



## The Newcastle Upon Tyne Peace Society (1817–50)

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# THE NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE PEACE SOCIETY (1817–50)

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The 1816 foundation of the Society for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace in London was followed by the creation of a number of Auxiliary societies throughout the country. This paper analyses the history of the Newcastle Auxiliary, covering its establishment in 1817, its disaffiliation from the London Society in 1840, and its subsequent re-affiliation in 1850. After an initial period of quietism after their formation, the paper demonstrates how the radical pacifism of the society developed in the 1830s and 1840s, placing their activities in relation to the specificities of Newcastle's political history, wider transformations in the British peace movement, and the influence of transatlantic networks of American peace advocacy and anti-slavery activism. The local Richardson family of Quakers personified these transformations, even as anarchists such as Joseph Barker represented a militant outer fringe of the society. Ultimately, however, the society struggled to garner wider support in Newcastle, clashing with local Chartists and with the town's militarist merchants and businessmen in 1848. The paper therefore demonstrates how the Auxiliary societies need to be thought of active, agential organisations which negotiated the contradictions between their pacifist ideologies and the local and regional milieu within which they were enmeshed.

**Keywords:** peace, pacifism, Newcastle, peace society, Richardson family

ON 13 APRIL 1869, a meeting took place at the Friends New Meeting House on Pilgrim Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, attended by both local Quakers and Church ministers of various, although mostly Nonconformist, denominations. The meeting was a significant moment in Newcastle's radical history and in the story of the nineteenth-century British peace movement more widely. Within its walls a resolution was adopted for the dissolution of the Newcastle Peace Society, which the *Durham County Advertiser* reported was discontinuing its activities due to simple 'want of encouragement'.<sup>1</sup> The resolution proposed:

That the Newcastle Auxiliary Peace Society be dissolved, but that a standing Committee of four gentlemen be appointed to confer when any action has to be taken ... and that those who have hitherto subscribed to this Auxiliary be encouraged to subscribe to the Parent Society in London, through its agent.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Durham County Advertiser*, 16 Apr. 1869, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *N[ewcastle] J[ournal]*, 12 Apr. 1869, p. 3.

On closer inspection, this want of encouragement may not seem so surprising when placed within the history of Newcastle and the wider North East region. By the close of the nineteenth century the region counted among its key industrial accomplishments several innovations that were crucial to the extension of warfare and imperialism. Charles Algernon Parsons' steam turbine, developed in the 1880s, became a defining feature of the Anglo-German naval arms race prior to the First World War; by 1911, 'nearly all British and foreign warships [were] fitted with the Parsons turbines'.<sup>3</sup> The marriage of coal and steel in the region and the opening of the Darlington–Stockton Railway in September 1825 further ensured that the North East would become synonymous with a technology that transformed the logistics of conflict and ultimately entrenched European imperialism across the globe.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, the standing that local companies such as Armstrong Mitchell & Company accrued for the proficiency of their artillery and warships symbolised the growing entanglement and mutual dependence between the North East's industrial economy and the exercise of military power.<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, however, Newcastle was a prominent site of radicalism and activism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and not solely because of the influence of radical MPs such as Joseph Cowen.<sup>6</sup> For instance, the town's involvement with the Chartist movement 'attained a stridency and vehemence which was rarely matched and never excelled elsewhere',<sup>7</sup> and several of Newcastle's leading radicals aligned closely with revolutionaries as divergent in their objectives as the Italian republican Giuseppe Mazzini and the Russian anarchist Pyotr Kropotkin.<sup>8</sup> Historians have also demonstrated the region's concerted involvement with the anti-slavery and free produce movements, particularly those spearheaded by local Quaker families in collaboration with their American counterparts.<sup>9</sup> Yet, despite these studies of radicalism and activism, there have been no attempts to illuminate the role of pacifism and peace advocacy in the region, especially when seen in the wider context of the history of the Society for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace (henceforth the London Society).<sup>10</sup> This paper therefore examines the formation, activities, ideas, and broader national and international connections of the Newcastle Auxiliary Peace Society (NAPS) between c. 1817 and 1850. It does so not just with the aim of elucidating an important and

<sup>3</sup> Alexander Richardson, *The Evolution of the Parsons Steam Turbine* (Cambridge, [1911] 2014), p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Ronald E. Robinson, 'Introduction: Railway Imperialism', in Clarence B. Davis, Kenneth E. Wilburn and Ronald Robinson, *Railway Imperialism* (Westport, 1991), pp. 1–6; Christian Wolmar, *Engines of War: How Wars Were Won & Lost on the Railways* (2010).

<sup>5</sup> David Saunders, 'Charles Mitchell, Tyneside and Russia's First Ironclads', *Northern History*, XLVIII(1) (2011), 75–95.

<sup>6</sup> Joan Allen, *Joseph Cowen and Popular Radicalism on Tyneside, 1829–1900* (2007).

<sup>7</sup> William Henry Maehl, 'Chartist Disturbances in Northeastern England, 1839', *International Review of Social History*, VIII(3) (1963), 389–414 (p. 389). See also William Henry Maehl, 'The Dynamics of Violence in Chartism: A Case Study in Northeastern England', *Albion*, VII(2) (1975), 101–19; D. J. Rowe, 'Some Aspects of Chartism on Tyneside', *International Review of Social History*, XVI(1) (1971), 17–39.

<sup>8</sup> Respectively, see Marcella Pellegrino Sutcliffe, *Victorian Radicals and Italian Democrats* (Woodbridge, 2014), pp. 97–101; David Saunders, 'The 1905 Revolution on Tyneside', in Jon Smele and Anthony Heywood, *The Russian Revolution of 1905: Centenary Perspectives* (Abingdon, 2005), pp. 260–78 (pp. 262–63).

<sup>9</sup> Louis Billington, 'British Humanitarians and American Cotton, 1840–1860', *Journal of American Studies*, XI(3) (1977), 313–34; Elizabeth A. O'Donnell, "'There's Death in the Pot!'" The British Free Produce Movement and the Religious Society of Friends, With Particular Reference to the North-East of England', *Quaker Studies*, XIII(2) (2009), 184–204; Patricia Hix, 'American and North East England's Quaker Anti-Slavery Networks', *North East History*, XXXIX (2008), 25–44.

<sup>10</sup> David Saunders, 'Challenge, Decline and Revival: The Fortunes of Pacifism in Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Newcastle', *NH* in press (2017) DOI: [10.1080/0078172X.2017.1309755](https://doi.org/10.1080/0078172X.2017.1309755)

overlooked part of Newcastle's radical history, but also to contribute to wider discussions concerning the history of the British peace movement in the nineteenth century.

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The foundation of the London Society on 14 June 1816 was quickly followed by the creation of a number of Auxiliary societies across the length and breadth of Great Britain. By the close of 1816 two Auxiliaries had been formed, one in Swansea and Neath, the other, the first of several women-led Auxiliaries, in Tavistock. In 1818 the Second Annual Report of the London Society listed a further three Auxiliaries in Hertford, Darlington and Newcastle, and throughout the 1820s many more sprang up, to make a total of twenty-one by 1831.<sup>11</sup> The Auxiliaries were officially affiliated to the London Society, producing reports for its organ the *Herald of Peace*, reprinting and circulating its tracts locally, and remitting the subscriptions and donations they collected to its treasurer in London. They consequently did much of the crucial early work in fostering and establishing principles of peace advocacy beyond the metropolitan confines of the capital, particularly as the London Society found its own footing only gradually in its first decades of existence.

