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CONSERVATIVE FRIENDS

WILLIAM F. RUSHBY

Conservative Friends are one of the smallest and least understood of Quaker denominations. My paper will sketch the history of Conservative Quakerism, and identify some of its significant features. I shall then address the “politics of identity” among Conservative Friends and their future as a group.¹

CONSERVATIVE QUAKER ORIGINS

Conservative Friends emerged at different times, in diverse places and for a variety of reasons.² The “smaller body” of New England Yearly Meeting was established in 1845, after South Kingston Meeting was dissolved by Rhode Island Quarter. South Kingston had refused to disown John Wilbur (1774-1856), one of its ministers, who ardently opposed evangelical innovations and the ministry of Joseph John Gurney (1788-1847).

This split touched off further divisions as other Orthodox bodies had to decide which New England group to recognize. Ohio Yearly Meeting (Conservative) (OYM) was founded in 1855 after such a struggle. Wilburite and Gurneyite factions in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Orthodox) (PYM (O)) also battled over epistles and credentials, but finally refused all official recognition of other yearly meetings and their ministers, to avoid a schism. Minor divisions followed, producing various groups of “Primitive Friends”.³

A further round of separations began in 1877, as Gurneyite bodies split over issues of revivalism, paid ministry and, later, acceptance of the Five Years Meeting Uniform Discipline. This resulted in divisions in Iowa (1877), Western (1878), Kansas (1879), Canada (1881) and North Carolina (1904) Yearly Meetings. A small group withdrew from London Yearly Meeting, forming the Fritchley General Meeting around 1868.⁴

Conservative Friends were part of the larger Wilburite movement. They networked informally with the Philadelphia Orthodox, who published the *Friend* (Philadelphia), the principal organ of Wilburite Friends. Philadelphia also sponsored the Tunesassa Indian outreach

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in New York State, eventually staffed almost entirely by Ohio Conservative Friends.⁵ Friends Boarding School (now “Olney”) served students from many traditionalist bodies.

The Hicksite yearly meetings formed an umbrella organization in 1900, and the Gurneyites, with some exceptions, followed suit in 1902. The Conservative Friends finally adopted a common doctrinal statement in 1913, but never developed a comprehensive *organizational* framework. Beginning in 1945, some Conservative groups merged with other Quaker bodies. Without an umbrella Conservative organization to affiliate with, Wilburite Friends in these united yearly meetings became officially invisible.

Wilburite Friends in the nineteenth century were a patchwork of groups, with diverse origins and varying degrees of mutual affiliation. As I see it, the fragmented character of the movement contributed to its organizational difficulties and eventual decline. At present there are only three Conservative yearly meetings and a few unaffiliated local meetings.

HISTORICAL TRENDS AND TENDENCIES

Drift toward Liberalism. Rufus Jones’ (1863-1948) reformulation of Quaker faith swept across American Orthodox Quakerism during the early 1900s. He was headquartered at Haverford College, a Philadelphia Orthodox institution. His movement broke down doctrinal orthodoxy and cultural conservatism among Friends with astonishing rapidity. A paradigm shift occurred, from supernaturalist biblicism to this-worldly mysticism. The Bible, the Quaker peculiarities and the concept of missions lost ground, while mysticism, social action and religious universalism became a new Quaker consensus. PYM(O)’s retreat from orthodoxy curtailed its leadership among Wilburite Friends. When the two Philadelphia yearly meetings merged, official Philadelphia Orthodox Quakerism disappeared. It had already mostly succumbed to liberalism.⁶

The new paradigm took root more slowly among Conservative Friends. Unanimity in decision-making enabled traditionalists to maintain the old order on paper, but not to preserve it in everyday practice. In OYM a cleavage developed between the “official religion,” as expressed by the Book of Discipline, and the “lived religion” of many rank and file members.⁷ In 1963, progressives rewrote the

Discipline, broadening and liberalizing the Meeting of Ministers and Elders.⁸ These measures gave OYM a more “mainstream” look.

Attempts were made in the 60s to bring liberal meetings into OYM, and align it with Lake Erie Yearly Meeting. The two groups even held some concurrent sessions at Barnesville. Significant differences in theology, ritual practice and cultural outlook proved to be deal breakers. Only Cleveland Meeting joined both Ohio and Lake Erie, and this affiliation was terminated when Salem Quarterly Meeting objected to Cleveland’s solemnization of a same-sex union. Other area “college meetings” affiliated only with Lake Erie Friends.

