

**QUAKERS AND CONSCIENCE: EDWARD BURROUGH'S
PROMOTION OF RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE 1653-1663**

by

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DEDICATION

I am dedicating this thesis in memory of my parents, Eva and Charles Embree of Springhill, Nova Scotia. They have always encouraged me in my studies and have set a glowing example of good Christian living.

During the writing of this thesis, I have used the same desk my father made for me as a teenager. He resourcefully attached $\frac{1}{4}$ inch plywood over two wooden orange crates from a grocery store nearby. The plywood was varnished and covered with a blotter which has been replaced several times. This home-made desk has been functional for over sixty years.

I appreciate all the sacrifices my parents have made for me and I know they have been proud of my accomplishments.

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ABSTRACT

The English Civil War period is a fascinating area of study given the religious, political and military battles which were waged from 1642-1649. Following the regicide of 1649 and the ascendancy of Oliver Cromwell during the Interregnum, the formation of radical groups dominated the social sphere. This thesis is concerned with one particular sect, the Quakers, or Society of Friends. Beginning as a loosely organized meeting of like-minded individuals and quickly numbering in the thousands, the Quakers became a source of contention for the government. Their unorthodox behaviour, unpretentious lifestyle and philosophy of the equality of all, set them apart in the class-conscious society of seventeenth-century England. Convinced that they were led by the Light of Christ, they defied state laws, the formalism of the Church of England and the social mores of deference to superiors. This caused many to be imprisoned and persecuted both by state authorities and by neighbours.

This thesis examines one Quaker's responses to this persecution and his arguments in favour of toleration. It reviews the copious writings of the Quaker Edward Burrough, who published extensively from 1653 to 1663. He not only refuted tracts written by others against Quakerism, but also wrote to those in authority to advocate liberty of conscience and relief from persecution. Confrontational and hostile at times in his replies to John Bunyan, he defended Quaker doctrine which the latter had challenged. Burrough wrote to Oliver and Richard Cromwell and Parliament imploring them to relieve Quakers of persecution and to provide liberty of conscience. Correspondence to Charles II after his Restoration in 1660 was forceful and relatively successful as the persecution of Quakers in the Boston area was somewhat relieved.

This thesis demonstrates that Burrough's argument for requesting liberty of conscience was that conscience was sacred because it was informed by God through the Light of Christ. The Light of Christ, moreover, dwelled equally within all people. He also suggested that the benefits of allowing liberty of conscience would be felt in the economic, social and political aspects of English life and would help to make England great. Ultimately, Burrough advocated toleration because he argued that toleration was a basic right of freeborn Englishmen.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

We are an Afflicted and Suffering people in these Kingdoms at this Day. Mocked, Reproached, haled before Magistrates, violently Abused and Imprisoned and much Hard dealing exercised upon us. This is apparently visible to all People and needs no further proof.¹

Edward Burrough penned these words in a tract written in 1660 at the beginning of the Restoration to publicize the sufferings and injustices meted out to Quakers. Quakerism had an immense impact on England from the time of the English Civil War when there was a great upheaval in all aspects of political, social and religious life. New religious sects and political factions abounded, causing problems for the government in trying to maintain law and order.

The Quaker sect, also known as the Society of Friends, was founded by George Fox and other like-minded individuals who questioned formalism in matters of faith. Within a decade of its beginnings, by 1655, the movement had attracted a following of around 35,000-40,000.² Consisting mainly of yeomen, merchants and artisans, the movement spread quickly by dedicated missionaries known as the “Valiant 60.”³ Early itinerant Quaker preachers were known as Publishers of Truth and distributed tracts and books explaining Quaker philosophy and doctrine.⁴ Gradually Quakerism extended into Germany, Turkey, China, the West Indies and many other places.⁵

The impact of Quakerism was felt in England when Quakers began to disrupt church services, ignore traditional codes of deference, and protest the paying of tithes to

¹ Edward Burrough, *The Case of the People (called Quakers once more) stated and published to the world with the accusations charged upon them and their answers* (London: 1660), Title page.

² Barry Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution* (London: Temple Smith, 1985), 11.

³ Barry Reay, *The Quakers*, 10, 11.

⁴ Richard T. Vann, *The Social Development of English Quakerism 1655-1755* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 9.

⁵ Richard T. Vann, *The Social Development of English Quakerism*, 92, 93.

the state church. Civil disobedience led to much persecution of the Quaker sect, including imprisonments, whippings, and fines.⁶ Similarly, in England's colonies, Quakers posed a problem. A law was enacted that mandated the death penalty for any Quakers returning to Boston after having been banished. Four Quakers were hanged when they returned to Boston to test the law.⁷ The persecution of Quakers encouraged many tract-writers to appeal for toleration as they viewed it. One of the most prolific tract-writers was Edward Burrough.

This thesis will analyse some of the 900 folio pages written by the Quaker layman, missionary and preacher, Edward Burrough. Edward Burrough pleaded with those in authority, namely Oliver and Richard Cromwell and Charles II, for liberty of conscience for those who obeyed the Light of Christ. Quakers believed the Light of Christ enlightened everyone and that this Light informed their consciences. This thesis will assert that Edward Burrough's theological argument was the basis of all his other arguments for toleration. Believing that the Light of Christ was holy, and something that dwelled equally within all people, Burrough argued that toleration was a basic right.⁸ Pragmatically, too, he suggested toleration was beneficial to the nation socially, politically and economically. Toleration would bring peace and prosperity to England. He also asserted that there should be separation of spiritual and secular matters. Burrough maintained that Quakers should be tolerated even though they worshipped differently

⁶ Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England* (London: Yale University Press, 1973), 207.

⁷ Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England*, 217, 218.

⁸ Edward Burrough, *Good Counsel and Advice Rejected by Disobedient Men (Works)*, 563.

from others and that everyone should be able to worship the way they were led, providing they did not harm anyone.⁹

Analyzing Burrough's writings and consulting recent scholarship that documents the many and varied facets of toleration will help clarify Burrough's idea of peace and the grounds he used to support his argument. The central theme of this thesis is the idea of toleration and Edward Burrough's attempt to persuade England's leaders that Quakers deserved liberty of conscience. Some of these leaders were themselves sympathetic to toleration of a sort. As will be seen, Burrough's definition of liberty of conscience differed from the Cromwells' and from Charles II's.

Edward Burrough was born of respected parents in 1634 in the village of Kendal, Westmoreland. He was brought up in the formal Church of England tradition. He was fond of reading and memorizing Scripture, but sought a more intense religious experience. He visited several places of worship, and the Presbyterian denomination satisfied him briefly. At the age of seventeen he was in a spiritual quandary concerning his salvation when George Fox journeyed to Kendal. Fox convinced Burrough that the Light of Christ could save him from his sins.¹⁰ Burrough was barely nineteen years old when he began his preaching ministry. He had a gift for discerning the mood and attitude of his audience.¹¹ By 1654 "Burrough was imprisoned for writing a letter" of reproof to another Christian who was living in wickedness.¹² The nature and intensity of the wickedness were not recorded by Burrough's biographer, William Evans. While living

⁹ Edward Burrough, *The Memorable Works of a son of thunder and consolation namely that true prophet and faithful servant of God and sufferer for the testimony of Jesus, Edward Burroughs, who dyed a prisoner for the word of God in the city of London, the fourteenth of the twelfth moneth, 1662* (London: 1672), 436.

¹⁰ William Evans, *Edward Burrough: A Memoir of a Faithful Servant of Christ and Minister of the Gospel, who died in Newgate, 14th, 12 mo., 1662* (London: Charles Gilpin, 1851), 1, 2, 6.

¹¹ William Evans, *Ibid.*, 20.

¹² William Evans, *Ibid.*, 20, 21.

and working as a Quaker missionary in London, Burrough had his pamphlets printed and distributed not only for the benefit of the Society of Friends but also for the public.

Quaker leaders attended meetings of seekers along with Members of Parliament and ministers.¹³ Even at this young age, Burrough was a political activist.

Braithwaite records that Burrough's friend, Francis Howgill, stated that Burrough "was a young man of no great learning, but he had an indomitable courage and a natural eloquence which reached the understandings and consciences of those with whom he conversed."¹⁴ Hugh Barbour quoted early Quaker meeting minutes, which stated that Burrough was "a thundering young preacher and the best tract-writer among early Friends."¹⁵ Burrough vowed to "bear witness against all formality in religion and false hirelings and chief priests."¹⁶ Evans described Burrough as a "spiritual wrestler," "a breaker of stony hearts," a "son of thunder" and a "consoler of the contrite spirit."¹⁷ Evans records Francis Howgill's testimony concerning Edward Burrough: Burrough was driven to preach, he was faithful, valiant, and "elegant in speech and had the tongue of a learned orator," was effective in ministry and died as a martyr.¹⁸ Edward Burrough and Francis Howgill worked together for about nine years in Quaker ministry. Burrough's writings epitomize the passion, enthusiasm, urgency and concern that he had for his brethren as he tried to relieve them of persecution.

¹³ William Evans, *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁴ William Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* Second Edition (London: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 286.

¹⁵ Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England* (London: Yale University Press, 1973), 46.

¹⁶ William Evans, *Memoir*, 7.

¹⁷ William Evans, *Memoir*, 45.

¹⁸ William Evans, *Memoir*, 394-401. James and John, two of Jesus' disciples, were called Sons of Thunder.

Burrough began preaching in 1655, just two months after his convincement to Quakerism.¹⁹ He outlined the Quaker doctrine of the Light which was given to everyone and which Quakers “found sufficient to reprove us of every evil deed, word and thought.”²⁰ They believed that it was by this Light that they could discern good from evil and also ascertain whether messages were from God or from the Devil. They also believed that this Light would lead them to Christ who was their salvation.²¹ Basking in this Light, Quakers believed that they had no need of a teacher, priest or bishop because “the Lord was their teacher by His Light in their consciences.”²² This belief in the Light of Christ was the basis of Burrough’s request for liberty of conscience when writing to heads of government from the 1650s until his death in 1663 while imprisoned for his religious beliefs.

Evans recorded that several pamphlets were printed that expressed views of Quakerism as “ridiculous, heretical, and dangerous.”²³ In reply to these pamphlets, Burrough outlined the Quaker doctrine, stating that Quakers believed Scriptures were true “in their place” and that the Scriptures “are a true declaration of God, of Christ, but they are not the Light.” “Christ is the Light.” Burrough claimed the Scriptures were guided by the Spirit of Christ.²⁴ In response to those who argued that Quakers denied Christ, Burrough testified that Quakers believed in the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. They

¹⁹ Richard T. Vann, *The Social Development of English Quakerism*, 39, 40, 45. Convincement in the Quaker tradition was the first step towards conversion. Although one was convinced of the truth, one needed a change of heart and soul which showed a change in behaviour.

²⁰ William Evans, *Memoir*, 10.

²¹ Salvation is the Christian belief that Jesus died for the sins of those who acknowledge Him as their Saviour, ensuring their entrance into Heaven and Eternal Life. William Evans, *Memoir*, 10.

²² William Evans, *Memoir*, 11.

²³ William Evans, *Memoir*, 65.

²⁴ William Evans, *Memoir*, 65, 66.

maintained that Jesus was the way to salvation and that there was no other way.²⁵ Barbour stated that the central theme of early Quakerism was the “radical inward experience.”²⁶ Early Quakerism also exemplified an intense zeal which is often a common reaction following new religious experiences. Apocalyptic writing was popular in the seventeenth century and some believed that England was the elect nation chosen by God to defeat the anti-Christ. Quakers often wrote of the “Lamb’s War,” which was the millennial event when Jesus would return to rule His Kingdom on earth for a thousand years.²⁷ Burrough referred to England as the elect nation in some of his writings and also maintained that the reformation which began had not been completed. He was determined to continue advocating toleration of Quakers in order to hasten the completion of the reformation.

Early Quakerism was organized in the midst of the Puritan tradition. Richard Vann writes that “Quakers were thoroughly within the Puritan tradition in their early consciousness of their own unworthiness.”²⁸ Vann states that because of this trait, some Quakers, as well as Puritans, experienced lengthy spiritual struggles.²⁹ Puritanism is a generic term which refers to those extreme Protestants who desired further reformation of the English church. Quakers and Puritans shared some common beliefs such as the dislike of popery, viewing the Pope as anti-Christ; they both appreciated godly laymen and

²⁵ Edward Burrough, *The True Faith of the Gospel of Peace Contended for, in the Spirit of Meekness; and the Mystery of Salvation (Christ within the Hope of Glory) Vindicated in the Spirit of Love, Against the secret opposition of John Bunyan a professed Minister in Bedfordshire. Or, an Answer to his Book, called, Some Gospel Truths opened etc. Wherein also he hath mixed many Lyes and Slanders, and hath secretly gainsayed the Way of Truth, and Doctrine of Salvation, under the account of Error and Heresie, as the Generation of chief Priests ever did. Or, A Return of Truth in simplicity, in the denial of his false Accusation in his dark Vail of false Reproaches taken off, and the Innocency of the Upright appearing. With some Queries given forth for him to answer, that Truth may further appear and Deceit may be ashamed, where ever it is found (Works)*, 138.

²⁶ Hugh Barbour, *Quakers*, 2.

²⁷ Hugh Barbour, *Quakers*, 1. And Revelation 20: 1-10.

²⁸ Richard T. Vann, *The Social Development of Early Quakerism*, 27,

²⁹ Richard T. Vann, *Ibid.*, 27, 28.

rejected the formality of the orthodox church.³⁰ Both Puritans and Quakers believed that England was the elect nation that was chosen by God to abolish anti-Christ.³¹

To focus only on the similarities between Quakers and Puritans misses crucial elements of difference, however. Crucially, Quakers differed from those Puritans who believed in predestination-- that only the elect would be saved.³² Quakers believed that salvation was available to all through the Light of Christ. Barbour claimed that “Puritans dominated morality, politics and church life for the entire century before Quakerism.”³³ Puritans encouraged everyone to read and study the Bible; they preferred that sermons should expound on Scripture and that *educated* clergy should preach the gospel throughout the land.³⁴ Quakers objected to learned clergy and advised preaching as led by the Spirit.

Quakers objected to the formalism of the established church. J. C. Davis clarified the idea of anti-formalism in his article concerning formality in religious and political life. J. C. Davis claimed that “both sides in the Civil War divide claimed to be against formality.”³⁵ Davis quoted John Stalham, who wrote in 1647 that the struggle was “against Popery, Prelacy, Superstition, Schisme, Heresie, Profaneness and Formality.”³⁶ According to Davis, contemporaries believed that preoccupation with formality distracted one from the substance of true religion. This in turn could divert attention from God and

³⁰ Barry Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 52, 53.

³¹ Barry Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate*, 52.

³² Michael A. Mullett, *Radical Religious Movements in Early Modern Europe* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1980), XXII. “Predestination is God’s eternal decree according to which some people are fore-ordained to salvation or damnation.”

³³ Hugh Barbour, *Quakers*, 2-8.

³⁴ Barry Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate*, 52.

³⁵ J. C. Davis, “Against Formality One Aspect of the English Revolution” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 6th Series, Vol 3 (1993), 267.

³⁶ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 267.

thus be idolatrous.³⁷ Quakers objected to the formality of written prayers, educated clergy, and enforced tithes.³⁸

In the 1630s Puritan merchants obtained a charter from Charles I to administer a trading post in Massachusetts. At that time Puritans from England led a migration of thousands to America. Between 1656 and 1660, 43 Quakers left England for the American colonies to convince the inhabitants of the New England colonies of the Quaker way of life.³⁹ The clash between the Puritans of Massachusetts and the Quaker missionaries led to the hangings of four Quakers and is the topic of Chapter 4 of this thesis. Burrough's attempt to save the lives of other Quakers in Boston was successful in that he received an audience with Charles II who issued a mandamus, thus preventing the continuance of capital punishment of Quakers.⁴⁰

Even though the Quakers had some similarity with Puritans, they were accused by some contemporaries of having ties to another radical sect known as Ranters who were described by their contemporaries as libertines. Ranters were mortalists, believing that the soul died with the body but revived at the final resurrection. Ranters denied Scripture, denied the historical Jesus, were sceptical of Jesus' Second Coming, rejected baptism and communion and excused sexual licence.⁴¹ They considered themselves free from obeying the law and as such were known as antinomians.⁴² They believed they

³⁷ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 267, 276, 277.

³⁸ The tithes are one-tenth of one's produce or income which was given to support the clergy of the state church.

³⁹ Hugh Barbour, *Quakers*, 60.

⁴⁰ William Braithwaite, *Beginnings*, 405.

⁴¹ Christopher Hill, *A Turbulent, Seditious and Factious People John Bunyan and his Church 1628-1688* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 80, 81.

⁴² Michael A. Mullett, *Radical Religious Movements*, XVII. "Antinomianism is the belief that the true Christian, internally prompted, will do what is right, regardless of external law."

were indwelt with the Spirit so had already been saved.⁴³ Ranters and Quakers both “emphasized the direct guidance or inspiration of the Spirit” and their group emotionalism “was associated with the power of God.”⁴⁴ Just as Quakers offended their neighbours and those in authority by refusal of hat honour, Ranters, as well, did not remove their hats during prayer.⁴⁵

Edward Burrough assured readers that Quakers did not have similar beliefs to the Ranters, even though John Bunyan equated the two in his debate with Burrough. Although Quakers had some similarities with Ranters, there were important differences as pointed out by Hugh Barbour. He states that “[e]arly Quakers were regularly labelled by men of their time as Ranters.”⁴⁶ Ranters were viewed as mystics by their contemporaries whereas Quakers did not view mysticism as the root of their doctrine.⁴⁷ Ranters were known for their immorality and anarchy, whereas Quakers’ “first test of genuineness of a leading (of the Spirit) was moral purity.”⁴⁸

A. G. R. Smith states that the Ranters were active from 1649-1651 but espoused such a radical lifestyle that the Commonwealth directed the Blasphemy Act especially towards them.⁴⁹ In order to curb the activity of the Ranters in particular, the Blasphemy Act was instituted on 9 August 1650. This act “denounced anyone who claimed to be God or equal with God together with the idea that there was no such thing as sin.”⁵⁰ The penalty if convicted under this act was “six months in prison for the first offence and

⁴³ Christopher Hill, *Ibid.*, 80, 81.

⁴⁴ Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers*, 28, 101.

⁴⁵ William Braithwaite, *Quakerism, Second Period*, 242.

⁴⁶ Hugh Barbour, *Ibid.*, 119.

⁴⁷ Hugh Barbour, *Quakers*, 108.

⁴⁸ Hugh Barbour, *Ibid.*, 119.

⁴⁹ A. G. R. Smith, *The Emergence of a Nation State The Commonwealth of England 1529-1660* Second Edition (London: Longman, 1997), 356.

⁵⁰ A. G. R. Smith, *The Emergence of a Nation State*, 356.

banishment for the second offence and death” for anyone who returned after banishment.⁵¹ The Quaker belief in the indwelling Christ led some to suppose that they claimed an equality with God, much as the Ranters were said to do, and risked leaving them open to charges under the Blasphemy Act. As such, Edward Burrough was adamant in his debate with John Bunyan that Quakers were not similar to Ranters.

John Bunyan’s writings were published and responded to by opposing tract writers. Burrough’s reaction to John Bunyan’s published books, which refuted Quaker doctrines, were published by Giles Calvert in 1656 and 1657. Ellis Hookes, Burrough’s printer, described Burrough’s writings as having “honest plainness and harmless simplicity” and claimed that “many prophesies have come to pass upon heads of Government of Oliver Cromwell and others.”⁵² Burrough’s *Works* were reprinted and republished in a special compilation by fellow Quakers ten years after his death and have undergone some editing. His *Memoir*, compiled by William and Thomas Evans of Philadelphia, was printed in London in 1851 which was 189 years after Burrough’s death.⁵³ All of these primary sources are available on line and via Early English Books Online (EEBO).

William Evans’ compilation of Edward Burrough’s *Memoir* includes a biography as well as excerpts from the pamphlets, tracts, epistles and letters which he wrote over the nine year period of his active ministry. Evans also included Burrough’s activities of debating with priests, Jesuits and friars, speaking with Army Chaplains, addressing

⁵¹ A. G. R. Smith, *Ibid.*, 356. And *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum 1642-1660* (C. H. Firth, R. S. Reit, Eds., 1911), 409-412.

⁵² Ellis Hookes, *Memorable works of a son of thunder and consolation namely that true prophet and faithful servant of God and sufferer for the testimony of Jesus, Edward Burroughs who dyed a prisoner for the word of God in the city of London, the fourteenth of the twelfth moneth, 1662* (London, first of second month, 1672), A 2.

⁵³ William Evans, *Edward Burrough, A Memoir of a Faithful Servant*.

Members of Parliament, and travelling to different areas of England and Ireland.

Burrough wrote letters of encouragement to newly-convinced Quakers, advised patience for those who were suffering for a righteous cause, and related the gospel message of salvation. The *Memoir* is primarily concerned with Burrough's writings and activities, but it also reported the travels and work of other Quaker missionaries to England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales.

Turning to the historiography of the Quaker movement and the Quaker quest for toleration and liberty of conscience, two authors in particular will be referenced. William Braithwaite wrote a two volume seminal text of Quaker history. Braithwaite's books, originally published in 1912 with editions updated to 1961, provide a comprehensive background history of Quakerism in the 1650s. In addition to his book on the origins of the First Period of Quakerism, he documented the Second Period of Quaker history into the eighteenth century. Braithwaite devoted three chapters of his second book to the topic of toleration and also included information on William Penn and his involvement in procuring toleration for Quakers.⁵⁴

Hugh Barbour, publishing in 1964, gives a comprehensive documentation of Quaker doctrine, persecutions and laws instituted to regulate Quaker behaviour. He expounds on the Quaker belief in the sacredness of conscience and argues that that was their basic argument for toleration. He claimed that Quaker non-violence was a "factor in bringing England to the policy of toleration,"⁵⁵ even though the Toleration Act was not enacted until 1689, twenty-seven years after Burrough's death. The varied definitions of

⁵⁴ William Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* Second Edition (London: Cambridge University Press, 1961). And *The Second Period of Quakerism* Second Edition (London: Cambridge University Press, 1961).

⁵⁵ Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England*, 212, XI, XII, 223.

toleration as envisioned by the seventeenth-century Puritan, Member of Parliament or person in authority will be noted. Oliver Cromwell's narrow idea of liberty of conscience compared to Charles II's will be discussed in chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis.

Liberty of conscience for Oliver Cromwell meant liberty for conscientious Protestants only. Puritans actually approved of persecution for heresy and idolatry. Persecution was one way of halting the spread of false religions. Cromwell's liberty of conscience extended only to those who did not endanger the public peace.⁵⁶ One of the problems of seeking toleration was the different interpretations of the phrase "liberty of conscience." Paul Seaward records that a Member of Parliament stated in 1662, that the phrase "tenderness of conscience" was "much abused."⁵⁷ Charles II's adviser, the Earl of Clarendon replied to this criticism that the merciful prince could distinguish between the "tenderness of conscience and the pride of conscience."⁵⁸ The Church of England Royalists in Charles II's Parliament were in a position of power and prestige. In order to maintain this position, some Members of Parliament were adamantly opposed to more toleration for dissenters, Presbyterians and Catholics.⁵⁹

Consulting the historiography of modern historians on the topic of persecution and toleration, seven authors will be referenced. Perez Zagorin writes in *How the Idea of Religious Toleration came to the West* (2003) that some authors would draw a distinction between 'toleration' and 'religious liberty.' Toleration meant forbearance—"the permission given by the dominant religion for other religions to exist, even though other

⁵⁶ John Coffey, "Puritanism and Liberty Revisited The Case for Toleration in the English Revolution" *The Historical Journal* 41, 4 (Dec. 1998), 961.

⁵⁷ Paul Seaward, *The Cavalier Parliament and the Reconstruction of the Old Regime 1661-1667* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 178.

⁵⁸ Paul Seaward, *The Cavalier Parliament*, 178, 179.

⁵⁹ Paul Seaward, *The Cavalier Parliament*, 194.

religions may be seen as inferior, mistaken or harmful.”⁶⁰ Religious freedom meant equal freedom for everyone with no discrimination between them and that no one had the power to cancel this liberty. Zagorin expressed little interest in drawing such distinctions, however, and claimed toleration was a basic right of society.⁶¹ Many today view toleration as a basic right as Burrough claimed in the seventeenth century, although for very different reasons.

