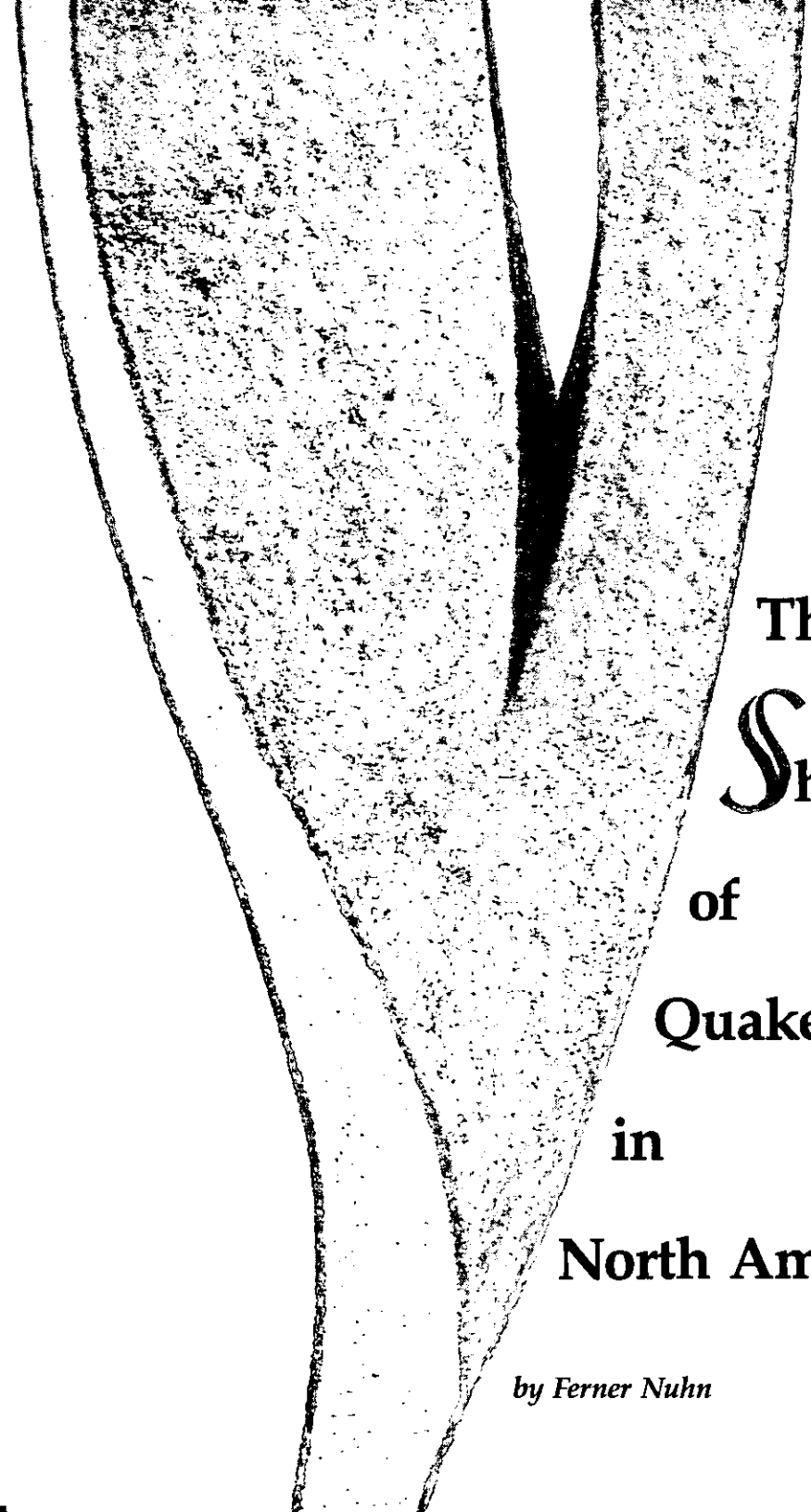
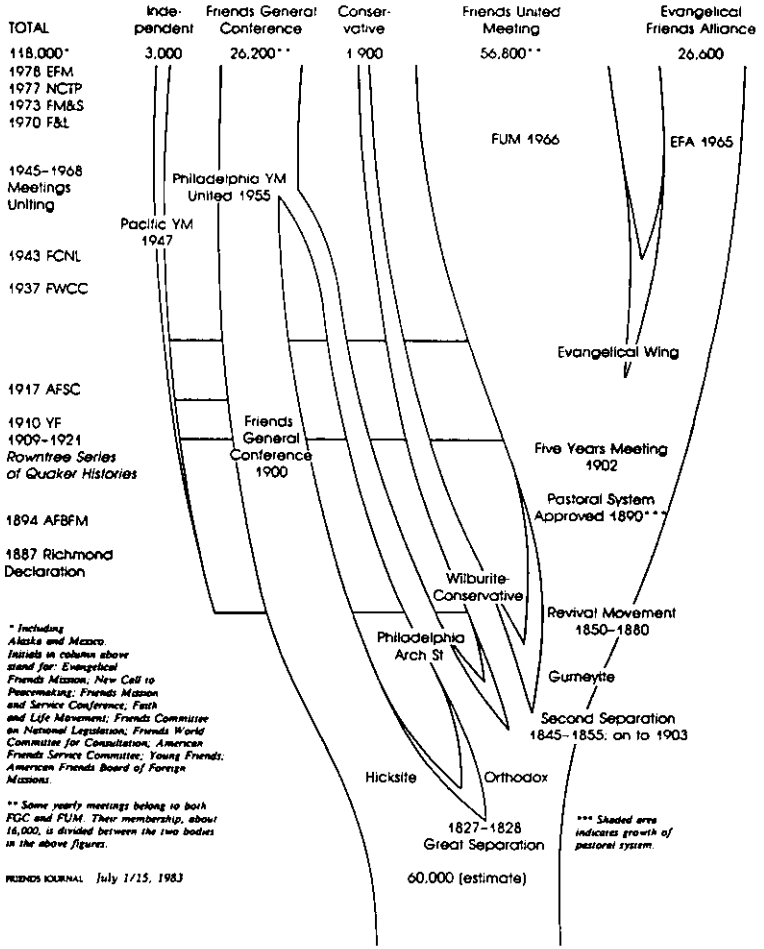