The OYM-liberal connection is now more subtle. The OYM Friends Center often features Friends General Conference (FGC) members as workshop leaders. Earlham School of Religion personnel seem to run second, with Conservative Friends third. Evangelical Friends and Mennonites are almost never used. The liberal tilt is obvious.

Cyrus W. Harvey (1843-1916), the Kansas Conservative firebrand, fiercely opposed Gurneyism and sought out Hicksite Friends, who shared his emphasis on the Inward Light. This mission took him to the Friends General Conference and all of the Hicksite yearly meetings over a period of ten years, beginning in 1898.⁹ Harvey’s foray into Quaker liberalism might seem like a curious aberration, but it presaged a persistent impulse among Conservative Friends.

Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) (IYM) declined in numbers and vitality during the early twentieth century.¹⁰ The old religious traditions were largely a spent force, and some searched for alternatives to a cultural nonconformity they could not espouse. Others lamented Iowa’s thinning numbers, and welcomed new “college meetings”. The newcomers’ liberalism was easy to overlook when theology was implicit and practice was exalted over doctrine.

With no FGC organization in Iowa, the new college meetings joined IYM. Urban groups soon outnumbered the rural meetings, and became dominant after the 1960s. The traditionalists were a shrinking and defensive minority, and are now mostly gone.¹¹

North Carolina Yearly Meeting (NCYM) is a different case. Some “college meetings” there joined the Conservative yearly meeting as in Iowa. But later, they and other new unprogrammed meetings created the FGC-affiliated Piedmont Friends Fellowship (PFF). Affiliation

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with Piedmont enabled unprogrammed meetings to bypass the Conservatives altogether.

My impression is that NCYM has become more tolerant of Christians than Iowa.¹² Even as the old conservatives passed on, liberal Christians have experienced growing influence.

Theological Erosion. When the Wilburite Friends separated from the Gurneyites, both groups shared many basic evangelical doctrines. In John Wilbur's *Letters to George Crosfield*, he asserts that "the plan of salvation and redemption" consists of (1) repentance, (2) the blood of Christ which atones, and (3) the Holy Spirit which sanctifies.¹³ Unlike Elias Hicks' (1748-1830) theology, Wilbur's religious outlook was perpetuated for many decades by his followers.

The 1913 Conservative Friends' doctrinal statement explicitly identifies Conservative Friends "with other evangelical religious bodies".¹⁴ On paper, the continuity with earlier Orthodox Quakerism remained strong, but it had weakened in actual practice.

Mildred Binns Young (1901-95), reared in the Salem OH Conservative meeting, comments on the culture of her childhood meeting:

We never discussed the Scriptures either at home or at school, and there was no First Day school.(8)...I do not think I was taught much, or perhaps anything, about sin when I was a child. (23)... I do not remember being given at home or at meeting, any explanations about Jesus, what I was to think about him, believe about him, how to attempt to fit him into my own life... I remember with what horror I first heard, at seventeen or so, that some people thought Christ had atoned for *our* sins by dying on the Cross.¹⁵

Salem Friends did read the Bible, but there was apparently little attempt to exposit what was read.

Spoken ministry, as Young remembers it, was hortatory and not doctrinal in focus. She was not taught to think rationally about her faith, or to give it explicit expression. Young's lack of exposure to basic Christian doctrine bespeaks the theological erosion which has occurred among Conservative Friends.

Callie Marsh reports on an interview with an Iowa Friend:

Paul Rockwell told me his parents taught him through example, which was effective education in terms of moral values...

‘But’ he went on, ‘I never knew what was supposed to happen in meeting for worship. For me, it was simply an exercise in somehow keeping still for an hour, nothing more.’¹⁶

Comments of this kind are only anecdotal evidence, but they abound.

A peculiar feature of Conservative Quakerism is its implicit theology.¹⁷ Traditionally, faith has been institutionalized as a system of norms and habits, which were taken for granted, infrequently verbalized and rarely scrutinized.

