are men of understanding, who have some regard to sincerity where they see it; and when such in the execution of their office have men to deal with whom they believe to be upright-hearted, it is a painful task to put them to trouble on account of scruples of conscience, and they will be likely to avoid it as much as easily may be. But where men profess to be so meek and heavenly-minded, and to have their trust so firmly settled in God that they cannot join in wars, and yet by their spirit and conduct in common life manifest a contrary disposition, their difficulties are great at such a time.

When officers who are anxiously endeavouring to get troops to answer the demands of their superiors see men who are insincere pretend scruples of conscience in hopes of being excused from a dangerous employment, it is likely they will be roughly handled. In this time of commotion some of our young men left these parts and tarried abroad till it was over; some came, and proposed to go as soldiers; others appeared to have a real tender scruple in their minds against joining in wars, and were much humbled under the apprehension of a trial so near. I had conversation with several of them to my satisfaction. When the captain came to town, some of the last-mentioned went and told him in substance as follows: – That they could not bear arms for conscience' sake; nor could they hire any to go in their places, being resigned as to the event. At length the captain acquainted them all that they might return home for the present, but he required them to provide themselves as soldiers, and be in readiness to march when called upon. This was such a time as I had not seen before; and yet I may say, with thankfulness to the Lord, that I believed the trial was intended for our good; and I was favoured with resignation to Him. The French army having taken the fort they were besieging, destroyed it and went away; the company of men who were first drafted, after some days'



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march, had orders to return home, and those on the second draft were no more called upon on that occasion.

Fourth of Fourth Month, 1758. – Orders came to some officers in Mount Holly to prepare quarters for a short time for about one hundred soldiers. An officer and two other men, all inhabitants of our town, came to my house. The officer told me that he came to desire me to provide lodging and entertainment for two soldiers, and that six shillings a week per man would be allowed as pay for it. The case being new and unexpected, I made no answer suddenly, but sat a time silent, my mind being inward. I was fully convinced that the proceedings in wars are inconsistent with the purity of the Christian religion; and to be hired to entertain men, who were then under pay as soldiers, was a difficulty with me. I expected they had legal authority for what they did; and after a short time I said to the officer, If the men are sent here for entertainment, I believe I shall not refuse to admit them into my house, but the nature of the case is such that I expect I cannot keep them on hire. One of the men intimated that he thought I might do it consistently with my religious principles. To which I made no reply, believing silence at that time best for me. Though they spake of two, there came only one, who tarried at my house about two weeks, and behaved himself civilly. When the officer came to pay me, I told him I could not take pay, having admitted him into my house in a passive obedience to authority. I was on horseback when he spake to me, and as I turned from him, he said he was obliged to me; to which I said nothing; but, thinking on the expression, I grew uneasy; and afterwards, being near where he lived, I went and told him on what grounds I refused taking pay for keeping the soldier.

I have been informed that Thomas a Kempis lived and died in the profession of the Roman Catholic religion; and, in reading his writings, I have believed him to be a man of a true Christian spirit, as fully so as many who died martyrs because they could not join with some superstitions in that Church. All true Christians are of the same spirit, but their gifts are diverse, Jesus Christ appointing to each one his peculiar office, agreeably to His infinite wisdom.

John Huss contended against the errors which had crept into the Church, in opposition to the Council of Constance, which the historian reports to have consisted of some thousand persons. He modestly vindicated the cause which he believed was right; and though his language and conduct towards his judges appear to have been respectful, yet he never could be moved from the principles settled in his mind. To use his own words: "This I most humbly require and desire of you all, even for His sake who is the God of us all, that I be not compelled to the thing which my conscience doth repugn or strive against." And again, in his answer to the Emperor: "I refuse nothing, most noble Emperor, whatsoever the council shall decree or determine upon me, only this one thing I except, that I do not offend God and my conscience."³⁹ At length, rather than act contrary to that which



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he believed the Lord required of him, he chose to suffer death by fire. Thomas a Kempis, without disputing against the articles then generally agreed to, appears to have laboured, by pious example as well as by preaching and writing, to promote virtue and the inward spiritual religion; and I believe they were both sincere-hearted followers of Christ. True charity is an excellent virtue; and sincerely to labour for their good, whose belief in all points doth not agree with ours, is a happy state. Near the beginning of the year 1758, I went one evening, in company with a Friend, to visit a sick person; and before our return we were told of a woman living near, who had for several days been disconsolate, occasioned by a dream, wherein death, and the judgments of the Almighty after death, were represented to her mind in a moving manner. Her sadness on that account being worn off, the Friend with whom I was in company went to see her, and had some religious conversation with her and her husband. With this visit they were somewhat affected, and the man, with many tears, expressed his satisfaction. In a short time after, the poor man, being on the river in a storm of wind, was with one more drowned.

Eighth Month, 1758. — Having had drawings in my mind to be at the Quarterly Meeting in Chester County, and at some meetings in the county of Philadelphia, I went first to said Quarterly Meeting, which was large. Several weighty matters came under consideration and debate, and the Lord was pleased to qualify some of His servants with strength and firmness to bear the burden of the day. Though I said but little, my mind was deeply exercised, and, under a sense of God's love, in the anointing and fitting of some young men for his work, I was comforted, and my heart was tendered before Him. From hence I went to the Youth's Meeting at Darby, where my beloved friend and brother Benjamin Jones met me by appointment before I left home, to join in the visit. We were at Radnor, Merion, Richland, North Wales, Plymouth, and Abington meetings, and had cause to bow in reverence before the Lord, our gracious God, by whose help way was opened for us from day to day. I was out about two weeks, and rode about two hundred miles.

The Monthly Meeting of Philadelphia having been under a concern on account of some Friends who this summer (1758) had bought negro slaves, proposed to their Quarterly Meeting to have the minute reconsidered in the Yearly Meeting, which was made last on that subject, and the said Quarterly Meeting appointed a committee to consider it, and to report to their next. This committee having met once and adjourned, and I, going to Philadelphia to meet a committee of the Yearly Meeting, was in town the evening on which the Quarterly Meeting's committee met the second time, and finding an inclination to sit with them, I with some others was admitted, and Friends had a weighty conference on the subject. Soon after their next Quarterly meeting I heard that the case was coming to our Yearly Meeting. This brought a weighty exercise upon me, and under a sense of



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my own infirmities, and the great danger I felt of turning aside from perfect purity, my mind was often drawn to retire alone, and put up my prayers to the Lord that He would be graciously pleased to strengthen me; that, setting aside all views of self-interest and the friendship of this world, I might stand fully resigned to His holy will.

In this Yearly Meeting several weighty matters were considered, and toward the last that in relation to dealing with persons who purchase slaves. During the several sittings of the said meeting, my mind was frequently covered with inward prayer, and I could say with David, "that tears were my meat day and night." The case of slave-keeping lay heavy upon me, nor did I find any engagement to speak directly to any other matter before the meeting. Now when this case was opened several faithful Friends spake weightily thereto, with which I was comforted; and feeling a concern to cast in my mite, I said in substance as follows: —

"In the difficulties attending us in this life nothing is more precious than the mind of truth inwardly manifested; and it is my earnest desire that in this weighty matter we may be so truly humbled as to be favoured with a clear understanding of the mind of truth, and follow it; this would be of more advantage to the Society than any medium not in the clearness of divine wisdom. The case is difficult to some who have slaves, but if such set aside all self-interest, and come to be weaned from the desire of getting estates, or even from holding them together, when truth requires the contrary, I believe way will so open that they will know how to steer through those difficulties."

Many Friends appeared to be deeply bowed under the weight of the work, and manifested much firmness in their love to the cause of truth and universal righteousness on the earth. And though none did openly justify the practice of slave-keeping in general, yet some appeared concerned lest the meeting should go into such measures as might give uneasiness to many brethren, alleging that, if Friends patiently continued under the exercise, the Lord in His time might open a way for the deliverance of these people. Finding an engagement to speak, I said, "My mind is often led to consider the purity of the divine Being, and the justice of His judgments; and herein my soul is covered with awfulness. I cannot omit to hint of some cases where people have not been treated with the purity of justice, and the event hath been lamentable. Many slaves on this continent are oppressed, and their cries have reached the ears of the Most High. Such are the purity and certainty of His judgments, that He cannot be partial in our favour. In infinite love and goodness, He hath opened our understanding from one time to another concerning our duty towards this people, and it is not a time for delay. Should we now be sensible of what He requires of us, and through a respect to the private interest of some persons, or through a regard to some friendships which do not

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stand on an immutable foundation, neglect to do our duty in firmness and constancy, still waiting for some extraordinary means to bring about their deliverance, God may by terrible things in righteousness answer us in this matter."

Many faithful brethren laboured with great firmness, and the love of truth in a good degree prevailed. Several who had negroes expressed their desire that a rule might be made to deal with such Friends as offenders who bought slaves in future. To this it was answered that the root of this evil would never be effectually struck at, until a thorough search was made in the circumstances of such Friends as kept negroes, with respect to the righteousness of their motives in keeping them, that impartial justice might be administered throughout. Several Friends expressed their desire that a visit might be made to such Friends as kept slaves, and many others said that they believed liberty was the negro's right; to which, at length, no opposition was publicly made. A minute was made more full on that subject than any heretofore; and the names of several Friends entered who were free to join in a visit to such as kept slaves.





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1760

In [Newport, Rhode Island](#), some sailors were [hanged](#) for having been guilty of a mutiny at sea.

Some of the [Quaker](#) group in [Newport](#), including some of the elders and some of the ministers, were, however little superior in morality to such condemned persons, for they were not only slavemasters but also were still entangled in the [international slave trade](#). For instance, at this point the Wanton family that would produce [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) was still engaging in this trade. Friend [John Woolman](#) wrote that he and his companions “in bowedness of spirit went to the [Yearly Meeting](#) at Newport, where I understood that a large number of slaves were imported from Africa and then on sale by a member of our Society.... At this time I had a feeling of the condition of Habakkuk as thus expressed: ‘When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered, my appetite failed, and I grew outwardly weak. I trembled in myself that I might rest in the day of trouble.’ I had many cogitations and was sorely distressed.” Habakkuk 3:16 is of course a graphic description of the wrath of God; the verse concluding with “I sigh for the day of distress to dawn over my assailants.”



Friend John engaged in a successful effort to read in [Yearly Meeting](#) session a petition to the [Rhode Island](#) legislature to discourage the importation of [slaves](#). Apparently he got through this with his customary delicate, compassionate, and forceful persuasion. Having been able to read the petition aloud in the hearing of Friends, he “felt easy to leave the essay amongst Friends, for them to proceed on it as they believed best.”



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Then, however, the [Yearly Meeting](#) took up the question of lotteries, and Friend John evidently was not able to maintain his temperance. He reports that “The matter was zealously handled by some on both sides.... And in the heat of zeal, I once made reply to what an ancient Friend said, which when I sat down I saw that my words were not enough seasoned with charity, and after this I spake no more on the subject. ...Some time after ... I, remaining uneasy with the manner of my speaking ... could not see my way clear to conceal my uneasiness, but was concerned that I might say nothing to weaken the cause in which I had laboured. And then after some close exercise and hearty repentance for that I had not attended closely to the safe guide, I stood up and ... acquainted Friends that though I dare not go from what I had said as to the matter, yet I was uneasy with the manner of my speaking, as believing milder language would have been better. As this was uttered in some degree of creaturely abasement, it appeared to have a good savor amongst us, after a warm debate.” Woolman had managed to rein in his anger and distress during his careful and skillful management of his antislavery petition, using the emotional energy to power his compassion, discernment, and charity toward the [slaveholders](#) themselves, but then during the discussion of lotteries his anger had slipped out. Following the general Meeting, however Woolman was able to meet with a number of slaveholding ministers, elders, overseers, and others, and was able to report that “My exercise was heavy and I was deeply bowed in spirit before the Lord, who was pleased to favour with the seasoning virtue of Truth, which wrought a tenderness amongst us, and the subject was mutually handled in a calm and peaceable spirit.”

Visit, in Company with Samuel Eastburn, to Long Island, Rhode Island, Boston, etc. — Remarks on the Slave-Trade at Newport; also on Lotteries — Some Observations on the Island of Nantucket.

FOURTH Month, 1760. — Having for some time past felt a sympathy in my mind with Friends eastward, I opened my concern in our Monthly Meeting, and, obtaining a certificate, set forward on the 17th of this month, in company with my beloved friend Samuel Eastburn. We had meetings at Woodbridge, Rahway, and Plainfield, and were at their Monthly Meeting of ministers and elders in Rahway. We laboured under some discouragement, but through the invisible power of truth our visit was made reviving to the lowly-minded, with whom I felt a near unity of spirit, being much reduced in my mind. We passed on and visited most of the meetings on Long Island. It was my concern from day to day, to say neither more nor less than what the Spirit of truth opened in me, being jealous over myself lest I should say anything to make my testimony look agreeable to that mind in people which is not in pure obedience to the cross of Christ.

The spring of the ministry was often low, and through the subjecting power of truth we were kept low with it; from place to place they whose hearts were truly concerned for the cause of Christ appeared to be comforted in our labours, and though it was in general a time of abasement of the creature, yet, through His goodness who is a helper of the poor, we had some truly edifying seasons both in meetings and in families where we tarried. Sometimes we found strength to labour earnestly with the unfaithful, especially with those whose station in families or in the Society was such that their example had a powerful tendency to open the way for others to go aside from the purity and soundness of the blessed truth.

At Jericho, on Long Island, I wrote home as follows: —

24th of the Fourth Month, 1760.



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DEARLY BELOVED WIFE, – We are favoured with health; have been at sundry meetings in East Jersey and on this island. My mind hath been much in an inward, watchful frame since I left thee, greatly desiring that our proceedings may be singly in the will of our Heavenly Father.

As the present appearance of things is not joyous, I have been much shut up from outward cheerfulness, remembering that promise, "Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord"; as this from day to day has been revived in my memory, I have considered that His internal presence in our minds is a delight of all others the most pure, and that the honest-hearted not only delight in this, but in the effect of it upon them. He regards the helpless and distressed, and reveals His love to His children under affliction, who delight in beholding His benevolence, and in feeling divine charity moving in them. Of this I may speak a little, for, though since I left you I have often an engaging love and affection towards thee and my daughter and friends about home, and going out at this time, when sickness is so great amongst you, is a trial upon me; yet I often remember there are many widows and fatherless, many who have poor tutors, many who have evil examples before them, and many whose minds are in captivity; for whose sake my heart is at times moved with compassion, so that I feel my mind resigned to leave you for a season, to exercise that gift which the Lord hath bestowed on me, which though small compared with some, yet in this I rejoice that I feel love unfeigned towards my fellow-creatures. I recommend you to the Almighty, who, I trust, cares for you, and under a sense of His heavenly love remain,
Thy loving husband, J. W.

We crossed from the east end of Long Island to New London, about thirty miles, in a large open boat; while we were out, the wind rising high, the waves several times beat over us, so that to me it appeared dangerous, but my mind was at that time turned to Him who made and governs the deep, and my life was resigned to Him; as He was mercifully pleased to preserve us, I had fresh occasion to consider every day as a day lent to me, and felt a renewed engagement to devote my time, and all I had, to Him who gave it.

We had five meetings in Narraganset, and went thence to Newport on Rhode Island. Our gracious Father preserved us in an humble dependence on Him through deep exercises that were mortifying to the creaturely will. In several families in the country where we lodged, I felt an engagement on my mind to have a conference with them in private, concerning their slaves; and through divine aid I was favoured to give up thereto. Though in this concern I differ from many whose service in travelling is, I believe, greater than mine, yet I do not think hardly of them



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for omitting it; I do not repine at having so unpleasant a task assigned me, but look with awfulness to Him who appoints to His servants their respective employments, and is good to all who serve Him sincerely.

We got to Newport in the evening, and on the next day visited two sick persons, with whom we had comfortable sittings, and in the afternoon attended the burial of a Friend. The next day we were at meetings at Newport, in the forenoon and afternoon; the spring of the ministry was opened, and strength was given to declare the Word of Life to the people.

The day following we went on our journey, but the great number of slaves in these parts, and the continuance of that trade from thence to Guinea, made a deep impression on me, and my cries were often put up to my Heavenly Father in secret, that He would enable me to discharge my duty faithfully in such way as He might be pleased to point out to me.

We took Swansea, Freetown, and Taunton in our way to Boston, where also we had a meeting; our exercise was deep, and the love of truth prevailed, for which I bless the Lord. We went eastward about eighty miles beyond Boston, taking meetings, and were in a good degree preserved in an humble dependence on that arm which drew us out; and though we had some hard labour with the disobedient, by laying things home and close to such as were stout against the truth, yet through the goodness of God we had at times to partake of heavenly comfort with those who were meek, and were often favoured to part with Friends in the nearness of true gospel fellowship. We returned to Boston and had another comfortable opportunity with Friends there, and thence rode back a day's journey eastward of Boston. Our guide being a heavy man, and the weather hot, my companion and I expressed our freedom to go on without him, to which he consented, and we respectfully took our leave of him; this we did as believing the journey would have been hard to him and his horse.

In visiting the meetings in those parts we were measurably baptized into a feeling of the state of the Society, and in bowedness of spirit went to the Yearly Meeting at Newport, where we met with John Storer from England, Elizabeth Shipley, Ann Gaunt, Hannah Foster, and Mercy Redman, from our parts, all ministers of the gospel, of whose company I was glad. Understanding that a large number of slaves had been imported from Africa into that town, and were then on sale by a member of our Society, my appetite failed, and I grew outwardly weak, and had a feeling of the condition of Habakkuk, as thus expressed: "When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered, I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble." I had many cogitations, and was sorely distressed. I was desirous that Friends might petition the Legislature to use their endeavours to discourage the future importation of slaves, for I saw that this trade was a great evil, and tended to multiply troubles, and to bring distresses on the people for whose welfare my heart was deeply concerned. But I perceived several difficulties in regard to petitioning, and such was the



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exercise of my mind that I thought of endeavouring to get an opportunity to speak a few words in the House of Assembly then sitting in town.

This exercise came upon me in the afternoon on the second day of the Yearly Meeting, and on going to bed I got no sleep till my mind was wholly resigned thereto. In the morning I inquired of a Friend how long the Assembly was likely to continue sitting, who told me it was expected to be prorogued that day or the next. As I was desirous to attend the business of the meeting, and perceived the Assembly was likely to separate before the business was over, after considerable exercise, humbly seeking to the Lord for instruction, my mind settled to attend on the business of the meeting; on the last day of which I had prepared a short essay of a petition to be presented to the Legislature, if way opened. And being informed that there were some appointed by that Yearly Meeting to speak with those in authority on cases relating to the Society, I opened my mind to several of them, and showed them the essay I had made, and afterwards I opened the case in the meeting for business, in substance as follows: —

I have been under a concern for some time on account of the great number of slaves which are imported into this colony. I am aware that it is a tender point to speak to, but apprehend I am not clear in the sight of Heaven without doing so. I have prepared an essay of a petition to be presented to the Legislature, if way open; and what I have to propose to this meeting is that some Friends may be named to withdraw and look over it, and report whether they believe it suitable to be read in the meeting. If they should think well of reading it, it will remain for the meeting to consider whether to take any further notice of it, as a meeting, or not.

After a short conference some Friends went out, and, looking over it, expressed their willingness to have it read, which being done, many expressed their unity with the proposal, and some signified that to have the subjects of the petition enlarged upon, and signed out of meeting by such as were free, would be more suitable than to do it there. Though I expected at first that if it was done it would be in that way, yet such was the exercise of my mind that to move it in the hearing of Friends when assembled appeared to me as a duty, for my heart yearned towards the inhabitants of these parts, believing that by this trade there had been an increase of inquietude amongst them, and way had been made for the spreading of a spirit opposite to that meekness and humility which is a sure resting-place for the soul; and that the continuance of this trade would not only render their healing more difficult, but would increase their malady.

Having proceeded thus far, I felt easy to leave the essay amongst Friends, for them to proceed in it as they believed best. And now an exercise revived in my mind in relation to lotteries, which were common in those parts. I had mentioned the subject in a former sitting of this meeting, when arguments were used



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in favour of Friends being held excused who were only concerned in such lotteries as were agreeable to law. And now, on moving it again, it was opposed as before; but the hearts of some solid Friends appeared to be united to discourage the practice amongst their members, and the matter was zealously handled by some on both sides. In this debate it appeared very clear to me that the spirit of lotteries was a spirit of selfishness, which tended to confuse and darken the understanding, and that pleading for it in our meetings, which were set apart for the Lord's work, was not right. In the heat of zeal, I made reply to what an ancient Friend said, and when I sat down I saw that my words were not enough seasoned with charity. After this I spoke no more on the subject. At length a minute was made, a copy of which was to be sent to their several Quarterly Meetings, inciting Friends to labour to discourage the practice amongst all professing with us.

Some time after this minute was made I remained uneasy with the manner of my speaking to the ancient Friend, and could not see my way clear to conceal my uneasiness, though I was concerned that I might say nothing to weaken the cause in which I had laboured. After some close exercise and hearty repentance for not having attended closely to the safe guide, I stood up, and, reciting the passage, acquainted Friends that though I durst not go from what I had said as to the matter, yet I was uneasy with the manner of my speaking, believing milder language would have been better. As this was uttered in some degree of creaturely abasement after a warm debate, it appeared to have a good savour amongst us.

The Yearly Meeting being now over, there yet remained on my mind a secret though heavy exercise, in regard to some leading active members about Newport, who were in the practice of keeping slaves. This I mentioned to two ancient Friends who came out of the country, and proposed to them, if way opened, to have some conversation with those members. One of them and I, having consulted one of the most noted elders who had slaves, he, in a respectful manner, encouraged me to proceed to clear myself of what lay upon me. Near the beginning of the Yearly Meeting, I had had a private conference with this said elder and his wife concerning their slaves, so that the way seemed clear to me to advise with him about the manner of proceeding.

I told him I was free to have a conference with them all together in a private house; or, if he thought they would take it unkind to be asked to come together, and to be spoken with in the hearing of one another, I was free to spend some time amongst them, and to visit them all in their own houses. He expressed his liking to the first proposal, not doubting their willingness to come together; and, as I proposed a visit to only ministers, elders, and overseers, he named some others whom he desired might also be present. A careful messenger being wanted to acquaint them in a proper manner, he offered to go to all their houses, to open the matter to them, – and did so. About the eighth hour the next morning we met in the meeting-house



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chamber, the last-mentioned country Friend, my companion, and John Storer being with us. After a short time of retirement, I acquainted them with the steps I had taken in procuring that meeting, and opened the concern I was under, and we then proceeded to a free conference upon the subject. My exercise was heavy, and I was deeply bowed in spirit before the Lord, who was pleased to favour with the seasoning virtue of truth, which wrought a tenderness amongst us; and the subject was mutually handled in a calm and peaceable spirit. At length, feeling my mind released from the burden which I had been under, I took my leave of them in a good degree of satisfaction; and by the tenderness they manifested in regard to the practice, and the concern several of them expressed in relation to the manner of disposing of their negroes after their decease, I believed that a good exercise was spreading amongst them: and I am humbly thankful to God, who supported my mind and preserved me in a good degree of resignation through these trials.

Thou who sometimes travellest in the work of the ministry, and art made very welcome by thy friends, seest many tokens of their satisfaction in having thee for their guest. It is good for thee to dwell deep, that thou mayest feel and understand the spirits of people. If we believe truth points towards a conference on some subjects in a private way, it is needful for us to take heed that their kindness, their freedom and affability, do not hinder us from the Lord's work. I have experienced that, in the midst of kindness and smooth conduct, to speak close and home to them who entertain us, on points that relate to outward interest, is hard labour. Sometimes, when I have felt truth lead towards it, I have found myself disqualified by a superficial friendship; and as the sense thereof hath abased me and my cries have been to the Lord, so I have been humbled and made content to appear weak, or as a fool for His sake; and thus a door hath been opened to enter upon it. To attempt to do the Lord's work in our own way, and to speak of that which is the burden of the Word in a way easy to the natural part, doth not reach the bottom of the disorder. To see the failings of our friends, and think hard of them, without opening that which we ought to open, and still carry a face of friendship, tends to undermine the foundation of true unity. The office of a minister of Christ is weighty, and they who now go forth as watchmen have need to be steadily on their guard against the snares of prosperity and an outside friendship.

After the Yearly Meeting we were at meetings at Newtown, Cushnet, Long Plain, Rochester, and Dartmouth. From thence we sailed for Nantucket, in company with Ann Gaunt, Mercy Redman, and several other Friends. The wind being slack we only reached Tarpawling Cove the first day; where, going on shore, we found room in a public-house, and beds for a few of us, — the rest slept on the floor. We went on board again about break of day, and though the wind was small, we were favoured to come within about four miles of Nantucket; and then about ten of us got into our boat and rowed to the harbour before dark; a large boat went



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off and brought in the rest of the passengers about midnight. The next day but one was their Yearly Meeting, which held four days, the last of which was their Monthly Meeting for business. We had a labourious time amongst them; our minds were closely exercised, and I believe it was a time of great searching of heart. The longer I was on the island the more I became sensible that there was a considerable number of valuable Friends there, though an evil spirit, tending to strife, had been at work amongst them. I was cautious of making any visits except as my mind was particularly drawn to them; and in that way we had some sittings in Friends' houses, where the heavenly wing was at times spread over us, to our mutual comfort. My beloved companion had very acceptable service on this island.

When meeting was over, we all agreed to sail the next day if the weather was suitable and we were well; and being called up the latter part of the night, about fifty of us went on board a vessel; but, the wind changing, the seamen thought best to stay in the harbour till it altered, so we returned on shore. Feeling clear as to any further visits, I spent my time in my chamber, chiefly alone; and after some hours, my heart being filled with the spirit of supplication, my prayers and tears were poured out before my Heavenly Father for His help and instruction in the manifold difficulties which attended me in life. While I was waiting upon the Lord, there came a messenger from the women Friends who lodged at another house, desiring to confer with us about appointing a meeting, which to me appeared weighty, as we had been at so many before; but after a short conference, and advising with some elderly Friends, a meeting was appointed, in which the Friend who first moved it, and who had been much shut up before, was largely opened in the love of the gospel. The next morning about break of day going again on board the vessel, we reached Falmouth on the Main before night, where our horses being brought, we proceeded towards Sandwich Quarterly Meeting. Being two days in going to Nantucket, and having been there once before, I observed many shoals in their bay, which make sailing more dangerous, especially in stormy nights; also, that a great shoal which encloses their harbour prevents the entrance of sloops except when the tide is up. Waiting without for the rising of the tide is sometimes hazardous in storms, and by waiting within they sometimes miss a fair wind. I took notice that there was on that small island a great number of inhabitants, and the soil not very fertile, the timber being so gone that for vessels, fences, and firewood, they depend chiefly on buying from the Main, for the cost whereof, with most of their other expenses, they depend principally upon the whale fishery.⁴⁰

I also encouraged the young women to continue their neat, decent way of attending themselves on the affairs of the house; showing, as the way opened, that where people were truly humble, used themselves to business, and were content with a plain way of life, they had ever had more true peace and calmness of mind than they who, aspiring to greatness and outward show, have grasped hard for an income to support themselves therein. And



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as I observed they had so few or no slaves, I had to encourage them to be content without them, making mention of the numerous troubles and vexations which frequently attended the minds of the people who depend on slaves to do their labour.

We attended the Quarterly Meeting at Sandwich, in company with Ann Gaunt and Mercy Redman, which was preceded by a Monthly Meeting, and in the whole held three days. We were in various ways exercised amongst them, in gospel love, according to the several gifts bestowed on us, and were at times overshadowed with the virtue of truth, to the comfort of the sincere and stirring up of the negligent. Here we parted with Ann and Mercy, and went to Rhode Island, taking one meeting in our way, which was a satisfactory time. Reaching Newport the evening before their Quarterly Meeting, we attended it, and after that had a meeting with our young people, separated from those of other societies. We went through much labour in this town; and now, in taking leave of it, though I felt close inward exercise to the last, I found inward peace, and was in some degree comforted in a belief that a good number remain in that place who retain a sense of truth, and that there are some young people attentive to the voice of the Heavenly Shepherd. The last meeting, in which Friends from the several parts of the quarter came together, was a select meeting, and through the renewed manifestation of the Father's love the hearts of the sincere were united together.⁴¹ From Newport we went to Greenwich, Shanticut, and Warwick, and were helped to labour amongst Friends in the love of our gracious Redeemer. Afterwards, accompanied by our friend John Casey from Newport, we rode through Connecticut to Oblong, visited the meetings in those parts, and thence proceeded to the Quarterly Meeting at Ryewoods. Through the gracious extendings of divine help, we had some seasoning opportunities in those places. We also visited Friends at New York and Flushing, and thence to Rahway. Here our roads parting, I took leave of my beloved companion and true yokemate Samuel Eastburn, and reached home the 10th of Eighth Month, where I found my family well. For the favours and protection of the Lord, both inward and outward, extended to me in this journey, my heart is humbled in grateful acknowledgments, and I find renewed desires to dwell and walk

40. I considered that as towns grew larger, and lands near navigable waters were more cleared, it would require more labour to get timber and wood. I understood that the whales, being much hunted and sometimes wounded and not killed, grow more shy and difficult to come at. I considered that the formation of the earth, the seas, the islands, bays, and rivers, the motions of the winds and great waters, which cause bars and shoals in particular places, were all the works of Him who is perfect wisdom and goodness; and as people attend to His heavenly instruction, and put their trust in Him, He provides for them in all parts where he gives them a being; and as in this visit to these people I felt a strong desire for their firm establishment on the sure foundation, besides what was said more publicly, I was concerned to speak with the women Friends in their Monthly Meeting of business, many being present, and in the fresh spring of pure love to open before them the advantage, both inwardly and outwardly, of attending singly to the pure guidance of the Holy Spirit, and therein to educate their children in true humility and the disuse of all superfluities. I reminded them of the difficulties their husbands and sons were frequently exposed to at sea, and that the more plain and simple their way of living was the less need there would be of running great hazards to support them.

41. The poverty of spirit and inward weakness, with which I was much tried the fore part of this journey, has of late appeared to me a dispensation of kindness. Appointing meetings never appeared more weighty to me, and I was led into a deep search whether in all things my mind was resigned to the will of God; often querying with myself what should be the cause of such inward poverty, and greatly desiring that no secret reserve in my heart might hinder my access to the divine fountain. In these humbling times I was made watchful, and excited to attend to the secret movings of the heavenly principle in my mind, which prepared the way to some duties, that, in more easy and prosperous times as to the outward, I believe I should have been in danger of omitting.



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in resignedness before Him.





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1765

The Philadelphia [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) sent an epistle to the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) at the time of the Stamp Act and the colonial opposition to it:

May we be watchful to keep out of those things.

THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY



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1769

The [South Kingstown](#) monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) was the first group of [Quakers](#) in [Rhode Island](#) to take the issue of abolitionism in New England to the New England Quarterly Meeting of the Quakers, and then to the New England Yearly Meeting. The Yearly Meeting for 1769 would appoint a committee that, in the following year, would report back a recommendation that Friends [manumit](#) all [slaves](#) owned by them, excepting only the very old and the very young — and the Yearly Meeting for 1770 would act positively upon this recommendation.



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1770

In the previous year the [South Kingstown, Rhode Island](#) monthly meeting had taken the issue of abolitionism in New England to the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), which had appointed a committee to study the matter and report back in the following year. At this year's meeting, the committee recommended that all New England [Quakers manumit](#) all [slaves](#) owned by them, excepting only the very old and the very young. The Yearly Meeting embraced this recommendation.⁴²

Up in the northern reaches of the [Rhode Island](#) colony, in [Cumberland](#), motherless [Friend Jemimah Wilkinson](#), age 18, was very happy that this was happening. She was decidedly opposed to human slavery. However, apparently without as much parental guidance as she needed, she was also being caught up emotionally in the religious re-awakening that was following the visits of the Reverend George Whitefield to New England. She would be becoming involved with the New Light [Baptists](#) of Ledyard, Connecticut, known also as "Rogerenes." Her attendance at such meetings would lead in August 1776 to her being [disowned](#) by her Quaker meeting, the [Smithfield, Rhode Island](#) monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) — and then she would in effect transform herself into a New-Age "channeler" for a spirit from the Other World, and create her own religious climate centered around her own person and her own personal whims.⁴³



42. For the benefit of non-[Quakers](#), I need to point out what this means. It means that there was not one single Friend who was so troubled by this as to stand in its way!



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1773

May: The [Rhode Island](#) Quarterly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) proposed to the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) that slaveholding be forbidden to any Quaker — and the same pointed query was issued by that larger group:

Are friends clear of Importing, Buying or any way purchasing disposing or holding of Mankind as Slaves, And are all those who have been held in a State of Slavery discharged therefrom.

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

EMANCIPATION

SLAVERY

43. Examples of this sort of religious misconduct have always abounded. There has been, for instance, in our own time, “Judge” J.F. Rutherford of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society who channeled bigtime by receiving the concealed true meanings of Scripture direct from God as the occasion arose, and there has been the bestselling Jane Roberts, a housewife from upstate New York who was channeling “Seth,” and there has been the touring-circuit phenomenon J.Z. Knight who was channeling a Cro-Magnon warrior who identified himself as “Ramtha,” and of course, there has been the indefatigable and terminally enthusiastic Shirley MacLaine. The spiritual entities channeled have been variously assigned inventive names such as Ashtar, Aurora, Bashar, Emmanuel, Jesus, K17, Kuthumi, Lazarus, Lily, Mafu, Mary, Mentor, Merlin, Monka, Phebious, Ra, Ramtha, St. Germaine, Zolar, Zoosh — and in this indicated early instance in a Quaker or Baptist context, “Divine Spirit.” (You know the old one about how many legs a dog has, if you call its tail a leg, the answer being four and the reason being that calling a tale a leg doesn’t make it a leg? Well, in this context, calling self-privileging by the name “Divine Spirit,” in very much the same manner, doesn’t evade the sin of self-privileging.)



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1774

Friends were beginning to encourage one another to bring their African-American servants to meeting for worship, to see to their education, and to arrange special meetings for them.

The New York [Yearly Meeting](#) of the Religious Society of Friends was beginning to ban its members from owning [slaves](#) but Friend [Elias Hicks](#) was noting “a great unwillingness in most of them to set their slaves free.” In his Jericho meeting for worship on Paumanok Long Island in this year, he spoke for the first time.

The New England [Yearly Meeting](#) appointed a committee to recommend new laws that would “tend to the abolition of [slavery](#).” Friend Thomas Hazard III of the [South Kingstown](#) monthly meeting, and Friends Moses Farnum and Thomas Lapham of the [Smithfield](#) monthly meeting, were on this committee.



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1775

During the American Revolution there were some Americans who considered it necessary to guard the shoreline of the mainland, and [Nantucket Island](#), against seizure of property by British foraging parties based on [Aquidneck Island](#) in [Narragansett Bay](#). We don't know how effective this fighting was in protecting American property from the British, but Quakers of course refused to contribute to the cost of such protection, and therefore there were 496 cases of seizure of the goods of peace-testimony Quakers in [Rhode Island](#) by local revolutionary authorities. In 1778 the property thus distrained from members of New England [Yearly Meeting](#) by local American authorities amounted to £2,473, while in 1779 the total distraint rose to £3,453. For instance, here are some of the revolutionary seizures made of property of ancestors of [Quaker](#) families of [Providence](#) monthly meeting:

- In 1775, local revolutionary authorities seized a dictionary belonging to Friend Thomas Lapham, Jr. of [Smithfield](#).
- In 1775, local revolutionary authorities seized 5 pairs of women's shoes belonging to Friend Paul Green of [East Greenwich](#).
- In 1776, local revolutionary authorities would seize the fire tongs of Friend Stephen Hoxsie of [South Kingstown](#), as he was the guardian of John Foster but John had not mustered during an alarm.
- Between 1777 and 1782, local revolutionary authorities would seize 7 cows, 5 heifers, and 2 table cloths belonging to Friend Simeon Perry of South Kingstown.
- In 1777, local revolutionary authorities would seize a mare worth £30 belonging to Friend John Foster of South Kingstown.
- In 1777, local revolutionary authorities would seize 3 felt hats belonging to Friend John Carey of [East Greenwich](#).
- In 1780, local revolutionary authorities would seize a silver porringer belonging to Friend Isaac Lawton of [Portsmouth](#).
- Between 1780 and 1782, local revolutionary authorities would seize 29 boxes of spermaceti candles, 20 yards of white linen sheeting, 14 yards of kersey, 16 sides of sole leather, a 3-year-old heifer, and 2 stacks of hay belonging to Friend [Moses Brown](#) of [Providence](#).
- In 1781, local revolutionary authorities would seize 9 sheep and 2 steers belonging to Friend Amos Collins of South Kingstown.
- In 1781, local revolutionary authorities would seize 2 ox chains and an ax belonging to Friend George Kinyan of [Rhode Island](#), because he had not been appearing at militia trainings.