The Shape of Quakerism in North America

by Ferner Nuhn

NORTH AMERICAN QUAKERISM: 1800–1980



FOREWORD

Some years ago, a study group in our local meeting asked if it would be possible to make a drawing showing the development and quite complex relationship of the various groups of Friends in America. The result was the chart, printed herewith, called "North American Quakerism: 1800-1980." As explained further on, it attempts to show quantitatively the evolution of the strands that make up the Religious Society of Friends on this continent.

Next, it seemed helpful to try to write a brief explanation of the drawing. The result—not as brief and I thought it might be—is the present study. It was originally published, handsomely illustrated, in the *Friends Journal* of July 1/15, 1983. A version was also published in the July, 1983, issue of the *Friends Bulletin* of Pacific Yearly Meeting. Thanks are due to the late Olcutt Sanders and to Vinton Deming, editors of the *Journal*, for permission and cooperation in producing this revised and annotated edition for the Friends World Committee for Consultation. Thanks are due also to Shirley Ruth and Jeanne Lohmann, *Bulletin* editors, for their assent to this edition.

A good many Friends have provided information and help of one kind or another in preparing this work. Among them are the following, whom I wish to thank: George A. Badgley, Edwin B. Bronner, Gordon M. Browne, Jr., Charles J. Browning, Kara Cole, David B. Gray (of Woodbrooke), Herbert M. Hadley, Norval Hadley, Leonard S. Kenworthy, T. Canby Jones, Viola E. Purvis, Robert J. Rumsey, Keith Sarver, Floyd Schmoe, William P. Taber, Jr., D. Elton Trueblood, Jack L. Willcuts, Bob Williams, Lloyd Lee Wilson.

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Claremont, California
June, 1984

THE SHAPE OF QUAKERISM IN NORTH AMERICA

Quakerism in England has remained a single body in spite of its internal differences and conflicts over the years.[1] Similar differences and conflicts in American Quakerism, on the other hand, resulted during the nineteenth century in several separations and a variety of Quaker bodies, differing not only in theological emphases but to some extent on ecclesiastical form. During the twentieth century, new forces have been at work on both sides of the Atlantic and elsewhere, bringing Friends into new patterns of association and work.

PLURALISM IN AMERICA

How did the wide diversification within American Quakerism come about? The size of the country, no doubt, has had something to do with it. Even before American independence, as Edwin Bronner points out, the distance between the colonies had required the creation of six Yearly Meetings.[2] Rufus Jones saw "a sad lack of historical insight" among leading American Friends as a main cause of the tragic separation of 1827-28.[3] Elbert Russell felt the "the new spirit of democracy and personal freedom" played an important role in that separation.[4] With the westward migration of Quakers along with throngs of other pioneers, it seems clear from Errol Elliott's *Quakers on the American Frontier,* that a considerable degree of *acculturation* has accompanied the development of Quakerism in America. This has been especially true, perhaps, of the evangelical wing of American Quakerism.[5]

America has a genius for pluralism, one might say, and Quakerism in America has not remained unaffected by this genius. But pluralism implies a certain unity. With the forces separating Friends, there have also appeared, in American Quakerism, forces drawing Friends together. Only by looking at both sets of forces together can one make out the shape of Quakerism in North America.

What are the implications for Friends of all persuasions of this diversified, yet interrelated, pattern in which American Quakerism finds itself? How may it best serve the purposes of God?

THE "FAMILY TREE" OF QUAKERISM IN AMERICA

Efforts have been made to picture the strange shape of Quakerism in North America. The accompanying drawing is based on the diagram used in the 1966 and 1976 booklets on American Quakerism published by the Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas. It has benefitted, also, from the chart, "Family Tree of American Yearly Meetings," in *Quakers on the American Frontier*.[6] As one may see, the present chart attempts to *quantify* the developments that have taken place in American Quakerism, both as to the numbers of members involved and the chronology of the changes that have taken place. It has seemed appropriate, too, to shift the strand representing Conservative ("Wilburite") Friends from a place on the far right of the evangelical wing of Quakerism to a point in between Friends United Meeting and Friends General Conference. Further, an effort is made, by means of the shaded area, to show the growth of a significant factor in a large section of American Quakerism, the pastoral system.

