The University of Hull

Tolerance and Toleration: The experience of the Quakers in East Yorkshire c. 1660 – 1699

Being a thesis submitted for the Degree of Ph.D in the University of Hull

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June 2006

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Abbreviations

BIA	Borthwick Institute of Archives (formerly Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, York)
EBS	Elloughton Monthly Meeting Book of Sufferings
EMM	Elloughton Monthly Meeting Minute Book
ERA	East Riding Archives (Beverley)
FHL	Friends House Library (London)
GBS	Great Book of Sufferings
KBS	Kelk Monthly Meeting Book of Sufferings
KMM	Kelk Monthly Meeting Minute Book
MM	Second Day's Morning Meeting Minute Book
OBS	Owstwick Monthly Meeting Book of Sufferings
OMM	Owstwick Monthly Meeting Minute Book
YQBS	Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting Book of Sufferings
YQMM	Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting Minute Book

Introduction

I

In July 1655 two Quaker travelling ministers from the East Riding of Yorkshire, William Dewsbury and John Whitehead, along with five other Quakers, were tried at Northampton assizes for 'creating a disturbance among the people'. Dewsbury had challenged the minister of Wellingborough, Thomas Andrews, in his parish church, and accused him of being a 'hireling' who preached for money. Edward Atkins, the sitting Judge, imprisoned the group after they refused to pay a bond to guarantee their future behaviour. He concluded that 'you [Quakers] are by common fame accused to be a dangerous people, and breakers of public peace'.[1]

At the end of April 2002, the Court of Appeal upheld the decision to exclude the leader of the Nation of Islam, Louis Farrakhan, from visiting Britain on the basis that his views might provoke public disorder. In November 2000, the then Home Secretary, Jack Straw, stated that Louis Farrakhan posed 'an unwelcome and significant threat to community relations...and a potential threat to public order for that reason'.[2]

These two examples are the best part of 350 years apart. The precise details of the cases are very different. The societies from within which each decision was made are separated by the distance of time, and are also very different. However, in their outcome, and the motivation behind the decisions that were made by those sitting in judgement, the two cases are strikingly similar. In both cases the defendants were members of radical religious movements that held views which were regarded by society at large as being extreme. It was feared that those who were on trial held beliefs that could cause social unrest and civil disturbance, which would fracture the fragile social harmony that exists within any society. Over the course of the last 350 years there have been a vast number of changes within British society, but religious

[1] W. Dewsbury, *A True Testimony of what was done concerning the servants of the Lord at the General Assizes, holden at Northampton the one and twentieth day of the fifth month 1655* (London, 1655), p. 6.
[2] *The Daily Telegraph*, May 1 2002, p. 10.

divisions within the population, and the threat of conflict that they may cause remain as real today as they were in centuries past. The two examples detailed above serve to remind us that religious toleration is a subject that has been emotive and controversial both within Britain, and across the world, for centuries.

Concerns and problems that accompany religious intolerance, such as civil unrest and war, remain problematical today. Testimony to this can be found in the terrorist attacks on America, Madrid, and most recently those in London. The war crimes tribunal at The Hague continues to pursue the Serbian leaders of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia for crimes against humanity that were, at least superficially, religiously motivated. In Northern Ireland some progress towards peace between sectarian Protestant and Catholic groups does seem to have been made, but it is a long and slow process. The conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians, which was originally based principally upon religious motivations, remains unresolved. This is to say nothing of toleration as it concerns issues such as sexuality, race or gender. The society where all individuals and their views are equally tolerated would appear to be a Utopia.

This thesis examines the practice of tolerance and intolerance that surrounded the development of Quakerism in the East Riding of Yorkshire in the mid seventeenth century. It is important to offer a distinction between the terms *tolerance* and *toleration*, which are used in the title of the work. Tolerance refers to the informal and unofficial actions of the local community in their daily relationships with their Quaker neighbours. In practical terms, these could be as insignificant as simply talking to them, trading with them, or not physically attacking them because of their religious beliefs. Toleration refers to the formal, and official, ideas and practice of religious toleration that was sanctioned by the local authorities and central government. Of course, the two are not as easily separable as these definitions suggest. Tolerance and toleration co-existed alongside each other, each impacting upon the other to various degrees throughout the second half of the seventeenth century.

The study is an examination of the tolerance and toleration of the Quaker community in the East Riding. It investigates the extent to which despite, or perhaps because of, increasing uncertainty about official attitudes to religious toleration,

Quakerism was able to take root and develop in the region within what was, effectively, a climate of religious tolerance.

It is based upon the detailed study of the Quaker community in the East Riding, a community that is not always visible at the distance of 350 years, and will, to a certain extent, always remain opaque due to a lack of evidence. A more detailed and critical discussion of the sources that have been used can be found throughout the thesis in the appropriate chapters. However, some information needs to be given here regarding the principal sources that the thesis is based upon and how they have impacted upon its structure.

Alongside this study the Yorkshire Quaker Heritage Project was taking place within the archives in the Brynmor Jones Library at the University of Hull. The YQHP has produced a searchable on-line database of sources and individuals in the Yorkshire region that is of great benefit for those researching any aspect of Quaker history. In the course of the research data was collected and passed on to the project regarding Quaker sufferings up to the end of the eighteenth century. In return, invaluable advice and guidance was received regarding the sources for Quaker history that existed across the region.

Quaker literature was a feature of the development of the movement. Many leading Friends, keen to leave an account of Friends' early years, recorded their history. For example, William Penn published *A Brief Account of the Rise and Progress of the People Call'd Quakers* in 1694, originally intended as a preface for George Fox's journal. William Sewell's *History of the Rise, Increase and Progress of the Christian People Called Quakers* followed in 1714.[3] Quite correctly, Adrian Davies has noted that these early histories took the form of hagiography.[4] They were written from within the Quaker movement in celebration of its evolution and development. More recently, written during the early decades of the twentieth century, William Braithwaite's two-volume grand narrative of Quaker history remains

[3] W. Penn, *A Brief Account of the Rise and Progress of the People Call'd Quakers* (London, 1694); W. Sewell *History of the Rise, Increase and Progress of the Christian People Called Quakers* (London, 1714).
[4] A. Davies, *The Quakers in English Society* (Oxford, 2000), p. 2.

essential reading for anybody interested in the subject. It is meticulously researched and detailed and is an indispensable source for reference.[5]

Adrian Davies's examination of early Friends in Essex is the most recent of a number of subsequent studies of Quakerism. His principal argument is that the Quakers in Essex were more integrated into the local community than has been acknowledged by previous historians of early Quakerism, such as Hugh Barbour and Richard Vann.[6] Davies convincingly shows that although Friends may have initially attempted to withdraw from worldly practices, this attitude changed as the movement developed throughout the second half of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.[7]

In part at least, the failure to recognise the integration of Quakers, and other dissenters, into local communities has been a product of the nature of the research that has taken place. The vast amount of manuscript material that was left by the early Quakers has thrust them towards the historical spotlight. However, the source material left by Friends has too often been examined in isolation from other sources that are available for local communities. Consequently, the impression left by the literature is that Friends somehow lived a separate existence from the rest of society. This is an opinion easily formed from the manuscripts and literature produced by early Friends, which place emphasis on upon their separation and their new form of religious belief and worship.

Within Quaker historiography it is widely accepted that the movement evolved and changed as was necessary in order to survive. This has led historians to the identification, and dispute, over which periods were the most important watersheds. Braithwaite's two volumes are divided between the 1650s, and from 1660 onwards. This distinct division of the early years of the movement gives a clear indication of when he regarded that important changes occurred. Barry Reay identifies the 1660s as the crucial period, with the re-organisation of the administration and bureaucracy of the movement and the rise in influence of 'bourgeois Friends who increasingly

[5] W. C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* (York, 1981); *The Second Period of Quakerism* (York, 1979).
[6] H. Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England* (New Haven, Conn., 1964); R. T. Vann, *The Social Development of English Quakerism 1655 – 1755* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969).
[7] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, Ch. 14.

controlled the sect'.[8] David Scott agrees with Reay in his study of Quakerism in York, marking the re-organisation of the movement implemented by Fox in 1667 as the crucial juncture.[9]

However, Davies argues that it is in fact the 1670s that were the crucial period for the movement. It was during this decade that early Quakerism repudiated its previously insular outlook, and started to become more integrated with the world. He argues that this ultimately led to the decline of the movement during the later part of the seventeenth century.[10] From the 1670s onwards Davies believes that Friends were more involved within local communities than previous historians have acknowledged.[11] He highlights the fact that 'ties of affection and genuine concern for family members carried greater weight than dislike of the new religion'. This is particularly relevant to bear in mind when reading Vann's account, which emphasises the individuality and self-dependence of the Quaker movement.[12]

The first part of this thesis offers new research into Quaker integration within a local community. As such, it can be offered as part of the historiographical tradition of a local or regional study of the movement, which can be added to those such as Vann, Davies and Morgan.[13] During the period of this study further new research into the Society of Friends has been taking place. For example, Simon Dixon has been working on a study of Quakerism in London during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.[14] The aim of this thesis has been to engage with this literature where there is something substantial to contribute.

John Wilhelm Rowntree produced a map of the Quaker's monthly and particular Meetings covered under the York Quarterly meeting in 1669. According to this map, the East Riding was more densely covered with Quaker communities than the other Yorkshire Ridings at this time.[15] Therefore, it became the principal region

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[8] B. Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution* (London, 1985), especially ch. 6. Quote from p. 122.
[9] D. Scott, *Quakerism in York 1650 – 1720* (Borthwick Paper 80, York, 1991), pp. 11 – 12.
[10] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p.217.
[11] *Ibid*, ch. 14.
[12] *Ibid*, p. 198; Vann, *Social Development*, *passim*.
[13] *Ibid*; N. Morgan, *Lancashire Quakers and the Establishment 1660 – 1730* (Halifax, 1993).
[14] S. Dixon, 'Quaker Communities in London c. 1667 – 1714' (Royal Holloway, University of London, Ph.D thesis, 2005).
[15] J. Rowntree (ed.), *John Wilhelm Rowntree: Essays and Addresses* (London 1905), appendix iv.

for this research. Its emergence and development are examined in the first section of the thesis, which is split into three separate chapters. Together, these chapters provide a social history of early Quakerism in the region. They examine the Quaker community in the East Riding and compare it to the rest of the population of the region. This provides the social context for the remainder of the thesis, and supplies the background that is necessary for any local study of religious toleration.

Unfortunately, some sources that have been exploited by other historians of Quakerism are not available for the East Riding. Most notably, the Quarter Sessions records for the county no longer exist for the second half of the seventeenth century. These are an important source for the historian of Quakerism, and have been fruitful to historians such as Richard Vann, Craig Horle and Adrian Davies when compiling their studies.[16] They not only provide information regarding the prosecution of Quakers in the civil courts, but also can contain details of their occupation and parish of residence. They can also be used to gauge the local magistrate's reaction and attitude towards Quakers, something which could be variable between individuals and places, and as such would have provided important evidence for this study. Their absence has been an unfortunate loss.

The principal source for the re-creation of the Quaker community in the East Riding has been the minute books that were kept for the three monthly meetings that covered the region, Kelk, Elloughton and Owstwick. No local preparative meeting minute books have survived from the area for the second half of the seventeenth century. The monthly meeting records begin at their inception in 1669. They provide valuable details about the principal work of the meetings. However, for the most part the meetings only recorded those who came before them to declare their intentions of marriage, and detailed the distribution of the stock of funds that was collected from the preparative meetings. Only any instructions that were given by the meeting to individuals are recorded. The personal details of those individuals who were present are not.

One senses when reading the book that the meetings were kept by a group of people who were well known to each other, and they were dealing with individuals that they knew personally. Therefore, there was not the need to record details such as

[16] Vann, *Social Development*; C. Horle, *The Quakers and the English Legal System* (Philadelphia, 1988); Davies, *Quakers in English Society*.

an individual's occupation or place of residence. The minutes appear to have been recorded to jog the memory of those who were present and participated, therefore enabling them to know who was responsible for carrying out which actions, and what the outcome of some of the actions were. Certainly, they were not being created with the intention to assist an historian to an understanding of events and actions some 350 years afterwards.

Although the monthly meeting minutes contain some records of the exercise of discipline among members, generally speaking the minute books are extremely vague. They do not provide details of the offences that have been committed, or how the situation was resolved. For example, In March 1672 the minute book for Owstwick monthly meeting notes how Ralph Barber began a court action against Daniel Hardy. What this dispute was about is not recorded, only that the monthly meeting was unhappy at the two men taking recourse to 'law before strangers'. The meeting felt that Friends could settle any differences that they had between themselves.[17] In May 1697 the same book records that Isaac Storr was spoken to by Thomas Levitt and Peter Gartham to see if he would condemn the 'wicked act' that he committed. There is no mention of what the act was, only that Storr churlishly informed the two Friends that they should 'do as they see meet'. Frustratingly, the consequences of Storr's reaction, or the monthly meeting's feelings about his behaviour are not recorded. The division was healed somehow, though again how is not recorded, as Storr was called upon at a later monthly meeting to distribute some of the stock of money to poor Friends.[18]

Together with the loss of the Quarter Sessions records for the region, the lack of detail in the monthly meeting minute books has hindered the re-creation of the Quaker community in the East Riding during the second half of the seventeenth century. Most notably, in the chapter that examines the social origin of Friends from the area the sources available have been limited to probate and hearth tax records. These have been complemented for some individuals with estimates of the value of the goods that they had distrained in lieu of tithe payments. This has produced a relatively small sample of individuals whose economic status is known and can be assessed. However, comparison to the work of other historians, such as Adrian

[17] ERA, OMM, p. 55.
[18] OMM, p. 225.

Davies, Richard Vann and Judith Hurwich, has helped to validate the conclusions that can be drawn from the sample.[19]

The second section of the thesis examines the Quakers' attitude towards religious toleration. It is principally based upon the contemporary books and pamphlets that were produced by Quaker authors. It is broken up into four different chapters, which each examines a different aspect of Quaker literature during the second half of the seventeenth century. The first chapter concentrates upon the literature that was read by Quakers in the East Riding. This is achieved by a detailed examination of two lists of books that were kept by Kelk and Elloughton monthly meetings during the second half of the seventeenth century. The second chapter is a detailed examination of the work of the second day's morning meeting, which was a centralised body within the Quaker bureaucracy that controlled the output of their literature. As such, it had an important influence upon the literature that was read by the Quaker community in the East Riding.

The book lists from the East Riding offer the basis for the remaining chapters in the section. By examining the literature that was held by the monthly meetings it is possible to conjecture the subjects that were important to the Quaker community in the region, and from there examine the ideological world within which it existed. As such, the second section of the thesis is an attempt to examine the mental structures that directed and constrained the Quaker community in the East Riding. The final two chapters examine some of the contemporary Quaker literature that was produced relating to religious toleration. They compare the work of William Penn, by far the best known Quaker author on the subject, to other works that were read and produced by Quakers from the East Riding. By doing so, they offer a contrast between the local and national attitude towards religious toleration that existed within the Quaker movement during the second half of the seventeenth century.

The final section of the thesis is a detailed examination of the persecution that the Quakers faced in the East Riding during the period 1654 – 1699. The principal sources have been the records of suffering that were produced by the Quakers

[19] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, pp. 140 – 155; Vann, *Social Development*, pp. 49 – 81; J. Hurwich, 'The Social Origins of the Early Quakers', and Vann's 'Rejoinder', *Past and Present* (no. 48 1970), pp. 157 – 164.

themselves. These include the suffering books that were kept by the monthly and quarterly meetings and the Great Book of Suffering, which was compiled by the yearly meeting. It was from the Great Book of Suffering that the Quakers produced the printed pamphlets throughout the period that highlighted cases of persecution and suffering, including statistical details of Quakers who were imprisoned and who had died while incarcerated during the period. Many of these were delivered to parliament and the King in an attempt to alleviate their suffering, and widely distributed to try and encourage favourable public opinion.

In his study of Quakerism in Essex, Davies mentions that the Archdeaconary courts' Act Books are a valuable source that provides evidence of parish affairs at a local level, including the state of the Church, non-conformism, and evidence of adultery, fornication and bastardy.[20] The Archdeaconary courts were the first level above parish administration, and were responsible for enforcing conformity and morality in the region. Offences of parishioners were recorded in the Act Books based upon the presentments of local constables and churchwardens. A thorough survey of these presentments was undertaken for the East Riding, but revealed very little regarding religious dissent in the area. The presentments were principally concerned with sexual morality in the region, particularly incidents of adultery and fornication, and the consequent bastardy that occurred in some cases. The absence of the presentment of dissenters is notable, as it suggests that either local officials did not consider non-conformity a problem in the region, or else they were simply unwilling to present their neighbours. The truth of the matter probably lies in a combination of these explanations.

The time span of the study has been designed to fit the evidence available. The Restoration of Charles II in 1660 offers an obvious starting point for the study, after his famous Declaration of Breda to grant 'liberty to tender consciences'. He was thwarted in this by the Cavalier Parliament, which oversaw the passing of the Clarendon Code of laws, which were designed to re-create uniformity of religion throughout the country and crush dissent from the Church of England.

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[20] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 224.

However, it is necessary at times to journey further back in time to the beginning of the Quaker movement in the East Riding. This allows for a more complete view of the suffering that they experienced. The earliest recorded suffering within the sources for the East Riding is 1654. The early to mid 1650s was the time when the Quakers first emerged as a recognisable group. George Fox was imprisoned in Derby for six months during 1650 and 1651 under the Blasphemy Act, for his activities around the midlands. Following his release from prison he headed north and into Yorkshire. He first entered the East Riding in December 1651, when he recalled in *The Journal* visiting Beverley and touring the surrounding area.[21]

The end of the time span is somewhat artificial and arbitrary. By collecting information up to 1699 there is data for the decade that followed the passing of the Toleration Act (1689). By continuing beyond the Toleration Act changes and continuations to the actions and attitudes of both the government and the local community can be identified and the impact of the Toleration Act upon the lives of the local Quaker community can be assessed. Following the Toleration Act the books of suffering effectively become a list of the Quaker community's refusal to pay tithes.

As with the start point of 1660, this end point of the study has been treated flexibly. At times, it has been necessary and convenient to include details of events that occurred either during the earlier part of the seventeenth century, or during the eighteenth century. Of course, the lifespan of many of the individuals included in this study does not fit into a neat period of time. It would be wrong to ignore relevant incidents within their lives that occurred beyond the structure that has been imposed upon this study.

The Quakers' own suffering records have been relied upon due to the absence of the Quarter Sessions records for the East Riding during this period, and the silence of the Churchwardens' presentments. A detailed examination and critique of the sources, including Joseph Besse's *Sufferings of the People Called Quakers* (1753), is contained in the first chapter of the section, which also examines the patterns of

[21] G. Fox, *The Journal* (London, Penguin Edition 1998), pp. 59 – 76. For greater detail see Ch. 1, pp. 28 – 9.

suffering in the East Riding and compares them to other studies that have been carried out by Quaker historians such as Davies, Vann, and Horle.[22]

The suffering books are valuable for providing information about individuals, both Quakers and non-Quakers, who lived within the area covered by the monthly meeting. It followed the instruction of Yearly meeting to include details of all those who carried out the persecution. There are references to local clergymen, the parish clerks and other officials such as churchwardens, constables and overseers of the poor. In the case of towns and cities references can be found to officials such as the mayor. Such detail can help the historian build up an intricate portrait of the local community.

Every incidence of suffering that is recorded within the books has been traced, and they have been compiled them into a database to allow analysis of the information that is provided. The database contains the details of some 1765 sufferings of over 500 individuals in the East Riding from 1654 to 1699. The first problem that was encountered when first approaching the books of suffering and designing the database were the parameters of time and space. The sufferings books record Quaker suffering into the eighteenth century and beyond. They also cover large geographical areas as they move to the regional and national administrative levels. For example, the quarterly meeting book of suffering covers all three of the Yorkshire Ridings. There is a vast amount of data available that needed to be reduced to a manageable size for a single researcher. This was achieved by concentrating upon the experience of the Quaker community in the East Riding. It is hoped that in time this initial research could be developed to cover the other Ridings of Yorkshire.

Following the standard regional borders does not produce an effective answer to the geographical problem that is faced in limiting the boundaries of the research. The city of Hull is technically not in the East Riding of Yorkshire, and yet lies within its geographical boundaries on the north bank of the Humber estuary. Alternatively, the city of York lies on the very edges of the boundary between the East, North and West Ridings, but, like the city of Hull, has its own separate administration.

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[22] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, Ch. 13; Vann, *Social Development*, Ch. III; Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, *passim*.

The answer to solving this structural problem lies within the sources themselves. They trace the structure of the Quaker community for the region, and demonstrate its boundaries. Owstwick monthly meeting included the city of Hull within its jurisdiction, and so Hull has been included. York held its own monthly meeting outside those of the East Riding and so has been excluded. Inclusion of Hull within the study is important. It allows for comparison to be made between the suffering that the Quaker community experienced in rural and urban areas. Allowing the sources to provide the parameters for the geographical area is important. By doing so the study follows the spatial area that was perceived by the Quakers themselves during the second half of the seventeenth century.

The next problem to be faced regarded the transferrance of the information from the suffering books into the database. This unavoidably involved a degree of quantification of the data. The principal concern was the maintenance of data integrity. The database records as much of the detail from the information as it was possible to keep, while making the data manageable. The first step was to record the material on to index cards for each individual Quaker. It was then possible to identify the different individuals that kept recurring, and produce a list of their sufferings.

Quakers rejected the Latin names of the months from January to August, and although they had no objection to the names of the months September to December, which were named as the seventh to tenth months, they are rarely used. Instead the months are referred to in their numerical order, as are the days of the week. March is the First month and February the Twelfth. Sunday is the First day and Saturday the Seventh.

The accuracy of the dating within the suffering books is uneven, its precision dependent upon the individual that transcribed the data and the information at their disposal. The suffering books are dated in the old style Julian calendar, which was used at the time, with the year beginning on Lady Day, March 25. This can be changed to the modern calendar to avoid any possible confusion, though to do this accurately it is necessary to have the precise date in which the suffering occurred. For the most part they are not available in any of the East Riding suffering books. The majority of the entries only give the year that the suffering occurred, making it impossible to accurately change the year. At least the month in which the suffering

occurred is needed to confidently alter dates, and should an incident have occurred in March an actual day would be needed also. Often the dates given are vague, possibly reflecting that the entries were being made retrospectively. For this reason the dates have been left in the old style for the analysis of the database and the patterns of persecution in the East Riding. However, when it has been possible to transfer the date of some of the incidences of persecution that occurred in the region into the new style within the main text of the thesis this has been done to make the study more accurate to the modern reader.

An under-recording of suffering would occur should the instances when one individual was fined for another's poverty not be separated and counted as two separate sufferings. This most commonly occurred when a Quaker meeting for worship was broken up. The suffering of the individual that had goods distrained increased, as double the goods were taken than otherwise would have been. Therefore the two individuals involved are both recorded within the database, with who was fined and on whose account given in the column left for additional comments, making such instances identifiable.

The remainder of the final section of the thesis examines the geographical distribution of suffering around the region, and identifies the locations where the Quaker community was most likely to face persecution. The place that is named in the database and has been used for analysis is the place where the suffering occurred, as distinct from the place where the individual lived. Often within the suffering books both pieces of information are available. Quakers regularly travelled to nearby meetings for worship. This data provides information on where the Quaker activity was strongest in the region, rather than where individuals lived. Often this overlaps. Where there was a strong Quaker community, it logically follows that meetings would be regularly held there. This has important consequences for the issue of toleration. For example, was Quaker activity more common in a certain area because there was a degree of acceptance from the local community, or possibly due to protection from prosecution by local officials? The database has helped pinpoint the areas where activity was strongest, and allowed such questions to be answered.

A detailed case study of four parishes is carried out, that helps to explain the patterns of persecution that have been traced for the East Riding. The statistics that

draw the pattern of persecution in the region during the period also help to highlight the incidence of religious toleration in the area. By doing so, the case study contextualises the suffering statistics that are offered in the earlier chapters of the section. The chapter that follows offers an explanation as to why the persecution occurred in the East Riding, and traces the important local influences that affected the patterns and distribution that have been identified. Finally, a close examination is carried out of the most common cause of persecution in the East Riding for the Quaker community: the refusal to pay tithes.

II

The historical study and discussion of toleration in England in the seventeenth century is mainly associated with religious toleration. It has largely concentrated upon intellectual history, and particularly the ideas and influence of John Locke. The seventeenth century included many important political events both in England and on the continent against which theories of toleration emerged, somewhat unevenly. A number of motivations for the development of religious toleration have been identified. These include a desire to maintain social order, intellectual theories of individual freedom of thought, speech and behaviour, and economic benefits, derived from trade between different people and nations.

There has been a vast amount of literature published that examines the development of religious toleration. For the most part, the history of toleration has been written as an intellectual rather than a social history. Historians have focussed upon the writings of philosophers, such as Locke and Mill, without consideration of the practice of toleration in the everyday life of the community. Instead, there exists a brief acknowledgment that *de facto* toleration existed in many areas and regions of Europe at different times, which has been left unqualified. Thus the study of the development of religious toleration in the western world has so far involved the writing of macro-history, examining the whole of a country at least, if not stretching

across Europe. Most recently, Perez Zagorin's study of the development of the idea of toleration in European thought falls into this category.[23]

The traditional, Whig, history of religious toleration is one that traces the march of progress of liberalist ideals. Amongst the principal ideas that formed this development of political liberalism is the development of popular monarchy and religious toleration. These were both achieved in the single event of the Glorious Revolution, which removed James II, unpopular due to his Catholicism, and replaced him with the Protestant William III and Mary II. Somewhat ironically, according to this reading of events religious toleration was achieved due to the intolerance of a Protestant parliament and nation to the reigning Catholic monarch.

The fact that James tried to introduce religious toleration for both dissenting Protestants and Catholics is often forgotten. Religious toleration is enshrined in popular consciousness as the achievement of Protestantism against Catholic absolutism and arbitrary rule, which was feared to be the intention of James. To be sure, James intended to promote the Catholic cause, and to do so required an uneasy alliance with Protestant dissenters such as William Penn, and liberal thinkers such as Locke, which ultimately proved not possible.

James's Declaration of Indulgence in 1687 enshrined a much wider religious toleration than was achieved in the Toleration Act of 1689, but crucially it was simply unpalatable to the majority of contemporary Protestants to concede ground to Catholics. The prevailing milieu was one of anti-Catholic prejudice and suspicion. Therefore when James made his declaration for liberty of conscience he acknowledged that he did 'heartily wish, as it will be easily believed, that all the people of our dominions were members of the Catholic Church'. The problem was that his wish was far too easily believed, and so his statement that 'conscience ought not to be constrained, nor people forced in matters of mere religion' was ignored, or forgotten.[24]

[23] P. Zagorin, *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West* (Princeton, 2003).
[24] *King James II the Second, his Gracious Declaration to all his loving subjects for Liberty of Conscience*, April 4 1687, J. P. Kenyon (ed), *The Stuart Constitution, Documents and Commentary* (Cambridge, 1966), p. 410.

Ultimately, Locke's belief that Catholics were a group that could not be tolerated was the prevalent one in a fiercely Protestant country, which ended with James's position being untenable. In the typical Whig fashion, Lord Macaulay identified 1689 as a liberal watershed. However, he also acknowledged that the provisions of the Toleration Act were 'cumbrous, puerile, inconsistent with each other, and inconsistent with the true theory of religious liberty'. Rather than celebrating a glorious achievement he instead acknowledged that its most important accomplishment had been to remove 'a vast mass of evil without shocking a vast mass of prejudice.'[25]

The most important work within the historiography on religious toleration is the work of W. K. Jordan, *The Development of Religious Toleration in England, 1558 - 1660* (1932 – 40).[26] His vast, four volume, study covers the period from Elizabeth to the end of the Commonwealth. Worden has commented that any subsequent account of religious toleration in early modern England can only be a footnote to the scope and detail of Jordan's account.[27] However, the work has a number of serious deficiencies, including the very scope and detail of the work itself. Quite correctly, Coffey has noted that the vastness of the work makes it extremely difficult to use productively. The descriptions of contemporary writings on toleration that are detailed by Jordan are lengthy and often repetitive.[28]

The repetitiveness identified by Coffey is symptomatic of the number of works that Jordan examined. Inevitably, there is a large degree of overlap between the writings of different authors on similar subjects. This study has been aware of this danger, and has carefully countered it. The vast number of Quaker pamphlets that can be identified on the subject of toleration cannot be examined individually. It is important to examine those that are most relevant and important to the study. Hence, as was mentioned earlier, the works of William Penn are examined in some detail in this thesis, and compared to others that were written by Quakers from the East Riding, or were included in the books lists for the East Riding and therefore were likely to

[25] J. Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England 1558 – 1689* (Harlow, 2000), p. 1.
[26] W. K. Jordan, *The Development of Religious Toleration in England, 1558 – 1660* (4 vols. London, 1932 – 1940).
[27] Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, p. 5.
[28] *Ibid*, p. 2.

have been read by Quakers in the region.[29] When reading a large number of the pamphlets that the Quakers produced, one is quickly aware of the repetitiveness of the subject, and very regularly their structure and language. This is examined in more detail in the second section of the thesis.

A further problem with Jordan's work is its march towards the ultimate outcome of the triumph of the ideology of religious toleration in England by 1660. The very nature of the work sets this up as the goal to be achieved, and sure enough, after following its long and detailed path it hits its mark. One is left with the impression that the work is almost self-fulfilling, and there is an inevitability about its outcome.

Furthermore, it reaches some dubious conclusions that conveniently ignore evidence that is contrary to his argument. Principally, Jordan argues that by 1660 'responsible opinion in England was...persuaded of the necessity, if not the positive virtue, of religious freedom'.[30] True enough, the period of the Commonwealth had seen a marked increase in literature that was published favouring religious toleration, partly connected to the collapse of censorship of printed material. It can also be argued that the Commonwealth allowed greater religious freedom than had occurred during earlier periods. But that would have been little comfort to those Quakers who found themselves imprisoned during the period such as George Fox and William Dewsbury, nor to James Naylor who was imprisoned, whipped, branded and had his tongue bored through. Perhaps more importantly still, it is a conclusion that blatantly ignores the fact that within five years time parliament had passed some of the most oppressive legislation against religious pluralism in the form of the Clarendon Code. Any march of 'responsible opinion' towards religious toleration that had occurred had not reached the members of the Cavalier Parliament.

The traditional historical view of the development of toleration, which is identified above, states that before the Reformation preservation of social order and the unity of society required the population to adhere to a single body of religious doctrine. Divergence from the established Catholic Church was met with persecution,

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[29] See above, p. 6.
[30] Jordan, *Development of Religious Toleration in England*, vol. IV, p. 9. Quoted in Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, p. 3.

making society generally intolerant. The Reformation led to a split in the single, unifying religious body. The consequence of this was war and social unrest, with the underlying factor of religious dispute continually rearing its head. It became clear that a single orthodoxy was no longer a practical pre-condition to social order and unity. Subsequently, theories of toleration began to become more prominent in the seventeenth century, ultimately leading to Locke's *Epistola de Tolerantia* (1689).[31]

Political events fit into this smooth development nicely. The Thirty Years War raged on the continent from 1618 to 1648, driven by a combination of political and religious motivations. During this same period England slid into civil war. The Glorious Revolution and the subsequent Toleration Act (1689) were the result of the failure of the intolerant policies that followed the Restoration. Toleration came about through the experience of the failure of intolerance.[32]

John Locke dominates this paradigm for the history of toleration. Locke's own intellectual development adds credence to the traditional view. In an early letter to Henry Stubbe (1659) and in his *First and Second Tracts on Government* (1660 – 62), Locke argued in favour of the repression of religious dissenters.[33] Within a relatively short space of time, Locke's views changed sufficiently for him to be become recognised as the leading theorist of toleration. In England at least, if not across western Europe, his view of toleration gained greater acceptance than other writers on the subject, for example Pierre Bayle and Benedict de Spinoza.

Within the debate over varying philosophical theories of toleration one unifying factor of the arguments has emerged: the question of which factors were most influential in driving the issue of toleration forwards. In one of the classic histories of toleration Henry Kamen has argued that economic concerns were paramount, and that the Reformation brought greater religious freedom while free trade and the desire to open and access new markets encouraged merchants to put

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[31] C. J. Nederman & J. C. Laursen 'Difference and Dissent: Introduction' in idem, *Difference and Dissent: Theories of Tolerance in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (London, 1996), pp. 1 –16.
[32] J. C. Laursen, 'Introduction: Contexts and Paths to Toleration in the Seventeenth Century' in J. C. Laursen & C. J. Nederman (eds.) *Beyond the Persecuting Society. Religious Toleration before the Enlightenment* (Pennsylvania, 1998), pp. 169 – 77.
[33] J. C. Laursen & C. J. Nederman 'General Introduction: Political and Historical Myths in the Toleration Literature' in idem, *Beyond the Persecuting Society*, pp. 1 – 10.

religious differences aside.[34] Such an argument had long been in existence. Voltaire identified the practical effects of economic forces lying behind the arguments for toleration in the eighteenth century. He argued that in England, at the London Stock Exchange, men from all nations were willing to put religious differences aside and place trust in each other.[35]

An alternative driving force behind the issue of religious toleration was the fear of social conflict. The desire for social unity, and the fear of large numbers of individuals that owed their allegiance to a power outside state and society, led to the theoretical development of religious toleration. Such groups posed a threat to civil order. Locke's philosophy of religious toleration provides a good contemporary example for this. For Locke, toleration was a theological notion, founded on the basis that each individual had a responsibility to seek salvation for his or her soul. They should therefore have the right to act and worship as necessary for their own personal salvation.

Locke was not in favour of universal toleration, however. Catholics and atheists could not be tolerated. Catholics threatened the unity of the state by owing their first allegiance to the Pope, a figure outside the society in which they lived. Should the Pope become an enemy of the state then Catholic subjects would also be, and society would face the threat of an enemy within. Atheists could not be tolerated because they were potentially disruptive of society. Promises and oaths that helped to bond society together would be meaningless to them, making them a possible threat to civil order.[36] Locke's toleration, then, was based upon individual belief and practice, but only when such belief and practice was no threat to state and society. Toleration was granted by the state to the individual and could, presumably, also be taken away. Priority was given to the unity and order of society, not the freedom of individuals.

Revisionist historians have been critical of the emphasis that is placed on Locke's theory of toleration. Laursen and Nederman have argued that the history of toleration has been dominated by a 'Locke Obsession'. They believe neither that

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[34] H. Kamen, *The Rise of Toleration* (London, 1967).
[35] M. Fitzpatrick, 'Toleration and the Enlightenment Movement' in O. P. Grell & R. Porter (eds.), *Toleration in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 23 – 68.
[36] J. I. Israel, 'Spinoza, Locke and the Enlightenment Battle for Toleration' in O. P. Grell & R. Porter (eds.), *Toleration in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 102 – 13.

Locke was original in his view, nor that he deserves the central place that he has held, due to the limited scope of his toleration. It was not the case of a single great thinker suddenly producing a theory of toleration, which had previously been missing from philosophical thought. Locke's friend and host while he visited the Netherlands, Philip van Limborch, had written tracts favouring religious toleration before Locke, as had Adriann van Paets and Pierre Bayle. Benedict de Spinoza was writing at much the same time as Locke. [37]

Spinoza formulated a much wider ranging theory of toleration than Locke. Rather than being theologically based Spinoza's toleration placed emphasis upon the freedom of thought and speech of individuals. Like Locke, Spinoza believed that it was impossible for the state to control people's minds, and therefore that it should not attempt to do so. Ultimately Spinoza also agreed with Locke that the state and society were of primary importance. Spinoza wanted the creation of a new state religion that was not Christianity, but an idealized simple and universal faith. He thought that individuals should be free to express their beliefs whatever their religion, but large congregations that did not belong to the state religion should be forbidden. Those that governed the state would also be ministers in the churches, avoiding the existence of a clergy that could provide an alternative or higher authority than the state.[38]

Both tolerance and persecution could be approached from the same direction, with the main concern the maintenance of social order. At the end of the sixteenth century Justus Lipsius had argued that heresy should be repressed by the state. He believed that it was better to lose one member of society than lose the society itself. Lipsius recognised that the state could not change an individual's beliefs, but thought that the individual ultimately owed a duty to the society in which he or she lived. The individual should be prepared to accept the public requirements of society both in religion and morality. Self-interest and preservation were the guiding spirits of the individual. In a persecuting society opposition to the accepted religious values would have physical risks, making such practice unattractive.[39] Theories of intolerance could be reached with the same motivation of avoiding civil disorder.

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[37] Laursen & Nederman 'General Introduction', pp. 2 – 4.

[38] Israel, 'Spinoza, Locke and the Englightenment Battle for Toleration', p. 105.

[39] R. Tuck, 'Scepticism and Toleration' in S. Mendus (ed.), *Justifying Toleration. Conceptual and Historical Perspectives*, (Cambridge, 1988) pp. 21 – 35.

It is possible to distinguish between civil and ecclesiastical toleration through an examination of the language that was used in contemporary writing. Civil toleration was recognised as 'indulgence', and contrasted by some seventeenth century writers with 'comprehension' or ecclesiastical toleration. Comprehension involved the degree of diversity that was tolerated within the established church. Civil toleration could take different forms. At the very least it allowed religious dissenters to worship as they chose, without state sanctioned persecution.

At a practical level this involved a simple suspension, or revocation, of the laws passed against dissenters. This was not a guarantee of full citizenship and the rights that came with it, however. Religious minorities would still be left on the margins of society, and possibly discriminated against, even if the discrimination was not being directed by the state. Those that wanted dissenters to have full religious liberty, often termed 'liberty of conscience', demanded a more radical, wider ranging, toleration. This would have meant religious minorities could enjoy the full privileges of citizenship, and would have required their status to be actively protected by the state.[40]

It is immediately striking that both ecclesiastical and civil toleration relate to two separate authorities that could each persecute dissent. Church and state existed in England as separate entities, and yet were intrinsically linked. It could be possible to have either indulgence or comprehension existing within society, and at the same time have dissenters penalised for their beliefs; therefore not having toleration of different ideas. The terms 'comprehension', 'indulgence' and even 'toleration' all suggest the granting of the right to worship by the state to the individual, not the individual's free right to worship as they please. For the most part, the distinction between comprehension and indulgence is only academic. They can be regarded as two different sides of the same coin: religious toleration. Freedom to worship as one wished and full rights to citizenship of society.

The most recent review of the toleration literature has been the work of John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England 1558 – 1689.* Coffey

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[40] Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, p. 12.

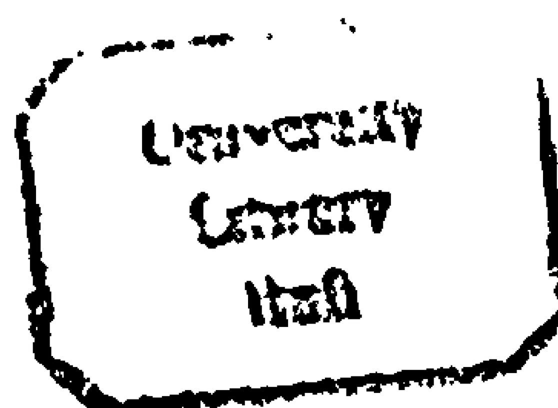
has highlighted the fact that it is quite easy to confuse toleration with either indifference or approval. In order for toleration of any practice to exist there must be an actual disapproval of it in the first place. This necessarily means that the view or action that is to be tolerated must surround a practice that is well known to people, if not there is likely to be indifference to the practice through a lack of experience and understanding.[41]

In the seventeenth century religion dominated the lives of people, being a subject that all would have had some experience of. The power of the state was crucial to any discussion of toleration. Richard Tuck has identified that, in the seventeenth century, the power of the state in religious matters had to be upheld for religious conflict and persecution to be avoided.[42] This meant that the machinery of the state had to be capable of pursuing religious dissenters for effective persecution to occur. In part, the occurrence of religious toleration could reflect a failing of the central state machinery to impose its values upon society. Alternatively, it could also be symptomatic of the indifference of the centralised state to enforcing values that are not universally held but are politically expedient.

In practice, the state needed to have its policies enforced by individuals at the local level. The different views and experiences of those that were applying these policies could lead to different judgements regarding the threat of social disruption. Inevitably, this meant that both persecution and toleration were not applied uniformly in any country or region, and could exist side by side. This fluctuating and varied nature of persecution and toleration across regions and localities is the reason that it is necessary to produce a local study of religious toleration. It is only through a study of the local context that the influences which affected the nature and patterns of religious toleration and persecution can be accurately discovered during the second half of the seventeenth century.

To ignore the local context and experiences is to miss an important point: the philosophical arguments in favour of religious toleration did not necessarily lead to, or cause, its practice. Rather, the philosophical musings of the intelligentsia regarding toleration lagged behind the practice of tolerance by individuals in their every day

[41] *Ibid*, p. 10.
[42] Tuck, 'Scepticism and Toleration', p. 30.



lives. Heiko Oberman has shown that the philosophical theory of Locke was trailing far behind established practice. *De facto* toleration was already operating in many areas of Europe in an effort to maintain social order. In Lausanne in the early sixteenth century the citizens voted that everyone was at liberty to participate in either Protestant services or Mass, as their conscience required. Oberman uses this example to argue that 'in the concerted effort to contain chaos, momentary but momentous solutions were advanced, awaiting permanency of law in later, more opportune times.'[43]

Oberman has argued that dissenters existed on the margins of society during the early modern period, and therefore that this is where the limits of toleration are best measured.[44] His study is of great importance, for it demonstrates the potential that there is for studying religious toleration through the localised experiences of dissenting groups, as this thesis does. However, his view that dissenters existed on the margins of society is not necessarily correct. Bill Stevenson has convincingly demonstrated that dissenters during the second half of the seventeenth century were more socially integrated than had previously been thought. This is something that is taken up as a sub-theme within the first and last sections of this study.[45]

Virtually all historians of religious toleration have acknowledged that forms of *de facto* toleration existed in many areas and regions of Europe at different times. However, little examination has been made of the actual practice of *de facto* toleration. This would involve the writing of a predominantly social history, rather than one that is grounded in intellectual or political history.

This thesis is an attempt to understand the local dimension of religious toleration. That is, the practice of tolerance, and persecution, that was experienced by the Quaker community in the East Riding during the second half of the seventeenth century. In doing so, it has principally taken the form of a social history of Quakerism in the East Riding. It examines the different factors and influences that affected the practice of religious tolerance in the region, and considers the ideological and political

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[43] H. Oberman, 'The Travail of Tolerance: Containing Chaos in Early Modern Europe', in O. P. Grell & R. Schribner (eds.), *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation* (Cambridge 1996), pp. 13 – 31.
[44] *Ibid*, p. 29.
[45] W. Stevenson, 'The Social Integration of post – Restoration Dissenters, 1660 – 1725', M. Spufford (ed.), *The World of Rural Dissenters, 1520 – 1725* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 360 – 87.

world in which the Quaker community in the area existed. The local dimension of tolerance and toleration is something that has been largely ignored by other historians of the subject, who have concentrated upon the importance of political events and philosophical writings. This study offers an assessment of the impact of those events and writings upon the daily lives of a group of religious dissenters.

Part I: Early Quakerism in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

Chapter 1: The Development and Geographical Distribution of Quakerism in the East Riding.

George Fox, who is widely acknowledged as the founder of Quakerism, first travelled into Yorkshire from Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire following his release from Derby gaol for blasphemy in October 1651. It is possible to trace Fox's travels around the East Riding based upon the details that are provided in his *Journal*. Information that it contains is often sketchy, Fox regularly simply recorded leaving one place and being in a village or town that is not named other than being 'some miles away'. A rough estimation of the places that he visited can be made if a direct path is traced on a map between fixed points, which are given by the places that he visited that he named in his *Journal*. Although Fox would not have journeyed as the crow flies, the general direction that he was travelling in is clear from the fixed points that he gives us. When Fox's approximation of the distance and time that it took him to travel from one place to another is factored into this equation it allows the towns and villages he recorded passing through that are not named in the *Journal* to be estimated with some degree of confidence.

After preaching around Wakefield, where James Naylor and William Dewsbury were convinced, Fox proceeded to Selby in the East Riding where he stayed with John Leake, who had been imprisoned with him at Derby. While in Selby he was 'moved by the Lord' to go to Beverley 'steeplehouse', which was most probably the Minster. He reached Beverley in December 1651 and stayed overnight at an inn before going to the Minster the next day, and challenging John Pomroy, who was preaching there. Following this he travelled roughly two miles, by his calculation, where he challenged a preacher at another church where his interruption was 'well received by the people'. [46]

Fox stayed overnight at an inn before travelling on to Cranswick to visit a Captain Pursglove. His direction of travel towards Cranswick would have been north from Beverley, which makes Leconfield the most likely location for his second altercation of the day and overnight stay. When at Cranswick Fox met Justice Hotham, with whom he stayed two nights, Hotham declaring, according to Fox's

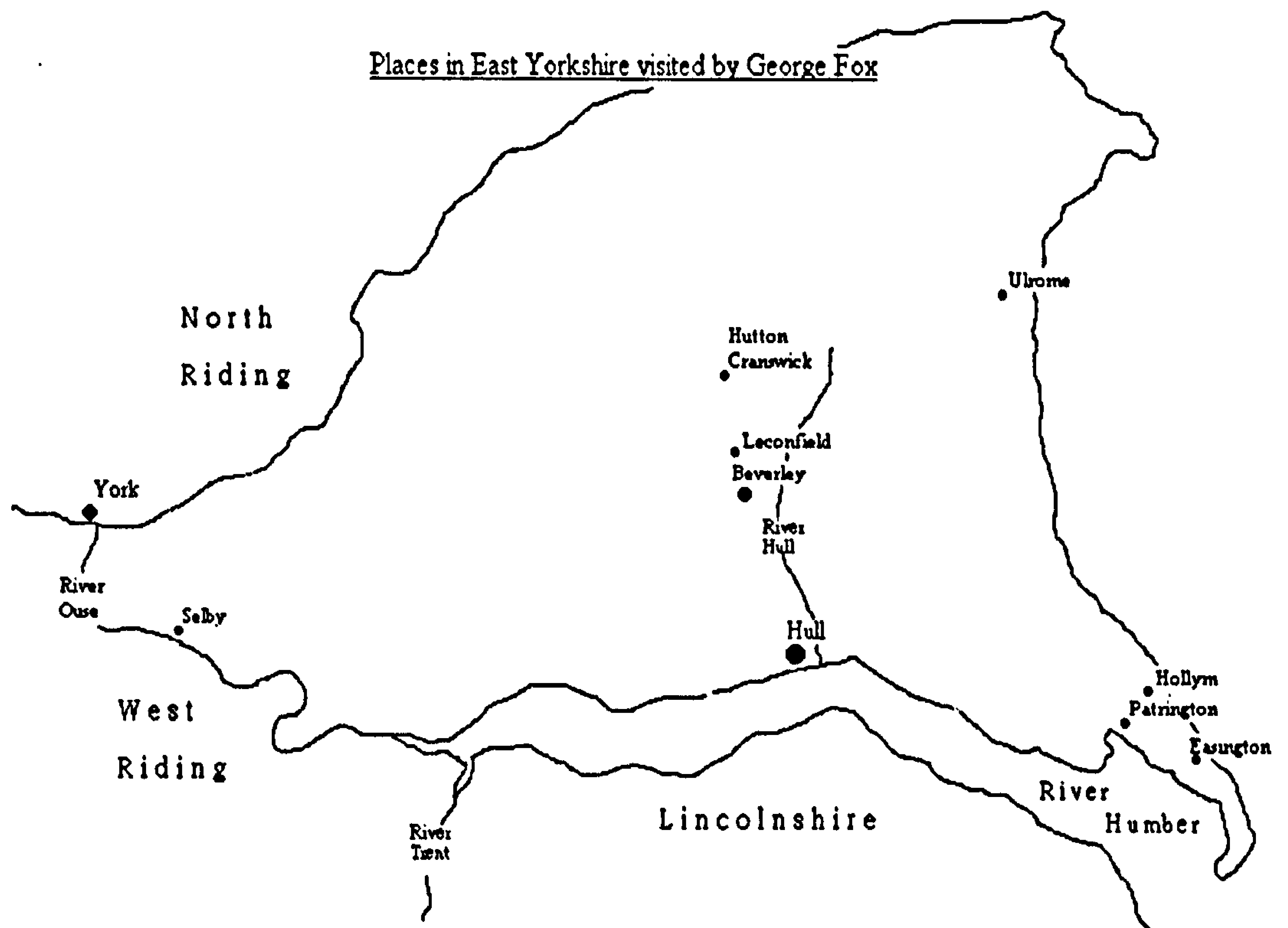
[46] The following account of George Fox's journey around the East Riding is based upon *The Journal* (London, 1998), pp. 59 – 76.

Journal, that 'his house was my house'. Fox records that he challenged the minister in Cranswick church, which led to many there being convinced and a Quaker meeting created. From Cranswick Fox journeyed to York, stopping somewhere unnamed overnight. At York he challenged the minister preaching at the Minster, but was thrown out by the congregation. He stayed the night at York and then travelled up into the North Riding before coming back through Pickering to Cranswick and Hotham's for a night and on to 'Oram' where he stayed with George Hartas.

This was actually the village of Ulrome on the east coast, where Hartas is noted as living in Kelk Monthly Meeting's book of sufferings in 1660.[47] From here Fox travelled down the coast of the county, 'sometimes by seaside, other times by towns', before arriving in Patrington. Here he was initially refused lodging and food, and ended up staying overnight just outside the town, before moving on to another place about three miles away, where he preached, before being seized and escorted back to Patrington.

As the direction that he was travelling in is unknown here he could have been at any of half a dozen or so surrounding villages, the principal candidate based upon later Quaker activity being Hollym. Fox then spent a few days in Patrington where he recorded that he held meetings at which 'many were convinced'. He then went out to the 'furthest land in the country', presumably being out through Easington and towards the Spurn peninsula where he held a meeting at one Colonel Overton's house, which was made up of 'prime people' from the surrounding area. Fox then returned to Patrington and journeyed back up the coast to Ulrome where he visited 'several great houses' in the area before journeying overnight back down to the city of Hull. From Hull he left the East Riding, passing over the river Humber and in to Lincolnshire. His journey and the places he visited are illustrated on the map below.[48]

[47] KBS, p. 167.
[48] Fox, *The Journal*, pp. 59 – 76.



The effects of Fox's journeys through the East Riding cannot be known for sure. Though sparking initial interest it would appear that he could not have been in the area for more than six weeks at the maximum, most probably less. More important to the organisation and distribution of Quakers at the local level was doubtless the continuous work of those around the district. William Dewsbury held the first meeting of Quakers in the county as early as 1652 in Bridlington. He had visited the town three or four times before finally settling a meeting to be held on the third day of every week, with a 'general' meeting, which became known as the East Riding monthly meeting, to be held every three weeks.[49]

Quakerism arrived early in the East Riding, and by the mid 1650s had set down solid roots. The eastern coast, and especially the south eastern part of the Riding was the area that was most densely populated, but it was not confined solely to any region and was diffused across the whole county. Fox had passed briefly through the East Riding of Yorkshire and along the coast in 1651. Dewsbury's first visit there as an itinerant minister was much more significant, however. The First Publishers of

[49] N. Penney (ed.), *The First Publishers of Truth* (London, 1907), pp.294 – 95.

Truth records how Dewsbury was 'doubtless the messenger of God unto many of us'.[50]

Figures who were convinced by Dewsbury in the area and went on to be travelling ministers included John Whitehead, who was a soldier garrisoned at Scarborough castle, and Thomas Thompson at Skipsea on the east coast. Robert Fowler, who was a master mariner and owned *The Woodhouse*, the vessel that carried the first Quakers to New England, was convinced at Bridlington. Robert Barwick and his wife were convinced at their house in Bridlington, and went on to regularly receive travelling Friends throughout the 1650s.[51]

William Dewsbury's first travels around East Yorkshire provide a good example of the early Quaker methods of recruitment. A travelling minister, in this case Fox, would first pass through the area and preach in public. This planted the initial seed amongst those in the area that were receptive to the message. Often, dissenting groups that were known about in certain areas were targeted. On some occasions Quakers requested, and were granted, permission to speak at Baptist meetings. Many that attended these meetings were not necessarily Baptist, but were seekers, searching for spiritual fulfilment as Dewsbury had earlier in his life, and were open to the early Quaker ideas. Those individuals that were sympathetic to the position of the early Quakers then met together to discuss the ideas that they had heard, and formed some loose organisation amongst themselves.

Dewsbury recognised that this loose form of organisation was not sufficient to hold the movement together. In January 1653 he officially settled a meeting in the East Riding to be held on the third day of the week, with a general meeting for Friends in the area held once every three weeks.[52] During the same year Dewsbury followed up the practical work with an epistle to Friends around the country that gave them the basic structure for their meetings:

[50] Penney (ed.), *First Publishers of Truth*, p. 296.
[51] *Ibid*, p. 294. Robert Barwick died while imprisoned for attending a meeting for worship in 1660.
[52] *Ibid*, p. 295; Braithwaite, *Beginnings*, dates the meeting as being settled in December 1652, p. 77.

> see that order be kept in the church in constant meeting together...once a week, or more if it may be, beside the First day meeting, and to have a general meeting with other Friends near to you once in two or three weeks.[53]

This was the first recorded attempt at a system of religious discipline among the early Quakers. Furthermore, it was a structure that was remarkably simiiar to that instigated by Fox during the later 1660s.[54] Rather than create a new structure for meetings Fox simply adapted one that was already known to Friends.

Dewsbury believed that the system of meetings that he suggested would be of crucial importance in maintaining and developing the Society of Friends. He recognised that the early Quaker movement was being forged by numbers of active individuals creating a loose religious community. In each particular meeting of Friends, Dewsbury noted, there were one or two individuals who were 'most grown in the power and life, in the pure discerning in the Truth' that had been chosen by the Lord. They would take care and charge over the Quaker community of that area. These chosen few were to be careful not to act as rulers over people, but instead were to rule 'in the power of the spirit in all purity', acting as examples to others.[55] With this in mind Dewsbury wrote an epistle to Friends around the country that explained the purpose of holding local and regional meetings.

> Watch one over another...and let no hard thoughts lodge in your breasts one towards another...When you see any draw back...be faithful in ministering to the pure in them, to raise up the seed to restore them again, and then forgive one another your offences...and exhort one another in love to the building up in your most holy faith.[56]

This outlined how the meetings were to help develop a feeling of community amongst the early Quakers. The role of the meetings was to strengthen the movement by providing a network of mutual encouragement and support rather than acting as a controlling structure to overlook the lives of individuals.

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[53] Dewsbury, W., 'This is the word of the living God to his church he hath called and chosen out of the world, to place his name into order, and guide in his pure wisdom to his praise and glory, who alone is worthy God over all blessed for ever', 1653, in *The Faithful Testimony of... William Dewsbury* (London, 1689), pp. 1 – 4.

[54] Smith *The Life of William Dewsbury* (London, 1836), p. 61.

[55] Dewsbury, W., 'This is the word of the living God to his church...', in *The Faithful Testimony of... William Dewsbury*, p. 1.

[56] Dewsbury, W., undated epistle to Friends, writen in Wellingborough [1655?], in *The Faithful Testimony of... William Dewsbury*, pp. 384 – 85.

The earliest Quaker activity that can be traced for the region, after Fox's visit in 1652, can be found in the suffering records. In 1654 Thomas Stansfield was imprisoned for interrupting a service at the church in Patrington and in 1655 had goods distrained for refusing to pay church rates. Thomas Gargill was imprisoned for challenging the local vicar at Swine in 1654.[57] In 1655 at Barmby Moor Christopher Wilson had goods distrained after refusing to pay church rates. The following year John Wilson and Walter Hall suffered the same punishment for refusing to pay tithes. In 1656 a Quaker meeting was broken up at Thornton and two Friends, Edward Gower and John Hall were beaten.[58] It is doubtful that this was the first meeting in that area, and probable that there were more than those two in attendance. At Holme upon Spalding Moor five Quakers had goods distrained for refusing to pay church rates in 1657.[59]

The Book of Sufferings for Owstwick monthly meeting provides evidence that there was a Quaker community in Hull by 1660, with five Friends arrested and banished from the city, before returning to be present at a meeting in December 1660, which was broken up resulting in their imprisonment.[60] In Sutton, a village about three miles north of Hull, fourteen Quakers were arrested following the break up of a meeting in 1660. After refusing to take the oath of allegiance before the examining magistrate all fourteen were imprisoned.[61] Quakerism in the area already had a strong foundation by the time of the re-organisation instituted by George Fox in 1669.

With the national re-organisation of the structure of Quaker meetings in 1669 the general East Riding monthly meeting was split into three meetings: Kelk, Owstwick and Elloughton. Beneath the three monthly meetings were the various preparative meetings that fell under their administration, and which were held weekly in villages across the East Riding. The Bridlington preparative meeting that had been settled by Dewsbury in the 1650s became part of the Kelk monthly meeting. By the later 1680s the monthly meeting had taken the name of Bridlington, which had by then become its largest preparative meeting. Similarly, Elloughton monthly meeting

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[57] OBS, DDQR/25, p. 9.
[58] ERA, EBS, p.27.
[59] The University of Leeds, Brotherton Library Special Collections, YQBS, vol. 1.1 part 3, pp. 4 – 9.
[60] *Ibid*, p. 12.
[61] YQBS, vol. 1.1 part 3, p. 1.

later became known as Cave in the 1690s, and Owstwick was referred to during its early years as either Holderness or East End meeting.

It is extremely difficult to provide details of the preparative meetings that existed in the East Riding and made up the three monthly meetings, as no preparative minute books have survived from the seventeenth century. Preparative meetings were the most common for worship, and were most frequently held at the house of a local Quaker, shared between those people that regularly attended. This makes them difficult both to locate and to judge their strength. However, some attempt must be made so that a general picture of Quaker activity in the East Riding can be drawn.

Kelk monthly meeting covered the northern part of the Riding, and was made up of five preparative meetings throughout most of the second half of the seventeenth century: Kelk, Bridlington, Ulrome, Swinkell and Kirbydale. These are the meetings that are recorded in the monthly meeting minute book as regularly making contributions to the stock of funds. By the 1690s Kirbydale preparative meeting had ceased existence, and a meeting at Skearn had replaced Swinkell meeting. By the turn of the eighteenth century it was the four preparative meetings of Kelk, Bridlington, Ulrome and Skearn that made up Bridlington monthly meeting.[62]

In April 1670 Kelk monthly meeting made enquiries of the preparative meetings regarding the establishment of places to bury their dead. Each of the preparative meetings reported that they did not have any specific burying place secured. In February 1671 it was recorded that Ulrome preparative meeting had a burial place that had been in the grounds of George Hartas's property, which had been set apart by him specifically for the use of Friends, but that this land 'yet remains unsecured'.[63] What this note meant, is that the Quakers had been using land in Kelk that had been granted to them by the property owner. However, they had not secured any legal claim to the land, therefore, it could be lost to them in the future. Two years later the monthly meeting discussed the question of acquiring a meeting house. It was unanimously agreed that it should be in Kelk.[64] There is no record whether somewhere was purchased or built specifically for the purpose, though in April 1673

[62] ERA, KMM, *passim*.
[63] KMM, p. 90.
[64] KMM, p. 106.

one pound eight shillings was granted from the monthly meeting funds to make a ditch to help drain the meeting house yard.[65]

David Butler's work, *The Quaker Meeting Houses of Great Britain*, does not mention the existence of any meeting house in Kelk. Although only the two references above are made in the records of the monthly meeting regarding a meeting house at Kelk, circumstantial evidence from the minute book can be used to confirm that one did exist. Throughout the 1670s the monthly meeting appears to have been settled at Kelk. This is in sharp contrast to the two other monthly meetings for the East Riding that moved regularly between villages.[66] The monthly meeting minutes only record that the meeting was held at Kelk, the specific place that it was held is never mentioned, which suggests that it was well known to those who attended. The two other monthly meetings regularly record the actual place, usually a local Friend's house, where the meeting was held.

During the mid 1680s the location of Kelk monthly meeting begins to be shared between Kelk and Bridlington. By this time Kelk preparative meeting was in decline. Certainly, it was during this period that Bridlington preparative meeting became the strongest in the area, which resulted in the monthly meeting changing its name. At Bridlington land had been purchased for a burial ground in Flother Cutting, which is now Havelock street, and in 1678 a tenement with either a garden or yard was bought as a meeting house and burial ground, which provides evidence of a strong Quaker community existing in the town.[67]

Though it provides evidence of where Quaker communities may have been strong, a centralised meeting place was not in itself a necessity. The evidence suggests that Quakers did not start seeking such places until around 1670. Prior to this meetings could occur anywhere, in a barn, house, field or moorside. According to Quaker belief the Lord was omnipresent and would not discriminate – neither did they.

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[65] KMM p. 108.
[66] See below, pp. 34 – 5.
[67] D. Butler, *The Quaker Meeting Houses of Britain* (Vol. II London, 2000), pp. 704 – 19.

