

‘TURNING HEARTS TO BREAK OFF THE YOKE OF OPPRESSION’:  
THE TRAVELS AND SUFFERINGS OF CHRISTOPHER MEIDEL  
C. 1659–C. 1715\*

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ABSTRACT

This study of Christopher Meidel, a Norwegian Quaker writer imprisoned both in England and on the Continent for his beliefs and actions, explores the life of a convert to Quakerism and his missionary zeal in the early eighteenth century. From Meidel’s quite tempestuous career we receive insights into the issues Friends faced in Augustan England in adapting to life in a country whose inter-church relations were largely governed by the 1689 Toleration Act, and its insistence that recipients of toleration were to respect the rights of other religionists. In England and Wales, although not censured by Friends, Meidel’s activities were nevertheless in contrast to the increasingly respectable nature of the Society. This study questions whether his provocative behaviour was a return to the testimony of the first Friends. On the Continent, Meidel was warmly welcomed in some towns and cities, but also seen in others as a potential troublemaker and consequently imprisoned. Only the intervention of leading Friends and of Prince George of Denmark saved him from a lengthy term of incarceration. Undaunted by his trials, Meidel continued his proselytising in the early eighteenth century, and his career offers a fascinating insight into the continuing determination of missionary Quakers and their commitment to their beliefs.

KEYWORDS

Meidel, Pietism, toleration, persecution, disputations, Norway, Holland, Cornwall, London, Wales

The recently published *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* has a large number of entries on Quaker spokesmen and spokeswomen.<sup>1</sup> Quite naturally, it includes major entries for George Fox (1624–1691), Margaret Fell (1614–1702), James Nayler (1618–1660), William Penn (1624–1691), and many other Quaker luminaries, but there are various other shorter biographies of less well-known Friends who were persecuted for their beliefs, including Christopher Meidel.<sup>2</sup> This study of the life of Meidel, a Quaker minister, will expand on that entry and offer insights into how Friends coped

with religious opposition in England and Wales in the period following the passage of the Toleration Act along with imprisonment on the Continent. Some years ago, Meidel's career was examined by Henry Cadbury,<sup>3</sup> and this study aims to extend his work by bringing to light further evidence as well as introducing this Norwegian Friend to a contemporary readership. A chronological biography will be offered drawing particular attention to the way that Meidel's method of invasive proselytisation was becoming increasingly outmoded from the vantage point of eighteenth-century Quakers.<sup>4</sup> The analysis also explores the tension between those Friends who wished to continue their testimony against clerics of the Established Church, and others who sought respectability and accommodation with the authorities in Church and State. This is what Brian Wilson, Elizabeth Isichei, Michael Mullett, and more recently Catherine L. Leachman and John Miller have observed as the organisational change of the Society from a sect to a denomination, and its transformation from radicalism to moderation.<sup>5</sup> Even so, and while the Society at large was making its peace with the State Church and society brought into being by the Glorious Revolution, there were still examples of Friends being accused by their meetings of behaving in a manner that was similar to the Ranters of the Commonwealth period.<sup>6</sup> In this context, Christopher Meidel's activities in post-Revolution Britain seem provocative, appearing to replicate the extremist testimony of the first generation of Friends. This raises a number of further questions: Did Meidel pose a challenge to the authorities on the Continent, who were generally less than tolerant than those of Augustan England? Why did the authorities question his motives, visualise him as a crypto-papist, disrupter, and troublemaker?

#### MEIDEL'S BACKGROUND AND CONVERSION TO QUAKERISM

Meidel was born in c. 1659 to the shipowner Cjert (Gert) Meidel and his wife Elen of Skien, Langesund, Norway, then in Danish possession.<sup>7</sup> In 1677, he graduated from Roskilde School in Denmark and then went on to receive a theology degree from the University of Roskilde.<sup>8</sup> Under the instruction of Dr Hans Rosing, on 25 August 1687 Meidel, then aged 28, was ordained as a pastor, though only after some unspecified youthful transgressions had been pardoned. In the second edition of Friends' biographical account of ministers, *Piety Promoted* (1811), it is recorded that Meidel was subsequently appointed chaplain to Prince George of Denmark, the husband of the future Queen Anne of England, and it is thought that he left Denmark in 1683 for England to continue in his position as chaplain.<sup>9</sup> On 14 September 1687 Meidel was appointed minister of the Lutheran Danish Church in Old Gravel Lane, Wapping, and swore the oath of allegiance and supremacy.<sup>10</sup> Meidel, however, became dissatisfied with the rigidity of the Lutheran Church with its orthodox practices, and felt that his congregation was 'no way bettered' after receiving the sacrament.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, he introduced some unconventional practices into the Danish service and this provoked resentment.<sup>12</sup> In 1690 Meidel left the Church but continued to minister to the spiritual needs of some members of the Lutheran congregation who gathered at his house in London. Hans Henrik V. Ahlefeldt, another minister at

the Wapping Danish Church, failed to persuade Meidel to return to the Church and embrace orthodox Lutheranism as well as to curtail his irregular gatherings.<sup>13</sup>

From the mid-1690s onwards Meidel began preaching as an Independent, presumably with a certificate granted under the terms of the Toleration Act, to a congregation which gathered at Nightingale Lane, East Smithfield, London.<sup>14</sup> It would seem that in 1699 he had become discontented with his life as an Independent preacher and was continuing to wrestle with his beliefs. There is no information about how he came to join the Quakers, at Stratford in Essex, within the compass of the Barking Monthly Meeting, but it is clear that he was impressed by the moral example they set and convinced by their doctrinal arguments. In an apologia (n.d.) to his former co-religionists, he explained that he admired the Friends' pacifism, their willingness to suffer physical abuse, and their code of conduct, with its emphasis on plainness and on simplicity of worship.<sup>15</sup> For their part, the Friends at Stratford could not fail to be impressed by the intellectual prowess of their newest member. In giving up a lucrative and high-profile position in the Lutheran Church, Meidel resembled the characteristics of the first generation of Friends who were prepared to sacrifice power and wealth in their search for truth. In view of the sacrifices he himself had made in changing his faith, Meidel saw himself as a missionary who was committed to the proselytising of others.

Emerging as a leading member of Barking Monthly Meeting, Meidel attended meetings for business, sanctioned action against erring Friends, assisted in poor relief payments, and signed a removal certificate on behalf of one Friend who sought permission to emigrate to Philadelphia. Meidel was indeed so valued by the meeting that between 1701 and 1702 he was asked to enquire into the activities of Maria Holland who had 'run into debt'.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, the London Morning Meeting placed their trust in him, especially when in October 1700 he offered to undertake a Danish translation of William Penn's *Key Opening the Way*, a study which explored Quaker theology and was subtitled, *Opening the Way to Every Capacity; How to Distinguish the Religion Professed by the People Called Quakers, from the Perversions and Misrepresentations of their Adversaries; With a Brief Exhortation to All Sorts of People to Examine Their Ways, and Their Hearts, and Turn Speedily to the Lord*.<sup>17</sup> The Meeting for Sufferings alluded to this translation in April 1702 as well as to Meidel's willingness to provide a Danish translation of Robert Barclay's *Apology*.<sup>18</sup> Meidel also encouraged Quaker missionary work and was keen to take a leading role in it.

