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**Richard Champion and the Society of Friends**

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## Richard Champion and the Society of Friends

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Richard Champion (1743–1791) was a Bristol merchant and porcelain manufacturer, best known to historians for his crucial role in the 1774 election of Edmund Burke as Member of Parliament for Bristol and for his close friendship with Burke over the ensuing decade. Burke, who between 1774 and 1780 visited his constituency only twice, relied heavily upon Champion to provide him with advice and information from the city as well as to disseminate to his constituency the ideas of the 'Rockingham Whigs', for whom Burke was an eloquent spokesman.<sup>1</sup>

Among fine arts historians and collectors, Champion's name is inseparably linked with that of William Cookworthy, from whom he eventually took over the manufacture of the first true porcelain in England.<sup>2</sup> Although prized today for its classical lines and historical significance, Champion's porcelain never brought him financial reward. His prolonged and expensive efforts to renew his patent in Parliament, contested vigorously by his opponent Josiah Wedgwood, marked the beginning of his financial problems, and the American War of Independence brought a near end to his once active North American trade. Only an elaborate financial agreement with friends and creditors in 1778 allowed him to escape bankruptcy, all too common among his friends and business associates. By 1781 his Bristol porcelain works were closed, and late in the year Champion moved to Staffordshire with modest plans to enter into the manufacture of porcelain amidst the many potteries there.

When Burke was appointed Paymaster General of the Forces under the Rockingham ministry in March of 1782, he called upon Champion to become one of his two deputies. Champion's service under that and the succeeding coalition ministry was brief and unsatisfying to him. Disillusioned, financially insecure, and suspected by his friend Burke of financial indiscretion,<sup>3</sup> Champion emigrated with his family to South Carolina where he lived as a gentleman farmer until his death in 1791.

Whereas historians have studied a number of aspects of Champion's career,<sup>4</sup> no one has examined the important role that religion and religious ideas played in his entire life. Champion was a member of the Society of Friends or 'Quakers' until 1778 (a fact never mentioned by his biographer, Hugh Owen). He was one of a growing number of Quakers in London, Bristol, and other commercial centres whose religious beliefs were challenged by a variety of new ideas, broader commercial opportunities, and the acute stresses of the War of Independence in America.

English Quakers had emerged from a century of persecution and 'sufferings' and by the second half of the eighteenth century were more numerous and prosperous than ever before. In Bristol, Quakers were leaders in the transatlantic trade, the newspaper industry, banking, and the manufacture of brass, chocolate, and porcelain.<sup>5</sup> After 1720 they were no longer barred from membership of the prestigious Society of Merchant Venturers.<sup>6</sup> Quakers further distinguished themselves in charitable organizations, most notably by their consistent support of the Bristol Infirmary.

In their origin the Society of Friends represented what one historian has called the 'left wing' or 'radical extreme' of Puritanism.<sup>7</sup> The Quaker belief in the 'Inner Light' (a personal experience of divine grace), which is available to all people, distinguished them from Calvinist Puritans. Moreover, their emphasis upon an inner spiritual experience led them to 'out-Puritan' the Puritans 'in their attitude toward what most people called the "world".' This led to 'distinctive ways of behaving' which set Quakers apart from other Christians.<sup>8</sup> Although Quakerism by the eighteenth century had become a 'more bourgeois religion' and might be said to resemble a 'connection' more than a religious sect, it continued to maintain traditional beliefs and practices which gave Quakers a clannish and distinctive character.<sup>9</sup>

According to the principles of their faith, Quakers rejected most worldly things in favour of a plain lifestyle. They eschewed traditional conventions of respect for social rank, refused to swear oaths or pay tithes, and they did not participate in privateering, smuggling, or the slave trade. Highly prized by the Quakers were the principles of hard work, self help and charity, and while the Society frowned upon frivolities such as public amusements or the theatre, they valued education, especially when it was practical or utilitarian in nature. Friends staunchly refused to pay taxes for, or participate in any form of, military service. The Society discouraged its members from participating in political affairs and demonstrated their support of the government by encouraging an acceptance of the political *status quo*. It was this attitude which probably resulted in their unofficial but frequent exemption from military service.<sup>10</sup>

Although Friends on both sides of the Atlantic were chastized by the Society for warlike activities during the Seven Years War (1756–1763), the English Society increased its vigilance during the American Revolution (1775–1783).<sup>11</sup> It has been suggested by one historian that the English Society of Friends, which took a forthright stand in opposition to the revolution by its 'obedience to established authority', felt compelled to provide examples of consistency to American Friends.<sup>12</sup> It is also possible that disciplinary issues such as privateering were more frequently discovered and dealt with later in the century because of the Society's increased organizational efficiency and the use of the method of 'Enquiries'.<sup>13</sup>

In Bristol, between 1774 and 1777 there were between one and three disownments within the Society of Friends per year, whereas in 1778 that figure rose to seven, and in 1779 there were ten disownments.<sup>14</sup> The disownment of Champion's relative, George Champion, in 1779 for his 'concern in vessels fitted out with Letters of Marque' as well as the disownment of Champion's friend Thomas Frank in 1778 for running up a 'debt far beyond his Capital and ability to discharge' are two examples of the economic stresses of the late 1770s.<sup>15</sup>

This paper is limited to the study of one individual who, like his relative and friend, was disowned by the Society in the late 1770s. It is quite likely that Champion exemplifies an important trend within the English Society, and certainly this phenomenon deserves closer scrutiny by historians. It is clear, however, that the departure of Champion from the Society of Friends was not the simple result of a sudden financial indiscretion on his part. It was, instead, the product of a complex set of new ideas, a result of expanded business and political horizons of his day, forced into focus by the abrupt crisis in America. Champion never abandoned many of the fundamental principles of his Quaker faith. He remained a man of great charity devoted to the idea of the brotherhood of mankind. He was, however, a political and business-minded being who could not withdraw from the challenges and problems of the world in which he moved. The Utopia he sought in his final, dramatic act of emigration was, in fact, inspired by Quaker principles.

Champion's activities in the Society of Friends can be traced in Bristol from 1764 until 1778 in the Men's Minutes and other records of the Society. Until his uncle Richard Champion's death in 1766, Champion is referred to in the Minutes as Richard, Son of Joseph Champion, or as Richard

Champion, Jun<sup>r</sup>. The Minutes themselves catalogue a rather stormy relationship with the Society and have sometimes been used by historians as evidence that Richard Champion was not a very good Quaker.<sup>16</sup> They must be read in conjunction with the records for annual collection, the diary of Sarah Champion Fox (Richard's sister), Champion's private correspondence and other primary sources.

Champion and his wife Judith Lloyd<sup>17</sup> are first mentioned in the Minutes of the Society of Friends in 1764 when, because of their marriage outside the Society, they were visited repeatedly by members. Champion had failed to secure his father's blessings for his marriage. In fact, according to the diary of Sarah, Joseph Champion had been so opposed to the union as to issue 'a threat of removing my brother by force from his native country.'<sup>18</sup> Without parental approval, a requisite of the Society of Friends, Champion eloped with his new bride to Edinburgh. Subsequently the couple stated that they considered themselves members of the Meeting, but their efforts to persuade the Society that their case was exceptional met with no success until, nearly two years later in December 1766, the couple submitted 'a fresh Acknowledgement of their Transgression of our Rules of Marriage' and were taken 'into unity' once again by the Society.<sup>19</sup>

It is not clear why Champion's father was opposed to his son's marriage, although he may have protested that his son was too young for such a union or that the marriage brought no economic advantage. In July 1774 Richard's sister Hester refused to accept, for reasons of conscience, her father's marriage settlement, and her brother Richard was appointed and approved by the Meeting (along with a family friend) to attend the marriage, presumably *in loco parentis*<sup>20</sup>

It would have been easy for Richard as well as Hester to discontinue their association with the Quakers at the times of their respective marriages. That they actively sought the Society's approval, and in the case of Hester, refused a settlement from her worldly father who ridiculed the ideals of the Society, demonstrates their desire to continue in unity with the Society of Friends.

There is no further mention in the Society's Minutes of Richard Champion until 1777 when the Meeting for Overseers reported that he had been 'fitting out an Armed Vessel,'<sup>21</sup> an act strictly against the rules of the pacifist Quakers. While action was postponed, another serious charge emerged which eventually led to the writing of a testimony of disunion. It is unclear whether this testimony was actually delivered to Champion, but after 1778 there is no mention of Richard Champion in the Minutes or other records of the Friends in Bristol.

The charges against Champion are laid forth in the Minutes of the Men's Meeting and have been chronicled by a number of historians of Bristol porcelain.<sup>22</sup> Champion, who had purchased the patent and porcelain works from Cookworthy in 1773, apparently did not satisfy the claims of three original stockholders (all Quakers) who were not, according to Champion, continued as partners in the new company. In 1778, two of these men and the widow of the third sought within the Society 'to settle their Dispute by Arbitration or any other Friendly way.'<sup>23</sup> Upon Champion's refusal to submit to arbitration, a testimony of disunion was drawn up, but apparently not delivered because Champion 'being in a Situation before the date of that Testimony w<sup>ch</sup> Disqualified him for referring the affair, and he hath since as we are informed Assigned his property to Trustees for the benefit of his Creditors . . .'<sup>24</sup> The delivery of the testimony was deferred, yet no more mention of the matter or of Champion is ever made.

Between the initial charge and this entry of 24 August 1778, Champion had worked out an arrangement with a number of friends and creditors to act as trustees in the assignment of his assets to avoid a court declaration of bankruptcy. The details of the trust are not known, but in a legal document drawn up in 1817 (an effort by the heirs of one of Champion's creditors to collect compensation from the heirs of Champion) reference is made to the 'Indenture of Assignment' of

4 August 1778, whereby the property of Richard Champion was vested in the hands of trustees or the benefit of his creditors.<sup>25</sup> Various securities, bills, bonds, and notes owned by or owed to Champion were thus turned over to the trustees who would presumably have weighed such claims as those of the three Quaker stockholders.

