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The Concern of Evangelical Friends for the Fellowship of the Gospel Among All Friends, October 1961

Arthur O. Roberts Editor

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CONCERN

THE CONCERN OF EVANGELICAL FRIENDS

for the fellowship
of the Gospel
among all Friends

"Ye are my friends,
if ye do whatsoever
I command you."

John 15:14

expressing the CONCERN of evangelical Friends in the areas of theology, Biblical study, outreach, and devotional life.

dedicated to a Christ-centered renewal of spiritual life among all Friends.

praying for an enlarged Quaker witness to the Gospel throughout the world.

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The Promise of the Holy Spirit

As I read the Acts through the other day in preparation for a lecture I was impressed as never before by the emphasis upon the Holy Spirit as the promise of God. Jesus gave to the disciples the command to wait for the Holy Spirit, which is the "promise of the Father." After Pentecost, Peter explains this occurrence to his audience as the pouring out of the Holy Spirit as promised. He assures his hearers that "the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are afar off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to him."

The Acts records the activities of the Church empowered by the Holy Spirit. May our lives individually, and in fellowship as the Church, testify to the fulfillment of God's covenant of grace in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The summer issue of CONCERN carried an editorial on "Evangelical Unity Among Friends". It elicited considerable interest. Two articles in this issue deal especially with ways of strengthening present bonds of unity. We hope to continue the discussion in the winter CONCERN. One of the more obvious preludes to greater unity among Friends is greater understanding of our several yearly meetings. In an effort to aid in that understanding we are beginning a series of articles featuring some of our yearly meetings. We aim to show not just the externals, not just the history and statistics, but something of the inner life of Friends as organized. Featured in this issue is Ohio Yearly Meeting, which will serve as host to our sixth conference of evangelical Friends, meeting at Malone College, July 18-22, 1962.

Ohio Yearly Meeting

-- An Historical Resume

By AMOS HENRY
Associate Professor History and Bible
Malone, College

Friends contributed a recognizable and distinctive strand to the religious and social fabric of Ohio. Elements of their own woven into the divergent, cultural tapestry of the state were service where needed, suffering when necessary, strength of conviction and richness of religious experience. The weaving process tells the Ohio story.

During the last quarter of the eighteenth century a few Friends visited the Ohio territory under a sense of religious concern for the Indian tribes. Thomas Beals performed such a mission in 1775 during the tense days leading to the American Revolution. In 1799 the Beals family moved to Ross County, Ohio. Thomas Beals died in 1801 and was buried near Richmondale in a coffin prepared by hollowing out a solid white walnut log. One hundred and thirty-six years after his death this man of vision and courage was honored by the unveiling of a marker on September 19, 1937. It is engraved with these appropriate words: "Thomas Beals, First Quaker Missionary to the Indians of the Northwest Territory."

In response to an appeal from the Delaware Indians six Philadelphia Friends journeyed to Detroit in 1793 to attend a prospective treaty, hoping "to evince their love by such aid as it was in their power to bestow." William Savery appears to have been the leader and chief spokesman for the group. Several Quaker worship services, probably the first in the Northwest territory, were held during June, July and August in which both frontier people and Indians united. Their ideals of brotherhood were unsuccessful in the tangled web of international intrigue. Their compensation was the peaceful satisfaction within their hearts of a service faithfully rendered.

On the thirteenth day of July, 1787, the Congress of the United States, in session in New York, enacted an ordinance for the government of the territory of the United States northwest of the Ohio River. Speaking before the Senate in 1830, Daniel Webster said, "I doubt whether one single law of any law-giver, ancient or modern, has produced effects of more distinct, marked, and lasting character than the Ordinance of 1787." It is not the

purpose of this paper to explore the various frontier theses and their relation to the development of the United States. It must, however, be recognized that the Northwest Ordinance contained one provision which greatly influenced subsequent Quaker history in America. It guaranteed to the future citizens freedom from slavery and involuntary servitude except for crime. This enactment in due time contributed greatly to the migration of hundreds of Quakers from the South into Ohio and Indiana and explains the heavy concentration of Friends therein during the intervening years.

Before the end of the eighteenth century, Friends had nearly cleansed themselves of the evil of slave-holding. This effort on the part of Quakers in liberating their slaves and in providing for their protection thereafter met with general disfavor in slave states. North Carolina passed laws which permitted the freeing of slaves only by license issued by a county court. The Friends, as non-slave holders, found themselves in tension with their state government and under social stigma among their neighbors. The Ordinance of 1787 seemed to them an act of divine providence, causing heavy migrations northward.

Slavery was not the only cause of migration. The economic conditions on the eastern seaboard were expulsive. Soil depletion, overpopulation and unemployment turned eyes westward. The west with its golden opportunities appealed to those who had not been born into the favored classes of the East. Friends were by no means free from these influences. Large numbers of them succumbed to the "Ohio fever" and were drawn westward by the availability of land at one or two dollars an acre and by the lure of the frontier. But the spirit of adventure and the desire for material gain was not without cost in terms of spiritual declension. In 1797 Joshua Evans visited the settlers in the region of the Monongahela near Brownsville, Pennsylvania and left this record of his impressions:

It seems to me they have in too general a way come over the western mountains to settle, for the sake of this world's treasure. Many of them appear to have obtained this, and are eagerly pursuing after more. Their minds are so over-charged with the cares of this kind, that the better part hath been wounded, both in parents and children. A great part of their conversation is about more land, new countries, and the things of this world. I laboured to turn their minds to a consideration of their latter end.

