

IN WAR TIME:  
WHITTIER'S CIVIL WAR ADDRESS AND THE QUAKER  
PERIODICAL PRESS

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ABSTRACT

Fought, at least in part, for a cause in which many Quakers ostensibly believed and had previously risked a great deal for, the American Civil War was a time of great trial for American Quakers. Extending ongoing efforts to understand this complex period, the following essay considers John G. Whittier's mid-war poem, 'In War Time', and the peculiarity of its simultaneous appearance in the major Hicksite, Gurneyite and Wilburite periodicals of the nineteenth century. Consequent of the singularity of its shared printing, Whittier's poem renders more legible the dilemma Friends faced when attempting to position their peace principles in ethical relation to the mass suffering of the war. Reflecting, while also contributing to, a major transformation in American Quakerism, 'In War Time' questioned the ethics of dissociative pacifism, exhorting members of the Society to assist the Union war effort, if only in non-combatant roles, as nurses in hospitals and as teachers among the freedmen.

KEYWORDS

John G. Whittier, Civil War, Religious Society of Friends, Quakerism, Peace Testimony, poetry, periodical press, 'In War Time', American Renaissance, ballad reading.

The time of trial is upon us; peace principles are being put to the test... Our newspapers teem with the spirit of war, and are calculated to instill and foster the same spirit; accounts of war achievements and the ideas of greatness and glory that attach to them; the preparations of men, money, provisions and instruments of death, and the destruction of property, the dead and wounded on the battle-field—with all these we are becoming familiarized, and in some measure leavened into the same spirit.

—*Friends' Intelligencer*, 'Peace'<sup>1</sup>

On 6<sup>th</sup> Mo. 15, 1863 the Alumni Association of Friends' Yearly Meeting School extended a vote of thanks to John G. Whittier, expressing the association's gratitude for the poem he had prepared for its annual meeting at Newport.<sup>2</sup> Written in the early months of the war's third year, the poem 'In War Time' considers the immense obstacles the Religious Society of Friends faced when trying to put its guiding peace principles in ethical relation to the violence and mass suffering of the American Civil War. Anthologized and better known as 'Anniversary Poem', Whittier's work prescribes a renewed Quaker Peace Testimony that is grounded in the conscience and in the body, modeled on the early Friends' willingness to suffer for the sake of conscience.

The Civil War was a time of great trial for American Quakers. Since its founding in England in the late 1640s, the Religious Society of Friends has maintained a total disavowal of war and violence; more than a broad endorsement of pacifism, this Peace Testimony is an elaborate, albeit unfinished and unfolding, commitment among members of the Society to promote and preserve a sacred amity. That being said, the Civil War was fought, at least in part, for a cause in which many Quakers ostensibly believed and had previously risked a great deal for, that is, the abolition of slavery.<sup>3</sup> So while it is difficult to quantify with any kind of precision, it is nonetheless clear that thousands of Hicksite, Gurneyite and Wilburite Quakers went against the tenets of their community and joined the ranks of the Union.<sup>4</sup> For others, the dutiful, almost performative, continuation of this historic Peace Testimony during the first half of the war manifested in many corners as an uneasy restraint, resulting in a complex and contingent distancing of Quakers from the disquieting reality of the Civil War. While efforts to conserve the peace principles inherited from the early Friends endured for the war's duration, the second half of the war, however, found Friends striving to position and reposition themselves and their Peace Testimony in ways that would allow them to aid better the causes of the Union.

Three days after Whittier's poem was read at the meeting of the Alumni Association, the poem appeared in print in *The Independent*, a Boston magazine unaffiliated with the Religious Society of Friends. A week later it was published in William Lloyd Garrison's *Liberator*.<sup>5</sup> The poem appeared in Quaker-run periodicals within a fortnight of its delivery and by the end of July had appeared in the three major publications of nineteenth-century American Friends—the *Friends' Review* (6<sup>th</sup> Mo. 27, 1863), *The Friend* (7<sup>th</sup> Mo. 11, 1863) and the *Friends' Intelligencer* (7<sup>th</sup> Mo. 18, 1863). Limited in its capacity to cast light on the everyday lived-religion of Civil War Quakers, the archive of the Friends' periodical press provides, nonetheless, a particularly multi-voiced record of how the Religious Society of Friends attempted to position itself in relation to the war as it was unfolding.<sup>6</sup> The 1863 delivery and subsequent reprinting of the poem is suggestive of the Friends' broad and dynamic striving, in the second half of the war, to realise a *living* Peace Testimony equal to the shifting landscape of the war and the nation.

'In War Time' reflects, while also contributing to, a major departure in American Quakerism.<sup>7</sup> 'The movement of many American Friends away from uncompromising pacifism', suggests Tom Hamm, 'has been long and complex,

and historians have yet to explore it fully... The fervent commitment of virtually all Friends to the Union cause between 1861 and 1865 brought the first compromises.<sup>8</sup>

Exemplary of these changes, the poem questions the ethics of dissociative pacifism, exhorting members of the Society to assist the Union war effort, if only in non-combatant roles, as nurses in hospitals and as teachers among the freedmen. In an effort to demonstrate how 'In War Time' focuses attention on the ethical basis underlying the many shifts the Society experienced during the years of the Civil War—and as a method for better understanding how the shadow of the Civil War forced the three major Quaker factions (the Hicksite, Gurneyite and Wilburite Friends) to reflect upon the animating spirit of their Peace Testimony—this essay reads Whittier's poem alongside, and in response to, the early coverage of the Civil War found in the three Quaker periodicals in which it ultimately appeared.

