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QUAKER EDUCATION IN IRELAND

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I L L U S T R A T I O N S

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P R E F A C E.

In undertaking this research my aim has been to trace the development of Quaker education in Ireland from its beginnings in the late seventeenth century, up to the early decades of the nineteenth. I have begun by placing Quakerism in its historical context, and have examined briefly the origins of the movement in England and Ireland, with reference to the political, social and religious factors which gave rise to its development.

In the early chapters of this study I have outlined the broad aims of Quaker education, and I have endeavoured to explain in general terms what the Society of Friends hoped to achieve in its schools. I have traced the development of Quaker schools in Ireland, starting with the early, rather erratic day schools of the Society, and have gone on to examine the major features of Quaker boarding schools. Considerable attention has been paid to the Quaker curriculum, and I have examined the various influences which gave the curriculum its particular stamp. A full chapter has been devoted to the discipline employed in Irish Quaker schools, and I have attempted to show how that system of discipline was determined largely by the rigid disciplinary code which governed the activities of the Quaker church. In the later chapters of the thesis I have examined the characteristics of the most commonly used Quaker school textbooks, and the rather mechanical teaching methods used in classroom instruction.

While the bulk of this research concentrates on Quaker education within the rather narrow confines of the Society of Friends, I have devoted the final chapter to education on a broader plane. Here I have attempted to trace the influence of Quaker philanthropic principles on education in Ireland as a whole. This final chapter is mainly concerned with efforts made by the Society of Friends in the early decades of the nineteenth century to establish charity schools in Ireland for the education of the Catholic poor, and with the Quaker influence on the Kildare Place Society in that latter body's ambitious plans to provide a national system of doctrinally neutral elementary education in Ireland.

The main emphasis of this thesis, however, has been on the years 1750 - 1840, mainly because it was at this time that Irish Quaker education became exclusively guarded, and hence, unique in nature. It was the establishment of the Quaker provincial boarding schools at Mountmellick in Leinster, Lisburn in Ulster, and Newtown, Waterford in Munster, which made the transmission of such a guarded education possible. Indeed, these schools were to dominate Quaker education in Ireland throughout the nineteenth century.

While the education provided by the Quaker provincial boarding schools has occupied a large part of this research, I have also paid considerable attention to the education provided by another Quaker boarding school, namely Ballitore Quaker boys school in Co. Kildare. Although the provincial schools were under the control of the Quaker provincial and national meetings, and were exclusively for Quaker children, Ballitore school was privately run and also

accepted non-Quaker pupils. Furthermore, Ballitore school was probably the most successful, and certainly the most famous of Irish Quaker schools in the eighteenth century. It was these qualities which made Ballitore such an interesting contrast to the provincial schools, and helped to underline the extremely guarded nature of the education being provided in the latter establishments.

I have ended my study around 1840 for several reasons. Firstly, it was at this time that Irish Quaker education began to change, and lose some of its most distinctive characteristics. The extremely guarded nature of that education began to give ground in the 1830^s and 40^s as the curricula in the provincial schools began to expand in response to demands being made upon them. Secondly, Ballitore school finally closed down in 1836 after a number of years in decline. Thirdly, the establishment of Stanley's National Board of Education in 1831, sounded the death knell for Quaker efforts in the broad field of educational philanthropy. Fourthly, and finally, it is perhaps fitting that 1840 brings this thesis to a close, because that year marked the opening of the Camden Street Quaker school, an exclusive boys boarding school which provided the most extensive curriculum yet seen at any Irish Quaker school. Although the Camden Street School lasted a mere four years its influence on developments in Irish Quaker education was quite considerable. After 1840, the provincial boarding schools were never to be quite the same again.

Before going further, it is important to say something about the Quaker calendar. The Quakers discarded the "heathen names" of the months, and of the days of the week. Since the year began in England (prior to 1752) on 25 March, that month was styled First Month and so on. The last seven days of March were taken as belonging to the New Year. January and February were regarded as the Eleventh and Twelfth months of the preceding year. In Quaker records the whole of March is reckoned as First Month, and April becomes Second Month. The following dates of consecutive meetings in February and March illustrate the practice;

27th of 12 mo. 1684", i.e. February. "6th, 13th,
20th, 27th of 1 mo. 1685", i.e. March.

The substitution of Quaker dating for that in general use has resulted in much chronological confusion. The vast majority of dates used in this thesis are quoted exactly as they have been found in the Quaker archives.

Finally, before rounding off this Preface, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Rev. Professor Seamus V. O'Suilleabhain for his guidance and continuing encouragement in carrying out this research, and for his constant help and kindness throughout the course of my studies over the past two years. A very special debt of gratitude is owed to Terence Mallagh, Curator of the Friends Historical Library Eustace Street, for the extraordinary help and consideration shown to me throughout the period of my research. I would also like to thank most sincerely Richard Harrison and Mary Shackleton of Eustace Street, for their invaluable assistance and co-operation throughout the past year. Finally I owe a special debt of gratitude to my

wife Mildred for her support and encouragement during the period of my studies, and to my little daughter Rebecca, whose perpetual cheerfulness helped to keep me going.

C H A P T E R I
THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF QUAKERISM
IN
ENGLAND AND IRELAND

The Religious Society of Friends (sometimes called among themselves "*Children of Light*", "*Friends of Truth*", or just "*Friends*", and more popularly known to outsiders as Quakers¹), was founded by George Fox, a Leicestershire shoemaker, between the years 1648-1666. Quakerism was but one manifestation of the bewildered groping of men of the seventeenth century for a religion to fit their needs. During the Reformation some Christians believed that the Protestant reformers, Luther and Calvin, stopped short of a complete return to primitive Christianity. They formed

¹On Wednesday, 30th October, 1650, Fox and two companions were taken into custody at Derby, for preaching, and were charged under the Blasphemy act of August 1650. They were charged before two magistrates of high standing, Gervase Bennett and Colonel Nathanael Barton, both of whom became M.P^s. for Derbyshire in 1653. It was here that Fox and his followers were called Quakers by Gervase Bennett, and the derisive name at once came into vogue. Fox says that Justice Bennett gave the nickname because Fox had bidden him tremble at the name of the Lord. Barclay, on the otherhand, tells us that the name came from the trembling of Friends under the powerful working of the Holy Ghost. Whatever the exact origin of the word, it very quickly found its way into print in a tract published in London early in 1652 called The Pulpit guarded with XVII Arguments. (William C. Braithwaite, The Beginnings of Quakerism. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd.1912),pp.53-58).

sects often classified as Anabaptist, and endured persecution by both Catholics and Protestants. The Anabaptists and their modern descendants, such as the Baptists, formed the left-wing of the Reformation. In England their counterparts were sects such as the Seekers, Ranters, and Quakers. While the Anglican Church denied the authority of the Pope and established a national church with the English King as its head, the Puritan element within Anglicanism rejected the Mass, Religious images and five of the seven Sacraments. The Presbyterians, following the lead given by Calvin and Knox, dispensed with bishops altogether, and the Baptists denied the validity of any form of Baptism other than total immersion. Finally came the Quakers who rejected the remaining ritual, the sole authority of the Bible, and the professional ministry.

The most fundamental Quaker belief is the doctrine of the "Inner Light". This idea is at the centre of Quakerism, and although Fox himself did not actually use this phrase, his consistent reference to the light, the seed, and the spark gave rise to its use.² Fox developed the doctrine of the "Inner Light" as he travelled through England, preaching during the turbulent years of the Civil War and the Interregnum. He was searching for a new way by which man could gain direct access to God, and he claimed that the Inner Light is that which enlightens conscience, or is "that of God in each man".³ At a time

²John Reader. Of Schools and Schoolmasters. (London: Quaker Home Service, 1979., p.57.

³William J. Whalen. "Our Neighbours, The Friends" published in The Word. (Roscommon: Divine Word Missionaries) October 1967. page unnumbered.

when most men in England, and indeed on the Continent, were excited by the form, and rites of religion, this was certainly a radical idea. The "*Inner Light*" means, in fact, that the Quaker seeks direct divine illumination by jettisoning all of the Christian sacraments, rituals, hymns, formal prayers and priesthood.

The traditional Quaker form of worship, the Silent Meeting, is designed to facilitate the direct inspiration of the "*Inner Light*". Here the Quakers assemble together and remain in silence until they believe themselves moved to speak by the Holy Ghost. Their prayers and praises are, for the most part, silent and inward. Speaking of silent worship, the theologian of Quakerism, Robert Barclay said:-

... when assembled, the great Work of one and all ought to be to Wait upon God; and returning out of their own Thoughts and Imaginations, to feel the Lord's Presence, and know a gathering into his Name indeed, where he is in the midst, according to his ⁴ Promise.

One of the major differences between the Quakers and other Protestants is that the former even discarded the pivotal sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist. They believe the Christian Baptism to be a spiritual one, and not one with water, in support of which they quote John the Baptist who said "*I baptise you with water, but there cometh one after me who shall Baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire*".⁵ Similarly, they regard the Eucharist as another superfluous rite, which merely succeeds in coming

⁴Robert Barclay. An Apology for the True Christian Divinity. (Aberdeen:1678), proposition XI. quoted in Philip Wragge. The Faith of Robert Barclay. (London: Friends House, Euston Road. 1948), p.103.

⁵Chambers Encyclopaedia. (London: Waverly Book Company Ltd. 1927) Vol V:11

between the worshipper and his God. As a scriptural basis for their rejection of the Sacraments, the Quakers believe that the last words of the dying Redeemer on the cross '*It is finished,*' announced the entire abolition of symbolic rites.⁶

Although Quakers have a high regard for sacred scripture, and stress the importance of the Bible in their everyday lives and in the education of their children, they nevertheless reject its absolute authority. For them, the direct illumination of the "*Inner Light*" is far superior to the written revelation of the Bible or the traditions of the Church. Referring to the subordinate role of the scriptures, Robert Barclay says:-

I do fully concede to the Scripture the Second Place ... For though God do principally and chiefly lead us by his Spirit, yet he sometimes conveys his comfort and Consolation to us through his children, whom he raises up and Inspires to Speak or Write a ⁷ Word in Season.

Quakers, therefore, consider the Bible to be the word of God, but believe the "*Inner light*" to be a manifestation of God.

Because of the radical nature of Quaker beliefs, it was inevitable that the movement would come into conflict with the Established Church and the State. The Established Church in England saw the Quakers as a potent threat to true Christianity, and was particularly infuriated by the Quaker attitude to the Anglican ministry. The Quakers regarded the latter as a "*hireling ministry*", and insisted on the voluntary nature of religious obligations. They

⁶Ibid., p.12.

⁷Barclay. Apology. Prop. III. Quoted in Wragge. Faith of Robert Barclay. p.70.

felt that Christians should do all for love and nothing for money. Furthermore, they did not consider "human learning" essential to a minister of the Gospel, and looked with distrust on the method adopted by other Churches for the training of such. In harmony with the doctrine of the "Inner Light", the Quakers felt that a system of formal training for the ministry was no substitute for inward fitness, and they believed that the call to this very special work was bestowed irrespective of rank, talent, learning or sex. When Cromwell, in 1657, signed a writ for founding a University at Durham - a project afterwards abandoned on account of petitions from Oxford and Cambridge - Fox met the Protector's emissary, and "let him see that was not the way to make them Christs' ministers, by Hebrew, Greek, and Latin and the seven arts, which all was but the teachings of the natural man ... for Peter and John that could not read letters preached the Word, Christ Jesus, which was in the beginning before Babel was".⁸ Indeed, such was the antipathy of the early Quaker evangelists to the formalism of the Established Church, that they, not infrequently, attempted to interrupt the services in what they disrespectfully called "steeple houses".

While the Anglican Church saw Quakerism as a threat to true Christianity, the State saw the movement as a challenge to its authority. What particularly worried

⁸William Charles Braithwaite. The Beginnings of Quakerism. (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1912), p.215.

the Civil authorities was the stubborn refusal of the sect to join the army or navy, pay tithes or take Oaths. Although Quakerism arose in the midst of civil war in England, and spread to Ireland during the Cromwellian Settlement, the movement soon adopted the peace principle as one of its most deeply held tenets. Robert Barclay reflected the attitude of many Quakers when, on the subject of war, he said:-

*Revenge and War, an Evil as opposite and contrary to the Spirit and Doctrine of Christ, as Light to Darkness.*⁹

Many soldiers joined the sect, gradually leaving the army for more peaceable vocations as other means of livelihood offered themselves. Indeed, William Edmundson,¹⁰ the apostle of Quakerism in Ireland, had been a soldier in Cromwell's army, before he was "convincèd" by the ideas of Quakerism. By 1660, most Quakers accepted that warfare of any kind was contrary to the spirit of the Gospels, and in the Acts of Settlement of the Restoration period many names appear of soldiers who settled in groups which later became large centres of Quakerism.¹¹

The question of Tithes was a constant source of conflict between the Society of Friends and the Civil and Religious authorities from the foundation of the sect until

⁹Barclay. Apology. Prop. XV. Quoted in Wragge. Faith of Robert Barclay. p.141.

¹⁰William Edmundson, "who might be called the St. Patrick of Quakerism, and who was one of the first to protest against Negro slavery in Virginia and The West Indies, lived near Mountmellick, and, perhaps, was buried in the lonely grave ground of Rosenallis" - Quoted in letter from the American Quaker poet, John Greenleaf Whittier, to the Mountmellick Centenary Committee, dated 20th/4th mo/1886. One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. (Dublin:Richard D.Webb & Son.1886),p.11

¹¹Olive C. Goodbody. Guide to Irish Quaker Records. (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission,1967)p.20

well into the nineteenth century. The Quakers refused to pay tithes for the upkeep of what they considered to be a "hireling Ministry".¹² So strong was the feeling against such payments that individual Friends were asked to sign a testimony declaring that he or she had not and would not pay such dues.¹³ The Society of Friends considered the payment of tithes not only an injustice, but also a direct denial of the belief that the coming of Christ had ended priesthood and Church dues.

Another area of conflict between the Quakers and the Civil authorities concerned the matter of taking or administering oaths. This practice was regarded by the Society of Friends as inconsistent with the command of Christ, "swear not at all", and with the exhortation of the Apostle James who said - "Above all things, my brethern, swear not, neither by Heaven, neither by the Earth, neither by any other oath".¹⁴ Furthermore, the Quakers believed that the taking of oaths was an unnecessary ritual which seemed to imply a double standard of truthfulness. There was the suggestion, they claimed, that one need not tell

¹²Chambers Encyclopaedia. p.12.

¹³Quaker opposition to tithes in Ireland became widespread from 1662. That year is marked by Irish Quakers as the year in which "we first became a people". It also marks the development of their strenuous and sustained opposition to tithes, culminating in a decision in 1680 "that refusal to pay tithe would be a distinguishing mark of Quakers in Ireland ... After that, any Friend known to have allowed anyone to pay tithe for him was publicly condemned and excluded from the Mens' Meeting". (Presidential Address 1955 to Friends' Historical Society, London - "Early Quakerism in Ireland", by John M. Douglas. Quoted in Michael Quane "The Friends' Provincial School, Mountmellick", Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland. (1959) Vol.89:60)

¹⁴Chambers Encyclopaedia. p.12.

the truth all the time, but only when under oath. The refusal of the Society of Friends to take or administer oaths was a serious handicap to them, as all official posts in the Civil government were closed to them. Furthermore, educational opportunities were also severely restricted for the Quakers, as the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were closed to Dissenters throughout the eighteenth and part of the nineteenth centuries.

Among the many minor peculiarities which distinguished the Quakers from more orthodox Christians, and which contributed to their unpopularity with the Civil and Ecclesiastical authorities, were the sects' insistence on the use of "plain language", and the refusal of Friends to doff their hats in deference to social superiors. The use of "plain language" meant that in speech Quakers invariably made use of the Biblical - sounding "thee" and "thou" in addressing a single person, without respect to rank, station or authority, and in support of this they pleaded correct grammar and the example of Scripture. On the subject of "plain-language" Robert Barclay said:-

We ought to use the Singular Number speaking to one; which is the common dialect of the whole Scripture. 15

Similarly, the refusal of Quakers to doff their hats to anyone, regardless of social rank, was based on their founders' belief that such a courtesy is due to God alone. Fox tells us, of his decision to engage in a crusade against the conventional insincerities, which we call the civilities of life. In his Journal, he wrote:-

¹⁵ Barclay. Apology. Prop. XV. Quoted in Wragge. Faith of Robert Barclay. p.135.

When the Lord sent me forth into the world, He forbad me to put off my hat to any, high or low, and I was required to Thee and Thou all men and women, without any respect to rich or poor, great or small. And, as I travelled up and down, I was not to bid people "Good morrow", or "Good evening", neither might I bow or scrape with my leg to any one, and this made the sects and professions to rage. 16

Indeed the refusal of Fox and his followers to conform to the conventions of seventeenth century English society, provoked the wrath of that most cermonious of ages.

The reaction of Church and State to what was considered the Quaker challenge was extremely severe. The authorities tried on several occasions to discredit the movement by claiming that it was, among many things, a front for Catholic agents. A particularly scurrilous pamphlet of 1654 was entitled "*The Quakers unmasked, and clearly detected to be but the spawn of Romish frogs, Jesuits and Franciscan Fryers, sent from Rome to seduce the intoxicated giddy-headed English Nation*".¹⁷ There was considerable persecution of the sect during the Commonwealth, and Fox himself was imprisoned eight times, for a total of six years, but the main thrust of the persecution of the Quakers occurred during the reign of Charles II. The hostility of Parliament found expression in the Quaker Act (1662), and under this and other acts against dissenters, over fifteen thousand Quakers were imprisoned for their beliefs, and over four hundred and fifty

¹⁶George Fox. Journal. (London: Thomas Northcott, Lombard Street, 1694), p.24.

¹⁷Whalen "*Our Neighbours, The Friends*" published in The Word. Oct. 1967.

Indeed, Edward Burrough, one of the early Quaker preachers in Ireland, was examined by magistrates at Waterford in 1656, on suspicion of being a Jesuit. (W.C.Braithwaite. The Beginnings of Quakerism. (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd. 1912) p.214.

were computed to have died in prison, or in consequence of wounds received in attacks on their meetings, both in Britain and Ireland.¹⁸ Another two-hundred were transported as slaves to the Indies. It was not until the Toleration Act of 1689 that the Society of Friends had peace to organise itself and to develop its discipline. Even then, the movement was periodically in trouble with the authorities, especially over the Quaker refusal to pay tithes or take oaths.

Organisation and Administration of the Quaker Church.

It cannot be said that any system of discipline formed a part of the original compact of the Society of Friends. Indeed, there was nothing systematic in its formation.¹⁹ It was an association of persons who were earnestly seeking after Divine Truth, and there was, consequently, a considerable degree of individualism among the early Quakers. As numbers increased, however, it soon became apparent that some regular arrangements for the preservation of order were required. George Fox mentions in his Journal, that some meetings for discipline were settled in the north of England (where the movement originated) as early as 1653.²⁰ The first General Meeting of which we are aware, however, was held at Balby, near Doncaster in Yorkshire, in 1656.²¹ There is also, in Fox's Journal, an interesting reference to a meeting at Skipton in 1658. Concerning this early Quaker assembly Fox says:-

¹⁸Encyclopaedia Britannica. (Chicago: William Benton, 1973), Vol.9:938

¹⁹Christian Discipline of the Religious Society of Friends in Ireland. (Dublin: Eustace Street, 1941), p.3.

²⁰Ibid., p.4.

²¹Ibid.

This Meeting had stood several years, and divers Justices and captains had come to break it up; but when they understood the business Friends met about, and saw Friends' books, and accounts of collections for the use of the poor; ... the Justice, and officers would confess that we did their work, and would pass away peaceably and lovingly. 22

The earliest meetings for discipline had three main objects. The first was to see to the care and provision of the poor members of the Society. The second was to seek redress for those illegally prosecuted or imprisoned, and the third concerned the proper registration of births, deaths and marriages.²³

It was not until the years 1667-69, however, that any regular system of government was established in the Quaker community. During these years Fox travelled throughout Britain to establish monthly meetings for church business, comprising a few Friends from several neighbouring meetings. The monthly meetings were grouped in county or quarterly meetings, and these in turn were subordinate to a yearly meeting established at London. Recognising that some system of organisation was absolutely necessary, Robert Barclay said:-

... forasmuch as all are not called in the same station, some rich, some poor; some servants, some masters, some married, some unmarried; some widows and some orphans, and so forth; it is not only convenient, but absolutely needful, that there be certain Meetings at certain Places and Times, as may best suit the conveniences of such who may be most particularly concerned in them; where both those that are to take Care may Assemble, and those who may need this Care, may come, and make known their necessities and receive Helps, whether by Counsel or supply, according to their respective needs. 24

The outcome of Fox's labours, therefore, was the emergence

²²George Fox. Journal (London:1694), p.215.

²³Christian Discipline in the Religious Society of Friends in Ireland. (Dublin, 1941), pp. 6 - 7.

²⁴Barclay. Apology. Prop. XI. Quoted in Wragge. Faith of Robert Barclay. p.114.

of a four tier structure of organisation which has remained essentially unchanged down to the present day. First, at the local level, were the preparative meetings; next came the monthly meetings, which were in turn subordinate to Quarterly meetings, and over them all were the yearly meetings. The preparative meetings are usually composed of members in any given place in which there are generally two or more Friends of each sex, whose duty is to act as overseers of the monthly meetings, to whom the executive department of the discipline is chiefly confided. The monthly meetings decide in cases of violation of discipline, and have the power of cutting off or disowning all who by their improper conduct, false doctrines,²⁵ or other gross errors, bring reproach to the Society, although the accused have the right of appeal to the quarterly meetings, and from these again to the yearly, whose decisions are final.

The quarterly meetings are composed of several monthly meetings, and exercise a sort of general supervision over the latter, from whom they receive reports, and to whom they give such advice and decisions as they think right. The yearly meeting consists of select or representative members of the quarterly meetings. Its function is to consider generally the entire condition of the Society in all

²⁵Abraham Shackleton Jr. of Ballitore, Co. Kildare was "disowned" by the Society in 1801 because of his unorthodox views. It was said that he "undervalued the Scriptures". (See "Character Sketch of Abraham Shackleton Junior" by John Hancock (1818) P.B.20(2) Friends Arch. Dub.)

its aspects. It receives written answers to questions it has previously addressed to the subordinate meetings, deliberates upon them, and legislates accordingly. To it exclusively the legislative power belongs.

Women, throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, had a special sphere of discipline allotted to them: they inspected and relieved the wants of the poor of their own sex, they took cognisance of proposals for marriage, they dealt with female delinquents privately, and under certain restrictions may even have done so officially, though in the "*testimony of disownment*" they have always had the assistance of members of the other sex.²⁶ Women were also actively involved in the matter of education.

QUAKERISM IN IRELAND

Quakerism came to Ireland in the wake of Cromwell's armies in the early 1650^s. Indeed, the real founder of Irish Quakerism was an old Cromwellian soldier, William Edmundson who was three years the junior of Fox, and who settled in Ireland about 1652.²⁷ He had already been attracted to Quakers in Chesterfield, and in the year 1653, when in the North of England on business, heard James Nayler, a prominent Quaker preacher, speak. Nayler's sermons had such an effect on Edmundson, that he returned to Antrim a "*convinced*" Friend. Removing to Lurgan, he and his brother began the first settled meetings of Friends in Ireland in

²⁶Chambers Encyclopaedia. p.13.

²⁷Braithwaite. Beginnings of Quakerism. p.210

1654.²⁸ In the following year the new creed spread widely in Youghal and in Cork, and speedily extended to Limerick and Kilkenny.²⁹ Indeed, it was at Cork that William Penn was drawn into the Quaker community by the preaching of a Quaker named Loe.³⁰ Quakerism spread rapidly in Ireland, with the result that by 1670 there were approximately seventy-two meeting houses throughout the country.³¹

The first wave of Quakerism in Ireland exhibited itself, as in England, in the form of fanatical, itinerant preachers who wandered throughout the country preaching their strange faith. Edward Burrough, having vainly attempted to obtain a hearing in the church, preached on horseback through the streets of Limerick. Barbara Blaughton followed congregations into the churches, protesting against the service, and on one occasion she appeared in the courts of justice in Dublin to exhort the judges on the bench. Solomon Eccles, having stripped himself naked from the waist upwards, and holding a chafing dish of coals and burning brimstone upon his head, entered a Catholic chapel near Galway while the congregation were at their devotions, exclaiming - "*woe, to these idolatrous worshippers!*". John Exham appeared in like manner in the streets of Cork in sack cloth and ashes³² (as indeed, did Robert Barclay in Edinburgh in 1672).

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹William Edward Lecky. A History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century. 5 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, & Co. 1892), Vol 1: 409.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Elia Buckley "*William Penn in Dublin*" Dublin Historical Record. Vol. 6. No. 3 p.83

³²Lecky. History of Ireland in Eighteenth Century. Vol. 1:409-10.

Itinerant Quaker ministers travelled diligently throughout Ireland, amidst many hardships in the second half of the seventeenth century, for the country at that time was in parts uninhabited, and their testimonies against the "hireling priests" brought them to prison on several occasions.³³ The itinerary included many of the places where there were settled meetings. In the North, Lisburn, Lurgan, Kilmore and Grange near Charlemont, were the chief centres; in Leinster there were meetings in Cavan, Athlone, Mountmellick, Carlow, New Ross and Wexford, as well as at Dublin, and in the South, Limerick, Cork, Bandon, Youghal, and Waterford had meetings. As in England, the new movement gathered groups of adherents in certain places and depended greatly upon the personal influence of men of high christian character, with the gift of leadership and the capacity for self-sacrifice. The early meetings were almost always held in private houses.³⁴

In Ireland the provinces formed the natural units for meetings for discipline, and about 1668, through the influence of William Edmundson, six-weeks' meetings were set up for Leinster, Munster and Ulster.³⁵ Their duties included the administration of relief to those suffering persecution, the care of the poor, the reproof of backsliders, and also the recording of births, marriages and deaths.

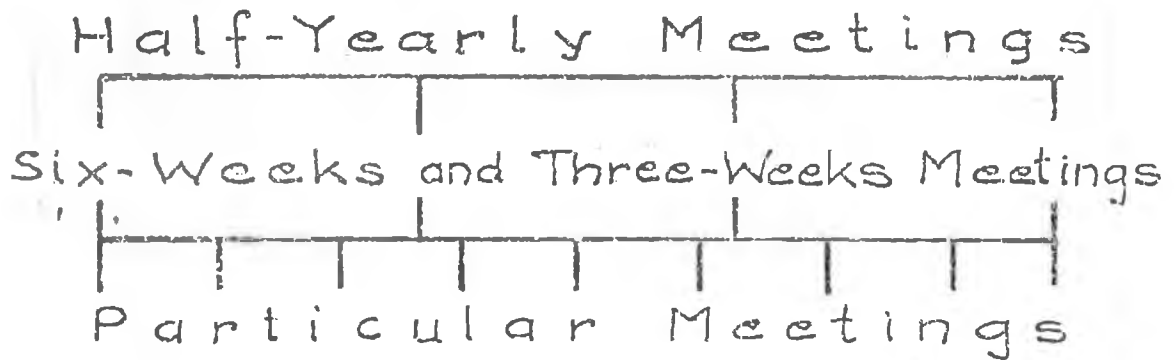
³³W.C. Braithewaite. Beginnings of Quakerism. p.223

³⁴Ibid.

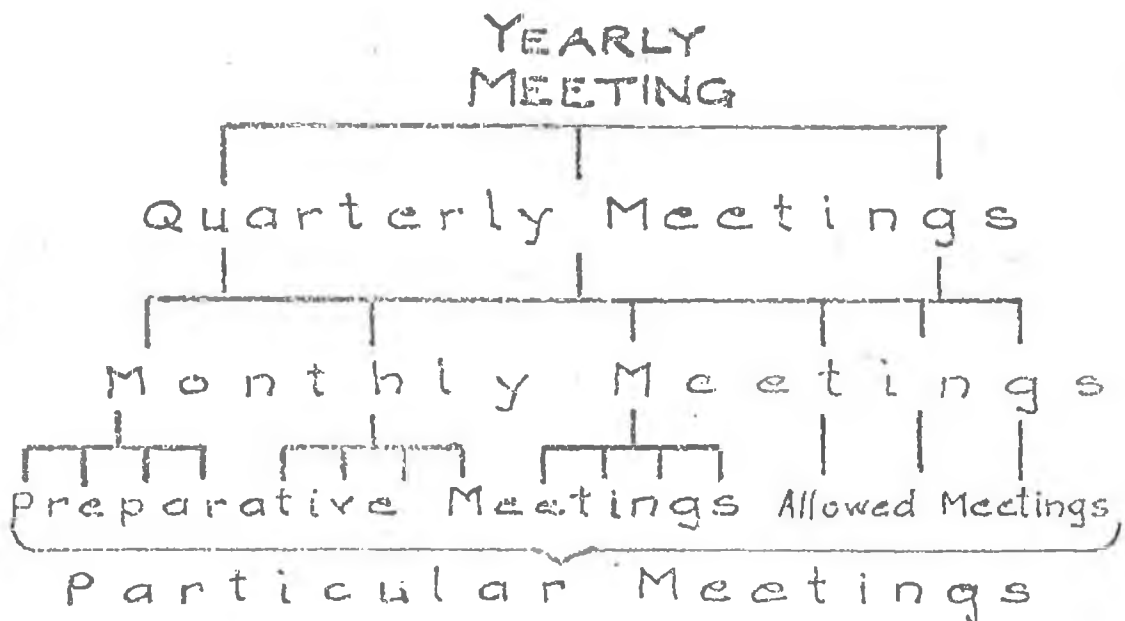
³⁵Christian Discipline of the Religious Society of Friends in Ireland. (Dublin: Eustace Street), p.9.

Structure of
The Religious Society of Friends
in Ireland

Before about 1800



After about 1800



Province meetings became quarterly meetings in 1792.

In 1669 William Edmundson and George Fox established men's and women's meetings in the chief centres. The men's meeting was usually held monthly; but in Dublin, where it acted as a permanent committee for the whole of Ireland, it was held fortnightly. These meetings, which after a time were called monthly meetings, took charge of local matters affecting Friends and sent representatives to the provincial meetings. A general meeting for all Irish Friends met for the first time in Dublin on fifth month 1670, and continued to meet regularly in Spring and Autumn for over a century.³⁶ It was called the National or Half-Years' Meeting, and consisted of a limited number of representatives from the men's provincial meetings. Since 1797, it has met only in the Spring, and has thus become the Yearly Meeting of Friends in Ireland.³⁷

As far as women's meetings were concerned in Ireland, it was agreed at the National meeting in 1678 to a proposal of Cork women Friends, that a general meeting for Quaker women should be set up. It was arranged that such a meeting should be held at the same time as the National meeting in Spring. By the middle of the eighteenth century, however, womens' meetings in Ireland seem to have become almost extinct, and in 1772 an effort was made to revive them.³⁸ They were then entrusted with the care of members of their own sex, but not with the business of

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., p.10

³⁸ Ibid.

admission or disownment. The Womens' Yearly meeting, established in 1679, met regularly until the beginning of the twentieth century, when it became united with the men's meeting.

In Ireland, as in England, the authorities were extremely hostile to Quakerism from the moment of its appearance in the country. Indeed, some of the early Quaker preachers had considerable difficulty getting boats to take them to Ireland.³⁹ At this time, Ireland was under the harrow of Cromwell's resolute government, and the Quakers were seeking entrance to a "distressful" land, under military law, whose native population was bleeding from recent conquest, and whose garrison and new settlers were, for the most part, zealous Baptists and Independents.⁴⁰ The Deputy in Ireland, at this time, was Henry Cromwell, the second son of the "Protector", and he was extremely suspicious of the Quakers. Henry Cromwell regarded Quakerism as an anti-social force, and especially subversive of civil government and military discipline. In February 1656 he wrote:-

I think their principles and practices are not very consistent with civil government, much less with the discipline of the army. Some think them to have no design, but I am not of that opinion. Their counterfeited simplicity renders them to me the more dangerous. 41

Again, as in England, persecution of Friends in Ireland reached its peak during the reign of Charles II, when, according to the influential Cork Quaker, Joseph Pike, "meetings were disturbed and broken up and Friends cast into prison".⁴²

³⁹ Braithwaite. Beginnings of Quakerism. p.223.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p.212.

⁴¹ Ibid., p.215.

⁴² Joseph Pike. Life of Joseph Pike. (London: Darton and Harvey. 1837), p.4.

During the twenty six years reign of the "Merry Monarch". seven hundred and eighty Quakers were imprisoned in Ireland, and nearly four thousand pounds worth of property was confiscated, mainly as a result of the Quaker refusal to take oaths or to pay tithes.⁴³ Thomas Wight and John Ratty give the following statistics regarding the persecution of the sect in Ireland from the accession of Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector until the end of George the First's reign.

Under the reign of	Number of Years they Reigned	Value taken	Prisoners
The Protectors, so called.	05	£86-13-06	101
K. Charles II	26	£3,824-16-08½	780
K. James II	04	£1,583-14-03	12
K. William & Q. Mary	13	£13,724-09-03½	33
Q. Anne	12	£16,199-15-03.	13
K. George I	13	£22,513-14-10	27
	IN ALL	£57,933-03-10½	966

44

This table shows that almost sixty thousand pounds worth of Quaker property was confiscated by the authorities in Ireland during the first seventy years of the sects ministry here.

⁴³ Thomas Wight and John Ratty. A History of the Rise and Progress of the People called Quakers in Ireland. (Dublin: I Jackson, 1751), p.367.

⁴⁴ Ibid. For a year by year breakdown of the imprisonments and fines for the period 1727 - 1751 see Appendix C.

According to Wight and Ruddy this colossal sum represented property mainly distrained for non-payment of "*Tythes, Priests Maintenance, and other Ecclesiastical Dues so called; and for repair of Parish Worship-houses*". By 1750, moreover, this sum had risen to approximately one hundred thousand pounds. The table above also demonstrates that while the number of imprisonments fell dramatically after the reign of Charles II, the amount of property confiscated by the authorities increased at a considerable rate over the next half century. The exception to this trend was the reign of James II, when, not only did the number of imprisonments radically drop, but the property distrained for non-payment of tithes and other church dues, was comparatively moderate. During the short reign of James II, the Quakers received special consideration from the Catholic monarch. James was a personal friend of William Penn, who had large estates in Cork, and Penn used his considerable influence with the monarch to win concessions for the Irish Quaker population.⁴⁵ Friends received protection from James, and were grateful to him for granting them liberty of conscience. Tyrconnel, The Lord Deputy in Ireland, though severe to other Protestants, treated the Quakers well and put them on the Jacobite Corporations.⁴⁶ William Edmundson, for instance,

⁴⁵ Isabel Grubb. Quakers in Ireland. (London: Swarthmore Press. 1926), p.61.

⁴⁶ Anthony Sharp, the prosperous Dublin Quaker, was by 1688 made Master of the Weavers' Corporation, whose Charter under James II contained a clause saying that those who could not swear might simply promise to be true to the King and Corporation. (Mrs. D. Goodbody, "*Anthony Sharp, A Quaker Merchant of the Liberties*". Dublin Historical Record. Vol.XIV. 1955-58. p.17.

complained to Tyrconnel of illtreatment at the hands of Roman Catholic soldiers. The case was investigated, the delinquents punished and the company removed from the neighbourhood.⁴⁷

In an Act of 1691, which abrogated the oath of supremacy in Ireland and appointed other oaths, a special form of declaration to be made by Quakers was inserted.⁴⁸ Neither in England, nor in Ireland, however, were Quakers exempt from taking the usual oaths in the law-courts, and their failure to do so was a frequent cause of loss to them. In 1719 an Act of the Irish Parliament for the "*granting of some ease and indulgence to the Protestant Dissenters in the exercise of Religion may be an effectual means to unite his Majesty's Protestant subjects in interest and affection*" resulted in certain alleviations in respect of Quakers.⁴⁹ By this act, the latter had their practical toleration conferred on them, and the only genuine grievance which remained was that of tithes. The treatment the Quakers received on the matter of tithes depended entirely on the temper of those with whom they had to deal. As it turned out, the government was able to prevent the passing of repressive acts enforcing payment, but could not, or would not, interfere with the carrying out of the existing law.⁵⁰

⁴⁷J.C. Beckett. Protestant Dissent in Ireland 1681-1780 (London: Faber and Faber, 1946), p.131.

⁴⁸Ibid., p.132.

⁴⁹John F. Pettit. "*A study of Aspects of Protestant Schooling in Ireland*" (M.A. Thesis. Education Department. University College Cork, 1971), p.174.

⁵⁰Beckett. Protestant Dissent. p.134

In practice, this approach meant, (as the table above indicates), that the number of imprisonments for non-payment of tithes decreased rapidly after the reign of Charles II, and by the middle of the eighteenth century had almost ceased. The government, however, did not hesitate to support the Established Church by assisting the ecclesiastical power in the collection of its Church dues, and the Quaker community in Ireland was to continue to suffer financial loss for non-payment of tithes until well into the nineteenth century.

According to the Quaker historian Isabel Grubb, the Jacobite war caused a break in the story of Quakerism in Ireland. After the war the Quaker community lost a considerable amount of its early dynamism, and became a rather static organisation. The first outbreak of religious enthusiasm had passed away, and the pioneers were succeeded by an exceptionally insular community, which became noted for its inwardness of outlook.⁵¹ In fact, Irish Quakerism now became more of a denomination than a movement,⁵² and tended to concentrate its energies on consolidating and strengthening its own discipline, rather than in trying to spread the message to others. Irish Quakerism was to remain engrossed almost exclusively in its own affairs, until the latter years of the eighteenth century when, partly due to the evangelical influence of Wesley and Whitfield, the Society became more outgoing, and began to distinguish itself

⁵¹Grubb. Quakers in Ireland. p.81

⁵²Grainne O'Flynn. "Aspects of Concern in the Religious Society of Friends with Education in Ireland. 1627-1812". Capuchin Annual. 1975. p.322

in many important areas of philanthropy, especially those of slavery, prison reform, famine relief and education.

The commercial affairs of eighteenth century Ireland were chiefly in the hands of Presbyterians, Huguenots and Quakers.⁵³ According to Arthur Young, who made his famous tour of Ireland in 1780, the Quakers were, by far, the most prosperous group, relative to size in the country. Young claimed that Friends were the "only wealthy traders in this island", and he quoted a farmer in Wexford who said, "The Quakers be very cunning and the devil a bad acre of land will they hire".⁵⁴ The American Friend, William Savery, who visited Ireland in 1797-8 was horrified at the abysmal poverty of the native population, and was extremely critical of the lifestyle of his fellow Quakers in Ireland. Writing in his Journal, he said:-

Friends in Ireland seem to live like princes of the earth, more than any country I have seen - their gardens, carriages, and various conveniences, with the abundance of their tables, appeared to me to call for much more gratitude and humility than in some instances, it is feared is the case. 55

Although Savery's criticisms here were undoubtedly sincere, and were largely motivated by the stark contrast in living standards which he observed between the prosperous Quakers and the majority native population, the overall impression

⁵³Grubb. Quakers in Ireland. p.17.

⁵⁴Arthur Young. A Tour of Ireland 1780. (Cambridge University Press, 1925), p.26. Quoted in Pettit "A study of Aspects of Protestant Schooling in Ireland". (MA. Thesis), p.173.

⁵⁵William Savery. Journal. (London: Charles Gilpin, 1844), p.267.

given is quite misleading. Those Quakers whom Savery criticized, were not typical of the Society in general, but represented a small minority of Irish Friends. Admittedly, Quakers like William Penn and Anthony Sharp were immensely wealthy, and had exercised considerable economic, and even political influence, at a time when Dissenters were, to a large extent, outside the law, but it must be emphasized, however, that the vast majority of eighteenth century Irish Quakers were modest tradesmen such as Millers and Bakers,⁵⁶ or small farmers. The Annals of Ballitore, for instance, which document the lifestyle of a colony of Quakers in South Kildare in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, bear witness to the fact that most Irish Quakers lived lives of great simplicity and "plainness". It must also be borne in mind, that throughout this period the Society of Friends continued to suffer economic losses due to their goods being distrained for non-payment of tithes and other church dues. Such distraints frequently involved the confiscation of household utensils, a loss which must have been grievously felt by the poorer Quaker families.⁵⁷ The care of the poor amongst its members was accepted by the Society of Friends as one of the prime functions of Quaker meetings from the earliest days of the movement, and indeed, it is no accident that the first successful public boarding schools established in Ireland by the Quakers in the late

⁵⁶Ida Greehan, review of Guide to Irish Quaker Records, by Olive C. Goodbody, in Irish Times. 27/7/68.

⁵⁷Eila Buckley. "William Penn in Dublin". Dublin Historical Record. Vol. 6. No. 3. p.83.

eighteenth century were mainly for the children of Friends in "low circumstances".

As far as numbers are concerned, it is extremely difficult to assess, with any degree of accuracy, how many Quakers were living in Ireland in the eighteenth century. Isabel Grubb estimates that there were perhaps six to seven hundred families of Friends in Ireland in the late seventeenth century.⁵⁸ At this time Quakers were most numerous in Dublin, with perhaps thirty per cent of the whole membership of the Society. Queens County (Laois) came next with about seventeen per cent. Indeed, the area in and around Mountmellick formed the most important Quaker centre in Ireland, outside Dublin, until the early nineteenth century. For a long time Munster and Leinster each contained many more Friends than Ulster, and in Connaught there have only been isolated groups for short periods.⁵⁹ William Savery, writing in his Journal in 1798, recorded:-

Leinster Province Meeting contains almost as many Friends as Ulster and Munster, and there is only one small meeting in Connaught. ⁶⁰

Overall, it has been estimated that there were, perhaps, between three and five thousand Friends in Ireland in the eighteenth century.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Grubb. Quakers in Ireland. p.36

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Savery. Journal. p.292.

⁶¹ Grubb. Quakers in Ireland. p.89.

THE QUAKERS AND EDUCATION

Ever since George Fox had established a school for boys and girls at Waltham Abbey in Essex, and a school for girls only at Shacklewell⁶² in 1668, the Society of Friends in both England and Ireland had set great store by education. Nevertheless, the first Irish Quaker school did not come into existence until 1677, when a day school was established at Mountmellick by William Edmundson, followed by a school at Cork in 1678 and one at Dublin in 1680. The early Quaker day schools, however, were not very successful, and the many new ones being opened in the first half of the eighteenth century were scarcely sufficient to replace those that were closing.⁶³

Nevertheless, the second half of the eighteenth century saw the establishment of more securely based schools. This new phase in Quaker education began with the establishment of the first Quaker national boarding school at Edenderry in 1764⁶⁴. This school, however, was only for girls, so the next major stage of Quaker educational endeavour in Ireland saw the establishment of "co-educational" provincial boarding schools at Lisburn in Ulster, Mountmellick in Leinster and Newtown, Waterford in Munster. These three boarding schools were firmly established by the end of the eighteenth century, and were directly under the control

⁶² Neville H. Newhouse. The Founding of Friends School Lisburn. (Lurgan: L.M.Press Ltd., 1974), p.1.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Portfolio 5A - 24. Friends Archives Dublin.

of the Quaker provincial and national meetings. Throughout the nineteenth and part of the twentieth centuries the Irish Quaker provincial boarding schools formed the basis of the Quaker system of education in Ireland.

Quakers, like other Dissenters and Roman Catholics in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, were subject, in varying degrees, to the rigours of the penal laws. Quaker schoolmasters, in order to teach within the law, had to obtain the episcopal licence from a bishop of the Established Church, and this, understandably, they were most reluctant to do. Consequently, the great majority of Irish Quaker schoolmasters in the eighteenth century were teaching outside the law, as of course were also Roman Catholics and Presbyterians. Several Acts containing clauses which penalized schoolmasters who taught without the Bishop's licence, were, however, suspended as to Protestant dissenters by the Toleration Act of 1689. This did not last for long, because during the High Church reaction at the end of Queen Anne's reign, the Schism Act of 1714 was passed, which required schoolmasters to be licenced and to be communicants. Again the Quakers were lucky, as the Whigs did not enforce the Act, and it was repealed in 1718. As far as Ireland was concerned, the Schism Act had been extended here by a special clause, but in actual fact, it was practically a dead letter.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, although Quaker schoolmasters in Ireland had a relatively free hand in the education of their pupils, they could, depending on the prevailing mood of the ecclesiastical and civil authorities be prosecuted for teaching without the episcopal licence. William Edmundson, for instance, wrote

⁶⁵ Daniel P. Corcoran. State Policy in Irish Education (Dublin: 1916), p.31.

to the Bishop of Kildare in 1715, on behalf of a Quaker schoolmaster, complaining that a:-

Friends schoolmaster, who taught their children at Mountmellick, had been cited several times to the bishop's court, and run to, or near an excommunication, for teaching school without the bishop's licence. 66

Generally speaking, Quaker schoolmasters were rarely prosecuted by the authorities for teaching without licence, and when they were, the Society of Friends seemed to have many influential allies to come to their rescue. Prominent Quakers like William Penn and Anthony Sharp, had contacts in very high places, and they were not loath to invoke such aid when they thought it necessary. Although the laws prohibiting Protestant dissenters from teaching were not actually repealed until 1779, they had fallen into disuse a long time earlier. Thus, to all intents and purposes, the Society of Friends in Ireland was left undisturbed as far as educational affairs were concerned, and was allowed to carry on with the education of Quaker children in its own particular manner.

On the matter of higher education, however, the Quakers were at a distinct disadvantage. Because of a number of laws against Protestant dissenters in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Quakers were barred from entrance to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in England, and to Trinity College Dublin, in Ireland. Such a prohibition meant, in fact, that few Quaker schoolmasters, by the early eighteenth century, were qualified to teach the classics. Abraham Shackleton of Ballitore, who was to a large degree self-taught in the Classics, was a notable exception.

⁶⁶William Edmundson. Journal 3d ed. (Dublin:1820), p.223.

Furthermore, considering the strong utilitarian element in Quaker education, it is probably correct to say that the knowledge that the universities were closed to them, almost certainly helped to contribute to the decline of Latin, Greek and Hebrew in Irish Quaker schools in the eighteenth century.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Richard Shackleton of Ballitore. (1726-1792), one of the few Irish Quaker schoolmasters in the eighteenth century to show enthusiasm for the Latin language, was very critical of the utilitarian attitude of many Quakers towards it. In a letter to his daughter Margaret Grubb at Clonmel in 1776, he said:- "*I know it is the fashion with many, who do not mean to send their sons to universities, to explode and decry Latin as a useless acquisition*". (Mary Leadbeater. Memoirs and Letters of Richard and Elizabeth Shackleton late of Ballitore Ireland. (London: Darton and Harvey, 1822), pp. 138 - 140.

CHAPTER II

THE AIMS OF QUAKER EDUCATION

The shape which Quaker education in Ireland took during the first two centuries of the sects settlement here, was largely determined by two major aims which lay at the root of the educational philosophy of the Society of Friends. The first, and undoubtedly the more important, of these two great aims was what could be called the religious and moral aim, and the second may be classified as the secular and vocational one.

For Quakers in Ireland during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, education meant, first and foremost, religious and denominational training.¹ Children were required, from a very early age to learn the religious principles of the Society of Friends, and parents were expected to teach them. Later on, with the establishment of Quaker day-schools, the latter establishments took over some of the religious function, but responsibility still rested, to a considerable degree, with the parents. A minute of the National Meeting of 1714 put it like this:-

It is the earnest desire of this Meeting that all Friends be zealously concerned to educate and bring up their

¹Portfolio 5A - 24. Friends Archives Dublin.

children and servants in the knowledge of the principles of the true Christian religion as professed by us, that they may be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them according to the Apostles' advice. I Peter.3.15.²

Indeed, if parents failed to provide a satisfactory religious education for their children, the Society felt obliged to intervene in order to rectify what they considered was an extremely grave omission.³ Probably the most distinguished, and certainly the most prosperous of Irish Quakers in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, was the Dublin merchant Anthony Sharp. Referring to the aims of education the latter declared:-

... Education that is good is first to educate a child in the fear of the Lord - Secondly, to be educated is the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures - Next and thirdly, after good literature, orthography, arithmetic, etc., a good trade honestly to live, to help and not to be burdensome to others. ⁴

The list of priorities outlined above by Anthony Sharp was to remain the standard hierarchy of Quaker aims in education for two centuries.

The overriding emphasis on religion in Quaker schools in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries meant that the Bible and the Quaker Catechism were the two most important texts used in those establishments, and a considerable portion of the school day was devoted to their study. Indeed,

²Minute of Dublin Half-Years' Meeting 9th mo.1714. Friends Arch. Dub.

³Joseph Pike in his Journal says that when indulgent parents disregard good advice "it becomes the indispensable duty of the Church to interpose, by dealing with them more closely or openly; as the example of such parents and children, is a hurt to our youth in particular, and a dishonour to our holy profession in general". (The Life of Joseph Pike, by the Author (London: Darton and Harvey, 1837), p.16.

⁴Quoted in Isabel Grubb. Quakers in Ireland 1654 - 1900 (London: Swarthmore Press, 1927), p.57.

in the majority of Irish Quaker schools, whether they were day or boarding establishments, the school day generally began and ended with readings from the Bible, and classroom activities were normally punctuated with prayers and readings from the Quaker Catechism. Although Sacred Scripture played an immensely important part in Quaker education, it must be emphasized, however, that as far as the religious principles of the Society of Friends were concerned, the Bible played a secondary role. For the Quakers, the Bible was not always regarded as divinely inspired,⁵ and was no substitute for the "Inner Light".⁶ The doctrine of the "Inner Light" emphasized the personal and direct nature of the relationship between God and man, and no books, no matter how sacred, could compensate for this. Quaker children were brought into the meeting-houses with their parents, where they were encouraged through silent-worship to seek direct divine illumination. It was hoped by the Quaker elders that such religious worship would not only affect the personality of their children, but would also influence for the good their outlook on life. The silent-worship of the Quaker meeting house, was a form of worship in which all could take part in ministry. It placed an emphasis on personal inspiration which was likely to foster an attitude of individuality and responsibility.⁷

⁵ John Reader. Of Schools and Schoolmasters. (London: Quaker Home Service. 1979), p.54.

⁶ Emphasizing the primacy of the "Inner Light", Robert Barclay, the theologian of early Quakerism said "I do freely concede to Scripture the second place". Quoted in Philip Wragge. The Faith of Robert Barclay. (London: Friends House 1948), p.70.

⁷ Reader. Of Schools and Schoolmasters. p.54.

Such an attitude was one of the primary aims of Quaker religious education.

There was another aspect to Quaker religious education, however, which seemed at odds with the ideas of individuality and personal responsibility emanating from the silent-worship of the Quaker meeting house. This mainly concerned the methods used in the study of the Bible and the Quaker catechism. The principal method of studying these texts was the mechanical one of rote learning. Large sections had to be learned by heart,⁸ and little concession was given to personal interpretation. Such study was meaningless and extremely frustrating to the majority of Quaker pupils involved, and it is difficult to see anything of educational value in it. To the Quaker authorities, however, there was a dual purpose behind such laborious activities. Firstly, exercises in rote learning, it was believed, provided a valuable discipline, and secondly, the material learned, if not properly understood by immature minds, would become a residue of experience which could be turned to better account later on.⁹

Closely related to the religious aim of Quaker education was the matter of character formation. Besides being well versed in the religious principles of their Society, Quaker children were expected to live out their principles in daily life. This meant a strict and consistent adherence to a rigid disciplinary code. As far as moral

⁸W.A.C. Stewart. Quakers and Education. (London: Epworth Press, 1953), p.131.

⁹Ibid., p.132.

education was concerned Quakers were expected to follow a code which emphasized "Plainness in speech, behaviour and apparel",¹⁰ and such aspects of puritanism were strictly inculcated in the Quaker schools. Quaker children were expected to be, first and foremost, truthful and honest people and every significant aspect of their behaviour in everyday life was to be measured against the yardstick of "truth". The rules for the management of Leinster provincial school, Mountmellick, for instance, state unambiguously that:-

The master and mistress are advised particularly to endeavour, through divine assistance, early to impress upon the minds of the children, the necessity of a strict adherence to truth, an abhorrence of falsehood, and the Remembrance of their Creator. 11

Indeed, one of the most serious faults a Quaker child could commit was to tell lies. In this regard, the rules for the Quaker boarding school at Clonmel made it clear that:-

If they commit fault that they candidly acknowledge it. 12

Quaker children were encouraged to tell the truth at all times and were frequently rewarded for doing so. At a schoolmaster's conference in Dublin in 1705, for instance, it was decided that "children should not be corrected in passion, nor for their lessons more than for untruthlike behaviour".¹³ Although a strict adherence to the truth is a lofty and noble aim in any educational system, it sometimes

¹⁰Grubb. Quakers in Ireland. p.81

¹¹Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School. P.B. 20(25). Friends Arch. Dub.