There were six principal areas in the Northwest Territory to which Friends migrated. In four eastern counties of Ohio, Colum-

biana, Jefferson, Harrison and Belmont, Friends from southern and eastern states settled. At the southern tip of the state in Lawrence and Ross counties a limited number established new homes and new meetings. A very large number of Friends, chiefly from southern states settled in the southwestern section of the state, especially in Clinton and Warren counties and also in the White-water River region near Richmond, Indiana. Migrants from North Carolina also settled in the Marmon Valley in Logan County, Ohio. Central Ohio, especially Morrow County, was settled by Friends from the state of New York, Clinton County and the town of Peru. In each of these regions the settlers arrived in large numbers from 1800 to 1820, with the migrations continuing until about 1840. The settlements in Lower Michigan did not occur until after the War of 1812 and the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825. Thereafter considerable numbers arrived from New York state, from Philadelphia and other Friends communities in the East.

Special attention should be given the group which probably became the first organized Monthly Meeting in Ohio. In June 1799, Coresound Monthly Meeting in Carteret County, North Carolina, and Trent Monthly Meeting in Jones County sent three men on a prospective journey to the Ohio Territory. As a result of their favorable report Trent Meeting granted removal certificates to all its members, declared Trent Meeting non-existent, gave its records to the Quarterly Meeting, and began their journey in January, 1800. In May they were sojourning in the vicinity of Westland and Redstone meetings in western Pennsylvania. After resting in that vicinity they crossed the Ohio River just north of Wheeling into the Northwest Territory in September, 1800, three years before Ohio became a state. Six miles up a little creek which empties into the Ohio at Bridgeport they held their first First-day meeting for worship, newly felled trees serving as pews. Soon a new log meeting house was erected and a monthly meeting organized on December 19, 1800; probably the first in the entire state. The name of the meeting was Concord. Perhaps it was the tranquil sylvan scenes, the rolling hills, the graceful trees which suggested the propriety of the name. Or, the name may have been adopted in contrast to the land of their former abode where the curse of slavery was the cause of so much discord. Concord meeting was located at the present village of Colerain.

How shall the Quakers who settled in the various regions of Ohio be characterized? They were chiefly farmers. Probably this fact accounts for their having settled on the various streams. Many of their meetings were named after creeks or rivers. Along these they found fertile soil, ample water supply, and aid

In transportation on the stream or along its banks. Others were craftsmen. An occasional school teacher or merchant was numbered among them.

Religiously the migrants followed the Quaker customs, especially with regard to "dress and address." They were the product of the quietistic period of Quakerism, an era marked by an unscriptural emphasis on the so-called doctrine of the inner light, and as a natural result, the neglect of the Scriptures. This generalization is intended as the broad historical background of the Quakers of the migration period. The evangelical and holiness impact upon the Society of Friends was to come within the century which opened with the migrations. Specifically, there was a lack of a strong local ministry, quietism having tended to silence vocal ministry.

A number of traveling ministers braved the hardships of wilderness travel in order to minister to these outposts of civilization. The journals of these men are the key to the spiritual conditions of the early settlers. They reported spiritual life to have been "low" and meetings for worship lifeless. Laxity and immorality were present. In spite of the defects, others were high in faith, devoted to truth and obedient to Christ according to their light. Stephen Grellet, who visited Ohio and Indiana in 1824, lamented that many joined Friends by convincement, but very few were converted. Many convinced members were among those carried away "by the spirit of infidelity" which was greatly spreading. The infidelity mentioned was not the denial of the existence of God but apparently a lack of fidelity to the Christian doctrines to which Friends from their earliest days had subscribed and in the power of which the faithful had lived. Grellet stated that persons from other yearly meetings were promulgating anti-Christian doctrines in Ohio and Indiana. The instrument he employed against this "infidelity" was that which Paul used in behalf of the Corinthians. "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures." In contrast to those who had "embraced infidelity," Grellet recognized "substantial, valuable Friends who maintain their ground in the church of Christ, and bear a right testimony against these evil-doers." A journal entry also indicates that there were hopeful young people "who appear to be bending (submitting) under the yoke of the dear Redeemer."

It must suffice for this study simply to recognize that the conditions set forth above led inevitably to the first of two schisms which occurred in Ohio and other yearly meetings. Although there were several contributing factors in the Hicksite Separation of 1828, the doctrinal differences were the basic factor and cannot be lightly tossed aside as attempted by some writers. This separation divided the Society into the Hicksite and the Orthodox groups. The second major separation in 1854 occurred within the Orthodox group and was not marked by serious doctrinal differences. The issues which arose were practical in nature having to do with departure from "Friends ways," the introduction of innovations adopted from Methodists and other evangelistic and revivalistic groups. This separation resulted in the Wilburite and Gurneyite groups, named for the two principle leaders of the respective groups. The evangelical impact on the Gurneyites will be briefly noted later.

In the development of the Friends Church in Ohio, Redstone Quarterly Meeting stood first in point of time. It was established by Baltimore Yearly Meeting the 5th of 3rd month, 1798, and was composed of Redstone and Westland Monthly Meetings. These meetings were situated along the Monongahela River, near Brownsville, Pennsylvania, and were "mother" to most of the meetings in Ohio. This quarterly meeting continued its organization until 1862 when the remaining remnant transferred its membership to Salem Quarterly Meeting in Ohio. In 1912 only a few of the old meeting houses were still standing, and were used only for funerals.

