

THE SOUTHERN FRIEND

Journal of the
North Carolina Friends
Historical Society

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Volume XVIII, Number 1

Spring 1996

Price
\$5.00
7.00

The Southern Friend

comeing winter which would be verry acceptable if she feels it her duty to do so but I am in hopes she will have companions that will be willing for her to take her own time and not hurry her home to soon this week our Quarterly Meeting which is now held at Piney Woods. there was so few friends that it was moved last year we expect Symons Creek will be removed to Rich Square. it seem as if there will be no [F]riends in Pasquotank much longer. there are verry few familys now. Mary Jesop has had a slight attact of billious fever but is nearly recovered her son Augustus is married to Margaret Bundy and lives with his Mother in law. his wife is the only child. no other complaint of sickness among thy relations or aquaintances that I know of at present. please to give my love to thy brother and sisters and there familys. John joines me in love to thee husband and children. I conclude and remain thy affectionate aunt Mary White

Endnotes

¹ Meaning, if she isn't careful.

² Mary White knew first hand the difficulties of losing a child since only four of her eight children survived to adulthood.

³ Mary White's husband.

⁴ Peninah White, cousin of Betsy Ann White, tells of her Yearly Meeting experience in a letter written in January 1837.

⁵ Announcement of intent to marry in a letter written by the couple.

⁶ Peninah is discussing the Eastern Quarter school known as Belvidere Academy, which became a boarding school in 1837.

⁷ Edward S. Gifford, 1835-1837.

⁸ New Garden Boarding School opened in the fall of 1837.

⁹ *i.e.*, to marry

¹⁰ This change gave couples intending marriage the option of writing a letter of intent rather than appearing together in person before the meeting. The Discipline still required that couples intending to marry inform the meeting and marry under the care of the meeting.

¹¹ Jephtha and Julia [White] White

¹² *i.e.*, Winslow.

¹³ Betsy Ann's husband John Macy.

Addison Coffin: Quaker Visionary

by

Thomas D. Hamm

This is the story of one of the most fascinating, most entertaining, and most perplexing Quakers ever to come out of North Carolina. Addison Coffin's life spanned a crucial era in the history of American Quakerism. Born in 1822, he came of age in the midst of the great migration of the North Carolina Friends to the Old Northwest. After moving to Indiana in 1843, he returned to North Carolina in the 1860s to urge remaining Friends to continue the migration north and west. In the 1870s and 1880s he was involved in the battles over pastors and revivalism that wracked Friends from New England to California. In the 1890s he turned his hand to history, recording the traditions he had heard and his memories of Quaker life in North Carolina and Indiana.

For these things Addison Coffin deserves to be remembered. But Addison Coffin is interesting for other reasons. He was a man who claimed almost supernatural powers of clairvoyance and foresight as an inheritance from his ancestors. He claimed to be the heir of the Albanoids, the last descendant of the prehistoric inhabitants of Ireland. In fact he was one of the last Friends with what was a fundamentally pre-modern outlook, one in which signs and visions were a natural part of life. For an historian, that makes Coffin all the more fascinating, but also raises questions about Friend Addison as an historical source. In this he