A detailed consideration of any of the individual Auxiliaries has, however, been largely missing from extant literatures on the nineteenth-century peace movement. The scales of historical analysis have typically been restricted to that of the national, continental and international to the detriment of the local and regional. For instance, the path-breaking work of Martin Ceadel takes the British peace movement across the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries as its primary focus.<sup>12</sup> The continental scale is best represented by the studies of Peter Brock and Sandi E. Cooper,<sup>13</sup> while at the international scale the gargantuan work of W. H. van der Linden remains the exemplary contribution.<sup>14</sup> While all of these studies aptly demonstrate the connections between different scales and locales where appropriate, the Auxiliary societies and their local and regional contexts are typically only placed under the spotlight when they become relevant for explaining wider changes and dynamics within the broader peace movement.<sup>15</sup> Aside from this, they are often relegated to supplementary status, the ostensibly *auxiliary* nature of their existence foreclosing a consideration of their potential role as important agents of peace advocacy in their own right.

The aim of this paper is consequently to detail the history of the NAPS from its formation in 1817, to its disaffiliation from the London Society at the beginning of the 1840s and finally to its re-affiliation to the London Society in 1850. It focuses on the origins, early developments,

<sup>11</sup> Second Annual Report of the Committee for the Society for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace for 1818 (1818), p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> Martin Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention: The British Peace Movement and International Relations, 1730–1854* (Oxford, 1996); Martin Ceadel, *Semi-detached Idealists: The British Peace Movement and International Relations, 1854–1945* (Oxford, 2000). See also J. E. Cookson, *The Friends of Peace: Anti-war Liberalism in England, 1793–1815* (Cambridge, 1982); Stephen Conway, 'The Politicization of the Nineteenth-Century Peace Society', *Historical Research*, LXVI(161) (1993), 267–83; Paul Laity, *The British Peace Movement, 1870–1914* (Oxford, 2002); Richard Taylor and Nigel Young (eds), *Campaigns for Peace: British Peace Movements* (Manchester, 1987).

<sup>13</sup> Peter Brock, *Pacifism in Europe to 1914* (Princeton, 1972); Sandi E. Cooper, *Patriotic Pacifism: Waging War on War in Europe, 1815–1914* (Oxford, 1991). See also Peter Brock, *Freedom From War: Nonsectarian Pacifism 1814–1914* (Toronto, 1991); Francis Lyons, *Internationalism in Europe, 1815–1914* (Leyden, 1963).

<sup>14</sup> W. H. van der Linden, *The International Peace Movement, 1815–1874* (Amsterdam, 1987).

<sup>15</sup> For example, the NAPS is mentioned only briefly in Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention* (note 12), p.222, 236, 310–11; and in van der Linden, *The international peace movement* (note 14), p.189–196.

ideology and (inter)national connections of the NAPS and its individual members. In particular, it demonstrates how, after a fifteen-year period of seeming quietism to 1831, the NAPS became exceedingly active in its peace advocacy efforts, initially encompassing an array of pacifist and pacifist<sup>16</sup> positions and gathering praise from the London Society for the fervour of its endeavours. In the 1840s the pacifism of the society deepened further, a shift which the paper argues was underpinned by three wider transformations; the coming to prominence of the local Richardson family of Quakers in the society, the connections of many in the society, especially the Richardsons, to national and international anti-slavery activism, and finally the spread of the ideas of two American peace and anti-slavery activists, William Lloyd Garrison and Elihu Burritt, into the society. The paper analyses these transformations and the society's wider activity, placing it within the context of Newcastle's local history as well as in relation to wider national and international developments and conflicts. Although the society's advocacy is beyond doubt, the paper shows how it ran into difficulties on Tyneside owing to the strength and forcefulness of the local Chartist movement and the militarist inclinations of local businessmen and merchants. From this discussion, it is concluded more broadly that the Auxiliaries need to be reconceptualised as active agential organisations that negotiated the contradictions between their heterogeneous pacifism, their national and international outlooks and the local and regional milieus within which they were enmeshed.

Empirically, what follows is based on an incomplete collection of the NAPS's reports,<sup>17</sup> reports of the NAPS's activities from the *Herald of Peace*, a detailed consultation of local and regional newspapers, secondary literatures where appropriate, a miscellaneous range of primary magazines, books and tracts that illuminate the NAPS and its members' activities in some way, copies of the *Peace Advocate*, published in Newcastle from 1843, and the personal manuscripts of George Richardson, an influential member of the society whose papers are held at the Library of the Religious Society of Friends in London. Although no minutes of their meetings and no correspondence between the NAPS and members of the London Society appears to have survived, making reconstructing their interaction with the wider peace movement difficult, these materials enabled a tracing of the NAPS's activities, albeit with a disproportionate focus on the 1830s and 1840s.

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The end of the Napoleonic Wars was arguably a watershed moment in the history of war and peace in Britain. David Bell has argued that the wars as a whole represented the first *total war* in history, with its mass armies, unprecedented spatial scale, oppositional ideologies and

<sup>16</sup> The crucial distinction between these terms is explained in Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention*, pp. 43–44. Broadly speaking, the pacifist position unconditionally and universally rejects the use of military force and violence in all circumstances, whereas the pacifist position rejects aggressive war but, in some cases, condones defensive warfare to protect international order.

<sup>17</sup> Only three of the NAPS's full reports to the London Society appear to have survived, the first (1832), second (1833) and fifth (1837), although many subsequent reports were reprinted in the *Herald of Peace*. See respectively: *Report of the Newcastle upon Tyne Auxiliary to the London Society for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace* (Newcastle, 1832), bound in vol. 9 of a set entitled *Miscellanea Northumberland &c*, Wallington Hall, Northumberland; *Second report of the Newcastle upon Tyne auxiliary to the London Society for the Promotion of Permanent Universal Peace* (Newcastle, 1833), 080 TRA(101), Great North Museum, Newcastle; *Fifth report of the Newcastle upon Tyne auxiliary to the London Society for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace* (Newcastle, 1837), 080 TRA(95), Great North Museum, Newcastle.

grievous casualties.<sup>18</sup> The cessation of the wars in 1815 was the final nail in the coffin for the doctrine of international relations Ceadel calls *fatalism*, the belief that war was inevitable, frequent and always latent when not occurring at any given moment.<sup>19</sup> Integral to fatalism was the assumed yet hegemonic belief that, because war had been an inexorable part of human affairs since time immemorial, it was both unthinkable and futile to decry or resist it. This doctrine, however, began to erode in the eighteenth century due to changes ‘both in the international system and in transnational influences common to all countries’.<sup>20</sup> The decline of fatalism dovetailed with the ascendancy of a peace-or-war debate, whereby war was believed to be not inevitable and therefore fruitless to discuss, but instead disappearing because of the progress ushered in by the European Enlightenment. War was reconvened as requiring justification, which contrarily could be contested and disputed. Both the timing and horror of the Napoleonic Wars thus spawned Britain’s first peace movement in 1793, a movement which was to argue that war could (and should) be curtailed and perhaps eradicated entirely, and out of which eventually grew the London Society in 1816.<sup>21</sup> In contrast to the centuries past, it was growingly believed that public opinion could end war.

