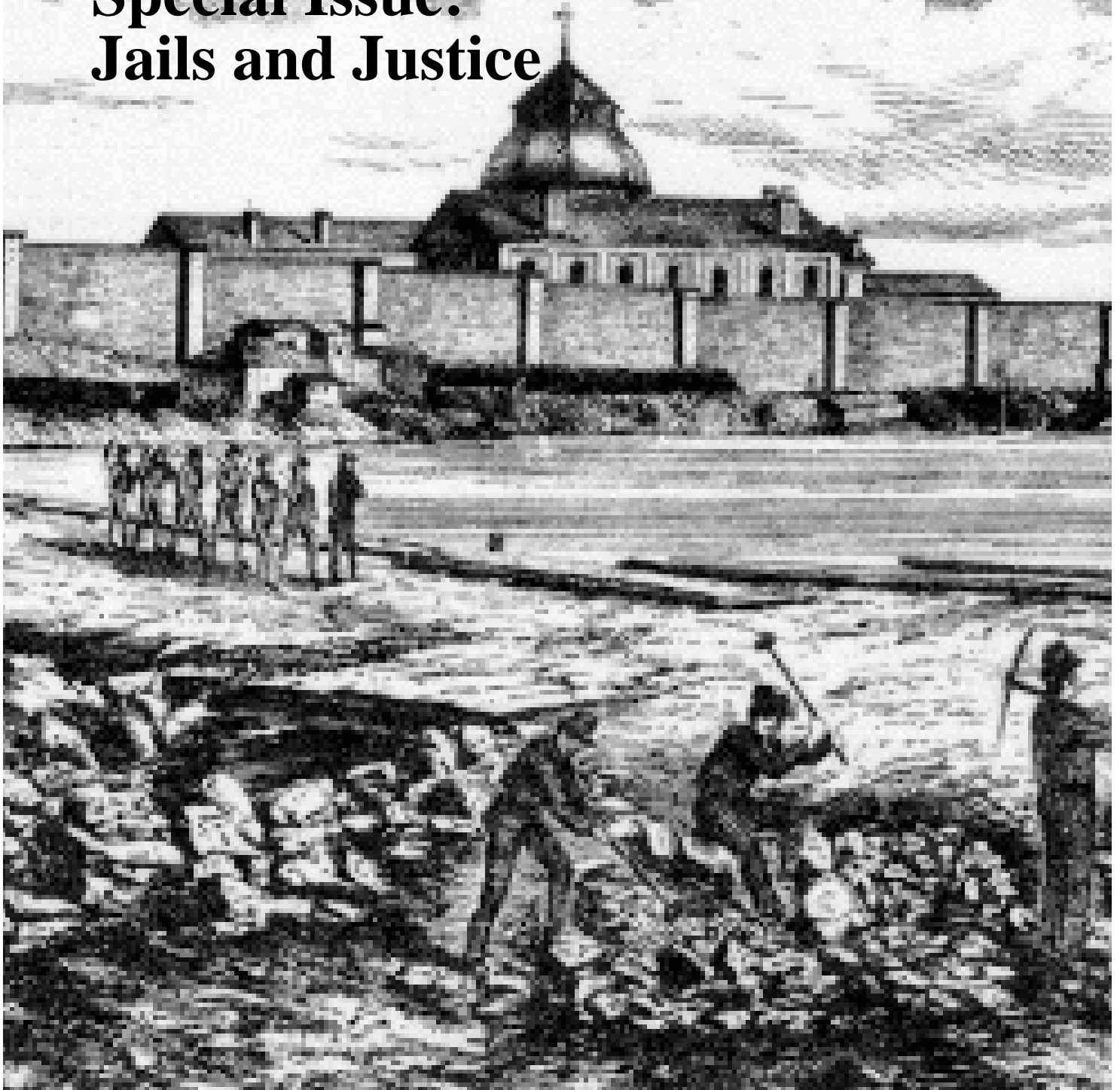


The Canadian Quaker History Journal

No. 68

2003

Special Issue: Jails and Justice



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Introduction to the Special Issue on Jails and Justice

By Jane Zavitz-Bond

Canadian Yearly Meeting Archivist
Chair, Canadian Friends Historical Association

Welcome to the Canadian Quaker History Journal for 2003. This year's theme, Canadian Quaker Work in Jails and Justice, grew out of our Annual Meeting in Kingston, Ontario. A number of F/friends were asked to contribute at that meeting, which makes their contributions to the journal even more generous. We trust your interest will be caught by these articles and cameos. This issue is only a beginning to the history of Friends' work in the prisons and efforts to improve the justice system.

We begin this Journal with the preface to Keith Maddock's book, yet unpublished, on the call to, and the experience of, prison ministry which is the pull that has always called Friends to serve, "I was in prison and ye visited me." This is the basis for our work still today. .

The Jails and Justice theme, just as last year's experience with Canadian Quakers and Agriculture, has simply opened the topic for further pursuit!. Quaker Committee on Jails and Justice (QCJJ) work is reported through its Minutes and Records within CFSC records in the CYM Archives. Barbara Horvath organized these materials, Sandra Fuller archived them, made the inventory and wrote introductions for the finding aid. The nature of history and research is a continuum; the more we learn the more opens before us. Interconnections appear which surprise and amaze us.

The history of Quakerism has been tied

to Jails and Justice from its beginning. Friends were imprisoned if more than five met for meeting for worship until 1688, when the Act of Toleration was part of the Glorious Revolution and permitted meetings to exist along with other churches. Many refused to pay a fine as that represented an admission of guilt they did not concede, whether for 'hat worship' - not doffing their hats in deference to judges, magistrates, all those of 'higher status', even the King - or for refusal to follow other laws not based on Truth, or beginning with the refusal to swear the oath in court prior to questioning.

The prisons were damp, disease ridden places, yet Friends entered with faith held high. Some asked to take the place of those who were ill or had dependant families. In Reading, England, the children held meeting when the adults were all in jail! So we understand why Freedom of Religion was important when Penn established his colony in 1680's. Quakers' familiarity with prisons continued through Elizabeth Gurney Fry's visits to assist women prisoners to read, and sew, and learn to better care for themselves and their children. Elizabeth sought prison reform for mentally ill incarcerated in Bedlam and visited by the public as a 'side-show.' The Tuke family of York, set up the first hospital for mental patients; later in Philadelphia, the Scattergoods established Friends Hospital to meet this same need.

A number of Canadian Quakers were

jailed at the time of the Rebellion in 1837. During wars in the 20th century conscientious objectors were placed in jail until alternative service was permitted by legislation. Even then some did not feel they could accept alternative service when registration was required, for a 'higher law' exists, and they were sent back to jail each time they served a sentence and then refused, again, to register! So our history is entwined with 'jails and justice.' But, had this not been so, Jesus' reminder to visit those in prison should send us there, and once there to care for those within. In the future changes may come, as one Friend called for the abolition of prisons, and the establishment of restorative justice. Yet, even today, concern looms that we will have less freedom since passage of the terrorism legislation under which individuals may be jailed without knowledge of charges... or a trial. Our history continues to challenge us to be faithful.

Our members have a variety of interests, we hope to serve you all. However, there is a wholeness in all we do. With that in mind, we continue last year's agricultural content. Enjoy this year's additions: Charles A. Zavitz' life chronology and photograph: the tour of Coldstream, for sites of its history; the Hughes family's story from Wales to Yonge St. They relate to many Canadian Quaker families.

Thank you to all who have contributed to this issue — in writing or production... The many generous volunteers have made this Canadian Quaker History Journal 2003 possible. We hope readers enjoy and find the contents worthwhile. Please send us your articles as you make discoveries to ensure future adventures in Canadian Quaker History, and share your CQH Journal with others who may be interested!

Good wishes for your undertakings in the New Year. Peace, and Joy on the journey.

The Art of Pastoral Conversation:

An excerpt from
Praying through the Bars: A Pastoral Testimony for Prison Visitors
(Unpublished, 2003)

Keith R. Maddock

"All real living is meeting."

Martin Buber

In general, encounters with prisoners correspond with all the high and low points of human interaction. Sometimes the visitor walks away from the prison with a feeling of profound warmth. At other times, the very act of walking away raises issues of personal inadequacy and guilt. At some point between these two poles there lingers the memory of a meaningful encounter with another person, a conversation that has altered your own outlook on the world.

From the prisoner's point of view, the experience may have been far less dramatic. Perhaps your visit was little more than a brief hiatus in an otherwise monotonous and depressing day. Perhaps some referral you made will bear fruit in the prisoner's life as he seeks help from reliable and competent agencies. Perhaps he will remember something you said, or cherish some small token you gave him. These are things you may never hear about, and yet they linger in your mind as you move on to other visits and participate in more conversations with similar results. The only certainty for the prison visitor is that conversation with the Spirit continues over time, and becomes a potential blessing for everyone who comes into his or her life.

My conversations have taken place in three different modes: in group programs, in one-on-one confidential visits, and in brief encounters through the bars. I am fully

aware that the practical initiative in most of these conversations is my own, or at least that of the religious community that has commissioned me to visit on their behalf. On the other hand, the prisoners have taken the initiative to reach out to me as a member of the greater community, and a representative of some religious authority.

Why do some prisoners reach out to me? As I walk through the corridors two afternoons a week, I try to be open to any number of approaches. Some men watch me pass with blank, or suspicious stares. Others, including those who have seen me pass through before, approach out of curiosity. This is an opening for introducing myself and information related to my spiritual orientation. Light reading material about the Religious Society of Friends often leads to further questions and opportunities for sharing common values, such as the experience of God in every person. That is often enough to encourage deeper sharing on another occasion.

Other motives are less easy, and perhaps impossible, to respond to. I have seldom been taunted or threatened, but I have been propositioned with requests for cigarettes and even drugs. Usually a respectful, "Sorry I can't help you with that," is all it takes to establish the boundaries. An added, "Is there something else I can help you with," gives them an opportunity to talk about more important issues in their lives. The important point to remember is that you represent an outreach for reconciliation, not

another judgmental voice from community or the criminal justice system.

On occasion, men have approached me with Bibles in hand, seeking an opening for God-talk. The range corridors are not the ideal environment for this, but it shouldn't be discouraged. Occasionally, I have found that the prisoner with specifically religious concerns has something special that he wants to share - either recent insights into his own salvation history or perplexing questions that have been stretching his mind. One man, in particular, wanted to ask me about some problems in Genesis. When, in the first chapter, God said, "Let us create," who was with him? I couldn't think of a relevant answer to that one at the time. But when he came to the question, "Since Adam was the first man, and we're all descended from Adam, what color was Adam?" I felt myself warming up to the topic. The prisoner had already revealed his Native ancestry, so I compared the question to the image of the sacred circle, around which we find the four colours and the four directions. What color is the sacred circle? In which direction does it point? Unfortunately, distractions from other prisoners interrupted our conversation at this point. But, before parting, we clasped hands through the bars, exchanging the Ojibwa blessing, "Kitchi Megwich."

On another occasion, I exchanged greetings with a Moslem inmate who had attended our group program. He was an interesting man, but sometimes overly persistent in his demands. When I realized he was about to ask for favors I couldn't deliver, I began to move on. But he followed, pleading, "Come on, Keith. Go the extra mile with me. That's what you're here for, isn't it?" His words, reminding me of Jesus' teaching in the Gospels, stopped me in my tracks. It turned out that he wanted to ask after another volunteer who had been grieving for

a deceased friend the last time they met. His request was to pass on his condolences, and advice related to the Moslem prescription for mourning.

I am more complete, more fully human for having been a part of such encounters. Martin Buber, the Jewish philosopher, believed that conversation is an essential prerequisite for our humanity. We become persons, or selves, because other people have treated us as subjects, worthy of care and affection. In the experience of the prisoner, alienation between the "I" and the world is a depressing and often terrifying experience. Only when he has reached the point of ultimate despair, does he begin to reflect that something must, and indeed can, be done about it. I reflected on the prisoner lying alone in his cell at night when I read, "As when in the grave night-hour you lie, racked by waking dream - bulwarks have fallen away and the abyss is screaming - and note amid your torment: there is still life."

Conversations that begin through the bars may become the seeds for deeper reflection in a prisoner's, or in a prison visitor's life. We are blessed with memories of encounters that confirm our humanity - reminding us that we are valued and cared for, regardless of our misdeeds and our limitations.

**Pennsylvania Quakers Establish the Modern Prison System
Eastern State Penitentiary, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
and
Provincial Penitentiary of the Province of Upper Canada -
Kingston Penitentiary**

from research by Sandra Fuller

Imprisonment came to be accepted not only as a device for holding persons awaiting trial but also as a means of punishing convicted criminals. In the 16th century, a number of houses of correction were established in England and on the continent for the reform of offenders. Unfortunately, the unsanitary conditions and lack of provision for the welfare of the inmates soon produced widespread agitation for further changes in methods of handling criminals. Solitary confinement of criminals became an ideal among the rationalist reformers of the 18th century who believed that solitude would help the offender to become penitent and that penitence would result in reformation. In the American colonies, fines and imprisonment became the major forms of punishment for nearly all offences - felonies as well as misdemeanours. In the 19th and 20th centuries, imprisonment replaced corporal punishment, execution, and banishment, as the chief means of punishing serious offenders, persons convicted of major crimes or felonies.

While European ideals and movements are of importance in tracing the rise of imprisonment as the usual method of punishing criminals, the most important force making for the introduction of imprisonment came from American Quakers. The Quakers were shocked by the brutal corporal punishments of that time, especially the shedding of blood, and their revulsion led to

the substitution of imprisonment for corporal punishment in those American colonial areas which the Quakers dominated for a considerable period - Pennsylvania and West Jersey.

Most important among these Quakers was the "Great Law" of 1682, submitted to the Pennsylvania colonial assembly by William Penn and adopted without any significant changes. For the first time in the history of criminal jurisprudence, it was here provided that the majority of crimes should be punished by "hard labor" in a house of correction. This Quaker criminal code governed the procedure in Pennsylvania until 1718, when the pressure of the British Government compelled the Pennsylvania authorities to abandon it in favor of the brutal Puritan codes which prevailed in the other English colonies. These relied on fines and corporal punishment rather than imprisonment in dealing with offenders.

But, just as soon as Pennsylvania was freed from Britain by the Declaration of Independence, the Quaker influence reasserted itself and the Pennsylvania constitution of 1776 directed that the criminal code be reformed and imprisonment be substituted for corporal punishment. Supported by the Quaker reformers and others in the Philadelphia Prison Society, and by one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, Dr Benjamin Rush, a law

was passed on April 5, 1790, which first permanently established imprisonment at hard labor as the normal method of punishing convicted criminals. Judge William Bradford of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, and later Attorney-General of the United States, was the leading figure in drafting the legislation which revolutionized the Pennsylvania criminal code and led to the creation of the Pennsylvania prison system.

Development of the Pennsylvania System of Prison Management

The Pennsylvania System is a penal method based on the principle that solitary confinement fosters penitence and encourages reformation. The idea was advocated by the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons, whose most active members were Quakers.

Between 1790 -92, on the principle of solitary confinement, a block of cells was constructed in the yard of the Walnut Street Jail in Philadelphia . Prisoners were segregated by sex and the severity of their offences, and hard labour was stressed as a reformatory measure. Each prisoner of this institution remained in his cell or its adjoining yard, working alone at trades such as weaving, carpentry, or shoemaking, and saw no one except the officers of the institution and an occasional visitor from outside.

By 1794, Walnut Street Jail in Philadelphia had been converted to become the first state penitentiary, and in this manner the modern prison system had its permanent and effective birth.

Solitary confinement received far greater emphasis when Eastern State Penitentiary was opened on Cherry Hill in Philadelphia in 1829. In 1829 the Eastern State Penitentiary on Cherry Hill in Philadelphia applied this philosophy of

separation. Prisoners were kept in solitary confinement in cells 7.5 ft wide by 12 feet long by 16 ft high. An exercise yard, completely enclosed to prevent contact among prisoners, was attached to each cell. Prisoners saw no one except institution officers and an occasional visitor. Solitary penitence was soon modified to include the performance of work such as shoemaking or weaving.

At the Walnut Street Jail, the Pennsylvania Prison System was first worked out, This method of prison management became a model for penal institutions constructed elsewhere in the United States. Critics in the United States argued that it was too costly and had deleterious effects on the minds of prisoners. From the Pennsylvania System, the variant known as the Auburn System was developed later on. The Pennsylvania System spread until it predominated in European prisons. In the United States, the Pennsylvania System was superseded by the Auburn System. These two systems dominated prison building and administration, and remained the dominant philosophy of prison management in the world during the nineteenth century - and the twentieth, as well, for that matter.

Sources:

The Origins of Prisons - Quaker Reforms, "Pennsylvania Quakers Establish the Modern Prison System". Britannica, Micropaedia, volume 9, p. 264, p. 710

EASTERN STATE PENITENTIARY, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

(Adapted from "Black Hoods and Iron Gags: The Quaker Experiment at Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia" by Mike Walsh, Eastern State Penitentiary Official Web Site)

"Let the avenue to this house be rendered difficult and gloomy by mountains and morasses. Let the doors be of iron, and let the grating, occasioned by opening and shutting them, be increased by an echo that shall deeply pierce the soul." - Dr Benjamin Rush, Quaker reformer, 1787

From the catwalk atop the central rotunda at the Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia, you can see the entire eleven acres of the abandoned facility. Every building on the site, which operated for 142 years and held the likes of Al Capone and Willie Sutton, is crumbling. Trees are growing through the roofs of many of the buildings, every piece of metal on the property seems to be rusting, and every piece of plaster is crumbling. It's hard to imagine that at one time this prison was the largest and most expensive building in America. It drew visitors from around the world to review its penal system and architecture, both of which influenced prisons worldwide for the next century. The prison sits on a rise in the middle of the Fairmount section of Philadelphia, and from the catwalk you can see the skyscrapers of Center City. When it was constructed, Eastern State was on a farm more than a mile outside the city limits.

The Quakers were the moving force behind construction of the prison, and they wrote that the exterior appearance should be "a cheerless blank indicative of the misery which awaits the unhappy being who enters". For many years, reform-minded

Quakers had lobbied tirelessly the Pennsylvania legislature to build a prison based on the idea of reform through solitude and reflection. The Quakers hopefully and naively assumed that an inmate's conscience, given enough time alone, would make him penitent (hence the new word, 'penitentiary'). They wanted a new prison to prove their theory, and in 1822 the Pennsylvania legislature approved the funding. A revolutionary radial design by a young architect named John Haviland was chosen. Each cellblock was to radiate in different directions from the hub. This allowed easy view of every cellblock from the center.

The first inmate brought to Eastern State Penitentiary on October 23, 1829 was Charles Williams, 18 years old. His prison record states: "Burglar. Farmer by trade. Can read. Theft included one twenty-dollar watch, one three-dollar gold seal, one gold key. Sentenced to two years confinement". As he approached in a locked carriage, he would have had a good look at the tall, foreboding exterior of the unfinished prison. It was and still is a gloomy fortress with tall iron gates and castle towers. The exterior walls are 30 feet high and 12 feet thick at the base. After Charles Williams had been brought through the three sets of giant doors, he was met by the warden. Williams was assigned a number, prisoner number 1, which would be his new name during his entire stay. Before he was taken to his cell, a black hood was placed over his head. The hood was used whenever inmates were outside their cells so they could not see any other inmates. Williams was then placed in a cell with nothing to do - no work, no reading materials, nothing. The Quakers knew what would happen: "His mind can only operate on itself; generally, but a few hours elapse before he petitions for something to do, and for a bible. No instance has occurred, in which such a petition has been delayed beyond a day or two". It's safe to

assume that Charles Williams sincerely regretted stealing those gold trinkets before those first few days were up, and he probably came to know the stories in that bible very well during the next two years.

The inmates were not allowed to communicate with each other or meet for any purpose, not even for religious services. Ministers sermonized to the inmates while walking through the prison, their voices echoing through the cellblocks. The inmates weren't allowed to sing, whistle, have visitors, see a newspaper, or hear from any source about the outside world. They were allowed in their exercise yards, which were attached to their 8 by 12 foot cells, just one hour per day. At Eastern State, you went into your cell and you stayed there. You saw no one except a guard, and you spoke to no one.

Here's how the Quakers explained this policy: "No prisoner is seen by another after he enters the wall. When the years of confinement have passed, his old associates in crime will be scattered over the earth, or in the grave and the prisoner can go forth into a new and industrious life, where his previous misdeeds are unknown".

Although the Quakers banned flogging at the prison, other types of corporal punishment were used. If you were caught communicating with another inmate by, say, tapping on a pipe, you might be denied a few meals or secluded in a dark empty cell for a day or two. If your infraction was more serious, you were chained to a cell wall or denied a blanket in winter. Another punishment used at the prison was the "shower bath" - an inmate was stripped to the waist, chained to an outside wall in cold weather, and doused with cold water. Even crueler was the iron gag, a five-inch piece of metal that fit over the inmate's mouth.

The cells were damp and musty with very little air circulation. The original sewer

system didn't work properly so the cells reeked. The central heating system, another new idea at the time, didn't work very well either. Although the conditions and punishments at Eastern State were harsh, they probably weren't harsher than other prisons of that time. The medical attention and the food were superior to prisons that came before Eastern State, and it was generally free of the corruption and danger associated with older prisons. The inmates were also expected to work, and those who didn't have a trade were trained in one.

By the time Eastern State was completed in 1836, it was the most expensive building in America at a cost of \$772,600. It immediately became a popular attraction, being visited by sightseers and dignitaries from around the world. By mid-century the prison was being toured by 10,000 people per year. During the next 100 years, approximately 300 prisons worldwide were modeled after Eastern State's radial design.

But Eastern State was criticized relentlessly for the use total solitary confinement. The London Times claimed that it was "maniac-making." Charles Dickens visited the Eastern State Penitentiary in 1842 and later wrote about it. "The System is rigid, strict and hopeless ... and I believe it to be cruel and wrong I hold this slow and daily tampering with the mysteries of the brain, to be immeasurably worse than any torture of the body." There are no figures on how many people went insane at Eastern State. Prison officials persistently claimed that solitary confinement had no ill effects on the inmates.

Through the 19th century, problems of mental illness and overcrowding forced Eastern State officials to dilute and eventually abandon the idea of complete isolation. The black masks were thrown out in 1903, and by then the iron gags were long gone. In the 20th century, Eastern State

Penitentiary was just an old, crowded prison. Like other prisons, it had its share of brutality, riots, hunger strikes, escapes, suicides, and scandals.

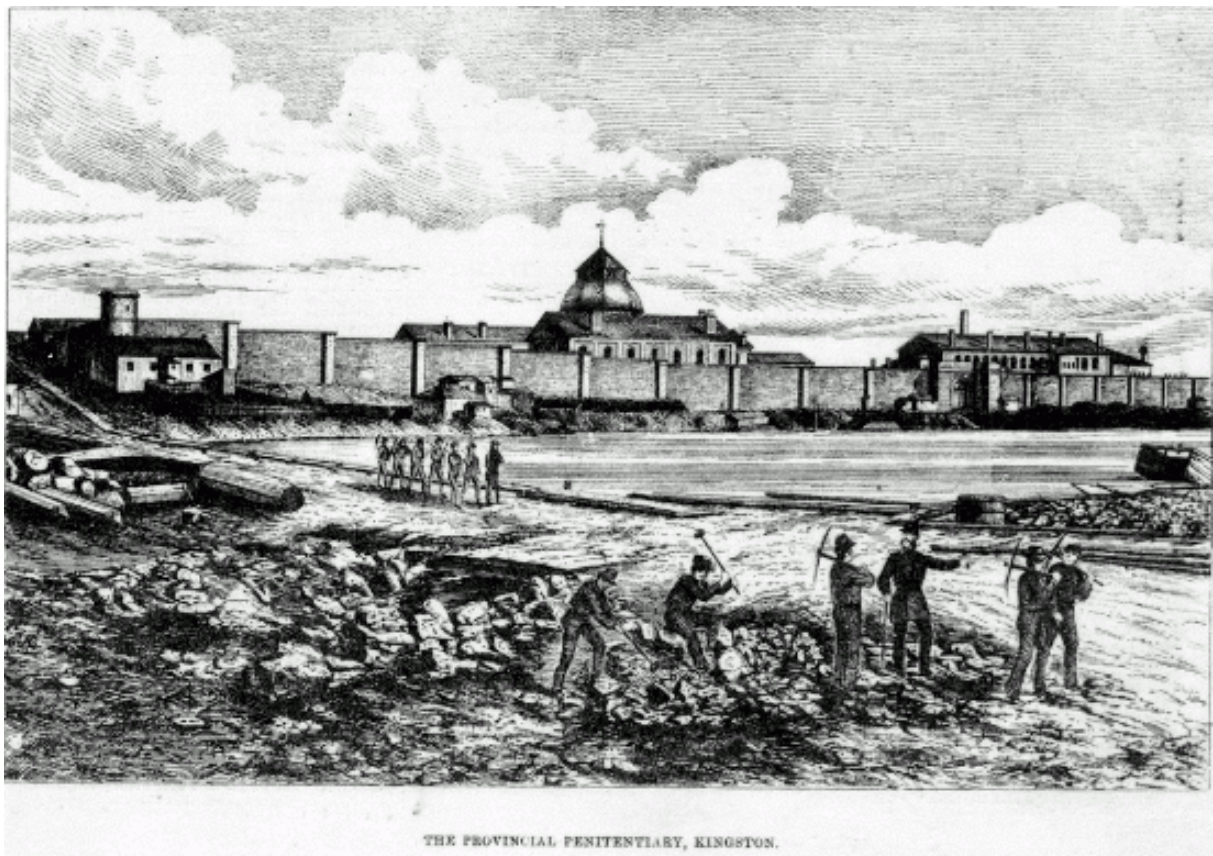
Things got interesting in 1929 when Al Capone spent eight months at Eastern State on a weapons charge. Capone allegedly needed a place to hide out from the IRS. As the legend goes, he was friendly with the warden, and his prison cell was outfitted with comforts and music. Eastern State was in the news again in 1945 when Willie Sutton, an infamous bank robber, and eleven other inmates escaped through a tunnel to Fairmount Avenue. Tunnels weren't unusual at Eastern State. In fact, they were the favored means of escape. Renovations in the 1930s uncovered an estimated 30 incomplete inmate-dug tunnels.

