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'Mercy, Tenderness, and Compassion': A Study into the Inclusion of Acts of Communal and Familial Support within Seventeenth-Century Quaker Records of Sufferings

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by

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Author's Declaration

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Abstract

‘Mercy, Tenderness, and Compassion’: A Study into the Inclusion of Acts of Communal and Familial Support in Seventeenth-Century Quaker Records of Sufferings

Toni Wadman

This thesis explores the inclusion of encounters of communal and familial compassion and support within seventeenth century Quaker records of sufferings. Whilst previous academic works have used these accounts of communal support to highlight the social integration of Friends within their local communities, little focus has been placed upon the purpose or reasoning behind their presence within Quaker suffering records. This thesis, therefore, examines how Friends perceived and understood these encounters as well as the reasoning and motivation behind their inclusion in their accounts of sufferings. To help answer these questions, this project consults the Original Records of Sufferings, handwritten records and letters detailing accounts of sufferings and persecution, along with the spiritual autobiographies and journals of several early Friends. Through the study of these sources, this thesis argues that the recording of communal sympathy served firstly a rhetorical and persuasive purpose, both to validate their positions as martyrs, and as a way for Friends to repackage themselves as peaceful and supported members of their communities, therefore creating a narrative of injustice surrounding their persecution. Secondly, this thesis argues that the recording of these encounters also held an affective and emotive meaning to these Friends, as they navigated communal and familial relationships post conversion to Quakerism. Finally, whilst several academic works have reasoned that through the documenting and collating of accounts of persecution suffering became an integral part of early modern Quaker identity, little consideration has been paid to the recording of encounters of kindness and support. Therefore, this thesis places its focus upon this and concludes that through the memorialising, collating and disseminating of these encounters Friends were attempting to create another facet of Quaker identity that argued against the negative portrayal given by official and polemical tracts, and highlighted their ability to find support and integration within their local communities despite their difference in faith.

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Introduction

Towards the end of his journal, Richard Davies, an early Quaker minister, noted the following:

> And now I think it is worth to take notice of the several Kindnesses, upon the account of our Suffering Friends, I received from this Bishop Lloyd, in his several Dioceses: Whereas we do Record the Hard-Heartedness and Cruelty we found from unmerciful and persecuting Bishops and Clergy, and how many they have made Poor, Widows and Fatherless, I think it is Justice and Equity in us to Record all Mercy, and Tenderness, and Compassion we find from those that are Conscientious and Charitable among them.[1]

Davies, as with many others during this period, experienced a great deal of suffering as a consequence of his faith, and he wrote about this extensively in his journal, *An Account of the Convincement, Exercises, Services and Travels of that Ancient Servant of the Lord*. These early Quakers suffered greatly for their faith. However, they also did much to memorialise and disseminate these sufferings. John Knott writes, 'no religious community of the late seventeenth century suffered more than the Quakers or did more to record and publicise their sufferings', and this is certainly illustrated by the wealth of written and printed information that was produced during this period, describing the persecution faced by Friends.[2] Returning to Davies's journal, however, he draws our attention not only to the suffering he faced but also the 'several kindnesses'.[3] In his passage, quoted above, we are made aware not only of his reference to times of 'Mercy, and Tenderness, and Compassion', but that Davies believed in

[1] Richard Davies, *An Account of the Convincement, Exercises, Services and Travels of that Ancient Servant of the Lord Richard Davies* (London: J. Sowle, 1710), p. 244.
[2] John Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature 1563 – 1694* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 216.
[3] Davies, *An Account of the Convincement,* p. 216.

the importance of recording such encounters along with their sufferings. Whilst Davies may have been unusual in commenting on his desire to document times of kindness and sympathy, he was certainly not alone in doing so.[4] When studying Quaker Records of Sufferings, along with their journals and convincement narratives, the reader is met with numerous accounts that record times of support and tenderness from neighbours, kin, and local officials. It is these particular encounters and their presence within the records of sufferings, and further writings of early modern Friends, that are the focus of this study.

As a dissenting religious sect, who had their beginnings in the turbulent times of the seventeenth century, it comes as no surprise that Friends faced persecution both from those in power and those within their local communities. The beliefs and actions of Friends were subversive not only in religious terms, but also socially. These early Quakers emphasised the authority of the 'Inward Light' of Christ, which they believed resided in all and offered each individual the possibility of salvific potential.[5] Contradicting the Puritan doctrine of Predestination, this was unsurprisingly seen by many as heresy.[6] Taking this further, as Christ dwelt within each person individually, Friends argued that this 'Inward Light' was of a greater authority than the Bible and Scripture, and as a result were seen both as blasphemous and arrogant.[7] The early Quakers' refusal to adopt societal norms was also seen as disruptive and inflammatory; they adopted plain dress, refused to address social superiors with the correct terms, and would not doff their hats in their presence.[8] As a result of the adoption of these subversive religious beliefs and social practices, Friends were heavily persecuted by both the

[4] In my research so far, this is the only account I have come across which comments on the decision to include times of support and kindness alongside records of sufferings.
[5] Hilary Hinds, *George Fox and Early Quaker Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), p. 15; Mary Cochran Grimes, 'Saving Grace Among Puritans and Quakers: A Study of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Conversion Experiences', *Quaker History,* 72 (1983), pp 3-26 (p. 5).
[6] Grimes, 'Saving Grace', p. 5; Pink Dandelion, *The Quakers: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 20.
[7] Hinds, *George Fox,* p. 15; Grimes, 'Saving Grace', p. 5.
[8] Hinds, *George Fox,* p. 1; Susan Wareham Watkins, 'Hat Honour, Self-Identity and Commitment in Early Quakerism', *Quaker History,* 103 (Spring, 2014), pp. 1-16.

authorities and those within their local communities. From the very beginning of the movement, George Fox emphasised the importance of documenting this persecution through written records and accounts.[9] In his 1657 Epistle to 'all Friends every where', concerning the collecting of their sufferings, Fox encouraged all Friends to not only record their sufferings, but to also send them on to London:

> …keep a Copy of your Sufferings in every county, and the Mens Names, that cause you to suffer, for Tithes, or for not Swearing. And all Friends, that suffer for not giving Money for Repairing of Steeple-houses; keep Copies of your Sufferings in every County, and by whom… Let a true and plain Copy of such Suffering be sent up to London.[10]

This act of collecting accounts of persecution became more formalised as the Meeting for Sufferings was established in London in 1676 to collect details of current and retrospective persecution.[11] The collection of these records of sufferings by early Friends has unsurprisingly found great scholarly focus, then, as will be discussed further below.

The inclusion of times of support and kindness from non-Quaker neighbours and kin within these records of sufferings, has found little academic focus, however. This thesis will, therefore, propose to add to this gap in knowledge. Through the study of accounts of communal and familial compassion and support, this thesis will explore what these encounters meant to the Quakers who experienced them, and subsequently how they perceived their place and

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[9] Brooke Sylvia Palmieri, 'Truth and Suffering in the Quaker Archives' in *Archives and Information in the Early Modern World* ed. by Kate Peters, Alexandra Walsham, and Liesbeth Corens (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 239-262 (p. 243); N. H. Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth Century England* (Leicester, Leicester University Press, 1987), p. 82; John Knott, 'Joseph Besse and the Quaker Culture of Suffering' in *The Emergence of Quaker Writing: Dissenting Literature in Seventeenth-Century England* ed. by Thomas N. Corns and David Lowenstein (London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1995), pp. 126-141 (p. 129); Knott, 'Discourses of Martyrdom', pp. 216-217.

[10] George Fox, *A Collection of Many Select and Christian Epistles, Letters and Testimonies, Written on Sundry Occasions, by that Ancient, Eminent, Faithful Friend and Minister of Christ Jesus* (London: T. Sowle, 1698), pp. 108 – 109.

[11] John Miller, 'A Suffering People: English Quakers and their Neighbours c. 1650-1700', *Past and Present*, 188 (Aug., 2008), pp. 71-103 (p. 73).

existence within their local communities. Chapter one of this thesis will explore how Friends understood and utilised reactions of 'sympathy' and 'compassion' from bystanders when witnessing their persecution. It will examine the inclusion of this sympathetic audience in the accounts written by seventeenth century Friends and show how they enabled these Quakers to validate their positions as martyrs suffering for their faith. Following on from this, chapter two will demonstrate how Friends recorded and collected accounts of non-Quaker neighbours and kin stepping in to offer support during times of persecution to create a narrative of injustice surrounding their ill-treatment. The chapter will illustrate how Friends emphasised their 'peaceable' nature, in contrast with that of the 'rude' and 'wicked' individuals and groups who persecuted them, to create a counter narrative that argued against the claims of sedition and discord placed upon them. Both chapters will, therefore, look to understand what these encounters of sympathy, compassion and support meant to Friends on a rhetorical level, and how the recording of them was used to produce a desired effect. Chapter three, however, will uncover how Friends viewed these encounters in a more affective light. It will argue that these accounts of communal and familial support represented personal bonds and relationship ties with their communities, and were significant factors in the self-definition of these early modern Friends. Finally, a theme that will be explored in all three chapters concurrently is the decision by Friends to record, memorialise and circulate these encounters of compassion and support. This thesis will argue that by doing so, Friends were attempting to create and portray another facet of Quaker identity – one which emphasised the possibility for inclusion and belonging within their local communities despite their difference in faith.

Themes of suffering and martyrdom have been prominent areas of study in terms of confessional and sect identity in the early modern world.[12] Alexandra Walsham's 'The

[12] Michael J. Braddick and Joanna Innes, eds., *Suffering and Happiness in England 1550-1850: Narratives and Representations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); Anne Dillon, *The Construction of Martyrdom in The English Catholic Community: 1535-1603* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002); Thomas S. Freeman and

Happiness of Suffering', for example, explores the 'role of affliction' in both collective and individual religious identities in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[13] In her work, Walsham emphasises the critical part that suffering played in forging a Protestant identity, and, with particular reference for this thesis, how this was expressed through life-writing.[14] This theology of affliction was a resource that helped Protestants to comprehend times of 'grief, guilt and illness'; it was a 'vital lens' through which they came to understand the fluctuations of their daily experiences and find meaning in times of pain and suffering.[15] Brad S. Gregory in his comparative study of Christian martyrdom, similarly looks to understand what suffering and the decision to die for one's faith meant to these confessional communities.[16] In *Salvation at Stake*, Gregory discusses the martyrological traditions of groups such as Catholics, Anabaptists, and Protestants, and how these became intertwined in their collective identities.[17] As a heavily persecuted sect, it is unsurprising that much of the scholarly work produced focuses on suffering as the overarching and integral part of Quaker identity.[18] John Knott has provided detailed studies on the significance of suffering and martyrdom for this non-conformist group. As a literary historian, Knott looks to reveal the story of suffering as told by the Quakers through the *Collection of the Sufferings of the People called Quakers*, an edited compilation of accounts of sufferings, created by Joseph Besse and published in 1753.[19] Tasked with the collection and publicising of a vast number of Quaker sufferings, Knott takes a closer

Thomas F. Mayer, *Martyrs and Martyrdom in England, c.1400-1700* (Boydell and Brewer, 2007); John R. Knott, Discourses *of Martyrdom in English Literature 1563-1694* (Cambridge, 1993).

[13] Alexandra Walsham, 'The Happiness of Suffering: Adversity, Providence and Agency in Early Modern England' in *Suffering and Happiness in England 1550-1850: Narratives and Representations* ed. by Michael J. Braddick and Joanna Innes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 45-64 (p. 46).

[14] Walsham, 'The Happiness of Suffering', p. 48.

[15] Walsham, 'The Happiness of Suffering', pp. 54-55.

[16] Brad S. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

[17] Gregory, *Salvation at Stake,* p. 7.

[18] Miller, 'A Suffering People: English Quakers and their Neighbours'; John Seed, 'History and Narrative Identity: Religious Dissent and the Politics of Memory in Eighteenth-Century England', *Journal of British Studies,* 44 (Jan., 2005), pp. 46-63.

[19] Knott, 'Joseph Besse and the Quaker Culture of Suffering', p. 126.

look at Besse's role in this and determines that in his undertaking he created a book of martyrs taking much of its inspiration from John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments.*[20] Like Foxe, the *Collection* illustrated Friends as steadfastly suffering for their faith. Whether it be during the seizure of their goods or being committed to prison, Besse portrayed the Quakers' patience, unwaveringness, and in many cases 'joyful acceptance of suffering'.[21] As Knott writes, 'it is interesting, in itself, for what it reveals about the ways in which Quakers understood and presented the persecution and suffering that contributed so significantly to their self-definition…'.[22] Their existence as martyrs suffering for their faith became an important part of a collective Quaker identity, then. A focus on the literary work of Quaker leaders has often been employed when looking to explore the identity of seventeenth century Friends as martyrs.[23] A further study undertaken by Knott, for example, helps to shed light on the suffering and martyrological presence of early modern Friends. In his work on martyrdom in English literature, 1563-1692, Knott employs this technique by consulting the works of George Fox, as well as John Bunyan and John Milton, among others.[24] This book illustrates how these leaders were engaging in a long-standing tradition of suffering for one's faith, and were significantly influenced by John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments.*[25] Looking in more detail at Quaker sufferings, Knott illustrates the appropriation of Foxe's work by the leaders of the religious sect as a way to justify their resistance to persecution and place themselves at the centre of a martyrological tradition.[26]

Alongside this, the theme of Providentialism, with particular reference to divine judgement against one's enemies, has been shown to be a significant facet of early modern

[20] Knott, 'Joseph Besse and the Quaker Culture of Suffering', p. 126, 129.
[21] Knott, 'Joseph Besse and the Quaker Culture of Suffering', p. 129, 130.
[22] Knott, 'Joseph Besse and the Quaker Culture of Suffering', p. 126
[23] Ann Hughes, 'Early Quakerism: A Historian's Afterword' in *The Emergence of Quaker Writing,* pp. 142-148 (pp. 146-147).
[24] Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature 1563-1694* (Cambridge, 1993).
[25] Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom,* pp. 2-4.
[26] Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom,* p. 223.

religious identity. Alexandra Walsham's *Providence in Early Modern England* argues that Providentialism and the hand of god played a significant role in helping to create a sense of 'collective Protestant consciousness' and confessional 'identity'.[27] Naomi Pullin has taken up this theme of divine judgement within Friends' consciousness in her article 'Providence, Punishment and Identity Formation in the Late-Stuart Quaker Community'.[28] Within her work, Pullin looks to develop the understanding of the role of providence in confessional identity formation through the analysis of examples of providential judgments recorded by Friends.[29] Pullin argues that 'Providentialism served as a specific role in Quakerism's early years and was clearly part of a collective "Quaker mindset".[30] Taking examples from Fox's *Journal,* she illustrates how the recording and circulation of divine judgements against the persecutors of Friends were integral to the development of the movement's identity.[31]

These works have highlighted the significance of suffering, martyrdom, and the perceived divine judgements of one's enemies, in influencing how early modern Quakers viewed their existence and identity. This thesis certainly hopes to add further to this narrative. The studies undertaken by both Knott and Pullin, however, take much of their source information from the records written and produced by the leaders of the sect. In his analysis of Quaker discourse of suffering and martyrdom, Knott looks both at the works of George Fox as well the published volumes of the *Collection of Sufferings* produced by Joseph Besse. Similarly, in her article on providence and identity formation, Pullin writes that stories of divine judgement are most prominent in the published works of early leaders, and the majority of the references within this article are based on Fox's writings or Besse's edited *Collection*.[32] By

[27] Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 5.
[28] Naomi Pullin, 'Providence, Punishment and Identity Formation in the Late-Stuart Quaker Community: c. 1650-1700', *The Seventeenth Century,* 31 (2016), pp. 471-494.
[29] Pullin, 'Providence, Punishment and Identity Formation', p. 471.
[30] Pullin, 'Providence, Punishment and Identity Formation', p. 479.
[31] Pullin, 'Providence, Punishment and Identity Formation', pp. 477-478, p. 485.
[32] Pullin, 'Providence, Punishment and Identity Formation', pp. 477-478.

focusing on the writings of the leaders of the sect, along with that of Besse, both Knott and Pullin illustrate how these themes featured heavily in the identity of the group's leaders, and also in the identity they wanted to portray outwardly in their published works. These studies, however, offer less representation of how seventeenth century grass roots Friends understood and interacted with these aspects. As Quaker historian, Adrian Davies, writes, 'local Quakers had a significant role in the development of the movement and appear not to have been merely the passive bystander often implied in sociological theory.'[33] Nicholas Morgan similarly argues for the importance of studying the 'unknown' Friends, who have been largely overlooked in preference of studying those who held centre stage in London.[34] The experience and actions of these 'ordinary' Friends, therefore need to be considered when studying themes of early modern Quaker self-definition and identity.[35] This thesis will, therefore, look at the records produced by Friends at ground level to uncover how these themes emerged in their everyday experiences within their local communities.

