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Paul F. Burton
University of Strathclyde

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AN OCCUPATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY SCOTLAND

Paul F. Burton

University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland

ABSTRACT

This paper summarizes our knowledge of the occupational background of English Quakers as a preliminary to an analysis of the occupations of Scottish Quakers in the nineteenth century, based upon the primary sources of records of births, marriages and burials. The same increase in middle-class occupations, including the professions, is evident in Scotland, but the process of embourgeoisement seems to have been slower in Scotland, and by the end of the nineteenth-century merchants and retailers were the largest group in the Society there, rather than the professions. There is also evidence of regional variations in the occupations noted.

KEYWORDS

Occupations, Quakerism, Scotland, England, social history, professionalization

We know a great deal about the social structure of the Society of Friends in England and Wales from its origins up to and including the nineteenth-century: over the decades to approximately 1900 the Society underwent a change from predominantly agricultural and artisan occupations to become professional and middle class, in contrast to other Nonconformist denominations in which the congregations largely remained 'working class'. Smaller scale studies have suggested that this has remained true into the twentieth-century: Slack has shown,[1] for example, that 78 per cent of male Friends and 73 per cent of women Friends were in the professional and intermediate occupations. There are nuances and clear regional variations, in England at least, between rural and urban Quakers, though there is evidence that rural Friends were generally quite wealthy.

1. Kathleen M. Slack, 'Constancy and Change in the Society of Friends' (Swarthmore Lecture 1967; London: Friends Home Service Committee, 1967), p. 87.

We also know something of the occupational structure of congregations in other Scottish denominations: Hillis found class differences in Church of Scotland and non-established church congregations in Glasgow, noting that 'in every church the largest grouping is the working class category',[2] with the higher percentages being found in the Church of Scotland. Church elders, however, were predominantly middle-class, and Hillis saw eldership as a mark of business success or a route to further advancement.[3] MacLaren has similarly shown the dominance of the middle class among elders in the Free Church and Church of Scotland in Aberdeen, though he concludes that this domination drove the working class out of the Free Church.[4]

There is, however, no comparable analysis of Quakers in Scotland at any time other than brief comments, and we do not know how Scottish Quakers fitted into the overall picture of Quakerism in Britain at a time of great change. Were nineteenth-century Scottish Quakers also an increasingly middle-class, professional denomination and are regional variations to be observed?

This article explores the occupational structure of nineteenth-century Friends and is based upon an analysis of 236 records of births, marriages and burials held in the National Archives of Scotland.[5] As a basis for comparison, the membership of the Society in Scotland had reached 563 in 1899.[6] Most of the records referred to male Friends: occupations are recorded for only seven women (two teachers/schoolmistresses, a domestic servant, a shopwoman, a sempstress, a stationer and a governess).

The occupations were classified using the groupings employed by Field[7] in his analysis of Methodists' occupations. Though some nineteenth-century occupations had to be added to Field's groups, the resulting list of occupations does indicate the wide range of industries, and other fields in which Scottish Quakers were engaged in the nineteenth century, ranging from accountants to university professors, from bakers to woollen manufacturers.

2. P. Hillis, 'Presbyterianism and Social Class in Mid-nineteenth Century Glasgow: A Study of Nine Churches', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 32.1 (1981), pp. 47-64 (54).

3. Hillis, 'Presbyterianism and Social Class', p. 52.

4. A. MacLaren, *Religion and Social Class: The Disruption Years in Aberdeen* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), p. 210.

5. National Archives of Scotland, CH10/1/29-38, 45-46, 48-55, 64.

6. *Statistics of Friends in Scotland* (Typescript; London: Friends House Library, 1989[?]).

7. C.D.Field, 'The Social Composition of English Methodism to 1830: A Membership Analysis', *Bulletin of John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 76.1 (1994), pp. 153-78.

Occupational Analysis of English Quakers

A not insubstantial body of literature presents a somewhat complex picture for England and Wales, and there are brief remarks in the literature relating to Scotland that suggest a similar social background for the Quakers there. The occupational structure of a group such as the Society of Friends can change in a number of ways: the membership as a whole becomes gradually more affluent (as reflected in recorded occupations) and/or its increasingly middle-class character attracts others of a like background as converts. As a result of these two factors, it becomes less attractive to lower-class members, who leave and thus further change the balance of occupations: alternatively, they remain, but become a numerical minority within the Society. Bernstein has suggested[8] that the Society's quietism and political passivity in the eighteenth-century ceased to be attractive to 'those working men in whom the commercial spirit had not taken sufficient root'. What this does not tell us, of course, is *why* the Society continued to be attractive to some at least of the middle classes after the renaissance of the 1860s,[9] when the decline of the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries was in part due to the more affluent leaving because Quaker plainness sat uncomfortably with increasing wealth:[10]

> What is the use, [to the modern bourgeois], of a religion which is neither the established one of the State, nor a creed which has any influence on the masses, which has neither fine churches nor any distinguished or highly gifted preachers, which is not rationalistic enough for the 'cultured' spirit of our times nor symbolic enough to fascinate the surfeited mind?[11]

8. E. Bernstein, *Cromwell and Communism: Socialism and Democracy in the Great English Revolution* (London: Cassell, Petter, Gilpin & Co., 1963), p. 249.

