

Ludlow Quaker Journal

No. 13, February 2018



In 2014 Friends minuted their wish to dispense with a regular Meeting Newsletter, but to retain an occasional Journal to provide a forum for news, comment and events. The Journal will publish anything that Friends think is of interest; so its range may be very wide. If you find it too long, select only what interests you from the Table of Contents. It will only publish what the editor receives without solicitation, so if you want Friends to know about your interests and concerns, make sure they reach the editor: he will be very pleased to hear from you.

Comments and letters to the editor are also welcome.

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Quaker Viewpoint

Murri has sent in a selection of our contributions to the 'Christian Viewpoint' column in the *Ludlow Advertiser*. We take turns in this column with the other Ludlow churches. As you see, we have a variety of authors, but Murri tells me she is finding it difficult to recruit further willing contributors. Have you a Quaker thought you would like to share with Ludlow Christians? Do you fancy a brief bow on the public stage? Are you ready to seize this open opportunity for outreach? If you are willing to write for Christian Viewpoint, please let Murri know, and enjoy your moment of publicity.

Quaker Viewpoint 13 March 2017

A Post-Truth Age

I think a lot of ordinary people have been fully aware of degenerating honesty for a long time. We have had the banks, many large-scale companies and even MPs not being completely honest. The press has also been stretching the truth to make big headlines so it makes profits. All of the above have been to do with money.

Quakers do not believe we have to accept this post-truth age. Our testimony of truth and integrity means we feel very strongly about this subject.

There are things that can be done. If we look at Australia, and even now the USA, work has begun to test facts given out to us all. It may mean putting procedures into place which slow the sharing of information. It may mean asking for all 'facts' to undergo peer reviews, as is done in Wikipedia. It will mean that something active has to be done, and that needs a lot of thought. The government needs to be engaged with this subject.

Is fast access to information that is inaccurate a good thing? In our information over-load world I think we have some leeway on time for reflection.

Barbara M. & Maureen F., Ludlow Quaker Meeting

Quaker view point 20 March 2017

Last year Amber Rudd suggested that foreigners are "taking jobs British people could do", and her colleague, Liam Fox, said immigrants "come to the country and consume the wealth of the country without ever having created anything". Both UKIP and the Conservatives seem intent on reducing immigration to very low levels.

If they do so, they may make us both less well and less prosperous. The National Health Service employed, in 2015, some 235,000 non-British workers out of 1.22 million, some 20%.

For non-British nurses the share was 21%, while for doctors 30%. The health service would find it difficult to continue without non-British workers. In building, 10 % of the 2.1 million construction workers in the UK are immigrants, many of them skilled.

Low annual net migration to the UK would result in economic growth being slower, tax revenues weaker and the public debt higher. High annual migration results in stronger public finances, with a lower ratio of government debt to gross domestic product.

Within overall migration, there are a very small number of refugees who are coming to this country because of a steadily growing crisis of war, inequality, and environmental degradation. Quakers wish to promote peace, equality, and truth, and putting faith into action is important. We believe that refugees today should be welcomed, as, before the second world war, many were welcomed from Germany.

John C. - Ludlow Quaker Meeting

Quaker Viewpoint 27 March 2017

SPRING TIME

We honoured those that created the washer and dryer and called them 'inventors'. Man feels so proud when he develops the latest appliance or gismo for us, the consumer.

But let's look at the Divine forces that send the winds to clean away the weak and dead debris from the land and the floods that wash it all away with some strong rain: the compost that then builds up to provide nourishment for all. Now that's clever!

Do you take time to respectfully walk along well-worn paths and see afresh all the splendour that is before you?

Do you respect the Creator that provides this bounty; not just for you, for we each must share all that is provided? We must take only our portion.

Mother earth unconditionally provides for every eventuality before we even consider a need for something. Your Mother did the same for you from the moment you popped out into this miraculous world.

How do you show your appreciation for the divine design of Motherhood — not just on Mothering Sunday, but every day in every way?

You can't possibly forget Mothers' Day for EVERY day is Mothers' Day!

