

The Confrontation Between Quakers and Clergy 1652–1656: Theology and Practice

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Abstract

The conflict between the clergy and the earliest Quakers can be better understood in the context of the ‘mainstream’ Puritan tradition. Analysis of the pamphlets interchanged is used to investigate what the participants in the confrontation were hoping to achieve, what background they were drawing on and what theological issues arose. Analysis of the pamphlets interchanged shows that the Quakers gave priority to the abolition of the paid professional ministry, while the clergy argued that the Quaker movement should be suppressed. The Quakers claimed to be guided by the inward light of Christ, but they supported their arguments with biblical references. Neither group were willing to admit to a source for their methods of biblical interpretation, but the clergy were clearly drawing on the patristic tradition, to which Jean Calvin and William Perkins were indebted; the Quakers may have learned from earlier radical groups. Each group used theological arguments to support very different codes of conduct. The clergy claimed to be entitled to the support of the magistracy in suppressing Quakers, but in the confused circumstances of the Interregnum the extent to which such support was forthcoming varied from place to place. This article focuses on different approaches to practice arising from these theological differences.

Keywords

Oaths, Tithes, Women, Magistracy, Papacy, Language, Authority, Ministry

Introduction

This research focuses on the clash between the earliest Quakers and a group I call the ‘mainstream’ Puritan clergy. The latter were dedicated to the concept of

an English Church that was thoroughly Reformed¹ and working closely with the civil authorities. They aimed at the destruction of Quakerism, a new movement that denied the need for professional clergy. The Quakers' central doctrine was the Light of Christ in every individual, and the need to give absolute priority to attention to it. They saw the teachings of the 'mainstream' Puritan clergy as such an obstacle to this that they made the removal of these clergy a principal objective of their teachings and writings.

I use the publications produced on both sides in this disagreement, along with other sources, both primary and secondary, to reconstruct confrontational events, to clarify the arguments each side put forward in defence of their positions and to show how differences in theology gave rise to and were used to justify differences in behaviour. I discuss the objectives of each side and argue that each intended the destruction of the other as an organised body. The focus is on events occurring in the years 1652 to 1656, and publications associated with these events.

By 1652 the 'mainstream' Puritan clergy were insecure and vulnerable, and Quakerism seemed to them a fulfilment of their worst fears. The two groups engaged in 'pamphlet wars'.² The clergy complained that the Quakers were too uneducated for them to engage with, but in practice the Quakers had advantages such as experience of open-air preaching. Consequently, the two sides were on fairly equal terms in the pamphlet wars, but these took place in the context of a systematic attempt to destroy Quakerism by legal penalties including mass imprisonment. The clergy felt entitled to the support of the civil authorities, but the extent to which they were able to call upon such support varied between localities. The Quakers behaved in ways which they knew would lead to imprisonment, but took advantage of the confused legal and political situation to avoid it where possible.

The close analysis of these exchanges and events brings into sharp focus the character of the 'Quaker explosion'³ and the initial response to it, which is often

1 When written with a capital, this word is used in the sense: '*Christian Church*. Freq. with capital initial. Accepting, espousing, or characterized by the principles of the Reformation. As applied to a church or churches, originally used of any Protestant denomination but now more commonly of non-Lutheran churches and esp. (freq. with capital initial) Presbyterian and Congregationalist ones'; 'reformed, adj.1 and n.', *OED Online*, June 2015.

2 See Rosemary Moore, *The Light in their Consciences: the early Quakers in Britain 1646–1666*, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000, p. 89. I have followed Rosemary Moore and other authors (e.g. Michael P. Winship, 'Weld, Thomas (bap. 1595, d. 1661), Independent minister and religious controversialist', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/28986> [accessed October 2019]) in using 'pamphlet war' to refer a discrete exchange of pamphlets, although in the case of the Quakers and the clergy it might seem more logical to refer to these as battles in the course of a longer war. I also follow Rosemary Moore in using 'pamphlet' in preference to 'tract', as the latter might be taken to have derogatory implications. The appendix lists the short titles of these pamphlets.

3 Moore, *Light*, p. 22.

blurred when longer timespans are treated as homogeneous. The Quaker writings make clear that the abolition of a paid professional ministry was a priority, to be achieved before right ways of worshipping could be established.

Both the clergy and the Quakers had a coherent theology, so that their arguments are interdependent. The clergy argued that the scriptures constituted a unique and final revelation. From this it followed that salvation could come only through listening to those who had been properly trained in the exposition of scripture. This correct interpretation would lead people to seek forgiveness and sanctification through repentance, but the sanctification would never be completed in this life, so repentance and dependence on the clergy were a permanent condition, ending only at death.

The Quakers claimed that by dedicated and wholehearted searching it was possible to make contact with God and experience leadings identical to those the biblical authors recorded. These led to a state of perfection in which human beings could speak with the same authority as the biblical authors. Only the perfect could understand the Bible correctly, so that those who preached without being perfect were necessarily leading their hearers astray.

No compromise between these two positions was possible, but there are logical gaps in both. The clergy in the Reformation tradition had in theory jettisoned the appeal to Church tradition. This left them unable to explain why the Bible should be accepted. More seriously (since in practice almost everyone did accept the Bible), much of their theology depended on authorities such as the Church Fathers to uphold interpretations that were far from self-evident. The Quakers based their teaching on the claim to direct inspiration, which validated their interpretation of the Bible. They relied on the latter to substantiate their attack on the clergy, but it is not clear how the process of ‘trying the priests’⁴ was supposed to work. Possibly the Quakers were relying on their skill in biblical quotation and the fact that it is very difficult to extrapolate Calvinism from the Bible without exterior prompts, or alternatively they may have believed that people who listened to them and took their advice were already on their way to perfection and so were enabled to interpret scripture correctly.

The alternative theological positions were used to justify the different behaviour that the two sides condoned, encouraged, practised or condemned. Contemporaries distinguish between beliefs and practices in their criticisms of Quakers. Francis Higginson discusses first ‘erroneous opinions’ and then ‘wicked practices’;⁵ Thomas Weld follows him closely, first listing ‘doctrines’ under 17 ‘positions’ and then three ‘principles’, which refer to behaviour.⁶ Quakers do not make the same distinction

4 Advocated in, for example, Thomas Aldam, *False prophets and false teachers described*, London, 1652.

5 Francis Higginson, *A brief relation of the irreligion of the northern Quakers*, London, 1653.

6 Thomas Weld, *The perfect Pharise, under monkish holines, opposing the fundamental principles of the doctrine of the Gospel, and scripture practices of gospel-worship manifesting himself in the generation of men called Quakers*, London, 1654, pp. 3–35.

explicitly, but their theological points are frequently made in the context of the way the clergy behaved and the behaviour they encouraged. In this article I discuss how different attitudes and practices were treated in the pamphlets, under the main headings of authority, magistracy and property; the ministry, mediate and immediate calling; language and social behaviour; tithes and the maintenance of preachers; oaths; quaking; attitudes to the papacy; and women.

Authority, Magistracy and Property

The clergy saw the conflict with the Quakers as an episode in a much longer struggle. Obedience to the 'godly magistrate' and cooperation between magistrates and ministers were central to the agenda of the 'mainstream' puritans. Their ideal had not changed since 'heavenly order' in Norwich was described as 'the magistrates and the ministers imbracing and seconding one another, and the common people affording due reverence and obedience to both'.⁷ There are two explicit elements in this ideal: a collaboration of equals (gentry and clergy) and 'common people' accepting their subservient position. This ideal weathered the violent changes of the 1640s and early 1650s; a secure position for the clergy under the protection of a respectful local magistracy could be pursued under king, Protector or more confused constitutional arrangements, however difficult the achievement of that ideal might be. These expectations are spelled out in the Westminster Confession and inform the clergy writings considered here.

IV. It is the duty of people to pray for magistrates, to honour their persons, to pay them tribute and other dues, to obey their lawful commands, and to be subject to their authority for conscience' sake. Infidelity, or difference in religion, doth not make void the magistrate's just and legal authority, nor free the people from their due obedience to him.⁸

The perceived threat to such 'heavenly order' had not changed in essence. The Quakers are consistently represented both as unwitting emissaries of the Roman Antichrist, repeating heresies that had troubled both the early Reformation and the Christian Church in its earliest days, and as the enemies of civil order and property rights. Thus, it was possible to represent the Quakers as individually too contemptible to notice and yet corporately a terrible threat that must be suppressed by the strongest legal weapons available.

The Quaker writings suggest that the clergy are wrong in claiming that Quaker policy includes violent destruction of the professional ministry and the magistracy and the abolition of property.

7 Cited in Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of the Protestants: The Church in English Society 1559–1625*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982, p. 143.

8 Anon., *The confession of faith and catechisms, agreed upon by the assembly of divines at Westminster together with their humble advice concerning church government and ordination of ministers*, London, 1649.

Benjamin Nicholson includes judges and ‘priests’ alike in a blistering attack. ‘You judges that judge for Reward are one, and the Priests that preach for hire are another.’⁹ This implies a moral equivalence between taking bribes and accepting payment for preaching, both offences that will incur speedy punishment from God.

Quakers had a view of law and of magistracy that was founded in their theology. The letter appended to *The Standard of the Lord* by Christopher Atkinson is addressed to ‘the Major and Justices of Kendal, and to all Magistrates and Justices in England, which profess your selves Christians’. It concludes with an interesting conflation of political and religious concepts of liberty. The 17 signatories complain of being kept in prison: ‘who are freeborn of England, and made free by the Son’.¹⁰ Most of these freeborn signatories are women.

James Parnell finds it inappropriate that the ministers need support from the magistracy:

The judge ... said the Lord Protector had charged him to see to punish such persons as should contemn either Magistracy or ministry: But what a ministry is this, that stands in need of an outward magistracy, to uphold it against a people that comes with nothing but spiritual weapons.¹¹

Thus the ‘sweet amity’ between clergy and magistracy commended by the clergy is itself, in Quaker eyes, evidence of the wrongness of both.

