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'SOME ACCOUNT OF THE PROGRESS OF THE TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS': THE WHITE QUAKERS OF IRELAND

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ABSTRACT

The White Quakers were a small but vocal sect of schismatic Quakers in Dublin, Waterford, Clonmel and Mountmellick, under the leadership of Joshua Jacob and Abigail Beale, between c.1840-1854. The history of the sect, its connections with contemporary utopian leaders in England, its contemporary reputation in the Quaker and non-Quaker world, and treatment in historiography are examined. White Quaker ideas on religious authority, gender and marriage, capitalist and commercial activity, are also outlined in the following study.

KEYWORDS

White Quakers, Religious Society of Friends in Ireland, utopianism, communism, free-love.

Thackeray in The Irish Sketchbook (1843) noted that Irish Quakers had established 'a sort of monkery'. Outside Carlow he encountered 'a couple of cars drawn by white horses, and holding white Quakers and Quakeresses, in white hats, clothes, shoes, with wild maniacal-looking faces, bumping along the road.' The White Quaker sect's often bizarre activity from c.1840 - 54, under the leadership of Joshua Jacob and Abigail Beale, between c.1840-1854. The history of the sect, its connections with contemporary utopian leaders in England, its contemporary reputation in the Quaker and non-Quaker world, and treatment in historiography are examined. White Quaker ideas on religious authority, gender and marriage, capitalist and commercial activity, are also outlined in the following study.

Their activities from 1843 - 44 are recorded in the extraordinary serial Some account of the Progress of the Truth as it is in Jesus. This comprised reports from Joshua Jacob, supporters' and opponents' letters, minutes of the sect's meetings, and material relating to the sect's prehistory in the form of letters and accounts of dreams from c.1832 onwards. Any attempt to understand the members' psychology must study the dreams precisely recorded in their private journals - a common practice in mainstream Quakerism - and published in Progress of the Truth. They offer insight into the emotional relationships between members, and between them and their Quaker relations. They express anxiety about the Quaker majority from which they were alienated and which they saw as their persecutors, and a sense of themselves as a divinely-favoured body.

Some of their critics' often extremely hostile letters, tracts and pottern were reproduced in Progress of the Truth. This material and the journal's general tone, according to the English radical Thomas Frost, were 'decidedly unique in journalism, and worthy of preservation as one of the curiosities of literature.' A Quaker critic called it a 'rake's progress to untruth.' Jacob's (and his followers') fierce denunciations were printed as handbills, and many are preserved at the Friends' Libraries in Dublin and London. An important, though biased contemporary account, is provided in Sarah Greer's Quakerism, or the Story of My Life (1851). Scattered references appeared in the Owenite paper New Moral World, Barmby's several journals, the freethought journal The Reasoner, and two other progressive journals: Howitt's Journal and Joseph Barker's The People. Shortly after its demise, White Quakerism was briefly discussed in the British antiquarian journal Notes and Queries. A succinct synthesis of material largely from Progress of the Truth formed a mostly accurate and well balanced account, in two unsigned articles in the Newcastle Weekly Chronicle of 1876.

Joshua Jacob fascinated contemporaries. One antiquarian claimed somewhat
hyperbolically that he had 'divided public attention equally with [Daniel]
O'Connell', the Liberator.' His notoriety secured an entry in the late Victorian
[British] Dictionary of National Biography and the Quaker Alfred Webb's
Compendium of Irish Biography, and a modern Dictionary of Irish Biography. The
basic biography is supplemented by a recent short article by Lena Boylan
drawing on local memories of the sect in an article in The Irish Times (1888).
Most recently Jacob's character and his sect are explored in John MacKenna's
classic study of English utopian experiments; Barbara Taylor's
basic biography is supplemented by a recent short article by Lena Boylan
Joshua Jacob was born in Clonmel, one of the southern Irish 'Quaker towns'
and Jacki e Latham's study of the 'sacred social ist',
become understandable. They appear only br ief ly in Isabel Grubb's
education in Leeds, Waterford and Ballitore, he was apprenticed to a Dubl i n
bankrupt bus inessman, he was thrown on his own resources. After rece i ving an
neighbour, kind to the poor, and greatly respected .''' Around 1835, conv inced
Quaker community he was known as a prosperous tradesman and 'Fr iend in
contrast with the 'B lack Quakers'. By 1842, the rejection of wordly goods was
the next requ irement. Most Quakers ignored the actions precipitating his ejec­
tion but Jacob's condemnat ion of worldl iness attracted supporters among 'the
mothers left their grown-up children and grandchildren, husbands their
wises, and wives their husbands and children, denouncing and inveighing
all sorts of bitter things against all their old acquaintances who were
unprepared to go the whole hog with them.'

They were of good and wealthy Quaker families, 'educated as good as
Friends generally have', and of hitherto 'highest respectab ility '. 19 Webb recalled
'many rich people, particularly rich women'. In total, about fifty adults joined
in the early 1840s. In addition, members had children, and were naturally keen
to tran them in the 'Truth'. Jacob felt it a 'requ iring' from 184 1 to educate
them through personal example 'to learn to serve themselves in the creat ion;
to make their own beds, and to clean the i r rooms every morni ng. ''' Until the
famine years, when the sect, like mainstream Quakers, continued their charita­
ble work by offering relief, they recruited few from outside the Quaker middle
classes, although they were 'open to all'.11 An exception was the painter Isaac
Dickenson, whose lower status was highlighted by himself and by his Quaker
opponents. In the later 1840s few original White Friends remained, and
recruits were of humble, non-Quaker background.
The sect's development from the time of Jacob's disownment was minutely
detailed in almost three thousand pages of Progress of the Truth to late 1844. This
text revealed the drama from the establishment of several houses and Meetings:26
Joshua's imprisonment in the Four Courts Marshalsea (until 1846), for princi­
pled refusal to return money vested in the community, which belonged to the
children of a deceased brother;27 his 'putting away' of his wife and 'marriage' to
Abigail (March 1843), which critics thought threatened the inaugurat ion of a
free-love community along the lines of the Owenites; through to the enforced
auction of goods at the community house at William Street, Dublin (October
1843),28 and establishment of a new house at Usher's Quay.29
The Progress of the Truth ceased in late-1844,29 but there are accounts of their
community in the mansion and estate at Newlands outside Dublin. This was
represented as a cheerful, self-sufficient vegetarian paradise but in reality by
1850 it was a failing experiment.30 By this date, through desertion especially
after the 'marriage' of Abigail, abduction31 (although presented as 'rescue' by the

THE HISTORY OF THE SECT

Joshua Jacob was born in Clonmel, one of the southern Irish 'Quaker towns'
(so-called due to the importance of Quaker economic activity).32 The son of a
bankrupt businessman, he was thrown on his own resources. After receiving an
education in Leeds, Waterford and Ballitore, he was apprenticed to a Dublin
grocer and candlewick manufacturer. In 1829, he married Sarah Fayle and
fathered seven children. He saved enough to establish a profitable shop, 'The
Golden Teapot', selling tea and sugar in ha'penny and farthing packets. In the
Quaker community he was known as a prosperous tradesman and 'Fr iend in
God to dispose of furniture and household goods; and to wear simple, undyed
clothing that was to give the sect its popular name and wh ich symbolised the
employment of a local Quaker from the importance of Quaker econom i c activity). The
Quaker幹nitior ial and Commenctement of the Millennium, and Jackie Latham's study of the 'sacred social ist',.

