

What is Experiment with Light?

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The Experiment with Light Network

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The Experiment with Light Network

www.experiment-with-light.org.uk

Preface

This pamphlet is based on a talk I gave at a conference on 'the future of Experiment with Light' at Glenthorne, Grasmere, in 2011. The aim of the conference was to discern the next stage for the Experiment now that so many people were becoming involved in it and wanting to spread it. My talk was meant to provide some background to this discernment by describing where we had got to with this practice and where we might need to go next. But part of this was describing what the Experiment itself was – any suggestions as to how we might develop it would have to bear in mind the nature of this unusual practice, this 'strange animal', as we affectionately called it. There were indications already that some eager practitioners, and some not-so eager critics, had not really understood what the practice was about. So for the sake of clarity I gave as full and precise a description of it as I could in the half an hour or so that I had for this. I did not need to say how I had come upon this practice in the writings of early Friends or how I had developed the practice for myself, because I had already written about these things in a little book, *Light to Live by*¹. But I did need to be clear about what the Experiment had become, especially now that so many other people were actively engaged with it.

The talk was well received and it led to a lively conference in

¹ See Resources list at the end of this pamphlet.

which indeed the next steps of our work became clear². It was then also agreed by the Steering Group set up by the conference that I should publish it more widely, with some modification. It should inform those who were interested what the practice was about, and it should clear up some possible misunderstandings. So here it is. The original text has been revised and enlarged, but the core description remains as it was. The new version is sent out with the blessing of the Steering Group of the Experiment with Light Network.

Rex Ambler

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² See our website for details of that, also in the Resources.

Introduction

Experiment with Light began as a personal practice of meditation, inspired by a study of early Friends. It did not arise from the contemporary practice of Friends. It was rather a recovery or retrieval of a practice that had long been abandoned, though it has been adapted and developed to respond to contemporary needs. It can therefore seem rather strange to someone who comes across it for the first time. The practice is also very personal, when compared with other spiritual practices, like Meeting for Worship. It goes into the issues of personal life in great detail, though it can widen considerably to other concerns. To some Friends it can seem, and has seemed, rather *too* personal, too occupied with concerns of the self when our focus as Friends should always be on others, they say. And thirdly it goes rather deep. Or perhaps we should say, it *aims* to go deep. It aims to get to the very bottom of the issues that concern us, in the confidence that down there in the deep we will find the light that will reveal what is happening there and point the way forward. And to some Friends this can seem risky, if not downright dangerous. These perceptions and fears are natural enough to people who have not yet tried the practice for themselves. Yet they highlight the fact that the practice does not fit in easily (yet?) with Friends' present way of doing things. It seems a strange and slightly wild creature. What are we to make of it?

We should note, first of all, that it is what we today would call a meditative practice. It is a disciplined use of silence and stillness aimed at evoking a greater awareness and insight. We are of course familiar today with meditation as a spiritual practice, and there are many forms of meditation, which are widely used, many of which have been introduced to the West by teachers from the East. Even so, it may be surprising to hear a Quaker practice described in this way. And it is true, if we think of meditation as undertaken only by an individual, who tries to empty his or her mind so as to gain some inner peace, well yes, Quakers do not engage in that. At least, that is not the distinctive way in which Quakers pursue their spiritual concerns, or did, even at the beginning of their movement. But that interpretation supposes a very limited view of what meditation is, or can be, though it is no doubt the popular view. In fact, meditation has assumed many forms at different times and in different places, from Buddhist 'sitting' and Hindu yoga, to the Jesus prayer, and Sufi and Hasidic dancing. What unites these practices is not the form they have assumed, but the intent and the experience. They are intended, we could say, to open up a new experience of life, if possible an experience of freedom from the ego and oneness with reality. And they are doing this by helping people to let go the talk in which they normally view reality and to get a direct sense of what is happening in their lives, and in the whole world around them.