In trying to explain why Western Europe gradually began to tolerate religious pluralism, Zagorin notes that two explanations commonly given by other historians were that it was because of “religious indifference” and “political expediency.”⁶² These conditions, alongside trends between the 1600-1700s, of “scepticism, libertinism, latitudinarianism, rationalism . . . Biblical criticism and deism,” were all factors which led to the Enlightenment, according to Zagorin.⁶³

Rather than focus on indifference or expediency, however, Zagorin counselled that historians examine the intellectual roots of “a genuine belief in and commitment to toleration as something inherently good.” He insisted that “in a certain sense, ideas rule the world, and the attitudes and actions of human beings are greatly affected by reasons and justifications.”⁶⁴ Zagorin relied on the intellectual writings of John Locke and the French philosopher Pierre Bayle to come to his conclusions. He also acknowledges “the mixture of scriptural, theological, ecclesiastical, epistemological, ethical, political and pragmatic arguments,” which contributed to the religious freedom of Western Europe.

⁶⁰ Perez Zagorin, *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 5.

⁶¹ Perez Zagorin, *Ibid.*, 7.

⁶² Perez Zagorin, *Ibid.*, 8.

⁶³ Perez Zagorin, *Ibid.*, 8, 9.

⁶⁴ Perez Zagorin, *Ibid.*, 12.

He maintains that without these arguments religious freedom could not have been achieved.⁶⁵

Zagorin quotes John Rawls, the distinguished American philosopher, who wrote that our understanding of the “roots of the liberal society” began in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with the long controversy over religious toleration.⁶⁶ This statement gives credence to the importance of the writing of Edward Burrough in his long battle to achieve religious toleration for Quakers and others. Burrough also used pragmatic, political, epistemological and ethical arguments, as well as his theological argument to emphasize his position.

Zagorin points out that the Dutch Republic was the only country where there was genuine religious toleration during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.⁶⁷ Some historians have debated this statement. J. R. Collins asserts that Zagorin’s book was “a popularizing history” and accuses Zagorin of referring to outmoded twentieth-century historians to come to his conclusions.⁶⁸

John Coffey’s book *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England 1558-1689* (2000) covers part of the period of the current thesis concerning Edward Burrough’s attempt to secure toleration for Quakers and others. Coffey reviews the history of toleration from before 1558 and concludes with the Act of Toleration in 1689. He claims his book is a Whig history of toleration which reviews the dramatic progress from persecution to toleration and from religious uniformity to pluralism.⁶⁹ Coffey asserts that

⁶⁵ Perez Zagorin, *Ibid.*, 13.

⁶⁶ Perez Zagorin, *Ibid.*, 310.

⁶⁷ Perez Zagorin, *Ibid.*, 240.

⁶⁸ J. R. Collins, “Redeeming the Enlightenment: New Histories of Religious Toleration” in *Journal of Modern History* 81, No. 3, Sept., (2009), 611.

⁶⁹ John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England 1558-1689* (London: Longman, 2000), 5.

the seventeenth century was a major turning point involving two major religious changes: the interruption of the monopoly of the national church, causing the increase in the number of sects and denominations, and the discontinuance of coercion to provide uniformity. The tradition of coercion was promoted by Augustine to encourage individuals to adhere to the Catholic faith during the medieval period.⁷⁰

Coffey argues that persecution was still occurring in Tudor and Stuart England, but it began to change in the 1640s. Haller and Woodhouse, writing in the twentieth century, agreed that the impetus for the change was largely due to “[p]uritanism which laid the groundwork for pluralism” and attacked “coercion for religious purposes.”⁷¹ According to Coffey tolerance connotes the idea “of patience, forbearance and longsuffering.”⁷² Whereas *tolerance* is an attitude, *toleration* is defined as a policy of the state towards religious dissent.⁷³ His book is concerned with what the state enacted to manage dissent. The second context of toleration is ecclesiastical toleration, which is the degree of diversity tolerated within a particular church.⁷⁴ Different groups favoured civil or ecclesiastical toleration, or one or both concepts. Coffey tries to weave together the ideological, legal or political and social dimensions of toleration.⁷⁵

Coffey traces the various periods of persecution from the so-called tranquil fourth century when Constantine was converted to Christianity to the seventeenth-century post-Reformation period.⁷⁶ He cites 1022 as a turning point when the persecution of heretics

⁷⁰ John Coffey, *Ibid.*, 6.

⁷¹ John Coffey, *Ibid.*, 7.

⁷² John Coffey, *Ibid.*, 11.

⁷³ John Coffey, *Ibid.*, 11.

⁷⁴ John Coffey, *Ibid.*, 10, 12.

⁷⁵ John Coffey, *Ibid.*, 14, 15.

⁷⁶ John Coffey, *Ibid.*, 22.

worsened and lasted for two hundred years.⁷⁷ He reviews pivotal events including the inquisition in Spain; the expulsion of all Jews from Spain (1492); how the Protestant Reformation intensified persecution of Catholics in certain countries; how John Calvin was intolerant of heresy, idolatry and immorality and how Martin Luther opposed persecution in the early 1530s.⁷⁸

The Augustinian concept of persecution was finally broken in 1644 with the influence of the writings of four authors in particular: John Milton, William Walwyn, Henry Robinson and Roger Williams,⁷⁹ according to Coffey. Groups agitating for toleration and against the theory of persecution were the radical Puritans, dissenters and the moderate Anglicans such as John Locke, and others such as Anthony Ashley Cooper, and Jeremy Taylor.⁸⁰

John Coffey outlines the political, theological, philosophical and economic arguments for toleration during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Coffey's history discusses persecution and toleration during the same period in which Edward Burrough was actively advocating toleration during the Cromwellian Protectorate and until 1663.

Charitable Hatred (2006)⁸¹ is Alexandra Walsham's comparative analysis of attitudes and treatments of individuals and communities during 1500-1700. By the eighteenth century, religious pluralism was firmly entrenched and religious movements which began as radical sects became known as denominations.⁸² Walsham argues that during the period 1500-1700 persecution and toleration were not at opposite ends of the

⁷⁷ John Coffey, *Ibid.*, 23.

⁷⁸ John Coffey, *Ibid.*, 23, 24.

⁷⁹ John Coffey, *Ibid.*, 47.

⁸⁰ John Coffey, *Ibid.*, 50

⁸¹ Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred Tolerance and Intolerance in England, 1500-1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006)

⁸² Alexandra Walsham, *Ibid.*, 30.

same spectrum but were “closely interwoven.”⁸³ Pluralism replaced uniformity in religion after the Reformation.

During this Early Modern period, the authorities viewed persecution as a necessity to prevent and curb sedition and subversion. Believing that it was necessary to prevent dissenters from contaminating the orthodox populace, persecution was necessary in order to ensure uniformity and political stability. Although Walsham acknowledges the intellectual arguments of persecution and toleration, she prefers to concentrate on the social, economic and pragmatic aspects of the question. Walsham notes the negative connotation of toleration in the early modern world and challenges Zagorin’s approach which treated toleration as something that was always and inherently a positive, liberal virtue.

Walsham uses the thematic method in her book rather than the chronological approach.⁸⁴ For example, during the medieval period people were persecuted on the grounds of heresy or sedition. By the seventeenth century, persecution was aimed at those with different preferences in church worship or doctrine. Walsham states that those who advocated toleration in the seventeenth century were “confined to a tiny minority.”⁸⁵ She cites John Locke and John Milton among this small minority but points out they refused toleration for Catholics and atheists.⁸⁶ She neglected to mention that Edward Burrough was one of the “tiny minority” advocating toleration during the Interregnum and early Restoration periods.

⁸³ Alexandra Walsham, *Ibid.*, 300.

⁸⁴ Alexandra Walsham, *Ibid.*, 20

⁸⁵ Alexandra Walsham, *Ibid.*, 235.

⁸⁶ Alexandra Walsham, *Ibid.*, 235.

Walsham downplays the Act of Toleration of 1689, referring to it as a “step backward.”⁸⁷ Her argument about toleration is that it is misleading “to trace a linear path from persecution to toleration” but that they interacted with each other in a “recurrent and unending cycle.”⁸⁸ She stated that it was at the local level where the ideas and practical approaches of tolerance and intolerance were intertwined.⁸⁹ J. R. Collins refers to Walsham’s book as the definitive work on the subject of persecution and toleration.⁹⁰

John Marshall’s tome, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture* (2006), analyses arguments for universal toleration in the late seventeenth century.⁹¹ He cited works by a group of early Enlightenment writers in the 1680s and 1690s. Marshall includes John Locke’s arguments for toleration for specific groups of people and his reasons for not tolerating other groups.

John Marshall’s book is divided into three parts. The third part outlines arguments for religious toleration “by a small group of writers in the 1680s and 1690s who tried to combat religious intolerance.”⁹² In this part of his book Marshall shows how these thinkers attempted to define early Enlightenment culture by advocating religious toleration; by the development of the “republic of letters” and by improving manners and civility.⁹³ These early Enlightenment authors used “political, economic, epistemological, religious, historical and scientific arguments” for promoting religious toleration.⁹⁴ Marshall examines each argument in turn, as well as John Locke’s argument. Some

⁸⁷ Alexandra Walsham, *Ibid.*, 267.

⁸⁸ Alexandra Walsham, *Ibid.*, 287.

⁸⁹ Alexandra Walsham, *Ibid.*, 315.

⁹⁰ J. R. Collins, “Redeeming the Enlightenment: New Histories of Religious Toleration” (*Journal of Modern History* 81 No 3, Sept. (2009), 615.

⁹¹ John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

⁹² John Marshall, *Ibid.*, 9.

⁹³ John Marshall, *Ibid.*, 9.

⁹⁴ John Marshall, *Ibid.*, 10.

historians have acknowledged the seventeenth century as the crucial period in fostering toleration. However, Marshall asserts that it was the Enlightenment authors who provided the greatest impetus to the idea of toleration. This present thesis will maintain that the writings of Edward Burrough and others were instrumental in promoting the debate about persecution and toleration in the seventeenth century.

According to J. R. Collins, Marshall's book is a definitive work on the toleration debates in England, France and the Netherlands concentrating on the political context.⁹⁵ John Marshall's book goes well beyond the period researched for this present thesis but it shows the pervasive debate about tolerance and intolerance during the seventeenth century not only in England but also in parts of Europe.

J. C. Davis examines the language of religion and liberty in his essay "Religion and the Struggle for Freedom in the English Revolution" (1992). Religious liberty is compared to civil liberty and the law in this essay. Davis' object in this essay is to find the common focus between religious and civil liberty and to ascertain whether language and assumptions were shared between the two ideas. Citing several different authors with various views, both from the seventeenth century and more recently published works, Davis points out that the authors see liberty as the end of the battle along with the struggle against popery and arbitrary government. Exactly what they meant by "liberty" differed, however. Some believed that the primary end of liberty was in fact religious and moral *discipline*.⁹⁶ As there is no liberty without laws, civil liberty entails the "freedom to live under known rules and not to be subject to the arbitrary will of other

⁹⁵ J. R. Collins, "Redeeming the Enlightenment," 625.

⁹⁶ J. C. Davis, "Religion and the Struggle for Freedom in the English Revolution" *The Historical Journal* 35 3 (1992), 513.

men or authorities.”⁹⁷ This formulation was a common belief in the early seventeenth century, well before John Locke, according to Davis.⁹⁸

Davis cautions that the language and substance of civil and religious liberty do not fully coincide; there is only “marginal commonality.”⁹⁹ Citing theologians Peter Sterry, John Goodwin and other authors such as William Prynne and William Walwyn, liberty of conscience had nothing to do with managing ourselves but was a claim to submit to “God rather than any other authority.”¹⁰⁰ According to John Wildman and John Goodwin, who argued at the Whitehall debates, it was impossible to delegate the power of the management of one’s conscience to a magistrate because one did not have the power to delegate. The control of the conscience belonged to God and this task could not be delegated to another.¹⁰¹ “There was no will to be guided by but the will of God.”¹⁰²

The irony of toleration is that one may be given the liberty to usurp God’s will “or prevent submission to it.”¹⁰³ In this regard toleration was not a positive concept but an irreligious one. William Walwyn, the Leveller, stated that liberty of conscience meant “liberty to serve and worship God according to one’s conscience.”¹⁰⁴ Edward Burrough would agree with this definition of liberty of conscience.

Davis reports that there was a sense, in the seventeenth century, in which any form of worldly authority was seen as a usurpation of God’s freedom and will. Davis also mentions the “provisional acceptance of plurality” in religion and the idea that

⁹⁷ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 513.

⁹⁸ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 513.

⁹⁹ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 514.

¹⁰⁰ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 515, 516.

¹⁰¹ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 515.

¹⁰² J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 517. (Davis cites R. T. Kendell, writing in 1979).

¹⁰³ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 517.

¹⁰⁴ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 519.

formalism was akin to hypocrisy.¹⁰⁵ He conjectures that perhaps formality/hypocrisy rather than authority/liberty may be the key debate in this period. He claims that the Puritan Revolution was a struggle for “freedom from worldliness.”¹⁰⁶ Puritans desired freedom to respond to God’s will, “to submit to His rule and labour in His service.”¹⁰⁷ The struggle was not seen as a “conflict between freedom and authority in the abstract.”¹⁰⁸

Davis observes that when the agents of Christian freedom (kings, bishops, divines, magistrates and other people in authority) organized for godliness, that they were actually a threat to liberty because they all formalized matters of the spirit into set forms. By putting faith in human forms and formality, they denied liberty to providence and freedom of the Spirit.¹⁰⁹ The religious concept of liberty of conscience as the freedom to submit to God’s will while at the same time obeying civil law without hypocrisy justifies the pairing of shared language and shared assumptions of the phrase, liberty of conscience, according to Davis.¹¹⁰ Davis then concludes that the shared language pairs formality with hypocrisy and authority with liberty.

Blair Worden argued that in seventeenth-century England toleration was widely believed to be *not* “an edifying principle but an impious policy.”¹¹¹ Concerning liberty of conscience, Worden stated that a number of seventeenth-century writers argued that conscience could not be forced and could not be tested objectively. He maintained that

¹⁰⁵ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 528.

¹⁰⁶ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 528.

¹⁰⁷ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 528.

¹⁰⁸ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 528, 529.

¹⁰⁹ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 530.

¹¹⁰ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 530.

¹¹¹ Blair Worden, “Toleration and the Cromwellian Protectorate” in *Persecution and Toleration* W. J. Sheils, ed., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 200.

Cromwell did not intend toleration for everyone but required church unity.¹¹² Worden asserted that Cromwell “neither wanted toleration nor provided it,” not in the seventeenth-century sense or the modern sense.¹¹³

Blair Worden’s essays have been published in a book, *God’s Instruments*, in 2012. Included are some he had published in 1984 but had updated and revised. He added others written in 2008, 2009 and 2011. In his essay of 2008 on “Civil and religious liberty” Worden notes that J. C. Davis (1992) has challenged the ideas of two twentieth-century historians, William Haller and A. S. P. Woodhouse, that liberty was first conceived as religious but that it became secular.¹¹⁴ Worden tries to satisfy both authors’ ideas by writing that there were five stages in the debate about civil and religious liberty during the Puritan Revolution.

Blair Worden traces the evolution of the debate about civil and religious liberty beginning in 1641-42 through stages until the phrase was fully incorporated in the parliamentary language by 1658. The phrase actually “altered the vocabulary of political debate,” according to Worden.¹¹⁵ Some argued that the “good old cause” which was the motto during the Puritan Revolution, was liberty of conscience and liberties of the nation (implying civil liberty).¹¹⁶ The idea of pairing liberty of conscience with civil liberty is also apparent in Edward Burrough’s writings when he argues for the economic and peaceful advantages for allowing liberty of conscience.

¹¹² Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 210.

¹¹³ Blair Worden, “Toleration and the Cromwellian Protectorate” *Ibid.*, 208, 210, 227.

¹¹⁴ Blair Worden, *God’s Instruments Political Conduct in the England of Oliver Cromwell* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 325, 326.

¹¹⁵ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 342.

¹¹⁶ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 341, 343.

Gary De Krey's article, "Rethinking the Restoration" (1995) analyses the debate over the meaning of the phrase liberty of conscience and its importance during 1667-1672. The new Conventicle Act and the Declaration of Indulgence in 1672 renewed the debate about conscience, bringing it to public attention through the print medium and verbal discussions about the religious settlement.¹¹⁷ The religious settlement was a return to the Church of England as the established church following the Puritan Revolution. To clarify what is meant by conscience, De Krey analyses the writings of five dissenting authors Dr. John Owen, Sir Charles Wolseley, the Presbyterian John Humfrey, the philosopher Slingsby Bethel and the Quaker William Penn.

Dissenting authors Philip Nye, John Owen and John Humfrey argued for natural law and acknowledged the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Crown. Realizing that the magistrate was responsible to God in the external sphere of public morality and religious order and the individual was responsible to God in the internal sphere of spiritual belief and worship, these two spheres were independent. These authors state that obedience to God cannot simply be equated with obedience to the religious claims of the prince.¹¹⁸ John Humfrey argued that individually, each person "needs to determine whether his own behaviour and belief conforms to the will of God."¹¹⁹ "To make this judgement," he needs to employ his conscience.¹²⁰ According to Owen and Humfrey, as de Krey observes, conscience is "the God-given faculty" that enables humans to determine whether their behaviour is conforming to God's will.¹²¹ This is similar to the Quaker

¹¹⁷ Gary De Krey, "Rethinking the Restoration: Dissenting Cases for Conscience, 1667-1672" in *The Historical Journal* 38 1 (1995), 58

¹¹⁸ Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 58.

¹¹⁹ Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 58.

¹²⁰ Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 58.

¹²¹ Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 58.

belief in the holiness of the conscience as revealed to them through the Light of Jesus and as argued by Edward Burrough.

John Owen points out that the “individual conscience acts as God’s vicegerent” in the internal sphere.¹²² Extrapolating from this idea, Owen wrote that obeying one’s conscience was a natural right and as such should not be coerced by a magistrate.¹²³ He explained that it was the duty of the Christian’s conscience to determine whether the ecclesiastical commands of the magistrate in the external sphere coincided with one’s interpretation of God’s will in the internal sphere.¹²⁴ However, when there is a discrepancy between what the individual affirms as the will of God compared to the command of the magistrate, the Christian can passively be disobedient to the sovereign, according to Owen and Humfrey.¹²⁵

Humfrey and Bethel both argued that religious persecution was detrimental to trade and security of the state.¹²⁶ Sir Charles Wolseley agreed with this theory, maintaining that a balance was needed among divided religious interests. He believed that religious liberty was the best way to prevent religious factions.¹²⁷ Regarding the controversy about separation of church and state, the authors had differing opinions. Whereas Penn relied on the ancient constitution of the Magna Carta to validate his belief that liberty of conscience was the birthright of English freedom,¹²⁸ Sir Charles Wolseley argued for separation of church and state on the grounds that Christianity was reasonable

¹²² Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 58.

¹²³ Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 59.

¹²⁴ Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 59.

¹²⁵ Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 60.

¹²⁶ Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 63.

¹²⁷ Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 62.

¹²⁸ Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 64.

for a Christian nation, compared to atheism, deism and Epicurianism. He also asserted that liberty of conscience was essential “for the advancement of truth.”¹²⁹

Millennial ideology, which was prevalent during the early Restoration, was promoted by the Fifth Monarchists movement.¹³⁰ Their ideology called for righteous violence on behalf of a reformation of church and state. They envisioned a new state, a kingdom of God which was ruled by God and “embraced the tenets of resistance,” according to De Krey.¹³¹ The term “righteous violence” is paradoxical and would not equate with Christian values. However, when one is entitled to liberty of conscience, their interpretation of conscience would be used as the verification for their actions, whether violent or peaceful.

De Krey concludes that in rethinking the early years of the Restoration there are three different historiographical areas which must be considered. First, the dissenting authors formulated a “coherent definition of conscience” and defended it in the political and religious realms.¹³² Secondly, De Krey notes that there is continuity in the theme of the “thought and behaviour of the political rivals of the English Revolution” with those of the Restoration.¹³³ Thirdly, De Krey notes the importance of this five year period in the early Restoration because of the debate over conscience and also because of the political situation. De Krey asserts that the constitutional and religious debate about liberty of conscience was “the first nation-wide crisis of the Restoration.”¹³⁴

¹²⁹ Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 65.

¹³⁰ Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 67.

¹³¹ Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 71.

¹³² Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 82.

¹³³ Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 82.

¹³⁴ Gary De Krey, *Ibid.*, 83.

A brief review of all of these authors indicates that some of them, particularly Zagorin and Coffey, cite the year 1644 as a turning point in the history of persecution and toleration in England. Walsham, Zagorin and Coffey all record the Augustinian tradition of employing coercion during the medieval period which continued until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when advocacy for toleration intensified. Some authors indicate that the Act of Toleration of 1689 was a watershed in the progress of acquiring toleration for at least some members of society, although Walsham states that it has been too highly praised. John Marshall indicates that the Enlightenment fostered the idea of toleration. However, other authors as noted above have cited the early modern period authors as catalysts for promoting toleration.

This thesis will examine the writings of Edward Burrough who was one of the early passionate authors who appealed for toleration from 1653 until he died in 1663. Having personally experienced persecution, Burrough's writings are an important addition to the evolution of toleration from the seventeenth century. Burrough was explicit in his definition of liberty of conscience in a testimonial of 25 September 1661. He maintained that liberty of conscience meant that the Spirit of God cleansed one's conscience of sin and guided that conscience in matters of "faith, doctrine and worship."¹³⁵ The Spirit of God led to all truth and faith. However, he asserted that the conscience could be "misled, misinformed and misguided" and could lead people to do things of which the Lord did not approve.¹³⁶ He referred to this as a false spirit when the conscience was not guided by the Spirit of Truth. The Spirit of God was revealed to man by the Scriptures, according to Burrough, and this could not be taught by man. This

¹³⁵ Edward Burrough, *A Testimony Concerning True Liberty of Conscience (Works)*, 833.

¹³⁶ Edward Burrough, *Ibid.*, 832.

belief led Quakers to reject the teaching and formality of the Church of England.

Burrough concluded that those who persecuted the exercise of conscience also persecuted Jesus. Burrough admitted that some people were persecuted who were not led by the Spirit of God. In that instance, city magistrates would be judged by the Lord.¹³⁷

The definition of liberty of conscience and the extent of toleration which law-givers should extend to the public were discussed by many during the seventeenth century. This thesis is an effort to clarify some of the confusion surrounding these two concepts which were causing so much debate and discussion. Much has been written on the subject of toleration, but very few have concentrated on Edward Burrough's copious writings even though there are a large number that are extant. His writings were taken seriously by his contemporaries and his boldness in writing to the king and parliament show his diligence and concern for his fellow Quakers and their plight as the persecuted. In this regard, this project will be a worthwhile addition to the scholarship of that era.

This thesis argues that there is a difference between liberty of conscience and toleration. The quest for liberty of conscience was a theological argument. Writers such as Burrough argued that conscience is informed by God and the interpretation of God's will is a subjective exercise for each person. The belief that conscience is a sacred right of believers elevated conscience to a higher sphere than other just rights. The argument for toleration included social, political and economic reasons and toleration can be legislated in state acts and ordinances. This thesis will show that the history of toleration evolved over a period of years which were replete with instances of severe persecutions followed by periods of relative toleration of religious dissent. A brief review of each chapter of this thesis follows.

¹³⁷ Edward Burrough, *A Discovery of Divine Mysteries (Works)*, 830, 833, 832, 834.

Chapter 2, entitled “The Battle of Words,” analyzes the theological debate between Edward Burrough and John Bunyan in regard to the toleration of differences between Christians. The debate was recorded in four books written and published in 1656 and 1657. The main theme was how one was to arrive at knowledge of the Truth of the Gospel. Quakers believed the Light of Christ and His Spirit guided them to Truth while Bunyan, the Puritan, relied on Scripture to acknowledge Truth. Although many facets of their doctrine were common to both, a notable difference was that Puritans believed in predestination (that only the elect are saved), while Quakers believed that everyone could be saved by the redeeming power of Jesus. Chapter Two sets out the theological argument for liberty of conscience which this thesis argues was the foundation for all of Burrough’s other arguments.

Chapter 3, “The Battle for Laws,” analyzes the letters that Burrough wrote to Oliver and Richard Cromwell during the Protectorate years, 1653-1659. Many Quakers were persecuted during that period and Burrough pleaded for liberty of conscience for Quakers. Believing that liberty of conscience meant the freedom to submit to God’s will, Quakers believed they were doing the right thing by disobeying state laws. Burrough wrote of God’s providentialism and His judgement which would be meted out to rulers who abused their subjects. Cromwell’s limited approval of liberty of conscience did not extend to Quakers, nor to Catholics, Episcopalians and the licentious.

