



# THE QUIET WORD

December 2014 issue no.11



Meeting for worship

[GILDERSOME Friends Meeting](#)

House 75 Street Lane, Gildersome,  
Leeds, LS27 7HX

tel: 0113 2564944 or 07973 450  
368

Sundays, 10.45 am

[ILKLEY Friends Meeting House](#)

Queens Road, Ilkley, Leeds, LS29 9QJ  
tel: 01943 600 806 or 01943 601  
181

Sundays, 10.30 am

[ADEL Friends Meeting House](#)

New Adel Lane, Leeds LS16 6AZ  
tel: 0113 2676293

Sundays, 10.45 am

[CARLTON HILL Central Leeds](#)

Friends Meeting House

188 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds,  
LS2 9DX

tel: 0113 2422208

Meetings for worship:

Sundays, 10.45 am

[ROUNDHAY Friends Meeting House](#)

136 Street Lane, Leeds, LS8 2BW

tel: 0113 2933684

Sundays, 10.45 am

[OTLEY Friends Meeting](#)

1st Sunday of month 10:45 at various  
houses.

3rd Sunday every month in The  
Court House—usually in the Robing  
room .

Enquiries :0113 318 8084

[dmr@cooptel.net](mailto:dmr@cooptel.net)

[RAWDON Friends Meeting House-](#)

Quakers Lane, Rawdon, Leeds,  
LS19 6HU

tel: 07582 960092

Sundays, 10.45 am

[LEEDS UNIVERSITY](#)

Tuesdays, 1.05pm

In Claire Chapel, The Emmanuel  
Centre which is alongside the main  
entrance to the University of Leeds  
Campus opposite the Parkinson  
Building (with the white clock tower).

Organised by the Leeds Universities  
Chaplaincy

[Bedford Court](#)

First and third Wednesdays,  
10.30 am



*A boy from Stroud stared at a star  
To meet his mother's eyesight there*

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## Dates for your diary

*@ denotes an event that is only open to those who attend Leeds Quaker meetings.*

### December

**Thursday 4th** 6pm to 7pm **Meeting for Worship** followed by a soup dinner at QMH, 188 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds

**Thursday 4th** 6.30pm Tackling Inequality - Leeds Civic Hall

**@ Sunday 14th** 1.15 to 4.15 **Leeds Area Quaker Meeting** at Adel QMH **Speakers include Juliet Prager, Deputy Recording Clerk of BYM**, topic ' My spiritual journey and supporting our centrally managed Quaker work'

**Saturday 20th** 10.30am to 11am **Quaker Peace Vigil** meet outside Debenhams on Briggate

**Saturday 20th** 11am **Christmas Carols with a Peace Twist** - especially commissioned for the occasion! Meet outside Debenhams on Briggate - the site of Leeds Moothall where 50 Quakers were imprisoned in 1683.

**Sunday 21st** 10.45am **All Aged Quaker Meeting** followed by shared vegetarian lunch, QMH, 188 Woodhouse Lane, LS2 9DX

**Thursday 25th** 9.30am **Christmas day breakfast** and 10am **Meeting for Worship**, QMH, 188 Woodhouse Lane, LS2 9DX

### January

**Saturday 17th** 10am to 4pm **Quakers in Yorkshire Gathering** at Oxford Place Methodist centre, next to Leeds Town Hall. Topic: Parliamentary Liaison by Jessica Met

**@Sunday 25th** 1.15pm Leeds Area Meeting Elders and Overseers. **Topic: supporting elderly friends**. Venue; QMH 188 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds, LS2 9DX nb this meeting is open to all Quakers in Leeds AM

## Have you submitted a article that has not appeared in the Quiet word?

Unfortunately we have noticed a misprint of the Quiet word email address on some previous Quiet Word issues. This was brought to light recently when someone wondered what was happening with an article they submitted. I always say—if you are going to make a mistake like that you may as well put it on a template so it gets repeated again and again on different Quiet Word issues. If you have submitted an article that hasn't been included or would like to submit one please email me at [quietword@leedsquakers.org.uk](mailto:quietword@leedsquakers.org.uk)

**E**ric Hulland was remembered at the memorial meeting for worship held 28/11/14 at Carlton Hill. Eric died this summer and Elizabeth, his wife, passed away in 2013. All Leeds Quakers can see the testimony to Elizabeth Hulland on the new LAQM website – if you have not yet got your access to the website, please see your Local Meeting clerk. Shortly after Eric and Elizabeth moved to Bedford Court in 2006 (the 'Quaker' retirement complex at Horsforth, Leeds), I assisted Eric in preparing a short account of some of his experiences. These were serialised in the Carlton Hill newsletter of the time and now is a good a time as any to remember them.

Robert Keeble

## Part 1 - Avoiding the Cherry Wardens

I was brought up in London, in the Finchley area which was on the Northern Line for those who know it. I enjoyed a stable safe childhood and I had a sister who was eith years older than myself. My father was a company secretary and my mother 'kept the home' which was the norm at that time.

I went to a boarding school in Kent which was located next to the country's biggest cherry orchard and have fond memories of eating the cherries which were 'freely' available. The knowledge that the 'Cherry Wardens' were patrolling the orchards With guns added to the excitement of a successful foraging trip, but the truth is, they were after the birds, not us. Even so, one would not want to get caught! I liked the school which had a strong Christian ethos and proved to be a fun place to learn. My father was not impressed with it and brought me back to London to study at Highgate School.

Highgate School had a strong academic reputation and the boys all had set places in class. I sat two places away from the 'Gerald Hofnung' – the famous cartoonist (and Quaker) who died tragically young. I left school at 17 and, were it not for the Second World War, had hoped to enter the Priesthood. I knew that it would not

be right for me to join the army, but at the same time, I did not see myself as an 'Absolutionist'.

In 1944 I applied to join the Friends Ambulance unit (FAU) and because I was given an offer of a place with the FAU, I was granted CO (Conscientious Objector) status by the C.O. panel. My family did not agree with my views, but did continue to support me. The FAU consisted of nearly 1000 people and the Unit focused on helping the war injured. My Basic Training started at Birmingham in the grounds of Northfield, which is near to Woodbrooke and was the home of Dame Elizabeth Cadbury (of Quaker / Chocolate fame). The association of the FAU with Cadbury's earned the nickname of 'Chocolate Soldiers'! On completion of the Basic Train-

*They knew that we could be shot at  
and killed and that we were unarmed  
and doing an important job.*

ing, I also did Mechanic and Driver Training at Bristol. Finally, I undertook Head and Spinal Injury Training at Edinburgh Hospital, which was where I met Brian Meara of Ilkley Meeting who was also doing FAU training at the time. I was now a fully qualified Ambulance Driver and about to start work in war torn Europe. Incidentally, another Leeds Friend who was in the FAU was Edwin England, who went to Carlton Hill meeting until his death in the late 1990's.