By 1804 there were so many Friends in Ohio that it appeared advisable to establish a quarterly meeting. This would reduce the long miles traveled through forest and across unbridged streams in order to attend the quarterly sessions. It would also make possible larger numbers sharing that fellowship. Accordingly, Ohio Quarterly Meeting was established in September, 1805 by Redstone Quarterly Meeting and was composed of Concord, Short Creek, and Miami Monthly Meetings. The rapid growth of Friends meetings in Ohio made the name Ohio Quarterly Meeting untenable since it was too inclusive. In a very few years Ohio Quarterly Meeting was changed to Short Creek Quarter. In 1808 Salem Quarterly Meeting was organized, and Miami Quarterly Meeting in 1809. West Branch Quarterly Meeting was organized prior to 1813 and was composed of meetings west of the Miami River. Probably it embraced in its original boundaries meetings in eastern Indiana. These five quarterly meetings: Redstone, Short Creek, Salem, Miami, and West Branch, constituted Ohio Yearly Meeting when established in 1813, Salem having been the leading

one in urging the establishment of a yearly meeting.

The growth of Quaker population in Ohio had brought their numbers to an estimated eight thousand in 1812. The desire for a yearly meeting was inevitable, and that year a joint request from the quarterly meetings was sent to Baltimore Yearly Meeting. Baltimore appointed a committee to consider the request and report. The next year (1813) the committee returned a favorable report. Baltimore Yearly Meeting concurred in the report, and in so doing became the official mother of Ohio Yearly Meeting. In view of the large numbers of Friends coming into Ohio from North Carolina, it may be said with propriety that North Carolina Yearly Meeting was our spiritual mother; the same also, in a lesser degree, is true of Virginia.

The committee report, approved by Baltimore Yearly Meeting, became the enabling enactment by which Ohio Yearly Meeting was established. It was placed first in the minutes of the new yearly meeting and reads thus:

The committee appointed to unite with women Friends in a further consideration of the interesting subject of a Yearly Meeting to be held in the state of Ohio, report that we have several times met and have had the company of several brethren of the Yearly Meetings of Philadelphia and Virginia and believing that in our deliberations, we have been favored with a degree of solemnity, we are free to propose that the quarterly meetings west of the Allegheny Mountains within the verge of this Yearly Meeting, be at full liberty to convene together at Short Creek on the third First day in the eighth month next in the capacity of a Yearly Meeting; agreeably to their prospect and desire, as expressed in their report to the Meeting last year, which was united with and the Quarterly Meetings west of the Allegheny Mountains, which have hitherto belonged to this yearly meeting, are at liberty to send representatives, and to forward their contributions and to report thereunto accordingly.

The first regular item appearing in the original minutes of the new Yearly Meeting is the opening minute which reads:

At Ohio Yearly Meeting for the state of Ohio, Indiana territory, and the adjacent parts of Pennsylvania and Virginia; first opened and held at Short Creek the 14th of 8th month 1813.

The meeting convened at the Short Creek Quarterly Meeting house near Mt. Pleasant. It has been estimated that 2,000 Friends

were present. Visiting Friends came from distant points to witness the establishment of the first yearly meeting west of the mountains.

So rapid was the increase of Friends in Indiana that Indiana Yearly Meeting was established by Ohio in 1821. Indiana Yearly Meeting took jurisdiction over western Ohio, including Alum Creek and other central Ohio meetings. Alum Creek and Goshen meetings and others associated with them returned to Ohio Yearly Meeting about 1860. In 1892 Wilmington Yearly Meeting was organized by Indiana, taking jurisdiction over meetings in southwestern Ohio. The meetings in Michigan were established by and subordinate to New York Yearly Meeting. In 1869 Adrian Quarterly Meeting in southern Michigan was transferred to Ohio Yearly Meeting.

Several concerns exercised the minds of Friends in Ohio during the years immediately following the organization of the Yearly Meeting. A matter of major importance arising in the first business session was provision for a suitable meeting house in which to hold the annual meetings. A committee was appointed and one year later (1814) reported the purchase of several lots of ground adjoining the town of Mt. Pleasant. Plans had been made for a two-story building, 60 x 90 feet, with youth galleries. The work had been contracted and the greater part of the materials was available. The cost totaled \$10,215.00 and the building was first occupied in 1816. In 1866 the Yearly Meeting was held first at Damascus and thereafter alternated between Mt. Pleasant and Damascus. The exact reasons are not known with certainty, except that Damascus was more accessible by railroad and larger number of Gurney Friends were located in that general area. A yearly meeting house was erected at Damascus. Since 1910 the yearly meeting has been held at Damascus annually except in 1913 when it convened at Columbus, Ohio and in 1917 when it was returned to Mt. Pleasant and the century-old meeting house. In 1938 efforts were put forth to rehabilitate the old meeting house. Personal subscriptions being inadequate, the building and grounds were transferred to the State of Ohio in 1949. The 98th General Assembly authorized acceptance and appropriated \$50,000.00 for restoration. Only partial restoration has been achieved due to inflation and possible under-estimate of the extent of the project.

Another concern of Friends in Ohio in the earlier days was the reading of the Scriptures. This concern may have been as the first light of dawn for a people who had remained long in the darkness of an extreme quietism and neglect of the Bible. It was discovered that numbers of families settled in Ohio were without

a copy of the Bible. Bible associations were formed to encourage the reading of the Scriptures. Care was exercised to make certain that every family of Friends was supplied with a copy of the Sacred Scriptures and to encourage the daily reading of a portion thereof with the family assembled.

On the frontier Friends maintained their historic interest in education. The earlier frontier school was the "subscription school," that is a private school in which the teacher accepted whatever he could get for his service. Often the school met in his own home. In many communities monthly meeting schools were operated under the supervision of the local church. Friends also operated schools above the elementary level under the name of boarding schools, academies or seminaries. In all of these they sought to provide a "guarded literary and religious education" for their youth. Friends schools often predated and laid a foundation for the public school system.

