QUAKERS AND THE BRITISH MONARCHY: A STUDY IN ANGLO-AMERICAN ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES IN THE EARLY 1760'S

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HISTORIANS of pre-Revolutionary America frequently have reviewed the political, religious, social, economic, and legal thought and activities in the New World in an effort to discern the development of distinctive customs and attitudes. These attempts to portray an "emerging America," however, often have not included a study of personal contacts between the Old and the New Worlds; rather, they have emphasized various "official" and popular protests. A study of this personal dimension, for example the attitudes of members of social or religious organizations operative on both sides of the Atlantic, will further contribute to the analysis of a developing American character.

The extensive records of the Society of Friends illustrates well the relationship of English and American thought. Quakers were not in the forefront either of the revolutionary agitation in America or of the radical movement in England; most preferred to avoid serious involvement in the contest over colonial rights and urged moderation in the approach to solving the differences of opinion. At the beginning of the crisis period in the early 1760's, however, there had appeared among the more outspoken Quakers in Great Britain and America some subtle differences of opinion toward the monarch, the central figure of the government and the person who personified the administration and ceremonial authority of England. While some of these differences may be explained by the division of American Quakers into "political" and

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“ecclesiastical” factions, that is, those who participated in or accepted participation in the government and political life and those who opposed it, there were also divergent, though muted, views between Friends in America and in England over their responsibility toward monarchy.

English and American Friends had long maintained close ties, and their attitude toward many subjects were similar despite the three thousand miles that separated them. The official annual or more frequent letters of information and exhortation that were sent among the meetings contributed much to a standard of unity that other religious organizations with a more formal hierarchy lacked. Certificates of removal, by which church membership in England was transferred to the colonies, also insured repeated contacts between the areas and added to the unity of Quakerism. In addition, familial and mercantile ties among Friends often continued to be close, as shown by the extensive correspondence and the evidence of a large number of ocean crossings. Finally, the Meeting for Sufferings in London, a subordinate committee of the London Yearly Meeting, wielded an important influence on colonial Quakerism and served as the agency for the coordination of Quaker activities within England.

Their pacifistic orientation and apparent egalitarianism had made the Quakers a suspect body among the populace as well as among large numbers of English officials in the seventeenth century; and this attitude continued even after the passage in 1689 of the Act of Toleration, an act that removed physical persecution but not all political disabilities. In an effort to reassure the government that their teachings were not politically motivated, it became a regular practice for Friends both in England and in America during periods of crisis and on other appropriate occasions to reassure the responsible authorities of their loyalty to the government and their attachment to the crown by means of

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loyal addresses to the throne or to other appropriate officials. While to some persons such addresses were empty verbiage, the correspondence of Friends, as well as that of colonial officials, reveal the widespread opinion that addresses were of considered practical and ceremonial importance.

Pennsylvania was the most significant area of Quaker settlement and influence in the New World, as Quaker leaders, particularly through their control of the Assembly, had exercised a dominating influence in the government from the beginnings of the colony. Friends were able to retain this power despite the tide of non-Quaker immigration in the first half of the eighteenth century. By mid-century probably less than one quarter of the inhabitants were Friends. Though Quaker numbers and influence continued to dwindle, the Friends still provided the effective leadership of the Assembly.

Quaker political authority and prestige, however, were dealt a serious blow by the wars against the French and by Indian raids, actions that both strained the pacifistic principles of some of the Friends and also undermined non-Quaker confidence in the Assembly. Friends in England feared that the colonials might compromise their beliefs if they remained in critical positions of leadership, while Parliament disapproved of the Quaker reluctance to answer the French and Indian attacks by military means. English officials consequently began to discuss the enactment of oath and test laws that not only would exclude Friends from the Assembly of Pennsylvania, but also from all other legislative and civil offices throughout America. In an effort to forestall action that would call undesirable attention to their unpopular religious position, and influenced by the desire to guard the religious integrity of the Americans, English Friends were able to convince a number of Pennsylvania Quakers to resign their seats in the Assembly and others not to stand for re-election. Although Quaker influence in Pennsylvania continued to remain strong after this political crisis, in 1756, and many of the Quaker policies

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This is not, of course, to suggest that only Friends used the loyal address; examples from other religious, social, and political organizations appear throughout English and American newspapers as well as in broadside form. Many addresses, in addition, were not printed.

were continued in the so-called Quaker or Popular Party, a majority of the Assembly thereafter was non-Quaker.

