

WOMEN, RADICALISM, AND REVOLUTION:
A STUDY OF WOMEN AND THE RADICAL
MOVEMENTS OF THE ENGLISH
REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD.

By

SOPHIE CAROLINE WINSTON JONES

Bachelor of Arts

University of Sussex

Sussex, England

1989

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
December, 1991

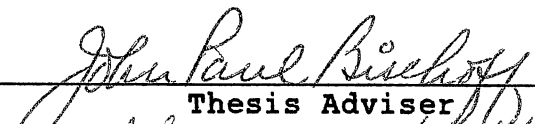
Shesha

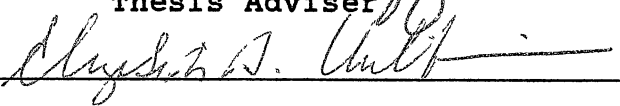
1991


W182W


WOMEN, RADICALISM, AND REVOLUTION:
A STUDY OF WOMEN AND THE RADICAL
MOVEMENTS OF THE ENGLISH
REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD

Thesis Approval:



Thesis Adviser






Dean of the Graduate College

PREFACE

This study examines the role of women within four of the major radical movements of the English Revolution and the extent and impact of their participation within these movements. The movements included in this study are the Levellers, the True Levellers or Diggers, the Fifth Monarchists and the Quakers. While all the other movements failed to survive the immediate Revolutionary period, the Quakers survived beyond the Restoration and this study thus includes the period from the outbreak of war in 1642 to the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

I wish to thank my major advisor, Dr. John Paul Bischoff for his constant assistance and help throughout this study. I also wish to thank my other committee members, Dr. Elizabeth Williams, and Dr. James Cooper, Jr. for their assistance in the completion of this thesis.

Without my family's support and encouragement I probably would never have completed this work, and I must especially thank my Father for his generous and timely support. I also wish to thank my uncle, Roger Jones, for his encouragement of my academic career. Finally, I must thank Thomas Gashlin for his technical advice on the preparation of this manuscript.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. WOMEN AS LEVELLERS, DIGGERS, AND FIFTH MONARCHISTS	15
III. WOMEN AS QUAKERS	38
IV. PERSECUTION OF QUAKERS	51
V. CONCLUSION	72
BIBLIOGRAPHY	78

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The debate regarding the status of women in the seventeenth century has previously centered on elite or aristocratic women to the neglect of non-elite women. Women members of the many radical movements active in England during the Revolutionary period, while the subject of some short articles, have on the whole been ignored.

Increasingly, scholars have focused their attention on male leaders of the radical movements such as the Levellers, Diggers, and Fifth Monarchists, but while some excellent works have been published on these groups, relatively little attention has been paid to the role and impact of women's participation in these movements. The major questions addressed throughout this study are to what extent women did participate in the radical Revolutionary movements, and whether there were any lasting effects from this participation.

Because the Society of Friends is the only radical organization to survive beyond the Interregnum, and due to the excellent sources available concerning the Society, this study focuses most heavily upon them. Studying the early Quaker movement in conjunction with other radical movements

of the period serves several purposes. One of the major benefits of studying the Quakers as part of a general English movement (just one of the many radical groups emerging from the chaos of a world turned upside down), is that it precludes the mistake often made by Quaker scholars of downplaying the radicalism of the early Quaker movement. It also makes it easier to avoid identifying the Quakers as a unique phenomenon, when they were in reality part of a general radical movement. The English Revolutionary period encouraged the emergence of a variety of radical movements, from the primarily political Levellers and Diggers, to the politico-religious Fifth Monarchists, and the Quakers, who were the most pietistic group of the four. All of these groups and several smaller ones such as Grindletonians, Ranters, and the Family of Love, took advantage of the relative disorder of the war years to propagate their ideas. Among groups such as the Levellers, Diggers, Quakers, and Fifth Monarchists, a significant commonality of ideas existed and was particularly important with reference to women. Women found a new freedom of expression and action through their involvement with these radical groups, due both to their activism and to the attitudes of male radicals such as John Lilburne, Gerrard Winstanley, and George Fox. Of these radical movements, only the Quakers survived beyond the Restoration, so the most important question is whether or not the Quakers perpetuated the tradition of female activism established during the Revolutionary period.

Christopher Hill, a Marxist historian whose work has been pioneering in many respects, was one of the first to emphasize the fluidity among radical movements. As he points out, "men moved easily from one critical group to another, and a Quaker of the early 1650s had far more in common with a Leveller, a Digger, or a Ranter than with a modern member of the Society of Friends."¹ Barry Reay, a student of Hill, whose work focuses more exclusively on Quakers, also finds that considerable fluidity existed between the radical movements of the period. Reay quotes John Ward, a minister at Stratford-upon-Avon who made a clear connection between Quakers, Levellers, and Diggers. Ward commented that "several Levellers settled into [became] Quakers."² Moreover, Reay observes that in addition to John Lilburne, the Leveller leader, other notable Levellers including Henry Clark, George Bishop, William Bray and Christopher Cheeseman, all became Quakers, reinforcing the idea of fluidity among radical movements of the time.³

Hill's and Reay's observations about the exchange of ideas and individuals among Revolutionary radical movements are equally valid for women, who also moved from group to group and drew their ideas freely from among them.⁴ The relative freedom of expression and action women gained during this period stemmed to a great degree from the exchange of ideas and attitudes among the radical groups. As we shall see, many of the recognized leaders of radical movements, most notably Fox, Winstanley, and Lilburne,

supported the right of women to participate within their movements and espoused unorthodox views regarding women's rights and abilities.

Dorothy Ludlow, in her article "Shaking Patriarchy's Foundations: Sectarian Women in England, 1641-1700,"⁵ supports the idea that radical "sects" positively affected women during this period. According to Ludlow, women's experience in such movements as the Quakers, Fifth Monarchists, and Levellers must have been "emancipatory," at least to the extent that working for a common cause and suffering persecution together forged new male respect for women and their contribution. For the women themselves, their involvement with radical movements accorded them new and invaluable experience in the areas of public speaking, publishing, and preaching. This new experience inevitably widened women's horizons beyond the traditional, restricted, domestic worlds to which they had been limited. Ludlow credits radical sects with providing opportunities to women denied them within the organized churches and wider society; radical sects gave women a new sense of confidence, an outlet for their energy, mental stimulation, and a sense of themselves as shaping and affecting their world rather than passively allowing themselves to be acted and spoken for.⁶

Ludlow is unusual among feminist scholars, most of whom downplay or completely reject the argument that radical Revolutionary movements contributed anything positive to women of the period. Interestingly, and almost uniquely,

Ludlow argues that a great deal of continuity in the advantages offered to women by their involvement with radical organizations continued beyond the Restoration. To support this conclusion, Ludlow cites the continuing high ratio of female membership in the Non-Conformist sects, particularly the Quakers. One of the purposes of this thesis is to examine to what extent Ludlow's conclusions regarding the continuing benefits of movements such as the Quakers to their female membership are valid. Despite Ludlow's overall analysis of the benefits radical organizations gave women, she still argues that these benefits were incidental and not due to a conscious effort on the part of the male leaders of radical movements. If Ludlow had included a study of these leaders' ideas on the role and status of women, she might have been able to credit them with deliberately promoting a new status and appreciation of women.

Even though Ludlow does not credit male leaders with an active role in emancipating women, her study is relatively appreciative of the role played by radical organizations in freeing women of patriarchal social restrictions. Not all feminist scholars agree that radical groups positively affected women's status. For example, Hilda Smith, throughout her book, Reason's Disciples,⁷ exemplifies the view that radical groups were uninterested in women's status. According to Smith, neither the religious nor political movements concerned themselves with the rights of

women, despite their vigorous defense of male rights. Smith typifies radical movements as agitating only in defense of male citizens' rights to govern their families (maintain patriarchy), and defend their property against the king.⁸ The primary reason for Smith's conclusions regarding the relationship between women and radical organizations is her contention that aristocratic women were the feminists of the period. This characterization of aristocratic women as the only early feminists is the result of an error of analysis originating from the tradition of learned ladies in the sixteenth century. Aristocratic Elizabethan women were famous for their learning and intellectual ability, particularly as their talents extended to classical languages. However, by the seventeenth century, it was no longer fashionable for women to learn the classics, and those who wanted to do so aroused society's displeasure. Because of this change in attitude, historians often conclude that women as a whole lost advantages possessed by their sixteenth-century sisters; what they overlook by this interpretation is the increasing democratization of education in the seventeenth century. The learned lady of the sixteenth century was a court phenomenon and very much an exception to the norm. By the mid-seventeenth century few women were educated in classical languages, but more women from more diversified backgrounds were literate.⁹

Joyce Irwin, while not completely rejecting a positive relationship between women and radical organizations,

postulates that studies arguing more equality for women in radical organizations are oversimplified. She rejects the idea that women gained by their involvement with radical groups. Irwin argues in her book, Womanhood in Radical Protestantism,¹⁰ that analyses accrediting radical organizations with emancipating women are taken in by theoretical ideals expressed by male leaders.¹¹ While Irwin is entirely correct to read the texts critically and to point out that it is possible for a discrepancy to exist between rhetoric and reality, she undermines her observations by excluding actions and focusing entirely upon ideas. Without an examination of both expressed male ideas regarding the status of women, and the activities and attitudes of women themselves, it is difficult to reach valid conclusions.

Despite the drawbacks of Irwin's and Smith's analyses, at least they consider the question of women's relationships with the radical organizations of the Revolutionary period worthy of study. The majority of scholars of the period fail to address any questions about women. The recently published Seventeenth Century Norwich: Politics, Religion, and Government, 1620-1690,¹² relegates the women of England to a footnote, stating that women are outside the scope of the study, which supports a view unfortunately shared by other scholars. Surprisingly, even some women scholars are influenced by the assertions that the events of the Revolutionary period had little effect on women and that

women had little participation in them. Patricia Higgins for example, in an otherwise excellent article¹³ states that the majority of women were largely unaffected by the Civil War.¹⁴ Having made this assertion, Higgins throughout her article illustrates the degree to which women participated politically in the events of the day and how comparatively large numbers of women became involved. After reading Higgins' work, it is difficult to agree that women were largely unaffected by the Civil War.

The English Revolutionary period accords the historian focusing upon the study of non-elite society some unique opportunities due to the effective removal of censorship between 1640-1660.¹⁵ Despite the wealth of deterrents, a surprising number of non-elite women took advantage of this abnormal freedom to publish their writings. The absence of censorship allowed any man who could write, had an opinion, and could find access to a press, to publish. Predictably, for women it was more complicated even with the suspension of censorship. Patriarchy, with its traditional emphasis on women's domesticity, obedience, and realization of intellectual inferiority, still exercised its discipline and threatened society's wrath upon aberrant women.

A woman with the audacity to publish her opinion ran the risk not only of society's ridicule, but also of the loss of her good name. The importance of reputation in seventeenth century society is illustrated by the fact that women faced protracted and expensive court battles to defend

their reputation.¹⁶ A recent Ph.D. dissertation, "Her Good Name and Credit: The Reputation of Women in Seventeenth Century Devon,"¹⁷ illustrates the overwhelming importance of reputation to Englishwomen of the period. Loss of reputation actually led to the possibility of loss of life: witchcraft accusations became a much likelier threat to women with a bad reputation.¹⁸ A woman's reputation almost exclusively centered upon her sexual reputation, and this could be damaged in several ways. Obviously, infidelity if discovered led to loss of reputation, but unchastity need not have occurred for a woman's honor to be impeached, mere suspicion of infidelity was enough to ruin a woman's reputation. Society's perception was the vital issue: immodesty, which could be demonstrated in several ways, was the primary factor leading to perceptions of unchastity. According to social convention an immodest woman was probably an unchaste woman, and expressing one's opinions, particularly in print, was seen as the height of immodesty. When one realizes the number and popularity of printed guides to ladies' behavior, the importance of conforming to the ideals of contemporary society becomes apparent.¹⁹

Considering the societal disincentives placed upon women, it is remarkable that they ever got their ideas into print. For women, as well as men, the religious and political controversy of the Revolutionary period provided the impetus to action and publication. Due to the risks entailed by publication, some women published anonymously

and others resorted to a male pseudonym. Despite this, enough material remains to illustrate the extent to which women participated in the events and ideas of the day.