Finally, please note the column of dates and events on the left margin of the drawing. These indicate developments in American Quakerism which have brought Friends of varied persuasions into new patterns of relationship.

Membership figures for Friends in the nineteenth century are hard to come by. The estimates used here are made from such data as may be found in works by Rufus Jones, Elbert Russell and Errol Elliott. No claim is made for the complete accuracy of the resulting figure; it is subject to refinement through better data. Yet I believe its general configuration is valid, and that it reveals significant truths about Quakerism in North America.

ELEMENTS OF DIFFERENTIATION

The elements of work to bring differentiation within American Quakerism became evident only after the American colonies had won their independence from England. Yet, in so far as these involved theological issues, they were, and are, much the same as those at work in English Quakerism. Indeed, English Friends holding certain views, visiting America in the early nine-

teenth century, helped to precipitate the separation in American Quakerism.

One such element was (and remains) an emphasis on the universalistic implications of the "Inward Light" as the central principle in the Quaker faith. George Fox himself had introduced this element into the Quaker movement through his vision that "every man was enlightened by the divine light of Christ."[7] Indeed, as the *Logos*, or Cosmic Christ, referred to in the first chapter of the Gospel of John, this universalistic element may be said to be present in Christianity from the beginning. In America, after the Revolution, this emphasis was particularly strong among Friends in rural areas such as the Long Island of Elias Hicks (and Walt Whitman) and the Pennsylvania countryside of John Comly, a leading Friend of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Elbert Russell, as noted, saw a relationship between the libertarian and equalitarian ideals of the new country and the universalistic element of Quakerism.

Another element, however, was the antithesis of this universalism: an emphasis, or re-emphasis, on the particularities of Christian belief, especially the authoritative role of the Bible and the centrality of the figure of Jesus Christ, as the basis of the Quaker faith. Much of the power of the early Quaker movement had derived from an experiential sense of these particularities—though in the universalistic setting noted above. George Fox had heard an inner voice tell him "there is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition;"[8] and it was only after this experience, in another great "opening," that he had seen this same divine light of Christ "shine through all."

As a word defining the Christian faith, the modern term "Christocentric," is not one which Fox or early Friends used. "Christolucent" or "Christoluminous" would, I believe, be more descriptive of the Christian character of the faith of Fox and early Friends. The particular and the universal came together in Fox's powerful apostolic experience and mission. Both dimensions were assumed to be present in his often-quoted charge to Friends: to be "patterns, be examples; walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one."[9]

THE "GREAT SEPARATION"

Unfortunately, in the controversy which now developed among American Friends, the two elements became separate rallying points for opposing positions, the one view called "Hicksite," the other "Orthodox." Both sides tended to become doctrinaire and dogmatic. The "Orthodox" position had an appeal to more well-to-do Quakers in the cities and in some rural areas (though geographic or class distinctions can not be pushed too far in explaining the division). Travelling Friends from England—resuming visits to America after the Revolutionary War—were much troubled by the "Hicksite" movement. Stephen Grellet, and even more, Thomas Shillitoe, in their travels about America, vigorously opposed the "Hicksite" position and promoted the "Orthodox" one.

The controversy became so bitter that it resulted in the first of the separations that occurred in North American Quakerism, the so-called "Great Separation" of 1827-28.[10] The venerable and influential Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (with many of its constituent local Meetings in the countryside) split about two to one as between "Hicksite" and "Orthodox" adherents. The split resulted in the forming of two "Philadelphia Yearly Meetings:" Philadelphia Race Street, "Hicksite;" and not many blocks away: Philadelphia Arch Street, "Orthodox." It would be 127 years before the two Quaker bodies came together again in one Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

Similar separations, in varying proportions as between "Hicksite" and "Orthodox" adherents, took place among and within other Yearly Meetings and even within Monthly Meetings. According to Rufus Jones' estimates, the "Hicksite" Friends were greater in number than those taking the "Orthodox" position.[11] Elbert Russell estimated that, taking all the Yearly Meetings into account, the numbers of each kind were about equal.[12]

SECOND "SEPARATION"

But now an uneasiness arose among Friends in the "Orthodox" ranks. Actually two sorts of Friends were included among those who had become alarmed by the "Hicksite" movement. One valued older Quaker ways as they had come through

their forbears: waiting in silence on the Lord; the sense of Christ as the "Presence in the midst;" distrust of merely "creaturely" activities; regard for particular Quaker testimonies, such as those to simplicity and peace. John Wilbur, a New England Quaker with strong convictions of this sort, became the leader of Friends of this persuasion.[13]

The other sort of Friends among the "Orthodox" reflected the growing evangelical movement of the times, both in England and America. Stemming from the Wesleyan and "low church" awakening in England during the eighteenth century, the evangelical movement swept in waves across the United States in the nineteenth century. A kindling, vitalizing movement in many ways, it emphasized serious Bible study, personal religious experience, and the redemptive power of Jesus Christ. With it came hymn singing and appointed preaching of a revivalistic sort. The Calvinist doctrine of natural depravity sometimes entered into this sort of preaching—a doctrine essentially alien to the vision of early Friends.[14]

John Joseph Gurney, scholarly and personable member of a distinguished English Quaker family, became the leading figure in the evangelical movement among Friends both in England and America.[15] Coming to America in 1837, Gurney found a warm welcome among Friends of an evangelical bent, a cooler one in other quarters. His learning, style and enthusiasm appealed especially to college-age Friends, dismayed, as many were, by the recent bitter separation among their elders. (Earlham College, in Richmond, Indiana, was named after the Gurney family seat in Norwich, England.) But inevitably, Gurney's views and ways clashed with the more traditional ways and feelings of the "Wilburite" party. The result was the "Second Separation" in American Quakerism.

