Irish and British Quakers and Their American Relief Funds, 1778-1797

The outbreak of the American Revolution soon brought difficulties upon Friends in many sections of the colonies, and reports of their suffering quickly reached their European colleagues. As early as 1776 Dutch Quakers wrote to London "In these troublesome times, we often have to remember, with sympathy, our brethren in America" and requested that they be kept informed by London Yearly Meeting concerning the situation of American Quakers. The 1776 general epistle from London Yearly Meeting to all Friends noted that "we have affecting information of the state of Friends in those parts; and deeply sympathize with the faithful." A 1776 letter to Philadelphia reported that "the minds of many amongst us were deeply affected with a sense of your Sufferings."

Early British Quaker response appears to have been limited to expressions of sympathy and the offering up of prayers that American Friends would come through the difficulties. As 1776 turned into 1777, there came word of increasing Quaker suffering in New York and New Jersey. Further reports from various American yearly meetings only served to increase the concern which British Friends had for their colleagues overseas, so that they wrote to Irish Quakers in 1777 "We feel a deep sympathy with our Suffering Brethren in America."

It was the return of Thomas Gawthrop (a "public Friend" who

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1 Epistles Received, IV (1758-1788), 421-422, Friends House Library, London.
2 Epistles from the Yearly Meeting of Friends, held in London to the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings in Great Britain, Ireland, and Elsewhere; from 1681 to 1857, Inclusive (London, 1858), II, 28-29.
3 Epistles Sent, V (1774-1790), 60, Friends House Library.
4 Ibid., V, 62.
5 Letters to and from Philadelphia, I (1757-1815), 142-147, Friends House Library.
6 Epistles Sent, V, 87.
had attended Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1777) which gal-
vanized British Friends into action—turning their feelings into
deeds. As soon as Gawthrop reported the great need of Philadelphia
Quakers a committee was formed to send out a “Cargo of Provisions
& Coals.”\(^7\) Even as this committee was completing its plans, a
letter from Philadelphia, dated December 16, 1777, arrived via
Ireland, reporting widespread suffering in that city. Philadelphia
Friends themselves requested the sending out of a “cargo ship” of
needed provisions, offering to repay the cost at some future time
when they might be able to do so.\(^8\) The *Mary & Charlotte*, loaded
in London early in February, arrived in Philadelphia in June 1778
with much of its cargo damaged or spoiled by the long voyage and
improper packing. The unhappy story of this miscarried effort at
Quaker relief has been told elsewhere and does not belong here.\(^9\)

The idea of raising a special British relief fund was inspired by
the December letter from Philadelphia, requesting that a special
cargo be sent out. The Philadelphia Friends, after reporting the
widespread suffering among Quakers, had promised “that any
charitable Donation which may be made, and arrive here for their
benefit, Friends will hand out with great care, and fidelity.”\(^10\) The
General Committee (with its Cargo and Subscription subcommit-
tees), which was set up to provide immediate relief to Philadelphia
Quakers, authorized the establishment of still another committee
of “such Friends in this City [London] as are disposed to promote
this benevolent Design.”\(^11\)

This decision to organize a “sub-committee for the Donation
Fund” was taken on February 9, 1778.\(^12\) The new group of con-
cerned individuals was to meet following the rise of the next Meeting
for Sufferings in London. Many Friends were present at several
such gatherings in February, but nothing was really accomplished

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\(^7\) General Committee for the Relief of Friends in America Minutes, 1, Friends House
   Library. This volume is hereinafter referred to as General Committee Minutes.
\(^8\) Ibid., 8–12.
\(^9\) Kenneth L. Carroll, “The *Mary & Charlotte* Fiasco: A Look at British Quaker Relief to
   212–223.
\(^10\) General Committee Minutes, 11–12.
\(^11\) Ibid., 12.
\(^12\) Ibid., 7, 12.
until early the following month. On March 6 a large body of Friends
met and decided to send out a special letter to Quakers in Great
Britain and Ireland. This letter refers to reports of the distress of
Friends in the Philadelphia area and notes that “the affecting
accounts have been confirm’d by the arrival of some Friends from
that Province as well as a letter received from thence.” It then
states that London Friends had shipped a cargo of provisions “on
the Account & at the Charge of Friends” in Philadelphia. A Cargo
of provisions had also been sent by Bristol Friends, “partly on the
like account and partly as a donation.” It was felt that, if both of
these vessels were to arrive in safety, “there is reason to hope that
their wants will be for some time at least reasonably supply’d.”

Since, however, it appeared likely that Quakers in Pennsylvania
and other parts of America would continue “to be exposed to the
like distresses,” London Friends agreed to “set on foot a subscrip-
tion in order to raise a fund for the purpose of relieving the necessi-
ties of our poor afflicted Brethren in America as they may become
known.” Whatever might be contributed would be placed “under
the direction of a numerous and open Committee who we doubt
not will take care that whatever is collected shall be faithfully
applied to the relief of the sufferers.” Donations were to be trans-
mittad to any of the following Quaker banking firms: Archer,
Bydes, Maude & Co.; Barclay, Bevan, & Bening; Bland, Barnet, &
Hoare; Brown, Collinson, & Tritton; Hanbury, Taylor, Lloyd, &
Bowman; and Smith, Wright, & Gray.