There are several examples of people who became Quakers but continued to hold positions within the magistracy, such as Anthony Pearson and Gervase Benson,¹² at least until they were manoeuvred out of office. The close co-operation between Quakers and Judge Fell illustrates what Quakers might see as right behaviour in a magistrate. The Quakers did not hold that it was wrong to be a magistrate, although their expectations of how a magistrate should behave were scarcely compatible with the role as it was generally understood.

According to Higginson, the Quakers were against property.¹³ There is nothing in the pamphlets considered here to suggest that Quakers were opposed to property as such. However, in a tract not directed to the clergy Parnell expresses strong views on wealth and poverty:

9 Benjamin Nicholson, *A blast from the Lord, or A vvarning to England, by way of exhortation to take heed, and not run upon their own destruction; which will be speedily, without true repentance*, London, 1653.

10 Christopher Atkinson, *The Standard of the Lord Lifted up against the Kingdom of Satan*, London: Giles Calvert, 1653, p. 31.

11 James Parnell, *The Fruits of a Fast*, London: Giles Calvert, 1655, p. 9 (misnumbered 6), also quoted in *The Lambs defence against lyes*, London: Giles Calvert, 1656.

12 See C. B. Phillips, ‘Colonel Gervase Benson, Captain John Archer and the Corporation of Kendal, c.1644 – c. 1655’, in Gentles, I., Morrill, J. and Worden, B. (eds), *Soldiers, Writers and Statesmen of the English Revolution*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 183–201.

13 Higginson, *A brief relation of the irreligion*.

Woe unto you that are called Lords, Ladies, Knights, gentlemen and gentlewomen, in respect to your persons, who are exalted in the earth, who are proud, and high, and lofty, who are called of men master, and sir, and mistris and madam, in respect of your persons, because of your gay cloathing, because of your much earth, which by fraud, deceit and oppression you have gotten together; you are exalted above your fellow-creatures, and grind the faces of the poore, and they are as slaves under you, and must labour and toyle under you, and you must live at ease

To the light in your consciences I speak, which comes from Jesus Christ who is the light of the world ... which if you love it and to it harken ... will be your teacher, and wil let you see the creation and the goodness thereof, and will teach you how to use it, and order it in its place, out of the lust, to the glory of God, and how to do good with it, so that there be no want in creation or cry of oppression, but the hungry will be fed, and the naked clothed, and the oppressed set free, and here is the blessing restored to the Creation.¹⁴

The implication is clear that gross inequality of wealth is wrong, and all claims to superiority based on it are false. Parnell does not distinguish between wealth that is acquired by 'fraud, deceit and oppression' in the present generation and inherited wealth. Nor does he spell out any detailed programme of reform. That is left to the Light in the consciences of the rich. The evil he addresses is the moral evil of greed and self-indulgence, which he appears to take more seriously than the sufferings of the poor. Similarly, Richard Hubberthorn stresses that redistribution of wealth is a necessary consequence of responding to the Light of truth:

... whosoever doe receive the truth in then love of it, which we freely declare from the Lord, and hath this worlds good, he cannot see the poor in need, nor want, nor beg their bread, but the truth where it is received opens the bowels of compassion, and takes off oppression and the heavy burden the poor groans under,¹⁵

Rosemary Moore notes that, despite such rhetoric, in practice wealthy people could become Quaker and remain wealthy.¹⁶ Margaret Fell was uncharacteristically tactful when urging rich fellow-Quakers to be generous in contributing to the Kendal Fund.¹⁷

In summary, the Reformed commitment to support for the magistracy must have served a useful purpose in assuring the authorities that the clergy were not a threat. The Quaker view at this period seems to have been that redistribution of wealth could and must wait until all the wealthy had responded to the Light. Forcible redistribution would not have contributed to the reign of Christ which they were announcing. Similarly, magistrates would come to recognise the leadings of the Light and stop persecuting Quakers. The removal of the paid

14 James Parnell, *The trumpet of the Lord blowne. Or, a blast against pride and oppression, and the defiled liberty, which stands in the flesh*, London, 1655.

15 Richard Hubberthorn, *The immediate call to the ministry of the Gospel, witnessed by the spirit*, London, 1653.

16 Moore, *Light*, pp. 64–65.

17 Moore, *Light*, p. 24.

clergy took priority over both, but it was to be accomplished by the refusal of tithes and other challenges to their authority.

The Ministry, Mediate and Immediate Calling

The conflict between the clergy and the Quakers was at its most intense about what constituted a valid right to preach. Both claimed it. The clergy derived it from their training and ordination, the Quakers from immediate (unmediated) calling.¹⁸

The importance of the professional ministry in the ‘mainstream’ Puritan scheme of things is not only central but would be difficult to overstate. According to the Worcestershire Petition, admitted to be drafted by Richard Baxter, but claiming to speak for ‘many thousands, gentlemen, free-holders, and others’:

We know that it was by the ministers of the gospel that the Lord Jesus did set up his Kingdom on earth ... we know he granted their commission on the reception of his plenipotencie, and upon his ascending he gave them for the perfecting of the saints ... It is the ministry by which Christ hath continued his church to this day ...¹⁹

To Baxter, a Church without a defined, professional ministry is a contradiction in terms:

The Church never did nor can subsist without its officers, who are an essential part of it ... And therefore if the ministry be extinct the gates of hell have prevailed against the church. And then Christ is overcome, or hath broken his promise. And then he is not Christ, so that if Christ be Christ, the Church and ministry continue These most cruel men would have all the preachers give over their work and leave the world to perish in infidelity.²⁰

He treats it as self-evident that the second would be the result of the first:

Either the Pastors of the Reformed Churches are the true ministers of Christ or else ... there is no church, no ordinances, no Christianity, no Christ. For he can be no king without subjects and laws, no master without a school and scholars, no physician without patients, no husband without his spouse, no head without a body, no intercessor without a church to intercede for.²¹

The logical problem appears obvious; none of these images actually requires intermediaries. Baxter makes no mention of this. It is as if the depth of his own

18 Clergy and Quakers both use ‘immediate’ in the sense of ‘unmediated’.

19 Richard Baxter, *The humble petition of many thousands, gentlemen, free-holders, and others, of the county of Worcester*, London, 1652 (the EEBO catalogue notes: ‘attributed to Richard Baxter’). Baxter calls it the ‘Worcestershire Petition’ in *The Worcester Petition to Parliament defended*, 1653.

20 Richard Baxter, *A second sheet for the ministry justifying our calling against Quakers, seekers, and papists and all that deny us to be the ministers of Christ*, London, 1657.

21 Baxter, *A second sheet*.

conviction forces him to assume what he claims to prove. Baxter has no problem defining true ministers in theory:

All those are true ministers, that are in an office of God's institution, and are competently fitted for that office by Knowledge, Godliness and utterance, and have all and more than all that God hath made necessary to a right entrance or admission, even true ordination, consent of the flock, and the Magistrate's allowance.²²

This does not include any sort of immediate call. However, the circumstances of the Interregnum made 'true ordination' difficult to define. It could be claimed on the basis of the discredited episcopal system, the Presbyterian form available in London, or various local procedures. Baxter admits the difficulty, and falls back on a very minimal definition of when a minister should be accepted: 'If a minister be in quiet possession of a place, and fit for it, the people are bound to obey him as a minister without knowing that he was justly ordained or called.'²³

It appears that for Baxter it is even more important that there should be a minister in every church than that he should be properly qualified. This view of the ministry parallels the position of the Westminster Confession on the rights of the magistracy.²⁴

Reformed churches differed widely on whether to give an important role to lay Elders. In the 1650s there was wide diversity of practice, and no standard form of organisation was enforced. The Worcestershire Petition may be taken as expressing Baxter's ideal of godly gentry, supportive of the ministry and explicit about their own dependence on them.²⁵ It gives no evidence of support for an exalted view of the role of Elders. Laymen were excluded from the Worcestershire Association.²⁶

A particularly striking illustration of the clergy's view of the role of laymen occurs in Immanuel Bourne's account of the disputation at Chesterfield. He refers twice to John Bunting, once as 'an honest yeoman (of more true spirituall understanding than many Quakers)', and the second time as 'an understanding Christian'. On the first occasion, Nayler had accused Bunting, who was writing in shorthand, of writing lies, and Bunting replied, 'Nayler, Thou art the father of them, for I write what thou speakest.' On the second, Bunting objects to Nayler's claim that everyone has a Light within sufficient to direct them to salvation by saying 'Dead men have no light in them, but every naturall man is a dead man, dead in trespasses and sins, as witnesses the apostle, *Eph. 2* What light is there then

22 Baxter, *A second sheet*.

23 Baxter, *A second sheet*.

24 Anon., *The confession of faith and catechisms, agreed upon by the assembly of divines at Westminster together with their humble advice concerning church government and ordination of ministers*, London, 1649.

25 Baxter, *The humble petition*.

26 Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *Richard Baxter*, London: Nelson, 1965, p. 68.

in a naturall dead man, sufficient to direct him to attain salvation?’ Despite his references to Bunting’s ‘understanding’, Bourne gives no indication of recognising what good points these are. They demonstrate not only knowledge of scripture but an ability to apply that knowledge in an original way arising from the words used by his opponent.²⁷

There are no comparable examples of quick thinking among Bourne’s many quotations from the clergy present. It may be asked whether a layman equipped with ‘native wit’²⁸ and skills appropriate to an informal setting was an entirely welcome contributor to the disputation.

In this context, the Quaker claim to ‘speak from the mouth of the Lord’ was an offence. One of Higginson’s ‘Erroneous Opinions’ begins ‘They hold that Fox and all the rest of their Speakers are immediately called’, and continues with much anecdotal evidence that Fox believed this of himself.²⁹ Even more offensive than their claim to be called ‘immediately’ (without intermediary)³⁰ was their insistence that any ‘mediate’ call was invalid: ‘They affirm that there is no such thing contained in the Holy Scripture as a Mediate call to the Ministry by man’; ‘They hold the office of teaching to be utterly useless in the Church of God’; ‘They call the worship of God used in our publick Assemblies a beastly worm-eaten form ...’.³¹

It has been suggested that the early Quakers, like the clergy, had a concept of ministry and preaching as the function of a distinct group. Moore³² and Kate Peters³³ both note that the bulk of early Quaker writings were produced by a small number of itinerant preachers. Peters further argues:

The notion of a Quaker ministry, however, runs contrary to many basic conceptions surrounding the early Quaker movement Yet despite this, there was within the early Quaker movement a body of men and women acting as an effective leadership ... these ‘ministers’ were itinerant preachers³⁴

Peters states elsewhere: ‘the relationship between author [of Quaker tracts] and audience was essentially that of preacher and congregation’,³⁵ citing principally

27 Immanuel Bourne, *A defence of the Scriptures, and the Holy Spirit speaking in them, as the chiefe iudge of controversies of faith*, London, 1656.