Yet such ostensibly provocative activities as missionary campaigns, which had been apparent in the years leading up to 1689, nevertheless still infuriated some clergyman of the Church of England after the Toleration Act had been passed. In fact, the very presence of itinerant preachers aroused hostility, and as a result of the work of conservative missionaries the label of deviancy could still be attached to Quakers as a whole, in spite of their quest for acceptance and growing respectability. In the papers of Henry Cadbury there is further evidence that Meidel quickly became accepted as a Quaker minister, but courted controversy. In an undated episode the Norwegian Friend publicly contradicted the Lutheran Pastor Ivor Briuch during his church service, for which he was arrested and confined to prison.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, on 24 February 1701 at Green's Coffeehouse in Finch Lane, Cornhill, London, Meidel, along with

the Quaker convert, minister, and writer, Richard Claridge (1649–1723), became involved in a disputation with the London Baptist minister and controversialist writer Benjamin Keach (1640–1704).<sup>20</sup> Keach complained at Claridge's earlier decision to leave the Baptist Church, in which he had served as a minister, and suggested that he had become deluded, but Claridge rejected Keach's arguments, and stated that it was Keach who was acting under a delusion by accepting maintenance as a minister. This, Keach observed, was lawful and proceeded to reflect upon the Quakers' omission of water-baptism and the eucharist. Both Claridge and Meidel contended that water-baptism was not sanctioned by the Gospels,<sup>21</sup> while Meidel remarked that there was no need for water-baptism, particularly to 'those that had that of the spirit, water-being but an outward thing or shadow, and not the inward substance'.<sup>22</sup>

#### MEIDEL'S MISSIONARY ACTIVITY

In the passing years Meidel must have thought about Norway and the family he had left behind, and on 2 March 1702 he told the London Morning Meeting that he wanted 'to goe into his Native Country', seeking their permission to do so. Although aware that this journey might be dangerous for a Quaker minister, George Whitehead (1636?–1723), a prominent London Friend, felt that it was equally unwise to discourage him.<sup>23</sup> After securing the necessary approbation of the Friends of Barking Monthly Meeting,<sup>24</sup> Meidel set off to visit his brother<sup>25</sup> and other relatives in Norway. At first Meidel received a 'kind reception' in Norway,<sup>26</sup> but the Bishop of Norway took exception to his prolonged visit and, after informing the Danish governor of Norway of his activities, Meidel was arrested at Skien and confined at his brother's house.<sup>27</sup> The reason for his arrest was to 'prevent his spreading... the venomous Doctrine of Quakerisme' as well as an allegation that he was employed 'to hire persons there to Transport themselves to America'.<sup>28</sup> Elsewhere in the Norwegian accounts it is suggested that, while in Norway, he sought to promote his Danish translation of William Penn's *Key*, and other Quaker literature. Furthermore, he became embroiled in a three-day disputation at Eidanger in the county of Telemark, with Pastor Halvor Nielsen Gierpen.<sup>29</sup> Given the significant development of William Penn's 'Quaker Colony' in Pennsylvania,<sup>30</sup> the Norwegian authorities were closely monitoring Friends' activities. The town council of Skien had summoned the townspeople calling for information about Meidel's whereabouts and warning them not to provide the Quaker with accommodation.<sup>31</sup>

On 25 January 1703, in order to exonerate Friends and Meidel in particular from any wrong-doing, four leading Friends, George Whitehead, William Penn, Theodore Eccleston (1651–1726), and Daniel Quare (1648/9–1724), were called upon to write to Prince George in an attempt to rescind the order for the house-arrest. One week later, Whitehead and Quare reported that they had been granted an audience with the prince, where they explained the circumstances of Meidel's arrest and 'desired him to endeavour to influence the magistrates there to be favourable to him'. Prince George was persuaded by their arguments and stated that he 'was agst persecution and yt he would doe what he could for him'.<sup>32</sup> Other Friends, aware of Meidel's limited funds, wrote to the Meeting for Sufferings advising it that between

£10 and £20 should be given to assist him.<sup>33</sup> Such was the influence of Friends that by the end of the month Daniel Quare was able to report that Prince George had persuaded the Chief Minister of Denmark to write to the Principal Secretary of State to intervene on Meidel's behalf. On 19 February 1703 the Meeting of Sufferings was able to note that the king of Denmark had personally become involved in the case and Meidel was quickly released.<sup>34</sup> By April 1703 he was preparing to leave Skien for London.<sup>35</sup>

Undaunted by his experiences in Norway, in February 1704 Meidel, accompanied by John Everett (n.d.), visited Friends in the West Country, but there is no evidence of their activities.<sup>36</sup> In the following June, Meidel and John Padley (c. 1660–1723/4) proposed to the Morning Meeting that they should visit the Yearly Meeting at Amsterdam. This suggestion was warmly received, and removal certificates on their behalf were drawn up.<sup>37</sup> In August 1704 Meidel and Padley informed the Morning Meeting that they had received a warm welcome from Quakers and attenders in Holland, and in March 1705 Meidel, along with John Salkeld (1662–1738/9), proposed to revisit the Dutch Friends.<sup>38</sup> A letter written from John Clause (fl. 1664–1705) on behalf of the Quarterly Meeting of Friends at Amsterdam to the London Yearly Meeting in May 1705 indicated that Meidel and his companion, Salkeld, had visited them, while Friends at Rotterdam were 'glad of them and refreshed with them in ye sense & love of ye Truth and Life'.<sup>39</sup>

In a later account, Salkeld and Meidel provided a memoir of their experiences while in Holland.<sup>40</sup> They noted the devotion of the members at Rotterdam, although they were few in number, and of two Friends at Haarlem.<sup>41</sup> The pair also attended the Quarterly Meeting at Amsterdam and held several other meetings with Friends and attenders. They also witnessed in Amsterdam the conversion of a Lutheran minister who 'confest to ye Truth, and Expressed his Satisfaction, wishing that ye Lord might unite our hearts as our hands then were'.<sup>42</sup> They had similar success at Harlingen in Friesland where they held meetings with Friends and secured the convincement of 'a collegiant'<sup>43</sup> who had initially sought information about the Society. The tolerance of the Netherlanders towards Quakers was in evidence when the two missionaries went to the University of Friesland in Leeuwarden where the librarian and other members of staff were 'very Civil and Corteous to us'. The same warm reception was given at Emden and at Hamburg, while at Frederickstadt in Holstein they were able to hold 'good and comfortable meetings' and met 'a seeking and tender people'.<sup>44</sup> Further details of this journey were provided by Thomas Story (1670?–1742) who intimated in his journal that Meidel preached in the streets of Tanning (Tönning in modern-day Schleswig-Holstein), which was then occupied by the Swedes under Charles III. Here he met opposition and the magistrates had him apprehended and removed from the city. After two days of rough treatment he appealed to the governor of the city who arranged to meet him. The official explained that he could not overturn the earlier decision, but wished Meidel a safe journey and even offered the Quaker a sum of money, which was refused since Meidel was 'not under any necessity'.<sup>45</sup>

Later meetings were held in northern Holland, notably at Twisk where the Friends made a distinction between those who 'own the Truth in Doctrine, but shun the

Cross in bearing ye name of a Quaker'. The two Friends were altogether satisfied with their missionary endeavours but were also aware that Dutch members needed help in maintaining the code of discipline, particularly in burying their dead, and in opening shops on public fast and feast days.<sup>46</sup> Later that autumn Meidel requested 'a certificate of his conversation and unity with Friends' to complete this missionary work in the Netherlands.<sup>47</sup> There was a recognition that in parts of Europe religious toleration had been granted, particularly in the lands of the king of Prussia, Frederick William I, but that some areas were less welcoming, such as Hanover where the city government had passed an edict to prosecute dissenters.<sup>48</sup> Meidel remarked that in the visit he conducted there with John Padley in 1704 they had found a degree of toleration among the church ministers, but this had been discouraged by the state authorities who feared the influence of the Unitarian beliefs known as Socinianism.<sup>49</sup>