The rift first opened in New England where, in 1845, a body of "Wilburite" Friends withdrew from the larger body of New England Yearly Meeting. In 1854, a bitter separation took place in Ohio and another in the same year in Indiana. The process continued sporadicaly through the nineteenth century and on into the twentieth. Assuming the name "Conservative," the withdrawing Friends formed their own Yearly Meetings in roughly the same areas as the on-going "Gurneyite" Yearly Meetings.[16]

As indicated in the chart, the number of Conservative Friends has steadily diminished, from a peak of perhaps eight

thousand members in the latter part of the nineteenth century to less than two thousand at the present time. Yet Conservative Quakerism, as William Taber notes, has a "distinct flavor." Its largely agricultural or small-town communities enjoyed a "kind of golden age" in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and it remains a recognizable and valued strain in American Quakerism.[17]

Faced with the choice of becoming "Gurneyite" or "Wilburite," Philadelphia/Arch Street Yearly Meeting decided to be neither. It remained "Orthodox," dissociating itself from other Quaker bodies in America.

THE PASTORAL MOVEMENT

Through their evangelical outreach, "Gurneyite" Yearly Meetings were soon increasing in membership,[18] In the 1850's, the country as a whole experienced a broad religious awakening led by Charles J. Finney and others. Friends began to reflect this movement before the Civil War and continued to do so in the decades after the War. Strong preachers emerged, some from within Friends, others coming to Quakerism from other denominations, but almost all influenced by the revivalist movement—Sybil Jones, John Henry Douglas, David D. Updegraph, and others. Groups of young people in Friends Meetings and schools held moving sessions of Bible study and prayer.[19]

The new members drawn into Friends Meetings needed special counsel and nurture. To provide such nurture, ministers were appointed and "freed" from their usual occupations by small stipends from the Meeting treasury. Gradually such selected and paid leaders were given other pastorial duties, and so arose the "pastoral system" within the "Gurneyite" Yearly Meeting.

The connection between revival meetings and the growth of the pastoral system is well illustrated by figures given by Errol Elliott.

> In 1886 one hundred and forty revivals were held in Indiana Yearly Meeting with 3,600 conversions and nearly 2,000 seeking membership . . . . The Yearly Meeting was asked "to take some step to assist in supplying this need for more pastoral

work in our Meetings." By 1889 fifty-two Meetings were under pastoral care with ministers in full-time pastoral work.

By 1890, the calling of ministers into full-time service was generally approved among "Gurneyite" Yearly Meetings, and by 1902, the year Five Years Meeting was organized, "the system was in to stay."[20]

The evangelical movement among American Friends resulted not only in a revivalistic outreach and the pastoral system at home but in substantial foreign mission work abroad. Begun in the 1870s by individual Friends, mission ventures were adopted by Yearly Meetings and in 1894, coordinated under the American Friends Board of Foreign Mission (see chart, left column). The work has continued to the present time, with the recently formed Evangelical Friends Mission sharing supervision with the Wider Ministries Commission of FUM (successor to the AFBFM).

Vigorous and lasting Friends Yearly Meetings, under indigenous leadership, have grown out of the mission ventures of the evangelical wing of American Quakerism: in East Africa, Bolivia and Peru, Central America, Jamaica, Cuba, India, the Middle East, Alaska, Taiwan. Exact figures are unavailable, but it seems certain that upward of 100,000 people of the so-called "Third World" are members of the world family of Friends through mission activities initiated by American Friends.

REASSOCIATION

But wide diversification does not tell the whole story of Quakerism in North America. With diversification came new movements of association and cooperation. Both the "Gurneyite" and the "Hicksite" Yearly Meetings felt the need for better understanding and mutual support in their common purposes and concerns.

Within some "Gurneyite" Yearly Meetings there had grown confusion as to where a line should be drawn between the practices of an evangelical sort of Quakerism and those of more traditional Protestant churches. Some ardent "Gurneyite" leaders had begun to feel drawn toward such rites as Baptism and the Lord's Supper in their outward expression as perhaps necessary elements of a true Christianity.[21]

Seeking to clear up such confusion and at the same time state

their evangelical view of Quakerism, leaders of 11 "Orthodox" Yearly Meetings met in Richmond, Indiana, in 1887 and drew up what has come to be known as the "Richmond Declaration." While recognizing the inward and spiritual significance of such Christian practices as Baptism and Communion, the statement did not view them as ordinances to be outwardly observed by Friends. Otherwise, it emphasized, in rather traditional language, a strongly scriptural and Christological interpretation of Quakerism. However well this "declaration" succeeded as a definitive statement of the Quaker faith (and some Yearly Meetings represented at the conference refrained from adopting it as such) it served as a stabilizing factor and rallying point for evangelical Friends in North America.[22]

