

THE GAZETTE

“a news-sheet, a periodical publication giving an account of current events”

West Falmouth Religious Society of Friends

SEPTEMBER 2021



Contents

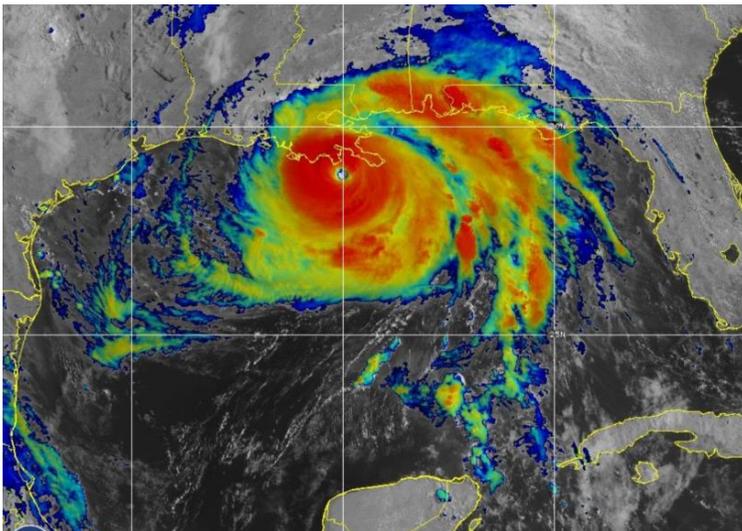
<i>Upcoming Events</i>	2-5
<i>Memorial Minutes</i>	6-8
<i>New Members</i>	9
<i>Readers Write</i>	10-15
<i>What We're Reading</i>	15-17

From Willa Blythe Baker’s “5 Buddhist Practices to Help Tackle Climate Change”

“There is good reason to embrace the uncertainty of climate change as a liberating practice. The more we fear uncertainty, the more likely we are to avoid thinking about climate change. In fact, our worst enemy might not be climate denial, but rather a subtle, subconscious rejection of climate change, based on our fear of the unknown.

If, however, we embrace the truth of uncertainty, we can develop the courage to stay open and engage with the world. If we can accept the fragility of life on earth, we can invest ourselves in the possibility of collective action.”

<https://www.lionsroar.com/5-practices-to-help-you-skillfully-contemplate-climate-change/>



Hurricane Ida makes landfall, August 29. https://www.star.nesdis.noaa.gov/GOES/floater_band.php?stormid=AL092021&band=Sandwich&length=24



Officers

Fran Lightsom, clerk

(508-548-9186;

fran.lightsom@gmail.com)

Molly Cornell, recording clerk

Clyde Tyndale, treasurer

Regular Events

Adult Discussion Group

Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

Peace and Social Order

2nd Sunday at 12:00 p.m.

Erica Adams, convener

Empathy Practice (NVC)

Usually 1st Saturday 9:30–11:45

Brenda Nolan, convener

Restorative Circle Practice

Usually 1st Saturday 1:00-3:00

Brenda Nolan, convener

Ministry & Counsel

Cynthia Rankin, clerk

(508-360-7536)

Sunny Davidson, co-clerk

West Falmouth Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Usually 4th Sunday

(September 26, October 24)

Note: Due to COVID, many of these events are on hold. Check with committee conveners to be sure.

September Birthdays

Nan Garrett-Logan, 5

Len Kreidermacher, 25

Upcoming Events

New England Yearly Meeting

Beacon Hill Friends House – Simple Morning Meditation Practice

– Held via Zoom **Monday through Friday** from 8:00 – 8:30 a.m.

The meditation is 15 minutes long, and begins and ends with a brief introduction to the practice. Orientation for newcomers begins at 8:00 a.m. and practice begins at 8:10. Join once or join regularly! The meditation is free and open to the public. See

<https://bhfh.org/virtualprograms/simple-morning-meditation-practice-5/>.

Beacon Hill Friends House – Midweek Experiments in

Faithfulness – Held via Zoom Wednesdays from 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Learn more and register for particular programs at

<https://bhfh.org/midweek/>.

Beacon Hill Friends House -- Drop-in Support for Addressing Racial Justice Among Quakers --

Held via Zoom **September 1**, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. and **Monday,**

September 13 from 5:00 – 6:30 p.m. LJ Boswell will facilitate these sessions. For further information and to register see

<https://lu.ma/88cwug0i>.

Beacon Hill Friends House -- Exploring Spiritual Practices:

Meditation, Prayer, and Presence – An online course led by

Marcelle Martin. Tuesdays September 7 – November 16. Attend either the morning session: from 10:30 – 12:30 p.m. or the

evening session from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. For further information including course outline, basic texts, introductory video and

registration see <https://lu.ma/exploring-spiritual-practices>.

Young Friends Leadership & Welcoming Workshop Series –

Thursdays, **September 30, October 7,** and **October 14** from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Join other Quaker teens in exploring how you

can create the warm and welcoming community you seek in this three-part online workshop series. Do you remember the first

time you walked into a place where you felt truly welcomed?