Meidel's activities, as well as earlier attempts by Quakers to proselytise on the Continent, should nevertheless be placed in a wider European context as they provide some insight into religious divisions and the persecution of minority religious groups. His behaviour ought to be related to other cotemporary religious movements that were active in Europe. The persecution of Protestants in Habsburg-dominated territories meant that religious refugees sought protection in the lands of the Electors of Brandenburg-Prussia and Saxony. Other religious groups also emerged, including the Dutch-Swiss Anabaptist Mennonites in the sixteenth century. Quaker missionaries sought to influence these groups and to that end William Caton (1636-1665), John Stubbs (1618-1694), and William Ames (d. 1662) attempted to secure Quaker meetings in Holland and North Germany, while Stephen Crisp (1628-1692) is accredited with establishing the Quaker community in the Low Countries between 1663 and 1670. Crisp also expelled apostate Quakers in Friesland, Harlem, and Leiden in the early 1670s, and was active in promoting the Quaker message throughout this decade and the early 1680s to the Low Countries.<sup>50</sup>

William Penn made missionary visits to northern Europe in the 1670s, especially to Herford (c. 1671) where, along with Benjamin Furly (1636-1714) and Thomas Rudyard (c. 1692), he failed to convert the Labadists who had been given shelter by Princess Elisabeth of the Palatinate, the Abbess of Fräuleinstift (1618-1680). In 1677, Fox, Penn, George Keith (1638-1716), and Robert Barclay (1664-1718) travelled to Germany and Holland to develop the work of earlier Friends, and to 'find new converts among like-minded Pietists, especially in the volatile Palatinate region'.<sup>51</sup> Swiss Mennonites, French Huguenots, and Hungarian Hutterites had sought protection in this region.<sup>52</sup> In 1688, Penn visited The Hague, which encouraged Friends to propagate as well as defend their message against constant criticism, including taunts that Penn favoured Socinianism. Apart from the Quakers other Dissenting groups were active in northern Europe, notably the breakaway Amish community who in 1693 practised a more conservative theology, while in 1722 Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760) established a model Christian community, the Herrnhut, for persecuted refugees from Moravia on his Berthelsdorf estate in Saxony. He hoped they would follow the pietistic traditions of Philip Jacob Spener and August Hermann Francke, but initially the community was riven with internal disputes until August 1727 when a new sense of unity prevailed.<sup>53</sup>

These pietistic communities were concerned that religion had become too formalised and they therefore emphasised the internal workings of the Holy Spirit as their forbearers had done. They believed that the world was a sinful place, corrupted by excessive consumption, immorality, and in desperate need of moral regeneration. As Kevin Herlihy has observed, 'the impetus for social reform was couched in paradigms that emphasised training individuals to conform to outward moral precepts devised by the educated'. Members of these communities, especially young adults, were told 'to count the cost of religion' to ensure that they would not become the victims of a corrupt and transient world. Yet, as he points out, these high moral standards were difficult to maintain and consequently members of these groups were prone to bouts of anxiety as they had to possess 'zeal with candour and moderation...sobriety with cheerfulness...without anything inclining to sallies of levity'.<sup>54</sup> As Geraint H. Jenkins has observed for Dissenters elsewhere in Europe, these reformers were 'profoundly suspicious of worldly pleasures', and determined to reform 'the habits of moral and social discipline, efficiency and restraint, decorum of bearing and propriety of speech, sobriety, caution and thrift'.<sup>55</sup> These same religious exiles had a significant presence in Denmark and Norway, and Quaker missionaries can be counted among this group of radical European moral reformers.<sup>56</sup>

#### MEIDEL'S CHALLENGE TO EARLY MODERN CULTURE

During the early eighteenth century Meidel elaborated upon the views of Friends towards current religious practices and popular customs. Accompanied by Richard Claridge, on 16 September 1705 Meidel attended the funeral of Elizabeth Skinner, a member of the Barking Meeting. Skinner's son, a non-member, had decided to have his mother buried in the parish churchyard in direct opposition to the wishes of the Society.<sup>57</sup> Meidel and Claridge testified against this activity, especially the placing of mourning cloth upon the coffin, but they were warned by the curate that they faced prosecution if they continued to disrupt his work. Meidel nevertheless persisted and at the graveside he 'exhorted the people to repentance, and to warn them in the fear and dread of the Lord'.<sup>58</sup> This action warranted a further rebuke by the curate, while the clerk informed Meidel that he would be arrested unless he stopped preaching. Undeterred, the Quaker continued his testimony, but was interrupted by the minister's son and the churchwarden, who 'came in a rude and unchristian manner, saying, He should not preach there, and pulled him from the place where he stood'.<sup>59</sup>

Eventually, Meidel was ejected from the churchyard, while Claridge continued the testimony. What is interesting is the way that the Quaker's assailants are depicted in his account, and in a spirit which rather reflects the typical attitudes of pre-Revolution Friends rather than the growing respectability and quietism of the Society in the eighteenth century. Thus, apparently oblivious to the provocative nature of their own actions, these Friends denounced the minister's son as 'a vain young fellow' and the churchwarden as 'a man of a loose conversation', but without sufficiently questioning the reasons why they were so forcibly removed.<sup>60</sup> Not content with the graveside testimony, both Friends preached on this occasion outside the *Anchor and Crown* in Barking, calling upon the people to repent and to avoid 'false teachers, who

make merchandize of their souls, divining for money, and preaching for hire, and from all false ways and worships, and recommend them to the true teacher sent of God, Jesus Christ'.<sup>61</sup> They attracted a huge but peaceful crowd—'some hundreds' is suggested—and put this down to the power of their message rather than to the peculiar sight of two men railing against the official belief-systems of the crowd which had gathered.<sup>62</sup>

On May-day 1706, Meidel composed an attack upon the popular culture of his neighbours and others in Stratford in Essex. Five hundred copies of the broadside entitled 'Assembled to Dance' were later published by Friends.<sup>63</sup> In this tract Meidel drew upon biblical testimony (Eccl. 3.4) to observe that there was a 'Time to Mourn and a Time to Dance', and questioned, as a 'lover of your souls', whether that was an appropriate time for people to be dancing. He pointed out that in biblical times dancers were a 'Stiff-necked People, who quickly turned aside out of the way' in times of adversity,<sup>64</sup> while the Prophets, Christ, and His followers, 'whom ye profess to follow', did not indulge in 'Fiddling, Dancing, Singing, Playing, Masquing, Gaming, Bowling, Ringing, Fencing, Bull- and Bear-Baiting, Cock-Fighting, Ranting and Revelling'. Meidel saw these practices as pagan and thereby detestable:

To whom do you keep your *May-Days*, and set up *May-Poles*, and *Garlands*, and play your *May-Games*, and Sing your *May-Songs*, and Dress your Houses and Places of Worship with *May*? Was it not in former times to the Goddess *Maia*, or the Strumpet *Flora*? And did not the Heathens *Dance*, and keep their *Floralia*, or Feasts of Flowers and Blossoms to Worship her, and in acknowledgment of this their *Bountiful Goddess*, like the Milk-Folks now with the Pails, Garlands, Silver and Gold upon their Heads.<sup>65</sup>

He called on these 'foolish' and 'unwise' people to consider their Protestant forebearers at Stratford, especially the thirteen martyrs who were burned to death under Mary I near to where they were holding their May-dances.<sup>66</sup> Finally, in a damning critique of alehouse culture, Meidel emphasised the moral dangers associated with this popular activity:

And you who keep Taverns and Ale-Houses, and such like Publick Houses, do not imagine that a Blessing will attend you and yours, if you go about to Enrich yourselves by Encouraging the Sins of the People... Consider how many Sins you do encourage by allowing that one great Sin of *Excessive Drinking*. It is this that often stirs up *Vain Mirth*, *Foolish Jesting*, *Wanton Singing and Dancing*, *Gaming and Playing*; Nurseth up *Lewdness*, *Whoredom*, and *Debauchery*; Provokes to *Cursing*, and *Swearing*; Occasions *Quarrelling*, *Fighting* and *Murther*; Renders People *Brutish*, *Sottish*, *Idle*, *Unfit for Business*, and *Contemptible* in the sight of God and Sober Men; and such often turn to *Robbing* and *Stealing*, and so come at last to the *Gallows*.<sup>67</sup>