Bearing in mind Irwin's warnings about taking male statements at face value, analyzing available writings from male radicals in conjunction with any evidence left by women is the most accurate means of formulating a clear perspective of the relationship between women and radical organizations. An analysis of both the expressed male ideas regarding the status of women in conjunction with the activities and ideas of women themselves is the most useful method of reaching accurate conclusions on the subject of women's relationship with radical organizations and that is the methodology followed in this thesis.

Chapter two includes a brief description of the Leveller, Digger, and Fifth Monarchy movements, and an analysis of the nature of women's participation in each of the groups. Wherever possible, women's writings are analyzed to see how the women themselves visualized their role and the kind of justifications they used for their departure from normal seventeenth-century feminine behavior. As the women did not act within a sheltered female society but interacted fully with men, male writings are also analyzed to see to what extent male radicals supported the women's behavior and ideas.

Chapter three examines the development of Quakerism and analyzes the role of women within that organization. Again

the methodology used is to analyze the written evidence from both male and female Quakers in conjunction with women's actions. Chapter Four describes and examines the effects of the development of a formalized organization on the Society of Friends and on the nature of women's involvement in the Society. This chapter also contains an analysis of the effects of persecution on the role of female Quakers. The concluding chapter addresses the question of whether the Quakers, as the only surviving radical Revolutionary movement, preserved the gains made by women during the Revolutionary period or not. To this end, it includes an analysis of the effects of toleration for the Quakers, and particularly on the role of women within the Society.

Female radicals participated fully within their respective movements, and they and their fellow male agitators formulated some important justifications of their new role during the English Revolution. The Quaker movement shared many ideas regarding the status and role of women with other contemporary radical groups, and it was in the Quaker movement that women briefly achieved the most significant role. Numerically women remained important to the Quaker organization from its inception through its consolidation. However, following the cessation of persecution and the consolidation of Quaker organization, the Society of Friends changed drastically, becoming more formalized and less radical. This change affected the status and role of female Friends within the Society, and

although they retained a place in the organization, it was less active and conformed more to traditional patterns of female behavior. The days of large numbers of women preaching, disrupting Anglican services, and going naked for a sign were over. Following the Glorious Revolution, Friends entered their quietist period where they largely withdrew from English society and avoided all confrontation whenever possible.

The long term effect of women's activism during the Revolution was probably slight. A new tradition of female radicalism emerged, but women were largely unable to act on it due to the nature of late seventeenth and eighteenth century society. Despite this, for a period of some twenty years, radical women of the Revolutionary period came very close to achieving freedom from seventeenth century patriarchy.

ENDNOTES

¹Christopher Hill, The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution (Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd, 1978), 14.

²John Ward, Diary of the Reverend John Ward; ed. C. Stevenson: 1839; quoted in Barry Reay, The Quakers and the English Revolution (New York: St Martin's Press, 1985), 141.

³Ibid., 20.

⁴Mary Adams is a classic example of this, becoming first an Anabaptist, then a Familist of Love, and ending her life as a Ranter. The Ranter's Monster, 1652, quoted in J. C. Davis. Fear, Myth and History: The Ranters and the Historians (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986)

⁵Published in Triumph Over Silence: Women in Protestant History (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1985), 93-123.

⁶Ibid., 108.

⁷Hilda Smith, Reason's Disciples: Seventeenth Century English Feminists (University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Chicago: 1982)

⁸Ibid., 10.

⁹Ruth Willard Hushey, "Cultural Interests of Women in England from 1524-1645," (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1933), 11.

¹⁰Joyce Irwin. Womanhood in Radical Protestantism, 1525-1675 (New York: Lewiston, 1979).

¹¹Ibid., xix.

¹²John T. Evans, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979).

¹³Patricia Higgins, "The Reactions of Women, with special reference to Women Petitioners," in Religion, Politics, and the English Civil War, ed. Brian Manning (New York: St Martin's Press, 1973).

¹⁴Ibid., 179.

¹⁵Hill, The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution, 18.

¹⁶See Janet Thompson, "Her Good Name and Credit: The Reputation of Women in Seventeenth Century Devon," (Ph.D Dissertation, 1987, University of Cincinnati), 4.

¹⁷Ibid., 4.

¹⁸Ibid., 145.

¹⁹A classic example being Richard Braithwaite's book, The English Gentlewoman (London: 1631).

CHAPTER II

WOMEN AS LEVELLERS, DIGGERS, AND FIFTH MONARCHISTS

The Leveller, Digger, and Fifth Monarchy movements all illustrate the degree to which women participated in radical movements of the English Revolutionary period. As they had many similar ideas on the nature of women's involvement in their movements, it is useful to analyze them as a group. Women members of each organization published and left us evidence of their participation that is especially useful when read in conjunction with the ideas of male leaders. By examining both the women's actions and the men's ideas, we may formulate the most accurate assessment on the nature of women's involvement in each movement.

The idea of women participating in religious and political events, formulating, and even expressing their ideas was horrifying to many. It was bad enough to have traditional forms of government challenged, but for women to abandon their traditional passivity was seen as the height of anarchy. Even worse was the spectacle of women choosing to defy their husbands on religious matters and attend different churches. As John Brinsley, a Puritan Minister stated, that husband and wife:

"who lie in the same bed, and in the eye both of God's law and man's are both one, should yet be of two churches, it is such a solecism, such absurdity in Christianity, as . . . the world never saw practiced, much less heard pleaded for until this last age [1645]."¹

As far as Brinsley, and most of his contemporaries were concerned, husband and wife were one unit, and it was the husband's role to determine the beliefs and actions of that one unit. Any woman who defied her husband, especially over something as important as religious affiliation, challenged the husband's authority in an unacceptable fashion.

The role of Eve in the Fall was a major reason given for the supposed inability of women to participate fully in religious debates, and woman's role in the Fall was a major example cited of women's moral weakness. Because of this weakness and the threat offered to male morality by women's temptations, women were supposed to remain under the domain of men and within the confines of the home. The Puritan minister John Brinsley summarized and reiterated the standard explanation of women's weakness in his publication A Looking glasse for Good Women². His analysis of why Satan approached Eve, and not Adam, is significant and demonstrates the standard male attitudes about women's intellectual abilities and character. As Brinsley explained:

For the present I shall only enquire why Satan singled out the woman? . . . A [answer] For this take a double reason: Satan looked upon her as a fitting object, and a fitting instrument to work by . . . in as much as she was the weaker vessel, less able to withstand the stroke of his

temptations . . . by reason of the natural infirmity of her sex.³

Brinsley continued, stressing the threat women offered to men's morality:

And hereupon Satan singled out her [Eve], that she being herself deceived might be the instrument to deceive him [Adam] . . . Hereby she became a transgressor . . . she became also the author and original of transgression.⁴

Women, as Brinsley explains, were weaker than men, morally and spiritually as well as physically. Because of their inherent weakness, Satan saw Eve, not Adam, as the easiest target in the Garden. Strangely, women had the ability to tempt men, and their very weakness was a terrible threat to men's spiritual welfare and strength. Eve and all her daughters, not Satan, were responsible for the Fall of Man. It was man's responsibility to insure that women could do no further damage.

The date of publication of Brinsley's tract, 1645, is significant, as by this time some women, ignoring their collective guilt as daughters of Eve and flagrantly spurning the widely held male belief of their moral inferiority, were preaching and publishing their religious ideas. Brinsley sought to remind men and women of the reasons why women should remain within the home, passive, unpublished, and preferably relatively ignorant on theological issues, while maintaining a suitable deference to men. Additionally, Brinsley attempted to remind men of the inherent dangers of listening to women. After all by contemporary reasoning, if

Adam had not listened to Eve, man could have avoided the Fall.

Horrifying though it was to many moderates and conservatives, women did actively participate in radical religious organizations. A Discoverie of Six Women Preachers, in Middlesex, Kent, Cambridgeshire, and Salisbury,⁵ an anonymous tract, is an account of such active participation, in this case to the extent of preaching, by women. The author of the tract gives a scathing account of the six women and their theological ideas. One of the most disturbing teachings listed, was ascribed to Joan Bauford, who "taught in Feversham, that husbands being such as crossed their wive's wills might lawfully be forsaken."⁶ The concluding part of the tract illustrates exactly what many contemporaries outside radical organizations thought of women's participation, and is worth quoting at length:

Thus have I declared some of the female academies, but where their university is I cannot tell, but I suppose that Bedlam or Bridewell [a mental hospital and a prison respectively] would be two convenient places for them. Is it not sufficient that they may have the Gospel truly and sincerely preached unto them, but that they must take their minister's office from them? If there had been such a dearth of the Gospel as there was in the time of Queen Mary it had been an occasion somewhat urgent. But God be praised it was not so, but that they seemed to be ambitious, and because they would have superiority, they would get upon a stool, or a tub instead of a pulpit. At this time I have described but six of them [women preachers], ere long I fear I shall relate more.

In this passage, the anonymous author summarizes some of the most common accusations directed against women radicals by moderate or conservative men. One of the commonest complaints was that women's ambition and desire to gain superiority over men prompted their actions. Another widely held belief was the idea that studying theological issues caused insanity in women because their minds became strained by serious study.⁸

All the radical groups analyzed in this chapter formulated their own responses to refute the official Anglican doctrine on women's role in religion and the Church. The leaders of the Levellers, and the Diggers, John Lilburne and Gerrard Winstanley respectively, both developed their own arguments about the Fall, and women's lack of responsibility for it. Like Brinsley, they followed the convention of structuring their responses around Scripture, and detailing each aspect of their argument in point form.

In common with all the other radical Revolutionary movements, except the Quakers, the Levellers never formed a formal organization and remained a loosely affiliated group that is best described in terms of its supporters' beliefs. One of the most fundamental of these beliefs was that of the ultimate sovereignty of the people, as opposed to the monarchy, or even an unrepresentative parliament. Another important Leveller belief was the right of the people to freedom of worship. The Levellers supported the idea of individual freedom, including freedom of action and freedom

from restraint and arbitrary arrest, and they rejected the concept of a central and monopolistic locus of authority. As a result of this they agitated for the decentralization of political power, including the state church, and for an increase in local and representative control.⁹

Historians have found the issue of the Leveller desire to extend the franchise one of the most compelling areas of analysis, yet they have largely overlooked the issue of whether this extension of the franchise included women. No evidence exists to suggest that the Levellers, either collectively or individually, proposed extending the franchise to women. Despite this, women participated in the Leveller movement, and the publications of leading members indicate that male Levellers were sympathetic to women's participation in non-traditional and largely socially unacceptable behavior such as petitioning and publishing political and religious ideas. Unfortunately, analysts of the Leveller movement often manage to overlook women¹⁰, which is surprising as the evidence of women's contribution and participation is unavoidable when researching the Levellers.

From the earliest days of its activity, the Leveller party included large numbers of women among its followers. From the petitions they presented to Parliament, we know that at least six thousand women supported the Levellers and identified themselves with its cause.¹¹ Many of these women, in addition to providing passive support, actively

supported the movement, and their activism was a vital component of the high profile that the Levellers briefly achieved. The principal form of female activism in the Leveller movement centered around petitioning and lobbying Parliament. Women demonstrated in large numbers, forming "an identifiable female 'lobby' or pressure group,"¹² and therefore participated in political activity.

Leveller women presented petitions to Parliament in September 1646, March 1647, August and October 1647, August 1648, and April and May of 1649.¹³ At least two of these petitions originated in response to the imprisonment of Leveller leaders. In addition to illustrating the loyalty of women to Leveller leaders, the statements the women made when delivering these petitions also illustrate women's ideas about their political rights. Following the rejection of a petition presented to the Commons on the grounds that the women presenting it were meddling in issues beyond their comprehension, Leveller women delivered another petition that clarified their attitudes toward their rights.¹⁴ In the words of these Leveller women:

Since we are assured of our creation in the image of God, of an interest in Christ equal unto men, as also of a proportionate share in the freedoms of the commonwealth, we cannot but wonder and grieve that we should appear so despicable in your eyes as to be unworthy to petition or represent our grievances to this honorable House [Commons].¹⁵

This was a spirited defense of women's political rights--rights not widely believed to exist, and not supported by

precedent. The link between radical religion and politics is obvious in this extract. Equality in the eyes of God is stressed, but equally emphasized is the women's claim to freedom and political rights. The petition continued as follows:

Have we not an equal interest with the men of this nation in those liberties and securities contained in the Petition of Right, and other good laws of the land? . . . And can you imagine us to be so sottish or stupid as not to perceive or not be sensible when daily those strong defenses of our peace and welfare are daily broken down and trod underfoot by force and arbitrary power?¹⁶

This extract illustrates the degree to which Leveller women claimed equality with men in the sense of an interest in the political affairs of the nation. Seventeenth-century Englishwomen had no legal or political rights independent of their husbands, and the fact that Leveller women claimed them emphasizes their level of politicization.