Maybe someone asked you your name, or invited you to play a game with them, or gave you a really big smile and told you

they're glad you're here. The knowledge you have of what makes you feel welcome is a gift that you can use to welcome others,

and this is an important part of leadership that makes a

community thrive! These workshops are open to Young Friends—high-school-age youth living in New England who are Quaker or

are interested in the Quaker way. Registration required. Learn

more at <https://neym.org/events-calendar/2021/09/young-friends-leadership-welcoming-workshop-series>.

West Falmouth

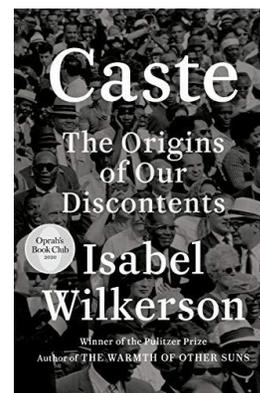
Weekly Sunday Worship continues to be held via Zoom at 10:00 a.m.

Quaker Women – We continue to meet weekly via Zoom on **Thursdays** at 7 p.m. Contact is Abigail at asajyoung@gmail.com. Next gathering is September 2. The topic is “generosity.”

Book Discussion – Tuesday, **September 7** at 2 p.m. outside Quaker House, weather permitting. We will be discussing Isabel Wilkerson’s *Caste*. All are welcome. Please bring a chair and wear a mask. We will be distancing. Contact is Maggie Saab.

Peace and Social Order – Sunday, **September 8** at 12:00 noon via Zoom. The guest presenter will be Keith Harvey of AFSC.

Sandwich Monthly Meeting fall picnic has been put off for now. Monthly Meeting for Business on Sunday, October 3 will take up the possibility of a picnic in October.



Also of Interest



September Worship Sharing with **Quaker Earthcare Witness** and **Friends General Conference** – Wednesday, **September 29** from 8:00 to 9:15 p.m. For further information and to register see <https://secure.quakerearthcare.org/civicrm/event/info>.

Friends World Committee for Consultation – World Quaker Day – Sunday, **October 3**. Resilience and Hope: Drawing Strength from our Quaker Faith. See <https://fwccamericas.org/wp/event/world-quaker-day-2021/> for further information.

NEYM 2021 Annual Sessions -- Recordings of Plenary sessions and Bible Half Hours are now available. Plenary Sessions were offered by: Shirley Hager and gkisedtanamoogk (August 7); John Calvi (August 9); and Hanifa Nayo Washington (August 10). Bible Half Hours were offered by Jay O'Hara (August 8 – 12). To access recordings see <https://neym.org/recordings-2021-annual-sessions>.

Friends General Conference 2021 Gathering – If you missed the Gathering this year or want to revisit some of the vital and inspiring content brought up in these talks, the Evening Program and Bible Half Hour videos are now available to watch at your convenience. See <https://www.fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering/2021-gathering-videos>.

FCNL Virtual Events –

Witness Wednesdays, Silent reflection, together in community from 5:15 – 6:15 p.m. Registration required.

September 1 - <https://www.fcnl.org/events/virtual-witness-wednesday-silent-reflection-38>.

September 8 - <https://act.fcnl.org/event/witness-wednesday-virtual-events/2268/>.

September 15 - <https://act.fcnl.org/event/witness-wednesday-virtual-events/2269/>.

September 22 - <https://act.fcnl.org/event/witness-wednesday-virtual-events/2270/>.

September 29 - <https://act.fcnl.org/event/witness-wednesday-virtual-events/2271/>.

Thursdays with Friends, A discussion of current events and their impact.

September 9, 4:00 – 4:30 p.m. *The Climate Crisis and Racism* with Clarence Edwards, FCNL’s Legislative Director for Sustainable Energy and Environment. Register at <https://www.fcnl.org/events/thursdays-friends-climate-crisis-and-racism>.

September 23, 2021, 4 - 4:30 *Investing in Native Communities*. Join Portia Kay[^]nthos Skenandore-Wheelock, FCNL’s lead lobbyist for Native American policy, to learn what the American Rescue Act and Infrastructure legislation represent for Native communities. Register at <https://www.fcnl.org/events/thursdays-friends-investing-native-communities>.

FCNL News and Updates –

Read Diana Ohlbaum’s August 24 update, *Four Ways FCNL is Standing in Solidarity with the Afghan People*. Ohlbaum notes that the war in Afghanistan has brought about the deaths of over 71,000 civilians and the displacement of more than 5.3 million people, according to the Costs of War project at Brown University (see <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/costs>). She writes of the urgency of ending endless wars and the need to keep the human costs of this conflict at the center of our advocacy. See <https://www.fcnl.org/updates/2021-08/four-ways-fcnl-standing-solidarity-afghan-people>.

Read Diane Randall’s August 16 update, *Holding Afghanistan in the Light*. See <https://www.fcnl.org/updates/2021-08/holding-afghanistan-light>.

Read Alex Frandsen’s June 28 update, *Haaland Announces Indian Boarding School Initiative* on the need for “[l]awmakers and advocates alike [to] reckon with this dark chapter in American history”, a reckoning that “must extend to the Quaker community, too.” See <https://www.fcnl.org/updates/2021-06/haaland-announces-indian-boarding-school-initiative>. The update links to Paula Palmer’s 2016 *Friends Journal* article on Quaker management of at least 30 of the boarding schools for Native American children (see <https://www.friendsjournal.org/quaker-indian-boarding-schools/>).