In his PhD thesis on Quaker communities in London, Simon Neil Dixon has highlighted a movement of academic focus away from that of the traditional 'Fox-centred' view, towards the study of ordinary Friends and their relationship with the society in which they lived.[36] This movement towards the study of history from below is certainly well known and discussed. This move, to the focus on the experiences and perspectives of 'ordinary' folk, has provided a deeper look into the realities of religious difference within day-to-day life. Whilst suffering and persecution were certainly a reality for those with non-conformist religious views, we are now aware that this was not the only existence they experienced. Wide-ranging studies such as Alexandra Walsham's *Charitable Hatred* and Benjamin Kaplan's *Divided by Faith* have

[33] Adrian Davies, *The Quakers in English Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 7.
[34] Nicholas Morgan, *Lancashire Quakers and the Establishment 1660-1730* (Halifax; Ryburn Publishing Services, 1993), pp. 23-24.
[35] Jeremy Gregory, 'Review', *Continuity and Change*, 16 (2001), pp. 452-453 (p. 452).
[36] Simon Neil Dixon, 'Quaker Communities in London 1667-c1714' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of London, Royal Holloway, 2005), p. 19, 24.

illustrated how religious difference did not always equate to isolation and persecution, especially within the context of local communities in which one coexisted with neighbours and kin.[37] As Walsham found in her overview of tolerance and intolerance in early modern England, 'familiarity, friendship and regular interaction counterbalanced the fear and anxiety that were prerequisites for sectarian prejudice and bigotry.'[38] Kaplan, too, found that local neighbourhoods had the capacity to foster toleration; neighbourliness, he writes, had the ability to 'counterbalance the centrifugal force of religious difference'.[39] Other edited works such as *The World of Rural Dissenters* and *Catholic Communities in Protestant States* have highlighted how religious non-conformists, and even those labelled as heretics, could find integration within their local communities – the identity of a suffering isolated group was not always inevitable.[40] When looking at Catholics within Protestant communities of London and York in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, William Sheils found that, when left to themselves, the two differing groups ultimately opted to 'get on' and 'get along'.[41] Sheils argues that in this circumstance the best term to describe this arrangement was the 'secular language of neighbourliness', rather than the religious language of toleration.'[42] Similarly, Derek Plumb, Christopher Marsh and Bill Stevenson - in their studies on Lollards, Familists, Baptists and Quakers respectively - have highlighted a 'consistent pattern of relatively harmonious

[37] Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England 1500-1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), pp. 148-149; Benjamin Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (London: Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 251; Nadine Lewycky and Adam Morton, eds., *Getting Along? Religious Identities and Confessional Relations in Early Modern England: Essays in Honour of Professor W. J. Sheils* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2012); Bernard Capp, *The Ties that Bind: Siblings, Family and Society in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).
[38] Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, pp. 148-149.
[39] Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*, pp. 250-251.
[40] Margaret Spufford, ed., *The World of Rural Dissenters 1520-1725* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Benjamin Kaplan, Bob Moore, Henk van Nierop and Judith Pollmann, eds., *Catholic Communities in Protestant States: Britain and the Netherlands c. 1570-1720* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).
[41] William Sheils, 'Getting on and Getting Along in Parish and Town: Catholics and their Neighbours in England', in *Catholic Communities in Protestant States*, pp. 67-83 (p. 80).
[42] Sheils, 'Getting on and Getting Along', pp. 80-81

participation in the world beyond the sect' which resulted in encounters of toleration and support from neighbours and kin.[43]

These studies have been invaluable in changing our understanding of the day-to-day encounters and relationships which early modern individuals experienced in their local communities. Studies undertaken on early modern Friends have uncovered similar findings illustrating that the Quakers were able to find support and toleration from their neighbours and kin despite their religious difference.[44] Adrian Davies's *Quakers in English Society* looks broadly at Friends within society, devoting its last chapter to their integration within their communities.[45] Similarly, Bill Stevenson's chapter in *The World of Rural Dissenters* looks closely at Quaker relationships with their neighbours and kin within the localities of Cambridgeshire and the surrounding areas.[46] Both studies employ the use of local suffering records to illustrate that Friends were not always the isolated and disruptive sect they are perceived to be. On a practical level, Quakers held positions of importance within communities such as parish constable or overseer of the poor, and also employed and were employed by their conformist neighbours.[47] Furthermore, Davies's and Stevenson's studies illuminate that Friends still maintained neighbourly and family relationships despite their difference in faith.[48] By consulting local suffering records, both Davies and Stevenson have uncovered the reality of another existence for Friends, one that runs alongside the already established themes of suffering and martyrdom, and offers themes of kindness, support and toleration. This thesis

[43] Patrick Collinson, 'Critical Conclusion' in *The World of Rural Dissenters,* pp. 391-392; Derek Plumb, 'The Economic and Social Status of Later Lollards' in *The World of Rural Dissenters*, pp. 103-131; Christopher Marsh, 'The Gravestone of Thomas Lawrence Revisited (or the Family of Love and the Local Community in Balsham 1560-1630) in *The World of Rural Dissenters,* pp. 208-234; Bill Stevenson, 'The Social Integration of Post Restoration Dissenters 1660-1725' in *The World of Rural Dissenters,* pp. 360-387.
[44] Miller, 'A Suffering People: English Quakers and their Neighbours', p. 93; Davies, *The Quakers in English Society,* pp. 191-215; Craig Horle, *The Quakers and the English Legal System* (Pennsylvania; University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), pp. 265-266; Nicholas Morgan, *Lancashire Quakers and the Establishment 1660-1730* (Halifax; Ryburn Publishing Services, 1993), p. 91.
[45] Davies, 'The Quakers in Society' in *Quakers in English Society,* p. 191-215.
[46] Stevenson, 'The Social Integration of Post-Restoration Dissenters' in *World of Rural Dissenters*, p. 360-387
[47] Stevenson, 'Social Integration', p. 369, 372; Davies, *Quakers in English Society,* p. 206, 209.
[48] Davies, *Quakers in English Society,* p. 202; Stevenson, 'Social Integration', pp. 372-373.

will add further to this exploration of the experience of seventeenth-century Friends in their local communities, and more widely themes of early modern religious toleration and integration. However, whilst these academic works have focused on the social integration of Friends within their local communities, this has often been looked at through the lens of the one offering support and toleration. As well as a focus on the reasons behind those offering help and compassion to Friends, further work also needs to be undertaken to help illuminate how Quakers perceived and understood these acts of kindness. It is through studying these particular encounters found with the Original Records of Sufferings, and the spiritual journals of Friends, that this thesis hopes to begin to uncover this perception.

Furthermore, whilst this study looks to illustrate how Friends viewed these acts of tolerance and support, it will also look to understand their presence within their accounts of sufferings. Whilst the studies discussed above, by those such as Knot and Pullin, have focused upon the act of Friends recording and circulating accounts of suffering, martyrdom and divine judgement, there similarly needs to be discussion on their decision to also record, collect and circulate the sympathy, compassion and kindness they experienced within their local communities.[49] As Dixon writes in his study of Quaker communities in London, 'Their policy of intransigence in the face of persecution served to foster a self-identity based on sufferings and martyrdom. This was reinforced by their practice of collecting and recording for posterity the sufferings of individual Friends'.[50] If the act of collecting and recording accounts of suffering therefore enabled the creation of a collective Quaker identity - one of a marginalised and isolated sect - how did the presence of accounts of compassion, neighbourliness and acceptance from non-Quakers, fit into this narrative?

[49] Pullin, 'Providence, Punishment and Identity Formation'; Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom*; Knott, 'Joseph Besse and the Quaker Culture of Suffering'.
[50] Dixon, 'Quaker Communities in London', p. 106.

Themes of record-keeping and memorialisation, and how these activities enabled those doing so to create a particular narrative and identity, are therefore central to this thesis. In recent years, the study of early modern archives and record-keeping has found great focus. In her article 'The Social History of the Archive: Record Keeping in Early Modern Europe', Alexandra Walsham offers an introduction into the recent academic works undertaken in this area.[51] In this overview, Walsham highlights a shift towards the scholarly study of the archive as a 'process', rather than the end-product of the archive itself.[52] In their work, historians have looked to study the ethnography of the archives, and to situate them within the political, religious, social and cultural conditions in which they were created.[53] In *Archives and Information in the Early Modern World,* Walsham, along with Liesbeth Corens and Kate Peters, presents and discusses a number of works which continue this discussion.[54] In this volume, the authors study the histories of the archives themselves, focusing on how they were 'structured, arranged and policed', and the influential contexts in which this occurred. As these works have emphasised, the political and social environments in which these records were created and collected must be taken into context when analysing them.

The period on which this thesis finds its focus, the late seventeenth century, was a time in which Friends had begun to change their interaction with those outside the sect. In response to increased persecution after the Restoration, as non-conformists faced harsher legal punishment, Friends scaled back their disruptive behaviour in an attempt to limit the suffering they faced.[55] John Miller has begun to touch on this change in outlook in his article on English Quakers and their neighbours in the late Seventeenth Century. Miller explains how Friends

[51] Alexandra Walsham, 'The Social History of the Archive: Record-keeping in Early Modern Europe', *Past and Present,* 230 (2016), pp. 10-48.
[52] Walsham, 'The Social History of the Archive', p. 17.
[53] Walsham, 'The Social History of the Archive', p. 11, 17.
[54] Liesbeth Corens, Kate Peters and Alexandra Walsham, eds., *Archives and Information in the Early Modern World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).
[55] Miller, 'A Suffering People', pp. 85-86, 103.

shifted from being at the height of the Lamb's War in the 1650s, to that of a more peaceful and integrative group from 1660 onwards.[56] In his article, he illustrates how Friends 'reinvented and repackaged' themselves in their writing, in an attempt to limit persecution.[57] This thesis will not only expand on the work undertaken by Miller, but it will also look to contribute to the wider understanding of record-keeping and collection, and its connection to identity formation.

Acts of record-keeping and memorialisation are significant to this thesis as it looks to explore the decision by early modern Friends to record, collect and circulate accounts of compassion and support from their non-Quaker neighbours and kin. In her study, 'Dislocation and Record-Keeping: The Counter Archives of the Catholic Diaspora', Liesbeth Corens discusses the record-keeping and memorialisation practices of the dispersed and dislocated early modern Catholics in Protestant England.[58] Firstly, Corens establishes how the acts of collection and commemoration allowed Catholics within seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England to negotiate dispersal and create a sense of belonging.[59] These practices allowed a scattered and marginalised group to find a 'common direction and purpose', and allowed for the creation of a united identity despite the distance they faced.[60] Secondly, Corens illustrates how these collections were not only part of the development of an internal identity, but were also a response to the English Protestant archives which had either turned them into the opponent, or written them out entirely.[61] Creating these 'counter archives' allowed these Catholics to protect their memories and reputation, as well as allowing them to construct their narrative as they wished it to be told.[62] As has been discussed above, the leaders of the early Quaker movement saw great significance in record-keeping. For Fox '"Truth" ultimately relied

[56] Miller, 'A Suffering People', p. 103.
[57] Miller, 'A Suffering People', p. 74, 103.
[58] Liesbeth Corens, 'Dislocation and Record-Keeping: The Counter-Archives of the Catholic Diaspora', *Past and Present* (2016), pp. 269-287 (p. 272).
[59] Corens, 'Dislocation and Record-Keeping', p. 272, 273.
[60] Corens, 'Dislocation and Record-Keeping', p. 273.
[61] Corens, 'Dislocation and Record-Keeping', pp. 280-281.
[62] Corens, 'Dislocation and Record-Keeping', p. 273, 280, p. 285.

on testimony' and so there was great importance placed on written records that could be kept and consulted when needed.[63] In her study on truth and suffering in the Quaker archives, Palmieri argues 'In their obsessive collection of records, testimonies, and court documents attesting to persecution, the Quakers seem to be aware that through the sheer weight of evidence, the act of collecting creates its own truth.'[64] This thesis will argue that the recording, collection and collation of encounters of sympathy and support by Friends, were of great significance to the creation of their own narrative and self-definition.

This dissertation has consulted the collection of the Original Records of Sufferings, held at the Library of the Society of Friends in London. This collection contains the original, handwritten letters and accounts of sufferings sent to London by individuals and collective meetings from varying counties across England and its surrounding areas.[65] This thesis has focused upon the first four volumes of the Original Records of Sufferings, with all eight volumes covering a date range of 1655-1766. Many of the accounts within the first four volumes were written in the 1680s, a period of particularly severe suffering.[66] As the focus of this research was upon the encounters of compassion, kindness, and support from non-Quakers, as recorded by Friends, I therefore identified cases within the Original Records of Sufferings which included these encounters and any common themes that emerged. From these sources, there appeared two common themes which formed the basis for the first two chapters in this thesis. Firstly, non-Quakers appear in these sources as compassionate bystanders who express concern and compassion for Friends during times of persecution. These bystanders 'weep' and 'cry out' with pity, utilising martyrological literary devices borrowed from those such as John

[63] Palmieri, 'Truth and Suffering', p. 252.
[64] Palmieri, 'Truth and Suffering', p. 261.
[65] Library of the Society of Friends, 'Quaker Sufferings Records: an "Embarras de Richesse"', *Quaker Strongrooms*, 2012, [Accessed 3rd June 2021] https://quakerstrongrooms.org/2012/06/06/quaker-sufferings-records-an-embarras-de-richesse/.
[66] Davies, *The Quakers in English Society*, p. 169.

Foxe.[67] Secondly, Friends recorded encounters where members of the community, who were not Quakers, stepped in to help limit persecution, most commonly by paying fines but in some cases risking persecution themselves by obstructing constables and officers.

The accounts found within these four volumes can be loosely divided into two different styles. The first of the two are much shorter in their nature with some merely stating the name of the Friend, the reason for their persecution such as 'non-payment of tithes', and the punishment that they faced, most commonly the distrainment of goods. These accounts listed the goods being taken, often detailing their individual value, and typically provided a total value of the items taken. For example, in a collection of Sufferings from the Lincoln Monthly Meeting in 1684, it is recorded that 'The servants of Christopher Rands of South Hykham tythe farmer took from John Hoult of North Hykham, corn and hay valued worth 3 shillings' for the non-payment of tithes.[68] Accounts such as these make up around half of those found within the Original Records of Suffering and, whilst brief, they are at times used to record encounters where a neighbour or member of kin stepped in to offer help. Most often this kindness and support was illustrated in a single sentence – such as a neighbour paying for the goods and returning them to the said Friend, to use a common example. An instance of this can be seen similarly recorded by the Lincoln Monthly Meeting in 1684. For his attendance at a Meeting, 'They fined John Green of Manthorpe 10 shillings for which William Faukner Constable took from him one horse worth above five pounds, but a neighbour seeing the Constable so unreasonable, ran after him, paid the fine & released the horse.'[69] Accounts such as these were therefore likely often recorded and compiled as part of the Monthly Meetings for Sufferings and then sent to the centre of the Society in London, thus finding themselves part of the Original Records of Sufferings.

