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Paxton: a Haven of Peace during World War II*

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Conscription, and those who conscientiously object to war or being conscripted to fight, have episodically been hot issues in Australia. The newly formed Federal government's *Defence Act 1903* allowed people to avoid military service if 'doctrines of their religion forbid [them] to bear arms or perform military service'.¹ Australia is reputedly the first country to recognise conscientious objection, but the grounds on which to grant exemption from conscription have never been clear.²

During the late nineteenth century, colonial governments feared dangers from Russia and Germany, and compulsory military training was often suggested but not implemented. Such training would save the country the cost of a standing army and members of the Australian National Defence League, established in 1905, argued in favour of compulsory military training because:

the Australian lad was a downright bad lot, entirely out of hand, a lawless larrikin, who could only be brought to reasonable behaviour and moral improvement by military discipline.³

In any event in 1909, Australia introduced compulsory military training for young males, to come into effect on 1 July 1911. There was little opposition, except from Quakers, Christadelphians and some socialists, because there was no war to fight, and it was relatively easy to avoid.⁴ The training did not result in army service, but that did not stop Queensland Quakers from objecting. During World War I, while compulsory military training continued, Australians were bitterly divided through two referenda that rejected conscription. Those who conscientiously objected to war could simply elect not to enlist. That did not mean that they escaped censure, vilification and, at times, violence.⁵

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In 1935, the Australian government again sought, but failed to introduce, conscription, but did manage to restart compulsory military training which had lapsed in 1929. Not until 1939, in preparation for World War II, was conscription introduced but only for defensive military action within Australia. Training of conscripts began on 1 July 1940.⁶ With the rapid movement of Japanese forces towards Australia, the legislation changed in 1942 to allow conscripts to be stationed anywhere in the South Pacific region.⁷ This presented a serious challenge to Quakers and other Australians who had moral objections to war. One response was to create a small Quaker commune, known as Paxton (peace-town, or place-of-peace), near Brisbane. Paxton provided a safe haven for Australian conscientious objectors seeking to avoid conscription, and for respite following terms of imprisonment. It was on the east side of Logan Road, north of Dennis Road, now part of Logan City.⁸ To understand the Paxton commune, one must understand something of the origins and principles of Quakerism.

Quakers

The Religious Society of Friends, known as Quakers, was founded by George Fox, in seventeenth century England. Fox brought together various dissenting groups who rejected hierarchical priesthoods, instead believing that God would speak directly to and through ordinary people when meeting in fellowship.⁹ Quakers meet for worship ‘without any ordained priests or ministers, and without the use of any rites such as baptism or the Eucharist; they are said to “silently wait upon God”.’¹⁰

Like many dissenting religious groups, early Quakers often lived communally for personal protection and to facilitate fellowship.¹¹ In England, a group of Quaker women formed *Quaker Company* commune in 1692, and in 1825, Quaker men formed *Gravelly* commune.¹² In North America, Quakers created numerous communes, the best-known being *Spring Hill* (1829), *Fraternal Home* (1840), *Highland Home* (1844), *Cedar Vale* (1875) and *Friendswood* (1890).¹³

A central tenet of Quaker life is pacifism. They believe that taking up arms is immoral and counter-productive, so, when faced with military conscription, they become conscientious objectors. Quakers believe that ‘war is contrary to the teaching and spirit of Jesus Christ’, ‘that military training is morally injurious to young boys’ and ‘that war would not end war, but rather would engender hatred and sow the seeds of future strife’. In 1910, the Quakers’ General Meeting in Australia vowed to resist compulsory military training and conscription.¹⁴

The first Quaker in Australia was Sydney Parkinson who sailed with Captain Cook in 1770. The first Quakers to spend time in Australia and have

any impact were James Backhouse and George Walker, from 1832 to 1838. Early Quakers brought with them the idea and practice of communal living, and in 1869 several young Quakers from Sydney created *Friends Farm*, a commune on Queensland's Sunshine Coast.¹⁵ Although *Friends Farm* lasted only a few years, it became well-known within Quaker circles and may have provided a template for those Quakers creating Paxton 70 years later. Newspaper coverage in 1939 of British and American communes for conscientious objectors might have also informed those forming Paxton and other Quaker-based communal experiments.¹⁶

Establishment of Paxton

In 1940, a small group of Brisbane Quakers, principally the Souwer and Brown families, but also including the Hoey, Coaldrake and Clare families, began to meet regularly for musical evenings and to discuss the war and how they could respond. The idea emerged that they needed to find farmland on which they could live together as Quakers and where they could set their own social and cultural rules. They sought to 'find an island somewhere in which we could preserve all that was best in life from wars'.¹⁷

After inspecting the fringes of Brisbane, they discovered a 'reasonably-priced' 40 hectares of wooded land¹⁸ on the east side of Logan Road, north of Dennis Road, 20 kms south of Brisbane in what is now Springwood. Members 'walked around it ... tested the soil ... examined the trees ... dug for water in



First gathering of Paxton commune founders on their land, Laurie Brown on right, May 1941.
(Souwer family collection)



From left, large tent for sleeping, shed for cooking and socialising, bags of charcoal for sale, their old Buick car fitted with charcoal burner on rear, April 1942.