¹²"AdVICES for pupils at Clonmel Female Boarding School. C.1800". Grubb. Collection. S.124.

¹³Portf. 5A - 24.

was carried to extremes in the case of some over conscientious Quakers. For the latter, telling the truth meant much more than merely not telling lies. It also meant the avoidance of all forms of exaggeration or overstatement, and even, we may presume, understatement. Mary Leadbeater, the authoress, speaking of her mothers strictness in this regard, says:-

*... So strict was her adherence to truth that she scarcely allowed herself to assert anything positively, nor would she permit us to do so; and so accustomed have I been to this habitual caution, that even to this day, if I hear an extravagant expression, I examine it involuntary in my mind before I perceive the exaggeration.*¹⁴

Clearly, this is a case where a lofty educational aim has gone too far and has done its work too well. This rather unfortunate state of affairs was clearly the result of a worthy educational aim, namely the cultivation of truthfulness, being too rigidly interpreted. Such an inflexible approach to rules and regulations was a not uncommon characteristic of the puritanical element in Quakerism. Such an approach was not unexpected in a sect which emphasized a literal interpretation of the Bible.

The Quaker emphasis on telling the truth at all times can be most clearly seen in the attitude of the Society of Friends in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to the administering or taking of oaths. Interpreting literally the Scriptural injunction "*Swear not at all*", the early Quakers refused to take oaths, as they claimed that

¹⁴Mary Leadbeater. The Leadbeater Papers. Vol.1. (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862), p.129.

the latter implied a double standard of truthfulness.¹⁵ Overall, however, it is probably correct to say that the Quaker educational aim of inculcating a strict adherence to the truth was extremely successful and beneficial for the Society of Friends. The emphasis on truthfulness was a major influence on the development of the Quaker character, and indeed such an emphasis was of considerable assistance to the sect in its dealings with others in the world of business. Quakers, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries acquired a remarkable reputation for fair dealing with people of other denominations in the fields of trade and commerce, and although some outsiders were annoyed, at first, by the refusal of Quaker business men to barter, insisting instead on a fixed price for their products, it was soon realized that the practice was based on what the Quakers considered was a fair price, consistent with their notion of truth.¹⁶

Philanthropy had always been an important characteristic of the Quakers, and in the nineteenth century in particular, it became the dominant one. It is not surprising therefore to find that an important aim of Quaker education in Ireland was to cultivate in children a charitable disposition towards their fellow man. Indeed, the doctrine of the "Inner Light" with its emphasis on "*that of God in each man*",¹⁷

¹⁵In an Act of 1691, which abrogated the oath of Supremacy in Ireland, a special form of declaration to be made by Quakers was inserted. J.C. Beckett, Protestant Dissent in Ireland 1687-1780 (London: Faber and Faber. 1946) p.132.

¹⁶Grubb. Quakers in Ireland p.96

¹⁷William J. Whalen. "*Our Neighbours, The Friends*", The Word. Oct. 1967.

helped to provide a philosophical basis for Quaker benevolence towards all mankind, and this theme was constantly reinforced in Quaker schools. In the rules for the female Boarding school, at Clonmel, for instance, the pupils were urged to "*cultivate an affectionate regard for one another*" - and "*if one be offended, by no means to revenge it, but to feel after that charitable disposition*".¹⁸ In consistency with this fundamental Quaker tenet, the pupils in Irish Quaker schools were constantly being reminded to act in a cooperative rather than in a competitive spirit. James White, son-in-law of the second Abraham Shackleton, and master of Ballitore boarding school from 1806-1836, was keenly aware of this aim and he considered that any "*advantage arising from the agency of emulation is more than counterbalanced by the spirit of envy, and the other bad passions which it is apt to excite in the breasts of disappointed candidates*".¹⁹ Although emulation was sometimes resorted to by Quaker schoolmasters, it was not encouraged by the Quaker authorities who saw it as counter productive and contrary to the spirit of Christianity. The ideal of Christian charity towards ones fellow man was constantly being emphasized in eighteenth and nineteenth century Quaker schools, and such ideas often found expression in the textbooks being used in

¹⁸Advices to the Pupils of Clonmel Female Boarding School. C 1800. Grubb. Coll. S.124. Friends Arch. Dub.

¹⁹Betsy Shackleton. Ballitore and its Inhabitants Seventy Years Ago. (Dublin: Richard D. Webb & Son. 1862). Preface. P. VIII.

those schools. In this regard, a few brief examples will suffice. In Lindley Murray's English Reader, for instance, a textbook which was extremely popular in Irish Quaker schools in the early nineteenth century, the philanthropic ideal was succinctly expressed in the following verse;

CHARITY

*In faith and hope the world will disagree; 20
But all mankind's concern is charity.*

Furthermore, in chapter three of the same publication, under the heading "*Didactic Pieces*", there is an extremely moralistic essay on "*Forgiveness*".

Despite 'trying to cultivate the ideals of charity and christian politeness amongst their pupils, Quaker schools in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were not always successful. In a letter from a past pupil of the Munster provincial boarding school, at Newtown, Waterford to the school centenary committee in 1898, it is recorded that in the early nineteenth century "*there had been too much fagging and even a kind of cruelty practised on the little ones for very trifling things*".²¹ In contrast to English public schools, however, which were notorious for excesses of this kind in the nineteenth century, the incidence of recorded cruelties in Irish Quaker schools was considerably lower. The Quaker philanthropic principle which influenced the Societys' schools in Ireland

²⁰Lindley Murray; The English Reader. (York: Longman & Rees, 1799), p.250

²¹Newtown School Centenary. (Waterford: Newenham and Harvey, 1898), p.35.

had a humanizing effect on both masters and pupils, which must have compensated, to some degree, for the austerity of the discipline. Admittedly there were occasions when the Quaker testimony of peaceful living seemed to abandon the schools. The Leinster provincial school at Mountmellick, for instance, went through a grim period in the 1820^s and 30^s,²² and the English Quaker school at Sidcot in Yorkshire underwent mutinies in 1846 and 1859.²³ Nevertheless, these examples are exceptional, and as far as Ireland was concerned, Quaker masters were regularly being reminded by the national and provincial meetings to administer punishments only in a cool and restrained manner. It was further enjoined that such punishments should always be medicinal and never retaliatory.²⁴ The extent to which the masters actually adhered to this principle, and the way in which the pupils reacted to it, would seem, overall, to have been reasonably consistent with the very important educational aim which inspired it.

Samuel Tuke, the English Quaker educationist and founder of the Friends Education Society at Ackworth in Yorkshire in the early nineteenth century, saw the subjection of the will and the fostering of habits of steady application as important aims of Quaker education.²⁵ From the earliest times, the Society of Friends had regarded

²²One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. (Dublin: Richard D. Webb and Son. 1886), p.28.

²³Reader. Of Schools and Schoolmasters. p.34.

²⁴Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School. P.B. 20(25).

²⁵Reader. Of Schools and Schoolmasters. P.39.

the will as a very dangerous and unpredictable faculty, and they felt that a major priority of any system of education should be to discipline it. Joseph Pike, the puritanical, though extremely influential, Cork Quaker in the early eighteenth century, had very definite views about the subjection of the will. In his Journal he complained of *"the fondness and indulgence of many parents to their children, in giving them their own way and wills so long, until the root of evil has grown and spread itself forth into many evil branches, and at length, they have been alienated from Truth and Friends"*.²⁶

In order to submit the will to discipline and to facilitate the formation of habits of steady application, the Society of Friends established a system of provincial boarding schools in Ireland in the late eighteenth century. These schools were governed by a rigid disciplinary code, which sought to educate the children in an extremely "guarded" manner. The daily life of these schools was legislated for, down to the smallest degree, so consequently there was little room left for discretion, either on the part of the teacher or the pupil. Such a regimented schedule, it was hoped, would "teach" young Quakers to be disciplined in their lives. They rose at 6 a.m. in Summer and 7 in Winter to the round of a bell, and their whole day was regulated in this manner. What they wore, spoke, read, ate, and even played was determined by an unyielding disciplinary system, the object of which was to produce consistent, reliable,

²⁶Joseph Pike. Life of Joseph Pike. (London: Darton and Harvey, 1837), p.144.

industrious, obedient and serious-minded young Quakers.

Quaker education not only tried to discipline a Quaker's inner life, his beliefs, attitudes and feelings, but on a secondary level, it sought to influence even his external appearance. Although the doctrine of the "Inner Light" emphasized the "inward" aspects of man, the Quakers also laid considerable emphasis on the outer. We have already briefly referred to regulations governing external factors such as plainness in apparel, behaviour and speech. There were many other minute regulations besides, concerning the quality and colour of clothing and the wearing of perriwigs amongst others.²⁷ In addition to these, Quaker education laid considerable stress on the adoption of proper posture and deportment, and there are numerous references to these aims in the literature on schools, now deposited in the Quaker archives. At Mountmellick, for instance, the teachers were enjoined to "*inculcate a modest and humble deportment*" in their pupils, and the Mistress was to take advantage of the garden walks in order to correct any "*unbecoming awkward gestures*" in the girls.²⁸ In a similar vein, Mary Tolerton, a past pupil of Lisburn Quaker school in the early nineteenth century, and a housekeeper at Newtown in the 1820^s, related how at the Ulster provincial school:-

... great care was taken as to our carriage and deportment, lest we should contract any bad habit of stooping or shuffling in walking etc. Those were the days of backboards and seats without backs. 29

²⁷Portf. 5A - 24. Friends Arch. Dub.

²⁸One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. p.20.

²⁹Portf. 5A - 25. Friends Arch. Dub.

She goes on to relate what must have been a very harrowing experience indeed, for a young girl, all for the cause of deportment. She says that the children at the school were regularly asked to "*stand straight with our backs against the wall, sometimes to lie flat on the floor, or our shoulders were held back with bandages in order to expand our chests. Once I remember being tied up in this way, which so distressed me that I began to cry, and as I could not raise my hands, another girl was told to take my handkerchief and dry my tears for me. Never again was I bandaged for stooping*".³⁰ One must wonder at the supposed benefits of such a procedure as related above. Granted, physical education is an essential and extremely valuable part of ones general education, and the Quakers must be complimented on their interest in cultivating correct carriage and posture at a time when the latter was shamefully neglected in most contemporary school systems. Again, it would seem, however, that Irish Quakers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries had the right principle, but interpreted it too rigidly. The result was an inflexibility and insensitivity of approach which probably, in many cases, caused considerable emotional distress and perhaps even permanent psychological damage, thus offsetting the undoubted benefits which could result from a more liberal application of the principle.

While, the main aim of Quaker education in Ireland during the first two centuries of the Society's ministry

³⁰ Ibid.

here, was, indisputably, religious and moral in character, rather than literary, secular subjects had, nevertheless, a significant role to play in the Quaker curriculum. There was a strong utilitarian element in early Quaker education, however, which William Penn gave voice to in a letter to his wife and children, on leaving England in 1682. In it he says:-

For their learning be liberal . . . but let it be useful knowledge, such as is consistent with Truth and Godliness, not Cherishing a vain conversation or idle mind, but ingenuity mixed with industry is good for the body and mind too. I recommend the useful parts of mathematics, as building houses or shops, measuring, surveying, dialling, navigation; but agriculture is especially in my life; let my children ³¹ be husbandmen and housewives.

The strong anti-intellectual bias in early Quaker education, stemmed partly from the doctrine of the "Inner Light", with its stress on direct illumination and reliance on ones personal resources, rather than on the externally written word, and partly from the antipathy of the early Quakers towards a learned priesthood, or those whom they disparagingly called "*professors*". In Fruits of Solitude, Penn saw the true aim of education as the making of the man rather than the scholar,³² and this idea dominated Quaker education in Ireland down to the end of the nineteenth century.

For eighteenth and nineteenth century Quakers the main aim of an education in the secular subjects was the vocational one of preparing pupils for suitable occupations

³¹S.M. Janney. Life of William Penn. 1876. p.199. Quoted in William C. Braithwaite Second Period of Quakerism (London: Macmillan & Co. 1919), p.529.

³²Braithwaite. p.529.

in society when they should leave school. For the children of those in "*low circumstances*", manual work, coupled with an elementary education in the three - R^s, was designed to fit the recipients to take their allotted stations in the lower ranks of society,³³ while in the schools for the wealthier Quaker pupils, the aim was to prepare the latter for occupations in trade, business or the professions.³⁴ Education was not seen by the early Quakers as an avenue to social mobility, as they deprecated any attempt to raise a son to a higher social position than that which his father held.³⁵ The education provided by the Quaker provincial boarding schools at Lisburn, Mountmellick and Newtown, Waterford, aimed at preparing the girls for the role of useful household servants, and the boys for an apprenticeship to a useful trade when they left the school at fourteen years of age. Indeed, the utilitarian and vocational aspects of such an education can be clearly seen in the fact that the provincial school committees actively discouraged pupils from staying on at school beyond fourteen years.³⁶

Although the secular education offered by the three provincial boarding schools in the late eighteenth and early

³³Reader. Of Schools and Schoolmasters. p.31.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Grubb. Quakers in Ireland. p.95.

³⁶Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School.
Friends Arch. Dub.

nineteenth centuries was extremely narrow, being largely confined to a study of the three - R's³⁷, a much wider curriculum was offered to the children of those in "more easy circumstances" in the few private Quaker schools in Ireland at this period. The most important of the private establishments were Ballitore boys boarding school in Co. Kildare, Sarah Grubb's school for girls at Suir Island, Clonmel, and Ann Shannon's "finishing school" for girls in Mountmellick. These schools, designed for the more affluent pupils, aimed at preparing their scholars for roles in the middle ranks of society. Indeed, Ballitore school, while providing a traditional education in the classics, also managed to incorporate the best elements of vocationalism into its curriculum. Abraham Shackleton Sr., when opening his school in 1726, made the aims of his curriculum very clear when he spoke of "fitting the youth for business".³⁷ The latter point, designed mainly for Quaker pupils destined for careers in business, was instrumental in putting Ballitore school far ahead of its time in Ireland, when most second level schools taught an exclusively classical curriculum. Indeed Ballitore, which also accepted non-Quakers on its rolls, was a remarkable synthesis of two distinct approaches to education. The traditional liberal curriculum of Greek, Latin and mathematics, on the one hand, was balanced by business oriented courses in bookkeeping, stenography and modern languages on the other.

³⁷Michael Quane. "Ballitore School". Journal of Kildare Archaeological Society. Vol XIV: 176.

Sarah Grubbs' school for girls at Suir Island, Clonmel, went beyond an elementary curriculum, but extra subjects were severely curtailed, and were largely confined to what were termed "*useful History and Geography*".³⁸ In fact, the Clonmel establishment was based largely on a similar type school for girls at York, of which Sarah Grubb was a patron. The aims of the curriculum at Suir Island were, to all intents and purposes, identical to those of York, which Sarah Grubb summarized as being the inculcation of "*Simplicity of manners, and a religious improvement of the morals of youth*".³⁹ Ann Shannon's school at Mountmellick was primarily a "*finishing*" school where pupils were taught necessary "*accomplishments*" as a preparation for their entrance into middle class Quaker society.

Although Quaker education in Ireland in the period under study was excessively utilitarian, the Quakers, nevertheless, had tremendous regard for such education, limited though it was. This is borne out by the National Meeting of 1746, which recorded an extraordinary enlightened minute for the time. In it they said:-

The good education of our offspring is a matter of the highest moment, and it's the desire of this Meeting that parents might have it at heart, being of the judgement that what is laid out for that purpose may be of more service to them if so much were reserved to be added 40 to their portions.

The quotation above shows that years before it was a generally

³⁸ Sarah Grubb. Journal. 3rd ed. (Belfast: William Robinson. 1837), p.244.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Minute of Dublin Half-Years Meeting 9th mo. 1746. Friends Arch. Dub.

accepted truth, the Society of Friends accepted that a good education was worth spending money on, and that nothing would compensate a child in after life, if the education he received was below what he should have had. What the early Quakers regarded as a good education, however, was primarily a religious and denominational one, combined with a fairly narrow selection of what was thought most useful in the secular subjects.

Despite the Quaker emphasis on religion and on the basic skills of literacy in their schools, there was another important element never far from the surface of Quaker consciousness, which exerted a considerable influence on the curriculum, and consequently on the Quaker character. This was the Quaker attitude to the natural world. Quaker education, even in its most limited form, always tried to inculcate in its recipients a love and respect for the world of natural science.⁴¹ The world of man, with its ever present threat to morality, was to be shunned, and the Quaker child was to be protected from such potentially evil influences, by being educated in the "guarded" environment of the boarding school. The world of nature, however, with its fauna and flora, was regarded as an important learning environment for the Quaker child and the latter was encouraged to study it. The literature in Irish Quaker schools at this period abounds in carefully selected extracts illustrating this important Quaker value,

⁴¹Stewart. Quakers and Education. p.148.

and articles entitled "*Against cruelty to Insects*" or "*Cruelty to Brutes censured*", speak for themselves.⁴²

Indeed, it is no accident that gardening was one of the main recreations of Quakers at this time, and gardening by pupils was encouraged in all Quaker schools since it was said to promote skill, neatness and order. It was agreed that gardening tended to the formation of industrious habits and taught the value of time.⁴³ Quaker teachers noted a general improvement of their pupils' behaviour "*during the busy months and a relapse during the winter ones*".⁴⁴

Quaker education was religious and vocational in aim. It was not cultural in the sense that interests could be pursued for their private and personal intimations of pleasure or enrichment. Only if those interests had moral and religious ends were they to be followed. Those subjects, therefore in which one had personal pleasure or elation because they were beautiful, or because they deepened human understanding, or because they enriched emotional experience or gave intellectual satisfaction, were not to be taught.⁴⁵ The education provided in Quaker schools was therefore an extremely narrow one, and all areas of the curriculum were subordinated to either religious or vocational principles. It was such principles, indeed,

⁴²"*Against cruelty to Insects*" is a short essay in Lindley Murray's Sequel to the English Reader. (Dublin: William Porter, 1801). Chapt VIII, and "*Cruelty to Brutes Censured*" is a short poem by Cowper in Murrays English Reader (York:1799). Chapt. 6. Sect. IV

⁴³Quane "*Ballitore School*". Jour. Kild. Arch. Soc. p.202

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Stewart. Quakers and Education. p.44.

which were to determine the basic aims of Quaker education
for two hundred years.

CHAPTER III
QUAKER SCHOOLS IN IRELAND
IN THE EIGHTEENTH
AND
EARLY NINETEENTH
CENTURIES.

During the first thirty years of Quaker settlement in Ireland, the Society of Friends was as subject to the vagaries in religious toleration as were the Irish Catholics.¹ Persecution of the sect by the ecclesiastical and civil authorities was particularly severe, especially during the reign of Charles II, and consequently, it is not surprising to find no reference to the establishment of Quaker schools in Ireland during the first twenty-five years of the Society's ministry here. In 1675, however, at the national half-yearly meeting in Dublin for ninth month, a proposal was made to establish a boarding school for Quaker pupils "at Castledermot or near thereabouts".²

¹Grainne O Flynn, "Aspects of Concern in the Religious Society of Friends". Capuchin Annual. (1975), p.322.

²Portfolio 5A - 24. Friends Archives Dublin.

This proposed school did not materialise, and the earliest established Quaker school in Ireland seems to have been a day school, set up by William Edmundson and some local Friends at Mountmellick in 1677,³ followed by one at Cork in 1678. In Dublin a school was started in 1680, with a Scotsman, Alexander Seaton as Master, in the small meeting-house in Bride's Alley (alias Parson's Lane). This meeting-house was the first built by Friends in Ireland, and lay to the rear of the larger one situated in Bride Street, which was first used in 1669 at the time of the visit of William Penn.⁴ The Dublin Quaker school was forced to close temporarily in 1690 as a result of the political unrest in Ireland during the Williamite Wars, and did not reopen until 1693.

As far as the northern part of the country was concerned, the earliest mention of a school in Ulster was when the Friends of Ballinderry "*consented that five pounds be raised and given to Robert Chambers for keeping schools to teach Friends' children, and that those Friends that live most convenient to give said Robert his diatt free so long as he is employed by Friends*".⁵ This minute was passed in 1700, and three years afterwards it was arranged that in addition to keeping school, Robert Chambers should also keep the records of the meeting and that his salary should

³William Edmundson. Journal. (Dublin 1715), pp.227/8.

⁴Olive C. Goodbody. Guide to Irish Quaker Records. (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission 1967) p.19.

⁵Minute of men's Meeting Glenavy. 22/6/1700. Portf.5A-24.

be five pounds per annum.⁶ If this school was the first Quaker school to be started in the north of Ireland, they were thirteen years behind the rest of the country. By the time the Ulster provincial school was being started, in the latter years of the eighteenth century, there were five Quaker day schools in Ulster.⁷ These schools had been for some time under the care of a Committee and were receiving financial assistance from the National Meeting. They only continued for two years after the provincial school was in being, and were then discontinued. Any funds connected with them were then handed over to the provincial school.⁸

The curriculum in the early Quaker day schools in Ireland was extremely limited, although in a few rare instances, the classics seem to have been taught. The hours were extremely long and must have been very wearing on both masters and scholars. School began at seven in the morning and generally continued until five in winter and six in summer. It seems that the girls came an hour later in the morning, probably in order to give them time to help their mothers with the domestic chores.⁹

Because all the Quaker schools in late seventeenth century Ireland were day establishments, the Society of Friends tended to regard such schools as second best. The ultimate aim of the Society was to establish a system of

⁶Portf. 5A-24. Friends Arch. Dublin.

⁷These were at Lurgan, Ballyhagen, Moyallon, Ballinderry and Charlemont.

⁸Portf. 5A - 24.

⁹Ibid.

boarding-schools throughout Ireland, in which the religious principles of the Quakers could be effectively transmitted, and much of the energy of the Society was directed towards this end, especially in the second half of the eighteenth century. The first important Quaker boarding¹⁰ school in Ireland was established at Ballitore, County Kildare, in 1726 by Abraham Shackleton, a Yorkshire schoolmaster, but although the school was extremely successful, it did not meet the needs and wishes of the Irish Quaker authorities, mainly because the school separated itself from the control of the provincial and national meetings. Consequently, the second half of the eighteenth century saw a more vigorous and sustained effort by the Society of Friends to establish a system of provincial boarding schools, firmly under the control of the Society. The result of these efforts was the establishment of Quaker provincial boarding schools in the three provinces of Ulster, Munster and Leinster, in the latter years of the eighteenth century.

Quaker schools in eighteenth century Ireland were exclusive in the sense that they catered only for the needs of Quaker pupils, and indeed went to extreme lengths to protect such pupils from what they considered to be harmful outside influences. Ballitore boarding school, which accepted a considerable number of non-Quakers on its roll, was a notable exception. The Quaker emphasis

¹⁰ Although the great majority of early Quaker schools in Ireland were day schools, some schoolmasters may have supplemented their meagre incomes by keeping a number of boarders. James Gough, for instance, kept a boarding school at Mountmellick in the 1730's.

on exclusiveness in education was a direct result of the rigid, disciplinary code which the Quakers began to adopt in Ireland immediately following the end of the Williamite Wars, a code which emphasized the strict enforcement of minute regulations, especially with regard to "*plainness in speech, behaviour and apparel*".¹¹ It is not difficult, therefore, to accept exclusive schooling as the prerogative of a religion whose members were required to be definably different from those around them.

With the advent of the nineteenth century, however, there were some signs that the Society of Friends, in certain respects, was beginning to venture outside the narrow confines of exclusive education. Although most Quakers still insisted on an exclusively Quaker education for their own children, many were prepared to involve themselves in the education of non-Quakers. Thus, the early decades of the nineteenth century saw Irish Quaker participation in educational philanthropy, mainly in attempts to bring an elementary education to the children of the Catholic poor. Such philanthropy saw the establishment of numerous Quaker-inspired Charity-schools, many of which were known as Lancastrian schools, after the Quaker Joseph Lancaster, and a significant number of which were conducted through the agency of the Kildare Place Society.

¹¹ Isabel Grubb. Quakers in Ireland. 1664-1900. (London: Swarthmore Press Ltd. 1927). p.81.

In contrast to Quaker involvement in Irish Charity Schools, was the growing number of individual Quaker schoolmasters and mistresses, who conducted their own small private schools for all religious denominations in the early decades of the nineteenth century. These private Quaker "pay-schools" were particularly numerous in important centres of urban population such as Dublin and Waterford, and they generally provided a 'superior' education for children of the dissenting sects, members of the established church, and middle-class catholics.

From the above brief summary of the development of Quaker schools in Ireland, it can be clearly seen that by the early years of the nineteenth century, four distinct types of schools associated with the Quakers had emerged. Firstly, there were the Quaker public boarding schools, under the control of the provincial and national meetings, and catering exclusively for Quaker pupils. Secondly, there were the Quaker private boarding schools, like Ballitore or Suir Island, Clonmel, which were independent of provincial control. Thirdly, there were the Quaker charity schools which catered primarily for the educational needs of the Catholic poor, and fourthly, there were the Quaker private "pay-schools" which offered a 'superior' education to anyone who could afford to pay the fees.

We shall now examine the most important characteristics of each type of school.

QUAKER PUBLIC BOARDING SCHOOLS

For the majority of Quakers in England and Ireland in the eighteenth century, the ideal educational environment for their children was considered to be the public boarding

school. Such an institution, it was felt, would transmit a "guarded religious education" to all its inmates, and would protect the latter from harmful outside influences. In the first century of Quaker settlement in Ireland, however, the Society of Friends was not sufficiently organised, or indeed motivated, to establish a national system of boarding schools for the whole Quaker population of the country. Consequently, during the first one hundred years of the Quaker ministry in Ireland, there were several sporadic and uncoordinated attempts to establish schools for Quaker pupils, on a rather ad-hoc and localized basis. It was not until 1764 that the first Quaker national boarding school was established at Edenderry, in County Offaly.

THE QUAKER NATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOL, EDENDERRY. (1764-1773)

The Edenderry boarding school was under the management of Ebenezer and Margaret Mellor, two Quakers from Manchester, and was for girls only. As far as subscriptions for the establishment of the school were concerned, Ulster gave £203, Munster £249 and Leinster £464. A house and ten acres of land near the town of Edenderry were taken, at a rent of thirty-three pounds per annum, and a committee furnished the establishment.¹² No suitable master could be found by the Committee for the boys side of the school, so the opening of the latter was deferred. The fees were thirteen guineas per annum, and there was an entrance fee of one guinea. According to the Prospectus, each scholar was to be

¹²Portf. 5A-24.

... instructed by the Mistress in all things necessary for their accomplishments, and by the Master in reading, writing and arithmetic if they choose it, but no abatement to be made in the price if they dont 13 choose it.

Additional money was to be paid for the provision of optional extras such as tea, and for washing "white gowns, petticoats, and white stockings". In 1765 the school was full and many girls were ready to come, so the Committee decided to build more chambers and to enlarge the schoolroom. They also decided to provide a room with a fireplace for the reception of pupils who were ill. This year also saw the committee inspecting the appearance and conduct of the scholars in dress and address, and they were concerned to observe that the appearance of some of them was inconsistent with Quaker principles. For some reason the school did not continue to do well and in 1768 it was arranged to withdraw all the free scholars who had been part servant, part apprentice, and let the Mellors have the house and furniture rent free, and run the affair as a private concern charging what they liked, the only condition being that they must take only Quaker pupils.¹⁴ The anxiety of the Mellors concerning the ability of the school to attract and retain a viable number of Quaker pupils is reflected in a copy of the Prospectus dated the third of fifth mo. 1769, where they appeal to their fellow co-religionists to "encourage their undertaking by their sending their children thereto". Furthermore, in an

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

obvious attempt to win over the goodwill of parents of potential pupils, the Prospectus stated that:

*... particular attention will be paid to the Direction of the Parents in the Branches they choose to have them, taught by their obliged friends.*¹⁵

The Edenderry boarding school was a fee-paying school for the daughters of affluent Quakers, (at least from 1768 when the free scholars were withdrawn). Nevertheless, despite the claims of many Quakers as to the equality of men and women, education in practice was generally regarded by the Society of Friends as more of a priority for men. Thus the Edenderry school, throughout its short history, found itself constantly urging Quaker parents to send their daughters there, as even affluent Quakers, it seems, were not convinced of the need of a boarding school education for females. Considering the difficulties encountered by the national boarding school, Edenderry, from its initial establishment it is not surprising that this school, the first national Quaker boarding school in Ireland, lasted a mere ten years, and broke up on the death of Mrs. Mellor in 1773. The property was then sold and the proceeds were divided among the provinces in proportion to the sums given by each.¹⁶

QUAKER PROVINCIAL BOARDING SCHOOLS.

By the latter decades of the eighteenth century, Irish Quakers began to establish their schools on a more permanent footing. Their efforts soon bore fruit in the

¹⁵Edenderry. Friends' School Prospectus 1769. P.B.20(67). Friends Arch. Dub.

¹⁶Portf. 5A-24.

foundation of the three provincial boarding schools at Lisburn in Ulster (1794), at Mountmellick in Leinster (1786) and at Newtown in Munster (1798). The provincial boarding schools were co-educational in the sense that they tried to attract boys and girls in equal numbers, although actual class instruction was usually conducted separately. Furthermore, these schools admitted Quaker children only, in contrast to some of the private boarding schools, like Ballitore, which also admitted other denominations. The education provided by the three provincial boarding schools in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was extremely limited, and offered little more than an elementary education, involving the three - R's and Bible study. It was not until well into the nineteenth century that the curriculum of the provincial boarding schools widened to include the classics, modern languages and science.

ULSTER PROVINCIAL BOARDING SCHOOL.

The Ulster provincial boarding school, situated at Lisburn, Co. Antrim, evolved from a Quaker school founded exactly twenty years earlier in 1774. The 'Friends School, Lisburn' was established as a result of a bequest of one thousand pounds from the Quaker philanthropist and linen - merchant John Hancock, in his will of 1764.¹⁷ The first master at the Lisburn school was John Gough, who came to Lisburn from the Dublin Quaker school in 1774,

¹⁷Neville H. Newhouse "The Founding of Friends' School Lisburn". Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries. 1968. Vol. 98.p.49.

and remained there for seventeen years, dying in office in 1791. Under the guidance of Gough, the Friends School, Lisburn, operated independently of the quarterly meetings of the province of Ulster, and it was not until 1794 that the school came under the control of the Ulster provincial meeting. There is considerable ambiguity concerning the status of the Lisburn Quaker school between 1774 and 1794, and it has never been fully resolved whether the school was run privately by trustees, or run by trustees on behalf of the Quakers.¹⁸ What seems fairly certain, however, is that the school was closed for a short period after the death of John Gough, probably as the result of serious differences between the school and the quarterly and national meetings. It seems likely that a number of non-Quaker pupils were admitted to the school, during the mastership of Gough, and such an innovation was severely frowned upon by the Quaker meetings. Thomas Greer, an elder, claimed in 1792 that :

*... it was giving a latitude to others at the beginning that upset the school or was the chief means thereof.*¹⁹

From the report it would seem very likely that the difficulties of the Lisburn school following the death of Gough were the climax of tensions dating back many years. When Richard Shackleton of Ballitore visited the Quaker school at Lisburn in 1779 he wrote to his daughter :-

¹⁸ Idem. A History of Friends School Lisburn. 1974. p.16.

¹⁹ Ibid. p.15.

... it is a very good schoolhouse and the dwellinghouse clever and pleasingly situated ... this house is situated on a hill, about a quarter of a mile from the town of Lisburn, which overlooks the town and commands a fine prospect of it and the country about it. Lisburn is esteemed one of the handsomest²⁰ towns in the kingdom.

Undoubtedly Richard Shackleton would have found the status of the Lisburn school somewhat similar to his own school at Ballitore. Both schools were independent of the provincial meetings, and both accepted a number of non-Quaker scholars. It was precisely because the Quaker elders wanted to avoid a situation occurring at Lisburn similar to Balitore, that John Gough Jr. was prevented from succeeding to his father's job, on the latter's death in 1791. In 1794 the Lisburn Quaker school came under the control of the quarterly meeting of the province of Ulster, and has remained so up to the present day. From 1794 the school became officially known as the Ulster provincial boarding school.

Shortly after the Lisburn school came under the control of the Ulster quarterly meeting, an American Quaker, William Savery visited it. In his diary, dated eleventh mo. 1797, he described his visit as follows:

With the help of lanterns we walked out to the Boarding School for Friends of the Province of Ulster, which consisted of about fifty scholars, boys and girls; their supper was potatoes and milk, they looked healthy and were decently dressed ... The Province of Ulster raises annually about three-hundred pounds for its support, this with some little income besides, enables the institution

²⁰Quoted in "Shackleton Letters, edited by F.M. Young".
Journal. Kildare Archaeological Society Vol. IX. No. 1.
p.152.

to board, educate, and clothe fifty-six children from eight to fifteen years of age at three pounds per annum; they bringing with them one good suit, and also a common one, the whole expense of each scholar is about thirteen pounds per annum Irish, and Irish pound being about eighteen shillings and six pence. 21

The Ulster provincial boarding school, despite being periodically troubled by financial difficulties in the first half of the nineteenth century, proved to be a remarkable success. Indeed, official recognition of its achievements can be seen in the Report of the Commissioners for Endowed Schools 1854 - 8, where it is claimed that the Ulster provincial boarding school, along with its Leinster counterpart were the "only two superior endowed English schools in operation throughout the whole island". 22

LEINSTER PROVINCIAL BOARDING SCHOOL (1786-1921)

The Quaker boarding school for the province of Leinster, situated at Mountmellick, had its origins in educational developments taking place in England in the second half of the eighteenth century. A committee of the London Yearly Meeting of 1758 decided to provide for a sound religious and scriptural education for Quaker children. In 1762 an educational fund for two-thousand pounds was raised, and in 1777 Ackworth School, Yorkshire was founded. 23

²¹William Savery, Journal. (London: Charles Gilpin, 1844), pp. 254-255.

²²James Godkin. Education in Ireland (Dublin: Alex Thom. 1862), p.175.

²³Robert Barclay. The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1876), p.550.

The latter establishment was the first successful boarding school for Quakers "*not in affluence*", and in 1784 New England Quakers set up a similar foundation at Portsmouth Rhode Island. As Quaker activities in Ireland tended to mirror those of the parent body in England, it was perhaps inevitable that the idea of a similar school for Ireland should be considered. This is indeed what happened at the six-weeks meeting of Leinster province, held in Moate, on the fourteenth of eight mo. 1784. The minutes of that important meeting record a discussion on the subject of "*the education of the children of Friends in low circumstances*".²⁴ It was first suggested that where children were suffering from want of proper education, such should be boarded in Friends' families, where they might attend Friends' schools. After several difficulties to such a procedure were considered, however, it was finally decided that attempts should be made to establish a provincial boarding school. Finally, on the 30th of first month 1786, the Leinster provincial boarding school, situated at Mountmellick, was opened, for the "*Children of Friends in low circumstances*". Those other than in low circumstances, were only admitted when "*there did not appear a sufficient number of those whom it was originally designed to fill the house, always giving a preference to those in less affluent circumstances*".²⁵ Children between eight and twelve years old were admitted,

²⁴Michael Quane "*The Friends' Provincial School, Mountmellick*". Jour. R.S.A.I. 1959 p.63.

²⁵Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School. P.B. 20(25). Friends' Arch. Dub.

and they had to leave by fourteen unless special permission was obtained. The school, from the beginning, was under the control of the quarterly meeting of the province of Leinster, and it was visited and inspected on a regular basis by the school-committee on behalf of the quarterly meeting. Because of the difficulty in finding a suitably qualified schoolmaster, the Mountmellick school opened on the 30th of first month 1786 for girls only, under Deborah Butler as teaching mistress. By seventh - month 1786, however, John Taylor "offered" as schoolmaster, and the institution became co-educational as officially intended.²⁶ The Friends provincial boarding school, Mountmellick, was to remain co-educational until 1855, when for administrative purposes the educational activities of the Munster and Leinster provincial meetings were combined. From that time, until the closure of the school in 1921, the Leinster provincial boarding school, Mountmellick, became exclusively a girls school, the boys of the two provinces being sent to Newtown, Waterford.

MUNSTER PROVINCIAL BOARDING SCHOOL (1798 -)

The Friends provincial boarding school for the province of Munster was founded at Newtown, Co. Waterford, at the former home and estate of the Wyse family in 1798. It appears, however, that a decision to open a boarding

²⁶One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School.
(Dublin: Richard D. Webb & Son, 1886), p.16.

school for the Quakers of Munster had been taken as far back as 1790. At first Clonmel was considered as an "eligible situation", but then serious consideration was given to a house with forty acres of land between Carrick and Waterford.²⁷ Meanwhile, the following advertisement had appeared in Ramsey's Waterford Chronicle of May 10th 1791:-

To be sold or let, Newtown House and Domain, containing thirteen acres walled in with a ten feet wall with garden in full bearing with the best of features included... commanding a most extensive view of the River Suir. Either six thousand pounds purchase or 28 three hundred pounds per annum.

The property was not purchased by the Quakers on this occasion, but when it appeared for auction again in 1798, two Friends were sent directly from a meeting to bid for it. They were successful, and on the first of eight month 1798, thirty one boys and seven girls entered the Munster provincial school, at Newtown, Waterford. Unlike the Ulster and Leinster provincial boarding schools, which were intended primarily for the less affluent of Quaker pupils, Newtown was founded so that:-

... the children of Friends (not only those in indigent, but those of more easy circumstances) may have the advantage of a religious education, and be in some degree preserved from the dangerous consequences 29 of being brought up in a less guarded manner.

Newtown House was an impressive Georgian mansion, but unfortunately such architectural and decorative splendour was alien to the puritanical Quaker elders, who, in an act

²⁷ Emilie Bernis "Waterford's Quaker Community. 1650-1800". Old Waterford Society. Decies. No. 4. Feb. 1977. p.20.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Minutes for Quarterly Meeting for Munster Province. 18-19/4/1796. Friends. Arch. Dub.

of misguided vandalism stripped the home and its surroundings of some of its most decorative features. William Savery, writing in his diary from Newtown on the first of eight month, 1798, records

... having a great deal of ornamental work about, Friends have ordered much of it removed and workmen are now taking down the Stucco work on the ceilings³⁰ and walls and plastering it plain.

The Quaker school Commiteee also ordered the workmen to dispose of the ornamental iron gates at the entrance to Newtown and to cover over the gilding on the staircase banisters with paint of a "more sober hue".³¹ Clearly a sect which emphasised "plainness of speech, attire and behaviour" was not going to allow its' children be corrupted by what was considered the ostentatious ornamentation of the Wyse mansion.

The Munster provincial boarding school catered for approximately sixty pupils, forty boys and twenty girls. Like Leinster provincial school, Newtown remained co-educational until 1855, when it became a boys school. Girls, however, were readmitted in the early twentieth century, Margaret Stokes being the first in 1906. Newtown Quaker school was extremely successful throughout the nineteenth century, and, indeed may have helped to contribute to the decline of the illustrious Ballitore

³⁰William Savery. Extracts from his Journal relating to Clonmel and Waterford. 1798. Portfolio 19-112. Friends Arch. Dublin.

³¹Newtown School Centenary. (Waterford: Newenham and Harvey, 1898), p.72.

school in the 1820^s and 30^s, when the latter establishment lost many pupils to Newtown.³²

SUPERIOR QUAKER PUBLIC BOARDING SCHOOLS

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, many Irish and English Quakers began to attribute the sharp decline in their numbers during the previous century, to the failure of the Society to provide a higher or superior type of education for their children. Consequently, as the three provincial boarding schools taught a very limited curriculum in the early nineteenth century, the Society of Friends in Ireland was "determined to create a type of education which would give Quaker boys as fair an opportunity to prepare for life as other English boys had in the great Public schools".³³ English Quakers gave the lead with the establishment in 1829 of Bootham School for boys, and in 1831 of Mount Sion school for girls, both in the city of York. Both schools were described as "modern" and the curriculum at Bootham included the Latin, Greek, French, German and Italian languages. Drawing was taught at an extra charge of three pounds per annum. The number of pupils was limited to forty at these exclusive schools, and the fees in 1842 were thirty guineas per annum.³⁴ Subsequently, in 1839, the Quaker provincial Committee in Dublin decided to establish an Irish Quaker institution on similar lines as the English

³²Michael Quane "Ballitore School". Journal of Kildare Archaeological Society. Vol. XIV. No. 2. p.209.

³³Idem. "Quaker Schools in Dublin" Journal R.S.A.I. 1964. p.59.

³⁴Ibid.

models. The result of the Committees' deliberations was the founding of the '*Friends Boarding School Dublin*', more popularly known as the Camden Street school, which opened on the seventeenth of second month 1840.

The Camden Street school was for boys only, and its curriculum was very impressive in its surprising comprehensiveness. The school proposed to provide a course of instruction "*more extended*" than that provided by the three provincial schools,³⁵ and even included Irish as an option among the vast array of languages on offer. As the Quakers were not proselytizers it would seem that Irish was included on the curriculum for mercantile purposes only. It is not known, however, whether or not the option was actually taken up by any of the scholars.

The Camden Street school was started with a sum of £2,350, subscribed by twenty-five Friends throughout Ireland.³⁶ It was managed by a Committee of Dublin Friends. The head-master was Bedford Gilks, and the Assistant Master was Thompson Sharp. Bedford Gilks had resigned the mastership of the Ulster provincial school, at Lisburn, in order to accept the Camden Street post.³⁷ The subscribers and the Committee were well-known and influential Friends, and a good deal of time and care was given to the management of the school. Nevertheless, despite

³⁵Proposal for Establishment of Quaker Boys boarding school. Dublin. P.B. 20(73). Friends Arch. Dub.

³⁶Portf. 5A - 24. Friends Arch. Dub.

³⁷Newhouse. History of Friends' School. Lisburn. p.39.

the high hopes held out for the school on its establishment in 1840, it did not prove a success. This may have been due to the choice of headmaster who does not seem to have been either a good disciplinarian or an organiser. Four years after the school was started, it was handed over to Bedford Gilks³⁸ to continue as a private venture, and three years after that it came to an end. The only real alternative left to the children of wealthy Quakers was to seek a 'superior' education in one of the many reputable Quaker boarding schools in England.

QUAKER PRIVATE BOARDING SCHOOLS:

Quaker private boarding schools were those which operated independently of the quarterly or yearly Quaker meetings. Unlike the three provincial boarding schools at Lisburn, Moutnmellick and Newtown, the private schools catered exclusively for the children of wealthy Quaker parents and others. They were managed by private individuals and families, rather than by official Quaker committees, and they tended to include other denominations among their pupils.

QUAKER BOY'S BOARDING SCHOOL, BALLITORE. (1726-1836).

Undoubtedly the most successful of the Quaker private boarding schools was that run by three generations of the Shackleton family at Ballitore, Co. Kildare. Ballitore is a small village in south-Kildare, on the borders of

³⁸ Bedford Gilks was a native of Gloucester and a fine classicist. He came to Lisburn in 1838 where he married the mistress in charge of the girls at the Provincial School. But he was a scholar rather than a disciplinarian. (Newhouse. Ibid., p.39.)

Co. Wicklow and is about twenty-eight miles from Dublin. During the latter years of the seventeenth century, two Quakers Barcroft and Strettel³⁹ purchased the land and transformed its appearance, so that by the middle of the eighteenth century Ballitore was a thriving Quaker colony. The famous boys' boarding school had been founded in 1726 by Abraham Shackleton, a Yorkshire schoolmaster. It was the only Quaker boarding school in Ireland in the eighteenth century which provided more than an elementary education for its pupils, and it gained a considerable reputation for the teaching of the classics and mathematics. Furthermore, while embodying the traditional classics at the core of its curriculum, Ballitore boarding school was nearly half a century ahead of its time, when in the 1780^s it offered modern languages and shorthand as a conscious preparation for a commercial career.⁴⁰

Ballitore boarding school catered for the educational needs of between fifty and sixty pupils, ranging in age from the extremely young to the fully mature. Among the former were Tom and Sam Eyre, illegitimate sons of Stratford Eyre, the warden of Galway, both of whom entered Ballitore school in 1766. According to Mary Leadbeater, "*Tom Eyre was not long out of petticoats, and Sam still wore them*".⁴¹ Another very young pupil was Aldworth

³⁹Mary Leadbeater. Leadbeater Papers. Vol. 1. (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862), p.15.

⁴⁰John F. Pettit. "*A Study of Aspects of Protestant Schooling in Ireland*". (M.A. Thesis. U.C.C., Ed. Dept. 1971) p.191.

⁴¹Leadbeater Papers. Vol. 1. p.63.

Phaire, the son of a Colonel, who entered the school at five years of age in 1777, joined the army in adult life, and died in the West Indies.⁴² While the majority of pupils at Ballitore were between eight and fourteen years of age, there were a number of older students, who were generally classified as "Parlour-boarders".⁴³ The latter, for the most part, lived in the same house as the master and family, and attended school with the regular boarders. Typical of the parlour-boarders was Robert Baxter from Monaghan who attended Richard Shackleton's school in 1775, when he was sixteen years old,⁴⁴ and Bob Bayley, son of the Shackleton's landlord, who attended the school at seventeen years of age.⁴⁵ The parlour-boarders had a considerably more informal relationship with the master than the regular boarders had, and to a certain extent they were considered as part of the family. Among the oldest scholars to attend Ballitore school was Thomas Wray, who was about twenty-seven years old, and who came "*to study such branches of mathematics as would qualify him for the army*".⁴⁶

While Ballitore boarding school was mainly a school for Quakers, it included many non-Quakers on its roll. The most illustrious of the latter were, undoubtedly,

⁴²Ibid., pp. 103-4.

⁴³Ibid., p.42.

⁴⁴Ibid., p.98.

⁴⁵Ibid., p.107.

⁴⁶Ibid., p.314.

Edmund Burke, who came to Ballitore with his elder brother Garrett, and his younger brother Richard in 1741,⁴⁷ and the famous United Irishman James Napper Tandy, who attended the school in 1749. Other famous past pupils of the school were Richard Brocklesby, later to become physician to Dr. Johnson, and Paul Cardinal Cullen who entered the new day-school under James White on the tenth of fifth month 1812. Ballitore boarding school catered mainly for the educational needs of affluent Quakers whose only other alternative was to attend Quaker boarding schools in England. Although there were twenty-one boarding schools, inclusive of the workhouse at Clerkenwell, in existence for Quakers in England by 1760,⁴⁸ Irish Quakers had failed to establish a single boarding school, with the exception of the privately run Ballitore school, up to 1764.

Despite being a highly respected Quaker boarding school, often visited by Friends, Ballitore was, nevertheless, untypical of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Irish Quaker schools. It was not under the control of the Leinster provincial meeting, and its acceptance of non-Quakers on its roll was an innovation frowned upon by many traditional Quakers. With its emphasis on modern languages, especially French, Ballitore boarding school, in the late eighteenth century, was clearly ahead of other Irish Quaker

⁴⁷ Ibid., p.46.

⁴⁸ W.A.C. Stewart. Quakers and Education. (London: Epworth Press, 1953), p.47.

schools, which provided little more than an elementary education. Indeed, it can be justly claimed that Ballitore was the first Quaker 'secondary' school in Ireland. While the provincial boarding schools taught an extremely limited curriculum, and dispensed with their pupils at fourteen years of age, Ballitore boarding school prepared its Quaker pupils for a career in business, and prepared many non-Quakers for entrance to the University. Edmund Burke, for instance, entered Trinity College Dublin from Ballitore in 1744,⁴⁹ and maintained a life long friendship with Richard Shackleton, son of the founder of the school. Ballitore school was also untypical of other contemporary Quaker schools in the sense that there was a considerable cosmopolitan element in residence there. Pupils came to the school from places as far afield as Jamaica, Norway and France. Mary Leadbeater records that "many West Indians were sent to the school",⁵⁰ and in reference to the French influence there, she relates:-

Several French men and boys came here in the time of my grandfather, to learn English, and they left the name of the "French Room" to a large apartment in which they slept. 51

The influence of different cultures at Ballitore must have contributed significantly to the much broader educational milieu in evidence at the school, a milieu which contrasted sharply with the rather narrow learning environment provided by the provincial boarding schools.

⁴⁹ Leadbeater, Papers. Vol. 1. p.46.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p.87.

⁵¹ Ibid., p.43.

On Abraham Shackleton's retirement in 1756, the mastership of Ballitore school passed to his son Richard. In 1765 the latter was approached with the offer of becoming headmaster of a projected new provincial school, exclusively for Quaker boys. Richard turned down the offer by stating that:-

I think it is of some advantage to us to have the children of others educated by persons of our persuasion, who have the welfare of our Society at heart. 52

While approving of a "select Boarding school for Friends", he felt that his own metier lay in giving a virtuous education, and conscientious care to others, who then became dispersed among those not acquainted with the principles of the Society of Friends.⁵³

Although Ballitore Quaker school accepted non-Quakers as pupils, it is extremely unlikely that Catholic children did attend when it was exclusively a boarding school. The vast majority of names on the Ballitore school list would suggest that few, if any, were Irish Catholics. If some Catholics did attend, they were in all probability, children of middle and upper class parents, who could afford to pay the substantial fees, and whose entry would have been much conditioned by lack of alternatives.⁵⁴ From 1806, however, Ballitore school also accepted day pupils and Catholics began to attend. Eight members of the family of Paul Cardinal Cullen attended the day school between 1806 and

⁵²Letter of Richard Shackleton to his cousin John Christy. Fennell Collection. Friends Arch. Dub.

⁵³Goodbody. Guide to Quaker Records. p.72.

⁵⁴O'Flynn. "Aspects of Concern". Capuchin Annual. 1975. p.327.

1826, when the school was under the mastership of James White, but by this time the day school was known as the Lancastrian Village School, and was under the auspices of the Kildare Place Society.

Largely because of the influence of the famous boys boarding school, Ballitore became known, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as the "Athens of Ireland".⁵⁵ The school was the most important, and by far the most successful of all eighteenth century Irish Quaker boarding schools, and was only temporarily closed in 1803, because of scruples felt by the grandson, Abraham Shackleton Jr. about reading and teaching classical authors.⁵⁶ The school was reopened in 1806 under James White, a son in law of Abraham Jr. In the 1830^s, however, the number of pupils declined at Ballitore, possibly due to the advancing years of James White, but more probably due to the more popular attraction for Quaker pupils of the Munster provincial school at Newtown, Waterford, which had opened its doors in 1798, and which was rapidly achieving considerable prestige in Quaker circles in the early nineteenth century.⁵⁷ The Quaker boys' boarding school at Ballitore, Co. Kildare, finally closed its doors in 1836, after more than a century in operation.

⁵⁵Margaret F. Young. "Ballitore and its Institutions". Jour. Kild. Arch. Soc. Vol 8. p.167.

⁵⁶Canon Sherlock. "Ballitore and its Associations". Jour. Kild. Arch. Soc. Vol. 5. p.415.

⁵⁷Quane "Ballitore School". Jour. Kild. Arch. Soc. p. 209.

SUIR ISLAND SCHOOL. CLONMEL.

Another school of a private kind was Suir Island, started in 1787 by the itinerant English Quaker missionary Sarah Grubb on an island in the river Suir. She wished to promote a "guarded and religious education" for the children attending her school.⁵⁸ In her Journal she claimed that "she was in easy circumstances and under no necessity to pursue this employment for family support", and denied any "intention of getting or saving money by it ourselves".⁵⁹ Her husband, Robert Grubb had made "ample preparations for a boarding school for girls, and has built a considerable addition to our present dwelling; which stands upon an island, in a navigable river called the Suir. It is a hundred yards across, and near a quarter of a mile long".⁶⁰ Sarah Grubb was concerned with the "state of true religion (Quakerism) in Ireland", and hoped to "cultivate the one ground of general reformation through education". She had been opposed to the recent tendencies of Irish Quakers to become involved in philanthropic concerns, and had hoped to combat this trend by the guarded nature of the education being provided in her school. This position was clearly at odds with Quakers, like those on the School Street committee, in the previous year, who felt that the Society

⁵⁸Sarah Grubb. Journal. (Belfast: William Robinson, 1837), p.164.

⁵⁹Ibid., p.166.

⁶⁰Ibid., p.167

of Friends had a duty to venture outside the narrow confines of the Society, and to offer their assistance to those in need in the outside world.⁶¹ Suir Island school was exclusively a female boarding school, and it was mainly intended for children aged eight to eleven years.⁶² Sarah Grubb, herself, lived for only three years after the commencement of the school, but the school did good work, and the money left by Robert Grubb for its continuation became part of the endowment of the provincial school at Mountmellick.⁶³ There is very little information available concerning the school, as the minute books and school papers were unfortunately destroyed by fire. After the death of its founder, the school was carried on by members of the Jacob-Taylor family, and later became Prior Park School.

