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The Relation of Quakerism to Its Own History

LEWIS BENSON

I wish to maintain that there is a view of history that belongs to Christianity and to Quakerism and that this view has largely disappeared from Quaker life. Before attempting to outline the view of history that belongs to Quakerism I will first briefly describe some varieties of both the non-historical and historical approaches to contemporary Quakerism.

SOME CURRENT TRENDS

Among those who see contemporary Quakerism as essentially unrelated to its history I will mention two types. One of these arrives at its position by identifying the essence of Quakerism with a mysticism that is akin to Eastern mysticisms. When understood in these terms Quakerism is seen as a timeless spiritual religion not tied to any historical events. From this viewpoint the essence of Quakerism is independent of its history. In this world of space-time, all religions must have an historical side but this is not the essential thing.

Another type of non-historical approach is found among those Quakers who are not mystics or exponents of spiritual religion but who believe that we ought to “enter afresh in each generation on the adventure of naked living.” For these Friends Quakerism is, by definition, identical with the Quaker ideas and practices that prevail at the present moment and therefore we learn nothing about what Quakerism should be by studying what it has been. The past is dead and the present is living. The exploration of the past is a legitimate field of scientific study but the Quaker historian of Quakerism is not making any significant contribution to the ongoing life of the Society of Friends.

There is also to be found a variety of approaches among those who do see Quakerism as related to its own history—of the

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4. Quoted by Ullmann, op. cit., p. 61.
5. Ibid., p. 48.
most important of these Frederick Tolles has recently given us an excellent survey. Without attempting such a comprehensive survey I want to review some current trends in which Friends try to link the Quakerism of today with that of the past.

The first is mostly the work of British scholars and it grows out of a situation that is peculiar to British Quakerism. British Quakerism in the twentieth century has tended to identify itself with organized Free Church Protestant Christianity. In the pioneer work of organizing Free Church Councils on the local and national level Quakers played a significant part. Today they take their places in these councils as a matter of course and in several places a Quaker serves as president of the local council. The effect of this close association over several generations gives to the English Quaker mind a sense of belonging to the free church tradition in a way that is rarely found among non-British Friends. This trend has been greatly strengthened in recent years by the work of Geoffrey Nuttall. He interprets early Quakerism as a development within Puritanism and regards it as the extreme left wing of those groups who chose to pursue the Puritan ideal as separate denominations. Although Geoffrey Nuttall is himself a believer in the right of each denomination to maintain its separate existence, his work as a historian of early Quakerism has had the effect of strengthening the position of those Friends who are ecumenically minded. Maurice Creasey speaks for such Friends when he says that "the Reformation had somewhat the function of a prism; it broke up the white radiance of the rediscovered Christ of the New Testament into rainbow colors, and each of the Reformation churches—the Society of Friends not excepted—tended to concentrate its attention upon the color of its choice. Is it not possible, to continue the metaphor, to see the Ecumenical Movement of the present time as having somewhat the function of a lens, gathering together, harmonizing and focusing once again those isolated refractions...?"

Harold Loukes, another British Friend, has laid hold of this general view of Quakerism and has attempted to extract from it all its logical implications. It is his view that the Quakers must now accept the fact that as a community they are circumscribed. He believes that Quakerism has already reached its maximum development in history and is merely a gloss or commentary on a text that would not exist were it not for the faithfulness of non-Friends. We are thus portrayed as a parasitical body whose very existence is dependent on the continued existence of religious bodies very different from our own. He states that our point of departure is no mighty proclamation of truth and maintains that we have been stressing the small truths while other Christians have been stressing the great one.

"Quakerism," he says, "is like an instrument in an orchestra picking up the theme from other instruments, and playing it with a certain individuality appropriate to itself, but without the grand statement of the theme in full orchestra it would lose much of its beauty." Just how important, in his view, the Quaker instrument is in this orchestra is indicated when, using a different figure, he says, "It is small change we deal in," but he adds that we must be ready with our "twopence"—"our little store of faith and assurance." It is no wonder that many of the more serious and responsible Quaker youth in Great Britain have ceased to look to the Society as furnishing the base from which large stores of faith and assurance can be built up. With the clear-eyed logic of youth they show a strong disposition to by-pass fragmentary Christianity—i.e., Quakerism—and reach toward the Christianity that they have been told has the white radiance of the whole gospel. They are strongly attracted to ecumenical Christianity and not a few of its more thoughtful members have indicated their openness to purging Quakerism of certain features that stand in the way of fullest Quaker cooperation in the ecumenical movement.