Eastern State was closed in 1971. By then it had been certified as a National Historic Landmark. Several schemes surfaced during the next twenty years for con-

verting it into a shopping center or condos, but every plan was fought by a hearty band of local preservationists. They eventually convinced then-Mayor Wilson Goode of the site's historic value, and he put an end to conversion plans.

A few years ago, the Pennsylvania Prison Society, the direct descendant of the Quaker reform organizations, was given use of the site for historic tours. The prison has since become an extremely popular tourist attraction. The site has also been used for several art installations and performances, and the Prison Society has acquired grant money to repair the roofs of numerous buildings.

While touring Eastern State, it's easy to imagine yourself being incarcerated there 150 years ago. The cell walls are high and arched, like a church. The only sunlight comes from a small skylight. The geometry of the room invites you to stare up at the light and lift your prayers to the Lord.



PROVINCIAL PENITENTIARY OF THE PROVINCE OF UPPER CANADA KINGSTON PENITENTIARY

What many official reports suggest is that the experience of imprisonment, as a response to crime, is itself criminogenic: it actually produces and reproduces the very behaviour it seeks to control. Another theme that runs the historical course of 150 years between the early days of the penitentiary and the cusp of the twenty-first century is that the experience of imprisonment, intended to inculcate respect for the law by punishing those who breach its commands, actually creates disrespect for the very legal order in whose name it is invoked.

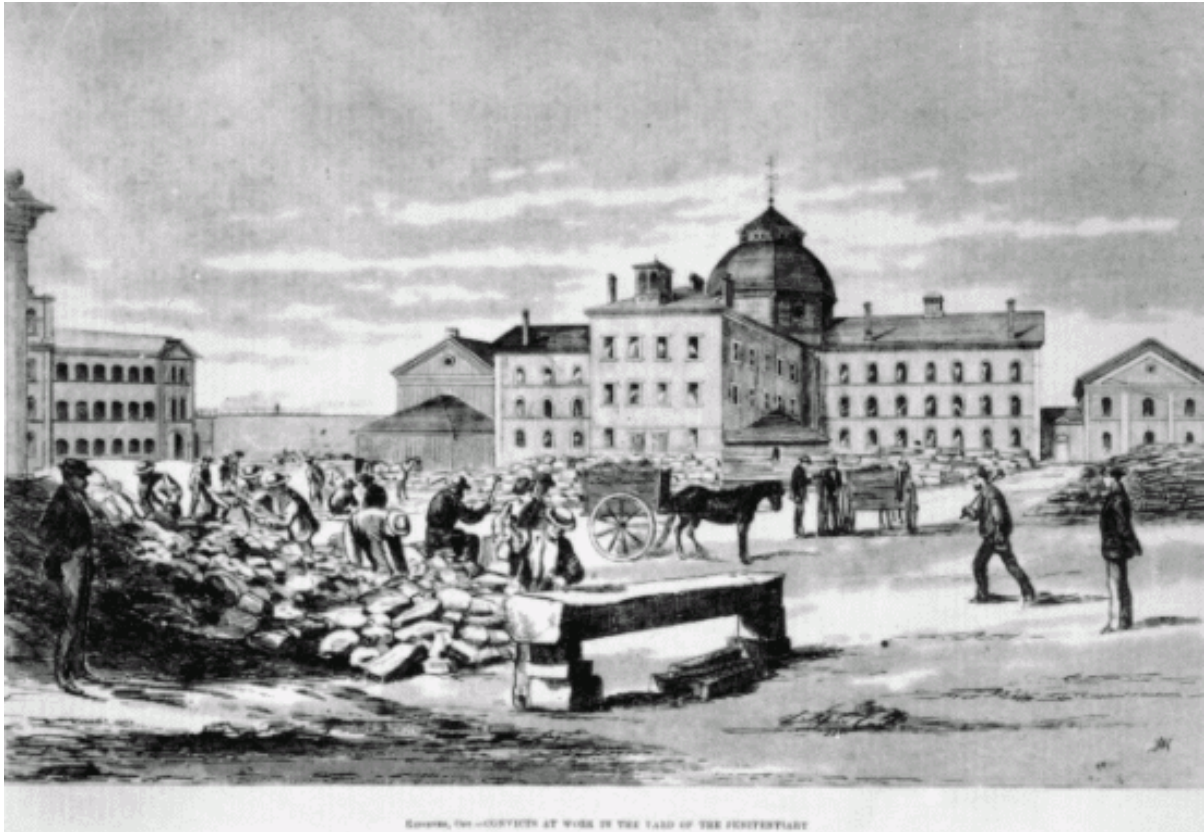
In 1832, the report on an ideal prison was received, and the land for construction of the prison was purchased. The original design for the Provincial Penitentiary of the Province of Upper Canada, the institution that became Kingston Penitentiary, was by William Powers, formerly a deputy keeper at Auburn Penitentiary in upstate New York. His design was a hybrid of the tiered structure at Auburn and the cruciform or radial arrangement of Eastern Penitentiary in Pennsylvania. In designing the first wings, Powers, in an 1832 report to the provincial assembly, felt it was important to promote silence by isolating the inmate and providing for undetected surveillance, notions that were seen as reforms at the time. The harmony and order often associated with classical architecture were thought to affect the people experiencing the design. The Penitentiary is a large limestone building, built partly by convict labourers. The earliest available plans for the Provincial Penitentiary of Upper Canada appeared in the 1836 Reports of the Boston Prison Discipline Society of Boston (vol. 6, p. 889).

From 1835-1845, there was no tall

limestone wall, the only protection was a 12 foot high wooden fence. Over the years, there have been very few people to get over the large limestone walls of Kingston Penitentiary. An illustration which appeared in *Canadian Illustrated News*, December 1870, shows work crews being supervised outside the walls of the Provincial Penitentiary, Kingston. The main dome can be clearly seen. Another illustration in the *Canadian Illustrated News*, July 1873, shows convicts at work in the yard of the Penitentiary, the first known image of Kingston Penitentiary's interior. Originally, the windows of the first wing were square, but the windows were rounded on later wings to prevent cracking. Today all the windows are rounded and extend across each floor. While many changes have since occurred in prison philosophy, certain elements of Kingston Penitentiary's structure have become the prototype for penitentiary design in Canada.

As legislative accompaniment to the new institution, Canada enacted its first Penitentiary Act. Borrowing from the preamble of the English Penitentiary Act of 1779, it set out the intentions behind Kingston: "If many offenders convicted of crimes were ordered to solitary imprisonment, accompanied by well-regulated labour and religious instruction, it might be the means under providence, not only of deterring others from the commission of like crimes, but also of reforming the individuals, and inuring them to habits of industry" (An Act to Provide for the Maintenance by the Government of the Provincial Penitentiary, [1834], 4 Will. IV, c. 37).

Kingston Penitentiary was officially opened in June 1835 when the first six prisoners were brought to the Penitentiary. A photograph of the North Gate of Kingston Penitentiary shows a row of white Doric columns created from local limestone,



announcing, to those who entered within, a new era in the treatment of prisoners, with reformation fashioned along the Enlightenment ideals embraced by prison reformers on both sides of the Atlantic and reflected in the reform blueprints of John Howard.

The first decade at Kingston Penitentiary saw the establishment of a regime of cruel and escalating punishments which, while less public than the spectacle of the gallows, were unimagined by those who drafted the Penitentiary Act. In the 19th century, a number of prisoners were young children, boys and girls even younger than 10 years old, who were imprisoned for thefts such as pickpocketing. Rules at the Penitentiary were very strict in the early days. One young boy was given many lashings for laughing and winking. Another young boy was lashed for speaking French, the only language he knew. There were many different forms of punishment - one method of punishment was the flogging

triangle. For the first years of the penitentiary's operation, the warden had relied exclusively upon flogging as the sole punishment for offences of all types.

In 1848, the Brown Commission was set up to investigate the penitentiary. The Commissioners reported that many of these floggings were inflicted on children. While condemning the warden's methods, the Commission reaffirmed that the purpose of the penitentiary was to restore the moral compass of the prisoner through contemplation, hard labour, and the teaching of honest trades. Its report also underscored the importance of fairness in the treatment of prisoners, both to re-establish the moral legitimacy of punishment and to allow the penitentiary experience to have a reformatory effect (Second Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Investigate into the Conduct, Discipline, and Management of the Provincial Penitentiary, 1849).

Around the turn of the century it was

believed that if the prison experience was the worst possible that inmates would be convinced that they should never return, or consider doing wrong again. Their theory was soon proved to be wrong. The inmates, when released, were shunned from society and resorted to their old ways to get money for food and a place to stay. In 1968, corporal punishment ceased, and in 1972 it was removed from the criminal code.

For the first century, Kingston Penitentiary was both a men's and woman's prison until 1934 when the Prison for Women opened across the road from Kingston Penitentiary.

In 1992, new renovations commenced and cells were enlarged. Inmates are allowed electronics and other entertainment devices (TV, computers, games) in the new cells. They must purchase their own equipment; however, there is no internet access. Inmates are allowed to obtain jobs in order to save some money for when they are released.

Kingston Penitentiary is one of the best-known institutions in Canada. It is the only waterfront penitentiary in the country, covering 10-11 acres on Lake Ontario and located at 555 King St West, Kingston, Ontario. The Penitentiary consists of two buildings: the Penitentiary itself, and the warden's old residence which is now a museum. Because it continues to provide jobs and services to many citizens of Kingston, KP has brought many economic benefits to the city of Kingston. In addition, the Penitentiary has become a topic of interest for many tourists.

Kingston Penitentiary Museum

The Kingston Penitentiary museum is located in the old warden's residence across the street from the Kingston Penitentiary. The museum began as a Centennial project

in 1967 and was relocated to the warden's house in 1986. The museum is funded directly by Correctional Service of Canada.

There are four exhibit rooms on the first floor. The first room displays a collection of uniforms, a camera used for 'mug shots', and a 'count' board (used to show location of each convict). The second room displays drawings of the Penitentiary and its properties, plus examples of convict ingenuity in building hollow books and shoe heels, useful for hiding guns and drugs. The third room displays a flogging triangle and a strapping table. One can also see shackles, handcuffs, body chains, restraint belts, leg irons, and replicas of several innovative forms of punishment used in mid-nineteenth century. The fourth room displays sanctioned convicts labours - for example, elaborately carved furniture. The fifth room consists of a cell used in 1906, and a currently-used cell. The cells are full size in order to show the living quarters of an inmate. One of the displays features Joe McCulley, former Headmaster of Pickering College, Newmarket, who subsequently was employed by Corrections Canada.

The museum, as well as parts of the Penitentiary, including cell doors, were built by convict labourers. The Museum of Kingston Penitentiary provides a rare chance to observe the daily life of a prisoner throughout the years.

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The Quaker Committee on Jails & Justice (QCJJ): Acting on Canadian Friends' Justice Concerns

By Marc Forget

(from research in the CFSC records in the CYM archives; Sandra Fuller, project archivist)

Introduction

The Quaker Committee on Jails and Justice (QCJJ) is a committee composed of volunteer members whose long term goal has been defined as the abolition of prisons. The members of QCJJ believe that prisons and jails are basically expressions of violence, and of society's inability to resolve its problems. The vast majority of people presently in prison do not need to be there. QCJJ works toward finding and promoting community alternatives such as those labelled restorative justice. The minority who must be segregated from society because they threaten people's safety are still human and any institutions devised to contain them must respect the rights, responsibilities, and human dignity of both those incarcerated, and those employed to care for them. This is not possible under the present prison system.

The goal of abolition requires economic and social justice, concern for all victims (prisoners, guards, victims of crimes, families), and caring reconciliation among people. Abolition of prisons does not mean abolition of responsibility, but rather an acceptance of responsibility - the responsibility of the offender to alleviate, in some meaningful and creative way, the harm done by the offence. It is also the responsibility of society to those people, both staff and inmates, presently trapped in a violent

system which breeds crime, rather than prevent it, as well as the responsibility to the victims of crime who are largely ignored in the present system.

While abolition is a long-term proposition, much work needs to be done now both in promoting the ideal of abolition and countering the negative consequences of the current system. To these ends QCJJ focuses on educating the public as well as supporting groups and organizations that offer direct services to prisoners and their families. The latter is achieved through the distribution of small grants to organizations such as Project Reconciliation in Kingston, ON; Christian Council for Reconciliation in Atlantic Canada; the Association in Defence of the Wrongly Convicted nationally; and Out Of Bounds magazine on Vancouver Island.

A Rich Tradition

Quakers have been involved with jails and prisons since the 17th century when thousands of Quakers were persecuted and imprisoned for their religious beliefs. Historically, in not standing or swearing the oath in courts, Friends acted on their belief in the equality of all before God. Many died from the harsh conditions in prisons. An early Quaker, Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845), sister of Joseph John Gurney who was a driving force behind a revival of

Quakerism in 19th century England, visited prisons, and what she saw of the inhumane conditions led her to dedicate herself to justice and prison work. In the time since then, Quakers have often been in prison for their pacifism in refusing to go to war. As a group, Quakers have had experience as reformists both outside and inside the prisons.

Quakers visit prisons, not to convert people to Quakerism, but as people deeply committed to reconciliation in conflict situations. As a religious group, Quakers believe that there is that of God in every person.

Responding to that belief with regard to the justice and prison systems is challenging, and requires Quakers to try to change those parts of human institutions which seem destructive to individuals. Respect for that of God in others makes Quakers realize that relationships through programmes are only meaningful and helpful where there is mutual growth and respect. Directly out of prison programmes come educational growth, political action, individual relationships. Some volunteers follow prisoners through courts, jail, prisons, and aftercare. In the course of their work, Quakers work with many other community agencies and resources.

Friends everywhere base their opposition to the death penalty on the testimony of the presence of God in every person, the belief in the intrinsic value of every human life, in the possibility of redemption for every human being. The spirit of this is best captured in the 1868 statement of John Bright, from *Christian Faith and Practice*:

The real security for human life is to be found in a reverence for it. If the law regarded it as inviolable, then the people would begin also so to regard it. A deep reverence for human life is worth more than a

thousand executions in the prevention of murder, and is, in fact, the great security for human life. The law of capital punishment, while pretending to support this reverence, does in fact tend to destroy it. (Quaker Concern, Fall 1984)

Quakers have a long-standing concern for the abolition of the death penalty, believing in the uniqueness and sanctity of each individual life which no other person has the right to take away. Friends across Canada have been active in their efforts to have capital punishment abolished. Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends has made official statements to the Canadian government on this subject. When the 5-year test suspension of the death penalty in Canada ended in December 1972, a number of discussions concerning problems in criminal justice and the application of Friends Testimonies took place. As Friends struggled to come to grips with the issues, the American Friends Service Committee publication, "Struggle for Justice", was of considerable assistance. A working party was held at Grindstone Island in the summer of 1972. The CFSC Peace Secretary met with Government officials in the Federal Penitentiary Service to discuss the topic in detail.

In 1973 Yonge Street Half-Yearly Meeting (YSHYM) received a request from British Friends for support on their stand against capital punishment. The ensuing discussions rekindled an interest in justice and prison issues amongst members of YSHYM. Shortly after the request from British Friends, Richard Broughton and Joleigh Commandant took part in a workshop on prison abolition at Powell House in New York State. The inspiration and insights they brought back led to a Special

Interest Group at YSHYM and to the creation of a Prison Committee the very next year.

Prison Committee, Yonge Street Half-Yearly Meeting of Friends (Quakers) 1974-1978

The Prison Committee of Yonge Street Half-Yearly Meeting of Friends (Quakers) was formed in October 1974. The impetus for the formation of the Committee was the anticipated meeting of the fifth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders, scheduled to be held in Toronto, September 1975.

In 1975, the Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC) completed its transition from being an organization dealing largely with international service to one having equal commitments for concerns in Canada and abroad. In March 1975, CFSC provided to the Prison Committee of Yonge Street Half-Yearly Meeting of Friends a budget for 6 months' work which was used for part-time staff salary, speakers, assembling resource materials, and preparation for the activities of Canadian Friends around the UN Congress. As a result of this active involvement in prison work, other related groups, such as Church Council on Justice and Corrections (CCJC, which grew out of the Canadian Council of Churches) applied to CFSC for support for Alternatives, an educational tool which attempted to deal with crime and justice more positively. CFSC also contributed to projects undertaken by Halifax Friends and Montreal Friends.

The Prison Committee of Yonge Street Half-Yearly Meeting of Friends (Quakers), was a group concerned with the systems of criminal justice and corrections at all levels of government in Canada - federal, provincial, municipal. It obtained information

about penal services, and set up library of resource materials, visited jails to assess effectiveness, made requests to government for improvements or alterations, and hired staff to provide more immediate action, particularly conciliation between inmates and administration. The Committee also established helpful contacts with other community groups working in the area of penal reform such as John Howard Society, Prisoners' Rights Committee, Family and Friends Association, and the Probationary Service of Ontario. Letters were regularly sent to Members of Parliament.

In June 1975 the Prison Committee of YSHYM published its first Prison Committee Newsletter. Up to five issues per year were produced until 1978 when the Committee became Quaker Committee on Jails & Justice. For the following 10 years three issues of QCJJ Newsletter were produced every year, and since the late 1980s two issues per year have been produced. The QCJJ Newsletter is mailed to well over 300 recipients in Canada and around the world.

After its initial contract with CFSC for financial assistance in hiring a part-time staff person in April 1975, the Prison Committee requested financing for part-time staff person again in October 1976, and continued to receive financial support from CFSC until 1978 when it officially joined CFSC as a standing committee (QCJJ).

In 1977, the Prison Committee (YSHYM) experienced organizational changes which resulted in a new name, A Quaker Committee on Jails and Justice (AQCJJ), and the formation in November 1977 of several working groups which later became sub-committees: Direct Services, Political Action, and Education. These changes paved the way for a smooth working relationship once the Committee became part of CFSC, a move which was

requested by YSHYM in May 1978 and approved at Canada Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, August 1978. In order to complete the transfer of the Prison Committee of YSHYM to CFSC, Ruth Morris was appointed clerk of the Quaker Committee on Jails & Justice (QCJJ) in November 1978.

For some of the early members of the Prison Committee of YSHYM, Friends such as Fred Franklin, Richard Broughton, and the late Ruth Morris, being involved in the work of the Committee helped deepen their commitment to prison issues, and was the beginning of many years of activism in the field.

Quaker Committee on Jails & Justice and Prison Abolition 1978 - 1984

In its first year as a standing committee of CFSC, QCJJ explored in depth the idea of prison abolition. Then-QCJJ member Bob Melcombe suggested that a statement on prison abolition be presented to Canadian Yearly Meeting. Bob proposed using a statement prepared by a group of New York State Friends for their Yearly Meeting. The idea of a minute on prison abolition was presented at Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) in 1979, and was received with questions and reservations. During the following year QCJJ members visited Monthly Meetings to help with Friends' understanding. At CYM 1980 Friends still did not reach unity on prison abolition, but a minute was written and the matter referred to further prayer and discernment. At Canadian Yearly Meeting in 1981 Ruth Morris presented prison abolition as a vision, a dream to pursue. Instead of getting lost in detail and wording, the gathered Friends were asked whether they shared the vision. Following a period of worship, punctuated by compelling ministry, Friends

reached unity. The minute reads:

We approve of the following Statement on Friends Response to Crime (see also Minute #21):

Friends, partly through their own experiences in the prisons of the seventeenth century, became concerned about the treatment of the accused or convicted. Friends witnessed to their concern for the Divine Spirit in humans by seeing prisons as an alternative to corporal or capital punishment. Subsequently, they worked for reform of these prisons. Today, Friends are becoming aware that prisons are a destructive and expensive failure as a response to crime. We are, therefore, turning from efforts to reform prisons to efforts to replace them with non-punitive, life-affirming and reconciling responses.

The prison system is both a cause and a result of violence and social injustice. Throughout history, the majority of prisoners have been the powerless and the oppressed. We are increasingly clear that the imprisonment of human beings, like their enslavement, is inherently immoral and is as destructive to the cagers as to the caged.

The challenge before us is to use alternatives based on economic and social justice and on the fulfilment of human needs. Some alternatives to prisons have already been developed and more are needed to bring about reconciliation and healing within the community. Friends need to seek out, develop and support such programs. At the same time, we need to foster awareness in ourselves and others of the roots of

crime and violence in society to ensure that our lives do not unintentionally reinforce these evils.

Prison abolition is both process and long-term goal. In the interim, there is a great need for Friends to reach out to and to support all those affected: guards, prisoners, victims and families.

We recognize a need for restraint of those few who are exhibiting dangerous behavior. The kind of restraint used and the help offered during that time must reflect our concern for that of God in every person. (Minute #93 Canadian Yearly Meeting, 1981)

Minute #21.

Abolition of prisons is a goal. Like disarmament, it may seem to many a concept that is unrealistic in today's world, and would require each of us to take risks and make commitments we may not be prepared to make. Nevertheless, we set abolition of prisons as an objective to be worked towards.

It is not unknown for Friends to have testimonies which we as individuals have difficulty living up to. We hold each testimony as a vision which helps guide us toward the Light. It is part of our ongoing responsibility as Friends seek in the Light for ways to make this vision a reality in our day to day lives.

While we are clear on prison abolition as a goal to be worked towards, we are not in unity as to the appropriate way to express this. Some Friends would like to see revisions made to the proposed statement, or feel it is too long. Some are not clear where it should

be placed in our Book of Discipline, or if it should be put there at all. We were cautioned during our seeking not to let discussion of details cloud the Spirit. The important thing is that we be clear on what our vision is, and the commitment we are making in expressing it.

We lay this matter over for further seeking at our Wednesday morning session. (Minute #21 Canadian Yearly Meeting, 1981)

Following the adoption of the Prison Abolition Minute by Canadian Yearly Meeting, QCJJ began contacting individuals and organizations that also believed in prison abolition. This eventually led to QCJJ being one of the founders of the International Conference on Prison Abolition (ICOPA), and QCJJ organized the very first conference, which took place in Toronto in 1983. ICOPA conferences have since been held every two years (with one exception, the conference planned for 1999 had to be postponed and was held in 2000), and have taken place in Eastern and Western Europe, Africa, Latin America, New Zealand, the United States, and Canada. Eventually the name of the conference was changed to the International Conference on *Penal* Abolition, to emphasize the fact that ICOPA members believed it was no longer just the prisons that should be abolished, but the concept of punishment as the only possible response to actions that cause harm.

Direct Services, Political Action, and Education 1984 - 1996

Court-watching and prison visits by QCJJ volunteers exposed the needs for educational, political, and direct service activities to further the work and ideals of

the Committee. QCJJ tried to work concretely toward diminishing the function and power of prisons in three ways: Direct Services, Political Action, and Education.

Direct Services: - Going into prisons on a regular basis provides an opportunity to be allies with prisoners and offers mutual growth through these relationships. Jail visiting provides an awareness of the destructive aspects of prisons on all people affected. Programs are held for women's groups, for men's groups, for those in protective custody.

Political Action: - Political actions work directly to achieve the needed changes toward abolition, with special concerns about the possibility of another vote on capital punishment. They include: demonstrations, meetings with politicians, writing letters to government representatives and to newspapers to raise awareness about prison issues, presenting briefs to public meetings, affecting changes in the area of bails and justices of the peace, working for alternatives to prisons such as victim-offender reconciliation programs, and for humane therapeutic programmes.

Education: - Quakers believe that education is fundamental to effecting social change. The move towards a prisonless society requires awareness among people of the reality of the present prison system, leading to a consensual demand for change.

The Quaker Committee on Jails and Justice (QCJJ) worked in the areas of abolition of capital punishment or the death

penalty, abolition of prisons, and alternatives to prisons. QCJJ also worked in conjunction with organizations such as Church Council on Justice and Corrections, Prisoners Rights Group, Committee to Alleviate Prison Overcrowding (CAPO), and worked on special project to create pre-trial justice or bail, as well as with other issues connected to aboriginal peoples, violence against women, and youth.

A Stronger Focus on Education 1996 - present

At its fall 1996 General Meeting the members of QCJJ did a "visioning" process to determine how the Committee's resources could be used most effectively. Given the huge increase in prison population since the mid-1980s (5-6% per year) the members concluded that the most important task was to inform the public about the failures of the prison system, and about the existing, proven alternatives as well as new ideas. In the mid-1990s the concept of restorative justice (RJ) was coming into mainstream public consciousness, and new approaches to RJ were being implemented. It was decided that the primary focus of QCJJ would be on education, and the work would begin within the Friends community in Canada.