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In addition to property seizures, in three cases a Quaker man who refused to participate in militia activities would be jailed. One of these men was Friend David Anthony of [East Greenwich](#). In each case the Friends would conduct an investigation to determine whether the person had acted in the spirit and manner of Friends, and if he had, would go to the General Assembly at [Providence](#) to petition the “tender consciences” of the lawgivers for his freedom.

Not all [Rhode Island](#) Quakers refused to participate in the civil unrest of the period but those who did participate in any way were always rigorously and promptly [disowned](#). Between 1775 and 1784, the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) would disown a total of 147 Quakers who had become involved in one way or another with the civil disruption. Among those [disowned](#) was, upon his own request, Major General [Nathanael Greene](#). (Less tolerance, in fact, was shown for those who deviated from the Peace Testimony than for those Friends who continued to hold slaves.)

THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY

Colonel [Elisha Jones](#), a wealthy landowner and [slaveholder](#) of Weston, Massachusetts, was an active Tory with



14 sons and one daughter ([Mary Jones](#) → [Mary Jones Dunbar](#) → [Mary Jones Dunbar Minot](#), Thoreau's grandmother).

DUNBAR FAMILY

**THOREAU WAS
“CLEAR JONES”
IN ONE RESPECT
AT LEAST ...**

After the Revolutionary War, eight of these sons would be banished for loyalty to England, and the Jones estates in Weston would be confiscated. Two sons who were in the Concord lockup as Tories escaped with a variant of the old “file baked in the cake” trick. Later, [Henry Thoreau](#) would consider it worthy of note, that one of the prisoners who had been in the Concord lockup with his relatives was named Hicks.

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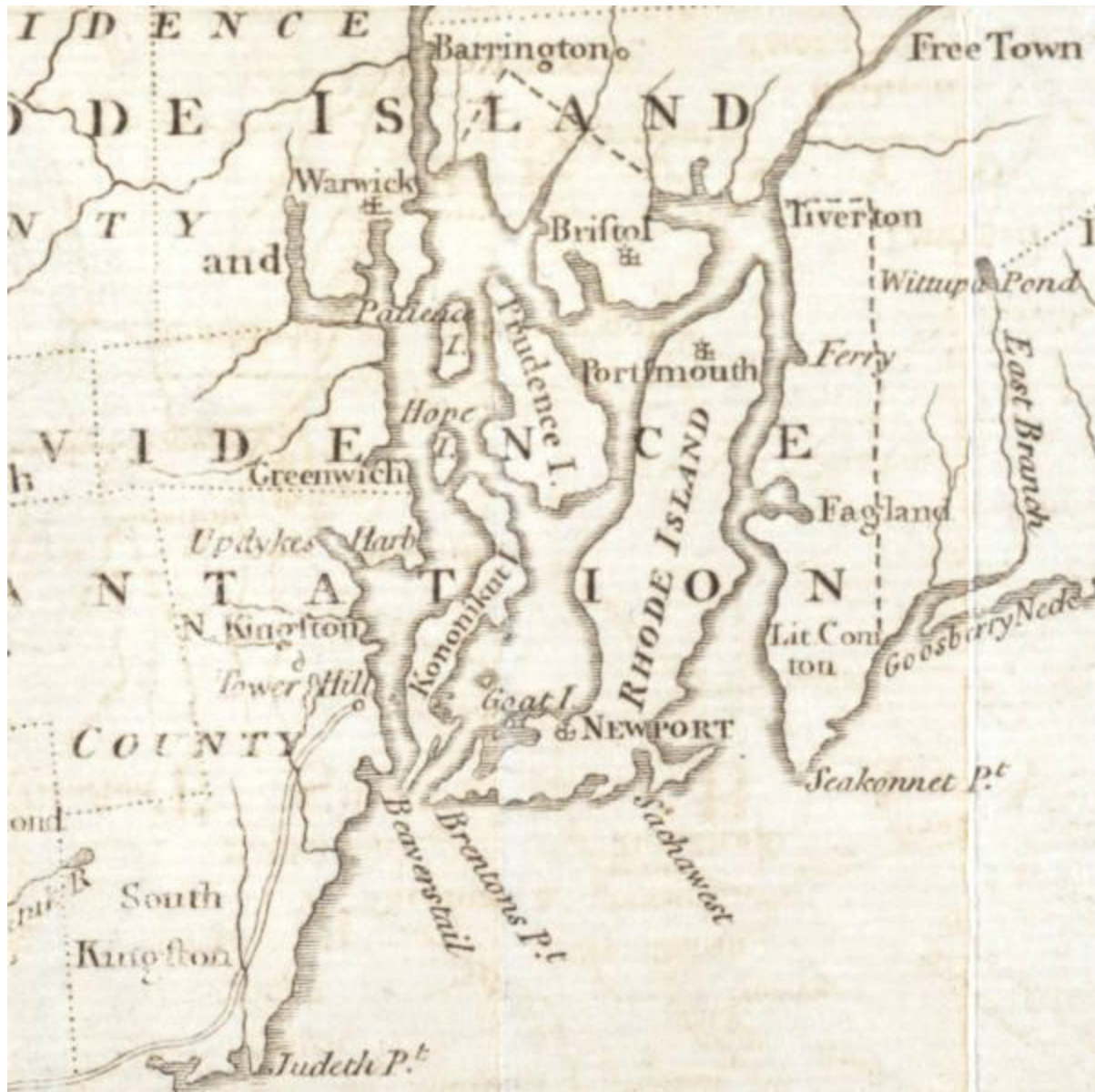
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The man named Hicks in the jail was presumably the Doctor Jonathan Hicks of Plymouth who had been traveling on the *Polly* with Doctor Josiah Jones of Hinsdale NH and who had been taken prisoner along with him by the captain, as men suspected of Tory sympathies, to be delivered to the Committee of Safety of Arundel ME.

[Arundel is now named Kennebunkport. This Hicks prisoner could not have been John Hicks of Rockaway LI, the father of Elias and of Elias's five brothers Samuel, Jacob, John, Stephen, and Joseph, because that Hicks had become a convinced Friend, that is, a convert to Quakerism, a few years before the birth of Elias in 1748 and in 1774 he would have been 63. It could not have been any of Elias's brothers, or the biographies of Elias would have noted this. During the Revolution, six Friends attempted to cross from the mainland to *Paumanok* "Long Island" to attend [Yearly Meeting](#) and were intercepted by the British, but they were kept aboard one of



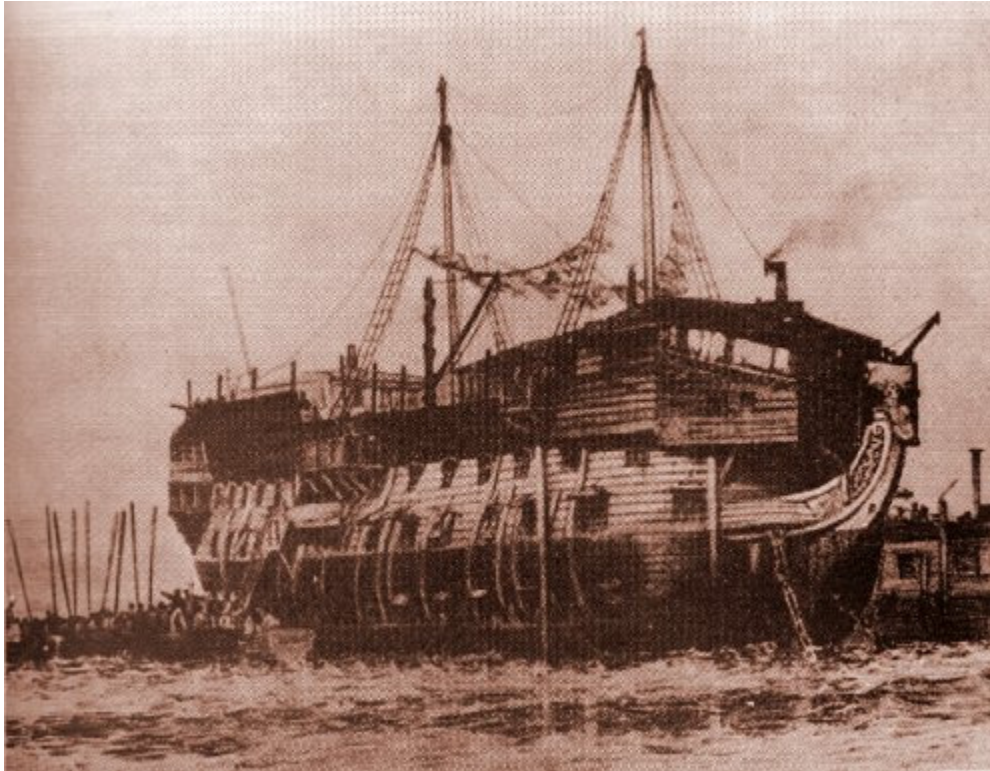


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the prison hulks the British anchored off the Narrows and this was not until the late spring of 1777 whereas



what we are presently considering is the lockup in Concord MA *circa* 1775. When the British and their Hessian troops went through the port of New York for transportation at the end of the active fighting, 1,004 Quaker loyalists made an escape without their American property to the Maritime Provinces of Canada and among these 1,004 at least 6 families were named Hicks. As heads of families or as individual unattached males, there were John Hicks and Charles Hicks who were descendants of Elias Hicks's great-grandfather Thomas Hicks, who was not a Quaker and in fact held the office of Sheriff which a Quaker cannot hold (these two emigrated to Annapolis County), and there were Oliver Hicks who emigrated to Digby, Sylvester Hicks who emigrated to Granville Township, Gilbert Hicks who emigrated to New Brunswick, and Samuel Hicks who emigrated to the Maritimes. Perhaps it was one of these men who was in the Concord lockup and participated with Thoreau's two loyalist Jones ancestors in making their dramatic but nonviolent jailbreak, but there doesn't seem to be any particular reason to suppose that this Hicks might have been directly related to the family of



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Friend [Elias Hicks](#) or even, were he related, that he might have been a member of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) imprisoned because of a refusal to participate in warfare. There is no more reason to speculate here, than there is to fancy a connection between the Quaker painter [Edward Hicks](#) who was limning so many Peaceable Kingdoms On God's Sacred Mountain and the William Hicks who would daub the *marchés*



Planning a Peaceable Kingdom on God's Holy Mountain

d'Ossoli in Rome. There doesn't seem to be anything to do with this mention in [Thoreau](#)'s journal, other than to use it as a demonstration that Thoreau was sensitive to the name Hicks, a fact for which no explanation has been offered other than his familiarity with the testimony of Friend Elias. The new stone Middlesex County jail in which Thoreau was to be kept overnight was not built until 1797, and had nothing whatever to do with the old wooden jail of Concord town, which had been nearly opposite the present library and near the old cemetery.]

20th, 3d Month: "The Committee appointed to treat with those [Friends](#) who hold their **fellow creatures as slaves** made return that they had treated further with Latham Thurston as desired by the last Monthly Meeting and that he still refused to comply with the advice of the [Yearly Meeting](#) respecting holding mankind as [slaves](#). Wherefore we, apprehending our selves clear of any further labour with him in that respect do **disown** him to be any longer a member of our Society."

"By a minutes of our last monthly meeting the Clerk was directed to procure a Book to record [manumissions](#), but upon further consideration we do direct that said manumissions be recorded in one end of our book for recording condemnations."

RHODE ISLAND

QUAKER DISOWNMENT



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1776

During the Revolutionary War, Flushing, Paumanok Long Island was occupied by the British. Local [Quakers](#) would not participate in the war effort and a number of them suffered the confiscation of property as punishment. Flushing Meeting spoke out against members who aided the British or accepted military service. Consequently, the Friends meetinghouse was seized by the army and used for various purposes including a hospital, stable, and storage. It is believed that the army burned the original benches and picket fence as their



firewood, since this was in short supply. With this meetinghouse unavailable, New York [Yearly Meeting](#) moved its gatherings to Westbury, never to return. Monthly meetings in New York and other areas were



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formed, and Flushing Meeting became merely a local monthly meeting (which it remains today).



The American colonies were in revolt, and loyalties were divided. With all the pressures, divided loyalties were to be found even within the [Religious Society of Friends](#). As an example of how [Quaker disownment](#) was used as a tool in this incendiary situation, here is a disownment that was announced in this year at the Fairfax, [Maryland](#) monthly meeting:

"W.R. who by birth had a right of membership in our Religious Society but through levity and a disregard to that principle which would preserve if adhered to, he hath been seduced and drawn away with the Spirit of the Times so far as to enlist and join in the active part of war, leaving his place of abode to that end, and having given us no opportunity to treat with him on this sorrowful occasion, we, agreeable to our antient practice, think it requisite to deny him the right of membership among us, which is hereby confirmed by our monthly meeting and he so to stand until by due contrition he condemns his conduct which we can but desire on his behalf."

As an example of an acknowledgement of disownment due to warlike activity, here is a statement that was duly received and placed on file in this year by that same meeting:

"Whereas I the subscriber have several times stood Centry in a military manner and having considered the same, I see it to be wrong, for which misconduct I am sorry, and hope to be more careful for the future, desiring that Friends would accept this my acknowledgment and continue me under their care as my future



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conduct shall render me worthy. J.L.”⁴⁴

On Paumanok Long Island, Friend [Elias Hicks](#) was standing steadfast and refusing to participate in the American Revolution or

*“use any coercive force
or compulsion
by any means whatever;
not being overcome
by evil,
but overcoming
evil
with the good.”*

THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY

He well knew that any suggestion that we attempt to kill the Devil with a gun or a sword could have been a suggestion sponsored only by the Devil himself. Instead he chose to make his contribution to the cause of American liberty by paying visits to [Quaker](#) slavemasters on *Paumanok* “Long Island,” entreating them to strike a direct blow for human freedom by [manumitting](#) their black [slaves](#).

As you can see, even [Quakers](#) have such cannon:



This cries out for explanation but first you need to think about it because there are several levels at which explanation must be attempted.

44. These are per Morse, BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING, page 59.



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10th, 1st Month: When the [Yearly Meeting](#) for Sufferings met in [Portsmouth](#), the [Quakers](#) had scruples about the use of paper currency that had been issued in the colonies, because these bills had been issued “for the purpose of carrying on war.”

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

It was considered that it was “a Duty required of them to guard carefully about contributing thereto in any manner.”

THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY

RHODE ISLAND

On the following screen is a sample piece of colonial currency prepared for Massachusetts by Paul Revere, that gives us a good idea of what the Quakers were finding so troubling. The figure holding a cutlass is accompanied by a motto from Publilius Syrus, *Ense petit placidam, sub Libertate Quietem* “By the sword we seek peace, but peace only under liberty.”

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1777

Friend [Moses Brown](#) went into his harvest field and called his laborers together, and offered to pay them extra wages if they would be willing to dispense with the usual allowance of distilled spirits that employers of that period provided to their laborers. At a much later point he would confide to his journal that “I have never Since being now 57 years furnished Any Spirits in Harvest or Hay Time, & I have My business done better and the Laborers come in and go out More Quiet and Satisfactory to them & their Family than they used to do when Spirits were freely Given and Used by them.”

Friend [Moses Brown](#) served on a committee to plan the education of children of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of Friends. It was decided that students who were from outside the Friends community would also be allowed to participate. The [Smithfield](#) Monthly Meeting hired Friend Job Scott to “teach a School at the Lower Meeting House in Smithfield [that would refer to what is now the Saylesville meetinghouse in Lincoln], to be paid 80 hard dollars, or an equivalent in clothing, or Other things, for One Year, to be paid Quarterly, and his board to be found.” This would eventually result in the founding of the school of the New England Yearly Meeting, what is now referred to as Moses Brown School, on land next to what is now referred to as Brown University. (At the moment of this writing, there is no connection whatever between the school and the nearby Providence and [Smithfield](#) Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, any connection between the school and the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends is at the most perfunctory and financial, and the educational curriculum of the school contains no testable Quaker component — while consideration is being given to dissolving even this perfunctory residual linkage with the [Quakers](#), “except in spirit.”) According to Mack Thompson’s *MOSES BROWN, RELUCTANT REFORMER* (Chapel Hill NC: U of North Carolina P, 1962, pages 135-6):

IN THE COURSE of the long years of the Revolution, [Moses Brown](#) emerged as the leading Quaker in New England. The basis of his leadership was an ability to hold the diverse groups within the various meetings together in the face of economic disaster, public ridicule, and divided loyalties. The solidarity of the Society of Friends was threatened not only by external enemies but by internal disputes. The war raised many problems that Friends had never had to deal with before, and the individualistic tendencies of their beliefs encouraged many to challenge the authority of tradition and the collective will of the meetings. To Moses the internal conflicts brought on by the war were as serious as dangers from battle or from governmental authorities, and he made strenuous efforts to minimize their effects.

The most divisive threats to the Society were posed by paper money and taxes. These two issues were intimately connected with the much broader question of acceptance or rejection of the new governments which used the taxes and money to support their civil and military establishments. In the early years of the Revolution, some Friends felt that currency issued by the rebellious governments should not be accepted, and this attitude became the official position of the Society, although it was more strictly adhered to in the middle states than in New England.⁴⁵ Moses thought that the distinction made by Quakers between specie and paper money was ridiculous; one promoted the war as much as the other. His position was determined



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by sympathy for the American cause and by common sense: it was fortified by his experience when distributing the donations to the poor sufferers around Boston from 1775 to 1777. There he found that while some Friends accepted specie, others refused to take the new paper currency "from a principle of its promoting the war as well as on account of the authority making it."⁴⁶

The [Maryland Yearly Meeting](#) of the Religious Society of Friends banned the Quaker buying and selling of slaves. Until this time, [Quakers](#) had grown in number. After this date, Friends who did not wish to give up their [slaves](#) would go Episcopalian, while Friends who would give up their slaves would be forced out of the area, as they could not compete in the growing of [tobacco](#) without the use of slaves.

The transfer of Isaiah Boone and Hannah Boone from Virginia to the Sandy Spring Friends Meeting marked the first recorded entry of Meeting members named other than Brooke or Thomas.

The colony of [Maryland](#) decided to maintain its current high duties discouraging the importation of new black [slaves](#).

"An Act concerning duties."

" ... no duties imposed by act of assembly on any article or thing imported into or exported out of this state (except duties imposed on the importation of negroes), shall be taken or received within two years from the end of the present session of the general assembly." LAWS OF MARYLAND SINCE 1763: 1777, sess. Feb.-Apr., ch. xviii.

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

29th, 7th Month: The Meeting at [Newport](#) recorded: "Our [Friends](#) Aaron Lankester and David Sands signifying to this Meeting their desire to get off the island [they were visitors from New York [Yearly Meeting](#)] we appoint Gould Marsh, Thomas Robinson and Isaac Lawton to assist them in getting a permit from the Commanding Officer of the Island."

RHODE ISLAND

45. Pemberton to [Moses Brown](#), August 28, November 9, 1775, MOSES BROWN PAPERS, MISC. MSS (John Carter Brown Library, Providence, B-814, Box 6). The Pembertons' refusal to accept paper money issued by the revolutionary governments may well have been an expression of their pro-British feeling rather than an effort to maintain the Quaker discipline, although admittedly the two motives are hard to differentiate. For an argument that Israel Pemberton "did not defend the acts of the British government," see Thayer, Theodore. ISRAEL PEMBERTON: KING OF THE QUAKERS (Philadelphia PA, 1943, page 207).

46. April 30, 1776, MOSES BROWN PAPERS, MISC. MSS (John Carter Brown Library, Providence, K-AB)



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1779

March 25, Thursday: The [Smithfield, Rhode Island](#) monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) minuted its concern over the proper education of its young people:

It having been the concern of this Meeting to Promote the Education of our youth in Schools under the Government of Solid friends and as this necessary care is much relaxed within our Yearly Meeting, from what our Discipline requires, and finding Incouragement, by our own short experience, as well as by the doings of the last yearly meeting held at Philadelphia on this Subject, which have been laid before this meeting we are Induced to recommend to the Solid attention of the Quarterly meeting this important Subject and if it appears to you as it does to us of weight enough to carry forward to the Yearly meeting and the minds of Friends are United in a living concern therein, We think it will be an acceptable step in the Reformation.

MOSES BROWN SCHOOL

In result, the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) would charge a committee to prepare a report on educational needs for presentation during the following yearly meeting.



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1780

The New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) appointed a committee “to Consider of a plan, for the Erection of a School or Schools for the Education of our Children & youth” in [Rhode Island](#), and a subscription fund was created for this purpose with Friend [Moses Brown](#) making the first donation, of \$575.

MOSES BROWN SCHOOL

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1781



→ July 4, Wednesday: At the Concord (Pennsylvania) Monthly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), a query came from Birmingham Meeting whether, if an applicant for membership is known or believed to be sincere, he or she should be rejected simply on account of the color of their skin. The applicant in Birmingham, Pennsylvania, a young woman named Abigail Franks, confessed to being but $\frac{1}{2}$ white, and $\frac{1}{8}$ Negro and $\frac{3}{8}$ Native American. Such a request for membership presented by a local meeting such as the Birmingham would have been determined, had the applicant been fully white, at the level of the Monthly Meeting without reference to higher meetings. In this instance the application was referred to [Yearly Meeting](#) simply because the applicant was of mixed race. This issue would be referred first to a committee of men and women and then to a Quarterly Meeting committee which would be charged “to inquire more minutely into the disposition, color and circumstances of the individual on whose account the application took its rise.”⁴⁷



47. The data elements for this series on the acceptability of persons of mixed race as Quakers are from Henry Cadbury's “Negro Membership in the Society of Friends” in [The Journal of Negro History](#), Volume 21 (1936), pages 151-213.



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October: In the case of Abigail Franks, the committee of [Quakers](#) reported that the young woman who confessed to mixed-race origins had been visited and that:

her disposition they apprehended to be worthy of Friends' notice; and her color appeared to them not darker than some who are esteemed white: and we find by inquiry that her great grandfather was an African Negro and her great grandmother an American Indian; her grandfather a descendant of them and her grandmother an Indian; her father a descendant of them and the mother a white woman.

The matter of the acceptability of such a person of mixed race as a member of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) was referred to the [Yearly Meeting](#).⁴⁸

Meanwhile, the general social context of these people who were being so racially picky was as follows:



Pennsylvania Quakers ... experienced significant harassment for their pacifism and neutrality. Their numbers were already greatly reduced by the disciplinary renaissance of the 1750s, and they faced a real schism from "Free Quakers," who both supported the Revolution and rejected pacifism. As a result "orthodox" Friends found themselves hunted down in a colony they had founded and long governed. In May 1776 a stone-throwing mob forced Philadelphia Friends to observe a fast day that the Continental Congress had proclaimed. A Berks County mob shackled and jailed Moses Roberts, a Quaker minister, until he posted a \$10,000 bond guaranteeing his "good" behavior. Philadelphia patriots also exiled seventeen Friends to Virginia in 1776 for nearly two years so they would not interfere with revolutionary activities. Patriots celebrating the surrender of Cornwallis in October 1782 ransacked Quaker homes that had not displayed victory candles.

48. The data elements for this series on the acceptability of persons of mixed race as Quakers are from Henry Cadbury's "Negro Membership in the Society of Friends" in [The Journal of Negro History](#), Volume 21 (1936), pages 151-213.



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1782

11th of 11th Month: The Clerk of the Meeting for Sufferings of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), Friend [Moses Brown](#) of [Rhode Island](#), agitated for the [Quakers](#) to “promote the institution of a school or schools.”

From the Meeting for Sufferings for New-England, to the several Quarterly and Monthly-Meetings belonging to the Yearly-Meeting.

Dear Friends,

Being moved by the Yearly-Meeting, as well as by renewed desires being raised in ourselves, to encourage and promote the institution of a School, or Schools, for the virtuous education of our youth; and as we are apprehensive the design and intention of the Yearly-Meeting has not been dearly understood by many, whereby objections and discouragements with well-minded Friends have arose, tending to shut up the benevolence which otherwise might have been manifest by a more general, free and liberal contribution, to an institution intended for and which promises essential benefits to the poor and others, not only for the present, but for generations to come: We are therefore engaged to lay before you the intentions of Friends in this establishment, and our purpose of executing them, when and as far as we are enabled; and to add such remarks as may remove, as far as may be, such objections as we have heard suggested. There are some, and we hope not a few, yet amongst us, who, as the restraining principle of truth hath been raised into dominion, have been made uneasy in their minds, at their children's going to schools of those not of our society, nor under the government of it; where there is generally a corruption of language and often of manners imbibed, if not taught as parts of their instruction. Those who have a concern for a right education of their rising offspring, that they may be preserved in the simplicity of truth, are desirous to have them brought up and instructed in the way they should go, that when they are old they may not depart from it. From this source arises the present concern of the Yearly-Meeting, correspondent with the concern of our worthy ancients, who we find by the discipline established amongst us as a people, as early as the year 1690, advise Friends every where, “as far as they are able or may be capable, to provide school-masters and mistresses, who are faithful Friends, to teach and instruct their children, and not to send them to such schools where they are taught the corrupt ways, manners, fashions, and language of the world, and of the heathen, in their authors and names, of the heathenish gods and goddesses, tending greatly to corrupt and alienate the minds of children into an averseness or opposition against the truth, and against the simplicity of it.” The want of attention to which advice has occasioned the well-concerned amongst us for the happiness of the rising generation, and prosperity of truth,



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to mourn for the hurt thereby sustained in our society. Our principles lead to a separation from the world, its customs, habits, language, and manners; how then can we hope for faithful successors in our *posterity*, or that they will come up in principles and practices agreeable thereto, if we continue so far to neglect the early care of our offspring, as to send them to schools where principles and practices so repugnant are inculcated and taught? It is essential to the continuance of every society, upon the foundation of its rise and establishment, that its first principles be often recurred to. The principle of light and truth, which first separated our ancients from the world, early led George Fox, that ancient worthy follower of our Lord, into a sight of the necessity of a separation from the world, in the education of the succeeding generations, even before the establishment of the discipline which the Lord was then opening in him, and is in the hands of faithful members as a hedge around us as a people. In the year 1667, after being at Hertford at settling the men's Monthly-Meeting, and returning towards London, he advised the setting up a school at Waltham for teaching boys, and also a woman's school to be opened at Shacklewell, for instructing girls and young maidens in "*whatever things were civil and useful in the creation.*" See journal, page 395. And his concern for the prosperity of the schools is manifest by his visiting them in various parts, an example still worthy the attention of the Lord's servants. Some may be ready to say, it is evident that truth requires its professors should be instructed and exemplified by its followers; but, say they, how does this apply to, or make necessary, the Yearly-Meeting school, it being each Monthly-Meeting's concern to attend to this necessary care? True, it is the duty and should be the care of rightly-concerned Friends, in each Monthly-Meeting, to see, as far as may be, that proper schools are kept up for the right education of the children. The question is of importance, and needs to be answered, as it leads to the rise of the proposition for the present institution. At the Yearly-Meeting in 1779 there came up a proposal from Rhode-Island Quarter, and at the same time a recommendation from our brethren of Pennsylvania and New-Jersey, by their epistle from the Yearly-Meeting, respecting the education of our youth, in schools under the care of solid Friends; which took the solid attention of our Yearly-Meeting, and they recommended to each Quarter to appoint a Committee, to "assist the several Monthly-Meetings in the best method of educating children and youth amongst Friends, and to return an account next year, in order to ripen the subject for further advice and assistance in this interesting matter." The Quarterly-Meetings, upon inspection by the said Committees, did not find any schools under the immediate care of Monthly-Meetings; nor were there any standing Committees for that purpose, in any Monthly-Meeting, save one; but upon a large and favored conference of the Committee from Rhode-Island Quarterly-meeting, with the Committees of seven Monthly-Meetings, half the number in the Yearly-Meeting



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assembled upon the occasion, with other solid Friends. "There appeared a disposition in each Monthly-Meeting to reform in our practice, and get as fast as may be into the education of children and youth in schools wholly under the tuition of Friends, and the government of the several Monthly-Meetings, by Committees to be appointed for the purpose." And accordingly the Quarterly-Meeting's Committee gave forth advice, in the 10th month, 1799, "that Friends do not, after their present contracts expire, send their children to schools kept by instructors not of our society, or not under the regulation of Friends, without the advisement of the School-Committee of their respective Monthly-Meetings;" which limitation, though it may to some seem as the effect of modern zeal, is supported by an ancient recommendation of our Yearly-Meeting in 1709, which may not be improper on this occasion to recite, "that Friends do their endeavours to get Friends school-masters or mistresses, and in want of such to have their children taught at home, not send them to such as are not Friends; because of the dangers of being corrupted with the hurtful conversation of the youth, or otherwise."

The said Committee had further to observe, in their report to the Quarterly-Meeting, "that the great difficulty that seemed to attend Friends, at this time, respecting the establishing proper schools in the several Meetings, is the great defect of education in times past, whereby persons suitably qualified for school masters are not easily, if at all, to be had. If therefore the Quarterly-Meetings could promote a school, where boarding scholars might be received and taught, in such a manner as to qualify our youth, of the rising generation, to teach school, we think it would be an acceptable service." Which being accepted, and the substance sent up to the Yearly-Meeting, and being read there, with the accounts from the other Quarters, the subject at large came weightily before the Meeting, and a large Committee was appointed to take the subject into consideration, and report what appeared best to be done *further* in that matter. From all which it appears evident, that the early care of Friends to guard against a declension, which doubtless was foreseen would arise in the society, if a care was not duly attended to in the virtuous education of the rising generation, in our principles and practices, and to guard against the corruptions incident to mixtures with others at large, has not had the desired effect. Several causes for which may be assigned, one of which is the want of proper attention, in too many, to the first principle of light and truth as afore mentioned, which separates from the world, and which would engage all our members to comply, as far as circumstances would admit, with the advices of superior Meetings upon this subject, which has been sorrowfully felt by some amongst us, who have to believe that the outgoings of many of our youth have been greatly owing to the want of attention in parents to this great duty of a right education of their offspring. The difficulty of procuring suitable school-masters, and in small Meetings members living



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too remote from each other to daily go to and return from one school, and the want of ability, in many families, both on account of their education and their streightened circumstances in life, render the proper instruction of their children in their families impracticable. To remedy these difficulties, make education cheap and easy for all in society to come at, in a more guarded, safe and useful manner; and especially that the affecting and reproachful answers to our queries, too often heard, that our poor do not partake of suitable learning to fit them for business, the concern of Friends is extended to

The institution founded by the Yearly-Meeting, in 1780, as follows:

"We the Committee appointed to consider of a plan for the erecting of a school or schools, for the education of our children and youth, in order to qualify not only a sufficient number for instructors and schoolmasters, but that the poor children and others of the society may receive the necessary learning to qualify them for business, having considered with attention, and solidly conferred upon the subject, do propose the recommending down to the several Quarterly and Monthly-Meetings, the promoting free, liberal and voluntary subscriptions, donations, bequests and devises, adequate to the design and importance of the subject, as a fund to remain forever; the interest or income of which to be applied to the support of education: That there be a standing Committee appointed by this Yearly Meeting, to whom, or some of them, deeds and conveyances of real estate may be made, as Trustees for the Yearly-Meeting for New-England; and to be authorised to receive all donations, collections and subscriptions; and to take care of devises, which may be from time to time for the purposes aforesaid, and to appropriate the same, and to be in all cases subject to the direction of the Yearly-Meeting. And that said Committee, as soon as it shall be enabled, open a school, in such place as they may judge most convenient, within the limits of this Yearly-Meeting. And as the fund shall or may be increased, to increase the number of schools, if necessary, in the most convenient places, within the limits aforesaid: And have the right of procuring and approbating all masters and instructors of such schools; and also to establish general rules and orders, both for the observation of the instructors and pupils, directing the books that shall or may be read, and the branches of learning to be inculcated, consistent with truth and the good order of society; and to take the necessary care that they are faithfully attended unto. The said Committee to be subject, from time to time, to the advisement and direction of this Meeting; and to be annually re-appointed, if thought best, or removed, as occasion may require: And that the said fund is to be considered as a perpetual estate, limited and confined to the purposes of education irrevocably; but that the direction and application thereof be in the Yearly-Meeting, or their Committee – who are to have liberty to receive into the said school or schools orderly youth, not of our society (they



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complying with the rules and regulations of the school) whenever the Committee may, after due consideration of all circumstances, think it useful and best. And as it appears a care is reviving in most Monthly-Meetings for the due education of the rising generation, it is the desire of this Committee that such care be continued and increased, and that the example of this Meeting operate as an encouragement to each particular Meeting, to attend to so important and necessary a concern.

"And in order to the speedy establishment of this necessary institution, we recommend a subscription in freedom to be promoted in all the Meetings, to be forthwith applied for the purposes aforesaid; and that it become the care of Friends in future to promote annually subscriptions, to be applied to the use of the school, until the income of the fund shall be sufficient, and so make such annual subscriptions unnecessary.

"Which being several times read, and weightily considered, this Meeting approves of the same, and commits the care and management thereof to the Meeting for Sufferings; any of whom are empowered to receive donations, to be conveyed to the Meeting for their disposal: And that any three or more to be by them named be feoffees in trust for the Yearly-Meeting, to receive deeds and conveyances of any real estate."

It appears that Friends, not only in the southern governments upon this continent, but in England and Ireland, about the same time, without the notice of each other, have been moved upon to a renewed care of the rising youth in this respect. Our brethren in England have informed us of their approbation and satisfaction to hear of our intention; and that they had established an institution in their Yearly-Meeting of the like kind, which afforded a promising prospect of usefulness: The liberal benevolence of Friends there being such, as to raise the fund already so large, as to purchase an estate, educate, victual and cloath, upwards of 300 boys and girls, at the small expence, to their parents, of 8 guineas a year, or 3s. 3d. sterling per week. It appears to us the revival of engagement amongst Friends, on this subject so generally, ought to be considered by all, who are desirous of promoting the reformation in our society, as a favour; and that encouragement is thereby administered.

To come up to their example in full we do not expect; yet so far as circumstances require, and ability is afforded, we think it worthy our imitation. And as an account of that institution hath been published in a letter, written by our Friend John Fothergill, and laid before us, we think it may be acceptable and useful to recite some parts of it for your encouragement; especially those describing the intentions of Friends, being well expressed, and correspondent with our intentions, in putting to practice the plan referred to our execution.

He says, "I need not here recapitulate the abundant care, and the many endeavours that have been used for the education of Friends children. We have many schools for the education of youth amongst us, and very deserving school-masters, in various



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parts of this nation, where the children of those in affluent circumstances derive a competent share of learning; and that those who are of less ability may partake of the like benefit, is the object of the present institution, and I hope it will be practicable to draw a line between those who are the proper objects of this establishment and such whose circumstances allow them to send their children to the present schools, as will give no just cause of complaint." And after mentioning the generous exertions of many Friends, in liberally subscribing to the institution during the sittings of the Yearly-Meeting, he says, "from this time I confess I have felt very little discouragement, notwithstanding the labour and care that must attend the settling this extensive concern. Is there any thing of great value in this life, that doth not require proportionable care and labour to obtain it? I persuade myself we are making provision not merely for the *subsistence* of great numbers of children of both sexes, in a safe and healthy retreat, but are likewise providing for their *orderly* and *Christian education*. Too few are the parents who can honestly say, "that they train up their children in godly conversation, in plainness of speech, behaviour and apparel, and in frequent reading the holy scriptures." Here we trust due care will be taken, both of their principles and conduct. From what I can learn, it does not seem that much backwardness, in respect to this affair, has appeared in any place. If it has not proceeded every where with equal alacrity, it seems to have been owing more to the want of due information than any other cause. It is agreed, that as the school is intended for the education, maintenance and cloathing of children, whose parents are not in affluence, that they shall be instructed in reading, writing and accounts, as fully as the time allowed them will permit. Some useful employment may be provided for the boys, according as their age, strength, talents or condition, may require. Learning and labour, properly intermixed, greatly assist the ends of both, a sound mind in a healthy body. The girls also will be instructed in knitting, spinning, useful needle-work, and in such domestic occupations as are suitable to their sex and stations. I believe it is the wish of all concerned in this important affair, that by gentleness, kind and affectionate treatment, holding out encouragement and approbation to the deserving, exerting the influence of the fear of shame, and promoting the children to every act of kindness and beneficence one towards another, to bring forward into the society and its service a number of youth, who may have been made acquainted under such tuition, in degree, with the discipline of wisdom. Many children amongst us sustain a grievous loss, by not being early and properly made acquainted with the principles we profess. For want of this instruction, they become too easy a prey to the customs of the world; and those habitudes, which would be as a kind of hedge about them, and protect from many temptations, are thrown down, and all the allurements of vice and folly suffered to seduce their affections to their ruin. When they cease to be distinguished



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from others by their garb and deportment, they too often cease to be distinguished from the world by their morals, and the rectitude of their conduct.