We joined our ship at Tilbury Docks amid a fierce air raid which saw heavy bombing of the nearby Eastend Soap Factories – the blaze was massive and I can remember thinking that the battle front would be safer than London! We sailed to Ostend and then as the war progressed we went through Belgium, Holland and then into Germany.



One of many cartoons by Gerald Hofnung

The FAU did feel different from ordinary army life despite the fact that we were in uniform. It felt as though we were 'with the army, but not of it'. In Britain, where some people, understandably, who resented or were hostile towards CO's. On the continent it was different: the troops were very good to us. They knew that we could be shot at and killed and that we were unarmed and doing an important job. As with us, the army boys would also say that they were working for peace – just going in a different way to get there. Our uniform was a standard Army Uniform, but with the FAU badge on the shoulders and the front pocket. This occasionally resulted in soldiers mistaking us for Officers, so we were often saluted! The food was not exciting and consisted of 'Compo Rations' which were corned beef and hard biscuits. This diet quickly resulted in sore gums which was not pleasant. However, one advantage of the FAU was the fact that, as with the officers, we had our own Mess Room.

George Thorn was my Section Leader and he would delegate the duties which usually consisted of Casualty Collection or setting up Clearing Sta-

tions where the wounded were treated prior to being sent back to the front or back to the UK depending on the severity of the injuries. When we were on Casualty Collection we worked in pairs. Our Ambulances, which were similar to the standard Army trucks, could carry up to four casualties at a time, but normally we would transport one or two at a time. The priority was to support Allied injured soldiers, but occasionally we would carry civilians and injured Prisoners of War (POW's) who were always very grateful for our support and we never needed an armed escort. Clearly, the work got busier when there was a big offensive and I can remember driving through villages and seeing all the houses that had been burned to the ground.

At the end of the war, I worked for the Friends relief Service in Germany. This is when I met Elizabeth, my future wife. More about the post war era in next month's newsletter

**Eric Hulland**  
**LAQM**



## Leeds – the Quaker city?

In November a straw poll was conducted at each Local Meeting in Leeds to establish the day and time that people would prefer to attend Leeds Area Quaker Meeting. The results of the poll seem to suggest that our present practice of holding our LAQM's mostly on a Sunday afternoon is the favoured option. The poll showed that there is a great diversity of attendance at our seven meetings within 'Leeds Area Meeting'. The numbers attending were as follows: Carlton Hill 49 (including 2 children), Ilkley 33 (including 5 children), Rawdon 19, Roundhay 17, Adel 15, Gildersome 13 and Otley 7. This came to a total of 154 which is a far bigger attendance than normally takes place at York or Sheffield which are both seen as 'Quaker Cities' with a sup-

per sized Quaker Meeting being attended by about 100 friends! Of the 154 friends attending in Leeds, 102 indicated that they would come to Area Meeting more often if it were on a Sunday afternoon, Saturday am/pm or a weekday evening – one implication being that we could conceivably look forward to over 100 friends attending future Area Meetings.....

What is quite clear is that no one opted for the 'all day Saturday Area Meeting' so this is no longer planned to take place. The full results of the survey and the subsequent suggested changes to our Area Meeting format are fully detailed in the new 'Documents in Advance' section of our new Area Meeting Website - if you have not yet got your access to the website, please see your Local Meeting clerk.



## “The Shaking of the Foundations” - Paul Tillich

### Chapter 19: “You are accepted”

By Jan Brummfit

I suppose my very early childhood experiences and the loss of a number of family members at an early age, made me a candidate for being influenced by an evangelical crusade at our local chapel. The emotion of the occasion led me to go down to the front to “Give my life to Jesus” but the truth of the matter was that it was not authentic. I realise now I was searching for Love but I felt at that time that it was my fault that I couldn’t accept Jesus into my life. It was like I was on the mainland and across the water was an island. I needed to get to the island (representing acceptance) but there was no bridge. Of course now I know I was not meant to go there because I no longer accept the Saviour aspect of Jesus in the traditional sense. When we are loved unconditionally by God there is no need to be “saved” as we can never ever be separated from the Father/Mother. So for four years, between the age of 16 and 20 I had an internal battle going on and was quite terrified of dying “out of the fold” so to speak.

*so many chains put there by myself  
through despair and self criticism fell  
off and I was transformed*

While in university in London I was a member of the Methodist Society and it was the tradition there for groups to be formed and to study a set book or part of it. I was in Sunday Afternoon Group because it was a long way up to Hinde Street and as I was going up already for a talk, tea and worship it made sense to combine the two. In the Easter term - just after I was 20 years old we came to study a book of sermons by the German Theologian, Paul Tillich. It was a synthesis of the work of Paul Tillich, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Rudolf Bultmann that caused so much controversy when the Bishop of Woolwich, Doctor John Robinson, published “Honest to God,” criticising traditional Christian Theology. On the train going up to Charing Cross I began to read Chapter 19 of “The Shaking of the Foundations,” called “You are accepted”, which we were to study that afternoon. It was to be absolutely mind blowing for me for here was Paul Tillich telling me that all I had to do was to accept the fact that I was accepted. No need

for belief - even in God or Jesus or the Bible - just acceptance of myself where I was at that time. Then I would experience Grace. And so I did - so many chains put there by myself through despair and self criticism fell off and I was transformed over the next few days and weeks. Within a couple of years it actually led me to leave the church so radical was the experience. I would like to share with you the part of the sermon which made the most impact. Should you want to read the whole sermon you will find it at

<http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=378&C=84>

but I am only going to share the part which had so much effect on me and which I have read many times and even recently recommended to someone going through the same degree of self rejection that I did. The most important words for me are in bold.