Now with this broader understanding we should be able to recognize the Quakers' practice of sitting in silence together as also

meditation, even in their regular Meeting for Worship, though it is admittedly a very unusual form of it. This is especially true of the practice of early Friends which is now being revived in Experiment with Light. In fact, in helping Friends to a greater awareness of themselves (initially) it is surprisingly like those practices from the East that we have come to know recently. But there are differences too. There is no guru or master in the Quaker path, no official teaching or method, no withdrawal from the affairs of the world. On the contrary, Quakers lay responsibility on every individual to find truth for themselves, trusting that each has the divine resource within them to show them the way. For the same reason, they can trust Friends to support one another, not least in the honest sharing of what they have learnt in their silent waiting in the Light. So their practice of meditation, as now practised in the Experiment, is more focused than other meditative practices on everyday life, more open to communal sharing, and more intent on putting the insights gained into action. These characteristics don't make the Quaker practice automatically better than others, but they do make it distinctive. And they help us to see how the Quaker way of doing meditation hangs together and makes sense and works out in practice.

All this is by way of introduction. We can now ask the question more directly, What *is* Experiment with Light? How exactly does it hang together, make sense and work in practice?

I could describe what happens in a typical session of the Experiment, with the guided meditation for the first forty minutes, the

'time alone' to absorb what happened in the meditation, and then the sharing of the experience in the group. This is the discipline that we follow. But it wouldn't make much sense without some understanding of what is supposed to be going on when we do all this. What is supposed to happen inside us when we go through the various 'steps' of the meditation? What happens between us when we share something of our experience? And how is all this supposed to help us in our life and work afterwards? The practice needs to be understood if it is really to work, even though most of the understanding will come from doing the practice and then reflecting on the experience afterwards. Something can be said, and should be said, therefore, before we ever try it for ourselves, to explain where it comes from and how it might help. I hope that in what I write here I can at least provide an initial explanation.

So, to begin with, let me distinguish these two aspects to the Experiment: the understanding and the practice. And I should now add a third, which has to do with the teaching and support of the practice, which I will describe under the old Quaker rubric of 'ministry.' And I think that it's best if I treat them in that order.

An Understanding

It is an understanding first of all of what Quakerism was at the beginning and what it might become today. In particular, it is an understanding of what those early Quakers did when they gathered together in silence, and what they experienced as they did so. So it is

different from our usual approach to the early Quakers which tries to understand what they *believed*, or what they taught as their theology. That traditional approach has not proved very successful, I have to say, because nothing very clear or coherent comes out of it. When we ask what they *did*, however, and what they experienced in the process, it all becomes a lot clearer.

This happened to some extent in what is known as 'the Quaker renaissance' of a hundred or so years ago. There was a crisis at the time about modern science, biblical scholarship and the movements for social change, which all challenged the more evangelical way of thinking then prevalent among Friends. Friends rose to the challenge, however, and rediscovered their origins in an experience of God's light within them. So they looked to that experience to enable them to get a sense of the truth they were looking for. 'The light within,' said Rufus Jones, 'which is the basis of our Quaker faith, is not some abstract idea. It is an experience.'³ Moreover, it was an experience available to everyone, so that everyone could find the truth and life they were looking for by finding this source within them. They could test the truth and life in their own experience, 'experimentally', as Fox said. John Wilhelm Rowntree, introducing the great History of the movement, which was to appear in seven volumes during the next few years, described that early movement as 'a great experiment in spiritual religion.'⁴ William Braithwaite, who wrote the two volumes of that

³ Rufus Jones, *An Interpretation of Quakerism*, 1932, p.1.