Chapter 4, “The Battle to save Lives,” documents the letters which Burrough wrote to King Charles II and Parliament to try to stop the capital punishment of Quakers in New England. Burrough outlined several themes in his letters to Charles II. Citing economic loss to the nation and arguing that wars would ensue if liberty of conscience

was not provided, Burrough wrote that liberty of conscience was necessary for the peace of the nation. He advocated separation of religious and secular matters, reasoning that government provided peace and order for the country but should not have control over the religion of its subjects. Burrough reminded Charles II of the sovereignty of God and that God should not be provoked. He assured the king of the Quakers' loyalty and maintained that they would obey laws, even though they viewed them as unjust. This was a complete contradiction of Burrough's former insistence that Quakers do not obey man's laws. Burrough advised Charles II not to insist on conformity. Following a personal audience with Charles II, Burrough received a mandamus from the king which was delivered to the General Court in Boston, and the capital punishment of Quakers ended. Burrough urged Charles II not to usurp God's position as king of the Quakers, because Quakers believed that Jesus was their only king. This chapter also includes Burrough's list of fifteen advantages for granting liberty of conscience to Quakers and others.

The general outline of this thesis gives an indication of the vastness of the topic of toleration and also the differing definitions of liberty of conscience by various authors both in the seventeenth century and in the modern period. Toleration is not a licence to follow one's erratic will. There are demands of discipline, order, obedience and also cultural mores to be considered. Andrew Murphy stated that "between 1630 and 1690 the philosophical, pragmatic, theological and political grounds for toleration were debated with a vigor as never before."¹³⁸ Each of these facets of toleration will be evident in this thesis as it pertains to the writings of Edward Burrough.

¹³⁸ Andrew Murphy, *Conscience and Community in Early Modern England and America* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 6.

CHAPTER 2

The Battle of Words

The theological debate between Edward Burrough and John Bunyan

“The words I own but thy voice I deny.”¹³⁹
Burrough to Bunyan, 1657.

This chapter analyzes the theological debate between John Bunyan, the Bedford Puritan preacher and Edward Burrough, the Quaker missionary. Edward Burrough’s quote “The words I own but thy voice I deny” indicated that although he agreed with John Bunyan’s quotations from Scripture, he disagreed with Bunyan’s interpretation. Burrough repeated this phrase four times in his defences of Quaker doctrine written in reply to Bunyan’s two books.¹⁴⁰

The mid seventeenth century was a time of intense debate and inquiry among many in society concerning religion and the state church. Several lay people received “openings” or revelations about religion which they shared with groups of other seekers. The rapid growth of Quakerism led to local debates with Puritans mostly from the Independent and Baptist persuasions.¹⁴¹ John Bunyan, a member of the Bedford Independent Church, debated with the Quakers by writing a book criticising Quaker doctrine. The sudden popularity of Quakerism and its extremely unorthodox customs caused Quakers to be feared and persecuted. They urged authorities to tolerate their

¹³⁹ Edward Burrough, *Truth (the Strongest of all) Witnessed forth in the Spirit of Truth, against all Deceit: And Pleading in Righteousnesse its owne cause, to the understanding of the Simple, against a very great number of lyes, slanders, perverting of the Scriptures, contradictions and false damnable doctrines, held forth by the Independants and In particular by one John Bunion (one of Gog’s Army) in two severall Bookes put forth by him, against the despised scattered People called Quakers and is a REPLY unto his Second Book called A Vindication etc.* (London: 1657), 6. (The words I own but the voice I deny).

¹⁴⁰ Edward Burrough, *The True Faith of the Gospel of Peace*, 141.

¹⁴¹ John Bunyan, *The Miscellaneous Works of John Bunyan*, Volume 1, T. L. Underwood, Ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), XVIII.

activities and to give them freedom to exercise their religion as they were led by the Spirit who was their guide. This Spirit was identified as the Light within. This Light within was the most distinctive feature of early Quakerism.¹⁴²

The debate between Bunyan and Burrough is significant in this thesis because it outlines the Quaker reason for insisting on the liberty of obeying the sacred Light of Christ which informed their consciences. This is the foundational issue in this thesis. Requesting liberty to follow one's conscience was the crucial factor in negotiating tolerance for Quakers during the Cromwellian Republic and the restoration of Charles II. The Burrough and Bunyan debate documents the theological parameters of Quakerism compared to John Bunyan's Puritan dogma. Quakers also rejected the formality of the state church and thus objected to paying its tithes which were used for support.¹⁴³ Quaker beliefs created a conflict between the Quaker sect and state authority. Another aspect of this debate was how one came to knowledge of the Truth of the gospel. Each debater came to knowledge of the Truth by a different source. Quakers focused single-mindedly on the Light while other sects emphasized different aspects of doctrine.

This chapter will analyze Bunyan and Burrough's different interpretations of the Light of Christ, the Spirit of Christ, the nature of conscience, the doctrine of salvation and how one arrived at the knowledge of truth. The Quaker interpretation of these beliefs affirmed that as "Children of Light," they should not be persecuted for having different beliefs.

The Quaker plea for religious toleration of their doctrine and form of worship was challenged by Bunyan's dissenting Protestant dogma. Quakers believed that the Light of

¹⁴² John Bunyan, *The Miscellaneous Works*, XIX.

¹⁴³ The tithe is one-tenth of one's income or produce which was given to the church for support.

Christ was synonymous with the Spirit of Christ and as such sanctified them.¹⁴⁴ The Light or Spirit of Christ directed the person to discern the difference between right and wrong. Quakers, therefore, asserted they only needed God's laws to lead them to righteousness. They objected to being persecuted for obeying God's laws and not obeying state laws, some of which they considered unjust. Interpreting Quaker doctrine, as outlined in this debate, will show the relevance and importance of the Quaker belief system and their reason for insisting on toleration and liberty of conscience. As well, this debate will clarify Burrough's reasons for requesting toleration and liberty of conscience when he corresponds with authorities in government, which are the topics of Chapters 3 and 4.

John Bunyan (1628-1688) was born in Elstow, near Bedford, and lived during one of the most turbulent eras of English history. He was only 14 years old when the First English Civil War erupted in 1642 and at 16 years old joined the Parliamentary Army in which he served for nearly three years.¹⁴⁵ The removal of the episcopacy, regicide of 1649, and the emergence of numerous religious sects during the 1650s all had an impact on Bunyan's life and thinking.

A tinker by trade, Bunyan travelled about the country, eventually settling in Bedfordshire where he joined the Bedford Independent congregation in 1653. In 1655 he moved with his wife and two daughters to Bedford and began preaching. He was mentored by Bedford pastors, John Gifford and later John Burton.¹⁴⁶ Although fully "aware of his weakness and unworthiness" of salvation, he believed in the Calvinist

¹⁴⁴ Sanctification in the Christian context is the act of becoming holy by following Jesus.

¹⁴⁵ Christopher Hill, *A Turbulent, Seditious and Factious People John Bunyan and his Church 1628-1688* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 4, 8.

¹⁴⁶ John Bunyan, *The Miscellaneous Works*, XV.

doctrine of predestination and considered himself one of the elect.¹⁴⁷ He had studied the Bible but continued to suffer doubts of his own worthiness. His sermons, in which he emphasized his personal experiences, drew hundreds of people.¹⁴⁸ Bunyan related his spiritual journey in a work entitled *Grace Abounding*, which was published in 1666.¹⁴⁹ His pastor, John Burton, wrote that although Bunyan was not well educated, God had given him “the tongue of the learned” and that he had been anointed to preach the gospel. Bunyan also claimed to be qualified for writing these tracts because he had experienced “temptations of the Devil.”¹⁵⁰ Bunyan became a great preacher, controversialist and writer, most famously as the author of *Pilgrim’s Progress* which was published in 1678 and 1684.¹⁵¹

The Quaker movement was brought to Bedford by William Dewsbury in 1654. It was common practice to hold spirited public debates on Biblical topics. Quakers disputed with priests and ministers, which led to “tract warfare” and “anti-Quaker tracts averaged about 20 per year.” Nearly all of these tracts received replies from Quakers.¹⁵² Quakers published numerous pamphlets which helped to increase the number of followers. Barry Reay reports that over 500 titles by Quakers were published from 1653-57 and another 500 were published between 1658 and 1660.¹⁵³ Edward Burrough debated with John

¹⁴⁷ Predestination is the Calvinist doctrine that only certain people have been saved from sin. These few are known as the elect.

¹⁴⁸ John Bunyan, *The Miscellaneous Works*, XVI.

¹⁴⁹ Christopher Hill, *A Turbulent, Seditious and factious People*, 63.

¹⁵⁰ John Bunyan, *Some Gospel-Truths Opened according to the Scriptures*. A 11 and B 2.

¹⁵¹ Christopher Hill, *Ibid.*, 68, 73.

¹⁵² John Bunyan, *Miscellaneous Works*, XXI, and Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England* (London: Yale University Press, 1964), 53, 136-137.

¹⁵³ Barry Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution* (London: Temple Smith, 1985), 11.

Bunyan at Pavenham in 1656 in person and also in 1656 and 1657 in the four books which are the subject of this chapter.¹⁵⁴

The four books which will be referenced in this chapter begin with John Bunyan's first book, *Some Gospel-Truths Opened*, which was published in 1656.¹⁵⁵ Bunyan's reason for writing his first tract, aimed at the Quakers, was to challenge some of the claims of the Quakers by quoting Scripture which he thought upheld his belief in Christian soteriology, the Christian doctrine of salvation. The young Edward Burrough defended the Quaker position by publishing *The True Faith of the Gospel of Peace Contended for* in 1656.¹⁵⁶ To counter Burrough's tract, Bunyan in turn published *A Vindication of the Book called, Some Gospel-Truths Opened* in 1657.¹⁵⁷ Burrough responded by publishing *Truth (the Strongest of all) Witnessed Forth* in 1657.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ John Bunyan, *Miscellaneous Works*, XXIV.

¹⁵⁵ John Bunyan, *Some Gospel-Truths Opened according to the scriptures, Or The Divine and Humane Nature of Christ Jesus, his coming into the World; his Righteousness, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, Intercession and second coming to Judgment, plainly demonstrated and proved. And also Answers to severall Questions, with profitable directions to stand fast in the Doctrine of Jesus the son of Mary, against those blustering storms of the Devils temptations, which do at this day, like so many Scorpions, break loose from the bottomless pit, to bite and torment those that have not tasted the vertue of Jesus by the revelation of the Spirit of God* (London: 1656).

¹⁵⁶ Edward Burrough, *The True Faith of the Gospel of Peace Contended for, in the Spirit of Meekness; and Mystery of Salvation (Christ within the Hope of Glory) Vindicated in the Spirit of Love, Against the secret opposition of John Bunyan a professed Minister in Bedfordshire. Or, an Answer to his Book, called, Some Gospel- Truths Opened, etc. Wherein also he hath mixed many Lyes and slanders, and hath secretly gainsayed the Way of Truth, and Doctrine of Salvation, under the account of Error and Heresie, as the Generation of chief Priests ever did. Or, A Return in Simplicity, in the denial of his false Accusations as his dark vail of false Reproaches taken off, and the Innocency of the Upright appearing. With some Queries given forth for him to answer, that Truth may further appear and Deceit may be ashamed, wherever it is found. (Memorable works of a Son of Thunder, 1672.)*

¹⁵⁷ John Bunyan, *A Vindication of the Book called, Some Gospel-Truths Opened; According to the Scriptures, and the Opposition made against it by Edward Borrrough, a professed Quaker, (but proved an enemy to the Truth) examined and confuted by the Word of God. And Also, The things that were then laid down, and declared to the world by me, are a second-time born witness to according to truth: with the Answer of Edward Borrrough to the Quaeries then laid down in my Book reprovred. And also, a plain Answer to his Quaeries, given in simplicitie of soul; and is now also presented to the world, or who else may read, or hear them; to the end (if God will that Truth may be discovered thereby* (London: 1657.)

¹⁵⁸ John Bunyan, *Miscellaneous Works.*, XXVII.

Following a brief summary of each book, several contentious issues will be analyzed. John Bunyan's first book, *Some Gospel-Truths Opened*, documented the Christian theology of the advent of Jesus. Bunyan showed by Scripture text that Jesus was promised by God from the time the world began and that He was expected for generations. Bunyan pointed out that Jesus was, of necessity, both human and divine; that He could not be merely a Spirit. Jesus was from the tribe of Judah as prophesied and was the Saviour who would justify sinners by His righteousness. Bunyan reviewed the Gospel accounts of Jesus' death, His bodily resurrection and ascension. He included the prophecy of Jesus' Second Coming and the Day of Judgement. Noting Quaker doctrine to the contrary, Bunyan argued whether Christ was spiritually or bodily within believers and whether the Light of Christ convicted one of sin.¹⁵⁹ Bunyan's first book was a well organized Biblical exegesis addressing some of the major theological doctrines which he disputed with the Quakers.

Burrough's first tract was *The True Faith of the Gospel of Peace*¹⁶⁰ in which he rejected some of John Bunyan's criticism of Quakerism. Bunyan refuted some of Burrough's replies to his first book in *A Vindication of the book called, Some Gospel-Truths Opened*, but also noticed that they agreed on some subjects. Bunyan continued to explain Christian doctrine as Puritans understood it, especially the role of the law and the work of the Holy Spirit. Quakers asserted that Jesus was bodily within - a doctrine which was denied by Bunyan. In Burrough's reply in *Truth the Strongest*, Burrough claimed that the Light and the Spirit of Christ were in union and that everyone had the Spirit.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ John Bunyan, *Ibid.*, XXXI, XXXII.

¹⁶⁰ Edward Burrough, *The True Faith of the Gospel of Peace Contended for (Memorable Works of a son of Thunder)*, (London: 1672).

¹⁶¹ Edward Burrough, *Truth the Strongest of all*, 43.

W. Braithwaite explained the importance of the Light in Quaker doctrine. Quakers believed they were “Children of Light” and insisted that there could be no “guidance of the spirit apart from walking in the light.”¹⁶² George Fox preached that the Light of Christ was the guide to eternal life.¹⁶³ The Quaker belief that the Light of Christ was available to all was their most important belief and explicitly informed all of their doctrine, behaviour and practice of inclusiveness. As such, the doctrine of the Light of Christ, which was intertwined with the Spirit of Christ and conscience, will be investigated first.

The doctrine of light was interpreted differently by Burrough and Bunyan. Two Scripture texts which were quoted often in these two books were John 1: 4 -“In him was the life and that life was the Light of men,” and John 1: 9 - “The true Light that gives Light to every man was coming to the world.” This last quote was spoken by John the Baptist about Jesus. Bunyan wrote that although everyone was born with the Light, it did not necessarily follow that this conscience, or Light, was the Spirit of Christ as Quakers believed.¹⁶⁴ Bunyan quoted John 16: 8, 9 to show that the Spirit of Christ convinced one of sin: Jesus said “when he comes he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness.” Jesus was speaking of the Holy Spirit in this verse. However, this Holy Spirit would not come until Jesus had gone back to His father in heaven (John 16: 7).¹⁶⁵ According to this Scripture everyone would be convicted of sin by the Spirit of Christ but

¹⁶² William Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism Second Edition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 22.

¹⁶³ William Braithwaite, *Ibid.*, 22, 44.

¹⁶⁴ John Bunyan, *Some Gospel-Truths Opened*, 70.

¹⁶⁵ John Bunyan, *Ibid.*, 78. John 16: 7, But I tell you the truth: It is for your own good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

the Holy Spirit would only dwell in the converted person. There are several nuances to the idea of the spirit which need clarification.

To clarify the word spirit in the context of this chapter, first the spirit is the breath of life, or the soul of a person, the animating part of one's being. Secondly, Quakers equated this spirit with the Light of Christ with which everyone is born. A third reference to spirit is that Christians believe that Scripture was guided by Spirit-led writers who produced the Holy Bible. According to Quakers, Scripture is "other men's words" even though the words were guided by the Spirit of God. A fourth definition of spirit is the Holy Spirit who is the third person of the Trinity, which includes the Father (God) and Son (Jesus). The Holy Spirit, known as the Comforter, was given to believers after Jesus left this earth. Thomas Luxon explained that the custom of Quakers holding silent meetings originated in the Quaker belief that the Gospel could not be learned by "other men's words" such as preaching, but that Truth must be revealed by the Spirit already within. Quakers believed that the tongue could speak one thing but there could be another meaning in one's heart. The words may be true but the spirit was false.¹⁶⁶ The Quaker suspicion of language was evident in Burrough's quote at the beginning of this chapter.

Burrough stated that the Light revealed the truth of God. Burrough maintained that the Light of Christ would lead to the Kingdom of Peace and Righteousness. Quoting Jesus' words "I am the Light of the world; he that follows me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the Light of Life" (John 8:12), Burrough stated that the Light of Christ convinced one of sin and that everyone needed to have Jesus within their heart, not just a belief in the historical Jesus. Burrough claimed that without the revelation of Jesus

¹⁶⁶ Thomas Luxon, *Literal Figures Puritan Allegory and the Reformation Crisis in Representation* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 134, 132.

within a person, there was no salvation.¹⁶⁷ Burrough stated that what he knows to be true, he knows by the Spirit of the Lord.¹⁶⁸ These statements show that Quakers trusted implicitly in the Light of Christ and that this belief informed their entire doctrine.

Contrary to what Quakers believed, Bunyan stated that although Jesus gave the Light to everyone who came into the world that it did not necessarily follow that this conscience (or Light) was the Spirit of Christ, or the work of grace which was active in one's heart. The debate concerned whether the Light of Christ (given to everyone at birth) was the same as the Spirit of Christ or the Grace of God. Burrough claimed they were the same—they were “one in nature” and led the same way.¹⁶⁹ Further, Burrough asked, how did the Spirit of Christ give Light or the Grace of God lead, if not in the conscience?¹⁷⁰ Bunyan disputed Burrough's claim that the Light of Christ and the Spirit of Christ worked through the conscience.

The next discussion was whether non-Christians such as heathens, Turks, Jews and atheists became convicted of sin if they did not have the Spirit of Christ in them. Quakers believed that the Spirit of Christ inhabited everyone at birth and that salvation was possible for everyone, even though they had never heard of Jesus. Burrough stated that although everyone had the Spirit of Christ or Light of Christ at birth, not everyone listened to it or was led by it. Burrough claimed one should listen to the Light within as preached.¹⁷¹ Burrough's answer reflected the Quaker emphasis on the importance of the inward focus. However, Bunyan's belief was that *not* everyone had the Spirit because

¹⁶⁷ Edward Burrough, *The True Faith of the Gospel*, 138, 140.

¹⁶⁸ Edward Burrough, *The True Faith of the Gospel*, 141.

¹⁶⁹ Edward Burrough, *The True Faith of the Gospel*, 144.

¹⁷⁰ Edward Burrough, *The True Faith of the Gospel*, 144.

¹⁷¹ Edward Burrough, *The True Faith of the Gospel*, 144.

some were led by natural instincts.¹⁷² Bunyan wrote that everyone had a conscience but not everyone had the Spirit of Christ. Bunyan also asserted that just because Jesus as God lighted everyone, it did not follow that conscience was the Spirit of Christ as Quakers believed.¹⁷³

Bunyan pointed out that one needed salvation whether one was convicted of sin by the conscience or the Spirit of Christ.¹⁷⁴ Bunyan stated that when people were convinced by the Spirit of Christ that there was no other way to be free from the guilt of one's conscience, then people would believe in Jesus and never seek another Gospel.¹⁷⁵ The other Gospel to which Bunyan was alluding was the so-called false doctrines held by sectaries such as the Quakers, Ranters and others. After defending his theology by Scripture showing that people needed a Saviour, Bunyan asserted that Jesus was the promised Saviour. He reviewed the Christian doctrine of the birth, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus.¹⁷⁶ Bunyan claimed that Jesus' ascension in his physical body was "made light of by those men called Quakers and other infidels."¹⁷⁷ Bunyan's emphasis on the mediator Jesus and his bodily resurrection and ascension were contrasted here by the Quaker emphasis on the ethereal Light and Spirit. Burrough disputed these attacks on Quakers' beliefs when he wrote his tract.

Contrary to what Bunyan preached, Quakers maintained that everyone could be saved. Bunyan's theology reflected the Calvinist teaching that only some (the elect) would be saved from damnation. The Quaker assertion that all could be saved fostered

¹⁷² Jude 19. Those are the men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the spirit. John Bunyan, *Some Gospel-Truths Opened*, 70.

¹⁷³ John Bunyan, *Some Gospel-Truths Opened*, 70.

¹⁷⁴ Salvation is the Christian belief that those who believe that Jesus died for their sins will be given eternal life by God's grace. Grace is defined as unmerited favour.

¹⁷⁵ John Bunyan, *Some Gospel-Truths Opened*, 86, 88.

¹⁷⁶ John Bunyan, *Some Gospel-Truths Opened*, 89-113.

¹⁷⁷ John Bunyan, *Ibid.*, 113.

their universalist spirit and encouraged them to demonstrate that everyone was equal, thus not requiring a public display of honour such as doffing the hat, bowing or addressing prominent people by their titles. This belief caused much prosecution specifically for contempt of court. Quaker manners, style of dress and Biblical vocabulary set them apart as a peculiar people.

Another contentious issue with the Quakers was the doctrine of the Second Coming of Jesus.¹⁷⁸ Bunyan expounded on Christian dogma as he maintained that Jesus was coming again to judge “the quick and the dead.”¹⁷⁹ Bunyan listed nine signs which needed to be fulfilled before the Second Coming of Christ—all of which implied that Christ could not be bodily present in themselves as the Quakers maintained. The prophesy that many false Christs and false prophets would appear prompted Bunyan to accuse the Quakers of being among their number, twisting their claims or misunderstanding their talk of being “one in Christ” as blasphemous claims *to be* Christ: “those men called Quakers . . .do some of them call themselves Christ and show great signs (as their quaking).”¹⁸⁰

Another sign of Christ’s Second Coming was that there would be many scoffers. Bunyan claimed that that prophesy was “fulfilled in the men called Quakers” because they made a mockery of Christ’s Second Coming by claiming it had already happened in themselves.¹⁸¹ Bunyan continued to denigrate the Quakers when he wrote that he had heard the Quakers blaspheme the doctrine of the Second Coming. Bunyan listed all the

¹⁷⁸ The Second Coming of Jesus was prophesied in the book of Revelation and was also recorded in the Gospels. Jesus is to come back to earth and set up an earthly kingdom and reign for a thousand years, according to Scripture. (Revelation 20: 4, 5 and Matthew 24).

¹⁷⁹ John Bunyan, *Some Gospel-Truths Opened*, 136.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 143.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 144.

incidents which would take place at the Second Coming, especially to those, such as the Ranters, Quakers and drunkards, who mock the event. He predicted there would be “weeping and gnashing of teeth,” as the Scripture promised.¹⁸² At the end of the book Bunyan labelled the Quakers “painted hypocrites” because of their boasting and bragging of their holiness.¹⁸³ However, their belief that Jesus was bodily within them, that the Light made them holy and informed them of right from wrong provided them with the impetus to request toleration.

While Burrough talked of Christ already having come again in each believer who recognized the presence of His Light within themselves, he also wrote that Jesus must appear again in sight of all. As such, he said, Quakers did believe Jesus was coming again.¹⁸⁴ Burrough stated that Quakers believed Christ would come again to judge the world including the heathens according to their deeds as written in Joel 3.¹⁸⁵ Both Quakers and Bunyan agreed that Jesus was coming to judge the living and the dead by their deeds. Bunyan argued that Jesus was to come physically, not just spiritually, as Quakers believed.¹⁸⁶ The Quaker understanding of the Second Coming of Jesus was radically different from Bunyan’s belief that Jesus would come physically through the clouds.

One of the main reasons for dissension was the difference in the interpretation of Biblical texts between the two men concerning the person of Christ. Quakers asserted that Jesus inhabited their bodies and also believed in Him historically. Burrough claimed that Quakers do understand Jesus to be the foundation of their faith as the God-man. He was

¹⁸² John Bunyan, *Some Gospel Truths Opened*, 179.

¹⁸³ John Bunyan, *Some Gospel Truths Opened*, 213.

¹⁸⁴ Edward Burrough, *Truth the Strongest*, 15.