The crisis of the mid-1750’s was of considerable significance to the colony and to Quakers in general. It tended to sharpen differences among American Friends over the role to be played in political life and in the world. Many increasingly became wary of any action that might compromise their beliefs, and a number sought to emphasize their ecclesiastical position and their uniqueness in the New World by withdrawing not only from political life but also from the society around them. The political crisis also exposed some of the strong anti-Quaker prejudice of British officials and the populace, and it became necessary continually to allay fears of possible Quaker “anarchy” through official and unofficial contacts. Moreover, the crisis of 1756 indirectly led to a local reassessment of the power structure in the colony that culminated in the movement to strip the proprietary of its authority by converting Pennsylvania into a royal colony. Since Benjamin Franklin, an ally of the Quakers, was in the forefront of the agitation, and since some Quakers had given both active and tacit support, this action logically would reassure those who thought the Quakers opposed both government in general and royalty in particular. By 1760, therefore, as a result of the crises over war and the Quaker participation in the Assembly, the role of the Friends in Pennsylvania was undergoing a critical reassessment, both in the colony and in England.


Tolles, Meeting House and Counting House, 233-238. The Quaker action in this instance cannot be separated from the entire ferment of religious change and revival in America at this time. See Dietmar Rothermund, The Layman’s Progress: Religious and Political Experience in Colonial Pennsylvania, 1740-1770 (Philadelphia, 1961), 43, 53, and Tolles, Quakers and the Atlantic Culture, 91-113. See also the analyses of Quaker relations with the government in Robert O. Byrd, Quaker Ways in Foreign Policy ([Toronto], 1960), 116-121, and Isaac Sharpless, Quakerism and Politics: Essays (Philadelphia, 1905), 87-88, 207-298.

Additional problems that reflected adversely on the Friends and the Assembly in Pennsylvania included the question of taxing proprietary lands, the case of libel brought by the Assembly against William Smith and William Moore, and questions over the issuance of paper money and the appointment of judges. A critique of the role of Quakers in Pennsylvania society is in Boorstin, The Colonial Experience, 54-63.
The Quakers of London, living in the cosmopolitan center of a great empire, were in many respects more sophisticated in their numerous contracts with the government than the Americans. They also were more aware of the practical and technical considerations behind the cultivating of these contacts, despite the long association of the colonial Friends with the Pennsylvania Assembly and with the British government. As a society London Quakers regularly addressed the government on matters of interest to them and on matters that could affect their status; they were, in addition, responsible for presenting the petitions and addresses from various provincial and colonial Friends to the appropriate authorities. Ceremonial and informal events were occasions for the Friends to emphasize the innocence of their pacifist orientation and to advance their standing in the eyes of the government. It was, for example, from the house of David Barclay, prominent London Friend and merchant-banker, that George III and the royal family viewed the Lord Mayor’s show in early November, 1761.8 According to Friend John Freame, Barclay had “spared no cost in repairing his House both within and without as well as decorating it in a suitable manner for the reception of the Royal Family.” Those Friends gathered at Barclay’s for the four hour visit, Freame indicated, were all allowed to kiss the royal hands without kneeling.9 There were misgivings in America over such overt displays of attention, as this seemed to involve unnecessary or undesirable “commotion” in the world of politics. Yet such visits were helpful in assuring the Quakers of the sympathy of the newly-crowned monarch. Such contacts also gave English Friends a much greater appreciation of the ceremonial requirements of their government.

The accession of George III on October 25, 1760, had come during a time of protracted war when public attitude toward the Quakers generally reflected hostility. Such an auspicious occasion

8 Charles II, William III, Mary, Anne, and George II reportedly had watched these proceedings from the same place. R. Hingston Fox, Dr. John Fothergill and His Friends: Chapters in Eighteenth Century Life (London, 1919), 270. J. C. Long, includes a description of the visit George III: The Story of a Complex Man (Boston, 1960), 94-98.