Bankruptcy, or the imprudent overextension of one's finances which brings about a state of bankruptcy, was grounds for disownment by the Society of Friends. The testimony of disunion against Champion, however, had been directed at his failure to recognize or arbitrate the claims of three members. The assignment of his assets to trustees was made necessary by his general financial woes (the great expense of the patent renewal, a poor market for his expensive china,<sup>26</sup> and a cessation to his North American trade) but the step was probably precipitated by these and perhaps other claims he could not meet. It is not known whether the three were ever compensated, but it is unlikely, as Champion apparently felt that Cookworthy, not he, bore responsibility.<sup>27</sup>

While there is no record of the disownment being delivered to Champion, there is also no record of Champion formally disavowing his membership in the Society (as his friend, Joseph Harford, was to do in 1779). Neither party definitively severed ties.<sup>28</sup> Champion, for his part, made no effort toward reconciliation and apparently ended his long association with the Quakers in 1778.

A study of Champion's financial contributions to the Friends confirm this fact. During the years when Champion was a member, he contributed to the Annual Collection a sum varying between two guineas (in 1766, the year his uncle Richard Champion died and left an undetermined sum to his nephew<sup>29</sup>) and half a guinea in 1775 (the year of Champion's difficult and costly patent struggle). The records for 1774, 1776, and 1777 are not complete so it is impossible to determine if and what he gave in those years, but in 1778 and beyond he no longer contributed.<sup>30</sup>

When his financial affairs were in a crisis and he ceased to be a donor to the Society of Friends, Champion continued (in 1778 as well as 1779) his contribution of five guineas to the Bristol Infirmary. He also contributed five guineas in 1778 for the relief of American prisoners of war.<sup>31</sup> Disownment did not bar a Friend from attending monthly meetings, worship services, or from contributing to the Society. The evidence indicates that Champion deliberately chose to end his association of more than eighteen years.

There is no record of Champion joining the Society after he left Bristol. His sister, Sarah, does not mention her brother quitting the Society and makes only oblique references to the loss of her fortune (which had been tied up in her brother's porcelain works) and to the 'many trials' of the year.<sup>32</sup> One American observer, touring England in 1784, made the interesting observation that Champion was 'once of our Society, which he has quitted, but being a man of sense, his manners seem free from that disagreeable something which too generally attends those who have done so.'<sup>33</sup>

Was his departure from the Society a result of the threatened disciplinary action, or was it brought about by a number of complex factors which made Champion at odds (in principle and in practice) with the Friends? Did Champion renounce most of the tenets of his faith, or did he maintain some of the beliefs of the Quakers even after he quit the Society? To answer these questions one needs to look beyond the records of the Society of Friends to examine Richard Champion in his work, community, and family in light of the fundamental principles and practices of the Society of Friends.

From the diary of Sarah we learn much of the family and religious life of Richard Champion. Richard was the second child of Joseph and Elizabeth Rogers Champion. After the death of his mother in 1745, Richard and his sisters were cared for by his mother's family until 1751 when he

went to London to join his father, a merchant. A strong religious influence existed in Champion's Bristol relatives. His maternal grandmother, Ester Palmer Rogers, had before her marriage been a missionary in America. Contact between young Richard and his two sisters, Sarah and Hester, as well as with his mother's relatives, was continued by occasional visits. Sarah made it abundantly clear in her diary that her father's household was far from pleasing to her:

Much as I loved my brother nothing could compensate for the disagreeable things I met with in a six weeks' visit. Everyday produced some new scene of confusion-quarrelling &c, a neglect of attending places of worship, paying no regard to the sabbath, never reading the scriptures, and profaning the most sacred names by a wanton use. These and many other things made me earnestly wish to return home.<sup>34</sup>

Sarah shows considerable relief that her brother was finally settled in Bristol in November 1762 at the home of their uncle, Richard Champion. Known in Bristol as 'Gospel Champion,' Richard Champion senior was an active member of the Society of Friends. Along with the Lloyds and Rogers, he undoubtedly set about counteracting the unchristian-like behaviour of Champion's father. In her diary Sarah describes her uncle as 'a man of remarkable worthy character, in whom a solid good understanding was joined to a disposition uncommonly peaceful.'<sup>35</sup>

In many ways, young Champion's life fits into a common pattern for Quakers in the 1760s and 1770s. Like most Quakers of the time, he did not have a university education. Although this was probably due to social and economic factors which kept most merchants from attending university, dissenters were in fact denied admission to English universities. Barring themselves from most professions, including law and the clergy, and shunning the holding of political office, Quakers usually pursued agriculture or business as careers. The former, by the eighteenth century, was increasingly avoided because of the problems arising from their refusal to pay tithes to the Church of England.

Like many other Quakers of the day, Richard was sent in 1762 to learn to become a businessman under the tutelage of his uncle. In time he was to combine an active trade with the North American colonies with a career of porcelain manufacturing.

Although we have no record of his attendance at Meetings of Worship, Sarah (a devout Quaker all of her life who after 1768 lived with her brother and his wife) leads us to believe that Champion frequently attended Quaker Meetings as well as Quarterly and Yearly Meetings.<sup>36</sup> Many of his friends, especially in the 1760s and early 1770s, were Quakers,<sup>37</sup> and Sarah mentions his presence at many informal social gatherings of local Friends. Recalling the happy days of June 1766 Sarah wrote, 'My brother, Sukey Rogers, and myself were, in a peculiar manner, united in the pursuit of the "one thing needful".'<sup>38</sup> And in a letter to her brother and his wife in 1769 Sarah wrote, 'I differ not from my dear Brother in sentiment on one subject – I am well persuaded that too great are the inconveniences attending a want of similarity of Religious professions in the most important affair in Life, to suffer a Young Person of piety & prudence . . . to run the risk of the want of it.'<sup>39</sup>

The circle of friends in which Champion, his wife, and his sisters moved in their younger years was intimate if perhaps somewhat limited. As Sarah wrote in 1767, 'I have long been of the opinion it is safest and best to endeavor as much as possible to confine our intercourse to those who have been educated in much the same line as ourselves.'<sup>40</sup>

Occasionally, Sarah and her brother were exposed to visiting Quakers. In 1766 the London minister, Thomas Whitehead, visited the Champions for an evening, and in 1767 Samuel Fothergill (younger brother of Dr. John Fothergill) attended a Yearly Meeting in Bristol, describing to Bristol Friends his visit to America. Later, at the home of a friend, Sarah, Richard and others dined with him and 'engaged in testimony and supplication.'<sup>41</sup>

Champion, like other Quakers of the day, tended to establish business connections with other members of the same faith. In 1766, he inherited a portion of the estate of his uncle Richard. Two years later he presumably used some of this inheritance to invest in the china manufactory of William Cookworthy, a widely respected Quaker from Plymouth. Although we have few details of Champion's early career as a North American merchant, it is likely that he inherited a ship or ships from his uncle<sup>42</sup> whose business associates were most likely other Quakers. A large portion of Champion's shipping was to Charles Town (later Charleston), South Carolina,<sup>43</sup> where several of Champion's brothers-in-law settled. It was common practice for Quakers on both sides of the Atlantic to trade with one another. In fact one historian has observed that English Quakers, because of family and religious ties, nearly monopolized the trade with American Quakers. Mutual trust, so necessary in large, long distance transactions made without the assistance of lawyers and spread over a year's time, was supplemented by the fulfillment on the part of the English Quakers of many of the personal needs of their American friends.<sup>44</sup> The correspondence of Champion with his relatives in South Carolina clearly demonstrates the latter,<sup>45</sup> and while they do not appear to have acted as business partners, it is most likely that the South Carolina Lloyds helped to establish business ties in America for Champion.

Having established the fact that in his personal and business life Champion's associations were chiefly with other Quakers, let us look at a number of specific tenets and practices of the Society of Friends and determine whether or not Champion agreed with them in his principles and actions.

The Quaker practice of 'plain living'<sup>46</sup> led to a rejection of excessive materialism and the Society of Friends frequently cautioned its members against the dangers of acquisitiveness. As one Yearly Epistle from Bristol warned, 'One of the most prevailing enemies in this day . . . is the Inordinate love of riches, grandure [*sic*], Friendship, & fashions of the world.' In another yearly reminder the Society warned that in this 'Time of Ease & Liberty . . . too many employ their Industry & Anxiety for the Things w<sup>ch</sup> perish.'<sup>47</sup>

How did a merchant and a manufacturer reconcile his naturally acquisitive occupation with a doctrine that was inherently opposed to materialism?<sup>48</sup> Champion found the explanation, as probably many Quaker merchants did, in a social philosophy based upon charity. In 1763 he wrote to his brother-in-law, John Lloyd, in South Carolina, 'we were designed to be of mutual Advantage to each other, and therefore ought not to seclude ourselves from Society, as it provides us the Benefits which we might render to our fellow Creatures.'<sup>49</sup> A few years later he re-stated his hope that, 'whilst I am engaged in the Service of my fellow Creatures in the more busy Scenes of the World, I hope it will be productive of good both to them & to me.'<sup>50</sup> When he considered the purpose for which we were created, Champion wrote, 'no life can be acceptable to the Creator, which is not useful to his Creatures: we are not born for ourselves, but for the totality of Beings. In whatever station of Life we are placed, the Duties of it are inseparably connected with the great Interests of Society.'<sup>51</sup>

It never troubled Champion that one of the products of his manufacturing was fine, expensive china, probably because the traditional Quaker rejection of the fine arts did not extend to artisans and craftsmen whose work was acceptable because of its essentially utilitarian nature.<sup>52</sup> There seems also to have been a mid-century relaxation in the Quaker attitude toward the manufacture of luxury goods. It was, after all, not wealth but the correct use of one's wealth which was important.<sup>53</sup>

Champion was not only concerned with the use of his wealth but with the dangerous spirit of acquisitiveness. Writing to his friend James Dallaway of Bisley in 1769, Champion warned that businessmen must guard again 'shutting out every fine feeling of humanity and becoming literally like Beasts of the field, as to rise early in the morning and late retire to rest, and filling the time

with satisfying the wordly appetite for money, as they do for food.<sup>54</sup> Years later, writing aboard the *Britannia* after he had made the decision to emigrate with his family to America, Champion predicted that the present rage for luxuries was a temporary 'evil', and he extolled the basic simplicity of the American way of life.<sup>55</sup>

Champion was a living example of his own philosophy. In addition to his annual giving to the Society of Friends, he contributed to a number of local charities including the Bristol Infirmary, the Bristol Society for the Relief and Discharge of Persons Confined for Small Debts, and the fund for the Relief of American Prisoners during the American War of Independence.<sup>56</sup>

Following the previous service of four members of his family,<sup>57</sup> Champion held the position of Treasurer at the Bristol Infirmary from 1768–1778. During his ten years service to the Infirmary, where Quakers had long been influential, a crisis arose regarding the salary of the Infirmary chaplain.<sup>58</sup> Although the Infirmary had a tradition of religious toleration which allowed for the ministering of numerous denominations, an Infirmary chaplain from the Church of England had received a salary, collected by the clergy of Bristol, since the 1750s. In 1773, after the death of the chaplain, a quarrel arose between the Anglican clergy, who wished to designate their annual subscription to the Infirmary specifically for the salary of the Infirmary chaplain, and the Quakers and other Nonconformists, who felt that specified subscription was a dangerous precedent. A central figure in the storm of protest was the principal officer, Richard Champion, to whom complaints were addressed.