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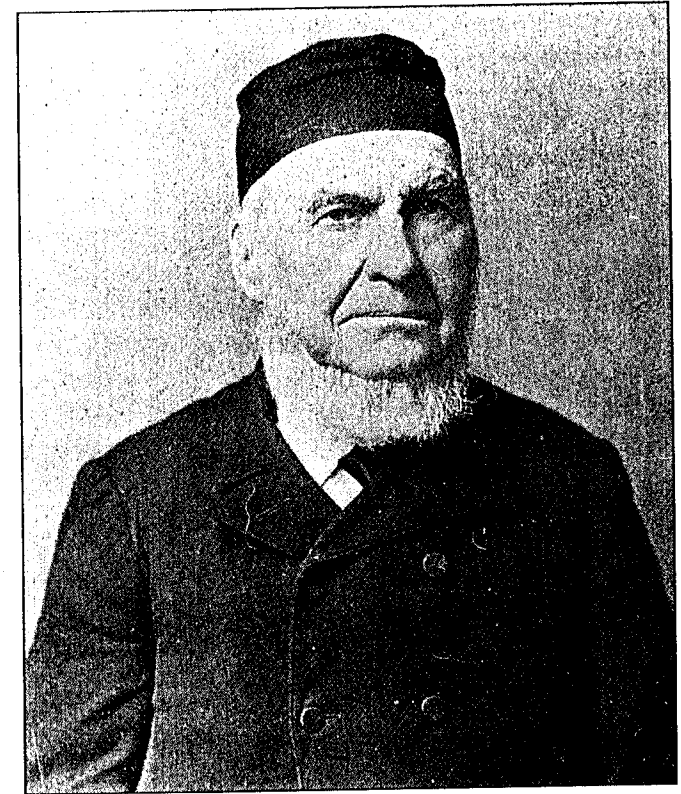
provides us with an opportunity to think about certain aspects of the history of Quakerism in North Carolina, about what we know and how we know it.¹

As one would guess from the name, Addison Coffin was descended from Nantucket Quakers. His father was Vestal Coffin, a name well known to students of North Carolina Quaker history. It is with his father that we should begin our consideration of Addison Coffin.

Both Addison Coffin and his more famous kinsman, Levi Coffin, were definite about the place of Vestal Coffin in history—he was the founder of the Underground Railroad. This is a claim that most historians today would view with considerable skepticism. Some would deny that there ever was such a thing, or at least anything as organized as the name suggests. Others would point out that ever since Africans had come to America as slaves they had found ways to escape, and had found help from other slaves, free blacks, and Indians far more often than from whites, even Quakers. Still others would point out how precarious the situation of North Carolina Friends was. Both state and federal laws imposed heavy penalties on those who aided runaways, and there was no lack of slave catchers, bounty hunters, and generally suspicious and unsympathetic neighbors. County grand juries petitioned the legislature to do something about seditious and dangerous Quaker abolitionism, and in 1841 North Carolina Yearly Meeting itself urged its members not to aid fugitive slaves.²

Reading Friend Addison's autobiography, published in 1897 as part of a fund-raising effort for Guilford College, shows that, while on one hand there was probably not a highly organized antislavery network in Guilford County in the 1820s and 1830s, part of an unbroken chain stretching north, there were sympathetic Quakers who were known to slaves and free blacks as dependable allies. Addison is careful not to make any precise claims about the number of slaves he helped; instead, he contents himself with the statement that "it would fill a large book to give the principal events connected with the Underground Railroad from North Carolina from 1819 to 1852." He refers to midnight councils deep in the woods, "laying plans, devising ways and means and essential preliminaries" with older men and "revelations that could have been more than a seven-days' wonder" (Coffin, A. 1897, 40–41).

In fact, when Friend Addison is specific about his doings, we find that they tend to fall into a pattern that is consistent with what we know of



Addison Coffin

the antislavery activities of Friends, and of the pattern of action by fugitive slaves.

The first case involved Vestal Coffin and another man who looms large in Addison Coffin's autobiography—a slave known as Hamilton's Saul, the property of a certain General Hamilton who lived near Greensboro. Saul made it a practice to meet slave coffles passing through Greensboro, looking for free blacks who had been kidnapped and "sold south." In one he found a free man of color from Delaware named Benjamin Benson, who had been kidnapped and sold to one Thompson in Guilford County. Saul promptly enlisted the aid of Vestal Coffin, who sued Thompson. The slaveowner hurriedly sold Benson to a Georgian and then denied any knowledge of him (Coffin, A. 1897, 17–18).