The London Friends provided 1,000 printed copies of their
appeal and set up a smaller subcommittee which was to decide how
to distribute the letters and how to promote the subscription.
Also, it was to take charge of the money when collected and keep
an account of receipts and disbursements.

13 “Fair Minute Book of the Subcommittee for the Donation-fund,” 1–3, Friends House
Library. This volume is hereinafter referred to as Donation Fund Committee Minutes. This
document was signed by eight Friends who were acting on behalf of the much larger number
of concerned individuals.
14 Ibid., 1.
15 Ibid., 1–2.
16 Ibid., 2.
17 Ibid., 3.
By March 13, 1778, a substantial number of Friends had accepted the responsibility of sending out the printed letter “to one or more Friends in the Several Counties, or places, requesting that the Subscription may be proceeded in with all convenient Expedition.”

On this same day a letter was dispatched to Philadelphia Friends (enclosing a copy of the appeal), notifying them that this general subscription had been initiated. The Donation Subcommittee, having “agreeable Expectations” of the contributions to come, authorized the Philadelphians to draw up to £500 which might be “of immediate Service, to the distressed of our Society within your reach, for the purchase of Such necessaries as they may stand the most in need of.” They also requested that they might be informed of “the wants of the distressed as they may arise within your Knowledge, and in what manner they may be most effectually supplied.”

Much of the actual work of this body in its opening months was done by John Blakes, who on May 26, 1778, was requested to procure the proper ledgers to “keep the Accounts therein, transcribe the Minutes, give all necessary notices to attend the sittings of the Committee, and do all needful business relating to the subscription.” He was authorized to apply to the six banking firms to obtain an account of all money paid into them and the names of the contributors.

Partial reports of contributions were provided by Blakes early in June, but it was not until the middle of the month that a full accounting was made of the status of the subscription at that point. Some £4,007:15:8 had been received by the bankers. The names of subscribers (a mixture of individuals and Monthly Meetings) were listed by John Blakes in the volume entitled “Subscription Book.” They range from the 10/6 gifts of Susannah Gregory

18 General Committee Minutes, 18.
19 Ibid., 21.
20 Donation Fund Committee Minutes, 3-4.
22 Subscription Book for the Donation Fund, Friends House Library.
and Joseph Lumm to the £25 of the well-known John Fothergill, and from the £11:17:9 of Mansfield Monthly Meeting to the £250 of Hartshaw Monthly Meeting. Further sums continued to come in, so that the total amount for 1778 came to £4,897:17:2. Additional subscriptions were also received in 1779.

The Donation Committee, which had already authorized Philadelphia Friends to draw up to £500 from London, soon told them to use a total of £2,500 from the proceeds of the sale of provisions from the “Cargo Ship.” The Committee also decided that it would reimburse each of the subscribers to the Cargo Fund fifty per cent of the original loan. If, however, the sale of the cargo did not “produce a Sum necessary to pay the said Fifty percent,” the subscribers were “to refund the deficiency.”

Irish Friends, like their British brethren, were deeply aware of the great amount of suffering which the Revolutionary War brought to American Quakers. To London Yearly Meeting they wrote: “We partake with you in deep Sympathy with our Suffering Friends in America, yet have rejoiced to hear of their preservation, thro’ the exercises & perils of a stormy time, in their Stability in the Truth.” They soon learned that British Friends were starting a subscription for “the purpose of relieving the necessities of our poor afflicted brethren in America as they may become known.”

Not only did Irish Quakers receive a request from their British colleagues to join in the subscription, but their own National Half-Year’s Meeting in Dublin was also prodded by a similar concern from members in Leinster Province Meeting who sympathized “with our suffering [American] Friends, in their pinching trials, and apprehending the exigencies, and necessities of many are very great, earnestly recommended to Friends of the three Provinces [Leinster, Munster, and Ulster] to promote liberal Subscriptions for

\[23\] Ibid., i–4. Fothergill later received his £25 back.

\[24\] Ibid., 5; Donation Fund Committee Minutes, 8ff.

\[25\] Donation Fund Committee Minutes, 10.

\[26\] Ibid., 10–11. Each one receiving payment was expected to sign a receipt for the money refunded and also to promise to make the necessary refund if the sales of the “Cargo” failed to produce the fifty per cent amount. This particular plan of refunds was never carried out.

\[27\] Epistles Received, IV (1758–1778), 443.

\[28\] A copy of this letter is found in Friends Historical Library, Dublin, in Portfolio 5B, number 45.
their relief." John Dawson and Joseph Pike of Dublin were named to receive contributions, and a committee, appointed to help them dispose of the money collected, was asked to write immediately to Philadelphia Friends, authorizing them "to draw for a sum not exceeding £1,000, as soon as they think proper, for the use of Friends in America in general."