9. T.C. Kennedy, 'Heresy-hunting among Victorian Quakers: The Manchester Difficulty, 1861–73', *Victorian Studies* 34.2 (1991), pp. 227-53; *idem*, 'What Hath Manchester Wrought?: Change in the Religious Society of Friends, 1895–1920', *Journal of Friends Historical Society* 57.3 (1996), pp. 277-305; *idem*, 'History and Quaker Renaissance: The Vision of John Wilhelm Rowntree', *Journal of Friends Historical Society* 55.1, 55.2 (1983–84), pp. 35-56; E. Bronner, 'Moderates in London Yearly Meeting, 1857–1873: Precursors of Quaker Liberals', *Church History* 59.3 (1990), pp. 356-71; M. Grubb, 'Tensions in the Religious Society of Friends in England in the Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Friends Historical Society* 56.1 (1990), pp. 1-14; E.H. Milligan, '"The Ancient Way": Tradition in Nineteenth Century British Quakerism', *Journal of Friends Historical Society* 57.1 (1994), pp. 74-101.

10. V. Anderson, *Friends and Relations: Three Centuries of Quaker Families* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1980); M. Forster, *Rich Desserts and Captain's Thin: A Family and their Times, 1831–1931* (New York: Vintage, 1998).

11. Bernstein, *Cromwell and Communism*, p. 250.

Unfortunately, the records are largely silent on this point: they record 'converts' primarily as becoming members 'by convincement', but they do not indicate what convinced them. Isichei has suggested that an important (albeit obvious) reason was the continued acceptance of the Society's beliefs, but also that a fear of isolation from a closely-knit group and a certain status in nineteenth-century society played a part: she is also of the view that increasing wealth brought with it a sense of guilt which was alleviated by membership of a group known for its philanthropy and social concern.[12]

This section summarizes what we know of Friends in England and Wales in order to provide a basis for comparison with Scotland, though there are obvious difficulties.

The evidence for the occupations of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English Friends comes from a number of studies (though these tend to focus on the former period). In an early analysis, Beck and Ball note the change in London bridegrooms' occupations between 1680 and 1780 and dryly observe, 'A comparison of the numbers in this Table will show how many more were engaged in the humbler class of industrial pursuits in the former period than in the latter'.[13] On reworking these data, Raistrick concluded that 'the Society of Friends had moved from being predominantly craftsman-artisan in the seventeenth century, to middle-class traders in the late eighteenth century'.[14]

Cole identified the regional variation in four English counties together with London and Bristol, and also assessed the limited extent to which the occupational background of Quakers in London changed during the latter half of the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth-century.[15] In view of Raistrick's comment noted earlier, it would appear that the change began later in the eighteenth-century, following on the Industrial Revolution. In London, perhaps not surprisingly, the 'humbler industrial trades' outnumbered the commercial sector, but are themselves outnumbered by the clothing trades: the agricultural sector was among the smallest. Cole concludes that no particular occupation was dominant, but that the Society had little appeal to

12. E.A. Isichei, 'From Sect to Denomination in English Quakerism, with Special Reference to the Nineteenth Century', *British Journal of Sociology* 15 (1964), pp. 219-20.

13. W. Beck and T.F. Ball, *The London Friends' Meetings: Showing the Rise of the Society of Friends in London...* (London: Bowyer Kitto, 1869), p. 90.

14. A. Raistrick, *Quakers in Science and Industry: Being an Account of the Quaker Contributions to Science and Industry During the 17th and 18th Centuries* (London: Bannisdale Press, 1950), p. 32.

15. A. Cole, 'The Social Origins of the Early Friends', *Journal of the Friends' Historical Society*, 48.3 (1957), pp. 99-118.

the urban proletariat in London,[16] and he argues that the trades and generally skilled occupations were the groups in seventeenth-century society who felt most threatened economically and politically at that time, suggesting that Quakerism provided them with an outlet for their views.[17] However, the regional differences are also very significant, demonstrating the difficulty of generalizing about early Friends in England, and we will return to this point in the social analysis of Scottish Quakers.

Comparing Quaker occupations with the rest of the population, Vann has questioned Cole's overall findings, suggesting that the *middle to upper bourgeoisie* were more prominent among early Quakers.[18] He argues that the 'middling sort' were in the majority in English society generally, therefore it should come as no surprise to find them dominant within the Society: only if they were present in disproportionate numbers could it be said that this was significant. Vann has suggested that the differences in his study are primarily due to Cole's use of records up to 1688, by which time a greater proportion of converts 'of a consistently lower social rank' had joined.[19] Bernstein suggests[20] that this influx may have been due to the increasing numbers who joined the Society in search of its assistance to the poor which was so preferable to that provided by the state, but it had the effect of lowering the social status of Buckinghamshire Quakers during the longer period which Cole examines.

Where Vann does develop the discussion is in his comparison of Quaker occupations in three areas (Buckinghamshire, Norfolk and Norwich) with the general population described in the Gloucestershire muster roll, concluding that 'the earliest Friends were drawn to an unusual degree not from the urban and rural "petite bourgeoisie", but from the yeoman and trading classes of the nation'.[21] Hurwich,[22] using hearth tax returns, also found a significant proportion of Warwickshire Quakers who were artisans and poor husbandmen, but, more significantly, that there was a move into the towns after 1700, although the numbers of tradesmen and master craftsmen did not increase with this

16. Cole, 'The Social Origins of the Early Friends', p. 115.

17. Cole, 'The Social Origins of the Early Friends', p. 118.

18. R.T. Vann, 'Quakerism and the Social Structure in the Interregnum', *Past and Present* 43 (1969), pp. 71-91. See also R.T. Vann, *The Social Development of English Quakerism 1655–1755* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969), pp. 47-87.

19. Vann, 'Quakerism and the Social Structure in the Interregnum', p. 79.

20. Bernstein, *Cromwell and Communism*, p. 246.

21. Vann, 'Quakerism and the Social Structure in the Interregnum', p. 90.

22. J.J. Hurwich, 'The Social Origins of the early Quakers', *Past and Present* 48 (1970), pp. 156-62 (160).

migration. Nor does an analysis of the hearth tax returns suggest that Vann's upper bourgeoisie were more prominent.