Although no author's name is provided for the preamble to this petition, Katherine Chidley is the most probable. Chidley was a prolific writer and proponent of Leveller ideals, as well as being a religious radical. She provides us with a model for the type of issues motivating women to action and the form this action took. She asserted her independence early, refusing to be churched in 1626 on the grounds that it was demeaning for women due to its origin of purifying women after childbirth. In common with a growing number of contemporary women, Chidley rejected the notion that women were sullied by childbirth and thus rejected the ceremony of churcing. After moving to London she and her

husband Daniel joined a Separatist congregation, where, true to form, she became a vocal spokesperson for the Separatist cause and the principles of religious toleration.

Individuals with radical religious sympathies often developed correspondingly radical political ideas, and the Chidleys were no exception. No doubt following his mother's lead, Samuel Chidley served as treasurer for the Levellers in 1647-68. Katherine Chidley herself remained heavily involved with the Leveller movement and, even after its demise agitated on behalf of John Lilburne. In 1653 she led at least six thousand women in a demonstration culminating in the delivery of a petition to Parliament calling for Lilburne's release.¹⁷

In many respects Katherine Chidley was a typical Englishwoman of the period--a wife and mother, pious, and educated enough to be able to comprehend the contemporary issues. How typical she was in the level of her commitment to religious and political freedom is the central question. We may at least assert confidently that she was not exceptional in this regard, as women in their thousands signed the petitions she wrote and presented to Parliament.

Another prominent Leveller woman, Elizabeth Lilburne also served the party in important ways, and exemplifies the lengths to which the Revolutionary period pushed women and how courageously they responded. When her husband John Lilburne was imprisoned by the King and tried for treason (which carried the death penalty), Elizabeth Lilburne

personally secured his freedom. In order to have her husband freed, she lobbied the Commons and persuaded them to threaten the King with retaliation should he execute his prisoners. Having achieved this support from Parliament, Elizabeth Lilburne travelled to Oxford and secured her husband's freedom by arranging a direct exchange of prisoners.¹⁸

Like Katherine Chidley, Elizabeth Lilburne also organized and wrote petitions designed to secure the release of John from his frequent imprisonment. This was more than the demonstration of marital devotion. John Lilburne was the popularly acclaimed leader of the Levellers, and had widespread support from the general population. Elizabeth's actions, therefore, had important political implications, and helped maintain a high profile for the cause, as well as demonstrating female activism.

We can only speculate as to the exact form and structure of female Leveller's organization, but the circulation of the women's petitions and the receipt of thousands of signatures indicates a high level of informal organization among them. Unlike women such as Katherine Chidley, the majority of women supporters of the party left us no direct written evidence on the level or nature of their involvement. Many of these women were only semi-literate and thus unable to publish their ideas, although they could sign their names and probably read.¹⁹ We do know that when challenged, the women delivering petitions

gave spirited and informed replies defending their rights to petition and supporting their political objectives.²⁰

Even without written evidence it would be reasonable to assume a degree of male support within the party, as no evidence exists to suggest that Leveller men tried to prevent their wives and daughters from demonstrating and petitioning. The writings of John Lilburne provide important evidence of male Leveller attitudes concerning women, and although they express his personal opinion as the popular leader of the party it is probable that many followers shared his views. As the following extract shows, Lilburne, drawing on religious sources, stressed the equality of men and women in much the same way as Katherine Chidley:

Which two [Adam and Eve] are the earthly original fountain . . . of all and every particular and individual man and woman . . . who are, and were, by nature all equal and alike in power, dignity, authority, and majesty, none of them having by nature any authority, dominion, or magisterial power one over or above another.²¹

Taking Adam and Eve as his examples, Lilburne stressed the equality of men and women both before and after the Fall. Significantly, in this extract Lilburne rejects any idea of male authority over women and directly repudiates traditional patriarchy. Without evidence that Levellers provided support for women to take advantage of their supposed equality, Lilburne's writings would be less convincing. However, we know that women, themselves, claimed equality and acted upon this claim.

In addition to agitating for an extension of the franchise, the Levellers also advocated religious toleration stating that:

we do not empower our representatives [in Parliament] to continue in force, or make, any laws, oaths, covenants, whereby to compel by penalties or otherwise any person [note the use of the word person, rather than man] to anything in or about matters of faith, religion, or God's worship.²²

Many Levellers, both leaders and followers, were Separatists. Both John Lilburne and Richard Overton, two of the three principal Leveller propagandists, at one time belonged to Separatist churches. William Walwyn, despite never becoming formally affiliated with a particular congregation, was a firm supporter of religious toleration.²³ Katherine Chidley published a tract in 1641 entitled The Justification of the Independent Churches of Christ, in which she forcefully made the case for toleration and freedom of conscience. It was in this tract that she made her famous statement regarding freedom of conscience for women; "I pray you tell me, what authority the unbelieving husband hath over the conscience of his believing wife?"²⁴ Chidley rejected the official Anglican view, articulated by polemicists such as John Brinsley, that men had spiritual authority over their wives, particularly if the husband was an unbeliever by Separatist standards.

It was not coincidental that Katherine Chidley made a connection between religious freedom of conscience, toleration, and the rights of women to choose and practice

their religion free from male control. Traditionally, religious uniformity and patriarchy in England had been mutually supportive in much the same way as church and monarchy. Contemporary society perceived the elimination of religious uniformity as a direct threat to traditional patriarchy, and justifiably so. Radical religious organizations did undermine traditional patriarchy and emancipate women, at least during the Revolutionary period. Thus toleration, or the freedom of these movements to practice their faith, was of central importance to women, as we see from Katherine Chidley's defense of toleration.

In keeping with their other ideas regarding the equality of men and women, and the value of women's participation in religious and political debates and events, many radicals denied women's responsibility for the Fall, even going as far as to deny the significance of the Fall altogether. Gerrard Winstanley, leader of the Digger or True Leveller movement, articulated these denials most fully, describing sin as the responsibility of the individual. By Digger reasoning, women were blameless for the Fall and not to be held accountable for man's weakness and greed. In Winstanley's words:

this [pre-Fall]l innocencie or plaine heartedness in man was not an estate 6,000 years ago onely; but every branche of mankind passes through it, and first is defiled by imaginary covetousnesse, and hereby is made a Devll; and then he is delivered from that darknesse by Christ the restorer.²⁵

Reasoning such as Winstanley's liberated women from responsibility for man's transgressions and served as yet another intellectual blow to traditional patriarchal authority.

Of all the radical movements included in this thesis, the Diggers were the most radical politically. Winstanley believed that the only way men could be free was if social inequality could be eliminated. To this end he advocated the end of private land ownership in favor of common ownership and methods of production and distribution. In common with the Levellers, Winstanley supported an extension of the franchise, but unlike them he advocated universal manhood suffrage to include even servants and wage laborers. In terms of numbers, the Digger movement probably remained small. Seventy three people attempted to found the first Digger settlement on St. George's Hill in Surrey and estimates for the movement remain around two to three hundred in total.²⁶

Winstanley, in common with many other radicals, rejected the monopoly the educated conformist elite enjoyed in English society, especially in terms of religion and the interpretation of the law. To break this monopoly he advocated free education that would be compulsory for boys and girls, both of whom would have to continue at least until they were able to read.²⁷ Winstanley's blend of practical solutions to social problems such as landlessness and poverty and his development of intellectual arguments to

liberate both men and women from what he saw as oppressive patriarchal and authoritarian traditions is unique for the period. Even though the number of Diggers remained small and we have no way of estimating the number of women involved in the movement, Winstanley's ideas about women illustrate how radicalism fostered the rejection of traditional patriarchy. His philosophy also illustrates the connection between radical support for religious freedom and toleration and new freedom of action and expression for women. Winstanley saw the established church as a supporter of established authority and an oppressor of the people, including women, and he supported the right of the people to religious freedom.²⁸

Fifth Monarchists, a loosely knit organization illustrative of the connection between religion and politics²⁹ included some highly articulate and influential women among their ranks. It is difficult to define an overall philosophy for the group as its membership and ideology was extremely diverse. Probably the only belief firmly shared by Fifth Monarchists was a belief in the imminent return of Jesus Christ to earth where he would establish the kingdom of God, the Fifth Monarchy. Relatively small as this group may have been numerically, politically their ideas were important. For a while they heavily influenced Oliver Cromwell himself. Cromwell's summoning of the so-called Barebones Parliament to create rule by Godly men (rule of the Saints or Godly men being a major Fifth Monarchist

ideal) illustrates the influence that Fifth Monarchist ideas attained.³⁰

Mary Cary provides an example of female activists in the Fifth Monarchy movement. Little is known about Mary Cary's personal life other than she began studying the Bible seriously at the age of fifteen and probably got married in the late 1640s.³¹ From her writings it is clear that she was relatively well educated, and her confidence was such that she published at least thirteen works between 1645 and 1653. In her second publication, A Word in Season published in 1648, Mary Cary argued that all saints should be allowed to preach freely, with no restrictions placed on women because of their sex.³² She herself denied that she was a passive mouthpiece for revelation, her understanding coming not from "any immediate revelation--or that she had been told it by an angel." Instead, Mary Cary stressed that her understanding came from her dedicated studies of the Bible and was due to her own individual abilities.³³

As well as stressing that her prophesying and preaching abilities were due to her own talents, Mary Cary believed that other women could, and indeed would, emulate her. In her work A New and more exact Mappe or Description of New Jerusalem's Glory published in 1651, Mary Cary states that

the time is coming when not only men but women shall prophesy; not only aged men but young men, not only superiors but inferiors: not only those who have university learning but those who have it not, even servants and handmaids.³⁴

Not only was this a prophetic statement, but it reinforces the evidence that radical women were well aware of the reasons for the monopoly of establishment theologians. Many radicals, particularly Quakers,³⁵ denied the validity of having a monopoly of university trained preachers. However, women in all radical groups seem to have been particularly vociferous in denouncing the monopoly of religious study and expression by those with formal educations. This indicates that radical women were fully aware of the disadvantage their lack of formal education gave them. Furthermore, they were determined to overcome it by arguing that untrained individuals, male and female, were capable of achieving real knowledge.

University training during this period was still limited to conformists, and radical women were denied access to higher education on two counts: their gender and their non-conformity. Thus we find repeatedly that radical women such as Mary Cary published and spoke out against the idea that the only people who could prophesy and decide theological issues were those with a formal education and university training. Women's rejection of the idea that a formal training was necessary in order to preach resulted from their awareness that universities served as a means of state control over religion. Mary Cary is an example of a seventeenth century radical woman who vigorously defended women's rights to freedom of expression despite their lack of formal education.

Anna Trapnel is another Fifth Monarchy woman well known to her contemporaries. Unlike Mary Cary, Anna Trapnel described her creative talent as God-given, saying that her words were "poured forth by the Spirit in [a] variety of Psalms and Spiritual Songs."³⁶ Describing herself as a "poor instrument",³⁷ Anna Trapnel's tone was more humble than Mary Cary's, but the two women had much in common.

Like Mary Cary, Anna Trapnel also had little respect for formal education and did not see the lack of it as a deterrent against attaining knowledge. As she stated:

Thou shalt read the visions John had,
Not after the learned Doctor's way;
But thou shalt read them in plainness,
and clear light in thy day.
Thou shalt not read what's spoke of Dragon and
Beast
With University-art;
But thou shalt read with King's seven eyes,
And an enlightened heart.
Thou shalt not run to antichrist's Libraries,
To fetch from thence any skill
To read the Revelations of Christ,
But be with Knowledge fill'd.³⁸

Trapnel's strong language in this passage reflects the contempt she felt for those whose skill depended on knowledge from "antichrist's libraries." Speaking as one whose skills and knowledge emanated from the Spirit, Trapnel obviously felt in a position to denounce the work of Anglican theologians who possessed the "university-art" denied her, but lacked any form of revelation or prophetic ability.