Murri S. - Ludlow Quaker

Quaker Viewpoint 3 April 2017

Peace. Abiding Peace. Like its inseparable companion Social Justice, Peace cannot be held by one, a few, or even the majority. For abiding Peace to exist at all, it must be shared by All. And from whence will this Peace come? Will it be delivered to us fully formed and complete? Will it be built and readied for distribution by experts such as politicians, diplomats, academics, religious leaders or armed forces?

NO!

An abiding Peace must be created, nurtured, and WILLED into existence by each and every one of us. How? We know in our hearts how!

Former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon explained it this way, "Peace is much more than putting weapons aside..., it is about supporting each other as a universal family."

So then we must each become an advocate for Peace. In this we must be steadfast, unwavering, constant and have faith that Peace is achievable.

Considering the existing weapons of mass destruction that could cause cataclysmic environmental devastation and unprecedented loss of human life and suffering, it is imperative that we build an abiding Peace. For in this global era, humanity has one shared future.

Peace is the only future with a future.

Kim H. & Murri S. – Ludlow Quakers

Hereford Peace Council's 'Peace Train', coming on 24 October 2018

The 'Peace Train' is an event being organised by the Hereford Peace Council to ask Parliament to ensure that the UK becomes a signatory to the Nuclear Weapon Prohibition Treaty.

Background: The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) is a coalition of over 460 organisations in 100 countries working to eradicate nuclear weapons globally. On 7 July 2017, 122 nations, members of the UN General Assembly, agreed that nuclear weapons should be illegal and that the process to universally eradicate nuclear weapons should begin. Official signings of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW, or Nuclear Weapon Prohibition Treaty) were opened in New York by United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres on 22 September 2017. ICAN received the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize for this landmark agreement.

However, none of the nuclear weapons states joined in: the **UK is not a signatory** and does not plan to sign.

Purpose of 'Peace Train': To gather written support demanding that the UK become a signatory to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. These requests may be in various formats such as letters or petitions.

Who: Established organisations such as Quaker Meetings, Peace and Justice groups and Town Councils will be invited to contribute an independent message to Parliament.

Method: A small number of the Hereford Peace Council and supporters will ride a regularly scheduled Arriva train on the North Wales/South Wales line from Hope, Flintshire to Newport, Gwent (the length of Wales -- proposed route that may be change slightly). At each stop along the route, we will collect any written messages and add them to our 'mail bag'. Our plan is that each participating organisation will have a representative waiting on the platform to personally hand over their letter or petition. Representatives from participating organisations will be very welcome to join us for some or all of our train journey if they choose.

From Newport, the 'mail bag' will be escorted on the main line to London and be delivered to Parliament.

Rationale: Riding the train and personally collecting the messages offers opportunities that independent mailings would not offer. These include:

- 1) networking with sympathetic organisations and the goodwill that cooperation between groups automatically engenders;
- 2) increased public awareness. This is an event rather than a posted or electronic letter that would **not** be witnessed by the public;
- 3) each organisation could arrange for media coverage at their station to increase public awareness.

NOTE: It is the intention of the Hereford Peace Council **that this event will be peaceful**, and that neither passengers, crew, nor the rail company should be hindered or inconvenienced in any way.

Variations: Each participating organisation along the route would be acting independently and sending their own message. Therefore, each group could arrange a 'send-off' for their own message. For example, a Peace and Justice group could stand discretely aside on the rail platform bearing placards that spell PEACE or another appropriate message. With local knowledge of their circumstances, each group could arrange their own 'send-off'.

When: Wednesday, 24 October 2018. This date is United Nations Day and part of Disarmament Week.