At least, this was the belief of the Newcastle Quaker George Richardson, who wrote sometime before 1830 that ‘[t]he late improvement in and increased power of public opinion furnish another guarantee of peace. Glory and conquest are no longer acknowledged as justifiable causes of war’.<sup>22</sup> In October 1817, Richardson and a number of other Quakers had formed the ‘Newcastle upon Tyne Auxiliary to the London Society for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace’, confirming van der Linden’s inference that ‘Quakers played an important role in [the NAPS]’.<sup>23</sup> These Quakers were all members of the tight-knit Quaker community in Newcastle, most of which had migrated to the area in the wake of the rapid industrialisation of the River Tyne in the eighteenth century.<sup>24</sup> Upon settling, they had formed close familial networks and become immediately active in the social, religious and philanthropic life of the town. Importantly, among the founders of the NAPS was at least one *pacifist*. This indicates that the NAPS was one of the many Auxiliaries which took advantage of the London Society’s March 1818 rule change allowing non-pacifists to serve as Auxiliary committee members.<sup>25</sup> This helps to explain why the NAPS emerged when it did, six months after the rule change was introduced but not before.

However, much less is known about the NAPS between 1817 and 1830. The lack of evidence, both in local newspapers, the *Herald of Peace* and locally published overviews of religious societies seems to suggest that from the year of their formation the NAPS engaged in a profound quietism, meeting annually to discuss the Peace Society’s tracts but stopping short of intruding into the town’s political milieu. In fact, the most significant reaction to the NAPS’s founding was derogatory. One ‘S’, writing in a local magazine, immediately decried the formation of the society, arguing that, if ‘peace societies [were] to deprive christians

<sup>18</sup> David Bell, *The First Total War: Napoleon’s Europe and the Birth of Warfare as We Know It* (Boston, 2007).

<sup>19</sup> Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention*, pp. 63–98.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 166–221.

<sup>22</sup> L[ibrary of the] R[eligious] S[ociety of] F[riends], George Richardson MS Box R4/1/23.

<sup>23</sup> van der Linden, *The International Peace Movement*, p. 192.

<sup>24</sup> Geoffrey N. Cantor, *Quakers, Jews, and Science: Religious Responses to Modernity and the Sciences in Britain, 1650–1900* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 140–41.

<sup>25</sup> Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention*, pp. 232–33.



of the means of self-defence, they would prove the greatest enemies of the human race'.<sup>26</sup> Although the debate prompted by 'S' in the magazine was reprinted in the *Herald*, the NAPS itself seemingly made no contribution to it. Aside from their own 1832 explanation that '[p]erhaps their having underrated the spread of pacific principles has been the chief cause of their silence', their inactivity maps neatly onto Ceadel's demarcation of the Peace Society into the Jonathan Dymond (1816–31) and Joseph Sturge (1832–45) eras, 'pacifist, Christian, Quaker-backed, and quietist' in the first and more politically active in the second.<sup>27</sup>

The beginning of the Joseph Sturge era was marked by what Ceadel calls a provincial radicalism, whereby a radicalisation and pluralisation of the views espoused by Auxiliaries in Birmingham, Manchester, Darlington and, indeed, Newcastle put pressure on the London Society to 'reaffirm or even intensify its absolute rejection of violence'.<sup>28</sup> Believing the London Society to be too static and uncommitted, the provinces demonstrated a zeal that quickly outstripped the capital. In Newcastle, this was explainable above all by the NAPS's Quaker composition, which included a wealthy dynasty of tanners including the Richardsons, the Beaumonts and the Priestmans. Despite this, it seems their pacifism was hesitant at the beginning of the 1830s. Their first report to the London Society in 1832, for instance, came out only cautiously against defensive war. In the early peace movement the legitimacy of defensive (as opposed to offensive or retributive) war was a perpetual concern, to which the NAPS stated:

To hear the Duke of Wellington declare, as he is said to have done, 'that nothing is do dreadful as a battle won, except a battle lost,' ... may well make even the advocates for the doctrine of the lawfulness of defensive war, question the soundness of their position.<sup>29</sup>

That this statement was not an attempt to limit the society only to pacifists was confirmed later, when the report invited those 'who are not yet prepared, by the full conviction of the practical soundness of this sentiment, to disclaim all war ... to cooperate with them to the full extent of their present views'.<sup>30</sup> The third rule of the NAPS similarly made no attempt to limit subscription only to pacifists, decreeing simply, and with a likely deliberate interpretive flexibility, that '[t]he Society shall consist of persons of every denomination, who are desirous in the uniting in the promotion of peace on earth'.<sup>31</sup> This passive rebuff of defensive war combined with the outward willingness to accommodate those in Newcastle who were not strict pacifists is indicative that the NAPS did not, to begin with, position itself as a strictly pacifist organisation.

However, the tensions latent within this stance were exacerbated at the NAPS's 1833 annual meeting, which is noteworthy as the first time that John Orange, a Congregationalist minister from Barnsley, would have attended. In 1833, Orange had accepted an invitation to become minister of the newly formed St James Chapel on Blakett Street, and almost immediately became secretary of the NAPS upon his arrival.<sup>32</sup> Orange subsequently became recognised for his forceful lectures both locally and in the pages of the *Herald of Peace*. For instance, reporting on a lecture he had given in 1834 on whether or not 'the sword shall devour forever',

<sup>26</sup> *Northumberland and Newcastle Monthly Magazine*, II (1819), 105.

<sup>27</sup> Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention*, p. 223.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 282.

<sup>29</sup> *H[erald of] P[ea]ce* (Jan.–Mar. 1832), p. 282.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 284.

<sup>31</sup> *Report of the Newcastle upon Tyne Auxiliary*, p. 11.

<sup>32</sup> *[The] E[vangelical and] M[issionary] C[hronicle]* (Jan. 1833), pp. 165–66. Thanks also to Keith Edghill for providing additional information on Orange.

the *Herald* commented it ‘occupied upwards of an hour in its delivery ... and several [of the audience] assented to the soundness of the principles set forth in the lecture, and expressed a desire that they would spread and prevail’.<sup>33</sup> Orange’s speeches and the content of their second report in 1833 led to the *Herald* praising the NAPS’s ‘undiminished zeal in the cause of peace’, a discernible change from their passivity not five years earlier.<sup>34</sup>

Orange clashed, however, with NAPS founder, fellow secretary and *pacifist* John Fenwick at the 1833 annual meeting. A longstanding public figure, grocer and Baptist, Fenwick was also a prominent member of other Quaker societies in Newcastle, serving as secretary to the Anti-Slavery Society and treasurer to the Auxiliary Baptist Missionary Society. Orange and Fenwick disagreed over the anti-defensive war message conveyed in the NAPS’s report of that year. ‘I feel myself under great difficulty in rising to speak on the present occasion’, Fenwick stated. ‘The report I have read is not drawn up by me; and I cannot go to the full length of the principles it contains respecting defensive war.’ Fenwick’s ambivalence was also echoed by the Revd Valentine Ward, a Wesleyan Methodist minister residing at Brunswick, who noted there were three kinds of warfare: aggressive, retributive and defensive; the former two ‘utterly at variance with christianity [*sic*]; but the latter, under peculiar circumstances, might be justified’. In response, George Richardson poured scorn on his secretary by mocking the ‘feebleness’ of his address and stating his hope that ‘he would see the weakness of his positions, and take his stand on higher ground’. Orange, meanwhile, foregrounded the ‘exceedingly delicate and difficult task’ of demarcating between offensive and defensive war, contending that ‘once we admit the lawfulness of war at all, call it whatever we may, we are out at sea, and know not whither the waves may carry us’. In the chair, the Revd William Hawks of Gateshead attempted to subdue the storminess of the meeting by expressing ‘his hope that the slight differences of opinion existing amongst them would, by exciting greater interest, help forward rather than hinder the object which they all had at heart’.<sup>35</sup>