[67] Knott, 'Joseph Besse and the Quaker Culture of Suffering', p. 132.
[68] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/188.
[69] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/188.

The second category of accounts, however, are much longer and more detailed offering rich and fascinating accounts of the experiences of the Quakers who wrote them. These accounts are made up of letters, often being addressed to Friends in London, as well as those collected in the monthly Meetings for Sufferings as before. In lengthier accounts such as these, there can be found specific tales of kindness and support recorded in greater detail, such as when a jailor risked facing persecution himself to allow a Friend the chance to attend his son's funeral.[70] These accounts provide a deeper insight into their experiences with their conformist neighbours and kin, and, most importantly for this thesis, how they understood and wanted to portray these encounters to others. Richard T. Vann's article 'Friends Sufferings – Collected and Recollected' offers an introduction into a number of the different sources available for this topic, providing an outline of their strengths, weaknesses and overall complexities; this article was influential when choosing my source base for this thesis.[71] Throughout this study, the Original Records of Sufferings have offered captivating accounts, written by many different hands and providing many different experiences. As Vann writes, 'The charm and poignancy of first-hand accounts, with their occasionally fascinating digressions, make the Original Records of Sufferings a resource quite unlike the summaries that are found either in the quarterly meeting books of sufferings or in the large books kept in London.'[72] I have certainly found this to be true.

To better understand the creation of these records, and how they were engaged with by other members of the sect, it is important that contemporary literacy rates are considered. By the end of the Stuart period, David Cressy estimates that around 45% of men and 25% of women were literate.[73] As a result of research already undertaken in this field, however, it is

[70] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Four,* YM/MfS/ORS/4/490.
[71] Richard T. Vann, 'Friends Sufferings – Collected and Recollected', *Quaker History,* 61 (1972), pp. 24-35.
[72] Vann, 'Friends Sufferings', p. 32.
[73] David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 176.

understood that Quakerism fostered higher levels of literacy among its members than that within the rest of English society.[74] In his work on English Quakers, Adrian Davies discusses the literacy rates of late seventeenth century Friends. Using instances of Friends signing their name on certain documents in Essex, such as Affirmations of Loyalty or records of Friends intending to marry, Davies illustrates that both male and female Quakers had a comparatively higher level of literacy than their contemporaries.[75] With many Friends coming from the 'middling ranks' of society, in which literacy was more widespread, this finding is not too surprising.[76] George Fox also urged that those who could read and write passed their skills onto those who could not, to ensure that, not only were accounts of suffering written down, but that they could be shared with future generations.[77] Within the Original Records of Sufferings, themselves, there are a variety of different authors all with varying styles of spelling and handwriting. Some of these records are separate accounts written by individuals with differing levels of writing ability, whilst other accounts come as a collective group of neat transcriptions from individual towns or counties. As a result, this would suggest that a significant number of seventeenth century Friends were able to engage with these records, through both writing and reading.

However, whilst it is shown that both male and female Friends of the seventeenth century enjoyed higher rates of literacy than their non-Quaker contemporaries, it is important to note that female Quakers are less present than their male counterparts within the Original Records of Sufferings. Of the accounts I cite in this thesis, only 2 find their focus to be on that of female Friends specifically.[78] In a small number of other accounts, female Quakers are present as they are found in lists of Friends in prison, or as the wife of the male Friend facing

[74] Davies, *The Quakers in English Society*, p. 115.
[75] Davies, *The Quakers in English Society*, p. 115-122.
[76] Davies, *The Quakers in English Society*, p. 118.
[77] Davies, *The Quakers in English Society*, p. 122.
[78] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two*, YM/MfS/ORS/2/126; LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Three*, YM/MfS/ORS/3/262.

persecution.[79] Unfortunately, as a result, female Friends are less represented within this study and, therefore, further work remains to be done to better understand how female Quakers engaged with these encounters of communal and familial support.

To complement the accounts found within the Original Records of Sufferings, this thesis will also consult a number of the spiritual autobiographies and convincement narratives produced by the early Quakers. Nikki Coffey Tousley describes how spiritual autobiography 'blossomed' in the mid seventeenth century 'as a result of the emphasis on self-examination, personal piety and experience in the English Reformation.'[80] The Quakers were no exception to this, and during this time Friends were 'prolific' in their production of such texts, writing short convincement narratives in the first few decades of the movement before moving onto the production of spiritual journals towards the end of the seventeenth century.[81] Whilst the main purpose of the creation of these spiritual autobiographies was to record the narrative of the individual's convincement and later religious experiences - most commonly the suffering that they endured for their faith - these sources also offer great insight into the relationships they held with their non-Quaker neighbours and relatives.[82] Whilst the vast number of accounts found within the Original Records of Sufferings allow the opportunity to build an overall picture of the encounters Friends had with those outside of the sect, they at times lack detail and therefore only provide small snapshots into the occurrences they record. Throughout their spiritual journals, however, Friends record the same encounters of sympathy, support and kindness from those around them, often describing them in more detail, and therefore providing a greater context in which we can explore such themes.

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[79] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume One,* YM/MfS/ORS/1/113; LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/137; LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/179; LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Three,* YM/MfS/ORS/3/360.

[80] Nikki Coffey Tousely, 'The Experience of Regeneration and Erosion of Certainty in the Theology of Second-Generation Quakers – No Place for Doubt?', *Quaker Studies,* 13 (2008), pp 6-88 (p. 7).

[81] Coffey Tousley, 'The Experience of Regeneration', p. 9.

[82] Bruce Hindmarsh, *The Evangelical Conversion Narrative: Spiritual Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). p. 44.

Whilst many of the Quaker journals often follow similar stages and patterns – 'an increasing dissatisfaction with Orthodox Puritan teaching, a time of ineffectual seeking for true religion amongst various contemporary sects, and then, finally, the experiences of submission to the inward light' – they do offer insights into the different encounters and dynamics with non-Quaker neighbours and kin.[83] Tim Cooper, in his article on Richard Baxter's *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, writes that:

> People who write autobiography are setting out to tell us a story, but it is first of all a story they tell themselves. This is especially true in the Seventeenth Century, when most people attempted to fit their own individual story into what they felt was the greater story of God's providence and agency.[84]

In his study on spiritual autobiography in early modern England, Bruce Hindmarsh argues that the writing of these accounts represented the attempt of the early modern individual to answer the question 'who I am?'.[85] These journals allowed the writer to explore not only their religious existence and identity, but also their place within their defining community.[86] From these narratives the reader can look to understand how Friends defined themselves both in relation to their faith as well as their surrounding societies. Recent works, however, have highlighted the communal and collective nature and purpose of these texts, as well the influence of the social, political and religious landscapes in which they were produced.[87] Rather than just a direct window into the soul of the individual, it must be noted that these spiritual autobiographies were constructed by the writer and the religious environment in which they

[83] Hindmarsh, *Evangelical Conversion Narrative,* p. 45; Howard H. Brinton, *Quaker Journals: Varieties of Religious Experiences Among Friends* (Pennsylvania: Pendle Hill Publications, 1972), pp. 4-5.
[84] Tim Cooper, 'Conversion, Autobiography and Richard Baxter's Reliquiae Baxterianae (1696), *The Seventeenth Century* 29 (2014), pp. 113-129 (p. 121).
[85] Hindmarsh, *Evangelical Conversion Narrative,* p. 10.
[86] Hindmarsh, *Evangelical Conversion Narrative,* p. 10.
[87] Tom Webster, 'Writing to Redundancy: Approaches to Spiritual Journals and Early Modern Spirituality', *The Historical Journal,* 39 (1996), pp. 33-56 (pp. 40-41); Andrew Cambers, 'Reading, the Godly, and Self-Writing in England, circa 1580-1720', *Journal of British Studies,* 46 (Oct., 2007), pp. 796-825 (p. 796, 797); Walsham, 'The Social History of the Archive', pp. 37-38.

resided.[88] These journals offer a rich source, therefore, when attempting to uncover how Friends defined and ultimately wanted to portray their relationships and identity with regards to their non-Quaker kin.

When approaching these sources, it is important that it is understood how they were intended to be used at the time in which they were produced. As discussed above, from the very beginnings of the movement, Fox called for Friends to record their sufferings and send them on to the central authority in London. As can be seen from the Original Records of Sufferings this call was met by those across England and beyond with accounts being received from areas such as Cornwall and the Isle of Man.[89] Of the accounts which formed the basis for my analysis in this study, approximately one third came from London and the surrounding areas such as Buckinghamshire and Middlesex. Given that the central authority for Friends was based in London, it is unsurprising that these accounts make up a large majority due to the proximity of these localities.[90] Following this, however, the areas that reported the highest number of cases of support from their non-Quaker neighbours and kin were Huntingdon, Norfolk, Lincoln, Leicestershire, and Gloucester, offering a wide range of accounts from across England. The movement of these accounts of sufferings did not stop once reaching London, however. These records were not just intended to be collected, but also publicised.[91] As Brooke Sylvia Palmieri summarises in her chapter 'Truth and Suffering in the Quaker Archives':

> Quaker bureaucracy worked in two directions, requesting information and correspondence from Quakers far and wide, which was then collected, copied, summarised and transmitted from a central authority in London back out into the world.[92]

[88] Cambers, 'Reading, the Godly, and Self-Writing', p. 815; Webster, 'Writing to Redundancy', pp. 40-41.
[89] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/218; LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/219; LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/126.
[90] Palmieri, 'Truth and Suffering', p. 252.
[91] Knott, 'Joseph Besse', p. 129; Palmieri, 'Truth and Suffering', p. 243; Vann, 'Friends Sufferings', p. 24.
[92] Palmieri, 'Truth and Suffering', p. 253.

This flow of information can be seen to have been occurring with the accounts found within the Original Records of Sufferings. These letters and documents were being transcribed by recording clerks and entered into the Great Books of Sufferings from an early date.[93] As Richard Vann shows, nearly all of the accounts found within the Original Records are signed 'Reg^{d} R. R', referencing Richard Richardson who assumed the role of recording clerk in London from 1681 - 1689, with some of the sources being noted with 'entered', 'supposed entered' and 'not to be entered'.[94]

By using the Original Records of Suffering, then, we are able to access these accounts written by Friends at a specific moment. The sources allow the reader to see the records of a large, dispersed community - emerging from individuals and counties as they make their way into the archive in London, before they are edited during transcription by the recording clerks. As Vann illustrated in his comparison of the accounts within the Original Records of Sufferings and the Great Books of Sufferings – the forty four volumes of the transcriptions of the original records sent to London – entry into the Great Books came at a price.[95] In the act of transcription, edits were naturally made, and as Vann concluded, 'entry in this register was often by abstracting rather severely from the original document.'[96] Therefore, by using the documents from the collection of the Original Records of Sufferings, rather than the later transcribed and published editions, we are given access to the literary thoughts and themes that Friends were portraying not only to the central authority in London, but also to other Quakers and, in the instance of publication, back out to the World.

[93] Vann, 'Friends Sufferings', p 32.
[94] Vann, 'Friends Sufferings', p. 32; Library of the Society of Friends, 'A 17th Century Recording Clerk's Library: Richard Richardson's Books', *Quaker Strongrooms*, 2017 [accessed 3rd June 2021], https://quakerstrongrooms.org/2017/04/28/a-17th-century-recording-clerks-library-richard-richardsons-books/
[95] Vann, 'Friends Sufferings', p. 32.
[96] Vann, 'Friends Sufferings', p. 32.

Chapter One

'Peoples Harts were Much Tendered and Broken': The Use of the Compassionate Bystander in Seventeenth Century Quaker Records of Sufferings

Existing during a period of such severe persecution of non-conformist worship, 1660-1688, early Friends suffered heavily for their faith and therefore unsurprisingly identified greatly with the long history of Christian martyrs.[97] These Friends, from across the country and beyond, were encouraged to record the persecution they endured, ultimately leading to the creation of the vast collection of the accounts of sufferings.[98] From an early date, George Fox stressed the importance of keeping written records, requesting that copies of all sufferings be sent to London.[99] With persecution being fundamental to their experience and existence, the recording of these sufferings provided a way for Quakers to witness, and therefore be martyrs to, their faith.[100] Historians such as Alexandra Walsham and Brad S. Gregory have written on the martyrological nature of Protestant literature, stressing the importance of John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* in influencing the writings of wider dissenting sects within the seventeenth-century, as well as those of the Quakers.[101] Whilst Friends did not face the same threat of execution as the Marian martyrs, for example, they utilised the same language and narrative techniques to establish themselves as virtuous men and women suffering for their faith.[102]

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[97] John Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature 1563 – 1694* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 4.
[98] Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom,* p. 217; N. H. Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-Century England* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1987), p. 82.
[99] Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity,* p. 82; Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom,* p, 217.
[100] Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom,* p. 5.
[101] Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England 1500-1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), p. 28, 172; Brad S. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (London: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 195; Elizabeth Eveden and Thomas S. Freeman, *Religion and the Book in Early Modern England: The Making of John Foxes 'Book of Martyrs'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 134; Brooke Sylvia Palmieri, 'Truth and Suffering in the Quaker Archives' in *Archives and Information in the Early Modern World* ed. by Kate Peters, Alexandra Walsham, and Liesbeth Corens (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 239-262 (p. 255).
[102] John Knott, 'Joseph Besse and the Quaker Culture of Suffering' in *The Emergence of Quaker Writing: Dissenting Literature in Seventeenth-Century England* ed. by Thomas N. Corns and David Lowenstein (London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1995), pp. 126-141 (p. 132).

These martyrological accounts can be found within the records of sufferings of early Quakers, and offer a different insight into one of the number of ways in which Friends understood and utilised the support and compassion they experienced from their neighbours and kin, and are therefore of great importance to this study. Within these accounts, Friends recorded the sympathy, pity and shock presented by their conformist contemporaries when witnessing their persecution. And so, whilst this chapter will touch upon the wider martyrological aspects found within the Original Records of Suffering, its focus will primarily be upon the inclusion of the 'sympathetic' audience found within these accounts.

This inclusion of the sympathetic bystander in Quaker accounts of sufferings has found limited focus in scholarly research. John Knott, in his research on early modern Quaker martyrdom, offers a small comment on the inclusion of compassionate neighbours and kin in the martyrologies of Friends – seeing the sympathy of the citizen or the official as a small victory of the 'weak' – though they are largely passed over in his study.[103] A study by Althea Stewart does place its focus on these sympathetic audiences, however. Stewart's article, 'Good Quaker Women, Tearful Sentimental Spectators, Readers and Auditors', though based predominantly on the writings of four female Friends, examines the use of the 'sentimental spectator' – a tearful and compassionate bystander demonstrating pity at the suffering of these Friends.[104] As Stewart argues, the inclusion of this figure in their narratives, evident both as individual spectators and larger audiences, helped to establish and emphasise the virtuousness of both the Friends who were being punished, as well as the wider Quaker cause.[105] However, based on the writings of four female Friends, Stewart's article focuses largely on this gendered dimension, as she herself indicates.[106] This chapter will, therefore, look at this 'sentimental

[103] Knott, 'Joseph Besse and the Quaker Culture of Suffering', p. 136.
[104] Althea Stewart, 'Good Quaker Women, Tearful Sentimental Spectators, Readers and Auditors', *Prose Studies,* 29: 1 (2007), pp. 73-85.
[105] Stewart, 'Good Quaker Women', p. 75, 76, 83.
[106] Stewart, 'Good Quaker Women', p. 75.

spectator' as presented within seventeenth-century Quaker writings. As will be shown, it is through the inclusion of the sympathy and concern of these 'weeping' and 'tearful' spectators, that Friends attempted to establish and emphasise the probity and righteousness of their cause and their place within the historical tradition of martyrdom. Furthermore, it is through the recording, collecting, and collating of these accounts that Quakers, often facing great persecution and isolation, created the existence of a collective and united identity.