Vestal Coffin was not turned from his purpose. With the aid of two other Friends, Enoch Macy and Dr. George Swain, he enlisted abolition-

ists in Delaware to send south a witness to identify Benson as a free man. A magistrate then forced Thompson to bring Benson back from Georgia. Saul had one of Thompson's slaves keeping the abolitionists informed about Thompson's plans. The case ended happily—Benson was freed, and Thompson had to pay \$1,600, considerably more than the original price, to the Georgian to whom he had sold the free man (Coffin, A. 1897, 18–19).

The second case of which Coffin wrote involved another free black, John Dimery, who had been freed by his master in Anson County, North Carolina. Dimery had then moved his family to New Garden, where he lived near Vestal Coffin. When his old master died, his sons decided to try to reenslave Dimery and sell him. When they seized him, however, a daughter escaped to bring Vestal Coffin and Isaac White, another Friend, to the rescue. A non-Quaker neighbor threatened the kidnapers with violence when they brought Dimery to his house. As they argued, Dimery headed into the woods and eluded a tracking dog while the by-now thoroughly cowed slaveholders left for home. Dimery set off that night for Richmond, Indiana (Coffin, A. 1897, 20–21).³

The last case involved the Coffin's black ally, the crafty slave known as Hamilton's Saul. When his master, the general, died, Saul was sold to a slave trader and taken to South Georgia. On the way south, he was careful to note the towns through which he passed and the landmarks along the roads on which he traveled. After a year he escaped and headed north. His journey was dangerous—at one point he killed three bloodhounds with his bare hands. Finally, after weeks on the road, famished, tattered, and maimed, he appeared at the Coffin house. Vestal Coffin was by now dead, but Aletha Coffin and her children fed and nursed him until he was ready to head north. Addison Coffin later considered this his first work on the Underground Railroad (Coffin, A. 1897, 36–40).

These three cases tell us several things. They confirm what historians of slavery and abolition have long noted: the real heroes of the Underground Railroad were the slaves themselves, who faced the greatest challenges and dangers. It was John Dimery who held his own against the kidnapers and eluded their dogs; it was Saul who won the confidence of kidnapped free people and arranged to spy on the unscrupulous Thompson. When Saul himself was sold south, he spent a year planning his own escape and he accomplished it, outwitting pursuers and strangling bloodhounds with his bare hands (Gara 1961).

The second thing we should note is what Coffin himself recognized. Writing about the liberation of Benjamin Benson, Coffin concluded: "There was more of this kind of business [rescuing free people of color who had been kidnapped] than in assisting real fugitive slaves." In fact, North Carolina Friends, and their cousins in Ohio and Indiana, had a long history of going to considerable effort and expense to rescue free blacks from kidnappers. In their struggle, they were quite willing to make use of the courts and often had the aid of non-Quakers. It was a Guilford County court, after all, that gave Benjamin Benson his freedom, once faced with indubitable proof. It was a non-Quaker white who was apparently quite willing to beat in the heads of John Dimery's kidnapers. At least until the 1830s, Friends had faith in a kind of rough justice that made it possible for them at times to use the law and courts to their advantage (Coffin, A. 1897, 21; Hilty 1993, 44–54).⁴

Finally, although Coffin never says so explicitly, it is also clear that Vestal and Addison Coffin were part of an interracial network that quietly but effectively helped both victims of kidnappers and some fugitives. It was the slave Saul who enlisted Vestal Coffin's help on behalf of Benjamin Benson. When Saul made it back to Guilford County, he naturally sought out old friends. A number of historians of slavery and abolition have pointed out how fugitive slaves in unfamiliar neighborhoods usually, and understandably, sought out other blacks and stayed away from whites. But there were some whites, like the Coffins, who won their confidence. Quakerism, at least a Quaker appearance, probably did make a difference at times. More than one account has survived of fugitive slaves approaching Friends, trusting them because of their dress. And in at least some neighborhoods, there were stories among the slaves of strange white folks called Quakers who opposed slavery, helped fugitives, and refused to aid slavecatchers (Gara 1961, 5–6, 42–51, 59–60, 93, 114; Hamm 1995, 39).