**Do we know what it means to be struck by grace? It does not mean that we suddenly believe that God exists, or that Jesus is the Saviour, or that the Bible contains the truth. To believe that something is, is almost contrary to the meaning of grace.**

Furthermore, grace does not mean simply that we are making progress in our moral selfcontrol, in our fight against special faults, and in our relationships to men and to society. Moral progress may be a fruit of grace; but it is not grace itself, and it can even prevent us from receiving grace. For there is too often a graceless acceptance of Christian doctrines and a graceless battle against the structures of evil in our personalities. Such a graceless relation to God may lead us by necessity either to arrogance or to despair. It would be better to refuse God and the Christ and the Bible than to accept them without grace. For if we accept without grace, we do so in the state of separation, and can only succeed in deepening the separation. We cannot transform our lives, unless we allow them to be transformed by that stroke of grace. It happens; or it does not happen. And certainly it does not happen if we try to force it upon ourselves, just as it shall not happen so long as we think, in our self complacency, that we have no need of it. **Grace strikes us when we are in great pain and restlessness. It strikes us when**

**we walk through the dark valley of a meaningless and empty life. It strikes us when we feel that our separation is deeper than usual, because we have violated another life, a life which we loved, or from which we were estranged. It strikes us when our disgust for our own being, our indifference, our weakness, our hostility, and our lack of direction and composure have become intolerable to us. It strikes us when, year after year, the longed-for perfection of life does not appear, when the old compulsions reign within us as they have for decades, when despair destroys all joy and courage. Sometimes at that moment a wave of light breaks into our darkness, and it is as though a voice were saying: "You are accepted. You are accepted, accepted by that which is greater than you, and the name of which you do not know. Do not ask for the name now; perhaps you will find it later. Do not try to do anything now;**

**perhaps later you will do much. Do not seek for anything; do not perform anything; do not intend anything. Simply accept the fact that you are accepted!" If that happens to us, we experience grace After such an experience we may not be better than before, and we may not believe more than before. But everything is transformed. In that moment, grace conquers sin, and reconciliation bridges the gulf of estrangement. And nothing is demanded of this experience, no religious or moral or intellectual presupposition, nothing but acceptance.** In the light of this grace we perceive the power of grace in our relation to others and to ourselves. We experience the grace of being able to look frankly into the eyes of another, the miraculous grace of reunion of life with life. We experience the grace of understanding each other's words. We understand not

merely the literal meaning of the words, but also that which lies behind them, even when they are harsh or angry. For even then there is a longing to break through the walls of separation. We experience the grace of being able to accept the life of another, even if it be hostile and harmful to us, for, through grace, we know that it belongs to the same Ground to which we belong, and by which we have been accepted. We experience the grace which is able to overcome the tragic separation of the sexes, of the generations, of the nations, of the races, and even the utter strangeness between man and nature. Sometimes grace appears in all these separations to reunite us with those to whom we belong. For life belong to life. And in the light of this grace we perceive the power of grace in our relation to ourselves. We experience moments in which we accept ourselves, because we feel that we have been accepted by that which is greater than we. If only more such moments were given to us! For it is such moments that make us love our life, that make us accept ourselves, not in our goodness and self-complacency, but in our certainty of the eternal meaning of our life. We cannot force ourselves to accept ourselves. We cannot compel anyone to accept himself. But sometimes it happens that we receive the power to say "yes" to ourselves, that peace enters into us and makes us whole, that self-hate and self-contempt disappear, and that our self is reunited with itself. Then we can say that grace has come upon us."

**Jan Brumfitt  
Gildersome Meeting**



## A bit about me –Pete Redwood

As the “new boy” at Carlton Hill I am very much aware that I am still a bit of a stranger to many Friends although I have been heavily involved with Quakers for over 25 years.

To fill in some of the gaps: -

My first encounter with Quakers was in Winchester in 1987, but I was accepted into Meeting in Norwich in 1989. By that time I was working for Friends of the Earth as a transport campaigner, based in Norwich. I also helped with their Water and Toxics campaign, helping pursue legal action against some of the big chemical companies operating in the area that were proven to be polluting the Norfolk Broads. Through that, I was invited onto the Norfolk Broads Consultative Committee by the Norfolk Broads Authority.

The Quaker Meeting kept me anchored in spiritual matters and gave me the opportunity to serve the Meeting – as overseer, and eventually elder. I was appointed as convener of Children's Committee and had a particular interest in working with the older youngsters - 12-16 age group. Together with Chris Edwards (now warden of Friargate Meeting in York) we ran a Link Group, holding three or four residential weekends of activity. We had a couple of youngsters on the committee to help decide what we should do each time. The Meeting was horrified when they selected witchcraft as a topic, but we turned it around to cover a much wider belief, although we did have a Wicca friend of mine come to do a session with them.

Another occasion for concern was when they wanted to go and protest at the building of the Newbury bypass in Berkshire. I had already spent a number of years with the campaign group against the building of the M3 through nature reserves, ancient burial grounds and areas of scenic beauty in Hampshire, so had a number of contacts. We also contacted Newbury Meeting to see if they could help us with accommodation. The clerk was most unhelpful and we discovered that the issue of building the by-pass had actually divided the Meeting. However, a sympathetic Friend came forward and offered us a corner of her field in which to camp. Over the weekend we made contact with the protest camp, had a workshop session with one of the Friends of the Earth transport campaigners – and took part in a Druid ceremony at the protest camp.

I still had to earn a living and for six years ran my own business designing, building and selling bicycle trailers. Also around this time I developed an interest in alternative energy and joined the Centre for Alternative Tech-

nology at Machynlleth in Wales and running a support group in Norwich.

A chain of events then overtook me. The breakup of my second marriage and a dispute with the local council which caused me to close the business, plus other issues. I next found myself in Whitby helping to set up a Quaker residential community. Sadly, it was being done for all the wrong reasons and so was doomed to failure. In the meantime I had established myself at Robin Hoods Bay, working in a second-hand bookshop. A short while later the bookshop closed and I was forced to find a job in Scarborough – or more strictly the Job Centre found one for me!

Working in an office, sat in front of a computer all day was not my idea of the ideal job. Nevertheless, I did it for six years, under the fancy job title of Database Administrator, basically, looking after all the student records of a Further Education College and maintaining and updating the database that held them. In order to do the job I had to move to Scarborough because travel to and from Robin Hoods Bay by bus outside peak times was a nightmare.

Scarborough Meeting played an important part in my life and I held various appointments during my time there – elder, overseer, Quaker Peace and Social Witness representative, Living Witness Project representative, Premises Committee. I also had connections with Christian Ecology Link – an ecumenical charity helping churches of all denominations to address environmental concerns like climate change. I was elected onto the national steering committee where I served until four years ago.

An increase in rent plus a reduction in Housing Benefit put me in danger of being homeless. Having attended a few Buddhist meditation sessions at the Meeting House I was invited to live at the Buddhist Centre in Pocklington. I stayed there for three and half years until I transferred to the centre here in Leeds in March.

I am now enjoying a peaceful retirement – still active with environmental groups here in Leeds, and now also involved with asylum support groups.

**Pete Redwood**  
**Carlton Hill Meeting**



## A response to Benefit Cuts

Over that last few years, government policies around benefits have made life considerably worse for many of the poorest in our country. Whilst the fallout is difficult to measure, many services have experienced a surge of demand from people too poor to provide for themselves and their families. Over the last year alone, charities such as The Trussell Trust's Food-banks have stepped up to provide emergency food to almost 1 million people – nearly triple than the previous year. In this same year, Shelter have reported an increase in 4000 more households becoming homeless in England.