AFSC News and Updates –

Read Pauline Muchina’s August 12 blogpost *To end this pandemic, we must put human lives over pharma profits* in which she argues that world leaders must expand COVID-19 vaccine production by allowing more companies to manufacture doses. See <https://www.afsc.org/blogs/news-and-commentary/to-end-pandemic-we-must-put-human-lives-over-pharma-profits>

For some good news, read John Lindsay-Poland’s June 22 blogpost *A local victory in California’s East Bay: Care First, Jails Last* in which he notes that coalition efforts including AFSC have led Alameda County to take steps to stop jailing people with mental illness. On the anniversary of the police murder of George Floyd, the Board of Supervisors unanimously passed the [Care First, Jail Last Resolution](#), which prioritizes a continuum of care and services for people with mental illness who are at risk of incarceration. AFSC co-authored the policy as part of the Decarcerate Alameda County coalition. See <https://www.afsc.org/blogs/news-and-commentary/local-victory-californias-east-bay-care-first-jails-last>.

Tell U.S. policymakers: Assist Afghan people seeking safety. For a sample letter you can edit and send see <https://www.afsc.org/action/tell-us-policymakers-assist-afghan-people-seeking-safety>.

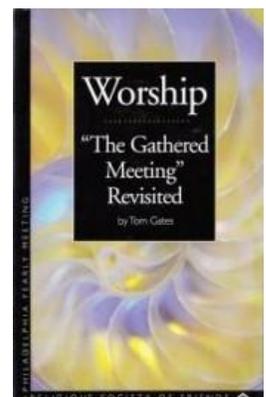
Pendle Hill Events –

Daily worship via Zoom from 8:30 – 9:10 a.m. See <https://pendlehill.org/explore/worship/join-us-online-for-worship-in-the-barn/>.

Lectio Divina: A Friendly Exploration of Quaker Writings -- Thursdays, **September 2 – October 7**, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. via Zoom with Barbara “Shulamith” Clearbridge. *Lectio divina*, latin for “divine reading,” is a way of slowly reading and contemplating a brief text. Participants will use this creative process to explore spiritual writings of historical and modern Friends of diverse backgrounds and ages. For a description of the full six-session program and to register for the entire series or individual sessions see <https://pendlehill.org/events/lectio-divina-a-friendly-exploration-of-quaker-writings/>.

The Stephen G. Cary Memorial Lecture 2021 – *Radical Transformation: Long Overdue for the Religious Society of Friends*. Given by Vanessa Julye, co-author of “Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship: Quakers, African Americans, and the Myth of Racial Justice.” **September 13**, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. via Zoom. Open to all. Registration required. For further information and to register see <https://pendlehill.org/events/stephen-g-cary-memorial-lecture-2021-radical-transformation-long-overdue-for-the-religious-society-of-friends/>.

Online Reading Group – On **Wednesday, September 8**, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. via Zoom, the group will discuss Tom Gates’s *Worship: The Gathered Meeting Revisited* published by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. For information on purchasing the pamphlet and registering for the discussion see <https://pendlehill.org/events/pendle-hills-reading-group-september/>.



Memorial Minutes

Memorial Minute for Margaret Eastman



Margaret (Peggy) Eastman came to Friends in the early 60s and became a member in 1965. She left her former religious affiliation after expressing her concern to the minister that she was not comfortable teaching “fire and brimstone” in Sunday School, and the minister suggested she should leave, so she did. Margaret eventually found her true home with Friends. When she first came to the Yarmouth Preparative Meeting, there were some very weighty Friends in attendance as this was the only active year-round meeting on the Cape at that time (the meeting was officially reactivated in 1955 after having been “laid down” in 1909). Peggy reflected that the meeting was very active, although small in numbers, with a very lively First Day School where she often brought her three young daughters. Peggy remembered this as a very wonderful time and reminisced about when they all traveled to the grounds of the East Sandwich Meetinghouse for a summer picnic even though that meeting was not active at that time.

Peggy was considered a true “elder” and held in high regard by Friends near and far who had the good fortune to know her. She served as Co-Clerk and then Clerk, and sat on committees at Yarmouth Meeting, served as Recording Clerk for Sandwich Quarterly and often traveled to Quarterly Meetings, and to NEYM retreats and Sessions events. While Co-Clerking Yarmouth Preparative Meeting (YPM), she and her Co-Clerk organized a protest on the grounds of the meetinghouse to stand against the invasion of Iraq; over 100 people showed up. For years YPM held gatherings in Friends’ homes to share hospitality followed by a presentation. Margaret often hosted such meetings; one memorable gathering was when her uncle Robert Leach, a well-known Quaker who was a conscientious objector in WWII, and helped start Pendle Hill, spoke about the history of Nantucket Quakers. Margaret reflected on when she came to the Cape with her uncle when she was about nine years old specifically to visit the East Sandwich Meetinghouse and this experience stayed with her.