Whether this activity or a more public demonstration of his opposition to popular culture caused his arrest or not is unclear, but the London Morning Meeting minutes record in April 1707 that he had been imprisoned at Newgate a little while after publishing this broadside.<sup>68</sup>

Meidel's missionary work also took him to Wales. In an account of Friends who visited Thornbury Meeting in Wiltshire in June 1706, there is a brief reference to a visit Meidel undertook. While there he met Elisha Beadles, minister and clerk of the



Pont-y-Moel meeting in Monmouthshire, and the two men travelled together towards Bristol.<sup>69</sup> Presumably, it was at that time that Beadles invited Meidel to Monmouthshire, an invitation he took up in the following year. In that county Friends had continued to hold outdoor or 'gathered' meetings at market towns. In 1707 these meetings caused Thomas Andrews, the vicar of Trefddyn parish at Pontypool in Monmouthshire, to complain in an open letter that 'for some weeks past [Friends had] taken a very Riotous Liberty of assembling in the open streets'.<sup>70</sup> Andrews also testified that in these meetings itinerant Quaker preachers simply resorted to verbal attacks upon the clergy rather than offering any new doctrines. He stated that 'they invidiously and falsly reproach'd our Establish'd Worship, as Anti-Scriptural and Carnal; Our Ecclesiastical Discipline, as Tyrannical and Ungodly; and the Ministers of Religion, as Mercenary and Hypocritical, regarding more the handfulls of Barley [tithes-payments], than the Good of Souls'.<sup>71</sup> In the same year Andrews condemned the visit by these Quakers to the sick wife of a clergyman. This visit, Andrews claimed, left her 'ranting for several days' as her mind was corrupted into believing that those who received tithes or went to the parish church were in league with the devil.<sup>72</sup>

#### REINTERPRETING THE LAW

The attacks upon ministers during their services had not ceased either. Andrews recorded that, although the Quakers professed humility, it was a 'sham and that for all their pretended meekness in turning t'other cheek upon an Inquiry, they can yet (occasionally) give me first blow, and, without any provocation, fly in the face even of the Constitution itself'.<sup>73</sup> Andrews was in no doubt that Clause 18 of the Toleration Act was designed to prevent Nonconformist preachers from disrupting services and, therefore, he viewed the Quakers' intimidating behaviour as a blatant infringement of the law. As evidence, Andrews stated that on 22 January 1707 his service at Trefddyn parish had been disrupted by Meidel, Philip Mashman,<sup>74</sup> and several Welsh Friends who made 'several antick postures'. He was again disrupted while concluding his sermon by Meidel's pronouncements on the nature of sin. Meidel announced that pride, idolatry, whoredom, and drunkenness were sins, but Andrews observed that 'he taught us no new doctrine at that time, unless that it was absurd in men to bow at the name of Jesus, when Jesus was within 'em'.<sup>75</sup> Andrews felt that Meidel and the other Quakers had 'insulted the Constitution' because, although toleration had been granted, the government had not intended Nonconformists to undermine the church's authority or rant at the clergy during divine service.<sup>76</sup> Meidel and other missionary Quakers were willing to risk imprisonment but sought to show that the law was open to interpretation. In their defence, Meidel and the Welsh Friends argued that the accusation of riotous assembly could not be substantiated since the Society 'neither use force nor Arms, nor had any other Intent than to worship the Lord'.<sup>77</sup> In advancing this argument, Friends, including Meidel, chose to ignore the fact that their disruptive behaviour was indeed in contravention of the law as it then stood.

Meidel's disruptive tactics were also deployed on a visit to Cornish Friends.<sup>78</sup> There he was arrested and imprisoned at Launceston gaol where he remained until

he was brought before the magistrates at the Quarter Sessions at Truro. The magistrate fined Meidel £20 for disturbing the clergy at Liskeard during divine service. In response, Meidel insisted that he had sat quietly in the church and had not spoken to the congregation until the minister had finished his sermon. He then called upon them to repent and amend their lives, after which he was arrested for causing a disturbance. Again it seems as if Meidel and the authorities were interpreting the law in different ways. According to Clause XVIII of the Toleration Act

if any person... shall willingly and of purpose, maliciously or contemptuously come into any cathedral or parish church, chapel, or other congregation permitted by this act, and disquiet or disturb the same, or misuse any preacher or teacher, such person or persons, upon proof thereof before any justice of peace, by two or more sufficient witnesses, shall find two sureties to be bound by recognizance.<sup>79</sup>

Meidel chose to believe that he was entitled to challenge the clergyman after the delivery of the sermon, whereas the law explicitly prohibited such disputation on church property and especially during the church service. The recorder of the Cornish Sufferings provided an interesting insight into the problems this kind of activity was causing for eighteenth-century Friends. Although the clerk acknowledged that Meidel went to Liskeard church for a 'conscientious engagement' and not for profit or pleasure, he questioned the merits of such an action. Even so, he noted that Meidel deserved the compassion of Friends. He was aware that the Norwegian might have taken this action in response to the apostate Quaker George Keith's earlier intervention at a Quaker meeting before Meidel's arrival in Cornwall.<sup>80</sup> Meidel, however, was eager to distinguish between his own dignified and quiet action in the parish church and Keith's 'going with abundance of Rabble noises & disturbance'.<sup>81</sup> Meidel was an intelligent man and it is difficult to escape the conclusion that he was interpreting the law to his own advantage. He argued that he had not violated the Toleration Act's prohibition of disruption of religious worship since he had been a passive observer of the clergyman's service and had spoken only after 'the priest had in appearance ended'. In contrast, Keith by his very demonstrative action had not upheld those principles and, 'as a notorious offender', ought to have been prosecuted.<sup>82</sup>

Meidel also had to defend himself against accusations that he was a Jesuit or Catholic priest, a typical feature of seventeenth-century accusations.<sup>83</sup> Admittedly, Meidel had refused to take the oath of allegiance to Queen Anne (which explicitly repudiated the Pope's rights over the queen and the realm), but this was because of the Friends' reluctance to swear oaths rather than being indicative of their allegiance to the papacy. As the Cornish Friends observed, Meidel supported the Queen's 'Right of Government' and acknowledged 'due subjection to her & denies the pretended power of the pope or that he or any other prince or potentate hath any souveraigne Right or Jurisdiction within the Queen's dominions'.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, they stressed that even if Meidel had tendered the oath to the local civic authorities he would not have received any benefit from the magistrates at the Quarter Sessions since they had already fixed the fine and his term of imprisonment. In order to cast Meidel as a corrupting influence in the community, who was able to manipulate the terms of his imprisonment, damning evidence was manufactured by unspecified

opponents in the area. It was alleged that he lived 'gluttonously and luxuriously', while in contrast he was able to argue that the keeper of Launceston prison, the keeper's family, and visitors to the gaol could vouch for his 'temperance and moderation'.<sup>85</sup>