In April 1997 QCJJ was one of a few non-governmental organizations to be represented at "Satisfying Justice", the first national conference on RJ in Canada. The Church Council on Justice and Corrections (CCJC), of which Canadian Yearly Meeting is a founding partner (and to which QCJJ is its liaison), took part in organizing the conference, and because CCJC was becoming a very effective representative of the Christian community to the federal government, QCJJ gradually doubled its annual financial support of CCJC over the follow-

ing three years.

QCJJ created a two-day workshop on justice, and in 1997-98 the workshop was offered to Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups across Canada. A workshop was given at Atlantic Friends Gathering in May 1997, and others hosted were by Monthly Meetings in places such as Victoria, Vernon and Argenta, BC; Calgary and Edmonton, AB; Toronto, Ilderton (Coldstream MM); ON; and Montreal, QC. Some resources were also produced and distributed, including a list of videos and a short bibliography on RJ, and a list of websites of organizations working in RJ.

In 1998 QCJJ began offering presentations on justice to students in a variety of fields of study in universities across Canada. To date these have included sociology students at St. Thomas University in Fredericton, NB; graduate students in education at the University of Toronto; philosophy students at the University of Calgary; law and criminology students at the University of Alberta in Edmonton; and criminology students at Simon Fraser University near Vancouver. Consistent with its focus on restorative justice, QCJJ became a member of the Victim Offender Mediation Association (VOMA, an international organization) in 1998, and subsequently offered sessions at VOMA annual conferences. A short workshop on justice was also offered at Friends General Conference in Wisconsin, 1998.

Following a 1998 request for assistance in purchasing some printing equipment, QCJJ initiated the creation of a section on peace, nonviolence and reconciliation in *Out Of Bounds*, Canada's premier prison-based magazine. QCJJ continues to support this section in *Out Of Bounds* with an annual grant.

From 1999 to 2001 QCJJ took part in creating and facilitating 2-day workshops

on RJ for Parole Officers and prison staff for Correctional Service Canada (CSC). This was the first time QCJJ acted as a "contractor"; CSC covered all expenses and the cost of staff time.

In 1999 QCJJ produced a 20-page research document titled "Crime as Interpersonal Conflict: Reconciliation Between Victim and Offender". The document was presented at Dilemmas of Reconciliation, an international conference held in June 1999, and subsequently distributed to individuals and organizations around the world. Early in 2003 the document was published as a chapter in a book called "Dilemmas of Reconciliation", published by Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

In April 2000 QCJJ was part of the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC, the Quaker body with official status at the United Nations) delegation to the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders in Vienna, Austria. This was the third Congress where Friends and others made efforts to have RJ recognized as a viable alternative to the current system of punishment, and the UN Crime Commission subsequently developed guidelines for the use of RJ, which were officially adopted by the UN in 2002. Also in 2000, QCJJ offered sessions on RJ and penal abolition at the fourth world wide conference of the International Prison Chaplains Association, in South Africa. While in South Africa QCJJ staff gave a presentation on RJ at the Quaker Peace Centre in Cape Town. In summer 2000 QCJJ offered, on behalf of AFSC New England Regional Office, a 3-day workshop on RJ in an inner-city neighborhood of Boston.

A section on justice was established by QCJJ within the CYM Lending Library in 2001, making part of QCJJ's library available to Canadian Friends. In the same year

a flyer titled “Satisfying Justice” was produced and distributed. A justice workshop for youth was developed, and subsequently delivered to a group of teens at CYM 2001 in Nova Scotia. A few months later a presentation was given at an international conference on human rights and prisons on how “criminals” are treated as a separate race.

In 2002 QCJJ took part in the production, by a Master’s student in criminology at Simon Fraser University, of a documentary on RJ and prison abolition. The Committee also participated in the tenth ICOPA conference, held in Lagos, Nigeria (the first time ICOPA was held in Africa), and played an important part in the second national RJ conference in Canada, held in the Ottawa region in September 2002. In fall 2002 QCJJ took part in a federal government consultation on the establishment of a set of guidelines to regulate the use of RJ in Canada.

Prior to the implementation of the new Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA, which replaced the Young Offenders Act) on April 1, 2003, the Canadian government organized a 3-day informational conference in which QCJJ was invited to take part at no cost to the Committee. This invitation highlighted the recognition QCJJ has achieved nationally in justice circles. Later in the spring QCJJ gave a short workshop on RJ to a group of Circles of Support and Accountability volunteers in Ontario. In June QCJJ presented a short paper on a new way of evaluating RJ programs to the 6th International Restorative Justice Conference. QCJJ began delivering its restorative justice workshops to other nonprofit organizations such as John Howard Society.

Looking Ahead

QCJJ continues its efforts at informing Friends and the Canadian public on the

current justice system and its alternatives. The QCJJ Newsletter is still published twice per year, and various other resources are made available to Friends and the public. The Committee is currently developing a document that explores the meaning of justice, in particular from Friends’ perspective, that it will submit to the Editorial Committee of the Canadian Quaker Pamphlet series.

Women Ministering in Prisons:

Elizabeth (Gurney) Fry
Elizabeth (Rous) Comstock
Barbara Bachozeff
Ruth Morris
Muriel Bishop

Elizabeth (Gurney) Fry (1780-1845)

Elizabeth Gurney was born May 21 1780, Norwich, Norfolk, England, the daughter of a wealthy Quaker banker and merchant. In 1800 she married Joseph Fry, a London merchant, and combined her work with the care of a large family. Untiredly attending to the poor, she was acknowledged as a minister by the Society of Friends in 1811. A wealthy English Friend, she spent much of her time visiting the women prisoners in England and reading the Bible to them. She travelled to northern England, Scotland, Ireland, and much of Europe where she inspected prisons and wrote reports. As an example, her recommendations for Newgate Prison included separation of the sexes, classification of criminals, female supervision for women, adequate provision for religious and secular instruction, and useful employment. A well-known picture is that entitled, "Elizabeth Fry entering Newgate". She was a British Quaker philanthropist and one of the chief promoters of prison reform in Europe. She also helped to improve the British hospital system and the treatment of the insane. Even in her lifetime, her suggestions were increasingly acted upon, and she helped to start the modern prison reform movement. She died October 12, 1845, Ramsgate, Kent, England.

Elizabeth (Rous) Comstock (1815-1891)

by Joyce Holden

Elizabeth L. Rous was born in 1815, and was one generation younger than Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845). Her parents took her to London Yearly Meeting when she was eight years old and she heard Elizabeth Fry speak of her work among the prisoners, the suffering, and the outcast. She later wrote: "I was too young to understand one half of what she (Elizabeth Fry) said, yet good seed was sown then and there....My childish heart was lifted in the prayer that I might grow as good as she was and work in the same way." So, from this early age, her life's journey was impacted by the testimony and life of Elizabeth Fry.

She was a teacher before her marriage to Leslie Cerrighet in 1847. She was widowed two years later and left with an infant daughter, Caroline. After four years, she emigrated to Canada, bringing her daughter and her sister, Lucy. They settled with the Quaker community in Belleville and she became a part of Huntingdon Preparative Meeting in West Lake Monthly Meeting. (Huntingdon later became a part of Cold Creek Monthly Meeting.) It wasn't long until they recognized her gifts in ministry and she became a recorded minister of the gospel. (In Dorland's book, it says her

name was Wright at this time.)

Her travels in the ministry took her to Picton, Kingston and even to Leeds. She wrote in a letter: "At this present time, I know more of confidence in my Heavenly Father's love, more of the tranquility and peace that the world cannot give, than at any former period in my life. I feel that my whole soul and spirit are more devoted and dedicated to the service of my God than heretofore."

Her ministry travels took her to the U.S. where she met and married a Michigan farmer, John T. Comstock (1858). She was soon involved in building up the Rollin Meeting and getting involved in the Underground Railway. Friends were aiding fugitive slaves on their way to Canada. Elizabeth was often called on to help connect family members who had gotten separated on the journey, to offer consolation and prayer, and to read from the Bible for the sick and dying. In 1861 she wrote: "I know I have a gift to comfort the afflicted, and for this power I do thank God, and strive to exercise it whenever and wherever I can."

This gift of consolation took her into the prisons to visit. She worked tirelessly on behalf of those who were imprisoned for helping fugitive slaves. She had a minute from her Monthly Meeting "to visit the prisons, hospitals, houses of refuge, asylums and other institutions in many of our large cities, also for going to the streets and lanes of the cities to bring in the poor the maimed, the halt, and the blind" and if that were not a big enough task she was also to attend the Yearly Meetings in Indiana and Baltimore. All this took her away from home for several months at a time, often left her in a depression and very lonely, but her conviction that her labours for the benefit of her poor, suffering, fellow creatures were blessed kept her going.

Her many letters tell of her prison visits. Once she met a 35 year old man sentenced to 45 years for harbouring and feeding a slave with his wife and 7 children. A black preacher was sentenced to 15 years for having a copy of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in his house and Friends succeeded in getting his release after five years.

On one occasion Elizabeth was visiting a man imprisoned for 15 years for giving food and rest to a passing fugitive woman. Elizabeth was quite indignant and said she would rather be a prisoner for what he had done than for anything else and assured him that he would be rewarded in the next life. "I reminded him of a higher tribunal, at which he would stand, and where, instead of being condemned for giving food and shelter to a wanderer and outcast, he might hear the welcome assurance, 'Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the last of these, my brethren, ye did it unto me.'" A Friend who was accompanying Elizabeth, touched her arm and told her that many ears were listening and she just might end up in prison herself if she kept on speaking this way. "What good would that do?" he said. "For I believe thou canst do far more good at large than shut up in there." She reluctantly took his counsel, but continued to protest the unjust laws of the Slave States.

We are very fortunate to have many letters written by Elizabeth and they give us detailed accounts of her prison visits. At Joliet prison in Illinois, she spoke to a meeting of 1,800 prisoners and then went from cell to cell speaking "motherly words" to the young prisoners and giving them a religious tract. One prisoner recognized her and told her his story and pleaded his innocence. She believed him and said if the warden agreed she would take his case to the Illinois Governor. In talking with the warden she discovered not just this young man but also three other prisoners were

innocent and needed someone to plead their cases for pardons. One was a seventy year old woman; another a Canadian; the third a man accused of stealing a horse. Elizabeth got an audience with the Governor and he sealed the pardon for the first man. Before the Governor could get away, Elizabeth said, "I then related to him the circumstances of the poor old woman, with the same result. Then I proceeded to state the cases of the other two men, and was interrupted by the governor's exclamation, 'Why, Mrs. Comstock, you surely don't mean that you want me to open the prison doors for all the convicts at Joliet.' Then I urged the point with the words, 'Governor Palmer, the prerogative of mercy is vested in thee; it is a blessed prerogative, and a time is coming when thou and all of us may have to cry for mercy. I hope that in that solemn hour thou wilt be able to think of the words of our Lord, 'Blessed are the merciful' with joy and not with fear.'"

After the Emancipation Proclamation and the end of the Civil War, Friends in America and Canada were very active in rehabilitating the freed slaves. Many of these people emigrated to the North, especially to Kansas as the nearest free state. Hearing of their destitution and need, Elizabeth again traveled from Michigan to Kansas to help in this emergency. Kansas was soon swamped with refugees needing clothes, shelter employment and education. The Kansas Governor gave tribute to Elizabeth and her companion, Laura Haviland, saying they had been "faithful, honest, earnest and prayerful, stinting themselves in order to do more for the oppressed people. God never made two nobler, grander women." (Laura Haviland was also born in Canada.)

All of this travel, work and pressure took its toll on Elizabeth Comstock. She had several physical breakdowns and forced

rests. In 1884, she lost her husband and she and her daughter moved from the farm to Union Springs, New York. She continued to minister in meetings, and speak out on prison issues and temperance. At her death on August 3, 1891, the magazine, "The Christian" called Elizabeth Comstock "the Elizabeth Fry of America" and so the prayers of that eight year old girl that she might grow as good as Elizabeth Fry and to exercise her gifts of ministry whenever and wherever she could were answered.

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Barbara Bachezeff 1900 - 1977

Jane Zavitz-Bond

A special woman who taught art at Olney Friends School in Barnesville, Ohio, from 1962-1970. She lived in the trailer next to us. Barbara Bachezeff was my neighbour and my friend. As the faculty gathered each year we shared summer experiences. Barbara's accounts were always extraordinary, both for their content and for her gift of making the story come alive.

Once in the 1960's she recounted her summer in BC when she went to Argenta Friends School and first worked with clay fired in an old style earthen pit, a Japanese style. She was ever an artist and always tried new media for creative expression. While Barbara was in Argenta that summer some young men were sentenced and she was drawn into a walk as the Sons of Freedom Doukhobors trekked from their homes to support the youth imprisoned at Nelson. They had blown up power lines in a protest to the British Columbian government's education policy which required

that Doukhobor children learn English. Some parents refused and the children were taken from their homes and put in boarding school. The Radical Sons of Freedom did not grant the government that right.

The power line incident occurred in the 1960's, a decade later, planned and carried out by a few youth. The earlier protests in which the adults had used arson on their own homes, and nudity, did not hurt others, but received public attention, was costly to them, and remembered.

Barbara Bachezeff became involved with the Doukhobor women when they were sent for terms in the Kingston, Ontario Women's Penitentiary

the only federal facility for women in Canada. Illiterate, they spoke Russian. Far from home, they were isolated and lonely. Her concern for these women brought Barbara and CFSC, the Canadian Friends Service Committee, together. Barbara had come to Montreal after W.W.II, and through contact with Friends it was arranged for her to go to Kingston on weekends for visits to



Barbara Bachezeff

the women's prison. She read the letters sent to the Doukhabor women and wrote responses for them. She sent reports to Fred Haslam at CFSC, who reported this work in their executive meetings via a sub-committee. They sent bus fare to allow her to visit and care for these women. Over time and with visits to the BC Doukhabor communities, Barbara became a valued advisor to CFSC on the complicated Doukhabor situation. Her reports and perspectives, from her ability to communicate, in both Russian and English, and her innate wisdom assisted CFSC to make decisions and respond. Her letters are in the CYM Archives.

One impact of Barbara's presence may be seen in the vigil at Nelson. Upon their arrival in Nelson the Doukhabor camped outside the prison planning to stay until their sons were released. They were not threatening or violent. They put up rude shelters from packing boxes and other discarded materials. The summer nights were chilly, and some people in Nelson began to give the Doukhabor covers, and cots, even a stove, and other items needed for the camp. Barbara cooked, she always cooked!, and translated for them. She observed and reported the transformation of the Nelson community's attitude toward people they had first feared and felt alienated from. Much had happened to create negative feelings. Local people remembered the news reports and pictures that had alarmed them. Then a miracle occurred as people learned to know each other. I believe Barbara's spirit and her ability to communicate with both groups helped begin this transformation.

As further background, the first Doukhabor came to Canada after persecution in Russia for not bearing arms. In 1895, they piled and burned their guns in protest. Count Leo Tolstoi wrote Friends for assis-

tance on their behalf. In 1899, when Daniel Elkington met the first group of these immigrants in Halifax., they knelt together on the wharf in a prayer of thanksgiving for their safe arrival. Daniel carried concern for the Doukhabor the rest of his life. It was arranged that land in Canada, similar to their Russian homes, would be theirs; the Russian government released them; and Friends helped them settle in their new life. The Radical Sons of Freedom were a smaller body who remained separate. They moved from the prairies to British Columbia because they would not take an oath under the government, or meet other requirements for land title required. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and AFSC, later founded during W.W.I, continued this concern. By the 1960's Anna Brinton was sent to assist Canadian Friends in any way that seemed right. She first met Barbara when visiting the Doukhabor while consulting with CFSC. The ensuing friendship continued to enrich us all. Barbara went to Pendle Hill. And, yes, cooked! Next through her art she came to teach at Olney, continuing her concern and visits to the Doukhabor during summers.

This account is of prison visits and Barbara's subsequent care for the Doukhabor, but a short summary of her life is called for to allow fuller appreciation of this remarkable individual. A biography of her life would fill a book, enriched by all who knew her, and have their own stories to tell.

Barbara's life began in Russian Siberia near the Amur River, in 1900. She was born to the Russian son of the physician and pharmacist of the nearby army camp and the Siberian daughter of a wealthy woman landlord in the area. Her heritage was wide; her potential great. Endowed with a positive personality she related to people, and was aware and observant of the world around

her. She lived and loved life fully. When the Russo-Japanese War came, her landlord grandmother took the family to safety on large wagons. Thus, even in war, her early world felt secure. She grew to create her world, wherever she was. She was sent to a Russian Orthodox boarding school where she learned one does not believe everything one is told; she preferred to experiment to find Truth. Trained as a nurse during W.W.I on a Hospital Ship in Vladivlastok harbour, she next attended art school in European Russia during the starving time. Barbara acquired the basic art skills she used, and built upon, for the rest of her life; then, married to a compatriot engineer who electrified cities, she lived in central China. Shortly before W.W.II, Barbara went, alone, with her three children to Australia.

Her younger daughter married an American soldier and immigrated to the United States. Barbara brought her family to Montreal for their higher education and to be on the same continent with her daughter and grand children... In time her son, Constantine, became a planner for the CNR, and Olga, her older daughter, a well known muralist. As an Australian citizen Barbara could immigrate to Canada. Later, after her teaching years in the US, she acquired a small rural property in Vermont, and put her artistic touch on it--from buildings to benches, designed and decorated with the bright colours and charm of her imaginative folk art-- influenced by all the world she had known.

Her last days were spent with her daughter in California, buoyant in spite of physical decline. She made life better wherever she was. Her observant comments, and humour, as she found ways to do whatever she and others, needed with imaginative ingenuity -- and discipline taught us by example. She was at home in the world, with anyone, anywhere. The women prison-

ers in Kingston felt this, her students sensed it. The world is made brighter remembering one who lived fully, seeking that of God in every person, and looking for the immediate new revelation-- waiting to be discovered. She taught in many ways, but first by 'being' Barbara. She was a model prison visitor. .

References:

The CFSC Minutes for executive committee and Doukhabor subcommittee from 1953-1967. Held in the CYM Archives, at Pickering College, Newmarket, Ontario.

The Doukhabor materials in The Peace Collection at Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA.

My memories of Barbara while we were at Olney Friends School, and of the stories she told.

Ruth Morris and Abolition of Prisons

Barbara Horvath

It is impossible to separate the activities of Canadian Friends, as a corporate body, from the leadership and vision shown by individual Friends. This is especially true when we look at issues related to jails and justice.

I was Clerk of Quaker Committee on Jails and Justice (QCJJ) from approximately 1986 to 1990, the period when QCJJ was moving from its origins, under the care of Yonge Street Half Yearly Meeting, to its present status as a sub committee of CFSC. Much of my work as Clerk was to try to make sense of and shepherd the structural change while trying to preserve the radical activism that had characterized QCJJ when it began in 1975. There were many extraordinary Friends involved in this, but Ruth Morris was a consistent

and highly influential presence. Because Ruth published so much material, her work and her perspective is very accessible. I have used two of her publications as basis

of my comments. (see bibliography) In 1981 Canadian Yearly Meeting approved a minute of record, stating our corporate support for the abolition of prisons. In retrospect, this seems extraordinary!!!

In many ways, the story of the Abolition Minute illustrates the involvement of Canadian Friends in the '70's and '80's in the issue of prisons and justice.

Ruth Morris' pamphlet, "Seeds of Abolition," outlines the origins of Quaker Committee on Jails and Justice, as well as her

own transformation from a sheltered, idealistic, rather naïve Friend to a radical social activist. Justice issues emerged as a



Ruth Morris

concern of Yonge Street Half Yearly Meeting (YSHYM), just at the time British Friends asked for support in their opposition to the death penalty in Britain. The YSHYM Prison Committee was initiated, spurred on by Friends' preparations for the Fifth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, which was to be held in Toronto in 1975. (The Congress ended up being held in Geneva) The new committee focussed on the campaign to end Capital Punishment in Canada. As Coordinator of CFSC, Ruth naturally became deeply involved in facilitating Friends' opposition to the Death Penalty. As they prepared for educating Friends and mounting an advocacy campaign, Ruth and other members of the Prison Committee were drawn into exploring the state of criminal justice and prisons in Canada.

Through volunteer programs in the jails, Ruth and these Friends gained experience and insight into the way the "justice" system worked. They heard about the life experiences of many of those who were in jail, characterized by desperate poverty, lack of job skills, illiteracy, mental illness and addictions. Most importantly, they came to know some prisoners individually and to see "that of God" in each of them. Ruth writes:

There began to grow in us a deep sympathy and a terrible rage at the waste of human life and at the misconception that social wrong could be righted by scapegoating these hopeless, struggling individuals. (Seeds of Abolition, p.10)

But how could they transmit their experiences to Friends as a whole, and what would be an effective way to advocate for change?

The Prison Committee began an ambitious program combining direct service, advocacy for change, and public education. At CYM 1976 they made a model of a cell, based on those in use at the old Don Jail; they invited Friends to get "locked in." Creative thought and practical work was done on alternatives to prison. Relationships were established with other justice activists. Prison abolition began to be talked about and, when compared to the fundamental faults of the present system, began to seem less and less outrageous.

New York Yearly Meeting had a very active Prison Committee at that time, galvanized by the deadly riots at Attica during the 1970's. News York Friends had composed a minute supporting the abolition of prisons, which they shared with Canadian Friends. QCJJ distributed the draft minute to monthly meetings through their representatives on CFSC, so Friends across Canada had an opportunity to become aware of the issue, discuss it and access additional informative resources. The process was intended to facilitate more in-depth understanding of the shortcomings of the present system and the range of alternatives being developed.

Ruth and other supporters of this Minute never denied or downplayed the challenges of handling the most troubling crimes, including brutal murder and violent rape. They also acknowledged the needs of victims and their families and the brutalizing effect of the prison system on guards and other staff.

The Abolition Minute was not approved in 1979, the first time it was presented to CYM. Friends were ready to accept that the current prison system is not working, but needed a clearer picture of realistic alternatives.

The Committee as a whole, and Ruth in particular, had already worked on alterna-

tives and they continued to do so. Ruth was hired by the province to organize and direct a new program, The Toronto Bail Project, which provided bail to some of those who were jailed simply because no one can post bail for them. Ruth started a residential program, My Brother's Place. She supported and encouraged other alternatives – Victim Offender Reconciliation Programs (VORP), Restitution, Diversion, Community Dispute Mediation Centres and Community Service Orders. She was instrumental in starting the Toronto Justice Council. Ruth's pamphlet, "Creative Alternatives to Prisons," was an effective way to tell Friends about the full range of resources that could replace the prison system.

In addition to her direct service and advocacy, Ruth was also putting herself and her family on the line in posting bail, providing personal and family support, and opening her home to ex-prisoners. She learned a great deal about affirming the positive aspects of these troubled individuals, while placing responsible limits on their acceptable behaviour.

The Abolition Minute was not approved in 1980, the second time it came before CYM. But the third time, 1981, demonstrated how much Friends had opened their hearts and minds to this issue and how visionary and convincing Ruth could be. "Seeds of Abolition" describes in eloquent detail the points Ruth made in her presentation of the Minute to the session at CYM and the movement within the Meeting as unity emerged.

The Abolition Minute states, in part:

"The prison system is both a cause and a result of violence and social injustice. Throughout history, the majority of prisoners have been the powerless and the oppressed. We

are increasingly clear that the imprisonment of human beings, like their enslavement, is inherently immoral, and is as destructive to the cagers as to the caged.... We are therefore turning from efforts to reform prisons to efforts to replace them with non-punitive, life-affirming and reconciling responses." (CYM 1981.93)

Canadian Yearly Meeting went on record again, in 1986, in minuting its opposition to the Death Penalty, a minute on which unity was much easier to reach since the position is so clearly consistent with Friends' testimonies.

In her writings, Ruth shares the credit for facilitating change with other Friends and with prisoners who allowed her into their lives. From my own perspective, I particularly want to mention Richard Broughton and Fred Franklin, Friends whose life-work has furthered our understanding of these issues and who have supported and encouraged countless prisoners. Fred was such a constant and accepted visitor in jail that one new inmate turned to him and asked, "what are you in for, pops?"

Ruth was a peculiar combination of naivete and toughness. She wrote about her protected, middle class life, and feeling scared, at first, to expose herself to offenders. We can all identify with these feelings. But then she had the courage to apply her spiritual beliefs to her day-to-day experiences, in a very literal manner. She was vulnerable to being hurt or taken advantage of, but the risks she took were not foolish. She was defended only by her belief that God was leading her to do this work and by her non-judgmental attitudes to the troubled people to whom she offered support. Ruth also enjoyed extraordinary support from her husband, Ray and from her

children and many colleagues.

But Ruth's approach got her into serious trouble when her idealism ran into the brick wall of institutions and bureaucracy. As Clerk of QCJJ, I found Ruth impossible to reason with or influence when I was focusing on processes and formalities, because she was focused on a more fundamental level of human justice.

