

# Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage



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# Contributors to This Issue

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**Joanne Hess Siegrist** is a native of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and a 1969 graduate of Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Virginia. She is a teacher, historian, author, tour guide, promoter of family life, as well as a community and church worker. She authored *Mennonite Women of Lancaster County: A Story in Photographs from 1855-1935*, published by Good Books, 1996. She is founder/instructor of Heritage Watchers in its nineteenth year. Since 1991 she has harvested and documented photographs for Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society. In 2005, Joanne began countless new connections with Swiss folks. She and her husband usually visit Switzerland once a year, and together they give related presentations. Joanne and her husband, Don Siegrist, a retired physician, are parents of three adult married sons and six grandchildren.

**Moira E. Mackay** graduated from Juniata College with a B.A. in history and museum studies, and is currently enrolled in a dual M.S./M.A. in archives management and history at Simmons College, Boston, Massachusetts.

**Ernest G. Gehman** (1901-1988) taught German and other subjects for forty-nine years (1924-1973) at Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia. Born in Bally, Pennsylvania, he studied at Eastern Mennonite School, Harrisonburg, Virginia, and Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana, and received his baccalaureate and M.A. degrees from Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. In 1949 he received his doctorate from Heidelberg University in Germany. Interested in the preservation of the Pennsylvania German dialect, he frequently offered classes and gathered stories, poems, and anecdotes, which he preserved in a tape collection.

**K. Varden Leasa** (1979-2009) began to volunteer at Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, where he eventually started teaching classes in Pennsylvania German dialect. Prior to his death he translated dialect poems and stories, including some by Ernest G. Gehman, to help others understand and appreciate the faith and culture that lent purpose and meaning to his life.

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## IN THIS ISSUE

- An Introduction to the Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster: Origins and Early Years** 2  
*By Joel Horst Nofziger, Ramona Rivera Santiago, and Joanne Hess Siegrist*
- “Lift Up Thy Voice like a Trumpet”: Anne Knight and the Fight for the Enfranchisement of Humanity** 14  
*By Moira E. Mackay*
- Ferwas so Englisch?/Why So English?***  
**A. *Gwiddle un Gwidder/Quinces (Gwiddle) and Lightning (Gwidder)*** 33  
**B. *Seide un Seider/Silk (Seide) and Cider (Seider)*** 33  
*Von Ernest G. Gehman; transcribed and translated by K. Varden Leasa*
- Puerto Rican Meals** 34  
*By Rolando L. Santiago*
- Exhibit Review** 37  
***Abner K. Zook Dioramas***  
*By Jim King*

## ON THE COVER

David Leaman Hess Jr. (1921-1958), center, with his four eldest children—David, John, Joanne, and Mary Kathryn—plus five tomato pickers from Puerto Rico. This picture was taken on the Hess farm about 1955.

*An introduction to the story of Hispanic Mennonites in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania based on an August 2014 field trip by the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society*

## **An Introduction to the Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County: Origins and Early Years**

*By Joel Horst Nofziger, Ramona Rivera Santiago, and Joanne Hess Siegrist*

The Hispanic Mennonite congregations in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, are the result of outreach by Mennonites beginning in 1951, when the first Puerto Rican migrant workers arrived in Lancaster County. The 1950s were a period of massive change for the county and Lancaster Mennonites. The nation was coming out of World War II, which fueled an increase in wealth among Lancaster farmers. Mennonites were slowly starting to leave the farm for the city, lose their distinct separation from the world, as seen in the changing styles of dress, and the Brunk revivals swept across the religious establishment.<sup>1</sup> Into this environment Hispanics came to Lancaster looking for work, and through fellowship with their employers they began a now-flourishing Hispanic Mennonite Church. As the tagline to a 1961 *Christian Living* article described it, “strangers in the country became friends in the field first, then brothers in the church.”<sup>2</sup>

Lester Hershey, one of the Mennonite workers in Puerto Rico, saw the postwar migration to the mainland as the result of conversion: “As they become saved, they desire to rise to a higher standard of living.”<sup>3</sup> For many, the reality of the immigrations was more rooted in economic necessity. Following World War II, the island had significant unemployment. In an effort to alleviate this, the Puerto Rican Department of Labor established a migrant division that arranged contracts between U.S. mainland employers, farmers, and unemployed Puerto Ricans. Ramona Santiago recollected that her father traveled through Pennsylvania and New Jersey looking for work before eventually settling at Elmer P. Weaver Sr.’s farm. Puerto Ricans initially came to Lancaster in the 1950s primarily for seasonal farm labor, but as the decade progressed, the migrants wanted more permanent jobs and did not want to be separated from their families back on the island. Having been introduced to Lancaster through migrant labor, they settled and took jobs, especially in light manufacturing, hotels, restaurants, canneries and poultry plants.<sup>4</sup>

In the 1950s, more than fifty thousand Puerto Ricans, the majority of them Catholic, migrated to the United States mainland from the island. When they arrived, the Mennonite Church had already been engaged in outreach to Spanish speakers for more than three decades. In 1919, the Chicago Home Mission moved to 1907 South Union Avenue—the heart of the Mexican quarter, where Hispanics working on foundries and the railroads settled

in great poverty.<sup>5</sup> Thirteen years later in 1932, the mission began Spanish language services, and in 1934 David Castillo took leadership of the Hispanic congregation there, becoming the first Hispanic Mennonite pastor in North America. In 1936, William Detweiler and T. K. Hershey, the latter of whom would later be involved with Lancaster’s Hispanic Mennonite outreach, made the first mission trip to the American Southwest. This led to the establishment of Mennonite missions in South Texas, the cultural borderlands between the United States and Mexico. There was also contact between Mennonites and Hispanics on the island of Puerto Rico itself. In 1943, Mennonite Central Committee started placing Civilian Public Service Workers on the island—picking up on work done by Brethren service workers a year prior.<sup>6</sup>

Today there are approximately 50,000 Hispanics in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania representing 9.5% of the total population of 527,000.<sup>7</sup> Hispanic Mennonites do not fit the stereotypical Mennonite image, often having more in common with their mainline Protestant and Pentecostal neighbors than with Anglo Mennonites. “A considerable number of the [Hispanic] congregations include some form of ‘Evangelical Mennonite’ in their name,” as Ronald Collins notes in his preface to the English translation of Rafael Falcon’s *The Hispanic Mennonite Church in North America*. He continues to point out that none of the congregations discussed belong to the Evangelical Mennonite Conference,<sup>8</sup> but “probably all of them would affirm they are Evangelical Mennonite in the sense that their birth, behavior, and [. . .] being center in the ‘evangel.’ For the Hispanic, to be the church is

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1. Felipe Hinojosa, *Latino Mennonites: Civil Rights, Faith, and Evangelical Culture*, Young Center Books in Anabaptist & Pietist Studies (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), 52–54.

2. Esther Eby Glass, “One Fellowship, Two Tongues,” *Christian Living* 8, no.10 (October 1961): 3.

3. Lester Hershey, quoted in Hinojosa, *Latino Mennonites*, 40.

4. Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, “Hispanic Mennonite of Lancaster County Field Trip,” August 23, 2014; Esther Eby Glass, “One Fellowship,” 3; Rolando Santiago, on “Midstate Memories,” WHTM-TV/ABC 27, July 18, 2014.

5. The Chicago Home Mission was an outreach effort of the “Old” Mennonite Church.



La Plata Valley, Puerto Rico, where Mennonites first arrived in 1943

to evangelize, thus nothing is more natural than to call themselves 'Evangelical Mennonite.'<sup>9</sup> There are three Hispanic Mennonite congregations in Lancaster Conference, but they are part of a broader network of over forty Hispanic Mennonite congregations in four states and three Central American countries—Mexico, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica—that started as a result of outreach by the Hispanic churches themselves under the organization of the Spanish Mennonite Council.

The council was established in 1969 to develop unity and identity among the three existing churches and start new congregations—which grew to eight congregations eleven years later, to the vast network of today.<sup>10</sup> George L. Zimmerman observed in 1979; “A church that traces its roots to a small group of people meeting together in the town of New Holland, most of them of Puerto Rican origin, has now come of age.”<sup>11</sup> In 2014, there were more than fifteen-hundred members

6. Esther Eby Glass, “One Fellowship,” 3–4; Hinojosa, *Latino Mennonites*, 17; Rafael Falcón, *The Hispanic Mennonite Church in North America, 1932-1982* (Scottsdale, Pa: Herald Press, 1986); Felipe Hinojosa, “Making Noise among the ‘Quiet in the Land’: Mexican American and Puerto Rican Ethno-Religious Identity in the Mennonite Church, 1932-1982” (Diss., University of Houston, 2009), 5.

7. U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts. Data derived from Population Estimates, American Community Survey, Census of Population and Housing, State and County Housing Unit Estimates, County Business Patterns, Nonemployer Statistics, Economic Census, Survey of Business Owners, Building Permits. <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/42/42071.html> (accessed November 13, 2014).

8. The Evangelical Mennonite Conference was formed in 1960 by the Manitoba Kleine Gemeinde, which had first changed its name to Evangelical Mennonite Church in 1952. Henry Fast and Terry Smith, “Evangelical Mennonite Conference (Kleine Gemeinde),” March 2012 *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*. [http://gameo.org/index.php?title=Evangelical\\_Mennonite\\_Conference\\_\(Kleine\\_Gemeinde\)](http://gameo.org/index.php?title=Evangelical_Mennonite_Conference_(Kleine_Gemeinde)) (accessed November 13, 2014).

9. Ronald Collins, Preface to the English translation of Rafael Falcón, *The Hispanic Mennonite Church in North America, 1932-1982*, 13.

10. Samuel Lopez, “The Vision Continues,” *Missionary Messenger*, 71, no. 1 (May 1994): 3-5; Rolando Santiago, on “Midstate Memories,”

11. George L. Zimmerman, “Jesus Said, ‘Edificare Mi Iglesia,’” *Missionary Messenger* 55, no. 6 (October 1979): 11.



Hess farm, about 1955: David Leaman Hess Jr. (1921-1958) pours water for his four seasonal Hispanic workers. The picture was taken on the Hess farm, 197 Airport Road, Marietta, Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, the names of the four Hispanic men are unknown. (Joseph Dwight Hess, interviewed by Joanne Hess Siegrist, October 19, 2013).

of Hispanic Mennonite churches in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and New Jersey.<sup>12</sup>

### Strangers in the Field

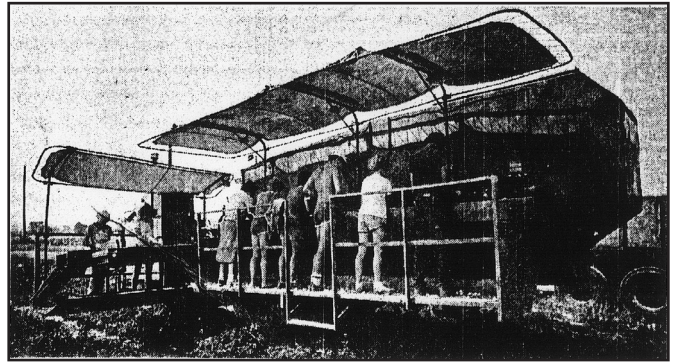
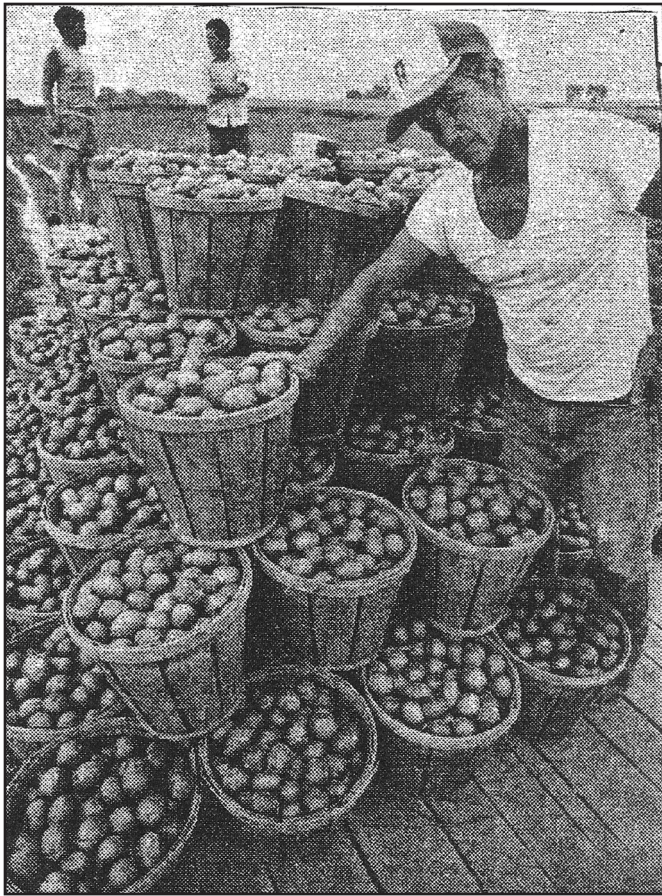
Lancaster farmers began planting field tomatoes in the early 1930s. H. J. Heinz was the first major contractor, but in 1936, Campbell's Soup Company became the major buyer of tomatoes.<sup>13</sup> Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, tomatoes were harvested by hand, using family labor and local help. All tomatoes harvested were red tomatoes, which were harvested as piece work—the green tomato market did not start until 1954 and even then was mostly limited to the southern end of the county, especially the area around Rawlinsville. Joseph Hess recalls that when Campbell's Soup Company came to Lancaster, his family was farming three acres. The next year they expanded to eleven acres and had twenty acres under cultivation by 1942.<sup>14</sup> After World War II there was increased demand for processing tomatoes (tomatoes with a thicker skin to survive commercial transport) especially from Campbell's Soup Company, which specifically asked farmers to increase their acreage in 1947. This led Lancaster farmers to cultivate more acres of tomatoes. The increased amount of cultivated acreage led to a local labor shortage. The New Jersey Farm Bureau responded to this regional labor shortage by starting a migrant worker program. The agency would bring Puerto Rican workers to New

Jersey, by way of New York. Farmers from New Jersey and Pennsylvania would travel to the camp to sign up as many men as they required for their eight-week tomato harvest. Farmers would pay the agency the cost of air fare, about forty-five dollars, which the bureau had forwarded to the workers, and then take a portion of each worker's weekly income to pay off the flight. Farmers were responsible for providing a clean place for the workers, as well as access to water. They were also required to provide beds—mattresses and springs, blankets, pillowcases—and a stove for the workers to cook for themselves. This system of hiring Puerto Rican migrants on harvest-long contract was repeated until 1964. After that, tomato harvesting became mechanized, eliminating the need for large numbers of farm laborers; however, by that point in time, many Hispanics had settled in Lancaster County and found jobs in chicken processing plants, the steel mills, the Buck Iron Works, and other industries.<sup>15</sup>

12. Samuel Lopez, USA Hispanic Mennonites, interview by Joanne Hess Siegrist, August 20, 2014.

13. Joseph Dwight Hess, "Tomato Harvesting and Our Hispanic Workers," interview by Joanne Hess Siegrist, August 19, 2014.

14. Ibid.



**Left: Joseph Dwight Hess with his tomato crop. He worked with tomatoes from 1936 to 1986. Top right: Brothers—Dwight and John Hess— East Donegal Township, inspect a truckload of tomatoes harvested from the fifty-five-acre tomato crop. Bottom right: a mechanical tomato harvester on the Hess farm.**

In preparation for the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society's August 2014 field trip, "Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County," James Gingrich interviewed several of the surviving farmers who used Puerto Rican migrant labor for tomato harvest. Harold Brubaker farmed tomatoes in the Mount Joy area. He farmed under contract with Heinz, who provided the tomato plants and bought the crop. After harvesting, the tomatoes were transported to Florin, Pennsylvania, where they were loaded onto train cars to be taken for processing. Brubaker recalls traveling to Hamburg to pick up migrant laborers from the train station. John Groff farmed ten to twelve acres of tomatoes for over twelve years, and his brother Elias Groff raised between twelve and fourteen acres of tomatoes for ten years. They each hired between four and five workers per year; Elias Groff generally hired workers between eighteen and twenty-five years old while John Groff took laborers between twenty and fifty.<sup>16</sup>

There was variation in how much and by what method the migrant workers were paid. Part of this is

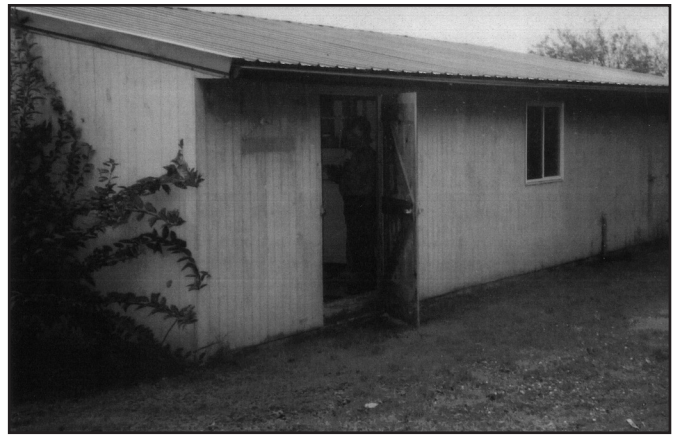
due to the New Jersey Farm Bureau which, when they facilitated contracts, set both piece rate and an hourly rate, then allowed farmers and workers to decide which rate to use on a day-by-day basis. Which pay rate they used was fluid, but workers had a clear preference for the per basket rate when the harvest was good, switching to per hour when tomatoes grew scarce.<sup>17</sup> John and Elias Groff paid their men between forty and seventy cents per five-pound bucket of red tomatoes. Green tomatoes, without spots or blemish, earned one to two dollars per basket when paid per piece, but they were generally harvested at a per hour rate because of the more stringent quality control used in their harvest. One farmer, Mahlon Shenk, notably withheld a portion of his workers' income, paying them only nine cents per basket, returning the withheld portion if the workers completed the full season. Prior to implementing this system, he had trouble with workers departing towards the end of the season when there were fewer tomatoes—and less possibility of earning—leaving Shenk to finish

15. Joseph Dwight Hess; Paul Hess, "Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County Field Trip," 2014; Elias Groff and John Groff, "Puerto Rican Harvesters in Lancaster County, 1950-1964," August 2014.

16. Harold Brubaker, interview by James Gingrich, July 15, 2014; Elias Groff and John Groff, "Puerto Rican Harvesters in Lancaster

County, 1950-1964," interview by James Gingrich, August 2014;

17. Joseph Dwight Hess, "Tomato Harvesting and Our Hispanic Workers," 2014. On the Hess farm, the number of baskets collected was tracked by stickers, unique to each worker, used to mark the baskets they filled.



This farmhouse (top) is where Elmer Paul Weaver Sr. and wife, Emma, and family lived in the 1950s at 1032 Osceola Drive, Drumore Pennsylvania. Near the barn stood this early chicken house (Top right), remodeled to serve as the first home in the United States for the Rivera family.



Fully loaded with three-quarter bushel-baskets, a truck is off to the cannery in this 1942 photo. It is on the Lime Rock farm of Joseph Bomberger Bucher (1884-1965) and wife, Bertha (Hertzler) Bucher, Penn Township, Lititz, Pennsylvania. The Buchers used an early tomato harvester designed for them by Ben High, but in the 1950s, many neighboring farmers hired Puerto Rican laborers who lived in remodeled farm sheds from mid-July to early October. Each worker tagged their baskets, with a goal of picking between 100 and 300 baskets per day. (Mary Lou Buckwalter Sauder, interview by Joanne Hess Siegrist, October 19, 2013).

the work of picking himself. In addition to supporting themselves, many of the workers sent money back to their families in Puerto Rico via money order.<sup>18</sup>

One well-publicized aspect of the Hispanic Mennonite interaction was the housing provided to them when they arrived. Merle Good's book, *Happy as the Grass Was Green*, and the 1973 film adaptation *Hazel's People*, touches on the treatment of Hispanic workers. Specifically, the fictional account uses their poor housing conditions as a key moral crisis for Eric Mills, the main character, as he sees the church leaders willfully ignoring their inhumane treatment. Towards the end of the film it is quietly mentioned that the Hispanics have been moved to better housing but not before Mills decides he cannot be at home among the Mennonites.<sup>19</sup> This portrayal has some basis in reality. Amos N. Hoover housed Puerto Ricans in former chicken houses on his farm—the same

building would later become the Farmersville Old Order Mennonite Church School.<sup>20</sup> And the workers on David Leaman Hess Jr.'s farm lived in the tobacco stripping room, which was cramped, cool, and damp. But this

18. Mahlon Shenk, interview by James Gingrich, July 15, 2014; Elias Groff and John Groff, "Puerto Rican Harvesters in Lancaster County, 1950-1964"; Joseph Dwight Hess, "Tomato Harvesting and Our Hispanic Workers," 2014.