In the early years of Ohio Yearly Meeting a committee on education made annual reports. Their chief concern was the encouragement of day schools under the tuition of Friends teachers. With the growth of the public schools it became increasingly difficult to provide the desired "guarded" education for Quaker youths. The committee on education grappling with the problem in 1859 recommended to the Yearly Meeting the encouragement of better "home instruction" and the promotion of "First day Schools." The Yearly Meeting endorsed the proposition and the present day Sunday School movement was initiated among Ohio Friends.

It is not possible to trace in this article the church's interest in Indian affairs and in the slavery controversy. May it suffice to state that Friends were interested and active in ministering to the redmen in their slow expulsion westward. Both Ohio and Indiana Yearly Meetings united in the promotion of a farm and school near Wapakoneta, Ohio. In a more dramatic and personal manner many Friends were involved in the liberation of slaves and their safe conduct into free territory and even to Canada. Aunt Laura Haviland, near Adrian, Michigan, was one of the best known and northern-most operator of the underground railroad.

The last half of the nineteenth century witnessed changes in Ohio Yearly Meeting produced by the revival movement. These changes in practice and organization were chiefly those having to do with the conduct of meetings for worship. The unprogramed meetings based on silence were replaced by a service directed by a pastor with regular elements of song and sermon, periods of silence still being observed. Other less significant changes followed but it was the revival meeting and the subsequent pastoral arrangement which precipitated the series of changes which ensued.

Many Quaker historians refer to the revival period as a time of doctrinal change. The limitations of this paper and the treatment given the subject of doctrinal change may leave the impression of an over-simplification of a really difficult problem. However, it would appear valid to refer to this period of Quaker history as one of doctrinal renaissance or re-discovery. The quietistic period which spanned the eighteenth century has been called the Middle Ages of Quaker history, hence the propriety of titling the period of revival and reorganization, beginning about 1800, as the period of renaissance, of rebirth, of "creative activity." This view favors the concept that the doctrines of the revival period were not entirely new and foreign to earlier Quaker history, but rather in large measure a rediscovery of vital truth. Specifically, the issue is whether or not the revival period repudiated reliance on the Inward Light as a sufficient basis of a religious life, favoring instead the outward authority of the Bible with the attendant peril of bondage to the mere letter thereof.

Although early Friends strongly emphasized inward illumination, conviction and spiritual birth through Christ by the Spirit, they were very careful to assert their acceptance of the authority of the Scriptures. George Fox very often argued from them and appealed to them in proof of the divine message which he proclaimed. The fact is, he would have been far more at home with Luke Woodard in a revival service one hundred years ago than in a quiet meeting devoid of the Holy Spirit, whom silence was supposed to welcome. While Robert Barclay was strong for immediate revelation and placed the Spirit above the Scriptures, he nevertheless states that in them are all the essentials of the Christian faith, that they are "the only outward judge of controversies among Christians; and that whatsoever doctrine is contrary unto their testimony, may therefore justly be rejected as false." Speaking for Friends he further states, "We are very willing that all our doctrines and practices be tried by them. . . as the judge and test." Again he records as a positive maxim "That whatsoever any do, pertaining to the Spirit, which is contrary to the scriptures, be accounted and reckon a delusion of the devil." From the foregoing it would appear evident that early Friends accepted the authority of the Scriptures and that therefore the nineteenth century Evangelical Friends did not introduce a new doctrine into the church regarding the outward authority of the Scriptures.

The doctrine of holiness or entire sanctification as taught by Dougan Clark and David B. Updegraff may not be regarded as new. This truth they stated in clearer biblical terms in keeping with the new emphasis on Bible study; also, it was expressed in terms adopted from Methodists and other holiness denominations.

Robert Barclay In Proposition VIII, Concerning Perfection, gives a rather clear statement as to the possibilities of grace in the heart.

In whom this pure and holy birth is fully brought forth, the body of death and sin comes to be crucified and removed, and their hearts united and subjected to truth; so as not to obey any suggestions or temptations of the evil one, but to be free from actual sinning and transgression of the law of God, and in that respect perfect: yet doth this perfection still admit of growth; and there remaineth always in some part a possibility of sinning, where the mind doth not most diligently and watchfully attend unto the Lord.

The evangelical movement among Friends tended to give balance between the authority of the Scriptures and the energy of the Spirit, between the saving message of Christ and service-oriented activities. They did not proclaim a social gospel but rather a saving gospel having ethical and social implications.

As the nineteenth century drew to its close a series of conferences were held each fifth year at Richmond, Indiana. The purposes of the conferences were to encourage unity, give clarification and definition of Quaker principles and to give direction to the church under the new pastoral system which had arisen. Ohio sent delegates to the conferences and to the establishment of the Five Years Meeting in 1902. Upon the recommendation of the delegates, Ohio declined to unite with the Five Years Meeting. This action was based upon liberal tendencies which the Ohio delegates reported as being present.

Probably the results of this choice of independence may not be entirely on either side of the ledger. One result was to cut the Yearly Meeting off from association with gifted leaders among Friends, and a provincialism resulted. Some degree of spiritual pride may have unconsciously permeated our ranks. Again, the same spirit of independence, of freedom from central authority, on occasion, seems to have characterized certain of our local churches and members. On the other hand, Ohio Yearly Meeting, across the years, has had a good reputation for orthodoxy, freedom from liberalism, devotion to evangelism, holiness, missions, and tithing. Many look to her as their spiritual mother and rise up and call her blessed.