9 John Freame to Mary Plumpstead, December 25, 1761, Misc. MSS, Friends’ Historical Library, Swarthmore. The writer, member of a family of prominent goldsmiths and a founder of what later became known as Barclay’s Bank, indicated that he was absent from the King’s visit from “want of curiosity.”
could be used by Friends in both England and America to address the throne. The London community promptly pledged its loyalty to the new monarch and appealed for the continued recognition of the special nature of the Quaker religious position:

Ever faithful and zealously affected by thy illustrious House, tho’ differing in Sentiments and Conduct from others of our Fellow-subjects, we embrace this Opportunity to crave thy Indulgence and Protection; and beg leave to assure the King, that our Dissent proceeds not from a contumacious Disregard to the Laws, to Custom, or Authority, but from Motives to us purely conscientious.  

The address to the King’s mother was similarly filled with all due respect for the royal family:

We . . . beg Leave to testify our Grief for the Loss we have sustained by the Decease of our late gracious Sovereign. Duty, as well as Gratitude, for the Favour we enjoyed during his long and happy Reign, claim our unfeigned Regard to his Memory: and to every Part of the Royal Family, our most grateful Attachment.

The Pennsylvania Friend, William Logan, who at the time was meeting with the Proprietor in London, attended these ceremonies and concluded that both addresses were “very good.” He also indicated that the entire body of Friends was “very kindly Receiv’d” by the King and “very Genteely & kindly” by the Princess Dowager. Although the addresses of the London Friends were only two of a large number of such presentations made on this occasion, the leaders considered their efforts both necessary and worthwhile for their cause.

The accession of George III likewise was an excellent opportunity for Friends in America to reassure the monarch of their


11 “The Address of the People called Quakers, to the Princess Dowager of Wales,” December 1, 1760. Broadside in Pemberton Papers, XIV.

12 William Logan to John Smith, December 8, 1760, Smith MSS, V. HSP. Logan had been a member of the Governor’s Council of Pennsylvania since 1743.
loyalty. It was particularly timely given the crises embroiling the Pennsylvania scene, and since, in most instances, the Quakers and the Assembly—still strongly influenced by the Quakers—were unpopular with the British administration. It also appears that George III, judging by his later conversations with London Friends, was interested in the status of the Quakers in the New World and that he would have welcomed correspondence from the American Friends. Although the political leaders in Pennsylvania and elsewhere recognized the value of quick reaction to the change of the monarch and promptly sent addresses, nothing was forthcoming from Friends in America.

The inactivity of the Pennsylvania Friends was viewed with displeasure in England, and several Friends in London reminded the colonials of their precarious position. William Logan wrote to his cousin James Pemberton, clerk of the Philadelphia meeting, and to his brother-in-law John Smith of Burlington, New Jersey, a prominent Friend and retired Philadelphia merchant, urging them to do whatever possible to secure an address from the Quakers to the monarch. He emphasized that the “Friend’s Interest” at court had declined “for want of proper persons Exerting themselves and applying on particular and proper occasions,” rather than from any hostility to the Friends. It had been almost a year since the accession, and an address for that
event would be inappropriate. He suggested, however, that one on the King's marriage and coronation would be in order. In his letter to Smith Logan argued that an address "would be attended with some advantages, and more especially as you have not very long since been represented to the Ministry in an unfavourable light." Dr. John Fothergill, the prominent London physician and botanist, expressed similar sentiments in a letter to Israel Pemberton. First of all he emphasized the virtues of George III:

It is a favourable circumstance, that we have a King of whom it may I think with great truth be said, that there are few persons of his age in his extensive dominions who are blessed with a better mind, or a clearer understanding. . . . He speaks what he means, and he means the happiness of his Subjects.

Fothergill, however, was primarily concerned with the failure of Americans to address the monarch, "when much less important branches of society, do it daily with approbation." Many potential advantages also would be lost if they failed to respond. Once the war with France was concluded, Fothergill had discovered from conversations with "some persons of eminence" in London, "the consideration of the several Governments in America, will be brought upon the carpet," and probably the governments that were least known were likely to lose the most. Fothergill also suggested that

You would wish to appear not inconsiderable: but if you are too small to be seen, or too indifferent whether you are seen or not, how can you expect any notice should be taken of you when you perhaps most need it.