19. *Hazel's People*, DVD, directed by Charles Davis (Burt Martin Associates Production, 1973).

The film is based on Merle Good, *Happy as the Grass Was Green*, (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1971).

20. Amos B. Hoover, "Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County Field Trip."





Early Landis farm, about 1959 (left)—Mervin and Rachael Landis reared their family of nine children at 2475 Oregon Pike, Lancaster, Pennsylvania and attended Landis Valley Mennonite Church. In the 1950's they often hosted three or four Hispanics to help with tomatoes and tobacco. Many evenings after dinner the young Landis boys scurried outside to greet these men who boarded in a side farm shed on their farm. This day four Landis brothers—Elmer, Edward, Fred, and Melvin—pose with a farm worker whose name is lost with time. Those exchanges eventually inspired the eldest, Elmer Gene Landis (b. 1951), into speaking fluent Spanish and eventually working in Central America. After tomato harvest, Mervin Landis gifted a dress suit to this gentleman as he left for New York City to visit other Hispanic friends. (Mervin and Rachael Landis, interviewed by Joanne Hess Siegrist, December 23, 2014).



Darlene Weaver and Ramona Rivera, 1962

was not a uniform experience. The Brubakers housed their migrant workers in the old log house—the same log house that had been built years earlier for their own family. John Groff provided a trailer for the workers, while Elias gave a garage as living space. Both took their workers to the store to buy the foods they wanted, and the workers made their own meals. Joe Hess recalled, “Each farm provided a clean, dry place for these workers to live with beds, blankets, kerosene stove, cooking fuel, and water. Each farm then took their workers to the local grocery store so they could select and purchase their own food.”<sup>21</sup> Hess himself housed the workers in his own farmhouse, giving them a few side rooms.<sup>22</sup>

The relation between farmers and migrants was not always positive. Joseph Hess noted that when hiring from the New Jersey Farm Bureau’s labor cooperative, the bureau would act as mediators to resolve conflicts. Later when farmers and workers gained enough connections to fill their labor needs without governmental intervention, the group of workers that lived on each farm generally



Rohrer farm, about 1955: These seasonal tomato workers were hosted on the farm of Clarence and Alverta Rohrer, 2508 Creek Hill Road, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The living quarters for these men was in the tobacco shed, and here they pose by two of their beds. (Keith Hoover, interviewed by Joanne Hess Siegrist, November 10, 2013)

knew each other well enough to avoid major trouble. But before that was reached, there was difficulty, some of it owing to the language barrier. Esther Eby Glass in her 1961 feature for *Christian Living* on the Hispanic Church work recounts a story told by Paul Landis: “On one occasion a farmer almost lost his entire working force because the men could not get him to understand that they wanted lard and didn’t know where to get it. Sometimes they can’t find Spanish-type food in local stores, and the farmer doesn’t know what they are trying to tell him.”<sup>23</sup> Small issues became compounded

21. Joseph Dwight Hess, “Tomato Harvesting and Our Hispanic Workers,” 2014.

22. Harold Brubaker; Elias Groff and John Groff, “Puerto Rican Harvesters in Lancaster County, 1950-1964”; Joseph Dwight Hess, “Tomato Harvesting and Our Hispanic Workers,” 2014.

23. Glass, “One Fellowship,” 37



Elmer P. Weaver Jr. takes this photo of his wife, Martha, and their six children as his parents prepare to return to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, after their pleasant visit in Puerto Rico. This young family lived in Puerto Rico from December 1, 1958, to early June 1960. Goal: Spanish immersion for home mission assignment with Lancaster's Hispanics under Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities.

in unfamiliar settings, and without the ability to resolve them early on, became complicated.<sup>24</sup> In many of these cases, the Lancaster churchmen who were working to evangelize the workers—and who were the only Lancaster Mennonite non-Hispanic Spanish speakers—stepped into mediate labor issues.

### Permanent Employment for Permanent Residents

While farm labor, especially tomato harvesting, brought large numbers of Hispanics through Lancaster, the community was a seasonal one. Victor Weaver Poultry Plant was the first major employer willing to hire Hispanic workers year round. Victor Weaver began his poultry business in 1937 and opened production in New Holland the following year. As demand increased, Weaver initially expanded production capabilities through hiring Mennonite labor, especially pulling from the Old Order and Amish communities. But Weaver had difficulty maintaining a full-time schedule with this conservative labor because they tended to take off en masse for weddings, funerals, and similar events. In looking for a stable workforce, Weaver began utilizing Latino/Latina labor. According to Larry Newswanger, Ross Esbenshade was instrumental in helping Victor Weaver come to this decision. They were in Sunday school together, and Esbenshade approached Weaver about providing the year-round work. The stability that

Victor Weaver provided through those permanent jobs became the basis out of which the Hispanic community began to grow and grow.<sup>25</sup>

Victor Weaver enjoyed a good reputation among his workers. This reputation was well earned by the progressive manner in which he ran his business, where he often took personal interest in his Hispanic workers. This could be seen in the way he provided temporary housing for workers, albeit out of converted chicken houses, and his encouragement to T. K. Hershey to begin

24. Glass, "One Fellowship," 37; Joseph Dwight Hess, "Tomato Harvesting and Our Hispanic Workers," 2014.

25. Larry Newswanger, "Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County Field Trip," 2015; Rolando Santiago, "Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County Field Trip," 2014.

26. George Gonzalez immigrated to the mainland from Puerto Rico in August of 1953. He did not come as a migrant worker, but to attend Bible School. T. K. Hershey, whom he connected with through Lester Hershey, got him into Elverson, Pennsylvania. T. K. Hershey also provided Gonzalez with land to farm to support himself. The first crop of tomatoes failed, and then his second crop of corn failed as well. After that second crop failed, he was giving his testimony at North Lebanon Mennonite Church when a man there told him that "he had to minister to his people." It was then he began working at Victor Weaver's and became active in the New Holland Hispanic

a ministry among the Puerto Rican workers. He also worked to overcome the language barrier, producing a Spanish-language manual for the plant and making sure interpretation was available—Ramona Rivera Santiago recalls that she would often be called to the office to make sure that language did not prove an obstruction. The case of George Gonzalez provides evidence of the positive worker relations maintained by Victor Weaver.<sup>26</sup> Gonzalez worked for Victor Weaver for thirty years, from 1954 to 1984. Gonzales worked the butchering lines, steeling knives.<sup>27</sup> He would frequently get calls from people planning on migrating to the mainland. He would call Victor Weaver, who would tell him to bring in these newcomers, and they would have a job almost on arrival. Miriam Gonzalez Lauver, George Gonzales's daughter, recalls that he would speak out whenever he saw any racial inequality: "He wanted his people to be equal, to have everything equal. . . . He was a little bit of a pioneer, but he would say that he was just trying to get what was right." Victor Weaver's responsiveness, along with the responsiveness of others in leadership at the plant—Ben Burkholder, John Kennel, Melvin Mitchell, and Luke Bomberger—allowed him to maintain a positive relationship with his many Hispanic workers.<sup>28</sup>

Weaver Poultry took a risk in hiring Hispanic workers, a move that was not viewed universally as a good decision. The Weavers got complaints about hiring "outsiders," and some individuals were afraid of the Puerto Ricans and so forbade their sons from working there. Ramona recounted a story of her time working at Victor Weaver's:

An Amish girl asked me, "Is it true that all Puerto Ricans carry knives? Being a bad girl, I told her, "Yeah, you should see the one in my purse."<sup>29</sup>

It is worth noting that stereotyping was not the sole domain of the white residents around Victor Weaver's New Holland plant. There was a widespread perception among the Hispanic community that to work at Victor Weaver's, one had to become a Mennonite.

## Early Missions

Lancaster Mennonite Conference began to feel the call to minister to the arriving Puerto Rican and other Hispanic migrants in 1949.<sup>30</sup> T. K. Hershey, a seventy-

year-old veteran of the mission field in Argentina—who had already helped start the mission work in Texas—arrived and began to establish contacts with Hispanic migrant workers in southeastern Pennsylvania during the tomato- and potato-harvest season. That first season, Lancaster Mennonite Conference sponsored twelve services between August 28 and October 2, six at Goodville Mennonite Church Sunday afternoons and six at Hernley Mennonite Church Sunday evening. Hershey presided over each service, except for those on September 25, when John Litwiller served in his stead. In a letter to the *Gospel Herald*, Hershey reports that twenty-one men converted on account of the Mennonite testimony that first season.<sup>31</sup> Attendance to these early services averaged three hundred and fifty people, reaching as high as six hundred during peak harvest season.

After T. K. Hershey stepped aside due to declining health, Adonna Nissley, along with Paul Landis, Melvin Lauver, Raymond Charles, Isaac Frederick, Jacob Rutt, and James Martin took up the Hispanic work, addressing both spiritual needs and making sure the migrant workers were being treated fairly. By 1953, H. Raymond Charles reports the schedule for Spanish-language services had expanded to include Parkesburg Mennonite Church Saturday evenings, New Holland Mennonite Church Sunday mornings, tentative services in Lebanon Sunday mornings, Bossler Mennonite Church Sunday afternoon, Rawlinsville Mennonite Church and Hernley Mennonite Church both on Sunday evenings.<sup>32</sup> Nissley pastored Puerto Rican migrant workers for several years and maintained an extensive preaching circuit: Parkesburg Mennonite Church on Saturday evening, Rawlinsville Mennonite Church Sunday morning, Bossler Mennonite Church Sunday afternoon, and Hernley Mennonite Church Monday evening. During Nissley's time, between four hundred and five hundred people made commitments to follow Christ.<sup>33</sup> Because the large number of individuals working among the migrants lacked steady and constant guidance, the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities asked William Lauver to direct the Hispanic work in the summer of 1954. The Lauvers had significant experience working with Hispanics, having served in Argentina and Florida working with Cubans, and Johnstown, Pennsylvania, serving the Mexicans there. Over the course of this early mission period, as a supplement to the personal work of Hershey, Nissley, Lauver, and others,

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Mennonite Church, including prison ministry.

Miriam Gonzalez Lauver, "Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County Field Trip, 2014."

27. Steeling, not stealing, is a type of maintenance performed on a knife to keep its edge. The process involves running the blade down a honing steel to realign the cutting edge.

28. Larry Newswanger, "Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County Field Trip," 2014; Ramona Rivera Santiago, "Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County Field Trip," 2014; Lauver, "Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County Field Trip," 2014.

29. Ramona Rivera Santiago, "Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County Field Trip," 2014.

30. Note that generally the beginning of the Hispanic outreach by Mennonites in Lancaster is dated to 1950, as Rafael Falcón does in his history, *The Hispanic Mennonite Church in North America: 1932-1982*. The

date should properly be 1949 because T. K. Hershey writes about his work in the 1949 harvest season in the November 8, 1949, issue of the *Gospel Herald*.

31. T. K. Hershey, "Work Among the Puerto Rican Migrants," *Gospel Herald* 42, no. 45 (November 8, 1949): 1104.

32. Falcón, *The Hispanic Mennonite Church in North America, 1932-1982*, 94; Joseph Dwight Hess, "Tomato Harvesting and Our Hispanic Workers"; Adonna Nissley, interviewed by James Gingrich, July 6, 2014; H. Raymond Charles, "Spanish Outreach," letter, July 12, 1953, Spanish Work, Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society Archives.

33. In a telephone interview by James Gingrich shortly before Nissley's death, Nissley reflected that the biggest flaw of his work among the migrant workers was inadequate follow-up with those who had converted. Adonna Nissley, interviewed by James Gingrich, July 17, 2014. Nissley passed away August 23, 2014.



Bridgeport Mission of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, was located along the Conestoga River. It is currently an apartment building.

Lancaster Mennonite Conference distributed a large amount of Spanish literature. Glass reports that twenty-five hundred tracts and three hundred Spanish-language songbooks were distributed annually. Additionally, approximately five hundred Spanish Bibles were sold at a subsidized rate during each migrant season.<sup>34</sup>

The central tactic of the early Hispanic work was simple: have the farmers bring their workers to church. Joseph Hess put it simply: "Farmers in this area didn't work on Sundays. We went to church, so Lancaster Conference provided a place for these people to go to church as well. The men seemed to be willing to go, and they had Spanish preaching."<sup>35</sup> Rafael Falcón in *The Hispanic Mennonite Church in North America: 1932-1982* noted that the property owners assisted in T. K. Hershey's work by encouraging their workers to attend the service and notes that the combined efforts of Hershey and

the farmers led to attendance as high as two hundred individuals.<sup>36</sup> In 1953, H. Raymond Charles sent out a letter with the following call: "As in previous years, we wish to advise you of the places where we expect to hold services and to encourage [sic] you to take upon yourself the responsibility of seeing that transportation is provided for these men to attend the services in your locality."<sup>37</sup> He also noted that he would be sending a card to everyone who employed migrant workers, informing them of the times and locations that Spanish-language services would be held. Charles also encouraged readers to contact employers of Hispanics in their area, both Mennonite and non-Mennonite, and inform them of the meetings. They were asked if young people in the congregation could provide transportation to those Hispanics who needed it—with the expectation that the bulk of the Puerto Ricans would receive transportation from their employers. Eight years later, Paul G. Landis would reflect that the success of the Hispanic migrant program depended on the farmers they worked for. They were not eager recipients of the church's outreach, but "they will come most willingly if they have seen Christian love demonstrated in their employer's dealings with them."<sup>38</sup> And once they have come, a few responded to the message being preached. Landis clearly saw what Falcón later noticed, that the cooperation and concern of farmers was the single most important aspect in the



Stairs leading down to one of the first locations of the New Holland Hispanic Mennonite Church, 207 East Main Street, New Holland, Pennsylvania, by Kauffman Hardware

34. Falcón, *The Hispanic Mennonite Church*, 94; Mary Jean Kraybill, "William Lauver: Fifty Years in Spanish Work," *Missionary Messenger*, 48 no. 4, (August 1971): 12-13; Glass, "One Fellowship," 37.

35. Joseph D. Hess, "Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County Field Trip," 2014.

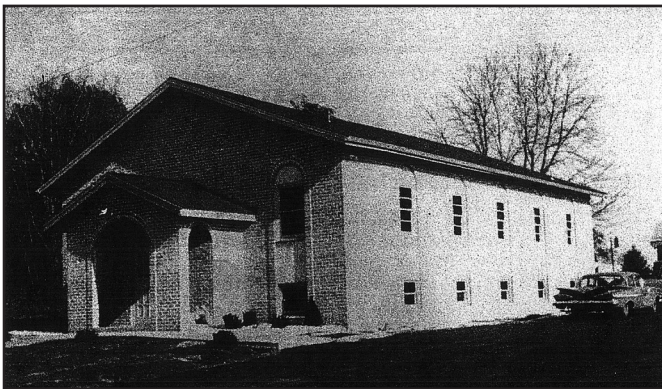
36. There exists in the written record a seeming discrepancy in numbers, especially between Glass, writing in 1961, and Falcón, in 1986. This is mainly the result of unclear writing where yearly attendances and av-



214 West King Street, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, former site of the Water Street Rescue Mission, became home to the Good Shepherd (Hispanic) Mennonite Church.



Interior of the 214 West King Street location of Good Shepherd Mennonite Church, about 1967.



Good Shepherd Mennonite Church, at its current location on Harrison Street, Lancaster. The building was built in 1970 and expanded in 1978.



Wedding, 1960s at the second site for Hispanic Mennonites at West King Street, Lancaster City. Left to right: Bishop Frank Enck, Hector Caballero, Artemio DeJesus, Nereida DeJesus, Zoraida Morales, Elmer P. Weaver Jr.

outreach to the Hispanic community. The centrality of the employers was highlighted in the ending ritual of the migrant workers' labor season. At the end of the year, there was an annual fellowship meeting and service, in cooperation between Lancaster Mennonite Conference and the Migrant Commission of the Lancaster County Council of Churches. The meeting was open to all Spanish speakers but primarily aimed at migrants who had finished their season's work, and farmers would provide for their transportation to the event. The day included a Gospel service conducted by a furloughed missionary from a Spanish-speaking mission field, and a meal served by ten Mennonite churches. Glass, in her description of the Hispanic mission work going on at the

time, frames this as a clear reversal of roles: "All summer, Puerto Ricans have been working for Mennonites; on this day Mennonites serve Puerto Ricans."<sup>39</sup> This service, including its role-reversing service, and the fellowship it fostered, is indicative of the role that farmers and employers, rather than the church men conducting outreach, had in reaching out to Hispanic workers. From these combined efforts of farmers and church workers, Hispanic Mennonite churches began to form in the early 1950s.<sup>40</sup>

It is important to note that the outreach efforts of Mennonites were not without opposition. Most of the migrants were at least nominally Catholic, and the local Catholic parishes did not take kindly to Mennonite

erages are not assigned dates. It is my assumption that the lower numbers reflect earlier periods of outreach, and higher numbers, later years.

37. H. Raymond Charles, "Spanish Outreach."

38. Esther Eby Glass, "One Fellowship," 37.

39. *Ibid.*, 37.

40. Falcón, *The Hispanic Mennonite Church in North America, 1932-1982*, 93; H. Raymond Charles, "Spanish Outreach"; Esther Eby Glass, "One Fellowship," 6, 7, 37; Joseph Dwight Hess, "Tomato

Harvesting and Our Hispanic Workers"; Samuel Lopez, "The Vision Continues," 4.

It is important to note that farmers did not support the missions universally. Elmer Weaver laments in his *Missionary Messenger* report in February 1961 that "the non-Mennonite farmers don't co-operate with us very well in this respect [transportation] and neither do some of the Mennonite farmers."



Rawlinsville Sunday school class, 1957. Teacher: Ruth Weaver (back row); Darlene Weaver (first row right); Ramona Rivera (standing, third from left)

poaching of their members. Elmer P. Weaver Jr., reporting from Rawlinsville Mennonite Church, notes that the Catholic church based in Quarryville was making a concerted effort to reach Puerto Rican migrants, including using buses to gather migrant workers to bring them to mass. Weaver also reports an incident during the 1960 harvest season when the Catholics actively tried to undermine the Mennonite missions:

After the service the second evening, as I began shaking hands and giving the greeting "Buenas Noches y Dios le Bendiga," I heard a man say, "We respect them, but we must not attend their service." I did not know who the man was, but God led me to find out. Since one of the farmers hadn't arrived for his men, I decided to take my carload home and return to wait with them. When I returned, I saw no one but decided to go in one drive and out the other. It was then I saw two men waiting in the lower drive. They told me they were waiting for the priest. "Well," I said, "please get in my car and we'll wait for him." It was beginning to dawn on me that one of these men had made the statement discouraging attendance at our service. These men were the priest's "helpers." He had left them at the service and had gone to a neighboring farm to see why those workers hadn't attended his service that morning.<sup>41</sup>

Weaver continues on to note that some laborers did not enjoy the Catholic services but were refusing to attend the Mennonite services out of fear.<sup>42</sup>



Church leaders and members, ca. 1962, at West King Street. Standing: Clauti Martinez, Antonio Ortiz, Artemio DeJesus, Teodoro Santiago, Ubaldo Rios, Miguel Martinez, Blas Martinez, Manuel Rios. Seated: unidentified, Elmer P. Weaver Jr., Hector Caballero

### Establishing Churches

By 1953, the Puerto Rican community was starting to transition from a migratory group to a permanent body. The Rawlinsville Migrant Service was the last of the churches on the migrant circuit to continue the program. Rawlinsville, though in the southern end of Lancaster County, was the center of green tomato harvesting, and so had a continual demand for migrant labor until mechanization. Ten of the farmers who attended Rawlinsville Mennonite Church employed Puerto Rican laborers, and this work force represented the main body of the migrant service. Four Puerto Rican families were members of Rawlinsville. Paul G. Landis preached at Rawlinsville during July until the first frost, approximately ten weeks, from 1955 to 1960. Elmer P. Weaver Jr. began to run the Sunday evening Spanish language services after Landis. In Weaver's first summer, between July 31 and October 2, the average attendance was thirty-three individuals, with a high of 37 and a low of nine. Weaver continued to run the services through the mid-1960s. However, once the Bridgeport Mission of Lancaster became active—in part because of the efforts of the Weaver family, the migrant service at Rawlinsville lost many people.<sup>43</sup>

In contrast to the Rawlinsville agricultural community, New Holland offered a more industrial setting. Because Victor Weaver offered permanent employment to Puerto Ricans, the Hispanic population in and around New Holland grew large enough to warrant a Spanish language Sunday-school class, which quickly became a Spanish preaching service that was held in a large Sunday-school room at the New Holland

41. Elmer Weaver, "Elmer Weaver Reports: Rawlinsville Migrant Services," *Missionary Messenger* 37, no. 10 (February 1961): 6.