Today the Ohio Yearly Meeting of the Friends Church with central offices at Damascus and having some ninety churches in Ohio, Michigan, Virginia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Iowa, Rhode Island and Ontario, Canada, is definitely committed to the saving message of Jesus Christ. The basic need of the individual

and of the world is spiritual. Men must have bread, but not bread alone. Although joining with numerous agencies for relief, for restraint of evil, and for human rights, the Ohio Friends are not committed to the idea of a humanly achieved utopia. They look rather for the second coming of Christ and labor for Him until He comes. They are chiefly concerned with pastoral ministry, evangelism, church extension, and foreign missions.

All churches in Ohio Yearly Meeting now have pastors. The pastor is the key person in each church. His basic function is that of being a shepherd of the flock and of doing the work of an evangelist. In a strict sense he is not an officer of the church but rather its spiritual leader. He ministers to the local congregation from the pulpit and in home visitation. He encourages, counsels, and wields influence in all departments and programs of the church. He gives himself to the Word of God and to prayer. He does not displace lay responsibility and services. The ministerial and lay roles complement each other, the latter greatly supplementing the former.

Evangelism as viewed by Ohio Friends involves both the emotional and instructional aspects. They deplore shallow emotionalism but earnestly believe the great truths of the gospel, when preached in the power of the Spirit, to be capable of profoundly moving the emotions. Friends' evangelism is truth-oriented rather than emotion-oriented, for men who are moved must stand upon the firm rock of truth after the emotional surge has subsided.

This type of evangelism is to find expression in all the endeavors of the church: in the Sunday School, Youth Meetings, Bible Clubs, Vacation Bible Schools, and Youth Conferences; as well as in special evangelistic meetings, camp meetings, and personal witnessing.

Church Extension is the term employed to express the idea of establishing new churches in unchurched or unevangelized areas. The growing American suburbia presents a challenge which cannot be overlooked. The various churches of Ohio Yearly Meeting through the unified budget make available a few thousand dollars annually toward the erection of churches and the support of pastors in new fields. Several such new churches are now in process of development. These new churches are called Extension Monthly Meetings and are under the supervision of the Evangelistic, Pastoral and Extension Board of the Yearly Meeting and the General Superintendent.

Beyond our shores, Ohio Friends promote missions in India and Formosa. The work is promoted along lines of direct evangelism, education and the medical hospital. Effort is expended to establish indigenous churches of national Christians capable of self-government.

Beside the main avenues of endeavor already noted there are other activities in which Friends engage. The Friends Rescue Home in Columbus is operated by Ohio Yearly Meeting. It is supported by the Yearly Meeting, the Community Chest and personal gifts. Unwed mothers received medical and hospital care, limited educational opportunities, and a Christian testimony and example.

Malone College, in Canton since 1957, is sponsored and partially supported by the Yearly Meeting. The school was the former Cleveland Bible College. The college now offers studies in six divisions: Education and Psychology, Fine Arts, Literature and Language, Religion and Philosophy, Science and Mathematics, and Social Science. Its present enrollment is in excess of 600.

Ohio Friends promote the special interests of peace and service, of stewardship and tithing, of total abstinence and enforcement of liquor laws. They stand opposed to all other evils which are detrimental to public welfare and Christian character.

The Yearly Meeting is an independent and sovereign body, having affiliation with the National Association of Evangelicals and the National Association for the Promotion of Holiness.

The sixth triennial conference of the ASSOCIATION OF EVANGELICAL FRIENDS will meet July 18-22, 1962, at Malone College, Canton, Ohio.

Theme: "The Mission of Friends"

Although the list of participants is not yet ready, the following topics can be announced:

"The Problem of Growth", "Frontiers for Friends in Moral Integrity", "Role of Church Polity in Outreach", "Frontiers for Friends in Evangelism", "Relevance of the Quaker Principle of Authority to Evangelism and Outreach", "Frontiers for Friends in Life Commitment", "Relevance of Message to Mission". Friends are urged to make plans now to attend.

The Bonds of Unity among Friends

By GERALD DILLON, President
Association of Evangelical Friends

The ideal of Christian unity is a scriptural emphasis. Paul exhorted the churches over and over to be in unity one with another. At one time when the church was about to break into factions he wrote to them this searching question, "Is there more than one Christ?" (Phillips) Indeed, there is but one Lord, one faith, and one baptism; and by this one essential baptism, he declares, "we are all baptized into one body."

To describe this unity in terms of purely spiritual oneness without any consideration of the practical and organizational unity of Christians is hardly doing justice to the Scripture. It should be of real concern to every Christian that there are needless divisions within the Church of Jesus Christ. With a sense of joy, therefore, I read the article in the previous issue of CONCERN, written by the editor, on this timely subject. Without seeking to heal the serious wounds of the Church universal, let us first address ourselves to the conditions within our own denomination.

What are the bonds which make Friends a Christian denomination? The first major bond which makes us a denomination is our common allegiance to the Christian faith, especially as it centers in the person of Jesus Christ. In some cases this has been watered down in order to make unity as broad as possible; this has resulted in loss of identity as a Christian denomination. We have to that extent become simply a religious organization giving lip service to Jesus as one of the great religious leaders in history. Yet there has been and does still exist across the length and breadth of Friends people a deep faith in the essential elements of the Christian faith. We do believe in the deity of Jesus Christ; we recognize the basic depravity of human nature. We accept the unique revelation of God in the person of His Son and through the pages of the Holy Bible. We believe in the ministry of the Holy Spirit—the third person of the trinity—the death and resurrection of Christ as the indispensable means of man's salvation, the necessity of the new birth, and in the life to come. It is safe to say that 75 to 90% of the Quakers in the world believe in these

essential elements of the Christian faith.