⁴ John Wilhelm Rowntree, 'Preface' to the first edition of William

history on the first fifty years, put it somewhat differently. He described Fox's unique vision in terms of 'a passion for reality', his message as 'a call to reality in every relation of life' and his testimony to people in plain and honest speech as 'witnessing for reality in life'.⁵

Rowntree and Braithwaite were indeed pointing to something unique and radical in that early movement, but, surprisingly, they did not explore it further. On reading them we want to ask, What then was this 'reality' early Friends were so passionate about? How did they find it and – with our more modern sceptical questioning – how did they establish that it was indeed 'real'? Also, what had experimentation got to do with this? Did they, like the new scientists of their time, have particular practices that enabled them to establish the truth on the basis of experience? These were certainly the

Braithwaite's volume, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 1912, p.v; quoted in Hugh Doncaster's Foreword to the 2nd edition, 1955, p.v. In the second volume of Braithwaite's early history the Introduction was written by his, and Rowntree's, American friend, Rufus Jones, though unfortunately it was not included in the second edition. Jones wrote, 'With all its limitations, this Society [of Friends]... has proved to be the most impressive experiment in Christian history of a group-mysticism, a religious body practising corporate silence as the basis of worship and maintaining a fundamental faith in Spirit-led ministry', in William Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism*, Macmillan and Co, 1919, p.xxx. I get the impression from the similarity of their language (see the following note too) that these three friends had been discussing 'experiments' in religion and the search for 'reality' in preparation for their writing of the history.

⁵ William Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, (1912), 2nd edition 1955 (Cambridge University Press) and 1981 (York:Sessions), pp. 35, 47, 494.

questions that arose in my mind, and they led me to a serious investigation of early Quaker writing in search of some answers.

The answers, I discovered, were not so difficult to find, once I had grasped the language they were using. The 'truth' they were after, having been disillusioned by the official teaching of the churches, was the truth of their life: that is, the reality of their life as they experienced it and as they opened themselves up to it. And this particular reality of their lives opened out, once they accepted it, onto the reality of other people's lives, the reality of social and political life, and ultimately the infinite reality they called God. Early Friends also found that they could get access to this reality in a very practical way, and that they could test its truth for themselves. They had within them, they discovered, as had everyone else, a certain awareness of how they lived their lives, which made them feel either good or bad about themselves. This was their 'conscience', in the broad sense that that word carried in the seventeenth century. It was a feeling they could be immediately aware of by simply becoming still and silent; it would 'rise up' within them. If they took that feeling seriously and paid attention to the reality of their life as it was now being indicated to them, they would begin to see their life differently. They would have to deal, of course, with all sorts of contrary feelings that would have been aroused by the thought that they had done something wrong, or that their life had been some kind of pretence. This was the inevitable defence of a 'self' that felt under attack, and they would need considerable courage to face it. But their great discovery was that if

they let the self quieten down, with all its argument and chatter, they would begin to get a clear view of what was really happening in their lives. Something deep within them would show up the truth of it all. If they owned that truth, painful as it might have been, they found they were reconciled to reality and at peace with God.

So the first part of this 'spiritual experiment upon the soul', as William Penn called it⁶, was to try out for themselves this method of getting to the truth: to try the silence and stillness, the patient waiting, the promptings of conscience. It was also then to see what happened when they embraced the truth of what they saw and put it into practice in their lives. And finally, they could test their insights by sharing them with others, who may have had similar insights to confirm or disconfirm what they had said. In this way everything they said and did could be grounded in experience, and they could have the confidence that they were indeed 'living in the truth'.

We can sum up that early understanding of the Quaker movement, as we have come to understand it again, as a recognition that what they most needed for their freedom and fulfilment as human beings was a sense of the reality of their life, both as individuals and in society, and that this could be gained by opening themselves inwardly to the reality that was already pressing on their conscience.