I

Found present within the Original Records of Sufferings are times where Quakers employed the theme of the sorely abused Friend and the weeping and compassionate audience. An example of this can be seen with Ellinor Stockdale and Robert Callow, who offered a detailed account of several of their sufferings occurring on the Isle of Man in 1682, and in which sympathetic spectators were present.[107] Ellinor and Robert both faced great persecution for their faith – in their accounts we read of the beating and abuse that Ellinor faced, being placed in the stocks and remaining prisoner in the dungeon for eight days, after 'being moved of the Lord' to warn her conformist neighbours of their evil doings.[108] When punished for their marriage – 'for not being marryed by a preist' - both Robert and Ellinor were sent to prison.[109] The account records how, when ordered later to be banished from the Island, Ellinor 'was by force pulled out of her husband's armes… with great violence, to the boat'. And, as a result of seeing this, 'persons cryed out with pitie to see her soe abused'. The account went on to detail her journey once upon the ship:

> The owner of the vessel would not suffer them to put her on his board, but the persecuting partie putting her on board, and the other partie thrusting her off she was

[107] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/126.
[108] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/126.
[109] Kristina Polder, *Matrimony in the True Church: The Seventeenth-Century Quaker Marriage and Approbation Discipline* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2015), pp. 38-42.

> sore abused; and at last shee was left on board but the winde came contrary and bought them backe.[110]

When attempting to set sail the following day, the boat with 'the winde comeing contrary was set ashore again.'[111] Finally, the account ends, two years later in 1684, with Ellinor being pregnant and petitioning for her liberty but finding no relief – though when Governor Robert Haywood later learnt of her condition, he ordered for her to be sent home to her husband.[112]

The compassionate and weeping audience is present here, illustrated in the audience who cry out and show pity at Ellinor being taken from her husband's arms. In her research on four female Quakers, Stewart coins the term of 'sentimental spectator', arguing that these women employed the use of sentimental and compassionate individuals and audiences both described in the text, but also recruited as readers.[113] In her study, Stewart focuses specifically upon female Friends, and the attempts of these women to define themselves as 'good Quaker women' in this patriarchal period; It was the figure of the sentimental spectator that helped them to do this:

> In such texts, sentimental spectators and readers were used to give structure and moral meaning to events which, because they concerned ordinary women, could be conceived of as essentially trivial unless they could be shown to be part of the wider picture of God's work on earth.[114]

These written accounts of the sufferings of Quakers used the trope of the crowd or the individual being moved by the abused moral and virtuous Friend.[115] By including these 'sentimental spectators' in their writings - the audience of neighbours and kin - the Friends were reinforcing their status as martyrs. These women, Stewarts argues, wanted to illustrate

[110] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/126.
[111] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/126.
[112] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/126.
[113] Stewart, 'Good Quaker Women', p. 75.
[114] Stewart, 'Good Quaker Women', p. 83.
[115] Stewart, 'Good Quaker Women', p. 83.

that, rather than criminals disobeying the laws of their country, their actions were virtuous and as a result of their obedience to God and their adherence to his directions.[116] This trope can be seen to apply to the account of Ellinor's sufferings found within the Original Records of Sufferings. The record emphasised the dreadful situations and abuse that she had found herself facing – from her beatings and imprisonment in the dungeon, to her 'forceful' and 'violent' separation from her husband. Those witnessing the separation were shown to feel compassion for the Friends, crying out with pity to 'see her soe abused'.[117] Through the illustration of the pity and cries of these bystanders, we are led to think of the innocence and virtuousness of Ellinor's actions. Through this encounter, and its recording, Ellinor became a martyr suffering for the truth faith, rather than a criminal, disobeying the laws of her country. Further confirming her position of virtue and the probity of her cause, there appears to perhaps be further proof of divine intervention present within the narrative of Ellinor's sufferings. With the wind coming 'contrary' on several occasions, preventing her being banished from the island, the account alludes to divine providence intervening during her time of persecution. As Alexandra Walsham writes, events such as these were a compelling testimony to the guidance of the Lord; 'His finger could be discerned behind every inexplicable occurrence; He regularly stepped in to discipline sinners and bestow blessings upon the righteous and good'.[118] Such a suggestion again furthered the 'rightness' of Ellinor's actions and cause, then, as she received help and strength from the 'Hand of God'.[119] These two themes, divine providence and the sympathy of the audience, interlink and work together to emphasise the righteousness of Ellinor's actions and cause.

This narrative technique is not solely employed by female Friends, however. As the accounts found within the Original Records of Sufferings illustrate, this dynamic was employed

[116] Stewart, 'Good Quaker Women', p. 75.
[117] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/126.
[118] Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 2.
[119] Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom,* p. 222; Knott, 'Joseph Besse', p. 132.

by both genders of early Friends as they sought to use their sufferings to confirm their religious probity. An account of the persecution and suffering of two brothers in Cirencester, in 1682, similarly used the language of martyrdom along with the 'sentimental spectator' showing compassion and pity.[120] The two brothers were fined and had goods taken from them for the act of speaking at a meeting, as well as holding a meeting at their house. The account records how the neighbours attempted to resist the distrainment of the Friends' goods by obstructing entrance into their property, as did the officers who were called to break open their door. The account the goes on to describe the weeping and pity present by those witnessing the event:

> Peoples harts were much tendered and broken and many weeping eyes and their cheerfulness in the suffering did much afect the harts of the people to see them soe abused to bee sent to prison.[121]

The description of the audience, with broken hearts and weeping eyes, makes use of a similar strand of martyrological language found throughout Foxe's *Acts and Monuments.* In the case of John Hooper, for example, a well-known Protestant reformer burned in Gloucester in 1555, Foxe recorded that at the time of his execution 'in every corner there was nothing to be seen but weeping and sorrowful people.'[122] A note in the margin of the text reads 'the weeping of the people at Master Hooper's burning' whilst the accompanying woodcut illustrates bystanders looking sorrowful with one man appearing to wipe a tear from his face.[123] Whilst the brothers' persecution – the distrainment of their goods, having had fines laid upon them, and their subsequent stay in prison – cannot be compared with the much more severe punishment of the burning of Hooper, the same imagery of a compassionate and pitying crowd

[120] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/131.
[121] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/131.
[122] John Foxe, 'The Life and Martyrdom of Master John Hooper, Bishop of Worcester and Gloucester, burnt for the defence of the Gospel at Gloucester. Anno 1555. February 9.' in *Foxe's Book of Martyrs: Select Narratives* ed. by John N. King (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 53-71 (p. 69); Stewart, 'Good Quaker Women', p. 76.
[123] John Day, 'The Burning of John Hooper, the Bishop of Gloucester', 1555, Woodcut in *Foxe's Book of Martyrs: Select Narratives* ed. by John N. King (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 71.

appears. Althea Stewart writes, 'Weeping is shown as a sign of virtue because tears are shed out of pure compassion for an innocent victim.'[124] The response of pity and tears described in these particular accounts of sufferings highlighted the virtue and morality of those being punished as it suggested their innocence and, therefore, the wrongness of their conviction. That the brothers, and Ellinor, received such a response confirmed the righteousness of their actions, and the wider Quaker movement. And by recording such pity and tears from their onlookers, their readers would hopefully also be convinced of such.

II

Found within the above account, and within several other records within the Original Records of Sufferings, is that of another martyrological tradition - the act of suffering passively. By embracing their persecution peacefully, and choosing to record their doing so, Friends were again consciously placing themselves within a larger narrative of martyrdom.[125] As Knott writes in his study on George Fox and the suffering of Friends, 'by asserting their joy in suffering, Quakers, like many of Foxe's martyrs demonstrated their confidence that they suffered by the "Hand of God" and that this same hand would sustain them'.[126] By embracing suffering, Friends were illustrating their belief in, and identifying with, the divine support which strengthened them.[127] In the account of the martyrdom of John Rogers, for example, John Foxe recorded that during his imprisonment 'he was merry, and earnest in all he went about'.[128] Whilst, when taken to be burnt at the stake, Rogers showed 'most constant patience… not only content patiently to suffer and bear all such bitterness and cruelty as has been showed

[124] Stewart, 'Good Quaker Women', p. 76.
[125] Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom,* p. 221; Knott, 'Joseph Besse', p. 129.
[126] Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom,* p. 222; Knott, 'Joseph Besse', p. 132.
[127] Stewart, 'Good Quaker Women', p. 74; John Marshall, 'Seventeenth-Century Quakers, Emotions and Egalitarianism' in *Feeling Exclusion: Religious Conflict, Exile & Emotions in Early Modern Europe* ed., by Giovanni Tarantino and Charles Zika (London: Routledge, 2019), pp. 146-164 (p. 151).
[128] John Foxe, 'The Story, Life, and Martyrdom of Master John Rogers', in *Foxe's Book of Martyrs: Select Narratives* ed. by John N. King (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 35-41 (p. 37).

him, but also most gladly to resign up his life, and to give his flesh to the consuming testimony of the same.'[129] The same presentation of strength and patience in suffering is similarly found throughout the Original Records of Sufferings – most commonly within the accounts written during times in prison. With Friends not facing the same public executions that the Marian martyrs did, it was during these imprisonments in which they faced their greatest trials.[130] Like Foxe's martyrs suffering patiently as they waited to be burned upon the stake, early Quaker accounts of imprisonment were used to illustrate their perseverance and strength despite the testing conditions which they faced.

Several accounts found within the Original Records of sufferings illustrated Friends facing persecution with great patience and good nature. An account detailing the imprisonment of Friends in Norwich in 1682, for example, stressed the terrible conditions in which they found themselves, faced with a 'churlish' jailer they were kept close prisoners with not enough space to sleep.[131] A letter written by Henry Lamb from Norwich jail in December of the same year also highlighted the terrible conditions in which they were kept, with overcrowding and no liberty to go outside.[132] The account, addressed to George Whitehead in London, went on to conclude, however:

> But our trust is in the Lord alone for we have none other helper besides him, and we know he is able to deliver us, blessed be Lord we are generally well in health… we remaine thy friends and Brethren in tribulation, and patience of the Lamb which shall have the victory.[133]

Similarly, Friend John Fiddeman wrote on December 25th of 1682 that, despite the abuse he and other Friends had faced in jail, they:

[129] Foxe, 'Martyrdom of Master John Rogers', p. 37.
[130] Knott, 'Joseph Besse', p. 132.
[131] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume One,* YM/MfS/ORS/1/118.
[132] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume One,* YM/MfS/ORS/1/119.
[133] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume One,* YM/MfS/ORS/1/119.

> Are all very well through mercy and the presence of the Lord is amongst us, which make our present trouble but light unto us, and we may truly say God hath strengthened our faith, and he is arming us with patience.[134]

In a letter from Derby jail in 1681, John Gratton also recorded how he is 'very well satisfyed' with his condition and 'truly content'.[135] By emphasising their strength and patience, despite the terrible circumstances in which they found themselves, these Friends were identifying with the suffering faced by Christ himself, and thus establishing their existence as martyrs. By illustrating the patience and strength they had found to withstand these sufferings, they were emphasising divine intervention and support of the Lord and thus the probity of both their own, and the wider Quaker, cause. In a letter dated September 1682, Friends wrote 'as our Sufferings do abound, our consolation doth much more Abound.'[136] This use of a biblical reference (II Corinthians 1.5), again cemented the righteousness of their cause. By emphasising their endurance and stoicism, then, these accounts were endorsing their virtue and the existence of divine support.[137]

The account of the two brothers of Cirencester, discussed above, also follows a similar pattern both to those mentioned above, and the wider martyrological traditions found in works such as Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*.[138] The inner peace and patience illustrated by these Friends, allowed them to both identify with their saviour and emphasise their existence within a long tradition of martyrs. The account stressed the cheerfulness and strength with which these two Friends faced their persecution. It contrasted the 'cruelness' and 'wickedness' of the Justice of Peace with the patience and joy of the brothers; the rage of the officials in this case is illustrated with their 'raving', 'swearing' and 'damning'. As Knott determines, 'the more

[134] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume One,* YM/MfS/ORS/1/113.
[135] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Four,* YM/MfS/ORS/4/490.
[136] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume One,* YM/MfS/ORS/1/121.
[137] Stewart, 'Good Quaker Women', p. 81.
[138] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/131.

hostile the local officials and the more abusive the jailors, the more extraordinary the capacity of Quakers to endure suffering patiently would seem'.[139] The contrast between the 'patient' and 'cheerful' brothers with that of the 'swearing' and 'raving' officials, therefore, emphasised the innocence and righteousness of these two Friends, as well as suggesting of the immorality of their persecutors.[140] In this particular case, however, the figure of the 'sentimental spectator' re-emerged, this time in reaction to the joy and cheerfulness that the brothers exhibited. The account records:

> They bore it all cheerefully and they are cherefull in prison and I do believe that there will be greate servais for the truth by it… so cherefull in it that the people were much taken, sum prayed for them and sum cursed thier persecuters and sum stood and admiered.[141]

As a result of the joy, cheerfulness and constancy shown by the suffering Friends, the compassionate spectator is recorded as showing admiration towards both the brothers facing persecution and the wider Quaker faith. The statement that such joy and commitment exhibited by these Quakers - despite their suffering - was 'of greate servais for the truth' suggested of imminent conversions from those watching the encounter. It is difficult to determine whether the compassion shown here suggests of admiration and an intention and desire to convert to the Quaker faith, though Alexandra Walsham does argue that a number who witnessed events such as these would have been moved to take up the religion of those who suffered passively for their faith.[142] However, regardless of this, Friends employed this use of the admiring bystander - in this case their neighbours who witnessed their persecution and detainment – to illustrate the integrity of their actions as well as the wider Quaker movement. Similarly, the suggested influence on the conversion of these bystanders would again imply of the

[139] Knott, 'Joseph Besse and the Quaker Culture of Suffering', p. 132.
[140] Marshall, 'Seventeenth-Century Quaker Emotions', p. 152.
[141] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/131.
[142] Walsham, *Charitable Hatred,* p. 170.

righteousness of their faith. Whilst, finally, the crowds 'cursing' of the Friends persecutors once more highlighted the morality of their actions, as it placed it in contrast with an implied injustice and immorality on the part of the persecutors.

III

These accounts have illustrated a number of ways in which Friends understood and utilised the encounters of compassion and sympathy they received from their neighbours and kin during their suffering. The presence of the 'sentimental spectator' enabled these Friends to demonstrate and validate their positions as martyrs suffering for the true faith. The weeping and tearful onlooker added to the imagery of an audience moved by the immoral persecution of the moral and virtuous Quaker. In some cases, the 'sentimental spectator' is recorded as not only showing compassion but also admiration and thoughts of conversion to the Quaker faith as a result. By recording such belief and action by the individual spectator or audience, Friends were able to convey a rightness to their cause. Through experiencing such pity and compassion from these 'sentimental spectators', these Friends cemented their own understanding of their positions as true martyrs. Subsequently, it is by recording and circulating these experiences, that Friends began to contribute to the creation of the wider narrative of Quaker martyrdom, as seen within the Original Records of Sufferings and beyond.

These accounts held a larger purpose than just existing as justification for those who penned them, then. The act of recording the sufferings themselves, and the accounts of martyrdom in this case, served a larger purpose. As Brooke Sylvia Palmieri writes:

> The totality of Friends' records, correspondences, and printed works functioned as a body of evidence to support a perception of historical continuity between Foxe's brutal depictions of the Marian Martyrs and Quaker treatment under Charles II. [143]

[143] Palmieri, 'Truth and Suffering in the Quaker Archives', p. 243.