It's in this context that George Osborne, in the recent Conservative party conference, has announced their intention to cut an additional £3bn if successful in the next election. The primary reason given is that public spending must decrease to stabilise the economy. Whilst this is a reasonable goal, achieving stability by reducing support for the poorest in the country, as opposed to cutting back on, say, military spending, needs to be questioned.

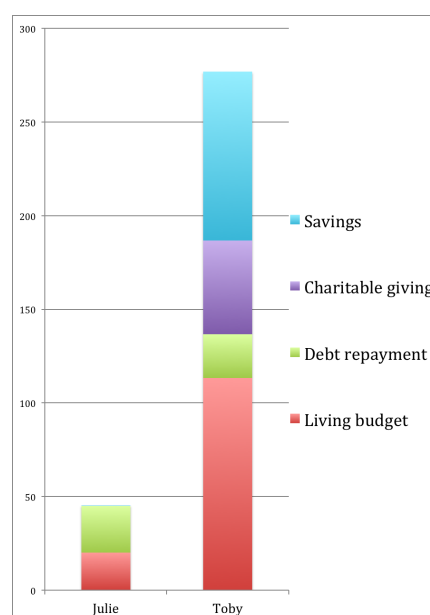
### The 'generous' benefits system

It's often believed that our benefits system is somehow generous, and people dependent on benefits live comfortably. The reality is often far from the truth. As a point of reference, I compared my budget with the budget of a client of Christians Against Poverty (CAP), the charity I work for.

Julie is 42, lives alone, has little prospects of working again due to physical and mental health issues, and is dependent on ESA, Housing Benefit and Council Tax benefit. I'm 28, earn just over the national average, and share a low-rent house with 3 others. Despite my shared housing being far more economical, Julie spends £8.50 less per week on fixed costs (rent, utilities etc.), which probably means her house is cold and very basic. It's on her unfixed costs, however, where the gap is very apparent.

Embarrassingly, my living budget (food, transport, clothing, leisure) is around 5 times what Julie has to spend. We then both have debt repayments to make to the government. For me, this is a Student Loan. For Julie, it's rent and Council Tax arrears, and previous benefit overpayments. I then have almost Julie's entire income again to spare, which I either give away or save. By our society's standards, I'm average, and live modestly. Julie's generous benefits go nowhere near

providing healthy food, safe, warm housing and quality of life.



### Better off in work

The Government often bandies around the maxim that people should be 'better off in work than on benefits'. Indeed, there are contexts where people are penalised for finding part time work, and in these scenarios, I wholeheartedly agree that the system needs reform. The danger is where it's assumed that people aren't trying to find work because they're comfortable on benefits, and should have these cut to incentivise working.

Many simply have almost no prospect of finding work regardless of how much better off they would be in work – such as Julie who will likely depend on these tiny benefits indefinitely. The situation is comparable for many others with poor English skills, no education, criminal records, or debilitating health issues.

### Benefit sanctions

Another recent drive has been to clamp down on fraudulent benefit claims, particularly disability benefit claims and sanctions on Job Seeker's Allowance for people not deemed to be trying hard enough. Whilst there is a minority cheating the system, thousands are driven into debt, homelessness and malnutrition for bureaucratic reasons. This drive is supposedly about saving the country money – but as the 2<sup>nd</sup> smallest type of fraud in the UK, with the elephant of corporate tax fraud left unhindered (estimated at 50 times the size of benefit fraud), it's clear that this is more about finding a political scapegoat.



## Benefit cuts in practice

One of the big dangers with talking in very general terms about how benefit cuts affect the poor is that what it means to an individual is lost. The benefit cuts typically represent a small reduction across a range of commonly claimed benefits. It may be a reduction of £2pw on council tax benefit, and an effective loss of £3pw on ESA not being increased in line with inflation – it doesn't sound like much. Returning to Julie's budget in more detail, we see a very different picture of what a few pounds means.

*She'd have to save for weeks just to catch a bus.*

Income		
[ESA, HB, CTB]	£163.77	
Expenditure		
Rent	£78.00	
Council Tax	£15.99	
Utilities	£23.81	
Food	£19.00	
Transport	£0.28	
Clothes	£0.23	
Leisure	£0.70	
Emergencies	£0.12	
Arrears / debts	Owed	Repayment amount
Rent arrears	£208	£3.65
Council Tax arrears	£249	£3.88
Benefit overpayment	£280	£8.52
Social Fund Loan	£176	£8.52
Water arrears	£1191	£0.23
Overdraft, payday loans etc.	£5167	£0
Overdraft, payday loans etc.	£5167	£0

Her living budget is ridiculous. She'd have to save for weeks just to catch a bus. It's no surprise she has ended up in debt. Probably the most ludicrous part of her budget is the amount that she repaying each week on

her debts to the council, when she has so little to live on. These amounts aren't optional, they're deducted directly from her benefits – pushing her into further debt. Julie lived in shame, terrified of leaving the house, and like 1 in 3 of other clients of CAP, considered suicide as a solution.

It's in this context that benefit cuts need to be assessed in, not just statistics. If £5 is to be cut, we need to look at where this cut is supposed to be taken from.

## The good news

Despite many problems, there's lots of progress to celebrate. Many of the big banks are genuinely improving their policies towards those in poverty and starting to offer some help to vulnerable people. Meanwhile, the charity sector has responded brilliantly to these challenges.

Julie received several home visits from CAP, where she was given bags of shopping to fill her cupboard. Over the next 6 months, CAP's Insolvency team then worked on Julie's behalf to prepare bankruptcy paperwork. Unable to pay the £700 bankruptcy fee herself (yes, you may unbelievably need £700 to be declared bankrupt in England – a wonderful Catch 22 situation), CAP paid her court fees and cleared her outstanding debt. Whilst Julie remains very poor, in real terms she now has £25 extra per week, which is a significant difference. Importantly, she no longer has to fear eviction or has the shame of debt. It's good to know that every day, thousands are being helped in this way by charities across the UK.

## What we can do

The people worst affected by benefit cuts typically have the least political influence, which is why it's important to raise awareness of the situation, and represent those who can't represent themselves. The more work we can do to influence wider society and the government into protecting the poorest, and show that we understand how the system is operating, the more chance there is of lasting change.

For those of us who come into contact with those affected by benefit cuts either socially, through volunteering or work, the most significant thing you may be able to do is connect that person with the many services available. I wholeheartedly recommend the following key services:

**Foodbanks:** For emergency help with food, there are 4 Foodbanks in Leeds. Vouchers are required, which can be obtained from a range of professionals such as doctors or social workers.

**www.turn2us.org.uk** This website offers a self-help benefits checking service to ensure someone is getting all they're eligible for. It also provides a searchable directory of trust funds who may be able to provide individuals with hardship grants. This said, if somebody is in severe debt or facing eviction I don't recommend self-help - there are several free professional services for these issues.

**Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB):** A great free service for assistance with making benefits claims, disputes, housing issues and debt advice. As a one-stop shop for a broad range of help or referral to other local services, it's often a good place to start. CAB have 6 centres in Leeds.

**Christians Against Poverty (CAP):** Specializing in those who are particularly vulnerable or difficult to help, CAP provide a home-visit service for those in severe debt. As the only service to pay for clients' bankruptcy fees, provide food and where necessary, essential appliances, I recommend CAP for those that can't find help elsewhere or need a holistic service. CAP have 5 centres in the Leeds-Bradford area and can be contacted on 0800 328 0006

**StepChange:** A telephone-based debt management service, including benefits advice. Ideal for those who need a less hands on service (though a minimum income threshold can be required). The helpline is 0800 138 1111

**Toby Johnson**  
**Carlton Hill Meeting**



## William Dewsbury (1621-88) – the first Quaker in Leeds

We have a very small library at new Carlton Hill Meeting House and some of the books from the thousands that were once in the original 'Carlton Hill Library' still remain. One such book is that of *Annals of The Early Friends- a series of biographical sketches*, which was printed in 1900. It was discovered almost by accident – we have a monthly book group at Carlton Hill and we agreed to select any book off 'the top shelf' and in this way it was 'found'. Many people have told me that they were interested in the article 'A short history of Leeds Area Quaker Meeting' (QW page 4 November 2014). So taking these friends at their word, I would like to share a bit more about William Dewsbury as detailed in 'the Annals'.

The early years of William Dewsbury were spent as a Shepherd's boy at Allerthorpe (near Pocklington) in Yorkshire. His father died when he was eight years old and whilst giving vent to his sorrow in tears he seemed to hear a voice saying, "weep for thyself, for thy father is well.". Exceedingly

powerful was the impression then made on his mind. "Deep sorrow seized on me," he says, "and I knew not what to do to get acquaintance with the God of my life." When about thirteen, having heard of some Puritans living in Leeds, he begged his friends to find him some employment there. He found disappointment in Leeds as none could tell him "what God had done for their souls in redeeming them from the body of sin". His health

*Carnal weapons were laid down  
and spiritual weapons were wielded  
in a conflict more severe than any  
outward one.*

suffered from his spiritual conflicts and he found it hard to

carry out the work of a cloth-weavers apprentice.

When he was about twenty, he entered the Parliamentary army. His biographer imagines that he had been led to believe that by this step he 'would be going up to the help of the Lord against the

mighty'. Failing to find the associates he longed for in the army, he visited Edinburgh, where he tells us, that he only found formality and that no light was brought to his soul when he met with the Independents and Anabaptists.

William is then quoted as saying "the Lord discovered me that His love could not be attained to by anything I could do in any outward observances, and in all these turnings of my carnal wisdom, while seeking the kingdom of God *without*, thither the flaming sword turned to keep the way of the tree of life and fenced me from it....Then my mind was turned *within* by the power of the Lord...And the word of the Lord came unto me and said, 'Put up thy sword into its scabbard; if my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight; knowest thou not that, if I needed, I could have twelve legions of angels from my father?' which word enlightened my heart. It showed the kingdom of Christ to be within, and that its enemies being within and spiritual, my weapons against them should be spiritual – the POWER OF GOD "

William resumed his old occupation as a cloth weaver. Carnal weapons were laid down and spiritual weapons were wielded in a conflict more severe than any outward one. In about 1648 he recalled that he had felt a strong calling to preach in public and share his experiences with others, but that 'he was taught by the Holy Spirit that the time for this was not yet come, and that if he waited until a future year there would be a great openness in the minds of the people to receive his message. Knowing the voice and following his Shepherd, he quietly pursued his trade, holding meetings for worship in his own

house. It was about this time that he married a young woman, Ann, who, like himself, had passed through many inward conflicts.

In 1651, William and Ann met George Fox at Stanley near Wakefield (although some accounts record the meeting place as Snyderhill Green). In his journal, Fox wrote "At an evening meeting there, William Dewsbury and his wife came and heard me declare the Truth. And after the meeting there, it being a moonlight night, I walked out into the field, and confessed to the Truth and received it; and after some time he did testify to it". Returning to Leeds, William will recounted "Freely thou hast received, freely give and minister; and what I have made known unto thee in secret, declare though openly". William details that this six year period of waiting was one of the hardest things that he had to endure and when on his death bed, alluding to this period of his life, he said that he never afterward "played the coward, but as joyfully entered prisons as palaces, telling his enemies to hold him there as long as they could; and in prison he sang praises to his God, and esteemed the bolts and locks put upon him as jewels". In preaching 'Truth', he endured much hardship, on one occasion he was imprisoned at Warwick Gaol for nearly eight years; and at a later period, for nearly six more. If friends wish, I can relay a little more of Williams life on a future occasion.

**Robert Keeble**  
**Carlton Hill Meeting**



Christmas Eve in the trenches of France,  
the guns were quiet.  
The dead lay still in No Man's Land –  
Freddie, Franz, Friedrich, Frank . . .  
The moon, like a medal, hung in the clear,  
cold sky.



Silver frost on barbed wire, strange tinsel, sparkled and winked.  
A boy from Stroud stared at a star  
to meet his mother's eyesight there.  
An owl swooped on a rat on the glove of a corpse.



In a copse of trees behind the lines, a lone  
bird sang.  
A soldier-poet noted it down – *a robin holding  
his winter ground* –  
then silence spread and touched each man  
like a hand.

Somebody kissed the gold of his ring;  
a few lit pipes;  
most, in their greatcoats, huddled,  
waiting for sleep.  
The liquid mud had hardened at last in the freeze.

But it was Christmas Eve; *believe*; belief thrilled the night air,  
where glittering rime on unburi sons  
treasured their stiff hair.  
The sharp, clean, midwinter smell held memory.

On watch, a rifleman scoured the terrain –  
no sign of life,  
no shadows, shots from snipers, nowt to note or report.  
The frozen, foreign fields were acres of pain.

Then flickering flames from the other side danced in his eyes,  
as Christmas Trees in their dozens shone, candlelit on the para-  
pets,  
and they started to sing, all down the German lines.



Men who would drown in mud, be gassed,  
or shot, or vaporised  
by falling shells, or live to tell, heard for the  
first time then –  
*Stille Nacht. Heilige Nacht. Alles schläft,  
einsam wacht ...*

*Cariad, the song was a sudden bridge from man to man;  
a gift to the heart from home,  
or childhood, some place shared ...*  
When it was done, the British soldiers cheered.

A Scotsman started to bawl *The First Noel*  
and all joined in,  
till the Germans stood, seeing  
across the divide,  
the sprawled, mute shapes of those who had died.