"The history of the rise and progress of Friends, their principles, their sufferings, and the indulgences granted them by the legislature, will probably make a part of this instruction to the children of both sexes, as well as the general doctrines of religion and morality. But above all, it is hoped that every opportunity will be embraced of cherishing, in their tender minds, obedience to that principle of light and truth which is given us to profit withal. And however necessary it is for all to be bred up in the fear of offending this pure inward spirit of truth, which naturally leavens the mind into a teachable, submissive frame; yet to those whose condition in life makes a just subordination a duty, a temper of this kind must be an invaluable blessing. Perhaps there is nothing in the common course of public education in the world, that so unfits men for that humble attention to the divine monitor within, that renders them such perfect strangers to the spirit of Christianity, and all its happy effects, as the cultivation of a bold unfeeling disposition, under a notion of promoting manliness and courage; it too often sets aside that great defence and ornament of youth, a modest ingenuous temper; accustoms them to throw off the restraints of duty and affection, and at length to bid defiance to entreaty, admonition and reproof. In this place it is hoped that endeavours will be used to form in the children a temper widely different, equally remote from a culpable fear and servility, and an audaciousness that knows no respect for order or authority. There is a circumstance in the bringing up of Friends children, which has been and yet is of greater importance to them than perhaps is generally apprehended, and I mention it, as in the proposed institution it will doubtless be particularly regarded. To habituate children, from their early infancy, to silence and attention, is of the greatest advantage to them, not only as a preparative to their advancement in a religious life, but as the ground work of a well-cultivated understanding. We are almost the only professors of Christianity, who acknowledge the use of this absolutely necessary introduction to Christian knowledge and Christian practice. To have the active minds of children early put under a kind of restraint, to be accustomed to turn their attention from external objects, and habituated to a degree of abstracted quiet, is a matter of great consequence and lasting benefit to them. To this they are inured in our assemblies, and to sit in silence with decency and composure. Though it cannot be supposed their young and active minds are always engaged as they ought to be, yet to be accustomed thus to quietness, and initiated to curb and restrain the sallies of their youthful dispositions, is no small point gained towards fixing a habit of patience and recollection, and a regard to decorum, which seldom forsakes those who have been properly instructed in this entrance to the school of wisdom, during the



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residue of their days. Did the subject of this letter admit of it, it would not be difficult to shew, from abundant authority, and reason itself, the vast aid afforded to the improvement of the human mind, by early habits of silent attention. The most ancient schools of philosophy taught and practised it; and the scriptures are so full of precepts on this head, as ought to remove every objection to this necessary duty. As it must happen that, in many places, the children of those who are objects of my present consideration are destitute of such opportunities, by the remoteness of their parents' situation from meetings; it is another call to society to prevent, as much as possible, the loss arising from such circumstances. How many farmers, manufacturers and others, are often under the necessity of sitting down in places at a great distance from a meeting? In which case, if they have numerous families, the most they can do may be to take with them the eldest, when the younger are left at home untutored in this most wholesome discipline, till the practice becomes a burthen to them. To this consideration it will not be improper to add another which is connected with it, and that is the want of opportunities of sending their children to Friends schools. By which means, if they have any learning at all afforded them, it is under the tuition of such as are mostly strangers to our principles, and the practice derived from them, plainness of speech, simplicity of manners, and that beginning of wisdom, which is inspired by the fear of the Lord. On the contrary, they are liable to associate with such children as are unacquainted with all these things; taught to deride those who practise them, and live at large to appetite and custom. And how often does it happen that the children of Friends, in such situations, bred up with unprincipled licentious youths, form connexions with them, to their own great hurt, the distress of their parents, and the loss of many a valuable member to society?"

We may now mention, that the state of society amongst us at present being different from the state of Friends in England, as to there being schools sufficient under the government of Friends, where the children of those who are of ability to pay may be instructed; the children of such therefore, with the poor, must be admitted, under suitable regulations, so as not to preclude the poor, whenever presented; they being the first in view to be instructed. We do not expect it will be best to delay opening the school until there is a sufficiency to board the whole scholars out of the fund; but as soon as one can be opened, to teach and board those who are or may be considered as the poor of the society, it may be best to proceed. The period for opening the school must depend upon the liberality of each Monthly-Meeting, and their members, to subscribe for the promotion of so benevolent a purpose. As fast as the fund increases beyond the proportion of scholars, the expence for their instruction will be lessened.

After having thus explained the intention of Friends in this undertaking, which we hope and trust may be of use to future



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generations, if properly supported, and conducted with that prudence and economy which have hitherto accompanied the management of our affairs, we may add some remarks on such objections to this design, as we recollect to have heard mentioned or suggested. It hath been alledged here, as in the case of the Ackworth-School, that it might be much more advantageous to society, could several similar schools be settled in different parts of the Yearly-Meeting. This, says the letter, "at first may appear a reasonable allegation. It may be thought that small schools are more easily managed than larger, that much would be saved in sending children backward and forward, that many parents would consent to sending their children fifty miles, who would object to three or four times that distance; and, in short, that each school being under the guidance of Friends, in the particular district whose conveniency it is to serve, its management would be inspected with more attention and success, than might be supposed to be the case with such an affair as the present." But let us look at the probability that such schools would be erected: Have we not seen the endeavours of concerned Friends, and the Yearly-Meeting, by their recommendation to each Monthly-Meeting, to promote schools under their own care, without the desired effect? And in England Friends found by experience, that it was possible to draw the attentions of Friends to one considerable object, and interest themselves in its support, whilst lesser ones in a short time disappeared; unless, as our friend John Fothergill observes, we should discover a more lively zeal to promote such undertakings, than some late endeavours made appear. — Nevertheless, if experience should teach us that more schools in different parts will be most useful, whenever the funds are raised sufficient, they may and doubtless will be erected. — But let not this idea divide Friends attention in the beginning, of which there is danger in the present case, if we are not careful to keep out *self*, so that our charity may be of that nature which the Apostle assures us "seeketh not her own." I Cor. xiii 5. Then we shall be able to come up to his further advice, "let no man seek his own, but another's welfare." I Cor. x. 24.

We are satisfied the *expen*ce on the whole will not, in the method proposed, be equal to the cost of education equally good about home, could the same be had; and to the poor and middling in circumstances the expence will be considerably lessened, as the principal amount of the contribution will doubtless come from those of easier circumstances, and we doubt not many Friends now deceased, could they have foreseen if would gladly have promoted so useful an institution in their wills; and as little can we doubt, that others will gladly embrace a like opportunity hereafter. The disadvantage of educating our youth in a place of bad examples, may serve to put us upon a care where we fix the institution, no place being yet fixed upon, that it may be in a neighborhood of solid Friends. He says, "to serve the rising generation, and promote its benefit, the sum of £3000



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was generously subscribed by Friends, a house built, and an able, well qualified master was procured. It was intended to be a day-school, but such was the ill effect of the children mixing with others, in going to and from school; so much were they hurt by bad examples, and bad company, that those who had engaged in the generous design, found it necessary to abandon it, merely, as it appeared, from this circumstance. Such is the necessity of preserving youth from the influence of bad example, if we hope to preserve them in innocence and simplicity. The prospect of avoiding both these causes of disappointment, seems only obtainable in such an institution as the present, where, in the first place, every reasonable endeavor will be used, that none make a part of the family, whose conduct is not exemplary; and, in the next, no opportunities will be afforded the children educated there of mixing with others, to their harm." As the like objection has been made on account of the expence of travel from the remote parts of the Yearly-Meeting, as was made to the Ackworth-School, we may give the same answer. "This expence will be greatly reduced, if the children are allowed to remain there such a length of time as may enable them to receive competent instruction: The longer they are permitted to remain, the less burthensome their conveyance." To relieve this expence, we find twopence sterling a mile is allowed, for all distances above 50 miles, to be paid out of the stock; something similar may and doubtless will be allowed, to make this article as easy to all parties as the nature of the case will admit. "It will perhaps be urged, that many Friends may be unwilling to send their children to so distant a part of the nation. It must ever be a difficulty to affectionate parents, to lose sight of their objects of regard and attachment. But is it not daily seen, that parents, in the most affluent circumstances, both amongst us and others, part with their offspring to the greatest distances, when the benefit in prospect for their children claims such a sacrifice? The schools of Friends, in the north and in the west of England, chiefly consist of children from the greatest distances; and they often remain at them, unseen by their parents, a longer time than perhaps may be the case at this school. Besides, have we not seen this objection totally removed by what has happened at Gildersome, a place as remote from London, and the eastern and southern parts of this kingdom, as Ackworth? Besides, the separation of children from their connexions is oftentimes of much consequence to themselves and their families, by preventing improper associations, or dissolving such as have been already formed, greatly to the unhappiness of many an affectionate careful parent. There is one objection of much weight, that naturally presents itself to the view of every considerate person, which is the situation of the times. This is most certainly a discouragement to every public undertaking, and to this in particular — but with the difficulties of the times the necessity of such provision keeps equal pace. Many may be obliged to accept of that help which they could once afford to others; and one of the surest means,



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perhaps, of averting such necessity, will be to consider ourselves as stewards of the blessings we enjoy; and that by communicating to the wants of others, we are laying up provision against want ourselves. Large contributions are not expected where but a little can be spared, and those who are of ability we trust will not withhold their assistance. To descend into all the objections that could be framed would be tedious: I believe we shall all be of opinion, that those who do not choose to part with any thing, however commendable and necessary the occasion, will be found the most fertile in raising objections. – Hitherto there has been no reason to complain. When the matter was opened at the Yearly-Meeting, and properly explained, Friends seemed to vie with one another in their generous efforts. This has likewise been the case, wherever the nature of the affair has been rightly understood." May this also be the case of us in New-England, after the intentions of Friends herein manifested are generally made known. And we may further mention our concern, in the language of a Committee of upwards of sixty Friends, from various quarters of the Yearly-Meeting of London, with divers other Friends from distant parts– "in order that the great end of establishing this school (a pious, guarded, useful education of the children of Friends not in affluence) may be more effectually obtained, it appeared to be the wish of all present that some Friend might be found willing to accept the office of Treasurer, and to reside at the place – one whose age, reputation and experience, as well in a religious progress as in temporal concerns, may qualify him to promote, in every part of the family, the main object of this institution: And it is much to be desired that such an one might engage from principle of duty. Besides reading and writing, and useful accounts, instruction upon other subjects, suitable to their years and situations, is intended to be given them, and these to be intermixed occasionally with some light manual occupations; such as may at once be conducive to their health, lessen the unpleasantness of application, and be in some degree useful to them in future life, be their condition what it may; improving each sex in their respective vocations, as much as may be, keeping always in remembrance, that to make them acquainted with themselves, and stand in awe of him who made them, and not to sin against his holy law in their hearts, will prove, through life, a source of solid comfort." It is not practicable precisely to define the instructions to be given in this institution, but what is mentioned by our worthy ancient, George Fox, when he advised the first schools set up, comprehends the intention of Friends in this respect, and is worthy to be repeated: "In whatever things were civil and useful in the creation." There no superfluity is allowed, and we hope we and our successors may have an eye thereto, and not go beyond what truth and Christian discipline enjoin; and as the direction of the school will ever remain in the Yearly-Meeting, it is to be hoped Friends may be easy in their minds as to any apprehensions on that account. The poor, and those of small circumstances, as



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mentioned, are the objects principally in view; these, when qualified for school-masters, as well as other business, are more likely to be useful in that laborious but necessary occupation, than those whose parents may be in affluence, being more likely to sit down and gain experience therein, than those who may have more temptations to take their flight into the world. All distinctions, as in the Ackworth-School, are to be avoided as much as possible; the children here, as there, ought to value themselves on no other superiority than behaving themselves better than others, both in respect to learning and conduct. They are all to be considered as children of one family, under the care of that body which interests itself deeply in the welfare of them all. The riches, the poverty, the good or bad conduct of their connexions, must here have no other regard paid them, than such as may proceed from the necessity of guarding against the influence of any of these circumstances, to the children's future disadvantage. — And if the fund of this, as in that institution, comes ever to support an uniformity of dress, we think, as it may tend to prevent undue distinction, it would be well to follow their example therein. "Though the children's improvement in learning, their health, and other suitable accommodations, are matters of great moment in such an institution as this, yet there is one of a superior nature; to promote a tender, teachable disposition, inuring them to bear that yoke in their youth which will moderate their desires, and make way for the softening influence of divine good-will in their hearts, fitting them for the faithful discharge of every duty in life, yielding content in action, moderation in prosperity, becoming at once the safe guard and ornament of every stage in life, from youth to ripe old age. This, I trust, will be the constant, uniform endeavour of those, in an especial manner, who may be engaged in the immediate service of the family, in whatsoever station they may be placed I know this is the fervent desire of many, and trust I may say of all who are engaged in this matter;" to which we may also put our seal.

Having thus given you an account of the sense and intentions of this Meeting, respecting the institution, we may, by direction of the Yearly-Meeting, as well as from a desire of seeing the plan executed for the benefit of the present generation, as well as posterity, recommend to Friends generally, to make subscriptions in freedom and openness of mind, consistent with truth and becoming its followers, united in the same cause of promoting each other in love and good works. And it is the desire of this Meeting, that as soon as Friends are easy to compleat their subscriptions, they will send them up, and if any Monthly-Meeting or concerned Friends are desirous of any further information, we will endeavour to give them a satisfactory answer.

*Signed in and by Order of the Meeting for Sufferings,
held at Providence, for New England, the Eleventh
of the Eleventh Month, 1782.*

By MOSES BROWN, Clerk.



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P.S. By a printed report of the state of Ackworth-School, in 1780, it appears there had been, from its being opened, in the 9th month, 1778, to the 31st of the 12th month, 1780, 314 children admitted; that from the progress then made in that undertaking, a guarded, religious and useful education, had been procured for many Friends children, then in the house, who could not otherwise have had these essential advantages; that several were then well qualified for servants and apprentices, and that any Monthly-Meeting sending a list of their subscribers, the names would be inserted in the Ackworth books, which Friends are informed will also be the case here.

VIEW THE PAGE IMAGES



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1783

In Philadelphia, the [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) circulated a petition against the [international slave trade](#) to the Federal Congress, as follows:

To the United States in Congress Assembled
The Address from the Yearly Meeting
of the People Called Quakers
4th Day of the Tenth Month 1783

Being through the favour of Divine Providence met as usual at this season in our annual Assembly to promote the cause of Piety and Virtue, We find with great satisfaction our well meant endeavours for the relief of an oppressed part of our fellow Men have been so far blessed, that those of them who have been held in bondage by Members of our Religious Society are generally restored to freedom, their natural and just right.

Commiserating the afflicted state into which the Inhabitants of Africa are very deeply involved by many professors of the mild and benign doctrines of the Gospel, and affected with a sincere concern for the essential Good of our Country, We conceive it our indispensable duty to revive the lamentable grievance of that oppressed people in your view as an interesting subject evidently claiming the serious attention of those who are entrusted with the powers of Government, as Guardians of the common rights of Mankind and advocates for liberty.

We have long beheld with sorrow the complicated evils produced by an unrighteous commerce which subjects many thousands of the human species to the deplorable State of Slavery.

The Restoration of Peace and restraint to the effusion of human Blood we are persuaded excite in the minds of many of all Christian denominations gratitude and thankfulness to the all wise controller of human events; but we have grounds to fear, that some forgetfulness of the days of Distress are prompted from avaricious motives to renew the iniquitous trade for slaves to the African Coasts, contrary to every humane and righteous consideration, and in opposition to the solemn declarations often repeated in favour of universal liberty, thereby increasing the too general torrent of corruption and licentiousness, and laying a foundation for future calamities. We therefore earnestly solicit your Christian interposition to discourage and prevent so obvious an Evil, in such manner as under the influence of Divine Wisdom you shall see meet.

Signed in and on behalf of our Yearly Meeting held in Philadelphia for Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, and the western parts of [Maryland](#) and Virginia dated the fourth day of the tenth month 1783.

SLAVERY



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Here are the signatures on this above petition against the [international slave trade](#), rearranged for your convenience into alphabetic sequence:

- ACER/STEER, Jos. Jr. ?
- ALLEN, David
- ALLINSON, Saml.
- ASHBRIDGE, Geo.
- ATKINSON, William
- ATKINSON, William
- ATTMORE, Caleb
- ATTMORE, Tho.
- BACON David
- BAILY John
- BALDERSON John
- BALDWIN Joshua ?
- BALL Joseph
- BALLINGER Daniel
- BARKER/PARKER Thompson ?
- BARNARD Richard
- BARTLETT Richard
- BATES Hezekiah
- BEALE John
- BELLANGER Thomas
- BENERES Anthony ?
- BERNARD Jeremiah Jr.
- BERRIS/BERRY John ?
- BETTS Simes ?
- BIDDLE Owen
- BIRCHALL Jno.
- BLACKFORD Gerard Jr.
- BONSALL Edward
- BONSALLE Isaac
- BORTON/BARTON Isaac ?
- BRADWAY Edward
- BREWER William
- BRIGGS Samuel
- BRINGHURST James
- BRINGHURST Joseph
- BRINTON Joseph
- BRITT Daniel
- BROTHERTON Henry
- BROWN ?
- BROWN Jonathan
- BROWN Joshua
- BROWN Richard
- BROWN Saml.
- BROWN Thomas
- BUCKLEY Phins.
- BUDD Joseph
- BUNTING Joshua
- BUNTING Josiah



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- BUNTING Samuel
- BURROUGH Joseph
- BUTLER John
- BYRNES Daniel

- CADWALADER Isaac
- CADWALADER Moses ?
- CAMERON Dugald
- CANBY Samuel
- CAREY Thomas
- CARPENTER John
- CATHRALL Benjamin
- CATTELL Jonas
- CHESTNUTWOOD Jacob ?
- CHILD John
- CHURCHMAN George
- CHURCHMAN Mord.
- CLARK Joseph
- CLARKE Benjamin
- CLARKE Isaac
- CLARKE Saml ?
- CLAYTON Aaron
- CLEAVER Ellis
- CLEAVER Ezekial
- CLIFFORD Thomas
- CLIFFTON William
- CLIFTON Henry
- COALE William
- COATES Moses
- COATS Isaac
- COLLINS John
- COLLINS John
- COMFORT Ezra
- COMFORT John
- CONARROC Thomas Sr. ?
- COOKSON Samuel
- COOPE Abrah.
- COOPER David
- COOPER Samuel
- COOPER William
- COOPER William Jr.
- COPLAND Cowperthawaite
- COWGILL Eze.
- COWGILL Henry
- COWGILL John
- CRESSON James
- CRESSON Joshua
- CUMMING David

- DARNEL Edward
- DARNEL Lewis
- DARNEL Samuel



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- DAVIES Joseph
- DAWES Abijah
- DAWES Jonathan
- DAWES Rumford
- DAWSON Daniel
- DAY Jacob
- DENNIS Philip
- DICKENSON Daniel
- DILLWYNE Geo. ?
- DIMOCK Joshua ?
- DINGCE/DINGEE Christopher ?
- DINGEE Chas.
- DIXON William
- DORSEY Benedict
- DOUGHTY William
- DOWNING Silas
- DOWNING William
- DOWNLIE Geo. ?
- DRINKER Danl.
- DRINKER Henry
- DRINKER John
- DUNCAN John
- ELLIOTT John Jr.
- ELLIS John
- ELLIS Peter
- ELLIS Wm.
- ELY Hugh ?
- EMLER/EMLIN James ?
- EVANS David
- EVANS Enoch
- EVANS Evan
- EVANS George
- EVANS John
- EVANS Robert
- EVANS Thomas
- EVANS Thos.
- EVES John
- FALK William ?
- FARQUHAR Allen
- FARQUHAR Thomas
- FEARNBY/FEARNLEY Thomas ?
- FERRICE/FERREE John ?
- FIELD Elijah
- FIELDS John
- FISHER Mi ?
- FISHER Thomas
- FISHER Thomas
- FLOWER ?
- FOLLETT Thomas
- FOLWELL William



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- FORMAN John
- FORSYTHE John
- FOULKE Caleb
- FRANKLIN John
- FRANKLIN Thos.
- FRENCH Robert
- FURMAN Josiah
- FURMAN/TRUMAN Morris ?

- GARRETT Nathan
- GARRIGUES Saml.
- GARRIGUIS Edward
- GARRIGUIS William
- GENNONERE Sam ?
- GEORGE Thomas
- GIBBONS Ia ?
- GIBBS Jonathan
- GIBBS Joshua
- GIBBS Lucas
- GILBERT John
- GILLINGHAM Yeamans
- GODINGS William
- GOODWIN Richard
- GRACY John
- GRAY Enoch
- GRIEST/GUEST John
- GRIFFITH Abrm ?
- GRIFFITTS James
- GRISEGER William ?

- HAINA Job
- HAINES Caleb
- HAINES Jesse
- HAINES Samuel
- HALL David
- HALL Thomas
- HALLOWELL Thos.
- HALLOWELL Wm. Jr.
- HAMPTON Samuel
- HAMTON Benja.
- HARLAN Caleb
- HARRISON Thomas
- HARTSHORNE William
- HARVEY Amos
- HARVEY William
- HATTON Peter
- HAVILAND Daniel
- HAWLEY Joseph
- HAWORTH George
- HAWORTH John
- HAYDOCK John
- HAYES Henry



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- HEDGER Samuel
- HIBBERD Abraham
- HICKS Samuel
- HILLIAR John ?
- HOLLINGSHEAD Edmund
- HOLLINGSWORTH Christopher
- HOLLINGSWORTH John
- HOOPER/HOOPES William
- HOOPES David
- HOOPES Thos Jr. ?
- HOPKINS Johns
- HOPKINS Saml.
- HORNE John
- HORNOR Benj.
- HOSKINS John
- HOSKINS Raper
- HOUGH Benjamin
- HOUGH John
- HOUGH Thomas
- HOWELL Arthur
- HOWELL John
- HOWELL Joshua
- HOWELL Sam.
- HUGHES Owen
- HUMPHREYS Benjamin Jr. ?
- HUMPHREYS John
- HUMPHREYS Richard
- HUNT John
- HUNT John Jr.
- HUNT Joshua
- HUTTON John
- HUTTON Samuel

- JACKSON John
- JACKSON Wm. Jr.
- JACOBS Isaac
- JAMES Abel Jr.
- JAMES Isaac
- JAMES John
- JAMES Joseph
- JANNEY Bleackston
- JANNEY Joseph
- JANNEY Mahlon
- JEFFERIES Wm.
- JEFFERIS Cheyney
- JENKINS Joseph
- JESS Zachariah
- JOHN Griffith
- JOHN Joshua
- JONES Cadwalader ?
- JONES Edward
- JONES Edward



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- JONES James Jr.
- JONES Nathan
- JONES Norris
- JONES Owen
- JONES Richard
- KAMBIN/KAMBER Caleb ?
- KERSEY William
- KIRK Caleb
- KIRK Elisha
- KIRKBRIDGE/KIRKBRIDE Robert ?
- KIRKLAND/KIRKBRIDE Jonathan ?
- KITE Benjamin
- KNIGHT Giles Jr.
- LAING John
- LAMB Daniel
- LAMB Joshua
- LAMB Pierce
- LANCASTER Aaron
- LANE Isaac
- LARKIN Isaac
- LEE Mordecai
- LEEDS Daniel
- LETCHWORTH William ?
- LETTLERS/LITTLERS Nathan ?
- LEWDEN John
- LEWDEN John
- LEWIS Evan
- LEWIS Nathan
- LEWIS Robt.
- LEWIS/LORDS Vincent ?
- LIGHTFOOT Thomas
- LINDLEY Jacob
- LINTON Benjamin
- LINTON W.
- LIPPINCOTT William
- LITCHWORTH John
- LONGSTRETH Daniel
- LORD Constantine
- LORD Constantine
- LOWNES Caleb
- LOWNES William
- LUKENS Joseph
- LUNDY Jacob Jr.
- LYNN John
- LYSSTON John
- MARILE Jacob
- MARILE John ?
- MARIS Caleb
- MAROT Davenport



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

- MAROT Phillip
- MARSHALL Henry
- MARTIN George
- MASON Benjamin ?
- MASSEY Thomas Jr.
- MATHIS Bartho.
- MATTHEWS Thomas
- MAULE Ebenezer
- MAXEY Isaac
- McRAE Andw. ?
- MIDDLETON Gideon
- MIDDLETON Saml.
- MIFFLIN Daniel
- MIFFLIN Warner
- MILHOUS Jesse
- MILHOUS John
- MILHOUSE Thomas
- MILLER Mark
- MILLER Samuel
- MILLER Solomon
- MILLER William
- MINSHALL Griffith ?
- MOON James
- MOON Moses
- MOORE David
- MOORE Edward
- MOORE George
- MOORE Joseph
- MOORE Mord.
- MOORE Robert
- MORRIS John Jr.
- MORRIS Joshua
- MORTON John
- NEWBOLD Clayton
- OAKFORD Aaron
- OFFEY/RIPPLEY Danl. ?
- OLDDEN John
- OTTEY William
- PAINTER James
- PARKE Jacob
- PARKER John
- PARKER Thomas
- PARRISH John
- PARRY John
- PASASON/PAXON Oliver ?
- PAXON Ephraim ?
- PAXON Thomas
- PAXSON Aaron
- PAXSON Isaac



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NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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- PAYNTER Richard
- PEARSON Thomas
- PEIRCE John
- PEMBERTON Saml.
- PENNELL Dell
- PENROSE Joseph ?
- PENROSE William ?
- PICKERING Isaac
- PICKERING Jona.
- PICKERING Jos. ?
- PIERCE/PEIRCE Joseph
- PLEASANT Saml.
- POTTS Jonas
- POTTS Joseph
- POULTNEY Anthony
- PRICE John Jr.
- PRICE Philip Jr.
- PRICE Philipe
- PRICE Richard
- PRIOR Edmund
- PUGH James
- PUGH John

- REDMAN Thomas
- REEVE Mark
- RENNICK/PENNICK Caleb ?
- RENNOCK/PENNOCK Joseph ?
- REYNELL John
- REYNOLDS Henry
- RHOADS Samuel
- RICHARDS Saml.
- RICHARDSON Joseph
- RICHARDSON Joseph Jr.
- RICHARDSON William
- RIDGE Zachary
- RIDGWAY David
- RIDGWAY J.
- RIDGWAY William
- RING Elias
- RISELY John
- ROBBINS Nathan
- ROBERTS Hugh
- ROBERTS Israel
- ROBERTS John
- ROBERTS John
- ROBERTS Joseph
- ROBERTS Willism
- ROBESON John
- ROBINSON Ebenezer
- ROGERS Abner
- ROGERS Robert
- ROGERS Thomas



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- ROGERS Thomas Jr.
- ROGERS Thomas Jr.
- ROGERS William
- ROSE Thos.
- RUSSELL Tos.
- SANSOM William
- SATTERTHWAIT John
- SAVERY William
- SAVERY William Jr.
- SAY Thos. ?
- SCARLET John
- SEAL Caleb
- SHARPLES Joel
- SHARPLES Joshua
- SHARPLES Thomas
- SHARPLESS Daniel ?
- SHARPLESS Jos.
- SHARPLESS Nathan
- SHATWELL/SHOTWELL Jos. Jr.
- SHAW Henry
- SHESHIR/CHESSHIR Joel ?
- SHINN Sam. ?
- SHOEMAKER Jacob
- SHOEMAKER Jacob Jr.
- SHOEMAKER Jonathan
- SHOEMAKER Thomas
- SIM/PIM Thomas ?
- SIMPSON John
- SIMPSON Saml.
- SMEDLEY Jeffrey
- SMEDLEY Thomas Jr.
- SMITH Aaron
- SMITH James
- SMITH James Jr.
- SMITH John
- SMITH Samuel
- SMITH William
- SPEAKMAN Thomas ?
- STABLERS Edward ?
- STACKHOUSE Joseph
- STAPLER Jno.
- STAPLER John Jr. ?
- STAPLER Thomas
- STARR Jacob
- STARR James
- STARR James
- STARR saml.
- STARR William
- STEVENSON Cornell
- STEVENSON William
- STOKES Thomas



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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- STRODE Richard
- SUGAR Thos.
- SWAIN Benjamin ?
- SWAYNE Jacob
- SWAYNE Tho.
- SWETT Benj.
- SWIFFT John ?
- TALBOT John
- TALBOT Joseph
- TATUM John
- TAYLOR Amos
- TAYLOR Bernard
- TAYLOR Samuel
- TEST Benjamin
- THOMAS Isaac
- THOMAS Robert
- THOMAS Townsend
- THOMPSON Daniel
- THOMPSON Israel
- THORNTON James
- THORNTON James Jr.
- TODD John
- TODD John Jr.
- TODDINGS James ?
- TOMKINS Jacob
- TOWNSEND John
- TOWNSEND Joseph
- TRIMBLE Samuel
- TROTTER Saml.
- TROTTER Thomas
- TURK Isaiah ?
- TYSON James
- UPDEGARD Saml. ?
- UPDEGRAFF Harman ?
- VANLAW Joseph
- VERRCE Robert
- WALKER Abel
- WALMSLEY Silas
- WARING W.
- WARRINGTON Joseph
- WATERMAN Jesse ?
- WATHERILE Saml. ?
- WATSON Thos.
- WAY Joshua
- WEBB John
- WEBSTER Hugh
- WEBSTER Isaac
- WEBSTER William



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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- WELLS Richard
 - WEST Charles
 - WEST Charles Jr.
 - WEST Joseph
 - WHARTON Isaac
 - WHELALL James Jr. ?
 - WHITALL Job
 - WHITE Robert
 - WHITE Samuel
 - WHITSALL James
 - WHITSON Thomas ?
 - WIBLES/HIBLES David ?
 - WILKES/WEEKS Resine ?
 - WILKINSON Francis
 - WILKONSHAM Enoch
 - WILLETS Amos
 - WILLIAMS George
 - WILLIAMS Nathan
 - WILLS Aaron
 - WILLSON Gabriel
 - WILSON Isaac
 - WILSON William
 - WOLMSLEY Thomas ?
 - WOOD Robt.
 - WORINTON Abraham
 - WORLEY Jacob Jr.
 - WORRILL Jonathan
 - WORSTALL/ James ?
 - WRIGHT Isaac
 - WRIGHT John
 - WRIGHT Jon.
 - WRIGHT Jonathan
 - WRIGHT Nathan
-
- YARNALL Amos
 - YARNALL Eli
 - YARNALL Ellis
 - YARNALL Joshua
 - YARNALL Peter



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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Here is the Silhouette of one of the Philadelphia Quakers who signed the above petition against the [international slave trade](#), Friend John Parrish, who lived from 1730 to 1807:



Incidentally, the above petition is often described as an antislavery petition. It is not that. It does not ask the federal government either to proscribe slavery in the United States, or to prohibit the domestic trade in slaves, and it does not ask that any slaves be freed. It is solely a petition against an international business operation.



Costumes of Philadelphia Quakers



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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The “Meeting for Sufferings” committee of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), with Friend [Moses Brown](#) acting as clerk of that committee, noted that £134 was lying around in their education kitty and decided to bite the bullet and create a Yearly Meeting School. They considered [Providence](#), [Portsmouth](#), and [East Greenwich](#) in [Rhode Island](#), and Lynn in Massachusetts, and settled on Portsmouth because they were offered the use of a room in the local Friends meetinghouse together with the rental income from a number of house lots that Rhode Island Quarterly Meeting owned in [Newport](#). Friend Isaac Lawton there could be the schoolmaster at an annual salary of £75, and local families were volunteering to provide room and board for as many as 30 young scholars.



[John Brown](#) of [Providence](#), [Rhode Island](#) provided half the funds for a “compleat Philosophical Apparatus and Library” of science at the [College of Rhode Island](#) — clearly they were able to take a “philosophical” *pecunia-non-olet* attitude, at the time, toward the fact that such moneys arose at least in part from the international vending of human beings, both between Africa and America (the international trade in new



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[slaves](#)) and from region to region along the American coast (local resale of used slaves).



Here is an example of the local resale of used slaves mentioned above (something that we seldom take into consideration when thinking about these issues), a local resale practice that would be allowed to continue unimpeded even after the “[international slave trade](#)” and its dread Middle Passage had been benevolently interdicted. In this year, a white widow of Warren, [Rhode Island](#), Roby Luther Whitting, was having difficulties with her [slave](#) lad Fantee. She had leased her property to Edward Jones of [Providence](#) on May 22, 1782 to be used for a period of one year, but Jones had been dissatisfied with Fantee’s labor and also dissatisfied with Fantee’s general attitude. In a letter to the widow on January 17, 1783 he asked to be paid damages, alleging that the boy had been guilty of “every vice under the sun,” vices unspecified. In this situation, Fantee escaped, was recaptured and imprisoned, and was then returned in disgrace in irons to the widow in [Warren](#). The slavemistress, at her wit’s end, on February 6, 1783 entrusted her black, “about Eighteen or Twenty Years Old a Healthy Active Lad,” to Isaac Gorham of the *Patty* to be sold in the West Indies, to be taught a lesson he wouldn’t forget by being gradually worked to death in the cane fields. (On the voyage thither, Captain Gorham’s sloop would be intercepted by a British warship and lucky Fantee would find himself confiscated as contraband.)



“It is simply crazy that there should ever have come into being a world with such a sin in it, in which a man is set apart because of his color – the superficial fact about a human being. Who could **want** such a world? For an American fighting for his love of country, that the last hope of earth should from its beginning have swallowed [slavery](#), is an irony so withering, a justice so intimate in its rebuke of pride, as to measure only with God.”



– Stanley Cavell, *MUST WE MEAN WHAT WE SAY?*
1976, page 141



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October 1, Wednesday: This being the year in which [Moses Brown](#), a brother to the wealthy [Providence](#) businessmen [Nicholas Brown](#) and [John Brown](#) who engaged in the [international slave trade](#) but a convert to [Quakerism](#), was becoming an elder in his monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) and beginning his campaign to end [Rhode Island](#)'s involvement in human slavery,⁴⁹ one might be tempted to leap to the presumption that such



MOSES BROWN



a campaign must obviously have been a righteous Quakerly protest against lay racism, motivated by religious egalitarianism — but before we leap to such a conclusion we must consider something which happened on this particular day of the year: In the case of Abigail Franks, the young woman of mixed race who had applied for membership in the [Religious Society of Friends](#), the [Yearly Meeting](#) decided that:

The request of Chester Quarter last year respecting the application of a woman to Concord Monthly Meeting to be received into membership, and which was referred for further consideration to this or a future meeting being now revived, the subject opening with weight, it is the sense and judgment of the meeting that Concord Monthly Meeting may safely consider the application of the person on the same ground in common with other applications for admission into membership.

Although these minutes testify only to “weighty and edifying deliberations and a spirit of condescension,” “a weighty exercise,” and “diverse just observations,” mentioning no doubt or objection, it is clear that there had been such — because there is on record a personal letter from a friend of the applicant who afterward commented “the mountains of opposition are leveled before her.”⁵⁰

No way was this going to be easy! There was still a great spirit of racism to be overcome!

49. There were five slaves in the Brown family mansion on College Hill in [Providence](#), and [Moses Brown](#) helped them work up the courage to steal themselves away.

50. The data elements for this series on the acceptability of persons of mixed race as Quakers are from Henry Cadbury's “Negro Membership in the Society of Friends” in [The Journal of Negro History](#), Volume 21 (1936), pages 151-213.





NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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1784

Beginning of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) boarding school at [Portsmouth, Rhode Island](#). The committee that ran this school was made up of two members from each monthly meeting. Classes were held in a small upper room at the Portsmouth Meetinghouse and the students boarded among the families of local [Friends](#).⁵¹ The master of the school was Isaac Lawton, who had been Clerk of the New England Yearly Meeting. Among the initial crop of 30 students were:

- Obadiah Brown, a son of [Moses Brown](#)
- Jonathan Lapham of [Smithfield](#) Monthly Meeting
- Abraham Borden of [South Kingstown](#) Monthly Meeting⁵²



51. The [Quaker](#) school accepted non-Quaker children, so long as they would continue to abide by the Quaker rules.

52. This effort would endure for four years, until 1788. After a hiatus of two decades, in 1808, Friend [Moses Brown](#) would revive this school board, and after more than another decade of planning, the school would begin anew in 1819, this time atop College Hill in [Providence](#).)