Irish Quakers had long enjoyed close ties with America. Not only had many Friends removed from Ireland to America, but a large number of Americans traveling in the ministry had visited Ireland during the half-century before the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. Also, some Irish Friends, such as Samuel Neale, had been in America during this same period. The Half-Year's Meeting, therefore, was able to report in November 1778 that "considerable subscriptions" for the relief of American Quakers had been made in Leinster and Munster Provinces, but that the effort in Ulster was really just getting under way. It was therefore recommended that Ulster Friends in tender sympathy with our Friends in affliction, [are] to interest themselves in their behalf, and endeavour to influence Friends in each meeting, to contribute more freely, according to their respective abilities. Also, if in any part of the other Provinces any remarkable backwardness appears of coming up in due proportion of contribution, to use like endeavours to promote an enlarging thereof, according to their circumstances.

A February 1779 epistle from Philadelphia to Irish Friends gave a summary of Quaker suffering and expressed thanks for their assistance, especially since "there is not a present prospect of a reconciliation between the contending parties, and the Calamities of War appear likely to continue and increase, [and] the Assistance of our European Brethren may become seasonable & necessary."
Copies of this letter were sent to the three Provinces by John Gough, with the hope that the account of these sufferings would be a means of “opening the hearts of some, who may have been too backward [in giving], to become more liberal in their subscriptions.”

The first financial report of the Committee on Subscriptions was given to the National Half-Year’s Meeting in November 1780, when it was noted that subscriptions for Munster Province Meeting were £1,025:1:3, those from Leinster £1,042:7:7, and from Ulster the much smaller amount of £135:12:10½. Interest on this fund amounted to £128:18:9—so that, after having sent £200 English (£216:13:4 Irish) to Philadelphia, the amount remaining was £2,115:8:1.34

A June 1781 letter from Philadelphia to Dublin caused Irish Friends, at their November 1781 Half-Year’s Meeting, to express their “deep sympathy with the Distresses of Our [American] Friends, under the severe calamities of war, to which they are still exposed.” Even though the earlier “liberality of [Irish] Friends, in many Parts, was very commendable and satisfactory,” the Half-Year’s Meeting recommended that a second subscription be raised “inasmuch as the necessities of our said Friends continue, and even increase.” It was also hoped that “wherever there was a falling short in the former collections, Friends may be incited to supply the Deficiency, in a more liberal contribution on the present occasion.”35

At the May 1782 Half-Year’s Meeting it was reported that the second subscription was “on foot” and that the following amounts had been raised: Ulster, £480:0:0; Leinster, £912:6:3; Munster, £800:0:0; thereby making a total of £2,192:6:3 of new funds.36 Two years later it was recorded that an additional £1,408:1:5 had been contributed, with £480:16:3 from Munster and £927:5:2 from Leinster.37 Thus Irish Friends, although fewer in number and less affluent than British Quakers, had contributed as much as their British brethren toward the relief of their American colleagues.

There exist in Friends Historical Library, Dublin, several lists of

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33 National Half-Year’s Meeting Minutes, May 2–5, 1779.
34 Ibid., minutes for Nov. 5–8, 1780.
35 Ibid., minutes for Nov. 4–7, 1781.
36 Ibid., minutes for May 5–9, 1782.
37 Ibid., minutes for May 2–6, 1784.
those who contributed to these two subscriptions. One of these for 1783 contains the names of 113 Irish Friends who gave to the second subscription in amounts ranging from 11 shillings 4½ pence (Joseph Fawcett) to £50 (John Dawson). A dozen Friends other than Dawson contributed amounts of £10 or more. Still another such list contains the names of some of those who gave to both subscriptions. In a large number of cases the same amount was given both times, while in others the amounts tended to be about half as large the second time. In a very few cases, such as that of Wight Pike, the amounts were increased.

Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings began to use the Irish relief fund in 1779. In October of that year it alloted £315 to New England Yearly Meeting's Meeting for Sufferings to be used for Friends on the mainland and on Nantucket. This amount came largely from the Irish fund, with £200 [English] being drawn on John Dawson Coates and Joseph Pike in Dublin. Much of this had been used by February 1780 in Rhode Island and Nantucket, where Friends have "been much distressed, and reduced in this time of Calamity." Later on in 1780 it was reported that,

Friends at Nantucket have for some time been shut off from the Main [land] by the Severity of the Season, so that we have not had any very late Accounts; but the last [account] they were better supplied with Fuel than last year, and Provisions were to be had for money, but the almost total Stagnation of Business has greatly reduced many to Poverty, which more and more appears; Sensible of this we early directed part of the donation from Ireland to be applied there, and have enlarged that sum.