However, Hurwich is at pains to point out that this is a study of a different English county, which may be no more typical of English Quakerism at the time than those examined by Vann, and we are left with the conclusion that there are almost certainly regional differences. This point is also made by Anderson, who proposes yet another approach, using the wills of Lancashire Quakers and other primary sources such as registers and the accounts of sufferings: wills, he claims, constitute a more reliable guide to real wealth than occupational names.[23] He also finds a large number of Quakers between 1652 and 1690 (56.3 per cent of his group) whom he classifies as 'yeomen' or 'husbandmen': however, the poorer husbandmen outnumbered the wealthier yeomen and Anderson suggests that 'solid, though middling, wealth' is typical of the Society in Lancashire at this time, and also that there was some evidence of the wealthier members joining before 1665, another of Vann's proposals: before that date, the husbandmen outnumbered the yeomen by an even greater margin.[24]

Reay has increased the complexity of the picture with his analysis of Quaker occupations in Cheshire, Essex, Colchester and Somerset, concluding, as with the others discussed here, that these early Quakers were middling people, slightly more wealthy than the bulk of the population,[25] a conclusion also borne out by the fines recorded by Besse for Durham and Northumberland. In 1682, total fines of £409.7.3 were levied for holding Meetings or 'Absence from the National Worship'.[26] Such sums suggest a relatively wealthy group, though we know that the value of goods seized was invariably far in excess of the fine levied, and could sometimes extend to removing the bedding.

We have, therefore, a relatively clear, if complex, picture of the social status of the seventeenth-century Quakers in England, suggesting a predominantly rural group of middling wealth, though with variations in different counties and in the cities. Relatively little has been written about Friends during the quietism of the following century, however, though what is available is more comprehensive than the works discussed above. Vann has extended his work,

23. A. Anderson, 'The Social Origins of the Early Quakers', *Quaker History* 68 (1979), pp. 33-40.

24. Anderson, 'The Social Origins of the Early Quakers', p. 39.

25. B. Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution* (London: Temple Smith, 1985), pp. 20-26 (21).

26. Besse, *Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers*, Facsimile of part of the 1753 edition (York: Sessions Book Trust, 2000), p. 185.

along with David Eversley, to cover the entire period to 1900 using the technique of family reconstitution to discuss, *inter alia*, occupational status.[27] Using the standard sources of registers, wills, quarter sessions records and similar they have tabulated the occupational distribution of rural and urban English Quaker bridegrooms for 50-year periods from 1650 to 1849. Their analysis allows general trends for the period between 1650 and 1849 to be identified which indicate the decline in agricultural occupations and the increase in the professional and commercial group. Their overall conclusion is that wholesale traders (especially in the food trades) and later professionals became prominent in the Society, while the poor and labouring groups were conspicuous by their absence. The growth of professionalism is attributed to the major role played by Quakers in the increasing bureaucracy of business and commerce, grounded on their high levels of literacy and reputation for honesty.[28]

For nineteenth-century Quakerism, Isichei presents data for occupations derived from the digests of deaths,[29] dividing the data into three periods covering 1840–41, 1870–71 and 1900–1901 and creating four occupational groups: Class I consisting of gentlemen, manufacturers, professionals and similar groups, II of retailers, teachers, clerks and independent craftsmen, III the skilled or semi-skilled workers and IV the unskilled workers and agricultural labourers. A summary of her findings is given in Table 1.

Table 1. *Percentages of occupations of Quakers for three periods*[30]

Occupational Group	*1840–41*	*1870–71*	*1900–1901*
Class I	50.5	60.8	46.1
Class II	26.6	16.5	31.9
Class III	15.8	15.5	14.7
Class IV	7.2	7.2	7.3
	(n = 222)	(n = 194)	(n = 191)

The picture of English Quakerism in the latter half of the nineteenth century is fairly clear: approximately half of the membership were in the

27. R.T. Vann and D. Eversley, *Friends in Life and Death: the British and Irish Quakers in the Demographic Transition, 1650–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), see pp. 68-74.

28. Vann and D. Eversley, *Friends in Life and Death* p. 74.

29. E. Isichei, *Victorian Quakers* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 171-82; 288-91.

30. Adapted from Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*. Percentages are based on total numbers where an occupation is stated in the digest.

middle-class occupations of banker, merchant or manager throughout the period. Interestingly, however, the agricultural basis had not been lost: concealed in the data are significant numbers of landowners in Class I (they were the largest single class in 1840–41 and the second largest in the other two periods, outnumbered only by the undefined 'gentlemen'). The retail traders continued to be well represented in Class II, where they were the largest single group. Their numbers have fallen by 1900–1901 (from 17.5 per cent of the total to 10.9 per cent), although Class II has increased as a percentage of the total as a result of more clerks, small managers and foremen in the group. It is particularly interesting to note that this structure 'is precisely opposite to that of the general population' in which the labouring classes constituted 70 per cent of the total,[31] though we cannot ignore the consistent but small group (7 per cent of the total) of unskilled workers and labourers, and Isichei acknowledges that there were differences between regions which do not appear in these data.[32]

As a result of the work discussed above, we have a generally clear picture of the changes in occupational structure within Quakerism in England over 250 years. Bearing in mind the problems of terminology and classification which such an analysis gives rise to, there was a general trend towards increasing numbers of the professions and the wealthy middle-class merchants and retailers, such that, by the end of the nineteenth century, more than half of the membership was in these two groups. A third significant group lay in the skilled craftsmen, who constituted one in five or less of the membership. Other occupational groups were present in much smaller numbers and overall the analysis indicates the significant change in the occupational composition of the Society from its origins to the end of the nineteenth century.