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This school would be discontinued due to cash flow problems after but four years of operation, in 1788, and would for decades exist only as a concept in a storage box. However, this original attempt in 1784 in Portsmouth would enable the present school to utilize the numerals “1784” on its logo, as a sort of slogan (you see, they’re not really saying that their school began in the Year of Our Lord 1784 — they are merely reciting these four digits, in the same way that their present sports audiences recite their sports slogan “Go Quakes!” without actually making any reference to the Religious Society of Friends). You will notice that they are also superimposing these four anonymous digits on a sketch of a building that would be constructed not in 1784 but some 35 years later, in 1819, and not in Portsmouth but in Providence after they had been out of existence for several decades except as a nice concept:



(Of course, it would be arguably more honest for them to be using the numerals “1819” on their logo — but as we all are aware, an excess of honesty is not always a winning policy. Go Quakes!)





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1787



By this year all members of the New York [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) had written and delivered [manumission](#) papers for all their slaves.

Do I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION? GOOD.



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1788

The New England [Yearly Meeting](#) boarding school that Friend [Moses Brown](#) had established in [Portsmouth, Rhode Island](#) in 1784 at this point was discontinued due to cash flow problems (although the rents from Point Estates in [Newport](#) had been promised as tuition, due to the general economic distress in New England during this year the renters there had fallen behind in their monthly payments).⁵³

MOSES BROWN SCHOOL

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

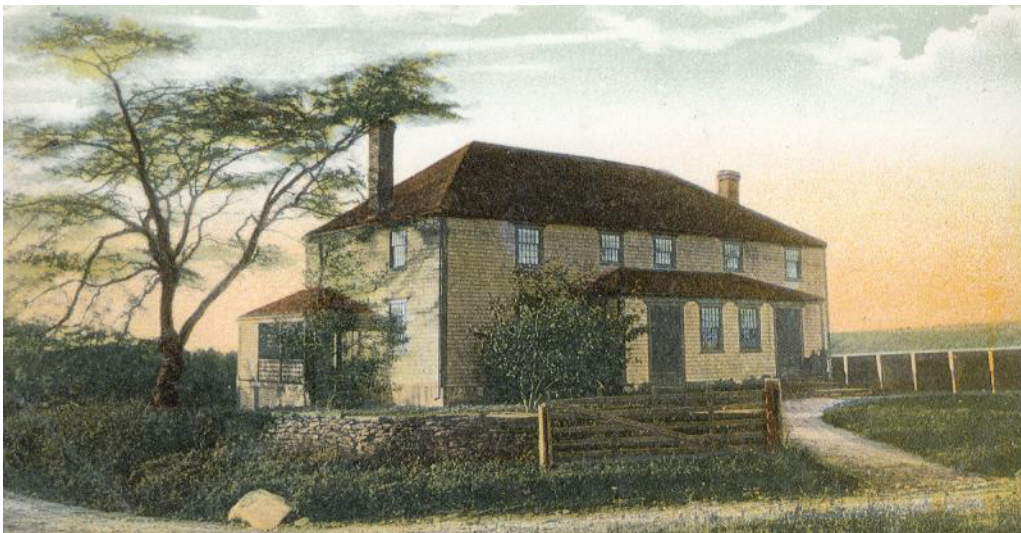
53. After a hiatus of two decades, in 1808, Friend Moses would revive this school board, and after more than another decade of planning, the school would begin anew in 1819, this time atop College Hill in [Providence](#).



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1789

The Reverend Jesse Lee, with two other Methodist ministers, entered George Whitefield's tomb to view the evangelist's quiet repose.



In 1784 the Methodist Church had taken a staunch position against the sale or imbibing of ardent spirits with a qualification, "unless in cases of extreme necessity." In this year this qualification was deleted. A similar platform was adopted by the Presbyterian Synod of Pennsylvania and by the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#).

THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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THE FUTURE CAN BE EASILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT



For several years, the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) had been paying off its [slaveholders](#) for the [manumission](#) of their slaves (allow us to assist you with the financial burden of this).



"It is simply crazy that there should ever have come into being a world with such a sin in it, in which a man is set apart because of his color – the superficial fact about a human being. Who could **want** such a world? For an American fighting for his love of country, that the last hope of earth should from its beginning have swallowed [slavery](#), is an irony so withering, a justice so intimate in its rebuke of pride, as to measure only with God."



– Stanley Cavell, MUST WE MEAN WHAT WE SAY?
1976, page 141



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1790

After the Quaker school in the upstairs room of the meetinghouse in [Portsmouth, Rhode Island](#) had been closed for some two years because of the failure of the lot renters in Newport to keep up their rents, the Newport monthly meeting made official inquiry to the Meeting for Sufferings as to whether the school would ever be opened again, and if not, what was going to happen to these rent moneys if they accumulated. They requested “a reconveyance” in which the title to this property would revert to them. This reconveyance was made, and to top up the amount, the Meeting for Sufferings added “a reimbursement for sundry expenses in preparing a part of the Portsmouth meeting-house for the use of the school in 1784.”

The New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) nevertheless minuted that despite the release of the scholars of the [Yearly Meeting School](#) for a vacation of “one year or longer” due to shortage of funds, the school fund “should not be diverted to any other purpose.” Friends who had subscribed to support this fund might therefore continue to do so “in perfect freedom,” aware that their contributions would be diverted to no purpose other than Quaker education. The Meeting for Sufferings was to reopen this school as soon as the general financial situation had sufficiently improved.



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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1791

[Friend](#) Isaac Collins of Burlington, New Jersey published a BIBLE, one of the first American printings of the entire BIBLE and now noted for its accuracy. Like other major printing projects of the time, the initial publication was financed by advanced subscriptions — in this case with the active involvement of the Philadelphia [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and [Baptists](#). Part of the discussion between Collins and the various religious bodies interested in the project to publish an American edition of the King James version of the BIBLE were whether to include the Apocrypha, a concordance, and, as a sort of appendix, a commentary by a Jean Frederick Ostervald. The objections made to including the APOCRYPHA and any non-Biblical material came from the Baptists. The decision that was reached was to make the edition available in three forms, a full edition, an edition lacking the extra-biblical commentary, and an edition lacking the Apocrypha. The story of the “Collins Bible” may be pursued in Richard F. Hixon’s ISAAC COLLINS: A QUAKER PRINTER IN 18TH CENTURY AMERICA, Rutgers UP, 1968. Here the appropriate question would be, what translation and what edition of the BIBLE was available to [Henry Thoreau](#)?



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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1793

June: [Friend Elias Hicks](#) of Long Island visited the monthly meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on [Nantucket Island](#).⁵⁴

This was part of [Friend](#) Elias's 14th ministry journey. That summer he was traveling with the young [James Mott](#), Jr., future bridegroom of the newborn Lucretia Coffin.

LUCRETIA MOTT



On this long journey, he had gone from the Jericho meetinghouse on *Paumanok* Long Island (still extant, pictured above) across the sound to Port Chester meeting, up the Connecticut shore to Stamford meeting, on up the shore to Stonington meeting, into [Rhode Island](#) to the [Westerly](#) meeting, up to the meetings in and around [Providence](#) and Taunton, back down and round through the [Newport](#) meeting and the [New Bedford MA](#) meeting to the Falmouth meeting, and at this point out to the meeting on [Nantucket Island](#). He would continue back up across Cape Cod to the Sandwich meeting and on up along the South Shore to the Scituate meeting, and on to the [Boston](#) area and the Salem meeting, and north to the Newburyport MA and Hampton and Dover NH meetings, and on to the Portland ME meeting, and beyond that crossing the “great river Kennebeck” twice and reaching to the Fairfield and Winthrop meetings, and then the Pittsfield NH meeting, and then back down into Massachusetts and to [Boston](#), visiting again some meetings already preached at and attending New England [Yearly Meeting](#), and then striking west presumably through [Concord](#), over to the

54. Other famous-name visitors to [Nantucket Island](#): John Easton, former [Rhode Island](#) deputy governor, [Metacom](#), sachem of the [Wampanoag](#), Frederick Douglass, and [Henry Thoreau](#).



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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North Adams meeting in the north-west corner of Massachusetts, and up through Vermont to the Sharon, Hanover, and Vergennes meetings, and up across Lake Champlain to the Grand Isle meeting, and then back down through Vergennes again to the meetings in Saratoga and Albany and Hudson NY, and then back home to Jericho by way of the Brooklyn meeting of New-York. Total mileage they would put on their horses during this traveling season: 2,283 miles. During this absence his child Sarah would be born, and the two traveling ministers by November had spoken at about 123 meetings.

It was at some point during this year that Friend Elias's young orphaned relative, [Edward Hicks](#) who had been taken into the Quaker household of David and Elizabeth Lewis Twining, having reached the age of 13, was being put out as an apprentice to the Tomlinson brothers, coachmakers in Attleborough.



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1796

The New York Friends' [Yearly Meeting](#) founded the Nine Partners Boarding School at Mechanicsburg.

June: The male and female [Quakers](#) who had visited the older mulatto woman Cynthia Miers reported that they believed "*her to be convinced of the principles of Truth as professed by us and desirous of walking agreeable thereto,*" and nevertheless the meeting merely forwarded the case "*to the Quarterly Meeting for their advice and direction herein.*" A Scotch Friend present in this monthly meeting, John Wigham, described this in his journal.⁵⁵

The case of a Mulatto woman, who had applied for membership with Friends, came before the meeting: a committee had been appointed to visit her, and reported their satisfaction as to her conviction but thought it unsafe to receive her on account of her colour! After much discussion it was at last concluded to refer the matter to the Quarterly Meeting. How hard it is to overcome old prejudices.

The Quarterly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) adopted the following course:

From Rahway and Plainfield Monthly Meeting, we are informed that Cynthia Myers, a Mulatto woman, had applied to be received into membership with them, had been visited by a committee from their meeting, who made a favorable report respecting her, yet as they could not fully unite in judgment in her case, it was referred to this Meeting where claiming our solid attention, and many friends expressing their sentiments thereon, it was thought best to refer it to the [Yearly Meeting](#) as friends here could not unite in the propriety of receiving The (sic) without the concurrence of that meeting.

December: The general question of the admitting of Negroes as full members of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) was raised in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. The matter originated with the application for membership of the mulatto woman Cynthia Miers of Rahway, New Jersey. The [Yearly Meeting](#) appointed a committee to consider the question, to which both women Friends and visitors from other parts were admitted. Their report was made in writing and accepted by the Yearly Meeting, to the effect that they were united in believing that the Friends Discipline already established relative to receiving persons into membership was not limited with respect to nation or color, and recommended therefore that applicants for membership should be investigated as to their views and practices and when satisfied monthly meetings might in their freedom receive such with propriety without respect of persons or color.⁵⁶

55. The data elements for this series on the acceptability of persons of mixed race as Quakers are from Henry Cadbury's "Negro Membership in the Society of Friends" in [The Journal of Negro History](#), Volume 21 (1936), pages 151-213.

56. The data elements for this series on the acceptability of persons of mixed race as Quakers are from Henry Cadbury's "Negro Membership in the Society of Friends" in [The Journal of Negro History](#), Volume 21 (1936), pages 151-213.



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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1797

Friend [Hannah Barnard](#), a [Quaker](#) minister of Hudson Monthly Meeting in New York, felt a concern to travel among Friends and others in the British Isles. Her monthly meeting therefore issued a travelling minute which was duly endorsed by the Quarterly Meeting and by New York [Yearly Meeting](#).



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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January: The minutes of Rahway and Plainfield Monthly Meeting show that in the next month the case of the older mulatto worshiper Cynthia Miers was resumed, and in the following month she was received into membership. Friend John Hunt, who served on the committee, wrote of the decision as having been held back 20 years though there had never been anything to prevent her acceptance other than the color of her skin.⁵⁷

There was that felt which raised the testimony in this respect, over all opposition, although the spirit of prejudice which had been imbibed on account of colour, had kept it back above twenty years within which time, [many or] divers black and mulatto people have requested to have a right among Friends, but till now have been [rejected and] put by, on account of their colour.

Among those who spoke in favor of admission were two foreign [Quakers](#), Martha Routh of England and Jean de Marsillac of France. Friend Martha described the event as follows:

At this season the further consideration of admitting black people into membership with friends, was revived; and a large committee was appointed wherein concerned women friends were admitted. Their weighty deliberations felt to me evidently owned of Truth; the result whereof was, that no distinction of colour should be an objection when such as requested to be joined to us, appeared to be convinced of the principle we profess. This being spread before the [Yearly Meeting](#) was united in, without a dissenting voice.

Here is a Silhouette of Public Friend Martha Routh (1743-1817), as she appeared when she was visiting the New World:



Friend [Stephen Grellet](#) of France, later to become well known, was 23 years of age and attending annual

57. The data elements for this series on the acceptability of persons of mixed race as Quakers are from Henry Cadbury's "Negro Membership in the Society of Friends" in [The Journal of Negro History](#), Volume 21 (1936), pages 151-213.



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meeting for the first time, having just joined the Society. He wrote in his characteristic evangelical language:

The [Yearly Meeting](#) came to the conclusion that any people of colour, becoming convinced of our principles, and making application to be received as members of our society, ought to be treated as white persons, without any distinction on account of colour, seeing that there is none with God, who has made all nations of the earth of one blood and that Jesus Christ has died for all, and is the saviour of all who believe in Him, of whatever colour or nation they may be.



Evidently there had been other cases of applicants of color and evidently these also had been delayed for many years. Not very many Negro members were immediately accepted on the basis of this [Yearly Meeting](#) ruling once it was embodied in the Book of Discipline. For nearly a century, rather than being generally distributed, this had been a mere manuscript kept by one member of each Monthly Meeting; in this year, however, arrangements were made for printing it, and so in the first printed form of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Discipline the outcome of the decision on Cynthia Myers came to be embodied in a paragraph under "Convinced Persons" ending "The said meetings are at liberty to receive such (persons) into membership, without respect to nation or color." This paragraph would remain in the Discipline not only until the separation of 1828 but in each branch of Friends in every edition for nearly a century longer, and would then mysteriously disappear.



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1801



By this point the school fund under the administration of Friend [Moses Brown](#) had grown to \$3,837.40, a decision had been reached that said Fund “should not be diverted into any other channel,” and the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) was soliciting the various monthly meetings to establish Quaker schools. Although several of these would indeed be established, “diverse Friends continued to err so grievously as to send their children to public or other improper Schools, whereby their tender minds are in danger of Suffering Loss.” Something further needed to be done, but what?



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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1806



The Philadelphia [Yearly Meeting](#) discipline of the [Religious Society of Friends](#):

NEGROES OR SLAVES

It appears to have been the concern of this meeting revived from time to time, with increasing weight, to testify their entire disunity with the practice of enslaving mankind (and particularly to guard all in membership with us against being concerned in the purchase of slaves from the coasts of Africa) yet as we have with sorrow to observe that in some parts of our country, this shameful practice is still continued and connived at, we think it proper to revive the advices heretofore issued; and again exhort our members, to be no way accessory to this enormous national evil, but to discourage it by all the justifiable means in their power; it being obvious that wherever it prevails it tends to corrupt the morals of the people, so as not only to render them obnoxious to the displeasure of the Almighty, but deaf to his warnings, and insensible and regardless of his impending judgments. -1755, 1806.

And we earnestly desire it may become the concern of our members generally, to use the influence they have with those who hold slaves by inheritance or otherwise, that they may be treated with moderation and kindness, and instructed as objects of the common salvation in the principles of the Christian religion; as well as in such branches of school-learning as may fit them for freedom, and to become useful members of civil society. Also that Friends in their several neighbourhoods advise and assist such of the black people as are at liberty, in the education of their children, and common worldly concerns. -1778.

Understanding that some in membership with us, either through inadvertence, or from selfish motives, have hired slaves to assist them in their business; we desire such to consider that in so doing they promote the unrighteous traffic, and oppose our testimony against it. Friends are also cautioned against acting as executors or administrators to estates where slaves are bequeathed; and doing any thing whereby their bondage may be prolonged. -1774.

We are united in judgment, that the state of the black people, who have been held as slaves by any of us or our predecessors, calls for a deep inquiry and close examination, how far we are clear of with holding from them, what under such an exercise may be opened to our view as their just right; and we earnestly and affectionately entreat those in particular who have released any of them, to attend to the further openings of duty. Even if no such obligations to this people existed among us, it is worthy of our serious consideration, whether any object of beneficence is more deserving of our regard, than that of training up their youth in such virtuous principles and habits as may render them useful and respectable members of the community. It is the sense and judgment of this meeting, that if any



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of our members are concerned in importing, selling, or purchasing; or shall give away or transfer any negro or other slave, with or without any other consideration than to clear their estate of any future incumbrance, or in such manner that their bondage is continued beyond the time limited by law or custom for white persons; and also those who accept of such gift or assignment; they ought to be speedily treated with in the spirit of true love and wisdom, and the iniquity of their conduct laid before them. And if, after Christian labour, they cannot be brought to such a sense of their injustice, as to do every thing which the monthly meeting shall judge to be reasonable and necessary for the restoring such slave to his or her natural and just right to liberty, and condemn their deviation from the law of righteousness and equity, to the satisfaction of the said meeting, that such member or members be testified against as other transgressors are by the rules of our discipline for other immoral, unjust, or reproachful conduct. -1774.

It appearing that, notwithstanding the many afflictive dispensations with which divine wisdom has seen meet to visit this land, many of its inhabitants are so deaf to the language of the rod, as to continue in the nefarious traffic for slaves to the coasts of Africa: and that the importation of them is still connived at: this meeting, considering such a conduct as a bold and impious defiance of the Ruler of nations, and pregnant with the most alarming consequences to our country, earnestly recommends to the meeting for sufferings to embrace every suitable opportunity for advancing our testimony in this respect, and for calling the attention of the public mind to this awfully interesting subject. - 1786, 1787, 1806.

A section of this year's Philadelphia [Yearly Meeting](#) discipline for the [Religious Society of Friends](#) perhaps can help us understand why it was that [Henry David Thoreau](#) would not ever vote:

CIVIL GOVERNMENT

Liberty of conscience being the common right of all men, and particularly essential to the well-being of religious societies, we hold it to be indispensably incumbent upon us to maintain it inviolable among ourselves: and therefore advise and exhort all in profession with us, to decline the acceptance of any office or station in civil government, the duties of which are inconsistent with our religious principles; or in the exercise of which they may be, or think themselves to be, under the necessity of exacting of their brethren any compliances against which we are conscientiously scrupulous. And if any persons in membership with us, notwithstanding this advice, shall persist in a conduct so reverse to our principles and religious liberty, it is the sense of this meeting that they be treated with, as in other cases of offence; and if they cannot be brought to see and acknowledge their error, that the monthly meetings to which they belong should proceed to testify our disunity with them.

And it is also the sense and judgment of this meeting, that Friends ought not, in any wise, to be active or accessory in electing, or promoting to be elected, their brethren to such offices or stations



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in civil government, the execution whereof tends to lay waste our Christian testimony, or subject their brethren or others to sufferings on account of their conscientious scruples.

Believing that we are called to show forth to the world in life and practice, that the blessed reign of the Messiah, the Prince of Peace, is begun, and we doubt not, will proceed till it attains its completion in the earth, when according to the prophecies of Isaiah and Micah, "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Influenced by these principles, we cannot consistently join with such as form combinations of a hostile nature against any; much less in opposition to those placed in sovereign or subordinate authority; nor can we unite with or encourage such as revile and asperse them, for it is written, "Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people." Acts 23:5.

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The [Great Meetinghouse](#) of the [Friends](#) in [Newport, Rhode Island](#) was enlarged to accommodate the New England [Yearly Meeting](#). The renewed structure featured a spacious gallery above, which was intended for the use of persons of color (as it would turn out, this gallery would ordinarily be quite empty, except that during the week of the Yearly Meeting it would be packed with white people).



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➡ The [Yearly Meeting](#) School that Friend [Moses Brown](#) had established in [Portsmouth](#) in 1784 had closed its doors in 1788. Friend Moses at this point, however, revived this school board, and after more than another decade of planning, the school would begin anew in 1819, this time atop College Hill in [Providence, Rhode Island](#).)



In [Providence](#), the legally incorporated entity “The Charitable [Baptist](#) Society” obtained the authority to levy a tax on church pews for repair of the society’s meetinghouse.



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1815



June: Friend [Paul Cuffe](#) became involved in the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#). He would be asked to help make decisions regarding the Quaker meetinghouse in Boston. According to the diary kept by Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#), on the second day of the yearly meeting, in the afternoon, this man of color was among the “public laborers,” which is to say, among those who stood and doffed their hats and spoke from the silence of worship. The public laborers whom Friend Stephen heard were:

- Friend Rowland Green
- Friend Elisha Thornton
- Friend [Moses Brown](#)
- Friend [Paul Cuffe](#)

This is the first time that ever a man of colour delivered his opinion in our Yearly Meeting and I guess in any in the World.



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1818



June: The New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) at [Portsmouth](#) was informed by its Meeting for Sufferings committee that the construction of [Yearly Meeting School](#) was so far completed that the building in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) might be made use of during the following winter. The hiring of staff was authorized. Friends [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) and Lydia Gould of [Newport](#) would be serving as Assistant Superintendents.



June 17, Wednesday: Charles François Gounod was born in Paris, 2d and final child born to François-Louis Gounod, official artist to the Duc de Berry and drawing master to the pages of the King's Chamber, with Victoire Lemachois, daughter of a lawyer.

Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal about the proceedings of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) at [Portsmouth](#):

4th day – The Meeting begun at 10 O'clock – Various concerns came before us – that which excited the most interest was a communication brought in by a committee appointed Yesterday, to the different quarterly meetings respecting the applications of several friends in low circumstances to the general government for pensions for their services in the revolutionary War – a general Unity was expressed discouraging all such applications & advising to the contrary, & encouraging all meetings where such applicants may reside to extend to them a liberal hand of help. – Henry Post at the opening of the meeting appeared in fervant supplication. –

The Meeting met this evening at 4 OC – the first buisness entered on was Jeremiah Austins Appeal which was confirmed –After expressing a few words, – which were reply'd to in a most feeling & pertinent manner by [Moses Brown](#) – he retired from the meeting having the heart felt sorrow of many friends – -Epistles were prepared to the usual meetings with which we correspond & most of them were attended with a good savor of life & also a communication was prepared to the different Monthly & Quarterly Meetings, written with much animation so that some of us said in our hearts "the best wine has come last" – The Meeting concluded under a solemn covering – & I have no doubt many may say with emphasis "It is good for me to be here"



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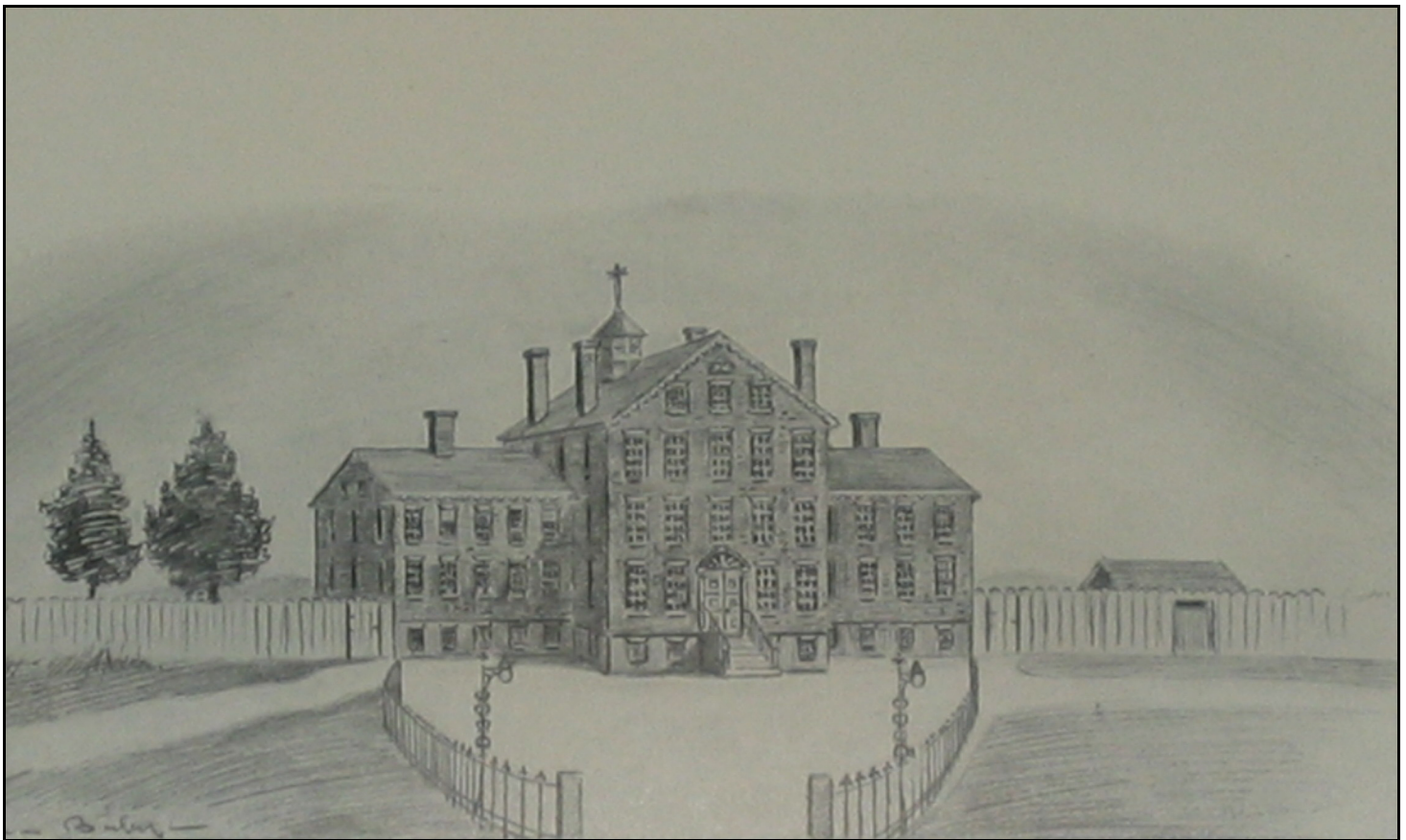
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1819



January 1, Friday: With construction complete on the central part of their building (the part between the wings, now referred to as “Middle House”) New England [Yearly Meeting](#)’s boarding school for [Quaker](#) youth went into operation in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) on the farmland that had been donated in 1814 by [Friend Moses Brown](#). (Of course, there would be a Boys School and a Girls School, held distinct not only in reports and catalogues but also by means of gender segregation of classrooms, and gender segregation of walks, and gender segregation of groves and playgrounds and dining areas.)



This sketch was added to the face of a clock made by John Bailey, in the building’s sitting-room

Present at that point were the [Quaker](#) who had been hired to be a teacher in the boys’ department, Friend Benjamin Rodman, two assistant teachers for the girls’ department, Friends Mary Mitchell and Dorcas Gardner, Friend Maria Augusta Fuller from Lynn, Massachusetts, age 12, Friend Comfort Allen, age 22, a Quaker young woman from Richmond, New Hampshire, and three Quaker girls from Nantucket, Friends Elizabeth Brayton, age 15, Anna Fitch, age 14, and Hepsabeth Mitchell, age 14. (It has been noted, as an attempt at humor, that at this point, with two superintendents, one teacher, two assistant teachers, and five girl scholars on site, the teacher/student ratio had become exactly the ideal ratio of one on one!)



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When the [Hicksite](#)/Orthodox split would occur in the [Religious Society of Friends](#), this school would remain with the Orthodox or Quietist or segregationist branch and would prosper, enrolling on an average a student body of more than 150 white students during the decade of the 1830s.



During this year, also, Friend Moses would fund the purchase of a lot in Providence on which the colored people might erect a meetinghouse and school:



The colored people called a meeting in 1819 to take measures, to build a meetinghouse, with a basement for a school room. After appointing their Committee to carry out their wishes, they sent a special committee to Mr. [Moses Brown](#), to inform him of their intentions and see what he would do toward aiding them, knowing he belonged to the Society of Friends and was a very benevolent man, besides some of the members of the committee had been in his service. Mr. Brown, after hearing their statements, highly commended their movement, and said, "I always had it in my heart to help the colored people, whenever I saw they were ready to receive. Now go and select you out a lot, suitable for your purpose, and I will pay for it."

Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) of [Newport](#) wrote in his journal about the opening of this school (at which eventually he would teach):

6th day 1st of 1st M 1819 / My mind under much depression, particularly from yesterdays occurrences at Portsmouth. — It is a comfortable reflection that the Truth remains to be unchangeable & that those who abide in it have nothing to fear. — I have thought much of the Yearly Meeting School which is opened this day at Providence, the day has been very clear & remarkably mild for the season, may it prove an omen of the future usefulness of the institution to coming generations.⁵⁸

58. Stephen Wanton Gould Diary, 1815-1823: The Gould family papers are stored under control number 2033 at the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections of Cornell University Library, Box 7 Folder 12 for August 24, 1815-September 25, 1823; also on microfilm, see Series 7



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1823



Friend Jesse Kersey (1767-1845), who had been approbated as a [Quaker](#) minister, was suspected by Quaker elders of having succumbed to drugs and to alcohol, and his right to minister was challenged. This is from A NARRATIVE OF THE EARLY LIFE, TRAVELS, AND GOSPEL LABORS OF JESSE KERSEY (Philadelphia: T. Ellwood Chapman, 1851, pages 83-87):

From the time of my commencing in the world, there has been no object of a temporal character more desirable to me, than that of having it in my power to render to every man his due. Hence, I toiled with industry equal to my strength. I endeavored to avoid expenses; but when I had a family to provide for, this was impossible. Sickness subjected me to doctor's bills, and children were to be clothed, fed, and educated. After I went on the farm, my crops often failed, and I was never able to make any clear money by that business. Under these and other discouraging circumstances, my health gave way; and at length under the pressure of various kinds of trial, my constitution seemed to fail, and I was overtaken with the [typhus fever](#). This disease appeared to prostrate my physical strength, and desolate the remaining powers of the nervous system. In order to raise me above the fever, recourse was had to powerful stimulants. Hence, when I felt the returns of weakness, stimulants were the only remedy within my reach; I could get hold of no other thing that would relieve me. The paroxysms of nervous disease that frequently occurred, would deprive me of the exercise of my rational understanding, and the remedy unavoidably taken was sometimes, by those who knew not the case, declared to be the disease. Hence, my moral character was called in question. Reports were spread abroad that I was become the victim of intemperance. A consequence of which was, that when I came to Philadelphia to attend the [Yearly Meeting](#) in the year 1823, a number of Friends at the close of the Meeting for sufferings on sixth day, desired me to stop with them. I did so; and they informed that reports very unfavorable to my character, were in circulation; – and therefore in their opinion I had better not attend the Yearly Meeting, but for the present return to my family.

On this afflicting occasion, the energies of my mind became prostrated, and my strength so gone from me that I returned home under deep discouragement, reflecting on my situation, and thinking I had none to look to, or to lean upon. A horror of great darkness fell upon me, and it seemed as if the lion of the forest was let loose to roar against me, and even to destroy me utterly. For a time my mind was almost distracted; and I frequently thought of putting off all dependence upon the Society of Friends, and of standing separate and alone. But when I thought of leaving the Society, this objection was always, present with me: that as certainly as the children of Israel



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were to dwell alone, and not to mix with the surrounding nations, — so was the Society of Friends; for they were called out from among the various classes of men, and they were to stand separate, in order that the force of their example might have a proper effect upon the surrounding inhabitants. I could not therefore leave the Society; although I could feel little or no support to the mind, either inward or outward. Sometimes there would be a short interval of light and hope, but soon I would again feel lost, and left to myself.

Thus for several years, I endured a state of much suffering and various deep trials, among which was the removal of several of my children by death. I was also under the necessity of selling the farm as before noted, and thus was turned out upon the world poor, and penniless. But the most trying of all was, that my character among Friends had become so far blasted, that it was thought proper by some to deny me the standing of a minister in the Society. I was accordingly removed from a seat in the meeting of ministers and elders. Under those circumstances, my poor soul was so far cast down, that all prospect of recovery was frequently lost: and that which gave the greatest power and force to those feelings was a consciousness that I had not kept my place, but had frequently given way to an excessive use of stimulants, in order to conquer or soothe the horror of my situation. But among all the remedies for distress, there is none more dreadful than that of intemperance. It not only fails to relieve, but it adds an incalculable amount to the affliction. No one can conceive the horror and anguish that I felt and passed through. It was a state of suffering that baffles all description; and when once a poor creature is landed in it, every step taken on that ground is making his way out more difficult.

I cannot look back to the period when my standing was called in question, without feeling the most poignant remorse, that I should have been in any degree the cause of reproach to the ever blessed Principle of Truth of which I have made profession. But from having been brought down by an attack of typhus fever, as before mentioned, to a very low and weak state, in which for several days I had no prospect of recovery, my physician gave me both laudanum and brandy; and recommended the frequent use of the latter in my case, as indispensable to my recovery. It was during this time of weakness, and under the pressure of my difficulties and trials, that I fell into the habit of drinking brandy, and thought my condition required it. Yet I never indulged in a course of excess, because of a disposition to rebel against my good and merciful Creator; but it was occasioned by reason of an overwhelming weight of weakness, and incapacity to stand my ground.

During this time of close trial, it was vain to look for any human aid; and what added to the mass of mournful feelings and views, was the disordered state of the Society of Friends. Many of the members with whom I had formerly associated, had in my opinion departed from the principles of Friends and taken up a



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determination to rule the body of the Society in their own way – even though it should prostrate the character and standing of faithful Friends who could not unite with their measures. Consequently, as I was already proscribed, I sought for no strength or comfort among this class, – and stood for a time alone. Being thus weakened, broken down and discouraged, and no associates in the Society to mingle with, I do not marvel at (though I do not approve) of some of the weaknesses into which I unhappily fell. But, adored forever be the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls;– his arm is not shortened that it can not save, nor his ear grown heavy that it cannot hear. By the blessed interference of his adorable goodness, wisdom, and power, deliverance was miraculously furnished, and a way made for me to rise again into the glorious liberty of the ever blessed Truth. This I acknowledge with gratitude to have been nothing short of a Divine work. And having witnessed that my God is indeed a God of mercy and long-suffering kindness, I am humbly bound to speak well of his excellent name, and to magnify the arm of his power. Oh! how wonderful is his loving-kindness to the children of men! When, by his Spirit my mind is opened to take a view of his marvellous kindness, long-suffering, and forbearance with transgressing mortals, – no language is sufficient to do the great subject justice. Sometimes the query arises, how is it, that he permits transgressing mortals to go on year after year, in a state of rebellion against the clear impressions of his Spirit, and lengthens out the opportunity for such to return to him, and enjoy his favor? Thus he even extends his call to the eleventh hour of the day; evident evidently not willing that any should perish in their sins, but that all should return, repent, and live.

Should we accept the above at face value? An editor of Friend Jesse Kersey's A NARRATIVE OF THE EARLY LIFE, TRAVELS, AND GOSPEL LABORS OF JESSE KERSEY has been forced to conclude that this could not possibly have been an "entirely truthful" account: "he (or possibly a posthumous editor) misstates things, denies ever having said things that are clearly documentable, compresses multiple events into a short period of time, and gives misleading accounts of the trials he faced. He also omits critical things, or gives the impression that they happened in a different way." This [Quaker](#) editor concludes by remarking "I've come across self-serving or romanticized in retrospect accounts before, that is something rather to be expected, but I'm finding things that go beyond that."

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

**WHAT I'M WRITING IS TRUE BUT NEVER MIND
YOU CAN ALWAYS LIE TO YOURSELF**



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1824



After having attended village schools, [Friend Elizabeth Buffum Chace](#) (then known of course as [Friend Elizabeth Buffum](#)) boarded for one year at the Quakers' [Yearly Meeting](#) Boarding School, the establishment which is now known as the "[Moses Brown](#)" School on College Hill on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#). [Friend Abby Kelley](#) was during the same year attending this Friends School.

(There is, however, an apparent discrepancy on the record. Elizabeth Buffum was stated to be eighteen years of age when she attended the Friends school in Providence, which would put her year of attendance as 1824 since she was born in 1806, and yet other documents put her year of attendance as 1822.)

Note that these two Quaker scholars, being girls, would have been in "Girls School," a facility held distinct not only in reports and catalogues but also by means of gender segregation of classrooms, and gender segregation of walks, and gender segregation of groves and playgrounds and dining areas (over and above rigid racial segregation that was making certain that Rhode Island's black and red populations would remain forever entirely in the dark).

In this year superintendents Friends Matthew Purinton and Betsy Purinton of Salem, Massachusetts departed and were replaced by Friends Enoch Breed and Lydia Breed.

Superintendents.

1819-1824.	Purinton, Matthew and Betsy.
1824-1835.	Breed, Enoch and Lydia.
1829-1835.	Gould, Stephen Wanton and Gould, Hannah , Asst. Supts.
1835-1836.	Davis, Seth and Mary.
1837.	Breed, Enoch and Lydia.
1838-1839.	Rathbun, Rowland and Alice.
1840-1844.	Wing, Allen and Olive.
1845-1846.	Thompson, Olney and Lydia.
1847.	Congdon, Jarvia and Lydia.
1847-1852.	Cornell, Silas and Sarah M.