In 1902, after several preliminary meetings, ten "Gurneyite" Yearly Meetings joined to form a general plenary body, Five Years Meeting (now the triennial Friends United Meeting). They adopted a uniform discipline (which owed much to the statemanship of Rufus M. Jones) and combined several old and new boards to carry out common concerns. These included foreign missions, Indian and Negro affairs, peace, evangelism and education.[23]

Meanwhile, a number of "Hicksite" Yearly Meetings began to work together in common concerns. In 1868, leaders of First Day Schools met to confer on matters of religious education. In 1881, the Friends Union for Philanthropic Labor brought together Friends who had been active in the Underground Railroad prior to the Civil War and who were now working for peace and social reform in a number of areas. These included child welfare, equal rights, industrial conditions, temperance, prison reform and work on behalf of Negroes and Indians. In 1893, the Friends Religious Conference was formed to advance the spiritual life of Friends and consider the Quaker faith in relationship to world religions. In 1894, Friends with special responsibility for Friends schools and colleges formed the Friends Education Conference. In 1900, these four groups—which had often held their meetings at the same time and place—met at Chatauqua, New York, and adopted a new, over-all form of organization: Friends General Conference. Representatives from several "Hicksite" Yearly Meetings joined in establishing this new body, whose present standing committees correspond, in a general way, to its organizational forerunners.

Friends General Conference emphasizes the Inner Light, the Christ Within, as a central conviction of Friends and values the traditional form of Quaker worship based on expectant waiting for divine guidance. It recognizes that the divine leading may bring about diversity of approach both within the Society of Friends and the Christian family as a whole. Not a legislative body, it is governed by a broadly-representative Central Committee, based in Philadelphia, which meets regularly throughout the year. It performs common services for Friends of its persuasion, such as publication of literature, aid to new meetings and the furthering of ecumenical relations. It arranges for a biennial (now an annual) gathering of Friends for mutual inspiration, education, sharing, and advancement of the faith of Friends.[24]

Conservative Friends, represented by three Yearly Meetings, have never had a central organization, such as FUM and FGC. Yet they have always had a strong sense of identity, which is valued not only within their own Meetings, but by sympathetic Friends in other Yearly Meetings and in England. Their Meetings have shared in the general renewal of Quakerism which has taken place in the twentieth century. In 1965, they held a general conference in Barnesville, Ohio. Other conferences, for mutual inspiration and sharing, have been held since that time.[25]

A FURTHER BRANCHING

In the latter half of the twentieth century, a further branching took place within the evangelical wing of American Quakerism. In 1956, concerned Friends of a number of Yearly Meetings, wishing to stress more specifically the evangelical motivation in Christianity, formed the Association of Evangelical Friends. In 1965, four Yearly Meetings of this persuasion (two of which had belonged to FUM) joined formally to establish the Evangelical Friends Alliance. The Alliance adopted a constitution involving statements of purpose, faith, policy and procedure.[26]

The segment called "Independent" is, in the words of the FWCC *Directory,* "a category of convenience" to indicate yearly meetings not of the other "branches" shown in the drawing. They here include Central, Pacific, North Pacific and Intermountain Yearly Meetings. The horizontal lines in the chart show the preconnections of these bodies with other branches: Central with

Five Years Meeting from which it withdrew in 1926; Pacific with FGC, 5YM and Conservative Friends through several of its founding Monthly Meetings. The earliest of these was San Jose, originally a Preparative Meeting (1873) of an Iowa Conservative Quarter. Others include University Meeting, Seattle, which stemmed from Friends Memorial Meeting established in 1907 by Indiana Yearly Meeting (5YM); and Orange Grove, Pasadena, and Berkeley Meetings, recognized by Race Street, Philadelphia (FGC), respectively in 1907 and 1914.[27]

A QUAKER RENAISSANCE

Around the turn of the century, a remarkable renaissance took place in Quakerism on both sides of the Atlantic, led by such Friends as John Wilhelm Rowntree in England and Rufus M. Jones in the United States. A new Quaker literature, historical and expository, was developed which made vivid for twentieth century minds the richness of the Quaker heritage.[28] The power of the inner-directed Quaker meeting was rediscovered by people seeking divine guidance, individual and collective, in the modern world. The relevance of Quaker testimonies on peace, simplicity and equality, in the face of the social crises of the twentieth century, became apparent.

New organizations appeared. Formed in Philadelphia in 1917, the American Friends Service Committee crossed sectarian lines within and beyond Quakerism in opening channels for life-nurturing service to people opposed to war and the war effort. Continuing as a religiously-motivated service body, it became an important new expression of the Quaker faith. A sister organization, designed especially for work in the political field, the Friends Committee on National Legislation, was formed in Richmond, Indiana, in 1943. In 1930, Pendle Hill was established near Philadelphia as a spiritual retreat and adult study center. (Earlham School of Religion was founded in Richmond, Indiana, in 1960.) New sorts of projects evolved: international seminars on college campuses and in political capitals around the world, domestic and international work camps for young people, a permanent Quaker center and mission at the United Nations. Among the distinguised leaders, British and American, of this modern Quaker movement (besides Jones and Rowntree) were

Henry T. Hodgkin, William C. Braithwaite, Paul Sturge, H. G. Wood, Alfred C. Garrett, Henry J. Cadbury, Clarence Pickett, Howard and Anna Brinton, Thomas Kelly, D. Elton Trueblood, Douglas V. Steere and others.