(Souwer family collection)

the gravelly bed of the creek' and were satisfied – so bought and occupied it in early 1941. Most of the deposit was provided by Herbert Hoey and Lawrence Brown, the only ones who 'had any money in the bank', then registered in the names of Dick Souwer and Lawrence Brown. The land was covered in 'thick bush', with many large trees including tallow-wood.¹⁹ The land had belonged to Isaac Dennis²⁰ who had recently surveyed it into several smaller blocks, a decision that became important later.

The Quakers moving onto Paxton acted 'in the clear light of faith', but later admitted that 'had they sat down then to list all the possible problems and difficulties that might assail them, there probably would have been no Paxton'.²¹ In January 1942, *Peacemaker* magazine, published by the Federal Pacifist Council of Australia, being careful to avoid mention of providing safe haven for conscientious objectors, reported:

A community farm outside Brisbane is being developed as a temporary home for any people who may have their homes destroyed by bombs. The government has been asked to help in the provision of equipment. The unit also has a caravan trailer fitted up for use as a mobile canteen. The authorities have been asked for permission to take the canteen into any bombed area to provide food for the people of the area. A First Aid Unit is being formed for relief work in bombed areas.

The members are undertaking a financial disability. Their method is to pool all incomes, and after providing the needs of each, to devote the surplus to the equipment and costs of the three schemes above.²²

Three months later, Paxton members felt confident enough to carefully announce their willingness to host conscientious objectors:

There are several tents, a shed, some water, and a 500 gallon tank.²³ One Friend's caravan is ready for use as a canteen. Some cars fitted with gas producers are available should there be an emergency evacuation and transport of bomb victims. These practical moves they regard as alternative service. Pacifists in other States hope with them that they may be allowed to carry on.²⁴

They still had no buildings, and war restrictions made building materials hard to obtain. They used their Quaker network to obtain second-hand materials and started to build housing and farm sheds. Their objective was to not only live together, but also to accommodate, support and hide conscientious objectors. As well, they sought to be a haven of peace in what was turning into the war-oriented, militarised city of Brisbane. By May 1942, 14 people were on-site, clearing land and building accommodation. They had no electricity, so relied on kerosene lamps.²⁵ The experiences of other communes established in Australia to support conscientious objectors probably helped them develop their communal social structure and culture.²⁶

One Paxton member, Barbara Souwer, recalled conscientious objectors 'mainly from Sydney. We'd feed them, maybe they'd stay for a few weeks or something. They'd get a bit run down; maybe they'd been in prison. Then they'd go home.'²⁷

During 1942 Paxton communards tried to harvest and sell their bountiful timber for lumber. When that failed they started to sell it as firewood, and used some to produce charcoal. They had three brick-lined pits and were able to produce top quality charcoal that they used to power their cars and truck, and sold the rest. Charcoal-fuelled cars were common because of wartime rationing of petrol. They had an old caravan, equipped as a mobile kitchen, to feed homeless people should Brisbane be bombed.²⁸ This



Dick Souwer (Jnr) making charcoal in one of their brick pits, early 1942.

(Souwer family collection)

had been donated by the Critchley family, Quakers from Sydney who arrived drawn by a team of horses.²⁹

Many Australians vehemently objected to conscientious objectors. Queensland Police Commissioner, Cecil Carroll, was concerned that ‘Conscientious Objectors may not only have objection to military service, but may have subversive tendencies.’ His policy was ‘to check on such persons from a security point of view, and keep a record of them, and, if necessary, supply a copy of such record ... to Intelligence Section or Security Service if and when required.’³⁰

Shirley Souwer recalls being terrified during a pre-dawn raid by military intelligence, and Barbara Souwer recalled ‘police often coming to the farm and searching the houses’ – but catching few conscientious objectors.³¹ As far as can be determined, only three of Paxton’s resident conscientious objectors were forcibly removed by police and imprisoned – Gordon Clare, Les Hoey and Gordon Herron. Hoey was ‘well known in Brisbane as a young man of strong but radical convictions’.³² When called up Hoey wrote:

it is ludicrous to consider that a man should be called to account for not wishing to kill his fellowman. The ... division into various nations is an artificial state which I do not recognise. People are human beings ... no matter what their colour or size, and as such are altogether brothers.³³

On 15 April 1942, Hoey’s application to be exempted from military service as a conscientious objector was considered in court. When challenged,



Shirley Souwer posing at Paxton’s dam, late 1943.