While the nuances of the disputes that unsettled the Religious Society of Friends in the first half of the nineteenth century are well outside the scope of this paper, a brief overview highlights the significance of the poem's nearly simultaneous appearance in the three Quaker periodicals, while also addressing the origins of the periodicals themselves. The first major division in the Society occurred from the Spring of 1827 to the Fall of 1828—beginning with the splitting of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and concluding with the Indiana Yearly Meeting—resulting in the formation of so-called Hicksite and Orthodox Friends. The Orthodox and Hicksite groups each established its own independent Yearly Meeting, an authoritative and administrative body comprised of representatives from smaller Monthly and Quarterly Meetings. The Orthodox Friends themselves divided into Gurneyite and Wilburite Friends starting in 1845, beginning in the New England Yearly Meeting and ending with the Ohio Yearly Meeting in 1854.<sup>9</sup>

Whittier, himself a New England Gurneyite Friend, was a founding member of the American Anti-Slavery Society (1833) and in 1847 became the corresponding editor at *The National Era*, an important abolitionist weekly newspaper. Whittier's public prominence afforded him a uniquely influential position within the Religious Society of Friends, one that appears, if the repeated printing of 'In War Time' is any indication, to have transcended the divisions within the Society.<sup>10</sup> One explanation for the poet's broad appeal, at least amongst the Friends, is that his abolitionist efforts brought him into contact with members of each faction, as well as with non-Quaker intellectuals and organizations committed to the peaceable abolition of slavery. Noteworthy as the poem's presence in the three periodicals is, it is not altogether surprising. When the poem appeared, Whittier was already the most well-known Quaker of the nineteenth century, respected and read by Hicksite, Orthodox and non-Quaker alike.<sup>11</sup> That being said, 'In War Time' is remarkable among Whittier's work for the near-simultaneity of its publication across the three periodicals. An anomaly of sorts, I know of no other printed piece that was similarly shared between the three magazines in the nineteenth century.

Like the two publications that would come to follow, the Orthodox *The Friend* was published in Philadelphia. Its first issue is dated 10<sup>th</sup> Mo. 13, 1827—nearly six months after the initial Hicksite-Orthodox schism cleaved the Society. Published weekly by John Richardson and edited by Robert Smith, *The Friend* would later assume a distinct Wilburite bias. The Hicksite Friends in Philadelphia began publishing the *Friends' Weekly Intelligencer* in late March of 1844 (later shortened to *Friends' Intelligencer*). Notably, unlike *The Friend*, the *Intelligencer* appeared without editorial attributions.<sup>12</sup> Founded two years after the New England Orthodox Friends' secondary fracture into Gurneyite and Wilburite Meetings, the *Friends' Review* was begun by Enoch Lewis in 1847 who—according to the memoir written by his son Joseph Jackson Lewis—'believed that a periodical in some respects different from *The Friend* was needed to express the opinions and principles of the major part [i.e. Gurneyite] of the Society'.<sup>13</sup>

Thinking of *The Friend* as the Wilburite outlet and the *Friends' Review* as the voice of the Gurneyite is a useful and accurate shorthand; I should like, however, to qualify this shorthand slightly, noting that while *The Friend* definitely embraced the leanings of John Wilbur, tactical maneuvers and great effort at the administrative level kept the Orthodox Philadelphia Yearly Meeting nominally intact through the Civil War.<sup>14</sup> So, while solidly identified with the Wilburites, perhaps *The Friend* might too be remembered as similarly striving to maintain the structural, or at least nominal, integrity of the Yearly Meeting in this period of Orthodox division.

Reflected in both the poetry of John G. Whittier and the pages of the Friends' periodicals, the ethical dimensions of the Civil War were a great dilemma to the Religious Society of Friends. Hicksite, Gurneyite and Wilburite communities were unsettled by the rumors and witnessed goodbyes of neighbors and sons leaving for the battlefield. Many it seems went willingly, others as conscripts, and still others as martyrs for the Peace Testimony. An article appearing in 11<sup>th</sup> mo., 1861 in the Hicksite *Friends' Intelligencer* is admirably succinct in outlining the difficult position of many 'young and ardent' Friends:

That many of the young and ardent in our own religious Society should have been drawn into the whirlpool of popular enthusiasm, is not to be wondered at. The apparent connection of the contest with the anti-slavery movement, in which Friends have taken such a lively interest, has induced the desire, on the part of some, to have a war prosecuted with vigor, which seems to them to promise, as one of its results, the long-desired enfranchisement of the colored race.