In her book The Cry of a Stone published in 1654, Trapnel provides some autobiographical information. Born in

Stepney Parish (in London), she was the daughter of a shipwright. Her home and upbringing were pious, and her parents lived and died "in the profession of the Lord Jesus Christ." Her mother evidently supported Anna's prophetic abilities, as her last words were, "Lord! Double thy Spirit upon my child." Even though born into a 'middling sort' of household Anna Trapnel studied both reading and writing, and judging by her extensive and articulate verse, must have been taught for a number of years.³⁹

John Rogers, in his book Ohel or Beth-shemesh⁴⁰, illustrates how male Fifth Monarchists felt about women's participation and their role in attaining the millenium. In addition to maintaining women's rights to speak in church, Rogers also maintained their right to hold church office. Following the format of critics of women's speaking, preaching, and participating in other ways,⁴¹ Rogers laid out his argument in point form using a biblical source to back each of his arguments. Thus:

that which concerns all (brothers and sisters), reason requires should be done (or ordered) by all . . . if it be lawful for a women to have any office in the church (which implies a power and authority) then it is (much more) lawful for women to vote, wish, or offer any thing to the church . . . it is lawful for women to have office in the church. See I Tim. 5:9.⁴²

After arguing extensively on behalf of women, Rogers asked women not to take advantage of their freedom to the extent that men would become disadvantaged. This is particularly interesting, as it reflects the ambivalence about the status of women that arose during the war years

among radical men. Men whose formative years had been spent in traditional households, despite their rational beliefs and Biblical arguments in favor of the equal status of women, retained some uncertainty toward female equality. Many men must have agreed with Rogers when he asked women to "be not too forward, and yet not too backward, but hold fast to your liberty . . . maintain your right, defend your liberty, even to the life . . . and yet be cautious too."⁴³

ENDNOTES

¹John Brinsley, A Looking-glasse for Good Women, (London: 1645), 5. Quoted in Keith Thomas, "Women and the Civil War sects." 52, and Joyce Irwin, Womanhood in Radical Protestantism, 35-39.

²Ibid., 35-39.

³Ibid., 35.

⁴Ibid., 35.

⁵Quoted in Joyce Irwin, Womanhood in Radical Protestantism, 211.

⁶Ibid., 213.

⁷Ibid., 214.

⁸Michael MacDonald, "Madness and Healing in Seventeenth Century England," (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1979).

⁹F.D. Dow. Radicalism in the English Revolution 1640-1660 (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1985), 30-56. Also See Christopher Hill, The World Turned Upside Down, 107-112.

¹⁰See for example Joseph Frank, The Levellers: A History of the Writings of Three Seventeenth Century Social Democrats: John Lilburne, Richard Overton, and William Walwyn (Cambridge, Mass: 1955. repr. New York: 1969).

¹¹Patricia Higgins, "The Reactions of Women," 8.

¹²Patricia Higgins, "The Reactions of Women," 183.

¹³Ibid., 200, and H. N. Brailsford, The Levellers and the English Revolution (1961., 2nd ed, 1976), 316-317.

¹⁴Brailsford, The Levellers and the English Revolution, 317.

¹⁵From a Petition of Women, Affecters and Approvers of the Petition of Sept. 11, 1648 (May, 5, 1649), quoted in Puritanism and Liberty, ed. A. S. P. Woodhouse.

¹⁶To The Supreme Authority of England the Commons Assembled in Parliament. The Humble Petition of Divers Well-Affected Women of the Cities of London and Westminster, the Borough of Southwark, Hamblets and Parts Adjacent. Affecters and Approvers of the Petition of September 11. 1648 [May 5, 1649], quoted in Puritanism and Liberty ed, A.S.P Woodhouse, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 35.

¹⁷Ibid., 35, and The Biographical Dictionary of British Radicals vol 1, edited by Greaves and Zaller, (Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1982). Also see Hill, World Turned Upside Down, 312.

¹⁸Brailsford, The Levellers and the English Revolution, 87.

¹⁹See Angeline Goreau, The Whole Duty of a Woman, : Female Writers in Seventeenth Century England (The Dial Press, New York: 1985).

²⁰Higgins, "The Reactions of Women," 210.

²¹John Lilburne. The Free Mans Freedome Vindicated. Or a True Relation of the Cause and Manner of Lieut. Col. John Lilburnes Present Imprisonment in Newgate. Puritanism and Liberty: Being the Army Debates (1647-9) from the Clarke Manuscripts with Supplementary Documents, ed, A. S. P. Woodhouse, Puritans and Liberty, 350.

²²An Agreement of the People of England, and the Places Therewith Incorporated, for a Firm and Present Peace Upon Grounds of Common Right and Freedom, quoted in Puritanism and Liberty, A. S. P. Woodhouse, 361-2.

²³Michael Watts. The Dissenters: from the Reformation to the French Revolution (Clarendon Press, Oxford: 1978), 118.

²⁴Keith Thomas. "Women and the Civil War Sects." Past and Present, 13 (1958): 53. See also Biographical Dictionary of British Radicals in the Seventeenth Century: Volume 1, A-F, ed, R. Greaves and R. Zaller, 139.

²⁵Gerrard Winstanley, New Law of Righteousness, 17, quoted in W. Schenk The Concern for Social Justice in the Puritan Revolution, (Longmans Green & Co, London: 1948).

²⁶Dow, Radicalism in the English Revolution, 74-80. Hill, The World Turned Upside Down, 112-135.

²⁷Hill, World Turned Upside Down, 137.

²⁸Dow, Radicalism in the English Revolution, 76.

²⁹Louise Fargo Brown. The Political Activities of the Baptists and Fifth Monarchy Men in England During the Interregnum, (American Historical Association, Washington: 1912), 1.

³⁰Ibid., 30. See also Alfred Cohen, "The Fifth Monarchy Mind: Mary Cary and the Origins of Totalitarianism," Social Research, 31, (1964), 195-213.

³¹Greaves and Zaller, Biographical Dictionary of English Radicals, 127.

³²It is important to realize that among the radical movements of this period the term saints applied to anyone who accepted God, and carried no suggestion of an elect group, in the way the term was used by contemporary Puritans.

³³Ibid., 127, and Alfred Cohen, "The Fifth Monarchy Mind," 202.

³⁴Quoted in Hill, The World Turned Upside Down, 322. Also Leo Solt, "The Fifth Monarchy Men: Politics and the Millenium," Church History, 30 (1961), 317.

³⁵"Quakers wanted a movement away from the university bred, privileged clergy towards a ministry of simple men and women," Barry Reay, Quakers and The English revolution, 38.

³⁶Champlin Burrage, "Anna Trapnel's Prophecies." English Historical Review, 1911, 534.

³⁷Ibid., 527.

³⁸Ibid., 531.

³⁹Ibid., 533.

⁴⁰Quoted in Joyce Irwin, Womanhood in Radical Protestantism, 170-179.

⁴¹for example, Thomas Edwards, Gangraena, 2nd ed. London: 1646; and John Brinsley, A Looking -glasse for Good Women, London: 1645. Both quoted in Joyce Irwin, Womanhood in Radical Protestantism.

⁴²John Rogers, Ohel or Bet-shemesh, quoted in Joyce Irwin, ed, Womanhood in Radical Protestantism, 170-179.

⁴³Ibid., 178.

CHAPTER III

WOMEN AS QUAKERS

George Fox, founder of the Society of Friends, left a full account of the evolution of the Society in his Journal.¹ The Journal also provides many insights on the role of women in the Quaker movement. He tells us that he was born in Leicestershire in 1624, the son of a weaver, and that his wife was "of the stock of the martyrs."² Raised in a pious family, Fox describes himself as unusually serious and grave as a child. As he grew older his dissatisfaction with established religion sent him on the spiritual quest that culminated in his founding the Society of Friends. Fox spent years travelling the country seeking answers to his questions on spirituality and worship and eventually met up with other like-minded people who formed the beginnings of the Quaker movement. In 1647 Fox met Elizabeth Hooten, and with her he formed the first Quaker group, originally known as the Children of the Light.³ Fox quickly gained a large following, in many cases attracting people previously affiliated with other radical movements.

Historians, with justification, have always regarded the Quakers as an example of a radical movement that provided its female followers with vastly more freedom than

was the norm in seventeenth-century England. An important point often forgotten, however, is the extent to which the Quakers inherited the ideas of other radical movements. Even more importantly, they were the only movement to survive the Interregnum and continue the tradition of revolutionary radicalism, albeit in a formalized organization. As Reay notes, "after the defeat of the Levellers and Diggers and the downfall of the Rump and Barebones Parliaments, the Quakers were the only group capable of representing the aspirations of the earlier years."⁴ The Quakers provided a new option to followers of other radical groups who were either disillusioned with their movement, or were without a movement following its disintegration. Many of these radicals formally became Quakers. John Lilburne is the most famous convert to Quakerism following the collapse of his own movement, but many of his less prominent members followed suit.

From its earliest days the Society of Friends attracted many women followers who were of great importance to the organization⁵. Quaker women, as well as setting an example of women's abilities by their behavior (preaching and travelling extensively around the British Isles and abroad), also wrote some important works in support of women's rights. One of the most important of the arguments published in favor of women's active involvement was Margaret Fell's Women's Speaking Justified: An Epistle from the Women's Yearly Meeting at York.⁶ Within this

important work, Fell effectively refuted all the major Biblical arguments cited to argue that women should not interfere with church (and by implication, political) affairs. Fell pushed her argument further than earlier apologists, stating on the subject of the much quoted passage in Corinthians on women's silence that "here the man is commanded to keep silence as well as the woman, when they are in confusion and out of order,"⁷ arguing that men deliberately misread the passage and that it was invalid as a restriction on women's speaking.

The relationship of Jesus Christ with women, in particular Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, is another example Fell drew upon to support her arguments that women should be equal members of the church. She stated that:

Jesus owned the love and grace that appeared in women and did not despise it, and . . . he received as much love, kindness, compassion, and tender dealings towards him from women, as he did from any others."⁸

Her point here is that Jesus Christ himself accepted women as his followers and that these women gave him as much support and love as his male disciples. Fell wrote the pamphlet in response to the use by men in general, even some male Quakers, of Paul's injunction against women's speaking as a reason to forbid women to preach, prophesy, and participate in religious matters. For Quakers the issue of speaking was vital because of the way Quaker meetings functioned, with individuals speaking freely as the Inner

Light directed them, which meant that anyone denied the right to speak in meeting could not function as a full member of the Society. To be denied the right to speak was as effective a denial of membership as it would be in the Anglican Church if an individual was denied communion.

Margaret Fell became a Quaker in 1652 and provided an important center of support for Quakers all over the country. Her father, John Askew, was a gentleman and Margaret reinforced her gentle-born status by marrying Thomas Fell, lord of the manor of Ulverston.⁹ Thomas Fell was also a Judge with considerable influence. Because of his position, Margaret could offer a relatively safe haven at her home where Quakers met and exchanged ideas.¹⁰ Thomas himself never became a Quaker, but due to Margaret, their home at Swarthmore became a center for the organization. With George Fox and other Quakers travelling almost continuously in their efforts to spread the Quaker message, a center for correspondence and organization became necessary. This is what Margaret Fell provided at Swarthmore. In contrast to other Quaker women, Margaret Fell travelled comparatively little, but her contribution in establishing Quakerism was significant. Over five hundred letters to Margaret Fell from other Quakers remain extant, with the majority of them written between 1654-1670 when the organization was in its formative stage.¹¹ The size of this correspondence and the fact that both male and female Quakers sought her advice, sometimes preferring to confide

in her rather than Fox, illustrates Margaret Fell's contribution and overall standing within the early Quaker movement.

Margaret Fell is best known as the Quaker postmaster and provider of a center for Quaker study and refuge from persecution, but she also wrote extensively. One of her ambitions was to spread the message of Quakerism among the Jews, and to this end she wrote a total of five pamphlets.¹² In common with other radical women such as Elizabeth Lilburne and Katherine Chidley, Margaret Fell also organized petitions to Parliament. In 1659 she organized a petition against tithes that was signed by a total of seven thousand other Quaker women.¹³ Also in common with other radical women, Margaret Fell lobbied for the release of radical leaders, travelling to London in 1660 to press Charles II to release George Fox.