42. *Ibid.*

43. Hess, "Home Missions: Bridgeport"; Landis, "Rawlinsville Mennonite Church (Rawlinsville, Pennsylvania, USA,);" Elmer Weaver, "Elmer Weaver Reports: Rawlinsville Migrant Services"; Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, "Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County Field Trip."

Mennonite Church. This was the first Hispanic Mennonite Church in Lancaster Mennonite Conference. By 1956 they had outgrown the room in the New Holland church and rented—without Conference assistance—a basement room in the nearby Kauffman's Hardware Store at 213 East Main Street.<sup>44</sup> That same year the congregation held its first baptism. William Lauver was the minister at that time, preaching the first sermon at that location in 1956 and the last sermon in 1971; George Gonzalez also delivered sermons in Spanish. Gonzalez was not licensed until 1961 (ordained in 1967 for the Hispanic Mennonite work) but was heavily involved in working and preaching before the 1960s. The congregation would have approximately fifty people in attendance for Sunday worship. They still maintain a connection with the English-speaking New Holland Mennonite Church, originally meeting with them for communion and footwashing once a year (now just an annual worship and communion service). In 1971, New Holland Spanish Mennonite purchased their own building on Tabor Road, New Holland, Pennsylvania, having also had services in the youth center of Christian Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Then in 1975, the congregation moved to its present location, 24 North Roberts Avenue, New Holland, Pennsylvania, the former building of the (Anglo) New Holland Mennonite Church.<sup>45</sup>

The Bridgeport Mission began in 1952 with David Groff's vision to provide a Spanish-language Sunday school for the Mexican children living there. Through the later work of Jacob Rutt, an adult class was begun. The mission station formally established itself in 1957, when it moved into the old mill on Ranck Road along the Conestoga River. The structure was long and narrow and often filled to capacity with the front portion for church and the back for Sunday school.<sup>46</sup> The building and land around it was owned by the Mexican Ortega family, run by the matriarch Santa "Grandma" Ortega. At first, the mission provided her a contribution once a year and then twice a year, in a show of appreciation, in addition to monthly rent, which the mission board provided. The mission started as a Sunday school, and that continued to be a major part of its outreach. Many children came to summer Bible school there on trucks with straw-filled beds. On November 10, 1957, Bridgeport saw its first baptism which included three Hispanic individuals. Grandma Ortega was received into the church at the same time, having been baptized previously. The mission was active with such outreach as prayer meetings, Sunday school classes, Sunday evening children's services, and winter sewing circles. In an undated and unlabeled meeting between July

1959 and September 8, 1959, Paul G. Landis stressed to those gathered, "we should get away from the word 'mission.' Everyone is on the same level."<sup>47</sup> This seems to have had at least some effect. The church was bilingual, with joint singing, devotions translated from English to Spanish and Spanish to English, with Sunday school and sermons divided by language. In 1961 there was a ratio of three Spanish-language classes to five English classes, with twenty-six Spanish-speaking families in attendance. In 1960, there were two pastors, Elmer P. Weaver Jr. and George Gonzalez, working together in the mission. In 1962 the Bridgeport mission split, with some members, including the Weavers, moving to establish a church at West King Street while others, including Paul Mellinger, remained at Bridgeport. The West King Street congregation became what is today El Buen Pastor (Good Shepherd Mennonite Church) on Harrison Street, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.<sup>48</sup>

## Conclusion

This paper has attempted to trace the contours of Hispanic Mennonites in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, from their initial movements into the county through the establishment of their community—looking at the how and why of their coming and their joining of the Mennonite tradition. The material used to accomplish this was first gathered for the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society's field trip, "The Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County," which ran on Saturday, August 23, 2014. For the most part, I have limited my scope to the first decade of their experience. There is a great deal beyond this to explore, untangle, and preserve about the Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster. Many questions still wait for answers to be uncovered. These include:

1. How did the treatment of migrant workers by Mennonite employers compare to that of non-Mennonite employers?
2. What was the process and experience by which Hispanics transitioned from migrant-agriculture work to non-agricultural work (beyond their experience with Victor Weaver)?
3. What records does the New Jersey Farm Bureau retain that could shed light on Hispanic migrant workers and their experiences?
4. What was the connection between Hispanic Mennonites and the Mennonite Messianic Mission?

There should also be more research into the history of the Bridgeport Mission, which became very tangled in the 1970s following church divisions and moves (or lack thereof). Now is the ideal time for these questions to be pursued while they remain in living memory. □

44. Today this room is in the basement of the New Holland Historical Society.

45. Falcón, *The Hispanic Mennonite Church in North America, 1932-1982*, 93; James Senft, "Spanish Speaking Mennonite Church Celebrates 50 Years"; "Lancaster Mennonite Conference: History"; Glass, "One Fellowship," 5; Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, "Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County Field Trip"; Lopez, "Hispanic Mennonite History Question," e-mail, November 25, 2014.

46. Glass, "One Fellowship," 5; Kathryn L. Hollinger, "A Spanish Witness in Lancaster"; "Lancaster Mennonite Conference: History." 47. "El Buen Pastor: Minutes of Bridgeport Mission, 1957-1963."

48. Ramona Rivera Santiago, "Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County Field Trip"; Hollinger, "A Spanish Witness in Lancaster"; "El Buen Pastor: Minutes of Bridgeport Mission, 1957-1963"; Shirley Boll, "Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County Field Trip," 2014; Weaver, "United States: Good Shepherd Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa."

*A young historian explores the impact of Quaker Anne Knight on the antislavery and women's suffrage movements.*

## **“Lift Up Thy Voice like a Trumpet”: Anne Knight and the Fight for the Enfranchisement of Humanity**

*By Moira E. Mackay*

Staring out from the black-and-white photograph is an old woman. Her face, contrasting starkly against the all-black of her somber attire, suggests a pugnacious nature, one of strong conviction, unsmiling and stern. What makes the portrait remarkable is the placard in her hand that she points to with a stick. The sign reads, “By Tortured Millions / By the Divine Redeemer / Enfranchise Humanity / Bid the Outraged World / BE FREE.”<sup>1</sup>

The photograph, taken in Paris in 1855, shows Anne Knight, an early nineteenth-century reformist, activist, proto-feminist, and Quaker.<sup>2</sup> This single image and the sentence that she takes care to highlight, embodies her life mission of enfranchisement. Knight used the image as a calling card, exemplifying that she herself thought of the phrase and her appearance to be indicative of how she wanted the world to view her and her beliefs.<sup>3</sup> The somber and simple attire attests to her role as a Quaker, as she does not wear the decorations and embellishments of most middle-class English women. Her inclusion of the “Divine Redeemer” also denotes how her Quaker beliefs shaped her personality and ambitions. The majority of her life was spent fighting for the enfranchisement of unrepresented or otherwise marginalized groups. The sign she holds with its sentence exhibits this life-long struggle in its use of the word “Humanity” instead of one of the specific causes in which she was an active participant. It is a cry for a more just world that asks for an end to suffering and the right to freedom from a humanist perspective.

She was neither a typical middle-class Victorian woman nor a typical radical reformist; rather, she was progressive and politically active to an extreme.<sup>4</sup> Scholarship on the reform movement includes aspects of middle-class, radical women in these movements, in which she is often included. But more often in scholarly literature, she is used as a device to reflect the radicalization that this group of women underwent in the early to mid-nineteenth century. However, her humanist approach to reform and her pursuit of justice in a variety of causes, some of which were not typical of most middle-class women, set her apart within society and active reform movements.

Anne Knight grew up in a Quaker family that had ties to many of the more radical thinkers of the time. Educated and encouraged to explore social issues within a philanthropic and maternalistic attitude, as was proper for middle-class women in early nineteenth century

Britain, she was able to take those ideas into the public domain because of her Quaker upbringing. Several of the causes Knight supported were expected for middle class women, such as the abolition of the British slave trade; however, others were more unusual, such as her support for Chartism, utopian societies, and her later support for women's rights.<sup>5</sup> Despite this, she is not a well-known figure: mostly unpublished, unofficial, and *unmarried*. There are limited references to her throughout scholarly literature, and she is mentioned in the diaries and letters of friends and acquaintances. Ultimately, she speaks for herself in her own letters and her own actions. During her lifetime, she published extensively on women's rights and, in her activist efforts, she was recognized by her contemporaries.

In the late eighteenth century and late nineteenth century, there was a rise in political and social action, known as the “Age of Reform.”<sup>6</sup> Born in 1786, Knight was very active along with many other women of the middle class, especially those in alternative religions such as Quakers, Unitarians, and Evangelicals. Even Anglican women were active in these causes. Women, who were given more liberty in terms of education and participation in the public and political sphere, were still expected to maintain a certain level of middle-class propriety. Nowhere did a cause attract a larger body of women activists than the abolition of the British slave trade. Working-class women's, as opposed to

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1. The placard is difficult to discern; this is the best transcription that could be made out, but there is a similar sentence published in one of her letters.

2. The term ‘feminist’ was not used until later in the century so it is not historically accurate in describing Anne Knight; however, it is applicable for other women who shall be discussed in this paper.

3. Bonnie S. Anderson, *Joyous Greetings: The First International Women's Movement, 1830-1860* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 88.

4. The term ‘radical’ is used here to describe a group of people in the nineteenth century who favored drastic reforms in social, economic, and political policies for the betterment of society and humanity. They were more extreme than most reformers in their pursuit of reform.

5. She was a strident supporter of Chartism (see page 29), where she had more than sympathies for the utopian ideals. She was also a sympathizer with the extremely radical Irish Quaker sect, the White Quakers.

6. The Age of Reform was a period of time in both England and the United States where reformist thought and populist thought were more prominent and were inciting more action. Reforms on prisoner welfare, on slavery, on temperance, and on a number of different issues were all in effect during this time.



middle-class women's, divide between the domestic and public sphere had always been less rigid than that of the middle-class; working-class women were therefore increasingly politicized through the Chartist movement. Nevertheless, most women kept the belief of "separate spheres" and refrained from public lectures or expressing zealous ideals. Knight frequently pushed these boundaries in her writing and, in a few cases, in speaking and organizing publicly. The limited number of radical women who operated outside the domestic sphere were those that later went on to support women's rights. Knight was an important member of this group who were prepared to associate themselves with the radical women's rights movement despite frequent opposition.

Knight did not run for office or hold high positions in any of her causes like Elizabeth Heyrick, nor did she produce a prolific number of publications like Harriet Martineau. What she did do was support radical causes, speak her mind, and send strongly worded letters to anyone she thought might listen. She supported utopian societies both in Britain and in France as well as unpopular Quaker sects. In life outside her activism, she did stay within the parameters of most middle-class Victorian women, thereby avoiding complete censure in the Quaker and reformist communities. As mentioned before, she approached political activism with a humanist mindset, which included a number of unexpected marginalized groups in her fight for enfranchisement. The 1840 International Antislavery Convention acted as a catalyst for her radicalism and the public nature of her activity. It was at this time she was propelled into the forefront of the British women's rights movement. Through her fight for women's rights, she developed a voice in the public political realm that moved her out of the usual sphere for a middle-class female activist. Anne Knight has been marginalized in the scholarship on radical reform in the nineteenth century. Using her letters and published works and by tracing her actions, this thesis argues that she was more prominent and important than the scholarly literature portrays her to be. She was significant to reformist and feminist history as an individual.

### Historiography

Anne Knight has been marginalized by scholarly literature, which only contains brief references to her life and achievements. Most scholars who refer to Knight cite a biographical article published by Gail Malmgreen in 1982 in *Quaker History*.<sup>7</sup> This is the sole source that focuses primarily on Anne Knight. Malmgreen's article is a biographical sketch of Knight and her family with general references to her life's activities and pursuits. Malmgreen argues Knight was not an important historical figure on her own. Stressing this point, Malmgreen argues that Knight should be viewed as a "representative early feminist, rather than as a lone pioneer" and that in the abolition movement and in her other causes "she was neither influential nor even very widely noticed."<sup>8</sup> In contrast to Malmgreen's conclusion that Knight was simply representative of a small group of women, this thesis argues that Knight was more than illustrative of a movement.

## What Young Historians Are Thinking

Moira E. Mackay's "'Lift Up Thy Voice Like a Trumpet': Anne Knight and the Fight for the Enfranchisement of Humanity" is the first of a three-part series showcasing the three presenters of the 2014 Young Historian's Symposium. This symposium, organized jointly by the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society and the Sider Institute for Anabaptist, Wesleyan, and Pietist Studies at Messiah College, is dedicated to fostering young historians working from the historic peace-church tradition.

The symposium will run again on October 12, 2015. Those interested in participating in the 2015 Young Historians should contact Joel Nofziger at [communications@lmhs.org](mailto:communications@lmhs.org).

The abolition movement had a significant effect on Anne Knight as well as a larger impact on the public agency of women in society. The scholarly literature devoted to the subject of women's involvement in the movement has increased over the last few decades, beginning with Clare Midgley's ground-breaking work, *Women against Slavery: The British Campaigns, 1780-1870*.<sup>9</sup> Midgley is the foundational text for all succeeding research on the subject and is, therefore, the most prominently used source in this thesis on the subject of women in the abolition movement. While other literature on abolition and women's involvement in the movement is referenced, Midgley's work remains the defining text.<sup>10</sup> Midgley's argument, which is supported by subsequent scholarly work, is that the abolition movement gave women the political and public training that they would later use in the women's rights movement. This argument correlates with the evidence used in this thesis, which demonstrates how Anne Knight's participation in the antislavery movement influenced and directed her actions in the women's rights movement.

The majority of the more radical members of the abolition movement, those who tended to avidly support Chartism as well as eventually the women's rights movement, also corresponded with American rights activists. The exchange of letters, material, and eventually

7. Gail Malmgreen, "Anne Knight and the Radical Subculture," *Quaker History* 71, no. 2 (1982): 100-113.

8. Malmgreen, "Anne Knight," 101.

9. Clare Midgley, *Women against Slavery: The British Campaigns, 1780-1870* (London: Routledge, 1992).

10. Elizabeth J. Clapp and Julie Roy Jeffrey, ed., *Women, Dissent, and Anti-Slavery in Britain and America, 1790-1865*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Kathryn Gleadle and Sarah Richardson, ed., *Women in British Politics, 1760-1860* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000); Karen I. Halbersleben, *Women's Participation in the British Antislavery Movement, 1824-1865* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1993); Halbersleben, "Elizabeth Pease: One Woman's Vision of Peace, Justice, and Human Rights in Nineteenth-Century Britain," *Quaker History* 84, no. 1 (1995): 26-36; Gail Malmgreen, *Feminism and Empire: Women Activists in Imperial Britain, 1790-1865* (London: Routledge, 2007).



V. FRANK, Photo

Photo of Anne Knight with her "calling card," taken in 1858

delegates in 1840 was very important to the involvement of British women in the women's rights movement. The 1840 convention was a pivotal moment in the life of Anne Knight as was the "Transatlantic Sisterhood." The authority on the interaction between British and American female abolitionists is Kathryn Sklar.<sup>11</sup> In her work, *Women's Rights and Transatlantic Antislavery in the Era of Emancipation*, Sklar does not mention Knight despite her many letters to American abolitionists that have survived. However, she is an important background text for the American Garrisonians who were active in American abolition and women's rights. Sklar argues that American women were more active in the American antislavery movement and more able to embrace politics than their British counterparts. The American women abolitionists were a strong influence on Knight because of their ideals and their acceptance of women's participation in the movement. Knight's meeting and correspondence with them were part of the catalyst of her radicalization towards the feminist movement.

Knight wrote prolifically on Chartism, working-class utopias, and enfranchisement, not just for women but also for slaves and for the working class. These ideologies influenced her writing and activism. They also provided a support base for her involvement in the

women's rights movement and increased her publishing opportunities. Barbara Taylor's book, *Eve and the New Jerusalem*, as well as Jutta Schwarzkopf's book, *Women in the Chartist Movement*, are the most comprehensive and complete texts on women's involvement in the Chartist movement.<sup>12</sup> They are comprehensive and detailed, and also the basis for more recent research on women in working-class movements. Knight is referenced briefly in both Schwarzkopf's and Taylor's books in her capacity as an activist. These works argue that working-class women were less hampered by their propriety for social action and were therefore more capable of being political than middle-class women. This may have been why Knight found educated working-class women more appealing than those women of the abolition movement. Using Knight's correspondence and published works, Taylor and Schwarzkopf build on these references to demonstrate that Knight had an active role in both Chartist and women's rights societies.

Scholarly literature on the Women's Rights movement usually deals with women's suffrage in the 1880s and 1890s. Anne Knight was active in the 1870s as one of the first voices of female suffrage, publishing before the period that is credited with the beginning of the women's rights movement. As most feminist texts focus on the later suffrage movement, it was important to obtain scholarly literature that dealt with "the Woman's Question" rather than the later societies, pertaining more to Knight's role in the movement. The latter half of Knight's life is a culmination of her work in the women's rights movement as she brings in experience from both the abolition movement and the Chartist movements. Her role in these movements is frequently stated from a feminist perspective. Bonnie S. Anderson's work, *Joyous Greetings: The First International Women's Movement: 1830-1860*, gives a detailed account of Knight's role not only in the Chartist movement but also in the French and British feminist movement.<sup>13</sup> Anderson does not use prior scholarly work as a reference in the case of Knight, referencing her letters and political diary instead. Knight features in this work as a prominent figure in the early suffrage movement. Anderson's information on the friendship between Knight and Jeanne Deroin,

11. Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Women's Rights Emerges within the Antislavery Movement, 1830-1870* (New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000); Sklar, "Women Who Speak for an Entire Nation: American and British Women Compared at the World Anti-Slavery Convention, London, 1840," *Pacific Historical Review* 59, no. 4 (November 1, 1990): 453-99.

Kathryn Kish Sklar, and James Brewer Stewart, *Women's Rights and Transatlantic Antislavery in the Era of Emancipation* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2007).

12. Jutta Schwarzkopf, *Women in the Chartist Movement* (London: Macmillan and Professional, Ltd., 1991).

Barbara Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem: Socialism and Feminism in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983).

13. Bonnie S. Anderson, *Joyous Greetings: The First International Women's Movement, 1830-1860* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

14. Malmgreen, "Anne Knight," 103.

15. It is not entirely clear in what order the children were born except that Priscilla was the eldest daughter, and William, the next oldest, was the oldest son.

the French feminist, is invaluable and supports the last chapter of this thesis. The scholarly literature that focuses solely on Anne Knight may be limited, but her presence pervades many of the reform movements of the nineteenth century.

