

A PROPOSAL FOR THE FORMATION OF A  
CANADIAN FRIENDS HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

The Concern presented at Yearly Meeting was drawn up as Suggestions to the Archives Committee and was drawn up as concern that our Canadian Quaker History should be more widely known and studied and that we should be more active in our study, preservation, servicing and making more widely and easily available our Canadian Quaker materials, by indexing, photocopying, publication, searching out, etc., etc.

We cannot be grateful enough to those who already have done so much; they are well known to you: Arthur Dorland, Elma Starr, Elsie Cutler, Harold Zavitz, Walter Balderston, Elma Haight and others in Norwich, people in Wellington and Bloccfield; but we need to do more than that. Further discussion with various people has made me think that a Canadian Friends Historical Society might be more suitable and helpful at this stage of our efforts. Such a historical society might be modelled on the Friends Historical Society based in the U.S. It would be quite separate and distinct from Yearly Meeting, include non-Friends interested in Quaker history in Canada, and if asked advise on the problems of Quaker materials. Hopefully it would include a few people with well-developed historical skills as well as those of us who are concerned or interested amateurs.

I see a Canadian Friends Historical Association as fulfilling two functions: One organizing a corps of knowledgeable interested people who would be active in undertaking various projects of research, compilation, indexing, publication, etc.; and the second a way of making all Friends aware of our past in Canada; seeing how problems of the past tend to recur in the present and seeing how they were resolved in the past; why solutions were good or bad; the relations of changing conditions to these problems, etc.

I would like to put forward tentatively for consideration the following items regarding a Canadian association:

1. The name should be Canadian Friends Historical Association.
2. Membership should be open to Friends and non-Friends everywhere.
3. It should be in close touch with Yearly Meeting but quite separate.
4. It should establish channels of communication with other Canadian church Historical Societies, especially the Mennonites.
5. It should charge a fee of \$2.00 per year to cover expenses, e.g., mailing and publication.
6. It should hold two meetings a year: An annual one for business, perhaps in the late fall, with hopefully an address by a good speaker; and a spring meeting which would take the form of a Quaker pilgrimage to some spot of Canadian Quaker interest.
7. Publish a bulletin twice a year which could include the results of projects concluded, or of individual research, etc., book reviews in the field, articles in any other Canadian history magazines dealing with Canadian Quakerism.

8. A list of projects might include such things as the following:
- a) Publish the list of Quaker Archives at Western University which Elsie Cutler compiled and of which a xeroxed copy is in Toronto Friends House Library.
  - b) Indexing of the original volumes at Western University, a tremendous task.
  - c) List the items such as the letters in the shoe box at Western University, and do a finding aid for them, likewise check if any deeds are rolled up in the cupboard.
  - d) Continuing projects in oral history across the country. Interview older Friends. In the case of Meetings where no records are available as in one Meeting out West, this would be invaluable. Also it would fill in the bare bones of Minutes and Reports.
  - e) Check possibility of photocopying of the Walton collection which went to the purchaser of the Walton home in Aurora. These Quaker items are in the possession of the Aurora Historical Society.
  - f) Compile a list of Archives in other private hands, and study ways and means of getting them copied.
  - g) Publish Harold Zavitz's list of Quaker cemeteries. Check on which cemeteries have had lists made of people buried therein and do the ones not done.
  - h) Publish a list of Museums strong in Quaker artifacts, e.g., Wellington and Norwich.
  - i) Get a research team to hunt material in various fields of Quaker efforts which may be found in specialized fields, e.g., education, old schools.
  - j) Hunt Quaker material in other archives, e.g., National, Lennox Addington, etc.
9. Material should be kept in Toronto.

There are many other activities which will occur to other people. The list is endless.

Dear Friend:

Representative Meeting approved the above recommendation and asked me to lay it before the Records Committee of Canadian Yearly Meeting for consideration and action. I would appreciate receiving your comments and suggestions soon, so that we can proceed if this seems advisable.

Yours truly,

GRACE PERCIE

\* ELMA STARR SAYS THE PURCHASER OF THE WALTON HOME STILL HOLDS THEM. (JULY 1971 G.P.)