The Meeting for Sufferings "or some other meeting that may soon happen and be most the representative of the whole body," according to Fothergill, should consider the matter. He even sub-

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15 William Logan to James Pemberton, October 1, 1761, Pemberton Papers, XV. As could be expected, the English Friends addressed the King on his marriage. See the text in the January 21, 1762, issues of the Pennsylvania Gazette and the Pennsylvania Journal. Thomas Penn expressed concern over the delay of the Pennsylvania address on this occasion. See his letter to James Hamilton, April 25, 1762, Penn Letterbooks, VII.

16 William Logan to John Smith, October 1, 1761, Smith MSS, V.

17 John Fothergill to Israel Pemberton, November 2, 1761, Etting-Pemberton, II. Also in Pemberton Papers, XXXIV, Fothergill Letters. HSP.
mitted a list of topics suitable for inclusion in the address: the liberties enjoyed under George II, the accession of the new monarch, his various declarations and his “conduct consistent with them,” as well as his recent marriage. The London merchant, John Hunt, suggested much the same, but stressed the sincere interest that George III apparently had toward Friends in England and America. The royal reception of the Friends’ address on the King’s marriage was conclusive evidence:

the reception we mett with was very extraordinary and beyond anything of the Kind in former Reigns. The Kings condescension was almost beyond compare, and above all ’twas asserting to feel that he was possesst of remarkable sensibility[,] it seemed to Me there is something in him very reachable.

An address, Hunt advised, “wld be Esteemed an acceptable Tribute.”

The pressure from such prominent Friends in England undoubtedly was instrumental in securing an address from the colonials. The consideration of the matter came “weightily” before the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting for Sufferings in January, 1762, and a committee of six was appointed to prepare the document. The committee’s efforts were accepted with a few alterations, and James Pemberton was directed to send three copies “by the first Opportunity that may present.”

John Hunt to James Pemberton, November 12, 1761, Pemberton Papers, XV. Hunt sent a similar letter to Israel Pemberton in which he underscored the compassionate qualities of the monarch and suggested that an address would be in order. John Hunt to Israel Pemberton, November 13, 1761, ibid. It appears, however, that despite the glowing reports of the Friends’ visits with the monarch, there had occasionally been some difficulties. John Freame, reporting on the Lord Mayor’s Day visit of George III, alluded to these problems: “as to what pass’d on Friends presenting their late Address, I am inform’d, The last mistakes were in This amply redress’d (which by no means lay at Their door) by the reception They met with now.” John Freame to Mary Plumpstead, December 25, 1761, Misc. MSS, Friends’ Historical Library. This may account for the English Friends’ caution in dealing with addresses to the crown.

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting for Sufferings, Philadelphia, January 21, 1762. The text of the address of the London Friends to the King appeared in the Pennsylvania Journal and the Pennsylvania Gazette. The original minutes are in the Friends Records Office, Arch Street, Philadelphia. Microfilm copies of the meeting minutes of both Pennsylvania and London are available at the Friends’ Historical Library, Swarthmore. All succeeding references to the Friends’ minutes are from these repositories.
The address from this Monthly Meeting for Sufferings followed the suggestions advanced by Fothergill. It began with an expression of respect to the monarch and a tribute to the late King:

We thy Faithful Subjects, tho' situated at a remote distance from thy Royal Person, desire to express the unfeigned pleasure we received on hearing thou hadst happily succeeded to the throne of thy Ancestors; at the same time we were deeply touched with grateful affection for the memory of our late King, thy worthy Grandfather; whose mild Government, and paternal attention to the preservation of this Religious and Civil Liberties of his People, justly merited, and obtained our sincere Love, and Duty.29

The Friends also expressed appreciation for the new monarch's proclamation of October 31, 1760, "For the Encouragement of Piety and Virtue, and for preventing and punishing of Vice, Profaneness, and Immorality," extended congratulations on the monarch's recent marriage, stated their desire for the cessation of hostilities, and asked God to furnish the King with

wisdom adequate to the difficulties attending thy exalted Station and under the Divine influence thereof, perpetuate the Government of thy Kingdoms, & their dependencies in thee and thy family to the latest Generations.