During a lengthy career as a journalist Margaret held many roles such as editor and political columnist at the Cape Cod Times. She felt being a journalist was “somewhat of a calling” and viewed this as an opportunity to “make a difference.” Margaret attended the United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing, China in 1995 on behalf of the Cape Cod Times and noted there was a strong contingent of Quaker women in attendance. She often spoke publicly across the Cape about the conference. In her role as a journalist, Margaret was noted by colleagues as a mentor and matriarch by some and although she had a kind and patient demeanor, she “was not to be underestimated.”

When Margaret semi-retired she wrote a gardening column and often wrote a freelance column summarizing her many travels across parts of Europe with traveling companions. One wonderful memory about the annual New Year's Eve gathering hosted by the East Sandwich Preparative Meeting is of Peggy meeting a Friend's mother who discussed her appreciation for Peggy's gardening columns. All of Peggy's work, be it for the newspaper and/or within the Quaker community, reflected her strong belief in speaking truth to power and of her deep faith. As part of her faith, Margaret was a firm believer that there were "angels among us."

In addition to being an active member of Friends and her calling as a journalist, Margaret also found time for advocacy work as a member of Cape United Elders, a former Community Action Committee of Cape Cod & Islands program. Members served as trained ombudspersons which allowed them to visit nursing homes unannounced to observe the facilities, talk to residents and staff, and to report issues of concern to the State's Department of Elder Affairs when necessary. She stayed involved in this program until it was terminated.

Margaret was truly a "weighty Quaker" and Friends often turned to her for advice and friendship. However, she was not beyond speaking up when she felt it was important to express her deep concerns. We could all aspire to and learn from such an example!

As Margaret's health declined, she spent her last two year in a nursing home where close friends had the honor of participating in worship at her residence until the Pandemic made this impossible. She died of respiratory failure in the early morning of January 27 at the age of 89, leaving behind her three daughters, Barbara, who was her caretaker (partner David), Susan Eastman, and Sheila Eastman Jeffrey (husband, David Jeffrey) and their two adult children (Kurt and Sara (husband, Christopher Damp). Margaret was widowed in 2001.

Information taken from:

Profile of Margaret (Peggy) Eastman, conducted on October 14, 2003 by Lee M. Hamilton.

Cape Cod Times article, *Journalist Peggy Eastman's life: telling stories, mentoring others*, by Denise Coffee, January 29, 2021 (pages 1A & 4A).



Memorial Minute for Katherine Stillman



Katherine Stillman moved to Wellfleet in 1972 and became a member of Sandwich Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends on April 7, 1996. She attended Yarmouth Preparative Meeting where she took on many roles, including once serving as Clerk. She also hosted a Mid-Week Worship at her home under the care of Yarmouth Preparative Meeting. Always sociable, Katherine often opened her home, whether it be for conversation, companionship, to share a delightful meal, or to simply sit and savor the marsh that abutted her property.

Katherine loved to travel. Two of her many trips included traveling with Quaker Friends to Italy and to India and, as a young woman, taking a month-long trek in the Himalayas. If a Friend needed a traveling companion, Katherine was always willing and ready to accompany. Katherine was a member of Common Voices, a women's a cappella singing group. Friends who attended the concerts always made it a point to connect with Katherine at the receptions following the performances. Katherine's community involvement included serving as chair of the Wellfleet Library Development Committee.

Katherine was a potter with extensive training. Her repertoire included techniques learned from Acoma Tribe artisans in New Mexico. In her potting shed and shop, Katherine had a small tin where people could leave money for their purchase with a note stating, "If you are in need of money, please take some." In 1988 the Wellfleet Public Library interviewed Katherine, captured in a documentary titled, "Katherine Stillman, The Potter."

Potting was not her only trade. At various times, Katherine taught at a school for children with special needs, created pastries for a local restaurant and worked as an Outreach Coordinator for the Truro Council on Aging,

Katherine remained active in the Meeting until her health declined. She died on July 20, 2020 at the age of 76 and will be remembered with love by those Friends who experienced her quiet presence in Quaker Meeting and her great joy for life.

Some information for this memorial minute was published in The Cape Codder, December 19 - 31, 2020 edition.



New Members

Meet New Friend Todd Kelly –

As a new member of Sandwich Monthly Meeting, Todd says he gets to embark on a greatly refreshed spiritual journey. He adds that because of such, his spiritual practice and studies have gained a deeper faith and clarity in being of service to others. Todd attends Yarmouth Preparative Meeting.



Readers Write

The Branch – An essay inspired by a miraculous visit

Peg Parker Fawcett

Seated on the porch one evening with my dear Bob, we were enjoying the sounds of drifting thunder and the scents of freshly drenched ferns. North Mountain was not yet visible through a thick low fog. I felt profound tranquility and much gratitude.

Our world was in a mess. The COVID-19 Pandemic so far had killed 555,493 people globally and it was still raging. Our country was not the *United States* but a country overloaded with humans who were more divided than ever. Our president, a narcissistic mad man, was threatening our safety and wellbeing.