Through the recording of these accounts, these early Friends were creating their own narrative that reinforced their existence as martyrs suffering heroically for the true faith.[144] Where others labelled them as disruptive, and at times heretical, the Quakers writing these accounts were fighting against this portrayal. Through the recording, collecting and circulating of these accounts, and the inclusion of the compassionate bystander, Friends were arguing for the truth in their cause. Furthermore, the process of gathering and collating of these records was significant in connecting the dispersed and marginalised community of Quakers, as Liesbeth Corens illustrates in her own research on the importance of collection and commemoration in uniting isolated Catholics in Protestant England.[145] By recording and gathering these accounts, Friends were creating and maintaining a collective and unified purpose despite the distance and troubles they faced. N. H. Keeble argues that 'it was by writing that non-conformists frustrated the dissevering intention of the Clarendon Code. By their letters they maintained a "sense of community" and fellowship despite being forcibly separated'.[146] Letters sent to and from prison, such as those discussed in this chapter, allowed for support and connection during difficult times and enforced isolation, and allowed these Friends to maintain their purpose and strength. Through the maintaining of this regular contact, these Friends were able to create a network of support and a sense of a unity and belonging despite the distance they faced.[147] This practice of record-keeping and circulation allowed isolated and suffering Friends to negotiate dispersal and create a sense of belonging with the wider Quaker community.[148]

This discussion of the tearful of compassionate bystander has offered insight into how early Friends understood and utilised positive encounters with those outside of the Quaker

[144] Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom,* p. 218.
[145] Liesbeth Corens, 'Dislocation and Record-Keeping: The Counter-Archives of the Catholic Diaspora', *Past and Present* (2016), pp. 269-287 (p. 272).
[146] Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity,* p. 78.
[147] Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity,* p. 81.
[148] Corens, 'Dislocation and Record-Keeping', p. 272, 273, 274, 280; Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity,* p. 82.

faith. The use of neighbours and kin as 'sympathetic spectators' is only one of the ways in which we encounter support and kindness from non-Quakers within these accounts, though. As spectators, these individuals are shown to offer compassion from the side-lines. However, more commonly than just existing as a witness offering pity and compassion from the outside, neighbours and kin are often recorded intervening to limit persecution and offer support and protection to suffering Friends. It is these particular accounts, and the meaning, understanding, and purpose which Friends attached to them, that the following chapter will look to explore.

Chapter Two

'Of Peaceable and Quiet Behaviour': The Use of Accounts of Communal Support in the Rhetorical Construction of a Peaceful and Moderate Sect

Early Friends were well-known for their disruptive behaviours - going naked through the streets, chastising their conformist contemporaries, and heckling ministers, to name but a few. Seen to be challenging all symbols of early modern society, it is unsurprising that the Society of Friends were labelled as a disruptive and disorderly group in social, political, and religious terms.[149] As Adrian Davies writes, 'Quakers were accused of fracturing the bonds of love and charity which held together local society because they railed savagely at ministers and spurned established codes of civility'.[150] Their refusal to swear oaths or pay tithes, for example, important community based rituals in seventeenth century England, were seen as a direct flaunting of not only social but legal duties too.[151] Seventeenth century Quakerism was, after all, not a movement wholly isolated from the communities in which it began. Conversions to the faith often took place within the localities in which Friends had always resided, and so they continued to share the same ancestry, space, and customs with their conformist neighbours even after their change in religious belief.[152] Early Modern contemporaries and their dissenting neighbours and kin navigated this religious difference daily, and as the Sufferings Records themselves attest to, this at times caused damage to the ideal of communal harmony. Present throughout the Records of Sufferings, spiritual journals and autobiographies, however, are times when those outside of the Quaker faith stepped in to offer help and support to suffering

[149] Richard L. Greaves, 'Seditious Sectaries or "Sober and Useful Inhabitants"? Changing Conceptions of the Quakers in Early Modern Britain', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies,* 33 (Spring, 2001), pp. 24-50 (p. 31); Craig Horle, *The Quakers and the English Legal System* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia University Press, 1988), p. 13; Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England 1500-1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), p. 164.
[150] Adrian Davies, *The Quakers in English Society: 1655-1725* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), p. 203.
[151] Davies, *Quakers in English Society,* p. 203.
[152] Benjamin Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (London: Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 250.

Friends. Historians, such as Adrian Davies and Bill Stevenson, have already used such accounts to highlight that the introduction of Quakerism into a community did not necessarily equate to discord and disruption.[153] Using accounts found within sufferings records and spiritual journals, Davies and Stevenson referenced acts of kindness and support offered by conformist contemporaries. Recorded within the suffering accounts were times when conformist parishioners gave their support to Friends during the distrainment of their goods as punishment for their faith, times where they attended their weddings and funerals, as well as examples of Friends holding positions of importance within their local communities.[154] These accounts certainly worked to create an image of Quakers maintaining neighbourly and community relations despite their difference in faith.

The purpose or place of these accounts of kindness and interaction alongside, and within, Records of Sufferings have found much less focus, however. As with the first, then, this chapter will offer another explanation for the inclusion of communal support and kindness found within the accounts of sufferings written, collected and circulated by Friends. This chapter will illustrate that through the inclusion of these times of support and kindness, Friends were attempting to create a counter narrative that argued against claims of their disruptive and seditious nature. It has been established by Ben Pink Dandelion and John Miller that a change in the outlook of the Society of Friends occurred after the Restoration which led to the limiting of certain disruptive behaviours.[155] Dandelion argues that 'as the sense of the Second Coming receded, living in the meantime became the ongoing reality and surviving persecution the immediate goal'.[156] Miller similarly writes that, 'their aggressive, disrespectful attitude towards

[153] Davies, *The Quakers in English Society: 1655-1725;* Bill Stevenson, 'The Social Integration of Post-Restoration Dissenters: 1660-1725' in *The World of Rural Dissenters: 1520-1725* ed. by Margaret Spufford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 360-387.
[154] Stevenson, 'Social Integration', p. 369, 376, 384, 385; Davies, *Quakers in English Society,* pp. 191-216.
[155] Ben Pink Dandelion, *The Quakers: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 90; John Miller, '"A Suffering People": English Quakers and their Neighbours c. 1650 – c.1700', *Past and Present,* 188 (Aug., 2005), pp. 71-103 (p. 71, 91, 92); Davies, *Quakers in English Society,* p. 210.
[156] Dandelion, *The Quakers*, p. 90.

authority and their neighbours had left them exposed and vulnerable, following the collapse of army rule and the return of the monarchy. Such changed circumstances forced their leaders to rethink their position.'[157] And so, came a 'pragmatic realism' that led Fox and others to scale back the Lamb's War and look to persuade the new regime of their 'peaceable' nature.[158] Convincing both the government and their fellow citizens of their peaceful and harmless existence appeared to become a crucial task to limit persecution and ensure survival. This chapter will illustrate that through the recording and gathering of accounts where neighbours and kin stepped in to limit or prevent persecution, Friends were creating a feeling of injustice by emphasising that their punishment was not supported or agreed with. This theme of injustice was an important tool when arguing for toleration both from their communities and the authorities.

This change in outlook can be seen throughout the Original Records of Sufferings, and spiritual journals and autobiographies of Friends. Whilst early Quakers initially presented themselves as 'heroic outsiders', fighting the Lamb's War, this stance changed after the Restoration, as can be seen throughout the records consulted in this chapter.[159] In these accounts, Friends emphasised their peaceable nature in contrast to the disruptive and immoral actions of their persecutors. Non-Quaker neighbours and kin are often recorded offering help to 'peaceable' Friends who are facing persecution from 'rude' and 'wicked' individuals. In an account of sufferings from November 1685, for example, this use of language can be seen. It is recorded that after being kept out of their meeting house by Parish Officers, Friends assembled in a 'peaceable manner' in the street.[160] However a 'wicked' and 'notorious' informer, after seeing these Quakers gathered in the street, did 'maliciously' inform the

[157] Miller, 'A Suffering People', p. 85.
[158] Miller, 'A Suffering People', p. 87, 90, 92.
[159] Miller, 'A Suffering People', p. 74.
[160] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/133.

magistrates of their doing so.[161] Miller touches upon this theme of language and self-fashioning, in regard to communal integration and good neighbourly conduct, in his article on Quakers and their neighbours in seventeenth-century England. He writes, 'after 1660, the records of sufferings give a very different picture: that persecution was the work of self-interested priests, officials and informers, and that the Quakers' sufferings distressed their fellow-citizens and neighbours, who did what they could to mitigate them'.[162] This topic of narrative construction only finds a brief focus in Miller's article, however, and so there remains more work to be undertaken in this area. This chapter will, therefore, explore this self-fashioning further and will illustrate how Friends attempted to create an alternative narrative and counter archive that reasoned against claims of disruption and sedition, and instead emphasised the possibility of their peaceful existence within society, which called for toleration as a result.

I

By far the most common type of kindness that Friends recorded in the Original Records of Sufferings is that of their neighbours and kin offering support during the attempted distrainment of goods. In these accounts, non-Quakers were documented either preventing the distrainment from happening or purchasing the goods themselves in order to either return the items to their owner or to ensure they were sold fairly. In these accounts, Friends often recorded the worries of their contemporaries that items taken from these Quakers would be deliberately undervalued and undersold. Throughout accounts of sufferings there was often woven a sense of injustice with regards both to the laws themselves, or the ways in which they were applied.[163] This same narrative can be seen within the Original Records of Sufferings and spiritual journals

[161] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/133.
[162] Miller, 'A Suffering People', p. 74, 103.
[163] Miller, 'A Suffering People', p. 74.

of Friends consulted during this study. By including accounts where conformist neighbours and kin stepped in to prevent any 'underhanded' persecution of Friends in their community, it reaffirmed and emphasised this theme of injustice as it illustrated that others outside of the Society believed the punishment to be wrong. An account found with the Original Records of Sufferings, for example, recorded how John Morton of Amersham was arrested for 'conscientiously refusing to pay tithes' in 1687. When he subsequently had his goods taken from him in payment, however, it was recorded that 'some of his neighbours, that are not Quakers, being unwilling the Goods should be undersold, satisfied the Execution, & took the Goods off the Bayliff to make the best of them'.[164] Again in 1686, when William Kirton faced distrainment due to the non-payment of tithes, his neighbour William Mondon paid the demands of the bailiff and sold the goods himself, returning one horse back to Kirton.[165] Similar accounts can be found in the spiritual autobiographies kept by early Quakers. Oliver Sansom, for example, wrote that, when his goods were taken away after his refusal to pay tithes, his relations 'seeing that my Goods were likely to be sold underhand, made an agreement with the Priest to pay him Twenty Pounds, and they to take the Goods to sell for as much as they could.'[166] That non-Quakers were seen to be wanting to limit any perceived injustice in the distrainment of the goods of Friends, suggests of the belief by those in the local community that these Friends deserved fair treatment, at least. This call for fair treatment was certainly something that the Society were keen to advocate as well as commemorate.

In other accounts, however, parishioners are recorded as going further in helping Friends to avoid the punishments they faced.[167] Such action on the part of their conformist neighbours further created a perception of injustice in regard to the persecution that these

[164] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume One*, YM/MfS/ORS/1/64.
[165] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume One*, YM/MfS/ORS/1/3.
[166] Oliver Sansom, *An Account of the Many Passages of the Life of Oliver Sansom* (London: J. Sowle, 1710), p. 53.
[167] Horle, *The Quakers and the English Legal System*, p. 266.

Friends had faced. In a number of cases of distrainment found within the Original Records of Sufferings, it is documented that conformist neighbours and kin paid to ensure that Friends could keep their goods. When Richard Proud of Ramsey had a mare taken from him in 1681, for example, it is noted that a William Peacock, 'noe Friend', paid the money to ensure that the mare was returned to him.[168] In 1690 a neighbour bought and returned a distrained clock to Quaker John Plant of Spitalfields.[169] Whilst in August 1681, Charles Hammond, presumably a neighbour or family member, bought the goods of a widowed Quaker and returned them to her.[170] Family, neighbours, and even unfamiliar acquaintances are regularly recorded paying the fines of early modern Friends in this way. In 1691, both Richard Crudson's father in law and landlord, 'not being Friends or professors of truth', paid his tithe fees after he spent seven days in jail for their non-payment.[171] A Friend from Middlesex recorded his brother's payment of church tithes to the priest after he had been summoned to the Bishops Court.[172] Whilst in 1682 Friend Ambrose Brewer, of Norwich, had his fines paid to secure his release from prison by his apprenticeship master.[173] In a single account from Friends in Leicestershire in 1683, three separate Friends are recorded as having their fines paid for them, two by 'acquaintances' and the remaining being paid by the wife of a Quaker, 'being not of the same persuasion', after she borrowed four pounds and ten shillings from a neighbour to do so.[174]

By gathering accounts such as these, Friends were creating a resource from which they could petition the authorities for relief.[175] Nicholas Morgan discusses the importance of the Records of Sufferings and states 'as an archive, it was plundered ruthlessly by Friends in order

[168] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Three,* YM/MfS/ORS/3/262.
[169] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Three,* YM/MfS/ORS/3/267.
[170] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Three,* YM/MfS/ORS/3/262.
[171] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Four,* YM/MfS/ORS/4/427.
[172] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Four,* YM/MfS/ORS/4/497.
[173] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume One,* YM/MfS/ORS/1/119.
[174] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Three,* YM/MfS/ORS/3/327.
[175] Nicholas Morgan, *Lancashire Quakers and the Establishment 1660-1730* (Halifax: Ryburn Publishing Services, 1993), p. 20, 71.

to highlight the worst excesses of the legal system against them'.[176] Morgan identifies that between 1650 and 1699 Friends published some 252 petitions or appeals to Parliament or other authorities, alongside this they also published 248 pamphlets and broadsides which contained accounts of sufferings.[177] Friends drew upon and presented accounts of sufferings to Parliament or those in positions of authority in an attempt to influence their actions in favour of the Quakers.[178] The accounts found within the Original Records of Sufferings discussed here, where neighbours and kin fought against the persecution of Friends, would have been instrumental to this as they helped to highlight the excesses and unfairness of the legal system. That conformist members of the community were recorded stepping in to help limit the persecution of Friends emphasised the theme of injustice as it illustrated a belief by others outside of the Society that they were being treated unfairly.

II

Whilst the accounts highlighted the injustice Friends faced, they also illustrated the acceptance and support Friends were able to find within their local communities, despite the difference in faith. That those outside of the faith can be seen to have actively worked to limit persecution would suggest that these early Quakers were able to maintain relationships with those in their local communities despite their difference in faith. As Davies writes, in his study on Quakers in English society:

> As we have seen, from the earliest years of the movement in the country, kin and neighbours showed sympathy to ordinary Friends, which contradicts the impression given by hostile pamphleteers and the Society that Quaker sectarianism gave rise to only deep familial and societal divisions.[179]

[176] Morgan, *Lancashire Quakers and the Establishment*, p. 21.
[177] Morgan, *Lancashire Quakers and the Establishment*, n. 78 on p. 29.
[178] Morgan, *Lancashire Quakers and the Establishment*, p. 20.
[179] Adrian Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 214.