ANNE SHANNON'S SCHOOL MOUNTMELICK. (1787-1826)

Anne Shannon's school was a boardingschool for girls, established at Mountmellick in 1787, a year after the establishment of the Leinster provincial school. This school was highly regarded by Quakers, and many girls left the Leinster provincial boarding school at fourteen years, and were sent to Anne Shannon's school to "finish", often staying until seventeen or eighteen years of age.⁶⁴

QUAKER CHARITY SCHOOLS

The establishment of Quaker charity schools in Ireland in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, was

⁶¹O'Flynn "Aspects of Concern". Capuchin Annual. 1975. p.331.

⁶²Grubb Collection. S.126: Friends Arch. Dub.

⁶³Portf. 5A - 24. Friends Arch. Dub.

⁶⁴One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. (1886).p.26

the result of a new direction in Quaker thinking, which brought the Society of Friends into the arena of educational philanthropy. The Quaker charity schools catered mainly for the educational needs of the Catholic poor, and such schools made considerable progress throughout Ireland in the early years of the nineteenth century. The curriculum of the charity schools associated with the Quakers, provided an undenominational education, consisting in the teaching of the three - R^S and the reading of the Bible, "without note or comment". The first major charity school established by the Quakers in Ireland was the Dublin Free School in 1798, which was open to all denominations, and which catered for very large numbers. This school had its origins in an earlier weekly-school, run by the Sunday - school Society from 1786, and which moved to the School- Street premises in 1798⁶⁵. William Savery gives an account of a typical Quaker charity school at Clonmel, when he visited that town in 1798. In his journal he writes:-

Visited a public charity school, primarily attended to by Ann Grubb ... held in Friends Old Meeting House ... One Hundred and fifty poor ragged children, boys and girls, apart are taught reading, writing, knitting and sewing ... the boys nearly all without shoe or stocking and greater part of the girls. Common schooling here about three shillings and sixpence per Quarter. 66

⁶⁵Helen Clayton. To School without Shoes. (Sunday School Society: undated), p.9.

⁶⁶William Savery. Extracts from his diary relating to Clonmel and Waterford, 1798. Portf. 19(112). Friends Arch. Dub.

The Quakers also played a significant role in the introduction of Lancastrian schools into Ireland, and the Kildare Place Society, on whose committee the Society of Friends exerted considerable influence, adapted the books and methods of the English Quaker Joseph Lancaster for use in their schools. Quaker charity schools in Ireland, mainly connected with the Kildare Place Society gained some ground in the early years of the nineteenth century, but due to increasing opposition from the Catholic hierarchy, amidst accusations of prosllytism, the Lancastrian schools gradually lost the support of the majority population. Even at the height of their popularity, however, in the 1820^s, less than twelve percent of the Catholic children receiving instruction attended the schools of the Kildare Place Society.⁶⁷ The vast majority of Irish Catholic children continued to get their education in the illegal "hedge-schools". The ambitious plans of the Kildare Place Society for the provision of a national system of elementary education for the poor of Ireland, were finally destroyed by the withdrawal of the government grants in 1831.

QUAKER PRIVATE PAY SCHOOLS

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, before the passing of Stanleys' Education Act in 1831, there existed in some urban centres of population Quaker

⁶⁷Dowling. The Hedge Schools of Ireland. (Dublin: Talbot Press.), p.42.

"pay-schools", which accepted all religious denominations on their rolls for a stipulated fee. These schools, the majority of which were day institutions, tended to be small and were mainly intended for the children of middle-class parents. Because of the small numbers for which they catered, and because of the substantial fees involved, the Quaker private pay-schools of the early nineteenth century exerted little impact on Irish education at a time when the majority of Irish schoolchildren were either attending the illegal, though extremely popular, hedge-schools, or the legal and considerably less popular, Lancastrian schools associated with the Kildare Place Society.

The Quaker private pay-schools were situated in urban rather than rural areas, as Quaker communities tended to settle mainly in commercial centres. In Dublin, for instance, it is recorded that in 1824 there was a school established in Eustace Street in a room belonging to the Quaker Meeting House, under the management of Mary Gough. She had twenty pupils in all, composed of eight boys and twelve girls. In religious terms her pupils included nine Protestant episcopalians, three Presbyterians, four Quakers and four Roman Catholics. This number of pupils produced for Mary Gough an income of about sixty pounds per annum.⁶⁸ In the same year there is

⁶⁸Quane. "Quaker Schools in Dublin". Jour. R.S.A.I. 1964. p.58.

evidence of a school in Trinity Place, taught by Joshua Abell, a past pupil of Ballitore boarding school. Abell was a Quaker and ran his school in a private house rented by him at twenty pounds a year. Abell's school was comparatively large for schools of this type, as he had forty-five pupils. The latter included twenty one Protestant episcopalian, twenty Dissenters and four Roman Catholics. These numbers produced a total yearly income for Abell of one hundred and seventy pounds.⁶⁹

At 38 Upper Dominick Street there existed, in the early years of the nineteenth century, a small exclusive day school conducted by two Quaker brothers by the name of Michael and Stephen Clarke. This was an expensive school, with fees at between six and eight guineas per annum. The school catered for a mere ten pupils, three Protestant episcopalian, three Dissenters and four Roman Catholics.⁷⁰

The vast majority of small Quaker pay-schools were day establishments. At Rumley Avenue, Monkstown, however, two Quaker sisters called Stephens converted their cottage dwellinghouse into a boarding school. The Stephens' had nine boarders in all, comprising six Protestant episcopalian and three Roman Catholics, each boarder paying twenty pounds a year for his keep and education.⁷¹

Outside Dublin, the next most popular area in Ireland for the smaller type private Quaker school was Waterford. The latter city was a thriving commercial centre in the early nineteenth century and had a reasonably large Quaker

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid., pp.58-59.

⁷¹ Ibid.

population. In Queen Street there was a co-educational school kept by Mary Sykes, a Quaker. The latter had twenty-five pupils, fifteen of whom were Quakers and ten Protestant episcopalian^s.⁷² Another co-educational school in Waterford was run by two Quaker ladies, Elizabeth Hanna and Margaret Davis in Rose Lane. This school catered for thirty pupils in all, fifteen Quakers, eleven Protestants and four Roman Catholics.⁷³

This chapter on Quaker schools in Ireland has been mainly concerned with the most notable characteristics of four major types of school associated with the Quakers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The public and private boarding schools, the charity schools and the private pay-schools, all had important roles to play in providing for the varied educational needs of Quakers and others in Ireland in the years preceding and following the Act of Union. By the mid. nineteenth century, however, the pattern of Quaker education in Ireland had radically changed. The 1830^s were a turning point in the development of Quaker schools, for these years saw the rapid decline of the Lancastrian schools and the private pay schools, mainly as a result of the setting up of the National Board of Education in 1831. Furthermore, Ballitore boys' boarding school, which, for over a century, had been the

⁷²Idem., "Waterford Schools in the opening decades of the nineteenth century". Jour. R.S.A.I. 1971. Vol.101. p.142.

⁷³Ibid.

most successful Quaker school in Ireland, closed its doors in 1836, after a number of years in decline. These rather dramatic changes in the fortunes of Quaker schools in Ireland, were, undoubtedly, a severe blow to the Society of Friends which found its influence in educational affairs waning, at a time when the Society was particularly interested in educational philanthropy. In one important area, that of the public boarding schools, however, Quaker education went from strength to strength. The provincial boarding schools at Lisburn, Mountmellick and Newtown, Waterford were now the most important Quaker schools in Ireland. Their new found status, as the lynchpin of the Quaker system of education in Ireland, was reflected in their ever widening curricula. No longer were these schools confined to providing an elementary education for the "*Children of Friends in low circumstances*". By the 1830^s they began to accept Quakers from all classes of society, and the Leinster provincial school, Mountmellick, which was typical of the others, introduced French and Latin into its curriculum in 1833.⁷⁴ Furthermore, by 1851 the mode of examining by written papers was introduced, and the age of leaving was extended to fifteen years.⁷⁵ The development of the Lisburn and Newtown schools broadly followed the pattern set by Mountmellick. The success of the Quaker provincial boarding schools was officially

⁷⁴One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. (Dublin: 1886), p.38.

⁷⁵Ibid.

recognised in the Report of the Commissioners for
Endowed Schools 1854 - 8, when it claimed that Mountmellick
and Lisburn were the "*only two superior endowed English
schools in operation throughout the whole island*".⁷⁶

⁷⁶James Godkin. Education in Ireland. (Dublin:
Alex Thom. 1862), p.175.

C H A P T E R I V
THE ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION
OF
IRISH QUAKER SCHOOLS

The rapid spread of Quakerism throughout Britain and Ireland in the second half of the seventeenth century soon impressed upon the founders of the movement the importance, and even necessity of establishing a formal organisation to coordinate the activities of its members. Although the essence of Quakerism, as manifested in the doctrine of the "*Inner Light*", with its emphasis on the personal nature of the relationship between God and man, seemed to be the very antithesis of order and organisation, it nevertheless became increasingly clear to many Quakers that a more systematic approach to the affairs of the movement was essential to ensure its stability and survival. Indeed, George Fox, who was to display a remarkable genius for church government, firmly believed that a formal system of organisation, coupled with the keeping of written records, was especially important in a church which had no paid ministry.¹ Furthermore, at a

¹Olive C. Goodbody, Guide to Irish Quaker Records, (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1967), p.1.

time when Quakerism was regarded with suspicion and even open hostility by the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in England and Ireland, it was particularly important for the safety of the movement that all of its activities be formally recorded and available for inspection if required. In addition to these undoubtedly persuasive arguments there was the very practical matter of bringing some consistency and coordination into the activities of the many isolated Quaker communities which were scattered throughout Britain and most² of Ireland. It was these considerations which were largely responsible for Quakerism developing into the more formally constituted Society of Friends, and the three-tier structure of the Society's organisation, which subsequently emerged in the second half of the seventeenth century, namely the monthly quarterly and yearly meetings, has remained essentially unchanged up to the present day.

Although the Quakers established their organisational structure primarily in order to facilitate the development of their church, it became very apparent to some early Quakers that education was too important a subject to be allowed to develop haphazardly, and must be somehow fitted into the organisational structure of the Society. Since Quakers regarded the transmission of the religious principles of the Society as the foremost aim of education, the

²The Society of Friends did not settle to any significant extent in the West of Ireland. In 1798 William Savery wrote in his Journal that "*there is only one small meeting in Connaught*". Journal of William Savery, (London: Charles Gilpin, 1844.), p.292.

importance of providing denominational education for Quaker children became a major priority of the Society of Friends from very early on in the development of the movement. George Fox gave the lead in this direction with the establishment of the first Quaker schools in England in 1668, one at Waltham Abbey for boys and girls, and a school for girls only at Shacklewell. As these institutions were boarding-schools, and since the trend of Quaker education in Ireland followed the pattern of that in England, at the national half-yearly meeting in Dublin held in ninth month 1675 a proposal to establish a boarding school for Quaker pupils was put forward in the following words.

It being proposed the necessity of endeavouring to get an able Friend to teach youth and keep a school in this nation for the better educating children, it was thought meet that every Province General Meeting do make enquiry how many Friends' children may be had to put forth to such a school and bring an account to the next Half-Years' Meeting, and in the interim Francis Rogers and Thomas Holme are desired to write into England to make enquiry for such a Friend for keeping a school at ³ Castledermot or near thereabouts.

This early minute on Quaker educational affairs in Ireland gives us a valuable insight into the Society's attitude to the organisation and administration of its schools. It would seem likely from the central situation of Castledermot, and its circumstances as a small village, that it was a boarding school which was contemplated.⁴ There is an obvious concern for centralized control of any proposed schools, as

³Portfolio 5A-24. Friends Archives Dublin.

⁴"Report Concerning Friends' Schools in Ireland", p.6. published in Education in the Society of Friends. (York: William Simpson. 1855).

it is abundantly clear that the school proposed for Castledermot would be under the control of the National Half-Yearly Meeting. It is the duty of the subordinate provincial meetings to furnish the higher body with a list of potential pupils, and two Friends are required to seek for a suitable teacher from England on behalf of the Half-Yearly Meeting. What the latter wanted to establish was obviously a national boarding school for all the children of Quakers willing to attend. What is particularly interesting about this minute is that it shows that as far back as 1675 the Society of Friends had articulated a well thought out policy on what it considered the best organisational procedure for the establishment of Irish Quaker schools, a procedure which the Society was to employ with varying success during the next two centuries.

Despite the best intentions of the Society of Friends, however, the establishment of Quaker schools in Ireland, particularly in the first hundred years of Quaker settlement here, did not generally work out in practice in accordance with the wishes of the Quaker authorities. In fact, there was often very little effectual coordination between the three levels of Quaker organisation in the case of educational affairs, and Quaker schools tended to be established on an ad-hoc and rather haphazard basis. The national boarding school proposed for Castledermot in 1675 did not materialize, and the first actual Quaker school in Ireland was a small day school set up in Mountmellick in 1677 by William Edmundson, in cooperation with some local Friends⁵. The records of the Society from 1678 onwards

⁵William Edmundson, Journal, (Dublin.1715), pp.227-8

indicate that a compromise was made and that several day schools were set up in parts of the country where a population concentration would guarantee support. Indeed, the monthly, quarterly and yearly meetings seemed in practice to have little control over the viability of Quaker schools, and there are constant references in the minutes of Quaker meetings, at all levels, to the helplessness of those bodies when faced with the prospect of a Quaker school breaking up. A minute of the National Meeting in 1687 expressed concern at this unfortunate state of affairs, and it made the request that:-

Friends do encourage such school masters as are Friends to continue their schools, and not to put their children from them to other schools without the consent of ye Men's (Monthly) Meeting, and the school Masters not to lay down their schools without ye consent of ye Men's Meeting to which they belong, and if they agree not to be referred to ye Province Meeting. 6

This advice was largely ignored, but in process of time these early day schools which were mainly established by individuals, became more completely the charge of the meetings where they were situated: teachers were appointed when vacancies occurred, and standing committees were formed to exercise a degree of control over them⁷. We do not find, however, that any public funds were yet appropriated to the encouragement of select schools for Quaker pupils.

It is therefore very evident that throughout the late seventeenth and the greater part of the eighteenth

⁶"Report concerning Friends' Schools in Ireland". (York: 1855), p.6.

⁷Ibid. p.10.

centuries, the Quaker hierarchial structure of organisation in Ireland could generally do no more in educational matters than advise and facilitate, as its directions and suggestions were, not infrequently, bypassed or ignored. The Yearly Meeting could give valuable advice on the selection of teachers and on the best teaching methods. It could also act as a screening body in the selection of suitable textbooks for Quaker schools. The provincial and monthly meetings could stimulate interest in new educational ventures, but the ultimate survival and prosperity of a particular Quaker school depended largely on the commitment of Quakers at the local level. One suggested reason for the Quakers' conspicuous lack of success in trying to graft educational affairs firmly onto the organisational structure of the Society in the early days, was lack of finance. Admittedly, financial difficulties were, to a considerable extent, responsible for the failure of the Quakers to establish a national boarding school in Ireland during the first century of settlement here, and this was the reason given by the National Meeting in 1763.⁸ But financial difficulties were only part of the explanation. Lack of will to follow through with several educational projects was another important contributory factor. Indeed, it is a well established fact that many Quakers, after initial enthusiasm and support for educational projects, tended to

⁸ Neville H. Newhouse. "The Founding of Friends' School Lisburn", Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland. 1968. Vol. 98, p.48

show a distinct lack of sustained interest, after the first flurry of excitement was over.⁹ A classic example of this attitude can be seen in the events surrounding the establishment of the famous Quaker boys boarding school at Ballitore, in Co. Kildare in 1726. A Quarterly meeting held at Carlow asked three Friends, on behalf of the subscribers, to sign a document assuring the Master, Abraham Shackleton, of forty pounds a year for three years. John Duckett, a prominent, wealthy Quaker, played an important role in this affair. In a letter to Abraham Shackleton, Duckett claimed that a large number of Friends were talking of sending their children, "but", he went on, *"we are concerned to have none but orderly Friends to subscribe, who we are sensible will commit the whole care and management of their children to thee"*.¹⁰ Things did not work out as planned, however, and Duckett's optimism does not seem to have been well founded. The large number of Quaker pupils did not materialize and Shackleton could not afford to pick and choose his pupils. In fact, the shortage of Quakers compelled Abraham Shackleton to also admit non-Quakers into his school. Although Ballitore remained a centre often visited by Friends, it was never a Quaker school in the sense that it was under the direct control of the quarterly or yearly meetings. It thus was able to maintain its existence even after Abraham

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Copy of letter to Abraham Shackleton, dated 20/6/1725, Friends Archives Dublin.

Shackleton Jr's quarrel with the Society in 1801, when he was "*disowned*".

According to W.A.C. Stewart in his book Quakers and Education, the middle two quarters of the eighteenth century were the worst in the educational fortunes of the Society of Friends.¹¹ During the last quarter of the eighteenth century, however, there was a growing unanimity among Irish Quakers that a boarding school education was the best possible means of ensuring the inculcation of the Society's principles, and it was generally agreed that the Society should provide for the education of all its members and especially for those in "*low-circumstances*". Consequently, the latter decades of the eighteenth century witnessed a more vigorous attempt by the Society of Friends to establish its schools on a more secure footing. To ensure stability of existence and consistency of standards it was recognised by a growing body of Friends that a much closer monitoring of Quaker schools by the Society would be required than had previously been the case, and that control of the schools would have to be more firmly vested in the monthly, quarterly and yearly meetings. It was in fact time, many concerned Quakers believed, that the important procedures outlined a century earlier, *vis a vis* the proposed National boarding school at Castledermot in 1675, should be put into effect with regard to the establishment of New Quaker schools.

¹¹W.A.C. Stewart, Quakers and Education, (London: 1953), p.49.

The first evidence of this new, more vigorous approach to the organisation of Quaker schools in Ireland was the declaration by the National Half-Yearly Meeting in Dublin in 1763 that a standing committee on education was being established and that it should report regularly on educational affairs. The immediate object of the Committee, however, was to attempt to establish the first Quaker National boarding school in Ireland. The standing committee was composed of Friends of the Ulster, Munster and Leinster provincial meetings. It was the function of the Committee to choose a suitable site for the school *"in a healthy situation, near a Meeting of Friends, where the discipline of the Society is well kept up, and Friends children kept well within the bounds of Truth"*.¹² The committee was also to consult with local Friends when a suitable site had been chosen and to *"take their advice and assistance"*.¹³ The Quaker authorities obviously realised that if the school was to be a success, cooperation at the local level would be absolutely essential. The selection of a suitable schoolmaster was also the committees responsibility, and it was to report its progress on educational affairs to each national meeting. The efforts of the first standing committee on education, which included Abraham Shackleton and Thomas Bewley among its members, were

¹²Grubb Collection. S-121. Friends Arch. Dub.

¹³Ibid.

rewarded with almost immediate success, with the establishment of the first national Quaker boarding school for girls at Edenderry in 1764, the boys section of the school being deferred as no male teacher "had offered". Although the Edenderry school lasted less than a decade, and broke up on the death of the mistress, Mrs. Mellor, in 1773, the approach was a step in the right direction towards the establishment of better organised Quaker schools. The establishment of a standing committee on educational affairs was a particularly valuable innovation, as such an enlightened body could monitor the educational needs of the Irish Quaker community and could plan, in a systematic and organised manner, the satisfaction of those needs. It was hoped that the establishment of such an informed body would bring a speedy end to the kind of ad-hoc approaches to the foundation of Quaker schools which had been such a disquieting feature of the previous century in Ireland. For the remainder of the eighteenth century, the national or yearly meetings actually encouraged the provincial meetings to establish their own schools.

The next important step in the organisation of Irish Quaker schools occurred in 1774 with the establishment of Friends School Lisburn under the mastership of John Gough, author of the famous eighteenth century Arithmetic. This school was established as a direct result of a bequest of one thousand pounds in the will of John Hancock, a prosperous linen merchant, for the purchase of land in

or near Lisburn on which to build a school for the children of Quakers. In his will, John Hancock, laid down that a school be established

... within the present bounds of Lisburn." Men's Meeting for the Education of the Youth of the people called Quakers, the master thereof to be a sober and reputable person, and one of the said people, and the school to be under the Inspection of the Quarterly Meeting of said people of the Province of Ulster. 14

This extract from the will is in complete harmony with the official Quaker approach to the organisation and administration of Friends schools. Like the Edenderry boarding school of 1764, or the illfated Castledermot school venture of a century earlier, the main provisions are extremely similar. The school is for Quakers only; the master must also be of that persuasion, and most important of all, the school is to be placed under the control of the Ulster provincial meeting. Despite the fact that the foundation of Friends' School, Lisburn was the immediate result of John Hancock's philanthropic act, the Quaker provincial and national meetings undoubtedly played a significant role in its establishment. Nevertheless, in circumstances not dissimilar with the Ballitore boarding school, Friends' School Lisburn gradually succeeded in separating itself from the jurisdiction of the Ulster provincial meeting, and for the next two decades John Gough practically ran the school single handed, reporting directly to the schools' trustees, rather than to the provincial meeting of the province of Ulster. It was not until after the death of

¹⁴ Newhouse, A History of Friends School Lisburn. (Lurgan: 1974), p.1.

Gough in 1791, that the Ulster provincial meeting regained control of the Lisburn school, on refusing to support John Gough, Jr., as successor,¹⁵ and from 1794 the school became officially known as the Ulster Provincial school. The Quaker authorities had obviously no intention of allowing the Lisburn school to remain outside the control of its meetings, and Ballitore, though an interesting exception to the Quaker rule, was regarded as somewhat of an aberration which was not to be tolerated in the development of other Quaker schools in Ireland.

With the establishment of the Leinster provincial school at Mountmellick in 1786, detailed and explicit rules for the management of the school were laid down. The organisation and administration of the Mountmellick school was modelled on that of Ackworth, in Yorkshire. The latter establishment was under the immediate care of two Committees, one of which consisted of Friends of London, and the other of Friends in the neighbourhood of Ackworth.¹⁶ Similarly, in Ireland, the provincial school at Mountmellick was under the care of two committees, one a standing committee of forty three men¹⁷ Friends, "*who were desired to be prepared to send two or more of their members to the meeting of the committee of every Province or Quarterly Meeting, there to lay before it, or to consult upon, any matter that shall appear necessary*",¹⁸

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 13-15.

¹⁶ Sarah Grubb, Journal, 3.ed. (Belfast:1837), p.227.

¹⁷ Subsequently a committee of 35 women was formed.

¹⁸ One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. (Dublin: Richard D. Webb and Son, 1886). p.15.

and a local Committee of sixteen Friends resident in Mountmellick. The Leinster provincial meeting had overall responsibility for the management of the school, and the various monthly meetings within the province were responsible for a considerable amount of the finance, including the school fees.¹⁹ The rules for the management of the school stated that every three years the quarterly or provincial meeting was to appoint a new Committee of men and women to conduct the affairs of the school, the committee being composed of people from each of the monthly meetings. As far as the local committee was concerned, *"two of each sex were expected to visit the school every week in rotation, to enquire into the childrens' improvement in learning and behaviour, to inspect the provisions and to audit the accounts."*²⁰ The provincial meeting authorized the purchase and distribution of textbooks, the payment of staff and the employment of teachers, all, of course, subject to the approval of the national meeting. The rules for the management and administration of Mountmellick school provided the organisational basis for all other Quaker provincial boarding schools in Ireland. The same rules, with only the most minor amendments, were applied to the Ulster provincial school from 1794, and to the Munster provincial school when it opened its gates in 1798.

¹⁹Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School, 1816, Friends Arch. Dub. P.B.20(25).

²⁰One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. p.16.

Occasionally, in exceptional circumstances, the national meeting was called upon to come to the financial assistance of a provincial meeting. The Ulster provincial meeting, for instance, found it necessary to appeal for such assistance on a number of occasions in the early nineteenth century, in connection with the critical financial position of the Lisburn school. In fact, funds were established by the Leinster and Munster provincial meetings for the sole purpose of aiding the Lisburn school, and these funds became a permanent and substantial part of the income of the Ulster provincial school. Financial assistance was required by the Lisburn school because of the large number of children in the Ulster province, of parents in "low-circumstances". It was calculated in the late eighteenth century, for instance, that approximately two-hundred such children resided in Ulster,²¹ and this entailed that the education provided in the Ulster provincial school would have to be heavily subsidised by the Leinster and Munster provinces. The Rules for the Government of the Leinster Provincial school, which became the blueprint for Quaker educational organisation as a whole in Ireland, not only regulated the school's external relationship with committees, and with monthly, quarterly and yearly meetings, but also covered the detailed internal administration of the school. It is this latter aspect of school organisation that we turn to next.

²¹Portf. 5A-24. Friends Arch. Dub.

INTERNAL ORGANISATION OF QUAKER SCHOOLS

The day to day business of the Quaker provincial boarding schools was normally carried out by a superintendent and matron; a teaching master and mistress, a housekeeper, and a handful of servants.

THE SUPERINTENDENT: In all three provincial schools a superintendent and matron looked after household matters and the health and cleanliness of the pupils. In the words of the Ulster provincial school committee, when advertising a vacancy for superintendent at the Lisburn school in 1841, the primary function of the latter official was *"to have a general oversight of the Establishment including the farm"*.²² The superintendent was to ensure that *"the officers and servants perform their duty in the school departments"*, and was to inform the committee if *"anything is amiss"*.²³ He was to maintain regular contact with the school committee, and was to *"furnish each Monthly Meeting, once in three months, with an account of any Bill or Bills of Continuance then due"*.²⁴ In fact, the superintendent was a crucial functionary of the Quaker school system, and his cooperation was vital for the successful operation of any school committee. It was the superintendent, through the school committee, who kept the provincial meetings informed on a regular basis, of school affairs, and his role was vital for the successful

²²Ulster Provincial School; Vacancy for Superintendent, 27/4/1841. P.B. 20(96). Friends Arch. Dublin.

²³Rules for Government of Leinster Provincial School. P.B. 20(25). Friends. Arch. Dub.

²⁴Ibid.

flow of communication between the school and the Quaker organisational hierarchy. In John Gough's time at Lisburn, the superintendent, if indeed there was one, had failed to communicate with the provincial meetings, with the result that for almost twenty years the Ulster provincial meetings, and indeed the national meetings, were almost totally ignorant of the affairs of the Lisburn Quaker school. The Lisburn school, during the first twenty years of its history, was obviously not depending on financial support from the Ulster Provincial meeting, and it seems very likely that it was run on a quasi-private basis. Before 1794, when the official Quaker life of the school began, Friends School, Lisburn was in the hands of a group of trustees who were obviously not required to send reports to the Society. They were active in promoting the school's welfare, but did not do so as official representatives of the Ulster quarterly meeting. Any written reports they made have been lost.²⁵

In the provincial boarding schools, the superintendent and matron, who were normally man and wife, usually gave some instruction themselves, assisted by another teacher or by an apprentice. Richard Allen, the superintendent at Newtown, Waterford in the early nineteenth century, was always addressed by the boys as "*master*", and he played an important role in the religious education of the pupils.²⁶ Indeed, it was generally the practice in the

²⁵Portfolio 5A-88/89. Friends. Arch. Dub.

²⁶Newtown School Centenary. (Waterford: Newenham and Harvey, 1898), p.41.

Quaker provincial boarding schools for the superintendent rather than the schoolmaster, to examine the catechism.²⁷ In disciplinary matters he also played an important role, and corporal punishment was only to be administered in his presence.²⁸ Furthermore, as a final sanction the superintendent, in consultation with the school committee, had the power to expel a pupil from the school.

MASTER AND MISTRESS: As the Quaker boarding schools, under the control of the national and provincial meetings, were 'co-educational' in the narrowest sense, i.e. boys and girls were educated in the same institution, but were generally taught in separate classes, special arrangements had to be made to cater for their different needs. Many Quakers believed that it was a "*desirable thing that all the knowledge females require should be by the medium of teachers of their own sex*",²⁹ therefore the provincial boarding schools had to make provision for a male and female teacher. In fact, the opening of the boys section of the Leinster provincial school had to be delayed for several months in 1786 as no male teacher "*had offered*", and the same thing happened at the opening of the first national boarding school at Edenderry in 1764. At the opening of the Munster school, however, at Newtown in 1798, no such problem presented itself. John Crouch was appointed as master with a salary of eighty guineas

²⁷Rules Leinster Provincial School. Friends. Arch. Dub.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Joseph Lancaster, "*Letter to John Foster, Esq.*" in Corcoran. State Policy in Irish Education. (Dublin: Fallon Bros. 1916), p.199.

per annum, and Margaret Abell as girls teacher with a salary of fifteen guineas.

Although the affairs of the Quaker provincial boarding schools were generally carried out in a very formal and regulated manner, there were occasions when a more informal approach was adapted. This was sometimes the case when temporary vacancies for teachers arose, especially on the girls side of the house. In order to prevent serious disruption to the regulated routine of Quaker school life these vacancies were, from time to time, "*supplied by the voluntary and gratuitous assistance of women Friends, members of the Committee or otherwise*".³⁰ Examples of such selfless altruism abound in Quaker records, and when problems of various sorts arose in the provincial schools, there was normally no scarcity of eager volunteers wishing to help out. A classic example of such was the case of George Roberts, who at Newtown, "*apprehended it to be his duty to offer his services to the institution by residing in the house, lodging in the boys' rooms, assisting to take care of the boys out of school hours, and gives such other assistance in general as he may be enabled to do*".³¹ The committee accepted his offer and he declined to accept any remuneration for his services.

ORGANISATION OF THE SCHOOL DAY AT THE QUAKER

PROVINCIAL BOARDING SCHOOLS

The Quaker boarding school day was a long one, beginning

³⁰Newtown Centenary. p.76.

³¹*Ibid.*, p.74.

at the spartan hour of six a.m. in Summer and seven in Winter, and continuing until late at night when the superintendent retired to his Chamber with the keys of the premises.³² The bulk of our information on the organisation of the school day is based on the voluminous records of Leinster provincial school, the schedule of which was adopted almost verbatim by Munster provincial school, the only difference being that the Newtown rules allowed for the supplying of a slice of bread to the pupils between meals in the morning and similarly in the afternoon.³³ There is little direct information available, however, about the organisation of the Lisburn school day, as that school was independent of the control of the Ulster provincial meeting during the first two decades of its existence, and hence did not keep the detailed records associated with Quaker school committees. However, as the Quakers tended to value consistency and uniformity very highly in their approach to educational matters, it is very likely that the school day at Lisburn was not radically different from that of Mountmellick and Newtown. An outline of the school day at Mountmellick, therefore, should give a good indication of what went on in the other provincial schools.

³²Rules Leinster Provincial School.

³³Rules for the Government of Munster Provincial School.
(Dublin: 1837), P.B. 20(74) Friends ARch. Dub.

PLAN OF REGULATIONS FOR SCHOOL HOURS (1785)

BOYS

HOURS

- 6 Rise in Summer (In half-hour Roll called in school,
7 Rise in Winter (Matron Reads the Bible aloud, boys
(all standing.
Spell from Pennsylvania Spelling Book till
8 Breakfast - going from the schoolroom to their meals
in good order.
9 To School. Roll called. Writing, Catechism, Arithmetic
till
1 Dinner - exercise till
3 Called to
School - Superintendent hears them in Catechism.
4 Master teaches them Arithmetic - examines the work
of the day in their copies and ciphering books -
and gives such punishment for faults committed in
the course of the day as his sober judgement
determines adequate - not forgetting to commend.
7 the deserving.³⁴

PLAN OF REGULATIONS FOR SCHOOL HOURS (1785)

GIRLS

HOURS

- 6 Rise in Summer (Every two to make their own bed.
7 Rise in Winter (Roll called in an hour or less. Mistress
(reads, the girls all standing.
The girls appointed for each week then
go to sweep out the room. The rest spell till

³⁴Quoted in Michael Quane "The Friends' Provincial
School, Mountmellick," Journal of the Royal Society of
Antiquaries of Ireland. Vol. 89. 1959, p.67.

- 8 Breakfast - In half hour go to school. Master sets them to write their copies and stays with them till
- 9- When they have finished their copies, Knitting, Sewing, Spinning etc., till
- 12 - they use relaxation till
- 1 Dine - Mistress after dinner walks them into the garden in dry weather, at which time she has an opportunity of teaching them to avoid unbecoming awkward gestures.
- 2 to school - Master teaching them arithmetic till 4 - then rests for an hour.
- 5 Mistress instructs them in Reading, Spelling, Catechism, etc., the remainder of the evening and examines their work of the day.³⁵

MEALS IN QUAKER PROVINCIAL BOARDING SCHOOLS.

As far back as the early eighteenth century, the Quaker elders had warned parents about the moral dangers to their children in "*too much fullness and choiceness in eating and drinking*",³⁶ Consequently, the food provided by the provincial boarding schools was plain but reasonably nourishing. There were three meals a day; breakfast, dinner and supper. Breakfast and supper were the same; bread and milk or potatoes and milk or porridge (stirabout). A week of dinners went;

FIRST DAY. (Sunday): Bread and Broth in Winter:

Bread, potatoes and cheese in Summer

SECOND DAY. (Monday): Boiled or roast Meat and Vegetables for one table, and pudding or suet pudding for the other.

³⁵Ibid.,

³⁶Minute of Half-Yearly Meeting. fifth mo. 1701. Friends' Arch. Dub.

THIRD DAY. (Tuesday): As Monday the other way round.
FOURTH DAY. (Wednesday): Potatoes and either milk or butter.
FIFTH DAY. (Thursday): Meat and Vegetables for both tables
in Winter, Puddings in Summer.
SIXTH DAY. (Friday): Potatoes and Milk or Butter.
SEVENTH DAY. (Saturday): Soups made out of griskins and
broth reserved for First Day.

Beer served with each Dinner.³⁷

As the Quaker provincial boarding schools had sizeable farms attached to them (Newtown, for instance, had fifteen acres), the schools were, to a considerable degree self sufficient in the provision of meat, fruit and vegetables. The plainness and dull uniformity of the food, not only was in harmony with Quaker emphasis on plain living, but facilitated quick and efficient service for the fifty or sixty boys and girls.

The private Quaker boys boarding school at Ballitore, Co. Kildare, was probably administered on less formal lines than the three provincial schools. Ballitore school was independently run by the Shackleton family and was not under the control of the provincial or yearly meetings. Consequently, there was no school committee reporting to the provincial meeting. As in the case of the Lisburn school under John Gough, there is very little evidence available to historians on the day to day organisation of Ballitore. We do know, however, because the school also accepted non-Quaker

³⁷Newhouse, History of Friends School Lisburn.pp.11-12.

pupils, that a Protestant Episcopalian usher was always employed there, whose duty it was to hear the catechism of his co-religionists who were on the rolls, and to accompany them to divine service on Sundays at Timolin.³⁸ The senior household staff at Ballitore in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were mostly Quakers, and the "*inferior servants*", as Mary Leadbeater calls them, were generally Roman Catholics.³⁹ There was always a steward employed at Ballitore, and one of his many tasks was to bring back boys who had run away from the school. One particularly successful steward was a Quaker named James McConnaughty, of whom Mary Leadbeater says:

If a boy ran away from school, James was dispatched after him, and such was his success that the boys gave⁴⁰ him the name of "the blood-hound".

Apart from the steward, there was generally an elderly man employed at Ballitore to carry out lighter duties of a miscellaneous kind. One such functionary was an old ex-soldier named John Buckley, whose duties were "*to assist in cleaning the shoes and knives, to cut the bread, attend the boys' table, and announce at the schoolroom door when the meals were ready*".⁴¹ Overall, it would appear, that greater flexibility was employed in the administration and day to day running of Ballitore school than was the case in the provincial schools, where the duties of the staff were legislated for in the most minute detail, leaving almost nothing at all to human initiative.

³⁸ Mary Leadbeater, Leadbeater Papers. Vol. 1. (London: Bell and Daldy, 1826), p.72

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.42.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.79

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.42.

THE FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION OF QUAKER SCHOOLS.

Finance was certainly a very important factor in the efficient administration of Irish Quaker schools. Indeed a report of the National Meeting in 1763 stated that it was lack of finance which was largely responsible for the failure of many Quaker schools during the previous one hundred years in Ireland.⁴² Although some Irish Quakers had begun to distinguish themselves in the fields of trade and commerce in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the restrictions of the English trading policy made such excursions extremely hazardous, and huge losses were often sustained.⁴³ With the establishment of 'Grattans' Parliament' in 1782, however, a greater degree of stability entered commercial affairs, and the latter years of the eighteenth century saw the emergence of the Quaker community in Ireland as the most successful and prosperous group, relative to size, in the country. With this new found commercial prosperity at their disposal, it was a natural step for the Quakers, because of their high regard for education, to make a more vigorous and sustained attempt to establish their schools on a more solid financial footing.

The usual procedure in the financing of a Quaker school was to raise subscriptions from among the members of the monthly and quarterly meetings to cover the purchase price of the building and equipment in the case of a new school.

⁴²Newhouse. *"The founding of Friends' School Lisburn"*. R.S.A.I. 1968. p.48.

⁴³Grainne O'Flynn, *"Aspects of Concern in the Religious Society of Friends with education in Ireland"*. Capuchin Annual. 1975. p.325.

At the National Half-Yearly Meeting in 1763, for instance, it was decided that eight hundred to one thousand pounds would be necessary for the purchase of the proposed Edenderry boarding school. Any money left over after the purchase was to be "*placed out at interest, or otherwise disposed of to bring in a certain annual income, to be applied to the purpose of educating the children of Friends in low circumstances*".⁴⁴ The finances required for the day to day running of Quaker schools were to be largely the responsibility of the quarterly or provincial meetings, which were to see to it that all the monthly meetings within each respective province contributed their share of subscriptions. In 1785, for example, when Mountmellick boarding school was being established, the Leinster school Committee were determined that each monthly meeting should be responsible for school fees. If the parents could not pay, then the monthly meeting had to obtain the money locally.⁴⁵ School fees came under the heading of Bills of Admittance and Continuance, and for Mountmellick in 1786 the bill of admittance for each pupil came to five pounds per annum. At Lisburn in 1794 the fee was six pounds, and at Newtown in 1798 it was fixed at eight pounds. It was the duty of the school superintendent to "*furnish each Monthly Meeting once in three months, with an account of any Bill or Bills of Continuance then due*".⁴⁶ Apart from bills of admittance

⁴⁴Grubb. Coll. S-121. Friends. Arch. Dub.

⁴⁵One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. p.14.

⁴⁶Rules Leinster Provincial School. Friends Arch. Dub.

and continuance, further income was obtained from the following sources:-

- (a) From Friends who pay more than the cost of Bills.
- (b) Profit from Rent of land owned by the school.
- (c) Annual legacies from Quaker benefactors.
- (d) Yearly Meetings' allowance towards clothing of an apprentice.
- (e) Profit on farm attached to school.
- (f) Interest on money sent out by the Treasurer.⁴⁷

When all these sources of income were added up, it was naturally hoped by the thrift-conscious Quakers that income would balance, if not exceed, expenditure. Unfortunately, however, this was not always the case, and there are numerous references in the Annual Financial Reports of the three provincial schools, complaining about falling subscriptions, lamenting increased expenditure over income, and pleading for extra financial assistance. Although all three Quaker boarding schools experienced financial difficulties from time to time, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, it was undoubtedly the Ulster provincial school which seemed to be in the greatest distress. Although the records of the Ulster school are scanty between 1774 and 1794, because of its unusual relationship vis a vis the Ulster quarterly meetings, the school was nevertheless in financial troubles from the very beginning, despite John Hancock's generous

⁴⁷Statement of Accounts of Munster Provincial School.
P.B. 20(76). Friends. Arch. Dub.

bequest of one thousand pounds.⁴⁸ When in 1794 the Friends School, Lisburn finally came under the care of the Ulster quarterly meetings, so that, in the words of the Lisburn Standard "every Friend in the Province has a voice in its management and regulations",⁴⁹ its financial difficulties continued. In 1820 expenditure exceeded income by forty three pounds at the Lisburn school, and matters continued to deteriorate over the next ten years. By 1831 the situation was considered so serious that the school committee felt it necessary to go outside the province and appeal to the generosity of "Friends in other parts of the nation".⁵⁰ In this particular case the committee estimated that a "sum of about two-hundred and fifty pounds" would be required.⁵¹ Three years later, in the Ulster school Committee report for 1834 we read that "the expenditure has considerably exceeded the income", and the Ulster provincial school was asking for assistance to the sum of one hundred pounds.⁵² The financial problems of the Ulster provincial school were alleviated to some extent by the provision of a fund established by the Munster and Leinster provincial meetings. The Munster

⁴⁸Newhouse, "Founding of Friends' School Lisburn" Jour. R.S.A.I. 1968. p.54.

⁴⁹Lisburn Standard. Sat. Sept. 1st 1894. P.B. 20(97). Friends Arch. Dub.

⁵⁰Report of School Committee of Ulster Provincial School. 1831. P.B. 20(86). Friends Arch. Dub.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Report of School Committee of Ulster Prov. Sch. 1834. P.B. 20(87). Friends Arch. Dub.

and Leinster fund became a permanent source of income for the Ulster provincial school during the first half of the nineteenth century. The availability of such a fund is a good example of how the organisational structure, which the Quakers had developed and perfected, could facilitate in the transfer of resources from one province to another, in order to give valuable support to schools in various kinds of difficulty. It was the lack of such efficient support structures in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries which contributed largely to the collapse of Quaker schools in financial difficulties.

According to the Report Concerning Friends' Schools in Ireland published at York in 1843 the following are the principal endowments for promoting Education among Friends at that time:

ULSTER PROVINCIAL SCHOOL - House, and about twenty acres of land, held in perpetuity at a moderate rent, it is supposed may be worth about two thousand pounds. Profit rents arising from lands and houses bequeathed or purchased, and from pecuniary legacies and donations invested; an annual income of about two hundred pounds. Leinster Fund two thousand pounds lent on mortgage, producing an annual income of one hundred and twenty pounds. Munster Fund, one thousand, two hundred pounds. Rent on mortgage, producing an annual income of seventy-two pounds.

LEINSTER PROVINCIAL SCHOOL - House, and about twenty acres of land, held on lease for lives, subject to rent, valued at one thousand, five hundred pounds. Legacies of sundry Friends, annually payable out of their estates, amounting to about fifty-five pounds per annum. Funded property,

arising from legacies, yielding about thirty five pounds
pr annum.

MUNSTER PROVINCIAL SCHOOL - House and estate of Newtown,
valued at five thousand, five hundred pounds. Legacy of
the late Robert Grubb, ten pounds, eighteen shillings and
ten pence, payable annually.

FEMALE BOARDING SCHOOL, SUIR ISLAND CLONMEL. - House and
garden at Suir Island, freehold estate therein, valued at
forty-five pounds per annum. Income chargeable on another
portion of the estate of the late Robert Grubb, about
fifty-five pounds per annum.

FRIENDS' BOARDING SCHOOL (for boys), DUBLIN. - Capital
stock subscribed by Friends, to be refunded if income from
scholars prove sufficient, two thousand, three-hundred and
fifty pounds.

BROOKFIELD AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL - House, and about twenty
four acres of land, subject to rent, valued at one thousand,
two hundred and ninety pounds. Money at interest about
seven hundred and seventy pounds.

The Yearly Meeting of Friends, in Ireland, has for many
years granted assistance for the clothing of apprentices
intended for schoolmasters, and at present authorizes
the issue of twenty-nine pounds, ten shillings and eight
pence per annum from its funds for this purpose.

CAPITAL £16,610 - ANNUAL INCOME £622.⁵³

The organisation and administration of Irish Quaker

⁵³Report Concerning Friends' Schools in Ireland.
(York: 1843), pp.21-22.

boarding schools had been developed to a remarkably sophisticated degree by the end of the eighteenth century. By that time, the Society of Friends had succeeded, in each of the three provinces of Ulster, Munster and Leinster, in establishing an important boarding school for Quaker boys and girls, under the vigilant control of the provincial and national meetings. Indeed, these schools were so successfully integrated within the organisational structure of the Society, that the education provided in each institution showed a remarkable consistency and uniformity of content and standard. The lynchpin of efficient Quaker school organisation and administration was, undoubtedly, the work of the committees, especially the local ones. The latter committees, on which both sexes were equally represented, carried out their duties with exemplary diligence, and were largely responsible for the smooth efficiency with which Quaker school business was generally conducted. The work of the Quaker school committees contrasts starkly with that of the Charter-schools, whose achilles' heel was definitely, the malfunctioning of its local committees.⁵⁴ It was selfless dedication on the part of the men and women of the Quaker educational committees, at the local, provincial and national levels, which contributed largely to the incontrovertible fact that the Irish Quaker boarding schools of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were the best schools of their kind in Ireland. This enviable reputation was in no small measure due to the efficient organisation and administration of the Quaker school system.

⁵⁴ John F. Pettit. "A Study of aspects of protestant schooling in Ireland". (M.A. Thesis. U.C.C. Ed. Dept. 1971), p.185.

CHAPTER V

THE QUAKER CURRICULUM

The Quaker school curriculum in Ireland during the first century and a half of the Society's settlement here, was an extremely narrow and limited one. Quakers were puritans and therefore they rigorously excluded from the curriculum all subjects which they believed were inconsistent with the tenets of their church. Consequently, Quaker schools in Ireland throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with few exceptions, taught a curriculum which was dominated by the religious principles of the Society, and which provided little more than an elementary education in the secular subjects.

A notable characteristic of the Quaker curriculum in Ireland and England in the period under study was its unashamedly utilitarian format. This latter quality was a prominent feature of Quaker education from the very beginning, and reflected the anti-intellectual bias of the early Quaker preachers. The Quaker rejection of intellectual learning as a necessary qualification for priesthood, exerted considerable influence on the character of the Quaker curriculum, and led to the gradual expulsion of those subjects which did not have an obviously practical use.

William Penn, (1644 - 1718), one of the most eminent of early Quakers, was an enthusiastic advocate of utilitarianism in education, and he regarded too much book learning as "an oppression of the mind".¹ In recommending what he considered to be the ideal curriculum, he said:

*Learn and teach your children fair writing, and the most useful parts of mathematics, and some business when young, whatever else they are taught.*²

Indeed, John Bellars,³ a Quaker philanthropist and friend of William Penn went further, and saw the school curriculum incorporating a considerable amount of physical labour, even for very young children. Bellars believed that school hours in the seventeenth century were too long and tedious "to tie a child to his book", and consequently he recommended that:-

*At four or five years old, besides reading, boys and girls might be taught to knit and spin, and bigger boys turning: and being upon business though slight, it improves the reason by sensible demonstration, whereas a childish silly employment leaves their minds silly.*⁴

Bellars and Penn, like the majority of their contemporaries, had an extremely limited view of the nature of children. In their eyes children were, to a considerable extent, miniature adults, and they consequently believed that children must be brought up in an unreservedly practical

¹William Penn. Life of William Penn (Philadelphia: The Friends Library, ed. by W.M. and Thomas Evans. 1841, Vol V) pp. 298-299. Quoted in Michael Quane. "Quaker Schools in Dublin" Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries Ireland.1964. p.52.

²Ibid.

³John Bellars (1654-1725). He was a Quaker philanthropist with a special interest in Education. In 1695 he published his Proposals for Raising a College of Industry. which raised considerable interest and controversy. He was also interested in prison reform, and his labours in this sphere of activity anticipated to some extent those of John Howard. (D.N.B.)

⁴Quane. "Quaker Schools in Dublin" (Jour.R.S.A.I.1964)p.52.

manner, with little or no concessions being given to the child's imagination or playful disposition. The intention was to produce pious, practical and industrious young men and women, and the means was a curriculum, the dominant characteristic of which was an uncompromising utilitarianism.

Utilitarianism in Irish Quaker schools can best be seen in the curricula of the provincial boarding schools, which the Society of Friends established in the latter years of the eighteenth century. The first of these, for the "children of those in low circumstances" was established at Mountmellick in 1786. This school, which was known as the Leinster provincial school, was strongly influenced by an English Quaker school at Ackworth in Yorkshire, which was founded in 1777. The curriculum at Ackworth combined manual work with an elementary education sufficient to enable the recipients to take their places in the lower ranks of society, and the fact that the children did much of the work necessary to sustain the community meant that it could be run economically and fees thus kept low.⁵ In line with Ackworth therefore, the curriculum at Mountmellick provided an elementary education in the three-R^s, combined with scriptural study and a considerable amount of domestic work. The Ulster and Munster provincial schools, which were soon to follow,

⁵John Reader. Of Schools and Schoolmasters. (London: Quaker Home Service, 1979), p.31.

were similarly influenced by the Ackworth model. Besides the three-R^s, the girls at Mountmellick were to be taught "sewing; marking and knitting, and to make and mend their own apparel, and the house linen; also to make shirts for the boys,"⁶ and to do mending for any local Friends who cared to pay for it. Similarly, at the Munster provincial school at Newtown, Waterford, the girls had to perform a wide range of domestic duties. Deborah Martin, a pupil at Newtown in the 1830^s recollects as follows:

*We kept our rooms, sweeping, dusting etc. On
Seventh day (Saturday) we had to dry rub the floors - 7
We helped in the dining room and laundry.*

The considerable emphasis on domestic chores and manual labour in the provincial boarding schools in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, was the product of several important factors. At a very practical level, the availability of unpaid labour ensured that the schools could be run economically, but there were other considerations besides. Many Quakers saw the provision of manual labour as a useful training for the pupils at the provincial schools, the majority of whom were destined for employment in the lower ranks of Quaker society. Since the schools at Lisburn and Mountmellick were founded mainly for the education of those "in low circumstances", the Quaker committees responsible for the management of these schools were determined that proper work be provided for the children, the girls especially to be exercised in such

⁶Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School. Friends. Archives Dublin.

⁷Newtown School Centenary. (Waterford: Newenham and Harvey. 1898), p.66.

"domestic employments as may qualify them for useful servants".⁸ Indeed, there was the further consideration that many Quakers believed that a curriculum which did not cater for a training in manual work was morally dangerous for the pupils. The National Meeting of 1701, for instance, had warned parents of the dangers involved in keeping children too long at school without labour⁹, and consequently, Quaker children were provided with a curriculum which gave them an elementary education combined with a degree of work experience. Admittedly, the curriculum at the provincial boarding schools tended to burden the girls with the bulk of the domestic duties. It was the girls who had to make the boys beds and repair the boys clothing, besides performing many other menial tasks, and such employments meant that they were not given as much time in class as the boys. The latter, nevertheless, had a number of domestic chores to perform, mainly connected with the extensive farms which were attached to all the major schools.

The education provided in Quaker schools in the eighteenth century was first and foremost a religious education. This meant that the Quaker curriculum devoted a considerable amount of time to the study of the Scriptures and the religious principles of the Society of Friends. Indeed, it has been said that religion was one of the four R^s

⁸Michael Quane "*The Friends Provincial School, Mountmellick*" *Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*. (1959). Vol. 89:68

⁹Minute of Dublin Half-Years Meeting for 5th mo. 1701. Friends. Arch. Dub.

in a Quaker school, and that the teacher of it was not mortal.¹⁰ The religious training provided in Quaker schools at this time had three main elements. These were, firstly, the preparation for and the life of Christ; secondly, the differential tenets of Quaker belief and practice, and thirdly, the ethical consequences of such belief.¹¹ At the provincial boarding schools, for instance, the school day began with readings from the Bible, and the rest of the day was interspersed with activities of a devotional nature. The Quaker catechism was considered very important, and it was taught and examined by the school superintendent on a regular basis, and by the school committee from time to time. Moreover, every evening, after the usual class lessons were over, Quaker schools were expected to provide a "period of retirement" where the Scriptures could be read and studied. This activity normally occurred shortly before the pupils were due to go to bed.¹²

The study of the Scriptures in Irish Quaker schools in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries meant that the children had to commit to memory many long and difficult extracts.¹³ This served a double purpose. Firstly, in the psychological view of the time, this type of learning was regarded as a valuable discipline. Secondly, the material learned, if not properly comprehended by the immature minds of children, was a residue of experience

¹⁰W.A.C. Stewart. Quakers and Education. (London: Epworth Press, 1953), p.131.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School.

¹³Stewart. Quakers and Education. p.131.

which later spiritual development would cause to yield profitable returns. While the reading of the Scriptures and the learning of the Quaker catechism were probably the most important, and certainly the most overt aspects of the religious education provided in Quaker schools, they were not, however, the only ones. It is important to realise that in Quaker education the religious principles of the Society of Friends permeated every aspect of the school curriculum, and whether the latter merely offered the basic skills of literacy, or whether it provided a more comprehensive education, all aspects of that curriculum were expected to facilitate the inculcation of Quaker values.