A Haunted Heart. Given their radical, utopian and communitarian
connections, the sect appears but is not closely examined in W.H.G. Armytage's
classic study of English utopian experiments; Barbara Taylor's

THE WHITE QUAKERS OF IRELAND

equally refractory, and were in like manner drowned, were kept out of
the meeting like him, and held forth in the passages as he did.35

Supporters included close relations, notably Jacob's brother Samuel and
William, sister Mary, and niece Lucy, while a sister-in-law was another follower, and
many of the members were cousins. According to Greer, his wife Sarah was
'unit ed heart and hand,' and Jacob's symbolic public smashing of their
household's coloured and gilded china and earthenware met with her applause. 12 She
was particularly 'efficient in the women's Meeting', 13 but in reality, her support
wavered and she was dramatically rejected by her husband and other members.14
Membership of the sect split many other families and friends.

Membersh i p of the sect split many other families and friends:

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Weaned of the world, they rejected its 'heap of things.'

God's blessing superseded mere familial ties. The ideals and ideas which defined, sustained and divided the sect now need to be examined.

**WHITE QUAKER BELIEFS CONCERNING QUAKERISM**

In a study of this length it is only possible to examine the White Quakers' most important beliefs. Their religious and socio-political ideas will need to be comprehensively analysed elsewhere. These beliefs were presented in writing, but required practical manifestation: 'We cannot call Christ our Saviour in sincerity without witnessing Him in this way.' Their understanding of their task was provided in a statement given by Joshua and Abigail to an inquirer who was a follower of Barnewby. It was:

> simply and entirely the work of God. Different from all other communities, we live by faith; no plans, no commerce, no speculations, no contrivances, no taking thought for the morrow, nor taking thought for any of those things which the nations of this world seek after, because our Father who hath begotten His Son in us, and has given us this faith, knoweth what he have need of, and will supply all our need, as we continue in the exercise of it."

Weaned of the world, they rejected its 'heap of things.' God's blessing superseded mere familial ties. Their lifestyle was chaste, temperate, healthy and robust: 'the means, whereby those who have been during their life time otherwise, have become so.'

Physician, lawyer, priest and soldier were not required, while servants were not allowed. Forbidden items included clocks, watches, carpets, beds, mirrors, wallpaper, bed curtains, silverware, mahogany furniture, sofas and pictures. Indeed,

> Only a change of raiment, simply made without dye. We cook, bake and wash, scour the floors, make and mend our clothes and shoes; in which, as well as useful learning, the children are instructed, having no thoughts of toys or pastimes in use in the world. Parents have no control out of the truth over their own children, but generally find coming amongst us that they have much to learn themselves."

Obedience by children and 'in all to the Spirit of God' was insisted on as 'unity is held in the bond of peace.'

Although much that they insisted on can be seen as reasserting the practices of a 'Peculiar People', their Quaker opponents viewed their doctrines and practices as eccentric and scandalous. They also astonished English radicals who supported Owen or Fourier, but others were less quick to condemn their eccentricities. In 1844, the Englishman George Ruby told the New Moral World's editor that their 'internal arrangements as respecting diet, domestic accommodation, demeanour to each other, &c, are distinguished by great practical good sense'; nor did the costume look 'so singular as one would expect from the description.' Nevertheless, given that Ruby was but a brief visitor, while the sect continued for a decade, his testimony has the value of a snapshot of a staged scene.

The examination of their beliefs naturally begins with their interpretation of Quakerism. The White Quakers saw themselves as a 'pure body' which had attempted to reform a once highly favoured church. Claiming from George Fox's time the 'highest and purest standard of Christian religion and worship, even of being led and guided by pure unerring Spirit of God, divine vengeance rightly would fall first on Quakers for worldliness and abandonment of old principles.' The sect represented a tendency apparent elsewhere, notably among followers of John Wilbur in America who were hostile to 'modernisers' like J. J. Gurney.

Jacob reprinted John Barclay's letters (c.1818) against innovations in children's religious education. A letter to Richard Allen in 1837 also reflects this conservatism. In June 1837, Jacob stated that the Moral Reform Society was 'inconsistent with the principles of our religious Society, and inadequate to the end proposed by it.' He felt that it was grievous 'to see those who profess the only guide into all truth, and dependence on it alone, now turning to this human invention as a substitute.' He claimed to have long felt burdened by impure tracts full of 'modern trash... such as Gurney and others being too much resorted to and delighted in.'

In their youth, Jacob, Abigail Beale, and a leading follower, Mary Pim, had met John Conran (1739 - 1827), recalled by Jacob as 'a champion in his day against the same infidelity that under another form then sought to trample on the life of Christ among us' — an allusion to the late-eighteenth century Irish schism. Jacob declared that, meeting Conran during his apprenticeship, he had been told about Conran's sufferings at the hands of 'false brethren' (the 'New Lights'), and charged with continuing Conran's defence of the doctrine of Christ's divinity. Perhaps Conran knew or sensed that his young auditor was a fervent Friend. If the incident truly happened then the commission to preserve the purity of the Society is important. Abigail corresponded with Conran, and a letter from January 1820 to 'My dear cousin, Abigail Beale' was reprinted in Progress of the Truth.

Not only were they hostile towards the 'evangelical' modernisers whom they interpreted as a new danger equivalent to the 'New Lights', but they publicly charged in printed and spoken testimony, particularly in the Progress of the Truth and in broadsheets, their Quaker relatives and their friends with worldliness, and found fault with the lives of 'weighty' Quakers. The majority Quaker response
to their critique of an endemic ‘backsliding’ tendency had been expulsion. The language was heated with White Quaker supporters characterised, according to the White Quakers, ‘not by the thoughtless ones only, but those holding the chief seats’, as: ‘ranters, fanatics, heretics, deep dark spirits, Hicksites, unbelievers, without love, without natural affection, disturbers of the peace, mad, deluded, self-righteous, devils.’ White Quakers, including women, were forcibly ejected from meeting houses. Further response was shaped, naturally, by activity as an independent body. This confirmed Quaker fears, and ensured they emphasised the sect’s schismatic status. The recording clerk of the Religious Society at London felt it necessary to stress that Jacob was no longer a Quaker when The Times reported the sect’s extraordinary behaviour in Waterford in 1842.

Behaviour on both sides was intemperate. White Quakers attacked opponents as individuals, showing no reluctance to publicise the family quarrels and hostilities. The schism was complicated in part by being a familial conflict, and the legal proceedings by Joseph Beale against Jacob and his sister-in-law Anne Joseph Jacob (on behalf of her children). Individual Quakers resorted to violence, appeals to the authorities, and tactics such as sending people to beg charity from the sect in 1843, to bankrupt or embarrass them. Handbills and papers spread misinformation, and bitter language was again resorted to. Anonymous letters castigated Abigail as a harlot, and her mother-in-law was similarly described. Condemned for sexual immorality, the sect received letters and took notice of sentiments which confirmed their view that the Society harboured lewd members. One correspondent, claiming to have admired Jacob’s early ‘consistent walk’, spoke of ‘Thy Tea Pot as it is technically called Poking its nose into forbidden Ground.’ It was alleged that they were embracing Owenite free-love under the guise of religion. The grounds for this allegation was the early ‘consistent walk,’ spoke of ‘Thy Tea Pot as it is technically called Poking its nose into forbidden Ground.’ It was alleged that they were embracing Owenite free-love under the guise of religion. The grounds for this allegation was the early ‘consistent walk’ of John Conran, which will be discussed below.