In the non-Quaker world Ruth twice lost major positions, in agencies working for prisoners' well-being, because she treated offenders as worthy people, or, if you will, because she saw that of God in them so strongly that her bosses felt deeply threatened by her readiness to advocate and take risks on their behalf. Ruth's anguish about these experiences was profound, and she needed and received, support from many Friends.

It was to support Ruth that I found myself attending the memorial meeting for Joseph Fredricks, who had been killed while he was in prison for the murder of 11 year old Christopher Stevenson. While I believed in the principle of "that of God in everyone," it was difficult to explain the experience of giving thanks for the Grace of God in the life of such a person. The memorial meeting was a time of very deep and covered worship. I felt privileged to be among the worshipers.

This was the kind of experience that one shared when being involved with Ruth Morris.

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Muriel Bishop's Work With Inmates and Ex-Inmates

Jo Vellacott

What follows here is more of a personal memoir than anything else. Muriel Bishop Summers (then Muriel Bishop) worked for many years with prisoners and ex-prisoners in Kingston. I am not attempting to write a factual account of how her work developed, but want to share what I know of its colour and spirit, through many conversations and the now disappearing art of letter writing. Her daughter, Elaine Bishop, provided me with a copy of a research paper Muriel wrote for the Chaplaincy Division of Corrections Canada addressing the relationship of Inmates, volunteers and chaplains, which shows Muriel as able to analyse as well as to observe.

Skimming through years of correspondence recently was a moving experience. Mainly the letters reflect the years of loving support we gave to each other even when separated by distance. I was in and out of Kingston a good deal through these years so there are many gaps. But references to Muriel's work, in which she knew my interest, were quite sufficient to refresh my memory of the great range of work with prisoners in which Muriel was involved, and of how often she quietly took a leading role. Another very personal story emerging in the letters and in my memory, though never quite overtly expressed, is that of Muriel's gradual recognition of her own gifts in the prison work, her growth of self confidence, and her slow coming to the knowledge that to refuse to accept and make full use of these gifts in herself would be to fail in what she was called to do.

Although I think Muriel's work began well before this date, the letters only pick up in 1977, when she wrote several times of the adventure of working with a group of men in Collins Bay, and of how the group had begun to come together.

It is hard to capture Muriel's way of working with prisoners. Above all, I think she felt real love for them, which they recognized. She was not sentimental, and was able to accept the fact of backsliding as well as the small steps forward that she saw being taken. Involved as she was she was a good observer, and never lost her sense of humour. She describes role playing at Collins Bay: we "had a good time - and I think, a valuable one," she wrote, "One guy who had just been for a parole hearing said he wished he could repeat it having had the role playing experience - felt he could have handled it better. From his description of the way he did handle it he couldn't have done much worse, that's for sure".

During these same years Muriel was much involved with Thousand Islands Monthly Meeting, and her main occupation was her work with her husband in their gift store, the Port Hole. But it was as early as 1977 that both the Meeting and those that she met in the Chaplaincy service encouraged Muriel to look into the possibility of formal chaplaincy work. It was not until 1985 that she asked CYM to approve a contract with CSC, but unity was not found then. The history of the movement of this concern through due Friends process is a long saga and deserves to be written. CYM

was not able to come to unity (and that an incomplete unity) on it until 1992.¹ By this time Muriel was long gone from Kingston and from active prison work. I do remember that she felt disappointment at times, but I have no sense that her faith in Quaker process was ever shaken. What did cause her anger, on one occasion, was a small committee meeting where she felt there had been no attention paid to Quaker process.

After Muriel left Kingston, she continued to pass her experience along to others, and to learn from them. For instance, in January 1992, she facilitated a weekend workshop at Woodbrooke for Quaker prison ministers. An interesting postscript comes in a reference she made to what was done by British Friends, who did not seem to have the same difficulties with allowing Friends working in prisons to receive some remuneration.

Muriel had no illusions about the difficulty of working within the system, and sometimes was frustrated by arbitrary changes in the rules around her prison visits - for instance when a sudden change would be made forbidding open visits in the chapel or in space provided by the chaplains. I have been struck by the width of her vision. Brief as the comments are that she makes in these letters, she shows a perception of the wider issues, for example the tension between the chaplains and the administration, the difficulties arising from too great an openness at times to an influx of prison visitors with no training and too narrow an agenda, especially when that was an overriding evangelical agenda. Whenever she could she supplemented her own wisdom and experience by taking courses in pastoral care at Queen's Theological College.

The study she did for the Chaplaincy service focussed on the relationship of Inmates, volunteers and chaplains. Written very simply, it admirably combines percep-

tive analysis with constant reference to the thoughts and feelings of those she was working with, and she incorporates, often without comment, many direct quotations from those she had interviewed. The study is based on "interviews ... with Protestant and Roman Catholic chaplains, volunteers of several denominations, some male and some female inmates, parolees, ex-inmates, one Social Development staff-person, a Native Spiritual leader, and a parole officer.

Informal discussions have taken place during gatherings such as Prison Ministries Conference at Five Oaks, Regional Chaplains' meetings, and over coffee after groups or church services."²

Muriel's general conclusion was that the key to harmonious relationships lay in openness to a variety of theological and denominational differences; problems arose, in effect, when volunteers went in convinced, or prisoners themselves believed, that they had possession of the only way to salvation.

One of Muriel's gifts was exactly this openness to a variety of ways of expressing spiritual understanding and experience. As she moved, in the mid 1980s, into work at Project Reconciliation, an initiative of First Baptist Church Kingston, she brought this gift to a new set of circumstances. I learnt a great deal from observing her interaction with people whose strong theological beliefs differed from hers, whether they were members of the Baptist congregation or the Board of the Project, prisoner and ex-prisoner clients, or whomever. She knew more clearly than many of us do just what Quaker belief meant to her, and its theological underpinnings. She never compromised her beliefs, nor hid them, but she never enforced them on others, and she had the gift of hearing where words come from. Her clearness brought her respect; her warmth brought her love.

The phrase about hearing where words come from, incidentally, has another side to it. Although Muriel would never have claimed to be able to be sure who was telling the truth, and although she was inevitably at times deceived and disappointed, she was not easily taken in by a show of religiosity or repentance put on by someone who wished to ingratiate himself or herself; she could hear where those words came from, too.

Muriel would challenge offenders to confront the effects of their crimes and to take responsibility. On a broad scale this informed her interest in Victim Offender consultation; at a personal level, when the Port Hole was broken into, she took the opportunity to make sure her prisoner friends knew just how she felt. She was wryly amused to find that the first reaction of some was indignation that this had happened to someone they cared about, declaring that they would make sure it didn't happen again; she had to do further work to bring home that the kind of hurt she was feeling was felt by all the victims of crime, and that this was what she wanted them to think about.

Another whole field of endeavour that I have not touched on was Muriel's work with the Alternatives to Violence Project, in which she was again a pioneer, being one of the first to bring the programme into prisons in Canada. Here is another piece of scholarly research which has not been fully covered as far as I know.

We are prone these days to blame our present failings on our past sufferings. Muriel was deeply affected by what she knew of the terrible histories of those she worked with, but she aimed always to help them take responsibility, to move forward from where they were now, and to make the best of what was left to them of life and hope. In a brief reference in one letter to a

rush of client crises she wrote of "extra visits to inmates, one-to-one, some of whose situations and struggles move me tremendously". The struggle was central.

Notes:

- 1) Minutes of Canadian Yearly Meeting, esp. 1989, min. 27, 75, pp 14-18, 70; CYM Reports, 1992, p.81, min.40, 185-6.
- 2) M. Bishop, *A Study Concerning the Relationship of Inmate, Volunteers and Chaplains*. Unpublished.

Queens University Credit Program in the Kingston Area Penitentiaries

David Holden

My life changed early in the summer of 1981 as I was innocently thinking of what I might do during the break in classes. I knew I should be doing research, writing and generally playing the dedicated academic. Then, the Head of my department asked me to consider organizing and running a program of extramural studies in the local penitentiaries. I was puzzled by this as I had never had an interest in criminology, penology, corrections, offender rehabilitation or of even visiting the local "joints". I said so to him, but he said to go ahead and do it. Not wanting to irritate or alienate the Head of my Department, I asked him why he thought I should do it as there were several of my colleagues who had a deep interest in those fields. His reply puzzled me when he told me that both he and the Dean felt I might be the best person for the job.

As it was not a trivial matter I decided to consult with people involved or with an interest in that area. I found that there was a great deal of support for the idea of a university credit program in the prisons.

Support came from people in the Faculty of Education, St. Lawrence College, the Dean's Office, and the people in charge of inmate programs at Collins Bay Institution and at CSC Regional Headquarters.

I learned that the University of Victoria had been running a program of post secondary courses with some success. Further, they had evidence that such a program of courses had a strong effect on reducing the levels of recidivism among the inmates who took them. It was on this basis that Correctional Services of Canada had approached the University to mount a program in the Kingston area. Later I

looked carefully at the research they had produced and found it to have some serious flaws. However, at the time there was a strong feeling in favour of such a program.

At the time there were 8 CSC institutions in or near Kingston. We were asked to begin at Collins Bay Institution for several reasons. It is, and was, the largest medium security institution near the University.



Prof. David Holden.

When I visited Collins Bay I met with the Head of Inmate Programs and the Head of the School. A meeting with the Warden of Collins Bay Institution reinforced the desire for such a program. After discussion a visit was arranged for me to meet a group of inmates who had expressed an interest in taking a University course for credit. The credit aspect was important as I had instructions to make the courses in the penitentiaries as academically demanding as those at the University. .

A few days later I was led through 4 electrically powered steel barriers to a large room in sad need of paint with a high ceiling. The windows were in need of a wash, the room was made even dingier by the security mesh outside them. The shades on the windows were tattered, uneven and torn. In the room there were about 40 men all dressed in green similar to the work clothes enjoyed by many auto mechanics. Many had beards, most were tattooed and there were a good many of them in bad need of haircuts. They all looked grim. Some had been lifting weights for years, and had the sleeves of their shirts ripped off to show their muscles. My job was to tell them what was involved, and to get an expression of interest from them. Having never met inmates before, and having no idea of their approach to things, I reverted to my training in Anthropology. I behaved as if I were entering an unknown new society, open to their thinking and approach to life. I thought they were entitled to the respect and consideration that all people deserve.

With the inmates expression of interest, and the support of all the people I had talked to I prepared two things, one was a proposal to CSC for the funding. The other was to the University of an academic plan for such a program. We were the only supplier in sight for the program, so CSC tentatively approved. Queen's approved the

budget, and approved the plan. So we went into negotiation to get the matter settled to be started in September, 1981. There was a delay as the Treasury Board had to approve the arrangement to allow the funds to be released. This delayed matters. By then, the women at the Penitentiary for Women had found out, as had the Elizabeth Fry Society, and various members of Faculty. Pressure came too late for me to make adjustments to the budget and academic plan. But their arguments were persuasive. It was obvious that it would be unfair to the women to deny them the same privileges the men were to receive. As a result I agreed to teach an introductory course in Sociology to both a class at Collins Bay and the Prison for Women – usually referred to as P4W. A visit to P4W produced about a dozen women interested in the idea.

Late in September the contract was signed and celebrated at a dinner in the Penitentiary Staff College. At the head of the table were the Principal of the University, the Head of the CSC system and his regional Deputy and the Wardens of both Collins Bay and P4W. In between were other notables of both organizations. And, at the foot of the table I was in the company of the directors of the two schools and the heads of inmate programs. My only memory is of the notables making politically appropriate noises, the friendship expressed by the people near me, and the remarkably tough shrimp.

With my teaching load reduced to one course at the University, the heavy title of being the Academic Director of the Queens University Program in the Kingston Area Penitentiaries I began my work. Courses had to be approved, students admitted to the University and registered, textbooks acquired and rooms to be arranged. All done, and I had to go through a security check and given orientation to the whole

security system of the penitentiaries. All was arranged, and on October 2 I began teaching in both institutions. The work at Collins Bay paid for me, and at P4W was voluntary. I began with about 35 at Collins Bay, in the same room I had met them the first time around. At P4W I met a dozen women in the room they used for their library. The women were almost as prepossessing as the men had been. They were better dressed, and had much more varied clothing, but some of them also had tattoos.

In both places, I got their paperwork filled out, textbooks distributed. (Carrying in texts for this many was a bit of a load). And, so it all began. I was nervous and tense. I was in a room behind multiple steel barriers activated by people behind armored glass.

With me at Collins Bay were some 35 men, some with impressive muscles and all as worried about me as I was about them. At P4W, there were fewer of them but we all shared the same level of concern. I had taught Introductory Sociology many times, so that was no problem. They had never taken a University credit course before, so they did not know what was to be involved.

The inmates in both places felt I needed to be tested to see kind of a person I was. Their language at both places was quite vulgar and impolite. They criticized me, and the institutions they were in, complaining about all manner of things. And, to make sure I was put in my place they all called me Dave, lest I get any sense of superiority. I had not expected this, as it was a very different experience to the submissive and often fearful reaction from First Year students at the University.

Off I went in my familiar course and they trailed along asking what they thought were awkward questions, which only made the thing more interesting for me. I always enjoyed the awkward questions and critical

remarks from my students as I knew they were actually thinking about what I said and they had read. The two groups of inmate-students were very interested in the material. After a while one accused me of being subversive and wondered if the system was tapping the room. He suggested I might be removed for my ideas. I felt this would be a very interesting outcome, and said so. The women were equally challenging, but in very different ways. I taught in the morning at Collins Bay and the same material in the afternoon at P4W. The two courses were quite different. What the men challenged me on, and the questions they asked were very different from those of the women.

Shortly, the numbers in the two courses dwindled. Then I gave them their first quiz. Then there were only 20 men and five women. I also found that I was no longer Dave, but Mr. Holden. Further into the term I became either Dr. Holden, or Professor Holden, where things remained. It was a curious move from intimacy to social distance and, yet, at the same time one of greater friendship. At the same time I learned a lot about them, and began to hear things they had earlier kept private.

In 1982 the program was expanded, both in the number of courses and the places where they were being given. Courses were added to those being taught in Collins Bay and P4W. For this to happen, each year people were needed to teach the courses, enroll students, get security clearance for everyone, order and deliver textbooks and make sure classrooms were available. We also began providing tutors for people who were taking correspondence courses. I also began an effort to persuade CSC to allow women to take the courses being offered at Collins Bay, to meet the criticism that men had a broader selection of courses than they did.

At this point I went off on sabbatical

leave to spend a year at Earlham College as the Quaker in Residence leaving the program in the hands of Prof. Peter Platenius in Psychology. My year in Richmond was very productive. During it I wrote the major part of the manuscript of my book, and persuaded Joyce to return to Kingston with me. We were married in the West Richmond Friends Meeting on June 10, 1983.

On my return to the University I learned that the program I had started had been terminated. The staff of the penitentiaries resented the free university courses inmates were getting. This resentment had two strong bases. One was that inmates should, in principle, not be allowed to take university courses. They were not deemed worthy of such privileges. The second, equally strong base was that the guards and other staff had not had the opportunity of entering university. They would dearly love having the chance to do so. Their opposition was made stronger because they could not afford to pay for their tuition. The inmates had been getting their courses for free. As part of the return of the program, inmates were to pay the small sum of \$25.- for their courses. Given the rates of inmate pay at the time this was roughly equivalent for them of regular rates of tuition.

A very lively debate took place on the issue. A number of people outside and inside both Corrections and the University weighed in. There was a broad ranging debate. I was challenged by those who felt inmates should not be allowed to take courses at all. The argument was basically that anyone who commits a crime should be sent to prison and given no privileges. There were some who had not realized that sending a person to prison did not end there, and that offenders would complete their sentences and then be released from prison. On the other hand a large number were

strongly in favour of the program. Among them were many who were very critical of the requirement that inmates should make a payment for their courses. They felt that inmates, and all other undergraduate students should be given free University training. This group criticized me very strongly for allowing CSC to charge students for their courses.

My take on the matter was complicated. I felt that Correctional staff should be encouraged to enroll in University courses. I did all I could to provide information, encouragement and material that would allow them to do so. This mollified some, but did not meet the feeling that is shared by many guards that inmates are too "low" to be allowed to do so. For the others, I argued that a university experience would allow people to have something to fall back on when they were released. I also felt that having a university record would make it easier for them to be accepted by employers on their release from prison. Much of my argument was based on the idea that a parolee could continue in the University, finish their degree, and then go out into the world with something other than a prison record. By then, too, I had learned that the positive experience of completing assignments and a courses gave many of them the first positive experience of their lives.

With strong support from many, and encouragement from the University, I persuaded CSC to restart the program. More courses were added to the selection, and we began teaching at Joyceville and Millhaven. Kingston Penitentiary, Frontenac, Bath, and Pittsburgh Institutions had correspondence courses added the following year, and the year after we added a course in English at Kingston Penitentiary.

Instructors and tutors had to be found. I had plenty of volunteers wanting to do this, but problems began to surface. One was that

some hated the idea of being locked behind barriers they had no control over. Others were fearful of the experience once it had begun. I got some very interesting explanations as to why they could not continue in their teaching. They usually centered around the idea that their “mothers /wives/ girlfriends” were afraid they might be assaulted. None were, but this did not have an effect on their fears. I then instituted the policy of asking those who wanted to teach a course to go into the institutions, and meet their prospective students. They had to go in without anyone other than Penitentiary staff. If, after that, they still wanted to teach there, I got them cleared and hired.

Dealing with the students was a different kind of proposition. Almost all them did not have the requisite high school education or the grades that would make them admissible. So, I abused the mature student admission regulations and got them in anyway. These state that if the students had been out of high school for three years, and were over the age of 20, they were eligible to enroll in a university course. If after a successful completion of the course, i.e. with a grade of 65 or better, they could do it again. Then, after having completed four courses successfully, i.e. maintaining a passing grade, they could enroll as regular undergraduate students. This worked well until the people in the Admissions Office of the University began demanding other things. The regulations also stated that requests for admission had to be made three months before the beginning of term. Given the situation in the Institutions this was quite impossible. So, we had a meeting with the Dean of Students acting as referee. He came down on my side, and things went on.

A second problem came with the Office of Part-time Studies. The staff there objected to having to handle material coming from the Penitentiaries. They were particu-

larly offended by having to handle material from a couple of notorious killers. Somehow they felt they were being contaminated by the papers coming through the mail. It took a bit of persuasion, and argument that they would not be “infected” to get them to accept and process the material. By this time, my colleagues felt my main contribution was to get them to realize that criminals could be intelligent, and might have something to offer to the world. In fact, a small handful of the inmates had managed to make grades good enough to be on the Dean’s List.

One of my concerns continued to be the shortage of courses for the women. I was constrained by the need to get 12 or more students in each course. The population of the Prison for women was too small to allow for more than one at a time. To given them a wider choice, I persuaded CSC, again, to allow women to be moved to Collins Bay to take courses there. I even offered the Sociology of Deviant Behavior one year to a mixed class. It was clear that both the men and the women benefited from the contact. They were better dressed, cleaner, and performed better in class. I learned as much as the students did that year. But boys will be boys, and girls like them that way. One of the women, serving a life sentence, realized that her biological clock was ticking down. If nothing happened she would never be able to have a baby. Contact with the men offered her a solution. What she forgot was that withdrawal to the washroom did not offer the privacy she thought. She was unsuccessful in her quest, but almost destroyed the program in the process. At another time a couple of the women were not allowed onto the bus to go to Collins Bay because their clothing was deemed far too revealing.

By 1988 I was able to report that courses were being given in Collins Bay,

Millhaven, The Prison for Women, Bath, Frontenac and Joyceville with a total of 144 students enrolled. I also reported the next year that the program produced its first graduate in 1986. In 1987 two more received degrees. In 1988 five received degrees. The following year two more did so. In addition, one completed a degree from Kingston Penitentiary through the Correspondence Program. Several more completed degrees in subsequent years.

Among those receiving degrees were women who had started their degrees in my classes at P4W. One was the first woman in Canadian history to complete a degree while in custody. She received a great deal of attention from the media. Unfortunately the media played up the people who had been the victims of her crime, rather than the success of the program in reaching that point. We had hoped the success of the program would be recognized yet at the same time we received a lot of negative publicity from people who seemed to feel people who went to prison should be punished rather than rehabilitated. The family of the murdered man, who were the victims of her crime, got a lot of sympathy as they were people who could not afford a university education.

In 1988 I again went on sabbatical leave. This time we went to Ireland, leaving the program in the hands of Caroline Miller, one of my strongest political supporters. While in Ireland I visited two Prisons in Northern Ireland, and spoke on my experience to Queens University, Belfast. Northern Irish prisons are considerably different to those in Canada, or even to those in the Republic of Ireland. This, however, is another story.

In 1990 I picked up the program again, but by the end of the academic year, I was happy to return it to the hands of Caroline Miller. I retired a year later, and then in

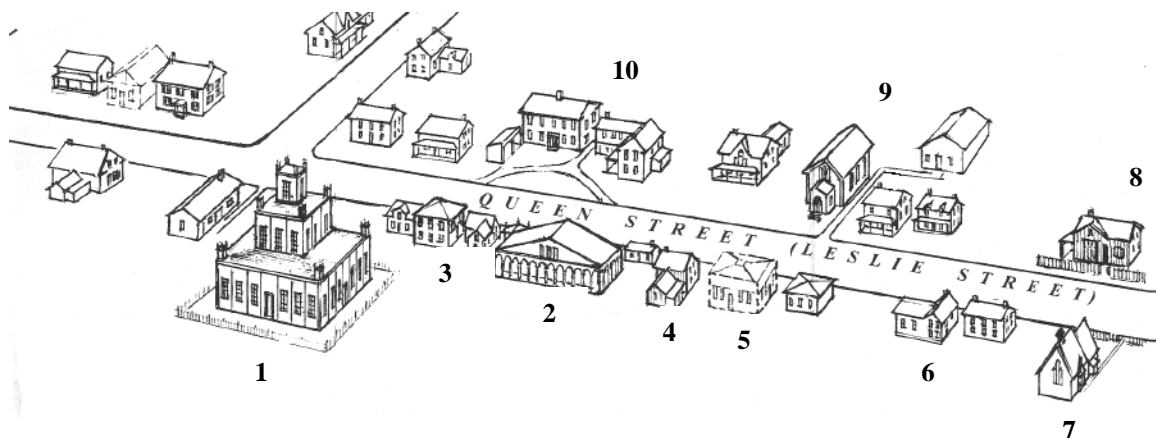
1993 CSC decided to discontinue the program altogether. By then they were convinced that education was not the solution for recidivism and were off on another tangent. Sadly, programs are started with all manner of enthusiasm, to be replaced and discontinued. The reason given is always the same: "It is too expensive!"

Sharon (Hope): A Village Portrait (1851)

In this issue we present the next in our series of photographic portraits of historic Quaker villages.

The Village of Hope was built by the Children of Peace, a Quaker offshoot of the Yonge Street Monthly Meeting (Newmarket).

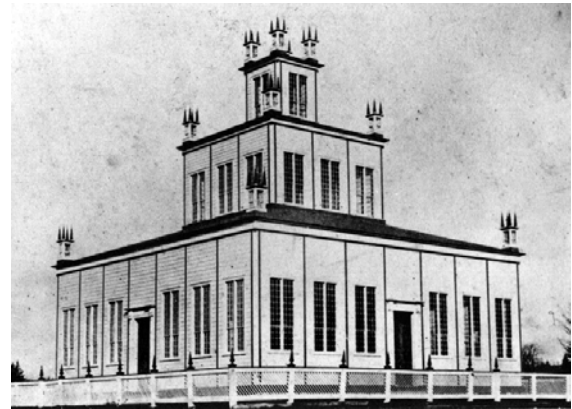
(Smith's Canadian Gazetteer, 1846). SHARON, or DAVIDTOWN. A village in the township of East Gwillimbury, three miles and a half from the Holland Landing, and about thirty-five from Toronto. It was first settled in the year 1800, by a Mr. David Willson, from the state of New York; who with a few followers, about six in number, seceded from the Society of Friends, and established a sect of his own. These have been since known as "Davidites." They have at great expense, and much labour, erected two large buildings of a most singular appearance, which strike the eye of the traveller at a considerable distance. The first of these, designed to be an imitation of the ancient, Jewish temple, is a building, the ground floor of which is sixty feet square, and twenty-four feet high. Above this is a gallery, for musical performances; and above this again, a kind of tower or steeple. The whole height of the building is sixty-five feet. In the interior is a large space enclosed by twelve pillars, on each of which is inscribed in gold letters, the name of one of the Apostles. Within these again, are four others, inscribed in like manner with the words, "Hope," "Faith," "Charity," "Love." In the centre of the building, surrounded by these pillars, is a kind of cabinet, about five feet square and seven feet high, made of oak, of elaborate workmanship; in shape, something resembling one story of a Chinese Pagoda; at the four corners and on the top of which are placed brass lamps. On each side of the cabinet are four windows. The interior is lined with black cloth, trimmed with crimson. In the centre is a kind of table covered with black cloth, with crimson hangings, supporting a Bible. The temple was built by the congregation, who spent seven years about the work; working of course, only at intervals. It was completed in the year 1832. Every year, on the first Friday evening in September, the temple is brilliantly illuminated. A meeting is held here monthly for the





purpose of making collections for the poor. Since the completion of the Temple, \$1500 has been contributed; 600 of which have been expended.