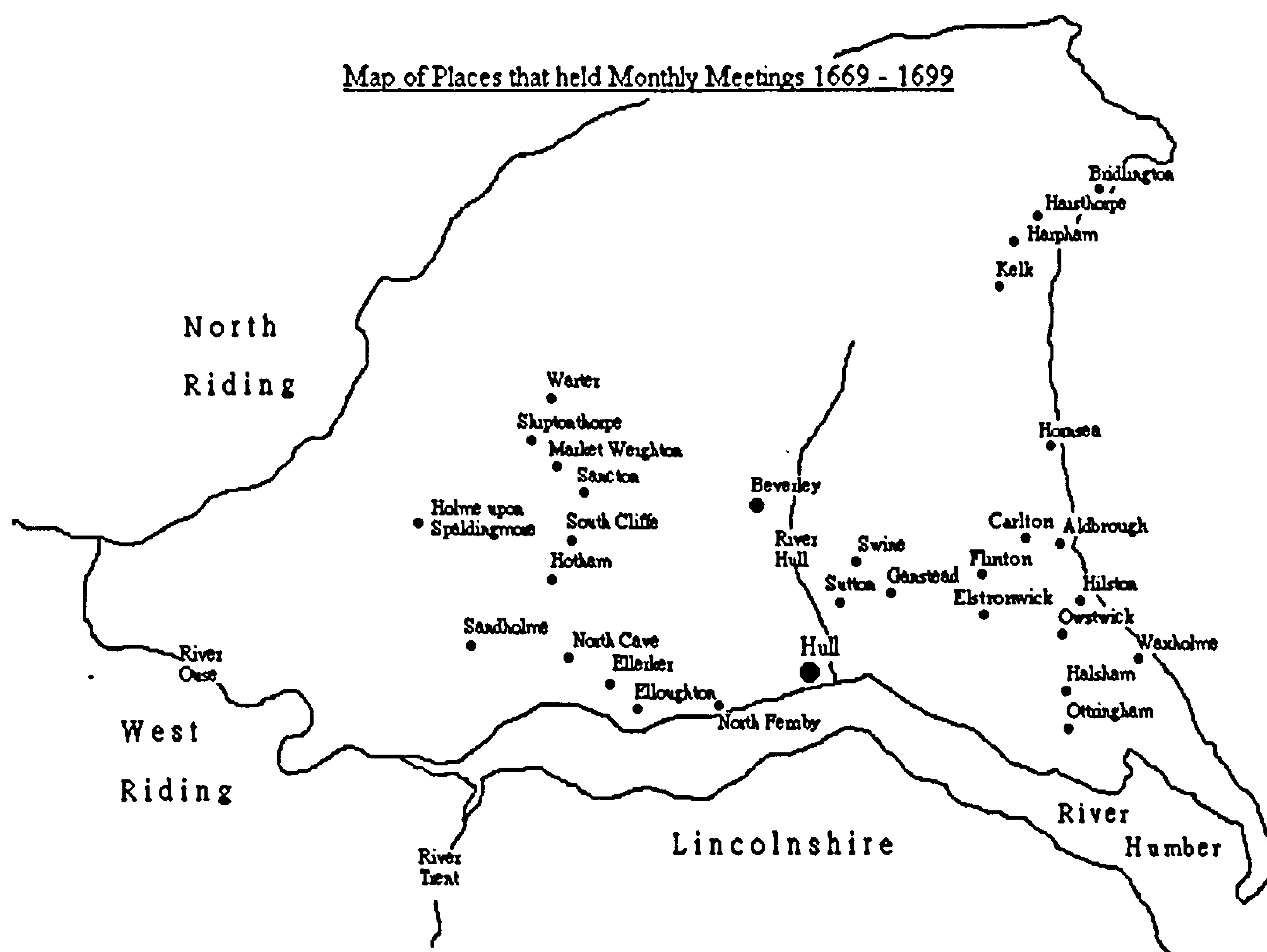
Throughout the 1690s Kelk monthly meeting (or Bridlington as it was now known) was also held in the nearby villages of Haisthorpe and Harpham. It is noticeable that a preparative meeting was not based at either of these places, according to the monthly meeting records of funding that was being brought in to the monthly meeting at this time. Instead, it seems likely that the monthly meeting was being held at the house of a local Friend. The suffering records for Kelk monthly meeting suggest that the two individuals that hosted the meetings were Robert Turner of Haisthorpe and Christopher Oliver of Harpham. Both regularly had goods distrained throughout the 1690s in these villages for refusing to pay tithes.[68]

Owstwick monthly meeting covered the south eastern part of the East Riding, which contained the greatest number of Quaker communities of the three monthly meetings that covered the Riding during the second half of the seventeenth century. However, the number of communities declined throughout the period. The opening page of the minute book starts with a list of the six preparative meetings that made up the monthly meeting, and the names of thirty six villages and towns that were covered by the preparative meetings.[69]

The six preparative meetings in 1669 were: Owstwick, East End, Paull, Sutton, Hull and Hornsea. East End and Owstick meetings were the two largest, at least geographically, both recording ten villages as belonging to their meeting in 1669. East End meeting covered the far southern part of the Riding, which included Patrington, Withernsea, Hollym and Easington. Paull meeting was the smallest, recording only two villages as making up the meeting. During the early 1670s Paull meeting fell into decline, and by 1675 is not mentioned at all in the minute book, indicating that it had ceased existence. The five remaining preparative meetings continued to meet until the early 1680s, when Sutton meeting began to decline, and was replaced by a meeting at Swine, then Ganstead, before the monthly meeting was reduced to four preparative meetings in 1685. The four remaining meetings (Owstwick, Hull, East End, and Hornsea) continued throughout the rest of the seventeenth century.[70]

[68] ERA, KBS, pp. 187 – 91.
[69] ERA, OMM, pp. 1 – 2.
[70] OMM, *passim.*

Owstwick monthly meeting was held in at least fifteen different places. It seems to have moved from place to place indiscriminately, being held at a local Friend's house that was agreed upon at each meeting previously. For example, during the early 1670s, when held at Owstwick, it was often at the house of Marmaduke Storr. When the itinerant minister John Whitehead was in the area the meeting was often held at his home, Swine Grange.[71] Owstwick monthly meeting led a largely nomadic life, despite the establishment of a meeting house at Owstwick sometime in the early 1670s. The precise location of the meeting house is unknown, though it is thought by Butler that it had previously been a dwelling, possibly a local Friend's. In Hull the Quakers used a property in Lowgate for meetings that belonged to William Garbutt, a local Friend. In 1687 his house and garden were bought for £75 to act as a meeting house and burial ground.[72] It was not until 1688 that the monthly meeting became centralised at Owstwick, and throughout the 1690s the meeting was occasionally held at Hull, Withernsea or Easington. A map of the towns and villages where the three monthly meetings were most regularly held in the East Riding is given below.



[71] OMM, January 4 1672; October 2 1673.
[72] Butler, *Quaker Meeting Houses*, vol. II, p. 704 – 19.

Owstwick monthly meeting minute book includes a list of individuals that were part of the preparative meetings in 1669. The minute book states that this is only 'the names of some Friends belonging to each meeting', indicating that the list of names included is far from being a complete record of membership at that time.[73] The list is useful, however, for it contains the names of local Quakers who were active in the area at that time. There are a total of fifty-eight names on the list spread between each preparative meeting. Owstwick meeting has fifteen individuals listed, the largest of the six meetings. East End, Sutton and Hull meetings all record the names of ten members, Hornsea nine and Paull only four, which confirms that Owstwick was the largest meeting from the area and Paull the smallest.

All the names that are included in the minute book are male. If it is assumed that all these men were married with children an estimate of the size of the Quaker community in the region is possible. Peter Laslett has calculated that the average number of children produced by a married couple during the seventeenth century was slightly over four.[74] If four is used as a multiplier together with the fifty- eight known male members and their wives, the number of Quakers who were members of Owstwick monthly meeting was 290.[75]

After 1669 the south western portion of the East Riding fell under the jurisdiction of Elloughton monthly meeting. It comprised five preparative meetings: Howden, Barmby, Beverley, Elloughton, and Warter. By 1672 a sixth meeting had been added from Market Weighton. However, by the early 1690s membership was falling, and the monthly meeting had been reduced to four preparative meetings regularly attending from Elloughton, Howden, Barmby and Sancton, with the meetings at Barmby and Warter amalgamating.

Similarly to Owstwick monthly meeting, Elloughton led a nomadic life, being held variously at Friend's houses in the area in at least nine different villages, and occasionally the town of Beverley. In Beverley Thomas Waite leased land for a burial ground as early as 1667, with a meeting house built on this land in 1702. In 1696 the

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[73] OMM, pp. 1 – 2.
[74] P. Laslett, *The World We Have Lost, further explored* (London, 1983), p. 116.
[75] The 58 male names recorded in Owstwick monthly meeting minute book are multiplied by four to include children (=232), 58 is then added to the total to include their spouses (290).

monthly meeting became settled at North Cave, where a cottage and tenement had been bought in 1687 to act as a meeting house and burial ground.[76] In recognition of the centralisation of the monthly meeting at North Cave, it became known as Cave meeting, rather than Elloughton.

The three monthly meetings that covered the East Riding from 1669 were all subject to change within their internal structure, responding to geographical and numerical changes in membership. During the later seventeenth century all three meetings lost members and their preparative meetings were reduced in number. Each monthly meeting finished the century with four preparative meetings that regularly contributed to funds. The early structure of Quakerism in the East Riding was an informal one, with preparative meetings leading a nomadic life around the county. No one parish or place dominated the movement. The establishment of a meeting house and burial ground did not necessarily lead to the centralisation of a meeting. The centralisation to a fixed place for meeting that did occur within Elloughton and Owstwick monthly meetings happened gradually, over a number of years, and came towards the end of the seventeenth century.

[76] Butler, *Quaker Meeting Houses*, vol. II, pp. 704 – 19.

Chapter 2: The Quaker Community in the East Riding: Marriage Patterns and Population estimates.

The imprecise organisation and structure of Quakerism in the East Riding that is detailed above makes it extremely difficult to estimate the Quaker population in the county during the second half of the seventeenth century. However, some attempt must be made in order to judge the significance of the movement within the county, and its place in contemporary life. This will provide a background against which the experiences of tolerance and toleration can be more accurately judged.

One way of gaining an insight into the number of Quakers that lived in the East Riding is through their records of marriages. A couple getting married involved the creation of a new household, and commonly led to the birth of children who would be brought up as Quakers. However, they did not necessarily remain Quakers during their adult life. Many left the movement, especially during the later years of the seventeenth century, which makes an examination of the birth and death records of the Quakers as a guide for population numbers unsatisfactory. A detailed examination of Quaker marriages can provide good evidence of the fluctuating Quaker population in the East Riding throughout the period, and allow an estimation of their numbers to be made.

The Quaker movement in the second half of the seventeenth century has often been viewed as being distinct from the rest of society. Quakers believed that the world had been corrupted over time, drifting away from the true religion that they had, in effect, re-discovered. The society therefore encouraged members to repudiate 'worldly' acts and customs, and advised its members to keep contact with non-Quakers to a minimum level. However, the Quaker movement was born from the seventeenth century society from which it was attempting to separate. Economic and social necessity meant that contact with that society could not be avoided. Though attempting to turn from the world, individuals remained, to a large extent, conditioned by it. This can also be demonstrated by an examination of early Quaker marriage patterns.

The method of aggregative analysis involves a simple counting of the records contained within the parish registers, and has been put to effective use by demographic historians to study the seasonality of marriages, baptisms and burials during the early modern period. It has been used to make estimates of the population, most famously by Wrigley and Schofield in *The Population History of England and Wales 1541 – 1871* (1981), as well as helping reveal mortality crises, as demonstrated by Appleby.[77] Aggregative analysis takes the records of marriages, baptisms and burials as proxies for births, deaths and fertility. An accepted anomaly in these records is that of non-conformists. Separated from the customs of the established Church, the records that reveal their behaviour are usually missing from the parish registers, unless an extremely conscientious clergyman or parish clerk sought the information out. This data is not entirely lost though. Some non-conformists kept their own records, the Quakers being one example. Birth, death and marriage registers were passed up through the administrative levels of monthly and quarterly meetings to the yearly meeting. This has allowed Vann and Eversley to carry out their examination of Quaker demography for the entire country, *Friends in Life and Death* (1992), to try and fill some of the gaps left by Wrigley and Schofield.

Quaker marriages in the East Riding of Yorkshire during the second half of the seventeenth century can be examined through two different sources. The first source available is the digest register of marriages that exists at Friends House Library. Within the digest register the marriages of couples are listed by quarterly meeting, and within the quarterly meeting listings they are grouped into alphabetical order and then listed chronologically. The digest register for Yorkshire appears to have been compiled by the forwarding of information from the local monthly meeting to the quarterly meeting. However, there are a number of differences between the information contained at the monthly meeting level and that within the national marriage registers. These differences highlight the danger for historians of relying solely on one source of evidence to provide their information.

One problem with the digest registers of marriage is that some of the information held within them does not seem to have been accurately recorded. This

[77] E. A. Wrigley & R. S. Schofield, *The Population History of England 1541 – 1871* (Cambridge, 1981); A. Appleby, 'Disease or Famine? Mortality in Cumberland and Westmorland 1580 – 1640', *Economic History Review*, 26 (1973), pp. 403 – 32.

raises doubts over the content of the rest of the material. The marriage lists are generally made up of double entries, due to the fact that they have been recorded in alphabetical order. Entries are made under the surnames of both the individuals that were married. These entries are sometimes inconsistent. For example, on 10 March 1671 Elizabeth Fox of Barwick is recorded as having married Thomas Anderson from Bridlington, further on in the register it is recorded that an Andrew Thomas of Bridlington married Elizabeth Fox of Barwick on the same date. Undoubtedly, it would seem that Elizabeth Fox was married on 10 March 1671, but to whom? In this case the name has probably been mixed up by whoever was recording it, as the two variations are quite similar.

This is not always the case. On 23 February 1670 Elizabeth Billany of Ross, according to the register, married both John Maire, also of Ross, and Stephen Matlock of Rimswell. One possible explanation could be that two women shared the same name, but the surname is not common making it unlikely, and the possibility of two women with the same name both living in the same East Riding village reduces the chances of it being the case. When this occurs the solution is to refer to the monthly meeting minute books. The proposed match will have been detailed close to the date of marriage, and the name of the individuals involved will be recorded. In this case John Maire was the husband.[78]

For the purposes of aggregative analysis these two examples do not really cause any problem, as the marriage is recorded taking place on a certain date, thus it can simply be 'counted'. It does cause problems for the technique of family re-constitution because the surname of the new family unit, and hence the name under which any children born to it could be identified within the registers of births, cannot be known for sure.

For statistical analysis concerns are raised by the occurrence of differences in the date of marriages in different entries. For example, the marriage of John Fisher of Barmston to Sarah Hutchinson of Hornsea is recorded in the register as having happened on both 14 May 1672, and 5 February 1675. However, there are generally more discrepancies between the months that were recorded, rather than the years.

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[78] OMM, February 1670.

Though this could be due to an error on the transcription of the handwriting on the document, there is less chance than usual of this being the case because Quakers used numbers rather than names for the month, reducing the chance of the handwriting being mis-read.

The second, local, source is the monthly meeting minute book, which records the instances of couples coming before the monthly meeting to gain permission to marry. The Quaker marriage procedure was a fairly lengthy one, as is revealed within the monthly meeting minute books. The prospective couple had first to declare their intentions to the women's monthly meeting, where one existed, and then repeat the procedure at the men's meeting. Following this request members of the respective meetings were appointed to investigate the proposed match. This involved checking the background of each partner and ascertaining that they were free from any others and, preferably, that they had the permission of their parents. The couple then had to attend the next monthly meeting to receive their answer. This procedure was entered into the minutes of the relevant meeting, allowing a similar method of analysis to that used on parish registers. The number of marriages counted in this paper was recorded from the second time the prospective couple appeared before the monthly meeting and received their permission to marry. Births were not recorded in the minute books, and deaths only very occasionally. For those records the registers are essential.

A comparison of the statistics between the data collected from the monthly meeting minute books and the register of marriages reveals an .nder-recording of marriages within the digest registers. The method of counting the number of marriages proposed before the monthly meetings in the East Riding gives a total number of 364 couples who were married between 1670 and 1699. The number of marriages recorded for the same period in the register is only 196. This is a very large discrepancy, with the register only recording 54% of the marriages compared to the monthly meeting minutes. It casts serious doubt over the accuracy of using the digest register solely to provide statistics for marriage.

The study of Quaker marriage from the monthly meeting minute books is not based on the examination of marriage ceremonies, as is the case with the study of parish registers, but of the permissions to marry that were granted by the monthly meeting. The time lag between receiving permission to marry and the actual marriage

is not known. The Quaker marriage ceremony was little different from the meeting for worship. All that was required was the presence of witnesses to a declaration by the couple. It would not have required a vast amount of organisation, and could have been carried out at one of the weekly preparative meetings for worship. It can reasonably be assumed, therefore, that the marriage occurred a relatively short time after permission was given. With the monthly meetings in the East Riding being held at the beginning of each month, it is probable that the couple were married before the month was out.

To an outsider, it would have been difficult to distinguish between a Quaker marriage and their meeting for worship. The Kelk monthly meeting book of sufferings provides an example of this confusion. In December 1683 David Milner and Sarah Towse both had goods distrained for attending a meeting for worship in Elmswell. They appealed against the action, unsuccessfully, on the basis that it was actually their marriage ceremony.[79] Though Quaker marriages were not legally recognised they were not illegal, as their religious worship was.

The Quakers believed that the marriage ceremonies of the established Church were part of the corruption of the world against which they testified. Marriage was thought to be a custom that had been appropriated by the clergy to gain money from the people.[80] Quakers were not married by any individual, yet the discipline of the monthly meeting procedure for marriage can be directly compared to that of the Church of England. Adrian Davies has noted that the Quaker practice for declaring the intention of marriage was very similar to the Anglican practice of issuing public banns, both offering the opportunity for objections to be raised.[81] Vann and Eversley have also observed that a conscientious clergyman would have counselled the couple proposing marriage to ensure that there was not any moral or ethical obstacle to their marriage. The Quaker marriage procedure passed on this responsibility to those individuals who investigated the proposed marriage for the monthly meeting.[82]

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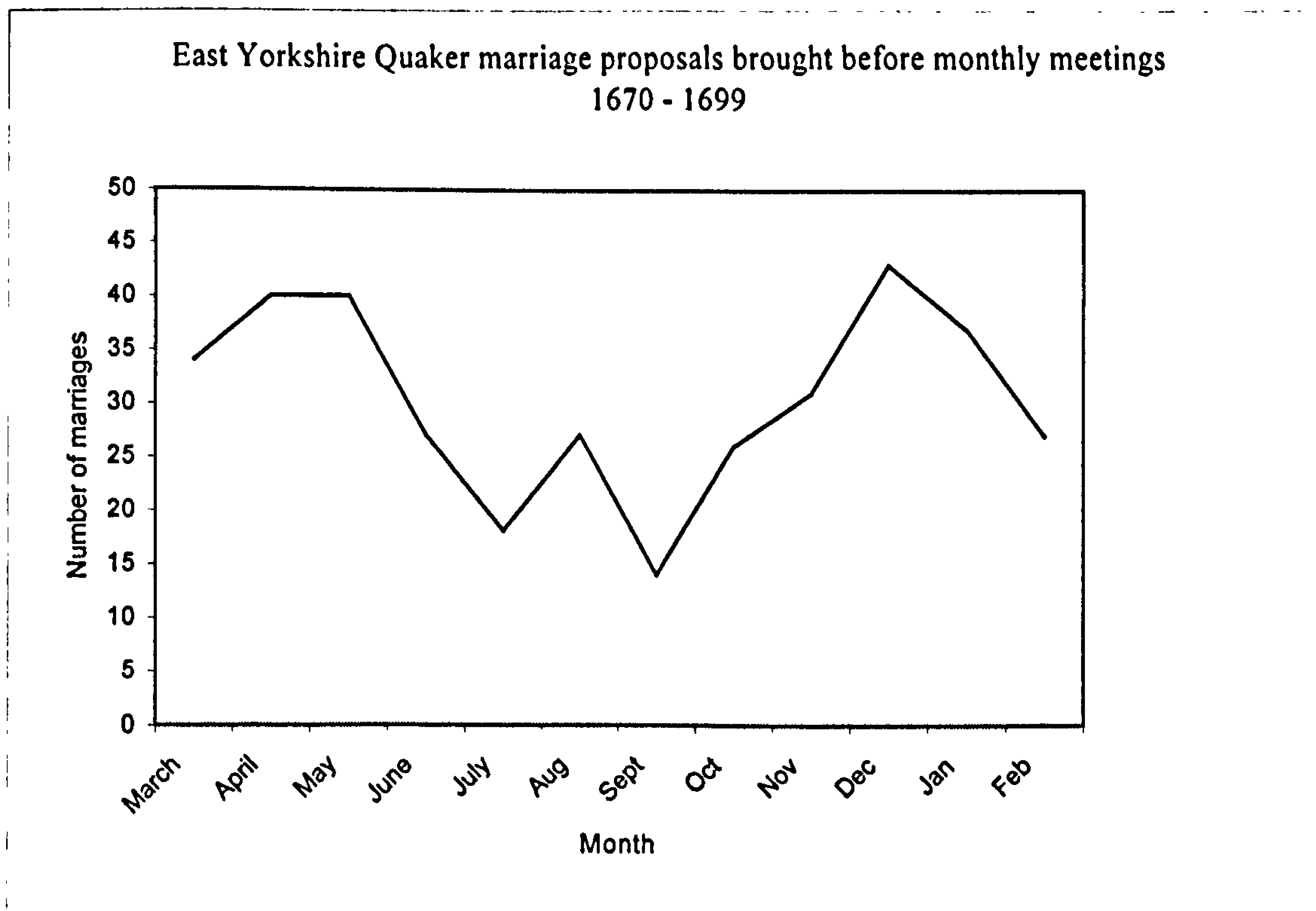
[79] KBS, p. 186.
[80] R. T. Vann & D. Eversley, *Friends in Life and Death The British and Irish Quakers in the Demographic Transition, 1650 – 1900* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 83.
[81] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 97.
[82] Vann & Eversley, *Friends in Life and Death*, p. 83.

Before the English Reformation there were three periods when marriage was prohibited by the Church: Lent, Rogationtide and Advent. Although the three periods of prohibition ceased to be part of the Church of England law following the Reformation the custom continued to be observed, Wrigley and Schofield noting that 'habits changed slowly'. All of these periods fell broadly within the same time each year, though were subject to some variability between years. The Lent prohibition period was the ten weeks from Septuagesima to the first Sunday after Easter; the earliest point in the calendar was from January 18 to March 29.[83] Rogationtide was the three weeks from Rogation to Trinity Sunday; the earliest time was April 26 to May 17 and the latest May 30 to June 20. Advent began somewhere between November 27 to December 3 and lasted until January 13.[84] Vann and Eversley have argued that although Quakers did not deliberately avoid the times when marriage had traditionally been prohibited March and December did usually see fewer weddings than the average month.[85]

The patterns of marriage seasonality for both Quakers and the Church of England are extremely similar. The general trend traced by Wrigley and Schofield from the parish registers was for marriages to reach a peak during the early summer and autumn months, separated by a trough in the late summer, and a 'chasm' in March.[86] Vann and Eversley have found much the same pattern from the Quaker marriage registers, though the peaks and troughs are less pronounced.[87]

[83] The Lent prohibition period was longer than the actual period of Lent, which is the forty days from Ash Wednesday to Easter Saturday.
[84] Wrigley & Schofield, *Population History of England*, p. 298 notes.
[85] Vann & Eversley, *Friends in Life and Death*, p. 84.
[86] Wrigley & Schofield, *Population History of England*, p. 298.
[87] Vann & Eversley, *Friends in Life and Death*, p. 84.



The graph above shows the seasonality of marriage declarations that were given permission by the monthly meetings in the East Riding during the last thirty years of the seventeenth century. The pattern is similar to that described by Wrigley and Schofield, and Vann and Eversley. The first peak occurred during the months of April and May, matching the early summer months that they identified. The last peak, however, falls in December and January, the two months following the two peak months of October and November that were identified by Wrigley and Schofield. It is noticeable that the number of marriages given permission to go ahead made by the monthly meetings fell during February before rising again between March and May. If it is assumed that following permission to marry being given the couple were married during the same month, the Quakers in the East Riding during the last quarter of the seventeenth century were not, as Vann and Eversley found, avoiding two of the traditionally prohibited periods of marriage, which fell in December and March.

The summer trough remains in the general pattern, as does the peak in early summer. In the East Riding during the period from 1670 to 1699 April and May recorded the second highest numbers of marriage, slightly behind December, and marginally in front of January. June, however, seems to have been the beginning of the summer trough, with the number of marriages falling quite markedly. The bottom

of the trough was reached in September, which consistently had a low number of marriages. Wrigley and Schofield's study showed that the early summer peak reached a maximum during the later seventeenth century, with April, May and June all recording high instances of marriage. They note that for a brief time May actually displaced November as the most popular month for marriage.[88]

It is generally accepted by historical demographers that the general pattern of marriages was created by the rural nature of seventeenth century society and the seasonal demand for labour in agriculture. The late summer trough in marriages coincided with the most labour-intensive period of the calendar, the harvesting of the yearly crop. The autumn and summer peaks fall during the time of year when the demands on labour were at their lowest, following the harvest of crops in autumn and after the most intensive period of care for young animals in early summer. These peaks can reflect regional variation between arable and pasture farming.[89]

Davies has argued that the Quakers faced a different situation from others in society when choosing their partner. He believes that this was the result of their practice of endogamy, combined with social exclusivity. The usual venues for mixing with the opposite sex, for example local dances or fairs, did not attract younger Quakers because of their testimony against worldly practices. Partnerships were probably forged, Davies comments, at meetings for worship. These were virtually the only opportunity that young Quakers had of mixing together socially.[90]

Did the places where Quakers were most socially active, i.e. their places for worship, heavily influence their choice of marriage partner? An examination of the places from which marriage partners were drawn together helps to answer this question and reveal the extent of the Quaker network within, and beyond, the East Riding, as well as providing important information regarding the geographical mobility of individuals. A sample of over 300 marriages from the East Riding during the second half of the seventeenth century has been traced, over 200 of which give the place of residence of both partners, which can be identified on a map. The distances that are given were measured according to the scale of the map. They were measured

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[88] Wrigley & Schofield, *The Population History of England*, pp. 299 – 301.
[89] *Ibid*, p. 303.
[90] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 92.

in as direct a line as possible, and have provided a useful rough guide. An analysis of this information provides significant results.

Firstly, it is noticeable that 43% of the marriages sampled involved partners from the same city, town or village who had not had to travel to find a marriage partner. Furthermore, 20% of these marriages were between partners living in the city of Hull. This reflects the fact that because population numbers were greater within urban centres, so were the chances of finding a partner from there. A further 29% of the sample was made up of couples that lived between 1 to 10 miles from each other. This evidence can initially be used to support Davies's theory that the local meetings for worship played the extra role of providing opportunities for prospective partners to meet.

However, in 20% of the marriages in the sample the distance between the respective partners place of residence was over 15 miles. It is highly unlikely that this type of distance was covered regularly for a meeting for worship, as it would have involved a round trip of over 30 miles. The relatively high number of partnerships forged across longer distances drags the mean distance that Quakers in the East Riding travelled to find a marriage partner during the second half of the seventeenth century up to 10 miles.

The furthest distance between residences for marriage partners was between Joseph Storr of Hilston and Katherine Vaulogtest of Amsterdam, who were married in 1678. This partnership demonstrates that the Quaker network was not confined only to this country, but also stretched overseas. Storr was a wealthy merchant, and the two most likely met while he was in Amsterdam for business. She was certainly a Quaker, as Owstwick monthly meeting granted Storr a certificate of approval for her local meeting.[91] Whether they met through a business relationship or at a meeting for worship in Amsterdam cannot be ascertained. In this case the importance of the sea as a means of trade and travel that connected groups of people is demonstrated. This point is reinforced by the partnership of three couples where male Friends from Whitby married females from Bridlington, and three instances when male Friends from Scarborough married females from the Bridlington locality. Another match with

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[91] OMM, September 1678.

a coastal connection was between William Coatsworth of South Shields and Mary Frost of Bridlington in 1667.[92] Whether these couples met through a meeting for worship is not known, though it is entirely possible. That they met because of the importance of the sea as a means of transport and trade is almost certain.

The table below shows the number of marriage proposals that were brought before each monthly meeting in the East Riding in totals for each decade for the last thirty years of the seventeenth century. They have been grouped together in this way to enable the general pattern of population movements to be examined. The monthly meetings (Kelk, Owstwick and Elloughton) have been abbreviated to only their first letter. The months have been left as they are recorded in the minute books, with March being the first month and February the twelfth.

Number of marriage proposals per month brought before Kelk (K), Owstwick (O) and Elloughton (E) Monthly Meetings, 1670 – 1699 (per decade)

Monthly Meeting	K	O	E	**Total**	K	O	E	**Total**	K	O	E	**Total**	Grand Total
Month/Year	1670-79				1680-89				1690-99				
March	5	13	3	**21**	5	7	2	**14**	2	1	2	**5**	34
April	8	7	5	**20**	2	7	1	**10**	6	2	2	**10**	40
May	5	1	5	**11**	6		3	**9**	5	2		**7**	40
June	2	2	3	**7**	4	5	1	**10**			1	**1**	27
July	4	6	3	**13**	7	2	2	**11**	2	1		**3**	18
August	2	2	2	**6**		3		**3**	3		2	**5**	27
September	5	4	1	**10**	4	6	2	**12**	2		2	**4**	14
October	5	7	1	**13**	2	3	3	**8**	3	6	1	**10**	26
November	6	7	4	**17**	7	8	5	**20**	3	2	1	**7**	31
December	6	9	5	**20**	5	6	4	**15**	1	1		**2**	43
January	5	8	2	**15**	3	2	3	**8**	2	2		**4**	37
February	4	5	6	**15**	5	3	3	**11**	3	4	1	**8**	27
Total	57	71	40	**168**	50	52	29	**131**	32	21	12	**65**	364

The table shows that the number of marriages between Quakers was falling throughout the period, the most rapid decline occurring during the 1690s when the total number of marriages fell to a level of half that of the 1680s. It was during the 1690s that concerns over Quakers marrying outside the society became prominent, a

[92] KMM, September 1667.

period that also saw the first real decline of Quaker numbers.[93] If the number of marriages is taken as a rough guide for fertility levels, and assuming that mortality levels remained constant, then the fall in the number of marriages would lead to a decline in fertility and therefore a decline in the Quaker population in the East Riding.

The figures in the table above can be used to help make an estimate of the Quaker population that was in the East Riding during the period. Laslett has pointed out that because marriages were generally entered into at later ages and were often broken up by the death of a partner, the number of children that were produced per marriage can be calculated at slightly over four.[94] Therefore, the total number of children produced by the Quaker marriages between 1670 and 1699 can be calculated by multiplying four by the total number of marriages, which gives the figure of 1456. To this figure the total number of marriages can be added again, as each marriage involved two people. This brings the total number of Quakers living in the East Riding to 1820. However, this figure does not account for mortality, either adult or infant, and ignores the possibility of migration. Furthermore, as was noted earlier, some 10 per cent of the total number of marriage were remarriages, the fertility level of which was widely variable, largely depending on the age of the respective partners. It is therefore wise to use this figure with caution, bearing in mind that it is only a very rough guide. However, from these calculations it can be said with some confidence that there were approximately 1500 - 2000 Quakers living in the East Riding during the second half of the seventeenth century.

Owstwick monthly meeting had the largest Quaker population of the three monthly meetings during the 1670s and 1680s, as was noted earlier.[95] By the 1690s, however, Kelk monthly meeting had the strongest Quaker communities, with 32 couples seeking permission to be married, compared to 21 at Owstwick. Elloughton monthly meeting was the smallest of the three throughout the seventeenth century.

All three monthly meetings were in decline during the period. Between the 1670s and the 1690s Owstwick and Elloughton monthly meetings saw the number of marriages brought before them fall by some 70%, a severe reduction of numbers.

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[93] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 94.
[94] Laslett, *World We Have Lost*, p. 116.
[95] See above, p. 38.

These two monthly meetings lost membership in a similar pattern, with each experiencing a 27% decline in marriages between the 1670s and 1680s, followed by a decline of about 60% between the 1680s and 1690s.

Generally speaking, Kelk monthly meeting managed to maintain population numbers between the 1670s and 1680s, with a fall of only 13% in marriages. Between the 1680s and 1690s this figure rose to a 36% decrease in marriages, and overall between the 1670s and 1690s Kelk monthly meeting saw an overall decline in marriages of 44%.

It is clear from these patterns that there was a sharp decline of Quaker population during the 1680s. The reasons behind this rapid decline are unclear. It is generally accepted by historians of Quakerism that the Society's numbers began to decline towards the end of the seventeenth century. Rowntree has argued that this was mainly due to the 'suicidal madness' of Friends being disowned for marrying outside the society. He believed that this policy came close to 'extinguishing the society'.[96]

The practice of endogamy, in the East Riding at least, increasingly led Quakers to a high degree of geographical mobility for the purposes of finding a marriage partner. As Quaker numbers began to decline individuals had to look further afield to find a marriage partner from within the movement. During the years 1660 to1669 the proportion of marriages where the distance between the places the two individuals lived was greater than 15 miles stood at 13%. This figure increased to over 20% during the 1670s and 1680s and reached above 30% for the 1690s.

One of the effects of this geographical mobility was a strengthening of ties between Quaker communities throughout the area. The marriages outlined above between partners from Whitby, Scarborough and Bridlington and its hinterland demonstrate that links existed between the monthly meetings of the East coast. Two individuals married partners from the Cleveland area, and two males from the East Riding married females from Malton. In the southern region of East Yorkshire three females married husbands from Lincolnshire, a relatively short distance across the river Humber. In the Eastern region two female brides came from York. These

[96] J. W. Rowntree, 'The Rise of Quakerism in Yorkshire', in J. Rowntree (ed.), *John Wilhelm Rowntree. Essays and Addresses*, p.61.

examples can suffice to show that Quaker communities across the county were intrinsically linked. Marriage provided family ties, which further consolidated the network.[97]

Evidence from the East Riding suggests that the practice of endogamy may not have been strictly adhered to in all cases, however. Those already married before their conversion to Quakerism did not have to leave their spouse, even if their partner did not become a Quaker. Furthermore, marriage practice may have been more liberal than has previously been thought. In one case in July 1680 Elliner Gill of Owstwick was given permission to marry Robert Wattondale, who was not a Quaker. The women's monthly minute book records that Wattondale was 'a man who hath not frequented Friends meetings, neither hath Friends such unity with him as they could desire'. Despite this, it was decided that the marriage could go ahead 'for her sake'.[98]

In September 1711 William Sargeant and Mary Lyth declared their intentions to marry to Monthly Meeting. In this case 'the young woman being too comfortable to language, fashions and customs of the world Friends cannot have full unity with the marriage, yet not being willing to bear too hard upon them leave them to their liberty to marry'.[99]

Admittedly, this is only a couple of examples. Generally speaking Quaker practice was to marry a partner that was from within the society. Quakers believed that an 'unequal yoking' of partners of mixed religious beliefs was to be avoided.[100] The family served as the main instrument of religious instruction. Therefore, it was necessary that both parents held a single religious point of view. If this was not the case it was feared that religious commitment could decline, and there would be confusion during the raising of children that resulted from a mixed partnership. Richard Vann has pointed out that this was not an original doctrine. It was probably developed from the common Christian belief of the period that no Christian should marry an infidel, heretic or schismatic.[101]

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[97] KMM, November 1665; 2 May 1682; 7 December 1690.
[98] ERA, OWMM, DDQR/21, p. 30.
[99] *Ibid*, p. 137.
[100] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 93.
[101] Vann, *Social Development*, p. 181.

An important question to consider is what attracted early Quaker couples to marriage? Love, or even merely mutual affection, is an obvious starting point. Davies has pointed out that the Quaker marriage ceremony included a declaration by both parties to be 'loving and faithful' to one another, possible evidence of a loving relationship.[102] A declaration of love was also included in the contemporary Church of England ceremony that followed the Book of Common Prayer, which indicates how closely the practice of Friends paralleled that of the established Church. Evidence of discipline from the monthly meeting minute books also reveals that many couples did feel strongly about each other. For example, in September 1671 William Backer and Francis Twinam declared their intentions of marriage to Owstwick monthly meeting following the presentment of their written confession of 'the lust of our owne harts [sic]'.[103]

The Quaker belief of 'the Light within' would have required that the guidance of conscience, or spirit, was of crucial importance. This in itself could be interpreted as a bond between a couple, whether it was termed love or not. Occasionally, of course, the spirit may not have been clear, or was subject to human fallibilities. Phyllis Mack has provided an example of the difficulties that occurred in Nottingham when one 'Martha Plats experienced a motion toward marriage with an Edward Langford'. Unfortunately for her, Langford experienced no such motion and was, apparently, 'disturbed by her repeated proposals'.[104]

It is also possible that partnerships were forged for economic reasons. Marriage involved the creation of a new household, and the distinct possibility of dependent children. The family was an important economic, as well as emotional, support unit. This is one of the reasons used by Laslett to explain the high age of first marriage when he dispelled the 'misbeliefs about our ancestors' concerning child marriage, and the lack of an extended family household during the early modern period.[105]

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[102] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 95.
[103] OMM, p.49.
[104] P. Mack, *Visionary Women. Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth Century England* (London, 1992) p. 269.
[105] Laslett, *The World We Have Lost*, Ch. 4.

Ann Kussmaul's work examining rural labourers and servants further emphasises the important role of the household as an economic unit. She demonstrated how servants were not those in domestic service during the early modern period. Instead, they were adolescents and young adults aged between 15 and 24 years old, who worked as rural labourers, for example as ploughmen, dairymaids and apprentices, but lived within a household where they were regarded as part of the 'family', though there were not necessarily any kinship ties.[106] There is not any evidence available in the monthly meeting minutes, or elsewhere, to either confirm or deny that this occurred in the Quaker community in the East Riding.

The structure of service reflected the demographic patterns and family structure of the period. For example, the relatively high age of first marriage identified by Laslett, and the structure of the nuclear family in early modern rural society. Kussmaul highlights how the labour demands of the nuclear family constantly changed depending upon its stage in the life cycle.[107] A family of two married adults without any need for labour could quickly become two adults with two dependent children needing attention and food, in need of labour to continue the production of the household after the loss of the mother from the economic unit. In time, the mother would return, together with the children, who could now contribute to the production. In time the children would gradually add more and more to the productive unit of the family, therefore reducing the need for labour.

Kussmaul argues that service in husbandry solved the economic problems of the life cycle simply by offering a flexible solution to them. While in service young adults were protected from the seasonal and cyclical variations of the economy. By living in with their employers they were guaranteed food and lodgings, and in return were a source of cheap labour to increase the income into the household. She notes how the family was flexibly redefined, using servants as they were needed.[108]

In turn, dependent children of working age could be sent to other families to reduce the burden upon the household, and provide additional income. This system of sending children from the family home provided a ready supply of labour for rural

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[106] A. Kussmaul, *Servants in Husbandry in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1981), p. 3.
[107] Kussmaul, *Servants in Husbandry*, p. 24.
[108] *Ibid*

society. Young adults supplied relatively cheap labour. They worked in part for their lodgings and food. In time, they could save any additional income to enable them to marry and set up their own household. The pattern of life for many in the early modern period would have involved being in service when they were young, before leaving service to marry and set up their own household.[109]

In Essex Adrian Davies found that Quaker families often employed servants and apprentices who were not members of the movement. He also believes that religious observance was not forced upon those who entered the Quaker household, based upon the evidence of apprentices who had been apprenticed to Quakers swearing oaths to become freemen.[110] Unfortunately, there is not any evidence available in the monthly meeting minutes, or elsewhere, to either confirm or deny that the system and structures described by Kussmaul and Davies occurred in the Quaker community in the East Riding.

Wrigley and Schofield have emphasised that marriage was a social act, which involved the 'expectation of economic and residential independence' for the newly married couple. They point out that the feasibility of marriage was 'dependent upon the availability of economic resources'.[111] The measurement of the Quaker family as an economic unit is extremely difficult. Vann and Eversley have highlighted the fact that there is no direct way of estimating the cost of children to the household, or the opportunities of them being put out to work. Ultimately, they argue, historians' understanding of motivation for marriage is at best informed speculation and must remain obscure.[112]

The economic functions of the family are perhaps best highlighted by the high amount of remarriage during the period. In a society with relatively high mortality rates remarriage was necessarily common. Laslett uses the example of Clayworth where the local incumbent has left unusually detailed information regarding the parish. Every marital union in the village was listed in 1688, of which 21 out of 72 of the husbands had been previously married. Laslett points out that the death of the husband threatened to end the family unit as surely as the marriage itself began it. He argues that a capable wife in charge of the household was an important and difficult

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[109] Kussmaul, *Servants in Husbandry*, pp. 23 – 4.
[110] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 206.
[111] Wrigley & Schofield, *The Population History of England*, p. 305.
[112] Vann & Eversley, *Friends in Life and Death*, pp.82 – 4.

role to replace, though it was not as crucial economically. Thus he believes that 'should the husband and the father die, everything on which the family depended was put in jeopardy'.[113]

Kussmaul has pointed out how the system of service in early modern society protected the household from the relatively high mortality rates. On the death of a parent children could be sent into the households of others to help ease the burden of supporting them. Alternatively, servants could be hired in place of the lost adult to ensure that production continued and the household had its income.[114]

The Quakers were not excepted from the danger of mortality in the family unit. Remarriage was not unusual and makes up roughly 10 per cent of the total number of marriages recorded in the East Riding monthly meeting minute books. Upon remarriage the Quakers closely guarded the rights of any children that existed from any previous partnership, as was the practice in society generally. In circumstances where the new wife brought money or land to the partnership some of this was also protected, guaranteeing her a degree of economic independence from her new husband.

Quakers did not repudiate the existing legal system and customs, but worked within them. Permission for marriage to go ahead would not be given by the monthly meeting until it was certain that the wife and her children had been provided for, and that the terms of any existing probates were met. It is worth quoting one example at length to demonstrate the detail with which this practice was carried out. In December 1670 John Maire and Elizabeth Billany declared their intentions of marriage to Owstwick monthly meeting. Elizabeth had been married previously, and had three children. The monthly meeting decreed that:

> The said John Maire is to give bond before marriage to the three children of Elizabeth Billany, to make up her former portion the sum of five pounds a piece and the bonds to be given into the hands of Ruben Handcock & Peter Johnson to be kept for the childrens use, and if any die [the portion] to fall to the others. Furthermore the said John Maire is to give bond to Elizabeth Billany that she shall have 15 pounds to dispose of at any time before her death to whom she pleaseth...

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[113] Laslett, *The World We Have Lost*, pp. 113 – 15.
[114] Kussmaul, *Servants in Husbandry*, p. 26.

> The eleven sheep belonging to the three children shall go forward for their use they paying for their keeping & the said John Maire to give his bond...unto John Langricke for his counter security he being bound to the church of York for the childrens portions.

Having received confirmation from Ruben Handcock and Peter Johnson that they had received bond from John Maire the monthly meeting gave its permission for the marriage to go ahead.[115]

By using intermediaries such as Langricke Quakers avoided direct contact with the church, and thus kept themselves separate from, though working within, worldly practice. In this example the Quakers did not operate any independent system for the protection of Elizabeth Billany's property, but worked within the established and legally binding probate framework. Quakers made wills in the same way as the rest of society. The bonds that were given by Maire to Handcock and Johnson were merely an added protection for money that the children were legally due according to Maire's will. It would appear that they were operating through a non-Quaker intermediary, Langricke, who was possibly an executor of the will, and was certainly bound by the church courts for the protection of the children's portions. The Quakers used the legal system that existed when it benefited them.

The Quaker population in the East Riding, as examined through their marriage records, declined during the last three decades of the seventeenth century. The fall in marriages was marked, especially during the 1680s when all three monthly meetings experienced a rapid decline. By the end of the 1690s Kelk monthly meeting had replaced Owstwick as the largest in the county. By now it had become known as Bridlington Monthly Meeting. The fact that Bridlington was an economic centre as a coastal and fishing town assisted the development of the Quaker community in the locality.

It can be seen that although Quaker marriage practice was separate from the rest of society, it was basically formed in a similar way. The Quaker movement could not escape structures of the world such as the yearly economic cycle, which conditioned their pattern of marriage, as it did the rest of the country's. Thus the patterns of marriage for Quakers during the later seventeenth century were generally

[115] OMM, pp. 39 – 40. The will of Eizabeth Billany's previous husband has not survived.

similar to those of members of the Church of England. Furthermore, the monthly meeting procedure for worship was remarkably similar to that of the established church.

Quakers faced a different situation from others when choosing a partner. The practice of endogamy led many individuals to seek partners from outside the locality, especially towards the end of the seventeenth century as membership numbers began to fall. In guaranteeing the rights of individuals from previous partnerships they were only following worldly practice, and were prepared to work within the established legal system. Though they attempted to separate from the basic structures of the world in the seventeenth century, the Quaker movement remained congruent to them.

Chapter 3: The social origins of the early Quakers in East Yorkshire.

The social origin of the early Quakers has been a matter of historical debate stretching almost fifty years. It is of significance for this study to understand the effect that economic and social standing had upon the practice of religious toleration and persecution in the East Riding. This will be examined in a later chapter of the thesis. For now, it is necessary to examine what the social origins and standing of the Quaker community in the East Riding was, and to place it into the context of the wider historical debate on the social background of the early Quaker movement.

The sources for examining the social background of early Quakers are many and various. They include the monthly meeting minute books, suffering records, court records, the registers of births, marriages and burials, probate records and hearth tax returns, and some of the published pamphlet material. Richard Vann and Barry Reay have both concluded that it is best to use as wide a variety of these sources as possible, a method that has consequently been adopted by Adrian Davies.[116] This eliminates any bias or inaccuracies that may be present in any one of these sources. For example, reliance on only the probate records would give a false impression of the social origins of the early Quakers, as wills were only left by those that had something to leave behind for family or friends. Therefore, the poorest members of society are largely excluded from these records. However, they do provide good evidence for those that had some property to leave behind.

Despite the large variety of sources available the extent of the evidence that they provide for the East Riding in the seventeenth century is not especially great. The local monthly meeting minutes and suffering records are silent regarding the occupations of the individuals that are named within them. Similarly the registers of births, marriages and burials for the East Riding do not record occupations until the later eighteenth century. In an earlier survey of the social origins of early Friends Cole noted that of 1, 200 marriages examined from the marriage registers for the whole of Yorkshire occupational information was provided in only about 10 per cent of the

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[116] Vann, *Social Development*, pp. 47 – 87; B. Reay, 'The Social Origins of Early Quakerism', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 11 (1980), pp 55 – 72; Davies, *Quakers in English Society* pp. 140 – 55.

entries.[117] The assize records for Beverley, the administrative centre of the East Riding, no longer exist for the second half of the seventeenth century. This has left only probate records and hearth tax returns to assess the social background of early friends.

The result of this is a relatively small sample of eighty-five members of the early Quaker community in East Yorkshire to be examined, but the results remain significant. There are thirty probate records that have been traced that can be attributed to Quaker individuals that lived in the East Riding during the second half of the seventeenth century, the earliest identified is from 1674 and the latest 1708. In addition to this fifty-five Friends have been identified amongst the hearth tax returns for 1672, 1673 and 1674. Only eight individuals have both a probate record and can be identified within the hearth tax assessments.

The hearth tax returns can be used as a rough guide to social status, though Reay has warned that they can be problematical. He correctly points out that researchers need to be rigorous in the identification of individuals within the hearth tax returns due to the large numbers of individuals who are included within them. The most effective way of identifying Quaker individuals within the hearth tax returns is to firstly identify the parish in which they were resident. After this, they can be looked for in the returns, which are organised by parish.[118] However, this method is not foolproof. There are plenty of instances of individuals sharing the same name, especially in parishes with large populations. This is a particular problem with regards to Quaker communities living in towns and cities. When this complication arose in the East Riding the individual concerned has been disregarded, to avoid producing any dubious or false results.

The great advantage of the hearth tax returns is that they include all levels of society. Those who were discharged from payment due to their poverty are recorded in some of the returns, including many parishes in the East Riding. Therefore, the returns provide historians with an important guide to the economic status of many individuals who otherwise have left no record behind them because they were not

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[117] A. Cole, 'The Social Origins of Early Friends', *Journal of Friends Historical Society*, 48 (1957), pp. 99 – 118.
[118] Reay, 'Social Origins', p. 63.

wealthy enough to leave a will. In addition, the coverage of the population within the hearth tax returns is such that they allow comparison to be made both between and within different regions.

The earliest surviving hearth tax assessment for the whole of the East Riding is for Michaelmas 1670, but the document is in a bad state of decay and often illegible. The most complete return for the East Riding is from Michaelmas 1672, though this excludes Hull and Hullshire. Assessments were made in the form of paper books for each wapentake for use at Michaelmas 1673 and Lady Day 1674, which include the data for Hull. All of these are in good condition, and are virtually identical to the assessment for 1672.[119]

The most efficient way of identifying individuals within the hearth tax assessments is to identify the individual and the parish in which they lived, and then to check the name against those in the assessment for the parish. Of course, common names such as John Smith or Peter Johnson recur frequently. For this reason individuals that have common names cannot be identified with any certainty, and so have not been included in the sample, unless those that shared the same name within the parish were assessed for the same number of hearths. By identifying Quaker households in this way the sample is a random one. No particular source leads to the identification of those that make up the sample, and households can be disqualified from the sample simply by sharing a name with their neighbours.

A survey of the hearth tax returns for the whole of Yorkshire has been made by Purdy, which provides statistics for the East Riding against which the sample of fifty-five Quakers can be compared. The results are given in table 1 below. Purdy records a total of over sixteen thousand households in the East Riding assessments for 1672 and 1673, of which 23 per cent (3, 669) were not chargeable. The proportions that follow after this have been worked out based on the number of remaining

[119] J. D. Purdy, *Yorkshire Hearth Tax Returns*, Studies in Regional and Local History 7 (Hull, 1991) pp. 31 – 33. The assessment for the East Riding at Michaelmas 1672, on which Purdy bases his survey, and which I have used to allow comparison to be made is in the National Archives, Kew, E179/205/504. It is available on microfilm in the ERA.

households in the East Riding that were chargeable for hearth tax, which was 12, 400, or 77 per cent of the total number of households.[120]

Table 1. Comparison of the social origins of Quaker households to the East Riding Population.

Number of hearths	East Riding population (%)	Quaker sample (%)
Not chargeable	23	7
1	49	57
2	15	23
3 - 6 (incl.)	12	13
7+	1	0

Almost half of the households, 49 per cent, that were liable for hearth tax in the East Riding were assessed for only one hearth. A further 15 per cent (1, 860) of the chargeable households had two hearths. The proportion of households that had between three and six hearths (inclusive) was 12 per cent, and only 1 per cent of households in the East Riding had seven or more hearths.[121] In comparison, the sample of fifty-one Quaker households that were liable for hearth tax for the same years is made up of 57 per cent with only one hearth, 23 per cent with two hearths and the remaining 13 per cent with between three and six hearths. No Quaker household in the East Riding had over six hearths, and 7 per cent of the sample of fifty-five households was not chargeable.

It is immediately striking how little variation there is between the figures for the East Riding population as a whole and the sample of Quaker households that were liable to pay hearth tax. Slightly more of the Quaker sample, some 8 per cent, was assessed for two hearths. This was offset in the statistics by those households that had only one hearth. The largest difference, 16 per cent, is in the number of households that were discharged from paying hearth tax.

Taken only at face value, these figures suggest that the Quaker community in the East Riding was marginally wealthier than the population in general in the region, as a smaller proportion was discharged from paying hearth tax. When the 8 per cent

[120] Purdy, *Yorkshire Hearth Tax Returns*, p. 50. Purdy's work has provided the figures, the calculations are my own. See table 1 below.
[121] Purdy, *Yorkshire Hearth Tax Returns*, p. 50.

difference between the East Riding population and the Quaker sample that had two hearths is also considered this observation becomes more plausible. It is also worth noting that at the other end of the social scale none of the Quakers from the East Riding had seven hearths or more, which is indicative that membership was not drawn from the social elite.

In her study of dissenters in Warwickshire Hurwich has produced figures of the hearth tax distribution amongst Quakers compared to the general population of the region. For her study she adopted categories for level of wealth in relation to number of hearths that have been kept the same for comparative purposes.[122] The figures are based on her sample from the hearth tax assessments of 1670, on Quaker households that have been identified between the period 1663 to 1689, rather than her pre-1663 figures based upon the 1662 hearth tax assessments for Warwickshire, again for comparative reasons. Her findings help to test the validity of the small sample that has been used for the East Riding. The figures are given in table 2 below. Davies has produced similar figures for Essex, based upon the 1671 hearth tax assessments. However, he has grouped the number of hearths slightly differently to Hurwich, although the level of wealth categories remains similar.[123] This has meant that they have had be compared to the East Riding in a different table. These figures are given in table 3 below.

Table 2. Comparison of the social origins of Quaker households in Warwickshire and the East Riding.

Level of Wealth	Number of Hearths	Warwickshire (%)	East Riding (%)
Poor	Exempt - 1	57	64
Middling	2 - 3	36	28
Relatively comfortable	4 - 5	4	5
Prosperous	6 - 9	2	3
Wealthy	10+	1	0

The figures show little difference between the Quaker communities in Warwickshire and East Yorkshire amongst the higher social groups, those that fall into the relatively comfortable to wealthy categories. Amongst the poor and middling

[122] J. Hurwich, 'The Social Origins of the Early Quakers', *Past and Present*, 48 (1970), pp. 156 – 62. Hurwich adapted the categories from W. G. Hoskins, *Industry, Trade and People in Exeter 1688 – 1800* (Manchester, 1935) pp. 111 – 22.
[123] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 146.

social groups the East Riding sample has 7 per cent more poor and 8 per cent less middling. The Warwickshire Quaker community was generally more prosperous than that of the East Riding. However, the average number of hearths per household for Warwickshire has been calculated by Hurwich to be 1.8, compared to an average for the East Riding population of 1.4. The average number of hearths per Quaker households in Warwickshire was 1.9, compared to an average of 1.7 for East Yorkshire.[124] Therefore, the main difference between the Warwickshire and East Riding samples is one based on regional differences of wealth and prosperity. In both areas the Quaker community was slightly wealthier than the general population. Furthermore, the similarity of the figures helps validate the small sample that has been used for East Yorkshire.

Table 3. Comparison of the social origins of Quaker households in Essex and the East Riding.

Level of Wealth	Number of Hearths	East Riding (%)	Essex (%)
Poor	Exempt - 1	64	23
Comfortable	2 - 3	28	44
Prosperous	4+	8	30
Wealthy	8+	0	3

The comparison between the figures for the East Riding and Essex further emphasises the importance of regional differences of wealth. Unfortunately, Davies's grouping of number of hearths does not enable an accurate average number of hearths for Quakers in Essex to be calculated. Nor does he provide the figure in his work. However, he does compare his sample of Quaker households in Essex to the general population, which reveals that 40 per cent of the households in the region were either exempt or assessed for only one hearth. This can be compared to 72 per cent of all households in the East Riding that fall into the 'poor' category.[125] Therefore, it can be assumed that Essex was relatively wealthier than East Yorkshire. This is reflected within the Quaker community in the region, where 23 per cent of households were exempt from the hearth tax or were assessed for one hearth, compared to 64 per cent in the East Riding. There is a correspondingly large difference in the proportion of Quaker households that fall into the comfortable and prosperous categories, where the figures for Essex are 17 per cent and 21 per cent higher than those in East Yorkshire respectively.

[124] Hurwich, 'Social Origins', p. 160.
[125] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 146.

Similarly, there is a significant difference between the figures for Warwickshire and Essex. Hurwich's sample for the Quaker community in Warwickshire shows 34 per cent more in the poor category and eight per cent less in the middling or comfortable category of two or three hearths. Again, regional variations in wealth help explain the differences between the figures. Hurwich calculated that 64 per cent of the general population in Warwickshire were in the poor category as opposed to the 40 per cent in Essex. This evidence supports Davies's observation that the Quaker community around the country 'reflected distinctive and sometimes sharply contrasting occupational characteristics according to the locations in which it took root and flourished'.[126]

The evidence for occupations of the Quaker community in the East Riding is made up of information given in probate records. Again the sample is only small, which makes it difficult to draw wider conclusions. However, when coupled with the evidence from the hearth tax returns it adds credence to the theory that although the Quaker community in East Yorkshire reflected the region from which it was drawn, its membership was marginally wealthier than the East Riding population in general.

Twelve husbandmen and four yeomen left probate records that have been found for Quaker individuals in East Yorkshire. Together, they account for over half the sample of thirty probates that have been identified. The next most numerous occupation is house carpenter, which accounts for only two individuals. The remainder of the sample was made up of a variety of employments, including a blacksmith, cooper, mercer, grocer, fisherman, and merchant. Seventeenth century England was predominantly rural, and the East Riding region was no different. This is reflected by the fact that the majority of the sample made their living from the land. No attempt has been made to categorise or group the occupations of the Quaker community in the East Riding for analysis. This is for two principal reasons: the difficulties of categorising husbandmen and yeomen, and the size of the sample.

The occupations of husbandman and yeoman cause their own problems of categorisation. Both of them could have had varying degrees of wealth, the difference

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[126] *Ibid*, p. 147.

was in social status. In the legal sense of the term yeoman referred to an individual that possessed freehold land worth forty shillings per annum, but it was also commonly used to describe any farmer beneath the rank of gentleman, regardless of whether or not he was a freeholder. Therefore, the term could be equally applied to substantial copyholders or leaseholders.[127] A village survey in Warwickshire in 1698 has shown that there was a rapid increase in the number of yeomen and a corresponding decrease in the number of husbandmen. However, this was attributed to changes in language as the term husbandman began to die out.[128] Vann has pointed out that 'it was not uncommon for men to be called both yeoman and husbandman, even at approximately the same time'. He also highlights the fact that within the Norfolk quarter sessions virtually everybody indicted during the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was called a yeoman, which led him to treat the description with due scepticism.[129] Vann concluded that due to the inconsistency with which contemporaries used the terms yeoman and husbandman, the probate records, and the records for sufferings, provide the best evidence for the economic status of an individual.

This approach was also taken by Reay, who agreed with Vann's belief that a refusal to pay an estimated annual tithe of £4 a year indicated yeoman status.[130] However, Reay warned that the reverse was not necessarily true. A substantial landowner could be liable for a relatively small tithe if a small piece of land was owned away from a larger part of his estate. Bill Stevenson has warned of the dangers of attributing the status of yeoman quite so easily. He has argued that the stage of the economic lifecycle at which an individual was at could greatly affect the amount of land he farmed, and his productivity. Health, age, and availability of labour within the household could all be defining factors. In turn, all these factors would impact upon the amount of tithe that was paid. He concludes that under the £4 a year rule, a landowner could be judged a yeoman throughout most of his life, and fall into the lower category of husbandman during his later years.[131]

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[127] Reay, 'Social Origins', p. 58.
[128] P. Styles, 'A Census of a Warwickshire Village in 1698'', *University of Birmingham Historical Journal*, 33 (1951/52). Cited in Vann, *Social Development*, p. 64.
[129] Vann, *Social Development*, p. 64.
[130] Reay, 'Social Origins', p. 58; Vann, *Social Development*, pp. 65 – 6.
[131] B. Stevenson, 'The Social and Economic Status of post – Restoration Dissenters, 1660 – 1725', M. Spufford (ed.), *The World of Rural Dissenters* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 332 – 59.

Tithes cannot be used as an accurate measure of income, nor are they indicative of occupation. Individuals whose principal employment was as blacksmith or carpenter, for example, may also have held a small piece of land that was used to supplement their income.[132] For example, Richard Hardy of Hollym in the East Riding was described as a 'house carpenter' in his will. He still left behind three acres of arable land to one son, and an acre planted with beans to another.[133] However, Reay concludes that in practice the distinction between husbandman and yeoman is a 'fairly easy' one to settle. The amount of goods and bequests of money left in wills, together with information from the hearth tax returns and suffering records for non-payment of tithes all indicate the status of an individual.[134]

The probates of Quakers that have been traced for the East Riding highlight the difficulties of judgement that are left to the historian. Sure enough, in a few cases the decision is not a difficult one. For example, Robert Wood of Hollym left 40 shillings in his will, together with a plough, 2 yokes, a pair of oxen and a 'nag', 4 ewes, and 2 acres of land in March 1674.[135] Although no occupation is given for him it can reasonably be assumed that he earned his living from his small parcels of land and few animals, and was a husbandman. By contrast, William Elleker of Sutton was depicted as a husbandman in his probate. He left his wife, Isabell, £140 and an undisclosed amount of land in October 1674. In the hearth tax assessments two years earlier had been charged for a household with four hearths.[136] Thomas Pinder of Halsham was described in his will dated February 1698, as a husbandman. Although he left no land he did leave 46 sheep to his sons, and goods and other animals valued at over £250, and monetary bequests of £66.[137] Clearly, both Elleker and Pinder were much wealthier than Robert Wood, and can be regarded as a yeoman, rather than their contemporary description of husbandman.

