**Student Handout 4-Henry Scattergood Primary Resources**

**Henry Scattergood, Recollections on Working with the American Friends Service Committee During World War II**

*After World War II, Henry Scattergood returned to Philadelphia and taught history at the Germantown Friends School and then served for sixteen years as its Head of School before retiring in the 1970s. He was interviewed be West Chester University student Mireille Resseguier on April 13, 1992, for an oral history project with the Chester County Historical Society on the Chester County Homefront in World War II.*

HENRY SCATTERGOOD: I was born in Philadelphia in January, 1911….There were five of us in the family, and my mother and father were what we called birthright Quakers; both families had been Quakers for many generations. I attended the Germantown Friends School, which is a Quaker day school from kindergarten through twelfth grade that was started in 1845. And I went there and graduated from there, then went on to Haverford College, which is also a Quaker college.…

And when I graduated from Haverford College in 1933, I went on something called the Experiment in International Living. Have you ever heard of that? Well, it was started by a man, [Donald B. Watt] actually in Pennsylvania, who thought that the way to prevent wars in the future was to get people to live with each other, and get to know each other, when they were young. And so he would take groups of students to Europe, and since that time the organization's spread pretty much over the world. And they would go there in a group, and then live in individual families. You've heard of the American Field Service, probably? Same idea. But the point was, then you would go off at the end of the summer, and take a trip, and so forth. The great experience was getting to know another culture a little bit in depth.

I went to Germany, in a place called Freiburg. Do you know where that is? It's in southwest Germany; it has a marvelous cathedral. And I lived with an old gentleman named Anton Fendrick, who had just gotten fired from one of the great newspapers of Germany, because he wrote anti-Nazi material in the paper. And he was an old man, and rather distinguished, and I guess at that time the Nazis didn't think it was worth doing much about him. He wasn't going to be around for very long. But I lived in his house for five or six weeks that summer, I guess. Maybe, I forget, it was more than a month….

Then I went to Harvard, and I found out that history was the subject that I wanted to teach. And so I took a master's degree in history from Harvard, and taught in a school in Cambridge, Massachusetts called the Shady Hill School. I got married in 1938, and my wife was teaching there, too. And our first child was born in 1940. Well, along came the war, and I registered as a conscientious objector, which was no great credit to me. I had grown up in that, in a Quaker background that was sort of congenial. I guess many people have said it was almost expected that I would do that, although plenty of my contemporaries who were Quakers didn't—in other words, went into the Army of Navy. But I registered as a C.O., as they were called, and that allowed me to continue teaching.

But we had children at that time, and so I was given what was called a 3-A classification. You know what I'm talking about? If you got 1-A, that meant you would be drafted right into the Army. If you had 2-A, that meant that you were doing work of national importance of some sort, so they let you not go in the Army. If you had 3-A you were not put in the Army at this time, because you had dependents. If you had 4-F, you were mentally or morally deficient in some way, so that they didn't want you. And if you were 4-E, that was a conscientious objector.

Well, I never got to be 4-E, because about the time that the Draft Board felt they needed me in-- the 3-A classification sort of stopped--I was given a chance to work with the American Friends Service Committee in refugee work in Europe and North Africa. And so I went on a Portuguese freighter, from Philadelphia, one dreary September evening, as I remember, and we got across through equinoxial storms, to Lisbon.

And I lived in Lisbon for sixth months, and of course you may not know, but you may recall if you read history of that period, Lisbon was the great port of exit from Europe during the war. It was a neutral

country. Portugal was neutral, so if you got to Lisbon and could get the proper papers, you could come to America or come to South America. In other words, you could leave Europe. So many people were there, trying desperately to get papers, and they weren't allowed to work. The Portuguese government said, "You may not take jobs, because that would take away from the Portuguese people, and they need them."

So various refugee service committees, the Unitarian Service Committee, and the Catholic Service Committee, the Jewish Service Committee—it was called AJDC—I forget exactly. Different religious groups had a service committee, and they helped people of their persuasion, or Quakers helped anybody who came to them and asked for help. But the Catholics and the Jews, particularly, I think, served their own people. So I stayed there—this was in 1943—and I stayed there for about five or six months, and then I went to Casablanca, because there were Quaker, American Friends Service Committee offices spotted in a few places, one in Casablanca and one in Algiers, one in Cairo.

And I moved to Casablanca, where I had charge of the office there, and stayed there for another six, seven months. And there, there were mostly Spanish refugees who had fought against Franco. And I guess you know about the Spanish Civil War. So we were able to help them get employment, because the Americans, actually, were having a lot to do with building an airport at Casablanca, and they needed people to do menial labor--some carpentry and other kinds of construction work, and whatever. So when somebody came to our office, we would steer them out to the airport, and once they got a job, they got papers, and the police didn't bother them. And we had clothing in both places, and were able to help people who needed the clothing, and also would help them communicate if they had relatives in the United States. We could, if you had an uncle in Chicago, we could write to the uncle and say, "You can send me a money order, that would be very helpful," or whatever …

But I think most Quakers felt that the thing to do in the time of war, [was] to not participate. But I wasn't a total objector; I didn't say I won't register. I realized that one has responsibilities as a citizen, but I wanted to do something constructive if I could, rather than go out and shoot people, and be shot at. And so I just was one of the lucky ones who had something interesting and, I think, fairly worthwhile, to do during the war. Before that, up until I went in the early 40's, I was teaching. And so my life started to change very much. If I had been living in Europe, it would have been a different story, of course.