¹⁸⁵ Edward Burrough, *Ibid.*, 15. Joel 3 is entitled “The Nations Judged.”

¹⁸⁶ John Bunyan, *Some Gospel-Truths Opened*, 149.

both divine and human, and that Jesus was the one who was designated by God for the salvation of the world and that they believed that it was by the Light of Jesus that they were saved.¹⁸⁷ This statement essentially agreed with Bunyan's Christian soteriology, except that Bunyan would assert that it was because of the blood of Jesus that sinners were saved.¹⁸⁸ Burrough reiterated that Quakers believed that Jesus was fully and completely the way to salvation.¹⁸⁹ When Bunyan wrote that Jesus was expected, Burrough stated "I own the words and I deny thy voice."¹⁹⁰ Burrough implied that Bunyan was saying one thing but had opposite thoughts in his heart.

Burrough quoted Bunyan as saying that the Light was conscience that some (Quakers) falsely call Christ. Burrough denied this statement but did not give any explanation or Scripture verse or reason for denying it. Both agreed that sins against the Mosaic law (the Ten Commandments and additions to it) were sins against God. Burrough agreed with Bunyan that the Light of Christ enlightened everyone to salvation or condemnation. Burrough and Bunyan both cited John 16 as the Scripture which outlined the work of the Holy Spirit. ("But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.") Both debaters also agreed that neglecting the Light of Christ would lead to damnation. Burrough claimed that the Law needed to be obeyed.¹⁹¹

Quakers accepted the Scriptures and stated that the Light of Jesus was the same as the Spirit of Christ. Burrough maintained that the Light of Christ and the Spirit of Christ were in union.¹⁹² Quakers believed they were anointed and did not acquire the

¹⁸⁷ Edward Burrough, *The True Faith*, 138.

¹⁸⁸ This belief reflects the Hebrew doctrine that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, Hebrews 9: 22. John Bunyan, *Some Gospel Truths Opened*, 62.

¹⁸⁹ Edward Burrough, *The True Faith*, 140.

¹⁹⁰ Edward Burrough, *The True Faith*, 140, 141.

¹⁹¹ Edward Burrough, *The True Faith*, 143, 144.

¹⁹² Edward Burrough, *Truth the Strongest*, 12-21, 24.

knowledge of truth from hired preachers. Further, he stated that the apostles did not need anyone to teach them—they had the truth.¹⁹³ Burrough’s explanation of how Quakers arrived at the truth was by revelation through the Light of Christ in their heart. This internalization of the Spirit led Quakers to believe that they did not need the formalism of the state church; they were being led by the Spirit as revealed to them in their consciences.

In conclusion, this epistemological debate was not settled by the end of the publication of the four books. The essence of “The Battle of Words” was how to know the Truth about the nature of the Light of Christ, the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit, salvation, and conscience. Knowing this Truth led Quakers to extrapolate that they were worthy of being tolerated and that they should be assured of liberty of conscience. Although both men believed in the existence of God, and both were of the Christian persuasion, there were elemental differences in doctrine and dogma. Questions arose about how one could be sure of what one believed and what was the source of their knowledge. If this knowledge was manifest in the conscience, how could one know whether the conscience was influenced by the Spirit of Christ (which one would presume would influence for good), or whether one’s conscience was influenced by the Devil, disguised as the Angel of Light, (which would inspire evil.)

Bunyan asserted that the Light of Christ was not the conscience as Quakers believed. The Light of Christ convicted one of sins committed against the Mosaic law. Bunyan also wrote that everyone had a conscience but not everyone had the Spirit of Christ. He ridiculed the Quakers who asserted that the Light was the same as

¹⁹³ Edward Burrough, *Truth the Strongest*, 8, 9.

conscience.¹⁹⁴ When one was convicted of sin, either by the Law or by the conscience or by the Spirit of Christ, then Bunyan claimed, one realized a need for a Saviour or a way to be redeemed from one's sinful and lost condition. Bunyan believed that the Saviour was Jesus who came in the flesh, died bodily, was raised bodily and was to return bodily.¹⁹⁵

Quakers, on the other hand, emphasized the inward manifestation of the Light of Christ which they equated with the law and the Spirit of Christ in union which would convict of sin and give directions for deciphering good and evil. They depended on the inward revelation of the Spirit of Jesus who was their spiritual guide to knowing right from wrong. The holiness which Quakers ascribed to the conscience and was equated with the Spirit of Christ gave them the incentive to request liberty of conscience from authorities in matters of religion.¹⁹⁶ Both Burrough and Bunyan believed that Jesus was the Saviour who redeemed believers from their sins although Bunyan maintained that only the elect would be saved. They were also assured of the Second Coming of Christ although there were important differences of opinion about the actual event.

The debate degenerated into "semantic quibbles," according to Thomas Luxon.¹⁹⁷ Bunyan realized that it was not advantageous to continue arguing about details and that one should concentrate on foundational Christian doctrine.¹⁹⁸ Both authors wrote extensively on this subject of knowing the Truth of the Gospel; Bunyan believed his proof was in the Scriptures while Burrough believed his verification was in the revelation of the Light of Christ in everyone who believed.

¹⁹⁴ John Bunyan, *Some Gospel-Truths Opened*, 67.

¹⁹⁵ John Bunyan, *Some Gospel-Truths Opened*, 136-162.

¹⁹⁶ Edward Burrough, *The True Faith*, 144, 145.

¹⁹⁷ Thomas Luxon, *Literal Figures*, 131.

¹⁹⁸ Christopher Hill, *A Turbulent, Seditious and Factious People*, 104

Lawrence Kuenning, who has studied this debate extensively, stated that “Bunyan’s logic is completely wasted on Burrough,” and that Burrough’s theology is not understood by Bunyan.¹⁹⁹ Kuenning observed that the Quaker belief of Christ within was not just as Spirit but also as flesh and blood. Both asserted that salvation was a supernatural event and began with conviction of sin. Both were assured of the fact that believers would go to heaven, according to Kuenning.²⁰⁰

This chapter has shown that the Quaker belief in the Light of Christ gave them the assurance that they were led by the Spirit of Christ as revealed to them in their conscience. This belief also gave them the determination to withstand the persecution which they endured. They objected to being policed and persecuted because they believed they could discern the will of God, which taught them the difference between right and wrong. God revealed His will to them in their consciences.

Quaker belief in the universality of salvation--that everyone could be saved by believing in the resurrection of Jesus with the guidance of the Light--enabled them to embrace everyone as an equal. This also informed their decision not to accept the traditional hierarchy of social orders which were prevalent in seventeenth-century England at that time. This Quaker dogma of inclusiveness led them to believe that toleration should be extended to all groups, and also undoubtedly led eventually to their peace principle which developed by 1663. Thinking that the formality in church services was a sign of insincerity, they chose not to participate in the state church. The direct revelation of God given to them through the Light of Christ was their assurance that they were doing the right thing. Their opposition to educated preachers discouraged them

¹⁹⁹ Lawrence Kuenning, *Burrough and Bunyan Debate*, Ph D. dissertation, Hyperlink. (quakerheritage press.org). Chapters 6 and 7. Accessed January 27, 2013.

²⁰⁰ Laurence Kuenning, *Ibid. Conclusions*.

from paying tithes to the state church. This practice led to much persecution and encouraged them to press for liberty of conscience. This Light pointed to the spiritual Kingdom of God. Burrough stated that although everyone was given the Light, not everyone received it or followed it.²⁰¹

Burrough and Bunyan's beliefs were diverse on some issues although some of their foundational doctrines were similar. Also significant were the educational backgrounds of each man, their religious experiences and their manner of writing and presenting arguments. Bunyan's work was profusely illustrated by scriptural texts while Burrough used few scriptural references. Bunyan wrote in an organized way, stating what he was going to prove, citing Scripture to prove his point, mainly in a numbered format, then summarizing what he had just written. Burrough, on the other hand, wrote in a less organized way in this debate, and adamantly denied Bunyan's charges against the Quakers, without providing more information on Quaker doctrine except to deny what Bunyan had just written. He did note that they agreed on certain tenets of doctrine.

Burrough claimed that following the Light was more reliable than following Scripture.²⁰² Burrough insisted that Quakers followed "all Christ's ordinances, preaching, praying, baptism, communion and singing."²⁰³ Quakers, however, did not practice baptism, observe communion or sing in their meetings, which were held in silence waiting for a revelation from God.

Bunyan challenged Quaker doctrines on several points. He asserted that not everyone had the Spirit of Christ because Scripture stated that some were sensual and did

²⁰¹ Edward Burrough, *The True Faith*, 144.

²⁰² Edward Burrough, *Truth the Strongest*, 37.

²⁰³ Thomas H. Luxon, *Literal Figures*, 133. (Quoted from Burrough's *Truth Defended*, 10, 11).

not have the Spirit.²⁰⁴ Bunyan also insisted that it was through the law that one became conscious of sin, such as stealing, lying and murdering. He admitted that although one's sins were revealed in the conscience, it did not show the person a Saviour, who was Jesus.²⁰⁵ Bunyan believed that only certain people would be saved, contrary to Quaker inclusiveness. Bunyan's belief that Jesus is to return bodily disagreed with the Quaker doctrine that Jesus was bodily inside them but was coming again. Quakers were opposed to hiring preachers and Burrough accused Bunyan of preaching for hire. However, Bunyan was known as a "mechanic" preacher because he worked at his tinsmith trade during the week. He denied being paid to preach.²⁰⁶

Burrough claimed that Quakers had the Truth as revealed by the Light of Christ. As such, they insisted they should not be persecuted. He accused Bunyan of persecuting them by slandering and reviling them. He added that Quakers witness that they are of God.²⁰⁷ Burrough sincerely relied on the revelation of the Light of Christ as the guiding factor in Quaker doctrine. Equipped with this belief he was able to withstand some of the abuse which was meted out to him.

The importance and radical nature of Quaker doctrine as outlined in this chapter will be relevant in the next chapter in understanding Quakers' request for liberty of conscience and toleration during the Cromwellian period.

²⁰⁴ John Bunyan, *Vindication*, 8. Jude 19.

²⁰⁵ John Bunyan, *Some Gospel-Truths Opened*, 79, 88, 89.

²⁰⁶ John Bunyan, *Vindication*, 4, 5.

²⁰⁷ Edward Burrough, *Truth the Strongest*, 2, 5, 6, 12.

CHAPTER 3

The Battle for Laws

. . . peace hath her victories
No less renowned than war; new foes arise
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains
Help to save free conscience from the paw
Of hirling wolves, whose gospel is their maw.²⁰⁸
John Milton

This is an excerpt from the poem “To the Lord General Cromwell” by John Milton (1608-1674) which he wrote after Cromwell’s military campaigns. Milton predicted that Cromwell’s next battle would be the attempt to pacify religious radicals, including the Quakers. This chapter will document the battle between Oliver and Richard Cromwell on the one hand, against Edward Burrough’s sharp pen on the other as Burrough fought for liberty of conscience against the powers of the revolutionary government. In this battle, Cromwell had the power as the leader of the Republic while Burrough only had pen and passion as his weapons. Burrough maintained that because Quakers were led by the Light of Christ and obeyed the Spirit of Christ that they were submissive to His leading and did not need to be policed by state laws. This is the basic argument of this chapter. Burrough argued that it was wrong to persecute Quakers because they followed God’s laws alone.

This chapter will begin with a brief description of Oliver Cromwell followed by a critical analysis of Burrough’s fourteen letters addressed to Oliver and Richard Cromwell and the Parliament. These letters showed Burrough’s passion and urgency in his effort to change laws not only to relieve persecution but also to assure freedom of worship in the manner which Quakers preferred. Burrough argued that Cromwell usurped God’s power

²⁰⁸ John Milton, *To the Lord General Cromwell* (Toronto: *The Book of Knowledge*, vol. 11, The Grolier Society Ltd., 1945), 4349. Maw is the Old English word for the stomach (or mouth) of certain animals.

by making state laws which were contrary to God's laws. Burrough's letters were delivered to the Cromwells but were also published as *Good Counsel and Advice Rejected by Disobedient Men* in 1659 for the benefit of the public. Burrough's practice of publishing his letters circulated his ideas to a wider audience. The results of the battle for liberty of conscience as envisioned by Burrough and Cromwell will be enumerated in the conclusion of this chapter.

Before proceeding to an analysis of Burrough's letters, the unsettled political condition of the nation will be reviewed. After the regicide of January 1649, the nation was governed by the Rump Parliament until April 1653, then by the Barebone's Parliament, also known as the Nominated Parliament, from July 1653 until 12 December 1653 when it was dissolved to make way for the First Protectorate Parliament under Oliver Cromwell.²⁰⁹ The Nominated Parliament, which included members representing the entire British Isles, met in July 1653. "Most of its 144 members were chosen by the Council of Officers," which was controlled by the Army.²¹⁰ Oliver Cromwell had distinguished himself during the battles of the English Civil Wars. In December 1653 Oliver Cromwell, as Commander-in-Chief of the forces of the Commonwealth, was appointed head of state with the title Lord Protector.²¹¹

Cromwell reluctantly accepted the honour of being Lord Protector but believed that he was called "by the Lord" to this illustrious position.²¹² Cromwell's belief that he was acting according to God's will affected his decisions during his political career. However, his decisions were often at the mercy of parliament and so could be altered by

²⁰⁹ Barry Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 7.

²¹⁰ Alan G. R. Smith, *The Emergence of a Nation State The Commonwealth of England 1529-1660* Second Edition (London: Longman, 1997), 324.

²¹¹ Alan G. R. Smith, *Ibid.*, 324.

²¹² Alan G. R. Smith, *Ibid.*, 323.

parliamentary vote. J. C. Davis points out that “Cromwell was saturated in the providentialism of his contemporaries.”²¹³ John Morrill reported that Cromwell was driven by a cause he believed in. Cromwell trusted God but was uncompromising and ruthless, not conspiratorial, according to Morrill.²¹⁴

Cromwell dissolved the Rump Parliament in April 1653 with the help of the Army. In December 1653 a group of officers headed by Major-General Lambert drew up the first and only written constitution that Britain has ever had: the Instrument of Government.²¹⁵ This 42 clause document dealt with administrative and constitutional issues of the Commonwealth, including four clauses pertaining to religion. Clause 35 recommended that the Christian religion “as contained in the Scriptures” was to be the “public profession” of the Commonwealth. Recognizing that there were contentious issues in the nation, the document stated that as soon as possible, a more certain solution could be arranged to encourage and maintain industrious teachers of the Christian religion. These knowledgeable teachers would also uncover error and heresy and disprove whatever was contrary to “sound doctrine.” Until these teachers could be secured, the current maintenance of clergy would be continued.²¹⁶ This meant that there would be a continuation of the collection of tithes to support clergy who worked within the national church. The collection of these tithes, as well as the institution of educated clergy, were major grievances for the Quakers.

Clause 37 of the Instrument of Government assured protection to those who believed in God and Jesus Christ but who differed from “the doctrine, worship or

²¹³ J. C. Davis, “Cromwell’s Religion” in *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution*, John Morrill, Ed., (London: Longman, 1990), 186.

²¹⁴ John Morrill, *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution* (London: Longman, 1990), 14.

²¹⁵ A. G. R. Smith, *The Emergence of a Nation State*, 328, 329, 330.

²¹⁶ *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum*, volume 2 (1649-1660) (London: Firth & Reit, 1911), 821.

discipline publicly held forth,” providing they did not abuse this liberty or cause a disturbance of the public peace. This liberty was not extended to Catholics, Episcopalians or licentious Christians.²¹⁷ This part of the clause could have protected Quakers whose form of worship and doctrine differed radically from the state religion. However, Quakers disturbed church services led by hired preachers and also refused deference to superiors. This annoyance was a major source of consternation for the public and for magistrates who dealt with the prosecutions.

The Instrument of Government did not protect Quakers from persecution. Belief in Christ was one of the doctrines which Quakers professed, although the exact meaning of this was debated. Quakers were opposed to Catholicism but the doctrine of the former on other theological matters was not clear to all parliamentarians. Some doubted that Quakers were Christian. J. C. Davis elucidates the idea of liberty of conscience. He writes that liberty of conscience denotes freedom to be submissive to God’s will rather than any other authority.²¹⁸ Quakers believed that liberty of conscience was sacred and should not be interfered with by magistrates. Toleration, on the other hand, implied the forbearance which governments should have when confronted with religious groups whose beliefs were different from those of the orthodox church.

William Evans, Burrough’s biographer, pointed out that many people misunderstood the idea of “liberty of conscience.”²¹⁹ He continued by stating that some Christians maintained that it was their duty to punish those who differed from their own doctrine. Cromwell and a few of his colleagues preferred more liberty of conscience for

²¹⁷ *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, Ibid.*, 822.

²¹⁸ J. C. Davis, “Religion and the Struggle for Freedom in the English Revolution,” in *The Historical Journal* 35, 3 (1992), 515.

²¹⁹ William Evans, *Edward Burrough: A Memoir of a Faithful Servant of Christ and Minister of the Gospel, who died in Newgate, 14th, 12 mo., 1662* (London: 1851), 31.

certain groups but others were opposed to more liberty of conscience for all dissenters.²²⁰

Cromwell was in the difficult situation in which the Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Episcopalians and Independents were not satisfied with his leadership.²²¹ Adamantly opposed to Catholicism, he issued a proclamation abjuring “Popish Supremacy” to which all people of England were to adhere and swear as an oath.²²² This posed a problem for Quakers who declined to swear oaths of any kind.²²³ Refusal to sign this oath led to the suspicion that Quakers were sympathetic to Catholicism. Several Quakers compiled a declaration for Oliver Cromwell on 28 May 1655 stating their beliefs about Popery. Quakers reiterated that although they could not swear oaths, they were opposed to “popery, popish rites and observances.”²²⁴

What was Cromwell’s intention in seeking to provide “liberty of conscience”? The phrase is not used in the Instrument of Government. Bernard Capp wrote that “[o]utside the national church, Cromwell was happy to *tolerate* and protect separatist congregations.” Then Capp stated that “[r]eligious freedom is only complete, of course, when all religious communities enjoy civil equality as well as *liberty of conscience* and freedom of worship.”²²⁵ As Blair Worden notes, the word toleration had a different meaning in the seventeenth century than it does today. Cromwell’s idea of liberty of conscience cannot be equated with modern notions of toleration, or of toleration as an ideology in the seventeenth century according to Worden.²²⁶ Blair Worden wrote that in

²²⁰ William Evans, *Edward Burrough: A Memoir*, 32.

²²¹ William Evans, *A Memoir*, 76,

²²² William Evans, *Ibid.*, 76.

²²³ William Evans, *Ibid.*, 76.

²²⁴ William Evans, *Ibid.*

²²⁵ Bernard Capp, “Cromwell and Religion in a multi-faith Society” in *Cromwell’s Legacy*, Jane Mills Ed., (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 108. (Citing S. R. Gardiner & W. C. Abbott)

²²⁶ Blair Worden, “Toleration and the Cromwellian Protectorate” in *Persecution and Toleration*, W. J. Sheils, Ed. (Great Britain: Basil Blackwell, 1984), 200.

seventeenth-century England toleration was not a virtue.²²⁷ “The Long Parliament consistently used the term pejoratively.” It was believed to be the design of anti-Christ, according to seventeenth-century sources and reported by Worden.²²⁸

Worden reports that some historians used the term liberty of conscience and toleration synonymously.²²⁹ Worden quoted twentieth-century historians who maintained that toleration began because of the “Arminian philosophy of free will and free thought” and was a reaction against Calvinist doctrine.²³⁰ Calvinist doctrine proclaimed that only a select few would be saved. Quakers believed all could be saved. The word toleration does not appear in the Instrument of Government. However, contemporary historians such as Alan Smith, claim that the document reflected Cromwell’s desire “to secure *toleration* for Protestant dissenters outside” the state church.²³¹ The words in the document “shall not be restrained from” and “shall be protected in,” could be interpreted as a begrudging acceptance, or an implied toleration of dissenters who held beliefs contrary to the “public profession” of the nation. There was much controversy in the First Protectorate Parliament concerning the Instrument of Government.

After some dissension in parliament, Cromwell dissolved the First Protectorate Parliament on 22 January 1655.²³² One of Cromwell’s main goals was to appease radical groups to prevent the potential threat to public order. The Quakers were an immediate concern. Their rapid rise in popularity and numbers, their lack of deference and their demands for toleration caused Cromwell considerable anguish. During the 1650s, 2,000

²²⁷ Blair Worden, “Toleration and the Cromwellian Protectorate, *Ibid.*, 200, 227.

²²⁸ Blair Worden, “Toleration and the Cromwellian Protectorate, *Ibid.*, 200.

²²⁹ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 200, 201.

²³⁰ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 202.

²³¹ A. G. R. Smith, *The Emergence of a Nation State*, 432.

²³² Barry Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate*, 47.

Quakers were prosecuted for refusing to pay tithes or for breaching the peace. Local magistrates and ministers instigated and encouraged Quaker persecution.²³³ Edward Burrough was working as a missionary in Ireland when he first wrote Cromwell in 1655.²³⁴ From 1657 Burrough continued his letter-writing campaign to implore Cromwell to ease the persecution of Quakers and to allow liberty of conscience.

Turning to an examination of Burrough's letters to Oliver Cromwell, Burrough warned Cromwell in a letter of May 1657 that danger would befall him if he did not listen to the Lord.²³⁵ He wrote that Quakers did not have liberty of conscience. He reviewed the abuses meted out to the Quakers: some were cast into prison; some were charged "unjust fines," while others faced "illegal proceedings, beatings and abusings and woundings and bruising." People were "under bondage for tythes," many were in prison for not swearing oaths, many were forcibly removed from meetings, and others were whipped and suffered at the hands of gaolers. Some suffered because they would not "bow with Hat or knee."²³⁶ The urgency and concern was evident in Burrough's writing as he pleaded for Cromwell to "[l]et the Lord search thy heart."²³⁷ Burrough and Cromwell did not have the same understanding of the meaning of liberty of conscience.

In a letter dated April 1657, Burrough accused Cromwell of purposely allowing persecution of Quakers when it was in his power to end it. Burrough wrote that Cromwell could stop the persecution with "the stroke of his pen."²³⁸ Continuing his admonishment of Cromwell, Burrough wrote in May 1657 and advised Cromwell to seek God's counsel

²³³ Bernard Capp, "Cromwell and Religion in a multi-faith society" in *Cromwell's Legacy*, 106.

²³⁴ William Evans, *Memoir*, 80, 81.

²³⁵ Although Edward Burrough wrote this letter in 1657, it was not published for the public until 1659.

²³⁶ Edward Burrough, *Good Counsel and Advice Rejected by Disobedient Men and the Days of Oliver Cromwell's visitation passed over and also of Richard Cromwell, his son, late Protector of these Nations. (Works)*, 551, 554, 555.

²³⁷ Edward Burrough, *Good Counsel and Advice Rejected, (Works)*, 555.

²³⁸ Edward Burrough, *(Works)*, 557.

because the Quakers were suffering because of him. He warned Cromwell that if he did not stand by the Quakers, they would not support him “in his day of trouble.” Burrough reminded Cromwell that Quakers were expelled from the army even though they helped in the war.²³⁹

Regardless of Burrough’s pleadings, admonitions, warnings and threats of non-support, liberty of conscience did not materialize. Burrough arranged a personal interview with Cromwell in June 1657 and reiterated verbally the abuses his fellow Quakers were suffering. Cromwell justified himself by saying that although these sufferings were “contrary to his will” that he was not responsible for the injustices to Quakers.²⁴⁰ Cromwell’s trait of absolving himself of any wrong-doing in important decisions was evident in other circumstances, for example the Nayler affair.

The Quaker James Nayler, caused extensive controversy in 1656 when he rode a horse through the streets of Bristol followed by an entourage of adoring women and men as if he were re-enacting the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. He was accused of blasphemy because he claimed to have Christ within him.²⁴¹ Although Cromwell’s Second Protectorate Parliament did not have judicial powers, they debated for nine days to determine Nayler’s punishment. Nayler’s tongue was bored through; he endured the pillory twice, was whipped severely twice, and then imprisoned for three years.²⁴² According to the Instrument of Government, clause 3, the Lord Protector had the power of pardons (except in the case of murders and treason)²⁴³ and could have relieved

²³⁹ Edward Burrough, *For the Hands of the Protector (Works)*, 558, 559.

²⁴⁰ Evans, *Memoir*, 182, 183.

²⁴¹ William Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* Second Edition (London: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 241-249.