### **“As true a KNIGHT as ever wore spurs”: Biography**

To recognize that Anne Knight was a remarkable individual, it is necessary to examine her life and how she evolved into the activist she became. In this way, understanding her family, her faith, and those figures in her life that influenced her choices are important pieces showing Knight as a woman apart from the conventional female radical reformer. Knight was born to William and Priscilla Knight, *née* Allen, on November 2, 1786, as one of eight children. Family friends described the Knight brood as an ‘odd lot,’ made more odd by their parents and their extended, nonconformist Quaker family.<sup>14</sup> There was a large age spread between the Knight children; this impacted the relationships between the siblings.<sup>15</sup> The three surviving sons seemed artistically inclined although all three died relatively young. Of her sisters, Maria was the only child to marry: she married John Candler, a radical Quaker active in the antislavery movement and great friend of Thomas Clarkson, showing that antislavery ran in the Knight and Allen families.<sup>16</sup> The Candlers travelled frequently to spread the word of abolition in the United States and eventually settled in Yorkshire, England, to run a Quaker lunatic asylum, which may explain some of Knight’s American contacts in the antislavery movement. Sophia was Anne’s younger sister and her closest confidant.<sup>17</sup> A great number of letters exist between them as they exchanged frequent correspondence for their entire lives.<sup>18</sup> Sophia, also a spinster, was perhaps as politically oriented as Knight but much less active in the public sphere. She, as the sort of anchor of the Knight family, stayed in the family home of Chelmsford and corresponded with Knight from there. Knight herself stayed in the Chelmsford home well into her life, until she was fifty at least. However, despite living at home, she was an active traveler, travelling between London, Chelmsford, and Paris, which Sophia did not.<sup>19</sup>

Knight’s father, William, was a middle-class grocer and prominent in the radical circle of leading English Quakers. He was described as having a liberal disposition, being easy with his children and rather concerned for their education and well-being, including the girls.<sup>20</sup> He died in 1814. Her mother, Priscilla, was very intelligent and had “an unusual strength of mind with great eccentricity of character,” although seen to be rather rigid with her children.<sup>21</sup> The Allens, Priscilla’s side of the family, were central to many Quaker nonconformist circles, which increased Knight’s exposure to various radical and nonconformist persons who visited the family frequently. Her cousin, William Allen, was exceedingly well connected among abolitionists, reformists, and intellectual circles in the United Kingdom.<sup>22</sup> Judging from the tone of his letters to her, he was an influential and paternal figure to her. The influence of her family and the large Quaker network can be seen in the way that many reform movements, especially abolitionism, were generational and inherited through family members. All four Knight sisters were active members.<sup>23</sup>

The Knights were solidly members of the nonconformist middle class, but because of their Quaker origins, it is incorrect to pigeonhole them into the patriarchal and Anglican middle class of nineteenth-century Britain. Anne was not a part of the “idealized position of women” of the new nineteenth century Britain even as she enjoyed the “wider social participation” afforded to women of her class.<sup>24</sup> The line between social acceptability in activism and a more physical involvement in the public sphere of radical reform was one that she crossed and pushed frequently. Her Quaker dress, faith, and lifestyle protected her enough not to be criticized for her morality in middle-class English society as she lived life as an unmarried woman in a provincial country: she performed good works, she visited friends, and she read a great deal.<sup>25</sup> In her day-to-day activities, she remained within the domestic sphere. As a Quaker, however, her radicalism and nonconformity encompassed her life, and she was far from the heroines of early nineteenth-century literature. Quakerism affected and influenced the ways that Knight

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16. Joseph A. Boromé, “John Candler and Thomas Clarkson: An Enduring Antislavery Friendship,” *Quaker History* 62, no. 1 (1973): 35-46. <http://muse.jhu.edu/> (accessed February 15, 2013).

Thomas Clarkson spent his entire life in the abolition struggle and was second only to William Wilberforce in his prominence in the movement. He was also a known and frequent associate of the Friends’ societies and in contact with the Knight and Allen families.

John Candler was a British Quaker active in reformatory work and a missionary in Jamaica. He is credited with naming “Knightsville” in Jamaica after his sister-in-law. Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 129.

17. Malmgreen, “Anne Knight,” 103.

18. Anne Knight, *Knight Family Papers*, Friends House, London [MS Box W2].

19. Malmgreen, “Anne Knight,” 104.

There is not very much known on the eldest daughter, Priscilla, except that she died in her thirties, leaving Sophia as the mainstay of

the family.

20. Anne Knight, *Knight Family Papers*, Friends House, London [MS Box W2].

21. Malmgreen, “Anne Knight,” 103.

22. William Allen (1770-1843) was a philanthropist, a pharmacist, a scientist, and an abolitionist. He was great friends with Thomas Clarkson and embarked on a number of philanthropic or reformist projects with intellectual leaders such as Joseph Pease, the father of Elizabeth Pease; James Mill, the father of J. S. Mill; Samuel T. Coleridge; and Jeremy Bentham. He also opened a Quaker school for girls in 1824, which will be referred to later.

William Allen, *Life of William Allen: With Selections from His Correspondence* (London: C. Gilpin, 1847).

23. Malmgreen, “Anne Knight,” 102-103.

24. Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (London: Routledge, 2003), 19.

25. Malmgreen, “Anne Knight,” 104.

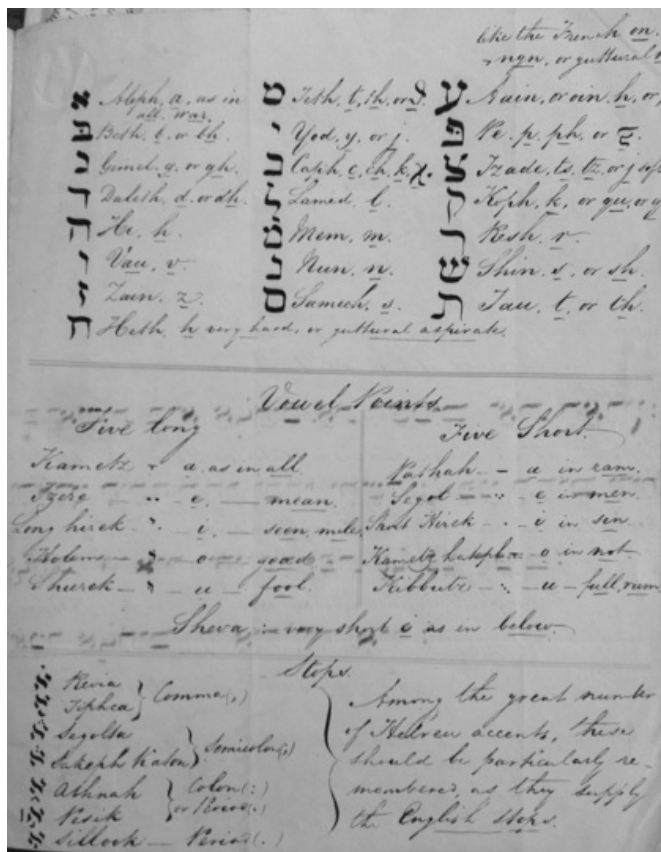
and her colleagues approached antislavery and other reform movements. British Quakers were a closely intertwined community. There was equal opportunity for Quaker girls to be educated with boys, and they were taught the same subjects, such as philosophy, economics, literature, and mathematics. This education is evident when reading Knight's writing as she makes a great use of literary, biblical, and classical references, showing powerful and competent penmanship:

Our Anglo-Saxon predecessors shared with our brothers the councils of the state. The Gaulish women up to 1515, exercised their right for voting. Are all these testimonies – is the demand for the reinstatement of our *ancient right*, to be called 'stuff and nonsense,' and that we may as well say it is the right of women to go into the army? Their right has not been disputed when they have gone there, and "their deeds proved so loyal in hot bloody trial," from Boadicca and Joan of Arc and the Maid of Zaragossa. Men have no right to go there, "nor women neither," to dislodge a human soul is His right alone who gave it. . . . 'Bella matribus destestata,' was a Roman Proverb; and if pagan women hate war, how much more the women of Him who said, "Love one another."

Who was it said years ago fifteen hundred millions have been spent in spreading barbarism over the world?<sup>26</sup>

This letter, written in April of 1849 to Lord Brougham, a leading abolitionist in Parliament and a friend of her grandfather's, was a direct and published attack on his refusal to support women's rights to suffrage. Her language uses a lot of the same rhetoric that surrounded the woman question, such as evoking historical examples of past societies that allowed women more political freedom. This same rhetoric is seen in her contemporaries such as R. J. Richardson, Harriet and John Stuart Mill, and Mary Wollstonecraft. There is a tone of accusation to her writing that shows the frustration she felt at what she saw as a lack of logic as well as a humanist and Christian failing not to allow women political standing. Her writing reveals her to be very educated in a way many women of the period were not.

At the age of thirty-eight, Knight had her first European tour, or a Grand Tour, which was common for men of the upper and middle class to take and usual for women Quakers as well. They travelled in groups to spread the word and visit Quaker relations. She was already well versed in German and French and struck up acquaintances wherever she went, correspondences and friendships that lasted until her death in 1862.<sup>27</sup> She continued her education throughout her life, thanks to her correspondents as seen in a letter from Thomas Grimes, who was teaching her Hebrew through correspondence in 1824.<sup>28</sup> The Knights and Allens, especially, were families that were well known in the circle of Friends, and so Knight was raised in a household where radical leaders such as Joseph Marriage, Joseph Pease, Thomas Clarkson, Elizabeth Heyrick, and Lord Brougham, all prominent members of the abolition movement, visited her family.<sup>29</sup> Clarkson, as mentioned above, was good friends with Anne's brother-in-law, and, as one of the main pillars of the antislavery movement, brought



Letter from Thomas Grimes to Anne Knight showing Hebrew lessons

a certain prominence to the Knights' position in the movement. In this way, her exposure to philanthropic public works cultivated her independence as well as inspired her to be more critical of society and to act according to a philanthropic ideal.

Anne's personality comes out in her letters; it is pugnacious, stubborn, and strong when she was in pursuit of a cause. Dressed in the black conservative garb of a traditional Quaker and proclaiming her ideals for all to hear, she looked a forceful figure. She often exasperated her friends and family; the forcefulness of her writing did not endear her to everyone. As seen in some of her correspondence, she badgered, she pushed, and she was a powerful writer in these respects. After the 1840 convention, many individuals, such as the American delegates, suspended correspondence with her.<sup>30</sup>

Knight's involvement in a number of reform movements, nominally those concerned with gaining

26. Letter to Lord Brougham from Anne Knight, Paris, April 14, 1849, Friend's House London, vol. D, no. 232 [manuscript].

27. Malmgreen, "Anne Knight," 104.

28. Anne Knight, *Knight Family Papers*, Friends House, London [MS Box W2].

29. Malmgreen, "Anne Knight," 105.

30. Anne Knight and Maria Weston Chapman, [Letter to] My dear M. Chapman [manuscript], [Chelmsford], England, 1840, Boston Public Library Antislavery Collection.

political rights for the disenfranchised, was in many ways a result of how she was reared. Her family and her religion had a heavy influence on her pursuit of activism. The reform movements in which she chose to participate gave her the experience she increasingly needed to become more radical and more publicly active. Her experience in abolition and Chartism laid the basis for her public advocacy of women's rights, which earned her the title of protofeminist as she participated in women's suffrage before the more well-known feminist movement took off in the 1880s. The antislavery movement became a defining part of her life, which, even if perhaps not her most important contribution or the one she is most remembered for, encompassed a great deal of the peak of her life and set the stage for her later activism. Her true calling, however, was women's rights. Much of this was accomplished because of the education she was afforded by belonging to the Quaker community, which was one aspect of her childhood that set her apart from a large portion of middle-class female activists.

### "Thy Friend": Anne Knight and Religion

As a Quaker, Anne Knight's religion was vital to her development as an activist, and her faith was arguably the greatest influence on her life and mission. Quakerism promoted social and political action in a faith based on pacifist beliefs and thus encouraged its members, regardless of gender, to go into the public sphere. There were, however, constraints on Knight because of her gender, constraints that were apparent because of the Victorian era and the expectations for respectability from the middle class. Although Knight followed the teachings of Quakerism and female preaching in public was acceptable, her forays outside the accepted gender sphere that even Quakers adhered to made her family fear for her and the church's reputation.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, evangelical religion came to action in the forefront of social and political issues in Britain. Nonconformist denominations from Unitarian, Baptist, or Methodists as well as Anglicans were all involved in social causes as a form of moral duty and committing "good works." Upper and lower middle-class women formed important support networks for many social causes, such as the move towards temperance or prison reform. According to Suzanne Rickard, "a Victorian woman with a cause . . . was more often than not a woman inspired by deep religious beliefs and by a personal interpretation [of] women's duty of stewardship."<sup>31</sup> However, women of the middle class tended to pursue "only one major social

cause," which was expected to be feminine in nature or approach, such as would inspire 'maternalistic' authority and virtue.<sup>32</sup> These were thought to be acceptable for ladies' sensibilities and allowed them to participate in the public sphere under the guise of relevance to a woman's moral purity and decency.<sup>33</sup> When considering these generalizations for women activists, Knight demonstrates her radicalism, as she broke out of many of these constraints. She pursued several different causes, many of which were popular among middle-class women but her approach to action frequently differed from other women as she did not approach philanthropic actions with a maternalist discourse. Knight fought for political rights and connected herself to radical utopian ideals, which distinguished her from her female colleagues. She was, however, just as influenced in her actions and convictions by religious morals. Philanthropic women of the era tended to focus on a single issue of moral value while Knight focused on the larger injustice of equality that encompassed many different causes, showing a wide vision for change. The foundation of this difference between Knight and most other women activists was that, as a Quaker, she had been brought up with fewer gendered constraints. Female Quakers were raised to see public activity as an option but within the confines of a female sphere: that which made use of their moral purity and domestic or maternal authority.

The Quaker faith is peaceful, egalitarian, and humanitarian.<sup>34</sup> These three founding thoughts would govern Knight in every cause she subscribed to, making details of her life clearer with the understanding of her religion and its meaning in her life. The Quakers were an extremely tight-knit community with a crisscrossing network of kinship, business, and friendship. The network reached all over the British Isles and abroad in some cases, as seen in Knight's letters, where some are addressed to as far as Russia, the United States, and western Europe.<sup>35</sup> Quaker families were large, and marrying outside of the Quaker religion required the individual to leave the community altogether; consequently, being raised a Quaker was intrinsically linked to being surrounded by an extended network.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, Quakers frequently intermarried and were related. Knight herself came from the Knights and the Allens, two prominent Quaker families from Essex. Most Quakers in nineteenth-century Britain were upper middle class and in a trade or merchant station of society, which included Knight's family.<sup>37</sup> Through this network of community religion, Knight was influenced by and held friendships with many of the leading Friends of the day. Her friendship with Elizabeth Heyrick, a prominent

31. Suzanne Rickard, "Victorian Women with Causes: Writing, Religion and Action," in *Women, Religion, and Feminism in Britain, 1750-1900*, ed. Sue Morgan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 143.

32. *Ibid.*, 141.

33. *Ibid.*

34. In 1647, George Fox brought together a group of religious dissenters to create the Religious Society of Friends. They were dedicated to and influential in many causes for equality in the

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They, like most religions after the English Civil War, went through a period of persecution for their beliefs. The Society spread through the world, focused mainly in America and Africa.

35. Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 101.

Anne Knight, *Knight Family Papers*, Friends House, London [MS Box W2].

36. Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 86.

37. *Ibid.*, 81.

Quaker woman in the abolition movement, is visible in their letters from the early 1820s and 1830s. As Heyrick was older than Knight, she was probably an early influence on her decision to support the abolition movement. Knight was also in contact with a more radical sect of Irish Quakerism, the White Quakers, which portrays not only her linkage to the Friends' network all over the British Isles but also her correspondence with the more radical factions of her own religion.<sup>38</sup> Her friendship also extended to the Sturges, mainly Joseph Sturge, who was active in politics and the abolition movement, and to Elizabeth Pease, who was one of the central female abolitionists and whose father, Joseph Pease, was the first Quaker member of Parliament.<sup>39</sup> Beyond the British Isles, however, the Quaker network can be seen in the transatlantic aspect of the abolition movement.<sup>40</sup> The Grimke sisters, in particular, were in contact with Knight and Pease through their Quaker connection. This network also included activists who were not Quakers, such as Thomas Clarkson and William Lloyd Garrison, an American abolitionist, but revealed their fascination and support of the Society, thus weaving themselves into the network. Clarkson, who was in contact with Knight towards the end of his life, wrote a multivolume history of the Quakers, portraying his intimate knowledge of the Society. The Quaker network in kinship, business, and friendship was an important part of Friends' lives, but it also became a useful tool in philanthropic public acts; the network was used for spreading information and mobilizing activism.

The most fundamental aspect of Quakerism to Knight was their belief in the spiritual equality between genders. Female preachers were welcomed and encouraged because of the Quaker belief that all humans have a 'Light' of God inside them, allowing them a direct connection to God. This permitted any human to interpret the Bible, regardless of gender, thus giving women a chance to preach and speak before audiences on matters of religion, morality, and spirituality.<sup>41</sup> Women were not, however, equal in a social or political manner. Friends' Meetings were held separately between men and women, with women holding little authority in the actual planning and executive decisions that were involved in the Meetings.<sup>42</sup> In this respect, Quaker women were not wholly different from their compatriots in the Anglican, Methodist, and Unitarian sects. Quaker women from the time of Knight's birth, around the 1780s, moved freely about the country and would preach openly. By the time Knight was of marrying age, her generation of Quaker women was consigned to a stricter domestic sphere according to wider ideals about feminine propriety.<sup>43</sup> The nineteenth century revealed a difficult balance for Quakerism between the evolving notions of feminine respectability in society warring with the Quaker belief and tradition of women as spiritual equals. There was a move towards a more constrained public life for Quaker women, even as they were more and more in the public sphere advocating for their causes. They were permitted to speak and preach in public only under the guise of religious spirituality or maternalist virtue.<sup>44</sup> Knight received backlash for her public voice from her intermediate family. After publishing and distributing a pamphlet on the rights of women after the 1840 convention, detailing why women should be able

to participate in the public sphere, her cousin, William Allen, wrote her in disapproval of her words:

I read with shame and sorrow thy letter dated 8<sup>th</sup> month 4<sup>th</sup> 1840 – my dear cousin do all in thy power to prevent the farther circulation – of this arrogant piece of bombast. I feel for thy reputation as a dear relative and I feel also for the character of our religious Society. I have ever been a strong advocate for the rights of women and very desirous that their talents and energies should be made as extensively useful in the cause of Religion & humanity as possible for the assert that women have "clearer, and diviner instincts than men" – is going very far beyond the mark.<sup>45</sup>

From this personal letter, it is seen that his main protest about Knight's conduct was her venturing into the realm beyond that of what he deemed acceptable to female propriety. The acceptability of her opinions hinged on her speaking as a spiritual or moral authority. By evoking spiritual rhetoric that points out inequality, especially in divinity, Knight stepped too far for her Quaker family over a line into the public sphere. Allen states that she is incorrect in stating "diviner instincts," even as her point is not meant to highlight spiritual inequality, but as a discourse on the issue of women becoming equal in the public sphere. Even in rhetoric, however, this was not a permissible statement, not only because she was a woman, but also because of the Quaker belief of equality in divinity and that women are representative of that spiritual prerogative. He scolds her for her strong public voice and expresses his worry over the respectability of his cousin and through her, the respectability of the Society at large, giving himself credibility by professing his support for her cause. He himself shows his affront to her public arguments by his strong accusations of arrogance over her presumption to publish. This dichotomy between the genders that emerges in the nineteenth century is in part what prompted Knight to embark on her later crusade for women's rights. It stemmed from the 1840 Antislavery Convention, soon after which this letter is written. Despite the freedom allotted to her as a Quaker woman, where she had more freedom than most other religious sects, the inequality between the sexes was still felt. This criticism from her relative and the suggestion that she is sullyng her reputation and that of the Quaker Society was a challenge that many women faced

38. Midgley, *Women against Slavery*, 77.

The White Quakers were a small Quaker sect in Dublin, Ireland, led primarily by Joshua Jacobs and Abigail Beale. They were unlike any other forms of Quakerism at the time as they advocated a return to revivalist and evangelical Quakerism instead of what they saw Quakerism had become—namely, too adapted to the Victorian code of discipline and worldliness. This sect would have been attractive to Knight because of their adoption of "communism in property, and the alleged abandonment of marriage," which would have advocated women breaking out of the Victorian female mold.

Joan Allen and Richard Allen, ed., *Faith of Our Fathers: Popular Culture and Belief in Post-Reformation England, Ireland and Wales* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 18.

when they spoke outside of a sphere of spirituality or domesticity. Therefore, despite the freedom provided to her by her membership in the Society of Friends, it is evident that constraints due to gender roles were still present and felt by Knight.

Most Quaker women were content with and even propagated Allen's view. Even some of the Quaker female leaders were reluctant to stand in a spotlight. As previously established, Quaker women had more freedom to participate in the public sphere. This is in part because Quakers were much less rigid in their separation of domestic, spiritual, social, and political spheres, as shown previously in Knight's education.<sup>46</sup> However, as stated above, Quakerism was just as susceptible as other evangelical and dissenting religions to adhering to societal respectabilities on the subject of gender. Elizabeth Pease, for example, was asked to be the female delegate to the founding conference of the Central Negro Emancipation Committee but refused the leadership, preferring to act in a behind-the-scenes position without public recognition even though she was one of the founding members and organizers.<sup>47</sup> Pease is an example of even a Quaker woman's desire not to venture too far outside the sphere of respectability. Knight, also, did not often speak in public, portraying an observance of Victorian societal propriety, at least among the middle class in England. She did, however, speak publicly in France, where it was more accepted for a woman to speak in a public setting.<sup>48</sup> The notable exception for public speaking in Knight's case was towards the end of her life when she had become a women's rights advocate and was invited to speak at a variety of Chartist associations. This makes her atypical, but it also displays the difficulties she found with public participation in the middle class, as Chartists were working class and more open to women speaking on subjects beyond spirituality. Both Knight and Pease wrote in a strong and extremely educated manner, thus showing how their Quaker upbringing made them more easily frustrated with the societal constraints on women activists. Therefore, women, even those of Quaker upbringing, may have been reluctant to take a public leadership role, but radical women were not shy in the publishing of pamphlets and letters or in the active pursuit of causes. Their public voice and role came out in their writing and publishing, thus protecting them from rejection or tumult from society.