Reay gives an example of Andrew Smith of Stebbing in Essex, who left bequests of £200 in 1675, who he regards as a yeoman. By this comparison Pinder can also be regarded as a yeoman. However, Smith also left behind 80 acres of land,

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132 Reay, 'Social Origins', pp. 58 – 9.
133 Borthwick Institute of Archives (BIA), Calendar of Probate Records taken from the Act Books of the Deanery of Holderness (PADH), March 24 1705.
134 Reay, 'Social Origins', p. 59.
135 BIA, Probate Acts in the York Registry 1673 – 1680 (PAYR), vol. 55, fo. 35.
136 *Ibid*, vol 55, fo. 300.
137 BIA, PADH, July 8 1698.

and was assessed in the hearth tax returns of 1662 for four hearths.[138] There is no other such qualifying evidence for Pinder. Instead, his probate simply leaves 'everything else', except what was left in bequests, to his wife Sara. This is a common problem with the probate records. The property and money that was bequeathed is detailed, with the rest of the estate left to the next of kin, commonly a wife or child and no further detail provided. For example, Ralph Porter of Bridlington left his wife, Dorothy, 'the dwelling house in Bridlington, and all garths, gardens and buildings belonging to it'. Just what these buildings and garths were is left unknown.[139]

Those who were not as wealthy as Thomas Pinder, but could nevertheless be regarded as living a comfortable existence, leave further problems for categorisation. Timothy Westerdale of Roos left goods in his will valued at £117 17s in July 1705, along with money left to his two daughters, Sarah and Mary, of over £30. He also left animals and crops, and eleven different individuals owed money to his estate.[140] No occupation is given in his will, though from the crops and animals left it is clear that he made his living from the land. In addition, it appears that he was of sufficient standing in the community to act as a money-lender. As such, the categorisation of husbandman is not indicative of his status, yet nor was he as wealthy as Thomas Pinder to be clearly regarded as a yeoman. Further evidence is needed, but has not been found in the hearth tax records, or for non-payment of tithes in the suffering records.

The contemporary descriptions of yeoman in the probate records do not help to clarify the matter. In May 1708 Christopher Oliver of Harpham left goods and animals estimated at £124 in his will, in which he was identified as a yeoman. He made his son, John, the executor and left it to his discretion to provide for his wife for the rest of her life. However, he added that if she was not satisfied with the executor's treatment of her she was to be paid £6 a year for life.[141] Although Oliver is identified as a yeoman he was only as wealthy as Timothy Westerdale, and did not have anywhere near the wealth left by Thomas Pinder, both of whom were identified as husbandmen. Francis Story of Bridlington was described as a yeoman in his will, but only left goods valued at £17 10s, together with his house and an unspecified amount

[138] Reay, 'Social Origins', p. 59.
[139] BIA, Probate Act book for the Deanery of Dickering (PADD), 1688 – 1710, June 6 1699.
[140] BIA, PADH, July [?] 1705. The will is dated April 2 1705.
[141] BIA, PADD, June 29 1708.

of land to his wife, along with monetary bequests of £34 to his two daughters. In the hearth tax assessments for 1672 Story was assessed for one hearth.[142] Sebastian Ellythorpe, another identified as yeoman in the probate records, left goods estimated at £53, substantially less than five others who were described as husbandmen, who all left in excess of at least £140. In Ellythorpe's case, he did leave a substantial amount of land, approximately 86 acres, which places him comfortably into the yeoman category.[143]

Of the sixteen Quaker yeomen and husbandmen from the East Riding identified in the probate records only 5 left goods valued at under £50. Of the fourteen remaining individuals identified 6 left goods estimated at under £50 and another 5 probate records did not include an inventory. These without any inventory include Robert Prudom, a mercer from Bridlington, who was owed £100 by five different individuals. He left his house and all his household goods to his wife, and the remaining goods to his friends and executors of his will. They had to sort out his finances by collecting the debts and selling his goods, and were then to provide for his wife and children as was necessary.[144] Thomas Somerscales of Hull was a house carpenter, and although he left debts on his estate the several apartments he owned around the city, including one on High Street, at that time the principal street in the city, more than counterbalanced them.[145] William Garbutt of Hull left his wife, Rachel, their house in Lowgate and 2 tenements with gardens in Mytongate. His will does not record his occupation.[146] Richard Haggit of Hull was a cooper. He left his house in the market place and 'garden spot in the Manour' to his wife, Margaret. Following Margaret's death the house was to go to his son John, and daughter Sarah Harper. With the assistance of trustees they were to sell the house and distribute the money, estimated at over £150, amongst his other children and grandchildren.[147]

Richard Cocke of Kilnsea left monetary bequests of £21 in his probate. He was described in his will as a fisherman, but his house was assessed in the hearth tax returns for two hearths.[148] William Peacock of Bridlington was a blacksmith, and

[142] *Ibid*, March 15 1710.
[143] BIA, Calendar to the Wills of the Prerogative Court of York 1688 – 1731, September 28 1695.
[144] BIA, PADD, November 3 1708.
[145] BIA, PADH, August 1 1691.
[146] *Ibid*, December 17 1703.
[147] *Ibid*, July 24 1691.
[148] BIA, PAYR, vol. 58, fo. 259.

assessed for one hearth in the hearth tax returns of 1672. In January 1698 he left his wife, Elizabeth, their house and 'one grass close' the size of which is unrecorded. He also left goods and monetary bequests of £78, and 40 shillings for Bridlington monthly meeting 'for the use of the poor'.[149] Neither of these two could be regarded as coming from the poorest section of the East Riding community.

The impression that is left from the evidence of the probate records that have been traced for Quakers living in East Yorkshire during the second half of the seventeenth century supports the view that is established from an examination of the hearth tax returns: that the Quaker community in the East Riding was marginally wealthier than the population of the region in general. Whether those who were described as husbandmen could really be categorised as yeoman is beside the point, the majority of them left goods and animals valued at over £50, which would have meant that they were earning a relatively comfortable living from the land. Furthermore, the fact that they owned these goods and animals demonstrates that these Friends were active members of the local communities in which they lived. They purchased goods and raised animals for sale at market, or for slaughter, and were well integrated into the local rural economy. The majority of other Quakers whose economic prosperity can be judged through their probate records similarly can be regarded as having an above average standard of living for the region.

How does the evidence from the East Riding fit into the wider historical debate of the social origins of the early Quakers? The principal disagreements have concerned the social status of those who were recruited to the Quaker movement, and whether the social background of members altered during the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Contemporaries recorded that the early Quaker movement was made up of the people drawn from the lowest section of seventeenth century society. Possibly, this was an attempt to discredit the movement. Ralph Farmer noted how 'certain Morris dancers from the north' had started arriving in Bristol in the mid 1650s 'with an intent here to exercise some spiritual cheats'.[150] In the most well known description Pagitt

[149] BIA, PADD, January 31 1698.

[150] R. Farmer, *The Great Mysteries* (London, 1655). Cited in Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, p. 1.

castigated Friends as 'the dregs of the common people'. Likewise, Hallywell believed that they were 'the refuse of the world, persons of the meanest quality and lowest parts and education'.[151] Such comments were largely accepted, and shaped historians' views of early Quakerism well into the twentieth century.[152]

Alan Cole began the more recent debate with his article on the social origin of early Friends in 1957. In a survey of early Quakers from Lancashire, Buckinghamshire, Bristol and London he concluded that 'early Friends were mainly drawn from the urban and rural *petite bourgeoisie*'.[153] He qualified this by admitting that the exact status of Friends who came from the middle strata of the population could not be known for sure, but argued that the number of husbandmen, weavers, tailors and shoemakers that could be found in the ranks of early Quakers favoured the view that Quakerism was most influential amongst those classes that were 'hard pressed'.[154]

Richard Vann, whose study was based on the Quaker communities in Norfolk and Buckinghamshire, has challenged Cole's view. Vann argued that 'in the beginnings of Quakerism the gentry and wholesale traders were especially drawn to it, and that the tendency was for the social standing of Friends to decline during the first century'.[155] Over 7 per cent of Vann's sample was drawn from the gentry and professional classes. Furthermore, he pointed out that yeomen predominated amongst Quakers that earned their living from the land, and that wholesale traders were more numerous amongst Friends than retailers, a pattern that was reversed in the general population.[156] However, Vann contends that after 1670 Friends failed to attract any further converts from the landed gentry and some of the lesser gentry, or at least many of the following generation, left the movement. This, he believes, was due partly to the effects of the strict Quaker discipline that prohibited much of the lifestyle of the upper classes, but was mainly because of the 'unfavourable political climate'. Second generation Quakers who wanted political power either had to conform, or else they

[151] E. Paggitt, *Heresiography* (London, 1654), p. 136; H. Hallywell, *An Account of Familism* (London, 1673), p. 124. Cited in Reay, 'Social Origins', p. 55.
[152] Vann, *Social Development*, p. 49.
[153] Cole, 'Social Origins', p. 117.
[154] *Ibid*, p. 118.
[155] Vann, *Social Development*, p. 50.
[156] *Ibid*, p. 67.

were limited to colonial affairs. Consequently, the social composition of eighteenth century Quakerism was more 'plebeian' than earlier in the movement.[157]

The different sources that were used by Vann and Cole could help to explain some of the differences between their conclusions. Cole's research was based largely upon the information that he found in the Quaker marriage registers. The information that they record varies widely between different counties, especially for the earliest period of Quakerism during the 1650s and 1660s. Cole himself concedes that 'it is highly irregular in occurrence and is quite inadequate in many districts'.[158] Indeed, the registers for the East Riding do not record the occupations of individuals until the later eighteenth century.

Vann's evidence was drawn from a wider range of sources than that of Cole. He too used the registers, but supplemented the evidence from them with contemporary descriptions that can be found in the suffering records, minute books of meetings and court records. Vann points out that the marriage registers use the term 'gentleman' sparingly, and that many of the gentleman that were recruited to early Quakerism were already married, and therefore do not appear in the registers, which has led Cole to underestimate their number.[159] Unfortunately, for the East Riding, these sources do not provide adequate information.

In her investigation of non-conformists in Warwickshire, Hurwich disputed Vann's findings. The gentry connections found in first generation Quakers by Vann in Buckinghamshire and Norfolk were absent from Warwickshire. Furthermore, she argued that Warwickshire Quakers did not fit Vann's pattern of social decline, instead they showed remarkable social stability throughout the second half of the seventeenth century.[160] She rightly comments that the deficiencies in evidence for the earliest Quaker converts make it difficult to accurately assess between those who were initially drawn to the movement and those that were recruited at a later date.[161]

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[157] Vann, *Social Development*, pp. 73 – 79. This is of interest for religious toleration. It is worth further research - Decline in numbers due to a political desire that required tolerance from the establishment. However, there was a general decline in Quaker numbers across the social spectrum, not only among those with political ambitions.
[158] Cole, 'Social Origins', p. 100.
[159] Vann, *Social Development*, p. 79.
[160] Hurwich, 'Social Origins', p. 161.
[161] *Ibid*, p. 157.

However, Hurwich admits that her data is not directly comparable to that of Vann, as her assessments of wealth are drawn from the hearth tax returns that she has categorised, rather than basing her analysis on contemporary descriptions from Quaker and other records. Hurwich does not agree with Vann's view of early Quakerism being drawn from some of the wealthiest members of society. Her findings emphasise that they were not drawn exclusively from the poorest members of society. Some 36% of her sample were categorised into the 'middling' group that lived in houses with two or three hearths. However, the majority, 57%, were drawn from those who Hurwich regarded as poor, and were either excluded from paying the hearth tax, or else had only one hearth. Together these groups accounted for 93% of the sample.[162] The results of Hurwich's work show a Quaker population in Warwickshire more closely comparable to that described by Alan Cole than Richard Vann.

More recently, Bill Stevenson has investigated the economic and social status of dissenters during the second half of the seventeenth century. In the Upperside of Buckinghamshire, between 1655 and 1685, he has found that no Quakers were described as gentlemen in the records. However, Stevenson acknowledges that some prominent Friends from the area, such as William Penn, Thomas Ellwood and Isaac Pennington, were undoubtedly of gentry status.[163] He has qualified this by emphasising that such individuals were extremely scarce amongst the general membership of the Quaker movement in the region. Furthermore, they were peculiar to the Upperside monthly meeting in the county. Stevenson has not found any other examples of 'obvious' gentleman in the Lowerside of Buckinghamshire, nor in neighbouring Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire or Cambridgeshire.[164]

Stevenson's work casts serious doubt over the results that were produced by Richard Vann for the same area. He comments that it is 'extremely difficult to see how Vann could conclude that early Quakerism in Buckinghamshire was a "stronghold" of substantial yeoman and wealthy wholesale traders'.[165] Stevenson believes that the mis-representation of Vann was due to his categorisation of yeoman as anybody who held twenty acres of land, and paid, or rather refused to pay, £4 in

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[162] See table 1 on p. 63 above.
[163] Stevenson, 'The Social and Economic Status of post-Restoration Dissenters', pp. 352 – 53.
[164] *Ibid*, p. 353.
[165] *Ibid*

tithes. Similarly, he believes that Vann overestimated the numbers of wholesale traders and large producers. Moreover, many of them were far from being 'prosperous'. In contrast, he found that there were a substantial proportion (34%) of husbandmen and labourers in the region. Similarly to Hurwich, the Quaker community described by Stevenson has more in common with that described by Cole than Vann.[166]

Reay's research into the social origins of Quakers slightly refined Vann's arguments. In a study of Friends in Cheshire, Essex, Somerset, Buckinghamshire, Norfolk and Norwich, Reay found that although there were numbers of the poorer social groups in Somerset and Essex, 'the sect was mainly drawn from the middling sort, the relatively comfortable middle section of the county community'. On the whole, he believed that Quakers were 'wealthier than the general population'.[167] However, he believed, similarly to Vann, that wholesalers were prominent in the movement, and were responsible for spreading the early Quaker message.

Reay also argued that the number of labourers and servants in the early movement was limited. Furthermore, he found that 'a high percentage of Quakers were involved in some form of agriculture', and believed that this could be due to their opposition to tithes.[168] A more likely, and obvious, reason could simply be that Quakerism reflected the predominantly rural society from which it came. Most importantly, Reay acknowledged that 'there *was* regional variation in the social structure of early Quakerism.'[169] This is something that is emphasised by the comparison of the results for the East Riding with those of Davies and Hurwich for Essex and Warwickshire earlier in the chapter.[170] The Quaker population of local areas and regions cannot be separated from the general social structure of the population in that region.

Principally, early Quakerism reflected regional trends and variations, and therefore the Quaker community needs comparison to the local social structure for an accurate assessment to be made of whether or not it was more or less wealthy. The

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[166] Stevenson, 'Social and Economic Status', p. 354.
[167] Reay, 'Social Origins' p. 67.
[168] *Ibid*, p. 61.
[169] *Ibid*, p. 63. The italics are Reay's.
[170] See p. 63 & 64 above.

evidence for the East Riding agrees with Reay's broad conclusion that, generally speaking, Quakers were wealthier than the rest of the population in the region. However, it takes some stretch of the imagination to describe the Quaker community in the East Riding as being drawn from 'the middling sort'. Vann's hypothesis that Quakerism was primarily drawn from the gentry and prosperous wholesalers does not stand the scrutiny of the research that has followed. In the East Riding, as in other regions, Quaker converts were not recruited from the highest social background. Of course, there were some exceptions, such as William Penn and Isaac Penington, but they stand out because they were atypical of the rest of the Quaker community.

Part II: The printed literature of the early Quakers: its development, control and influence on attitudes to religious toleration.

Chapter 4: Quaker Literature and Reading in the East Riding.

The Quakers produced a vast amount of literature during their formative years and beyond. These writings were not aimed solely at a Quaker audience, but were also used to promote the movement to the country at large. In the seventeenth century, as now, printed matter was an important propaganda weapon. Pamphlets, epistles and letters circulated the country, as did the itinerant ministers, to help spread the Quaker message. The aim of the literature was not purely promotional, however. By setting out their views and opinions in print to the country, the early Friends also set them out to each other. This helped to develop early Friends from a loose-knit network of individuals and groups scattered across the country into a recognisable religious movement. Rosemary Moore has identified some thirteen hundred Quaker publications for the period between 1646 and 1666 alone and the number of publications only increased during the later seventeenth century.[171] This gives a good idea of the sheer weight of material that is available.

The literature of the early Quakers did not develop independently from other spiritual publications of the period. Kevin Sharpe has noted how a dialectic between reading and attitude towards the outside world can be identified most readily in the case of some Puritan individuals during the early seventeenth century. He argues that the diaries of puritans Nehemiah Wallington and Robert Woodforde demonstrate a strong correlation between the puritan polemic that they read, the sermons that they heard, and a strengthening of their commitment to their spiritual beliefs and opposition to the Church of England.[172]

Furthermore, the work of Elizabeth Boucier has demonstrated how the majority of those that kept diaries were keen readers, who would buy books from both local printers and sellers, and on occasion those further afield if they had travelled away from home.[173] Indeed, reading was a common experience of the early Quaker ministers from the East Riding during the period of spiritual turmoil many experienced before their adoption of the faith. William Dewsbury noted how he had

[171] R. Moore, *The Light in their Consciences* (Pennsylvania, 2000), p. 231.
[172] K. Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions. The Politics of Reading Early Modern England* (London, 2000), p. 67.
[173] E. Boucier, *Les Journaux privés en Angleterre de 1600 à 1660* (Paris, 1976), pp. 277 – 279 and Ch. 5, *passim*. Cited in Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions*, p. 283.

tried to stay at home and read various theological texts as part of his spiritual development. Unfortunately, he does not record which texts it was that he read.[174]

Although the knowledge of what Dewsbury read would be enlightening, the point is that the Quakers who were writing their spiritual autobiographies towards the end of the seventeenth century had already been influenced by other spiritual writings, such as those of the puritans. They had not developed in some ideological vacuum. Boucier demonstrated that from her sample of seventy journals kept in both print and manuscript form, virtually all the authors believed that reading led them to further their knowledge and virtue, which brought them closer to God. As such, they were following the ideological leading of the humanist writers, particularly Erasmus.[175] For Friends in the second half of the seventeenth century, the writing and reading of such journals was an important part of their religious practice.

Rosemary Moore has identified some thirteen hundred Quaker publications for the period between 1646 and 1666 alone and the number of publications only increased during the later seventeenth century.[176] This gives a good idea of the sheer weight of material that is available. Extracting the publications that are most relevant to the subject that is being examined has largely been an arbitrary task for historians.

One way of selecting the relevant material is to be guided by the lists of books that can be found in some seventeenth century monthly meeting minute books. In the East Riding of Yorkshire two such lists can be found, from two of the three monthly meetings that covered the county. They are for Elloughton (later Cave) and Kelk (later Bridlington) meetings. Although there is no such book list surviving for the third meeting that covered the county, Owstwick monthly meeting, its minute book frequently records money being paid out of the stock for books. All three of the monthly meetings in the East Riding received and distributed books to their members, as they were required. By using the lists from Elloughton and Kelk monthly meetings as guides to the subjects that were of interest to Friends in the region it is possible to view the influences that shaped the behaviour and the attitudes of the early Quakers to the world in which they lived.

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[174] W. Dewsbury, 'The First Birth', undated pamphlet, in *The Faithful Testimony of ... William Dewsbury* (London, 1689) p. 48.
[175] Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions*, p. 284.
[176] R. Moore, *Light in their Consciences*, p. 231.

The list of books that belonged to Elloughton monthly meeting is written inside the front cover of the minute book, presumably put there for easy reference. Unfortunately, the book has been damaged, and the top right hand quarter of the page is illegible. The majority of the page is legible, however, and contains details of twenty-two books that belonged to the monthly meeting during the period covered by the minute book, between 1667 and 1720. It cannot be ascertained when the first books were collected by the monthly meeting. The number of books kept by the monthly meeting increased throughout the period, with most acquired during the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.[177]

Kelk monthly meeting minute book also contains a list of books belonging to the meeting. The list is much larger, however, containing details of sixty-one books acquired during the period between 1669 and 1727. This is probably because the Kelk meeting was larger than the one at Elloughton, with more money available for the purchase of books. Rather than a simple list of books belonging to the meeting, as the Elloughton minutes contain, Kelk monthly meeting minutes record the books being borrowed by individuals from the meeting. This is worth noting as it indicates that this meeting, at least, possessed a reading culture that would have influenced some of the individuals who belonged to it. Similarly to Elloughton, the collection of books held by Kelk monthly meeting increased during the period, with most being added around the turn of the eighteenth century.[178]

It appears from the evidence in the monthly meeting minutes that the books were not requested by any individuals from the meetings directly, but were sent to them at the request of another authority, possibly by the order of the quarterly meeting at York.[179] Therefore, the reading lists of the three monthly meetings in the East Riding contained books that had first been approved or recommended by the central bureaucracy of the Quaker movement.

The monthly meeting minutes for Elloughton and Owstwick first recorded payments being made out of the stock for books in the early 1670s. Elloughton

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[177] EMM, p.1.
[178] KMM, pp. 1 – 6.
[179] EMM; KMM, *passim*.

monthly meeting minutes records how two shillings four pence was paid out of their money for books 'for the service of Friends'.[180] The Owstwick minute book records that three shillings was paid for Josiah Cole's book, which was to be kept by the monthly meeting.[181] Not all the books may have been wanted or used by members of the monthly meeting. Elloughton monthly meeting recorded how 'several books which were sent to the meeting were dispersed among Friends to be disposed of as there shall be service seen for them'.[182]

Thomas Waite, who was a printer and bookseller at York, supplied the books for all the monthly meetings in the East Riding. It is possible that Waite was a Quaker, or at least was sympathetic to their views. He employed an apprentice, Thomas Hammond, who was a member of York monthly meeting. It was common practice for Quakers to apprentice their youths to co-religionists where possible. The quarterly meeting records refer to Hammond as a bookseller. Hammond became a clerk to Yorkshire quarterly meeting during the mid 1680s, a position that he held for over forty years.[183] During this time he was a regular correspondent with the yearly meeting and meeting for sufferings in London. The Elloughton and Owstwick minute books both record regular payments being made to Waite directly, or to his then apprentice Thomas Hammond, who delivered the books to the two monthly meetings.

The purchasing of books appears to have been a major drain on the resources of the local meetings in the East Riding. The books were often bought for the monthly meetings by wealthier individuals of the Quaker community, who were then reimbursed their money by the meeting when there were enough funds available. For example, Elloughton monthly meeting repaid 9s 5d to Sebastian Ellythorpe 'which he had paid for books'.[184] Kelk monthly meeting minutes record how in April 1687 Francis Taylor of Langtoft was reimbursed eight shillings 'which he had laid down for books'.[185] In March 1692 the Owstwick monthly meeting minutes show that Joseph Smith received a payment of 17s 8d, which he had paid for books three

[180] EMM, p. 4.
[181] OMM, p.54.
[182] EMM, p. 16.
[183] FHL, Dictionary of Quaker Biography (DQB), unpublished typed manuscript compiled by staff at FHL.
[184] EMM, p. 32.
[185] KMM, p. 178.

months earlier. In October 1699 Jon Barron was reimbursed with £1 1s that he had paid out for a copy of George Fox's epistles, and 'some other of Friends books'.[186]

The monthly meetings in the East Riding attempted to cover the cost of buying books by selling them on. Unfortunately, the names of the people to whom the books were sold is not recorded, so there is no way of knowing whether the books only reached a purely Quaker audience, or whether they were read by others within the community. For example, Elloughton monthly meeting minutes record that 'some money was paid to Friends that had laid out money for books sent to the monthly meeting & others brought in money for those of the books that were disposed of'.[187] In July 1675 it was noted that 'some books were paid for that were sent to the monthly meeting, & as many as could be disposed of, money was re-taken for'.[188]

The number of books that were sent to the meeting and how many were then sold on is again not noted in the minute books of the East Riding. In September 1673 Elloughton monthly meeting bought three books of William Penn's. Whether these were three copies of the same book or different books is not recorded. How much was paid for them is illegible due to the minute book being damaged.[189] In January and February 1680 all three monthly meetings bought Samuel Fisher's works. Owstwick monthly meeting paid ten shillings, but Kelk paid thirteen shillings for their copy. The extra three shillings can be accounted for in the travelling costs for their delivery. Kelk monthly meeting lay furthest away from York of all the meetings in the East Riding.[190] In March 1677 Kelk monthly meeting paid ten shillings, ten pence for Francis Howgill's works.[191]

In general, however, the minutes only record money being paid for books that had been sent to the meetings, not which books they were and how much they cost. An example from Elloughton can be taken as typical of all three monthly meeting minutes: 'more books were brought to the meeting that were disposed of & money sent to York to pay off part of the arrear charged upon the meeting for books'.[192] This

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[186] OMM, p. 202; 254.
[187] EMM, p. 20.
[188] EMM, p.21.
[189] EMM, p. 4.
[190] EMM, p. 33; OMM, p. 118; KMM, p. 148.
[191] KMM, p. 132.
[192] EMM, p. 33.

also demonstrates the importance of reading literature within the early Quaker movement. The purchasing of books was considered important enough to the monthly meeting that they were prepared to run up arrears with the bookseller.

The fact that both Kelk and Elloughton monthly meetings in the East Riding acquired the majority of their books during the later seventeenth century demonstrates the increased importance of literature to the developing Quaker movement during the period. The reading literature that was being bought by the monthly meetings at Kelk and Elloughton can be roughly grouped into three main categories. First, the collected works and spiritual autobiographies of individuals. Secondly, doctrinal works that set out Quaker principles and organisation. Finally, works of spiritual support and encouragement, often taking the form of defences of Quaker practice against controversy within the movement itself. All of the works that are found on the book lists for the two meetings have Quaker authors. It can reasonably be presumed that the reading of non-Quaker works was not encouraged by the monthly meetings.

The largest proportion of works on the two Quaker reading lists is made up of collected works and spiritual autobiographies. They account for seventeen of the sixty-one books kept by Kelk monthly meeting, and fifteen of the twenty-two books that can be identified from the Elloughton records. The first collected writings of a Friend that can be traced are those of George Fox the younger, which were published in 1662, the year after his death. The collector and editor of the works cannot be identified, as he gives only his initials J. P. Within the introduction to the works the aim of the collection is indicated, 'not by this do I appear...as a person promoting a person in the seat of the hearts of people...I cannot but in a recordance of it and in a concordance with it say..."let the memory of the righteous live"'.[193]

The important phrase is 'in a concordance with it'. The literature of the early Quakers helped to develop and reflect a uniformity of belief and opinion through the collection, publication and dissemination of works with which they agreed. Other collected works followed shortly after Fox the younger's, including Richard Hubberthorne's in 1663. After this the genre really began to take off. Edward Burrough's works were published in 1672 and Francis Howgill's in 1676, both of

[193] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 418. Braithwaite speculates that the author could be John Perrot, Issac Penington, James Parke or John Pennyman. All were active Friends in London at this time.

which were included in the reading lists for both Kelk and Elloughton monthly meetings.[194]

Spiritual autobiographies are probably the most distinctive form of Quaker literature. There is quite a degree of overlap between them and the collected works, as within earlier works the early leaders recounted many personal experiences. The earliest Journal that was traced by Braithwaite was that of William Caton, published in 1689.[195] Part of William Dewsbury's collected works (1689) also included a spiritual autobiography, as did the works of John Whitehead (1704).[196] Both Kelk and Elloughton monthly meeting reading lists contain the works of Dewsbury, who was from the East Riding himself, and travelled and ministered in the county regularly.

This raises the possibility that local Quakers would have been interested in reading the experiences and writings of a local person, who was well known to most of them and had become a travelling minister, and a prominent member of the Society. However, it is noticeable that within the book lists neither meeting had a copy of Thomas Thompson's journal, and only Kelk held a copy of John Whithead's.[197] Both of these men were local, Thompson spending all his life at Skipsea on the east coast, and Whitehead living for twenty years at Swine, before moving to Lincolnshire. Therefore it appears that at the local level members of the Society made little distinction within the national leadership between local men and those from other regions. Their lives, writings and attitude towards religious toleration are examined in more detail in a later chapter of the thesis.[198]

Both the spiritual autobiographies and the collected works of individuals were not published until after their death, a fact which helps to explain the proliferation of such works towards the later part of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The spiritual journals recorded the travails of the consciences of the individuals, before they became Friends. Dewsbury remembered how he had started his spiritual journey at as young an age as eight, and how a 'deep sorrow seized upon me, and I

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[194] Briahtwaite, *Second Period*, p. 418.
[195] *Ibid*, p. 421.
[196] W. Dewsbury, *Faithful Testimony*; J. Whitehead, *The Life and Writings of John Whitehead, an early and eminent minister of the gospel in the Society of Friends* (London, 1704)
[197] T. Thompson, *An Encouragement early to seek the Lord...in an Account of the Life and Services of Thomas Thompson* (London, 1708); J. Whitehead, *Life and Writings*.
[198] See Ch. 6.

knew not what to do that I might get acquaintance with the God of my life'.[199] John Whitehead had a similar experience as a fifteen year old, when he realised that 'my heart was full of corruptions and filthiness, and lusted to all manner of evil and unrighteousness...Thus I became sensible of my wretchedness and separation from God'.[200]

Both Dewsbury and Whitehead were rescued from their separation with the Lord by the discovery of the Quaker message. Dewsbury recorded how

> The Lord discovered to me that his love could not be attained in anything I could do, in any of these outward observations...Then my mind was turned within, by the power of the Lord to wait in his counsel, the Light in my conscience, to hear what the Lord would say.[201]

Similarly, when he was twenty years old, Whitehead had discovered that 'the kingdom of God is not in outward observations; but that it is within and is righteousness, peace and joy'.[202] However, Whitehead had remained 'beguiled' for another two years, until he had met Dewsbury who convinced him of the Truth. Both Dewsbury and Whitehead shared similar experiences during their spiritual journeys, as did many others of the early Quaker leadership. What is most striking in these two passages above is the uniformity in language. Both recall how they were separated from God and that they turned from 'outward observations' to search 'within' where they found the answer in the form of Quakerism. As Quaker literature developed authors were provided with a structure of spiritual experience and language that was approved of by the Society. This was encouraged by the central control of Quaker literature through the work of the second day's morning meeting, which is examined in the following chapter of the thesis.

Within the reading list of Kelk monthly meeting there are many books that fall into the category of doctrinal works. They cover a number of subjects, ranging from the organisation and structure of the Quaker movement to explanations of their position on non-payment of tithes. By collecting such works, and lending them out to members, monthly meetings around the country kept, at close hand, the answers to

[199] Dewsbury, 'The First Birth', pp. 44 – 5.
[200] Whitehead, *Life and Writings*, p. 2.
[201] Dewsbury, 'The First Birth', p. 50.
[202] Whitehead, *Life and Writings*, p. 4.

questions that could be posed by both members and non-members of the Society. By reading such literature individual Quakers were constantly reminded of their position within, and towards, the outside world.

An example of this is Anthony Pearson's publication *The Great Case of Tythes Truly Stated*, which was one of the books owned by Kelk monthly meeting. The monthly meeting also held another two books written by him, though the reading list does not record their titles.[203] The inclusion of Pearson's works in the reading list for a monthly meeting in the East Riding demonstrates how written literature played an important part in shaping the consensus of the early Quaker membership around the country. Through the medium of printed pamphlets and books the local membership at Kelk could discover, in great detail, explanations of theological positions and dispute with the established Church, which they may otherwise have only heard when a travelling minister passed through the area.

Pearson was a magistrate in Westmorland, who was convinced by Nayler when he was brought before him on a charge of seducing the people. *The Great Case of Tythes* is the earliest publication that addresses the Quakers' position towards tithes and explains their refusal to pay them. Pearson explains how in the Old Testament tithes were paid by the people to the tribe of Levi, for their service of the Tabernacle. Out of this tithe the Levites gave the tenth part to the priesthood of Aaron and his sons, thus no tithe was actually paid by the people to the priests. Therefore the seventeenth century system of tithes was in fact a distortion of how the practice had actually operated in the Old Testament, Pearson explained.

Furthermore, when on earth, Christ had put an end to the priesthood that had existed. Instead, Christ ministered freely, a practice that was continued by the Apostles. The ministers of God did not now require any settled maintenance or tithe, but were free to work the land for their own living, or could live from the contributions and offerings of those who received the Gospel and were grateful for the message they received. However, these contributions were not compulsory. By using this argument Pearson showed that the Quakers believed that the work of Christ, and

[203] A. Pearson, *The Great Case of Tythes Truly Stated, Clearly Opened, and Fully Resolved* (London, 1659).

the writings of the New Testament, took precedence over the Old Testament when arguing a case based upon scriptural justification.

Pearson then continued to show the historical development of tithes, their legal position, and how the Church had come to depend on them for income. What is particularly interesting is the emphasis that was placed upon the role of the Catholic Church in the development of tithe payments. Tithes were seen as being 'an innovated Popish exaction and oppression'. Pearson argued that it was the Catholic Church that had instigated tithe payments for maintenance, therefore they were an example of how the Church of England remained steeped in Popish practices.[204]

In legal terms Pearson demonstrated that tithes were a temporal, not spiritual or divine right. Had they been a divine right making payment obligatory to maintain the clergy's position as servants for God on earth, non-payment of tithe should have been judged by God, not by man. In bringing tithe cases to court, however, the clergy showed that tithes were a temporal right, and drew extensively upon custom and usage as their legal arguments. Therefore the clergy regarded tithe as a property that was their due. However, this was rejected by Pearson, who pointed out that tithe had only become recognised as a property following the establishment of the Church of England, and had developed purely to allow impropriators of tithe to buy and sell it for profit. Furthermore, Pearson stated that tithe was not a property because it was a payment based upon the product of the land, not the actual value of the land itself. Tithe payment could alter depending on the use of the land. When crops were grown a higher tithe was paid than when the land was used for pasture. Leaving the land as waste, or planting wood for timber could actually avoid tithe payment. Wooded or wasteland was classed in law as *faera naturae*, from which no tithe was due.[205]

Other doctrinal works on the non-payment of tithes appear to have drawn extensively upon Pearson's writing. Both Kelk and Elloughton monthly meetings had copies of the collected writings of George Fox. In 1676 Fox published his own treatise on the non-payment of tithes in a pamphlet *The Beginning of Tithes in the*

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[204] Pearson, *Great Case*, p .32.
[205] *Ibid*, pp. 27 – 28.

Law.[206] The arguments are identical to those written by Pearson seventeen years earlier and outlined above. This is good evidence that the Second day's morning meeting, established by George Fox in 1673, was acting as an effective monitor of publications, ensuring that uniformity and consistency of opinion and argument were being used.[207] It further demonstrates the important role that Quaker literature had to play in the development of the movement, with writings and theories from an earlier period being used to address concerns that occurred at a later date.

Not only in the case of non-payment of tithes did Quaker doctrine argue that the New Testament had replaced the Old. This was also the case for the scriptural justification for not swearing an oath. A pamphlet written by Fox on this subject in 1675, *A Small Treatise Concerning Swearing*, clearly identified two different ages as far as theology was concerned; the Old and the New. Within this pamphlet Fox stated that 'The righteousness of Christ excels and exceeds the righteousness of the law of the prophets, and of their swearing'.[208] He emphasised that in the Old Testament differences within and between the children of Israel were resolved by the swearing of an oath to the Lord. However, this was a personal matter between the individual and God, not an oath made on a book, nor one tended to any person by another. Were the individual to break that oath, God would be the judge. Similarly to tithes, the practice of the Old Testament had become distorted in seventeenth century life. Oaths were used commonly, for secular purposes as well as spiritual, the Quakers believed. For example, they were used in courts of law or to prove loyalty to the monarch. Most importantly, however, in the New Testament Christ had forbidden the swearing of oaths.[209]

Adrian Davies has pointed out that Friends used books to improve morale amongst members. He comments that when a meeting thought members were backsliding against testimonies such as non-payment of tithes, they would acquire and distribute works to bolster any wavering convictions. Furthermore, their literature

[206] G. Fox, *The Beginning of Tithes in the Law, and the ending of tithes in the Gospel* (London, September 1676)
[207] See Ch. 5 below for a more detailed examination of the Second day's morning meeting.
[208] G. Fox, *A Small Treatise Concerning Swearing in the Old time of the Law* (Swarthmore, October 1675), p. 6.
[209] Fox, *A Small Treatise, passim.*

helped defend their reputation within the region and helped to improve the morale of the local Quaker community.[210]

This is true enough, but the circulation of printed literature played another important role within the development of early Quakerism: it helped to unify the movement by providing the loose knit network that had been established across the country with instruction issued and controlled from a central base through the second day's morning meeting, whose role is examined in the following section of the thesis. The literature offered details and guidance regarding a large number of subjects, and provided models for expected behaviour, opinions and actions.

The Quaker literature that was kept by Kelk and Elloughton monthly meetings was both inward and outward looking. In the cases outlined above, concerning the non-payment of tithes and refusal to swear oaths, Quaker literature reflected the attitude of the movement towards the outside world. Furthermore, the book lists also include work that detailed the internal structure and organisation of the Quaker movement. An example of this is Barclay's *Anarchy of the Ranters*, a book that was kept by both Kelk and Elloughton monthly meetings. In the work, Barclay highlighted the need for structure and discipline within the movement and showed that this was compatible with the individual leadings of the Light Within.[211] He explained the object of the Quaker system of meetings as being twofold: outwardly to take care of the poor and provide discipline against scandals and things that were 'undeniably wrong', and inwardly for individual guidance to guard against apostasy, which could lead to division within the Society.[212] This piece of writing was aimed inwardly, at a Quaker readership, with the intention of explaining that organisation was necessary to develop the Society and remain a unified movement. It was a good source of reference for local monthly meetings because it offered an explanation regarding both their spiritual and bureaucratic role within the early Quaker movement.

Another work that can be found on the list of books that were kept by both Kelk and Elloughton monthly meetings was John Whiting's *Judas and the Chief of Priests* (1701). This too was a work that can be regarded as both inward and outward

[210] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 111.
[211] R. Barclay, *The Anarchy of the Ranters and other Libertines* (London, 1676).
[212] *Ibid*, p. 85.

looking. It was written during the time of the Keithian controversy during the late 1690s, in answer to the criticisms that were being levelled against Quakers by George Keith. Keith was a Scottish Quaker, who had emigrated to New Jersey in 1684. In 1689 he had become headmaster of Friends' public school in Philadelphia. William Braithwaite describes Keith as a man of 'commanding intellectual ability' and a Scottish theologian.[213] Keith turned on the Quakers in America citing unsound discipline in organisation and preaching. In 1694 he came to Yearly meeting in London with his grievances, which were promptly rejected. He consequently frequented meetings in London before he was disowned. Jasper Batt, a prominent London Quaker, described Keith's behaviour in meetings as 'very proud, arrogant and uncivil'.[214] Keith then set up his own meeting at Turner's Hall, in Philpot Lane, Fenchurch Street. From here he issued numerous challenges to Friends for public debates, which were ignored, and published various pamphlets and books.

The fact that Friends in the East Riding held copies of Whiting's response to a Keithian pamphlet demonstrates how the printed literature of early Friends helped to unite to the movement against criticism and controversy. Furthermore, it also shows the close relationship between the national and local bureaucracy of the Quaker movement. None of George Keith's publications appear on the lists of books that were kept by Kelk and Elloughton monthly meetings. However, both meetings hold copies of work that was designed to separate Friends from Keith's views. The circulation of Whiting's work was directed by the second day's morning meeting, whose role is examined in the following part of the thesis.[215] It ensured that Friends in the provinces were aware of the official responses that had been authorised by the national bureaucracy to Keith's opinions. This meant that they could refer to them if necessary to stop an attack from their enemies from the outside world, and also use them to prevent any dissension from within their meetings. In the conclusion of the pamphlet Whiting noted that his aim was to provide a robust defence for Quakerism, which would 'vindicate Truth from perversion and distinguish it from error'.[216]

Other work that appeared in both Elloughton and Kelk monthly meetings book lists' included the *Spirit of Martyrs Revived* (1682). It was compiled by a number of

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[213] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 482.
[214] *Ibid*, p. 487.
[215] See Ch. 5.
[216] FHL, J.Whiting, *Judas and the Chief of Priests* (London, 1701), p. 259.

prominent Quakers in London, though is chiefly attributed to Ellis Hookes, who acted as clerk and general secretary to the second day's morning meeting, the work of which is examined below. It was a recollection of the persecution that had been faced by Christians throughout history, and placed particular emphasis upon the suffering of Protestants at the hands of Catholics.

The *Spirit of Martyrs* drew on the tradition, and some of the detail, that can be found in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* (1563), that celebrated the Protestant ascendancy that followed the persecution of the Marian regime. The *Spirit of Martyrs* followed the same structure as the *Book of Martyrs*, being split into different chapters, each of which gives details of persecution across a range of periods and places, both at home and abroad. However, the *Spirit Of Martyrs* brought Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* up to date, and included accounts of those Protestant dissenters that suffered during the reigns of Elizabeth and James.

The intentions of the book are obvious enough: it helped to place Friends suffering into the context of those who faced persecution before them. Furthermore, it offered a criticism of the established Church by comparing the persecution that the Quakers faced to that experienced by Protestants under the Catholic Church. Chapters three and four of the *Spirit of Martyrs* concentrated upon the 'sufferings, persecutions and martyrdoms of the servants of the Lord, inflicted upon them by Papists', and 'persecutions, savage cruelties and unheard of massacres of the poor distressed Protestants in Foreign parts'.[217] By doing so, it paralleled the behaviour of the Church of England and the Catholic Church, and showed the similarities of their actions to suppress dissent.

Much of chapter five in the *Spirit of Martyrs* concentrates upon the experiences of the Separatists Barrow, Penry and Greenwood, who were imprisoned and later executed during Elizabeth's reign after being convicted of writing seditious books. It emphasises how the Church was the main protagonist in the persecution and execution of the three Separatists. Hookes explains how the clergy pushed for Barrow, Penry and Greenwood to be executed because they threatened the Church's hegemonic position in society.[218] According to this version of events it was the threat

[217] E. Hookes, *The Spirit of Martyrs Revived* (London, 1682), pp. 25 – 208; 209 – 44.
[218] Hookes, *Spirit of Martyrs Revived*, pp. 245 – 59.

to the established Church that ended up with the dissenters being executed, and not any threat to the state. The Church is criticised for being greedy and corrupt, and for misleading civil authorities for its own ends. Through this explanation Hookes offered a thinly veiled comparison to the conflict between the Quakers and the established Church of England during the second half of the seventeenth century.

What is most notable about this chapter is that it completely ignores the persecution and suffering that was inflicted by the Elizabethan authorities upon Jesuit Priests and some members of the Catholic community during this period. The Catholic experience of persecution and suffering was clearly not one that the Quakers had sympathy with. Most importantly, it was a tradition that Friends wanted to distance themselves from. The Jesuits had been persecuted in Elizabeth's reign because they had been regarded as a threat to the state and social order. By publishing this work the Quakers made the statement that they could not be regarded as a similar threat to Catholics, nor were they a new phenomenon to fear. Rather, they wished to emphasise that Quakerism was part of a peaceful tradition of Protestant dissent that was being persecuted by an oppressive state.

The similarity between the Church of England and the Catholic Church during the second half of the seventeenth century is something that particularly galled the Quakers, as it had done the Puritans during the sixteenth century. It was a subject that was addressed by Henry Mollineux, a Quaker from Liverpool, in his book *Antichrist Unvailed* (1695), which was held by Kelk monthly meeting.

Mollineux described in the preface to his book how 'popish inventions' were 'contrary to the Scriptures of Truth', and that 'many professing Christianity and Reformation from Popery are yet found in them'.[219] He went on to detail the 'popish inventions' that were objected to. They included worshipping images and relics, prayers to and for the dead, idle compliments, flattering titles, being divided into 'different and distinct orders', and praying in a 'foreign tongue', which denied the people access to the Scriptures in their own language.[220]

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[219] H. Mollineux, *Antichrist Unvailed, by the Finger of God's Power...* (London, 1695), p. 3.
[220] Mollineux, *Antichrist Unvailed*, p. 4.

Most importantly for Mollineux and his fellow Quakers, these were all aspects of searching for the spiritual world in 'outward shows and signs'.[221] Although many of the popish inventions were associated only with the Catholic Church, the Church of England followed the same macro-philosophy of searching for, worshipping and following external symbols of divinity and spirituality. The clergy were responsible for leading the people in this direction, and encouraged them to continue because it suited their own interests, Mollineux believed. This guided the people away from what the Quakers believed to be the true form of divinity and worship, which could only be found internally, through the Light Within. Mollineux used John the Baptist as an example of how external symbolism had been corrupted by the Church. He pointed out that John had baptised adults as a symbol of their repentance from previous sins. John had not baptised infants that had just come into the world, for they had not yet anything to repent.[222] By holding a copy of Mollineux's work, the Quaker community in the East Riding had a constant source of reference to remind them of the corruptions of the Church of England and the righteousness of their worship and belief.

Other literature such as the *Spirit of Martyrs*, which placed Friends' suffering in the region into context, was prominent on the lists of books kept by Kelk and Elloughton monthly meetings. As early as 1661 George Bishop had published the pamphlet *New England Judged*, which provided details of the sufferings that Quakers faced in America. This was included on the list of books that belonged to Kelk monthly meeting. In the subtitle of the pamphlet it stated how it included details of the 'cruel whippings and scourgings, bonds and imprisonments, beatings and chainings, starvings and huntings, fines and confiscation of estates, burning in the hand and cutting of ears...banishment upon pain of death, and putting to death' of Quakers in the colony.[223] To the Quaker community in the East Riding New England would have seemed another world, but some of the experiences of persecution that they read about would have been familiar, though often much more extreme, to their own.

The list of books kept by Kelk and Elloughton monthly meetings reveal the early Quaker literature that was important to the members of the Society. As the

[221] *Ibid*, p. 107.
[222] *Ibid*, p. 108.
[223] G. Bishop, *New England Judged...being a brief relation of the sufferings of the people called Quakers in those parts of America...* (London, 1661).

amount of literature increased authors drew upon that which had gone before to provide a language and structure of which the Society approved. This was most evident within the genre of the spiritual autobiography, which was the most distinctive form of Quaker writing. The literature was aimed at members and non-members alike. It played the dual role of explaining Quaker views and opinions to the outside world, and also reinforcing those views within the Society itself. As such, Quaker printed literature was an important influence upon individual members, helping to shape their position within, and attitude towards, the outside world.

The Quakers closely monitored the works that were published from the beginning, and in the form of the second day's morning meeting created an organisation for self-censorship. This became necessary as the amount of literature that was published increased during the later seventeenth century. The meeting offered centralised control over the literature that was published by the early Quakers. By deciding what could and what could not be published, it had an important influence upon what was read by members across the country, including in the East Riding. The books that were sent to the monthly meetings in the East Riding, and which were read by the Quaker community in the region, were all authorised to be printed by the second day's morning meeting. For this reason, the thesis now examines the role of the meeting, and its influence over the printed literature of the Quakers.

Chapter 5: The Centralised Control of Quaker Literature.

The books that were recorded on the reading lists for the East Riding could not have been published and distributed around the country until they had first been authorised by the second day's morning meeting in London. The following section looks in detail at the development of the meeting, its role within the early Quaker movement, and its influence upon seventeenth century Quaker literature.

Elloughton monthly meeting's list of books includes a copy of John Whiting's *Catalogue of Friends' Books* (1708). This was the first attempt by Friends to give an exhaustive list of all the works that had been published by them from the beginning of the movement. It is 238 pages long and is organised alphabetically by the authors' surnames. At the end of the catalogue is an appeal from Yearly meeting for 'books wanting', which requests a number of titles to be sent to London to help complete their collection of work.[224] By holding copies of the catalogue, Elloughton monthly meeting ensured that they had reference to all the literature that was approved by the second day's morning meeting and had been published. Should they ever need to combat an external attack, or counter any internal schism, they could request for a copy of the work that was most applicable to their needs, and use it in their defence.

Unfortunately, the work of the second day's morning meeting cannot be examined directly from any work that was published by Quakers from the East Riding. The minutes are not explicit about all the work that they received, or from where it had originated. Furthermore, none of the work that has been identified from the morning meeting minutes during the second half of the seventeenth century can be linked directly to the East Riding, with the exception of one pamphlet written by John Hogg of Hull, which was rejected for publication by the meeting.[225]

It appears that Friends from East Yorkshire were consumers of Quaker literature, rather than producers of it. The travelling ministers from the East Riding who submitted pamphlets to the second day's morning meeting, such as John Whitehead and William Dewsbury, did so while visiting other parts of the country. Subsequently, virtually all of their pamphlets deal with issues or concerns that were

[224] Whiting, *A Catalogue of Friends' Books*, pp. 229 – 32.
[225] See pp. 113 below for greater detail.

raised outside the East Riding. For example, John Whitehead, who lived in the village of Swine in the East Riding, published his account of suffering at the hands of the authorities in Lincolnshire in 1682.[226]

Despite this, however, the Quaker literature that was held by the monthly meetings in the East Riding, and which was read by their members, was not acquired randomly, nor was it selected by the local members based upon their interests and concerns. The Quaker movement monitored its own publications through their structure of meetings and bureaucracy that developed during the second half of the seventeenth century. Therefore, it is important to examine the Quaker book lists from East Yorkshire, which have been examined earlier, in the context of the national movement.

I

The second day's morning meeting played an important part in the development of early Quakerism. Historians have largely regarded the meeting as being one that at least edited, if not censored, the writing of individual Friends to stop any divisive or controversial material being published. It has been believed that the meeting, in doing this, helped to shepherd the development of the movement down the path that was planned carefully by George Fox and his followers.

This interpretation of events is open to some questioning, however. The view that the meeting edited or censored Quaker publications is true enough. The motivations for doing so may have been more complex than simply to help establish Foxonian hegemony within the movement. A close examination of the meeting's minute book reveals that Fox's influence on the meeting has been overstated. By editing or censoring publications the morning meeting sought to direct and manage the literature in relation to the Quakers' position as dissenters in seventeenth century society. By doing so it unified the views and opinions of members across the country, and therefore helped develop Quakerism into a national movement.

The early Quaker leadership realised that any work published would have to be consistent to avoid internal divisions. Therefore Quaker literature throughout the

[226] See below, pp. 124 – 5 for greater detail.

seventeenth century was subject to quite rigorous internal checks and censorship. As early as 1653 Thomas Aldam, one of the early leaders from the West Riding, wrote a letter to George Fox approving the recommendation that Fox should view all books before they were printed.[227]

Bearing in mind the sheer weight of publications it must be of some doubt whether Fox could actually check all publications prior to printing. However, during the early years the majority of writing was done by a relatively small group, which included Fox, Nayler, Hubberthorne, Farnsworth, Burrough, Howgill and Dewsbury, who together formed the inner sanctum of Quaker leadership. Others who published material occasionally would first send it to be seen and approved by a prominent individual. Thus, Rosemary Moore has concluded that in general any statement of Quaker views based on the published literature of this time is representative of the opinions of the leadership, with which other Quakers either agreed, or else they left the movement.[228]

Uniformity of opinion within the Quaker movement was aided by the development of the fortnightly meeting of men that was held in London. The fortnightly meeting had begun in 1656 as a meeting of Friends not involved in the travelling ministry, to provide a centralised base as Quakerism developed around the country. It was to be composed of Friends 'anciently grown in Truth', to provide advice and guidance to those that required it.[229] It is most probable that Edward Burrough and Francis Howgill played a key role within the meeting. They initially acted as travelling ministers, but, as the Quaker movement spread south, Burrough and Howgill became based in London to oversee the development of the Society there. In a letter to Friends around the country in 1662 Burrough set out the role that the fortnightly meeting would play:

> The proper work and service of the meeting is for the well-ordering of the affairs of Truth in outward things, among the body of Friends, and that a general concord and assent may be among the ancients of them, for the

[227] Thomas Aldam to George Fox, Swarthmore Manuscripts, iii. 39. Cited in Braithwaite, *Beginnings*, p. 134.
[228] Moore, *Light in their Consciences*, p. 26.
[229] Braithwaite, *Beginnings*, p. 340.

> government of the whole, by hearing and considering of things fitting for the advancement of Truth.[230]

By overseeing the 'well ordering' of 'outward things' the fortnightly meeting was an important centralised force for guidance and advice regarding Friend's views and behaviour. However, censorship of publications remained the province of individual leaders, until the development of the Second day's morning meeting.

The self-regulation of publications through individual leaders lapsed throughout the 1660s as persecution began to take its toll and they found themselves imprisoned. In May 1666 a group of ministers meeting in London had recommended that all books that were printed should be approved by some 'faithful and sound' Friends prior to publication.[231]

In 1672 Yearly Meeting decided to take the matter of regulating Friend's publications in hand. Ten Friends were appointed to oversee the editing and printing of all publications. No new book, or new edition of an earlier one, was to be printed without authorisation. This executive committee was expanded in 1673 when George Fox set up a second day's morning meeting, that met weekly, specifically aimed at supervising the publication of books.[232] At the first meeting, held in September 1673, it was decided that two of all books that were written by Friends were to be collected and held together for reference, to prevent the distortion of the Quaker message by its opponents. In addition the meeting was responsible for obtaining a single copy of all books that were 'written against Truth', so that charges against Quakerism could be answered.[233]

During the Interregnum years the printing presses were allowed, in practice, a large degree of freedom. This was despite laws designed to restrain them. An Act passed in September 1649 did not allow the publication of any book or pamphlet without a licence, though unlicensed presses continued to publish material virtually

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[230] E. Burrough, *Testimony Concerning the Setting up of the Men's Meeting in London*, in A. R. Barclay (ed.) *Letters of Early Friends* (London, 1841), p. 305. Cited in Braithwaite, *Beginnings*, p. 340.
[231] T. O'Malley, ' "Defying the Powers and Tempering the Spirit." A Review of Quaker Control over their Publications 1672 – 1689', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 33 (1982), pp. 72 – 88.
[232] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 280.
[233] FHL, London, Morning Meeting Minute Book (MM), vol. I 1673 – 1692, p. 1.

unchecked.[234] This was addressed in 1652 by six London Booksellers in *A Beacon Set on Fire*, which petitioned parliament against the publication of blasphemous books. In 1654 the authors issued *A Second Beacon Fired*, which was aimed specifically at the Quakers, whom they believed were 'blasphemous, paganish, anti-scriptural and anti-Christian'.[235]

The publication of Quaker works during the 1660s and 1670s was illegal. The Regulation of Printing Act of 1662 re-introduced a system of licensing that had previously existed during the interregnum period. Printing was restricted by the act to the master-printers of the Stationers Company, Oxford and Cambridge universities and the archbishop of York. In addition, the number of master-printers, apprentices and even presses was meant to be strictly controlled. The Act was enforced by the appointment of an official Surveyor of the Press, Sir Roger L'Estrange, in 1663, who held virtually unrestricted powers of search and seizure.[236]

However, this system of licensing and regulation of the press was ineffective. The Printing Act did not cover the prosecution of offences such as the printing of publications by individuals who were outside the printing profession. The economic opportunities to those that were capable of printing illegal material were potentially substantial, as were those to the Wardens of the Stationers Company and L'Estrange, who were not above taking bribes and turning a blind eye. The Quakers managed to produce a vast number of publications throughout the second half of the seventeenth century. Thomas O'Malley has estimated that between 1652 and 1684 they were responsible for the printing of slightly over 3, 000 items, which accounted for 8.8 per cent of the total of all publications during this period.[237] Therefore, although technically illegal, it was not difficult for the Quakers to manage to produce the amount of printed literature that they did.[238]

The main printer and bookseller for the Quakers at this time was Giles Calvert. Though never a Quaker himself, there is good reason to believe that he was sympathetic towards radical religious views. His wife, Elizabeth, was a Baptist and

[234] Braithwaite, *Beginnings*, p. 303.
[235] *Ibid*
[236] G. A. Cranfield, *The Press and Society*, (London, 1978), pp. 19 – 20.
[237] O'Malley, 'Quaker Control', p. 74.
[238] *Ibid*, p. 73.

his sister Martha had become a zealous Friend who was involved in James Naylor's infamous entry to Bristol. Calvert's shop was at the Black Spread Eagle, at the west end of St. Paul's.[239] One commentator noted how his shop was 'that forge of the Devil, from whence so many blasphemous, lying, scandalous pamphlets...have spread over the land'.[240]

During the Civil Wars Calvert printed Leveller pamphlets, most notably for Richard Overton. In 1646 he was examined by the Mayor of London and the House of Lords following the publication of Overton's anti-monarchical *Last Warning to all the Inhabitants of London.*[241] Towards the end of the 1640s Calvert was associated with the radical group 'My One Flesh'. The Ranter Abiezer Coppe had attended meetings of the group, and Calvert also directed Lawrence Clarkson to a meeting. In 1650 it is believed that Calvert printed Clarkson's pamphlet *A Single Eye all Light, no Darkness.*[242] In 1653 Calvert began to print for Friends, and by his death in 1663 he had published over two hundred pamphlets.[243] In addition, he allowed Friends in London to use his shop as a contact address, and also acted as a banker, loaning money when it was needed and keeping a record of financial transactions.[244]

Another important printer and bookseller for Quakers during this period was Thomas Simmonds, who was Calvert's brother in law.[245] Simmonds is not known to have been a Quaker and at one time was acting as printer for Richard Baxter, a vehement opponent of Friends. Despite this he had a bookshop at the Bull and Mouth meeting house at Aldersgate in London, and printed many items related to Friend's sufferings. It has been estimated that during the period 1653 to 1662 Calvert and Simmonds were, between them, responsible for printing over 600 publications for Friends.[246] Following the Restoration and throughout the rest of the seventeenth century the most prominent printer and bookseller was Andrew Sowle, who unlike Calvert and Simmonds was a Quaker. Sowle was convinced at a young age, though

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[239] FHL, Dictionary of Quaker Biography.
[240] T. Hall, *Vindicae Literarum* (London, 1654). Cited in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 9 (Oxford, 2004).
[241] R. Overton, *The Last Warning to all the Inhabitants of London* (London, 1646). Cited in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.*
[242] *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.*
[243] *Ibid*
[244] Moore, *Light in their Consciences*, p.28.
[245] Also referred to as Thomas Simmons.
[246] Dictionary of Quaker Biography.

exactly when cannot be identified. He printed and published around London, being at various times based in Devonshire New Buildings, at the Crooked Billet in Hollywell Lane, Shoreditch and the Three Keys in Nag's Head Court, Gracechurch Street.

Sowle had two daughters, who both remained Quakers and continued in the printing business. His eldest daughter, Elizabeth, married William Bradford in 1685. They emigrated to America and Bradford became Friends' printer there. Tace, the younger daughter, carried on the business following Sowle's death in 1695. In 1703 she was based at a premises in White Hart Court off Gracious Street. An advert for the business is printed at the end of the second edition of the third part of *Piety Promoted*, which she printed and sold. It contains details of sixty works that were available for sale, as well as 'Bibles, Testaments, Concordances, spelling books, primers, horn books with writing paper, paper books and marriage certificates on parchment, stamp'd'.[247] This was a business that was not confined to printing and publishing only Quaker works. As far as can be ascertained no Quaker author was responsible for eleven of the works listed. William Dell, who was Master of Caius College at Cambridge, wrote three of these. He was ejected from the ministry for non-conformity in 1662 and was sympathetic toward Quaker views, though not a Quaker himself.[248]

Other non-Quaker books for sale appear to have been books that would have been of practical use for self-help. They included *The Writing Scholars Companion*, which was advertised to help 'explain every rule needed to write true English', *A Diurnal Speculum* that included an explanation of money, weights and measures and 'An account of England – being brief accounts of each county and the names and days of markets and the commodities found therein', and *The Good Housewife made a Doctor: Or Healths Choice and good Friend* that was described as 'Natures own prescribing to prevent and cure most diseases incident to men, women and children'.[249]

[247] 'Books printed and sold by T. Sowle, in White Hart Court in Gracious Street', in J. Tomkins, *Piety Promoted, being a collection of the dying sayings of many of the people called Quakers*, 3rd part, 2nd edition (London, 1703).
[248] Dictionary of Quaker Biography.
[249] 'Books printed and sold by T. Sowle', in J. Tomkins, *Piety Promoted*, 3rd part, 2nd edition.

The Restoration years did not see freedom for unlicensed printers as the Interregnum had. Giles Calvert was imprisoned in 1661. Andrew Sowle experienced a great deal of suffering for his work. According to *Piety Promoted* 'his house was often searched and printing materials often broken to pieces and taken away, as were any of Friends books that he was found to be printing'.[250] The Licensing Act was renewed in 1662 and continued until 1679, before again being renewed during the period 1685 to 1695. It contained printing within severe limits, with punishment largely at the discretion of the magistracy short of capital punishment. As a direct result of this Quaker books were published throughout these periods without any printer's or publisher's name.[251]

Quaker works and manuscripts provided good business for the printers that were commissioned by the morning meeting. In April 1690 Andrew Sowle brought seven hundred of Thomas Ellwood's books in to the morning meeting. These were distributed to meetings across London, with each meeting taking at least fifty copies. The morning meeting directed that the London meetings were to pay the rate of 13 shillings 4 pence for them, with the remainder being held by the meeting to satisfy any further demand.[252] In July 1689 Sowle was paid forty shillings by the meeting for eleven hundred copies of a paper issued by the yearly meeting.[253] It is possible that some of the excess copies from London would be sent to the regional meetings, and passed on to the provincial monthly meetings. Both Kelk and Elloughton's monthly meeting book list included copies of Ellwood's books, though it is not known whether they were ordered from London.[254]

Inevitably, there was rivalry between the printers for this business. The morning meeting noted how there had been some 'difference and discontent' between the printers that they used in London on account of one re-printing another's copy for distribution around the city. This led to the declaration that the printer employed by either the morning meeting, or the author following the meeting giving consent to

[250] J. Tomkins, *Piety Promoted* (London, 1701), pp. 100 –103.
[251] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p.418 n.
[252] MM, 28th April 1690.
[253] MM, 8th July 1689.
[254] See above, pp. 74 – 6 for discussion of the distribution of Quaker books to the monthly meetings in the East Riding.

print, was to have sole property and possession of the manuscript or paper and that 'no other printer or bookseller employed by Friends shall reprint the same'.[255]

Andrew Sowle's decision to print books and papers for the morning meeting appears to have been primarily an economic decision, rather than a theological one. There is some evidence of tension between the printers and the morning meeting. In July 1689 the meeting noted that Sowle should not print any more books or papers without having first agreed a price with the Friend that delivered the copy for print. This was because 'when Friends have come to pay him for some things he printed he has demanded more than they could have it done for'.[256] Sowle himself was a Quaker, but he was not merely providing a service for his co-religionists. In this case it appears that Friends were either being charged above, or were demanding a price that was below, the market rate. Whichever was the case; the relationship between the morning meeting and Sowle was based on business and not religious considerations.