In the final comments of the Cornish Friends submitted to the Truro magistrates, the reader is able to detect a discernible difference from the statements of Friends' behaviour in the years before the Toleration Act. Whereas in this earlier period 'the Lambs War' was all pervasive,<sup>86</sup> by the early years of the eighteenth century Friends were far more circumspect. Meidel and his Cornish Friends were prepared to state that he acted independently of the local meeting of Friends and so was completely responsible for his own actions. The Society was to be judged blameless since it was 'an inward impulse on his owne mind, and noe way by the advice confederacy or foreknowledge of sd People who looks on it as their duty to Live peaceably with all men as much as in them Lyes'.<sup>87</sup> Friends were all too anxious to accommodate the post-Revolution authorities and their laws. As various historians of Quakerism have observed, the Friends had gradually retreated from their position as a radical sect and were increasingly motivated by the need to secure their status as a respectable denomination.<sup>88</sup> Michael Mullett and Nicholas Morgan have, however, questioned some of these explanations. For Mullett, the attainment of denominational status was accomplished at the cost of the Society's prolonged existence, and the transformation was far from comprehensive. He has argued that in Lancashire, Hanoverian Quakers continued to demonstrate most of the characteristics of a sect.<sup>89</sup> Nicholas Morgan has reinforced Mullett's findings, and has reservations about those studies which view Friends' code of conduct as a negative force.<sup>90</sup> Indeed, Morgan's research on Lancashire suggests that until the 1760s the code was 'a tool to stimulate spiritual growth'.<sup>91</sup> While the evidence by Mullett and Morgan appears to refute the traditional view that the roots of decline can be found in the imposition of discipline after 1690, their arguments apply only to the particular relationship that Lancashire Friends had with the Church and State. Yet, for others, notably David Scott who has examined York Quakers, there is evidence of a rapprochement with the wider community.<sup>92</sup> What these studies thereby indicate is that Quakerism continued to be regionally distinctive, and that there were diverse responses by members to different aspects of the code of discipline. For Cornish Friends there was an acknowledgment that Meidel, driven by 'the Inner Light', was prepared to suffer for his beliefs as he earnestly believed that 'the Lord turned hearts to break off the yoke of oppression'.<sup>93</sup> As a convert, he wanted to embrace all of the struggles and sacrifices of the first generation of Friends. While on the one hand the Society was progressively moving towards a better rapprochement with the State and its religious settlement, Meidel, on the other hand, clung to mid-seventeenth-century Quaker values and the methods of preaching of the early Friends.

One of the last known references to Meidel is in a letter written on 22 August 1708 from the Grand Châtelet, a Parisian gaol where he had been a prisoner for two weeks.<sup>94</sup> According to the letter, he had originally been arrested at Pont where he was held for one week, and later detained at St Lys for a further week,<sup>95</sup> before finally being imprisoned at the Grand Châtelet. Here he referred to a great number of

prisoners of different nationalities and social backgrounds, and acknowledged that he was looking for employment to support himself while in France.<sup>96</sup> Despite his arrest, on his way to the Parisian gaol he called on the Parisians to repent:

Repentez vous de vos péchés, O vous Parisiens, et le bon Dieu vous visitera avec la connaissance salutaire de sa vérité: et il vous aidera au temps de l'adversité, lequel viendra sur tous ceux qui persèverent dans leurs iniquités.<sup>97</sup>

(Repent your sins, O you Parisians, and the merciful God will impart you with the salutary knowledge of his truth: and he will help you in times of adversity, which will come to all those who persevere in their wickedness.)

Moreover, he acknowledged that he had been treated 'civilly and kindly by most or all of the better sort', but was prepared to suffer as 'a poor...traveller, who desires the prosperity of Zion'.<sup>98</sup> At this point the information on Meidel runs out and no further details on the last years of his life are available, apart from an unconfirmed claim that he had embraced Roman Catholicism and spent his remaining years in Ireland.<sup>99</sup> It is conjectured by Henry Cadbury that he had died by July 1715, since an inheritance from his half-sister in that year was to be administered by Gerhard Meidel, their brother, on behalf of Christopher's son.<sup>100</sup> Since nothing is known about Meidel's own family this cannot be corroborated.

In considering the available evidence, what can scholars make of Christopher Meidel's missionary work and the persecution he suffered? It is clear that he was passionate about proselytising, and although Friends continued to send ministers to evangelise, the methods used by some of them were increasingly being frowned upon. The more 'radical' elements of Meidel's preaching certainly provoked a reaction, both in post-Revolution Britain and in the more hostile parts of Europe. He was, nevertheless, prepared to suffer as the early generations of Friends had done, but the question is whether his actions worked against the spirit of the Act of Toleration. Indeed, how workable was the legislation when it could be easily circumvented? It ought to be remembered that there had been similar ameliorating enactments in the seventeenth century, notably Charles II's Declaration of Indulgence in 1672, before another wave of persecution in the Tory reaction of the early 1680s was followed by James II's two Declarations of Indulgence of 1687 and 1688. It has been argued here that some Friends were interpreting the law in their own way, while others were not only going against the spirit of the Act but its very wording.

At the same time, it can be seen that Meidel's actions went against the internal regulatory behaviour of the Society in the eighteenth century, or at least ran counter to the willingness of most Friends to adopt the changes in their own behaviour, which had made possible the Society's transition from a reviled sect to a kind of tolerated and tolerable denomination.<sup>101</sup> Meidel's work and his willingness to suffer persecution were in that sense anachronistic—a throwback to the old dissent of the 'Saints', but did his apologia of c. 1699 to the Independents offer a new way forward? Undoubtedly, Meidel's Norwegian Lutheran background needs to be taken into consideration when making an assessment of his later career. Did he throw off the conditioning of his upbringing and become a more passionate Quaker as a consequence? As already shown, he relinquished a comfortable position as a chaplain in a

royal household, and rejected the accoutrements of a minister of a Lutheran Church and Independent preacher, in order to follow the plainness and simplicity of Quakerism. Arguably, it was the sheer scale of this sacrifice that invested his ministry with such didactic authority and an absolute unwillingness to negotiate his view of the world.

## NOTES

\* Library of the Society of Friends, London (LSF), Case 19, Transcript of a loose paper in a volume of Cornish Sufferings 'The case of Christopher Meidel prisoner at ye Casstle in Launceston presented to the consideration of the Justices at their Q[uar]ter Sessions at Truroe' (c. 1707). This study was first presented to the Quaker Studies Research Association at Woodbrooke College in 2005. I have benefited enormously from the help of Josef Keith, Joanna Clark and other members of the Library of the Society of Friends, London.

1. An online search of the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* for 'Quaker' revealed 1304 entries, although a number of the entries in fact represented critics of the Society. See Matthew, H.C.G., and Harrison, B. (eds), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

2. Fell-Smith, C., 'Meidel, Christopher'; rev. Hall, D.J., in Matthew and Harrison (eds), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/18514> (accessed 20 May, 2006).

3. Cadbury, H.J., 'Christopher Meidel and the First Norwegian Contacts with Quakerism', *Harvard Theological Review* 34 (1941), pp. 7-23.

4. For comparative purposes, see 'The Suffering Case of Thomas Rudd, 1699', in Mullett, M.A., *Radical Religious Movements in Early Modern Europe*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1980, pp. 139-40.

5. See Wilson, B., *Sects and Society: A Sociological Study of Three Religious Groups in Britain*, London: Heinemann, 1961, and his 'An Analysis of Sect Development', *American Sociological Review* 24 (February 1959), pp. 3-15; Vann, R.T., *The Social Development of English Quakerism, 1655-1755*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969, Chapter 6; Isichei, E., 'From Sect to Denomination among English Quakers', in Wilson, B. (ed.), *Patterns of Sectarianism: Organisation and Ideology in Social and Religious Movements*, London: Heinemann, 1967, pp. 1-14; Mullett, M., 'From Sect to Denomination', *Journal of Religious History* 13 (1984), pp. 168-91; Leachman, C.L., 'From an "Unruly Sect" to a Society of "Strict Unity": The Development of Quakerism in England, c. 1650-89', PhD thesis, University of London, 1997. Miller has persuasively argued that Friends after 1660 were attempting 'to scale down the Lamb's War'; see Miller, J., "'A Suffering People": English Quakers and their Neighbours, c. 1650-c. 1700', *Past and Present* 177 (August 2005), pp. 71-103 (91-92).

6. For example, in 1697 William Jenkins was censured in Monmouthshire for his 'ranterish' behaviour. See Glamorgan Record Office D/DSF/325.

7. Much of this background information is provided in Gløersen, A.T., *Slaegten Meidell-i Norge og Danmark*, Kristiania, 1903, pp. 11-15; and Cadbury, 'First Norwegian Contacts with Quakerism', pp. 13-15.