A letter to the treasurer, dated 1 February 1773 and signed by fifteen prominent clergymen of Bristol, set forth the Anglican position, but in March a general meeting of the subscribers, undoubtedly under the influence of the treasurer and other Nonconformists, 'Resolved that no person who does not pay his Subscription to the Treasurer for the usual purpose, can be allowed to recommend patients.'<sup>59</sup>

Although the annual collection for the Infirmary in the churches of Bristol fell drastically in 1773 and 1774,<sup>60</sup> the total number of subscribers was only slightly decreased,<sup>61</sup> and the total income of the Infirmary was not severely affected.<sup>62</sup> This resulted in part from the efforts of the treasurer who, at the time of his resignation, wrote that he had 'paid attention to the Aggrandisement of the Fund; considering it the principal object on which the Support of the Charity depends.'<sup>63</sup> It was surely no coincidence that in 1774 a collection for the Bristol Infirmary was requested from the Society of Friends and by December £61 17s. 5d. (a larger sum than the entire Anglican collection for that year) was ready to be paid by the Bristol Society of Friends to the Treasurer of the Infirmary, Richard Champion.<sup>64</sup>

The issue of the chaplain's salary came to a climax in October 1774 when Thomas Newton, the Bishop of Bristol, declared that 'an Infirmary without a Chaplain' was 'an antichristian institution' and totally withdrew his subscription.<sup>65</sup> Soon thereafter the entire matter was resolved when the Society of Merchant Venturers and the Corporation of Bristol agreed to assume the joint responsibility of an annual subscription for the salary of the chaplain. Acknowledging this fact in a letter to Richard Champion, the Bishop wrote:

London 27 March 1775

Your worthy Corporation and the Society of Merchants can never be sufficiently commended for their great generosity and goodness, but it would certainly have been more for the credit and honor of the Bristol infirmary to provide a chaplain out of the general fund than to depend upon particular benefactions. However I cannot but rejoice that some establishment is made for the Chaplain and probably when I return to Bristol in the Summer I may suscribe [*sic*] again.<sup>66</sup>

Charity was not the only means by which Champion sought to fulfill the Quaker directives concerning materialism. In his letters to friends we discover his thoughts concerning commerce and manufacturing, his two major pursuits.

In the first role, Champion contributed to society because

Commerce, if directed to its proper channels, enlarges the mind, and points out to it the use of which Riches, obtained by the connecting vast extensive Continents by supplying the wants of the one with the abundance of the other, and by bringing home to the native shores all that conduce to the pleasure, Ease and Enjoyment of its Inhabitants, ought to be placed, that of employing the poor in manufacture and encreasing [*sic*] the state by bringing up Navigators for its service.<sup>67</sup>

Commerce produces the money by which manufacturing, 'the greatest Utility to Mankind', can prosper:

The Manufacturer is exercising [*sic*] the Virtues of the Heart by Example. He finds employments for the Poor [,] he rebukes the Sloathful [*sic*], with the true spirit of Charity relieves the distresses of His dependants, and teaches them by his Conduct to look upon him as a Father and their fellow workmen as their Brethren ready to assist each other when ever sickness or Old Age overtakes them [.] [I]n a few words, the Manufacturer can in the most literal sense be said to performe [*sic*] the great precept of doing good to all Mankind.<sup>68</sup>

Long before the patent struggle with Josiah Wedgwood drained his finances and weakened his monopoly of the manufacture of porcelain, and long before the American non-importation agreements and the war brought ruin to his commerce, Champion rejoiced that he had combined manufacture and commerce to the betterment of mankind. The Society of Friends in Bristol had for some time operated a Workhouse, founded upon the idea of relieving its own poor through self-help and charity.<sup>69</sup> Champion endeavored, in his dual roles as manufacturer and merchant, to uphold the same principles.

Thus far we have observed a man of great industry and charity, a man opposed to extravagance and materialism, and dedicated to the service of others. It would be an error, however, to conclude that Champion, even before 1778, was a thoroughly conventional Quaker.

On five fundamental principles Champion demonstrated a questionable orthodoxy: his attitudes toward war, the theatre, social rank and classes, learning, and political involvement. In studying these areas it is important to examine the reasons for his divergence from the Society, how far he strayed in his unorthodox views, and to determine if his independence of mind and action contributed to his final departure from the Society.

Although there is no record of military service of any kind, Champion's private correspondence reveals that he was not a confirmed pacifist. He disliked war and felt it should be avoided, and he complained that governments too often prey on men's emotions to rouse them to battle. Referring to the 'charms' of the trumpet, drum and waving banner, he wrote to his young friend, Henry Davis, in Ireland in 1764,

Pompous Sounds please for a moment & they fill the mind with a Tumult that banishes Reflection; yet when it subsides, it is not unattended by gloomy Thoughts. It is not pleasant to survey a field of Battle reeking with the blood of those, who might have lived with Honour to their Country, or to behold our friends cut down in our very Sight [by] the sword, or swept off[f] by the Bullet. A fruitful Region made a barren desart [*sic*], and its Inhabitants the prey of sword and famine.

. . . The state [he continued] has fully succeeded in its Endeavours to invite its Subjects to enter into the Service. Everything pertaining to War has a pleasing and noble Appearance. Our Ideas are naturally Susceptible [to] Grandeur, and our minds are seldom tired of any display of the magnificent kind.<sup>70</sup>

Champion scorned this general attitude and felt that until 'Necessity calls upon us, [we should] leave any gay Images of war to those who are less capable of feeling.' He went on to analyse the two kinds of military courage and found that the 'reflective' (as opposed to the 'natural' or emotional) form of courage is 'built on the sure basis of virtue. This [Champion wrote] will be our Safety in times of Necessity, and will at all times make us take up arms in defence of those things which are dear to us.'<sup>71</sup> Here Champion clearly admitted, as did a substantial number of Quakers

in America during the revolution, that a war in defence of principle is legitimate.

Although Champion would not condemn his friend's service, for his part he preferred his cheerful fireside to the battlefield. 'It is [he wrote] the best and least dangerous state, and by far the most lasting.'<sup>72</sup>

Champion's fundamental attitude probably never altered, but he did succumb, on several occasions, to the 'charms' of the military establishment. In 1769 he described to a friend a visit to Portsmouth where he observed the 'Engines of War' and wrote that 'The sight of the wonderfull [*sic*] floating Machines is really sublime, and fill[s] the mind with Vast Ideas.'<sup>73</sup> One volume of his letterbooks, which includes poetry and miscellaneous prose, contains a vivid description of a battle as well as an account of the conquests of a privateer.<sup>74</sup>

As Champion's commercial activities expanded, so did his political awareness, and his attitude toward war began to sound somewhat more pragmatic. In a long letter in 1770, considering the various causes for the friction between England and Spain, he wrote, 'The longer we can preserve peace, the better able we shall be to prepare for War.'<sup>75</sup>

The 1760s and early 1770s saw a great increase in Champion's interest in American affairs. His brothers-in-law had joined the militia in South Carolina,<sup>76</sup> and he learned from them and other business correspondents of the firmness of the American position. He had long opposed the government's restraints on American colonial trade and was involved in the efforts in Bristol to repeal the Stamp Act. The one thing that made Champion recoil from his otherwise firm pro-American stance was the violence that accompanied the colonial non-importation movement. He found such 'terrible disorders' and 'violent extremes' altogether 'inexcusable.'<sup>77</sup> 'It is notable to stand up in defence of our liberties [he wrote his relative in South Carolina], but in this defence, we should be cool and dispassionate.' And later, he wrote 'To prevent the ill effects of vice and villainy of Men in Power, the People must be resolute, but without Violence in defence of their Violated rights; that when they complain of the Conduct of their Governor, their own should be an example.'<sup>78</sup>

Champion supported Burke's efforts to repeal the 'Intolerable Acts' and restore normal economic and diplomatic relations with America, and when the war finally came, he opposed it as a tragic struggle between two friends and partners in trade. He espoused neither the idea of American representation in Parliament nor American independency, but he disseminated large amounts of American intelligence to leading members of the Rockingham Whigs who shared his sympathetic attitude toward the Americans. His reports to Burke, the Marquis of Rockingham, the Duke of Portland, and other opposition leaders were met with repeated expressions of thanks and were, on the whole, presented in a factual, unemotional manner, sympathetic to the American side, but lacking in any enthusiasm for the war itself.

In March 1775, Champion wrote to Mrs. Burke, with some implied distress, that the Quakers in New York and Philadelphia 'are determined . . . to be loyal subjects.'<sup>79</sup> In August, however, Champion wrote to Lord Rockingham that, 'It is an absolute fact, that even the Quakers have armed, and one whole company formed of them, besides officers in other Battalions. They are all in military uniform.'<sup>80</sup>

Champion was informed in December 1775 in a letter from a correspondent in Philadelphia (probably Mr. Robert Morris, a business partner to whom he frequently wrote<sup>81</sup>) that many Quakers in Philadelphia had armed:

Out of 8 Captains, 6 are of the Quaker families, and belong to the meeting; they will begin to recruit in a day or two, and are only prevented by waiting for their commissions, which are to be made only by the Congress. The rigid Quakers among us have made another attempt to put us in confusion; about 30 of them, as a public body, have petitioned the Assembly to be exempted from bearing arms, or contributing towards the support of those who do. However I hope they will be silenced in a decent way, and yet with so much spirit that they will not attempt opposition hereafter. Those who are to reap, ought to plough and sow.<sup>82</sup>

The news of numerous Pennsylvania Quakers arming was spread quickly and was much exaggerated. It led many to mistaken conclusions about the position of the majority of Quakers in Pennsylvania who remained true to their pacifist conviction and opposed the overthrow of British rule by force.<sup>83</sup> Champion was not so deluded. He wrote to the Duke of Portland in 1777 that, 'with whatever desire the Quakers and Tories might wish for the approach of General Howe, the People [of Philadelphia], in general, had not the smallest apprehension of it.'<sup>84</sup> Although Champion was rather careful not to state his own reaction to the news that some Quakers were taking up arms, the general tone of his correspondence is sympathetic to the American position, and in no way does he upbraid those Quakers in America who had armed.