Following the inception of the second day's morning meeting all literature for publication was to be sent to London, checked, and authorised for printing. Any Quaker minister could attend the meeting, but realistically, because of the meeting's location, participation was restricted to London Friends and those who visited the city. Ten of the leading Friends in London regularly attended and carried out much of the work, reading and editing the manuscripts, themselves. These were Stephen Crisp, William Bayley, Ellis Hookes (who acted as clerk and general secretary), William Gibson, John Burnett, Jasper Batt, Alexander Parker, Gerrard Roberts, George Whitehead and William Penn. Other Quaker ministers are noted in the minute book as having attended the meeting when they were in London, though in general they do not seem to have been extensively involved in it.[257]

Effectively, this group of London Friends took over the role of approving manuscripts for publication that had been done during the late 1650s and early 1660s by individuals around the country. It did not represent a change of policy to try and contain the individual spirit; this had been accepted from an early stage, as Aldam's letter to Fox, and the recommendation of the group of ministers that met in London in

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[255] MM, 29th February 1683.
[256] MM, 8th July 1689.
[257] MM, *passim*.

1666 indicated. It was significant because it represented a policy of structural change in church government, and created a centralized institution for the monitoring of Quaker publications that continued into the twentieth century.[258]

The second day morning minutes are patchy during 1673 and 1674, and it does not seem that many manuscripts actually passed through the hands of the meeting until November 1674. The minute book records the establishment of the meeting during the first year when most of the business defined the responsibilities of the meeting. At the first meeting it was agreed that Ellis Hookes was to act as general secretary to the meeting. In this role all manuscripts that were sent to the meeting passed through his hands. He was responsible for sending the manuscripts that had been approved by the meeting to the printers, and also for returning those that were rejected back to the authors.[259] When the meeting rejected a manuscript an explanation of why was given to the author. For example, following the rejection of her book in July 1677 Margaret Fell was informed by John Burnett and Jasper Batt of 'the particular reasons why Friends object against it & cannot print it, as it is, without it being altered or corrected'.[260]

Thomas O'Malley has noted that the policy of centralization that occurred during the 1670s and 1680s 'existed to suppress individuality and to act as tools in the building of a Foxonian unity'.[261] This raises the interesting question to what extent the morning meeting was under Fox's control? Fox himself was rarely active in the meeting, though he did instigate it. The group of London Friends that made up the hard-core of the meeting were prominent individuals and leaders within the Society in their own right. They had their own ideas about what was in the best interests of the movement and the membership, and were not men who were likely to be easily led.

O'Malley has stated that the meeting 'did not record any cases of Fox's books being rejected', and uses this as evidence that Fox had control over the meeting. He argues that 'The lack of friction between these men and Fox shows that some degree of loyalty existed between them and the founder of the second day meeting.'[262] This is

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[258] The Second Day's Morning Meeting ceased meeting in 1901.
[259] MM, 15th September 1673.
[260] MM, 23rd July 1677.
[261] O'Malley, 'Quaker Control', p. 76.
[262] *Ibid*, p. 85.

simply not correct, however. An examination of the morning meeting minutes reveals that in December 1675 a pamphlet of George Fox's was accepted to be printed, but only after it had been given to William Penn to 'correct'; that is to edit out passages that the meeting deemed to be unsatisfactory to print.[263] In February 1677 it was noted that 'a book of G. Fox's directed to all kings and princes referred to George Whitehead, Stephen Crisp, W. Penn, Alex Parker and John Burnet to read and correct for the press'.[264] Fox's pamphlet *The State and Duty of a Child, Youth and Young Man* was printed in February 1683 after it had been revised by the meeting.[265] In February 1688 three papers of Fox's were referred to Alex Parker, Patrick Livingston, George Whitehead and Richard Richardson to review and correct before printing.[266] In June 1677, the meeting flatly refused to authorise the printing of a paper that Fox had submitted to them, with or without corrections.[267]

Fox and the morning meeting clearly did not always see eye to eye on matters. Though he initiated the creation of the meeting to regulate Friends' publications, he was subjected to the same editing and censorship that other members of the Society were when they submitted manuscripts to the meeting for approval before printing. In a letter to London Women Friends, Fox showed his anger, most probably coming from a bruised ego, that the meeting had refused to print a paper of his directed against the Wilkinson/Story separatists:

> I was not moved to set up that meeting to make orders against the reading of my papers...[it is] not for them to have an authority over the monthly and quarterly and other meetings or for them to stop things to the nation which I was moved of the Lord to give forth to them.[268]

Fox was not the only prominent Quaker to fall foul of the morning meeting. In July 1677 it refused permission to Margaret Fell to print a book because there were 'several heads in it being objected against'.[269] Isaac Pennington had his book *The Souls Food* returned to him for 'corrections' before he was able to send it to the printers.[270] Following the death of Isaac Pennington, his son, John, had his testimony

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[263] MM, 27th December 1675.
[264] MM, 29th February 1677.
[265] MM, 12th February 1683.
[266] MM, 23rd February 1688.
[267] MM, 9th June 1677.
[268] Fox to London Women Friends, 28th April 1676. Cited in Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 280.
[269] MM, 23rd June 1677.
[270] MM, 4th October 1680.

concerning his father revised by the meeting.[271] Richard Richardson, the clerk of the meeting, was asked by some other members to revise a paper of his against wigs.[272]

Other prominent individuals had their work carefully scrutinised before permission to print was granted. Robert Barclay's *Catechism and Confession of Faith* was first printed in 1673. He later translated it into Latin, but before it could be printed the morning meeting appointed Richard Richardson to compare the Latin with the English. Only if the translation was accurate was it to be printed.[273] In February 1680 William Penn brought 'several sheets of addition' to be included in the reprinting of *No Cross, No Crown.* They were only added to the new edition after they had been read and approved by the meeting.[274] The members of the morning meeting were not discriminatory against any individual or their work. Each piece of work was judged according to its own merits, regardless of who the author was.

Funding was raised for the printing of books through a variety of means. The principal way was simply by drawing on the 'stock', that is the funds, of the local and regional meetings. General collections for the service of truth were raised by the Yearly Meeting in 1668, 1672, 1676 and 1679. In 1672 the Yearly Meeting noted that money needed to be raised 'for bookes that are disposed of and given away for the publick service of truth to the Chiefe rulers and others'. At other times local meetings sent a fixed amount of money to London to help cover the costs of producing books, or the printing of a book was funded entirely by the local meeting or individual author.[275]

The practice of the morning meeting in refusing to print manuscripts, but allowing them to be circulated amongst local and regional meetings, would have helped reduce expenditure on printing. It also helped to direct work solely to an internal audience, rather than the general public. For example, the meeting decided that 'Thomas Taylor's epistle entitled *A Loveing & Seasonable advice to his Children of Light* be not printed but spread & read amongst Friends in manuscript where it may

[271] MM, 25th April 1681.
[272] MM, 5th March 1688.
[273] MM, 13th December 1675.
[274] MM, 23rd February 1680.
[275] O'Malley, 'Quaker Control', pp. 79 – 80.

be serviceable'.[276] In April 1677 the meeting read an epistle of John Wilsford's that was 'not seen meet to be printed but to be sent back to him by Ellis Hookes to send abroad in manuscript if it be upon him so to do'.[277]

Statistical analysis is possible for the fifteen-year period between 1675 and 1689, the figures of which are given in the table below. Due to the patchy nature of the minutes during 1673 and 1674 it is not wise to include them within any statistical analysis. A total of 474 books passed through the hands of the second day's morning meeting during the period 1675 - 89. The numbers varied year to year. The average number of manuscripts that were handled each year by the meeting during this period was thirty-two. In 1680 the meeting reviewed fifty-nine manuscripts, its highest number. 1679 was the year that saw the lapse of the printing laws. Therefore, Friends were quick to take advantage of the greater freedom to print items. Also worth noting is the fact that 1678 and 1679 were two of the years that Friends faced severe persecution. 1678 was the year that saw the second lowest number of manuscripts handled by the meeting, only 21. It can be hypothesized that the initial spate of persecution checked the number of items printed by Friends, as they struggled to deal with the fresh round of imprisonments and fines. Having recovered from the immediate shock the movement rallied, and began printing items in response to their sufferings.

Year	Number of books									
	Accepted	%	Corrected	%	Refused	%	Manuscript	%	**total**	%
1675	11	39	4	14	10	36	3	11	**28**	6
1676	26	79	3	9	4	12	0		**33**	7
1677	12	48	5	20	6	24	2	8	**25**	5
1678	16	76	2	10	2	10	1	5	**21**	4
1679	31	76	4	10	3	7	3	7	**41**	9
1680	39	66	11	19	8	14	1	2	**59**	12
1681	20	69	4	14	3	10	2	7	**29**	6
1682	30	58	7	13	14	27	1	2	**52**	11
1683	27	66	6	15	5	12	3	7	**41**	9
1684	14	48	4	14	5	17	6	20	**29**	6
1685	16	47	10	29	8	24	0		**34**	7
1686	12	57	2	10	4	19	3	14	**21**	4
1687	15	63	4	17	5	21	0		**24**	5
1688	8	53	1	7	5	33	1	7	**15**	3
1689	15	68	2	9	3	14	2	9	**22**	5
total	**292**	**62**	**69**	**15**	**85**	**18**	**28**	**6**	**474**	99

[276] MM, 30th November 1674.
[277] MM, 16th April 1677.

O' Malley has estimated that during the period 1674 – 1688 about 20 per cent of all manuscripts submitted to the morning meeting were refused to be printed.[278] These results are confirmed by my own research on the morning meeting minute book for the period 1675 - 1689. The total number of manuscripts rejected by the meeting for this period was 85, or 18 per cent. However, O' Malley does not include a figure for the number of manuscripts that were printed after 'corrections' had been made to them in his analysis of the morning meeting. Nor does he take into consideration the works that were not printed, but were circulated within the Quaker movement in manuscript form. The meeting allowed the printing of 15 per cent of work they received after they had 'corrected', or edited, it. This raises the figure of 18 per cent rejected to 33 per cent rejected or edited by the morning meeting. In addition a further six per cent were refused to be printed, but were circulated internally in manuscript form, and therefore were not meant for public consumption. This increases the proportion of manuscripts edited or censored by the morning meeting to 39 per cent. In total, this means that only 61 per cent of the work that was submitted to the morning meeting was printed without editing or censorship of one type or another.

The statistical evidence from the morning meeting minutes also demonstrates the relationship between the actions of the morning meeting and external events that affected the Quaker movement. The total proportion of manuscripts that the morning meeting refused to print during the period 1675 – 1689 was 18 per cent. The proportion reached its highest peaks in the years 1675, 1677, 1682, 1685 and 1688. With the exception of 1677, all these years coincide with significant political events. In 1675 the morning meeting refused to print the highest proportion of manuscripts, 36 per cent. This year also saw the Order in Council issued by Charles II to magistrates for a more diligent execution of the penal laws. This followed Charles's Declaration of Indulgence of 1672 that had suspended the legal penalties for non-conformists. However, the suspension was short lived, as parliament forced Charles to withdraw it, and accept the Test Act, which excluded Catholics from public office, as it forced concessions from Charles in return for finances for the war against the Dutch between 1672 and 1674.[279]

[278] O'Malley, 'Quaker Control', p. 83.
[279] D. Smith, *The Stuart Parliaments 1603 – 1689* (London, 1999), p. 152.

Between 1678 and 1682 political instability was inflamed with the revelation of Titus Oates' popish plot, which was symptomatic of the anti-Catholic sentiment that had enveloped the nation. Against this background of paranoia parliament attempted to exclude James from the succession because of his Catholicism. In December 1678 Edward Coleman, James's former secretary, was executed after it was discovered that he had been corresponding with Jesuits on the continent, including Louis XIV's confessor. Part of the correspondence, which implicated James in negotiations with France and Rome, was disclosed in the House of Commons on April 27 1679. The Commons reacted by resolving that James's Catholicism had 'given the greatest of countenance and encouragement to the present conspiracies and designs of the papists against the King, and the Protestant religion'.[280] Despite Charles' efforts to compromise by offering some limitations on any Catholic successor, which included Parliament taking temporary control of the Crown's rights of ecclesiastical patronage and the appointments to civil, legal and military offices, on May 21 the Commons voted 207 to 128 in favour of a bill that would have excluded James from the succession. Charles responded by dissolving parliament on July 12.[281] Over the next three years the battle between the Commons and monarch continued in similar fashion over the issue of James's exclusion.

The period of the exclusion crisis saw the number of manuscripts handled by the morning meeting increase dramatically. During the early 1680s there was a loyalist reaction to the conflict. Public opinion began to draw comparison between the actions of the Long Parliament during the 1640s and the Exclusion Parliaments.[282] Following the final victory by Charles, helped by him signing a secret treaty with France that secured his finances, there was a fiercely loyalist backlash across the country that led to a peak in Quaker suffering.

In the East Riding of Yorkshire, 1682 saw the greatest number of Friends arrested while meeting together for worship. It was also the year that saw the morning meeting refused to print 14 manuscripts, the highest number during the period 1675 – 89. Notably, 1682 was also the year the meeting handled a total of 52 manuscripts, the

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[280] A. Grey (ed.), *Debates of the House of Commons from the Year 1667 to the Year 1694* (London, 1763), pp. 137 – 152. Cited in Smith, *The Stuart Parliaments*, p. 157.
[281] Smith, *Stuart Parliaments*, p. 157.
[282] For a more detailed account see Smith, *Stuart Parliaments*, pp. 156 – 61.

second highest during that fifteen year period. The five year period 1679 – 1683 was the peak period for the activity of the morning meeting. The number of manuscripts that it reviewed almost doubled between 1678 and 1679 from twenty-one to forty one. The total number of manuscripts that were considered by the meeting during those five years was 222, which represents 47 per cent of the total number of manuscripts considered between 1675 and 1689.

In the years 1685 and 1688 the morning meeting refused to print a significant proportion of manuscripts. They are also years that saw significant political events. In 1685 James II come to the throne following the death of Charles, and 1688 the Glorious Revolution and succession of William and Mary. In 1685 the morning meeting rejected 24 per cent of the manuscripts they received for the printers, and edited a further 29 per cent, which was the highest proportion of work that was 'corrected' by the meeting. In 1688 the meeting rejected 33 per cent of the manuscripts they received. The Quaker movement across the country was influenced by external political events, over which it had no control. The morning meeting reacted in turn to these events, and sought to influence and guide individuals in the best interests of the movement as a whole.

The work that was 'corrected', that is edited or censored, was noted as such in the minute book. This involved alterations to the work such as the removal, or re-writing of passages that the meeting had judged unsound or offensive. In February 1676 a book of *The Life and Death of Jane Whitehead* was committed to Jasper Batt and William Gibson 'to correct the places marked & to leave out such things as the meeting in the reading of it did judge to be omitted & being so corrected then to be sent to the press'.[283] In June 1682 the meeting received a manuscript from Isaac Ashton junior entitled *A Dreadful Cry Proclaiming Gods Judgement against England, Scotland and Ireland.* It was decided that this piece of work was 'not at all safe to print or publish, nor for him to talk or declare abroad those things contained in it'. What was actually contained within his writing was not recorded. However, it was considered dangerous enough to the movement that the meeting noted that some local Friends who knew him should advise him to 'keep low in the wisdom and fear of

[283] MM, 24th February 1676.

God'. A copy of the meeting minute was sent not only to local Friends, but also to his father.[284]

As the examples above demonstrate, specifically what the members of the morning meeting objected to cannot be known for sure, though there are occasional glimpses recorded in the minute book. In July 1677 Joanne Whitrow was moved to write a paper that recorded the words her daughter had spoken at the time of her death. After reprimanding Whitrow for having the book printed without sending it to the meeting, it was desired by the meeting that 'what is chiefly her own praise be left out'.[285] The meeting's motivation was to keep the account of the death of Whitrow's daughter strictly to what was factual and believable for the wider public. By doing so the meeting acted in the best interests of the Society to ensure that such accounts were not dismissed lightly by their readers. This helped to enhance the public reputation of the movement by demonstrating that the Quakers spoke honestly and truthfully in all matters, which ultimately reflected upon their theology.

Further evidence of the motivations that lay behind the decisions made by the members of the morning meeting regarding the printing of papers and manuscripts can be found following the death of Robert Barclay in October 1690. Both Kelk and Elloughton monthly meetings held copies of Barclay's work. Elloughton meeting had a collected volume of his publications, and Kelk included copies of his *Apology* and the *Anarchy of the Ranters* in the book lists.

Barclay's papers and manuscripts had been collected together by the second day's morning meeting to explore the possibility of printing them in one volume for posterity. George Whitehead and Stephen Crisp brought an account of the papers into the meeting in February 1691. They found that the majority of Barclay's manuscripts were controversial, and had been written in answer to papers and books that were no longer in print. They feared that publishing some of them would have brought 'new and unusual controversies into the world'. This was especially directed at two books and answers that had been written by Barclay in reply to his uncles, Robert and Charles Gordon, who had printed many 'intricate and unlearn'd' questions...these

[284] MM, 19th June 1682.
[285] MM, 30th July 1677.

said Gordons being men of strange and uncouth notions yet full of opposition against Truth'.[286]

It was also noted that many of the papers merely repeated subjects and issues that had been more fully dealt with in Barclay's *Apology*. Whitehead and Crisp believed that it was unnecessary 'to print the same matters on things twice over in the same volume' for that would only 'clog the book with reiterations'.[287] They concluded that, 'considering his great industry in defence of Truth... there are many things in the manuscripts useful and plain', therefore it was left to Barclay's family to transcribe them into a book to preserve them. It is possible that this was the edition found in the book list of Elloughton monthly meeting.

The meeting principally edited or censored manuscripts to protect internal harmony, the reputation of the Quaker movement, and their position within society at large. By doing so the meeting chiefly responded to external, rather than internal, pressures and opinion. Whitehead and Crisp's account of Barclay's papers demonstrate that manuscripts were rejected by the morning meeting for three main reasons. First, because the subject, style or purpose of the manuscript was unclear, repetitive, or would be unknown to a general readership. Secondly, because the subject could be construed as too radical or eccentric and threatened the internal harmony of the movement. Finally, because the subject would have created conflict with either the authorities or other religious organisations.[288]

In December 1674 the meeting rejected a book by Steven Smith entitled *The Baptist Leaders Thresht*, the rationale being that 'the subject of Baptism...is more fully and directly answered by other hands...as the case now stands between Baptists and Friends they would not willingly have other controverseyes brought in to make more work'.[289] In this case the meeting acted to avoid unnecessary and repetitious work during the height of the Lamb's War, when resources were already stretched. In February 1675 Ambrose Rigg had a paper 'directed to the persecutors' rejected because 'it was not judged a convenient time and season to make it public'.[290] 1675

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[286] MM, 23rd February 1691.
[287] MM, 23rd February 1691.
[288] O' Malley, 'Quaker Control', p. 84.
[289] MM, 7th December 1674.
[290] MM, 15th February 1675.

had seen an increase in the level of persecution suffered by Friends following the Order in Council from the King, though the period 1672 to 1677 generally saw sufferings at their lowest levels. At that time the meeting decided that discretion was the better part of valour, and did not want to risk further conflict with the authorities that could have led to a greater persecution of members across the country.

In Ambrose Rigg's case the morning meeting acted in his best interests. They directed the output of the press in reaction to the changing position of the movement within society during the second half of the seventeenth century. The example detailed above provides evidence that the morning meeting was primarily influenced by local concerns, rather than trying to influence them. Appealing to those who were responsible for the persecution directly was a more efficient way of relieving suffering than printing papers of condemnation that would be read by individuals that had no direct influence over the proceedings. The morning meeting recognised that printing such papers could help to form a sympathetic public opinion, but they also recognised that printing condemnations of the individuals involved in the persecution of Friends could have a detrimental effect, and increase their suffering.

When persecution against the Quakers was again rife during the early 1680s, the morning meeting received a manuscript from Richard Vickris, who along with many other Quakers was suffering in a Bristol gaol.[291] After careful deliberation it was decided that it was safer not to print it immediately, fearing that 'whilst they are prisoners...the publication of this booke would tend to frustrate & strengthen their bonds'. However, it was decided that 'if they remain prisoners then it be left to them to consider whether it will lay upon them to publish this book'.[292] John Whitehead, the travelling minister from Swine in the East Riding, sent an account of his trial at Lincoln assizes to the meeting in August 1682. However, there was some reluctance to print the account until 'the prosecution that John lies under be determined'. It was decided that the book should be kept safe until after the authorities had decided whether or not to issue a praemunire against him, and printed only if he was imprisoned.[293]

[291] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 107, identifies Richard Vickris as a Quaker merchant imprisoned at Bristol.
[292] MM, 26th January 1681.
[293] MM, 21st August 1682.

In May 1682 the meeting received a paper from John Hails against 'informers, justices &c'. It decided that the paper should not be printed. Instead, the meeting advised Hails that he should 'write a few tender lines' to the justices and informers in the area that were responsible for the persecution 'as other Friends do in many places', and attempt to seek redress of his grievances at a local level. The meeting concluded that 'to publish it so, to all the justices in the country and nation would not be well'.[294] Similar advice was given to Edward Bourn and his fellow prisoners at Worcester in July 1682. They had written an address to the 'Inhabitants of Worcester' against their persecution. Again, the morning meeting advised that it would be better for them to send a manuscript to those that were responsible for their persecution rather than risk printing a paper that could inflame opinion and make their suffering worse.

Internal disputes over policy and theology that could have threatened the unity and development of the Society were also considered by the second day's morning meeting before permission was given to print manuscripts. In this role the meeting ensured that members of the movement remained unified in opinion on various issues. In practice this often meant refusing to print a manuscript with a subject that could divide the Society. Hence, in March 1675 a book of Samuel Watson's 'concerning a sign' was refused to be printed because the meeting 'were not satisfied there would be a service printing of it'.[295]

In November 1680 William Rogers published his book *The Christian Quaker*. Rogers was a Bristol Friend who sympathised with the Wilkinson-Story separatists. His book detailed the facts of the separation from the Wilkinson-Story point of view, and was strongly critical of George Fox.[296] The book caused great controversy amongst Friends, which is reflected by the amount of time the morning meeting spent organising for rejoinders to be printed. John Bringhurst, who printed the manuscript for Rogers, was promptly disowned.

However, the meeting was wary that the conflict should not become too widespread and damage the movement further, and feared that it could provide

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[294] MM, 29th May 1682.
[295] MM, 29th March 1675.
[296] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, pp. 319 – 320.

ammunition for the Quaker's many enemies. Consequently, in March 1682, two manuscripts written by Thomas Lawrence were rejected by the meeting. The minutes record how one is not to be printed because 'adversaries will take advantage of his propositions'. The other because the meeting felt that Lawrence was giving too much regard to Rogers, 'several things contained therein tends to set up too high and tends to puff up W. Rogers'. However, they did not want to discourage criticism of Rogers, leaving it to Lawrence to decide whether he should write privately to him.[297]

The most notable decision that was made by the meeting in the interest of internal discipline was the refusal to authorise the printing of James Nayler's works. The possibility of publishing his writings was suspended by the meeting in 1677, and was not instigated again until 1698 by Friends in Yorkshire. It was not until 1716 that they were finally published in a heavily edited form.[298]

The need for consensus and central direction to prevent factional division within the Quaker movement, which was provided by the second day's morning meeting, is highlighted by the case of John Hogg of Hull in the East Riding.[299] Furthermore, Hogg's case demonstrates how the personal conduct of the individuals that submitted the manuscripts to the meeting was as important as the content of their writing. John Hogg sent his book *Some Observations upon a Sermon* to London, where it was agreed to print it. However, shortly afterwards word reached the meeting that 'after it coming up to London he [Hogg] showed himself high towards the brethren and in a prejudiced spirit, it was not then judged meet to take further notice of it'. Instead, the meeting wrote to the local leadership explaining the reason that the book was not to be printed, together with their desire that Hogg 'may be bought to see and acknowledge his offence & mistake and be reconciled with the bretheren'. John Whitehead, one of the national leaders from East Yorkshire, was also informed of the

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[297] MM, 13th March 1682.
[298] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p.419.
[299] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 474 n. 6 states that John Hogg was a local minister from Howden in the East Riding. However, Hogg does not appear in any of the suffering records that have been traced for the region, nor in the minute book for Elloughton monthly meeting which would have covered the area. It is not clear where Braithwaite got the information from, though it is most likely to have been taken from either the Yearly, or Quarterly Meeting records.

decision so that he could monitor the situation and prevent any further dispute from arising.[300]

John Hogg gave further trouble, with John Lyth of Hull, a decade later over the issue of re-marriage within a year of the first spouse's death.[301] Again, the principal issue was concern over the centralised control that was being established within the Society of Friends. Elloughton and Owstwick monthly meetings raised questions at quarterly meeting, and objected to any control further than caution in allowing the marriages to take place. The questions and answers were noted in the quarterly meeting minutes. However, neither monthly meeting recorded the answer from quarterly meeting into their minute book, possibly suggesting that it was ignored.[302]

Having noted that a large percentage of the work submitted to the second day's morning meeting was edited or censored, the scope of the meeting's work must be considered. How many of the Quaker publications that were included in the book lists for the monthly meetings in the East Riding during this period actually passed through the second day's morning meeting?

Unfortunately, it is impossible to answer this question conclusively. The morning meeting minute book does not give extant titles of the work, or the authors, that the meeting dealt with. It most usually notes that a paper or book from a certain author was received and either accepted, rejected or corrected for the press. For example, the paper of Fox's rejected in June 1677 is not named. Therefore it cannot be known whether Fox, contrary to the decision of the meeting, printed this paper anyway, or if it was printed at a later date following re-submission to the meeting after some revision had been made. Similarly, the book lists from Kelk and Elloughton monthly meetings do not give explicit details of all the works that they owned. The book list from Kelk simply records that they had 'two of Anthony Pearson's books', and 'two volumes of William Penn's works', without providing the

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[300] MM, 11th February 1675. The 2nd Day's Morning Meeting sent their reply to Friends in Hull, which was under the jurisdiction of Owstwick monthly meeting. Hogg does not appear in the records of this meeting either.
[301] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 476, n. 3.
[302] YQM, December 1685; Braithwiate, *Second Period*, p. 476.

titles of Pearson's books, or giving details of which works of Penn's were included in the editions of collected works.[303]

The machinery of centralized bureaucracy created by Quakerism was not all encompassing. There is some evidence in the morning meeting minutes that not all items that were printed passed through the meeting. Over a year after the inception of the meeting it is noted that 'All bookes or papers which E[llis]. H[ookes]. or others have to be read in this meeting be constantly brought & presented to the bretheren in the second day meeting'.[304] In July 1677 Joanne Whitrow was reprimanded for having printed a book (mentioned above) that had not been checked by the meeting 'so that Friends may leave out what they see [is] not of service to the Truth'.[305] Shortly afterwards the printers Andrew Sowle and Benjamin Clarke were reprimanded by the meeting for printing and selling items before the meeting had chance to check them.[306] O' Malley has correctly pointed out that the same commercial pressure that allowed the printers to act illegally undoubtedly influenced their decisions regarding what they did and did not publish.[307]

There is good reason to believe that the minute book is not fully extant, as there are many gaps in the dates between meetings. Whether a meeting occurred during these gaps and was not minuted cannot be known for sure. However, there is some evidence from Fox's journal of second day meetings that he attended not being entered into the minute book.[308] It can be concluded that as all the meetings were not noted, likewise neither were all the manuscripts that were dealt with. O'Malley has noted that only about 36 per cent of Quaker publications between 1674 and 1688 passed through the morning meeting. However, he believes that it is probable that a much higher percentage of books that were printed were reviewed before their publication.[309]

The morning meeting was not only involved in censoring and editing Quaker literature. As the meeting developed it established itself as an important part of the

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303 KMM, p. 1.
304 MM, 11th February 1675.
305 MM, 23rd July 1677.
306 MM, 26th April 1675.
307 O'Malley, 'Quaker Control', p. 82.
308 *Ibid*, p. 83.
309 *Ibid*, p. 83.

central bureaucracy of the movement. It helped to settle new meetings in London as they were required. For example at Southwark, where the meeting decided that 'a meeting at the park on the first-days in the afternoon might be of great service to the spreading of Truth and easing the meeting at the Down, which is usually much pressed'.[310] During the parliamentary elections in 1675 the morning meeting issued instructions encouraging members of the Society to give support to candidates who were willing to sign a declaration promising that they favoured liberty of conscience, and would do all in their power to remove the laws of 'persecution about religion'.[311]

In 1681 the morning meeting began to direct the public ministers around London to ensure that the meetings were supplied equally. Ministers were required to visit Ellis Hookes's chamber on the Saturday to let him know which meeting they would be attending on Sunday. It was noted in the minute book that this was 'so as there may not be several at one meeting and none at another'.[312] The problem of organising worship around London continued throughout the 1680s. In February 1689 the meeting directed Friends from Southwark and Devonshire House monthly meetings to not abandon their own weekly meetings in favour of the one that was held at Gracechurch Street because 'so crowding it' they were 'oppressing the women and weaker sort of people'.[313] Six months later the instruction for ministers to inform the meeting of which worship they would be attending on the Sunday was re-issued. This was because many ministers from London were leaving the city in favour of other meetings, 'whereby the service is the harder to such as remain'.[314]

The fact that the meeting acted as one of the central forces of the movement was mainly due to the fact that the members involved in the meeting were also those that were principally involved in the other meetings of central church government. There was a great degree of overlap between many of the meetings involved in church bureaucracy in London, principally because they were the meetings at which the leading individuals met. Hence, it was possible that the morning meeting proposed that the meeting for sufferings might be held 'on the sixth day of the week in the afternoon, because of the three meetings on the fifth days, whereby several Friends

[310] MM, 21st September 1680.
[311] MM, 31st May 1675.
[312] MM, 16th May 1681.
[313] MM, 25th February 1689.
[314] MM, 15th July 1689.

that might be assistant, are often prevented from coming to the meeting for sufferings'. However, this decision was ultimately left to the meeting for sufferings itself to decide.[315]

In conclusion, the second day's morning meeting was an important part of the centralized bureaucracy of the Quaker movement during the second half of the seventeenth century. Friends managed to produce a vast amount of printed literature, despite it being illegal during much of the period. The morning meeting acted as an editorial board for this literature, which was then passed on to the provincial monthly meetings. It was funded by the movement from a local and regional level, and handled literature from across the country. It was a form of centralised bureaucracy that responded to the needs of the membership, and considered local as well as national concerns. Therefore, the meeting did not simply exist to enforce a Foxonian hegemony upon the movement. Fox was not heavily involved with the weekly organisation and decisions of the meeting, and was subject to the same checks as other Quakers who submitted manuscripts to the meeting. The morning meeting managed, directed and censored manuscripts according to the prevailing situation that was faced by Friends in society at large.

Throughout the second half of the seventeenth century the Quakers faced state sanctioned persecution. They printed and published a vast number of pamphlets during this period at the discretion of the second day's morning meeting, which can be used to examine the contemporary view of religious toleration that developed within a persecuted minority. The next sections of the thesis will examine the attitudes and views of the Quaker movement towards religious toleration during the second half of the seventeenth century, contrasting differences between the local and national level.

[315] MM, 27th September 1680.

Chapter 6: The Experiences and Attitudes of Quakers towards Toleration in the East Riding.

It is difficult to tie any of the early Quaker travelling ministers into a particular region. The very nature of the travelling ministry led individuals to be away from their homes for considerable periods of time. Consequently, their experiences of suffering and persecution were not always linked to the areas that they called home. Despite this, it is important not to dismiss their experiences whilst travelling as irrelevant to the local Quaker community. During the time that the travelling ministers were at home it is difficult to imagine them not discussing these experiences with others. Often they recorded and published a record of their encounter with the authorities, which would have brought knowledge of their experience to a much wider audience than those who had merely participated in, or witnessed, it.

Within the East Riding, local attitudes towards religious toleration can be examined through the experiences and writings of two leading members of the Quaker movement from the region, John Whitehead and Thomas Thompson. The arguments of Whitehead and Thompson might be regarded as typical of those with whom they interacted most closely: other Quakers from the area who have otherwise left no record of their thoughts and opinions. Their attitudes towards religious toleration were different from the theoretical and philosophical arguments that were produced by William Penn in favour of liberty of conscience, which are examined in the following chapter of the thesis.[316] For these two men considerations of national politics and economic development were of secondary concern. Principally, their ideas of toleration were formed from their practical experiences. They simply wanted to be left alone by the authorities, and allowed to worship as they chose.

John Whitehead is perhaps the best known of the two men to Quaker historians. Smith's *Catalogue of Friends' Books* lists 23 separate publications, made up of pamphlets, broadsides and epistles that were written by Whitehead, including his collected works *The Written Gospel Labours of...John Whitehead* (1704).[317] He

[316] See Ch. 7 below.
[317] J. Smith, *A Catalogue of Friend's Books*, vol. II (London, 1867).

was born in 1630, and was brought up as a Puritan by his parents who steered him away from habits such as 'swearing, lying, cursing and the like'. They also educated him as best they could, first of all through hearing sermons, later through teaching him to read the scriptures. This was something that he took to quickly, soon gaining knowledge 'beyond many of my equals', according to his own account.[318]

However, he spent the early part of his life unconcerned with religious matters, noting that he lived without thought of God 'sporting and playing' and enjoying 'pride and pleasures'.[319] It was at the age of sixteen or seventeen that Whitehead began to experience religious concerns, he tried to remedy them with his knowledge of scriptures, but found that he remained in an 'unsettled state'.[320] When he was eighteen he joined the army, and fought for Parliament. A year later, still unsettled, it came to him that 'the kingdom of God was within, not in outwards forms'. He remained troubled for a further two years before he was convinced by William Dewsbury while serving in the army at Scarborough Castle.[321]

After leaving the army he lived at Owstwick, before moving to Swine. How long he was at Owstwick before he moved is not clear. He was certainly living at Swine in October 1673, when Owstwick monthly meeting book records the meeting being held at his house, Swine Grange.[322] In 1683 he moved to Fiskerton in Lincolnshire, where he remained until his death in September 1696.

Thomas Thompson is less well known to Quaker historians. He was born, and lived all his life, in Skipsea, on the east coast of East Yorkshire. The date of his birth is not known for sure, though it has been estimated at 1631.[323] He was a less prolific writer than Whitehead, with only two entries in Smith's *Catalogue*. The first work that he published was a testimony to John Whitehead, which appears at the beginnings of Whitehead's *Gospel Labours*.[324] His other publication was his spiritual autobiography, *An Encouragement Early to Seek the Lord* (1708), which included

[318] J. Whitehead, *The Written Gospel Labours of that ancient and faithful servant of Jesus Christ, John Whitehead* (London, 1704), pp. 5 – 6.
[319] *Ibid*, p. 4.
[320] *Ibid*, p. 5.
[321] Dictionary of Quaker Biography.
[322] OMM, October 2 1673.
[323] Dictionary of Quaker Biogrpahy, where this date comes from is not recorded.
[324] Whitehead, *Written Gospel Labours*, pp. 2 – 10.

written works that had not been published. His son, Thomas junior, published these writings after Thompson's death, as his father had instructed him.[325]

According to Thompson's own account he was religiously minded from the age of eight. At this young age he began attending sermons frequently and followed 'the most conscientious and ablest preachers' from the region.[326] There is no mention that his parents were religiously inclined, and it appears that they did not keep a Bible in the house. Thompson notes that he 'greatly desired a Bible' as he did not have one to read. Once his parents knew his desire they quickly went out and bought him one.[327] Once Thompson read the Bible he was greatly affected by God's relations to the individuals of the Old Testament, believing that they must have been fulfilled and happy with their close relationship to God.[328]

It was a similar relationship that Thompson began to seek. He quickly learnt the scriptures and could repeat many of the sermons that were given by the clergy. He continued to keep company with those who he believed to be the 'most Godly' ministers from the area and mixed with people who 'delighted to be discoursing of things of God'.[329] However, he became unsatisfied with his relationship with God as he grew older, and became dissatisfied with the clergy.

Thompson's life now followed the familiar pattern of a seeker, passing from one religious group to the next, without finding satisfaction or really knowing what it was that he was seeking. How long this state lasted is not known for sure, Thompson does not provide any indication within his spiritual autobiography. Instead, he details the seeking process that he experienced. He started by trying alternatives within the church, visiting and talking with many different clergymen in the area. He recalled how he had passed 'from one to another seeking rest, but found none'. He next turned attention to groups that were outside the formal church, and attended meetings of independents, but again failed to find any satisfaction.[330]

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[325] T. Thompson, *An Encouragement Early to Seek the Lord; and be faithful to him: in an account of the life and services of that ancient servant of God, Thomas Thompson* (London, 1708), p. 7.
[326] *Ibid*, pp. 11 – 12.
[327] *Ibid*, p. 12.
[328] *Ibid*
[329] *Ibid*
[330] *Ibid*, p. 13.

By this stage Thompson had become disillusioned with the ministry of others, and instead decided to follow his own path. He describes how the Lord made it known to him that man-made ministry was not for him, and 'did not profit people at all'. He withdrew from the society of others, and left the independents. Thompson recalls how he was 'retired in my mind', and delighted in being alone to meditate on spiritual matters and 'the things of God'. He began to read the books that had been published by others who had any spiritual and theological experiences, in an attempt to enlighten himself and gain a greater understanding of spiritual matters.[331]

Thomas Thompson first heard of the Quakers when George Fox travelled through the East Riding in December 1651 and January 1652. However, Thompson did not hear him preach, but heard an account of Fox's life and doctrine from others:

> His behaviour was very reserved, not using any needless words or discourses...he used not respect of persons, very temperate in his eating and drinking, his apparel homely, yet decent; as for his doctrine, he directed people to the light of Christ in their consciences to guide them to God.[332]

As well as providing a description of Fox, this is a good example of the importance of the spoken word in spreading the news of the Quakers around the region. Thompson did not have to hear Fox preach to hear his message. Instead it was relayed to him second, or perhaps third, hand, through the interaction of people in everyday life. Fox's message appealed to Thompson. He describes how his 'mind was turned inwards', and he 'came to be denied and in many things humbled to the cross', though he had yet to meet a Quaker or hear the message for himself.[333]

Thompson next encountered Quakerism in September 1652, when he heard that a group were meeting at Malton, in the North Riding. News of the Quakers could clearly spread quickly and across relatively large distances through word of mouth; Malton and Skipsea are about twenty-five miles apart. Most people spoke against the Quakers, but when Thompson enquired why, nobody accused them of any particular crime. Instead, Thompson recalled how they were described in generally negative terms, and their actions were criticised: 'they were a fanatical and conceited people,

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[331] Thompson, *Encouragement Early*, p. 14.
[332] *Ibid*
[333] *Ibid*

and burnt their lace and ribbons, and other superfluous things, which formerly they used to wear, and that they fell into strange fits of quaking and trembling'. Such reports did not discourage him. He remembered how these reports 'increased my desire to see and be acquainted with some of them'.[334] Thompson finally got the chance to come face to face with the Quaker movement in October 1652, when he heard that they were in Bridlington. He soon heard further news that they were to hold a meeting in Frodingham, but he could not attend during the day as he had to work. He resolved to go that night, and travelled to the meeting alone as no acquaintances wanted to go with him. It was here that he first met William Dewsbury and became convinced.[335]

Whitehead and Thompson were of a similar age, and their early life experiences leading to convincement to Quakerism reveal the type of person that was drawn to the movement, and became a travelling minister. Thomas Thompson was religiously concerned from an early age, before becoming disenchanted with the established church and becoming a seeker. His experience is an identical pattern to that described by William Dewsbury, another of the early Quaker leaders from East Yorkshire. In contrast to these two, John Whitehead became religiously inclined at a relatively late age, in his mid-teens, spending his early years leading a relatively carefree existence. Their early backgrounds complete this contrast, with Whitehead coming from a strict Puritan household, compared to Thompson whose parents did not own a Bible. Being brought up in a pious household did not lead Whitehead to early religious inclinations, though it can be speculated that this background did help the quick development of knowledge that he described once he applied himself in that direction.

Both men were from similarly humble social backgrounds, being assessed for only one hearth in the 1672 hearth tax assessments for the East Riding.[336] Thompson was imprisoned in November 1661 for refusing to give a local tithe farmer a hen and eggs that were valued at nine pence, which provides good evidence that he made his living as a smallholder.[337] Whitehead is a little more problematical. He spent much of

[334] Thompson, *Encouragement Early*, p. 16.
[335] *Ibid*, p. 17.
[336] National Archives, Kew, Hearth Tax Assessments for Michealmas 1672, E179/205/504, townships of Skipsea and Swine.
[337] Thompson, *Encouragement Early*, p. 20.

his time travelling in the ministry outside the East Riding, during which time the Quaker community around the country provided him with food and lodgings when necessary. Following his arrest in Wellingborough in March 1654, Whitehead was accused of being a vagabond and wanderer, a common charge that was easily made by the authorities against travelling ministers. He answered this charge by stating that he had a home where he lived with his wife, and that he was 'not a burden to any'.[338] Like Thompson, he was assessed for small amounts of tithes, and the statement that he made to the authorities in Northamptonshire was true, as there is no record in Owstwick monthly meeting minute book of any money being given to his family to relieve poverty.[339] The size of both men's landholdings can only be estimated from such sources, though it can be stated with confidence that they were both self-sufficient small farmers. There is no evidence that indicates how they held the land, whether freehold, copyhold or as tenants.

Whitehead and Thompson first met at the end of December 1652 at a meeting in Malton. Thompson had travelled to the meeting with William Dewsbury. The principal purpose that drew them both to the meeting was to meet with another of the early Quaker leaders from Yorkshire, Richard Farnsworth.[340] They quickly became close, travelling around the East Riding and into north Yorkshire together to hold meetings, which on occasion led to confrontations with those who were hostile to Quakerism.

At Hunmanby, in the north-eastern corner of the East Riding, Whitehead and Thompson held a meeting in May 1656. The meeting was to have been held at a local man's house, though it was deemed unfit for the purpose as a large number of people gathered. The meeting was moved to a nearby close, where it was disturbed by 'a great number of rude people, who made much stir and noise and threw stones at Friends'.[341] Unperturbed by this the meeting withdrew into a nearby barn, where the mob continued to cause a disturbance. Some entered the barn and made their way threateningly towards Whitehead who was preaching. Thompson and another local Quaker, Robert Barwick, stood in front of Whitehead to protect him, with 'a woman

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338 J. Whitehead, *The Enmity between the Two Seeds*, in *idem*, *Written Gospel Labours*, p. 30.
339 OMM, *passim*; OBS, pp. 14, 225, 234, 235.
340 T. Thompson, *A Few Words in way of Testimony Concerning ...John Whithead*, in Whitehead, *Written Gospel Labours*, pp. 2 – 3.
341 Thompson, *Testimony Concerning ...John Whithead*, p. 5.

or two' alongside. The mob were 'striving in much wrath and madness, shaking their fists, swearing many terrible oaths, and desperately threatening us', Thompson recalled.[342] On this occasion it ended without violence, the anger of the mob became subdued for some unknown reason, and they left the barn peacefully. Thompson attributed this good fortune to the Lord's intervention.[343] On another occasion Thompson was arrested after a warrant had been raised against him, and William Dewsbury, after they had been travelling around the region preaching. Following his apprehension Thompson was brought before Francis Carling, the justice who had raised the warrant, and examined. He was threatened with imprisonment, although released without any charge being brought later that day, and Carling commented that he should be whipped until the blood ran down to his heels.[344] It was in the face of experiences such as these, that both Thompson and Whitehead formed their own ideas concerning religious toleration.

In July 1662 John Whitehead was arrested in Lindsey in Lincolnshire, on suspicion of holding a Quaker meeting for worship, contrary to the Quaker Act, which had been passed by parliament earlier that year. A local magistrate, William Walley, examined him and decided that nothing he heard was worthy of Whitehead being charged with any offence. The following day he was recalled by Walley, and examined again, this time in the presence of another magistrate, John Boswell. Whitehead admitted that he did visit the houses of Friends, and sometimes would 'speak Truth to them'. The two magistrates thought this worthy of imprisonment.[345] Whitehead was imprisoned for two weeks until the assizes. At the assizes he was ordered to remain imprisoned by the judge, Woodham Windham, until the next quarter sessions, without being seen, or having a chance to defend himself against his accusers. In response Whitehead published a pamphlet *An Appeal Against Injustice to the Chief Magistrates* (1662).

Whitehead began the pamphlet by questioning the ideological basis for the practice of persecution. By doing so, he raised questions that he knew were

[342] Thompson, *Testimony Concerning ...John Whithead*, p. 6.
[343] *Ibid*, p. 7.
[344] Thompson, *Encouragement Early*, p.19.
[345] J. Whitehead, *An Appeal Against Injustice to the Chief Magistrates, and all the Good People of England*, in *idem*, *Written Gospel Labours*, pp. 177 – 213.

impossible for the authorities to answer, and so weakened their position. Moreover, he staked a claim to the moral high ground, from the position of the persecuted:

> All you that would compel us to a conformity of worship, is your worship in the infallible spirit of Truth; not differing in matter or manner from the primitive Christian's worship? If this you cannot affirm, and reasonably demonstrate to every man's conscience, then why will you seek to force the conscience to conform to that which you cannot demonstrate is altogether right and infallible?[346]

The questions that Whitehead was asking formed the spine of the Quaker attitudes towards the established Church of England, and towards religious toleration. The Church had been corrupted from the worship of the 'Primitive Christians', that is the first followers of Christ, which was described in the New Testament. Therefore, to experience the true religion Quakers felt it was necessary to worship apart from the established church. Whitehead knew it was impossible for the Church to provide any answers that could prove that their practice of religion was the absolute Truth, for no man could. Doing so would have placed the person who claimed to have absolute Truth alongside God. However, if the Church acknowledged that they did not have the absolute Truth, it would be hypocritical to then try to stop individuals from pursuing it. Logically, this would make the practice of persecuting those who were attempting to find Truth wrong. Therefore, it was right to tolerate dissenters from the Church.

Whitehead was aware that there was a difference between the toleration of Protestant and Catholic dissenters. Catholic dissenters could not be tolerated because they owed allegiance to the Pope, a foreign national. By owing their principal allegiance to a foreign figure, Catholics could not be regarded as totally loyal to the English state, and should be regarded as a threat to social harmony. However, this was not the case with the Quaker community in the country. In a slightly earlier work Whitehead pointed out the Quaker belief that it was a duty to God to be obedient to the monarch and state. Quakers could not be regarded as a potential threat because of this belief, 'we that fear God do not but honour the King, because the Lord requires it

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[346] Whitehead, *Appeal Against Injustice*, p. 181.

at our hands, and woe unto us if we do not'.[347] Whitehead stressed the point that the Quakers were loyal subjects, and should not be regarded with the same suspicion as Catholics were; 'we [Quakers] yield all due obedience to our temporal prince, and utterly deny all foreign power'.[348]

Therefore, it was particularly galling to Quakers that they should be prosecuted under laws that had been passed against Catholics. One of the principal complaints of Whitehead was his continued imprisonment for refusing to swear the Oath of Allegiance. He highlighted that he could not swear for conscience sake, and that the swearing of the oath had been instituted specifically to target Catholics, 'that oath was principally, if not wholly, intended for Popish Recusants'.[349] Moreover, while these laws were being used for the prosecution of Quakers, many Catholics were escaping penalties for their religious beliefs. Whitehead thought that this only further demonstrated the corruption of the system, and reflected badly on those who were enforcing the laws; 'by proceeding against us (who from our hearts deny Popery) upon the statutes that were made against popish recusants, whilst they that are really such go mostly unpunished, you may seem partial in yourselves, and stain your own honour'.[350]

The corruption that Whitehead identified stemmed from the Church of England trying to protect its position in society. Those within the Church needed to maintain the monopoly that it held for their own personal gain, and were not motivated by spiritual belief or practice. The clergy gained their income from the people, and in return only sought to maintain their position, rather than further the spiritual needs of the people. Whitehead pointed out that the Primitive Christians had not asked for or received anything for preaching their message, an example that was adopted by the Quakers. This was the motivation behind the Quaker's refusal to pay tithes. By comparison the Church claimed income for the maintenance of the clergy and for maintaining and repairing church buildings. This income was claimed regardless of whether people were members of the Church. Whitehead thought that

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[347] J. Whitehead, *For the Judges of the Assize and Justices of the Peace Sitting at Alisbury*, in *idem*, *Written Gospel Labours*, p. 61.
[348] Whitehead, *Appeal Against Injustice*, p. 186.
[349] *Ibid*
[350] *Ibid*, p. 185.

this was unreasonable, for if people were not using the Church why should they pay for its upkeep?

> When do we...desire anything of you or any that dissent from us for the maintenance of our ministers, or for the repairing and up-holding of our meeting houses [?]...If such a practice would be looked upon by you unjust and unreasonable in us, then see how it looks in yourselves.[351]

Quakers refused to pay for the upkeep of a Church, which they thought was corrupt, and consequently had removed themselves from. However, the Church still pursued them for tithes. Both Whitehead and Thompson had tithes claimed from them by the local vicar.[352] Therefore Whitehead's argument outlined above and his concern over the issue of tithes was firmly rooted within his own personal experience of the Church claiming money from him.

Thompson argued that the Church was hypocritical. Protestants had complained of their persecution under the rule of Catholics, and yet the Protestant Church was now responsible for pursuing a policy of persecution against its dissenters. Thompson highlighted the social aspect of persecution, noting how imprisonment separated husbands from wives and parents from children.[353] Whitehead stressed that the Quakers were a godly people, who wanted to live quiet, sober and peaceful lives under the authority of the government.[354] In so doing, both men revealed their belief that they were a part of the nation, not separated from it. As such, they too had recourse to law. Whitehead pointed out that as subjects of the nation the Quakers 'ought to have the benefit of the law'. Instead, he believed that he was subjected to illegal imprisonment, without the opportunity of facing his accusers or being given the chance to defend himself.[355]

Therefore, the criticism that was being made was of the operation of the legal system against the Quakers. It was the perceived abuses of the system that were being criticised, not the system itself. Whitehead noted how the attitude of the courts

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[351] J. Whitehead, *To the Dean, Sub-Dean, Chancellor, Surrogate, and other officers and ministers belonging to the Ecclesiastical Court at Lincoln, and to all members of the Church of England*, in *idem*, *Written Gospel Labours*, p. 221.
[352] KBS, p. 187; OBS, p. 225.
[353] T. Thompson, *To King Charles the Second of England*, in *idem*, *Encouragement Early*, p. 76.
[354] Whitehead, *For the Judges of the Assize*, p. 61.
[355] Whitehead, *Appeal Against Injustice*, pp. 184 – 85.

towards the Quakers had helped to shape public attitudes towards them. Harsh and unfair punishment through the legal process could lead to similar experiences in the community, 'the opinions of Judges are infectious, and many are ready to be led thereby...how cautious and circumspect ought you to be in making new precedents...especially if you leave an example of severity or rigour against us'.[356] Inherent in this argument was the belief that the Quakers should receive some protection from the law. The law served to protect the rights of those who needed it most, as a persecuted minority of the population the Quakers expected justice to be applied to them.

A principal complaint of the Quakers within the legal system was the use of informers. Craig Horle has noted that in the seventeenth century the authorities used informers as an 'auxiliary police force'. They were offered financial inducements through a share of the fine, and were not liable for any court costs should the information not be enough to secure any conviction.[357] Thompson noted how this encouraged some individuals to persecute Quakers, who would have been well known in their local community. Unscrupulous informers would have found Quakers relatively easy prey. This was known by Thompson, who noted how 'cruel hearted ones...inflict sufferings upon an innocent people, some thinking to enrich yourselves with the estates of those who harm you not...therefore you take an advantage against them, and inform against them in your courts'.[358] He continued by criticising informers for failing to keep the Commandment 'thou shalt not covet'. Moreover, he pointed out that 'if it be a sin to covet our neighbours' goods, as undoubtedly is, then certainly it is much more sinful with force and violence to take them away'.[359] Again, it is notable that Thompson did not criticise the laws themselves, merely their application through informers. The legal system and structure were not being questioned. Similarly to their criticism of the attitude of the courts, and the application of the laws against Catholics, Whitehead and Thompson were opposed to the abuses of the legal system, rather than the institution itself.

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[356] Whitehead, *For the Judges of the Assize*, p. 63.
[357] Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, p. 40.
[358] T. Thompson, *A Few Words to Those who are Persecutors of the Innocent*, undated, in *idem*, *Encouragement Early*, pp. 80 – 4.
[359] Thompson, *A Few Words*, p. 81.

The writings of Whitehead and Thompson demonstrate how they addressed the issue of religious toleration where they experienced it within their lives: at a practical and local level. This can be contrasted with the writing of William Penn and his ideas on religious toleration, which were more philosophical and drew upon his very different experience of life. In so doing, comparison is made between attitudes towards religious toleration at the local and national levels. The variation in practical experiences help to account for the differences in the attitude towards religious toleration between Whitehead, Thompson and Penn. At the same time, similarities in their writing and language help to demonstrate the importance of the printed pamphlets in disseminating ideas of religious toleration throughout the Quaker movement across the country.

Chapter 7: Variations of religious toleration within Quakerism.

Personal experience was crucial in shaping the attitudes of individuals towards religious toleration. In a regional study of religious toleration it is important to examine the experiences and consequent attitudes of the local community, in this case the Quaker community in the East Riding, and contextualise it to the widely differing experiences that the Quaker community faced across the country. This can be achieved by closely examining the formative experiences of national leaders of the early Quaker movement who came from very different social and educational backgrounds.

In the following section the early life of William Penn is compared to that of William Dewsbury, who was born and brought up in the East Riding of Yorkshire, before he left the region. William Penn was one of the most prominent individuals within the Quaker movement during the second half of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. William Dewsbury was among the first of those who became convinced Quakers during the mid-seventeenth century, and went on to become one of the 'valiant sixty' early Quaker ministers who travelled the country to preach Quaker theology and help develop the movement.[360] By comparing the early lives of Penn and Dewsbury side by side it is possible to identify how the different influences that they experienced helped to form their ideas and attitudes towards religious toleration. In turn, this helps reveal how differences in their ideas and attitudes towards religious toleration was shaped by their personal experiences, which demonstrate differences in ideology between the local and national levels of Quakerism in the seventeenth century.

It is an indirect attempt, necessarily so due to the nature of the sources available, to map the mental landscape of Quakerism in East Yorkshire during the second half of the seventeenth century. That is to say, the prevalent ideologies that shaped the thought processes of the Quaker community in the region, and influenced how Quakers in the East Riding interacted with and reacted to the outside world. It also demonstrates how various personal influences were drawn upon by authors of

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[360] See Ch. 1, pp. 30 – 31 for greater detail of William Dewsbury's role in the development of Quakerism in the East Riding.

Quaker literature, which shaped the content of the books and pamphlets that were written, published and read by members of the Quaker movement during the second half of the seventeenth century. The main theme of this section is based upon answering the question: how far was Penn's view of religious liberty shared by the rank and file membership of the Quaker movement in the East Riding?

I

William Penn was not a typical member of the Quaker movement, coming from a socially privileged background. Consequently, his arguments for religious liberty were developed from a national and international perspective, and therefore would have been more familiar to the experiences of an audience that was drawn from a more socially exclusive background than were most Friends.[361] Penn's was the most philosophical approach to religious toleration of the Quaker authors who tackled the subject. However, his arguments were not necessarily adopted by the general membership of the movement. They were based on widely differing experiences of persecution and toleration, which did not resonate through the rank and file membership across the country.

Personal experience was crucial in shaping the attitudes of individuals towards religious toleration. This can be demonstrated by closely examining the experiences of national leaders of the early Quaker movement who came from very different social and educational backgrounds. William Penn was a strong advocate and one of the leading voices, if not thinkers, in favour of liberty of conscience during the second half of the seventeenth century. He published many pamphlets and epistles of various lengths that laid out in clear terms the arguments that supported the cause. A close examination of these writings reveal Penn's view of liberty of conscience as inclusive of all Christians, and motivated by a desire for social unity and national economic strength and development, underpinned by his approach to the role of the state and its relationship to the individual subject. This philosophy of religious toleration was not one that was shared by all Quakers.

William Dewsbury has been given little credit as a writer and propagator of the early Quaker message. Braithwaite has commented that he had neither the

[361] See Ch. 3 for discussion of the social origins of Friends in the East Riding, and across the country.

practical genius of Fox, nor the mind of Barclay, but this is doing him a disservice.[362] The publication of Dewsbury's collected writings allowed them to be read by the national Quaker audience. His stature within the Society was high, as was principally demonstrated by his work in reconciling Fox and Naylor. He was responsible for convincing many of the truth of Quaker theology, some of whom became prominent individuals in the movement during the later seventeenth century.

Dewsbury had been responsible for the settling of many of the first Quaker meetings in East Yorkshire, and though he had left the area during the 1650s he left a legacy in the area through the convincement of local leaders, such as John Whitehead and Thomas Thompson, whose own lives and writings are examined in the following section of the thesis. Both Kelk and Elloughton monthly meeting book lists included copies of Dewsbury's collected works. Therefore, his personal experiences were read, and had an influence upon, the lives of Quakers in the region after his death.

How far William Penn's personal experiences and arguments in favour of religious liberty reflected the experiences and views of the Quaker community in the East Riding is uncertain. It is possible that by developing his ideas at a national and international level Penn's work was not intended for consumption by the audience at a local level in the provinces. The list of books kept by the monthly meeting at Kelk includes '2 volumes of William Penn's works'. What these works were and whether they included any of his writing on religious liberty cannot be known. The list of books that was kept by Elloughton monthly meeting did not include any of Penn's works.[363] However, the monthly meeting minute book does record the purchase of three books of Penn's in September 1673.[364] The titles of the books are not recorded, but it does provide evidence that Penn's writing was being read in the East Riding, and his ideas were therefore familiar to Friends in the region.

William Penn's early education and experience of life set him apart from other prominent Quakers, which is demonstrated in the contrast with the early life of William Dewsbury. Dewsbury was never formally educated, as Penn was, and spent the early years of his life working to help bring income into the family household.

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[362] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 451.
[363] KMM, pp. 1 – 6; EMM, p. 1.
[364] EMM, p. 4.

Dewsbury's theological interests started at a much younger age than Penn, to such an extent that it could be considered that Dewsbury spent most of his life concerned with theological matters.

In contrast, Penn gained a very different experience of life through his formal education and travels around Europe. He came into contact with many individuals of greater spiritual and theological experience, who all helped to shape his opinions one way or another. There is no record of Penn feeling that he was staring into the spiritual abyss, as Dewsbury and many of the other Quaker leaders did, and consequently following an individual seeking experience due to a loss of faith and lack of guidance.[365] This is not to say that he was not concerned with theological issues during the early period of his life, but rather that his attitude was shaped by vastly differing influences from Dewsbury's.

William Penn has been described by Braithwaite as 'the foremost champion in England of religious liberty' during the 1670s and 1680s.[366] Although this can be seen as an exaggeration, it is certainly true that Penn was the foremost champion of religious liberty amongst the Quaker movement during this period. This is where the real interest in Penn as a theorist of religious liberty lies. As a whole the Quaker movement was united behind the cause of liberty of conscience, and Penn was socially the best placed man in those ranks to take up the cause. Penn's view of liberty of conscience could therefore be seen as representative of the Quaker movement. However, he was not a typical member of the organisation, with friends at court and a close relationship with James Stuart, duke of York. Although Penn's writings on liberty of conscience were strongly influenced by his religious views, they were not necessarily reflective of the views, formed by experience, of the rank and file Quaker movement throughout the country.

William Penn came from a privileged family. His father, Admiral Sir William Penn, had a distinguished naval background. During the Civil Wars, Sir William had fought for parliament, and then served Cromwell during the Protectorate, but by 1660

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[365] See, for example the experiences of Thomas Thompson and John Whitehead detailed in Ch. 6 above, pp. 119 – 21.