The second building is the meeting house; which measures 100 feet by 50. It is surrounded on the outside by rows of pillars. The ground floor is twenty feet high, the ceiling is arched, and is supported by three rows of pillars, on which are inscribed in letters of gold, the names --- Daniel,

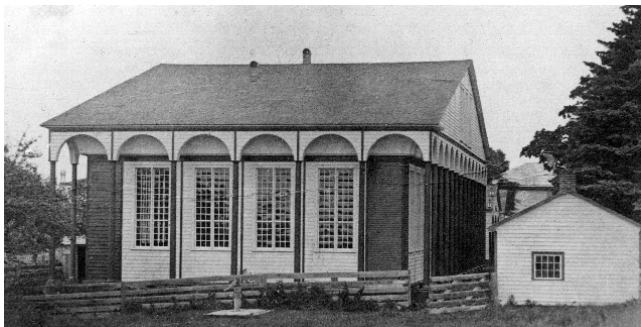


Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Moses, Jacob, Abraham, Solomon, David (with a harp), Judah, Reuben, Samuel, Levi, Isaac, Benjamin, Aaron, Joseph, and "Our Lord is one God." There is also a tolerable organ. Above the meeting house is a school-room, fifty by twenty-

Above: The Streetscape of Sharon as it would have appeared in the 1840s, showing the location of the Temple (1), Second Meeting House (2), and David Willson's House (4).

Above right: An early picture of the Temple (1) showing the ornate fence which originally surrounded it.

Left: The Second Meeting House (2) from the front and side. The small building at the right of the lower picture is the Cook House used for provisioning their annual feasts.





one feet. The building was completed in 1842. It was built by subscription, and cost about \$2500. The members meet every Sunday for religious service; and twice a-year, viz., on the first Saturdays in June and September, for a feast or communion, at which time all comers are welcomed. The congregation, including children, number about 200.

Above: The Second Meeting (2) from the rear, as seen from the second storey window of the Temple. The first rooftop to the right shows the relative location of the First Meeting House (5).

Middle Right: David Willson Hughes' store (3), which stood in front of the Temple. David Hughes stands by the door, two other men on his left. A buggy is parked in front.

Bottom Right: David Willson's Study (1829). This small ornate study was built by the Children of Peace about the time the Temple was completed. David Willson composed his hymns and sermons here.

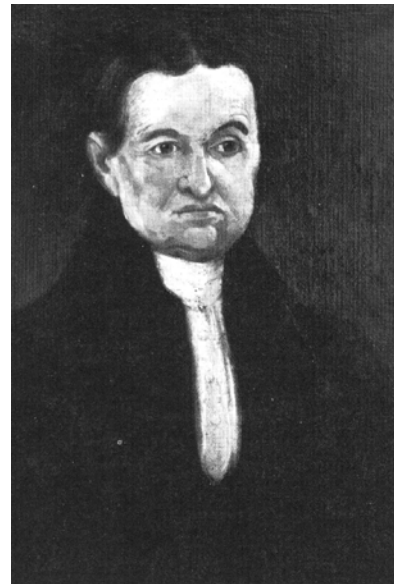
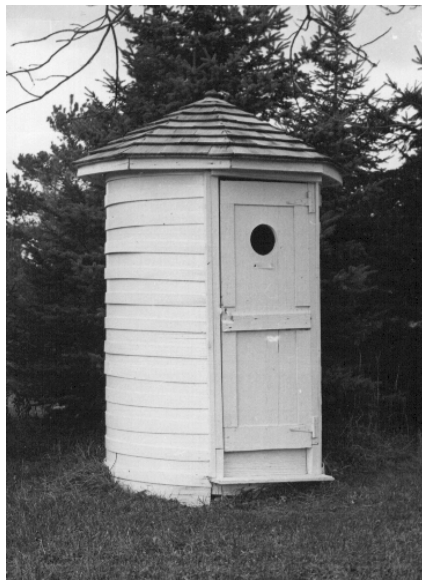




Left: David Willson's house (4), Leslie Street, Sharon in 1887. Willson was the leader of the Children of Peace until his death in 1866.

Below Left: David Willson's Round Outhouse, now at the Sharon Temple historic site.

Below Right: An early portrait of David Willson by an unknown artist. Willson separated from the Quakers in 1812 when he was forbidden to preach in the Yonge Street Meeting House. Willson claimed he would take the principles of George Fox "on to perfection."



Left: After the separation from the Yonge Street Meeting, the Children of Peace constructed their own meeting house (5) in the centre of what was to become the village of Hope, not far from David Willson's house. Finished in 1819, the building was square, with a door in each side, to emphasize the equality of all people coming from all directions. The meeting house also differed from Quaker models in having a large barrel organ and band stand at its centre.

Right: The Kavanagh-Theakston Store (6) was built using lumber from the first meeting house. Kavanagh's father, James Sr., was one of the few fatalities of the Rebellion of 1837. James Jr. established this store, and later went on to become the vice-president of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.



Right: St James Anglican Church (1869): As the Children of Peace declined after David Willson's death in 1866, other religious denominations established congregations in the village. The Anglican Church (7) was designed by John T. Stokes, an architect in the village (see below). The church is built in the gothic style, but has an unusual belfry.

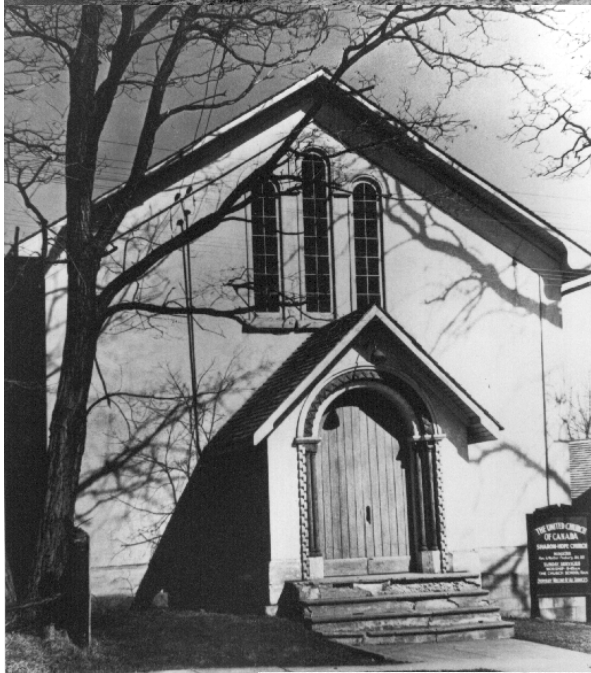


Right: Peter Rowen House. Rowen (1812-1875) a blacksmith and wheelwright, lived in this charming Regency cottage. The house retains its original appearance on a beautifully gardened lot with an octagonal gazebo and carriage house at the rear.



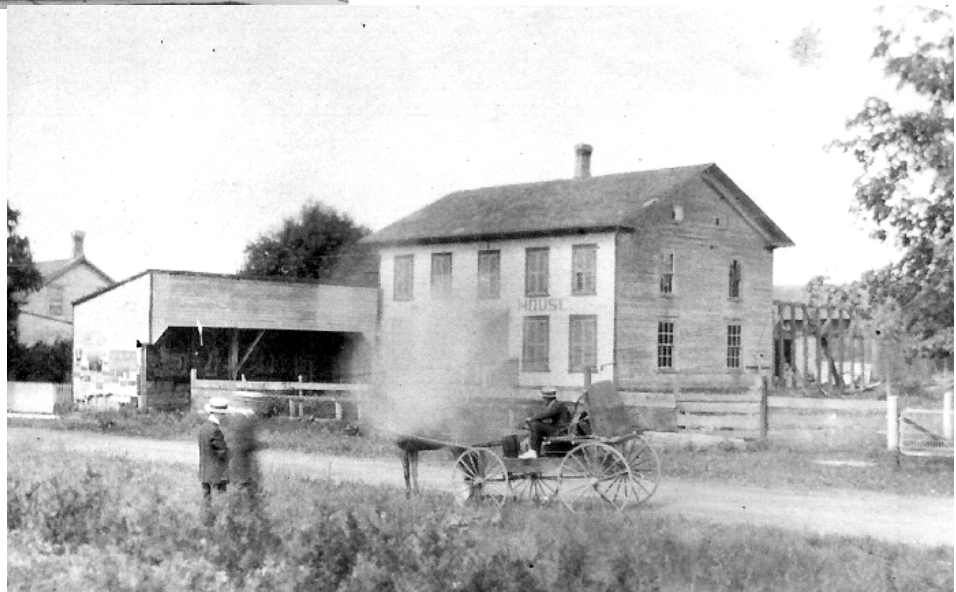


Left: John T. Stokes House (8) -1852. Stokes learned his trade as builder from Temple designer Ebenezer Doan. He served as township clerk, treasurer, road superintendent, post master, and eventually civil engineer of the City of Toronto. Most of his earlier architectural work are churches, including the Anglican church and Methodist churches in Hope, and the Presbyterian and Christian Churches in Newmarket.



Middle Left: The Canadian Wesleyan Methodist New Connexion Church (9) designed by Stokes in 1867. The building had a Romanesque entrance (seen below) which is now gone. The building was used by the United Church of Canada, until it was transformed into a daycare facility.

Below: The Mansion House Hotel(10) was built and operated by John Reid in the 1840s. It was a regular stop on the stage-coach route to Lake Simcoe. The building remained in use until 1910 when it was closed by the prohibition vote. The Hall over the south shed (not seen) was used as a ball-





Above: The Children of Peace were prosperous farmers, and numerous spacious farm-houses can be seen along Leslie Street. One of the more beautiful of these farmsteads, now known as Walnut Farm, was built by Judah Lundy (1813-1897). The Lundy family remained members of the Children of Peace until David Willson's death, when they became Methodists and donated the land for the New Connexion church.

Below: The Children of Peace Burial Ground: The oldest marked graves in the

Children of Peace Burial Ground date from 1820, the year after their first meeting house was completed. It was established on a sandy knoll on the southwest corner of Lot 7, Conc. 3 of EG. This original cemetery was approximately 25 rods in size, or about 82.5 feet by 82.5 feet. Most of the existing stones in the cemetery lie within this area. In 1912, the sale of the lumber from the Second Meeting House was used to establish a trust fund for the continued maintenance of the burial ground.



The Coldstream Tour

By David A. Zavitz

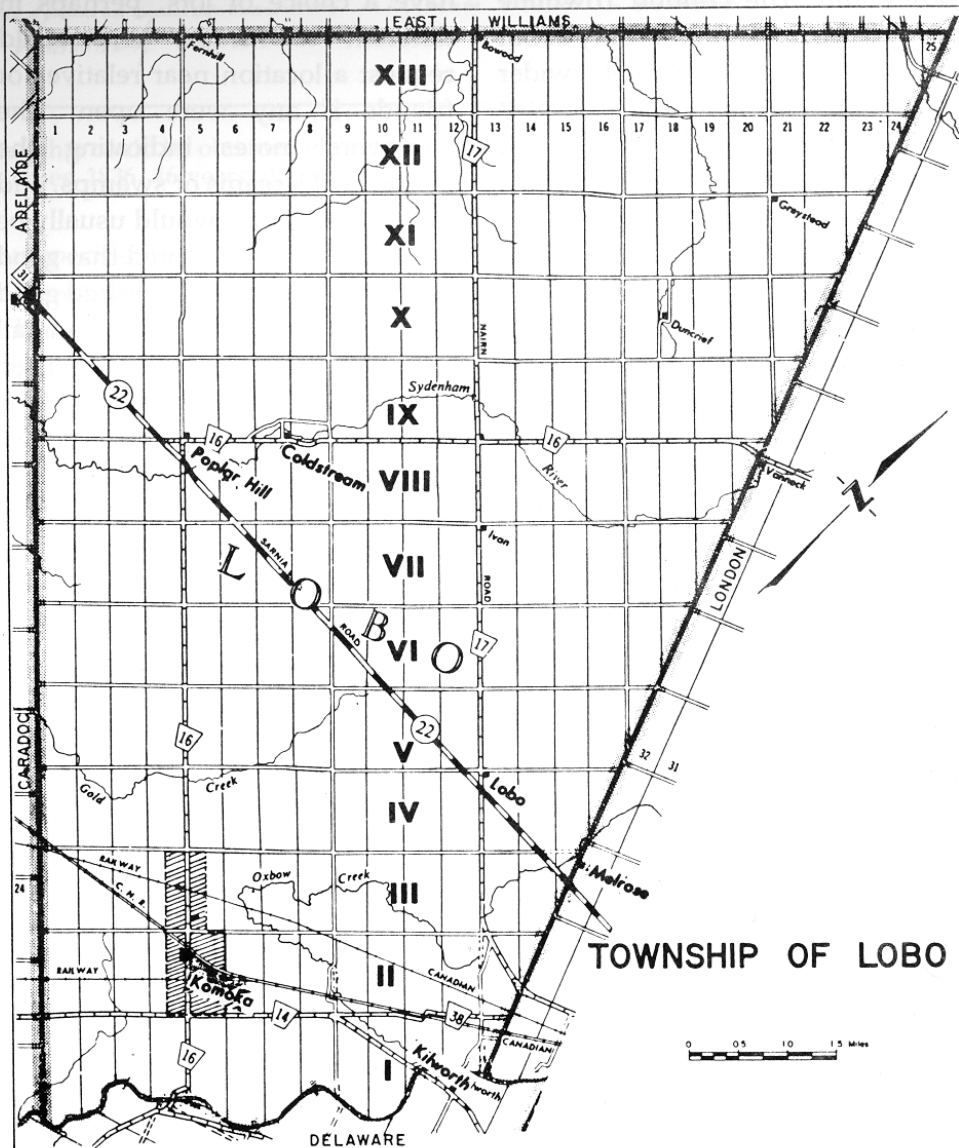


1. Friends Meeting House (Quakers)

The first settlers in Coldstream were Quakers Benjamin Cutler and his brother-in-law John Marsh. The first meetings were in the homes of these families and the chair factory of John Marsh. In 1850 a log meeting house was erected following pressure from Daniel Zavitz on land donated by Benjamin Cutler and John Marsh. In 1859, when it became too small, a brick building was built on the same site and it still stands much the same as it was then. Caroline Zavitz Cutler donated another half acre of land for the burying ground.

2. Cutler Red Brick Cottage

This house was built of red brick which was very rare at that time and there doesn't appear to be a record of where it came from. Various Cutler families lived in it over the years. It is likely that it was built by Ellis for his growing family. Ellis had the first post office here from 1856-1860. The family seemed to have a lot of health problems that they attributed to the stagnant water of the mill pond and so abandoned it. It fell into disrepair and was empty for some years. William and Susie fixed it up and retired there when he became crippled. After his death, it was abandoned and even-



The resultant pattern of roads in Lobo.

tually fell down.



The Cutler Mill

3. The Cutler Mill

A saw mill was built in 1837 by Benjamin Cutler on the road allowance on the south side of the creek. The saw mill had a raised track on pillars to roll the logs from the higher ground on the north side of the stream across and into the mill. In 1838 he added a three story grist mill. It was later sold but due to it's location the owner could not get a clear deed and it was returned. His sons worked in the mill and Ellis ran it for a time. It was later abandoned and it collapsed in 1905.

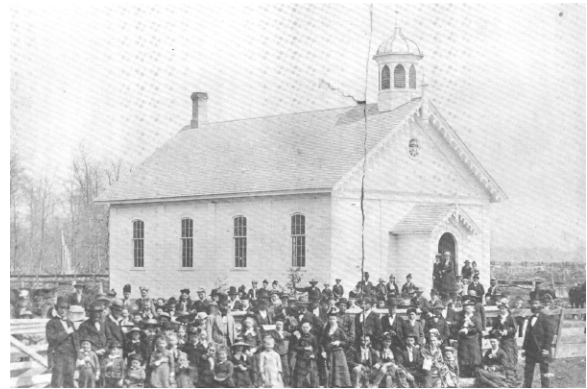
4. The Wood House

John Wood built a house and store at the corner of the 9th concession. He operated this store until his death in 1848 when Jacob Marsh purchased it. Jacob later moved it to Mill Lane in 1870. John's son John married Jacob Marsh's sister and was a teacher at S.S. #3 school and his son Clare ran a tailor shop next to the wood home. Another son, Albert, became an important Ontario entomologist.

5. Hume Cemetery

It was used by the Scottish settlers starting in 1825. It ceased being used about 1907 and soon became a wild, overgrown jungle.

In the 1950's Vera McLean spear-headed a drive to clean it up and to set the old stones in concrete to protect them. In 1987 the government took over the care of these old abandoned cemeteries.



6. S. S. #3 School

The records show that this school may have been in several locations from the Hume Cemetery south to the 8th concession over the years. It was originally a log cabin built in 1845. In 1859 a frame building was built on the current site. It burnt down in 1869 and teacher John Wood moved his 100 students to the town hall until a new building could be erected. The present building was opened in 1870. It was in continuous use until 1965 when the township opened a central elementary school called "Valley-view" across from the mill pond.

7. The Muma Farm

In 1863 Nelson Kester was living in a small house on this property. He sold it to Christian Muma. Christian enlarged it. His son John inherited it and raised 5 children. One son Earl lived there for many years until retiring. His brother Louis built a house next door and raised his family. This house was later bought by Maxwell McLean and moved down on the 6th concession. Another son, Robert, became an important nature artist.



8. The Mill Pond

This was the reservoir that ran the Marsh Mill. It is shallow and spring fed. After the mill was abandoned the pond was drained and for many years the flats were covered with bushes and reeds. The Sydenham Valley Conservation purchased it in the mid 1960's and dredged it. They built a new dam and larger embankment to hold the water. When funds ran out the conservation authority withdrew and closed it. Today it is run by a local group who hope to protect it for future generations.

9. Clare Blacksmith Shop

First blacksmith built this house in 1878 on mill land across from the store and had a blacksmith shop on the corner. In 1889 he

built a new house on the 9th overlooking the mill pond with a new blacksmith shop east of the house. This shop was torn down when Robinson's bought the house and built the gas station. Today George Webb of Coldstream Meeting runs a woodworking shop in the station and has remodeled the house.

10. Howard Zavitz Farm

Howard, son of Samuel and Ida purchased this farm from the Wood family and built a house across from the town hall. He had graduated from the Ontario College of Agriculture in Guelph and was interested in farming. He experimented with apples and



The Clare House
(above) and the
Clare
Blacksmith Shop



had a large apple orchard on the farm. Howard later moved to the house just west of this house.



11. Coldstream Town Hall

This frame structure sided in clapboard was erected in the 1850's. In 1869-70 school year it served as a school while the new S.S. #3 was being built. In 1880 it was moved to the Muma farm as a shed. It stood until the 1940's. In 1881 a new building was raised. It served as town hall and was used as the home of the Continuation School from 1920 to 1925. In 1949 it was converted to the township garage. In 1969 it was renovated again to serve as the Lobo Fire Hall. The OLIO SOCIETY started in 1876 by the Society of Friends and ran for about 25 years. They first met in homes and later when it grew too large for a house, it was moved to the Meeting House and the Town Hall. It was interdenominational with songs, readings, poems etc. About 1900 it spawned the debating society that was held at S.S. #3 School. It also spawned the Young Friends Review published by Edgar and Samuel

Zavitz. Interest in literature led to the formation of the first library. In 1882 Friends started the Lobo Lecture Club as an extension of the Olio. This organization was instrumental in the formation of the first FARMERS INSTITUTE in Ontario held in Coldstream.

12. Marsh Store

The house was moved here in 1870 by Jacob Marsh and the store built on. The family lived in the house while running the store. The store was home to many operations during it many years. It housed the first library, Lobo Mutual Fire Insurance Company formed in 1882, the Lobo Lecture Club, the first telegraph office, the first telephone system and a popular meeting place to exchange news. Jacob operated the first telegraph line which ran from the Komoka CPR station to the store. He hand delivered the messages. In 1908 when the line was to be abandoned, Jacob purchased it and formed the Quaker Telephone System. This later became the Lobo Telephone System. In 1921 he sold it to Alex McKenzie and the office was move across the road to the McKenzie house. It was run by Alex and later his son George. George moved the office to his new house in Poplar Hill in 1965. The first operators were the Marsh girls and Laura Zavitz, daughter of Newton. The Library grew out of the Olio Society

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| <p align="center">MECHANICS' INSTITUTE</p> <p align="center">COLDSTREAM.</p> <p align="center">Book No. <u>1603 H</u></p> <hr/> <p align="center">RULES.</p> <p>1.—This Library will be open on all days except Sundays and Public Holidays.</p> <p>2.—No book to be kept longer than three weeks, and anyone desirous of retaining a book for a longer period must have it re-marked by the Librarian. A post card will effect this if sent to the Librarian.</p> <p>3.—All damages done to books must be made good by the party in whose hands the book is at the time, and no book will be issued to the individual until the damage is remedied.</p> <p>4.—No member will be allowed to have more than one of the Library's books at one time.</p> <p>5.—Magazines are let out after two weeks and must not be kept longer than six days.</p> |
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and was housed in the backroom of the store. It started as the Coldstream Public Library and remained a private organization until 1892 when it became the Coldstream Mechanics Institute. Middlesex County took it over in 1934. It remained in the Marsh store until after Roy Marsh's death. It was later moved to the teacher's room in the old Continuation School. Edgar Zavitz was a founding member and keen supporter. He served on the board for over 40 consecutive years. He believed in reading non-fiction and did not support the purchase of fiction books. Devious means were sometimes devised to sneak fiction books into the collection.

13. Woolen Mill

The Woolen Mill was built by Jacob Marsh

behind the Marsh Store and in front of the mill overlooking Mill Lane. It burned down in the 1890's and was not rebuilt.

14. Marsh Mill

In 1839, John Marsh built a saw and grist mill on Mill Lane. The power was supplied by the water in what is now the conservation authority reservoir. The dam was of thick beams that had to be raised during floods. It remained there well into the mid 1900's until it finally fell down and was washed away. The mill race remains and the conservation authority built a new dam behind the site of the old one. For a short period they ran a small water wheel where the mill had once been. There are still old metal turbines and pipes if you know where to look.



The Marsh Store

15. The Clare/ McKenzie/ Fletcher House

In 1878 Samuel Clare, a blacksmith, built a small house and blacksmith shop on this property. When Alex McKenzie bought the house in 1921 he also purchased the telephone company from Jacob Marsh and put an addition on the house to accommodate the exchange. His son, George bought the company in 1937 and moved it to Poplar Hill in 1952 His daughter Mary Fletcher took the house and raised her family there. In recent years her son Jim tore the house down and rebuilt.



16. Coldstream Continuation School

It was decided that Coldstream needed its own high school. From 1920-1925 the Town Hall served this purpose. It wasn't available the next year so the school was moved to Friends Meeting House. The community built a large 2 story brick building that opened in 1928. The school ran on this site until 1948 when students were transported to Strathroy District Collegiate Institute. The school then served as the Town Hall and Community Center until



Daniel Zavitz House

1988 when it was demolished to make way for the new municipal building.

17. Daniel Zavitz House

Daniel Zavitz came in 1843 to work for his brother-in-law at the mill. In 1847 he bought the farm from John Marsh. He built a large white frame house. A fire in 1904 destroyed the house and barns. His son Edgar was running the farm. He rebuilt the house of cement blocks, lining the inside walls and ceilings with flowered tin as fire proofing. After his death the farm was rented out for many years and then sold in the 1970's.



18. The Nagel House

This house was built in 1904 by a Nagel. The furniture from Edgar Zavitz's house was stored here after the fire until he could rebuild as the house was still empty. In 1920, Edward Bycraft purchased the house and he and his wife Flossie Brown raised 4 children. His son Bruce inherited the house upon Edward's death in 1957. His daughter Ruth Zavitz bought the house when Bruce moved his family to the Albert Cutler House. She severed the house from the farm which Bruce still owns. The house went out of family hands when Ruth sold the house in the 1980's and moved to London.

19. Kate Marsh House

This house was built by Jacob Marsh for his daughter Kate. She lived there until her

death in 1837. It was willed to a nephew but he never lived there. Eventually it was purchased by Phillip Hamacher. Philip's mother Mary Marsh came to live there until her death. Phillip and Betty renovated the house and retired here and are still in residence.



Kate Marsh House

son Edgar Marsh. He worked at his father's mill and invented a power windmill. His daughter Lettie took over the house and raised three sons. She was very active in community functions. George Webb bought it and later sold it. It has been renovated to look much like it was when it was built.



21. **Newton Zavitz House**

This house was built by Jacob Ott Zavitz, a brother to Benjamin F. and George Ott. He

20. **McArthur House**

This house was probably built by Jacob's



The McArthur House

left this house to his son Edmund Henry who lived there most of his life. His son Newton and Florence lived there when they first married. Newton wanted to farm so he bought a farm from Samuel P. Zavitz and they traded places. Samuel and Ida retired there.

22. Chair and Furniture Factory

John Marsh built a chair factory on the bank of the creek. It was powered by water from the creek. He later built other furniture and coffins.

23. Marsh House

John Marsh and Benjamin Cutler had seen this house and liked the lay out. They built an identical house in 1840. They were two story, and of frame clapboard construction with wings on either side of the center section. There were long slanted roofs

running to the rear. This house was demolished to build the house where Ron Cutler raised his family.