Despite her privileged position Margaret Fell suffered imprisonment on three different occasions; in 1664 for refusing the Oath of Allegiance, which resulted in her indictment on the charge of praemunire; in 1670 when she was reimprisoned for praemunire¹⁴; and, in 1684 for failing to attend her parish church services.¹⁵ Her first period of imprisonment lasted for a period of four years, but she did not waste this time, using it instead to write pamphlets and study.¹⁶ As a wealthy landowner, Margaret Fell also suffered economic penalties for continuing to attend meetings and her experience illustrates that women as well

as men accepted the risk of both imprisonment and economic penalties for their faith.

After the death of Thomas Fell, Margaret married George Fox, and with him continued to spread the teachings of the Society of Friends. Their marriage was unusual in that George Fox refused to benefit materially from his wife's wealth, despite the convention that a wife's property became her husband's on their marriage. Fox also took the unconventional step of making sure that Margaret Fell's children from her first marriage supported their union.¹⁷

Quaker women built on the achievements of earlier women radicals, but they achieved an influence and freedom unmatched by women in other radical organizations. George Fox's first convert was appropriately enough a woman, Elizabeth Hooten, who became the first woman preacher of the movement. Like so many other Quakers, Elizabeth Hooten was allied with another radical movement before becoming a Quaker, in this case the Anabaptists. After her conversion, she became a tireless preacher and intrepid traveller who, in addition to travelling all over England, went to America and Jamaica.

Because of her status as Fox's first convert and one of the First Publishers of Truth, there is more information about Elizabeth Hooten than many other Quaker women of the period. When she first met Fox in 1647, she appears to have been middle-aged, although her exact age is unknown. Fox himself described Elizabeth Hooten as "a very tender

woman,"¹⁸ and she was obviously a respected member of the movement. Besse lists some of the periods of imprisonment Elizabeth Hooten suffered for her beliefs, and comments that she was "said to have been the first Woman Preacher among the People Call'd Quakers, she was convinced by George Fox, and Preached the Way of Salvation to others publicly, in the year 1650."¹⁹

Like many other Quakers, both men and women, Elizabeth Hooten suffered because of her beliefs. According to Besse, she was imprisoned on five occasions: in 1650 for declaring the truth in Derbyshire; in 1651 for interrupting the Priest's sermon; in 1654 for speaking to the Priest in a "steeplehouse," and again in 1655 for the same offense; and lastly in 1652, imprisoned with Mary Fisher for publicly declaring the truth.²⁰ In addition to being imprisoned she suffered an assault in 1660 perpetrated by the Parish Priest, a certain "Jackson, Priest of Selston." As Besse describes it, she was merely walking down the street when the Priest recognized her as a Quaker. She "was abus'd, beaten with many Blows, and knockt down, and afterward put into the water" ²¹

Being the first of Fox's converts and the first woman preacher of the Quaker movement was not enough for Elizabeth Hooten, who wanted to preach the Quaker message as far afield as she could. When she was at least sixty years old, she travelled to America on a missionary trip, arriving in Boston in 1662. During this period, Boston had severe

penalties for Quakers daring to preach their message within its jurisdiction. Hearing about some fellow Quakers' imprisonment, Elizabeth Hooten visited them and was herself imprisoned as a result. Later, the Governor ordered that she be abandoned deep within the forest and left to starve. Despite her age, she managed to escape from the forest, travelling to Rhode Island and on to England. There she gained a license from Charles II to settle in any of the colonies and returned to Boston. Once again she was expelled from the town, and this time travelled to Cambridge where she was imprisoned for two days without food and water. Her ordeal was not over yet, for she was whipped through three towns and again abandoned in the forest. Again she managed to survive this ordeal and returned to England, where she suffered further imprisonment for disrupting services and preaching. She accompanied George Fox on his trip to Jamaica in 1670, and it was on this trip that she died in 1671.²²

Intrepid Quaker women who travelled the world and proved, as well as argued, women's ability to participate in and actively shape the nature of their organization are numerous. The early Quaker movement invested much time and resources in the attempt to win converts, and women took an active part in this proselytizing effort. Among the most noteworthy of these women is Mary Fisher, who travelled all over the world and attained an audience with the Turkish Sultan, Mohammed IV.²³ As already mentioned, Mary Fisher

shared imprisonment with Elizabeth Hooten in 1652, and she was also one of the "first sufferers of the People Call'd Quakers in Cambridgeshire."²⁴ In 1653 Mary Fisher and her companion, Elizabeth Williams, went to Cambridge with the intention of demonstrating the lack of truth in the beliefs of Cambridge theologians. When the women responded to students' taunts by saying that the university was "a Cage of Unclean Birds," they were whipped through the streets.²⁵ Both Elizabeth Hooten and Mary Fisher are typical of Quaker women of this period because of the extreme persecution they faced for their beliefs. Their repeated offenses illustrate their determination to practice and to spread their beliefs among the general population.

George Fox, no doubt influenced by the abilities of these women and his earlier observations of other women radicals, was a staunch supporter of women's rights within the Quaker organization. To counter the arguments of some male Quakers against women's full involvement, he stated:

Now Moses and Aaron, and the seventy elders, did not say to those assemblies of the women, we can do our work ourselves, and you are more fit to be at home to wash the dishes; or such like expression, but they did encourage them in the work and service of the lord.²⁶

As this quotation illustrates, Fox had little time for men who would have preferred women to remain at home fulfilling their traditional domestic roles. He saw women as integral and vital religious agitators who could join him "in the work and service of the Lord." According to his Journal, he

formulated his views on women relatively early. He recounts two episodes where he disagreed with other men regarding women in 1646 and 1648, when the Quaker movement was still in its formative stage. The first of these episodes was when he "met with a sort of people (a group) that held that women have no souls . . . no more than a goose. But I reproved them, and told them that was not right."²⁷ The second episode is even more interesting as it illustrates Fox's views on the right of women to speak publicly on religious matters, even in a church service. Being moved to attend a meeting of Presbyterians and Baptists, Fox became angry when a woman asked the priest a question and was informed by the priest that he did not permit women to speak in the church. Fox described his anger and how he confronted the priest, stating that "the woman asking a question, he (the priest) ought to have answered it."²⁸ Most seventeenth-century men denied the right of women to speak in church or to take any active role in the area of public religion and theological issues. In true radical fashion, however, Fox supported the right of women to participate as fully as men in the service.

Among the radical movements and their members, both male and female, may be seen a belief in the abilities and rights of women to participate politically in the contemporary events. Of course there were individuals within these movements who doubted the correctness of the new position of women and their growing self-confidence, but

the overall philosophy of the radical movements analyzed within this paper was supportive of a new, active role for women. Radical women themselves enormously influenced the composition and character of radical movements, and although most of these movements withered away, women's gains were temporarily preserved and nurtured by the Quakers, the sole radical group to survive beyond the Restoration. It would be misleading to conclude that radical movements deliberately fostered feminist beliefs or that women such as Katherine Chidley saw themselves as feminists (in the modern sense of the term), but it is accurate to conclude that deliberately or not, the activities and ideologies of these organizations fostered, at least temporarily, new opportunities for women. Before the Revolutionary period, only aristocratic women were able to publish their ideas, and on the whole they refrained from participating actively in political or religious debates. Due to the existence of radical organizations, common women found new opportunities for the formation and expression of their political and religious ideas. Immediately after the Restoration, only Quaker women retained any real independence of expression and action, but a new tradition of female activism although suppressed, existed.

ENDNOTES

¹George Fox, Journal, revised by Norman Penney (London, J. M. Dent & Sons, 1924).

²Ibid., 1.

³Ibid., 7.

⁴Barry Reay, Quakers and the English Revolution, 38.

⁵Indeed, Quakers had so many female followers that rumors circulated that the Society of Friends was solely a female organization. Keith Thomas, "Women and the Civil War Sects," Past & Present 13, 1958, 42-62.

⁶Margaret Fell, Women's Speaking Justified, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979).

⁷Ibid., 185.

⁸Ibid., 5.

⁹Greaves and Zaller, ed, Biographical Dictionary, 273.

¹⁰William Braithwaite, The Beginnings of Quakerism, Second Edition revised by Henry Cadbury, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), 104.

¹¹Greaves and Zaller, Biographical Dictionary of British Radicals in the Seventeenth Century, 273.

¹²Ibid., 273.

¹³Ibid., 273.

¹⁴The charge of praemunire is curious, as praemunire meant the offence of resorting to a foreign court. The only explanation for Fell being charged with this offence is her refusal to settle her property dispute with her son in a regular court, choosing instead to take the dispute to a Quaker meeting.

¹⁵Greaves and Zaller, Biographical Dictionary, 273; and Bacon, Mothers of Feminism, 15.

¹⁶During this period of imprisonment Margaret Fell wrote at least five important pamphlets, including: For Manasseh Ben Israel, the Call of the Jewes, 1656; A Loving Salutation to the Seed of Abraham, 1656; A Call to the Universal Seed of God, 1665; A Call unto the Seed of Israel, 1668; and The Daughter of Sion Awakened, 1677.

¹⁷Bacon, Mothers of Feminism, 16-17.

¹⁸George Fox, Journal, 6. Tender in this usage meant unusually receptive to mystic revelation, or the Inner Light.

¹⁹Joseph Besse, An Abstract of the Sufferings of the People Call'd Quakers, 52.

²⁰Ibid., 52, 156, 323.

²¹Ibid., 195.

²²Dictionary of National Biography, 308.

²³Bacon, Mothers of Feminism, 26.

²⁴She and her companion Elizabeth Williams were the first Quakers to preach in Cambridgeshire. Besse An Abstract of the Sufferings of the People Call'd Quakers 22.

²⁵Ibid., 18.

²⁶George Fox, An Encouragement to all the Faithful Women's Meetings, 1676, Cited in Joyce Irwin, Womanhood in Radical Protestantism, p. 189

²⁷Fox, Journal, 7.

²⁸Ibid., 14.

CHAPTER IV

PERSECUTION OF QUAKERS

Unlike other radical groups, the Society of Friends under the leadership of George Fox developed the necessary organizational structure to survive beyond the immediate Revolutionary period. Reflecting the egalitarian beliefs of Friends, Fox organized the society around local meetings, and instead of being dominated by one person the words of all were to be listened to in order to arrive at a sense of meeting. Quakers denied the validity of a specialized ministry because they believed that every individual, through their guidance from the Inner Light, had an equal claim to be a minister. Similarly Quakers believed that sainthood was a status achieved by all, and not limited to the few "elect" in a Calvinist sense. Furthermore, because the Inner Light directed people on an individual basis, no Quaker could deny the validity of another individual's beliefs and actions. Each local meeting met weekly but in addition to these localized meetings, monthly meetings encompassing several weekly meetings developed, as did even larger regional meetings which became quarterly. The first regular local meeting began at Balby in Yorkshire in 1658 and the pattern became established in every Quaker

community. By 1668 the monthly meetings were also established, primarily in response to the severe persecution brought about by the passage of the Conventicle Act. All the disparate Quaker groups and meetings fell under the leadership and authority of the annual London meeting that drew together Friends from all areas of the country and became the highest authority for Friends.¹

With the organization of the Society structured around the weekly, monthly, and annual meetings, the question of women Friends' involvement in the meetings became central. Unless women had access to meetings, their full participation within the Society would weaken and their equality with male members would exist on paper only. The informality of the movement in its early days allowed women to participate fully in all aspects of its development, but increasing formality and organization posed a threat to women Friends' status in the Society.