I tried to settle and my thoughts drifted to Mom and Dad. They were why I was here in this body and safe place. Surely, they too had experienced many peaceful moments here in the mountains. They loved it here. Their ashes were beneath the ferns and their good spirits were always floating about. But at this time, I felt their presence more acutely than ever since they had passed.

Bob and I sat quietly as the fog swirled and changed. First it dropped and got caught in the valley and there was a glimpse of the mountain. At one point, it moved easterly hovering over the creek, tracing its curve and direction. Moments later it was back, now in the closest valley advancing toward us in a most gentle way. It obscured the valley so much that it created a breathtaking silhouette of the tree line above. Neither Bob nor I had ever seen such awesome beauty from the porch during his thirty-two and my sixty years of visiting this place.

We held hands and were quiet. I thought of Mom and Dad and so many others who for 110 years have had the wonderful opportunity to experience such beauty from this same site.

The fog continued to roll toward us.

The vision became more profound. From my vantage point, two distinct white orbs of fog were approaching. I must admit, they may not have been distinct but appeared so because there was a single branch jutting up from the undergrowth in the foreground that separated them. At this point, I acknowledged them. Mom and Dad were checking in with me.

Then, the most amazing thing happened. Bob said, “is that a rainbow?” And sure enough, there was a glorious vertical display of pastel colors. But here is what was so magical. The rainbow came from above (as they do), but it appeared to touch down on the top of that single branch right between the Mom/Dad orbs. The image was in my perfect line of vision about fifty feet away.



Peg and Bob taking in the view in the Sullivan Mountains.
Photo credit: Molly Gundlach, July 2018.

We continued to sit in awe of this magnificent experience. Bob also had felt the presence of Lib and John. We remained quiet.

I thanked Mom and Dad for my life and for the lives of their other kids. I thanked them for their parenting that taught us to be kind and caring of the earth and all its creatures great and small. I assured them that I would keep tabs on their kids and would always love them. I also assured them that even though we will be selling our share of the cottage, we would remain on good terms with the cousins. During this encounter, I did not communicate about my own family. I so often felt them watching over us so it just wasn't the time.

When Bob and I discussed this extraordinary experience, we agreed that it was a loving and supportive "visit." It seemed that the rainbow's appearance had brought the messages -- *all is ok, you are loved and, no, we are not disappointed.*

We laughed and said a few more WOWs. We spoke of the spectacular natural phenomena we had observed and decided that we could see even more if we snipped off just one branch that was obscuring the view of the creek. After all, we humans want more and then more. Yes, we would cut it in the morning.

Then NO! We were guided otherwise. A bird appeared on the branch we were considering. First, he displayed his profile in the most open area for our viewing. Then, when he captured our attention, he jumped to another spot and looked straight at us! We believe we were being asked to leave the branch just where it was. It was quite the perfect branch.

*written for my beloved sibs, Lin, Tom, and Deb while in the Sullivan Mountains, PA, June 2019.



Uphill to Meeting

(for Sarah "Sally" Fritz)

After a memorial meeting
I walk through the graveyard
uphill to the meeting house;

I step on time
and on the herb thyme
and the fragrance of both
haunts me as I go
uphill to meeting.

I avoid buttercups and veronica,
field pussytoes, anything in bloom
on this ground, wasting, on my thoughts
uphill to meeting.

In the great darkness of day
an old path between stones
illuminates the way
uphill to meeting:

much the same some swallows,
starlings, robins, gold finches,
blackbirds with their red chevrons
my color guard, cheerleading me as I go
uphill to meeting.

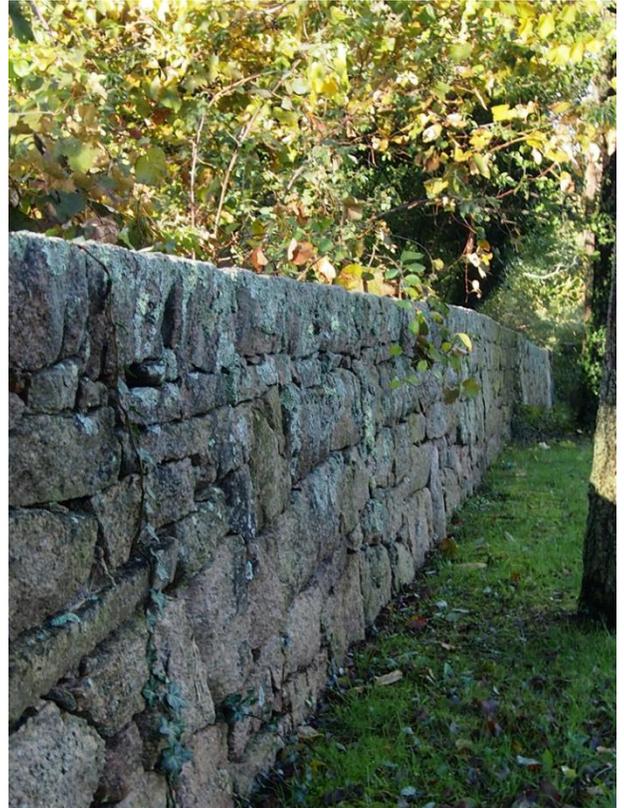
My footsteps are lighter
but they land more heavily,
time more liquid as it goes
but each year harder as I walk
uphill to meeting.