All night, along the Western Front, they sang, the enemies –  
carols, hymns, folk songs, anthems, in German, English,  
French;  
each battalion choired in its grim trench.

So Christmas dawned, wrapped in mist, to open itself  
and offer the day like a gift  
for Harry, Hugo, Hermann, Henry, Heinz ...  
with whistles, waves, cheers, shouts, laughs.

*Frohe Weihnachten, Tommy! Merry Christmas, Fritz!*

A young Berliner, brandishing schnapps,  
was the first from his ditch to climb.  
A Shropshire lad ran at him like a rhyme.

Then it was up and over, every man, to shake the hand  
of a foe as a friend,  
or slap his back like a brother would;  
exchanging gifts of biscuits, tea, Maconochie's  
stew,



Tickler's jam ... for cognac, sausag-  
es, cigars,  
beer, sauerkraut;  
or chase six hares, who jumped  
from a cabbage-patch, or find a ball  
and make of a battleground a football  
pitch.

*I showed him a picture of my wife. Ich zeigte ihm  
ein Foto meiner Frau.  
Sie sei schön, sagte er.  
He thought her beautiful, he said.*



They buried the dead then, hacked  
spades into hard earth  
again and again, till a score of men  
were at rest, identified, blessed.  
*Der Herr ist mein Hirt ... my shepherd, I shall not want.*

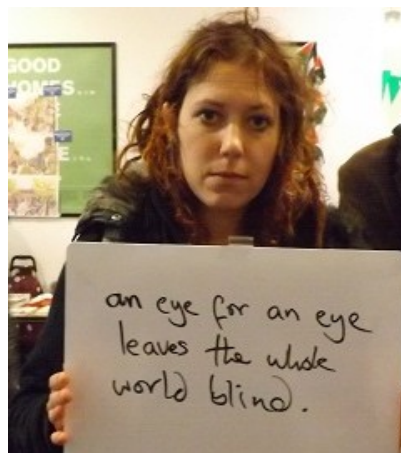
And all that marvellous, festive day and night, they came and  
went,  
the officers, the rank and file, their fallen comrades side by side  
beneath the makeshift crosses of midwinter graves ...

... beneath the shivering, shy stars  
and the pinned moon  
and the yawn of History;  
the high, bright bullets  
which each man later only aimed at the sky.

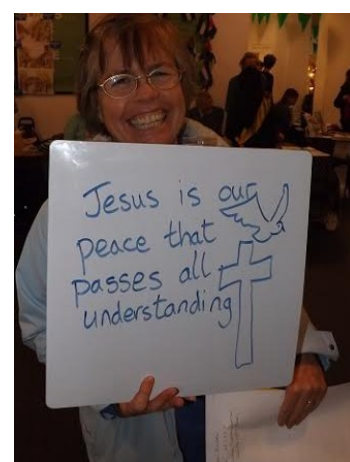
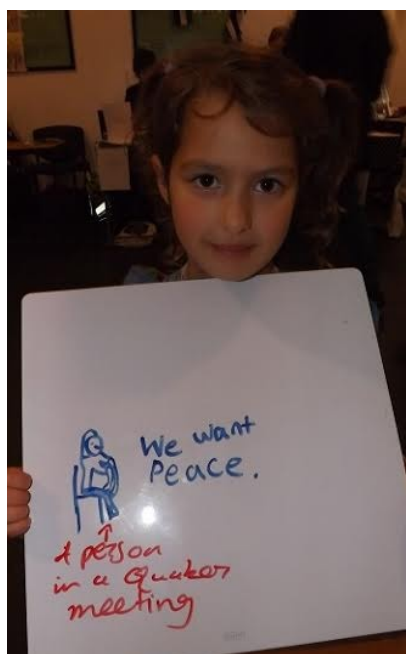


**Christmas Truce**  
by  
**Carol Ann Duffy**





**The Leeds Summat** was held on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November at Leeds University – there were two Quaker stalls, one organised by the NFBP which gave out many leaflets and about three hundred white peace poppies. The other Quaker stall was run by the Outreach Committee from our Woodhouse Lane Quaker Meeting House. Visitors to the stall were invited to write a short peace message which was then photographed. Local Quakers also ran one of the many workshops that was held throughout the day, the workshop was entitled 'building a sustainable community' and was so popular that some people had to be turned away.

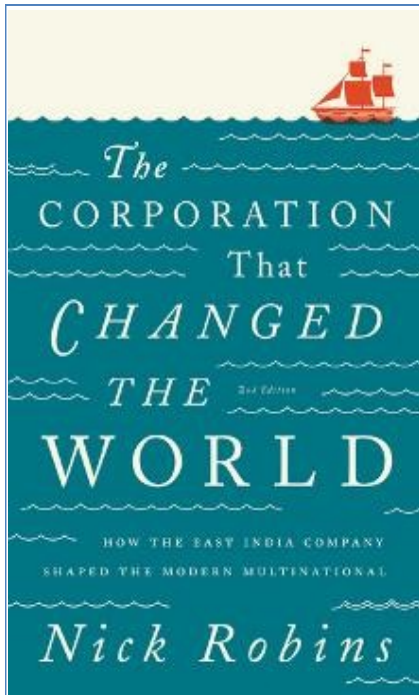


# The Corporation That Changed the World

## How the East India Company Shaped the Modern Multinational

### Nick Robins

Book review by [Pascal Ansell](#)



In the mid-18th century, the East India Company (EIC) accounted for half of the world's trade, had its own army and enjoyed tax-raising powers over 10 million Indians. Yet, strangely, not a single London memorial exists to remember it.

The Battle of Plassey (1757) kicked off the EIC's takeover of a large swathe of Bengal. Company execs bought up and hoarded rice, contributing to huge famines throughout the 18th century. Robins cites an 1878 article from the *Journal of the Statistical Society* that concluded that 'in the 120 years of British rule there [were] 34 famines in India, compared with only 17 recorded famines in the entire previous two millennia.'

In the 19th century, the Company resorted to drastic measures to stay afloat in the Chinese market, supplying and facilitating the illegal opium trade that precipitated the First and Second opium wars.

In its mania for market domination, the Company involved itself in 'immense crimes, safe in the knowledge that domestic and international remedies were not in place'. With a few exceptions, accusations of malpractice were easily dodged back in London. Underlying the ethical negligence was the structure of the EIC. Company execs were deliberately paid menial wages - but with employment came the 'privilege of private trade', and therefore rampant

exploitation.

Nick Robins' writing is clear and to the point. And while this doesn't make for electrifying reading, there is plenty of room for revelation.

As the go-to man for so many neoliberal apologists, I had always imagined Adam Smith to have somehow created free-market dogma out of thin air. Yet Robins reveals that Smith was wholeheartedly opposed to monopolies of any kind, instead supporting the competition of smaller companies within a regulated playing field.