8. The University of Roskilde is approximately 30 kilometres west of Copenhagen. For details of Meidel's matriculation see Smith, S.B., *Kjøbenhavns Universitets Matrikel, 1611-1740*, 2 vols., Copenhagen, 1889-94, II, p. 75, and cited in Cadbury, 'First Norwegian contacts with Quakerism', p. 13 n. 13.

9. Bevan, J.G., *Piety promoted... the tenth part*, London, 2nd edn, 1811, pp. iii; Hall, 'Christopher Meidel'. This was not the first encounter Norwegians had with Quakerism. For details on seventeenth-century activity see LSF, Port. 36.35, Letter of George Fox to Margartet Fell, dated 9.4.1674 which refers to Friends in Norway ('Norraway') and Holland ('Holond'). See also

Cadbury, 'First Norwegian Contacts with Quakerism', pp. 8-12; Carroll, K.L., 'The First Publishers of Truth in Norway', *Journal of the Friends' Historical Society* 53.3 (1974), pp. 226-31. Moreover, in April 1687 Gerard Jefferson of Norway had removed to Surrey with his wife and family. See LSF, Great Book of Sufferings, 6, pp. 246-47 (Surrey) with the date of 15.2.1687 appended in the margin.

10. It is unclear whether he continued to serve as chaplain to the prince. For details see Harald Faber, *Danske og Norske i London og deres Kirker* (Danes and Norwegians in London and their churches), Copenhagen, 1915, p. 45; Finne-Grønn, S.H., et al., *Geistlig Edsprotokol for Oslo of Hamar Stifter 1601-1730*, Kristiana, 1918, p. 140; Cadbury, 'First Norwegian Contacts with Quakerism', p. 13. Hall, however, suggests that he was the minister of the Danish congregation at Wellclose Square, near Ratcliffe, London, where services were conducted in German. See Thomas Story's account see Story, T., *A Journal of the Life of Thomas Story: containing, an account of his remarkable conviction of, and embracing the principles of truth, as held by the people called Quakers*, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1747, p. 496; Hall, 'Christopher Meidel'.

11. Faber, *Danske og Norske i London og deres Kirker*, p. 45; Hall, 'Christopher Meidel'.

12. No extant information has survived concerning these developments.

13. See Faber, *Danske og Norske*, p. 45; Hall, 'Christopher Meidel'.

14. It has been suggested by Cadbury that Meidel may have been the successor to John James, the ejected lecturer at Newark, Nottinghamshire (c. 1660), who was the pastor of this congregation until his death in 1696. See Haverford College Special Collections, Pennsylvania. MS.1121 (Henry Joel Cadbury Papers, 1910-1974). Box 59.

15. Cadbury, 'First Norwegian Contacts with Quakerism', p. 15. A letter from Henry Gouldney to Sir John Rodes at Barlborough Hall near Chesterfield, Derbyshire, in January 1700 refers to the Norwegian as the 'honest Christopher Midell' who 'continues hopefull' of being of service to the Friends. The letter is provided in Locker-Lampson, S.F., *A Quaker Post-Bag*, London: Longman, 1910, p. 78; Cadbury, 'First Norwegian Contacts with Quakerism', p. 22.

16. LSF, Ms. 11b13. Barking Monthly Meeting, 1691-1715 (no pagination), minutes dated 4.12.1700 (testimony concerning the behaviour of Friends); 2.7.1701 (poor relief payments); 4.9.1701 and 3.12.1701 (removal certificate for John Brown to emigrate).

17. LSF, Morning Meeting Vol. 2 (1692-1700), p. 366 (minutes dated 8mo.1700). This was discussed in subsequent meetings; see Morning Meeting, Vol. 3 (1700-1711), pp. 34, 35 (minutes dated 21.5.1701, 28.5.1701). For further details see <http://www.tractassociation.org/AKey.html> (accessed June 2006).

18. LSF, Meeting for Sufferings, 15 (1700-1702), p. 325 (minutes dated 24.2.1702). The Danish translation of William Penn's *Key Opening the Way...to Discern the Difference* was published in 1705. See Meidel, C., *Een Lidē Nøgel, til at Aabne Veyen for alle, som søge derefter, Hvorved de letteligen kunde, giøre forskiel imellem den Religion, some det Folck kaldet Quækere bekiende, oc Deris Modstanderis Misforstand oc Forvendelser. Med een kort Formaning til alle Folcke, flitteligen at prøve deris Veye, oc betimeligen at onvende sig til Herren...oversat...*, London, 1705. A year earlier the London members had called upon Dutch Friends to assist in the printing of the work, while in June 1710 they reported that Meidel had presented Danish translations of Robert Barclay, *Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, which was published posthumously in 1738. See Meidel, C., *Forsvar for den sande Christelige theologi, som den kundgiøris og praedikis af det folk, som, af foragt, kaldis Quaekere... Skreven paa Latin og Engelsk ved Robert Barclay...oversat...paa Dansk*, London, 1738. He also provided a translation of Barclay's *Catechism and Confession of Faith* which was published in 1717 two years after his death. See Case 21, Yearly Meeting, Vol. 4 (1709-1713), pp. 138-39. Entry dated 2.4.1710; LSF, Morning Meeting, Vol. 3, p. 178 (minutes dated 19.4.1704).

19. It is claimed that while incarcerated he wrote the foreword to his Danish translation of William Dell's book, *Knowledge of [or Teachings concerning] the Baptism*. See Haverford College Special Collections, MS.1121, Box 59.

20. Besse, J. (ed.), *The Life and Posthumous Works of Richard Claridge*, London, 3rd edn, 1836, pp. 92-105. Keach was also embroiled in a long-running argument with James Owen of Oswestry

from the mid-1690s onwards. See Jenkins, G.H., 'James Owen versus Benjamin Keach: A Controversy over Infant Baptism', *Journal of the National Library of Wales* 19.1 (Summer 1975), pp. 57-66.

21. It is not known how the two Quakers circumvented Matt. 3.13.

22. Besse, *The Life and Posthumous Works of Richard*, p. 101. For work on Keach, see Copeland, D.A., *Benjamin Keach and the Development of Baptist Traditions in Seventeenth-Century England*, Lewiston, NY and Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001.

23. LSF, Morning Meeting, Vol. 3, pp. 62, 64 (minutes dated 2.1.1701-2, 16.1.1701-2); Cadbury, 'First Norwegian Contacts with Quakerism', p. 15.

24. They had provided him with the necessary letter of recommendation, but in this particular case it was written in Latin. LSF, Ms.11b13, minutes dated 7.2.1702. During this period Meidel is recorded as living at Shatford in the parish of West Ham.

25. Presumably Gerhard Meidel, a minister at Holden. For further details of the Meidel family, see Cadbury, 'First Norwegian Contacts with Quakerism', p. 13.

26. LSF, Morning Meeting, Vol. 3, p. 84 (minutes dated 2.9.1702). The journey is also related in Cadbury, 'First Norwegian Contacts with Quakerism', pp. 16-17.

27. David J. Hall suggests that this date was 1700, but the minutes of the Meeting for Sufferings suggests this much later date. LSF, Meeting for Sufferings, 16 (1702-3), p. 144 (minutes dated 15.11.1702) and referring to a letter from John Clause at Amsterdam. The Morning Meeting in January 1703 specified that Meidel had been prevented from returning to London by poor weather conditions, while the Bishop of Norway believed that Quakerism was 'worse than popery'. See LSF, Morning Meeting, Vol. 3, pp. 91-92 (minutes dated 4.11.1702-3).

28. LSF, Meeting for Sufferings, 16 (1702-3), p. 144

29. Anon., *Bokem om Bøker. Aarsskrift for Bokvenner*, 7 vols., Oslo, 1926-45, I, p. 151; Haverford College Special Collections, MS.1121, Box 59.