[366] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 55.

was a Royalist who welcomed the Restoration.[367] Penn was born into the family of a prominent courtier in 1644, and received the education that was expected for someone of his social status. It began at Chigwell Grammar School, in Essex. Buranelli informs us that it was chosen by his father for being an Anglican school that described itself as 'neither Papist nor Puritan'. He left the school at the age of twelve, when the family moved to Ireland. Penn's education continued there under private tutors. In October 1660 he started as an undergraduate at Christ Church, Oxford.[368] While there it is probable that John Locke taught Penn Greek. However, during this period Locke was still conservative in his political thinking, which makes it highly unlikely that he would have influenced Penn's thoughts regarding religious toleration.[369]

It was at Oxford that Penn became a dissenter. The former Dean of Christ Church was John Owen, a Puritan who had been appointed by Cromwell, and who was ejected from the college at the Restoration. However, he had remained in Oxford and acted as a private mentor to students who were dissatisfied with the Church of England. Penn was one of a number of students who, under Owen's influence, held prayer meetings amongst themselves and were fined for non-conformity. In the autumn of 1661 Penn was sent down from Christ Church for writing a piece that offended the college authorities.[370]

The influence of Owen on the young Penn has been seen as a significant element in his religious development. Though not a Quaker, Owen was a Puritan and Independent. He helped lead Penn away from the Church of England into the ranks of the Protestant dissenters, which ultimately led Penn to Quakerism.[371] Recent research by Mary Geiter has also emphasised the fact that Penn's parents were dissenters. His mother was a Dutch Calvinist and his father a Presbyterian, though Sir William conformed to the Church of England following the Restoration.[372] Penn later remembered how his father had been deeply upset by his nonconformity, and a number of disputes between the two followed his return home. He stated, 'bitter usage

[367] V. Buranelli, *The King and the Quaker. A Study of William Penn and James II* (Philadelphia, 1962), pp. 19 – 20.
[368] *Ibid*, p.25.
[369] *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Oxford, 2004).
[370] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 56.
[371] Buranelli, *The King and the Quaker*, p. 25.
[372] M. Geiter, *William Penn* (Harlow, 2000); *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

I underwent when I returned to my father, whipping, beating, and turning out of doors'.[373] However, the disputes were always settled.

In 1662 his father sent him to Paris, to experience the French court. Penn did not spend long in Paris. He left after only a few months and enrolled at a Huguenot seminary at Saumur. There he continued his theological education by studying under Moyse Amyraut, a Calvinist theologian of the French Reformed Church. Amyraut's philosophy of non-resistance and the importance of an individual's conscience in their relationship with God greatly influenced Penn's religious thinking. It was strikingly similar to the Quaker theology of the 'light within', which he was to adopt.[374]

It was in Ireland, while in charge of his father's estate in 1667, that Penn became a convinced Quaker. Penn had first experienced Quakerism when only twelve years old. Thomas Loe, a travelling minister from Oxford, had visited his father's house in Cork. Loe was in Ireland again in 1667, and visited Cork to preach. Penn went to hear him and was intrigued by what he heard. He started to attend Quaker meetings in the area regularly and became convinced by the autumn.

At the beginning of November a meeting attended by Penn was disturbed by a soldier. He was arrested and imprisoned with several other Quakers by the mayor, and subsequently wrote a letter to the Earl of Orrery, Lord President of Munster, in favour of liberty of conscience. Though he was released, his father heard of the incident from the Earl and Penn was ordered to return home. This he duly did by way of Bristol, where Josiah Cole, one of the City's leading Quakers, joined him as a travelling companion. In December 1667 Penn was back in London, where Pepys recorded that he 'is a Quaker again, or some very melancholy thing'.[375]

In marked contrast to William Penn, William Dewsbury is a figure unknown to those who are unfamiliar with early Quaker history. Dewsbury was born and brought up in East Yorkshire. Dewsbury was one of the so-called 'valiant sixty' Quaker preachers that helped to spread the early Quaker message. Despite this he remains relatively unknown, with little attention paid to him within the

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[373] Penn, 'Address to the Labadists', in W. Penn, *Travels in Holland and Germany*, (London, 1677). Cited in Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 56.
[374] *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.*
[375] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, pp. 58 – 9.

historiography, which has been dominated by the figure of George Fox. Dewsbury's name tends to appear in passing, with little detail about his life and work.

Although much of his ministerial work took him outside the East Riding, he is a good example of an individual from the local region who became a convinced Quaker and travelling minister. Furthermore, through the lists of books that were kept by Kelk and Elloughton monthly meetings it is known that Dewsbury's work was read by Quakers in the region. Therefore his experiences became familiar to Friends in the local community, some of who would have known him personally. The books that were read by Quakers in the region helped to shape their mental world, which impacted upon their interaction with the local community. Ultimately they helped develop their attitude and expectation of religious toleration in the region.

The details that are known of Dewsbury's life are patchy, yet when put together quite a full picture emerges. The date of Dewsbury's birth is unknown. By working backwards from the events of his life that are known an estimate can be made that it was sometime around the early 1620s. He grew up in the village of Allerthorpe in the East Riding of Yorkshire, which is roughly 15 miles east of York. He was employed as a shepherd boy, an occupation that gave him plenty of time for thought and reflection. His father died when he was eight years old, an event which possibly triggered his religious questioning. According to his own account he first encountered a troubled conscience at this young age: 'the word of the Lord came unto me, "I created thee for my glory, an account thou must give to me for all thy words and actions done in the body"'.[376] From this tender age Dewsbury's life was dominated by theological questions and concerns.

The pattern of his life as an adolescent and young man was one that was common to many contemporaries. He was a 'seeker', someone that tried many different religious experiences, each of which left him unfulfilled. When he was thirteen Dewsbury was apprenticed to a cloth-maker at Holbeck, near Leeds. It appears that this was at his request. He had heard of a group of strict Puritans in Leeds and wanted to join them. However, on attending their meetings Dewsbury found that they were 'seeking the kingdom of God in outward observations, as I had before I

[376] Dewsbury, 'The First Birth', p. 44.

came there', and felt that he was no further forward in his search. More importantly, despite talking with many different ministers none there could tell Dewsbury what God had done for their souls to redeem them from sin.[377]

It was the question of sin and redemption that appears to have been the driving force behind Dewsbury's theological wanderings. Following his initial failure to find religious satisfaction Dewsbury tried a wide variety of different forms of worship. He attended Anglican service, tried psalm singing, reading, praying, meditating and visited many ministers to talk over his concerns, all to no avail. During this period, probably from his mid to late teens, he describes feeling 'tortured'. His internal, psychological, torment began to have a physical effect and he grew weak. At one point he became so ill that his employer believed that he had fallen into consumption, and called doctors to examine him.[378]

At the beginning of the Civil Wars Dewsbury had either finished, or was nearing the end of his apprenticeship and joined the parliamentary army. Initially he believed that he was doing the Lord's work, and joined 'that little remnant that said they fought for the gospel'. More specific details of the regiment that he served in and the influences that he came across are not known. His internal torment continued, and he states that he was 'willing to give my body to death...to free my soul from sin'.[379] However, he quickly became disenchanted, only finding 'much ignorance' within the army, and travelled up to Edinburgh, having heard of the Reformed Church in Scotland. Again he was frustrated by what he found and he soon returned to England.

After his return from Edinburgh Dewsbury 'went amongst' the Anabaptists and Independents, without finding fulfilment. However, he did find a wife. Very little is known of her, including her maiden name. What is known is that Dewsbury visited a young woman he had heard of at York, who was in a similar state of spiritual torment to him. Some time after they initially met they were married in York, at a meeting of Anabaptists, with whom she was associated. She became Ann Dewsbury.[380]

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[377] Dewsbury, 'The First Birth', p. 46.
[378] *Ibid*, pp. 47 – 8.
[379] *Ibid*, p. 49.
[380] E. Smith, *The Life of William Dewsbury, an Early and Eminent Minister of the Gospel in the Society of Friends* (London, 1836), pp. 45 – 7.

It was around the same time, in 1645, that William Dewsbury arrived at what can be recognised as the early Quaker position. He recorded that

> The Lord discovered to me, that his love could not be attained in anything I could do, in any of these outward observations...Then my mind was turned within, by the power of the Lord, to wait in his counsel, the Light in my Conscience, to hear what the Lord would say...the word of the Lord came unto me...that the kingdom of Christ was within; and the Enemies was within, and was spiritual, and my weapons against them must be spiritual.[381]

According to his recollections, Dewsbury had reached, and became satisfied with, the Quaker position earlier than Fox. He subsequently left the army and returned home to East Yorkshire. Dewsbury had arrived at this point, after years of seeking, independently of any other individual. It is worth noting that the date was 1645. At this time, according to Fox's *Journal*, Fox was still visiting various ministers and clergymen on his spiritual journey, having many of the same religious experiences that Dewsbury had.[382] However, Dewsbury still had some way to go before he was entirely happy. Following his release from his experience of the torments of sin and redemption he remained troubled by temptation to ignore or deny the Light Within, until he states he was 'released by the Lord' in 1651. Co-incidentally this is the year in which Dewsbury and Fox first met.

William Braithwaite claims that Dewsbury came to recognise the power the Lord had to free him of his struggle against sin 'perhaps through the help of George Fox'.[383] However, the only evidence for this is circumstantial. What is known is that Dewsbury first met Fox at the house of Lieutenant Roper, at Synderhill Green, near Balby in the West Riding of Yorkshire sometime in December 1651. It was here that Fox also met Thomas Goodaire, and James Naylor.[384] Fox's *Journal* recalls the meeting briefly, merely mentioning that they were all 'convinced'.[385] Noticeably, and perhaps significantly, Dewsbury does not recall the meeting at all in his account of

[381] Dewsbury, 'The First Birth', p. 50 – 1.
[382] Fox, *The Journal*, pp. 6 – 9.
[383] Braithwaite, *Beginnings*, p. 64.
[384] Smith, *The Life of William Dewsbury*, p. 52.
[385] Fox, *The Journal*, p. 59.

being convinced. Rather, he notes that 'I came to the true knowledge of the scripture, and the eternal rest...by the inspiration of Jesus Christ'.[386]

As has been noted above, Dewsbury's recognition of spiritual guidance coming from within was reached at an earlier point than Fox. Rather than Fox convincing Dewsbury and the others of the Truth, it would seem that he met with a *fait accompli*. The fact that Dewsbury and the others were gathered at the house of Lieutenant Roper suggests that they were already known to each other, and had probably met on previous occasions to discuss theological matters. It is not unreasonable to assume that such a group meeting together were doing so because they shared common ideas and opinions. After a number of years as a seeker that had involved a long and arduous spiritual journey and a wide range of religious experiences, it is highly unlikely that a single meeting could have resulted in Dewsbury's total convincement to Fox's message, unless it was in agreement with his own thinking. This was not a convincement by Fox. Rather, it was a coming together of like-minded individuals.

The rest of Dewsbury's life was spent as a travelling minister, though most of it was spent in one prison or another. Braithwaite has aptly described Dewsbury as 'passing his life in prison with brief intervals of freedom'.[387] In spring 1654 he was first imprisoned in York Castle, charged with seducing the people and suspicion of blasphemy, but was not brought to trial. He was released in July 1654 and travelled around Yorkshire before going south into the Midlands. He visited Derby, Lincoln, Newark, Nottingham and Leicester before being arrested in Wellingborough after challenging the minister, Thomas Andrews, there. He was imprisoned at Northampton gaol for over a year and released in January 1656.[388]

Following his release Dewsbury briefly went home, which was now in Wakefield. It is not known when he moved there, though it is believed to have possibly been sometime in 1654. He was certainly living there by 1655.[389] He then travelled south, before returning to Yorkshire. At the end of summer 1657 he toured the West Country, and visited Friends at Bristol. This was probably an attempt to

[386] Dewsbury, *The First Birth*, p. 54.
[387] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 221.
[388] Braithwaite, *Beginnings*, pp. 174 – 5.
[389] Smith, *The Life of William Dewsbury*, pp. 58 –9.

encourage and support Friends in the area following Naylor's infamous entry into the city. There is reason to believe that Dewsbury and Naylor were close. They both met Fox at the same time, and probably knew each other before their meeting with him. With Dewsbury's move to Wakefield he would have been a near neighbour of Naylor, when they were both at home.

Immediately after Naylor's entry to Bristol Dewsbury wrote to him, urging him to repudiate his actions. In reply Naylor duly did so, issuing a general paper that expressed his great regret about the effect that it had had on Friends.[390] Dewsbury's quick intervention following the Naylor affair provides evidence of his stature within the society. It also demonstrates a degree of level-headedness and lack of egotism that cannot be found in either Fox or Naylor following the incident. Roger Hebden, another of the early travelling ministers from Yorkshire, addressed a letter to Dewsbury from London informing him of Naylor's state of mind after interviewing him with Edward Burrough. Hebden concluded with an appeal that 'thy being at London might be of great service, if the Lord so order it'.[391] This was a direct appeal to Dewsbury for help and guidance during the crisis caused by Naylor's actions. Unsurprisingly, Dewsbury was of great importance in finally achieving the reconciliation between Fox and Naylor following Naylor's release from prison in autumn 1659.

During 1660 Dewsbury was imprisoned at York. This followed the brief scare over the Fifth Monarchy rising in London, which resulted in many dissenters being imprisoned. In 1661 he was imprisoned at Newgate for refusing to swear the Oath of Allegiance. Upon his release he returned to Yorkshire, only to be arrested again and imprisoned at York, as the authorities sought to round up the Quaker leadership. This time he was not released until the spring of 1663.

By the end of 1663 Dewsbury again found himself imprisoned, this time at Warwick, for refusing to give bonds for his freedom following a *praemunire*. He was not released until 1672, under Charles II's general pardon. The fact that the authorities were willing to keep him imprisoned for this length of time is testament to their

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[390] Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 271 – 2.

[391] M. T. and Roger Hebden to Dewsbury, 13th of the 4th month [1657] in Cadbury, H. J., (ed.) *Letters to William Dewsbury and Others*, (London, 1948), pp. 22 – 5. M. T. is not identified. The date 1657 can be placed because of the events the letter refers to.

regard of him, and his stature in the Quaker movement. During this period of imprisonment Ann Dewsbury died, and in May 1667 Dewsbury was married for a second time, to Alice Meades, who was from Warwick.[392] Following his release he travelled for a year or so, including visiting Friends in Bristol in early summer 1673, but by 1674 was again imprisoned in Warwick gaol, where he remained into the mid 1680s. In December 1686 Dewsbury wrote a 'General Epistle to Friends'. In the postscript he mentioned that his health had declined and that he was not capable of travelling as he once had. He commented how he needed to rest when he travelled to the meeting in town. He stated that this was due to having been a prisoner for nineteen years at Warwick, four of them being kept as close prisoner.[393] On June 17 1688 Dewsbury died.

Dewsbury did not spend his time in prison idly. He was a prolific writer of epistles and pamphlets, as well as sending numerous letters to individuals and meetings to encourage and support the developing Quaker movement. *The Faithful Testimony of that Ancient Servant of the Lord... William Dewsbury* (1689) contains a total of 80 works, made up of 27 printed pamphlets, and 53 letters and epistles, of various lengths, to Friends. There are undoubtedly many others that were not included in this collection or did not survive. Although the travelling minister, in this case Dewsbury, could be constrained by the authorities through imprisonment, the printing press allowed for his work to continue through the country.

Dewsbury's writing was predominantly aimed at a Quaker audience, rather than the public at large. The content of his writing reveals the aspects of theology and the Quaker message that were most important to him. Unsurprisingly, considering the amount of time he spent imprisoned, suffering is a subject that appears regularly. However, it is notable that Dewsbury did not address the issue of religious toleration within his writing, as William Penn did. Instead, he issued pamphlets that examined a theological doctrine of sufferings that was developed by the early Quakers as a response to their persecution. Dewsbury used the fact of the Quaker's persecution and suffering as a theological tool to demonstrate their righteousness.

[392] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, pp. 221 – 3.
[393] Dewsbury, W., 'A General Epistle to Friends, from that Ancient Servant of Christ William Dewsbury', in *The Faithful Testimony of... William Dewsbury*, pp. 369 – 376.

The suffering that Dewsbury and other Friends experienced, both in the East Riding and around the country, became a necessary part of their theology. It was a common, shared experience, which helped to unite individual members of the Society and provided them with a sense of identity. The beliefs and actions that were manifest through the light in the conscience of individual Quakers during the early years of the movement could be variable. However, through persecution by the local authorities individuals suffered the consequences for these beliefs. Somewhat ironically, it was the experience of suffering that provided a common cause for Friends to focus upon. William Dewsbury's personal experience of persecution was the same as many other Friends, therefore his publications helped to develop their justification of suffering, and shaped their identity.[394]

Dewsbury developed a theological justification for Friend's persecution, rather than investigating the secular issues of why the Quakers were being persecuted. Dewsbury's emphasis upon the experience of persecution, and his justification for the suffering, was subject matter that would have appealed to members of the Quaker community in the East Riding who had experienced similar suffering themselves. Dewsbury's writing would have struck a chord with fellow Quakers both in the East Riding and in other regions of the country, rather than with the general populace. Dewsbury's writing would not have appealed to those who were not conversant with, or sympathetic towards, Quaker theology and experience of persecution.

This is in marked contrast to William Penn, who developed his philosophy of religious toleration based upon very different experiences of persecution to Dewsbury. As a result of his varied educational and suffering experiences Penn produced literature for a much wider, and non-sectarian audience, and consequently examined the righteousness of state intervention in an individual's spiritual affairs.

Friends believed their suffering to be justification of the righteousness of their message. Dewsbury noted how in the Bible the prophets and apostles were labelled as blasphemers and heretics by the high priests, as the early Quakers were by the clergy. Direct comparison was made to the suffering of Jesus Christ:

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[394] See part III of the thesis for greater details and examples of Quaker suffering in the East Riding.

> Oh, people in England!...I suffer outward bonds and Persecutions, as my Lord and master did; who was called a blasphemer...by the high priests, who cried to the unjust magistrates to deliver him up into their hands...the unjust men in authority...though they proved not a thing against him, they put him to death, calling him a blasphemer; and he sealed his testimony with his blood.[395]

Furthermore, suffering was a test of faith. It helped to unite the Quaker movement against a common enemy, which was church and state, and bring members closer to God and salvation. Dewsbury's writings offered support and encouragement to the many others that were experiencing persecution. During his imprisonment at Northampton in 1655 Dewsbury urged others to

> be faithful in walking with God in perfect obedience to his will, freely giving up your bodies to finish your testimony in sufferings, if the Lord call you, for it is not given to believe, but to suffer with him, and they that suffer with him, shall raign [reign] with him.[396]

Dewsbury, and other Friends, believed that it was their persecution by the authorities that distinguished them as true followers of God's will. Their physical suffering was only a temporary situation, which was desired by God as a test of faith. Dewsbury placed the Quakers physical sufferings into the long term spiritual context, in which their suffering was relieved in the afterlife, and they achieved eternal glory and redemption. He noted how they would not be detained 'in prisons and desolate holes' any longer than God determined was for their eternal good, and that their patience would reap the rewards for their present hardships.[397]

Dewsbury did not criticise any secular laws, or try to develop any theory of religious toleration. By developing a theology that embraced their suffering it is possible that many Quakers did not want, or believe that they needed, tolerance from the authorities and their neighbours. The intolerance and persecution that they faced in their lives helped to justify their beliefs and demonstrated their righteousness.

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[395] Dewsbury, W., 'The Discovery of the Great Enmity of the Serpent', undated pamphlet in *The Faithful Testimony of... William Dewsbury,* pp. 26 – 43.
[396] Dewsbury, W., 'The mighty day of the Lord is coming, in which Christ knocks at the door of the heart of kindreds, tongues, people and nations, who desire to know the only true God' (Northampton Gaol, 7 February 1655), in *The Faithful Testimony of... William Dewsbury,* pp. 8 – 16.
[397] W. Dewsbury, 'To all the Faithful and Suffering Members in all holes, prisons and gaols...', in *The Faithful Testimony of... William Dewsbury,* pp. 247 – 50.

William Penn first came to the authority's attention with the publication of *The Sandy Foundation Shaken* (1668), which was written shortly after his conversion to Quakerism.[398] The book detailed the doctrines of Quaker theology, but went too far for many, and was deemed blasphemous, as it appeared to deny the Holy Trinity. Pepys noted that 'I find it so well writ as I think it is too good for him ever to have writ it, and it is a serious sort of book, and not fit for everybody to read'.[399]

The Sandy Foundation Shaken was printed illegally, without a licence. This led to Penn being arrested and imprisoned in the Tower of London until August 1669. He was released following the intervention of his father, who appealed to the Duke of York on his son's behalf. Penn was given the chance to defend himself to the King's Chaplain, which he duly did in *Innocency with Her Open Face* (1669). It satisfied the authorities regarding the blasphemy allegations, though Penn insisted that it was not a recantation of his earlier writing.[400]

During his imprisonment in the Tower Penn wrote the first edition of his work *No Cross, No Crown* (1670). The second edition was printed in 1682, after Penn had re-worked his original, and the second day's morning meeting had authorized his additions to the work.[401] Following his release Penn went to Ireland for a year, where he oversaw the family estates for his father. He returned to London in summer 1670, and acted as a minister around London. It was in this capacity that he was arrested with William Meade, while attending a meeting at Gracechurch Street on August 14. An eyewitness noted the meeting and the arrest:

> Several thousands [were] at it, but by reason of the multitude of rude people who came mostly to gaze it was more like a tumult than a solid assembley...William Penn was there, and spoke most that was spoken; there were some watchmen with halbards and musketeers came to take him down while he was speaking, but the multitude crowded so close about him that they could not come to him; but to prevent further disturbance, he promised when the meeting was done to come to them.[402]

[398] W. Penn, *The Sandy Foundation Shaken* (London, 1668).
[399] S. Pepys, *Diary*, February 12 1669.
[400] Buranelli, *The King and the Quaker*, p. 42.
[401] See above, p. 104.
[402] John Rous to Sarah Fell, August 15 1670, A. R. Barclay (ed.), *Letters of Early Friends* (London, 1841), cited in Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 69.

William Meade presented himself to the authorities along with Penn, and both were taken before the Mayor of London, who charged them with conspiring to commit a riot.

The Penn – Mead trial is possibly the most famous of all Quaker trials. The result seriously challenged judicial dominance of the court, and consequently set a precedent that no jury could be punished for its verdict. It started with Penn and Meade being fined for not removing their hats. Shortly afterwards Sir John Robinson, the lieutenant of the Tower, objected against a juror, Edward Bushel, for not kissing the bible when being sworn. From there it degenerated into a dispute between Penn, the lord mayor, Robinson and the jury.[403] Penn and Meade were both removed to the bail-dock, away from the bench, due to their numerous interruptions in court proceedings. Penn's defence turned the trial into an examination of common-law tradition, and the legal rights of Englishmen. During the recorder's charge to the jury, Penn harangued them from the dock that to give the charge in absence of the prisoners was illegal. 'It is directly opposite to and destructive of the undoubted right of every English prisoner' he asserted, despite the fact that he must have heard the proceedings, and therefore have arguably been present, to be able to object in this way.[404]

After deliberating for ninety minutes the jury was split, eight to four in favour of a guilty verdict. The four jurors in favour of the defendants included Bushel. The court tried to pressurize the four into supporting a guilty verdict. The recorder and Robinson both blamed Bushel directly. The recorder angrily told him that 'you are the cause of this disturbance, and manifestly show yourself to be an abettor of faction'. Robinson added that 'you have thrust yourself upon this jury because you think that there is some service for you. I tell you, you deserve to be indicted more than any man that hath been brought before the Bar this day'.[405]

The jury was sent out again and this time returned a verdict that Penn was guilty of 'speaking in Gracechurch Street'. The court refused this verdict, quite properly as the charge was conspiring to commit a riot. The jury was sent out again,

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[403] Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, p. 116.
[404] *Ibid*
[405] Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, p. 117.

and returned with a verdict that Penn was guilty of 'preaching to an assembly', but found Meade not guilty. This decision was angrily rejected; the jury could not find one defendant guilty and the other innocent on a conspiracy charge. The recorder told them that the court could not be so abused, and that 'we will have a verdict by the help of God, or you shall starve for it'. Penn reminded them that they were Englishmen, 'mind your privilege; give not away your right'. The jury was dismissed for the night and locked up without food, drink or a chamber pot.[406]

The following day was Sunday, September 4. The jurors returned in the morning with the same verdict, which led the recorder to comment that 'it will never be well with us, till something like the Spanish Inquisition be in England'.[407] After being sent out, they again returned the same verdict. They were warned that if they continued to be so stubborn they would be carted about the city, as in the time of Edward III. They were again dismissed, and after a short time informed the court that they had reached a new verdict. The jurors were given food and drink, and the judges decided to recess until the next day.

On Monday morning, an incredulous court heard that they had reached a not guilty verdict for both Penn and Meade. The two prisoners were not released, as the fine for contempt for not removing their hats remained. The jurors were promptly fined forty marks each and imprisoned until the fine was paid. In November they were admitted bail by the court of Common Pleas, after obtaining a writ of *habeas corpus*. In 1671 a majority of ten of the judges in Common Pleas ruled that a jury could not be punished for its verdict. The jurors were released, and their fines rescinded.[408]

Penn published his account of the trial shortly after its conclusion, in a pamphlet triumphantly entitled *The People's Ancient and Just Liberties Asserted in the Tryal of William Penn* (1670). His opponents were quick to reply, with *An Answer to the Seditious and Scandalous Pamphlet* (1670), that Craig Horle attributes to Samuel Starling, who was the court recorder.[409] This was the same period in which Penn was writing *The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience* (1670). Braithwaite notes that the shorter, first edition of the pamphlet was published before Sir William Penn's

[406] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 71.
[407] *Ibid*, p. 72.
[408] Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, p. 117.
[409] *Ibid*, p. 117 and p. 152, n. 36.

death on September 16 1670, as it is initialed W. P.j. on the title page. The preface of the second edition is dated February 7 1671 from Newgate prison, two days after Penn started six months imprisonment under the Five Mile Act.[410]

William Penn's target audience for his pamphlets was very different to the Quaker audience that read William Dewsbury's pamphlets. That is not to say that Penn was not influential amongst the Quaker community, but rather that his different personal experiences, and nature of the persecution he faced, led him to develop his arguments aimed at a national and international, rather than local level.

There is a striking difference in the experiences that were detailed by Dewsbury and Penn in their writing. Although both men drew upon their personal experiences of suffering and persecution, these experiences were vastly different. When Penn was imprisoned in the Tower for six months in 1668/1669 it was not comparable to Dewsbury's experience of imprisonment at Warwick. Penn's father was able to appeal to James, Duke of York, on behalf of his son, and Penn consequently secured release after six months. In marked contrast, during this period Dewsbury was imprisoned at Warwick on a *praemunire*, and remained there for nine years from 1663 to the Declaration of Indulgence in 1672. It is in details such as these that the differences between the two men are demonstrated, and through such comparison that the important differences between national and local experience is found.

For the Quaker community in the East Riding, William Penn's experiences and ideology reached towards horizons way beyond their view. It was by reading the experiences of other Quaker travelling ministers that occurred at a local level, such as William Dewsbury, that Friends in East Yorkshire found events with which they could associate through shared experience. The only individual of social status comparable to Penn amongst Friends was Robert Barclay. It is perhaps significant that Penn remained within the circle of courtiers, leading a life that straddled both the upper echelons of society and the Quaker movement, whereas Barclay chose to largely remove himself from the higher circles of society.

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[410] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 74, n. 4.

Barclay's writing concentrated on the form and organisation of the Society of Friends. Penn considered these, but also beheld society at large, and the role of individuals within society. Penn's writing on liberty of conscience can be considered to be further reaching than any other Quaker work on the subject. It considered the relationship of Christian religious movements to the national state and the ways in which this relationship could be structured for the benefit of the whole community, and therefore did more than merely concern itself with the position of the Quakers within society.

The term 'liberty of conscience' is one that was frequently referred to by Penn in his writing. He used it as an interchangeable term with religious toleration. This can be seen in the title of Penn's work *The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience* that was sub-titled, *Which may serve the place of a General Reply to Such late Discourses as have oppos'd a Toleration.*[411] More specifically, it was outlined in the pamphlet *A Perswasive to Moderation to Church Dissenters*, in which Penn stated that 'the conscience then that I state, and the liberty I pray...I think, I may venture to call a toleration'.[412] These two pamphlets were Penn's definitive writing on the issue of religious toleration. *The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience* (1670) was his earliest writing on the subject, setting out his position clearly. Throughout the remainder of the seventeenth century Penn's ideas on religious toleration remained constant. *A Perswasive to Moderation* (1686) was written sixteen years later. Within the later pamphlet Penn's ideas are more lucid, but the basic arguments remain unchanged.

In defining liberty of conscience Penn not only wanted a freedom of mind, but most crucially a freedom of the physical body to act as the spirit dictated. 'By liberty of conscience', he wrote, 'we understand not only a mere liberty of the mind...but the exercise of our selves in a visible way of worship'.[413] In practical terms this represented a simple removal of the penal laws against dissenters. Penn included an explanation of the term 'persecution' that helped clarify this position: 'by imposition, restraint, and persecution...we mean any coercive or hindrance to us from meeting

[411] W. Penn, *The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience* (London, February 1671), in *idem*, *The Peace of Europe, The Fruits of Solitude and Other Writings*, E. B. Bronner (ed.) (London, 1993), pp. 153 – 86.
[412] W. Penn, *A Perswasive to Moderation to Church Dissenters* (London, 1686), p. 191, in Bronner (ed.) *The Peace of Europe*, pp. 187 – 223.
[413] Penn, *Great Case*, p. 159.

together to perform those religious exercises which are according to our faith and persuasion'.[414]

The arguments that surrounded liberty of conscience in the seventeenth century were firmly grounded in fears that conflict between different religious groups would lead to an overthrow of the established political order. The experience of the Civil Wars and the execution of the king remained a none-too distant memory for many in England. Due to these fears dissenters were regarded suspiciously, and theology became a matter of political survival. Penn recognised this, and overcame it by separating the theological and the secular worlds. He stressed the fact that the Quakers did not hold any political ambitions or concerns and therefore were not a threat to the state. This was expressed within his definition of liberty of conscience, and is worth quoting at length:

> Yet we would be so understood to extend and justify the lawfulness of our so meeting to worship God, as not to contrive, or abet any contrivance destructive of the government and laws of the land, tending to matters of an external nature, directly or indirectly; but so far only as it may refer to religious matters, and a life to come, and consequently wholly independent of the secular affairs of this [life], wherein we are supposed to transgress.[415]

The key to Penn's separation of the spiritual and secular was rooted in his Quaker theology and belief in individual conscience, or the 'light within'. He believed that there was such a thing as an individual conscience, by which he understood the apprehension and persuasion that each individual had of their duty to God. Any attempt to impose upon the spiritual relationship by the secular world was unjustified, so long as the individual concerned did not interfere with, or break, any secular law. In brief, Penn believed that toleration was due to anyone 'that acknowledges the civil government under which he lives, and that maintains no principal hurtful to his neighbour in his civil property'. Those who caused civil unrest could not be tolerated, as civil disobedience was against the will of God.[416]

Penn believed primarily that persecution against Christian dissenters was 'un-Christian'. With such a statement he implied that a government that practised such a

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[414] Penn, *Great* Case, p. 159.
[415] *Ibid*
[416] Penn, *Perswasive to Moderation*, p. 190.

policy should be regarded as heathen. He thought that any member of the Protestant faith should be sympathetic towards the dissenter's position, having once been dissenters from the Roman Catholic Church themselves, and having experienced persecution. Penn therefore thought that it was paradoxical that the English government should pursue a policy of persecution. He highlighted the fact that Protestants had gained their name from protesting about the imposition of faith on individuals, and had, ironically, turned into the imposers of faith themselves.[417]

Penn thought that it was impossible, and misguided, to attempt to impose faith on any individual. He argued that 'faith was a gift of God' and that which was not true faith was sin.[418] This made it a sin for any individuals to follow a faith that was not of their own choosing, but was imposed by the state through a policy of persecution. Persecution did not make an individual truly believe in a faith, only conform outwardly to a faith, for fear of secular punishment. This blurred the worlds of secular and spiritual life, which Penn had separated in his work. He argued that it was wrong to impose secular punishments for spiritual offences. As faith was between God and the individual, so should any punishment be. The ultimate punishment of eternal damnation was far greater than any that could be imposed upon the physical body.

Penn argued that physical punishment did not help to inform man's judgement, or to resolve any spiritual doubts he might have, or to convince his understanding. For man's salvation the weapons that needed to be used were those of sound reason and truth, which would lead to the individual finding true faith. The imposition of religion upon the people did not help them find salvation, because they would not sincerely believe. It only served to make the individual a hypocrite. Penn stated succinctly 'force may make an hypocrite; it is faith grounded upon knowledge and consent that makes a Christian'.[419]

Furthermore, the state was wrong in trying to impose religion because by doing so it interfered with the relationship between man and God. It placed man as a higher authority than God, which of course Penn believed he was not. Man accepted that he was not infallible and did not have complete answers, or the ultimate truth.

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[417] Penn, *Christian Liberty as it was Soberly Desired in a Letter to Certain Foreign States* (London, 1674), p.4; *Great Case*, p. 155.
[418] Penn, *Christian Liberty*, p. 4.
[419] *Ibid*, p. 6; *Great Case*, pp. 162 – 7.

This was a point that was conceded by all, which made it paradoxical that any man should try to enforce his faith upon others. Penn argued that persecution actually hindered the promotion of Christianity, for at best all it could achieve was to stop or silence any opposition. If the individual accepted the imposed belief for the sake of convenience he would not try further to inform or reform himself to find the truth.[420]

Penn believed that persecution by the state fluctuated according to political need and convenience, depending upon the opinion of the national leadership. He emphasised that the laws of the land could be broadly divided into two categories: those that were indispensable and immutable, and those that were superficial, and were alterable according to circumstances. The laws that related to religious persecution fell into the second category, Penn thought. He demonstrated this by showing periods in the country's history when religious laws had changed as the ruler did. He particularly concentrated upon the Edwardian, Marian and Elizabethan settlements, which had changed the national church from Protestantism to Catholicism, before returning to Protestantism again.[421]

By doing this Penn demonstrated his belief that secular and spiritual worlds were actually separate spheres that could co-exist independently of one another. He thought that they had only been connected for political expediency. He showed that individuals continued in their secular affairs for the economic benefit of the nation regardless of their spiritual concerns. Therefore the state should not concern itself with matters relating to the consciences of individuals, but allow them to make their own spiritual choices.

Buranelli has rightly commented that Penn believed in a system of 'distributive justice', that is the equitable distribution of rights and privileges, as well as duties and burdens, amongst the population. As all individuals within the population help contribute to the state they, in turn, have a right to be sheltered and protected by it.[422] Persecution by the state of a peaceful and industrious section of the population, such as the Quakers, contravened this belief. Again, Penn's separation of the secular and spiritual world is in evidence within this argument. He pointed out that

[420] Penn, *Great Case*, p. 162.
[421] *Ibid*, p. 173.
[422] Buranelli, *The King and the Quaker*, p. 109,

spiritual beliefs did not make an individual unfit or incapable of playing an important role in secular life. Penn believed that spiritual differences between individuals and the state should not affect their natural and civil rights within secular society:

> They [dissenters] are men as well as yourselves, born free, and have equal plea to natural and civil common priviledges with yourselves: The different Perswasion of their consciences about things relating to another life, can no waies render them unfit for this; it neither unmans nor uncivilises them. They have the same right to their liberty and property as ever, having by no practice of theirs in the least forfeited any of those human advantages the great charters of nature and scripture have conferr'd upon them [sic]'.[423]

Therefore, Penn's liberty of conscience was one that was inclusive of all members of society that did not threaten the peace of the state or break any secular law. This included Catholics, a group who were largely excluded by other Quaker supporters of liberty of conscience.

Penn pointed out that persecution actually removed the freedom of choice that he believed was the natural right of mankind. 'Men have their liberty and choice in external matters, they are not compelled to marry this person, to converse with that, to buy here, to eat there, nor to sleep yonder'. By removing man's freedom of choice the mind and understanding was destroyed and man was left in much the same condition as beasts, simply being kept according to others commands and wishes. 'That this liberty should be unquestioned, and that of the mind destroyed...does not unbrute us, but unman us, for take away understanding, reason, judgement, and faith, and like Nebuchadnezzar, let us go graze with the beasts in the fields'.[424]

This argument reveals Penn's belief in the basic natural rights of individuals to make free choices in matters of faith and belief. He acknowledged that individuals had different levels of capability and understanding, but thought that all people had the right to make an informed choice about what they believed according to their understanding. Penn thought of liberty of conscience as a natural right of man, for it enabled those choices to be freely made. Alternatively, a government policy of

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[423] Penn, *Christian Liberty*, p. 7.
[424] Penn, *Great Case*, pp. 166 – 7.

persecution removed the choice from the individual and placed it in the control of the state, which he believed was wrong.

Penn's philosophy of government and the role of the state played an important part in shaping his arguments in favour of liberty of conscience. He thought that the role of government was to act in the best secular interests of the state and the people, and that spiritual interests had to be decided by the individual concerned. Penn therefore believed that persecution by the state was a contradiction of the nature and role of government. He did not think that religious persecution was in the interests of either the state or the people.[425]

Penn considered that the persecution of individuals was not in the economic interests of the nation. By imprisoning peaceful dissenters for their beliefs the state only served to remove an otherwise useful section of the population from economic production. By weakening the economic capacity of the nation the state weakened its own strength. The exclusion of Catholics from public office weakened the state by refusing a position to many in society who were among the population's most capable. Penn argued that ultimately, by following a policy of persecution, the state was actually damaging itself. The government lost the respect of those whom it persecuted, and the position of those in society who enforced the laws, such as the magistrates, was undermined as they were forced to enact laws that were of no benefit to the individual or society. Furthermore, because opinion within the nation was split over the issue of persecution, and the position of the law enforcers was undermined, the policy of persecution actually served to split the unity of the nation, the very thing that it was trying to achieve.[426]

As persecution was in the interest of neither the state, nor the individual, the government had followed the wrong policy, Penn concluded. Persecution only served the interests of the established clergy who pursued their own interests at the expense of the people's spiritual well being, and against the interest of the state. The fact that the Church of England favoured persecution of dissenters was symptomatic of why dissenters felt it necessary to be distanced from the Church. Penn commented that 'the reason of their [dissenters] present distance from you [the clergy] is not to introduce

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[425] *Ibid*, p. 168

[426] Penn, *Great Case*, pp. 171 – 2.

dangerous or exotic opinions, but to live a life of more holiness, purety and self-denyal than before...they have reason to believe that the power of Godliness is much lost amongst you'.[427] Penn believed that 'the people's interest is the supremest law'. Should it have been in the interests of the people to practice persecution then the policy would have been accepted, and not met with the degree of opposition that was ranged against it during the second half of the seventeenth century.[428]

An important part of Penn's argument for liberty of conscience concentrated upon his belief that individuals were self-serving, acting for their own best interests. Having separated Church and state Penn identified three factions in the country concerned with toleration: the Church of England, Protestant dissenters and Catholic dissenters. Penn believed that a policy of toleration would make it easier for the government to control issues of religion because they would be able to play each faction off against the other. He argued that religious disputes became serious political issues only when one of the factions held disproportionately more power than the others and sought to maintain their position. He believed that this was the case with the Church of England during the second half of the seventeenth century.

Penn emphasised that the state policy of persecution had caused an uneasy alliance between the Protestant and Catholic dissenters against the Church, creating a larger number of people seeking religious and political change than would be the case if all had liberty of conscience. He pointed out that under liberty of conscience the Protestant and Catholic factions would be separated, and Protestant dissenters would unite with the Church of England to counter any threat to the state posed by Catholics. This would have ensured that Catholics could not gain any political power. People were more likely to be loyal to a state that protected their interests and freedoms. Dissenters would strongly support a state that allowed them freedom to worship as they chose, for it would be paradoxical for them to seek to destroy a state that was serving their interests. Therefore, liberty of conscience would actually reduce the risk of civil unrest and strengthen the political position of the nation's rulers.[429]

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[427] Penn, *Christian Liberty*, p. 5.

[428] Penn, *Some Free Reflections Upon Occasion of the Public Discourse about Liberty of Conscience and the Consequences thereof in this Present Juncture* (London, 1687), p. 7. The Pamphlet is actually anonymous but has been widely attributed to William Penn, and is almost certainly his work judging from the style and the arguments that it contains. In addition, the printer and seller was the Quaker Andrew Sowle, who worked almost exclusively for Friends.

[429] Penn, *Perswasive to Moderation*, pp. 206 – 14.

Penn acknowledged that civil peace and the state could be threatened by groups espousing religious principles, but argued that this would be a political act, and could therefore be dealt with by the secular laws. He emphasised that it was wrong for opponents of dissenters to presume that they would constitute a political threat if liberty of conscience were allowed, when they had been no threat previously.

Penn noted that religious uniformity did not guarantee any loyalty, for political plots against the state and monarchy could as easily come from a member of the established religion as a dissenter. Individual interest was again the motivating factor. Penn believed that religious groups should not be held responsible for the behaviour and actions of individual followers. Individuals were responsible for their own actions. He noted that 'crimes are personal. Societies must not be condemned for the miscarriages of particular persons. Let every man then bear his own burthen'.[430] This view had probably been shaped by the experience of the Quaker movement, which had encountered many problems with individuals using their conscience as justification for acts that had been judged immoral and outraged society, most notably James Naylor's infamous entry to Bristol.

Overall, Penn's theory of liberty of conscience was rooted firmly within his experience of life. The fact that he came from a privileged background helped him to target his ideas and arguments at a national and international audience, rather than a regional and local one. By liberty of conscience Penn simply wanted a removal of the penal laws against dissenters from the Church of England. He viewed the removal of such laws as being in the best interests of the state and its subjects. Penn argued that politics and religion had become too intertwined, when in fact they were separate spheres that co-existed alongside each other, with neither affecting the other. This rigid separation of the spiritual and secular worlds enabled him to relate his arguments in favour of liberty of conscience to his philosophy of government and the role of the state.

Penn's writing on religious toleration was influenced by his experiences as a Quaker. All Quaker pamphlets that dealt with the subject of religious toleration during

[430] Penn, *Some Free Reflections*, p. 14.

the second half of the seventeenth century used theological discourse with reference to scripture to justify the removal of the laws against dissenters, as Penn did. For Penn, however, this was the starting point in a theory of religious liberty that continued on to individual rights, the role of government, and economic prosperity. For other Quaker writers the theological justification was the sole basis of their argument. In Penn's *The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience* the first three chapters are concerned with theology and scripture, the last three chapters with the rights of the individual and the role of government, followed by historical examples of religious liberty.[431]

This can be contrasted with the earlier work of Richard Hubberthorne, Samuel Fisher and Francis Howgill *Persecution Inconsistent with Christianity...*, which was first published in 1661 and was being re-printed in a third edition around the same time that Penn first published *The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience*.[432] The work of Hubberthorne *et al* was primarily concerned with theological justification for religious liberty, and by the time of the third edition had been bound together for publication by an unknown editor along with four other sections that recorded statements from James I, Charles I and II and 'instances of divers other authors on the same subject collected by William Caton'.[433] The scriptural references used by Hubberthorne *et al* were the same passages that can be found in Penn's work. For example, 'All things whatever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them' (Matt. 7.12.), was used in both works. Hubberthorne *et al* explained that as every man wanted to have liberty for his own conscience, according to scripture, all should allow liberty for others to have liberty for theirs.[434] Another passage used in both works was 'Let the wheat and the tares grow together, until the time of the harvest, or end of the world' (Matt. 13.). According to this analogy the tares, or worshippers of false religion, should be judged by God, and not punished in the secular world. God alone would provide the ultimate punishment of eternal damnation for their sins.[435]

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[431] Penn, *Great Case, passim.*
[432] R. Hubberthorne, S. Fisher, F. Howgill, *Persecution Inconsistent with Christianity, Humane Society and the Honour of Princes. From Testimonies of themselves, and approved authors and martyrs herein impartially collected* (3rd edn London, 1670).
[433] Hubberthorne *et al*, *Persecution Inconsistent*, p. 1.
[434] *Ibid*, p. 22; Penn, *Great Case*, p. 163.
[435] *Ibid*, p. 23; Penn, *Great Case*, p. 164.

Both *The Great Case* and *Christianity Inconsistent* stressed the peaceful nature of scriptural argument. They pointed out that they followed the instruction 'the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual' (2 Cor. 10.3.), and also that Christ had rebuked the disciples that had favoured destroying those that were opposed to him, stating that 'the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives but to save them' (Luke 9. 54.). Force of reason was the only weapon that was to be used by the Quakers.[436]

A number of other scriptural references appeared commonly throughout other Quaker literature on persecution during the seventeenth century. One of the principal points was that the Christian religion was one that suffered, but had not persecuted. Penn traced examples through both the New and Old Testaments, citing the examples of Abel, Moses, the prophets and ultimately Jesus Christ himself. 'How patiently devoted was he [Christ] to undergo the contradictions of men and so far from persecuting any, that he would not so much as revile his persecutors, but prayed for them'.[437] George Fox followed the same line of attack in an undated pamphlet addressed *To All Magistrates and People in Christendom.* Fox pointed out how in the Old Testament none of those up to Noah tried to 'force or compel any to their religion'. Furthermore, even when in Egypt the Israelites had not been compelled to the religion of the Pharaoh. From Moses to Joshua through all the Judges, Prophets and Kings, none had attempted to compel any nation to worship their God.[438]

Indirectly, this formed an open attack upon the Church of England and the clergy who persecuted Friends for not attending service, tithes and church rates. Fox noted how Christ had sent his disciples out into the world, instructing them that they were not to compel any to hear them, and if they would not hear them they were not to be cast into any prison or compelled to provide any maintenance.[439] Penn highlighted the scriptural instruction to bishops by Paul, that they should 'be of good behaviour, apt to teach, no striker, but be gentle unto all men' (1 Tim. 3.3.). The anonymous author that collected together some of Friends' sufferings into a single broadside sheet and addressed them *To the King and Both Houses of Parliament* in

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[436] Penn, *Great Case*, p. 164; Hubberthorne et al, *Persecution Inconsistent*, p. 24.
[437] Penn, *Great Case*, p. 162.
[438] G. Fox, *To All Magistrates and People in Christendom, and elsewhere to turn from the Persecuting mind, that destroys peoples bodies and estates for not conforming to your religion and worship*, undated [1675?].
[439] Fox, *To All Magistrates and People*, p. 2.

1680 saw the matter in much simpler terms, however, stating that 'we desire the Bishops and Priests that say scripture is their rule to see how their doings are short of this doctrine'.[440]

Other Quaker authors did not develop their arguments, as Penn did, into discourse on the rights of individuals and the role of the state. As such, they were limited to exploring how theological issues related to the secular concern of social cohesion and the Quaker's particular place in seventeenth century society. The most striking difference that this created between Penn's writing and other Quaker literature concerned toleration for Roman Catholics. Whereas Penn included Catholics in his vision of religious liberty other Quaker writers left them implicitly excluded, seeking only toleration for Protestant dissenters.

The anonymous author who addressed a single sheet broadside *To the King and Both House of Parliament* began by desiring that 'you would make a distinction betwixt tender consciences, dissenting Protestants and Papists'.[441] The author did not go into any further detail of why any distinction should be made. One is left with the impression that it was not felt necessary to explain why, it was accepted that this was common knowledge and would have been well known to contemporaries who read the sheet. This is also the impression that is left by another publication, *The Case of Protestant Dissenters* (1682). The unidentified author, T. R., went to great pains within the title to explain that the laws passed under Elizabeth and James 'were only made against Papists and not against Protestant Dissenters'.[442] It highlighted the fact that the prosecution of Quakers under these laws varied around the country, with many judges and justices differing in their interpretation of whether the laws should be used against Protestant dissenters. However, there was no questioning of whether the laws were fair, or should have been implemented, against Catholics. Again, this was taken to be common knowledge, and accepted by the reader.[443]

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[440] Anonymous, *To the King and Both Houses of Parliament. Here are some of our sufferings and Grievances laid down before you, in the wisdom of God, to take into your consideration, and to relieve us* (London, 1680).
[441] Anon., *To the King and Both Houses of Parliament*, single sheet broadside.
[442] T. R. (unidentified), *The Case of Protestant Dissenters Showing that the laws made in the 23rd and 28th of Queen Elizabeth, for forfeiture of 20l a month, for absenting from the Parish Church; And that the 3rd of King James, for seizing two thirds of a persons estates, convicted on those laws, were only made against Papists and not Protestant Dissenters*, (London, 1682).
[443] *Ibid*, p. 2.

In 1680 a pamphlet was issued by the Quakers and signed by individuals who were prominent in London. This publication aimed to bring the attention of the public to the Quakers' sufferings around the country. It was addressed *To the King, Lords and Commons in Parliament*, and emphasised how the Quakers were aggrieved that they suffered 'especially upon old statutes made against Popish recusants'.[444] This pamphlet highlighted the fact that the Quakers had been specifically named in the laws that been passed by parliament against them. Therefore, there was no need for magistrates and judges to resort to laws that had been passed against Catholics to prosecute Quakers.[445] *The Case of Protestant Dissenters* fully agreed with this, and pointed out that some Quakers who had been indicted under the statutes of Elizabeth and James had applied to the King and had their cases discharged. It claimed that the King had declared 'it was hard that we should be prosecuted on laws made against us, and also on laws not made against us'.[446]

Quaker authors were unhappy that laws for the persecution of Catholics were used against them, but unlike Penn they did not call for these laws to be removed, or for persecution against Catholics to be ended. The style of the pamphlets suggested implicitly that Catholics could not be tolerated, but did so without explicitly indicating why this was. This allowed Penn to continue campaigning for religious liberty to include Catholics, as the Quaker position on religious toleration was left ambiguous.

Primarily, the Quakers were concerned with their own position in seventeenth century society. Quaker authors based their writing on their own experiences. Therefore, they were mainly motivated by the desire to redress their own persecution, rather than any desire to be involved in a wider discussion on the advantages of religious toleration for the nation. William Penn's ideas on religious toleration were not representative of the Quaker movement as a whole. The comparison of Penn's writings to other Quaker authors from the East Riding helps to identify and examine the beliefs and culture of the Quaker community in the East Riding, which can be taken as typical of other provincial Friends around the country.

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[444] J. Osgood, W. Mead, G. Whitehead, W. Gibson *et al*, *To the King, Lords and Commons in Parliament Assembled. The Case of the People called Quakers stated in Relation to their Late and Present Sufferings, especially upon Old Statutes made against Popish Recusants* (London, 1680).
[445] *Ibid*, p.2.
[446] T. R., *Case of Protestant Dissenters*, p. 2.

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The early Quakers printed a vast amount of literature. It can be split into three main categories: spiritual autobiographies and collected writings, works on internal doctrine and organisation, and works of spiritual support and encouragement. Of these three categories the most distinctive and numerous was by far the spiritual autobiography and collected writings of prominent individuals. This literature played the double role of explaining Quaker views and opinions to those outside the movement, while also reinforcing those views within the Society itself. As such, Quaker printed literature was an important influence upon individual members, and helped to shape their position both within and towards the outside world.

In the East Riding of Yorkshire the monthly meetings acted as intermediaries for this literature, helping to collect and distribute it amongst the local Quaker community. They first began to collect books during the early 1670s. This coincided with the development of the second day's morning meeting, which acted as a national editorial board for the increasing amount of literature. As the influence of the morning meeting developed in the later 1670s and 1680s Quaker authors were provided with a structure and language that helped to harmonise the movement into a singular coherent voice on a number of issues, which helped the development of the movement as a whole.

The second day's morning meeting provided a centralised controlling force for the printing of Quaker literature. It responded to external events and local concerns, and acted in the best interests of members according to the changing position of the movement within society. The Quakers were most vulnerable during periods of political instability. During these periods the movement was persecuted by the state, which believed that they offered a potential threat to social stability. In response to the persecution the amount of literature increased, and the morning meeting's workload reached its peak.

The Quaker movement was primarily concerned with its own position in seventeenth century society. Much of the Quaker literature that was written during

times of persecution discussed the issue of religious toleration. At the local level this meant that it was chiefly concerned with the removal of the laws that saw Friends penalised for their religious beliefs. The most notable exception to this was the work of William Penn, who produced a number of works that considered the effect of religious liberty at a national and international level. However, Penn's work did not reflect the typical attitude of the general Quaker membership to religious toleration. It did not draw on the local experiences that other writers did, such as Whitehead and Thompson in the East Riding.

The experience of persecution and suffering was an important one for Friends. The writing of John Whitehead, Thomas Thompson and William Dewsbury is typical of other Quaker authors, who published detailed accounts of their experiences. These common experiences at the hands of persecutors helped to both define and reinforce Friends' beliefs. A suffering literature emerged from within the Quaker movement, which became part of their theology, and was an important symbol of the righteousness of their beliefs, as well as justifying their break from the established Church. The remaining chapters of the thesis examine the experiences of persecution and suffering, and tolerance, which the Quaker community experienced in the East Riding during the second half of the seventeenth century.

Part III: Persecution and Tolerance in the East Riding of Yorkshire

Introduction: Government Legislation against Dissent.

The suffering of the early Quakers is a well-documented phenomenon. This is no accident. From the beginning of the movement in the 1650s the Quakers faced persecution. Quaker suffering varied widely across time and region. There is ample source material that provides evidence for their persecution. It was collected by the Yearly Meeting, which was the representative national body of the Quaker movement, after passing upwards through the regional administrative levels of Quaker organisation, the monthly and quarterly meeting. This material was compiled by the early Quakers themselves, and for the most part survives intact and is easily accessible at local and regional record offices, libraries and archives around the country. In 1753 Joeseph Besse published *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers*, based upon these records.[447]

This rich mine of source material has been exploited profitably by historians such as William Braithwaite, Hugh Barbour, Richard Vann, and most recently Adrian Davies, and yet has largely been accepted unquestioningly as representing the day to day experience of early Quaker suffering. The sources of Quaker sufferings that exist for the East Riding of Yorkshire can be traced, and have been used to compile a database of all the sufferings for the region. The database comprises 1765 sufferings of over 500 individuals during the period from 1654 to 1700.

Analysis of this information has demonstrated how the Quakers constructed their sources of suffering, and highlights the danger of using them uncritically. The key critique of the sources is that distortion and bias was generated from within the Quaker movement, as they highlighted and published their own sufferings. The sources themselves reveal that the work of Besse was a carefully selected view of Quaker suffering.

It was hoped by non-conformists that the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 would bring with it limited religious toleration. Charles II had stated in the Declaration of Breda his wish to grant 'liberty to tender consciences', but the Cavalier

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[447] J. Besse, *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers...*, 2 vols. (London, 1753).

Parliament that met in May 1661 quickly set out to re-establish Anglican supremacy within the national church. Quakers were liable to prosecution under the existing recusancy laws of Elizabeth I and James I. Originally passed to suppress Catholicism they left all non-conformists open to weekly fines of 12d for missing worship in the established church, and could ultimately lead to a fine of £20 for missing a months worship. Quakers could also be prosecuted for transgressing common law and canon law through the civil and church courts respectively.

The Cavalier Parliament passed a series of new statutes that penalised dissent, both Catholic and Puritan. They have become known as the Clarendon Code, named after the Lord Chancellor at the time. This is somewhat ironic because rather than initiating the statutes Clarendon attempted to dampen the fires of the Anglican reaction during the early 1660s, particularly against Protestant dissent. The first of the new statutes that most affected the Quaker movement was the Act of Uniformity (1662), which required the swearing of the Oaths of Supremacy and Allegiance and taking of Anglican sacraments, and a declaration that the Solemn League and Covenant was invalid. The Act ensured all church positions could only be held by Anglicans, excluding many Puritan ministers from their parish.[448]

The Quaker Act (1662) was aimed solely at suppressing the Quaker sect. It named the Quakers specifically, and made it illegal for them to hold meetings in groups of five or more, except for immediate family. The Act also ambiguously included all those who went under 'other names of separation' who refused to swear oaths.[449] The Quaker Act was mostly superseded by the Conventicle Acts of 1664 and 1670, which made it illegal to meet in groups of five or more for the purpose of religious worship that did not follow the Book of Common Prayer, which had been revised and accepted by parliament in April 1662. The first Conventicle Act (1664) was introduced by parliament following the scare of the Northern Plot at Kaber Rigg and Farnley Wood in 1663, in which Friends were implicated.[450] The basis for these Acts was the 1581 Elizabethan Conventicle Act, which implied that any meeting, regardless of its size, was illegal. In contrast, the Acts passed under Charles II offered at least some degree of toleration by allowing small groups to meet together.

[448] B. Coward, *The Stuart Age. England 1603 – 1714* (Harlow, 1994), p. 294.
[449] John Miller, *After the Civil Wars: English Politics and Government in the Reign of Charles II*, (Harlow, 2000), p. 135.
[450] See below, pp. 180 – 1 for greater detail of the Northern Plot.

However, it was not deemed to be sufficiently accomodating by the Quakers, or other dissenting groups.[451]

The 1670 Conventicle Act gave the authorities greater powers than had existed under the previous legislation. A single magistrate could enforce it without any recourse to a jury. The penalties allowed for fines of five and ten shillings to be levied for the first, and any subsequent, offence. In addition, two new offences were created by the Act: anybody preaching at a conventicle was liable to a fine of £20 for the first, and £40 for any subsequent offence, and the householder on whose property the meeting was held was liable to a £20 fine. In addition, local officials that refused or failed to enforce the law could be fined £5, and magistrates were liable for a penalty of £100.

The fines that were issued under the Act could be recovered by distraint. If the offender was poor, or unknown in the area, their fine could be levied on any other convicted for attending the same meeting. This clause was aimed at causing conflicts within separatist groups. The hope was that better off dissenters would come to resent paying the penalty for those who were worse off, thereby fracturing dissenting communities. Furthermore, the Quaker travelling ministers regularly moved around the country from meeting to meeting. Under this legislation those that attended the local meetings would be liable to the heavy fine for preaching at the conventicle, rather than the visiting minister.[452]

The fact that penalties against local officials and magistrates were included in the legislation is evidence that the central government suspected that some local officials were protecting dissenters from prosecution. To encourage prosecution of dissenters the income from the fines that were levied were split between the crown, the informer and the poor. Therefore, the local community had a vested interest in ensuring that dissenters were prosecuted through the potential to lower their poor rates, and the government mobilised a large number of self-interested individuals to act as informers on their behalf.

[451] C. Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, p. 46.
[452] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 67; Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, pp. 120 – 1.

The potential for abuse of the legislation caused Andrew Marvell to note that it was 'the quintessence of arbitrary malice'.[453] However, the penalty of transportation, which had been in place under the 1664 Act, was removed. The authorities recognised that the harshness of the penalty could actually discourage the prosecution of dissenters. The policy of the Act seems to have been based upon economic rather than physical penalties for dissenters. William Braithwaite noted that the Act was designed 'to ruin rather than imprison the offenders'.[454]

The final piece of legislation in the Clarendon Code came in 1665 with the passing of The Five Mile Act. It banned all dissenting preachers that did not take the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy from coming within a five-mile radius of any corporate town. The Act was passed following concerns within the government over the flight of the clergy from London during the Plague. Many Nonconformist clergy filled the gaps left by Anglicans, and the Quakers continued to hold their meetings, proselytise and care for the sick.[455]

[453] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 67.
[454] *Ibid*
[455] Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, pp. 71 – 2. I am indebted to Simon Dixon for bringing this to my attention.

Chapter 8: Sources and Patterns of Quaker Suffering in the East Riding.

The sources for Joseph Besse's *Sufferings* were 'original records and other authentic accounts', which were the Quakers' own Books of Suffering. The work was requested by the Meeting for Sufferings, following a directive from Yearly Meeting in 1727 to collate the sufferings and imprisonment of Friends. It was originally published in 1733 under the title *Abstract of the sufferings of the people called Quakers...*, a single volume that ran up to 1660. Volumes 2 and 3 covered the years 1660 – 1666, and were published in 1737. It was intended that eight octavo volumes would cover the period up to 1689. In 1741 this was changed, along with the title, possibly to provide greater clarity to the work. It was decided that continuous account would be given of the sufferings in each county, rather than for each year. The new format was printed and published in two volumes.[456]

In part at least, the uncritical acceptance of Besse's work by historians is fuelled by its widespread availability and the scope of the work. Copies of *Sufferings* are located in many libraries both around Britain and in America, and it includes details of persecution that occurred both in Britain and overseas, which makes it a convenient source of material for early Quaker suffering. Historians of the Quakers have largely used Besse's work uncritically. W. C. Braithwaite's classic narrative histories of early Quakerism draw upon it virtually exclusively as a source for examples, and compilation of statistics, of Quaker suffering. This is despite his own warning that 'the sources behind it often yield fuller and sometimes more accurate information'.[457] Subsequent authors have done likewise. It can be found nestling, quietly and authoritatively, within the bibliography that accompanies Barbour's work *The Quakers in Puritan England*, and Richard Vann's *The Social Development of English Quakerism*. Barbour notes that it was a collection of data produced 'by the early Friends themselves' without reservation or comment of any possible bias or distortion that may have arisen during composition.[458]

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[456] This paragraph is based upon D. Butler, 'Friends Sufferings 1650 to 1688: A comparative summary', *Journal of the Friends' Historical Society* (JFHS), no. 55 (1988), pp. 180 – 4.
[457] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 285 n.
[458] Barbour, *Quakers in Puritan England*, p. 260; R. Vann, *Social Development*.

More recent work by David Butler acknowledged that Besse's *Sufferings* has been a 'constant source of material on early Quakerism'. He recognised that it was based upon source material that had passed through different stages. Firstly the sufferings were collected and recorded into a book by Monthly Meeting. From there a transcript was passed to Quarterly Meeting, where the process was repeated and the information passed onto Yearly Meeting for inclusion in the Great Book of Sufferings. Butler correctly noted that this process was not ideal. Deficiency in the finished work could come from the original local record and the transmission through the various stages. Despite this, however, he sanguinely concluded that 'this work is the most comprehensive available source generally available, and over the years those using it have found that it may generally be relied upon'.[459] Statements such as this have been made in the absence of any detailed examination that compares the material within Besse's work to that which is available at the earlier stages.