²⁴² William Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 252, 257, 261, 262 ff.

²⁴³ *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, Ibid.*, 813.

Nayler's severe punishment. However, Cromwell declined to mitigate Nayler's excessive punishment. Nayler was released from prison in September 1659 and died in October 1660.²⁴⁴ Johann Sommerville notes that there was a question whether parliament had judicial power in 1656, in which case, they did not have the authority to punish Nayler.²⁴⁵

Continuing with Burrough's correspondence, he wrote to Cromwell in September 1657 when there had been no relief in the persecutions of the Quakers. In this letter he expressed his love towards Cromwell and warned him that evil people were plotting to overthrow him because they were envious of him. Burrough claimed that some people hated Oliver Cromwell, were revengeful and that there were "conspiracies and secret plottings." He named the Fifth Monarchy Men²⁴⁶ as enemies and stated that they might be the instrument by which the Lord would punish Cromwell.²⁴⁷ There were threats on Cromwell's life on several occasions. Burrough claimed that the Lord had shown him what to say to Cromwell and this justified him and gave credence to his words.²⁴⁸ Burrough's belief that he was obeying God by warning Cromwell was a recurring theme throughout his letter-writing. The urgency of these warnings was also apparent as was his compassionate concern for the sufferings of his Friends.

Adversaries made at least two attempts to overthrow Cromwell and the Protectorate. In the spring of 1654 a group of Royalists intended to kill Cromwell and other members of government in order to proclaim Charles II king. The plan was to kill

²⁴⁴ William Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 264, 265, 273, 275.

²⁴⁵ Johan Sommerville, "Oliver Cromwell and English Political Thought" in *Oliver Cromwell*, John Morrill, Ed., (London: Longman, 1990), 257.

²⁴⁶ Fifth Monarchy Men was a radical group who envisioned the one thousand year reign of Jesus, following the four monarchies of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. (Revelation 20).

²⁴⁷ Edward Burrough, (*Works*), 559, 560, 561, 562.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 562.

Cromwell while he was travelling to Hampton Court. Three conspirators were executed.²⁴⁹ The consequences following this threat included the abolishing of horse-racing for six months, prohibiting duels and attempting to curb swearing and cursing.²⁵⁰ The Royalist security organization known as the Sealed Knot planned an uprising in early 1655 led by Colonel John Penruddock. This uprising was thwarted and Penruddock and some of his followers were executed and some were transported to the West Indies.²⁵¹ Cromwell was well aware of the opposition against him and his government. Rivals for his position were dealt with by the full measure of the law.

These incidents may have prompted Cromwell to initiate measures in 1655 which were designed to protect the nation and encourage righteousness. In August 1655 Cromwell organized the Major-Generals to combat the threat of Royalist aggression and also to promote godly reformation. Four months previously, in April 1655, there had been an effort to keep military expenditure low. Soldiers accepted reduced pay, there were cuts to the standing army and a volunteer horse militia was formed consisting of over six thousand men and horses. A Decimation Tax was levied on those who supported the Royalist cause since the outbreak of the Civil War in 1642. The rationale behind this tax against the Royalists was that the Protectorate believed it was not God's will that Royalists form the government. A Royalist government connoted arbitrary or single rule, which was to be avoided, according to the republicans. The peace of the Commonwealth depended on the Major-Generals for the security of the nation and for the godly reformation which Cromwell, Parliament and Council envisioned, all of whom belonged

²⁴⁹ Martyn Bennett, *Oliver Cromwell* (London: Routledge, 2006), 225.

²⁵⁰ Martyn Bennett, *Ibid.*, 225.

²⁵¹ Barry Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 63.

to the “Puritan oligarchy,” as reported by Barry Coward.²⁵² In October 1655 there was a central registry in London to track Royalists. Coward, citing twentieth-century historians, reported that Cromwell approved of this security system.²⁵³

Cromwell desired a broadly based State Church and worked to create a godly nation, according to A. G. R. Smith.²⁵⁴ A review of religious reforms instituted by Cromwell shows he made a concerted effort at religious acceptance but only for selected groups. His Instrument of Government in 1653 made it illegal to coerce those who professed faith in God by Christ Jesus, “though differing in judgement from the doctrine, worship or discipline publicly held forth.”²⁵⁵ This clause should have protected Quakers from persecution but did not. Cromwell viewed Quakers as pious “but misguided.”²⁵⁶ Bernard Capp reports that Cromwell was irritated by “their denunciation of parish clergy, their disruptive practices and their intolerant spirit.”²⁵⁷ In an effort to alleviate this situation Cromwell issued the proclamation of February 1655 forbidding Quakers from disturbing church services. Offenders were to be prosecuted.²⁵⁸

Continuing his reforms after the 1653 Instrument of Government, Cromwell added the Humble Petition and Advice in 1657, clauses of which were aimed directly at Quakers. It prescribed heavy penalties for disturbing ministers or disrupting services.²⁵⁹ Cromwell’s further religious reforms were the result of petitions to the government requiring that “godly” ministers be confirmed in their posts, as recorded by Barry

²⁵² Barry Coward, *Ibid.*, 64, 65, 67, 69. (Coward cites S. R. Gardiner for this information).

²⁵³ Barry Coward, *Ibid.*, 68.

²⁵⁴ A. G. R. Smith, *The Emergence of a Nation State*, 432.

²⁵⁵ Barry Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate*, 28.

²⁵⁶ Bernard Capp, “Cromwell and Religion in a multi-faith society,” *Ibid.*, 106

²⁵⁷ Bernard Capp *Ibid.*, Bernard Capp references earlier historians, W. C. Abbott and S. R. Gardiner for his information.

²⁵⁸ Barry Coward, *Ibid.*, 59.

²⁵⁹ Bernard Capp, “Cromwell and Religion,” *Ibid.*, 107, 98.

Coward. The petitioners envisioned a godly reformation.²⁶⁰ J. R. Collins reported that Cromwell stated that the most important administrative achievement of his regime was his church settlement.²⁶¹ Parishes were to be maintained by continuing the tithes system. The clergy were controlled by a committee known as Triers, which examined and appointed new ministers. Triers were a group of 38 ministers and nine prominent laymen, in the original group, who judged “the godliness and sufficiency of each” candidate applying for lectureships or preaching positions. These ministers were given “an oral examination and three written testimonials” were required by the committee.²⁶² On 28 April 1657 the Triers Ordinance was amended to require parliamentary approval of future commissioners for licensing ministers. Barry Coward reported that the Triers Committee in its first five years of existence dealt with “over 3,500 ministerial nominees and that the local ejectors were active in nearly two-thirds of English counties between 1654 and 1659.”²⁶³ Cromwell himself participated in this control of the church in around 40 percent of Triers’ presentations.²⁶⁴

The Ejector Committee “examined allegations of immorality or insufficiency.”²⁶⁵ The committee of Ejectors was composed entirely of laymen whose mandate was to root out scandalous and inefficient ministers and schoolmasters. They were helped in their mandate by the Major-Generals. Ministers could be ejected for having opinions derogatory to God or destructive to humane society; for moral offences; for use of the Prayer Book (Cromwell objected to the formalism of written prayers); for Roman

²⁶⁰ Barry Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate*, 40.

²⁶¹ J. R. Collins, “The Church Settlement of Oliver Cromwell” *History*, Iss. 285, 87 (2002), 18.

²⁶² J. R. Collins, *Ibid.*, 28.

²⁶³ Barry Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate*, 180.

²⁶⁴ Barry Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate*, 40, 90, 180, 181.

²⁶⁵ Bernard Capp, “Cromwell and Religion,” *Ibid.*, 98, 107.

Catholicism and for writing, preaching or publishing opposition to the present government.²⁶⁶ Cromwell's government was beginning to appear to be not only an oligarchy but also an autocratic dictatorship.

Burrough's impatience was evident in his next letter of December 1657 when he wrote "[y]ou have no excuse" and listed again the injustices which the Quakers endured.²⁶⁷ In his most explicit warning he claimed there was a secret enemy "reigning and rebelling in this nation which is greater than any foreign invader."²⁶⁸ Who or what was this secret enemy to which Burrough was alluding? Burrough believed these warnings were prophesies from God. In the next letter, delivered to Cromwell at Hampton Court in April 1658, Burrough encouraged Cromwell not to listen to lies about Quakers.²⁶⁹

In another letter given to Oliver Cromwell at Hampton Court in June 1658, about three months before Cromwell's death, Burrough preached to Cromwell demanding that he "hearken to the word of the Lord."²⁷⁰ Burrough stressed that Cromwell needed God's wisdom to guide him in all affairs so that he would be protected from the enemy. He warned the Protector about false teachers, evil-doers and drunkards. One of Burrough's constant complaints was against ministers who preached for money. Here again he advised Cromwell "to trample down all who teach and preach for hire."²⁷¹ Burrough promised Cromwell a reward if he was faithful in all he did but stated that the Lord would smite him if the oppression continued.²⁷²

²⁶⁶ J. R. Collins, "The Church Settlement of Oliver Cromwell" *Ibid.*, 27, 28, 29, 30.

²⁶⁷ Edward Burrough, *To the Protector and Council (Works)*, 562.

²⁶⁸ Edward Burrough, *(Works)*, 564, 565.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, *To the Protector, (Works)*, 565.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, *To the Protector (Works)*, 566.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 568.

²⁷² Edward Burrough, *Ibid.*, 569.

Burrough delivered a letter to the Protector's wife and children in September 1658, the day before Cromwell died. He again recited the litany of injustices which the Quakers endured.²⁷³ Cromwell died without the passage of an act, proclamation, bill or declaration to relieve the religious persecution of the Quakers. Burrough and Cromwell both believed that Cromwell was an "instrument of God's will."²⁷⁴ Was it not God's will that the Quakers be relieved of persecution? Cromwell thought he was doing God's will by allowing the persecution of Quakers.

Although Oliver Cromwell made an attempt at establishing religious toleration for some Protestant denominations by instituting the Instrument of Government and the Humble Petition and Advice, his death slowed the progress of religious reform. Perhaps he had not intended to relieve the Quakers of their misery. His church settlement policies were curtailed following his death. A few days after Oliver Cromwell died on 3 September 1658, his son Richard became Lord Protector. Burrough did not hesitate in writing to Richard Cromwell in 1658, reminding him that Quakers continued to be persecuted from the time of his father's tenure in office. He advised Richard that although God had given Oliver the power to rule, he had not been obedient to God and as a result had died suddenly.²⁷⁵ There were 100 Quakers in prison when Oliver Cromwell died. Burrough admitted that Oliver did release some from prison but had not done enough to relieve Quakers from the burden of paying tithes. Burrough encouraged

²⁷³ Edward Burrough, *This is for the Protector's Kindred, his wife and children; to be read soberly by them in the fear of the Lord (Works)*, 570.

²⁷⁴ A. G. R. Smith, *Emergence of a Nation State*, 342.

²⁷⁵ Edward Burrough, *To Richard Cromwell (called) Protector of these Nations written for his instruction, Oct. 1, 1658, (Works)*, 571.

Richard to be wise and righteous in the government which he would lead and warned him that if he was not wise that the Lord would smite him just as his father was dealt with.²⁷⁶

Burrough's words flowed quickly and decisively as he viewed himself the chosen one who was assigned or instructed to warn the leaders that if they did what was right then God would bless them; if not God would punish them and allow their enemies to have the victory. This belief in the providential care of God was a foundational belief of both Oliver Cromwell and Burrough. In another letter of 1658 to Richard Cromwell, Burrough asserted that although God had favoured his father Oliver with triumph in wars, renown, wisdom, valour and a pure spirit, Oliver had died prematurely because he had failed to finish the work God assigned him to do. Burrough lavished words of encouragement and warning at the same time, urging Richard to rely on God, to fear God and to be wary of evil-doers.²⁷⁷

In a letter of October 1658 to Richard Cromwell, Burrough listed some of the defects in the management of government. He claimed the magistracy was degenerate; that those in authority were corrupt and that they oppressed the poor; that they subverted good laws; that righteous people suffered and were put in prison for no other reason than that they do not "put off the hat or bow the knee."²⁷⁸ Burrough continued to write to Richard Cromwell and his parliament in 1658 and 1659.

In another letter of 1659 Burrough praised the authorities but stated there was still work to be done, as the reformation had been interrupted. Anti-Christ's kingdom had not

²⁷⁶ Edward Burrough, (*Works*), 571, 572, 573.

²⁷⁷ Edward Burrough, *To Thee Richard Cromwell, chosen to be Protector and chief Magistrate Governour of these Nations of England, Scotland and Ireland; a faithful Presentation and Salutation, by a Servant of the Church,* (*Works*), 574, 576.

²⁷⁸ Edward Burrough, *To Richard Cromwell/ Protector and Chief magistrate of these nations of England, Scotland and Ireland, a faithful presentation and salutation by a Servant of the Church,* (*Works*), 585, 579.

been rooted out and Quakers were still being oppressed. In this letter he referred to the false church and distinguished it from the true church which he believed was the Church of Christ. He again referred to the burden of tithes and stated that Jesus had not instituted the tradition of forced maintenance of ministers. In contrast, he noted that while ministers were being cared for, Quakers' estates and liberties were confiscated and lives were lost. He said everyone should give as they were led by the Lord and should not be coerced.²⁷⁹ Burrough's idea of liberty was pointed out in this letter: he wrote "[i]f oppression is gone it will allow righteousness and mercy to flourish and people will be free."²⁸⁰ The freedom envisioned by the Quakers meant freedom to worship as they were led, freedom to follow their consciences and also relief from persecution. Edward Burrough wrote that the conscience is free when it is free from sin.²⁸¹

Richard Cromwell's tenure in office was brief. A. G. R. Smith records that although Richard had been nominated by Oliver Cromwell, the former did not have the position in the army that his father had. There was a conflict between the Rump Parliament and the army. Richard's Presbyterian inclinations were also disliked. Senior officers urged Richard to dissolve Parliament in April 1659. Following this there was open hostility; the Rump was recalled in May 1659 and Richard resigned. The Protectorate was thus ended.²⁸²

The Long Parliament was in power in September 1659 and Burrough himself addressed parliament.²⁸³ Burrough began on a cheerful note when he wrote that many

²⁷⁹ Edward Burrough, *To Parliament of the Commonwealth of England. The present authority of these Nations assembled at Westminster. (Works)*, 585, 591.

²⁸⁰ Edward Burrough, *Ibid.*, 587.

²⁸¹ Edward Burrough, *Testimony Concerning True Liberty of Conscience, (Works)*, 830.

²⁸² Alan G. R. Smith, *The Emergence of a Nation State*, 366, 367.

²⁸³ Edward Burrough, *To the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England (Works)*, 585, 592 ff.

positive things had happened but that the work of reformation had been interrupted. He suggested there was some hope but that their hopes had vanished, that anti-Christ's kingdom had not been rooted out and that 10,000 were still in bondage to the false church. Again he stressed the fact that conscience needed to be free to exercise the Spirit of God. He ended this letter by being slightly more hopeful than in other letters when he stated that if they did not reform the laws, that God would find some other way.²⁸⁴

In Burrough's *Message to the present rulers of England* in November 1659, he displayed his great concern and love for the country of England. He began this letter by praising God as his mighty and powerful prince who ruled decisively by His word.²⁸⁵ In a patriotic vein Burrough claimed that the Lord had favoured England and that "[h]e has a purpose of Love toward England." "He will refine it in the fire of tribulations."²⁸⁶ In this message Burrough asserted the sovereignty of God and his belief that England would be great because of, or in spite of, tribulations. The political situation was one of uncertainty because of Richard Cromwell's resignation and the indecision of the governing body, the Long Parliament.

Burrough believed the nation was ruled by anti-Christ and Satan. Oppression had continued contrary to God's will; corruption was rampant and God had given the rulers time but they had wasted it. He conceded that the nation was freed from tyranny and cruelty when popish authority was ousted but it was only a few years later when it was replaced by another similar power. He ended this letter by maintaining that the oppressed

²⁸⁴ Edward Burrough, *Ibid.*, 585, 591, 587.

²⁸⁵ Edward Burrough, *Message to the present rulers of England, whether Committee of Safety (so called), Council of offices or others whatsoever. Delivered unto them by an ambassadour from the right Heir of the Government whose right alone it is to rule. And by special Authority and Commission from him, this is sent unto them, that they may hear, and fear and learn Wisdom, and may deliver up the proper Right of the only King unto him, that they may be blessed; but on the contrary dependeth their DESTRUCTION. (Works)*, 589.

²⁸⁶ Edward Burrough, *Ibid.*

were not weary of their sufferings but that the nation would never be happy while Quakers continued to be in bondage.²⁸⁷ This was a strange statement following the many letters requesting freedom from persecution. However, as Richard Vann points out, persecution was not a deterrent but a stimulant for the Quakers.²⁸⁸ Many believed they were identifying with Jesus in their sufferings. Referring to the apocalypse, Burrough wrote that the rulers had made war against the Lamb and His followers. He referred to Revelation 17:14 concerning the end times and the Lamb's War.²⁸⁹ This belief in the final battle of the Lamb's War was a recurring theme in Quaker theology and in Burrough's letters.

In conclusion, this chapter has analyzed Edward Burrough's fourteen letters addressed to Oliver and Richard Cromwell, 1657-1659 and to the rulers of England between 1659 and 1660. There were several recurring themes in these letters. Burrough stressed the loss of liberties which Quakers had suffered and listed the injustices which they had endured. Not only had they lost estates and trades but also they had been abused physically and had been imprisoned. They had been prevented from meeting peacefully in their assemblies.

Another theme was Burrough's belief that he had been appointed by God to warn the leadership of England of impending destruction if they did not rule with justice and righteousness and relieve the persecution of the Quakers. His warning to Oliver Cromwell that there were enemies who were trying to kill him was taken seriously. He

²⁸⁷ Edward Burrough, *A Message to the present Rulers of England, (Works)*, 586, 597.

²⁸⁸ Richard Vann, *The Social Development of English Quakerism 1655-1755* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 94.

²⁸⁹ Edward Burrough, *Message to the present rulers of England (Works)*, 592. They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of Lords and King of Kings-and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers. (Revelation 17:14).

warned Cromwell that he would have to answer for all his actions on the Day of Judgement. When writing to Richard Cromwell he wrote “[i]f you fall, remember you were warned.”²⁹⁰ Writing to the parliament he warned them not to oppress the people of God because God would avenge them.²⁹¹ In this letter he told the rulers that he was free now because he had told them what God had told him to tell them.²⁹² In the letter *To the Present Rulers of England*, Burrough brought a warning of destruction. He claimed his master (God) had given him the message to give to them.²⁹³ In the letter addressed to Cromwell’s wife and children Burrough claimed he was the one appointed to write them but in “tender love to you all.”²⁹⁴ Burrough’s firm belief that he was divinely appointed to warn rulers of impending doom gave him the confidence to continue with this endeavour.

Another of Burrough’s themes was his encouragement to his correspondents to follow the Light of Christ and to let it be their guide. To Oliver Cromwell he wrote “[t]he Light must be your only teacher,”²⁹⁵ “[l]et the Light of thy own conscience judge.”²⁹⁶ In his letter to Richard and Henry Cromwell he wrote: “[y]ou must own the Light within and become subject to it or you have no part of the Kingdom of God.”²⁹⁷ It was the Light of Christ which was the guide to righteous living and informed one’s conscience according to Quaker doctrine. Burrough wrote to parliament: “[t]he conscience needs to be free to exercise the Spirit of God.”²⁹⁸ This relationship between

²⁹⁰ Edward Burrough, (*Works*), 580.

²⁹¹ Edward Burrough, (*Works*), 581.

²⁹² Edward Burrough, (*Works*), 597.

²⁹³ Edward Burrough, (*Works*), 594.

²⁹⁴ Edward Burrough, (*Works*), 569.

²⁹⁵ Edward Burrough, (*Works*), 583.

²⁹⁶ Edward Burrough, (*Works*), 561.

²⁹⁷ Edward Burrough, (*Works*), 583.

²⁹⁸ Edward Burrough, (*Works*), 591.

the Light of Christ (which Quakers interpreted as the Spirit of God) which controlled the conscience was the central tenet of Quaker belief.²⁹⁹

Blair Worden, consulting the work of historians W. C. Abbot, John Owen, Peter Sterry and others, reported that the Quaker doctrine of the inner Light informed one's conscience.³⁰⁰ Worden reported that Cromwell's goal of liberty of conscience was very different from modern liberalism.³⁰¹ Liberty of conscience was a fundamental tenet upon which Cromwell would not compromise, according to W. C. Abbott and recorded by Worden.³⁰² Quoting religious leaders, Worden reported that "the union of the believer with Christ" was essential to salvation. However, the union of believers with each other, which "was essential for the creation of a commonwealth," would be pleasing to God.³⁰³ One of Cromwell's primary objectives was the formation of a godly nation. He hoped God would make Christians all "one heart."³⁰⁴ Worden reports that the argument in the Puritan camp was "not about toleration" but was "about liberty of conscience."³⁰⁵ John Owen and Oliver Cromwell both desired liberty for "God's peculiar, not for the unregenerate." "God's peculiar," according to Cromwell, were the Presbyterians, Independents and Baptists.³⁰⁶ Although the Jews were not one of Cromwell's "peculiar people," he arranged the admittance of Jews to England. Cromwell's aim in admitting

²⁹⁹ See Chapter Two for the debate between John Bunyan and Edward Burrough on the Light of Christ and the Spirit of Christ.

³⁰⁰ Blair Worden, "Toleration and the Cromwellian Protectorate," *Ibid.*, 207, 208.

³⁰¹ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 210.

³⁰² Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 218.

³⁰³ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 210.

³⁰⁴ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 211.

³⁰⁵ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 209.

³⁰⁶ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 211, 212.

Jews into England was part of his millennial belief that it was necessary for Jews to be converted before Jesus' Second Coming. Their conversion would hasten that event.³⁰⁷

The letters to parliament and the rulers of England stressed the sovereignty of God and providentialism. Burrough wrote that God would allow rulers to be placed on thrones and would also let them fall at His will; God can do what He wills.³⁰⁸ Burrough and Cromwell both believed in God's providential care. Cromwell believed that he had won his military battles because of God's favour. However, when the British lost the battle with Spain in the West Indies, Cromwell was humbled and felt God had been displeased with him.³⁰⁹ There were several references in Burrough's letters to the Kingdom of God, the Day of Judgement, the Lamb's War and the horn of the fourth beast. These were Biblical references to the millennial period when Jesus was to reign for a thousand years as prophesied. These beliefs prompted many of the warnings which Burrough reiterated to the leaders of government.

Finally, Burrough's idea of toleration as shown in his letters was that Quakers needed the freedom to practice their religion as they chose, meeting undisturbed and being led by the Light of Christ which taught them right from wrong. Quakers also wished to be free from paying tithes and free from the social injustices they experienced for not paying deference to superiors. They objected to being persecuted for being different from the current orthodox religion. Burrough also argued that the state should not be involved in legislating spiritual matters. The suggestion of separating civil matters from religious matters is implied in Burrough's letter to the present rulers of England. In this letter Burrough urged the authorities to let God be ruler of His kingdom and have

³⁰⁷ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 211.

³⁰⁸ Edward Burrough, (*Works*), 592.

³⁰⁹ Martyn Bennett, *Oliver Cromwell*, 237.

power over people's consciences in all aspects of worship and service.³¹⁰ Burrough urged the rulers to repeal all laws of anti-Christ.³¹¹ Burrough believed Cromwell had usurped God's power by making laws which did not agree with God's laws; therefore the persecution of Quakers was wrong and unwarranted.

Cromwell's definition of religious toleration was somewhat different from Burrough's. Cromwell was in a powerful position and could have been instrumental in making laws which could relieve the persecution of the Quakers. However, his attempt at religious peace fell short of providing religious toleration for all sects and denominations and those who did not keep the peace. He excluded Catholics, Episcopalians, atheists and Socinians (Unitarians). He tried to establish a holy nation by his series of proclamations and education by groups such as the Triers, Ejectors and the rule of the Major-Generals. Each plan had limited success. His plans for religious reformation were interrupted by his untimely death in September 1658. Cromwell envisioned a state church with religious freedom only for *peaceful* minorities.³¹²

J. C. Davis stated that Cromwell was suspicious of the sects because they did not have the "spirit of kindness which could encourage mutual toleration."³¹³ Cromwell also suspected sectaries of colluding with Royalists. Davis claimed that Cromwell's Declaration of 20 March 1654 for a national day of fasting and humiliation indicated the extreme degree of anxiety which Cromwell experienced during his first years in office.³¹⁴ Cromwell's religious interests lay in "liberty of conscience;" his desire for religious

³¹⁰ Edward Burrough, (*Works*), 594.