Occupational Analysis of Nineteenth-Century Scottish Quakers

To what extent, then, is this process evident in Scotland? Were nineteenth-century Scottish Quakers equally middle class, and were there also regional variations? Did Friends in and around the rural area of Aberdeen differ from those of the rural Borders, which lacked a city of comparable size as a centre; did Edinburgh Quakers also differ markedly in their occupations from those in Glasgow, with its different industrial and commercial basis? It is equally valid to ask if this occupational structure differed from other denominations in Scotland.

31. Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, p. 173.
32. Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, p. 181.

We have much less data for Scotland at any time since the arrival of Quakerism there in 1653, and we know little about who the Scottish Quakers were, beyond Burnet's history.[33] Vann and Eversley's wide-ranging and detailed demographic analysis of the Society covering the period from 1650 to 1900 places Scotland in 'North Britain', and it is not possible to disaggregate the Scottish data.[34] Field's unpublished history[35] is based largely on an analysis of minutes, though it does at times provide potentially useful material on financial matters which may indicate the wealth of members. The wills of Scottish Friends also provide some clues (though a thorough analysis of these has yet to be made): Mary Turnbull of Aberdeen, for example, left over £360 in specific bequests to family and friends in 1872 as well as an estate valued at more than £1,300, and Amos Cruickshank's estate amounted to almost £9,000 on his death in 1895.[36]

Marwick briefly describes the occupations of some of the more prominent Scottish Quakers:[37] he states, for example, that most seventeenth-century members 'were originally associated with the land', including the Aberdeenshire Cruickshanks (later to be noted cattle breeders) and the Border lairds who were the ancestors of Sir Walter Scott and General Haig. Hew Wood of Hamilton and William Miller I were gardeners and seedsmen (the former on the Duke of Hamilton's estate). Elsewhere, Marwick has noted 19 gardeners and seedsmen in the membership lists for 1656 to 1790, equal to the number of weavers,[38] though an innkeeper (allegedly an illegitimate son of Charles II)[39] and a brewer are also known. Later Friends were occupied in a variety of trades, including hosiery and knitwear in the Borders,[40] tobacco pipe manu-

33. G.B. Burnet, *The Story of Quakerism in Scotland, 1650–1850* (London; Clarke, 1952).
34. Vann and Eversley, *Friends in Life and Death*.
35. R.H. Field, *Glimpses of Early Friends in Scotland* (unpublished manuscript, 1921; Transcript in West of Scotland Monthly Meeting Library, Glasgow).
36. I am indebted to Karen Yeoman for pointing out these and other wills of Scottish Quakers.
37. W. Marwick, 'Studies in Scottish Quakerism', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* 16.2 (1967), pp. 89-98. See also W. Marwick, 'Friends in Nineteenth Century Scotland', *Journal of Friends' Historical Society* 46 (1954), pp. 3-18.
38. W. Marwick, *A Short History of Friends in Scotland* (Edinburgh: Scotland General Meeting, 1948), p. 16.
39. W.F. Miller, 'George Swan, of Glasgow', *Journal of Friends' Historical Society* 11 (1914), pp. 22-27.
40. C. Gulvin, *The Scottish Hosiery and Knitwear Industry, 1680–1980* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1984).

facture, tea dealing[41] and biscuit making in Glasgow, shawl making in Paisley and brewing in Edinburgh. For the second half of the nineteenth-century until approximately the 1930s 'Quakers are predominantly professional', primarily in medicine (including, until his disownment, Sir Joseph Lister) and as university lecturers. Marwick's presidential address to the Friends' Historical Society in 1969 repeats much of this, and adds: 'Friends were chiefly middle class. Obituary lists of male adults 1863-1928 may be summarized as: professional 27, manufacturers and merchants 22, shopkeepers 10, manual workers 10,'[42] although it is unclear to which part of Scotland he refers or precisely what he includes in the category of 'professional'.

In his analysis of the Society's records from the first 150 years in the South of Scotland (to 1790), Miller notes:

> nineteen gardeners and seedsmen, nineteen weavers, ten servants (male and female), ten 'merchants' (shop-keepers), six tanners, six tailors, five glovers, four shoe-makers, three brewers, three bleachers, three tobacco merchants... There were also five 'portioners' (small landed proprietors) and perhaps not more than three 'Lairds'...[43]

Miller has also provided some delightful pen portraits of Edinburgh Quakers in the middle of the nineteenth-century, which occasionally mention occupations: two cousins who were shawl manufacturers, a coal agent, a carpenter, an engraver, an artist, a shoemaker, students (largely of unspecified disciplines, though he specifically notes women from the Ladies College), a scientist, a professor of veterinary science and a Leith tobacconist.[44]

Limited though these statements are, they suggest that Scotland also went through the same process of embourgeoisement as England, and the analysis which follows aims to identify the precise nature of this process, including the extent to which the main regions of Scottish Quakerism differed.

Changes in Occupation

The records examined made it possible to note changes in occupation by individuals: in some instances, the occupation given at marriage, for example,

41. 'William Smeal', in *Brief Memorials of Some Members of Friends' Meeting, Glasgow* (Glasgow: Hay Nisbet, 1874), pp. 5-9.

42. W. Marwick, 'Quakers in Victorian Scotland', *Journal of Friends' Historical Society* 52 (1969), pp. 67-77.

43. W.F. Miller, 'Notes on the Early Records of Friends in the South of Scotland from 1656 to about 1790', *Journal of Friends' Historical Society* 1 (1903), pp. 69-70.