If Quakerism is one of the smallest of the many fragments within Protestantism and if it has reached its maximum potential then it has no place to go but down. In 1954 Harold Loukes told a conference of European Friends that when the negative views of the Quakers "have been heard and heeded by the Christian church then the diverging stream of Quakerism must flow back into the main current." And so we are represented as...
being small because we come from a dwarf breed that has no capacity for greater growth.

Another Quaker trend has flourished chiefly on this side of the Atlantic since 1952. Its basic tenet is that Quakerism is composed of four elements: mysticism, evangelicism, rationalism, and humanitarianism. It is certainly a fact that these four elements can be found in contemporary Quaker life. It has been further stated that these four strands have been present in Quakerism from the beginning and that they constitute a “natural variety” that ought not to be “artificially restrained.” If Quakerism is by definition a complex of four elements and has been so from the beginning then the task of Quaker leadership is to keep them in balance in accordance with what has been called “a wise historical pluralism.” Thus the modern image of a Quaker leader is one who is not committed to any one of these four strands in a way that excludes the other three. If we accept the dogma that normative Quakerism must contain these four elements in balanced proportion then the Quaker of good character is a fellow who would never do anything to destroy or upset this balance. It would seem to follow that as long as this balance is maintained there is bound to be a co-development of all four elements in perpetual harmony. But in actual fact the effect of this teaching is to create an atmosphere in which there is such fear of upsetting the balance that a free discussion of differences is difficult. When free discussion languishes the inevitable consequence is a spiritual and intellectual vacuum that is soon filled from sources outside the Society. We are no longer a community set apart from the world, and the impact of non-Quaker ideas and movements often determines the direction in which Friends are moving. We are becoming an outer-directed rather than an inner-directed community. This is a time when we need Fox’s counsel, “do not sell (truth) for changeable things that subsist for a time.”

Perhaps the appeal of this four-strand theory is that it appears to account for the variety in present-day Quakerism, at least as far as these four strands are concerned. History as a means of explaining and justifying the status quo is not unknown among us. And we are paying the price for doing this, namely that what history really has to tell us remains concealed. When we look at the past we see only that image of ourselves that we have projected there. Our present smallness and dividedness are not challenged by our study of history, but, on the contrary, these aspects of contemporary Quaker life are made to appear historically inevitable and respectable.

THE VIEW OF HISTORY THAT BELONGS TO QUAKERISM

I believe that it is essential to the life of Quakerism that: it keep a right relation to its own history. The experience of hearing and obeying, although it must always be an experience of hearing God’s voice “while it is today,” is nonetheless an experience of a voice which has been speaking in every age. It is a voice that is not just for me but is for me in relation to God’s purpose throughout history as he has revealed that purpose to those who were ready to hear and obey. Therefore, in the experience of hearing and obeying this voice we have fellowship with the obedient ones throughout the ages. Fox says, “As you love the light and bring your deeds to it, you will come to know the light Moses was in, and come to know the prophet that he said God would raise up, whom you should hear; and come to know the covenant of light that brings in the Gentiles . . . .”

The answer to the question “Who are we?” is not entirely supplied by a knowledge of holy history, but neither is it answered without some knowledge of holy history. Holy history is predicated on a dynamic concept—the hearing and obeying of the voice of God today—and its story is the story of those who have heard and obeyed. It offers no comfort to those who seek to escape the present by “living in the past” and it discloses its secret only to those who hear and obey God’s voice today. The voice that is heard “while it is today” is the voice that tells us what our place is in the ongoing story of holy history. It is in this exercise of hearing and obeying that a man learns who he is. When we are fulfilling the part to which God has called us in holy history then we know ourselves as God knows us and as he intends us to know ourselves. When Fox says “I am in my holy element, and holy work in the Lord” he is bearing witness to how he found himself by hearing and obeying. “Man’s knowledge of
his own nature is obtained from the act of decision as well as from his contemplation of God's works in relation to him.\textsuperscript{9} It is a significant fact that the early Friends were men and women who knew who they were and in this knowledge they knew how they were related to Moses, the prophets, and apostles. They were consequently concerned that their story be preserved that "all might know the dealings of the Lord with them."