Thus, the Philadelphia meeting had fulfilled the London request for an address to the monarch. Hopefully their action would be productive of some good for the society. Instead it was to reveal some differences between the two areas.

Even before the address was formally presented to the London Meeting for Sufferings, John Fothergill sent his opinion that it would cause the Friends in America greatly to "suffer in our Sovereigns opinion, and in the judgment of the publick, should we offer it." "We must suppress it from appearing," he wrote to James Pemberton, "unless you will resume the Subject, and say something more worthy of the Sovereign, more worthy of yourselves. and less exceptionable to us."21 John Hunt, who was to present it to the London Meeting for Sufferings, wrote that the

29 Monthly Meeting for Sufferings, Philadelphia, January 21, 1762.
21 John Fothergill to James Pemberton, April 7, 1762, Etting-Pemberton, II.
address was “not just what some of Us Cod wish it to be” and that the principal objection was that it was not signed “by Friends generally.” The committee appointed to examine it concurred with Hunt’s criticism and concluded that the address would have been better had it been sent from the Yearly Meeting than from the Monthly Meeting for Sufferings. Because of these various defects, the London Friends decided against presenting the document to the monarch, and a committee composed of Fothergill, Hunt, Thomas Jackson, and Jacob Hagan was directed to inform the Pennsylvania Friends of the decision.

James Pemberton wrote that the Pennsylvania Friends would abide by the decision of the London Meeting, yet he also defended the action of his meeting. The address, as sent, had been the result of a series of compromises over words and ideas. Some Friends had objected in principle to such ceremonial activities and consequently saw little value in this effort. One apparently had even objected to the use of the word “Sovereign” and requested that the committee avoid it. A few had earlier voiced reservations over the contents of the English addresses and consequently wanted to avoid such extravagances in their own. Additional considerations were suggested in the Philadelphia meeting, Pemberton wrote, that would have caused even greater concern in England; these considerations, however, were not named. Pemberton agreed that it would have been in order had the American Friends enlarged on the benefits of the old reign and the happy prospects of the new one, yet, he concluded, one had to “keep within ye bounds of Truth & Sincerity.” He like-

22 John Hunt to Israel Pemberton, April 6, 1762, Society Collection, HSP. Hunt suggested that the principal objection was that it was not signed “by Friends generally.” Almost two hundred had signed the London Friends’ address to the monarch. James Pemberton to John Smith, July 10, 1762, Smith MSS, VI.

23 Minutes of the London Meeting for Sufferings, 1761-1766, April 10, 1762. The Philadelphia Yearly Meeting was held in September; hence compliance with this request would have delayed the Address about nine months.

24 William Logan, who was returning to Pennsylvania, was entrusted with the letters. Ibid., May 7, 1762. Since Logan carried these letters and made the personal contacts, we have fewer records on this dispute than might be desired.

25 James Pemberton to John Fothergill, June 30, 1762, Pemberton Papers, XXXIV, Fothergill Letters.

26 This statement appeared in the draft of the letter, but Pemberton edited it out before it was sent.
wise agreed with the criticisms on the method of signing and concluded by suggesting to Fothergill that he "must look upon ye whole as ye Act of your weaker Brethren, it may teach us wisdom & future Care." In general, then, Pemberton's explanatory letter was utterly devoid of any criticism of the actions of the English Friends, though it was indicative of sentiments in the Philadelphia meeting.

Privately, however, Pemberton was a bit more outspoken though he was not vindictive or bitter. He defended the address and argued that it had been the "plain dress" to which many of the English Friends had objected. That plainness, he suggested, was the result of the numerous reservations over the activities of the London Quakers, who had gone beyond the bounds of propriety in their contacts with the government. The implication was that the American address, because it followed those ideas of plainness associated with Quakerism, was much more in keeping with the traditions of the society. Americans were upholding the society in its relationship toward royalty in England; London Quakers were straying.

Shortly thereafter Pemberton received more detailed information on the rejection of the petition in two letters from London. The first contained general reservations to the address, such as "that as it is the first address from Friends of these Provinces to the throne, It would probably have been much more acceptable had it come from the Yearly meeting." The other was filled with specific "learned Criticisms upon almost every paragraph," as seen in Pemberton's summary:

thier [sic] first Remark begins with the first Paragraph: (Situation remote distance. this is well known)—desire to express: you express it when you write it—when you desire, do it is prior hadst happily succeeded this Employs (say they) a fear of his having unhappily succeeded:

James Pemberton to John Smith, July 10, 1762, Smith MSS, VI. Pemberton suggested that Smith's brother "disapproved it much, & my brother has express'd his Sentiments concerning it, as upon occasions alike circumstanced."