And that is the understanding we are drawing on when we

⁶ William Penn, 'The Epistle to the Reader', in *Primitive Christianity Revived* (1696), reprinted in William Penn, *The Peace of Europe, The Fruits of Solitude and other writings*, ed. Edwin Bronner, (Everyman 1993), p.228.

undertake an Experiment with Light. We are not assuming, when we do so, that early Friends are an authority on all this. It might be tempting to treat them in this way, because they did set a powerful example, but that early understanding has to be tested. And the first part of that testing has to be that we listen carefully to what early Friends said, and see (and hear) if what they said resonates in our own experience. Does their witness to the truth, as they saw it, ring true with us? If it does, then the next step is to check out what they said in our own experience. How are we supposed to do that? Well, fortunately, they taught a *method* for accessing the truth they talked about. To find out the validity of what they said, and at the same time the validity of our interpretation of what they said, we can try out the method for ourselves. So this is the second aspect of the Experiment we need to focus on. It is:

A Practice

The practice is remarkably simple, which makes it all the more remarkable that it seems to have been so largely forgotten. It is a matter of attending to our present experience of life so that we can move from there to a deeper and fuller experience of it. We are not looking immediately for guidance or inspiration, which is often the concern of modern Friends. We are looking to see first of all what is going on in our life. This may sound like a rather detached and factual concern, which in a sense it is. But when we discover, as we do when we put it into practice, that there are all kinds of resistance to our

knowing the simple truth, it becomes quite a challenge. But, as early Friends found to their amazement and joy, there is a resource within us that enables us to rise to the challenge: to look at the reality and to accept it for what it is. It is not the familiar resource of reason or imagination, valuable though these are, but a deeper, largely untapped source of insight which can enable us to see things as nothing else can. To get to this source, however, we have to let the other activities die down, even the activity of quietly thinking to ourselves or day-dreaming. We have to let go all these familiar concerns of our conscious self and become still and silent to the core of our being. Then and only then will something else happen.

The first thing that might happen is that we become aware of things in our life that really matter to us, but which we never seem to have the time or confidence to take on. In some forms of meditation we would be advised to let these things go as well. But in this Quaker meditation they can be taken seriously, however trivial or mundane they may seem at first to be. They are pointers to the truth we need to know. As our First Advice says – a remarkable survival from that very first practice – 'Take heed, dear Friends, to the promptings of love and truth in your hearts. Trust them as the leadings of God, whose light shows us our darkness and brings us to new life'. (That advice could be taken in fact as an ideal summary of Experiment with Light, and many Friends who have undertaken the practice have referred to this Advice as the best possible expression of it.) These promptings may be experienced as little more than nudges or niggles, but if they are

pointing to the truth that we need to acknowledge or the love that seems to be required, they are worth paying attention to. That of course is the first challenge: to 'take heed... to the promptings' when all sorts of other thoughts and promptings will be pressing for our attention. But if and when we do 'take heed' to the little we are already aware of as 'love and truth', we become immediately more aware of them. The promptings become disclosures. The 'darkness' in particular, which we didn't really want to know about because it threatened our self-image, is disclosed anyway, and with it the whole truth of the situation, which gives us at least a realistic basis for knowing what to do. In fact, discovering and accepting the whole picture of our life as we are presently living it, allows us to see the potential for our life that we have been ignoring. It 'brings us to new life'.

That, as I see it, is the simple process we go through, or may go through, when we do the Experiment. We are opening ourselves up to new possibilities for our life by allowing a deep, divine resource within us to light up the truth of our life.

When we understand this process we can engage with it at any time in any way. We can do it alone, or with others. We can focus on personal issues or global problems. We can apply it to the trivial and mundane, or to the great and elusive issues of our lives. But there are, it has to be said, some practical difficulties with the process, especially for us moderns (though not only for us), and those of us engaged with the process have been trying over the years to deal with