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1828



February 28, Thursday: Fryderyk Chopin's Rondo a la Mazur was published by Andrea Brzezina, Warsaw as op. 5.

The initial issue of the Cherokee Phoenix appeared in the Cherokee Republic in the present state of Georgia, the 1st newspaper ever to be printed in a native American language.

Friend Stephen Wanton Gould wrote in his journal:

5th day 28th of 2 M / Rode in the Stage to Portsmouth to attend the Moy [Monthly] Meeting, which was a good encouraging time Mary Hix preached a little very sweet & lively then a few words by Anne Dennis, then a few by a daughter of Nathan Chase of Tiverton, followed by Ruth Freeborn The Meetings public & private were very satisfactory seasons to me. - I dined at Asa Shermans & then Walked home, with the exception of a bout two miles which a man on the road gave me a ride in his Wagon.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

An Act to Incorporate the Yearly Meeting of Friends for New-England (as copied from the official document by Friend Margery S. Walker, Recording Clerk in about 1972 and 1973 of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends).⁵⁹

Sec. 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in the General Court Assembled, and by authority of the same, That Moses Brown, David Buffam, William Rotch, Jun. Rowland Green, William Almy, Estaes Newhall, Daniel Johnson, John Osborne, James Hoag, Abraham Wilkinson, William Buffam, Jr., Enoch Breed, Samuel F. Hussey, Abraham Sherman, Jun. Daniel Howland, Abijah Chase, Thomas Howland, William Jenkins, Isaac Bassett, Jun. And Stephen A. Chase, together with the other members of the Yearly Meeting of Friends for New-England, and their successors, be, and they hereby are made a body politic in this Commonwealth, by the name of the Yearly Meeting of Friends for New-England, with power to take and hold, in their corporate capacity, in the City of Boston, and other places within this Commonwealth, real or personal estate, for religious and charitable purposes, provide the net income thereof shall not exceed, in any one year, the sum of three thousand dollars.

Sec. 2. Be it further enacted, That the said Yearly Meeting may, from time to time, convey to any person or persons, any of their said real estate; and a deed executed by their Committee, called the meeting for sufferings, or a majority of them, under their hands and seals, and acknowledged and recorded according to law, shall be sufficient to pass the title of said Yearly Meeting

59. The New England Yearly Meeting is incorporated, not only in Rhode Island, but as well in several other of the states of New England.



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thereto.

Sec. 3. Be it further enacted, That this act may at any time,
be altered or repealed at the pleasure of the Legislature.

YEARLY MEETING SCHOOL



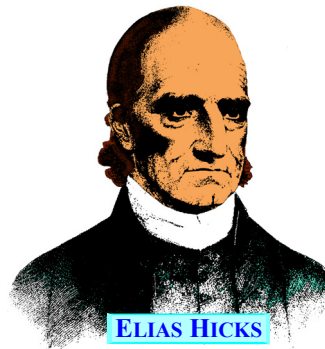
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May: At the First Day worship of the New York [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), Friend [Elias Hicks](#) sat in the morning at the Rose Street meetinghouse and in the afternoon at the Hester Street meetinghouse, while the English visitor, the evangelical Thomas Shillitoe, did the opposite. Then, on Monday at the meeting for business, the two religious leaders confronted each other. Samuel Mott was elected Clerk but, due to the passion of the event, the only way he could be gotten up to the Clerk's table was by passing him over the heads of the crowd. (Those of us who have been to a rock concert will be able to imagine this scene.) Friend Elias, "that poor deluded old man," leaned down from the gallery to lend Friend Samuel a hand in the struggle to get him up to where he could touch the Clerk's table — but Elias's hand slipped.



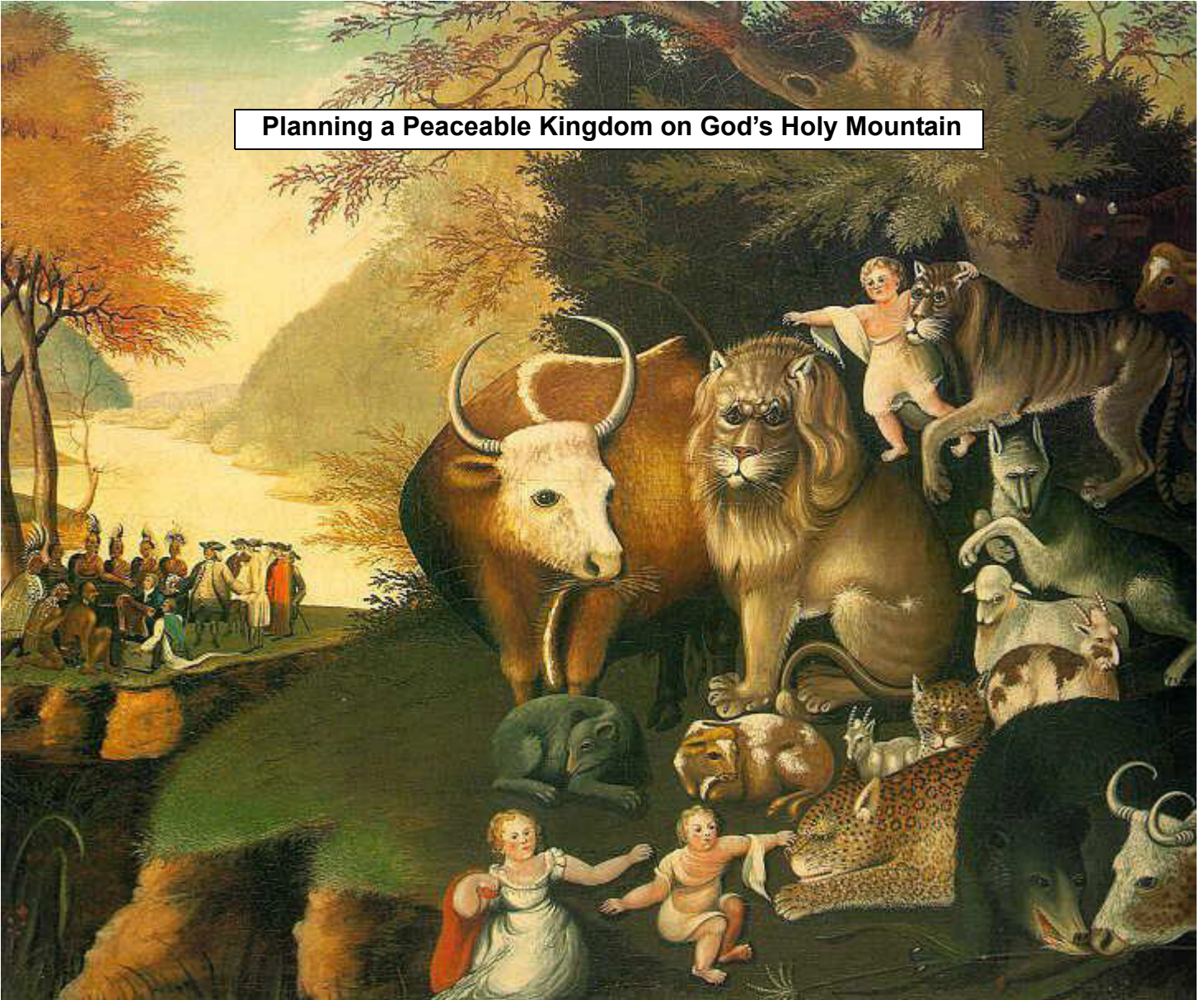
When the table had been torn to pieces, Friend Thomas and the evangelicals walked out and formed a new meeting. The great split had occurred.

In the New York Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends, it turned out after the clerk's table had been repaired, there were 14,768 [Hicksites](#), 5,351 Evangelicals, and 743 Refusers. Meanwhile, Elias's cousin, Friend [Edward Hicks](#), another Quaker minister, was painting the perhaps one hundred versions of his "Peaceable Kingdom" of Isaiah 65:25, which he distributed to various meeting houses in conciliation. These

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paintings all showed the famous peaceful interaction between white founding fathers and “Chief Tammany.”⁶⁰

Planning a Peaceable Kingdom on God's Holy Mountain



60. Or *Tamanend*, after whom Tammany Hall in New York City, and the bully boys of Boss Tweed, were named. In 1681 King Charles II of England had granted a charter to William Penn, Quaker, for a “Holy Experiment” in a land to be called “Pennsylvania.” Having received royal permissions for what they were worth, Penn immediately sought the permission and cooperation of the actual owners and inhabitants of this New Land. “Well,” you might say, “so did the founding fathers of Concord, Massachusetts!” But you’d be wrong, there was quite a difference. What was offered in Concord was things like a jack-knife and a jacket, followed soon after by an imperative “I thought I told you to make yourself scarce.” Penn was after a continuing relationship among equals. He was planning something that the grasping fathers of Concord never imagined, to wit, a peaceable kingdom on God’s holy mountain.

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Isaiah 65:25: The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust [shall be] the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.





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1841

June: Friend [John Greenleaf Whittier](#) was on tour with an Englishman, Friend [Joseph Sturge](#), who was going to the various meetings on the Atlantic seaboard to speak of his experiences in the freeing of the slaves of Jamaica.



When they reached the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) held at [Newport](#), they were informed that they would not be allowed to use the [Great Meetinghouse](#) for any such antislavery discussion. The two young men were considered by this [Quaker](#) group to represent the practice of arriving at decisions “by majorities, frequently after excited discussions,” when what was needed was silence, compassion, unanimity, and a gradualist approach. Rather than whip up opposition to the evil white people of the South by lecturing among the good white people of the North, the [Rhode Island](#) Friends felt it would be better to appeal directly to the consciences of the good white people in the South who were most directly involved in this evil. “In order for his peaceful release, the hearts of those who now control him [the slave] must be touched and softened.” After such a

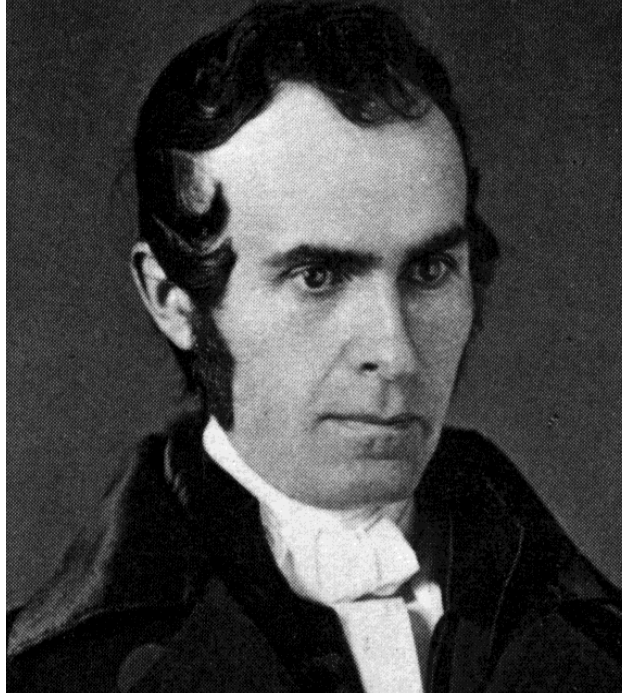


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rebuff, Friend Whittier for several years would refuse to attend his yearly meeting.



Here are the reactions of Friend [Joseph](#) upon touring a slave trading emporium near Washington DC at some point during this month:

In the afternoon I proceeded by a steam packet, with one of my friends, to Alexandria, about six miles distant, on the other side of the Potomac. A merchant, to whom I had an introduction, kindly accompanied us to a slave-trading establishment there, which is considered the principal one in the district. The proprietor was absent; but the person in charge, a stout, middle aged man, with a good-natured countenance, which little indicated his employment, readily consented to show us over the establishment. On passing behind the house, we looked through a grated iron door, into a square court or yard, with very high walls, in which were about fifty slaves. Some of the younger ones were dancing to a fiddle, an affecting proof, in their situation, of the degradation caused by slavery. There were, on the other hand, others who seemed a prey to silent dejection. Among these was a woman, who had run away from her master twelve years ago, and had married and lived ever since as a free person. She was at last discovered, taken and sold, along with her child, and would shortly be shipped to New Orleans, unless her husband could raise the means of her redemption, which we understood he was endeavouring to do. If he failed, they are lost to him for ever. Another melancholy looking woman was here with her nine children, the whole family having been sold away from their husband and father, to this slave-dealer, for two thousand two



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hundred and fifty dollars. This unfeeling separation is but the beginning of their sorrows. They will, in all probability, be re-sold at New Orleans, scattered and divided, until not perhaps two of them are left together. The most able-bodied negro I saw, cost the slave-dealer six hundred and eighty-five dollars.

Our guide told us that they sometimes sent from this house from fifteen hundred to two thousand slaves to the south in a year, and that they occasionally had three hundred to four hundred at once in their possession. That the trade was not now so brisk, but that prices were rising. The return and profits of this traffic appear to be entirely regulated by the fluctuations in the value of the cotton. Women are worth one-third less than men. But one instance of complete escape ever occurred from these premises, though some of the slaves were occasionally trusted out into the fields. He showed us the substantial clothing, shoes, &c., with which the slaves were supplied when sent to the south; a practice, I fear, enforced more by the cupidity of the buyers, than the humanity of the seller. Our informant stated, in answer to enquiries, that by the general testimony of the slaves purchased, they were treated better by the planters than was the case ten years ago. He also admitted the evils of the system, and said, with apparent sincerity, he wished it was put an end to.



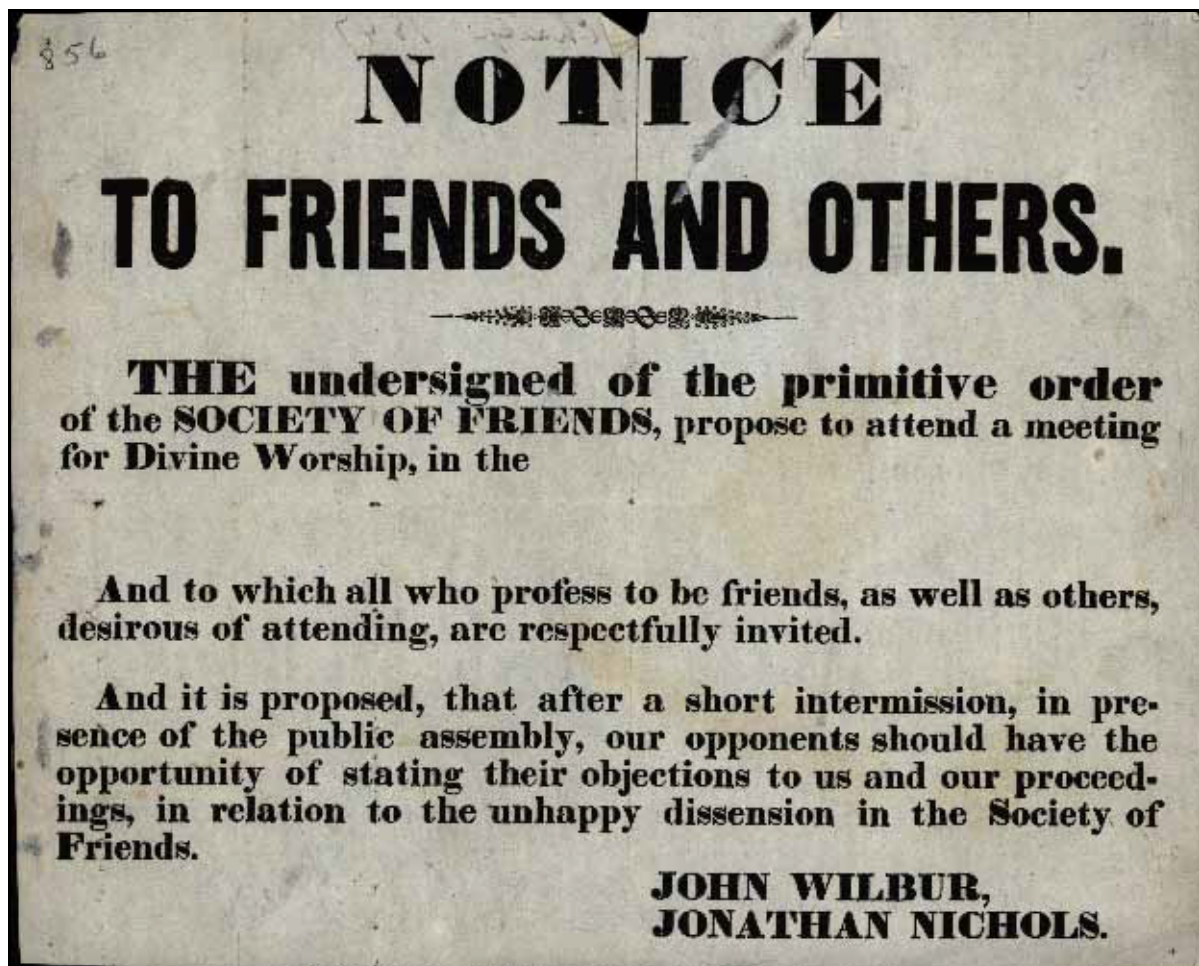
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1843

January: Although the teachings of Friend [John Wilbur](#) were sustained by a large majority of his [Quaker](#) neighbors in [South Kingstown, Rhode Island](#), that monthly meeting had been dissolved and its members added to the Greenwich, Rhode Island monthly meeting. At this point this monthly meeting formally [disowned](#) him, and its decision would subsequently be confirmed by the Friends quarterly meeting and then by the New England [Yearly Meeting](#). His supporters would form an independent yearly meeting, the members of which would be known as "Wilburites."





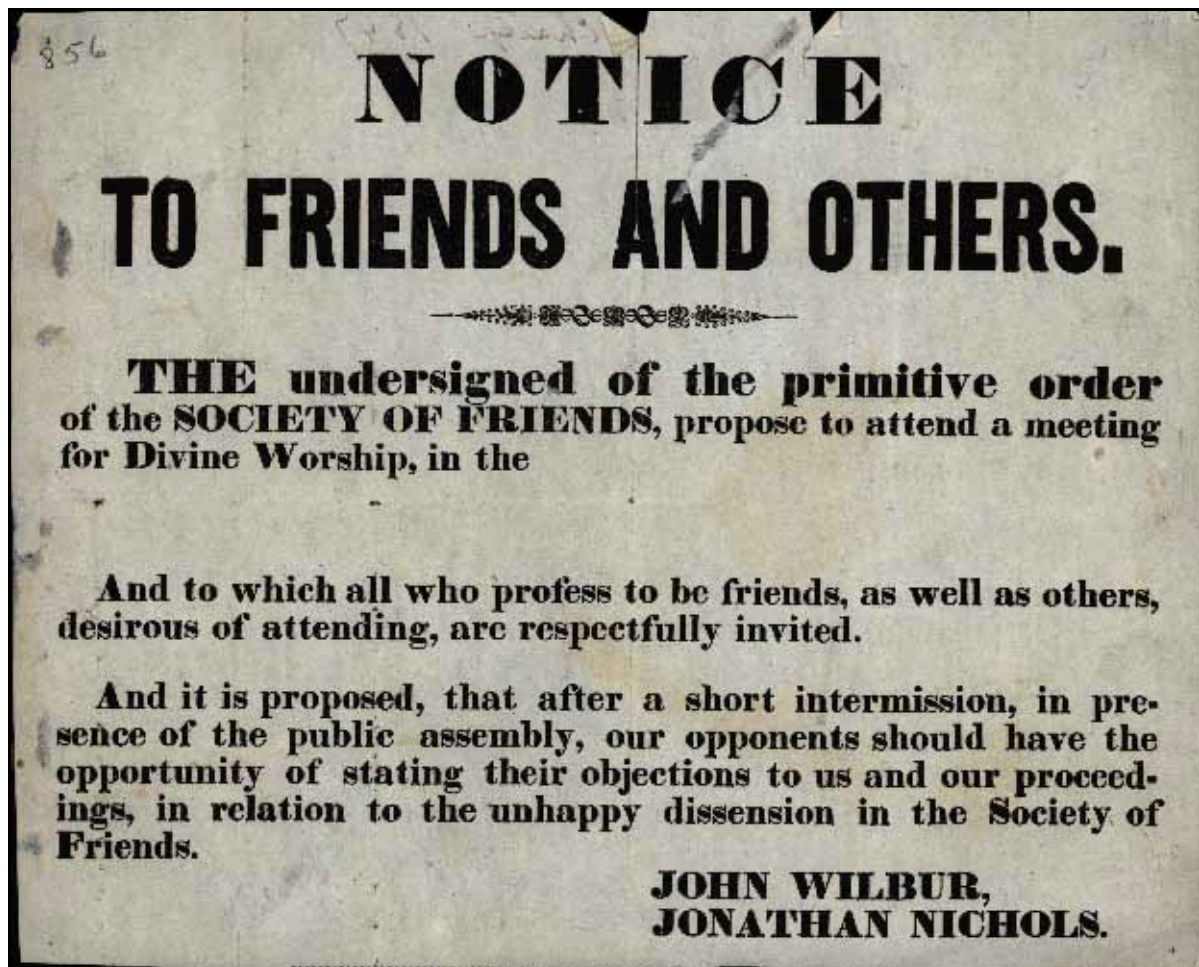
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1844

In the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) during this year and the following one, Friend [John Wilbur](#) would be maintaining that the Truth could be ascertained both from the records of past revelations encapsulated in the Scripture, and from continuing revelations which were coming from God to individuals of the present day. As an advocate of the personal Inner Light, he would be being opposed by Friend [Joseph John Gurney](#), a traveling minister from England, who would be holding that such personal revelations were of necessity pernicious should they differ in any particular from what we were deriving from a careful perusal of the Scripture. The upshot of this would be that Friend John would be [disowned](#) by the Society, and several of the monthly meetings in southern New England during this timeframe would find themselves separating into “Wilburite” versus “Gurneyite” meetings.





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"Let us begin by committing ourselves to the truth – to see it as it is, and tell it like it is – to find the truth, to speak the truth, and to live the truth."

– Republican Presidential nominee
Richard Milhous Nixon, 1968
(a birthright Quaker)





WHAT?

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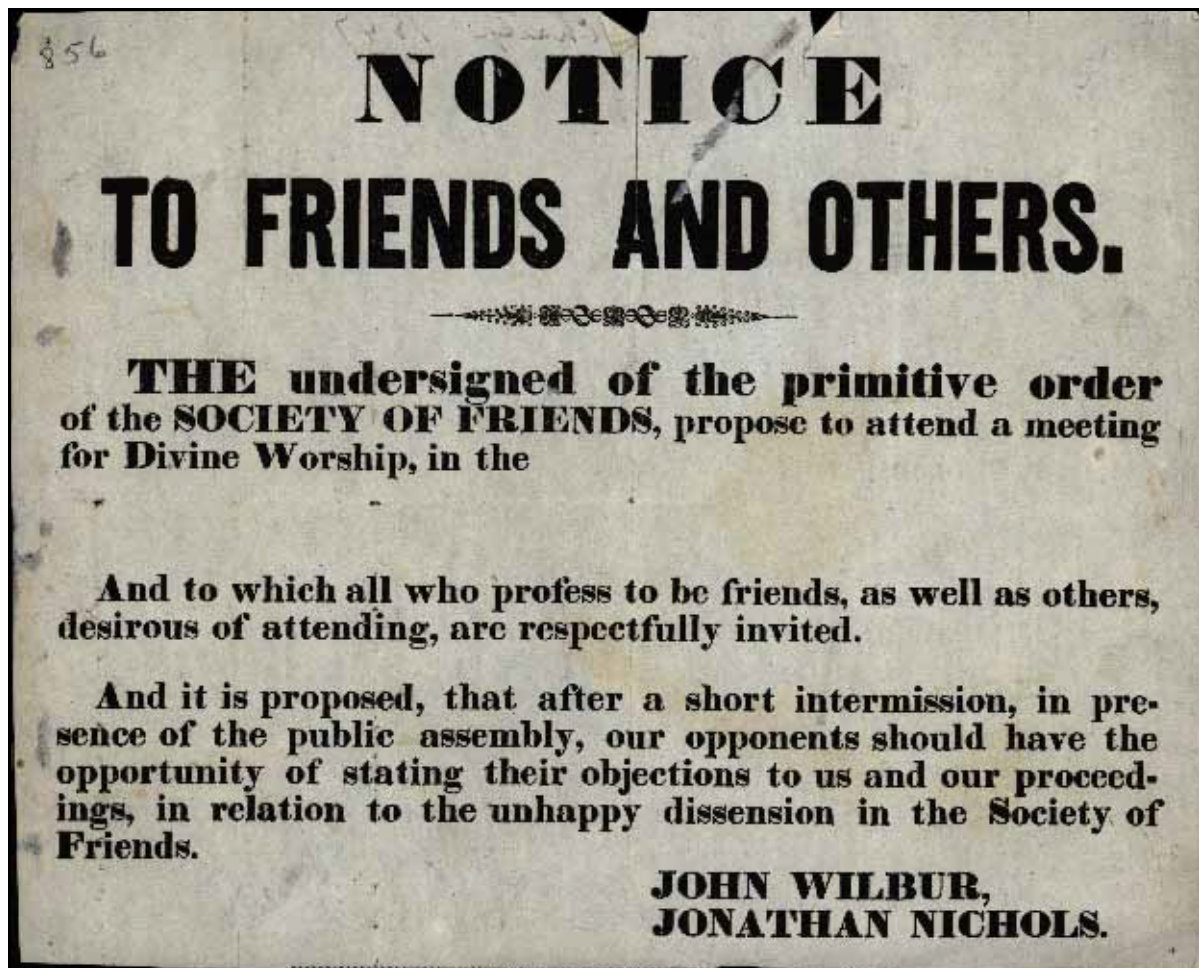
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1845

The [Providence](#) Monthly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) was split by the great Wilburite schism of 1844, having to do with the message of Friend [John Wilbur](#), a [Rhode Island](#) farmer and traveling Friend (minister). At the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) they [disowned](#), not only Friend John, but his entire monthly meeting as well. (These separated Friends formed a separate body which they called the “New England Yearly Meeting of Friends” to distinguish it from the “Yearly Meeting of Friends for New England,” or simply “the smaller body” in distinction from “the larger body,” the Gurneyite bolsheviks –adherents of the English evangelical Friend [Joseph John Gurney](#)– claiming 8,136 adherents, the Wilburite mensheviks claiming only 629. One group, the Wilburites, became the Providence Monthly Meeting of North Providence/Pawtucket. This meeting would be laid down in 1881, its members joining to [South Kingstown](#) Monthly Meeting and worshipping until 1892 as the Pawtucket Worship Group.)



As the [Yearly Meeting School](#) affiliated with the Gurneyite grouping, letting the Wilburites depart, its enrollment plunged to 55 resident young scholars.



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Friends Olney Thompson and Lydia Thompson came to the school as superintendents.

Superintendents.

1819-1824.	Purinton, Matthew and Betsy.
1824-1835.	Breed, Enoch and Lydia.
1829-1835.	Gould, Stephen and Hannah, Asst. Supts.
1835-1836.	Davis, Seth and Mary.
1837.	Breed, Enoch and Lydia.
1838-1839.	Rathbun, Rowland and Alice.
1840-1844.	Wing, Allen and Olive.
1845-1846.	Thompson, Olney and Lydia.
1847.	Congdon, Jarvia and Lydia.
1847-1852.	Cornell, Silas and Sarah M.

The Monthly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on [Nantucket Island](#) declared itself to be a Wilburite meeting, following the teachings of Friend [John Wilbur](#) in regard to the ongoing divine inspiration provided by an Inner Light. With the Gurneyite split among the [Quakers](#), some of the former members of the disbanded [Hicksite](#) meeting on [Nantucket Island](#) joined this new Gurneyite meeting.

READ ALL ABOUT IT



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1846

April: From [Mexico](#), [Josiah Gregg](#) initiated a correspondence with Dr. George Engelmann of St. Louis, Missouri.⁶¹ He would be providing plant specimens quite new to Botany — such as the night-blooming cactus *Cereus greggii*.

The end of the Canadian Rebellion had eased border tensions without the new redoubts of [Fort Niagara](#)'s ever having needed to be tested. Troops stationed there had often been called away for other duties elsewhere. The United States government had been becoming more and more reluctant to pay the expenses of a garrison to man this old fortification. At this point the post was once more abandoned, in favor of something that seemed much more important, to wit, making this War on Mexico.



"War is God's way of teaching Americans geography."

— Ambrose G. Bierce



US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

The New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of Friends would declare that what the US was attempting by violence to bring about in Mexico was to "reestablish slavery where it had already been abolished."

Back on his plantation in South Carolina, surrounded by his slaves, retired government official and private citizen Joel Roberts Poinsett opposed this war. In Mexico, meanwhile, an American soldier found a Mexican girlfriend. Then he discovered his officer on top of her and made the serious mistake of threatening this man. Perhaps this officer was one of those who had been trained in Secretary of War Poinsett's vastly improved West Point academy. His comrades were drawn up into a standard three-sided square for his execution, but although he urged them to shoot straight and not make him suffer —and although, as under normal circumstances, one or two of the muskets to be used by the firing squad had been loaded randomly with powder but no ball in order to make it easier for the soldiers to commit this act— evidently his comrades were reluctant to aim at him. So, after the volley he was still conscious. The officer, rather than dispatch the condemned as per usual with his own pistol applied to the back of the neck, had two of the enlisted men recharge their muskets and fire at short range directly into their comrade's head as he lay on the ground. One of the men wrote home, that this time they really blew his head apart. —It must have looked like a poinsettia. The record does not indicate what happened to the Mexican, where she spent her next *Noche Buena*. We do not have a record which indicates what impact there was on the war against Mexico, that former Minister to Mexico, former Secretary of War Poinsett, on his plantation in South Carolina surrounded by his slaves, was counseling against it.

61. Dr. George Engelmann (1809-1884) of Frankfort on the Main, Germany had emigrated to St. Louis as a physician and botanist, and in 1856 would organize the St. Louis Academy of Science.



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"[A nation is] a group of people united by a mistaken view about the past and a hatred of their neighbors."

— E. Renan, *QU'EST-CE QU'UNE NATION?*
March 11, 1882





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1853

May 25, Wednesday: [Waldo Emerson](#)'s 50th birthday.

An influential "Exposition of Sentiments" document was adopted by the Pennsylvania [Yearly Meeting](#) of Progressive Friends at Kennett Square. Friend [Lucretia Mott](#) helped draft this, although she remained with Philadelphia's [Hicksite](#) Yearly Meeting. Friend Joseph Dugdale, one of the Clerks who signed it, later removed to [Illinois](#) and became a major figure in the new Illinois Yearly Meeting. Friend Jesse H. "Ducky" Holmes, a Swarthmore professor and Clerk of the Progressive Yearly Meeting during its final two decades, was also a member of Swarthmore Meeting, and would be a very active figure in the Friends General Conference until his death in 1940. This Progressive reformation of liberal Quakerism would come to fruition in 1926, when the Friends General Conference would adopt a Uniform Discipline. This document would become the basis and template for new editions of all the Friends General Conference yearly meetings, which emerged in rapid succession thereafter, and closely resembled it. The Uniform Discipline codified such Progressive principles as the idealization of the individual seeking conscience, a congregational polity, the quiet abolition of Ministers and Elders, the near-total abandonment of disownment, and a renewed emphasis on humanitarian reform as the goal and sign of authentic religion. The result would become "meetinghouse" or "unprogrammed" Quakerism as we know it today.

EXPOSITION OF SENTIMENTS ADOPTED BY THE PENNSYLVANIA YEARLY MEETING OF PROGRESSIVE FRIENDS, 1853

To the Friends of Pure and Undeified Religion, and to all Seekers after Truth, of whatever name or denomination, the Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting of Progressive Friends sendeth Greeting;

DEAR FRIENDS: Having been led, as we trust, through obedience to the revelations of truth, to form a Religious Association upon principles always too little regarded and often trampled under foot by professing Christians and popular sects, we are constrained to address you in explanation of our leading sentiments, purposes, plan; and hopes.

If, as we believe, the basis of our organization, and the arrangements we propose for the culture of man's religious powers, are in harmony with the Divine laws, and adapted to the wants of human nature and the demands of the present age, it is certainly incumbent upon us to diffuse true knowledge thereof as widely as possible; and if, on the other hand, "the light that is in us be darkness," it is proper that we should invoke your earnest efforts to redeem us from our errors, and turn our feet into the highway of holiness and truth. We, therefore, ask your serious and unprejudiced consideration of the matters presented in this Exposition, so that, whether you shall accept or reject our propositions, your conclusions may minister to your own peace of mind and growth in the love and practice of the truth.



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In our efforts to apply the principles of Christianity to daily life, and to social customs and institutions which we deemed subversive of individual and national morality, as well as in conflict with the laws of God, we encountered the hostility of the popular sects, to one or another of which most of us belonged, and to which we were bound by ties that grew with our growth and strengthened with our strength. Mingling with the chime of church bells and with the tones of the preacher's voice, or breaking upon the stillness of our religious assemblies, we heard the clank of the slave's chain, the groans of the wounded and dying on the field of bloody strife, the noise of drunken revelry, the sad cry of the widow and the fatherless, and the wail of homeless, despairing poverty, driven

By foul Oppression's ruffian gluttony
Forth from life's plenteous feast;

and when, in obedience to the voice of God, speaking through the holiest sympathies and purest impulses of our Godlike humanity, we sought to arouse our countrymen to united efforts for the relief of human suffering, the removal of giant wrongs, the suppression of foul iniquities, we found the Church, in spite of her solemn professions, arrayed against us, blocking up the path of reform with her serried ranks, prostituting her mighty influence to the support of wickedness in high places, smiling complacently upon the haughty oppressor, "justifying the wicked for a reward," maligning the faithful Abdiels who dared to stand up for the truth and to testify against popular crimes-thus traitorously upsetting the very foundations of the Religion she was sacredly bound to support and exemplify, and doing in the name of Christ deeds at which humanity shuddered, obliterating her indignant blushes only with the tears that welled up from the depths of her great loving heart.

For a time, though not without deep mortification and discouragement, we bore this appalling delinquency, thinking in our short-sightedness that it was mainly the result of a temporary mistake, and not of an incurable leprosy tainting the whole body. In the "patience of hope" we toiled on, seeking to reform alike the Church and the world, and deeming it certain that the former would speedily abandon her false and sinful position, and "come up to the help of the Lord" against the hosts of unrighteousness and oppression. Our hopes in this respect were doomed to a sad and bitter disappointment.

The leaders of the Church, instead of retracing the false step which they had taken, grew more and more hostile to the cause of Christian Reform, while there was not found in the body enough of moral principle to reject their counsels and repudiate their impious claims to a Divine warrant for their criminal apostasy. Inflated with spiritual pride, and claiming to be the anointed expounders of God's will, they mocked at Philanthropy as no part of religion, exalted in its place the Dagon of man-made Disciplines, charged obedience to the decisions of Yearly



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Meetings or other ecclesiastical assemblies, as the sum of human obligation, bade us stifle the gushing sympathies which link us to our kind, and passively "wait God's time" for the removal of the evils that afflict and curse our race; as if God had not revealed his purpose of doing this work by human instrumentality – as if there were times when deeds of charity and mercy are offensive in His sight – as if the cry of suffering Humanity and the emotions it stirs within us were not a sufficient revelation of His will, and we were bound to wait in listless inactivity for some supernatural or miraculous manifestation of His authority and power!

Alas! how many have thus waited, until at last the spiritual ear has become too dull and heavy to vibrato under the gentle tones of the "still, small voice," and the head so hard and cold, that it has ceased to beat at the cry of mortal woe! Superstition has woven around their souls her impenetrable veil, excluding the warm sunlight of God's presence, paralyzing their moral energies, and leaving their holiest sympathies to stagnate for lack of use; thus unfitting them for the work the good Father sets before them in common with all His children, and defeating the great end and purpose of their earthly life.

When we refused to obey the mandate of our ecclesiastical rulers, choosing to hearken to the voice of God rather than unto the voice of man, we found our worst foes in our own religious households; the rod of ecclesiastical power was lifted above our heads, and some of us were made to understand that excommunication was the price to be paid for the exercise of that liberty which Jesus proclaimed as the birthright of his disciples. We might have devoted our energies, to the acquisition of wealth, and, in imitation of the example of many who stood high in the Church, entered into close relations with men devoid of religious principle in the pursuit of that object and no voice of censure or reproof would have been lifted against us; but when we associated with noble men and women, not of our sect, for the purpose of abolishing slavery, war, intemperance, and other crying abominations, and our zeal for humanity made us indifferent to the forms of the Church, though more than ever alive to the great principles she had so long professed to believe and revere, we were treated as offenders; and the strange spectacle was witnessed of bodies, claiming to be God's representatives on earth, excluding from their pale, men and women of blameless lives for loving peace, purity and freedom so devotedly, as to be willing to co-operate with all whose hearts prompted them to labor for the promotion of those heavenly virtues. Thus were the great and ennobling principles of our common humanity subordinated to sectarian shibboleths, and that Divine charity, which is the essence of the God-like, and the sum of every virtue in man, narrowed down to the dimensions of a particular creed, or smothered under the petty limitations of speculative theology.