While an unknowable number of Friends took up arms for the causes of the Union, others likely took the stance advocated in the *Friends' Intelligencer*, which in October of 1861 advised its readers 'to remain quietly at their homes, and attend peaceably to their own ordinary and proper business, meekly bearing whatever may be imposed for the support of our testimony'.<sup>15</sup>

During the Civil War, Friends who refused to bear arms for either the Union or the Confederacy faced social censure and ridicule, and because drafted Quakers often refused to pay either the commutation fine or to provide a suitable replacement to enlist in their stead, many were thrown into jail or, worse, physically

forced onto the field of battle. Recognizing early on that its peace principles set the Religious Society of Friends against the dominant northern ethos, and were therefore likely to attract anti-Quaker sentiments, the *Friends' Intelligencer*, *Friends' Review* and *The Friend* routinely published accounts of Friends past and present gladly suffering for their commitments to peace. Signed by the Clerk, Joseph Snowdon, a lengthy, two-page 'Address to the Members of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, from the Meeting for Suffering' appearing in the Gurneyite *Friends' Review* is indicative of such encouraging efforts, expressing 'feelings of affectionate sympathy with Friends, under the various temptations and difficulties which may assail them, in the present agitated condition of our beloved country'.<sup>16</sup>

While long exegeses of scripture advocating meekness, faithful courage and nonviolence are more common, articles passionately reaffirming the historic continuity of the Peace Testimony likewise filled the pages of these periodicals.<sup>17</sup> There is so great an appeal to tradition across the presses, one begins to wonder where the preservation of tradition ends and the mobilization of principle begins. Turning to their unified and astonishingly rich archives, each of the three presses set to work patterning a historic Peace Testimony sewn together from minutes of Yearly and Local Meetings past, the seventeenth-century writings of the First Founders and the inspired writings of concerned Friends living during the American Revolution. An 1862 article in the Wilburite *The Friend* is suggestive of the collective effort to spread, reaffirm and concretize, in the sphere of public print, the particularities of the historic Peace Testimony. Foregrounding historical accounts of Quakers jailed, fined and battered for their refusal to wage war, the article—'Suffering for the Testimony against War'—recapitulates, at great length, the prescriptive decisions of eighteenth-century Friends during the American Revolution:

Many are the instances on record, in which the faithful members of our religious Society suffered in person and property, from the ruling power, rather than violate their testimony...one of these mentioned by Thomas Story in his journal, has interested me, and I will offer an abstract of it for the columns of 'The Friend'.<sup>18</sup>

That the major presses of the Religious Society of Friends were turning back to the Revolutionary War for clearness and encouragement underscores just how important the historic commitments to, and nuances of, the Peace Testimony became to nineteenth-century Friends, many of whom were confronting the enormity of war for the first time. Simply signed 'S', a piece running in the Gurneyite *Friends' Review* is uncommonly candid on this point:

Although taught from our earliest infancy to abhor wars and fightings—but hardly knowing why we should do so—and educated in a Society, whose faithful members have upheld peace principles throughout the course of over two hundred years, yet the present emergency found many of us totally unprepared to meet its requirements. We thought, indeed, that *constituted as governments now are*, it was necessary that this unprovoked rebellion should be crushed, and the traitors to their country punished... Why then should not *we* aid our rulers in the execution of their purposes, and strengthen their hands by our influence and our money, or by our personal participation in the conflict?<sup>19</sup>

The author takes two full pages to explain precisely why they should not aid their rulers in the 'execution' of their plans, whether that aid might be pecuniary, participatory or otherwise. Quoting scripture and refuting arguments of every kind, the article leaves its readers with queries intended to lead those in doubt to reflect upon the truth of the Peace Testimony on their own.

While I have deliberately tried to highlight the thematic, generic and formal continuity amongst the three presses, it is important to note that Hicksite and Orthodox Friends generally maintained differing levels of engagement with the world outside of their communities.<sup>20</sup> This relative proximity to the 'world' is reflected in the actual coverage of the war in their periodicals. 'The Summary of Events' column in the Wilburite *The Friend* often provided a state-by-state update on the movements of the two armies, the declarations of Lincoln and his war cabinet, as well as the mounting casualties.<sup>21</sup> Uniformly in-depth and thorough, the column repeatedly included a section labeled 'Progress of Hostilities', or sometimes just 'Congress', and once, after a battle 'near a small stream called Bull's Run', spoke almost spiritedly of 'The First Great Battle'.<sup>22</sup> 'The Summary of News' printed in the Gurneyite *Friends' Review* is no less willing to provide its readers with accounts of the rising hostilities. In late April of 1861, two weeks after Confederate soldiers first took Fort Sumter and claimed Charleston Harbor for their own, the column ran a textured summation of the first collision between the Union and the Southern Confederacy.<sup>23</sup>