³¹¹ Edward Burrough, (*Works*), 555, 594.

³¹² Bernard Capp, "Cromwell and religion in a multi-faith society," *Ibid.*, 110.

³¹³ J. C. Davis, "Cromwell's Religion" in *Oliver Cromwell*, John Morrill, Ed., 185.

³¹⁴ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 185, 187.

unity; “his providentialism” and “anti-formalism” according to J. C. Davis.³¹⁵ Both Davis and Worden agreed that Cromwell did not desire toleration but unity.³¹⁶

Although Burrough and Cromwell both believed in liberty of conscience, each interpreted the idea in a different way. In seventeenth-century England, the word toleration connoted a danger of heresy and an opportunity for licentiousness. It was the religious freedom of the 1650s which allowed the radical groups to thrive, as reported by Bernard Capp.³¹⁷ Capp recorded that many MPs believed that toleration was “evil and dangerous” and would undermine order and provoke God’s wrath.³¹⁸ Although some historians used the two concepts of liberty of conscience and toleration synonymously, they were two separate ideas. Burrough and Cromwell both agreed that formalism detracted from the true substance of religion. Cromwell believed that formalism was man’s work, not God’s work.³¹⁹

Burrough’s writings changed slightly over the time period of these letters, 1657-1659. His letters to Oliver and Richard Cromwell were to individuals whom he knew personally. His letters to parliament and to the rulers of England were addressed to a group of law-givers. Each group of letters contained the Quaker request for liberty of conscience to follow the Light of Christ and included warnings, complaints of oppression and pleadings for mercy, justice and righteousness. Burrough’s battle for laws which would relieve Quaker persecution was not over, however, as he continued to write to Charles II when he ascended the throne in May 1660. The letters to Charles II are the subject of Chapter 4.

³¹⁵ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 191.

³¹⁶ J. C. Davis, *Ibid.*, 196.

³¹⁷ Bernard Capp, “Cromwell and religion in a multi-faith society,” *Ibid.*, 94.

³¹⁸ Bernard Capp, *Ibid.*, 96.

³¹⁹ J. C. Davis, “Cromwell’s Religion” *Ibid.*, 207.

CHAPTER 4

The Battle to save Lives

We have a pretty witty king
And whose word no man relys on:
He never said a foolish thing,
And never did a wise one.
Rochester³²⁰

This poem was pinned to Charles II's door in Whitehall, the king's residence after he was restored to the throne in 1660. This verse suggests the extreme difference between the Puritan Oliver Cromwell and the merry monarch, Charles II. Not only were their personalities extremely different but their political policies, religious outlooks and lifestyles were vastly at odds. Jennifer Uglow described Charles II as "pragmatic and sceptical." She claimed he needed "to create a carapace to survive." He devised "strategies based on charm, outward compliance and private evasion" and acted "as if he took nothing seriously, especially not work or religion." He "was clever, affable and courtly" but was also a cynic. He was not committed to any spiritual doctrine, "was physically restless and easily bored." "He loved to be entertained." Uglow questioned whether he was play-acting, "cunning, naïve, clever or lucky."³²¹

This chapter will analyze three of Edward Burrough's documents to Charles II and his advisors, in which he clarified his definition of liberty of conscience. He argued that magistrates should not usurp God's prerogative by making laws which were contrary to God's laws. He also asserted that people should be free to obey God's will as revealed through their consciences. Burrough argued that allowing freedom of conscience would encourage peace, stability and prosperity for the nation. He explained his rationale for the

³²⁰ Jennifer Uglow, *A Gambling Man Charles II's Restoration Game* (New York: Ferris, Straus & Geroux, 2009), 4.

³²¹ Jennifer Uglow, *Gambling Man*, 2- 5.

concept of separation of spiritual and secular matters.³²² As well as advocating for Quakers in England, Burrough wrote in support of the persecuted Quakers in New England. Events in New England were at a crisis when four Quakers were hanged between 1659 and 1661. Edward Burrough's correspondence with Charles II regarding the New England Quakers received a positive response from the king. This chapter will also note the post-Restoration religious settlement which favoured the Anglican gentry and which stipulated several laws for controlling dissenters, Quakers in particular.

Before reviewing Burrough's correspondence, a brief summary of political events will describe the unsettled political and social situation after 1659. After Richard Cromwell resigned or was ousted in a coup by the New Model Army in May 1659 England was hovering on the brink of anarchy.³²³ Gary De Krey describes the social, political and religious unrest during this interval between the end of the republic and the restoration of Charles II. The Army recalled the Rump Parliament (the remnant of the Long Parliament which sat from 1649-53) and governed at Westminster; then the Army staged another coup in October 1659 and dissolved the Rump by December 1659. The Rump "re-established itself against the Army" but in the meantime General George Monck moved his army from Scotland towards London in January 1660. Monck forced the dissolution of the Rump Parliament on 16 March 1660.³²⁴ Gary De Krey records the prevalence of "depressed trade, underemployment and burdensome taxes" during this interval before Charles II was instated. Numerous petitions from the public to parliament

³²² Edward Burrough, *A Visitation of Love unto the King, and Those call'd Royallists* (London: 1660), 15, 16.

³²³ William Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* Second Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 469.

³²⁴ Gary De Krey, *London and the Restoration 1659-1683* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 5, 19.

demanded a free parliament.³²⁵ An atmosphere of fear pervaded the city of London which was fostered by Presbyterian clergy who preached and wrote pamphlets predicting that the Anabaptists, a term which included all sectarians, planned to deprive clergy of their state sponsorship.³²⁶ This fear was heightened by the fact that some of the sectarians were accumulating arms. There were rumours of a massacre by the Anabaptists. Anglican Royalists figured predominately in trying to settle the nation.³²⁷

Monck took command of the London regiments and ordered new elections. The results of the election of MPs showed a decidedly Royalist persuasion with Anglican gentry and some Presbyterian Royalists dominating the membership.³²⁸ Known as the Convention Parliament, many of the Anglican and Presbyterian members were in favour of calling a king. However, there was some hesitancy on the part of the Presbyterians who feared a return to episcopacy with the prominent Anglican presence. Both feared the influence, hostility and increase in military might of the sectarians.³²⁹

The escape from the Tower of sectarian leader John Lambert on 10 April 1660 caused further unrest. There were rumours that Quakers and Anabaptists supported his army in the Midlands. Quakers were reported to have sold their estates to assist Lambert. The mustering of Lambert's troops along with the gathering of the militia and trained regiments in London hastened the decision to call Charles II.³³⁰ Meanwhile, Charles II had been in exile on the continent or in Scotland for the ten years following his father's death. Advised by Edward Hyde, the soon-to-be Earl of Clarendon, Charles II issued the

³²⁵ Gary De Krey, *London*, 25, 5, 19.

³²⁶ Gary De Krey, *London*, 55.

³²⁷ Gary De Krey, *London*, 56, 57.

³²⁸ Gary De Krey, *London*, 57, 59, 60, 61.

³²⁹ Gary De Krey, *London*, 62.

³³⁰ Gary De Krey, *London*, 63.

Declaration of Breda in April 1660 in the Netherlands in the hope of being invited back to what he considered his rightful throne.³³¹

The Declaration of Breda acknowledged the unsettled conditions prevalent at that time with reference to “the general distraction and confusion which is spread over the whole Kingdom” and suggested that people would appreciate peace and stability in the nation. Charles II expressed a hope to be reinstated as king, which he asserted was his right given by God and nature. The document stated that once the animosities amongst people were better understood, the king would be ready to propose an Act of Parliament which would grant liberty of tender consciences to those who did not disturb the peace of the Kingdom, contingent upon whether parliament agreed. As a further incentive, Charles proposed to pay the arrears owing the officers and soldiers of Monck’s army, depending on the agreement of parliament.³³²

The definition of liberty of conscience was not clarified in this declaration. Ultimately, the concept of liberty of conscience fell out of favour with members of parliament and the liberty suggested in the Declaration of Breda never materialized. Charles II and the parliament did not have the same definition of liberty of conscience as insinuated in the declaration and as endorsed by groups such as the Quakers. Obviously impressed by the promises outlined in the Declaration of Breda, the Convention Parliament voted to restore Charles II on 1 May 1660.³³³

The Earl of Clarendon was chief minister during most of Charles II’s reign. The Cavalier Parliament that followed the Restoration enacted laws against dissent. These laws, known in the nineteenth century as the Clarendon Code, were misnamed according

³³¹ William Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 473.

³³² The King’s Declaration, *House of Lords Journal* Volume 11, (1 May 1660), 3.

³³³ Tim Harris, *Restoration Charles II and His Kingdoms 1660-1685* (London: Allen Lane, 2005), 1.

to John Coffey.³³⁴ Coffey claims that the real framers of the unpopular code against dissent were the Church of England gentry, not Clarendon himself. Included in this code were: the Corporation Act of 1661, which imposed the sacramental test upon all municipal officers who were “to take oaths of allegiance and supremacy” and “to take communion in the Church of England;” the Quaker Act of 1662, which stipulated that those who refused to swear the oath and who assembled together with five or more Quakers were to be “fined, imprisoned or, on a third conviction, transported;” the Act of Uniformity of 1662, which required “all clergy to be episcopally ordained, to renounce the Solemn League and Covenant” and to use the new Prayer Book.³³⁵ The Solemn League and Covenant of 1643 was negotiated between the Parliament of England and brought Presbyterian control to England in exchange for Scottish military aid. Cancelling this covenant gave the Anglicans control of the parliament in England in 1661.³³⁶ The Conventicles Act of 1664 made it illegal for more than five people outside the family to meet together for worship “without using the Anglican Prayer Book and liturgy.”³³⁷ Penalties for violating any of these acts caused a severe hardship on dissenters, whether clergy, magistrates or laity.

Charles II was restored to the throne on 29 May 1660, his thirtieth birthday, although his coronation was not solemnized until May 1661. William Evans, Burrough’s biographer, reported that after Charles II was restored to the throne that “many public predictions had been given out by Friends, plainly foretelling that he would be brought

³³⁴ John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558-1689* (London: Longman, 2000), 167, 168.

³³⁵ John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 168.

³³⁶ A. G. R. Smith, *The Emergence of a Nation State The Commonwealth of England 1529-1660* Second Edition (London: Longman, 1997), 310.

³³⁷ John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 169.

back.” Some of the king’s friends “wished to know whether the Quakers could tell if his power was likely to be permanent.”³³⁸ Some historians conjecture that the king’s friend who asked these questions was Lord Clarendon, Charles II’s Lord Chancellor.³³⁹ Although Burrough’s replies were meant to satisfy the king’s friend, the pamphlet with the questions and answers was distributed and available for the public.

The three documents written by Burrough to be reviewed in this chapter are: *A Visitation of Love unto the King and those call’d Royallists*,³⁴⁰ a paper printed in London in 1660. Burrough clarified his definition of liberty of conscience in *The Case of Free Liberty of Conscience to the king and both houses of Parliament*, printed in March 1661.³⁴¹ Burrough’s plea for the Quakers in New England is contained in *A Declaration of the Sad and Great Persecution and Martyrdom of the People of God called Quakers in New England*, printed 30 March 1661.³⁴²

Turning to an analysis of the first two documents in this group, three themes are evident: the sovereignty of God, the definition and results of allowing liberty of

³³⁸ William Evans, *Memoir*, 368.

³³⁹ William Evans, *Ibid*.

³⁴⁰ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation of Love unto the King and those call’d Royallists consisting of I. Of an Answer to several Queries proposed to the People (called Quakers) from a (supposed) Royallist. II. Of an Objection Answered, concerning the Kings Supremacy. III. Of an Epistle directed to the King & those that go under the name of Royallists. IV. Of certain Queries returned to them (called Royallists) to answer.* (London: 1660).

³⁴¹ Edward Burrough, This pamphlet is included in *The Memorable works of a son of thunder and consolation namely that true prophet and faithful servant of God and sufferer for the testimony of Jesus, Edward Burroughs, who dyed a prisoner for the word of God in the city of London, the fourteenth of the twelfth moneth, 1662* (London: 1672.)

³⁴² Edward Burrough, *A Declaration of the Sad and Great Persecution and Martyrdom of the People of God called Quakers in New England for the Worshipping of God whereof 22 have been Banished upon pain of Death, 03 have been martyred, 03 have had their right-Ears cut, 01 hath been burned in the Hand with the letter H, 31 Persons have received 650 Stripes, 01 was beat with Pitched Ropes, Five Appeals made by them to England, were denied by the Rulers of Boston, One thousand forty four pounds worth of Goods hath been taken from them (being poor men) for meeting together in the fear of the Lord, and for keeping the commands of Christ, One now lyeth in Iron-fetters condemned to dye. Also Some Considerations, presented to the King, which is an Answer to a petition and Adresse, which was presented unto Him by the General Court of Boston: Subscribed by J. Endicot, the chief Persecutor there; thinking thereby to cover themselves from the Blood of the Innocent.* (London: 1661).

conscience and Burrough's concept of the separation of spiritual and secular matters. Evans stated that Burrough answered "his catechists in a strain of honest and fearless exposition."³⁴³

The first question in *A Visitation* was whether Quakers had foreseen that Charles Stuart would be proclaimed king. Burrrough replied that God gives the crown to whomever He wills. Burrrough reiterated that Charles II must be converted to God and be ruled by God or he could never rule justly.³⁴⁴ God would avenge the person oppressing the king's subjects.³⁴⁵ Burrrough took no responsibility for any of the sufferings the king may have endured when he replied that if the king suffered because of his own iniquity, that it was God who punished him, not man. Burrrough maintained that in his judgement, the Lord was offended by the government of the late king so He designated people to oppose him.³⁴⁶

Burrough observed that there was a "rude and profane" spirit in the nation which provoked God. This was happening at the beginning of this king's reign and he warned that if it continued then God's wrath would destroy the nation. He noted that there were some who were hypocrites in matters of religion and were now afraid and confused whereas those who were upright and sincere towards God were not afraid.³⁴⁷ He implored Charles II to fear the Lord and not rule in tyranny or God would limit his time on the throne. He warned that if Quakers continued to be persecuted, it would be unjust in God's sight and might provoke Him.³⁴⁸ Some of Burrough's answers seem too

³⁴³ William Evans, *Memoir*, 368.

³⁴⁴ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 5.

³⁴⁵ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 6.

³⁴⁶ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 11 - 13.

³⁴⁷ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 17 - 19.

³⁴⁸ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 16.

simplistic and obvious. The utopia which Burrough envisioned was contingent upon everyone believing the same doctrine and behaving in a righteous manner according to God's laws. Even if Burrough could not bring about the ideologically united nation he was espousing, he hoped that at least Quakers would be free from persecution.

The next section of this document entitled *An Objection Answered, concerning the Kings Supremacy* asked whether or not the Quakers would be subject to the king's laws.³⁴⁹ Burrough argued that Quakers had always obeyed the sovereign and even suffered under what they considered unjust laws and would continue to be obedient to those in authority who were just and ruled according to Quakers' consciences.³⁵⁰ Quakers would deny the supremacy of a government if it meant supremacy over the church as in prescribing laws for worship and faith which were spiritual matters. They only ascribed religious supremacy to Jesus Christ as He was their "judge, king and law-giver" in all spiritual matters.³⁵¹ Jesus was their only spiritual king and not Charles II, nor any other man. Burrough vowed obedience to King Charles II in all matters pertaining to the affairs of the nation.³⁵² Burrough was forthright and definite in his answer to this last question and his answer would not leave the king's friend questioning the sincerity of the Quakers although he could question their allegiance. This short document included all three of the themes present in Burrough's pamphlets: the sovereignty of God, the definition of liberty of conscience and the separation of spiritual and secular matters.

³⁴⁹ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 21, 22.

³⁵⁰ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 22.

³⁵¹ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 22.

³⁵² Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 21 - 23.

In the *Epistle to Charles Stuart*³⁵³ Burrough reminded the present king of the promised reformation of church and state which was not complete. He lamented that the king could not distinguish between executing justice on transgressors and being persecuted for conscience-sake. He insisted that Quakers could not deny their religion because they were convinced their consciences were influenced by God's leading and that they must do what was right by the Spirit. He advised the king not to persecute for conscience-sake but to be meek and sober, rule with righteousness and truth and God would prosper him. If not, God would rebuke him.³⁵⁴ Burrough's theme of the providential care of God, the sovereignty of God, and the advantages of liberty of conscience is evident in this epistle to Charles II. Burrough also warned Charles II of God's wrath for unrighteous living. Noting Uglow's description of Charles II above, was Charles impressed, annoyed or amused by Burrough's religious language?

Apart from Burrough's main themes, he included other topics which follow. Burrough gave a review of the attributes of the Quakers who had neither oppressed nor envied anyone but had always been law-abiding.³⁵⁵ To claim that the Quakers were law-abiding was questionable. Quakers were frequently in prison for not obeying the laws, even though they considered the laws unjust. He said "[w]e are His people and He hath chosen us."³⁵⁶ The Quakers did not espouse the Calvinist belief in the election of those who were chosen to be saved; they believed that all could be saved. Burrough's statement that "He hath chosen us" could be interpreted to mean that Quakers were chosen to suffer as a test of their loyalty to God. Burrough maintained that Quakers were willing to suffer

³⁵³ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation of Love unto the King and those call'd Royallists*.

³⁵⁴ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 23 - 31.

³⁵⁵ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 4.

³⁵⁶ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 4.

for the name of Jesus.³⁵⁷ Burrough justified the behaviour of fellow Quakers with an explanation of their beliefs which prompted them to act the way they did.

The questioner asked whether it would be considered persecution if Charles II avenged the death of his father. Burrough's answer was that blessing followed when enemies were forgiven. However, he stated that there was a difference between suffering for a good conscience and suffering because one was punished for past wrongs. If Charles II persecuted people who had caused his father's death, they were not being persecuted for righteousness sake or for a good conscience. He replied that the war had not been a rebellion against the king but an attempt to bring about a religious reformation. Burrough reiterated that Quakers did not fight with "carnal weapons and swords."³⁵⁸ Charles II did avenge his father's death, executing many of those who had signed the death warrant for the regicide. In a further act of vengeance, he also had the bodies of those who had already died, exhumed and mutilated.³⁵⁹

Quakers were challenged to absolve themselves from the accusation that the king had suffered from *their* activities. If the king's suffering was unjust, the guilt would not fall on all his subjects, but on those particular subjects who caused the sufferings. For example, Burrough asked who first raised the war against the previous king; who "cast out the bishops and prelates," then became "corrupt, covetous, self-seeking, proud and ambitious?"³⁶⁰ Burrough claimed these (the Presbyterians) were the ones who were guilty of the turmoil in the king's administration. Burrough stated that the Quakers were not guilty of the iniquities because they had not taken benefices or made war with

³⁵⁷ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 4.

³⁵⁸ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 11.

³⁵⁹ Jennifer Uglow, *Gambling Man*, 103 ff.

³⁶⁰ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 12.

weapons.³⁶¹ Burrough answered that this was his judgement on these questions. He did not refer to any Scripture texts or to any other authority. The Quakers were given this opportunity to defend themselves, even though they were persecuted. Burrough answered some of the questions by saying “It depends . . . on whether Charles II reigns with justice and mercy or otherwise.”³⁶²

Continuing with the second theme of Burrough’s writings, the sixth question asked how much toleration the king should permit to those who wished liberty of conscience.³⁶³ Burrough stated that the government should not dictate how subjects should worship. The king was ruler over one’s *outward* worldly affairs and should not interfere with spiritual matters. He asserted that it was Christ alone who was head of the church. The king needed to “tolerate and allow liberty of conscience” in religious matters to all people and allow everyone to be persuaded in their own consciences how to worship God.³⁶⁴ He maintained that people should not be killed for their “religion, worship, church and ministry” nor be imprisoned or persecuted, but be allowed to live in peace with each other. He stated that liberty of conscience was expected and it was because this had been lacking that there had been much strife, contention and persecution. Some sects had been tolerated and others had been persecuted. He claimed that if liberty of conscience had been afforded all parties, that the “war might have been stopped.”³⁶⁵ Liberty of conscience should be available to all in matters of faith and

³⁶¹ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 11, 12, 13.

³⁶² Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 9.

³⁶³ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 14.

³⁶⁴ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 15, 16.

³⁶⁵ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 16.

worship.³⁶⁶ Did Burrough actually advocate liberty of conscience for everyone, including Catholics?

Burrough stated that Quakers had a clear conscience as they were persecuted for righteousness sake.³⁶⁷ He claimed free liberty of conscience in matters of religion as their basic right, “but as our right from God and you, we claime the liberty of the exercise of our Consciences, in the matters of Faith and a holy life towards God.”³⁶⁸ This brought them peace with God in their consciences. Quakers believed they were led by the Light of Jesus within and this light convicted one of sin. If they sank into the sins of drunkenness, lying and swearing, the Light of Jesus would lead them to repentance, bringing peace of conscience to them with God.³⁶⁹

The next part of this document (*A Visitation of Love*) included fourteen rhetorical questions which Burrough asked of the Royalists.³⁷⁰ He asked if they believed that God had a purpose in bringing the Royalists to power.³⁷¹ Then he asked, was the reason God restored the monarchy to power because the republicans were oppressive? Although the Cromwellian administration promoted some religious toleration, there were 2000 Quakers who were prosecuted and many who were persecuted for their beliefs during the Cromwellian era, according to Bernard Capp.³⁷² In the next three questions Burrough referred to God’s providential care and His judgement. Would it be possible for the government of Charles II to be answerable to God, or was it to be similar to Charles I’s

³⁶⁶ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 15 - 17.

³⁶⁷ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 20.

³⁶⁸ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 20.

³⁶⁹ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 20.

³⁷⁰ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 32-39.

³⁷¹ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 31, 32.

³⁷² Bernard Capp, “Cromwell and Religion in a Multi-Faith Society”, in *Cromwell’s Legacy*, Jane Mills, Ed. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 106.

administration?³⁷³ Burrough probably knew the answers to the questions he was asking. He was cleverly preaching under the guise of questioning. The law as instituted by the government was necessary because many people did not have the law of God in their hearts, according to Burrough.³⁷⁴

Next he asked what Royalists believed about liberty of conscience in matters of religion. He asked whether it was not a “just right” to live under whatever ministry and assembly a person felt was right for himself or herself. Was it God’s prerogative to be ruler over one’s conscience? He can “Prescribe, Instruct, Teach Faith, Worship and Duty in all things in the matters of his own Kingdome?” Then he asked whether God had delegated this power to any Emperor, king or ruler to have lordship over one’s conscience?³⁷⁵ Burrough’s statements implied that although Charles was restored to the earthly throne that God remained the king of the Quakers’ conscience. Charles II should not usurp God’s prerogative.

The next question, with an obvious answer, was whether it was better to trust Quakers who were reliable, commendable, sincere and trustworthy rather than those who changed their religion at the persuasion of the Royalists.³⁷⁶ He questioned whether they realized that their hedonistic conduct might cause judgement upon the nation of pestilence, famine and poverty. He warned them not to be arrogant or God would destroy them if He were provoked.³⁷⁷ Burrough’s theme of the sovereignty of God is evident in this passage.

³⁷³ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 33.

³⁷⁴ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 35.

³⁷⁵ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 35.

³⁷⁶ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 38.

³⁷⁷ Edward Burrough, *A Visitation*, 35-39.

In asking these questions Burrough was trying to ascertain whether persecution of Quakers would be reduced under the monarchy compared to that under the Commonwealth with Cromwell. Bernard Capp wrote that when Charles II was restored to the throne, the new parliament instituted harsh new laws to “destroy Puritan dissent.”³⁷⁸ Bernard Capp was referring to the unpopular Clarendon Code. He recorded that persecution ensued after the harsh new laws were instated and “two thousand Puritan ministers were dismissed by 1662,” including “hundreds of magistrates” and counsellors by a revengeful Cavalier Parliament.³⁷⁹ These laws were aimed at all dissenters, whether clergy, magistrates or laity.³⁸⁰

Burrough continued his correspondence in a document titled *The case of Free Liberty of Conscience* in March 1661 addressed to the king and both Houses of Parliament. He began by stating that some people worship differently in the kingdom and that everyone should be allowed to worship the way they are led if they are not harming anyone.³⁸¹ He organized his reply into fifteen separate paragraphs, many beginning with the conditional “If you do not allow free liberty of conscience.”