The vast majority of Irish Quaker schools in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries had one major factor in common, and that was their provision of what they termed a "*plain, English education*". With the exception of Ballitore boarding school and a few other private fee-paying establishments, Quaker schools in Ireland taught a curriculum which focused almost exclusively on the study of the vernacular, together with a basic education in what were considered the most practical areas of arithmetic. The vernacular rather than the classics was, from the start, the basis of the Quaker curriculum. Indeed, the vernacular acted as an opposition to the hegemony of Latin with its suspicious pagan, university and ecclesiastical associations.¹⁴ It is not surprising, therefore, that a curriculum based firmly on the vernacular, was essentially what the Quaker provincial boarding schools

¹⁴Ibid., p.27

provided, until the early decades of the nineteenth century, when they began to extend their curricula in order to meet the greater demands being made upon them.

Quakers were English in origin and they continued to maintain close links with the parent body in England throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Irish representatives attended the London yearly meeting on a regular basis, and Quaker schoolmasters and committees in Ireland frequently sought advice from their counterparts in England. It was perhaps inevitable, therefore, that Irish Quakers laid considerable emphasis on the "Englishness" of the education provided in their schools. The vernacular was extremely important to Irish Quakers and they stressed the utility of speaking and writing with correctness. Quakers were expected to express themselves articulately, with the minimum of words, and they felt the necessity of studying the English language from early childhood "so that in the growth and expression of the intellectual faculties, so powerful an instrument as language may be, at all times, ready for effective service".¹⁵

The vernacular, as taught on the curriculum of Irish Quaker schools, was largely concerned with reading, writing, spelling and the study of grammar. Quakers were not, of course, alone in their insistence on reading and writing as the basis of their curriculum. Such subjects formed the basis of over two-thirds of all elementary

¹⁵ Committee Report to Friends' Educational Society, 1842, Quoted in Michael Quane. "Quaker Schools in Dublin". (Jour. R.S.A.I. 1964), p.62.

education. But where Friends' children went on to study grammar, for sixty years of the nineteenth century, most elementary instruction in English stopped at reading, writing, and some very simple composition work.¹⁶ Grammar occupied about one eighth of the school day, and included an intensive study of parsing and analysis.¹⁷ Parsing and analysis was extremely popular in Irish Quaker schools in the early nineteenth century. This was partly due to the fact that the subject was manageable for young and comparatively unskilled teachers. Furthermore, parsing and analysis was seen by many as a parallel to the classical grammarian's exactness. Another significant point was that since it was linked to objective facts, parsing and analysis was an aspect of language that bore no relation to its imaginative use, and therefore it was seen as a valuable discipline.¹⁸

Spelling was another daily exercise in Quaker schools which occupied a considerable amount of class time. At Ackworth, in Yorkshire, for instance, the girls and boys in the early nineteenth century were to have at least one hour's spelling every day,¹⁹ and this became a regular feature of the Irish provincial boarding schools also. As far as a writing style was concerned, great pains were generally taken to develop clarity and economy of style, as ornamentation and verbosity were frowned upon. Essay

¹⁶Stewart. Quakers and Education. p.112.

¹⁷Quane. "Quaker Schools in Dublin". Jour. R.S.A.I. p.62

¹⁸Stewart. Quakers and Education. p.112.

¹⁹Ibid., p.110.

work was also an important feature of the study of the vernacular in Quaker schools. At Ackworth in the 1820^s we find essays on "self-Importance", "Grumbling", "Exaggeration" and subjects from natural history.²⁰ Like many schools in the nineteenth century, moralistic themes played an important role in the composition work done in Quaker schools.

Another important factor in the study of the English language in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Quaker schools in Ireland, was the considerable emphasis laid on the development of good handwriting. Indeed, some of the letters and copybooks of pupils from the provincial schools are written in the most exquisite calligraphy. Strangely enough, on this matter of handwriting, it seems that standards at Ballitore were not always what they should be. This is suggested by the comment of a Ballitore pupil in a letter to his father in 1813. Here Robert J. Lecky says:-

I write exercises in French and Latin, which in general I try to write well, but there is very little care taken of the boys' writing. 21

Lecky's comments here may not be representative, but perhaps the much broader curriculum at Ballitore contributed somewhat to the neglect of handwriting, a subject which, undoubtedly got more attention in a curriculum limited to the three - R^s.

²⁰Ibid., p.113.

²¹Quoted in Michael Quane "Ballitore School".
(Journal of Kildare Archaeological Society. 1967) p.202

The reading material provided in Quaker schools in Ireland for the study of English was generally extremely dull and unstimulating. The textbooks of Lindley Murray, the American Quaker, were used to a considerable extent at the provincial schools, especially his Grammar and The English Reader, and large sections of each publication had to be learnt by heart. Poetry was generally disapproved of by eighteenth century Quakers, but selected poems, mostly of a moralistic nature, began to appear in Quaker school textbooks in the early nineteenth century. Thus Murrays' Reader included carefully chosen verse from Pope, Cowper and Addison, and his Sequel to the English Reader included such classics as Gray's *Elegy*, Goldsmith's *'Deserted Village'*, and Johnson's *'The vanity of Human Wishes'*.²²

The study of the vernacular in Irish Quaker schools at this time involved two major emphases. Firstly there was the emphasis on the objective use of language, as may be seen from the careful study of Grammar, from the rote learning of definitions (Ackworth, for instance, published a vocabulary in the early nineteenth century which many schools used), and from the regular practice in spelling and dictation. Such objective emphasis was to be expected in an age which valued the skills of penmanship,

²²In his Sequel, Murray admitted that "In selecting materials for the poetical part of his work, the Compiler met with few authors, the whole of whose writings were unexceptionable. Some of them have unguarded moments, in which they have written what is not proper to come under the notice of youth". Sequel to the English Reader. (Dublin: William Porter 1801). Preface.

of "expressive" reading, and of memorization of information. Such emphasis was also to be expected in schools which had a number of adolescent, apprentice teachers, and it was to be expected in the schools of a religious sect which had as one of its basic tenets "plainness of speech". The second major emphasis was on the vocational and religious purpose behind the study of the vernacular. The subjects for compositions or essays, for instance, were generally related to information, piety and social affairs, and the imagination was circumscribed to moral or religious education.²³ Even the poetry which was studied was descriptive or pious. The personal emotions did not find much expression in language work.

Overall, the English courses provided by Irish Quaker schools in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, were rather dull and colourless, and little scope for the exercises of the imagination was permitted. Deborah Martin, a pupil at Newtown in the 1830^s summed up the school curriculum as follows:-

*Our studies were plain English - very plain indeed.*²⁴

Apart from the study of the Bible and the reading and writing of the vernacular, the next most important subject on the Quaker school curriculum was arithmetic. Quakers felt that arithmetic was an extremely useful and

²³ Stewart. Quakers and Education. pp. 114-115.

²⁴ Newtown School Centenary. p.63.

practical subject, and it was considered by most as an essential part of a boy's education. It was the generally held belief of eighteenth and nineteenth century Quakers that "there are few exercises of the mental powers more valuable than that of the science of numbers". They felt that "It induces correct and sympathetic modes of thinking, and encourages great caution against jumping to conclusions without correct premises".²⁵ They believed that vulgar and decimal fractions were of major importance, but that alligation, progression etc. were of lesser consequence. There was considerable emphasis in their schools on mental arithmetic, and they favoured the adoption of a well-selected course of practical arithmetic adequate to the wants of actual transactions in business.²⁶ In fact, arithmetic was another key subject of the Quaker curriculum which was strongly influenced by utilitarianism. A good knowledge of practical arithmetic was essential for those entering the fields of trade and commerce, areas in which a considerable number of Quakers were destined to enter on leaving school. John Gough's Practical Arithmetick in Four Books, published in the late eighteenth century provided an extremely comprehensive course in the practical aspects of the science of numbers. The extensive range of Gough's book can be seen clearly from the table of contents which are included in Appendix F at the end of this thesis.

²⁵Quane "Quaker Schools in Dublin" p.63.

²⁶Ibid.

Despite the importance given to arithmetic on the school curriculum, Quakers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries did not always regard the subject as an essential requirement for girls. Indeed, very few teaching mistresses in the eighteenth century were capable of giving instruction in arithmetic, and this was even the case at Ackworth, when Sarah Grubb visited the school to make her report. By 1792, however, the deficiency at Ackworth had been remedied, as the editor of Sarah Grubb's Journal indicates.²⁷ In Ireland, likewise, the teaching of writing and arithmetic was for a considerable time a male preserve, and it was not until the early nineteenth century that the females were trained for such instruction. When in 1764 the Society of Friends finally succeeded in establishing the first national Quaker boarding school for girls at Edenderry, arithmetic was not considered an essential part of the girls' education. Moreover, the status of even reading and writing was also extremely ambiguous, as the Prospectus for the school stated:-

*Each scholar is to be instructed by the Mistress in all things necessary for their accomplishments, and by the Master in reading, writing and arithmetic if they choose it, but no abatement to be made in the price if they dont choose it.*²⁸

While the mathematics taught in most Irish Quaker schools did not go beyond the teaching of practical

²⁷ Journal of Sarah Grubb. (Belfast: William Robinson. 1837). p.231.

²⁸ Edenderry Friends School Prospectus. P.B.20(67). Friends Arch. Dub.

arithmetic, until well into the nineteenth century, Ballitore boys' boarding school was once again a notable exception. This famous school also provided extensive instruction in algebra and geometry, and was referred to in advertisements as "*Classical and Mathematical*". Robert Lecky, writing from Ballitore in 1813, when the school was under the mastership of James White, recorded:

*I am in the fourth problem of Mensuration, simple equations in algebra, and the third book of Euclid.*²⁹

Even this, however, did not exhaust the mathematic curriculum at Ballitore, because shortly after, in reply to this letter Robert's father said:-

*He (the master) mentions his wish that thou should learn Trigonometry, which I should by all means desire including Spherics, and I do not expect that you will experience any considerable difficulty in the attainment.*³⁰

It is some indication how far Ballitore was ahead of other Irish Quaker schools in regard to its mathematics curriculum, when one realises that two of the subjects referred to by Robert Lecky above, namely algebra and mensuration, did not become part of the curriculum of Leinster provincial school, Mountmellick, until 1853.³¹ In the Camden Street school in the early 1840^s, however, a highly ambitious course in mathematics was undertaken. The extensive nature

²⁹Quane "*Ballitore School*". (Jour. Kild. Arch. Soc. 1967). p.203.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. (Dublin: Richard D. Webb and Son 1886) p.39.

of the course is indicated by the comprehensive list of books on the subject used at the school. These were:

Gibson	-	Surveying	Simpson	-	Euclid
Walkingham-		Arithmetic	Crocker	-	Land Surveying
Morie	-	Navigation	Rawney	-	Mensuration
Elrington-		Euclid	Hutton	-	Mensuration
Keith	-	Trigonometry	Keith	-	The Globes.
Bonnycastle-		Algebra			

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The Camden Street school was not a success, and within four years it had to close down. It is therefore not possible to assess how successful such a comprehensive course in Mathematics really was. By the second half of the nineteenth century, however, the mathematics curriculum being taught at the Quaker provincial boarding schools was greatly extended, though it was some considerable time before such benefits were extended to the girls. It is a remarkable fact, that a significant portion of the mathematics courses taught at these schools in the late nineteenth century were flourishing at Ballitore a century earlier.

The role of the classics, especially Latin, on the Quaker school curriculum in eighteenth century Ireland was an extremely controversial one. Some schools rejected the subject out of hand, others accepted it with considerable reservations, but very few unreservedly welcomed it. The Quaker attitude to Latin was influenced by several important factors. Firstly, Latin was the

³²Quane "Quaker Schools in Dublin". Jour. R.S.A.I. 1964. p.63.

language of a pagan culture, and some Quakers were therefore reluctant to include such on the curricula of their schools, fearing its influence on the Christian ethos which they valued and guarded so carefully. Another consideration was that Latin authors held views on sexual morality and warfare which the majority of Quakers found inconsistent with their own tenets, and furthermore, Latin textbooks abounded in references to pagan deities which conscientious Friends found most unpalatable. In addition to this, some Quakers felt that the subject matter of Latin books tended to encourage what they called "*vanity*", and hence there are many references in the minutes of Quaker meetings in England and Ireland on the morality of teaching "*vain Latin books*"³³ in Quaker schools. Finally, the fact that Latin had been for centuries very closely associated with the rituals and education of the Roman Catholic Church, and since the Reformation had still remained an extremely important element in the education of members of the Established Church, did not endear the ancient language to a puritanical sect which had jettisoned the rituals and traditions of the major churches.

Despite the considerable reservations felt by many Quakers about the suitability of Latin as a subject on the curricula of their schools, there remained an influential body of Friends who felt that the language was too important to ignore. The attitude of these Quakers to the classical languages, however, was empirical and

³³Portfolio 5A - 24. Friends Arch. Dub.

utilitarian and was not rooted in the study of the usually accepted texts.³⁴ A notable advocate of utilitarianism in the teaching of the classics was Thomas Lawson,³⁵ an early Quaker and friend of William Penn. Lawson claimed:-

... I oppose not teaching or learning of languages, as of Latin, Greek, or Hebrew, etc. Knowing there may be service therein, for the management of Foreign Transactions and Negotiations and Correspondence with³⁶ other nations.

On purely practical grounds, people like Lawson argued, that Latin was a universal language and consequently might prove useful for the conversion of the world. These people were not interested in Latin culture, as such, but purely in the mechanics of the language. Indeed Thomas Lawson mentions in a letter to Sir Thomas Rodes in 1690 a scheme to link the teaching of the classics with a knowledge of plants and trees. On this subject he says:

Some years ago, George Fox, William Penn, and others were concerned to purchase a piece of land near London for the use of a Garden School-house ... My purpose was to write a book on these in Latin, so as a boy had a description of these in book lessons, and their virtues, he might see those growing in the garden ... to gain the knowledge of them.

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Lawson's book *Flosculi Britanniae*, remained unfinished at his death in 1691 .

The role of the classics on the curriculum of early Quaker schools in Ireland is far from clear. Very little

³⁴ Stewart. Quakers and Education. p.25

³⁵ Thomas Lawson. (1630-1691). Quaker and Botanist. He was an excellent scholar in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, and was the most noted herbalist in England. He was also an excellent schoolmaster, and his writings are clear, pointed and logical. His style, orthography, and handwriting show him to have been a man of literary ability far in advance of most of his sect. D.N.B.

³⁶ T. Lawson. Dagon's fall before the ark. 1703 reprint. pp.73- 4. Quoted in Stewart. Quakers and Education. p.25.

³⁷ Stewart. Quakers and Education. p.26.

is known about the curricula of these schools which were established in the last quarter of the seventeenth century, but it is highly probable that such schools were day establishments, and, for the most part, were privately run. Gradually, some of these early schools came under the control of local Quaker meetings, and records indicate that Latin must have been a subject in some of them. There is also some evidence that Latin was at first taught by a number of Quaker schoolmasters in Ireland, some of whom later dropped it from the curriculum for conscientious reasons. The omission of Latin from the curriculum for conscientious reasons often resulted in considerable financial losses for the schoolmasters concerned, as a minute of the National Half-Years Meeting of 1687 indicates. It goes as follows:-

... the schoolmasters because of making conscience of teaching vain Latin books get few scholars but Friends children. 38

By the end of the seventeenth century, however, as the discipline of the Society of Friends increased in Ireland, it is probable that the teaching of Latin either decreased or was radically amended in conformity with Quaker requirements. Revisions of Latin textbooks by Irish Quaker schoolmasters took place in 1705, 1706 and 1710,³⁹ but there is, nevertheless, very little evidence available as to how widespread the teaching of Latin really was in early Irish Quaker schools. Probably the majority of these schools taught a curriculum which was largely

³⁸Portf. 5A - 24. Friends Arch. Dub.

³⁹Ibid.

confined to the three - R^S, since it is extremely unlikely that many Quaker masters were qualified to teach the classics. Indeed, it was difficult enough at this time to find schoolmasters sufficiently qualified to provide even an elementary education. It seems highly unlikely, therefore, that Latin appeared on the curriculum of more than a handful of Quaker day schools in Ireland by the second half of the eighteenth century. There is some evidence, for instance, that Latin was taught at a Quaker day school in Waterford in the 1780^S,⁴⁰ but such references are very rare in Irish Quaker archives, and the Waterford school must have been an exception.

There was one school, however, in eighteenth century Ireland where the classics were at the core of the curriculum. This was the private Quaker boarding school at Ballitore, where Abraham Shackleton Sr. enjoyed an enviable reputation for the teaching of the classics. Despite his success as a schoolmaster and as a successful teacher of Latin and Greek, Abraham Shackleton was, like all his Quaker contemporaries, influenced to a considerable degree by Quaker puritanism, and the latter influence undoubtedly affected his attitude to Latin. In a letter from his brother Roger, a schoolmaster in England, the latter said on the subject of classical authors:-

As to heathenish authors the Profane sort I would exclude, as Ovid's de Arta Amandi, and for my part I do not approve of Aesop's Fables, tho' they abound in good Latin and morals, but Ovid's Metamorphoses and de⁴¹ Tristibus are well enough.

⁴⁰ Report concerning Friends Schools in Ireland. (York: 1855), p.11.

⁴¹ Quane "Ballitore School". Four. Kild. Arch. Soc. p.174.

Abraham Shackleton, almost certainly took some of this advice, for when he advertised for pupils in the public press he made it clear that:-

... he declines from conscientious motives, to teach that part of the academic course which he considers injurious to morals and subversive of sound principles, particularly those authors who recommend in seducing language the illusions of love and the abominable trade of war. 42

Despite the selective nature of the Latin and Greek texts being taught at Ballitore, this noted Quaker boarding school nevertheless succeeded in giving its pupils an excellent grounding in the classics. The measure of Ballitore's success in this regard can be seen in the fact that the classical curriculum being taught there provided such an illustrious person as Edmund Burke with a solid foundation in Latin and Greek, a foundation which he was to profitably build upon later when he pursued a distinguished career in the worlds of letters and politics.

The classical curriculum at Ballitore continued under Abraham Shackleton's son Richard, who in the 1740^s took the unprecedented step for an Irish Quaker of attending Trinity College Dublin for the purpose of studying Hebrew. Richard Shackleton was a lifelong friend of Edmund Burke, and the latter sent all his publications to Ballitore.⁴³ Indeed, their close friendship was in a large measure due to the love of the classics which both men developed as pupils at Ballitore, and which they shared throughout their lives. In a letter to his daughter Margaret Grubb at Clonmel in

⁴²Ibid. p.176.

⁴³Mary Leadbeater. Leadbeater Papers. Vol. 1. (London: Bell and Daldy 1862) pp. 168- 9.

1776, Richard Shackleton sent the following words of advice concerning the classical education of her son then aged nine:-

I know it is the fashion with many, who do not mean to send their sons to universities, to explode and decry Latin as a useless acquisition; it may, perhaps be unprofitable in this sense, that it may bring them in no money; the concerns of civil life may be transacted quite as well without it: the finest productions in that language are translated into the mother tongue. French is more essential to accomplish the gentleman, to accommodate the traveller, and it is the most universal vehicle of verbal communication, but Latin has been for ages past, and I believe will be for ages to come, (if the world stand), the groundmark of the literary part of a liberal education. It is like the root of all the most refined living languages; and when a foundation is laid in this, the rest are readily learned. In our own tongue, so many thousand words branch out from the Latin, so many Latin words are adopted into our language and become a part of it; and so many familiar Latin phrases and expressions used in speaking and writing, that an ignorance of Latin leaves one much in the dark, and, like bad spelling, betrays an original defect in one's tuition.

An adept at Latin knows, as it were by intention, the powers and fitness of words derived from that fountain, and uses them accordingly; he has opportunity of reading historians, moralists, poets and orators, in a language which no translation does anything like justice to: translations compared to such originals are like shadows compared with substances, and like unanimated compared with animated nature. Do let Abraham learn Latin immediately: he may go on with his French at the same time. The store of learning is no burden. There are many changes in life: he may possibly be put to his shifts in future life, and be glad to get his bread by his wits like his grandfather. When stripped of all the Latin scholar can say: "Omnis mea mecum porto" I hope that my first born grandson will be permitted to cultivate that literary knowledge, which when kept in due subordination, is an useful ornament in society.

44

This remarkable letter throws considerable light on the importance of Latin on the curriculum at Ballitore, and it is an eloquent rejection of the narrow utilitarianism that

⁴⁴ Memoirs and Letters of Richard and Elizabeth Shackleton late of Ballitore Ireland. ed. Mary Leadbeater. (London: Harvey and Darton, 1822), pp.138-140.

coloured the thinking of many contemporary Quakers. Richard Shackleton admits that Latin is of little use to one in preparing for a job. Neither will it make money nor assist one in foreign travel. What is important, however, is that Latin is immeasurably valuable both as a linguistic base and as a cultural grace, and these two latter qualities, are for the Quaker master, sufficient reason to recommend the inclusion of Latin on the curricula of Quaker schools.

In 1779 Richard Shackleton relinquished the mastership of Ballitore school to his son Abraham, under whose headship classical studies continued to play an important role. In 1789 however, the classical curriculum was considerably restricted, mainly due to scruples felt by the master concerning the teaching of pagan authors, and a further dramatic change took place with Abraham Shackleton's refusal to accept non-Quaker pupils into his school.⁴⁵ The immediate result of these innovations at Ballitore was that the school went into decline, and although Abraham reversed his policy at the turn of the century, the decline continued until Ballitore school was closed temporarily in 1803, with the master going into retirement. In 1806, however, the school reopened under the mastership of James White, a son-in-law of Abraham Shackleton, and once again the classical side of the curriculum was given considerable emphasis. Evidence

⁴⁵Leadbeater. Papers. Vol. 1. p.183.

of what texts were studied at Ballitore under James White can be found in letters written by some of the pupils at the school. A typical reference is that of Robert J. Lecky, who in 1813 wrote:-

My dear Father . . . I am reading Phaedros in Latin. Roman History in French. I have got the verbs in the Greek Grammar. 46

From the evidence available in the Quaker archives, it would seem that Ballitore boarding school provided a remarkably wide curriculum in the classics, right up to its closure in 1836.

Ballitore school, with its emphasis on a classical curriculum, was an exception among Quaker schools in Ireland, and stood out in sharp contrast with those Quaker schools under the direct control of the Society of Friends. The most important Quaker schools in Ireland in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, apart from Ballitore, were the three provincial boarding schools at Lisburn, Mountmellick and Newtown, Waterford. These schools, however, taught a very limited and utilitarian curriculum, and Latin did not make its appearance until the 1820^s and 30^s. There were several reasons for the omission of the classics from the curricula of the provincial schools. Firstly, there was the traditional Quaker bias against the teaching of a pagan culture, already referred to. Secondly, since the Ulster and Leinster provincial schools were originally established for the "children of those in low circumstances", it was felt by the Quaker meetings that a sound religious education,

⁴⁶Quane. "Ballitore School". Jour. Kild. Arch. Soc. 1967. p.202.

together with a basic grounding in the three - R^s was adequate schooling for children destined for low status occupations. (It must not be forgotten that Quaker education was primarily vocational and utilitarian). Finally, there was the practical problem of finding suitably qualified schoolmasters to teach the classics, a problem which was particularly difficult in a Society which had not the benefits of University training. By the opening decades of the nineteenth century, however, pupils from all social classes were accepted in the provincial boarding schools, and it gradually became apparent that the curricula of these schools were much too narrow, and had fallen considerably behind what was on offer in contemporary English Quaker schools. Consequently, Latin was introduced to Newtown in 1829, and a young man from Waterford came to the school three times a week, charging fees of four guineas per head per annum.⁴⁷ Mountmellick soon followed suit, and Latin was first taught there in 1833,⁴⁸ The short-lived Camden Street school, which opened its doors in 1840, included the classics among a vast array of languages on its curriculum. This school, however, which modelled itself on some of the better English Quaker boarding schools, closed down within four years, having had little chance to make any immediate impact on Quaker education in Ireland.

Because many Quaker pupils were destined for careers in business, the curricula in their schools tended to include

⁴⁷Newtown School Centenary. p.78.

⁴⁸One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. p.38.

a number of commercial subjects. William Penn, in the late seventeenth century, had emphasized the importance of children learning "some business when young",⁴⁹ and this utilitarian outlook was remarkably influential throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Even Ballitore school, which was mainly noted for the classical and mathematical subjects taught there, played its part in providing a number of commercial subjects. Abraham Shackleton Sr., when founding the school in 1726, stated in an advertisement in the public press that:-

He proposes to fit the youth for business, and instruct⁵⁰ them in polite literature.

The first part of the announcement above was obviously in deference to parents who intended their sons for trading pursuits, and in order to facilitate such pupils, courses in book-keeping and shorthand were taught. There is preserved in the Quaker archives Dublin an original copy of a shorthand book used by Thomas Pim at Ballitore in 1786. This interesting manuscript, written in the most exquisite calligraphy, is a good example of how the religious principles of the Society of Friends permeated even this most utilitarian area of the curriculum. The contents of the manuscript indicate that pupils at Ballitore were expected to learn their shorthand by studying specially translated versions of the Lords' Prayer, the Psalms, and highly didactic material on Virtue, Industry and Discretion.⁵¹

⁴⁹Quane. "Quaker Schools in Dublin". Jour.R.S.A.I. 1964. p.52.

⁵⁰Idem. "Ballitore School". Jour. Kild. Arch. Soc. 1967.p.176

⁵¹Shorthand book of Thomas Pim. Ballitore School. (1786) Friends Arch. Dub.

Probably the most widely taught commercial subject in Irish Quaker schools was book-keeping. This subject was taught extensively in the provincial boarding schools from very early on in their history. The rules for Leinster provincial school, Mountmellick stated explicitly that apart from an elementary education in the three - R^s, the boys were also to be taught book-keeping.⁵² Besides being a very practical subject, Quakers urged the importance of book-keeping on moral grounds, since "*for want of such knowledge, they believed, many small tradesmen had failed in business, and involved themselves and their connections in embarrassment and distress*".⁵³ Indeed, by including commercial subjects on the curriculum, the provincial boarding schools, and Ballitore school, anticipated by quite a distance of time the recommendations of the 1855 Endowed Schools Commissioners Report, which condemned existing Protestant schools on the grounds of following an exclusively classical curriculum, when in fact, most of the pupils were destined for careers in business.⁵⁴

Quaker puritanism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries strongly influenced the attitude of the Society of Friends towards the teaching of modern languages, especially French in their schools. Many Quakers believed that the inclusion of French on the school curriculum would pose a

⁵²Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School. P.B. 20(25). Friends Arch. Dub.

⁵³Fifth Annual Report Friends' Educational Society, 1841: Quoted in Quane "Quaker Schools in Dublin". R.S.A.I. 1964 p.63.

⁵⁴John F. Pettit. "Aspects of Protestant Schooling in Ireland" (M.A. Thesis. U.C.C. 1971) p.193.

threat to the morals of their children, and consequently a minute of the Half-Years Meeting of third month 1723 warned Friends to seek the advice of Quaker elders or to consult the meeting to which they belonged, if they wished to study the language.⁵⁵ As in the case of Latin authors, many Quakers believed that French literature had a tendency to "corrupt our youth", and hence they felt that their children must be protected, in every possible way, from such baneful influences. Again, as in the case of Latin, it is extremely unlikely that more than a handful of Quaker day schools taught French in Ireland in the first half of the eighteenth century. The children of prosperous Quaker parents possibly did learn some French from private tutors, or in Quaker boarding schools in England, but, overall, Quaker opinion in Ireland regarding the study of French was overwhelmingly unsympathetic, if not hostile. The Shackletons of Ballitore, however, were more far-seeing in their attitude to learning in general, and this broader outlook can be seen in Richard Shackletons' advice concerning his grandson's study of the French language. In a letter already referred to on the subject of Latin, and written in 1776, Richard Shackleton says of French:-

I felicitate him on his beginning to learn French, and wish him good speed in it. I observe many get a little superficial smattering in that language and soon lose it: I wish it may not be the case with⁵⁶ Abraham.

⁵⁵Portf. 5A - 24. Friends Arch. Dub.

⁵⁶Memoirs and Letters of Richard and Elizabeth Shackleton. (London: 1822). p.138.

Further on in the letter the writer says that French is "essential to accomplish the gentleman, to accommodate the traveller, and it is the most universal vehicle of verbal communication".⁵⁷ Not only was the assumption that French should be necessarily included in a child's education a modification of earlier Quaker practice, but it was also noteworthy in the Irish educational context of that time. Indeed, French was part of the curriculum at Ballitore in the late eighteenth century, and French influence was present in the school from an even earlier period. Mary Leadbeater refers, in the Annals of Ballitore, to the "French-room" at the school in her grandfathers' time, when several French men and boys, some of them Huguenots, came to Ballitore to study English.⁵⁸ Later on, in the early decades of the nineteenth century, Ballitore school became almost as renowned for its teaching of French as it was for the classics and mathematics. This enhanced reputation was acquired during the mastership of James White, when the latter employed the teaching services of Theodore Suliot, a native Parisian and an M.A. graduate of Glasgow University.⁵⁹

Again, it must be stressed that the curriculum at Ballitore was exceptional in so far as it was well in advance of any other Quaker schools in Ireland, and indeed, it was superior in many ways to the schools of other

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Leadbeater. Papers. Vol. 1. p.43.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p.406.

denominations in eighteenth century Ireland. By the nineteenth century, however, a noticeable change in the attitude of some Irish Quakers to the inclusion of French on the Quaker curriculum, could be detected. This change was due, in a large measure, to developments taking place in English Quaker schools, which often led the way for their counterparts in Ireland. Some Quakers now began to feel that "a knowledge of European tongues had become increasingly valuable, since commerce, literature, science, foreign travel has made them an essential part of a liberal education".⁶⁰ The outcome of this new mode of thinking was that some Irish Quaker schools began to offer French as an option on the curriculum. This was the case for Clonmel boarding school for girls, originally founded by Sarah Grubb in 1787, but under the management of Elizabeth Morris from 1801. In the Prospectus for that school it is stated that:-

A teacher to be provided for such as incline to learn the French language, at Half a guinea a Quarter. ⁶¹

What is unusual about this, is that not alone was French generally regarded with distaste by contemporary Quakers in Ireland, but it was felt that while boys might learn it under exceptional circumstances, the French language was much too dangerous for the sensibilities of refined females. The provincial boarding schools were the last to hold out, and as late as 1827 the study of the "languages" at Newtown was reported against.⁶² In 1829

⁶⁰Quane "Quaker Schools in Dublin". R.S.A.I. 1964.pp.62-3.

⁶¹Prospectus. Clonmel Boarding School for Girls. P.B. (20)66. Friends. Arch. Dub.

⁶²Newtown School Centenary. p.77.

however, it was decided that French should be introduced, and the extra costs involved were to be defrayed by the parents.⁶³ This extension of the curriculum was only granted to the boys, and it was not until 1844 that French at Newtown was extended to the girls.⁶⁴ The Leinster provincial school, Mountmellick, finally allowed French to be introduced in 1833⁶⁵ The provision of instruction in the French language at the provincial boarding schools was facilitated by the publication of extremely "guarded" French textbooks in the early years of the nineteenth century, by the American Quaker Lindley Murray. The latter published the Lecteur Francois in 1802, and followed this up in 1807 with his Introduction au Lecteur Francois.⁶⁶ Such guarded publications ensured that there was little danger that the presence of French on the curriculum of Irish Quaker schools would endanger or "corrupt" the morals of youth.

History and Geography did not play a significant role on the Quaker school curriculum in Ireland until the early decades of the nineteenth century. This was mainly due to the fact that the provincial boarding schools saw little need for a curriculum which provided more than an elementary education for the children of Friends in "low circumstances". Admittedly history and perhaps some

⁶³Ibid., p.78.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. p.38.

⁶⁶Lindley Murray. Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Lindley Murray. 2 ed. (York: 1827). p.112.

elements of Geography were taught at Ballitore in the second half of the eighteenth century, but the provincial boarding schools did not see the necessity for such additions to their curricula until much later.

Early Quaker schools in Britain and Ireland regarded historical study as unnecessary and even spiritually mischievous,⁶⁷ but there was a general admission that the study of Quaker history was necessary for members of the Society of Friends. This, in turn, meant some examination of non-Quaker history, mainly to see where Friends had to stand firm. The study of history presented Quakers with a considerable dilemma. Although Quakerism was not dogmatic, there were definite demands about such things as plainness and war, which would have to be seriously taken into account, if history were to become part of the school curriculum. Whereas literature and drama could (at least superficially) be dismissed as untruthful on the whole, and so taboo, historical data were facts. It was up to the Quakers to decide how truthful the study of history was going to be in their schools.

In the correspondence of Moses Brown in 1784, the latter, after forty one years experience, says he would have in the teaching of history:-

... such parts of history as would convey a right

⁶⁷ Stewart. Quakers and Education. p. 123.

It is sometimes said that Friends have lacked a sense of historical perspective. This was particularly true of early Quakers, who believed that they had revived primitive Christianity. In so doing they seemed unaware of the features they had acquired from the puritanism of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and they appeared to ignore the rich heritage of the centuries that lay between them and the beginning of Christianity. (Reader. Of Schools and Schoolmasters. p.50.)

*idea of the corruption of the human heart, the true nature of the effects of war, the advantage of virtue.*⁶⁸

In other words, the study of history was to be for the substantiation of the Quaker viewpoint and its subject matter was to be subordinated to the promulgation of Quaker ethical beliefs. The only history systematically developed for school use in the eighteenth century was classical history and the only form of study was that of question and answer. The history textbooks were strings of Questions and Answers or statement of fact, and much rote learning was indulged in at this time. Histories of Ancient Greece and Rome were sometimes supplemented by classical stories from the English Readers of Lindley Murray, which made their appearance in Quaker schools in the first decade of the nineteenth century.⁶⁹

By the end of the eighteenth century, English history became a subject of study in some Quaker schools in England, and a specially abridged edition of one such history was used at Ballitore in the 1780^s,⁷⁰ It was not until the early decades of the nineteenth century, however, that history became part of the curriculum in those schools which were originally intended for the children of Friends in "low-circumstances". Ackworth, in Yorkshire, once again gave the lead, and by 1820 English history was an accepted study at this famous Quaker school.⁷¹ The Irish provincial boarding schools soon followed suit, but throughout the

⁶⁸ H.H. Brinton. Quaker Education in Theory and Practice. Pendle Hill. Pamphlet, no. 9.1940. Quoted in Stewart. Quakers and Education. p.123.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p.125

⁷⁰ Quane. "Ballitore School". Jour. Kild. Arch. Soc. p.185.

⁷¹ Stewart. Quakers and Education. p.125.

first half of the nineteenth century, history was one of the most peripheral of subjects on their curricula, and indeed, as late as 1833, when Latin and French were first introduced to Mountmellick, only four boys were learning English history there.⁷² Furthermore, the girls at the Leinster provincial school were excluded from historical study, mainly because an elementary education was considered sufficient for them. Similar rules applied to Lisburn and Newtown.

Irish history was not taught at the Quaker provincial boarding schools, as the subject was considered likely to lead to political dissatisfaction. Even at the more liberally run Ballitore school, where English history was taught in the late eighteenth century, the history of Ireland was only briefly referred to, and then in the most biased manner. (See Chapt. VIII pp. 254). Although the primary aim behind the inclusion of history on the curricula of Quaker schools was in order that "*the crying evils of war, oppression and slavery should be placed in their true light*",⁷³ it was felt that Irish history was too politically sensitive to be employed for that purpose. Consequently, the teaching of history in Irish Quaker schools in the early decades of the nineteenth century was extremely limited. History courses were generally confined to summaries of Roman and Greek history or to exclusively English history, and all the material was carefully selected

⁷²One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. p.38.

⁷³Quane. "*Quaker Schools in Dublin.*" Jour. R.S.A.I. p.63

in order to facilitate the transmission of Quaker values. Although the Society of Friends regarded adherence to the truth as one of their most fundamental principles, the study of history at Quaker schools meant that many aspects of truth would have to be hidden, in the interests of a "guarded" education. Some Quakers felt uneasy about this, but pleaded that the immaturity and delicacy of children's minds necessitated some compromise with historical truth.

Although Geography was another late subject on the curricula of Irish Quaker schools, it did not present the Society of Friends with controversy, as history certainly did. Once again the Irish provincial boarding schools followed the lead given by Ackworth which introduced Geography to boys in 1803, and to girls in 1807.⁷⁴ The latter date was also important at Mountmellick because Quaker school records refer to the teaching of geography for the first time at the Leinster provincial school on that date.⁷⁵ By 1820, therefore, geography was a recognised subject for study on the curricula of the Irish provincial schools, although it does not seem to have occupied an important place there for some considerable time.

Geography was a likely study for Quaker schools, because first the nature of belief in the "Inner Light" demanded a concern for the condition of all men at home and abroad. Secondly, missionary activity opened up contacts with far away places, and the simple study of Quaker

⁷⁴ Stewart. Quakers and Education. p.120.

⁷⁵ One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. p.37.

missionary work, a natural study in a Quaker school, would demand a geographical view. Thirdly, the visits of concerned Friends from abroad to England and Ireland with certificates from their own meetings, often led to contacts with the schools, and a discussion of habits, customs and problems of the visitors' country. Fourthly, from the vocational viewpoint, the study of geography was encouraged in order to provide knowledge supposed to be useful later on, either directly or by transfer. Fifthly, as Lancasters' methods indicate, instruction with map and globe could be entrusted to apprentices.⁷⁶ (This last point was especially important in a Society which suffered from a chronic shortage of adequately qualified teachers, during the first two centuries of its history).

Despite the fact that Geography appeared to be a subject ideally suited to the Quaker curriculum, it remained a rather neglected subject in Irish Quaker schools until the middle of the nineteenth century. Again, as in the case of history, Latin and French, this situation was largely due to the fact that the Irish provincial boarding schools were based on the Ackworth model, whose first consideration was to provide an elementary education for the children of less-affluent parents.

From the early nineteenth century, however, in the privately run Quaker boarding schools in Ireland, a certain amount of instruction in geography was given. In the prospectus for Sarah Grubb's school at Clonmel, for instance, there is a reference to the teaching of "Geography with the use of the Globes".⁷⁷ It would seem

⁷⁶ Stewart. Quakers and Education. p.120

⁷⁷ Prospectus. Clonmel Boarding School for Girls. PB(20)66. Friends Arch. Dub.

that the bulk of Geography teaching in Quaker schools in the early nineteenth century consisted mainly of learning considerable amounts of facts and details by heart, and the "use of the Globes" as mentioned above, must have represented something of an educational innovation in the schools where such a visual aid was employed. Even the use of the globes, however, sometimes failed to make the Geography lesson interesting, and in this regard, Betsy Shackleton of Ballitore claimed that her father Abraham's attempts at the teaching of Geography did not always have the desired effect. In her memoirs she says "*as to lectures on the globe, I only longed for them to be over*".⁷⁸ As Ballitore school was a boys boarding school, Betsy Shackleton's remark would suggest that the teaching of Geography at Ballitore in the late eighteenth century was not an intrinsic part of the school curriculum, but was an occasional extra which the master provided when he taught the boys, together with his own daughters, outside normal school hours. It is highly probable that the status of geography at Ballitore was fairly similar to that at the provincial boarding schools, where the subject, when it was taught at all, was on the outer periphery of the curriculum.

Although there was nothing remotely resembling formal courses in science on the curricula of Irish Quaker schools in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries,

⁷⁸Betsy Shackleton. Ballitore and its Inhabitants Seventy Years Ago. (Dublin: Richard D. Webb and Son. 1862), p.109.

the Society of Friends, was nevertheless, extremely interested in the world of natural science. The natural creation, they felt, was part of God's plan, and in it God could be perceived. Words and learning that depended primarily on books could be deceiving, and Quakers consequently wished to go back to nature, the real source of things. Quakerism found scientific study satisfying because it was empirical, direct and actual. Bootham school in York, from its foundation in 1828 undertook to teach the elements of Natural philosophy, and the first natural history society at a school in England was begun there in 1834.⁷⁹ This interest in natural history was the matrix of all scientific study in the Quaker schools. It had religious principles at its centre. It encouraged one to attend to the creation, to discover its lore and its laws, to let the natural world work its way into the mind of the naturalist. The emphasis on the country and on natural laws and forces, was intended to take the young mind away from the influences of man made society, which, it was believed, could corrupt.⁸⁰ Consequently, many Quaker schools in the early nineteenth century encouraged the collecting of mosses, plants, lichens and shells. This was certainly the case at the provincial boarding schools, where an interest in the natural environment was encouraged by the school authorities. Margaret Fisher, a pupil at Newtown in the early nineteenth

⁷⁹ Stewart. Quakers and Education. p.148.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

century, records that the Munster provincial school possessed a "nice cabinet of rare shells, etc., and the girls were invited to contribute to it".⁸¹ The boys at the Quaker boarding schools in the early nineteenth century were expected to cultivate an interest in gardening, and each of them was given his own small plot on which to grow vegetables. This practice not only applied to the provincial schools, but also was the case at Ballitore. Perhaps, as far as science was concerned Ballitore came closest to anticipate what was to become relatively commonplace in the second half of the nineteenth century. Betsy Shackleton, writing of her father Abraham at the end of the eighteenth century, tells us that he "frequently showed the boys experiments with the air pump and the electrifying machine". She also refers to demonstrations at Ballitore on the workings of the "solar microscope".⁸²

Irish Quaker schools in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries taught a curriculum which was largely dominated by the religious principles of the Society of Friends, and which offered some basic instruction in the vernacular. By the early decades of the nineteenth century, however, there was considerable pressure being put on the provincial boarding schools to widen the range of the education being provided there. The response to these demands saw a gradual extension of the Irish Quaker curriculum, with the introduction of Latin, French, higher

⁸¹Newtown School Centenary. p.35.

⁸²Betsy Shackleton. Ballitore and its Inhabitants. p.109.

mathematics and even some science in the 1830^s and 40^s. Despite these welcome changes, however, the influence of puritanism on the Quaker curriculum still remained strong, and it was to be some considerable time before drama, art and music⁸³ were to make their way into Quaker schools. In a sense the Camden Street school, which lasted a mere four years in the early 1840^s, was something of a watershed in Irish Quaker education, as it offered a wide variety of subjects,⁸⁴ many of which were still regarded as taboo in Irish Quaker schools. Among the vast array of subjects on offer were French, German, Italian, a variety of courses in mathematics and even Irish.⁸⁵ Although the Camden Street school was not a success, and broke up within a few years of its foundation, it proved to a considerable number of Irish Quakers that a "guarded" and religious education need not necessarily be a narrow one. Despite its short life, the Camden Street school helped to prepare the way for the gradual erosion of those puritanical and inhibiting elements which had held back Quaker education in Ireland for over two centuries.⁸⁶

⁸³In the late nineteenth century, the local committee of Mountmellick provincial school "after much serious deliberation came to the conclusion that it is desirable no longer to exclude the teaching of music from the school". Lessons on the piano were therefore given at the school for an extra charge of £4. per annum "for each girl whose parents wish her to learn". (M. Quane "Quaker Schools in Dublin", p.67)

⁸⁴For a full list of subjects on Camden Street school Curriculum see Appendix G.

⁸⁵Most of the population at that time spoke Irish, and most of the Quakers here were merchants and traders. As they were not proselytisers, it may be inferred that their interest in the Irish language was purely mercantile

⁸⁶For an interesting summary of the changes that took place in Irish Quaker life and education, between 1786 and 1886, see "Dinah and Ethel: A Dialogue", in Appendix (B)

C H A P T E R VI

DISCIPLINE IN IRISH QUAKER SCHOOLS IN THE EIGHTEENTH AND EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURIES

The system of discipline employed in Irish Quaker schools in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was largely determined by the system of organisation which the Society of Friends had established for the efficient government of its Church. George Fox, on his visit to Ireland in 1669, laid down the broad outlines of this scheme of government, which gradually began to take shape in the form of monthly, quarterly and yearly meetings. The Quaker system of discipline sought to ensure that the whole life of man, from the cradle to the grave, was legislated for by the Quaker church. Even the most trivial activities of individual members of the Society of Friends did not go unnoticed by the Quaker authorities, and important events in ones lifetime, such as being apprenticed, changing one's job, or getting married, were matters to be decided by Quakers as a whole, rather than by the individual concerned.¹ Personal freedom was subordinated to the demands of an uncompromising Society

¹Neville H. Newhouse. "*John Hancock Junior, 1762-1823*". Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland. Vol.101. (1971), p.43.

which insisted on uniformity and consistency in its members. The behaviour of Quakers in everyday life was regulated by a rigid disciplinary code, the breaking of which was punished by a system of sanctions. The ultimate sanction was 'disownment' or expulsion from the Society.

Education, therefore, was seen by the Quaker authorities as playing a vital role in the socialization of the individual Quaker. Just as, in adult life, Quakers were continually being subjected to the scrutiny of the Society's meetings, so likewise the Quaker child was, from morning to night, being carefully instructed in the principles of the Society, through the medium of what was often referred to as a "guarded education". Plainness in speech, apparel and behaviour were insisted upon,² and every possible precaution was taken to protect the Quaker child from alien, outside influences. The outside world was regarded as a threatening and dangerous place by a Society which saw itself as unique and distant from all others. Thomas Wight and John Ritty in A History of the Rise and Progress of the People called Quakers in Ireland, drew attention to the importance placed by Irish Quakers on education, and on their concern for effective discipline in this matter. They reported that:-

This weighty affair, of the Education of Youth, appears, especially in the early times, to have been one principal Object of the Church's care and concern, both by a constant recommendation that parents should instruct their children in the Principles of Christianity,

² Isabel Grubb, Quakers in Ireland 1654-1900. (London: Swarthmore Press, 1927), p.81.

inure them to frequent Reading of the Holy Scriptures, and train them up in the way of Truth, Sobriety, Industry, Plainness of Habit and speech, and necessary learning and by a constant enquiry how this advice was³ put into execution.

Wight and Ruddy are obviously referring here to the earlier period of Quakerism, when the necessity for boarding schools, or indeed, exclusive schools of their own, was not yet fully recognised by the majority of Irish Quakers. During the first thirty years of Quaker settlement in Ireland, the majority of Quaker children were probably educated at home, or were sent to be educated with other religious persuasions. Parents, however, were seen as the prime educators of their children, and the efforts of the former were closely monitored by the Quaker meetings. By the latter decades of the seventeenth century, Irish Quakers began to establish schools in various parts of the country, beginning with Mountmellick in 1677, so that by the end of the century, a number of small Quaker day schools had been established.

In order to fully appreciate the system of discipline established by the Society of Friends in their schools in eighteenth and nineteenth century Ireland, it is essential to understand the contemporary Quaker attitude to children. Quakers, like many of their contemporaries, did not regard children as being naturally good⁴, hence guidance, reproof and even punishment were necessary for correcting any tendency towards wrongdoing which they might exhibit.

³Thomas Wight and John Ruddy, A History of the Rise and Progress of the People called Quakers, in Ireland. (Dublin, 1751), p.422.

⁴John Reader, Of Schools and Schoolmasters. (London: Quaker Home Service, 1979), p.29.

Joseph Pike, the influential Cork Quaker, reflected the contemporary Quaker attitude to children in his journal, when he said:-

... evil and folly are naturally bound up in the heart of the child. ⁵

Pike felt strongly that it was an extremely important duty of parents to discipline their children in a strict and consistent manner, by "commanding, instructing, correcting, restraining, admonishing, and keeping them in subjection".⁶ It was absolutely necessary, he felt, that parents "should keep a very strong hand" over their children, especially when they are "prone to wildness". He was especially critical of parents who were lax in the disciplining of their children, and he claimed that many of the latter were ruined by such parents through what he terms a "foolish indulgence, falsely called love".⁷ If parents failed in their duty to discipline their offspring, Pike believed that it was the duty of the Quaker church to intervene, and to set things aright. In his journal, he says:-

... it becomes the indispensable duty of the Church to interfere, by dealing with them more closely or openly, as the example of such parents and children, is a hurt to our youth in particular, and a dishonour to our holy profession in general. ⁸

With the establishment of Quaker day schools in the latter years of the seventeenth century, it was hoped that these institutions would prove a useful vehicle for the

⁵ Joseph Pike. Life of Joseph Pike. (London: Darton and Harvey, 1837), p.15.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., p.16.

⁸ibid.

transmission of the Society's discipline to Quaker children. On the whole, however, the early Quaker day schools were not an unqualified success, and indeed, many of them went out of existence after a very short time. The standards in some of these early schools were often very low, mainly due to great difficulty in obtaining qualified schoolmasters.⁹ Furthermore, some schoolmasters complained to their respective meetings that many Quaker parents were not supporting their schools, but were sending their children to be educated with "others who are not Friends". With this unsatisfactory state of affairs obviously in mind, the National Meeting of 1701 advised parents on the tightening up of discipline, so far as their children were concerned. It warned against

- (1) *Pride and idleness, with too much of the hurtful conversation of the world.*
- (2) *Schooling children with non - Friends and in company with other children, whose example occasions their losing the plain language and excites them to pride and vanity.*
- (3) *Too much fullness and choiceness in eating and drinking, especially having the opportunity too frequently to drink strong liquors.*
- (4) *Giving children money to spend at their own will, both before and when they are apprentices.*
- (5) *Keeping children too long at school without labour.*
- (6) *Finery in apparel and liberty of too much of the world's conversation.*
- (7) *Keeping children unemployed at home and exposed to the roving vanities for which idleness makes way.*¹⁰

⁹Report concerning Friends' Schools in Ireland. (York: 1855), p.12. Friends Archives. Dublin.

¹⁰Minute of Dublin Half-Yearly Meeting for fifth month. 1701. Friends Arch. Dub.

The minute accordingly recommends that children be taught at Friends' schools or by their own parents and that concerned Friends show themselves examples in plainness and moderation, and in keeping their children to necessary labour.

Despite the best intentions of many Quaker parents and the strenuous efforts of the best Quaker day schools, the latter establishments proved unsatisfactory as vehicles for the transmission of the Societys' discipline. A major deficiency of the Quaker day school was that the moral education obtained there could be considerably offset by experiences gained outside the school building after classes were over. Once again, Joseph Pike draws attention to this particular weakness of the Quaker day school when he says;

I would advise and caution all parents to take particular care of their children in going to and returning from school, lest they fall into company that would certainly corrupt them; likewise to keep them from walking abroad on first - days, or those called holy days, for such times are the most dangerous, and they are then most liable to fall in the way of ¹¹ idle company, to their great hurt.

What the Society of Friends really wanted, and what they strove to accomplish, was the establishment of a system of boarding schools in Ireland, where Quaker pupils could be educated uniformly, according to the strict discipline of the Society. The boarding school would provide the seclusion necessary for the moral protection of the child,

¹¹Pike. Life of Joseph Pike. p.23.

which the home, in connection with the day school, rarely afforded. The English Quaker, Samuel Tuke, a founder member of the Friends' Educational Society at Ackworth School in the 1830^s, spoke thus of the role of the boarding school in the discipline of Quaker children;

We also think that the boarding school affords opportunities of useful mental development, and for the formation of vigorous character, which are not to be found under the system of private tuition or in a day-school.

The boarding school may be considered as the first transplantation from the home seed bed to new ground, in which the roots and twigs of the plant have greater opportunity of expansion. The day school in connexion with home care has much theoretically to recommend it: human life is seen, and many useful lessons are learned, both as regards the child himself and his companions, and we do not undervalue the daily exercise of the filial affections as an educational means, or the religious and moral care which right-minded parents may exercise over their children. This system of education is not, however, so favourable to the subjection of the will, and to the formation of habits of steady application, as that of the boarding-school. Neither the parent nor the master has that single authority over the boy which is desirable, and the associations formed, in going and returning 12 from school are often of the least desirable kind.

Although the above quotation comes from a paper written by Samuel Tuke in 1843, it very accurately reflects the attitude of many Irish Quakers of a century earlier to the advantages of a boarding school education for their children. The Quaker boarding school, they argued, was the only realistic way of transmitting a "guarded education". The boarding school student would be under the closest supervision both day and night, and in such a manner he would be protected from all harmful outside influences.

¹²Quoted in Reader, Of Schools and Schoolmasters. pp. 38-39.

Such a school would facilitate a consistent and uniform approach to Quaker discipline, and in such a protected environment the scholar would be sheltered from the temporary lapses in discipline which were an unavoidable part of even the most vigilant Quaker home. The boarding schools which the Society of Friends established in Ireland in the latter years of the eighteenth century were regarded by their founders as extensions of the Quaker family.¹³ They were extensions with a difference, however, as they were free from the alleged weakness which characterized many Quaker families, and which Joseph Pike unsympathetically referred to as "*foolish indulgence falsely called love*".