Betty Ward comments about the Conservative Friends at Borden SK:

I get the feeling from the young people that they have never been told what it means to be a Quaker. Their elders seem to have assumed that they would learn the faith through some kind of osmosis.¹⁸

Her observation is consistent with reports from other Wilburite communities, and the loss of young people is similar also.

Without an organized teaching ministry, with no hymnody and, until recently, no disciplined Bible study to inculcate the symbolism and cognitive map of their faith, Conservative Friends were poorly equipped to transmit their belief system to the next generation, or to evangelize outside their ranks.¹⁹

There are situations where doctrinal issues move unavoidably to the forefront. One was the nomination of a non-Christian to serve as Clerk of IYM. His appointment was eventually approved, but at the expense of some membership losses to the yearly meeting.²⁰

In Ohio, Olney Friends School was the lightning rod for doctrinal conflict for several decades. In the late 60s and early 70s, charismatics and liberal Friends skirmished repeatedly. Later, some Christian OYM members and a group of liberals (some OYM members, some Olney alumni) struggled for years for control of the school. These people did not want to leave religious, or anti-religious, socialization of the young to the vagaries of osmosis! Some of them also recognized the influence school personnel have had on the yearly meeting, including its theology.

In Iowa and Ohio, same-sex issues have brought doctrinal differences to the forefront and made them very explicit. Conflict over “hot” issues heightens theological sensitivities, and exposes covert power struggles to the light of day.²¹

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Conservative Friends have a reputation for being Christ-centered and biblically-oriented. In fact, liberalism has exerted far more influence over this branch of Friends than is often thought.

Institutionalism. Conservative Quakerism represents back-to-basics Christianity. Ironically, Olney, whose original mission was lost long ago, has become an entrenched institution. Keeping the school running has claimed an enormous amount of energy and resources.

OYM's "lost generation", adolescents in the 60s and 70s, is now the primary bearer of this institutional legacy. Many of them, but not all, became liberal under Olney influence, and shifted their loyalty from meetinghouse to schoolhouse! A few continue to be involved with the yearly meeting, sometimes primarily in asset-related roles.

The boarding schools have been players in Conservative Friends' identity struggles in Ohio and, to a lesser extent, in Iowa. An Olney mailing stated quite succinctly: "...the core Quaker belief that there is 'that of God' in everyone shapes community life at Olney." This is, of course, the "core Quaker belief" of *liberal* Friends.

Another aspect of the school is less obvious. Conservative Friends have no paid clergy or staff. School personnel perform "gatekeeper" tasks handled by church bureaucrats in other Quaker groups. These school personnel have mostly been more liberal than other yearly meeting members, and serve as conduits for mainstream Quaker influence on Conservative Friends. Olney's gatekeeper function continues even though it is now independent. Note that the yearly meeting's mailing address is still "c/o Olney Friends School."

Loss of Nonconformity. After a long history of uncertain commitment to plain dress, plainness was dropped by other Friends but retained by Wilburites. For many decades, it has been a flash point of conflict in Conservative circles.

The garb symbolically expresses tension between Quaker faith and secular culture. Those who want to "mainstream" their faith often find the distinctive garb odious. Others, who see Conservative Friends as a "peculiar people," regard it as indispensable. Plain dress is a symbol of identity and a boundary marker. Current ambivalence toward it reflects Conservative Friends' uncertainty about their religious tradition as a whole.

NEW DIRECTIONS

The “Conservative” Brand. Thus far, the three surviving yearly meetings have retained their Conservative identification, though Ohio has deleted the term from its title. Iowa and North Carolina Friends once considered affiliating with the FGC, but this is apparently not a live issue at present.

Iowa Friends have mostly abandoned the Christ-centered and biblically-engaged theology of earlier Conservative Friends.²² Historical sketches of IYM reveal a preoccupation with issues of practice, with less concern about questions of belief. Iowa Friends retain Conservative Friends’ traditional approach to conducting business meetings and a non-bureaucratic atmosphere. We might dub them “procedural Conservatives.”²³ There are some new Quaker fellowships outside of Iowa’s historical territory which have affiliated with IYM rather than FGC. They apparently prefer Iowa’s more traditional style.