A second major bond is that of common practices. Organizationally, Friends are very much the same the world over. They meet in monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings. They appoint elders and other officers in the churches. More significantly, Friends generally observe similar moral practices. Everywhere there is the same concern for peace among men, for temperance and for high social ethics. One can go to the heart of Africa and there find a strong witness against the use of "sweet beer" and note similarity of emphasis with the temperance presentations in America. Certain peculiar testimonies exist around the world. Quakers generally address each other with the given name and avoid terms which bespeak reverence and awe. It is significantly strange that in the area of practice there is very little that actually separates Friends. Here and there may be isolated differences, but throughout is the underlying, consistent emphasis that Friends should live in the spirit of Christ. This basic bond tends to hold us together, as it most certainly should.

A third major bond and one which we consider the least important is our common heritage. Friends everywhere trace their beginning to the ministry of George Fox and other early Friends of England. It is admitted that in the stream of our history there have been at least three major divisions. Yet, everyone of these groups quote avidly from the writings of George Fox and others of his day. This is one of the factors that keeps us bound together whether we like it or not. It will be difficult for any one of us to drift outside the "Quaker family" so long as we each quote and claim the common heritage.

It begins to look rather strange that Friends should be divided at all if we have so much in common. What are the barriers that seem to keep us apart and divide us into different groups? The first is geographical, with its attendant problem of adequate communication. The very fact that it is well over a thousand miles from Ohio Yearly Meeting to my own, Oregon, and that there is very little official, adequate, communication, is a factor. Another is the organizational differences that exist. The very fact that we have an organization called the Five Years Meeting and yearly meetings organized independently, makes it difficult to bridge across with a sense of all-over unity. Organizations such as the above tend to become self-contained and satisfied with their own circle, and consequently do little to reach out to others. One might also mention certain differences in customs and practices that grow out of cultural association with others and help shape points of particular emphases. But in themselves, however, these are only superficial and can be surmounted if we will.

Certain more serious barriers do keep Friends apart. One is the emotional tie that is attached to our organizational patterns. Because grandfather worshipped in "X" yearly meeting makes it difficult for his grandson to hear of any other organization or procedure. The persistence of organizational patterns may blind us to the viewpoint that a totally new realignment in our day may accomplish more for Christ. The fact is that many are emotionally bound to the group in which they grew up and close their eyes to possibilities on a higher level. This emotional factor is real: it must be considered in discussing our bonds of unity.

An even more serious difficulty is the doctrinal differences existing among Friends. It is my conviction that a large majority of Friends are evangelical and give more than lip service in their personal life to the faith of our fathers. Yet the very fact that there are differences of beliefs—even though minority ones—constitutes a real problem. Without doctrinal discernment some Friends may actually follow and support programs and policies which on doctrinal grounds are diametrically opposed to their own convictions. Theological liberalism has taken a heavy toll of Friends leadership, a liberalism which in some cases has degenerated to the point of pure and simple humanism—with a dash of religious seasoning. If there is to be unity within the Friends Church these theological differences must be faced. They cannot be ignored by theological double talk and equivocal language. The day has come for straightforward talk about these differences. If disagree we must, let us at least agree to organize along lines that respect the convictions of the people we are representing. Any sense of unity which aims to bridge these very serious theological differences should be on a consultative basis only and never on action or policy-making terms.

The question comes, "how may the bonds of unity which we now have be strengthened in the future? Perhaps one way is for those evangelical groups which are called "independent" yearly meetings, to immediately bridge across their boundaries with some workable type of organizational cooperation. I, for one, would like to see Oregon, Ohio, Kansas, Rocky Mountain, Central, and others sit down together and find some type of organization which would bring them into closer cooperation.

Another way of strengthening present bonds is for the Conference of Evangelical Friends to be continued and strengthened. Here, although in an unofficial, or individual, capacity, is an opportunity for Friends both within the Five Years Meeting and outside its organization to meet, become acquainted, pray together, and to sense a oneness in Christ. The forthcoming conference, to be held at Malone College, Canton, Ohio, (July, 1962)—

the sixth conference of this series—will be significant in pulling together Friends from many areas into a vital fellowship of evangelical faith.

A third way to strengthen bonds is the establishment of a summer school for the training of ministers. While it may be impossible for a full three year seminary at the present, it is not impossible that Friends could have a strong summer school, in this way becoming better acquainted through common inspiration and scholarship, and discovering greater unity.

A fourth important step, already renewed among us, is inter-visitation. We must be encouraged to travel and visit Friends in other parts of the world. It is good for people of Kansas to visit Ohio, and for people from the independent yearly meetings to visit the Five Years Meeting and its member yearly meetings and monthly meetings. This can be a very fruitful step.

A fifth and final step is the most important of all, without which all others will fall short of achieving the unity we desire. That is the step of revival. Revival within the Friends churches everywhere would do more to strengthen the bonds of unity and to promote new ones than any other thing we could do. As one has so aptly stated, "the problem of Christian unity is not in being drawn closer to each other but all of us being drawn closer to the crucified Christ." As we gather in penitence about the cross, suddenly we discover that all the differences that keep us apart are really quite superficial, and that in Christ we are one. It is high time then that we gather about that cross and discover how we stand shoulder to shoulder in one common fellowship of love and faith.

It is impossible to close this paper without recognizing at the same time the larger dimension of Christian unity. As we Quakers gather about the cross we will discover others there whose names we may not at first recognize. Suddenly we will realize that the name means so little. It is the fact that we all share one common faith in one Lord and Savior, and that in the light of this we are brothers, that will catch our attention. Let us then be willing, while we are drawing closer to each other as Friends to include in Christ those sheep "which are not of this fold "

Strengthening our

Bonds of Unity

By EDWARD ESCOLME, Pastor
Damascus, Ohio Friends Church

Within the past few months it has been my privilege to read in manuscript form a book by Walter R. Williams entitled "The Rich Heritage of Quakerism."