As there was a considerable emphasis on a "*guarded education*", and on the maintenance of a strict religious atmosphere in their schools, Irish Quakers in the eighteenth century tended to be extremely protective towards their children. The inwardness of Irish Quakers at this period meant that the world at large was regarded as a place in which wickedness flourished and which posed a threat to the morals of impressionable Quaker children. Consequently, in keeping with this threatening view of the world, many eighteenth century Quakers developed an outlook closely akin to a siege mentality, and hence surrounded their boarding schools with high protective walls. The minutes of Leinster provincial school at Mountmellick state decisively that "*a wall seven feet high shall be built*

¹³Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School. (1816). P.B.20(25) Friends Arch. Dub.

immediately, cutting off all communication with the street, and having a door opposite the centre of the house".¹⁴

A wall was also to be built round the garden. Similarly at Lisburn walls were built, and a hedge separated the boys and girls' playgrounds in the early nineteenth century, which was soon replaced by a high wall.¹⁵ At Newtown, Waterford, the Munster provincial school was surrounded by a wall ten feet high,¹⁶ and the ornamental wrought iron gates at the entrance were taken down and replaced by a plain wooden gate, completely blocking off the view.¹⁷

The protective measures undertaken by the Society of Friends in relation to their schools in Ireland make it abundantly clear that the Quaker authorities were determined to educate their children in a rarified atmosphere, almost totally isolated from the outside world. The Leinster provincial school, though situated in the town of Mountmellick, was, to all intents and purposes, sealed off from contact with the neighbourhood, and rules of a similar nature applied to the Ulster and Munster provincial schools in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The discipline employed in the three provincial boarding schools, not only separated the boys and girls

¹⁴ One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. (Dublin: Richard D. Webb and Son, 1886), p.18.

¹⁵ Neville H. Newhouse, A History of Friends' School Lisburn. (Lurgan: 1974), p.35.

¹⁶ Emilie Bennis. "Waterford's Quaker Community: 1650-1800". part 2. Old Waterford Society. Decies No. 5, 1977, p.20

¹⁷ Newtown School Centenary. (Waterford: Newenham and Harvey, 1898), p.72.

from the outside world, but also placed considerable barriers between the sexes. Despite being pioneers of co-educational boarding schools in Ireland, the Society of Friends rigorously segregated the sexes within their schools. At Lisburn, for instance, boys and girls were kept apart when they were not in class. Although girls presumably looked at boys if they were in class together, once they were outside the building, it was a serious offence for a girl to be found talking to a boy.¹⁸ Margaret Fisher, a pupil at Newtown in the early nineteenth century, reports:-

It often resulted in punishment if we looked over at the boys' table when taking our meals, or if we spoke to a boy who was not a brother or cousin. 19

In fact, discipline was so strict in the segregation of the sexes at the provincial boarding schools that boys and girls were even forbidden to know each others names.²⁰ Though technically co-educational, the Friends school Lisburn instructed the girls in reading, writing and arithmetic in the same room with the boys, but not in classes with them.²¹ Similarly, at Mountmellick, a past pupil who attended the provincial school in the 1830^s, records:

Boys and girls met in the dining room for meals, and to hear the scriptures read, but no further intercourse was allowed, and we never met in class. 22

¹⁸Newhouse. History of Friends School Lisburn. p.35.

¹⁹Newtown School Centenary. (1898). p.34.

²⁰Ibid., p.77.

²¹Extracts from Diary of Mary Tolerton at Lisburn School. Portf. 5A-25. Friends. Arch. Dub.

²²One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. (1886). p.29.

At meals, in the three provincial boarding schools, the pupils were compelled to maintain strict silence, and they were forbidden from starting to eat, or from leaving the table, until either the master or mistress had given a suitable signal for the purpose.²³ Even in Sarah Grubb's private boarding school for girls at Clonmel, similar rules were in operation and pupils were strongly advised:

That they forbear talking one to another in school hours, at meals and reading except there be sufficient reason for it, and then not to be louder than a whisper. 24

The children at the Quaker provincial boarding schools were under the strictest supervision, both day and night. The only recreation permitted in the late eighteenth century was "a country walk", and although pupils at Mountmellick, for instance, were allowed "to walk in the fields for the benefit of the air" twice a week, they were never to go out of the sight of their teachers.²⁵ The spiritual well being of the children was being continually emphasized, and those in charge were strongly urged "to be watchful that no improper books, pamphlets or papers be introduced or secreted among the children, this being a source of much evil".²⁶ The children were to rise at the spartan hour of 6 a.m. in Summer and 7 in Winter, and to

²³Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School. Friends Arch. Dub.

²⁴Advices to the pupils of Suir Island School. Clonmel. Grubb Coll. S.124. Friends Arch. Dub.

²⁵Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School.

²⁶Ibid.

retire early at night. The rules for the management of Leinster provincial school state:-

Early hours for retiring are to be observed, the governor being desired to lock the doors of the house²⁷ at the tenth hour, and take the keys to his chamber.

Deborah Martin, a pupil at Newtown in the 1830^s, gives an example of the extreme lengths to which some Quaker teachers resorted when trying to regulate the behaviour of their pupils. She cites the example of the governess Rachael Barnes, who was so concerned with the moral welfare of her pupils, that no detail of their school day was too trivial for observation and comment. Rachael Barnes introduced a novel plan to help improve the conduct of her pupils, which Deborah Martin describes as follows:-

When we assembled in our schoolroom for the nightly reading of the Scriptures, before we took our seats, little black books called "diaries" were produced, and in each Rachael Barnes entered brief remarks as to our conduct during the day; sometimes it might be "trying to be good", or "cross and unkind to my little sister", red ink denoted good conduct, black²⁸ the reverse.

These "diaries", which were discontinued in 1835, on the departure of Rachael Barnes, are a good example of the extraordinary detail in organisation to which many Quakers in positions of authority were prepared to go when laying down regulations for the moral well-being of members of the Society. It is no surprise to read of such meticulous detail in the discipline of Quaker children, particularly in a Society which regulated even the colour of a silk

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Newtown School Centenary. p.64.

handkerchief or the number of buttons on a coat.²⁹

The nature of the "guarded" education provided by the Quaker provincial boarding schools in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries meant, in effect, that school vacations were unknown. From the moment of entering the school at about ten years of age, until his, or her, departure about four years later, the Quaker child very seldom saw his parents. Indeed, it has been recorded that on some occasions parents failed to recognise their children, and vice versa, after the passing of a number of years away from home.³⁰ The Quaker authorities sincerely believed that approximately four to five years of continuous education in the principles of the Society, within the protected environment of the boarding school, was essential for the proper socialization of every Quaker child. Samuel Alexander, who went to Newtown as a pupil in 1828 wrote in a letter to the Newtown centenary committee of 1898 that his school life "continued unbroken for a single day in five years".³¹ Similarly, an 'old-boy' who attended Mountmellick as late as 1836 recorded:-

*I was only home for two nights in three and a half years. No vacations. In those times we did not think of them, and no such thing as a Christmas dinner.*³²

Parents came occasionally to see their children, normally when the former were attending quarterly meetings. The usual method of communicating with parents throughout the year

²⁹Grubb. Quakers in Ireland. (1927), p.83.

³⁰Newtown School Centenary. pp. 18-19.

³¹Ibid., p.38.

³²One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. (1898), p.31.

was by letter, but even this channel was severely restricted, because, as one past pupil of Newtown recalls, "*Our letters were written under inspection, and no others were allowed*".³³ The first vacation, a period of four weeks at Mountmellick, was not granted until 1853. As early as 1817, however, two boys had been allowed to go home for a short time, and in 1830 permission was requested for nine children. This request was granted, but at the same time the conviction was expressed "*that the practice ought not to be encouraged, as it is one which is likely to be injurious to the children*".³⁴ Such an apparently unfeeling attitude on the part of the Quaker authorities must, however, be seen in its historical context. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Irish Quakerism was strongly influenced by adherence to an extremely rigid, disciplinary code, and routine and regimentation were seen as an essential part of every Quaker child's education. Many Quakers seriously believed that any unnecessary interruptions in the regulated routine of school life was bound to be detrimental to the spiritual and moral well-being of their children.

Another important factor must also be borne in mind. There is evidence to suggest that the attitude of Quaker parents towards their children in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was more detached than is the case in the modern world. Families were very large then, and there was an extremely high death rate among children. Anthony Sharp, for instance, had twenty children and only eight of them survived three years of age,

³³Newtown School Centenary. p.64.

³⁴One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. p.32.

and of those, two died shortly afterwards. The very fact that the same name was given two or three times to succeeding children would seem to suggest that the first bearers of it had very little individuality, even in the minds of their parents.³⁵ It is only when we take such factors into account, that we can begin to comprehend why Quaker parents acquiesced in an arrangement which deprived them of the company of their children for periods of four or five years.

As far as school vacations were concerned, however, there was one notable exception in the case of Irish Quaker schools. The private boys boarding school at Ballitore, Co. Kildare, introduced school vacations in the early nineteenth century, many years ahead of the provincial boarding schools. Mary Leadbeater, for the year 1808, records in her diary;

A vacation of one month was given this Summer, the first ever given in Ballitore school. 36

Ballitore boarding school, however, was unique. It was privately owned and it did not come under the jurisdiction of the Quaker provincial meetings. Nevertheless, it must not be inferred that the Quakers at Ballitore were radically different from the rest of their co-religionists in Ireland. Such indeed was far from the case. Although the school was the first Quaker boarding school in Ireland to grant annual vacations, it must be remembered that under three generations of the Shackleton family no such vacations were given. It was mainly in deference to the many non-Quakers at the school that James White, a son-in-law of Abraham Shackleton Jr., granted vacations from 1808. The valuable discipline of an unbroken period of boarding school education was accepted in principle by

³⁵Portf. 5A - 24. Friends Arch. Dub.

³⁶Mary Leadbeater. The Leadbeater Papers. Vol. 1. (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862), p.320.

many Quakers in Ireland until well into the nineteenth century.

Despite the absence of school vacations, regular holidays were granted on monthly meeting day and on seventh day (Saturday) afternoons in the Irish Quaker boarding schools,³⁷ and at Newtown Waterford an excursion to the sea-side at Tramore or to Woodstown was organised annually in the early nineteenth century. Because of the absence of vacations, Deborah Martin recalls that this annual outing was a "*wonderful delight*".³⁸ At Lisburn, according to Mary Tolerton, the children at the Ulster provincial school often had a "*play-day*" or an evening allowed to them for recreation.³⁹

Quaker children, like children everywhere, found some time for games and recreation, despite the considerable length of the school day and the absence of vacations. Unlike other children, however, the Quaker child was expected to be sober and serious in everything he did, and this applied even to his recreation. To a certain extent, the Quaker child in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was regarded as a miniature adult, and like the adult, he was expected to avoid all activities of a frivolous nature. Perhaps the recreation most in favour with Quakers was the reading of serious literature. At Newtown, for instance, in the early nineteenth century, there was a small library for the girls which was mostly availed of on

³⁷Newtown School Centenary. p.65.

³⁸Ibid., p.67.

³⁹Portf. 5A-25. Friends Arch. Dub.

First days (Sundays). The bulk of the literature in this library was the work of Quaker authors, Sewell's History and the writings of Thomas Ellwood being the most frequently read.⁴⁰ As Mary Leadbeater records in her diary, this was a period when "There were few, if any, books ... calculated for children which combined entertainment with instruction",⁴¹ so the reading material in the Quaker boarding schools must have been very dull stuff indeed. Margaret Fisher, a past pupil of Newtown recalls that the provincial boarding school possessed a "nice cabinet of rare shells, etc., and the girls were invited to contribute to it".⁴²

As far as games were concerned, the Quaker boarding schools of this period were very strict. The game of marbles, for instance, which was extremely popular with contemporary schoolchildren, was forbidden in the Quaker provincial schools and the Camden Street school, mainly because the Quaker elders considered it too close to gaming. They put their objections in the following manner:

Our objection against the game of marbles is its tendency to promote the desire of keeping that which has been temporarily won by skill - the first step in gaming. The practice of claiming and keeping the marbles of an antagonist which a boy has succeeded in striking out of the ring is entirely prohibited in Quaker schools not only as tending to infuse a mercenary and covetous disposition, but as leading by an easy gradation to stakes or to chance games, till the evil spirit of the gamster with its seven other spirits more wicked still might find too ready an 43
entrance.

⁴⁰Newtown School Centenary. p.35.

⁴¹Leadbeater. Papers. p.62

⁴²Newtown School Centenary. p.35.

⁴³Quoted in Michael Quane. "Quaker Schools in Dublin". Jour. R.S.A.I. (1964) p.65.

Indeed the rules for the administration of Leinster provincial school warned those in authority there to "strictly avoid gaming of all kinds",⁴⁴ and this rule was strictly enforced in the other provincial schools. Furthermore, the game of chess, which might seem on first sight to be consistent with Quaker seriousness and sobriety was severely frowned upon by the Quaker authorities, as it was considered likely to develop into an obsession with those who played it, to the exclusion of other, more important, interests.⁴⁵

At the Shackleton boarding school at Ballitore, however, where a somewhat more liberal regime prevailed, a greater variety of games and recreations was permitted. This was partly due to the broader outlook of the Shackletons, especially Richard, and the presence of non-Quaker pupils. The boys were allowed to keep caged birds as pets; allotted garden plots in which to grow flowers and vegetables, and played extensively with "Casting tops, Battle boards, and shuttle-cocks".⁴⁶ Jonathan Pim, a pupil at Ballitore in 1821, referred in a letter to the fact that boys at the school "have a great many pets now viz; Rabbits, pidgeons, dogs, crow, jack-day etc."⁴⁷ Mary Leadbeater, a daughter of Richard Shackleton, vividly describes the lively atmosphere

⁴⁴Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School. PB 20 (25). Friends Arch. Dub.

⁴⁵Quane. "Quaker School in Dublin". p.65.

⁴⁶Idem. "Ballitore School". Jour. Kildare Archaeological Society. Vol. XIV. No.2 pp. 178-179.

⁴⁷Letter. Jonathan Pim to Richard Webb. Ballitore 4/12/1821. Friends Arch. Dub.

of the school playground at Ballitore when she says;

... the ball bounded in the ball alley, the marbles⁴⁸ rolled, and the tops spun.

There is some evidence to suggest, however, that even at Ballitore the game of marbles was not always in favour, and was frowned upon by the school authorities. James White, headmaster at the school from 1806 to its closure in 1836, obviously regarded the game with considerable disapproval. His displeasure is recorded in the letter of Jonathan Pim already referred to, where he says:-

They now and then play marbles which the master hates and walk over tables which he dislikes as much, as he has lately got the tables painted and the paint is⁴⁹ almost all torn off already.

The daily routine of school life at Ballitore was occasionally broken and enlivened by excursions to places or events of interest. A rather amusing story, connected with one such event, and concerning Edmund Burke is related by Mary Leadbeater. Burke and some of his fellow students were permitted one day to go and see the procession of the judges at the county town of Athy, on condition that each of the senior lads should write a description of the spectacle in Latin verse. Mary Leadbeater continues:-

When Burke finished his own task, he was earnestly solicited by another lad to assist him, the poor fellow declaring that he had laboured in vain for hours to knock something out of his brains, and that rather than try again he would walk barefooted to the top of Lugnaquilla, which is the loftiest of the Wicklow mountains, about twelve Irish miles from Ballitore. He reminded his schoolfellow how often

⁴⁸Leadbeater. Papers, p.319.

⁴⁹Pim to Webb. 4/12/1821. Friends Arch. Dub.

he had helped him before, and said that this was the hardest task he ever got. Burke was for the moment somewhat puzzled how he could compose a second paper on the same subject; and hoping to obtain some hint for the composition, he asked the applicant what had struck him as most remarkable in the procession. The lad replied that he had noticed nothing in particular, except a fat piper in a brown coat. Furnished with this hint, Burke immediately commenced and in a very short time completed a humorous poem in doggerel Latin; the first line of which was as follows:-
"Piper erat fatus, qui brownum tegmen habebat". 50

The discipline at Ballitore was considerably more liberal than that of the provincial boarding schools. Apart from the presence of a number of non-Quaker pupils, other factors contributed to the more relaxed atmosphere at the school. These included the fact that a number of the senior students at Ballitore were considerably older than the students at the provincial schools, who generally had to leave at fourteen years of age. Ballitore school also catered for a number of 'parlour-boarders', some of whom were grown adults.⁵¹ Discipline for the latter was, understandably, considerably more relaxed than that which governed the behaviour of the younger students, and the 'parlour-boarders' lived with the master and his family with a considerable degree of informality. Mary Leadbeater refers to the convivial evenings at the Ballitore household and of the "suppers which, after a day spent in fulfilling their different duties, assembled the master, mistress, their children, the parlour boarders, housekeeper, and ushers, round the cheerful table".⁵²

⁵⁰Leadbeater. Papers. Vol. 1. p.50

⁵¹Ibid., p.43.

⁵²Ibid., p.314.

Ballitore school was much more an extension of the Quaker family, than the provincial boarding schools. While the latter emphasized the notion of family in the literature associated with the administration of the schools, they were, in actuality, austere and impersonal institutions. At Ballitore, however, the influence of the Shackleton family, that of master, mistress and children, was very apparent, and permeated every aspect of school life. It was the family influence at Ballitore, which made the school for many boys a home from home, and which was largely responsible for the happy atmosphere which generally prevailed at this unique Quaker school.

Two areas, in which the Quaker disciplinary code, as applied to schools, was especially rigid were those of clothes and speech. From the earliest days of the Society of Friends, Quakers had constantly emphasized the importance of "plainness" in these matters, and the reports of the numerous school committees throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries bear witness to the urgency with which this subject was regarded. The Cork Quaker Joseph Pike had warned parents of the moral dangers to children presented by "*finery in apparel*", and he asked them not to give their children "*fine clothes, which would beget in them a high proud mind*".⁵³ Consequently, the major emphasis in Irish Quaker schools in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as regards clothing was on

⁵³Pike. Life of Joseph Pike. p.64.

simplicity and utility. The clothing requirements for the pupils in each of the provincial schools was laid out in unambiguous detail for their parents. The rules for the administration of Leinster provincial school, for instance, stated that

Those who shall have the care of providing clothing for children sent to the school, are requested to be particular, that it may be such as shall be consistent⁵⁴ with our Christian profession.

At a meeting of the Committee for Leinster provincial school held at Edenderry on 8th 10 mo. 1785, "the following list of clothes was concluded on to be brought by each child to the school at the time of admission, and they are on leaving to take a like quantity of clothes with them, viz.,

LIST OF CLOTHES TO BE BROUGHT TO THE SCHOOL BY EACH

BOY	GIRL	
1 Hat	1 Hat or Bonnet	4 Check Aprons with Bibs
2 Coats	1 Cloak (not silk).	1 White Apron
2 Waistcoats	1 Pr. Stays.	2 Neck Handkerchiefs
2 Pr. Breeches	1 Pr Pockets	2 Pocket do.
4 Shirts	1 Pr. Mittens	4 Caps with Strings
2 Handkerchiefs	2 Stuff Gowns	2 Night Caps
4 Pr. Worsted stockings	2 Petticoats (quilted)	4 Pr. Stockings (worsted or yarn)
2 Pr. Shoes	2 Under do.	2 Pr. Shoes." ⁵⁵
2 Night Caps.	4 New shifts with 4 strong tuckers to tack	

⁵⁴ Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School.

⁵⁵ Michael Quane. "The Friends' Provincial School, Mountmellick". (Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland. Vol. 89. 1959.) p.69.

Similar clothing requirements were applied to the Ulster and Munster provincial schools. We read, from the account of a female past pupil of Newtown that;

Girls wore little ' Friends Bonnets', with no cap underneath and no frill at the back - the boys all⁵⁶ wore top hats.

Despite the vigilance of the Quaker school committees and the untiring supervision carried out by the superintendent and his staff, there are several references in the Quaker school archives to periodic infringements of the rules about clothing. In 1812, at Mountmellick, the superintendent informed the school committee "that some boys have been sent in, whose clothing necessarily required alteration, in order to preserve that consistency of appearance, so desirable in a school immediately under the care of the Society".⁵⁷ Irish Quaker boarding schools in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries did not use school uniforms as such. This was mainly because the latter tended to be associated with charity schools, and the Quaker authorities at the provincial boarding schools had "no design publicly to mark them (the children of Friends in low circumstances) as objects of charity".⁵⁸ Nevertheless, the very explicit and detailed rules governing the type of clothing worn by Quaker pupils in the provincial schools produced a

⁵⁶Newtown School Centenary. p.34.

⁵⁷One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. p.21.

⁵⁸Sarah Grubb. Journal. (Belfast: William Robinson, 1837), p.239.

dull and drab uniformity of appearance, which closely paralleled the sober and uninspiring appearance of their more conservative elders.⁵⁹

As far as "plainness of speech" was concerned, the rules of the three provincial schools were very insistent that all the pupils should constantly use what they termed "plain language". Plain language meant that a Quaker refused to use the plural "you" when addressing someone, since it was the form of address to a superior, and was believed to be giving special honour to a human being. Instead he substituted the Biblical-sounding "thee" and "thou". Robert Barclay, the Quaker theologian, referring to the "plain-language" says;

Seeing therefore it is manifest to us, that this form of speaking to men in the plural number, doth proceed from Pride, as well as that it is in itself a lie, we found a necessity upon us, to testify against this corruption, by using the singular equally unto all. ⁶⁰

Many Quakers believed that educating their children with non-Quakers was a threat to the development of plain language, and concern for the latter's development was one of the reasons for Quakers wishing to establish their own schools in the first place. They strongly felt that

⁵⁹This point is brought out in a stanza from a poem written to commemorate the centenary of Mountmellick school in 1886. It reads:-

*"With elders quaint of trim
Are children quaint as they;-
The girl in her poke-bonnet, drab or grey,
The boy in his broad brim."*

(One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School), p.73.

⁶⁰Quoted in Phillip Wragge. The Faith of Robert Barclay. (London: Friends House, 1948): p.135.

"plain language" could best be advanced in the protected environment of the boarding school, and the staffs of Quaker schools were constantly on the alert for any infringements of this rule. The rules for Mountmellick school, for instance, state unequivocally that the children are "to constantly use the plain language correctly and encourage each other therein",⁶¹ and Sarah Grubb's private school at Suir Island, Clonmel was concerned that all the girls be "careful to use the word 'thou' in its proper place".⁶² Indeed, traditional Quakers in Ireland regarded the acquisition of "plain language" with such importance, that it became one of the major external distinguishing marks of the Society of Friends in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Besides being seriously concerned with discipline in regard to clothes and speech, the Quaker boarding schools in Ireland also laid down explicit rules concerning the consumption of food and drink. The half-yearly meeting of fifth - month 1701 had warned parents about the moral dangers threatening their children as a result of "Too much fullness and choiceness in eating and drinking, especially having the opportunity too frequently to drink strong liquors".⁶³ Consequently, the bill of fare provided by the three provincial boarding schools was rather dull and

⁶¹Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School.

⁶²Advices to the pupils of Suir Island School, Clonmel. Grubb. Coll. S.124. Friends Arch. Dub.

⁶³Minutes of Dublin Half-Yearly Meeting. 5th mo. 1701. Friends Arch. Dub.

monotonous, though reasonably nourishing. William Savery, on a visit to Lisburn in 1797, recorded in his diary that the children of the provincial boarding school were partaking of "potatoes and milk",⁶⁴ and Mary Tolerton, a pupil at Lisburn about ten years later recalled that "we had meat three times a week".⁶⁵

The Quaker prohibition against the frequent consumption of "*strong liquors*" was also rigorously enforced in their boarding schools. Such a prohibition, however, did not extend to the moderate consumption of beer, which was served on a regular basis. In this regard, Mary Tolerton, who had become assistant housekeeper at Newtown boarding school in 1817, recalled that the former housekeeper Hannah Robinson, had insisted that "*every child must have a good drink of beer every day that there was no meat*". The beer served at Newtown was brewed in Waterford by a "*much esteemed Friend named Cherry*".⁶⁶ Similarly, at Lisburn, according to Mary Tolerton, beer was available regularly twice a week at dinner.⁶⁷ When the serving of beer in the provincial boarding schools was eventually discontinued about the middle of the nineteenth century, it was done for economic rather than moral reasons.

⁶⁴William Savery, Journal. (London: Charles Gilpin. 1844), p.254.

⁶⁵Extracts from Diary of Mary Tolerton. Portf. 5A-25. Friends Arch. Dub.

⁶⁶Portf. 5A - 23.

⁶⁷Portf. 5A - 25.

PUNISHMENT IN QUAKER SCHOOLS.

With such a comprehensive system of rules and regulations guiding the behaviour of Quaker boys and girls, it sometimes happened, of course, that the rules were broken. To deal with such occasions the Society of Friends had devised a system of punishments which were relatively uniform throughout the Quaker schools, and which varied only in minor details from school to school. Such punishments ranged from milk corrections and reprimands for minor infractions of the rules to corporal punishment and even expulsion for the most serious offences.

For minor offences, in particular, the object behind Quaker punishments was not so much to inflict physical pain or discomfort, as to initiate a sense of shame in the offending pupil. Mary Tolerton, a pupil at the Ulster provincial school in the early nineteenth century, recalls some examples of the latter approach to discipline in her diary. At the Lisburn school boys and girls sat at opposite sides of the room, a pathway being left between the two sets of forms. In this pathway, she recalls;

... the first boy or girl found idling was made to stand holding the 'tawse' (tawed or whitetanned leather), until another idler was found, to whom the first was only too glad to pass it on, and give up the place of scorn and disgrace. 68

She also refers to naughty children at Lisburn being sent

⁶⁸Ibid.

to a place of punishment known as the 'Black Hole',⁶⁹
a narrow garden cellar under the house, entered from the
garden, and used exclusively for minor offenders.
Although, continues Mary Tolerton, the children dreaded
to be sent there, she thinks the dread was "more of the
disgrace than of the dark loneliness of the hole".⁷⁰

Some of the punishments meted out at the Irish
Quaker boarding schools in the eighteenth and nineteenth
centuries may appear ludicrous and bizarre to the
modern mind, but obviously they must have been extremely
effective in their impact upon young, impressionable
Quaker children, leaving aside the possible psychological
damage they might have caused. For late rising at
Newtown, for instance, a boy had to come to dinner with
a towel round his head, and for stirring the fire a
girl had to sit in the large entrance hall and say to
anyone passing - "I am here in punishment for poking the
fire".⁷¹ Deborah Martin, a pupil at Newtown in the
1830^s states that probably the hardest punishment to
bear was "to stand in disgrace at the dining-room
sideboard during meal time - it was felt to be quite a
public exposure".⁷²

⁶⁹The 'Black Hole' at Lisburn was probably an outcome
of the influence of Ackworth School in Yorkshire, where a
similar place of detention was in existence. At Ackworth
the place was referred to as "the new prison", or more
colloquially, "the Holes", and there are records of short
solitary confinement for such offences as rudeness, teasing
fighting, causing wilful disturbance, cruelty to other
children, etc. (W.A.C. Stewart. Quakers and Education.
(London: Epworth Press, 1953) p.199)

⁷⁰Portf. 5A - 25

⁷¹Newtown School Centenary. p.17.

⁷²Ibid., p.65.

A rather more serious punishment for relatively minor offences, and one most likely to bring the recalcitrant pupil to heel was to "send him to coventry". This was a punishment occasionally used in the Camden Street school for boys in the early 1840^s, The school authorities would "assemble the other boys - explain the circumstances - wish them not to countenance him (the offender), or play with him till leave be given".⁷³ Those in charge felt that there was no more effective punishment than letting the offender realise that he was being "shunned by all". This form of punishment must have been especially severe in Quaker boarding schools, where a child was isolated from his home and parents, and where he was totally dependent on the companionship of his peers. The cornerstone of Quaker disciplinary policy at the Camden Street school was to make the offender "solitary in a crowd". There was always the qualification in Quaker schools, however, that the punishment being administered should always be employed medicinally and should never be vindictive or retaliatory in nature.⁷⁴

The latter qualification was particularly important when it came to the matter of corporal punishment. Floggings were commonplace in the boarding schools of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and it is a debatable point whether Quaker schools were more severe in this

⁷³Michael Quane. "Quaker Schools in Dublin".
Jour. R.S.A.I. 1964. p.67.

⁷⁴Ibid.

area than others. George Fox himself was not adverse to the use of corporal punishment in schools. Referring to this matter, he said;

Withold not correction from thy child, for if thou beatest him with the rod he shall not die. 75

Friends, however, often placed some sort of limit upon themselves by reserving corporal punishment as a last resort, and then using a special record book which could be inspected, or by having the punishment inflicted by another master than the one who awarded it.⁷⁶ The record-book system, for instance, was used for a while at Ackworth in Yorkshire, in the early years of that schools' history, and the system of discipline employed there significantly influenced disciplinary policy in the three Irish provincial boarding schools. As far as Mountmellick was concerned, the rules for the government of the school stated explicitly that corporal punishment should only be administered with "coolness and moderation, in a way suitable to the nature of the fault and in the presence of the Superintendent or Mistress of the Family".⁷⁷ Unfortunately, however, there is some evidence to suggest that at Mountmellick in the 1820^s and 1830^s especially,

⁷⁵G. Fox and E. Hookes. A Primer and Catechisme for Children. 1670. p.91. Quoted in Stewart. Quakers and Education. (London: 1953) p.40.

⁷⁶Stewart. Quakers and Education. (London: Epworth Press, 1953.) p.41.

⁷⁷Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School. Friends Arch. Dub. Sarah Grubb, (1756-1790), the Foundress of Suir Island School, Clonmel was opposed to corporal punishment. She claimed that "to punish a child because it has offended us, without the discovery of an evil design, is to act under an unchristian spirit, which revenges injuries". Quoted in Sarah Grubb, Journal. (Belfast: 1837), p.248.

the severity of punishments sometimes far outweighed the gravity of the offence. One particular incident, related in the minutes of the school committee, involved several boys being flogged in the presence of the committee, one boy so severely, that the doctor had to be sent for, and leeches applied to his wounds.⁷⁸ Furthermore, an "old-boy" who attended the school as late as 1836 records that the Superintendent and Master "exercised themselves in thrashing us. There was a shrub that grew inside the garden door, called Butcher's Broom, which was a great favourite for this purpose."⁷⁹

In general, however, floggings were only resorted to in Irish Quaker schools for what were considered very serious offences. Such an offence might be a combined act of protest or rebellion by a number of conspiring students. An incident of this nature occurred at Mountmellick in the early nineteenth century when the students at table protested about the quality of the food, shouting out against "John Bull" (the nickname for the English Superintendent), and his unsavoury "plum pudding".⁸⁰ A similar type of offence which earned the culprit a flogging was a "barring-out" at Ballitore school, led by a boy called Henry Graham in the 1730^s. The practice of "barring-out" involved the occupation of the school premises by the student body, and the locking out

⁷⁸One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. p.28.

⁷⁹Ibid., p.29.

⁸⁰Ibid., p.28.

of the staff. Mary Leadbeater, in her diary, relates the incident at Ballitore in the following manner:-

A "barring-out" took place, and Abraham Shackleton (the master), after having tried other methods in vain, forced the door with a sledge-hammer. While this was being done, the garrison strove to capitulate. They asked for "a week's play." - "No." "A Day's Play." - "No." "An evenings play" - "No." "Pardon for their fault." - "No." Graham snapped a pistol, which missed fire. The offenders were led to punishment; those who expressed sorrow for what they had done escaped the dreaded whipping. Graham would not, and was whipped. He was then asked was he sorry now? - "No." He was whipped again. Was he sorry? - "No." He was whipped again. Was he sorry? - "Yes; he was sorry that the pistol had missed fire!" 81

"Barring-outs", which normally occurred at the approach of school vacations, were not common in Ireland, and were particularly rare in Quaker schools where no vacations were granted, until well into the nineteenth century.

In the records of Mountmellick school, for instance, there is just one brief reference by a past pupil to an abortive "barring-out."⁸²

The ultimate sanction which Quaker schools could impose on offending pupils was expulsion. This was very rarely used by the Quaker school authorities, however, and was only applied as a last resort. Expulsion of pupils

⁸¹Leadbeater. Papers. Vol. 1 p.74.

⁸²One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. p.37 According to Dr. Johnson in his Life of Addison, "The Practise of Barring-out was a savage licence practised in many schools to the end of the last century". (The practice was not common in Ireland, but according to Michael Quane in Jour. Kildare Archaeological Society. 1967, there is an account of a barring-out at Armagh Royal School in Realities of Irish Life by W. Stewart Trench, and also an account of one at the Erasmus Smith Grammar School, Drogheda about 1720 in Recollections of the life of John O'Keefe, written by himself. London 1826. Vol. II p.151.)

from Quaker schools corresponded to a considerable degree to "disownment", the ultimate Quaker punishment for non-conforming adult members of the Society, and hence was only resorted to when every other possible solution had failed. The rules governing the Leinster provincial school state that if it should prove necessary to expel a pupil, the "Superintendent with the approbation of the Friends of Mountmellick appointed for him to consult with, may have such child removed".⁸³ Indeed, it appears from the records of Munster provincial school that shortly after its foundation, the school had to expel some of its boys for serious misconduct, though, in at least one case, an offender was allowed to return, and perhaps it was in this connection that a certain George Roberts volunteered to offer his services to the school and kept a close watch on the conduct of the boys, without payment.⁸⁴ Obviously, the sparsely staffed co-educational boarding schools found it extremely difficult at times to control the more boisterous and ebullient of their male pupils. Even the more liberally run Ballitore school was occasionally forced to employ the ultimate sanction of expulsion. Mary Leadbeater refers to such a case, and speaks of the offending pupil as a boy "mean in sentiments, person, and manners, who had been an indulged child, and was possessed of a good fortune". The culprit had been found guilty of theft on a number of occasions, and there seemed a sort of

⁸³ Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School.

⁸⁴ Newtown School Centenary. p.74.

poetic justice in the fact that he "*dislocated his shoulder, whilst trying to break open the box of one of his schoolfellows to steal a crown from it*". Mary Leadbeater tells of his eventual expulsion from the school, and ends her account by claiming that he "*finished his career in a state of abject beggary*".⁸⁵

Quaker discipline in education in the early nineteenth century extended beyond the confines of the Quaker boarding schools, and reached a new level of efficiency in the Lancastrian charity schools, which were introduced into Ireland for the education of the poor. Although the Irish Lancastrian schools were not intended for the education of Quaker children, but catered mainly for the basic educational needs of the Catholic poor, the system of discipline in these schools was heavily influenced by the Quakers. In the Irish Lancastrian schools, a significant number of which were conducted through the agency of the Kildare Place Society, hundreds of scholars had to be provided with an elementary education. The English Quaker, Joseph Lancaster, believed that his "*monitorial-system*" was the answer to the problem of numbers in the Irish Charity schools, and his genius for organisation and discipline soon made itself felt in those schools which adopted his system. If one master was to control hundreds of pupils, the organisation would have to be worked out to the smallest detail. Every

⁸⁵Leadbeater. Papers. Vol. 1. p.103.

boy, every book and every slate would have to have its appointed place; every virtue would have its reward, and every offence its punishment.

Lancaster strongly disapproved of corporal punishment in his schools,⁸⁶ so an alternative system of discipline was devised by him. Despite being a Quaker, he introduced a considerable degree of military discipline into his system, and he also developed a system of badges, tickets, offices and other rewards.⁸⁷ The monitor had appropriate placards to tie round the necks of offenders and make public their misdeeds, and a repetition of faults increased the severity of the shame, even to the yoking of boys to a piece of wood fastened round all their necks, so that as they were made to walk round the schoolroom backwards, the stumbling of one caused anguish to all.⁸⁸ The principal object of Lancaster's disciplinary system, however, was not to cause actual physical pain, but to make the recalcitrant pupil an object of ridicule. As we have already seen, a similar disciplinary policy prevailed in the Quaker provincial boarding schools at Mountmellick, Lisburn and Newtown, Waterford in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Despite the wide range of sanctions at the disposal of the Irish Quaker boarding schools in the maintenance of discipline, there was one disciplinary method which

⁸⁶ Frank Smith, A History of English Elementary Education. 1760-1902. (London: University of London Press. 1931), p.74.

⁸⁷ Frank P. Graves. Great Educators of three Centuries: (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd. 1925), p.241.

⁸⁸ Smith, History of English Elementary Education. p.74.

they strongly disapproved of. This was the punishing of pupils by increasing their work load in the form of extra assignments, essays etc. The Quakers were reluctant to employ such a sanction in their schools, because they were afraid of the damaging effects it might have on the students' attitudes to study.⁸⁹ Quaker schoolmasters were often advised not to punish lazy or troublesome pupils by giving them extra educational tasks to perform, lest the pupils "*connect any unpleasant reflection with the pursuit of knowledge*".⁹⁰ Although, in the Quaker mind, secular learning was always subordinate to religious and moral considerations, many Quakers were, nevertheless, reluctant to use knowledge as a mere tool in the enforcement of school discipline; knowledge was too important, they felt, to be used as a means towards another quite different end.

The question now arises as to how effective the discipline employed in Irish Quaker schools really was in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Did it achieve its purpose? Did it, in fact, produce the loyal, hardworking and serious minded people it set out to do? The answer to this question is probably yes and no. Throughout the nineteenth century the Society of Friends was well known for its serious attitude to life, for its

⁸⁹ Quane, "*Quaker Schools in Dublin*". Jour. R.S.A.I. 1964, p.67.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

scrupulously fair behaviour when dealing with people outside the society, and for its altruism in its involvement with the underprivileged. This is all perfectly true, and undoubtedly owed much to the system of discipline in which such virtues were fostered. There is another, less attractive side to the matter, however. The system of discipline employed in Irish Quaker schools and in the Society in general in the eighteenth century, did much harm to the Society of Friends. In particular, there was a tremendous drop in membership during that period, a falling away which has continued, though at a much less accelerated rate, to the present day. Many young Quakers found the rules governing every aspect of their lives too restrictive, and consequently felt compelled to leave the Society. Rules which zealous puritans like Joseph Pike of Cork considered so necessary were ultimately responsible for the rapid decline of the Society in Ireland,⁹¹ and from this angle, one can see that some aspects of the system of discipline employed by the Quakers were counter-productive.

For those Friends who remained loyal to the Society, however, the system of discipline can be seen to have been extremely successful in achieving what it set out to do. A loyal inner core of committed Quakers remained, who exhibited all the necessary Quaker virtues in their daily lives. To illustrate the effectiveness

⁹¹ Isabel Grubb. Quakers in Ireland. (London: Swarthmore Press, 1927), p.81.

of Quaker discipline at its best, it is perhaps useful to look at the examples of two distinguished people from totally different backgrounds, who were subjected to the discipline of the Quakers when young, and view the most obvious effects of that discipline on their characters and subsequent behaviour. In the case of the authoress, Mary Leadbeater, for instance, brought up a Quaker and mixing in Quaker circles all her life, the effects of Quaker socialization were very strong indeed. In her diary she relates the effects of her mothers' efforts to impress upon her when young the moral dangers of "*too much finery in apparel*". The mothers' discipline was completely successful, for, as Mary Leadbeater says "*the fondness for dress so natural to youth was pretty much starved; nay, it became, perhaps, a matter of too much indifference to my sister and me*".⁹² The discipline of the Society had obviously done its work well.

In contrast to Mary Leadbeater, we can now look at the case of a non-Quaker who was subjected to similar discipline, with results no less dramatic. Margaret Aylward, foundress of the Sisters of the Holy Faith, who was born in 1810, received her early education at a day school kept by Quaker ladies in Waterford. Here "*a modest deportment, the use of plain language, respect for elders, and strict courtesy were inculcated*". Those who knew Miss Aylward in later life, it is said, felt that the

⁹²Leadbeater. Papers. Vol. 1. p.62.

"thee and thou" discipline of the Quaker establishment in which she was educated, was responsible for "an austerity or aloofness of manner which often chilled and embarrassed one on a first acquaintance with her".⁴³

When one considers the dramatic effects Quaker discipline could have on these two people of exceptionally strong character and radically different Christian persuasions, it is not difficult to imagine the power and potency of such discipline in the "guarded" and sheltered environment of the provincial boarding schools.

⁹³Margaret Gibbons. Life of Margaret Aylward. (London. 1928), p.21. Quoted in Michael Quane "Waterford Schools in the early years of the nineteenth century". Jour. R.S.A.I. 1971. Vol. 101. p.145.

CHAPTER VII

QUAKER SCHOOLMASTERS IN IRELAND

The vast majority of Quaker schoolmasters in Ireland during the first century of the sects' settlement here, were of English birth. This is, perhaps, not surprising in a Society which had its origins in England, and which maintained regular contact with the parent body there. Thus when William Edmundson established the first Quaker school in Ireland at Mountmellick in 1677, he appointed as master of the school, Lawrence Routh whom he described in his Journal as a "*quiet, harmless Englishman, capable to instruct children in learning and sobriety*".¹ Indeed, surveillance by leading British Quakers such as George Fox and Robert Barclay appears to have been kept on the selection of these early teachers. Fox recommended Richard Gowith as a master for Cork in 1678, and Barclay selected the first Dublin master, Alexander Seaton in 1680.² By the early decades of the eighteenth century, however, there were efforts made by the Irish Quaker

¹William Edmundson. Journal. (Dublin:1715 pp.227/8.

²Portfolio 5A - 24. Friends Archives Dublin. Robert Barclay was a Scottish Quaker and his book The Apology is regarded as the standard exposition of the principles of his sect. Several hundred copies of portions of this work were reprinted, with a preface by John Chambers, for distribution in Ireland. Chambers was also Scottish and had been on the continent with his patron, Barclay, before he became master at the Dublin Quaker school in 1697. Michael Quane "Quaker Schools in Dublin". Jour. R.S.A.I. 1964. p.53.

meetings to train teachers of their own for service in Irish schools, and this sometimes led to likely scholars being sent to England to learn the craft of schoolmastering from experienced masters there. Thus Gilbert Thompson, for instance, who had a celebrated Quaker school at Shankey, near Warrington, was often asked by the Irish National meetings to recommend teachers, and Irish Quaker scholars were sent to him to be trained.³ Despite the considerable effort expended to provide a regular supply of Irish Quaker teachers, however, the majority of Quaker schoolmasters in Ireland throughout the eighteenth century were of English birth. Indeed, it was not until well into the nineteenth century, that a systematic approach to the training of Irish Quaker schoolmasters was inaugurated.

Pay and working conditions for the early Quaker schoolmasters in Ireland were extremely poor. They were usually paid a small fixed sum, together with "*diatt and lodgings*", and this was generally supplemented by fees obtained from the children. Alexander Seaton, for instance, who was a graduate of Aberdeen University, received a salary of £5 in 1680, when he became master of the Dublin Quaker school, and this salary was raised to £7 in 1688.⁴ Seaton finally left Dublin in 1690, on the

³Portf. 5A - 24. Friends Arch. Dub.

⁴Ibid.

Alexander Seaton was born about 1652 at Aberdeen. At nineteen years of age he became a Quaker, and spent nineteen months in prison at Aberdeen for his principles. He became master of the Dublin Quaker school in 1680, but left in 1690, during the Williamite Wars. He returned to Ireland in 1699, and settled at Hillsborough in County Down. He died in 1723. (Mary Leadbeater. Biographical notices of members of the Society of Friends who were resident in Ireland. (London: Darton and Harvey, 1823), pp. 144 - 145.

closure of the Quaker school due to the disturbed state of the country during the Williamite wars, and his successor was given a salary of £10 and the benefit of the school room, when the premises re-opened in 1693.⁵ Richard Gowith at Cork seems to have done slightly better, and when he emigrated in 1685 his post was worth £16 per year. On the otherhand Gowith's working conditions were far from satisfactory. Since his school was held in the gallery of the Cork meeting house, the scholars had to be turned out when the room was needed for meetings of the Society.⁶ Lawrence Routh, at Mountmellick, got a salary of £16 per year in 1677, and was also promised with "*diatt and lodgings*". As Routh's salary was more than double that of colleagues at Cork and Dublin, it is extremely unlikely that he supplemented this sum with fees from the students.⁷ In some schools the master had a guaranteed income based on the school fees, but if numbers dramatically fell the master was likely to be dismissed. Samuel Fuller, for example, was master at the Dublin Quaker school in the 1690^s, at a fixed salary of £40 per year. If the pupils' fees at 6/- a quarter did not come to £40 a year, the deficiency was to be made up to him by the meeting. Fuller was not a successful teacher, however, and he lost the confidence of many of the parents. The school began to dwindle, and when the deficiency to be made up passed the £18 level, Fuller was dismissed by the school authorities.⁸ At the

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

Cork school, about the same time, Thomas Banks was employed as master with a guaranteed income of £20 per year. The fees at the school were 9/- a Quarter for Latin: 6/- for writing and arithmetic and 4/- for English readers. There were only about a dozen scholars at the school, however, and poor Quaker children were taught free. It was not always possible, therefore, for the childrens fees to cover the master's salary.⁹ In the early 1700^s, William Dover, an English schoolmaster taught at a Quaker school in Clonmel. He was guaranteed £20 per year, but had to find himself "*diatt and lodgings*". It is most likely, however, that he was also given the school fees, which were as follows:-

Scollers Sculling Latin 9/- a Quarter. 10
Sifering, writing or English 6/- a Quarter.

There were only eleven children in Dover's school in its first six months of operation, so his income must have been fairly modest.

The mastership of the Dublin Quaker school, with a salary of £40 in the early eighteenth century, was the most prestigious and the most highly paid Quaker teaching post in Ireland for over half a century. It was not until John Gough's departure from Dublin to Lisburn as master of the latter school in 1774 that the Dublin Quaker school began to go into decline. From that time on, the Friends School Lisburn, provided a salary equivalent to that of

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Dublin,¹¹ and John Gough remained at the northern Quaker school, dying in office in 1791.

Because Quaker schoolmasters in Ireland in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were generally poorly paid, they usually supplemented their meagre salaries by pursuing a totally different part-time occupation. At the Cork Quaker school, for instance, Edward Borthwick combined the pursuits of master and bookbinder for approximately twenty years in the early eighteenth century. Indeed, he was so involved in his bookbinding that the teaching at the school obviously suffered. In 1699 the Cork men's meeting recorded that Edward Borthwick was neglecting his work by leaving the management of the school to a boy while he got on with his bookbinding, often using his press in the classroom. Moreover, the situation had deteriorated to such a degree that by 1703 the meeting felt it necessary to advise him strongly against such a practice. Borthwick, however, seems to have continued on much as before, and in 1715 we hear that his school boys were so obstreperous that the meeting arranged they were only to be given a half holiday if they behaved themselves, and were not to be told beforehand when it was to be, so that they might not have time to plan any mischief. The evidence would suggest that it was Borthwick's neglect of his pupils in the classroom, which was largely responsible for their troublesome

¹¹Neville H. Newhouse. A History of Friends' School Lisburn. (Lurgan: L.M.Press Ltd., 1974), p.8.

and unruly behaviour.¹² Samuel Fuller, master of the Dublin school from 1714, combined the occupations of schoolmaster, bookseller and publisher. He held his teaching post for nearly twenty years, and after his death the business was bought by another Quaker schoolmaster.¹³ The practice of combining schoolmastering with some other occupation seems to have been fairly common in eighteenth century Ireland, but it was, nevertheless, strongly disapproved of by the provincial and national meetings. The only reason the official Quaker bodies tolerated this obviously unsatisfactory state of affairs was because of the great scarcity of Quaker schoolmasters in Ireland at that time.

The Irish Quaker authorities in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries regarded the position of schoolmaster as a very serious and responsible calling. Consequently, the monthly, quarterly and national meetings repeatedly warned masters of the moral dangers involved in neglecting their pupils, by involving themselves in other activities. An undated manuscript in the Friends' Archives Dublin, but probably written in the early eighteenth century, speaks of the danger of children being neglected at school, and says of the master:-

... When he has but few scholars, so that he may seem to have scarcely full employment, there is danger of falling into a kind of negligence by indulging himself in some reading, writing, study or the like

¹²Portf. 5A - 24.

¹³Ibid.

such as he would not, probably, wish his employer to see; thus he may slide into a kind of eye service, and almost imperceptibly enfeeble his own mind, and not render all their due, or at least that benefit which such an opportunity would afford; were he attentive to his duty; nor will his secret feelings in such case utter the comfortable sentence "Well done; good and Faithful servant". 14

The quotation above makes it abundantly clear that Quaker schoolmasters were expected to give total commitment to the education of their pupils, and anything short of this was regarded as a betrayal of service. Not only were part-time occupations regarded with the greatest disapproval, but even momentary lapses from the task at hand were severely frowned upon.

Quaker schoolmasters in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were in very short supply, and Quaker parents often "put their children to the care of others who were not Friends", as a minute of 1725 expressed it.¹⁵ In 1760 the London yearly meeting declared that "the numbers of able and well qualified teachers amongst us is very small",¹⁶ and in Ireland the situation was even worse. The chronic scarcity of Quaker schoolmasters was due to several factors. Firstly, the laws against Dissenters in the eighteenth century had closed the universities to Quakers, who were thus deprived of the benefits of a higher education. Secondly, the low level of pay offered to the masters of Irish Quaker schools acted as a major disincentive to the most able. Thirdly there was the

¹⁴Portfolio 5A - 23. Friends Arch. Dub.

Indeed, another interesting manuscript in the Quaker archives, again undated, but probably from the same period as the one just quoted, lays down six important criteria by which the conscientious teacher should assess his own performance as an instructor of the young. It is entitled "Queries for the self-examination of a tutor", and it emphasizes the seriousness of the responsibility which the position of schoolmaster carried in Quaker eyes. A copy of this document is included in (Appendix D)

¹⁵Newhouse, History of Friends School, Lisburn. p.1.

¹⁶Ibid. p.5.

matter of Quaker school viability in Ireland. Indeed, during the first century of Quaker schools in Ireland, the life-span of many of these establishments was very uncertain and unpredictable. Some proposed schools never materialized, and many of those which did soon broke up. This uncertainty and insecurity offered little incentive to aspiring Quaker schoolmasters, who often thought twice about uprooting themselves from England for a precarious and relatively insecure tenure as Quaker schoolmasters in Ireland.

Because Quaker schoolmasters were so thin on the ground, it not infrequently happened that the Quaker meetings were forced to accept masters who were very poorly qualified. Thus Samuel Forbes, who taught at the Dublin Quaker school in the 1690^s, was dismissed after three years because parents were not satisfied with his teaching of writing.¹⁷ After the dismissal of Forbes, the experiment was tried of having two masters John Chambers and Thomas Banks at the Dublin Quaker school. Chambers, however, was unable to teach writing and arithmetic, and he promised to hire an usher to carry out these tasks. A minute of the Dublin mens' meeting put it thus:-

John Chambers does hope and promise to get an usher to please Friends, and it is desired that all Friends will encourage the school as much as may be, but if any Friends do desire to send their children to Thomas Banks to learn fine writing and arithmetic, or else children to his wife, to learn to read the primer, they are not hindered from so doing.

Within a month, however, the meeting found it necessary to settle "which children were to go to John and which to Thomas".¹⁸

¹⁷ Portf. 5A - 24. Friends Arch. Dub.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Lack of competence in teaching the basic skills of literacy was not the prerogative of the Dublin Quaker school, however, for in the minutes of the Cork mens' meeting for 1698, there is reference to a new master at the Cork Quaker school who was assured £5 - 15 - 0 a quarter. It was soon discovered, however, that this man could not teach writing and arithmetic, and it seems that he was very well satisfied in the following year to be given five guineas to remove himself home to England.¹⁹

The vast majority of Quaker schoolmasters in Ireland during the period 1650 - 1750 were English by birth. Generally, they were masters of day schools, and, with few exceptions, taught a very rudimentary curriculum. While a few early masters, like Alexander Seaton at the Dublin Quaker school, had a superior education, and were well qualified for the task of schoolmastering, many were very poorly qualified, and some were even unable to teach the basic three - R^S. Although the Quaker meetings were often dissatisfied with the quality of much of the teaching in the early Quaker schools in Ireland, they did not organise themselves as a body to do something to remedy the situation until well into the second half of the eighteenth century.

While the standard of Quaker education in Ireland in the first half of the eighteenth century was in general, extremely low, it would be quite misleading to think that this was uniformly the case throughout Quaker schools in

¹⁹ Ibid.

Ireland at this period. Many Quaker schoolmasters were extremely competent, and some of the early ones, recommended by Fox and Barclay, gave little cause for complaint.²⁰ There was one Quaker schoolmaster, however, who stood well out from all the others at this time. He was probably the most competent, and certainly the most successful Quaker master in the first half of the eighteenth century, and no account of Quaker schoolmasters would be complete without a biographical sketch of this outstanding figure in Irish Quaker education. His name was Abraham Shackleton, and he was master of a Quaker boys' boarding school at Ballitore, Co. Kildare from 1726 to his retirement in 1756.