Hawks’ hope was ultimately misguided. A couple of years later Fenwick and Ward had been expunged not only from the Committee but from the NAPS entirely, leaving Orange and George Atley Brumell, ‘an unusually enterprising secretary’<sup>36</sup> but about whom little is known, to oversee the activities of the society. Orange reiterated at the NAPS’s annual meeting in 1835 that ‘every species of warfare’, including defensive war, was ‘in opposition to the will of God, and so to act was in all cases incapable of justification’.<sup>37</sup> As much as can be surmised from his speeches, Orange’s commitment to pacifism was similar to (and probably inspired by) Jonathan Dymond’s, in that he based his rejection of war primarily on Christianity and his adherence to the Gospel, but also engaged in a secondary and contingent line of reasoning that emphasised any kind of war could always be represented as defensive by a state seeking a justification to fight.<sup>38</sup> The NAPS also, in 1834, inaugurated an essay-writing competition for the best essay proving ‘That all War is inconsistent with the Spirit of Christianity’, which was won by the man who was later to become the Peace

<sup>33</sup> *HP* (Apr.–Jun. 1834), p. 341.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 323.

<sup>35</sup> Quotes in this paragraph from *N[ewcastle] C[ourant]*, 12 Oct. 1833, p. 3.

<sup>36</sup> Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention*, p. 310.

<sup>37</sup> *NC*, 21 Mar. 1835, p. 4.

<sup>38</sup> See Ceadel’s analysis of Dymond in *The Origins of War Prevention*, pp. 48–49. In 1835, Orange declared that he had previously been in favour of defensive war, but had renounced his opinion after reading the London Society’s tracts. See *ibid.*



Society's travelling lecturer, William Stokes.<sup>39</sup> The emphasis placed on proving that *all war* was explicitly inconsistent with Christianity demonstrates that, alongside the disappearance of Fenwick and Ward from the society and the stirring lectures of Orange, by 1835 at the very latest the NAPS was firmly pacifist in its ideology and orientation.

During this time, however, the NAPS had little opportunity to advocate these principles beyond their chapels and meeting halls. Like all the Auxiliaries, their primary activity was the printing and distribution of tracts and reports throughout the local populace. Copies of their second report were, for example, circulated to church ministers throughout Newcastle and the wider region. Moreover, the printing office of the *Newcastle Courant* and the bookshop owned by Edward Charlton and James Finlay widely distributed the London Society's tracts.<sup>40</sup> They did this alongside their annual meetings and lectures, which were convened not only by Orange but by a gradually increasing number of peace witnessing reverends such as the Baptist Revd Richard Pengilly. These efforts led the London Society to comment approvingly in 1835 that '[t]he Newcastle Auxiliary does not relax in its efforts to promote the good cause'.<sup>41</sup> But there is little evidence these efforts made much impact in Newcastle, most likely because of the years of peace that followed the Anglo-Ashanti Wars in the 1820s. The contradiction between the NAPS's increasing advocacy and the indifference it was seemingly greeted with is thus explainable by the simple fact that it was difficult to argue that peace was a pressing and urgent issue when Britain was not at war. Furthermore, as David Saunders has argued, many of the prominent merchants and businessmen of Newcastle were more concerned with aggressively keeping international trade routes open at this time, a commitment at least partly transmitted to the region through the efforts of the Russophobe diplomat David Urquhart.<sup>42</sup>

The outbreak of hostilities with Afghanistan and China in 1839 was therefore the first real test of the pacifist NAPS's peace advocacy. Owing to the serious illness of his wife, Orange had left Newcastle for the Isle of Wight the year before, and perhaps partly as a consequence the NAPS was slow to respond to the wars in the East.<sup>43</sup> The *Herald* reported in July 1839 that the NAPS had recently not been 'prominently before the public' because 'the various topics which have engaged the attention of the public have, to a considerable extent, prevented the [society] from attempting much over the last few months'.<sup>44</sup> The first report of the newly independent Newcastle Peace Society (NPS) in 1840 similarly told of 'no very extensive labours to recount to the Annual Meeting'.<sup>45</sup> Instead, it was the local branch of the Chartist movement that condemned Britain's involvement in opium smuggling the strongest, with *The Northern Star* newspaper blasting in August 1839 that '[w]e, her Majesty's profit-mongering subjects have, for a long time, been driving on a contraband and most lucrative trade with China, at the expense of the health and morals of the Chinese nation'.<sup>46</sup> Meanwhile, the more moderate *Newcastle Journal* slyly positioned the coming war as one of self-defence, writing in January 1840 that '[t]hese proud and unsociable barbarians ... cannot be expected to take

<sup>39</sup> William Stokes, *All war inconsistent with the Christian religion & the best interests of nations: and the limits defined to which force may be applied by the civil magistrates in suppressing popular tumults* (Newcastle, 1836).

<sup>40</sup> *Second Annual Report of the Newcastle Upon Tyne Auxiliary*, p. 8.

<sup>41</sup> Nineteenth Annual Report of the Committee of the Society for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace, in *HP* (Apr.–Jun. 1835), p. 66.

<sup>42</sup> Saunders, 'Challenge, Decline and Revival'.

<sup>43</sup> *EMC* (Jan. 1838), p. 89.

<sup>44</sup> *HP*, NS 1 (1838–39), p. 316.

<sup>45</sup> *HP*, NS 2 (1840–41), p. 174.

<sup>46</sup> Phoebe Chow, *Britain's Imperial Retreat from China, 1900–1931* (Abingdon, 2017), p. 41. On the response of Chartism to the wars, see Shijie Guan, 'Chartism and the First Opium War', *History Workshop*, xxiv (1987), 17–31.

very tamely the actual attack upon their war junks', when it learned of Captain Elliot's firing on the Chinese a few months earlier. The *Journal* blamed Elliot himself for the mismanagement of the dispute, suggesting that when the inevitable reply came from the Chinese Britain would have no choice but to respond in self-defence.<sup>47</sup> Although it is difficult to say, this subtle narrativisation of the war is likely representative of the middle-class group of merchants and businessmen in Newcastle, who probably viewed the war with indifference at best and in self-defence at worst.

Among this climate, it was only on Christmas Eve 1840 that the NPS held a meeting to protest 'the continuance of war in various parts of the East, and to entreat her majesty to pursue a pacific policy'. A Scotch minister, the Revd Dr Lockhart, moved a motion condemning the wars as 'injurious even to the victors' and calling for their settlement through international arbitration, but before the motion could be voted on it was hijacked by members of the local Chartist movement. As the *Herald* recounted, 'a Chartist speaker rose to move an amendment, and concluded a long speech, for the most part foreign to the object'. The Chartists present were agitating for the release of the leaders of the 1839 Newport Rising, and apparently after their amendment was seconded they 'caused a clamour which prevailed while the result was pending'.<sup>48</sup> Although the meeting ended peaceably, this incident with the Chartists helps to explain why the NAPS failed to garner much support from the working classes of Newcastle. In 1839 the society had placed 'twelve copies of a Chronological Chart of the Wars' in public places, hoping 'that by this appeal through the eye, to the judgment, the attention of many will be arrested, who have not hitherto felt sufficient interest to induce them to investigate the subject',<sup>49</sup> suggesting that their distribution of tracts (primarily among the 'influential classes of society',<sup>50</sup> as they had earlier admitted) had only garnered limited working-class attention. Furthermore, it is likely the society was prevented from establishing any meaningful lines of collaboration with the Chartists because of the violent rhetoric and undercurrents of the latter. The Newcastle society's strict opposition to war and violence of any kind was plainly incompatible with the procurement of arms and weapons by Newcastle's Chartists from 1839, and the theological arguments presented by William Stokes and others as to whether or not the civil magistrate was justified in using violence would have sat dubiously next to the repeated arrests and edgy standoffs between the Chartists and local magistrates that occurred the same year.<sup>51</sup> Thus Ceadel's observation that its nationwide brush with Chartism helped the London Society 'to establish some links with the working classes sooner than it would otherwise have done' does not apply so readily to Newcastle.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, the frosty relationship between Newcastle's Chartists and peace advocates was to continue long after the wars in the East had subsided.<sup>53</sup>