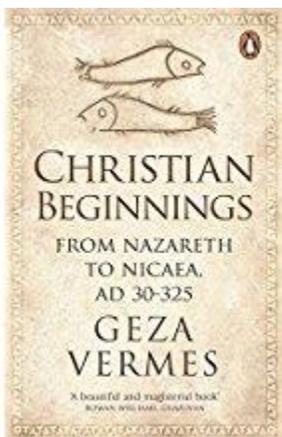
This action is especially important in light of the Secretary General's United Nations New Year's Day message: "...I am not issuing an appeal, I am issuing an alert-- a red alert for our world. Conflicts have deepened and new dangers have emerged. Global anxieties about nuclear weapons are the highest since the Cold War." (Antonio Guterres)

Your support will be very much appreciated. And please send me any additional ideas or suggestions you may have – many thanks!

Kim H., Hereford Peace Council

Book reviews

Geza Vermes, *Christian Beginnings: from Nazareth to Nicaea AD 30 – 325* (Penguin, 2013)



I have just finished reading this book; hard work, but well worth the effort. Geza Vermes was born in Hungary in 1924 into a Jewish household. He converted to Roman Catholicism in his youth, subsequently becoming a priest, but left the church in 1957. He ended his life as a member of a Liberal Jewish Synagogue. He began lecturing at Oxford University in 1965, eventually becoming the first Professor of Jewish Studies. He is regarded as one of the world's greatest experts on early Christianity and the Dead Sea Scrolls. However, like all “great experts”, he is viewed by some as a controversial figure.

This book, published a year before his death in 2013, is a summation of his work over the previous fifty years or so. I print below the summary paragraphs of the main sections of his book, summaries which come after extensive presentation and deployment of background material, texts, and argument.

“The religion proclaimed by Jesus was a wholly theocentric one in which he played the role of a man of God par excellence, the prophet of prophets, the shepherd of the flock, the leader, revealer and teacher without being himself in any sense the object of worship as he later became in the fully fledged Christianity created by Paul and John, and especially from the second century onwards. In the Synoptic Gospels, unlike in the rest of the New Testament, the focal point of reflection and teaching is God, and not Jesus or Christ. It is towards God, the heavenly Father, that prayers and worship are directed without mediators. It is the Father

himself who listens to supplications, offers a helping hand, and acts as protector, comforter and saviour. Surrounded by an aura of charisma, the religion practised and preached by Jesus was meant to be a passport allowing the holder without let or hindrance and without the need for go-betweens to enter directly into the Kingdom of God. Christocentricity does not stem from the historical Jesus.”

“The casting of Jesus in a new mould began with Paul. Addressing a pagan audience ignorant of Judaism, he had first to explain to his public who Jesus was before transmitting his teaching to mostly low-class Greek men and women. As a result, it was the messenger rather than the message that became the subject of Pauline Christianity. Jesus's inspirational exhortations encouraging Jews to change their way of life was replaced by an expository exercise aimed not at God the Father, but at Christ, and at the significance of Jesus's death and resurrection, which Paul interpreted as an atonement for sin and source of universal salvation. The Apostle of the Gentiles elevated the Prophet-Messiah of the Synoptic Gospels and Acts to the rank of triumphant Son of God, a status granted to him by God after his resurrection. *Qua* Son of God, he was soon expected at his Second Coming to be revealed as the Lord of the living and the resurrected dead. Paul transformed the God-centred religion of Jesus into a Christ-centred Christianity.”

“A further major change occurs in the Fourth Gospel. The hero of the Fourth Gospel is no longer the Galilean holy man of the Synoptic Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, but a celestial saviour in temporary exile on earth. Jesus is the Son of God, not just metaphorically as Jews would understand the idiom, but the incarnate eternal Word or *Logos*, sent into the world to redeem not just the Jews, but the whole of mankind. John has made the charismatic prophet Jesus wholly unrecognisable by lifting him from earth to heaven and from time to eternity.”