Driven thus to choose between our loyalty to sect and our allegiance to God, and feeling still the need of some outward



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helps in the cultivation of the religious sentiment, we were naturally led to investigate the whole subject of religious organization, its nature, uses and sphere, and the source and extent of its powers. The result of our inquiries is a clear conviction, that Churches, however high their pretensions of authority derived from God, are only human organizations, and the repositories of only such powers as may have been rightfully conferred upon them by the individuals of whom they are composed, or derived from the laws of our social nature. It is time that this truth, so long obscured by the sorcery of priestcraft, were clearly understood and boldly proclaimed.

Too long have the common people been deluded with the idea that the Church holds a mysterious or organic relation to the Infinite, — a relation distinct from that existing between the soul and its Creator, and conferring special powers and prerogatives. Perhaps no error has done more than this to debase and enslave the mind of man, to fetter his godlike powers, and make him the ready instrument of superstition and priestcraft. It is the most vicious element of Popery, from which our Protestant sects are not yet delivered. Our religion, which should make us free and self-reliant, willing to bend the knee only to God, as he stands revealed to our own consciousness, withered by the touch of this superstition, becomes, in the hands of ambitious and designing men, the instrument of our degradation the symbol of littleness, meanness, bigotry and hypocrisy.

The Romish Church sets up for herself a claim of absolute infallibility, and the various Protestant sects, professing to deride her pretensions, yet tax our credulity scarcely less. From the Episcopal Church, with her imposing ritual and elaborate ceremonials, down to modern Quakerism, with its professed abjuration of all forms, its rustic garb and look of "meek simplicity," all seem deluded with the idea that the Church, being made after a Divine pattern, is supernaturally preserved from error. Even the Quaker regards the decision of his Yearly Meeting with a superstitious reverence scarcely inferior to that which the Catholic awards to the decrees of the Pope and the Cardinals. Do his reason and common sense suggest that the Yearly Meeting has decided erroneously or unjustly, he banishes the thought as little less than impious, becomes silent if not acquiescent, and mayhap lays his reason and common sense a sacrifice on the altar of the Church. Poor man! let him be once fairly convinced that ecclesiastical bodies, however sacred their professions, however worthy of esteem within their legitimate sphere, are yet only human, and without authority to bind the conscience even of the humblest of God's children, and he will no longer dare to offer such a sacrifice, to dishonor his Creator by debasing his powers.

It would be easy to show that this claim of supernatural power, on the part of the organized Church, is at war with the whole genius and spirit of Christianity as exhibited in the life and teachings of Jesus, and without warrant in the writings of the



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Apostles and primitive Christians, as well as subversive of individual rights and responsibilities. Jesus nowhere indicated an intention to organize a Church clothed with such power. Indeed, it does not appear from his recorded words that he even contemplated any organization whatever of those who should embrace his doctrines, He specified no such work as incumbent upon those whom he sent forth as witnesses of the truth, but left them to adopt such instrumentalities as might recur to them adapted to promote the object of their mission.

The Apostles did indeed organize Churches, but they did not pretend that they were framed after a Divinely prescribed pattern, still less that they were clothed with a supernatural power. "It was not," says a learned writer, "until the number of personal followers of Jesus increased by thousands, and the need of some organization began to be felt, that any thing like the institution of a distinct and permanent religious society appears to have been definitely contemplated. And then nothing more was done, than was necessary to that present exigency. Thus the whole institution of the Church at Jerusalem grew up by degrees, as one step after another was called for by a succession of circumstances altogether peculiar." A religious periodical of high authority in matters of ecclesiastical history, testified, some years since, as follows:

Men have clung as with a dying grasp to a few shreds of ancient tradition, and deemed it sacrilege to meddle with these consecrated relics. They have attached a peculiar sacredness to their own constitutions, councils, ordinances, creeds and decisions, as if they rested on Divine right and apostolic authority.... The beautiful theories of Church government, devised with so much care and put together with so much skill and art, have, we are sure, no manner of resemblance to the Churches mentioned in the Acts and Epistles. The primitive Christians, could they come among us, would be not a little surprised to hear their assemblies, gathered by stealth for worship, with or without particular standing officers, referred to as the models after which the superstructure of denominational Churches is supposed to be fashioned. They were simple-hearted men and women, exposed to continual persecution, and bound together in Christian love; forming and modifying their regulations exactly as was needed; never once dreaming that they or their successors were bound to a single system by some great code, provided by Divine authority.... The reason of associating together was, to further this great end, mutually to enliven the feelings of devotion, strengthen the principles of piety, and aid in, and urge to, the discharge of duty.... Some things were practiced in some Churches and not in others. Some officers existed in one and not in another; some met in one place and not in another; and all had a right to do whatever



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might be conducive to the general good.

We have dwelt at some length on this point, because we deem it of fundamental importance. This claim of organic communion with God lies at the root of many evils in the Churches around us, and hence we desire to make our denial of its validity as emphatic as possible. We would impress upon the minds of all whom our voice may reach, the truth, that there is no mysterious alchemy whereby a company of men, mean and selfish as individuals, are transmuted into a holy body; no Divine afflatus vouchsafed to them in the mass, superseding the necessity of personal conformity to the will of God.

Such a claim is the acme of superstition and imposture. It is amazing that it should for so long a period have deceived and befouled the nations! When will the people learn that there is nothing Divine, nothing too sacred for investigation, in the artificial arrangements and prescribed formalities of sects? Alas! what multitudes join the popular Churches, submitting to their rites and paying the expenses of their administration, deluding themselves meanwhile with the idea that they are thus ensuring their eternal salvation, even though their daily lives are defiled by sordid and debasing acts, and they scarcely lift a finger or breathe one honest aspiration for their own or the world's moral improvement!

Our inquiries into the nature and uses of Religious Organization have also brought us to the conclusion, that the Churches around us have made a vital mistake in demanding uniformity of belief in respect to scholastic theology, ordinances, rites and forms, as a condition of religious fellowship and the basis of associated effort. It would hardly be possible to exaggerate the evils resulting from this mistake. It has led the Church into dissensions, hypocrisy and all uncharitableness, and instead of promoting a manly, vigorous and healthful piety, which ever manifests itself in works of practical benevolence and would make her a burning and a shining light in the presence of surrounding darkness, it narrows the scope of her vision, dwarfs the intellect, smothers the heart, and makes her the purveyor of traditions and shams, a covert for meanness and treachery, and a hiding-place for the perpetrators and apologists of popular wickedness. It reverses the arrangements proposed by Jesus and his early followers, putting that first which should be last, the incidental in place of the primary, the temporary in place of the eternal. Jesus enjoins it upon his bearers to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness;" but the popular Church practically tells us, on pain of eternal perdition, to seek first of all the theology of that kingdom, assuring us, with impious tongue, that if we only master that, get its different parts properly arranged and labeled, and learn to believe them, however inconsistent with each other, and contrary to our reason and common sense, the righteousness may safely enough be left to take care of itself!

Instead of requiring as the evidence of our piety the "fruits" demanded in the Gospel of Jesus, it sneers at "good works" as



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"carnal" and inefficacious, bids us mind our catechisms, disciplines and confessions of faith; to come regularly to its assemblies, and worship according to its prescribed forms! It is no wonder that politicians, bent upon schemes of selfish aggrandizement, mock at the Higher Law, and declare their own oppressive statutes a finality, when the Church is found thus corrupt and apostate. No marvel that insatiate Wealth tramples upon lowly Poverty; that War's "red thunders" reverberate round the world that Drunkenness counts its victims by tens of thousands; that Land Monopoly grinds humanity in the dust; that Lust is doing his work of defilement and shame with impunity; that immortal beings are driven to their daily toil tinder the lash, and even sold in the shambles, when the Church proffers absolution for such crimes upon terms so easy of fulfilment. The natural counterpart of this false and superstitious devotion to creeds and forms is an unnatural sourness and melancholy – a Pharisaical spirit, which frowns upon amusements as an offence to God, and which would cover the face of society with a sanctimonious gloom as repugnant to Religion as to unperverted human nature. The victims of this spirit converse about religion, not in manly and natural tones, indicative of sincerity and earnestness, but in a whining, canting manner, as if it were a burden hard to be borne, but which they reluctantly consent to carry during their mortal life, as the only means of eternal salvation!

We are persuaded that the exhibitions of this spirit on the part of the Church have produced incalculable mischief, by exciting the prejudices of the young against all Religion as necessarily of an ascetic character, and by placing amusements beyond the pale of Christian influence, thus making them liable to excesses which might otherwise be avoided. The Christian, of all other persons, should not be of a sad countenance, but ever cheerful and hopeful in his demeanor, making the very atmosphere he breathes a witness of the serene joy that dwells in his heart. No false idea of sanctity, no superstitious or fanatical "worry" about his soul, should he ever suffer to make his presence distasteful and unwelcome to the young.

We cannot undertake to particularize all the errors of principle and practice in the popular Churches, which our investigations have revealed to us; but there is one more which we must not pass in silence. We allude to that vicious and despotic feature in the organization of most of them, which, beginning in the subordination of the individual to the local Church, or to Elders. Overseers, or other officers thereof; ends in the subjection of local bodies to some larger assembly or central power. There are, indeed, some Churches which have attempted to abolish this system, but they are still too much bound by usage to practices inconsistent with their theories.

Experience, as well as observation, has taught us that local organizations should in the first place be formed upon principles which will offer the best possible safeguard to the equal rights of the individual members, and discourage tyranny,



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whether of the many or the few; and, in the next place, that they should never allow any other body, however numerous or imposing, to exercise authority over them. The forms of Church organization, instead of being such as are suggested by the ideas of individual freedom and responsibility which pervade the teachings of Jesus, would seem to have been borrowed from anti-Christian and despotic systems of civil government, whereof force is the vital and controlling element. Under such forms religious tyranny, always difficult of repression is sure to spring up into a vigorous life.

It would be easy to illustrate this truth by a reference to the history of any of those Churches in which the affiliated and subordinating system of government prevails, but the experience of many of our number naturally leads us to point to the Society of Friends as a warning against this lamentable evil. The setting apart of ministers as a distinct order of persons, and for life; the appointment of Elders to sit in judgment upon the services of the Ministry, and to determine officially what is and what is not inspiration; the subjection of individual liberty to official dictation; the subordination of Preparative to Monthly, of Monthly to Quarterly, of Quarterly to Yearly Meetings; all this affords a covert for despotic authority. It is an arrangement whereby the few are enabled to control the many, and to carry into successful operation their plans for keeping the Church popular with the world, while she is trampling upon her own most vital principles, and obstinately refusing to do the work for which she was originally established. It aggravates, moreover, all the other evils which have crept into the body, and renders the work of reform extremely difficult, if not impossible.

But while we thus earnestly deny the claims of Religious Associations to Divine authority, and maintain that they form no exception to the rule, that "institutions are made for man, not man for institutions," and while we would fearlessly expose all that is wrong in existing Churches, we do not therefore repudiate such associations as necessarily evil. Founded upon right principles, adjusted to the wants of our social nature, within their legitimate sphere as the servants and helpers, not the masters of the soul, as a means and not an end, we esteem them of great importance. It is only when they interpose between our consciences and God, assuming to tell us authoritatively how much and what we must believe, and virtually trampling under foot the right of private judgment, that our manhood prompts us to reject them.

The mistakes which men have made in their efforts to realize the benefits of Religious Association, however strange and even preposterous they may appear to us at this advanced period of the world's history, were only the incidents of Humanity imperfectly informed and developed. They should not therefore discourage us, still less lead us into other errors at the opposite extreme. Men have also made great mistakes in science, and in things pertaining to physical life — in astronomy,



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chemistry, and the mechanic arts, and even in agriculture; and it would be no more absurd to urge these mistakes as a reason for abandoning all associated effort in such matters, than it would be to allege the similar blunders into which men have fallen in regard to Religion, and the abuses growing out of them, as a reason why we should resist the strong impulse of our nature which prompts us to combine our efforts for the promotion of piety and good morals.

Past errors and present imperfections, instead of affording an argument against organization, are only illustrations of its necessity, as a means whereby the strong may help the weak, the highly cultivated soul minister to the edification of those less enlightened, and social influence become the aid and support of individual virtue. Beavers do not more naturally combine to build their habitations, than men and women, inspired by a common love of God and Humanity, and a common thirst for religious excellence, mingle and combine their individual efforts for the promotion of pure and undefiled religion among themselves and throughout the world.

In forming The Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting of Progressive Friends, we have followed the instincts of our moral and social nature, and acted Upon the settled conviction, that such an organization was necessary to our highest efficiency in the work which our Heavenly Father has given us to do. We seek not to diminish, but to intensify in ourselves the sense of individual responsibility – not to escape from duty, but to aid one another in its performance – to lift up before all who may be influenced by our words or actions a high standard of moral and religious excellence – to commit ourselves before the world as the friends of righteousness and truth, and as under the highest obligations to labor for the redemption of mankind from every form of error and sin.

It has been our honest endeavor to avoid, if possible, the mistakes into which previous organizations have so generally fallen, and especially those radical errors which are pointed out in this address. To this end we have made our association as simple as possible, having done little more than to provide for an annual assembly. We claim for this organization no other powers than such as we ourselves have conferred upon it in consistency with our own and others' individual freedom. We make no draft upon the veneration of our fellow-men for any arrangement that we have adopted, or may adopt hereafter. Veneration is due only to God, and to those eternal principles of Rectitude, Justice and Love, of which He is the embodiment. We have set forth no forms nor ceremonies; nor have we sought to impose upon ourselves or others a system of doctrinal belief. Such matters we have left where Jesus left them, with the conscience and common sense of the individual. It has been our cherished purpose to restore the union between Religion and Life, and to place works of goodness and mercy far above theological speculations and scholastic subtleties of doctrine. Creed-making is not among the objects of our association.



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Christianity, as it presents itself to our minds, is too deep, too broad, and too high, to be brought within the cold propositions of the theologian. We should as soon think of bottling up the sunshine for the use of posterity, as of attempting to adjust the free and universal principles taught and exemplified by Jesus of Nazareth to the angles of a man-made creed.

Churches which undertake this impious and impracticable work doom themselves thereby to barrenness and death. Instead of being warmed and animated by that living faith which "works by love" and overcomes the world, they lapse into bigotry and intolerance, and their formularies, having no life in themselves, become at length mere petrifications, fossil remains of ideas, which, however significant once, have no longer any adaptation to the condition of the race. It is sad to behold a Church, with Christ's name upon its brow, turning away from the wells of immortal truth, and clinging with superstitious pertinacity and veneration to the shell of an ancient creed, or the letter of an ancient Discipline, from which the original soul long since took its flight; swift to frown upon the slightest departure from its forms and theories, but slow to utter a testimony against a popular sin; ever zealous in tithing "mint, anise and cumin," but heavy of step and slow of speech when the great interests of Humanity are at stake.

Our terms of membership are at once simple, practical and catholic. If we may be said to have a test, it is one which applies to the heart and the life, not to the head nor to any of its speculations. Our platform is broad as Humanity, and comprehensive as Truth. We interrogate no man as to his theological belief; we send no Committees to pry into the motives of those who may desire to share the benefits of our Association; but open the door to all who recognize the Equal Brotherhood of the Human Family, without regard to sex, color or condition, and who acknowledge the duty of defining and illustrating their faith in God, not by assent to a creed, but by lives of personal purity, and works of beneficence and charity to mankind. If, by any possibility, there should be found here and there a sincere inquirer after truth, who may not feel himself included in this invitation to membership, we shall still bid him welcome to our assemblies, and listen with patience to whatever his highest convictions may prompt him to offer.

We do not seek to bind our Association together by external bands, nor by agreement in theological opinions. Identity of object, oneness of spirit in respect to the practical ditties of life, the communion of soul with soul in a common love of the beautiful and true, and a common aspiration after moral excellence, — these are our bond of union; and when these shall die out in our hearts, nothing will remain to hold us together; and those who shall come after us will not be subjected to the trouble of tearing down a great ecclesiastical edifice, constructed by our hands, before they can make provision for the



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supply of their own religious wants.

The name of our Association is suggestive of its history and principles. As a sign of our adherence to the great moral testimonies which the Society of Friends has so long professed, as well as for historical reasons, we have adopted in part the name chosen by Fox, Penn, and other reformers of a past generation, for the Societies which they founded, and which, we regret to say, have in our day widely departed from the spirit and principles of those illustrious men. The term "Progressive" is intended as a recognition of the fact, that our knowledge of truth is limited, and as an indication of an honest purpose on our part to "go on unto perfection," and to avail ourselves from time to time of whatever new light may be shed upon our path. Our meetings are at present conducted very much like those of the Society of Friends, except that they are not ruled by Elders, and that we have among us no privileged class called Ministers. We welcome alike the word of exhortation, the voice of prayer, and the song of praise and thanksgiving, whichever may well up from the "inner fulness" of the devoted heart; and if at any time words shall be uttered that appear to us to savor not of life but of contention and speculation, while we may feel called upon to speak our own sentiments with freedom, we hope not to be found denying the liberty of speech to others. Some may fear that liberty so unrestricted may lead to disorder and confusion, but we are persuaded that gentleness and forbearance are more potent than official dictation, and that the instinctive sense of right and wrong, in the breast of even a misguided and obtrusive man, will afford the best safeguard of propriety and order in our assemblies.

As a Yearly Meeting, we disclaim all disciplinary authority, whether over individual members or local Associations. We shall, from time to time, declare our sentiments on such subjects as may demand our attention; but they will be armed with no other force than that which our moral influence may impart, or which may belong to the nature of truth when earnestly and honestly spoken. It will be our aim to cherish freedom of thought and speech, on every subject relating to man's highest welfare. In saying this, we have no mental reservations to mock the earnest seeker after truth. We have no thunderbolts to launch at those whose perceptions of truth lead them to different conclusions from those of the majority; no edicts of excommunication to scare the soul from its researches; no sanctimonious scowl to dart at him who carries the torch of free inquiry into the very holy of holies. We know of no question too sacred for examination nor in respect to which human reason should yield to human authority, however ancient or venerable.

Our organization is formed upon such principles, that while the body will not be responsible for the acts of individuals, so, on the other hand, individuals and minorities may avoid responsibility for any acts of the body which they do not approve, by recording their votes against such acts, or, if they think the case demands it, by a protest. It will, more-over, be



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the right of any individual to withdraw from the Association at any moment, without being required to give reasons for so doing, and without being subjected to censure on the part of the meeting.

Believing that local Associations, similar in their principles and aims to ours, would meet the wants of multitudes at the present day, and that they would be likely to accomplish great good, we hope to see such established in every community where a sufficient number of persons are found ready for the work. The men and women who are engaged in the various moral reforms of the day, and who have become weary of the prevalent sectarianism, might, we believe, gain strength for their special labors by establishing regular meetings on the First day of the week, for mutual edification and improvement for an interchange of the sympathies growing out of common pursuits and trials, and for the cultivation of their moral and religious powers. The principle of human fraternity would be thereby strengthened among them, and their children be preserved from many unhealthful influences, and prepared to meet the responsibilities of, life in a spirit becoming to the age in which their lot has been cast

Surely, these are objects worthy of our earnest thought and most careful attention. Our province is not that of iconoclasts alone. We must build as well as destroy. If there are evil institutions to be overthrown and pernicious customs to be uprooted, so also is there need of a new social fabric, of which righteousness and peace are to be the foundations. If there are vices to be done away, so also are there virtues to be promoted; if there are corrupt freedoms to be hewn down and cast into the fire so also are there plants of godliness to be trained, and flowers of heavenly beauty and fragrance to be nurtured. And in this work we must help each other, not occasionally and incidentally alone, but regularly and systematically.

The arrangements for meetings should in every case be adapted to the peculiar wants and tastes of the communities in which they are respectively held, care being taken to keep forms subordinate to works of practical goodness and beneficence. It is neither necessary nor desirable that one meeting should be an exact copy of another. Adhering closely to fundamental principles, there will still be scope for a variety of modes and forms.

The local Associations should do more than hold weekly meetings. They should regard it a sacred duty to provide for the visitation and help of the poor in their respective neighborhoods, to lend their sympathy and encouragement to such as are borne down under heavy trials, and to afford prompt and efficient aid in every right effort for the promotion of Temperance, Peace, Anti-Slavery, Education, the Equal Rights of Woman, &c.; that thus the public may be convinced that the Religion they seek to diffuse and establish is not an aggregation of mysteries, abstractions, and unmeaning forms, but a Religion for practical, every-day use, whose natural tendency is to fructify the



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conscience, intensify the sense of moral responsibility, purify and ennoble the aims of men, and thus to make society wiser, better, and happier. Such Associations, moreover, ought to regard it as their special function to cultivate and develop the religious sentiment among their members, and, so far as possible, in the community generally. For this purpose they would do well to establish libraries, in which the works of eminent anti-sectarian writers upon moral, ethical, and religious subjects might become accessible to all classes, especially to the young.

Such Associations would naturally communicate, by letter or otherwise, with the Yearly Meeting, each giving That body the results of its own peculiar experience, and receiving in return the experiences of others, with such suggestions as the Quarterly Meeting, upon a careful comparison of the whole, may be qualified to make. The various Yearly Meetings may also strengthen one another's hands by fraternal, correspondence and counsel; and thus, without ecclesiastical authority or domination on the part of any, the whole body of believers in practical Christianity throughout the country may be cemented together in Christian love, and prepared to labor in harmony for the redemption of mankind from every evil and false way, and for the establishment of universal righteousness, purity, and peace. A Church thus united would wield a moral power like that of the Apostles and immediate followers of Jesus, and the means by which it would conquer the world are those which an Apostle has described:

BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE, BY LONG-SUFFERING, BY THE
HOLY SPIRIT, BY LOVE UNFEIGNED, BY THE ARMOR OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS ON THE RIGHT HAND AND ON THE LEFT.

Dear Friends! are these ideas of a Church Utopian? Are we dreamers and enthusiasts? or is the day foretold by ancient prophets and bards beginning to dawn upon our darkness and to light the dull horizon with its reviving rays? Are we always to walk amid shadows and shams? Do we not hear the voice of God speaking to us in the deep silence of our souls, and uttering itself in the events that are passing before us, bidding us awake from our slumbers, to cast away our doubts, and purify ourselves for the work of building up a pure Christianity upon the earth. Are not the fields every where white unto the harvest? and are there not all around us men and women, whose hearts God hath touched with holy fire, and who stand ready to enlist with us in this glorious cause?

Let us, then, not falter, nor hesitate. What if our numbers are few, and the hosts of superstition and sin stand before us in menacing array? What are their boasts to us, when we know that the truth we promulgate is "a part of the celestial machinery of God," and that, "whoso puts that machinery in gear for mankind hath the Almighty to turn his wheel?"

O, brother man I fold to thy heart thy brother



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Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there;
To worship rightly, is to love each other,
Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.

Follow with reverent steps the great example
Of Him whoso holy work was 'doing good,'
So shall the wide earth seem our Father's temple,
Each loving life a psalm of gratitude.

Then shall all shackles fall; the stormy clangor
Of wild war music o'er the earth shall cease;
Love shall tread out the baleful fire of anger,
And in its ashes plant the tree of peace.

Signed on behalf and by direction of the Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting of Progressive Friends, held at Old Kennett, Chester County, by adjournments, from the 22d to the 25th of Fifth Month, 1853.

Joseph A. Dugdale,
Sidney Peirce,
Clerks



May 25: I quarrel with most botanists' description of different species, say of willows. It is a difference without a distinction. No stress is laid upon the peculiarity of the species in question, and it requires a very careful examination and comparison to detect any difference in the description. Having described you one species, he begins again at the beginning when he comes to the next and describes it *absolutely*, wasting time; in fact does not describe the species, but rather the genus or family; as if, in describing the particular races of men, you should say of each in its turn that it is but dust and to dust it shall return. The object should be to describe not those particulars in which a species resembles its genus, for they are many and that would be but a negative description, but those in which it is peculiar, for they are few and positive.



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1857

A magnificent gift came to Philadelphia from England: “One of the members of Parliament in looking over the rubbish of a City curiosity shop” had discovered an oil on canvas painted by Peter Cooper *circa* 1720 that was entitled “The Southeast Prospect of the City of Philadelphia.” He had presented this “antique daub” to George Mifflin Dallas, the American minister at the Court of St. James, deprecating its value except as a curiosity, and Dallas of course was remanding it to its place of origin. Cooper’s effort now appears to be the oldest surviving canvas of any city in North America:



Here are the various descriptions of what [Friend George Keith](#)’s Quaker schism had amounted to in the previous century, as presented by John W. Watson in 1857 in *WATSON’S ANNALS OF PHILADELPHIA AND PENNSYLVANIA A COLLECTION OF MEMOIRS, ANECDOTES, AND INCIDENTS OF THE CITY AND ITS INHABITANTS AND OF THE EARLIEST SETTLEMENTS OF THE INLAND PART OF PENNSYLVANIA FROM THE DAYS OF THE FOUNDERS INTENDED TO PRESERVE THE RECOLLECTIONS OF OLDEN TIME, AND TO EXHIBIT SOCIETY IN ITS CHANGES OF MANNERS AND CUSTOMS, AND THE CITY AND COUNTRY IN THEIR LOCAL CHANGES AND IMPROVEMENTS*:

In 1684, Thomas Lloyd in writing a letter to the Friends’ Meeting at Dolaran, in North Wales, dated the 2d of 6 mo., says, that there were then 800 people at Friends’ Meeting in the city. At that time, says another writer, all denominations assembled with the Friends in much harmony and good fellowship, until discord and confusion was introduced by George Keith’s schism. In 1691 a scene of rare confusion was exhibited in Friends Meeting. The facts in the case have been told by Thomas Wilson, a public Friend, who was present. George Keith, who had just separated, sent T. Wilson and his companion, James Dickinson, a challenge to dispute. They readily agreed to meet, and many Friends of both parties assembled. George Keith railed much. He and his abettors requested another meeting, which was also granted. At another time George Keith went into Friends’ Meeting while James Dickinson was there, and preached fawningly, as though he and James Dickinson were in unity; but James stood up and confuted him. Then Keith withdrew in much wrath, and the people of other denominations present, being numerous, cried aloud – “Give way and let the devil come out, for the little man from England (J.D.) has got the day!” The Society for propagating the Gospel in foreign parts, in their account of the services of George Keith as their Missionary, telling of course their opinion, in their own way say; that this Mr. Keith “first joined about the



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year 1691, with a party of [Quakers](#) in opposing some of their errors – especially in their notion of the sufficiency of the light within every man to salvation, without any thing else," and the other party joined with Mr. Thomas Lloyd the deputy governor, and a great preacher among them; thus severally creating separate meetings in the province. It must have been a singular spectacle to have seen one who had been a plain public Friend, attired in drab and broad brim, cast off his garb, and go abroad among them in his black gown as a church minister. A convincement certainly of strange occurrence. It is but justice to suggest, that at that time, the Friends could not have gone over wholly to the doctrine of plenary illumination, because, that William Penn's writings against Perot, Luff, and others, declare that such took the doctrine of the Holy Spirit speaking in men in a larger sense than was just, so that they ran out into extravagances thereby.

In 1702 – 8th of 9 mo. Isaac Norris' letter says, "George Keith hath been twice here, but has not yet disturbed our Meeting as hath been his custom to the eastward. He is now the talk and news of the town; but has little to boast of in all his progress hitherto. His own party is like to fall with him. All his sermons are railings against the Friends." During the time of this schism there came out a printed pamphlet of 24 pages against orthodox Friends, which might be deemed a curiosity for its rare and gross scurrility. It is without imprint, but shows from its context that it was done at Philadelphia about the year 1701. Ample evidence of the whole have been preserved in my MS. Annals in the City Library, on pages 190 to 193. There indeed they deserve to be buried, were it not that their style of abuse is so unique as to show a characteristic of some minds of that day, which we could not conceive of in modern times; besides they contain some local references which may possibly serve on some needful occasion to illustrate some local incidents. The whole has the appearance of being set forth as the venom of Keith's adherents. It assails the characters, by name, of every leading man in Friends' Society, making them severally immoral men (though sly) of the grossest kind. It is called "the Cage of unclean Birds" – because George Fox had so called false professors. I have purposely suppressed all the names, and refer to the whole now rather as a matter of amusement than of scandal. The Friends, then vilified, must have been endowed with much moderation, to have endured such a publication, or else the doctrine of libels was ill understood and without practice among them. Some of the facts are ludicrous enough. One, a minister too, is accused by name of packing his flour barrels with only good flour at the ends! and also of blowing in money scales to make his light money pass off as weight! It reproaches them of vain-glory in building "a great Cathedral Meeting Place at Philadelphia" – corner of Second and High streets. The Friends, who generally held a majority in the civil rule of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, found themselves more and more embarrassed as mixed population increased. They had difficulties in serving in



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judicial offices where oaths were required, and also in providing public defence against enemies. The feuds and animosities raised against Friends in the Assembly were very high, and went on increasing from 1701 to 1710. War with France occurred in the interval. A French privateer plundered Lewestown, – and several of them plundered and burnt vessels in the bay. In 1709, the city of Philadelphia was got into high commotion for a defence. "The hot church party" were all in favour of it. The people petitioned the Queen for defence, and objected at the same time to the passive principles of the Friends, as unfit for civil rule, &c. When I have seen so much correspondence as I have, in that day, on that subject, and have witnessed how perplexed the Friends were with their unruly charge – made up of many nations and many minds – I have thought them (to use a homely domestic figure) not unlike the perplexed hen with her duck-chickens, which perpetually countered her nature by taking to the water, and leaving her in embarrassment and distress! If they governed for a while, retaining therein their religious views, it was still a daily work of shifts and expedients to keep the approbation of other sects. It was, as Doctor Johnson says "like a dog who walks upon his hinder legs – he does not walk well, but we are surprised he walks at all!" James Logan, in speaking of these facts, in 1709 says, "The clamours and abuses from such men to the Friends in government tires them and makes them weary of the load. When the queen asks for our quota for Canada, Friends know not how to act or how to refuse, seeing that all the other colonies contribute more than is required." Isaac Norris, in 1709-10, speaking of these facts, says, "Those of the church grew very uneasy and unneighbourly in their expressions, because of the defenceless situation of the place. They are for a coercive law, that all may be obliged to bear arms, or else they will do nothing. They manage this craftily, in order to lay Friends aside in government, – the holding of a place in which is extremely difficult to Friends, and we can hardly judge which has the worst prospect – whether to hold it under such difficulties as daily fall in the way, or to resign it to some men who are of no honourable principles. Embarrassed and discordant as we are, I often think of the frogs' petition to Jupiter, and fear it must be a governor immediately from the crown that must set us to rights. We are a mixed people, who all claim a right to use their own way. Some Friends still in places and offices that cannot be exercised without great difficulties and sometimes full stops – so that a very great hardship falls upon the Assembly. To me it seems impracticable to do any thing that will please and hold!" In another place, to James Logan, he says, "We say our principles are not destructive or repugnant to civil government, and will admit of free liberty of conscience to all, yet to me it appears, (although I get into a labyrinth when I turn my thoughts that way) to be concerned in government and hold them, we must either be independent and entirely by ourselves, or, if mixed, partial to our own opinion, and not allow to others what we desire from



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them!" To illustrate some of the difficulties, supposed to exist in civil matters because of the religious objections of Friends to oaths, I give the following facts – to wit: In 1703, William Penn writes, that "the lords of trade spake to me of the insufficiency of the government of Pennsylvania – saying, the first of the council was not able to register ships, administer an oath, or perform some other requisites; but I told them this could not hinder government, while three or four of the council were churchmen, and of age and experience – and no matter who of the council transacted them, so that they were qualified to do it; – and yet, by our constitution, our Friends were so: – besides, I told them it was not to be thought that a colony and constitution, made by and for Quakers, would leave themselves and their lives and fortunes, out of so essential a part of government as juries – nay, more, that we would not have gone thither to be so precarious in our security as to be deemed incapable of being jurymen – if so, that the coming of others shall overrule us who are the originals and made it a country." On one occasion, stated by James Logan, the grand jury being summoned of such as could swear, it was found the number present were insufficient. "On the sheriff's calling for more out of the tales, one and another, being offered the oath, declined it, some for one reason, and some for another. The design evidently was by those factious persons who contend for nothing more than our confusion. They would herein prevent all things that might take away occasion of complaint against us, and they hoped the delay of justice might prove a great one!" On another occasion it happened that only three of the five judges being present, and those only who could swear, "they administered an affirmation according to law, which gave cause of many discourses among the discontented. But through these men's restless endeavours, it is found extremely difficult fully to discharge the duties of government incumbent on us – they taking all advantages of throwing in our way whatever may perplex us, by reasons of oaths, and such other things as are inconsistent with the principles of most of us – besides, that many things occur in the administration according to the law of England, as well as immunities by our own law, which cannot well be executed by men of our profession. Such objections against us, being what they daily court, when, by their endeavours, they by any means bring them to bear, they greedily lay hold of them." William Penn in reply to these and similar statements, makes a remark in 1704, saying "I am grieved to think that you ever gave way to any other affirmation than that appointed by law in the province, by which you have given away a most tender point, not easily recoverable. My regard to the queen is known almost to partiality; but I shall never obey her letters against laws, into which she may be drawn by interested persons." James Logan was never averse to measures for protection – i.e. for defensive war; and there is reason to infer that Penn himself and some other Friends were of the same opinion. The idea gained ground as the colony increased, and therefore members were often found



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in the assemblies of the Friends' Society, who in the opinion of "the most straitest" of the sect, were too lax in their discipline of "testimony" &c. We find, therefore, that such a public Friend as John Churchman deems himself called to express his disapprobation of their public callings generally, as too exposing in its general tendency, for tender minds – and about the same time, the year 1758 we see a warning voice from "The Watchman," by a Friend in the Pennsylvania Journal, wherein he says "From the moment we Friends began to lose sight of our original institution, we erred greatly; for when we saw so much corruption interwoven in the affairs of this world, we were unfit to be concerned in them, and should have rested satisfied on a dependence on the son of the Lord, and what protection the laws of our country would have given us. But we must needs have that power in our own hands; and having so exceeded their native moderation and self-command, they knew no bounds – they grasped at more, by which means the life of our old and respected friend and governor, [William Penn](#), was made a life of trouble. Let us return to our original plan, and leave the concerns of this world entirely to the men of this world!"

...

In 1689, the Friends originated the Friends' public school in Philadelphia –the same which now stands in Fourth below Chestnut street. It was to be a grammar school, and to teach the learned languages. George Keith, a Scotch Friend and public preacher, (afterwards an Episcopal clergyman and a bitter foe to Friends!) became the first teacher, assisted by Thomas Makin, who in the



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next year became the principal.



Costumes of Philadelphia Quakers

There is another mention of Friend [George Keith](#) and his splinter group of antislavery [Quakers](#) later on in this Watson volume:

In 1693, the separate meeting of Friends under George Keith, assembling at the house of Philip James in Philadelphia, gave forth a paper declaring their sense of the duty of emancipation – “after some reasonable time of service” – Vide Gabriel Thomas. The large original proprietors of property in Philadelphia and Pennsylvania called “the Free Society of Traders” of 1682, although as a corporation they might be said, like others, “to be without souls” conceded an article very favourable to emancipation, saying “If the society should receive blacks for servants, they shall make them free at fourteen years’ end, upon condition that they will give unto the society’s ware-house two-thirds of what they are capable of producing on such a parcel of land as shall be allowed to them by the society, with a stock of necessary tools.” Then comes a proviso of rather singular character, saying “And if they will not accept of these terms they shall be servants till they will accept of it!” I have seen, among the earliest pamphlets extant of Philadelphia publication, one from the Friends’ meeting of Philadelphia, of the 13th of 8mo. 1683, giving “exhortation and caution to Friends concerning buying and keeping negroes.” The sum of the counsel was, that none should attempt “to buy except to set free.” This little address contained many of the arguments now usually set forth against slavery. In 1696, the [Yearly Meeting](#) of Friends having



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concerted some measures to discourage the bringing in of more slaves, and to preserve the morals of those they had, the subject was renewed in the year 1700 on the arrival of [William Penn](#), in consideration of his pressing upon the Philadelphia meeting his wishes concerning the same. Their sense of the subject was expressed as follows, to wit: "Our dear friend and governor, having laid before this meeting a concern that hath laid upon his mind for some time concerning the negroes and Indians, that Friends ought to be very careful in discharging a good conscience towards them in all respects, but more especially for the good of their souls; upon consideration whereof, this meeting concludes to appoint a meeting for negroes to be kept once a month, &c." At the same time, he introduced a bill into the assembly "for regulating negroes in their morals and marriages" – also another "for their trials and punishments." The former was defeated by the jealousies then in the house.

