

From the Editor –

Dear *ACSQ* subscribers,

Wow, it's a warm late June day as I write this introduction to your July issue of the *ACSQ*. OK, no it's not, I'm lying. It's actually early November. It's been a crazy year and we got way behind. Too few hands on deck and new hands arriving that need training, and MANY classes to teach. So, here we are, sending you the July issue in November. Sorry. . . We're going to try to get back on track, honest!

This issue features Carol Medlicott's wonderful essay on the many cultural manifestations of the Tree of Life leading up to the iconic Shaker gift drawing painted by Hannah Cohoon, now in the collection of Hancock Shaker Village in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Medlicott's research has uncovered many cultural antecedents, both sacred and secular, from within and beyond the Shaker tradition. Additionally, she has procured many fine illustrations to bring the subject to life.

The second article is by another stalwart *ACSQ* contributor and Shaker researcher, Stephen J. Paterwic. In 2019 I discovered some interesting archival documents relating to the Maine Shakers in the Massachusetts Archives. I eagerly passed them on to Steve for his perusal. Thankfully, he agreed to digest their contents and produced this excellent article for us which fleshes out one of the first legal challenges to the Shaker covenant. The documents, as illuminated by Paterwic, also shed considerable light on relations between the Shakers and their non-Shaker neighbors.

OK, better start working on the next issue.

Have a great summer!

— Christian Goodwillie