24. Benjamin Cutler House

Benjamin built his copy of the Marsh House in 1840 backing on the creek. This house was later demolished and the gravel removed to use to build roads.

25. Albert Cutler House

Albert Cutler, son of Ellis, built this house in 1872 and 1873. He later moved his family to Warwick Township. Ellis and his family move there from the brick cottage. It was rented out during the years Ellis was in Ailsa Craig. Chester and Florence Brown, Edward and Flossie Bycraft and Archie and Violet Hocking lived there at some point. William and Susie took it over and farmed until Will became crippled and moved to



Albert Cutler House



Amos Cutler Farm

the cottage. His son Ellis and wife Elsie raised a family of 3 there. After Ellis' death Bruce Bycraft bought it and moved his family there from the Nagel House. He and his wife Lorna still reside there.

26. Amos Cutler Farm

Amos Cutler, son of Benjamin, bought this farm. He farmed it for many years remaining single. Robert Bycraft built the house that stands on the corner. The farm was purchased by the Bycraft family and now belongs to Paul Bycraft.



27. Grandview

Benjamin F. Zavitz and his wife Marion (Merrin) Cutler came in 1848 following her father Benjamin. They lived in a frame house for 17 years while he raised prize winning horses. In 1865 they began the construction of a large brick home 3 bricks thick on the first floor and 2 bricks thick on the second floor. It had a frame extension

with a long slanted roof at the rear. While building this house long planks were stored leaning against the barn. One of these fell striking Marion on the head and causing her death. Their son Hugh Kester took over the farm. In 1878 the west was opening up and Hugh decided to try his luck. Benjamin's brother George Ott Zavitz was living up on the 11th concession and was looking for a larger house and so purchased the new house in 1880. Their daughter Mary Eliza was away visiting in the USA and came home to a new home. Mary later married John Bycraft who was working next door at Samuel Zavitz's. Eventually he and Mary bought the farm from her father and raised their family there. Their son George and wife Florence raised two children there. After George's death Florence moved to London and Jamie Bycraft purchased his uncle's farm. Several people lived there until Jamie and Thelma retired from farming and move in.



28. Samuel Zavitz House

In 1868 David Zavitz, son of Benjamin F. Zavitz, built this board and batton house while living in the previously constructed barn David later sold this to Samuel P. Zavitz and his wife Ida Haight. Samuel was interested in fruit and ran the first commercial fruit orchards in the area. In 1918 when he was ready to retire, he sold and traded

places with Newton Zavitz. His son A. Raymond Zavitz took over the farm and ran it until his death. His family still own it.

29. David Cutler House

In 1867 David Cutler, son of Benjamin, and his wife Caroline Zavitz built this large fram house raising five children. About 1918 Annie Cutler, Ellis's daughter, and her husband Samuel Brown moved from Birnham to the Albert Cutler House where Samuel had run a cheese factory. They

bought this house and move their family of 6 children. They decided to try fruit farming. While waiting for the orchards to mature, their son Pearson moved the Blacksmith Shop from Poplar Hill and converted it into a tile making business. He wasn't happy and turned it over to his brothers Howard and Chester. Eventually, Chester took over sole ownership and expanded the business. His sons have continued to present day.



The Cutler-Brown House

Early Quaker Visits to the Niagara Region of Canada in 1799 and 1803: The Journals of Isaac Coates of Pennsylvania, 1799 and 1803.

Christopher Densmore
Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College

Introduction

The journals kept by Isaac Coates (b. 1748) of Caln, Chester County, Pennsylvania, of his travels to the Niagara Region of what was then Upper Canada in 1799 and 1803 contain some of the earliest accounts of the fledgling Quakers communities at Black Creek, near the modern city of Ridgeway, Ontario, and at Pelham.

We are fortunate to have a number of Quaker journals of visits to Upper Canada in the 1790s and early 1800s. These journals were kept by Friends traveling on behalf of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to attend treaties and councils with Native Americans, particularly the Seneca Nation of the Iroquois Confederacy living in Western New York. These trips were combined with visits to Friends living on the Niagara Peninsula in Upper Canada. Several members of the delegations kept detailed journals, in part to be able to accurately report their observations to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. These Friends were also curious about a region that was at that time remote and largely unknown to the people in the eastern United States. Also, Friends in south-eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey were probably curious about a region that was and would continue to attract Quakers seeking new land for settlement, and perhaps a return to the protection of the British government.

Transcriptions of several early Quaker visits to the Niagara Region, beginning with

the visits of a Quaker delegation traveling through the region on route to an Indian treaty in 1793, were published in 1999 in the Canadian Quaker History Journal 64 (1999), pp. 1-24 as "Early Quaker Visits to the Niagara Region of Canada, 1793-1804," edited by myself, Christopher Densmore. When I compiled the 1999 article, my text for Coates' journal was based on an abbreviated and heavily edited version of Coates' 1799 journal as presented in a volume of Coates family history published in 1906.¹ Unknown to me at the time, was a much more complete version of the 1799 Coates journal, and a journal from 1803. These had been published in a Quaker weekly, the Friends Intelligencer in Philadelphia in 1887.² This Friends Intelligencer text was based on manuscript journals then in the possession of in possession of William Hughes, a grandson of Isaac Coates. So far, I have not been able to locate the original manuscript version of the Coates journal.

This transcription of the Isaac Coates journals for 1799 and 1803 include only those portions of the journals covering his travels in Upper Canada.

Introduction to the Coates Journal of 1799

In 1799, Coates was part of delegation of Friends from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting who traveled to the Niagara region of Upper Canada to ascertain whether the young Quaker communities at Black Creek and Short Hills (or Pelham) were ready to

be granted the status of a monthly meeting in the Society of Friends. The visiting Friends, despite some reservations on the part of Coates, did approve the establishment of Pelham Monthly Meeting. Pelham Monthly Meeting, including the Preparative Meetings of Black Creek and Pelham, was a distant part of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting until transferred in 1810 to New York Yearly Meeting. Coates and his fellow Quakers also visited Friends and others along the Niagara River at Chippewa and Newark (modern Niagara-on-the-Lake), and took time to view Niagara Falls and the Whirlpool Rapids.

Coates began his journey on 8th month [August] 23, 1799, leaving his home in Chester County and traveling west to Pittsburg, and then north to the Seneca Reservation at Alleghany. The party then traveled on to the Iroquois Reservation at Buffalo Creek, near present city of Buffalo, New York, before crossing over the Niagara River into Canada. Halliday Jackson, one of the Friends then teaching at the Alleghany Reservation in New York State accompanied the party to Canada. The following section of the Coates journal begins with Coates and his party traveling east along the margin of Lake Ontario before reaching Black Rock, near the modern city of Buffalo, New York, to cross the Niagara River into Canada. The party then traveled along the shore of Lake Erie to visit Friends living at Black Creek near the modern city of Ridgeway, Ontario.³ After leaving Canada, Coates returned to his home in Chester County, Pennsylvania, 10th Month (October) 27, 1799, completing a journey of two months.

Isaac Coates Journal, Ninth Month (September), 1799

21st [9 Mo. 1799] Rode three miles

down on the margin of the lake and river Niagara to the ferry.... This Niagara River is the great outlet of all the northwestern lakes and waters, which makes a very great river above a mile wide and of great depth, running very rapidly. We crossed the river in a boat, which the heavy current drives across in a few minutes, which to some of our company appeared a little terrifying; and then rode up on the margin of the lake on the other side about eight miles, which appears to be pretty level except some pretty high banks of sand and a general bed of limestone lying in a form similar to the lower bed on the other side. Then turned off from the lake about a mile to Daniel Pound's, where four of us dined and left some linen to be washed (Halliday Jackson and Hugh Hartshorne having parted with us at the ferry and gone down to view the great Falls). We then rode Asa Schooly's where we met with our beloved Friends William Blakey, Nathan Smith and Jacob Paxon, who we heard had arrived two days before us. Here we all propose to stay this night, our kind friend and landlord appearing to have things comfortably about him. They said they could contrive bedding for us all; but Thomas Stewardson and myself were desirous to sleep on the floor with our blankets, believing it would be best on several accounts; but we could not do it without hurting our friend's feelings, so consented to take a bed. But when we got to the bed chamber by ourselves, we found a good clean bed and clothing, which we examined, and found a thick straw bed on the sacking. We then took off the feather bed and laid it in the corner of the room, expecting we should not be discovered. But our kind friend came into the room and found the bed in the corner, but did not any more insist on our compliance with their request.

22d, and first of the week. Stayed and attended their meeting, which was held in

the house of our friend Asa Schooly, where we lodged, which was to me a dull time, though some lively communication therein. After dinner I took an affectionate farewell of Halliday Jackson, who returned from viewing the great falls and is now about to return though a lonely wilderness to Genesinguhta, the place of his present abode. We then classed ourselves in order to visit the families in this neighborhood, Nathan Smith, Jacob Paxon, and James Cooper going in one company, and William Blakey, Joshua Sharples, Thomas Stewardson, and myself in another. We then proceeded to and visited the families of John Cutler, a member; John Harret and Azariah Schooly. Neither of the last two in membership, but hopeful, well inclined people. Returned to lodge at the same place. I may note here that Joshua Sharples, in getting into the boat at Buffalo Creek, slipped and fell on the edge of the boat, which at first did not seem very bad, but [he] hath been gradually getting worse. We now think some of his short ribs are broken, and it looks as if he would hardly be fit to travel to-morrow.

23d. Joshua Sharples being too much amiss to venture out, we sent out without him and had religious opportunities in the families of Daniel Pound, the widow Morris, and Obadiah Dennis, the second of which in a particular manner was a favorable one; and then returned to our lodging where we all met and had a religious opportunity in the family.

24th. Joshua Sharples being too unable to travel, we left him and rode thirty miles to John Willis's where we lodged. On our way we rode fourteen miles down the river Niagara, crossed Chippeway River and passed the great Falls. Several of our company were disposed to take a view of the great phenomenon, but James Cooper and myself thought there was not time suffi-

cient to satisfy our curiosity, so rode on and left them to take a slight view. We all met at the aforesaid Willis's and had an opportunity of retirement in the family, in which was some pretty close work.

25th. Set off from John Willis's, he accompanying us, and rode eleven miles to Friends' meeting, at the place called Short Hills, which in the forepart was very heavy and trying, but more lively before the conclusion. After meeting William Blakey, Thomas Stewardson, and myself visited Samuel Taylor and family, and went to Jeremiah Moore's to lodge, in whose family we had a solid opportunity.

26th. We visited the families of Enoch Shrigley, Solomon Moore, Jacob Moore, and Thomas Rice, none of them members, but all the descendants [of Friends] and appear to be thoughtful people. In the evening had a religious opportunity in the family of John Taylor, whose wife and children are members, but John was disowned by Falls Monthly Meeting and now is desirous of being reinstated, and sent an acknowledgement by William Blakey, here we lodged.

27th. Joshua Sharples met us yesterday in the afternoon, being somewhat better, but weekly yet. We visited the families of Joshua Gillam and Benjamin Will, both members, and the family of Thomas Gillam, not a member, it being a tender visitation to him. We returned to Jeremiah Moore's, where we met with the rest of our company; had a solid conference among ourselves respecting the nature of our appointment, which hath felt increasingly weighty. Four of us lodged here, to wit: Nathan Smith, Thomas Stewardson, Joshua Sharples, and myself.

28th. Joshua Sharples went along with James Cooper to see a friend. Nathan, Thomas, and myself visited two families who are a little inclined to Methodists, and

returned to Moore's to dinner. In the afternoon paid some social visits, and lodged at the same place, which at the present is a temporary home.

29th, and first of the week. Attended Friends meeting at their usual time and place. After meeting walked four or five miles along with Nathan Smith to Samuel Becket's, where Nathan had appointed a meeting to begin at four o'clock, to which the neighbors and many Friends from about their meeting-house came, and which I hope was a time of profitable instruction to some of them. On taking a view of the earnest desire which many of them have to attend such places, the compassionate feelings of my heart were very much awakened, especially for their women, many of them going four or five miles on foot, some of them with young children in their arms and others in such a state that I should have thought scarcely fit to travel far on horseback; yet they would and did walk faster than was easy for me, and returned to their homes in a dark night, the men carrying lighted torches in their hands to show them the way along their muddy and rooty roads. Lodged at the same place.

30th. Spent part of the day agreeably with some of our friends; also had a solid opportunity with a man who we believed had taken imagination for revelation, which had led him into some strange acts and predictions. I hope his state was so clearly opened and laid home to him that it may be of some use to him. He acknowledged he had been deceived and followed a lying spirit. In the evening five of us returned to my lodging.

Isaac Coates Journal, Tenth Month (October) 1799

1st of the Tenth month [1799] We all attended a conference before appointed to

be held at Friends' meeting house in Pelham township, otherwise the Short Hills, with the members of said meeting and the Friends of Black Creek, which was conducted with great solemnity. In this conference I was more fully convinced that there is a small number of seeking, religiously minded Friends in both places, and that if they abode in the patience and perseverance, the way would open ere long for the establishment of a monthly meeting amongst them. But the rest of my brethren believed the time was already come; so, after expressing my doubts of their being fully ripe to be entrusted with the executive part of our Discipline at this time, I freely submitted my feelings to the judgment of those whom I esteem to be deeper in the religious experience. It was then agreed to open a new monthly meeting to-morrow at eleven o'clock, to be known by the name of Pelham Monthly Meeting in Upper Canada, to be composed of Friends of Pelham and Black Creek and to be held alternately at each place the first Fourth-day in every month.

2d. Attended the opening of the new monthly meeting, it being a favored opportunity, which revived a hope that if this small number of Friends composing said meeting keep in humility and steady attention to best direction, their number and experience may so increase that the testimony of truth may be supported amongst them. After meeting took leave of our kind friends near the meeting-house and rode five miles to our friend, Samuel Becket's, who is a member of said meeting and who kindly entertained six of us, Joshua Sharples staying at James Crawford's.

3d. Thomas Stewardson, James Cooper, Jacob Paxon, and myself set off, intending for Newark down the Niagara River. Dined at Queenstown, the landing where all the goods conveyed thus far by water are

unladen, and those intended to be reshipped and taken into Lake Erie are carted or carried by land above the great Falls. Thence to Newark, it being a newly settled town at the mouth of the river Niagara, containing about one hundred houses. It is a beautiful place opposite the American fort, called Niagara Fort, and just where the river empties into Lake Ontario which is another wonderful fresh water sea in this northern country. Lodged at George Bradshaw's. In this place oats is 6d. per quart, hay 14d. per night for horses. This day's ride, twenty-two miles.

4th. Rode fifteen miles up the river to William Lunday's [sic.]. Left our horses there and walked about a mile to a meeting appointed by Nathan Smith and William Blakey, in a meeting-house near the Falls, called the Federal Meeting House, it being built by the inhabitants for any minister of any religious denomination to preach in, but I understand meetings are very rare in it. No Friends live hereabouts but William Lunday, and he, by some means, forfeited his right before he came here, but is kind to us. I thought the opportunity was owned, particularly towards the close. In the afternoon William Blakey, Nathan Smith and Thomas Stewardson set off from Black Creek; Jacob Paxon being very poorly, stayed at Lunday's; James Cooper and myself went about five miles down the river to view a great curiosity called the whirlpool. On our way we met with an acceptable repast on excellent peaches. We came to the bank of the river, which I believe is three hundred feet above the water, nearly perpendicular, on which we had a fair view of that astonishing place, the river is rushing with great impetuosity against the bank or wall of rocks at a short turn in the river and then turning in a cove of perhaps ten acres in which it whirls round and round, striving to escape at a narrow passage of perhaps

one hundred yards, being all the opening there is between the high hills. Into this pool abundance of logs and timbers is carried and perhaps cannot get out for some weeks. It is amazing to behold the whirls that are formed, the logs sucked down and some time after shooting up (perhaps 100 yards from the place they went down, end foremost) fifteen or twenty feet perpendicular out of the water; that upon the whole it is an indescribably agitated place. Returned and lodged at William Lunday's.

5th. William Lunday accompanied James Cooper and myself in order to take a satisfactory view of the great cataract. We went about three-quarters of a mile below the Falls and then descended a bank of limestone rocks, I suppose nearly 300 feet, which was not quite perpendicular, to the surface of the water, some times holding by roots, some times by twigs, and some of the way down a ladder, other times sticking our toes in the cavities and holding by the craggy parts of the rocks. When down, clambered along the rocks, logs, slabs, and timber up the river to the place where the water shoots over the rock and falls 160 feet. We went as far as we thought was safe, being as wet, with the spray of water and sweat, as if we had been in a heavy shower. I had an inclination to go further in behind the water, but Lunday said it was dangerous; for, as he said, if the wind were to shift against us we should be in danger of being suffocated with the spray and sulphur which smelled very strong. I thought there was not quite so much danger as he alleged, believing he was a good deal timid; however, I thought best to decline, lest I should suffer for my temerity. On clambering along the rocks by water with a wall or mountain of rocks 160 feet high in some places over my head, hanging twelve or fifteen feet over plumb, it appeared truly awful and dangerous, which put me upon

thinking what my view was in going into such apparent danger, as it is evident great columns of them frequently break off and fall down; but as I believed it was not altogether to gratify an idle curiosity, for the whole of the prospect led me into a reverent frame of mind, admiring the wonderful works, and in some measure adoring the Great Author, I then thought myself if I should then be buried in oblivion, perhaps my soul was as much in a state of aspiration and adoration as it might be when the unavoidable event should take place. This consideration led me on without much fear at the time, though naturally timid. I need not undertake to describe this wonderful phenomenon, as many pens have been employed in setting forth its magnitude; but as I have been employed in setting forth its magnitude; but as I have taken a view of the river in places many miles down, I am fully of the mind that the great Falls at some period were nine miles farther down the river and that they are gradually wearing up, and perhaps in time may drain the great Lake Erie. It is wonderful to behold the agitation of the water in the rapids above the falls and also below them, column after column dashing against each other and rising a great height with such foaming and confusion that the whole appears truly awful. We were very wet when we left the place; got on our horses and rode to Chippewa. Fed our horses and took a snatch ourselves, then rode to Black Creek settlement, twenty-four miles, and lodged at Anna Morris', who is a kind, agreeable young widow.

6th. Attended the meeting at Asa Schooly's, it being large for that place. After meeting we had a conference with the members of that meeting and laid before them the need we thought they have of a house to meet in, which they seem spirited to build. One considering their circumstanc-

es, -- being mostly new settlers and not in very affluent life,-- we made them an offer of thirty dollars toward purchasing materials; but they modestly declined accepting it, and said they could do it themselves. I have now prepared things in order to set my face homewards to-morrow, which feels very pleasant.

7th. Wm. Blackey, Nathan Smith, Jacob Paxon, Thomas Stewardson, and myself lodged at our kind friend, Asa Schooly's, last night who with his valued wife, equipped us for our journey through the wilderness. Early in the morning, after taking an affectionate farewell of our kind host, I set off with Thomas Stewardson, and rode thirteen miles to the ferry. Had a fine passage over the river which is a terror to many, then rode three miles up the lake to the mouth of Buffalo creek, put up our horses, and waited until the rest of our company came...

Introduction to Isaac Coates Journal, 1803

Coates 1803 travels were on behalf of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Indian Committee, with the major business being councils with the Seneca and other Iroquois at Alleghany and Buffalo Creek. After concluding its business at Buffalo Creek, the party, including Coates, Thomas Stewardson, John Shoemaker and George Vaux, continued across the Niagara River to visit Friends in Pelham Monthly Meeting.

In the entry for the 5th of 10th Month, 1803, Coates refers to issues of land titles in Upper Canada. The issue included the necessity of taking oaths... Taken up by the Meeting for Sufferings of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Pelham Monthly Meeting being part of that meeting) and by them referred to the Meeting for Sufferings of London Yearly Meeting and later to the

government of Upper Canada.

In his 1803 travels, Coates left his home on the 9th of 9th Month (September), 1803, and returned home on the 18th of 10th Month, 1803.

Isaac Coates Journal, Tenth Month (October), 1803

3rd. ... John Shoemaker and myself rode down to the ferry [at Black Rock] on the great river Niagara and crossed in six minutes. There I saw three Mohawk Indians carry a bark canoe a considerable distance and put it in the river, and then five of them got in and rowed across in five minutes; said river said to be above a mile wide. We then rode to the mouth of [the] Chippewa, fed our horses and took a snack, at which place there was a British officer who was formerly stationed in the neighborhood of the great Falls, but is now fixed at York, over Lake Ontario. He being on his way up to Long Point on the Grand River, he was so much pleased to be in company with a couple of Quakers that he politely offered to accompany us to the Falls and show us the way down. As we rode down the river in view of the rapids we met I. Bonsal and G. Vaux who had been taking an upper view. They turned back with us and we all went down the ladder where the curious are accustomed to go down, the officer leading the way; but the tremendous appearance of the way down discouraged John Shoemaker from attempting it. The rest of us followed the officer down and then up the craggy, slippery way to the edge of the great shoot or water; which together with returning is a laborious task, for I believe there were but very few dry threads, either linen or woolen, upon any of us when we returned. I having four years ago had a view and given some description of this amazing cataract, need not write much now. While I was viewing

this superlatively grand and most astonishing natural curiosity of the kind in the known world, my curiosity would have been fully satisfied had it not been for one reflection or consideration, which was that I knew my wife had a great desire to enjoy the view which I was then favored with, which made me feel as though I was only half satisfied. We returned to Chippewa and lodged, having ridden twenty-four miles this day.

4th. We set off and rode down the river by the side of the rapids above the Falls for a little more than a mile and then took another view of the great phenomenon; and I think this morning, the whole of the prospect appeared more astonishingly great and beautiful than I had ever seen it before, it being a clear morning, and viewing the great fall and the dashing of the huge and confused rolls of water over the rocks in the rapids between us and the son, to be sure appeared amazingly grand and gratifying. We then rode four or five miles to view the whirlpool, which four years ago I thought a great curiosity as the other; yet I was disappointed now, thought it appeared to be a wonderful place, but very far inferior to what it did then; there being but few logs in it, and whether it was owing to the stillness of the day or some other cause, I know not, there did not appear the sucks formed taking down the logs, nor the very great agitation there was then. We then rode to William Lunday's; dined; and thence to John Taylor's at Pelham, where we met with James Wilson and the rest of the company we parted with at Wm. Ellis's at Muncy, who all lodged at Taylor's except James Wilson, Isaac Bonsal, and myself, who went to Jeremiah Moore's.⁴ Rode twenty-three miles today,

5th. Attended the monthly meeting of Friends at Pelham, which myself and others had established in the year 1799. I remem-

ber it was a subject of great weight with me at the time, being impressed with some serious doubts that the members which were to compose said monthly meeting were furnished with religious experience or skill enough to be entrusted with power to judge the fitness of persons to be received into membership, or deny from the privileges of the Society. And although there now appear to be more in number than there were at first opening, and some rather more experience, yet I apprehend they still remain in a very infant and unskillful state. Isaac Bonsal, John Shoemaker, and I endeavored to draw their attention by querying with them whether they were easy to remain in a careless situation respecting the foul channel in which they receive or obtain the titles for their lands, or whether it would not be better to apply for redress. Some of them first expressed they thought it was a matter of no consequence, but others expressed their dissatisfaction. At length they united in desiring that the Yearly Meeting or Meeting for Sufferings, might take the matter upon their behalf.⁵ Lodged at John Taylor's.

6th. Isaac Bonsal, John Shoemaker, George Vaux, and myself rode to Queenstown and dined; then crossed the great river Niagara where it is not half a mile wide, but we were told the depth hath hitherto been unfathomable. It looks a terrifying place to cross: the water appears nearly as green as grass and whirling round, I suppose occasioned by the great rocks in the bottom; this being the place where I apprehend the great Falls at some period exhibited the grand appearance they now do up the river miles away.

We got over safely and in about five miles came to the Tuscarora village of Indians, where I met with Jacob, the Indian, who learned the smith trade with John Pennock. He appeared much pleased with seeing us. A number of other Indians were

helping him to put up a coal pit. He told us his cousin learned first, and a great many of the white people from Queenstown and Niagara brought their smith work to him. From his appearance and disposition of industry, I thought our expense and trouble in educating him were well spent. Then road to one Beech's in the wilderness, where we met with two families from Cattawissa, one of which was Ezekiel James's, who were moving to Yonge Street in Upper Canada. We all lodged in this cabin, being twenty-tree of us besides the family; having ridden thirty-tree miles this day.

Notes:

- 1) Truman Coates, *A Genealogy of the Coates Family* ([Oxford, Pennsylvania], 1906), pp. 93-108.
- 2) Published as "Journal of Journeys to the Indian Country," in *Friends Intelligencer*, Volume 44, in twelve parts, 7th Month 16 through 10 Month 1, 1887; the sections reproduced in this article are on pages 503-503, 514-516 (179) and pages 611-612 (1803).
- 3) At this period, Black Creek refers to the area near Ridgeway, not to the modern hamlet of Black Creek on the Niagara River below Fort Erie.
- 4) "James Wilson and party..." refers to Hannah Yarnall (1765-1822) from Pennsylvania who was traveling "in the ministry" to visit Friends of Pelham and Yonge Street Monthly Meeting accompanied by Mary Witchel, James Wilson and Samuel Johnson. The manuscript of Yarnall's 1803 trip is in the Richardson Papers at Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College (RG5/187, Series 1, Box 1). A version of the Memoir and Journal of Hannah Yarnall was published in *Friends Miscellany* 9 (1836-1837), pp. 195-240.
- 5) The issue of land patents appears to include the requirement to take an oath of allegiance, and whether the Quaker "affirmation" was legally acceptable to prove title. The issue was taken up by the Meeting for Sufferings of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1803-1806.