The experiences of Vestal and Addison Coffin and their kin thus confirm much of what historians have been telling us about slavery and abolition. It was a complex situation. Non-Quakers who would have reacted violently to the suggestion that they were abolitionists were still willing to aid, and to set free again, kidnapped free blacks. Slaves worked with Quakers to free other slaves. And it was above all an interracial enterprise, one that brought together whites and blacks in a relationship of trust.

Addison Coffin was not alone, of course, among North Carolina Friends in being an abolitionist, a reformer, or an advocate of westward migration. But there was one aspect of his life that, to my mind, makes him almost unique. Addison Coffin may have been the last pre-modern Friend living in the nineteenth century.

I call Coffin “pre-modern” because I think that his was a mind that in many ways looked backward, that was at odds with the nineteenth century, let alone the twentieth, which Addison Coffin almost lived to see. (He died in 1897.) He lived in a world in which he saw visions and heard voices, convinced that he was the last survivor of an ancient race, the last heir to an ancestral gift of second sight. This is the most fascinating part of Addison Coffin’s life.⁵

Addison Coffin’s “gift” came to him through his mother, Aletha Fluke Coffin. According to Addison, she was an Albanoid, descended from the prehistoric, pre-Celtic inhabitants of Ireland. “When the first colony of Hebrews came to Ireland 1200 B.C., the Albanoids were in possession of the island, and had been for an unknown period,” Addison wrote. They were highly civilized, had a regular alphabet and written language, and knew many arts unknown to the Hebrews.” With the coming of the Hebrews, two thousand years of war followed, with the last battle coming about 800 A.D. in County Down. By 1784, there were only fifteen Albanoids left, including Addison’s grandmother, Mary Fluke. In that year they came to America (Coffin, A. 1897, 12).

In his autobiography, Addison Coffin recorded other Albanoid traditions. They were not European, Asian, or Egyptian in origin, he claimed; they had come to Ireland from the west. Coffin speculated, although he was careful not to state definitely, that their likely origin was the lost continent of Atlantis. On a trip to Ireland in 1892, Addison claimed that he found in County Down the temple that the Albanoids had built 2500 years before Christ, and that the Albanoids had been in Ireland even before that (Coffin, A. 1897, 449–50).

The problem with Coffin’s story is that there is absolutely nothing to confirm it. No one other than Addison Coffin seems ever to have heard of the Albanoids—no historian of Ireland, not even specialists in Irish folklore and mythology. The root word—alban or alba—is traditionally associated not with Ireland, but with Scotland. One of the ancient names that Scots applied to themselves was the Alban race. (Albany also derives from it.) So here we have charitably to leave Friend Addison’s



Aletha Coffin

Irish history as unproved and unprovable (*Oxford English Dictionary* 1989, s.v. *albanian*).

Whether or not her ancestors came from Atlantis, Aletha Fluke Coffin was a remarkable woman. She became a Friend shortly after her marriage to Vestal Coffin in 1817 and remained one until her death.

Left a widow in 1826, she raised her four children on a small farm at New Garden. When the boarding school opened there in 1837, she saw to it that Addison and his brother Emory attended. In 1831 she rode

horseback to Indiana to find a likely piece of land for a farm, purchasing a tract in Hendricks County, although she did not leave North Carolina permanently until 1851. When she was well into her nineties, she could still be found at her wheel, spinning flax and wool, or in her garden. When she died in 1892, Addison, as he had promised, brought her back to New Garden to be buried with her husband and mother (Coffin, A. 1897, 22–31).