28 Ann Hughes, ‘Public Disputations, Pamphlets and Polemic’, *History Today* 41/2 (1991).

29 Higginson, *A brief relation of the irreligion*.

30 See Hubberthorn, *Immediate call*.

31 Higginson, *A brief relation of the irreligion*.

32 Moore, *Light*, 26.

33 Kate Peters, *Print Culture and the Early Quakers*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. 21–22.

34 Peters, *Print Culture*, p. 22.

35 Kate Peters, ‘Patterns of Quaker Authorship, 1652–56’, in Corns, T. N. and Loewenstein, D. (eds), *The Emergence of Quaker Writing: Dissenting Literature in Seventeenth Century England*, London: Frank Cass, 1995, p. 14.

Richard Farnworth's *Warning to Underbarrow*³⁶ and *Several Letters*.³⁷ The latter is a collection of letters written by four different authors – William Dewsbury, George Fox, James Nayler and John Whitehead – to specific Quaker groups, published together, along with an additional 'precept' by Fox, as one pamphlet. Three of the four letters indicate that bad news has been received about the spiritual state of the meeting addressed, and the same is hinted in 'Precept of George Fox'. This is not surprising, in view of the rigour of the expectations. It is made clear that a period of intense spiritual suffering is to be expected before the ability to speak and act as God wills is attained. 'Suffer with the imprisoned seed in you';³⁸ 'This is the cause of you suffering, not discerning what that Antichrist is ... the plagues must pass upon that nature, therefore sink down into the suffering and death';³⁹ 'Give up what you have and are into his will'.⁴⁰

The principal charge is that some of the Quakers addressed have shortened this necessary stage, and in particular that they have anticipated the time when it is right for them to speak. 'Thou that art flown up into the ayr to speak of that thou livest not.'⁴¹ 'He [the antichrist] is ready ... to lead out the vain mind into the liberty and boasting of high things, in words without power ...'.⁴² 'Beware of speakings in the presence of the Lord, except your words be eternal life, the eternal Word of God ...'.⁴³

In every case the advice, expressed in many different ways, is the same. 'I charge you slight not the examination of your hearts, every one of you in particular ... and to the alleyeing eye, that light in your consciences I direct you.'⁴⁴ 'Here is your peace and blessedness, that you silence all flesh.'⁴⁵ 'Know one another in spirit and not in word, and meet often together, and wait often for his teaching alone in a cross to your own wills.'⁴⁶ 'Therefore wait every one within yourselves to hear that joyful sound [the word of the Lord] and everyone of you dwell in obedience to what is made manifest, and so more shall be communicated.'⁴⁷ 'The wisdom of the most High is spreading and making itself manifest into your hearts.'⁴⁸ 'Stand

36 Edward Burrough, *A vvarning from the Lord to the inhabitants of Underbarrovv*, London, 1654.

37 William Dewsbury, *Several letters written to the saints of the Most High, to build them up in the truth, as it is in Jesus*, London, 1654. In my references I use the initials of the four authors (Dewsbury, Nayler, Whitehead and Fox).

38 Dewsbury, *Several letters* (D).

39 Dewsbury, *Several letters* (N).

40 Dewsbury, *Several letters* (W).

41 Dewsbury, *Several letters* (D).

42 Dewsbury, *Several letters* (N).

43 Dewsbury, *Several letters* (F).

44 Dewsbury, *Several letters* (D).

45 Dewsbury, *Several letters* (N).

46 Dewsbury, *Several letters* (N).

47 Dewsbury, *Several letters* (W).

48 Dewsbury, *Several letters* (F).

fast in the freedom ... and to you who cannot witness this, wait and mind the pure, and then the burden will be ease ... your strength is to stand still ... that you may know how to wait.⁴⁹ There is no suggestion that what these meetings need is another visit from an itinerant preacher. They are reminded of what they have already been told, to attend to the Light in their consciences, and the effort of the writers is focused on making them aware that waiting in the Light is a long and difficult process, but not on any account to be abandoned or skimped. The implication is that this waiting will lead to the ability to offer true spoken ministry, and all the caution is justified by the fact that such ministry is 'the eternal Word of God'.⁵⁰

Hubberthorn describes the progression from preaching 'the letter', through a painful period of silence and waiting, to preaching at the immediate command of God:

[I] knew the letter, and was a minister of the letter before I knew the power of the Word of God; but when the living powerful word of God was made manifest in me by his mighty power, then was I made silent from speaking anything of God from that knowledge and wisdom, which was natural ... which word was in my heart as a fire which did burn up corruption and uncleanness, ... the Lord called me forth by his mighty power, to be witness to him in the world, and to declare and preach forth the Son of God according to my measure, as it was made manifest within me.⁵¹

Thus, as early as 1653 (the letters in *Several letters* are all individually dated to 1653) newly established Quaker Meetings were being told that they did not need a preacher; they needed to wait quietly, both as individuals and in gathered meetings, however difficult that was, until they were able to speak authentically with the voice of the God within them. They were also given dire warnings against failing to wait silently until the process was complete.

Thus, both groups had a strict view of who was entitled to preach and under what circumstances. The clergy attributed their right to arduous scholarly training and ordination. The Quakers believed that experience of attending to the Light within led to the ability to recognise the prompting that enabled them to speak with authority.

Language and Social Behaviour

The lifestyle of each group was totally repugnant to the other, but it is not easy to infer the specific causes of offence from the generalised accusations interchanged.

The peculiar social behaviour of the Quakers caused most offence when it violated expectations of deference. As Baxter puts it, 'They break the Fifth

49 Dewsbury, *Several letters* (F).

50 Dewsbury, *Several letters* (F).

51 Hubberthorn, *Immediate call*, pp. 1–2.

commandment⁵² by open dishonouring of magistrates and ministers.’ John Stalham, writing in Edinburgh, claims to have learned about Quaker views on ‘Civill Honour’ ‘in discourse’, and reports them moderately.⁵³ He does not appear to have experienced ‘railing’ at first hand. But he too concludes ‘But their opinions, and practices hereanent, are contrary to the fifth commandment, and the practices of the saints in all ages hitherto.’⁵⁴ Fox, writing retrospectively, notes that the reaction of ‘priests’ [clergy]: ‘But oh, the rage that then was in the priests, magistrates, professors⁵⁵ and people of all sorts, but especially in the priests and professors!’⁵⁶

It is difficult to generalise about how magistrates reacted. In legal settings it is not always clear for which of their numerous offences Quakers were being punished. Naylor alleges that he was threatened with imprisonment for refusing to put off his hat, and for thou’ing the magistrate,⁵⁷ but Higginson denies that he was actually imprisoned for that.⁵⁸ The mayor of Cambridge took enforcement into his own hands: ‘Two men followed me and commanded me to go with them two before the Mayor, who when I came before him, came unto me and violently took off my hat and threw it upon the ground and asked me whence I came ...’⁵⁹

Higginson implies that Quaker ‘railings’ against magistrates were moderated by fear: ‘yeah, sometimes they spare not the Dignity of Magistracy, but speak evill of them as far as they dare.’⁶⁰ Higginson does not distinguish between ‘speaking evil’ and withholding of customary deference. At least one of their adversaries, Stalham, concedes that daring was not usually lacking:

They professe quaking and trembling, after the manner of *Moses, Habukkuk, Job, Daniel, Paul* and others, and yet are some of the most bold daring creatures that ever I heard speak, or observed to put pen to paper, and will stand (in an evill cause) before Magistrates without quaking or fear.⁶¹

The only clear example I have found of a ‘magistrate’ who accepted Quaker conventions is Ralph Clark, mayor of Chesterfield, a civic dignitary who allowed

52 ‘Honour thy father and thy mother’ Ex 20:12; Deut 5:16.

53 John Stalham, *Contradictions of the Quakers (so called) to the Scriptures of God and to their own scriblings and vain janglings*, Edinburgh, 1655.

54 Stalham, *Contradictions*.

55 Professor: A person who makes open profession of religion, esp. a professing Christian. ‘professor, n.’, *OED* online, <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/152066> [accessed October 2019].

56 George Fox, *The Journal of George Fox*, ed. John L. Nickalls; Philadelphia, PA: Religious Society of Friends, 1997, p. 36.