New Meetings were formed and older Meetings invigorated. College and urban centers proved fallow ground for new Meetings, which often drew members from the professions: education, the social services, the arts, government, law, medicine. Across the country, associations of such meetings grew into Yearly Meetings: Pacific in 1947 (later divided into Pacific, North Pacific and Intermountain); South Central, 1961; Southeastern, 1962; Lake Erie, 1963. And this process is continuing.[29]

Meanwhile, the varied branches of Friends drew together for certain common purposes. As early as 1910, Young Friends of a number of Yearly Meetings began to hold summer conferences, a movement which resulted in time in the Young Friends of North America, with representation from all branches of Friends. More and more, the international work of Friends, both in service and mission, called for a world Quaker organization. In 1922, a world conference of Friends was held at Oxford, England and in 1937, at a second world conference at Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, the Friends World Committee for Consultation was formed.

A connecting and enabling, rather than a governing body, the FWCC has proved to be the most catalytic of Quaker organizations in relating Friends of different branches. It brings Friends together in its own annual and triennial sessions, in this country and elsewhere. It arranges all-Friends conference of varied scope—regional, national, hemispheric and world. It provides common services, such as publication of Friends directories and handbooks and aid to traveling Friends. When called upon, it is often able to provide staff for projects involving the varied bodies of Friends.[30]

A number of reunions took place among the separated strands. In 1945, the divided groups in New England were reunited and, in 1955, those in Canada and New York. In 1955 also came the historic reunion which brought about again a single Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. Baltimore became a united Yearly Meeting in 1968. As the twentieth century is approaching a close, it may be said that "Hicksite" and "Orthodox" are terms which should be taken as largely historic in significance.

CROSS-FERTILIZATION

With the drawing together of varied strands, a sort of cross-fertilization has been taking place in American Quakerism. About 1950, the Superintendents and Executive Secretaries of the Yearly Meetings began to meet annually in an informal conference for fellowship, workshop and sharing. This useful gathering continues to this day.[31] In 1957, at the invitation of the FWCC, a conference of Friends in the Americas was held in Germantown, Ohio. Twenty years later, with increased representation of Friends from Central and South America, a conference attended by 800 Friends was held at Wichita, Kansas.

The interaction of Friends of diverse persuasions has stimulated a renewed interest in the theology of Quakerism. In the late 1950's, some concerned Friends established an informal organization, the Quaker Theological Discussion Group, "to explore more fully the meaning and implications of our Quaker faith and religious experience." The QTDG holds annual conferences and publishes a quarterly journal, now in its 20th volume: *Quaker Religious Thought*.[32]

In 1970, inspired by a recent national conference of evangelicals, Friends of the evangelical wing of Quakerism invited appointed delegates of all Yearly Meetings to a conference in St. Louis to "The Future of Quakerism." Out of this widely representative gathering grew the "Faith and Life Movement." Through a central committee, this movement selected a national panel to study critical issues among Friends and arranged for inter-Yearly Meeting conferences. Over the next decade or so, five study booklets were published by the panel and eight regional and one national conference was held. In 1982, as having served its purpose, the Faith and Life Movement was laid down.[33]

Beginning in 1973, representatives of the mission and service bodies of Friends have undertaken to meet in international conferences approximately every three years, to share information and to understand better their interrelated tasks.[34] In 1977, a national program, "New Call to Peacemaking," initiated by an evangelical Friend, Norval Hadley, brought together Friends, Brethren and Mennonites in a continuing effort to enlist Christians of all denominations in the cause of peace in a world threatened by nuclear destruction. The "New Call" has held several national conferences and stimulated numerous regional meetings in cooperation with other church bodies.[35] In 1975, In

Dallas, Texas, the Friends Ministers Conference was formed to study more fully the role of Friends with special responsibility in ministry. Open to ministers in "upprogrammed" Meetings as well as pastors of "programmed" Meetings, it meets nationally every five years for study, fellowship, sharing and inspiration.[36]

Education, both religious and general, has been a strong concern of Friends from early times. Outstanding institutions of learning have grown from this concern. In America, a number of these institutions have evolved through secondary to the higher levels of education. As this is written, sixteen Quaker-established schools in the United States are listed as institutions of higher learning. They cover a wide range from Haverford College (1833) through George Fox (1891) and Friends Bible College (1917) to Pendle Hill (1930) and Friends World College (1965). Some of the more distinguished colleges have reflected the trend to over-secularization which many church-founded institutions have experienced in modern times. In 1980, at Wilmington College, the Friends Association for Higher Education was formed. Its aim is to strengthen the original spiritual dimension of Quaker higher education and seek to bring about closer relations both among Quaker institutions themselves and between them and the general Society of Friends. The Association held its fourth annual conference in June, 1983, at Haverford. It represents still another linkage amongst the varied strands of Quakerism in North America.[37]

The cross-fertilization, perhaps reaching only certain levels or areas of Friends, is evidence of the latent power in Quakerism.

In summary, Quakerism in North America, through its varied and relatively autonomous segments, relates to a wide spectrum of the Christian movement and to society in general: yet, in being part of the movement called "Friends" or "Quaker," it has a certain identity of its own. From such a make-up has come a diversity of results, ranging from pastoral Friends Churches on the one hand to unprogrammed Friends meetings on the other; from the Berea Bible Institute in Chiquimula, Guatemala, to the Zen-Christian Colloquium in Japan; from participation of Friends in the National Association of Evangelicals to membership in the World Committee of Churches.