As man finds himself by hearing and obeying the voice of God so also must the church find itself by the same kind of exercise. The early Quaker community knew where it belonged in holy history and it knew this only because it was in the life of hearing and obeying that Moses, the prophets, and apostles were in.

There are two wrong ways to relate Quakerism to its history. One of these is to take some point in Quaker history and make it the norm for all Quakers at all times. Another is to read back into Quaker history the image of contemporary Quakerism.

It is my conviction that the relation of Quakerism to its own history can only be found in the context of a Christian understanding of the right relationship between God, man, and history. Christianity is not indifferent to history and it does not leave the question of historical relationships to be dealt with in some manner not provided for in the Christian revelation. The God of the Christian is concerned about history. He is concerned about the story of man and how that story is going to come out. "In the Bible," says C. E. Wright, "God is known and addressed primarily in the terms that relate him to society and to history."\textsuperscript{10} The Bible has one master theme—the call of God for a people obedient to his word through whom he purposes to gather mankind into a community under his rule.

If the Bible is the book of the acts of God then these acts tell a story that is not ordinary history but a special kind of history. This special kind of history is what we mean by holy history. Otto Piper states that "The Bible describes holy history as a process in which people are prepared to follow God's bidding while in secular history 'the nations walk in their own counsels.'"\textsuperscript{11} This means that Christianity is an eschatological religion and eschatology, says C. H. Dodd, "is an attempt to give a satisfying account of the ways of God in terms of the process, assumed to be real and the proper field of divine action." Christianity looks "back to a real beginning and forward to a real end" and conceives "the process from beginning to end as directed by the purpose of God." And finally, "in the coming of Christ we have the conclusive entrance of God into history...in which the whole purpose of God is fulfilled."\textsuperscript{12}

Early Quakerism understood itself within the context of a Christian understanding of history and this means that it understood itself in terms of holy history and eschatology. It is significant that in putting Quakerism in its historical context William Penn began with Adam and Eve and brought the story through the fathers and Moses and the prophets to God's conclusive revelation through Jesus Christ which fulfilled the rest. Although for Penn and the early Friends God acted conclusively in Jesus Christ this did not mean, for them, that holy history had come to an end. The story of holy history is still being written in the only way that it ever was or could be written—in the lives of men and communities who are committed to hearing and obeying. Prophetic religion can never be reduced to a static system. God acts in history and directs it toward his own ends.

The early Quakers were interested in holy history since Pentecost. They began their study of Christian history with two questions: first, What did God do for men through Jesus Christ? and second, To what extent does the history of Christianity reflect the purpose of God in sending Christ into the world? The answer of early Friends to the first question focused on two things: first, the possibility of a holy life without legalism; and second, the possibility of a community living under God's rule without institutionalism. Both of these gifts are made possible under the gospel by the continued active presence of Christ as he reveals God's righteousness to his church and gives it a unique order based on his personal rule and the gifts he gives its members.

The question that early Friends put to their contemporaries was this: "Where is the church that is so ordered and which bears a faithful witness, through suffering, to God's righteousness?" This is what Fox was saying in his often repeated chal-
lenge "Are you in the same life and power that the prophets and apostles were in?" It is basic to early Quaker thinking to assume that in the purpose of God, the ongoing corporate existence of the visible church in history is not to be secured by a self-perpetuating religious organization. The true successors of the apostles are those related to Christ in a disciple relationship.

To the churchly establishment of his day Fox said:

You have had the name of Christians, which name hath come by tradition, and succession... but the life and the power, and the love and the wisdom, that was among the apostles and in them... have you been... out of generally and it is in the life and power of God, in which God is served. To succeed them in the form without the power and Holy Ghost is no succession... To succeed the Apostles in the same Holy Ghost and power, and life that they were in, that is the right succession.

The church of the true succession is recognized by its charismatic ordering and by its conformity to and suffering for a standard of righteousness divinely revealed. Fox maintains that the true successors of the apostles must have the "same righteousness" that the apostles had and that they must be in the same cross of Christ, for the Cross is "the power of God that crucifies them from the world."

The early Quaker doctrine of the long dark night of apostasy is to be understood in terms of this conception of succession. The apostasy that early Friends were talking about was as apostasy of the church and their criticism of the church "since the apostles' days" was that it had found another basis for its claim to succession than the basis furnished in the new covenant. The claim that there was a "long dark night of apostasy" "since the apostles' days" does not assert that there were no true Christians or no true church during this period. It claims rather that the true Christians and true church during this period were in tension with the great historical continuum that falsely claimed to be the true successor of the church of the apostles.