Aletha Coffin is one of those strong Quaker women who deserves attention in her own right, but for the purpose of this paper her significance is what Addison Coffin saw as her gift to him—supernatural gifts of clairvoyance and second sight, to see events from far off, to foretell the future, to read the minds and know the thoughts of others. Addison claimed that his memories extended back into earliest infancy, even before he was born. Addison's first consciousness of this gift came when he was a young boy. He wrote of it thus:

At six years of age the first clear distinctive manifestation came. I was alone in the orchard, when suddenly I seemed surrounded by a soft, warm influence that seemed lifting me up in the air, then at once an infinite expanse opened to my eyes, so full of wonderful, and to my young mind awful things, that I was terrified, and ran screaming to the house. Mother met me and at first sight comprehended the terrible reality. Second sight had come upon me, and it filled her with sadness and suffering, for she knew too well by the tribal tradition that all who inherited it went to an early grave, unless they had an iron constitution. From that hour life to me was full of hidden terror; I was too young to comprehend the situation; every effort was not made by the few who knew about this condition to arrest the future development, and I had a sore, sad life of it until I was twelve years old.

Coffin described another scene when he was eight:

One time . . . mother went to see a dear friend, Naomi Stephens, who had just been left a widow, leaving us children at home. After playing outdoors until tired, we went in to the fire; my younger brother and I lay down on the floor and went to sleep. Suddenly a vision opened to my mind; I saw mother sitting weeping by Naomi Stephens, who was wringing her hands as if her heart would break. It was over two miles away, yet I saw every feature, every movement and gesture of both. I sprang to my feet and started to run in a straight line to mother, and it was all my brother and sister could do to overtake and hold me from running on, and the vision would not fade until mother returned and took me in her arms. That vision has never faded; it was as I saw it: the two were sitting as I described it at that very moment (Coffin, A. 1897, 22–31).

This strange gift did not bring Addison Coffin happiness; it disturbed

and perplexed him and his family and friends. As he remembered it, "there was no limit; space and time vanished, and for a time I could not shut out the awful scene." Family and neighbors decided that the cure was to keep him otherwise occupied and distracted—his uncle Job Coffin taught him to shoot, while old Joseph Hubbard, the father of the renowned preacher Jeremiah, told him stories of "hunting and travel." Gradually, by Addison's own account, "with my own intense desire to escape such fearful things, the visitations became less frequent, and ceased altogether in their first intensity." In his last years, he recognized it as "clairvoyance" or "mind-reading," which he described as "a remarkable consciousness" (Coffin, A. 1897, 32–34).

Visions were not new thing for Quakers, of course. At the very roots of Quakerism were the strange "openings" of George Fox on the moors of Yorkshire and Lancashire, visions and experiences beside which those of Addison Coffin seem unremarkable. Even in the nineteenth century such things were known among Friends. In 1803, for example, the Vermont Quaker minister Joseph Hoag had a vision in which he saw the course of American political history for the next sixty years, including the Civil War. Daniel Barker, another minister, from Marlborough Meeting in North Carolina, had similar visions. J. Walter Malone, the fervent evangelical Friend who founded the Cleveland Bible Institute (now Malone College) in 1892 had visions of demons. Amos M. Kenworthy, an Indiana Quaker minister who was a contemporary of Addison Coffin, claimed to be able to foresee the future and to read minds. One elderly Friend tells me that in his youth young boys believed that if Amos was in meeting, you didn't even *think* about going fishing that Sabbath afternoon, or he would know about it and tell your parents.⁶

All of these Friends saw their "leadings" or "openings" as gifts of God, come to them because of their faith, or as a fruit of their sanctification, much in the way that believers had prophesied in biblical times. Such an understanding is completely absent from Addison Coffin's account. For him it was an ancient racial or tribal gift, supernatural, but not peculiarly Christian.