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38 Portfolio 19, number 95a (Room 4, Friends Historical Library, Dublin). Cf. Portfolio 19, numbers 86 and 95.
39 Ibid., 19, number 95d.
41 Ibid., 258, minutes for Apr. 20, 1780, quoting a letter from New England Meeting for Sufferings of Feb. 14, 1780.
42 Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, 165, Friends House Library. It is estimated that between eighty and ninety per cent of the inhabitants of Nantucket at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War were Quakers. Cf. London Meeting for Sufferings Minutes, XXXIV (1775-1777), 18, 21-23, for a petition to the House of Commons which says that of the 5,000 inhabitants of Nantucket ninety per cent are Quaker. It also notes that the island is sandy, not yielding provisions for one-twentieth of its inhabitants who depend upon whaling for their livelihood—purchasing grain and other necessities from their neighbors.
43 Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, 171-177.
Additional sums were drawn from the Irish Fund for use in New England (under the direction of Moses Brown) in September 1780 and for Nantucket on January 18, 1781.44

In April 1781, as the increasing hardships of southern Quakers became known, Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings expressed the belief that aid would soon be needed in that section. On May 17 some £500 in gold was sent to North Carolina, to be used in the Western Quarter (Western Quarterly Meeting of North Carolina Yearly Meeting, which also included South Carolina and Georgia Friends). An account of the needs of these southerners was also sent along to the Irish Quakers whose contribution was being used.45 Additional money from this fund was sent to North Carolina in 1784 to be used to assist Friends on the “frontiers” of the Western Quarter who “remain under great Straits by the Distressing Effect of the late War.”46

Another use of the Irish relief fund was to help underwrite the cost of Benjamin Gilbert’s search for his family which had been captured by a party composed mostly of Indians and taken to Canada. This large frontier Quaker family had been taken prisoner in 1780, after the “valuable improvements” on their land had been burned. Benjamin Gilbert, Sr. died in captivity, but his son Benjamin was finally able to rescue his mother and twelve other relatives in 1782, as well as “one other who was captivated by the Indians.”47 The £120 furnished to Benjamin, Jr. (to purchase a horse and other “necessities”) must have seemed like money well spent. An additional grant was made to the Gilbert family soon after their return to Pennsylvania. The story of the sufferings of this family was first published in Philadelphia in 178448 and was later reprinted many times both in Philadelphia and London.

At the end of 1781 Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings reported that it had used about one-half of the Irish fund, applying this money

44 Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings Minutes (1775-1785), 292, 298.
45 Ibid., 303, 305.
46 Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, 223 (Aug. 19, 1784).
47 Ibid., I, 1, 194-200, 205-209.
48 A Narrative of the Captivity and Sufferings of Benjamin Gilbert, and his Family; who were surprised by the Indians, and taken from their Farms, on the Frontiers of Pennsylvania, in the Spring, 1780 (Philadelphia, 1784). This account was “taken down” by William Walton.
principally to Nantucket, Rhode Island, & the Carolinas, where the calamitous Effects of the War have fallen most heavy with respect to the means of outward support, more especially among the poorer sort of Friends; for the Relief of whom, and [on] some other occasions of the like Nature, we have drawn on Friends of that Nation for about one half the amount of what they have placed under the Direction of this Meeting: It appearing to us needful to be very careful & circumspect in the discharge of this Trust.  

Additional heavy demands upon this fund in 1782-1784 did not exhaust it, thanks to the second subscription which Irish Friends had raised. These donors, who had received a number of reports from Philadelphia on the use being made of their contributions, expressed their approval in 1784 of the way that the money was being used.  

Continued use of this fund was made after the 1783 close of the fighting, with the final draft on it in 1790 not being entirely spent until 1794. All of the principal of this collection appears to have been used to aid American Quakers, with some £654:19:5 in interest being eventually returned to the three Province Meetings in 1788 (in proportion to the amounts which they had contributed). Among later uses of this fund was a 1787 gift to North Carolina Friends “on the frontiers,” to be used especially in building or rebuilding meetinghouses damaged by war. Also a number of families within the verge of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting received assistance in 1789-1794.

Among the documents to be found in the Friends Historical Library, Dublin, is one entitled “Account of money distributed, since the second month 1788, by the committee of the benevolent donation of Friends in Ireland.” This list, sent from America to enlighten Irish Quakers on the use of their contributions, shows a total of £705:16:6 granted to six Friends in 1789, three in 1790, four in 1792, three in 1793, and five in 1794. These grants not only reflect the ongoing suffering and need which came from the Revo-

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49 Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, 188-189.
50 National Half-Year’s Meeting Minutes, May 2-6, 1784.
51 Ibid., minutes for Nov. 2-5, 1788.
52 Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, 274.
53 Friends Historical Library, Dublin, Portfolio 11, item number 12.
olutionary War but also indicate something of the nature and extent of Quaker suffering resulting from that struggle. They also show that, although most of the Irish money spent during the war was used outside the Philadelphia area, most of the 1789-1794 expenditures went to aid people within the limits of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