When we ask the question "What are the bonds which make Friends a Christian denomination?" the title to this book suggests one answer.

We know that history, tradition and sentiment may serve as chains binding us to the past, but they may also be loving bonds uniting us in a common faith and in a common task.

Early Friends were evangelical. Their ministry was within the framework of the Holy Scriptures, and their particular emphasis was the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. One has only to read the letter of George Fox written in 1671 to the Governor of Barbadoes to realize the rich content of their Christian faith.

These Friends believed in and experienced the immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit, both as touching time and place of service and also the manner of that service. Thus their ministry had a prophetic note. They preached the gospel, but even more important, they preached the truth needful for a given time and situation. They spoke "to the condition of people."

Many of the seventeenth century Friends traveled extensively and served courageously in the ministry of the gospel in the Old and the New World.

Over a hundred years before Thomas Jefferson penned the words of the Declaration of Independence, Friends were standing for such ideas, ideals, and truths as "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed, by their Creator, with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

These truths they interpreted in the light of the New Testament and for these truths they suffered the confiscation of their goods; imprisonment in "nasty stinking prisons;" and forfeiture of life itself.

We believe it to be a fair and truthful statement "that in the 17th century no group of Englishmen, comparable in numbers, made a greater contribution to freedom of assembly, freedom of worship, and freedom of speech, than did the Friends."

Throughout their history Friends have engaged in a wide variety of "good works." They have engaged in prison reform, freedom for the Negro, and justice for the Indian. In many areas they have been pioneers in the cause of education. They have stressed the virtues of honesty, truthfulness, uprightness, sobriety and integrity.

The history of the Friends Church is a bond that binds us as a Christian denomination.

Other bonds that bind us into a church are the interests we share as evangelical Friends in such concerns as evangelism, missions, Christian education, church extension, the publication of Christian literature, and practical Christian service. We shall hope to think of these vital bonds in the closing portion of this article.

"What are the barriers, serious and superficial which break the bond?"

This is our second major consideration. As we consider this phase of the subject before us, we are led to a realization that what is serious to one person may appear very superficial to another, and vice versa.

Method, form, order of worship are matters of vital concern to all of us. Such matters are not superficial. They are matters of great importance to all of us. Yet we recognize that true worship may take place where the traditional order of Friends worship prevails, that is, where the meeting is nonpastoral, unprogrammed, and held on the basis of silence. On the other hand a meeting for worship in a Friends Church where the pastoral system prevails may be spiritually meaningful. But the reverse may also be true of a meeting for worship regardless of the pattern followed.

The division between Gurney and Wilbur Friends ought never to have taken place. As a Gurney Friend let me assume that most of the blame for this division lay with Gurney Friends. However, had there been deeper understanding and greater love for Christ and one another among both groups of Friends the issues of mode of worship and other Friends practices could have been resolved in a more Christlike manner, and with less disastrous effects.

The identification of pacifism with peace has sometimes served as a barrier to unity among Friends. Suffice it to say that some who are not pacifists have contributed to the cause of peace. It would appear that when the latter are evangelical Christians they

should be made to feel welcome in membership with us.

Another source of disunity among Friends has been the question of the ordinances. We divide on the issue of holy communion, and we are not baptized with the spirit of divine love.

It would—so this writer is persuaded—be startling if we knew the number of evangelical Christians, some of whom have a Quaker ancestry, and others who hold evangelical Quakerism in high regard, who have felt that the best thing to do with this question was to unite with some other Christian denomination rather than cause any disturbance in the Friends Church. Perhaps this is the course that many Friends would encourage such people to take. Be this as it may, the question of the ordinances will continue to be a barrier to unity, and a cause of weakness among Friends.

London Yearly Meeting in its General Epistle for 1885 had in it this paragraph.

What is the baptism in which we believe, but that in which the words are made a living experience, 'He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire?' What is the supper of the Lord, but a spiritual communion in which it is our highest privilege to share? They truly partake thereof who habitually rest on the work, sufferings, and death of their Lord as their only hope, and to whom the indwelling Spirit gives of the fulness which is in Christ. (Rev. 3:20)

In 1886, Ohio Yearly Meeting gathered in annual session made the following pronouncement:

Ohio Yearly Meeting is united in reaffirming her sincere faith in the truth of the Holy Scripture concerning the baptism with the Holy Ghost, as the only saving baptism, and administered by Christ Himself to His own dear children, who will consecrate themselves to Him and claim the promise of the Father; and, also, no outward rite can ever be substituted for the eating of the flesh and drinking of the blood of Christ, without which no man can have eternal life.

It would appear that within the compass of these two statements there was a basis for unity and understanding but in 1887 the Richmond Conference of Friends adopted the following statement:

We believe it to be inconsistent for any one to be acknowledged or retained in the position of minister or elder among us, who continues to participate in, or teach the necessity of the outward rite of **Baptism** or the Supper.

Thus the non-observance of what are considered non-essentials is made essential to a basis of unity among Friends. This I consider to be a barrier which breaks the bond of unity.

A misunderstanding as to what constitutes a basis of unity may be a serious barrier to unity. Friends have never divided on the basis of service as such. Thus the call to service, however commendable that service may be, can never take the place of Christ our Lord as a basis of unity.

Furthermore a record of praise-worthy service should not be used as a platform from which to set forth theological, economic, and political views with which the majority of Friends are not in unity. This procedure is a serious barrier to unity.