The major theme of God’s sovereignty and his providence is prominent in this document. First Burrough pointed out that God alone was the Lord over their consciences. He reminded Charles II and Parliament that Charles I said he did not want his laws “to intrench on God’s sovereignty.”³⁸² Hugh Barbour affirmed that the Quaker doctrine of the sacredness of conscience was their “basic argument for toleration.”³⁸³

³⁷⁸ Bernard Capp, “Cromwell and Religion in a Multi-Faith Society,” *Ibid.*, 109.

³⁷⁹ Bernard Capp, *Ibid.*, 109, 110.

³⁸⁰ John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration*, 169.

³⁸¹ Edward Burrough, *The Case of Free Liberty of Conscience, (Works)*, 814.

³⁸² Edward Burrough, *Ibid.*

³⁸³ Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England* (London: Yale University Press, 1973), 212.

Burrough pointed out that if God was not the ruler of one's faith and worship, then God's authority was usurped. He advised the king and government not to meddle in one's faith in God and one's conscience because woeful effects would follow.³⁸⁴ Persecutions would continue if people were not permitted to have free liberty of conscience in spiritual matters. Quakers would rather suffer than conform to anything contrary to the "light and knowledge."³⁸⁵ True Christians, Burrough maintained, would not persecute for matters of conscience, only false Christians who had a form of godliness and no substance.³⁸⁶ The Quakers' aversion to formality was evident in Burrough's writing.

Concerning the establishment of a state church, Burrough asserted that legislating people to join a state church would cause them to sin and become hypocrites if they were not in agreement. In emphatic language, Burrough stated that those who adhered to the state church under duress were "Children of the Devil." Forcing people to belong to a state church would cause people to be "false-hearted, envious and malicious and would try to free themselves from bondage."³⁸⁷ His assertion that attending a church under duress would encourage hypocrisy was a valid point. Warning of judgement from God, Burrough wrote that it was unreasonable and dangerous to force people to conform to a certain religion, which he claimed was "fallible and uncertain."³⁸⁸ In forcing people to conform to one church, Burrough accused this government of acting similarly to the heathen rulers and false Christians and warned that Charles II's government would be labelled anti-Christian. He quoted the apostles and Jesus who said everyone should be persuaded in his own mind "to do or not to do." By not allowing liberty of conscience,

³⁸⁴ Edward Burrough, *The Case of Free Liberty of Conscience*, 815.

³⁸⁵ Edward Burrough, *Ibid.*, 815.

³⁸⁶ Edward Burrough, *Ibid.*, 816.

³⁸⁷ Edward Burrough, *Ibid.*, 816, 817.

³⁸⁸ Edward Burrough, *Ibid.*, 817.

“you are not following Christ but anti-Christ, heathen rulers and cruel papists.”³⁸⁹ The idea of the separation of spiritual and secular matters was not paramount in the minds of king or parliament at this time, although Burrough had suggested it in some of his answers.

Citing economic loss for the nation, Burrough warned that if liberty of conscience was not allowed there would be an exodus of tradesmen, husbandmen and merchants who would travel to another country where there would be religious tolerance. This impasse would weaken the country and there would be poverty and the enemies would be enriched.³⁹⁰ John Marshall stated that many persecuted Quakers from England “found greater tolerance in the Netherlands” during the Cromwellian years (1650s) and under Charles II from the 1660s-1680s.³⁹¹ Liberty of conscience would permit people to “submit to the higher authority of God alone.”³⁹² According to Burrough, allowing liberty of conscience would not only be beneficial economically but also would promote peace for the nation.

Burrough was more emphatic and dire in his next prediction of the results of not allowing freedom of conscience. He predicted there would be wars and bloodshed and that the government could be overthrown for not allowing God to be the king of one’s conscience. Burrough charged “God will deliver the persecuted and avenge the

³⁸⁹ Edward Burrough, *Ibid.*, 818.

³⁹⁰ Edward Burrough, *The Case of free Liberty of Conscience, (Works)*, 818.

³⁹¹ John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture Religious Intolerance and Arguments for Religious Toleration in Early Modern and ‘Early Enlightenment’ Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 142.

³⁹² John Coffey, “Puritanism and Liberty Revisited The Case for Toleration in the English Revolution” *The Historical Journal* 41 4 (Dec. 1998), 981.

persecutors.”³⁹³ One of the themes of Burrough’s writings is that Quakers do not seek revenge because God would avenge the wrongs which were forced upon people.

Another scenario which could happen if people were not allowed liberty of conscience was that true Christians might be destroyed as heretics. Burrough wrote that if honest and upright people were punished and drunkards and profane people were at liberty that this would be contrary to the laws of Christianity. Burrough invited objections to his rationale, maintaining that his notion of liberty of conscience would guarantee peace and prosperity to the kingdom.³⁹⁴ Burrough predicted that not allowing liberty of conscience would cause true Christians to be accused of heresy.³⁹⁵ Heresy is defined as having opinions contrary to orthodox teaching and belief. Those who opposed the orthodox church in England during this period were usually known as dissenters or non-conformists. Those dissenters who caused unrest were prosecuted and persecuted.

Burrough implored the government to allow freedom of the exercise of pure consciences. He admonished the readers to be gentle, meek and patient because that would foster peace. “Let God have His prerogative and Lordship in the exercise of conscience,” over the inner man while the government dealt with the outward man.³⁹⁶ Burrough reiterated the theme of the separation of secular and sacred jurisdictions in this discussion of religious toleration.

In his dissertation to king and parliament Burrough wrote in a less confrontational manner and was less loquacious than in other writings. His arguments were well organized and numbered and contained a few Scriptural references and apocalyptic

³⁹³ Edward Burrough, *The Case of free Liberty of Conscience (Works)*, 819.

³⁹⁴ Edward Burrough, *The Case of free Liberty of Conscience, (Works)*, 820.

³⁹⁵ Edward Burrough, *Ibid.*, 819.

³⁹⁶ Edward Burrough, *Ibid.*

warnings. Burrough recognized that conscience was under the control of God and thus was sacred. Burrough believed that changing one's religion at the behest of government was insincere, unwholesome and possibly heretical. The suggestion of changing religion could refer to those who were forced to worship at the state church but it could also be applied to Charles II who was lukewarm in his religious observances. He was not attached to Anglicanism although he appeared as such in public while secretly preferring Catholicism. Uglow reports that in domestic affairs, Charles II had to appear to be a "stout Protestant" but in international dealings, "he was a Catholic at heart."³⁹⁷

While Burrough was concentrating his efforts on relieving persecutions by writing to the king and parliament in England, events in New England were unfolding where Quakers were suffering even graver penalties. Quakers had been busy proselytizing in North America since 1655, during the Cromwellian Republic. Braithwaite recorded that the work in America began when Mary Fisher and Ann Austin went to Barbados at the end of 1655. They travelled to Boston during the summer of 1656 and were joined by eight other Quakers who arrived from England.³⁹⁸ From 1657 severe laws were enacted against the Quakers and they were subjected to banishment, whippings, brandings and imprisonment from the Puritan administration in New England.³⁹⁹ In October 1658 the Massachusetts rulers enacted a law whereby Quakers could be executed if they returned following banishment.⁴⁰⁰ Two Quakers who had been banished returned to Boston to test this law.⁴⁰¹ William Robinson and Marmaduke Stephenson were hanged on 27 October

³⁹⁷ Jennifer Uglow, *A Gambling Man*, 197.

³⁹⁸ William Braithwaite, *Beginnings*, 402.

³⁹⁹ William Braithwaite, *Ibid.*, 403.

⁴⁰⁰ William Braithwaite, *Ibid.*, 404.

⁴⁰¹ William Braithwaite, *Ibid.*, 404.

1659. Mary Dyer, who had been formerly banished and returned was reprieved but later hanged in May 1660. William Leddra of Barbados was hanged in March 1661.⁴⁰²

When news of the first of these hangings reached England, Burrough wrote to the parliament on 24 January 1660, advocating a repeal of this law. This letter was delivered directly to the speaker of the House of Commons, William Lenthal.⁴⁰³ The authorities in Boston sent a delegation to Charles II on 11 February 1661 outlining their complaints against the Quakers and trying to justify their actions. Their petition was entitled *The Humble Petition and Adresse of the General Court at Boston in New England*.

Burrough's reply to their petition was published in March 1661, entitled *A Declaration of the Sad and Great Persecution and Martyrdom of the people called Quakers in New England*. In this document Burrough listed all the persecutions Quakers endured in New England and his use of words showed the urgency of the topic.⁴⁰⁴ He began: "Oh King this . . . is very urgent and of great necessity even in behalf of Innocent Blood."⁴⁰⁵ The colonists' letter and Burrough's reply were printed in the same document. Letters to the king were published for the public as well as for his personal use.

Burrough complained that the colony had enacted harsher laws specifically for Quakers although they had not committed any crimes but were persecuted simply for worshipping in a different manner than did members of the Puritan orthodox church.⁴⁰⁶ He proceeded to reply to each paragraph of the New England document to prove that the colonial law-makers were unjust. The Puritans wrote that they had chosen to live in the

⁴⁰² William Braithwaite, *Ibid.*, 404.

⁴⁰³ William Evans, *Memoir*, 344, 350.

⁴⁰⁴ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration of the Sad and Great Persecution and Martyrdom of the People of God, called Quakers in New England, for the worshipping of God*, 3.

⁴⁰⁵ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration of the Sad and Great Persecution*, 3.

⁴⁰⁶ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 3.

wilderness of New England rather than comply with the rigid doctrine of the bishops which they refused to do because they could not comply with a clear conscience.⁴⁰⁷ The Puritans of England and the Quakers both relied on the argument of needing liberty of conscience in matters of religion. It is ironic that Puritans who requested freedom to worship with a clear conscience in England denied this right to the Quakers who came to Boston.

Burrough maintained that the church in Boston worshipped contrary to the Scriptures, not by the Holy Spirit but by the “spirit of persecution, violence and cruelty.”⁴⁰⁸ The New Englanders complained that the Quakers promoted false doctrines, accused them of blasphemy and of being enemies of the government.⁴⁰⁹ Burrough refuted all charges laid against the Quakers and testified that they *did* believe in the Trinity, in Jesus, the Gospel and the Scriptures and tried to teach this doctrine to others. He wrote that the Spirit which inspired the Scriptures was their “rule of life.”⁴¹⁰ He told the accusers that if they had been led by the same Spirit they would not have treated the Quakers the way they had.⁴¹¹ Burrough’s assertion that Quakers believed in the Trinity,⁴¹² Jesus and the Scriptures was challenged by John Bunyan as noted in Chapter 2 of this thesis. Quaker doctrine was so different from the orthodox view that some claimed Quakers were not Christian.

The accusation that Quakers were “open enemies of the government” engendered the reply by Burrough that Quakers merely tried to convert people to God and to

⁴⁰⁷ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 5.

⁴⁰⁸ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 5.

⁴⁰⁹ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 6.

⁴¹⁰ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 7.

⁴¹¹ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 6, 7.

⁴¹² The Trinity is the Christian belief in God, the father, Jesus, the son and the Holy Spirit as three in one essence.

encourage them to live by truth and righteousness. He assured the king that Quakers were “subject to whatever government was set up.”⁴¹³ He accused the New Englanders of flattering the king and refusing to repent of the hangings.⁴¹⁴ The petitioners justified themselves by saying they had no choice but to banish the Quakers whom they claimed were causing so much disturbance both in the “Civil and Ecclesiastical realm.”⁴¹⁵ They claimed that because the Quakers were warned of the consequences but had ignored the warning they therefore caused their own demise.⁴¹⁶ Burrough’s assertion that Quakers were subject to whatever government was in power was debatable. Quakers obeyed the laws which aligned with their consciences and beliefs. At times their consciences were contrary to the nation’s laws.

Burrough’s reply to the accusation that they caused their own demise was that they should have been treated with Christian love and mercy.⁴¹⁷ Both Burrough and the petitioners noted that even though the Quakers were treated badly, their numbers increased.⁴¹⁸ Burrough forcefully reiterated that instead of committing a crime against “[s]tates Civil and Ecclesiastical” that the Quakers only warned sinners to repent. He maintained that they only used conversations, doctrines and practices which were innocent causes. They used no weapons. He warned the petitioners that rather than being safer now from the Quakers, that they had incurred the “justice and terror of the Almighty” as well as the justice of the king and the laws of England. He assured them

⁴¹³ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 7.

⁴¹⁴ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*., 8.

⁴¹⁵ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 8.

⁴¹⁶ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 8, 9.

⁴¹⁷ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 9.

⁴¹⁸ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 9.

that God's justice would prevail.⁴¹⁹ Burrough's theme of the sovereignty of God was evident here as in most of his writings.

Burrough commended the Quakers for obeying God's laws instead of man's laws, even though they knew there was a civil law about banishment on pain of death if they returned.⁴²⁰ He quoted Biblical passages to verify his conclusion. He reminded his audience that the three Hebrew men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego from the Old Testament story in Daniel 3, did not bow down to the image.⁴²¹ Referring to the New Testament, he noted that the apostles did not obey man's laws when they were admonished not to preach.⁴²²

Using flowery language, the Bostonians claimed that the Quakers died because of the "Superadded Presumption" and "Incorrigible Contempt for authority."⁴²³ Burrough's response to this language was that the petitioners were trying to put a "Good Name" on their "Bad Work."⁴²⁴ He stressed that it was because the Quakers were different that they were attacked by the magistrates. He stated that the Quakers could not obey the unjust laws and were moved to come back by the Light of Jesus (or as other Christians defined it, the Holy Spirit); it was not out of malice.⁴²⁵

Burrough claimed there was no just cause for fearing the Quakers. He maintained the court of Boston usurped the authority which was established by Charles I when the colony was formed and used absolute power in dealing with the Quakers.⁴²⁶ The petitioners claimed they feared God and the king and were "zealous of government and

⁴¹⁹ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 9, 10.

⁴²⁰ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 11.

⁴²¹ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 11.

⁴²² Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 11, 12.

⁴²³ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 12.

⁴²⁴ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 13.

⁴²⁵ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 12, 13.

⁴²⁶ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 13.

order” and were not seditious.⁴²⁷ Burrough stated that the king must hear both sides of a story, the accusers and the accused in order to make a just decision.⁴²⁸

Burrough criticized the colonists for enacting laws which were contrary to their patent which stated “[t]hey shall make no Lawes contrary to the Lawes of England.”⁴²⁹ He also complained that their church government was different than the “wholesome Constitution of the Civil Government of England.”⁴³⁰ In reply to the assertion that the colonists were subjected to the yoke and conformity of the bishops in England, Burrough rebutted that they were causing a yoke to be attached to the Quakers.⁴³¹

Burrough gave these considerations to the king to vindicate the Quakers whom he asserted were innocent of the charges laid against them. To prove his point, he attached a list of all the sufferings which the Quakers had endured while in New England.⁴³² In another pamphlet entitled *A Declaration of some part of the sufferings of the people of God*,⁴³³ Burrough was more explicit in his details of the sufferings, counting every offence that was committed against the Quakers. Not only were there physical mutilations, fines, goods distrained and banishments, some Quakers were sold into slavery to Barbados, Virginia or other English plantations. To authenticate these claims, this pamphlet was signed by seven Quaker witnesses who were in England and had endured some of the persecutions meted out to them in New England.⁴³⁴ Burrough

⁴²⁷ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 15.

⁴²⁸ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 14.

⁴²⁹ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 15.

⁴³⁰ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration*, 15.

⁴³¹ Edward Burrough, *Ibid.*, 15, 16.

⁴³² Edward Burrough, *Ibid.*, 16.

⁴³³ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration of some part of the Sufferings of the People of God (in scorn called Quakers) from the Professors in New-England, Only for the Exercise of their Consciences to the Lord, and Obeying and Confessing to the Truth, as in his Light he had discovered it to them. (Works)*, 17-20.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, 19, 20.

implored the king to consider those Quakers who had suffered for conscience sake and hoped for some relief in the persecution.⁴³⁵

In 1661, Burrough had a personal audience with Charles II concerning the hangings in Boston. Charles immediately dictated a mandamus ordering the Massachusetts authorities to stop the executions. This missive was sent to New England by an exiled Quaker, Samuel Shattuck. The Puritan government in Boston complied with the missive, fearing the revocation of their patent by the king. They changed the law in 1661 to “flogging from town to town” for Quakers whom they viewed as disturbing the peace and worshipping contrary to the orthodox church of New England.⁴³⁶

The pamphlet concerning the sufferings of Quakers in New England contained both the Puritans’ argument and Burrough’s replies on 15 March 1660 and was printed in London in 1661. The account of the martyrdom was sent from Plymouth in New England by Peter Peirson.⁴³⁷ This pamphlet also included a letter by Mary Dyer to the General Court in Boston after she received word of the death sentence. George Bishop, an English Quaker, recorded the mandamus from Charles II in his book *New England Judged*. Charles II ordered the Court of Boston to send Quakers to England to be tried.⁴³⁸

The Puritans who settled in the Massachusetts Bay area envisioned a holy Commonwealth with godly rule and religious uniformity. They opposed the toleration of

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁴³⁶ William Braithwaite, *Beginnings*, 405. Samuel Shattuck’s name is spelled Shattock in primary source documents, (*A Declaration of some part of the Sufferings*), 20.

⁴³⁷ Edward Burrough, *A Declaration of Some part of the Sufferings of the People of God.*, Title page and p. 24.

⁴³⁸ George Bishop, *New England Judged . A relation of the cruel and bloody sufferings of the People called Quakers in the jurisdiction chiefly of the Massachusetts, Beginning with the sufferings of William Ledra, whom they murdered and hung upon a tree in Boston, the 14th of the 1st month, 1660 barely for being such a one as is called a Quaker, and coming within their jurisdiction; and ending with the sufferings of Edward Wharton, the 3rd month, 1665. And the remarkable Judgements of God in the Death of John Endicot, Governour, John Norton, High Priest and Humphry Adderton, Major General. (Printed in London, 1667) Reply to A Declaration of the General Court of Massachusetts holden at Boston the 18th of October, 1658, 38.*

dissent, according to Andrew Murphy. They believed that the colony would be judged on its success of building a godly community. Magistrates who tolerated dissent brought judgement upon themselves as well as the entire community. The Puritans claimed that Quakers undermined the order and peace of the community and were thus led by the devil. Quakers, however, claimed their “revelations were infallible.”⁴³⁹ The Puritan idea of true liberty was the liberty to follow the gospel. Magistrates denied they persecuted Quakers for the sake of conscience. They reasoned that if someone believed an erroneous theological position, one could not be righteous or persecuted for righteousness sake. This was known as erroneous conscience, according to the Puritans.⁴⁴⁰

Carla Pestana recorded that after a decade of Quaker growth in New England, the efforts to eradicate them ended by 1661. Colonial authorities realized the futility of establishing a unified church. Some Quakers returned to England after the Restoration and there were fewer Quaker visitors to New England.⁴⁴¹ Pestana also reported that Royal Commissioners visited New England and New York in 1664-65. Charles II disapproved of the abusive treatment of Quakers. The Commissioners delivered an unfavourable report of the Bay colony and Charles II ordered the colonial government to send agents to England in April 1666 to answer charges.⁴⁴² Edward Burrough’s persistent and effective letter-writing had secured a reprieve for the New England Quakers. Burrough died in December 1663 so did not live to witness the reforms which took place in 1664 and 1666, nor the Act of Toleration in 1689.

⁴³⁹ Andrew Murphy, *Conscience and Community Revisiting Toleration and Religious Dissent in Early Modern England and America* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 32, 34, 51, 55.

⁴⁴⁰ Andrew Murphy, *Conscience*, 50.

⁴⁴¹ Carla Peatana, *Quakers and Baptists in Colonial Massachusetts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 39.

⁴⁴² Carla Pestana, *Quakers and Baptists*, 43.

In conclusion, several themes will be noted in Burrough's writings during this period. He was repetitious in many of his works, particularly on the topic of the sovereignty of God. He asserted that God chose rulers of nations and that He could bring judgement upon tyrannical leaders. God was the ruler of everyone's conscience. Burrough believed that God's providence was sure and that God needed to be feared because He was all powerful.⁴⁴³ Burrough stressed the fact that inward spiritual matters were God's prerogative and that outward secular laws were the preserve of the government. This separation of spiritual matters from secular laws led to his endorsement of the idea of the separation of church and state. He noted that ensuring liberty of conscience would foster a peaceful nation. A just society would not punish its citizens for their inward thoughts, only for their outward actions. However, the outward actions of Quakers such as not removing hats were punishable, even though this outward sign was predicated on their inward thoughts. The theme of usurpation was evident in that the Puritans usurped Charles I's laws; Charles II usurped God's throne and Puritans in Massachusetts usurped the rights of Charles II.

Burrough explained his interpretation of liberty of conscience in several of his writings. Quakers viewed liberty of conscience as a sacred right and that it should be available to all. His idea of freedom was that one's conscience needed to be free from sin in order to receive the Spirit of Jesus who teaches the truth. He admitted that the conscience could be misguided and misinformed. This observation was similar to the Puritan idea of erroneous conscience. Although Charles II had some sympathy for the Quakers, it was unclear what his interpretation of liberty of conscience was when he

⁴⁴³ The word fear when used in the expression "to fear God" means to reverence God rather than the emotion of foreboding.

issued the Declaration of Breda in 1660. Leaving the decision on this question to the parliament absolved him of the responsibility of explaining his intentions.

Burrough was not only concerned with religious matters of the nation but also with practical effects such as the economic situation. When some tradesmen were persecuted, they were liable to leave the country, according to Burrough, causing a hardship to the nation. A peaceful nation was more conducive to trade. Burrough maintained that it was important to tolerate differences in religious matters to avoid heretical behaviour and hypocrisy.

Burrough issued warnings to authorities for unrighteous acts, claiming that the Quakers were righteous people and obeyed all the laws, even though the laws were interpreted by them as unjust. The promise in the Declaration of Breda stated that there would be liberty to tender consciences on condition that the peace of the nation was not disturbed, providing the parliament agreed. However, as De Krey pointed out, the Quakers and other sectarians were feared and this unrest was a major factor in the haste in calling a king. The so-called Clarendon Code regulated dissenters after the Restoration of Charles II. The Quaker Act was especially harmful to them.

Burrough's writings succeeded in having Charles II write the mandamus to the General Court of Boston which curtailed some of the persecution there. The fact that he arranged an audience with Charles II and that people were available to deliver the letter to Boston and that a captain was ready with a ship and could sail without freight must have been interpreted as the providential care of God.⁴⁴⁴ Burrough displayed perseverance, audacity, confidence, enthusiasm and compassion in his attempt to convince authorities that Quakers needed to be tolerated. His admonition for the

⁴⁴⁴ William Braithwaite, *The Beginnings*, 405.

separation of religious and secular matters and the toleration of differences were part of the profusion of writings and developments which laid the ground-work for our religious freedom today. His important contribution to this benefit should not be taken lightly. Burrough's battle for lives was at least partially successful.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

One of the new religious persuasions introduced in the 1650s was the Quaker sect. The English Civil Wars were caused largely by the religious turmoil between the established Church of England and other religious groups such as the Presbyterians. Different interpretations of Scripture allowed for the flourishing of many new radical sects. Some, such as the Diggers, Ranters, Fifth Monarchy Men and others, were based on philosophical tenets, millennial prophesies, communism and/or social ideas. It is noteworthy that Quakers are one of the few groups still in existence of all the multiple radical religious sects begun in seventeenth-century England. Part of the reason for their survival was the large volume of written works by Quakers. Edward Burrough and many others brought attention to Quaker doctrine by their published works and specifically drew attention to the fact that Quakers were persecuted.

Burrough debated with the prominent preacher John Bunyan and boldly arranged a personal interview with Republican leader Oliver Cromwell and later with Charles II in the Restoration period. Burrough's perseverance, enthusiasm and steady advocacy for the relief of persecution for the Quakers was a catalyst in the long battle for religious toleration for everyone. During this early period of Quakerism, new converts displayed an enthusiasm and energy which is common to new religious sects with innovative ideas. Although based on Christianity, Quakers developed a radical doctrine which differed enormously from commonly held Christian beliefs to the point that some accused them of not being Christian at all. The importance of religious experience is tantamount to understanding Quaker uniqueness. Both George Fox and Edward Burrough were searching for a more intense spiritual relationship at the time and found the doctrine of

the inner light satisfied their longing. Both related their spiritual experiences in their writings.