In 1840, therefore, the newly independent NPS faced a contradiction between its increasing radicalism and its reception in the town. On the one hand, throughout the 1830s it had eliminated pacifism from its ranks and advocated the principles of pacifism with an increasing strenuousness that was noted by the *Herald of Peace* on more than one occasion. However,

<sup>47</sup> *NJ*, 18 Jan. 1840, p. 4.

<sup>48</sup> *HP*, NS 2 (1840–41), p. 281.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 174.

<sup>50</sup> *HP*, NS 1 (1838–39), p. 316.

<sup>51</sup> On the violent underpinnings and rhetoric of Newcastle's Chartists, see Maehl, 'The Dynamics of Violence in Chartism'.

<sup>52</sup> Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention*, p. 335.

<sup>53</sup> See Ceadel, *Semi-detached Idealists*, p. 48.

it had failed to respond quickly to Britain's military escapades in the East, and when it did so its protest meeting was unashamedly hijacked by Chartists (who presumably made up a significant proportion of the 200–300 in attendance).<sup>54</sup> More widely, the evidence would suggest that, just as it failed to make much headway into the working classes, the society also failed to convince those merchants and businessmen who depended on international trade for their livelihoods as to the relevance of pacifism. It consequently appears that, beyond its Quaker core and the few ministers it had attracted with its message, the NAPS declared itself independent at the time it was most struggling to make its mark felt in the local area.

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It was at this point a softening of the NAPS's emphatically pacifist stance could have enabled a stronger basis for collaboration with the Chartists, and the possibility, in acknowledging the potential legitimacy of defensive war (or at least not decrying it so strongly), of a larger pool of local pacifist support to draw upon in its peace advocacy efforts. However, the declaration of independence from the London Society in 1840 was indicative of a wider transformation in the NAPS, which was to actually see it shift further toward the inflexible end of the pacifist spectrum.<sup>55</sup> In 1843, a new resolution of membership was adopted which demonstrated the deepening of the pacifist ideology:

I, the undersigned, being convinced that war, *in every form* is contrary to the spirit and precepts of the Gospel of Christ, and desiring to promote this principle, and to live consistently with its requirements, do hereby enrol myself a member of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Peace Society.<sup>56</sup>

The words *in every form* signified the restriction of membership (not merely committee positions) to pacifists only. In the 1840s this pacifism was underpinned by three wider transformations that impacted upon the society and its members. The first was the coming to maturity of the extraordinary Richardson family of Quakers within the NPS's ranks. The second was the growing transatlantic connection of many of the NPS, particularly the Richardsons, to American anti-slavery abolitionists, and the third was the parallel spread of the ideas of two American abolitionists and pacifists — William Lloyd Garrison and Elihu Burritt — into the society.

Jonathan Mood has observed of the Richardsons that 'members of their family, along with three other related family groupings, dominated the government of the Quaker society in Newcastle'.<sup>57</sup> A similar statement could be made about the importance of the Richardsons to the NPS in the 1840s. Aside from founder member George, in 1838 five other Richardsons were listed as subscribers to the NAPS, of whom two (Edward and John) sat on the Committee.<sup>58</sup> However, from 1840 all of the other members of the family were usurped in the fervour of their advocacy by husband and wife Henry and Anna Richardson. Anna had moved to Newcastle

<sup>54</sup> A point we owe to David Saunders.

<sup>55</sup> Year of disaffiliation from *HP*, NS 2 (1840–41), pp. 174–75.

<sup>56</sup> *Preston Chronicle*, 9 Dec. 1843, p. 2.

<sup>57</sup> Jonathan Mood, 'Women in the Quaker Community: The Richardson Family of Newcastle, c1815–1860', *Quaker Studies*, ix(2) (2005), 204–19 (p. 206). For a general overview of the life of the Richardson family in the North East, see George Richardson, *The annals of the Cleveland Richardsons and their descendants: compiled from family manuscripts, etc.* (Newcastle, 1850); Anne Ogden Boyce, *Records of a Quaker Family: The Richardsons of Cleveland* (1889); Anna Richardson, *Memoir of Anna Deborah Richardson with Extracts from her Letters* (Newcastle, 1877). Although these records give insight into the lives and travels of the Richardson family, they provide few insights into their peace activism.

<sup>58</sup> *Fifth report of the Newcastle upon Tyne auxiliary*, p. 7.

from Oxfordshire after marrying Henry in 1833, and through following their activity it is possible to trace the key changes in the NPS in this period. As well as being committed abolitionists as soon as the early 1830s (when slavery was outlawed in Britain), in the 1840s they began publishing two peace magazines: the *Peace Advocate and Correspondent*, and the *Olive Leaf*, which was aimed specifically at children. Further, they attended the Paris Peace Conference in 1849, and were afterwards inspired to return to France to distribute 2,000 specially bound copies of the New Testament.<sup>59</sup>

The pacifism of the Richardsons was absolute yet nuanced. Although they published no tracts on peace, the pacifism of Henry Richardson is visible in a series of 1847 editorials written and published in the *Peace Advocate*, which proposed a plan for what he termed a Christian Commonwealth. Commonwealth was here defined as ‘descriptive of the whole community of a country — the people and government united . . . as bound together by common interests, having those interests secured and watched over by their government’.<sup>60</sup> He proposed a policy of international non-intervention, pointedly criticising ‘[t]he ruinous consequences of our habit of intermeddling’ and arguing instead that ‘[w]e should advise, remonstrate, persuade, and mediate, but not coerce’.<sup>61</sup> What he called the Christian Commonwealth’s domestic policy was, however, the most intriguing of all; Henry claimed that the spread of the only truthful and correct interpretation of the Gospel (i.e. pacifism) was the great object which was desired. As this interpretation permeated the whole community of the country, he suggested the development of three tiers of ‘great ruling influences’ would ensure the proper conduct of the people.<sup>62</sup> The first would naturally be the fear of God, which would become supreme ‘[a]s the nation advance[d] in religious and moral excellence’, but the second would be the fear of public opinion.<sup>63</sup> In other words, if public opinion was so overwhelmingly committed to pacifism, the likely prospect of public condemnation and ostracisation would be enough to prevent any deviation from its principles. Yet he argued a third tier was still necessary — the civil magistrate — to counteract any possible deviations that might still occur.