Coffin's experiences make sense if we keep in mind that as late as the 1820s and 1830s belief in many aspects of the supernatural—what we today would call superstition—was still very strong in popular and folk culture. Pennsylvania Germans put hex signs on their barns. Scots-Irish hunters sought out witchmasters to put protective spells on their rifles. Farmers all over the United States still planted by the stages of the

moon. As late as 1860, in Carroll County, Virginia, 60-year-old Maria Ayers listed her occupation for the census taker as "witch." Valentine Nicholson, a Friend born in Ohio in 1809 to parents lately come there from Guilford County, remembered how he was warned to beware of those who pretended to foretell the future, as they could do it only by the "black art." At this time the Disciplines of most yearly meetings warned Friends to beware of those claiming such gifts. In Westfield, Indiana, in the 1840s, young James Baldwin, the son of other Friends come up from Guilford County, was judged to be "possessed" by neighbors on account of his precocity. In upstate New York, the Mormon Prophet, Joseph Smith, who for a while had lived by hunting for hidden treasure with magic seeing stones, founded a new religion on golden plates that he translated with the aid of another such seeing stone.⁷

What is not clear, although it is suggestive, is how this relates to Addison's rocky relationship with the Society of Friends. A birthright Quaker, he was a consistent Friend until age forty, married in meeting twice, receiving meeting appointments, regularly attending the yearly meeting sessions in Richmond and Plainfield. During the Civil War something happened. It was probably not directly related to the war—Addison's uncompromising unionism and pacifism were beyond question. But early in 1864 his monthly meeting, Mill Creek in Hendricks County, complained of him for "disunity," and in Fourth Month disowned him. In the next year, he was forcibly removed from one of the sessions of Western Yearly Meeting by the doorkeepers. Three years later, in 1867, Mill Creek Monthly Meeting was laid down, badly divided by intractable controversy (Coffin, A. 1897, 95–125; Heiss 1962–1977: VI, 176, 196).

It is exasperating that we know so little about this. Coffin recorded that as his gifts and visions became known among Friends, he was much sought after for appointments. Apparently he left a full account of the controversy, but the editor of his autobiography excised it, commenting that "the account of this period was written with hesitation, and only at the urgent request for his 'whole life.' Now remembering his seeming reluctance, we withhold these pages from publication." Apparently that portion has been lost. In 1871, however, he was received back into membership at Mill Creek again (Coffin, A. 1897, 13; Heiss 1962–1977: VI, 176).

In 1877 there was a separation in Western Yearly Meeting, as Conservative Friends, who opposed the revivals and other innovations appearing in most of the Gurneyite yearly meetings, left the larger body and organized Western Yearly Meeting of Conservative Friends. Mill Creek was badly split. What is remarkable is that Addison managed to get himself disowned by both groups at Mill Creek, and on the same day in 1880. The "Fast" Quakers rose up against him for "attending a meeting held contrary to discipline," even as the "Slow" Friends testified against him for "neglecting attendance of our religious meetings and taking an active part in meetings held subversive to the long established good order of Friends." In fact Addison's heart was certainly with the revivalists. Attending London Yearly Meeting in 1892 he predicted that it would soon adopt revivals and pastors, as more enlightened Friends in America were doing.⁸

In 1881 Addison made peace with Gurneyite Friends, becoming a member of the newly organized Amo Monthly Meeting. It is obvious that he always thought of himself as a Friend, no matter what his relationship with his meeting. He was a regular participant in the "Fast" yearly meeting at Plainfield, and on his death in 1897 was buried in the Friends Cemetery at Hadley in Hendricks County (Membership record, Amo M.M.; Coffin, A. 1896).

Addison Coffin's last service to Friends was as an historian. We are indebted to him for all that he preserved—for his memories of the Underground Railroad and of Quaker traditions in North Carolina and Indiana and for looking into and using monthly, quarterly, and yearly meeting records as an historical resource. He preserved much for us. But using other sources, and comparing Friend Addison with them, raises some serious questions.⁹