44. W.F. Miller, 'Reminiscences of Some Old Edinburgh Friends', *Journal of Friends' Historical Society* 10 (1913), pp. 1-11.

differed in subsequent birth notices. Some of these changes were surprising, in that they were to apparently unrelated work: at the birth of his first daughter, for example, David Bryson is recorded as a confectioner, but by the time his son is born two years later, he is the keeper of an Edinburgh temperance hotel. John Constable, a Perth weaver, married Margaret Irvine in March 1805 and with her had 11 children between 1806 and 1826: in that period he was a manufacturer's assistant in Edinburgh and then a pattern painter, changes which may have become necessary because of the decline in the weaving industries of the time. Particularly interesting is the instance of Robert Allan of Broughty Ferry. On his marriage in 1869 to Julia Fanny Walker, he is recorded as a photographer. A year later, on the birth of his first son, he is both photographer and perfumer, but nine years later he is described as a 'teacher of drawing', and by 1885 he has become a 'science and art teacher'. These, however, appear to be the most extreme examples of changes in occupation and the majority of the others are more readily understandable.

A total of 27 Scottish Quakers (11.4 per cent) were noted as having a different occupation at some time in their lives from that first recorded, although 12 of these changes do not result in a change in occupational group and in some cases the 'change' may simply be a result of different terminology at different times: the tobacco pipe manufacturer may also have been regarded as a merchant. Where changes in group do occur, all but one represent a move from skilled craftsman to merchant or retailer and this may reflect the increased size of the business in which the individual was employed or which he owned. It does mean that, for the present study, if the *last* recorded occupation had been noted, rather than the first, the merchants, manufacturers and retailers would have formed an even larger group within nineteenth-century Scottish Quakerism.

The Occupations of Nineteenth-Century Scottish Quakers

A total of 106 different occupations were recorded for the 236 Scottish Quakers and are summarized in Table 2, using Field's classification (14 different occupations in Group A, 48 in Group B, 34 in group C, 2 in Group D, 2 in Group E and 6 in Group F). However, the detail of Group B is potentially misleading in one respect. As all *specific* occupations were noted, this has resulted in two large groups of unspecified 'manufacturers' (11) and 'merchants' (10), plus instances of specific industries such as the stocking manufacturer or the leather merchant. There are, in total, 27 manufacturers and 12 merchants representing, respectively, 11.4 per cent and 5.1 per cent of

all recorded occupations. On the other hand, there are many instances in which an occupation is represented by only a single individual. In all, 23 of the 106 occupations had more than 2 incumbents and 8 had 5 or more.

Table 2 clearly indicates the dominance of the retail sector and the skilled craftsmen within the Scottish Society: together they constituted almost three-quarters of the occupations recorded. However, one of the hypotheses put forward here was that the Society had become both middle class and *professional* and this latter aspect does not appear to be borne out: the gentry and professions accounted for only 8.9 per cent of the total, and were fewer in number than the agricultural sector, which represented one in ten of Scottish Quakers in this century. (In fact, no one was recorded as gentry, though this may be due to a disinclination to use the terms 'gentry' or 'gentleman', as others have suggested.[45]) The picture here appears to be more reminiscent of Raistrick's depiction of the late *eighteenth-century* Society of middle-class traders[46] which was referred to earlier.

Table 2. *Occupations of Scottish Quakers by groups*

Group	*No.*	*% (n = 236)*
A: Gentry and professions	21	8.9
B: Merchants, manufacturers and retailers	102	43.2
C: Skilled craftsmen	72	30.5
D: Agriculture (excl. labourers)	25	10.6
E: Maritime, naval and military	2	0.8
F: Labourers, servants and paupers	14	5.9

The dominance of the retail trades and the paucity of professional occupations is further highlighted by comparison with Vann and Eversley and Isichei's data for nineteenth-century English Quakers which were discussed earlier, and is shown in Table 3 below.

There are few significant differences between Groups B, D, E and F in either country, though the Scottish manufacturers and retailers were slightly more numerous than was the case in England. However, the principal difference lay in Groups A and C. Approximately one-third of English Quakers were in professional occupations, whereas in Scotland they accounted for less than one in ten. In contrast to this, there were proportionately many more skilled craftsmen north of the border. If we average the data for England, we find that twice as many Scots Quakers were craftsmen, in a total of 34

45. Vann and Eversley, *Friends in Life and Death*, p. 69.
46. Raistrick, *Quakers in Science and Industry*, p. 32.

industries ranging from bookbinder to umbrella maker. Prominent among these craftsmen were 15 hosiers, 9 weavers and 7 shoemakers.

The picture thus far, therefore, is of a Scottish Society of Friends whose members were no longer mainly associated with the land (as indeed was suggested by Marwick[47] and Miller[48]), but were now working in the retail trades or as skilled craftsmen. The embourgeoisement of Scottish Quakers had proceeded far, and may also have been a feature of Scottish urbanization, but their 'professionalization' appears to have been considerably behind that of England.