Undoubtedly the White Quaker episode was deeply embarrassing, painful and shaming to Irish Quakers. Their publications exposed the family conflicts and alleged moral failings of prominent southern Irish Quakers. They divided husbands from wives and children, and seemingly advocated free-love. Unsurprisingly, the Society avoided publicising the schism through discussions in its journals. Only the most opaque of allusions were made in an article in The Friend of 1849, and transmitted as a response to Bamby’s The Apostle and Chronicle of the Communist Church. The conservative Irish Friend was also wary, though some paragraphs and correspondence show that several White Quaker concerns were shared by others (assuming that the letters were not from them). The journal, which intended to serialise a ‘Life of John Conran’, printed correspondence calling for simplicity in clothing and habitation, and paragraphs opposing compromises to simplicity involved in modern trade. It published a letter from J. F. of Islington, which stressed that George Fox and early Friends had ‘minds of that which pressed upon them as their religious duty to declare’, regardless of reputation, worldly interest or safety. But as a salutary watchword it printed a passage from Isaac Pennington’s Works which enjoined tenderness in dealing with weaknesses. This may be an allusion to the new ‘fault finders’ in the Society.
White Quaker Rebecca Ridgway vehemently denied the 'R anter' label as them in their critique of Greer's distortions, but the Rev. E. Nangle felt that the 'fearful manifestation of evil' was but a doctrinal development. He noted that it should have been a new 'beacon' to the Society and was 'an added testimony of the 'Inner Light' and presented as the result of a higher agency: 'we could not preach in our own free-thought as 'infidelity'. True earthly joy came through the 'leadings and wills, but in the Lord's way and time .' Belief in the 'Inward Light' meant a continued watchfulness for the Spirit's promptings. Jacob, as a traditionalist, felt noted that backsliders succumbed to the devil's temptations. This belief in a division between the spiritually enlightened and those in spiritual darkness was symbolised through plain white clothing and habitation, simple food, and whose right place was 'subservient to revelation'. Action had to be understood as a 'thrill of horror' when he heard of any White Quaker speaking lightly or complacently of the smallest motion of God's spirit secretly manifested to them; which they have not faithfully attended to, and obeyed. Moreover, promptings might not originate in God. Jacob alluded to trials against opposing spirits, and noted that backsliders succumbed to the devil's temptations. This belief in a division between the spiritually enlightened and those in spiritual darkness was symbolised through plain white clothing and habitation, simple food, and domestic or agricultural occupation, expressed a division between the damned and those working for their salvation. It might be assumed that the White Quakers believed in the doctrine of original sin but Jacob believed this doctrine was 'cursed'. In stressing the 'Inward Light', White Quakers were liable to charges of antinomianism, but the latter doctrine was not what Jacob advocated. The White Quaker Rebecca Ridgway vehemently denied the 'Ranter' label as Ranters had been an immoral loose people who gave out, that what was sinful in others was not sin in themselves, and consequently they were guilty of many gross sins: they used to go into the Meetings of our early Friends singing and dancing. The dreams that frequently figure in Progress of the Truth provided another source of guidance. They were carefully recorded and returned to, and represented an effort to continue Quaker traditions. It was important not to question their validity. For example, it was recorded: 'If I were to enter into reasoning with thee on these things, I might destroy the Lord's work and endanger my own soul.' Though denying the supremacy of Scripture, White Quakers were steeped in it, especially the Old Testament and Book of Revelation. Quotations from, or echoes of, the Bible appeared throughout the sect's writings. This was partly a conscious effort to show that they were not heretics. Critics naturally thought this the clothing of hypocrites and sinners. Alighting on random passages of the Bible also provided guidance, a regular practice in Quakerism and the wider Protestant world. Dreams were recorded for their significance as warnings or comfort; difficulties could be interpreted as tests of obedience, as 'close trial and proving of faith' while complex tasks were embraced as 'crucifixions'. The Progress of the Truth gives numerous instances of personal testing by Jacob and others. He required members to demonstrate 'obedience beyond what wordlings are willing to yield', and argued that:

This people must be a separate people, not a mixed people; and to enable them to stand for the honour of God, they must go through the trials, siftings and provings that are appointed for their purification: that this temple may be holy.

Some of these tests appear perverse and cruel, such as the order given to a wealthy, aged Quakeress, to eat a bowl of 'strababout' on the steps of the Bank of Ireland one winter's morning, dressed only in white calico with no shoes or stockings. This incident can be read as a cult-leader's attempt to humiliate, or at least to make humble, and break the will of a follower. However, it can be argued such a task may have been willingly undertaken. The Bank had also become the subject of Jacob's ire because he thought his gold coins were weighed dishonestly there. His early followers were mostly unused to hard manual or menial work, and it was alleged that a 'delicate young lady' died because of overdwork when ordered to wash clothes for the whole community. Such acts curbed individual will, asserted leadership, and publicly expressed White Quaker values.

The verdict of one close and critical observer indicates the group nature of the sect's discipline. It was a 'white nunnery' where recruits had to 'give up their own will, they must have no will of their own, and be subject one unto another, And give up even all their outward substance, every bit.' James 'Shepherd' Smith, an English radical, thought that though Jacob was professedly leader he actually 'exercises no perceptible authority ... there is no appearance of any regular system of government amongst them.' In fact there was, in the form of structures following Quaker practice, disciplinary meetings and procedures, such as private admonition, testifying and letters of disownment. Jacob's primacy is clear. The authority to command came from his prophetic status, as the servant of the Lord. Moreover, he was disingenuous when he denied that he was 'leader' of a sect because 'divinity' and damnation followed disobedience and questioning of his authority.

The anathematising and insults strikingly departed from the public face and reputation of Quakerism. In contrast to their continuing acts of private charity and philanthropy was their vehemence towards backsliders. Yet, although Joshua spoke in Progress of the Truth with supreme confidence about his mission,
there are indications of doubts and struggles. For in the presentation of 'requir-
ings', as the result of a struggle between two spirits, between good and evil, there was more than a wish to express a sense of drama.* In these moments of crisis Jacob was supported by his 'handmaid' Abigail Beale, and her importance should not be minimised. An obituary in the radical English paper The Spirit of the Times described her as 'the master-mind and guiding spirit of the White Quakers'. Although the conclusion must be that Jacob was the leading figure, Beale's role deserves recognition and examination. This examination is placed in the context of White Quaker ideas on gender.*

**WHITE QUAKERS, GENDER AND MARRIAGE**

Abigail Beale was a woman of strong resolve and moral courage, who assumed and was accorded the de facto position of second in authority to Jacob. She was required to play an important role in the sect's affairs when, following Jacob's refusal to return money belonging to his nephews and nieces, he was incarcerated in Four Courts prison (remaining there for four years and eight months). The prominence which she enjoyed as a result of her freedom of movement was supported by a conviction that 'by her faith, strength and beauty the true church will be enabled to cut off the head of the wicked one.' Abigail belonged to a prominent southern Irish Quaker family. She was the daughter of the manufacturer William Beale of Irishtown (1765 - 1818) and his first wife Mary, a religious young woman who died shortly after Abigail's birth. In 1799, William married his second wife, Elizabeth (née Garratt), and the relationship between stepmother and stepdaughter was very close, as Elizabeth was a loyal supporter of 'Abby' and the sect. Abigail's dreams often featured Annegrove, her mother's house and a significant point of contention between the sect and male Quaker relations. Her half-siblings Anne, Mary, William and Joseph were actors in the family drama.

