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## Burton's "A Social History of Quakers in Scotland, 1800-2000" and Burnet & Marwick's "The Story of Quakerism in Scotland 1650- 1950" - Book Review

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marked by togetherness. The claim in Dobbs' book that it might prove of interest to Quakers is too modest. This is an important examination of the development of the Quaker movement and is of broad scholarly importance. Both books add materially to understanding the diversity of the present-day movement on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

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BURTON, P.F., *A Social History of Quakers in Scotland, 1800–2000* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2007), pp. vii + 370. ISBN 978-0-7734-5452-1, Cloth, £74.95, \$119.95.

BURNET, G.B., and MARWICK, W.H., *The Story of Quakerism in Scotland 1650–1950* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2007), pp. 230. ISBN 978-0-718-89176-3, Paper, £17.50, \$37.50.

The history of the Society of Friends in Scotland, while it mirrors the history of the Society in England in many respects, nonetheless differs in a number of significant ways. Despite this, little has been written on Scottish Quaker history and historians frequently make assertions about 'British Quakerism' which are based solely on evidence from England. It is a pleasure, therefore, to have two books on Quaker Scottish history, one new and one a reprint of a 1952 text.

Paul Burton's book is a social history, not a theological or institutional one, although as he puts it: 'both theology and the Society as institution will necessarily be considered at times, for all three are intimately bound up with one another' (p. 27). It describes and analyses the changing social history of Quakerism in Scotland during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a period of significant change for most, if not all, churches in Scotland.

Burton examines a number of features of the Society and its members—occupations, class, changing social structures, gender and the role of women, the complex interrelationships of Quaker families and the wider contribution of a number of prominent members, whose work has ranged from art and economics to electrical engineering. He sets this detailed analysis of Scottish Quakerism within the context of developments in the wider society within which it was located, including the spread of evangelicalism, the hotly debated secularisation of British society and the relationship between class and religion.

While much has been written about the complicating factors associated with 'insider research' (research carried out within a group of which the investigator is a member) in relationship to sociological and anthropological research, less work has been done on the implications for historical research projects. Paul Burton is himself a Quaker and was personally known to many of those studied for the latter sections of the book; it is good, therefore, to note his sensitivity to those issues within his work.

The book begins with a brief background to Quakerism in Britain generally and in Scotland specifically. These chapters, while of necessity short, are detailed and do a good job of pulling together material from a wide variety of sources, including archival ones.

Chapter 4 examines migration and social change in the Society in Scotland during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, examining movements in and out of Scotland in order to identify the nature of their contribution to the social makeup of the Society. When a Quaker left his or her Meeting, either temporarily or permanently, he or she was issued with a certificate of removal, and this chapter is based on painstaking analysis of hundreds of certificates. In broad terms, Quakers formed part of the general pattern of migration to and from Scotland, but Burton demonstrates the ways in which they diverged from that pattern. Chapter 5 examines the occupational structure of nineteenth-century Scottish Friends using records of births, marriages and burials, usefully setting this alongside other similar work which has been done on English Friends' occupations and on class and occupation in other Scottish denominations. Chapter 6 looks at the family relationships which were a significant feature of nineteenth-century Scottish Quakerism, exploring the links and connections between prominent Scottish Quaker families and the wider implications of those connections.

The book changes methodology in the seventh and eighth chapters which look at the social makeup of the Society in Scotland today. These two chapters are based on a questionnaire which was sent to every adult member or attender of the Scottish Society. The questionnaire (a copy of which is included in the appendices to the book) sought

...to identify the social background of Scottish Quakers as indicated by their occupations and those of their parents. It was also considered important to establish the overall make-up of the Society through a series of demographic questions on age, education, etc., as well as Friends' 'spiritual background'—had they come from a Quaker family or had they come to Quakerism via another route. It also sought comments and views on perceived changes in the Society and reasons for joining, either as member or attender (p. 198).

The final number of adult members and attenders surveyed was 1193. A follow-up questionnaire was later sent personally to non-respondents; the final response rate was 65.5%, a good result allowing a generally valid set of conclusions to be drawn. Burton's analysis of the results provides both a useful 'snapshot' of the Society at the beginning of the twenty-first century and a provocative exploration of issues raised by some of the responses to the survey.

Paul Burton's work is to be warmly welcomed. It is good, too, to see George B. Burnet and William H. Marwick's *The Story of Quakerism in Scotland 1650–1950* back in print and therefore available to a wider audience. This edition is a reprint of the original 1952 edition with no additional material.

While dated in some ways, this book remains the most extensive discussion of Scottish Quakers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Based on his original 1936 doctoral thesis, Burnet describes the Society's history in Scotland from 1653 to

1850, but the nineteenth-century material is brief and much less detailed than that on the earlier periods. A nine-page supplement by William H. Marwick covers the period from 1850 to 1950. It is an institutional history with an emphasis on the struggle of Quakerism to survive in a hostile environment; there is little social history.

George Burnet was a Church of Scotland Minister and his personal religious views come through strongly in the chapter titled 'Why Quakerism Failed in Scotland' which argues that 'neither the psychological nor the spiritual climate of Scotland suited it' (p. 192). Nonetheless the book provides a valuable starting point for any historian of Scottish Quakerism and a wealth of information and sources for further work.

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WILLIAMS, P.A., *Quakerism: A Theology for our Time* (York: Sessions, 2007), pp. 198. ISBN 978-1-85072-364-6, Paper, £10.

Patricia Williams makes a vigorous claim: that Quakerism is the best theology for our time, at least in the context of modern Christianity. Other forms of Christianity have proved themselves inadequate. Specifically, they fail by the criteria of modern biblical criticism and empirical science. Williams is well qualified to use these criteria, since she herself is a philosopher of science and an active participant in biblical research. It is the philosopher that comes through most strongly, however, as she draws the contrast between early Quakerism and orthodox Christianity, and subjects both to the tests of modern critical knowledge.

The book is in three parts. Part 1 characterises Quakerism as a spirituality and theology grounded in the experience of the Light. It is an experience open to everyone, whatever their culture or belief, since the Light is found to be present in everyone, and to be effective in them if they give it attention (Chapters 2, 3). This experience, once accepted, leads people to the divine and proves to be sufficient to guide them in the practicalities of life (Chapter 5) and to unite them with others who are similarly open (Chapter 4). They do not require beliefs as a basis for life since they can experience the reality of life for themselves, and they do not need rules to live by since they can (if they choose) discern what needs to be done. This discerning, it is true, may need to be checked by the community, but the community's guidance is principally in the form of lived testimonies to its truth (Chapter 5).

This presentation is fresh and clear, but the summary on p. 61 sits somewhat oddly with it.

The foundational Quaker doctrine is that all people have a measure of the divine Light within them... The remainder of the core Quaker theology follows logically from this foundational doctrine. Because the Light is divine, everyone should heed it. To heed it, people must listen for it, and a good listener listens in silence.