ABRAHAM SHACKLETON OF BALLITORE (1697-1771)

Abraham Shackleton was born of Quaker parents at Bingley in the West Riding of Yorkshire in 1697. He was the youngest of six orphans, his mother having died when he was six, and his father two years afterwards.²¹ As he suffered from a delicate constitution as a youth, he decided to cultivate his "*natural taste for literature*",²² rather than undertake a more physically taxing occupation. Although he was twenty years of age when he began to first study Latin, he succeeded so perfectly as to write that

²⁰ John Chambers, perhaps, was an exception. The Great scarcity of Quaker schoolmasters at this period, probably explains why Barclay recommended Chambers for the Dublin school, despite the fact that he could not teach writing and arithmetic.

²¹ Mary Leadbeater. The Leadbeater Papers. Vol. 1. (London: Bell & Daldy, 1862), p.27.

²² Idem. Memoirs & Letters of Richard and Elizabeth Shackleton late of Ballitore Ireland. (London: Harvey and Darton, 1822), p.2.

language 'not only with correctness but with elegance'.²³
His first teaching post was as an assistant in David Hall's school at Skipton in Yorkshire. Later he removed to Ireland where he was engaged as private tutor to the families of William Cooper of Cooperhill, and John Duckett of Duckett's grove, Carlow, who were both wealthy country gentlemen and Quakers. It was these men who were mainly responsible for recognising his exceptional talents as a master and organiser, and for encouraging him to open a boarding-school, which he did at Ballitore, Co. Kildare, on the first of third-month 1726.²⁴ Early in 1726 he consulted his brother Roger on the project, and Roger, who was then teaching in a Quaker school at York, replied:

What the discouragements are, I can't tell. To look beforehand at worldly things, sometimes they are promising and sometimes otherwise. I hope thou need not fear a school, from which a sufficient livelyhood will result; but the business, as all others are, is attended with difficulties, and the best way is to arm yourself with good management, and to keep an affable temper as much as consists with authority of a master, for it is that which pleases parents. 25

The Quaker boys boarding school at Ballitore prospered under the mastership of Abraham Shackleton and the school won a enviable reputation for the teaching of the classics and mathematics. Abraham Shackleton was unique among Quaker schoolmasters in Ireland in the first half of the eighteenth

²³Leadbeater. Papers. p.27.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Michael Quane. "Ballitore School". Journal of Kildare Archaeological Society. Vol. XIV. p.174.

century in that he provided a remarkably wide curriculum at Ballitore, catering not only for those who wished to study the traditional classical courses on offer, but also for those who were destined for a career in business. In an advertisement in the public press he declared that the school aimed "*to fit the youth for business, and instruct them in polite literature*".²⁶ When Abraham Shackleton retired in 1756 and handed the management of the school over to the care of his son Richard, Ballitore boarding school was undoubtedly the most successful Quaker school in Ireland, and attracted pupils not only from within the Society of Friends but from other religious denominations in Ireland and from abroad.

Abraham Shackleton spent his retirement constructively, and according to his granddaughter, Mary Leadbeater, "*employed his time either in religious visits, or in cultivating his land at home*".²⁷ Although he had run his school as a private establishment, independent of the jurisdiction of the Leinster Quarterly Meetings, Abraham Shackleton was an extremely conscientious and hardworking Quaker, who spent a considerable portion of his time in the service of the Society of Friends. As far as religious visits were concerned, he was always most willing to help and advise those in need of spiritual guidance and assistance. Joseph Oxley, a prominent English Quaker, who visited Ireland in 1762, gives the following account of him:

²⁶Ibid. p.176

²⁷Leadbeater. Papers. p.75.

Although my dear companion Abraham Shackleton was not engaged publicly, he was a man truly worthy of double honour, and in family visits and select opportunities he was of singular service, advising and admonishing as he was opened in the Truth, and the people loved him with great affection. ²⁸

Besides being active during his retirement in furthering the religious principles of the Society of Friends, Abraham Shackleton also continued to maintain a keen interest in educational affairs, and in this regard he played a prominent role on the committee which was formed to establish the first Quaker National boarding school at Edenderry in 1764²⁹. His favourite leisure-time activity, however, was to look after his land and to cultivate his garden. The latter pursuit was a very popular one among Quakers, who regarded horticulture as one of the few morally safe forms of recreation available to eighteenth century Christians. Abraham Shackleton's liking for gardening was aptly illustrated in a joke concerning him, published in the schoolboy's magazine, the "Ballitore Advertiser" for the fifth of seventh - month 1820, some fifty years after the death of the "old master". It goes as follows:

Abraham Shackleton the elder complained to his steward William Gill that his boys injured his young trees by carving their names on the barks. "Why Master" replied William, "it was you taught them to make letters". ³⁰

²⁸ Joseph Oxley, Journal. (London: Darton and Harvey, 1837), p.270.

²⁹ Proposal for Edenderry School. Grubb. Coll. S.121. Friends Arch. Dub.

³⁰ Portf. 5A - 45. Friends Arch. Dub.

As a Quaker schoolmaster in eighteenth century Ireland, Abraham Shackleton was exceptionally well qualified. Although he did not possess a university degree, since universities were closed to dissenters in the early eighteenth century, he nevertheless was fluent in Latin, and had a sound knowledge of Greek and Mathematics. At a time when most Quaker schoolmasters in Ireland taught little more than the three-R^s, and, indeed, when some like Samuel Forbes or John Chambers of the Dublin Quaker school were unable to satisfactorily teach even these basic skills, Abraham Shackleton was preparing Quaker pupils for careers in business and some non-Quakers for University entrance. His skill as a superb teacher of the classics is well brought out in the remarkable tribute paid to him by his most famous and successful pupil, the great Edmund Burke, who went to Ballitore in 1741 and entered Trinity College from there in 1744.³¹ Burke had just successfully undergone an entrance exam at Trinity College, in which he was closely examined, both by a senior Lecturer and by a Fellow of the College in the works of Horace, Virgil and Homer, when in a letter to Abraham Shackleton's son Richard, he said:

*I cannot express, nor have I the knack of doing it, how much I am obliged to your father for the extraordinary pains and care he has taken with me, so as to merit the commendation of my tutor, and all I can do is to behave myself so as not to bring scandal upon him or
his school.* 32

³¹Leadbeater. Papers. p.46.

³²Leadbeater. Papers. Vol II. (London:1862),p.5.

Abraham Shackleton brought a new status and dignity to the role of schoolmaster, and tackled his job with a seriousness of purpose and an absolute sense of dedication to the task at hand. Such undivided commitment to teaching was exceedingly rare at a time when it was customary for Quaker schoolmasters to be simultaneously employed in other part-time occupations. His concern for the individual welfare of each of his pupils is reflected in a letter he wrote to Joseph Inman concerning the latter's son Jo. This letter, which included the bill for Jo Inman's fees, may be considered as an early eighteenth century school report. In it Abraham Shackleton says:

This advises that Jo is getting pretty well on with his learning, and without all doubt will make a good scholar. 'Tis true there are some boys of larger capacities and sharper wits, but as his is far from being bad, and he diligent with all, he will certainly gain the desired point. Nor is the progress he has already made to be disliked. I dont mean in books, ³³ but in the understanding part.

The latter point of making progress "*in the understanding part*", shows remarkable insight for an eighteenth century Quaker schoolmaster, at a time when education was regarded by most people as a mechanical process, involving much rote learning, and the uncritical absorption of text-book material. Clearly, Abraham Shackleton had a much broader view of the purposes of education, than was shared by the majority of his contemporaries, and his attitude to rote learning probably reflected that of his brother Roger, who in 1726, advised Abraham -

³³Portf. 5A - 2. Friends Arch. Dub.

I discommode repeating ex memoria their daily lessons out of poets, unless they have capacity for it which all have not, and it dulls the edge of learning they are to have tasks suitable as an usher to their³⁴ genuis.

Abraham Shackleton was a strict disciplinarian during his mastership at Ballitore boarding school, and would not flinch from using corporal punishment when he thought it necessary. Unlike his grandson Abraham Junior, who was said to have been over gentle with the young,³⁵ the older Shackleton was consistently strict in the enforcement of discipline within the school. According to his granddaughter, Mary Leadbeater, his "general deportment was very grave" and he "was never pleased when he saw us playing with our dolls".³⁶ The latter point illustrates a characteristic shared by many Quakers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who saw dolls as "craven images" and regarded any associating with such as contrary to the second commandment. Abraham Shackleton's strictness and stern exterior were compensated for, however, by his kindness, and he was loved by all who came into contact with him. In later life, he was affectionately known by the boys at Ballitore school as the "Old Master", and his granddaughter Mary Leadbeater claimed that all his grandchildren were very fond of him.³⁷

³⁴Quoted in Quane. "Ballitore School". Jour. Kild. Arch. Soc. Vol. XIV. p.174.

³⁵John Hancock, in a "Character sketch of Abraham Shackleton Junior" 1818, claimed that the latter "By relaxing the bands of discipline, left under too little restraint the youthful passions". (P.B.20(2).Friends Arch. Dub.

³⁶Leadbeater. Papers. Vol. 1. p.75. (It is interesting to note that the children at Munster provincial school, Newtown, Waterford, were forbidden to play with dolls until well into the 1830^s. (Newtown School Centenary. (Waterford: Newenham and Harvey, 1891), p.34.

³⁷Ibid.

Even when over seventy years of age, Abraham Shackleton continued to undertake the rather taxing and hazardous voyage to England to attend the London Yearly Meeting, and when in that city in 1769, he accepted the invitation of his illustrious past-pupil Edmund Burke to visit the latter at Beaconfield.³⁸ In the following winter the candles suddenly went out in the Quaker Meeting house, and this was interpreted, following the subsequent illness of the "old master", as an omen of death. Abraham Shackleton's health gradually deteriorated, and he died at Ballitore on mid-summer day 1771. In a letter of condolence to the bereaved son Richard, Edmund Burke wrote.

He was indeed a man of singular piety, rectitude, and virtue, and he had along with these qualities a native elegance of manners which nothing but genuine good-nature and unaffected simplicity of heart can give, and which they will give infallibly, be the exterior forms what they will. 39

During the second half of the eighteenth century there were considerable improvements in the quality and the supply of Quaker schoolmasters in Ireland. These changes occurred as a result of increasing concern by the national meeting regarding the chronic scarcity of adequately qualified schoolmasters. The latter were still extremely hard to find and England, as a source of regular supply, could not be depended on. Consequently, the Dublin national meeting of 1763 set up a special committee to "consider the case of the want of schools and schoolmasters", and one

³⁸ Ibid., p.76.

³⁹ Leadbeater. Papers. Vol. 1. p.78.

important recommendation which emanated from that committee was "*That clever children of poor Friends should be trained as teachers at the cost of the Society*".⁴⁰ Here, at last, was a novel idea for Irish Quaker schools. This was the first time that the Society of Friends as a whole, through the agency of the national meeting, was seriously considering subsidizing the training of poor children as apprentice teachers. Although this was a step in the right direction, little was actually done to give effect to this recommendation, until the last quarter of the eighteenth century when the Society of Friends began to successfully establish provincial boarding schools mainly for the children of those in "*low circumstances*". With the establishment of those boarding schools, under the control of the provincial and national meetings, many Quakers now realized the urgency and advantage of training a succession of apprentice teachers. The apprenticeship system was the only realistic way of achieving a reasonable degree of continuity in the supply of Quaker schoolmasters in Ireland. By this system, the services of suitable apprentices could be retained as salaried teachers, on the expiration of their terms of apprenticeship. Furthermore, it was hoped by the Quaker authorities that the establishment of the provincial boarding schools, with their fully professional staffs, would bring about the end of the part time schoolmaster. The job of the schoolmaster, it was

⁴⁰ Neville H. Newhouse. "*The founding of Friends School, Lisburn.*" Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland. Vol. 98:48.

argued, was too important to be anything but a full time occupation, and the few smaller day schools still remaining in the hands of Quaker masters and committees, were urged to provide the teaching staffs with adequate financial remuneration. In the latter years of the eighteenth century, for instance, when the national meeting was occupying itself with the foundation of the Ulster provincial school at Lisburn, it was advised tht the day schools in Ulster, at Lurgan, Ballyhagen, Moyallon, Ballinderry and Charlemont should also be continued, and that religiously disposed masters and mistresses be procured for them and a sufficient salary annexed thereto to induce them to give up their whole time and attention to this most weighty employment.⁴¹ Although these day schools went out of existence within a very short time, the point made by the national meeting was very clear. The days of the part-time schoolmaster were definitely numbered.

The second half of the eighteenth century saw an overall improvement in the teaching qualifications of Quaker schoolmasters in Ireland. The minimum qualifications required of Quaker masters were that they be able to successfully teach the three-R^s, and these qualifications did not significantly change until well into the nineteenth century. An advertised vacancy for the position of schoolmaster at the Ulster provincial school, in 1841, went as follows:-

The Schoolmaster or Teacher of the Boys Department is expected to possess a competent knowledge of all the Branches generally included within the range of a plain

⁴¹Portf. 5A - 24.

English Education. Satisfactory Testimonials in regard to his moral and religious character would also be required. 42

As far as the provincial boarding schools were concerned, a "plain English Education" simply meant a competency in the three - R^s, with some knowledge of the fundamentals of English grammar, especially parsing and analysis. The master was also required to be of exemplary moral character, and to be of a religious disposition. He generally was not required to give instruction in the religious principles of the Society of Friends or in the Scriptures and catechism, as these texts were normally examined by the superintendent.⁴³ While the qualifications of Quaker schoolmasters in the second half of the eighteenth century, were a considerable improvement on those possessed by many of the early Quaker masters, very few seem to have made any significant impression on Quaker education during this period. There was however, one notable exception. This was a man who played a prominent role in Irish Quaker affairs for almost half a century, and who could be said to have dominated Quaker educational affairs in Ireland in the second half of the eighteenth century. His name was John Gough, and a brief biographical sketch follows.

JOHN GOUGH OF LISBURN. (1721-1791).

John Gough was born in the town of Kendal, in the county of Westmoreland, on the 21st of March 1721.⁴⁴ His

⁴² Vacancy for Superintendent, Ulster Provincial School. Lisburn 27/4/1841. P.B.20(96). Friends Arch. Dub.

⁴³ Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School. P.B. 20(25) Friends Arch. Dub.

⁴⁴ "A famous Lisburn Teacher: John Gough". The Lisburn Standard. April 25th, 1919

father was a well-to-do business man, who devoted most of the time to mercantile pursuits, but cared little for intellectual matters. Johns' mother, on the otherhand, seemed to hold different opinions and was particularly interested in the education of her son. She wanted John to avail of the best education possible for people in their financial circumstances and for the first eight years she herself taught him at home.⁴⁵ This early instruction proved to be a preliminary education of great value for the young Gough, and gave him an excellent start in life. During the next decade, therefore, John Gough, who was of a serious and studious disposition, continued to improve on his early educational foundation by further study.

While still under twenty years of age, Gough got an engagement as assistant teacher at a Quaker school under Thomas Bennet at Pickwick in Wiltshire.⁴⁶ Thomas Bennet had, himself been educated by the famous Gilbert Thompson of Sankey near Warrington, who had recommended several Quaker schoolmasters to the Irish National Meeting in the early 18th century. Gough seems to have continued at the Friends school, Wiltshire until 1740, when he crossed over to Ireland.⁴⁷ In 1744 he succeeded his brother James as master of the Cork Quaker school, when James became master at Mountmellick, and in 1748 John worked with James at the latter school. Shortly after this John Gough took

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Newhouse. History of Friends School Lisburn. p.6.

⁴⁷ Leadbeater. Biographical Sketches of Members of the Society of Friends who were resident in Ireland. (London: Darton and Harvey, 1823). p.271.

total charge of the Mountmellick school, when James became involved in the linen business nearby, and in 1750 he became master of the Dublin Quaker school.⁴⁸

John Gough was master at Dublin for twenty-three years, and during that period he gained a considerable reputation as a conscientious and dedicated teacher. Like many Quakers of his time there was a strong element of puritanism in his character, and he vehemently disapproved of many of the practices he saw around him. He branded as harmful "*plays, novels and romances*" and urged that such works should be replaced by books of a pious and religious nature.⁴⁹ When master at the Dublin Quaker school, it is recorded, that so famous had Gough become, that he was invited to attend a social function at Dublin Castle by the Earl of Hertford, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Gough wrote a reply to the Chief Secretary, requesting the latter to convey his thanks to the Viceroy for his invitation, but added that the tenets of his Church did not admit of Quakers attending entertainments.⁵⁰

At the Dublin Quaker school John Gough had a guaranteed income of £150 per year. He charged half a guinea per quarter for each pupil, and he got the rent of half his house and clerkship besides.⁵¹ He had established a considerable reputation as a schoolmaster at Dublin, and his post was the most prestigious among Quaker

⁴⁸Ibid., p.289

⁴⁹John Gough, Preface to Journal. by James Gough, (3rd ed. Dublin: 1830), P.V.

⁵⁰Lisburn Standard. April 25th, 1919.

⁵¹Portfolio 5A - 88/89. Friends Arch. Dub.

schools in eighteenth century Ireland. When he was approached in the early 1770^s, therefore, with the prospect of becoming headmaster of a new Quaker boarding school at Lisburn, Co. Antrim, he naturally viewed the offer with a considerable degree of apprehension. The Friends school Lisburn was being built as a result of a bequest of one thousand pounds from the wealthy Quaker linen merchant, John Hancock. The trustees of the school, the most influential of whom were the Quaker business men, William Neville and Thomas Greer, wrote officially to Gough in 1773 and offered him the mastership of the school. Gough at first was cautious, saying that he couldn't give a definite answer as it was "a very weighty business to think of" and that he was worried about "unsettling himself at this time of life".⁵² He summed up the main difficulties to his giving a positive reply in the following words.

*The trouble and expense of moving;
The loss of time and substance between
dissolving my school and establishing
a new one;
Opposition to the move in Dublin.*⁵³

By November 1773, however, Gough had made up his mind, and early in 1774 he became headmaster of Friends School Lisburn at fifty three years of age.

When Gough arrived at Lisburn to take up his new post in 1774, there was a considerable number of Quakers resident in and around the town. George Gregson, a native of Lancashire, had settled there about a century before and

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

carried on the manufacture of linen in a two-storey thatched house. A great number of Quaker families that had suffered persecution in England were living in Lisburn in June 1690 when William the Third received the troops there, and passed on to Hillsborough.⁵⁴

John Gough's fame as master of the Quaker school at Lisburn brought many new scholars to the school. Several of these were from the south of Ireland and a few from England. In 1767, a few years before coming to Lisburn, Gough published his famous Arithmetic, a work that went through numerous editions, and which was used extensively throughout Ireland in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Gough also published an English Grammar in collaboration with his brother James, and a History of the People called Quakers.⁵⁵ It is some indication of John Gough's great ability as a schoolmaster that the Dublin Quaker school went into decline shortly after his removal to Lisburn. (His brother James resigned the mastership of the Dublin school after a mere three years). Indeed, what John referred to as "*Opposition to the move in Dublin*" seems to have been very well founded. Obviously, Goughs' co-religionists in Dublin were keenly aware that the departure of the illustrious master to Lisburn would be an irreparable loss to the Dublin school, a loss which not even his brother James nor the latter's successors could adequately compensate for.

⁵⁴ Lisburn Standard. 1919

⁵⁵ Newhouse. History of Friends' School Lisburn. p.9.

For almost seventeen years, John Gough was master of Friends School Lisburn, dying in office in 1791. We know very little, however, of the organisation of the school during Goughs' tenure, as the school was not under the control of the Ulster Quarterly Meeting. Despite Gough's undoubted difficulties, with the Ulster Quarterly Meeting, he was a devout and hardworking Quaker who selflessly worked to promote the principles of the Society of Friends. He periodically attended the Yearly Meeting in London, and he acted as clerk to the National Half-Yearly Meeting in Dublin, until almost seventy years of age. In the minutes of the latter Meeting for the first to the fifth of May 1791 we read.

John Gough, having requested at our last half-year's meeting to be discharged from the appointment of clerk to this meeting, and his resignation being then accepted and Jonathan Hill being proposed each province is desired to nominate a clerk in rotation every year to write the minutes and proceedings of this meeting. 56

By this time his health was declining, and it became clear to his friends at Lisburn that the end was not far off. It is said that during his last illness he continued to attend to his pupils, as well as to speak at the Society's meetings. On the 25th of 10 month 1791 he was suddenly "seized with a fit of apoplexy, which, in a few hours, ended in his decease"⁵⁷, and he was buried in the Friends burial-ground, Railway Street, Lisburn. In a tribute to the great Quaker schoolmaster, Mary Leadbeater, the authoress said of him:-

⁵⁶Portf. 5A - 88/89

⁵⁷Leadbeater. Biographical Notices of Friends in Ireland.
p.290

He was of a sober, circumspect life and conversation, as becometh the gospel of Truth; plain and humble in his appearance, and grave in deportment. 58

Although it was the Quaker schoolmaster who tended to dominate Quaker educational affairs in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, it must not be forgotten that the Quaker schoolmistress also had a valuable contribution to make. From the earliest days of the Society of Friends, George Fox had insisted on the equality of women with men in the ministry, and consequently felt that women were also entitled to an education. Thus when Fox established his first Quaker boarding schools at Waltham Abbey and at Shachlewell in England, the former was for boys and girls and the latter for girls only.⁵⁹ Indeed, the Quakers were, in a sense, pioneers of co-education, as they were probably the first religious society to educate boys and girls in the same institution. Not only were they unusual in this respect, but the very fact that they provided an education for females at all was extraordinary at a time when most religious denominations completely neglected the education of the latter.

Girls and small children were usually taught by mistresses in early Quaker communities.⁶⁰ There is, for instance, a reference in the minutes of Waterford men's meeting of 1719, to a small Quaker day school at Charleville, where a female teacher, a local Friend, was given 2d. a

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Newhouse. History of Friends School Lisburn. p.1.

⁶⁰ Portf. 5A - 24.

week for each scholar. Her total income was 2/- or 2/6 weekly.⁶¹ These early Quaker schoolmistresses had no formal training, and generally confined their instruction to the teaching of reading, together with some knitting and sewing. These people generally set up school because they were the most literate females in their neighbourhood, and consequently, the education they provided was of the most rudimentary kind.

Although George Fox had drawn attention to the need for an education for females, the Society of Friends throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, never regarded female education with the same sense of urgency as that provided for boys. Consequently, it is not surprising that the early Quaker schoolmistresses were not as highly qualified as most of the men. Most Quaker schoolmistresses in England and Ireland, throughout the nineteenth century, were unable to teach writing and arithmetic.⁶² Although some of the early schoolmasters lacked proficiency in these elementary subjects, as we have already indicated in the early part of this chapter, it was extremely rare for a Quaker schoolmaster in the second half of the eighteenth century to be found deficient in this regard. Quaker schoolmistresses, on the otherhand, were, in general, not qualified to teach the three-R^s until the early years of the nineteenth century.

When the first national Quaker boarding school was established at Edenderry for females in 1764, the headmistress

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

Margaret Mellor of Manchester was not qualified to teach writing and arithmetic. What the school committee wanted was "A woman of good understanding of a sober, exemplary conversation, well approved as a Friend, and well qualified to educate them (the girls) in the accomplishments requisite to their sex".⁶³ Her husband Ebenezer was there to provide instruction in writing and arithmetic if the pupils required it. Similarly, at Ackworth in Yorkshire, the first Quaker boarding school for the children of Friends in "low circumstances", the same deficiency was evident in the teaching qualifications of the mistresses. Sarah Grubb, the foundress of Suir Island School, Clonmel, visited Ackworth in 1784, and was concerned about the poor qualifications of the female teachers.⁶⁴ It seems, however, that reforms were rapidly carried out at Ackworth, and by the end of the eighteenth century, the female teachers were given instruction in writing and arithmetic.

By the early years of the nineteenth century, much higher qualifications were expected of Quaker school mistresses than had previously been the case. No longer were they merely to teach reading and a few basic female accomplishments, but were expected to be proficient in the teaching of the three - R^s. The raising of standards among Quaker schoolmistresses in Ireland was to a large extent the result of reforms carried out in the training of apprentices at Ackworth in the latter years of the eighteenth

⁶³"Plan for Edenderry School". (1763). Grubb. Coll.S.121. Friends Arch. Dub.

⁶⁴Sarah Grubb. Journal. 3rd ed. (Belfast: William Robinson, 1837), p.231.

century. Indeed, the Yorkshire Quaker school exerted considerable influence on the development of Irish Quaker boarding schools, and it was the model on which the Irish provincial boarding schools were based.

Female apprentice teachers in Irish Quaker schools had to undergo a long and laborious training, and high standards of proficiency in the basic subjects were required. Mary Tolerton, for example, who had been a pupil at the Ulster provincial school Lisburn in the early 1800^s, "*served an apprenticeship of seven years to the school*", and also assisted in the work of the house.⁶⁵ Furthermore, when her term of apprenticeship had expired, she was put in "*full charge of the school for a year or two*", after the headmistress had left. Even this considerable training and experience was not deemed sufficient, however, and she was dismissed by the school committee when a more experienced teacher was found.⁶⁶ The Society, at this time, was so obsessed with the notion of a "*guarded*" education, that it insisted on subjecting the apprentice teachers, especially on the girls side of the house, to a discipline closely akin to that which was applied to the pupils. There is preserved in the Friends archives Dublin an indenture dated July 1807 for a young apprentice teacher, called Mary Creeth of Richill, Co. Armagh. This trainee had to agree to serve her mistress faithfully, "*keeping her secrets*" and carrying out "*her lawful commandments*". She

⁶⁵Portf. 5A - 25. Friends Arch. Dub.

⁶⁶Ibid.

was not to give or lend her mistress' property to anyone, and was forbidden to "commit fornication, to marry, and play at cards, dice tables, or unlawful games". She undertook not to use "taverns, ale-houses or play houses", nor to absent herself from the service of the said Mistress day or night unlawfully, but was in all things to prove "an honest and faithful apprentice".⁶⁷ Such discipline was understandably tough, but it was all part of the education which Quakers wished their children to have, and which would not have been possible unless the apprentice teacher was subject to the same kind of discipline as the children. Indeed, the rigorous training which female apprentice teachers were subjected to in the first half of the nineteenth century, meant that Quaker schoolmistresses were now much more knowledgeable in their subjects and more efficient in giving instruction than they had ever been before. They were now "real teachers", and could no longer be classified as mere instructors of reading and basic accomplishments.

During the first two centuries of Quaker settlement in Ireland, the Society of Friends was keenly aware of the importance of the right education for its children. Many Quakers, therefore, had high ideals when it came to the matter of selecting suitable schoolmasters and mistresses for their schools. They wanted people with sound rather than extensive learning, and, above all, they wanted people of impeccable moral character. The education which these

⁶⁷P.B. 20(83). Friends Arch. Dub.

schoolmasters were expected to impart to their pupils was basically a "guarded" and religious one, hence, it was extremely important that the influences transmitted by the master should be of the most approved kind. Unfortunately, however, the reality did not always approximate to the ideal, and Quaker schoolmasters varied considerably in quality, from the incompetent and negligent on the one hand, to the outstandingly good on the other. We have already mentioned in this chapter that the former type were more characteristic of the earlier history of Quaker education, and standards certainly improved in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, despite the shortcomings of many Quaker schoolmasters in the period under study, there were always a select few who approximated to the ideal. Abraham Shackleton and John Gough were the really outstanding ones, although the independent stance they took in separating their schools from the authority of the provincial and national meetings did not meet with official Quaker approval. During their lifetimes, both men were highly respected and admired by the majority of Irish Friends, because they seemed to represent all that was deemed most valuable in Quaker schoolmasters. It must be remembered that Quakers at this time were more concerned with the role of the schoolmaster, than with that of the teacher. The word schoolmaster suggests that education is carried on in a community, by one who holds a measure of responsibility and authority. He acts as a transmitter of inherited wisdom, the upholder of a set of values, and the guardian of order in the community. The same ethos is not associated with the word teacher, as the latter is one who is mainly concerned with

passing on information and skills. Shackleton and Gough were men of sound learning and impeccable moral character. They were also excellent teachers. In short, they possessed the essential characteristics, which fitted them ideally for the task of transmitting the inherited wisdom of the age to Quaker schoolchildren. It was such qualifications which made them the outstanding Quaker schoolmasters of the eighteenth century.

C H A P T E R V I I I

TEXTBOOKS IN QUAKER SCHOOLS

Ever since the Society of Friends first began to establish schools for Quaker children in England and Ireland in the late seventeenth century, the movement was seriously concerned about the quality of textbooks then available for school use. Textbooks, as we know them today, for the individual use of children in class, were extremely rare in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and those that were available were often prohibitively expensive. The high cost of school textbooks, however, was not an insurmountable problem for the Society of Friends, many of whose members had achieved considerable affluence in the fields of trade and commerce. What was of particular concern to the Quakers, however, was the moral suitability of available textbooks, and it was this latter criterion which largely determined the selection or rejection of particular textbooks for use in Quaker schools.

The texts employed in Friends' schools strictly adhered to the Quaker tenet of a "guarded education". Quakers were puritans and therefore rigorously censored all reading material within their schools, and where possible, substituted their own textbooks. George

Fox himself wrote a number of early textbooks for Quaker schools; the first was produced in 1670 and was called A Primer and Catechism for Children.¹ Others followed Fox in producing books, and while most of them were concerned mainly with reading and writing English, some ventured into Latin. For the Society of Friends the moral and religious function of education was paramount, and Quaker textbooks for schools tended to reflect this emphasis. William Edmundson, the apostle of Quakerism in Ireland, drew attention to the dangers which uncensored contemporary schoolbooks presented to children. In his Journal he claimed:-

Now, experience hath taught us, that in sending children to such schools where Books are taught, filled with Idle Stories, Lying Wonders, Fopperies and invented ceremonies, besides evil conversation, both in words and actions, too much countenanced, if not encouraged by too many Schoolmasters and Mistresses. Childish nature in youth is prone to listen thereto, rather than things that tend to Virtue and Sobriety, and being grafted in their minds, when young, grow up with them, and so obstruct better things, that tend to Godliness and their Salvation.

The quotation above reflects the traditional puritan rejection of imaginative literature, which most Quakers in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries regarded as a distortion of truth. Edmundson's dismissal of "Lying Wonders, Fopperies and invented ceremonies" meant that there was to be no place in Quaker schools for any

¹John Reader, Of Schools and Schoolmasters (London: Quaker Home Service, 1979), p.28.

²William Edmundson, Journal 3d ed., (Dublin:1820), p.224.

traces of romantic fiction, and any textbooks with elements of the latter, were to be rigorously excluded from the school curriculum. The National Meetings in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries played a prominent role in the selection of suitable textbooks for Quaker schools, and Conferences of Quaker schoolmasters were enjoined to consult on "proper books and good methods".³ In this regard, a conference of Quaker schoolmasters, held in Dublin in 1681 directed that "The Childs Delight by Thomas Lye⁴, called M.A. and Master of Allhallows, Lombard Street, London, dated 1671, be not taught by any Friends, nor no Friends nor their children learn therein, by reason of Images and many vain unsavoury sentences therein".⁵ Even a century later, so outstanding a Quaker schoolmaster as John Gough was to brand as harmful "plays, novels and romances", and he suggested that these should be replaced by books and essays tending to piety.⁶ The extremely narrow and insular nature of

³Portfolio 5A - 24, Friends Archives, Dublin.

⁴Thomas Lye, M.A. (1621 - 1684) a non-conformist minister, after graduating from Oxford was headmaster of Bury St. Edmund's School in 1647. He was afterwards elected by the Congregation of All Hallows, Lombard Street, London. He was, however, ejected in 1662 under the Act of Uniformity. He was 'very popular as an instructor of Children' ... and probably kept a school in his house at Clapham. He compiled A New Spelling Book and, about 1674, The Childs' Delight, which was several times reprinted. D.N.B., S.V. "Lye".

⁵Minutes of half-yearly meeting 9th month 1680. Friends Archives Dublin.

⁶John Gough, Preface to Journal, by James Gough. (3. ed. Dublin: 1830), P.V.

this attitude persisted among many Quakers in Ireland and England until well into the nineteenth century.

Nevertheless, despite the continuous attacks launched by Quaker Meetings against the unsuitability of much of contemporary school literature, less than sixty books were published by Quaker authors for the Children of Friends in the half-century after the opening of the first Quaker School at Mountmellick in 1677.⁷ Furthermore, half of these texts were not school books at all, but more books of advice, of which Penn's Fruits of a Fathers Love, is the outstanding example.⁸ The paucity of school - textbooks by Quaker authors in the first fifty years of Quaker schools in Ireland can be partly explained by the somewhat ambivalent attitude which many early Quakers adopted to book learning. Although they believed that much moral damage could be done to impressionable minds by unsuitable reading material, some early Quakers, nevertheless, felt that book learning could be overrated. The Dublin Half-Yearly Meeting of 1701, for instance, warned parents of the moral dangers involved in "*Keeping Children too long at school without labour*".⁹ Indeed, there was a strong utilitarian element in the thinking of the early pioneers of Quakerism on the subject of education, and many of them felt that not all of the time spent by children at school should be

⁷Michael Quane, "Quaker Schools in Dublin" Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland. Vol. 94. (1964): p.51.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Minutes of Half Yearly Meeting 5th month 1701. Friends Archives. Dublin.

occupied exclusively by book-work. William Penn, one of the outstanding early Quakers advised:-

*Have but few books ... indeed, reading many books is but taking the mind too much from meditation ... much reading is an oppression of the mind, and extinguishes the natural candle, which is the reason for so many senseless scholars in the world*¹⁰

Penn's reference above to the "natural candle" undoubtedly reflected a view held by a considerable number of early Quakers, a view that was heavily influenced by an extremely narrow interpretation of the central Quaker doctrine of the "Inner Light". Some Quakers believed that education primarily involved fanning the divine spark from within each person, rather than cramming the mind with facts and details from without, and although there is a considerable amount of sense in such an approach to education, many early Quakers concentrated exclusively on the inner element, at the expense of the outer, with the subsequent neglect of text - book learning in schools.

By the early decades of the eighteenth century, however, there was a considerable increase in the number of school textbooks written and published by Quaker authors, the majority of whom were schoolmasters. Samuel Fuller, master of the Dublin Quaker school from 1714 composed and published over the next two decades A Short Catechism for the Instruction of Youth, a Mathematical Miscellany and A Treatise on Astronomy.¹¹

¹⁰The Friends library. ed. by Wm. & Thos Evans. Philadelphia, 1841. Vol v., pp.298/299. Quoted in Michael Quane "Quaker Schools in Dublin" R.S.A.I. (1964) p.52.

¹¹Ibid. p. 55.

John Gough, Master of the Dublin school from 1750 to 1774, and master of Friends School, Lisburn from 1774 to 1791, produced two important textbooks, one an English Grammar, (a revision of a work by James, his brother), and the famous Arithmetic¹². The latter years of the eighteenth century saw a series of extremely successful Quaker textbooks, written by the American Friend, Lindley Murray, then resident at York in England. The most important of Murray's publications was undoubtedly his Grammar of the English Language, published in 1795. Other Quaker textbooks in general use in Friends' schools in Ireland at this time were John Walker's Elements of Geography and Anthony Benezets' Spelling-Book, both of which went into many editions in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The remarkable increase in Quaker school publications which characterized the late eighteenth century, coincided with more vigorous efforts by the Society of Friends in Ireland to establish a system of boarding schools for the education of their children, particularly those of parents in "low circumstances". If the boarding schools were to succeed in transmitting the "guarded" and religious education deemed necessary by the Quaker authorities, it was imperative that all reading material presented within the Quaker schools should be consistent in all respects with the principles of the Society. It was in this light that Quakers saw the urgent need to produce their own textbooks, and to rigidly purge the publications of others.

¹²Ibid p.56.

Quaker education in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was, first and foremost, an education in the religious principles of the Society. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Bible remained the principal reading book for two centuries of Quaker education in Ireland and Britain¹³. The minutes of the National Meeting of 1714 record, for instance that:-

It is the earnest desire of this meeting that all Friends be zealously concerned to educate and bring up their children and servants in the knowledge of the true Christian religion as professed by us 14

The study of sacred scripture, therefore, was a very important part of the Quaker child's school day, and Quaker school committees were constantly referring to the necessity for children to be trained in the "frequent reading of the Scriptures". Indeed, Scripture was considered so important an aspect of every Quaker child's education, that the school was expected to lay the foundation for what was intended to be a lifelong study of the sacred texts. The rules for the management of the Leinster provincial school, for instances, state explicitly, that

Each child on leaving the school, shall be given a Bible; also such suitable books, written by Friends, as the Committee shall direct. 15

Similarly, when the Munster provincial school at Newtown, Waterford, was being opened in 1798, the first books to be

¹³Reader, Schools and Schoolmasters p.28.

¹⁴Minutes of half-yearly meeting 9th month, 1714. Friends Arch., Dublin.

¹⁵Rules for the Government of Leinster Provincial School. (1816). P.B.20(25). Friends Arch. Dublin.

procured for the school were Bibles, and Monthly Meetings and individuals were appealed to to make grants to the school of any surplus "*Friends' Books they may have to spare*".¹⁶ While traditional Quakers believed that, ideally, all school textbooks should be suitable vehicles for the inculcation of moral principles, some texts, nevertheless were more obvious in this regard than others. In 1793, for instance, the Committee for Leinster provincial school at Mountmellick decided that in addition to a Bible, each child on leaving the Provincial school should be presented with the following works bound in two volumes.

Advice to Servants.	Handson's Captivity.
Penns Advice to his Children	Francis Howgill's advice
John Crookes' advice to his	to his daughter.
Children and Grandchildren.	Phipps' advice to the youth
Summary of Friends	of Norwich Meeting.
Principles.	Penns' Maxims. ¹⁷

Many of these books adopted a high moral tone, which, together with the extremely serious nature of the subject matter, must have proved very dull reading for the unfortunate children who were expected to study them.

There was another related type of extremely didactic literature recommended for Quaker children in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which apart from being dull, was

¹⁶Newtown School Centenary, (Waterford: Newenham and Harvey 1898). p. 71.

¹⁷Michael Quane, "Friends Provincial School, Mountmellick". Jour. R.S.A.I. 1959. p.73.

also extremely morbid in content. This literature consisted mainly of collections of the dying sayings of Quaker worthies. John Gough recommended seven such books entitled Fruits of Early Piety, in which were recorded the last utterances of those who died young, and the Dublin Half-yearly Meeting of 1718 ordered three thousand copies to be printed of a little book called The Dying Sayings of Hannah Hill, believing that "*there may be a service to our youth to have it*".¹⁸ The modern mind obviously must question the wisdom of the Quaker elders in recommending such excessively lugubrious material for their children. Strangely enough, however, Betsy Shackleton, a daughter of Abraham Shackleton, Jr. of Ballitore, approved of a similar volume which she came across as a child in her fathers' library. The book she refers to was entitled Piety Promoted, or Dying Sayings of the People called Quakers. Betsy Shackleton thought this a "*precious book, fit for all ages and I believe all tastes, as we must all die, and we therefore feel an interest in the state of mind in which our fellow - creatures leave the world*".¹⁹

Besides frequent readings of the Scriptures and the sayings of eminent Quakers, schoolchildren were also expected to have a thorough knowledge of the religious principles of their Society, and several catechisms were

¹⁸Portf. 5A-24. Friends Arch. Dublin.

¹⁹Betsy Shackleton, Ballitore and its Inhabitants, Seventy Years ago. (Dublin: Richard D. Webb and Son, 1862), p p. 103-104.

produced for this purpose. Robert Barclay, the Quaker theologian published an early catechism of Quaker beliefs, and as we have mentioned above, Samuel Fuller, the master of the Dublin Quaker school in the early eighteenth century, published A Short Catechism for the Instruction of Youth.²⁰ In the early nineteenth century the American Quaker, Lindley Murray, produced a catechism called A Compendium of Religious Faith and Practice designed for Young Persons of the Society of Friends. Murrays' aim in writing his "compendium" was to arrange the most important Quaker beliefs in "a regular and intelligible order", and to express them in language adapted to the capacities of young children.²¹ The design or layout of the work takes the form of Articles of Faith, followed by Proofs and Illustrations from the Holy Scriptures.

The first article in Murray's catechism is

There is but one living and true God, the maker and Preserver of all things, the source of happiness, and of everything that is good. ²²

This is followed by a number of Proofs and Illustrations which are

Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord. ²³
Devt. VI. 4.

²⁰Quane "Quaker Schools" R.S.A.I. (1964): P.55

²¹Lindley Murray, A Compendium of Religious Faith and Practice designed for Young Persons of the Society of Friends. (York: 1815). p.4 of Introduction.

²²Ibid., p.17.

²³Ibid.

and

Thou has created all things; and for thy pleasure they are, and were created. Rev. IV. 11 24

At the end of the work Murray has included an appendix "for teachers who prefer the catechetical mode of instruction". The layout of the catechism is in the standard question and answer form, and goes as follows:

Qu. How many articles or subdivisions are there in the second section concerning duties towards our fellow creatures ?

Ans. Thirteen Articles:

*Repeat the first Article of Duties towards our fellow - creatures.
Recite the proofs and illustrations of this article.*

*Repeat the second article under this head. 25
Recite the proofs and illustrations. etc.*

Murray's Catechism was remarkably similar in layout and design to the standard Catechisms of the time being used by other religious denominations, with the one possible exception that the Quaker author went into much greater detail in the subdivision of his material. Although the use of catechisms in schools naturally necessitated a great deal of memorization on the part of the pupil, Murray tended to go to extremes in this respect. Being a celebrated grammarian he was meticulous in his adherence to detail. Referring to his Catechism he said:-

It would tend to improve and perfect the learner's knowledge of the subjects comprised in the Compendium, and to exercise both his judgment and memory, if, after he had recited the proofs and illustrations under each portion, he were required to point out the corresponding parts.

²⁴ Murray, Religious Faith and Practice p.17.

²⁵ Ibid., p p. 86-87.

of every tenet, with the respective parts of the 26
proofs and illustrations which belong to it.

With regard to the example quoted earlier, for instance, the pupil was expected to recite verbatim all the thirteen articles or subdivisions, with their individual proofs and illustrations. Such a procedure must, undoubtedly have been an extremely laborious exercise.

Quaker textbooks in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were extremely plain in appearance and were totally devoid of all pictures or decorative illustrations.²⁷ This was because Quakers insisted on a strict adherence to "Truth" or reality, and they regarded drawings or illustrations as mere representations or distortions of the truth. This aspect of Quaker puritanism helps to explain the great scarcity of portraits of the early Quakers, who only very rarely allowed their profiles to be sketched or painted. It also helps to explain why drawing, drama and even music were some of the last subjects to be introduced onto the curriculum of Quaker schools in the late nineteenth century. The absence of pictorial illustrations in Quaker school books meant that Quaker authors made very little concessions to the interests of Quaker pupils.

Early Quakerism saw itself as a return to primitive Christianity, and thus rejected the sacramental rituals of the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches.

²⁶Ibid., p.79.

²⁷Quane "Quaker Schools" Jour. R.S.A.I. 1964. p.52.

Despite discarding the external trappings of the major Christian churches, however, there was one area of interest closely associated with those institutions which Quakerism retained, namely the Latin language. The Quaker attitude to Latin, nevertheless, was considerably different from that of the major churches. While some early Quakers recognised Latin as the root of the main European languages, few wished to retain it as the key to pagan, classical learning. Indeed, some of the first generation of Quakers merely wished to preserve Latin because, as a universal language it could prove useful for the conversion of the world.²⁸ Furthermore, some Quaker scholars wished to preserve the language, but discard the literature, and it was in this area of Latin literature that major problems arose for Quaker schoolmasters, especially in relation to the provision of suitable textbooks for the teaching of the ancient language.

The teaching of the Classics presented serious difficulties for many Quaker schoolmasters in eighteenth century Ireland. Some, like John Gough at Lisburn, felt that Latin was overrated,²⁹ but many still continued to recognise its value in education. As far back as 1676, an elementary textbook for the teaching of Latin was published in England by the Quakers. Attached to the

²⁸Reader, Schools and Schoolmasters p.28.

²⁹Neville H. Newhouse, A History of Friends School Lisburn (Lurgan: 1974) p.10.

book were the names of the master of Waltham Abbey School, Christopher Taylor, and the founder of Quakerism, George Fox. In the preface of this little book it is stated that

About six years since, a meeting of divers good Friends took place concern^g children's education and teaching the languages; and what then was fully agreed on and writ down was in substance, that they had agreed to lay aside the heathenish books, and the old corrupt grammars taken out of them, and set up Scriptures of Truth, and what may be savoury, and good matter that may not corrupt childrens' ³⁰ minds.

In 1705, a meeting of Quaker schoolmasters in Ireland, anxious to avoid "the contamination of the susceptible minds of their offspring by heathenish authors" reported, their determination to lay aside Virgil, Horace, Juvenal, Terence, Ovid de Tristibus, Ovids' metamorphoses, Erasmus Aesop's Fables, Corderius & Co., although they have "hitherto been used by Friends for the instruction of youth in the Latin tongue". It was found that these authors did not treat of things "agreeable to truth", and they consequently substituted "Sententiae Pueriles", "Cato Nomenclatura", "Castilions Dialogues", the Latin Bible and Testament, "Academia Celestis or Heavenly University" and Robert Barclay's "Catechism and Apology". An alteration in "Lilly's Latin Grammar" was approved and a thousand amended copies ordered to be printed.³¹

³⁰ Quoted in On the Past Proceedings and Experience of the Society of Friends, in Connection with the Education of Youth: (York: 1838), p.12. Friends Arch. Dub.

³¹ Robert Barclay, The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth, (London: Hodder and Stoughton. 1876), p. 496.

Not only did this schoolmasters' conference of 1705 revise the examples given in the Latin books, but further revisions took place in 1706 and 1710.³²

The problem posed by Latin textbooks was not just the fact that they were written by "heathenish authors". Another more important factor in the Quaker mind was the numerous references to pagan deities throughout the texts. For a sect which refused to name the days of the week or the months of the year by their customary titles, because they were called after pagan gods, the proliferation of such deities in the pages of the great Latin classics was, indeed, a considerable obstacle. An even greater difficulty was the fact that the attitudes of many of the Classical authors to sexual morality and military warfare were totally opposed to the principles of the Society of Friends. It was these two areas of morality in particular, which many Quaker schoolmasters found incompatible with the idea of a "guarded" education for their children. Indeed, it was mainly due to scruples about teaching the classical authors that Abraham Shackleton, Jr. temporarily closed Ballitore school in 1803. Referring to this event, Mary Leadbeater reports in her diary

For many years past my brother had entertained strong objections to the study of those authors which treat in seducing language of the illusions of love and the trade of war; and he published an advertisement declining to include such works in his course of education; thus relinquishing the credit and profit of preparing lads for College. ³³

³²Portf. 5A - 24 Friends Arch. Dub.

³³Mary Leadbeater, Leadbeater Papers Vol. 1. (London: Bell and Daldy 1862) p. 304.

A highly respected Quaker author, who was extremely concerned about the moral suitability of Latin textbooks in Quaker schools was Lindley Murray (1745-1826). In his autobiography Murray claimed that considerable caution and restraint must be exercised in the teaching of the Classics, "*especially in the education of young persons*".³⁴ He admits that many passages in the writings of the pagan authors are most unsuitable for Quaker children in matters of "*Religion, morality and even decency*". Such writings, he claims, have a strong tendency to "*corrupt the tender minds*" of impressionable young people and could quite possibly lead to "*depravities*" in adult life.³⁵ Murray is grateful that considerable progress has been made, to date, in the purgation of classical textbooks, but insists that there is a long way to go before "*complete purification*" takes place. For the latter to be successful, however, some works "*distinguished by the simplicity and elegance of their style*", would have to be sacrificed, because "*Fine language and beautiful composition prove the more dangerous, when they are the vehicles of corrupt and pernicious sentiments*".³⁶ Even at this stage, however, Murray is not so sure that those classical texts which have survived the Quaker censorial onslaught, would be completely safe in the rarified atmosphere of the Quaker classroom. Many would still

³⁴Lindley Murray, Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Lindley Murray. 2 ed. (York: 1827). P. 120.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid., p. 121.

contain "great defects in the religion and morality which they inculcate", so it would be the duty of the schoolmaster to point out such defects when necessary, and to contrast them with the "pure and perfect principles of the Christian religion".³⁷

From reading the comments of eminent Quakers like Lindley Murray on the moral suitability of classical text books, one gets the impression that it was basically the Latin language, rather than the literature, which the Quakers wished to teach. Murray seemed to be much more interested in "Fine language and beautiful Composition" than in the ideas and subject matter of the Latin texts, and perhaps this is understandable in a man who was a celebrated grammarian. It seems, however that Murray was not alone in this attitude, and that many Quakers were more interested in the manner of expression rather than the matter being expressed. It was mainly for this reason, therefore, that Quakers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries wished to purge the Classical texts of all subject matter regarded as alien to the ethos of their schools. An attitude very similar to the above was expressed a century earlier by William Penn when he said

It is a pity therefore that books (such as Lawson would write) have not been composed for youth, by some curious and careful naturalists and also mechanics, in the Latin tongue, to be used in school, that they might learn things with words, things obvious and familiar to them, and which would make³⁸ the tongue easier to be obtained by them.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Quoted in Charles Braithwaite's Second Period of Quakerism, (London: Macmillan & Co., 1919), p. 529-530.

The quotation above is an obvious example of utilitarianism applied to the study of Latin. Penn is only concerned here with the mechanics of the language, and implies that the literature is more of a hindrance than a help in the learning of Latin. Despite the considerable purgation carried out on most of the best Latin authors in Irish Quaker schools in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, such texts, fortunately, did not deteriorate to the level envisaged by Penn. Certainly, many fine Latin writers did not appear on the Quaker curriculum at all, and many of those who did had been altered almost beyond recognition, but thanks to the more liberal - minded policy of a few Quaker schoolmasters like Abraham Shackleton, Sr., and his son Richard of Ballitore, the study of classical literature was not allowed to die in eighteenth and early nineteenth century Quaker schools, despite the truncated state of many Latin text-books.

Although considerable attention was lavished by eighteenth century Irish Quakers on the subject of Classical text books, the three provincial boarding schools at Mountmellick, Lisburn and Newtown concentrated on giving their pupils a "*good English education*", and did not begin to teach the classics until well into the nineteenth century. Classical studies during the eighteenth century were largely confined to a few private Quaker establishments, the most noteworthy of which was the Multi-denominational Quaker boys boarding school at Ballitore, Co. Kildare. The provincial boarding schools, on the otherhand, were mainly concerned with the teaching of the three Rs and the Bible, as a considerable number of their pupils were destined to ~~serve~~ apprenticeships on

leaving school at fourteen. Consequently, textbooks on English reading, grammar and spelling predominate at this period with considerable emphasis also on arithmetic, and of course, religious knowledge.

As far as textbooks on the English language were concerned, the most notable Quaker author was Lindley Murray, whom we have already referred to in relation to classical authors. Murray was one of the most prolific of Quaker authors and succeeded in publishing several very successful textbooks in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the most noted of which was probably his Grammar of the English Language which he published in 1795. Murray says of this important publication

I conceived that a grammar containing a careful selection of the most useful matter, and an adaptation of it to the understanding, and the gradual progress of learners, with a special regard to the propriety and purity of all the examples and illustrations; would be some improvement on the English Grammars³⁹ which have fallen under my notice.

In the Preface to his Grammar, Murray stated that he hopes this publication will promote "the cause of virtue, as well as of learning", and he admits that he has taken great care "to avoid every example and illustration, which might have an improper effect on the minds of youth".⁴⁰ The Grammar is divided into four parts, and the most important rules, definitions and observations, which are intended for memorization, are printed in

³⁹ Murray, Memoirs. p.107.

⁴⁰ Idem, An English Grammar. 4 ed. (York: Longman, Hurst, Rees. 1819), p. 12.

distinctly larger type: The four broad divisions of the work are: (1) Orthography (2) Etymology (3) Syntax (4) Pronunciation. Speaking of Murray's Grammar, the critic of the Monthly Review for July 1796 says:

*This is a publication of much merit, and fully answers the professions in the Title. The appendix contains some of the best rules for writing elegantly, and with propriety, that we recollect to have seen,*⁴¹

Shortly after the publication of the Grammar, Murray published a volume of Exercises, calculated to correspond with, and illustrate by plentiful examples, all the rules of the Grammar. At the same time he claims in his autobiography, "I formed a Key to the Exercises, designed for the convenience of teachers, and for the use of young persons who had left school".⁴² Not content with this, Murray went on to publish an Abridgement of the Grammar, "for the use of minor schools, and for those who were beginning to study the language". Again, like all good Quakers, the moral issue was predominant in Murray's textbooks, and he hoped "to imbue the students' mind with sentiments of the highest importance, by interweaving principles of piety and virtue with the study of language".⁴³

In 1804 Lindley Murray published a Spelling Book. This was a small volume, of which Elizabeth Frank, in an addendum to Murray's autobiography says

⁴¹Quoted as advertisement at the end of Murray's The English Reader. (York: Longman and Rees, 1799).