Apparantly neither of the two letters was preserved. Summaries and excerpts from the letters are in James Pemberton to John Smith, July 17, 1762, Smith MSS, VI.
There were other criticism "much of the same Consequence." Pemberton thought these statements could only upset the members of the meeting, and he concluded that it would be better if the letter were suppressed. The letter of specifics, however, could be used by the committee appointed to prepare the next address, he wryly added, "if one Sufficiently Skill'd can be obtained."

John Smith indignantly denied the English contentions. The statement about the Yearly Meeting, he maintained, was a "poor one." The simple language employed was much to be preferred over the style of the London address:

> when its considered, who it was to speak for, I think plainness in expression, much more suitable & characteristic than pompous words & I believe would be more acceptable to the Sovereign, who I presume, is a Judge of Language.

As for the stylistic criticisms, Smith contended that he had "never seen any thing of the kind more puerile & contemptible and with such liberties." The reputation of the Philadelphia Meeting had been damaged by the rejection, and he even hinted at the possibility of squaring things by publishing the letter. Yet he agreed with Pemberton that withholding the stylistic criticisms from the general body was preferred, since their publication could damage Anglo-American Quaker relations.29

The action of the English Quakers was not formally considered until late September, when the Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings agreed to submit it to the Yearly Meeting with the recommendation that "such an address at this Time may be rather unseasonable."30 The delays caused by the slowness of communications and by the rejection made it virtually impossible for the Pennsylvania Quakers to effect a revision for resubmission to England; more than a year would have elapsed from the time of the coronation and the royal marriage. The Yearly Meeting

29 John Smith to James Pemberton, August 24, 1762, Pemberton Papers, XVI.
30 Monthly Meeting for Sufferings, Philadelphia, September 26, 1762. The matter had been raised earlier, but since many of the Friends had been absent, it was postponed. See James Pemberton to Thomas Jackson, John Hunt, John Fothergill, and Jacob Hagan, October 9, 1762. Pemberton Papers, XXXIV, Fothergill Letters.
concurred with the opinion of the Philadelphia Meeting and the matter was dropped.

By the time the Philadelphia Friends had reached this decision, there was another potential subject for an address to the throne. In early September, 1762, the first product of the marriage of King George and Queen Charlotte was born. The English Friends agreed that an address of congratulations would be in order, and such an address was prepared. The seventeen who attended the ceremonies for the reading of the address on October 1 were evidently pleased with the monarch's expression of appreciation and his declaration that the Friends would always be able to depend on his protection. The American Friends, however, failed also to respond to this opportunity.

Still another occasion for addressing the monarch arose in the Spring of 1763 when peace finally came on the international scene. Characteristically, the Friends in England responded with an address. It was an effort both to reassure the monarch of their own loyalty as well as to counter the various domestic factions that were attacking the monarch for the liberality of the peace terms. More than fifty members of the Society from various parts of England and Ireland attended the presentation ceremonies on June 1. The King reiterated his gratefulness for the loyalty of the Society and concluded that such affection "cannot fail to insure to You the continuance of my Protection." The

31 Minutes of the London Meeting for Sufferings, 1761-1766, September 10 to October 15, 1762. It was reported that the expenses for addressing the King on this occasion were £12.12.6. The text was reprinted in the December 16, 1762, issues of the Pennsylvania Gazette and the Pennsylvania Journal.