30. For a recent study of the growth of Pennsylvania and Friends involvement, see Allen, R.C., 'In Search of a New Jerusalem: A Preliminary Investigation into Welsh Quaker Emigration to North America c. 1660-1750', *Quaker Studies* 9 (September 2004), pp. 31-53.

31. Gløersen, *Slægten Meidell i Norge og Danmark*, p. 129ff, and cited in Cadbury, 'First Norwegian Contacts with Quakerism', p. 17.

32. LSF, Meeting for Sufferings, 16, pp. 144, 148 (minutes dated 15.11.1702, 22.11.1702). See also Morning Meeting, Vol. 3, pp. 94, 99 (minutes dated 11.11.1702-3, 25.11.1702-3).

33. LSF, Meeting for Sufferings, 16, pp. 148-49. The correspondent was Edwaes Hartswell.

34. LSF, Meeting for Sufferings, pp. 153, 171 (minutes dated 29.11.1702, 19.12.1702); Morning Meeting, Vol. 3, p. 100 (minutes dated 1.12.1702-3).

35. LSF, Meeting for Sufferings, 16, p. 196 (minutes dated 9.2.1703).

36. LSF, Case 51 no. 63. Account of Ministering Friends who visited Thornbury from 1703 to 1730. The Friends had travelled from Bristol to Thornbury en route for Sudbury. The date specified is 8.12.1704.

37. LSF, Morning Meeting, Vol. 3, pp. 177-78 (minutes dated 19.4.1704). The Barking Monthly Meeting also received a letter from Meidel informing them that he was planning to visit Friends in Holland. See LSF, Ms.11b13, minutes dated 4.5.1704.

38. LSF, Morning Meeting, Vol. 3, pp. 181, 194 (minutes dated 14.6.1704, 12.1.1704-5).

39. LSF, Case 30. Epistles received, Vol. 1 (1683-1706), pp. 404-6. To the Yearly meeting of friends in London from ye Quarterly Meeting at Amsterdam... written by John Clause 15.3.1705.

40. LSF, Case 21, Yearly Meeting, Vol. 3 (1702-1708), pp. 202-5. A short account of John Salkelds and Christopher Miedells journey into Holl[an]d and Part of Germany in ye year 1705. Entry dated 3.31.1705.

41. LSF, Case 21, Yearly Meeting, Vol. 3 (1702-1708), p. 202.

42. LSF, Case 21, Yearly Meeting, Vol. 3 (1702-1708), pp. 202-3.

43. For details of the members of the Dutch spiritual movement known as 'the collegiants' see MacCulloch, D., *The Reformation: Europe's House Divided, 1490-1700*, New York and London: Allen Lane, 2003, p. 697.

44. LSF, Case 21, Yearly Meeting, Vol. 3, pp. 203-4.

45. Story, *A Journal of the Life of Thomas Story*, p. 497. Story concluded this brief tale by commenting that in 1712 the city was besieged by Peter I of Russia and the king of Denmark, Frederick IV. He noted that the banks, ditches, gates, and bridges of the city were 'levelled, filled up and demolished, that a stranger can scarce discern where they have been... Yet the inhabitants, being guided by their Priests...do still continue their aversion to Truth'. For brief details of the Great Northern War c. 1700-21 see Anderson, M.S., *War and Society in Europe of the Old Regime*, London: Fontana, 1988, pp. 174-77.

46. LSF, Case 21, Yearly Meeting, Vol. 3, pp. 203-4.

47. LSF, Ms.11b13, minutes dated 4.8.1705.

48. In a later account the London Morning Meeting noted the effect that anti-Quaker literature was having in Germany and recorded that 'we have been greatly misrepresented by some adversaries'. See LSF, Morning Meeting Vol. 4 (1711-1734) (minutes dated 30.5.1722). This may be a reference to the publication of Richard Blome's *The Fanatick History; or, An Exact Relation and Account of the old Anabaptists, and the New Quakers*, London, 1660. This was first published in German c. 1701 as Blome, R., *Historia fanaticorum*, Frankfurt, 1701, and was later reprinted in Corvinus, J.F. (ed.), *Anabaptisticum et enthusiasticum Pantheon und geistliches Rüst-Hauss wider die alten Quacker, und neuen Frey-Geister*, Köthen and Frankfurt, 1702. I am extremely grateful to Erin Bell for these references.

49. LSF, Case 21, Vol. 3, pp. 204-5. Prevalent in the late-sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in Transylvania, Poland and the Netherlands, the Socinians were led by Laelius Socinus/Lelio Sozzini (1525-1564) and Faustus Socinus/Fausto Sozzini (1539-1604). They were sceptical of the Trinity and the divinity of Jesus.

50. For online entries for see McDowell, N., 'Caton, William'; Davies, A., 'Crisp, Stephen'; Gill, C., 'Stubbs, John'; Skidmore, G., 'Ames, William', in Matthew and Harrison (eds), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4898>; <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6707>; <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/69131>; <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/441> (accessed November 2006). Additional information is provided in Crisp, S., *A memorable account of the Christian experiences, gospel labours, travels and sufferings of that ancient servant of Christ, Stephen Crisp*, London, 1694; Sewel, W., *The history of the rise, increase and progress of the Christian people called Quakers*, London, 1722; Hull, W.I., *The Rise of Quakerism in Amsterdam, 1655-1665*, Swarthmore: Swarthmore College, 1938; Hull, W.I., *Benjamin Furly and Quakerism in Rotterdam*, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania: Swarthmore College, 1941; Bernet, C., 'Quaker Missionaries in Holland and North Germany in the Late Seventeenth Century: Ames, Caton and Furly', *Quaker History* 95.2 (Fall 2006), pp. 1-18.

51. Martin, L., 'Female Reformers as the Gate-Keepers of Pietism: The Example of Johanna Eleonora Merlau and William Penn', *Monatshefte* 95.1 (Spring 2003), pp. 30, 37.

52. For further details of Penn's missionary work in 1677, particularly with reference to Johanna Eleonora Merlau and Maria Juliane Baur von Eyseneck, see Martin, 'Female Reformers', pp. 37-49. See also Seidensticker, O., 'William Penn's Travels in Holland and Germany in 1677', *Pennsylvania Magazine of Biography and History* 2.3 (1878), pp. 237-82; Barbour, H.S., *William Penn on Religion and Ethics: The Emergence of Liberal Quakerism*, Lewiston, NY and Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 1991; Geiter, M.K., *William Penn*, New York: Longman, 2000.

53. See Hamilton, J.T., and Hamilton, K.G., *History of the Moravian Church: The Renewed Unitas Fratrum 1722-1957*, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania: Moravian Church in America, 2nd edn, 1983; Freeman, A.J., *An Ecumenical Theology of the Heart: The Theology of Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf*, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania: Moravian Church in America, 1998.

54. Herlihy, K., 'A Gay and Flattering World: Irish Baptist Piety and Perspective, 1650-1780', in Herlihy, K. (ed.), *The Religion of Irish Dissent, 1650-1800*, Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1996, pp. 57-58, 63-64.

55. Jenkins, G.H., *Literature, Religion and Society in Wales 1660-1730*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1978, p. 85.



56. For details of radical reformers and Pietism in Denmark, Norway, and northern Germany as well as Pietist-Quakers in Europe see Olssen, O., *Sekteriske Veraegelser i Kristiania omkring 1706*, Theol. Tidsskr. For den evang.-lutherske kirke i Norge. Ny Raekke 1, 1871, pp. 190-205; Jakubowski-Tiessen, M., 'Der Peitismus in Dänemark and Schleswig-Holstein', in Brecht, M. (ed.), *Geschichte des Pietismus: im Auftrag der Historischen Kommission zur Erforschung des Pietismus*, vol. II, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995, pp. 446-66. I am grateful to the anonymous reader for these references.