During the war, Quaker merchants in England faced a difficult moral dilemma. Should they disregard the dictates of the Society and protect their ships by arming them or, worse yet, should they abandon their trade with the enemy, obtain Letters of Marque and become privateers? Champion apparently never contemplated the latter, but he was not alone in seeking armed protection for his ships and their cargoes.

In December 1776, after his ship missed sailing with a convoy, Champion wrote, 'I put a few guns on board her [his ship, the 'Marquis of Rockingham'], as a means of defence only, for I can never, consistent with the principles I have always possessed, act offensively against a People supporting their Rights, and therefore can by no means think of taking a Letter of Marque.'<sup>85</sup>

In August 1777, Champion carried an offer from the Berkeley family to the Society of Merchant Venturers to command, equip, and meet the expense of manning a coasting convoy vessel to protect the merchant ships of Bristol.<sup>86</sup> Earlier that month, as we have already noted, it was reported at the Men's Meeting in Bristol that Champion was involved in the outfitting of an armed ship. The arming of convoy vessels or his own merchant ships, an undesirable defensive measure in Champion's mind, was to the Society of Friends a breach of discipline and might, even without his financial problems, have brought disownment.

Finally, no principled Quaker could serve as Deputy Paymaster of the Forces, but Champion's service in that position represented no real departure from his actions in the years just before he left the Society. Burke, whom he served, was dedicated to the prompt conclusion of the war in America and to a general decrease in governmental expenditure. Such principles were in no way inconsistent with Champion's views.

While it is easy to trace Champion's feeling about military matters, his attitude toward another subject, the theatre, is considerably more complex.

The proposal in 1764 to build a new theatre in Bristol was met with the general disapproval of the Quakers who, like the Methodists and other Dissenters, looked upon the stage as an evil institution which corrupted the mind and disseminated language and manners unbecoming to Christians. The role played by Champion in the theatre controversy has been discussed by several historians. He has variously been described as one of the original supporters of the project, one of its ardent opponents, and as a hypocrite who did one thing with the left and another with the right hand.

Kathleen Barker, in her book *The Theatre Royal Bristol, 1766-1966*, states that Richard Champion was one of three Quakers who were among the original shareholders of the 1764 theatrical enterprise, and the assertion was repeated recently by Georges Lamoine in *La Vie Littéraire de Bath et de Bristol 1750-1800*.<sup>87</sup> Richard Champion's name, in fact, does *not* appear among the signatures of the original thirty-four subscribers of the agreement signed on 17 September 1764, nor is it among the eleven additional ones added to the document on 30 May 1766.<sup>88</sup> The text of a second document drawn up on 26 August 1767 does list 'Richard Champion, Merchant' as one of the fifty subscribers of the theatre, but where his signature should have been added in a numbered space at the bottom of the sealed document, his (along with one other)

signature is mysteriously missing, and his name was not listed among those present when the document was sealed and delivered.<sup>89</sup> Neither his letterbooks nor his sister's diary gives any indication that he was absent from Bristol at this time.

Did Champion actually purchase a share in the theatre? P.T. Underdown has suggested that the shareholder was probably Champion's cousin of the same name.<sup>90</sup> The likelihood of Champion's involvement is increased, however, by the fact that several of his friends (Joseph Harford, Paul Farr, and Thomas Farr) and a future business partner (Edward Brice) were among the shareholders. A letter from Sarah to her brother, dated only one week after the drawing up of the 1767 document, contains negative comments about the stage, but no specific mention of his holding a share in the Bristol theatre. It is possible that Champion intended to purchase a share and later changed his mind because of Quaker pressure against such an enterprise.

If Champion did purchase a share in 1767 (when he might have acquired by inheritance the necessary large sum through the death of his uncle in 1766), he most certainly disposed of it before 1773, for there is no mention of Champion in the Quaker Minutes at this time when his friend Joseph Harford agreed, under pressure, to relinquish his.<sup>91</sup>

Historians have long asserted that Champion was the author of several vitriolic, anonymous attacks against the building of the theatre, most notably, 'The Consequences of a New Theatre' and 'Bristol Theatre: A Poem.'<sup>92</sup> These works, which stress the religious and moral evils of the stage, bear some resemblance to the 1764 Quaker Remonstrance against the theatre. Lamoine gives a lengthy analysis of these pieces, largely based on the studies of P.T. Underdown and G.T. Watts,<sup>93</sup> and builds the case that Champion, almost single-handedly, led the Bristol Quaker opposition to the theatre.

In examining the Minutes of the Society of Friends, one finds that in 1764 Richard Champion was one of several members of the Society chosen to draw up and later to present the Quaker Remonstrance against the theatre, first to the mayor and later to the aldermen of the city.<sup>94</sup> This was certainly the work of Richard Champion, senior, or 'Gospel Champion.' 'Richard Champion, jun' or 'Richard, Son of Joseph Champion' as he is referred to in the Society Minutes, had, along with his wife, not yet been accepted into 'unity' after their marriage outside the Society. On the very day that the uncle was reported to have signed the Remonstrance against the theatre, the nephew and his wife were asked to 'demean themselves consistently with the Rules of our Society.'<sup>95</sup>

It seems most likely that Richard Champion, Sr., one of the elder leaders and largest donors to the Society of Friends, might also have taken part in the literary battle against the theatre. The religious spirit motivating the Remonstrance, which he helped to draw up and deliver, was consistent with the anonymous literary attacks. It is improbable that twenty-one year old Champion, junior, living with his new bride at the home of his mother-in-law and the object of Quaker disciplinary action, would have taken an active role in the issue at this time.

Champion's only mention of the theatre in his extant letters of this period does not support the hypothesis that he was the author of the anonymous protests:

I am not an Enemy to Amusements, when they are confined to the higher ranks of People. The Danger I think to be apprehended [*sic*] from them, is when they are rendered too cheap and the lower ranks find admittance. We have an Example in this City at this time. Not content'd with the play house at Jacobs Well, which surely was near enough, to make its access easy to the better sort, they are now building a new one in the very Centre of the town where the common People will find such easy access, as scarce to be missed from their families, where their Duty lies. I admire a Theatre. Its abuse only displeases me, and that I want to see remedied.<sup>96</sup>

If Champion opposed the theatre it was for *social* rather than for the religious reasons expounded in the anonymous protests. His position was not altogether inconsistent with the Quaker emphasis upon moderation which, for example, discouraged but did not ban the use of

alcohol or the frequenting of public places of amusement. Most Quakers in the mid-eighteenth century were, like Champion, reasonably prosperous and not of the 'lower ranks.' In Champion's mind, one good way to exercise moderation, so ably practiced among Quakers, was to control the potential dangers of the stage among the lower classes.

Other evidence supports the argument that Champion, like other young Quakers whose orthodoxy waned in the face of new ideas, actually admired the theatre. In his letterbook covering the years 1766–1770 appear several pieces of 'Theatrical Intelligence' including the story of Mrs. Prichard's leaving her theatrical career, her farewell epilogue, a detailed accounting of the number of seats at Covent Garden, and an epilogue spoken by Miss Pope at Drury Lane.<sup>97</sup>

In 1773 Richard Champion (junior) was one of two representatives from Bristol who delivered to Parliament a petition to prevent the licensing of the new theatre. P. T. Underdown presents this as another effort in a career of consistent opposition to the stage, which extended even to the nearby city of Birmingham and was interrupted only by his pressing financial difficulties in 1778.<sup>98</sup> Lamoine uses this information to support his assessment of Champion as a hypocrite, and incorrectly points out that Champion was at the same time disciplined by the Society of Friends for holding a share in the Bristol theatre.<sup>99</sup> To assess these contradictory evaluations, it is necessary to look at the protest movement in 1773 and compare it with the earlier Quaker protest of the mid-1760s.

In contrast with the earlier campaign against the theatre, which stressed its immorality in long, theological and moral arguments, the campaign of 1773, in which Champion took a leading role, stressed the social and economic consequences of a theatre. The attitude was consistent with the view Champion had expressed in 1765. The printed statement issued by the Bristol opposition, and quite possibly written by Champion who preserved a copy in his letterbook, opposed the licensing on a number of grounds. If anyone had a right to a license it was the theatre at the Hotwells which had prior establishment as its merit and which had been 'totally destroyed' by the building of the new playhouse. The theatre-goers, who were 'almost wholly invalids,' were now expected to travel 'exposed to the evening air . . . a great distance from the Wells.'<sup>100</sup>

Despite these observations, the opposition argued that no theatre (and especially two theatres) was really needed in a commercial city like Bristol, comprised of 'an industrious, sober, frugal people.' The 'rapid tide of luxury' with its growing expense was inappropriate for the difficult economic times: 'Our trade wears a gloomy aspect, a scarcity of money prevails and credit is in a situation far from agreeable.'<sup>101</sup> In better times, in a better location, and with greater controls, a theatre could be an asset to society.

We would wish to support a rational amusement, could we overcome the difficulty of fixing it on a proper ground. . . . We are sensible that few things would contribute more to the advantage of mankind, than the drama properly regulated – by the continual formation of scenes, which might strengthen an attachment to virtue, and inculcate lessons useful in life . . . [and later] . . . we do not condemn the original design of the stage, or the advantages that might be derived from it, we only condemn its abuses.<sup>102</sup>

The opponents of licensing hoped for the 'support to an opposition from the far greater part of Citizens, unconfined by either religious or political sentiments.'<sup>103</sup> In fact, the opposition of 1773 was not at all restricted to Quakers, nor was the language of the protest similar to the earlier complaints. P. T. Underdown found it surprising that Samuel Peach, the father-in-law of Henry Cruger and a wealthy linen-draper with no affiliation with the Dissenters, accompanied Champion to London to lead the opposition to the licensing of the theatre.<sup>104</sup> The opposition's stance, however, was moderate and emphasized social and economic arguments which appealed to hard-working merchants of any denomination. Writing to Lord Dartmouth in February 1773 Champion stated that the 'far greater part of the Inhabitants highly dislike [the theatre] and look upon it as detrimental to the Government of the City.'<sup>105</sup> Not surprisingly, the Bishop of Bristol,

the highest Anglican clergyman of Bristol, was to present the opposition petition to the House of Lords but had, in the end, to defer the honour.<sup>106</sup>

Champion was neither the religious fanatic who led the earlier literary campaign against the theatre nor the bold-faced hypocrite described by Lamoine. For a Quaker he held a rather unorthodox admiration for the stage (which may have increased after 1774 under the influence of Burke, a great admirer of the stage and a friend of the renowned actor, David Garrick). Champion's public opposition in 1773 was not to the building, but to the licensing, of the theatre and was based not upon religious but upon social-economic grounds. While his arguments were not unacceptable to Quakers, they reflected the outlook of a modern Quaker merchant and were moderate enough in tone to be supported by non-Dissenters as well.