“The Epistle of Barnabas (c. AD 120-135) adds a new element. It shows the influence of Paul and John, but displays in addition a strong anti-Jewish animus. The Jesus of Barnabas has ceased to be Jewish; indeed “the Jews” are his enemies. He is simultaneously the earthly Son of Man and the eschatological as well as celestial Son of God, who participated in the work of creation long before his descent to earth. A major hurdle was swiftly crossed by the Apostolic Fathers of the second and third centuries, among them Ignatius, Clement, and Pliny the Younger, who mustered enough courage to call Jesus “God”. This culminated in the Council of Nicaea (AD 325) where the concept of consubstantiality appeared, being expressed in the Creed (in part) thus: *We believe in one God, Father Almighty, Maker of all things, visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, begotten as only-begotten of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father. . .*”

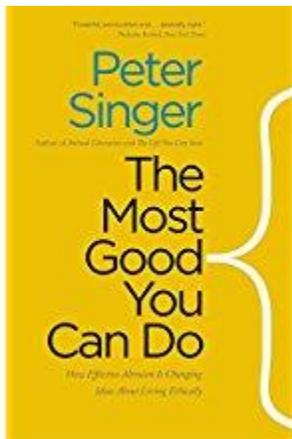
But, Friends, what has all this to do with us? Has it, perhaps, something to do with the early Quakers' conviction that they were re-apprehending the teachings of Jesus? Well, right at the

end of the book Geza Vermes seems to think so when he writes:

“By contrast, the piety preached and practised by Jesus, consisting of a total surrender of the self to God, and a constant search for his Kingdom through limitless devotion and trust, was relegated to a supporting role. Charismatic Christianity was mostly kept away from the limelight, although occasionally it surfaced in a restricted form . . . in fringe movements like Montanism or millenarianism or Quakerism . . .”

Roy

Peter Singer, *The Most Good You Can Do. How effective altruism is changing ideas about living ethically* (New Haven: Yale U. P., 2016)



I was delighted to find this book in Ludlow Quaker Library, and congratulate John C. on buying it. I have hitherto thought that living fairly simply and donating to charities was as far as I could go. However, this book, based on the concept of “effective altruism”, made me think about trying to rationalise my donations so as to make a more effective difference. Peter Singer quotes a number of people who have done this, working out how much they need annually, and giving the rest away. There is an interesting range, including a woman who at first felt she should not have

children as they would consume more resources, but eventually decided to have just one. Others have taken well paid jobs simply so that they could give more. Others have donated a kidney to a stranger. These people do not deprive themselves so that they are actually suffering, but try to take a balanced view of what they really need. They pledge to donate a percentage of their income.

Secondly, they try to find out which are the most effective charities to which to donate, measured by the number of people substantially helped. Inevitably, it seems, this works out at medical charities such as those which give mosquito nets to children to prevent malaria, organisations which have de-worming programmes, or those which prevent blindness due to cataracts or other eye diseases. It is easy to work out the effectiveness of these. The book also gives examples of work to measure the effectiveness of other types of interventions, which can be difficult without a control for comparison. However, some research has been done, in, for example, a developing country, in trying to get more girls to stay longer at school.

Regarding effectiveness, the percentage of the money donated which is used for administration could be one of the criteria for deciding, but as is pointed out, such money may

be used in evaluating the effectiveness of a project. Presumably a regular monthly or annual donation is better than a one-off. I would like to know the salary of the CEO of each organisation, and how it compares with the pay of the other workers.

Peter Singer describes the church's teachings on sharing, in particular that of the Catholic Church. However, in trying to find out why people donate, it seemed that it was not generally for religious reasons. The author distinguishes between those who give for emotional reasons, such as hearing of the suffering of even one child, and those who give by measuring how many people they can help. It seems that what he calls "effective altruists" concentrate on numbers, and get satisfaction from knowing that they have helped a certain number of people.

Peter Singer is known for his championing of animal rights, and he has a chapter on reducing animal suffering and protecting nature. As he points out, the suffering of the millions of animals which are factory farmed is quite horrifying. He quotes some work which has been done on the effectiveness of leaflets in reducing the amount of animal products consumed. He also mentions the seriousness of climate change, but points out how difficult it is to measure the effect of campaigning. He does not mention the idea of "offsetting" one's production of CO₂ which can be calculated, if in a rather token way.

I found the whole book very inspiring. It was thought-provoking to read about people who have taken the trouble to find out how best to use their money and be willing to sacrifice some luxuries in order to act on it. It is encouraging to learn that such people exist, when one hears so much about corruption and self-serving. It challenged me to try to work out how much I really need and to try to be more scientific in my donations, as I tend to be very haphazard.