⁴²Murray, Memoirs, p. 108.

⁴³Ibid.

The gradation throughout the work is easy and regular; and well adapted to the progress of the infant understanding. The advances from letters to syllables, from syllables to words, and from words to sentences, are carried out by almost insensible⁴⁴ degrees.

In Quaker schools in eighteenth and nineteenth century Ireland there was considerable emphasis placed on 'orthography' or spelling, and Murray himself believed that a "Spelling-book is commonly the threshold of Learning".⁴⁵ Indeed, as in all his textbooks, Murray did not allow the nature of the subject to detract from the overall moral purpose of all Quaker education, and saw even the humble spelling-book as a vehicle for the promotion of moral principles. This he achieved by introducing into the book "a number of easy reading lessons, calculated to attract attention", so that "the infant mind might be imbued with the love of goodness, and led to approve and practise many duties connected with early life".⁴⁶ Other spelling - books in use at Irish Quaker schools included Benezet's Spelling Book, the Pennsylvania Spelling Book; the Universal Spelling Book, and the Ackworth Vocabulary. The latter publication was used at the Munster provincial school in the early nineteenth century, and was later replaced by Butter's Spelling Book.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Ibid., p.273.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p.113.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Newtown School Centenary. (Waterford: Newenham and Harvey, 1898), p. 63.

Another important textbook used extensively in Irish Quaker schools in the period under study was The English Reader, again by Lindley Murray. According to the author "This was a compilation containing some of the most esteemed pieces in the language both in prose and poetry; which are at once calculated to promote correct reading, to give a taste for justness of thought, and elegance of composition, and to inculcate pious and virtuous sentiments".⁴⁸ Murray admits, in the preface to his Reader, that he has introduced "many extracts which place religion in the most amiable light, and which recommend a great variety of moral duties".⁴⁹ He has also included a number of extracts from Scripture in order to cultivate a taste for the reading of the Sacred book, or, as he himself expresses it "To excite an early taste and veneration for this great Rule of Life".⁵⁰ Under the heading 'Select Sentences and Paragraphs', the English Reader begins with the statement "Diligence, industry and proper improvement of Time, are material duties of the young", and this high moral tone is continued throughout the work, with the exception of a few brief admissions of "pieces which will amuse as well as instruct".⁵¹ The English Reader is broadly divided into sections on:

- (1) Narrative Pieces. e.g. "No rank or possessions can make the guilty mind happy".⁵²

⁴⁸ Murray Memoirs, p. 111.

⁴⁹ Idem The English Reader p.5.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p.6.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., p.25.

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⁴⁸ Murray Memoirs, p. 111.

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⁵⁰ Ibid., p.6.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., p.25.

- (2) Didactic Pieces e.g. "The Importance of a good⁵³ education".
- (3) Argumentative Pieces e.g. "On the Immortality of the⁵⁴ Soul".
- (4) Promiscuous and mixed pieces e.g. Carefully selected extracts from poetry, like "The road to Happiness open to all men" by Pope, or "Human Frailty"⁵⁵ by Cowper.

Murray's textbooks, combining a high moral purpose with a systematic approach to the transmission of knowledge, were used extensively in Irish Quaker schools for more than half a century. When the Munster provincial boarding school at Newtown, Waterford was being established in 1798, it is particularly significant to note that the only schoolbook specifically mentioned in the Quaker minutes was Murray's Grammar, of which the school Committee were directed to procure fifty copies "on the best terms they can"⁵⁶. In 1799 at the Leinster provincial school, Mountmellick, Murray's English Reader was introduced, having been inspected by the Committee and pronounced to be a good and safe reading book. Again at Mountmellick in 1805, Murray's Grammar and Exercises were introduced.⁵⁷

There can be no doubt that the influence of Lindley Murray's textbooks on the teaching of English reading, grammar and spelling in Irish and English Quaker schools was immense in the first half of the nineteenth

⁵³Ibid., p.47. ⁵⁴Ibid., p.92 ⁵⁵Ibid., p p.324,337.

⁵⁶Newtown School Centenary, (Waterford: Newenham and Harvey, 1898), p.71.

⁵⁷One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. (Dublin: Richard D. Webb. & Son, 1886), p.23.

century. Murray's influence, however, was not only felt within the confines of Quaker schools, but extended far beyond. Indeed, even the schools for the Irish poor, being established in the early years of the nineteenth century, owed much to Murray. These 'Lancastrian schools', a considerable number of which were conducted through the agency of the Kildare Place Society, borrowed extensively from Murray's writings when compiling their own textbooks. The Dublin Reading Book, for instance, which sought to teach manners and morals, as well as reading, drew much of its content from the reading-books of the American Quaker author.⁵⁸ Perhaps the greatest proof of Murray's success as an author of textbooks for schools was the fact that for over half a century his Grammar of the English Language was the standard textbook on the subject throughout Britain and America.⁵⁹

Despite the undoubted popularity of Lindley Murray's textbooks in Irish Quaker schools, the most well known textbook by a Quaker author in general use in Ireland in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was John Gough's Arithmetic. This textbook was used extensively throughout Ireland for nearly a century, and was well known to the hedge - schoolmaster

⁵⁸ Kingsmill Moore, An Unwritten Chapter in the History of Education. (London: Macmillan and Co. 1904). p.219.

⁵⁹ Chambers's Encyclopaedia, 1927 ed., Vol 7. p.353.

William Carleton. Gough's Arithmetic had superceded Voster's in the Irish hedge-schools, and was itself later replaced by Thompson's. On seeing a copy of Gough's textbook in the hands of a well known teacher, Carleton affected to be shocked.

'Gough's', he exclaimed, ... 'Surely it is not possible that you are teaching the system of a man who for years has proved himself to be ignorant of the doctrine of proportion! I thought I should have found Thompson here, not Gough - but indeed, Mr. Newland, I did expect to have met you with Homer or Virgil in your hand, and not with such a schoolboy's book as Gough's Arithmetic'.⁶⁰

The full title of Gough's text was Practical Arithmetic, in Four Books, and the 1792 edition included an appendix of Algebra by "the late W. Atkinson of Belfast". Book One consisted of Whole Numbers, weights and measures; Book Two of Fractions, Vulgar and decimal; Book Three of Mercantile Arithmetic, and Book Four of Extraction of Roots, Porgressions etc. In the preface, Gough claimed that he hoped his work would meet an important need in contemporary education, where much valuable class time was being wasted in the teaching of arithmetic, due to a scarcity of suitable textbooks. Time was being wasted, claimed Gough, in schools where "the master or assistant writes down the Rules or Questions for the boys, or causeth them to write them themselves from printed books or manuscripts".⁶¹ At the end of the

⁶⁰William Carleton Autobiography p.263, Quoted in P.J. Dowling Hedge Schools of Ireland. (Dublin: Talbot Press), p p. 77 - 78.

⁶¹John Gough, Practical Arithmetick in Four Books, (Dublin: 1792), Preface., p.3.

Preface, Gough recommended to teachers how they might use the textbook successfully in class. He said

I think it will be best to begin with Whole Numbers, and proceed thro Notation, addition, Subtraction, Multiplication and Division; Addition and subtraction of numbers of Divers Denominations, Reduction and the Rule of Three, to the Contractions, without meddling with the questions at the end of the Rules. 62

At the end of his great work, Gough included a very comprehensive number of revision questions, in order, as he himself says, "to exercise the learner in the Sundry Rules".⁶³

The minutes of Mountmellick school committee in 1824 suggest that Arithmetic was at a low ebb among the boys, to remedy which, an "Arithmetical Grammar" was introduced.⁶⁴ Little is known of the nature of this text, but it was obviously an effort to combine in one, two branches of learning not usually regarded by children with much favour.

The gradual expansion of the curriculum in the Quaker provincial boarding schools in the early nineteenth century gave rise to the appearance of new textbooks in history and geography. The teaching of geography was first mentioned in the minutes of Mountmellick school in 1794, when it was "apprehended that books of moral miscellany might be profitably joined to the use of the Scriptures", for which purpose six copies of Walkor's

⁶²Ibid., p.4. ⁶³Ibid., p.333.

⁶⁴One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School.
(Dublin: 1886), p.37.

Geography and fifty copies of Extracts and Original Anecdotes, were to be obtained.⁶⁵ The combining of Walker's Geography with the use of the Scriptures would suggest that the teaching of Geography in eighteenth and early nineteenth century Quaker schools was far removed from what we are now acquainted with. Again,, as in all subjects, the Quakers laid emphasis on the religious and moral aspects of education, and consequently the subject matter of Quaker textbooks was expected to facilitate such a purpose. Indeed, John Walker, M.D., the author of the Geography was, even by Quaker standards, an exceptionally conservative man in his moral outlook, and this characteristic of the eminent doctor is borne out by an incident concerning his visit to Ballitore in 1783, when he objected to the presence of the only gravestone in the Quaker cemetery. Mary Leadbeater relates the incident as follows:-

... he seemed much pleased with us, our school, our village and our gardens. I suppose he was not so well pleased with our place of interment, for the stone which marked the grave of Abel Strettel appeared to him inconsistent with our principles as a religious society, and on the night before his leaving Ballitore, he got into the graveyard, and alone and unassisted, completely buried the stone ... this was a very rare instance of a gravestone in one of our burying grounds. 66

John Walker, the subject of the above anecdote, was born at Cockermouth, Cumberland in 1759, and was a physician.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 23.

⁶⁶ Leadbeater, Papers p.142.

He went to Dublin in 1779 and became a pupil of Esdale, the finest artist in the city. In Dublin he embraced the principles of the Society of Friends, and in 1788 he published his textbook Elements of Geography.⁶⁷

Walker's Geography was a much fuller work than the geographical summary (a mere twelve pages) appended to John Gough, Jr's Reader. This latter work, which was also compiled before the Union, emphasized that "*Ireland is a Kingdom distinct from and independent of Great Britain, though governed by the same king*".⁶⁸ Other similar type textbooks in use in Irish Quaker schools in the early nineteenth century were Pinnock's Catechisms of Geography and History, which were used extensively at Newtown in the 1830's,⁶⁹ and Goldsmith's England, which was used as a history textbook at the Camden Street Quaker school in the early 1840's.

Textbooks on history, however, were extremely rare in eighteenth century Quaker schools in Ireland. When history was taught at all, it was exclusively English history, and consequently the textbooks made only the briefest references to Ireland. In Trinity College, Dublin, there is preserved An Abridgement of English History for the use of Ballitore School. This publication, as would be expected, deals very tenuously with

⁶⁷ Isabel Grubb's Research File. Item 27. Friends Arch. Dublin.

⁶⁸ One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School (1886), p.7.

⁶⁹ Newtown School Centenary, (Waterford: Newenham and Harvey, 1898), p.63.

the history of Ireland, and the few references to the latter are presumably all the boys were told on the subject. Regarding the 1641 Rebellion or so-called "Bloody-Massacre", the pupils at Ballitore were taught that in the Reign of Charles I the Papists of Ireland thought this a favourable opportunity to throw off the English yoke by a general massacre of Protestants; *"neither age, sex or condition received pity, no benefits, alliances or authority were any protection ... friends murdered their intimates, relations their kinsmen, and servants their masters"*. With regard to the reign of James II the teaching was that after the Battle of the Boyne, *"The Roman Catholics were restored to the enjoyment of their liberties in the exercise of their religion which they had possessed in the reign of Charles II"*.⁷⁰ This grossly distorted account of important events in Irish history was typical of official opinion in Ireland in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, regarding the teaching of history in Irish schools. The absence of history books in the various charity schools, for instance, was part of a well defined policy. Contemporary writers and educationists, such as Richard Lovell Edgeworth, were emphatic in their opinions that the teaching of history in general, particularly Irish history, laid the foundation of discontent and of disaffection to constituted government.⁷¹ It is not

⁷⁰ Michael Quane, "Ballitore School", Journal of Kildare Archaeological Society. Vol. XIV. 1966-67, p.186.

⁷¹ Patrick J. Dowling, The Hedge Schools of Ireland, (Dublin: Talbot Press), p. 85.

surprising, therefore, that the Irish Quakers, whose roots were English and who consistently protested their loyalty to the king in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, were totally opposed to the provision of textbooks on Irish history in their schools.

Jonathan Pim, a pupil at Ballitore in 1822, clearly regretted the absence of Irish history textbooks at the school, and in a letter to his friend Richard Webb, wrote

I should be very glad to read the history of Ireland that thou speaks of, if thou would send it to me. I have often wished to read one and often thought of reading Leland's which I don't like, for want of a better, besides it is too large for one who knows so little of her history, as I must confess I do. 72

The British administration in Ireland had obviously good reason to fear the influence of textbooks on Irish history, for, a short time later Jonathan Pim, again writing from Ballitore, said

I have read the history of Ireland ... I thought before that the cruelties committed on us by the English were great, but until I read it, I never had a right opinion of them. 73

Indeed, for most of the nineteenth century Irish history was, to all intents and purposes, ignored in Irish Quaker schools, except for occasional references to the subject which appeared from time to time in textbooks on English history.

⁷²Portf. 5a - 56. Friends Arch. Dublin.

⁷³Portf. 5A - 57. Friends Arch. Dublin

Just as some Quakers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, had strong reservations about the teaching of the Classics, especially as regards the moral suitability of pagan authors, so likewise they were also highly suspicious concerning the teaching of modern languages, particularly French. The learning of French was considered by the Society of Friends as likely to corrupt the minds of youth, and was not to be undertaken without the permission of the Quaker elders.⁷⁴ Consequently, Quakers felt the need to replace traditional textbooks in French by highly "guarded" versions of their own. Here again, Lindley Murray came to the rescue, with the publication of his Lecteur Francois in 1802. Like the English Reader, the Lecteur Francois was a compilation of notable extracts from French literature. Murray followed this up in 1807 with his Introduction au Lecteur Francois. Explaining the motivation behind his publication of textbooks in French, Murray claimed that

In foreign languages, not less than in English, it is of high importance, that youth should be presented with books inculcating sound morality, and purified from everything, which might stain the delicacy of their minds. 75

As we have already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, expense was not an overriding factor for

⁷⁴Minutes of Half-Yearly Meeting. 3 mo. 1723. Friends Arch. Dublin.

⁷⁵Murray, Memoirs. p. 112.

the Society of Friends in the provision of suitable textbooks for their schools in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Many members of the sect had risen to considerable prominence in the fields of trade and commerce at this time, and those who still remained in "low-circumstances", as the phrase went, were generally well provided for by the ministrations of the vigilant and philanthropic monthly meetings.

By the early years of the nineteenth century, however, when the Quakers began to undertake the immense task of providing an elementary education for the Irish poor, the high cost of available textbooks did, indeed, become a major problem. Now the Society was dealing with huge numbers for the first time in its history, and the provision of school textbooks for the Irish poor, akin to what was being provided in the Quaker provincial schools, was far beyond the economic resources of the small philanthropic sect. As Patrick J. Dowling points out in his Hedge Schools of Ireland, a shilling in Irish money in the early years of the nineteenth century represented, in the most prosperous parts of the country, a full day's wages for a farm labourer, and in the poorer districts it would have paid three days wages.⁷⁶ Consequently, the price of school textbooks was far beyond the reach of

⁷⁶Patrick J. Dowling, The Hedge Schools of Ireland. Talbot Press. Dublin. p. 77.

the majority of the Irish population at that time. To illustrate this point, Dowling quotes an advertisement in the Ennis Chronicle of March 3rd 1793, which gives some idea of the price of books at this period. The advertisement reads as follows:-

Rational Spelling Book
Just published by the printers hereof, a New and improved Edition of the Rational Spelling Book, price 1s. 7½d; Watts' ditto, 1s. 7½d: Universal ditto, 1s. 1d.; ... Dowling's Book-keeping, Vosters' Arithmetick, with an extensive assortment of School Books. 77

Furthermore, the prices quoted above were probably popular prices, and many other school books were undoubtedly more expensive. The London Hibernian Society, in the early years of the nineteenth century overcame the difficulty posed by the high cost of textbooks by insisting on the use of the Bible as a text-book for all purposes in their Irish schools.⁷⁸ This procedure, however, was totally unacceptable to the non-proselytising Quakers, as it was also, of course, to the vast majority of Irish Catholics. Another possible solution to the problem, but again ruled out by the conscientious Quakers, was that of using the books employed by the hedge-schools in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Economic circumstances forced the hedge-schools to use anything in the line of reading material that came to hand, and each pupil, therefore, had to provide himself with whatever he could. Among the various publications in use in the hedge-schools

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Kingsmill-Moore, Unwritten Chapter p.39.

were Hero and Leander, History of Captain Freney a Robber,
Irish Rogues and Rapparees, History of Redmond O'Hanlon
a Notorious Highwayman, and many others of a similar type.⁷⁹
These publications were extremely cheap, but were regarded
by the Quakers, and, indeed, by the Commissioners of
Education⁸⁰ as morally reprehensible. Clearly a sect
which endorsed the high moral and puritanical principles
of a Lindley Murray or a John Gough, could find little to
recommend in books about rogues, rapparees, and notorious
highwaymen. The problem of providing textbooks
economically for the education of the poor in Ireland was
finally solved by the English Quaker Joseph Lancaster,
whose "*monitorial system*" made the education of vast
numbers of people possible in the first place. Lancaster's
solution was indeed a novel and unusual one, and it was
rooted in the principle that one book sufficed for a whole
school, no matter what its numbers. In fact, Lancaster's
text-books for use in Charity schools were not bound
together like traditional books, but instead were composed
of a series of tablets, each of which was mounted on a
card, and was of sufficient size to be suitable for class
purposes. The spelling book which the Kildare Place
Society published on this system contained sixty tablets
and the reading book, one hundred.⁸¹ This rather crude,
but reasonably effective system was employed in many of
the Lancastrian schools in Ireland in the early decades of
the nineteenth century.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p.214. ⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid., p.218.

The shape which textbooks took in Irish Quaker school in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was largely determined by Quaker puritanical beliefs. As the main purpose of education, in the Quaker mind, was to provide a training in the religious and moral principles of the Society, everything else was subordinated to that prime aim. Consequently, great emphasis was placed on a study of the Bible and the Quaker catechism, and secular literature inevitably suffered. Textbooks in the ancient classics, English, History and modern languages were either completely forbidden or were rigorously censored in conformity with the Quaker idea of a "*guarded education*". Behind the high walls of the three provincial boarding schools at Lisburn, Mountmellick and Newtown, Waterford, Quaker children were, through the medium of carefully selected textbooks, being exposed to an extremely limited view of the world, a view which was not to significantly change until the end of the nineteenth century, when textbooks in Quaker schools began to present a broader and more realistic picture.

CHAPTER IX

TEACHING METHODS IN IRISH QUAKER SCHOOLS

From the moment when the first Quaker school in Ireland was established at Mountmellick in 1677, the Society of Friends was concerned that the teaching methods employed in Quaker schools should be the correct ones. Consequently, in the following years, the Quaker national meetings took a special interest in this matter and consulted the parent body in England, from time to time, seeking advice on the best teaching methods available. Because the English body was considerably more experienced in educational matters, and because English Quakers were more in touch with educational developments than their more isolated Irish colleagues, the advice and recommendations emanating from London and elsewhere in England were very seriously considered by Irish Quakers throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

On the third of ninth month 1680, the Dublin Half-Years' meeting deputed three Friends to write to Christopher Taylor, master of George Fox's school at Waltham Abbey in Essex to "*make enquiry after what method Friends Schoolmasters about London do teach the children the Latin, Greek and Hebrew tongues*".¹ This was followed up in 1681 when the Dublin

¹Minute of Dublin Half-Years Meeting. 3/9/1680. Friends Archives Dublin.

national meeting directed Friends schoolmasters in Ireland to confer together "about the method of teaching youth and also to consider a little book in manuscript given out and sent to this Meeting by Richard Jordan".² The schoolmasters who met at this conference were Alexander Seaton, Lawrence Routh, Patrick Logan, John Archer and Henry Rose, and they reported that Richard Jordan's book for the teaching of spelling "is very imperfect in many places and that there are books extant for that purpose so that Friends as a Meeting are not willing to encourage the printing of it".³ Again, at a schoolmasters' conference in 1705, there was considerable emphasis laid on proper teaching methods, and it was decided that children "should not be corrected in passion, nor for their lessons more than for untruthlike behaviour",⁴

Quakers in eighteenth century Ireland, as indeed in England, were not revolutionary in their teaching methods⁵, and they tended to employ the methods currently available, provided such were not inconsistent with the principles of the Society of Friends. Education in Britain and Ireland in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, especially at the elementary level, relied mainly on extremely mechanical methods of instruction, and was almost totally uninfluenced by educational reformers on the Continent such as Rousseau and Pestalozzi. Most elementary schools in Britain and Ireland relied heavily on rote - learning, and the Quakers were no exception. Indeed, their methods

²Portfolio 5A - 24. Friends Arch. Dub.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵John Reader. Of Schools and Schoolmasters. (London: Quaker Home Service, 1979), p.27.

of teaching the three - R^s were remarkably similar to what was going on in the schools of other religious denominations. The Quaker school day was largely spent in the dull mechanical routines of learning by heart, reciting, spelling, and laboriously transcribing rules and explanations.

As far as the teaching of reading was concerned, the Quaker provincial school at Mountmellick employed a three class system of instruction which survived throughout the lifetime of the school. According to an educational report on the school in 1796, the following system prevailed:-

The children are divided into three classes; the first comprises the best readers, the second the next best readers, and the third those beginning to read; each class is of both sexes; a lesson is read to every class; and to prevent any idea of one sex being preferred to another for instruction, the males read first one day, and the females first the next day, and so alternately - the different sexes, though of the same class, do not read together, but each in succession by themselves, and by this arrangement the worst readers have sufficient opportunity, if they will make use of it, to get the lesson while the rest are reading, and be thereby the sooner ready to go to write and cipher.

The reading classes at Mountmellick school were obviously very highly organised and tightly structured; and many children within that system must, indeed, have felt under great pressure to progress from the weakest to the best reader class.

In Quaker schools the method employed in the teaching of reading had a dual purpose; firstly to develop the skill of actually being able to read for understanding,

⁶One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. (Dublin: Richard D. Webb & Son, 1886), pp. 21-22.

and secondly to encourage clarity of speech. Recitation was regarded as being very important in Quaker schools, as it was seen as an exercise in voice production. Clarity of speech was highly valued by the Quaker elders because such an acquisition was very useful at the Quaker meetings.⁷ The inarticulate person was not very helpful at such assemblies. Sarah Grubb, the founder of Suir Island School, Clonmel, refers to this dual purpose in the reading methodology employed in Quaker schools, when, speaking of Ackworth, she says:-

The reading mistress has seldom more than one class in her school at a time, which consists of six or eight, and they read paragraph by paragraph, all standing so remote from her as to render a proper exertion of their voices necessary, by which they are inured to read & audibly.

The curriculum and teaching methods employed at Ackworth exerted considerable influence on the Irish Quaker provincial schools in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In contrast to the extremely structured methods of teaching reading at Mountmellick and Ackworth, sometimes more informal methods were employed in Quaker schools with considerable success. In this regard it is useful to refer to the methods of a schoolmistress at Ballitore in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, called Molly Webster. Betsy Shackleton, a daughter of Abraham Shackleton Jr. of Ballitore, was a past pupil of

⁷Michael Quane. "Quaker Schools in Dublin". Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland 1964. Vol 94:64.

⁸Sarah Grubb. Journal (Belfast: William Robinson.1837). p.232.

Molly Webster, and in her memoirs, says of her:-

I believe there never was a better school mistress. Indeed I firmly believe that Bell, or Lancaster or Owen Finn, never taught children to read in so short, a time as my teacher.

In Quaker schools in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, it was quite common for females to teach reading, but to leave what were considered the more difficult skills of writing and arithmetic to men. Molly Webster specialized in the teaching of reading, and she had certainly a flair which endeared her to her pupils, and which undoubtedly helped them to progress in this field. Betsy Shackleton gives a charming account of this remarkable womans' teaching method, which goes as follows:-

In teaching the alphabet she patiently went on from + (criss-cross) to the final Zed, which she called IZZARD. She said A and the pupil said A; she said B and the pupil said B. If she was in a pleasant humour, and the pupil was very young, or very good or very pretty, she would make the impression more delightful as well as more lasting by saying A was an apple-pie, B bit it, C cut it; or C for Cat, D for dog, or for Debby; T with a hat on, round O, 10 crooked S, Q in the corner, and so forth,

The above approach to the teaching of reading has a refreshing informality about it, and was undoubtedly very effective in the hands of an imaginative schoolmistress like Molly Webster. Unfortunately, however, imaginative Quaker

⁹ Betsy Shackleton. Ballitore and its Inhabitants Seventy Years ago. (Dublin: Richard D Webb & Son. 1862), p.27. Bell and Lancaster were pioneers of the "monitorial system" of education in Britain and Ireland in the early nineteenth century. Bell was an Anglican and was mainly supported by the Established Church, while Lancaster was a Quaker and was mainly supported by the Dissenters. (For greater detail on the system of Joseph Lancaster see Chapt.X.) Owen Finn was a Catholic teacher at Ballitore Lancastrian school in the early nineteenth century. When the Catholic parents were refused permission by the school committee to allow their children to be taught the Catholic catechism on the school premises, they set up a rival school nearby, and were joined by Owen Finn as Master. Mary Leadbeater. Leadbeater Papers. Vol. 1. p.371.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p.28

schoolmasters were very scarce in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the general approach to the teaching of reading was, as in the case of other subjects, an extremely dull and mechanical one. The systems of Bell and Lancaster were designed for unskilled apprentice teachers and monitors, who knew little more than the pupils themselves, and the learning of reading became, for most pupils, a long and laborious process.

The methods used in the teaching of writing in Irish Quaker schools were, again, very similar to those employed elsewhere. The method involved the laborious process of the master writing individual letters for the pupils to copy, and they, in turn, were expected to progress gradually from letters to words and finally sentences. Indeed, writing was developed into a fine art in some Irish Quaker schools in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and in Mountmellick, for instance, the most beautiful calligraphy was practised.

An area in which rote learning is clearly unavoidable is that of spelling, and the latter subject inevitably occupied an important part of the Quaker school day. In 1726, Roger Shackleton, a Quaker schoolmaster of some repute in England, advised his brother Abraham, who was about to establish a Quaker school at Ballitore in Co. Kildare, that:-

Those who are English scholars to be exercised daily¹¹ in orthography, I mean in ye principles of spelling.

¹¹Michael Quane. "Ballitore School". Journal of Kildare Archaeological Society. Vol. XIV: 175.

Spelling, which Lindley Murray referred to as the "threshold of learning",¹² was examined daily in the provincial boarding schools. The Leinster provincial school, Mountmellick, which was fairly typical of the others, had this to say on the method of teaching spelling at the school:-

Spelling individually is the first daily lesson of the school; those who think they have it best come up and are heard first, without distinction of age or sex; the words each misses are marked in their spelling books and a register of them kept to prevent erasures, and on Seventh-day (Saturday) evening, before they are allowed to play, they must spell off all the words missed through the week, or be debarred from play for that evening. The children of both sexes spell in one general class on Fourth and Seventh days. 13

Although few people would disagree that spelling is an important part of an elementary education, the exercise was sometimes brought too far in the case of Quaker schools.

A pupil at Mountmellick in the 1850^s recorded the following:-

We were expected to learn a page, or half a page, as the case might be, of the roots in Butter's Spelling book. This had to be repeated by rote. We were to know it so perfectly, that the teacher should have nothing to do but hold the book in her hand, while we said word after word consecutively, with meaning and derivation. This was quite beyond my powers. When my turn came, any word but that next in order would present itself to my bewildered brain, and I always missed. Consequently it was decreed that I should descend to the Third class. I remained at the head of this class for a few weeks, when I was again placed in the Second. 14

One must inevitably wonder at the educational benefit of such an unenlightened methodology as outlined above. In

¹²Lindley Murray. Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Lindley Murray. 2 ed. (York: 1827).p.113.

¹³One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. p.22

¹⁴Ibid., p.41

eighteenth and nineteenth century Quaker schools, children were being processed through an extremely mechanical system, and the overwhelming emphasis was on mindless rote learning. The sheer drudgery and the excessively laborious nature of the assigned tasks, coupled with the every present fear of failure, and consequent relegation to a lower class, must have occasioned the children considerable mental distress. Although corporal punishment was not, as a rule, used in the co-educational boarding schools as an incentive to learning, the prospect of play being cancelled on Seventh-day evenings must certainly have been a sufficient threat to spur the pupils on to greater endeavours. Withdrawal of privileges acted as a major support for the success of the various teaching methods employed in the Quaker schools.

In the Irish Quaker boarding schools of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, approximately one eighth of school time was devoted to the study of English grammar.¹⁵ The provincial boarding schools provided what they called "a plain English education", and the study of English grammar was consequently regarded as an intrinsic part of such an education. Unfortunately, however, the methods employed in the teaching of grammar at the provincial schools left much to be desired. The basic text used by Irish Quaker schools was Lindley Murray's Grammar of the English Language, first published in 1795, and the standard method of "teaching" that text was to compel the students to learn

¹⁵Michael Quane. "Quaker Schools in Dublin".
Jour. R.S.A.I. p.62.

whole sections of it, by heart. Rote learning as applied to English grammar, with all the latter's definitions and rules, was an extremely time consuming and laborious exercise of doubtful educational value. Jonathan Dymond, the most distinguished of nineteenth century Quaker philosophers was extremely critical of the methods being used in contemporary Quaker schools for the teaching of grammar. He claimed that "*a grammar of Murrays' lies before me, of which the leaves are worn into rags by being 'learnt' "*",¹⁶ and he failed to see any sense in the use of such mechanical methods of learning. Dymond asserted that there is no educational argument to justify young children being compelled to learn abstruse definitions from Murray such as, "*words are articulate sounds, used by common consent as signs of our ideas*",¹⁷ Indeed, rote learning was sometimes carried to such extremes that entire textbooks were learned from cover to cover, after a tremendous expenditure in time and effort on the part of frustrated and bewildered pupils. Dymond, in fact, quotes the sad example of one such pupil who "*learnt one of Murrays' grammars until he could actually repeat it from beginning to end*", but could not recollect that "*one particle of knowledge was conveyed to his mind by it*".¹⁸ In an extremely well argued chapter entitled "*Intellectual education*", Jonathan Dymond suggests an alternative approach to the teaching of English grammar in schools. He feels

¹⁶Jonathan Dymond. Essays on the Principles of Morality and on the rights and obligations of mankind. 9th ed. (Dublin: Eason & Son Ltd., 1894), p.113.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

Another core area of the Quaker curriculum subjected to the mercy of mechanical methods of instruction was that of arithmetic, an area which was regarded as essential for all Quaker boys. John Gough, schoolmaster at Dublin for twenty-three years and at Friends School Lisburn for seventeen, published in 1767 his famous Practical Arithmetic, which was used extensively throughout Ireland for almost a century. Goughs' Arithmetic was intended to improve the methodology employed in the teaching of arithmetic in contemporary Irish schools, and in his Preface to the work, the Quaker author gives us some insight into the methods currently in use and points out the major defects, which he hopes his publication will remedy. He says:-

I apprehend the usual method of teaching Arithmetic is twofold, either the Master or Assistant writes down the Rules and Questions for the boys, or causeth them to write them themselves from printed Books or Manuscripts. The former method is much more toilsome to the Teacher, and besides takes up much Time, which I presume might be better employed in instructing the pupils, and explaining to them the nature of their Rules. 20

This quotation draws attention to the undoubted fact that the teaching of arithmetic in the majority of eighteenth century schools, involved a colossal wastage of valuable time, with both the master and the pupils slavishly copying down questions and rules, because of a lack of suitable textbooks. While Gough saw that his Arithmetic would be extremely useful in the saving of precious time in school, since all the major rules were stated and were illustrated by many examples, the availability of such a

²⁰ John Gough. Practical Arithmetic in Four Books. (Dublin: R. Jackson, 1792). Preface.

comprehensive textbook did not, however, obviate the need for rote learning. The recitation of arithmetical tables was still a regular part of instruction in arithmetic, and there was also considerable emphasis placed on mental arithmetic.²¹ Indeed, there are numerous occasions in Goughs' Arithmetic where the mechanical learning of rules is obviously required. A particularly obvious example is where Gough lays down the rules required for the extraction of the Cube Root. Here, in order to facilitate memorization, the rules are stated in the form of rhyming couplets, as follows:-

Q. How must I extract the Cube Root?

A. First let the numbers pointed be
 In periods each of places three;
 Beneath the last the cube next less
 Put; and its root i' 'the' quotient place;
 The cube then from the period take;
 Remainder with next period make
 A Resolvend; Then we must see
 This resolvend divided be
 By just 300 times the square.
 O'th figures which in quotient are
 Next quotient figure such must be
 As to allow for numbers three;
 First for the products of the said
 Figure, by the division made;
 That of its square being multiplied
 By all the quotient beside,
 And then by 30 is the second;
 And let its cube the third be reckon'd.
 Their sum must be the subtrahand,
 Not greater than the resolvend
 Then from the greater take the least;
 To the remainder bring the next
 Period; and the same way descend,
 From point to point unto the end.
 Which done, if ought remain there shall, ²²
 Add triple ciphers for a decimal.

²¹Quane. "Quaker Schools in Dublin". Jour. R.S.A.I. 1964. p.63.

²²Gough. Arithmetic. p.288.

This example, containing twenty-six lines, must have presented a remarkably tedious exercise for young school children to learn. It was, however, only one of many laborious arithmetical rules which the Quaker child, amongst others, was expected to learn by rote, and unlike the example of the Cube Root, the majority of other rules were not aided by the provision of rhyming couplets. Indeed, the Quaker authorities in Ireland were so obsessed with the development of memory in their schools, that the Camden Street School, which opened in 1840, included a course in mnemonics on its extensive curriculum.²³

The teaching of the French language was largely neglected in Irish Quaker schools throughout the eighteenth century, mainly because there were few Quakers qualified in the correct methodology for teaching it. Many eighteenth century Quakers, however, were extremely suspicious of the French language, largely because they believed that much French literature was immoral, and therefore, presented a threat to the "guarded" nature of the education provided in Irish Quaker schools. The teaching of French, it was believed, would have to be undertaken with the utmost caution, and only highly qualified teachers should be allowed to give instruction in it. French had been neglected in Quaker schools because, as the National half-yearly meeting of 1723 put it:-

... the method of teaching thereof as also the learning of same as now taught has a tendency to corrupt our youth. It's therefore desired that Friends be very careful how they admit the practice thereof there being few, if any Friends in the nation that teach that language which, if

²³Quane "Quaker Schools in Dublin". p.63.
For outline of curriculum at Camden Street School, See Appendix G.

there were, it might be less dangerous to corrupt the 24
manners of our children or youth.

French was, nevertheless, taught at Ballitore in the late eighteenth century, and it gradually made its way into the curricula of the provincial schools in the early decades of the nineteenth. When it was taught, however, the emphasis was on the study of French grammar and on selected readings from French literature, rather than on the spoken tongue. Despite the undoubted utilitarianism of many Quakers, who began to see the French language as an avenue to trade and commerce abroad, the spoken language was neglected in Irish Quaker schools in the nineteenth century, mainly due to the extreme scarcity of properly qualified teachers. Quakers had no dispute with French as a spoken language, it was the literature that they feared. Consequently, when the language was introduced to their schools, many Quakers must have been deeply disappointed with the methods of instruction. The principal methods employed in the teaching of French in Irish Quaker schools involved the learning of considerable amounts of vocabulary, the construction of sentences and the translation of French into English and vice versa, using Lindley Murray's Lecteur Francois, or a similar publication, as a basic textbook. With concentration on the written rather than the spoken language in Irish Quaker schools in the early nineteenth century, it is not surprising that Quaker parents were sometimes concerned about the methods being used to instruct their children. Robert J. Lecky, a pupil

²⁴Dublin Half-Years Meeting. 3rd mo.1723. Friends Arch. Dub.

at Ballitore in the early nineteenth century wrote from the school to his father in 1813, saying:-

Thou has mentioned my speaking French to the Master, but I never begin. He sometimes in questioning us after our French, asks the questions in French, but very seldom. If thou wishes him to do so in general,²⁵ thou hadst better write to him thyself.

The master in question here was James White, the son in law of the second Abraham Shackleton, who was master of Ballitore school from 1806 until its close in 1836. Although White was an extremely capable master, by the standards of his time, he was obviously not fluent in French, and this lack of competence, undoubtedly, inhibited his indulging in French conversation in class. At Ballitore, however, the situation regarding the teaching of French radically improved when James White employed the services of Theodore Suliot, a native of Paris as an usher and assistant master in the school for a number of years. Suliot had an M.A. degree from the University of Glasgow, and was extremely popular with the boys during his stay at Ballitore.²⁶ The services of a native Parisian like Suliot must have been an invaluable asset to the school, as far as the teaching of French was concerned. Furthermore, Suliot was young and imaginative, and he introduced several minor innovations into his teaching methodology. Jonathan Pim, a pupil at Ballitore in 1821, wrote an account of one such innovation, as follows:-

Suliot has brought in fashion a new kind of judgment in classes of French and Latin. He marks down the name of each boy in a class with divisions for each day, and in those divisions he places the judgments, which are the figures 0 1 2 3 4 5, and the letter n which has a

²⁵Quane "Ballitore School", p.202.

²⁶Ibid., p.204.

stroke over it. 1 stands for midling, 2 is worse and so on to 5. 0 is the best and n is when the boy does not know his lesson at all - it stands for Nesceit. At the end of the week the figures are all added up, and whoever has best is placed first in the class for the ensuing week. 27

From the quotation above it is clearly evident that Theodore Suliot was not adverse to introducing an element of emulation into his teaching methodology. The ranking of pupils from the best to the worst in class was a method not generally in favour among Quakers, who saw recourse to rewards and emulation as encouraging learning for the wrong reasons. Many Quakers believed, for instance, that "Rewards and Emulation considered abstractedly possess the cardinal defect of holding out a stimulus to perform a duty which ought to be (if performed at all in future life) performed without any other impulse than the natural disposition to do it for its own sake. without any other stimulus whatsoever".²⁸ The Society of Friends was not consistently uniform, however, in its attitude to the use of emulation as an incentive to learning, and there is evidence in Quaker archives of elements of rewards and emulation creeping into Quaker schools from time to time. Indeed, the three-class structure at the Leinster provincial boarding school must have facilitated such an approach to instruction. It is not surprising, therefore, that Quaker schoolmasters occasionally resorted to the encouragement of a competitive spirit among their pupils, despite the fact

²⁷ Jonathan Pim to Richard Webb. 4/12/1821. Friends Arch. Dub.

²⁸ Quane. "Quaker Schools in Dublin". p.67.

that such procedures were officially frowned upon. In the actual day to day interaction in the classroom, the Quaker schoolmaster had very few incentives to learning to place before his pupils. Learning for learnings' sake was obviously no attraction to immature minds. Furthermore, the mechanical methods of instruction, coupled with the fact that the majority of Quaker text-books were extremely dull and uninteresting, made it almost impossible for the master to successfully instruct his pupils in the various areas of the curriculum without some compromise with his pedagogic principles. Without such a compromise in the form of rewards and emulation, the Quaker schoolmaster would have been forced to teach exclusively by fear, through the frequent application of corporal punishment.

Closely related to the methods of teaching in Quaker schools were the examinations which were held on a fairly regular basis in the provincial boarding schools in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These early examinations were rather quaint and curious, and were conducted by the local school committees.²⁹ Their main areas of concern were those of basic pupil learning and conduct. As Quaker education was, first and foremost, an education in religious and moral training, the early Quaker committees responsible for the conduct of the examinations, were mainly interested in whether the pupils knew their catechism and were well behaved. As time went on, however, the areas to be examined widened considerably, with emphasis being placed on a knowledge of the three-R^s,

²⁹One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. p.22.

and by the early decades of the nineteenth century the pupils of the provincial boarding schools were examined in a wide variety of subjects, including English, arithmetic and needlework.

As far as the Leinster provincial school was concerned, the first examination took place there in 1787, a year after the school opened, and was conducted by a committee, who found that the "*youth had profited as much as could be expected for their time*".³⁰ This rather ambiguous report was followed up in 1791 by the announcement that:-

Friends examined the Proficiency of the lads and lasses apart, and are gratified to hear of their general good conduct and submission to their superiors; also to find them improved in many respects, and accomplished in such training and useful arts as are befitting their sexes, and promise to be of advantage to them in future life. 31

At the Munster provincial school, Newtown, Waterford, examinations were normally conducted on the forenoon of Seventh day preceding the quarterly meeting, and according to Deborah Martin, a pupil at the school in the 1830^s, these examinations were "*a very sober state of affair*", with each class being seated opposite a row of Friends who "*questioned us in the different branches of our learning*".³²

The examinations at the provincial boarding schools were exclusively oral ones, as written papers were not introduced until the second half of the nineteenth century. Ackworth in Yorkshire gave the lead, when in 1845, written

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Newtown School Centenary (Waterford: Newenham and Harvey, 1898), p.64.

questions were used for the first time,³³ and in 1851 the Leinster provincial school followed suit.³⁴ Because rote learning played such an important part in the teaching methodology employed in Quaker schools, it is most probable that the oral examinations required the recitation of considerable amounts of memorized learning.

Having conducted the examinations into the various branches of learning acquired by the pupils, the committees for each of the provincial boarding schools recorded an overall impression which they published in the annual school report for each respective province. A typical sample of such reports goes as follows:-

Leinster 1815: The improvement of the Children in the sundry branches of their learning is very evident; and their agreeable conduct bespeaks the great care that has been extended towards them. 35

Ulster 1821: The Committee have to notice a considerable progress made by the children, in most branches of their learning. 36

Munster 1823: The children have made as much progress by learning as might have been expected. 37

A common characteristic of these reports is the fact that they are all extremely ambiguous. They seem to merely reflect a very general impression formed by the examining committees. It is most unlikely that each individual pupil received marks from the examiners in the various branches

³³W.A.C. Stewart. Quakers and Education. (London: Epworth Press, 1953), p.170.

³⁴One Hundred Years of Mountmellick School. p.38.

³⁵Leinster Provincial School Report. 1815. P.B.20(28). Friends Arch. Dub.

³⁶Ulster Provincial School Report. 1821. P.B.20(85). Friends Arch. Dub.

³⁷Munster Provincial School Report.1823. P.B.20(76) Friends Arch. Dub.

of his learning. This detailed work would have been an intrinsic part of the schoolmasters' job. The examining committees main function, it would seem, was to check on standards, by a rather cursory examination of the pupils as a class, and thus to draw broad conclusions regarding their general learning and behaviour. Indeed, it is difficult to see how the reports of the early examining committees could have been anything but general and ambiguous, as the committee members were, more often than not, poorly qualified for the task assigned to them. The people on these committees were men and women who were very interested in schools, but who were often not properly equipped for the demanding duties of a school examiner. The result, therefore, was often a very basic information enquiry, or a demonstration of the rudimentary skills of the scholars.³⁸

The teaching methods employed in Irish Quaker schools in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were certainly not revolutionary. They were methods which had been in use for a long time in the schools of other religious denominations, though perhaps not always used with the same success as the Quakers. These methods did, however, undergo some modifications in the Quaker classroom. The Quakers were firm believers in order, organisation and system, and their teaching methods, therefore, were remarkably consistent and uniform throughout their Irish schools. The methods in use at Mountmellick, for instance, were to all intents and purposes, identical with those employed at

³⁸ Stewart. Quakers and Education. p.171.

Lisburn and Newtown, and such consistency enabled the Society of Friends to give its education a uniform stamp throughout the country. Admittedly, the mechanical nature of the instruction given in Irish Quaker schools did not allow much scope for the development of personal judgment or significantly promote emotional maturity, and this certainly was a grave defect of their system. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that the Quakers were puritans, and could not therefore, be expected to provide for these elements which they distrusted so much. Indeed, given the limited nature of Quaker educational aims, it cannot be denied that the methods of instruction employed in their schools went a long way towards achieving them.

CHAPTER X

QUAKER PHILANTHROPY AND EDUCATION

During the first fifty years of its existence, the Society of Friends was a dynamic, outgoing movement, which spread with considerable rapidity throughout England and Ireland and even into America. The early apostles of Quakerism were 'enthusiasts', who regardless of considerable dangers to themselves, sought zealously to spread their beliefs among the populace.¹ George Fox, the founder of the movement, was imprisoned on several occasions. Robert Barclay, the Quaker theologian, walked in sackcloth and ashes through the streets of Aberdeen, and many Quakers interrupted the pulpit sermons of Anglican clergymen. Indeed, Quakerism seemed to thrive on persecution, and when the latter was considerably relaxed by the Toleration Act of 1689, the initial evangelical tendencies of the

¹William E. Lecky told of the risks the early Quaker preachers took in Ireland. He said of them, "... few facts in the history of Quakerism are more striking than the impunity with which these itinerant English missionaries, teaching the most extreme form of Protestantism, and wholly unsupported by the civil power, traversed even the wildest and most intensely catholic districts of Ireland, preaching in the streets and in the market-places". (W.E. Lecky, History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century. 5 vols. (London: Longmans, Green & Co. 1892). Vol. 1: 410

movement abated somewhat, and Quakerism for the next one hundred years turned inward, and seemed to concentrate its energies on conserving and consolidating itself, rather than on spreading its influence abroad by the "convincement" of others. Throughout most of the eighteenth century, Quakerism was more of a denomination than a movement, and became almost totally absorbed in its own internal affairs, to the virtual exclusion of the outside world. This exclusiveness was reinforced by an elaborate code of strict disciplinary rules governing every significant (and indeed many apparently insignificant) aspects of a Quakers everyday life.² The Quaker code of discipline did, indeed, succeed in maintaining intact a loyal 'inner circle' of traditional Quakers, but the Society lost many of its members to other sects in the eighteenth century, mainly due to the severity of the Quaker disciplinary code. On the whole, Quakers in the eighteenth century were oblivious to the world of politics, except where it encroached directly on their own affairs, and it is particularly revealing that an event as politically catastrophic for Ireland as the Rebellion of 1798, goes almost unnoticed in the minutes of Quaker meetings, except for the occasional reference to some Friend who has suffered loss of property. The Society was active in religious devotions, but advised its members against going beyond their business activities into political, or even into public affairs.³ In the late

² Isabel Grubb. Quakers in Ireland: 1654 - 1900. (London: Swarthmore Press. 1927), p.82.

³ Neville H. Newhouse. "John Hancock Junior". Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland. 1971. Vol.101:47.

eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, however, partly as a result of the Evangelical Movement and the influence of Wesley and Whitfield, the Quakers began to ask themselves whether there was not some Christian work for them to do in the world. Thus began a period of Quaker philanthropy unequalled in its history, a period which brought the Society of Friends into the arenas of slavery, prison reform and education.

The origins of Quaker philanthropy in educational matters, however, go back much further than the late eighteenth century. From a very early date the Society of Friends assumed responsibility for the care of the poor amongst its own members and especially for their educational welfare. In 1659 it was advised at a general meeting at Skipton in Yorkshire that

... each particular Meeting should be expected to care for its own poor; to find employment for each as want work, or cannot follow their former callings for reason of the evil therein ... and to help parents in the education of their children, that there may not be a beggar amongst us.

As far as Ireland was concerned, advice in a similar vein was given in a letter by George Fox to the national Half-Yearly meeting of ninth month 1671, when he asked all the meetings to be diligent in "setting forth apprentices and fatherless and poor Friends' children".⁵ Indeed, Quaker concern for the educational needs of their less affluent members was a continual preoccupation of the Society of Friends throughout its history, and is borne out by the

⁴William C. Braithwaite. The Beginnings of Quakerism 2d ed. (London: Macmillan and Co. 1912), p.330.

⁵Quoted in Olive C. Goodbody. Guide to Irish Quaker Records. (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1967), p.11.

numerous references to the matter in the minutes of the monthly, quarterly and yearly meetings. In fact, it was such philanthropic concern which was directly instrumental in the establishment of the Ulster and Leinster provincial boarding schools, originally intended exclusively for the "*Children of Friends in low circumstances*".

Sometimes, moreover, Quaker philanthropic zeal in educational affairs extended beyond the school years. There is evidence in the archives of the Society of Friends of a fund, raised for the "*assistance of Friends in low circumstances in the Province of Ulster, by giving apprentice fees with children, and assisting young men and women, on their outset in life*".⁶ This fund was set up in 1811, and seems to have been partly motivated by the desire to stop the significant decline in Quaker numbers, particularly in the case of young females who married into other denominations in order to better their social position. The loss of members in this way was a cause of some serious concern to the Society of Friends, as the records state that "*divers of such occurances took place*".⁷ The fund was mainly intended for the benefit of those who had been educated at the provincial school, Lisburn, but others, in exceptional cases, were considered. This was evidently a case of philanthropy with strings attached, as a major qualification for receiving benefit from the fund was that the recipients be "*married agreeably to the good order of our society*". The committee

⁶ Document giving details of a fund being set up in Ulster in 1811. P.B. 20(98). Friends Archives. Dublin.

⁷ Ibid.

responsible for the establishment of the fund stated that their major concern was, "*That the care that had been so long and so anxiously exercised for the children of such (Lisburn school), should be continued towards them after leaving the school*".⁸

Although marrying outside the Society of Friends in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries normally resulted in "disownment" or excommunication, not all of those who forfeited their membership with the Quakers found themselves outside the pale of philanthropic endeavour. In fact, the Society of Friends continued to show concern for the well-being of ex-members, and especially for the educational welfare of their children. We read in the archives, for instance, that Friends were particularly concerned for the "*suffering and neglected condition of a large number of children, mostly residing in the province of Ulster, who were either the immediate or remote descendants of those who at various periods had forfeited their membership with the Society of Friends, chiefly by outgoing in marriage*",⁹ At first subscriptions were raised in order to pay for the education of these unfortunate children at day schools and for "*supplying their families with Bibles and other religious books*", but it soon became obvious to the Society that much more needed to be done, and that a boarding-school education would be absolutely essential, if the children were to be given the

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Photocopy of Document FI (1840/3) in Archives at Friends Meeting House, Carlton Hill, Leeds. Copy at Friends Arch. Dub.

"guarded" Christian education which all traditional Quakers felt was so necessary for the successful transmission of Quaker principles. It was, therefore, decided that an educational establishment should be founded where such children would receive "useful school learning" and religious instruction, and be "trained in habits of order and industry". It was such philanthropic concern which resulted in the foundation of Brookfield Agricultural College at Moira, Co. Down, in 1836, for the "children of those who attended meetings for worship but were not members of the Society".¹⁰

Although philanthropy had always been an important characteristic of the Society of Friends, it did not make itself felt on a large scale until the latter years of the eighteenth century. Up to that time Quaker philanthropy had been largely confined to the members of the Society in their dealings with one another. At times of crisis Quakers were expected to help each other out, and the remarkable success of Irish Quakers in trade and commerce, and the outstanding success of the Ulster and Leinster provincial boarding schools can, in large measure, be attributed to such philanthropic concern. There are numerous references in the monthly, quarterly and yearly meetings of the Society of Friends to the efforts of the latter in coming to the aid of its less fortunate members. Though philanthropy was an important characteristic of the Society in the eighteenth century, it did not become the

¹⁰ Goodbody. Guide to Irish Quaker Records. p.122.

dominant one until the latter years of the eighteenth and the early decades of the nineteenth. These years saw the introduction into Ireland of several Quaker inspired philanthropic enterprises aimed mainly at the education of the Catholic poor, who were then just recovering from some of the harsher restrictions of the Penal Code. From this moment on, Quaker philanthropy in educational affairs was to occupy a much wider stage than had previously been the case. Several important factors contributed to this new direction which Quaker philanthropy in education was taking. Firstly, the repeal by "Grattan's Parliament" of some of the most severe Penal Laws against Catholics laid the way open for the provision of elementary education for Catholic children.¹¹ Up to this time, Catholic children in

¹¹The educational provisions of the penal code were repealed by Gardiner's act of 1782:

Whereas several of the laws made in the kingdom relative to the education of papists or persons professing the popish religion, are considered too severe, and have not answered the desired effect: be it enacted that so much (of the acts 7 Will. III, c.4; 8 Anne, c.3) as subjects persons of the popish religions, who shall publicly teach school, or who shall instruct youth in learning in any private popish house within this realm, to the like ... penalties and forfeitures as any popish regular covict shall be ... repealed.