As with his position regarding the theatre, Champion's attitude toward social classes and rank was influenced by his own social and economic outlook. His entry into political life also had an important impact on his views in this area.

During his twenties, like most Quakers, he emphasized virtue over rank. In 'A Prayer' which he wrote and sent to his sister in 1770, Champion prayed for God to, 'Give my Country Kings who Deserves [*sic*] their Crowns less by Birth and Title, than Merit and Justice.'<sup>107</sup> And like most Quakers, he was very much opposed to ceremony, describing himself to his brother-in-law in 1764 as 'a Correspondent who possesses Freedom and hates Ceremony. [Champion wrote] I was ever of opinion that the easiest Manner in which Common Life can be passed is the happiest; Ceremony is the great Enemy to it and changes Pleasure into Pain.'<sup>108</sup>

Yet Champion recognized the reality of social classes and accepted cheerfully his lot:

Some are taught to govern[,] others to obey and as long as we act properly in the Situation which is allotted to us, we shall have full enjoyment of them [our station in life] whether it is in the political, the literary or the commercial world.<sup>109</sup>

Although he may have been more accepting of the social *status quo* than many Quakers, he was disdainful of pride and haughtiness which he thought sometimes characterizes one's superiors, and he emphasized that a liberal education might enable men to treat their inferiors with greater understanding, 'to make up the difference' between them.<sup>110</sup>

Eleven years later he was to oppose the chairing ceremony of the newly elected Members of Parliament for Bristol and wrote to his friend and recently elected Member Edmund Burke, who refused to participate in the ceremony, that it had all been a 'ridiculous parade.'<sup>111</sup> Champion's position here was consistent, but politically not very expedient, for it was to help widen the rift between Burke and Henry Cruger, the other member for Bristol who did assent to the chairing ceremony.

Champion's dependence upon people of rank and station increased considerably after the election of 1774 when he became identified as a member of the 'Rockingham Whigs.' His correspondence with Burke, and especially with the Duke of Portland and the Marquis of Rockingham, reveals an admiration for rank and title which was quite anathema to Friends. It shows a marked departure from his earlier correspondence (which frequently stressed a happy acceptance of one's state in society) to an obsequious posture wherein Champion belittled himself and lavishly praised those above him. Soon after he first met Burke, he sent Mrs. Burke a charming and humorous letter, introducing himself and his wife to her as if he were describing two friends. Though he spoke of himself as a 'Gentleman,' he apologized for his 'Common Boarding School Education,' his lack of the 'polish of [a] Genteel life' and 'the Elegant Manner of the Gentleman.' Champion emphasized his business abilities and his good nature and told Mrs. Burke that 'If you continue to honour the Gentleman with your attention his habits are not so fixed but that they may be removed, for he is capable of improvement and in time you may perhaps make something of him.'<sup>112</sup>

Champion's correspondence with the Duke of Portland began in 1775 and continued until 1781, and his correspondence with the Marquis of Rockingham covers the same years. Contrary to the practice of the Quakers, who shunned the use of titles because they elevated one man above another, Champion addressed them both as 'my Lord,' closing his letters with the customary 'Your grace's much obliged and most obedient humble servant.'

When praised by the Duke of Portland for his active role in securing the election of Burke in Bristol, Champion responded that he had merely 'performed [his] duty' and that it was not to his own efforts but 'to the goodness of your Grace that we are indebted for the grateful Sensations we now feel.'<sup>113</sup> Champion frequently apologized for intruding on the Duke of Portland or the Marquis of Rockingham with more American intelligence, and expressed an unworthiness for the thanks they always returned to him.

Later, when Champion was in the midst of a personal financial crisis, he thanked the Duke 'for the generous Indulgence which your Grace continues to honour me with.' Although there is no evidence that the Duke offered Champion financial assistance at his time of need or at any later time, Champion wrote, 'I am indebted to that Man, in whom Greatness and Goodness are concomitant virtues.'<sup>114</sup> Champion had made several attempts to find a wealthy investor to help save his porcelain manufactory, and he must have hoped that the Duke (whose own financial state was most difficult at the time<sup>115</sup>) might someday reward his political devotion with a financial investment in his porcelain concern.

The most that the Duke was able to do was to apologize to Champion for his 'inability to obviate those difficulties under which you have been so long struggling' and to encourage Champion to use his name 'freely' if it might be of use in Champion's future plans.<sup>116</sup> Champion was to make use of this offer on at least one occasion in 1781 when in Staffordshire he tried to arrange for the rental of a piece of property.<sup>117</sup>

Frequent gifts of specially executed pieces of porcelain to such dignitaries as the Duke of Portland, the Marquis of Rockingham, Lady Hyndford, the Burkes, and the Queen of England herself also demonstrate Champion's eagerness to bestow favours and ingratiate himself with his social and economic superiors. Unfortunately for Champion, such gifts did not prevent Josiah Wedgwood from successfully attaching some damaging clauses to the bill in 1775 to renew Champion's patent, nor did they ever entice any of the recipients to invest in his porcelain works.

The bitterness displayed by Champion in 1784 when he wrote his book on the . . . *Past and Present Political, Commercial, and Civil State of Great Britain*. . . may well have resulted from his failure to gain ample reward from his superiors. When he wrote with disgust about those at court who 'submit to any yoke' and the 'mere machines, guided by avarice or ambition,'<sup>118</sup> Champion may have been facing his own recent failure to profit within the system. Unwilling to stoop further for financial or political favour, he turned in his decision to emigrate to his earlier attitudes that stressed an acceptance of one's station in life and emphasized the doctrine of self-help.

Once in America, Champion's buoyant and optimistic spirit returned, and he quickly reverted to his old habits. His last, but unsuccessful attempt to curry favours was directed at none other than President George Washington to whom Champion sent a letter, a copy of his book, and a sample of his porcelain. Washington politely sent his thanks for the book and observed that it is commendable that one express one's opinions on commercial and political subjects, but no appointment of preferment was forthcoming.<sup>119</sup>

In his attitude toward education and learning, Champion was in many ways a traditional-minded Quaker, but in others he was more a child of the Enlightenment. Quakers had, in the century since their founding, earned an admirable reputation as pioneers in science and industry. One historian explains their success by the fact that their creed discouraged worldly pursuits and

left them time for study, while another points to the fundamental attitude of Quakers toward truth which encouraged an independent search for God's purpose.<sup>120</sup>

Frederick Tolles, in his study of American Quakers, revealed that Quakers in Philadelphia were leaders in a vigorous intellectual life, but that their espousal of the 'new philosophy' of empiricism emphasized not the abstract but the useful or utilitarian nature of rational inquiry. Furthermore, the flowering of Quaker intellectual activity in America waned from the mid-century onwards when Quakers turned away from the main currents of worldly activity in favour of cultivating their 'inner plantation'.<sup>121</sup>

Champion certainly embodied the Quaker ideal of the 'seeker.' His entire body of correspondence and papers bear testimony to his eagerness for self-education, the search for information, and the advancement of truth. In 1769 Champion was active in obtaining sponsors for a course of lectures in Bristol. 'We attend a course of lectures [wrote his sister, Sarah] – I shoud [*sic*] not have been one but my Brother took pains to procure Subscribers, so that I c'd not refuse being one.'<sup>122</sup> Such an endeavour was clearly an effort on the part of Champion to complete his own education, cut short by his early entry into business:

I had from my Infancy the most eager bent to study, which . . . was damped by a variety of unexpected Circumstances & an introduction to the Busy Scenes of y<sup>e</sup> World. . .<sup>123</sup>

[and later] The narrow Sphere of Life in w.<sup>ch</sup> I have moved having been a constant bar (?) to me. I can only boast a fondness for the Tasteful Arts which may perhaps assist the Dictates of Nature. I have indeed loved them from infant years. . .<sup>124</sup>

Contenting himself to 'the few hours I can devote to literary Amusement'<sup>125</sup>, Champion found time to write poems, prayers, and essays. In 1770 he sent his sister, at her request, a few samples: 'an unfinish'd Tragedy, part of [an] Essay on conversation . . . & some other Trifles that have escap'd the common Journey of their Brethren from my Bureau to the fire place. . .'<sup>126</sup> His many letters to friends, relatives, and business associates also demonstrate his broad interests. Years before his acquaintance with Edmund Burke, Champion wrote a long letter to his step-brother, Joseph Champion, on the importance of eloquence in history, its relationship to liberty in ancient Greece and Rome, and the sad neglect of it in English education.<sup>127</sup> His other interests included such diverse subjects as the paving of city streets, the manufacture of porcelain in Asia, and American geography.

The zealous literary interests of Champion are best illustrated by his participation in the establishment of a subscription library in Bristol.<sup>128</sup> In February 1774, after the first annual meeting of the Library, Champion (who had received the largest number of votes in the election of members for the governing committee) wrote that he was 'highly pleased with this Institution,' especially because Bristol was as renowned for 'its want of Literature' as it was for its commerce. He described himself as one of 'about half a dozen who first landed (if I may express myself in such a manner) this Revolution in the Town, for I may fair call it one and I hope I may live to see Bristol as famous for a liberal Cultivation of the Sciences as it is for the Cultivation of Trade and Manufacture.'<sup>129</sup>

From 1773 until 1781, when he and his family moved from Bristol, Champion used the library on at least sixty-five occasions.<sup>130</sup> The topics of the books he borrowed included ancient and modern history, biography, the classics, archaeology, and books of voyages and discovery. He did not confine himself to literature which might have met with the approval of the Society of Friends. Books he read included essays on military history, the *The Life of Cellini* (the free-thinking Renaissance artist) and the works of Edward Gibbon, renowned for his critique of Christianity.<sup>131</sup>

Champion's literary interests and his efforts in self-education raise an important question. Was he a Quaker fulfilling the role of a 'seeker,' or was he a part of the larger and more secular

phenomenon, the Enlightenment? The evidence suggests that he was both. Champion thought, wrote, and read widely and his interests were not confined to the useful or utilitarian. He admired and applied the methods of reason and observation to the world around him. Yet he placed knowledge in the context of a Christian system which rested upon broad Quaker principles exemplified by the way he lived.