North Carolina Yearly Meeting is liberal, but there seems to be a significant Christian and tradition-oriented momentum. Since the year 2000, the yearly meeting has published an online journal, articulating its view of Conservative Quakerism.²⁴ NCYM’s most visible leader has argued for a rediscovery of Quakerism’s Christian roots and its traditional forms.²⁵

The PFF (forming an FGC yearly meeting in 2015) serves Quaker liberals, taking pressure off of NCYM to represent this constituency.²⁶ North Carolina Friends might move in a traditionalist direction, at the risk of losing some liberal meetings. NCYM is attracting outsiders interested in its version of Conservative Quakerism. The viability of liberal-conservative Quakerism probably depends on how radically the FGC departs from its traditional Quaker moorings.

NCYM’s membership statistics are no longer available for public scrutiny. Chuck Fager suggests that demographic trends do not auger well for the older, more traditional meetings.²⁷

The most enigmatic Conservative yearly meeting is Ohio. It stands alone among unprogrammed yearly meetings as an unapologetically Christian faith community. However, a cleavage exists between the Christian majority and a liberal minority.

In the past “guarded” ingroup education and endogamous marriage were significant in recruiting many young people into membership.

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Sometime after World War II, this strategy lost its efficacy. In Ohio nowadays, few young people commit themselves to Conservative Friends, and these usually come from theologically orthodox families.

When a church's traditional recruitment strategy breaks down, it must quickly retool or face demographic collapse. OYM has not responded to this crisis effectively. Thanks to birthright and affiliate categories, the group's membership list includes lots of "free riders," masking its actual losses.

Decline of Local Meetings. An OYM leader once told me that Friends found their local meetings "boring." Neglect of the local meeting is not an option for a healthy church. Olney, affiliate membership and the OYM Friends Center can never substitute for the local "school of the prophets"!

Reinvigorating local meetings is critical for renewal of Conservative Quakerism. Some meetings have dwindled until they have only two regular attenders. Chastened by declining membership, Conservative Friends may be ready to learn from other denominations how to nurture local congregations.

Several years ago the Chesterhill (actually named "Chesterfield") meeting in Ohio almost died out. Two couples from other meetings became regular visitors at Chesterhill. They also worked on renovating the building. Their effort helped to rebuild the meeting, which is now self-sustaining.²⁸

Something like this is also going on in the West Grove Meeting in North Carolina. Attempts to strengthen local meetings should be the norm, not the exception!

"Newcomers". Since the 1960s', outsiders have shown persistent interest in OYM. These seekers have been called "newcomers" or, more pejoratively, "imports" by some natives.

The newcomers were mostly young, and more conservative than many birthright Friends. The OYM leadership viewed them with suspicion and anxiety. The often-expressed aspiration to bring "young people" into the yearly meeting, as it turns out, meant members' children and grandchildren, not strangers with outdated clothing and alien ideas!

Religious differences in OYM, and anxiety over the influx of outsiders, made accepting the new demographic difficult. Yearly meeting members were bound together by kinship and a common

bond to Olney. Many found it hard to accept outsiders who shared neither of these ties.²⁹

The newcomers frequently challenged what had been taken for granted. Liberalism at Olney and disciplinary problems there were a focus of controversy for many years. Most old-timers venerated the school, and found the criticism painful. It took a transfer of school ownership to Olney's avid supporters, accomplished by irregular procedures, to reduce conflict over the school. Olney still has a significant under-the-radar influence on OYM.

While some Ohio meetings are dying, new Conservative groups have started. Small OYM meetings have been established in Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Virginia. A few other fellowships are also emerging. Affiliates and fellow travelers have begun meetings in Great Britain and Greece. All told, these groups represent a small number of people. Whether they can gain significant traction is not yet apparent. Without these newcomers, OYM may soon be history.

Some inquirers want to relate to Conservative Friends, but live far from a congenial meeting. Under the influence of the Rockingham meeting, a category of "affiliate members" was created, and seekers from distant places have joined OYM on this basis. The Rockingham meeting has a total membership of over fifty, but only a few resident members.

Iowa and North Carolina have also recently attracted new meetings preferring a Conservative affiliation.

The "Mission Field". Liberal Friends seeking a Christian Quaker home are often seen as the Conservative mission field. Such persons are already committed to the Quaker faith, which assures some compatibility.