(Souwer family collection)

Hoey stated ‘it does not interest me whether the Court agrees with my view or not’. His application was rejected because he was ‘most arrogant’. The prosecutor rudely suggested that ‘some military officer might be able to make a man of the applicant’.³⁴ Hoey was incarcerated briefly at the Exhibition Grounds, then released to return to Paxton where he was in a relationship with member, Shirley Souwer.³⁵

On 14 December Hoey was again arrested and ‘held under detention’ for 50 days’, in ‘military confinement’. Eventually, a court martial found that he had been wrongfully detained and discharged him. Back at Paxton, police arrested



Gordon Clare, Les Hoey and Gordon Herron, at Paxton's double wedding, after which they went straight to Palen Creek Prison Farm for six months, February 1943.

(Hoey family collection)

Hoey, along with Gordon Clare and Gordon Herron on 24 February 1943, and they were imprisoned for six months at Palen Creek Prison Farm.³⁶ From prison Hoey wrote 'two of the boys off Paxton are with me, and when we get together it is easy to imagine we are back at the old farm.' They were released later that year.³⁷

In late 1942 Paxton communards completed their first house, which everyone used for communal meals and recreation. The Souwer family slept there with others sleeping in tents, a shed and a caravan. Eating together is recognised as one of the most important activities in developing a common goal and direction within communal groups.³⁸

Paxton: successful Communal Living

By the end of 1942, Paxton commune was making progress and was financially 'self-supporting'.³⁹ The seven permanent members became much more open about:

offering shelter, work, livelihood, co-operation and community living to Brisbane C.O.s. It [their land] is partly cleared, one house has been erected,⁴⁰ two others are under construction,⁴¹ bores⁴² have been sunk, and water laid on to the houses, there is a flourishing firewood contract business, a thriving chicken farm, and an equity of nearly £1000.⁴³

The seven permanent residents, plus an unknown number of conscientious objectors⁴⁴ prospered, relying on 'not luck, but faith'. Conscientious objectors



Transport options: Ford truck, Major hitched to dogcart, and a dray, Paxton, 1943.

(Souwer family collection)

came there from across Australia.⁴⁵ They raised poultry for eggs and meat, grew and sold vegetables, and sold charcoal and firewood, including under contract to a wool-scouring firm. Using demolition materials, they were building more communal housing and farm sheds, and acquiring, or building, better equipment as fast as they could.⁴⁶

In February 1943, four of the young communards married: Herman (Dick) Souwer to Barbara Critchley, and Lawrence Brown to Sylvia Souwer.⁴⁷ The wedding was held at Friends' Meeting House, Makerston Street, Brisbane. As usual for Quakers, there was no ceremony as such, but an 'innovation in Quaker weddings was introduced by Miss Freda Brown singing at the beginning of the double wedding 'Oh Promise Me' while at the conclusion Mr Souwer (Snr), sang 'I'll Walk Beside You'.⁴⁸ After brief honeymoons at Tewantin and Burleigh, both couples resided at Paxton.

In April 1943, Connie Souwer dreamt of Paxton post-war: 'Will it become an example of co-operation, a sort of training farm for other centres? Will it be a place where Friends from all nations may meet in fellowship?'⁴⁹



Dick Souwer (Snr) and Laurie Brown inspecting chicks from their hatchery, 1943.
(Souwer family collection)

By November 1943 they had their own incubator, keeping the hens for eggs and selling the roosters for meat. Because Laurie Brown had engineering training, they established a workshop to repair farm equipment and were manufacturing egg-washing machines for the Poultry Farmers Co-operative Society.⁵⁰ They had



A field, well fertilised with chicken manure, growing vegetables, while behind are large poultry sheds and a tank to gravity feed water for irrigation. Note makeshift irrigation-pipe, July 1943. (Souwer family collection)



Buzzacott pump beside well being dug by hand. Note windless to pull up buckets of sand and gravel, as described by Roger Allen, May 1944. (Souwer family collection)

four completed houses with two more under construction.⁵¹ They were growing vegetables and flowers, irrigating from a dam that they had enlarged. For irrigation and to pump water from their well to a raised water tank, they used an old, petrol-powered, Buzacott pump.⁵²

In that same month a mainstream newspaper reported:

In a tiny settlement near Brisbane is being tried out an idea which has some important implications. It is the idea of a communal settlement—on the lines of the Kibbutzim of Palestine or the co-operative farms of Russia—started by a group of Quakers. ... One of the group ... explained, ‘The whole thing started as an experiment to find out if a group of people could live harmoniously and prosperously together by working the land and on community principles. We all threw up good jobs, but we had practically no capital when we started off. ... Working together—with our profits pooled—we have been able to buy plant and materials and to utilise labour to the best advantage. ... Our experience has convinced us that a group of people can make a success of community farming. The great necessity is tolerance and understanding.’ The present members are enthusiastic and hopeful about their social and economic experiment. They are anxious to show that even the individualistic Australian can make a success of a purely co-operative community venture.⁵³

During 1943, members rented a small retail shop at 719 Stanley Street, Woolloongabba, from which to sell eggs and poultry meat direct to the public.⁵⁴ Because they had no telephone at Paxton and to have orders ready for the next day, they used carrier pigeons to relay large orders from the store to the farm. When their children were born in a small hospital in West End, they again used a carrier pigeon to inform those at Paxton. In 1946, they claimed that ‘not one pigeon order had gone astray in two years’.⁵⁵

Frank Coaldrake,⁵⁶ *Peacemaker* editor, Anglican priest, and president of the Federal Pacifist Council of Australia, visited Paxton at the end of 1943 and reported:

Paxton ... means “Peacetown”. As you look at the Paxton farm, it means a place of hard work with a difference – its purpose.... There have been setbacks, uncertainties and pests.... But now, after nearly two years, Paxton stands sure.... Paxton is one place where we can learn that peace is not stagnation. A “Peacetown” is possible only where hard work and unremitting zeal are given, where money is no substitute for muscle, and where a man’s intentions ring true as his axe in the solid trees.⁵⁷

Paxton memoirs detail little about domestic arrangements but from previous communal research and hints given, we can be confident that there was no private income or property, and no-one was paid for their work.⁵⁸ All food and other expenses were met by the ‘collective’, with each adult receiving a personal allowance of 10 shillings per week.⁵⁹ The members would have eaten most meals together, prepared by a roster of cooks (probably including all adults). The communards met Saturday morning to discuss work rosters, major projects and budget matters, and Sunday mornings to look at

social matters and the inevitable interpersonal disputes.⁶⁰

Paxton members would have discovered, as do all communal groups, the extraordinary financial benefits of communalism. Twenty people eating together is much cheaper, per person, than ten groups of two. For building and farm tasks, or emergencies, they could have ten workers available within minutes. When large orders came in for poultry, firewood or vegetables, all members working together could have this ready in an hour – rather than by late the next day as an ordinary farmer, on his own, could manage. Communalism has many advantages as well as problems.⁶¹



Dick Souwer releasing homing pigeon from Paxton's Woolloongabba shop, 719 Stanley Street, 1942. (Souwer family collection)

In February 1944 a *Peacemaker* reporter assured readers that:

Paxton Co-operative Farm ... is progressing very satisfactorily. The recent rains have been of great benefit, and ... all the water tanks ... are full. The incubator is still doing a full-time job, and a large proportion of the chickens are sold in the Paxton Poultry Shop.

Les Hoey⁶² [having been released from prison] is raising beetroot, tomatoes, lettuce, and other vegetables. With an eye to the coming fruit season, a large number of rosellas have been planted that they hope will be both productive and ornamental.

So far as is known to the correspondent, affairs regarding C.O.s are at present all quiet.⁶³

By May 1944 another reporter found Paxton continuing to progress:

The purchases of two more incubators ... brings the egg-hatching capacity up to about 7,500 eggs, but this is difficult to fill during the present off-season; before long, however, production is expected to increase again.⁶⁴

Much of the free labour was provided by conscientious objector 'guests'. One who found a safe haven at Paxton in May 1944 was 34-year-old David Allen, from Epping, Sydney. He had served one month in Long Bay Gaol and three months at Emu Plains Prison Farm, been released, but now feared he would be called up again. Conscientious objectors were deliberately mistreated in prison. In Long Bay Gaol, Allen had been held in a 2m x 3.3m concrete cell with two 'hardened criminals', one a sex offender, sleeping on the floor, with a shared toilet bucket that occasionally over-flowed. Food and sanitation were deliberately poor in order to humiliate him. He was treated slightly better at Emu Plains.⁶⁵ Allen was probably targeted because of his high profile

as treasurer of the Federal Pacifist Council and his active membership of the Peace Pledge Union (PPU) and the Conscientious Objectors' Group (COG) in Sydney.⁶⁶

At Paxton, Allen found it:

wonderful to be in the bush again with gum trees all around and to breath clean air. I am pleased I came up here this time as in a way I had been hankering to join the group & it has been worrying me considerably, but realise now it is not for me.⁶⁷