I highly recommend this book. For further reading one can look up "effective altruism" on the internet.

Anne A.

A Story of Quakers and a Gun

A few years ago, Roy and Roger B. researched the history of Ludlow's Crimean War cannon. The results were turned into a lecture to the Civic Society, and published in the Society's *Heritage News* and in the journal *History**. The cannon is one of dozens which were captured in the Russian base and fortress of Sevastopol during the Crimean War (1853-56), shipped back to Britain and distributed around the country as trophies: towns and cities were invited to send in requests, and the War Office allocated guns to almost all who asked. Most of these trophies were reclaimed in 1940 by the World War II government and sent for scrap as part of the war effort – in our part of the world Wrexham, Bridgnorth, Leominster and Hereford all lost

their Crimean guns. Ludlow hung on to its historic Russian trophy by sending instead a German World War I trophy gun which the town had been given in 1919.

Another town whose Crimean cannon survived the 1940 scrap campaign was Darlington, in County Durham. Darlington was very much a Quaker town – as Wikipedia tells us, it ‘owes much of its development to the influence of local [Quaker](#) families in the Georgian and Victorian era, and who provided much of the finance and vision in creating the Stockton and Darlington Railway, the world's first steam-locomotive-powered, permanent passenger railway’. Darlington Football Club is still nicknamed The Quakers.

The most prominent Quaker family were the Peases, a large clan of successful and philanthropic businessmen, who produced the first ever Quaker MP and were very open to George Stephenson’s suggestion that they should invest in the first ever steam passenger railway. They took a leading part in local politics, and left their mark on many things -- Darlington's most famous landmark, the clock tower, was a gift to the town by Joseph Pease in 1864.

They were also deeply pacifist – Joseph’s brother Henry Pease was one of the prominent Friends who travelled to Russia in 1854 to seek an audience with the Tsar in an unsuccessful effort to avert the Crimean War.** So it was not surprising that the prospect of a military trophy produced friction. The Crimean Cannon in Darlington's South Park, writes local journalist Chris Lloyd, who tells the story, ‘was captured in the heat of bloody battle and transported home in triumph. But the Cannon's arrival in Darlington fired the first shot in a bitter political battle that lasted longer than the Crimean War itself.’

In August 1857, the Darlington Board of Health voted to request two Cannons. It was a poorly attended meeting, with many of the town's ruling Quakers absent, and the motion passed with a majority of one. The Quakers, led by the Pease family, implacable pacifists, would never have voted for a memorial to a war.



The Government sent a single cannon. Some wanted it displayed in the Market Square; others, in the churchyard, as nearby Middlesbrough had. During the debate, the Quakers regrouped and ensured the cannon was quietly forgotten about in a corner of South Park. There it remained until June 1860, when the cannon, fed up with its lot, wrote remarkable letters to local newspapers.

“The reptiles of the Earth take up their abode in what was once my chamber of destruction,” it thundered. “Birds twitter saucily and with

inquisitive eye peer into the dark recesses of my interior, and the worms hold nightly revels in the hollow region of my iron heart. Now, Mr Editor, who could stand it? I won't; I can't. . . if they don't move me soon, I'll blow up!"

(We may note that this was not the only gun that wrote to newspapers – Hereford's Crimean cannon also made its presence known in the letter page of the *Hereford Times*.)

The issue blew up at the next Board of Health meeting. Fourteen members were present, at least nine from the Quaker camp including, in the chair, their leader Joseph Pease. The non-Quakers, led by John Wrightson, landlord of The Sun Inn, said the cannon's condition was an insult to all our brave boys who had sacrificed their lives in the Crimea. Pease disagreed. "Lying where it was, the chairman said he thought it was a most beautiful emblem of peace, for he had actually seen lambs feeding close to the muzzle of the gun, a remark which was received with loud laughter," reported the *Darlington Telegraph* -- an avowedly anti-Pease weekly paper. But the cannon remained surrounded by sheep.