them. This is part of what we mean now by 'the experiment'. How do we quieten the mind when our life in the modern world stimulates it all the time? How do we deal with the darkness in us, or in the world around us, when it raises such fear, or anger, or confusion? How do we recognize the insights we get as truly 'the leadings of God'? How do we test them and communicate them to others? These are some of the questions we have been struggling with, and with time some answers have also emerged. One of the answers we have found helpful is to use a series of verbal prompts to guide us through the meditative process. These have been printed and made available on CD and as a download from our website, and many groups use them as a basis for their work together. There are also different forms of wording, according to people's needs and experience. They draw on both the practical wisdom of other traditions of meditation, like yoga and Buddhist insight meditation, and the techniques of modern psychology designed to help people get in touch with their inner feeling. But these practical guides are not themselves the Experiment, though people have sometimes confused the two. The six-step guide is one possible way of undertaking the Experiment. It was initially designed simply to teach it, in the hope that Friends could then do the meditation without further help. That proved to be a little optimistic, as it happened, but we have found that when Friends are able to dispense with the guide, a new kind of experience becomes possible: being able to go at their own pace, for example, or go more deeply into matters that concern them.

Another response to our modern difficulties with the practice is to do it in groups. This is not a new response, of course, because Friends learnt this at the very beginning. Those very first meetings 'in the light' were intense encounters in which Friends tried to help one another come to terms with the truth being revealed to them.⁷ They were quite distinct from the public meetings where Friends bore witness to what they had experienced or argued with people who seriously challenged them. However, people who were inwardly 'convinced' by these public events were advised to attend the smaller, silent meetings to undergo the experience and to share it with others.

The modern light groups are similarly designed to help individuals in their personal struggles – the showing of the darkness and the bringing of new life. They are not therapy groups, and there is no advice or counselling offered. But Friends listen to one another very carefully, in an accepting and compassionate attitude, and so help one another to understand and accept the truth of what is being revealed to them. What is said is obviously kept confidential within

⁷ See the excellent history by Hugh Barbour and William Frost, *The Quakers*, Friends United Press, Richmond, Indiana, 1988, chapters 3 and 4, especially p.39: 'Hearers who were convinced by these forms of mission were taken into smaller gatherings in private homes, where they shared their struggles of self-judgment under the Light with other seekers in daily or weekly "gathered meetings" with prayer and messages of guidance as well as silence and tears'. Cf. Hugh Barbour's earlier work with Arthur O. Roberts, *Early Quaker Writings*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1973, p.22, and in a new Introduction to the 2nd edition, Pendle Hill Pubs, 2004, p.30.

the group: this sense of being safe with the others helps Friends to build up the confidence and trust to explore their truth more fully. Also, the telling of their individual stories enables them to see connections in their different experiences of life, even in its dark and difficult side, which increases their feeling of unity. It is remarkably effective in providing the support and encouragement we feel we need, though none of us, I think, fully understands why this should be.

These features of the practice, taken together, make it noticeably different from Meeting for Worship, which by comparison is open, public and unstructured. There is an overlap, obviously: they both use silence and stillness to encourage awareness, they bring people together to share the experience (importantly facing one another in the same room) and they expect ministry to come from a deep spiritual source within them. But light groups are more focused and more attentive to process. They are *focused* on the truth, with the assumption that, like the society around us, we are prone to avoid it. They are focused more precisely on the truth of a person's life, which each has to face up to for themselves, on the assumption that such clarity about themselves is necessary for getting clear about others and the world around them. And though the Experiment might seem at first to be preoccupied with the dark side of life, that concern is only the first step in a *process* that leads eventually to light and life. The time spent together is structured to help that take place. It is providing the guidance and support to enable Friends to explore the depth and power of their spirituality.

Important though this may be, the practice is really no substitute for the open and free-flowing experience of Meeting for Worship. The Worship may not often reach the depths, but it is full of surprises and open to new things. It is also open and accessible (relatively) to visitors and newcomers, who can be drawn into the experience of silence. So Experiment with Light as a practice is best seen as complementary to Meeting for Worship, and to other traditional practices. It might on occasion help these practices by bringing some of the depth and clarity of the Experiment to these other situations, but its primary intent is more personal: to help anyone who will engage in it to discover their truth and live it more fully.