My dog waits for me at home
much as I wait in worship;
we travel together and alone
uphill to meeting.

The sun is bright,
the sky blue, the clouds white,
the door is open as always
though it's still
uphill to meeting.

Everyone is expectant,
worshipping together;
everyone having come this way,
uphill to meeting.

Eric H. Edwards (June 2021)



1688: Philadelphia Quakers Face the Question of Slavery

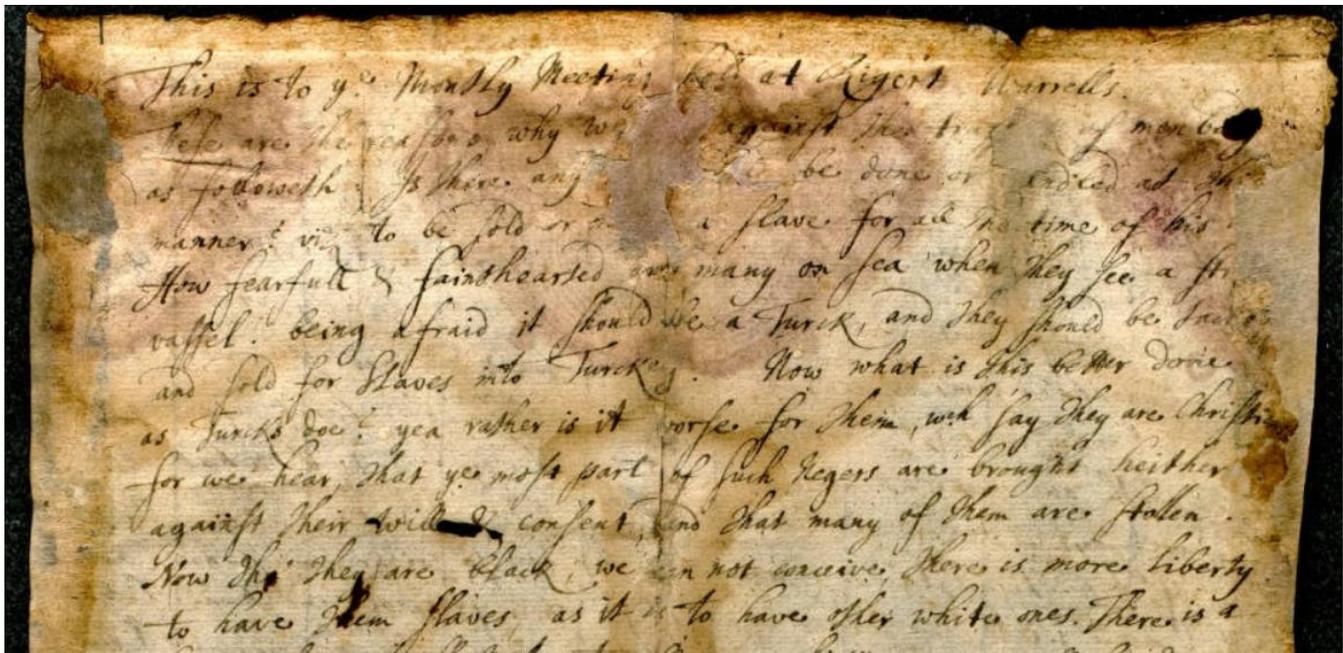
David Young

In 1683, Franz Daniel Pastorius, a German religious dissenter, arrived in newly-founded Philadelphia to purchase a tract of land for himself and a group of fellow dissenters from Frankfurt. The land he bought, called Germantown, became home to converts to Quakerism and Mennonites. The Mennonites awaited a preacher of their own; until then, some of them worshipped with the Quakers.

In 1688, four of these men, including Pastorius, brought a petition to their Monthly Meeting questioning the morality of slavery. They had come to Pennsylvania for religious freedom; why should there not be freedom from slavery as well?

They brought the petition to their Monthly Meeting, which found "it so weighty that we think it not expedient for us to meddle with it here." They sent it on to the Quarterly Meeting, which bucked it to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. PYM minuted that they would send it on to London Yearly Meeting, which has no record of it.

The petition was discovered in the PYM archives in 1844, and it was published in the British Quaker magazine, *The Friend*. The original is now at Haverford College.



Beginning of the petition, as shown at http://trptych.brynmawr.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/HC_QuakSlav/id/11/rec/1.

A transcription of the text follows, from *The Friend*.

This is to the Monthly Meeting held at Richard Worrell's.