Evidence exists that the early Quaker meetings were mixed, and often women comprised the majority of a meeting. Joseph Besse, in his Abstract of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers², gives numerous examples of women being arrested for participating in Quaker meetings. As men were arrested from the same meetings held in the same location, we may conclude that the meetings were composed of both men and women. Besse's account suggests that until the mid-1660s, Quaker women and men continued to join together for meetings as may be seen from the following examples. In

1662 in Bedfordshire, nineteen Friends were imprisoned for meeting together and this group included six women.³ In 1664 in Berkshire one man and six women were arrested for meeting together.⁴ Also in 1664, one man and five women were arrested for meeting together⁵. In addition to the primary evidence Besse offers, Quaker historians suggest that men and women attended the early meetings. For example, Margaret Hope Bacon⁶ refers to the fact that early meetings for worship were mixed. Bacon also suggests that although the first business meetings were for men, women may have attended with their husbands.⁷ Russell also states that women attended and participated in the early business meetings and does not limit this to those women married to fellow Quakers.⁸

From 1659 onwards, London Quaker women met for meetings known as Box meetings (named after the box in which the funds were kept), but these meetings existed primarily for the relief of sufferers of persecution. The women raised funds and used box meetings to distribute them among needy Quakers. The meetings came about after a Quaker woman, Sarah Blackbury, appealed to Fox to find some way of relieving those suffering most heavily from the persecutions. Fox was inspired to found the Box Meetings so that women could meet weekly to organize the relief of prisoners, widows and orphans, and oversee the placement of maids.⁹

It was only in the 1660s that George Fox began to push for the establishment of separate women's meetings on a level parallel to the men's. Fox initially had two choices open to him: to include women in the men's meetings, or to establish separate meetings for each. He opted for the latter. Fox's decision to support separate women's meetings rather than continue to hold mixed meetings may be analyzed in either of two ways. One possibility is that Fox saw this as a way of containing female enthusiasm and keeping women away from effective decision-making policy. The alternative is that Fox realized that despite their unorthodox views and behavior, Quakers could not fully escape social norms and assumptions. As patriarchy was one of the strongest contemporary societal norms, women would be less restricted and more independent if they held their own meetings.¹⁰ The latter conclusion is the only reasonable one to draw judging from Fox's expressed views of women and his behavior towards them. Fox gives his reasons for establishing women's meetings:

That the faithful women, who were called to the belief of the truth, being made partakers of the same precious faith, and heirs of the same everlasting gospel and salvation that men are, might in like manner come into the possession and practice of the gospel order, and therein be meet-helpers unto the men in the restoration, in the service of Truth, in the affairs of the Church, as they are outwardly in civil or temporal things. That so all the family of God, women as well as men, might know, possess, perform and discharge their offices and services in the house of God, whereby the poor might be better taken care of and looked after, and the younger sort instructed, informed and taught in the way of God; the loose and disorderly reprov'd and admonish'd in the fear

of the Lord; the clearness of persons propounding marriage more closely and strictly inquired into in the wisdom of God; and all the members of the spiritual body, the Church, might watch over and be helpful to each other in love.¹¹

Fox explained the reasons for founding weekly women's meetings as a response to the increasing persecution Friends suffered; women's meetings existed "that they [women] might see and inquire into the necessity of all Friends who was [sic] sick and weak and who was in wants or widows and fatherless, in the city [London] and the suburbs."¹²

Fox recounts an incident in his Journal when a man approached him and asked if it was not God's commandment that a man should rule over his wife, also stating that it was an affront to the established male eldership to set up women's meetings. Fox responded that male eldership and authority over women was a result of the Fall, and did not apply under the restoration by Christ,¹³ a response that clarifies Fox's view of the nature of the relationship between men and women. Male authority over women resulted from the Fall, and therefore could no longer be applied, in religious meetings or the home.

Modern Quaker feminists also see the need for separate women's meetings, and ironically, this is often viewed negatively by more traditional Friends. As Bacon states: "despite the many years of separate women's meetings, Friends continue to be slow to understand or accept the need for some of the Quaker feminists to meet separately in order to share and to free themselves of the hidden bond of

sexism."¹⁴ Bacon continues, arguing that separate meetings allow women a freedom of expression denied them in mixed meetings due to the patriarchal society in which women function; even though Quaker men tend to be responsive to the needs of women, Bacon sees female only meetings as the only way of granting women freedom from hidden sexism.¹⁵

As she states: "their [women's] need to meet separately has been strong, despite the initial opposition of older Friends, some of whom view the return to separate meetings as a setback in the long struggle toward integration."¹⁶

Just as modern Friends remain divided over the issue of separate or integrated meetings, so did Friends of Fox's era, although for different reasons. George Fox's support for women's meetings led eventually to a rift in the Society, with John Wilkinson and John Story leading a breakaway group, largely over the issue of the women's meetings. The major cause for resentment was that women's meetings were to be responsible for preparing couples for marriage, and reporting to the men's meetings as to whether a couple were ready for marriage or not, looking after the poor, and reproofing the "loose and disorderly."¹⁷ Story and Wilkinson rejected the idea of women having any control over men, especially in the area of the family and marriage.¹⁸ A basis for their rejection of women having any authority over men resulted from their belief that no individual could exercise authority over another, particularly in spiritual matters.

Wilkinson and Story also disputed the right of George Fox to impose a formal structure on the society, arguing instead that men should be able to worship freely as the Inner Light directed.¹⁹ Fox understood the importance of having a structured society both to hold the Society together in the face of the severe persecution imposed on Quakers, and also to control what many saw as excesses, such as the episode with James Naylor.²⁰ For the Quakers to survive and avoid going the way of the earlier radical movements such as the Ranters, Fifth Monarchists, and the Levellers, developing an organizational structure was imperative. Without a formal organization the tendency of the Quakers to fragment into an increasing number of splinter groups would be impossible to combat. The nature of Quakerism, with its emphasis on individual accountability and responding to the directives of the Inner Light, and the nature of the radical individuals attracted to the movement meant that some discipline was vital if the movement was to survive intact. In spite of this, Fox preferred to risk fragmenting the society rather than compromise his beliefs regarding women's equality. Instead of giving way to male members who agreed with Wilkinson and Story, Fox gave his full support to the establishment of separate meetings for women.

Fox's analysis of the persecution as something he needed to try to counter by using the women's meetings was an accurate one as persecution increased to a point where it

threatened the very existence of Quakerism. Despite the Protector's emphasis on Godly rule, Quakers were targeted for persecution by many J.P.'s. Persecution only escalated with the Restoration, as Friends increasingly became perceived as a threat to the establishment.

A petition presented to "the Right Honourable, The Council of State," in 1660 illustrates the fears of those with the greatest interest in maintaining the status quo; in this case the "Several Gentlemen, Justices of the Peace, and Ministers of the Gospel," of Lancashire who wrote the petition. It reads as follows:

since their [George Fox, and James Naylor] coming into this country [county of Lancashire], they have broached Opinions tending to the Destruction of the Relation of Subjects to their Magistrates, Wives to their Husbands, Children to their Parents, Servants to their Masters, Congregations to their Ministers, and of a People to their God, and have drawn much People after them; many whereof (Men, Women, and Little Children) at their Meetings are Strangely wrought upon in their Bodies, and brought to fall, foam at the Mouth, roar and swell in their Bellies.²¹

Predictably, the presenters of the petition feared the breakdown of order they felt the Quakers promoted, and their petition reflects their views on the nature of social order and who ought to defer to whom. It is significant that directly after complaining about the breakdown in the relationship between "Subjects and Magistrates" the petition lists the relationship between husband and wife. This petition illustrates the importance of patriarchy in seventeenth-century society. The structure of authority clearly supported the dominion of husbands over wives, and

those supporting the establishment feared that a change at any level of the hierarchy threatened the whole structure of social order. The authority of husband over wife was second only to the authority of magistrate, or governor, over their subjects.

That Quaker women continued their radical behavior is evident from Besse whose account of Quakers suffering from persecution was drawn from the Quaker Meeting for Sufferers, whose purpose was to chronicle all the separate acts of persecution against Quakers in England and Wales. Besse lists a total of 12,406 individuals in his account, and of these women comprise, 1,383, or 11.1%.²² Unfortunately, no accurate estimate exists of the ratio of female to male Quakers during this period, so it is impossible to estimate what percentage of Quaker women actively suffered from the persecution. Figures vary for the number of Quakers as a whole. Wrigley and Schofield estimate that in 1680 the total number of Quakers was 60,000 in England and Wales.²³ Braithwaite estimates 6,000-8,000 adult males, and a total membership including women and children, of 30-40,000 in the 1660s.²⁴

The first Act levelled against the Quakers was the Vagrancy Act, that although originally aimed at 'vagabonds and sturdy beggars' was extended in 1656 to include anyone travelling without sufficient cause, and while business interests were sufficient cause, itinerant preaching or attending Quaker meetings were not. Increasingly therefore,

Quakers found themselves arrested and charged under the Vagrancy Act.²⁵ Besse says of the Vagrancy Act that "so hot for Persecution were many Magistrates, that, by an unparallel'd [sic] Misconstruction of the Laws against Vagrants, they tortur'd [sic] with cruel Whippings the Bodies of both Men and Women of good estate and Reputation."²⁶

In Devonshire, and probably also in some other counties, Magistrates extended the Vagrancy Act to Quaker women living at home, requiring those unmarried women under the age of forty to go into service if they had no "other visible Means of Maintenance."²⁷ Five Quaker women in Devonshire had this law applied to them and were forced to find domestic service outside their homes. Three sisters, Agnes, Jane, and Elizabeth Light "who dwelt together, had an House [sic] and Land of their own, and industriously maintain'd [sic] themselves at Spinning, were sent to Bridewel" under the terms of the employment clause of the Vagrancy Act. Another case of persecution was that of Eleanor Roberts who cared for her aged father at home, and who was "whipp'd and incarcerated for six months."²⁸ Obviously, Magistrates found the Vagrancy Act to be a way of persecuting Quakers in an attempt to force them to renounce their faith. None of the cases recounted by Besse were valid under a strict interpretation of the Vagrancy Act, none of these Quakers were vagrants, and the application of the vagrancy laws to them illustrates the lengths that

magistrates and other hostile officials were prepared to go to in order to punish Quakers.

The next major wave of Quaker persecution resulted from the Venner uprising of 1661, when the Fifth Monarchists led an attempt to seize London and establish Christ's Kingdom on earth. The uprising was quickly put down, but coming as close as it did to the return of Charles II and the re-establishment of the monarchy it shook the confidence of the government and led to severe reprisals. Already viewed with extreme suspicion, Quakers suffered from Venner's abortive coup attempt. The rebellion reinforced the notion that non-conformists were traitorous, waiting only for the right moment to seize power and overthrow the monarchy. Venner's uprising took place in January of 1661 and was followed immediately by a proclamation that declared all religious meetings held outside parish churches as seditious. Further, any individual caught attending an unorthodox religious meeting had to immediately take the Oath of Allegiance.²⁹ As Quakers refused to swear oaths under any circumstances, the consequences of the Proclamation for them were disastrous. In less than a week after the issuance of the Proclamation, approximately 4,230 Quakers found themselves in prison.³⁰

In May of 1662, the Quaker Act was passed, primarily to inflict stronger penalties against Quakers who continued to refuse the Oath of Allegiance. The terms of this act made it an offense for more than four Quakers to meet together

and the penalties for doing so were harsh; the first and second offense incurred a fine, and or a prison sentence, and the third banishment, which if broken led to the death sentence.³¹ Women, as well as men, suffered under the terms of the Quaker Act. Besse lists a total of 148 Quakers as banished under the terms of the Act. Of these, seventy one were women: thus 48% of the people banished were women.³²

The last major piece of legislation contributing to an increase in persecution of Quakers was the Clarendon Code. This was a four part Act, passed between 1661 and 1664. The first part of the Code, the Corporation Code of 1661, restricted eligibility for service in public office to those persons attending a regular Church of England, and taking communion. This obviously excluded Quakers from public service. The second part of the Clarendon Code, the Act of Uniformity, resulted in the expulsion of 2,000 Non-Conformist or Puritan Ministers from their Church of England livings. Under the terms of this Act, clergymen had to take an oath accepting the Book of Common Prayer in its entirety or leave their livings. The 1664 Conventicle Act forbade the attendance of any religious service except Church of England services, and the penalties were the same as those incurred by breaking the Quaker Act; imprisonment for the first and second offenses, and banishment for the third. The last clause of the Clarendon Code was the Five Mile Act which forbade any minister or teacher from entering within a

five mile radius of a town unless he or she swore not to attempt to alter the established government of the Church, or the Realm.³³

Obviously, the penalties imposed on Quakers following the Restoration were severe, and the involvement of women Friends in providing relief for prisoners and their families was vital. It is true that women Friends behaved in what is traditionally perceived as a 'female' manner, by nurturing and comforting those in need, but this does not undermine the importance of what they were doing for the Quaker movement. Moreover, although they followed traditional female roles within the Quaker organization, they maintained radical and non-traditional behavior within wider society and were especially militant in their disruption of church services and confrontations with Priests.