However, on this point Richardson was unclear, suggesting that a small amount of ‘physical force’<sup>64</sup> might be necessary to subdue those who were not swayed by God or public opinion into adhering to the Gospel, but, other than pointing out that due to the crushing pressure of the first two tiers the magistrates duties ‘would be little more than nominal’,<sup>65</sup> did not define what was meant in this instance by physical force. Henry recognised the danger of this ambiguity, stressing that ‘[w]e do not mean to justify the resort to weapons in any country, under any circumstances’.<sup>66</sup> This was thus a form of what Ceadel calls *collaborative pacifism*, but only in the domestic sphere; Henry Richardson unequivocally rejected war but, in extreme circumstances, contended restraint was permissible in the domestic realm in the relations between citizen and civil magistrate.<sup>67</sup> In doing so, Henry and the other Richardsons in the

<sup>59</sup> John William Steel, *A Historical Sketch of the Society of Friends ‘in scorn called Quakers’ in Newcastle and Gateshead, 1653–1898* (Newcastle, 1899), pp. 191–92.

<sup>60</sup> *P[ea]ce A[d]vocate and C[or]respondent* (Nov. 1847), pp. 274–76 (p. 274).

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 275.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 276.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *PAC* (Sep. 1847), pp. 257–58 (p. 258).

<sup>67</sup> Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention*, pp. 52–53.

NPS placed themselves as part of a pacifist vanguard that alone could spread the ‘religious and moral excellence’ necessary to bring about the Christian Commonwealth.

In this viewpoint the Richardsons personally rejected the unconditionally non-violent and non-coercive outlook of some pacifists, those ‘opposed to all physical resistance of evil, carried so far as to object to seize the arm of a murderer, in the act of striking his victim’.<sup>68</sup> However, one individual associated with the society went further than this, taking not only a pacifist but also an anti-government stance, the maverick Revd Joseph Barker. It is difficult to do justice here to Barker’s extraordinary life and meandering, nomadic path across boundaries both theological and geographical.<sup>69</sup> Born near Leeds in May 1806, he entered the Wesleyan Methodist Church as a young man but, dissatisfied with aspects of their theology, joined the Methodist New Connexion soon afterwards in Nottingham. In 1831 he was posted to Blyth in Northumberland, spending six months preaching between there and Newcastle, before being removed again to Durham, where he was based for a second six months between 1832 and 1833. Although there is no evidence he was involved with any local peace Auxiliaries during this time, he reflected fondly on his first stay in the region, later declaring it ‘the greatest blessing of my life’ that set him on the path away from Methodism towards Unitarianism and eventual unbelief.<sup>70</sup>

At some point in his thirties Barker, like the Darlington Quaker Elizabeth Pease and a handful of others, began to embrace the ideas of the American pacifist and abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison. Garrison was unusual among mid nineteenth-century Christian pacifists in that he rejected not only all war, but also the ‘violent existence’<sup>71</sup> of human governments, aligning him with the tradition of Christian anarchism. In Lisa Kemmerer’s words, Garrison believed that ‘rulership and government are anti-Christian, and ought to be denounced, disregarded, and defied by Christians’, and he especially abhorred what he believed to be the US government’s built-in acquiescence to slavery.<sup>72</sup> He named his particular brand of pacifism *non-resistance*, and in his home country formed the New England Non-Resistance Society in 1838 for the furtherance of these principles. Among other things, the Non-Resistance Society pledged to reject all war, all human government and all distinctions of race, nationality or gender, and non-resistance was soon spreading unevenly into the British peace movement at the end of the 1830s.<sup>73</sup> For many, the rejection of human government, along with its concomitants such as voting in elections, was too much, but for others such as Barker it was a welcome injection of new ideas.

It was with his second removal to Gateshead in 1839 that Barker began writing and lecturing explicitly on ‘Peace, War, and Human Governments’.<sup>74</sup> His pacifism at this time has been analysed elsewhere, but it is notable for its extraordinary and vehement adoption of Garrison’s

<sup>68</sup> *PAC* (Sep. 1847), p. 257.

<sup>69</sup> See his autobiography: Joseph Barker and John Thomas Barker, *The Life of Joseph Barker written by Himself* (1880).

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 129.

<sup>71</sup> Garrison to Henry C. Wright, 16 Apr. 1837, in Louis Ruchames (ed.), *The Letters of William Lloyd Garrison, Volume II: A house dividing against itself 1836–1840* (Cambridge, MA, 1971), pp. 257–59 (p. 258).

<sup>72</sup> Lisa Kemmerer, ‘Anarchy: Foundations in Faith’, in Randall Amster, Abraham DeLeon, Luis A. Fernandez, Anthony J. Nocella II and Deric Shannon, *Contemporary Anarchist Studies: An Introductory Anthology of Anarchy in the Academy* (2009), pp. 200–12 (p. 205). See also Alexandre Christoyannopoulos, *Christian Anarchism: A Political Commentary on the Gospel* (Exeter, 2011), p. 23.

<sup>73</sup> Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention*, pp. 312–25.

<sup>74</sup> Barker and Barker, *The Life of Joseph Barker*, p. 272.



principles of non-resistance.<sup>75</sup> In a number of tracts published in Newcastle between 1840 and 1845, Barker outlined why ‘all war is inconsistent with the religion of Christ’,<sup>76</sup> and how through adherence to the Gospel ‘[t]he horrors and miseries of war would be brought to a perpetual end’.<sup>77</sup> He argued strongly against the use of violence in the protection of one’s life or liberty, proposing that ‘[n]o one is fit to be a disciple of Christ, who cannot make up his mind to lose his life for his sake’,<sup>78</sup> and took the rejection of defensive war to extreme lengths. For example, he reasoned that, should France invade England, ‘suppose that we, instead of preparing to kill them, were to receive them peacefully, share with them our food and our homes ... [t]hey would be conquered; they would be disarmed: there is not an army in the universe that could withstand such love’.<sup>79</sup> Most notably of all, Barker echoed both Garrison’s key principle and the anarchist philosophies germinating on the Continent when he declared that ‘[g]overnments [have] no right to command a man to do any thing ... Governments can give us the authority to do nothing but what is right, and we do not need their authority to do that’.<sup>80</sup>

In his rejection of war and government Barker’s ideas at this time can be seen, like Garrison’s, as encompassing what we would now define as Christian anarchism. He denied that any human government could ever be sanctioned by God and was thus not worthy of a Christian’s subservience, and was even sufficiently anarchist for Garrison to declare that ‘we agree with each other in all the essential points of Christianity’.<sup>81</sup> Anticipating anarchism’s reproach for nationalism, Barker was also insistent that ‘patriotism was a savage, pretended love of country, which gratified itself in extending their country’s dominions by the destruction of other nations’.<sup>82</sup> However, like Garrison, he had soon abandoned those tendencies that most firmly demarcated him as a Christian anarchist, and was perhaps therefore ‘concerned more often with agitating as such rather than with intellectual consistency’.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, in his preoccupation with the individual (as opposed to collective) scale of non-resistance, Barker aligned more closely with the individualistic anarchisms of the time rather than any communal (and, not to mention, atheist) branch of the philosophy later espoused by Bakunin or Kropotkin, something that was underlined by his fervent and self-congratulatory efforts ‘to counteract the mischievous tendency’ of Socialism in the North of England.<sup>84</sup>

Barker’s unusual ideas nevertheless found a home in Newcastle and an ally in the Richardsons. Not a year after relocating to the North East, he was present as the Chartists interrupted the NPS’s protest meeting in 1840, and a year later he was listed as a committee member.<sup>85</sup> By 1841 he was holding weekly peace advocacy lectures throughout the region

<sup>75</sup> Brock, *Pacifism in Europe*, pp. 395–96; Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention*, pp. 319–21.

<sup>76</sup> Joseph Barker, *All War Anti-Christian* (Newcastle, c. 1840), p. 1.