Perhaps his loss of interest in joining Paxton commune was because members put him to work:

shovelling rock & limestone into a truck. They have a well to be dug, it is now down 23ft (7m.), but has to go down 48 feet (15m.), so still a long way to go. The one to do the pick & shovel work is lowered down on wire rope. Rather ticklish business.⁶⁸

A week later, he wrote that no police had arrived but he was 'afraid it is only a matter of time before the blow falls'. He enjoyed himself, dancing, working hard and visiting other Quakers and conscientious objectors. The dance at the local school hall 'was terrific as packed full of people & very little dancing space'. Being from Sydney, he granted that 'as country dances go, I suppose it was not bad'. Having decided to leave Paxton, he hitchhiked to Murwillumbah, and caught a train back to Sydney to continue his work with PPU and COG, as well as to cement his relationship with Ruth Mills, a PPU member whom he married. In Sydney, Allen was again called up and again faced prison. Instead, he was ordered to go to Alice Springs to work for the Allied Works Council. He refused and was fined £10 10s. At this point the Australian military lost interest in him.⁶⁹

David Allen fondly recalled his time at Paxton. Members there were 'a little amazed at my ability with a single furrow plough – I should have known how to use it as I had had three months experience [at Emu Plains Prison Farm] using a scarifier. I looked like a real outdoor type ... as I had not worn a shirt for just on three months ... at Emu Plains ... [where] some days the temperature was over 100 (38°C).'⁷⁰



Dick and Barb Souwer with Roger Allen, George Street, Sydney, mid to late 1940s, perhaps March 1945.

(Souwer family collection)



Laurie Brown and Dick Souwer (Jnr) driving Major, trying to plough their land. Major does not appear to be correctly harnessed and it is obvious the drivers have little idea how to plough, early 1943. (Souwer family collection)

In September 1944, Archibald Davis, a poultry expert, visited Paxton and reported favourably:

The yards are all very large, and erected on recently cleared and burnt areas. The first of the pullets were already out on their new range, and thoroughly enjoying it too. R.I. [Rhode Island] Reds and Anconas have been added to the stock this year, making now four breeds on the farm. ... The proprietors of this progressive farm hope to increase the flock to 5000 this season, but find the rationing of poultry foods and shortage of material a big handicap. ... Irrigation has been added to the farm recently and now two acres are under cultivation, the water coming from a bore, pumped to an elevated tank. This service also waters the various poultry houses. In addition to the poultry, large quantities of flowers are grown for market, and there was a wonderful display of pansies, stocks, Iceland poppies and statice. Fowl manure is used to fertilise the flowerbeds, and certainly proves its value. A lot of hard work has been put in on this farm, and the feature that appeals most is the unity, co-operation and goodwill that exists amongst the workers who own the business. It is truly an ideal community farm.⁷¹

World War II ended on 14 August 1945. Because Paxton communards deliberately kept no record of names and dates, to make it harder for police to intervene, we have no clear idea of how many conscientious objectors they sheltered – but there would have been several dozen.

Under the title ‘Experiments in Community Living’ Frank Coaldrake wrote ‘During the war four experiments in pacifist community living were made in Australia [but only] one, the farm at Paxton, Queensland, still continues.’ Others were in Surry Hills, Sydney and Fitzroy, Melbourne, but were not very successful in providing support, often being wracked with internal divisions.⁷² Coaldrake lamented that although ‘Goodwill Service Fellowship, inaugurated



Paxton Chicken Pie Shop and Neptune Service Station, east side of Logan Road. Shirley Jamieson (nee Souwer) in doorway on left, late 1950s. (Souwer family collection)

in 1940 to sponsor experiments in community living, still exists ... and holds approximately £500 in trust money to help finance further experiments in country or city community living', there was little demand. 'The relatively small interest in, and support for, experiments in community living by pacifists in Australia indicates a lack of pacifist social consciousness in the Movement'.⁷³ While other communes established for conscientious objectors collapsed, Paxton continued.⁷⁴ In January 1946, Connie Souwer, from Paxton, proudly addressed a conference in Sydney about Paxton's 'Experiment in Community Living' and how they were adapting to peacetime.⁷⁵

Nevertheless, while Paxton thrived during the war and under the threat of military conscription, it did not cope so well with peace. Activities expanded too fast and Paxton ran into financial difficulties, exacerbated by no longer having the free labour of conscientious objectors. A core group continued to share work and income, while others remained in the area operating other businesses.⁷⁶

In 1952 the final blow befell the commune. A large cargo of their frozen chickens arrived in England in February, just as King George VI died. The wharves closed and the meat was put into refrigerated storage. Paxton commune was unable to pay the exorbitant charges, the bank refused a loan, and so they were forced to sell their farm, buildings and two houses for only £12,000.⁷⁷ Because the land was on several titles, some houses were saved, and used for homes as they started new businesses as individuals. These included the Paxton Service Station (also known as Neptune), and Automatic Welding and Engineering, on the southeast of Dennis and Logan Roads and the 'Chicken Pie Shop', just to the north, across Dennis Road.⁷⁸ These were well patronised by travellers between the Gold Coast and Brisbane. Paxton's

land is now occupied by Springwood Central State School plus shops, houses, car yards and light industry.