In 1670, Parliament passed the second Conventicle Act, replacing the earlier Act of 1664. Under the terms of the new Act, Quakers were no longer banished for the third offense, but Justices of the Peace were allowed to make forced entries into suspected meeting houses, and to forcefully break up unlawful assemblies. The most odious part of the second Conventicle Act was its provision rewarding informers with a third of the money of fines imposed, or of goods seized in penalties for unlawful meetings. This provision led to the increased persecution of wealthier Quakers as informers had much to gain from their imprisonment and fines.³⁴

The Restoration of the Monarchy was a disaster for Quakers, who were associated as a group with the radical Republicans. Venner and the Fifth Monarchists attempt to overthrow Charles in 1661 compounded their difficulties as radical movements fell under increasing suspicion and public hostility. Although the persecution made the period of Stuart rule difficult for the movement as a whole, it gave women a role to fulfil within the Society. Fewer women than men suffered imprisonment, but there are countless episodes recounted by Besse of women suffering assaults, whippings, and general harassment, and women Quakers also suffered imprisonment and banishment.

During the period of extreme persecution that lasted from the Restoration until the Glorious Revolution of 1688 women provided vital services within the Quaker movement. Quaker women provided an important source of support and relief for Friends and their families suffering imprisonment and often crippling fines, and they shared fully in the persecution Friends suffered. Women Quakers inevitably gained the respect and support of their male counterparts by their willingness to risk such severe penalties and in the role they played holding the Society together when it was most vulnerable. Unfortunately, once the Society of Friends was no longer at such risk and persecution lessened, so did the role and status of women Friends within the Society.

Historians such as Barry Reay³⁵ describe a change in the Quaker movement after the Restoration of 1660. This

post Restoration period is usually called the second period of Quakerism because of the general change in Friends behavior after this period and the new quietism of the Society itself. As Reay states, "energies which had formerly been engaged in conflict with the world were channelled into forming a haven within it. The Quakers strove to create their own world, an alternative community."³⁶ Thus historians of the Quaker movement see 1660 as an important cut off date, a date when the Society as a whole changed significantly.

However, Quaker historians such as Reay, Braithwaite³⁷, and Elbert Russell who all agree that the Quaker movement changed after the Restoration have generally not analyzed this change as it affected Quaker women. If we accept the year 1660 as the time when the Society withdrew from outside society and entered its quietist period, and accept the argument that persecution forced the Society to become more conservative, we ignore the impact of persecution on Quaker women. As we have seen, the evidence suggests that the severe post-Restoration persecution inflicted on the Quakers encouraged Fox to push for the establishment of separate and autonomous women's meetings. Instead of undermining the women's position within the movement, the post-Restoration persecution gave Quaker women an important purpose and place within the Society.

In 1672, largely because of his Catholic sympathies, Charles II issued the Proclamation of Indulgence. This

proclamation suspended all penal laws directed against Non-Conformists and Roman Catholic Recusants. It now became legal for Quakers to meet together in groups larger than four for worship, as long as the meetings were conducted in authorized meetinghouses.³⁸ After twelve years of intense persecution it seemed as if the Society of Friends had earned a respite, but the period of toleration was brief. In the 1680s, the newly elected Tory government again targeted the Quakers for persecution, this time in response to Quaker support for Whig candidates in the 1681 elections. Old statutes originally directed against Quakers and Non-Conformists were used again to punish Quakers for their political involvement.³⁹

After the death of Charles II, and the accession of James II, persecution against the Quakers again relaxed. In 1687 James issued the Declaration of Indulgence that repealed all earlier laws against Recusants and Non-Conformists.⁴⁰ Like his brother before him, James' toleration was the product of his desire to reintroduce Catholicism to the country and these Catholic sympathies led to his downfall. After the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688, William and Mary also issued a Declaration of Indulgence, and this finally brought the period of active Quaker persecution to a close.⁴¹

One of the last remaining legal problems for Friends resulted from their refusal to swear oaths. In 1689 the first Affirmation Act passed, and this allowed Quakers to

make an affirmation instead of the Oath of Allegiance.⁴² Even so, the continued Quaker refusal to swear still adversely effected them. Without swearing oaths, Quakers could not sue for debts, prove wills, deal with customs and excise, or give evidence in court. In a real sense Quakers lost their legal protection because of their refusal to swear.

After years of discussion in the Meetings for Sufferings, and largely due to the influence of the Quaker, George Whitehead, another Affirmation Act was passed by Parliament in 1696.⁴³ Under the terms of this Act, Quakers could state that they "do declare in the presence of Almighty God, the witness of the truth of what I say,"⁴⁴ and this would be considered as binding as an oath. However, the Act explicitly denied Quakers the right to "give evidence in criminal cases, or serve on any juries, or bear any office or place of profit in the government."⁴⁵

The nature of the Society of friends changed drastically in the late seventeenth century. In part this resulted from the death of many of the more radical leaders. Radical leaders who died by 1670 include James Naylor, James Parnell, John Lilburne, and George Fox the younger [so called to avoid confusing him with George Fox, founder of Quakerism]. As Reay states "the removal of radicals . . . left the movement to men like George Whitehead and Thomas Salthouse . . . the struggle to survive Restoration persecution encouraged organization, and organization

stimulated conservatism."⁴⁶ Quakers adopted such practices as birthright membership by the end of the seventeenth century, and this also contributed to the transformation in the Society's character. The inclusion of members who had not necessarily undergone a conversion experience, known by Quakers as convincement, tempered the impulses of members to preach and proselytize, and those members who retained radical impulses increasingly met with the society's discipline.

Despite the relative conservatism of the Society, and the undeniable change of the status of women within it, some women did maintain the tradition of travelling ministry. However, they found it more difficult than it had been before formal the organization of the Society, as they now had to receive the approval of their individual meeting before they could leave.⁴⁷ American women Friends felt called to travel to England in relatively large numbers, and between 1700-1800, a total of forty three made the trip. All but seven of these women were married, which suggests that male Quakers retained some notions of women's independence and right to preach and travel if so called.⁴⁸

ENDNOTES

¹Elbert Russell, History of Quakerism (New York Macmillan: 1942), 130-131.

²Joseph Besse, Abstract of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers, Two Volumes, (London:1733).

³Ibid., 2:9.

⁴Ibid., 14.

⁵Ibid., 14.

⁶Margaret Hope Bacon, Mothers of Feminism, 21.

⁷Ibid., 20.

⁸Russell, History of Quakerism, 132.

⁹Margaret Hope Bacon, Mothers of Feminism, 21.

¹⁰As Russell explains, "Fox realised that lack of experience in public affairs and modesty alike would prevent the adequate participation of women in the affairs of the Society; and so he violated logical consistency [by establishing separate women's meetings] in deference to actualities." The History of Quakerism, 132.

¹¹Fox, Journal, 1673, 314.

¹²Fox, Epistles 6, 1676, quoted in Braithwaite, 341.

¹³Fox, Journal, 1673, quoted in Douglas Gwyn Apocalypse of the Word: The Life and Message of George Fox (Friends United Press:1984)

¹⁴Bacon, Mothers of Feminism, 21.

¹⁵Ibid., 21.

¹⁶Ibid., 21.

¹⁷Fox, Journal, 314.

¹⁸Bacon, Mothers of Feminism, 21.

¹⁹For more on the Wilkinson-Story schism see Hugh Barbour, The Quakers in Puritan England (Yale University Press: 1964), 230; Elbert Russell, The History of Quakerism, (Macmillan Co: 1942), 142, 143, 147.

²⁰James Naylor scandalized the population as a whole, and many Quakers also, by processing into Bristol on horseback surrounded by women who sang 'holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth,' while strewing clothing in front of his horse. This incident was viewed as a blasphemous parody, with Naylor masquerading as Jesus Christ. Braithwaite, The Beginnings of Quakerism, 250-257.

²¹Besse, An Abstract of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers, 1:145.

²²The figures are mine, using Besse's index to his Abstract of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers as a source.

²³E.A. Wrigley and R.S. Schofield, The Population History of England, 1541-1871: A Reconstruction (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 93.

²⁴Braithwaite, Beginnings of Quakerism, 512.

²⁵Russell, History of Quakerism, 61-62.

²⁶Besse, An Abstract of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers, I,x.

²⁷Ibid., 72.

²⁸Ibid., 73.

²⁹Henry Clark, History of English Non-Conformity, 2 vols, 2:21,45.

³⁰Braithwaite, The Beginnings of Quakerism, 9.

³¹Clark, English Non-Conformity, 2:44.

³²The figures here are mine, using Besse as a source.

³³Russell, History of Quakerism, 91-92. See also Clark, History of English Non-Conformity, 24-34.

³⁴Russell, History of Quakerism, 94.

³⁵Barry Reay, The Quakers and the English Revolution.

³⁶Ibid., 104.

³⁷W. C. Braithwaite, The Second Period of Quakerism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955).

³⁸Ibid., 94.

³⁹Ibid., 102.

⁴⁰Clark, History of English Non-Conformity, v.II 109

⁴¹Ibid., 119.

⁴²Russell, History of Quakerism, 189.

⁴³Ibid., 189.

⁴⁴Andrew Browning, ed, English Historical Documents, 1660-1714 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), 404.

⁴⁵Ibid., 404.

⁴⁶Reay, Quakers and the English revolution, 120.

⁴⁷Bacon, Mothers of Feminism, 34.

⁴⁸Ibid., 34.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Four radical movements served as the basis for this study: the Levellers, Diggers, Fifth Monarchists, and the Quakers. Three of the four movements provide examples of female members who broke the bounds of patriarchy through their participation in radical movements. All of the women referred to in this study serve as an example of women participating in radical movements, illustrating both the form women's participation took and their justification of it.

Women like Elizabeth Lilburne and Katherine Chidley are examples of radical women who attempted to participate in the political life of the nation by petitioning Parliament. They rejected the idea that because they were women they had no access to political institutions, and through their petitions they attempted to influence parliament. Unfortunately, the evidence existing on Leveller women is so fragmentary that the choice of which women to use as examples was severely restricted.

Similarly, for the Fifth Monarchists, only two good examples of women radicals exist, and those two are Mary

Cary and Anna Trapnel. Both of these women published extensively, and in their writing both exhibit a similar contempt for established authority. Their denial of the validity of restricting prophesying and the ministry to those with a university education illustrates radical women's rejection of patriarchal authority. The state maintained exclusive control of the universities in an effort to limit ministry to conformists. Both church and state reinforced and supported patriarchy at all levels. Deference to the one's social superior, of wives to husbands, children to parents, and of every member of society to the state church and institutions, illustrate the patriarchal ordering of society. When Anna Trapnel and Mary Cary rejected an elite, university trained ministry, they were effectively rejecting patriarchy.

Owing to the scarcity of evidence, no examples of female Diggers have been included in this study. However, the writings of the leader of the Diggers, Gerrard Winstanley, corroborate that male radicals formulated ideas on the nature of women's involvement in the radical movements and in society as a whole. Winstanley's writings also illustrate the extent to which radicals shared ideas, although no other radical envisioned a reordering of society to the extent Winstanley advocated.

Of all the women included in this study the Quaker Margaret Fell was clearly of a higher social status than other radical women such as Anna Trapnel. It could be

argued that Margaret Fell provides an example of the attempt elite women made to free themselves from patriarchal control. To counter this argument it is important to realize that no woman of the period was truly a member of the elite. Women had no status independent of husbands and fathers, they could own no property (unless widowed), and could not function as independent members of society. This being the case, it seems unrealistic to categorize women on the basis of their marital relationships. Margaret Fell accrued her social status as the wife of Judge Fell. As an individual the only place she received recognition was within the fellowship of the Society of Friends.