With this view of the meaning of succession the Quakers were bound to differ radically from both Roman Catholic and Protestant interpretations of church history. This difference is notably evident in Fox's view of what constitutes separation, schism, and secthood. To those who claimed the Quakers were a sect Fox replied, "The Quakers are not a sect, but are... come to live in the life as the prophets and apostles did..."

This statement which sometimes seems extravagant to modern Quaker ears is consistent with all that Fox ever said or did. He defines a schism as a "rent from Christ and his body, his spirit and power" and he declares that "all are in a separation... if they are not... in the spirit of Christ the apostles and the true church were in..."

Early Friends were willing to have the term "children of the light" applied to themselves but we do not hear them talking of "grandchildren of the light!" They would have agreed with the London Yearly Meeting Epistle of 1857 which said, "Let it not be forgotten that vital Christianity cannot be transmitted as an inheritance to posterity." Now, if the ongoing life of corporate Christianity is to be understood in terms of maintaining a hearing-obeying relationship to Christ and not by any theory of natural succession "like unto earthly kings' crowns" then the question of paramount importance for us is surely the question--"Are we in this hearing-obeying relationship?"

I will now endeavor to explore some of the implications of this for us today and how our own history plays a part in answering this question.

THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD TODAY IN RELATION TO HOLY HISTORY

The question of the relation of Quakerism to its own history is ultimately a moral and spiritual one. There is a technical element involved—the task of accumulating and correlating data—but this technical element is not the decisive element. The problem of the relation of Quakerism to its own history is not essentially different from the problem of the relation of Quakerism to the church of the New Testament. It is not only a question of factual knowledge about the early church and early Quakerism. Something more is involved. Holy history is
relevant only to those who are themselves involved in holy history. Living “the life that the prophets and apostles were in” is Fox’s way of describing the life of involvement in holy history.

In the Quaker conception of holy history there is a twofold orientation: to the current historical situation which perpetually changes, and to the God of history in whom there is no variableness or shadow of turning. The God of history who reveals his will through his mighty acts in history has conclusively revealed himself in Jesus Christ. This revelation is not limited to the events of the life-span of Jesus of Nazareth but it is a revelation that continues as men and women become disciples of the risen Christ and learn from him God’s way of righteousness and holiness for their generation.

What the apostolic church and the early Quakers testified of their experiences of the living Christ is of the utmost relevance to all generations of Christians. But since they were called to bear their witness in holy history in an historical situation different from our own we cannot simply repeat the pattern of primitive Christianity and primitive Quakerism. The true church in any generation are the people who are living in the life of discipleship as it is related to the current historical situation. If the Quakers of today are living in the “life” they are as truly related to the first generation of Quakers as they can be. This is the right way for God’s people in one generation to be related to God’s people in another generation. There is no question of primitivism here and no question of natural succession. The forces of holy history are personal, moral, and spiritual forces.

All those who are living “in the life” now know that they are an integral part of an ongoing story of which the previous chapters were written by previous generations who were “in the life.” They know that they are members of a community the foundations of which are the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone.

The absolute necessity that is laid on God’s people to bear their witness in relation to the current historical situation has nothing to do with what might be called “keeping up with religious trends.” The call of God for a holy righteous people may have to be answered in a way that creates conflict with popular religious trends. The makers of holy history are seldom found among those who float with the current. The early Quakers, for instance, were described by Penn as people who were struggling against wind and tide. If then to be true successors of the early Christians and early Quakers we must live in the same life and power that they were in, what does this involve for us today and how should we understand the historical situation in which our witness must be made?

Today in America we live in a religiously colored society and our society receives its religious coloration mainly from the Christian denominations within it. But to belong to a Christian denomination in a religiously colored society is not necessarily to belong to a Christian community. G. E. Wright describes the congregational life of the denominations as gatherings “of individuals, motivated by a desire to be decent citizens in possession of peace of mind but knowing little of Christian community in the Biblical sense and expecting little from it.”

What then do we mean by Christian community? By Christian community I mean a community whose spiritual center is the determining force in the lives of its members and in its own life as a community.

The denomination as we know it in America today has a spiritual center but its life and the lives of its members are only partially determined by that center. The American denomination has become a captive to the civilization and culture that surround it. The denominations are pledged to serve one God—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—who is the father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But they are largely composed of people who also serve two false gods and this constitutes their captivity.

