

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the first issue in Volume 11. The journal is now developing a regular cycle of themed or semi-themed issues and more organic collections of articles. This is in the latter category but still achieves a high degree of coherence. Again, we have extended the length of the journal to keep pace with the wealth, in both senses, of submissions.

This issue is largely comprised of work carried out by those highly established in their field, most now working at professorial level. It is also a collection of articles largely based on primary research and yet one which nevertheless reflects the variety of disciplinary concerns within Quaker studies. History, biblical studies, church history, business history, aesthetics, and literary studies are all represented here.

The issue begins with an extended version of the 1998 George Richardson Lecture, given by Hans Erik Aarek from Stavanger University, Norway. This is part of the Lecture series set up by David Adshead at the Centre for Quaker Studies at the University of Sunderland in 1996, and which, now hosted by the Centre for Postgraduate Quaker Studies (Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre and the University of Birmingham), has become the annual prestigious lecture in the study of Quakerism. The 1997 Lecture by Edouard Dommen was published as a separate pamphlet. The Lecture didn't take place in 1999 and the 2001 and 2002 Lectures given by William J. Frost and Elaine Hobby respectively remain unpublished in their Lecture format. However, the inclusion of Hans Erik Aarek's piece here brings us as up to date as is possible, and future Lectures will be published in a more consistent fashion. They are unrefereed and will always be at the start of the issue they are placed in.

Hans Erik Aarek's article is the result of an exhaustive investigation into the experience of Quaker and Quaker-associated conscientious objectors in Norway in the nineteenth century and the slow process of gaining exemption from punitive laws restricting objection as well as religious freedom. Norwegian Quakerism nearly died out as a result of emigration to the USA but those remaining decided to end formal registration as a religious body at the end of the nineteenth century by refusing to comply with state regulations over conscription—only in 1936 were Norwegian Friends an official religious body again. The article combines a wide historical sweep with detailed personal reflections

from those involved, as well as a broad range of analysis. I am very glad that we finally have this in print.

Stephen Angell's article is fascinating. Using the wonderful Digital Quaker Collection (DQC) database set up at Earlham, available to everyone via the web, he has been able to analyse frequency of use of particular verses of Scripture, Colossians in particular in this case, and then analyses the theological approach taken by different Quaker authors. He has combined this with a comparative analysis of Quaker and Puritan interpretation. Angell is particularly helpful in his articulation of the Arminian emphasis of the Quaker view on salvation. As he writes, it is hoped that many other scholars will use the DQC and work on similar analyses of other scriptural passages. The potential is enormous.

Vail Palmer, well-known to all those familiar with *Quaker Religious Thought*, takes up a challenge posed by Melvin Endy that Fox and Penn shared a similar theological approach, otherwise Fox would have criticised Penn. In a piece which reflects on earlier scholarship as well as placing himself in current categories of thinking about the nature of Quakerism, Palmer argues that Fox and Penn were indeed different (Fox as an empathic reader of Scripture, Penn using it as external authority) but that Fox did not understand the way in which they differed and therefore was not publicly critical of Penn.

Glen Reynolds, whose new book is just out, compares Foxian theology with Valentinian gnosticism and argues that in some areas, the two are remarkably similar whilst not identical. Fox may have unconsciously been reinventing aspects of Gnostic thought.

The last two articles of this issue look at the inter-relationship between Quaker faith and design. The first, by Adrian Bailey and John Bryson, looks at how the faith of George Cadbury influenced his design of the model village at Bournville, whilst Roger Homan takes on Peter Collins' concept of 'plaining' arguing that presentday meeting houses have an aesthetic of restfulness. In other words, an aesthetic, which, in its appeal to a comfortable touch or an ornamental addition, is in tension with the tendency of plaining to reduce, and which is goal-oriented rather than process-driven. Again, both articles are the result of years of primary research and analytic reflection.

The book reviews section, now edited by our new Reviews Editor, Betty Hagglund, begins with an extended review article by Pam Lunn on two books by David Booy on self-writing and autobiography. Pam Lunn discusses these in the light of her own work and teaching on auto/biography. Other reviews include one by Gay Pilgrim on the important new sociological analysis of religious and spiritual life in Kendal, and one by Betty Hagglund on Catie Gill's highly recommended book on early Quaker women's writing published this year by Ashgate.

'Ben' Pink Dandelion, Editor