The story of the use of the British Quaker funds can never be completely told. What records we do possess suggest that there probably was, for a long time, a reluctance on the part of Philadelphia Friends to use these contributions. Whatever uneasiness and uncertainty existed probably arose in part out of the unfortunate experience of the spoiled provisions of the Mary & Charlotte and the controversy which developed between Philadelphia Friends and the London Cargo Committee. Another factor which perhaps complicated the touchy situation was the fact that the Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings was entrusted with the use of the Irish Relief Fund, while London Friends had turned theirs over to the committee which had originally written about provisions (some of whom were not members of Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings). When Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings raised a question about this arrangement, they seemed to get their fingers rapped by their London colleagues who informed them that not all of those written to in the first place were members of London Meeting for Sufferings but came from among those who “were supposed to be in easy circumstances.”

Even though Philadelphia Friends were authorized in 1778 to draw up to £500 for relief and at the beginning of 1779 were given permission to use £2,500 from the sale of the provisions from the cargo ship, they do not appear to have made any use of the British Donation Fund before 1789! Up to that time they seem to have turned to the Irish relief funds for whatever money they needed, even though on earlier occasions they had expressed to London Friends their appreciation of “the affectionate Sympathy manifested by our Friends in Great Britain and Ireland.” Although Philadel-
Philadelphia Friends, in reporting to London in 1780 difficulties of Nantucket Quakers, noted that they had already used some of the Irish Donation there and would probably use some of the British fund in Nantucket and Rhode Island, this use does not appear to have materialized. In other letters written from Philadelphia to London in 1781 and 1782 they speak only of using Irish funds, so that the London Donation Fund Committee in March 1782 wrote to Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings that there was a sum of £3,000 lying at interest in London banks for use of American Friends in need of help, and noted that “it is ready, or any part thereof, to be distributed when it may [by you] be thought proper.” The reply from Philadelphia seems noncommittal at best: “If it should hereafter appear Necessary to draw upon your Fund would it not be right, to adhere to some regular Mode of negotiating the business? In Ireland two Friends of Dublin are appointed to answer the Drafts of a Committee of this Meeting.”

Late in 1781 London Friends (not waiting for Philadelphia guidance) began to authorize the use of some of their Donation Fund to aid Quakers in other parts of America. On November 19, 1781, the Donation Fund Committee learned, through a letter from John Wakefield of Kendal, that several Friends from the South Carolina interior had been driven into Charleston. The committee immediately ordered Daniel Mildred to furnish Friends in that town “with a credit on the Subscription for the relief of Friends in America of not more than £200.” This money was placed in the hands of Isaac Peace [Pease?] at Charleston.

This British grant was ultimately put in the hands of a committee appointed by South Carolina’s Bush River Monthly Meeting early in 1783. A small sum of £57:7 was given to Isaac Hollingsworth,

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58 Ibid., I, 175.
59 Ibid., I, 188, 209.
60 Ibid., I, 193.
61 Ibid., I, 199-200. London Friends on Apr. 4, 1783, gave them the names of Jacob Hagen, John Wright, and Robert Barclay to draw on. Ibid., I, 201.
62 Donation Fund Committee Minutes, 17. Only Richard Chester, Daniel Mildred, Robert Barclay, and Joseph Gurney Bevan were present for this meeting.
his wife, and family, and Enoch Hollingsworth, all of whom had a certificate from Bush River Monthly Meeting. By 1784 some £123:17:16 had been distributed to sixty-three families, with the remaining £76:2:10½ being held in the hands of different Friends "for safety." Eventually the remainder was used to buy salt, casks for salt, scythes, sickles, iron, spelling books, ink powder, cloth, and even a casket for Dr. Neet "late of England."

About mid-1782 the London Donation Fund Committee heard that several Georgia Friends "have been by the distress of the times driven from their settlements into Savannah where they are destitute of subsistence except what hath been allowed them by the [British] Government there; and that others who remain on their Settlements [at Wrightsborough, in the American-held area] are also in great distress for not joining with their neighbours in the prevailing commotions, having been plundered of their effects, & subjected to peril of their lives." Immediately upon learning of this situation, the committee authorized Jacob Hagen to "take measures for their relief by furnishing some Person in Savannah with a credit not exceeding £500 for which this Committee will be answerable."