57. Besse, *Life and Posthumous Works of Richard Claridge*, pp. 159-64. See also LSF, Port. 14.25, p. 5.

58. Besse, *Life and Posthumous Works of Richard Claridge*, p. 160.

59. Besse, *Life and Posthumous Works of Richard Claridge*, p. 161.

60. Besse, *Life and Posthumous Works of Richard Claridge*, p. 161.

61. Besse, *Life and Posthumous Works of Richard Claridge*, p. 163.

62. Besse, *Life and Posthumous Works of Richard Claridge*, p. 164.

63. LSF, Morning Meeting, Vol. 3, pp. 226, 232 (minutes dated 29.2.1706, 3.4.1706).

64. See Exod. 15.20; 23.19; 2 Sam. 6.4; Ps. 90.4. I am grateful to the anonymous referee for these references.

65. LSF, Broad-sides 'A', p. 146. 'To my neighbours and others, in and about Stratford, near Bow, in Essex, Assembled to Dance on the 1st of the 3[r]d month, called May-Day, 1706. Printed by T. Sowle in White-hart Court in Gracious Street'.

66. For details see Foxe, J., *Actes and Monuments...The Variorum Edition* (1576 edition), hriOnline, Sheffield 2004, <http://www.hrionline.shef.ac.uk/foxe/> (accessed May 2006).

67. LSF, Broad-sides 'A', p. 146. This attitude was earlier provided by the London Quaker John Kelsall senior (1650-84). He perceived increased levels of vice and debauchery around him, and was contemptuous of the world in which he lived. Consequently, he wrote his *Testimony against Gaming, Musick, Dancing, Singing, Swearing and People calling upon God to Damn them. As also against drinking to excess, Whoring, Lying and Cheating...*, London, 1682. In June 1721 his son, John Kelsall junior, during a visit to Llanantfraed in north Wales, condemned maypole dancing. See LSF, Ms. S.193/1, entry dated 23.4.1721. For details of the reform campaigns waged against the behaviour of early modern society, see Shoemaker, R.B., 'Reforming the City: The Reformation of Manners Campaign in London, 1690-1738', in Davison, L., Hitchcock, K.T., and Shoemaker, R.B. (eds), *Stilling the Grumbling Hive: The Response to Social and Economic Problems in England, 1689-1750*, Stroud: Allan Sutton, 1992.

68. LSF, Morning Meeting, Vol. 3, p. 251 (minutes dated 24.2.1707).

69. LSF, Case 51 no. 63. Entry dated 24.4.1706.

70. Andrews, T., *A Serious Expostulation with the People call'd Quakers: By way of a letter to a Parishioner of that persuasion at Pontypool*, London, 1708, p. iii.

71. Andrews, *A Serious Expostulation*, p. iii.

72. Andrews, *A Serious Expostulation*, p. iv.

73. Andrews, *A Serious Expostulation*, p. iii.

74. Another itinerant preacher.

75. Andrews, *Serious Expostulation*, p. iv.

76. Andrews, T., *A Modest Enquiry into the weight of Theodore Eccleston's reply to a Serious Expostulation with the Quakers*, London, 1709, p. 53.

77. Eccleston, T., *A Reply to Tho. Andrews letter to parishioner of Pontypool, called 'A Serious Expostulation with the people call'd Quakers'*, London, 1708, pp. iv, v.

78. LSF, Case 19. The case of Christopher Meidel—prisoner at Launceston Castle...to the Justices...at Truro. 1p folio loose in front cover of the volume of Cornish Sufferings. Extracts are also provided in Haverford College Special Collections, MS.1121, Box 59.

79. *King William's toleration: Being an explanation of that liberty of religion, which may be expected from His Majesty's declaration, with a bill for comprehension & indulgence, drawn up in order to an Act of Parliament*, London, 1689. A microfilm copy is available at Cambridge University Library (Rare

Books). B125.2.9. Reel 637.24. See also Browning, A., *English Historical Documents, 1660–1714*, London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1953, pp. 400–403.

80. 1639?–1716. For a study of Keith and other Quaker divisions see Clark, R.I., 'The Quakers and the Church of England, 1670–1720: Ecclesiastical and Intellectual history', PhD diss., Lancaster University, 1985; Martin, C.J.L., 'Controversy and Disagreement in 17th-century Quakerism', PhD diss., Open University, 2003; Martin, C.J.L., 'Tradition versus Innovation: the Hat, Wilkin-son–Story and Keithian Controversies', *Quaker Studies* 8 (September 2003), pp. 5–22.

81. LSF, Case 19.

82. LSF, Case 19.

83. Reay, B., *The Quakers and the English Revolution*, London: Temple Smith, 1985, pp. 59–60; Kent, S.A., 'The "Papist" Charges Against the Interregnum Quakers', *Journal of Religious History* 12 (1982), pp. 180–90.

84. LSF, Case 19.

85. LSF, Case 19. Henry Cadbury provides some additional information from the Cornish Quarterly Meeting minutes that £10 had been raised for his support, while the Meeting for Sufferings in 1708 reimbursed £12 17s 3d to the Cornish Friends. See Cornwall Quarterly Meeting minutes dated 7.8.1707, 6.11.1707, 12.8.1708, 4.11.1708, and cited in Cadbury, 'First Norwegian Contacts with Quakerism', pp. 19–20.

86. For details, see Reay, *Quakers and the English Revolution*; Morgan, N., *Lancashire Quakers and the Establishment, 1660–1730*, Halifax: Ryburn, 1993, Chapters 1–3, 6; Davies, A., *The Quakers in English Society, 1655–1725*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000, particularly Chapters 1–4, 13; Moore, R., *The Light in their Consciences: Early Quakers in Britain*, Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000. See also three recent articles: Harlow, J., 'Preaching for Hire: Public Issues and Private Concerns in a Skirmish of the Lamb's War', *Quaker Studies* 10 (2005), pp. 31–45; Ayoub, R., 'The Persecution of "an Innocent People" in Seventeenth-century England', *Quaker Studies* 10 (2005), pp. 46–66; Miller, 'A Suffering People', particularly pp. 71–85.

87. LSF, Case 19.

88. See n. 5, and also Hill, C., *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas during the English Revolution*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975, pp. 231–58; Martin, D.A., 'The Denomination', *British Journal of Sociology* 13 (March 1962), pp. 1–14.

89. Mullett, 'From Sect to Denomination', pp. 190–91.

90. Morgan, *Lancashire Quakers*, p. 244.

91. Morgan, *Lancashire Quakers*, p. 269.

92. Morgan, *Lancashire Quakers*, p. 269.

93. LSF, Case 19.

94. Henry Cadbury ('First Norwegian Contacts with Quakerism', p. 20 n. 34) suggests that his was originally written in Latin and possibly addressed to the Dutch Quaker William Sewel.

95. Presumably these are both in, or near, Paris. The Pont is possibly Pont aux Meuniers.

96. Anon., 'Letters from the Past –11: In French Prisons', *Friends' Intelligencer* 98 (1941), p. 513.

97. Cited in Cadbury, 'First Norwegian Contacts with Quakerism', p. 20.

98. Cadbury, 'First Norwegian Contacts with Quakerism', p. 21.

99. Gløersen, *Slaegten Meidell i Norge og Danmark*, p. 131; Cadbury, 'First Norwegian Contacts with Quakerism', p. 21.

100. Haverford College Special Collections, MS.1121, Box 59. This legacy, Cadbury suggests, was never paid out as Gerhard subsequently died in 1717 and the Crown took over responsibility for the inheritance. See Cadbury, 'First Norwegian Contacts with Quakerism', p. 21, who also records an account by Jorgen Erboe, a Langesund customs officer, that Meidel had ruined his father's business.

101. For further developments in the eighteenth century see Allen, R.C., 'An Alternative Community in North-East England: Quakers, morals and popular culture in the Long Eighteenth century', in Berry, H., and Gregory, J. (eds), *Creating and Consuming Culture in North-East England, 1660–1832*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004, pp. 98–119; Miller, 'A Suffering People', pp. 102–3.

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