The following spring, in exasperation, it wrote once more, telling of the gruesome sights it had witnessed at Sebastopol. "*After many ups and downs I landed in this country,*" it went on. "*I heard a delightful home had been provided for me in Darlington, which so pleased me that for a time I considered myself the most fortunate of Cannons. How sadly I was mistaken. The cruel neglect has wounded me to the quick, for although made of iron, my heart is not so hard as that of some human beings.*"

The May 1861 Board meeting discussed the cannon's predicament. This time non-Quakers were in a majority. The gun's supporters were outraged that the Peases could block a decision for four years simply because they did not like it. John Pease, Joseph's elder brother, was mocked when he said that mounting the cannon in the park would be an insult to every Russian. Before the matter could be put to the vote, Joseph Pease "vacated the chair". No vote could be taken. But, mysteriously, the Sebastopol gun was soon -- quietly and without ceremony -- sited in the park. Funding to mount the cannon had already been raised in March by a special concert in the town's Theatre Royal.

In the course of time, the Pease family, which remained extremely wealthy, increasingly lost its Quaker commitment: there are few Pease or related grave-stones in the Darlington Quaker burial ground after about 1900. (Pease descendants are now prominent in the City of London.) When the question of scrappage came up in 1940, the gun narrowly survived -- details are not clear, but apparently Quaker pacifism was not in play. In 1857 Quaker opposition had achieved a four-year delay between the arrival and the mounting of the cannon in South Park; but there it still stands today. It has the tiniest of plaques to tell its story -- possibly (speculates Chris Lloyd) because the leading townspeople of the day thought that story was too bloody, or possibly because it reminded them of their eventual defeat.

Roger B.

Adapted from <http://thespasdirectory.com/profilego.asp?ref=2C3A31>

**Ludlow Heritage News*, no. 56, Summer 2012, pp. 3-5; *History*, Vol 99 (2014), Issue 337, 652-669.pdf (available free on line)

** Griselda Fox Mason, *Sleigh Ride to Russia, 1854* (York: William Sessions Ltd, 1985)

Southern Marches and Mid-Wales Area Meetings' Summer Camp

Area Meeting Camp is held annually for Friends and others who like the idea of camping together for a week. We choose a site within or near the A.M. area. There are usually about 40-60 campers. We bring our own tents to sleep in but share 2 marquees and a cook van. We share the preparation and eating of meals (mostly vegetarian), silent worship and daily activities and everybody spends one day helping with the chores. Activities may include walking, cycling, canoeing, swimming, sight-seeing, music, playing games and anything else people feel like organising. People of all ages come to camp, although children under 18 who come without their parents must have an adult camper (over 21) who has agreed to act as their guardian. Sorry – no pets! -- dogs cannot be brought to camp. No alcohol or illegal drugs are allowed on camp.

There will be two 1-week camps: July 21st – July 28th and July 28th – August 4th

This year we will be camping midway between Llanfilo and Talgarth, between the A438 and A479. The area is ideal for walking, cycling and visiting places of interest. The Visitor Centre at Langorse is approximately 4 miles away with opportunities for horse riding, climbing etc.

Campers may apply for one or two weeks. We strongly encourage people to come for a full week rather than part of a week.

Further information and booking forms have been circulated by AM Clerks. Alternatively, or to be added to our mailing list, please contact *Mikki Pullen*, tel. 01981 580056, email mikkijane@btinternet.com, or *Janet Blann*, tel. 07963 816555, email janet.blann@gmail.com,

or complete and return the slip below to Mikki Pullen, The Glass House, St Weonards, Hereford HR2 8 QH

Name

Address.....

Tel

Email

I am interested in attending Southern Marches and Mid Wales Camp

I am a member/attender of Local Quaker Meeting.

All new applicants must be known to either current campers or their local Quaker Meeting. References may be sought. Help with fees may be available from your Local or Area Meeting: please speak to your overseer in the first instance. It may also be possible to borrow equipment from other campers: please speak to Janet or Mikki.