A Ministry

There is another difference. The Experiment needs to be taught. It is not at all self-evident, especially to modern people, that looking for the truth of one's life and looking for it in a process of meditation is either possible or desirable. It is more likely to be seen as 'navel gazing' or 'delving into things' people don't understand. It goes as much against the grain of modern society as it did when it was first introduced in the seventeenth century. So now, as then, it needs to be explained that the truth of our life can be hugely liberating if we are able to find it, and that the ability to find it is a gift we already have, waiting to be discovered. If people need to be reassured about this, because the enterprise seems risky, let them hear the 'testimony' of Friends who have undertaken it and discovered its benefits for themselves. Let

them hear about the early Quakers who started a powerful and inspirational movement with the discovery of this truth. And let them be encouraged to try out the practice in a small and manageable way so that they can experience enough of its power to want to pursue it further.

This is why the workshops have been so important for the spread of the practice. They combine these different ways of learning. They explain the practice by describing the process and why and how it was developed. This usually involves a description of the very first Quaker practice as taught by George Fox, Margaret Fell and the others, because this is probably the best way of showing how this very new and radical way of doing things came into being. But then it also needs to be pointed out that we cannot do the practice in exactly the same way, because we live in different times. So meditation guides have been written to help deal with these modern concerns, which might also need explanation. The workshop then offers participants the opportunity to try out the practice for themselves, in this new, accessible form, so they can learn from the experience. They can tell the whole group later what in fact they learned from it, whether negative or positive, and the group will in turn learn something from the feedback. But before that, the workshop should allow people to share their experience in the intimacy and safety of a small group. They will learn more of this meditative experience by trying to put it into words, hearing themselves say what it meant for them, and they will learn from others as they attempt similarly to articulate their

experience. They are given the understanding at the beginning of the workshop to help them engage fruitfully with the practice, but then the practice, and the experience that flows out of it, will enrich their understanding. They should be able to say at the end of a workshop, with George Fox, 'This I knew experimentally'.

Friends who have had a good experience at such a gathering may want to read more about it, to get advice on how to set up a light group and sustain it, or to be taught how to run a workshop themselves. So we have written books and articles about it, set up a website (www.experiment-with-light.org.uk), and begun to form a network of Friends who can guide and nurture the work. All this amounts to a wide extension of the work itself. It is not simply about providing information or friendly support. It is about communicating something very deep, something we ourselves have experienced and feel moved to share with others. So the work of spreading it and supporting it needs to be guided by the very light we have found to be so transformative for us personally. It has to be Spirit-led. And our experience on the whole is that it has been, when we have been open enough and confident enough to allow ourselves to be led. When we come together to consider the work – those of us who are active in the work and keen to develop it – we give a lot of time to meditating together, on ourselves as a group and on the work we feel called to do. We are also hesitant about trying to 'manage' the work. It has often happened in our group meditations that we have felt inspired to let the work grow, to trust the hidden process by which human hearts are

touched and opened. We have often had images in these meditations of nature bursting with life, taking flight or growing spontaneously. We have taken this to mean that we are not called, at this stage, to organize ourselves as a group, especially not as a 'special interest group', nor to formalize the group's work. We are called rather to see the work as ministry, in the traditional Quaker sense.

This has led us to adopt a way of working that can support its spiritual nature – and keep our willing egos at bay! We try to *discern* what kind of work we are individually called to do, and when and where precisely to do it. We may have a clearness meeting on this, or a support group, or a conversation with other Friends. When my wife and I were invited to Southern Africa to do a Summer School for their Yearly Meeting, we went first to our own Area Meeting to test our concern. They confirmed it, and gave us a Travelling Minute to take with us. The Minute was very well received by African Friends because it meant that we came with the blessing and authority of Friends in Britain. Similarly, when Friends want to set up a light group in their Meeting they are likely to go to elders first of all to check it with them and gain their support. They might also take the suggestion to Business Meeting. Then the whole community of Friends can be involved in the discernment, whether or not they all join the light group. Apart from anything else, this larger involvement can prevent a light group from appearing to be exclusive, or divisive. The point is that if it feels right for the Meeting it will be good for the Meeting.