William Beale was concerned about the Society's moral state in his latter years, and from *Progress of the Truth* it is clear that his daughter was similarly, and deeply, concerned in the early 1830s, when Abigail supported a member who had been told to keep quiet in Meeting although the truth of his testimony had not been denied. She returned gifts from a newly married relation, shocked at the vanity and worldliness displayed. She was also troubled by her brothers' behaviour towards her stepmother. These concerns were manifested in dreams which she interpreted at the time or revealed later in *Progress of the Truth*. The thirteenth part of *Progress of the Truth*, and significantly the longest number, was wholly devoted to a retelling of her 'trials and exercises'. As the dramatically recalled, she was rejected by the Quaker body 'for endeavouring to stand in the simple Testimony of Truth'. The circumstances (summer 1836 - May 1839) were exhaustively detailed in the sixteenth part of *Progress of the Truth*. Abigail and two other women Overseers of the Waterford Monthly Meeting, Sarah Waring and Anne Goouch, were disowned after being charged with bringing mischief into families, difference into the Meeting, trouble upon their own heads and meddling between a mother and daughter. One irritant had been Abigail's rigour against a 'swindler' of a respectable family who had impregnated another Quakeress, Rebecca Gribb, to obtain goods in London in 1831. If the sect's account is true then there was an attempt, on the part of members of the Men's Meeting and Elder, such as Sarah Allen and Elizabeth Strangman, to silence the Overseers and shield the wrongdoer. Goouch, Waring and Beale were accused of being unfit to judge the case, and it was alleged that Goouch was motivated by a spirit of vengeance in interfering in a quarrel between the mother and daughter, Elizabeth and Eliza Goouch, her relations.

Abigail alleged defamation of character at her Women's Meeting but was treated as the transgressor and told to leave as a delinquent. The Meeting appealed to the men for support and force was used to prevent her attending the Meeting. Relatives appealed to her to make amends and own up to her guilt rather than embarrass them. Disowned finally in May 1839, she was uncertain how to proceed in making her separation more publicly known, when she was visited by Joshua Jacob whose testimony she had accepted as 'sound doctrine'. In 1837, she defended these doctrines in correspondence with a conservative English Quaker, Lydia Barclay. At this time she had little personal acquaintance with Jacob, when, according to his own account, he visited his cousin Isaac Jacob, her brother-in-law, with whom she was staying in spring 1839 whilst recovering from an illness which weakened an 'already weakly frame'. Recovering, in late October 1839 she attended Meetings at Jacob's house in Nicholas Street, and visited him in Dublin gaol when he was incarcerated in November 1839. She established a Meeting at Waterford, 'in order publicly to manifest our dependence [sic] on holy help and protection', and rented a house to hold future Meetings. She organised a more public Meeting in Dublin in 1840 and persuaded Jacob to reject 'outward matters', which he thought stood in the way. She felt the choice of house, at William Street, was a divinely appointed and irresistible act. She arranged a separate graveyard at Little Newtown in 1840, purchasing the land on the community's behalf. Again, the choice of site was presented as a decision literally imposed physically on her, as the Lord's doing. The sect's Dublin Monthly Meeting noted the 'increased weight' devolving upon her with Jacob's imprisonment, describing her as a 'Mother in Israel, giving the portion of bread in due season, an Elder worthy of double honour, who travails for the living birth in souls.' As shown by this and other passages, she was identified by sect members (and critics) with Deborah, the only female 'Judge of Israel' (Judg. 4-5) who encouraged Barak's victory against the Canaanites. She superintended work at the community house at Usher's Quay, and seemingly played a major part in life at Newlands until her death.

Abigail was wealthy, having inherited a large sum of money from her father. Unfortunately, her brother Joseph refused to hand this over, and £800 was lost in his business 'disgraceful failure'. His intransigence seems to have been a...
punishment for her support for Jacob. This hostility was strengthened after the
shame she bought to her non-White Quaker relations and the Quaker
community through the 'marriage' which was so publicly discussed in Progress
of the Truth. Her plight was echoed in the experiences of other White
Quakeresses, deprived of property by sons and abused for disobedience to
husbands and fathers. 116 Male relations forcibly removed them from the
community houses. One example of this was the experience of Abigail's sister
Mary, who married Thomas Thacker Pim in 1826. He was devastated when she
joined the sect (acting as Jacob's amanuensis in prison) and, visiting her in
February 1842, wanted to know how he could make amends and what would
happen to the children. She evidently surprised herself by calmly receiving him
as a stranger. Her request not to send the children to her at Mountmellick
Meeting House demonstrated a sense of a higher duty, but critics saw it as
another instance of White Quaker immorality. 117 Joseph forced the Waterford
White Quaker Meeting to read out a letter condemning her 'dereliction of
maternal duty' and transformation from loving and affectionate wife. In 1843,
Thomas could no longer tolerate the situation and she was forcibly taken from
the sect's house. She then faced denunciations by her former White brethren.

One of the sect's critics accused a visiting White Quakeress of being 'most
flippant' and thinking herself 'somebody'. 118 The women, in public distribution
of literature and refusal to accept warnings from policemen and magistrates, in
their silent 'witness to the truth' outside opponents' homes and above all in their
departure from their families, were acting in culturally unacceptable ways. 119 It
is easy to see the prominence of women in the sect's early years, 120 as
amounting to yet another sect where women especially were drawn to a
charismatic male leader. 119 Critics treated them as Jacob's harem, while Abigail
was presented as an aberration, an unnatural or misguided woman who had
succumbed to Jacob's magnetism. He was described as 'a man travelling about
making women leave their husbands and children'. White Quakeresses were
'honest but Silley [sic] Women . . . made the dupes of cunning but designing
men.' 121 Information on his attitude to female involvement is limited, but it
clearly was not conceived as concubinage. He was disgusted at one tract which
condemned the 'advancement of woman in the scale of civil and religious
society', and identified its author as a non-Quaker because the Society had been
most active in 'the work of reformation since the dark ages . . . to restore to
woman her Christian rights and free privileges.' 122 He also evidently agreed with
feminist sentiments expressed in letters by Goodwyn and Catherine Barmby,
and Anne Knight. 123 The community did attract at least one battered wife seek­

ing shelter, and violence against women was never alleged against the sect. 124

The attitude towards family ties can also be examined. One White
Quakeress acknowledged that 'it had been a great cross to her to separate from
them, but she knew it was right and required of her.' 125 Progress of the Truth
reports several instances where relatives attempted to contact White Quaker
siblings or parents, only to be rejected for having supported the expulsions from
the Quaker body. 126 There were at least four attempts at abduction or 'rescue'.