These are the reasons why we are against the traffic of men-body, as followeth. Is there any that would be done or handled at this manner? viz. to be sold or made a slave for all the time of his life? How fearful and faint-hearted are many on the sea, when they see a strange vessel,--being afraid it should be a Turk, and they should be taken, and sold for slaves into Turkey. Now what is this better done, than Turks do? Yea, rather is it worse for them, which say they are Christians; for we hear that the most part of such negroes are brought hither against their will and consent, and that many of them are stolen. Now though they are black, we cannot conceive there is more liberty to have them slaves, as [than] it is to have other white ones. There is a saying, that we shall do to all men like as we will be done ourselves; making no difference of what generation, descent or colour they are. And those who steal or rob men, and those who buy or purchase them, are they not all alike? Here is liberty of conscience, which is right and reasonable; here ought to be likewise liberty of the body, except of evil-doers, which is another case. But to bring men hither, or to rob and sell them against their will, we stand against. In Europe there are many oppressed for conscience sake; and here there are those oppressed which are of a black colour. And we who know that men must not commit adultery, some do commit adultery in others, separating wives from their husbands and giving them to others; and some sell the children of these poor creatures to other men. Ah! Do consider well this thing, you who do it, if you would be done at this manner? and if it is done according to Christianity? You surpass Holland and Germany in this thing. This makes an ill report in all those countries of Europe, where they hear of [it], that the Quakers do here handle men as they handle there the cattle. And for that reason some have no mind or inclination to come hither. And who shall maintain this your cause, or plead for it? Truly we cannot do so, except you shall inform us better hereof, viz. that Christians have liberty to practice these things. Pray, what thing in the world can be done worse towards us, than if men should rob or steal us away, and sell us for slaves to strange countries; separating husbands from their wives and children. Being now this is not done in the manner we would be done at [by] therefore we contradict, and are against this traffic of men-body. And we who profess that it is not lawful to steal, must, likewise, avoid to purchase such things as are stolen, but rather help to stop this robbing and stealing if possible. And such men ought to be delivered out of the hands of the robbers, and set free as in Europe.* Then is Pennsylvania to have a good report, instead it hath now a bad one for this sake in other countries. Especially whereas the Europeans are desirous to know in what manner the Quakers do rule in their province;--and most of them do look upon us with an envious eye. But if this is done well, what shall we say is done evil?

If once these slaves (which they say are so wicked and stubborn men) should join themselves,--fight for their freedom,--and handle their masters and mistresses as they did handle them before; will these masters and mistresses take the sword at hand and war

against these poor slaves, like, we are able to believe, some will not refuse to do? or have these negroes not as much right to fight for their freedom, as you have to keep them slaves?

Now consider well this thing, if it is good or bad? And in case you find it to be good to handle these blacks at that manner, we desire and require you hereby lovingly, that you may inform us herein, which at this time never was done, viz. that Christians have such a liberty to do so. To the end we shall be satisfied in this point, and satisfy likewise our good friends and acquaintances in our native country, to whom it is a terror, or fearful thing, that men should be handled so in Pennsylvania.

This is from our meeting at Germantown, held the 18 of the 2 month, 1688, to be delivered to the Monthly Meeting at Richard Worrell's.

Garret Hendericks
Derick op den Graeff
Francis Daniel Pastorius
Abraham op den Graeff

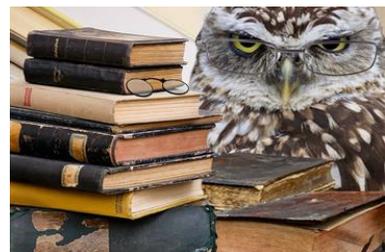
This is both a tribute to those who could, in 1688, see the equality of all people and a reminder to us how hard it is to cast off the evils we are used to.

*Alluding probably to the abolition of the old feudal system [note in *The Friend*]

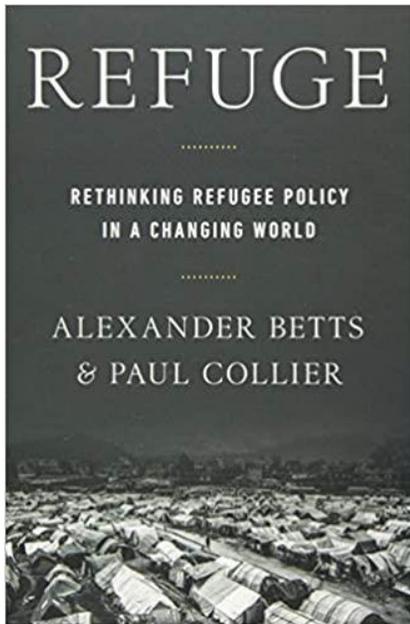
The Friend, Vol. XVII, No. 16 (1844), p.125. See https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Friend/HDIHAQAAMAAJ.

What We're Reading

John Davidson: *Refuge: Rethinking Refugee Policy in a Changing World* by Alexander Betts and Paul Collier.



There are more people displaced in the world today than at any time since the Second World War. Most of these 65 million uprooted people remain within their own countries, but nearly a third --over twenty million-- had no alternative but to cross a border. When they did, they became refugees. They are fleeing mass violence in chronically fragile states like Syria, Afghanistan, and Somalia, or they may be fleeing criminal violence in states like El Salvador. Refugees are not like other migrants: they are moving not for gain but because they have no choice. They are seeking safety abroad and, for the most part, refugees stay in the countries close to home. Almost 90 percent of refugees are in havens in the developing world (p.1).