57 George Fox, *Saul’s errand to Damascus: with his packet of letters from the high-priests*, London, 1653.

58 Higginson, *A brief relation of the irreligion*.

59 Hubberthorn, *Immediate call*, 2–3.

60 Higginson, *A brief relation of the irreligion*.

61 Stalham, *Contradictions*.

himself to be thou'd, although he was not, apparently, a Quaker. Higginson states that lack of proper respect extended to parents:

A Son, if turned a Quaker, will not use the usuall Civility of the world that is christian in putting off his hat to his Father or Mother, will give them no civill Salutations to bid him Goodmorrow that begat him, or her Goodnight, or farewell, that brought him forth, is with them accountd a wickednesse.⁶²

This hostile account is confirmed by the experiences of Thomas Ellwood, who became a Quaker around 1659. He relates how his ordinarily affectionate father was exasperated to the point of violence by his son's refusal to remove his hat and his use of 'thou', and yet Thomas felt obliged to persist in this behaviour despite the distress it caused to his father, to the whole household and to himself.⁶³

Higginson includes a section '*Of their Idleness, Savage Incivilities, and their irreligious, barbarous and turbulent practices*'. Language figures prominently among these: 'They are also as horrible railers as ever any age brought forth, a generation whose mouths are full of bitterness, whose throats are open sepulchres etc. The Billingsgate oister-women are not comparable to them.'⁶⁴ Baxter finds abundant evidence of 'railing' in Quaker writings. In *One Sheet* he writes:

There is scarce a scold heard among us in seven years time, that useth so many railing words to the basest they quarrel with, as these people will use familiarly in their religious exercises against the faithful servants of Christ ... even dogs, wolves, greedy dogs and hirelings, children of the devil ... with abundance such.⁶⁵

He returns to this point repeatedly in *The Quakers Catechism*: '[Quakers] 'sent me a letter of reviling, calling me over and over serpent and hypocrite' ...⁶⁶ and also: 'They sent me several papers, ... containing ... almost nothing but a bundle of filthy railing words (Thou Serpent, thou Liar, thou deceiver, thou child of the devil, thou cursed hypocrite, thou dumbe dog).'⁶⁷ At one point in *The Quakers Catechism* he repeats the phrase 'dumb dog' three times in three pages.⁶⁸

The charge is justified inasmuch as the Quaker pamphlets do show frequent use of such language. For example, Nicholson in *Truths Defence* uses language that can be described as abusive. The terms 'Liar' and 'blasphemer', and expressions such as 'Shameless and filthy generation', 'Daughter of Babylon', 'See thy shame and filthiness thou beast' and 'Laying open his own folly and nakedness' all occur frequently.⁶⁹ However, the abuse is not random. It occurs in connection

62 Higginson, *A brief relation of the irreligion*.

63 Thomas Ellwood, *The History of the Life of Thomas Ellwood, written by himself*, ed. and intro. Rosemary Moore; Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2004, pp. 32–41.

64 Higginson, *A brief relation of the irreligion*.

65 Baxter, *One sheet*.

66 Baxter, *The Quakers Catechism, or, The Quakers questioned*, 1655.

67 Baxter, *The Quakers Catechism*.

68 Baxter, *The Quakers Catechism*.

69 Benjamin Nicholson, *Truths Defence against Lies*, London, 1655.

with valid points. All the expressions that the clergy object to are biblical, and are used to link the clergy with the negligent and mercenary priests of the Old Testament and the Pharisees denounced in the synoptic gospels. Nayler writes:

Was it *rayling* in Christ, to call them the children of the Devil ... or to call them serpents and vipers, who sought by their subtilty to devour the simple? ... Even so these servants of the Lord now, if they speak the truth as things are found in ye, ... are no raylers Notwithstanding, they must do the message of the Lord faithfully.⁷⁰

Higginson puts it accurately: 'They apply all that is spoken to Idolatrous, idle, profane persecuting priests, and false prophets, either in the old or new Testament, to the Ministers of *England*.'⁷¹ So the clergy are objecting not so much to the language as such as to its application to them.

Barbour's phrase 'biblical Billingsgate'⁷² is a little misleading. Complaints of 'billingsgate' implied both the low social origin of the Quakers and the fact that much of their language came, shockingly, from women.⁷³ In the pamphlets discussed here, references to billingsgate and the Bible are never linked.

Quaker use of the word 'priests' is particularly interesting. They regularly apply it to the clergy, linking it to the Jewish priests of the Old and New Testaments, the pagan priests in the Old Testament and the pre-Reformation Catholic priesthood. It was not difficult for the Quakers to find parallels between the 'priests' or parochial clergy and the Pharisees as denounced in the synoptic gospels, or the priests of ancient Israel that the Old Testament prophets were vehement about. The passage from Howgill's *Answer to a Paper ... of Thomas Ellison (1654)*⁷⁴ draws on numerous scriptural references. Fox's *Paper sent* includes a number of references to the clergy's profit from tithes and finds parallels with Pharisaic behaviour: 'They are such as are called of men masters, and call men Masters, and have their chiefest place in the Assemblies, and stand praying in the synagogues, ... Matt 3.10 Matt 20.3'.⁷⁵ Magnus Byne⁷⁶ notes that the intention is provocative, but otherwise the clergy ignore it, either reluctant to disentangle such a complex of implications or perhaps preferring it to the other terms used by the Quakers.

70 James Nayler, *An answer to the booke called The perfect Pharisee under monkish holinesse*, London, 1654. For 'serpents' and 'vipers' see Matt 23:33. For 'of your father the devil' see John 8:44.

71 Higginson, *A brief relation of the irreligion*.

72 Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England*, New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1964, p. 137.

73 'Billingsgate, n.', *OED* online, <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/19023> [accessed October 2019].

74 Francis Howgill, *An ansver to a paper; called, A petition of one Thomas Ellyson*, London, 1654.

75 George Fox, *A paper sent forth into the world*, London, 1654, p. 5.

76 Magnus Byne, *The scornfull Quakers answered and their railing reply refuted*, London, 1656.

Another interesting word is 'lie'. At this period a casual reference to 'the lake' was a sufficient reminder that all liars will be cast into the lake of fire. The modern convention that 'lie' should be avoided in polite conversation had not arisen, and both Quakers and clergy sought out opportunities to call what might be slips or mistakes lies. Nayler writes 'to this they added a lie' when detecting a misquotation and Billingsley accuses Nayler of including a lie on his title page, because he refers to the Parish Teachers of Chesterfield when in fact Billingsley himself was the only person present who could accurately be so described.

Jantzen argues that Quakers, and especially Quaker women, differed from their contemporaries at the level of social symbolism. She claims that 'Lamb's War' was a 'gentle name for the inner struggle' and concludes that the belief that God is to be found within, 'sitting as king in the human heart', enabled Quakers in the late seventeenth century to offer an alternative to the 'competitive individualism, violence and war' that prevailed in the wider context.⁷⁷ As far as language is concerned, it would be difficult to sustain this argument on the basis of the pamphlets considered in this research. The Lamb's War, a term derived from Revelations 17:14, is not a non-violent image, and the tendency to use military language, noted by Moore,⁷⁸ is prevalent. Loewenstein⁷⁹ recognises the ambiguity of the Lamb as 'both a symbol of meekness and apocalyptic triumph', but goes on to stress the 'militant apocalyptic rhetoric' that Fox used in his pamphlets throughout the 1650s, culminating in his self-description as 'The Lamb's Officer'. On the other hand, Sarah Jones offers an interesting example of how a woman's interpretation can differ from masculine ones: 'and so, dear babes, reason not with flesh and blood, nor with the voice of the serpent ... but in the power of the Lord shut him out ... had *Eve* done so, she had not been overcome ...'.⁸⁰ There is nothing theologically original about this. Jones accepts that the story of the Fall in Genesis 3:1–19 is literally true, and that humanity is still living with the consequences. Like later Quakers, she implies that obedience to inner guidance can restore individuals to the state of Adam and Eve before the Fall.⁸¹ But whereas most authors concentrate on Adam, in whom all die (1 Cor 16:22), Jones focuses on Eve, and how she might have acted differently.

77 Grace M. Jantzen, 'Choose Life! Early Quaker Women and Violence in Modernity', *Quaker Studies* 9/2 (2005), Article 1, pp. 137–55.

78 Moore, *Light*, p. 122.

79 David Loewenstein, 'The War of the Lamb: George Fox and the Apocalyptic Discourse of Revolutionary Quakerism', in Corns, T. N. and Loewenstein, D. (eds), *The Emergence of Quaker Writing: Dissenting Literature in Seventeenth Century England*, London: Frank Cass, 1995, pp. 25–41.

80 Sarah Jones, *This is Lights Appearance in the Truth*, London, 1650, p. 2. William C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, London: MacMillan and Co., 1912.

81 E.g. Dewsbury, *Several letters* (F).

The clergy are less picturesque than the Quakers in their language, but they do not attempt to demonstrate their superiority by politeness. In *The Quakers Catechism*, Baxter begins his 'Answer to the Quakers Queries', referring to Quakers as 'Miserable creatures' and as 'praters': 'When your praters were here'.⁸² Bourne, in his description of the disputation at Chesterfield, has a special vocabulary for describing Nayler's speech: 'wrangled', 'vapoured', 'cried out', 'shuffled'. This is so automatic that he writes 'Nayler cries out' when he is discussing Nayler's letter to Billingsley.⁸³ Baxter writes of 'we that you so frantically bawl against'.⁸⁴ Both Bourne and Billingsley 'thou' Nayler in their letters, and call him Nayler, whereas the names of fellow-ministers and those they consider gentlemen are invariably prefixed with 'Mr' (i.e. Master). John Bunting is also denied this title, despite the importance of his contributions to the Chesterfield disputation.

Stalham calls his first anti-quaker work 'Contradictions of the Quakers (so called) to the scriptures of God and to their own scribblings and vain janglings'. The term 'scribblings' [sic] is used again on the title page of *Reviler Rebuked*. It could be argued that this derogatory term actually weakens his own point that no other writings have the same status as the Bible. It is instructive to compare Baxter's language in respect of Tombes, an ordained minister, with that which he uses to Quakers. Tombes is referred to as Mr T, and the language is invariably polite, although Baxter stresses not only the depth of disagreement but his disillusionment with what he sees as Tombes' inconsistent behaviour.⁸⁵

Higginson also complains of Quakers' social behaviour:

They go to their meales for the most part like Heathen, without any Prayer or thanksgiving, When meat or drink is set on the Table, the Master of the house if he be anything skilful in their way, invites none of his guests to it, but they fall to, one after another as their appetite serves them: when they go to bed, when they rise in the morning, when they depart from a house they use no civil salutes, so that their departures and going aside to ease themselves are almost indistinguishable.⁸⁶

This receives some confirmation from Ellwood. He also describes how, before his own involvement with Quakerism, he and his father visited the Peningtons, who had recently become Quakers, and were dismayed by the 'want of mirth and pleasant discourse' and so returned home 'not greatly satisfied with our journey, nor knowing what in particular to find fault with'.⁸⁷ Ellwood does not suggest that the Peningtons were uncouth, but his account confirms not only

82 Baxter, *The Quakers Catechism*.

83 Bourne, *Defence*.

84 Baxter, *The Quakers Catechism*.

85 Richard Baxter, *Plain Scripture proof of infants church-membership and baptism being the arguments prepared for and partly managed in the publicke dispute with Mr. Tombes at Bewdley*, London, 1653.