Smith laid into the so-called 'joint stock system', popularised by the EIC, for its absence of self-restraint and responsibility, and for encouraging 'hazardous speculation'. Given Smith's huge reputation, 'it is shocking how his penetrating critique of the corporation has been so comprehensively suppressed', Robins notes. 'Nothing of his skepticism of corporations, their pursuit of monopoly and their faulty system of governance, enters the speeches of today's neo-liberal advocates.'

There's no doubt that as regards London, 'the erasure of the East India Company is highly suspicious'. Robins book urges us to remember, while holding today's global corporations to account.

Pluto Press, 2012; 280pp; £16

'This review originally appeared in Peace News: [www.peacenews.info](http://www.peacenews.info)

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Newcastle QMH

Quakers from across the 'North' including friends from Wales, Scotland and England met at Newcastle Quaker meeting House on 29<sup>th</sup> November. The NFPB meetings are open to anyone and they are always very interesting. The next one is to be held on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February in Leeds at my own Quaker Meeting House at 188 Woodhouse Lane.

We heard about the work of Newcastle Conflict resolution Network (see [www.newcastlecrn.org.uk](http://www.newcastlecrn.org.uk)). With a large amount of support from Newcastle Quakers, NCRN has been running for six years now and organises workshops and events – the one I particularly enjoyed hearing about was the 'Good News Stories Day'. There was also 'Try Life' which used a computer game format to engage with young people in role play, enabling them to learn how to manage conflict in their lives.

The main session looked at the conflict in Ukraine – through the eyes and stories of three young men all in their early twenties. Alex, Igor and Dmytro, who were all from a town to the south of Kiev. They were on a church based volunteer exchange project working at the 'Kids Cavern' in a very deprived part of Newcastle. They detailed their experiences of the protest movement in Ukraine that had led to the fall of the pro Russian leadership, the subsequent elections and new government. They talked about their fear and hope for the future of their country and the deep distrust of Russia. They told us that people, especially the younger generation, no longer want to live as they had but want to be part of the EU, to be part of a civil society without Oligarchs, bribery and corruption. Reflecting on the momentous changes that have taken place, one said 'love

kept us going, we all acted as one body, people were united and our spiritual power was very strong'. They asked that we look at how we could help build the skills needed for a civil society in Ukraine and were pessimistic about the how the very complex problems in Eastern Ukraine could be resolved in a peaceful way.

We were also informed about the Hexham Debates that have been running for eight years and organised by Northumberland Quakers. There have proved to be phenomenally successful with 250 people attending the first session at which Bruce Kent spoke. Audiences range from 100 to 150 and the talks are all on the Peace and Justice topic. They are held in Hexham, a town with a population of about 12,000 people. They take place on a Saturday at 11am in a Catholic Church Hall (there is no Meeting House). The Hexham Debates seek to carry on the tradition of active, radical debate essential for ensuring freedom and justice for all. The most recent 2014 series sought to demonstrate ways in which a government's legitimate power depends on the consent of its citizens, and reveal how far we have moved away from that ideal. The debates are now filmed and can be viewed at <http://www.northumbriaquakers.org.uk/pages/hexhamdebates.html>

**Robert Keeble**  
**Carlton Hill Meeting**





## Asylum and Refugee Network - QARN

***“That which is morally wrong cannot be politically right” 1822 Quaker Faith and Practice 23.26***

At our Leeds Area Quaker Meeting on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December, we will be considering if we can support the ‘Birmingham Statement’; this has been prepared at the national gathering, in Birmingham, of all the different ‘City of Sanctuary’ groups. The full statement can be found at the Documents In Advance Section of our new Area Meeting Website - if you have not yet got your access to the website, please see your Local Meeting clerk.

The five main points are:

- 1. All asylum seekers, refugees and migrants should be treated with dignity and respect.***
- 2. A fair and effective process to decide whether people need protection should be in place.***
- 3. No one should be locked up indefinitely.***
- 4. No one should be left sick or destitute in our society.***
- 5. We should welcome the stranger and help them to integrate.***

QARN is the national Quaker group that co-ordinates our Quaker response to the asylum issue on a national basis. QARN has recently produced a statement on destitution which can be found at the QARN website, along with lots of other information for those that want to be kept well informed and be active and supportive in this area of concern: <http://qarn.org.uk>



**YORK Exhibition.** York Friends are mounting a display as part of a World War I exhibition in the York Castle Museum:

“Led by Faith and Conscience – Alternative Views of the Great War: What Would You Have Done?” The exhibition will run from 4 November to 3 January and is included in entry to the Museum.







## Edit Eskrigge and the Suffragists

This article is from a series of blogs by Neil Ashcroft's alter ego, the writer Russell Croft . Posted December 1, 2014

<http://www.russellcroft.net/blog>

On the eve of the First World War, just over a century ago, the militant “Suffragette” movement demanding votes for women was in full-swing. The names of Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughters Christabel and Sylvia, who founded the suffragette Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU) in 1903, are still widely recalled, as is their campaign of direct, often violent, agitation. But mention of the peaceful “Suffragist” movement, which had been going for almost fifty years by 1914, produces blank looks nowadays. My great-great aunt Edith Eskrigge (1872-1948) was an active suffragist, and deserves to be celebrated for her lifetime of selfless public service.

Unlike the Pankhursts and their followers, Edith did not go in for window-smashing, or fire-setting, or painting-slashing or attacking cabinet ministers with dog-whips. Nor did she endure terms of imprisonment and bouts of force-feeding. She was also unlike the socially influential Pankhursts in having a provincial middle class upbringing, being the sixth child of seven born into a prosperous merchant’s family at Liscard Vale, Wallasey, on the opposite bank of the Mersey from Liverpool. Her father worked as a cotton broker in Liverpool, and a photograph, taken in the 1890s, has the family posed outside their large house (which stood where Vale Park is now, in New Brighton) in all their sober, but splendid, late-Victorian self-assurance. Edith, then in her early twenties, is standing, second from the right.



*(An Eskrigge Family Portrait: Private Collection)*

A keen sense of social concern was instilled in Edith by her non-conformist background (Quaker on her mother’s side and Congregationalist on her father’s), which discouraged bright girls from living lives of moneyed idleness. Starting out working in London’s East End at the Canning Town Settlement, she became immersed in voluntary social work. On her return home, she taught disabled children and undertook charitable work on their behalf, particularly in establishing Invalid Children’s Aid, later the Child Welfare Association. During the First World War she was Chief Officer of the Soldiers and Sailors Family Association in Liverpool, when she worked closely with Eleanor Rathbone. Afterwards she became Hon. Secretary of the Liverpool Women’s Citizen’s Association, which was concerned with preparing women for their duties as citizens. Later she took an active interest in the Lancashire and Cheshire Child Adoption Society. But she declined to become a magistrate, being dubious of the value of imprisonment and unwilling to be responsible for imposing it.