MR: You just said that if you had been living in Europe it would have been a different story—why?

HS: I think that it was pretty hard to be a conscientious objector in most European countries. That wasn't accepted, was it? I'm pretty sure the Nazis didn't accept conscientious objectors. I think you would have gone to prison, certainly, if not be shot. And I don't know about laws in France at that time, but I think it wasn't easy to do it here. In some places, people looked down on you if you did it. You were a traitor, and coward, and so forth. The British allowed conscientious objection, but I think it went harder with them. Some conscientious objectors had a very hard time. We were lucky to have been in Philadelphia, because there were a lot of Quakers around, and a lot of Mennonites and other people, the so-called peace churches, so the Draft Boards were used to the idea, and they recognized that these people were not trying to undermine the government. They just really didn't believe in killing and war. And so, a lot of people were granted conscientious objector status, and went to what were called Civilian Public Services camps, which you may have heard of, the C.P.S. camps. So although they weren't doing anything great, somehow people didn't think of them as quitters. They thought they stood up for their beliefs. And it depends who you ask; some people would have been very unsympathetic, but others were sympathetic….

MR: How about your relations with the people who stayed here? Your friends?

HS: Well, I had some classmates that were sympathetic to my point of view. I went to a Quaker college, and I think there were others who felt the same way as I did there. And I think on the whole, people felt I was sincere, and I wasn't trying to get out of doing things. I'm sure there were some who didn't approve, thought I would have been better off if I'd gone in the military, but I wasn't in much contact with them at the time. So by the time I saw them afterwards, the war was over, and people were back in civilian

occupations, and so I don't think they felt the need to harass me for what I'd done during the war.

MR: And how about the non-Quaker part of the population?

HS: How did they feel about conscientious objectors? Well, there was some few of them. They didn't really cut much ice, you might say. They weren't a concern to very many people, because there were so very few of them. And there was a certain amount of, I suppose, prestige in joining the Army or the Navy, and educated people tended to get to be officers, and so forth. And they couldn't have cared less about the C.O. The C.O.s didn't impede what they were doing. They went over their work, and maybe some looked down on us for evading, they thought, our responsibilities. But I don't think there was much outward intolerance of C.O.s at this time. There was more in the Civil War, and in World War One. By World War Two I think people had begun to realize that war was a pretty terrible thing, and they might be understanding some of the reasons why people didn't want to involved themselves in it….

MR: I'm wondering if you were ever sorry for making the decision of applying to be a conscientious objector?

HS: Well, no, I don't think I was. I think that after all, there had been a Spanish Civil War. There had been a fair amount of time to think about it. It was getting to be pretty clear that there was going to be a war, because when Hitler started to move into various low countries, and then into France and so forth, and then of course, Pearl Harbor came in 1941, and that thrust us into war. So I don't think there was any great surprise to most American boys of draft age that there would be war, and that there would be a draft, and that people would be drafted. So we had some time to think about it.

And there were older people, people who'd survived the First World War, that could talk with you and advise you, and some of those men had been conscientious objectors. See, I was in a special situation, in that I had grown up as a Quaker, and it was bred into me, that that was an acceptable way to meet a war situation. But to try to get into some kind of alternative service where you'll be of use, but not killing, not in uniform. See what I mean? …Quakers are against war, have been against war, since the middle of the seventeenth century, because people like George Fox, and some of the early Quaker people, and William Penn—although his father was an admiral—Quakers had been writing about war, and their meetings had been talking about why we shouldn't have it, and the injustices of war, how that's not the way to solve problems. So it wasn't any great news to anybody to have Quakers. In fact, probably I'd have made more stir if I'd gone into the Army. People would say, "What are you doing in the Army? You're a Quaker." …

What I liked about the Quakers was that whether in war or peace, they kept on doing what they thought was right. And they were consistent in that fact. I mean, they didn't one day say one thing and do another. They consistently said the same thing, and did the same thing, except they expanded the work of the American Friends Service Committee so that people were being helped, and after the war—they didn't just do it in the Marshall Plan countries, but they went to Russia, they went to Finland. They went to various parts of the world where help was needed, and tried to help you, and then of course spread to Asia, and Africa, and so forth. The Quaker philosophy has been to help people who need help, and help them to get on their feet again. Not just support them, but help them to take responsibility for their own lives. And I think that's always been the Quaker belief….