Was Paxton successful as a commune? Although its life of 12 years was longer than the lifespan of many communal groups, age was not a crucial factor.⁷⁹ There is little doubt that Paxton was very good for its members. It is proudly remembered by descendants, and within local history and Quaker circles. Paxton was vitally important for Australia's conscientious objectors who found food, housing and, most importantly, a safe haven and moral support. Many of those conscientious objectors continued their commitment to peace and peacemaking in Australia.

Endnotes

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- 1 B Oliver, *Peacemongers*, Fremantle, Freemantle Arts Centre Press, 1997, pp. 9-10; P Dennis et al., *The Oxford Companion to Australian Military History*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 173; L Jauncey, *The Story of Conscription*, Melbourne, Macmillan, 1968, pp. 12-13.
- 2 *Peacemaker*, 31 October 1939, p. 3, and 1 April 1940, pp. 1, 5; National Archives of Australia [NAA] A1608,A45/1/12 (parts 1 & 2), and A5954, 429/3.
- 3 Jauncey, *The Story of Conscription*, p. 16; Dennis et al., *The Oxford Companion to Australian Military History*, p. 174.
- 4 NAA Fact Sheet 160: Universal Military Training in Australia 1911-29, April 2007; Jauncey, *The Story of Conscription*, pp. 23-36; J Main, *Conscription: The Australian Debate, 1900-1970*, Melbourne, Cassell, 1970, pp. 11-30; B Scates, *Draftmen Go Free* (pamphlet), 1988, p. 1.
- 5 Main, *Conscription: The Australian Debate, 1900-1970*, pp. 31-107; K Inglis, 'Conscription in Peace and War, 1911-1945', in R Forward & B Reece, *Conscription in Australia*, Brisbane, University of Queensland Press, 1968, pp. 22-45; Oliver, *Peacemongers*, p. 27.
- 6 Jauncey, *The Story of Conscription*, pp. 350-1; Main, *Conscription: The Australian Debate, 1900-1970*, pp. 108-10; *Peacemaker*, 31 October 1939, p. 3.
- 7 NAA, Fact Sheet 162: *National Service and War 1939-45*, March 2000; Main, *Conscription: The Australian Debate, 1900-1970*, pp. 114-28; Inglis, 'Conscription in Peace and War, 1911-1945', pp. 52-62; Dennis, et al., *The Oxford Companion to Australian Military History*, pp. 173-7.
- 8 There are many sociological reasons why Paxton should be considered a 'commune'. As well, in a 2000 interview, one of the founders, Sylvia Brown (née Souwer) states 'it was my uncle who found this piece of ground just outside of Brisbane, and we decided to make a commune'. (Logan City Council Libraries Oral History Project 2000/2001, interview of Sylvia Brown, by Mary Howells, 24 May 2000, Logan City Libraries, 15/006463636X, p. 7.
- 9 William Oats, *A Question of Survival: Quakers in Australia in the Nineteenth Century*, Brisbane, University of Queensland Press, 1985.