In other ways, this strategy is problematic. First, seeing liberal Friends as the mission field severely limits outreach. Is "stealing sheep" from the FGC the best mission strategy Conservative Friends can envision? Secondly, liberal Friends, even Christian ones, bring lots of baggage with them, including lifestyles and theological commitments at variance with traditional Conservative Quakerism. Because these recruits are already Friends, this baggage often gets checked in without careful scrutiny. In a small religious group, it does not take many "undigested" newcomers to reshape the theological and cultural contours of the faith community.

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VISIONS OF CONSERVATIVE QUAKER IDENTITY

What happens when the theology, values, and religious practices which formerly defined a religious tradition are devalued, or even discarded, by a majority of group adherents? For many Conservative Friends, their faith seems to be an uncertain, or even uncomfortable, fit. Who are the Conservative Friends, and what is their vision for the future?

Quaker Liberalism. Liberal Quakerism has a persistent appeal for some Conservative Friends. It seems to offer “relevance,” it appeals to the homegrown but disaffected “lost generation,” and it offers the prospect of merging with the more vigorous FGC.

Joining the FGC would spell the end of Wilburite Quakerism. What would working toward a liberal future do for Conservative Friends? It would no doubt compromise our Christian witness and, besides, the FGC already has this turf claimed.

Early Quakerism Revived. Some offer “early Quakerism revived” as the appropriate vision, citing Robert Barclay (1648-1690) as the gold standard for what that means. There were at least two or three versions of Quaker faith and practice that could, depending on the date, be regarded as “early Quakerism.” Does Robert Barclay’s Quakerism, neatly canned in a Mason jar, adequately represent early Friends?

Even if Robert Barclay’s Quakerism could be revived, what would it mean centuries later, in a vastly different world? Also, can we just ignore the *substantial differences* between early Friends and later Wilburites? I would argue that Robert Barclay does not represent Conservative Quakerism in its most dynamic form, and that his is not a good model for the contemporary practice of our faith.

Early Quakerism “Re-visioned”. Lewis Benson’s (1906-86) interpretation of George Fox offers a more compelling vision. Benson rejected Barclay’s elaborate system of theological propositions as a starting point. He looked instead to George Fox’s prophetism.

Fox drew inspiration from the Israelite prophets and prophetism in the primitive Christian church. Benson argued that Fox revived this prophetic Christian tradition, and made it the basis for the Society of Friends.

Benson’s view resonates deeply with the Conservative Quaker ethos.³⁰ However, Benson’s Quakerism is very cerebral, it is not grounded in traditional Wilburite Friends’ piety, and it offers little

strategy for implementation. So far, Benson's prophetic interpretation of Quakerism has found few advocates among Conservative Friends.

A Quaker "Bridge". Another approach sees liberal unprogrammed Friends and evangelical pastoral Friends as polar ends of a continuum, and positions the Conservatives between these extremes. Wilburites rejected both liberal deism and the Evangelical alternative to it. But, seeing Conservative Friends as a "bridge" between other Quaker traditions ignores the Wilburite tradition's *own integrity*, its historical, cultural and theological particularities, and its claim to represent authentic Quakerism. Conservative Quakerism is not, in essence, some kind of golden mean between other Quaker religiosities.

Pragmatic Evangelicalism. Some Conservative Friends have looked longingly at the vigor of Evangelicalism and Pentecostalism, and have urged borrowing from these traditions. Possible innovations include systematic Bible study, singing, evangelism, paid pastoral leadership and the ordinances.

Conservative Friends have already accepted some of these practices, at least informally. Bible study and congregational singing are found in some OYM meetings, but not incorporated into the regular meeting for worship. In OYM, evangelism is accepted and oftentimes practiced.³¹ (As someone suggested, "Friends do not proselytize" makes a better epitaph for a tombstone than a Quaker church policy!) Some Friends have received water baptism, including a handful of ministers. So far, paid pastoral leadership remains beyond the pale!

In the past, Conservative Friends lacked flexibility and pragmatism. Purism has not worked well, and some borrowing seems indicated. On the other hand, becoming "also-rans" in the evangelical race looks much like becoming liberal "also-rans." Adopting another group's agenda *in toto* will not take us where we want to go.