86 Higginson, *A brief relation of the irreligion*, p. 5.

87 Ellwood, *The History of the Life*, pp. 11–12.

that early Quakers behaved in much the way Higginson describes but that their contemporaries found such behaviour shocking and disturbing.⁸⁸

Ellwood's narrative is also helpful in showing that by 1659 a refusal to reciprocate conventional greetings could be good-humouredly accepted as an indication of Quaker allegiance:

But when they saw me stand still, not moving my cap ... they were amazed ... At length the surgeon ... clapping his hand in a familiar way upon my shoulder and smiling on me, said "What, Tom! A Quaker?" To which I readily and cheerfully answered, "Yes, a Quaker."⁸⁹

The 'Blasphemy Act' of 1650 forbids the expression of blasphemous opinions, but not blasphemy itself. The clergy's concentration on the terms of this Act is illustrated by the response to Naylor's letter to Billingsley.⁹⁰ This includes '.... And thy people thou teachest, hooting, yelling swearing and cursing and blaspheming the dreadful name of God' Billingsley later defends his parishioners by reference to an unspecified statute requiring them to bait the bull, but the accusation of blasphemy is passed over. 'Cursing and blaspheming' appears to be normal social behaviour under these circumstances.

Tithes and the Maintenance of Preachers

Barry Reay writes, 'It has recently been suggested that Quakers' principal arguments against tithes were scriptural These, however, were the Friends' least convincing arguments'⁹¹ This is misleading, and may reflect Reay's own explicit limitation of his interest to the non-theological.⁹² The Quakers launched a torrent of biblical objections to a paid ministry.

Aldam's *False Prophets* begins: 'All the Holy men of God spoke freely, and when any spoke for hire, it Was a filthie and a horrible thing, and the Lord did abhor it, and sent his true prophets to cry out against them.' He includes references to Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea and Micah, and also Matt. 5:60 and Matt. 10:8 ('freely ye have received, freely give').

Of the 33 points made in Fox's *Paper sent*,⁹³ three are concerned solely with the fact that the 'priests' accept money for their work⁹⁴ and 11 mention payment

88 For Mary Penington's own account of the change in the Penington household, see Norman T. Burns, 'From Seeker to Finder: the singular experiences of Mary Penington', in Corns, T. N. and Loewenstein, D. (eds), *The Emergence of Quaker Writing: Dissenting Literature in Seventeenth Century England*, London: Frank Cass, 1995, pp. 70–87.

89 Ellwood, *History of the Life*, p. 25.

90 James Naylor, *A dispute between James Naylor and the parish teachers of Chesterfield*, London, 1655.

91 Barry Reay, 'Quaker Opposition to Tithes, 1652–1660', *Past and Present* 86 (1980), p. 105.

92 Reay, *Quaker Opposition to Tithes*, pp. 99–100.

93 Fox, *A paper sent*. Numbers in the following references refer to the 31 points that from the bulk of this pamphlet.

94 Fox, *A paper sent*, 1, 2 and 4.

in connection with other criticisms.⁹⁵ In some cases a passing reference to trade or money occurs in a long denunciation of some other practice, such as in a paragraph concerned with the uselessness of knowing Greek and Hebrew.⁹⁶ Three paragraphs are explicitly against tithes: on the way ‘priests’ use the law to claim them;⁹⁷ on the variety of ways, in addition to tithes, that they find to claim money;⁹⁸ and on their practice of tithing those ‘they do no work for.’⁹⁹ The tract ends with a warning against the sinfulness of paying tithes.

Clergy and Quakers disagree over the meaning of Malachi 3:8–10, ‘ye have robbed me Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse.’ According to clergy, it is robbing God to withhold tithes.¹⁰⁰ According to Quakers, priests who accept tithes and fail to distribute them to the poor are robbing God. The whole book of Malachi is addressed to the priests, so the Quakers seem to have a point about the priests robbing God, but what the priests were supposed to do with the tithes when they had brought them into the storehouse is very unclear. Camm writes: ‘And whereas the priests should have storehouses that the Fatherless children and widows might thither come and be refreshed, that there should be no beggars in England, as there was to be no beggar in Israel’¹⁰¹ This appears to refer to Deut. 15:4. The word ‘beggar’ may have entered English colloquial imagery from the Wycliffe Bible of 1382: ‘Nedi and begger there shal not be among 3ow.’

The Quakers see it as particularly deplorable that the clergy claim tithes from those who are excluded from communion. Naylor’s objection to Billingsley was that he was a ‘man-pleaser’ who ‘owned’ the people of Chesterfield although they were manifestly unreformed.¹⁰² It is not clear whether the Quakers would be more tolerant of tithes accepted from those the clergy do ‘work for’, but unsurprisingly the clergy do not take this point up.

Moore¹⁰³ notes that by the late 1650s impropriated tithes were a source of confusion among Quakers. In 1657 Pearson offers a conciliatory opinion: ‘It is just they [the holders] have a moderate price for them.’¹⁰⁴ Impropriated tithes are rarely mentioned in the earlier pamphlets, but Byne takes strong exception to the omission:

But what if the lay-man, as they are called, take Tythes, must he be a Judas, a thief, an hireling too, because he takes his property of tythes, where it is, and from

95 Fox, *A paper sent*, 6, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23.

96 Fox, *A paper sent*, 6, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23.

97 Fox, *A paper sent*, 16.

98 Fox, *A paper sent*, 17.

99 Fox, *A paper sent*, 18.

100 Baxter, *One sheet*; Baxter, *The Quakers Catechism*; Baxter, *The Worcester Petition*.

101 John Camm, *Some Particulars concerning the Law, Sent to Oliver Cromwell*, London, 1654.

102 Naylor, *A dispute*.

103 Moore, *Light*, p. 118 & n.

104 Anthony Pearson, *The great case of tythes truly stated, clearly opened, and fully resolved*, London, 1657.

others, who have laboured to till the ground for him? And yet this man, who doth nothing for his tythes, and takes it, as due by law, is not cried out upon usually; only the minister is reviled for tythes, or maintenance, though he labour and take pains diligently, in the Office and place he is called unto.¹⁰⁵

The Quakers' apparent lack of interest in the early 1650s reflects their priorities; discrediting and weakening the paid ministry was more important to them than economic inequality and the hardships suffered by the poor.

The Quaker attack on tithes put the clergy in a difficult position. The 'mainstream' Puritan position was that tithes should be replaced, but understandably they preferred tithes to no maintenance at all, and interpreted attacks on tithing as attacks on the whole institution of a paid ministry. They seem to have preferred the defence of tithing to come from other quarters. The Worcestershire Petition, anonymous though generally agreed to be by Baxter, speaks for the gentlemen who signed it, and in their names complains of 'those that would undo us, under pretence of relieving us' and asks:

that you will be pleased ... to take special care of their [the ministers'] competent maintenance, that we may not have an ignorant ministry, while they are forced to be labouring for food and raiment, while they should be in their studies, or watching over their flocks ... and if the Ministers of this age be never so resolved to continue their work through all necessities, yet in the next Age the church is like to be destitute and desolate, because men will set their sons to other studies and employments: We therefore humbly crave that this Honourable Assembly will not take down the present Maintenance by Tythes (though we have as much reason to be sensible of those inconveniences it is charged with, as others) or at least, not until they instead of it establish as sure, and full, and fit maintenance.¹⁰⁶

Baxter's own actions¹⁰⁷ provide clear evidence that he was not mercenary on his own account, but he argues that in the long term there is a need for men who will take financial considerations into account when deciding that their sons should be educated in preparation for the ministry. He does not rely on the godly gentry and magistracy, but seeks to make arrangements that would provide financial inducements for the non-godly to take the needs of the ministry into account.

In 1654 William Sheppard published *The Parson's Guide; or the law of tithes*, prefacing it with 'The reasons of publishing this book'. The chief of these is 'How much strife there is everywhere about the payment of tithes', and he argues that strife arises largely from ignorance of the law:

Now if any man shall say, why at this time, when there is so much talk of taking away Tythes? I answer him, That we have had much talk of taking away many things a long time, which are not yet and maybe never will be taken away, nor perhaps ever will be. And I suppose the talk of taking away tythes is only the

105 Byne, *The scornfull Quakers answered*.

106 Baxter, *The humble petition*.

107 Nuttall, *Baxter*.

tythes in the hands of the ministers, and in relation to their maintenance, ... and as to these, I wish they were taken away, so that first of all a more convenient way of maintenance instead may be provided for the Minister, but this I suppose will ask time, and till that time, and after that time, ... I have taken pains to write this little Tract, ... which as it doth neither justifie nor condemn tythes, may do some little good, but certainly can do no hurt at all.¹⁰⁸

Sheppard was a Puritan and an outstanding legal expert. From 1654 to 1656 he was employed to advise Cromwell on legal reform. So he may be a little disingenuous about his motives for publishing *The Parson's Guide*, which was issued three times in 1654.¹⁰⁹

Weld demonstrates a very different way of introducing the subject of tithes into a pamphlet war. He objects to Quaker claims that ministers are pharisees, and gives six reasons for applying the word to Quakers. In the fifth of these he refers to Matt. 23:23 'for tything mint, etc but neglecting the weightier matters of the Law, etc.', and goes on to specify trivial matters that Quakers emphasise, while neglecting 'the great mysteries of Faith, righteousnesse of Christ, and the Ordinances of the Gospel'.¹¹⁰

It is puzzling that Pearson was aware of Quakers being imprisoned for withholding tithes in 1654 but not in 1653, since Quakers were producing anti-tithe pamphlets from 1652 onwards. It may be that, as Josselin's account suggests,¹¹¹ collecting tithes was normally difficult, and clergy went about it as best they could, sometimes concluding that they were not worth the trouble of collecting. So it may have taken some time before the systematic conscientious refusal of the Quakers was recognised as distinct from commonplace bad payment.