Addison Coffin was at his best as a teller of stories, and his "life and travels" is in fact a wonderful collection of them, as are his other writings. Many deal with events we know about from other sources, things we know took place or must have happened but which Addison recounts with an eye for detail and color not to be found elsewhere: what it was like to make the journey from North Carolina to Indiana in 1843, for example. In some cases, he preserved marvelous stories that we just cannot find elsewhere. One good example is his account of the minister Ann Jessup of New Garden, who in 1790 made a journey to England and brought back with her a wide variety of apple, pear, and grape cuttings,

along with many other seeds and starts. Among other things, Coffin claimed, Ann was responsible for introducing alfalfa into the United States. Another one of Addison's stories is his description of Abijah Pinson, a Friend from Westfield in Surry County who about 1800 set out a large orchard there from Ann Jessup's grafts. By Addison's telling, Abijah was the son of Richard Pinson, "a remarkably singular man" who "never owned land, thought it should be free as air and water, that every man should have what he needed, without cost." As for Friend Abijah, he "would not wear colored cloth, would have no paper money, would not pay land tax, but was wonderful punctual in all his religious convictions and duties, that when he got too feeble to attend Meeting, his faithful old horse would jump out of the pasture, go to the Meeting-House on Meeting days, stand by his accustomed tree an hour, and then to home again. He died at a good old age" (Coffin, A. 1897, 50-56; Coffin, A. Autumn 1983, 31-32).

This is a wonderful story—the problem is that it in many respects doesn't correlate with the other things we know. Abijah Pinson did not live out his days at Westfield, but in 1825 moved to Indiana, settling in Hendricks County, Indiana. In 1829 Fairfield Monthly Meeting disowned him and his wife for "disunity," which I take to mean that they had Hicksite sympathies. Abijah himself, according to his tombstone, died in 1832 at the age of 56, which even in those days would not have been "a good old age" (Heiss 1962-77, VI, 30-31).

Even more problematic is perhaps the most famous of all of Addison's stories, that of "Ann the Huntress." According to Addison, Ann appeared in 1790 or 1791 at a shooting match at New Garden. In the manner of Annie Oakley, she astonished all by proving the best shot there. As Coffin wrote, those present thought her an illusion, but "her bright, intelligent face, and lady-like bearing convinced them that she was a mortal, and one of the highest types of sacred womanhood." She refused to give her name, saying only that she was "Ann the Huntress." She took up residence with Richard Dobson, a New Garden Friend (Coffin, A. Autumn 1984, 30-31).

Ann was a marvelous hunter and tracker—every day she came home with choice game. But her greatest influence came in other ways. She was obviously well educated and quickly won the love of Friends all over the Piedmont, a welcome guest in any Quaker home. "The most wonderful thing she did was the reform in the language of the people," Coffin

wrote. "Before she came nearly every body said 'goin' instead of going, 'doin,' instead of doing. She taught all the children to sound the *ing* to all works with that termination." By the time she disappeared about 1807, she left "a half generation [which] had grown up under her magic instruction, and their superior polish and intelligence was a striking contrast to other communities." Ann left in the winter of 1807-1808, never to be seen again (Coffin, A. Autumn 1984, 30-31).

This is another wonderful story, but there is even less substantiation for it than for Addison's account of Abijah Pinson. Addison seems to have been the only person to recall this extraordinarily memorable person. There was no such Quaker as Richard Dobson, the Friend with whom Ann supposedly lived—in fact no surviving records show any Quaker family named Dobson in all of North Carolina. Finally, I have no doubt that, as a group, North Carolina Friends were better educated and better read than any other comparable group in the state, and certainly were very concerned for education. But again, I find no one else who was struck by the grammatical purity of North Carolina Quaker English in the nineteenth century. Everyone else I have seen who comments on the subject says that Friends, like their neighbors, were "goin'" and "doin'" well past the Civil War (e.g., Baldwin 1923).

What do we make of all of this? First, I do not think that Addison would ever have consciously told an untruth. He was far too moral and scrupulous. In other portions of his historical writings, he obviously takes great pains to search out records and find knowledgeable people. He had nothing to gain from invention.

Secondly, we have to allow for failing memory, both on Addison's part and on the part of his informants. If we are so inclined, we can pick apart many of Addison's writings on specific items, like dates, but that is no great matter.