In 1772, six years before his departure from the Society of Friends, Champion recorded in his letterbook a long letter. At times he sounded very much a Deist philosopher, extolling the wonders of the past and the beauties of creation that surround us:

The Searches into natural History particularly supply a fund of [the] divine System, but still more the contemplation of the ethical space where worlds succeeds [*sic*] each other in such amazing Progression, that [the] more we enter into their consideration, the more we are lost in the Infinity which surrounds, and teaches us more strongly than all the lessons we (?) can Learn that our abode in this world must be transient.<sup>132</sup>

We are lost in this infinity, he wrote, but mortal men like Newton have begun to unfold the natural laws so that as our understanding enlarges, so does our pleasure, but also our sense of being 'lost in their Immensity.'<sup>133</sup>

Religious People as they are call'd, tho' by as false a Name as they are mostly opposite to it, in reality are great Enemies to study. But their understandings which if not by nature narrow, and confined, are generally by practice [and] will not admit any progressive admiration of the Deity thru' the medium of the wonderful Works of his Creation.<sup>134</sup>

Although he was critical of 'religious people' and felt one learned more of God through a study of his creations, he was no Deist, for he also emphasized man's fallen state and the great need for true Christianity. Although the Reformation brought with it 'Daylight,' 'we have to guard against . . . the Common Error of removing from the Darkness of Superstition, into the still greater Darkness of Infidelity.' One's passions must be subdued by 'that divine system which we received from our Saviour Christ.' This Christian system was transformed by Champion, in the very same sentence, into the enlightened religious concept of, 'sacred commandments that are implanted (?) by natural Religion in every Breast of loving, & fearing God, & doing unto our Neighbors as we would they should do unto us.'<sup>135</sup>

Champion concluded his letter by stating that adhering to this system will bring rest to our minds and allow us 'to pursue our Discoveries without Molestation in a World of Spirits & enjoy ourselves in the Study of the works of almighty creation with a Happiness that shall never End.'<sup>136</sup>

As Champion's life became filled with business concerns and political activities, religion entered less and less into his correspondence, yet there is no indication that this attitude toward learning and its relationship to religion ever changed. He combined the traditional Quaker ideal of the 'seeker' with ideas from the Enlightenment which emphasized empiricism, natural law and natural religion. If there was a phenomenon which might be called the Quaker Enlightenment<sup>137</sup> certainly Champion exemplified it.

The political career of Richard Champion has been studied in a number of excellent works by P.T. Underdown,<sup>138</sup> but its effect on his religious life has not been examined. Well before his acquaintance with Edmund Burke, Champion took an active part in working for the repeal of the Stamp Act and, for a brief time in 1769 during the Wilkes controversy, played a role in the radical reform movement (the Independent Society) in Bristol which sought a number of democratic changes including shorter Parliaments and exclusion of placemen and touched upon the issues of electoral corruption, Parliamentary privilege, and habeas corpus.<sup>139</sup>

Disappointed by the 'conduct of part of my associates,'<sup>140</sup> Champion became disenchanted, withdrew his support from the radical movement, and gradually aligned himself with the more

moderate branch of the Whig party which rallied around the Marquis of Rockingham and his secretary, Edmund Burke. Thus it was natural that, when Parliament was prematurely dissolved in September 1774, Champion turned to Burke, who was then M.P. for Lord Verney's borough of Wendover, as a logical candidate for Member of Parliament for Bristol. Burke's knowledge of commercial affairs, and particularly those relative to the American colonies, was well known, and his powerful, recent speech in Parliament on American taxation had established his reputation as a friend of the British merchant and a foe of the restraints on American trade favoured by the Ministry of Lord North.<sup>141</sup>

During Burke's tenure as Member for Bristol (1774–1780), Champion played the crucial role of Burke's spokesman, fact-gatherer, and disseminator of information, and as such (along with Paul Farr, Joseph Harford, and a few others) bore the brunt of criticism against Burke.<sup>142</sup> Champion's self-imposed duties ranged from publishing Burke's renowned *A Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol* (a defense of Burke's absenteeism from Parliament in protest against the suspension of habeas corpus) to arranging a banquet of Burke's supporters in defiance of the government's officially proclaimed fast in December 1776.<sup>143</sup> He rallied Burke's supporters (and on one occasion, his own factory workers and dock hands) to fill the hall when pro-ministerial forces in Bristol tried to organize a loyalist address in 1775. In at least one instance Champion is known to have arranged for the printing and circulating of an American patriotic pamphlet.<sup>144</sup> Before and during the early years of the American War, Champion sent Burke, as well as other leaders of the Rockingham Whigs, fresh reports of American intelligence which, he was later to claim, brought the charge that he was in fact, 'an American agent' and 'the Apologist of Congress.'<sup>145</sup>

Most Quakers had seen no conflict between their religious tenets and working for the repeal of the Stamp Act,<sup>146</sup> and large numbers of Quaker merchants in Bristol, London, and other major cities took an active role in petitioning for the repeal.<sup>147</sup> Although the English Society of Friends sought to avoid a military confrontation and was, under the persistent leadership of Dr. Fothergill, behind the last serious efforts at seeking a compromise with the American colonists in late 1774 and early 1775,<sup>148</sup> when war actually came and a choice had to be made, the Society took a clear stand that Quakers should refrain from all political and military involvement.

The London Yearly Meeting Epistles of 1775 asked Friends 'to abstain from any connection with the political commotion of the day,' reminded them that the Bible had cautioned them about political disobedience ('thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people'), and asked Quakers to avoid even discussing the war.<sup>149</sup> Although some Quakers in America, notably in Pennsylvania, took a stronger loyalist or anti-Revolutionary stance than the parent organization in England,<sup>150</sup> the English Society did urge American Quakers to stay firm in their pacifist principles and refrain from any involvement in revolutionary activities.

Champion did not withdraw from the fray, nor did he remain neutral in his attitude toward the war. He did blame the Americans for inciting violence, he deplored the war itself, and was saddened and nearly ruined by its effects on trade. Although he neither wished for nor envisioned an independent America, his sympathies were firmly with the Americans. He charged not the American patriots but the policies of the British government with the responsibility for bringing about the war. Certainly these attitudes were in no way consistent with the policy of neutrality voiced by the Society of Friends.

Champion did not end his association with the Society of Friends during the campaign to repeal the Stamp Act, nor during his brief career in radical politics,<sup>151</sup> nor during his campaign activities in 1774. It was in the midst of the American Revolution, when he aligned himself quite publicly with the anti-ministerial party and expressed keen sympathies for Americans that his association with the Friends, who urged neutrality and non-involvement, came to an end. While not the immediate cause of his friction with the Society in 1778, his marked difference of opinion

on the American war helps to explain his permanent departure from the Society.

A decade and a half of intense involvement in the political and commercial life of Bristol and the nation had brought a number of changes in Champion. He had broken with the firm pacifist tradition of the Quakers, had armed his ships and helped in the organization of a system of armed convoys. The Quaker ideal of social equality had been modified by his involvement in the political career of Burke and by his attempts to secure financial and social reward for himself.

Champion ignored the Quaker exhortations that he refrain from political activities, support the *status quo*, and stay aloof from the political and military struggle with the American colonies. Yet as a Quaker, Champion worked hard for charitable and educational causes. He sought to blend industry and commerce to the advantage of society. He was a liberal-minded Quaker who admired learning, the arts and the theatre, but sought to confine the last to the needs of a well-ordered commercial city. Champion led rather too worldly a life for an exemplary Quaker and his religious and philosophical views were tempered by the ideas of the Enlightenment.

Most forces about him seemed to operate against Champion's orthodoxy, and after 1778 there was no effort on his part to re-establish ties with the Society. It could be argued that Champion had become his own version of a modern Quaker, an enlightened or liberal Quaker who bent or interpreted the teachings of the Society of Friends to modern problems and needs. Historians need to study the lives of other one-time Quakers from this period to determine if Champion was one of a growing number of rather devout but dissatisfied Quakers in England.<sup>152</sup> In America, because of the ethical and constitutional problems raised by the War of Independence, a number of Quakers formed an independent group known as the Free Quakers. They supported the American cause in the revolution, sanctioned the necessity of a *defensive* war, and approved of political participation.<sup>153</sup> There is no evidence that Champion knew of their existence or joined their rank once he emigrated, but he demonstrated a striking affinity of principles.

That Champion maintained important Quaker principles is apparent in the book he wrote in 1784 en route to South Carolina and had published three years later in London. Entitled *Comparative Reflections on the Past and Present Political, Commercial, and Civil State of Great Britain: With Some Thoughts Concerning Emigration*, the work is a set of rambling letters, bittersweet in their pessimism over the state of affairs in Great Britain and in their optimism for America, his new home.

In Letter XVI Champion extolled the virtues to be found in the interior of the Carolinas and Virginia, the very Quaker ideal of a simple and peaceful way of life: 'If they [the interior parts] have not those rougher properties which form the hardy and warlike soldier, they have those infinitely preferable qualities which constitute the quiet and peaceful citizen.' America was to him a land of simple clothes, no fancy ornaments or perfumes, and simple, handmade furniture. 'Instead of admiring the works of art [he wrote] we must content ourselves with admiring the works of nature.'<sup>154</sup>

During his service as Deputy Paymaster General of the Forces, Champion became disillusioned by court life and high politics, and in his book, praised the virtues of American simplicity, practical education, and well-placed values. Champion urged people of principle, especially at the court, to emigrate to America. Critical of the 'mere machines, guided by avarice or ambition,' he urged those of more scruples not to give up their principles, not to sacrifice their integrity, not to be 'mere instruments of obedience.'<sup>155</sup>

Finally, Champion proposed a planned 'association' to further the settlement of such disillusioned Englishmen in America. There would be three components of such an association: one group would lead the way into the American interior, 'to lay the foundation of a new settlement,'<sup>156</sup> another would stay in the American seaports to receive and assist the newcomers, while the last party would remain in England to send necessary supplies to the settlement.