One third and final major consideration seeks an answer to the question "How may bonds of unity be strengthened now and in the future?"

1. Let our best trained and most spiritually minded theologians prepare in simple words the most comprehensive statement of faith consistent with the evangelical position. Let breadth and charity characterize their work.

2. Let us seek to understand and to have fellowship with all evangelical Friends wherever they may be found: in the Five Years Meeting; in the Association of Evangelical Friends; in the independent Yearly Meetings; and among Friends in the British Isles and throughout the world. Let further division among Friends be our last desperate resort.

3. Let us welcome to our meetings the ministry of evangelical Friends from outside our own particular group, as well as the ministry of those of our own group. In turn let us welcome the opportunity to minister to evangelical Friends outside our own circle.

4. Let us, within a framework that is mindful of geographical distances, and sectional preferences, labor together in every practical field of Christian service such as missions, evangelism, publications, church extension, Christian education, and humanitarian service.

5. Let us in all humility seek understanding and fellowship with all Friends who sincerely love and acknowledge our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Inward Impressions

By WESTON F. COX

A man newly converted, though somewhat limited in spelling knowledge, had started the practice of marking impressive verses in his Bible. A friend observed that he had occasionally written "Satin" in the margin. When asked what it meant, he replied, "Those verses talk about Satan."

"But," said the friend, "you have not written 'Satan,' you have spelled 'Satin'." The convert responded, "Well, that's the way Satan comes to me, all dressed up in satin!"

Very likely, the young Christian was not the only one who has had difficulty in "trying the spirits, whether they are of God." While we are free to choose right or wrong, yet we are continually acted upon by inward impressions which influence our purposes, feelings and actions.

Every inward impression has a source. Back of each is a designing mind which is the source of it. God is the author of all good impressions, Satan of all that are evil. During our waking moments some type of impression is portrayed on the mind's screen, and we are called into account to evaluate it.

Proper discernment may come by trust, "this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He heareth us. . ." 1 John 5:14; by obedience, "If any man shall do His will, he shall know. . ." John 7:17; and by practice, ". . .who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." Hebrews 5:14.

From the very first recorded temptation in the Garden of Eden until now, the psychological impression that comes from Satan is tipped with a doubt: "Yea, hath God said. . .," "If thou be the Son of God. . .," "If you are the Christian you think you are. . .," etc. Even to the end of the Bible record, "the Devil and Satan. . ." is described as "the accuser of the brethren."

Therefore, the Christian is to remember that "there is some form of sin that is deceitful to each one, some form of appealing appetite, some pleasant sensibility, some area in the intellect that is an inlet, some association that hides its consequences of indulgence." To shun the very appearance of evil, it is well to follow

the little girl's rule: "When the devil knocks on my heart's door, I say, 'Jesus, will You go answer the door?'"

In the life of faith there is complete commitment to be fashioned and moulded according to His purpose. Divine guidance has been promised into paths where blessings await, but which, to short-sighted human eyes, seem sure to result in confusion. Surely, the Good Shepherd "goeth before, and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice."

The devout Quaker writer, Hannah Whitall Smith, suggests that God reveals His will through: the Scriptures, through providential circumstances, through convictions of the higher judgment and through inward impressions of the Holy Spirit on the mind. Where these four harmonize it is safe to say that God speaks. His voice will always harmonize with itself, no matter how many different ways He may speak.

If in doubt about any subject, first consult the Bible. Failure to search out and obey a Scriptural rule, looking instead to an inward voice, may lead to error. Where no rule seems evident, the Bible is a book of principles and not of disjointed texts. When a "leading" is of God, the way will open for it, and we will not need to batter down doors for ourselves. Likewise, tests must be made by spiritually enlightened judgment, or common sense. It is not enough for an impression to be remarkable, or prompted by a strong personality, or influenced by emotional enthusiasm. Certainly the "stops" for the Christian are "ordered of the Lord," as well as the "steps."

Trustful waiting has its place, as well. Satan will try to confuse and hurry with the urging that "something must be done right now!" The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, never nags, but quietly puts His impulse on the heart. His will becomes the most glorious experience to be had, richer and fuller than one can choose for himself. Indeed, "God gives His best to those who leave the choice with Him!"

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Book Review

A valuable addition to the "focal pamphlet" series published by Herald Press is Virgil Vogt's *THE CHRISTIAN CALLING* (Scottsdale, Pa., 1961; \$.50). Originally given as the John F. Funk lecture it is part of a Mennonite emphasis upon more adequate preparation for ministry in the church. Vogt's main point is that the church too long has held to a double standard—Roman Catholic and Protestant—higher for those "called" to Christian services and lower for others who assume secular tasks. The calling of God to witness is the starting point for every Christian, Vogt contends, and out of this ought to come the earnest, Spirit-led, desire to "create around Jesus a fellowship," a community.

Vogt believes that every Christian, whether in a secular or church vocation, ought to move about under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Consecration and Spirit-guidance should not depend upon the extent to which one is released from ordinary employment. I would commend this book to your reading. It would make an excellent piece for Ministry and Oversight bodies to read and to discuss.

If we would avail ourselves of the privileges of the gospel dispensation, and participate in the fellowship of the saints, and in the peace of God, we must not only wait and pray for the Holy Spirit—we must also yield to his influence, submit ourselves to his guidance, and obey his dictates. Thus, and thus only, shall we make an effectual progress in our Christian course, advance in the life of grace and holiness, and realize, in our own experience the declaration of Solomon, that "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day," Prov. 4:18.

—Joseph John Gurney, Essays