CONCLUSION

Historically-normed Conservative Quakerism proclaims Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, the critical importance of the Bible, and the continuing relevance of the Quaker tradition. This faith commends itself to serious seekers, and draws them to Conservative meetings. What these inquirers actually find among Conservative Friends is often disappointing. Many Friends have cast aside their own heritage, choosing Quaker liberalism instead. Others are unable to articulate

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their faith, and do not know how to relate to seekers. In Ohio newcomers have frequently run up against kin- and school-related barriers to acceptance, and have been told “you are not one of us.”

Conservative Friends need to address several basic issues before they can move forward. Some I have already identified. But there are others. They equivocate concerning the role of the Bible in the faith community, in an age and culture where such equivocation does not work well. They retain birthright membership, which compromises the integrity of the church. Personal holiness, once viewed as indispensable, is no longer seen by many as essential. Silence and beside-the-point queries are often used as covers for avoiding honest dialogue about serious problems. Back-room maneuvering and manipulation frequently supplant genuine searching together for God’s will. Friends go unchallenged when they confuse their personal agendas with the Shepherd’s voice.

Sometimes, it seems that the Conservative Quaker tradition is *a vision in search of a people!* “Would God that all the Lord’s people were prophets” Num. 29.14 (KJV), and that Conservative Friends would be found among them!

ENDNOTES

1. For a view of Conservative Friends by a leading church spokesman, see Lloyd Lee Wilson, “Conservative Friends, 1845-2010”, *Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies*, ed. Pink Dandelion and Stephen W. Angell, Oxford GB: Oxford University Press, 2013, 126-137.

I wrote the original version of the present paper in 2009. In retrospect, I see that it is critical, with scant attention to the strengths of the Conservative tradition. For more positive assessments of mine, see “Ann Branson and the Eclipse of Oracular Ministry in Nineteenth Century Quakerism”, paper presented at the Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies, Elizabethtown College, June, 2014, and “Cyrus Cooper’s Memorial and the Free Gospel Ministry,” *Quaker History*, 89.1 (Spring, 2000): 28-46.

In “The Quietist Heritage”, *Quaker Religious Thought* #90 18.4 (Autumn, 1980), William Taber and Ruth Pitman celebrate the Wilburite understanding of ministry.

2. Brady, John, “A Short History of Conservative Friends”, Appendix C of Wilmer Cooper, *Growing Up Plain Among Conservative Wilburite Quakers: The Journey of a Public Friend*, Richmond IN and Wallingford PA: Friends United Meeting and Pendle Hill Publications, 1999, 152-172.
3. Morse, Kenneth S. P., *A History of Conservative Friends*, Barnesville OH: by the Author, 1962.
4. For an account of Fritchley General Meeting, see Elizabeth Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, London: Oxford University Press, 1970, 53-60. The Halcyonia meeting in Saskatchewan, Canada, with roots in Fritchley GM, continues as an unaffiliated Conservative meeting.