Calling the Quaker settlement of Pennsylvania the only successful early settlement, Champion suggested that his new plan would eliminate some of the problems Penn's followers faced. Sounding the very essence of the successful Quaker businessman he had once been, Champion enthusiastically described the role of the party who remained in England. Such an individual should probably own land in both countries so when the deteriorating situation in the mother country became intolerable, he would have the option of emigration.<sup>157</sup>

Surely Champion's proposal grew from personal economic losses, disillusionment with government service, and a complicated breach in his ten year old friendship with Burke.<sup>158</sup> But the proposal is also the product of his Quaker background. Having allowed his formal association with the Society of Friends to end, he turned, during the emotion-filled moment of emigration, to an inspired plan for emigration based upon the old Quaker ideals of peace, simplicity, self-help, and brotherly love. Champion expressed the hope, never to be realized, that his friends might follow his 'planned association,' and in closing the final letter in his book hoped that 'the same religious attention shall descend to my posterity.'<sup>159</sup>

### Notes

1. See P.T. Underdown's excellent studies, especially 'Burke's Bristol Friends,' *Trans. B.G.A.S.*, 77 (1958); 'Edmund Burke, the Commisary of his Bristol Constituents, 1774-1780,' *English Historical Review*, 78 (1958); and 'Edmund Burke as Member of Parliament for Bristol,' D. Phil thesis, University of London (1954).
2. See A.D. Selleck, *Cookworthy 1705-1780 and his Circle* (Plymouth 1978); W.J. Pountney, *Old Bristol Potteries* (Bristol 1920); F. Severne MacKenna, *Champion's Bristol Porcelain* (Leigh-on-Sea 1947); and Hugh Owen, *Two Centuries of Ceramic Art in Bristol* (London 1873).
3. Dixon Wecter, *Edmund Burke and his Kinsmen* (Boulder 1939), chapter V.
4. supra 1-3. See also Walter Minchinton, 'Richard Champion, Nicholas Pocock, and the Carolina Trade,' *South Carolina Historical Magazine*, 65, (1964) and 70, (1969).
5. See, e.g., Paul H. Emden, *Quakers in Commerce. . .* (London 1939); J. Latimer, *Annals of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* (Bristol 1893, republished as *Annals of Bristol 2* Bath 1970); B. Little, *The City and County of Bristol* (London 1954, republished Wakefield 1967); and Wesley Savadge, 'The West Country and the American Colonies, 1763-1783, with Special Reference to the Merchants of Bristol,' B. Litt. thesis, Oxford, (1952).
6. W.E. Minchinton, editor, *Politics and the Port of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century, Petitions of the Society of Merchant Venturers 1698-1803* (Bristol 1963), 211.
7. Frederick B. Tolles, *Quakers and the Atlantic Culture* (N.Y. 1960), 74-5.
8. *Ibid*, 75-7.
9. Richard T. Vann, *The Social Development of English Quakerism 1655-1755* (Cambridge, Mass. 1969), 167, 206-7.
10. Anne T. Gary, 'The Political and Economic Relations of English and American Quakers [1750-1785],' D. Phil thesis, Oxford (1935), 357.
11. Margaret E. Hirst, *The Quakers in Peace and War* (London 1923), 228-9; Gary, *op. cit.*, 411.
12. Gary, *op. cit.*, 361-3.
13. This possibility has been suggested to me by Malcolm Thomas and Edward Milligan of Friends House, London. I know of no nation-wide study of the problem of disownments and resignations during the eighteenth century. A study of six London Monthly Meetings (recording five year periods only) shows a great increase in disownments and resignations in 1764, 1769, 1784, and 1789: *London Friends Meetings Showing the Rise of the Society of Friends in London* (London 1869), 123.
14. 'Testimonies and Minutes of Disunion of the Men's Meeting of Bristol 1762-1782', Bristol Record Office (hereafter abbreviated as B.R.O.) SF/A7/5.
15. *Ibid*; Owen refers to a George Champion as Richard's uncle; genealogical records in the possession of a descendant indicate a George Champion (1774-1817) was the son of Nehemiah Champion, a half-brother of Richard's father.
16. Owen, Champion's biographer, never describes Champion as a Quaker; Emden, (*op. cit.*, 70), states that he was not a 'convinced Quaker'.
17. Referred to by Richard and other family members as Julia.
18. MS. copy of the Diary of Sarah (Champion) Fox, Bevan-Naish Library, Woodhrooke College, 32.

19. Minutes of the Men's Meeting, B.R.O. SF/A1/11(a), 152. For a discussion of the traditional Quaker views on marriage see Vann, *op. cit.*, 183–7.
20. SF/A1/13 *op. cit.*, 86, 88–9; see also Sarah's Diary, *op. cit.*, 87.
21. *Ibid.*, 350.
22. Selleck, *op. cit.*, 74–77; MacKenna, *op. cit.*, 24ff.
23. SF/A1/13, *op. cit.*, 368.
24. *Ibid.*, 436.
25. This document, drawn up in Bristol by the descendants of Joseph Smith, dated 26 November 1817, is among the John Lloyd MSS., South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.
26. Champion to the Duke of Portland, Portland MSS., University of Nottingham Library Manuscripts Department, PWF 2,748.
27. MacKenna, *op. cit.*, 24. There does not seem to be sufficient evidence to determine who was in fact responsible. Champion's biographer argues sympathetically for Champion's position, but the biographer of Cookworthy supplies a better defence on behalf of Cookworthy. Owen, *op. cit.*, 21–2; Selleck, *op. cit.*, 76.
28. For example, the birth of Champion's daughter, Jane, in October 1778, and the death of their daughter, Eliza, in October 1779, were recorded by the Society, and in neither case were the parents listed with the usual indication for non-members. See B.R.O. SF/R1/1 and SF/R1/5.
29. Richard Champion Letterbook (hereafter abbreviated R.C. Letterbook), B.R.O. 38083(1), 167.
30. Records of Collection from 1763, B.R.O. SF/F1/2.
31. See below, n. 56.
32. Sarah's Diary, *op. cit.*, 133–135.
33. 'A Tour Through Part of England by Mary Shackleton, in the Year 1784,' *The Pennsylvania Magazine*, XL (1916), 157.
34. Sarah's Diary, *op. cit.*, 11.
35. *Ibid.*, 10. For the importance of the family in instilling Quaker beliefs and traditions in the eighteenth century, see Vann, *op. cit.*
36. *Ibid.*, *passim*, 25–156.
37. For example, A.R. Hawksworth, James Dallaway, Harry Davis, the Lloyds, the Harfords, the Rogers, the Frys, Thomas Frank, Sarah Farley and the Brices.
38. Sarah's Diary, *op. cit.*, 47.
39. Typescript copy of Sarah's correspondence, from the original, in the possession of Linsey Champion Bellamy of London, 259.
40. Sarah's Diary, *op. cit.*, 54.
41. *Ibid.*, 49, 51–2.
42. The ship *Lloyd*, whose master was Nicholas Pocock, was owned by both uncle and nephew.
43. See Minchinton, *op. cit.*; and Bristol Presentment Records, Avon County Reference Library.
44. Gary, *op. cit.*, 239.
45. R.C. Letterbooks, *op. cit.*
46. 'Plain speech', or the use of thee and thou, was apparently no longer consistently used by all Quakers in Champion's time. Champion never used it in his correspondence, nor did his sister Sarah, a very devout Quaker. Vann (*op. cit.*, 193) relates that its usage was declining in southern England by mid-century.
47. Minutes and Epistles of Bristol Yearly Meeting, 1769 and 1770, B.R.O. SF/A3/1.
48. Tolles (*Quakers*, *op. cit.*, 58–64, 154 fn. 2) explains the apparent contradiction between the Quakers' success in business and their testimony of plain living by their Protestant concept of 'calling' and their emphasis upon hard work, sense of order, thrift, prudence and honesty.
49. R.C. Letterbook, 38083(1), *op. cit.*, 71.
50. *Ibid.*, 38083(2), 110.
51. *Ibid.*, 38083(3), 29.
52. Tolles (*Quakers*, *op. cit.*, 77–9, 90) makes the connection between the Quaker plain style and the general Protestant rejection of the baroque and rococo styles with their Catholic associations. It is interesting that much of Champion's porcelain represents a return to classical lines and motifs.
53. Selleck, *op. cit.*, 123–4.
54. R.C. Letterbook, 38083(2), *op. cit.*, 298.
55. Richard Champion, *Comparative Reflections on the Past and Present Political, Commercial, and Civil State of Great Britain: With Some Thoughts Concerning Emigration* (London 1787), 285. The only extant copy is in the British Library.
56. State of the Bristol Infirmary, 1742–1805, B.R.O. 35893; *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, May 16, 1778; *Bristol Gazette and Public Advertiser*, January 8 and 15, 1778.
57. His grandfather, Richard Champion, his two uncles, Nehemiah Champion and Richard ('Gospel') Champion, and