Most Georgia Friends sought to live up to their Quaker pacifism and a thoroughgoing neutrality, although some few took up arms on behalf of the American cause. Still others were inclined toward the Tory position—especially Joseph Maddock and Jonathan Sell, the two leading Friends in the Wrightsborough community. When the American forces reoccupied Wrightsborough some of the pro-British Friends had their property plundered, their houses burned, and were banished to Savannah by the American partisans. Among those going to Savannah, with only a few personal belongings and only small "provisions" were Joseph Maddock, Jonathan Sell, and ten other male Friends and their families. Until they received help

64 Vouchers from Isaac Peace, Aug. 25, 1782. These were probably the Friends who fled to Charleston.
66 Vouchers from Isaac Peace, Friends House Library.
67 Donation Fund Committee Minutes, 17-18.
68 Epistles Received, V (1778-1801), 136-137.
69 Donation Fund Committee Minutes, 18.
70 Others were Joseph Williams, John Embrie, John Stubbs, Joel Saunders, John Hodgin, Joel Saunders, Jr., John Carson, Thomas Faillen, Thomas Stubbs, and Joseph Stubbs.
from the British Donation Fund, they existed on only an allowance of beef and rice given them by the British Government.  

Joseph Maddock drew upon the fund, sending a note to Daniel Silsby, who was one of those picked by London Friends to handle the £500, reporting that he had "purchased goods to the amount of Two hundred & forty pounds for the present relief of our Suffering Friends in Georgia." Maddock hoped to visit Silsby in Charleston as soon as time and weather would permit, to give "a particular account of the distribution of the goods." A letter from Daniel Williams of Wrightsborough Monthly Meeting in September 1783 notified Silsby that Friends of that Meeting were unable to give him an account of the use of the English money given to Maddock "as Joseph Maddock never laid the matter before Friends." In April 1784 Silsby informed John Townsend and Morris Birkbeck that, in spite of having written to Maddock several times, he had received no further response from him. He then reported that the Georgia distribution was not as widespread as had been hoped, for "several of the most respectable members of the Meeting declined receiving any part thereof." Silsby declared that he could not understand why Maddock did not consult with Friends on the proper use of this fund.

Philadelphia Friends in 1782 had sent some of the Irish fund to North Carolina, when the situation there appeared to be quite bad. They had learned by August, however, that conditions were much improved. The Philadelphians also noted, when reporting to London, that they had heard of the difficulties in South Carolina (where some Quakers from the frontier had claimed they were forced from their dwellings into Charleston) and in Georgia. Before these reports could be thoroughly checked out Philadelphians had learned that London Friends (after hearing like reports) had "made such

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71 Epistles Received, V, 136–137.
72 Joseph Maddock to Daniel Silsby [Silsby], Savannah, Jan. 19, 1783, Friends House Library.
73 Daniel Williams to Daniel Silsby, September 1783, Friends House Library.
74 It appears that Maddock offered money to these Friends but that they refused to accept it. After Savannah was evacuated by the British, Maddock and the rest of his group returned to Wrightsborough.
75 Daniel Silsby to John Townsend and Morris Birkbeck, Charleston, Apr. 10, 1784, Friends House Library.
provision as was likely to be sufficient." On October 19, 1782, Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings wrote to its London counterpart that Bush River Friends had reported "that three, or four Friends went (without being forced by violent means) from thence to that Town [Charleston], they not being willing to stay at home, & take their lot with their Brethren, chose to go there to escape trouble, for which Reason we think we are under no obligation to contribute to their Necessities no more than if they had no right of membership among us." Philadelphia Friends, therefore, wrote "We desire [that] you may be cautious of receiving Accounts on so slender authority as we apprehend those were." They also promised to send, from time to time, "the best accounts of the circumstances of Friends that we can procure."

On July 7, 1783, Philadelphia Friends notified London that a committee from North Carolina's New Garden Quarterly Meeting had visited Friends on the frontiers of South Carolina and Georgia during the past winter and early spring. They also went to Charleston where they had drawn money from Isaac Peace. Daniel Silsby was reported to have "expressed Surprise and Displeasure that Joseph Maddox [Maddock] of Wrightsboro had drawn for a part of that Money, which he looked upon as an imprudent Act, and it may therefore be supposed was unnecessary."

This further information about those who had fled to Charleston, and a growing doubt about Joseph Maddock's use of the £240 he had drawn, caused London Friends to respond to the Philadelphia desire that London show more "caution" by writing that

The application on behalf of Friends in Georgia & Charlestown, were not attended to without such testimonials of the truth of the relations, as then left no reason to doubt thereof. If we have been led into any error it hath been from a desire of communicating the most speedy relief to our Friends under Suffering, which it was feared might be increased by delay. As it now appears most expedient to receive information of suffering

76 Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, 194-195.
77 Ibid., I, 206-207.
78 Ibid., I, 207. They also noted that they had heard from David Barclay that £500 had been set aside for Georgia Friends.
79 Ibid., I, 212.
Cases through the medium of your correspondence it is proposed to attend in future chiefly to intelligence from you.\textsuperscript{80}