The sect knew that Quakers 'cannot endure having our burial ground used,' 127
and the death of one prominent female member (Mary Ridgway) involved
unpleasant attempts to undermine her wish to be buried there. 128 Samuel Jacob
followed his brother in 'divorcing' his wife Elizabeth when she was unable to
accept the community life. 129 Others divorced spouses for the same reason.
It was seen as an 'imperative duty' because husband and wife needed to be a 'heav­
enly kindred' and a 'bond of union'. 130 This was different to 'free love', with
which the sect has occasionally been associated. 131 Had White Quaker wives and
husbands been in harmony, this formulation probably would not have emerged.
Crucially, the White Quaker doctrine on divorce was presented not as 'freedom'
from rules, but as a response to God's inviolable command. In the absence of a
specific divine command it remained adultery, and was not to be justified by
self-centred criteria, such as personal happiness.

The twentieth part of Progress of the Truth was prefaced by a statement that
primeval man 'never looked upon the woman with delight, neither the woman
desired the man but in the movings of God's holy Spirit in the divine mind and
will.' Christian redemption restored this 'happy state' and was the only ground
of 'true and sacred marriage'. The entire number was a reprinting of Francis
Rous' The Mystical Marriage. 132 White Quakers maintained that marriage and
sexuality were divine requirings, and rejected the socialist-turned-mystic
William Galpin's attempt to connect them with celibate American Shakerism.
A poem published in the Owenite New Moral World praised 'wedded Love' as the
'true source/of human offspring', and maintained, against allegations of
polygyny, that it was the 'sole propriety/In paradise of all things common else'. 133

The 'marriage' to Abigail Beale, at least initially in 1843-44, does not seem to
have been consummated, 134 but Jacob's subsequent marriage, after Abigail's
death, demonstrates his continued opposition to celibacy. 135 Allegations of pub­
lic displays of nudity, apparently spread by opponents in order to discredit them,
naturally encouraged a view of the sect as a group of morally (or mentally)
unstable people. 136 White Quaker denial failed to silence these stories, which
remain attached to them.

COMMERCE AND CAPITALISM
The sect's attitude to commerce and communism is a further topic of interest.
Barmby recognised them as the 'Communist Church in Ireland'. Community
of goods was an important tenet, and demonstrated the return to 'primitive
Christianity'. 137 To further this, the auctioning of new members' goods was
encouraged. This tested the commitment of wealthy supporters who had much
to give up, publicly witnessed the Truth and secured funds. For example,
Elizabeth Pim's auction of luxury items, such as mahogany furniture and defili­
ware, in February 1844, was announced as 'For the Honour of Truth.' 138 Anne
Isaac Jacob was 'divorced' by the sect for refusing to sell her goods. She justified
her opposition on the grounds that selling luxurious goods to others was inconsistent with rejection of worldly goods, as destruction was more moral. The 'Community of goods' joined other beliefs condemnatory of a capitalist and commercial life which Quakers had embraced and excelled in. Jacob's apprenticeship had convinced him of the 'pernicious' effect of bills, and he refused to issue them in his own business. A dream set in Dublin Bay (recalled in 1843), reflected his condemnation of practices condoned by Quakers: the word 'grab-all' expressed its mood when he 'reviewed' it. He kept several tracts which expressed others' uneasiness about 'mammonism' in the Society of Friends.

The question of late hours in the retail trade was raised in a letter by an English supporter and elicited a characteristic response. As a tradesman, Jacob had supported 'a large family of small children, apprentices, clerks, and servants', and considering his long hours of toil an 'evil', he:

did not wait in the vain hope that my neighbours would be convinced or converted from this evil practice, under the fear that one penny might be turned from my door in their pockets, if I did that which I knew to be right or try to combine with them to persuade the public to come and purchase at a more suitable hour; but I took up my cross, that is the destruction of the will wherefrom the new birth is in continual operation and shut my doors on all occasions and times, when higher duties called, having dominion over the love of gain. For this cause my Heavenly Father... blessed me in basket and in store, in all things that I put my hands unto into faith... This indicates again his piety-infused commercial habits before the sect was formed, and expresses well his self-confidence and willingness to oppose normal behaviour. Faith was put in God, not in shopkeepers' combinations or public conscience. Another published criticism of capitalism came from Rebecca Ridgway. She condemned factories and joint-stock capitalism as human inventions that disrupted a divine order and economy, which required domestic work rather than combination in large factories 'to the destruction of health and morals'. Modern industrialism, although defended on grounds of human inventions that disrupted a divine order and economy, which required domestic work rather than combination in large factories 'to the destruction of health and morals'. Modern industrialism, although defended on grounds of national improvement and advance, oppressed the poor and made honest labour redundant. Another White Quaker condemned steam travel and all machinery, and hoped for the 'true simplicity of life and manners' when man was restored 'to a pastoral life'.

The White Quaker utopia involved menial domestic work, since it was 'inconsistent with the simplicity and purity of the gospel of Christ, not to labour with our own hands. This was one reason why they shocked respectable Quakers. One opponent ironically asked, after observing an inmate making the kitchen fire at William Street, 'was not that nice work for a respectable man's son'. Notions of respectability and distinctions belonged to Jacob's conscience had been stirred 'on account of my poor fellow mortals there in their neglected situation', during a brief incarceration in Four Courts gaol in 1839. Yet poverty per se was no virtue: 'Thou shalt not respect the poor more than the rich in judgement [sic]. Personal responsibility had to be exercised and a drunkard who abused their charity had the truth about his family's plight extracted from him by Jacob.

**THE PUBLIC REPUTATION OF THE SECT: SOME BRIEF COMMENTS**

Though limited in numbers, White Quakers acquired wide notoriety through violent and provocative language and bizarre, or allegedly immoral, behaviour. Press coverage, beyond local newspapers, included the English ultra-radical and national press. Articles appeared in the Concondium's journal, The New Age, and other progressive journals, such as the widely read Family Herald, Joseph Barker's The People, and Howitt's Journal (produced by the Quaker William Howitt). The Times was outraged but recognised that the sect's activity made interesting reading. Reports built on, and were supplemented by, the sect's own literature, distributed in the streets of White Quaker towns, and sent to 'influential people' by English supporters, especially Barmby. Thus the Earl of Stanhope, the Duke of Wellington, Thomas Carlyle and the organisers of the Society for Promoting Self-Supporting Institutions upon Christian Principles received tracts. Barmby distributed literature in the streets of London and sent material to Scotland, Wales, Switzerland and the United States. Progress of the Truth records close links with Barmby and communication with the 'Concordists' at their community at Ham Common, Surrey. Barmby, fellow son and associates visited Usher's Quay, while Hugh Doherty, the Fourierist, visited Jacob in prison. The Newlands community was visited separately by the socialist-Concordist William Galpin and Alexander Campbell, the socialist Isaac Ironside. Robert Owen himself and Joseph Barker.

**CONCLUSION**

The research on which this article is based has attempted to examine the sect in detail, piece together a chronology, uncover the sect's relations with other groups, and identify the purely apocryphal, such as the allegations of nudity. The picture remains shadowy. At the centre remains the enigma of the sect's founder.