Another practice that goes with the 'ministry' is that the speaker or leader will take another Friend with them to support the work and to keep an eye on them. This revives an earlier role of the elder. When Friends 'travelled in the ministry' in the past, they would go out in twos: one Friend would be mainly concerned with speaking in public (or perhaps advising individuals privately) while the other would be attentive to what was going on and discern, perhaps, what needed to be said or done. It is a pattern that seems to work well today, so we have 'an accompanying Friend acting as elder.'

Experiment with Light seems to be reviving (and revising) a number of practices from our Quaker past. But this, it should be said, is not a conscious attempt to go back to old ways. It arises from the practice itself. In our meditations we are trying to become aware of the situation we are in *now* – in our individual lives first of all, but then also among Friends and in the wider world. We want to be guided by this sense of reality, or, what comes to the same thing, by this light within us that shows up the reality. If in the process we find ourselves reviving older practices, it must be that Friends in the past were engaged with the same spiritual reality that we are.

Rex Ambler

RESOURCES

for

Experiment with Light

BOOKS

John Lampen (ed.), *Seeing, Hearing, Knowing: reflections on Experiment with Light*, William Sessions, York, 2008.

Quaker Life Study Materials, *Quaker identity and the heart of our faith*, Quaker Life, London, 2008, (includes CD of Rex delivering a lecture on early Friends).

Rex Ambler, *Light to Live by: an exploration in Quaker spirituality*, English edition, Quaker Books, London, 2nd edition 2008.

Rex Ambler, *Truth of the Heart: an Anthology of George Fox 1642-91*, with glossary, interpretive essay and translation into modern English, Quaker Books, London, 2nd edition, 2007.

Rex Ambler, *The Quaker Way: a rediscovery*, Christian Alternative, 2013.

Hugh Barbour, *The Quakers in Puritan England*, Friends United Press, Richmond, Indiana (out of print, try Meeting House Libraries, www.abebooks.co.uk or www.amazon.co.uk).

Hugh Barbour and J. William Frost, *The Quakers*, Friends United Press, Richmond, Indiana, 1988, esp chapters 3 and 4.

Patricia Loring *Listening Spirituality: Vol. 1, Personal spiritual practices among Friends*, and *Vol. 2, Corporate practices among Friends*, Openings Press, Washington DC, 1997 (Vol. 1) 1999 (Vol. 2).

WEBSITE: www.experiment-with-light.org.uk

includes downloads of talks and readings, plus text of meditations and other information; also *The Experiment with Light Newsletter*, to which you can subscribe, free by email.

CDs

There are six CDs available, price £20 for the full set, or £4.00 for each CD, apart from Nos 1 and 2 which are sold together, plus postage.

CD1 contains two talks given by Rex Ambler at a Workshop held at Charney Manor in 1998. The first is on the early Quaker experience, the second is an introduction to the meditative practice.

CD2 contains two versions of the meditation, for those new to

the practice.

CD3 contains two further meditations, one on the group or community, the other on the world.

CD4 (a two CD set) contains an alternative meditation for those more familiar with the practice, loosely based on George Fox's words, and readings from *Truth of the Heart* (as above). The second CD contains two versions of the meditation using bells in place of words, the first with a reminder of the six steps.

CD5 contains a version of the meditation, using entirely George Fox's words, taken from sections of *Truth of the Heart*, and a second version using very brief verbal prompts.

CD6 has another form of the meditation, with more help on centring down, and the stages: Mind the Light, Open to the truth, Wait in the Light, Submit to the truth shown. (MOWS), taken from Fox's terms.

It is hoped that new and revised recordings will be released as CDs and downloads some time in 2014/15.

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