The motivation behind the compilation of the sufferings books cannot be known for sure. Instructions for recording the incidents of suffering were detailed by Yearly Meeting, though without providing the reason why they were to be recorded:

> That exact account and true record be kept of all sufferings for truth, tyths and all other sufferings for Truth, whether by distress [distraint], sequestration, or imprisonment as full and complete in all respects as possibly may be, with their dates and the time of commencement of suits and the value of what is taken and by whom and for whom, and also of deliverances, and a speedy account given when any Friends are discharged from imprisonments or proceedings against them stopped...and that a distinct account be kept of sufferings, upon what statute or by what ways or means sufferings are brought upon Friends.[460]

The monthly and quarterly meetings recorded the persecution into books of suffering, which were designed to record all the persecution suffered by individual Friends whether they had transgressed the law or not. Within them can be found recorded the fines, distraints and imprisonments that they suffered. When they were fined Quakers had their goods distrained because they refused to pay the fine levied on them, due to their belief that they had not done any wrong.

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[459] Butler, 'Friends Sufferings', p. 181.
[460] Cited in M. Mullett, *Sources for the History of Nonconformity 1660 – 1830* (London, 1991), p. 100.

The most common offences that Quakers committed for which they could be prosecuted included not attending national worship, meeting for worship in groups of five or more, refusing to pay tithes and church rates, refusing to swear oaths, contempt of authority and refusing to give guarantees for their future behaviour (particularly when refusing to answer summons to court or appearing before magistrates and not removing their hats), interrupting church services and challenging the priest or preaching to the congregation, and refusing to serve or provide money for a substitute to serve in the militia. In addition the suffering books reveal instances of persecution when there appears to have been no law broken other than an individual being a Quaker. With their distinctive style of dress and behaviour that could have previously marked them out they would have been well known to the local community.

Mullett has suggested that the records of persecution were kept as 'a gesture of confrontation', at least to start with, before they evolved into records which could be of use in soliciting sympathetic opinion that could alleviate some of the burdens of suffering.[461] This explanation could account for the many tracts and letters written by Quakers criticising their persecutors. Barbour has noted that Quakers responded differently than other Puritan groups to their attempted oppression during the second half of the seventeenth century. He has argued that they 'made persecution a contest', and saw in it 'a means for growth in power'.[462] Hence, an allied motivation could have been to instil discipline within the movement and provide a powerful group identity in the face of adversity. Weak willed individuals could gather strength from the fact that they were not fighting a battle against oppression alone. Greater resolution could be drawn from the experiences of others.

The recorded sufferings could also be a tool for the promotion of the Quaker message. Rosemary Moore has highlighted the fact that by recording their sufferings Quakers gave maximum possible publicity to the persecution that they faced. She has suggested that by recording their sufferings Quakers used a double-edged weapon against opponents: the recorded sufferings were aimed to present a positive image of

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[461] *Ibid*

[462] Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England*, p.210.

Quakerism.[463] Not only could they provide sympathy for their persecution but also sympathy for Quaker beliefs.

The different stages through which the recording of sufferings passed can be traced. At each stage the number of sufferings that are recorded is steadily reduced. Of the 1072 entries that can be found within the monthly meeting suffering books for the East Riding, only 498 can be found within the suffering records at the next administrative level, the quarterly meeting. This is only 46% of the sufferings that were recorded at the monthly meeting level. Of the 1002 sufferings recorded in the Great Book of Suffering, produced by the Yearly meeting, only 443 (44%) can be found within the quarterly meeting suffering books. By this stage of transcription the original sufferings recorded by the monthly meetings have lost even more ground, with only 185 of the 1072 (17%) entries being found within both the quarterly meeting suffering books and the Great Book of Sufferings. The number of sufferings that survive all the stages of transcription and reach Besse's publication is only 101 (9%).

At each stage of recording, however, additional cases of suffering are found to those that were recorded at the previous stage. The inconsistency of the recording of sufferings at each level is demonstrated by such figures. Although it is noted above that only 498 sufferings can be traced from monthly to quarterly meeting level, the quarterly meeting suffering books record a total of 913 sufferings for the East Riding. This leaves 415 sufferings unaccounted for at the monthly meeting level. Similarly, within the Great Book of Sufferings 1002 entries can be traced for the East Riding, though only 443 sufferings can be found that are recorded earlier, at the quarterly meeting level. However, 520 sufferings can be found within the Great Book of Sufferings that were only originally recorded within the monthly meeting suffering books.

There are wide ranging discrepancies at every level. It is probable that many sufferings were passed on to quarterly meeting from the monthly meetings and not recorded at that level, but simply passed on again to Yearly meeting. Alternatively, the monthly meetings could have sent their sufferings straight up to Yearly meeting,

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[463] R. Moore, 'Reactions to Persecution in Primitive Quakerism', *JFHS*, 56 (1995), pp.123 – 31.

without giving them to quarterly meeting. Whatever the truth of the matter, it is clear that it is not possible to rely on one source for sufferings and claim that it is definitive, or even claim that it is the most accurate source available for information about Quaker sufferings.

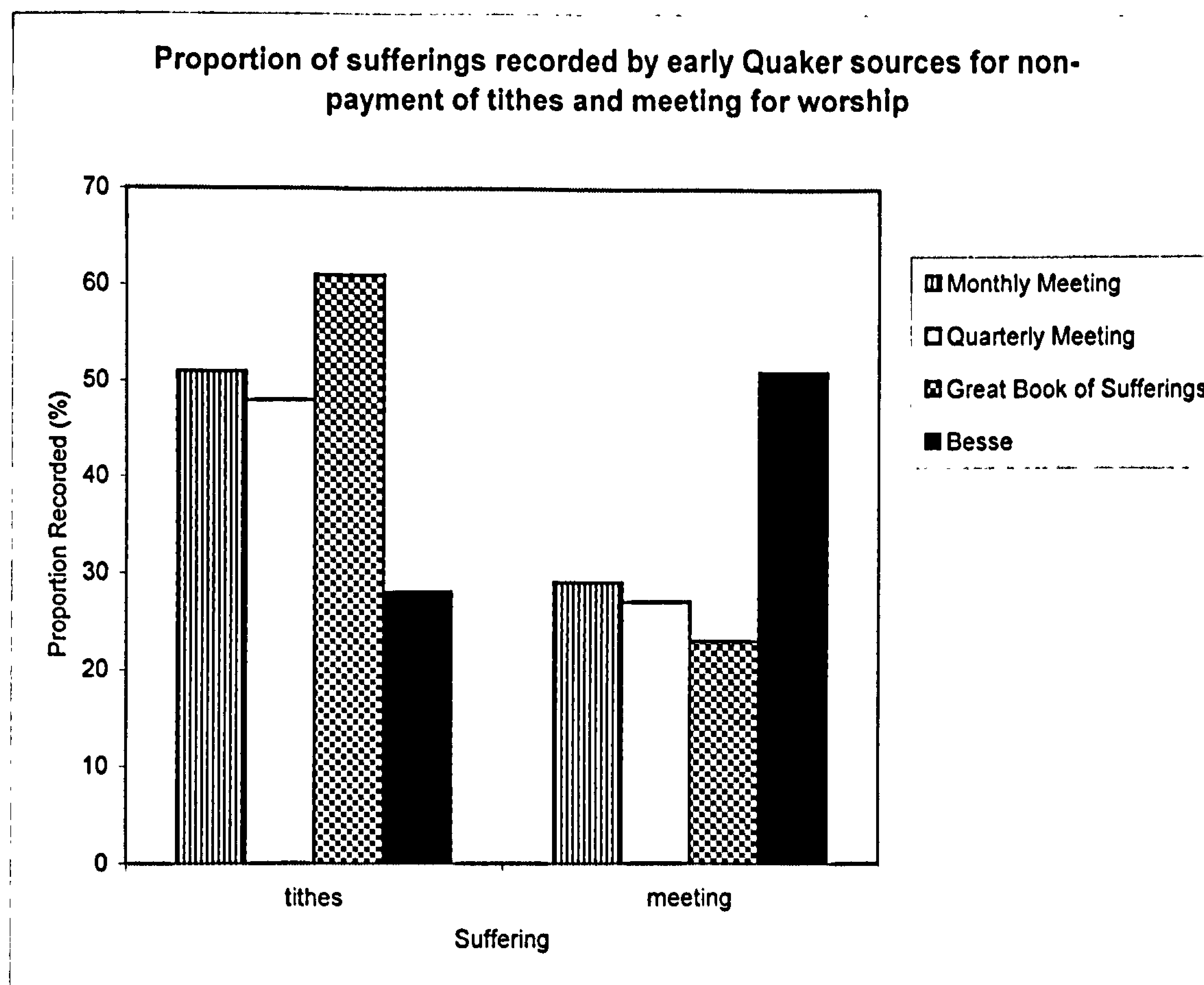
Comparison of the material available within Besse with that which exists at the monthly, quarterly and yearly meeting level reveals that Besse's work cannot be generally relied upon to provide an accurate picture of Quaker sufferings. In the first place the number of sufferings for the East Riding that can be traced in Besse is only 457, compared to over 1000 in the Great Book of Suffering and the monthly meeting suffering books and over 900 in the quarterly meeting suffering book. Besse records, at best, only 50 % of the sufferings for the region that were collected at other levels. It becomes immediately obvious that the sufferings that are recorded in Besse have to have been selected from the other sources. This raises the question: on what basis have they been selected?

Adrian Davies has suggested that the published literature of Quaker sufferings emphasizes the most sensational aspects of persecution that they faced. However, he fails to back this statement up with any hard evidence.[464] The information provided within the monthly and quarterly meeting books and the Great Book of Sufferings provide ample evidence that Davies's suspicion is correct. There is a great degree of proportional distortion between the type of offence recorded within Besse and those at the other levels. This is shown below in the table and graph.

Proportion of sufferings recorded by early Quaker sources for non-payment of tithes and meeting together for worship in East Yorkshire 1654 - 1700

Source	Tithes	%	Meeting	%
Monthly Meeting suffering records	552	51	309	29
Quarterly Meeting suffering records	438	48	244	27
Great Book of Sufferings	612	61	231	23
Besse	130	28	233	51

[464] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 178.



The two most common types of offence for which the Quakers in the East Riding suffered during the second half of the seventeenth century were their refusal to pay tithes and for meeting together to worship. These two offences make up 52% and 25% respectively, of the total sufferings that can be traced. Within Besse these two offences are also most numerous, but the figures are virtually reversed. Of the total sufferings for the East Riding that can be traced in Besse, refusal to pay tithes makes up 28% of the total, and meeting together to worship makes up 51%.

The offences that have been recorded have been selected, distorting the picture of Quaker sufferings. The motivation behind the distortion cannot be known for sure. Possibly, it represents the offences for which the Quakers most wanted to alleviate suffering. If this were so then by the time of the publication of Besse's work it would be most logical if tithes dominated the offences recorded. By 1753 Quakers could meet together for worship without fear of prosecution. They were, however, still liable to have goods distrained for refusing to pay tithe to the local clergyman, making this explanation unlikely. Opposition to the payment of tithes to the clergy was more widespread than just within the Quaker movement. In June 1659 Quakers in the north-west of England had collected a petition against the payment of tithes that had 15, 000

signatures.[465] By having their goods distrained for refusing to pay tithes Quakers suffered in the same way that those who paid their tithes dutifully did: they lost goods or money to tithe impropriators, or the church.[466] For this reason they may have been understated as a form of suffering in Besse.

By highlighting the sufferings for meeting together for worship emphasis was placed upon the spiritual and theological attack that was made on the Quakers during the second half of the seventeenth century. It can be seen as part of an attempt to re-create the Quaker image and identity as a group, through a selective use of historical fact. It is worth noting that the full title to Besse's work is

> A collection of the suffering of the people called Quakers, *for the testimony of good conscience*, from the time of their first being distinguished by that name in the year 1650, to the time of the Act, commonly called the Act of Toleration, granted to protestant dissenters in the first year of the reign of king William the Third and Queen Mary, in the year 1689. Taken from original records and other authentic accounts, by Joeseph Besse.[467]

The key phrase is italicised. It highlights the belief that the Quakers were persecuted without any cause other than for their conscience sake. It also demonstrates the Quaker belief that their actions, as dictated by their conscience, were correct and therefore their past behaviour was vindicated. Therefore, Besse's work can be seen as part of the genre of a theology of suffering, which was identified earlier in the thesis.[468]

Not only are the offences for which the Quakers suffered distorted in Besse's work, their punishments are also. Again emphasis is placed onto the more extreme suffering that occurred. This is demonstrated in the table below.

Proportion of punishments recorded by early Quaker sources in East Yorkshire 1654 - 1700

Punishment	Distraint (%)	Imprisoned (%)
Monthly Meeting	75	14
Quarterly Meeting	73	15
Great Book of Sufferings	76	20
Besse	49	45

[465] Reay, *Quakers and the English Revolution*, p. 83.
[466] See Ch. 9 for greater details.
[467] My italics.
[468] See pp. 142 – 3.

The two most common forms of punishment suffered by Quakers were imprisonment and distraint of goods, the latter being by far the most common. Of all the sufferings that can be traced in the East Riding 72% of them resulted in the distraint of goods. Twenty per cent resulted in imprisonment for varying lengths of time, ranging from a few days to several years.[469] Within the work of Besse these two punishments again remain most numerous, though their proportions are completely distorted. The total of sufferings that resulted in the distraint of goods falls, making up 49% of the total, while those that resulted in imprisonment rises dramatically to make up 45% of the total. This makes the suffering that the Quakers experienced in the second half of the seventeenth century appear more severe, according to Besse, than it actually was according to their own records. Such distortion could only have happened deliberately, had the selection taken place randomly it is highly unlikely that the proportional swing would have been so marked.

Quaker women were just as liable to persecution for their beliefs as the men, except they were not usually regarded as property owners by the patriarchal legal system of early modern England. Otherwise, their actions were identical: they met regularly for worship, refused to attend national worship in the parish church, and refused to pay tithes and church rates. These were the offences that most commonly led to punishment by the authorities in the East Riding. Despite this fact, the sources of Quaker suffering are dominated by the experiences of men rather than women. This raises the question of whether women were less likely to be prosecuted by the authorities or, whether contemporaries under-recorded their experiences, and left seventeenth Quaker women to effectively suffer in silence?

The early Quakers believed in the spiritual equality of both men and women. Women were active in the movement as travelling ministers and preachers, as well as organising and attending meetings for worship. It is this that has attracted the attention of historians, rather than the experiences of women who opened themselves up to conflict with the power of the state through the persecution of the local authorities simply by following the Quaker faith. For example, Phyllis Mack's book *Visionary Women* and Christine Trevett's work *Women and Quakerism in the 17th Century*, and more recently *Quaker Women Prophets in England and Wales* place their emphasis

[469] See appendix 3, 'Punishments suffered by Quakers in East Yorkshire 1654 – 1700'.

upon individual women prophets and ministers, and their role in challenging the assumptions and social order of a male dominated society.[470] The concentration of research upon the prominent female individuals within early Quakerism reflects the importance that these women ministers and preachers had on the movement, and the fact that their role required attention following their general neglect by earlier historians of Quakerism such as Richard Vann and Hugh Barbour.[471] However, it has come at the expense of the more typical everyday experiences of Quaker women, of which one of the most important was the persecution, or at least the threat of suffering, that they faced for their beliefs.

Of the 515 individuals that suffered persecution for their beliefs in the East Riding, 111 were women and 404 men. In all, 150 instances of Quaker women's suffering were recorded, compared to 1615 for their male counterparts. This produces an average of just over one (1.3) suffering for each female individual recorded in the suffering records compared to just under four for each male (3.9). This large disproportion can be accounted for in part by the fact that over a half (52%) of the sufferings that can be traced in the East Riding were caused by the Quaker testimony against the payment of tithes. This most commonly resulted in the distraint of goods to cover the fine that was imposed by the courts, which the Quakers also refused to pay on the basis that they believed they had done nothing wrong.

Women do appear in the suffering records for refusing to pay tithes, most commonly as widows. For example, Ann Carr of Sancton had goods distrained in 1699 for non-payment of tithes. The suffering records inform us that she was the widow of Anthony Carr, who was fined annually between 1689 and 1698 for the same offence.[472] In 1693 Martha Petfield of Lockington was fined for her testimony against tithes. She was the widow of Leonard Petfield, who died in 1691 after being imprisoned for refusing to pay tithes.[473]

Women are generally missing as individuals from the suffering books. They are not recorded in them as regularly as men, and when they do appear the individual

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[470] C. Trevett, *Women and Quakerism in the 17th Century* (York, 1991); *Quaker Women Prophets in England and Wales* (Lampeter, 2000); Mack, *Visionary Women.*
[471] Vann, *Social Development*; Barbour, *Quakers in Puritan England.*
[472] EBS, p. 44.
[473] FHL, GBS, vol. VII part II, p. 647.

is often not named, and the entry is made emphasising the husband. They are most commonly referred to as a wife, otherwise as a widow. For example Richard Batley was fined and had goods distrained for attending a meeting of worship in Bridlington in January 1683. The amount of the fine was double that of those arrested with him who were fined only for themselves. This was because he was 'also fined for his wife', who was at the meeting. Her name is not recorded. Batley and his wife had obviously attended the meeting together and as a consequence had a greater penalty to pay.[474]

These sketchy details of women's suffering can, and have, been included within the database. Cross-reference with other sources, such as the Quaker meeting minutes and marriage records, has helped to fill in the missing details for individuals. There still remains a substantial gap in the information, however. A third of the women from East Yorkshire that are recorded in the Quaker suffering books cannot be identified further than their surname, after being recorded simply as someone's wife.

The experiences of persecution suffered by Quaker women in East Yorkshire were filtered out of the historical record as it was constructed and published. Joseph Besse's *Sufferings* is heavily gender biased. Women's experiences are slowly filtered out through different administrative stages that occurred when the sufferings were recorded. The suffering experiences of 91 women can be found in the East Riding monthly meeting suffering books. At the next level, the Quarterly meeting, this number has fallen to 66. At the national level the number of East Riding women recorded in the Great Book of Sufferings falls further to 49 (53% of those recorded at the monthly meeting stage). Within Besse's work only 26 women (29% of those recorded by the monthly meeting suffering records) from the East Riding can be found.

At each administrative level the number of women that were included in the suffering records fell. Of the 515 individuals that are found in all the suffering records for the East Riding women make up 18% of the monthly meeting records, 13% of the

[474] EBS, p. 181.

Quarterly meeting records, 9% of those recorded in the Great Book of sufferings and only 5% of those included in Besse's *Sufferings.*

The imprisonment of one of the adults of the family had a detrimental affect on the family unit regardless of their gender. At an economic level it meant that there was one less individual contributing to the household economy. Socially, the suffering could be equally damaging. On occasion the persecution was particularly malicious. In 1660 Robert Barwick died, leaving his wife Grace and their children behind, after being imprisoned for attending a Quaker meeting. In 1662 Grace Barwick was sued in the Exchequer by Richard Hunter, the vicar of Foston, for refusing to pay tithes that were due to him. The use of the Exchequer Court added to the suffering that was experienced by her. Grace had to go to London to answer the suit, which increased the expense and took her away from her family. When in the court she could not swear to her answer, due to the Quaker refusal to swear any oath. As a result Richard Hunter raised a warrant against her and had her committed to prison for three months, which left her children alone at home, where they were looked after by neighbours.[475]

George Hartas of Ulrome died in 1669 after an imprisonment of nine years for attending a Quaker meeting, and left behind a wife and ten children. The same year the local vicar raised a writ against his wife for not attending the parish church. As a result she was banished from the parish and taken away by the constables, leaving the children at home. Where she was taken and what became of the children is unknown.[476]

There is some limited evidence that Quaker women were treated more leniently by the authorities than men. For example, in December 1665 a Quaker meeting in Hull was broken up and eight men and five women arrested and imprisoned. The suffering records note that the five women were released four days later, while the men remained in gaol for eight weeks.[477]

There were three main offences that Quaker women were persecuted for in the East Riding. The majority, 58 individuals (or 52%) were charged with attending

[475] YQBS, vol. 1.1 part 3, p. 16.
[476] KBS, p. 167.
[477] OBS, p. 15.

Quaker meetings for worship. 21 (19%) of the 111 women that can be traced in the suffering records were prosecuted for refusing to pay tithes. The final numerically significant offence is made up of the 26 (23%) women who were charged with refusing to attend national worship at the parish church. The other offences were made up of refusals to pay church rates, militia money, and marriage fees.

There is some reason to believe that the suffering books do not record every instance of suffering, however. Thomas Thompson of Skipsea was one of the national leaders of early Quakerism. He appears twenty times in the East Riding suffering records (mainly for non-payment of tithes), though as a travelling minister he would have spent much of his time, and consequently faced a lot of persecution, outside the area. In 1683 he was fined with his wife for not attending the parish church. He successfully appealed against his fine on the basis that he was actually imprisoned at York at the time. His wife's fine remained, however. What is striking about this is that it is the only occasion that Thompson's wife appears in the suffering records.[478]

In 1661 at Beverley Quarter Sessions Elizabeth Samson was charged with attending a Quaker meeting. She was offered her freedom if she paid a bond to guarantee that she would not attend another meeting. She answered the court that she 'would not promise to do so no more', and was duly imprisoned for six weeks. She was imprisoned later the same year for the same offence, and again in 1663.[479] She is not recorded in the suffering books after this. In 1664 Anthony Tindall, Christopher Walkington and their wives, whose names are unknown, were both fined for not attending the parish church at Holme on Spaldingmore. They were both fined at later dates for attending a Quaker meeting, but again in both cases their wives only appear the once in the suffering records.[480]

Admittedly, all of these examples could be coincidences. Elizabeth Samson, and Tindall and Walkington's wives may not have attended another meeting, or at least not one that was not broken up and prosecuted by the authorities. However, it is worth noting here that Samson chose to go to gaol rather than promise not to attend another Quaker meeting. It is also possible that these women could have died before

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[478] KBS, p. 186.
[479] EBS, p. 28.
[480] YQBS, vol. 1.1 part 1, p. 5.

they were prosecuted again. However, this gets increasingly unlikely the more examples of this kind are found, and there are many more. It could be the case that they did not tell their local meeting of their suffering, but this is highly unlikely as their husband's persecution was noted. What is much more likely is that their sufferings were simply not recorded.

Quaker women were just as likely as their male counterparts to experience persecution for their beliefs; they behaved in exactly the same way. Many would have felt the effect of persecution on the family unit even when they were not directly suffering themselves. The suffering records for the East Riding of Yorkshire that were constructed by the Quakers under-record the instances of women's persecution at every level. Furthermore, women's experiences of persecution that were included in the suffering records were filtered out at each administrative level. In the second half of the seventeenth century Quaker women in the East Riding were left to suffer in silence.

The pattern of sufferings that is traced by Besse paints a heroic beginning to the Quaker movement. In the face of state oppression the early Quakers can be seen to have maintained their spiritual position, and even increased their strength. This explanation for their suffering was recognised by the early Quakers and used as justification of their beliefs and actions. In 1655 George Fox wrote

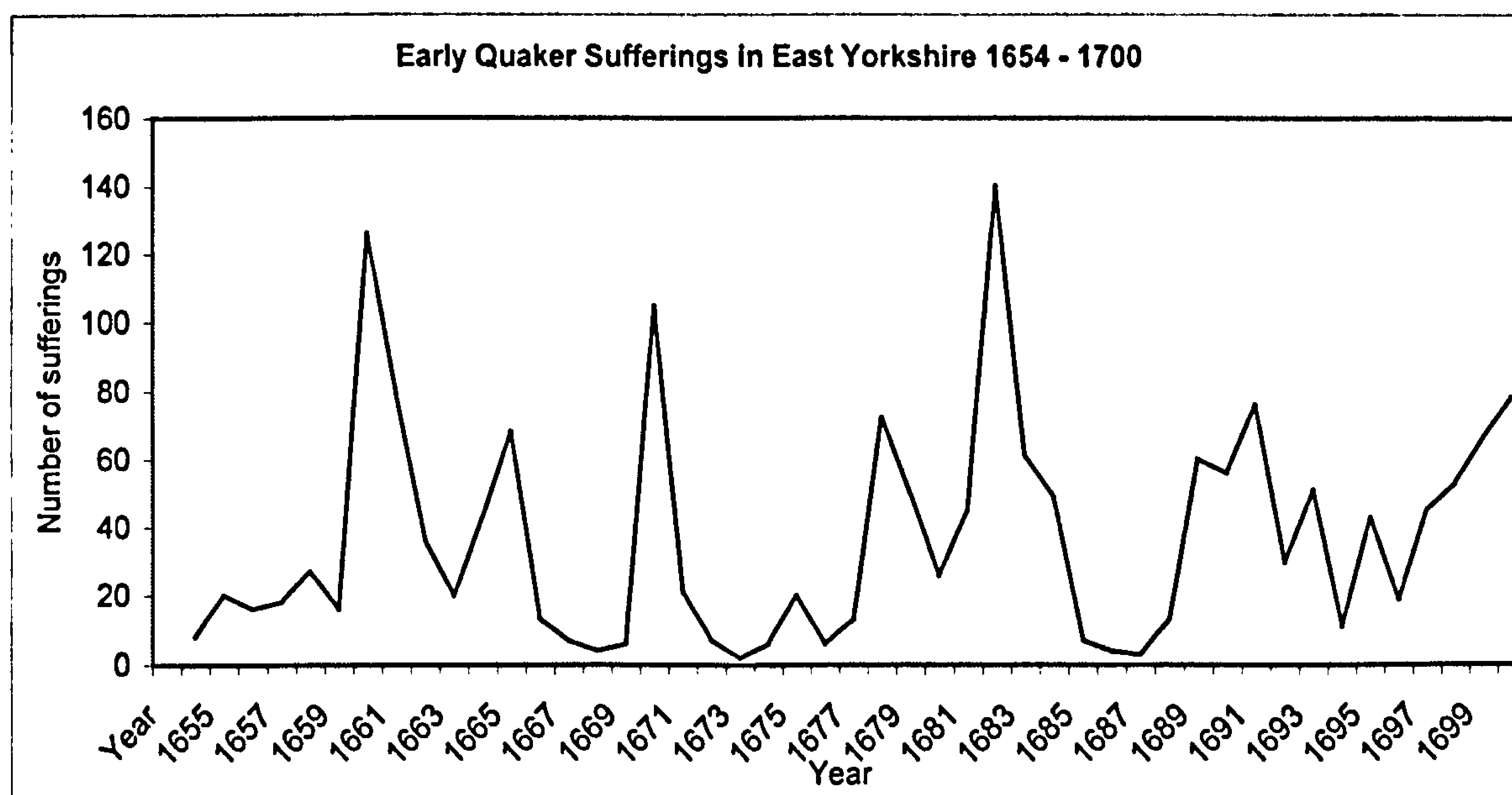
> Brethren everywhere that are imprisoned for the Truth, give yourselves up to it... and the power of the Lord will carry you over all the Persecutions... For since the Beginning hath the Persecution got up... For as the Apostles and true Christians suffered... so ye do... So the Power, and Life and Wisdom of the Lord God Almighty keep you, and preserve you... that ye may witness every one of you a Crown of Life Eternal.[481]

The Quakers recognised that persecution was part of delivering the message of the True Faith, as they believed. In Fox's statement above, comparison was made to Christ and his disciples delivering their message. Christ too had suffered, and warned his followers that they should expect to. Thus the Quaker message was actually reinforced and bolstered by the persecution that they faced during the early years.

[481] George Fox, *Epistles*, no. 92, in *The Works of George Fox*, collected edn. vol. 7 (Philadelphia, 1831). Cited in Moore, 'Reactions to Persecution', p.126.

With a theology that had embraced suffering it would not have been possible for Besse to compile details of the early persecution by actually playing down its significance and the hardships that had been faced by individuals. The more sensational aspects would naturally be highlighted. The heroic aspect to Quaker suffering is keenly taken up by Braithwaite. He has pointed out that the significant aspects of persecution during the decade following the Restoration can easily be identified, most notably the fears and prejudices of the authorities and the 'victorious heroism of the victims'.[482]

The patterns of Quaker suffering in the East Riding during the second half of the seventeenth century show quite a different picture to that painted by Besse and Braithwaite. The laws that were passed by parliament against Nonconformists were not applied smoothly or uniformly around the country. The peaks of Quaker suffering coincide with brief periods of political instability. This is illustrated in the graph below.



Richard Vann has shown that in Leicestershire, Buckinghamshire and Norfolk the laws against dissenters were most harshly applied in 1660 and 1661, from 1670 to 1672, 1675 to 1677 and most severely between 1680 and 1686.[483] More recently Adrian Davies has identified three main periods of Quaker suffering in Essex: the early 1660s, the time of the Second Conventicle Act in 1670 and during the period of

[482] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p.22.
[483] Vann, *Social Development*, p. 92.

the Succession Crisis in the early 1680s. Outside of these periods the vast majority of Quakers were largely free from continual persecution.[484]

The periods of persecution that occurred in the East Riding fit the general pattern for sufferings that are identified by Davies and Vann. Only in three years during the period 1654 to 1700 did the number of Quaker sufferings number over one hundred. These years were 1660, 1670 and 1682. Together they account for 21% of the total sufferings experienced in this period. Two main periods of suffering can be identified in the East Riding, 1660 to 1665 and 1678 to 1684. These thirteen years account for 45% of the sufferings that occurred during the second half of the seventeenth century. Inclusion of the year 1670 to these periods raises the total to more than half the sufferings that were experienced by the Quakers. These periods fit with the general pattern of a brief spate of persecution occurring during periods of political instability.[485]

The Civil Wars had demonstrated that religious tensions could lead to military conflict. The early 1660s saw the Restoration of the monarchy and two abortive insurrections. The Fifth Monarchy rising in London at the end of 1660 provided emphasis for the authorities of the threat that could be posed by religious dissenters. On January 10 1661 a Proclamation was issued that prohibited the meeting of Anabaptists and Quakers as well as Fifth Monarchists.[486]

At the end of the year in 1663 there was a second abortive rising, this time based in the north of England. The plot was designed by radical Puritans, and intended to force the carrying out of the Declaration of Breda, particularly the famous 'indulgence to tender consciences'. A group of about thirty reached Kaber Rigg, in Westmorland, before disbanding, disenchanted with the failure of reinforcements to arrive from the surrounding area. In Yorkshire, at Farnley Wood near Leeds, an armed group threw up entrenchments, though they gave up after daylight broke.

The Quakers were implicated in the plot. One of the men that gathered at Kaber Rigg had been a Quaker, but had been disowned before the plot. There is

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[484] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p.169.
[485] See appendix 1, 'Offences for which Quakers suffered in East Yorkshire 1654 – 1700'.
[486] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 9.

evidence, however, that the Quakers had actually alerted the authorities in York about the existence of the plot. Sir Thomas Gower, the High Sheriff at York, had received information from the Quakers in the city that they had been solicited by the insurrectionists, but they had refused all use of carnal weapons. However, they would not provide Gower with the names of those who had solicited them to take part in the uprising, which led to their implication through association.[487]

The passing of the Clarendon Code was motivated by the desire for social and political stability. The Cavalier Parliament used the legislation to attempt to re-impose religious uniformity and assert their authority upon dissenters.[488] The magistrates of the East Riding appear to have reacted vigorously to the proclamation that followed the Fifth Monarchists' rising in London. The years 1660 to 1662 account for 13% of the Quaker sufferings for the period 1654 to 1700. It is also worth noting that they represent 60% of the Quaker sufferings that occurred during the 1660s.[489] The magistracy reacted similarly to the abortive northern plot of 1663. Parliament brought in the Conventicle Act to try and suppress groups of non-conformists meeting together. It was feared that these meetings could have been seditious. The number of Quakers arrested for meeting together for worship increases from none during 1664 to thirty nine in 1665. Following this brief peak, however, it fell back down to only three prosecutions in 1666.

The arrest of Quakers for meeting together for worship appears to be the best indicator of the persecution of the sect. Thus during the times of political instability it was for, and often during, their worship that the Quakers were arrested. This is demonstrated by the fact that the peaks of suffering for meeting together to worship create the peaks in the chart on page 10 above 'Early Quaker Sufferings in East Yokshire 1654 – 1700'. In each of the three worst years for suffering in the East Riding, 1660, 1670 and 1682, 74% of the sufferings were for meeting for worship. These three years also account for 63% of the total sufferings for meeting for worship that occurred during the period 1654 to 1700.[490]

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[487] *Ibid*, p. 29 & 30 – 9; Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, p. 70.
[488] See pp. 162 – 5 above for more detail of the Clarendon Code.
[489] See appendix 2, 'Total sufferings of Quakers in East Yorkshire (decades)', table 2.
[490] See appendix 1, 'Offences for which Quakers suffered in East Yorkshire 1654 – 1700'.

The next period of persecution in the East Riding followed the passing of the second Conventicle Act in 1670. During this year over a hundred Quakers were prosecuted for meeting together for worship. Similarly to 1665, however, this level of suffering was only temporary. During the period from 1667 to 1681 there are only two years when there were any arrests for this offence, 1670 and 1671. In 1671 the level of prosecutions fell to only 19.[491] The fact that the authorities could reach out and arrest individuals at these times is indicative that they knew where they could be found. At other times the authorities chose not to harass and persecute them.

Having noted that persecution of the Quakers was at its most severe during times of political instability, it is worth observing that in the East Riding the Quakers do not have seem to have suffered in the aftermath of the discovery of the alleged 1678 Catholic plot in London. In autumn 1678 Titus Oates came forward and claimed to have knowledge of a plot to murder the king. The Duke of York's secretary was arrested and his papers confiscated, which showed that there had been correspondence with the Papal Nuncio and the French King's Confessor, Père La Chaise. Following this the magistrate to whom Oates had first revealed his information, Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, was found murdered. On November 1 Parliament voted unanimously that 'there hath been, and still is, a damnable and hellish plot contrived and carried on by the popish recusants, for the assassinating and murdering the King, and for subverting the government, and rooting out and destroying the Protestant religion'.[492]

The implication of James, the Duke of York, in the plot effectively led to the beginning of the succession crisis. During the four years 1678 to 1681, however, no Quakers were arrested for meeting together for worship in the East Riding. By now the Quakers were not being recognised as possible sympathisers with the Catholic cause, as they had previously been accused of, or confused with, during the 1650s and early 1660s. Furthermore, the nature of the Quaker movement had changed from the zealous enthusiasm and radicalism of the early years towards increased respectability. The authorities did not regard the movement as the same threat to the social order as they had done during the period of the Fifth Monarchist and Northern uprisings. This point is reinforced by the figures that have been produced by Craig Horle from the

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[491] See graph on p. 179 above, 'Early Quaker suffering in East Yorkshire 1654 - 1700'.

[492] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, pp. 90 – 91; D. L. Smith, *The Stuart Parliaments*, p. 156.

Great Book of Sufferings, which show that only five Quakers in London and Middlesex were arrested for meeting together for worship between 1678 and 1681.[493]

The familiar pattern of Quaker suffering emerged as the succession crisis wore on into the early 1680s. In 1682 the crisis reached its zenith, for the third time in as many years Charles II dissolved Parliament, which sought to pass a Bill that would have excluded James from the throne due to his Catholicism. During this period there had also been a loyalist reaction in favour of Church and King, as the organised opposition to the monarch starkly reminded many of the build up to Civil War during the 1640s.[494] In January 1681 Charles ordered the assize judges to enforce the recusancy laws against Catholics and other dissenters, and in June of the same year ordered the suppression of conventicles and seditious meetings.[495]

The Tory reaction to the exclusion crisis allowed local magistrates in the East Riding, such as William Osbaldeston in Bridlington, to move against dissenters.[496] 1682 was the worst year for Quaker sufferings in the East Riding during the second half of the seventeenth century. Over a hundred Friends were prosecuted for meeting together for worship. The following years this number dropped to only four prosecuted in 1683 and eleven in 1684. Again the pattern is of one year with a large number of prosecutions, before they become negligible.

The sufferings for non-payment of tithes was mainly a problem faced by Quakers living in rural areas. In the East Riding during the second half of the seventeenth century there were principally three urban areas: the towns of Beverley and Bridlington and the city of Hull. It is noticeable that Friends in each of these places did not suffer for refusing to pay tithes as their co-religionists did elsewhere in the county.

In total, there were 267 sufferings that occurred in these urban environments, of which only seven were for non-payment of tithes. Horle has amalgamated his figures for both the non-payment of tithes and church rates, though as a general guide

[493] Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, table of sufferings for London and Middlesex, p. 284.
[494] For greater detail of the succession crisis and Tory reaction see Smith, *Stuart Parliaments*, pp. 156 - 161.
[495] Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, pp. 88 – 89.
[496] See pp. 235 – 8 below for details of Osbaldeston and his persecution of Quakers in and around Bridlington.

the pattern gained from the figures for the East Riding are confirmed by his evidence. In London and Middlesex he found that only 237 sufferings were recorded in the Great Book of Suffering for non-payment of tithes and church rates out of a total of 4,855 sufferings recorded for the area between 1660 and 1688. In Bristol Horle did not find any suffering recorded for refusal to pay tithe or church rates.

Alternatively, in the rural area of Cumberland Horle found that they dominated the sufferings of the Quakers, making up some 88% of the total sufferings for the region.[497] David Scott has suggested that the city of York was effectively a 'tithe free zone' for the Quaker community there. He has argued that this was because there were relatively few of them, making the sum for collection insignificant and not worth the local clergy pursuing.[498] This explanation could be valid. In urban areas the local incumbent would possibly not have missed the income generated by their Quaker parishioners as much as those in smaller rural communities, making them less likely to pursue the matter.

It is with the beginning of the succession crisis that Quaker suffering for non-payment of tithes really began to increase in the East Riding. The Quaker testimony against tithes is well known, they would rather have been imprisoned than paid, and many were.[499] The non-payment of tithes makes up 52% of the total sufferings in the East Riding during the period 1654 to 1700. However, only 13% of these occurred before 1678. For the period from 1654 to 1677 there were only 117 sufferings recorded for non-payment of tithes. This can be compared with the period of the succession crisis, 1678 to 1683, when there were 219 sufferings for non-payment of tithes.

As the succession crisis led to a loyalist reaction, it is possible that the prosecution of Quakers for non-payment of tithes was encouraged as a way of controlling politically dangerous dissent. Alternatively, the political situation might have been taken advantage of by the clergy and impropriators of tithe to claim their due. However, in 1683 there was a significant reduction in the number of prosecutions for refusing to pay tithes. During the five-year period between 1684 and 1688 there

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[497] Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, tables of sufferings for Cumberland, Bristol and London and Middlesex, pp. 281, 283 & 284 respectively.
[498] D. Scott, 'Quakerism in York 1650 – 1720', University of York, Borthwick Paper 80 (1991), p. 29
[499] See above pp. 84 – 6 for the theological justification for refusing to pay tithes.

were only 25 prosecutions of Quakers for the offence in the East Riding, compared to 26 that occurred during 1683 alone.[500]

The Toleration Act did not provide any relief for the Quakers for their testimony against tithes. Hence this form of suffering continued unabated. During the period from 1689 to 1699 the suffering records show that there were 555 instances of suffering of this kind in the East Riding. This figure represents 60% of the total sufferings for refusing to pay tithes that occurred during the period 1654 to 1700. In 1696 the government passed an Act for the more easy recovery of tithes that did not exceed the value of forty shillings. It allowed for the value of the tithe to be assessed by two magistrates, who could then order for its collection by distraint of goods.[501]

The passing of the Act in 1696 made the collection of the tithe and the penalty cheaper and easier for both parties involved in the dispute. As a result, rather than there being a relief from this kind of persecution following the Toleration Act, the Quakers instead found that it got steadily worse in terms of number of prosecutions, though with less cost to the individual involved. The sufferings for refusing to pay church rates also continued, though these were not of any significant number, there being only 23 between 1689 and 1699.[502]

So far the analysis of Quaker suffering has been based upon the offences that they recorded. However, the punishments that are detailed in the suffering books are equally instructive. As outlined above, the two main types of punishment faced by the Quakers were distraint of goods and imprisonment. The first spate of Quaker suffering in the East Riding, during the period from 1660 to 1662, accounts for 49% of the imprisonment of Quakers that occurred during the second half of the seventeenth century. The decade 1660 to 1669 makes up for 66% of the total imprisonments suffered by the Quakers during this period. Of the three worst years for persecution that have been identified, 1660, 1670 and 1682, it is notable that 1670 and 1682 did not see the imprisonment of any Quakers by the East Yorkshire magistrates.[503] In August1684 Yorkshire quarterly meeting reported to Yearly

[500] See appendix 1., 'Offences for which Quakers suffered in East Yorkshire 1654 – 1700'. See below pp. 56 – 9 for greater detail of Quakers and the non-payment of tithes in the East Riding.
[501] Braithwaite, *Second Period*, p. 180.
[502] See appendix 2, 'Total sufferings of Quakers in East Yorkshire (decades)', table 5.
[503] See appendix 3, 'Punishments suffered by Quakers in East Yorkshire 1654 – 1700'.

meeting that 'At the last sessions held in all the three Ridings of this county the justices were inordinate, and few fined, and not one man sent to prison'.[504]

Perhaps most significant was that in 1682 54% of the fines that were levied on the Quakers were paid by neighbours, friends, relatives or business associates. In some areas of the East Riding at least, Quakers had become accepted into the local community to such an extent that they were actually being protected from persecution by it. This was certainly the case in Bridlington in 1682. The local monthly meeting sufferings book records that the officers of the town paid some £60 in fines for the Quaker community out their own pocket.[505]

This is not to suggest that in some cases Quaker suffering was not severe. In some cases Quakers were kept in very poor conditions when imprisoned. For example in Hull in February 1662 a group of Friends were incarcerated in a gaol called 'Mollie Tower' where their gaolers were

> not permitting the door of the Prison to be opened for above 20 hours, so that not so much as a seat could be gotten in to sit upon, in which time (the prison not having other conveniences) many of them were forced to do natures necessities on the same floor and what provision came to them was drawn up at a grate by a cord one chamber height.[506]

It is well known that many of the early Quaker leaders died in prison or as a result of their imprisonment. By the spring of 1663 national leaders such as Thomas Aldam, John Audland, Edward Burrough, John Camm, Richard Hubberthorne and James Naylor were all dead. William Caton and Richard Farnworth soon followed.[507] In Yorkshire between 1660 and 1682 thirty-two Quakers prisoners died.[508] Eleven of these were in the East Riding.

The point here is that historians have allowed the most severe cases to influence the overall view of Quaker suffering. More typical than those that died in prison are those that survived. With the exception of those who were thought to be

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[504] GBS, vol. 6 part II, p. 599. The quotation is remarkable, for it suggests that the magistrates were even excessively lenient towards the Quakers, after their previously harsh treatment. This would explain the use of the term 'inordinate', and its qualification.
[505] KBS, p. 185. See below pp. 229 – 236 for greater detail of toleration and persecution in Bridlington.
[506] OBS, p. 14.
[507] Vann, *Social Development*, p. 91.
[508] GBS, vol. 4, pp. 712 – 714.

part of the Quaker leadership imprisonments were mainly only for a short period of time. At the end of 1660, one of the most severe years for persecution, the quarterly meeting record book tells us of 536 Quakers imprisoned in Yorkshire, mainly in York Castle. All of them were released in the spring of 1661. For the most part they had been held for six to twelve weeks.[509] Again, this fits the general pattern that has been outlined for Quaker sufferings. The Great Book of Sufferings records this mass imprisonment and release before adding that since their release 'they [the authorities] were pretty quiet in this County in most places thereof, Friends enjoyning [sic] their meetings in a peaceable manner and not many imprisoned'.[510]

In conclusion, a close examination of the suffering records that were produced by the Quakers at monthly, quarterly and yearly meeting level, demonstrates that the historical view of Quaker sufferings and persecution has been carefully selected and created. As such it is possible to regard it as a myth. The Quakers did not suffer unrelenting persecution. They were liable, however, to suffer brief periods of it during times of acute political conflict that soon died away.

It has been proved that the work of Joseph Besse, which has for long been regarded by historians of Quakerism as the definitive source for persecution during the seventeenth century, does not give an accurate picture of Quaker sufferings. Emphasis has been placed in his work on the sensational and the extreme. By far the most commonplace suffering that the Quaker movement faced in the East Riding during the second half of the seventeenth century was that for their testimony against the payment of tithes. By far the most common punishment was the distraint of goods, in lieu of a fine that they refused to pay. This is not to say that there was not severe suffering, only that historians should be careful not to let the extreme take precedence, and therefore taint, our view of the past.

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[509] YQBS, vol. 1.1 part 2, p. 7.

[510] GBS, vol. 2 p. 36.

Chapter 9:'The Great Case of Tithes'?[511]

The Quaker testimony against the payment of tithes was the offence for which most Quakers in the East Riding suffered during the second half of the seventeenth century. As such, it deserves a detailed examination that can help to explain the nature and pattern of the offence and the consequent suffering that the vast majority of the Quaker community in the region experienced.

The suffering that the Quakers experienced for non-payment of tithes was brought about by two principal agents: the clergy of the established Church and lay tithe impropriators. Therefore, Quaker suffering for refusing to pay tithe was not simply a theological or spiritual issue, it was also a secular one. An analysis of the suffering of the Quaker community in the East Riding for this offence reveals that most prosecutions were not brought about by their conflict with the Church of England and its clergy. Rather, it was a conflict with landowners around the region who owned rights to collect tithe and wanted to receive the income that they were due. As such, it demonstrates the limits to which religious toleration was practised by landowners in the region. Although they may have tolerated the Quakers' religious beliefs and allowed them to practice their religion without molestation, they were not willing to tolerate their actions when they disrupted accepted legal practices and threatened their economic income.

Around the East Riding the non-payment of tithes was an issue that tended only to affect those Quakers who lived in rural areas, which was the vast majority of the county. For Friends that lived in the larger towns in the region, and the city of Hull, the testimony against tithes did not have a significant influence on their experience of persecution and suffering. There was also only one case recorded at the county town of Beverley of a Quaker being prosecuted for refusing to pay tithes, when Thomas Waite was imprisoned for the offence in 1665, and the coastal town of Bridlington only saw one prosecution for this offence, when Francis Story had goods distrained in 1689.[512]

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[511] A. Pearson, *The Great Case of Tithes* (London, 1657).
[512] YQBS, vol. 1.1 part 3, p. 135; GBS, vol. 2, p. 45.

As has been noted in an earlier chapter, the Quaker testimony against tithes was rooted in the belief that the Catholic Church had corrupted the payment of tithes, and the scriptural instruction of Matthew (X. 8) to minister freely had been ignored.[513] Their refusal to pay tithes has been seen by Laura Brace as an 'outright war with the authorities' over the issue of property.[514] Brace highlights the significance of tithes as a property right to both those who received and those who paid tithe, and therefore believes that by their refusal to pay tithes the Quaker community sought to defend itself against what it believed to be the imposition of arbitrary government upon their own property rights. An anonymous Quaker pamphlet written at the end of the seventeenth century pointed out that the law existed to defend the property rights of individuals who owned land or possessions through inheritance or purchase, but did not actually grant any right to land or possessions:

> they who say that by law, they have as good right to tithes, as any man has to his land are mistaken; for the law does not give any man a property, either in land or tithes, or any other thing, but only doth conserve every man's property which he hath in land or possessions.[515]

This enabled Friends to portray themselves as victims, peaceable people struggling against an oppressive regime to defend property rights, rather than law breakers, refusing to conform to the law and therefore threatening property rights and social order.

The legal basis for the payment of tithes was a complex one. The issue of tithe had been complicated by the Dissolution of the Monastries, and the consequent English Reformation, in which changes in land ownership had led to many laymen owning former monastic land, and claiming the tithe as a right on the property. These impropriated tithes became regarded as property, and assumed many of the legal characteristics of land, for example being passed on in any inheritance.[516]

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[513] See pp. 84 – 86 above for a more detailed examination of this.
[514] L. Brace, *The Idea of Property in Seventeenth Century England* (Manchester, 1998), p. 35.
[515] FHL, Anonymous, *Reasons Given For Refusing to Pay Tithes to Priests or Impropriators*, reason 12, (undated [1700?]).
[516] Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, p. 53.

Tithe disputes could be heard in both ecclesiastical and secular courts, dependent upon who was bringing the case. Only members of the clergy could sue in the ecclesiastical courts, with impropriators of tithe constrained to the secular courts. Brace notes that tithe debtors wanted the suits to be heard in secular court, where it could be challenged as a dispute over property ownership. However, the Quakers wanted tithe disputes to be constrained to the ecclesiastical courts.[517] This was expedient for their defence, which they wanted to base upon spiritual rather than secular objections. By objecting to the payment of tithe in the secular courts they risked the charge that they threatened the property laws of the land, and by implication were a threat to the social order. Furthermore, it was not only Quakers that objected to paying tithes. Tithes were generally regarded as being similar to taxes, something that everybody had to pay. Many objected to paying tithe on other grounds that were not spiritually motivated. Therefore it was unlikely that Friends would find sympathy from neighbours who disliked paying tithe but had to because it was the law of the land.

The Quaker suffering records include details of those responsible for their prosecutions. In the case of refusing to pay tithes it is noted whether either the local vicar or a lay impropriator brought the action. By distinguishing between the different parties the Quakers identified two different types of tithe payment: ecclesiastical and secular. An analysis of a sample of years has been taken for the East Riding, and is given in the table below. It reveals that for the Quaker community in the East Riding the issue of tithes was principally an area of conflict with lay impropriators, and not the local clergy. The sample of years taken is the five year period from 1695 to 1699, inclusive. This period has been chosen because it was one that gave the most complete run of information for all three monthly meeting suffering records. A sample from the Owstwick suffering records was taken for an earlier period, from 1678 to 1682, which shows similar results to the later period and is also given in table form below.

[517] *Ibid*; Brace, *Idea of Property*, p. 36.

Tithes Claimed from Quakers in the East Riding

Owstwick Tithes	Secular	Ecclesiastical
Year	No. of Prosecutions (%)	No. of Prosecutions (%)
1678	28 (64)	16 (36)
1679	28 (72)	11 (18)
1680	18 (67)	9 (33)
1681	21 (60)	14 (40)
1682	10 (59)	7 (41)
Total	105 (65)	57 (35)

Owstwick Tithes	Secular	Ecclesiastical
Year	No. of Prosecutions (%)	No. of Prosecutions (%)
1695	34 (64)	19 (36)
1696	25 (66)	13 (34)
1697	31 (72)	12 (28)
1698	35 (66)	18 (34)
1699	45 (82)	10 (18)
Total	170 (70)	72 (30)

The fact that most prosecutions were brought against Quakers by impropriators, rather than clergy, makes the issue of tithes a complex one in relation to toleration. Davies has described the refusal to pay tithes as a symbol that Friends were in earnest, as they deprived clergy from their livelihood and undermined the position of the Church. However, the relatively low number of prosecutions brought against Quakers in the East Riding by the clergy during these periods suggests that the church was not overly concerned about the loss of income from tithe representing a challenge towards its position in society, or at least the clergy in the East Riding were not duly concerned. It is also possible that the clergy in the region simply did not have the necessary resources to pursue the Quaker defaulters through the courts. Those lay impropriators who held tithe rights may have been more likely to pursue Quakers for refusing to pay tithes, and had greater resources at their disposal to do so, as the tithe was regarded as part of their business income. In many cases, tithe farmers must have deliberately purchased land precisely because of the valuable tithe rate. If they did not receive the tithe payment than their investment would not generate the expected income.

In many cases the persecution of Friends for refusing to pay tithes was based upon the economic motivation of the lay impropriator, rather than any theological or spiritual reason. This income could be relatively substantial. For example, Christopher Oliver of Harpham had goods distrained by Stephen Barnby, Jonathon Pinder and

Robert Walker, tithe farmers in the village. Between 1697 and 1699, Oliver consistently had corn and hay taken which was valued at over £5 each year. In the village of Haisthorpe Robert Turner had lambs, wool, hay and corn taken from him valued at over £20 each year during the same period by impropriators. In contrast, in 1698 Turner also had wool taken from him by Timothy Westfitt, the local vicar, but it was only valued at 13 shillings.[518]

The legal procedure against the non-payment of tithes was for a bill of complaint to be raised and given to the court that described the loss that had been incurred. The court would subsequently raise a writ that required the defendant to appear to answer the charges. If the writ was ignored, which it often was by Quakers, a second writ would be issued to the sheriff for the arrest of the defendant as an outlaw.[519]

Through the ecclesiastical courts the defendant could be excommunicated, and liable to imprisonment upon a writ of *excommunicato capiendo*, if he refused to appear or continued to refuse to pay the tithe. The church courts were suspended during the Interregnum, and justices had consequently gained the right to distrain goods for non-payment of tithes. Although this technically ended at the Restoration, secular court intervention in the issue of tithes had grown. If the tithe owed was under 40 shillings the tithe owner could sue in the local county court, and gain an order from a justice for distraint. Although not actually statutory this practice continued in custom throughout the second half of the seventeenth century.

Furthermore, during the Interregnum the Exchequer court had extended its jurisdiction over tithe. Exchequer had been recognised by Chancery as having authority over tithes as early as 1575. During the Interregnum the Exchequer allowed tithe cases to be brought before it by anyone who merely suggested that they were debtors to the crown, the logic being that the debtor was less able to repay his debt if he did not receive the tithe that was due. Again, this continued following the Restoration. Similarly, the courts of King's Bench and Common Pleas also extended their jurisdiction over tithe, allowing actions of debt to be brought before them.[520]

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[518] KBS, pp. 188 – 190.

[519] Brace, *Idea of Property*, p. 36.

[520] Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, p. 54.

In some individual cases Quakers were victims of this whole legal machinery, though rather than suffering at the hands of an unjust system they suffered more through the actions of individuals who were exploiting the system to persecute Quakers. One example of this in the East Riding was the experience of Sebastian Ellythorpe, who was a leading member of Elloughton monthly meeting. Ellythorpe lived in the parish of Holme upon Spaldingmore, in the village of Sandholme. From 1680 until his death in September 1695 he was involved in numerous conflicts with the vicar of Eastrington, James Dayson, over his refusal to pay him tithes.

Ellythorpe was a relatively wealthy yeoman. His probate return shows that he left over £50 of money and 86 acres of land to his family after his death.[521] The income from his tithe would have been valuable to Dayson, possibly making him more likely to pursue Ellythorpe through the courts. However, the nature of Dayson's pursuit of Ellythorpe documented in the suffering records reads more like one motivated by personal or spiritual grievance rather than simply income. It also provides a good example of the workings of the legal system against Quakers for refusing to pay tithe.

The first suffering recorded by Ellythorpe for refusing to pay tithe occurred in 1680. He owned twenty acres of meadow in the village of Sandholme, from which previous owners of the land had paid tithe to Dayson. When Ellythorpe refused to pay tithe Dayson employed an agent, Robert Lighton, who 'pretended to farm it for James Dayson, and came violently into the several parcels of ground as the hay was ready and took away 7 wagon loads of hay worth £1 10s 10d'. In 1682 Ellythorpe was summoned before the ecclesiastical court at York after Dayson caused a warrant to be raised against him for refusing to pay tithe. Ellythorpe was imprisoned at York gaol after refusing to swear to his answer before the court, but one of those present at the court owed him money, and so paid Dayson his due, against Ellythorpe's consent, and stopped the proceedings against him.[522]

[521] BIA, Microfilm 1698, Probate returns from the Prerogative Court at York, 28 September 1695.
[522] This paragraph, and the following account of Dayson's actions against Ellythorpe are based upon EBS, pp. 7 – 9.

Dayson's next suit against Ellythorpe was raised in 1687, and was for refusing to pay tithes for the three previous years. Ellythorpe answered the suit in open court at York Minster, and the court heard his reasons for refusing to pay tithe. Although the suffering book notes that no oath was tendered to him and he was allowed to leave, a certificate was raised against him for not swearing to his answer. This was made all the more galling to Ellythorpe by the fact that the three justices, Henry Constable, Jon Thorpe and Jon Bingham, were Catholics. This time he was arrested, although not until May 1688, and was imprisoned at York Castle for six months until his release in the November.

Dayson's next suit against Ellythorpe was raised in October 1690, in the Bishop of Durham's Court, again for not paying tithe for three years. Again, Ellythorpe appeared and answered the suit, and was allowed to leave. He was arrested and imprisoned at York Castle in March 1691, after the justices raised a warrant against him for refusing to swear to his answer. During this imprisonment Ellythorpe was kept a close prisoner. When the gaoler allowed him any freedom Dayson 'repaired to the gaol in a great rage' and threatened to indict the gaoler for neglect of duty. Ellythorpe was released in July 1692 at the assizes in York when Judge Powell declared that 'several defects were apparent' in the attachment by which he had been committed. By this time Ellythorpe was ill, and the imprisonment had kept him 'very frail'.[523]

The final suit raised by Dayson was an attempt to ruin Ellythorpe. Following Ellythorpe's release from gaol in 1692 Dayson secretly started a suit against him in the King's Bench for outlawry. The suffering book noted that that this action was 'tending to the utter deprivation of him [Ellythorpe] and his family of all his whole estate and privileges in the world'. Dayson let this suit fall, but in 1693 followed it with a bill against Ellythorpe in the Exchequer. This was, according to Friends, 'stuffed with lies and false pretences', with Dayson declaring many things due to him 'which he knew were never accounted due to his predecessors'. Furthermore, Dayson requested that Ellythorpe should answer every particular against him upon oath, in a bid to deliberately ensnare him.[524]

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[523] EBS, pp. 7 – 9.
[524] EBS, pp. 7 – 9.

The suffering records note that Dayson's intention, as he had apparently let many know in the area, was not to have Ellythorpe imprisoned, which was something that he could quite easily achieve through the local courts, but to 'make spoil of his estate'. By trying to bring the bill without Ellythorpe's knowledge Dayson was attempting to gain a conviction for outlawry, which would have been possible if Ellythorpe did not appear at court to answer the charges against him. Ultimately, such a conviction could have led to the sequestration of Ellythorpe's estate by the crown. It was noted that this was something that Dayson had planned and secretly worked towards for almost a year, without ever bringing intent of his proceedings, which should have been done legally through the Sheriff's office.[525]

The suffering of Ellythorpe is a good demonstration of the chronic persecution that was faced by some individuals. However, it appears to have been motivated more by personal grudge than any spiritual principle. The parish of Holme upon Spaldingmore was home to a number of Quakers. In 1664 fifteen Friends were prosecuted for not attending the parish church. In 1667 three of those prosecuted in 1664 had goods distrained for refusing to pay tithes. In 1684 two other Quakers, Anthony and Thomas Tindall, were both prosecuted for not attending the parish church. Thus, the number of sufferings in the parish could have been considerably higher, had the vicar Dayson chosen to persecute all the Quakers that lived there.

The fact that Ellythorpe was so rigorously pursued resulted from his prominent position within the local community as a landowner. For Dayson, the refusal to pay tithe not only deprived him of his income, but also acted as a symbol of social resistance. Victory for Ellythorpe could have led to others from the local community also refusing to pay their dues, and also diminished Dayson's position within the community. Occasionally, Quakers were instigators of communal resistance to payment of tithes. In 1659 Quakers and other villagers from Hadstock in Essex were responsible for the 'removal' of the book that detailed tithe payments, which left the rector unable to claim his dues. In 1675 at Belchamp Otten, also in Essex, the Quaker Samuel Parminter was the ringleader of a group of villagers who refused to pay tithes.[526]

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[525] *Ibid*

[526] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 32.

For most of the clergy in the country anti-Quaker feeling ran high. The vicar of Boxted, in Essex, gave some indication of the general feeling of the clergy in his submission to the Exchequer court in 1672 when he noted that Quakers were: 'men of evil and perverted disposition in principals, & contriving all manner of ways not only in defaming of your orator, but impoverishing, [and being] contemptible as much as in them lies [to] the whole clergy of England.'[527] Although the examples given above come from the south of the country, it is most likely that the clergy in the East Riding would have been aware of similar incidents that had occurred to other colleagues around the country. As such, the vicar James Dayson would have felt that he needed to protect himself from such action. By pursuing Ellythorpe, the most prominent Quaker individual from the parish, he sent out a clear message that he would not tolerate such action. Therefore, the persecution of Ellythorpe was not typical of the experiences of Friends that lived in the parish of Holme upon Spaldingmore. An example was made of Ellythorpe by Dayson in a bid to deter others.

It was not only the payment of tithes that was an issue to the early Quakers, but also whether or not they should receive them as impropriators. Members of the Quaker movement who were relatively wealthy could become impropriators of tithe through the purchase of land, or could rent land at a rate above market level from impropriators to clear them from the payment of tithes. This left a dilemma regarding the Quaker attitude towards the value and income of land, and created a very grey area regarding whether an individual was actually paying tithe or not. A group of Friends from Scarborough and Whitby monthly meetings raised this issue at Yorkshire quarterly meeting in June 1678, by providing a number of queries for clarification. The nature of the queries leaves little doubt that some Quakers in the region connived with landowners to pay tithe, and that those who held rights as an impropriator wanted to receive the income that they were due. In this regard, some Quakers who held property operated firmly within the established legal paradigm of tithes being a secular right of property, rather than being based upon theological justification. As such, they demonstrated that far from being a movement separated from seventeenth century society they were firmly entrenched within it.

[527] PRO, E112/398/265, cited in Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 32.