- 10 See <https://www.quakersaustralia.org.au/?page=A2> (accessed 19 December 2019).
- 11 T Bassett, 'The Quakers and Communitarianism', *Bulletin of Friends' Historical Association*, 43, 2 (1954), pp. 84-99.
- 12 C Coates, *Utopia Britannica: British Utopian Experiments 1325-1945*, London, Diggers & Dreamers, 2001, pp. 34-6, 73-7, 201-2.
- 13 T Miller, *Encyclopedic Guide to American Intentional Communities*, 2nd ed., Clinton, NY, Richard W Couper Press, 2015, pp. 68, 162-3, 169, 203, 414.
- 14 Oliver, *Peacemongers*, pp. 18-19.
- 15 W Metcalf, 'Friends Farm: Australia's First Quaker Commune', *Journal of Religious History*, vol. 42, no. 1, 2018, pp. 99-119.
- 16 *Evening News* (Rockhampton), 2 December 1939, p. 2; *Peacemaker*, 1 July 1940, p. 5, 15 March 1941, p. 5, 1 June 1941, p. 4, 1 August 1941, p. 4, 2 November 1942, p. 3 and 1 November 1944, p. 4.
- 17 Unpublished memoir of Connie Souwer, dated April 1943, held by her family.
- 18 Portion 395, Parish of Redland, County of Stanley.
- 19 Lawrence Clive Brown was also a conscientious objector. Queensland State Archives (QSA) ID 965114, 'Register of applications from Military Service'; *Courier Mail*, 5 September 1942, p. 7; Logan City Council Libraries Oral History Project 2000/2001, interview of Sylvia Brown, by Mary Howells, pp. 8 & 21; Barbara Souwer/Bostock interview in Frances Kendall, (2009) A history of Quakers in Queensland, 1850-2000 [unpublished manuscript], Queensland Regional Meeting Library, Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), Brisbane, Qld.; *Albert and Logan News*, 12 March 1986, p. 52.
- 20 Isaac James Dennis had been born in Bulimba in 1867, and proudly claimed to have never left Queensland. He was a very progressive farmer and local government councilor. His home farm was called 'Springlands'. Dennis died in 1946, and his farm now includes Springland Drive, on the western side of the Pacific Motorway. (*Brisbane Courier*, 3 August 1907, p. 12; 23 July 1946, p. 10).
- 21 *Peacemaker*, 1 April 1942, p. 1; Logan City Council Libraries Oral History Project 2000/2001, interview of Sylvia Brown, by Mary Howells, p. 21.
- 22 *Peacemaker*, January 1942, p. 1.
- 23 In spite of wartime rationing, this had been acquired from Scurr Brothers Hardware, Mount Gravatt, where a friend of the communards lived. Logan City Council Libraries Oral History Project 2000/2001, interview of Sylvia Brown, by Mary Howells, p. 12.
- 24 *Peacemaker*, 1 April 1942, p. 1.
- 25 Unpublished memoir of Connie Souwer, dated April 1943, held by her family; Logan City Council Libraries Oral History Project 2000/2001, interview of Sylvia Brown, by Mary Howells, p. 18.
- 26 *Peacemaker*, 30 June 1942, p. 4; *Peacemaker*, 2 November 1942, p. 3.
- 27 Barbara Souwer/Bostock interview in Kendall, (2009) A history of Quakers in Queensland, 1850-2000.
- 28 Unpublished memoir of Connie Souwer, dated April 1943, held by her family.
- 29 Logan City Council Libraries Oral History Project 2000/2001, interview of Sylvia Brown, by Mary Howells, p. 11.
- 30 QSA, Item ID 319677, 'European War: Conscientious objectors general' file, in a letter sent to the Officer in Charge, Victoria Barracks, on 28 August 1942.
- 31 Shirley Souwer/Jamieson Interview, 1996, in Souwer family archives; Barbara Souwer/Bostock interview in Kendall, A history of Quakers in Queensland.
- 32 *Courier Mail*, 16 April 1942, p. 5; *Peacemaker*, 1 September 1942, p. 1; 15 April 1943, p. 1; and 1 July 1943, p. 4; *Telegraph*, 18 August 1942, p. 5, and 25 September 1942, p. 4. Gordon Clare was a Christadelphian, while Gordon Herron was a Salvation Army