Ellis Hughes of Catawissa, Pennsylvania

John L. Ausman,
Ottawa

An original manuscript recently came into my possession that may be of interest to Canadian Friends as it deals with the origins of the Hughes family, of which so many descendants later belonged to the Yonge Street Monthly Meeting. The focus of the story is Ellis and Hannah (Yarnell) Hughes. Ellis was one of the founders of Catawissa, Pennsylvania, and elder brother of Job Hughes, the patriarch of many of the Hughes of Upper Canada and one of the first Quaker Ministers at Yonge Street.

The document is handwritten on both sides of quality writing paper. It is undated and unsigned, but appears to have been written in the mid-19th century by a great-grandchild of Ellis. It was found among some papers and letters dating from the US Civil War by Martha Spee of Illinois. Martha searched the Internet in the spring of 2002 for a Hughes descendant and sent it to me when I told her that I was a descendant of Ellis's brother Job. I reproduce it below in italic script, interspersed with my own commentary. I have sent the original manuscript to Pickering College for safekeeping. It begins:-

Strange to say, we trace our family from John Hugh of Merionethshire, Wales. He was one of the first Quaker preachers that settled in Gwynedd, Montgomery Co., Penn. in 1698. We have no record of how the name came to be changed but his son was called Ellis Hughes and was born in Merionethshire, Wales, in

1687. He was married to Jane Foulke, Mar 4th, 1713.

The anglicization of Welsh names, which had generally followed the "ap" or "son of" pattern, involved adding a possessive suffix, so that Hugh became Hughes, John became Jones, Matthew became Matthews, etc.

At Exeter Meeting of Friends in Berks. Co. Penn, Jan 31st 1765, a memorial of the life of Ellis Hughes, a minister, was read. This account reads: "He was born in Merionethshire in the principality of Wales and brought over into this province by his parents when about 12 years of age. About the 34th year, he appeared in the ministry. He died at his own house at Exeter, Jan 11th, 1764, age 76 years and some months, and was buried in the Friends' ground at Exeter."

Jane Foulke, wife of Ellis Hughes, was daughter of Edward Foulke, who was born in Landerfel parish, Wales, May 15th 1651, probably in the farmhouse of Goed-y-fael. It was the same parish where his ancestors had held lands for centuries. He removed to Penn. in the year 1698, coming over in the ship "Robert and Elizabeth" which cleared from Liverpool, England, April 18th and arrived at Philadelphia July 17th,

1698. He settled upon a plantation of 712 acres in the township of Gwynedd, 400 of which he purchased prior to his settlement, but the deed for which was not executed until July 6th 1699. The balance being overlooked in the original survey was confirmed to him by a patent upon resurvey some years later. He married in Wales, about 1688, Eleanor, daughter of Hugh Cadwallader of the parish of Yspully-Levan in Denbighshire, Wales. Her mother was Gwen, descended from the house of Gai-Fadog, who trace their descent to the princes of Wales. Jane Foulke's father, Edward F, who came over with his wife and nine children and settled in the township of Gwynedd has had his history so well written up by Havard M. Jenkins in his "Historical Collections" that it leaves us only the necessity to refer to them for information. His eighth child was Jane Foulke, who married Ellis Hughes and died at the home of her son-in-law Samuel Lee in Oley Township, Berks Co. and was buried at Exeter.

At Exeter Monthly Meeting, Sep 23rd 1767, a testimony was read concerning her as follows: "She was born in Merionethshire, Wales, in the north of the principality, Nov 10 1684, and came into Penn. with her parents about the fourteenth year of her age, and sometime after joined the Friends. About the 30th year of her age she entered into marriage with our worthy Friend Ellis Hughes, and sometime after moved from Gwynedd, where they then lived to Exeter where she was appointed an Elder, in which station she continued

steady to the end, for about thirty years."

The eldest son of Ellis Hughes and Jane Foulke Hughes was John Hughes, who married Hannah Boon. The second was William Hughes (from whom we trace) born 1716, married at Exeter Monthly Meeting Amy Willets, daughter of Thomas Willets of Long Island. The Willets family came over about 1650.

Actually, Richard Willets came to Rhode Island in 1840 from Gloucestershire and moved to Long Island a few years later. His daughter-in-law, Mary (Washburn) Willets joined the Quakers as a widow and brought up her children, including the Thomas Willets mentioned here, among the Friends of Long Island. Three children of Thomas Willets married Hughes siblings: Amy Willets married William Hughes; Elizabeth Willets married Samuel Hughes; Isaiah Willets married Rachel Hughes.

April 26th 1755: "William Hughes was disowned from Meeting." Probably some time after this, he and his family removed and lived for some years in Westbury, Long Island. At the Monthly Meeting Oct 30th, 1760, Ellis Hughes of Exeter Meeting, son of William Hughes, requested a certificate of removal to Westbury Monthly Meeting, Long Island. It was signed at Exeter Nov 27th, 1760.

Since 1744, Exeter MM records indicate that William was in the habit of taking too much strong drink. Although the link is no more than speculation on my part, this may have led to other domestic problems because after William's disownment in

1755 Amy left her husband and returned to her parents in Westbury, Long Island, a move which Exeter Friends found in their hearts "more safe to pity than condemn." Some of William's sons seem to have given the Exeter MM occasional grief as well. Job was criticized in 1765 for carrying arms for self defence in areas where danger might be expected from Indians, as well as for other lapses, for which he repented. Both Job and his brother Thomas were disowned for marrying outside the Friends; they were later reaccepted.

Their oldest son was Ellis Hughes, born Mar 12th 1739, married Jan 1st 1764 Hannah, daughter of Francis Yarnall, who was a member of the Provincial Assembly in 1711 and died in 1781 and whose wife was Hannah Baker. Ellis Hughes was sometimes called General Hughes. He was surveyor of lands and public surveyors of that day were sometimes called Surveyors-General. He was a large land owner, owning about 25,000 acres. He surveyed and owned all the lands where the Lehigh coal mines now are. With his father, William Hughes, he laid out Catawissa, originally a Quaker Settlement. The capitalist with whom he did business held the papers and while from home at Catawissa he was taken ill and died Oct 6th 1785 in the 45th year of his age. His remains lay in the Friends burying ground at his favourite place. His family never derived an acre of the land to which he was entitled.

Ellis Hughes carried out his survey of the region in 1769 and obtained title to a large tract of land (although the figure given here seems vastly exaggerated and may

reflect what he surveyed rather than what he owned) between Catawissa Creek and Roaring Creek where they join the Susquehanna River. He moved to the area in 1774 along with his brothers Job and Thomas and a number of other relatives, including some Willets. Ellis built the Hughes Mill on Roaring Creek, which he then sold to his brother Job in 1776.

During and immediately after the Revolutionary War, several Friends in the Catawissa area suffered persecution from Patriots who misinterpreted their pacifism or were envious of their large land holdings.

Their friendly relations with the local Indians, most of whom supported the British, was probably also a factor. In early 1780, a Patriot force infiltrated a group of Friends, decided they were Tories and arrested them. One of these was Job Hughes, who was imprisoned without trial for a year and whose wife and children were turned out of their home and their possessions confiscated. Early in 1781, a committee of Friends from Philadelphia petitioned the Chief Justice to exercise mercy with respect to Job and those who had been arrested with him. (Edwin M. Barton, Columbia County Two Hundred Years Ago, Columbia County Historical Society, Bloomsburg, 1976). It would be in this context that Ellis also seems to have lost title to his property.

The William Hughes who laid out the new town of Catawissa in 1787 (two years after Ellis' death) may have been a nephew or more distant relative. It could not have been Ellis's father, who had died by then. The town was known informally as Hughesburg for a number of years after its founding.

His wife being left a widow with ten children, after toiling for several years with the difficulty of making a

living on rented land, concluded to move to a town, and in about the year 1790 arrived at Baltimore with her family where she had scarcely an acquaintance and which place she had never seen. The enterprise was blessed of God, Him upon whom she had confided, and after a life of usefulness her remains were deposited in the burying grounds of the Friends Society, of which she lived and died a member. The day after her decease, which occurred suddenly April 1st 1816 in the 69th year of her age, a sermon preached by that eminent member of the Gospel of Peace Mary Mifflin, upon the occasion of returning from the grave just enclosed to the meeting then convening, was among the most consoling and eloquent discourses ever listened to by him who leaves this testimony upon record. "Trust in the Lord O my Soul."

This may be a reference to Mary Mifflin, a well-known preacher and great-granddaughter of John Mifflin, the Quaker settler who came to Fairmont Park, Philadelphia in 1679. She certainly left an impression on the author of this document who must have been a child at the time.

This union of Hannah Yarnall and Ellis Hughes was blessed with ten children - five sons and five daughters:

1st - Phoebe, b. Mar 8th 1765; m John Skelton.

2nd - Anna, b. Nov 7th 1766; died unmarried age 27 years.

3rd - Annabella, b. Sep 7th 1768; m. (Col.?) Peter Little, Baltimore.

4th - Elijah, b. Sep 8th 1770; m. Francis Daughaday, Baltimore.

5th - Mary, b. Sep 11th 1772; m. Benjamin Fowler, Baltimore.

6th - Jessie, b. July 26th 1775; died unmarried age 15 years.

7th - Thomas, b. Jan 23rd 1777; moved west, married there.

8th - Eleanor - b. Nov 25th 1778; married twice. Her first husband was William Buel; by him she had 2 sons; he was shipwrecked and lost so long she married in his absence Dr. Elisha Perkins of the City of Baltimore and had 1 girl.

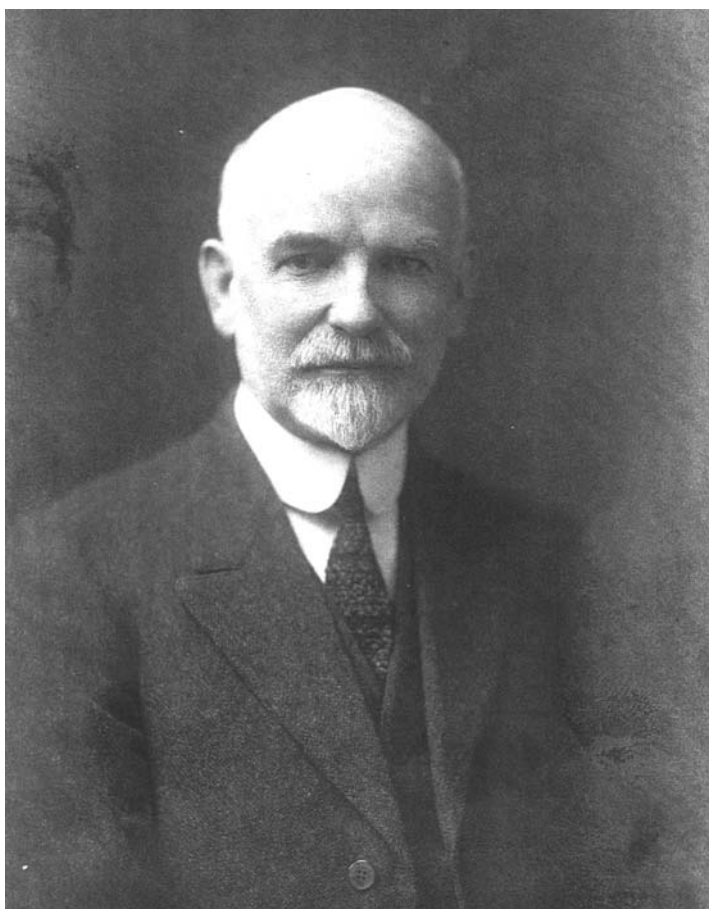
9th - Gideon, b. June 24th 1781; m. Hannah Dillan, Baltimore.

10th - Jeremiah, b. June 21st 1783; m. Priscilla Jacobs, Annapolis, Md.

Our grandfather Elijah Hughes and Fanny Daughaday had four children - two sons and two daughters. They moved from the City of Baltimore in 1803, April 20th. Aunt Mary Ann was then a little babe of about 2 years of age.

Chronology Of Charles Ambrose Zavitz

James Zavitz



Charles A. Zavitz

The following chronology was omitted from the article on Charles A. Zavitz published in Issue 67 (2002).

| | | | |
|------|--|------|---|
| 1863 | Born at Coldstream, Middlesex County, Ontario. | 1888 | Recorded the first crop test yields. |
| 1884 | Enrolled at Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph. | 1888 | Graduated with Bachelor of the Science of Agriculture Degree (took Honours in 10 of 11 papers). |
| 1886 | Instrumental in revamping the Ontario Agricultural & Experimental Union. | 1889 | OAC "Review" started. CAZ gave it its name and was on the Editorial Board. |
| 1887 | Appointed Assistant Chemist. | 1890 | Married Rebecca Elizabeth Wilson |

- of Prince Edward County.
Appointed Assistant Director of Experiments (with 56 experimental test plots). 1893 Brought first Soy Beans to Canada.
Appointed in charge of all Field Research.
- 1894 Son, Raymond Wilson Zavitz, born.
- 1902 Started cross-fertilization of plants to concentrate desirable characteristics.
- 1903 Started the seed chain that resulted in OAC #21 Barley.
Appointed Professor of Field Husbandry and Director of Field Experiments. 1904 A driving force in forming the Canadian Seed Growers' Association.
- 1910 OAC #21 Barley registered and released to the public.
Ontario Variegated Alfalfa established as best variety for Ontario Conditions. 1914 Field Husbandry Building (now Zavitz Hall) opened.
Appointed Acting President of OAC.
- 1915 Relinquished Acting Presidency upon return of the President.
- 1916 Awarded Doctor of Science Degree from University of Toronto.
- 1920 50,000 hybrid plants evaluated annually.
- 1923 Started developing red clover and forage grasses.
- 1924 Increased value of crops developed at OAC amounted to 5161,000,000.
- 1925 Released OAC #211 Soy Beans, the first to be registered in Canada~
- 1926 OAC had released 3 varieties of Oats, 1 of Barley, 3 of Winter Wheat, 1 of Spring Wheat, 1 of Spring Rye, 1 of Field Peas, 1 of Soy Beans, 1 of Millet and 1 of Mangels.
- 1927 Retired from OAC (2800 experimental plots) and moved to Poplar Hill, Middlesex County,
- 1931 Appointed Chairman, Canadian Friends' Service Committee (a Quaker enterprise).
- 1932 Awarded Honourary Doctor of Laws Degree, University of Western Ontario. Published "Spiritual Life".
- 1942 Died March 17th at Poplar Hill.
- 1974 Admitted to the Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame.
- 1984 Admitted to the Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame.
- 1993 Honoured by the Ontario Soybean Marketing Board, marking 100 years of Soybeans in Canada.
- 1999 Awarded Honourary Doctor of Science Degree by the University of Guelph. (The University singled out its most illustrious graduate as part of its 125th Anniversary celebrations)

In addition:

- The first Canadian Fellow of the American Society of Agronomy.
- An Honourary Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.
- An Honourary Fellow of the Canadian Society of Technical Agronomists.

The Coffin Family of Prince Edward Island

Elisha Coffin (1763-1851)
Farmer, Judge and Legislative Assembly Member
and
Captain William Coffin (1791-1843)

Ross Coffin

ELISHA COFFIN (1763-1851)
Farmer, Judge and Legislative Assembly Member

Elisha Coffin was born October 9, 1763 on the Island of Nantucket, Massachusetts. He was the second child of Elisha Coffin and Eunice Myrick Coffin.

Elisha's family moved off Nantucket shortly after his birth, to Cape Sable, Nova Scotia where Elisha's father was involved with fishing and boat building. Shortly after, their family moved onto St. John's Island (P.E.I.) to a place called Worthy's Point, along the Hillsborough River. Elisha's father must have been a fairly educated man, seeing as he was chosen to be a member of the Island's first Legislative Assembly. In 1783 the family settled in Savage Harbour, on the north shore, in King County, having purchased 200 acres from George Burns. This homestead is considered to be the first permanent home on the Island for our Coffin ancestors. Shortly after purchasing the property, Elisha's father died, leaving behind his widow and nine children. Elisha was 22 at the time of his father's death, his older brother Latham was 24.

In 1785, Elisha married a woman by the name of Jane Robbins, daughter of William and Helen Robbins of Stanhope, P.E.I. The

Robbins family held the distinction of being among the first settlers to come over from Scotland aboard the ship "The Falmouth" in April 1770. The birth date of Jane is thought to have been in 1765, in Scotland. Her father William moved from Stanhope to St. Peters in 1787 and was a half-brother of Duncan McEwen. Both of these families would figure into the Coffin family in later years. In 1788, Elisha and his brother Kimble commenced their ship building operation at Savage Harbour by building the small 17 ton schooner, "Rainbow". In later years Kimble went on to become a major shipbuilder, while Elisha's interest in shipbuilding was that of an investor more than a builder, although his sons would later show some involvement. Sometime after 1792, Elisha's brother, Latham, headed back to Nantucket to live, leaving Elisha behind as the eldest Coffin son on the Island. Latham married Elizabeth Coleman and had many children. He died at the old age of 84.

During the 1790's, Elisha and Jane were busy raising their children Kimble, Eunice and William. The family, during the 1790's was living on their farm at Savage Harbour, which consisted of 92 acres of his father's original farm. It was during this period of time that the Coffin's of Savage Harbour would receive a very distinguished visitor. Admiral Sir Isaac Coffin was a man who



Coffin Properties, Savage Harbour, 1810 Survey.

held his Coffin kin, close to his heart, so it was no surprise that when chance had it, he appeared on the shores of Savage Harbour. Elisha's father, Captain Elisha Coffin was the Admiral's second cousin, once removed. Sir Isaac's father, Nathaniel, was the Cashier of Customs prior to the American Revolution and his sister was Ann Callbeck of Charlottetown. Isaac Coffin was born in Boston in 1759. Like most of the Coffin's of that era he developed his sea legs at a very young age. He entered the Royal Navy in 1773 at the age of 14 under the watchful eye of Lt. W. M. Hunter. It was not long after this time that Hunter was quoted as saying, "Of all the young men I ever had care of, none answered my expectations equal to Isaac Coffin, never did I know a man to acquire so much nautical knowledge in so short a time". Coffin's rapid rise up the ladder in the British Navy leaves little doubt of his brilliance. At the age of 19, Lt. Coffin

was commanding the Cutter "Placentia". At the age of 20 he was serving under Admiral Pasley aboard the frigate "Sybil". He was the signal Lt. in the action off Cape Henry, at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay, in March 1781, during the Revolution. Later that year, he was made a Commander. After seeing action in the Caribbean aboard the "Borlfeur" he returned to England where he was called upon to take the newly appointed Governor of Canada, Lord Dorchester (Sir Guy Carleton) and his family, to Quebec.

It was during this period that Isaac Coffin, aboard the frigate "Thisbe", first sighted the Magdalen Islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Half jokingly he asked his friend, Lord Dorchester, to grant him the Islands for his loyal service to the Crown. Dorchester later took it upon himself to set the wheels in motion and raise the issue with King George III. On May 8 1798 The Magdalen Islands were granted to Captain Isaac Coffin. They remained in the Coffin's control for 105 years until 1903 and made Isaac and his heirs very rich men. Although Isaac never lived on the Islands, he made many efforts to advance the Islands forward by introducing healthy livestock and financial support. After Canada was ceded to Great Britain in 1763, the British made little effort to supply official currency for their North American holdings. In 1815, Sir Isaac Coffin became possibly the first one to rectify this by issuing an unofficial copper penny for the Magdalen Islands. The coin had the image of a seal on it with the words, "Magdalen Island Token", on one side and "Success to the Fisheries", on the other. However, the residents, mainly French fishermen, disliked Coffin and showed him little respect. It has been said that Coffin, once tried to expel his tenants on the Island but the British government frowned on the idea. After his death, the control of the Islands went to his nephews, the sons of his

brother John and sister Ann. The Islands were later sold to Quebec by a third generation of Isaac's nephews for \$100,000.00. It was also during this time that Coffin brought gifts of horses and cattle to Elisha's family at Savage Harbour. One story tells of Isaac requesting some of the Coffins of Savage Harbour to relocate onto his newly acquired Islands, but there were no takers. In 1804 Isaac Coffin became a Baronet while serving as a rear Admiral in Nova Scotia. He married Elizabeth Browne in 1811, but later separated due to their intolerance of each other's ways. Back in England in 1818 he served as a member of Parliament for the Borough of Ilchester, and was highly regarded in the House for his naval expertise. It was his love for his homeland back in America that cost him what would have been the crowning jewel to his career. It is said that the King, William IV, had his friend Sir Isaac Coffin, in line to become Earl of Magdalen and intended to make him the Governor of Canada, however, the British Parliament didn't take kindly to the idea of his appointment due to Coffin's strong American ties. The man himself stood over six feet tall, he was robust and energetic, until an accident at sea injured him severely. Having witnessed a man being swept overboard by a wave, Coffin rescued him by going overboard after him. He saved the man's life, but injured his back in doing so, this injury continued to follow him for the rest of his days. Isaac enjoyed good conversation and had a dry wit. One story tells of a time when he returned to England after one of his numerous voyages across the ocean (40 voyages in his lifetime). Upon his arrival he was informed that a man who was being held in confinement, a prisoner, claimed to be his relative. With his curiosity leading him, he went to the prison to further investigate. To his surprise he was brought to a

black man. Both surprised and amused, the coloured man told him that he was an American and therefore must be related, since Coffin was also an American. While listening intently, Coffin finally interjected saying, "Stop, my man, stop! Now let me ask you a question", he said, with a pause, "How old may you be?", "Well", replied the black man, "I should guess about 35". "Oh then!", Coffin said, turning to leave, "There must be a mistake, you cannot be one of my Coffin's, I don't recall any of us ever turning black before the age of forty". Another story reveals his love and hate relationship with his wife. After a short time of living together they both decided that what their marriage needed was a lot of distance between them. His wife's late night sermons gave Sir Isaac nightmares and the Admirals frolicking about the British taverns caused his wife to write late night sermons. A few years after their mutual agreement to live apart, Mrs. Coffin caught wind that Sir Isaac was about to set sail for Boston. Not being at all behind the fashions of the day, she requested her estranged husband to purchase her a Boston rocking chair while in Boston. Sir Isaac grudgingly agreed and upon his arrival in Boston he located a splendid chair, the best money could buy, but before shipping it back to England, he took a saw and cut a few inches off the back of the rockers, to ensure that every time his dear wife rocked, the chair would tip over backwards, putting her on her pompous fanny.

Admiral Sir Isaac Coffin died in England July 23, 1839 at the age of 80 and left a good portion of his fortune back in America spread out among his numerous kin. The Coffin school in Nantucket, was just one of Coffin's donations to his friends and family. His beloved Magdalen Islands were left to his nephews. In later years, Elisha's son, Benjamin Coffin, was asked to describe the old Admiral. His quick reply

was "Big feet, long legs and a big nose, just like all the other Coffins".

The late 1790's in P.E.I., saw the first Presbyterian Church in the area being built about one mile south east of Savage Harbour, in what is now West St. Peter's Cemetery. It served a wide area including the Coffins of Savage Harbour. They would travel by boat across the bay in summer and by sled over the bay ice in winter. Upon landing on the south shore, they would remove their shoes for the dusty walk along the trail to the church, so as not to get their best shoes dirty. This church existed for close to ninety years, until being replaced by a new one at Bristol. Elisha's grave lays within feet of where the old church once stood, and is probably one of the few remnants of the church's past history. I suspect it was Elisha's wife, Jane who first introduced Elisha and family to the religion of Scotland, Presbyterianism. It was also from this congregation that one of the Island's most famous Minister's developed. Elisha's grandson, Fulton J. Coffin, son of Elisha's son Benjamin, was born and raised in Savage Harbour. He was educated at Prince of Wales College before heading off to Princeton and Oxford Universities. Reverend Coffin became well acquainted with the leading scholars of the day, not only in North American, but also in Europe and Asia. He eventually settled in Trinidad where he became the principal of the Presbyterian Theological College, a post he held for twenty-five years. He was known as an expert in the Old Testament, and was thoroughly trusted by the East Indian population of the Island. Rev. Coffin was also a noted Hindu scholar, and lectured in their language as well as English. He died in 1936 and was buried in the Peoples Cemetery, in Mount Stewart, P.E.I., where all but one of the gravestones face the rising sun, Rev. Fulton Coffin's faces south,

towards his friends in Trinidad.

During the 1790's, Elisha appears on various documents and census reports. A list of subscribers to a copy of a memorial relative to the streets and commons of Charlottetown, presented to Lt. Gov. Fanning dated January 1, 1792, bares Elisha's signature, along with his brothers Latham and Kimble. The Island census for 1798 shows three Coffin families living on Lot 38, which included Savage Harbour. The census shows Kimble Coffin's family of five, two males and three females, Widow Coffin (Eunice) along with her sons Andrew and Joseph, and Elisha's family with nine, five males and four females. Elisha's family in 1798 only consisted of seven, Elisha, Jane, Kimble, Eunice, William, Margaret and Harriet. The leftover persons are two males who are under sixteen and create a mystery as to their identity. The census also shows Uriah Coffin, Elisha's great uncle, living on Lot 47 in East Point with his family of eight.