Fox in *Paper sent* gives numerous reasons for opposing the 'priests', but only 'coming to the steeple-house' and tithes are mentioned in his concluding warning of divine punishment. This emphasis on tithe refusal requires explanation. The professional ministry could be destroyed either by convincing people that their form of religion was wrong or by removing their income. The Quakers attempted to widen the basis of those who would challenge the clergy publicly by their repeated instruction to 'try your priests'¹¹² but people wishing to do this must have found difficulties. It would require not only detailed biblical knowledge but the confidence and mental adroitness to confront men who were skilled and trained in disputation and expected their arguments to be accepted. However,

108 William Sheppard, *The parsons guide: or The lavv of tithes*, London, 1656.

109 Nancy L. Matthews, 'Sheppard, William (bap. 1595, d. 1674), barrister and legal writer', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/> [accessed October 2019].

110 Thomas Weld, *The Perfect Pharisee, under monkish holiness*, London: Printed for Richard Tomlins at the Sun and Bible, 1654, pp. 49–50.

111 Alan MacFarlane (ed.), *The Diary of Ralph Josselin, 1616–1683*, London: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 1976.

112 See Aldam, *False prophets*.

for those who paid tithes,¹¹³ withholding them and making explicit that this was a principled refusal would have required great courage and commitment, but no special intellectual or social skills.

Oaths

Bowles, who does not mention Quakers in *The Dutie and Danger of Swearing*, notes that refusal to swear on biblical grounds is not new: ‘Hence the Anabaptists have concluded the unlawfulness of swearing in any case.’¹¹⁴ Stalham, however, seems to find a literal interpretation of Matt. 5:33 mere perversity:

They *take up* Christs words Matth 5.34 *Swear not at all* as they do other scriptures against his meaning, as if they did absolutely inhibite all oaths before a magistrate: whereas first he forbids oaths only, by creatures, heaven, earth, a mans head etc. The same meaning has *James*, Chap 5 verse 12. secondly, as appeareth verse 37 he forbids not only swearing but all oaths (though himself be called to witness) in ordinary communication; and let your yea be yea, and your nay nay.¹¹⁵

To this Farnworth replies: ‘And as for this saying, we take the words of Christ contrary to his meaning ... we take his words according to his mind, and so deny oaths.’¹¹⁶ In *The Reviler Rebuked* Stalham gives a long reply to this, justifying assertory and promissory oaths, and concluding ‘They that will not expound Scripture by Scripture, and compare the Precepts and examples for swearing, with the prohibition against it, fall into Scripturecontradiction.’¹¹⁷

The real point at issue seems to be the relationship between the Old and New Testaments. Stalham quotes ‘God is my witness’ (Romans 1:9) and similar expressions in the biblical Epistles, which might be taken as oaths, but the only point at which he is able to quote the New Testament in support of oaths is Hebrews 6:16,¹¹⁸ and on this Nayler, in a different context, appears to have won a point against Bourne:

when I had reprov'd the high priest twice for swearing, another said that if I would swear that he swore he should be punished: I answered, must I commit one sin to have another punished; they said it was lawful, if a magistrate commanded it, which I challenged them to prove, but they could not by any command or

113 Reay shows that Quakers in the 1650s came predominantly from ‘the middling sort – wholesale and retail traders, artisans, yeomen and husbandmen’, and that it was a predominantly rural movement. Reay, *Quaker Opposition to Tithes*, pp. 99–100.

114 Edward Bowles, *The dutie and danger of swearing opened in a sermon preached at York*, York, 1655, p. 4.

115 Stalham, *Contradictions*.

116 Richard Farnworth, *The Scriptures vindication against the Scottish contradictors*, London, 1653.

117 John Stalham, *The reviler rebuked: or, A re-inforcement of the charge against the Quakers*, London, 1657.

118 Stalham, *The reviler rebuked*.

practice of the saints in Scripture, but brought that in the Hebrews where Paul uses a comparison of mens practice, 'that men swer by the greater' and to this they added a lie and said 'all men' ...¹¹⁹

Bourne does not mention this accusation of misquotation in his reply. Stalham does not misquote, but argues that it was not Paul's intention to 'shut out Saints from being men in the world, or disoblige them from their common humanity'.

Edward Bowles takes a much more complex approach, arguing that swearing should be kept to a minimum and taken very seriously when done at all. He makes an argument similar to Stalham's, that Christ's words must be understood in the context of Pharisaic practice. But he goes on to complain: 'Where there is one too scrupulous, there are many too profuse in the matter of oaths.'¹²⁰ He proceeds to condemn careless conversational swearing, especially when it becomes a matter of perverse pride, of swearing falsely or of failing to keep promissory oaths. But he also laments the social and legal conventions that lead to excessive swearing. 'Every unnecessary oath is a vain oath, and litigious persons who occasion many oaths will find they have much to answer for.'¹²¹ 'It is sad to see how often men are produced to swear contradictions, where one must needs be guilty of falsehood in swearing.'¹²² He argues that,

concerning the oaths taken by inferior officers, by tradesmen in Companies and corporations; these oaths are too much used ... if Magistrates would take fast hold of the people, and lay firm obligations upon them ... It would be advantage to both parties concerned in promissory oaths, that penalties were many times imposed in the room of them.¹²³

Thus at least one of the clergy took the morality of swearing extremely seriously and went beyond finding arguments to justify compliance with the law to suggesting that magistrates and others had a responsibility to minimise the need for oaths.

An interesting example of the importance attached to oaths is the 'information of George Cowlshaw'¹²⁴ published by Prynne and reproduced by Baxter. All that Cowlshaw can actually swear to is that he met an old schoolfellow, Coppinger, who told him various things. Coppinger, by his own admission, is committed to deception. The only evidence of the truthfulness of what he told Cowlshaw is that he predicted, correctly, that Quakers would soon arrive in Bristol, at a time when Quakers were spreading throughout England and reaching all major cities, although (this is not noted by either Prynne or Baxter) he did not say that they

119 Naylor, *A dispute*.

120 Bowles, *Dutie and danger*.

121 Bowles, *Dutie and danger*.

122 Bowles, *Dutie and danger*.

123 Bowles, *Dutie and danger*.

124 William Prynne, *The Quakers unmasked, and clearly detected to be but the spawn of Romish frogs*, London, 1655, and Baxter, *The Quakers Catechism*.

were not already there, as in fact they were. Yet the mere fact that Cowlshaw has sworn is taken as evidence of the truthfulness of Coppinger's story.

Quaking

Quaking appears to be the aspect of Quakerism that first drew the attention of outsiders. According to Fox, the word 'Quakers' was first applied in 1650 by Gervase Bennet of Derby.¹²⁵ The author of *Querers and Quakers*¹²⁶ devotes the first five of his 30 queries to the subject. Clearly the Quaker defence, that quaking is scriptural, was already current, because he includes:

QUERE II: Whether when holy trembling and feare is commended in Scripture; there be meant any other ordinarily, then the Spirituall and holy dread in the soule, to stand in awe of God, repent before him, and walk to humbly with the Lord?

It is difficult to make out what the Querer means by 'quaking and trances', because his colleague, the author of the *replies*, draws at length on the works of Zwingli and the reported practices of the priests of Apollo¹²⁷ as reasons for not believing the Antiquerer's claim that quakings were involuntary. However, in QUERE III he asks 'whether it were ordinary in the Old and New Testament for the Holy Servants of God to quake, be entranced, make strange noises, shew strange swellings and stirrings of the body, as if they were possest with some spirit?'¹²⁸

Stalham gives a description of early Quaker procedure that may describe the context of some 'quaking':

They sit silent for an hour, or half, or quarter; and when others in (though not of) their company speak freely they *check* it with this, *in the multiplicity of word there cannot want sin*, or the like saying and yet they are in their writings full of Tautologies and needlesse nauseous repetitions.¹²⁹

Fox¹³⁰ cites biblical precedents for quaking and trembling. 'They are such teachers as deny the conditions that the saints witnessed, trembling and quaking; whenas we find the holy men of God that gave forth the scriptures witnessed these things.' He goes on to cite Moses, the 'Son of man' (referring to Ezekiel 12:18), Daniel, Jeremiah, David, Habukkuk, Isaac and the apostle Paul.

125 Fox, *Journal*, p. 58.

126 Anon., *The Querers and Quakers cause at the second hearing*, London, 1653.

127 Anon., *Querers and Quakers*, pp. 2–4.

128 Anon., *Querers and Quakers*, p. 7.

129 They professe quaking and trembling, after the manner of *Moses, Habukkuk, Job, Daniel, Paul* and others, and yet are some of the most bold daring creatures that ever I heard speak, or observed to put pen to paper, and will stand (in an evill cause) before Magistrates without quaking or fear, Stalham, *Contradictions*, p. 27.

130 Fox, *A paper sent*, p. 8.

Higginson gives two descriptions of quaking, the first in the Petition to the Council of State that was never delivered:¹³¹ ‘many whereof (men, women and little children) at their meetings are strangely wrought upon in their bodies and brought to fall, foam at the mouth, roar, and swell in their bellies.’¹³² The authors of *Saul’s errand* reproduce this, and there are two references to it subsequently. In ‘The Answer of George Fox etc.’ Fox writes ‘The meetings of the people of God were ever strange to the world’¹³³ and goes on to cite examples of extreme behaviour in the Bible. In ‘The examination of James Nayler’ Nayler answers ‘How comes it to pass that people quake and tremble?’ with ‘The scriptures witness the same condition in the saints formerly ...’¹³⁴ and the precise manifestation of the condition is not discussed.

In *Irreligion*, Higginson does not mention quaking among his Erroneous Opinions, but deals with it at length in his subsequent section on ‘Wicked Practices’.¹³⁵

Those in their assemblies that are taken with these fits, fall suddenly down, as it were in a swoone, as though they were surprised with an epilepsie, or apoplexy, and lie grovelling on the earth and struggling as it were for life, and sometimes more quietly as though they were departing; while the agony of the fit is upon them their lips quiver, their flesh and joynts tremble, their bellies swell as though blown up with wind, they foam at the mouth, an sometimes purge as if they had taken physick. In this fit they continue sometimes an hour or two, sometimes longer before they come to themselves again, and when it leaves them they roare out horribly with a voice greater then the voice of a man; the noise, those say, that have heard it is a very horrid fearful noise, and greater sometimes than any Bull can make.¹³⁶

This gives the impression of a first-hand description until the words ‘those say that have heard it’ arouse suspicions. Moore quotes vivid first-hand descriptions by Camm and Audland of their experiences in Bristol in 1654, when they were ‘forced to cry out’ and ‘made to cry like a woman in travail’.¹³⁷ These were related in private correspondence. It seems that in public Quakers defended quaking but did not seek to publicise it unnecessarily.