Repeal was made conditional upon the popish schoolmaster taking an oath of allegiance. Furthermore, before a Catholic teacher could set up a school he was required to obtain a licence from the Anglican bishop of his diocese, a licence which could be withdrawn at will. In 1792 the licensing requirement was abolished, and the relief act of 1793 provided that "persons professing the popish or Roman Catholick religion ... shall not be liable to any penalties ... save such as ... subjects of the protestant religion are liable to". Thus, save for the forbidding of Catholic endowments, the educational provisions of the penal code had disappeared by the beginning of the nineteenth century. (Quoted in Donald H. Akenson. The Irish Education Experiment. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), pp.44-45.

Ireland could only be legally educated in schools under the auspices of the Established Church, but the overt sectarian nature of the education provided in many of these schools made it impossible for the vast majority of the Catholic poor to attend. The only other alternative for Catholics, prior to this time, was to avail of the illegal and often erratic education offered by the so-called "hedge-Schools". Secondly, the influence of the Evangelical movement which was making itself felt on the Society of Friends in the late eighteenth century, helped to direct the attention of religious and philanthropic reformers to the "*moral dangers threatening the children of the poor*".¹² Thirdly, and perhaps most important of all, certain eighteenth century English educational innovations seemed to provide the means necessary for the successful accomplishment of such a gigantic undertaking, as the provision of an elementary education for the Irish poor.

The English educational innovations, which held out so much hope to philanthropists in the late eighteenth century, appeared to have solved the two most difficult problems regarding the feasibility of universal elementary education, that is numbers and cost. The opening of education, even of the most rudimentary nature, to all, had seemed but the remotest possibility to educational philanthropists until Joseph Lancaster, and to a lesser extent, Dr. Andrew Bell, drew peoples attention to the "*Monitorial System*".

The origins of the monitorial system of instruction are debatable, but it is certain that neither Lancaster nor

¹²Frank Smith. A History of English Elementary Education. (London: University of London Press, 1931), p.71.

Bell were responsible for it. Besides being used by the Hindus, as Bell observed, the monitorial method has formed part of the Jesuit system of education, and was confidently recommended by Comenius in his *Didactica Magna*.¹³ Indeed, there is evidence that an amended form of it existed in some of the Irish 'Hedge-schools' in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.¹⁴ What Lancaster and Bell did, however, was to employ the monitorial method on such a scale, and to organise it in so complete a fashion, that the problem of numbers in a school appeared to be solved and the question of cost abolished. In this particular chapter we shall be concentrating, almost exclusively, on the system of Lancaster rather than that of Bell, mainly because the former was a Quaker and because it was Lancasters' system which predominated in Ireland and which was employed by the Quakers in their considerable contribution to educational philanthropy.

¹³ Frank Graves. Great Educators of Three Centuries. (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd. 1925), p.240.

¹⁴ William Carleton says of the monitorial system "I know not whether the Commissioners of Education found the monitorial system of instruction in such of the old hedge schools as maintained an obstinate resistance to the innovations of modern plans. That Bell and Lancaster deserve much credit for applying and extending the principle (I speak without reference to its merits) I do not hesitate to grant; but it is unquestionably true that the principle was reduced to practice in Irish hedge schools long before either of these worthy gentlemen were in existence". (William Carleton. Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry. Fourth edition. Vol. II., pp.218-19. Quoted in Patrick J. Dowling. The Hedge Schools of Ireland. (Dublin: Talbot Press Ltd. undated), pp.59-60.

Joseph Lancaster, a Quaker, was born of poor parents in London in 1778 and received his early education at a dissenting charity school. He gained some knowledge of teaching by acting as usher in a boarding and a day school, and he designed his own school at the Borough Road, Southwark, London, for the poorest class, charging small fees and admitting free those who could not pay. Lancaster opened this novel type of school in 1798 when he was just twenty years of age. According to the noted Quaker historian, Charles Braithwaite, Lancaster's principle of providing a simple and Biblical Christian education for the poor, without giving the slightest prominence to any creeds or formularies, was probably directly the result of the religious principles of the Society of Friends. The Bible was the only religious book taught in Lancastrian schools. Indeed, Lancaster stated his own views on religious education very clearly in his important letter to John Foster, Chancellor of the Exchequer in Ireland, where he says:-

All controverted points should be kept in the background, far out of sight. A disposition to make proselytes should not be to swell the numbers professing this creed, or the other; but to convert the wicked from ¹⁵ the errors of his ways.

Although Lancaster was later to break with the Society of Friends, his attitude to proselytising reflects accurately the view held by the Quakers in general, who far from trying to swell their own numbers by offering easy options to would-be recruits, often, indeed, succeeded in depleting their own ranks by a rigid insistence on a strict disciplinary code.

¹⁵Quoted in Rev. T. Corcoran. State Policy in Irish Education. (Dublin: 1916), p.197.

The monitorial system allowed Lancaster to deal with vast numbers. In his letter to John Foster he claimed that "one thousand (Children) can be managed with as much ease as fifty used to be, without any assistant adult teachers".¹⁶ As numbers increased Lancaster's costs per head were diminished, for the expenses were almost stationery. He calculated that a school of one thousand pupils would cost no more than three hundred pounds per year, and he hoped, indeed, "to see the day when less than two hundred pounds per annum would educate one thousand children".¹⁷ With statistics like these, it is easy to see the stimulus which Lancaster's method offered to the philanthropic. Two hundred pounds divided by a thousand is four shillings, and as there were about forty-eight school weeks in the year, a payment of one penny by each child for each weeks instruction would keep the school going.

Lancaster's method, which was adopted by the Quakers in their Irish Charity schools, was to appoint an army of monitors, chosen from among the older scholars, and to assign to each of them some definite and simple task, which they were to teach to the pupils in their group. Classes were normally divided into groups of ten. Reading began with letters, and the scholar had to pass through a long and tiresome mastery of increasingly difficult stages before he "read for instruction". In class six they read the Testament,

¹⁶Ibid., p.201.

¹⁷Smith. History of English Elementary Education. (London: 1931), p.72.

in class seven the Bible, and in class eight "a selection of the best readers".

Arithmetic was graded in the same logical way. The monitor read out the sum to his group, then read out the full method of working it as well as the result of each step of the calculation, the pupils writing down the answer as the monitor dictated it. After sufficient practice their skill was tested, and the successful were promoted to a new group and a different kind of sum.

Writing and spelling were combined with reading, and the sand-tray, a device borrowed from Dr. Bell, was used in the early stages to help children to form their letters. Concerning spelling, Lancaster boasted that he had invented a new method, by which "*scholars repeat or spell sixty words daily, in addition to their usual lessons in reading, writing and arithmetic*".¹⁸

Lancaster's system seemed to be the "open-sesame" to universal education in the early nineteenth century, and it was enthusiastically received by some of the highest in the land, in both England and Ireland. For the nineteenth century philanthropists it appeared to be the answer to their dreams of education for all, and when William Allen, the Quaker scientist visited Lancaster's school for the first time in 1808, he wrote:

I can never forget the impression which the scene made upon me. Here I beheld a thousand children collected from the streets, where they were learning nothing but

¹⁸ Archibald Douglas on the utility of the Lancastrian system. Grubb Collection. S.C.3. Friends Archives Dublin.

For an outline of Lancaster's plan, based on his system at the Borough road, School, Southwark, London, see Appendix (A).

mischiefs, one bad boy corrupting another, all reduced to the most perfect order, and training to habits of subordination and usefulness, and learning the great truths of the Gospel from the Bible. 19

Indeed, the seal of official approval had been affixed to Lancasters' system in 1805 when George III bestowed royal patronage on him, with the well known words;

Lancaster, I highly approve of your system, and it is my wish that every poor child in my dominions should be taught to read the Bible. 20

It was such a system, mainly through the agency of the Kildare Place Society, that the Quakers imported into Ireland.

In the same year as George III approved of Lancasters' system for instructing the poor, Douglas Archibald, an Irish philanthropist, wrote to a large number of people in Ireland seeking their approval and support for the establishment of Lancastrian schools in this country. In a letter addressed to Ann Grubb of Clonmel, a member of a distinguished Quaker family, Douglas Archibald wrote;

... the ignorance of the great mass of the People, has been the primary source from which issued all those disorders which disgraced and agitated this country ... if ever a Country required the introduction of any system which may promote and accelerate improvement, in the Education and morals of our poor, Ireland is that country. 21

Like many of his contemporaries, Douglas Archibald saw education as an extremely effective method of social control, and like William Allen, he was greatly impressed by what he saw taking place at Lancasters' school at the Borough Road, London. At the end of a detailed account on the

¹⁹ Smith. History of English Elementary Education. 1931. p.75.

²⁰ Ibid., p.74.

²¹ Archibald. Grubb Coll. S.C.3. Friends Arch. Dub.

advantages (particularly the economic ones) of the Lancastrian method, Archibald concluded:-

Should you be led to encourage the proposed introduction of Lancaster's system, you will be waited on in a few days, when the smallest pecuniary assistance will be thankfully received and acknowledged then; or at the Bank of Messrs Riall's, towards the establishment of a School, in a very poor and distressed part of this country. 22

The early years of the nineteenth century saw the proliferation of Lancastrian schools in Ireland. The initial success of these schools was in a large measure due to the enthusiastic support they received from the dissenting sects, especially the Quakers. The Established Church tended to employ the somewhat similar system of the Anglican Dr. Bell, mainly because they frowned upon the undenominational nature of the Lancastrian schools. The first large scale venture of the Society of Friends into educational philanthropy in Ireland, however, was their establishment of the Dublin Free School²³ in School Street,

²² Ibid.

²³ Concerning the Dublin Free School, it is recorded that:-

This seminary, open to the children of all denominations of Christians and therefore called the Dublin Free School is situated in School Street, in the parish of St. Catherine; it is of a rectangular form, 156 feet by 37 of brick, and three stories high; of these the basement storey consists principally of stores rented by merchants in the vicinity, and on the two upper floors are the school-rooms, four in number, viz., two for males, and two for females; each 56 feet by 33, spacious, lofty, and well ventilated. The male and female schools have entrances perfectly distinct; and are separated from each other by a spacious committee-room, and an apartment appropriated to the Superintendent, who by an ingenious contrivance of the architect, is enabled by a small change in his position, to command an uninterrupted view of the four schools, though on different floors. (This plan is deemed so efficient for the purposes of superintending that it is adopted in some extensive manufactories in the Liberties). While he sits, the entire of the male and female schools on the first floor are open to his inspection

in the parish of St. Catherine in 1798, the same year as Joseph Lancaster opened the Borough Road school in London. The Dublin school, like that of London was open to all for instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic, and the reading of the Bible "*without note or comment*". This school had its origins in a weekly or Sunday school run by the Sunday-school Society as far back as 1786, which was also housed in the School Street premises. Both the weekly and day-schools at School Street were managed by a committee, the most active members of which were Quakers, William Savery, an American Friend, who visited Quaker schools in Ireland in 1797-8, visited the Dublin Free School, and in his diary he wrote:

Twelfth Month. 1st. Visited a Charity School, of which Friends had been considerable promoters; it consisted of about eighty boys and girls- they appeared ragged and many without shoes or stockings, yet kept in pretty good order. 24

The visit to the Dublin Free School had obviously created a reasonably favourable impression on William Savery, who tended to be very critical of Irish Quakers in general, regarding the latter as living too comfortably, while the majority of the population were in the direst poverty.²⁵

as are those on the second floor when he stands: thus a constant sense of his superintending eye contributes greatly to preserve order and silence; while his communication with his assistants is direct and unembarrassed by the necessity of moving from one school to another to give his directions. (Warburton, Whitelaw & Walsh, History of the City of Dublin, London 1818, Vol. II: 852/4. Quoted in Michael Quane "Quaker Schools in Dublin". Jour.R.S.A.I.1964.p.57)

²⁴William Savery. Journal. (London: Charles Gilpin, 1844), p.259.

²⁵Before coming to Ireland Savery had been in Britain, France and Germany. He left Waterford for Milford, and as he went through Wales noted that "*the people were warmly clad and few barefoot or ragged, as we have lately been accustomed to in Ireland*". Before leaving England for America he went with

It would seem from records that the Dublin Free School was the only school in the city in the late eighteenth century having any connection with the Quakers. The school catered for up to one thousand scholars in daily attendance, and by 1811 nearly thirty-thousand pupils had been admitted.²⁶

In 1811 a Quaker inspired organisation called the '*Society for promoting the Education of the Poor of Ireland*' was formed largely as a result of the success of the Dublin Free School. This new education society, later to be popularly known as the Kildare Place Society, contemplated an educational enterprise of national importance. This society intended setting up a model school in Dublin for the training of teachers for primary schools to be established throughout the country, and in the meantime decided to use part of the School Street premises as a temporary seminary or training school for teachers. From the very beginning, the Quaker influence on the '*Education Society*' was very strong,²⁷ and Joseph Lancaster himself was present at their

three Friends to lay before William Wilberforce the distressed state of the people of Ireland. (Quane. "*Quaker Schools in Dublin*". Jour. R.S.A.I. 1964. p.58.)

²⁶H. Kingsmill Moore. An unwritten Chapter in the History of Education. (London: Macmillan & Co. 1904), pp.8-9.

²⁷The general committee or ruling body of the Kildare Place Society, was rather exclusive in its composition. In 1825, it consisted of twenty-one Episcopalians, four Quakers, two Presbyterians, and only two Roman Catholics. Quaker influence on the committee, however, was much greater than their numerical strength would indicate. (James Godkin, Education in Ireland. (Dublin: Alexander Thom.1862), p.47).

first meeting in 1811. Among the Quakers on the committee of the 'Education Society', however, one name stands out from all the rest, Samuel Bewley.

Samuel Bewley made an enormous contribution to Quaker philanthropy in Irish education in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. From an early age, Bewley seems to have been convinced of the importance of providing a christian education for the Irish poor. This preoccupation with educational affairs is well illustrated by a phrase used to him by a correspondent, who refers to "*Thy darling object education*". He played an important role on the committee of the Dublin Sunday School which had moved to School Street in 1798, and he may even have taught classes himself in that school.²⁸ It was thus a natural progression for Samuel Bewley to become a major figure on the committee of the 'Education Society' when it embarked on its project of national educational importance in 1811. The broad undenominational basis of the 'Education Society' was probably in large measure due to the influence of Bewley, who, like Joseph Lancaster, was strongly opposed to any form of proselytising in the elementary schools of the Irish poor.²⁹ Bewley said that all children should be admitted to first-level schools and '*taught together without the slightest trace of difference made between them*'. The particular tenets of denominations would be taught out of school "*by parents and pastors*", while general reading

²⁸Helen Clayton: To School without shoes: A Brief History of the Sunday School Society for Ireland. (Dublin. undated), p.19.

²⁹Kingsmill Moore. Unwritten Chapter. p.43.

of the scriptures "as preparing the way for their obtaining this" could be undertaken by sufficiently advanced pupils.³⁰ Indeed, it was Bewley's intimacy with Lancaster which was responsible for the shape which the educational activities of the Kildare Place Society was to take. Furthermore, his considerable business experience, together with his remarkable organisational ability and clear-sighted dedication, made him an invaluable asset to the Society, especially in their financial and administrative affairs. It is perhaps ironic, though fitting, that Samuel Bewley did not long survive the collapse of the Kildare Place Society, and his name appears for the last time in the report which announced the withdrawal of the government grants in 1831.

A major priority of the Kildare Place Society was the acquisition of a suitable superintendent for the training of teachers at the model school. After considerable delay, ironically enough, due to the inefficiency of Lancaster, Samuel Bewley succeeded eventually in obtaining a suitable candidate for the position, in the person of John Veevers. The latter, whom Lancaster in a letter to Bewley described as "a member of the Church of England, but no bigot",³¹ was twenty-three years of age when he came to the Dublin Free School in 1813, on the extremely high salary for that time of two-hundred pounds per annum. He had had three years experience in training teachers, had a genius for

³⁰ Grainne O'Flynn. "Aspects of Concern in the Religious Society of Friends with education in Ireland 1627-1812". Capuchin Annual. 1975. p.331.

³¹ Kingsmill Moore. p.165.

educational organisation, and was, according to Lancaster "prepared to traverse all Ireland in establishing and organising schools". The teacher-training seminary in School Street was removed to a new location in Kildare Place in 1819, and from that time the 'Education Society' became popularly known as the Kildare Place Society. Lancasters 'monitorial system' was adopted by the Society, and the right of publication of his books was acquired for fifty pounds. An efficient school inspection system was established, together with facilities for the publication of cheap text-books.³² The number of schools under the auspices of the Kildare Place Society rose steadily from 1825, an average of sixty being added each year, until in 1830 there were 1634 throughout the country.³³

The village of Ballitore in Co. Kildare, which was a hive of philanthropic activity ever since its establishment as a Quaker colony in the late seventeenth century, founded its own Lancastrian school in 1811. We read in the journal of Mary Leadbeater that Thomas Doyle, who "had been instructed in Dublin (presumably at the School Street premises) in Joseph Lancasters' method" became the teacher at the new day-school.³⁴ Furthermore, in keeping with

³²The necessity of publishing a set of suitable related texts was a point that had previously escaped all other British educational societies. When the Commissioners of national education put out their own series of books, they were acting upon the Kildare Place Society's example and upon that society's recognition of the fact that a national system of schooling demanded a national set of textbooks. (Donald H. Akenson. The Irish Education Experiment. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. 1970) p.88.

³³Kingsmill Moore. p.126.

³⁴Mary Leadbeater. Leadbeater Papers. 2 Vols. (London: Bell & Daldy, 1862), Vol 1:331.

Lancaster's belief that "it is a desirable thing, that all the knowledge females acquire should be by the medium of teachers of their own sex",³⁵ Mary Leadbeater relates that a separate school for girls was built at Ballitore and that "Mistress, monitors, and visitors were appointed". The Lancastrian schools at Ballitore had been established by a committee under the direction of two very active philanthropists, John and Margaret Bonham, and the popularity of these schools is evident in the comment that "both schools filled very fast". It was Joseph Lancaster's contention that his system could provide an elementary education in the three-Rs along with Bible reading, very cheaply, and he felt that in Ireland the average cost of schooling a child could be even lower than in England. When we learn, therefore, from Mary Leadbeater, that "the children of farmers and shopkeepers paid sixpence per week, of working tradesmen fourpence, and of labourers twopence",³⁶ we can clearly see that this was indeed very cheap education, and in fitting harmony with Lancasters' plan. In fact, Lancaster actually visited the Ballitore school and was impressed by what he saw.

Educational philanthropy at Ballitore was exceptional in so far as it produced an intensive concentration of effort in a remarkably small area. Not only were Quaker elders, businessmen and schoolmasters involved in the effort to educate the poor of the area, but even some Quaker

³⁵ Joseph Lancaster "Letter to John Foster Esq." in Corcoran. State Policy in Irish Education. (Dublin: Fallon Bros. 1916), p.199.

³⁶ Leadbeater. Papers. Vol. 1:331

children were active in this regard. Again, in the Leadbeater Papers, we read of the efforts of Thomas Fisher, a pupil of the famous Shackleton boarding school at Ballitore, who "printed with his pen a monthly collection of essays, called the 'Juvenile Magazine', for the reading of which one penny was charged"... this money was applied to the education of poor children at the Lancastrian School".³⁷ Other informal efforts at educational philanthropy were commonplace at Ballitore. We read, for instance, of the praiseworthy efforts of Betsy Shackleton, a Quaker resident of Ballitore, who taught the art of "plaiting straw" to several poor children and "introduced a little manufacture". She also assembled her plaiters twice a week, and taught them "reading, writing and ciphering".³⁸

Despite the sincerity of motive behind much of Quaker philanthropy in the educational field, there is, however, a body of evidence which suggests that such philanthropy was not always completely welcome in the form it took. A particularly controversial issue in Ireland was that of religious education. Joseph Lancaster and Samuel Bewley felt that the only hope that the Lancastrian schools had of surviving and retaining the support of the Catholic majority, was that the religious education in the schools be denominationally neutral. To have a situation in the early nineteenth century, where Catholic teachers would provide a Catholic education for Catholic children was

³⁷Leadbeater. Papers. Vol. 1:355.

³⁸Ibid., p.329.

outside the Quaker philanthropists' frame of reference. Thus Bewley and Lancaster were convinced that the fairest possible education system would be one in which the Sacred Scriptures would be read "*without note or comment*". Nevertheless, many Roman Catholics were unhappy about the attitude to religious education in the Lancastrian schools, and in the Leadbeater Papers there is an example of this discontent. Mary Leadbeater reports that the Lancastrian school committee was approached by Roman Catholic parents, who requested that their children be taught the Roman Catholic catechism by the Master in the classroom after school hours. The request was politely, but firmly, turned down, as it was considered by the committee an "*innovation on the prescribed rules*". The immediate result of this rebuff was that alternative schools for the boys and girls were set up nearby by the parents. Mary Leadbeater complains that these new schools were enthusiastically supported by the Roman Catholics, and that they engaged Owen Finn, who had formerly been educated at the Quaker school, as master.³⁹

In relation to the above mentioned incident, Mary Leadbeater blames the Roman Catholic priest for playing a

³⁹ It seems that almost all the Catholic schools connected with the Kildare Place Society operated under what was known as the "*New Ross Plan*", under which the week's scripture lesson was explained in chapel on Sunday by the village priest, and under which Roman Catholic catechetical instruction was given during school hours, but outside the schoolroom. Thus the catholic clergy were able to keep the letter of the Society's rules, without violating their own religious principles. (Akenson. The Irish Education Experiment. (London 1970). pp.89-90.

major role in the unfortunate affair. Indeed, such complaints were common in the correspondence of the Kildare Place Society and the Sunday School Societies, in the early decades of the nineteenth century. The Roman Catholic hierarchy was naturally suspicious of any form of education for Catholics not under Catholic control, and their fears were well founded as far as some of the Bible Societies were concerned. The Baptist Society of 1814, and the Irish Society of 1818 were obvious proselytizing agencies, and they even went so far as to translate the Bible into Irish for use in their schools.⁴⁰ But the Kildare Place Society was radically different from the other Bible societies, at least in its earlier years. Unlike the others, it was truly undenominational in character. The support, or at least the benevolent neutrality, of the Roman Catholic clergy, combined with aid from parliament, meant that the society bid fair to be a national system of schooling for the Irish poor. Its administrative methods were not those of the petty proselytizers, but were suitable to a system of schools covering the entire nation. In the 1820^s, however, things went wrong for the Society, with Daniel O'Connell, a former member of the committee,

⁴⁰These societies had no interest in preserving the Irish language, but rather used the language because it was the quickest vehicle for reaching the souls of the peasantry. In the mid - 1820^s, the Baptist Society claimed ninety-five day schools, and the Irish Society about fifty. (Akenson: Irish Education Experiment. p.85)

becoming one of its bitterest enemies, and O'Connell's criticisms were quickly supported by the Catholic hierarchy. With strong attacks on the Society coming from both the conservative John MacHale, and the liberal Bishop Doyle of Kildare, we can infer that the entire Catholic hierarchy stood in condemnation of the educational system of the Society. Even in its early days, when it seemed that the Irish Catholic population was prepared to give the Kildare Place Society a chance, the majority of Catholics had strong reservations about it. It was mainly because the only politically attainable alternative to state-aided protestant schools was a system of religiously neutral school, that the Catholic hierarchy tolerated the Kildare Place system in the first place. Even a guarantee of doctrinal neutrality was, however, far from satisfactory for most Catholics, who ideally wanted their children to be taught the Catholic catechism in their own schools. The substitution of compulsory Scripture reading, "*without note or comment*" seemed meaningless to many Catholics.⁴¹ Furthermore, what

⁴¹On this point it is useful to look at the evidence given to the Commissioners of Education in 1824 by John Veevers, Lancaster's protege and superintendent of the Kildare Place model schools. The following are some of the questions he was asked, and the answers he gave.

Are the Scriptures in any way explained to the children in the school-room? - Never

Is it your opinion that the more advanced boys understand tolerably the meaning of the New Testament when reading it? - I am of opinion that they do not.

The question does not refer, of course, merely to the doctrinal parts of the New Testament; but do you conceive they understand the ordinary parts of the New Testament?

- I think they do not.

Do they manifest any curiosity upon the subject; any wish to be better informed about it? - I do not recollect any instance of it.

(Report, App. No. 207, p.472. Quoted in James Godkin. Education in Ireland. (London: Alexander Thom. 1862), p.50.)

Quaker philanthropists like Lancaster and Bewley failed to see was the importance of the dichotomy between the majority populations of England and Ireland. Members of the Protestant majority Church in Britain found little difficulty in acceptance of the notion of non-catechetical instruction, but the majority Church in Ireland was a teaching church. To Catholics, as Lord Stanly pointed out in his letter to the Duke of Leinster in 1831, "*the reading of the Holy Scriptures without note or comment by children must be peculiarly obnoxious ... (since) even to adults the right of unaided private interpretation of the Sacred Volume in articles of Religious belief*" was denied.⁴² This, therefore, was a major difficulty in the expansion of Lancasters' plan to Ireland, a difficulty which Quaker philanthropists like Bewley and Lancaster failed to understand.

Despite the emphasis placed by the Quakers and the Kildare Place Society on the undenominational basis of their educational system, there was definite evidence that in some of the Society's schools the principle of doctrinal neutrality was not always being strictly adhered to. By 1831, therefore, both a cabinet majority and Stanley, the Chief Secretary, had asserted that the Kildare Place Society had, in some practical instances, not lived up to its original promise of non-denominational Christian education, and could therefore not be entrusted with the

⁴²O'Flynn. "*Aspects of Concern in the Religious Society of Friends*". Capuchin Annual, 1975. p.332.

management of the new "plan" for the national school system. Despite the many laudable characteristics of the Kildare Place Society, characteristics on which it based its claim to be allowed to spearhead the proposed new national system of education, it must not be forgotten, that even at the height of its popularity, the Society had only the support of a small minority of the Catholic population. Though considerably more money was granted by Parliament to the various education societies than was deemed necessary in 1831 for the establishment of a national system of education, yet less than twelve per cent of the Catholic population receiving instruction in 1824, attended their schools.⁴³ The great bulk of the Catholic Irish still remained loyal to the large number of "hedge schools", which had remained in existence, long after the major penal laws had been repealed.⁴⁴

The decision of the government in 1831 to withdraw financial support from the Kildare Place Society, was not a case of ignoring the obvious advantages of its system of

⁴³Patrick J. Dowling. The Hedge Schools of Ireland. (Dublin: The Talbot Press Limited, undated), p.42.

⁴⁴The school census of 1824 provided two sets of figures on the number of pupils and schools throughout the country, one set of returns being provided by the protestant clergy, the other by those of the catholic faith. According to the protestant returns, there were 10,387 day schools in the country, containing 498,641 pupils, of whom 367,249 were catholic. The catholic return enumerated 10,453 schools with a total of 522,016 pupils, 397,212 of these being Roman Catholic. It is safe to assume that the great majority of catholic children were being educated in hedge schools and hence to conclude that by the mid - 1820^s, between 300,000 and 4000,000 children were being educated in such institutions. (Donald H. Akenson. The Irish Education Experiment. (London: 1970), p.57)

education, and some of the most important features of that system were retained in the new system of national education. The model schools, the text-book depository and the inspectorial system were all retained, and these important features continued to exert a significant influence on the development of elementary education in Ireland. Indeed, the best features of the Kildare Place system were, to a very large degree, the results of the strong Quaker influence on the committee. The efficient administration of schools, the text-book distribution system and the inspectorate were all important characteristics of Quaker education in Ireland as far back as the middle of the eighteenth century, and it was these important elements which were largely responsible for the undeniable fact that the Quaker provincial boarding schools at Lisburn, Mountmellick and Newtown, Waterford were far superior to any other schools in Ireland at that time. Admittedly, Joseph Lancaster does not deserve much praise as an educational reformer. He was vain and pedagogically ignorant, and his "*monitorial system*" was excessively mechanical, as it completely overlooked the contemporary theories of continental reformers like Rousseau and Pestalozzi. Nevertheless, the Lancastrian schools in Ireland helped to attract the government's attention to the need for a systematic approach to the general education of the poor, and the Lancastrian system afforded a substitute, though admittedly a poor one, for national education in the days before the government was willing to pay for general education. It was in those crucial years, before the introduction of Stanley's national board of education in 1831, that Quaker philanthropic effort in Irish educational affairs

was to make its influence most keenly felt, and indeed it was the legacy of such philanthropy which was to prepare the way for the introduction of the first national system of elementary education in the British Isles.

P O S T S C R I P T

Quaker education in Ireland throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries had been distinguished by its exceptionally guarded nature. The establishment of the provincial boarding schools in the latter years of the eighteenth century had ensured that the religious principles of the Society, together with an elementary curriculum, could be transmitted to the pupils with little danger of harmful outside influences creeping in to offset the effects of Quaker socialization. By the early decades of the nineteenth century, however, many Irish Quakers realised that an excessive emphasis on a guarded education did not adequately prepare Quaker children for life in the outside world. Consequently, the 1830^s and 40^s saw an extension of the Quaker curriculum in the Irish provincial schools, and gradually the education being provided in these institutions became less guarded with the passing of time. The provision of school vacations in the second half of the nineteenth century meant that Quaker children were exposed to other influences besides those of the boarding schools. Eventually, music, drama and art found their way into these schools towards the end of the nineteenth century.

By the early years of the twentieth century, mainly due to a declining Quaker population, the provincial boarding schools were educating pupils of other denominations besides Quakers, and it was only a matter of time before Quaker pupils were in the minority. This change in direction which Quaker education was taking was a serious blow to the guarded education which so many Quakers had prided themselves on in

the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In 1917, in response to widespread Quaker discussion about education, Ireland Yearly Meeting appointed a Committee to consider the whole question of the nation's four Quaker schools. These were the three provincial boarding schools and Brookfield Agricultural College at Moira, "Co. Down, which had been established in 1836 for the education of those who attended meetings for worship, but who were not members of the Society of Friends. In 1918 the Committee presented its report in which it recognised that "*the Friends of the first two centuries attached more importance to Quaker education than we do now*".¹ It thus, addressed itself realistically to problems which still perplex the Society of Friends in both England and Ireland. Out of a total of 229 boarders in the four schools, only 86 had Quaker parents, and of the thirty-three resident staff, only seventeen were Friends. On the financial side things were equally bad, for over the previous five years the schools had lost just over £1000 between them. Although this financial loss was not very heavy, the Committee felt that "*when it is remembered that more than half the children are non-Friends ... the position is not satisfactory*".² Quaker numbers continued to decline, so that by 1921 the Leinster provincial boarding school at Mountmellick was forced to close down.

¹Newhouse. A History of Friends School Lisburn. (Lurgan: L.M. Press Ltd.) 1974. p. 104.

²Ibid.

There are now only two provincial Quaker schools in existence in Ireland, the Ulster school at Lisburn and the Munster school at Newtown Waterford. The latter institution is now an exclusive fee paying school for the children of wealthy parents, while the Ulster school has got a much broader social intake. Even more so than in 1918, however, these two schools cater mainly for non-Friends, as indeed do the English Quaker schools. Consequently a major problem for the Society of Friends in Ireland in the 1980^s is how are they to preserve Quaker principles, and a unique Quaker ethos in schools that are becoming less Quaker in composition every day. This problem will certainly not be solved as easily in the 1980^s as it was in the 1780^s, since a highly guarded education is no longer feasible in a rapidly changing world.

OUTLINE OF IMPROVEMENTS RELATIVE TO EDUCATION
ARISING FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
JOSEPH LANCASTER'S FREE SCHOOL
FOR THE EDUCATION OF
ONE THOUSAND POOR CHILDREN
BOROUGH ROAD, SOUTHWARK

- (1) In the infancy of this Institution it was thought economical if youth could be educated at the rate of one guinea per annum each, but it has been proved that three can be educated for less than that sum.
- (2) At first it was feared that the education of 200 children under one master would be an undertaking of too much magnitude; it has been proved that 1000 can be managed with as much ease as 50 used to be, and that without any assistant teachers.
- (3) A new mode of teaching to spell has been invented, by which scholars repeat, or spell 60 words daily, in addition to their usual lessons in reading, writing, and arithmetic; by this method they read, write, spell, or cypher, at the same time; the aggregate benefit is proportionate.
- (4) A new method of teaching arithmetic, whereby those who know nothing about it, may teach it with the certainty of a mathematician. The pupils usually perform eight sums by this method, instead of one or two; it is familiar to the meanest capacity.

(5) The whole arrangements, and mode of school-keeping, have been effectually reduced to a system, whereby the principal teacher has at once a clear view of the school, of every class, and of the duties performed by the respective monitors; in the same manner as a merchant inspects and has an accurate view of his accounts, by his day-book, journal, or ledger.

The peculiar economy attending J. Lancaster's mode of instruction for 60 boys (cypherers) is thus compared:-

EXPENSE OF OUT-FIT, WITH BOOKS, ETC.

OLD WAY		NEW WAY	
60 Slates	£1 0 0	60 Slates	£1 0 0
60 Spelling Books 9d. each	£2 5 0	3 Spelling Books	2 3
30 Bibles at 3s each	£4 10 0	3 Bibles	9 0
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	£7 15 0		£1 11 3

Balance in favour of the new way,
£6 3s 9d.

Wear and tear in proportion to the same balance. The boys taught in the new way, having only three bibles, read as much as the boys taught in the old way, having 30 bibles.

Boys who learn by the new mode, have six times the usual practice in writing; but in the old way the expense is, at the first cost, 5½d per month, for writing books, pens, and ink, each boy: This will be six times increased, if it is desired to give both classes of boys equal practice, the usual cost for 60 boys is £16.10s. per annum.

OLD WAY

Six times the usual charge
for writing paper, etc. £99

NEW WAY

If they have not slates
already provided sixty
slates will cost £1 0 0
Allow 100 slate pencils
per annum, each boy at 8d
per hundred £2 0 0

£3 0 0

Balance in favour of new mode

£96. 0. 0.

Every additional 60 boys
require an additional
usher: least salary
per annum £30

Every additional sixty
boys require six monitors.
viz. one principal,
and 5 assistants: weekly
rewards 1d each £1 6 0

Balance in favour of new mode

£28.14. 0

Balance in favour of the new mode of tuition, not including
the improvements in writing and arithmetic - 600 boys,

£348.17s.6d.

Balance in favour of the new mode of tuition, including
the improvements in writing and arithmetic - 600 boys

£1,308.17s.6d.

This document is from the Grubb Collection S.C.3 Friends
Arch. Dublin.

(Dramatic dialogue illustrating the changes in Irish Quaker life and education over the period 1786 - 1886, presented as an entertainment at the Mountmellick centenary celebrations at Mountmellick School in 1886)~

DINAH AND ETHEL: A DIALOGUE

Enter Dinah and Ethel from behind a screen; Ethel dusting Dinah with her handkerchief; Dinah rubbing her eyes.

ETHEL - You dusty old thing, what brought you into that closet, and how long have you been there?

DINAH - Ah! I just lay down for a few moments - it is all very strange.

ETHEL - Lay down for a few moments? why you must have been there for years and years. No one knew there was a closet there - the door was papered over - I found it only by chance.

DINAH - Sure thou must be mistaken! I was ill. The fairy woman who lives near Derryguile Hill gave me something to drink made of herbs which she said she only knew. I was not to take much or I would sleep too long. Perhaps I drank too much. But what brought thee into the school, and where are the other girls?

ETHEL - What brought me into the school? Why I have been here, except in vacations, for two years.

DINAH - Vacations! I don't understand thee; and by thy conversation and dress thou art not a Friend. I don't remember thee at all. I hope thou art adhering to the truth. "What is thy name?"

ETHEL - Ethel.

DINAH - That name is neither Scriptural nor Friendly. I never heard it before.

ETHEL - It's quite a common name, and of course I'm a Friend. But what brought you here - and how long are you here? And what is your name?

DINAH - My name is Dinah. My brother Joshua brought me on a pillion to Dublin. We live in the County Wexford. And there I was entrusted to the care of a carrier - John Murphy - oh! it was a long journey, and we were stopped by whiteboys on the way; but they took nothing from us when they saw my Friends' bonnet and only my little box strapped on the pack-horse. And I am here only a few months - the school is opened only that time.

ETHEL - Pillions! packhorses! whiteboys! - school open a few months! Why you must have been asleep a hundred years - oh! you queer girl! But sit down and tell me all about it! Why this is the centenary of the school. Why did you not come by mail coach or canal?

DINAH.- Why thou knowest well there are none yet in Ireland - we hope soon to have them.

ETHEL - And we have not coaches or canal travelling - they are out of use - ever so long ago, before I was born.

DINAH - And how then didst thou come?

ETHEL - Why by train of course - in three hours from Dublin; and I forgot my luggage. That was an awful bore; but I telegraphed for it, and had a letter from papa the same evening to say that he had telephoned to Kingsbridge, and that it was all right, and would be sent on next day, and so it was; and I was awfully glad, for I should not like to lose my watch and chain, and music-books and my new dresses.

DINAH - Three hours from Dublin! Sure thou art not telling the truth! Surely thou art not one of our Society or thou wouldst not have a watch and chain and music-books, and such an inconsistent gown.

ETHEL - Friendliness is a thing of the heart, and not of outward appearance.

DINAH - Friendliness of the heart is best shown in plainness of speech, behaviour, and apparel. But let us not differ on these things. What is a train?

ETHEL - A train, why a railway - iron rails you know - and carriages are dragged along by steam, and you travel like the wind. But some trains are very slow: I never knew that between Maryboro' and here to go more than twenty miles an hour.

DINAH - I don't understand thee - twenty miles an hour slow! - how frightful to travel thus - and what are a telegraph and a telephone?

ETHEL - Wires worked by electricity; and you can send a message to America in five minutes, or speak to your friend in the next town.

DINAH - Well, how happy you must be!

ETHEL - Happy - oh, no - we are all poor and badly off! Father says the times never were worse.

DINAH - That's what dada says.

ETHEL - And the workpeople are all lazy and good for nothing, not like what they used to be fifty or a hundred years ago.

DINAH - And that is what dada says too. They must be very bad now. You must have very little to do, with all the new machinery.

ETHEL - Oh, not at all! Father and Ernest and Fred are nearly killed - they scarcely have time to swallow their breakfasts and rush to the train; and there they are telegraphing, and telephoning, and tramping, and writing letters all day, and attending lectures and things in the evening; and they come home late, tired and cross, and fit for nothing but to fall asleep in arm chairs.

DINAH - Well, dada and Joshua and Nehemiah are not so busy, though they have everything to do - and oh! it is vastly pleasant working in the house, and with them in the shop or the fields; and in winter the long hours round the fire, when dada reads "Thomas Ellwood" or some other improving book to us, and we knit or spin.

ETHEL - "Thomas Ellwood" - such a stupid old book! Oh! I delight in "Alice Through the Looking-Glass" or "Grimm's Fairy Tales" or a nice sensation story.

DINAH - Great patience!

ETHEL - But we travel in summer - the English Lakes or Switzerland.

DINAH - Well I think your lot is not so hard; but I would not like to travel so far. You can see nothing fairer than the River Slaney, or our mountains covered with snow in winter, or our fields and hedges in spring, or the calm summer evenings when we sit before the house after work, and watch the sun sinking behind Mount Leinster and Blackstairs.

ETHEL - Well your life must be awfully flat. What did you come here to learn?

DINAH - Reading, writing, and arithmetic, and spelling, and Bible narrative, and sewing and knitting, and darning and cross-stitch, and keeping rooms in order, and mending ours and the boys' clothes. What else should we learn?

ETHEL - Oh, you innocent! Why, we learn everything - literature and domestic economy, and German and French, harmony and thorough bass, and ethics, and botany and drawing, and euclid and algebra, and - and - (out of breath) - and - and - we learn pieces by Longfellow and Whittier.

DINAH - Who are Longfellow and Whittier?

ETHEL - Oh, stupid! Why poets, of course.

DINAH - I never heard of them.

ETHEL - Why, do you not know Whittier? He is an American, and a Friend too. There is one piece of his that would just suit you:-

"The Quaker of the olden time!

How calm and firm and true,
Unspotted by its wrong and crime,
He walked the dark earth through.
The lust of power, the love of gain,
The thousand lures of sin
Around him, had no power to stain
The purity within."

DINAH - That is beautiful; Whittier must have known my brother Joshua, for that's exactly what he is.

ETHEL - Then I suppose you have never heard of Scott, or Tennyson, or Browning.

DINAH - Oh, never! We don't much approve of poetry. It is seldom true. But art thou fond of Shenstone, or Gray, or Waller? I have heard of them.

ETHEL - Well, scarcely. I have heard their names.

DINAH - My mother sometimes repeats such poetry as:-

"Still to ourselves in every place consigned,
Our own felicity we make or find;
With secret course, which no loud storms annoy,
Glides the smooth current of domestic joy."

ETHEL - Why that is by Goldsmith, out of his Traveller.
We have been learning it by heart.

DINAH - Well, he must be a great poet to be known,
amongst so many others, by thee. But about thy learning -
canst thou spin?

ETHEL - No.

DINAH - Or weave?

ETHEL - No.

DINAH - Or make soap and candles?

ETHEL - No.

DINAH - Or listen carpets?

ETHEL - No.

DINAH - Or milk a cow?

ETHEL - No.

DINAH - What canst thou do then?

ETHEL - Oh, lots of far nicer things than those! I can
play lawn tennis - it's a splendid game - such fun; and in
winter when I'm not skating I do all sorts of fancy work -
crewel, and wool work, and I can make macramé lace, and I'm
going to learn lustre painting; but after all I think I like
music best.

DINAH - Well, canst thou speak a little Irish - all the
poor people speak it? Dost thou know what "She do vaha"
means?

ETHEL - No; few but students in Dublin learn Irish now.

DINAH - No Irish! How strange! And then there is the
Barony of Forth language. My father once took me to a fair
at Wexford, and there I heard the Forth and Bargy people
speaking nothing else.

ETHEL - All gone!

DINAH - What is that large building I saw through the
window, and what is that loud bell?

ETHEL - The Roman Catholic church and schools.

DINAH - Why, with us they are scarcely allowed schools, and they have only poor little thatched chapels.

ETHEL - Oh, that is all changed! The Lord Chancellor is a Roman Catholic, and the Lord Lieutenant visits their schools, and their churches are the grandest in the country.

DINAH - But art thou and other Protestants allowed to live?

ETHEL - How? Why? We are not interfered with. Why should we be? But if other changes come we shall have to leave the country.

DINAH - Well, if you have survived such changes, perhaps you will survive the rest. But I feel confused and dizzy. I will go and join my schoolfellows.

ETHEL - Ah! Dinah, that is long past. Why, if they were living now, they would be old, old men and women, more than a hundred years old.

DINAH - Then I would not care to live. Your world is strange and wonderful, but it is not my old simple world.

ETHEL - Is your name Dinah - ? (Whispers surname in her ear.)

DINAH - Yes.

ETHEL - Then you must be my great grandfather's sister, who was lost at school. How delighted they will be to see you at home! I will run and get leave to take you home for a week. Miss Brown is ever so kind. (About to leave hastily.)

DINAH - Stay. Wait a moment; ought thou not to ask Jacob Martin, he will be grieved if you ask anyone else? Oh, dear! I seem as though in a dream. I feel faint, as if the air of this time is not the air of my life.

ETHEL (Putting her arm round Dinah) - Ah! don't say that. Stay with us.

DINAH - Nay. I feel I cannot. There is something that calls me back to my own people. If my own times are past, at least I hope I can join my kindred and friends in a Better Land.

(They leave, ETHEL supporting DINAH.)

A.W.

The Annual Sum Total of Friends' Sufferings, chiefly
for Tythes, Priests Maintenance, and other Ecclesiastical
Dues so called; and for repair of Parish Worship-Houses,
from the year 1727, to 1751 inclusive. *

K. GEORGE II.				PRISONERS
Years	Sums			
1727	1939	02	02	
1728	1777	02	00	
<u>1729</u>	1921	10	00	Three Friends of Charlemont Meeting,
1730	1368	01	03	on account of Tythes (1729).
1731	1589	19	09½	
1732	1591	06	03	
1733	1585	00	04	
<u>1734</u>	1534	07	04	James Simpson and Joshua Deale in
1735	1458	07	07	Cavan Gaol, Through the severity of
1736	1485	18	00	Hugh Reilly a Popish Tythe-taker
1737	1599	17	09	under Whitnel Sneyd, Vicar-General of
1738	1486	13	07	Kilmore and Ardagh, and continued
1739	1511	00	08	Prisoners above a year. (1734)
1740	1884	06	00	
1741	1738	15	07	
1742	1532	07	08	
<u>1743</u>	1460	09	06	Joshua Thompson of Carlow Meeting, or
1744	1505	03	11½	account of Tythes, who continued a
1745	1687	14	06	Prisoner for some time (1743).
1746	1687	14	06¾	
1747	1450	09	03½	

K. GEORGE II.

PRISONERS

Years	Sums		
1748	1605	11	01½
1749	1564	11	11
1750	1760	07	08
1751	1743	19	00½
TOT.	£40,469	s17	d06 $\frac{1}{4}$

* Quoted from Wight and Ruttly. A History of the Rise and Progress of the People called Quakers. (Dublin: I Jackson, 1751).

Queries for the Self-examination of a Tutor.

- (1) Am I particularly careful of my Deportment and expressions when in the presence of youth; not only in my school but also at other times and places?
- (2) Do I endeavour, at suitable seasons, according to my measure, to impress on the minds of children; a just sense of the awfulness of Divine Worship, and to be exemplary therein myself?
- (3) Am I watchful over my own spirit and temper; and careful to maintain a labour for solemnity in my school?
- (4) Am I concerned to distinguish Judiciously when chastisement is really necessary, and to administer it coolly and prudently, rather "with a grieved than an angry countenance", desiring to punish rather by conviction than correction, agreeably to the gracious dealings of the Great Master with myself and mankind in general?
- (5) Do I embrace every suitable opportunity of inculcating the great Doctrine of the Sacred internal Principle as the primary rule of faith and practice and of the authority and verity of the Holy Scriptures in subordination thereto, with gratitude to our Bountiful Benefactor, and benevolence towards all the human race, and tenderness to every animal?
- (6) Do I oftener than the morning breathe after the renovation of that which is profitable to direct; not only in my steppings in and out before those over whom I am placed as an accountable Shepherd, but in all my concerns through Life, in my pilgrimage towards the Heaven and Peace at last?

A P P E N D I X E

LIST OF FRIENDS' MEETINGS IN IRELAND 1794

SUBDIVISION OF MEETINGS

PROVINCE OF ULSTER.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

PARTICULAR MEETINGS

Lurgan

(Lurgan.
(Moyallon
(Rathfryland

Antrim

(Antrim
(Ballimena
(Lower Grange
(Ballinacree.
(Toberhead
(Coleraine

Lisburn

(Lisburn
(Hillsborough
(Ballinderry
(Newtown

Charlemont

(Grange near Charlemont
(Cabragh
(Castleshane

Richill

Richill

Coothill

(Coothill
(Oldcastle

PROVINCE OF LEINSTER

County Wexford

(Eniscorthy
(Ross
(Forest
(Randlesmills
(Cooladine
(Ballintore
(Ballinclay

Moate

(Moate
(Ballinmurry

Carlow

(Carlow
(Castledermot
(Athy
(Ballitore
(Killconner

PROVINCE OF LEINSTER

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Dublin

Edenderry

Wicklow

Mountmellick

PARTICULAR MEETINGS

(Dublin
(Timahoe
(Baltiboys

(Edenderry
(Rathangan

(Wicklow
(Ballicane

(Mountmellick
(Tullamore
(Mountrath
(Birr
(Roscrea
(Knock-Ballimaher
(Ballinakill

PROVINCE OF MUNSTER

Youghal

Cork

Limerick

Waterford

County Tipperary

Youghal

(Cork
(Bandon

Limerick

Waterford

(Clonmell
(Garryroan

A P P E N D I X F

(Table of contents, John Gough's Practical Arithmetick in Four Books. Dublin: 1792)

<p><u>Book (1)</u> Notation of Numbers</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Numeration</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Addition of Whole Numbers</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Subtraction of ditto</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Multiplication</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Division</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Problems</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Numbers of Divers De</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Nominations</p>	<p>Tables of Money, Weights and Measures</p> <p>Addition of Divers, & Co.</p> <p>Multiplication of Divers</p> <p>Division of Divers</p> <p>Reduction</p> <p>Rule of Three Direct</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;">Inverse</p> <p>Double Rule of Three</p>
<p><u>Book (2)</u> of Fractions</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Reduction</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Addition</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Subtraction</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Multiplication</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Division</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Rule of Three</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Decimal Fraction</p>	<p>Reduction of Decimals</p> <p>Addition & subtraction of Decimals</p> <p>Multiplication of Decimals</p> <p>Division of Decimals</p> <p>Circulating Decimals</p>
<p>Book (3) of Mercantile Arithmetic</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Practice</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Practice in Decimals</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Practice in casting up coins</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Estimating Imports & Exports</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Tare and Tret</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Estimating allowances per cent</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Interest</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Annuities and Pensions</p>	<p>Rebate or Discount</p> <p>Exchange</p> <p>Arbitration in Exchange</p> <p>Invoice for exercise</p> <p>Barter</p> <p>Profit and Loss</p> <p>Fellowship</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;">with Time</p> <p>Allegation Medial</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;">Alternate</p>

Book (4) Extraction of Roots

Compound Interest

Extraction of the Square Root

Rule of False

The Cube Root

Compound Proportion

Arithmetical Progression

Geometrical Progression

* Curriculum at Quaker Boys Boarding School, Camden St. Dublin.
c. 1840.

LANGUAGES.

English, French, Latin, Greek & Hebrew; also Irish, German Italian, Spanish, etc. by special teachers if required.

MATHEMATICS.

Arithmetic, Algebra, Elements of Euclid, Plane & Spherical Trigonometry, Logarithms, Dialling, Land Surveying and Mensuration, Navigation, Astronomy, Use of Globes, Use of the Quadrant, Sextant, Theodolite, etc.

MISCELLANEOUS

Writing, Common and Shorthand. Book-Keeping. Geography and Statistics. History, Ancient and Modern. Scripture History. Catechism. Mnemonics. Chronology. Drawing. Elements of Natural Philosophy, including Botany, Geology, Mineralogy, Chemistry, etc.

* The list of school subjects quoted here, can be found in a document entitled "*Proposed Boarding School for the Children of Friends near Dublin*". P.B. 20(73), Friends Archives, Eustace Street, Dublin.

<h2 style="text-align: center;">AN ALPHABETICAL PRAXIS</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">simplifying all the preceding rules by the most common Words in various arts and Sciences.</p>					
A					
albatross	1	agreeable	1	avarice	1
albatross	1	alms, allose	1	aversion	1
abominable	12	alarm	10	awake	10
a bound	11	almost	11	axis	11
absence	107	altogether	111	B	
absolute, obsolete	11	amalgam	116	balance	117
accept	11	ambition	117	behavior	117
accepted	11	amend	117	beautified	117
acceptible	11	amiable	117	became, became	117
accepting	110	ample	117	because	117
acceptable	110	angry	117	beginning	117
according	110	anguish	117	behalf	117
acknowledged	110	animal	117	behold	117
accused	110	another	117	being	117
acquisition	110	annual, annual	117	beloved	117
active	110	antiquity	117	benefaction	117
actual, axle	110	answer	117	beneficial	117
address	110	anxiety	117	benefit	117
addressed	110	apportioned	117	beneficial	117
admire	110	ardent, ardian	117	beneficial	117
admit	110	armor	117	benefit	117
admonition	110	ashamed	117	better, better	117
adown	110	aspect	117	believe, believe	117
advance	110	aspire	117	be yond	117
advice, advise	110	assembly	117	benignity	117
affection	110	aspiduous	117	C	
affliction	110	assured	117	causal, causal	117
affords, offered	110	attended	117	cannot, cannot	117
afraid	110	abstract	117	causable	117
		attribute	117		

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BOOK OF ACCOUNTS RELATING TO MUNSTER PROVINCIAL SCHOOL. 1796 - 1831

MINUTES OF LEINSTER PROVINCIAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE. 1784 - 1834

MINUTES OF DUBLIN, HALF-YEARS MEETING UP TO 1797

MINUTES OF DUBLIN YEARLY MEETING 1797 - 1830

PORTFOLIO 5A (also called Education Portfolio) . Contains documents and letters relating to education, 1719-1858. Besides manuscripts, there are also some typescripts, and a few printed items.

Other rich sources of educational materials are the family collections, the most important of which are:-

THE GRUBB COLLECTION, which includes a number of items relating to Suir Island School, Clonmel

THE FENNEL COLLECTION.

THE SHACKLETON - PIM LETTERS.

THE LEADBEATER - SHACKLETON COLLECTION

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