According to the responses from quarterly meeting the letter of the testimony was not to pay any tithes, but there was a grey area which could be exploited if so desired, just so long as it was done discreetly. The opening query that required clarification for Friends from Scarborough and Whitby asked if 'lands are taken at a certain rent clear of tithes...whether or not are tithes paid herein[?]'. The answer from quarterly meeting was that if the lands were taken at a greater rent in a bid to avoid paying tithes, then it was not acceptable.[528] The fact that this question was raised, and the answer it received from quarterly meeting, suggest that this was a practice that may have been used by some Friends to avoid prosecution for not paying tithes.

Further queries all offered some indication of ways that Quaker landowners could avoid direct conflict with the clergy and impropriators over the payment of tithes. One asked whether it was acceptable for a tenant that rented land from a Quaker to pay tithes? The quarterly meeting advised that it was, so long as the landowner did not comply with his tenant in their payment. Therefore, Quaker landowners could rent their land out to others, gain the income from the rent and avoid conflict over the payment of tithes.

Another query inquired how far Quaker landowners were responsible for the actions of their servants, if either the servant paid tithes while gathering in the crops, or if the servant was imprisoned for refusing to hand over the tithe due on the crops. Quarterly meeting decided that the master was responsible for the actions of his servant, so should not allow him to hand over tithe payments, but should keep the servant indemnified against any losses or imprisonment suffered on the masters' behalf. However, it was noted that in either case the master should stop short of paying the tithe, even if it meant the servant spending time imprisoned.[529]

It was not made clear whether tithes were actually being paid should the servant pay the tithes and the Quaker master cover his lost income. This was possibly a loophole that Friends exploited to avoid suffering. As with the query regarding the tenant of a Quaker landowner making a tithe payment, it appeared that quarterly

[528] YQMM, vol II part 1, p. 44.
[529] *Ibid*, pp. 45 – 6.

meeting was aware of the loopholes that existed regarding to payment of tithes, but were unwilling to categorically close them.

Perhaps the most surprising of all the queries that the group sent to quarterly meeting was whether a Quaker landowner and impropriator could increase the rent on his land to cover the lost income from not receiving tithes. It showed that some Friends were businessmen, and wanted to maximise the profit from the land that they owned. It also demonstrated that some Quaker landowners wanted to receive tithe payments. If this was the case, then it can reasonably be assumed that they did not feel any strong theological objection to the payment of tithes and that they regarded tithe as a secular property right. Quarterly meeting replied that 'he that cannot for conscience sake be a payer of tithes ought not to be a receiver of the same'.[530]

The same query noted that a Friend could own lands with income from tithe 'having purchased the said tithes after he had purchased the land'. This point was not commented on by the quarterly meeting, who answered that the rent should only be increased with regard to improvement of the land.[531] However, the query highlighted another loophole. A wealthy Quaker could buy the right to the impropriated tithe for his own land, and having done so would avoid making any tithe payment. Although the quarterly meeting noted that Friends should not receive tithe payments from their land, they did not comment that they should not buy, or own, the right to receive tithe.

Quakers not only exploited grey areas in their testimony against tithes to reduce or avoid persecution. In some cases there is evidence that some Friends collaborated with the impropriator or clergy and paid their due. In March 1678 Yorkshire quarterly meeting issued an epistle which stated that 'some which have known the Truth, have not stood so faithful in their testimony against tithes and repairing steeplehouses as they ought to have done'. Consequently, they decided that each preparative meeting should nominate two Friends 'to mind that all that profess Truth be faithful in their testimony against tithes'.[532] The following year quarterly meeting enquired into the success of their proposals. In March 1679 they issued another epistle that highlighted widespread despondency over the issue. It noted how

[530] YQMM, vol. II part 1, pp. 44 – 6
[531] *Ibid*
[532] *Ibid*, p. 34.

'the ancient testimony...against the antichristian yoke of tithes, steeplehouse assessments and the like was much less full of late years'. Furthermore, 'it appeared that several meetings had not concerned themselves so diligently in the matter as was expected'.[533]

Clearly, not all Friends in the region regarded the refusal of tithe payments as an essential part of Quaker doctrine. This was not only a local or regional issue. During the early eighteenth century it was revealed that as significant an individual in London as William Meade had paid tithes.[534] The payment of tithe could have been regarded as an inconvenience, rather than an actual suffering. No doubt for many the risk of persecution and imprisonment over a payment that was relatively insignificant to their income was not one that seemed reasonable.

For a quiet and peaceful life many Quakers would have found it easier to co-operate and pay the tithe, rather than risk causing conflict with the local authorities. In 1708 the constable and tithe collector for the parish of St Mary le Bow in London were allowed to take money from the shop counter of John Willcocks. Of course, the suffering account noted that the money 'was far from being laid there for any such purpose', though the fact that the money was on the counter and unattended at the moment the officials entered the shop appears a little too convenient.[535] Furthermore, pressure from friends, family and the local community to conform rather than cause conflict and division could also be a great influence. John Start was a Quaker who lived at Hedingham in Essex at the end of the seventeenth century. His wife recounted to Abraham Gaymer how Start had refused to pay tithe, but 'the priest had troubled him for it, and she and others, neighbours and kindred had persuaded and prevailed upon him to go to the priest and carry [him] the money'.[536]

The Quaker testimony against paying tithes was the one for which they were most likely to experience persecution in the East Riding during the second half of the seventeenth century. This persecution was most commonly motivated by economic,

[533] YQMM, vol. II part 1, p. 43.
[534] A. Davies, 'The Quakers in Essex', 1655 – 1725 (University of Oxford, unpublished D. Phil thesis, 1986), p. 116. Meade was a leading Quaker in London, and was tried with William Penn for conspiring to commit a riot. See above pp. 145 – 6 for greater detail.
[535] S. Dixon, 'Quaker Communities in London c. 1667 – 1714' (Royal Holloway, University of London, unpublished Ph.D thesis, 2005), p. 161.
[536] A. Gaymer, *The Words of a Dying Man, Which May be a Warning to the Old and Young...*, London, 1700.

rather than theological considerations. It was predominantly instigated by lay impropriators of tithe, rather than the clergy. The case of Sebastian Ellythorpe highlighted how the refusal to pay tithes could be used to harass Quakers over long periods of time, should an impropriator or member of the clergy be so inclined. Ellythorpe's persecution was neither supported nor condoned by the local community, and was not typical of the experience of other Quakers who lived in the parish. Furthermore, there is some evidence that suggests not all Quakers rigorously maintained their testimony against tithes. Some regarded tithes as a secular property, in common with the rest of seventeenth century society. Therefore, they were unwilling to risk conflict with the authorities and suffer persecution unnecessarily over an issue that could be dealt with discreetly.

Chapter 10: The Geographical Distribution of Quaker Suffering in the East Riding.

The suffering records of the Quakers are a vital source for investigating the distribution of the community and their activity around the East Riding, as well as the persecution that they faced. It is important to understand the local conditions and factors that affected the extent of persecution and toleration within seventeenth century society to try to help explain the variations in practice that occurred around the county. To this end, it is necessary to identify the communities within the East Riding that experienced relatively high levels of persecution. The persecution that occurred can then be examined in close detail, and connected to the general pattern of Quaker sufferings for the county that has been described in chapter eight of the thesis, or else requires further explanation from the local situation and circumstances that existed.

The Quaker suffering records name a total of 122 different towns and villages where Quakers from the East Riding suffered during the second half of the seventeenth century. This figure is a little misleading, however. Not all the places recorded in the suffering books were actually in the East Riding. For example, three cases are recorded in London, and one in Durham. For those in London, the individuals had tithe cases brought against them in the Exchequer Court, which led them to travel to London to answer the case. These sufferings originated within the East Riding, and therefore need to be included in the analysis. The suffering in Durham is listed in Besse's work. Marmaduke Storr was travelling in the north-east in 1660 (why is unrecorded), when he was arrested at Durham while staying overnight at an inn. He was brought before the justices there and imprisoned after refusing to swear an oath before them.[537]

Storr's suffering in Durham is a good example of the instances of persecution that have not been traced by searching through the different stages of suffering records, namely those of individuals from the East Riding that suffered in places outside the county. The principal individuals that this would have affected are the travelling ministers from the area, for example John Whitehead and Thomas

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[537] Besse, *A Collection of the Sufferings*, chapter iv, pp. 99/100.

Thompson. Evidence would have to be found that any individual named in the suffering records of another region was actually from the East Riding, and not a different person who shared the same name. Most importantly, it would be inaccurate to include the sufferings of individuals from the East Riding that occurred outside the region. These sufferings properly belong in a study of persecution from the region where the act occurred, as local or regional influences could have had an important bearing on why the persecution happened when it did. Therefore, Storr's suffering can be disregarded from the total number of places, reducing it by one to 121.

The sufferings that were experienced by the Quakers in the East Riding during the second half of the seventeenth century help to demonstrate the structure of Quaker organisation within the county, which has been explained earlier.[538] Of the 121 places that are named within the Quaker suffering books only 45, or 37%, had ten or more instances of persecution take place between 1654 and 1700. In 26 of the 121 villages and towns only one instance of persecution was recorded during the period, 21% of the total. The average number of Quaker persecutions per place named in the suffering records for the East Riding was 14. This figure can be divided by 46, the total number of years that are in the period 1654 – 1700, to give an average number of sufferings per year, per place, named in the suffering records. This gives an average figure of 0.3 sufferings per year. These low figures help to confirm the general theory outlined in the last section that for most of the period the Quaker community in the region remained free from persistent persecution.

However, that is not to say that persecution did not occur. In the villages of Patrington and Hollym and the city of Hull over 90 sufferings were recorded. The highest number of sufferings during the period occurred at the coastal town of Bridlington, where 140 separate incidents were entered into the suffering books. In the majority of places where ten or more sufferings were recorded there were between ten and forty incidents, 36 out of the total of 45. In these 36 places the numbers of sufferings were split equally. In 18 of them between 10 and 19 instances of persecution occurred, and the remaining 18 saw between 20 and 40 incidents. This numerical breakdown is given in the table below.

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[538] See Ch. 1.

Number of sufferings in E. Riding villages/towns 1654 – 1700

Number of villages/towns recorded in the E. Riding suffering books	Number of sufferings 1654 - 1700
9	40+
18	20 - 39
18	10 - 19
51	2 - 9
26	1

It is necessary to identify those places where there were high numbers of sufferings relative to the local population. This will highlight the towns and villages where persecution was most common, and which can therefore be regarded as less tolerant of the Quakers that lived there. The town of Bridlington and the city of Hull are mentioned above as having a large number of sufferings recorded, but they are also places where there were high levels of population. The high number of sufferings that were recorded at the two places is not necessarily indicative that they were less tolerant, it may simply be a reflection of a higher level of Quaker population. This problem can be overcome by working out the number of persecutions that occurred at each place per person who lived there. This will provide a figure for persecutions that is relative to the local population and show those places where there was most, and least, suffering.

To work out this figure it is necessary for the population of each place to be known. The best, and most easily accessible, source for this purpose is the Compton Census of 1676. The Compton Census was organised by Gilbert Sheldon, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in January 1676. It is thought that Lord Treasurer Danby instigated it to demonstrate national support for the Church of England to Charles II.[539] The aim was to provide information regarding the number of Catholic and Protestant dissenters that inhabited each parish in the country, compared to the population that remained loyal to the established Church. A product of this was that the census produced records of population levels around the country, as well as providing information about dissenters. Sheldon passed the responsibility of directing the project on to Henry Compton, the Bishop of London, for the south, and Richard Sterne, the Archbishop of York, for the north. In turn, the final responsibility for

[539] A. Whiteman (ed.), *The Compton Census of 1676: A Critical Edition* (Oxford, 1986), p. xxiv.

making the returns rested with the local incumbent. There was a slight variation in the wording of the three questions that were asked by the census. In the 'York form' of the census the first question asked 'What number of persons are by common accompt and estimation resident and inhabiting in each parish subject to your jurisdiction [?]'.[540] It is the returns to this first question that can be used as a guide to the adult population of the parishes in the East Riding.

Of course, the Compton Census is far from a definitive guide to the population of every parish around the region, or the country. The question above did not give explicit details of who should be included in the return. The age for communion was sixteen according to canon law, and it is not clear whether those under sixteen were counted. Similarly, whether both men and women were counted, or just men as the heads of each household, is not clear. This inevitably means that there is some inconsistency between returns in different regions, and possibly even between areas within regions. However, in her detailed examination of the census Ann Whiteman has found that the surviving returns generally show that the local incumbents reported those over the age of sixteen and both male and females.[541]

There are not returns of the Compton census for every parish in the East Riding. Although there are details for 133 parishes, there are another 39 that Whiteman has identified that either did not complete returns, or the returns were lost and never recorded. Most of the places that did not return information were parishes that fell under peculiar jurisdiction, principally the Dean of York and the prebendary of York.[542] Furthermore, the census would have missed many people who did not fall into the structure of the parish system. This would have included poor squatters who lived on parish boundaries or wasteland. Those who were away from home regularly, such as those who transported goods around the country either by sea or by the river systems would also be missed, as would those who were serving in the navy or army. It is also striking when seeing the numbers for the returns that many are nicely rounded numbers, and the general impression is that the figure has been rounded either upwards or downwards. For example 88 of the 133 returns for the East Riding that have survived give population figures that are divisible by ten. For the city of

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[540] Whiteman (ed.), *The Compton Census*, p. xxix.
[541] *Ibid*, p. xxxvi.
[542] *Ibid*, pp. 564 – 5.

Hull the total number of people reported was six thousand, and the market town of Beverley returned a total population of 1500.[543]

The rounding of the figures in the returns leads to concerns that many local incumbents estimated the numbers, and that the local population of church-goers and dissenters alike was not systematically and conscientiously counted. However, Whiteman has pointed out that it is important not to underestimate the local knowledge that each vicar would have had of his parish. His knowledge could be crucial to his income. For example, knowing who owned which piece of land, and how much that land would yield, was important for his tithe income. Likewise, there are some examples of vicars who kept personal records of those in the parish who were old enough to take communion to check attendance at Easter and ensure that they collected the extra income that Easter offerings would bring in.[544] This would mean that the estimate of the local population that was made by the local incumbent for the census was unlikely to be too inaccurate. Even though it may not be regarded as providing a precise level of the population of each parish and the number of dissenters, it is certainly useful enough to give a good guide, which can be used to produce a rough estimate of instances of persecution per population at different places in the East Riding.

The greatest discrepancy between the figures in the Compton Census and the evidence from the suffering records is in the parish of Easington. No Protestant dissenters were recorded in the Compton Census, but the Quaker suffering books show that 28 different individuals experienced a total of 82 sufferings, 57 of which occurred before 1689. The majority of the sufferings (56) were for non-payment of tithes, which suggests that a sizeable number of Quakers at least held some land in the parish, even if they were not resident there. It is most likely that some of these Quakers were actually living in the parish. Fourteen Quakers were imprisoned for holding a meeting in the parish on March 21 1661. Although not all were from the village, it was being held somewhere, most probably in somebody's house. Unfortunately, the suffering records do not give the detail of where the meeting was held.[545]

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[543] Whiteman (ed.), *The Compton Census*, the East Riding returns are pp. 600 – 604.
[544] *Ibid*, p. xliii.
[545] GBS, vol. 2, p. 29.

In September 1683 five Quakers were fined in Easington, and consequently had goods distrained, for not attending the parish church. One of these, Richard Hide, was first noted in the suffering records having goods distrained for not paying tithes in the parish as early as 1665. Another, Francis Blashell, was part of a Quaker family that was recorded living in the parish in the 1660s. His father (also Francis) was one of those imprisoned in 1661. In 1670 Francis senior was imprisoned for two years for refusing to pay tithes, and after his release was quickly re-arrested and re-imprisoned in Hull for the same offence. He died while imprisoned after two and a half years.[546]

The differences between the information that is provided by the Compton Census and the Quaker suffering books make it difficult to combine such evidence with any great degree of confidence. The eleven places where the Quaker suffering books record the most number of persecutions are given in the table below, together with the number of persecutions per population of the parish. The table also shows the number of Protestant dissenters in the parish (according to the Compton Census), and the number of Quaker sufferings that occurred per Protestant dissenter. Unfortunately, the place that is recorded in the Quaker suffering records is usually the village or township, and not the parish that is recorded in the Compton Census, which can sometimes be different.

Comparison of population numbers and instances of persecution in a select number of places from the East Riding.

Place	Population	No. Protestant dissenters	No. Quakers persecuted 1654 - 1700	No. People living in parish per no. persecutions	No. Protestant dissenters living in parish per number of Quaker persecutions
Bridlington	500	30	140	3.6	0.2
Hollym	207	15	99	2.1	0.15
Patrington	200	12	97	2.1	0.12
Hull	6000	500	93	64.5	5.4
Easington	71	0	82	0.87	0
Withernwick	200	2	43	4.7	0.04
Sutton-on-Hull	120	42	42	2.9	1
North Cave	356	12	41	8.7	0.3
Warter	120	22	38	3.2	0.6
Sancton	137	6	34	4	0.2
Beverley	1500	122	34	44.1	3.6

546 YQBS, vol. 1.1, part 3, p. 26.

The table demonstrates the different levels of persecution that Quakers faced in the parishes where suffering was most common according to the Quaker suffering records. The figure of persecutions per population shows the places where most persecution occurred relative to the population of the parish. The lower the figure for the number of people living in the parish per persecution, the higher the level of persecution that the Quaker community faced.

The figures that demonstrate persecution level per Protestant dissenting population is more problematical. Again, the lower the figure the higher the level of persecution that dissenters would have faced in the parish. In general, the figures generated by this calculation confirm and support those of persecution per population.

The main discrepancies between the figures for persecutions per population and persecution level per Protestant dissenting population are the parishes of Easington and Withernwick. According to this figure Withernwick was the parish in which Protestant dissenters were most likely to be persecuted. The parish of Easington does not produce any result, because it did not record any Protestant dissenters living in the parish according to the Compton Census, though there is evidence (which is discussed above) that this is incorrect. The two places where Quakers were least likely to be persecuted remain the large urban centres of Hull and Beverley.

The Compton Census shows only two Protestant dissenters living in the parish of Withernwick. However, this figure appears more accurate than the one for Easington. The Quaker suffering records only note three individuals being persecuted in the parish of Withernwick: John Barron, Samuel Spencer and John Raines. John Raines was prosecuted only twice in the parish, in the years 1679 and 1680. Both times were for the offence of not paying tithes. Between 1681 and 1698 he was prosecuted a further ten times in the parish of Carlton for the same offence. Therefore he either moved from Withernwick to Carlton in 1680, or else he did not live there but rented some land in the parish in 1679 and 1680. John Barron was prosecuted 28 times between 1677 and 1699 for refusing to pay tithes, and Samuel Spencer suffered ten times for the same offence between 1688 and 1699. The low number of Protestant dissenters in the parish, and the high number of persecutions, could be distorting the

result of the calculation. This is true for all the parishes in the table. The relatively low numbers that are being used to produce the data means that only a slight difference can produce significantly altered figures. For this reason the figures of persecution per total number of population in the parish, not just Protestant dissenters, is a better guide.

The places that are included in this table are the villages, town, and city, rather than the parish, to allow for the number of persecutions per population to be calculated. If the parish was included the level of persecutions for Hollym could be even higher. The village of Withernsea had 55 persecutions recorded, and it is most probable that the Compton Census returns include it within the parish of Hollym, though it cannot be ascertained for sure. If the numbers for Withernsea were included then the total persecutions for Hollym would rise to 154, making it the parish with most persecutions for the period. The number of persecutions per population would fall to 1.3, making it a clear second to the parish of Easington. Similarly, the village of Langtoft has been left out of the table. The suffering books record 35 instances of persecution against Quakers in the village, which was in the parish of Hunmanby, which covered a large area in the north-east corner of the county and had a population of eight hundred recorded in the Compton Census. There were only four persecutions against Quakers recorded in the village of Hunmanby. In each of these cases the figures for the two places have not been combined together.

There are no such problems for the large urban centres of Beverley and Hull. The Compton Census returns combine the two parishes of Hull, Trinity and St. Mary's, and give the total population of the city at six thousand. In Beverley, the two parishes of St. John's and St. Martin's are combined with a population of six hundred, and the other parishes of St. Mary's and St. Nicholas are given separately at eight hundred and one hundred respectively, which gives a total population of 1500. The important difference here is that the Quaker suffering books remain consistent and record the place that the incident of persecution occurred, rather than the parish, just as they do in the rural areas. This results in the sufferings being recorded as having occurred in either Hull or Beverley, which makes the information that they provide consistent with that of the Compton Census.

The most persecutions per population occurred in the parish of Easington, where the number of persecutions per population was 0.87, which means that relatively there was an instance of persecution for every individual living in the parish. This can be compared to the figures for Hull and Beverley. In the city of Hull there was a relatively high number of persecutions, but when the large population is taken into consideration it was in fact one of the places with least persecutions per population with an average of one persecution for every 64 individuals, which means that it can be regarded as a relatively more tolerant place for Quakers to live than Easington. Similarly with the town of Beverley, once the large population is taken into account the level of persecution that occurred in the town is relatively low, with only one persecution for every 44 individuals, again relatively more tolerant than the other places in the East Riding that are listed in the table, with the exception of Hull.

The main urban centre in the East Riding was the city of Hull. Comparison of the sufferings that occurred in Hull to those that happened in the rural towns and villages of the East Riding help to demonstrate both similarities and differences in the nature of rural and urban persecution and toleration. Furthermore, by comparing the statistics for Hull with those for Bristol and London that were produced by Craig Horle, the national trends and ability of central government to direct persecution can be assessed.

The Compton Census gave the population of Hull as 6,000 in 1676, which included a total of five hundred Protestant dissenters.[547] The Quaker community in the city of Hull was not a large one. During the second half of the seventeenth century the Quaker suffering records include the names of 47 different individuals that were prosecuted within the city. Some of these would have actually lived outside the city walls in nearby villages such as Sculcoates and Marfleet. This was a relatively small number of Friends for such a populous city. It is less than the 65 Quakers that were recorded in the much smaller town of Bridlington during the same period. The earliest recorded suffering in the city occurred in December 1660 when a group of five Friends were arrested and escorted to outside the city walls, despite complaints that the action was 'without cause'.[548]

[547] Whiteman (ed.), *The Compton Census*, p. 602.
[548] OBS, December 1660. Besse dates the suffering as May 1661, *Collection*, p. 107.

Throughout the early 1660s, Friends in the city were harassed by the authorities, who enlisted the willing help of the soldiers based at the garrison. Principal among the soldiers that persecuted the Quakers was Richard Bishop, a captain of the garrison. Little is known about Bishop, other than the fact that he regularly occurs in the suffering records breaking up Friend's meetings in the city and on occasion physically abusing them. In 1661 a group of Quakers were arrested by Bishop for holding a meeting for worship and were brought before William Broxon, the deputy governor of the city. Broxon instructed that they should be removed from the city, as the group had been in December 1660, and directed Bishop that he should 'let the rude boys abuse them'. Bishop did as he was asked, with the keen assistance of a mob who were 'ready to do it as he bid them'. According to the suffering records the crowd 'did barbarously abuse the women with mire and dirt, like a company of brutes who had been killing some dog or cat'.[549]

Later that same year William Staveley and two other Friends were arrested by Bishop while walking down the street. They were driven at musket point to the governor's house, during which time Staveley was struck by Bishop a number of times 'with all the strength he had with an oak cudgel, fetching the strokes over his shoulder, as a man does when he is heaving down a tree'. The attack 'made blood run out of his nostrils', and led Staveley to, somewhat understatedly, question Bishop: 'what have I done that I should be thus absued?' In response Bishop simply attacked him again with the cudgel, and those who witnessed it reportedly commented that 'they never did see a man so abused in their lives'.

The governor was not at home, and so Bishop took the group to the Marshall's house, 'abusing them with many cruel and bitter words' on the way. The Marshall kept the group at his house overnight. Meanwhile, Bishop and 'others like himself' drank the evening away. They also found time to verbally abuse the three Quakers further, in an unsuccessful attempt to entrap them into saying something that could lead to them being charged with an offence.

The next morning the Marshall took Staveley and the others before the Governor, who had 'little or nothing to say against them', for nobody appeared to

[549] OBS, DDQR/25, p. 12. The following 3 paragraphs are based upon this account.

accuse them of anything. Bishop had 'got himself out of town'. He was ashamed to appear before them because of his actions the previous day. When the governor discovered what had happened he told them that they should gather witnesses to the attack so that Bishop could be punished. However, this was declined, the three Friends deciding to leave it to Lord who would 'bring us from under the hands of such unreasonable men in his own appointed time'.[550]

Bishop's abuse of Staveley was going too far for the authorities of Hull. Although it had been made quite clear that Quakers were not welcome in the city, it was not possible for someone of the character of Richard Bishop to take advantage of their position and act unlawfully. The fact that the governor of the city suggested that the Quakers should bring charges against Bishop suggests that the authorities in the city knew Bishop's character well, and were aware of the need to keep him under control. The three Friends still had recourse to law to defend their rights when necessary, even when that law sought to oppose them whenever possible.

At this early stage of Quakerism's development the city's authorities simply sought to remove the Quakers from the city. Therefore, the first act of the authorities was not to imprison them, but just to physically remove them from within the city walls. Friends in the city actually managed to come to some agreement with the authorities. The Owstwick book of sufferings recorded how 'the military said to us that if we would meet out of the town none would disturb us'. However, this arrangement failed to account for the zeal of Richard Bishop, who broke up a meeting with a group of soldiers in July 1661 at Drypool, a village about two miles to the east of Hull, and imprisoned those present in the north blockhouse of the Hull garrison. For good measure Bishop also beat John Whitehead and Philip Ford with a staff, before turning them over to the deputy Governor, William Broxon, who had them removed from the city.[551] It must have seemed ironic to Friends that in this case they were actually brought into the city from Drypool, only for them to then be removed from the city. Bishop's action in this case was designed purely to harass Friends that were from the city.

[550] OBS, DDQR/25, p. 13.
[551] OBS, p. 14.

The pattern of sufferings that occurred in the city of Hull is very different from those for the rest of the East Riding. The vast majority of the sufferings that occurred in the city took place during the 1660s, during the early development of Quakerism. There were 12 prosecutions against Quakers during 1660. However, the peak years of suffering in the city were 1661, 1662 and 1665, when there 23, 25, and 25 prosecutions against Quakers respectively. These three years account for virtually all the persecution of Quakers in Hull. In total there were 93 sufferings, of which only eight occurred after 1665.

In the East Riding during the 1660s Hull was the place that Quakers experienced most prosecutions. In 1661 there was an overall total of 79 sufferings in the East Riding, with Hull accounting for 23 of them. In 1662 the vast majority of sufferings that occurred in the region were in Hull, 25 out of a total of 36. In 1665 the proportion was again high, with Hull accounting for 25 of the total of 68 sufferings in the region. However, after these initial years of persecution in the city the proportion of sufferings that occurred in Hull became negligible. During 1670 and 1682, the two peak years of prosecutions against Quakers in the county, the suffering records do not record a single suffering taking place in the city. Indeed, no sufferings at all are recorded in Hull after 1678.

The number of sufferings that occurred during the 1660s in the city of Hull was not surprising. The city had a high level of population compared to the rural villages and towns in the region. The next most populous town was the county town of Beverley, which had a population of 1, 400 recorded by the Compton Census. No other town or village in the East Riding had a population of over one thousand.[552]

However, the actual number of Quakers in the city was relatively low. The suffering records noted only 47 different individuals in the city between 1654 and 1700, some of who may not have actually lived in the city, but come from nearby villages such as Marfleet, Sculcoates and Drypool. Therefore, Hull had a small Quaker community relative to its population size. As such, the city authorities did not regard them as any threat to the social order or the city.

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[552] Whiteman (ed.), *Compton Census*, p. 602.

Civic authorities around the country had a large amount of independence from the central government. This is reflected in the different patterns of persecution that Quakers experienced in different cities. National political events had an important influence upon the patterns of persecution that were experienced by Quaker communities around the country, but ultimately local and regional attitudes towards national political events also helped to shape patterns of persecution. This helps to explain differences in patterns of persecution that occurred across the country in both rural and urban areas.

Comparisons between the number of sufferings that Friends experienced in Hull with those in the cities of London and Bristol are possible by using the figures produced by Craig Horle.[553] Although the size of the Quaker population in the different cities varied, with London and Bristol having a much larger Quaker population than Hull, the pattern of the figures reveals slight differences in the peak year of prosecution during the 1660s. In London, 1661 and 1662 saw the initial spate of persecution against Friends, with respective totals of 324 and 305 prosecuted for holding meetings for worship. These two years were also the first peak years for Hull, with 23 and 25 Friends being prosecuted for the same offence. However, there is a marked difference in the pattern that followed the passing of the first Conventicle Act. The authorities in London reacted swiftly, and prosecuted 1, 729 Friends in 1664. In Hull there were no prosecutions of Quakers in the city until 1665, when 25 were arrested for attending meetings for worship.

There is a time lag of a year between the prosecutions in London and Hull. This time lag could be explained by the fact that London was the political centre of the country, and as such could react instantly to the direction of central government. The city authorities at Hull reacted more slowly, as the wishes of the government took longer to be communicated to them. However, when examined closely this idea does not bear scrutiny. The city authorities at Bristol also reacted swiftly to the passing of the Conventicle Act, and prosecuted 610 Quakers in 1664. Furthermore, following the passing of the second Conventicle Act in 1670 there was a total of 104 prosecutions of Friends across the East Riding for holding meetings for worship. In London there were 515 prosecutions for the same offence. In Hull there were no prosecutions of

[553] Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, pp. 283 – 4.

Friends during 1670. Clearly the authorities in the East Riding were abreast of political developments and could implement central government's wishes swiftly and effectively. The authorities at Hull could have done so, had they chosen to. Instead, they did not prosecute Quakers in the city because it was not thought necessary.

The nature of the sufferings that were experienced by Quakers in the city of Hull was different from those living in the rural villages of the East Riding. The most notable difference was the suffering for refusing to pay tithes. It was this form of suffering that made up the majority of all offences that Quakers were persecuted for during the second half of the seventeenth century in the region.[554] However, the Quaker community in Hull experienced relatively few sufferings for refusing to pay tithes. There were only five prosecutions recorded for this offence in the suffering records, four of which all occurred in April 1678 when John Todd, Edward Mounder, William Harlin and Judith Bond were all imprisoned. That same year there were 42 prosecutions of Quakers for not paying tithes across the rest of the county.

After Easington the parishes where Quakers were most likely to face persecution were Hollym and Patrington. Both of these places had just under a hundred instances of persecution between 1654 and 1700, and with populations of around two hundred the relative level of persecution was high, almost one incident for every two people that lived in the area. To these two places can be added the parish of Welwick, in which there were 32 recorded incidents of persecution against Quakers, and had a population of about a hundred, which gives a relative persecution level of almost one in every three people. It is not included in the table above because it did not record enough instances of sufferings.

What is most striking about these four parishes is that they are all located together in the south-east corner of the county. Hollym, Patrington and Welwick are all neighbouring parishes, with Easington bordering the south-east corner of Hollym. Together these four parishes account for a total of 310 sufferings, which is 17.6% of the total sufferings that were recorded by the Quakers in the East Riding during the second half of the seventeenth century.

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[554] See pp. 170 – 1 above.

Though a useful indicator, the quantitative analysis of religious toleration is not entirely satisfactory. The figures provide an incomplete picture, which requires some more qualitative information to be completed. The statistical analysis has highlighted four parishes in the region in which the Quaker community faced relatively high levels of persecution. A more detailed examination of these four parishes will help to provide the qualitative information that is behind the statistics, and provide a greater understanding of the religious persecution that occurred in the East Riding.

Chapter 11: A Case Study of Persecution in four Parishes in the East Riding.

The four parishes of Hollym, Patrington, Easington, and Welwick are all located together in the south east corner of the county. These four parishes recorded a relatively high level of persecution compared to the rest of the East Riding, which needs to be examined in some detail. The Compton Census recorded a total of 34 'other dissenters' (i.e. Protestant dissenters) in the four parishes in 1676: fifteen at Hollym, twelve at Patrington, seven at Welwick and none in the Parish of Easington.[555] The Quaker suffering books record a total of 55 different individuals being persecuted in these parishes between 1654 and 1700. Of course, the Compton Census is only a snap-shot of the population made by the local incumbent during 1676, though the difference between the two figures suggest that the numbers of Protestant dissenters are under-recorded in the returns. Undoubtedly, there was a Quaker presence within the parish of Easington that was not recorded in the Compton Census returns. However, it is important not to over-emphasise the level of persecution that the Quaker community faced within the parish based upon the suffering records.

The levels of persecution are distorted by the predominance of some individuals, whose experience was the exception rather than the rule. The persecutions that occurred in Easington between 1654 and 1700 are dominated by six individuals, who account for over half the total number of sufferings recorded in the parish. Of these six individuals one particularly stands out: Joseph Smith was prosecuted in the parish eighteen times between 1681 and 1700, on average suffering virtually once every year.

Smith's sufferings were all for refusing to pay tithes, except one for not attending the parish church in September 1683 and another for refusing to pay church rates in 1698. He also suffered six times outside the parish of Easington, five times for not paying tithes at Welwickthorp and Patrington, and once for attending a Quaker

[555] Whiteman (ed.), *The Compton Census*, pp. 600 – 1.

meeting for worship in Patrington in September 1684.[556] Joseph Smith's experience can be contrasted with that of Richard Hide, who suffered seven times at Easington between 1665 and 1695, on average just over once every four years. Refusing to pay tithes dominated Hide's persecution as it did Smith's, with only one prosecution for another offence, which, like Smith, was for not attending the parish church in September 1683.

There are striking similarities and differences within the persecution that was experienced by Smith and Hide. The fact that they both suffered predominantly for refusing to pay tithes fits into the general pattern for the whole of the East Riding. As noted earlier, non-payment of tithes accounted for over 50% of the total sufferings that were recorded by the Quaker community in the region.[557] Smith's prosecution for not attending the parish church at Easington came at the same time as Hide's, and coincided with a peak period for persecution in the county and nation during the exclusion crisis. This is also the period that accounts for Smith's prosecution for attending a Quaker meeting for worship. The fact that the two men suffered for their non-attendance at the parish church at the same time in September 1683 provides good evidence that those who were Quakers were well known within the local community. When political pressure was placed upon the local authorities they could react and prosecute those who were known dissenters from the established church.

However, given that the two men were clearly well known to be Quakers, and both would have refused to pay tithes, it is necessary to try and explain the discrepancy between the two men's experience of suffering for that offence. The suffering records show that Richard Hide only had goods distrained for refusing to pay tithe four times between 1678 and 1695. During this same period Joseph Smith had goods distrained eighteen times, which included four offences in the parish of Welwickthorp between 1678 and 1680. During the years 1680, 1682 and 1683 Smith had two lots of property distrained, which suggests that he owned at least two different pieces of land within the parish of Easington. It is possible that he sold his property in Welwickthorp and replaced it with land in Easington, as the suffering records do not mention him being in Welwickthorp after 1680. Therefore, it is

[556] Welwickthorp can, in all probability, be regarded as the parish of Welwick, but because of the slight variation of the name recorded the information has been considered separately to maintain any contemporary distinction that may have existed.
[557] See above pp. 184 – 5 for greater detail.

possible that Smith simply held more land than Hide, or that his land was more profitable, which would account for the higher number of sufferings for not paying tithe.

However, the fact is that Hide did have goods distrained after refusing to pay tithe in 1678, 1679, 1683 and 1695. If his property was valuable enough during these years to yield tithe it would also have been valuable enough during the years that Hide was not prosecuted for his refusal to pay. Of course, it could be the case that Smith was simply more conscientious in recording his sufferings and passing them to monthly meeting, though given that Hide did report his sufferings during the late 1670s it is not unreasonable to assume that he would have done so during the early or late 1680s as well. Hide's sufferings for not paying tithe during the late 1670s and in 1683 also coincide with the general pattern of sufferings that occurred during times of acute political pressure for dissenters. His first two prosecutions occurred during 1665 and 1666, it was then to be another twelve years before his next prosecution in 1678. These years fit with two of the peaks that are on the graph for the whole of the East Riding (see page 10 above). However, there was not any persecution in the parish of Easington during the crisis for the Quaker community that occurred across the region following the passing of the second Conventicle Act in 1670. In fact, there were only 23 sufferings in the parish recorded in the 23 year period between 1654 and 1677.[558]

Therefore, when examined in detail, the parish of Easington cannot be regarded as an intolerant local community during the second half of the seventeenth century. The experience of Joseph Smith needs to be contrasted with that of other known Quakers such as Richard Hide, who managed to live long periods in the community without any persecution for his religious beliefs. Why Smith experienced a greater number of sufferings can only be speculated, though it would seem that he held a greater amount of property than Hide, given his multiple prosecutions during certain years. There is also the possibility that Smith faced additional opposition because he was regarded as an outsider, having crossed the parish border from Welwick.

[558] This number could be increased to 27. There are four sufferings in the records where the date is not recorded.

What is certain is that Smith's experience was not typical. Five individuals, including Joseph Smith and Richard Hide, were fined for not attending the parish church in September 1683. Of these five Hide suffered the most instances of persecution after Smith, which is why he was used comparatively. However, Hide only experienced seven cases of suffering, compared to Smith's eighteen. Clearly, individual experience could be affected by different local factors.

The pattern of some individual Quakers experiencing relatively high levels of persecution compared to others, which has been traced at Easington, emerges in the other three parishes that had a relatively high number of sufferings during the second half of the seventeenth century. In the parish of Hollym two men, Richard Hardy and Gabriell Tomlinson, account for 66 of the total of 99 sufferings that were recorded in the Quaker suffering books. Altogether the records show that there were twelve Quakers prosecuted within the parish who were resident there. The Compton Census returns confirm this as an accurate figure for the number of Quakers living in the parish, showing a total of 15 Protestant dissenters out of a population of 207.[559] The next most prosecuted individual to Hardy and Tomlinson was Bengeman Bileth, who had six lots of goods distrained for refusing to pay tithes between 1697 and 1700. In contrast, during this same four year period Tomlinson had nine, and Hardy ten, lots of goods distrained for the same offence.

Further information on the lives of Tomlinson and Bileth is not known, but some sketchy details of Richard Hardy, and his relatives, can be traced and can be used to help explain the pattern of suffering that they experienced. The Hardys were a family of Quakers that came from the coastal village of Withernsea. It appears that their mother, Sarah, who had been an early convert, brought the family up Quakers. There is no mention in any of the Quaker records of their father, making it likely that he was either not a Quaker, or else had died and left Sarah a widow.

The first references to the family that can be found in the suffering records are in 1659, when Sarah had goods distrained for refusing to pay church rates. Richard Hardy's first prosecution was for not attending the parish church at Withernsea in 1664. Richard's sister, Margaret, was also prosecuted at the same time, and both had

[559] Whiteman (ed.), *The Compton Census*, p. 600.

goods distrained. Richard's brother, Daniel, lived at Withernsea throughout his life, and was prosecuted eighteen times there, mainly for non-payment of tithes, between 1663 and 1700. Daniel escaped prosecution for not attending the parish church in 1664 because he was imprisoned at York Castle at the time for refusing to pay tithes.[560]

Both Daniel and Richard were amongst those fourteen Quakers who were imprisoned for holding a meeting at Easington in March 1661. Sarah was imprisoned with Daniel in April 1663 for refusing to pay tithes, and mother and son were both beaten by the local officials when they were arrested.[561] They were imprisoned again for the same offence in 1665. Therefore, mother and eldest son were being punished as the landholders, making it most likely that the husband and father had died, leaving his land to them to sustain the family. While they were imprisoned in 1664 Richard and his sister were prosecuted for not attending the parish church.

When examined in this detail it is difficult not to be struck by the harshness and cruelty of the local authorities in pursuing the family in such a way. Richard and Daniel were both imprisoned early in 1662. Then, following their release, over the space of three consecutive years the senior members of the family unit were twice imprisoned, and those who remained free were fined. The authorities appear to have systematically and methodically pursued the family to punish them for their religious beliefs.

The period 1660 to 1665 was one of the main periods of Quaker suffering in the region.[562] It was undoubtedly a difficult time for the Hardy family, who suffered multiple imprisonments and fines, but 1665 also marks the end of the period of persecution, and the beginning of a period of eleven years peace for the family. Any further suffering was avoided until August 1677 when Richard Hardy had goods distrained after he refused to swear an oath at Withernsea Priory court.

The suffering book records each distraint for refusing to pay tithes as a separate incident, therefore increasing the total number of sufferings, rather than

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[560] OBS, p. 8.
[561] *Ibid*
[562] See pp. 179 – 81 above.

recording a single suffering of larger proportions that accounts for the multiple offences. For example, In 1681 Daniel had three lots of goods distrained, two for tithes owed in Withernsea and another for tithes owed in Hollym. In 1682 Richard had two lots of goods distrained for not paying tithes in Hollym, and Daniel was prosecuted twice for the same offence at Withernsea.[563]

It appears from the records that in 1681 Daniel had goods distrained for land at Hollym that was actually owned by Richard. This suggests that, the distraint of goods for not paying tithes was being implemented by those that owned the right to the tithe to raise their income. The suffering that the two brothers experienced was being primarily motivated by economic, rather than religious factors. This helps to explain why Daniel was fined for the land at Hollym in 1681. The impropriator of the tithes was not concerned with pursuing the individual based upon religious differences, but wanted the income that was due to him. It was irrelevant to him which brother the tithe was collected from, only that it was collected.

From 1678 to 1684 Richard and Daniel were consistently prosecuted for refusing to pay tithes, sometimes being prosecuted more than once a year. This reflects the fact that the two brothers owed tithes on multiple parcels of land that they owned, and that the tithe on the different pieces of land was owed to different people, for example a local tithe farmer, as well as to the local vicar. The will of Richard Hardy confirms that this was the case. He left three acres of arable land to his youngest son Thomas, which his wife Ann was to have the use of for her remaining life. He left his eldest son, Daniel, one acre of beans. Presumably, this was a separate field and did not refer to an acre of beans planted on the three acres left to Thomas and Ann. The probate does not stipulate for Daniel to only harvest a crop.[564] The division of his land between the two sons suggests that they were separate fields, with tithe rights owned by different people. Daniel Hardy's will has not survived.

The Hardy brothers' suffering follows the same pattern as that experienced by Joseph Smith and Richard Hide at Easington.[565] Their repeated prosecution for refusing to pay tithes occurred during the succession crisis in the late 1670s and early

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[563] OBS, pp. 236 – 37.
[564] BIA, Calendar of Probate Records from the Act books of the Deanery of Holderness, 24 March 1704/5.
[565] See pp. 216 – 8 above.

1680s. It is notable that the pursuit of the Hardy brothers for the offence ends in 1684, and they were not prosecuted for the following four years. This coincides with the accession of James to the throne, and ends in 1689, following the Glorious Revolution and the succession of William and Mary. Richard and Daniel Hardy, and their wives, were all prosecuted for not attending the parish church in late August and September 1683, as were Smith and Hide at Easington.[566] In September 1684 Daniel Hardy was prosecuted and had goods distrained for attending a Quaker meeting in Patrington. It is these offences that can be regarded as the litmus test for religious persecution during the second half of the seventeenth century, as the local authorities acted when faced with political pressure at a national level.

As at the neighbouring parish of Easington, religious persecution was not a constant threat to the dozen or so Quakers that lived in the parish of Hollym. At times, life did get extremely difficult for them, as has been shown by the example of the Hardy family between 1661 and 1665.[567] However, it is also worth noting that for the twenty four year period between 1664 and 1688 the Quaker suffering records show Richard Hardy experienced ten instances of persecution. Gabriell Tomlinson suffered twelve times during the period between 1666 and 1688. On average these two individuals, who were the most persecuted of the Quaker community in the parish during these periods, suffered less than one instance of persecution every other year. It was certainly not the case that the Quaker community in the parish of Hollym was rigorously persecuted for their beliefs.

What is most striking about Richard Hardy and Gabriell Tomlinson's suffering is that they both actually recorded more instances of suffering after the Toleration Act than they did before it. Richard Hardy had goods distrained a total of 17 times during the ten year period between 1690 and 1699, and Gabriell Tomlinson had goods taken from him 20 times during the same period, both for refusing to pay tithes and church rates. This compares extremely unfavourably to the levels of suffering (see above) that they endured between the mid 1660s and 1688.

On September 13, 16 and 17 1684 eleven Quakers were arrested for holding meetings for worship in the parish of Patrington, which lies south west of Hollym.

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[566] OBS, p. 11/18 for Hardy's suffering.
[567] See p. 219 – 20 above.

Amongst those arrested were Daniel Hardy from Withernsea, Joseph Smith from Easington, and Peter Johnson and William Blossam, both from the village of Patrington itself. None of those arrested were imprisoned, but all were fined and had goods distrained after refusing to pay the fine.[568]

The arrests in Patrington help to demonstrate the extent to which the Quaker community in the region was a close knit network, the local East End preparative meeting being comprised of members from the different parishes around the area, and how well known they were within the region.[569] It also demonstrates the inconsistency with which the laws were applied by the authorities within a small region. Daniel Hardy and William Blossam were by this time well known to the local authorities in the area, both had been imprisoned for attending a Quaker meeting at Easington as early as March 1662, and had since become senior members of the local Quaker community. In 1662 William Blossam was also arrested on his way to a meeting in Patrington, which is good evidence that he was well known by that time to be a Quaker, and in 1665 was prosecuted for not attending the parish church at Patrington. In 1675 he was arrested again for not attending the parish church, and this time was imprisoned for seven years.

The length of this imprisonment reflected the fact that Blossam was a senior member of the Quaker community in the region. By restricting his freedom and movements the authorities hoped that Quakerism in the area would be constrained. The length of Blossam's imprisonment restricted the total number of sufferings that he experienced, which was fifteen between 1662 and 1691, though the bare statistics mask the long term suffering that he endured between 1675 and 1682. Imprisonment was not his only suffering during this period, however. Between 1678 and 1681 Blossam had goods distrained six times whilst imprisoned, for not paying tithes and church rates. The suffering records complained how his goods were being distrained in 1678 'while he is imprisoned'.[570]

In contrast to Blossam, Daniel Hardy suffered 29 times between 1661 and 1700. However, he was not imprisoned for as lengthy a period of time as Blossam

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[568] OBS, p. 19.
[569] For greater detail of the East End meeting and its members see Ch 1, pp. 36 – 8.
[570] OBS, p. 228.

was, and although he served three shorter imprisonments between 1661 and 1665, he was not imprisoned again after the mid 1660s. There is no discernable difference between the status of the two men within the Quaker movement that can be discovered from the records. If anything, it was Daniel Hardy who was the more prominent and active of the two men, though this could be accounted for by Blossam's long imprisonment.

Another possibility is that the local parish officials in Patrington believed that Quakerism was a greater threat than was the case in the village of Withernsea, or the parish of Hollym. However, the statistics provided by the Compton Census for both parishes are virtually identical, the incumbent of Patrington reported twelve Protestant dissenters out of a total population of two hundred, compared to the fifteen out of a population of 207 recorded at Hollym.[571] The figures recorded in the Compton Census broadly agree with the statistics that can be drawn from the Quaker suffering records, where a total of seventeen different individuals were prosecuted in the parish of Patrington between 1654 and 1700. Both parishes experienced similar levels of dissent during the second half of the seventeenth century.

The local authorities may have regarded William Blossam as a larger threat to social harmony than other Quakers, but he did not suffer the highest number of prosecutions in the parish of Patrington. That dubious honour went to Peter Johnson, who was prosecuted twenty nine times between 1672 and 1695. Peter Johnson's first three offences were all committed in the neighbouring parish of Hollym. He was first prosecuted in 1661 for refusing to pay tithes and church rates, and was prosecuted twice more for the same offence in 1663 and 1666.[572] Sometime in the next six years he moved to Patrington, where he was prosecuted for refusing to pay church rates in February 1672. As was the case with the individuals that have been examined in the parishes of Easington and Hollym, Peter Johnson's prosecutions were mainly for refusing to pay tithes and church rates, with the exception of September 1684 when he was one of the eleven Quakers arrested in Patrington for holding Quaker meetings.[573]

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[571] Whiteman (ed.), *The Compton Census*, pp. 600 – 1.
[572] OBS, pp. 6 – 9.
[573] OBS, p. 19.

The pattern of persecution within the parish of Patrington fits with the general pattern of sufferings for the whole of the East Riding. There is a slight variation in the individual case of Peter Johnson, however. During the period that followed the succession of James II, 1685 to 1688, Johnson consistently had goods distrained for refusing to pay tithes and church rates. This was not the case in the parishes of Easington and Hollym, where the period was notable for the lack of prosecution for the Quaker community. Joseph Smith was prosecuted for non-payment of tithes in 1685, but then experienced a gap for three years, until he was pursued again for the same offence after the succession of William and Mary in 1689.

Similarly in Hollym, the Hardy brothers were not prosecuted between 1684 and 1689. It is also notable that other Quakers in the parish of Patrington did not experience any suffering during this period. For example, Samuel Nicholson was one of the eleven in the parish that was prosecuted for attending Quaker meetings in 1684. Nicholson was fined extra for holding a meeting on September 16 at his house, when three others were also charged with attending a conventicle, which resulted in them having goods distrained. Before this Nicholson had goods distrained for refusing to pay tithes for three consecutive years between 1681 and 1683. However, after 1684 he was not prosecuted again until 1689 for refusing to pay tithes.

The same authorities that were pursuing Peter Johnson throughout the period 1685 to 1688 chose to leave Samuel Nicholson alone, despite the fact that he was a known Quaker. As was the case in the comparison between Daniel Hardy and William Blossam, there was an inconsistency in the application of the law between individuals within the locality, and as was the case with Joseph Smith in Easington, individual experiences appear to have been affected by differing local factors.

The final parish of the quartet that saw a relatively large number of sufferings was Welwick, which lies south of Hollym and south east of Patrington. The pattern of sufferings in Welwick was very similar to that which has been outlined in the other parishes, with one individual dominating the statistics. The Quaker suffering books record six different individuals living in the parish between 1678 and 1700. There are no sufferings recorded in the parish before 1678. The Compton Census notes seven Protestant dissenters in the parish in 1676, which broadly agrees with the number

recorded in the suffering books.[574] Before 1678 it would seem that either the Quakers in the parish of Welwick lived peacefully with their neighbours and the local authorities, or that they were not as diligent as those from the neighbouring parishes in reporting their sufferings. Whatever the truth of the matter, there is no doubt that with the exception of Thomas Huntley, Welwick could be regarded as a tolerant parish. Huntley was prosecuted eighteen times between 1681 and 1700, on average virtually once every year, for refusing to pay tithes and church rates, and one case of refusing to either serve in, or pay money towards raising, the local militia.[575]

Although Huntley's total prosecutions throughout the twenty year period between 1681 and 1700 appear to be consistent sufferings for non-payment of tithes and church rates this was not the case. Huntley suffered only three times during the 1680s, in 1681, 1682 and 1683. He then had a six year period of peace when he was free from persecution between 1684 and 1689. Therefore, Huntley's pattern of suffering is similar to that experienced by Joseph Smith and the Hardy Brothers at Easington and Withernsea. Huntley was prosecuted fifteen times during the eleven year period 1690 to 1700. Again, the suffering was actually worse following the Toleration Act than it was in the decade preceding it. Thomas Huntley was not the only Quaker living in the parish, but his sufferings are far more numerous than any other individual during the second half of the seventeenth century.

The next most numerous sufferings were those of John Adam, who was first prosecuted for refusing to pay tithes in 1697 and suffered another four times up to 1700. Adam's prosecutions continued well into the eighteenth century.[576] There is no record of John Adam suffering in the parish before this, though Naomy Adam was prosecuted four times for not paying tithes between 1678 and 1680. It is possible that she was some relation, perhaps even his mother, though it cannot be established for sure. If this was the case, then the Adam family were not pursued by the authorities to the same extent that Huntley was. However, what is only certain is that John Adam held some land in the parish and was consistently persecuted from the mid 1690s.

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[574] Whiteman (ed.), *The Compton Census*, p. 601.
[575] OBS, DDQR/24, p. 6
[576] OBS, DDQR/25, pp. 246 – 90, *passim*, for John Adam's sufferings.

Chapter 12: Local Influences that Affected Persecution.

Some explanation needs to be offered regarding why four parishes in the south eastern corner of the East Riding contribute disproportionately towards the suffering statistics of the Quaker community for the region. One possible reason could be the influence of a local vicar, Henry Lathley, who was noted in the local suffering books as instigating many of Friend's sufferings in the area. Lathley was the vicar in the parish of Hollym throughout much of the second half of the seventeenth century. The suffering records first note his presence, and influence, during the early 1660s and he remained in his post up to, and beyond, the 1680s.

The details of Lathely's life are somewhat vague, though it is clear that he was a royalist during the Civil Wars. Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy* records that he was the vicar of Hollym with Withernsea in 1641. He was sequestered from his position there on December 6 1643 and was restored to the parish on October 10 1660. Lathley's support for the King and the established Church was not welcomed by many of his parishioners. The parish register notes how Lathley 'suffered much by the townsmen, and was indicted by them at York Assizes for being 3 years in arms for the King'.[577]

Upon Lathley's return to the parish in 1660, he would not have been pleased with what he found: dissent from the established Church was prevalent in the area. Its geographical position of the area, on the south eastern tip of the East Riding, was not passed through by travellers. It was, and remains to this day, somewhere that has to be visited deliberately. For this reason it is significant that George Fox visited the area as early as 1652. Fox described in his Journal how he visited Patrington and passed 'to the farthest land in the country'.[578] The fact that Fox chose to visit the region when travelling the country strongly suggests that dissent from the established church was already well grounded in the area, and that he believed he was delivering a message that would find some support in the region. However, he was not initially welcomed in the area, and was refused lodgings and food in Patrington, staying outside the town

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[577] A. G. Matthews (ed.) *Walker Revised: Being a Revision of John Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy during the Grand Rebellion 1642 – 1660* (Oxford, 1948).
[578] G. Fox, *Journal*, p. 75.

before he was seized and escorted back. Fox does not record who seized and escorted him back into the town, though it would seem that it was not the local authorities, for he records how he spent 'a few days' in Patrington, before holding a meeting that was well attended by the local townspeople, and where Fox recalled there were 'many convinced'.[579] Subsequently, there was much local Quaker activity, principally led by Thomas Stansfield, who was imprisoned in 1654 for interrupting the church service in the parish church.[580]

Therefore, when Henry Lathley returned to his parish he was faced with a strong core of local dissent in the region, as well as parishioners with whom he had fundamentally disagreed over church doctrine, and who had been prepared to indict him. Faced with such opposition it would be thought that, with the opportunity that the passing of the Clarendon Code provided, Lathley attempted to manipulate the law to its full extent in a bid to re-impose his, and the established Church's, authority.

Lathley exploited the opportunities that he got to harass the local Quaker community. In 1666 he was responsible for the imprisonment of four Friends, based upon a letter that he sent to the Bishop's recorder at York. In the letter he accused the local Quaker community of being comprised of 'rebellious people', and that he could not live beside them. He further alleged that they had been involved in the 'Westran Plot'.[581] The Bishop's recorder found it a 'strange letter' and passed in on to the governor of Clifford's Tower at York Castle, who in turn was so concerned with its contents that he sent it to the Lord Chancellor, who passed it to the King and Privy Council. They ordered that Lathley was to meet with Francis Cobb, the High Sheriff of Yorkshire, and three other justices, to explain in detail what he had alleged in the letter. However, Lathley refused to attend such a meeting. He was brought before Cobb and three other justices of the peace for the East Riding, Robert Hillyard, William Gee and Hugh Lister, after Cobb sent the Duke of Buckingham's Marshall to bring Lathely before them. The justices found the allegations in the letter to be false, but granted Lathley a warrant to summon as many Quakers as he could produce evidence against to appear before them at Beverley. In total thirteen Quakers were presented before the justices on February 22 1666, and four, John Nicholson, Peter

[579] Fox, *Journal*, pp. 74 – 5.
[580] OBS, DDQR/25, p. 9.
[581] It is unclear which plot Lathley is referring to here. Most probably it was the Northern Plot of 1663, when the Quakers were implicated at York. See above p. 180 – 1 for details.

Johnson, Peter Acklam and John Isaac, were taken to York and imprisoned until the following Assizes at Beverley, at which they were released.[582]

The letter that Lathley sent was full of lurid allegations against the Quaker community in the region, which could not be substantiated, hence it was rejected by the magistrates once Lathley was examined. However, the magistrates were clearly concerned by the Quaker activity in the region, and therefore were prepared to allow Lathley to present as many of the Quakers as possible from the region. What is most surprising about the incident was that Lathley only presented thirteen Quakers from a wide region covering the south east of the East Riding, when there was at least that number living in his own parish of Hollym. Unfortunately, the suffering book does not record the names of the thirteen who were presented, only those four that were imprisoned.

The incident reveals in microcosm the concern of the local authorities with the dissenting community, but also shows that they acted within well-defined boundaries, and did not over-react to malicious gossip and allegation. The magistrates appear to have believed that they did need to act against the Quaker community, but were not willing to act beyond the boundaries of the law. They were primarily concerned with maintaining the social peace, and therefore did not feel that they had to commit large numbers of Quakers to prison who were mainly living peaceable lives. The Quakers themselves knew what these boundaries were, and exploited them effectively in their own defence against persecution.

In 1686 Christopher Hutton was involved in a case that helps to demonstrate the manipulation of the system that was undertaken by both the Quakers and their persecutors. The persecution of Hutton reveals the complex interaction that occurred between the local officials and the Quaker community in the region. Hutton had valuable experience of the legal system, and good knowledge of his own rights within it. He was a well known Quaker from Warter, in the centre of the East Riding. Convinced of the Quaker message early in the 1650s, he was imprisoned for speaking out against the payment of tithes and the corruption of the legal system at Upper Helmsley in 1654. In June 1662 he was imprisoned for two years and nine months for

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[582] OBS, DDQR/24, pp. 23 – 4.

attending a Quaker meeting at Pocklington. Shortly after his release from gaol in March 1665 he was again arrested and imprisoned for attending a Quaker meeting at Bishop Wilton.[583]

Hutton was no stranger to the working of the legal system. In 1686 he was prosecuted by John Stapleton, a local magistrate, for holding a Quaker meeting at his house. Stapleton ordered the local officials to inform against Hutton, which they did reluctantly. The magistrate then issued a warrant for the distraint of Hutton's goods to the value of forty pounds, twenty for holding the meeting and twenty more for having a Quaker preacher there. The warrant named the preacher as one John Dixon, who Friends complained had not been at the meeting, nor in fact was known to them. The local officers were 'much pressed' by Stapleton to implement the warrant, and removed 140 of Hutton's sheep to cover the fine.

Hutton knew that Stapleton's actions were 'both without sufficient ground in the law and also beyond its utmost rigour', and consequently lodged an appeal at the quarter sessions. In response, Stapleton 'privately altered' the record and reduced the fine to thirty pounds, and other (unnamed) magistrates persuaded Hutton to withdraw his appeal on the promise of moderation. However, Hutton's minor victory against Stapleton was short lived, for Stapleton had the officers sell 104 of his sheep, which they did for £30 6s, which Friends complained was 'much under value'. The suffering book records that rather than actually moderating the fine, the justices actually added to it in its execution.[584]

The incident highlights the fact that it is wrong to regard the Quaker community as passive and helpless victims of the persecuting state in the form of local officials, and that they were in fact active players in their persecution, and fully understood the consequences of their actions, and knew their own rights under the law. Hutton knew that the prosecution by Stapleton was actually going beyond the boundaries that the law allowed, and as such, was himself protected and had rights under the law against unfair persecution by an individual justice. Stapleton also knew that he had gone beyond his own boundaries, and because of this was prepared to reduce Hutton's fine from forty to thirty pounds. However, Stapleton was aware that

583 Besse, *Sufferings*, p. 91; EBS, pp. 27 – 8.
584 GBS, vol. 6 part II, p. 519.

that the system could be manipulated so that the larger fine against Hutton could still be implemented. By ordering the local officers to sell the sheep under value he ensured that Hutton suffered the maximum possible consequence, which he could demonstrably justify to other magistrates within a legal framework.

A similar example of this was the case of Grace Barwick of Kelk, in the north east of the Riding. In 1662 Richard Hunter, the vicar of Foston, sued Grace Barwick retrospectively for tithes and church rates at the Exchequer. Hunter had been removed from his position during the Interregnum and had returned to his post after the Restoration. Hunter claimed dues that Barwick said had been paid by her first husband, Ralph Porter, to his predecessor.

Barwick was not prepared to suffer for her testimony against tithes if she did not have to. Furthermore, Barwick could demonstrate that the dues had been paid by 'certain writing' that she possessed. She therefore went to London to defend herself against the writ that had been raised against her. However, at the Exchequer she was asked to swear to her answer, which she could not do, and instead she 'plainly declared' the truth of the matter. This was taken advantage of by Hunter, who subsequently raised another writ against her for failing to swear and had her arrested, and imprisoned at York Castle for three months in 1663. The Quaker suffering book noted how this harsh action had removed her from 'her family and children'.[585]

As was the case with Christopher Hutton, both sides in this dispute knew their rights. Barwick understood that she was being unfairly prosecuted, and was not prepared to suffer unnecessarily. She had evidence to support her defence against the prosecution. This gave her enough confidence in the strength of her case, and her rights under the law, that she was prepared to travel to London to challenge the case, rather than let the case go uncontested and suffer meekly.

Similarly, Hunter was using an extreme measure by raising a writ against Barwick at the Exchequer Court in London. He would have known the inconvenience and extra expense that this would cause Barwick, with her having to go and answer the writ. He must also have known that Quakers would not swear oaths, and that she

[585] YQBS, vol. 1.1 part 3, p. 16.

would therefore leave herself open to further prosecution, and a greater chance of imprisonment, if she could be convicted for not swearing.