## "Misguided, mis-used, and mis-governed": Anne Knight and Abolition

In February of 1834, about six years before the woman question was in the foreground of conversation, leading abolitionist George Thompson wrote in a letter to Anne Knight about the role of women in the antislavery movement, "Where they existed, they did everything . . . they formed the cement of the whole Antislavery building – without their aid we never should have been united."<sup>49</sup> In this powerful quote, Thompson acknowledges the crucial role women played in the grassroots aspects of the antislavery movement. Women's participation was a contentious issue within the movement, and the existence of this quote shows an acknowledgement in private not seen in public by male leaders on their contribution. Women were a central force to the antislavery movement, but their legacy has been swept aside in abolitionist history as the records and memoirs focus on the male leaders, such as George Thompson. The representations of women are marginalized in image, writing, and participation. In minimalizing their contributions, they have become side notes in their own societies and histories. This is best portrayed in the designed medallion to denote support for the antislavery movement.<sup>50</sup> The symbol of the women's antislavery movement was the female counterpart of the men's antislavery associations: that of the kneeling slave asking, "Am I not a woman and a sister?"<sup>51</sup> The two images, the man and the woman, are identical in everyway except for the reversed gender. The unequal dichotomy associated with this image is attested to by the fact that this image is a representation of the women's participation in the movement, but the names inscribed on the back in commemoration are those of the male leaders, with no mention of the women that were represented in its creation.<sup>52</sup> The memoirs of the male leaders list women as wives, daughters, and sisters, not as the activists that they were to the movement.<sup>53</sup>

The beginning of women's involvement in the antislavery movement is often attributed in part to Lucy Townsend. In a letter to Townsend sent during the 1840 Convention, Anne Knight addresses her as "my slave benefactress" and "the chief lady of the history [of the abolition movement]."<sup>54</sup> This tone of address showed Knight's belief in not only Townsend's essential role in the founding of Ladies Societies but also her position of mentor to Knight and to other women like her.

39. *Ibid.*, 81.

40. *Ibid.*, 14.

41. Sheila Wright, "Every Good Woman Needs a Companion of Her Own Sex': Quaker Women and Spiritual Friendship, 1750-1850," in *Women, Religion, and Feminism in Britain, 1750-1900*, ed. Sue Morgan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 91.

42. Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 139.

43. *Ibid.*, 313.

44. *Ibid.*, 136.

45. William Allen to Anne Knight, March 19, 1841, Letters, Temp MSS 725/5, Friend's House, London.

46. Joyce Goodman and Camilla Leach, "At the center of a circle whose circumference spans all nations': Quaker Women and the

Ladies Committee of the British and Foreign School Society, 1813-37," in *Women, Religion, and Feminism in Britain, 1750-1900*, ed. Sue Morgan, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 53.

47. Midgley, *Women against Slavery*, 51.

48. Knight's time in France was an exceedingly important time of her life and is therefore further expanded upon later in this work.

49. George Thompson to Anne Knight, November 14, 1834, Friends House Library, London, Box W.

50. See images on p. 23

51. Midgley, *Women against Slavery*, 99.

52. *Ibid.*, 2.

53. *Ibid.*, 72.

54. *Ibid.*, 1.

Townsend, along with Mary Lloyd, founded the West Bromwich, Birmingham, and District Ladies Society for the Relief of Negro Slaves in 1825. Hannah More, who is also credited as the beginning of women's involvement of the antislavery movement and was active before them, is much better known.<sup>55</sup> However, she did not create societies as Townsend and Lloyd did, preferring to set up "parlour talks" in her home, approaching abolition as a "maternalist activist."<sup>56</sup> More's activism was opposite to that of Knight's, who continuously fought to venture outside of the female domestic sphere of influence and activism in which More confined herself. In this, Knight followed Townsend and Lloyd's example but was more radical than either in terms of breaking out of that domestic sphere. Townsend had experience with ladies' philanthropic associations through her participation in the interdenominational evangelical British and Foreign Bible Society, which helped to create a network of women who showed interest and activism in the antislavery movement.<sup>57</sup> Townsend and Lloyd's societies were less "maternalist" than More's, but they still functioned within a domestic sphere, keeping societies and meetings within the confines of female participation and propriety within their own homes. Knight and the next wave of female abolitionists took it one step further in the 1830s with petitioning and activities increasingly in the public sphere. The height of the creation of ladies' societies was during the late 1820s and early 1830s; there were seventy-three founded between 1825 and 1833 alone.<sup>58</sup> More and Townsend had cast women, from the founding of women in the abolitionist movement, in a supportive role of mother, daughter, and sister, becoming the domestic base of abolition, while the men, or the brains and activists of the movement, moved in the public sphere (on campaign). Knight and her fellow activists, such as Elizabeth Pease, Mary Ann Rawson, and Marie Tothill, pressed the boundaries of these constrictions by using the allowance gained through participation in the movement.<sup>59</sup>

The male leaders of the movement were divided on the acceptance of women's participation within the movement. Thomas Clarkson and Thomas Macaulay both actively supported the ladies' societies, where they obtained pamphlets and information to give ladies' societies to spread through their networks.<sup>60</sup> Clarkson in particular was in contact with women in the movement, such as Townsend and Knight.<sup>61</sup> Wilberforce,

however, as the leader of the upper class, Anglican, and parliamentary force behind the abolition movement, vehemently disagreed with female participation in the movement. In January 1826, at the beginning of the increase in ladies' societies, he wrote in a report for the Clapham Antislavery Society:

I own I cannot relish the plan. All private exertions for such an object become their character, but for ladies to meet, to publish, to go from house to house stirring up petitions – these appear to me proceedings unsuited to the female character as delineated in Scripture. I fear its tendency would be to mix them in all the multiform warfare of political life.<sup>62</sup>

Wilberforce expresses his fear of the mixing of the sexes but also of allowing women to participate outside their sphere of proper influence and what notions and unnatural progression could be created in consequence of the acceptance of women's public role in the movement. He clearly states that "private" is in character for women whereas his description of those activities that are unbecoming of them denote public participation. His opinions derive from his rigid religious and class-based societal structures, especially concerning his position on women's public participation, but as previously seen, it was a larger problem than simply Anglican radicalism. The debate on whether to allow women to participate began from the movement's inception. Even as Hannah More portrayed early female participation in her inclusion of the Clapham sect, she did not herself advocate the antislavery cause outside the home or make any attempts at public discourse. In the 1820s, More expressed her opinion in support of women's groups and their increased forays into the public sphere by joining, very late in her life, the Female Antislavery Society of Clifton. After More, the subsequent generation, like Lucy Townsend and Mary Lloyd, went one step further and created actual societies solely for and run individually by women. It was a step towards autonomy and female agency, even if women's societies were still constrained by the disapproval of the majority of the male abolition body. The women that followed, including Knight, Elizabeth Pease, Mary Tothill, Mary Ann Rawson, Elizabeth Heyrick, and Jane Smeal, put one more foot into the public sphere. Their use of mass letter campaigns, of canvassing door to

55. Hannah More's less radical approach was in part because of her early involvement, as she was active in the movement from the 1780s, but also in part because of her participation in the evangelical Clapham movement, which for all its radical politics was deeply conservative on the subject of women, who were not yet widely participating.

The Clapham Sect, or the Clapham Saints, was a group of evangelical and Anglican reformers whose primary mission was that of the abolition of the British slave trade. They were mostly upper class and were led by William Wilberforce, a member of Parliament who is largely credited for the success of antislavery legislation before the 1830s in Parliament.

56. Midgley, *Women against Slavery*, 154.

A maternalist activist is here defined by her approach to public activism where women kept their influence and activism within the confines of their home through women's meetings and writing letters to people of interest,

who were more often than not the wives of people of interest.

57. *Ibid.*, 47.

58. *Ibid.*

59. *Ibid.*, 154.

60. *Ibid.*, 48.

Thomas Macaulay was a high-ranking member of the Antislavery Society. Macaulay was a member of Parliament and a proliferate and popular writer of English history, but also very active in the antislavery movement.

61. Thomas Clarkson to Anne Knight, 1844, letters, Temp MSS 725/5; Midgley, *Women against Slavery*, 46.

62. Robert Isaac Wilberforce and S. Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce* (London: John Murray, 1838), 264.

63. Midgley, *Women against Slavery*, 84.





Illustrations from antislavery medallions

door, and of presenting petitions to sign was beyond what Hannah More or even Townsend and Lloyd had accomplished. This exemplifies the radicalization of the Ladies' Antislavery Societies in the 1830s after the initial passing of the Slavery Act of 1807. In this way, Knight's participation in this phenomenon of women's societies would have been thrilling to her in a way she had not previously experienced. As a Quaker, she had been exposed to highly educated people, but never before had she been free to exercise her own wit and education with other women of her class on subjects pertinent to her mindset. Women's societies were a place for women like Knight to express freely and challenge themselves in increasingly more public and 'masculine' avenues.

It was not unusual for middle-class women, especially those belonging to religious radical groups, to participate in philanthropic causes: it was even expected among some circles. The controversy was

in the nature of their participation and relied heavily on class expectations. The composition of the antislavery movement was heavily middle class, but some working-class and upper-class women participated. Midgley suggests the reason women's antislavery groups were almost exclusively middle class was in part because they functioned as social clubs for women.<sup>63</sup> As seen in Knight's prominent and enthusiastic role, she certainly uses them not only as a channel for her energies and ambitions but also more effectively as a tool for networking. She was able, through the contacts gleaned in these societies, to connect with women and men across the country and across the world, including France, Saint Petersburg, Germany, the United States, and Ireland. In a letter from George Stephen, he expresses his desire to "have correspondence with one Society from every quarter of the known world where a slave exists," expressing a conjoint effort to end slavery in the United States, which was a feeling reciprocated by Knight.<sup>64</sup> Despite this widening of communication between women and men in subjects that had not before been accepted as polite female conversation, there was a real lack of cross-class exchange.<sup>65</sup> This could be seen in a number of ways, but it was most apparent in the price of membership to ladies' antislavery societies, which was the same price as the men's societies and therefore not affordable to working-class women.<sup>66</sup> Cross-class action was demonstrated in the sugar boycotts where, in order to protest the harsh slavery overseas, the movement organized people to discontinue their use of sugar, which at this time was a main staple of upper- and lower-class daily use. It was also seen in the signatures, as both the sugar boycott and the collection of signatures required mass participation.<sup>67</sup>

There is importance in the terminology surrounding the abolitionist movement in terms of gender and class

64. George Stephen to Anne Knight, Knight Family Papers, MS Box WS/2/36.

There was no discernable date to this letter, but considering its subject of American slaves, it is a good guess that it is from after the 1840 Antislavery Convention.

George Stephen was the agency subcommittee activist who was in frequent contact with Anne Knight in the latter section of her life.

65. It is difficult to make sweeping generalizations about 'polite female conversations' because of a range of different demographics, not least of which is class. Quaker sensibilities, while still predominately Victorian middle-class, would have been more relaxed in terms for subjects discussed and the format for that discussion.

66. Midgley, *Women against Slavery*, 84.

67. *Ibid.*, 84.

distinction. One aspect of terminology, when referring to abolition societies, is the fact that men's antislavery societies, unlike their female counterparts, not only had no distinction between the classes in their titles but they had no gender description, showing the gendered aspect of the female societies. They did not differentiate between 'men' and 'gentlemen' as the women's societies did.<sup>68</sup> This distinction in female societies is an indication that the make-up of the women in the abolition movement was more than moderately middle-class in their usage of titling their societies as *Ladies'* societies. This is seen in organizations such as the Ladies' London Emancipation Society, the Ladies' Auxiliary of Glasgow, or Knight's Chelmsford Ladies' Antislavery Society, showing that both Knight and Elizabeth Pease were not immune to the class separation despite their support of universal suffrage and Chartism. The Female Antislavery Society of Birmingham was known later on for its encouragement of working-class participation and was not dependent solely on middle-class women, hence its usage of the term "Female" as opposed to "Ladies."<sup>69</sup> Heyrick, in her pamphlet *Apology for Ladies' Anti-Slavery Associations*, which called for female activism in the movement in 1828, specifically uses "ladies" and not simply "females" or "women."<sup>70</sup> Leonore Davidoff differentiates between women and ladies, stating that women "were divided between 'ladies' and 'women,' categories which signified as much gender as economic and social meaning" and that to look at a Victorian woman was to look "at a picture through a double exposure."<sup>71</sup> Her differentiation between the classes in terminology is important when looking at women's position in the abolition movement because it strongly denotes their composition in terms of class. 'Ladies' Societies' were for middle-class women, excluding lower-class women not only in action but also in title and name. The class distinction within the use of terminology can be seen in Knight's rhetoric concerning abolition, Chartism, and women's rights. When she begins her fight more specifically over women's rights, such as in her letter to Lord Brougham in 1849, she uses 'woman' exclusively, never mentioning 'Ladies,' evoking a combined struggle for "an equal footing with man" as "woman is equally admissible to office."<sup>72</sup> Knight would have seen this communal struggle of women to transcend class boundaries because of her work in Chartism and her eventual interest in French utopian movements.

Middle-class women in the abolition movement, as well as other philanthropic causes, represented the moral purity and fiber, religious or otherwise, of the movement.<sup>73</sup> This did not mean that women's active participation, at least in what was deemed a man's sphere, was welcome; merely that their support and their position as "The Heart" or "The Soul" of the movement was embraced by most.<sup>74</sup> In this way, the make-up of the abolition movement not only swung heavily toward the middle class, but also was heavily family oriented. As Midgley suggests, "Anti-slavery was a family concern."<sup>75</sup> The Knights and the Allens, for example, were all anti-slavery advocates and exposed Anne Knight to the rhetoric surrounding the issue early in her life. Hannah More, Elizabeth Pease, Priscilla Buxton, and Thomas Macaulay also had family members active in the cause through their parents or their siblings.<sup>76</sup> Abolitionists married within the movement as is seen in the case of

Priscilla Buxton and Knight's sister, Maria. In the case of Buxton, her marriage was held in conjunction with a celebration of Emancipation Day [August 1, 1834]. The men's toast to her and her marriage was "that she may long rejoice in the fetters put on that day as well as over those which she had assisted to break."<sup>77</sup> The similarities between slavery and women's role in marriage was a parallel used by the women's rights movement and used without irony by the abolition movement to describe marriage. Knight's position on marriage correlates with this opinion as she frequently evoked imagery of slavery or forced obedience when arguing for women's rights and enfranchisement, such as this quote, written early, in 1828:

Submission from the wife ought at any rate to be voluntary, not exacted; the word *obey*, in our marriage service, ought therefore to be expunged, it being an additional effort of their own, ungenerously, binding the curse upon the wife, by a bond of their own manufacturing.<sup>78</sup>

It is worth mentioning that in the Quaker marriage ceremony the word "obey" is not imposed. This connection between women as slaves, who are forced to obey their husbands with no political power, and slavery in the British Empire, is a subject that resonates with Knight and the women who continued activism into the women's rights movement. Shown by the quote, this opinion is recognized by Knight as early as 1828, which is more than a decade before her active role in the promotion of women's rights. Women's struggle for representation in their own societies and the larger organizations of male societies stems from this association as women in the movement were not only simply considered lower than their male counterparts but also subservient. Knight frequently breaks this belief of female subservience in her participation in the movement, in her writing and publishing, and her public agitation when confronted with injustices.

Women's societies are portrayed in most scholarly literature as small, local, and supportive to the large, male-based cause of the antislavery movement, but Midgley argues their representation as auxiliaries to the movement is incorrect in a number of ways.<sup>79</sup> First, ladies' societies were often quite large. This concept of smallness comes from their limitations as women (middle-class), as

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68. *Ibid.*, 45.

69. *Ibid.*, 84.

70. *Ibid.*, 49.

71. Leonore Davidoff, "Class and Gender in Victorian England: The Diaries of Arthur J. Munby and Hannah Cullwick," *Feminist Studies* 5 (1979): 91.

72. Letter from Anne Knight to Lord Brougham, Paris, April 14, 1849. Vol. D, no. 232.

73. Midgley, *Women against Slavery*, 94.

74. Davidoff, "Class and Gender," 89.

75. Midgley, *Women against Slavery*, 73.

76. More's sister, Martha, was prominent in the society and an active member of the Clapham Society as well. Pease's family, much like Knight, was in the Quaker network of abolitionists. She worked closely

they were confined to their own spheres of influence and were not seen *publicly* as large, autonomous, and active groups, but as the domestic and relatively tame support of other societies.<sup>80</sup> Women were seen to provide only passive support, like the sugar boycotts, where it was enacted only in their “sphere.” In 1833, Knight and Marie Tothill, another female abolitionist, created and organized their own petition with female signatures. Their complete compilation and development of the petition submitted to Parliament was very radical in terms of women’s participation as it was completely created through female agency. They collected over 187,000 signatures of women in a petition entitled the National Female Petition. Women were restricted from signing or presenting petitions to Parliament, making Knight and Tothill’s efforts unusually radical for women.<sup>81</sup> It certainly made them incredibly unusual as they were breaking out of the usual mold for a middle-class Victorian activist. What this petition also expresses is the amount of agency and participation women had in the movement: 187,000 signatures signify a mass-participation level.

Second, they were autonomous and acted basically independent of men’s groups. They received some help from the main branch of the movement, the BFASS or the British and Foreign Antislavery Society, obtaining permission from them to form. Women’s activities, such as going door to door to collect signatures for petitions, writing, printing, and loaning pamphlets, reveals their autonomy and individual agency within the movement.<sup>82</sup> Women’s societies followed a concrete belief that at times contradicted the men’s societies’ position, of immediate and not gradual abolition of the slave trade. Elizabeth Heyrick in 1824 published a pamphlet entitled *Immediate, not Gradual Abolition; or, an Inquiry into the Shortest, Safest, and Most Effectual Means of Getting Rid of West-Indian Slavery*, which garnered a lot of early support among women’s groups but was approached cautiously by the male leadership.<sup>83</sup> Knight, who followed Heyrick’s pamphlets, received a letter from her in 1828 on the subject of women’s participation in the movement, stating that “If . . . our own sex . . . could be prevailed upon to engage in similar executions what happy results might we not reasonably anticipate.”<sup>84</sup> Although Heyrick’s pamphlets were not aimed at women’s groups, they were certainly taken up by them as women engaged in the movement with an immediate

abolition attitude. The forming of women’s societies was almost fully an individual endeavor, achieved by one or two women in a community such as Knight, Elizabeth Pease, or Mary Anne Rawson. The founding of a ladies’ society was carried out by women with support from men but was formed completely by female agency.<sup>85</sup>

Third, ladies’ societies were not entirely local. They were based in a local setting with each town or city having a society, but they were not limited to their locality. Knight herself, although based in her small town of Chelmsford, travelled back and forth to London frequently to confer with the main antislavery society.<sup>86</sup> It is more correct to describe them as community based, and they truly were, as oftentimes towns had no anti-slavery organization except a women’s society.<sup>87</sup> As will be shown in the 1840 convention, the network of abolition and of Quakerism would help facilitate and justify women travelling unaccompanied for the movement. As seen with Knight and her involvement, it was a way of “corresponding, and seeking out like-minded visitors from other nations.”<sup>88</sup> They connected together in large networks, thus dispelling the view of them as small or local or supportive.