- member. Hoey was a first cousin of Joh Bjelke-Petersen, later to become Queensland Premier. Connie Souwer's memoir, April 1943, p. 4 refers to three C.O.s from Brisbane being there at this time – presumably Les Hoey, Gordon Clare and Gordon Herron.
- 33 Letter written 7 February 1942, in Hoey Family Archives.
- 34 *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 16 April 1942, p. 2.
- 35 *Peacemaker*, 1 October 1942, p. 1; Les Hoey letter dated 7 August 1942 in Hoey Family Archives.
- 36 *Peacemaker* 1 February 1943, p. 1, and 15 March 1943 p. 1; Oliver, *Peacemongers*, p.136.
- 37 The 'two boys' were Gordon Clare and Gordon Herron. Letter written in prison from L Hoey to Mr Collings, undated but mid-1943.
- 38 W Metcalf, *The Findhorn Book of Community Living*, Forres, UK, Findhorn Press, 2004.
- 39 Connie Souwer memoir, April 1943, held by her family.
- 40 For Dick Souwer (Snr) & Connie Souwer.
- 41 For Laurie & Sylvia Brown and Dick (Jnr) & Barb Souwer.
- 42 They had used the services of a 'Devine Diviner', a minister from Lota. The first bore gave no water while the second was productive. (Logan City Council Libraries Oral History Project 2000/2001, interview of Sylvia Brown, by Mary Howells, p. 15.
- 43 *Peacemaker*, 1 January 1943, p. 1.
- 44 During WW2, 2727 Australians applied for exemption as conscientious objectors. Dennis, et al., *The Oxford Companion to Australian Military History*, p. 173. One Paxton member, Barbara Souwer, recalled "quite a number of conscientious objectors" being there. No records were kept.
- 45 'Testimony to the Grace of God in the life of Sylvia Brown', Queensland Quakers Regional Meeting Minute, 3 August 2014; and Testimony to the Grace of God in the Life of Lawrence Clive Brown, c.2000.
- 46 *Peacemaker*, 1 January 1943, p. 1.
- 47 Both men were conscientious objectors who somehow managed not to be imprisoned.
- 48 *Telegraph*, 27 February 1943, p. 3.
- 49 Connie Souwer memoir, April 1943, held by her family.
- 50 *The Peacemaker*, 15 November 1943, p. 4.
- 51 *Telegraph*, 27 November 1943, p. 3.
- 52 Logan City Council Libraries Oral History Project 2000/2001, interview of Sylvia Brown, by Mary Howells, p. 16, and email from Frank Buckley, 31 December 2019. Buzacott pumps and motors were produced by Roseberry Engine Works, Sydney.
- 53 *Telegraph*, 27 November 1943, p. 3.
- 54 This shop still exists but is empty at time of writing.
- 55 Logan City Council Libraries Oral History Project 2000/2001, interview of Sylvia Brown, by Mary Howells, p. 24; *Telegraph*, 6 April 1946, p. 3; *Daily Telegraph*, 7 April 1946, p. 5.
- 56 Laurie O'Brien, 'Coaldrake, Frank William (1912–1970)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/coaldrake-frank-william-9771/text17267>, published first in hardcopy 1993, accessed online 29 September 2020.
- 57 *Peacemaker*, 20 January 1944, p. 2.
- 58 Metcalf, *The Findhorn Book of Community Living*.
- 59 Logan City Council Libraries Oral History Project 2000/2001, interview of Sylvia Brown, by Mary Howells, p. 10.
- 60 Shirley Souwer/Jamieson interview, 1996, in Souwer family archives.

- 61 A Butcher, 'Intentional Communities and Communal Economics', *Encyclopedia of Community*, vol. 2, Thousand Islands, Cal.: Sage, 2003, pp. 681-5; Metcalf, *The Findhorn Book of Community Living*, pp. 88-109.
- 62 The author came to know Les Hoey in the 1980s when he was editor of the radical journal, *Social Alternatives*. He died in 2007. *Social Alternatives*, vol. 26, no. 4, 2007, pp. 56-7.
- 63 *Peacemaker*, 15 February 1944, p. 4.
- 64 *Peacemaker*, 15 May 1944, p. 4.
- 65 *Peacemaker*, 15 April 1944, p. 2.
- 66 *Peacemaker*, 1 February 1943, p. 4, 15 March 1943, p. 4 and 15 November 1943, p. 4; Email from David Allen's daughter, Jenny Madeline, 31 December 2019.
- 67 Letter from David Whittier Allen to Ruth Mills, from Paxton Poultry Farm, 30 May 1944, courtesy of his daughter, Jenny Madeline.
- 68 Letter from Allen to Ruth Mills, 30 May 1944.
- 69 Letter from David Whittier Allen to Ruth Mills, from Paxton Poultry Farm, 5 June 1944; David Whittier Allen, 'Extract from Experiences as a Conscientious Objector' unpublished, c.1965, courtesy of his daughter, Jenny Madeline; and email from Jenny Madeline, 31 December 2019.
- 70 Allen, 'Extract from Experiences as a Conscientious Objector'.
- 71 *Poultry Farmer*, September 16, 1944.
- 72 *Peacemaker*, 1 June 1944, p. 4, 1 November 1944, p. 4, and September 1945, p. 1.
- 73 Oliver, *Peacemongers*, pp. 100-1; *Peacemaker*, October 1945, p. 1, and January 1946, p. 2.
- 74 *Peacemaker*, 1 October 1944, p. 1, 1 November 1944, p. 4.
- 75 *Peacemaker*, February 1946, p. 1.
- 76 Email from Margaret Van Breemen, 29 April 2019; *Beaudesert Times*, 28 November 1952, p. 5; *Courier Mail*, 12 January 1950, p. 5.
- 77 *Brisbane Telegraph*, 23 January 1952, p. 25, 6 February 1952 p. 22 and 2 September 1952, p. 24; *Courier Mail*, 12 November 1952, p. 13; email from Margaret Van Breemen, 3 December 2019; Souwer family archives.
- 78 *Beaudesert Times*, 28 November 1952, p. 5.
- 79 W Bainbridge, 'Intentional Communities and their survival', *Encyclopedia of Community*, vol. 2, Thousand Islands, Cal., Sage, 2003, pp. 703-5.