We find the first of these false gods in the mechanism of mass production and the absolute demands that it makes on men and society. The second is the modern nation-state that seems always to be moving in the direction of totalitarianism that swallows up all the elements of independent existence—political, economic, cultural, and religious.
The striving for power and gain is part of the life of the member of the denomination. He is constantly pulled in three different directions by the demands of his religious, economic, and political commitments. He takes it for granted that religion is one element of a cultural complex and that its function is to supply the energies with which to cope with the economic and political world as it is. Thus Christianity tends to be regarded as a wholesome element in secular civilization and where this viewpoint prevails the basic conflict between Christ's way of the cross and modern civilization remains hidden. There is a wide range of religious activity open to the member of the denomination, but the course of his life is not determined by a spiritual center and the life of the denomination is also not determined by a spiritual center.

In seeking to integrate religious society with worldly society modern man has made a fatal mistake because "the problem of life is not that of integration with the world... it is the problem of obedience to the will of the transcendent God." Without a transcendent urge which outweighs all the clamor for power and money," said the historian, Burckhardt, "nothing will be of any use." I am not going to say much here about the false God of political totalitarianism. It is a threat that has not yet fallen on us in the way that it has fallen on others in our generation. And yet we would do well to ask ourselves whether church life as we know it in America possesses the inner resources to withstand the pressures of a totalitarian government. I agree with Burckhardt when he states that persecuting governments "might meet resistance of the strongest sort from Christian minorities who would not fear even martyrdom." There is a power which is greater than any earthly power, and that is the power of the cross. But I want to speak more particularly here about the worship of material things, because materialism is part of the air we all breathe. We cannot say that materialism is a threat that has not fallen on us. This is the false god that Jesus said we could not serve and serve the true God at the same time. Fox said, "In all things the Lord is to have the heart. Therefore let it not go down in a multitude of encumbrances and be smothered in the earth." It may seem extravagant to say that the typical church member of today is to be described as "striving for power and gain." Certainly there are few who would be willing to accept this description. But suppose we change the words around a little and call it achieving financial independence or improving our standard of living? or providing for ourseives and our children? These phrases sound innocent enough and yet it is in this guise that Mammonism gains an entrance into the Christian's heart.

Today we are more naive than early Friends for they saw that materialism makes its appearance in two forms which they called the lawful self and the unlawful self. The London Yearly Meeting Epistle of 1802 describes the lawful self as "the too eager and therefore unlawful pursuit of lawful things." "There is a lawful self and an unlawful self," says William Penn, "and both are to be denied for the sake of him, that in submission to the will of God counted nothing too dear, that he might save us.... The lawful self, that which we are to deny, is that convenience, ease, enjoyment and plenty, which in themselves are as far from being evil, that they are the bounty and blessings of God to us: As husband, wife, child, house, land, reputation, liberty and life itself. These are God's favors that we may enjoy with lawful pleasure and justly improve as our honest interest. But when God requires them... they must not be preferred but must be denied." Before the end of the seventeenth century Quaker leaders were aware of the price that was being paid for a too easy acceptance of the lawful self, and William Edmundson writes that "cageriness after the lawful things of this world at this time, hinders many Friends' growth in the precious truth and their service to it in their day, tho' otherwise of great parts and abilities to do much service for truth... but we cannot serve God as we ought to do and as the day requires, neither please the captain of our spiritual welfare as good soldiers if we involve and load ourselves with the things of this world... and too many of our Society... who have in measure escaped the unclean, unjust and unlawful
things . . . now sit down in the dust with the lawful things of this world."24

This question became a major concern of the Leinster Province Meeting in Ireland in 1698 which gave forth an epistle that states that as the Lord had made them aware of the spiritual loss resulting from a "too eager pursuit after the lawful things of this world, a concern came upon us, that if possible we might all come to be limited with the bounds of truth . . . and to depend more upon that providential hand of the Lord, that will afford us what we stand in need of . . . .