*(A Youthful Edith: Private Collection)*

My mother remembers her great-aunt Edith, by then an elderly lady, as an influential role model. In order that opinion about the place of women in society be altered, it was necessary for women like Edith to demonstrate their suitability to public office by means of pioneering example. But my mother also remembers the private Edith as a generous woman with a great gift for friendship, who was the pivotal member of the extended family and who took responsibility for the care of its ailing members. Edith had a horror of violence and war, and hoped that the influence of women in public affairs would be for peace. But she was broad-minded and undogmatic in her approach to any given issue, always being able to see both sides of an argument. Although briefly engaged in the 1890s, she never married. She was outgoing, nevertheless, and was a lifelong enthusiast for the outdoor pursuits of walking, climbing and cycling. She also travelled a good deal abroad.



*(An Elderly Edith: Private Collection)*

Her capacities for organisation and public speaking were used to the fullest extent in the suffragist movement. She was much involved in running the pre-war West Lancashire, West Cheshire and North Wales Federation of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) led nationally by Millicent Fawcett. This explicitly non-political and non-militant organisation set out to campaign by persuasion on a range of social issues, as well as on the cause of women's suffrage. Edith was especially prominent in promoting the educational side of her federation's work, particularly at the summer school held at Talybont in North Wales to train women working in the federation. It was through her great-aunt's connections in Talybont that my mother and her brother were evacuated there as children from Wallasey, during the Second World War blitz.

In 1913 the suffragist NUWSS staged a Women's Suffrage Pilgrimage, wherein its constituent federations marched to London during June and July and combined in a great demonstration at Hyde Park on July 26<sup>th</sup>. Edith organised and led

her federation of the NUWSS's contingent (of about 450 participants) which joined members of other federations to march on the "Watling Street" route from Carlisle to London. *The Times* estimated that about 50,000 people attended the eventual Hyde Park rally, which was conducted in a peaceful atmosphere designed to show the strength and extent of the non-violent suffrage movement. Suffragette Emily Wilding Davison had stepped to her death in front of the king's horse at the Epsom Derby only weeks before, and it is interesting to note that this lone act of horror is routinely replayed in modern media accounts of the period whilst the peaceful activities of thousands of women like Edith seldom rate a mention. Of course such efforts did not secure parliamentary votes for women before the First World War, but then again neither did the more sensational actions of the suffragettes. It is not generally appreciated that the organised suffragist movement traced its origin back almost half a century to the formation of the "Kensington Society" in 1866, since when it had been advocating a broad range of women's rights with a fair degree of success. It had secured the important objective of legal property rights for married women, and had seen female ratepayers obtain the right to vote and stand as candidates in local government. For the first time, in the late nineteenth century, women established themselves in large numbers as members of public bodies. In such ways suffragists like Edith were influential in shifting opinion toward an acceptance that women had a rightful place in public life as well as in the home. The question of the franchise was not, in any case, a clear-cut gender divide, because a large minority of men did not themselves have the vote in parliamentary elections before the First World War. It took the war-time sacrifices of men and women alike before this

right was extended to all adult males, and to women over the age of thirty, at the war's end in 1918. Full electoral equality between the sexes was not granted until 1928.

A good friend of hers wrote that Edith "*was one to whom cultural pleasures of the mind came as naturally as breathing and throughout her life she absorbed knowledge like sunlight and made it part of herself.*" That friend also wrote that Edith "*remained to the end essentially an open air person of country tastes and with a primitive gypsy element in her composition...She would say that mountains intoxicated her, and that nothing gave her such pleasure as nature. She had indeed great knowledge of natural objects and wild creatures, and acute powers of observation; she was also something of a weather prophet...On long walks she would often sleep on the ground, a form of rest which gave her instinctive enjoyment and fulfilled some primitive urge...The 'sense of wonder' never failed her...There were no windows closed on life...Her essential wisdom, her readiness to appreciate the good in life and accept the painful, made her a restful as well as a profoundly stimulating companion.*"

I would love to have known her.

*A collection of papers and photographs relating to Edith Eskrigge is held at The Women's Library, Old Castle Street, London E1 7NT (Ref: 7EES)*

**Neil Ashcroft**  
**Adel Meeting**







### News updates from Friends House:

Every month, staff at Friends House, London, inform Area and Local Meeting Clerks about news and events that may be of interest to local Quakers

See <http://>

[www.quaker.org.uk/clerks-monthly-mailings](http://www.quaker.org.uk/clerks-monthly-mailings) for full details:

**BYM Children's Programme and Young People's Programme** 1–4 May, 2015 Booking for all programmes is essential. [www.quaker.org.uk/cyp-events](http://www.quaker.org.uk/cyp-events)

**Junior Yearly Meeting** 1–4 May, *Lee Valley* is for 15- to 18-year-olds (born between 1.9.96 and 31.8.99). This event is often significant in the lives of young people. LAQM is able to send up to two representatives. See your LM clerk for details and see [www.quaker.org.uk/junior-yearly-meeting-2015](http://www.quaker.org.uk/junior-yearly-meeting-2015)

**Courses for Quaker Roles at Woodbrooke in 2015** *Woodbrooke, Birmingham* Courses include training for clerks, elders, overseers, nominations committees, trustees, treasurers, meeting house managers and much more!

**Eldership and Oversight Training Days 2015** An opportunity to explore the roles and responsibilities of eldership and oversight, ask questions and share with others.

**A short guide to Quaker structures** There is a new leaflet, explaining in brief how individual Quakers fit into our local and national Quaker structures. See [www.quaker.org.uk/groups-and-structures](http://www.quaker.org.uk/groups-and-structures)

**Adult Education Grants** Grants are available to help members and attenders entering further or higher education, see [www.quaker.org.uk/grant-making](http://www.quaker.org.uk/grant-making)

**QPSW Simmons Grants 2015** For overseas project to enable rural young people to become self-sufficient. See [www.quaker.org.uk/grant-making](http://www.quaker.org.uk/grant-making)

**Earth & Economy**, the latest work of the Economics, Sustainability & Peace team, How you can get involved? See [www.quaker.org.uk/Earth-and-economy](http://www.quaker.org.uk/Earth-and-economy)

**Quaker News – winter issue out soon** see [gn@quaker.org.uk](mailto:gn@quaker.org.uk)

**Quaker Voices subscriptions for 2015** see [www.quaker.org.uk/quaker-voices](http://www.quaker.org.uk/quaker-voices)

**Order your copy of Conscience & Conviction** These WW1 peace resource packs for schools at [www.quaker.org.uk/conscience-and-conviction](http://www.quaker.org.uk/conscience-and-conviction)