32 Minutes of the London Meeting for Sufferings, 1761-1766, August 26, 1763. For the motivation of the Friends and descriptions of the ceremony of the address see William Reckitt to James Pemberton, June 1, 1763; Joseph Phips to James Pemberton, June 1, 1763; John Griffith to John Pemberton, June 21, 1763, all in the Pemberton Papers, XVI; see also Samuel Fothergill to William Logan, March 15, 1763, Jenkins Autograph Collection, Friends' Historical Library. Griffith suggested that though the address "took up a pretty deal of the precious time, of the yearly meeting with tho' for my Part, I esteem it a kind of Inferior work, when compared with the Important Services of that meetg, tho' for my Part, I esteem it a kind of Inferior work, when compared with the Important Services of that meetg, yet it seem'd necessary, and almost unavoidable now; as our London frds. have been so bodly adressing upon more trilling ocations than the Restoration of Peace." The address and a brief description of the ceremony also appeared in the August 18 issues of the Pennsylvania Gazette and the Pennsylvania Journal. Margaret Hirst indicates that the address on peace was "loyal and respectful in tone, [though] much less adulatory than those offered to his grandfather," Quakers in Peace and War, 199. In 1716, however, the Quakers had
conclusion of the extended war with France and other powers seemed to be a most appropriate occasion for the Pennsylvania Friends.

The question of addressing the King on the peace was discussed at several sessions of the Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings. In the session prior to the Yearly Meeting it was agreed that "it appears to be the desire of Friends in general" to address the King on the restoration of peace and to request the monarch to deal justly with the Indians whose lands were being settled contrary to the injunction of the authorities. The matter was then submitted to the larger body.

The proposal encountered significant opposition in the Yearly Meeting, despite the favorable recommendation from the Meeting for Sufferings, and the discussion extended over several days. On the last day of the session the clerk recorded that "as there does not appear Strength at this time . . . [to submit] an Address, with the other matter proposed by the minutes of the Meeting for Sufferings, it is therefore postponed for this time." Even on a matter of such great concern to the Friends as peace, there was no concurrence. The Yearly Meeting, however, did recommend that

a thankful remembrance of the favours & privileges
Our Religious Society have enjoyed under his Royal Ancestors and other Sincere & fervent desires for the Kings prosperity & preservation, Should be carefully manifested through the whole tenor of our Conduct, & conversation consistent with our Religious Principles, & profession.

Yet there would be no address.

In its epistle to the London Yearly Meeting the Pennsylvania Meeting indicated that there had been some doubt concerning the expediency of addressing the King on the occasion of peace;


Monthly Meeting for Sufferings, Philadelphia, September 26, 1763.

See the Minutes of the Yearly Meeting for Pennsylvania and New Jersey, held at Philadelphia, September 24-30, 1763.
consequently it decided to submit a statement of their positions on the peace, relations with the Indians, and various royal resolutions so that the London meeting could deal with the various matters as it saw fit. Some months later James Pemberton sent a fuller explanation and inquired whether the tone of the Epistle would have been acceptable in an Address to the monarch. He alluded, in his rather distinctive style, to some of the problems endemic in the Pennsylvania society that had made it impossible to send an address:

were you fully acq'd with our circumstances in this respect you would rather pity than blame some of us who are depressed under it within doors & without Some of our very good frnds of yr nation have felt it when with us for themselves, they have felt it for some of us & for the Society and yet appear to have forgotten the smart & tho: not with Intention I fear have rather contributed to sooth than starve it, Many who have abilities & might be servicable wholly decline engaging in any affairs of the Society on this Account.

Pemberton thus suggests that the continuing controversy over addressing the monarch had further alienated Friends from the Society in America. Since peace long had been the major concern of the Quakers, and since Quakers had resigned from the Pennsylvania Assembly essentially over the military question, it is all the more surprising that the Friends in Pennsylvania failed to reach accord on this occasion.

Such temerity, however, did not extend to their addresses to officials in America. When John Penn, nephew of the Proprietor, assumed his office as Deputy Governor, a committee of six Friends in Philadelphia prepared and presented an address. It contained a request for a continuation of the special status of the Friends as well as a recognition of the government in England:

The inestimable Privileges continued to our Religious Society, through the Clemency & Paternal affection of

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86 Epistle to the London Yearly Meeting from the Yearly Meeting for Pennsylvania and New Jersey, September 30, 1763, in ibid.
87 James Pemberton to John Fothergill, March 7, 1764, Pemberton Papers, XXXIV, Fothergill Letters. John Hunt and Samuel Fothergill had visited Pennsylvania in 1756 in an effort to convince Quakers to withdraw from the Assembly; Hunt appeared also to be prominent in the rejection. Undoubtedly the statement was alluding to him.
our Gracious King and the assurances our Brethren in Great Britain have lately received of his Royal Protection therein, demand our grateful & cordial acknowledgments, & encourages us to Request and expect the like favour from thee, in our Enjoyment of the valuable liberties granted to us by the Charters & Laws of this Province.  