The accounts of communal support and sympathy, therefore, challenged the criticism that Friends caused only discord and division within their localities, and this was something that the Society were keen to promote and disseminate. Within their writings, Friends made use of certain language and phrases to create an image that contradicted the disruption and disorder that they had previously been associated with. In particular, emphasis was placed on their 'peaceable' nature as is seen throughout the Original Records of Sufferings, as well as the spiritual writings of Friends. Whilst the earliest Friends were known for their more disorderly behaviour, it was in the early 1660s that Friends began to 'reinvent and repackage' themselves to limit the persecution that they faced.[180] One way in which Friends worked to recreate their image is through the obtaining of certificates that assured of their peaceable nature. These certificates, found within the collection of the Original Records of Sufferings, were signed by neighbours, gentlemen, justices, constables and clergy, and testified to the peaceful and quiet nature of particular Friends.[181] Friends from Norfolk, for example, obtained a certificate in 1681 written and signed by two Justices of the Peace testifying to their good conduct. They write:

> Wee whose Names are heer underwritten being well Affected to the Government doe humbly Certify that John Reeves, Thomas Dorner, Joseph Gill and Nicholas Howse are of Peaceable & quiet Behaviour. And doe not Give Disturbance to the Government & that they are not Reputed Papists nor Popishly Affected But are known to bee of those Dessenters called Quakers in this county.[182]

Again in 1681, both a neighbour and Justice of the Peace signed to say that 'Robert Kirby and Ellen his wife, Henry Miller, Elizabeth the wife of James Moor, Robert Peartree and Elizabeth

[180] Miller, *'A Suffering People'*, p. 103.
[181] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Four*, YM/MfS/ORS/4/484; YM/MfS/ORS/4/485; YM/MfS/ORS/4/487; YM/MfS/ORS/4/488; Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, p. 224.
[182] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Four*, YM/MfS/ORS/4/478.

his wife' were all of an agreeable nature both in the community and to the government.[183] Whilst nineteen gentlemen and neighbours certified that 'to the best of our knowledge' that Robert Bransby and Willyam Tilling were amicable and harmonious Friends.[184] The Society drafted a standard format for the certificates and these were sent out to various counties for Friends to have their local justices, gentlemen and neighbours to sign.[185]

Unable to swear allegiance to the crown, these certificates allowed the Quakers to demonstrate that they remained loyal to the throne and were not acting seditiously, despite their difference in religious belief.[186] The collection and dispersal of accounts illustrating the peaceable nature of the Quakers would be used for both internal and external purpose.[187] Internally, these accounts offered a guide to good 'Quakerly conduct' that could be read and adopted by Friends.[188] The circulating and publishing of such accounts not only demonstrated their peaceable nature to others but also educated those within the Society of Friends on how to conduct themselves. As has been demonstrated, with the Restoration came the need to work to limit persecution to ensure the survival of the sect. As this became the concern of leaders within the Society, the circulation of accounts such as these reminded Friends that a peaceful and integrative nature had now become essential. Externally, as has been shown, such accounts worked to limit persecution.[189] Miller writes, 'the change in the attitude of the "establishment" towards Friends owed much to the systematic lobbying and use of press to convince people that they were neither heretics nor dangerous'.[190] When petitioning the authorities, these certificates offered testimonies that argued counter to a disruptive and seditious sect, and instead illustrated Friends as trustworthy, loyal and even valuable members of society. Craig

[183] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Four,* YM/MfS/ORS/4/489.
[184] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Four,* YM/MfS/ORS/4/421.
[185] Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System,* p. 222.
[186] Morgan, *Lancashire Quakers and the Establishment*, p. 73; Miller, 'A Suffering People', p. 93; Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System,* pp. 221-225.
[187] Morgan, *Lancashire Quakers and the Establishment,* p. 20.
[188] Morgan, *Lancashire Quakers and the Establishment,* p. 20.
[189] Miller, 'A Suffering People', p. 89.
[190] Miller, 'A Suffering People', p. 89.

Horle provides an example of this in his work on Quakers and the English legal system.[191] When provided with certificates assuring the peaceable behaviour of imprisoned Friends, and facing pressure from the Meeting for Sufferings, a Bishop in London absolved these Quakers and freed them from prison.[192] Whilst these certificates are initially found within the Original Records of Sufferings, they later made their way into the *Great Books of Sufferings* and Besse's published *Collection of the Sufferings of the People called Quakers.*[193] It is clear, then, that publication and memorialisation of this peaceable existence was of great importance to the Society of Friends. After the Restoration, and subsequent change in outlook of the Society, Friends no longer wanted to be known or remembered as 'heroic outsiders' but rather wished to be portrayed as integrated and compliant members of their communities.

A similar use of language is found further within accounts of sufferings, as well as the spiritual autobiographies and journals of Friends. After the restoration there was a change in the writings of these early Quakers as they went from a group 'at war with the rest of society' to one persecuted by 'rude' and 'wicked' priests, officials and informers, whilst their conformist neighbours, distressed at their persecution, were shown to offer help and support.[194] These neighbours were now often referred to as soberly, moderate, neighbourly, loving and kind.[195] Such examples can be found within the accounts of the Original Records of Sufferings. When Friends were 'peaceably assembled' near their meeting place, for example, 'a party of soldiers led by a Leiutenant… did violently beat & strike severall very Cruelly'.[196] In 1685, William Bingley recorded how Friends were persecuted during a 'peaceable meeting', and how later 'rude fellows' took control of his house 'smoaking and Drinking by my Fier almost at all

[191] Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, p. 264.
[192] Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System*, p. 264.
[193] Miller, 'A Suffering People', n. 152 on p. 93.
[194] Miller, 'A Suffering People', p. 74.
[195] Miller, 'A Suffering People', pp. 84-85.
[196] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Three*, YM/MfS/ORS/3/351.

times of the Night which might have been a great hurt to my Wife being big with Child, had not the Lord by his Power preserved her'.[197] In his spiritual autobiography, John Gratton used similar phrasing as he wrote of the disruption of a meeting he attended in Great Markham in 1674. After attempting to dissolve the meeting, he recorded that the non-Quakers in attendance informed Justices that 'it was fitter for them to go and fetch the ale houses and to take notice of drunkards, and bad people, than to come thither after that manner and disturb such honest people'.[198] The drunkenness and violence of the persecutors was often emphasised in these accounts, which offered a stark comparison of the seemingly compliant Quaker with that of the disorderly and unsettling citizens who were doing the persecuting. By labelling the persecutors as such, it was they who became the disruptive and immoral force within the community as opposed to the Friends.

In contrast, within their writings, Friends emphasised their own peaceful and harmonious nature. When parishioners were asked to present a John Greenaway of London for not coming to church in 1683, for example, it is written that they refused arguing that 'hee wase a peasabell nibor and thay woold not bring him into trobell'.[199] Despite being threatened, and the persecutor being in a 'great frenzy', his neighbours continued to refuse to do so. Similarly, when constables were attempting to sell the distrained goods of Friend Theophilus Green, it is recorded that none in the community would buy them as he was 'very well-known and belov'd'.[200] John Gratton, too, told the tale of two Justices refusing to listen to the informants of Friends as 'they were not willing to have any hand in the ruining of their neighbours'.[201] Helping to emphasise this, was the referral of members of the community as 'loving, friendly,

[197] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/179.
[198] John Gratton, *A Journal of the Life of that Ancient Servant of Christ, John Gratton* (London: J. Sowle, 1720), p. 65.
[199] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Three,* YM/MfS/ORS/3/256.
[200] Theophilus Green, *A Narrative of Some Passages of the Life of Theophilus Green from His Youth* (London: T. Sowle, 1702), Early English Books Online, pp. 19-20.
[201] Gratton, *Journal of the Life,* p. 71.

moderate' and 'tender and loving'.[202] These accounts, then, created the image of the 'peaceable' Friend facing unwarranted persecution - as illustrated by the distressed conformist neighbours and kin - juxtaposed with the rude and aggressive informer or official. Rather than the Friend causing the disruption, therefore, it became the informant or magistrate, who would appear to be going against the wishes of the wider community. This narrative offered an alternative to that of the disruptive and seditious Friend causing discord within society. Rather, it was now the 'rude', 'wicked' and 'drunken' individuals, who were causing hurt and disharmony within their localities.

III

This chapter has offered another example of the way in which Friends understood and utilised times of support and kindness from those in their community, as well as exploring further the reasoning behind their inclusion within their accounts of sufferings and beyond. By highlighting that their non-Quaker neighbours and kin were willing to step in to limit or stop punishment, these Friends were stressing the injustice of their persecution – a valuable tool when petitioning for relief. Through this theme of injustice these Friends also looked to repackage their outward appearance. In their writings, Friends emphasised their peaceful and moderate nature, as well as their loyalty to the government and Crown. These 'peaceable' Friends were contrasted with the 'raging' and 'drunken' persecutors, who were shown to be acting against the wider wishes of the community. These accounts allowed for the creation of an alternative narrative seen in the records consulted here, where early modern Quakers found support and even acceptance from their communities, and the informers and persecutors were labelled as disruptive and immoral. As has been shown, such a narrative was employed by Friends when calling for their toleration. Through the act of documenting and gathering these

[202] Gratton, *Journal of the Life,* p. 70; Green, *A Narrative of some Passages,* p. 16, 19.

records, these Friends were also establishing a counter archive. By recording the encounters and sending them to the central authority in London, these Friends were choosing to commemorate and disseminate the support and integration they found within their local communities. This archive argued against claims of sedition and discord and instead highlighted the ability of these Quakers to integrate within their local communities and wider society. Rather than existing as marginalised and despised group, these records illustrated and memorialised a more positive and integrated existence.

Both as a method to cement their place within the history of martyrdom, and as a way to reinvent their outward image in a bid for toleration from the authorities and local communities, the recording of these events certainly held purpose for these Quakers. By looking at these accounts in this way, however, we reduce them only to their rhetorical nature. It is important to note that these early Friends did not undertake their conversion to Quakerism within a social vacuum, and, whilst their religious beliefs may have changed, the neighbourhood in which they lived, the space they occupied, and the acquaintances with whom they interacted with daily would have often remained the same. It is likely for many, then, that these encounters and the decision to record them would have held more meaning than just the practical reasons already stated here. The encounters of support and compassion that these Friends recorded highlighted the complexities of navigating religious difference in communal and familial relationships, and it is therefore important that these accounts also be explored in an affective light, as will be the focus of the final chapter.

Chapter Three

'We Both Wept, but We Still Loved Dearly': The Exploration of Communal and Familial Relationship Ties and their Significance in Early Quaker Self-Definition

The previous two chapters have looked to explore Friends' understanding of times of kindness, support and acceptance from their neighbours and kin, and the motivation for recording and collating them. Both have offered a particular purpose and desired result; the first chapter illustrated how the inclusion of pity and compassion of bystanders helped to emphasise and cement the Quakers' place within the wider history of Protestant martyrdom. By recording acts of sympathy and pity from those witnessing their persecution, Friends were engaging with a well-known tradition that would argue for their place within a long history of martyrs suffering for their faith. Chapter two, on the other hand, explored how Quakers looked to use these accounts of communal support and kindness to self-fashion themselves as peaceable and integrated members of their communities and thus limit persecution. In their letters and accounts, Friends employed a rhetoric that emphasised their 'peaceful', 'neighbourly' and 'moderate' nature in contrast with that of the 'rude' and 'wicked' individuals who persecuted them. These chapters have both argued, then, for a more instrumental understanding and rhetorical purpose of the accounts discussed. However, whilst these events and their subsequent understanding and recording by Friends can be viewed for their effective nature, it is also important that they are also viewed and acknowledged in an affective light.

For many of these early Friends, their conversion to Quakerism took place within the towns and communities in which they had always resided. Religious belief and the secular were, therefore, not so easily separated, and so the towns and cities in which Friends lived

would have offered not only an ecclesiastical environment but a social one also.[203] In her work on tolerance and intolerance in early modern England, Alexandra Walsham writes that 'apart from the hope of defusing suspicion and deflecting persecution, there were other compelling reasons why dissenters might feel the need to remain part of their parishes.'[204] Walsham argues that whilst 'collaboration' and 'fraternisation' of dissenters with their conformist contemporaries was certainly an attempt to limit suffering, they also 'reflected a sincere commitment to the wider community'.[205] For these Friends, therefore, these encounters of sympathy and support would have been understood in more than just practical terms. This chapter will explore the affective meaning of these encounters and will argue for an alternative reason behind the decision to record, collate and circulate them. Going beyond just the practical results that would have been earned through these writings, such as the limiting of persecution, this chapter will argue that the recording and memorialising of these accounts expressed a genuine desire by Friends to exist as integrated members of their communities who were able to maintain positive relationships with their families and neighbours despite the difference in faith. As Katie Barclay has shown, familial and communal relations were significant parts of early modern self-definition and identity.[206] This chapter will look at more detailed accounts that convey both neighbourhood and familial support and will look to explore the meanings of these events to those who experienced them, as well as the emotions which they induced. It will argue that alongside the rhetorical and persuasive reasoning behind the recording of such events, the decision to memorialise these encounters also reflected a personal desire by the

[203] Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England: 1500-1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), p. 207.
[204] Walsham, *Charitable Hatred,* p. 207.
[205] Walsham, *Charitable Hatred,* p. 210.
[206] Katie Barclay, 'Family and the Household' in *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction* ed. by Susan Broomhall (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), pp. 244-247 (p. 246); Elise M. Dermineur, 'Village' in *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction* ed. by Susan Broomhall (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), pp. 242-244 (p. 242).

writers to identify as integrated members of their communities who could maintain positive relationships with neighbours and kin despite their difference in faith.

I

As seen within the previous chapters, Friends included numerous accounts of communal support from those outside the Quaker faith within the Original Records of Sufferings – whether it be through the refusal of neighbours to help in the distrainment of Quakers goods or even through the payment of their fines by their neighbours and kin. Certain accounts within the Original Records of Sufferings provide greater detail and context to these encounters. In a letter dated the 21 May 1682, for example, a Friend wrote of recent events from Gloucester County Prison in May 1682.[207] The letter, addressed to another Friend - John Dew of London - describes the events surrounding the imprisonment of Daniel and Nathaniel Roberts. After these two brothers were fined for preaching and holding a meeting at their house, their neighbours and kin went to great lengths to offer protection. When the officers attempted to distrain their goods in payment for their fines, 'the neighbours one or other would come and lock their shop door and take away the key that they might be prevented'.[208] Further officers and a constable were sent to break into the brothers' accommodation, however, the officers initially refused to do so being 'troubled', though after being threatened with fines they eventually relented. The Friend writing the account also recorded how, when the officers sent for gunpowder to blow up the house, 'the people would not sell them any understanding their purpose.' The letter records that it was Market Day and 'town was in an uproar'. Another account, given to the Quarterly Meeting in 1687, describes the distrainment of goods from William Gill, a 'Broadweaver' from Bethnal Green, for his attendance at a Meeting in 1684.[209]

[207] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/131.
[208] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/131.
[209] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume One,* YM/MfS/ORS/1/68.

The account records how the constable Thomas Moore took with him two men to distrain the Friend's items. Upon gaining entrance, which was initially prevented, though it does not say by whom, the men appraised William Gill's goods to the value of £5 6s 6d. The record goes on to state that a neighbour bought the goods from the constable by a bill of sale. It concludes, however, by stating that 'one thing there is worth observing that the constable having sent for a cart to carry away the goods the carter understanding for what the goods was seized he refused to come'.[210] The account also goes on further to note that the joiner, who had been sent for by the constable to take down the goods, 'when he came to the door and understanding for what the goods was seized went back again and would not do it'. These accounts, therefore, begin to highlight the complexities in communal relations when encountering a difference in faith. In both accounts, the solidarity of the neighbours, who risked punishment themselves to help their non-conformist co-parishioners, is evident.

