Besse's "Sufferings of Early Quakers: Southwest England, 1654 to 1690" - Book Review

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Quaker historians frequently draw on Joseph Besse’s monumental account of the sufferings of Quakers throughout England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, New England and the West Indies from 1650, when Quakers ‘were first distinguished by that name’, to approximately 1689, when the Act of Toleration gave some protection to dissenters. Over a twenty-six-year period from 1727 to 1753, Joseph Besse collected together what he considered to be the most interesting or indicative
een seen in opposition to one's and to develop a theory based on subjectivization thesis not only to continue testing whether or not. Is it by chance that the subjectivization thesis was as an 'holistic' theory?

Gay Pilgrim
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that extraordinary Quaker con­
circular Friends of the eighteenth
his son William Bartram, plant in Cook's Endeavour voyage. Itawson, Peter Collinson, Johnrus, and an epilogue that makes
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ah Martha Baker.
imes little or no knowledge of section is split informally into nical introduction to the subject o twentieth-century published quotations from contemporary rated with photographic repro-
arkinson, as well as maps and

Geoffrey Morries
versity of Birmingham, England


e's monumental account of the Scotland, Wales, New England were first distinguished by that 'toleration gave some protection n 1727 to 1753, Joseph Besse ost interesting or indicative

examples of what Friends had suffered for the Truth and the two volumes of Sufferings often provide the only surviving copy of important primary documents.

Unless one is fortunate enough to have ready access to a major reference library, however, it can be difficult to locate a copy and there is, at present, no freely accessible online edition. In response to this, Sessions Book Trust is gradu­
ally publishing a series of regional facsimiles, with new indexes. The most recent of these is Southwest England, which reproduces the material from the original volume I on Bristol, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset and Somerset and from volume II on Wiltshire.

Two original indices are included; one which lists the names of 212 persons imprisoned in Ilchester in Somersetshire in 1660 and another which gives the names of those at Bristol sentenced to banishment and transportation in 1663 and 1664. These are supplemented by two modern indices, one of people and one of places, carefully compiled by Michael Gandy.

The book is well produced and the photographic facsimiles are clearly printed.

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