### “She is greater than Brutus”: Anne Knight and the 1840 World Antislavery Convention

As one walks around the National Portrait Gallery in London, an endless stream of famous modern and historical individual portraits adorns the walls. At the end of one of the nineteenth-century rooms, a large and rather unusual painting hangs to the right.<sup>89</sup> In the center of the painting, pontificating to a sea of heads, is an elderly Thomas Clarkson, raised high above the rest of the crowded room. Noticeable care is taken with the faces and likenesses of the crowd of people positioned at the front of the room as tiny individual portraits. The gallery provides an informative sign that identifies each person in this large, multiperson portrait, a sign that proves crucial to the understanding of the history surrounding the portrait. This portrait of the 1840 International Antislavery Convention depicts a row of women abolitionists who were involved in the movement and present for the convention: an odd juxtaposition as the issue of their inclusion was intensely debated in the convention. Knight herself is portrayed at the forefront of the painting, but her letters during the convention paint a different story.

with her father, Joseph Pease, and with George Thompson in running the British India Society, the goal of which was to liberate serfs from bondage. Macaulay’s father, Zachary, had lived in Jamaica for a number of years in his youth and had seen slavery firsthand, both men belonging to the Clapham Society. Priscilla Buxton’s father was one of the leaders of the antislavery committee in Parliament, leading her to be the secretary of the London Antislavery Society and one of his leading advisers.

77. Extract from Anna Gurney and Sarah Buxton’s “Journal,” Buxton Papers, vol. 12, 111-13, MSS Brit. Emp. S. 444, in RHL, taken from Midgley, *Women against Slavery*, 102.

78. Taken from Kathryn Gleadle’s *Radical Writing on Women, 1800-1850* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 120, from *Desultory Queries and Remarks*, 1828, 7. This letter, written in 1828, very early for Knight to be arguing on the topic of women’s rights, is perceived to be written by

Knight as it is reminiscent of her style of writing in terms of biblical and classical references and pugnacious tone.

79. Midgley, *Women against Slavery*, 44.

80. *Ibid.*, 3.

81. *Ibid.*, 23.

82. *Ibid.*, 59.

83. *Ibid.*, 103.

84. Elizabeth Heyrick to Anne Knight, August 25, 1828, Temp MSS 725/5, Letters, Friends House, London.

85. Midgley, *Women against Slavery*, 45.

86. Malmgreen, “Anne Knight,” 105.

87. Midgley, *Women against Slavery*, 44.

88. Anderson, *Joyous Greetings*, 20.

89. See illustration on p. 26.



The 1840 International Antislavery Convention

The 1840 Convention portrait, painted by Benjamin Robert Haydon, is one of the few in the history of the British abolition movement to acknowledge women participants. He painted a total of eight women, all British, three being the wives of prominent abolitionists, such as Clarkson, but others were more interesting choices. Haydon kept a detailed diary all his life, which included his day-to-day painting and sittings for the antislavery portrait. He states during the process: "Their [sic] bringing me thirty-one heads more, after arranging for one hundred and three, is rather a joke; but if they like, they shall have heads all over, like a peacock's tail," which shows that it was not by his own prerogative that women were included on the sidelines of the portraits.<sup>90</sup> He had Mary Anne Rawson, Elizabeth Pease, Lady Byron, and Anne Knight all pose for portraits to be included in the commemoration. Knight, already upset by being blocked from the convention, sent a letter to Lucy Townsend, one of the founding women of abolition who had tried to attend the convention, and maintained that she had "as much right to be there [in the commemorative portrait] as Thomas Clarkson himself, nay perhaps more."<sup>91</sup> Lucy Townsend did not make it into the portrait, but Knight herself did. She is shown near the front in stark white contrast in front of the black-adorned Amelia Opie, also a British Quaker. Knight's is the most prominent and easily visible face of the women portrayed. Despite her lack of publishing or leadership positions, she was painted at the forefront in a marked position relative not only to the women present but in the composition of the

portrait itself. There could be a variety of reasons for her to be so singled out: her cousin William Allen was painted sitting directly beside Clarkson or she was so well known as tenacious in her pursuit for women to be represented in the portrait. Regardless, it is validating of her prominence and activism within the British movement. While the portrait depicted an inclusiveness of the women abolitionists in the movement, it was not an inclusion that was felt in the actual convention.

On June 12, 1840, six years after the passing of the abolition of the British slave trade and a year after the dismissal of the apprenticeship system, the BFASS called for its first international meeting in London. It was aimed at American abolitionists with the primary goal of "universal abolition" and therefore brought together two movements in a transatlantic exchange of information and delegates.<sup>92</sup> There were some primary differences between the two movements, not the least

90. Benjamin Robert Haydon, *Life of Benjamin Robert Haydon: Historical Painter, from his Autobiography and Journals* (London: Longman, Green and Longmans, 1853), 150.

91. Midgley, *Women against Slavery*, 1.

92. Kathryn Kish Sklar, "Women Who Speak for an Entire Nation": American and British Women Compared at the World Anti-Slavery Convention, London, 1840," *Pacific Historical Review* 59, no. 4 (November 1, 1990): 461.

93. Sklar, *Women's Rights*, 43.

94. Sklar, "American and British Women," 456.

of which that the American abolitionist groups at this time were internally divided into two organizations, the American Antislavery Society, run by William Lloyd Garrison, and the American and Foreign Antislavery Society, a more conservative branch.<sup>93</sup> The division had arisen mostly as a reaction to the Garrisonian support of full participation by female members in the abolition societies in 1833, including leadership, which culminated in the divide in 1839.<sup>94</sup> The AFASS branch broke off from the original abolition movement in reaction to their support of women's leadership positions within the movement. This division had not occurred in the British Associations for a number of reasons that Kathryn Sklar outlines in her article that compares the British and American women abolitionists during the convention. Women in the British movement, according to Sklar, were less active and affronted by their exclusion from men's societies and the public sphere. The majority of female British abolitionists saw the debate surrounding the "woman question" as unseemly and beyond their respectable sphere. Lucretia Mott remarked in a letter to Maria West Chapman on her disappointment "to find so little independent action on the part of women."<sup>95</sup> This is in part because there was not the universal suffrage allotted to British men as there was to American men, resulting in a different focus of attention and priorities to suffrage by women activists. Female activism was also more limited and discouraged in the public sphere in Britain because of an increased attitude of evangelism surrounding even Quaker and Unitarian religions. Therefore, in lieu of the International Convention, British abolitionists would soon follow their American counterparts in a fissure when the issue of women and their participation in the movement was brought to a head. The purpose of the convention was a sharing of ideas provided through an exchange of delegates from both the American factions. The Garrisonians sent eight women as delegates, including Lucretia Mott, Sarah Pugh, and Maria West Chapman.<sup>96</sup> These women were rejected and refused entrance to the convention by the BFASS, who had by then aligned themselves with the AFASS.

Outraged by being barred from the convention, both American and British women's societies protested, some more forcefully than others. There was a flurry of letters on the inequality experienced at the convention from Lucretia Mott, Sarah Pugh, Elizabeth Pease, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and even some of their male supporters. Knight, in particular, was very forceful in her letters to friends on the subject. She wrote to Mott in 1840 during the convention a scathing and frustrated letter in which she asks why, when: "The dreadful monster *Slavery*

must be grappled with" antislavery societies send out "weak, tender, untrained for the work – modest woman!" and "Not man – not the stronger vessel."<sup>97</sup> Her sarcastic comments give an edge to her writing that other protesters somewhat lacked. This letter was published in many newspapers around the United States and in Britain, thus solidifying her reputation as a speaker for women's rights. She invokes historical women in past societies that were involved in politics as examples of those with obvious qualifications, as well as England's own Queen, demanding, "can they [men] much longer dare to hold up the puny cry of *custom*?"<sup>98</sup> This is a reflection of a sarcastic argument made earlier by a speaker during the convention, Dr. John Bowring. He states in his speech that restricting women from the public sphere was "a custom more honored in the breach than the observance" and that "Great Britain being ruled by a woman and the Society of Friends having given to their women a great, honorable and religious prominence."<sup>99</sup> These same arguments were made not only by various women's rights advocates of the time but by Knight in the series of letters she had published after the convention on the issue of women's rights. As both Knight and Mott had been barred from attending the convention, Knight's letter and Mott's letters to various members of the movement show the frustration, injustice, and inequality they felt at their exclusion.

There was male support for women's societies, describing and defending their contribution, but not all of the male leaders who had supported women's equality came out publicly during the convention. George Thompson, an enthusiastic advocate of women's societies and a leading member of Parliament in support of the abolition movement, spoke at the 1840 convention, "it appears that we are prepared to sanction ladies in the employment of all means, so long as they are confessedly unequal with ourselves."<sup>100</sup> And yet, later in the convention, Thompson would denounce his support of women's rights. This follows the vein Knight takes in her defense of women's societies as being good enough in the words of George Stacey, one of the leaders of the BFASS, to be thanked for their "bright example and philanthropic efforts" but not enough to "become a part of the working committee."<sup>101</sup> Knight herself, in a letter published in multiple sources around the world just after the 1840 convention, speaks of "THOMAS CLARKSON, our veteran hero[s]" support of the women's rights movement by asking who then would "dare to omit our names in the muster-roll for the council board?"<sup>102</sup> The promotion by various male leaders helped women in their individual agency in that they were supported and in some ways protected by their

The divide also concerned Garrison's "unorthodox religious views," perhaps a Unitarian leaning?

95. Lucretia Mott to Maria West Chapman, 1840, taken from Sklar, "American and British Women," 475.

96. Sklar, *Women's Rights*, 50-55.

97. Anne Knight, *National Anti-Slavery Standard* (New York, United States), Thursday, October 29, 1840, issue 21, p. 82.

98. Anne Knight, *The Liberator* (Boston, Mass.), Friday, October 30, 1840, issue 44.

99. Anne Knight, *The Liberator* (Boston, Mass.), Friday, October 30,

1840, issue 44.

99. Sklar, "British and American Women," 469.

Bowring was a prominent linguist, literary critic, anthropologist, and world traveller. He was part of the British Exchequer and an opponent of the Corn Laws, which associated him with the Chartist movement. He was also close friends with Jeremy Bentham.

100. Midgley, *Women against Slavery*, 160.

101. *Ibid.*, 159.

102. Anne Knight, *National Anti-Slavery Standard* (New York), Thursday, October 29, 1840, issue 21, p. 82.

public advocacy in the abolition movement. However, their fear of coming out publicly in support of women's rights and the stigma attached to that had consequences for women, and their pursuit of accreditation was seen during the 1840 convention. There were, however, some men that came out on the side of women's participation such as William Ashurst, Daniel O'Connell, and George Stephens. Ashurst was a supporter of Chartism and Owenism and encouraged his own daughters to enter the public sphere, opinions which he professed at the convention.<sup>103</sup> He accused the convention of falsity in its claims of "universal benevolence," as the male leaders, by fighting for the emancipation of slaves and seeking enfranchisement, were going to begin their very first convention in the hypocritical role of "disenfranchising their constituency as they did one-half of creation."<sup>104</sup>

The American delegates had not found a warm welcome at the convention from male abolitionists or from women. Mott remarks in her diary that the exceptions to this welcome were the Quaker women Anne Knight and Elizabeth Pease, whom she describes meeting and conversing with in her diary of the convention. Knight she describes as "a singular looking woman – very pleasant & polite."<sup>105</sup> Knight and Pease are mentioned throughout her diary as the two British women introduce the Americans to various British abolitionists. Their conversations during this period range from abolition to the different sects of their Quaker beliefs, which Knight calls "heresy."<sup>106</sup> Still, Knight was unhappy with the British abolitionists' treatment of Mott, who shunned the American women either because of the difference of religion or because of their strong public activities. Knight wrote to Margaretta Forten, which, obtaining a copy, Mott wrote down in her diary, "I do love Lucretia Mott for her work's sake. It was a joy to me to have the opportunity of offering those attentions which others neglected."<sup>107</sup> Knight acknowledged here that Mott and the other American delegates were ignored or passed over by British abolitionists as they were not able to overlook Mott's difference in Quakerism or her gender. Knight also recognized Mott for her contributions to the antislavery movement and actively pursued her acquaintance. In this, Knight and Pease were among the few British women working towards transatlantic communication during the convention, going to tea and initiating conversation about the issues that arose because of the women delegates. It is also interesting to note that the women who conversed and visited civilly with the American female delegates were those that later went on to be involved in women's rights.<sup>108</sup>

Anne Knight and Elizabeth Pease, with the help of the American delegates, attempted to arrange a separate conference for women during the convention when they realized a seat would not be offered, but the BFASS did not allow that either, prompting Pease to write in a letter to an American friend that "had we been at our homes, we might have exerted an influence, but here we felt ourselves to be powerless."<sup>109</sup> The other difficulty with arranging a separate conference came from the British women themselves, who were reluctant to associate with the American women who had caused such scandal in their unladylike behavior. Mott records this strain in her diary, "In vain we endeavored to have a

public meeting called for women – altho [sic] a few – Anne Knight, Elizh. Pease &c – did all they could to promote it" but in vain.<sup>110</sup> There were a few meetings after the convention had ended between the American and British women, but the Americans were disappointed in British women's contributions and acceptance of exclusion. The reactions and attitudes of the British women highlight the radicalism of Knight as she was one of the few women to put aside her religious differences to make her displeasure known about the exclusion of women from the conference. Although Elizabeth Pease expressed similar sentiments, she also did not say anything against George Thompson when he renounced women's validity at the convention although he had previously stated that Pease was his "right-hand man" and had come out in full support of women's contributions.<sup>111</sup> Knight, however, made a pointed statement in which she expressed that many men had supported women's rights but had not done so publicly, including George Thompson and Joseph Sturge.<sup>112</sup> The attitude of acceptance shown by the British female activists frustrated the Americans, but the interference of the male abolitionists in denying the ladies' societies the ability to meet as a group of women in private catalyzed radicalism within those radicals that later participated in the women's rights movement. The catalyst was possible because of men's interference in the female sphere, or denying them a private, female meeting. Exposing more than just tensions in the abolition movement, this controversy and schism in the antislavery movement gave rise to a new movement for British women. It gave Anne Knight her future calling, that of the "woman question." Many of the British women in the abolitionist movement, it is seen, were unaffected or perturbed by their own exclusion; however, the small group of women who did share the frustration with their American counterparts went on increasingly to advocate for women's rights. Knight ends her letter to Mott with, "I wish it were practicable that, continuing the subject now begun, the cause of humanity might be extended, so that by the time of a *second* Convention, it would be more deserving the name of a *World's* Convention."<sup>113</sup> The 1840 international convention was the catalyst point in Knight's life as she embraced and prioritized the advocacy of the women's rights movement, for which she would be known after 1840.

103. Gleadle, *Radical Writings*, 189.

104. *Ibid.*, 189.

105. Lucretia Mott, *Slavery and "the Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain to Attend the World's Anti-slavery Convention of 1840* (Friends' Historical Association, 1952), 25.

106. Anna Davis Hallowell, *James and Lucretia Mott: Life and Letters*, (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1890), 227.

107. *Ibid.*

108. David Turley, "Complicating the Story: Religion and Gender in Historical Writing on British and American Anti-Slavery," in Elizabeth J. Clapp and Julie Roy Jeffrey, ed., *Women, Dissent, and Anti-Slavery in Britain and America, 1790-1865* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 41.

## “The ugly women of forty”: Anne Knight, Chartism, and the Women’s Rights Movement

In the early nineteenth century, a radical campaign for reform emerged called Chartism, which focused on reforming the inequalities evident in British law concerning working-class men in politics. The movement was initially very widespread and popular among both sexes, but, as opposed to the abolitionist movement, it was heavily working class.<sup>114</sup> The pursuit of suffrage by Chartists arose after the passing of the 1832 reform, which granted voting rights to the middle class, including religious dissenters such as Quakers. Their aim was to gain the rights that were excluded from that reformatory act. They presented their movement as universal male suffrage, but it was in fact a battle for universal *male* suffrage, thus marginalizing women in the movement and prioritizing the need for the male vote. However, the women of the Chartist movement, like their middle-class parallels, portrayed themselves as “wives, mothers, and daughters,” as expressed by the Chartist women of Cheltenham, and not as individual activists.<sup>115</sup> The Chartists’ aim was for political equality and representation in Parliament, and as in other movements a vote for women was considered not only redundant to a man’s vote, especially if a woman was married, but also damaging to the family and marriage structure. The importance of the movement was not only in the large mobilization of the working class and for a “national coherence” seen within the Chartist ranks but was also crucial in the way that it identified the working people of Britain as a class separate from that of the middle and upper classes, thus bringing forth their claim for rights equal to theirs.<sup>116</sup> In application to women, as in other movements, female Chartists postponed their plans, if they were under consideration, for female suffrage or political rights in the belief that, if the Chartist movement succeeded, then the next step would be the vote for women.

In terms of women’s participation in the movement, it was more complicated than their participation in the antislavery movement, fundamentally because of class differences and their priorities concerning reform. Masculinity and femininity were expressed and understood differently than they were in the middle-class movements, simply because of the necessities of physical work and different division of labor within family

structures of the working classes. This is stressed by the fact that women in the working class were not confined to the female middle-class notion of the ‘domestic’ sphere, but they *were* restricted to a ‘maternalist’ sphere. This meant that, because of the necessity of the entire family being employed, it was unlikely that a woman’s place was to be confined to the home. Instead, female expectations were on her role as a mother, a caretaker, and a supporting wife or sister. She was still a dependent but not in the same way a middle-class woman, who had no income beyond that given to her by a male relative or husband, would have been. Women’s positions in the Chartist movement were similar to their middle-class counterparts in the antislavery movement in that they portrayed themselves as providing familial support. This is expressed in a number of pamphlets, such as those published by the Female Political Union of Newcastle upon Tyne in 1839, where they called for women to “join us and help our fathers, husbands, and brothers, to free themselves and us from political, physical, and mental bondage. . . . Is it not true that the interests of our fathers, husbands and brothers ought to be ours?”<sup>117</sup> This sentiment of responsibility to men’s rights above their own, because it would promote their own welfare and that of their family, was a shared vision between the classes; however Chartist women openly canvassed on this ideal.<sup>118</sup> Chartist women, unlike their middle-class counterparts, were more active in the public sphere and not as concerned with the female propriety that limited middle-class women to having meetings in their parlors. They showed militancy and an activism equal to Chartist men, but agency on their own behalf was minimal. Instead, the rhetoric surrounding Chartism was heavily reliant on maternalist discourse. This meant that much of the argument for working-class enfranchisement was meant to promote better lives for the working class and return women to the home to care for children and husband. Chartism was not a movement used to promote a women’s rights movement, but despite this, it was women’s Chartist societies that Anne Knight first connected with and worked through to create the first suffrage organizations.

Middle-class women’s involvement in the Chartist movement came in two forms: that with a socialist and almost Jacobin flavor and that of the attitude of middle-class philanthropy directed towards the plight of women and those less fortunate. The first form manifested in a

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109. Elizabeth Pease to [?], London, July 17, 1849, printed in Clare Midgley’s *Women against Slavery: The British Campaigns, 1780-1870*, (London: Routledge, 1992), 161.

110. Lucretia Mott, *Selected Letters of Lucretia Coffin Mott*, (Champaign, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 79.

111. Midgley, *Women against Slavery*, 122.

112. Gleadle, *Radical Writing on Women*, 8.

113. *Ibid.*, 189.

Anne Knight. *The Liberator* (Boston, Mass.), Friday, October 30, 1840, issue 44.

114. Chartists rallied around and issued the People’s Charter in 1838, the main points of which were universal male suffrage, equal

electoral districts, and the abolition of property requirements for members of Parliament as well as the abolition of payment to be a member of Parliament, annual general [universal] elections, and a secret ballot. It was presented to the House of Commons in 1839 and was defeated to much agitation.

115. Jutta Schwarzkopf, *Women in the Chartist Movement* (London: Macmillan and Professional, Ltd., 1991), 89.

116. *Ibid.*, 1.

117. Barbara Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem: Socialism and Feminism in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983), 266.

118. Schwarzkopf, *Women in the Chartist Movement*, 92.

small group of radicalized women that mostly came out of the abolition movement. This included Anne Knight, Elizabeth Pease, and Harriet Martineau. Because of the inequalities they experienced in the abolition movement and in other middle-class causes, they were drawn to socialist causes that used a rhetoric easily employed for the defense of women's rights.<sup>119</sup> Knight's political diary shows her digestion of various Chartist, socialist, and utopian tracts and articles, including a letter she copied down that she had sent to Robert Owen. The Owenite and Chartist ideas of equality were also more aligned with Quaker sensibilities, which may explain the high participation of the women involved in Chartism being Quaker.