More detailed accounts such as this are not only found within the letters and manuscripts that make up the Original Records of Sufferings, however. Within their spiritual journals and autobiographies, Friends chose to record very similar accounts that reflected the support and kindness they received from their conformist contemporaries. These accounts, again, illustrate the encounters of support and kindness which Friends received in more depth. Oliver Sansom, in his *Account of Many Remarkable Passages of the Life of Oliver Sansom,* records a time when, whilst being visited by a ministering Friend, he offered to hold a Meeting at his house.[211] Sansom writes how he sent his servants, 'both Man and Maid', to inform all his neighbours in his town and a nearby village 'that if they had any Desire to hear the Truth declared, they might come to my House at such an hour that evening'.[212] When the Priest called upon the Tithingman to break up the Meeting he found that neither he or the Constable were at

[210] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume One,* YM/MfS/ORS/1/68.
[211] Oliver Sansom, *An Account of the Many Passages of the Life of Oliver Sansom* (London: J. Sowle, 1710), pp. 39-41.
[212] Sansom, *Account of the Many Passages,* p. 39.

home as both of them were at Sansom's house 'peaceably assembled with many others in the Meeting'.[213] The 'Priest', coming to the Meeting place himself, began to threaten all those in attendance. Furthermore, he commanded that the Constable set a guard of men upon the two visiting Friends, so that they would be kept there until the morning. Sansom records, however, that:

> Some of the People, over-hearing what the Priest had said to the Constable, and disliking the Doings of the Priest, came to the two Friends, and (in Kindness to them) thrust them out at another Door into the Orchard, that the Constable might not see them…[214]

Sansom goes on to write that the Constable, not 'daring' to disobey the Priest's orders, came inside to apprehend the Friends but being unable to find them 'was glad, and so passed away'. Despite understanding his duty to do so, the Constable is shown to be relieved when he no longer must apprehend the Friends. This reaction from the Constable is not unique to Sansom's case, as we see a similar encounter in the following account of Theophilus Green. In his *Narrative of Some Passages of the Life of Theophilus Green,* Green shares a similar tale involving a local Constable stepping in to offer support.[215] Being found preaching at a meeting-house, Theophilus was fined by a Justice Foster of Putney. When the Justice came with the Constable to seize goods in payment for the fine, however, Green records how the Constable, 'being a Sober Neighbourly Man', refused to force entrance into his property.[216] When the Justice then found some goods within his yard, and asked the Constable to carry them away, the Constable replied 'I am no Porter' and again refused to help. In his 'rage', the Justice then fined the Constable himself. Green goes on to write how the Justice, the High-Constable and

[213] Sansom, *Account of the Many Passages,* p. 40.
[214] Sansom, *Account of the Many Passages,* p. 41.
[215] Theophilus Green, *A Narrative of Some Passages of the Life of Theophilus Green from His Youth* (London: T. Sowle, 1702), pp. 19-22.
[216] Green, *A Narrative of Some Passages,* p. 19.

another Petty-Constable did go on to seize a barge, and carried it away, however, despite offering it for sale several times 'none would Buy it, I being very well known and belov'd'.[217] A townsperson, seeing the barge left adrift and realising it belonged to Green returned it to him, not knowing that it had previously been seized as a payment of a fine.

Both Sansom and Green's accounts therefore highlight the difficulties of navigating religious difference and communal relationships in early modern communities. With regards to Sansom's encounter, the Constable whilst acknowledging his duty to punish the ministering Friends, was relieved when he no longer had to do so. In Green's encounter, however, the Constable, disagreeing with the Justice's request, risked a fine himself rather than distraining Green's goods. In early modern society, Officers and Constables often faced conflicting pressures such as these both from their superiors, as well as their local loyalties.[218] As Joan R. Kent writes, these Officers not only had official ties with their fellow villagers but also personal ones, as they also related to those in their communities as neighbours, friends and kin.[219] And so, whilst they had their obligations to central government, there are times where these relationships with neighbours and kin won out, as can be seen in Theophilus Green's account. It would also appear, in both accounts, that the townspeople similarly disagreed with the punishment of these Friends. As shown in chapter two, this was a common theme in Quaker accounts of sufferings and neighbours and kin frequently stepped in to limit or hinder the persecution of Friends. This act of solidarity from neighbours and officials can also be seen throughout early modern communities of differing faiths, however. In Elizabethan and Stuart England, for example, the ties of friendship and neighbourhood were of great significance to

[217] Green, *A Narrative of Some Passages*, p. 20.
[218] Joan R. Kent, *The English Constable 1580-1642: A Social and Administrative Study* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 22; William Sheils, 'Getting on and Getting Along in Parish and Town: Catholics and their Neighbours in England' in *Catholic Communities in Protestant States: Britain and the Netherlands c. 1570-1720* ed. by Benjamin Kaplan, Bob Moore, Henk van Nierop and Judith Pollmann (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), pp. 67-83 (pp. 75).
[219] Kent, *The English Constable*, p. 223.

recusants during turbulent times. Those in their local communities were reluctant to betray their Catholic neighbours; they intervened to defend recusants from indictment, helped to prevent their estates from being sequestered and offered protection against both officials and outsiders.[220] In 1681 in Wigan, for example, a crowd protected a poor Catholic widow from distrainment.[221] Similarly, William Sheils references the protection of Catholics by their neighbours in York surrounding the time of the Popish Plot.[222] Throughout early modern communities, we see, therefore, the same themes of defiance, as neighbours and kin intervene to subvert and undermine the legal punishment that Friends faced.

Whilst the journals and convincement narratives of Friends show the same desire to record times of great communal support and even acceptance, they also help to offer some understanding towards the way in which Friends viewed their relationships with non-Quaker neighbours and kin during, and post, convincement. In his *Journal of the Life of that Ancient Servant of Christ* John Gratton recorded his fear of leaving behind his connection with those in his local community.[223] In his writing Gratton reflects upon the inner trouble he faced at the prospect of losing his friendships and acquaintances during his conversion to Quakerism.[224] A preacher from Derbyshire, Gratton details the sadness and difficulty he felt at the time he was to become convinced of the Truth. He records the 'repute, friendship, love' and 'old companions' he would have to forsake as a result of his change in religious belief, writing that he was,

[220] Walsham, *Charitable Hatred,* pp. 273-274.
[221] Walsham, *Charitable Hatred,* p. 273; Michael J. Braddick, *State Formation in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 324-325.
[222] Sheils, 'Getting on and Getting Along', pp. 79-80.
[223] John Gratton, *A Journal of the Life of that Ancient Servant of Christ, John Gratton* (London: J. Sowle, 1720), pp. 20-21.
[224] Gratton, *A Journal of the Life,* p. 21, 33, 39.

> much troubled, for I was very loath to lose either, and would have gladly have had both the love of God, and the love of Men too, would both have enjoyed God and the World; but could not. [225]

Gratton tells of how he initially hid his belief in the Truth, continuing to doff his hat to those around him and refusing to adjust his speech, in hope that he could continue to 'please the People better'.[226] His decision to initially refrain from adopting outward Quaker behaviours was not an uncommon occurrence, as at times individuals of non-conforming religious faith hid behind a disguise of outward conformity in the attempt to limit both official and popular persecution.[227] Gratton also describes:

> Now when I understood that this people were the Lord's people, I felt a part in me that was sorry, for if it had been any other people, I might have been more at liberty to have pleased the World, and to have kept the friendship of it.[228]

The sheer concern Gratton expressed at the thought of losing contact with the World highlighted the significance that these encounters and relationships held for him. Gratton was not unique in his worries and concerns. As Bernard Capp writes, 'conversion was a complex phenomenon… and might be neither permanent nor complete'.[229] Across different faiths, early modern individuals 'wavered' in their conversions for months or even years and for those who did convert, their conversion remained unstable as the threat of imprisonment or execution loomed.[230] It appears, therefore, that there remained a desire to maintain a level of contact with their wider neighbourhood, not only as a way to avoid persecution, but for many it was also likely due to their personal affections.

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[225] Richard L. Greaves, 'Gratton, John (1642/3–1712)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view /article/11305].
[226] Gratton, *A Journal in the Life,* p. 43.
[227] Walsham, *Charitable Hatred,* p. 206.
[228] Gratton, *A Journal of the Life,* p. 39.
[229] Bernard Capp, *The Ties that Bind: Siblings, Family, and Society in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 126.
[230] Capp, *The Ties that Bind,* p. 126.

In their writings, Friends can be seen to further express this desire to exist and be portrayed as accepted individuals within their local communities. Furthermore, as their records would suggest, at times they also were perceived as such by their contemporaries. In his *Account of the Convincement, Services and Travel,* for example, Welsh Quaker Richard Davies recorded how, when being called on to be escorted to Prison as a result of his faith, many of his neighbours resisted his arrest.[231] In this account he emphasised the acceptance and support he was able to find from his neighbours despite his difference in faith. Davies wrote, 'at length many of the Aldermen fell into a Rage, and bid them, meddle with me if they durst'.[232] He went on to describe the anger that many of his neighbours and towns people felt towards the men coming to arrest him, writing 'for many of the Young Men of the Town, with the Aldermen, were gather'd together, with Clubs and Staves saying, What should a Town's-Born Child be so abused by such a bad Fellow.'[233] This reference to Davies as a 'Town's-Born Child' is significant as it offered an alternative narrative to that of marginalisation. Similar accounts added further to this narrative. When informer John David came to distrain Richard Davies' goods in punishment for his preaching, the Quaker recorded how many of his conformist neighbours offered Davies their support.[234] Disagreeing with the informer's actions, Davies described how many neighbours took their work away from John David, a weaver by trade, 'so that his Children went soon after a begging'.[235] Oliver Sansom, a Friend from Oxford, wrote of a similar experience. When two informers attempted to distrain the goods of Sansom and other Friends, he warned them that they would soon face trouble from their conformist

[231] Richard Davies, *An Account of the Convincement, Exercises, Services and Travels of that Ancient Servant of the Lord Richard Davies* (London: J. Sowle, 1710), pp. 65-67.
[232] Davies, *Account of the Convincement,* p. 65.
[233] Davies, *Account of the Convincement,* p. 66.
[234] Davies, *Account of the Convincement,* p. 170-174.
[235] Davies, *Account of the Convincement,* p. 170.

neighbours, saying 'if they did get our Goods, it would be but little Benefit to them: for thereby they would sooner be brought to Beggery, and even procure hatred against themselves.'[236]

These accounts emphasised that, despite their adherence to the Quaker faith, these Friends were still able to find a place, and some form of acceptance, within the local community, illustrating that one's character and history held more weight, at times, than their religious leanings. Walsham writes,

> far from being deviant outsiders, Quakers, and indeed other dissenters, were highly integrated members of both urban and rural communities: people who were regarded as responsible and reliable by their Anglican neighbours and who remained bound to them by ties of love, friendship, family and neighbourhood that blurred and cut across the confessional divisions that theoretically divided them.[237]

That Quakers were able to maintain these bonds offers explanation for the motives and emotions behind both those offering the support and those receiving it. As the suffering records and journals of Friends attest to, these ties of love and friendship were certainly tested and strained as a result of the Quaker faith. However, as the above accounts would suggest, in everyday interactions, Friends and their neighbours and kin were, at times, able to separate between the individual and their ideologies.[238] A change in faith did not mean the instant and total severing of ties and relationships with the conformist members of their communities.

By choosing to include such accounts in their letters, manuscripts and spiritual journals, Friends were not just defining themselves by their suffering, but also by their ability to find support and, at times, co-existence within their communities despite their religious difference. Whilst the portrayal may have offered a rhetorical purpose, there was also likely a desire on the part of the Quakers to exist as supported and accepted members of the community. As

[236] Sansom, *Account of Many Remarkable Passages,* p. 291.
[237] Walsham, *Charitable Hatred,* p. 309.
[238] Walsham, *Charitable Hatred,* p. 278.

Alexandra Walsham argues, to withdraw from society was 'to dissociate oneself deliberately from one's neighbours, to situate oneself conspicuously on its outer edges and margins.'[239] Seventeenth century localities were tight knit communities, not only ecclesiastical units they also existed as a social space. Though these Friends may have not shared the same faith with their neighbours and kin, they did share the same ancestry and communal space.[240] As Adrian Davies similarly concluded in his studies on early Friends in Essex, 'ordinary Quakers felt obligations towards members of parish society and did not wish to be wholly set apart'; this becomes evident when looking at the accounts discussed above.[241] As much as they were able to, Friends remained integrated with fellow inhabitants.[242] In their communities Friends held positions of responsibility, left gifts to the parish poor in their wills, employed servants and apprentices of non-Quaker faith, and lodged members of the parochial poor in their households.[243] Those outside of the Quaker faith would also regularly attend the weddings and funerals of Friends.[244] Rather than being marginalised outsiders, then, Quakers often aspired to exist as integrated members of their communities who were connected to their neighbours through love, friendship, family and neighbourhood ties. By recording, collating and circulating these encounters, these Friends were creating a narrative where they were defined not only through their suffering, but also though their ability to exist as integrated and, at times, accepted members of their communities.

[239] Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, p. 207.
[240] Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*, p. 250.
[241] Adrian Davies, *The Quakers in English Society: 1655- 1725* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000). p. 204.
[242] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 204.
[243] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, pp. 203-206; Bill Stevenson, 'The Social Integration of Post-Restoration Dissenters: 1660-1725' in *The World of Rural Dissenters: 1520-1725* ed. by Margaret Spufford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 360-387 (pp. 367-372).
[244] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, pp. 202-203; Davies, *An Account of the Convincement*, p. 260; LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Four*, YM/MfS/ORS/4/490; LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two*, YM/MfS/ORS/2/126.

II

Detailed accounts concerning the complexities of the relationships between Quakers and their conformist family members are less present in the accounts of communal support and kindness found within the Original Records of Sufferings. There are a number of times, however, when Friends recorded conformist family members coming forward to offer their support; fathers, brothers and wives were all shown to be paying fines to stop the seizing of the goods of Friends, or to ensure their release from the county jail. Emanuell of Fenstanton, for example, paid his father's fine in 1682 to prevent his goods from being distrained.[245] A Friend from Middlesex, similarly, recorded his brother's payment of church tithes to the priest after he had been summoned to the Bishops Court.[246] Whilst in Hemingford Grey, William Martin's son, not being a Quaker himself, paid to redeem his father's household goods, grain, and cattle after they were taken as payment for fines occurred for not attending church.[247] Religious difference, as can be seen from these examples, certainly placed strain upon the family members of Friends. Just on the surface we can see of the financial implications such encounters would cause. Unsurprisingly, these encounters caused much more than just financial strain, and it is within the spiritual writings of Friends that the difficulties and tension placed upon these relationships appear in more depth.

Throughout their journals, Friends highlighted the troubles both they and their parents and kin faced during their early conversion to the Quaker faith. Adrian Davies argues of the fear emanating from those at the forefront of the Society of the risk of kinship ties drawing converts away from the Quaker faith, and it would appear that this fear was not unfounded.[248] Oliver Sansom, for example, made reference to the pull he felt to reject Quakerism due to a

[245] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Two,* YM/MfS/ORS/2/209.
[246] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Four,* YM/MfS/ORS/4/497.
[247] LSF, *Original Records of Sufferings: Volume Three,* YM/MfS/ORS/3/262.
[248] Davies, *The Quakers in English Society,* pp. 196-197.

desire to maintain familial relations and affections. He recorded how the fear of displeasing and upsetting his parents prevented him from openly taking up his new faith:

> But alas! The Enemy now bestir'd himself, to throw Blocks in my way, to hinder me from being obedient to the Conviction I had received; and through his working there appeared to me so many and great Impediments on every hand (more especially from my Parents, and those altogether unexpected) that they prevailed over me, and stopt me from going on: So that, for fear of Offending, or too much displeasing my Father, I submitted to go to the Publick Worship again, to hear the Priests as before; and so instead of going forward, I went backward.[249]

As he records, Sansom's worry of offending his parents, particularly his Father, was strong enough to keep his faith hidden; his desire to maintain a relationship with his parents and kin outweighed, at least for a time, his need to outwardly conform to Quakerism. And so, he 'walked, Somewhat like Nicodemus, having a secret love and Regard to the Lord in my Heart; but not darin, through Weakness and Fear, to follow him in an open Profession of his Truth.'[250] As discussed above, John Gratton similarly expressed, even more openly, his decision to initially hide his faith in the hopes that he could keep the love and support of those close to him; 'for the love of the People I valued highly, and the Cross seemed so great, that I could then by no means persuade myself to take it up'.[251] Gratton also described how after refusing to hear a 'Priest' with his wife, who was not a Quaker at this time, they disputed and felt great sorrow and as a result he faced a great temptation to return to Conformist ways.[252]

Once openly practicing their faith, Friends continued to record being troubled by the calls of family members to forgo the Quaker belief. Sansom described a visit from his Father and Father-in-law where, with him being summoned to take the Oath of Allegiance, they came

[249] Sansom, *Account of the Many Passages*, pp. 5-6.
[250] Sansom, *Account of the Many Passages*, p. 8.
[251] Gratton, *Journal of the Life*, p. 21.
[252] Gratton, *Journal of the Life*, p. 33.

to his home in the hope that they might persuade him to take the oath. Sansom wrote 'and indeed, their Endeavours and Perwuasions were more grievous to me, that if I had gone presently to Prison. Wherefore with weeping Eyes, I intreated them to forbear, and leave me to the Lord'. [253] Sansom described how the suffering he faced knowing he had caused distress to his kin was worse than that of any persecution he faced due to his non-conformity. Accounts such as this, then, illustrate the difficulty in navigating the desire to adhere to one's religious belief whilst also wanting to maintain and foster positive relationships with loved ones – both were clearly important to Sansom here, as his emotional response shows. Friend, Richard Davies, provided a similar account. When being fined 60 shillings for preaching, a relation came 'chidingly' to him asking 'whether I had a mind to Ruine my Wife and Family? Could I not leave my Preaching when the Laws were so severe against us?'[254] After the imprisonment for the non-payment of tithes, Elias Osborn also recorded how his father was greatly troubled as he feared further suffering would befall his son leading to his ruin. He detailed how his father 'used all Endeavours he could, to perswade me to save my self… He would say, He had bestowed some Learning upon me, and I was turn'd Fool; he had taken care to save some Thing for me, and I was in a Way to lose it all.'[255] Bernard Capp, in his study *Siblings, Family and Society in Early Modern England* illustrates how families would often try to dissuade potential converts both on grounds of principle and as a way to protect them from danger.[256] One example Capp cites is Henry Pole, aged 17, who described the distress his mother felt at his conversion, and her attempts to deter him from going to St Omer.[257] Though his mother's tears had caused Pole great distress, he chose to follow his faith and disobey his parent. Kin often feared for the safety and economic future of their relations, and as seen here, seeing such

[253] Sansom, *Account of the Many Passages,* p. 16.
[254] Davies, *Account of the Convincement*, pp. 169-170.
[255] Elias Osborn, *A Brief Narrative of the Life, Labours and Sufferings, of Elias Osborn* (London: J. Sowle, 1723), p. 28.
[256] Capp, *The Ties that Bind,* p. 127.
[257] Capp, *The Ties that Bind,* p. 127.

concern from their loved ones caused distress.[258] The choice of non-conformity was certainly not an easy one and whilst these particular Friends did not, in the end, forgo their faith to please their relations, these accounts show of the difficulties they had felt and faced in making that decision.