I think that the explanation for understanding, and using, Addison Coffin's historical writings is to keep in mind what he told us about himself. One has to wonder what Addison actually remembered from witnessing the event, what he was told by others, and what he "knew" through his gifts of clairvoyance and "second sight." I know of a genealogist who tried to resolve knotty problems of lost ancestors by holding seances and communing with their spirits. One has to wonder if at times Addison "saw" things that others didn't, even in the past.

That is a caution, not a dismissal. I like Addison Coffin, and I hope that those of you who were not previously acquainted with him will too. We should be grateful to him for what he preserved, for reminding us that North Carolina Friends have been faithful in preserving their history, and that it is, by and large, a happy history to preserve.

Endnotes

¹ On the "pre-modern" outlook, see Butler 1990.

² Coffin, A. 1897, 19; Coffin, L. 1880, 21–22. On the Underground Railroad, see Gara 1961. For North Carolina Friends and slavery, see Hilty 1993, and Beeth 1984, 462–64.

³ There are somewhat confused and contradictory accounts of John Dimery or Demory in Tucker 1882, 137, 437.

⁴ According to John Demory's son William, the non-Quaker neighbor was William Knott. See Tucker 1882, 437.

⁵ See Butler 1971, Hall 1989, Brown 1976.

⁶ See, for example, Ingle 1994, 43–44, 49–53; Hoag 1861, 378–80; Oliver 1993, 55–57; Williams–Cammack 1918, 35–37, 60–61, 70, 80, 95–96, 108–09, 116; Marshall 1889, 4–8. Ernest E. Mills of Straughn, Indiana, related the story about Amos M. Kenworthy and the boys thinking of fishing.

⁷ Nicholson 1881; Brooke 1994; Baldwin 1923, 12–16; U. S. Census Bureau, Carroll County, VA 1860, 953; Parsons 1976, 159; Discipline 1839, 34.

⁸ Heiss 1962–77: VI, 176, 196; Hamm 1988, 92–94; Heiss 1963, 3–5, 10–13; Coffin, A. 1987, 347–58.

⁹ Coffin's history of North Carolina Friends was published serially as "Early Settlement of Friends in North Carolina: Traditions and Reminiscences." The first part appeared in the *Southern Friend*, 5 (Spring 1983), 3–7; Part II *ibid.*, (Autumn 1983), 27–38; Part III in *ibid.*, 6 (Spring 1984), 39–4 and Part IV in *ibid.*, (Autumn 1984), 15–33.

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Book Reviews

Miriam Lindsay Levering. *Love, Mom: Stories From the Life of a Global Activist, Teacher, and Mother of Six*. Edited by Wanda Urbanska and Frank Levering. Ararat, VA: Orchard Gap Press, 1996. 196 pp. \$14.95, paperback.

In this touching collection of essays by Miriam Levering we have been given a spellbinding profile of a memorable twentieth century woman. In his introduction, Frank Levering writes:

How, in one lifetime, did Mom give birth to six and raise a successful family; help her husband grow Levering Orchard into the largest orchard in the South; teach history and civics in the public schools; nurture her spiritual life and that of others in countless Quaker activities; throw herself into a multitude of national and international causes; and play a critical role in establishing the Law of the Sea Treaty, called by *The New York Times* “the greatest achievement in the development of the rule of law since the founding of the United Nations”?

Miriam’s twenty-five essays, written in a lively personal style, tell us how “she did it.” “Love, Mom.” What comfortable and familiar words to letter writers. One can imagine each essay ending with “love, Mom,” as Miriam tells us her stories—stories that ultimately seem larger than life to most readers whose lives perhaps are more “ordinary” than Miriam’s.

The stories are grouped into five sections: “Growing Up,” “Mother Knows Best,” “On the Mountain,” “Making the World a Better Place,” and “Goodbye, Miriam.” Included with the essays are tributes written by friends and family members who knew Miriam well. The book also features a selection of delightful Levering family photographs.

Miriam Levering was too busy to document her experiences until the last four years of her life. She responded to family wishes to write her

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Lorraine Frantz Edwards