What was Joshua Jacob like? Contemporary opinion was divided between those who thought he was a charlatan and those who thought he was a self-deluding...
religious fanatic. He was undoubtedly a bigot who anathematised dissenters (many of whom, of course, were relations), or well-meaning critics. Critics did not exaggerate the violence of the sect's own literature as these 'Publishers of the Truth' refused to temper their language. The tranquility pervading Newlands community in 1847 struck the prominent Dublin antislavery worker Richard Webb as an incredible change, while Barker's account of a visit in 1850 suggests this peace was short-lived and that a confrontational stance remained. According to Webb's son, Jacob harboured 'delusions' until his death.

What does White Quakerism represent? Greer and others rightly saw it as an attempt, at least originally, at returning to early Quakerism. It was conservative and inward-looking rather than a progressive utopianism and ought not to be linked (pace Barbara Taylor) with Barmby's and the Concordists' cerebralism and romanticism. Indeed, the sect made no claims to novelty or innovation. The original followers were 'chiefly interested for the prosperity and purity of their own little corner of mount Zion.' Several features, which now make Progress of the Truth seem odd, notably 'stories of Quaker miracles, dreams, portents, revelations, and prophecies', were certainly not intellectual or romantic in inspiration. Rather, they were orthodox if old-fashioned. Moreover, the conservative impulse continued. Jacob's nephew, another Joshua Jacob (1840-83) attempted to maintain simplicity or conservatism against evangelicalism, and was visited by one of the schismatic 'Fitchley Friends', a conservative English group emerging in the early 1860s. White Quaker tenets, theological and physiological, were echoed by Charles Allen Fox (1849-1929), an English Quaker historian to another wherein it was suggested that, because of Jacob's 'loose views' about marriage, 'much care may be needful in introducing their requirings of a sect, whose core principle was the Inward Light, were often, as this study has indicated, conscious echoes of earlier Quaker radicalism.

White Quakerism was not inaugurated with notions of returning to an Enlightenment-inspired primitive state of society. Notoriety, and the need or desire to find friends and converts transformed the sect's public face. An important factor in the transformation was the reprinting of Barmby's writings in Progress of the Truth. Old Quaker radicalism, in attacking the habits of the ungodly, particularly the injunction 'Be not conformed to this world', found echoes in Barmby's attacks on the established church and contemporary social relationships. When Joshua and Abigail Jacob were reviled for their 'marriage', Barmby's enthusiastic support was welcome. But Joshua was cautious about examining Barmby's writing and appreciated their differences when they finally met. It is clear, from Joshua Jacob's later comments on Barmby and other English socialists and radicals, that the identified points of common interest that these people explored proved to have different bases in reality. Yet observers would have been forgiven for thinking otherwise given the extent of Barmbyite material placed in Progress of the Truth. Newlands certainly represented developments of 'physical puritan' ideas parallel elsewhere, but these were in keeping with beliefs and practice already espoused by the sect. The new 'requirings' of a sect, whose core principle was the Inward Light, were often, as this study has indicated, conscious echoes of earlier Quaker radicalism.

White Quakers were remembered for their alleged sexual radicalism, a free-love reputation based on the divorce of Sarah Jacob and other unsympathetic spouses, and suggested by false reports of public nudity. Greer wrote of a 'most monstrous indelicacy and licentiousness' supported by texts such as 'to the pure all things are pure' which justified Jacob 'whenever he inclined to honour any of his female followers with a temporary preference.' Looking back twenty years, the American Unitarian Moncure Conway described them as a 'sort of free-love Quaker monastery' with a following due to the 'excited condition of those times.' Observers identified them with both Owenite free-love and an earlier Protestant antinomianism. The Rev. J.H. Blunt described them in his Dictionary of Sett (1874) as 'Antinomians of the worst description...cloaking villainy in the most sanctimonious language.' This was unfair. However, unattractive to contemporaries Jacob's behaviour was his public judgement on 'backsliding Quakers' at their funerals before the schism, his treatment of his wife, disruptive testimony in 'steeple houses', his ostentatious use of Quaker habits such as the 'steadfast' look and silence, the language used by the sect in its anathemas— he was not a villain. Though his 'marriage' to Abigail, and his subsequent marriage at Newlands laid him open to accusations of 'lewdness', his ideas on marriage and sexuality were not ones to gain sexual partners. The conflict stimulated an interpretation of marital and other bonds for which existing authorities, above all conscience, could be found. In contrast to radicals' interest in them in the 'excited condition of those times', their influence on Irish Quakerism outside their afflicted families has been viewed as limited. The short-term impact was probably stronger than later Quakers appreciated Jacob's followers after all were socially significant members: 'steady Friends' and 'pillars' of the Society whose separation had been shocking. Their strength of feeling about treatment by former family members and friends was expressed in a propaganda campaign which was unprecedented in Irish Quakerism. They convulsed Irish Quakerism 'to such an extent that they formed the staple subject of the gossip at quarterly Meetings, and all occasions when it is customary or proper for people to gossip at all.' Decades afterwards, implicated families would not talk about them. Jacob's great niece recalled that her grandmother, who had been a White Quaker, 'during the years of my early childhood never mentioned them in my hearing.' Their continued infamous reputation is shown in a letter from one early twentieth century Quaker historian to another wherein it was suggested that, because of 'loose views' about marriage, 'much care may be needful in introducing their names into the [Quaker historical] Journal or reference to their practice.' Greer claimed they inaugurated a more severe discipline in the Dublin Monthly Meeting which outlasted the schism. A response of resistance to 'constructive change' and fear of open discussion was a danger. It is doubtful whether in the longer term the schism helped reform Irish Quakerism through simplifications in living (as Joshua's great niece suggested), which might have 'given a little leaven to the main body of Friends in Ireland,' as extremism and notoriety made the episode a subject of shame. Isabel Grubb, breaking silence on events which had pained the Society, thought the experience may have been a catalyst for a softening of response to offenders within the Society. She
charitably noted that 'at least they attempted to live their religion, and not only to theorise about it.'

This is a just assessment of an experiment which disturbed contemporaries within the Irish and English Quaker communities, and the wider Irish and British society. White Friends challenged their age with their well-publicised activities and beliefs. They undermined the marriage bond when they believed there to be adultery of spirit; questioned familial duty when set against the commercial and capitalist practices accepted by the Quaker mainstream, and in the sect with fashioning the 'new moral world' of the Owenites and others, for successors to early Friends. Thus, observers were mistaken when they identified the demand of the Truth in an age of 'respectability', cult of the family and supreme purity of Quakerism against the encroachments of 'worldliness' and 'infidelity' by the 'New Lights' and the later evangelical Quakerism. "Conservative" Quakerism is discussed in


Mountmellick Friends, Some account of the Progress as it is in Ireland, Dublin: Thomas Cline, Mountmellick Friends, 1843 - 44. Hereafter cited as Progress. This was published in forty parts and issued with a part number which was separately paginated. Though undated the parts (averag- ing 70 pages) can be dated from material published in each issue. The Library of the Society of Friends, London (hereafter LSF) has two copies. The first is an incomplete set of four volumes, the other bound in three volumes. The first volume of the three-volume copy includes a MS index, contained in a notebook, with a printed calendar for 1840 - 81. This also incorporates a short pedagogue of the Jacob family. The publication is the chief primary source for this monograph. I have not so far been able to study other printed or manuscript material in the Library of the Irish Society of Friends, Dublin, but I am grateful to the Librarian for providing me with information on the archive, and sending me copies of some secondary material. In Progress, Mountmellick is spelt with an 'I'.