In 1801, Elisha and Jane had a son named Benjamin. In later years he would become known as "neighbour Ben". In 1803, their son James was born, and two years later in 1805 their daughter Rebecca was born. On February 16, 1805 a congratulatory letter was sent to Lt. Gov. Fanning, upon his retirement from public duty. It was signed, among others, by Elisha Coffin. It was during this time that Elisha was becoming involved in politics. He ran in the 1806 election, and won a seat as a member for Kings County in the Legislative Assembly, alongside his brother Benjamin.

Some of the debates in the house during this session dealt with Loyalist land claims and compensation for broken promises. The Parliament also dealt with regulation of liquor sales. This topic was of interest to Elisha, and possibly even brought to the House by him, seeing as how he had an

invested interest. According to the book, "History of Mount Stewart", Elisha was running a tavern in the Mount Stewart area, and so was his younger brother Andrew. It would appear that anyone and everyone who wanted to, was selling rum from their homes. This no doubt would have been taking business away from their established taverns. It was also common in the rural areas for a judge to hold a court of law in the local tavern, in later years, Elisha did just that. Another issue that crossed the floor, dealt with, what to do with people who intentionally maimed or killed cattle, and was stated, as a growing problem. Perhaps this issue stemmed from an incident when some privateers sailed up St. Peter's Bay, shot some cattle, turned around, and left. It was also stated that even though Britain was preparing for a possible war, (war of 1812), the government had put aside sixteen hundred pounds, for the erection of government buildings and gaols (jails).

In 1807, the Coffin's daughter Phebe was born. Shortly after or possibly during Phebe's birth, Elisha's wife, Jane died. It is not documented until Phebe's baptism, April 5, 1809, the mother (Jane) is listed as deceased. In 1810, a survey map drawn-up on September 15th, shows Elisha owning 160 acres of farm land at Savage Harbour. This property was part of his father's original purchase. To the north his younger brother Andrew is situated on the coastline with 83 acres and south lies the homestead of his brother Benjamin. Although their mother was still alive, I believe she was now living with her son, Kimble, possibly at St. Peters, where her death was recorded in 1814. Elisha was sworn in as a Justice of the Peace for Kings County in 1812. He was also farming during this period of time, and shows up on the MacDonald ledger (and old merchant's account book), in 1814 as the purchaser of nails, iron and rum. He paid

with oats and hay. Elisha continued to live on the north-east shore of Savage Harbour. In 1996, I visited Savage Harbour to view this landscape. As we came down the dusty road toward the harbour, my first observations were the mailboxes along the road on top of fence posts, that read "Coffin", thus telling me that indeed, I was on the right road. The green meadows were bordered by spruce trees. As the red rust coloured road, rounded a bend, I could see the harbour at the bottom of a gently sloping hill. At the base of the hill, I could see small grey fishing shacks by the dock. This is where early maps show Elisha's home being situated. The location is perfectly sheltered from the sea, which lies just north, over a small hill. The mouth of the harbour, has nearly closed off completely from the sea. Only a small channel remains, in which the fishing boats enter and leave. The beach front is wide, flat and rocky and probably very different than it was over one hundred years before. Gone are the forests of evergreen trees and tiny fishing shacks that once dotted the beach, changed by the wind, sea and time. Savage Harbour still remains a peaceful, thought provoking area, bathed in Coffin history.

In 1818, Elisha was named Constable for the area of Savage Harbour, by the Island's Supreme Court. Constables were responsible for handing out warrants and keeping the peace in their jurisdiction. They were men who were well regarded in their communities. On November 25th, 1820, the Lt. Gov. named Elisha to a new Commission of the Peace, along with his brother Benjamin. For many years after, Elisha represented the law in the Savage Harbour area. An interesting event in 1830, sheds more proof pertaining to the claim that Elisha's family landed on the Island earlier than most historians and genealogists thought. Many felt the Coffin's did not

healthy place, well and abundantly watered, good rich soil, plenty of timber, cloudless sky, but unfortunately inhabited by few poor and unenterprising people who are not well versed in agriculture. They are content to do as their predecessors did, live cheaply and be satisfied, never looking forward or thinking of improvements. We have now been here nine days and have never seen beef for the simple reason that there is none. We visited the market this morning and saw a little poor lamb, no feathered stock of any kind. The poverty of the people, leads them to salt cod and salt meats, which together with the great quantities of rum they drink, accounts for their general sallow look". Carrington's remarks about the laziness of Canadians brought forth a recollection by the editor, James Brandow, of the book "The Clockmaker", in which the fictional character Sam Slick writes in a 1838 series, "I have often been amazed when travelling among Canadians, to see the curious critters they be. They leave the marketing to the women and the business to their notaries, the care of their souls to their priests, and their bodies to the doctors, and reserve only frolicking, dancing singing, fiddling and gasconading to themselves". Perhaps these writers, confused lazy people, with frustrated people, who knew that no matter how enterprising they became, landlords always seemed to receive the lions share of the deal. At any rate, my interpretation of life on the Island during the 1830s and 40s is somewhere in the middle of Carrington's view and a more upbeat view. There were many poor people who were trying to carve out an existence upon their arrival on the Island, but in most cases, they were still better off in the new land than they were in the old. The more established families such as the Anderson's, Robbins, Webster's and Coffin's, had managed to survive their hardships through their will to become more

prosperous through farming, shipbuilding, retailing etc. Alcohol dulled the pain of poverty and despair for many, as it still does even today, however, the peaceful, isolated beauty of the land and sea made them stay on in hopes that their children may rise to the opportunities that the land may someday give to them.

In his later years, Elisha stayed on as a Magistrate for Kings County. He was no doubt a man of intelligence and held public office on many occasions in his life. On September 14, 1851, Elisha died at the age of 87, his obituary appeared in "The Examiner" on October 6th and reads as follows: "Died. At Savage Harbour, on the 14th ultimo, Elisha Coffin, Esquire, at the advanced age of 87 years. The deceased was the oldest Magistrate in Kings County and was once a member of the Legislature. He enjoyed the respect and esteem of all who knew him". Elisha Coffin was buried in West St. Peter's Cemetery in an old section that is now found in the woods where the church once stood. His grave is among six others (only four are marked, including his son James) and is considered one of the oldest graves in the cemetery. The stone reads, "To the Memory of Elisha Coffin Sen. who died September 14, 1851 aged 87 years".

Captain William Coffin (1791-1843)

William Coffin was born in 1791, at Savage Harbour, P.E.I. He was the second son of Elisha Coffin and Jane Robbins.

William grew up on his father's farm on the west side of Savage Harbour among his numerous kin who had now settled many Coffin homesteads in this area. Although farming would have been demanding most of William's time, records show that, like his brothers and cousins, he was developing

an interest in returning to the sea. Fishing and shipbuilding were becoming well established enterprises on the Island, and many of the Coffins had the skills to make a good living at it. William, along with his younger brother Benjamin, became involved in the boat building trade during the late 1820's. Their names appear on various shipbuilding lists in the area.

The early 1800's saw the Island developing strong trade ties with Newfoundland involving their sealing and fish trades. Shipbuilders in P.E.I. were finding a lucrative market for their Island built fishing vessels. Between 1830 and 1833 a total of 123 schooners were built on the Island, with the majority of them finding their way to Newfoundland. William's uncle, Kimble Coffin, was a large employer involved with the shipbuilding trade. His will, dated 1830, mentions an outstanding debt owing to him for a schooner named Hanna, by a Newfoundland fisherman. Kimble, along with his father Elisha had developed shipbuilding skills, and sailing skills, from their father Captain Elisha Coffin, who himself, appears on shipbuilding records, as early as 1785 on the Island. Captain Coffin was involved with John Coffin back in Cape Sable, Nova Scotia, fishing and building boats. John Coffin had come with Elisha, from Nantucket in the early 1760's. John's family, in Nova Scotia later went on to establish a fine distinction in Maritime business and public life. John Coffin's great-grandson, the Hon. Thomas M. Coffin was a Cabinet Minister in the Mackenzie Government in the 1880's.

Although a few smaller vessels were being built at Savage Harbour, the larger shipyards in the area were located down along the Hillsborough River near the town of Mount Stewart. Many of the Coffin families built ships along the banks of the river, and then towed them down to

Charlottetown, where they were rigged and prepared for their first voyages. The early part of the 1800's were important years for the smaller shipbuilding enterprises because of the development of the market in Newfoundland. It encouraged a degree of specialization, for boat builders, and showed others, that there was a demand for the type of boats that the smaller shipyards, on the north eastern part of the Island, could readily produce. The large scale builders such as the Peake Brothers and Thomas Owen, had little interest in this type of market at this time, however, in later years the Coffins were building larger vessels almost exclusively for the Peake Brothers.

William was interested in building the smaller vessels, usually under 100 tons. In 1829 he built the schooner Rainbow, listed as 77 tons. Later that year he built the schooner, "Three Sisters", with his brother Benjamin. In 1831 they built the schooner, "Ann" and in 1833 they built "The Lady of the Lake". Although their place of residence was listed as Savage Harbour, their building facilities was located near Mount Stewart. The reason for this was that the mouth of the harbour, at Savage Harbour, was too shallow to enable the keel of a completed vessel to pass safely. Only a few small boats were ever launched there.

Most locally built ships were financed by groups of farmers or families, who would collectively finance, build and crew, the completed vessels to their buyers. Before the vessels left, they would be loaded with lumber, food, and other cargo, before setting off to foreign markets. The end results, would bring home a handsome profit for all those involved. Unfortunately, the market for these boats dried up in 1834. William returned back to fishing and farming. William's uncle, Kimble Coffin, died in 1830, however his sons, and grandson, Duncan, William and Edwin, continued

on with their father's tradition, and became major builders for mainly the Peake brothers of Charlottetown. They built beautiful ships, such as the barquentine, "Ethel Blanche" and the "Ralph B. Peake", which was launched in 1876. This ship was 757 tons, her length was 170 feet and her beam was 33 feet across. The depth of the cargo hold was 19 feet and was magnificently finished from bow to stern and considered one of the finest ships ever to be built on the Island. In later years, it was the introduction of the steamships, that brought an end to the wooden sailing ships, and caused the bankruptcy of their financiers, the Peake Brothers. Today one can still visit the homes and offices of James Peake in Charlottetown, they have been preserved by the Government and now house the Provincial Heritage Foundation and Museum, known as Beaconsfield House. The year 1834 was not only the end of William's enterprise with building boats for Newfoundland, it was also to be the start of new beginnings, with his engagement and marriage to his cousin, Margaret Anderson Davison. Margaret, a widow, was the daughter of David Anderson and Helen Robbins Anderson. William's parents were, as before stated, Elisha Coffin and Jane Robbins Coffin. This made William and Margaret, first cousins, through their mothers. Margaret was a widow of the former Captain Robert Davison, who drowned within site of his homestead while returning from Newfoundland. Margaret and Robert had two daughters Elizabeth, born 1819 and Helen born (?), and two sons, Henry born 1821 and Robert born 1828. After Margaret's remarriage on February 5, 1834, Margaret and William lived in the scenic area of St. Peter's Bay, in a town called Greenwich. This was Anderson country, which leads to the speculation that the newlyweds were given property, or was

it that William moved into the Davison farm? In my visit to this area in 1996, I was stunned by the beauty of St. Peter's Bay. The gentle green hills, rolling down to the narrow bay, with the white steeples of the churches made for a postcard like setting. The French had settled here in the early 1700's and called it Saint Pierre. this community proved to be one of the few success stories during the early years of French settlement.

St. Peter's Bay is a long narrow inlet, working its way eastward from the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Approximately 9 miles long, from the north shore of the Island, its endings are inland at the town of St. Peter's. About half way along the Bay, on the north shore, lies the tiny community of Greenwich. The bay itself is only about one mile across. The history of St. Peter's Bay is an interesting one, beginning with the Mic Mac Indians, hundreds of years before. This area provided the natives with plenty of fresh fish and small game. At the time, the forests came down to the water's edge providing shelter from the cold and wood for their camps. The forests were teeming with deer, bear, raccoons and foxes. The bay provided salmon, trout, clams and lobsters. Early in the 1700's the French were attempting to settle P.E.I. or Isle St. Jean, as it was then known. They saw great potential in the harbour at St. Peter's Bay and started a fishing village called St. Pierre. Along with this village they built a fort at the mouth of the harbour in which today some remnants still remain. The Mic Mac were more or less a peaceful people, who shared the land with the French, trading furs and game with them. Eventually St. Pierre developed a reputation as a trading center, and prospered until the late 1750's, when the French were conquered by the British. The British tried to expel the Acadian population, their success was being hindered by the lack of

British transport ships, however, many Acadians were rounded up and shipped back to Europe, and south to America. In the early 1760's, the British divided the Island into lots. It was determined that St. Peter's was to be located on lot 41, in King's County. The development included the clearing of the forests that surrounded the Bay. Development was somewhat slow due to the fact that the new settlers could not purchase their property, but instead had to pay rent to landlords, back in England. However, to the credit of the first settlers, they carried on, cutting trees, removing stumps, and carving small farms from the forests, a task that could only be described as gruelling, laborious and filthy. The letters of Walter Johnstone, a Scottish visitor to the Island in the early 1820's, writes, "As the trees are cut the branches are lopped off, and the trunks cut into lengths of 12 or 14 feet. This operation they call junking them; if they are not junked before fire is applied, they are much worse to junk afterwards. Thus, when the space intended to be cleared is cut down, junked, and all lying in a promiscuous manner over the whole surface, fire is applied to it in as dry and windy a day as can be selected, and if the fire runs well, the greater part of the small branches will be consumed, but the trunks will only be scorched. These are next rolled together and made-up in piles, lying flat upon the ground; then the remaining small branches are gathered up and thrown upon the heavier wood, to help it to kindle for burning a second time. The stronger part of the family then go on to make up more piles, while the weaker part set fire to those which are thus prepared. In this way they proceed till the whole of what was cut down is gone over; then when the piles go out they are kindled again and those that continue to burn are thrust closer together, until all is consumed. I must say this is a piece of

work of the most dirty and disagreeable nature, and when the wood is heavy, it is as tiresome work as any I have seen in America. I have often passed by the settlers when engaged in this employment, and what with smoke, sweat, and the dust of the burnt wood, their faces were little fairer than those of the negroes in the West Indies, while their clothes were much the same as if they had been dragged up a sooty chimney". Johnstone goes on to recommend that new immigrants to the Island, bring enough oatmeal and provisions, to see their family through for one full year, and recommends early springtime as a good time to arrive. Many settlers didn't find out about the absentee landlord system until they had arrived on the Island, victims of smooth talking recruiting agents back home, in the British Isles. One story tells of the ancestors of Anne of Green Gables author, Lucy Maud Montgomery. After their arrival from Scotland, having barely survived the ocean crossing due to fierce gales, they set foot on the Island, only to find out that their was no promised land to buy. Mr. Montgomery wanted to continue to Quebec, but the violent sea crossing caused his wife much anxiety about re-boarding any ship in the near future, and there, they stayed, giving a future country, a great author.

St. Peter's Bay, in the late 1700's and early 1800's was eventually settled by the Scots on the north side, near Cable Head and Greenwich, the Irish on the south, and scatterings of Acadian, English and Loyalists in between. Family names common to the area in the 1800's were McEwen, Sanderson, Coffin, McLaren and Anderson. Along with Lapierre, Devoe, Sinnott and Larkin. Many churches were built to serve the faithful in and around the Bay. William's farm consisted of 70 acres, and was located on the east side of Cable Head Road, where it intersects with

Greenwich Road. From the Bay, it ran back across Greenwich Road, towards, and almost reaching Schooner Pond. It is back here, that the Schooner Pond grist mill was built. In later years, the Greenwich Presbyterian Church was also built along Cable Head Road. Today, the location is part of a farmer's field, however, there is a hint of the road that ran down to the Bay 150 years ago. This road, an extension of Cable Head Road ran down to the Bay from Greenwich Road to the water's edge. The farmers and merchants used to load boats, on what was known as McLean's wharf. A closer look suggests that maybe at one time there was a ferry across the Bay from this point. It would have saved the residents of the north side much in the way of travel time, if they were heading to Morell and beyond. The Book "Story of Prince Edward Island" by Blakeley and Vernon, confirms that once there was a ferry across the bay, but does not say where. Across the Bay another road leading away from the Bay suggests where the ferry may have landed. This road continues up the hill and past the Midgell Cemetery to the main Island road which leads into Charlottetown.

On the north side of the Bay the Anderson family built and operated ships. David Anderson was Margaret's father, David and his sons were involved with the trade to Newfoundland.

In the year of 1838, the Coffins of Greenwich, welcomed their new born daughter, named Jane Margaret. Also in 1838, their eldest daughter Elizabeth, had met and married a man named Frank Sterns. Frank was the son of Dr. Benjamin and Mahetabel Sterns from Truro, Nova Scotia. The Stern family of Truro were descendants of an old New England family from Boston, who descend from a Loyalist named Isaac Stearns. In later years, the mother of President, Calvin Coolidge, proved to be a

Stearns, as was the poet and Nobel Prize winner, T.S. Elliot. The T.S. stood for Thomas Stearns. In Canada the Stearns, dropped the "a" from their name, to spell "Sterns". After the Sterns' arrival to Nova Scotia, a Minister by the name of Robert Douglas came to Truro, Nova Scotia, at the turn of the century and became very close to the Sterns family. After awhile, Reverend Douglas moved onto P.E.I. and settled in the town of Morell, near St. Peters. The following summer the Sterns' daughter, Nancy, went to visit the Reverend Douglas and met William's cousin, Kimble Jr. After a short courtship, they were married and settled near St. Peters. Soon after, Caroline, Nancy's sister, came to visit and fell in love with William's brother Benjamin, they too were married and settled near Savage Harbour. Shortly after, the brothers Frank and William came to the Island, settling at Morell. Frank was a carriage builder and William was involved with the retail grocery and postal business. Later Frank met Elizabeth Davison Coffin, William and Margaret's daughter, and they were married. During this time in 1838, William was doing more farming than fishing. He lists his trade, on his new daughter's birth certificate as that of a farmer. His family now numbered six. It is probable that William's main crops were hay and oats. Their personal garden would have been potatoes, turnips, squash and beans. Some of the hay and oats would be used as currency to trade for other materials. An old merchant's ledger, which dates back to 1812 shows William, Elisha, Andrew and Kimble all listed as purchasers of various items such as tea, sugar, buttons and nails. One common purchase was rum. The alcohol was not only used for social gatherings, but was also the medicine of the day. In some cases such as in Donald McCormick's case, the rum was used to preserve his dead father until distant kin

could make the journey for his funeral. Most items were paid for by oats and hay, or in exchange for labour, as money was very scarce on the Island. In 1840, Margaret gave birth to their son William Montague. William was born September 23rd and baptized the following March.

The following years marked the beginning of what was to become some sorrowful years. The death of Margaret's father in 1842 at the age of 70 came as a blow to the community of Greenwich. Margaret along with her brothers and sisters, 12 in all, lost a father and community leader. David Anderson's signature appears on many of the important documents I have in my possession. Perhaps the death of Margaret's father prepared her for what was to come. In the fall of 1842 their daughter, Elizabeth, gave birth to a baby named Mehetabel, but the birth had complications, and Elizabeth died. Frank Sterns became a widower with a new born and a three year old son named Robert. Elizabeth was only 23 years old, and died on the 17th of October 1842.

During these years, William was fishing for a living in the waters off the north coast of the Island. They fished for cod, mackerel, herring and lobster off the north coast, just a few miles off shore. Today one can still find the boats fishing the same waters. The danger with this location on the north coast, during the old days of sail, was that the Island, being shaped like a crescent moon, with the gulf being on the north side, easily trapped unsuspecting boats if the wind suddenly changed and came in from the north or north-east. Often the warnings of a gale, was a calming of the winds, "the calm before the storm", as it is known. The lack of wind would trap the boats off the coast, robbing their sails of power. Unable to make for shore or round the ends of the Islands, the boats would only have time to reef sails, and pray, before a wall of wind

came down on them like an avalanche, often with driving rain or sleet, only the lucky escaped unscathed, the rest were remembered in song and verse:

The Drowned

On the bar of St. Peter, where the loud
 roaring billows
Heaved their form-crest tips with the temp-
 ests that rave
The stranger lies buried; there no sweet
 drooping willows
Will point out the spot 'tis a chill watery
 grave
Far, far from his home
The storm may grow louder, Heaven's
 power may be shaken
He heeds not, he hears not, he's free from all
 pain
He sleeps his last sleep, from earth's scene
 he was taken
No sound will awake him, to action again
Thus closes the tale Death fells a man in his
 glory
Today all is well, we rejoice with a smile
Tomorrow, alas, brings a heart wrenching
 story
And is then we see plainly how hopes often
 beguile
And leave a sad wreck to be forgotten in
 death's tale.
St. Peter's Bay 1848 by J.M.K.

The Colonial Herald on June 24, 1843
reads as follows:

Melancholy Accident - We regret to learn that on the 15th inst.; while Mr. William Coffin, of St. Peter's was returning to that harbour upon his fishing boat, accompanied by a young man in his employment, the boat was struck by a sudden squall, which caused her to upset. The boat

instantly disappeared, and both the individuals who were in her suddenly met a watery grave. Mr. Coffin has left a widow and several children, and numerous relatives and friends, to lament his loss. Peculiar sympathy is felt for Mrs. Coffin, as this is the second bereavement of this nature that she has been called upon to suffer, both having occurred near the same place, and in similar manner. Her former husband, Captain Robert Davison, was returning from Newfoundland, some years since, and having arrived within sight of his home, fell overboard and drowned.

On July 1, 1843 The Colonial Herald read:

The body of Mr. William Coffin, senior, of St. Peter's, whom we noticed last week as having been lost at sea, was found on Monday the 19th, in the surf near Black Bush (Hermanville), fully twenty miles to the eastward of where he went missing. He was buried on Wednesday last.

On July 18, 1843 The Royal Gazette read as follows:

The body of a young man named Oliver Scott, who it appears was in the boat with the ill fated Mr. William Coffin, when she upset, was spotted floating up with the tide in the mouth of St. Peter's Harbour on Tuesday last. The body was brought to shore and decently interred in the burial ground of that place. The deceased was about 20 years of age and was nearly a

stranger in this country, but was the son of a respectable farmer back in England. We do not know from which county he came, but there is a possibility that this notice may meet the eyes of some of his friends, if copied into English papers and they may learn the end of his worldly career.

Once again Margaret was being called upon to grieve for a drowned husband. Her William had been taken from her by the sea on June 15, 1843, leaving her a widow for the second time in her 43 years. When I was in St. Peter's Bay visiting the sights of our ancestors recently, I could imagine back to that sorrowful time, picturing the wake at the house, with the casket containing William's body lying in the living quarters, then being carried by carriage down to McLean's Wharf at the end of Cable Head Road and on to a waiting boat for the ride across the Bay, up the hill on the other side, to where the small chapel once stood in what is now Midgell Cemetery. William, was buried beside his step-daughter Elizabeth, and was among one of the first graves dug in the cemetery. Today the chapel no longer stands, however a marble bench in the cemetery marks the spot close to where it once stood. The four Coffin tombstones are distinctive by there originality and age.

From left to right lies William Coffin's head stone which reads as follows:

William Coffin who drowned in the harbour of St. Peter's on the 15th day of June A.D. 1843, age 52 years. His remains are here interred.

Margaret Anderson Coffin, wife of William Coffin, died at Charlottetown on the 12th day of March A.D. 1893 age 93.

Elizabeth Sterns, wife of Franklin Sterns, died October 17, 1842, age 23.

Robert Davison Coffin, died April 10, 1850, age 21. He was distinguished for his innocence of manner and purity of character and he submitted to the last foe of man with cheerfulness and resignation. Also to commemorate the death of his father, Captain Robert Davison who was accidentally drowned off St. Peter's Harbour on the 7th day of December A.D. 1827, age 59.

After the death of William, Margaret continued on with their farm in Greenwich. The next twenty five years are a mystery to my research, which are periodically brought to life by events such as Margaret's purchase of John Leslie's grist mill in 1848, on Schooner Pond. This was an unusual purchase for a lady in these times, but once again it shows the determination of this Scot, to carry on despite the pitfalls along life's journey. In 1850, another death in their family, with the sudden illness and death of her son Robert, whom Margaret, had given birth to, shortly after her first husband Robert Davison had drowned.

There is a map of this area, entitled, "The Lake Map of 1863." On this map directly across the Greenwich Road, lies a store on the Greenwich Road. Could this store have belonged to Margaret? In later years her son William, my great-grandfather, would find himself involved with running a general store, and it is possible that this store provided a start to the Coffins' new life after the death of William.

Margaret Coffin, later moved with her son to Charlottetown, in the year 1873, and continued on as a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother until her death in Charlottetown on March 12, 1893, age 93. Margaret was buried beside her husband William in Midgell Cemetery, and her legacy of courage should be remembered, by those who can envision her hardships and loss through her long life.