

2014

## Remembering T. Canby Jones

Ron Rembert  
*Wilmington College*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/qrt>



Part of the [Christian Denominations and Sects Commons](#), and the [Christianity Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Rembert, Ron (2014) "Remembering T. Canby Jones," *Quaker Religious Thought*. Vol. 123 , Article 17.  
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/qrt/vol123/iss1/17>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ George Fox University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Quaker Religious Thought by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ George Fox University. For more information, please contact [arolfe@georgefox.edu](mailto:arolfe@georgefox.edu).

# REMEMBERING T. CANBY JONES

RON REMBERT

Over a fifty-five year period, the Quaker Theological Discussion Group has promoted examination and exploration of “the intellectual foundations of Quakerism” and shared its discoveries in the publication, *Quaker Religious Thought*, “a journal of theology.” Among the many insightful Quaker contributors to these intellectual endeavors, T. Canby Jones of the Religion and Philosophy Department of Wilmington College in Wilmington, Ohio, played a significant part.

By inclination, Canby sought collaboration. Early in his career at Wilmington College, for example, he invited a young Catholic priest, Fr. Richard Rohr, to join him and others in a Quaker/Catholic dialogue open to the campus and the general public. In another instance, he envisioned and organized an Ecumenical Traveling Class which introduced many undergraduates and interested participants from the surrounding area to Christian, Buddhist, Islamic, Judaic, etc. traditions by travelling to their places of worship and interacting with members of those religious communities. In celebration of the centennial of Thomas Kelly’s birthday in 1993, Canby helped organize a cast of keynote speakers from various traditions — Baptist, Catholic and Quaker — to offer different perspectives on the life and work of one of Canby’s major mentors during his undergraduate days at Haverford College, Thomas Kelly. (Note the papers from the Kelly conference in Vol. 85 (1995).

Another of Canby’s mentors, George Fox, inspired much of his published work and QRT contributions. (Note his offerings in Volumes 7 (1962), 24 (1970), 39 (1975) and 56 (1984).)

His interest in George Fox was long-standing, finding its early academic expression in his graduate study at Yale Divinity School and Graduate School. George Fox was not only an academic interest for Canby. In his ministry to Campus Friends Meeting on the campus of Wilmington College, he would often feel inspired to speak from and about Fox. Canby also enjoyed bringing George Fox alive by dressing up as the seventeenth century Quaker and appearing in classroom settings or Quaker events on campus.

Among Canby's many contributions to the Religious Society of Friends, his excitement about the emergence of QTDG and QRT seems noteworthy. In his editorial, *Front Matters*, published in Vol. 11 (1964) when Canby assumed the role of editor of QRT, he states,

Greetings from your new editor. It has been a joy to me to see the concern of a Quaker journal of theology, broached at the Conference of Friends in the Americas held here at Wilmington College, become a fruitful reality.

Canby's commitment to QTDG and QRT ranged over a forty-year period matching his teaching career at Wilmington College. His first publication appeared in 1962 and his last offering was published in 2008. In that last essay, Canby looked back, reflecting on the Highlights of QRT#S 11 – 20 (1964 – 1968). Canby discloses,

It is a strange experience to go back forty-five years to read, examine, and interpret articles and issues of *Quaker Religious Thought* of which I was editor in a previous generation.

Would that current readers might share Canby's seemingly "strange," but fruitful, experience of looking back.