Despite the scarcity of evidence existing on the status of the women involved in this study and the difficulties of estimating the numbers of women involved in each movement, it is possible to draw some meaningful conclusions about women members of radical movements of the English Revolutionary period. From the examples provided, it is clear that women did see their participation in radical movements as a means of escaping contemporary social restrictions. Women's activities, analyzed in conjunction with the evidence available on male radicals' attitudes to women and their participation in the radical movements, show that women radicals did manage to escape the restrictions of patriarchy for the duration of the Revolutionary period.

The Quakers, as the sole surviving radical movement after the Restoration, initially preserved the gains women

made. As the Quaker movement developed a formal organization, women began to lose earlier gains. Although women still travelled in the Quaker ministry, they did so in fewer numbers. The Quaker organization as a whole began to avoid confronting authority, whereas it had previously courted confrontation wherever possible. This made Quaker women less visible as they had been the most active in disrupting church services and publicly proclaiming the truth. The real irony of the Quaker movement is that for it to survive, it had to develop a formalized organization. This meant, however, that Quaker beliefs rejecting the validity of one person imposing discipline on another had to be discarded. The Quakers of the 1650s and 1660s were very different from the Quakers of the 1680s and 1690s, and many of the older, more radical Quaker beliefs were quietly dropped or modified. As the Quakers themselves became more mainstream, Quaker women were given less equality in the movement.

Even so, compared to the rest of English society, Quakers maintained relative equality for women. The history of Quakerism provides examples of many women who cast off the restrictions commonly imposed on their sex and behaved in a fashion reminiscent of their Revolutionary predecessors. It is significant that Quaker women "comprised thirty percent of the pioneers in prison reform, forty percent of the women abolitionists, and fifteen percent of the suffragists born before 1830."¹ The one idea

that the Quakers never shelved was their belief that "in souls there is no sex,"¹ and this contributed to the relative freedom Quaker women maintained.

ENDNOTES

¹Bacon, Mothers of Feminism, 1.

²Ibid., 2.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Besse, Joseph. An Abstract of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers for the Testimony of a Good Conscience, from the Time of Their Being First Distinguished by that Name: Taken from the Original Records, and other Authentick [sic] Accounts. 2 Vols. London: J. Sowle, 1733.

Fell, Margaret. Women's Speaking Justified.
Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1667.

Fox, George. Book of Miracles, ed. H.J. Cadbury.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948.

_____. Journal. Revised by Norman Penney.
London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1924.

Haller, William and Godfrey Davies, eds. The Leveller Tracts 1647-1653. New York: 1944.

Henderson, Katherine and Barbara McManus. Half Humankind: Contexts and Texts of the Controversy about Women in England, 1540-1640. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985.

Hill, Christopher, and Edmund Dell, eds. The Good Old cause: the English Revolution of 1640-1660, its causes, course, and consequences. Extracts from contemporary sources. New York: A.M. Kelley, 1969.

Irwin, Joyce, ed. Womanhood in Radical Protestantism, 1525-1675. Lewiston, New York: E. Mellen, 1979.

Rollins, Hyder Edward. Cavalier and Puritan: Ballads and Broadides Illustrating the Period of the Great Rebellion, 1640-1660. New York: New York University Press, 1923.

Sabine, George. The Works of Gerrard Winstanley, with an appendix of documents relating to the Digger movement.
New York: Cornell University Press, 1941.

Woodhouse, A. S. P. Puritanism and Liberty.
Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951.

Winstanley, Gerrard. The Law of Freedom in a Platform: or True Magistracy Restored. Robert Kenny, ed., New York: Schocken Books, 1973.

Secondary Sources

Books

Aylmer, G. E. ed. The Levellers and the English Revolution.
London: Thames & Hudson, 1975.

Bacon, Margaret. Mothers of Feminism: The Story of Quaker Women in America. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986.

Barbour, Hugh and William Frost. eds. The Quakers.
New York: Greenwood Press, 1988.

Barbour, Hugh. The Quakers in Puritan England.
New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964.

Bauman, Richard. Let Your Word Be Few: Symbolism of Speaking and Silence among Seventeenth Century Quakers.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Best, Mary. Rebel Saints. New York: Harcourt Brace & Co, 1925.

Brailsford, H. N. The Levellers and the English Revolution.
Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976.

Braithwaite, W.C. The Beginnings of Quakerism. 2nd ed.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955.

_____. The Second Period of Quakerism. 2nd ed.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955.

Brown, Louise Fargo. The Political Activities of the Baptists and Fifth Monarchy Men During the Interregnum.
Washington: American Historical Association, 1912.

Burrage, Champlin. The Early English Dissenters: In the Light of Recent Research (1550-1641). 2 Vols. New York: Russell & Russell, 1964.

Clark, Alice. The Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century. London: Frank Cass, 1968.

- Clark, Henry. History of English Nonconformity. 2 Vols. New York: Russell & Russell, 1965.
- Cross, Claire. Church and People 1450-1660: The Triumph of the Laity in the English Church. Atlantic Highland, N.J: Humanities Press, 1976.
- Davis, J.C. Fear, Myth and History: the Ranters and the Historians. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Dow, F.D. Radicalism in the English Revolution, 1640-1660. New York: B. Blackwell, 1985.
- Eley, Geoff and William Hunt. eds. Reviving the English Revolution: reflections and elaborations on the work of Christopher Hill. New York: Verso, 1988.
- Evans, John. Seventeenth Century Norwich: Politics, Religion, and Government, 1620-1690. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979.
- Finlayson, Michael. Historians, Puritanism, and the English Revolution: the Religious factor in English politics before and after the Interregnum. Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1983.
- Frank, Joseph. The Beginnings of the English Newspaper: 1620-1660. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962.
- _____. The Levellers: A History of the Writings of the Three Seventeenth Century Social Democrats: John Lilburne, Richard Overton, William Walwyn. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969.
- Fraser, Antonia. The Weaker Vessel. New York: Alfred Knopf, 1984.
- Frost, William. The Quaker Family in Colonial America: A Portrait of the Society of Friends. New York: St. Martins, 1973.
- Goreau, Angeline. The Whole Duty of a Woman: Female Writers in Seventeenth Century England. Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday & Co Inc., The Dial Press, 1985.
- Greaves, R and R. Zaller. Biographical Dictionary of British Radicals in the Seventeenth Century. Vol 1. Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1982.
- Gwyn, Douglas. Apocalypse of the world: the life and message of George Fox. Richmond: Friends United Press, 1986.

- Haller, William. Tracts on Liberty in the Puritan Revolution, 1638-1647. New York: Columbia University Press, 1933.
- Christopher Hill. The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution. Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1978.
- Hirst, Derek. Authority and Conflict: England, 1603-1658. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986.
- James, Margaret. Social Problems and Policy During the Puritan Revolution, 1640-1660. London: George Routledge & Sons Ltd., 1930.
- Kanner, Barbara. ed. The Women of England: From Anglo-Saxon Times to the Present. Interpretive Bibliographical Essays. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1979.
- Lloyd, Arnold. Quaker Social History, 1669-1738. New York: Longmans, 1950.
- Manning, B. S. ed. Religion, Politics, and the English Civil War. New York: St Martin's Press, 1973.
- McGregor, J. F. ed. Radical Religion in the English Revolution. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Morrill, John. The Revolt of the Provinces: Conservatives and Radicals in the English Civil War, 1630-1650. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1976.
- Mullet, Michael. Radical Religious Movements in Early Modern Europe. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1980.
- Petergorsky, David. Left-Wing Democracy in the English Civil War: A Study of the Social Philosophy of Gerrard Winstanley. London: Victor Gollancz, 1940.
- Prior, Mary, ed. Women in English Society, 1500-1800. London: Methuen, 1985.
- Reay, Barry. The Quakers in the English Revolution. New York: St Martin's Press, 1985.
- Reynolds, Myra. The Learned Lady in England, 1650-1760. Boston: Houghton & Mifflin, 1920.
- Routley, Erik. English Religious Dissent. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960.
- Russell, Elbert. The History of Quakerism. New York: Macmillan Co., 1942.

- Schenk, W. The Concern for Social Justice in the Puritan Revolution. London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1948.
- Schlatter, Richard. The Social Ideas of Religious Leaders, 1660-1688. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940.
- Smith, Hilda. Reason's Disciples: Seventeenth Century English Feminists. Urbana, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1982.
- Spufford, Margaret. Contrasting Communities: English Villages in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974.
- Thompson, Roger. Women in Stuart England and America: A Comparative Study. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974.
- Troeltsch, Ernst. The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches, trans., Olive Wyon. 2 Vols. New York: Harper & Row, 1960.
- Underdown, David. Revel, Riot, and Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603-1660. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Watts, Michael. The Dissenters: From the Reformation to the French Revolution. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- Whiting, C. E. Studies in English Puritanism from the Revolution to the Restoration, 1660-1688. London: Macmillan Co., 1931.
- Wilding, Michael. Dragon's Teeth: Literature in the English Revolution. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Wilson, Katherine and Frank Warnke. Women Writers of the Seventeenth Century. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989.
- Wolfe, Don Marion. Leveller Manifestoes of the Puritan Revolution. New York: T. Nelson & Sons, 1944.
- Wrightson, Keith and David Levine. Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling, 1525-1700. New York: Academic Press, 1979.
- Wrigley, E. A. and R. S. Schofield. The Population History of England, 1541-1871: A Reconstruction. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981.

Articles

- Barrage, Champlin. "Anna Trapnel's Prophecies." English Historical Review (1911): 526-535.
- Cole, A. "The Quakers and the English Revolution." Past and Present, no. 10 (1956): 39-53.
- Cohen, Alfred. "The Fifth Monarchy Mind: Mary Cary and the Origins of Totalitarianism." Social Research, 31 (1964): 195-213.
- Cressy, David. "Literacy in Pre-Industrial England." Societas 4 (1974): 229-240.
- Cross, Claire. "Popular Piety and the Records of the Unestablished Churches." In Studies in Church History, Vol. 2., ed. Derek Baker. Oxford: Blackwell, 1975.
- Hurwich, Judith. "The Social Origins of the Early Quakers." Past and Present, no. 48 (1970): 156-61.
- Ludlow, Dorothy. "Sectarian Women in England, 1641-1700." In Triumph Over Silence: Women in Protestant History, ed. Richard Greaves, 93-123. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1985.
- Mack, Phyllis. "Women as Prophets during the English Civil War." Feminist Studies 8 (Spring 1982): 19-47.
- M'Arthur, Ellen. "Women Petitioners and the Long Parliament." English Historical Review 24 (1909): 698-709.
- Solt, L. F. "Fifth Monarchy Men: Politics and the Millenium." Church History 30 (1961): 314-24.
- Thomas, Keith. "Women and the Civil War Sects." Past and Present, no. 13 (1958): 42-62.
- Vann, Richard. "Quakerism and the Social Structure of the Interregnum." Past and Present, no. 43 (1969): 75-88.
- Williams, E. "Women Preachers in the Civil War." Journal of Modern History 1 (1929): 561-569.

Dissertations and Theses.

- Clemmons, Theresa Mackle. "Friends and Families: A Study of the Quakers of the Earls Colne Area, 1655-1750." M.A. Thesis, Oklahoma State University, 1983.
- Hushey, Ruth Willard. "Cultural Interests of Women in England from 1525-1645." Ph.D. Dissertation, Cornell University, 1933.
- MacDonald, Michael. "Madness and Healing in Seventeenth Century England." Ph.D. Dissertation, Stanford University, 1979.
- Rogers, Robert Michael. "Law Reform and Legal Thought Among English Radicals: 1645-1660." Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Northern Illinois, 1988.
- Thompson, Janet. "Her Good Name and Credit: The Reputation of Women in Seventeenth Century Devon." Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 1987.

2
VITA

Sophie Caroline Winston Jones

Candidate for the Degree of
Master of Arts

Thesis: WOMEN, RADICALISM, AND REVOLUTION: A STUDY OF
WOMEN AND THE RADICAL MOVEMENTS OF THE ENGLISH
REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD

Major Field: History

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in the Portsmouth, Hampshire,
England, April 1, 1968, the daughter of David
Gareth, and Rosemary Jones.

Education: Graduated from Peter Symonds College,
Winchester, England, 1986; received Bachelor of
Arts Honors Degree in International Relations from
the University of Sussex, England, 1989; completed
requirements for the Master of Arts degree in
History from Oklahoma State University in
December, 1991.

Professional Experience: Graduate assistant,
Department of History, Oklahoma State University,
1989-1991.