- See Morse, *History*, 58-60. Also see Betty Ward, *A Community of Friends: The Quakers at Borden*, Regina SK: Hagios Press, 2004.
5. Barton, Lois, *A Quaker Promise Kept: Philadelphia Friends' Work with the Allegheny Senecas, 1795-1960*, Eugene OR: Spencer-Butte Press, 1990,
 6. John H. Howell interprets the Philadelphia Orthodox transition to liberalism in broad historical context. See "War in the Social Order: the Great War and the Liberalization of American Quakerism," *Quaker Theology*, Autumn, 2001, 3.2, 1-7
<<http://quest.quaker.org/issue5-3.html>>. Ruth Pitman offers an Orthodox insider's view of "The 1955 Union and the Future of Friends", *Quaker Religious Thought*, # 116-117, December, 2011, 54-64.
 7. Taber, William, *The Eye of Faith: A History of Ohio Yearly Meeting, Conservative*, Barnesville OH: Representative Meeting of OYM, 1985, 165-216.
 8. Taber, "Growth and Change", *Eye of Faith*, 217-254.
 9. See Cyrus Harvey's comments on his visits to Hicksite meetings in *Friends Intelligencer Supplement*, 09-12-1908, 16.
 10. L. Frank Bedell portrays IYM, as it existed before the influx of urban meetings, in *Quaker Heritage, Friends Coming into the Heartland of America: A Story of Iowa Conservative Yearly Meeting*, Cedar Rapids IA: Privately printed, 1966. His history was officially authorized, but met with strong resistance from a leading liberal in IYM.
 11. Most of the remaining "traditionalist" Friends either died or transferred to OYM during the 70s. The appointment of a non-Christian as IYM Clerk in 1984 resulted in the withdrawal of one meeting and several individuals from the yearly meeting. See Callie Marsh, *A Lively Faith: Reflections on Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends (Conservative)*, Philadelphia: FGC QuakerPress, 2011, 17, 25-28.
 12. Callie Marsh reports that even Iowa Friends are now more receptive to Christian faith than they were in the "late twentieth century." *A Lively Faith*, 24, 32-33.
 13. Wilbur, John, *Republication of the Letters to George Crossfield*, Providence RI: The Continental Printing Company, Printers, 1895, 31-32.
 14. *A Brief Synopsis of the Principles and Testimonies of the Religious Society of Friends*, Barnesville OH: adopted 1912, published 1913, 12.
 15. Young, Midred Binns, *The Candle, The Lantern, The Daylight*, Wallingford PA: Pendle Hill Publications, #116, 1961, 8, 9, 23.
 16. Marsh, Callie, "Friends of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative): Who We Are and What That Might Mean." M.A.thesis, Earlham School of Religion, 2008, 143.
 17. Daniel Lee found a similar implicit theology among the Horning Mennonites in New York. See *Old Order Mennonites: Rituals, Beliefs, and Community*, Chicago: Burnham, 2002.
 18. Ward, *Community*, 88.
 19. For many years, summer Bible school for children has been held by OYM. I do not know how effectively it has transmitted the faith. Several active meeting children in Belmont County have attended the Evangelical Friends' school at St. Clairsville. The principal is a member of OYM. Elsewhere, young people from *active* OYM families were often home-schooled or attended Christian (frequently Mennonite) schools. The 2013 OYM Minutes indicate that none were attending Olney.
 20. See Marsh, *A Lively Faith*, 25-28.
 21. For Iowa's same-sex conflict, see Marsh, "Same-Gender Marriage," *A Lively Faith*, 55-65. As far as I know, no one has written a full account of the struggle in Ohio.

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22. Doctrinal “erosion” is especially obvious in changes in Iowa Yearly Meeting’s discipline between 1951 and today. The 1951 document elaborates extensively on doctrinal subjects, and even includes an excerpt from George Fox’s letter to the Governor of Barbadoes. The current discipline, in contrast, has little doctrinal content and seldom mentions Jesus Christ, preferring instead the more ambiguous “Spirit” or “Inner Light.”
23. See Marsh, *A Lively Faith*, for a discussion of the current state of IYM-C and its version of Conservative Quakerism.
24. See the online **North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)** Journal <<http://ncymc.org/journal/index.html>>
25. Wilson, Lloyd Lee, *Essays on the Quaker Vision of Gospel Order*, Philadelphia: Quaker Press of FGC, 2001, and *Wrestling with our Faith Tradition*, Philadelphia: Quaker Press of FGC, 2005. Wilson has other relevant publications.
26. Four of NCYM(C)’s nine monthly meetings are jointly affiliated with Piedmont.
27. Fager, Chuck, “Going Conservative with North Carolina Quakers”, *A Friendly Letter, The Blog* <<http://www.afriendlyletter.com/?p=160>>, August 14, 2010.
28. For a brief account of William and Verna Copes’ and Randy and Martha Giffens’ labors for renewal of the Chesterhill meeting. see *A Memorial for William L. Cope (1919-2002)*, Barnesville OH: Memorial Committee of OYM, no date, 7.
29. Nancy Ammerman found a similar reluctance to accept newcomers, based at least in part on “clubbiness”, in a midwestern pastoral meeting See “Gray Friends Meeting, Carmel: Swimming Upstream,” *Congregation and Community*, New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997, 81-86.
30. For a case study of Ohio Conservative Friends’ traditional prophetism, see Rushby, “Ann Branson...”.
31. When Lewis Benson and I went out to lunch at the “Friends in the Americas” conference in Wichita in 1977, he confided to me that he had attempted in the 1940s to persuade the leadership of Ohio Yearly Meeting to launch a concerted effort at outreach. He said that his proposal was rebuffed. Even decades later, persuading the yearly meeting to accept new meetings at a distance was problematic. Fortunately, evangelism and outreach are now accepted without a struggle.