The nearest we have to a published first-hand description of quaking is Gilpin’s narrative, which Burrough and Atkinson accept as substantially correct:

I still expected the appearance of the light within me, and earnestly desired that I might fall into quaking and trembling ... walking in my bed-chamber, I began (as

131 Higginson, *A brief relation of the irreligion*.

132 Fox, *Saul’s errand*.

133 Fox, *Saul’s errand*.

134 Fox, *Saul’s errand*.

135 Higginson, *A brief relation of the irreligion*.

136 Higginson, *A brief relation of the irreligion*.

137 Moore, *Light*, pp. 147–48.

I have formerly desired) to tremble and quake so extreamly, that I could not stand on my feet, but was constrained to fall down on my bed, where I howled and cried (as is usual with them) in a terrible and hideous manner, to the great astonishment of my Family. Nevertheless, I myself was not at all affected with fear, because it was a satisfaction to my former desire, and I looked upon it as the beginnings of the pangs of the new birth After this, going to bed, I was much troubled all night following in my sleep with dreams concerning my condition and had a discovery of my sins in particular, especially of covetousness¹³⁸

Of this, Atkinson writes ‘that which discovered thy sin in particular I own to be the light of God, which is thy condemnation.’¹³⁹ Though Atkinson identifies numerous ‘lies’ in Gilpin’s narrative, he does not make any objection to his description of the physical manifestations of ‘quaking’, or to the implication that this was the sort of behaviour usually to be witnessed in Quaker gatherings.

Thus, Quakers appear to have accepted descriptions of extraordinary and extreme behaviour as true accounts of what ordinarily happened at their meetings, with the exception of Higginson’s reference to ‘purging’, for which there is no confirmation. Higginson discusses the cause of quaking, concludes that it cannot be faked and attributes it to diabolical possession.¹⁴⁰ Atkinson accepts that his task is to distinguish divine and diabolical possession in accounting for Gilpin’s behaviour, but he clearly finds it difficult.

Stalham makes ingenious objections to the Quakers’ use of biblical precedents:

They think and profess themselves *perfect* beyond other saints, yet professe *trembling* and *quaking*, as under a spirit of bondage, at the foot of Mount Sinai, and they call *Moses* a *Quaker* to be imitated. Now, so far as he was under a legall administration he is not to be imitated, in exceeding fear and quaking, by any that have received the spirit of adoption. Rom. 8.15

They professe quaking and trembling, after the manner of *Moses*, *Habukkuk*, *Job*, *Daniel*, *Paul* and others, and yet are some of the most bold daring creatures that ever I heard speak, or observed to put pen to paper, and will stand (in an evill cause) before Magistrates without quaking or fear.¹⁴¹

Farnworth denies any contradiction:

The same power that made *Moses Habukkuk Daniel Paul* and the rest to quake, shake and tremble, the same power we wnesse and working out our salvation with feare and trembling, God working in us ... and as for being bold to witness the truth against deceit ... the Lord maketh the righteous as bold as Lyons¹⁴²

It is proper fear of God, he claims, that frees Quakers from fear when they confront magistrates.

138 John Gilpin, *The Quakers Shaken: Or, A Firebrand Snatch’d out of the fire*, London, 1653.

139 Atkinson, *The Standard of the Lord*.

140 Higginson, *A brief relation of the irreligion*.

141 Stalham, *Contradictions*.

142 Farnworth, *Scriptures vindication*.

It is argued above that quaking appears to have arisen spontaneously and taken Quakers themselves by surprise. Moore notes that a list of texts relating to quaking was distributed among Quakers,¹⁴³ although the relevance of most of them is not obvious and was disputed by opponents. Thus it appears most probable that the Quaker form of worship arose spontaneously, and was felt to be all-sufficient; biblical justification both for quaking and for dispensing with outward forms and ceremonies followed. This is consistent with the claim that they were following the leadings of God, and finding later that the Bible confirmed all that they had been taught directly.

Peters notes that from 1653¹⁴⁴ Quaker pamphlets appeared with the word 'Quaker' in large letters, prefixed by phrases such as 'nick-named' or 'called in scorn'. Stalham derides such ambivalence: 'They deny all them that deny quaking, and say Moses was a quaker, yet will not be called Quakers but say the term is put on them in scorn.'¹⁴⁵ The term was clearly useful in that, unlike those Quakers themselves preferred, such as 'Children of the Light',¹⁴⁶ it was not used by other groups. By the time of the Gilpin incident, there was clearly a need to decide who could and who could not be described as a Quaker: 'But as for the said Robert Collinson being a Quaker, that is false and is a lye.'¹⁴⁷ Here *Quaker* is a title that can be rightly used only by permission of acknowledged Quakers, not a term used in scorn.

Attitudes to the Papacy

The clergy take for granted English horror of papal power. Bowles is exceptional among the clergy in his abstention from abusive terminology.¹⁴⁸ It follows from the perception of the papacy as the centre of a diabolically inspired plot against true religion in England that Quakers are seen as either witting or unwitting agents of the pope. Higginson writes: 'Papists are open Idolators, and the propagators of your superstitions are more horrid blasphemers.' Bourne writes of 'detecting these Quakers but to bee the spawn of Romish Frogs, Jesuits and Franciscan Fryars, sent from Rome to seduce poore soules in this English nation'.¹⁴⁹ Prynne's *The Quakers unmasked* is cited with reverence, although, as shown above,¹⁵⁰ it depends on dubious evidence from a self-confessed liar.

143 Moore, *Light*, pp. 56–57.

144 Peters, *Print Culture*, p. 118.

145 Stalham, *Contradictions*.

146 H. Larry Ingle, *First among Friends: George Fox and the Creation of Quakerism*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 54.

147 Atkinson, *The Standard of the Lord* (Collinson was later formally excommunicated by the Quakers: Peters, *Print Culture*, p. 26).

148 Bowles, *Dutie and danger*.

149 Bourne, *Defence*.

150 See 'Oaths' above.

Quakerism's similarity to or identity with Roman Catholicism is argued from the fact that both accept the possibility of ongoing divine guidance and deny the theory that God's will can be learned only from the canon of scripture, which in 'mainstream' Puritan theology is closed.¹⁵¹ The differences are glossed over, so that Bourne apparently expects Nayler to debate 'Whether the private Spirit in the Pope, or in any Quaker, be the chiefe judge of Controversies?'¹⁵² Similarly, Joshua Miller asks 'What difference between popery and this opinion? For that which he calls justification by works or inherent grace; that they call Christ. I make no question but the pope will give them his blessing for this; yea, and canonize them as Saints also.'¹⁵³

The Quakers share the assumption that common ground with 'Papists' is sufficient proof of wrongness. Nicholson's title page summarises his argument:

Truths Defence Against Lies: In a brief Answer to a Book, intituled the Worcestershire Petition defended; set forth by one (of *Englands* blind guides) who calls himself a Minister of Christ, yet pleads altogether, that the *Friars, Abbots, Bishops, Deans* and *Chapters* Lands, which the Papists set forth to maintain their Idolatrous Worship, are of Divine right and institution, and were given to the maintaining of the Church of *England*, which he calles the Church of Christ, and complains of the sin of Sacrilege, against those who have, or shall take any of the aforesaid Lands or Tithes, from the Clergy, which he calles the Church, &c.¹⁵⁴

Burrough and Howgill's *Visitation* concludes with a series of 'particular papers, written in that Nation, to several sorts of people', which are listed on the title page. But a final unlisted paper is added: 'A Warning from the Lord to the Natives of that Nation of *Ireland*, who are made a curse, and a prey, to be destroyed of your enemies'. It contains harsher language than any addressed to the English clergy:

return to the Lord, from whom you are grievously degenerated into filthinesse and uncleanlinesse, being a cursed brood and are become unhuman in your impudent shamelesse practices of ungodliness, ... his wrath waites to consume you off the face of the earth, ... you have wholly slain gods witness and are become wild and bruitish as the beasts of the field.

This goes well beyond the 'railing' addressed to the clergy. It is never suggested that the clergy have lost the image of God. Burrough goes on to address the Light in their consciences and urges them to turn to it, though he does not seem to hold much hope of their doing so.¹⁵⁵

151 Anon., *The confession of faith and catechisms*.

152 Bourne, *Defence*, title page.

153 Joshua Miller, *Antichrist in man the Quakers Idol*, London, 1655.

154 Nicholson, *Truths Defence*.

155 Francis Howgill, *The visitation of the rebellious nation of Ireland*, London, 1656.

Women

The clergy use the role of women in the Quaker movement as evidence that Quakers are not to be taken seriously. Baxter writes: 'Very few experienced, humble sober Christians that I ever heard of that turn to them, but its raw young professors, and women, and ignorant *ungrounded people* ...'.¹⁵⁶ In Miller's *Antichrist* two women and one man are named as the principal Quakers who interrupt the sermon, and Mary Erberry gives a bailiff a paper to be delivered to Miller, but he continues to demand a response from 'any man'.¹⁵⁷ Later he writes:

What monstrous doctrine is this? To suffer women to be preachers by way of authority, condemned as against nature ... this doctrine was first held by the Pepuzians¹⁵⁸ ... But with us some women will be rulers over and directors of mens consciences, for so among the Quakers, women commonly teach as well as men.¹⁵⁹

The only contemporary woman mentioned with respect in the clergy pamphlets is Lady Rebecca Bindlosse, to whom Richard Sherlock dedicates the main section of *The Quakers wilde questions*.¹⁶⁰ This is very much in accordance with the tradition whereby great Puritan ladies took the lead in running godly households and were the subject of adulatory dedications. Three of the authors of Quaker pamphlets are women, but no replies were written to them. Thomas Edwards, writing in 1644, is indignant at the humiliation of receiving a reply written by a woman. This suggests that for the clergy replying to a woman author would have been an even greater indignity than addressing Quakers. It is obvious that the Quakers accepted the presence and activity of women in their movement, but in the pamphlets discussed here they do not draw attention to it.