4 Frost, T., Forty Years Reflections Literary and Political, London: Sampson Low, 1880, p. 55 (see also references p. 69). Frost also referred to them in a paper, 'Social Utopias', Chambers' Papers for the People 18 (1850), pp. 1-32. See the parody 'Charity Sermon' reprinted in Progress, 27, p. 34, and purporting to emanate from the 'White Quaker Press' at Mountmellick. See Progress, 31, pp. 39-40 for the tract, The Good and Characteristic Features of Quakerism. Engravings were also produced.

5 Joseph Blake, letter printed in Progress, 17, p. 21.

Greer, S. (originally anonymous), Quakerism, or The Story of My Life By a lady, who, for forty years was a member of the Society of Friends, Dublin: Samuel, B. Odhams, 1851, also printed in America, Philadelphia (1846) M. Moore, 1852. Greer (1806 - 91) claimed the abandoned Quakerism because of the harmful influence of Joshua Jacob on Irish Friends. See entry in Harrison, R. S., Biographical Dictionary of Irish Quakers, Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1997, p. 53.

7 See: New Moral World, 15 September 1847, p. 84 (there are further references to White Quakerism in the paper). The Reasoner, 21 February 1849, p. 128 (again, there are a number of other references to White Quakerism in this paper). New York Journal, 18 September 1847, p. 18, The People, 11 November, 1 May 1861, 17 May 1862, 7 June 1862, 28 June 1862, 19 July 1862, and Newcastle City Chronicle, 8 January and 15 January 1876.


common funds, with Jacob ensuring the stocks were sold, transferred and changed from bank notes to gold which was weighed in his presence. The plaintiff’s bill, filed in Chancery in December 1842, was reprinted later by the White Quakers, see Progress, 15, pp. 10-18, pp. 19-27. In the document the plaintiff, Joseph Beale, acting as the “nearest friend” to the family, alleged that the widow, Anne Jacob, was a ‘person of weak mind’. Beale also suggested that Joshua had prevailed on many followers, particularly females, to surrender to him property under the false and fraudulent pretence of being the ‘Apostle of God’, and that within the last two years he had accumulated almost £20,000.

For this decision, see a letter from H. D. Griffths in Progress, 15, pp. 10-18, pp. 19-27. For reference to the re-burial of many of his followers who died young between 1843 - 50, see Progress, 14, pp. 46-48.

For examples, see Progress, 3, p. 50-51 (William Beale’s ‘awful conduct’ and excessive drinking), 3, p. 40 (Joseph Beale’s fraudulence in business).

Joshua’s discussion of the character of Joseph Beale is given in Progress, 15, pp. 10-18, pp. 19-27.

Progress, 3, p. 71.

See the facsimile of a paper against White Quakers, Progress, 27, pp. 33-34. See Progress, 7, pp. 33-35 (a letter from a Waterford Quaker dated 5 April 1843), Progress, 6, p. 54 (a commentary upon Elizabeth Beale and contrasting her with Jezreel).

Progress, 28, p. 7.


Irish Friend, 1837 for John Conran. On consistency in plain dress and dwellings, see August 1839, p. 63 (a letter from Munster), while concerns over trading were expressed in September 1841, p. 135.


Irish Friend, extract from Pennington in June 1839, p. 47.

The awful state of disownment for convinced ‘birthright’ Quakers, and the isolation which their ‘peculiar Practices’ brought them after expulsion, if they could not accept the position of ‘attend-er’, is well documented in Isichei, Paterines, Quakers, pp. 67, 134-39. Isichei emphasises the ‘constant reminder’ in English Quakers of the schism in America but neglects the Irish warn- ing, though drawing on Greer in her study.

Progress, 8, p. 11.

Waterford Chronicle, 25 March 1843, reprinting the handbill.

Progress, 37, p. 37.

Progress, 40, pp. 33, 67. See his comments on Southcottianism in Progress, 7, p. 10 (published after Barmby’s letter on Southcott, pp. 6-7).

New Moral World, 15 February 1845, p. 268.


On Arragh, see Progress, 9. On the Paterines, see Progress, 18, p. 10. The Paterines of Lombardy opposed clerical marriage.

Progress, 7, Actions, such as the testimony in ‘strenuous hours’ and walking barefooted into town, and Joshua Jacob’s deportation in prison, show his emulation of George Fox and the early Friends.

This was already manifested in the American Hickite schism, and the evangelicalism of the Beaux and J. Gurney Tuke, the Gurneys’ Journal, The Inquirer, associated the current crisis in Irish Quakerism with Hickism, when making reference to the silencing of a minister at Waterford and office-bearers nearly an allusion to the disownment of White Quakers (Inquirer, November 1838, p.350). In its review of the conservative Irish Friend (published in Belfast) it appositely expressed our fears that in the present condition of the Irish Friends, some leader, of bold spirit and strong mind, and ardent temperance, might carry away with him a train of prepared disciples, who, emulous of the dauntless zeal of their “worthy predecessors,” would spread far and wide the “leprous distilment” of heresy.'
Admittedly, these incidents are reported in the unreliable account by Greer, in which she sees their activities as a beacon to warn 'against believing every spirit'. Jacob was the sect's 'spiritual father, ecclesiastical dictator and temporal treasurer'. For denials, see 'mercy of God ... whilst time of repentance remains'.

Details are given in Progres, 3, pp. 22-23. Admittedly, these incidents are reported in the unreliable account by Greer, in which she sees their activities as a beacon to warn 'against believing every spirit'. Jacob was the sect's 'spiritual father, ecclesiastical dictator and temporal treasurer'. For denials, see 'mercy of God ... whilst time of repentance remains'.

119 Though Greer stressed the greater religiosity in general of women Quakers. See Greer, p. 22 for Jacob's views on transgressions 'in likeness of Adam's transgression'; and the 'new creation in the soul of man'.

122 For instance, see Progres, 3, pp. 22-23. See Progres, 32, p. 22 for Jacob's views on transgressions 'in likeness of Adam's transgression'; and the 'new creation in the soul of man'.

14 It can be pointed out that William Dell, a seventeenth century antinomian, was nevertheless quoted in Progres of the Truth. See Progres, 4, pp. 8-9, p. 19, p. 22, pp. 28-31.

16 Newcastle Holy Chronicle, 8 January 1876; from Progres (I have not located this particular quotation).


25 Quaker/pro-Quaker responses to Greer's Vindication of Friends; (by one not a member) from slanders contained in a book just published entitled Quakerism, or, The Story of My Life published in 1849. See Progres, 3, p. 29; and broadsheet in LSF (pasted in Volume D, folio 224), p. 4. See also Holton, S. S. and Allen, M., 'Officers and

30 For instance, Progres, 33, p. 39, alleged that Jacob was the sect's 'spiritual father, ecclesiastical dictator and temporal treasurer'. For denials, see Progres, 25, p. 29, and broadsheet in LSF (past in Volume D, folio 224), p. 4. For defence of anathema as requirement of the truth, see Progres, 32, p. 44, and 35, p. 46 as a 'mercy of God... whilst time of repentance remains'.