In contrast, the *Friends' Intelligencer* does not provide a running column on the war. Unlike the broad engagements with military movements and the political developments of the war found in both *The Friend* and *Friends' Review*, the Hicksite Friends generally depicted the Civil War as occurring well outside of the Society's immediate affairs. It is clear, however, that the editors of the *Friends' Intelligencer* assumed that its readers regularly followed war news in secular newspapers: 'We have not attempted', an anonymous contributor to the *Intelligencer* explains, 'to give a regular abstract of the state of public affairs, such as can be gleaned from the daily papers, concluding that nearly all our readers have access to some of these sources of information'.<sup>24</sup> However, even in articles that addressed warfare more specifically, the *Intelligencer* often avoids directly confronting the persistent reality of the Civil War, treating the war as a generic—almost abstract—phenomenon, rather than a particular event that necessitated equally particular and considered responses.<sup>25</sup> Even a month after the attack on Fort Sumter, an article from the *Intelligencer*—simply entitled 'For Friends' Intelligencer'—fails to mention the Civil War by name, speaking more generally of: 'The feeling of sorrow occasioned by the difficulties which have unexpectedly swept as a dark cloud over this once happy country'.<sup>26</sup> The comparatively close coverage of the war's early stages in both of the Orthodox presses makes the limited reporting by the *Friends' Intelligencer* all the more remarkable, and suggests that some Quakers—despite the considerable number of Friends who were joining the Union cause—believed they had little connection to the war other than an earnest hope that some good (i.e., the total abolition of slavery) might ultimately come of it.<sup>27</sup>

Composed of twenty-three rhymed quintains—ABAAB, where three lines of iambic tetrameter (A) are braided with two lines of iambic dimeter (B)—‘In War Time’, like the three periodicals, attends reverently to the sacrifices of past generations of Friends. That being said, the poem also antagonizes the project of recapitulation by pointing out the limitations of simply claiming an inherited, radical tradition passed down from the early Friends. Whittier’s Civil War address aims to remind the Religious Society of Friends that the Peace Testimony—however steadfast and principled in past application and articulation—ought always to be a living commitment of the present. Following Whittier’s introduction, the poem’s third through sixth stanzas argue that donning the Peace Testimony as a kind of historic legacy is not itself sufficient to the magnitude of the Civil War. Exposing a drifting complacency within the Religious Society of Friends, the poet writes:

Full long our feet the flowery ways  
 Of peace have trod,  
 Content with creed and garb and phrase:  
 A harder path in earlier days  
 Led up to God.

Too cheaply truths, once purchased dear,  
 Are made our own;  
 Too long the world has smiled to hear  
 Our boast of full corn in the ear  
 By others sown;

To see us stir the martyr fires  
 Of long ago;  
 And wrap our satisfied desires  
 In the singed mantles that our sires  
 Have dropped below.

But now the cross our worthies bore  
 On us is laid,  
 Profession’s quiet sleep is o’er,  
 And in the scale of truth once more  
 Our faith is weighed.<sup>28</sup>

For Whittier, the enervating divide between rote profession and the haptic reality of truths ‘purchased dear’ was evidence of a misplaced self-regard that was effectively collusion.<sup>29</sup> Honoring the early Quaker’s willingness to embody and animate their principles, ‘In War Time’ suggests that the Society’s responsibilities are not just to an unseen Heaven, but also to a corporal and transient Earth.

Throughout the poem, Whittier points emphatically to the historic accountability and ongoing responsibility of the Religious Society of Friends to the unfolding war. Rejecting the detached quietism that would have Friends ‘remain quietly at their homes, and attend peaceably to their own ordinary and proper business’, the seventh through tenth stanzas of Whittier’s poem do away with what the poet understands to be a specious refuge; that is, the false comfort that

the intentional withdrawal from war signified the Friends' own blamelessness. Whittier writes:

The cry of innocent blood at last  
 Is calling down  
 An answer in the whirlwind blast,  
 The thunder and the shadow cast  
 From Heaven's dark frown.

The land is red with judgments. Who  
 Stands guiltless forth?  
 Have *we* been faithful as we knew,  
 To God and to our brother true,  
 To Heaven and Earth?

How faint, through din of merchandise  
 And count of gain,  
 Have seemed to us the captive's cries!  
 How far away the tears and sighs  
 Of souls in pain!

This day the fearful reckoning comes  
 To each and all;  
 We hear amidst our peaceful homes  
 The summons of the conscript drums,  
 The bugle's call.<sup>30</sup>

Like numerous articles across the three periodicals, the poem acknowledges the hardships of Friends who, faithful to their testimony, 'keep fealty to the laws / Through patient pain'.<sup>31</sup> 'In War Time', however, reaches beyond the communal pain of the Religious Society of Friends in an effort to draw nearer the 'faint' and 'far way' sufferings of the soldier and of the slave. Indicative of Whittier's broad revisionary project—and following the eleventh stanza, which takes up the Friends 'patient pain'—the twelfth through fourteenth stanzas urge Friends to suffer alongside and with the country as a whole:

The leveled gun, the battle brand,  
 We may not take;  
 But calmly loyal, we can stand  
 And suffer with our suffering land,  
 For conscience' sake.

Why ask for ease when all is pain?  
 Shall *we* alone  
 Be left to add our gain to gain,  
 When over Armageddon's plain  
 The trump is blown?