For the middle class, especially after the Charter was defeated in Parliament in 1848, the Chartist movement involved the women's rights movement, which was becoming slowly less stigmatized. In this way, middle-class participation took on a different form, which was maternalistic in the same way philanthropic causes against prostitution and poverty were. Middle-class women's support of Chartism rested on the belief that enfranchisement for the working class was for women to move back into the domestic sphere and out of the public sphere. They did not always support advocacy for working-class women's political rights. Marion Reid, for instance, published a pamphlet in 1843 in support of the enfranchisement of women. Knight annotated a copy of it, finding trouble with her assertion that only the "superior class of British women" were capable or deserving of the franchise because they were more capable of exercising those rights than the lower classes.<sup>120</sup> She also made apparent that she was not advocating women's politicization, simply the right to vote. Accordingly, Knight disagreed with Reid on her conclusion that working-class women not be afforded the vote and certainly not that the vote was all that was needed for equality between the sexes. Her stance as an advocate of human rights separates her even from women's rights activists as she saw equality as a much more broad term.

Although women in the Chartist movement were mostly content with working towards male suffrage, strong and outspoken women's rights associations came into being after the 1848 Chartist Petition, which was defeated in Parliament and for many marked the end of the Chartist movement. Knight, along with Elizabeth Pease and a couple of other women from the abolition movement, worked frequently with these women's associations, publishing letters in Chartist and working-class newspapers throughout England. Rhetoric surrounding universal suffrage frequently drew on the comparison of 'white slavery' in terms of the working class's position in Britain. In the same vein, Knight articulated the topic of women's rights in comparison to both the Chartist and abolition movements, drawing the comparison of women's subordination to men in gender and class. In a letter to the president of France in 1848, Knight highlights the advantages white men already have in the world:

(In order that) our declaration of principles loudly proclaim complete abolition, radical for you of privileged sex, race, birth, cast and fortune and you will see soon in the ranks of women of heart and

intelligence devoted and courageous who second your heroic efforts and help you to triumph egoism by the power of . . . their devotion.<sup>121</sup>

Her rhetoric on evoking race, class, and sex is a mixture frequently used in women's rights discussion. Her language is sarcastic, as it highlights that women continuously fight for a more privileged group of humans, in this case working-class men and slaves, while women are still disenfranchised. Knight's argument in this passage is to express that women were permitted to fight for other marginalized groups' rights while they are not considered in working-class men's or slaves' efforts. Marriage, also, was considered an institution that subordinated the wife, which carried with it rhetoric similar to that of slavery as seen previously with Priscilla Buxton's marriage, mentioned in the previous section.

In defense of women's position outside a maternalist view, Knight points out that not only are women now in the work force, which automatically forces them into the public sphere, an unnaturalness by the thoughts of some Chartists, but they are now involved in a political movement with men and the political sphere. In this way, she uses the fact that women are forced into the public workforce outside of the authority of their husbands and should therefore be treated as their husbands. Her argument is for universal suffrage, which would have included the entirety of humanity, an argument she made frequently before and after the 1840 convention when her radicalism turned to women's rights. Part of what makes her different from her fellow female activists is her interpretation of rights as humanist rights rather than simply the rights of women or the rights of slaves.

From 1840 onwards, Knight became more and more involved in the women's-rights movement, drawing on her experience from the antislavery and the Chartist movements. She creates parallels in her writing between slaves, the working class, and women. She used the imagery popular in Chartist texts against the upper and middle classes as oppressive and created an image of male oppression based on the same principles of fitness for political office, based on gender and wealth. As always in her discourse, Knight uses strong language in order to get her point across. Using rhetoric adopted for arguing the merits of universal suffrage, she points out in a letter published in the Chartist paper, *The Northern Star*, in 1851 that "the poor Chartists" have "abandoned

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119. Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem*, 276-77.

120. Marion Reid, *A Plea for Women* (1843), 122, in Anne Knight Personal Papers, Friends House, London.

121. Anne Knight, Notebook, MS vol. 486, Friends Library, London. Translation by author.

122. *The Northern Star*, vol. 14, no. 699, March 29, 1851, ed. 2, p. 8.

123. *Ibid.*

124. *Ibid.*

125. Ann Gilbert to Anne Knight, February 26, 1849, Chelmsford. Anne Knight Personal [manuscript], Friends House, London [MS Box 725-5].

126. *Ibid.*



their sisters in their demand for Universal Suffrage."<sup>122</sup> Her sarcastic tone is scathing and meant to cause shame and embarrassment to the Chartists, who called for equality but who included "only half" in their fight for political equality.<sup>123</sup> She is angered and frustrated at the time of writing this letter, eleven years after the beginning of her campaign for women's rights, that it is "not merely a logical inaccuracy" to deny women the vote, "but an injury in a political sense" as well.<sup>124</sup>

Her frustration is clear, and made clearer as she struggles with these debates in both the antislavery movement and in the Chartist movement. In a letter from Ann Gilbert in response to her plea for the support for women's rights and women's suffrage, the sentiments of most female antislavery activists is expressed in clear terms. Gilbert strikes down her strong language by accusing her of misapplying Scripture. The rallying points against Knight's claim that one half of humanity is not enfranchised is that "dissension . . . might affect domestic happiness," and that "Nature seems to have settled the question."<sup>125</sup> Gilbert's rhetoric on "women work" and the "divisions of labour" are opinions Knight heard frequently, especially in conjunction with marriage and middle-class female activists.<sup>126</sup> These feelings of constraint are what drove her further into a public advocacy of the women's rights movement.

The Sheffield Female Radical Association was of vital importance not only to women's role in the Chartist movement but also to Knight, who was active in the Association and its eventual evolution into the Sheffield Women's Rights Association. In 1839, the Sheffield Female Radical Association was the longest-running female Chartist association in England, mainly because of its evolution that year into a women's rights association. In 1852, it is mentioned in a snippet on the front page of *The Northern Star*, a national Chartist newspaper, that it had become the National Women's Rights Association.<sup>127</sup> In 1851, a letter from Aariah Higginbottom was published in *The Northern Star* and mentions that "Miss Anne Knight, a quakeress lady, and an advocate of our rights, will render us her valuable services" in the commencement of "an association under the title of the 'Sheffield Female Political Association.'"<sup>128</sup>

This is describing the first women's suffrage meeting at which Knight is notably present. Here, ten years after the 1840 convention, where her pursuit of the cause of women's rights became her priority, she is already well known as an advocate of women's

rights and is notable enough to be in the article. What it exposes is her crucial role in the development of the women's movement in Britain. Not only had she been one of the few at the forefront of women's rights within the abolition movement as a result of her rage over the refusal women met at the 1840 convention; she passionately pursued reform for women's rights through action and organization, impacting the movement's development. She was said to have started the first suffrage society in Britain in 1851, which is what the Sheffield women became because of her initiative in the cause.<sup>129</sup> The article describes the proceedings of their annual meeting, including the choosing of their "President for the year," which was "Miss Anne Knight, of Quiet Home, Chelmsford, a member of the Society of Friends."<sup>130</sup> It is not certain whether Knight was present at the meeting so as to be elected, but she was certainly elected president of the first women's rights association in the country. Again, her radical and strong support of the women's movement makes her exceptional to other women of her day, even those that were active supporters of women's rights.

References about Knight scatter Chartist and abolition papers on both sides of the Atlantic as her letters were published, usually on the subject of women, as she was considered "a prominent English advocate of the rights of Women" but often intertwined with the causes she pursued.<sup>131</sup> Knight was active in these causes and kept a growing correspondence with their leaders, such as Feargus O'Connor and Thomas Clarkson, but she was most well known and most reproduced and therefore most visible in her fight for women's rights from the 1840s to the 1860s.<sup>132</sup> This is especially true because the majority of her letters that are reproduced are those that berate male leaders for their lack of support for women's rights. This is true of Feargus O'Connor, Lord Brougham, Robert Bartlet, and M. A. Coquerel. Again, she uses strong language that is full of biblical and historical references in her letters to show her sentiments of the cause, which often garnered her negative comments from family and friends for her outspokenness.

This frustration is part of the reason Knight leaves Britain and makes her home permanently in France in the latter half of her life. Before the 1850s, when she left Britain permanently, she travelled frequently across the channel to France, her letters giving many signs of this passage, including one to Maria West Chapman in America and one published in *The Northern Star*.<sup>133</sup>

127. Schwarzkopf, *Women in the Chartist Movement*, 248.

*The Northern Star*, vol. 15, no. 748, March 6, 1852, ed. 2, p. 1.

128. Aariah Higginbottom, *Northern Star, and National Trade's Journal*, vol. 14, no. 694, February 22, 1851, ed. 2, p. 1.

Aariah Higginbottom appears throughout the Chartist papers, writing and publishing letters. She is listed as the financial secretary for the Sheffield Woman's Rights Association, and she played an active part in the Sheffield societies' activities from the time they were the Female Democrats of Sheffield, where she was correspondence secretary.

129. Malmgreen, "Anne Knight," 107-108.

130. *The Northern Star*, vol. 15, no. 748, March 6, 1852, ed. 2, p. 1.

131. *The Anti-Slavery Bugle*, vol. 7, no. 12, December 6, 1851, p. 4.

132. Feargus O'Connor was an Irish member of Parliament from Cork who was very influential in the Chartist movement. He founded *The Northern Star* in 1837. He was anti-women's rights and took a public stance against it. He quarreled with Daniel O'Connor, who was a major figure in abolition in Ireland and a prominent defender of women's participation in the movement.

Roger Swift, *Irish Migrants in Britain, 1815-1914: A Documentary History* (Cork, Ireland: Cork University Press, 2002), 152.

133. Anne Knight to Maria West Chapman, [Letter to] My dear friend [manuscript]. London, [England], 1842, British Public Library.

During this time period, France was a popular haven for British socialists and radicals. Beyond Knight, Harriet and John Stuart Mill, Thomas Clarkson, and Mary Wollstonecraft all lived for a period of time in France because of the freedom they found there. Because of the French Revolution, which had occurred within living memory and most of their lifetimes, there was an attitude contrary to that rigidity found in Britain concerning class divisions and, in some ways gender divisions. Radicals had an idealized view of French freedom and government because the language of the French Revolution was still in use.<sup>134</sup> It is a language seen in the writing of the Mills, Wollstonecraft, and Knight, especially in the rhetoric of liberty and equality for enfranchisement.

The other cultural aspect in France that made public participation easier for radicals and women was their culture of working class and anti-elitism that was still contentious in Britain. Knight, who was so active in Chartism, spoke publicly in Chartist society, showing that it was easier for working-class women to speak on public and political issues. The reason that working-class women were more able to speak publicly was that they were not as concerned with the middle-class preoccupation of "respectability" and "propriety." Women were already in the public sphere because of working outside the home, and so the constraints placed on middle-class women venturing into the public sphere were not so rigid with working-class women. Because France was more socialist in ideology, this working-class ideology surrounding gender was more accepted in society at large and therefore attractive to radical women like Knight. Knight, also, because of this ideology, may have been more comfortable overall with educated working-class women because of fewer limitations on her public participation.

In Knight's frequent trips to France, she came into contact with many of the French socialists and feminists who resided in Paris. Knight was visiting France when the 1848 Revolution broke out, involving many of the activists at that time, including Jeanne Deroin, who was an important figure in French feminism and socialism and involved in the French utopian group, Saint Simonians.<sup>135</sup> Knight romanticizes the Revolution as a conquest by the people over tyranny, made more valid by the peaceful nature of the abdication of Louis Philippe.<sup>136</sup> Deroin and Knight kept up a correspondence and presumably visited each other in Paris and London. In 1848, after the Revolution, there was a conservative backlash in France to the socialist reforms that had profited French women. This included banning women from political clubs and publishing in political venues. In Knight's political journal, she copied down the letter she and Deroin published in Deroin's paper *La Voix des Femmes*, a radical women's suffrage publication and the first female publication in France. The letter was a rebuttal to Athanase Coquerel, a Protestant minister who had supported the ban. Knight and Deroin coauthored a scathing letter in response in June of 1848, using language reminiscent of the Revolution and of the abolition movement:

Us too, we are part of society; too long have we been excluded from assemblies or asked the great questions on which the destiny of the world depend; and the power of the human spirit, split by human pride, has not produced anything except incomplete systems, egotistical laws, fanatical crimes, civil discord and all the miseries that degrade humanity. Someone said all for the people nothing by the people; wiser and more opportunities, you say all for the people, all by the people; it is the same for the emancipation of women, in the name of law and God and for the salvation of humanity.<sup>137</sup>

Their letter uses language very similar to that of the French Revolution and that of a humanist approach to women's rights. Both Knight and Deroin worked diligently in the spring and summer of 1848, or during what has been called "the springtime of peoples," to connect the revolutionary spirit to the women's rights movement in an effort to include them in the equality reforms.<sup>138</sup> They published many letters during this spring as feminists in Germany, the United States, and France lobbied for their political rights in response to the defeat of conservative politics. Knight's friendship with Deroin revealed her increased radicalism not only after the 1840 convention but also during the fever of socialism inherent during the spring of 1848. However, the feminist enthusiasm that was found in France in 1848 faded after the conservative backlash to the people's spring as women's groups lost funds and support. Women's rights groups had to look outside the country for support, which is how Knight again became involved with the Sheffield Women's Rights Association. Deroin, also, participated in the Sheffield Society, presumably because of her connection to Knight.

Through the Chartist movement and her activism and friendships in France, Knight displays a growth in her writing and an increase in her radicalism. Her devotion to the rights of women become more and more apparent as she aged, and she herself became more and more radical and forceful in her advocacy for women and for the enfranchisement of any people. □

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134. Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem*, 275.

135. The Saint Simonian movement called for the equality of the sexes on a humanist argument in the belief that a peaceful society, or utopian society, could only be achieved in equality in all things. They embraced the idea of *la femme libre*, which caused female Saint Simonians to propel themselves into feminist action by publishing their own newspapers, redefining their own emancipation, and forming their own organizations.

Anderson, *Joyous Greetings*, 12.

136. Anne Knight, "Letter to Richard Cobden, M.P.," August 13, 1850, in Tracts, vol. O, folder 229-30, Friends House, London.

137. Anne Knight, *Notebook*, Friends House, London [MS Vol. s486]. Translation by author.

138. Anderson, *Joyous Greetings*, 156.

*Selected Pennsylvania German stories from a 1979 audio recording by the author*

## **Ferwas so Englisch?/ Why So English?**

(Des is noch en waahri Gschicht.)/(This is also a true story.)

*By Ernest G. Gehman*

Der Schtorkieper Abram Glemmer vum Schteddel Line Lexington, net weit vun der Schtadt Lansdale in oscht Pennsylvanie, hot mir die Gschicht verzaehlt wie ich en yunger Mann waar. Er hot gsaat as en aldi Gremmemm vun der mennischde Gmee datt im Schteddel mol bei ihm im Sctor waar un gsaat hot, "Ich kann gaar net verschteh ferwas so viel vun unsre Gmeesglieder so Englisch warre wolle heidesdaags, wann doch der liewe Herr Gott deitsch is."

Der Glemmer hot die Aage uffgerisse, "Wie hoscht du sell ausfunne, Schweschder?"

Sie hot graad geantwatt, "Ei, er hot doch sellemols im Gaarde gerufe: 'Aadam, wu bischt du?'"

*Translated by K. Varden Leasa*

The storekeeper Abram Clemmer from the village of Line Lexington, not far from the town of Lansdale in eastern Pennsylvania, told me this story when I was a young man. He said that an old grandmother from the Mennonite congregation there in the village was in his store once and said, "I can't understand at all why so many of our church members want to become so English nowadays, when, after all, the dear Lord God is German."

Clemmer opened his eyes wide, "How did you find that out, Sister?"

She answered right away, "Yes, after all, he called that time in the garden: 'Aadam, wu bischt du?'"

## **A. Gwiddle un Gwidder/Quinces (*Gwiddle*) and Lightning (*Gwidder*)**

*By Ernest G. Gehman*

En deitschi Familie vun Kanadaa hot mol an re Bauerei in Lengescher Kaundi Pennsylvanie bsucht. Noch em Middaagesse sin die Mannsleit all nausgange die ganz Bauerei aazugucke. Wie sie darich der Baangaarde gloffe sin, hot der Bauer gfrogt, "Hen ihr aa Gwidde in Kanadaa?"

"Oh, ya," waar die Antwatt. "Es brennt allegebott en Scheier ab."

*Translated by K. Varden Leasa*

A Dutch family from Canada was visiting on a farm in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, one time. After lunch the men all went out to look at the whole farm. As they were walking through the orchard, the farmer asked, "Do you have quinces (*Gwidde*) in Canada, too?"

"Oh, yes," was the answer. "It burns down a barn now and then."

## **B. Seide un Seider/Silk (*Seide*) and Cider (*Seider*)**

*By Ernest G. Gehman*

Schpeeder sin allebeed Familie imme grosse Wagge im Schteddel rumgfaahre. Em Bauer sei Frau hot zum Bsuch gsaat, "Datt driwwer is en Seide-Miehl."

Die anner Fraa hot dann gfrogt, "Mache sie aa Lattwarrich?"

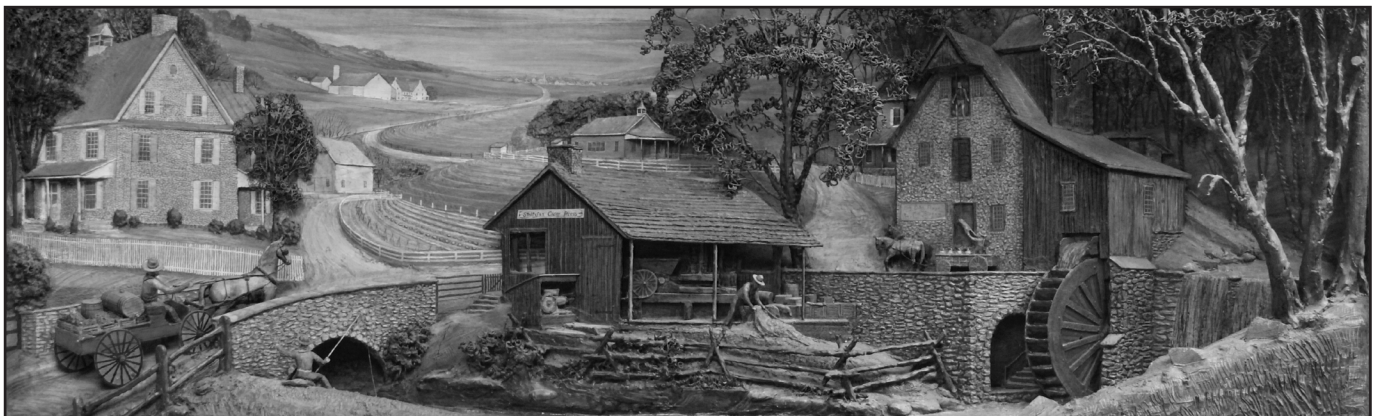
—Wie leicht kann's doch internationale Missverschtendnisse gewwe.

*Translated by K. Varden Leasa*

Later both families were riding around in the town in a big wagon. The farmer's wife said to her visitors, "Over there is a silk (*Seide*) mill."

The other woman then asked, "Do they also make apple butter?"

—How easy it is to have international misunderstandings.



## Puerto Rican Meals

by Rolando L. Santiago

### Introduction

The six recipes in this section represent a simple meal served frequently on Puerto Rican tables consisting of a main meal with white rice, seasoned pink beans, seasoned fried chicken, and a flan dessert. The recipes are translated from a popular cookbook that Carmen Aboy Valldejuli first published in Spanish in 1954 and is now in its sixty-eighth printing. It is considered the definitive cookbook on Puerto Rican cuisine. According to the *San Juan Star*, "[it] is considered a primer for beginning cooks . . . a textbook for home economists and it is a guide for the gourmet as well." The English version is titled *Puerto Rican Cookery*, and is in its thirty-sixth edition with over 167,000 copies in print.

Some of the recipes have ingredients that are not prevalent in North American cuisine. This is especially the case with the sofrito recipe, which is a typical Puerto Rican seasoning sauce. These ingredients are increasingly found in chain supermarkets and definitely in Puerto Rican ethnic food stores such as those located in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, where there is a large population of people with Puerto Rican ancestry.

There are references in these recipes to specific cooking equipment such as a *caldero* for cooking rice, and a double boiler for making the flan, which in Puerto Rico is referred as *baño de María* (Mary's bath). The recipes also include some information about cooking practices in mid-twentieth-century Puerto Rico. For example, in the 1950s consumers could still purchase live chickens, which then were weighed, plucked, and cleaned.

**Note about the translation:** Through the translation from Spanish to English, these recipes have been slightly adapted from the ones appearing in *Cocina Criolla* but are still faithful to the original ones.