JOHN F. WATSON, I, 1855

JOHN F. WATSON, II, 1857

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Martin Johnson Heade relocated from Trenton, New Jersey to [Providence, Rhode Island](#), and made his studio at 34 North Main Street while boarding at 43 College Street. His “Commodore Perry,” “Portrait of Bishop Clark,” and “View in Narragansett Bay” were placed on display in the Boston Athenæum. Would it have been in this timeframe that he also painted this portrait of Friend [Moses Brown](#), deceased for a number of decades, based upon a detailed sketch that had been made during Friend Moses’s old age suffering from vertigo in his mansion Elmgrove near the Friends [Yearly Meeting](#) School he had founded?





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(We immediately notice of course that this artist has quite erased Moses's signature cherry-red nose wart.)



One of the changes that had been made as a result of the financial crisis of 1855 was that the students would be given a graduation ceremony, during which they would be handed a diploma. In this year, the first graduate of the [Yearly Meeting School](#) was Mary S. Harris of Leeds, New York.



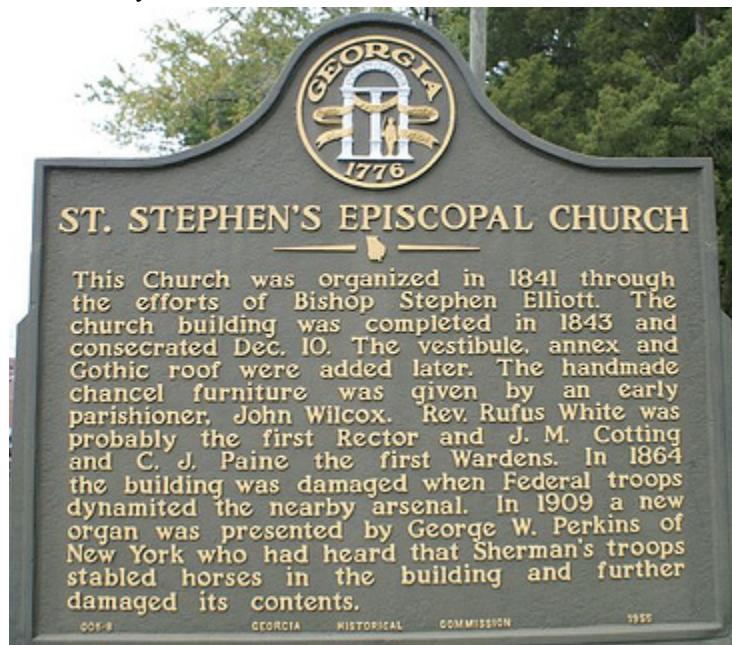
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1864

→ The Episcopal church structure in Georgia that had been established through the efforts of Bishop [Stephen Elliott, Jr.](#) was damaged when Federal troops led by General William Tecumseh Sherman stabled their horses in it, and dynamited a nearby arsenal.⁶²



No mention would be made of the Civil War in Flushing Monthly Meeting minutes, even at the height of the conflict. Flushing [Quakers](#) joined with New York [Yearly Meeting](#) in resisting the payment of war taxes, although they declared this to be not an act of disloyalty to the Union but instead merely an expression of their loyalty to the Quaker Peace Testimony.

THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY

62. This is not the Professor [Stephen Elliott](#) of South Carolina whose botany textbook Henry Thoreau consulted, but his son.



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1873

The expression of a rather typical conservative attitude toward [Quakers](#) in the arts:

“We would renewedly caution all our members against indulging in music, or having instruments of music in their houses, believing that the practice tends to promote a light and vain mind.... It becomes us to be living as strangers and pilgrims on earth, seeking a better country, and to be diligently using [our time] for the great end for which it is lent to us..., and not in vain amusements or corrupting pleasures, but striving that ‘whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we may do all to the glory of God....’”

—Philadelphia [Yearly Meeting](#) (Orthodox), BOOK OF DISCIPLINE

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS



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1881

In [Rhode Island](#), the [Smithfield](#) meetinghouse of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) burned, and would be replaced by the present structure:



When Clark Shove of Fall River offered to donate a grand piano to the [Yearly Meeting School](#) in [Providence](#), [Rhode Island](#), the School Committee of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) took his proposal as an opportunity for the Society to reappraise its attitude toward the arts. After serious consideration, the elders decided that this gift would be accepted, it being understood that “music lessons should be given at the school only to those pupils whose parents specifically requested it.”

During this year Friend Rufus Matthew Jones was completing his studies at the school.



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1882

This is what a [Providence, Rhode Island](#) guidebook had to say about New England [Yearly Meeting](#)'s boarding school for [Quaker](#) youth, now the [Moses Brown School](#):

FRIENDS' BOARDING-SCHOOL is one of the noblest and most richly endowed educational institutions in New England. Its 225 pupils come from twenty states, to prepare in a literary and scientific or classical course (or a combination of the two) for mercantile life or for universities and professional schools. Its founder, Moses Brown, was also a founder of Brown University. He gave, besides his personal care, nearly \$20,000, and about 50 acres of land which are now worth perhaps \$50,000. His son, Obadiah Brown, gave \$100,000, and since then benefactors in large and small sums have been numerous in all parts of the country; among them Wm. Almy, Ebenezer Metcalf, \$30,000, and a Boston lady who in 1882 gave \$30,000. The school has been able by its ample endowment to do noble work. Its foundation might be dated 1780, when Moses Brown headed a subscription by means of which the Society of Friends in 1784 began a school at [Portsmouth](#), R.I.; but it dates merely from 1819, since which time the school has been almost uninterruptedly conducted at Providence. The grounds, buildings, and equipment should be seen by every visitor to the city. The property is cor. Hope and Lloyd Sts., about a mile from the City Hall. The 50 acres are upon an eminence 182 ft. above tide-water, and overlook the city, the rivers, and Narragansett Bay. Nearly all the towns in Rhode Island can be seen from the cupola on the main building. The main building is of brick, 220 ft. long, and contains a dining-hall, girls' schoolroom, public reception-room, parlors and nurseries, recitation-rooms, and dormitories. An extension of brick, 76 ft. long, contains a boys' schoolroom and dormitories. "Alumni Hall," a three-story brick structure, 126 ft. long, contains on the first floor a grand public hall, besides rooms for the scientific apparatus and cabinets, the library, and reading-room; and on the upper floors dormitories for girls. There are also two gymnasiums, -one for each sex,- an enclosed place for roller-[skating](#), ponds for bathing and [skating](#), and academic groves of venerable trees for recreation and retreat. The equipment comprises an abundance of approved astronomical and other scientific-apparatus, laboratories, art-models, a library of 6,000 volumes, six pianos, and other musical instruments, etc. Ventilation, drainage, and other sanitary precautions, are perceptible everywhere. The school takes only boarding pupils, and thus becomes the home of about 225 boys and girls; and here may well be studied the co-education system. The institution is owned by the New-England Yearly Meeting of Friends, who choose the "school committee" of 33 men and women. The faculty consists of 18 male and female instructors, librarians, etc., eight of whom are college graduates, and all



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of whom are chosen by reason of superior qualifications. The principal is Augustine Jones, A.M., who in 1851 graduated from this school, and later from Bowdoin College, and afterwards from the Harvard Law School, and who was the partner and educator of Gov. John A. Andrew, the Massachusetts "War Governor." He practised law in Massachusetts for 12 years, and served in the general court for one year, and in 1879 relinquished his practice to accept his present responsible position, and has brought to the institution its greater prosperity. It is not possible in this limited space to give the details of the workings, terms, etc., of the school, but a descriptive pamphlet can be had free by any applicant. It must be stated, however, that 25 worthy pupils receive (in scholarships) their entire board, rooms, tuition, washing, etc., free of charge; a fact which in itself indicates the character of the institution. Although managed by Friends, the school is wholly unsectarian, and one-half the pupils are of other denominations.



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1886

February 27, Saturday: Sarah Nichols Pope-Dixon, a Quaker schoolteacher born in Salem, Massachusetts established in her last will and testament the endowment for a “Sarah N. Pope’s Teachers Home” primarily for the accommodation of unmarried women Friends who had devoted most of their lives to teaching. (Before the Trust moneys could be used for such purpose, they would need to accrue interest for some period of time, minus the fees and expenses of the custodian of the funds — in an imperfect world, this would turn out to be two full generations of human life, that is, not until 1936.)

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
NEW ENGLAND FRIENDS HOME

I, Sarah Nichols Pope Dixon, the wife of Robert Dixon of South View, Crook, near Darlington in the County of Durham, Colliery Manager, in exercise of the power in this behalf contained in the settlement executed previously to and in contemplation of my marriage with my said dear husband and of every other power or authority in any wise enabling me in this behalf hereby revoke all my former wills, codicils and testamentary dispositions, and declare this to be my last will or appointment in the nature thereof. I appoint and bequeath to my sister Elizabeth Hacker Valentine of Salem, near Lynn, Massachusetts, in the United States of America, all my share of the household goods, furniture, linen, silver, china and other articles and effects left to me by my dear parents, and now in her possession, and I also bequeath to her all my pictures, books, and other things belonging to me, and now in her possession at Salem aforesaid, save and except such articles as are named in a memorandum furnished by me to my said dear sister and now in her possession. And I appoint and bequeath the annuities following (namely) to my said sister Elizabeth Hacker Valentine the annuity of two hundred dollars during her life and to my nephew William Cox Pope of St. Paul, Minnesota in the United States the annuity of one hundred dollars during his life, the said annuities to be paid half yearly, the first payment thereof to be made at the end of six calendar months next after my decease. My said dear husband is at present in the enjoyment of a salary which I know to be in his view sufficient to provide for his comfort and for the indulgence of all that his tastes require, but should circumstances arise in which from the reduction or withdrawal of his salary or otherwise he may in his own uncontrolled opinion require some addition to his means, I direct my Trustee on his written request for that purpose under his hand to allow him out of the income of my property the annual sum of not less than three hundred dollars during the remainder of his life. And if the annual income for the time being of my property shall not be sufficient to pay the said annuities respectively including the annuity to my said dear husband if for the time being payable then I direct that all the annuities for the time being payable shall abate rateably and in equal proportions. And subject and



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without prejudice as aforesaid I appoint, devise and bequeath all and singular my real and the residue of my personal estate whether in the United States of America or elsewhere which I have any power to dispose of by this my Will unto and to the use of the Provident Life and Trust Company Philadelphia carrying on business at 409 Chestnut Street in Philadelphia in the United States of America (hereinafter referred to as "the said Trust Company"). Upon the trusts following namely) [?] Upon trust with all convenient speed after my decease and in such manner as the said Trust Company shall think proper to sell call in and convert into money all the said real and personal estate (except ready money) with power to make and execute all such contracts and assurances as shall be proper for effecting such sales. And upon further trust with and out of the moneys which shall come to their hands by virtue of the aforesaid residuary devise and bequest and of the trusts relative thereto to pay and discharge all my just debts funeral and testamentary expenses and the pecuniary legacies which I may give by any Codicil or Codicils hereto and to invest the residue of the said moneys in the name of the said Trust Company in such stocks, funds, shares or securities whether in the United States of America or elsewhere as the said Trust Company shall in their absolute discretion deem most advantageous and desirable with power from time to time at the discretion of the said Trust Company to vary and transpose the said stocks, funds and securities for or into any other of the aforesaid stocks, funds and securities, Provided that the said Trust Company may in their absolute discretion retain any of the property whether real or personal comprised in the foregoing appointment devise or bequest in the state of investment or otherwise in which it shall be at my decease so long as they shall in their absolute discretion think fit. And I declare that the same real and residuary personal property and the annual produce thereof shall subject and without prejudice to the trusts aforesaid and to the payment of the annuities hereinbefore appointed or bequeathed be upon the further trusts following (that is to say) A. Upon trust that the said Trust Company do and shall from time to time accumulate in their name in any of the stocks, funds and securities upon which investments are hereinbefore authorized the surplus annual produce of the same trust property respectively and all the resulting income and annual produce thereof until there shall be provided such a capital fund inclusive of the trust property hereby appointed as shall in the judgment of the Committee of the [Yearly Meeting](#) of the Society of Friends of New England (the Orthodox Branch) to be appointed in that behalf as hereinafter is mentioned be sufficient to provide for the acquisition and suitable endowment of the Home for Unmarried Women Friends who have devoted most of their lives to teaching as hereinafter more particularly mentioned. Provided always that notwithstanding anything hereinbefore contained such accumulation shall not be carried beyond the latest period to which it can be legally carried. B. In giving the following expression to my wishes I



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desire that the Committee of New England Yearly Meeting who may be appointed as hereinafter is mentioned shall have the liberty from time to time to extend or vary any of the particulars hereinafter specified in such manner in all respects as they may from time to time in their absolute discretion judge wise and expedient for the promotion of the general object which I have in view. Having been born in Salem near Lynn in Massachusetts, it will be a satisfaction to me if circumstances allow of the Home being established there; and as the means for establishing the Home are the result of my own industry and economy through the blessing of my Heavenly Father during my maidenhood, it may not be inappropriate that it may receive my maiden name and be called "Sarah N. Pope's Teachers Home." My object is to provide a plain but tasteful and attractive building with accommodation for at least a dozen inmates exclusive of attendants. I desire the building to be so planned as to admit of future additions if found expedient. The rooms to be of various sizes to suit the means of applicants, some to be with moderate sized sleeping rooms with small parlors attached. There should be one or more than one bath room furnished with all needful accommodations a good sized common parlor and dining room with such other rooms as may be required for the Committee, Matron and Officers, good closets to be provided in sleeping rooms and elsewhere. Proper furniture should be provided and from time to time renewed or added to as occasion may require including heating apparatus, kitchen utensils, beds, bedding, chairs, tables, drawers, carpets, table covers, clothes linen, plates, dishes, spoons, knives, forks, books and such other articles, implements, utensils and things whatsoever whether of household or domestic use as the Committee of New England Yearly Meeting to be appointed as hereinafter mentioned shall from time to time think necessary or expedient. I should like a small room at the Home to be appropriated if practicable to the reception of various articles such as books, pictures, photographs and other mementos of travel which I have preserved as of interest in connection with my life work and journeys. The inmates of the Home should be chosen by the Committee to be appointed for the care of the Institution by New England Yearly Meeting as hereinafter mentioned. They should be Members of the Society of Friends of the age of about forty-five years or upwards who have devoted most of their lives to teaching and who have not been married and are known for their peaceable orderly and devoted christian lives. In choosing them preference should be given to Members of New England Yearly Meeting. I should wish them as far as health and other circumstances admit to be in the practice of regularly attending Friends Meetings for worship at Salem which I trust may ever continue to be held in the Spirit and life which our early Friends sought to realize as occasions of religious solemnity and edification in which through Christ our ever living High Priest and Mediator the Father is worshipped in Spirit and in Truth. The friends chosen must be able in the opinion of the Committee to give a reasonable prospect of their



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ability to provide for the punctual payment of the sums, if any, arranged for their board. My idea has been that from \$5. per week and upwards ought to be the sum paid by each inmate for her board. But as I wish that the Home may be for the benefit of the inmates and that it may fulfill the legal definition of "Charity" I desire to leave the amount of such payment for board entirely to the discretion of the committee under the advice of my friend Augustine Jones hereinafter named. I hereby expressly authorize the Committee if they shall think fit to admit inmates without any payment if otherwise in their view suitable and also to allow my said niece Margaret Pope Valentine if she be for the time being living and unmarried to occupy one or more of the rooms at the Home free of charge.

I desire that the Home when established shall be placed under the care of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends (Orthodox Branch) whom I request to accept the same and to appoint for the management and superintendence and the control of the expenditure thereof such Committee of six reliable men Friends and six women Friends as they shall from time to time think suitable which Committee shall report annually to the said Yearly Meeting and be subject in all respects to its control and direction. I take the liberty of suggesting the names of my friends Augustine Jones and Gertrude Whittier Cartland as among those who may be suitably nominated among the first members of such Committee. All sums (if any) which may be received from the inmates shall be applied in such manner as the Committee shall from time to time approve in or toward the current expenses of the Home including those of repair and management. Feeling as I do that these general expressions of my wishes are very imperfect I authorize my friend Augustine Jones, Superintendent of The Friends Boarding School at Providence Rhode Island in whose judgment and skill I have entire confidence to draw up such more formal scheme or Deed of Foundation for the Constitution and Government of the said Home as he in his uncontrolled discretion shall think suitable for the purpose of carrying my intentions into full effect according to the Laws of the United States. And I appoint my friend SAMUEL R. SHIPLEY of Philadelphia aforesaid, or failing him such person or persons as shall be nominated in that behalf by the said Trust Company Executor or Executors of this my Will. And I declare that the receipts in writing of the said Trust Company for the time being acting in the execution of the trust hereby created for any money payable to them by virtue of this my Will shall be good and sufficient discharges for the same and that the persons to whom such receipts shall be respectively given shall not be answerable or accountable for the loss, misapplication or non application or be in anywise bound to see to the application of the moneys in such receipts respectively acknowledged to be received or to inquire into or be affected by express or implied notice as to the necessity or propriety or otherwise of any sale or sales made or professed to be made by virtue of this my Will. And I hereby expressly



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empower the said Trust Company from time to time to execute and enroll all such deeds and assurances and to do all such other acts and things whatsoever as the counsel of the said Company shall from time to time advise in the said New England Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends or any Committee thereof. And otherwise for the more effectual fulfillment and realization of the Trusts and purposes hereinbefore expressed. And I declare that the said Trust Company shall be chargeable for such moneys only as they shall actually receive by virtue of the trusts hereby in them reposed. And also that it shall be lawful for them out of the money which shall come to their hands by virtue of the trusts aforesaid to reimburse themselves all costs, charges, damages and expenses which they may pay or sustain in or about the execution of the aforesaid trusts or any of them or in relation thereto. And I expressly direct that the said Trust Company shall be entitled to be paid or allowed all such commission and other usual charges for business done by them for or in respect of the said Trust Estate in the same manner in every respect as if they had not been Trustees of this my Will. IN WITNESS WHEREOF I the said Sarah Nichols Pope Dixon have to this my last will and testament contained in this and the six proceeding sheets of paper set my hand this twenty seventh day of February one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six.

Sarah N.P. Dixon.

Signed and declared by the said Sarah Nichols Pope Dixon the testatrix as and for her last will and testament in the presence of us, who in her presence at her request and in the presence of each other (all being present at the same time) have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses.

Thomas Douglas, Mining Engineer, West Lodge, Crook.
Elizabeth Douglas, West Lodge, Crook.
Eunice C. Dixon, Great Ayton



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1903

[Elbert Russell](#) relocated from Illinois to Richmond, Indiana (to teach at Earlham College until 1915).

At the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) held in Portland, Maine, concern was expressed and a [Friends](#) committee was formed to create a retirement home somewhere in New England, similar to ones already established in New York City and in Pennsylvania, for “unmarried women Friends who devoted most of their lives to teaching.” At that time the cost of such residency was being estimated at \$2.56 per day per person.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
NEW ENGLAND FRIENDS HOME



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1904

November 8, Tuesday: Ethel Randolph Thayer ([Polly Thayer Starr](#)) was born in Boston to Harvard's Dane Professor of Law Ezra Ripley Thayer and Ethel Randolph Clark Thayer. This would make her a lineal descendant of the [Ripleys](#) of Concord, as well as of Governor William Bradford of the Massachusetts Bay Colony), and she would eventually relate that the family was:

"from Concord, the Old Manse. I used to visit there. His father was a professor at Harvard Law School, and – I say invented, I don't know what the right word is – I think he formulated the Law of Evidence. And back of that Emerson, and a long line of Ripleys. There was an old Ezra Ripley who was a minister, I think; but they were mostly legal. Father became Dean of the Harvard Law School."⁶³

63. Although this family does proudly assert Ralph Waldo Emerson as among their forbears, I have not as yet been able to document more than a spiritual relationship.



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(“Polly” would become a tall woman, and would live to be interviewed at a hundred in the year 2004 for an exhibition of her paintings at a gallery in Boston.)



SELF-PORTRAIT

During this year Sarah Alice Huntington agreed to deed her 9-room, 2-story home in Amesbury, Massachusetts to the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) for use as a retirement home for “unmarried women [Friends](#) who devoted most of their lives to teaching” — with a stipulation that she herself would be able to reside there until her death. (The building, although old and guilty of narrow dark stairs and thus a firetrap, was not at that time considered inappropriate for the elderly.)

NEW ENGLAND FRIENDS HOME

This structure —although it had more recently been in service as a tavern— was the one that had been made famous by Captain Valentine Bagley, protagonist a poem by Friend [John Greenleaf Whittier](#). The building had been the homestead of Hannah Currier, built in about 1710, and Hannah had become Captain Bagley’s wife — after the Captain’s death in 1839 the building and its wayside well had become the property of Daniel Huntington.

The Captain’s Well.

The story of the shipwreck of Captain Valentine Bagley, on the coast of Arabia, and his sufferings in the desert, has been familiar from my childhood. It has been partially told in the singularly beautiful lines of my friend, Harriet Prescott Spofford, on the occasion of a



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public celebration at the Newburyport Library. To the charm and felicity of her verse, as far as it goes, nothing can be added; but in the following ballad I have endeavored to give a fuller detail of the touching incident upon which it is founded.

From pain and peril, by land and main,
The shipwrecked sailor came back again;

And like one from the dead, the threshold cross'd
Of his wondering home, that had mourned him lost.

Where he sat once more with his kith and kin,
And welcomed his neighbors thronging in.

But when morning came he called for his spade.
"I must pay my debt to the Lord," he said.

"Why dig you here?" asked the passer-by;
"Is there gold or silver the road so nigh?"

"No, friend," he answered: "but under this sod
Is the blessed water, the wine of God."

"Water! the Powow is at your back,
And right before you the Merrimac,

"And look you up, or look you down,
There's a well-sweep at every door in town."

"True," he said, "we have wells of our own;
But this I dig for the Lord alone."

Said the other: "This soil is dry, you know.
I doubt if a spring can be found below;

"You had better consult, before you dig,
Some water-witch, with a hazel twig."

"No, wet or dry, I will dig it here,
Shallow or deep, if it takes a year.

"In the Arab desert, where shade is none,
The waterless land of sand and sun,

"Under the pitiless, brazen sky
My burning throat as the sand was dry;

"My crazed brain listened in fever dreams
For plash of buckets and ripple of streams;

"And opening my eyes to the blinding glare,
And my lips to the breath of the blistering air,

"Tortured alike by the heavens and earth,
I cursed, like Job, the day of my birth.

"Then something tender, and sad, and mild
As a mother's voice to her wandering child,

"Rebuked my frenzy; and bowing my head,
I prayed as I never before had prayed:



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“Pity me, God! for I die of thirst;
Take me out of this land accurst;

“And if ever I reach my home again,
Where earth has springs, and the sky has rain,

“I will dig a well for the passers-by,
And none shall suffer from thirst as I.

“I saw, as I prayed, my home once more,
The house, the barn, the elms by the door,

“The grass-lined road, that riverward wound,
The tall slate stones of the burying-ground,

“The belfry and steeple on meeting-house hill,
The brook with its dam, and gray grist mill,

“And I knew in that vision beyond the sea,
The very place where my well must be.

“God heard my prayer in that evil day;
He led my feet in their homeward way,

“From false mirage and dried-up well,
And the hot sand storms of a land of hell,

“Till I saw at last through the coast-hill’s gap,
A city held in its stony lap,

“The mosques and the domes of scorched Muscat,
And my heart leaped up with joy thereat;

“For there was a ship at anchor lying,
A Christian flag at its mast-head flying,

“And sweetest of sounds to my homesick ear
Was my native tongue in the sailor’s cheer.

“Now the Lord be thanked, I am back again,
Where earth has springs, and the skies have rain,

“And the well I promised by Oman’s Sea,
I am digging for him in Amesbury.”

His kindred wept, and his neighbors said
“The poor old captain is out of his head.”

But from morn to noon, and from noon to night,
He toiled at his task with main and might;

And when at last, from the loosened earth,
Under his spade the stream gushed forth,

And fast as he climbed to his deep well’s brim,
The water he dug for followed him,

He shouted for joy: “I have kept my word,
And here is the well I promised the Lord!”

The long years came and the long years went,
And he sat by his roadside well content;



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He watched the travellers, heat-oppressed,
Pause by the way to drink and rest,

And the sweltering horses dip, as they drank,
Their nostrils deep in the cool, sweet tank,

And grateful at heart, his memory went
Back to that waterless Orient,

And the blessed answer of prayer, which came
To the earth of iron and sky of flame.

And when a wayfarer weary and hot,
Kept to the mid road, pausing not

For the well's refreshing, he shook his head;
"He don't know the value of water," he said;

"Had he prayed for a drop, as I have done,
In the desert circle of sand and sun,

"He would drink and rest, and go home to tell
That God's best gift is the wayside well!"



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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1905

Since there weren't a thousand or more [Quakers](#) anymore in the vicinity of [Newport, Rhode Island](#) and the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) would not be assembling there anymore, the [Great Meetinghouse](#), which in 1699 had been the largest structure of any kind in the American colonies between Boston and New-York, was repurposed as a black entertainment center, hosting segregated dances and that sort of thing.⁶⁴



A number of the evangelical opponents of [Elbert Russell](#)'s critical Bible teaching at Earlham College were associated with the Christian Workers' Training School for Bible Study and Practical Methods of Work (or Cleveland Friends Bible Institute) that had been founded by [Holiness Friends](#) J. Walter Malone and Emma Brown Malone in March 1892 at the Whosoever Will Mission in a former Free Methodist Church in Cleveland, Ohio.

Friends had to learn by sad experience that the "Inner Light" is not an easy substitute for the encyclopedia.

64. This view dates to 1850. Note that when eventually this building would be restored as a [Quaker](#) meetinghouse in the service of the [Newport](#) tourist industry and carriage trade, their tourist literature would carefully avoid divulging the factoid, that the white silent-worship center had seen major service as a jiving black dancehall. Notice also that the repurposing of this meetinghouse as a dancehall has enabled us, by the deployment of carefully interlocking qualifiers, to claim that our meetinghouse near the Great Road in [Lincoln, Rhode Island](#), the oldest portion of which was erected after the oldest portion of this Newport meetinghouse was already standing is the oldest in **New England, that has remained in continuous use** (the actual oldest in all America in continuous use being the Great Meetinghouse of the Third Haven Friends in [Maryland](#), which has been in continuous use since shortly after August 14th, 1684).



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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Sarah Alice Huntington died and her 9-room, 2-story home in Amesbury MA became the retirement home for “unmarried women Friends who devoted most of their lives to teaching” of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#). Because of the 1886 bequest by Friend Sarah Nichols Pope-Dixon, eventually it would be possible to add an ell with 13 additional rooms, and this establishment would come to be referred to as the Huntington-Dixon Home. (It would come to be recognized as unsafe for elder occupancy in 1957, at which point the [New England Friends Home](#) would re-establish itself in Hingham MA.)





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1916

In England, Fry's, a competitor to [Cadbury](#) dating back to 1756 when [Friend](#) Joseph Fry had set up business as an apothecary and maker and seller of [chocolate](#), had been the market leader for the whole of the 19th Century. At this point that firm, suffering from inefficient buildings and outdated machinery, was no match for Cadbury's well-planned and efficient factory in Bournville, and so the manufacturing activities of the Fry's firm was absorbed into the Cadbury operation. Two formerly [Quaker](#) firms would be becoming one formerly Quaker firm.

In America, at the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), it became the recommendation of an ad hoc committee of the School Committee that [Moses Brown School](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#) create a separate building for the gender segregation of all girl scholars, whether they be day students or boarding students. (The girls were already de facto segregated, since in class they always needed to take the seats in the back. Although this proposal would not itself come to anything, in 1925 the existing Lincoln School would be purchased and converted to the use of these girl scholars — thus accomplishing the same objective.)

The exceedingly tall flagpole that had been erected at the [Moses Brown School](#) in 1898 was in this year destroyed by lightning (a matter of little consequence since Quakers don't have a flag).



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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1925

[Dr. Elbert Russell](#)'s [EARLY FRIENDS](#) AND EDUCATION (15 pages; Committee on Education of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends). In about this year, his "The Little Girl God Forgot" and "Not This Man But Barrabbas." He was traveling for the Service Committee and delivering lectures at Guilford College, the University of North Carolina, and Duke University.

In this year and in 1927 the two Philadelphia Yearly Meetings of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) would be issuing, apparently quite independently of one another, extensively revised Books of Discipline. In each of these revisions of the Books of Discipline the historic phrase "receive such into membership, without respect to nation or color" would be allowed to disappear. This would to all appearances be the result of mere editing as there had never been an official reversal of the color-blind racial policy that had been established during the 18th Century in either branch of the society.⁶⁵

At the nobody-but-us-white-people [Moses Brown School](#) in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), a playing field for the primary grades was created, and the Alumni Hall erected in 1868 received extensive renovation. At the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) it was reported that the most serious problem of this nobody-but-us-white-people school, for the past decade, had been a declining enrollment of the girl type of white children. To remedy the deficiencies which were causing this decline of one of the two types of white children, the existing Lincoln School standing a short distance to the east would be purchased by the Friends.

65. The data elements for this series on the acceptability of persons of mixed race as [Quakers](#) are from Henry Cadbury's "Negro Membership in the Society of Friends" in [The Journal of Negro History](#), Volume 21 (1936), pages 151-213.



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1936

Funds became available to the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), out of the appreciating bequest for a retirement home for “unmarried women Friends who devoted most of their lives to teaching” that had been established in 1886 by Sarah Nichols Pope-Dixon. Although not all the preferences expressed in her last will and testament could be fulfilled, an attempt was made to match the intent of the donor by giving former teachers preference over other applicants.

NEW ENGLAND FRIENDS HOME



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1941

October 23, Thursday: Plain-chant for America for baritone, orchestra and organ by William Grant Still to words of Chapin was performed for the initial time, in Carnegie Hall of New York City (Chapin was the wife of Francis Biddle, the Attorney-General of the United States).

In Flushing Meadows on Paumanok Long Island, Senator [Harry S Truman](#) opened the 1st session of the United Nations General Assembly. For a time during the 1940s and 1950s, the Flushing Friends meetinghouse would be a favorite spot for families of the United Nations. A large, active First Day School would evolve and delegates to the UN would frequently attend Flushing Meeting to speak on aspects of their work. Friend Robert Lea, a member of Flushing Meeting, would host many of these delegates in his home. The relaxed atmosphere and hospitality of a home proved to be so attractive that when the United Nations would relocate to their new building on Manhattan Island, New York [Yearly Meeting](#) would open "Quaker House" nearby, as a place of quiet refuge in which delegates might meet for private discussion of issues.

Jewish emigration from [Germany](#) was prohibited.

ANTISEMITISM



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1945

Members of the defunct Greenwich Monthly Meeting of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) were received in the [Providence](#) Monthly Meeting.

The “Gurneyite” meetings with both programmed worship and pastors of the Yearly Meeting of Friends for New England and the “[Wilburite](#)” meetings with unprogrammed worship and without pastors of the New England Yearly Meeting came together with the Connecticut Valley Association of Friends and the independent Cambridge, Massachusetts and [Providence, Rhode Island](#) meetings, to constitute an expanded New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#).



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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1947

The [New England Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) expressed concern that the [Moses Brown School](#) and the Lincoln School in [Providence, Rhode Island](#), although supposedly, nominally, they were under its care, were racist establishments that were not in fact extending this Quaker educational opportunity to “children of all races.”

By the mid-1950s, most Friends schools in the East had admitted at least a few African American students, and in some cases a substantial number had gained admittance. In 1958 Friends Select and Westtown were the two Friends Schools with the most African American students. Friends in New England, however, appear to have lagged behind. In 1947 New England Yearly Meeting expressed its concern that Moses Brown and Lincoln School in Providence, Rhode Island, two schools under the yearly meeting’s care, should include “children of all races in their school family”; six years later another minute suggested that the schools were then ready to do so. Still, in 1957 the yearly meeting continued to question whether Friends and their schools were “clear of discrimination.” Ten years later the meeting created a seventeen-member committee, including heads of the yearly meeting’s schools, to further “the meeting’s concern to meet the needs of more students from disadvantaged and minority groups” and to raise funds for scholarships. By the 1960s several African Americans had been admitted to Moses Brown School.⁶⁶

66. Page 332 in Donna McDaniel’s and Vanessa Julye’s FIT FOR FREEDOM, NOT FOR FRIENDSHIP: QUAKERS, AFRICAN AMERICANS, AND THE MYTH OF RACIAL JUSTICE (Philadelphia: Quaker Press of Friends General Conference, 2009).



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Former war prisoner and convicted felon [John R. Kellam](#) was accepted as worker for the [American Friends Service Committee](#)—which was queerly unprejudiced against him⁶⁷ although they were well aware of his record of draft dodging— in a project called PennCraft:



I had been working for the American Friends Service Committee in its subsidiary called Friends Service, Incorporated, helping coal miners who wanted to build their own homes in their spare time, when they were only partly employed and had been completely unemployed earlier when their fathers built a group of stone houses in the farm adjoining the one that I had gone out to manage. I had only eight homesteaders building their houses, homesteading families. There were fifty in the original group, six and a half times as many. It was a place called PennCraft.

I worked at PennCraft for subsistence wages and I did truck driving, materials delivering, building techniques teaching, technical and administrative accounting, and later on some land subdivision surveying. I was accounting for dollars spent on materials and manhours of labor that were exchanged by the various homesteaders working on each others houses at times, keeping two sets of books. Manhours and dollars. The capital for that whole project had been originally contributed by the owners of the big idle coal mines and the mine workers union. They put in equal amounts and the Service Committee made this project out of it where the miners borrowed the cost of the materials, did their own labor, built their own houses and paid off for the materials over time on a contract per deed basis and eventually when they made their last payment, we delivered their deed, meaning that they were the sole owners of the property that they had created.

Well, fresh out of prison, after a very short time with the

67. This was a special year for the American Friends Service Committee. Not only were they receiving Friend John as an employee, but also they were receiving the [Nobel Peace Prize](#).

ALFRED NOBEL



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National Council for Prevention of War, I was told that the Friends Service Committee was looking for a new project manager at PennCraft. They had a young fellow just starting who within two or three weeks felt overwhelmed by his job so much that even with just a suitcase to carry, leaving a small trunkfull of stuff behind, he went out on the highway and hitchhiked all the way to his home in Minnesota, without notice to anybody. He was made almost sick by his job because it was just too much. I had more technical information about building included in my architectural training, even though I had never had any responsibility on a building job. The only practical experience I had ever had was from climbing all over new construction and watching the workmen, talking with them and seeing how they did things. This, along with talking sometime with the designing architect, was the only practical supplement to my theoretical design, mathematics and mechanical studies in college.

Anyway, I went to PennCraft knowing that this other fellow had left that way. When they hired me, they got in contact with him and said that his successor had been acquired and would show up at a certain date. Would he, therefore, knowing that he would not be expected to continue, with that assurance, would he then be willing to come back for a week or two and help to break me in to the job? I would be otherwise just as ignorant of what I was facing as he had been. With his help, I would be more likely to be able to continue for as long as needed at PennCraft. So he did come back and, incidentally, he did pick up his trunk! He stayed with me for just one week. It was the minimum time that he'd had to promise! Maybe ten days, maybe two weeks, but he wasn't sure of that. So I had to learn as fast as possible how to pick up his loose ends. I found, just as he had been, as soon as I realized what was pending, what was facing me, I felt as if I was forty days behind in my work on the first day! He had had that same feeling, so I wondered whether I would really be able to stick to it. But then I had my whole family out there so I had to stick with it no matter how difficult it was. Also I knew that I could go through a difficult experience.

There was an FBI man who came to PennCraft where I was working later on after I had been out of prison a couple of years. He showed his badge and I recognized FBI on it and he asked me if we could talk in some place that wasn't as open as at this barn where some fellow homesteaders were using materials and equipment. So we went up to the house. On the way I told him that with respect to his own official duties there was nothing I could say that could help him. The only thing that I could think of to say that would be constructive and helpful was that I felt he would be a lot happier if he would quit that kind of a job and get into something useful where he wouldn't be adversarial with people, or bothering them as they were trying to live their lives, as if they were criminals. It seemed to me that he would be much better off in any other kind of occupation. I said, "Weren't you ever interested in something else almost as much as you are in this?"



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"I'd studied a while for the ministry."

"Oh, that would have been wonderful! Why settle for so much less?"

Maybe he wasn't too good at it! According to the congregation! Anyway, as an official of the FBI, ever since I became aware of how outrageously the FBI could go astray from the truth, under oath, in court, to lie about a defendant, there hasn't been an FBI man since that has been worth the time of day off my watch. But as a person, I said, "I respect you and I wish you could have a happier life than you could possibly have had with this job."