<sup>77</sup> Joseph Barker, *The Happy Tendency and Final Triumph of the Christian Religion* (Newcastle, c. 1845), p. 9.

<sup>78</sup> Joseph Barker, *Objections to peace principles answered* (Newcastle, c. 1841), p. 7.

<sup>79</sup> Joseph Barker, *Other objections to the peace principles answered* (Newcastle, 1842), pp. 5–6.

<sup>80</sup> Barker, *Objections to peace principles*, p. 3. See also Joseph Barker, *Non-resistance: in two letters* (Newcastle, 1842), pp. 5–16; Brock, *Pacifism in Europe to 1914*, p. 396, for similar statements.

<sup>81</sup> Garrison to Elizabeth Pease, 4 Apr. 1843, in Walter M. Merrill (ed.), *The Letters of William Lloyd Garrison, Volume III: No Union with Slaveholders 1841–1849* (Cambridge, MA, 1973), pp. 148–51 (p. 150).

<sup>82</sup> Joseph Barker and Lloyd Jones, *The Influence of Christianity: Report of a Public Discussion ...* (Manchester, 1839), p. 95.

<sup>83</sup> Christoyannopoulos, *Christian Anarchism*, p. 23.

<sup>84</sup> Barker and Barker, *The Life of Joseph Barker*, pp. 248–49. See also, for example, Joseph Barker, *The Abominations of Socialism exposed, in reply to the Gateshead Observer* (Newcastle, 1840).

<sup>85</sup> *HP*, NS 2 (1840–41), p. 281; Anon., *Local Collections; or Records of Remarkable Events connected with the Borough of Gateshead, 1841* (Gateshead, 1841), p. 38.



‘under the auspices of the Committee’,<sup>86</sup> and soon their support for him stretched to supporting his travels and family. As Barker himself recounted,

[a]t one period I lectured frequently on Peace. The Quakers aided me in obtaining rooms for my lectures, and supplied me with money to pay my travelling expenses; and the Backhouses and Peases of Darlington, and the Richardsons and others of Newcastle, contributed to the support of my family. I met some of the best and most agreeable people I ever knew among the Quakers.<sup>87</sup>

Through their mutual associate, Elizabeth Pease, Barker soon came to also have an impact on Garrison himself. In February 1843 Garrison told Pease that Barker’s ‘writings evince a most amicable and christian spirit, and a mind resolutely bent in knowing and obeying the truth’, and after they had finally met near Leeds in early September 1846, Garrison reflected that Barker had ‘a far reaching a comprehensive mind — is possessed of gloriously free spirit, and writes with astonishing ease and copiousness’.<sup>88</sup> However, Barker was not so popular among the local ministers who were not in the orbit of the NPS, especially after he had left the society in 1842 owing to his increasingly heterodox views on the Atonement and the Book of Revelation.<sup>89</sup> An Anglican minister at Hexham, George Bird, criticised both Barker and the NPS as ‘for the most part employ[ing] themselves in sowing the seeds of sentimental excitement, and in one-sided empty declamation, which could only be suffered to usurp the place of sober and decisive reasoning by an inconsiderate and unreflecting audience’.<sup>90</sup> Barker was also challenged on the eccentricity of some of his other theological views by the Methodist minister William Cooke in a long and exhaustive debate held in August 1845, in which Barker was regularly interrupted.<sup>91</sup> Consequently, while his ideas were for a time given a platform by the NPS, they unsurprisingly did not have much impact beyond that.

Barker’s involvement ran parallel to the wider increase in the society’s activities. In the early 1840s it remained cordial with the London Society; continuing to submit reports for publication in the *Herald of Peace* and calling for donations to assist the General Peace Convention in 1843. In 1841 it also reported ‘more extensive and varied labours than have usually fallen within the compass of one year’s operations’, breaking with the years of relative inactivity at the end of the 1830s.<sup>92</sup> Most importantly of all, however, was the development of a positively outward looking internationalism which sought to connect with growing national and transnational networks of peace advocacy. For example, when the Oregon Question threatened to simmer over in the mid 1840s, the NPS joined the rest of the peace movement in penning a Friendly Address to the US, theirs to ‘the inhabitants of Illinois, and neighbouring states of North America, with a friendly appeal to the Students of Knox College, Galesburg’, and on at least one occasion members of the NPS, including Brumell, the Richardsons and the tanner Jonathan Priestman, donated money to enable the printing and sending of peace tracts to the Norwegian Society of Friends in Stavanger.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Anon., *Local Collections*, p. 37.

<sup>87</sup> Barker and Barker, *The Life of Joseph Barker*, p. 273.

<sup>88</sup> Garrison to Elizabeth Pease, 28 Feb. 1843, in Merrill, *The Letters of William Lloyd Garrison*, pp. 123–27 (p. 124); Garrison to Richard D. Webb, 12 Sep. 1846, in *ibid.*, pp. 408–09 (p. 409).

<sup>89</sup> van der Linden, *The International Peace Movement*, p. 193.

<sup>90</sup> George Bird, *A Church: The Christian’s Peace Society* (Newcastle, 1843), p. 23.

<sup>91</sup> J. Selkirk, *Authentic report of the public discussion between Joseph Barker and William Cooke ...* (1845).

<sup>92</sup> *HP*, NS 2 (1840–41), p. 368.

<sup>93</sup> *PAC* (Jun. 1846), p. 142; LRSF, George Richardson TEMP MSS 911/2/18.

This outlook was best demonstrated by the connections cultivated by Henry and Anna Richardson to members of the American peace and abolitionism movements; specifically, the escaped US slave Frederick Douglass and the founder of the League of Universal Brotherhood Elihu Burritt (whom they referred to as ‘the very Hercules of Peace Literature’<sup>94</sup> in the *Peace Advocate*). Douglass was a slave who escaped incarceration in 1838 before coming into contact with Garrison in 1841. On coming to Britain in 1845, his twenty-month lecture tour inspired Anna and her sister-in-law, Ellen Richardson, to raise the necessary funds to secure Douglass’s formal manumission for his former owner in the US.<sup>95</sup> Subsequent to this, Douglass’s and Anna’s advocacy for peace and abolition entwined, encapsulated in a letter Douglass wrote to her, noting that ‘[t]he spirit of war rages. The war for the extension of slavery is daily becoming more and more popular; and he is branded a traitor who utters himself with any decision against it’.<sup>96</sup> Thus, as well as being active in the NPS and her publication of the *Peace Advocate* and *Olive Leaf* with Henry, Anna also established the Newcastle Ladies’ Free Produce Association in 1846 before, in 1847, starting to issue a “‘Monthly Illustrations of American Slavery”, in which she provided up-to-date information to nearly a hundred newspaper editors’.<sup>97</sup> Her and Henry’s spearheading of the free produce movement in Britain incidentally drew the ire of Garrison, who believed abstainers from cotton ‘fritter[ed] away great energies & respectable powers in controversies about years of cotton-cloth and pounds of sugar’.<sup>98</sup> In their commitment to abolitionism and free produce, as well as other local philanthropic causes such as temperance and prison reform, the Richardsons can be grouped neatly with the moral radicalism of Joseph Sturge that helped pluralise the wider peace movement in the late 1830s and 1840s. And although they were not involved with Sturge’s Anti-Slavery societies until the second half of the 1840s, other longstanding NPS members such as James Finlay and Jonathan Priestman were.<sup>99</sup>

While Sturge was undoubtedly the major radicalising influence on the London Society, historians have suggested it was the Richardsons who revitalised the British free produce movement in the late 1840s and early 1850s.<sup>100</sup> Indeed, in 1849 they formed the British Free Produce Association (Jonathan Priestman was also a founder),<sup>101</sup> and it is in this context that the Richardsons and NPS’s convivial support for the ideas of that other great peace advocate and abolitionist, Elihu Burritt, must be seen. Burritt himself had only himself begun peace advocating in 1843 after previous anti-slavery and temperance activism, and was most crucially a fervent advocate of free produce (unlike Garrison).<sup>102</sup> This ensured that when Burritt arrived in Britain in June 1846 to promote his League of Universal Brotherhood he was

<sup>94</sup> *PAC* (Jun. 1846), p. 141.