Friends often recorded experiencing conflict with their parents and spouses due to their conversion to the Quaker faith. Richard Davies writes of a fellow Friend who found himself in friction with his Father due to their difference in religious belief, recording that 'he suffered much Violence by his Father, in regard that he could not conform himself, to that dry dead and formal Praying, that his Father used.'[259] After returning home from imprisonment he described how the Father beat his son and 'without Natural Affection' locked him outside for the night. Davies himself recorded the troubles he faced with his own Parents and the resulting conflict and division. He described how, when he no longer bowed to his parents or took his hat off in their presence, his father soon turned his back upon him.[260] Capp, too, provides the example of Thomas Ellwood, a young Quaker convert whose father was angered at his refusal to use the expected gestures of deference such as doffing one's hat.[261] Quakerism caused discord, not only for theological reasons but because it denied traditional courtesies and etiquette expected within families.[262] This desire to continue to maintain these courtesies offers some explanation for the backsliding or wavering of conversion in the accounts of Oliver Sansom and John Gratton, discussed above. With early Friends converting to the faith rather than being born into it, such a change in actions and interactions must certainly have been difficult for both parties.

However, whilst these accounts illustrate the conflict that arose within families, they also record times when the ties of kinship, and the affection and love one felt for a family

[258] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 198.
[259] Davies, *Account of Convincement*, p. 39.
[260] Davies, *Account of Convincement*, pp. 34-35.
[261] Capp, *The Ties that Bind*, p. 128.
[262] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 196.

member, could at times outweigh any religious difference one had.[263] The accounts stress that once family members had seen that their spouses and children had not been changed by their conversion of faith, into the stereotypes depicted in propagandist tracts and rumours, they were at times able to overcome division.[264] Within their spiritual journals, it is evident that Friends were keen to displace such claims found in propagandist tracts. For example, despite facing difficulties with his parents early on in his conversion to the Quaker faith, Richard Davies recorded how his mother came to him and looked upon his face and 'saw that I was her Child, and not as they said, Bewitched, or Transformed into some other Likeness, which was reported of Quakers then.'[265] Elias Osborn similarly described how his Father overcame his sons change in behaviour and language, as when being asked by a relation he replied, 'don't trouble thyself nor me about it, I have done what I can to reclaim him, but I am satisfied 'tis a matter of conscience to him, he is more dutiful to me now than before.'[266] In his journal, John Gratton illustrated how he and his wife, despite being troubled by their religious difference, managed to navigate such issues. He wrote of the sorrow they both felt for the others theological beliefs, saying that they disputed often, 'till we both wept; but we still loved dearly.'[267] Whilst not convinced of the Quaker faith yet, Gratton's wife offered support and kindness to her husband when he himself suffered for his faith; when troubled by some at a Meeting for wearing a lace band upon his collar she removed it for him, along with all others.[268] As these Friends illustrated, when it came to the religious leanings of loved ones, both sides were able to overlook such conflicts in an attempt to maintain their relationships. Adrian Davies concluded,

[263] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 198.
[264] Stevenson, 'The Social Integration of Post-Restoration Dissenters', p. 386; Walsham, *Charitable Hatred*, p. 278.
[265] Davies, *Quakers in English Society*, p. 36.
[266] Osborn, *Narrative of the Life*, p. 22.
[267] Gratton, *Journal of the Life*, p. 50.
[268] Gratton, *Journal of the Life*, p. 48.

> No matter how shocking and deplorable conversion to Quakerism seemed, parents and other kin often sought to maintain contact with their erring relatives. Indeed, there is some evidence that ties of affection and genuine concern for family members carried greater weight than dislike of the new religion…[269]

This overcoming of religious difference, and ties of affection and concern, can be seen within the encounters discussed here. Though it is clear religious difference caused great difficulty and discord within early modern families, these records suggest that it is through the bonds of love and tenderness that some were able to overlook this.

Alongside their accounts of suffering and persecution, then, Friends recorded these times of difficulty and strain as well as the support, kindness and even acceptance that they experienced with their families and loved ones. Despite their change in faith, it appears that many Quakers desired to maintain happy and positive relationships with their kin. The discussion above goes some way in explaining the emotions behind such relationships and the difficulties and inner conflict that no doubt occurred during these times of support and kindness. That they included these in their journals, and within their records of sufferings, suggests of their individual and even collective importance to Friends. Writing on the early modern family, Katie Barclay tells us:

> it seems apparent 'family' was something that people held a strong investment in; in many contexts, family was a significant component in self-definition, and was strongly implicated in not only the making of identity but also future life choices & outcomes. As such, it was an institution that society and individuals cared deeply about.[270]

Whilst the religion one followed was of great importance in how they identified themselves, their relationships and connection to their family members and spouses clearly had an influence

[269] Davies, *Quakers in English Society,* p. 198.
[270] Barclay, 'Family and the Household', p. 246.

on how they understood their own self-definition. These journals allowed the writer to explore not only their religious existence and identity but also their place within their defining community.[271] As we have seen, looking at the accounts above, the communities in which these Friends defined themselves were not just those belonging to the Quaker faith but also communities of kin and loved ones regardless of them holding differing opinions on belief. These accounts illustrate the emotional responses that developed between Friends and their kin, and the influence that these subsequently seemed to have on how they understood their conversion and later experiences. Friends recorded both despair and sadness when reflecting upon the division that their conversion caused, as well as happiness at the times where their parents offered love and affection, looking beyond their differences in faith. Family ties were clearly significant to these Friends, and whilst they could not share the same faith as their kin, from these journals there appears an importance to remain as much as they could within their family unit - a desire to continue to identify with their loved ones regardless of their religious differences.

III

The decision by Friends to record these relationships and encounters in their writings suggests the significance they held for them. Whilst early Friends changed their faith, they often did so within the communities in which they had always resided, surrounded by those whom which they had shared customs and experiences. Early Modern villages were closely connected and interwoven entities, where inhabitants lived, worked and socialised together.[272] Elise Dermineur writes,

[271] Bruce Hindmarsh, *The Evangelical Conversion Narrative: Spiritual Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 10.
[272] Dermineur, 'Village', p. 242.

> … the village referred to a physical place but also to a group of people living together, often related by blood, most likely knowing each other, and where various layers of social, legal, economic and emotion norms shaped accordingly the behaviour, gestures and rhetoric of rural dwellers, and where individual and collective emotions were nurtured and expressed both within the household but also within the community as a whole.[273]

As we have seen, then, these experiences and encounters that occurred between Friends and their conformist neighbours and kin elicited many different responses and emotions. As the accounts above have illustrated, Friends understandably experienced division and grief as a result of their faith, but they also found acceptance, support, and kindness. These relationships were of course, complex, and as this thesis has suggested they would have held many different meanings to those who experienced them. However, these encounters would have also been a symbol of the relationships and existence Friends once experienced with their conformist family and neighbours, and as the narratives in the documents would suggest, it would appear that many still desired to maintain these relationships, despite their change in faith.

As both Katie Barclay and Elise Dermineur have shown, familial and communal relations were significant parts of early modern self-definition and identity.[274] Through the recording, collating and circulating of such accounts, Friends were not only attempting to define their existence and identity in regard to their faith but also in relation to the communities in which they resided. Much work has been done on the existence and identity of the Quakers as a marginalised sect, and of course this was the reality for many. However, as the above examples have illustrated, this was not the only existence that Friends chose to portray. Whilst their conversion in faith often caused times of difficulty and conflict, Friends also recorded and

[273] Dermineur, 'Village', p. 242.
[274] Barclay, 'Family and the Household', p. 246; Dermineur, 'Village', p. 242.

disseminated times of communal acceptance and integration – at times describing their own desire to remain a part of the communities in which they resided. As discussed in the earlier chapters, the process of compiling and collecting these accounts allowed marginalised Friends to maintain a united existence despite the distance they may have faced.[275] The collecting, memorialising and circulating of accounts of suffering allowed Quakers to create an internal identity and self-definition that united them during such difficult and persecutory times; through written contact these early Quakers were able to maintain their sense of identity.[276] That Friends also chose to include positive encounters between themselves and their conformist neighbours and kin - times of support, kindness, acceptance and integration – would suggest a desire to define themselves not only in terms of their marginalisation and difference, but by an ability to find an existence and place alongside their conformist neighbours and kin. In these instances, then, Friends were defined not only by their faith but by their relation to their wider conforming communities.

[275] Liesbeth Corens, 'Dislocation and Record-Keeping: The Counter-Archives of the Catholic Diaspora', *Past and Present* (2016), pp. 269-287 (pp. 272-274, 280).
[276] N. H. Keeble, *The Literary Culture of Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-Century England* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1987), p. 78, 81.

Conclusion

Returning to the passage from Richard Davies' journal introduced at the beginning of this thesis, we are reminded of the importance that Davies saw in recording the 'Mercy, and Tenderness, and Compassion' alongside the 'Hard-Heartedness and Cruelty' that the early Quakers faced.[277] As this thesis has illustrated, Davies was not alone in his belief in the importance of recording these encounters. Throughout this dissertation, we are presented with numerous accounts of communal and familial support that Friends chose to record and memorialise. Whilst these encounters of support and compassion have been used by academics to illustrate the social integration of seventeenth century Quakers, little has been done to analyse their inclusion within Records of Sufferings or spiritual journals, or to analyse the act of recording, memorialising and collating them.[278] This study has looked to begin to provide answers to these questions.

This thesis has offered a number of suggestions for the ways in which these Friends would have understood and perceived these encounters, and subsequently the reasoning behind their inclusion within their records of sufferings. Firstly, chapter one looked at the presence of the sympathetic bystander who witnessed the suffering of Quakers, displaying tears and compassion, and helped to validate the position of Friends as martyrs suffering for the true faith. Through the recording and collating of these encounters, these Friends were attempting to create a counter-narrative that argued against the heretical claims that were held against them and instead proved the probity and virtue of their cause. These records, and their circulation, also helped to unite the marginalised and dispersed community during times of severe

[277] Richard Davies, *An Account of the Convincement, Exercises, Services and Travels of that Ancient Servant of the Lord Richard Davies* (London: J. Sowle, 1710), p. 244.
[278] Bill Stevenson, 'The Social Integration of Post Restoration Dissenters 1660-1725' in *The World of Rural Dissenters*, pp. 360-387; Adrian Davies, *The Quakers in English Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 191-215.

persecution. Secondly, chapter two studied accounts where neighbours and kin stepped in to limit or prevent the persecution of Friends. By recording these encounters, Friends were creating a narrative of injustice that surrounded their persecution. In these records, Quakers emphasised their 'peaceful' nature and contrasted it with the 'immorality' of the persecutors, themselves, who were shown to be going against the wishes of the wider community – as illustrated when neighbours and kin risked financial and legal strain themselves to help subvert the persecution of Friends. This self-fashioning, again, looked to create an alternative narrative and archive where Friends argued against the claims of sedition and discord that had been placed against them. Finally, chapter three explored how these encounters would have been viewed by Quakers and their neighbours and kin in an affective light. More than just being understood and utilised for rhetorical and persuasive purposes, these encounters would have reflected personal bonds and relationship ties with members of their families and communities outside the Quaker faith. As the suffering records and spiritual journals attest to, despite their difference in faith, these relationships were important facets in the communal and self-definition of these early modern Friends.

This self-definition and identity formation has been an important aspect of this study. In his article on English Quakers and their neighbours in the late seventeenth-century, John Miller argued that suffering was an integral part of early Quaker identity.[279] Of this we have no doubt; as discussed in the introduction of this thesis, a number of historians have highlighted this as a crucial facet of the identity of Friends.[280] Simon Neil Dixon, for example, writes that it is through the collecting and recording of accounts of sufferings of individual Friends, that

[279] John Miller, '"A Suffering People": English Quakers and Their Neighbours c. 1650-c.1700', *Past & Present,* 188 (Aug., 2005), pp. 71-103 (p. 71).
[280] John Knott, 'Joseph Besse and the Quaker Culture of Suffering' in *The Emergence of Quaker Writing: Dissenting Literature in Seventeenth-Century England* ed. by Thomas N. Corns and David Lowenstein (London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1995), pp. 126-141 (p. 126); Miller, 'A Suffering People', p. 71.

Quakers were reinforcing an identity of suffering and martyrdom.[281] As this thesis has shown, however, within these accounts of sufferings Friends also made the choice to record and collect accounts of kindness and compassion, along with times of communal integration and acceptance from their neighbours and kin. As the collection of accounts of persecution added to the identity of a marginalised and suffering sect, it must also be acknowledged that through the recording and gathering of accounts of sympathy and support Friends were attempting to add another facet to their identity. The act of recording these encounters is important in itself, and their existence throughout the Original Records of Sufferings and beyond highlights their significance to the Friends who documented them. However, with the emphasis on publication of accounts of sufferings by the leaders of the sect, the Friends writing these accounts would have had some expectations that the encounters they recorded would have read and seen by an audience - as many were at a later date as they made their way into published collections such as Joseph Besse's *Collection of the Sufferings of the People called Quakers* in 1753.[282] This thesis argues, therefore, that through the recording and circulating of these encounters these Friends were attempting to portray, both inwardly and outwardly, another facet of Quaker identity, where they were defined not only in terms of their marginalisation or difference, but also their ability to find support, integration and acceptance within their local communities despite this difference in faith.

[281] Simon Neil Dixon, 'Quaker Communities in London 1667-c1714' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of London, Royal Holloway, 2005), p. 106.
[282] Knott, 'Joseph Besse', p. 129; Brooke Sylvia Palmieri, 'Truth and Suffering in the Quaker Archives' in *Archives and Information in the Early Modern World* ed. by Kate Peters, Alexandra Walsham, and Liesbeth Corens (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 239-262 (p. 243); Richard T. Vann, 'Friends Sufferings – Collected and Recollected', *Quaker History*, 61 (1972), pp. 24-35 (p. 24); Joseph Besse, *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People called Quakers: Volumes I and II* (London: Luke Hinde, 1753).

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