To suffer well is well to serve;  
 Safe in our Lord,  
 The rigid lines of law shall curve  
 To spare us: from our heads shall swerve  
 Its smiting sword.<sup>32</sup>

Throughout the poem Whittier exhorts Friends to recognize how they themselves are complicit in the ongoing war and to reflect on how their self-preserving priorities and tactics of withdrawal have deafened them to the pain and misery of others. 'Let me urge our young Friends humbly to seek for strength in retirement', an article in the *Friends' Intelligencer* advises, 'There is no more reason now, than at any other time, why we should imbrue our hands in the blood of others; all war proceeds from the same source'.<sup>33</sup> Believing that the ethical crisis produced by the Civil War was not an external force imposed on Friends, but one emanating from a shared history, 'In War Time' fully accepts the Religious Society of Friends' deep entanglement with the dark, clouded sky and the blood already on the ground.

Marshaling Friends into action, the sixteenth through the nineteenth stanzas express Whittier's commitments to a Peace Testimony that, while inherited, must be renewed through lived experience. In these stanzas, 'In War Time' legitimates a model of Quaker charity capacious enough to allow Friends conscientiously to position themselves within the Union war effort. Outlining an embodied Peace Testimony, Whittier revitalises ground broken by the early Friends by poetically replenishing 'the fields of duty' open to those in the present. Rooted in growth and sweeping in its expansionist implications, 'In War Time' advances a historical Quaker praxis attentive to, and tending toward, the ongoing cultivation of practiced truth.

Thanks for our privilege to bless  
 By word and deed,  
 The widow in her keen distress,  
 The childless and the fatherless,  
 The hearts that bleed!

For fields of duty opening wide,  
 Where all our powers  
 Are tasked the eager steps to guide  
 Of millions on a path untried:  
 THE SLAVE IS OURS.<sup>34</sup>

Ours by tradition dear and old  
 Which make the race  
 Our wards to cherish and uphold,  
 And cast their freedom in the mold  
 Of Christian grace.

And we may tread the sick-bed floors  
 Where strong men pine,  
 And, down the groaning corridors,  
 Pour freely from our liberal stores  
 The oil and the wine.<sup>35</sup>

Whittier's departure from the definitions of Christian duty dominant in the Hicksite, Wilburite and Gurney periodicals is emblematic of the Friends' shifting response to the second half of the war. The poem's catalog of embodied public

charity—offered in opposition to private, cloistered virtue—is an attempt to expand the modes of ethical relationality available to any Friend led to defy the driving force of civil war.

In one sense, the poem's primary contribution to the nineteenth-century Peace Testimony is, in fact, Whittier's willingness to treat the testimony as an inherited, though fluid, and ongoing practice. This desire to actuate Friends into substantive enterprise, Roland Woodwell's exhaustive biography suggests, was in keeping with an abiding position of Whittier's:

He told the story of the end of slavery within the Society of Friends in the [*National*] *Era* April 8, 15, and 22 [1847]... It concluded with the remark that Friends of the present day should ask themselves if they were maintaining the lofty standard of the old Quaker worthies. It seemed to Whittier that their increased zeal for verbal orthodoxy and distinctions of creed had led to a decline in practical, active testimony against evil customs, unrighteous laws, and popular sins.<sup>36</sup>

'In War Time' is a clarion call, encouraging Friends to step outside the borders of the Society's past and to 'suffer with our suffering land / For conscience sake' in the present.

The democratic and religious responsibilities framed in Whittier's poem—to the Union, to freed families and to others suffering from the consequences of war—renders more legible an emergent shift in American Quakerism, one that would ultimately bring Friends nearer to the Union and the suffocating violence of the Civil War. The coincident publishing of 'In War Time' (6<sup>th</sup> Mo. 27—7<sup>th</sup> Mo. 18, 1863) with the arrival of Cornelia Hancock at Gettysburg on 7<sup>th</sup> Mo. 6, 1863 is a curious example of how the poem indexes a particular moment in Quaker history. Hancock, whose letters offer an intimate record of her visits to wounded soldiers, would become one of the most well-known Quakers to serve as a nurse in the war.<sup>37</sup> The establishment of the Philadelphia-based Friends Association for the Aid and Elevation of the Freedmen by Hicksite Quakers in 1864 and the Friends' Freedmen's Association by the Orthodox in the same year, are just a few examples of the nearer relations Antebellum Friends cultivated in the second half of the Civil War.<sup>38</sup>

Exemplifying and participating in the observable transformation the Religious Society of Friends experienced during the years of the Civil War, the shared publication of this major poem intimates that Gurneyite, Hicksite and Wilburite alike weighed the value of Whittier's pronouncement of Quaker complicity in the war, as well as his assertion that even if Quakers still should not actually take up arms, they should more actively support the Union war effort, in whatever peaceable ways their conscience would allow. What is more, besides being a neat moment of symmetry between divided communities, attention to the repeated publication of 'In War Time' helps to calibrate ongoing work concerned with Whittier's poetics and the reception of his writing.

