

# THE FORMATION OF THE THOMAS MERTON SOCIETY (OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND)

by **Paul M. Pearson**

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To commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the death of Thomas Merton a gathering was held in Winchester, England, from Friday 10th until Sunday 12th December 1993. The weekend, attended by well over one hundred people from a number of religious traditions was addressed by a variety of speakers, including A. M. Allchin and Jim Forest, both of whom knew Merton personally, and other well known figures in Merton circles, including Esther de Waal, Monica Furlong, and Kenneth Leech. Bob Daggy, director of the Thomas Merton Studies Center, came to England to represent the International Thomas Merton Society (ITMS). He spoke of the work of the Center, the aims of the ITMS, and the current state of Merton studies in the United States.

During the course of the weekend the speakers met together with a number of specially invited consultants to discuss the possibility of forming some kind of Thomas Merton Society in this country. From their meetings a proposal was drawn up which was presented to those attending the conference on the following morning. The proposal was for the formation of a society to be called *The Thomas Merton Society (of Great Britain and Ireland)*. An interim committee was also proposed and this committee would work to make the proposal of the TMS-GBI a reality.

## THE INTERIM COMMITTEE

A. M. Allchin, Oxford, *Honorary President*

David Scott, Winchester, *Chairman*

Paul Pearson, London, *Secretary*

Lindsay Nevin, Winchester

Danny Sullivan, Southampton

Ian Thomson, Wells

Patrick Woodhouse, Chippenham

## THE AIMS OF THE SOCIETY

- \* to promote interest in and study of Thomas Merton and his concerns.
- \* to encourage the formation of local groups and chapters of the Society.
- \* to organize national meetings of the Society.
- \* to encourage publication of works by or about Thomas Merton in the United Kingdom and Ireland.



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