ECUMENICAL QUAKERISM

How should we react to this variegated shape of Quakerism in North America? In a similar inquiry Douglas Steere has suggested that there are roughly four ways in which we may respond. One is to go our own way within our particular circle of Quakerism, indifferent to other ways. Another is to assume that our way is the only correct one and to seek to win every one to this view. A third is to try to meld, or dovetail, the various ways into one composite way. A fourth is to continue, as we are led, to act from and within our own stream of Quakerism, but to be open to dialogue and a common seeking with Friends of other persuasions, trusting that God may throw further light on all our paths.

It is this last, which may be called the ecumenical way, that I believe can be most productive in our relationships both within the Religious Society of Friends and, beyond Friends, with other Christians and with people of other religious faiths.

Our differences, whether of theology or practice, are important, so we must try to understand them in the light of our mutual experience and continue to articulate and examine our convictions. If we are troubled by such terms as *Christian or Jesus Christ,* is it because of the actual figure or spirit of Christ or because of claims made by others—other churches or individuals—concerning these terms? If we are troubled by the term the *Inward Light* used to signify divine Truth in a universal sense, is it because of doubt of the existence of such Truth or because it is not always stated in certain Christian terms?

What is the meaning for us of such words as these from the rich treasury of our heritage: the *Inward light, Jesus Christ, the historic Christ, the Bible, the cosmic Christ, the Universal and Saving Light, God, Truth, "Spirit which was before Scripture," Holy Spirit, "love the first motion," mystical, "secretly reached by the Life," "overcome the contrary," "answer that of God in every one," faithfulness, obedience, power in stillness, power in the spoken word, meeting, church, simplicity, harmony, equality, clearness, liberty, guidance, way, opening, stop, evangelical, rational, social, "experimentally," convinced, established, "principle which is pure," witness, concern, "life may preach."* How is God dealing with us in ways suggested by these and other terms, and what may we learn from God's dealings with others?

NOTES

1. The diversity of Friends in England is recognized, in a sense, by London Yearly Meeting's listing of a variety of "Informal Quaker Groups" (24 as of May, 1983). Many of these reflect varied interests and orientations, but some six or seven, such as The Quaker Universalist Group and the "New Foundation" Fellowship, have to do with theological attitudes. The list is available from Quaker Home Service, Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ, England. See also "In Essentials Unity," by David Gray, *Friends Quarterly*, July, 1982.
2. *Friends in the Americas*, Francis Hall, editor, Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas, Philadelphia, 1976, p. 7.
3. Rufus M. Jones, *The Later Periods of Quakerism*, Macmillan, London, 1921, V. I, p. 436.
4. Elbert Russell, *The History of Quakerism*, Macmillan, New York, 1942, p. 282.
5. Errol T. Elliott, *Quakers on the American Frontier*, Friends United Press, Richmond, IN, 1969. See especially Chapter 11, "The Century of Change."
6. *Ibid.* p. 382.
7. *The Journal of George Fox*, John L. Nickalls, editor, University Press, Cambridge, 1952, p. 33.
8. *Ibid*, p. 11.
9. *Ibid*, p. 263.
10. See chart, also Jones, *Later Periods*, V. I., Chapter 12; and Russell, *History* Chapters 22 an 23.
11. Jones, *Later Periods*, V. I, 271, 272.
12. Russell, *History*, 322.
13. Jones, *Later Periods*, V. I, 511-515; Russell, *History*, 351-353.
14. Russell, *History*, 338.
15. Jones, *Later Periods*, V. II, 492-505; Russell, *History*, 329-341.
16. Jones, *Later Periods*, V. I, 524-537; Russell, *History*, 352-356; Elliott, *Quakers on Frontier*, chart op. p. 382. Especially turbulent scenes accompanied the separation in Ohio during the Yearly Meeting at Mount Pleasant in the fall of 1828. In the fall of 1979—151 years later—some 200 Friends, representing all Quakers in Ohio, including those of the 1854 division, came together in a "healing gathering" initiated by D. Elton Trueblood.
17. *Friends in Americas*, Chapter 5.
18. Russell, *History*, 434.
19. *Ibid.*, Chapter 31.
20. Elliott, *Quakers on Frontier*, 257.