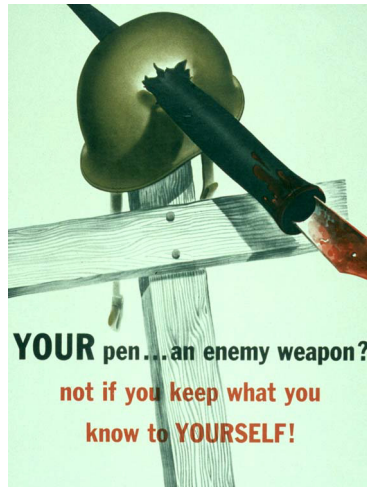
I still didn't know the worst about [J. Edgar Hoover](#). When the whole press of the country acknowledges the sort of a defective guy he was, even in that position, and how he had lists of enemies and people he'd like to find a way of putting in jail, without caring in advance what they might have done that was contrary to law, I couldn't have respect for that kind of official so corrupted. Hoover wasn't so much of a misfit during the war as he was in peacetime, because the first casualty of war is the truth. One of the best tools in warfare is deception. You're trying to deceive the enemy even if it means deceiving your friends first, having them unwittingly tell the enemy things that are not so.



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YOUR pen...an enemy weapon?
not if you keep what you
know to **YOURSELF!**



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1951

From the report of the [Moses Brown School](#) to the [New England Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#):

Of interest to the Yearly Meeting because of its great importance to the Moses Brown School and to Providence Monthly Meeting, is the building of a Meeting House on the school grounds.... The School Committee indicates its willingness to cooperate in this project and special committees were appointed to work out an arrangement that would be satisfactory to the School and to the Meeting. A parcel of land at the corner of Olney Street and Morris Avenue has been selected and a legal agreement has been drawn up. The meeting house property has been sold to the City of Providence, and architect has been engaged, and plans are being drawn. The Permanent Board, at a special meeting on Fourth Month 21, agreed to approve in advance any arrangement which is agreeable to the School Committee and the Providence Meeting. At the writing of this report there remain only a few details to be worked out. The two organizations, the School and the Meeting, will remain completely independent entities, but the proximity of each to the other should be of great advantage to both.

From the Minutes of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) for this year.⁶⁸

L. Ralston Thomas has presented a request from the [Providence](#) Monthly Meeting that approval be granted, in advance of any lease or deed of land which the [Moses Brown School](#) Committee may grant to the Monthly Meeting, on condition that the Monthly Meeting erect and maintain a suitable Friends' Meeting House on the property, and that in case such a Meeting House is not built and maintained the land is to revert to the Moses Brown School Committee. The request is approved.

...

L. Ralston Thomas has presented an agreement of trust between Providence Monthly Meeting and the Moses Brown School Committee. The meeting approves the agreement and designates Donald B. Snyder, of the Moses Brown School Committee, and Ernest C. Ainsworth, Treasurer of the Yearly Meeting, to sign the agreement.

...

The meeting approves the appointment of the Clerk of the Yearly Meeting and the Treasurer to sign on behalf of the Yearly

68. I must admit that I was greatly surprised when I first read this. I had been told repeatedly, by all and sundry, that we had "leased" this houseplot on the Moses Brown farm after a strip of houseplots along Olney Street at the north end of the campus had been divided off and sold. Nobody had ever mentioned to me that this had been, not a commercial deal made at arms length for the purpose of raising money, but instead an insider political accommodation in which the use of this plot had been simply gifted to us in a "sweetheart" manner after the land had been purchased for us by the city of Providence as part of its obtaining our old lot at the corner of Meeting Street and Main Street for the purpose of building a new firestation.



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Meeting on the proposed agreement of Trust between the Yearly Meeting and the [Rhode Island](#) Monthly Meeting of Friends. Russell D. Brooks has explained, and the Permanent Board understands, that the appointment of Russell D. Brooks and Seymour Wiley as Trustees of the property of Rhode Island Monthly Meeting was intended to make them responsible for the care of the properties and the use of the income from the funds of the Meeting.

Russell D. Brooks and Seymour Wiley are appointed at this meeting to serve as members of the Rhode Island Monthly Meeting Properties Committee.
Taken from the records.

ROBERT E. OWEN, Clerk



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1952

September 28, Sunday: For many years the Friends of [Providence](#) had worshiped in [Saylesville, Rhode Island](#) at what had been known as the “South” meetinghouse, the “North” meetinghouse having been across the river in



[Smithfield](#) (this “South” meetinghouse near Lincoln has by now become one of the two oldest surviving continuously operated [Quaker](#) meetinghouses in America). Then, belatedly, a Quaker meeting had taken place within the town limits, near the town fort on Stampers Hill (at the foot of today’s Olney Avenue). Then a new meetinghouse had been erected on North Main Street on the site of what is today the brick firehouse, and eventually it was expanded. When that expanded building had become old, it had in 1844 been put on heavy sledges and tugged by a team (a team of horses, we are told) down the snow-covered Town Street, then up Wickenden Street on Fox Point, and then uphill to 77 Hope Street, where it became a 2-family residence (demolished in 1860; the site now has an apartment building). Thus its century-and-a-quarter old foundation had been cleared, to hold up the west half of a 3d meeting house created in 1844 of plain uninsulated barn construction (the east half of the new structure would be on top of crawl space). This newer meeting house on Meeting Street had lasted the local Friends for 108 years, until the city of Providence was needing a central site for a proposed new Fire Station (another site was available to the city, but a brick building on it would have



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been more expensive to clear and its location between North Main Street and Canal Street had inferior access for fire equipment). So we offered our lot to the City and it was purchased gratefully for enough money to cover 90% of the cost of erection of a better new structure. Our very plain 1844 building was of no architectural import,⁶⁹ so we took the benches and little else and the City razed what was left behind. In consequence, in about this year, a 4th meeting house was erected, a brick meetinghouse with a slate roof, at the corner of Olney and Morris on Friend [Moses Brown](#)'s trust property atop the hill on the East Side. The land is subject to a long term lease from the New England Yearly Meeting, which is trustee for this trust property established by Friend Moses.⁷⁰ Friend Thomas Perry clerked the building committee and the architect was Albert Harkness. In September the building was dedicated, with a talk by Alexander Purdy. — That's where you can now⁷¹ join

69. Sometimes people get the idea that we Quakers worship old stuff. Yes, we have a long history but no, we don't.

70. I have seen a Moses Brown School document that refers to this lot as "school property." This is their insolence, as it is not. The Moses Brown School is squatting on the trust land left by Friend Moses precisely as the Friends meetinghouse is squatting on it, only through the permission of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. The difference between the school's use and the meetinghouse's use is that the monthly meeting holds a long-term lease entitlement whereas the school holds no such legal document.

71. Sometimes people get the idea that the Quakers are gone. No, we're still here.



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us for worship:



1699	The “Great Meetinghouse” in Newport, Rhode Island
1704	2-story Saylesville meetinghouse completed
1718	“Providence” monthly meeting set off from “East Greenwich” monthly meeting
1719	Construction began on a small Smithfield meetinghouse
1725	1st Providence meetinghouse erected near town fort at the very north edge of town, on “Stampers Hill” (up from Town Street at the foot of Olney Lane)



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1745	Kitchen shed added to Saylesville meetinghouse; 2d Providence meetinghouse erected at the corner of what at the time was known as Town Street but is now known as North Main Street and what at the time was known as Gaol Street but is now known as Meeting Street, across from Salt Cove; the name "Stamper's" having passed out of existence, this Quaker meetinghouse was being referred to as that of the Providence Worship Group of the Providence Monthly Meeting
1755	The small Smithfield meetinghouse was enlarged
1752	The Smithfield Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends's "upper" meetinghouse was at Woonsocket or Quinsnickit, and its "lower" meetinghouse was at Saylesville
1775	The 1719 Smithfield meetinghouse was again expanded
1783	The Quakers who met in the meetinghouse on Main Street in Providence, Rhode Island had up to this point been considered to be a "worship group" affiliated with the Providence Monthly Meeting (with meetinghouses in Smithfield and in Saylesville), a worship group that happened to be meeting to worship locally for convenience rather than going on the carriage ride all the way north to the Smithfield meetinghouse on the one side of the river or the Saylesville meetinghouse on the other side of the river. At this point the affiliations and the names were rearranged. Henceforth the group that was attending the Smithfield meetinghouse and the "Lower Smithfield" meetinghouse near Saylesville would be considered to constitute a separate Smithfield Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. That is, there would be two monthly meetings rather than one, and the name "Providence" would hereinafter adhere to the group that actually was inside the town of Providence.
1784	2d Providence meetinghouse enlarged
1822	2d Providence meetinghouse renovated: "what was called the Negros Gallery" removed (still in existence in Saylesville meetinghouse)
1844	2d Providence meetinghouse moved to Hope Street and became a residence; 3d meetinghouse erected with its west part atop old foundation
1849	The Smithfield meetinghouse was remodeled
1860	the old meetinghouse, become a residence on Hope Street, was demolished
1881	The Smithfield meetinghouse burned, and would be replaced by the present structure
1952	3d meetinghouse property at Main and Meeting streets purchased by city of Providence for firestation
September 1952	brick 4th meetinghouse, on Moses Brown farm property atop College Hill at corner of Olney and Morris (99-year renewable lease), dedicated



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1957

Summer: Different [Quakers](#) remember different years, but in **about** this timeframe there was a tense confrontation at the New England [Yearly Meeting](#), over the governance of the [Moses Brown School](#). School officials were saying that the school could no longer function properly if it remained a Quaker boarding school, that such a requirement kept the enterprise on the edge of financial collapse. Meanwhile, various Quakers were becoming outraged at the manner in which the governing board of the school, although a committee of the Yearly Meeting, had gotten inbred, incestuous, noncommunicative, authoritarian, and, fundamentally, self-perpetuating.⁷² A decision was reached, that the Yearly Meeting's school would no longer cater to the sort of students who would come and live there separate from their families of origin, but would instead cater to students who lived in the bosoms of their families in the surrounding community, which is to say, the vicinity of [Providence, Rhode Island](#). It is an open question whether any of the Quakers who assented to this were aware at the time that, since there were only a handful of Quaker children living within daily commuting distance of the school buildings, this decision to abandon boarding was in essence a fateful decision to start educating children of non-Quaker backgrounds in preference to the children of Quaker families.

July: The School Committee of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), and the Board of Directors of the [Moses Brown School](#), announced the appointment of Robert Cunningham, a non-Quaker, as Acting Headmaster of this [Providence, Rhode Island](#) institution.

72. There is a commonality to be noticed here, between the [New England Friends Home](#) asset of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), in Hingham, Massachusetts, and the [Moses Brown School](#) asset of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, in Providence, Rhode Island. Neither institution will permit a full and fair appraisal of the asset. Both institutions offer entirely fraudulent balance sheets in which the value of assets are persistently lowballed. The New England Friends Home, for instance, is carrying the land value at its nominal acquisition value of \$10,000 way back when, while their cost accountant falsely asserts that the use of such a value rather than the true current value is mandated by the tax laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Home relies upon the appraisals that its banks conduct every three years in order to validate the wisdom of their loans, disregarding the fact that such bank appraisals limit themselves merely to ascertaining that the value of the asset if forfeited would exceed to some degree the open balance of the loan (\$2,100,000 on a property informally estimated to be worth at least \$6,000,000), and falsely pretending that such a lowball figure represents the true total worth of the property were it put to its highest and best economic use. In the case of the Moses Brown School, I have seen no evidence that the asset has ever been appraised — and in the absence of such an appraisal, the non-religious prep school that presently occupies a campus that is worth approximately (order of magnitude) \$200,000,000 on the open market and is the property of the Quakers is being allowed to maintain its entirely secular occupancy at an annual rent of \$0.00. It is an ongoing surreptitious asset transfer of mind-boggling magnitude.

Given such a situation, there is only one possible explanation: the school has become an example of what the sociologists refer to as “regulatory capture.” That is to say, like the Civil Aeronautics Board which protected airlines from competition, the Interstate Commerce Commission which restricted competition in transportation, and the Department of Agriculture which implements policies that are alleged to favor the interests of large corporate farming concerns over those of consumers and family farmers, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Quaker committees that are supposedly governing Moses Brown School and the New England Friends Home have been infiltrated and taken over by people whose loyalty is not “upstream,” to the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, but “downstream,” to those in actual control of these entities as institutions functioning as business corporations. The term “regulatory capture” is central in a stream of research that is often referred to as the economics of regulation, which is critical of earlier conceptualizations of regulatory intervention by governments as being motivated to protect public goods. Two cited references, which I have not yet consulted, are M.E. Levine and Forrence, J.L.’s 1990 paper “Regulatory capture, public interest, and the public agenda. Toward a synthesis” in the [Journal of Law Economics & Organization](#), 6: 167-198, and J.J. Laffont and Tirole, J.’s 1991 paper “The politics of government decision making. A theory of regulatory capture” in the [Quarterly Journal of Economics](#), 106(4): 1089-1127.

Outside the United States government apparatus, the most notorious current example of regulatory capture happens to be the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations. That agency is presently paralyzed because the most vicious nations have insisted upon having seats there and influence there, and are using their seats and their influence to ensure that the Commission not do its job.



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1971

In [Providence, Rhode Island](#), [Butler Hospital](#) became affiliated with [Brown University](#)'s Medical School.

PSYCHOLOGY

The “cumbersome and complex system” of governance of the Quaker boys school and the Quaker girls school (Lincoln School) on the East Side of [Providence](#) began to engage the full attention of the Schools Committee and the Permanent Board of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#). The Board of Trustees of the two schools set up a Religious Life Committee charged to advise it in regard to “the development and planning of religious programs as part of the School life.” Planning was begun on an addition to the residence of the Headmaster of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) that could function as a space for student meeting for silent worship. (This addition was to be known as “The Exchange.”)

When the city of [Providence](#) implemented a desegregation plan in its public high schools, one involving extensive busing, parents and students marched to protest what they consider to be an attack on the quality of educational programs. Was the local private Quaker institution of education, the Moses Brown School on the East Side of Providence, also implementing a desegregation plan at this point? –We don’t know, and the officials at the school aren’t saying. All we know is that at some point during the 1970s, earlier in the decade or later in the decade, the Quaker institution would accept its very first student of color. It has proved impossible to ascertain the year, and it has likewise proved impossible to ascertain the name of this student, specifically because the school’s officials have stonewalled every attempt to obtain such derogatory information. The only thing we know for certain is that when finally such students of color were found acceptable whenever that was during this decade, they would not at least initially find themselves being treated the same as the white students.

Quaker Rosalind Cobb Wiggins, who taught African American history there in the 1970s and later became a school trustee, charged that of all students at Moses Brown on scholarship, only African Americans were expected to wait on tables and scrub floors.⁷³

73. Pages 339-340 in Donna McDaniel’s and Vanessa Juley’s FIT FOR FREEDOM, NOT FOR FRIENDSHIP: QUAKERS, AFRICAN AMERICANS, AND THE MYTH OF RACIAL JUSTICE (Philadelphia: Quaker Press of Friends General Conference, 2009).



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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1972

[Kenneth L. Carroll](#)'s "Martha Simmonds, a [Quaker](#) Enigma" ([Journal of the Friends' Historical Society](#) 53:1, pages 31-52).

The [Reverend George Mills Houser](#) was interviewed by Jervis Anderson for his A. PHILIP RANDOLPH: A BIOGRAPHICAL PORTRAIT:

"We in the non-violent movement of the 1940s certainly thought that we were initiating something of importance in American life. Of course, we weren't able to put it in perspective then. But we were filled with vim and vigor, and we hoped that a mass movement could develop, even if we did not think that we were going to produce it. In retrospect, I would say we were precursors. The things we did in the 1940s were the same things that ushered the civil rights revolution. Our Journey of Reconciliation preceded the Freedom Rides of 1961 by fourteen years. Conditions were not quite ready for the full-blown movement when we were undertaking our initial actions. But I think we helped to lay the foundations for what followed, and I feel proud of that."



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The old [Quaker](#) meetinghouse in [Conanicut or Jamestown, Rhode Island](#) was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Rather than having a School Committee of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) overlooking a single board of overseers for both the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) and the Lincoln School on the East Side of [Providence](#), there would in the future be two separate boards of overseers, plus a Coordinating Committee of the New England Yearly Meeting. (The Schools Committee, which had been in existence since 1780, was to be laid down.)

There was formed an “Ad hoc Committee on the Long Range Future of the Relationship of the New England Yearly Meeting to the Moses Brown School and the Lincoln School.”

[Calhoun D. Geiger](#) left off being a director of [Quaker Lake Camp](#) in the piedmont region of [North Carolina](#) to become a teacher at the Carolina Friends School in [Durham](#). He would initiate the Upper School Service Learning Program. After retiring as a teacher, he would continue to serve on the school’s Board, and teach basket weaving.

Clerks of Meeting

1943-1947	Edward K. Kraybill
1947-1948	William Van Hoy, Jr.
1949-1949	John de J. Pemberton, Jr.
1950-1951	Harry R. Stevens
1951-1952	John A. Barlow
1952-1957	Susan Gower Smith
1957-1960	Frances C. Jeffers
1960-1961	Cyrus M. Johnson
1961-1965	Peter H. Klopfer
1965-1967	Rebecca W. Fillmore
1967-1968	David Tillerson Smith
1968-1970	Ernest Albert Hartley
1970-1971	John Hunter
1971-1972	John Gamble
1972-1974	Lyle B. Snider (2 terms)





NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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1974-1975	Helen Gardella
1976-1978	Cheryl F. Junk
1978-1980	Alice S. Keighton
1980-1982	John B. Hunter
1982-1984	Edward M. Arnett
1984-1986	<u>Calhoun D. Geiger</u>
1986-1988	John P. Stratton
1988-1990	J. Robert Passmore
1990-1992	Karen Cole Stewart
1992-1995	Kathleen Davidson March
1995-1998	Nikki Vangsnes
1998-2000	Co-clerks J. Robert Passmore & Karen Cole Stewart
2000-2002	Amy Brannock
2002-2002	Jamie Hysjulien (Acting)
2002-2005	William Thomas O'Connor
2005-2007	Terry Graedon
2007-2009	Anne Akwari
2009-2012	Joe Graedon
2012-2013	Marguerite Dingman
2013-	Co-clerks Cathy Bridge & David Bridge



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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

1975

The cost of living in the [New England Friends Home](#) on Turkey Hill near Hingham, Massachusetts is reported, by the institution, to have been at this point about \$11 per day.⁷⁴

The board of governors of the Lincoln School for girls on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#) decided to overtly declare the mission of their school to be “the education and development of young women,” with nothing at all in regard to any alleged involvement with [Quakerism](#). That being the case, the Coordinating Committee that had been struggling to integrate the activities of that school with those of the Quaker [Moses Brown School](#) for boys on the East Side was forced belatedly to confront a hard fact, that the objectives of the two schools were “not coincident.”

74. Such institutional statistics are, of course, entirely bogus. The prices that the residents pay are nowhere near the true costs, since the Home has an endowment that in part sustains it. This is a classic case of a “disregarded externality” and is dishonest. The basic reason for this persistent dishonesty, upon which the Home Committee and the Matron insist, seems to be that, for so long as the responsible parties can keep the true costs of the service entirely hidden, there is no way for anyone to evaluate their job performance, and determine whether the service provided is superior to, or inferior to, the services provided by the Home’s tax-paying, for-profit nearby competitors. There is a commonality to be noticed here, between the [New England Friends Home](#) asset of the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), in Hingham, Massachusetts, and the [Moses Brown School](#) asset of the New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, in Providence, Rhode Island. Neither institution will permit a full and fair appraisal of the asset. Both institutions offer entirely fraudulent balance sheets in which the value of assets are persistently lowballed. The New England Friends Home, for instance, is carrying the land value at its nominal acquisition value of \$10,000 way back when, while their cost accountant falsely asserts that the use of such a value rather than the true current value is mandated by the tax laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Home relies upon the appraisals that its banks conduct every three years in order to validate the wisdom of their loans, disregarding the fact that such bank appraisals limit themselves merely to ascertaining that the value of the asset if forfeited would exceed to some degree the open balance of the loan (\$2,100,000 on a property informally estimated to be worth at least \$6,000,000), and falsely pretending that such a lowball figure represents the true total worth of the property were it put to its highest and best economic use. In the case of the Moses Brown School, I have seen no evidence that the asset has ever been appraised — and in the absence of such an appraisal, the non-religious prep school that presently occupies a campus that is worth approximately (order of magnitude) \$200,000,000 on the open market is being allowed to maintain its occupancy at an annual rent of \$0.00. It is an ongoing surreptitious asset transfer of mind-boggling magnitude.



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1976

[Kenneth L. Carroll](#)'s "[Quaker](#) Weavers at Newport, [Ireland](#), 1720-1740" ([Journal of the Friends' Historical Society](#) 54, pages).

In this year and the following one, restoration work was done to the old [Quaker](#) meetinghouse in [Conanicut or Jamestown, Rhode Island](#), a structure dating to 1786 (the building is now maintained by the Jamestown Historical Society).

[Providence](#)'s Lincoln School for girls was set off as a separate corporation from the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#).

In the [Durham monthly meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#):

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1943-1947	Edward K. Kraybill
1947-1948	William Van Hoy, Jr.
1949-1949	John de J. Pemberton, Jr.
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1971-1972	John Gamble
1972-1974	Lyle B. Snider (2 terms)
1974-1975	Helen Gardella





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1976-1978	Cheryl F. Junk
1978-1980	Alice S. Keighton
1980-1982	John B. Hunter
1982-1984	Edward M. Arnett
1984-1986	Calhoun D. Geiger
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1978

[Kenneth L. Carroll](#)'s "[Quakerism](#) and the Cromwellian Army in [Ireland](#)" ([Journal of the Friends' Historical Society](#) 54, pages 135-54).

David Burnham was made Headmaster of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#).

The "cost" of living in the [New England Friends Home](#) on Turkey Hill near Hingham, Massachusetts was reported, by the institution, to have been at this point about \$13 to \$14 per day, depending on the size of the room.⁷⁵

75. Actually, since the Home is endowed and receives contributions, the prices the residents pay are nowhere near the true costs. This is a classic case of dishonesty involving a "disregarded externality." Such dishonesty in "cost" accounting enables the responsible parties to keep the true costs of the service entirely hidden so that there is no way for their job performance to be evaluated and no way to determine whether the service they are providing is competitive with services which might be obtained by contract with one of the Home's nearby tax-paying, for-profit elder-care competitors. The way it's set up, it's a no-fault, best-effort situation without measurements or responsibilities — of course that's a sweet package for those whose performance is being evaluated, whenever they can negotiate this.



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In the [Durham monthly meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#):

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1984-1986	<u>Calhoun D. Geiger</u>
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1993

The [Quaker](#) monthly meeting at Stony Brook near Princeton, [New Jersey](#) instituted a standing “Liaison Committee” to address issues around the sharing of the Quaker property with the Friends School on the premises. The Meeting approved a summer camp and an after-school program.

The Permanent Board recommended to the [New England Yearly Meeting](#), that operation of the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) be transferred to an entity to be known as the “Moses Brown School Corporation,” and that this new entity be granted a 99-year lease on the land and buildings of the bequest made by Friend Moses Brown (which recommendation was not accepted).

Friend [Kenneth L. Carroll](#) became President of the Friends Historical Association that had been founded in Philadelphia in 1873 (until 2011).

Friend Kent Wicker has offered us his memories of his arriving in an unexpected place — the [Durham, North Carolina Friends](#) meeting:

My first memory of Durham Friends Meeting begins with me showing up at the old brick meetinghouse one Firstday morning in 1993. I had my infant daughter Alix in my arms and toddler son Jared in tow. As I recall, Bob Passmore saw me standing in the old kitchen around 9:45 looking curious and confused. He took pity on us, helping both me and the kids to get settled.

To my surprise, he led me out the back door and across a playground – to one of the most ramshackle buildings I had ever seen. There was a room-sized wooden section of building at the top of a slope, which was followed by a narrower wooden section that tumbled down the hill behind until it reached a wide concrete block section at a lower level. Doors and windows seemed distributed randomly. It looked like the result of an accidental collision between several storage buildings. (This is not too far from the truth: I am told that the top section had originally been a construction shed during the building of Duke's West Campus.) This was the DFM Firstday School facility – and the Durham Pre-K campus of Carolina Friends School.

My children were happy to try Firstday School, so Bob and I returned to the meetinghouse for worship. We paused for a moment in the tiny entrance hall outside the meetingroom doors, and then went in. I found myself at one end of a dimly lit 20x40-foot room with interior walls of painted concrete block, with three to four dozen people sitting quietly on metal folding chairs. There was an aisle between the chairs running the length of the building to a fireplace at the opposite end of the building. The chairs at either end of this long room faced each other; at the center, the orientation of chairs changed so that Friends instead faced each other across the central aisle.

I found a free seat, sat down, and tried to be as quiet as everybody else.

I had done enough research to know a bit about Friends. Having



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been unable to find in Durham the sort of progressive, lay-led United Methodist church my wife Cheryl and I had attended in D.C., we had gotten by just fine without church during the years I was earning my Ph.D. at Duke. But as I was finishing my degree, I came to realize that my soul felt dry, drained; I suddenly longed for spiritual community. So -despite our two kids and the fact that Cheryl worked weekends- I had been visiting those local churches that seemed to lean toward the liberal end of the theological spectrum: the UUs, the UCCs - and now the Friends. Having always enjoyed sermons, liturgy, ritual and singing in the choir, I was a bit wary about worshiping with Friends. But I experienced something at worship that morning that I had never quite experienced before. Later, I tried to explain it to Cheryl: "What they do in worship gets me to that spiritual place that I've always used ritual to get to before. But instead of ending there, they start there..."

Although I didn't know it at the time, I was hooked. I continued to visit other churches for a while, but kept coming back to Friends Meeting - now with Cheryl, who no longer worked weekends. We began showing up regularly for Building & Grounds workdays, which is the main way we got to know others in Meeting. We attended potlucks; we joined Friendly Eights. We gradually became part of the Meeting. At one early point, we did try to leave DFM, because we felt that the Meeting did not offer a consistent program of religious education for our children. But we came to realize that, in a spiritual community (especially such a small one) it was up to us to provide what we felt was lacking. So, despite any real knowledge of Quaker ways, or much in the way of a prepared curriculum, we started teaching Firstday School in that rickety old school building, which we ended up doing for many years.

As the seasons passed in the old Meetinghouse, Cheryl and I discovered just how hot a non-air-conditioned masonry building can be in the summer - and how wonderful it was to sit near the fire that Hale Stevenson, arriving early in the morning, would faithfully build every fall and winter Firstday. It was here that I first learned how sweet and deep waiting worship could be. With the electric lights kept dim during worship, the sunlight that played through the shutters sometimes seemed to be a Divine revelation all its own. The whirr of the ceiling fans, the rumble of the city bus down Alexander Avenue, the noise of children on the playground - all of these seemed to aid a worshipful atmosphere rather than detract from it. There seemed to be a sort of spiritual intimacy that was created by packing so many people into such a compact space, like so many spiritual batteries joined together. Years later, we would divide this space into two large but cozy classrooms that still retain some of that original worshipful spirit.

But the space also had its limitations. The heat kept many away in summer. Every Firstday, after Meeting for Worship, we would fold all the chairs and stack them against the wall, so that the space could be used by renters during the week. If there was an



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after-worship meal or event, we would have to shoo half of Meeting out of the building while we brought in folding tables from their storage area in the women's restroom. If the weather was good, we'd set up tables outside instead. The kitchen was old and poorly planned, and very few people could fit in it at once.

We didn't realize it at the time, but our family was part of a small but growing wave of growth for Durham Friends Meeting. There were already several families with children when we arrived at Meeting. However, around the time we started attending regularly, we were joined by several other 30-somethings with young kids: the Bairds, the Laursens, the Hannapels, the Sweitzer-Lammes. We continued some practices - such as Stone Soup- that were begun by the older kids, and we introduced a few of our own, such as a Christmas pageant with kids acting the parts of Mary, Joseph and the animals.

Gradually, the empty chairs in Meeting for Worship began to fill up more and more often. Eventually there came a time when latecomers had to sit on the floor regularly. The school building's facilities also grew increasingly inadequate for the sort of program Carolina Friends School wanted to offer. It was time -after a long and careful process of Friendly discernment- for some new buildings.



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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

2003

I, Austin Meredith, was asked to serve on the board of the [New England Friends Home](#) of the [New England Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), on Turkey Hill in Hingham, Massachusetts.

I began to write up a history of that institution, and put it on the web as part of my history of things Quaker.

ASSLEY



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

2004

I, [Austin Meredith](#), took part in monthly meetings of the board of the [New England Friends Home](#) of the [New England Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), on Turkey Hill in Hingham, Massachusetts, as it attempted to work its way through a period of financial distress due to empty beds. We came up with all sorts of ideas for saving money on operations, cutting costs, advertising to fill the empty beds, etc. Month after month we struggled, and finally the management of the facility reluctantly asked for board permission to dip into the endowment in order to keep the institution from being forced to close its doors. Reluctantly, the board agreed to a transfer of \$20,000 from the endowment into the operations budget, and then to another such transfer (afterwards we would discover that the management had already been spending down that endowment for some time, with the covert collusion of the treasurer of our board, and that our belated permission had merely helped to legitimate those pre-existing transactions).

ASSLEY

May 13, Thursday: An attorney's advice, that of Parish Lentz, was received by the New England [Yearly Meeting](#) in regard to the current proposal that the [Religious Society of Friends](#) abandon its historical role in regard to the [Moses Brown School](#) on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#), and allow this school—which has over the years been transforming itself into basically a secular hoity-toity college preparatory academy with a student body made up almost totally of non-Quaker residents of Providence, a teaching staff made up mostly of non-Quakers, an administration made up almost totally of non-Quakers, and a governing board made up mostly of non-Quakers, with, it must be allowed, a football team named “The Quakers”—to manage its own affairs in its own way without any interference:

The original deed from Moses Brown (the individual) to certain trustees which was recorded in the Providence Land Records April 24, 1819 grants the property “In trust and to their successors and assigns forever to have and to hold and for the intentions and purpose of the aforesaid People, Friends or Quakers of the Yearly Meeting for New England to erect suitable buildings thereon for a School House or Houses for the purpose of instruction in guarded education of the rising generations in a Boarding School or Houses for the purpose of instruction in guarded education of the rising generations in a Boarding School or schools according to the original minutes of the intentions of the said Yearly Meeting and hereafter set forth for the most effectual government thereof by the grantor and grantees herein expressed.” This deed further recites: “It being always hereafter to be understood that the whole of the said granted premises is and are to be at the sole disposal of the said meeting best in such manner that the said interest property, rents, profits, income and use is to be forever hereafter held and proved by the said meeting for the purpose of keeping up and maintaining a School or Schools for the education of the rising generation as aforesaid and is never at any time hereafter to be divested or applied to any other use or purpose whatsoever.” The trustees then transferred the property to the newly incorporated (by act of Rhode Island Legislature) Yearly Meeting



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of Friends for New England by deed recorded August 15, 1828. This transfer was subject to the restrictions of the deed from Moses Brown.

I personally reviewed these deeds in the Providence City Archives and have discussed the language with John Murphy who is the attorney who helped us on the title work for the bond issue. Although this is not a formal opinion, our initial conclusion is that the restrictions recited in these deeds limited the use of the property primarily and would not serve as an impediment to transferring it to a separately incorporated subsidiary of the New England Yearly Meeting of Friends. The deed from the trustees to the newly incorporated Yearly Meeting of Friends for New England convey the property to the said "incorporated society of the Yearly Meeting of Friends for New England and to their successors forever". The fact that the property was also transferred from the original trustees to the newly incorporated entity is also an indication that the restriction runs primarily to the use of the property as a school in the tradition of the Friends.

June: During New England [Yearly Meeting](#), advice was received from a Boston attorney in regard to the [Moses Brown School](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#) on the East Side of [Providence, Rhode Island](#):

I will be very interested in a Rhode Island attorney's interpretation of the 1819 deed. If I were interpreting this deed under Massachusetts law relating to the creation of charitable trusts, I would advise that the deed created a trust whereby the NEYM must both hold the property forever and use it forever "for the purpose of instruction in guarded education of the rising generations in a Boarding School or schools according to the original [circa 1819] minutes of the intentions of the said Yearly Meeting." I also think it is significant that, according to the quotation from Parish Lentz's memorandum in the minutes, the 1819 deed from Moses Brown to the original trustees was to the trustees and their successors and assigns but the 1828 deed from the trustees to NEYM was to NEYM and its successors (the omission of "assigns" is, to me, significant). It was stated in one of our committee meetings that a portion of the property was sold, but I presume that was in accordance with the further language of the deed "that the whole of the said granted premises is and are to be at the sole disposal of the said meeting best in such manner that the said interest property, rents, profits, income and use is to be forever hereafter held and provided by the said meeting for the purpose of keeping up and maintaining a School" if it was determined that the sale of some of the property was necessary for the purpose of keeping up and maintaining the school. it is not clear to me how the change from a boarding school to a day school was justified under this deed – was there a court order allowing the change? Regarding the present proposal for a transfer to a new



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MBS corporation, if NEYM decides it is no longer practicable for NEYM to hold the property, if this were under Massachusetts law I would recommend a so-called "cy pres" petition to the court, which must name the state Attorney General as a defendant in his capacity as overseer of charitable trusts, praying that the court permit a change in the trust, to be as close as possible to the donor's original intent under the changed circumstances, whereby NEYM would be permitted to convey the property to the MBS corporation subject to a reworded trust approved by the court as practicable under the circumstances.

Jeanne S. McKnight, Esq.
Kopelman and Paige, P.C.
31 St. James Avenue
Boston, MA 02116



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GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

2005

I, Austin Meredith, took part in monthly meetings of the board of the [New England Friends Home](#) of the [New England Yearly Meeting](#) of the [Religious Society of Friends](#), on Turkey Hill in Hingham, Massachusetts, as it came out of a period of financial distress due to empty beds. One of the things I had noticed about the cost accounting for this facility was that the asset value was being carried at a nominal \$10,000, so we requested the advice of the institution's cost accountant. He appeared before us and explained that the figure was merely nominal, and did not disagree that in actuality the structures and grounds were probably worth something more like \$6,000,000 on the open market. That didn't matter, he explained, because the actual value of the property was not an expense whereas our institutional balance sheets and budgets had to do only with costs. That nominal value of \$10,000 was being used merely as a place-filler on the ledger. I then asked why we should not substitute for the nominal value of \$10,000 the figure of \$6,000,000, since that would somewhat more accurately represent the actual situation, or obtain an actual appraisal and substitute that even-more-accurate figure. He responded that the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts forbade such accuracy, and in discussion it evolved that what he meant by "laws of the Commonwealth" was that actuarial truthfulness would be likely to drive us out of business by changing our tax standing. At that time he also cautioned us that, as members of the institution's board, under the existing law of responsibility we could be made personally liable should the institution be forced into default, if the amount were in excess of the million-dollar liability insurance policy carried by the institution.

I drove back home to Providence, Rhode Island and discussed this new information with my spouse. We very promptly prepared a letter of resignation, stating that we had not previously been informed that our personal assets were considered to be available as security for the institution, supposing instead that board membership had been merely a public service provided in a spirit of good will, and that our family could not sustain such a risk.

I took the opportunity, in this letter of resignation, to point out that the advertised figures of our low cost of providing care at the Home per day per resident could only be false because, since the Home was endowed and received contributions, the bills the residents actually received were nowhere near the actual costs. This is a classic case of a "disregarded externality" on the balance sheet. Such a practice of "cost" accounting enables the responsible parties to keep the true condition of the service entirely hidden so that there can be no way for their job performance to be evaluated and so that there can be no way to determine whether the service they are providing is competitive with services which might be obtained by contract with one of the Home's nearby tax-paying, for-profit elder-care competitors. —That the way they had it set up, this was a no-fault, best-effort situation without measurements or responsibilities.

I characterized our institutional reports, therefore, as false and unquakerly. No response has ever been made.

ASSLEY

"MAGISTERIAL HISTORY" IS FANTASIZING, HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY

"Stack of the Artist of Kouroo" Project


New England Yearly Meeting



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NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING

GO TO MASTER HISTORY OF QUAKERISM

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"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

- Remark by character "Garin Stevens"
in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST



Prepared: March 22, 2014



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ARRGH AUTOMATED RESearch REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, someone has requested that we pull it out of the hat of a pirate who has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (as above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture (this is data mining). To respond to such a request for information we merely push a button.



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Commonly, the first output of the algorithm has obvious deficiencies and we need to go back into the modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and recompile the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.

Place requests with <Kouroo@kouroo.info>. Arrgh.