

end of each church school year, but it is hoped that most of them will serve for a longer period of time. Ex-officio members will be the minister, Director of Christian Education, and superintendent of the church school.

The library is making a contribution to church library growth and interest in nearby areas. A clinic for church librarians in the Mecklenburg Presbytery was held in our church about two years ago for the exchange of ideas and experiences.

Other librarians in the area come to our library for help in classifying books and have asked us to visit them when they were starting libraries. Our chief advice to them in establishing a library is to have the whole church at heart and to choose a key location so that as people pass they will be motivated to *stop, look, and read*.

A QUAKER LIBRARY

By

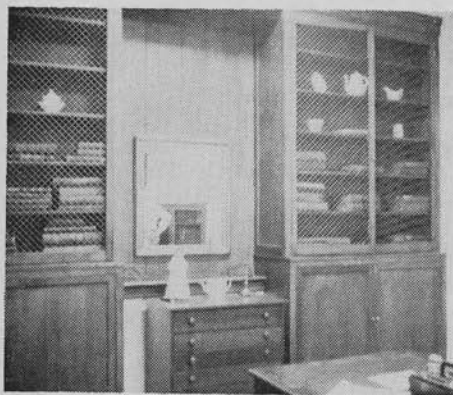
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Part of the genealogy collection in the outer room of the Quaker Collection is shown above. Picture at left is of George Cox, founder of the Society of Friends. The hat belonged to Nathan Hunt, founder of New Garden Boarding School.

Of all special collections in libraries on church-related college campuses throughout North Carolina, and indeed throughout the entire South, the Quaker Collection in the Guilford College Campus Library at Greensboro is probably unique.

1. Mr. Poole is director of libraries at Guilford College, Greensboro.



The above photo shows a section of the shelves and cabinets in the inner room of the Quaker Collection. The chest in the center of the photo contains the card catalog.



This view shows a section of shelving inside the vault which houses many valuable Quaker materials. Because of their size and delicate condition, volumes stored in the vault are placed on their side much like the codices of ancient libraries.

The claim to such singularity stems from the nature of the college itself. Guilford College is the only college in the South which is affiliated with the Society of Friends, or Quakers, as members of the Society are known to many. In the nation there are less than a dozen colleges which have special Quaker collections similar to the one at Guilford College. These colleges are all Quaker institutions located in New York, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Ohio, Iowa, Kansas, and Oregon. "No denomination has been more careful of its records or more interested in preserving its literature than have Friends. Thus, the normal Quaker college has a large deposit of its own books and records to care for."²

Despite its limited appeal through the many years since its founding, Quakerism has produced quantities of documents, manuscripts, monographs, and periodicals. It is mainly with these materials that a Quaker collection concerns itself.

Quakerism is an extension of the Puritanism which grew out of the turbulent era of the Long Parliament of 1640-60. The founder of the Society, which now has only 202,000 members in the world, was George Fox.³ Fox was considered an iconoclast and somewhat of a heretic in the England of his day, and for his preaching and beliefs he spent several years in prison. Despite such persecution, his teachings spread to the American colonies where followers of his doctrine met with persecution in New England and Virginia. Fox visited North Carolina in 1672, and records of the first Quakers in North Carolina date from 1671.

A primary concern of Quakers has always been the education of their children in the Quaker tradition. As the Quaker population of North Carolina grew after 1671 and spread across the state from the east into the Piedmont, so too grew the desire for a Quaker school to educate the children. By 1834 the concern for education led Friends to initiate plans for the founding of New Garden Boarding School close to New Garden

Monthly Meeting, six miles west of Greensboro.* In 1837 the school opened its doors. In 1888 the boarding school became Guilford College, the first degrees being granted at the 1889 commencement.

From the earliest days of the operation of the school, and later the college, efforts were made to collect writings published by or about the Society of Friends and its members.

By 1885 the collection of special materials had become quite valuable, either through purchase or donations. In the same year disaster struck when a fire destroyed the class building housing the vault in which the collection was kept:

*The records, some deeds and other papers were in the safe. The leather backs were baked and peeled from the records, and the edges were so charred that they crumbled at the slightest handling: This experience taught Friends a hard lesson. They have since erected a fireproof vault on the campus . . .*⁴

After the fire of 1885, the new vault and its contents changed locations at least four times, ranging from one end of the campus, through a graveyard, to the present library building, which was erected in 1909. In 1964 an addition to the library building provided new and enlarged quarters for the collection.