Conclusion

In the pamphlets discussed behaviour is invariably described as arising from theology, either explicitly or by implication, but it may be asked whether this was really the case, or if in fact theological arguments were being devised to justify behaviour that was already established. I have suggested that the form of Quaker worship, including quaking, may have occurred spontaneously and been justified *post facto*. Somewhat similarly, the clergy's clear idea of their role in society and

156 Baxter, *One sheet*.

157 Miller, *Antichrist*.

158 A member of a second-century sect of Montanists originating in Pepuza in Phrygia (an ancient region of Asia Minor). 'Pepuzian, n. and adj.', *OED* online, <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/140481> [accessed October 2019].

159 Miller, *Antichrist*.

160 Richard Sherlock, *The Quakers wilde questions objected against the ministers of the Gospel, and many sacred acts and offices of religion*, London, 1655.

how they should be treated can be defended on theological grounds, but seems unlikely to have arisen on these alone.

Despite the enthusiasm on both sides for numbered points, issues run into each other, and could all be described as aspects of the underlying conflict between, on the one hand, religion promulgated by an authorised elite, recognised and officially supported as a means of social control, and, on the other, the passionate assertion of immediate experience, which carries its own authority, casts new light on the Bible and demands the reassessment of all accepted conventions and structures.

The overall picture is of two groups who each saw the other as totally in the wrong and as an obstacle to movement towards better things. There is no suggestion of either group making an effort to see good things in the other. The possibility of compromise or amicable co-existence does not seem to arise.

By focusing on the conflict between the Quakers and the Puritan clergy as it occurred between 1652 and 1656, it is possible to obtain a clearer understanding of the history of both Puritanism and Quakerism. The rise of Quakerism has been studied from many points of view, and the conflict with the clergy has been noted. However, this research identifies the persistent strand in Puritanism that simultaneously demanded further Reformation and insisted that it should take place within the established Church and with the support of magistrates. This provides a context within which the arguments which were deployed can be better understood, and also makes the whole structure of the conflict, including the numerous arrests and imprisonments, more intelligible.

Much has been written about Puritanism, but usually with a focus on a relatively narrow time-span and under a variety of names. I argue that it is possible to identify a continuous tradition, which I call 'mainstream Puritanism', which commenced early in the reign of Elizabeth and was still active during the Interregnum. This perspective makes possible a clearer understanding of the attack on the Quakers and the form it took.

The research also helps to make developments after 1660 more intelligible. The history of Puritanism after 1660 usually concentrates on Dissenters, particularly the victims of the 'Great Ejection'¹⁶¹ of 1662, who are celebrated as the founders of Congregationalism, Unitarianism and other denominations. When it is recognised that during the Interregnum there had been a determined struggle to establish a national Church based on Puritan principles, it can be understood that Puritan clergy who conformed were not necessarily acting out of prudence or seeking financial security; they may well have felt that conscience required them

161 This event is usually referred to as the ejection of 1662, but 'ejection', a legal term with connotations of unjust deprivation (see *OED*) has survived in conformist tradition and serves to emphasise the importance of this event among the many episodes of ejection in the seventeenth century (see Alan P. F. Sell (ed.), *The Great Ejection of 1662: Its Antecedents, Aftermath, and Ecumenical Significance*, Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012.

to work for continued reformation within a national Church that had accepted episcopalianism but remained open to change.

Appendix

The Pamphlet Wars

Pamphlets exchanged by the clergy and Quakers 1652–1656, arranged where possible as interconnected series.

Quaker single

Q	1652	George Fox	<i>A paper sent</i>
Q	1652	Thomas Aldam	<i>False Prophets and False Teachers</i>
Q	1653	Benjamin Nicholson	<i>Blast from the Lord</i>
Q	1653	Richard Farnworth	<i>A brief discovery of the kingdome of Antichrist</i>
Q	1654	Francis Howgill	<i>An ansver to a paper; called, A petition of one Thomas Ellyson</i>
Q	1655	Ann Audland	<i>A true declaration of the suffering of the innocent</i>
Q	1655	Margaret Fell	<i>False Prophets</i>
Q	1656	Margaret Killam	<i>Warning to the Teachers and people of Plimouth</i>
Q	1655	Mason, Martin	<i>A Check to the Loftie Linguist</i>
Q	1656	Francis Howgill	<i>The visitation of the rebellious nation of Ireland</i>

Clergy single

C	1655	Edward Bowles	<i>The Dutie and danger of Swearing*</i>
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Brief interchanges (one pamphlet plus reply)

Samuel Eaton and John Camm

C	1653	Samuel Eaton	<i>The Quakers Confuted</i>
Q	1654	John Camm	<i>An Answer to a book called The Quakers Confuted</i>

John Pomroy and Richard Farnworth

C	1653	John Pomroy	<i>A faithful discovery of a treacherous design</i>
Q	1654	Richard Farnworth	<i>Light risen out of darkness</i>

Martin Mason and Edward Reyner

C	1655	Edward Reyner	<i>Precepts for Christian Practice*</i>
Q	1655	Martin Mason	<i>The Proud Pharisee Reproved</i>

Joshua Miller and James Nayler

C	1655	Joshua Miller	<i>AntiChrist in Man the Quakers Idol</i>
Q	1656	James Nayler	<i>AntiChrist in Man Christs Enemy</i>

Giles Firmin and Edward Burrough

- | | | | |
|---|------|-----------------|--|
| C | 1655 | Giles Firmin | <i>Stablishing against shaking</i> |
| Q | 1656 | Edward Burrough | <i>Stablishing against quaking thrown down</i> |
-

Richard Sherlock and Richard Hubberthorn

- | | | | |
|---|------|---------------------|---|
| C | 1654 | Richard Sherlock | <i>The Quakers wilde questions objected</i> |
| Q | 1654 | Richard Hubberthorn | <i>A reply to a book</i> |
-

Sampson Townsend and Christopher Atkinson

- | | | | |
|---|------|----------------------|--|
| C | 1655 | Sampson Townsend | <i>The Scriptures proved the Word of God</i> |
| Q | 1655 | Christopher Atkinson | <i>Ishmael and his mother</i> |
-

Magnus Byne and Thomas Lawson

- | | | | |
|---|------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| C | 1656 | Magnus Byne | <i>The Scornful Quakers Answered</i> |
| Q | 1656 | Thomas Lawson | <i>Lip of Truth</i> |
-

Series of publications

Gilpin series

- | | | | |
|----|------|----------------------|---|
| C? | 1653 | John Gilpin | <i>The Quakers Shaken: or, a firebrand</i> |
| Q | 1653 | Christopher Atkinson | <i>The Standard of the Lord Lifted Up</i> |
| C? | 1655 | John Gilpin | <i>The Quakers Shaken, or a discovery</i> [2nd edn with extra material] |
-

Worcestershire series

- | | | | |
|---|------|------------------------------------|--|
| C | 1652 | Richard Baxter (attrib.) | <i>Humble Petition*</i> |
| Q | 1653 | Benjamin Nicholson in Aldam et al. | <i>Threefold Estate</i> |
| C | 1653 | Richard Baxter | <i>The Worcester Petition to Parliament defended</i> |
| Q | 1654 | Benjamin Nicholson | <i>Truths Defence</i> |
| Q | 1655 | Richard Farnworth | <i>Brazen Serpent</i> |
| C | 1655 | Richard Baxter | <i>The Quakers Catechism</i> |
| Q | 1655 | James Nayler | <i>Ans. to a Book called the Quakers Catechism</i> |
| C | 1657 | Richard Baxter | <i>One Sheet against the Quakers</i> |
| C | 1657 | Richard Baxter | <i>A Second sheet for the Ministry</i> |
| C | 1657 | Richard Baxter | <i>A Winding Sheet for Popery</i> |
| Q | 1657 | Edward Burrough | <i>Many strong reasons</i> |
| Q | 1658 | George Whitehead | <i>Brief Treatise on the Truths Behalf</i> |
-

Appleby Series

- | | | | |
|---|------|--------------------------|---|
| Q | 1653 | George Fox, James Nayler | <i>Saul's Errand to Damascus</i> |
| C | 1653 | Francis Higginson | <i>Brief Relation of the Irreligion of the Northern Quakers</i> |

C	1653	Thomas Weld	<i>The Perfect Pharisee</i>
Q	1654	James Nayler	<i>Answer to a book called the perfect pharisee</i>
C	1654	Thomas Weld	<i>Further Discovery of that generation of men called Quakers</i>

Chesterfield Series

Q	1655	James Nayler	<i>A dispute between James Nayler and the Parish Teachers of Chesterfield</i>
C	1656	Immanuel Bourne	<i>A Defence of the Scriptures</i>
C	1656	John Billingsley	<i>Strong comfort for weak Christians</i>
Q	1657	Anthony Pearson	<i>The Great Case of Tithes truly stated</i>
C	1659	Immanuel Bourne	<i>A Defence and Justification of Ministers Maintenance by Tythes</i>

Stalham Series

C	1655	John Stalham	<i>Contradictions of the Quakers (so called) to the scriptures of God</i>
Q	1655	James Parnell	<i>Fruits of a Fast</i>
Q	1655	Richard Farnworth	<i>Scripture Vindication against Stalham</i>
C	1656	(Glisson, Henry)	<i>The True and Lamentable Relation of the Death of James Parnell</i>
C	1657	John Stalham	<i>Reviler Rebuked</i>
Q	1657	Richard Hubberthorne	<i>Rebukes of a Reviler fallen on own head</i>
C	1657	John Stalham	<i>Marginall Antidotes</i>

Notes: C = clergy authorship; Q = Quaker authorship; ★ Not explicitly anti-Quaker

Author Details

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