Table 3. *Comparison of nineteenth-century English and Scottish Quakers*[49]
(percent of total occupations recorded)

Group	*V&E*	*Isichei*			*Scotland*
	1800–49	*40–41*	*70–71*	*1900–1901*	*1800–99*
A: Gentry and professions	39.6	24.3	35.1	23.0	8.9
B: Merchants, manufacturers and retailers	42.1	34.7	25.1	42.2	43.2
C: Skilled craftsmen	3.7	21.2	18.8	18.7	30.5
D: Agriculture	14.6	12.6	13.6	8.0	10.6
E: Maritime, naval and military	0.0	1.4	0.5	1.6	0.8
F: Labourers, servants and paupers	0.0	5.9	6.8	6.4	5.9

However, the extent to which this already represents a change from the seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries can be judged by comparing our data with the only other quantification of occupations (albeit more limited) which Miller has provided for the period 1656 to 1790. Miller used the Society's early records to construct a dictionary of all named individuals and noted that there were slightly more than 770 members in the area south of the Tay, for whom he also recorded occupations. The data presented in Table 4 are not, therefore, directly comparable, as it is likely that the total number of agricultural occupations (Group D) and the labourers, etc. of Group F are under-represented for the earlier period, since Miller did not include the Aberdeen area.

Bearing in mind the limitations of direct comparison, these data indicate a significant increase during the nineteenth century in the number of Scottish Quakers involved in the retail trades: the number has more than doubled, whereas the numbers of skilled craftsmen have already suffered a decline and

47. Marwick, 'Studies in Scottish Quakerism'.
48. Miller, 'Notes on the Early Records of Friends'.
49. Sources: Vann and Eversley, *Friends in Life and Death*; Isichei, *Victorian Quakers; the various records of births, marriages and burials for Scotland.*

so too have those in Group F. There was also a small increase in the number of professional occupations.

Table 4. *Comparison of Scottish occupations, 1656–1790 and nineteenth century*

Group	*1656-1790*		*nineteenth century*	
	Number	% (n=122)	Number	% (n=236)
A: Gentry and professions	7	5.7	21	8.9
B: Merchant, manufacturers and retailers	22	18.0	102	43.2
C: Skilled craftsmen	55	45.1	72	30.5
D: Agriculture	5	4.1	25	10.6
E: Maritime, naval and military	2	1.6	2	0.8
F: Labourers, servants and paupers	31	25.4	14	5.9

Did this process operate throughout the century: was it a gradual process, or was there some identifiable point in the Society's history in the nineteenth century when its social composition changed markedly? As one occupational group increased in number, did another show a corresponding decline? To answer these questions, the data for each group were reanalysed by 25-year periods and are shown in summary form in Table 5. The table shows the percentage of each group recorded during the four quarters of the century and also the percentage of the total of 236 records: thus, it indicates, for example, that 23.8 per cent of Group A occupations were noted in the first quarter of the century, which represent 2.1 per cent of the total number.

The first point to note is the consistent representation of the retail sector occupations in Group B at each point in the century, at approximately 11 per cent of the total. The only other consistent group was E (maritime, naval and military), but as there were only two records of individuals in this group (a ship owner and a shipmaster), it is not possible to make further generalizations. All of the other groups exhibited some change over the century.

Table 5. *Occupations of Scottish Quakers by period*

Percentage of total for century (percentage of total number of occupations)

Group	*1800–24*	*1825–49*	*1850–74*	*1875–99*
A: Gentry and professions	23.8 (2.1)	19.0 (1.7)	14.3 (1.3)	42.9 (3.8)
B: Merchants, manufacturers and retailers	24.5 (10.6)	23.5 (10.2)	26.5 (11.4)	25.5 (11.0)
C: Skilled craftsmen	40.3 (12.3)	30.6 (9.3)	16.7 (5.1)	12.5 (3.8)
D: Agriculture	40.0 (4.2)	36.0 (3.8)	20.0 (2.1)	4.0 (0.4)
E: Maritime, naval and military	50.0 (0.4)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	50.0 (0.4)
F: Labourers, servants and paupers	50.0 (3.0)	21.4 (1.3)	21.4 (1.3)	7.1 (0.4)

Though not as large a group as in England, as we have seen, the largest concentration of professional occupations was at the end of the century, following a reduction in the middle period. In this group, the doctors occurred throughout the period (one in each quarter), but the distinctly 'white-collar' occupations of accountant, architect, civil servant, factory inspector and insurance broker all appeared in the last quarter of the century. The skilled craftsmen, on the other hand, declined as a percentage of the total throughout the period: there were only 9 of them recorded in the last quarter, compared with 29 in the first quarter. The weavers of Group C, for example, had disappeared by 1850 and the hosiers had gone by 1875. Similarly, the agricultural occupations (all but one of which are farmers) had almost gone by the last quarter: there remained only one farmer, where there were 18 in the first 50 years of the century. Change is further demonstrated by the decline in the numbers of labourers, servants and paupers of Group F. Fourteen were recorded, including six gardeners and four labourers, but by the end of the century there remained only one, a packer.

These features suggest that a process of 'professionalization' had begun in Scotland, but it did so towards the end of the century, making it, as we have already suggested, a later phenomenon of the Society there than in England. Vann and Eversley found almost 40 per cent of English Quakers in the first half of the century to be in Group A, though Isichei puts their number slightly lower in 1840–41. Evidence that professionalization in Scotland was more a twentieth-century phenomenon is provided by Marwick's statement (also quoted above) based on obituary lists that 'Friends were chiefly middle class'[50] and by Slack's smaller scale study.[51]

The entire process seems to have been a gradual one. There was no sudden decline or increase in numbers during the century, and it would be difficult to point to any one 25-year period as being especially significant, except perhaps in the case of Group A, which increased from 1.3 per cent of the total to 3.8 per cent in the last quarter. This may be a feature of the slow increase in membership after 1860, which only took on a steeper curve from 1888.