### White Rice

(6 servings)

1 pound of rice (2 cups)

1 tablespoon of salt

1 liter of water

4 tablespoons of lard [or oil]

1 – Combine the water, salt, and oil in a *caldero* (kettle with rounded bottom edges), and heat it on high until it boils.

2 – Take the rice, place it in a large strainer, and wash it rapidly directly under water.

3 – As soon as the water that combined with the salt and the oil starts to boil, add the rice, well strained. Stir it just one time so that the rice mixes with the water.

4 – Leave it on *high heat*, without covering it or moving it until it dries, which will take about 10 to 15 minutes.

5 – As soon as it dries, put it on *low heat*, change the position of the rice so that the rice at the bottom is now on the top. (Do this by introducing a cooking spoon across the two sides of the *caldero* and lifting

the rice out to turn it over.)

6 – Cover and leave it cooking at *low heat* around 15 minutes. (At half time move it in the manner indicated above.)

7 – Eat it soon after making.

Note: It's very important to move the rice in the manner indicated above and not more frequently than indicated. That way you will avoid the rice becoming sticky.

### Practical Sofrito

This is a very convenient sofrito (seasoned sauce) because you can prepare and preserve it in the refrigerator placing it in glass containers that are clean and covered. For each half pound of grains use *two teaspoons* of this sofrito. Add to the grains two tablespoons of melted *achiote* (annatto) oil and a quarter cup of tomato sauce.

A – 1 pound *tocino* (salted fresh lard)

¼ pound of *achiote*

B – 1 pound of cooking ham

¼ pound of sweet *ají dulce* (sweet chili pepper)

1 pound of green pepper, fresh

1 pound of onion

12 cloves of garlic (medium)

15 leaves of *culantro* (long coriander)

15 sprigs of *culantrillo* (cilantro)

1 tablespoon of dry oregano

1 – Wash and cut the *tocino* in very small pieces. Place them in a kettle, and melt the lard at *high heat* for 30 minutes. Move them occasionally.

2 – Turn off the heat, take out the pieces of *tocino*, and add to the lard the *achiote* previously washed and strained. Mix and leave it in the lard for *five minutes*. Strain into a large kettle.

3 – Separately wash the cooking ham well, and cut it in small pieces. Take the seeds out from the peppers and the *ajíes dulces* and wash them. Mix them and leave them in the lard for *five minutes*. Peel the onions and the garlic cloves, and wash them. Put all of this through a blender.

4 – Grind in a mortar the *culantro* leaves and the sprigs of *culantro*, previously washed and strained. Grind the dry oregano.

5 – Combine everything blended with the grounded spices, and cook them in the *achiote* lard on *low heat* and move it occasionally during 30 minutes.

6 – Wait until it cools, and pour it in glass containers. Cover them. Place them in the refrigerator to use them in spoonfuls.

Note: To omit the lard and *achiote* mixture in steps #1 and #2, substitute with an envelope of *sazón* (readily available in supermarkets in the United States and Puerto Rico with Hispanic products) which contains a mixture of grounded *annatto*, dehydrated garlic, cumin, coriander, and salts. *Sazón* provides the desired red coloring from the *achiote* but without the fat.

**Pink Beans**

- ½ pound of pink beans
- ½ pound of pumpkin
- 2 liters of water
- 2½ teaspoons of salt
- ½ pound of potatoes
- Sofrito [as described earlier in this section]
- 1 – Select, wash, and place the dry beans in water for several hours.
- 2 – Strain them, place them in 2 liters of water, and put at high heat, *covered* until they boil. When they boil, reduce the heat to moderate. Cook them for 2 hours.
- 3 – Peel, wash and cut in pieces the potatoes and the pumpkin. Add them, and place the salt. Add the “sofrito” for grains that appears elsewhere in this section.
- 4 – Leave it cooking *uncovered* for 45 more minutes so that the sauce will thicken.

**Adobo (Seasoning for the chicken)**

A clean chicken is one whose interior has been emptied, plucked, and with no feet or neck.

The first line indicates the weight of the chicken in pounds. Under this line you will find the corresponding adobo. (The adobo is the same whether the chicken is complete or in pieces.)

Grind in a mortar the grains of garlic, grains of pepper, dry oregano, and salt. Add without further grinding the oil and the vinegar, and mix it well.

Note: pre-prepared adobo canisters are readily available in the Hispanic food section of most supermarkets in the United States and Puerto Rico.

**Fried Chicken in Butter**

- 1 chicken
- ¼ pound of butter
- 1 – Pluck, clean, and divide the chicken in pieces.
- 2 – Weigh the chicken to determine the amount of adobo it needs.
- 3 – Wash the chicken in 2 cups of water to which you will have added the juice of 1 green lemon. Strain it and dry it well.
- 4 – *Don't* prick or cut the chicken.
- 5 – Put *adobo* according to the Table for Seasoning (*Adobar*) Clean Chicken.
- 6 – The chicken should be seasoned by pressing the adobo all around the chicken and under the skin. In both sides of the breasts there are two open channels through which you should also place the adobo.
- 7 – The chicken will be more delicious if you season it with the adobo hours before and you keep it in the refrigerator, remembering to take it out 1 hour before using it.
- 8 – In a frying pan place the butter on moderate heat, adding the chicken after the butter has melted. Put the heat on high, and let it cook for 3 minutes on each side.
- 9 – Put the heat low, and let the chicken cook without covering the pan for 30 minutes. (After 15 minutes, turn the chicken over.)
- 10 – Take it out, place it on absorbent paper so that the grease is absorbed, and eat it hot.

Note: If you like the chicken toasty, after it's ready, you can place the heat on high, and leave the chicken for 2 minutes on each side.

Pounds of clean chicken	1	1¼	1½	1¾	2	2¼	2½	2¾	3	3¼	3½
Grains of garlic (Size)	1 Sm	1 Sm	1 Med	1 Med	1 Lg	1 Lg	2 Sm	2 Sm	2 Med	2 Med	2 Lg
Grains of pepper	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4
Teaspoons of dry oregano	½	½	¾	¾	1	1	1¼	1¼	1½	1½	1½
Teaspoons of salt	1	1¼	1½	1¾	2	2¼	2½	2¾	3	3¼	3½
Teaspoons of oil	¾	¾	1	1	1¼	1¼	1½	1½	1¾	1¾	2
Teaspoons of vinegar	¼	¼	¼	¼	½	½	½	½	¾	¾	1

Approximate weight that chicken reduces after being cleaned

Live chicken, pounds	1¾	2	2¼	2½	3	3½	4	4½	4¾	5	5¼
Clean chicken, pounds	1	1¼	1½	1¾	2	2¼	2½	2¾	3	3¼	3½

Chart showing spice ration for Adobo

## Flan with Evaporated Milk

(Use molds for double boiler)

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup of sugar – to make a caramel in the upper mold of the double boiler.

5 eggs

$1\frac{1}{4}$  cups of sugar

1 13-ounce can of evaporated milk, used as it comes, without diluting.

- 1 – Place  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of sugar in the upper mold of the double boiler. Put it at *low heat* until it melts and it takes on a nice clear golden color. Spread it carefully on the bottom and the sides of the mold until they are totally covered.
- 2 – Heat water in the bottom mold of the double boiler.
- 3 – Separately combine 5 eggs with  $1\frac{1}{4}$  cups of sugar and with the contents of the can of evaporated milk, used as it comes, without diluting.
- 4 – Strain it over the mold with the caramel.
- 5 – Place it over the bottom mold of the double boiler. Place *heat low, cover the mold*, and cook for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours.
- 6 – Heat the oven at a moderate temperature of 350° F., and place the double-boiler mold in it without covering the mold, and brown for about 30 minutes.
- 7 – Wait until it *totally* cools before turning it over; otherwise the flan will open up.

## Meals and Religious Life

For many years I have been immersed in activities within primary societal institutions that define themselves as religious. These include family, congregations, church organizations, and conferences that claim a Christian Mennonite identity. Eating is a common practice that cuts across these institutions from the intimacy of a family gathering to a public deliberation during a church conference meeting.

I am grateful to abuela (grandmother) Elena, who after becoming Mennonite, continued to prepare *bacalao en escabeche* (marinated salted cod fish) during Lent and Holy Week, a common practice among the traditional Catholic culture of Puerto Rico. The memory of eating *bacalao en escabeche* on a Lenten Friday at the dinner table with the warm presence of abuela nearby in the kitchen is still a poignant reminder of Jesus' act to reconcile God with human beings and all creation.

The pastor of the congregation that I attended in my youth enjoyed organizing intergenerational parrandas (caroling outings) during the Christmas season. We started at mid-evening, caroled across many homes in the community, and ended at about 2:00 a.m. in the home of one of the church members. The family in this last home agreed beforehand to prepare *sopón* (chicken soup with rice, pumpkin, potatoes or *yautía*) as a way to culminate a joyous time of singing, building good will in the community, and cultivating bonds of fellowship with each other.

In March of each year, the Convention of Evangelical Mennonite Churches of Puerto Rico convened an assembly where a large number of delegates from about fifteen congregations attended. A typical dinner at these large gatherings included *arroz con pollo* (rice combined with chicken), *habichuelas rosadas* (pink beans), *guineítos verdes* (cooked green bananas), *ensalada* (lettuce and

tomatoes), and *pan de manteca* (slices of French-style bread). I am convinced that conversations over this succulent meal would often break down individual opinions about a difficult church-wide decision and helped build consensus.

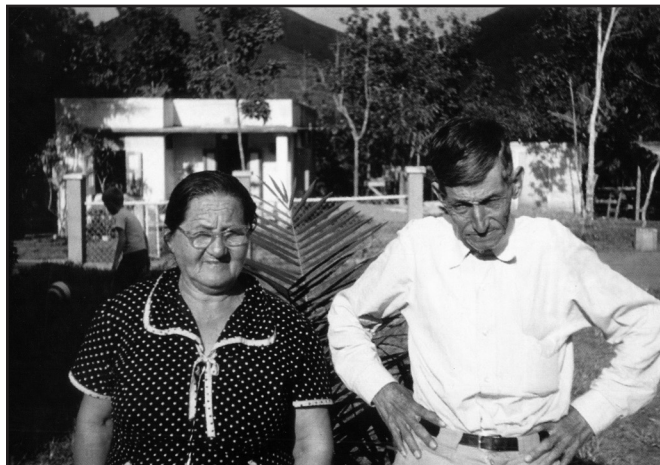
## Meals at Abuela's Home

There was a time in my childhood when my younger brother Richard and I stayed during summer days at my abuela Elena's house in La Plata, Puerto Rico, where I grew up. School was out, and abuela took care of us while my social-work parents went to their respective jobs in the neighboring towns of Cidra, Comerio, Cayey, and Aguas Buenas during the 1960s. In return for preparing our meals, abuela had plans for Richard and I to help her tend her *finquita*, a half-acre plot of land that she farmed intensively with coffee, bananas, plantain, beans, *gandules* (pigeon peas), and tropical roots such as *batata* (sweet potato), *malanga*, *yautía*, and *ñame*.

Richard and I usually had breakfast at home, but sometimes abuela had *funche*, a robust cream of yellow cornmeal, waiting for us as a second breakfast. I usually put sugar and milk over it to make it creamier. But even more delicious was a breakfast with sweet *maicena*. This was a smooth cream made with cornstarch, on which we sprinkled cinnamon powder.

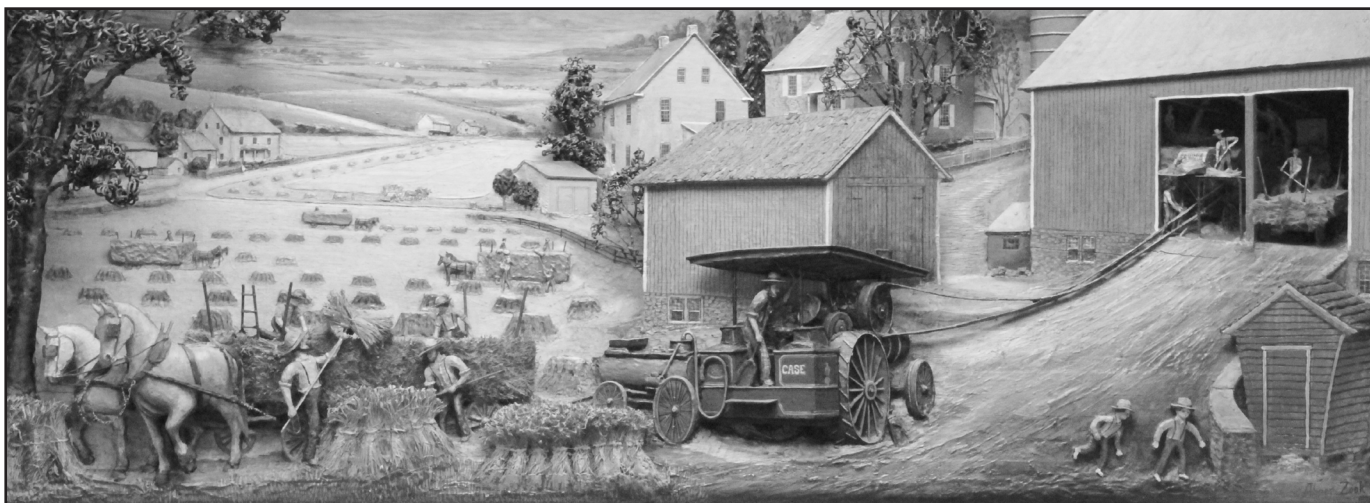
For lunch, my favorite was abuela's *sopa de pollo* (chicken soup). She was a good cook. She did not write her recipes down, but I do remember ingredients she used in the soup. She put potatoes, onions, culantro leaves, fresh garlic, and noodles in the soup. And of course, she added pieces of cooked chicken like drumsticks and thighs without the skin, as well as the liver and heart of the chicken, which I loved to dig from the depths of the bowl.

For dinner, it was almost certain that abuela prepared rice and beans, sometimes cooked together and other times separately. She made well-seasoned *guisado de carne* or beef stew to pour over the rice and beans. Often she had *tostones* or fried plantain, or a salad with fresh lettuce and tomatoes on the side. □



Elena and Fidel Santiago, La Plata, Puerto Rico

## Exhibit Review: Abner K. Zook Dioramas



"Summer Work," 1975

By Jim King

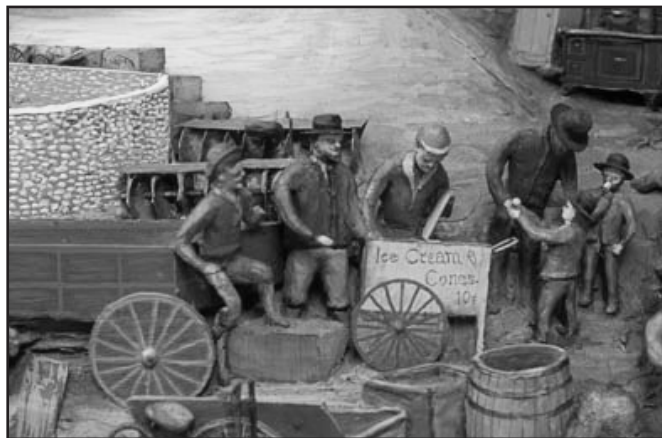
"The Farm Sale" has two auctioneers busy simultaneously, one selling dazzling sunshine-and-shadow and diamond-in-the-square quilts and the other selling frisky geldings. Abner Zook is an artist who created approximately eight hundred diorama paintings, hang-on-the-wall, framed two-dimensional/three-dimensional assemblages that recreate the Pennsylvania Dutch rural agrarian cultural life and happenings of the twentieth century. My favorite is the "Farm Sale" as I have enjoyed the thrill of purchase at this kind of event, perusing the ephemera of generations in an old homestead, enjoying the artifacts of practical rural domestication. Recreated here are the contents of the stone farmhouse in the yard with bidders and curious onlookers watching quilts go to the highest bidder. In the farmyard by the barn are mostly men and boys watching anxious horses being auctioned. In the middle of the assemblage are food vendors and indulgences such as ice cream.

What focus and depth of observation the artist brings to the telling of each story. The agrarian lifestyle is richly textured, and nuanced detail covers each square

inch. In other dioramas days gone by are brimming with nostalgia as I peruse the different stories. The range of stories is staggering when considering that the diorama format is more than a painting—it is sculpture as well. One has a sensation of being able to walk into the scene and participate. More than paint and color, there is wire, wood, plaster, and steel wool.

In "Green Hay Harvest" and "Summer Work" the farm stories told in each one are replayed daily just a mile south of the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society campus. Not much has changed as depicted in these works of art, thanks to the separatist piety of our Amish and Mennonite Lancaster County neighbors. These hard and honest labors were documented in beautiful perspective by Zook forty years ago and remind me this simple life of earth care and food production is the envy of many in these fast-paced times of iPhones, computers, and satellites on a comet.

I feel the collection of James and Nancy Binsberger is homage to great artistic effort, unseen in the culture of the "quiet in the land." It is a very good thing these dioramas are in the care of folks like the Binsbergers, who shared them for us to enjoy in this exhibition. I was inspired. □



Details from "The Farm Sale" showing the horses and ice cream vendor

## Recommended Reading

### Orders:

Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society  
2215 Millstream Road  
Lancaster, PA 17602-1499

**Phone:** (717) 393-9745  
**Fax:** (717) 393-8751  
**E-mail:** shop@lmhs.org

Add \$4.00 for first volume and \$1.50 for each additional one for postage/handling. Items marked with an asterisk (\*) require \$1.00 extra per asterisk for postage. Pennsylvania residents add six percent sales tax to combined total of books and postage/handling. Prices are subject to change without notice.

Boll, Shirley. *At Every Gate a Pearl*. Harrisonburg, Va.: Christian Light Publications, 2008. 131 pp. (paper). \$7.50. ISBN: 978-0-87813-968-2.

Falcón, Rafael. *La Iglesia Menonita Hispana en Norte América: 1932-1982*. Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1985. 192 pp. (hardcover). \$8.00. ISBN: 0-8361-1272-5.

Hinojosa, Felipe. *Latino Mennonites: Civil Rights, Faith, and Evangelical Culture*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014. 297 pp. (hardcover). \$45.00. ISBN: 978-1-4214-1283-2.

Kanagy, Conrad L., et al. *Winds of the Spirit: A Profile of Anabaptist Churches in the Global South*. Harrisonburg, Va.: Herald Press, 2012. 260 pp. (paper). \$13.99. ISBN: 978-0-8361-9636-8.

King, Jim, and Beth Oberholtzer. *False Graining Techniques: How to Add the Rich Look of Wood to Your Next Project*. East Petersburg, Pennsylvania: Fox Chapel Publishing, 2013. 40 pp. (paper). \$11.99. ISBN: 978-1-56523-797-1.

Lehman, Martin W. *Roots and Branches: A Narrative History of the Amish and Mennonites in Southeast United States, 1892-1992*: Volume 1: *Roots, 1892-1969*. Telford, Pennsylvania: Cascadia Publishing House, 2010. 307 pp. (paper). \$23.95. ISBN: 978-1-931038-69-0.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Roots and Branches: A Narrative History of the Amish and Mennonites in Southeast United States, 1892-1992*: Volume 2: *Branches, 1970-1992*. Telford, Pennsylvania: Cascadia Publishing House, 2011. 245 pp. (paper). \$21.95. ISBN: 978-1-931038-69-0.

Loewen, Royden, and Steven M. Nolt. *Seeking Places of Peace*: Global Mennonite History Series: *North America*. Intercourse, Pennsylvania: Good Books, 2012. 399 pp. (paper). \$11.95. ISBN: 978-1-56148-797-4.

Ortíz, José, and David Graybill. *Reflections of an Hispanic Mennonite*. Intercourse, Pennsylvania: Good Books, 1989. 93 pp. (paper). \$6.95. ISBN: 0-934672-78-4.

Shearer, Tobin Miller. *Daily Demonstrators: The Civil Rights Movement in Mennonite Homes and Sanctuaries*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010. 360 pp. (hardcover). \$65.00. ISBN: 978-0-8018-9700-9.

Toews, Paul. *Mennonites in American Society, 1930-1970: Modernity and the Persistence of Religious Community*. Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1996. pp. 441. (paper). \$20.00. ISBN: 0-8361-3117-7.

Valladares, Jaime Prieto. *Mission and Migration*: Global Mennonite History Series: *Latin America*. Intercourse, Pennsylvania: Good Books, 2010. 362 pp. (paper). \$11.95. ISBN: 978-1-56148-690-8.