Michael Cohen, a literary historian whose work is concerned with ballad form and the publication of Whittier's antislavery poems in newspapers, draws on Whittier's poetry in an effort to better 'incorporate and understand the cultural

life of poems in the context of their production and consumption at different points in their history'.<sup>39</sup> Having argued in this paper that the legibility of Whittier's poem as an index and weighty articulation of a moment of flux in the Religious Society of Friends relies on the singularity of its nearly simultaneous publication in the three periodicals, it is obvious that I sympathise with Cohen's assessment that Whittier's body of work lends itself particularly well to this variety of literary, historical method. However, 'In War Time' also augments Cohen's efforts by suggesting that the reception of Whittier's poetry is at times contingent upon the context of its printing as well as the religious dimensions of its inception. For example, subsequent editions of 'In War Time', or 'Anniversary Poem', retain the heading under which it originally appeared in the Friends' periodicals: 'Read Before the Alumni of the Friends' Yearly Meeting School, at the Annual Meeting at Newport, R. I., of the 6<sup>th</sup> mo., 1863'. When Whittier called for the renewal of the early Friends' embodied peace principles in the nineteenth century, he spoke as a Quaker to other Quakers.

There is much more work to be done on the history of Friends' relief efforts during the Civil War, particularly around the ways in which Quaker 'Women's response to war helped transform Friends' adherence to and interpretation of the peace testimony and their disciplinary standards'.<sup>40</sup> Linda Selleck's study of Quaker women educators and Glenn Crothers' research into Friends' support of the Union in northern Virginia are vital additions to our growing understanding of this period of contestation and change. Keenly sensitive to the ethical impasse facing American Quakers, writ large, 'In War Time' is an unlikely patch of common ground for those wishing to understand the unsettled state of American Quakerism during the years of the Civil War.

#### NOTES

1. 1<sup>st</sup> Mo. 25 (1862) vol. 18/issue 46, pp. 724-25. This paper uses the dating notation of the periodicals it cites. In the nineteenth century the Religious Society of Friends used an alternative system of dating wherein numbers replace the standard Gregorian months: January = 1<sup>st</sup> Month, February = 2<sup>nd</sup> Mo. etc.

2. A vote of thanks was also extended to George H. Chace for his effective reading of the poem as Whittier could not present the address in person. *Proceedings of the Alumni Association of Friends' Yearly Meeting School: With the Oration by Moses A. Cartland and the Poem by John G. Whittier, Delivered Before the Association at Their Fifth Annual Meeting At Newport, 1863*, Providence: Knowles, Anthony & Co., 1863, Evening Session. P. 11 ([http://books.google.com/books?id=VPUsAAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=VPUsAAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false)).

3. Sarah Palmer, a Philadelphia Friend, wrote in a personal letter, 'Quakers are drilling, contrary to all peace principles of the Sect; indeed, from all appearances we may suppose their hopes are based on war. I'm opposed to war—to cutting down men like grass—but if ever war was holy, this one, in favor of the most oppressed, the most forbearing, most afflicted, down-trodden, insulted part of humanity, is a holy war.' See Bacon, M.H., *Abby Hopper Gibbons: Penal Reformer and Activist*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000, p. 86. An excerpt is quoted by Hamm, T.D., in Angell, S.W., and Dandelion, P. (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 71.

4. Jacquelyn Nelson discovered in her study of Indiana Quakers that at least twenty-five percent of eligible Quaker Hoosiers fought for the Union. Moreover, Nelson argues that because of the difficulties in ascertaining the faith of any person in nineteenth-century Indiana, this estimate is likely too low. See Nelson, J., *Indiana Quakers Confront the Civil War*, Indiana Historical Society, 1991. See also Hamm, T.D., *The Transformation of American Quakers*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988. For a discussion of Quaker involvement in the Confederacy, see Mangus, M.S., ‘“A Cruel and Malicious War”: The Society of Friends in Civil War Loudoun County, Virginia’, *Quaker History* 88/1 (Spring 1999), pp. 40–62.

5. *The Independent... Devoted to the Consideration of Politics, Social and Economic Tendencies, History, Literature, and the Arts*, June 18, 1863, 15/759, p. 1/*Liberator*, June 26, 1863, 33/26, p. 104.

6. While I am interested in the archives of the Friends’ periodical press for its dynamism, it is not my contention that the robust recapitulation found in the Friends’ periodicals of the nineteenth century constitutes a divergent or more holistic textual-manifestation of the historic Peace Testimony than something like Jonathan Dymond’s influential monograph *An Inquiry into the Accordancy of War with the Principles of Christianity* (which was first published in America in Philadelphia, 1834) or through the many Quaker pamphlets circulating before and during the Civil War, e.g., John Jackson’s 1846 ‘Reflections on Peace and War’.

7. This extends, in my view, to the book of poetry in which the retitled ‘Anniversary Poem’ appears, i.e. Whittier’s 1864 book of poems *In War Time and Other Poems*, Boston, MA, Ticknor & Fields, 1864.

8. Hamm, T.D., *The Quakers in America*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2003, p. 162.

9. For a summary of the several separations, see Hamm, *The Quakers in America*, especially Chapter 3, ‘Their Separate Ways’.

10. The Hicksite *Intelligencer*, by way of quick example, reprinted an extensive review of Whittier’s 1849 book, *Poems*—published by Benjamin B. Mussey & Co. of Boston—that first ran in the *National Era*. The review was split into two multipage-parts and ran in back-to-back issues (2<sup>nd</sup> Mo. 17, 1849; 5/47–48, pp. 374 and 379). The earliest reprinting of a Whittier poem I have been able to identify in the *Intelligencer* is the poem ‘Chalkley Hall’, which ran in volume 2, issue 9 of the press (5<sup>th</sup> Mo. 31, 1845, p. 68).