In addition to these two grants to South Carolina and Georgia Friends there were several other direct payments by the Donations Fund Committee. On December 17, 1782, Samuel and Joseph Tregelles of Falmouth were reimbursed the £21:18:8 which they had spent “for the relief of four friends from Nantucket who had been taken prisoner and landed at Falmouth.”\textsuperscript{81} There was a £100 sum for Friends in New England on May 3, 1783.\textsuperscript{82} On August 7, 1783, the committee authorized the payment of 1779 drafts for the use of Rhode Island Meeting.\textsuperscript{83} A sum of £100 was also paid for “the relief of Friends of New York State.”\textsuperscript{84} The only other payment out of this Donation Fund in 1784 was one of £1,045:12:15 to the Cargo Fund as a credit to the subscribers to assist in covering their loss on the Mary & Charlotte cargo.\textsuperscript{85}

On November 15, 1786, six members of the Donation Fund Committee met and drew up a report of their stewardship and management. They reported that a total of £5,593:10:2 had been collected at various times for relief of American Friends. This sum was increased by £692:2:6 in interest paid by the Quaker Ackworth School through the end of December 1783, so that the grand total of funds available was £6,285:15:8. Only the small amount of £761:13:8 had been expended for relief by the time of this 1786 report. The committee had also reserved £500 for the use of the Negro school in Philadelphia. This last contribution had been authorized by the same large gathering of Friends meeting “at the close of one of the sittings of the Yearly-Meeting 1784” which approved the payment to the “Cargo subscribers” (“as both funds were raised with the same views”).\textsuperscript{86} These further transactions,

\textsuperscript{80} \textit{Ibid.}, I, 201.
\textsuperscript{81} Donation Fund Committee Minutes, 19.
\textsuperscript{82} Ledger of the Donation Fund raised for the Relief of Friends in America, 27a, Friends House Library.
\textsuperscript{83} Donation Fund Committee Minutes, 20.
\textsuperscript{84} \textit{Ibid.}, 22; Donation Fund Ledger, 27a, giving a date of Jan. 10, 1784, for this payment.
\textsuperscript{85} Donation Fund Ledger, 27a.
\textsuperscript{86} \textit{At a SUB-COMMITTEE for managing the Donation Fund for the Relief of Friends in America} (London, 1786), 1–2. After mid-1784 Ackworth School used this money interest free.
when added to the £761:13:8 spent in actual relief efforts, reduced the balance in hand to £3,978:9:7. The Donation Fund Committee noted in its report that this committee being sensible that every individual who contributed to this fund, has still a just right to such part of his subscription as hath not been applied to the original purpose for which the money was raised, takes this method of informing the subscribers in general, that should any Friend have any objection to the before-mentioned applications of the money, and signify the same through the meeting by which his subscription was paid, at or before the next Yearly-Meeting, he may receive back his proportion thereof: otherwise it is intended then to place the whole of the unappropriated money in the funds of Ackworth-school, agreeably to the sense of Friends in 1784 subject nevertheless to be called for as afore-said.  

It should be noted that Philadelphia Friends, who had used only Irish relief funds since 1778, had notified London Friends on August 19, 1784, that they left the disposal of the British charitable fund to those who had collected it.  

At the close of Yearly Meeting on June 1, 1787, members of the Donation Fund Committee met with representatives of London Yearly Meeting. Hearing from John Pemberton about the “distresses of many friends, in consequence of the late war, who are now settled in Nova Scotia,” they decided that the return of any money to the original subscribers (except in “cases of indigence or insolvency”) should be postponed until this “new information” was made known to them. It was thought right to keep all the unappropriated money until the extent of the new distresses (arising from “the same cause as those for which the money was originally given”) might be ascertained. This committee requested those who were claiming refunds to reconsider the matter, and it was decided that the fund should be under the direction of London Meeting for Sufferings. When the supervision of the fund was transferred, it was discovered that its balance was actually larger than had been reported. Meeting for Sufferings appointed a special committee to

87 Ibid., 2.
89 Donation Fund Committee Minutes, 29.
90 Ibid., 31, speaks of £4,445:19:10, while slightly later (32) a sum of £4,397:16:10 is spoken of as being placed with the Ackworth School Committee.
take charge of the money and to report to the parent body as occasion required.\textsuperscript{91}

A letter from James Pemberton and others in Philadelphia brought further information about the state of the “Quaker loyalists” who had settled in Nova Scotia as early as 1783.\textsuperscript{92} The report of two Friends (Joseph Moore and Abraham Gibbons) who had visited the Nova Scotia Quakers confirmed the “representation” which John Pemberton had already given London Friends. As a result of this intelligence, the new committee proposed that £500 be allowed for necessary supplies for the Nova Scotia needy.\textsuperscript{93} This grant was approved on February 22, 1788,\textsuperscript{94} and the money was entrusted to John Townsend and others who were to gather the cargo. Townsend and Wilson Birkbeck were instructed to draw up a “list of an assortment of things” to be sent.\textsuperscript{95} Such a list was approved by the committee on February 29, and Birkbeck, Townsend, and David Barclay were asked to procure those items “with all convenient Expedition on the lowest ready money price.”\textsuperscript{96}