- A.R. Hawksworth, a relative by marriage. As Champion expressed it, 'from its first Institution this office has been in our family', R.C. Letterbook, 38083(2), *op. cit.*, 109.
58. Munroe Smith, *A History of the Bristol Royal Infirmary* (Bristol 1917), 34ff.
  59. Minute Book 1772–1800, Royal Infirmary Biographical Memoirs III, B.R.O. 35893, 111–12.
  60. *Ibid.*, 112–3.
  61. State of Bristol Infirmary 1742–1805, *op. cit.*
  62. *Ibid.*; *An Account of Hospitals, Alms-Houses and Public Schools in Bristol* (Bristol 1775), 12–13.
  63. Letter from Champion to General Quarterly Board of the Subscribers, Biographical Memoirs, III, *op. cit.*
  64. SF/A1/13, *op. cit.*, 98, 121. The last previous such collection had been in 1770.
  65. Biographical Memoirs, III, *op. cit.*, 113.
  66. R.C. Letterbook, 38083(4), *op. cit.*, 198–9.
  67. *Ibid.*, 38083(2), 299–300.
  68. *Ibid.*, 38083(3), 240–1.
  69. Russell Mortimer, *Early Bristol Quakerism, The Society of Friends in the City 1654–1700* (Bristol 1967), 18.
  70. R.C. Letterbook, 38083(1), *op. cit.*, 83–4.
  71. *Ibid.*, 84.
  72. *Ibid.*, 85.
  73. *Ibid.*, 38083(2), 259.
  74. *Ibid.*, 120–2, 172–3.
  75. *Ibid.*, 38083(3), 140.
  76. *Ibid.*, 38083(1), 17–18. It is not known if Champion's American in-laws had maintained an association with the Society of Friends, although it seems unlikely because of their military service. Sarah recorded in 1781 that John Lloyd had sustained 'sufferings', the term used by Quakers referring to hardships on account of religious convictions, and stated that he was at present 'at his own estate on parole'. (Owen, *op. cit.*, 227). Quakers in America came under pressure for a variety of reasons including their refusal to serve in the military, to pay fines when they did not attend musters, and to subscribe to oaths of allegiance (Arthur J. Meekel, *The Relation of the Quakers to the American Revolution* (Washington 1979), chapters 9 and 15). By the time of his death in 1807, John Lloyd was heralded as 'one of the most zealous and active promoters of the American Revolution [who] was rewarded for his patriotism by the presidency of the [S.C.] Senate . . .' (*City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, November 11, 1807).
  77. R.C. Letterbook, 38083(1), *op. cit.*, 149. This and the following letter are reproduced in G.H. Guttridge, *The Correspondence of a Bristol Merchant 1766–1776 Letters of Richard Champion* (Berkeley 1934). Guttridge includes in his introduction a brief but good biographical sketch of Champion.
  78. R.C. Letterbook, 38083(2), *op. cit.*, 279, 283.
  79. *Ibid.*, 38083(4), 135.
  80. Rockingham MSS., Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, Sheffield City Library, WWM R1/1587. A similar letter with the same information, but no recipient's name, appears in R.C. Letterbook, *op. cit.*, 38083(4), 429.
  81. Champion's letters to Morris constitute part II of Guttridge, *op. cit.*, 23–67; originals are part of the Robert Morris MSS. in the Huntington Library.
  82. Owen, *op. cit.*, 161. This letter and much correspondence cited beyond this date by Owen is no longer extant. Extensive efforts by P.T. Underdown to locate the missing letterbooks were unsuccessful ('Edmund Burke as Member . . .' *op. cit.*, 502–3).
  83. Meekel, *op. cit.*, 131ff.
  84. Portland MSS., *op. cit.*, PWF 2, 732a.
  85. Cited in Guttridge, *op. cit.*, 66–7.
  86. Richard Champion to Samuel Worrall, Society of Merchant Venturers, Bristol, Bundle of Letters No. 20. Cited by P.V.M. McGrath, *The Society of Merchant Venturers of the City of Bristol* (Bristol 1975), 173.
  87. Kathleen Barker, *The Theatre Royal Bristol 1766–1966* (London 1974), 6; Georges Lamoine, *La Vie Littéraire de Bath et de Bristol 1750–1800* (Lille 1978); See also Latimer, *op. cit.* The other two were William Champion and Joseph Harford. The former was probably not a Quaker and the latter quit the Society in 1779.
  88. Agreement appointing trustees to further the purpose of building a theatre or playhouse, B.R.O. 8976(15).
  89. Declaration of uses and settlements of interests (original deed of trust with signatures of first fifty trustees), B.R.O. 8976(34).
  90. 'Edmund Burke as Member . . .' *op. cit.*, 457.
  91. See below, n. 99.
  92. The first was published by *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* in December 1764, and in the following year by T. Cadell. The second was published by S. Farley (Bristol 1766) but according to Lamoine was probably written earlier.
  93. P.T. Underdown, 'Religious Opposition to Licensing the Bristol and Birmingham Theatres,' *University of*

- Birmingham Historical Journal*, 5, no. 1 (1953); G.T. Watts, *Theatrical Bristol* (Bristol 1915), ch. 4.
94. SF/A1/10, *op. cit.*, 377.
  95. *Ibid.*, 374.
  96. R.C. Letterbook, 38083(1), 126. Cited by Owen, *op. cit.*, 108.
  97. *Ibid.*, 38083(2), 129–30, 167, 176–7.
  98. 'Religious Opposition . . .', *op. cit.*, 158–160. Underdown states that Champion 'intervened by remote control from Bristol' in a theatre protest in Birmingham. The extent of his involvement is unknown. Champion's letterbooks for this period are not extant, and evidence is limited to inferences by Burke and his brother (*Correspondence of Edmund Burke*, III (Cambridge 1966), 335–6).
  99. Lamoine, *op. cit.*, 217. It was Champion's friend Joseph Harford who agreed, in the face of pressure from the Society, to 'dispose' of his share. SF/A1/13, *op. cit.*, 22.
  100. Richard Champion Letterbook (1773–1775), Rare Books and Manuscript Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations (a sequel to 38083(4) at the B.R.O.) not paginated.
  101. *Ibid.*
  102. *Ibid.*
  103. *Ibid.*
  104. 'Religious Opposition . . .', *op. cit.*, 153, fn. 31.
  105. New York, R.C. Letterbook, *op. cit.*, Champion to Lord Darmouth, 18 February, 1773.
  106. *The Bristol Journal*, 20 February 1773.
  107. R.C. Letterbook, 38083(3), *op. cit.*, 131.
  108. *Ibid.*, 38083(1), 108–9.
  109. *Ibid.*, 38083(3), 242.
  110. *Ibid.*, 38083(1), 114–5.
  111. *Ibid.*, 38083(4), 97.
  112. *Ibid.*, 38083(4). 127–133.
  113. Portland MSS., *op. cit.*, PWF 2, 719.
  114. *Ibid.*, PWF 2, 742.
  115. A.S. Turberville, *A History of Welbeck Abbey and its Owners*, II (London 1939), 155ff.
  116. Cited in Owen, *op. cit.*, 150.
  117. Portland MSS., *op. cit.*, PWF 2, 760.
  118. Champion, *op. cit.*, 303.
  119. Dixon Wecter, 'An Unpublished Letter of George Washington,' *South Carolina Genealogical Magazine*, XXXIX (October 1938), 151–6. Washington's response is among the Fitzwilliam MSS. at the Sheffield City Library.
  120. Selleck, *op. cit.*, 124–5. Selleck cites Arthur Raistrick, *Quakers in Science and Industry*, (Newton Abbot 1968).
  121. Frederick B. Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House, the Quaker Merchants of Philadelphia* (Chapel Hill 1948), ch. 9 *passim*, 234–243; *Quakers*, *op. cit.*, 65–72.
  122. Sarah's correspondence, *op. cit.*, p. 206. See also R.C. Letterbook, *op. cit.*, 38083(3), 1.
  123. R.C. Letterbook, *op. cit.*, 38083(3), 279.
  124. *Ibid.*, 294.
  125. *Ibid.*, 280
  126. *Ibid.* 130.
  127. *Ibid.* 39–44.
  128. *Ibid.*, 331–2.
  129. New York R.C. Letterbook, *op. cit.*, letter dated 8 February 1774.
  130. Bristol Library Society Subscription Book, Avon County Reference Library, Bristol.
  131. Tolles' extensive study of the libraries of Pennsylvania Quakers shows that Champion was not unique in his unorthodox reading interests. American Quakers may have read plays by Moliere, books about Deism, and spicy works by Voltaire, but a mid-century crisis of conscience among American Quakers resulted in a general withdrawal from early pursuits, and a 1756 Philadelphia Query even warned against the reading of 'pernicious Books.' *Meeting House*, *op. cit.*, 236.
  132. R.C. Letterbook, *op. cit.*, 38083(3), 264–5.
  133. *Ibid.*, 265.
  134. *Ibid.*, 265–6.
  135. *Ibid.*, 367–8.
  136. *Ibid.*, 268.
  137. Malcolm Thomas and Edward Milligan of Friends House, London, have suggested that other individuals who might fit into such a movement in the Bristol area include Edmund Rack (1735/6–1787) and William Matthews (1748?–1816) of Bath.

138. Supra n. 1. Also P.T. Underdown, 'Parliamentary History of Bristol, 1750-1790', M.A. thesis, University of Bristol (1948) and 'Bristol and Burke', Bristol Branch of the Historical Association pamphlet (Bristol 1961).
139. 'Parliamentary History . . .', *op. cit.*, 160-3.
140. R.C. Letterhook, *op. cit.*, 38083(2), 302.
141. See also P.T. Underdown, 'Henry Cruger and Edmund Burke: Colleagues and Rivals at the Bristol Election of 1774,' *William and Mary Quarterly*, XV (1958).
142. Underdown ('Burke's Bristol Friends . . .', *op. cit.*, 135) charges that Champion did Burke a 'disservice' by enlarging rather than healing the rift between Burke and Cruger, as well as by failing to urge Burke to visit his constituency during the last four years of his office. The latter is difficult to substantiate as the Champion Letterbooks after 1775 are not extant and the references to them by Owen are meagre.
143. When, incidentally, Champion made a number of toasts (Owen, *op. cit.*, 178), a practice not acceptable to Quakers.
144. C.C. Bonwick, 'An American Audience for American Revolutionary Pamphlets,' *Historical Journal*, 19 (1976), 358.
145. Champion, *op. cit.*, 9.
146. Mekeel, *op. cit.*, 20-1.
147. *Ibid.*, 20-5; and Gary, *op. cit.*, 245-250. Champion was not unusual as a merchant in demanding repeal of the Stamp Act or in his wish for peace toward the end of the war, positions which most Bristol merchants supported out of economic self-interest (Savadge, *op. cit.*, 249, 287). His pro-American stance, even at the opening of the war, when most merchants swung their support to the ministry, indicates his consistent sympathies to the American cause.
148. Mekeel, *op. cit.*, 113-124.
149. London Yearly Meeting Epistles, II, 24-5, 28-9, 30-1 as cited in Gary, *op. cit.*, 355-6, 365.
150. Mekeel, *op. cit.*, 120. Mekeel's excellent study, which concentrates upon Pennsylvania Quakers, shows that the Quaker position in America varied widely and resulted less from English pressure than from local political and economic issues.
151. The radical movement did, after all, espouse equalitarian principles which, while political in content, had some compatibility with Quaker beliefs.
152. Individuals who deserve further study include Joseph Harford of Bristol and William Matthews of Bath.
153. Gary, *op. cit.*, 374-7; Mekeel, *op. cit.*, chapter XVI.
154. Champion, *op. cit.*, 273, 289, 292.
155. *Ibid.*, 303, 310.
156. *Ibid.*, 329.
157. *Ibid.*, 328-340.
158. The abrupt end of the friendship with Burke, never fully understood, is the intended subject of a forthcoming paper.
159. Champion, *op. cit.*, 347.

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