Of course, during the period under consideration, Scotland was also undergoing significant social and economic changes, including increasing urbanization, and the Society cannot have been immune from the effects of these changes, which would be reflected in the occupations of members and the changes we have just described. The major cities and towns were growing at an astonishing rate: Glasgow grew by more than one-third in the ten years to

50. Marwick, 'Quakers in Victorian Scotland'.
51. Slack, *Constancy and Change*, p. 87.

1841, and Dundee by 35 per cent. In contrast, a town like Paisley, reliant on an 'older' industry (handloom weaving) grew by only 5 per cent.[52] The decline in agricultural occupations as a percentage of the membership is not, therefore, unduly surprising.

The changing economy of Scotland is reflected also in the changes in the nature of the Scottish Meetings, as the rural Meetings declined in numbers during the nineteenth century and those in the towns and cities grew. Kinmuck in Aberdeenshire was one of the earliest and largest Meetings: founded by Patrick Livingstone in 1662, it 'grew to be the largest in the nation'[53] but its numbers declined steadily throughout the nineteenth century (although it did not close until 1940). In 1879 there were seven adult members, two attenders and ten children, eight of the last being from one family:[54] six years later, this group had declined to eight adults and four children[55] and by the end of the century only two members are recorded, Robert and James Gray.[56] A Meeting is recorded in Perth in 1857[57] though it had a somewhat varied life, being discontinued in 1881 (and not begun again until 1932). Kilmarnock is one of seven Meetings established in Ayrshire and south-west Scotland, though only it and Ardrossan had grown to any size by the end of the century. A Meeting was also established in Dundee in 1863, followed in 1871 by Greenock, though it lasted only five years: isolation from the main body of Friends in Glasgow may have played a part, though this is in contrast to Ardrossan, also distant from Glasgow but which grew from 7 to 56 members in the last decade of the century.[58]

Meetings in most of the other large towns and cities, however, grew steadily, if by very varying amounts. Edinburgh's total membership (of adults and children) rose from 48 in 1879 to 54 by the end of the century, while Dundee's membership increased from 16 to 58 in the same period. The largest

52. T.C. Smout, *A Century of the Scottish People, 1830–1950* (London: Fontana, 1987), pp. 8-9.

53. P. Livingstone, *Selections from the Writings of Patrick Livingstone...* (London: Cassell, Petter, Gilpin & Co., 1847), p. 5.

54. Society of Friends General Meeting for Scotland, *List of Members and Attenders of Meetings 1879.*

55. Society of Friends General Meeting for Scotland, *List of Members and Attenders of Meetings 1885.*

56. Society of Friends General Meeting for Scotland, *List of Members and Attenders of Meetings 1899.*

57. *Statistics of Friends in Scotland* (Typescript; Friends House Library).

58. Society of Friends General Meeting for Scotland, *List of Members and Attenders of Meetings 1899.*

growth in numbers was evident in the Glasgow Meeting, already the largest by the final quarter of the century. In 1879, its membership consisted of 76 adults and 69 children;[59] by 1899, this had grown to 117 adults and 95 children.[60]

The final question posed in this study was the extent of regional variation within Scotland and whether there were variations comparable to those of England. For the purposes of this part of the analysis, Scotland was divided into five regions, Perth and Dundee being regarded as a separate region, as neither can be comfortably linked with either Edinburgh or Glasgow: however, the total numbers in this region were small. The complete list of occupations, arranged by region, is summarized in Table 6.

A number of points stand out from this table which support the idea that Scotland, like England, displayed regional variations, and it can usefully be compared with the regional data for England described earlier and with Vann and Eversley's analysis of rural and urban bridegrooms.[61] More than half (57.1 per cent) of the 21 professionals lived in the Edinburgh area, whereas the greater part of the merchants and retailers were in or around Glasgow. The retail occupations were more scattered throughout the country, but do not occur in such concentrations as in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Edinburgh had two merchants compared to Glasgow's five, but there were also five merchants in the Aberdeen area. Not surprisingly, five of the six tea dealers among Scottish Friends in this century were located in Glasgow, dealing presumably with the tea imports into that city: the same can be said of the single tobacco manufacturer. The manufacturers of various products were almost equally divided between the two main cities (12 in Edinburgh and 11 in Glasgow), with only one in Aberdeen and three in the Borders.

It is perhaps more surprising, in view of Glasgow's industrial status throughout much of the nineteenth century, that slightly more of the skilled craftsmen were located in Edinburgh (41.7 per cent) than in Glasgow (34.7 per cent). The largest single group of Edinburgh craftsmen were the hosiers, of whom there were eight (with a further five in Aberdeen). Glasgow, on the other hand, had six of the nine weavers, though, as we have seen earlier, the weavers had disappeared by the middle of the century, and the hosiers lasted for only another 25 years in the Society. It is possible that the Edinburgh craftsmen were associated with the more luxurious trades whose products were in demand by the gentry of the capital, hence their greater number.

59. Society of Friends General Meeting for Scotland, *List of Members and Attenders of Meetings 1879.*

60. Society of Friends General Meeting for Scotland, *List of Members and Attenders of Meetings 1899.*

61. Vann and Eversley, *Friends in Life and Death*, pp. 70-71.

Table 6. *Occupations of Scottish Quaker by region*
Number and (percentage of total for each group)

Group	*Edinburgh*	*Glasgow*	*Aberdeen*	*Borders*	*Perth/Dundee*
A: Gentry and professions	12 (57.1)	8 (38.1)	1 (4.8)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
B: Merchants, manufacturers and retailers	34 (33.3)	49 (48.0)	12 (11.8)	5 (4.9)	2 (2.0)
C: Skilled craftsmen	30 (41.7)	25 (34.7)	12 (16.7)	1 (1.4)	4 (5.6)
D: Agriculture	0 (0.0)	2 (8.0)	23 (92.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
E: Maritime, naval and military	0 (0.0)	1 (50.0)	1 (50.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
F: Labourers, servants and paupers	5 (35.7)	2 (14.3)	7 (50.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)