This thesis has examined many of Burrough's published works during his letter-writing campaign in support of his peers. Burrough's grounds for his toleration argument were that Quakers should be afforded liberty of conscience because they obeyed the Light of Christ. This theme is repeated throughout his correspondence and in all chapters of this thesis. After a brief summary of each chapter, a more comprehensive definition of both toleration and liberty of conscience as they were viewed by John Locke, a philosopher and contemporary of Burrough, and modern historians, will follow. How these definitions relate to Edward Burrough's arguments will be highlighted.

Chapter 2 of this thesis, "The Battle of Words," outlined the theological debate between Edward Burrough and John Bunyan. This clarifies the reason Burrough was advocating so intensely for liberty of conscience. Equating the conscience with the Spirit of God, who informs one of right and wrong behaviour, Burrough elevated conscience to a divine perspective. The conscience needed to be free in order to submit to God's leading. The divine nature of the conscience as obeyed by the Quakers gave them the assurance that they did not need to be policed because they could discern the will of God as revealed in their consciences. Burrough advocated for liberty of conscience to relieve Quakers of persecution.

Bunyan and Burrough debated epistemologically as each man expounded on his understanding of how to know the truth of the Gospel. Bunyan relied on the Scriptures while Burrough believed that God delivered His truth to individuals through revelation in their conscience. Bunyan disagreed with Burrough on several points of doctrine. Bunyan

adhered to the Calvinist doctrine of predestination while Burrough believed that everyone could be saved. Bunyan asserted that the Scriptures were reliable whereas Burrough was less trusting of Scripture because it was “other men’s words.”⁴⁴⁵ Both agreed that formalism in the church worship service distracted one from true devotion. Quakers objected to educated clergy and the maintenance of clergy by the tithe system, whereas Bunyan was not averse to educated clergy but asserted that he was not paid to preach. Bunyan disagreed with Burrough that everyone had the Spirit of Christ because he asserted that Scripture stated that some had a natural spirit and did not have the Spirit of Christ.

Chapter 3, “The Battle for Laws,” reviewed Burrough’s correspondence to Oliver and Richard Cromwell and Parliament until 1659, requesting liberty of conscience for Quakers. The Instrument of Government of December 1653 followed by the Humble Petition and Advice of 1657 stipulated that Protestant Christianity was to be the public profession of faith for the nation. Protestant teachers were to be available to teach religion, the collection of tithes was to be continued and those who did not adhere to the public profession of faith were to be gently persuaded. Clause 37 stated that those who had “faith in God by Jesus Christ,” even though they differed in matters of doctrine, worship and discipline were to be protected in spite of their religious persuasion.⁴⁴⁶ This liberty was only valid if the participants kept the peace. This presented a problem for Quakers who caused disruptions at church services, ignored social mores of hat honour

⁴⁴⁵ Thomas Luxon, *Literal Figures Puritan Allegory and the Restoration Crisis in Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 133.

⁴⁴⁶ *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum*, volume 2 (1649-1660), 821, 822.

and displayed erratic behaviour at times. Catholics, Episcopalians and licentious individuals were exempt from the liberty.⁴⁴⁷

Burrough's main theme of his argument for requesting liberty of conscience of Cromwell was that it was their basic right. He further argued that the Quakers were law-abiding. However, as noted above, Quakers did disturb church services, defied traditional manners of respect such as bowing and giving 'right of way' to social superiors. Some displayed erratic behaviour. Legislation was enacted later to try to curb this threat. Burrough reminded Cromwell and Parliament that the religious reformation that had begun was not completed and that Quakers were still being persecuted. Burrough believed that Quakers followed the Light of Christ in their conscience and as such liberty of conscience for them meant the freedom to submit to God's will. He urged Cromwell not to usurp God's authority by making laws contrary to God's laws. The sovereignty of God and God's providence were also consistent themes in Burrough's correspondence. Another of Burrough's themes was that there should be separation of secular and sacred jurisdictions, advising state authorities not to interfere with one's spiritual life. Cromwell's Instrument of Government provided protection only for those he perceived as godly, particular people of his choice: the Independents, Presbyterians and Baptists. Cromwell envisioned a unified state church, not a plethora of separate dissenting congregations.

Chapter 3 also includes Oliver Cromwell's church settlement plan which included: the Major-Generals, who were to provide security to the state and encourage godliness and the Triers and Ejector committees, which examined well qualified clergymen to teach the Protestant religion. This plan may have worked well, had the

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

Protectorate lasted more than six years. Following Oliver Cromwell's death in September 1658 and the short political career of his son Richard, England was in a state of anarchy. At this point Charles II's proposal in the Declaration of Breda was accepted by parliament and he was invited back to the throne in 1660.

Chapter 4, "The Battle to Save Lives," analysed Edward Burrough's correspondence to Charles II after the latter's Restoration to the throne in 1660. Burrough also answered questions supposedly proposed by Charles II's first minister, Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon. Burrough reiterated his main themes in his replies to the questioner: the sovereignty of God, his definitions of liberty of conscience and his espousal of the idea of the separation of sacred and secular matters. Also included in this chapter is Burrough's plea for the relief of capital punishment for Quakers in Boston where four Quakers had been hanged in 1659, 1660 and 1661.

Burrough's letters and pamphlets were replete with warnings of utter destruction if God's laws were not followed. He also predicted dire consequences for the nation's leaders if they did not adhere to holy living and obey God's laws. He reminded Charles of the promised reformation that had not been completed. In this correspondence, Burrough gave practical suggestions that the economic situation of the nation would improve and there would be peace and prosperity if people were given liberty of conscience. Burrough asserted that if people were given liberty of conscience, wars and bloodshed would cease.

Burrough advocated separation of religious and secular matters in his writings to Charles II, maintaining that the king should rule over affairs of state and not meddle in spiritual matters. Burrough informed the king that Quakers would not bow to

governmental rules about their religious practices. Burrough wrote that the Boston Puritans had usurped Charles II's authority by adding their own laws instead of continuing with the laws of England, which were stipulated under their patent agreement. He urged Charles II not to usurp God's prerogative by making laws contrary to God's laws. Burrough's personal audience with Charles II along with the correspondence addressed to him prompted the king to issue a mandamus which halted the capital punishment of Quakers in New England. Chapter 4 also outlines the Restoration plan for regulating dissenters, the so-called Clarendon Code, which was particularly injurious to Quakers.

In Chapter 4 Burrough expounded on a constant theme: he was convinced that one's conscience needed to be free in order to receive the Spirit of Christ who teaches truth. He viewed liberty of conscience as a sacred right that should be available to all. Arguing that God was within the Quakers and that they were chosen by God gave Burrough the assurance that he had divine help in requesting liberty of conscience. Burrough believed intensely that it was his God-given duty to warn political leaders of disaster if they did not rule by God's laws.

The importance and the intensity of the debates about toleration will be highlighted by turning first to Burrough's contemporary, philosopher John Locke (1632-1704). Locke wrote that the care of souls is not the duty or jurisdiction of the civil magistrate. He asserted that the business of civil government needed to be separate from religion. Locke agreed with the Arminian doctrine of free will, and that people needed to be free to choose which religion they wished to follow.⁴⁴⁸ Locke wrote that it would

⁴⁴⁸ John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (1689) (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing, 1950), 18, 19, 29.

offend God if church doctrine, rites and order of worship were imposed on people.

Liberty to choose was necessary “if the end of religion was to please God.”⁴⁴⁹

Burrough’s writings agreed rather broadly with Locke’s recommendation of the separation of religious and secular matters. Burrough also agreed that people should be free to follow the religion of their choice, preventing hypocrisy and heretical behaviour.

Locke also had some opinions about liberty of conscience which agreed with Burrough’s suggestions, although each may not have read the other’s works. On the subject of liberty of conscience, Locke wrote that liberty of conscience was everyone’s right.⁴⁵⁰ Locke was distinguishing between the ideology of toleration and the concept of liberty of conscience with its religious connotations. He defended those who met together in assemblies for Christian worship and asserted that it was very unlikely that religious assemblies would be the venue for clandestine factions. Locke wrote during the 1660s, so it is particularly relevant for this thesis because he was responding to the intolerance which was manifested in his day. It is also interesting to note that Locke was influenced by the English theologian John Owen who advocated freedom of worship.⁴⁵¹ John Owen was formerly Oliver Cromwell’s chaplain and was instrumental in framing Cromwell’s church settlement.⁴⁵²

Locke observed that matters of faith were neither “provable nor disprovable;” they were only “believable or unbelievable.”⁴⁵³ For this reason, he concluded that no one should impose one’s faith upon another. He claimed that people did not need to know

⁴⁴⁹ John Locke, *A Letter*, 36.

⁴⁵⁰ John Locke, *A Letter*, 52.

⁴⁵¹ John Locke, *A Letter*, 5.

⁴⁵² Blair Worden, “Toleration and the Cromwellian Protectorate” in *Persecution and Toleration*, W. J. Sheils, Ed. (Great Britain: Basil Blackwell, 1984), 203.

⁴⁵³ John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, 7.

everything but only those things which involved one's conduct. Locke pleaded for mutual toleration among groups on pragmatic grounds.⁴⁵⁴ Burrough also argued for toleration on pragmatic grounds which included economic benefits and peace and prosperity.

Burrough's debate with Bunyan is an example of matters of faith being provable or disprovable and/or believable or unbelievable. Bunyan stated that he proved Christian soteriology by Scripture, while Burrough received his theology by revelation. By the end of the debate neither man had convinced the other that his position was true.

Locke's conclusion that church and state should be separate was reached by a theory of "political dualism" because he claimed that man's actions were subject to both church and state.⁴⁵⁵ However, he wrote that each jurisdiction needed to maintain its own limits so as not to intrude on the other's sphere. Locke made this assertion from his position as an Episcopalian. He disagreed with the Puritan idea of a Christian Commonwealth, which was Cromwell's intention.⁴⁵⁶ Burrough argued for the separation of religious and secular matters on grounds that the king or those in authority should not usurp God's prerogative as king over one's conscience. Locke and Burrough both advocated separation of religious and secular jurisdictions but each came to a different conclusion and by a different process of reasoning or revelation.

Turning to the historiography concerning toleration, the writings of modern historians, Andrew Murphy, Blair Worden and others will be referenced. Andrew Murphy wrote that the "philosophical, pragmatic, theological and political grounds for

⁴⁵⁴ John Locke, *A Letter*, 7, 8.

⁴⁵⁵ John Locke, *A Letter*, 8.

⁴⁵⁶ John Locke, *A Letter*, 9.

toleration” were debated as never before between 1630 and 1690.⁴⁵⁷ Edward Burrough’s writings have mirrored every category of Murphy’s summary. Philosophically, Burrough argued that toleration was a basic right of freeborn English people. The seventeenth-century philosopher John Locke advocated toleration but only for certain groups. He claimed those whose opinions undermined the interests of the community; those who were intolerant of others; atheists and those who served a foreign power should not be tolerated.⁴⁵⁸ In stipulating these categories not to be tolerated, Locke was showing the same prejudices which Worden noted of seventeenth-century law-givers: that toleration could engender license; that it was a negative concept; that it was not edifying and could encourage heresy.⁴⁵⁹ To deny toleration to those who serve foreign powers was a practical idea because loyalty to one’s country is crucial in time of war. However, the ‘foreign powers’ Locke had chiefly in mind was the Pope, and thus he denied toleration for Catholics.

The theological grounds for toleration were debated by John Bunyan and Edward Burrough. Although each had different interpretations of Scripture, they did have some common tenets of belief such as the need to obey God’s will and the need to ensure liberty of conscience. Whether conscience was interpreted as being led by the Light of Christ as Quakers believed or the Spirit of Christ, as Bunyan believed, both asserted that one should not be persecuted for following one’s conscience and submitting to God’s will. Bunyan and Burrough’s debate consisted of an epistemological argument on knowing the truth of the Gospel. Burrough maintained the truth was obtained by

⁴⁵⁷ Andrew R. Murphy, *Conscience and Community in Early Modern England and America* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 6.

⁴⁵⁸ John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, 10.

⁴⁵⁹ Blair Worden, “Toleration and the Cromwellian Protectorate” in *Persecution and Toleration*, W. J. Shiels, Ed., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 200.

revelation from God through listening and obeying the Light of Christ through the conscience. Bunyan believed the truth of the Gospel was conveyed by reading Scripture and by faith in the saving power of Jesus. Burrough argued that Quakers did not need to be policed and persecuted because they were led by the revelation of Jesus, thus their consciences were holy and sacred. However, when Quakers' interpretation of God's will led them to become conscientious objectors and encouraged civil disobedience, they became involved with civil law.

The political grounds for toleration were apparent when Burrough wrote to the political leaders Oliver Cromwell, parliament and Charles II. Not only would allowing liberty of conscience bring peace to the nation, according to Burrough, and relieve the Quakers of persecution but also it would encourage the economic situation of the nation and make England great. Burrough maintained that God had chosen England to be great because the nation would abolish anti-Christ.

Andrew Murphy claims that New England Puritans were afraid that toleration would lead to public disorder and anarchy. Puritans feared Quakers because of the latter's public display of erratic behaviour and because Quakers portrayed their revelations as infallible. Philosophical arguments stressed the "fallenness of human nature."⁴⁶⁰ New England Puritans accused the Quakers of erroneous conscience, claiming Quakers caused their own demise. This was cited as an example of the fallenness of human nature. Erroneous conscience occurs when an individual interprets God's revelations incorrectly, leading one to exhibit behaviour which would be contrary to Christian morality. Burrough approved of Quakers' actions because he said they were obeying God's laws and not man's laws.

⁴⁶⁰ Andrew Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 155.

Andrew Murphy quotes William Penn who wrote that force would not alter one's beliefs. Forcing individuals to worship a certain way or to attend a designated church encourages hypocrisy, according to Penn, a Quaker.⁴⁶¹ William Penn also wrote that "belief is a function of the understanding, not the will."⁴⁶² Locke and Penn both believed that because conscience was a faculty of the understanding, not the will, that one could not be coerced into believing one thing or another.⁴⁶³ Burrough believed that the conscience depended upon God's will, not man's will.

Andrew Murphy reports that in the seventeenth century, conscience represented the voice of God within but it also implied a degree of knowledge, not just opinion. This formulation of conscience enabled the person to know what God required so one could distinguish right from wrong.⁴⁶⁴ This was Burrough's argument as well, that the Light of Christ informed one's conscience so they would know right from wrong.⁴⁶⁵ Burrough did admit that on occasion some have interpreted God's message in error.⁴⁶⁶ However, Murphy reports that Quakers claimed that their revelations were infallible.⁴⁶⁷ Murphy notes that Cromwell envisioned a "religion of conscience, not of ritual."⁴⁶⁸ Both Cromwell and Burrough had an aversion to formalism. Murphy states that Cromwell's system of religious toleration provided more religious freedom than had ever existed previously in England.⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁶¹ Andrew Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 156, 174.

⁴⁶² Andrew Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 174.

⁴⁶³ Andrew Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 228.

⁴⁶⁴ Andrew Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 227.

⁴⁶⁵ Edward Burrough, *The True Faith of the Gospel of Peace*, 144, 145.

⁴⁶⁶ Edward Burrough, *A Testimony Concerning True Liberty of Conscience (Works)*, 444.

⁴⁶⁷ Andrew Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 55.

⁴⁶⁸ Andrew Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 116.

⁴⁶⁹ Andrew Murphy, *Conscience and Community*, 120.

Turning to Blair Worden's work on toleration and liberty of conscience, he asserts that the topic was serious. Worden cites William Haller, who quoted the seventeenth-century divine John Goodwin's idea that tolerating heresy was destructive to the soul. To usurp God's authority threatened the lifeline of salvation.⁴⁷⁰ If heresy is defined as having opinions or beliefs contrary to the orthodox church, it could mean that all dissenters were guilty of heresy. Locke wrote that if one is following Christ and His doctrine, that one is not a heretic.⁴⁷¹ According to Locke's definition, Quakers were not heretics although they had been accused as such.

Blair Worden points out that Puritans blamed Arminianism, the philosophy of free will and free thought for the idea that there should be toleration. Worden states that the prominent modern historians, S. R. Gardiner, W. K. Jordan and H. R. Trevor-Roper all argued that the development of toleration was linked to Arminian reaction against Calvinist belief in election.⁴⁷² Worden asserts that Puritans were hostile towards toleration because it was a negative concept. However, Worden wrote that the Puritan argument was "not about toleration but about liberty of conscience."⁴⁷³ He stated that there is a difference between allowing one to do as they liked, which could lead to licentiousness, versus permitting one to follow beliefs held by the conscience.⁴⁷⁴ This is the freedom of conscience that Burrough was requesting for his Quakers. Liberty of conscience would allow one to be different but not heretical because messages to the conscience from God were sacred and holy, but were also subjective.

⁴⁷⁰ Blair Worden, "Toleration and the Cromwellian Protectorate", 201.

⁴⁷¹ John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, 15.

⁴⁷² Blair Worden, "Toleration," 203.

⁴⁷³ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 209.

⁴⁷⁴ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 209.

Worden points out that the Members of Parliament, in discussing Nayler's punishment, approved of liberty of conscience but not toleration.⁴⁷⁵ Charged with blasphemy, Nayler could have been executed under the Blasphemy Acts of 1648 or 1650 that had not been repealed. However, not wanting to provide Quakers with a martyr, parliament acted on its own authority and assigned its own punishment for Nayler.⁴⁷⁶

Worden writes that the Cromwellian Instrument of Government of 1653 was "hastily compiled and clumsily worded."⁴⁷⁷ The Instrument showed Cromwell's narrow conception of liberty of conscience, according to Worden. The document advised liberty only for Cromwell's chosen.⁴⁷⁸ Quakers were ridiculed for their disruptive behaviour even though Burrough claimed they were law-abiding. The Instrument of Government stated that the Christian religion was to be the public profession of England. This would imply that Catholics, who were also Christian, should be included. However, they were explicitly not included in the narrow liberty afforded by Cromwell. The Humble Petition and Advice of 1657 clarified the definition of the word Christian when it stated that it was the Protestant Christian religion which was to be the public profession of faith for the nation.⁴⁷⁹ This stipulation definitely eliminated Catholics.

Another of Burrough's main themes was the providence of God. Worden also writes about this topic and clarified some of the mystery which surrounds this concept. Worden states that seventeenth-century Englishmen believed in providence.⁴⁸⁰

Providence was the cause if the monarch was unseated, or battles won or lost. Along

⁴⁷⁵ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 209.

⁴⁷⁶ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 221, 222.

⁴⁷⁷ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 216.

⁴⁷⁸ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 211, 223, 212.

⁴⁷⁹ Gardiner: *Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution*, 4.

<http://www.constitution.org/eng/conpur102.htm>

⁴⁸⁰ Blair Worden, "Providence and Politics in Cromwellian England" in *Past and Present* Nov. 109 1 (1985), 55.

with pleasant happenings, unpleasant acts of providence were interpreted as judgements, afflictions or trials which were meant to correct or chastise the Christian.⁴⁸¹ Calvinist belief taught that “nothing cometh by chance but whatsoever cometh to pass in the world cometh by the secret providence of God.”⁴⁸² Cromwell’s death on the 3 September 1658, was seen as providential because it happened on the anniversary of his successful battles at Dunbar and Worcester during the English Civil Wars.⁴⁸³

The theologian, John Owen, urged his followers not to be complacent about recognizing God’s providence in victorious battles. He preached that free will was a “threat to providentialism.”⁴⁸⁴ God’s providence was believed to be responsible not only for military successes but also in the appointment of state leaders. Worden reports that Oliver Cromwell had an “air of providential destiny around him.”⁴⁸⁵ When Richard Cromwell became the successor to his father, he claimed he was designated to that position “by the providence of God.”⁴⁸⁶ Worden points out that the secular form of providentialism is known as determinism.⁴⁸⁷

Worden reports that Andrew Murphy noted that it was the fear of divine punishment in 1656 which led the Cromwellian Parliament to issue harsh punishment on James Nayler because if they did not, they feared God’s judgement. Fear of divine punishment upon England was also a factor in the regicide of Charles I, which was seen as the only way to appease God’s wrath.⁴⁸⁸ Burrough lived in this seventeenth-century milieu of belief in the providence of God and of millennial eschatology. His writings

⁴⁸¹ Blair Worden, “Providence and Politics in Cromwellian England,” 55, 61.

⁴⁸² Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 63.

⁴⁸³ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 65.

⁴⁸⁴ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 66.

⁴⁸⁵ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 81.

⁴⁸⁶ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 57.

⁴⁸⁷ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 98.

⁴⁸⁸ Blair Worden, *Ibid.*, 98, 99.

reflect the spirit of his time and also portray his own intense beliefs and concern for his fellow Quakers. Although he did not live to see a relief in Quaker persecution, himself a victim of the persecution he denounced, his letter-writing was instrumental in bringing the plight of Quakers to the rulers of his day.

Modern historians have written extensively on the topic of toleration and liberty of conscience. Perez Zagorin⁴⁸⁹ and John Coffey⁴⁹⁰ have written that the conditions in the seventeenth century laid the ground-work for the evolution of toleration. Alexandra Walsham's book argued that toleration and persecution were closely interwoven and that pluralism replaced uniformity after the Reformation. John Marshall argued that the writings of intellectuals such as John Locke and others from the 1680s and 1690s fostered the idea of toleration. Marshall favoured the early Enlightenment period as the impetus for promoting toleration. J. C. Davis' article expounded on the theme that there was shared language between liberty of conscience and obedience to civil law without hypocrisy. Gary De Krey's article elaborated on the idea of the separation of church and state; that Christianity was reasonable and that liberty of conscience was essential for the advancement of truth.

The history of toleration has had a long and involved evolution from the seventeenth century to its current definition. The topic of religious toleration is relevant to the present day with the multiplicity of new religious groups which have arrived in Canada recently. The fear which was experienced in England during the seventeenth century will not be similar to our country but the ideology of toleration, which will have a

⁴⁸⁹ Perez Zagorin, *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

⁴⁹⁰ John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558-1689* (London: Longman, 2000)

different connotation in this century, will be just as crucial as it was then. That toleration is not licence is just as apt today as it was in seventeenth-century England.

This thesis has shown that toleration is a separate entity from liberty of conscience. Although both can be legislated, liberty of conscience is subjective and cannot be policed. Legislation concerning toleration during this period included the Instrument of Government in 1653, the Humble Petition and Advice in 1657 and the Act of Toleration in 1689. As time progressed there were several changes in the ideology of toleration.

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Burrough, Edward. *The True Faith of the Gospel of Peace Contended for, in the Spirit of Meekness; and the Mystery of Salvation (Christ within the Hope of Glory) Vindicated in the Spirit of Love, Against the secret opposition of John Bunyan a professed Minister in Bedfordshire. Or an Answer to his Book, called, Some Gospel Truths opened, etc. Wherein also he hath mixed many Lyes and Slanders, and hath secretly gainsayed the Way of Truth, and Doctrine of Salvation, under the account of Error and Heresie, as the Generation of chief Priests ever did. Or, A Return of Truth in simplicity, in the denial of his false Accusations, and his dark Vail of false Reproaches taken off, and the Innocency of the Upright appearing. With some Queries given forth for him to answer, that Truth may further appear and Deceit may be ashamed, where ever it is found.* Included in *Memorable Works of a son of thunder.*

Burrough, Edward. *Truth defended, or, Certain accusations answered cast upon us who are called Quakers by the teachers of the world, and the people of this generation with a clear discovery who are the false prophets and when they came in, and how they may bee known, and who they are that deny Christ and that preach another gospel . . . /by one who is a labourer in the vineyard.* Edward Burrough. London: Printed for Thomas Simmons, 1656.

Burrough, Edward. *Truth (the Strongest of all) Witnessed forth in the Spirit of Truth, against all Deceit: and Pleading in Righteousness its own cause, to the understanding of the Simple, against a very great number of lyes, slanders, perverting of the Scriptures, contradictions and false damnable doctrines, held forth by the Independents. And In particular one John Bunion, (one of Gogs Army) in two severall Bookes put forth by him, against the despised scattered People called Quakers. And is a REPLY unto his second book, called A Vindication, etc., Wherein what was wanting in his former of fulfilling wickednesse is now appeared, by his adding sin unto sin, against God and*

against his own soule. And this is to cleer the Truth from above 100 of John Bunions foule dirty lyes and slanders; By a friend of the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus; and not as it is in mens carnal apprehensions. EDWARD BURROUGH, London: Printed for Giles Calvert, at the Black-Spread Eagle, near the West end of Paules, 1657.

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