36 For his own experience as a 'minister of the gospel' of the 'strife of the two powers, light and darkness, that struggles for the mastery in the soul that is the object of that redeeming love', see Progres, 35, p. 9.


59 Progres, 3, p. 33. Her prominence, and her manner, caused tensions. William Roberts and Isaac Dickenson's confessions of murmurings and rebellious conversations' written before they left the sect, records their opinion of her 'hardness' in dealing with them. See Progres, 38, pp. 48-54. A report from Mary Dalton referred to 'slander' that she was 'so great a tyrant over them'.

60 Progres, 10, pp. 22-30 (account by Elizabeth Beale).

101 For references to the departure of Elizabeth Beale from Annesgrove on account of the hostility of William Beale to Joshua Jacob and others (also the subject of printed notices), see Progres, 8, p.63. Grievances concerning the loss of her annuity, houses and land are to be found in Progres, 1, p. 19; 2, pp. 54-55, 3, p. 55; 7, p. 64, 15, p. 8.

102 Progres, 3, p. 44 (letter dated 29 October 1832).

103 Progres, 15, p. 5.

104 See also Progres, 11, p. 10; 13, pp. 6-7, 14, pp. 19-34.

105 Progres, 11, p. 10.

106 Progres, 13, pp. 29-30.

107 Progres, 3, p. 59. Lyda Barclay failed to reply to this letter, and the deep unity given her with the suffering few in Ireland, gave place to the spirit of Black Quakerism', see Progres, 30, p. 52. Barclay supported the conservative American Quaker John Wilbur (1774 - 1856), a leading critic of J. Gurney's evangelicalism, who visited Great Britain in 1831 - 33 and 1853 - 54. His opposition to Gurney led to disownment in 1843, and in 1845 the New England Yearly Meeting was decided between Gurneysites and Wilburites.


109 Progres, 4, pp. 56-57.

110 Progres, 4, p. 64.

111 Progres, 5, pp. 3-4.

112 Progres, 3, p. 14. See also, 4, p. 52 for her own use of Deborah.

113 Progres, 15, p. 3. See 3, p. 40 for description of Joseph Brail as 'fraudulent'. His public reputation however was high on his departure for Australia following the failure of his businesses (c. 1852). For further information, see O'Keefe, R., et al, The Quakers of Mountmellick, FAS, 1994, p. 31-38, and Progres, 3, p. 39 for a letter from Hugh Law, agent of Bank of Ireland, Mountmellick, informing Abigail Beale of a creditors meeting. She refused to settle her claim in anything but full payment, a position which she was legally entitled to take. Details are also provided at http://irish­midlandencytest.com/content/ласис/people/quaker-mountmellick.htm Accessed 6 January 2004.

114 'Some account of suffering for conscience sake', cited in Progres, 15, details the sufferings 'with regard to outward property' of mainly female White Quakers. Property and money willed to Aunt Jacob by her father was also withheld by Joseph Beale.

115 Progres, 11, p. 44.

116 Progres, 33, p. 70.

117 See Progres, 37, pp. 13-14, for a magistrate's comments to the White Quakers, Susanna Delilah. At Newlands the gender ratio appears to have been equal.

118 Though Greer stressed the greater religiosity in general of women Quakers. See Greer, Quakerism, American edn, 1852, p. x.

119 Though Greer stressed the greater religiosity in general of women Quakers. See Greer, Quakerism, American edn, 1852, p. x.

120 Progres, 2, p. 65 (Benjamin Thompson, letter of 29 December 1842).

121 Progres, 33, p. 17. The 24 page tract which attacked Barmby and White Quakers was A Voice of Warning against Socialement (or A Voice against the Infallible and Prophetlike Writings of Some of those Called 'Societies') This was allegedly by 'Emma', but probably by John Chalmer Bonmall, a Methodist preacher living in Dublin, who sent anti-White Quaker tracts and letters to the sect and its supporters.

122 Progres, 31, pp. 40-41. Letters from Catherine Barnby to Beale, and her reply are given in Progres, 24, pp. 12-14.

123 Progres, 6, p. 23.


125 For instance, Progres, 33, p. 67 (two relations of Mary Ridsdway).

126 For damage to the graveyard, see Progres, 6, pp. 53-54, and for the removal of Anthony Pin's body by his sons, see Progres, 15, pp. 4-5.

127 See account in Limerick Express, 20 April 1844.

128 Progres, 15, pp. 35-37.

Following on from 'communion of saints', see Progress, 22, p. 56.

For Jacob's marriage to the Catholic Nagle, and the offspring he fathered after the decline of Progress, see Griffiths, 'The White Quakers', pp. 58-59, and 39, p. 22. For Doherty's London Phalanx, 2 April 1842, p. 830, to correspond 'Versilium', 30 April 1842, and p. 965, reprinting paragraph on sect from Letter to Lincolnshire Express.


For a letter from Galpin to Robert Owen, see Co-operative Union, Robert Owen Papers, 1715: letter dated '4 Dec 1848, London'. I am grateful to Dr J. E. M. Latham for a photocopy.

Barker's account of the visit, in his The People, was reprinted (via the abolitionist R. D. Webb) in the American National Anti-slavery Standard, 24 October 1850, p. 88. See also Barker, J. T. (ed.), The Life of Joseph Barker Written by Himself, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1860, which charts his program through various denominations and 'isms'.

For an example of the response to well-meaning criticisms by the English visitor Richard Child, see Progress, 28, pp. 60-65.


Tayler, Eve and the New Jerusalem, p. 175. Greens conservative Quaker distrust of more 'head-knowledge' (a phrase White Quakers themselves used) the idea of 'cerebralism' in relation to the sect is singularly inappropriate.

Webb, Anti-Slavery Standard, 28 October 1847, p. 87.

Webb, Anti-Slavery Standard, 28 October 1847, p. 87.


See the report by Barker of Jacob's distinction between his community and the 'community after the flesh' of Barnby, Campbell and others, in 'The White Quakers' in Webb, National Anti-slavery Standard, 24 October 1850, p. 88. See also Progress, 31, p. 27 for Jacob's selective reading of Barnby's writings.

Greer, Quakerism, p. 384.


For example, see Letter to Express, 29 April 1843 (unpaginated, p. 4) they 'adopt Owen's system in worldly concerns, rendering it more useful, under the true semblance of a spiritual guidance'.


Webb, Anti-Slavery Standard, 28 October 1847, p. 87.

See Legge, M., Alfred Webbe the autobiography of a Quaker nationalist, Cork: Cork University Press,
1999, pp. 21-22 in which it is noted the Quaker S.V. Peri's ambition to write the sect's history had been thwarted.


175 LSF, J. Ernest Grubb to Norman Penney, letter dated 2 September 1914, after index in notebook, pasted in front of first volume of three volume copy of Progress.

176 Greer, Quakerism, p. 385. Dublin Quakers still 'pertinaciously retain his alterations and additions', see also p. 308.


178 Jacob, Memoirs, p. 5.

179 Grubb, Quakers in Ireland, p. 130.

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