and there was an unanimous consent, one by one, to offer up ourselves to the judgment of the . . . Meeting, or other approved Elders . . ., if in anything we do exceed those bounds . . . And in subjection one to another in our possessions, holdings, callings, trading and dealing amongst men, not to be our own judges, or walk in the light of our own eyes, considering the wise man’s saying ‘that every man’s cause is good in his own eyes’ but his neighbor finds him out and in the multitude of counsel is safety. Not that we intend to deprive any of the moderate and lawful use of things of this world . . . or to invade and take away property but to bring all things into right bounds . . . that so none may be guilty of the great sin of abusing the Lord’s mercies, but might use and enjoy them to his honor . . . Thus shall we give evident testimony to the world by our moderation, even in the lawful things, that we are true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ in a self-denying life."25

If the church needed a corporate economic witness based on corporate stewardship in 1698 it certainly needs it now. Even as our peace testimony gives evidence that we are true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ in a self-denying life,26

CONCLUSION

In the foregoing I have tried to answer the question: "What is the right reason for relating Quakerism to its own history?" and I have endeavored to point out some of the implications of rightly relating the Quakerism of today to its own history. If we have forgotten who we are in holy history or perhaps, even, that there is such a thing as holy history, then the word of the living God will communicate little to us. Thus far the redemptive word of God has come to us in the language of holy history and eschatology. If we do not know what God has already done in history his word to us will be robbed of much of its meaning. If we are mistaken about the situation in contemporary society and history then we are likely to fail to make a witness that is relevant to our generation.

We cannot recover the spiritual center that belongs to Quakerism unless we are rightly related to our own history. When we know who we are and what our place is in God’s purpose for history we can begin to enter into that life, the life of hearing and obeying, that the prophets and apostles were in.

There are forces in Quakerism today that are constantly pulling it from its own true center. When honest-hearted seekers or our own youth turn toward the center for direction they find instead of a center — scatteredness. We need to recapture the conviction that the cause for which the Society has been called into existence is a great cause. The Quaker vision is an exalted vision. It is not a “little store of faith” or a twopenny contribution. We do not stand on the periphery of historical Christianity with our fragment of Christian truth waiting for the day when we will be absorbed back into the “main current.” The faith to which we are called to bear witness is a faith that pushes beyond the so-called great traditions of western Christianity.

When a church fellowship appears in our time that is ordered by the order of the gospel and by charismatic leadership and which answers God’s call to witness against the course of the world as we find it in the life of today, and which stands and suffers and does not scatter in time of persecution—then this community will be the spiritual successor of the prophets and apostles and early Friends. It is only such a community that will be ready to answer the question, “Are you in the same life and power that the prophets and apostles were in?”

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Contributors

Lewis Benson is no stranger to this publication since he is a member of its Editorial Board and contributor of a principal article in the Spring 1960 issue. A year ago he and his family joined with two other families in forming the "Baring Street Fellowship," an intentional community in West Philadelphia, as answer to "Christ's call for a visible body of disciples sharing in a common life, vision and testimony." A printer by trade, his true vocation is that of studying early Quakerism and keeping the Society of Friends informed of his discoveries. In the performance of this work he makes a very valuable contribution to Quakerism. He attends the Powelton Friends Meeting. In 1954-55 he was a fellow at Woodbrooke and was later a lecturer at both Woodbrooke and Pendle Hill. He is widely known for his pamphlet Prophetic Quakerism, and a variety of articles.

Wilmer A. Cooper, chairman of the Quaker Theological Discussion Group and Administrative Secretary of the newly formed Earlham School of Religion, is a member of the First Friends Meeting, Richmond. He received his first degree from Wilmington College and graduate degrees from Haverford College, Yale Divinity School, and Vanderbilt University. For the seven years preceding his joining the administration of Earlham College he was administrative secretary of the Friends Committee on National Legislation. He has traveled very widely in Friends' work in the United States and is thoroughly acquainted with the variety of American Friends meetings. He and Emily Haines Cooper are the parents of four children.

Chris Downing is welcomed with special enthusiasm to these pages as the first woman to write a major article in Quaker Religious Thought. Although most of the details of her life, she states, "are more appropriate for a woman's page feature than for Quaker Religious Thought" (since she is the mother of five children of whom the eldest is 8) she has yet found time and energy to graduate with English honors from Swarthmore College, to work for more than a year with the Jungian psychoanalyst Ira Progoff as research associate, and two years ago to enroll as a graduate student at Drew University. She has now completed all her work in this program except the doctoral thesis, which deals with a phase of the thought of Martin Buber. German by birth, she came to this country as a child. She is a member of the Summit, N. J., Friends Meeting, has written articles for Friends papers and has participated actively in Friends conferences.