Presently the Quaker Collection occupies two rooms, a fireproof vault, and a caged stack area, which together contain a total area of approximately 1,500 square feet. Entry to the collection is via the Main Reading Room.

The outer room of the collection serves as the entrance and contains a genealogical research collection comprising approximately 200 volumes. The keystone of this collection is the several volumes of William Wade Hinshaw's *Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy*. In addition to the genealogies, the room contains a growing collection of distinctive volumes in Guilford's Library. This room also contains furniture of historic interest, pieces once used in the boarding school, as well as pieces given by interested friends. On the walls are two collections of framed pictures, one of pictures and documents relating to the North Carolina Yearly Meeting and the early history of the college, the other of a set of etchings made to illustrate George Fox's *Journal*.

The inner room of the collection houses the curator's office and the entrance to the vault. For many years, Mrs. Dorothy Lloyd Gilbert Thorne has served as the able curator of the collection. It is she and her assistant, Mrs. Treva Mathis, who are primarily responsible for the conspicuous growth of this collection during the past several years. Their solicitations, as well as those of the former college librarian, Katherine C. Ricks, helped insure the deposit in the collection of the records, manuscripts, and minutes of nearly all the Quaker Meetings in North Carolina. Around the walls of the inner room are shelves and cabinets containing rare Quaker books, miscellaneous papers and pamphlets, manuscript items, microfilms of minutes and letters dating from 1645, and pictures indexed by a card catalog which is also housed in this room.

The vault adjoining the inner room houses the college archives, early account books of New Garden Boarding School, and, as previously mentioned, materials from many

*NOTE: The local congregation is usually a Monthly Meeting. Groups of Monthly Meetings form Quarterly Meetings which hold business sessions four times a year. There are eight Quarterly Meetings in North Carolina. These form a Yearly Meeting, or the state organization, which in turn forms Five Years Meetings, now called Friends United Meeting.

Quaker Meetings throughout North Carolina, deposited here for maximum access and safe storage.

Beyond the inner room is a caged stack area housing biographical and topical works on Quakers and Quakerism, as well as printed minutes of Meetings in other states, bound periodicals, and senior theses written at Guilford College.

In storage in other areas of the Library proper are many costumes and artifacts of Quaker origin. These are also indexed in the card catalog in the inner room of the collection. In its entirety the Quaker Collection contains over 500 manuscript volumes and over 2,500 monographic and periodical volumes.

In addition to the materials indexed in the card catalog within the inner room of the collection, the main card catalog contains entries for all monographic and periodical items in the collection. Classification of the materials is generally in the area 289.6 and expansions thereof, a system devised by Earlham College, a Quaker institution in Richmond, Indiana.

Presently the collection has no full-time staff. The curator, who also recommends acquisitions for the collection, is present eleven hours per week and upon demand, in addition to serving as chairman of the English Department. Classification is performed by Mrs. Treva Mathis, who, in addition to duties as reference librarian, has tended this responsibility for the past decade.

Except for the monographs housed in the cage area, none of the materials in the collection may circulate. Admittance to and general surveillance of the collection is provided by the public services staff in the absence of the curator.

The collection is used by historical and genealogical researchers who come from all points of the globe. In 1965-1966, 214 people visited and performed genealogical research in the materials of the collection. Some theses are researched here. Presently, one faculty member is researching his doctoral dissertation in the collection.

Clerks and members from various Quaker Meetings often use materials which their meetings have deposited here. Nearly as numerous as the visitors to the collection are the research questions which arrive by mail. As far as possible, these are answered immediately unless they demand research too extensive to be handled by the staff.

If the rising interest in family genealogies and the increased use of the Quaker Collection at Guilford College in the past few years are indicative of any kind of a trend, this collection, though modest in comparison to many larger ones, will make a distinctive niche for itself during the next few years in any list of special collections in the southeastern United States.

FOOTNOTES

²Gilbert, Dorothy Lloyd. *Guilford: A Quaker College*. (Greensboro, N. C.: Printed for Guilford College by J. J. Stone & Company), 1937, p. 288.

³Milligan, Edward Hyslop. "Friends, Society of." *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1960), IX, 938.

⁴Weeks, Stephen B. *Southern Quakers and Slavery*. ("Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science," Extra Volume XV), Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1896, p. 350.