Therefore, the suffering instigated by Hunter against Barwick appears to be particularly malicious, with greater motivation behind its instigation than merely to collect some tithes and church rates. In this case it would seem that the suffering was motivated by either a personal grudge against an individual, or strong religious convictions against Barwick for her Quaker beliefs. However, the suffering records show Foston to be a relatively tolerant parish. Sixteen Protestant dissenters were recorded in the parish in the Compton Census, and there were only fifteen cases of persecution recorded in the suffering books during the second half of the seventeenth century (including the one involving Grace Barwick detailed above), nine of which occurred during or after 1689. The motivation of Hunter was most probably a combination of both the personal and religious, though it does not appear that he pursued Quakers in the area with the same zeal that can be attributed to Henry Lathley at Hollym.

The parish that saw most prosecutions of Quakers during the second half of the seventeenth century was Bridlington, in the north eastern corner of the Riding. The parish of Bridlington included both the coastal town and the Quay, which were about a mile apart. Bridlington was one of the most populous parishes in the region outside the county town of Beverley and the city of Hull. The Compton Census recorded a population of 500, which included thirty Protestant dissenters, and no Catholics.

The Quaker suffering records include the names of sixty five individuals that were prosecuted in the parish, though not all of these would have lived there. Many of those names given in the suffering books were from neighbouring parishes and had come to the town to attend a Quaker meeting. The vast majority of the prosecutions that occurred were for holding meetings for worship in the town, which is in sharp contrast to most other parishes in the Riding, where non-payment of tithes was the most usual offence for which the Quaker community suffered. This reflects the nature of the relatively large population of Bridlington, which as a coastal town and port had a more urban character than most other places in the East Riding during the second

half of the seventeenth century. It also reflects the fact that the Quaker community at Bridlington was well established.[586]

In January 1661 five Quakers were arrested in the town for holding a meeting for worship, and subsequently refused to swear any Oath before the magistrates, which led to their imprisonment. They were the first Quakers in the town to be arrested for holding a meeting, but were not to be the last. However, what is significant is that they were the first and last Quakers to be imprisoned by the local authorities for this sequence of offences. After 1660 all those who were arrested in the town were fined by the magistrates, not imprisoned. There was one exception: Lancelot Menson was imprisoned on February 1 1676 on a writ of *excommunicato capiendo*, which was raised against him by the local magistrates for 'divers injuries and contempts'.[587] There were 140 instances of persecution recorded in the suffering records against Quakers in Bridlington, 133 of which were for meeting together for worship. The remaining seven were made up of three for not attending the parish church, one each for refusing to pay tithes and church rates and two for refusing to swear an oath.

The sufferings that were experienced by the Quakers in Bridlington help to shape the graph of overall persecution in the East Riding.[588] Persecution in Bridlington contributes most to the total of sufferings during the peak years of 1670 and 1682. This is a reflection of the fact that Bridlington was an urban centre, with a relatively large Quaker population. Consequently, it acted as a magnet to the Quaker community in the area, drawing individuals into the town for meetings for worship. During the earlier period of persecution in the early 1660s Bridlington remained relatively quiet, with only the five prosecutions in January 1661 for holding a meeting for worship, and the prosecution of two Friends, Francis Story and Mary Coulson, for not attending the parish church in March 1662. There was no more persecution of Quakers in Bridlington during the 1660s, until the passing of the second Conventicle Act in 1670 that precipitated the second severe period of persecution.

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[586] See Ch. 1, pp. 34 – 8 for details.
[587] KBS, p. 177.
[588] See p. 179 above for the graph.

In 1670 the authorities in Bridlington rigorously pursued Friends for meeting in the town and there was a total of 47 prosecutions. The total number of prosecutions for this offence in the East Riding during the year was 104. The next highest number of prosecutions in a single place was 17 in North Frodingham. Friends meeting in Bridlington accounted for 43% of the total prosecutions that occurred in the East Riding in 1670. However, the pattern of persecution in Bridlington fits that described above for the whole of the East Riding, and the country, with the Quaker community suffering a brief period of persecution during this year.[589]

After 1670 Friends were not prosecuted in Bridlington, with the single exception of Lancelot Menson in 1675. The Quaker community enjoyed an eleven year period of peace until 1682 and the political turmoil caused by the exclusion crisis. During the three months of December, January and February 1682/1683 Friends were again pursued by the authorities in Bridlington. This time the total number of sufferings for holding meetings for worship in the town was 81, out of a total for the county of 108. Friends' suffering in Bridlington accounted for 75% of all the sufferings in the East Riding for this offence during the year. In fact, there were only three other places in the county where Quakers were prosecuted for holding meetings during this spell of persecution, the villages of Elmswell, Harpham and Swinekeld. After the winter of 1682/83 Friends were again left to hold meetings in peace in Bridlington.

Unlike the parishes of Hollym, Easington, Patrington and Welwick, no one individual dominates the statistics for suffering in Bridlington. Instead, a number of prominent Quakers, such as Robert Lamplough, Lancelot Menson, Francis Simpson, Mary Coulson, Thomas Anderson and William Stringer, were each prosecuted four or five times during the period 1660 to 1691. What is most striking about the pattern of sufferings at Bridlington is the difference in the amount of persecution that the Quaker community experienced during the peak period of 1660 compared to the later periods of 1670 and 1682. The total number of sufferings experienced by Friends in the town increased from 5 in 1660 to 47 in 1670 and 81 in 1682 – a remarkable increase that requires some explanation.

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[589] See graph on p. 179.

William Osbaldeston, who was a magistrate in the area, undoubtedly had a detrimental effect upon Friends' experience of suffering and persecution in Bridlington. However, the presence of a persecuting magistrate also resulted in the townspeople of Bridlington reacting in the favour of the local Quaker community, and led to many acts of practical tolerance by neighbours and friends of those who were persecuted, in an attempt to reduce the effects of the persecution that they faced.

William Osbaldeston was a local landowner and lord of the manor at Hunmanby, approximately eight miles north of Bridlington. He was also a magistrate for the region, and was a staunch Anglican. Hunmanby was a large village, and had a population of about eight hundred recorded in the Compton Census. Notably, only seven recusants and three Protestant dissenters were recorded by the incumbant.[590] As the local landlord, it appears that Osbaldeston had an important influence and held tight control over his tenants, which included their religious practice. Only two Quakers were recorded in the village in the suffering records. John Hopper and John Hudson were both fined and had goods distrained for refusing to pay tithes in 1657.[591] This is the only mention of any Quaker activity in the village, though in 1682 Hopper had goods distrained after his wife had attended a Quaker meeting in Bridlington. The suffering book does not record whether Hopper still lived in Hunmanby or not.[592]

Osbaldeston was well known to the local Quaker community, who regarded him as a cruel persecutor. The Kelk suffering book recorded how 'his cruelty was such, that he said he would persecute the Quakers, as long as he lived'.[593] However, in Bridlington by the 1680s the Quaker community were not reviled or regarded as a group that threatened social harmony. Instead, the local population and officials actually rallied around their dissenting neighbours to try and protect them from the spate of persecution that they faced, and which was mainly instigated by Osbaldeston, during the winter of 1682/83.

The constables and churchwardens at Bridlington were reprimanded by Osbaldeston for failing to carry out their duties and present Quakers for holding meetings in the town. Osbaldeston's reaction to the lack of co-operation from the

[590] Whiteman (ed.), *The Compton Census*, p. 603.
[591] YQBS, vol. 1.1 part 3, p. 9.
[592] KBS, p. 180.
[593] KBS, p. 183.

local authorities was to employ informers against the constables and churchwardens. The suffering records noted how two informers, William Roxby and Thomas Sewell, entered a Quaker meeting at Bridlington and, after staying for an hour, left to inform two of the towns constables, Thomas Corbett and John Booth. The constables came to the meeting in their own time, after first searching for a witness to bring with them to corroborate what they found. By the time they arrived 'they found no meeting', the meeting having finished. However, the two informers had gone on to inform Osbaldeston of the meeting, for he had employed them to inform him of both the Quaker meeting and of the constables neglect of their duties. As a result Corbett and Booth were both fined five pounds and ordered to pay the informers twenty shillings each on top of their fine.[594]

In this case the two informers, Roxby and Sewell, were both from the village of Hunmanby. Therefore, Osbaldeston knew of the protection that Friends at Bridlington were getting from the townspeople and employed informers from outside the town. Additionally, they were from his land at Hunmanby, which meant that he had further control over them, either as tenants, employees or both. By using them as informers he further guaranteed that he could gain the conviction that he wanted against the Bridlington constables, which would enable him to further pursue the Quaker community without their protection from local officials. Indeed, the officials of Bridlington were suitably chastised by the prosecution of two of their number. In January 1683 a Quaker meeting was attended by the constables, churchwardens, and overseers of the poor after information was given by the town watchman. The suffering records noted how they were 'constrained against their will to come to the meeting house' for fear of their own prosecution.[595]

Osbaldeston did not get everything his own way, however. The officials of Bridlington and the townspeople had still been needed to carry out the penalties that were incurred by the Quakers. This was an area of the law that officialdom could not effectively regulate. When goods and possessions belonging to Quakers were distrained they had to be sold to raise the money to pay the fine. The Bridlington officials refused to sell the goods that they claimed under their market value, despite Osbaldeston's direction that they should 'distrain and sell at any rate'. Likewise, the

[594] KBS, p. 179; YQBS, vol. 1.1 part 2, p. 70.
[595] YQBS, vol. 1.1 part 2, p. 72.

townspeople of Bridlington regularly refused to buy the goods that had been distrained, which further added to the officials' inability to sell the goods.

The Kelk suffering book recorded how Osbaldeston ordered that the money that should have been raised from the sale of the goods should be brought to him, believing that the officials were simply refusing to carry out their duties. He threatened the officers that they would be fined five pounds each, or indicted in the Crown Office, the criminal side of the King's Bench. The result of this was that the officers of Bridlington ended up paying many of the fines that were levied against the Quaker community themselves, on the understanding that they would claim it back from Friends as they could get it.[596] For example, in January 1683 Francis Story was fined for attending a meeting for worship. The town constables distrained a cow and heifer from him to sell to pay the fine that he had incurred, but nobody would buy them. As a result one of the constables (his name is not mentioned) paid the fine himself and returned the animals to Story. Whether any retribution was claimed for the money that was paid out is not recorded in the suffering book. This makes it unlikely that anything was claimed back from Story, for if it had it would have been noted.[597]

Very little was actually claimed or paid back to the officials by the Quaker community in Bridlington. They did not expect, or want, others to pay their fines, and simply refused to acknowledge the fines that were raised against them, for they believed that they were not doing anything wrong. Friends noted in their suffering records how during the period of persecution in winter 1682/83 the eleven town officials (four constables, four churchwardens and three overseers of the poor) had paid out a total of seventy-seven pounds in fines for the Quaker community, and had received seventeen back, leaving them out of pocket by sixty pounds, equivalent to over five pounds each per office holder. In addition, this total did not include the fines that the two constables received, or other charges, such as the payments made to informers.[598]

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[596] KBS, p. 183.
[597] KBS, p. 181.
[598] KBS, p. 185.

The officers at Bridlington also acted to try and prevent Friends in the town from incurring any unnecessary fines, when it was possible. In February 1683 they recognised that fines had already been accumulated up to sixty pounds for the previous meetings that had been held in the town, and that the Quaker community (and possibly their own resources) could not afford to allow the fines to escalate further. Understanding that a fine was liable every week of up to twenty pounds for the meeting house where their worship was held under the Conventicle Act, the town officers convinced Friends to lock up the meeting house doors in the town, which saved them incurring the extra penalties for the meeting house that would have otherwise occurred. Osbaldeston forbade the officers from keeping Friends from their meeting house, telling them that they were hindering the King's revenues by their actions, but otherwise could do little about it. Friends in the town continued to hold their meetings outside the meeting house doors, which the town's watchmen attended and informed the officers of. The officers, 'who durst not refuse', came back to the meeting with the watchmen and took the names of those present to Osbaldeston who duly issued warrants against them.[599]

It was not only at Bridlington that acts of toleration such as this occurred, nor was it confined to the town or village officials. At the village of Harpham, Friends had organised to hold a meeting for worship on February 4 1683 at Christopher Oliver's house. However, Oliver's neighbours heard that Robert Fox, a village constable, and Thomas Gibson, the parish clerk, knew of the meeting and were going to act as informers against it. They prevented Friends from entering Oliver's house and yard, and therefore saved him a twenty pound fine. The meeting was held in the street outside and Oliver, his wife Jane, and five others were all indicted. They all had their fine paid by the neighbours that had prevented the meeting from being held in the first place.[600]

In total the suffering records for the East Riding include 114 cases of fines being paid for individual Friends by people from outside the Quaker community. Those that paid the fines were a mixture of family, friends, business associates and neighbours. Of these 114 cases, 63 occurred in Bridlington and 54 of them were during the winter of 1682/83. During this period there was a total of 81 prosecutions

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[599] KBS, p. 185.
[600] KBS, p. 182.

against Quakers, and the officers of Bridlington paid the fines in 76 per cent of the cases. The remaining nine cases in Bridlington of fines being paid for Quakers happened during the peak period of persecution that occurred in 1670. For example, Henry Jarrat was fined for attending a Quaker meeting in Bridlington in 1670; the fine was paid by 'his kindred'. During the same year Lancelot Menson had his fine paid by a neighbour, and Will Robson's fine was paid by 'his relations'.[601]

The officers of Bridlington appear to have sympathised with their plight, not because they agreed with their religious beliefs, but because they recognised that the Quaker community in the town was not any threat to social order, and were peaceable and industrious neighbours. As such, the persecution that was being orchestrated by Osbaldeston appeared unfair, and the officials were prepared to try and reduce the effect that it had at their own expense if necessary. Their actions can be regarded as practical toleration, but it was brought about because of the intolerance of the higher authorities, such as the magistrate Osbaldeston.

Similar events happened elsewhere in the East Riding. At Skipsea in May 1683 eight Quakers were prosecuted for not attending the parish church for worship, Thomas Rich and his wife both had their fine paid by neighbours, as did John Moore. Thomas Thompson and his wife also had their fine paid by a neighbour, though he had his fine waived after he appealed against it on the grounds that he was actually imprisoned at the time.[602] In 1699 William Clappison of Owstwick and Timothy Westerdale of Roos both had their fines for refusing to pay church rates and tithes paid for them by a neighbour that owed them money, without their consent.[603] It was not only later in the second half of the seventeenth century that Quakers benefited from others paying their fines. In 1668 John Lyth was imprisoned for refusing to pay tithes, but was released after a business associate paid the fine and claimed back his money from their later profits, the suffering book noted how this had cost Lyth eight pounds.[604]

The payment of fines for Quakers by friends and neighbours is good evidence of practical toleration, and the protection of Friends from the persecuting authorities.

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[601] KBS, pp. 174 – 175.
[602] KBS, p. 186.
[603] GBS, vol. 9 part 2, pp. 116 – 117.
[604] OBS, DDQR/25, p. 5.

However, it should be noted the phenomenon was in fact relatively rare. The 114 cases of fines being paid for the Quaker community in the East Riding needs to be set against the 1358 cases where individuals were fined and paid the penalty for their offences through the distraint and sale of their goods. Despite this, it is worth noting that the suffering records for the East Riding do not include any account of informers and officials severely abusing their position and taking advantage of Quakers who were vulnerable after a warrant had been raised.

For example, Craig Horle recounts the case of Martha Halsey in London in 1684 when Christopher Smith, an informer, and the local constables and watchmen came to distrain goods from her. They took everything that they could find 'from top to bottom of the house, spoiled most of her shop goods...drank some, gave away some, sold some'. Smith kept all the money and then he and six others took possession of the house for two days, pulling down her grates and copper and breaking her cistern. They even removed 'the empty bottles and old shoes'.[605]

In another case in Darlington in 1685 two informers, who were both drunk, and two constables returned to the house of Robert Truman where they had distrained goods earlier. They smashed down his door 'with a smith's great hammer', and found Truman's wife, young child and servant in the house. Finding little left in the house to take, one of the drunken informers 'fell on hacking up the bricks of the floor to take up a table that lay upon the posts fastened to the ground'. He shouted 'whore' at Truman's wife, threatened the child 'to get out of his presence' and grabbed the servant by the neck, 'swearing he cared not what he did', and saying that he was 'as bad as could be'.[606]

These cases can be contrasted with the complaint from the East Riding in 1665, when a group of Friends were transported to York gaol and the bailiffs claimed goods in lieu of payment. In total, £4 10s worth of goods were taken and they 'hunted about for more', for an order that granted them 25s. Friends brought the matter before one of the justices that had raised the order, Toby Jenkins, who 'was ashamed of it' and ordered the bailiffs to come before him to explain their actions. However, the

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[605] GBS, vol 5, pp. 357 – 58; cited in Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, p. 131.
[606] GBS, vol. 4 , p. 448, cited in Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal Sysytem*, p. 132.

bailiffs went to the other magistrate that had raised the warrant for their defence, Richard Robinson, 'and so justice was sleighted'.[607]

Richard Robinson appears regularly throughout the Elloughton suffering records, raising warrants against the Quaker community in the area. Clearly Friends knew which of the local magistrates was more sympathetic towards their cause, in this case Jenkins, and appealed to them for defence from abuse of the law. This tactic was not confined only to local magistrates, but also used for the judges of the assize. For example, in August 1684 Friends at York petitioned Judge Holloway, who had sat at York assizes and imprisoned those Quakers brought before him. When he was at Lancaster assizes Friends from York let him know that many of those imprisoned had been sick, and four had died since he left. They reported that Holloway 'seemed under a trouble to hear it' and he promised that when he returned to London he would let the King know and 'do all he could do' for them.[608]

Cases such as those that occurred in London and Darlington were in the extreme around the country, but nevertheless their absence in the East Riding is indicative of a social cohesion in some towns and villages that was not matched in many larger urban centres. These cases all emphasise the importance of the individual, their personal beliefs, attitude and morality. The bailiffs in the East Riding, and the informers and constables in the examples from London and Darlington were willing to take advantage of their position to gain personally from the Quaker community, who were left vulnerable to such abuse because as dissenters they were breaking the law.

However, these cases need to be contrasted with the situation in the town of Bridlington, where the local officials did everything within their power to try and protect the Quaker community from the abuse of the law. The officials at Bridlington were friends and neighbours of the Quakers in the town, and lived in a close and relatively small community. They recognised that the Quakers in the town were not any threat to that community, and they were in fact valued members of it. Therefore, they were willing to support fellow community members against abuse from the authorities, in the form of a persecuting magistrate. What is perhaps most important,

[607] EBS, p. 27.
[608] GBS, vol. 6 part II, p. 607.

is that these cases can be regarded as the exceptions, not the rule. For the most part the Quaker community lived peacefully beside their neighbours, a situation which left no historical record, and which is the best evidence of practical toleration occurring on an everyday basis.

Conclusion

I. Early Quakerism in the East Riding.

Quakerism came to the East Riding of Yorkshire early during the development of the movement across the country, and quickly took root and flourished. What is most striking about the development of early Quakerism is the speed with which it gathered up converts from a wide range of religious backgrounds. George Fox first visited the region during the winter of 1651/1652, and travelled the area preaching what is now recognised as the foundation of Quaker theology: belief of the light within the conscience of all individuals. The fact that this message was quickly embraced by a significant minority of people, not only in the East Riding, but also across the country, is evidence that it was a position that many had already reached in their spiritual evolution.

One of those early converts from the region was William Dewsbury, who went on to be one of the national leaders of the Quaker movement during the second half of the seventeenth century. Dewsbury quickly realised that although Quakerism was drawing a large number of loose-knit individuals together, the fledgling movement would need a formal structure and some organisation to be able to both survive, and develop further. In January 1653 he settled a weekly meeting, and instigated a general meeting for Friends in the East Riding that was held every three weeks. Following this he sent an epistle to other Friends around the country that provided details of this basic structure for their meetings.[609]

This was the first recorded attempt by a Quaker to place a system and structure of religious worship and discipline upon the loosely formed network of early members. It was a structure that was extremely similar to that instigated by George Fox during the late 1660s. Following his release from imprisonment at Scarborough Castle in 1666 Fox travelled down through Yorkshire and on towards London. During this journey he recognised that the initial zeal and momentum of the Quaker movement was flagging, damaged by his confinement and the imprisonment of other

[609] See Ch. 1, pp. 30 – 32.

national leaders, such as William Dewsbury, who was imprisoned at Warwick. Starting in London, and travelling around the rest of the country, Fox re-organised the formal structure of the movement into preparative (or particular), monthly, and quarterly meetings, with a national meeting held annually. It was this form that is recognised by historians of Quakerism today as founding the structure of the movement. However, it is important to note that this structure was not an alien one to early Friends, imposed upon them by Fox's charisma and authority. Rather, it was the re-assertion of a structure with which they were familiar, and had been first recorded by Dewsbury.

In the East Riding the re-organisation that was instigated by Fox created three monthly meetings to cover the region: Owstwick, Kelk and Elloughton. Owstwick covered the south eastern area of the county, Elloughton the south west, and Kelk the north. All three monthly meetings' minute books are dated from their settlement in 1669. Throughout the second half of the seventeenth century the three monthly meetings led a somewhat nomadic existence, being held in various villages that fell under their jurisdiction.[610] The wanderings of the meetings reflect the important role that individual members played in the development of Quakerism. Meetings were held at members' houses, or on their property. Early Quakerism was heavily dependent upon the goodwill and willingness of individuals to host these meetings. It was not something that was done lightly. Under the 1670 Conventicle Act the host of such a meeting risked a fine of £20, in addition to the fine that they were liable to for attending the meeting.

The decision to establish a meeting house did not necessarily lead to a centralised place for Friends in the region to worship. The three meetings led nomadic lives because it was the most geographically convenient way of holding the monthly meetings. As long as individuals were willing to host the meetings at their houses others appear to have been willing to travel to them. With individuals dispersed across a wide geographical area, Friends in the region appear to have settled upon the most convenient compromise for all members: meetings were held around the region in rotation. This ensured that all members in the area had a chance to participate in the meetings during the year and therefore could share in the administration and

[610] See Ch. 1, pp. 35 – 9 for more detail.

organisation of the movement as well as in their worship. It helped to foster a strong sense of identity and purpose that was necessary for Quakerism to survive and develop.

It was not until the new monthly meetings became established that Friends sought to centralise their worship around a meeting house. In Owstwick, a meeting house was established relatively early, sometime in the early 1670s. The precise location and date is unknown, though it is thought that the meeting house had previously been a residence of a local Friend. Elloughton monthly meeting did not establish a meeting house until 1687, when a cottage and tenement were purchased at North Cave for the purpose. Both meetings did not settle into their central building immediately. It was not until late in the seventeenth century that the two monthly meetings had a regular, fixed location: Elloughton at North Cave in 1696 (it became known as Cave monthly meeting), and Owstwick in the village of the same name in 1688. Even then, the Owstwick meeting was held on occasion in Hull, where a meeting house had been established on Lowgate in 1687 when the property of a local Friend was purchased for £75. It was also held in the villages of Easington and Withernsea, where it was hosted by a local Friend.

Like Owstwick, Kelk monthly meeting also established a meeting house relatively early. Its whereabouts is unknown, other than it was in the village of Kelk. Unlike the meetings at Elloughton and Owstwick, Kelk quickly became settled at the meeting house during the 1670s. During the 1680s the meeting began to be shared between Kelk and Bridlington as the dynamics of the meeting's membership changed, and Bridlington became the larger preparative meeting. A meeting house had been established at Bridlington in 1678 when a tenement was purchased for the purpose by Friends from the town. However, similarly to Owstwick meeting, Kelk meeting was also held in two nearby villages, Haisthorpe and Harpham.

During this period all three monthly meetings in the East Riding shared an important common feature: declining membership. Like Elloughton, Kelk meeting changed its name during the later seventeenth century and became known as Bridlington monthly meeting, to reflect the changing membership numbers. Analysis of the marriage patterns of Quakers in the East Riding shows that the sharpest decline

occurred for all three monthly meetings during the 1690s.[611] The initial decline occurred as the first generation of Friends, who had actively and enthusiastically chosen their religion, died. The second and third generations had not made the same conscious choice, but had it made for them by their parents. Consequently many did not have the same strong enthusiasm for their beliefs, and simply drifted away from the movement. This was exacerbated by the practice of endogamy, which limited Friends' choice of partners to a group where numbers were already in decline. Increasingly, members had to locate partners from further afield than was usual practice. In turn, this led to a redistribution of the Quaker population between different areas and regions.

Rather than being a separate entity from seventeenth century society, the Quaker community was congruent with it. The marriage patterns of the Quakers in the East Riding reveal that Friends' were not completely separated from the structures that shaped the patterns of life. The economic cycle of rural life shaped Friends' marriage patterns in the East Riding, as it did the rest of the population around the country. Furthermore, Friends' system of marriage was comparable to the practice of the established Church. The declaration of the couple before the monthly meetings was similar to the issuing of marriage banns. Both gave an opportunity for any moral or ethical objection to be raised by the local community.

In the case of re-marriage, Friends closely protected the rights of any children from a previous marriage, which were legally granted through the probate system. The probate system was used by employing non-Quaker intermediaries, who could prove wills in the church courts and be bound to them to provide portions, or bonds for children. In turn, the monthly meetings would appoint individuals to act as trustees, and guarantors for the portions or bonds. By using this method, Friends avoided direct contact with the church courts, but were able to work through them. In practice Quakers did not repudiate the established structures and customs of the world, but worked flexibly within them. This enabled them to be able function as a group within society.

[611] See Ch. 2, p. 49.

The social origin of early Friends has been an area that has given rise to some debate between historians. It is also an area that reveals how closely the local Quaker community was connected to the basic structures of the region from which it was drawn. Rather than it being the case that early Quakerism was composed of individuals who came from a social background that fits into a neat categorisation for historians, they instead reflected the often complex social structure of the area from which they came. It is necessary to emphasise here the importance of considering the local social structure when considering the social origins of Friends from any area, something that is often, sadly, missing from the debate.

In the East Riding, Friends were more likely to be slightly better off than the general population, but they were certainly not drawn from markedly higher social groupings. An analysis of the hearth tax returns for the region shows that Quakers were less likely to be from the social group that was discharged from payment. They were also more unlikely to be drawn from those who could be regarded as the social elite, in the East Riding categorised as those who owned properties with seven or more hearths.[612]

When compared to evidence from elsewhere around the country, the evidence from the East Riding is most closely aligned to that presented by Hurwich. Richard Vann's belief that Friends were drawn from an increasingly exclusive social background is not borne out by the East Riding data. Moreover, the differences in the social background of Friends from East Yorkshire and those examined by Davies in Essex are a product of the differences in the social background of the region that was being studied, not the differences between Friends and the population of the area.[613]

In a rural region that was dominated by agriculture it is no surprise that the vast majority of Friends (for whom occupational details are known) were also involved in agriculture. Although they attempted to live a separate existence from the rest of the world, the Quaker community remained firmly within its basic structures. Though set apart through their religious beliefs and worship, Friends remained congruent with the rest of society during the second half of the seventeenth century.

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[612] See Ch. 3, p. 61.
[613] See Ch. 3, pp. 64 – 6.

II. Quaker Literature and the practise of religious persecution and toleration.

The early Quakers produced a vast amount of printed literature throughout the second half of the seventeenth century. It was an important propaganda weapon that was used as a two edged sword. It promoted the beliefs, structure and organisation of the Quaker movement both to the general public and to its own members. It was a crucial tool in the evolution of the movement that helped develop the loose-knit network of individuals and groups of Friends scattered across the country into a recognisable religious movement.

Kelk and Elloughton monthly meeting minutes contain a list of the books that were held by the two meetings, which were lent out to their members. These book lists can be used as a guide to identify the subjects that were of most interest to Friends from the East Riding during the seventeenth century. They help to reveal the influences that shaped the attitudes and behaviour of Friends in the region towards the rest of society.

The books that were published by Friends had to first be approved by the central administration through the Second Day's Morning Meeting. The Second Day's Morning Meeting was instigated by Yearly meeting in 1672, when it appointed ten Friends to oversee the editing and publication of all printed material that was issued by Quakers. This system was formalised and re-structured a year later by George Fox, who expanded the committee into the Second Day's Morning Meeting. It was comprised of some of the leading Friends in London, who were also regarded as making up part of the national leadership. The meeting was regularly attended by such prominent individuals as Stephen Crisp, George Whitehead and William Penn. Other travelling ministers also attended the meeting when they were in London.

The establishment of the Second Day's Morning Meeting represented the centralisation of an already established system. The meeting did not represent a radical change in Quaker ideology or structure. The meeting in London merely took over and continued the work that had previously been done by individuals around the country. It provided a centralised meeting that could provide greater organisation and control of Friends publications across the nation. Similarly to the establishment of the structure of Friends' meetings by Fox during the late 1660s, it was not a radical new

development, but was an important part of the evolution of the Quaker movement. The Second Day's Morning Meeting was not under the control of George Fox, as has been argued by Thomas O' Malley. In fact, Fox had a number of publications revised by the meeting, much to his annoyance.[614]

The Second Day's Morning Meeting minutes suggest that the monthly meetings did not choose which books they wanted and received. In London at least, books were commissioned by the central bureaucracy and passed on to the monthly meetings. Books that were received in the monthly meetings of the East Riding could have been either sent from London, or commissioned by the Quarterly Meeting at York.[615] There is no evidence in the minutes of the monthly meetings requesting copies of books to be sent to them. What is certain, is that the Kelk and Elloughton monthly meetings received regular copies of books from York, which they had to pay for. Both monthly meetings were in arrears with their payments to the bookseller, which emphasises that the payment for books was a major drain on the finances of the provincial meetings. The fact that the meetings continued to provide funds for the publications demonstrates the importance with which they were regarded by the local membership.

The books that were held by the Kelk and Elloughton monthly meetings can be grouped into three principal categories: collected works and spiritual autobiographies, doctrinal works, and works of spiritual support and defences of Quaker practice. All three of these categories contain a degree of overlap in their subject matter. The largest proportion of the works held were the spiritual autobiographies and collected works. The spiritual autobiographies were the most distinctive form of Quaker literature. Their output increased towards the end of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, as many of the first generation of Quaker leaders passed away. As the number of spiritual autobiographies increased, authors drew upon work that had been previously published to provide a language and structure that was familiar to members, and which was approved by the Society through the Second Day's Morning Meeting.

[614] O'Malley, 'Quaker Control'; See Ch. 5, p. 103.
[615] See Ch. 4, pp. 78 – 80.

However, this was not an original genre. During the sixteenth and early seventeenth century Puritan individuals had kept spiritual journals and diaries. Some of these would have been familiar to Quaker travelling ministers, who would have read them during their own spiritual journey before they became convinced Friends. Quaker literature did not develop within some ideological vacuum, separated from other contemporary ideology and literature, but was influenced by what had been published before it.

The other works that were held by the two monthly meetings in the East Riding helped to offer support and encouragement to members. It gave details of Quaker theology and organisation, and included accounts of other Friends' sufferings around the country. Therefore, the literature offered moral support to individuals and groups of Friends who otherwise could have felt isolated from any national organisation. It provided a constant reminder to members of their duties and responsibilities as a Quaker, and offered guidance regarding the expected attitudes towards, and behaviour within, the outside world.

The controlling influence of the Second Day's Morning Meeting helped direct publications to issues and subjects that most needed attention. The meeting's influence reached the East Riding, and the rest of the country, through the literature that was held by the provincial monthly meetings, and read by their members. By acting as an editorial board for publications the meeting ensured that a consistent message was published regarding different issues and subjects. This helped Friends in the East Riding to know what the national movement expected of them.

As an editorial board, the meeting acted to censor any publications that could provoke controversy within the Quaker movement, or that could offer ammunition to Friends' many opponents. The peak periods of work for the Second Day's Morning Meeting coincided with important political events that affected Friends around the country. The principal subject that was dealt with by the meeting during these periods was that of persecution and suffering. This was not an accident. The literature that was published by Friends was written according to their own experiences, which were often influenced by external events over which they had no control. It was a defensive response to attacks upon the Society that were instigated by the authorities.

The meeting acted in response to the needs of the movement nationally, but also considered local implications. Hence, when Quaker suffering was at its worst in the East Riding during the peak of the exclusion crisis in 1682, the Second Day's Morning Meeting was at its busiest handling a total of 52 manuscripts, and refusing to print 14 of them.[616] The motivation for the refusal to print many of these manuscripts was a political one. The meeting was careful not to act recklessly and galvanise their opponents by inflaming public opinion. This could have only led to a deterioration of the situation, and prolonged or increased Friends' suffering.

Friends produced a large number of publications in response to their suffering. Like the spiritual autobiographies, this genre of suffering literature was not unique to Quakers. Christian martyrdom was a principal feature within the Quaker suffering literature. It emphasised how the early Christians had suffered for following Jesus Christ. Christ's own suffering and persecution by the authorities was highlighted, and used as justification for Friends own beliefs and actions. For many it was evidence of their righteousness. Quaker authors were also able to use comparisons to Protestant martyrs of the sixteenth century to expose the cruelties of the persecution that they faced. By doing so, they drew upon a literary tradition that was already well established. The most well known example was Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* (1563), published as part of the Protestant ascendancy after the persecution of the Marian Catholic regime. The aim of the this literature was to try and elicit sympathetic public opinion towards Friends' plight, while also emphasising the importance of their testimony to members.

The most significant publications on religious persecution and toleration by a Quaker author were the works of William Penn. Penn's philosophy of liberty of conscience, a term that he used interchangeably with religious toleration, was based upon his Quaker belief of the individual conscience. He separated the secular and spiritual worlds, and argued that an individual's spiritual concern was solely their own responsibility. Any attempt to impose upon the spiritual concerns of the individual by the secular world was unjustified and ineffective, as long as the individual did not transgress any secular law. An individual's conscience could not be altered through secular force and punishment. Penn believed in the right of the state to protect social

[616] See Ch 5, pp. 107 – 8.

order, a crucial issue in the contemporary debate over religious toleration, but argued that this should be unnecessary, because civil disobedience was against the will of God. Therefore those who caused civil disturbances were acting against God's will, and should be punished. Crucially, Penn did not regard any of Friends' behaviour as breaking civil law, for they only disregarded those laws that related to spiritual matters.

Penn's life and personal experiences were a long way removed from the vast majority of Friends during the second half of the seventeenth century. This is demonstrated in the contrast with William Dewsbury. Dewsbury was one of the national leaders of early Quakerism, but came from an extremely different background to Penn. His education and experience of early life in the East Riding, and his subsequent persecution at the hands of the authorities around the country, notably in Warwick, led to a very different philosophy of religious liberty and toleration.

Rather than being concerned with philosophical arguments in favour of the benefit of the individual and the nation, Dewsbury applied himself to the practical purpose of improving his own situation, and the situation of those Friends that he knew in the East Riding and around the country. He appealed to magistrates and others in authority to disregard the laws against Protestant dissenters, and for the government to remove those laws that Friends transgressed in their worship. He also pointed out that Quakers were not threats to the social order, and simply wanted the laws to be removed to allow them to worship in peace and without fear of molestation. Dewsbury's view of religious toleration was typical of other Quaker authors who published work of a similar nature. They were constrained within their own experiences of life and persecution, and limited themselves to exploring how spiritual issues related to social unity and the place of Friends in seventeenth century society.

The experiences and writing of two travelling ministers from the East Riding, John Whitehead and Thomas Thompson, provide good examples of the attitude of local Friends towards religious toleration. They both travelled the country, and their spiritual journals and collected writings were published after their deaths. Therefore, their experiences would have been familiar to Friends across the country through their publications, and personally through their interaction with meetings while travelling.

Similarly to William Dewsbury, it was through their interaction with the authorities and the general population that Whitehead and Thompson formed their own ideas of religious toleration. They consequently sought answers to their problems at a local, and practical, level. Their writing was not based upon philosophies of the national interest, or concerned with the relationship between the individual and the state, as Penn's was. They were concerned only with the relationship between God and the individual, and simply wanted to be able to worship according to their beliefs. In practical terms this required a simple removal of the laws against Protestant dissenters, which would have allowed Quakers to practise their religion. As such, these men were anticipating the Toleration Act of 1689.

It is important to emphasise the difference between the toleration of Protestants and Catholics during this period. The Toleration Act did not remove the laws against recusancy, and it was to be another 140 years until the Emancipation Acts finally removed all penalties against Roman Catholics. Catholics were not to be tolerated because they owed allegiance to the Pope, a foreign national. Should the Pope be an enemy of the country, which he was due to England's Protestantism, it was feared that Catholics would provide an internal threat to the political establishment. Furthermore, Catholicism was representative of absolutism and arbitrary rule to the popular imagination. This was contrary to the natural rights that were enjoyed by free Englishmen, it was believed.

The idea of 'natural' rights was something that was central to William Penn's philosophy of liberty of conscience. He believed that all men were born 'free' and should therefore remain free to choose their own spiritual beliefs as they saw fit. It was something that he used to good effect in his defence when tried with William Meade for conspiring to commit a riot in the summer of 1670.[617] Penn allowed for the toleration of Catholics based within this idea. This was not an idea that was shared by most other Friends. William Dewsbury and John Whitehead both emphasised that Catholics could not be allowed to worship freely, though without ever giving explicit details regarding why this was. They complained bitterly over their own prosecution under the recusancy laws, but it is notable that they did not call for their removal. One

[617] See Ch. 7, p. 145 – 6 for greater detail.

is left with the impression that they worked within an accepted seventeenth century paradigm, which did not require any explanation to their readers. Catholics simply could not be tolerated.

Friends were primarily concerned with their own position in seventeenth century society. The everyday experiences of individuals in the East Riding, and across the rest of the country, shaped their own feelings and attitude towards religious toleration. The subjects covered by Quaker literature were greatly affected by the experiences of members in different localities across the country. Unsurprisingly, persecution and religious toleration was the subject of many publications, particularly during periods when Friends suffering was greatest. It was the publication of this literature, and the sharing of the experiences of suffering, that helped develop the Society of Friends into a national movement.

The most common experience that was shared by Friends across the country was their persecution and suffering. Sure enough, the numerous groups and individuals dispersed around the country held similar theological beliefs and practised their worship in the same way, but their suffering was the embodiment of these beliefs and their worship in the public sphere. The literature of the early Quakers reveals the central place of the sufferings within their theology. Writers such as William Dewsbury, John Whitehead, and others used their suffering to help demonstrate their righteousness. As such, suffering was crucial in the development of a group identity. It was used by the second and third generations of Friends during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries to reinforce this identity, and to try and develop it further.

The most widely available published source of early Quaker sufferings is the work by Joseph Besse, *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers* (1753). Besse's work is characteristic of the formation of Quaker identity through sufferings. It has been widely exploited by historians of Quakerism from Braithwaite through to Vann, Barbour and Horle, and has largely been accepted unquestioningly as a source of information.[618] This thesis has clearly demonstrated the problems with Besse's work as a historical source.

[618] Braithwaite, *Beginnings*; *Second Period*; Barbour, *Quakers in Puritan England*; Vann, *Social Development*; Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System.*

It was compiled by Besse from Friends' own sources: printed accounts, monthly and quarterly meetings' suffering books, and the Great Book of Sufferings, produced by the Yearly Meeting in London. A detailed examination of the different stages of administration that Friends' sufferings passed through from the East Riding has revealed the flaws that were inherent in the system. Each level of bureaucracy showed a number of inconsistencies in the recording of sufferings. Some sufferings were omitted, others included that had not been present at the last level. It is extremely unwise to be reliant upon a single source for the sufferings of the early Quakers. Most notably, Besse's work contained only half of the sufferings that had been recorded in the suffering books at the different administrative levels.

Besse's work is, in fact, *a selection* of the sufferings of the people called Quakers. Besse's work emphasises the most sensational aspects of Quaker suffering that occurred in the East Riding, to the detriment of the more common. Therefore, the picture of sufferings that is painted by Besse is one that is distorted from the everyday experience of persecution that was faced by Friends in the county. Similar research from other regions would be instructive in ascertaining whether the East Riding is an exception, or whether this pattern can be found for other regions across the country.

The most common cause for Quaker suffering in the East Riding between 1654 and 1700 was a refusal to pay tithes. Within Besse's work the most common suffering during this period is not the refusal to pay tithes, but the attendance at Quaker meetings. When the punishments that individual Quakers suffered are examined a similar picture emerges. The distraint of goods, in lieu of a fine (Quakers refused to pay their fines because they believed they had done nothing wrong), was the most common form of punishment. Though this remains the case in Besse's work, prominence is given to those Friends who were imprisoned. Again, the picture recorded by Friends in their suffering books is distorted, and the proportion of Friends from the region who were imprisoned dramatically increases.

Furthermore, the evidence from the East Riding suggests that Besse's work is heavily gender-biased. Female Friends were equally likely to suffer for their religious testimony and practise as their male counterparts. The important difference in the seventeenth century legal system was that they were not as likely to be property

owners. Consequently, the suffering records of early Friends under-record their experiences of persecution. Quaker women are frequently absent in the suffering books, and the sufferings that they experienced in the East Riding were slowly filtered out at each administrative level.

Friends' suffering in the East Riding fits into the pattern that has been established by other historians. The peak periods of persecution that they faced coincide with periods of political instability. During the period 1654 – 1699 the peak years of persecution in the East Riding were 1660, 1670 and 1682. These years account for a fifth of all sufferings during this period. These years saw the Restoration of Charles II, the passing of the second Conventicle Act, and the conclusion of the crisis to exclude James from the succession. It was not the case that the early Quakers faced unremitting persecution on a daily basis. The pattern in the East Riding was for a brief spate of persecution to occur during times of political instability, but for the most part Friends were left unmolested. This is a pattern that also emerges in other parts of the country.[619]

The fact that the authorities could reach out and prosecute Quakers during these times of political crisis is important for two reasons. First, it demonstrates that Friends were well known and recognised around the country. They were not some secretive underground movement, that was difficult to find. They held their meetings openly, often in public places, and they were attended in some instances by large numbers. Secondly, it shows that the state did have sufficient power and organisation to be able to arrest Friends during these periods. The machinery of government was an effective force, and had the ability to implement its policies in rural provinces around the country, as well as in the more politically sophisticated, and influenced, urban centres.

After the passing of the Conventicle Act in 1664 Friends risked prosecution on at least a weekly basis, if not more often, for holding their meetings. This provided the authorities with plenty of opportunities to prosecute them. For the most part, these opportunities were simply not taken. The best indication of government directed persecution was the arrest of Friends for holding meetings for worship. This was the

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[619] See Ch. 8, pp. 179 – 80.

offence that led to the peaks of suffering in the East Riding during the years 1660, 1670 and 1682.

The fact that for most of the period between 1654 and 1699 the Quakers in the East Riding were not constantly imprisoned or fined is indicative of a society that was a good deal more tolerant towards religious dissent than has previously been acknowledged. Even within a relatively small region such as the East Riding, Friends were not prosecuted uniformly. The peaks of suffering that occurred in the region in 1670 and 1682 are shaped significantly by the prosecution of Quakers in the town of Bridlington for meeting together for worship. In 1670 Friend's sufferings in the town represented 43% of all sufferings in the county respectively.[620]

Statistics such as these warn historians of the dangers that are present in attempting to make generalisations. Indeed, even at the level of the parish it is difficult to make any general statement regarding the pattern of persecution and suffering. The patterns at this level are affected by the experiences of one or two individuals, for example Joseph Smith of Easington, whose suffering is disproportionate to other Friends from the parish.[621]

Certain individuals were prosecuted more than others. Unfortunately, the motivation behind their persecution is not always clear. The patterns of suffering that have been traced at the parish level reveal the wide variety of levels of persecution that existed between different individuals within the same parish. At face value, the suffering statistics that have been calculated show parishes and places where persecution was relatively high, but when these places are examined in detail a great deal more tolerance is revealed than the bare statistics suggest.

It is important to note that local factors and relationships between individuals were an important variable in whether or not Friends suffered. These variables are not always visible from the distance of 350 years. Undoubtedly, the presence of individuals such as the vicar of Hollym, Henry Lathely, or the magistrate from Hunmanby, William Osbaldeston, greatly increased the likelihood of Quakers from

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[620] See Ch. 12, p. 234.
[621] See Ch. 11, p. 216 – 218.

those localities being persecuted.[622] These two are typical of a much larger number of individuals across the country that were opposed to Quakerism, and were in a position to act upon their personal views.

However, while considering the negative impact that individuals such as Lathely and Osbaldeston could have upon the persecution and toleration of Friends, it is important not to forget the broader patterns of persecution that occurred in the East Riding. Osbaldeston did persecute Friends in the Bridlington area with a zeal that was unmatched across the rest of the county, but only did so when it was politically expedient. He ensured that at times of political crisis Quakers from the area were hard hit, but his persecution only lasted for brief periods. When Friends in Bridlington faced their worst suffering in the winter of 1682, largely instigated by Osbaldeston, these were the first prosecutions against them since 1670. As such, it would be quite incorrect to describe the town as intolerant during the whole period 1660 to 1699.

Furthermore, during these peak periods of persecution the townspeople of Bridlington reacted with examples of practical tolerance towards the Quaker community. Throughout this period of persecution local officials, friends and neighbours actually acted positively to try and protect the Quaker community from the persecution that was being directed by the authorities through Osbaldeston. This did not only happen in Bridlington, but in other parishes across the East Riding.[623]

It serves to remind us that the seventeenth century state needed the co-operation of the local community in order to successfully pursue policies of persecution against religious dissent, whether Catholic or Protestant. Without the will of the individuals who enforced the law at a local level (for example, magistrates, constables, and churchwardens) the authorities were left impotent. At times, Osbaldeston was simply unable to prosecute Friends, and had to resort to the employment of informers from outside the town to put pressure on the local officials to do their duty.

Such actions demonstrate a strong sense of community within the town. Quakers were not just religious dissenters, but were neighbours, tradesmen, family

[622] See Ch. 12, p. 227 – 9 for Lathely; pp. 235 – 8 for Osbaldeston.
[623] See Ch 12, p. 238.

and friends. This was especially true in smaller rural communities, where social cohesion was necessary for the continuation of everyday life. People with skills that were needed regularly, such as a carpenter or blacksmith, could not be alienated from village life for their religious beliefs. Nor could the labour of dissenters be left unused during the crucial harvest period. There were greater and more complex relationships between individuals than solely that of religious belief, and this affected Friends' experiences of persecution and toleration.

The nature of the persecution of Friends in the East Riding was greatly dictated by the geographical and economic structure of the region in which they lived. The principal cause of Quaker suffering in the county was their testimony against paying tithes. This was a result of the fact that the East Riding was (and remains to this day) a largely rural area. Friends in the urban centres of Hull, Beverley and Bridlington did not, for the most part, face the annual suffering for refusing to pay tithe that those living in the rural villages did.

Close examination of this form of suffering demonstrates that rather than being instigated by the Church, it was in fact lay tithe farmers who more commonly pursued it. The Quaker testimony against tithes may have been theologically motivated, but because of the structure of tithe ownership, payments in the second half of the seventeenth century had become increasingly secular in practise. Rather than it being a conflict between the Church of England and Quakers, in the East Riding at least it was largely a conflict between Friends and tithe impropriators.

It is within this conflict that the limits of toleration within a community are found. It was less the fact that the Quakers worshipped in a different way that led to their suffering, but more because they refused to pay their due to the tithe farmer. For many tithe impropriators the decision to pursue Quakers for the offence was not spiritually or theologically motivated. Rather, it was based in practical economic considerations. Many Friends owed some quite substantial sums, which impropriators wanted paid. Therefore, it was possible for both persecution and toleration to exist side by side in the community. Quaker meetings and beliefs could be tolerated, as far as they did not infringe upon the rights of others in the community. Where they did, conflict would occur that would lead to instances of Quaker suffering.

The fact that the refusal to pay tithes dominates Friends' sufferings in the East Riding is also further evidence that much of the persecution experienced by Quakers in the region was not consciously directed by state policy during the period 1660 to 1699. State sanctioned persecution was marked by the arrests of Quakers for meeting together for worship, which caused the peak years of suffering during the period in 1660, 1670 and 1682. The Quaker testimony against tithes remained a source of their suffering following the passing of the Toleration Act, and the introduction of state-sanctioned toleration of Protestant dissent. In fact, following 1689 Friends' suffering for refusing to pay tithes in the East Riding actually increased, due to legal reform that made the pursuit of unpaid tithe claims cheaper and easier.[624]

The Quaker suffering for refusing to pay tithes also reveals the importance of Friends' testimony for their beliefs. Although to lay impropriators it may have been a secular decision to pursue Quakers for their payments, for Friends it was an outward demonstration of their faith. This helps to explain the frequent instructions from Yearly and Quarterly meeting to ensure that the testimony against tithes was adhered to. However, for some Quakers at least, this was a testimony that was not always strictly observed. Many no doubt considered the practicalities of a testimony that could cause many problems for them, which could be easily overcome. It also could have impacted upon the goodwill of their neighbours. Some must have thought it prudent to let some of their goods be 'taken' and record it in the suffering books, rather than risk breaking the social cohesion that allowed them to practise their religion unmolested throughout the rest of the year.

It is important to note that Quakers were not passive victims of persecution during the second half of the seventeenth century, but played an active and important role in shaping the nature and occasion of their suffering. The importance of the public demonstration of faith through their suffering led many into direct conflict with the authorities, and at times individual Friends actively instigated this conflict. Both sides in this conflict knew their boundaries, and at times both sides overstepped them. Quakers complained most bitterly over illegal actions that led to their suffering, but it

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[624] See Ch. 8, p. 185.

is important to note that individuals had protection from, and recourse to, the law in cases where over-zealous magistrates or officials went beyond their remit.

The persecution and toleration of Quakers during the period 1660 to 1699 did not occur in any fixed pattern. Friends actively took part in their conflict with the state authorities, and boundaries were shaped by the interaction between the two sides. Friends' suffering was at times severe, and on many occasions took the form of a cruel exploitation of a vulnerable group in society. However, the Quaker community in the East Riding was free from persecution throughout much of the period. They were not faced with continual harassment from the authorities, nor were they isolated and alienated from their neighbours due to their religious beliefs. The Society of Friends was born from, and into, seventeenth century society, and remained congruent to it. For the most part they lived peacefully within the community and alongside family, friends, and neighbours, who did not necessarily share their religious beliefs. This did not leave any significant historical record, due to its nature. However, the very absence of any record is the best evidence of practical tolerance occurring on a day-to-day basis.

Appendix 1: Offences for which Quakers suffered in East Yorkshire, 1654 – 1700

Suffering Year	Arms	Beh	CR	Court	Hat	Interr	Mar	Meet	N-C	Oath	Pre	Spe	Tithes	Unk	Total
1654			1			2				1	3	1			8
1655			8				2			2			8		20
1656			4					2		2			7	1	16
1657			11		1								6		18
1658			10					2	1				14		27
1659			8										8		16
1660			25		1			63		16			15	6	126
1661		1	2					50	15	5			3	3	79
1662			1					31		2			2		36
1663			2					3	7	1			7		20
1664	5		5						31	1			1		43
1665	1		1					39	11	1			15		68
1666	1		3					3					6		13
1667	3												4		7
1668													4		4
1669			4						1				1		6
1670	1							104							105
1671			1					19					1		21
1672			7												7
1673			2												2
1674			3						2	1					6
1675			6						9				5		20
1676			1							2			3		6
1677			3						2	1			7		13
1678			4				2		6				60		72
1679			4							1			45		50
1680			3										23		26
1681			5						1				39		45
1682			4					108					28		140
1683			2					4	31				24		61
1684								11	36				2		49
1685			1						3				3		7
1686			1					1					2		4
1687			1										2		3
1688			1										12		13
1689			4									1	55		60
1690	1		2										53		56
1691			4							3			69		76
1692			2	2									26		30
1693			1										50		51
1694													11		11
1695			3										38	2	43
1696			1										18		19
1697			2										43		45
1698			2										51		53
1699			2										64		66
1700			1										77		78
Unknown	3		6										11		20
Total	**15**	**1**	**164**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**4**	**440**	**156**	**39**	**3**	**2**	**923**	**12**	**1765**

Appendix 2. Total sufferings of Quakers in East Yorkshire (decades)

Table 1.

Suffering	Arms	Beh	CR	Court	Hat	Inter	Mar	Meet	N-C	Oath	Pre	Spe	Tithes	Unk	Total	%
Year																
1654			1			2				1	3	1			8	8
1655			8				2			2			8		20	19
1656			4					2		2			7	1	16	15
1657			11		1								6		18	17
1658			10					2	1				14		27	26
1659			8										8		16	15
Total			**42**		**1**	**2**	**2**	**4**	**1**	**5**	**3**	**1**	**43**	**1**	**105**	
%			40		1	2	2	4	1	5	3	1	41	1	% Total	**6**

Table 2.

Suffering	Arms	Beh	CR	Court	Hat	Inter	Mar	Meet	N-C	Oath	Pre	Spe	Tithes	Unk	Total	%
Year																
1660			25		1			63		16			15	6	126	31
1661		1	2					50	15	5			3	3	79	20
1662			1					31		2			2		36	9
1663			2					3	7	1			7		20	5
1664	5		5						31	1			1		43	11
1665	1		1					39	11	1			15		68	17
1666	1		3					3					6		13	3
1667	3												4		7	2
1668													4		4	1
1669			4						1				1		6	1
Total	**10**	**1**	**43**		**1**			**189**	**65**	**26**			**58**	**9**	**402**	
%	2	0.2	11		0.2			47	16	6			14	2	% Total	**23**

Table 3.

Suffering	Arms	Beh	CR	Court	Hat	Inter	Mar	Meet	N-C	Oath	Pre	Spe	Tithes	Unk	Total	%
Year																
1670	1							104							105	35
1671			1					19					1		21	7
1672			7												7	2
1673			2												2	1
1674			3						2	1					6	2
1675			6						9				5		20	7
1676			1							2			3		6	2
1677			3						2	1			7		13	4
1678			4				2		6				60		72	24
1679			4							1			45		50	17
Total	**1**		**31**				**2**	**123**	**19**	**5**			**121**		**302**	
%	0.3		10				0.7	41	6	2			40		% Total	**17**

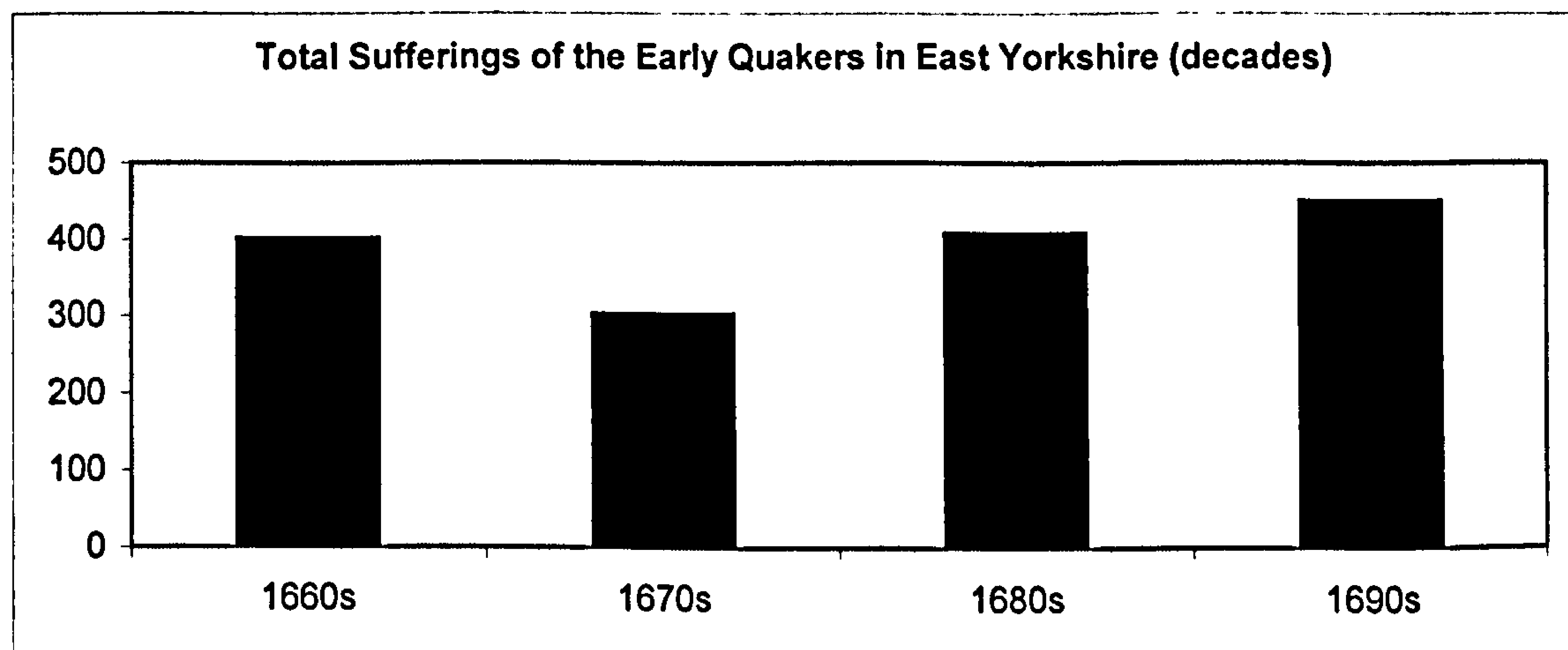
Total sufferings of Quakers in East Yorkshire (decades)

Table 4.

Suffering	Arms	Beh	CR	Court	Hat	Inter	Mar	Meet	N-C	Oath	Pre	Spe	Tithes	Unk	Total	%
Year																
1680			3										23		**26**	6
1681			5						1				39		**45**	11
1682			4					108					28		**140**	34
1683			2					4	31				24		**61**	15
1684								11	36				2		**49**	12
1685			1						3				3		**7**	2
1686			1					1					2		**4**	1
1687			1										2		**3**	1
1688			1										12		**13**	3
1689			4									1	55		**60**	15
Total			**22**					**124**	**71**			**1**	**190**		**408**	
%			5					30	17			0.2	47		% Total	**23**

Table 5.

Suffering	Arms	Beh	CR	Court	Hat	Inter	Mar	Meet	N-C	Oath	Pre	Spe	Tithes	Unk	Total	%
Year																
1690	1		2										53		**56**	12
1691			4							3			69		**76**	17
1692			2	2									26		**30**	7
1693			1										50		**51**	11
1694													11		**11**	2
1695			3										38	2	**43**	10
1696			1										18		**19**	4
1697			2										43		**45**	10
1698			2										51		**53**	12
1699			2										64		**66**	15
Total	**1**		**19**	**2**						**3**			**423**	**2**	**450**	
%	0.2		4	0.4						0.6			94	0.4	% Total	**25**



Appendix 3: Punishments suffered by Quakers in East Yorkshire, 1654 - 1700

Punishment	Banished	Beaten	Distraint	Imprisoned	PbO	None	Unknown	LM	Total
Year									
1654			1	7					8
1655			17	3					20
1656		3	12	1					16
1657			18						18
1658			24	3					27
1659			14	2					16
1660	6		34	86					126
1661	2	3	18	56					79
1662			6	30					36
1663			11	9					20
1664			40	2	1				43
1665			23	44		1			68
1666			9	4					13
1667			7						7
1668			2	1	1				4
1669	1		4	1					6
1670			90		14		1		105
1671			19	2					21
1672			7						7
1673				2					2
1674			1	5					6
1675			2	18					20
1676			5	1					6
1677			6	7					13
1678			55	17					72
1679			49	1					50
1680			26						26
1681			42	3					45
1682			64		76				140
1683			47	1	13				61
1684			12	28	9				49
1685			4	3					7
1686			4						4
1687			2	1					3
1688			12	1					13
1689			58	2					60
1690			54	2					56
1691			71	2				3	76
1692			26	4					30
1693			49	1			1		51
1694			11						11
1695			43						43
1696			19						19
1697			45						45
1698			52	1					53
1699			64		2				66
1700			78						78
Unknown			20						20
Total	**9**	**6**	**1277**	**351**	**116**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**1765**
%	0.5	0.3	72	20	7	0.1	0.1	0.2	

Appendix 4. Explanation of tables

Offences

Arms – Refusal to serve, or hire substitute to serve in the militia.

Beh – Behaviour, refusal to give sureties for behaviour.

CR – Church Rates, refusal to pay church rates. Includes clerks fees, maintenance of parish church, marriage, burial and mortuary dues.

Court – Refusal to appear in court.

Hat – Hat Honour, refusal to remove hat in presence of social superiors.

Inter – Interrupting Service, Interruption of church service to challenge priest or preach.

Mar – Marriage, not being married in established church.

Meet – Meeting together for worship.

N-C - Non-Conformity, refusing to attend National worship.

Oath - Refusing to swear oath.

Pre – Preaching in public place.

Spe – Challenging priest in public place, away from church.

Tithes – Refusal to pay tithes.

Unk – Unknown.

Punishments

Most are self-explanatory. Those that are not:

Beaten – physically attacked, either in public or at home.

Distraint – Goods distrained, in lieu of fine. Quakers refused to pay fines because they did not believe they had committed any offence.

PbO – Paid by others, fines or tithes paid by a member of the community or family.

LM – Lost Money, an incident when 3 Quakers lost money through a bankruptcy case because they refused to swear an oath to the court. Consequently the court dismissed their claim for the money that they were owed by the individual that was declared bankrupt.

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