James Pemberton suggested that the effort did "not come up to what I could wish on the occasion" but expressed hope that it might "pass in the crowd." He concluded that the Friends had aimed at plainness rather than politeness.

It appears that this juxtaposition of plainness and politeness is a partial explanation for the Quaker attitude in the 1760's. Ecclesiastical Quakers in America, particularly after the crisis of the 1750's, had increasingly heeded the spirit embodied in William Penn's advice to "meddle not with government." Yet there was an address to the new governor in 1763, just as there had been addresses to the monarch in the past. Consequently it appears that the difficulties arose from the added formality and correctness required in the address to the monarch, rather than from any basic opposition to political addresses. Certainly it was not due to hostility toward George III. The eminent Quaker historian and educator Isaac Sharpless later wrote that Friends "base their beliefs on a principle, strained perhaps sometimes, and follow where it leads." The principle that the Quakers in

28 Monthly Meeting for Sufferings, Philadelphia, November 4, 1763. Prior to Penn's departure a group of London Friends waited on the new executive with a request for continued favor to the Friends in Pennsylvania. Minutes of the London Meeting for Sufferings, 1761-1766, August 22 and September 7, 1763. The expenses for entertaining the Governor on this occasion were £11.6.8.

29 James Pemberton to John Smith, November 17, 1763, Smith MSS, VI. Pemberton also suggested that the "Collegians have thereon [not shown] any great Abilities. with all thier [sic] boast of Literature."

30 Quoted in Sharpless, Quakerism and Politics, 79.

31 The address from the Yearly Meeting of Pennsylvania to George I in 1725 called the monarch "so gracious a Prince, Great in his goodness and Love to his People, Great in the benighity of his Reign which reaches to the most distant of his Subjects, And Great in the Sight of the Nations round about." P. R. O. C. O./1233:172. It was signed by one man, John Estaugh, "In Behalfe and by Apoyntment of the Said Meeting."

32 Sharpless, Quakerism and Politics, 212. Following the principle of ostentatious behavior "where it leads" could logically bring the Quakers to the position of republicanism, though there were no such sentiments in the materials used for this study. Tolles points out that republican authors, however, were popular in Quaker libraries such as that of John Smith, see
America increasingly emphasized was unostentatious behavior in their relations with the crown. On this they could not compromise.

The failure of the American Friends to persevere on the matter after the rejection could indicate a Quaker indifference to their reputation at court, an unlikely explanation given the position of the society in Pennsylvania at the time. Such an indifference would also appear unlikely since there also was some evidence of the beginning of the movement to place Pennsylvania directly under the authority of the King. A number of Quakers, against the advice of the meeting, participated in this movement in 1764 and even those who opposed the conversion because of possible jeopardy to their religious position, had to emphasize that their opposition was not directed against the King but rather was motivated by religious reasons. Hence each side realized that it would be wise to cultivate royal affection whenever possible, though it was necessary to "keep within ye bounds of Truth & Sincerity."

In the context of the eighteenth century the failure of the Pennsylvania meeting to reach accord with English Quakers on the matter of addressing the King was significant. More than pro forma exercises, addresses embodied the basic principles of the society that produced or presented them. The American address to the King was such a sincere statement of basic convictions concerning their relationship to the crown. Rejection of the address implied rejection to the American contentions, although relations between the two areas remained cordial. The actions of the American Friends and their failure to follow up the opportunities to address the King are to an extent indicative of the ascendancy of the ecclesiastical faction in Pennsylvania. They also demonstrate, however, that at this time there were differences in attitude toward the monarch among Friends in the Old World and the New. English Friends recognized and followed their ceremonial obligations in the world of eighteenth century London. Monarchy and the formalities attached to it seemed foreign and less relevant in America, a land devoid of an aristocracy, particularly to a society leveling in its traditions and far removed from the ceremony of London. A number of other American colonials were soon to suggest the same thing.