By June 30, 1788, almost all the cargo for Nova Scotia Friends had been collected. These goods were insured and consigned to the care of Zephaniah Kingsley, Christopher Sower, Thomas Whitlock, William Whitlock, and Thomas Califf at St. Johns.\textsuperscript{97} A July 4, 1788, letter from the committee to these Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Quakers informed them that they were being sent “sundry articles of provision and clothing with some implements of husbandry and Dollars” for distribution among the needy. They were also told that

As several of the settlements are distant from each other, and many who are intended to partake of this relief may not be known to you, we recommend an application to the undernamed friends for their Aid,\textsuperscript{98} who, we

\textsuperscript{91}Ibid., 32.
\textsuperscript{93}Donation Fund Committee Minutes, 23.
\textsuperscript{94}Meeting for Sufferings Minutes, XXXVII (1783-1788), 482.
\textsuperscript{95}Donation Fund Committee Minutes, 34-35. The Meeting for Sufferings subcommittee continued to use the same minute book.
\textsuperscript{96}Ibid., 36.
\textsuperscript{97}Ibid., 40.
\textsuperscript{98}Those so named were Joseph and Thomas Canby at the Indian House Village and Joshua Knight at Beaver Harbour.
have no doubt, will with you cheerfully engage in this Business, and we
trust it will be your Endeavour to give effect to our intention by a just
discrimination in the disposal, duly apportioning what is consigned to the
respective wants of those in profession with us, whose situation may give
them a claim to the assistance of Friends. 99

This relief cargo was dispatched to St. Johns, New Brunswick,
on the True Britton. Its total cost (including freight, insurance, and
other charges) had amounted to £503:3:0. The additional three
guineas were given by “private hand.” 100 Eventually, London
Friends were to hear, via Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings, that
the goods had been gratefully received, suitably distributed, and
greatly appreciated by the emigrants. 101 Extracts from letters from
both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were sent on to London
giving information about the shipment and its distribution. When
the vessel arrived in November, a committee had been set up at
St. Johns to keep exact minutes of all transactions. It reported that
“We are distributing the donations as fast as the People come in, &
have sent one fourth to Digby, another fourth to Beaver Harbour,
and reserve one half for St. John & its vicinity.” Salt and clothing
which had been sent to the free Negroes were also about to be
distributed. 102

In 1789 London Meeting for Sufferings wrote to its Philadelphia
counterpart, reporting that it had (in 1788) taken over the manage-
ment of the charitable fund. It noted that “upwards of £4000” still
remained and was subject to “drawing” and “application” by
Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings. It was hoped that Philadelphia
would give as full an account as possible of its use. 103 A year later
the London Meeting noted: “If our former request for a few par-
ticulars respecting the cases of distress which have been relieved
from the Fund, for the satisfaction of Contributors can be complied
with, without putting you to much trouble, we believe it would not

99 Donation Fund Committee Minutes, 42.
100 Ibid., 43, minutes dated Aug. 8, 1788.
101 Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, 293. Philadelphia and New York Friends had sent
some relief supplies in 1787.
102 Ibid., I, 301–302. One of the trustees, writing from Granville, speaks of distributing a
sum of money “on our side of the Bay . . . which we proportioned to each family according
to our Judgment, so as to give general satisfaction as far as appears.”
103 Ibid., I, 287 (July 10, 1789).
only be acceptable to many friends, but may tend to encourage the exercise of Charity on future occasions, wherever they may present [themselves].”

By mid 1789 Philadelphia Friends had begun to draw upon this fund, receiving at least £100 that year and £700 in 1790. This was the first direct usage of the British fund by Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings which, up to then, had relied solely on the Irish contributions. In keeping with the London request a rather thorough account of the expenditures was forwarded by John Pemberton, showing £1,070:10:0 disposed of in twenty-five grants between May 2, 1789, and November 18, 1790. Forty-one additional grants, ranging from £10 to £100, were financed through drafts on this fund in the 1792-1797 period. A second report, dated December 22, 1797, disclosed £1,573:15:0 expended “for the relief of a number of Friends who suffered by the calamities of war.” It also reported £200 lent “to a Friend, who in various ways, suffered much by the difficulties & changes which the late commotions & troubles have brought on him.” When repaid, this sum would be used as Meeting for Sufferings directed. The balance remaining in the hands of the treasurer of the Philadelphia committee was £195:5:0. These two reports show the funds already used, or in hand, totalling £3,048:10:0. The remainder of the funds in England were ultimately turned over to Ackworth School in Yorkshire.

104 Ibid., I, 298-299 (July 30, 1790).
105 Donation Fund Committee Minutes, 45-47.
106 Cf. John Pemberton’s four-page letter to London Meeting for Sufferings, found in Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, between pp. 301 and 302. Almost all of these grants were to individuals within the confines of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.
107 London Meeting for Sufferings Minutes, XXXIX (1791-1796), 48, 129.
108 Loose sheets found in the front of Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, Cf. Bulletin of Friends Historical Association, VII (1916), 70-84.