21. Jones, *Later Periods,* V. II, 982-930; Russell, *History,* 488, 489.
22. Jones, *Later Periods, V. II, 930-932; Russell, History,* 489-491.
23. Francis B. Hall, "Friends United Meeting, *Friends in Americas,* Chapter 2. For further information, write Friends United Meeting, 101 Quaker Hill Drive, Richmond, IN 47374.
24. Howard W. Bartram, "Friends General Conference," *Friends in Americas,* Chapter 3. Or write Friends General Conference, 520-B Race St., Philadelphia, PA 19102.
25. William P. Taber, "Conservative Friends," *Friends in Americas,* Chapter 5.
26. Arthur O. Roberts, "Evangelical Friends Alliance," *Friends in Americas,* Chapter 4. Or write Evangelical Friends Alliance, 2018 Maple, Wichita, KS 62713.
27. See David C. LeShana, *Quakers in California,* Chapters 4, 6, 8, for originals of Pacific Yearly Meeting
28. Pioneering the new Quaker literature was the monumental "Rowntree Series of Quaker Histories," conceived by John Wilhelm Rowntree and Rufus Jones, but on the death of the former, largely carried out by Rufus Jones. See bibliography for books in this series.
29. The current FWCC *Friends Directory* and *Handbook: Finding Friends Around the World,* give addresses of contemporary Quaker organizations and statistical data on the Religious Society of Friends.
30. Office of the FWCC, Section of the Americas, is at 1506 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102.
31. *Quaker Religious Thought* is published at Rt. 1, Box 549, Alburtis, PA 18011.
32. The Faith and Life booklet series is distributed by the Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas, 1506 Race St., Philadelphia, PA 19102. See bibliography for titles in the series.
34. For information on Mission and Service Conferences, write FWCC, World Office, Drayton House, 30 Gordon St., London WCIH OAX.
35. For information write Edgar Metzler, National Coordinator, New Call to Peacemaking, Elkhart, IN 46515.
36. The Third Friends Ministers Conference is to be held May 2-6, 1985, at the Bismarck Hotel, Chicago, IL. For information write 1985 Ministers Conference, 101 Quaker Hill Dr., Richmond, IN 47374.
37. For information on Friends Association for Higher Education write 17118 Quaker Lane, Sandy Spring, MD 20860

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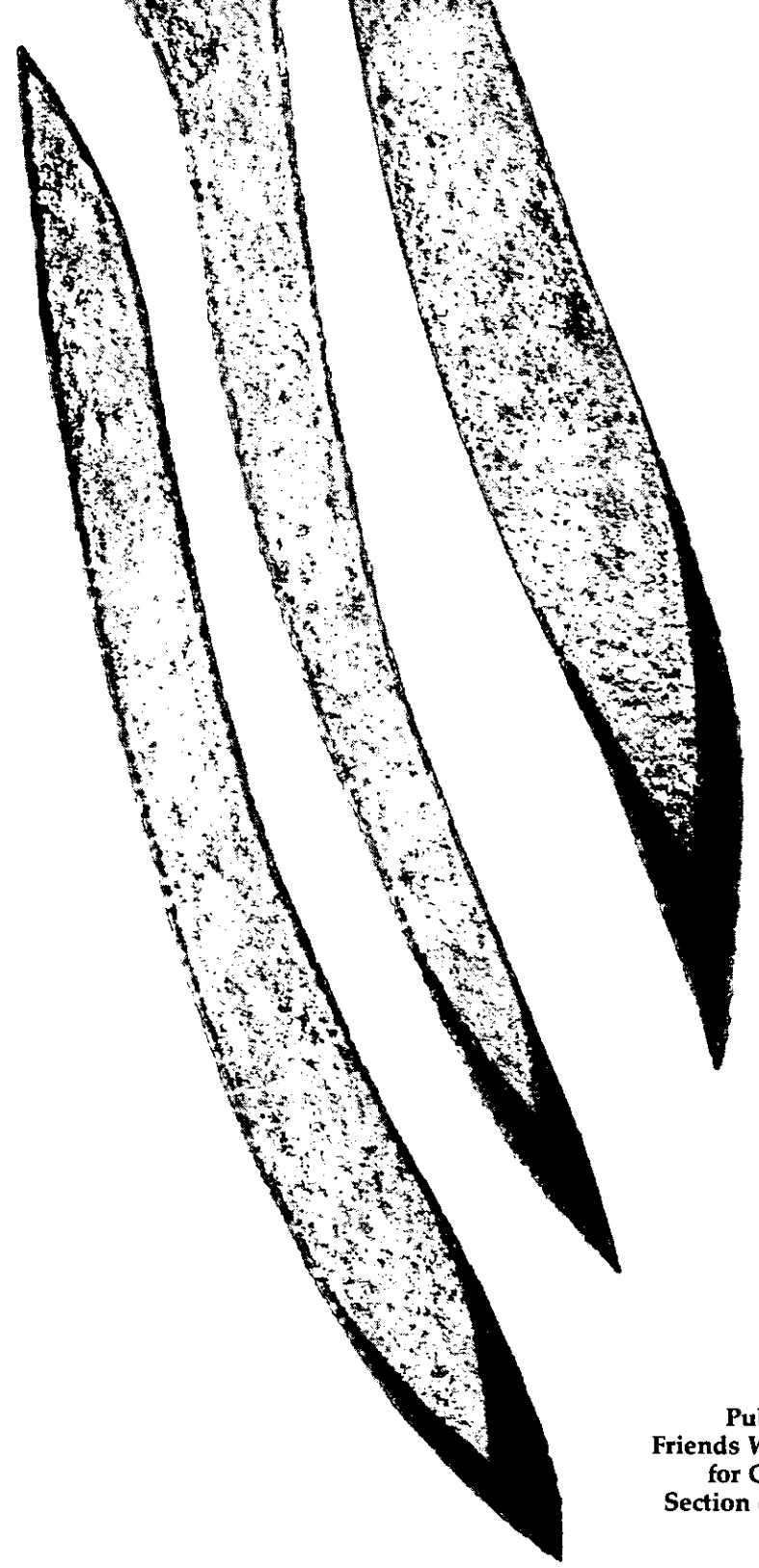

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