11. This diminutive overview of Whittier’s life is pooled from: Underwood, F.H., *John Greenleaf Whittier: A Biography*, Cambridge, MA: The Riverside Press, 1883; Wagenknecht, E., *John Greenleaf Whittier: A Portrait in Paradox*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967; Woodwell, R.H., *John Greenleaf Whittier: A Biography*, Haverhill, MA: DBL Commercial Printers, 1985; Hamm, *The Quakers in America*.

12. Eventually the paper included a tagline indicating that the publication was ‘Edited by An Association of Friends’. It is worth mentioning too that the first incarnation of the *Intelligencer* was actually published in New York City, 4<sup>th</sup> Mo. 2, 1838, and was edited by Isaac T. Hooper. However, the press folded for financial reasons. The Philadelphia-based periodical took the name in 1844, but had no personal or legal ties to the earlier attempt. The New York *Intelligencer* stated its purpose in relation to that of *The Friend*, ‘Our orthodox brethren have been for some time prosecuting a scheme, similar in some respects, but failing in one essential particular, to answer the desired end; and we make this statement, to show that we are not taking up a position on pre-occupied ground’. *Friends’ Intelligencer* (of NY). 4<sup>th</sup> Mo. 2, 1838, 1/1, p. 4.

13. *A Memoir of Enoch Lewis*, West Chester, PA: Press of F.S. Hickman, 1882, pp. 82–91. In an article, ‘The Expanding World of Ohio Wilburites in the Latter Part of the Nineteenth Century’, *Quaker History* 56/1 (1967), pp. 18–33 n. 9, historian William Taber Jr. underscores the Gurneyite bias of the *Friends’ Review*, writing that it ‘always gave a very different view of the Wilburite Ohio Yearly Meeting, when it mentioned it at all’.

14. At the time of Enoch Lewis’ venture, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, the majority of whose members were Wilburite in their leanings, was the largest and most influential Yearly

Meeting in America. See Wilson, L.L., 'Conservative Friends 1845–2010', in Angell and Dandelion (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies*, pp. 126–41.

15. *Friends' Intelligencer*, 'Address to the Meeting for Sufferings...Baltimore', 10<sup>th</sup> Mo. 19, 1861, 18/32, p. 499.

16. *Friends' Review*, 'Address', Joseph Snowdon, 2<sup>nd</sup> Mo. 22, 1862, 15/25, p. 387.

17. An article in the *Friends' Review* from 9<sup>th</sup> Mo. 1862 provides a typical example: 'When called to any infringement of their scruples on this point, their plea was, that as Christians they could not fight. This was the ground of the earliest apostles of Quakerism, established by reference to the New Testament, and has been maintained unimpaired by their accredited successors down to the present day.' *Friends' Review*, 'Friends and the War', W.N., 9<sup>th</sup> Mo. 6, 1862, 16/1, p. 6.

18. *The Friend*, 'Suffering for the Testimony against War', 9<sup>th</sup> Mo. 6, 1862, 36/1, p. 5. See also, *The Friend*, 'Testimony against War', 5<sup>th</sup> Mo. 4, 1861, 34/35, p. 278.

19. *Friends' Review*, 'Why May Not A Christian Fight?', 10<sup>th</sup> Mo. 25, 1862, 16/8, p. 115. Emphasis in original.

20. Hamm, *Transformation*, especially Chapters 2–3. By way of quick example, one possible reason for this was financial, as Wilburite and Gurneyite communities were more economically and socially engaged with non-Quaker businesses (i.e. wealthier) than were the Hicksite. Whittier is likely referring to this in his critique in the ninth stanza, 'How faint, through din of merchandise / And count of gain, / Have seemed to us the captive's cries! / How far away the tears and sighs / Of souls in pain!'

21. 'The events now transpiring in the United States', the column's preface explained shortly after the firing on Fort Sumter, 'are of so much greater moment than in any other quarter, that we shall devote the whole of the space appropriated to the summary to domestic occurrences. These alas, have been of a most melancholy character, presaging the immediate commencement of civil war.' *The Friend*, 'Summary of Events', 4<sup>th</sup> Mo. 20, 1861, 34/33, p. 264.

22. *The Friend*, 'Summary of Events', 6<sup>th</sup> Mo. 29, 1861, 34/43, p. 344. 7<sup>th</sup> Mo. 20, 1861, 34/46, p. 368. 7<sup>th</sup> Mo. 27, 1861, 34/47, p. 376.

23. *Friends' Review*, 'Summary of News', 4<sup>th</sup> Mo. 20, 1861, 14/33, p. 527. See too the following issue, 34, for the paper's coverage of Lincoln and Jefferson Davis' proclamations for volunteer militias. A didactic article by a Richard Dykes Alexander, an English Quaker, entitled 'War Inconsistent with Christianity', appeared in the *Friends' Review* a week before the Confederate firing on Fort Sumter, further suggesting the solicitous interest of Orthodox Friends in the imminent clash of North and South. 4<sup>th</sup> Mo. 6, 1861, 14/31, p. 486.