<sup>95</sup> On this, see L. Diane Barnes, *Frederick Douglass: Reformer and Statesman* (2013), p. 51; Clare Midgley, *Women Against Slavery: The British Campaigns, 1780–1870* (1992 [2005]), p. 137.

<sup>96</sup> Douglass to Anna Richardson, 29 Apr. 1847, in John R. McKivigan (ed.), *The Frederick Douglass Papers. Series Three: Correspondence. Volume 1: 1842–1852* (2009), pp. 208–09 (p. 209).

<sup>97</sup> Midgley, *Women Against Slavery*, p. 136.

<sup>98</sup> Quoted in Julie Lynn Holcomb, “‘There is death in the pot’”: Women, Consumption, and Free Produce in the Transatlantic World, 1791–1848’ (unpub. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas at Arlington 2010), p. 213.

<sup>99</sup> British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, *Proceedings of the general Anti-Slavery Convention ...* (1840), pp. 527, 577, 581.

<sup>100</sup> Billington, ‘British Humanitarians’; Holcomb, “‘There is death in the pot’”, pp. 213–17; Midgley, *Women Against Slavery*, pp. 135–37; A. P. Vaughan Kett, ‘Quaker Women, the Free Produce Movement, and British Anti-Slavery Campaigns: The Free Labour Cotton Depot in Street’ (unpub. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Brighton, 2012), pp. 24, 90, 95, 200–01.

<sup>101</sup> Vaughan Kett, ‘Quaker Women’, p. 91.

<sup>102</sup> See Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention*, pp. 356–413.

received particularly warmly when he visited Newcastle on 13 November. According to the *Newcastle Guardian and Tyne Mercury*, his lecture was attended by ‘a very numerous audience, the room being crowded in every part’.<sup>103</sup> The following week, on the 18th, the NPS met and pledged ‘[t]hat a society be formed in Newcastle on Tyne to carry out the object of the League of Universal Brotherhood’, demonstrating their embracing and acceptance of Burritt’s principles.<sup>104</sup> Burritt’s connection to Newcastle continued thereafter; he returned in April 1847 and again in February 1849. He also grew close to the Richardsons after his initial visit; Anna set up a Newcastle branch of the Olive Leaf Circles, the network of female peace groups associated with Burritt’s cause, and in the mid 1850s Burritt took over the editorship of an anti-slavery magazine published by the Richardsons, when they could no longer sustain it.<sup>105</sup>

All of this indicates that, throughout the 1840s, it was the entwined transatlantic connections between the Richardsons, the NPS and the abolitionist and peace movements that spurred and transformed the society’s continuing absolutist pacifism more than anything else. In many ways they were a microcosm of Sturge’s wider provincial radicalism; a moral radical core expressed most visibly by Orange and the Richardsons, but with a militant periphery represented by Barker’s brash anarchism. Yet it was also this absolutism and outward-looking stance that ensured when Europe descended into revolution and militarism in 1848 the NPS suffered locally. The rise of the Second Empire in France raised the prospect of the old enemy marauding across the English Channel once more, to which viewpoints such as the Richardsons’ non-intervention and Joseph Barker’s ‘share with them our food and our homes’ were ridiculed by local businessmen and newspapers. Furthermore, the occupation of parts of the Ottoman Empire and invasion of Hungary by Russia brought the ever-simmering and noxious combination of Tyneside’s Turcophilia and Russophobia to the boil soon afterwards, suffocating the local space within which the NPS could operate.<sup>106</sup> It was in this climate that attendances waned at their annual meetings; aside from the fanfare that accompanied Burritt’s visit in 1846, the *Peace Advocate* noted simply ‘attendance small’ at the NPS’s 1847 meeting.<sup>107</sup> It was also in contrast to the fortunes of the London Society, which was buoyed by Burritt’s influence and popular appeal, two well-organised campaigns against the prospective reintroduction of the militia and the organisation of the successive International Peace Congresses in Brussels, Paris and Frankfurt in 1848, 1849 and 1850.<sup>108</sup> Thus, while the London Society was able to ride a wave of growing anti-war sentiment in the country, the specificities of Newcastle’s local political milieu contrarily spelled the end of the NPS’s decade-long independence. The success of the London Society, the death of Brumell, their absolutist stance, and the antagonism they faced in Newcastle sent the NPS — tail between legs — back to Auxiliary status in 1850. With the Crimean War on the horizon and the militarists on the march, from 1850 the (re)affiliated NAPS was never again a noteworthy force in the North East.

<sup>103</sup> *Newcastle Guardian and Tyne Mercury*, 14 Nov. 1846, p. 8.

<sup>104</sup> *PAC* (Dec. 1846), p. 191.

<sup>105</sup> Holcomb, “‘There is death in the pot’”, pp. 216–17; Vaughan Kett, ‘Quaker Women’, p. 24.

<sup>106</sup> Saunders, ‘Challenge, Decline and Revival’.

<sup>107</sup> *PAC* (Jun. 1847), p. 239.

<sup>108</sup> Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention*, p. 414.

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It is often difficult to judge the success or failure of peace movements and societies, given that they have typically operated in a context that considers war and violence inextricable parts of human society and international politics. Yet, whatever their successes or failures, this paper has demonstrated van der Linden's supposition that '[t]he Newcastle Peace Society did not essentially differ from the London parent association' and 'was not very enthusiastic' requires revision.<sup>109</sup> Judging by their multifarious activities, the route they took towards radical pacifism in the late 1830s, the heterogeneity of their members' ideas and the international connections they cultivated, it is a mistake to position the society as a mere emulation of the wider London Society. Instead, the society needs to be recognised as one that diverged from the London Society in several important ways, and which negotiated the tensions and contradictions of advocating peace in Newcastle's specific political milieu in uneven and, perhaps, ultimately fruitless ways. There is little evidence that the society made significant impacts beyond its predominantly Quaker and Nonconformist catchment areas, and on those occasions where wider British interventionism could be opposed it was seemingly surpassed by the efforts of the local Chartists and overwhelmed by the militarist inclinations of local merchants and businessmen.

However, the zeal and commitment of John Orange, the Richardson family, Joseph Barker and the other members of the society to both pacifism and other moral causes such as abolitionism is not in doubt. Indeed, it is significant that, although the society struggled from 1850 onwards, closing down completely in 1869, out of its ashes appeared Robert Spence-Watson, the grandson of NAPS founder member Joshua Watson. Spence-Watson was to become arguably the North East's most significant pacifist and reformer in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>110</sup> Consequently, although he needed the backing of no local branch of the Peace Society, this paper has shown, if nothing else, that his advocacy and reforming was built upon an important tradition of peace activism in Newcastle, one that deserves to be recognised.

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<sup>109</sup> van der Linden, *The International Peace Movement*, p. 193.

<sup>110</sup> Saunders, 'Challenge, Decline and Revival'.