Refuge presents an interesting discussion of the way in which public thinking about refugees has changed since the core elements of relevant international law were conceived and established after the Second World War. When the 1951 Convention on Refugees was signed and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was established by the U.S. and European governments, the public was very welcoming to the cold war refugees, viewing them as heroes in the struggle against communism, while today refugees are widely portrayed by right-wing politicians as dangerous and impoverished. Although the 1951 Convention and the UNHCR remain significantly unaltered since their creation, focusing on the legal standard of a “well-founded fear of persecution,” neither I nor the authors of *Refuge* (Oxford professors Collier and Betts) believe these should be abolished. Nevertheless, the 1951 Convention fails to adequately answer the most basic contemporary questions on ‘who to protect,’ ‘how to protect,’ and ‘where to protect,’ offering a lack of guidance on the dominant refugee questions of the twenty-first century. Meanwhile, UNHCR is increasingly struggling to fulfill its underlying purpose, to facilitate collective action on protection and solutions for refugees.

The nature of the forced- displacement challenge has been fundamentally altered by the changing nature of conflict, including the shift from Cold War bipolarity to multipolarity, the sharp increase in global population since the 1950s, climate change and the resulting displacement of populations, and increased state fragility within the developing countries, along with other factors. The 1951 Convention has now been signed by 145 countries, in which governments agree to reciprocally allow people fleeing a “well-founded fear of persecution” for reasons of political opinion, race or nationality or religious belief, onto their territories. This was not meant in 1951 to be permanent, but after 1967 (again as part of the logic of the Cold War) was extended to include developing countries. In a classic instance of Eurocentrism, a convention explicitly focused on state persecution of individuals in postwar Europe was applied globally and permanently in 1967 without modification. With wide variation in its legal interpretation between states, policy coherence has been lost. Several of the countries that today provide the main havens for refugees have not signed it.

We must have empathy for refugees, but allowing all who would like to enter Western Europe (or the United States) to move permanently without restriction is an answer which almost all elected politicians reject, as they would not wish the population of the U.S. or Western Europe to suddenly increase by fifty percent. In explaining the panic in Europe concerning refugees and the fears which led British people to vote for Brexit in 2016, the authors emphasize the sudden movement in April 2015 of more than a million Syrian and other refugees to Europe, in which Europe for the first time in its history received a mass influx of refugees from outside the European region. Instead of cooperating on a coherent plan, European governments resorted to unilateral panic declarations, their policies being shaped more by the domestic politics of the moment than the search for collective solutions. Although the authors praise Angela Merkel for allowing nearly a million refugees into Germany, they criticize the failure of the EU to set up a new policy after the door was closed to further immigration later that year. They emphasize the neglect of the nearly 90 percent of the world’s refugees who remain in the developing world, as it is vastly

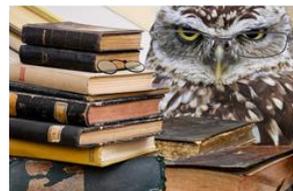
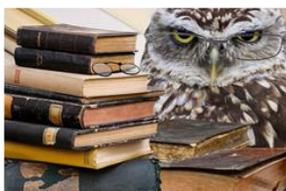
more expensive to bring refugees to Europe and incorporate them into European society than it would be to provide refugees with jobs in less developed countries.

The current crisis of Afghan, Sudanese, and Syrian refugees escaping war zones is less extreme than in 2015, but continues on in the same pattern as before, as there is almost universal noncompliance with the socioeconomic rights specified in the Convention. Most host states place serious restrictions on the right to work; nor are these the only parts of the Convention that are ignored. From Australia to Kenya to Jordan to Hungary, governments turn away refugees at the border, or threaten to expel them, without even assessing their claims (p.7). Nor has the situation improved since this book was written three years ago. Most recently, the Greek Coast Guard has forcibly pushed away boatloads of refugees in the Aegean seeking to claim refuge in the EU, and Stephen Miller, Donald Trump’s “immigration expert,” sought to make American policy as hostile as possible to all persons seeking refuge by drastically reducing the number permitted to enter the country.

The authors call for building a system that works to meet today’s needs. They recommend a more honest and straightforward definition of a refugee, focusing on physical danger to the person, rather than “fear of persecution.” Along these lines, the authors argue for rethinking the ethics of the duty of rescue, so as to emphasize the right of the person to safety, in order to broaden the concept to include victims of climate change or gang violence rather than focusing on persecution as the only relevant issue. They go on to argue that havens should be rethought so as not to trap people for decades in depressing camps where they are not permitted to work. The authors are sharply critical of the UN refugee system for establishing these long-term camps, which they say is both inhumane and expensive (see especially Chapter 5, pp.127-155). Assistance should be rethought, in their view, so as to restore autonomy and not to remove refugees from economic development opportunities as the current system tends to do by presenting them to donors as a crisis in need of immediate humanitarian assistance year after year.

The authors make a series of good points, but given the toxic and demagogic nature of the national debate on refugees in both Europe and the U.S., it continues to be difficult for policymakers to rethink the entire issue. I would recommend this book to any Quaker who might be interested in the problems faced by refugees in the modern world, and the authors’ focus on Europe is an interesting contrast to the usual discussion centered on America as the nation offering refuge.

Betts, A. and Collier, P. *Refuge: Rethinking Refugee Policy in a Changing World*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2017.





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