An urban–rural divide is most evident in Group D, the agricultural workers, 92 per cent of whom lived in the Aberdeen area. They included 23 of the 24 farmers (as well as the single farm servant in Group F) and Aberdeen also had half of the total in Group F, the least skilled set of occupations, though Edinburgh was not far behind with five in this group, including four of the six gardeners. This concentration of agricultural occupations in Aberdeen and the surrounding area is not, of course, surprising and it is in some ways larger than the data for Group D alone suggests, as Aberdeen also had all three millers and the solitary occurrences of stabler and millwright, occupations primarily associated with rural life. However, there is also evidence of differences between Edinburgh and Glasgow beyond those already identified above. While Edinburgh had more than half of the professions, it also had over one-third of the unskilled occupations (four of the six gardeners), whereas Glasgow had 48 per cent of the retailers, but only 14 per cent of the unskilled. Excluding the small numbers in Groups D and E, Edinburgh had overall a more even distribution of occupations than Glasgow.

Conclusion

If the Quakers of Scotland had become predominantly middle class by the end of the nineteenth century, were they then any different from other denominations? As we have already seen, MacLaren has identified the domination of the kirk sessions of both the Church of Scotland and the Free Church in Aberdeen by middle class elders,[62] and Hillis has found a similar situation in the established and non-established churches in Glasgow. In each case, middle class elders (defined by occupation) formed some 70 per cent or more of the sessions, although Hillis found that the working class constituted the majority

62. A. MacLaren, *Religion and Social Class*, pp. 218-20.

of the *congregation*:[63] '...the middle class dominated the administrative posts of the church, a situation which largely arose out of the economic and social obligations attached to the office of elder and manager'.[64]

Brown has noted change in the social composition of the congregation of a dissenting Glasgow church between the 1820s and the 1850s. Initially dominated by skilled working men, by the 1850s this group had fallen to 45 per cent of the congregation, while the middle-class occupations had increased from 17 per cent to 37 per cent,[65] but he has also noted that individual congregations could vary considerably, with a general tendency to rise in status over time: 'it would be unwise to see the social composition of presbyterianism as static or uniform'[66] and the present study has shown that Quakerism was also subject to such change during the nineteenth century. In that, therefore, it did not differ greatly from other denominations in Scotland, and it was equally affected by the changes in the Scottish population.[67]

This occupational analysis has indicated that Scottish Quakers had become considerably more middle class by the end of the nineteenth century, with almost three-quarters of the occupations recorded consisting of retailers and skilled craftsmen. More of the latter were evident in Scotland than was the case in England, where a decline in their number had already set in, but Scotland had not progressed as far in the 'professionalization' which was also evident south of the border: the growth in the number of professional occupations came towards the end of the century. No attempt has been made here to ascertain whether this was associated with the changes within the Society as a whole that were introduced after the 1860s and which did away with many features that may have deterred these individuals from joining. The process generally was a gradual one over the century, and change does not seem to have occurred abruptly. There is also evidence of differences between the urban areas of Edinburgh and Glasgow and the rural hinterlands of Aberdeen and the Borders which are comparable to those noted in England.

The greatest decline was in the number of agricultural occupations: by the last quarter of the century there was only one farmer left within the Society. Isichei, however, found that 8 per cent of English Quakers were still in

63. Hillis, 'Presbyterianism and Social Class in Mid-nineteenth Century Glasgow', p. 54.

64. Hillis, 'Presbyterianism and Social Class in Mid-nineteenth Century Glasgow', p. 53.

65. C.G. Brown, *Religion and Society in Scotland since 1707* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), p. 108.

66. Brown, *Religion and Society in Scotland since 1707*, p. 110.

67. Smout, *A Century of the Scottish People, 1830–1950*, ch. 3.

agricultural occupations at the end of the century, and this appears to indicate that Scottish Quakers had made a more complete move away from agricultural occupations. The process has already been noted by MacLaren in Aberdeen (and 23 of the 24 Quaker farmers were from Aberdeen): new agricultural technology had changed forever the rural lifestyle, creating a 'pull to migrate' into the city at the same time as a new and truly urban bourgeoisie was developing.[68] It is a distinct possibility that Scottish Friends were not immune from this process.

The Society of Friends in Scotland, therefore, also exhibited the same move towards being a predominantly middle-class denomination as in England, but it remains to be seen whether and to what extent the professional classes increased in number in the century that followed. It may be the case that this similarity was caused by immigration of English Quakers into the Scottish Society.

It has not been possible to identify accurately in this study *why* the skilled craftsmen formed a smaller and smaller percentage of the membership as the century drew to a close, or *why* the retailers and professions were increasing in number (though some suggestions have been put forward). What has been shown is that the Scottish Society, like its counterpart in England, was changing in social composition, albeit more slowly. Membership numbers more than doubled between 1867 and 1899 (from 239 to 563)[69] but the appeal seems to have been to the retailers and the professional groups: the basis for this appeal remains to be identified. Was it something inherent to the Society, or was it a reflection of changes in the wider Scottish society of the nineteenth century?

AUTHOR DETAILS

Paul Burton is a PhD student at the University of Strathclyde, researching the social history of Scottish Quakerism with specific reference to gender, occupations and Quaker families. He is a member of Glasgow Meeting.

Mailing address: Graduate School of Informatics, Department of Computer and Information Sciences, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow G1 1XH, Scotland.
Email: Paul.Burton@cis.strath.ac.uk

68. MacLaren, *Religion and Social Class*, pp. 12, 22.
69. *Statistics of Friends in Scotland*.