24. *Friends' Intelligencer*, 4<sup>th</sup> Mo. 27, 1861, 18/7, p. 104.

25. Rather than providing their own coverage and insight on the war, the *Friends' Intelligencer* published sweeping editorials refuting any 'Plea of Self-Defence' or 'Plea of Necessity' as justification for war in general. *Friends' Intelligencer*, 5<sup>th</sup> Mo. 18, 1861, 18/10, p. 148. 5<sup>th</sup> Mo. 25, 1861, 18/11, p. 164.

26. *Friends' Intelligencer*, 'For the Friends' Intelligencer', 5<sup>th</sup> Mo. 18, 1861, 18/10, p. 147.

27. *The Friend* and the *Friends' Review* to the unfolding of the war suggest the early understanding on the part of many Friends that the Society would not be able to wait out the war, that it would need to come to understand itself in relation to the mounting conflict. That being said, the positions expressed in the Orthodox presses, like the Hicksite, are still limited in so far as they do not necessitate taking any direct responsibility for the war or its underlying causes.

28. Whittier, 'In War Time', stanzas 3–6. *The Friend*, 7<sup>th</sup> Mo. 11, 1863, 36/45, p. 356.

29. 'I am not unmindful', the poet would later write, 'of the wide difference between the appreciation of a pure and true life and the living of it, and am willing to own that in delineating a character of such moral and spiritual symmetry I have felt something like rebuke from my own words'. Introduction to John Woolman's *Journal*, vols. VII, *The Works of Whittier*, Standard Library Edition. Boston, MA: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., The Riverside Press, 1892, p. 359.

30. Whittier, 'In War Time', stanzas 7-10. The legal complexity and ethical nuance of conscription, of/for Friends in the North and South, cannot be adequately attended to here, but it is worth mentioning that conscription was a major topic in each of the presses, e.g., *Friends' Review*, 'The Southern Conscription of Friends in the South', 9<sup>th</sup> Mo. 20, 1862, 16/3, p. 42. *The Friend*, 'The Drafted Friends From North Carolina', 11<sup>th</sup> Mo. 14, 1863, 37/11, p. 86. *Friends' Intelligencer*, 'Our Plain Duty', by A.H.L., 12<sup>th</sup> Mo. 5. 1863, 20/39, p. 614.

31. Whittier, 'In War Time', stanza 11.

32. Whittier, 'In War Time', stanza 12-14.

33. *Friends' Intelligencer*, 'For the Friends' Intelligencer', 5<sup>th</sup> Mo. 18, 1861, 18/10, p. 147.

34. Whittier's rather emphatic possessive-declaration here may be misleading to readers unfamiliar with his consuming efforts for the causes of abolition and black citizenship. Whittier, to me, is calling on Friends to engage in work to relieve the sufferings of the freedpeople—'the slave is ours'. Such work was well underway by 1863. However, the line cuts both ways: where Whittier perhaps testifies to the Society's long-standing opposition to slavery, which by about 1784 had eliminated slave-ownership from their community, the backbeat of the line insists that Friends accept responsibility for the long-term sin of slavery in which they were still complicit. In this way, the poem asks its readers to share responsibility for the generation of the war.

35. Whittier, 'In War Time', stanzas 16-19.

36. Woodwell, *John Greenleaf Whittier: a biography*, p. 197. Of the poem itself, Woodwell writes that it, 'said substantially what had been said two years earlier in the circular letter to Members of the Society of Friends but added that the free slaves were, by tradition, the wards of the Quakers' (p. 319).

37. Hancock, C., *Letters of a Civil War Nurse*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998.

38. The *Intelligencer* had been reporting on the Women's Association of Philadelphia for the Relief of the Freedmen, a largely but not exclusively Quaker organization, all through 1863. I am indebted to an exhibit digitized by Bryn Mawr College for information about these organizations (<http://trilogy.brynmawr.edu/speccoll/quakersandslavery>), as well as the Women's Aid Association Minutes, Book I, 1862-3, MSS—(quoted in Heckman, O.S., 'Pennsylvania Quakers in Southern Reconstruction', *Pennsylvania History* 13/4, p. 251).

39. Cohen, M., 'Whittier, Ballad Reading, and the Culture of Nineteenth-Century Poetry', *Arizona Quarterly* 64/3, p. 24.

40. Crothers, G., *Quakers Living in the Lion's Mouth: The Society of Friends in Northern Virginia 1730-1865*, Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012, p. 256. Crothers writes that, 'In the fall 1862 aftermath of Antietam, Quaker women in Loudoun and Frederick Counties fed—sometimes under protest—Confederate and then Union troops' (p. 239). I would add to this evidence the collected letters of Elizabeth L. Comstock, which too show that Quaker women were bringing comfort to wounded soldiers by at least 1862. Also, more than a year before the poem's initial delivery the Women's Aid Association of Friends was formed by the women of the Orthodox Yearly Meeting in Philadelphia with the aim of getting clothing and blankets to Southern freedmen.

#### AUTHOR DETAILS

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